

MATRIX

45





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ISSUE BY:

ALAN & ROCHELLE
DOREY DOREY

AT

22 Summerfield Drive,
MIDDLETON,
Greater Manchester, M24 2WW

Tel: 061-653-6293

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Chairman of the BSFA is: Alan Dorey, 22 Summerfield Drive, MIDDLETON, Gtr. Manchester

ARTWORK CREDITS:

SHEP KIRKBRIDE - Cover, 11, 27; PETE WALKER - 2; PHIL PROBERT - 3; NIK MORTON - 10; JOHN KERR - 13, 15; KEVIN CLARK/STEVE GREEN-- 16, 19; D.WEST - 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 36.

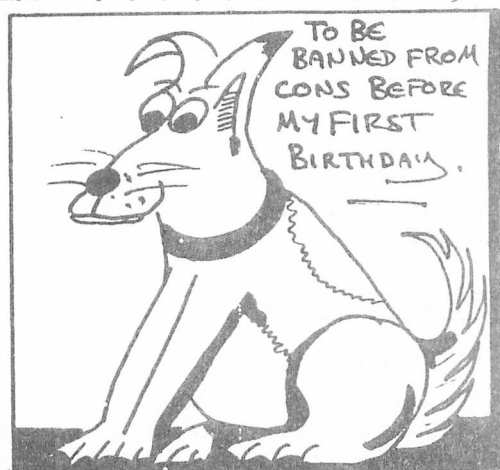
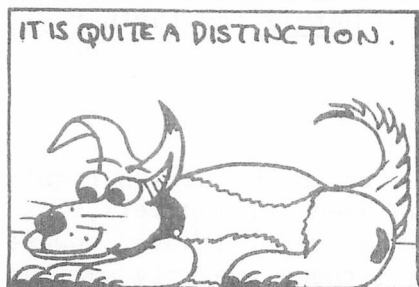
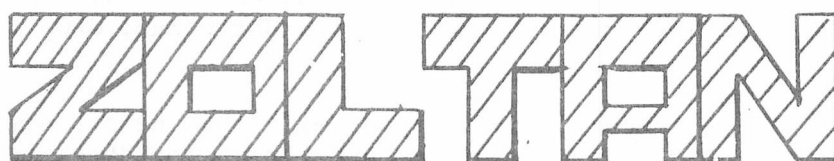
Many thanks for all the regular contributors and correspondents, without whom, etc. Very special thanks to John & Eve for tirelessly printing this issue, to Keith Freeman for organising the mailing sessions (and devoting much of his valuable spare time to the BSFA) and advance thanks for all the mailing session collators and their valued ministrations.

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The DEADLINE for MATRIX 46 is JANUARY 16th 1983 - please ensure that any submissions are with the editors prior to this date. The address to write to for the present is:

ALAN & ROCHELLE DOREY, 22 Summerfield Drive, MIDDLETON, Greater Manchester, M24 2WW.

EDITORIAL

You haven't had the pleasure of reading my little column of BSFA news for a few issues now. Moving house some four times in one year is pretty exhausting, and even less conducive to actually being able to settle down and collect one's thoughts sufficiently to put typer to paper. However, now resident in our own home, I can at last dust down my desk, pull out the typewriter and bash enough keys in the almost correct order to make myself understood.

The Editorial position on Matrix is thus: A number of people have applied, so far unsuccessfully, for the editorship. There are now two names up for consideration by the committee at a meeting that will have taken place the day prior to the mailing session that committed this issue of Matrix to the GPO. Both are highly suitable and it's simply a question of the committee deciding which of the two worthy candidates will be selected. In view of that fact that in all probability, the new editor won't have much time to get the next issue together (and because I have been unable to announce the new editor's name and address), I shall more than likely be putting the next issue together. More of the same! I will, of course, be involving the new editor to a certain degree, so that they can get into the swing of things and get used to little things like deadlines and how to co-erce material out of people in three easy stages. (Hit them, hit them again, collect).

Oddly enough, I'm quite enjoying editing again - following my one-off Vector earlier in the year - and could even get back down to producing the first issue of Gross Encounters in over a year. Still, on with the news:

POSTERS

Jim Barker has been hard at work, chained to his desk, for the past few months designing a new BSFA poster. This is now available from the Matrix Editorial address for interested people, chiefly those who have access to a suitable display site, be it a shop-window or a University/College/School notice-board. Please let me know how many copies you would like, and send a large STAMPED SAE, or else I won't be able to mail them out. There is also a limited edition of the poster available without the advertising copy, simply BSFA and a large blank space for you to advertise your own local group. I hope to start despatching the posters shortly after Christmas, GPO willing.

Jim has also designed a new badge for us, since supplies of our existing one are now extremely limited. This will be available very shortly from Sandy Brown for the princely sum of 25p, plus a STAMPED SAE. Please watch out for a future Matrix for further details.

BIBLIOGRAPHIES:

Paul Kincaid and Geoff Rippington are hard at work on the third in the series right now. The first bibliography, produced towards the end of 1981 has been selling well, but is still available from Geoff Rippington at the VECTOR editorial address. I have, however, a very small number of bibliographies signed by Bob Shaw, and these are only available DIRECT from myself for a remittance for £1.20 (including post and packing) made payable to BSFA Ltd. Stocks are very limited, so I suggest you get moving right away.

ORBITER

The Orbiter writers' workshop is now being run by DOROTHY DAVIES. Details are available from Dorothy at: 3 Cadels Row, FARINGDON, Oxon. However, Dorothy regrets that she will be unable to enter into any correspondence unless a stamped S.A.E is enclosed. With 3 humans and 2 birds to support, Dorothy needs your assistance!

INTERZONE

A healthy number of BSFA stalwarts have seen the light and signed up for subscriptions to INTERZONE, now into its fourth issue. With issue three, the page count was increased and interior illustrations introduced, so it is definitely THE SF magazine to subscribe to. Many important writers have featured in its pages thus far, including Michael Moorcock, J.G. Ballard, M. John Harrison, Gary Kilworth, Angela Carter, together with a growing band of exciting new authors, the very raison d'etre of INTERZONE.

Issue 4 is currently at the printers being typeset, and will hit the streets early in the new year, but now is the time to take out a subscription:

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BSFA AWARD 1982

Fresh from Kevin Smith's success at Chicon, the 1982 Worldcon (where he presented a couple of the BSFA's awards to Tom Disch and Gene Wolfe), we now encounter this year's Award, to be announced at Albacon II, the 1983 British Easter SF Convention. Whilst that's still 4 months away, NOW is the time to be collecting your thoughts on the best SF that has appeared during 1982. Enclosed with this mailing you'll find the Nomination Form, together with a list of notes and instructions. These should be completed and returned as soon as possible to JOSEPH NICHOLAS at the Paperback Inferno address. From your nominations, a shortlist in each of the categories will be drawn up and sent out in the February 1983 mailing, thus enabling you (and also the Albacon II attendees) to select your choices for the winners.

DAVE LANGFORD ON TV !

(By our TV Correspondent, Rochelle Dorey)

On Wednesday, November 24th, famed author of 'The Space Eater', D.R. Langford appeared on Granada TV's afternoon version of the BBC's 'Pebble Mill at One', 'Exchange Flags'. This live broadcast (from Liverpool) included a feature on Telepathy, and our friend and colleague, DRL, was speaking against the subject. Unfortunately a victim of limited airtime, DRL performed very well, but the question must be asked, what was he doing in Liverpool, and did Hazel know? I think we should be told.

FINALLY...

I don't know what to say about Graham and Linda James' marvellous job at editing Matrix. No praise is too high. Through all the difficulties they endured, they came up with the goods, every time. I salute them.



REVIEWS

REVIEWS: Unfortunately, we're somewhat low on the reviews side this issue of Matrix. Whilst we're not flush enough to provide all-expenses-paid trips to the latest movies, we are more than happy to receive reviews of films, TV or radio productions that you might have come across. Any submissions would be more than welcome, so do please send them into the Matrix Editorial address. (22 Summerfield Drive, MIDDLETON, Greater Manchester, M24 2WW for the time being - Alan & Rochelle Dorey, interim editors). Right - I'm typing this on November 20th, and here we have a review of the recent Radio 4 production of Ray Bradbury's FARENHEIGHT 451, first broadcast a mere 7 days ago. Who says we're not up to date?

ASHES WITHOUT PHOENIX: "FARENHEIGHT 451" reviewed by PHILIP NICHOLS

((Farenheight 451, BBC Radio 4 13th November 1982, Directed by Brian Miller))

In settling down to listen to this new Radio 4 production of Ray Bradbury's novel, I wondered how successfully the essential Bradburian quality of the images would come across in the absence of the narrative; how do you capture Bradbury without the use of his own by now over-used adjective and metaphor-packed prose? The simple answer, and the one used by the dramatist Gregory Evans, is: You don't. You just quote whole chunks out of the book verbatim and dramatise the chatty bits. Indeed the entire play is a direct adaptation of the novel, in many cases using complete and unedited dialogue lifted straight off the page.

Does it work? On the whole, the answer is yes. The story is fundamentally a dramatic one, with an intertwining of the major and minor conflicts which lends a certain texture and increasing tension to the play. Montag, the everyday fireman-in-the-street (who has to start fires, remember), happens to meet up with Clarisse, who sweeps the autumn leaves into motion with every step she takes, and scents the air with "the faintest breath of fresh apricots and strawberries". Clarisse is "seventeen and crazy", and her very presence brings out in Montag a new appreciation of the world. Montag eventually grows tired of life with his wife who is always listening to the sea-shell radio and watching endless soaps and quiz shows on the "parlour walls". (For those of the SF-as-prophecy school, Bradbury's sea-shells are a remarkable premonition of personal stereos, and his description of the quizzes accurately fits 'Blankety Blank'). When Clarisse mysteriously disappears, Montag steals a book, eventually kills Beatty, the fire chief, and with the aid of Faber (a professor, not a publisher) runs away to join a community of college lecturers who are each learning a book by heart in order one day to save the world with their wisdom - acquired from Homer and Shakespeare and Melville, but not, strangely, Robert Heinlein or Barbara Cartland.

After the opening quote from a pretty poor narrator who sounds like a member of the news department or the Radio 4 continuity staff, the production soon comes alive with Montag's first chance encounter with Clarisse, a typically mischievous innocent, and yet wordily-wise Bradbury child, played rather flatly by Patience Tomlinson. I was not immediately disposed towards Michael Pennington, who sounds more of a physical lightweight than I had imagined Montag to be. However, he eventually delivers the goods with some gusto. The sudden disappearance of Clarisse is too under-emphasised, perhaps giving the impression that the character was added as an afterthought to pad out the exposition, whereas Clarisse is a prime mover in the whole sequence of events - a kind of mother-figure who instructs Montag in the beauty and evils in the world, and then disappears, leaving him to discover the truth of her words and take action he would rather leave to her.

The horror of the moment when Montag finds his wife has - without being in the least

aware of it - taken an overdose is similarly underplayed, and the yet greater horror he experiences as he watches his wife's stomach pumped out by and untrained paramedic who treats the event as routine is almost totally lost. However, the domestic wrangles between Montag and Millie are wonderfully balanced, Montag the newly converted romantic and rebel, seeing the evils Clarisse has talked about being brought to life in his own spouse; his wife content to take part in three-dimensional soap operas unfolding on the living room walls.

As with Montag, so with Beatty: I was at first unimpressed with Peter Miles' sinister playing of the manipulator Beatty, who is for me the most intriguing character of the book. With all his knowledge of literature - knowledge denied to Montag - he exemplifies what the book-hoarding Montag might have become if he had not met Clarisse. At one point, Montag comes close to this realisation, when he remarks that under other circumstances Beatty might have become a rebel (although, characteristically, he does not realise the corollary of his remark: "There but for the Grace of God..."). Beatty sees himself as a kind of renaissance fireman; in the book he wears the symbol of the phoenix on his helmet, an irony Bradbury plays upon at the end when the outcast Montag joins are likened to the fiery bird. The play omits any mention of the phoenix - a pity, since it is a most appropriate metaphor. Even though Peter Miles plays the role rather literally, his Beatty is just about the most impressive performance in the play, descending into ham only with his dying words (but when Bradbury writes "Go ahead now, you second-hand literateur, pull the trigger!", you have little choice).

The play shows up the weakness of Bradbury's original ending - the cliché of the rebel running off to join the other outcasts who will band together and free the world from tyranny just as soon as the tyranny obliges by blowing itself up - but itself weakens what is already there. The excitement of the chase (and one of Bradbury's best sequences in the book, where Montag approaches one of the last barriers to his escape, the enormously wide boulevard - "a vast bowling alley in the cool morning" - while at the same moment police helicopters appear overhead and the radio announces that war has been declared) is completely abandoned in the play, and so the bones of the plot, bared of the flesh of Bradbury's finest prose, show through as the weak structures that they are. As well as taking away the thrill of the chase, the impending destruction of the old order accompanying the symbolic escape is omitted, presumably because the effect on radio would have been lost in the absence of dialogue. Because the society does not self-destruct, the significance of Montag's escape is considerably lessened, and the final moments of the play, with the literateurs sitting around the camp fire discussing what they will one day do, come across not as triumphant, but as rather pathetic.

