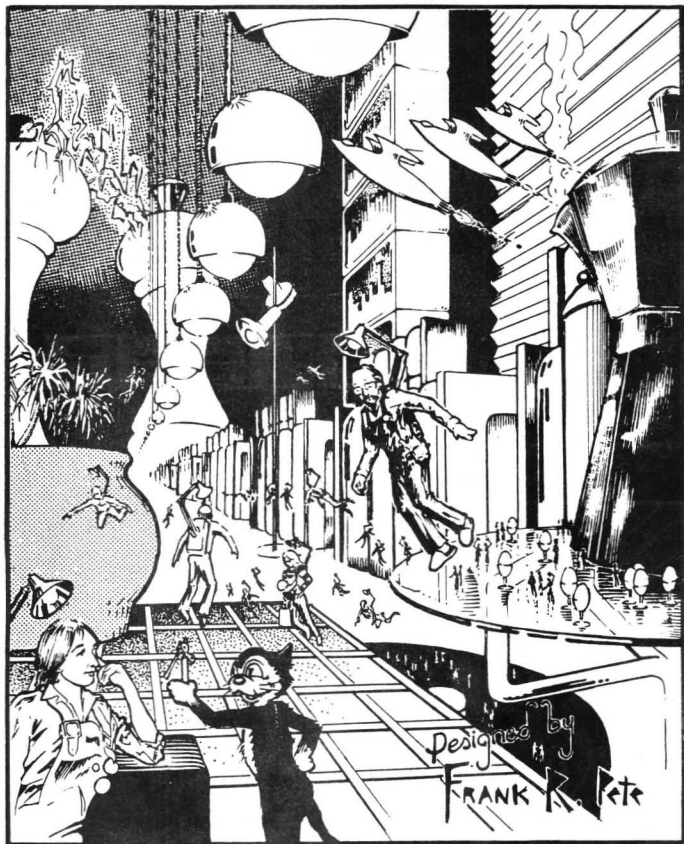


SPACE habitat

JUNE/JULY 1982

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MATRIX 42

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HOW TO FIND YOUR WAY ROUND THE SPACE HABITAT

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*This gigantic issue cheerfully reduced to bring you more for your money in less space.
Special thanks to Graham for taking over the children and household duties, not to mention
cooking great meals, and having a birthday during production and typing of Matrix 42.*

DEADLINE MATRIX 43: 14 JULY 1982

THE EDITOR'S DEFINITE ARTICLE

CONVENTIONS FOR PROFIT OR FUN?

Personally, I enjoyed Channelcon. Not because of its programme (or lack of it), not because of the Hotel (or in spite of it) and not because of the costs (we knew what to expect and had budgeted accordingly). I wasn't enamoured with the bar prices - but we got round this by buying wine and beer off the premises. I didn't particularly take to the jack-booted space warriors wielding axes, but I kept out of their way after one storm-trooper said, "we had enough weapons to destroy everyone in the hall." The committee couldn't take responsibility for this (although they could, in future, by banning weapons from cons), and they couldn't really be blamed for the little Hitler of a porter who made our six-year-old kid cry because she was playing on the staircase. I didn't find it wholly amusing that a number of fans had their rooms invaded by the Hotel Staff; but overall, the committee had done a reasonable job on briefing the staff - one chambermaid remarked to me, "yes, it is hot in here - I don't know why, but in one room, they asked for 12 extra blankets..." And, they got them!

I enjoyed the con because I went around and found my own entertainment, but I wonder how many other people were in this position - particularly the newer fans who didn't know anybody. "Getting into fandom" is not exactly a new phenomenon, but the process, I would imagine, is particularly difficult with the size of conventions and how this affects their organisation. I was left with a feeling that conventions are now so large that they have lost their identity and have synthesised to a number of conventions within a convention. Each group goes its own way; the "fancy"-dress-space-pirates; the D&D freaks; the video-merchants; middle-class fandom; the fanzine fans; the programme buffs; etc etc. There was no one area where you could post yourself and meet acquaintances and prospective friends. The Fan Room, though well organised, in one sense, by Jim Barker, was the farthest point away and, despite the excellent displays, its organisation as a programme room prohibited people

staying there, relaxing, and talking over a few pints. OK, so Vorcon II tried the idea of a "fan-room in a bar" and, in some people's minds, failed - due mainly to the large attendance and small number of other bars. I went to Brighton with 100 copies of my fanzine to distribute and I managed to farm out 25; I just didn't see the rest of the crowd. This is not, particularly, a criticism of Channelcon: Vorcon was too large as well, and Novacon, for some time, have been grappling, unsuccessfully, with the problem of too grand an attendance.

Probably, Albacon II will see an attendance of around 1000 people. The prospect of a horrendous and suffocating World-con-type-Eastercon is now with us - even more so with the Eurocon/Eastercon in '84. I don't actually object to Eurocon - I've always wanted to hear Bob Shaw translated into Serbo-Croatian - but I now feel, in the words of the Walrus, that the time has come to think of many things.... The problems of size also mean that there are now few, very few hotels who can possibly accommodate an Eastercon. Those that can, tend to charge for their facilities and the room rates are generally high. Albacon has ended up with good room rates (mainly because they did a deal with the hotel to undercut the Metrocon rates) but the main hotel is small and most fans will end up in the overflow. Perhaps cost will prove to be the self-limiting factor, but it would mean that many fans will simply not be able to afford to go in future. Maybe we should be thinking about regional conventions in the future? Maybe the BSFA should take some sort of initiative and act as a clearing house for conventions (in the wake of increases in the number of fans attending cons, many small cons have grown up - but several have been cancelled and left the prospective attendees at a loss). Bob (got) Shaw's proposals for an Eastercon Charter seemed anathema at the time - but I now find myself agreeing with him - perhaps further than that, in developing a charter for all cons. The "profit" angle of conventions adds fuel to this.

It does seem like a terrible bureaucracy for fans, who tend towards highly individualist-anarchist-type behaviour, but I am concerned that the type of convention which has appealed to the majority of fans in recent years is disappearing. What did happen to the fannish convention? Just a side-thought, but perhaps this does have something to do with the fairly poor state of fanzines (quan-

tity and quality) despite what some people would have you believe about the so-called "fanzine renaissance". Conventions, now, seem to have less and less to do with fandom. The room parties and the bar conversations, etc, are still there, but more and more people I talk to are favouring the Unicons and Racons of this world rather than the Novacons and Eastercons. Perhaps this is the future direction - regional-type conventions will develop, naturally. As I said before, it's OK for me, generally, I can enjoy myself, whatever, at any convention, but whether I'd say that if it was my first or second convention - I dunno.

THERE'S NO BUSINESS

LIKE SHOW BUSINESS

The BSFA AGM was rather like waiting for the Bomb to Drop after WW III had been declared. It was expected that there would be fireworks over the vexed question of the BSFA's business manager; it was not until the closing stages that this finally erupted and caused, probably, the most heated BSFA business meeting, the blood-less coup in 1979 included, for many-a-year. One takes no great pride from the events involving Ken Eadie versus the BSFA but, it had to happen. Perhaps, my only point in mentioning this is to explain that I have not received any correspondence - Ken was to write to Matrix about BSFA involvement in charitable affairs.

However, another matter which caused some ripples was the decision of the Channelcon Committee to dispense with the Doc Weir Award. The What? you might ask. Doc Weir was a fan who came into fandom late in life and who participated in all facets of science fiction. He helped to get the infant BSFA on its feet. The Doc Weir Award was set up in 1963 to honour a fan for his contribution/services to fandom, principally one who had not received any other awards. Voting took place at Eastercons, and support for a particular fan usually came by word of mouth - there being no specific reason in any one year for what the award was for - just some recognition from fellow fans for a well-liked/ hard-working fan. Past winners have included

Terry Jeeves, Ken Slater, Malcolm Edwards, Keith Freeman and, more recently, Greg Pickersgill, Bob Shaw and John Brunner. Channelcon felt that the Award had lost its original purpose, it had fallen into disrepute, and they did not receive details from the Administrator in time to include with the programme book. Hence, No Award. The BSFA, loosely, had some role in arranging finance etc for the Award and it was thought that the matter should be raised in these columns; e.g., Should the Award continue? How should it be organised? Should the Award be for any specific reason? etc etc. Quite separate from any response to this issue of Matrix, if you have any thoughts on the subject over the next four months or so, please drop me a line and the Committee will discuss the matter further in time to organise something (if necessary) for next year's Eastercon.

Still on the Awards front, the Ken MacIntyre Award (for best fanzine cover) is presented at Eastercon, at the same time as the BSFA awards. The rules for entry are to send in the original and a copy of the cover of the fanzine; three entries were received this year! Although Rob Hansen was a worthy winner (if only based on the quality of his output in 81-82) it is no real credit to him, I would imagine, to gain the award in such circumstances. Again, the rules of entry need re-examination and, after the debate in previous letters columns on the subject, I think it's high time we instituted some proper recognition for "fanzine awards" in conjunction with the BSFA Awards. If voted on by BSFA members and Eastercon attendees, it would offer the best method of recognition. I propose a "Best fanzine"; "Best fan-writer"; and "Best fan-artist". I'll see if I can persuade the Committee accordingly.

Nowt else at the AGM, other than Colin Greenland being elected to the Council (in place of Malcolm Edwards) and by a majority vote over Ian Watson, who, admittedly, wasn't present and had not indicated whether he was prepared to stand. Colin will represent the interests of the SF Foundation. On that front, George Hay has asked BSFA members if they could help with the Foundation's work. Contact him at the N.E. London Polytechnic, Longbridge Road, Dagenham, RM8 2AS.

COMPETITION M39

Now at an end; entries were received from only five members: Nic Howard, K Marsland, Brendon Gore, who all got two right; Trevor Mendham (Book 1 - "Flames, a burning sun and a desolate wasteland - ans. Paperback Inferno"; Book 2 - "Foot in Mouth, hands to ears, eyes which refuse to see - ans. Definitely Paperback Inferno"; Book 3 - "A Poor Author being set upon by hordes of teeth and talons - ans. Paperback Inferno, again"; Book 4 - "Living in Cloud Cuckoo Land, miles above the majority of people - ans. It has to be Paperback Inferno") almost deserved the prize. But the winner was Trevor Harwood. The correct answers (albeit ambiguous) were (1) Shadowfire - Tanith Lee; (2) Barefoot in the Head - Brian Aldiss; (3) Plague of Demons - Keith Laumer; (4) Cloud Walker - Edmund Cooper.

FANZINE REVIEWS

May I thank those people who expressed interest in reviewing fanzines for *Matrix*. From those who applied (fools that they were!), I was quite amazed at the interest people have in reviewing, especially since the 'ace-fanzine reviewer' bit has been done to death in years gone by. My

judgment was that Martyn Taylor would best fit the job; he has reviewed for *Matrix* on many occasions; he has been active in fandom recently; he takes an interest in writing articles and contributing letters to *Matrix* and *Vector*; and he produces a fanzine. Whether he knows anything about fanzines is another question! No, he does, I tell you. So, fanzines, for review, to him at 5 Kimpton Road, Camberwell, London SE5 7EA. Parting thanks to Simon who, ever since I mentioned that he always met the deadline for his "Clubs" column, has managed to over-run the deadline each time for his "Cuts" column. Other than that, he did a fine job, albeit for a limited period.

HAPPY TRAILS

Finally, I did say when I took over the editorship in 1980 that I aimed to complete two years in the hot seat. That two years is approaching. The editorship is an onerous (and sometimes thankless) job; whilst we haven't exactly run out of ideas, a new approach or personality will be no bad thing and it is as well to get out while the going is good and we're meeting deadlines (just). In order to give sufficient time for the Committee to find a new incumbent, I think that Linda and I should give notice of our intentions to hand over towards the end of this year. Expressions of interest in the job (with an account of your proposals, ideas, background, etc) may be sent to Chairperson Dorey at the address shown on page 2. No farewell messages yet, please; we're still, at least, two issues to complete!

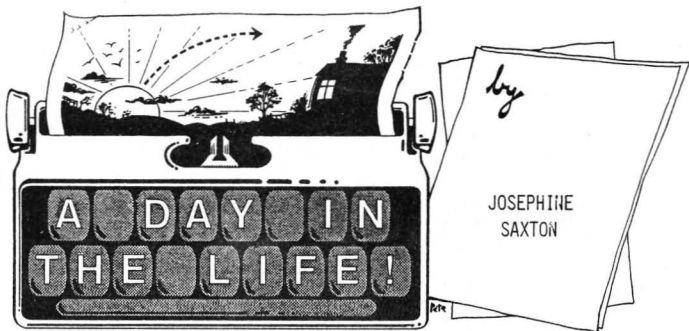
THREE LITTLE BIRDS

Fearnville Terrace has seen its population increase, yet again, with the birth, at 8.19 pm Monday 17 May of Amanda Shirley-Anne Dorey, daughter of Alan and Rochelle Dorey. In an exclusive *MATRIX* interview, Amanda was quoted as saying, ... "Coo-Coo Ca-Cho..."

The newest fan weighed in at 6lb 5½oz; Rochelle is doing fine and Alan is positively beaming, though he says it hasn't hit him yet - it will when Amanda wakes up wailing in the middle of the night.

Hearty congrats to Parents and daughter.





First I leap out of bed having just remembered in my hypnogogic peregrinations that I promised to write an article next week which has just ended. Getting out of bed this way sounds like Ginger Baker with the flu; this is because I have a drum-kit by the bed in case I feel lonely during the night. To wake myself up I crawl on hands and knees to the other side of the room, past the sewing-table and reach my pair of timbales, the loudest drums in the world, drag myself upright into a Groucho Marx position (some mornings I have a bad back because two in a single bed is bad for arthritis if good for everything else) - do a few rolls, several minutes of triplets, a bit of an ego-trip with the wrong end of the sticks and then stagger off to put the kettle on, a long way in a large Victorian house. While my Kenya fix is filtering I do everything that the Boys in the Palace Flophouse do but in a very lady-like way, i.e. privately. I have a white telephone by the avocado bidet so I sort out the dates for the evening while I remind my Muladhara Chakra that that was not it, honey, if we're going to live forever, more is yet to come. I smoke my fourth home-rolled Gauloise (it is possible to shower while smoking if you use a long cigarette-holder) while drinking my coffee and stroking my cat who gets very Familiar at this time of day, which could be any time between dawn and mid-day



depending. I play around with my Circadian Rhythms sometimes just to see what happens, and I and all of Rastafari can tell you, it happens.

I then decide what to wear: on dull days I tend to wear gold embroidered things, mirror-embroidery, my magic fur waistcoat and lots of jingly jewellery, but if I'm going to cut the lawn its dungarees and wellies. I used to always wear a pinafore over a sensible frock but that was for hanging out the laundry when the kids were little. Nowadays the hanging out I do is around bars so dressing is easier.

Some days I clean the house from end to end and rush through the shopping at high speed, prepare dinner in advance as far as possible, write a chapter-of my latest novel, sort out a few problems which friends bring to me, have tea and fresh-baked scones waiting for my teenage daughter and her gang of bike-boys when they return from some club they call the Sixth Form, give a little motherly advice to my older boy who may just have got up if he isn't in India preparing to do Psychology at Edinburgh (ho-ho-ha-ha that'll fix him), but other days I don't do any of that. Somebody may drop by for a little smoke, somebody could ring up suggesting lunch at the Rainbow, our Alternative Cafe where there is sure to be someone to talk with, or I may slouch off to the Crown and have a game of pool with the lads.

If I haven't already done the shopping at high-speed I do it around this time, depending upon what time it is, have a quick look at the prices at Vic's junkshop, try to walk past our unique music shop, go in and listen to some African, Islamic, Jazz or Latin and fool around with their current stock of odd musical instruments. I then hare up the street towards home, run up a bill at the butchers, stop to have a chat with Royston, Luke, Vince, Emanuel, Eileash, Pearl, Terry (Terry?) or whoever to find out if there's a blues on at the weekend or who's playing at Winston's or if there's anything about apart from that awful black; make a quick decision between red and white at the winestore while the lady there admires my clothes and tells me about her fibrositis (I don't tell her my problems - I have found it is more profitable to forget them), ask her to put aside the last three bargain Chablis in readiness for the night I am to spend with Tony listening to Tom Waite and run quickly past our local Oxford Historian who once tried to get me to put a red Labour sticker on my window and who is now taking me very seriously when I told him I was an Anarchist. I also speed past my neighbour who is Irish and who stands in the middle of the road asking God Questions but who is the perfect neighbour to have for a drummer. No complaints either way.



Around this time I write about five pages of a short story, put together a few frames on my bongoes and start cooking dinner. I once tried sending out for a Takeaway but it didn't work so I cook. For example today it is pigeons done slowly in red wine, and my ex-husband will do the new potatoes, broccoli and salad, so it is all organised. One thing you do learn from twenty-one years of marriage is how to organise things. Today he did the shopping, too, so please don't think I spend all my time shopping.

Just before dinner is my usual time for answering mail: there was a time that the high point of the day was the postman, but now I glaze through it over my coffee and come back to it around what used to be tea-time. If I'm in the mood, I'll write an obscene love-letter to Andrew whom I met in Hong-Kong last summer, or get my head off to Marc in Malibu Beach (he used to be my editor at Doubleday's thirteen years ago but they sacked him and now he is a

freelance anti-crime writer and music critic and we hope to meet in Paris again in July), or keep Jackie Lapidus (ringleader of the Paris Lesbian Underground and

American Jewish Poet) up to date or maybe write to Paul Kincaid saying oh well why not go to the SF convention, it might be fun.

After dinner I read, stare into space, sort out the laundry, scrub the bathroom floor, water my several hundred plants, talk to the seeds I planted, make love to my cat and try to remember if I said I'd see anyone this evening and if the doorbell rings and its my drumming teacher, I'm over the moon and forget the rest. If I mixed some wholemeal bread that morning I will by now have it ready to bake so put it into the oven while Phil shows me how a conga should really be played, or if it's Thursday we watch Kenny Everett. We also watched *African Queen* because my drumming teacher's uncle Tommy was an extra, but my son blew it all by saying 'all these black men look alike to me' which made the drummer laugh so much he missed the crucial shot.

Sometimes I run off a first draft for a story, write a song and tape it, cut my hair very short, bleach it and dye it blue or knit a sweater for my daughter (three days for the very last one) or telephone my female tattooist friend who is studying Obeah in Jamaica - she isn't on the phone but I have a turned-on Mock Orange tree outside my window; or I'll design and sew something interesting to wear or put in a little time training my Avocado, but mostly I either have an early night with my Self-hypnosis tapes or, after checking who's in charge of the central heating and hot-water (it is non-ecological to leave it on all night), change, do my face, get in the mood and go out. We might have a good band on at Winston's or start at the Talbot with Reggae and then go on to a dance at the Community Centre, a late cocktail party (Latin American) or a blues over Sweeneys; wherever it is, I dance. This is my way of keeping fit and if any sporty person thinks that jogging, tennis, etc is heavier exercise than three hours of dancing, let them try it. There was a time I used to walk my Irish Setter five miles a day in the Peak District but I find marathon dancing suits my temperament much better.

Depending upon whether I had a drumming lesson and how it went, I dream at ninety-minute intervals all night long, or make love until I fall into the Unconscious, either personal, collective or oblivious. I also try to keep up with the journal I am writing on the advice of my acupuncturist, read two Iris Murdoch novels a week, keep myself well-groomed (you never know whom you might meet), speak in French for an hour a day and read the *Sunday Times* and *Observer* before they arrive again. The pace of modern living being so fast, I find that in twenty-four hours there just is not enough time to catch up on everything I'd like to do, but I do my best under the circumstances. One has been obliged to make sacrifices: long dinner-parties for academics, weight-training, evening classes both as student and teacher, astrology, I Ching and Tarot, cleaning out the cooker, dusting the picture rails, painting pictures, having nervous breakdowns, all have had to go. Also, I have learned not to make absolute plans nor try and think more than a day ahead, which makes a considerable difference to any one day. Once, I had time to relax!