As for the technical realisation of the production, with the exception of the inane repetition of less than apt 'Dick Barton' type music, it is of a very high standard. The sounds of the fires are very impressive, and the sudden combustion of the house belonging to a book-hoarder is so suffocating that the heat can almost be felt. This, plus other clever use of sound effects (the brief recurring flare of Beatty's re-usable matchstick, the sound of the fire engine, the literally atmospheric sound of the autumn wind in the street scenes, the gruesomely authentic sounds of Montag vomiting) make the whole entirely convincing, and thankfully avoids the typical BBC electronic blips and squeaks that masquerade as futuristic backdrops in too many productions. The mechanical hound is kept suitably frightening by understatement; similar to the way in which Bradbury avoids giving much substance to the beast.

All in all, an entertaining evening's listening, a good piece of novel-into-drama radio, and even an emotive experience.

((With the advent of Channel 4 TV, let us hope that perhaps some new SF productions will come our way. Too late for inclusion in this Matrix, but nonetheless well worth mentioning is 'Book Four', a weekly half-hour show devoted to various aspects of publishing and writing. Introduced by Hermione Lee on Wednesdays at 6.30 p.m., there was a substantial interview with J.G. Ballard on 24-11-82))

BSFA SURVEY

Here are the results of the BSFA survey recently conducted via one of our mailings by Peter Holdsworth and Ken Lake. I've reproduced their results and commentary below, with a few added notes to clarify certain responses. It's interesting to note that their number of responses accounted for a shade over 12½% of the total BSFA membership, which in marketing terms, is an impressive figure. (Alan Dorey)

SF READING PREFERENCES: BSFA SURVEY RESULTS:

By Peter Holdsworth (who set the questions)
and Ken Lake (who was one of the respondents)

101 members of the BSFA took part in the survey, broken down as follows:

- 22 with less than one year's membership
- 24 with between one and two year's membership
- 15 with between two and three years membership
- 14 with three years' membership
- 26 with four or more years' membership.

Thus nearly 75% of the respondents are relatively new to the Association, perhaps indicative of greater keenness among newer members to answer questionnaires. (Again, as an added note, since Easter 1978, over 1200 new people have joined the BSFA, and with a current membership fluctuating around 800-900 members, one could say that the membership as a whole is relatively new).

Of the longer serving members, 7 had been around for 4 years, 6 for 5 years, 1 for 6 years, 2 for 7 years, 1 for 10 years, 1 for 13 years and 1 for 15 years. Another said 'since middle sixties, off and on', another 'over 20', yet another was a little uncertain ('23 or 24?'), while Ethel Lindsay boldly stated 'Founder Member' - and it was she who equally boldly denounced the "old wave/new wave" question in these terms:

"I do not like the label which I think too abstract and silly"

More about that particular question later. The next point of interest is, of course, Who did they vote for?:

THE TOP TEN FOR THE "SIX YEARS AGO" FAVOURITES

- | | | |
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| 1 - Isaac Asimov | 5 - Larry Niven = | 9 - E.E.'Doc' Smith= |
| 2 - Arthur C Clarke | 5 - Clifford D Simak = | 9 - John Wyndham = |
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| 4 - Michael Moorcock | 8 - Philip K.Dick | 9 - J.G.Ballard = |
| | | 9 - Jack Vance = |

In total, 81 authors were cited, and in most cases the top ten above reflect choices which gained in excess of ten votes or more (not everybody quoted five names in each category). Enid Blyton was included, which rather worried Peter, although Ken recalls 'Down the slippery slip' with pleasure from as long as 45 years ago). As with all groups, more than ten authors are represented in the list due to a number of ties.

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There is a great deal of similarity in choices when the six-year list is compared to the "three years ago" listing over page:

1 - Isaac Asimov (1)	3 - Ursula LeGuin (-) =	9 - Brian Aldiss (5) =
2 - Arthur C Clarke (2)	3 - Michael Moorcock (4) =	9 - Frank Herbert (-) =
3 - Robert A Heinlein (3) =	7 - Robert Silverberg (-)	9 - Larry Niven (5) =
3 - Philip K Dick (8) =	8 - J.G. Ballard (9)	

(Previous placings are given in brackets)

However, it's in the list of "Current Favourites" that we see the most change, and a fascinating picture it presents too:

- 1 - Philip K Dick (up from joint third place, and well merited too)
- 2 - Ursula LeGuin (up from joint third place to a deserved second spot)
- 3 - Gene Wofe (complete newcomer, but BSFA award winner)
- 4 - J.G. Ballard (well up on his last two placings)
- 5 - Chris Priest (also new and well deserved - only three votes in last group)
- 6 - Brian Aldiss (moving up again)
- 7 - Bob Shaw (also new - surprisingly un-represented previously)
- 8 - Larry Niven (moving a shade upwards again)
- 9 - Robert Silverberg (falling slightly)
- 10 - Jack Vance (just creeps back in) =
- 10 - Anne McCaffrey (two more votes than last time) =
- 10 - Isaac Asimov (from top to bottom in six years - oh dear!)

Some voters seem to have been a little perplexed by the whole thing, mostly it seems because they tended to equate 'how many books I have by this author' with his/her being 'favourite'. The problem is easy to grasp: if you have dozens of books by Mr. A, he is bound to loom large in your mind - yet you can 'grow out of him' and I fear that is what brough poor Isaac tumbling down. (Of course, newer writers won't have the same output and the presence of say, Chris Priest, with comparatively few volumes published, speaks a lot for the quality of what he produces.)

At this point, Ken Lake would like to put in a minority view: he feels that 'five favourite authors' is just too limiting, and that had we been asked for a larger number (or had no limit been quoted) many fine writers would have scored significantly higher on aggregate - because they were just squeezed out by the narrow choice band.

Now we come to what one respondant called 'a curious inflammatory question' and another 'an impossible question to answer' - the distinction in preference between 'old wave' and 'new wave' authors.

A simple check turned out to be not so simple. Agreed that 27 members voted straightforwardly for old wave, and 36 for new wave, but the remaining 38 expressed their feelings in many ways. Peter's analysis distinguishes:

No Preference	25
Didn't answer	13

However, Ken's analysis (on re-reading the forms) reads like this:

Like Both categories	: 20
Will not or cannot express a preference	: 18

So let's take a brief look at some of the comments inserted in this space:

- Don't agree with classification - Define 'new Wave' first - No - Wot? - probably but not necessarily - Neither! Good writing - Can't tell the difference!

Two people could not understand the question at all and said so; one more expressed himself a little more forcibly: 'What the fuck does that mean?'. It was noticeable that those who voted for old wave did so without comment, whereas a number of those

counted in here as new wave voters in fact added special riders to their votes, thus:

- But not experimental
- Broadly speaking
- (or mixture!)
- (as long as it is mind-challenging)
- for all a label is worth (i.e. not much)

And perhaps that last quote summarises the feelings of many of our helpers in this intriguing survey. Can someone now tell us: Would you like a complete listing of all authors with the votes cast for each?

Final comment from one respondent - this is one open to discussion:

- It would be interesting to do a survey of astrological star signs in the BSFA. Would certain types be predominant?

Well Ken is a Cancer, and Peter is a Virgo. Anyone else care to join in?

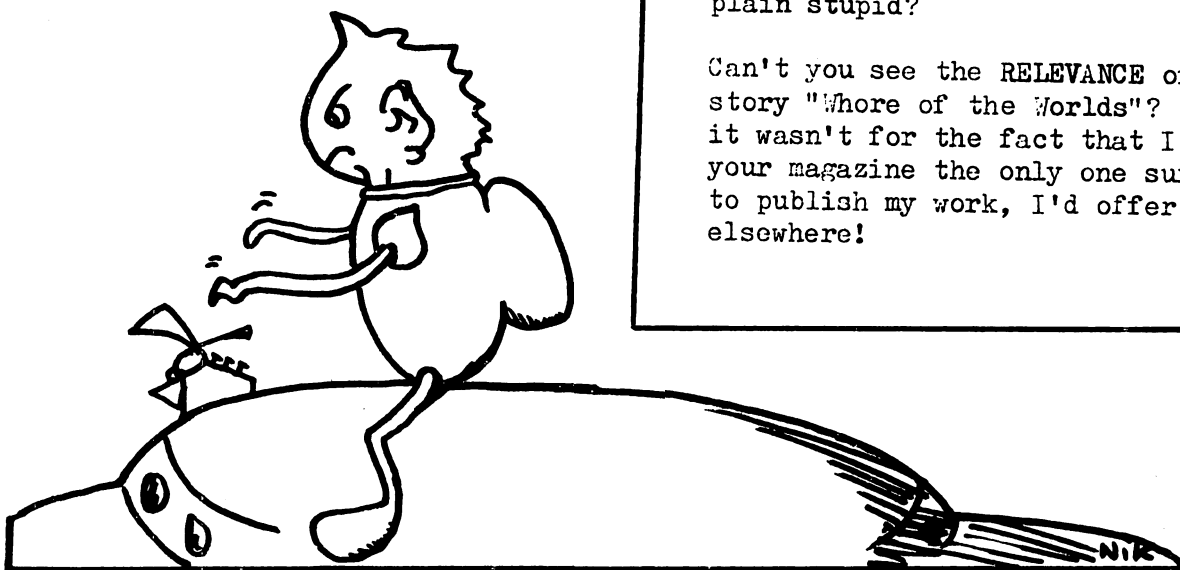
Peter Holdsworth & Ken Lake

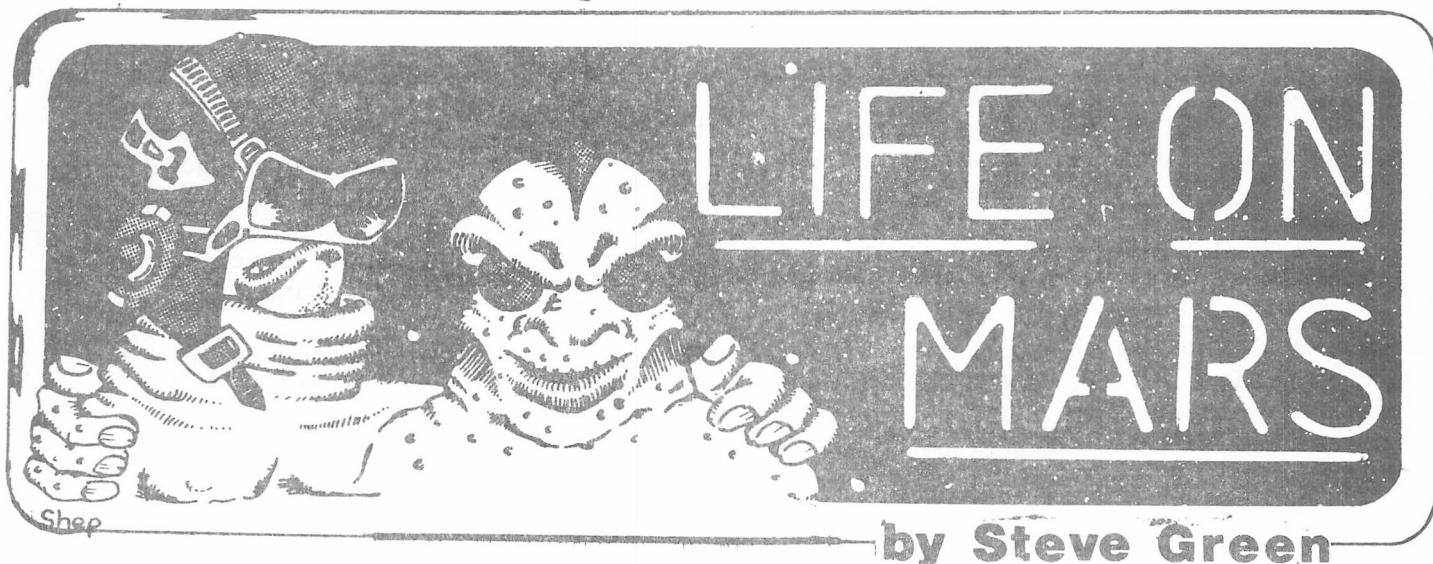
(Sandy Brown added a written footnote when sending the survey through to me that he was a 'Pyrex'. I think the survey was interesting to conduct, but it shows all too clearly the dangers of asking an apparently clear-cut question without considering the likely response. Without defining Old Wave and New Wave, you run into immediate trouble, quite apart from trying to artificially label aspects of writing and imposing such categories on the population you seek to question. Still, it obviously involved a lot of hard effort, for which my thanks!)

Dear Editor

Are you racist, bigotted or just plain stupid?

Can't you see the RELEVANCE of my story "Whore of the Worlds"? If it wasn't for the fact that I deem your magazine the only one suitable to publish my work, I'd offer it elsewhere!





Breakfast in the Ruins:

If one precise location at one precise moment in time could be considered the centre of the fannish universe, dawn in Dowlais must be the furthestmost point from it. In November, the already bleak streets take on an entirely new air of emptiness, forcing the locals back into their homes, or the nearest pub; "Don't bother me kid, I'm a stranger here myself." Desolate, windswept, forgotten Dowlais: the perfect land of exile to recover from the ravages of Novacon and the ignominy of failing to win COFF (*The Concrete Overcoat Fan Fund, awarded to the most deserving cretin of the year - Ed.), to slip quietly away from the clutches of fandom - right? Weong. Even here, I'm surrounded by tattered fnzs still to Loc, notes urging articles still to write, and - worst of all - a reminder that the Life On Mars deadline is almost up. There is no escape from the Fannish Inquisition.