Josephine Saxton, probably the most underrated writer in these isles, had her first published story in *G&SF* in 1965, her output is somewhat limited and she has had three published novels in between bringing up a sizeable family. Perhaps her best known work was *VECTOR FOR 7*. She has recently contributed to *INTERZONE 2*.



CHANNELCON - A COLLECTIVE VIEW

CHANNELCON ROCK - COLIN GREENLAND

Channelcon Rock is not a number by the terrible Eric and the Maggots at the Saturday night bop, but the real stuff, lettered all the way through, so I put down two tons of fanzines and start to eat it, but get only halfway and wonder why I started, like reading *The Sound of Winter* by Arthur Byron Cover. At the INTERZONE reception Mike Dickinson is roaring that everyone should read Arthur Byron Cover, the best New Wave author, so I buy one of his books and Mike says, 'Which one did you buy? Not *The Sound of Winter*, was is? Because that's the one that's no good.' So instead I go to a party with so many Starship Troopers I keep expecting to be arrested and dive into a lift which deposits me in the basement at another party where I'm talking to John Sladek about his imaginary relatives when another lot of Starship Troopers burst in and spray everyone with sticky dayglo string for celebrating Metrocon instead of Albacon. By this time I am elsewhere, being introduced to Marjorie Brunner in total darkness, and discussing world peace while Michael Palin hacks something large and improbable to pieces at the other end of the room. Every time I start a conversation it gets interrupted halfway, like Channelcon Rock. Tipped off by Jackie Gresham that the sea here is an odourless replica, I head for the Brighton Pavilion instead, with Josephine Saxton and her man. The Pavilion is a masterpiece of kitsch so highly developed that it turned into art again. Marble is really painted plaster, and bamboo is mahogany carved and painted to look like bamboo. Except where it's actually wrought iron. It is Brighton at Easter, police are herding skinheads, and a vast horde of bikers suddenly goes streaming by. We watch them, standing amid the preserved insanity of the Prince Regent, in the palace of his private lust where we are already the invaders, the tourists. Is the rate of change accelerating, or standing still? Meanwhile somebody says to me, 'Didn't you write something in *Focus*?' and for some reason I end up buying him a drink while trying to sell INTERZONE to three fans who reply, without smiling, 'I spit on Moorcock,' and, 'We like writers who get a lot of shit here, writers like Larry Niven.' I am glad I do not read Larry Niven. Eve Harvey comes out of the main hall crying, 'Colin! Get in there quick! They're voting on you now!' In one smooth motion I suddenly become a councillor of the BSFA. Phil Palmer, on the other hand, has turned into a line drawing, and everyone's pillowcases have gone pink, someone goes by in a t-shirt that says 'Take a Cruise to Buenos Aires', Angela Carter is reading from *The Runts of 23 Cygnus-VI*, and Rog Peyton is auctioning bulldog clips, and somebody says, 'You're the bloke who wrote the piece in *Focus*, aren't you?' I buy him a drink. David Pringle reveals that this is the middle-class bar, sealed off from the upper-class bar across the foyer and menaced with incipient anarchy from the working-class bar upstairs. Could this be *High-Rise* by J.G. Ballard? One Bob Shaw or another is talking to a Viking, Gerry Webb is defending Vincent Clarke's poodle, and Chris Morgan is saying, 'I liked your piece in *Focus*.' I rush to buy him a drink, but at that instant the bars all close at once with a sound like thunder, the stars are going out one by one, my watch has stopped and I am left holding two entirely different editions of Michael Moorcock's Martian trilogy, which I have never read and never will, and a half-eaten stick of Channelcon Rock.

THE INSIDER - JOHN HARVEY

Another year, another Eastercon. Not so, because no Eastercon is ever *just another* Eastercon, each has its own character, its good and bad points. The annual change of venue and organisers combine to make each Easter a unique occasion and, of course, Channelcon was no exception.

As the Chairman's Chief Dogbody (self-titled) I didn't expect to see much of the convention and it certainly started that way. Wednesday had been spent pouring a pint's worth of equipment into a half-pint transit van and then repacking it as pieces of dexion (that over-sized Meccano-like material) gracefully slid out the back

to litter the road behind. Thursday was notable for the 5-hour dash to Folkestone to collect Paul Kincaid and 8 boxes of Channelcon rock, followed by six hours spent turning one hundred pieces of dexion into display screens. So, by the time the last Fanroom display screen had been erected on Friday morning, I decided it was time to enjoy Eastercon - at the nearest bar.

It's true of any convention that the hotel staff can, despite 12 months' hard work by the committee, make or break the event. In this respect the Metropole was, on the whole, excellent. But, of course, there's always the exception. Those of you with long memories might remember the over-zealous night security staff at Seacon (some will say I'm being mild there). Mindful of the 'table thumping' that had to be done in 1979, Eve had long discussions with the management, assurances had been given and we thought all would be well. So they were by and large, except that the Night Manager obviously thought we all lowered the tone of his hotel. Still, in view of the fact that he obviously considered himself master of all he surveyed, I think he was kept reasonably under control and thank goodness the little bum's retired now!

Saturday night is always a good night at Eastercon; the exhibitionism of the Fancy Dress parade leading into more exhibitionism on the dance floor, and on this occasion half the attendees spent the evening girating to the sound of 'The Maggots' (lead by our very own Graham Charnock) and Jeff Suter's disco. In the wee small hours the "Vote Metrocon" poetry soiree and bachanalian orgy took over and tired fans (starring John Sladek) slowly sunk into disheveled heaps on the floor.

But enough of this talk of people enjoying themselves, we had gathered for serious business - Science Fiction. So what of the programme? To be honest, I can't remember much of what went on inside the Wintergardens because I didn't go in there often. John Sladek's guest of honour speech was something I did catch and I was very pleased to have done so. With wit and satire he discussed the pseudo-sciences and neatly put them in their place. There appeared to be a growing demand for video films at conventions, so I provided my own recorder and the convention hired tapes. However, they grossly underestimated the demand and the small room allocated for this sometimes resembled a sauna! No doubt next year will organise a vast arena with huge projection TV's and nobody will go to the video programme - such is life.

Up in the Fan Room Jim Barker, who had worked hard all year stealing ideas from the TV, presented a programme packed full of silly games. Perhaps the surprise success of the convention was Jim's 'Great Pork Pie Race'. This awakened the creative genius of fans as they were required to transport a Brian Burgess Standard Pork Pie across a room by the most novel method of propulsion. Rob Jackson won with an amazing Meccano edifice using a falling weight. Get your thinking caps on for next year.

For many years now I've been developing the theory that the main *raison d'être* for the Eastercon is to decide who will organize next year's. This view was given even more substance at Channelcon by the presence of two very strong bids - Albacon and Metrocon. Even though I must confess a bias since I was a member of the Metrocon committee, in the run-up to Channelcon I'm sure the London-based bid was ahead, principally for lower hotel prices, but also possibly because the majority of fans live nearer London than Glasgow. However, the cunning Scots had used the Metrocon room rates as a lever and squeezed their hotel lower. Thus it was neck and neck as a capacity audience filled the Metropole's Wintergardens. Metrocon lost the toss and made their presentation first - a slick and witty slide show by Dave Langford followed by an intensive question and answer session. Bob (the Godfather of Scottish Fandom) Shaw spoke for Albacon and although his presentation may not have been as witty, he used lessons from the Metrocon show and his ability to 'think on his feet' to turn disadvantages to his benefit. I guessed it was going to be close, and it was - 199 to 220 in Albacon's favour. Why did Albacon win? Lower room rates and a better showing on the day certainly appear to be the main factors, plus, possibly, Metrocon's overconfidence and inadequate preparation. A good fight nevertheless, and one which should benefit Eastercon - but that will be judged next year. At Albacon there'll be the Eurocon at Easter bid vs a North of England bid (mainly organised by London-based fans, though) so watch out

for another good battle. But remember, if you're going to Albacon, book early or you'll find yourself in an over-flow hotel!

DOWN FROM INVERNESS - JIMMY ROBERTSON

Another Easter, another Eastercon. The monotony of it all got to me eventually, but more of that later, perhaps. Channelcon was going to have to be something special to justify the ball-breaking journey down from Glasgow. It wasn't. It wasn't that the programme didn't bristle with stuff that I just had to see, though it didn't, 'cos that never bothered me in the past; it was the sodding hotel. As a hotel, it was something special, but for a con it was a big disappointment. The layout of the Metropole, for those of you who didn't attend Seacon or Channelcon, is such that it offers many bars and places to chat which one would think was fannish heaven, but not so. The last three Eastercons and Novacons at The Angus have all had a large open area with seats scattered all around which allowed one out of his brain, like wot I always am at cons, to stagger from conversation to conversation and still feel I was part of the huge party that was going on around me. This was sadly missing at Channelcon. Scattered throughout the hotel were pockets of people I wanted to talk to but it was murder trying to locate them.

Still and all I had a good time at Channelcon, but then I don't think I could ever do otherwise. Cons are like sex - it's always good, but sometimes, ah, sometimes.....

For a start, I was on a panel about the year in fandom. What did I know about that? I thought. Not a lot, but then I wasn't giving up a chance to be up there with well-known stirrers and headcases like Chuck Connors and Abi Frost. Not forgetting Martyn Taylor, who I suspect is a closet headcase/stirrer quietly on the side. Anyway, we drew a fair crowd. It was all left to Pete Lyon in the audience to revive the flagging panel and to go on in singular style denouncing all and quoting strange quotes and going over the top in a satisfying manner. Joseph refused to be drawn - 'I said it all in a fanzine,' was his contribution and as sensible as most it was, too.

I usually love the discos, but Jeff Suter was doing it and I feared the worst. As it turned out, it wasn't too bad but, as I'd expected undanceable rock music much loved by SF fans, it wouldn't've been difficult.

Quite frankly, for personal reasons, I was really pissed off with the whole thing by Sunday evening, so I decided that as a good con wasn't coming to me, I was going out to get it. I got tanked up with anything I could lay my hands on, promised myself I would get no sleep that night, and went hunting.

I eventually found my con. I had worked my way round to the fan room party and as I was just about to approach Jeff with bribes to play a good record, he began playing a string of Motown hits. This would have been enough in itself, but Greg Pickersgill took pity on me and persuaded his wife Linda to ask me to dance - joy! Well, I bopped about to the Isleys etc until I was knackered but happy.

After that, it was just one good thing after another, like passing the time of night with a *Focus* editor, meeting Alun Harries and learning that drunken Welshmen ain't too bad, listening to old school tieisms and wanting to vomit.

I lasted all night and I'm doing it again. Try it if you haven't already.

ENTERING INTO THE TWILIGHT ZONE - SIMON BOSTOCK

I'd been looking forward to Channelcon for about a year. I read and re-read the Progress Reports and thought of what wonderful things were going to happen to me there. I would mingle freely with all the Big Names in fandom, I kept telling myself before the event. Sure, I'd meet those people with whom I'd only corresponded, go to the infamous room parties and see folk write things on Joseph Nicholas, and get lots of fanzines presented to me. When it came to the real thing, though, the whole picture was changed. You see, I'm what you may call a shy and retiring type with people I don't really know well and people I haven't seen before....Not that I don't talk once someone introduces themselves, but, well, at Channelcon I had to do most of the introducing, and for me that was hard.

Even on the way to the con I was on edge. I had to hop on a coach to London, then dash along to Victoria Train Station to get to Brighton. All the tickets had

been ordered, so I was okay in that respect; what did worry me considerably, however, was the thought of getting onto this coach or the train and finding out that I was off to a totally different destination. This haunted me on my way there and on the trip back. Take my journey on the train, for instance. The ticket collector had seen my ticket and let me through, but still there was doubt in my mind. Perhaps he hadn't looked at it properly, I thought. Perhaps he'd left his glasses at home. The train was about to go, so I boarded. I sat down next to an elderly couple, and tried to look calm, getting out a map of Brighton. I was *still* uncertain, and pricked my ears up hopefully at every stop in an attempt to hear the loudspeaker outside mention Brighton. I heard it! Now that would be enough to assure most people, but I went on listening to the announcements to reinforce my hopes. My tenseness eventually slackened, and I was able to get comfortable and relaxed. When I was at the seaside resort I began to actually realise that I had made it, made it to my first convention, and when I entered through the Metropole's revolving doors I began to wonder what the hell I was in for.

Most of the Friday was spent attending the programmed events. I didn't speak to anybody until the BSFA AGM took place and Martyn Taylor whispered "Simon?", then presented me with a copy of RAA 3. Now that did make me happy. Someone had actually recognised me, spoke to me! Later on, in the Fan Room, Dave Langford came up to me and dropped a copy of *Visible* in my eager paws. I was dumbstruck... well, very nearly. If he'd stayed a little longer I might have even managed to actually converse, but he didn't. Later on, a woman who I don't think I know came up to me and gave me a copy of *Raffles*, then exited. Throughout my stay, I didn't know her identity. I suppose I should have really gone up to her and asked for her name, but, well, y'know... I was nervous. I thought about looking at her con badge to tell me, but she had her back to me and she might see me looking at it. Why that should have stopped me, I don't know, but it did. Walking up and down the corridors in a vague attempt to make folk believe I was occupied with something, I realised I hadn't eaten for ages. Somehow, I didn't want to go off searching for a meal (which would undoubtedly have cost a small fortune in the Hotel), fearing that I might miss something important - after all, I had been saving for months to afford the trip - so, instead I decided to wait 'til morning to satisfy my by then unhappy stomach.

Unfortunately, a lot of the breakfast (namely the egg, sausage and mushrooms) was pure garbage, and made me feel quite ill. In subsequent breakfasts I stuck to cornflakes and toast.

I'd taken roughly 55 copies of *Supernova* with me, after consulting the member list and ticking off who was to get one...unfortunately, I only managed to get rid of 11. Not surprising, really, as some of the fans who I recognised didn't get a copy, but, well, y'know...I was nervous. Every time I approached a fan (I found it much easier to tackle someone while they were on their own, and not in a crowd of people talking amongst themselves) my heart started pounding like hell, my senses were numbed and my mind clouded. After the initial 'shock' I would begin to get back to normal, but it's that great big step that I found hard to combat. In fact, on the Saturday night I still hadn't introduced myself to anybody, and I was beginning to utter such unbelievable things as 'never again' and 'I've had enough'. My sentiments changed gradually from Sunday to the Monday as I plucked up courage to introduce myself and in turn they generally introduced me to various others whom I'd either heard of or corresponded with, which all adds weight to the statement that it's not the events that necessarily make or break a convention, it's the attendees.

I eventually settled in, but it was too late. It was the Monday, and I had to vacate my room by ten. Then I had to be out around half past two. I enjoyed Channelcon; I am extremely glad I got to meet people like Sandy Brown, Graham James and Nic Howard and look forward to seeing them all, and more besides, at Novacon in November. I definitely hope I'll be able to relax and unwind more; I'm going to make the effort, because, from what I've seen, it'll be worth it. I think that after a few conventions my nervousness will disappear on its own. Well, here's hoping, then. Why not find out for yourselves? Challenge me at Novacon or Cymrucon. Please.



BSFA AWARDS:	JOSEPH NICHOLAS
BSFA LONDON MEETING:	EVE HARVEY
FILM & TV NEWS:	SIMON BOSTOCK
CONVENTION NEWS:	EDITORS
FORTHCOMING BOOKS:	JOSEPH NICHOLAS & EDS.
BOOK NEWS:	EDITORS
OTHER NEWS:	EDITORS
MAGAZINE NEWS:	EDITORS
SOURCES:	LOCUS; STARBURST; QUESTAR; SUNDAY TIMES; CHRIS DAILEY (FOCUS)

BSFA AWARDS : 1982

Presented at Channelcon, the winners were:

- Best novel - Gene Wolfe's *The Shadow Of The Torturer* (Sidgwick/Arrow)
- Best short fiction - Rob Holdstock's "Mythago Wood" (F & SF, September)
- Best media presentation - *Time Bandits* (Terry Gilliam/Handmade Films)
- Best cover artist - Bruce Pennington

A total of 132 ballots were cast, 56 of them by post and 76 at Channelcon itself - somewhat less than last year, which produced a total of 196 ballots, 119 of them being cast by post and the remaining 54 at Yorcon II. That there was an increase in the number of ballots cast at the convention is welcome (although, paradoxically, there might have been a greater increase if they had not been distributed with the Programme Books - what do you do with such stuff, after all, but dump it in your room and read it on the way home? - but this can be rectified next year by the simple expedient of printing more of them), but that there was such a fall in the number of postal ballots is rather worrying. Has everyone given up reading new fiction and thus feel no longer qualified to vote on the year's offerings, or something?

A crumb or two of comfort, however, may be derived from the fact that there was a small increase in the number of nominations received - 41 as opposed to last year's 36, naming a total of 32 novels, 27 short stories, 28 media presentations and 19 cover artists. Good enough, in itself, but with 800-odd of you out there it's still a bit on the low side....

Oh well, there's always next year, what?

BSFA LONDON MEETING : REPORT

The April BSFA meeting held at the King of Diamonds was, with over 35 people in total, one of the best attended for some time and a very lively discussion was held on the BSFA in general and the BSFA meetings in particular.

Two of the topics raised which elicited a great deal of discussion were whether the BSFA should organise a one-day, serious science fiction conference and the subject of the proposal put before the committee many months ago for a new media magazine.

The idea of a serious conference (as opposed to convention) is not a new one, its latest incarnation being Malcolm Edwards's proposal during his reign at the Science Fiction Foundation, that the BSFA and NELS combine forces for the organisation of such an event. Sadly, the departure of Malcolm to pastures new and the severe grants cuts shelved the idea, but many people at the meeting felt that the BSFA should look into the matter again. Obviously nothing could be done immediately since the financial and organisational aspects of such a venture would have to be considered at length, but it was felt that this could be an exciting venture.

The longest discussion of the evening revolved around the idea of a new media magazine and we were lucky enough to have both the proponents, Roy Macinski and Martyn Taylor, present to elaborate on the proposal they had put before the committee last year. At first some concern was voiced that either this would merely be regurgitating third-hand what is already appearing in magazines such as *Starburst*, or that it would detract from *Matrix*'s media section. Roy and Martyn allayed these fears, however, by explaining that what they envisaged was not merely a survey of news, since they could never compete with magazines such as *Starburst* and all the resources at their disposal. Their plans were for a magazine that would provide much more in-depth discussion of the whole media area (defined by them as *everything* except written SF - theatre, art, music, films, TV, radio, etc) than is present in any BSFA publication, with more information from sources such as BBC on up-coming events. Since the committee are still looking at the matter, Roy and Martyn had no firm plans as to whether this new venture would be better as a completely separate magazine, or an addendum to either *Matrix* or *Vector*, but the general feeling of those present was that, if done properly, it could prove to be very useful in widening the scope of the BSFA and the suggestion was made that, perhaps, a 'dummy' could be produced to give members some idea of what was envisaged.

The final topic discussed was the London BSFA meetings themselves with suggestions for improvement of the facilities and for future programme items. I promise to do my best on those suggestions relating to London, but I can't do anything about the other areas of the country without help from the rest of you. How about someone starting up a BSFA meeting in another area? So long as the drain on BSFA funds is minimal this can, in my view, only improve the Association, and the London meetings have shown that the cost of room hire can be covered by a minimal entrance fee.

The next London meeting on 21st May sees the first heat in the BSFA Mastermind Quiz, with heats scheduled in Portsmouth, Leeds and Birmingham during the course of the year. For further programmed details, see the flyer with this mailing.

FILM AND TV NEWS

ITV seem to be gathering a lot of blockbuster SF/horror-type movies these days. *Damien-Omen Two* has been advertised on television for this spring, *Alien* is scheduled for the autumn, *Superman I and II* have been secured for some time next year, *Star Wars* probably in the Christmas billing.... Wonder what the BBC will be showing. Also wonder why the TV companies fork out vast sums of money for films they know will never pay their way.

Harlan Ellison has arranged for a new TV series that will adapt sixty-five of his short stories. The American series, his name being the title, will probably hit American TV stations in late '82, after the independent syndicators (like 20th Century Fox) have battled it out to decide who will produce the thing. Ellison is to have complete creative control, which seems to be one point in the series' favour. Let's hope the British TV stations are interested in screening it too.

The new Socialist government in France has eased Film Censorship, meaning films like *Maniac*, *Mad Max* and *George Romero's Zombie - Dawn of the Dead* are no longer banned. It also means that anyone above twelve years old can see something like *An American Werewolf in London*, whereas before it had to be thirteen (thirteen? It's eighteen over here!). The crap British Board of Film Censors should follow suit.

There is going to be a sequel to *Halloween II*, which was a sequel to *Halloween*. It will be entitled *Halloween III* (gosh, that's original) and Tommy Lee Wallace will direct. But, folks, guess who's writing the script? Yes, you haven't guessed it, it's our old buddy....Nigel Kneale!! (How's that for a punchline?)

BITS: *Conan* is an R certificate in the USA (under 17's accompanied by an adult), which will probably mean an X over here.... *Revenge of the Jedi*, the latest *Star Wars* film, has cost \$32.5 million, more than the other two films combined.... A sequel to *The Amityville Horror* should be out soon....

CONVENTION NEWS

Flyers on forthcoming conventions were thick on the ground (sic) at Channelcon. Should all of these materialise, you could just about manage one con per month over the next year, provided, of course, that you have sufficient finances. I don't want to put anyone off, but make sure that if you do sign up, you get information quickly, and regularly. As predicted last issue, *Lexicon* folded and this has not been the only con recently to collapse.

COLNECON 82: 26 June 1982. A one-day event (although overnight stay is probably needed). GoH Garry Kilworth and Hitch Hiker's sounds fiend Tim Souster. Venue is Colchester's Arts Centre. Cheapo hotels available from £7.00 to £9.50 depending on your requirements. Attending membership £2.50, write (SAE) to aspiring new writer Alex Stewart, 11a Beverley Road, Colchester, Essex. PR available.

FAIRCON 1982: July 23-26, 1982. Glasgow's sixth SF Convention in the Central Hotel. GoH is Harry Harrison. Usual programming. Supporting £4.00, Attending £9.00. Hotel rates are single £17.00 with splash; £15.00 dry; twin £14.50 and £12.00 per person per night. Details from 1/r 39 Partickhill Road, Glasgow G11 5B4.

EUROCON 7: August 10-15, 1982 at La Chaux de Fonds, Switzerland. 15 Swiss francs to support or 50 to attend. For fuller details see the British Eurocon '84 bid sheet. They are trying to organise group travel to Switzerland (see address under Eurocon '84 Bid). Otherwise, write to Congrès Européen De Science Fiction, La Chaux-de-fonds, CCP 23-20234, Switzerland. Watch out for the heavily armed Swiss citizens.

SILICON 6: August Bank Holiday 27-30, 1982. Grosvenor Hotel, Newcastle. Fannish, very fannish convention, including football and drinking. Normally invitation only, or try crawling to Ian Williams at 6 Greta Terrace, Chester Road, Sunderland SR4 7RD.

GALILEOCON: 27/28 and 29 August 1982. What did Galileo have to do with SF? Why did he throw his maths books at Delilah ("who was sitting, worthlessly alone")? Answers to none of those questions can be obtained from Ms Tina Pole, 11f Priors Terrace, North Shields, Tyne & Wear NE50 4BE. This is the 14th "Official" British Star Trek Convention at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, featuring GsoH Theodore Sturgeon and Judy Blish.

CHICON: 2-6 September 1982 at the Hyatt Regency, Chicago, Illinois, USA. This year's World SF Convention. GoH A Bertram Chandler. AGoH Kelly Freas. FGoH Lee Hoffman. Supporting Membership \$15 or Attending \$50. Join up and vote for the Hugos. Further info - P.O. Box Ael20, Chicago, Illinois 60690, USA.

UNICON 3: 10-13 September 1982. To be held in the wonderful, yet suicidal, surroundings of the University of Keele, Staffordshire. GoH is Richard Cowper, author of "many fine novels"; Fan GoH is ex-fan Leroy Kettle; Guest Author is Rob ("I told them I was going and I find I'm Guest Author") Holdstock. Good fannish convention - £6 to attend or £3 to support; Plus £1 on the door. Group discounts available. Single rooms £8.00 (not including Zoltan) or £6.50 for hard up students. Details from pipe-smoking John Wilkes, 18A Ivel Gardens, Biggleswade, Beds.

FANDERSONCON: October 8-10, 1982. Bloomsbury Centre Hotel, London. Information 88a Thornton Avenue, London W4 1QQ.

ECONOMY: 10/11th October 1982. Otherwise known as Shoestringcon 4, organised by Hatfield Poly Students at the Elephant House (really), Hatfield Poly. Attending £4.00 (£2.00 PSIFA members); Supporting £3.00 (£1.00). Films, speakers, usual, real ale. Details c/o 4 Ryders Avenue, Colney Heath (nr Hatfield), St Albans, Herts.

FENCON: October 16, 1982. Cambridge University SF Society, one day, birthday celebration. Membership £3.00. Various quizzes, talks and jollities. Accommodation available, though cannot be booked by the organisers. Details form 27 Newmarket Road, Cambridge CB5 8EG.

NOVACON 12: 5-7 November 1982. The Brum Group's source of finances. To be held at the Royal Angus, Birmingham. GoH Harry Harrison. Attending membership £6.00. Single room £11.00; double/twin £14. Details - Apt 2, 1 Broughton Road, Handsworth, Birmingham.

CYMRUCON 2: 27-28 November 1982 at the Central Hotel, Cardiff. Wales's 2nd SF Convention. GoH Lionel Fanthorpe. Other Guests: Brian Stableford, Ian Watson, Dave (still ranking as Fan GoH) Langford. Panels, films, fancy dress, 24-hour bar. Attending £5 (before 1 August 1982), £7 after. Supporting £2 (£3.00). Details, 28 Claude Road, Roath, Cardiff, Wales, or ring (0227) 493590.

RACON: 4-6 February 1983. Grosvenor Hotel, Edinburgh, Scotland. GoH Harry (it's me again) Harrison; Fan GoH Pete ("Who's Bob Marley?") Lyon. Attending Membership £7.00. Organised by likeable bunch of FORTH fans; details - Chris Anderson, 77 Baron's Court Terrace, Edinburgh, Scotland.

ALBACON II: 1-4 April 1983. Winners by 222 votes to 199 over Metrocon (and Surplus Cashcon) much to the surprise of leading London fannish noteables, for the 34th Annual U.K. Science Fiction Convention. Aided by a slick presentation from Bob Shaw and reduced hotel rates, they've brought Eastercon back to Scotland. Attending membership (supporting in brackets) are: to 1 July 1982: £7.00 (£3.00); to 1 December 1982: £8.00 (£4.00); to 1 February '83: £9.00 (£5.00); at the door £10.00. Unnecessarily complicated, eh wot? Gs of Honour are Tanith Lee and James White. Again, no specific Fan GoH, other than making the TAFF and GUFF winners Fan Gs of H. A good move, in one sense, if they can get the TAFF and GUFF winners to actually participate in the fan room and show themselves, unlike some previous fan fun winners. Room rates range from £9.00 for a triple without bathroom to £15 for a single with, including VAT and full Argentine Breakfast. Details from 1/r 39 Partickhill Road, Glastow G11 534 or ring Bob Shaw's answering phone 041 334 6874.

BECCON 2: 29-31 July 1983. Essex Crest Hotel, Basildon; repeat of the '81 con. Usual programming; GoH to be named. £3 to support from 191 The Heights, Northalt, Middx U35 L34.

THE CON WITH NO NAME: ... and no sense of finance..... September 17 & 18, 1983 at the Dragonara Hotel, Leeds. Media SF Convention, charging £10 registration and £14 plus VAT for a single room, £19 for a double. Details from Miss Trisha O'Neil, 111 Chestnut Grove, Conisborough, S. Yorks.

CONSTELLATION: September 1-5, 1983; the World SF Convention in Baltimore, Maryland USA. GoH John Brunner. Supporting membership is \$20 at present. Info from Worldcon 41, Box 1046, Baltimore, MD 21203, USA.

NEWS OF 1984: Members will have received full details of the British Bid for the 1984 EUROCON. The organisers plan to bid for this to be held over Easter 1984 and, thus, also bid for the 1984 Eastercon. This is likely to provoke some fannish arguments, to the extent of a number of fans, including Atkinsons, Charnox, Kettles etc releasing a bid sheet for their Eastercon '84 ("Eurocon is a good idea - but not at Easter," they say). Their 1984 con is a good idea, I would say, but not at Easter! Anyway, take your pick and pre-support Eurocon for £1.00 from Pauline Morgan at 39 Hollybow, Selby Oak, Birmingham B29 4LX; or, hold on to your money and send messages of sympathy/support to 4 Fletcher Road, London W4 5A7.

STOP PRESS: Well, not really as scintillating as the heading may sound, but I have just received a further piece of news from the BECCON committee who have produced "The Voice of the Shrimp", an interesting and very detailed account of the organization of BECCON '81. It provides very useful hints for convention organizers and is available at 50p from the BECCON address shown above.

FORTHCOMING BOOKS

SPHERE: 22 July 1982 - *The Counts of Chaos*: Roger Zelazny £1.50

PENGUIN: 24 June 1982 - "King Penguin" Paperback issue of Garry Kilworth's *Gemini God* £1.75

CORGI: Not sure of publication dates - but the following are either out now, or will be shortly: Philip José Farmer's *The Lovers* (£1.50) - this was originally published in a shorter version in 1952 in *Startling Stories* and then, in full form, in 1961. It caused an absolute storm because of its portrayal of sexual liaison between a human and an alien - and was, in fact, banned. This edition has been newly revised by the author.

A re-issue of Anne McCaffrey's *The Ship Who Sang* (£1.50).

A new compilation of short stories from Walter Miller, entitled *The Darfsteller and Other Short Stories* (£1.75); the collection comes mainly from his work in 1952-54 from *Astounding*, *Amazing*, and *F & SF*. Recommended by me!

FUTURA: 22 April 1982 - Joe Haldeman: *Worlds* (£1.75)

GRANADA: 13 May 1982 - Philip José Farmer: *Jesus On Mars*; Frederick Pohl: *The Age of The Pussyfoot*; Christopher Stasheff: *King Kobold*
3 June 1981 - Isaac Asimov: *Opus* (collection of extracts from his first 200 books);
Frederick Pohl: *Survival Kit*

SIDGWICK & JACKSON: 13 May 1982 - Gene Wolfe: *The Sword Of The Lictor* (£7.95)

FABER & FABER: Now out (hardback) *In the Valley of the Statues*, a collection of short stories by Rob Holdstock; there are 8 short stories, from 1974 to last year's highly acclaimed 'Mythago Wood'.

BOOK NEWS

Frank Herbert has received a piffling advance for *Dune 5*, rumoured at \$1.5 million; puts into perspective Chris Priest's £2000 for *The Affirmation* and thus, the relative states of SF in this country and the U.S. Who'd be a British SF Author? Silverberg, another of the modern conglomerates has three new books in the can - one, *Valentine Pontifex*, is a sequel to *Lord Valentine's Castle*. "I don't like to write sequels, but..." said Silverberg. Oh yeah? After the sales of *Castle and Majipoor Chronicles*, I'm sure he found it difficult to resist the advance - wouldn't you? Robert A. Heinlein, a minor American writer, has released *Friday*; see previous *Matrices* for an outline.

Paul Kincaid look-a-like, Greg Benford, now also in the Big Time with *Timescape*, has completed *Against Infinity*, due out next year.

Philip K Dick's last novel, *The Transmigration of Timothy Archer* will be published in America by Timescape in June. Rob Holdstock's *Where Time Winds Blow* has been published stateside, as has Sladek's *Roderick*. Ursula Le Guin has a new collection of short stories due out in the U.S. in June from Harper & Row; it will include two totally new stories and some previously published, but obscure, stories.

A third Don't Panic book *Life, The Universe and Everything* is being released in America following the huge success of *Hitchhikers and Restaurant*; "I don't read S.F.," said Douglas Adams in a recent interview in America, "... and I don't want to be considered a science fiction writer." Don't worry, Douglas.

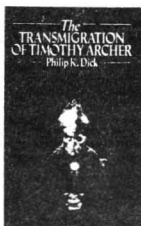
OTHER NEWS

More competitions for aspiring writers; perhaps on the fringe this time, but the 'Catherine Cookson Cup' 1982 is open to works of Short Fiction - on any subject matter - up to 2500 words. Entries open 1 June and close 31 August 1982. Entry fee is £1.00 and the usual considerations apply for submission of manuscripts. First prize is a Cup and £100. Further details and entry forms from Mary Monk, 70 Lower Park Road, Hastings, Sussex TN34 1LD. If you write, mention that you heard of this via *Matrix*!

As indicated last issue, an evening of tribute to Philip K Dick will be held on June 9th at 7.30 PM, City Lit, Stukeley Street, Drury Lane, London WC2. Organized by Colin Greenland and Roz Kaveney. The evening is entitled 'The Strange Pilgrimage' and speakers will include Brian Aldiss and Philip Strick.

According to reports from our Moscow Correspondent, between 200 and 300 people were killed in an explosion at a Russian Space Plant last month. Since the authorities have not confirmed the report, there is no way of knowing whether this will have an effect on the Russian Space Programme, which had recently been going well with a soft-landing of a Space Probe on the Planet Venus in April

The New Musical Express of 15th May featured a full page and half article by Maxim Jakubowski on the state of SF; hard-hitting, but amusing and principally directed at the perilous state of SF in this



country and, in the U.S., the reactionary trend, the "blockbusters" and the sequels upon sequels. Also mentions the "insulated world of SF fandom, divided by intermecine quarrels like political commitment, feminism or the disposition of surplus convention funds"!!!! Enough material in the article to fill the pages of VECTOR and MATRIX for years to come.

Sadly, I report the death of British SF author Edmund Cooper on March 11, 1983, aged 53. He hadn't published a novel for nearly ten years, but wrote a number of short stories and around 20 novels from 1951 to 1974. His work could, somewhat be labeled 'Golden Age SF' and he was criticised over his attitude towards feminism, particularly in *Five to Twelve* (1968) and *Who Needs Men* (1972). He wrote a regular SF column for the *Sunday Times* but was something of a recluse from the SF world. Perhaps his most famous story was *Jupiter Laughs*, an alternate world, in which Jesus Christ doesn't die on the cross. Cooper had been an alcoholic and had tried "drying out" in a London clinic in 1971; at an inquest into his death, the coroner recommended a verdict of death from Chronic Alcoholism.

Will anyone knowing the whereabouts of Pete Roberts, ex-fan, please write to David Langford with details. Roberts has been missing for the last two conventions, having been rumoured to have been in Tenerife in November. This is an official view of the BSFA.

Courtesy of the CHICON committee (1982 Worldcon) the Hugo Nominees have been released, including:

BEST NOVEL:

DOWNBELOW STATION BY C.J. CHERRYH (DAW)
LITTLE, BIG BY JOHN CROWLEY (BANTAM)
THE MANY-COLORED LAND BY JULIAN MAY (HOUGHTON MIFFLIN)
PROJECT POPE BY CLIFFORD SIMAK (DEL REY)
THE CLAW OF THE CONCILIATOR BY GENE WOLFE (SIMON & SCHUSTER)

BEST NOVELA:

"THE SATURN GAME" BY POUL ANDERSON (ANALOG, FEB 2)
"IN THE WESTERN TRADITION" BY PHILLIS EISENSTEIN (F&SF, MARCH)
"EMERGENCE" BY DAVID R. PALMER (ANALOG, JAN 5)
"BLUE CHAMPAGNE" BY JOHN VARLEY (NEW VOICES 4)
"TRUE NAMES" BY VERNOR VINGE (BINARY STAR 5)

BEST NOVELETTE:

"THE QUICKENING" BY MICHAEL BISHOP (UNIVERSE 11)
"THE THERMALS OF AUGUST" BY EDWARD BRYANT (F&SF, MAY)
"THE FIRE WHEN IT COMES" BY PARKE GODWIN (F&SF, MAY)
"GUARDIANS" BY GEORGE R.R. MARTIN (ANALOG, OCT 12)
"UNICORN VARIATION" BY ROGER ZELAZNY (ISAAC ASIMOV'S, APRIL 13)

BEST SHORT STORY:

"THE QUIET" BY GEORGE FLORANCE-GUTHRIDGE (F&SF, JULY)
"ABSENT THEE FROM FELICITY A WHILE" BY SOMTON SUCHARITKUL (ANALOG, SEPT 14)
"THE PUSHER" BY JOHN VARLEY (F&SF, OCTOBER)
"THE WOMAN THE UNICORN LOVED" BY GENE WOLFE (ISAAC ASIMOV'S, JUNE 8)

TIME BANDITS, DRAGONSLAYER, EXCALIBUR, RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK and OUTLAND from the BEST DRAMATIC PRESENTATION category, and our very own and beloved DAVE LANGFORD is the only Brit included in the nominations - for BEST FAN WRITER.

Total Membership of CHICON stands, at May 10, at 3950.

The NEBULA-HYPE AWARD winners have also been announced: NOVEL: Gene Wolfe's CLAW OF THE CONCILIATOR (Also winner of the BSFA Award); NOVELLETTE: Michael Bishop's THE QUICKENING; and SHORT STORY: Lisa Tuttle's THE BONE FLUTE, although I believe she was mean to have withdrawn this.

Dave Langford now steps down from the U.K. TAFF Administrator and hands over to the winner of the 1982 race, which is KEV SMITH who, in a close-fought finish, held off Rog Peyton's challenge. In fact, Rog won the UK vote but Kev's big majority in the US vote ensured his overall victory. Not so victorious were the purveyors of the 'HOLD OVER FUNDS' campaign, who received little support for their somewhat boring attempt to undermine TAFF. OK, so Kev (and many other fans, for that matter) might be able to trip over to the States without help from a fan fund, but that does not appear to me to be the point of the exercise. Congrats to Smiffy and also to Dave Langford for a fine job as TAFF Administrator.

ROG PEYTON has now resumed his best-seller list for *Matrix* (courtesy of the Brum Group and Pauline Morgan), and the April list shows:

- (1) The One Tree - Stephen Donaldson (Fontana); (2) God Emperor of Dune - Frank Herbert (NEL)
- (3) Dr Who & the Warrior's Gate - John Lydecker (Target); (4) Oath of Fealty - Larry Niven and Jerry Pournelle (Futura); (5) The Claw of the Conciliator - Gene Wolfe (Arrow); (6) Worlds - Joe Haldeman (Futura); (7) The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman - Angela Carter (King Penguin); (8) The Lost Worlds of Cronus - Colin Kapp (NEL); (9) Camber the Heretic - Katherine Kurtz (Future); (10) Windhaven - George R.R. Martin & Lisa Tuttle (NEL)
- (10a) Search for the Sun! - Colin Kapp (NEL).