Where to start first? Why not here, or rather nearby Cardiff, which should have hosted its second Cymrucon by the time you slide this Matrix out of its envelope and the back cover falls off. Naveed Khan takes up the story:

"The Cardiff Group meets weekly in the Students' Union Building Bar on Fridays at 7.30/8.30 p.m - 10.30 p.m., though we sometimes wander off to Swansea for guest authors and quizzes, and they sometimes wander over to Cardiff for a joint meeting. We're very informal, though we do have a president, chairman etc., but this is basically for the benefit of the Students' Union.

"Another meeting spot is Lionel Fanthorpe's bookshop on City Road, especially on Saturday afternoons, and the comics stall in the antique market, also on Saturday afternoons. Details can be had from any of these places or from Tony McCarthy at: 28, Claude Road, CARDIFF (Tel: 493590) or Lionel at 129, City Road, CARDIFF (Tel: 498368)."

Thanks, Naveed. While I remember, if yourself or any other group spokesman have any alterations to make to the BSFA clubs directory (or indeed, news of any kind), can I have them as soon as possible for the updated edition in readiness for Albacon II.

Now, in keeping with the Moorcock motif above, I'll just slip Hawkwind's 'Hall of the Mountain Grill' onto the deck whilst reporting Matrix undercover agent Dave Haden's findings from his probe into the whereabouts of the alleged Stratford group, a note which simply read: "Ever since we all went to university there has been very little time to organise regular (or even irregular) meetings, our block booking for Unicon 3 more along the lines of a reunion. The society is suspended for an indefinite period." Pity. Dave himself adds: "A thought occurs - if our beloved Second City group does get, as you phrase it, 'terminal rior mortis', who, if anyone, will organise Novacons? Solihullicon?"

God forbid, although SSFger Phill Probert is next year's Novacon chairman and at least two fellow members will be working on the programme (myself included). No, we're busy publishing the group's new bimonthly organ Twilight Zine (available for the usual from the Life On Mars address; as advertised in the Birmingham Evening Mail and Ansible) and preparing for the Solihull Group's new twice-monthly schedule, which takes effect in the new year (second Sunday of the month at the Golden Lion, Warwick Road,; fourth Friday at the Red House, Hermitage Road), not to mention our Christmas shindig on December 19th. See, there's hope for Midlands fandom yet.

STOP PRESS: Newcastle University SF&F Society can be contacted via the Union Society, King's Walk, NEWCASTLE-upon-TYNE; Birmingham SF Group to hold Yuletide fest on December 17th; BSFA newcomer Alison Ud-Din still waiting to hear from fans in the Bristol area and can be contacted at: 14 St.George's House, St.George's Road, Bristol.

EDITORIAL STOP PRESS: Leeds University SF Group still meet Wednesdays in the Pack Horse, Woodhouse Lane, LEEDS, where newly installed handpumps have made it the almost ideal venue; watch out for the Glasgow/Edinburgh Regional BSFA Group meetings shortly; also watch out for the inaugural meeting of the Northern Limpwrist in Manchester 'REAL SOON NOW'.

And Finally Cyril..

For once, I end this bimonthly overview of groupdom on a somewhat serious note. Very few of you can be unaware of the rather absurd feud between this column and the committee of one of this country's veteran SF groups, which reached its idiotic peak with a piece of cheap (not to mention inaccurate) character assassination in the lettercol of the last Matrix. I'm tired of the silly affair, as is Alan*, and my letter putting the record straight this issue marks the end of the matter as far as Life On Mars is concerned.

However, I feel a few words on this column's general policy with regard to news are in order. Firstly, the information which appears in Life On Mars is, to my knowledge at that moment, always accurate. Wherever possible, I use two sources. Rumours are qualified by the use of phrases "I'm told", "I hear" or suchlike. Secondly, when errors do creep in, I guarantee those erred against full right of reply, on these same pages.

This is general newspaper policy, and the ground rules I've followed during my four and a half years as a journalist. I see no need to change just because a few jerks have no stomach for criticism.

Steve Green, Dowlais, South Wales.

DEADLINE for next issue: JANUARY 9th, 1983. Address all correspondence to:

Steve Green, 11 Fox Green Crescent, BIRMINGHAM, B27 7SD

*As editor, I would point out that I support neither side - Impartial Al.



FILM & TV NEWS: The Editors

BOOK NEWS : Joseph Nicholas,
The Editors.

OTHER NEWS : Joseph Nicholas,
The Editors.

SOURCES: LOCUS, BIRMINGHAM SF
GROUP.

FILM AND TV NEWS:

Channel 4 TV (for those who can actually tune in; rumour has it that BINGLEY, centre of the universe, is without the service) is re-showing the John Steed/Emma Peel editions of the hit sixties spy show The Avengers. Catch them on Saturday night/Sunday morning - in colour. From the creative collective energies of Muppet people Jim Henson and Gary Kurtz comes a new movie 'Dark Crystal', which judging by the pre-publicity in the USA appears to be another Fantasy Flick; the third Superman movie is currently in production at Pinewood studios, and the third Star Wars pic, 'Revenge of the Jedi' is also shooting, showcasing the wooden acting talents of Harrison Ford for the last time. As regards the Superman movie, I hear that amongst the guest stars are Richard Pryor and Pamela Stephenson, and that the whole effort will once again be directed by Richard Lester. David 'Scanners' Cronenberg is hard at work on 'Videodrome', whilst Frank Herbert's Dune is now shooting and is moving to Mexico to film the desert sequences.

Film producer Mark Halperin has reached an agreement with the Scott Meredith Literary Agency to make a film based on Marion Dimmer Bradley's 'Darkover' novels; but they'll have problems getting the telepathic homosexual courtships down on celluloid....Fred Hoyle's Ossian's Ride will soon begin filming in Eire; it has a budget of \$5½ million, which would augur well for its script and production values if it wasn't for the fact that it's all to be shot on videotape...Poul Anderson's and Gordon Dickson's Earthman's Burden, concerning Fuzzy-like aliens called 'Hokas', has been optioned by Walker Productions, who plan to make it as an animated TV series.

BOOK NEWS:

Forthcoming from the following publishers are:

Oranada: 14th October: Kilgore Trout - Venue on the Half Shell
4th November: Philip Jose Farmer - Strange Relations
Chelsea Quinn Yarbro - Time of the Fourth Horseman
Dougal Dixon - After Man: A Zoology of the Future
25th November: Piers Anthony - God of Tarot
Piers Anthony - Vision of Tarot
Piers Anthony - Faith of Tarot
16th December: Richard Ford - Quest For the Faradawn
Robert Stallman - The Book of the Beast
Doris Lessing - The Sitian Experiments
27th January: Michael Moorcock - The Vanishing Tower
17th February: Poul Anderson - The Trouble Twisters
Frederick Pohl - The Way The Future Was

Methuen: 11th November: James Gunn - The Dreamers

Sphere: 16th December: Harry Harrison - The Stainless Steel Rat For President
20th January : Stephen Couper - The Ice Belt

Gollancz: November: Terry Carr - Best Science Fiction of the Year 11
Roger Eldridge - The Fishers of Darksea

Macdonald: October : Stephen King - Different Seasons
Terry Brooks - The Elfstones of Shannara

Harlan Ellison's The Last Dangerous Visions has been sold for the umpteenth time to Houghton Mifflin. Contracts have been exchanged and the advance (about \$30,000) paid. Thus ends the saga of the most famous unpublished book in the science fiction world, a book first sold back in 1972! The first part of the four volume series is due out in the USA in December.

Tower Books and Leisure Books, two minor paperback lines run by Nordon Company, have gone out of business...Samuel R. Delany stopped the October publication of Neverana by Bantam because he didn't like the cover. The book has now been postponed until spring 1983; he has another novel from Bantam coming in February 1983...Speaking of Bantam books, Karen Haas has been replaced as science fiction editor by Lou Aronica. We understand that her resignation was because her employers felt that she was "not the right spokesperson for the Bantam Line".

Frederick Pohl has completed the line-up for a new short story collection containing some reprint and some new material, to be entitled Midas World. He is said to be part way through a new novel set in the same universe as Gateway and Beyond the Blue Event Horizon, and has sold another novel to Timescape books....Michale Moorecock is at work on The Laughter of Carthage, a sequel to Byzantium Endures, and is also engaged in a revision and expansion of Heroic Dreams, a critical study of fantasy literature which was to be published by Pierrot and which will now be done by Timescape Books. According to the September Locus, he was to have a story ('The Opium General') in the first issue of a new British SF magazine, Blazer, to be published in October; has anyone heard anything of this magazine, or even seen a copy?...Ian Watson has a new novel, Chekov's Journey from Gollancz in early 1983...Coming from Timescape Books in January is The Citadel of the Autarch by BSFA Award winner, Gene Wolfe...Twilight Zone magazine goes bimonthly in January, will now cost \$2.50 and have a circulation on 65,000. It hasn't been doing too well of late, and cashflow is said to be tight.

Norman Mailer is reputedly writing a novel set on a Starship...H. Beam Piper's 'supposedly lost' third 'Fuzzy' novel (Fuzzies and Other People), has been rediscovered in a trunk full of unsorted papers and will be published by Ace in the Autumn of 1983... Ben Bova has resigned as editorial director of Omni to devote more energies to writing full time...David Kyle is reviving Gnome Press and plans to issue his Lensman books (amongst others) in hardback...Now available in the USA for \$11.95 is The Omni Future Almanack, edited by Robert Weil and a foreword by Ben Bova.

Robert A. Heinlein has been presented with a 'Tomorrow Starts Here' award by a space advocacy group called Delta Vee. His acceptance speech consisted largely of tedious platitudes about the wonderfulness of space travel and xenophobic cliches concerning the human races supposed responsibility to colonise the galaxy and kill lots of smelly aliens...John Varley is at work on Demon for Berkley (fresh from their takeover of Ace Books) - the exact identity of this novel is not given, but it's a safe hedge that it's the sequel to Wizard, itself the sequel to Titan (and there with a bit of luck, the series will stop)...John Gardner, critic and author (of Grendel, Freddy's Book, The Sunlight Dialogues and the epic poem Jason And Medea), died in a motorcycle accident on 14th September aged 49, only four days before he was due to marry for the third time...Marta Randall's New Dimensions 13, due for publication in the autumn, has been postponed due to insufficient advance orders; if suitable resubscription isn't forthcoming then some of the stories may have to be taken out in order to reduce the book's price.

Piers Anthony has sold a five volume series 'The Biography of a Space Tyrant' (Refugee, Mercenary, Politician, Executive, Statesman) to Avon and the first book in a fantasy quintology, "Incantations of Immortality", to Del Rey. Ogre, Ogre, the fifth book in the Xanth series, is due from Del Rey any time, with the sixth (Night Mare) coming in January. The seventh (Dragon on a Pedestal) is due towards the end of 1983. He is apparently working on an eighth and also on various SF and non-SF novels (war, occult, crime etc,) in which publishers do not seem to be the least bit interested. He attributes this to the fact that outside the SF field, he's in the same position as any new writer, although it might be thought obvious that he can't write to save his life and that while publishers are quite happy to pass off any old ill-written junk

as SF, they demand rather better when it comes to other genres.

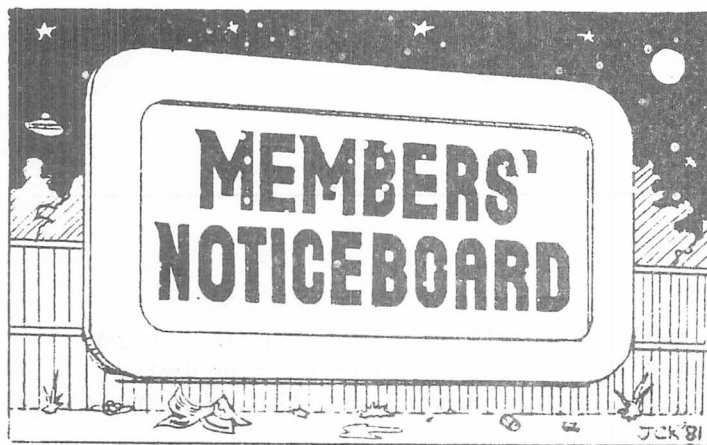
INTERZONE recently saw its third issue (with the fourth imminent), and has increased its page count to 36, and now carries letters and illustrations. Subscription details will be found elsewhere in this issue of Matrix...New Voyager the first issue of a new British SF magazine hit the stands recently. It's a follow-up to the one-off New Voyager which in early 1982 after having been on sale for several months, managed to tot up sales of 45,000. For some reason, this figure filled the publishers full of enthusiasm, and this new issue (published quarterly) is apparently 'Today's magazine for those who can't wait for tomorrow'. Personally, today's quite a nice day, and if this magazine's indicative of what is to come, I want to get off now. Orientated to the media and toy model making masses, it seems doomed to failure. Any faint vestige of science fiction that the first issue had has been removed, and the book reviews are only remarkable for their complete and utter absence of taste, discrimination and intelligence. A preface to the column says that 'The outlook...gets more depressing every month as the number of books printed and reprinted lessens.' Fine and dandy, even find myself agreeing. But then goes on to say that the USA supports at least six speciallist SF and Fantasy publishers, and that why can't Britain do the same: 'There are rays of light in the darkness, Greystoke Mowbray for instance....' Good God! A recommendation for a latter day Badger-Books type publisher! I discard it.