:: COMPETITION :: COMPETITION :: COMPETITION ::

M40: the Competition of Competitions

Dave Langford misjudges again

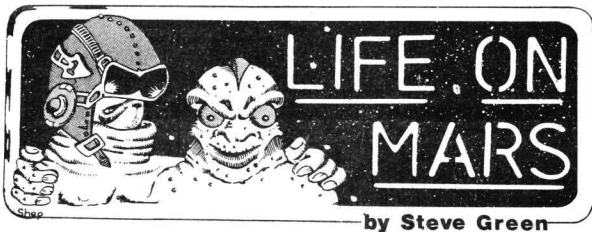
After my pathetically undignified extension of the deadline, we ended up with 27 varying brilliant competition ideas from 14 entrants. In no particular order, at least to begin with:—

JIM ENGLAND offered a 3-part competition, for best plot, best story written about the winning plot (assuming I could persuade *Focus* to run it) and best critique of the winning story... KEVIN SMITH's despicable notion was quoted last issue... JOE NICHOLAS invited members to imitate his own inimitable style in a 2000 word review of Heinlein's latest (negative review compulsory)... KEITH MARSLAND wanted members to construct suitable hells for SF notables, eg. 'Joe Nicholas to spend eternity reading *Asimov's* while the collected works of Barry B. Bongyear are etched onto his skin with vitriol tipped swan quills'; another suggestion of Keith's was one-paragraph finales wrapping up *Known Space* or the *Dune/Gor/whatever* books—no sequel to be possible... SUE THOMASON had four goes, my favourite being the 'Call My Bluff' game idea in which weird words would be set and you'd be asked to define them in a paragraph as they might have been defined by a particular author (eg. a Jack Vance footnote, a Heinlein lecture)... VIC NORRIS wanted submissions of best (genuine) scientific cockups and best (imaginary, I presume) rejection slips... DONALD RIDLEY's competition has the great merit—as he points out—of requiring no knowledge of Binomial Theorem while still being bloody impossible: members are required to identify SF books from the slender evidence of blurbs from old editions... MALCOLM EDWARDS ingeniously suggested 'The Game' from Philip Dick's *Galactic Pot Healer*, in which book-titles etc are obscured by (ostensibly) literal computer translation—it would be the duty of D. Langford to fudge up a list of items like the noted author 'Serious Constricting-Path' and the duty of readers to understand this as 'Ernest Hemingway', etc... MICHAEL ASHLEY felt there was a need for a competition where 'all those who have read only Niven and Pournelle haven't got a hope in hell but lit crit vultures (eg. me) walk away with the prizes': to this end he suggested a competition to identify SF titles which are quotes from Shakespeare or, more esoteric, 'anything vaguely literary'... SIMON BOSTOCK sought inspiration in the *Sun* and offered a 'Speculative Fiction Name-Game' which sounds remarkably like boring old acrostics... MARGARET HALL called for condensed SF novels as they would have been headlined in the tabloids—'Tragedy of hideaway family shocks social workers. Lonely teenager Fuchsia had never been to a disco, court told' (*Gormenghast*)... CHERRY WILDER toyed with the idea of famous writers as bandleaders—'Harlie and his No-Mouth Screamers' and further delights to be invented by readers...

A special mini-prize (fanzines etc) goes to ANDY HOBBS for the economy of his proposed competition: 'Estimate the number of responses to this Competition.' The arbitrarily awarded book-token is ALEX STEWART's though, for his invention of Postal Charades. His entry comes in two parts, the first being a series of examples ('The first player does a novel/film. Six words. He climbs onto a table and plummets to the floor.') and the second a series of titles such as *The Aubergine that ate Rangoon*—the winning competition idea being for members to describe as concisely as possible how they'd act out these titles in charade form. The possibilities are endless; this one will be set someday; congratulations, Alex. But—

M41: The Spaceship Debate Continues and Dave Langford goes out of the airlock

'Look, be reasonable, everybody; when I set this competition last issue I still hadn't realized the awful truth that people will only enter one competition at a time; so although we got a respectable turnout for M40 at last, M41 only had 2½ entries owing to its running simultaneously; I must therefore beg you not to throw me out of the airlock yet simply because I'm not closing off competition M41 this issue but extending the deadline until one week after the *Matrix* 43 copy date (see inside front cover), giving you more time to impersonate SF/fantasy authors and write their own justifications (in not more than 150 words) for not being thrown out of the airlock; please send same to me at 22 Northumberland Avenue, Reading, Berks, RG2 7PW; in June I'll almost certainly be moving to 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, but mail will be redirected; be sure to enter; another £5 book token is there to be won; I'm far too lovable to be abandoned now; I hope this brief speech has aaaaaaanaaaaaaaarrrrrgh—'



BRIGHTON REVISITED

Fandom's a little like greatness: some are born fans, others achieve fannishness, the majority have fandom thrust upon them.

That latter category obviously includes the staff of the Brighton Metropole, site of this year's Eastercon, whose frequently bemused and occasionally overtly hostile attitude must place that hotel's future as a convention venue – and, indirectly, plans for a Brighton Eurocon – in serious doubt.

Meanwhile, Channelcon rolled on regardless, Easter's inevitable cauldron of insanity, inanity and inebriation unthwarted by the disapproving scowls of porters skulking in the shadows to pounce on unsuspecting carpet-crashers or barmaids lost in a hail of paper darts. Despite the somewhat dubious honour of breaking the news of Lexicon's collapse to its alleged guest speaker Bob Shaw and a foiled attempt by the Exeter Group to stage an SAS-style dawn raid on my first floor toilet window, I have to confess I even remained conscious long enough to enjoy the con myself.

The demise of the Leicester Group's Lexicon, however, added a darker undercurrent to an otherwise upbeat weekend, calling into question once again the logic of local groups attempting to host full-scale conventions. In the past year both Babel-Con (an outgrowth of Douglas Adams fandom) and Filmcon (the brainchild of members of the Birmingham SF Film Society) have suffered similar fates, and missives from groups like the Hull University SF Society announcing absurdly nebulous plans to follow suit in the summer ("Can you recommend someone willing to advise us on practical problems and economics?") offer little hope for improvement in the near future.

Far too many groups are taking far too many chances with other people's money, and despite the case for small-scale events exploiting purely local support – as proven most recently at MicroCon – attempts to organise national events without the barest comprehension of the logistics involved are patently suicidal.

SORRY, I'LL WRITE THAT AGAIN

Still baring the scars of Curtian Con 1, legend-in-his-own-lunchtime Bruce Saville leaps forward to correct last issue's clubs directory: "Slapped wrist time, Steve. There now follows a lesson on the inter-relationships of Io and Strathclyde University.

"The fact is, Glasgow University's SF society is called Io (not Strathclyde's), while the Strathclyde University Space & Science Fiction Society is known universally as S4 (I can't think why). End of lesson."

Mea culpa, boss. And now, in a vain attempt to restore my ailing journalistic credibility, I'll reveal what happened at Channelcon when Bruce and Henry Balen dragged Joan Patterson off his bed and tried to ((continued page 94)).

THAT'S LIFE DEATH

Requiescat in Pace: the Norwich SF Group. Former secretary Glen Warminger takes up the story: "This may possibly be a temporary setback, but I consider it inevitable that now the club has folded, the enthusiasm, time and energy required to resurrect it will not be found even amongst those few like myself who wish it to continue. "On closing, I would like to thank all those who supported the club in its various forms from its inception in 1974, and especially those who supported Anglicon."

Ditto the Harringay & District Sci-Fi discussion Group which, Malcolm Edwards informs me, "sort of faded into what it was when it began, me and Leroy Kettle going down the pub."

Meanwhile, Geoff Boswell writes to confirm the West Midlands SF Group's rumoured passage to that great bulletin board in the sky, supplying a potted history of the rise and fall of Black Country fandom: "The WMSFG (or 'them fuckers in the sticks') officially formed December '80 and took membership fees during January and February '81. There was a meeting on the last Friday of each month. Paul Higgs was vice-chairman and his wife Karen ran the 'book pool'.

"The 'rot' set in when they resigned – travelling from Great Wyrley was too much. I was sorry; they're great folks.

"The zine *Evenstar* was now being edited by Simon (Kiss of Death) Bostock, but folded before publication of ish 9 due to lack of printing opportunity. We ran three film nights; one broke even, the other lost a lot of money.

"People stopped coming to the meetings. I myself couldn't make the final few due to regular excuses such as no transport (car broken down), inclement weather, doing something else and ill

health (I had debility - nearly cracked up!).

"January and February '82 came around and no one - NO CNE - out of 30 or so renewed the membership. The fees had bolstered the film losses and we also framed some original artwork for good member Ken Cheslin.

"I shed a few tears. Richard Allen is running off a fanzine. Paul Higgs is still writing (for me) and I intend to - eventually - re-present *Starchase*. The rest...?

"No big deal."

THRILLING WANDER STORIES

And finally, for those who doubt the existence of Brighton fandom outside the corridors of the Metropole, Ruth Wilder of the Wandering Worlds SF Group:

"We had a very large meeting at my house on April 23 to discuss Channelcon, and got 14 people. Two of our regulars didn't come. If it gets to be many more I am seriously going to consider opening the double doors to the garden and installing fairy lights, thus being the only SF group to have outside meetings with Fairies under the washing line. ((What about the Surrey Limpwrist?))

"When did we begin, and why? Some years ago (about five) there was a festival at one of the adult education centres in Brighton. I had been to lectures there and one of their tutors had been instrumental in writing me a nice testimony which helped to send me to university (thus putting me in their debt and getting rid of me at the same time - not stupid). One of the lecturers let them down at two days' notice so Alan Tuckett, who ran the place at the time, asked me as the only writer he knew (it was a poetry festival) if I would give an hour's lecture. Naturally, since I had never done this sort of thing before and I happened to be ill in bed with phlebitis at the time and I had only two days to prepare it, I said, 'Fine, okay, yes'. Around 30 people came and paid 50p or so to listen to me talking on 'Satire and Humour in SF'. Next time the schedules were made up there was an SF course on it, with me lecturing (and being paid for it, too). They were successful, so I did some more the next year, fitting it in with getting a degree, teaching dressmaking (don't ask) and being the single parent of three small boys.

"After that, I felt it would be a pity if the nice little group of people that we had found fell to bits, so I proposed meeting at each others' houses every two weeks or so to talk about SF. Thus 'Wandering Worlds', 'cause we meet in a different place each time. I didn't want to always be cast in the role of tutor, so for the first year I generally only went to the meetings that were held at my house (and not always to all of those, either). We flourished.

"We gradually formed into the way we did by trial and error. There is no membership fee; she or he whose house it is held at provides the refreshments, while others bring biscuits (jelly, sweets, ice, books to swap or lend, a cake on our anniversary, etc). Meetings generally start at 7-ish, and officially break up at 11-ish. Lots of people are still there at 3 a.m. He or she at whose house it is held decides the topic we talk about, which have included women in SF (the writers and the written-about), favourite bits of SF, authors, the short SF story, is Ruth awake?, SF in the media, cons, has anyone read and understood *DHALGREN?*, what are we all here for? (a discussion on the state of the universe and all that), etc.

"We never go the pub, probably for a variety of reasons: we have always had people who are 14 or so who wouldn't be allowed in, one of us dislikes smoke, none of us sees the point in paying silly bar prices when we have our own and sitting yelling at each other over a haze of smoke in a noise-filled pub. Some of us do smoke in one room; it doesn't notice.

"As to membership, we take anything; we have only ever had trouble with one member (no, he was not drunk; he used to thump another member half his size. We discouraged it, he's okay now). Otherwise, we get on really well. We do have one lady who is interested in astrology and she says it's 'cause we have a lot of nice Cancer signs in the group. There are usually about six females, age range 22 to 22 (I think two of them may really mean 32, but they are ladies), and up to ten males, age range 15 to 33. None of the males are married or have kids, all are in full employment with a preponderance of computer experts in various guises. One female is living with the bloke she married; two of us tried it - I got spots and the other lady found incompatibility. Only one of us ALL has children, me. My boys are now 15, 12 and 8. They are good gophers. Chris had the distinction of being trapped at Seacon with Chris Reeve. Richard was the boy of whom it was said at Channelcon that he had got enough pennies to arrange to travel via the QE2 in future. The only person to come out of cons with a profit. In fact, if anyone wants to write a book on how to run a con I will lend him to them free, since there isn't a con going he hasn't tried.

"We have never lost any members; they go to college and move to Bristol and often drift back (an advantage of not having a fixed fee and a different topic each time). We have no religious or political adhesions other than the 42nd squad. ((Ehh?)) Other interests of members include D&D, costumes, computers, 42nd squad, folk songs, Vikings, writing and sleeping.

"We read SF, fantasy, comics, horror, OMNI-type stuff, DR WHO and BLAKE's 7, STAR TREK, humour, science fact (shuttle, etc), etc. Most anything in fact - we are very tolerant of each others' attachments to THUNDERBIRDS, Harlan Ellison and being extremely silly at short notice.

"Projects include six lectures in Brighton on aspects of SF (starting on May 10), SquadCon (a projected bid to hold a huge con in Blackpool in 1985, with 8000 people from all over the world) ((See comments earlier - Steve)), a costume fashion show for Albacon II and being nice to the aforementioned Richard for more than 15 minutes (a competition).

"We met the Brighton SF Group once; we invited them to our meetings and they didn't come.

"Yup, there is a lot of fanish activity here; for an update, phone me or Vortex Books in Brighton. Otherwise, see previous paragraph. We can usually provide sleeping space for 30 people and welcome visitors. Contrary to rumour, we do not eat them for breakfast. None of us are awake that early."

RENDEZVOUS WITH RUMOUR

STOP PRESS: Barely has he launched the Midlands' new ficzine *Quartz* than Geoff Kemp announces plans for a Tamworth SF group (contact at 23, Raygill, Wilnecote, Tamworth, Staffs) ... Solihull SF Group re-launches newsletter *Overmatter* (available for a stamp from the *LIFE ON MARS* address) ... South Hants SF Group's zine *Death Rays* reveals dubious goings-on at members' Christmas party ("Mia was taking pictures of men in their underpants while she was wearing a black nightie. St*v* Gr**n tried to kick a tool box to death with his bare feet..") ... Bob Shaw blows the gaff on various Northern fans in *Rockcon* II PR 1 ("My lawyer tells me it's definitely actionable," he gleamed at Channelcon) ... Spotlight thrown onto the Exeter Group, MicroCon and especially *Matrix* contributor Kevin Clarke in *Now Spray Your Feet* ("The sleeping bag goes a funny colour and tries to regurgitate Kevin, but this is averted by administering three gallons of cold water down its throat..") ... Mutterings of an Eastercon bid in a city not one million miles from Birmingham (watch this space) ... Keele SF Group announces provisional film programme for third and final Unicon (A BOY AND HIS DOG, ALPHAVILLE, DEATHWATCH and SHOCK TREATMENT) ... Linda Strickler collapses after typing out the latest BSFA clubs list supplement ...

All mail to:
11 Fox Green Crescent, Brimingham B27 7SD

Deadline for next issue:
July 1.

BSFA 1982 CLUBS DIRECTORY - SUPPLEMENT

One of the most popular of Jim Barker's static displays at the Channelcon fan room proved to be his national groups chart, based in part on last issue's *LIFE ON MARS* Directory; to complete the circle, many of the inevitable omissions and corrections appear below.

Why only "many"? Well, I viewed with some scepticism entries like Cardboard Cut-Out Fandom (a spin-off of the BLAKE's 7 Appreciation Society, p'haps?), Bob Monkhouse Fandom ("Hughie Green Fandom ousted in 1974 coup") or "Paul McCartney has a farm here"; and as for "Steve Green Fandom", the less said the better ...

ABERDEEN

Aberdeen University SF Society: Contact William Goodall c/o Aberdeen University Union, Broad Street, Aberdeen, AB9 1AW.

BIRMINGHAM

Birmingham University SF Society: Wednesday lunchtimes at the Guild of Students table tennis room.

BOURNEMOUTH

Wonderworld: Contact on 0202 37733 (days).

BRIGHTON

Brighton SF Group: Andy Robertson has replaced David Penn as group contact; write him at 20 Kingsley Road, Brighton (Tel: 558775).

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University SF Society (CUSFS): Now meets at the New Hall Bar, Huntington Road.

COLCHESTER

Colchester SF Group: Formerly the Stour Valley SF Group, holds informal meetings al'ernate Tuesdays at the borough council's social club.

DURHAM

Durham University SF Society: Contact c/o the Secretary, Durelm House, Durham.

EDINBURGH

Edinburgh University SF Society: Thursdays at the David Hume Tower, Edinburgh University; contact c/o the Societies Centre, 60 the Pleasance, Edinburgh.

Friends of Robert the Hack (F.O.R.T.H.): Contrary to what you read here last issue, the correct title of the Friends' amazingly triffic fanzine is (surprise, surprise) *Forth*; cunningly disguised as *No Award 5*, the latest edition costs just 50p from Owen Whiteoak at Top Flat (left), 112 Polwarth Gardens, Edinburgh.

GLASGOW

Glasgow University SF Society:)
Strathclyde University SF Society:) (See column)

HATFIELD

Hatfield Polytechnic SF&F Society: Alternatively known as PSIFA.

IRELAND

Ireland SF Association: 'Meetings, fanzines, films, etc'; contact Brendan Ryder at 18 Beech Drive, Dundrum, Dublin 16.

KEELE

Keele University SF Society: Contact Chris Hughes c/o Department of Psychology, University of Keele, Keele, Staffs.

KENT

East Kent SF Group: Contact Paul Kincaid at 114, Guildhall Street, Folkstone, Kent CT20 1ES.

LEICESTER

Leicester SF Group: Lexicon has now been cancelled and refunds should have been distributed by the time you read this (see column).

LONDON

City Illiterates: Fridays until September at the Cock Tavern, Euston (take the tube to Warren Street and search behind the Rank-Xerox building), moving to the Kingsway Tavern, Holborn, October - March; contact 01 422 9895; responsible for Beccon (names withheld at psychiatrists' request).

Friends in Space: Now meet at the Queen Victoria, Ealing, on the third Sunday of the month; prone to assaults by Greg Pickersgill screaming "It's always the same faces" (try wearing a false moustache, like Jim Barker).

Harringay & District Sci-Fi Discussion Group: Folded shortly before Channelcon (see column).

Imperial College SF Society: Alternatively contact Jonathan Flint c/o the Physics Department, Imperial College, London SW7.

SODDs: Responsible for the groupzine *SODDs Love*, which made its debut at Channelcon, this assorted gathering of fans from Durham, St. Andrews and Oxford groups can be contacted at 18 Selkirk Road, Tooting, London

MANCHESTER

Tameside SF Modelling Society: Contact c/o 23 Pinnington Road, Gorton, Manchester; monthly meetings, challenges, etc.

UMIST: Contact via the UMIST students' union at P.O. Box 88, Sackville Street, Manchester M60 1QD.

MATLOCK

Matlock SF Group: Alternatively contact Bob Day at 154, Sandbed Lane, Belper, Derbyshire (phone Belper 3515).

NORWICH

Norwich SF Group: Now folded (see column).

ST. ALBANS

Staffen: Phone 39172 after 8 p.m.

ST. ANDREWS

University of St. Andrews SF&F Society: Tuesdays at the union boardroom; contact c/o the student union pigeonholes or ask for Terry at John Smith's Bookshop, 87 South Street.

SALTCOATS

Saltcoats & District SF Club: Alternatively known as S.O.S., an abbreviation for Space Odyssey Society rather than a fannish distress signal.

SHEFFIELD

Sheffield SF Group: Final Wednesday of each month at the West Street Hotel, West Street, Sheffield; write Chris Jennings at 43, Walkinson Gardens, Sheffield S19 6LU.

STOKE-ON-TRENT

Stoke-on-Trent Sixth Form College SF Group

Stoke-on-Trent SF Society: Contact Patricia Hall at "Janus", 141 Allerton Road, Trentham, Stoke-on-Trent ST4 8PG.

STOUR VALLEY

Stour Valley SF Group: See COLCHESTER.

TAUNTON

Taunton SF Group (the Cidereal SF Society): First Friday of the month at the Winchester, Taunton; write Allen Boyd-Newton at 42 Church Lane, Bicknoller, via Taunton, Somerset

WEST MIDLANDS

West Midlands SF Group: Certified dead in February, victim of dwindling attendances (see column).

WORTHING

Worthing SF Group: May have changed its title to Space Scene UK; write Nick Flynn at the Croft, 26 Cissbury Road, Worthing (Tel: 30642) for the latest developments.

ON THE DRAWING BOARD

Tanworth SF Group: Write Geoff Kemp at 23 Raygill, Wilnecote, Tanworth, Staffs.

Walsall SF Group: Details from Paul Vincent at 25 Dovedale Avenue, Pelsall, Walsall, West Midlands W53 4HG.