At the 1982 BSFA AGM at Brighton, I instituted a new Award, known simply as the Chairman's Award. It will be presented to the person (or persons) whom I consider have made a major contribution to the BSFA over the preceding year. Thus it's probably the least democratic award other than the Doc Weir. The First Award, taking the form of a shield mounted on a wooden plaque and suitably engraved, was presented by myself to KEITH FREEMAN at the August 1982 mailing session in Reading. I'm sure you'll all join with me in acknowledging our thanks and gratitude to his continued tireless efforts.

At Novacon 12, the Annual Nova Awards were made as follows:

Best Fanzine - EPSILON (Rob Hansen)
Best Writer - CHRIS ATKINSON
Best Artist - ROB HANSEN

So it's a double award for Welshman-in-exile Rob Hansen, and a thoroughly deserved victory as best writer for the talented Chris Atkinson.



Once Again, just a reminder that the Members' Noticeboard service is free of charge to all BSFA members; provided you are not a commercial operator, you can insert your request, plea, advert, etc in this column by writing to the Editorial Address. Please quote your Membership Number if you can.

ANTONY FRANCIS (4 Mansel Close, Cosgrove, MILTON KEYNES, MK19 7JQ, tel: 0903-562454). Members wanted for and Orbiter group I am organising. Please send name, address and telephone number (and manuscript if possible) to above address. Only those who are destined to be great writers need apply.

ALAN DOREY (Who He?) - 22 Summerfield Drive, MIDDLETON, Gtr.Manchester, M24 2WW. I am anxious to get hold of a copy of The Day of Forever by J.G.Ballard (Paperback or Hard back) and the October, November 1981 and October, November 1982 issues of the Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction. Must be in good condition.

JIM BARKER - 113 Windsor Road, FALKIRK, Stirlingshire, FK1 5DB (Tel: Falkirk 35452) asks "Are there any SF fans in the Central Scotland/Stirlingshire region who might be interested in getting an SF group organised?" If so, do please contact Jim at the above address.

SIMON STRONG - 4 High Greave Avenue, SHEFFIELD, S5 9GF (Tel: 0742-460609): WANTED URGENTLY:- Does anyone out there have a tape cassette recording of the Radio 4 presentation of FARENHEIT 451 ? (First broadcast on 13-11-82, repeated 15-11-82). If you do, PLEASE contact me at the address given. I'll pay for postage or whatever. Help a desperate R.B fanatic (The presentation is subject of a review elsewhere in this issue of Matrix - Ed).

HOME RULE FOR SCOTLAND!

Since we don't see why the English should have ALL the fun, we wondered if there would be any interest in getting some BSFA meetings off the ground in Scotland.

Like the London meetings, these would be held at a regular venue on a regular day each month and would be open to all BSFA members (and guests).

To make the meetings as accessible as possible we'd thought of holding meetings in both Glasgow and Edinburgh on alternate months, these being the two main Scottish fannish centres. The first Glasgow meetings is scheduled to be held at:

The Central Hotel, GLASGOW, 7.30p.m on Friday, January 14th 1983

This will be followed by the first Edinburgh meeting at:

Milnes Vaults, Hanover Street, EDINBURGH, 7.30p.m, Friday 11th February.

Hopefully(!) meetings will then be held in the same venues on the second Friday of each alternate month. Since we don't know what response we're going to get, the first meetings will be very informal "getting to know you" sessions, though I'd like to get some discussions going about future meetings. What sort of programmes should they have? Quizzes? Guest Speakers? Panel Discussions? That type of thing.

Already under way are plans to hold Scottish heats of the BSFA "Mastermind" competition with the winner going forward to meet other regional Masterminds in a grand final. More details about this at the first meeting(s). And no doubt we'll have a few surprises as well. The meetings are open to all BSFA members, so please come along and bring your ideas with you. Sandy Brown and I are going to look pretty daft if we're the only people who turn up...

JIM BARKER

BSFA LONDON MEETINGS

Have no fear! The original BSFA meetings in London still go ahead on the third Friday of each month! Please note that there won't be a meeting this December, although it will be 'business as usual' on Friday, January 21st, 1983. The meetings start at about 7.30, and the venue is:

The King of Diamonds, Greville St (Off Hatton Garden), LONDON, EC1

There's a membership charge of just 30p for each meeting, and are an excellent opportunity to meet fellow BSFA members and take part in the various organised activities. Any problems on location, contact: Eve Harvey, 43 Harrow Road, CARSHALTON, Surrey (01-642-1541).

CONVENTION NEWS

Rochelle and I weren't going to go to Novacon this year through a desperate lack of funds following our recent house-move, but I guess you just can't resist the draw! Graham and Linda James came over to visit us on the Friday night of Novacon, ostensibly to watch Woodstock with us on Channel 4. After a degree of drink and good fun, we all decided to head down for Novacon and see what would happen, so we found ourselves there after all - even if we were in the overflow to the overflow hotel. Still, we were in good company as huge name writer C.Priest was also there, and you know? We really had a good time. Conventions are like that I guess.

Right, here's the latest listing of forthcoming attractions. If I've omitted any cons, or got details wrong, please let me know:

RACON - February 4th to 6th 1983, Grosvenor Hotel, EDINBURGH, Scotland.

GoH is Harry Harrison, again, with the very wonderful Pete Lyon as FGoH. The Matrix editorial team are heading up to Edinburgh, so we'll hope to see a lot of you there. Supporting membership is £3.50, attending £7 or so. Details from: RACON, 77 Baron's Court Terrace, EDINBURGH, EH8 7EN.

ALBACON II - April 1st to 4th 1983, Central Hotel, GLASGOW, Scotland.

GoH is Jim White, Special Guest, Tanith Lee. The main hotel is probably full by now, although hotel bookings should still be sent to the hotel. The Albacoon II address is: Albacoon II, c/o B/L 8 Highburgh Road, GLASGOW, G12 9YD from where membership details can be obtained.

BECCON '83 - July 29th to 31st 1983, Essex Crest Hotel, BASILDON, Essex.

GoH still to be announced. Supporting membership is £3, attending £7. Last year's (well, this year's) was reputedly well worth attending. Details from Beccoon, 191 The Heights, Northolt, Middx, UB5 4BU.

WORLDCON 41 - September 1st to 5th 1983, Baltimore Convention Centre, Baltimore, USA

GoH is our own John Brunner, FGoH is Dave Kyle, Toastmaster, Jack Chalker. Until December 31st, membership is \$10 supprting, \$30 attending. This is the 1983 World SF Convention, trading under the name of 'Constellation'. Details from: Worldcon 41, Box 1046, Baltimore, Maryland 21203, USA.

ORWELLCON 1983 - November 11th to 13th, Antwerp University, Antwerp, Belgium.

GoH is Anthony Burgess (just to keep CP happy) with Alexander Zinoviev as Guest Speaker. Damned fiendish of these Belgians to get in a year early. Supporting membership is 200 B.Fr., attending, 400 B.Fr. Details from: B.Suykerbuyk, A.Vermeulenlaan 21, bus 20, B02050 Antwerp, Belgium.

Other conventions next year will include Novacon 13 at the Royal Angus Hotel, Birmingham (First weekend in November); Silicon 7 at the Grosvenor Hotel, Jesmond, Newcastle-upon-Tyne over August bank holiday weekend and Unicon 4 at its new site of the University of Essex at Colchester (September?).

Still two bids for the 1984 Eastercon - Brighton (Combined Easter/Eurocon) and Blackpool. The bidding session takes place at Albacoon II - I hope to have reports from each of the representative committees in the next Matrix giving the stories to date.

THE TAVERN at THE END OF TIME

By Kevin Clarke
and Steve Green

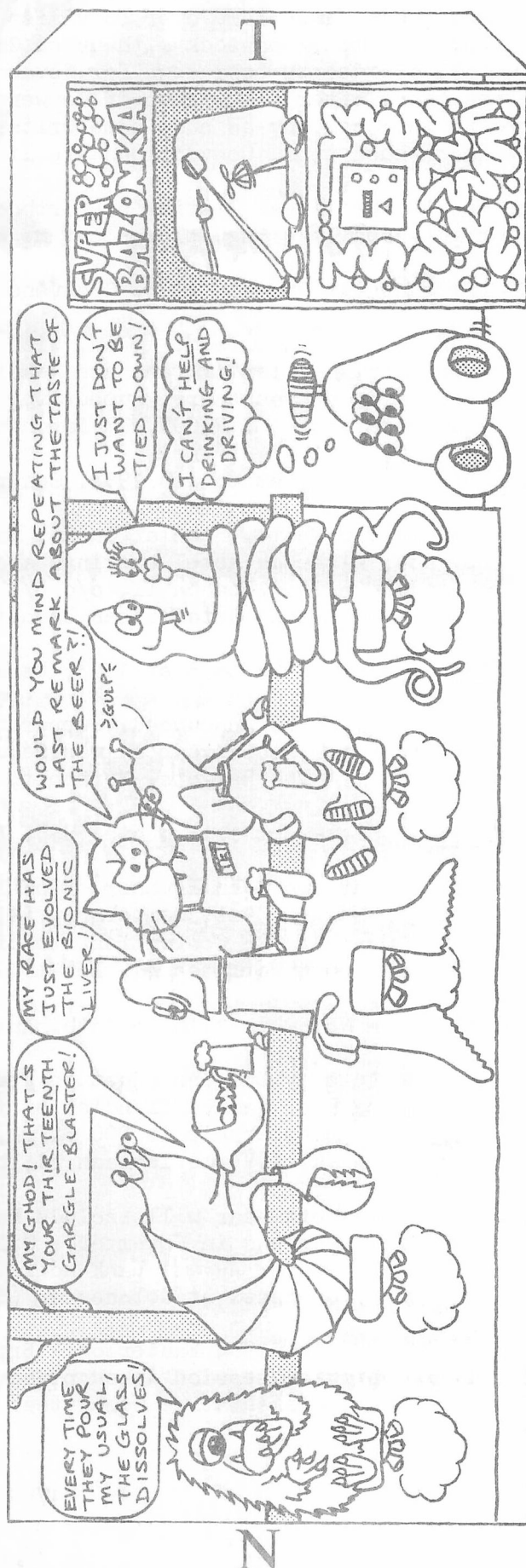
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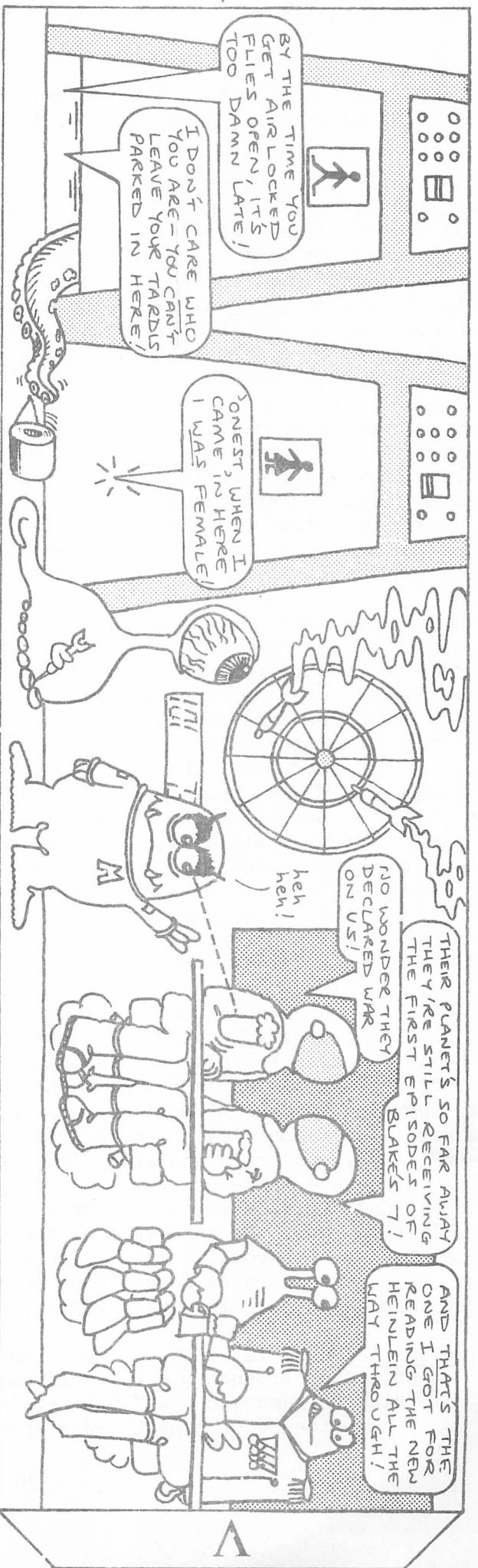
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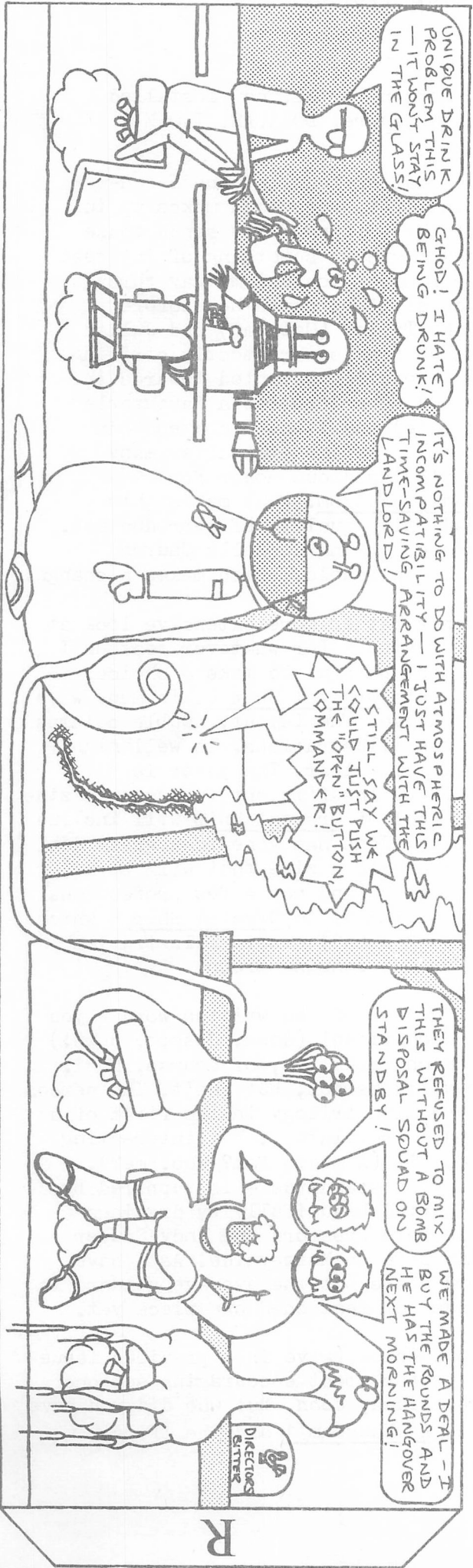
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(T-A, V-E, R-N), INTO A
RING, WITH THE CARTOON
ON THE INSIDE.
3. TAPE THREE STRINGS ONTO
THE OUTSIDE OF THE RING
AND USE THEM TO SUSPEND
IT FROM THE CEILING AT
EYE-LEVEL.
4. TO VIEW THE CARTOON,
STAND WITH YOUR HEAD
INSIDE THE RING. YOU
WILL APPEAR TO BE
STANDING IN THE MIDDLE
OF THE ROOM WITH THE
ACTION TAKING PLACE ALL
AROUND YOU.