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## UNICON 3 : CHRIS HUGHES

Unicon 3 will be the last of the series of Unicons, as far as its committee are concerned; three conventions are enough for anyone and no amount of external pressure will be able to change their minds. Indeed another Unicon at Keele would probably be impossible as most of the organisers leave this year. So, unless someone out there is willing to take over, Unicon 3 may be the last campus convention its members will be able to attend for some considerable time to come. Neither I nor the rest of the Unicon committee are eager to see Unicon die. Hence, I hope that this article will persuade someone reading it to do more than just think of Unicon's future, but to actually take steps towards securing it. To do this I feel it necessary to point out, for those who do not already know, all that is good about a convention held on a University campus.

The first and second Unicons have, I think, proved conclusively that there does exist a valid alternative to hotel conventions, that cons held on university sites are no less enjoyable than their four-star counterparts. Furthermore, the addition to the fannish calendar, on a regular basis, of a convention which does not overtax financial resources should be welcomed. If there were four major conventions held each year, only a few fans who presumably wish to attend all) would be able to do so at Eastercon or Novacon prices. If, however, one or perhaps even two of those conventions were campus conventions then the possibility of attending all four becomes much more likely. The cost of attending a Unicon, for example, is only half or a third of that for attending an Eastercon.

That fans ever manage to attend some conventions is a mystery to me. Take Channelcon, for example. A close friend, who is by no means a spendthrift, reckons his expenditure at that convention was in excess of £160. My own outlay too, had I booked a room, would have approached this figure. Now, I've never thought of myself as having a money fixation, but when such things as car-parking cost £12 for the weekend in the official car-park, and banquet tickets are offered at £9.50, and it costs £16 for a bed in a rat hole of a room and your morning bacon and eggs or whatever, and cider costs you £1.20 a pint, and rumours are circulating about that guy who bought a gin and tonic the other night at the pre-convention price of £1.80, I feel the chances of being able to enjoy myself at such an event rapidly diminishing. While it would be nice to say that conventions are a chance for people to get away from reality and all its worries, including financial ones, and to view fandom as being above such mundane considerations, most fans must feel some worry about cash flow problems (rapidly, and away from you) at these events. One reason why the Albacon bid for the '83 Eastercon was successful over that of Metrocon was, I suspect, due to its remarkably low room rates, and the committee's rejection of the 'money no object' delusion from which both Channelcon and the Metrocon bidding committee seemed to suffer.

Now, the major advantage of a campus convention, of course, is its low cost, but, in addition to this, the facilities in many universities are actually better than those you would find in a hotel. Universities are also used to dealing with students; they are very easy going and no fannish excesses are likely to over worry them - although what Paul Oldroyd, Chrissie Donaldson and their puppy Zoltan did in their room on the last night of Unicon 2 did raise a few eyebrows amongst the cleaning staff the next morning. It means that being told to keep off the stairs by some bullet-headed cretin and having your room searched for excess persons by the same would be inconceivable at Unicon. It also means that, on the whole, the university staff are a pleasant, easy-going group of people.

The smaller conventions are also easier for a newcomer to fandom, not only because they are easier on the pocket, but because there are many other fans who are new too.

An idea which has been tossed idly (perhaps too idly) around amongst the committee is to offer Unicon for bidding, as is done with Eastercons. Now, this may seem pretentious, as Unicon is, after

(Continued page 32)

LOOK HERE YOU LOT !  
THIS IS PHILL'S FIRST  
EVER CARTOON STRIP  
SO PAY ATTENTION !

HE HAS GONE TO ALOT OF TROUBLE  
TO DO THIS. PEOPLE SAY THAT  
HIS DRAWINGS ARE LIKE CHRIS FOS  
DON'T YOU BELIEVE IT !



IN ANY CASE THAT'S OLD NEWS NOW. HE HAS BOUGHT HIMSELF  
A JIM BARKER DOT-TO-DOT DRAWING SET AND A PAUL LYON  
PAINTING-BY-NUMBERS KIT. SO FROM NOW ON YOU WON'T GET  
ANY MORE OF THOSE SILLY LITTLE FILLO SPACESHIPS.



YOU'LL JUST GET BIGGER ONES !!!

The key to it all: The usual means available for trade, letter of comment or contribution. You will often get a sample issue if you write in and ask, but this depends on availability. Page sizes: Q means quarto and FC means foolscap.

Lots to review this issue, so I'll dive straight in -

A FOREIGN FANZINE 5/6 (Roelof Goudriaan, Postbus 589, 8200 AN Lelystad, Netherlands; for the usual or £2.50 for four issues. Pay by IMO, post giro (NL-4113560) or cash; A5; R; 64pp) Some peculiar stuff in this bumper double issue of Roelof's English language fanzine: like a piece by David Thiry singing the praises of "oldwave" SF against the "new wave", developing his argument by reference to a love affair. This is all very clever but, since it's generalised in the extreme, with no specific references to books or authors, it's hardly convincing. Also, what do you ageing hippies out there think of this?: "The new wave was engendered in the sixties, a decade of introspection, spiritual self-flagellation, and rage. In other words, it was a time of reacting to reality, without an eye for the future. Everything was awful, so they said, and it was time we all got damned mad about it!" Yet I have memories of peace and love and a belief that such feelings were about to take over the world; anger, yes, but an optimistic anger, a belief that things were wrong but could very easily be put right. I think that David's idea of the sixties is wrong or, at best, over-simplified.

What else? There's a piece of fiction by Andrew Osborne featuring a thinly disguised David Langford as a character. I wasn't too impressed with this either: it's just a fairly humdrum story with a few in-jokes to make it palatable. Better is another piece of fiction with a fanciful link: "A Trufan Comes to Town" by John D. Owen, which contains a larger-than-life character who is apparently John's idea of what a BNF must be like. The characterisation is inaccurate and confused but the character it produces is entertaining enough, even if the story doesn't amount to much in the end.

The other material is more predictable: an interview with Andrew Offutt; Yves Vandezande on the dying short story market and the problems it causes for new writers; a report on Beneluxcon; and some more fiction.

AFF is splendidly produced and this issue sports a beautiful cover by Pete Lyon. It's come on a lot in the past year; the earliest issues seemed to be cobbled together without any clear idea of what the zine was about. This issue has a sure identity to it, though the mood is too dry and the fiction content too large for my own tastes. But it's nice to see a zine which keeps us in touch with Europe and I did enjoy a piece I haven't mentioned yet: Martyn Taylor attacking the preoccupation of fantasy writers with feudal societies.

AIKAKONE 1,2 (URSA/SF-Klubi, Hannuksenukka 4.A.4, SF-00260 EPS00 26, Finland; 4 issues subs 35 FIM to postal cheque account 25740-0 EPS00 26, Finland. Price 44pp) Thanks to Tom Olander for sending me a couple of Finnish-language zines. They have summaries in English, so I'm able to tell you they contain articles on Jules Verne, H G Wells, and John Varley, plus fiction by Larry Niven, Alfred Bester, and Finnish writers, and news and reviews. Attractive, glossy production.

ANSIBLE 24, 25 (David Langford, 22 Northumberland Avenue, Reading, Berks RG2 7PW; 5 issues for £1; Q; part R; 10pp (incl Hugo nomination ballot) and 6 pp The continuing story of news and rumours, cheerfully edited by Dave Langford. Issue 25 includes the voting form for the 1982 fan poll. Get your votes in now.

ARENA 13 (Geoff Rippington, 6 Rutland Gardens, Birchington, Kent CT7 9SN; Price 60p; A5; R; 36pp) Deprived of its arts-council grant, this is unfortunately the last issue of Geoff's own sercon-zine, though he's re-emerging even at this very instant as the editor of *Vector*, and a good choice, too. This last ARENA has Brian Aldiss on H G Wells, Ian Watson on politics and fandom (in the wake of the panel at Yorcon 2, which caused so much fuss), and lots of reviews.

BLACK HOLE 22 (Simon Polley for Leeds University SF Group; Leeds University Union, PO Box 157, Leeds LS1 1UH; 3 issues for £1.80 incl. postage; A5; R; 40pp) It's about time I apologised to Mike Ford for not reviewing BLACK HOLE 21 due to the fact that I lost it, but by all accounts Mike did a good job of patching together the mess left by the two previous almost-editors. Now, a year later, and after a period in which it seemed that BLACK HOLE, the university group, and all who sailed in her would be lost, here comes issue 22, starting off with an editorial from the new and enthusiastic editor Simon "I want to do big things with BLACK HOLE" Polley on the problems which beset SF in the ghetto of genre



fiction: not a new subject, but it's handled in an entertaining and literate manner.

The main article comes from D West, on the subject of the infamous Zeor books from Jackie Lichtenberg, which D exposes as sex-obsessed and potentially damaging. There's also the return of Paul Randall's NEWS AND RUMOURS column, a few reviews and a piece of meaningless fiction from Gordon Foy. Hopefully Simon will be a little more discriminating in future when selecting fiction, but I wish him luck with the zine.

**BRIGHTON ROCK 1** (Keith and Rosemary Walker, 6 Vine St, Greaves, Lancaster, LA1 4UF; "only on whim", "not generally available" (you don't know how lucky you are); A4 sheets folded over lengthwise; 16pp) There's long been a theory that Keith goes out of his way to make his fanzines look as visually disgusting as possible, and this time he's surpassed himself by including crude "anatomical" drawings in amongst the careless typing and poor layout. This is the first non-review zine I've seen from Keith and in it he discusses his reaction to Channelcon, the general state of the Eastercon, and the lack of powers which organisations have over their voluntary officers. He also re-prints and explanatory article on fandom by Pierre Berton, which previously appeared in 1962.

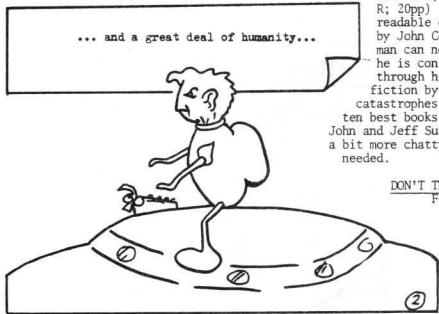
Keith's writing has always struck me as opinionated. There are parts of this zine in which I agree with what he's saying and in which he appears to be following a logical argument, but then he will ruin everything by coming out with over-the-top dismissals which don't follow from what has gone before. Metrocon, for instance, becomes "the poorly organised, naive Metrocon charade". Well, the bid at Channelcon might not have been inspiring (though I don't know myself, because I wasn't there - I must shamefacedly admit that I was in bed with a hangover from the excellent Metrocon party the night before) but why was it naive? Similarly, *Interzone* is "a thoroughly amateurish slick fan fictionzine", this again without any supporting argument. I'm willing to accept criticism on *Interzone* of course, but the first issue certainly didn't contain fan fiction by any stretch of the imagination.

Keith also has strong views about fanzines, of course: they should not, he says, be judged "with the rule book for books. They are essentially...letter substitutes...Would you really try to measure your personal correspondence against the heavily edited, frequently re-written book or short story?" Thereby he ignores the fact that the best fanish writing often *is* re-written time and time again to get it right. Keith might prefer to dash his stuff straight onto stencil, but he surely must be aware that some others adopt a more considered approach, and that it's often been pointed out that his own fanzines might improve if he did the same.

**CRYSTAL SHIP 5** (John D Owen, 4 Highfield Close, Newport Pagnell, Bucks MK16 9AZ; most likely for the usual; A5; R; 32pp) John says the major criticism of the previous issue was that he's "too eclectic, flittering about all over the place in one issue" and certainly issue five also covers a wide range of subjects. This is fine with me (producing STILL IT MOVES, it would be, wouldn't it?) but my own complaint is that the zine's a touch insubstantial; all the articles are fine in themselves, but they're *minor* articles, not one of them making a big impact. There's Steve Sneyd with an interesting collection of territories which are the subject of boundary disputes; Mary Gentle on Mildred Broxon's *TOO LONG A SACRIFICE*; and a poem about Dick's *VALIS* from Iain Ewing. There's also some pieces by John himself: on John Martyn and Norman Spinrad, and a fanish piece about his car journeys into work. The latter is literate and mildly amusing but ultimately unambitious and inconsequential. The zine itself *is* ambitious. It's beautifully produced, containing this issue some impressive artwork by Martin Helsdon, and the choice of material is refreshingly unpredictable, but the end result remains, as I said, insubstantial.

On the "state of fandom" panel at Channelcon, Chuck Connor and Martyn Taylor were agreed that *CRYSTAL SHIP* is the best fanzine of the year. On the evidence of this issue, I don't agree, but try it and see what you think.

**DEATH RAYS 3** (John Bark for the South Hants SF Group, 5 Byerley Close, Westbourne, Emsworth, Hants PO10 8TS; free to members or the usual; A5; R; 20pp) The best issue so far of this always readable clubzine, with an interesting article by John Cornish which speculates that modern man can never adapt to his environment because he is continually changing his environment through his own actions; a reasonable piece of fiction by Nik Morton; John Bark on fictional catastrophes in England; a Gene Wolfe review; the ten best books feature; and a fanish column by John and Jeff Suter, which seems set to make the zine a bit more chatty and less formal - just what it needed.



**DON'T THINK ONCE (TWICE)** (Graham James, 12 Fearnville Terrace, Oakwood, Leeds LS8 3DU; for the usual; A4; 10pp) Mainly Graham's reactions to letters on the first issue, and developments on the ideas raised therein. There's also a spoof on the PONG fan poll, and a reprint of Dick Bergeron's comments on fan writing from a recent PONG. Keith Walker might

like to read this, if only to discover that, as I mentioned before, his isn't the only view of how to go about fan writing.

**DRIFTING SOUL 2** (Mike Hamilton, 38 Park Way, Etwell, Derbyshire DE6 6HU; most likely for the usual; Q; 6pp) A better organised issue this; the last one was all over the place, this time there's a main article at the front, followed by record reviews, followed by letters. Mike isn't the greatest writer around but his record reviews are interesting, and the main article, about being destined to miss conventions because he accidentally killed an albatross, has a good, original idea behind it.

**DRILKJIS 6** (Dave Langford (address as ANSIBLE) and Kevin Smith, 10 Cleves Court, St Mark's Hill, Surbiton, Surrey KT6 4PS; for the usual or 50p; A4; R; 24pp) The main trouble with Dave and Kevin's entertaining serconize is that it doesn't come out very often. This issue is all good stuff, even if some of it seems a touch familiar. D West's piece on Jackie Lichtenberg had already (just) appeared in **BLACK HOLE**, while Garry Kilworth's **IN PRAISE OF ALIENS** had been in **OVERMATTER**. However, **DRILKJIS** must have a much wider distribution than either of those, it probably doesn't matter a great deal, except to people like me who have to read everything that comes along. The most entertaining articles this time are by the editors themselves: Dave on the ill-fated **MNI Book of the Future**, and a sensible piece from Kev on convention accounts. Other articles: Ian Watson's **Yorcon II** speech, and "science fact" from Denis Brezhnev (!).

**DRYGULCH SPECIAL** (The Red Army Choirboys, Glasgow, Northern Siberia; for two kopeks short of the full rouble; FC; 6pp) Well, there I was standing in the bar at Channelcon and Jimmy Robertson remarked that I'd have to review the **DRYGULCH SPECIAL**, wouldn't I, and everyone from Glasgow fell about laughing. Well, it's not so difficult - it's thin and glossy and there's lots of pictures, and.... Well, what it is really is an assortment of news pictures (some with added speech balloons), advertisements, publicity hand-outs, cartoons, and graphic descriptions of executions.... It's proof of the inherently subversive nature of fanzines. It's the antithesis of **THE SUN** newspaper. It's witty and artistic. It's an experiment in the art of collage. Yes, a collage, that's what it is.... a skillful juxtaposition of....

Bloody hell. They're still laughing.

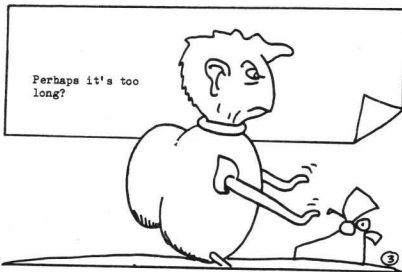
**EPSILON 10** (Rob Hansen, 9A Greenleaf Rd, East Ham, London E6 1DX; ((Honestly, it's hard enough work doing this column as it is, without people putting their addresses at the bottom of page 11. Page 11! Is Rob trying to give me brain failure or something?)); most likely for the usual; Q; 28pp) An atypical issue, as Rob himself mentions: he shuns the usual fannish controversy in favour of reminiscences about his introduction to SF and his fannish publishing career with **EPSILON**. Not as impressive as issue nine, but interesting nonetheless, and there's still a bit of controversy raging in the long letter column.

**ERG 78** (Terry Jeeves, 230 Bannerdale Road, Sheffield S11 9FE; £1 for two issues or 30p in stamps and a loc; Q; 30pp) **ERG's** 23rd anniversary issue, with lots of short reviews, fiction from Terry, Alan Burns on the dangers of buying a home computer, and Robert Mapson, like Simon Polley in **BLACK HOLE**, talking about the problems of genre fiction.

**NO AWARD 5** (Owen Whiteoak for **FORTH**, Top Flat (left), 112 Polwarth Gardens, Edinburgh EH11 1LH; for the usual or 50p; A5; R; 40pp) There's only one editor this time; perhaps that's why this issue seems less like a clubzine hotchpotch and more like a zine with a bit of planning behind it. Sercon and fiction have been left behind in favour of more fannish matters like anecdotal writing and the airing of views on general subjects. There's nothing here as memorable as, say, **SHAKESPEARE IN PERSPECTIVE** from an earlier issue, yet the overall standard of the zine is improving. Nothing made me jump up and down with excitement, but nothing made me cringe either. My favourite pieces were Owen's thought on getting into fandom and what it has meant to him (struck a few chords with me, that) and Jim Darroch's article on the biased (or just plain thoughtless) attitude of the media to Scotland.

As always, it's a lot better than one could reasonably expect from a clubzine.

**GAMBIT 55** (Ted White, New Decade Productions Inc, 1014 N. Tuckahoe St, Falls Church, VA 22046 USA; most likely for the usual; USQ; 24pp) This is not meant to be a "blockbuster" issue, says Ted, or to make the "Best Single Issue of the Year category". I'd be inclined to ask why not (all that stuff about doing your best etc) except that Ted co-produces **PONG** every three weeks and writes stuff for other fanzines as well, so I'm surprised he has the time and energy to produce **GAMBIT** at all, let alone do a blockbuster issue.



And a blockbuster it certainly isn't, though it's readable enough, with an article by Lee Hoffman on the problems caused by moving from the role of fanzine writer to convention panelist, and Avedon Carol with a very generalised piece on WHAT'S GOOD IN FANZINES. There's a long editorial by Ted himself, but by far the best item is a fanzine review column by home-grown Malcolm Edwards, which is entertaining and logically argued throughout. His views on NABU, however, seem to have annoyed Ian Maule, and perhaps with some justification - more of that later.

IN DEFIANCE OF MEDICAL OPINION 6 and a bit, 6 + 3 kilovolts, 17 microns and 1 grain (Chuck Connor, c/o Sildan House, Chediston Rd, Wissett, Near Halesworth, Suffolk IP19 0NF; for "virtually anything interesting, except money which is really disgusting but will never get refused"; PC, A4; 12 pp, 24 pp) Two more cocktails of letters and reviews with a twist of scandal from the prolific Mr Connor.

KEITH'S KRUDZINE 1 (Keith & Rosmary Walker, address as BRIGHTON ROCK; for the usual; 10pp) A thinly disguised issue of Keith's FANZINE FANATIQUE reviewzine.

MAD DOG 5 (Chris Brasted & Simon Meacock, 3 Nichols Rd, Northam, Southampton, Hants or SMS, 29 Northumberland Rd, Northam, etc. Fourth editor is Adam Warren; 40p plus 25p p&p; A4; 30pp) I've mentioned before that I know next to nothing about comics, so I don't find this zine particularly easy to review. There are a couple of long strips which I found boring, in once case, and inexplicable, in the other; but there's also a number of one-pagers which were generally much more interesting, particularly METHOD OF DOUBT and THREE LITTLE WORDS from the guy called SMS. There's a piece of fiction, too, containing some interesting snippets of philosophy, but not quite coming together as a story. I think they're on surer ground with graphics and I hope these continue to predominate. If you're interested in comics, do give it a try.