A



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DOWN PALACE WALLS BY MARTYN TAYLOR

((Here we have the latest set of fanzine reviews from Martin Taylor, now installed on the Isle of Man. His address: Flat 2, 17 Hutchinson Square, DOUGLAS, T.O.M))

I have a pile of fanzines on my desk that is much smaller than the one I confronted two months ago, but what this one lacks in quantity it more than makes up in quality. Nary a bad zine to be seen, and while none of the writing quite sends those shivers down the spine that the really finest work does there is something of interest in almost all. What has struck me forcibly, though, as I have ploughed my way through them all is the amount and quality of the artwork, much of it by names heretofore outwith my knowledge - Shep Kirkbride (Ad Nauseam), Mike Taylor (Calaban) and Julian Kernes (Nu Yu) gave my eyes particular pleasure. Front covers too are mostly striking (and while I wish that judgement criteria could be more heavily weighted towards the internal contents of a zine there is no doubt that a good cover creates a favourable impression that requires a lot of work inside to dissipate) and I would commend Dan Steffan's covers for his own Boonfark - so simple but so effective even after many times of looking - and Ted White's Gambit, Harry Turner's insidious cover for Microwave, and Brad Foster's superb image for New Canadian Fandom. What makes this pictorial excellence the more pleasurable is the overall high quality of reproduction. Walkerzines and that eye destroying micro-elite type face lurking in Falls Church apart, just about everything else is a positive pleasure to behold. Which makes a change!

In the two previous Down Palace Walls I have taken a rather more extensive look at what I consider to be the pick of the zines I have for review - for whatever reasons I consider them to be superior. This time it has been almost painful to make a choice, but I have settled on - surprise, surprise - John D. Owen's Crystal Ship 6. In many ways Crystal Ship is the epitome of the qualities discussed above. The layout, double columns of reduced type interspersed with well placed half column illustrations, is well nigh perfect of this type of zine. The reproduction is absolutely clear. The paper is marvellous quality. While these physical qualities would be insufficient to rescue a zine with poor contents there is no doubt that the look and feel of Crystal Ship will incline most readers to a favourable attitude. To my mind, though, John has gone to a great deal of trouble and expense - both in time and in money - to create a zine that will be a pleasure to receive, and it is an example to most faneditors (and not a few professional editors too). There is a harmony between the text and the images in Crystal Ship 6 which is all too rare, and when you add a double page (pull out? John?) centre illustration from Martin Helsdon you have a heavyweight contender for the fanzine crown.

As for the words - and I speak as an unreconstructed adherent of the written word - you have Mary Gentle comparing Corwainer Smith and Somtow Sucharitkul (down, Joseph, down!) by drawing out the oriental elements in both writers (Sucharitkul is, of course, Thai. Of course? Of Course!) in a piece that ought to be heavily sercon, but isn't. The sercon element is provided by John himself discussing the Foundation trilogy in the first of a projected series of reappraisals - nothing too profound or revelatory, but interesting nonetheless - and yours truly analysing 'The Seven Samurai' (A media fan? Who, me?). Poetry of a quite acceptable standard - at least by fannish standards - is supplied by Judith Buffery and David Thiry, whose words are complemented beautifully by drawings from John. Just to lower the intellectual tone a little Pete Presford and Andy Sawyer provide some low keyed parochial musings on dragons and life on Merseyside. As I have said, none of the pieces rates force 10 on the Langford scale but the average standard is much higher than any other zine in this pile, and I have not mentioned one piece yet.

In Epsilon 12 John, in a LoC, suggests that "...the space (give in a previous issue to a reprint of a John Brosnan piece) would have been better spent encouraging someone to write something as humorous now." Rob replied, "Great idea, John, but who did you have in mind?". On the evidence of 'The Laird of Fannesh' in Ad Nauseam 1 and the 'First

Fanzine' in Crystal Ship 6 it should be fairly obvious who John has in mind, John D.Owen. These are certainly two of the funniest pieces, from non-professional contributors, seen in fanzines for some time.

So there you have it, a fanzine that can hold its own with any, and one well worth acquiring.

And now, the details of that pile I mentioned at the top of the column:-

AD NAUSEAM 1 : Kevin Rattan, Room b44, Bowland College, University of Lancaster, Lancaster. LoC, Trade, Contribution, 50p.

Humour from John (the 'D' stands for sercon) Owen; an interesting interview with Steve Gallagher; a story from Steve Sneyd - good idea but lousy telling; a poem by Stephen Longstaffe - who has read too much, but not enough, Roger McGough; a pseudonymous look at reviewing techniques; Harry Andruschak on - can you guess? - the JPL; Kevin exercising his paranoia on the politics of fandom; scabrous tales from the casualty ward, courtesy of Bernard Earp; Ken Mann guiding us through the groves of electronic aids to mass murder; the sort of fan fiction that gave fan fiction a bad name, from Terry Jeeves; Faircon report from Joy Hibbert. I like this zine, and if the overall standard of writing improves, I'll like it even more.

ANSIBLE 29 : Dave Langford, 94 London Road, READING, Berkshire, RG1 5AU.
£1 for 4 issues anywhere in world (note change of rate).

The song remains the same - con reports, award winners, Milford (UK) report, the vital-to-the-future-of-civilisation-as-we-know-it gossip column, and the (verbatim, yawn, yawn) Brunner-Harrison spat. No Hum. Egos at five paces. Just indispensable.

BOONFARK 7 : Dan Steffan, 1010 N.Tuckahoe St., Falls Church, Virginia 22046, USA.
'The Usual', Old Fanzines, Contributions, US \$2.50 per issue.

72 pages from Dan and friends, packed with quality artwork from quality artists, disappointing ephemera from Lee Hoffman, a squeal of male angst masquerading as a serious scientific discussion from Alexis (Castration complex? Me?) Gilliland; an extended viewing of the entrails of Fandom Americanis as Ted White continues his retrospective excoriation of 7th Fandom by taking his shovel to Harlan Ellison (a brave man...at last!) an overlong but occasionally amusing reminiscence about juvenile crime from Eric Meyer, the whole topped off by an at times embarrassingly revealing memoir by Rich Brown which in parts approaches the level of excellence of Steve Brown's similar piece in Boonfark 6. A Loccol that would be of stupefying length if the writers weren't interesting apart, this has most favoured fanzine status.

CALABAN 1 : Eunice Pearson, Apt. 2, 1 Broughton Road, Handsworth, BIRMINGHAM, B20 2PT.
80 pence per issue.

A mixture of poetry, prose, reviews and artwork from mostly Midlanders with serious avant garde pretensions, which is interesting, if only in places. A lot of care has gone into this production which only suffers from a problem amongst most young producers of this sort of work, a failure to realise that the truly succesful avant garde artist masters the conventional forms before exploring the limits of those conventions. Nevertheless, Calaban deserves encouragement.

CELESTIAL HOMECARE OMNIBUS No.2 : C/O Pete Armstrong, 23 Bramley Lane, SHEFFIELD, S13 8TY.
Contributions or 60 pence per issue.

An energetic zine from a team of gamesters, given the amount of space they devote to them. 8 pages of strip cartoons bulk out this issue, and I can do no better than to quote the lads themselves, '...another ripoff of a cult following that would have been better off left alone.' Mind you, CHO started life as a Hitcherzine, and judging from the standard of the Hitchhiker ripoff in this issue, No. 1 must have been fairly dire.

The material in this zine is of fairly limited interest and modest standard, but given their obvious enthusiasm and apparent ability to produce a good looking zine, Pete could be a name to watch in the future.

CRYSTAL SHIP 6 : John D. Owen, 4 Highfield Close, NEWPORT PAGNELL, Bucks, MK16 9AZ .
Trade, Editorial whim.

This is the Chinese take away edition, although the oriental influence ranges from slim to occidental. I have seen three Crystal Ships and each has been an improvement. If it gets much better then a few faneds are going to climb into warm baths and seriously contemplate that packet of single-edged Gillettes they have been storing away for just such an event. If you don't get this one already, then do so, quickly.

EARTHQUAKE COUNTY 1 : Owen Whiteoak, Top Flat (left), 112 Polwarth Gardens, EDINBURGH, EH11 1LH. Trade, LoC, Whim.

A personalzine that sees Owen ranging over Philip K. Dick, ambiguity, broadcasting, drugs, the Falklands, and much else besides, all linked by quotes from Robert Hunter's 'The Wheel'. The contrast between this and, say, Crystal Ship, could hardly be greater but one of the true pleasures of this job is receiving these two in the same post.

EPSILON 12 : Rob Hansen, 9A Greenleaf Road, East Ham, LONDON, E6 1DX.
LoC, Trade, Whim.

Rob is, of course, a brand name editor. He just sits there and talks to you. He's sane, He's sensible. He's interesting. You don't have to agree with him but at least he doesn't make a habit of going off at half cock, which implies that he has a respect for you as a reader. This is an agreeable trait. That said, Epsilon 12 is a trifle thin, with 17 out of 25 pages devoted to a Loccol - although, in fairness, this is the most interesting of the several mammoth Loccols to be found in this batch of zines. All this fades into insignificance, however, by the first appearance of 'Trufan and Junior'. All fanartists should study this and, once they have finished weeping, learn. A master is at work.

ERG 80 : Terry Jeeves, 230 Bannerdale Road, SHEFFIELD, S11 9FE.
£1 per two issues, or 30p in stamps plus LoC.

Terry doesn't change. In Erg 80 he chatters on about computers, plastic, the Tunguska phenomom, ancient fiction old and new, and the great Jeeves American trek. Now Terry is such a plainly agreeable fellow that it is impossible not to be pleased when Erg arrives. It may not shake the foundations of the firmament but it oozes reassurance and confidence in disorientating times.

FANZINE FANATIQUE (?) : Keith & Rosemary Walker, 6 Vine Street, Greaves, LNUCASTER, Lancs., LA1 4UF. Availability? Try the Usual.

Pages of thumbnail reviews interspersed with musings well up to the Walker standard of wit, erudition and factual accuracy...hell, I may not know why he bothers, but it is obviously a labour of love.

GAMBIT 56 : Ted White, 1014 N. Tuckahoe St., Falls Church, Virginia 22046, USA.
The Usual, or US \$5 per issue.

Any resemblance between Gambit and Boonfark is intentional - Dan and Ted live in each others' pockets; after all - save for Ted's passion for the micro-elite - commonly known as the 'Doctor, my eyes...' typeface. The best feature of any Ted White zine is usually Ted, and there is a lot of Ted in this issue, mostly looking backwards to old cons, old loves, old feuds. The problem is that Gambit 56 has a review column by Malcolm Edwards. As the song would have it, 'Nobody does it better', and the comparison is salutary. A little of Edwards reaches those parts that no amount of White will ever reach. For myself I think I've seen enough of Ted in retrospective mode for the time being. After all, if he keeps looking backwards how's he going to get any decent feuds going now?