MICROWAVE (Terry Hill, 41 Western Road, Maidstone, Kent ME16 8NE; for the usual, useable artwork, and lots of other stuff incl. 20p in stamps; A5; R; 12pp) Steeped in the classic fanzines of years gone by, Terry apparently has similarly grand aspirations for MICROWAVE, but there's no sign of any of them being approached with this first issue. Terry's wife Margaret contributes the best piece, in which she talks about her life with Terry and his fascination with SF. Terry's own stuff is insubstantial and his attempts at humour singularly unsuccessful - a good example is the visual joke on the front cover which falls completely flat because he sees fit to explain it underneath. Surely he must realise that jokes are never funny if you have to explain the punchline.

Terry hopes to expand MICROWAVE into a genzine and he may indeed have more ability as an editor than he's shown so far as a writer. The trouble is, to attract people into writing for you, you have to exhibit some evidence of quality in the first place: something which this issue fails to manage. Still, no doubt Terry will persist and improve - I wouldn't like to write off a fanzine on its first issue.

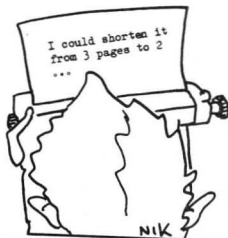
MUSIC FROM A FIRE/DAGONBURST 2 (Christina Lake, 2 Shepherds Green, Chislehurst, Kent BR7 6PA; most likely for the usual; A4; 22pp) Talking of improvement, Christina Lake is a good case in point. I thought DRAGONBURST 1 had promise, but was disappointed by the rather unimaginative choice of material in THIS NEVER HAPPENS, which she co-edited with Lilian Edwards. This issue comes as welcome surprise: there's very little I can find fault with, and the best of it is very good indeed. There's a refreshingly wide range of subject matter: Christina writes entertainingly about such forbidden subjects as THUNDERBIRDS and BLAKE'S SEVEN (no mean feat), her nostalgia for the Radio Caroline of the Seventies, and the art of looting ("send back the staples which presumably came out when you took off the cover and make some sarcastic comment on how he might like to re-use them for the next issue.") One of the best articles dispatches fandom into the twelfth century ("Criticism was vociferous, vehement and immediate, most of it administered by a thug-like type called Raimon Matraqueur who would stroll into a fanzine recital, dismember the offending troubador, and politely tell the inanimate carcass how he might improve his next ish). But the best piece describes Christina's realisation during a train journey that many of her actions and attitudes are the result of subconscious conditioning, and relates this idea to the difficulty of writing science fiction that is truly alien.

The last time I suggested that a piece was worthy of wider exposure in Focus, the editors wrote to tell me they've already got it lined up. OK lads, how about asking for this one?

As for MUSIC FROM A FIRE, I think it's the best zine in this issue's batch. If Christina carries on like this, she deserves to make a name for herself. I hope she doesn't bother too much about getting outside contributors though; it's working very well as a personalzine.

NABU 12 (Ian Maule, 5 Beaconsfield Rd, New Malden, Surrey KT3 3HY; for the usual; Q; 30pp) This issue kicks off with a reply by Ian to Malcolm Edwards's comments in GAMBIT which said something to the effect that the lack of a strong editorial personality makes NABU rather a wishy-washy fanzine. Ian retorts: "I don't consider myself a sufficiently competent writer to inflict more than the minimum amount of my own material on the readership" and adds that, in his opinion, a fanzine should "stand or fall on the quality of the outside contributions".

Now, as far as I'm concerned, both Ian and Malcolm are





perfectly reasonable. Malcolm's criticism that NABU suffers from a lack of editorial personality is valid, yet Ian is probably equally right in believing that he couldn't provide such a personality if he tried; Malcolm's comment is true, but it doesn't help Ian any.

So what? Malcolm might argue that he's expressing his opinion on the fanzine and whether or not it's of any use to Ian is irrelevant. But, it's necessary to look at the effect which criticism can have. If Ian were to accept Malcolm's point, he would have two courses of action open to him to improve NABU. He could (a) hand the editorship over to someone who was a better writer, in which case it would probably cease to be NABU in any case, or he could (b) try to follow Malcolm's advice and go ahead and write more and damn well exert an editorial personality.

Personally, I'm rather glad that Ian isn't going to follow either course. I think his assessment of his own limitations is probably correct, and that if he acted on Malcolm's advice and brought out a NABU with a greater Ian Maule content, he would produce a pretty boring fanzine. I'm glad he has the sense to realise that Malcolm's criticism is in practical terms utterly useless.

A similar case occurred recently, but the outcome on that occasion was different, because the advice was acted upon. D West wrote to SECOND HAND WAVE accusing them of being wishy washy and boring; a fanzine should have more bite to it, he argued. And this, I now discover, is the reason why the normally pleasant SECOND HAND WAVE was transformed last issue into a series of rather vicious and ill-considered attacks on "BNFs". They were trying to give D what he wanted and give the fanzine more bite. This is a prime example of criticism which may be theoretically valid having a deleterious effect in practical terms. The same might have been true of Malcolm's comments on NABU.

So, having said all that, I'd better make sure I restrict my own comments on NABU 12 to the outside contributions, which do, indeed, comprise the greatest part of the fanzine, and by which Ian declares that it stands or falls.

NABU is going through a rather traumatic time at the moment. For the past three years or so, its major recognisable and constant feature has been Joseph Nicholas's review column. Now that Joseph has very sensibly decided to keep his mouth shut about fanzines for a while, Ian has been obliged to look around for a replacement. His choice, Phil Palmer, did seem like a good one and Phil's first column, on American zines, makes entertaining reading, with lashings of wit (of Noreason: "...there is probably enough now known about (Dave Langford's) movements to make them into a board-game"). The trouble is, Phil sometimes gets too carried away with being witty, and forgets to ask himself whether he's using a logical and convincing argument. Take Ted White's article THE POLITICS OF FANDOM IN WARHOON 29. Phil pooch-pooches the thing entertainingly enough, and Ted's article did contain the odd daft remark (e.g., the accusation that Platt and West were getting at Willis because he was Irish) but at the time I found the main argument convincing, and looking back on it now I reckon there's probably more than a grain of truth in it. And where is Phil's carefully reasoned argument against the conclusion? It doesn't seem to be there. Phil just describes the article in derisive terms and expects you to agree with him. And that isn't always going to work. Phil has written a funny article but a rather imprecise piece of criticism, and one that is more likely to annoy those mentioned than to persuade them to see the error of their ways.

What of the rest of NABU? There are articles by other new contributors: Darroll Pardoe on Saturday morning cinema, for instance, and Brian Smith on writing reviews for the BSFA (!). I've talked before about the differences between writing for personalzines and for genzines. Darroll produces an excellent letter substitute called MEET ON THE LEDGE (which, in case you were wondering, he marks 'not for review', so that's why I haven't mentioned it) and, on present evidence, is definitely a personalzine writer. His material in NABU would be fine as part of a personalzine, but it's not really weighty enough to stand on its own as an article. As for Brian, he illustrates that he can write in a readable and witty fashion, but the subject matter (I ask you!) is just too damned boring to produce a good article. There's promise though - with the right choice of subject, we might get a very good article from Brian before long.

The two remaining articles are an entertaining piece of theology from George Bondar and Ted White replying to Joseph's article in the last issue. Ted's article is OK but no great feat of criticism. There have been so many holes in Joseph's writing of the last six months that a child of ten could pull him apart.

All in all, by no means the best NABU I've seen, but Ian is searching round for new writers and may yet weather the storm of Joseph's departure.

NEW CANADIAN FANDOM 4 (Robert Runte, Box 4655, P.S.S.E., Edmonton, Alberta T6E 5G5, Canada; 4 Canadian or US dollars for five, or free sample on request, or for the usual; USQ; 16pp) News, conreps, and book reviews from Canada.

NEW RIVER BLUES 6 (Abi Frost, 69 Robin Hood Gdns, Cotton St, London E14 and Roz Kaveney, 15 Muscott House, Whiston Rd, London E2; for the usual or 20p; A4; 12pp) NERB continues to maintain a high standard, and this despite a particularly pig-headed article on elitism by Abi this issue. Fandom, she maintains, is elitist and a good thing, too. "Frost paralyses Britain" it claims on the contents page, and it may well be that Abi is being deliberately provocative in an attempt to get the level of response which always seems to have evaded NERB. There are plenty of other things to talk about on this issue, and since I fear this article is already becoming too long for the taste of the editor, I've decided to finally send Abi the loc I've promised her for the past three years. So the defence of my judgment above will hopefully appear in the pages of NERB itself.

As to the other stuff: there's an excellent cover by Abi with the headline "Martians Invade Isle of Dogs" which is a nice satire on the initial impact of the Falklands invasion; an amusing list of reasons why the upper classes should be socialists; and two stirring pieces of writing by Roz, one about the injustice of the way our legal system works, and one about that invasion. It's nice when the inherent potential of fanzines to be well and truly topical is realised, and Roz and Abi managed to get this timed even better for the Falklands than they did a previous issue for

Lennon. Nice work. Roz's Falklands piece begs comparison with Ken Brown's in SODD'S LAW, so I'll delay discussion till then. Just one more point before I move on though: I can't understand why Abi seems to have developed such a grudge against Alan Ferguson. His letter in this issue is treated by Abi as though she were his schoolmistress; she finds fault with his choice of certain words; she prints part of his letter then breaks it off in the middle saying, "There is a lot more of this inept and self-centered narrative, but you don't really want to read it, do you?" thereby carrying this whole criticism thing a bit too far. Fanzines are a tool for communication and good writing is an aid to communication, so it's worthwhile criticising writing that's bad in the hope that it will improve. But publicly deriding a letter on the grounds that it's (shock, horror) stylistically inconsistent, and then cutting it off in the middle to illustrate disgust, isn't helping communication: it's obliterating anything that letter had to say and it's discouraging communication from others who might be afraid that they'd be subjected to the same treatment. Though stylistic and grammatical perfection is always nice, it's possible to communicate interesting information with the occasional misspelling and badly chosen word. Good writing should be an ideal but not a fetish; if Abi didn't like Alan's loc, she should have wafed him, not turned her loccol into an English language lesson. Still, this was an interesting issue, I add grudgingly. Bloody hell, just because you find something interesting, it doesn't mean to say you have to agree with it.

PERIPHERY 6 (Jeff Suter, 18 Norton Close, Southwick, Fareham, Hants PO17 6HD; for the usual or 20p in stamps; A4; 18pp) Just as NERB gained by being topical, this issue's notable lack of topicality does tend to detract from it. I mean, the Royal Wedding is a bit Old Hat, what with the Falklands and everything. The other stuff's OK though, and all in all this is an improvement over the last issue. Jeff talks about the formation of the South Hants group and includes the speeches they've received from Michael Vyse and er, someone called Alan Dorey. There's also a piece on a 'save the whale' march from - wait for it - Adrian Cull.

PONG 31, 32, 33/34 (Ted White, 1014 N. Tuckahoe St, Falls Church, VA 22046, USA and Dan Steffan, 1010 N. Tuckahoe St, etc; for the usual (trade to both editors); USQ; 10pp, 10pp and 20pp) Issue 31 has Dick Bergeron on the art of fan-writing; 32 has the results of the PONG poll, in which our very own Malcolm Edwards, Chris Atkinson, and Joseph Nicholas featured prominently among the winners; while the 33/34 double issue is the best since the annish, with some conreps, a review of a re-print of THE CACHER OF THE RYE (apparently a well-known classic of fan-writing), Dick Bergeron's column, and an excellent piece by Dan about persuading a friend that he can fly.

PREVENT 2 (John Jarrold, 31 Dukes Way, West Wickham, Kent BR4 9AU; most likely for the usual; Q; 6pp) John returns after several years out of fandom to give his views on the current scene and reminisce about the problems he had getting a US visa in 1974.

ONE OF OUR TYPEWRITERS IS MISSING (Andrew Neale, 157 Longsight, Harwood, Bolton, Lancs. Other editor: P.D. Bream; "available, for the price of postage, to anyone who wants a copy"; A5; 16pp) The trouble with A5 zines is they tend to slide out of the pile and get themselves out of alphabetical order. Never mind. This is a first fanzine from two lads who have recently left school; articles about the youth opportunities scheme and a trip to Scousecon plus some killer fanzine reviews of local Bolton efforts. If they can do it so can I (summons up hidden reserves of KTF) er ... this isn't really very good. The main problem is the very juvenile humour, e.g., "puffs and perts should be drowned at birth". The trouble with saying things like that is that some people actually believe it. Anyway lads, what about this leather fetish you keep going on about?

Still, Andrew at least can write literately enough. It might improve.

RAA 3 (Martyn Taylor, 5 Kimpton Rd, Camberwell, London SE5 7EA; for the usual; A4; 18pp) A better issue, this, mainly because of an excellent article by Chris Bailey about working for a Russian-owned firm. THE MAN WHO BRINGS THE PAY ROUND COMES FROM PSKOVSKOYEN, it's called: a good choice of material and well written. We could have a new star here. Martyn's own stuff: there's a fanish piece about telephones, but once again (yawn) I much preferred his film and book reviews (though, naturally I don't agree with all his remarks about Interzone).

RAFFLES 5.5 (Larry Carmody, 629E 8th Street, New York, NY 10040, USA and Stu Shiffman, 19 Broadway Terrace, New York, NY 10040; for the usual, the unusual, old fanzines or one US dollar; USQ; 12pp) Stu on the Hugos (!), Larry on a tube train busker, some brief fanzine reviews, and an article by Taral which I didn't understand at all - perhaps you need local knowledge. This is a slim interim issue, but all in all better produced and just a bit more readable than the last one.

SODD'S LORE (from the SODDS, 18 Selkirk Rd, Tooting, London SW17 0ES; for the usual; A5; R; 24pp) This is a lot better than it looks, though, like most clubzines, the standard is variable: there's some poems (some of which are supposed to be bad but others of which, I fear, are not), a piece of rather bad fiction, a science article, some reasonable book reviews, a clever piece called SOME USES FOR 10,000,000,000 POUNDS, and - best of all - a couple of pieces by Ken Brown. The best of the two is called THE ECOLOGY OF FANDOM, which gives some convincing ecological (or so he says - I would have said sociological) reasons for the existence of fandom. There's also a piece on the Falklands which, as I've mentioned, begs comparison with Roz Kaveney's piece in NERB.

Of the two, Roz's is the most polished piece of writing; she presents the thing convincingly as a fight against the evil fascist junta in Argentina. Fine - but events have shown (I write with benefit of hindsight) that in the course of operations we have allied with the even more evil fascist junta in Chile. As Ken points out, it comes down to politics in the end; we treat countries 'as if they were real entities with a soul of their own, rather than collections of individuals. Then we

give them human characteristics like "honour" and "shame" and identify ourselves with them. This lets the men who run the armies and governments use the rest of us to boost their macho self-images". But then he adds: "I think of the Guatemalan government - probably the most evil at the moment anywhere in the world ... ready to invade Belize ... and I'm not so sure any more" and he ends on a note of indecision. Fine. Once the Argentinians had landed, the Falklands struck me as a no win situation (as they say), with any course of action likely to turn out to be the wrong one. But the thought that most impressed me in Ken's piece was this: "One thing that this mess has brought out clearly is that the motives and emotions I condemn in the warmongers of the world exist in me as well - the only way to improve things is by recognising one's own guilt, not by pretending to be better than anyone else". A good article, that.

SPIN 1/82 (Turun SF-Seura, Box 538, SF20101, Turku 10, Finland; 4 issue subs 25FIM to postal cheque account TUS29571-3; Q-ish; 28pp) Another Finnish zine sent by Tom Olander. This one is less glossy than AIKAKONE, but well produced nonetheless. Sercon material in Finnish.

STILL IT MOVES 2 (Simon Ounsley, 21 The Village Street, Leeds LS4 2PR; for the usual; A4; 42pp) The address above is where you can reach me from now on. SIM 2 contains Alan Ferguson on his first parachute jump, Jackie Gresham on SF's uses as a sedative, John Nixon on the psychology of fanzines, Kate Jeary on back-cover blurbs, and D West on the secret hidden significance of SF and fancy dress. Plus Ounsley on the 'politics in fandom' scandal and the cosmic significance of Batchelor's packet soups. Pete Lyon illustrations and a D West cover. (I like it.)

SUPERNOVA 4 (Simon Bostock, 18 Gallows Inn Close, Ilkeston, Derbyshire, DE7 4BW; for the usual; A4; 24pp) Mary Gentle contributes this batch's *third* article on SF IN THE GHETTO, coming to more or less the same conclusion as everyone else. Pity we can't do anything about it. There's also a sense of futility about Iain Byers's A CHAIN ABOUT THE NECK, in which he argues that all we need to do to improve the standard of SF is to disband fandom. OK, Iain, we do it tomorrow. Sorry folks, no more BSFA, no more fanzines, no more cons, but just wait for the nice surprise when you go down your bookstore. Seriously though, I think that Iain is confusing fandom, which often has a critical attitude towards SF, with the general SF reading public who, it seems, will buy anything as long as it's got SF on the cover.

Simon himself still manages to be pretty fugg-headed (to use that well-known American expression) from time to time. This issue he's accusing us all of apathy because we haven't voted in the SUPERNOVA poll. The trouble is, he hasn't stopped to wonder why we would need another poll when we've already got the BSFA award for SF and the ANSIBLE poll and the Nova award for fanfannish stuff. How many polls do you think we can support, Simon? Would it really be sensible if every zine around started doing its own poll? Maybe people think we've got enough polls already and maybe *that's* why they haven't voted.

Anyway, I ought to stop going on at Simon. SUPERNOVA has come out regularly throughout the year and improves with every issue. With the change to A4 this time, the presentation has improved enormously (helped by a wonderful Pete Lyon cover) and Simon's writing is also getting better; the questions he asks in the Brian Stableford interview this issue seem to have been thought out carefully rather than taken straight out of 101 GOOD QUESTIONS TO ASK IN AN INTERVIEW, which seemed to be the case in earlier issues. I hope he continues to improve and I wish him the best of luck.

THE PATCHIN REVIEW 3, 4 (Charles Platt; UK agent David Pringle, whose new address I can't find, so write to 21 The Village Street, Leeds LS4 2PR; £6 for six issues, £1 for sample; A5-ish; R; 64pp, 56pp) Now quarterly US sercon scandal magazine, with articles by such as Gregory Benford and Norman Spinrad.

THROUGH THE LENSE (Roy Macinski, 2 Frogmill Cottages, Hurley, Nr Maidenhead, Berks SL6 5NH; for the usual or 16p in stamps; A4; 16pp) New serconzine from Roy, which is difficult to judge from this issue because it consists almost entirely of a long piece by Martyn Taylor on Tarkovsky. The latter seemed a bit familiar in places (perhaps not surprisingly, since 50% of the stuff I've read from Martyn seems to have been on the same subject), but Martyn is always entertaining when he talks about films and this must be his definitive article on his favourite director. The only other article is an irritatingly apologetic piece by Eve Harvey on Angela Carter. Roy contributes a rather sombre editorial on the problems of fanzine editing. Cheer up Roy - you are supposed to *enjoy* fan-activity, you know.

THYME 12, 13 (Irwin Hirsh, 279 Domain Rd, South Yarra, Vic 3141, Australia and Andrew Brown, 660 Swanston St, Carlton, Vic 3053, Australia; for trade to both editors; news or subs. British agent: Joseph Nicholas, 94 St George's Square, Piccadilly, London SW1Y 3QY; Q; 4 pp each) Australian fanfannish news and review zine.

WHOLE FANZINE CATALOGUE 20, 21 (Brian Earl Brown, 16711 Burt Rd, #207, Detroit, Michigan 48219, USA: 60¢ per issue or \$3 for five, or for the usual; A5-ish; 24pp each) Probably the best guide to the international fanzine scene. Mainly capsule reviews, but there's the occasional longer piece of comment.

And that's that: a bumper batch of fanzines bringing my spell as *Matrix* reviewer (and, indeed, a series of eighteen - almost - consecutive *Matrix* columns) to a close. Why am I leaving? Mainly because I lose enthusiasm and keep repeating myself and have to keep looking back to see what I've said before, in order to make sure I build up some sort of consistent and all-embracing worldview of fanzine production (and generally go bananas). It's been nice to try my hand at reviewing, but I don't want to build it into a career. As I've said before, I think that writing *got* zines is more important than writing *about* them and that's what I plan to spend my extra time doing. Besides, it's

about time someone else got a chance to give their views. I've done a year's worth of fanzines and I think that's enough to be going on with. Who knows, in a few years' time I might fancy another try.

It would be nice to end with a detailed overview of the last year, but there isn't really the time or space to do that properly. Suffice it to say that I think the fanzine scene today is a lot healthier than it was a year ago. It's been particularly nice to see one or two zines gradually improve over the year, and also, of course, to pick up the one or two really excellent issues that make the whole thing worthwhile. I think my favourite two of the year were START BREAKING UP and INDIAN SCOUT, which included contributions from a galaxy of stars: Chris Atkinson, Linda Pickersgill, Chris Evans, the Glasgow Cretins, Pete Lyon, and Alan Ferguson, none of whom were particularly renowned as fanfash writers prior to Season, belying the claim that the "fanzine revival" has just been caused by the temporary awakening of a couple of fanfash dinosaurs. It'll be good if Malcolm Edwards and Greg Pickersgill do get it together again, but there's plenty of other talent around if they don't.

Before I go, don't forget to keep sending me fanzines, will you? I mean, I'd still like to read them, and all being well you'll get a copy of STILL IT MOVES in return. For my new address, see the SIM review.

See you around.

=====

REMEMBER: Send all fanzines to our new reviewer: MARTYN TAYLOR  
5 KIMPTON ROAD  
CAMBERWELL  
LONDON SE5 7EA

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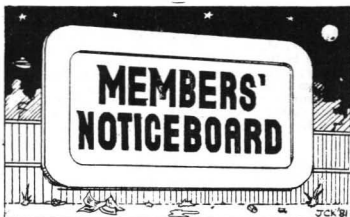
#### UNICON 3 (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 23)

all, only a minor convention which has had a little-changing committee and has, so far, been restricted to one site. We do, however, have something worth bidding for: the surplus funds, providing they exist, from Unicon 3. There would be a few strings attached, like retaining the Unicon name, for example, but these would not be overly restrictive on any future committee.

A prospective committee for any future Unicon would not necessarily have to consist of university students, although it helps with liaison if at least one committee member is. Ex-students of the same university, or local SF groups nearby a college would be ideally situated to take on the running of a Unicon.

I would be interested to hear the reaction in *Matrix* to the future of Campus Conventions. Meantime, if you, or your friends, or your university group would like to carry on the Unicon tradition, then write as soon as possible to Jan Huxley, Unicon 3, University of Keele, Keele, Staffs ST5 5BG, informing the committee of your plans. You will be expected to present a bid report for display at Unicon 3. There will be a programme item at the convention in which bidding committees will be asked to outline their proposals for Unicon 4. At the same time there will be an opportunity for anyone to put forward other proposals for the Unicon surplus, such as donating it to INTERZONE, to TAFF, or GUFF, to Albacon or Eurocon 84, or for using it to set up a Unicon award or getting the committee pissed. If you would like to present any one of these proposals, or one of your own, contact the committee for details.

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Apa-Sfaf is folding, and thus copies of mailings 2-3 can be ordered, at 40p each to cover the cost of postage. Inside mailings have been apazines from Martyn Taylor, the Pickersgills, Dave Langford, Chuck Connor and Geoff Boswell. Secure your copies now! Send the cash to Simon Bostock at 18 Gallows Inn Close, Ilkeston, Derbyshire. (The last mailing, #4, will be out Real Soon Now.)

Sebastian Cody of the National Film School, Station Road, Beaconsfield, Bucks, is trying to locate a story (which is not Roald Dahl's) in recording very low sounds, and has machines wired up all over the place. One evening he plays a new sound to a friend: it is a great roaring explosion. He asks the friend if he can guess what it is. The friend can't. The man explains: "It's you kissing my wife". He needs the author and/or title of this, no doubt badly-remembered, short story. It is very important to him, so please help.

THE SOUND MACHINE) concerning a man who is interested in recording very low sounds, and has machines wired up all over the place. One evening he plays a new sound to a friend: it is a great roaring explosion. He asks the friend if he can guess what it is. The friend can't. The man explains: "It's you kissing my wife". He needs the author and/or title of this, no doubt badly-remembered, short story. It is very important to him, so please help.

CY CHAUVIN at 14248 Wilfred, Detroit, Michigan 48213, USA extends an open invitation to any who care to stop and visit on their way to CHICON. He has a spare bedroom; and Detroit is directly between UK and Chicago. Please write ahead--he'd hate to have to give someone the floor because the bedroom had been promised to someone else!

Taking the decision to give notice of intent to step down from the editorship (see editorial) was not easy; despite the 'negative' side of the job - the sheer volume of work - the enjoyable activity is receiving members' comments. It is true that most fanzine editors suffer, at some stage, from no response from their mailing list.



This never applies to Matrix (famous last words, eh?) and whilst the overall response rate is probably no more than 5%, it is still sufficient to receive a steady flow of letters each day (around 30-40 each issue). Associated with the activity of reading and editing the letter-column, is planning, with D West, the cartoons. I believe that flattery can be the ultimate form of contempt, so I usually refrain from back-slapping activities, but, in D's case, I am a great admirer of the 'subtleties' of his work. I find it amusing that some recent allegations have been made that D's cartoons are cleverly designed to influence readers' attitudes. I also find it somewhat annoying that people, such as Rob Hansen, insult both the members, and me in my functions/work as editor, by saying, in his recent fanzine, that he couldn't be bothered to reply to my letter which asked him if he required a copy of the issue for which he did the cover (I wrote because he was entitled to a copy as a contributor, but I did not know if he had one by virtue of membership in the BSFA). If nothing else, he has missed a steady flow of tremendous artwork and cartoons from D (and other artists) - is he so arrogant and secluded that he, as an artist himself, can choose to ignore the output of his fellow fans? More on the brainwashing saga later, but first I'm taken to task for my comments, last issue, concerning EXTRO.

DAVE LANGFORD  
22 NORTHUMBERLAND AVENUE  
READING BERKS RG2 7PW

Your comments on Extro in Matrix 41 are unfortunate in that any criticism of Extro, coming from you, is likely to be ascribed to patriotic Interzone fervour and desire to do down the 'opposition'. For similar reasons I feel rather diffident about criticizing Interzone (apart from the usual fannish leppugling, of course). 'The more SF magazines the merrier,' says jolly Malcolm Edwards: a wholesome attitude, especially as Interzone and Extro aren't really in competition.

However, your complaints deserve a reply---so here goes.

(1) Sorry if you felt starved of Extro advance publicity. I should have remembered that the flyer kindly distributed by the BSFA, although delivered to 'the BSFA' long before the mailing, wouldn't have been seen in Leeds until your personal mailing arrived. Also, the most recent issues of Ansible have featured snippets about Extro.

Meanwhile the 30,000-copy print run you mention is definitely on the high side (though we non-fiction editors don't get told everything); the distribution through Smiths was once being planned by the ever-enthusiastic Robert Allen, but is still hanging fire; people should look for it in small-er newsgroups, or subscribe, or whatever.

(2) In general I agree that reprinting mass-market published material isn't a terribly good idea in a magazine. But your comments seem likely to give new BSFA members the impression that Extro 1 contained only the three major items you complain about, rather than the nine actually featured! And of the three, two have had no professional appearance in this country. A version of my own article 'Genocide for Fun and Profit' (you got the title wrong) appeared in Drilkis and later Vector (you got the order wrong), meaning that numerous fans have seen it: but why should I deny this ecstatic reading experience to the thousands and thousands of SF readers out there, who we hope will like the completely rewritten Extro version? Similarly, the circulation of SF Review in this country is so small that it seems excessive to complain about the Watson interview's appearance therein.

The very wonderful Interzone, after all, features what is effectively a reprint---that edited chunk of the already published Moorcock novel. ("But we meant to publish Interzone before The Brothel In Rosenstrasse appeared," you wail. The same sort of good intentions applied to Extro's publication of the Watson interview.) Likewise, the special Ballard limited edition distributed as an Interzone free gift is reprinted from Ambit---pasted up from Ambit's very pages, in fact. Far be it from me to criticize, but should dwellers in glass collectives really throw such stones?

(3) Many thanks for wishing Extro good luck: of course I wish the same to Interzone, particularly if it buys my stories. As you piously hope, the second issue of Extro is indeed an improvement: of course I wish the same for Interzone.

I wonder if BSFA members imagine you weighing each word with utmost care as the result of long cognition, before finally setting down your immortal letter-column responses? I don't. I imagine you in much the same state

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CHANGED  
COMPLETELY!



THE EDITORS  
STOPPED  
BITCHING,  
FOR ONE  
THING

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as D. Langford with Ansible, bashing out pithy comments and later wondering whether the need to be brief hasn't made you overstate your case. Often Ansible comments have turned out crueller or ruder than intended (if only there were space and time to do it right!), and sometimes I suspect the same thing when I read bitchy little comments from such a truly wonderful human being as Graham James...

Dave added a very friendly "PS", rather opposite to Martyn Taylor's orifice-allegations:-

MARTYN TAYLOR  
5 KIMPTON ROAD  
CAMBERWELL  
LONDON SE5 7EA

Dave Langford took you to task re your comments on 'Extro' in the last Ansible, but in case you didn't get the message, you were talking out of your backside.

Extro 1 was not too hot, although 2 is a definite improvement. On the other hand it did contain rather more than you gave the impression of there being. There were even stories by new writers, something more conspicuous by their absence from Interzone 1...

But that is falling into your trap. We ought to be encouraging BOTH publications. They are not aiming for the same market, after all, and there is room for both (let's hope so, at least). If you, as an individual, have some grievance against Extro (or anything else) then take off your editor's hat and say it as an individual. Do not abuse your position as editor of the BSFA's magazine to make personal points. After what went before your 'Good luck to it...' has all the sincerity of a nine pound note. Interzone doesn't need that sort of 'support' and Extro doesn't deserve that sort of attack.

I did not make those comments on Extro as a means of trying to slap it down and promote Interzone. What I said was substantially true, although I now accept that because of the brevity of the comments, they were mis-leading and I did rather leave myself open to allegations of skulduggery. Dave (non-fiction editor of Extro) does make a good point about "hasty" editorial comments (his comments on Malcolm Edwards, in Ansible, are a good example. The letter column takes the longest of the sections in Matrix to prepare but, sometimes, one does add comments off-the-top-of-one's-head, to fill a few lines and I stand accused and guilty! I agree, also, with Martyn (contributor of a letter to issue 2 of Extro) Taylor that both magazines deserve encouragement and Issue 2 of Extro has improved, as I have remarked in the news section. To a large extent, the magazines are not in competition, they do have different ideas and aims. But, as to whether or not I'm abusing the editorial role with the use of D's cartoons.....

MICHAEL ASHLEY  
86 ST JAMES ROAD  
MITCHAM SURREY CR4 2DB

Ken Mann makes a reasonable point about your use of D's cartoons. They do have an influence if only at a

subconscious level (D West = bigger fan than E Harvey, therefore I'll write to Matrix disagreeing with E and gosh I've just thought of this good image of a cornucopia...). And at the conscious level I don't actually like being told what to think because I've had a chance to make up my own mind. The implication is that the average Matrix reader is slightly stupid and needs a few nudges in the direction of the right way of thinking.

Mike's comments are laughable. I'm quite sure that 99.9% of members are more than able to form their own views. The cartoons are used for humour and try to match the point being made in the letter; they no more tell you what to think than the letter itself. Anyway, I'm off to have a quick brain-wash and I'll leave Mike to continue his point.

You seem to get a bit worked up over Chuck and, to some extent, Ken Mann. I actually think they're useful people to have around in that they're obviously discontented with the BSFA. Good for them! So far as I know there's always been a group of individuals sniping away at the BSFA, which is just as it should be. I only wish they could actually grasp things like elementary logic and first-year invective but still they're at least trying to keep you on your toes. The world would be a duller place without the curse of Silden House.

Whilst I don't know where the allegations emanated from (but Simon seems to hint), I also appear to be abusing my editorial position in regard to.....

SIMON BOSTOCK  
18 GALLOWAY INN CLOSE  
ILKESTON  
DERBYSHIRE DE7 4BW

The lettercol had some fairly interesting quotes, in particular the one from Chuck Connor. I don't agree with him at all that Matrix is now being used as your personalzine. I'm not certain, but I think the definition of "personalzine" runs along the lines of something largely editor-



written, on personal things or from people with stories of what's happened to them. *Matrix* isn't either. (Interestingly enough, I was sent a letter some time ago with a petition I was asked to sign, addressed to you and telling you not to vent your own opinions through the BSFA newsletter (for the simple reason that only members have a right to air their views; they must think you're tampering with the mailing list or something). Apparently I got a copy because, by my copies of *SUPERNOVA*, I seemed to hold these views....what I want to know is where those clues are. All I did was print a loc from Chuck, and even that had no connections with his protest.)

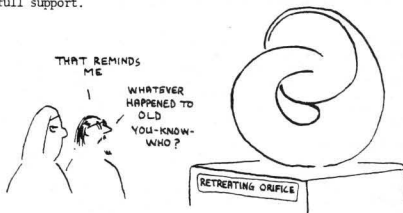
I refute the allegation, of course. Put simply, how on earth can I edit, if I don't comment? *Matrix* is the forum for members - but there must be editorial presence and this will reflect the editor's own personal opinions. Chris Priest covered this point, succinctly, in an interview with him in *Matrix* 33. I'm glad to see that the flyer Simon refers to came to nothing. However, I may have risen to the bait just once too often on my "feuds" with Chuck Connor and it is interesting that I received several letters asking me to refrain from the battle with C. Connor in future. DOROTHY DAVIES requested this, as did M. D. WIPPELE in a well-thought-out letter which he marked DND. I think that it has turned away from arguing a point (valid for *Matrix*) to a battle of personalities (invalid); I agree with Steve Ince, below, and I will withdraw from the saga:-

STEVE INCE  
26 HIGH STREET  
CHELTENHAM  
GLOS GL50 1DZ

It's a long time since I last wrote a letter to *Matrix*, but when flicking through the pages of the last issue I saw Chuck Connor's name (as usual). I thought I would see what he had to say for himself this time (having at one time been classed as part of the "gang of three" - or so it seemed) and read the letter. Quite frankly I was a little embarrassed by

the way that he goes on and on and on and on and on and on....

Now, I can remember the time that Chuck bemoaned the fact that there was so much bickering and back-biting going on within the realms of fandom, but here he is, now, the worst culprit. It appears as though he goes to great depth with his "moles" and the like just to get at one or two little things. But it is a complete waste of time, for I (and I'm sure many others) find it completely boring. And I simply cannot understand his attitude to the *Interzone* affair as someone who was once the champion of the fictionzine cause. I, for one, think that *Interzone* is a great idea and give it my full support.



As for you, Graham, I think that you are wrong to respond in the way that you do. Admittedly it is difficult not to respond when there is a person dragging your name through the mud with every chance that he gets. Not only is it getting boring - as you mentioned in M41 - but such petty squabbling should be left out of *Matrix* altogether. Chuck accuses you of turning *Matrix* into your own personalzine, but seems a little ridiculous when he insists that his letters are published in *Matrix*. I think I shall scream if I see his name in *Matrix* without being next to

something relevant. Which is a shame as Chuck is likeable enough in other ways and has produced some very interesting zines (more notably *SELF ABUSED*, BUT STILL STANDING).

I take exception to a couple of points that William Bains brings up in his letter in M41. He says, "The BSFA exists for furthering science fiction..." But what does this mean? And does the BSFA exist to further science fiction? As far as I see it, the BSFA exists purely for the members, providing information on the science fiction world, forthcoming books, etc, and for a platform for discussion and debate. If this happens, at the same time, to further SF, then all well and good. But the BSFA is the membership. The analogy with Laker and Laker Enterprises falls down for the simple reason that Laker was the force behind Laker Enterprises, whereas John Brunner is merely another member of the BSFA - albeit a fairly famous one.

Ken Brown also got entangled with William Bains's ideas:-

KEN BROWN  
351 DITCHLING ROAD  
BRIGHTON

The main purpose of this letter is to take up some of the points that William Bains raised in the lettercol of *Matrix* 41.

To quote William: "One problem that I dimly perceive in the BSFA is its inability to separate its members from itself. It acts as a collection of individuals, not as an organisation...." Well, to be honest mate, one problem that I dimly perceive in the human race is our ability to think of organisations as separate from their members. We get a group, whether it's a little one, like "my class at school", a great big one, such as "China" or a middle-sized sort of thing like the BSFA. Then we think and talk of it as if it was an autonomous entity rather than a collection, as if it was a thing-in-itself instead of something that exists only in the mind, as a convenient label.

This leads to two big problems. The first is that you can become detached from the groups you are a member of. You can behave as if you have no responsibility for its actions. This is the source of the "it wasn't me, it was the uniform" defence, which was pretty well blown at Nuremberg.

The other trouble is that we allow the group to control our actions. What this means in practice is that we let whatever clique controls the group (there nearly always is one) to dictate to

us. Of course I'm not going to pretend that the BSFA is a powerful force for evil in society, or is controlled by a nasty fascist oligarchy, or even that it matters a damn what the BSFA does. But, the principle is the same.

William asks us "for the sake of the BSFA as an organisation" to refrain from using *Matrix* to discuss nuclear weapons, "building practice codes, the novels of Barbara Cartland, the sex life of frogs". But if the members want to, why not? The BSFA doesn't exist, other than as a label for a few hundred assorted fans. If some of them want to talk about frogs in *Matrix*, let them. And if John Brunner feels morally obliged to bring the prospect of destruction to the members through *Matrix*, let him.

And while we're at it, Freddie Laker is an unfortunate example to use. William again: "Laker Airways is bankrupt. Laker is not. Paradox? No - they are not the same." Well, if one man, in a blundering attempt to line his own pocket can waste more money (other people's money) than the entire population of Burundi earn in a year, put 7,000 people out of work and still keep his Rolls-Royces and his huge mansion in Surrey, I don't call it a paradox, I call it a crime. And if he's not responsible for his actions in law, it just shows whose side the law is on.

Nidip, Croak, Nidip..... Not all were against Will Bains's ideas. An intelligent frog and Leeds Group Member from Harrogate jumps to his defence:-

DAVID V. BARRETT  
31 MAYFIELD GROVE  
HARROGATE  
N. YORKS.

William Bains is right: personal views on disarmament, politics, religion etc do not belong in *Matrix* except when they are SF-related. If anyone wants to set up 'SF Readers Against Argentinian Aggression' (cf. Feminists Against the Bomb, Rock Against Racism, etc), fine, and I may well join them, but just as not all feminists are against the Bomb, and not all rock groups and listeners are against racism, so with SF readers, including BSFA members, who are, on the whole, a bunch of intelligent, well read, socially aware and often highly individualistic individuals (excuse the tautology).

It would almost be worth going back into teaching, and joining (horrors!) the NUT (I was an NAS man for those few years of hell), just for the pleasure of resigning over their current so-called democratic stance on disarmament. (Anything less democratic than a union decision-making process would be hard to find outside the Buenos Aires Parliament Buildings. Or the Kremlin.) I strongly defend the right of individuals to group together to form non-violent pressure groups to push their views. But an existing organisation, whether a church, a union, or the BSFA, must not make itself into a pressure group on matters a large number of its members may not agree with, and which are not fundamental *raison d'être* of the organisation. The BSFA is 'an organisation for anyone interested in SF' (my emphases) says the advert, and while that certainly includes, for example, John Brunner and his CND chums, it must not exclude those who disagree with him, either explicitly or, by seeming to take those views unto itself, implicitly.