IZZARD 1 : Patrick & Teresa Nielsen Hayden, 4337 15th NE No. 411, Seattle, WA 98105, USA. LoC, Trade, Contribution, US \$1 per issue. UK agents: Chris Atkinson & Malcolm Edwards, 28 Duckett Road, LONDON, N4 1BN.

'Who will take up the Pong mantle?' asked White and Steffan. Me.Me. Me, US! cried the sterling Patrick and Teresa, and Izzard is their shot at a small, regular, newsy zine. Chat from Patrick and Teresa (on being a bureaucrat - a nice one), reviews from Jerry Kaufman and still more Uffish Thots from Uncle Ted White. Okay, you can get this one.

MICROWAVE 3 : Terry Hill, 41 Western Road, MAIDSTONE, Kwt, ME16 8NE.
Trade, LoC, Contribution, Embarrassing Photo, 20p per issue.

Tremendously fannish stuff from Messrs. Hill, Skel, Jeeves, Connor and Clarke (sounds like a highly dubious firm of solicitors to me), all of it matching the breathless vigour of the presentation which includes much artwork from the inimitable ATom, not to mention Harry Turner, John Cook and that man Jeeves. Unfortunately I found it all a bit in one ear and out the other, not making too much impression on the way through. Terry plays his role as the standard bearer for the sacred name of Trufandom just a little too hard for my taste, and has replaced his excruciating but marvellous music quiz by another of those interminable Loccols.

A NEOTERIC ZINE 2 : Matt Mackulin, 28 Crift Lane, Rawtenstall, ROSSENDALE, Lancs, RB4 8NG.
Trade, LoC, (or both), 20p in stamps.

Matt is a quick learner and there is more in content in issue 2, with the pick being Steve Sneyd's practical specularion on how we can prevent Leonid (R.I.P - Up to date Alan) and Ronald having us all accompany them into their imminent graves. John D. Owen lends his weight to the wheel while Matt provides fiction, some presentable film reviews and a Loccol commentary. This issue's words of advice to Matt are...relax, NEVER print your own fiction (let someone else do it - Quartz, Calaban etc. - editors may be evil but they have their uses), and keep on improving.

NEW CANADIAN FANDOM 5 : Robert Runte and Michael Hall, PO Box 4655, P.S.S.E., Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, T6E 5G5. Trade (copies to both editors), News, Contributions, Artwork, LoC, Whim.

I look forward to New Canadian Fandom arriving as it always looks good, whatever the content. No. 5 has a gorgeously rccocco cover from Brad Foster, and computerised (?) typesetting. The contents are too wide to detail, but are mostly Canadian in outlook, save for Peter Kuczka's report on sf in Hungary and some deliciously sick humour from Taral Wayne. Recommended for insularists everywhere.

NOT SCIENCE FANTASY NEWS 2 : A Vincent Clarke, 16 Wendover Way, WELLING, Kent, DA16 2BN.
Availability, Vin? Try the usual.

This issue has a piece by Bob Shaw. Anyone who requires further recommendation is just playing hard to get. Not much else to be found, though, save for yet another 16 page loccol. For a man who affects to despise bickering Vin? wields a large wooden spoon. Truth to tell, there doesn't seem to be much life about these letters and while reader reaction is important to a writer/editor I can't help feeling that the letters and comments both need to have a wider significance if they are to justify devoting quite so much space to them. Perhaps I'm just not happy with loccols - readers of RAA will have noticed - but I can't stop myself comparing the Loccols in Microwave and Not Science Fantasy News with that in Epsilon and concluding that Epsilon's is more interesting and entertaining because of the intensity on the part of the writers which seems to me to be one of the reasons why Terry and Vin? are uneasy about certain areas of contemporary fandom. Over to the Clarke/Hill axis.

NU YU 1 : Data Day Publications, Box 251, Philadelphia, PA 19105, USA.
US \$2 per issue, International Postal Money Orders only.

When I saw the postmark I imagined that those weird and wonderful Cretins were on the

rampage again. I was wrong. This is American, and it is just weird. Subtitled 'The Fine Art of Vivisection' it is an excellently produced zine combining occasionally splendid artwork with a text that will one day make Daniel Silk the darling of SoHo society. I didn't understand a word, but as the Mael Brothers tell us, 'Looks, looks, looks...'

PROTON 1 : Simon Bostock, 18 Gallows Inn Close, ILKESTON, Derbys., DE7 4BW.
Trade, LoC, Stamp, Editorial Whim.

A slim not-quite-Supernova-substitute that sees Simon in confessional vein - what really happened to Supernova, what really happened to Apa sf & f (I'll confess that I dropped out of that because I simply didn't have the time to fulfill all my commitments, earn a living and pursue a complex personal life all at the same time. The Apa was one of the areas giving me least satisfaction, so it was one of the first sacrifices on my personal altar of expediency. There you have it Simon) and Simon's side of the Evenstar mystery. Not a great zine, but one of these days Simon will produce one. You mark my words.

SF HORIZONS : (aka Fanzine Fanatique 49) : The Walkers again, address as before.

More of the usual Walkerisms.

SHARDS OF BABEL 3/4 : Roelof Goudriaan, Postbus 589, 8200 AN Lelystad, The Netherlands.
£1 for 4 issues.

Roelof's nicely produced European newszine provides an interesting window on parts of the world that do not speak English as a first language. It will be necessary until we Anglos get our chauvanistic linguistic arse into gear, so get it.

SIKANDER 7 : Irwin Hirsch, 279 Domain Road, South Yarra, Victoria, 3141, Australia.
Trade, Loc, Contribution, A \$1 per issue.

A relaxed zine that sees Irwin relating his crise de coeur regarding one Sikhander Bakht and revealing his admiration for John Huston's 'The Man Who Would Be King' (That's what I call taste in films, Irwin). There are some dispensable memoirs from Billie Wolfenbarger and an occasionally sparkling and rather more occasionally tiresome detailing of his culinary exploration of Denver, Colorado by Bruce Townley. Stu Shiffman fills some space with fannish musings, but does little else, in stark contrast to Leigh Edmonds who provides the best piece of writing to be found anywhere in this collection of zines. This outback tale defies disbelief right to the end, and you ought to get Sikander 7 just for it. Another overlong loccol.

TRIPLE ECHO 5 : Steve Roberts, Andrew & Josie Briggs, 238 Fletcher Road, PRESTON, Lancs, PR1 5HH. £2 for 4 issues (Cheque/PO to Andrew Briggs).

42 pages of variously reduced type mean that you get a lot for your money, as well as disproving what some folk say about media fans. There are interviews with William Shatner (who seems to be making quite a nice living out of sending himself up, thank you very much) and Bryan Talbot (comics, you fool, comics), pieces on Dr. Who and the Gerry Anderson exhibition, news, views, reviews, letters, comic strips - something for all the family, in fact. Just how valuable some of the news columns are is debateable - all the information is available elsewhere - but then, not everyone has the capacity or desire to scour all the trades. Again, some of the artwork is excellent (although some of it isn't) and I would have paid just for one cartoon (and it is on page 37).

VIDEO HORIZON : The Walkers, again. Address as before.

A zine dedicated to SF and fantasy videos, with Keith debating the rights and wrongs of the legal action against some of the more exploitative violence videos currently available at your local emporium, and talking sense. Now isn't that a pleasant note on which to end.

The end, the end. Anyone out there still awake and paying attention can send their fanzines to me and I'll do my best to give them a fair hanging...that doesn't read quite right. Oh well. Just as I was typing this a mailing came from Chuck Connor, so there is already a large column waiting to be written. Oh yes, the usual is usually taken to mean a letter of comment, trade of your own fanzine, contributions of words or images, or respectful, nay, grovelling request to the editor.

I've been MARTYN TAYLOR, and can be found at:

FLAT 2, 17 HUTCHINSON SQUARE, DOUGLAS, ISLE OF MAN

Back to the Editors

One fanzine that Martyn may not have seen yet was 'NOT ALBACON II', a somewhat disturbing production from the tortured mind of the fake Bob Shaw. Normally, I wouldn't pass what could be construed as personal opinions within the pages of a BSFA magazine, but on this particular occasion, a few words are essential.

I don't propose to rake through the sordid details of his departure from the Albacon II committee, but there are portions of this fanzine (which takes the style and form of a duplicate Progress Report 2) which must be aired, if only to try and clarify the current position.

This fanzine, large sections of it previously produced by Shaw shortly after his 'expulsion', is a pointless tirade against the remaining committee. I'm reminded of a gradual re-writing of history to make the story fit his adopted persona of 'The Fan the Shit Hit'. What occurred between Bob Shaw and the other committee members does not concern us here. It wasn't the first con committee to have internal problems, and I'm sure that it's not going to be the last. No, I think that what a number of people object to is his public airing of matters that should have remained concealed. This action was totally uncalled for, doing fandom a dis-service (by throwing all into confusion) and most of all, appears almost calculated to ensure that Albacon II fails. Bob hasn't done himself any favours and seems almost bent on deceiving the rest of convention fandom with his ill-thought out rantings. So who cares if the convention committee has free memberships or not? He wasn't the chairman, and if the majority felt that free memberships was to be order of the day, why should he get a bee in the bonnet about that? For an apparently whiter than white victim of nasty, malicious and mean committee machinations, his concern over a few committee memberships is all the more strange to swallow when compared to his threat to sue the committee for loss of earnings whilst he was involved with them. His fanzine mentions solicitors letters and a sum around about £120. The remaining Albacon committee talk about £300. Again, this sort of bickering (for that's all it is when stripped of its pretensions to 'glory') is pointless and irresponsible. If he really thinks he's got a case against the committee for loss of earnings (and judging by his remarks in NOT ALBACON II, he feels he has), can he not see that in a roundabout way he is advocating that concon people should be paid, and two, almost blessing the idea that the general Albacon membership should be subsidising him for his differences with the other organisers.

I'm certain that the basis of the original arguments between the two factions was a case of 'six of one, half a dozen of the other', but I'm sad to see that someone who has been charged with the responsibility of running several conventions should stoop so low. From my own personal conversations with Bob over the course of the last three months, his version of the facts changes slightly each time to suit the person to whom he is talking.

I find all this very disturbing, and ultimately, very sad. We are all guilty on occasions of rash actions, especially when you passionately care about something in fandom. This affair is better ended. So how about it, Bob?

WORD SEARCH

MATRIX 45 - COMPETITION

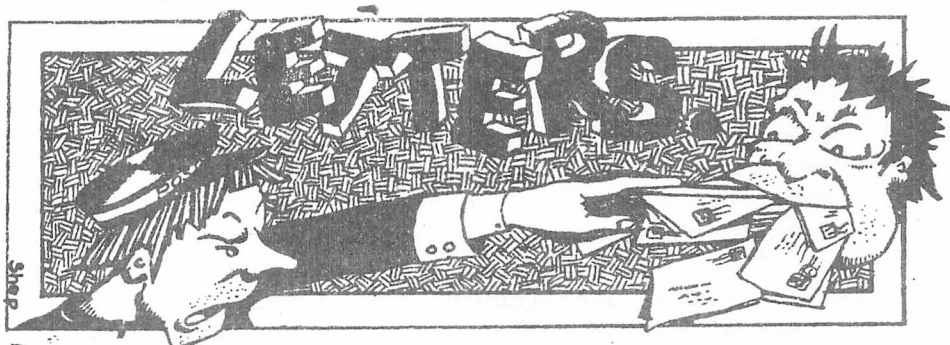
(Set by Nik Morton)

This issue's competition takes the form of a 'Wordsearch'. The Grid below contains the names of 34 'Mainstream' writers who have also at some stage, turned their hands to Science Fiction. You can find the

answers inside the back cover of this issue of Matrix, but just as an aid, the first name on the list has been circled. The names could be vertical, horizontal, diagonal, backwards - but they're all in there, so Good Luck!



Graham and Linda's last issue of MATRIX seemed to spark off quite a good deal of comment. A collection of mail that deals with a magazine not produced by oneself is always difficult to handle, but with this latest batch of mail, I have found it doubly so. Graham's pertinent comments which introduced the last



letter column are still very much valid, and whilst many of the letters received were quite fun to read, their construction and subject matter wasn't always sufficient to see publication. However, I was extremely pleased and gratified upon looking back at recent letter columns to see that a wider and broader based section of the membership is now writing in. Particularly pleasing are missives from some of the older standing members, such as Darrol Pardoe and David Lewis. Anyway, this column is the lifeblood of Matrix, so keep the letters rolling in.

Steve Green seems to have upset a few people recently; quite surprising considering his diminutive size and rampant shyness:-

DAVE HADEN,
Shottery Stores,
Shottery,
STRATFORD, Warks.

The massive amount of protest by the Brum Group Committee, seemingly because of the very pertinent remarks on the state of the group made by Steve Green in M43, seems wildly out of proportion. All Steve was saying in print is what has been said in private by many members since soon after the Committee were elected in January 1982. There was little or no choice of candidates then, and I hope that in 1983 we can at least elect a committee that will attempt to revive the group, instead of just trying to prop up the present decaying routine.

Steve might be the person that some of the more straight-laced members love to hate, but Pauline Morgan takes this to the point of downright maliciousness in her letter, there seems to be more libellous comments there than in recent Life On Mars columns! Many of the points she makes she must surely know to be either half-truths or simply untrue, indeed all are little to do with Steve's comments and seem to be purely defensive backbiting.

((I've read Pauline's comments in the last Matrix very carefully, and added some background information from discussions with Pauline at Novacon. Whilst the substance of truth, I feel, is contained in much of what she says, perhaps some of the statements made are a little too forceful. As individuals, I can't see why either Pauline or Steve should be getting particularly hot under the collar. Steve has written a long letter putting his side of the 'story' - which follows - but I feel that this too should be read with an open-mindedness necessary for Pauline's letter. Anyway, let's see what Steve's got to say on this thrilling subject:-

STEVE GREEN,
11 Fox Green Crescent,
Acocks Green,
BIRMINGHAM, B27 7SD

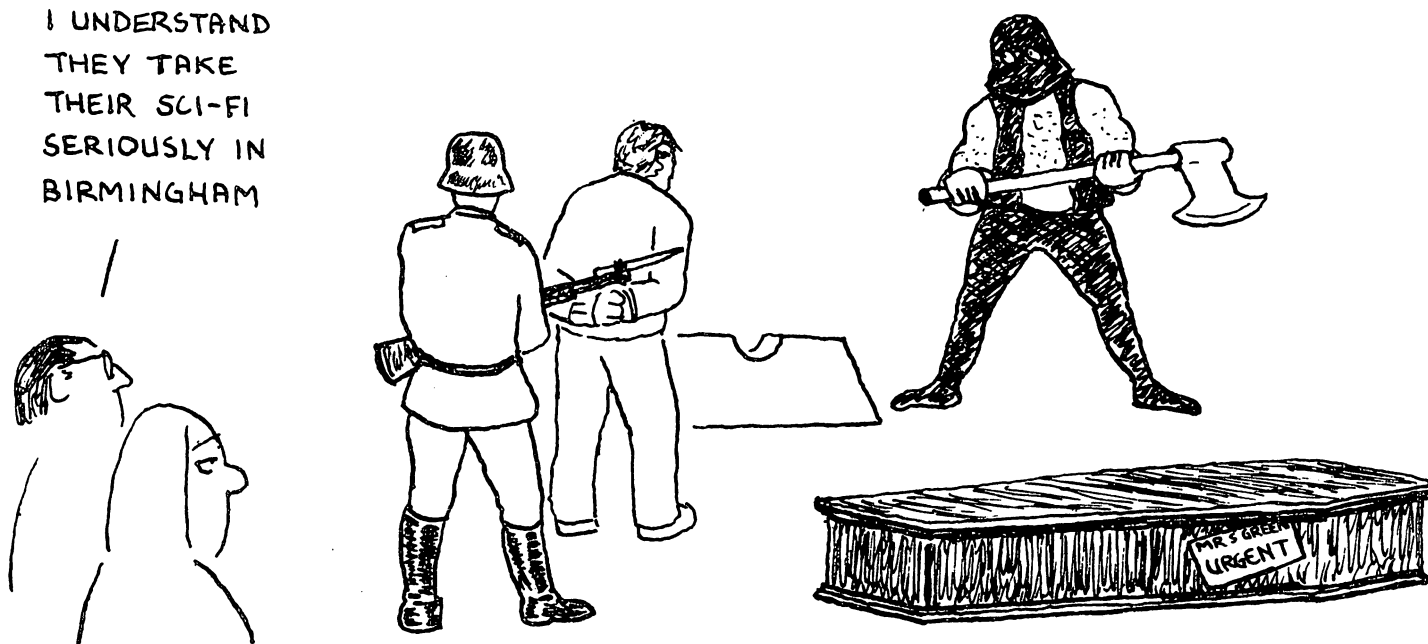
The cautious side of my nature advises that I ignore Pauline Morgan's imaginative piece of character assassination (or so it would be if the ammunition was factual) in Matrix 44, but considering the very real danger she might be believed, I cannot. I'll turn to the few 'facts' she lists:

1) I was not asked to resign as newsletter editor; in fact, then-chairman Dave Hardy asked me to reconsider, quote: "It may surprise you to know that I agree that the newsletter has been in many ways brighter and more attractive since you took over the job of editor". My intention to include as much news as possible each month may have been out of line with the committee, but I never consigned group matters "as an afterthought" to the back page (as shown by the copies of issues I edited I've enclosed for BSFA committee reference). Still, I'm hardly surprised Pauline isn't terribly well informed

of committee matters which took place in 1978/9; neither she nor Chris (Morgan) held any post on the committee at that time, joining seven months after I left, of my own volition.

2) I'm surprised to hear I'm a "failed reviewer" for Brum Group, seeing as Chris has only rejected one of my reviews (on the grounds that he liked the book and I didn't, preferring his own review to see print; quote: 'I prefer to back my own judgement.. This doesn't mean that my opinion is necessarily any better than yours. Nor is it any cunning plot to stop you reviewing for the newsletter or to annoy you.') and I only failed to deliver once (one of the Illuminatus series, which Chris claimed no one else would dare attempt - in fact, I tried unsuccessfully to hand it back when I first knew that I couldn't make the deadline), with just cause in my mind (my paper was about to fold, or so it appeared; there are times when fandom must come second to keeping my job).

I UNDERSTAND
THEY TAKE
THEIR SCI-FI
SERIOUSLY IN
BIRMINGHAM



3) I did not libel Chris Smith (the disguised reference), at least in my opinion. He felt differently. In the final event we agreed that there was no point in wasting money seeing who was correct. Pauline's comments, incidentally, are libellous, in my opinion (backed by two law exams I've taken, both with a credit), but the same applies.

4) I can't recall making inane comments, but I'll watch myself in future. Dave Langford and I conversed briefly when he spoke to the group, but he started it. Oh, and I was told to keep quiet by Vernon Brown once when I asked someone if they wanted a drink, but I'm told he recently reprimanded a barman for shutting the till too loudly, so that probably means very little.

5) Yes, I would like to see the SSFG last as long as the BSFG. A fact, at last, but one I already stressed in Matrix 44.

6) It's hardly surprising that I would ask group members for help and information, since the BSFG membership includes quite a few of the SSFG and a large number of personal friends. As for committee help, I recently asked Pauline for Dave Langford's new phone number. This, she couldn't give me. I also asked her to plug the SSFG in the September and October newsletters (for the group, not for me personally). Again, no help was forthcoming. I get more co-operation from my enemies.

On the other points:

1) Join the committee again? Thanks for the suggestion, Pauline, I may take you up on it.

2) For someone so hot to criticise me for checking his fact, Pauline really should check hers.

The statements criticised by Jim England were not made by myself, or indeed any member of the Matrix editorial staff. They were, in fact, expressed by Geoff Boswell, a fact made perfectly clear if Pauline had bothered to read his letter properly, quote: 'Geoff Boswell says...'. Had Jim written directly to me, I'd have included his comments in the column.

One question still remains: is the Matrix readership as bored silly with this argument as I am? If so, I suggest we end the 'feud' here and now. Agreed, Pauline?

((.....zzzzz...Oh, er...sorry...no, of course we're not bored, Steve. You may well have got some valid points in your comments, and yes, the BSFG newsletters you sent me from 1979 do tend to back up your version of the events. However, I don't know whether that was a representative sample! It does seem that neither of you really wants to admit defeat, so why not just drop the whole matter. Correspondence closed, as they say in The Times.

As an added point of interest, which doesn't have any bearing on the dispute, I'm pleased to announce that Steve Green and Ann Thomas of Dowlais, near Merthyr Tydfil, South Wales are to become engaged on December 31st...wedding bells sometime in 1984. Matrix editorial staff best wishes to the pair of them.))

BENEDICT S. CULLUM,
35 Totteridge Lane,
Whetstone,
LONDON, N20

Imagine it, with one BSFA sample mailing under my belt and a full subscription to follow, the Brighton SF Seminar seemed a heaven-sent opportunity. It was, I thought, more positive than buying a fanzine, yet less drastic than attending a bona-fide convention.

SO IT'S
BAD FOR MY
HEALTH...

YOU WANT
I SHOULD
UNILATERALLY
BECOME THE
FIRST DRAGON
NOT TO
SMOKE?

So, with a fellow enthusiast in tow, I was able to embark on the short train journey with only the vaguest of worries.

In fact, I enjoyed listening to what the four guest speakers had to say. The scheduled event, however, is not prompting my missive.

Entering the William IV room, I was pleased to note that someone had moved all of the ashtrays to one corner; decidedly more effective than a 'No Smoking' sign (who is going to flick ash around the Brighton Pavilion?).

Come the afternoon, however, someone

saw fit to move one of those ashtrays, positioning it adjacent to the row behind mine. It would be a stupid person that did not grasp the implicit message that smoking was not wanted...and a selfish one that ignored it. I recognised the culprit from a book-sleeve photograph. Towards the end of the afternoon he got up to make his speech, leaving behind a lady to continue smoking.

Considering the commitment shown by the Brunners towards saving the world from nuclear destruction, I would have thought that they just might have had a little more regard for their fellow men. After all, Armageddon is a possibility, lung cancer though, is a definite actuality. It is a pity to have to complain, since it's nothing personal, but I do feel strongly about this kind of double standard.

((Has anybody else any thoughts on the subject?))

((Changing the subject, we move onto Rob Hansen's article on fandom in the last issue. Quite a good deal of comment has been received and a selection of the responses are published below...))

NIK MORTON,
235 West Street,
FAREHAM, Hants,
PO16 0HZ

The quotation from Ted White seems pretty damning, that fan fiction by its very nature execrable, that if the stories are good enough, they'll be printed commercially...Up to a point, I agree that amateur writing, if it were good enough, would sell to professional markets - an 'observation borne out conclusively by research'...Yet, that bit about research makes me wonder. Before I sold my first story, I was in the amateur status; after selling, was I then a professional? Is it that simple? Probably not. Consistent sales, then? Well, I had those too. Does that mean that if I then chose to write a story for a fanzine - with no profit motive - then that story would not be of publishable quality because it was featured in a fanzine? Rubbisa, really...The quality of fiction in fanzines can be good - if the editor is unblinkered and not too desperate for material, any material. If stories are sent back for rewrite after rewrite, all the better. And what of the amateurs who have never dared try sending their stories to magazines, thinking they weren't good enough, or they only published Big Names anyway? No, there is scope for fan fiction; some will be excellent, rafted pieces which are just unable to find a niche in a limited market, while others require a little extra effort; and others may need more than that, a workshop perhaps...No, again, in retrospect, I think amateur writing cannot be written off (no pun intended!) so easily. It may seem obvious, but professionals were amateurs to begin with...

((In my own experience - going back a few years when I edited a fanzine that published fiction every now and again - there is so much bad fiction being produced. Writers tended to have very little discrimination; whilst they would be happy to craft an article or plan an essay, when it came to fiction, any hackneyed idea they had for a plot seemed to take over as the prime directive, everything else being discarded along the way. My own feelings were that fiction was so easy to write badly. I didn't blame the writers so much as former editors of the fanzine who were quite happy to publish anything to fill up the space. When standards are low, anything goes. Let's hear what you think. Here's Darroll Pardoe...))

DARROLL PARDOE,
11B, Cote Lea Square,
Southgate, RUNCORN,
Cheshire, WA7 2SA

Rob Hansen's article in the present issue illustrates nicely the dangers of lifting a comment out of a twenty year old fanzine. In the course of his argument Rob quotes an account by Walt Willis of the 1964 Eastercon and uses it to support his case. The trouble is that what Walt said is not (and was not) true. It may have been perfectly acceptable in the context of the whole piece from which it was derived. I don't know, since I don't have the article in question to look at it. It presents as stark black and white a situation which in reality took in all the colours of the rainbow.

Take - as an example of a new fan of the time - Peter Weston. Peter certainly had a serious side. His fanzine Speculation (Zenith when it started) is well-known as being concerned with science fiction rather than fandom. So I suppose a present day newcomer would jump to the conclusion that Peter was one of the protesters that Walt says thought 'fandom as we know it was a useless excrescence'. Yet Peter had his fannish side. His OMPazine 'Nexus' was light, witty and humorous; he was instrumental in founding the Birmingham SF group (the original one that is); nobody (at that time) would have thought him less a fan than anyone else. And he was not alone. Many others among the 'New Wave' of the early sixties were the same: fans certainly, but also interested in SF to an extent that had previously been unusual.

There was certainly no lack of enthusiasm in the BSFG. New fans all, yet by 1964-65 they were running the BSFA, putting on an Eastercon and producing masses of fanzines. Might one suspect that some of the talk at the time, which Walt Willis deplored, of the irrelevance of fandom, was in reality gentle leg-pulling at the expense of the 'old guard' of the day?

LAWRENCE O'DONNELL,
58 ST. James Street,
Milnrow,
ROCHDALE, OL16 3JY

Well now, Lettercol 44 seems to be swinging back from world events to fandom itself once again. Of course we all agree that the BSFA encourages and promotes fandom don't we? But which fandom? Is it 'Proper' fandom, Leeds fandom, Brum fandom or what? If you old stagers can't agree, what chance

have we got.

For instance over the past months I've been learning the jargon, had a letter (with cartoon!) in Matrix, made some new contacts and am counting the weeks to Albacon II. What more could a new fan ask. Trouble is I still don't feel fannish. You're holding out on me, aren't you, eh? There's some sort of secret initiation rite isn't there? Like D. West buying you a drink, or suffering character assassination in Life on Mars. How about being fitted with cement shoes by the Leeds Mafia? Come on, own up you lot!