I can't quite see how the publication of members' views in these columns, whether it be on frogs or CND, turns the organisation into a "pressure group". *Matrix* is mailed only to BSFA members and contributors - it doesn't form a policy-making document, a manifesto, or out else. And mother frog, spawns her view:-

MARJORIE BRUNNER  
THE SQUARE HOUSES  
PALMER STREET  
SOUTH PETHERTON  
SOMERSET TA13 5DB

As Dorothy Davies referred to me in her letter to *Matrix*, I am tempted to write to you as a writer's wife and SF

fan of many years.

John wrote his letter partly as a result of support we had received by writers in France and Italy. I started to write letters to British writers to gain support for the Appeal by





European writers. I eventually got the support of the Society of Authors and the Writers' Guild. The Crime Writers' Association turned down the publication of the appeal because it was 'political'. But DESMOND BAGLEY wrote me a long letter of support.

I feel sorry that so many fans do not consider that this subject is worthy of debate in your columns, concerned only with the fantasy of science fiction, because I now have on file the backing of 250 writers, journalists, poets, playwrights, novelists ..... which includes a formidable number of the most eminent names in the literary scene, and many of our respected science fiction writers, TV and Radio personalities who are also writers and most of the leading SF writers in France. In addition, Bernt Engelmann, the Vice President of International P.E.N. in Germany, has collected the support of thousands of European writers from the U.S.S.R. and Finland to Portugal and Greece. So I feel that some fans are outnumbered by the number of writers who do feel extremely concerned, including those who were at the Eastercon in Brighton.

So you see this is not a matter of John Brunner's views or of his wishing to get on a soap box. This appeal is supported by Nobel Prize winners, Booker Prize winners and thousands of other concerned WRITERS, whatever the genre.

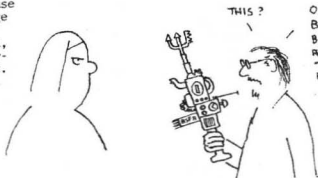
If I were to conduct a straw poll on the views of members, I'd find that their views were fairly evenly balanced on CND, with a slight majority erring towards disarmament. More importantly, the vast majority defend John's right to air his views, and I hope Marjorie's impression on this is corrected. Waving banners, of course, may not change anyone's views "... if you go on carrying pictures of Chairman Mao, it ain't gonna change anybody, anyhow..." said Lennon and McCartney, but it does focus the issue in the public mind. It amazes me that, when people discover a view with which they disagree, their first line of attack is to say that the view shouldn't be aired. We then sail very close to the questions revolving round censorship and control, as the BBC have found of late with their attempt at "balanced" coverage of the Falklands war. Jim Darroch reflected on this point in his letter:-

JIM DARROCH  
21 CORSLIST ROAD  
CURRIE  
MIDLOTHIAN EH14 5LZ

I wonder how many people actually notice how their freedoms are being eroded away, day by day? Whether it be TV surveillance in shops/pubs, compulsory seat-belt wearing, freedom to walk about at any time, day or night, without being picked-up by the cops (Bradbury's story 'The Pedestrian' is not SF any more, is it) or, even more frightening, the gigantic erosion of civil liberty arising through the security required for the nuclear industry. You are not even allowed to ignore your census form.

Since my earliest SF-reading days, I have thought that the best SF is that which extrapolates present-day trends, conditions, etc into a future scenario. In other words, it is a way of examining the present through a sort of distancing effect. The works of Ellison, Dick and Brunner demonstrate this. It is surely ludicrous for so-called SF fans to claim, therefore, that unemployment bears no relation to SF. What the hell do they think that SF is? They probably think that 1984 is SF, as you said in THINK ONCE, after all, such a police state could never happen here..... COULD IT? (If you believe that, you'll believe anything.) An interesting comparison can be made with 1984 in *Cancer Ward* and *Ivan Denisovich* by Solzhenitsyn - would these same readers call these books SF? No, of course not. We all know how nasty and corrupt the Soviet State is, don't we? Good Ole USA.

One final point - can we use the pages of *Matrix* to encourage a total ban on the carrying of weapons at cons? At Channellcon, there was one stupid bugger carrying a double-headed axe about. Please note that we, in Edinburgh, at RA Con, will NOT allow anyone to remain at the con if they are carrying weapons such as the above. Toy laser guns are OK, but swords, etc are just stupid and should be kicked out of all future Fancy Dress events at cons.



I suppose someone will point out that banning weapons would amount to censorship and control! Jeff Suter echoes the views on personal freedom and then refreshes the parts that SF can't reach with a criticism or two of the BSFA Awards:-

JEFF SUTER  
18 NORTON CLOSE  
SOUTHWICK FAREHAM  
HANTS PO17 6HD

Well the bleeding hearts and Riders of the Apathy Age seem to have been shocked into writing, to return to *Matrix* that feeling of safety, they don't like rocking the Status Quo - nor do they like anyone else to do so. Witness the letters column in M41, particularly William Bains's letter. Ye Gods, SF is about the Real World, the dangers of nuclear proliferation have been a subject of SF since the late '30s. Trying to separate SF and Nuclear Debate is impossible. Sure *Matrix* is a forum for SF enthusiasts, but if the Bomb goes up there sure as hell won't be any SF readers left. The most dangerous suggestion is that you, as editors, should censor political letters. Hell's Teeth, we in this country are subject to enough censorship, secret files and sinister surveillance by other bodies without that particularly nasty disease creeping in to the BSFA. Bosfa has always seemed to be made up of individuals brought together by their admira-

ation of SF, but as individuals they also bring with them their own ideas, ideals and philosophy - many of which coincide with others within the Association. However, the BSFA is large enough to accommodate people of different persuasions and just because one element of those diversified groups/individuals object to some point of view is not, and never should be, an excuse for selective censorship. I could always call for censorship on those of a Right Wing persuasion, or those objecting to political subjects being aired in *Matrix*. Blandness and apathy are the enemies of us all and the Ally of the Dogs of War.

Okay, speech making over, now onto SF Awards.

Just lately the subject of Awards in the Science Fiction world have come under the gaze of fanish wordsmiths, many of whom have come to the conclusion that they are no longer required. This is based on the fact that some have become little more than a Hype Race (Nebula) or are not representative of the Majority (Hugo & Checkpoint/Ansible). Let's take fannish awards first. Mike Ashley feels that not enough people vote for these - that isn't the fault of the Awards' system but the fault of Joe Phan for not voting. Again, the Riders of the Apathy Age enter the picture. Many of these awards are light hearted and an excuse for some spoof politicking and feuding. In some ways it is also a recognition that all one's work as a fan editor/writer/letter writer/artist has not been in vain, somebody out there is actually reading the stuff one toils, sweats and cries over. There is nothing as soul destroying as putting pen to paper and no-one replies or even acknowledges the fact that you have done your best. Of course British fan writing (and that of European and Australian fan writing) does not get a fair crack of the voting in something like the Hugo awards because it is dominated by the Americans, so a purely British Award is one way of redressing the balance. Which isn't to say that British fanwriters shouldn't persevere with trying to crack the Hugos. Perhaps we Brits should institute an International Award just to show WE are egalitarian. After saying that, I see that Bob Shaw is once again voicing his doubts over accepting the Hugo Fan Award. I say to Bob that he *did* win it as a fan of 30 years standing, and deservedly so.

Onto the professional awards. The Nebula has fallen to the dictates of writing for profit and profit. A Nebula award is a great selling device for author and publisher alike. With free copies accompanied by endorsements and recommendations for SFWA members to vote. And it shows, too, that there are those who feel that this is wrong within SFWA. Well done, Lisa Tuttle, for withdrawing 'The Bone Flute' when she found out that Hype had entered the race. Courageous too, as it appears that she would have won. (Full details in ANSIBLE 25.) Perhaps her comment at the end sums up disquiet about the Nebula: "I don't go along with Chris (Priest) in thinking the Nebula should be abolished, but I do think that, as it exists now, it is pretty much a farce." Unfortunately, change in the voting for the Nebula can only come from within SFWA and members of Lisa Tuttle's calibre are few and far between.

As for the Hugos, British writers have fared a little better, but not much, and the plight of the European and Australian writer is worse. Unfortunately, most Worldcons are predominantly American, even Seacon did not produce a change in voting preferences. The only cure for this is if more Brits sign up for Worldcons and vote, vote, vote. However, here there is scope for change in voting systems, but once again, it means putting the pressure on via participation.

Now, to our very own awards. At Channellon I watched the award ceremonies and perhaps I was more disenchanted with the actual format than any doubts about the acceptability and desirability of the awards. For example, while presenting the awards, our man Joe Nicholas said that the actual, physical, award could not be made due to the fact that the votes were only known the night before and the award could not be engraved in time. OK, but why not present the award to the recipient and then, afterwards, quietly take it back for engraving or personalising. More dramatic and more satisfying to the audience. Perhaps a photographer (there are hundreds at a convention, myself amongst them) could be on hand to record officially the ceremonies for Bosfa (good copy for *Matrix*, a record for posterity and good for publicity). Also, I still see that both BSFA and publishers still call our award The British SF Award. How unexciting. I thought it was called 'The Carnell'. A small point, but the name has more impact. It rolls off the tongue with a rough familiarity (apologies to etc....), a list of names of awards would then have a completeness about it; The Nebula, Hugo, Carnell, Prix Apollo, Ditmar. What do the rest of you think?

THE SO-CALLED  
WINNER OF THIS  
TEDIOUS LITTLE  
AWARD...

(WHICH I APPEAR  
TO HAVE LEFT  
IN THE BAR  
SOMEPLACE)



IS A PERSON  
WHO NEEDS  
(AND GETS) LITTLE  
OR NO INTRODUCTION...

PARTICULARLY SINCE ALL  
YOU CRETINS SEEM TO  
HAVE IGNORED MY  
PERFECTLY CLEAR  
INSTRUCTIONS  
AND VOTED FOR  
THE WRONG ONE

I have written, in my editorial, that there should be fannish awards given, alongside the BSFA Awards. As to the latter, it is true that the Bosfa (or Carnell, or British SF Award) has little or no real publishing significance. It features on book blurbs, occasionally, but is less likely to sell a copy that a full-page advertisement in the Keele University fanzine, PHANTASIAAGORIA (Penguin recently quoted, in one of their publishing hand-outs, that a book was receiving "a full-page advert in PHANTASIAAGORIA".... ho ho, not even a mention of a quarter page in *Vector*).

My remarks, and those of Nick Flynn have provoked rising genetic engineer, computer freak and microbiologist, William Bains, to explain the finer points of intelligent life:-

WILLIAM BAINS  
182 SEDEXBOR ROAD  
COVENTRY CV3 4DZ

As both a computer freak and a molecular biologist I tell Nick Flynn that he should look up 'determinism', 'Eccles and Popper', 'target-oriented behavior', and 'bloody mindedness' before he makes a statement like 'machines do NOT get 'smarter'". A drole paper in 'Ceil' a sixmonth ago showed the path taken by some living cells (fibroblastic, so there) over a surface littered with tiny metal particles so that we could see where they had been. The cells were in a medium suitable for binary division, their normal mode of replication.

The tracks showed where several cells had paused to divide in their wanderings. The daughter cells wandered off from the site of the happy event ... in paths that were near mirror images. Apparently random, their motion was actually being guided by internal logic that we knew nothing about. They have no 'nervous system', no analogue of the brain of the microprocessor and, unless you want to postulate that every cell in your body has its own mind (and every protein in the cell, and every atom in the protein...), no mind. Living things, but not with that randomness we associate with life. Their motions were determined.

And so, if that large collection of cells called Nick Flynn says that inert, programmed, determined mechanisms cannot learn, cannot get smarter, well, his mother must have had a hell of a shock when the midwife smacked his bottom.

Anyway, there are computer programs around now that can be taught facts disparate from those which they already 'know', and can integrate them into a logical structure. Any idiot can design a machine that has 'purpose' (one was running around the Edinburgh Artificial Intelligence Unit for a while, plugging itself into the mains whenever its batteries got low). The only problem with putting learning ('heterologous data acquisition' if you want long terms - just made it up) programming into such a robot is that there is absolutely no point in doing it at the present stage of the game. Because today it is just a game.

But your editorial comment to that letter really takes the denture denter. What the hell is Matrix but the product of a hundred machines? Can you look me in the phototube and say that you wrote every copy out by hand from spoken interviews and conversations on handmade paper? Everyone is so shit-hot about this 'new technology' when it is but a small step compared to what the Luddites were faced with, and with what we will get in the next few centuries if linear or exponential development along these lines continues.

Last comment. '...they only give a semblance of intelligence'. I know several people who got good degrees on a semblance of intelligence. Lots of learning, lots of conditioned responses to questions, no thought. But just what are they doing? Operating Microsoft Basic? This whole letter demonstrates the usual fannish desire to be critic and pundit on intellectual sand. Wiser minds than mine have said what comes of this.

*William makes his point, of course, by stretchin' definitions to the extreme but, far be it for me to argue with one so knowledgeable on the subject.*

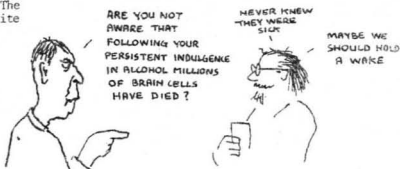
The news of Dick's sad death led to several personal comments from contributors, in particular, a request that VECTOR should devote a special issue to him. Lisa Tuttle's "dream-like" day led to praise, reflected by Nik Morton:-

NIK MORTON  
235 WEST STREET  
FAREHAM  
HANTS PO16 0HZ

Lisa Tuttle's "A Day in the Life" was cleverly written in the same dreamlike manner of her thoughts; her wrestling with reading and reality, the quandry posed by the blurring of unreality-reality was well done. I felt as though I was once more treading through Chris Priest's "Dream Archipelago"; an intriguing piece, worth re-reading. And it is surprising how familiar some of the fantasies are... Yes, perhaps so-called reality is the dream... It seemed quite appropriate to follow Lisa's article with your tribute to the late Philip K Dick: his reality-questioning, mind-expanding imagination and prose will be missed. John Brunner's small but moving memoir, "a person busy destroying himself", does make me wonder how many other SF writers have "destroyed themselves" - a quick glance through the Who's Who and Encyclopaedia indicates quite a few... Is there a message here, as John Brunner implies...?

JOHN SPURRIER-DAVIES pointed out that the TIMES did, in fact, carry an epituary for Dick and NIK HOWARD advised me that Dick's first published story appeared in PLANET STORIES (July 1952) and that his first sale was to FSF.

MISS CAROL GREEN of 6 Hazelwood Avenue, Osbalduick, York, wrote that "it had taken her a long time before she found the BSFA, so why don't we advertise more?" Perhaps, if we did, we would no longer be able to run the organisation as we do at present, on a part-time, unpaid basis. A large influx of members would be very difficult to handle. She is also interested in finding a local club in York - any offers? Maybe, Carol, you could take the short journey to Leeds, where we meet every Friday night in the VITTLE INN (West Riding Hotel) - just round the corner from the Station.



ARE YOU NOT  
AWARE THAT  
FOLLOWING YOUR  
PERSISTENT INDULGENCE  
IN ALCOHOL FILLS  
OF BRAIN CELLS  
HAVE DIED?

NEVER KNEW  
THEY WERE  
SLIP

MAYBE WE  
SHOULD HOLD  
A WAKE

MARTYN TAYLOR (again) took the BSFA Committee to task for their handling of the Ken Eadie affair, and CHRIS HUGHES offered a number of suggestions, including an idea that the BSFA should have only one magazine, incorporating all the various bits and pieces and all the existing magazines. A piece of administrative tidying up which would, in my opinion, be wholly unwelcome.

PAUL DEMBINA wrote in praise of Angela Carter and Channelcon and added that he met me at the con, "in the presence of a slightly intoxicated D West (very enigmatic)". No Paul, D West was very intoxicated and slightly enigmatic. JOHN BARK wrote in total disgust at Keith Walker's fanzine (see review column) BRIGHTON ROCK 1:- "It is filled with pointless, childish scrawls depicting sexual organs - the sort of thing you expect to see in primary school lavatories, not at your breakfast table. These have absolutely no connection with the text, are crudely drawn and are not even funny. They are simply offensive, and suggest Keith has a screw loose somewhere."

We Also Heard From: ??? ONNELL, with some art-work, COLIN GREENLAND ("Who is the strange pilgrim in the work of Philip K Dick?"), GARRY ANDREWS ("Interzone loses 9.15 to 5.04 against Extro on his scale of rating..."), KEITH MACKIE, STEVE GREEN, JAN HUXLEY, JIMMY ROBERTSON, JOHN HOBSON (with a review which pressure of space prevented us from including), CY CHAUVIN, LESLEY MATCH (or was it HATCH?), SANDY BROWN AND KEVIN BUSBY whose letters arrived whilst Linda was typing this page!, and EVE HARVEY who told me that the final copy is required by 22nd May ..... HELP!

## MAGAZINE NEWS

A new magazine QUARTZ may or may not send alarm bells ringing, but its second issue is now out, covering new short fiction from Anthony Blagg and Steve Sneyd and articles, including an interview with Mike Moorcock. Subscriptions are £2.50 for four issues or 80p for the second issue (post free). Details from Diamond Press, 23 Raygill Wilnecote, Staffs, England. This is a semi-pro venture, including letters, articles, free advertisements and involving Steve Sneyd, Eunice Pearson, Anthony Blagg and others from the fan fiction world.

Amazing Stories has been sold to a new company (Dragon Publishing - a subsidiary of the D&D firm TSR Hobbies); George Scithier will be the new editor. The magazine may move to a bi-monthly schedule in early '83. The editorial changeover will take place in September.

Issue 2 (April/May '82) of EXTRO has appeared; an improvement, I would say, in my unbiased opinion, on Issue 1. Included is fiction from Bob Shaw, James White, Richard Cowper, Jim Johnston, Edward Mackin and Ian McDonald, nonfiction from Chris Evans and an interview with James White. Price is 75p; the lay-out and illustration are quite good. Meanwhile, Issue 2 of INTERZONE (Summer '82) will be out in mid-June - see M41 for details.

FOCUS (not the BSFA version) - see M40 for details - will not now be appearing due to a financial reversal from the proposed publisher, CPK Industries. If you have submitted a M.S., this will be returned, but possibly by surface mail.

## AND NOW A WORD FROM OUR SPONSOR....

At last your venerable Chairman gets a word in edgeways. Rushing between Fearnville Terrace and St.James Hospital, Leeds has meant a cut-back in my activity as regards the BSFA in the last few days, so if anybody is awaiting a response to a letter or whatever, please bear with me. There is a lot I would like to say about the AGM held at Channelcon, but no doubt this can wait until the next mailing. However, there is just one item which I must bring to your notice and that is the subject of Ken Eadie. As you know, Ken was our Business Manager for a good part of last year, but because of his various activities, he no longer holds that position. This has already been stated in Matrix twice, but I am repeating it for the benefit of those members who might have heard a little bit about the Ken Eadie affair, and more importantly, for those who know nothing of it.

Basically, the Committee felt that Ken was not working with the rest of us, but rather against us, despite constant reminders and requests to change his methods. Suffice it to say, Ken was unfortunately causing us a few problems, and action had to be taken. The BSFA council operates on a basis of mutual trust, and quite frankly, that was in severe danger of being breached. At the AGM it was decided that Ken be removed from the post of Business Manager. He was already technically in breach of this by virtue of failing to renew his membership within a three month period of having let it lapse. Ken raised this point at the AGM and steps are being taken to provide hard facts as to when he left the BSFA and when he joined again. Finally, I would like to emphasise that Ken does not have the power to transact any BSFA Business on our behalf, and that anyone discovering him acting in this capacity should advise me urgently so that the appropriate action can be taken. Fine. See you all next issue.

ALAN DOREY