Rob Hansen's 'Fandom as I know it' fills some gaps. How about sending it out to future members along with the Fan Dictionary of M38 as Mick Lewis suggests. Ah, Rob I see my true purpose now - I'm a neofan. What images the term invokes; selling sercon-zines in the Arndale watched by nervous cops, beating up trufans in quiet corners, writing mein Personalzine!

((How about taking quick look for D. West's vision of what being a neofan is like by flicking the pages over to number 36. A slightly different viewpoint! Anyway, from the new member to an older member, our friend from Stowmarket, David Lewis:))

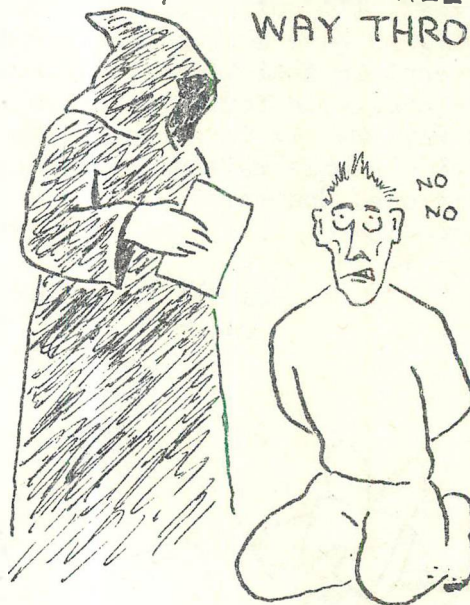
DAVID V LEWIS,
1 Hornbeam Road,
Stowupland,
STOWMARKET,
Suffolk

Rob Hansen's history of the BSFA (M44) reflects what he likes to think happened and not what actually happened, although in fairness, my memory of those events is somewhat blurred now. I joined back in 1969/70, several years prior to his appearance on the fannish scene. The collapse he refers to occurred around 1974 and was due to two twerps getting themselves onto the council, advertising in Science Fiction Monthly (RIP) and being swamped with membership applications and ducking out of the ensuing work without informing anyone. This is prior to Hansen, so his knowledge of this is owt. This left people like Gra Poole (the then company secretary) to piece together the remnants and get it out to members via his zine, Spi (RIP). The BSFA's Fanzine Library was lost in mysterious circumstances around this time too, which was a major crime since it contained many fanzines of great value then, and more so if they were still around now.

The pieces were also picked up by Alan and Elke Stewart amongst others, and by the time Hansen was around, the BSFA was doing okay - regular mailings etc. It was not that fannish but the output for the period compares well with that of today. Although later excesses of one editor had to be stopped abruptly - a mess similar to that created by the late business manager today.

Matrix started life as a 3 or 4 page news bulletin and it was Tom Jones in 1975/76 who started it off along the lines of today, stating in his first editorial that it would become the forum for the membership and purveyor of SF news. Later editors have merely pointed this up and brought their own individual qualities to bear on its development. Rob states a biased view which has perpetrated its own myths on past events. A lot of which just aint true Boss.

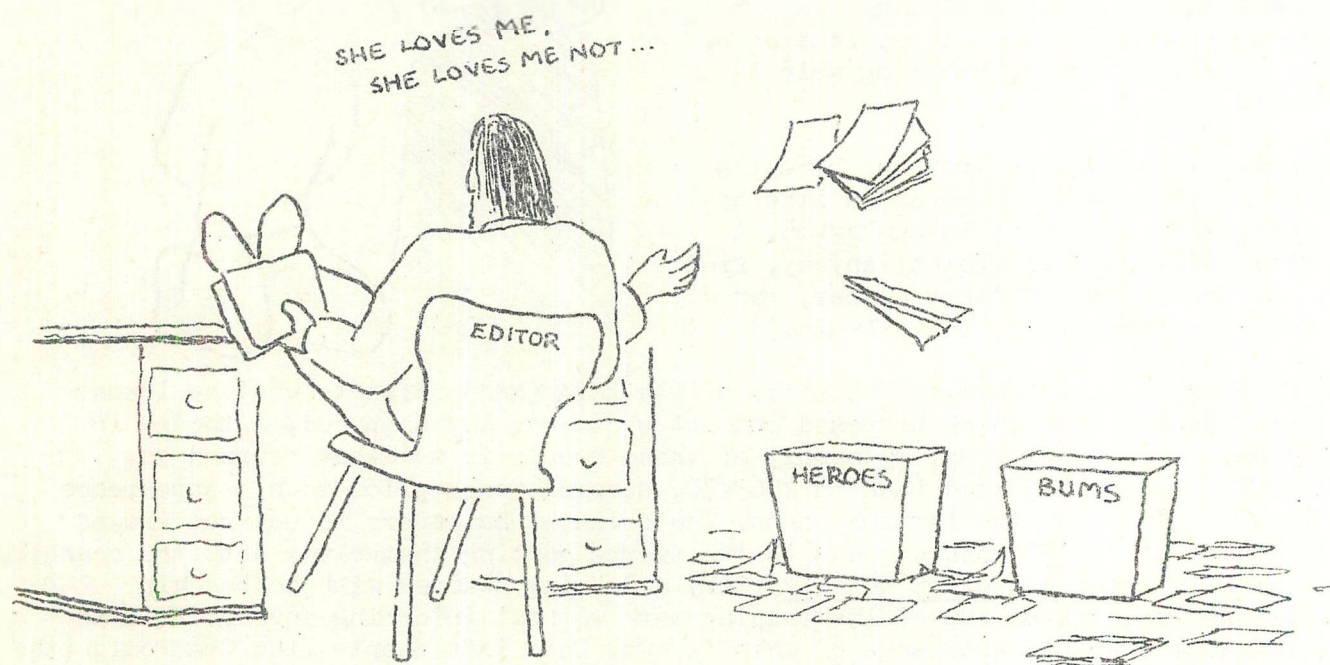
AND FOR THE NEXT TEST
YOU ARE REQUIRED TO
READ A COPY OF
/ TAPPEN - ALL THE
WAY THROUGH



As to giving Matrix out free to all and sundry, you must be joking. Matrix, Vector and Focus are not fanzines; they are, were and always will be House Journals.

If you wish to reach the sundry itinerant cretins outside the BSFA, by all means sell them Matrix, Vector and Focus. The price for the equivalent of a year's mailing should be so pitched as to make it cheaper to sub, thus recruiting members; but to Freeloaders, No. If someone wants our mags, they gotta pay for 'em.

((Dave's letter raises some interesting points regarding the position of the BSFA magazines. I tend to refer to them as fanzines, basically because that is what they are. They may well be house journals, but I am using the term fanzine as a generic title; I can't abide this notion that we, the BSFA, should set ourselves apart from the rest of fandom by adopting different criteria for judging our productions. Having said that, I'm not advocating for one second that we should give the BSFA magazines away. As Dave so succinctly puts it 'they gotta pay for 'em'. The general policy at present is that Vector and Focus - and to a lesser extent, Paperback Inferno - are available for sale to non members, and a large number of copies are sold in this way. Matrix is strictly 'Members only' - other than the odd copy sent out as part of a sample mailing, or contributor copies given to folk like D. West for their services. Comments?))



((Mention of that man Hansen, here he is...))

RCB HANSEN,
9A Greenleaf Road,
East Ham,
LONDON, E6 1DX

I think there's a misconception in Graham James' reply to Michael Ashley with regard to Malcolm Edwards and myself wanting to go 'mid-Atlantic' because while we're both involved with, and interested in, American fandom we produce our fanzines for British readers (75% of the print-run of my own fanzine is distributed in the UK, for instance). Nor is this interest in US fandom anything new, as a glance through old issues of Epsilon will show, though there's rather more to be interested in US fandom at present than there has been for some years and hence all the more reason to re-establish transatlantic links that had been allowed to weaken. Those of your readers interested in fandom beyond the confines of the BSFA could do a lot worse than to write off for some of the fanzines coming out of the US at the moment (addresses in the Matrix fanzine review column).

Graham is also wrong in assuming that I only write letters of comment to American fanzines since I've had a couple printed recently in Darroll Pardoe's Pig on the Wall, sent one to Vinç Clarke on his Not Science Fantasy News, had one printed in Matrix 43 and have sent this one along to you. Not an output of letterhack proportions but not bad for these days.

I entirely agree with Michael Ashley that '...fandom proper is a variable term, the property of whichever group of fans is most dominant at the present time...', but does he really think any group is '...dominant at the present time'? There are quite a few good writers around at present, it's true (not least among them, Ashley himself), but they don't have the cohesion to constitute a dominant group. No doubt such a group will form in future, a group who (as the events of the early seventies showed) don't need to be based in any one area but do need to have the writing ability and sense of common cause to become identified as such in the fanish mind. It was such a group and its interactions, that I had in mind when I wrote the closing section of my article, and one which I'd love to see develop.

((Right on, Rob - about the mid-Atlantic bit. Dozens of fanzine editors send their wares across the miles to the USA, but they are principally produced for the UK. Inter-continental diffusion of tastes and interests is vital in order to promote a lively and growing fandom - and besides, the US has so much to learn from us!))

PSEUD'S CORNER

H.CHARING,
25 Manor Court,
High Street,
LONDON, N14

Reading Judith Hanna's review in Paperback Inferno of some Samuel R Delaney re-issues was an experience.

A review loaded with such 'off the cuff' statements as:

"Epic blockbuster structural opposition"

"archetypal mythic patterns" - and most interesting of all:

"it's an exploration of the reciprocity of the opposed roles of hero and villain, of their symmetry and inescapable interdependence as the two poles of a dichotomy which like the reflexivity between 'I' and 'You' is an artifact of the viewers perspective"

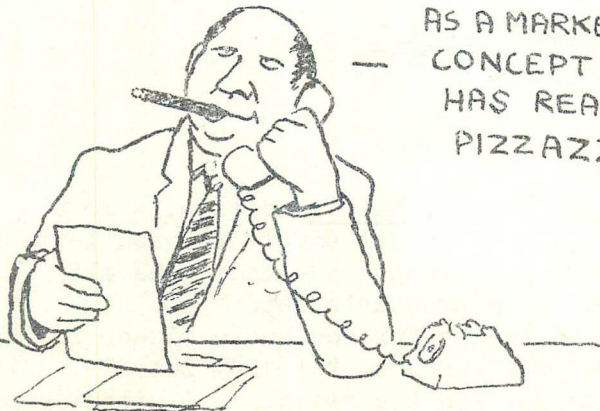
is deserving of a review.

((Cor! Use big words, doncha!))

"SCIENCE FICTION
FOR WIMPS"

YES, I LIKE IT

AS A MARKETING
CONCEPT IT
HAS REAL
PIZZAZZ



A.VINCENT CLARKE,
16 Wendover Way,
WELLING,
Kent, DA16 2BN

I seem to have annoyed Martyn Taylor so much by the first issue of Not Science Fantasy News that his review of it in Matrix 44 is a bit incoherent.

I'm sorry about that, as the lad is doing his best, given that fanzine publishing is for fun and its products are not really suited for Higher Literary Criticism. However, may I just point out one or two teeny misapprehensions?

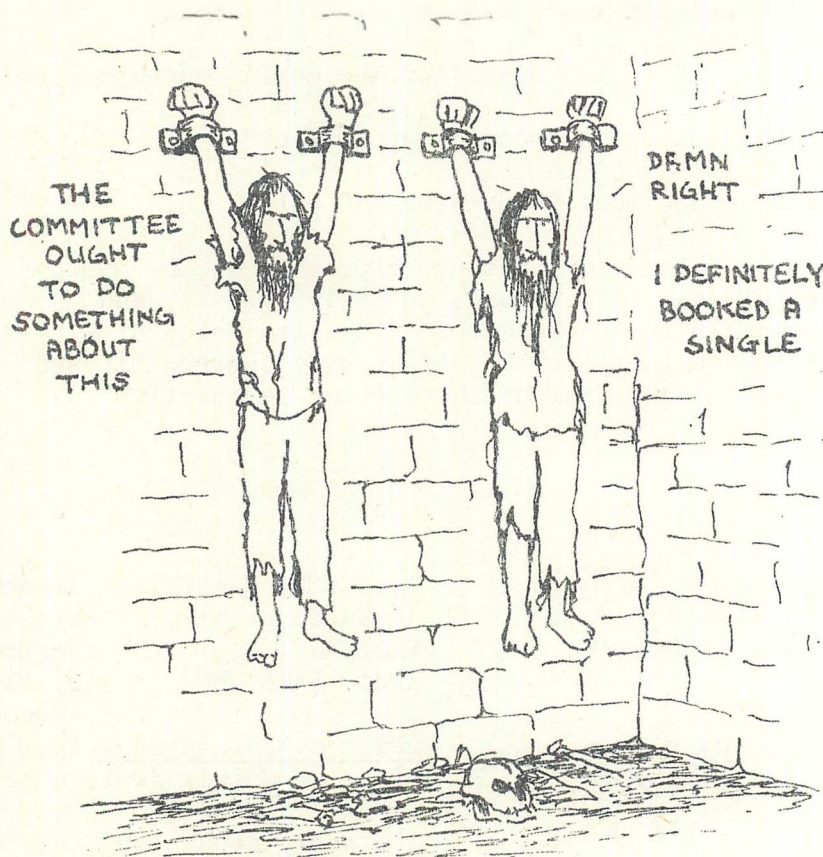
"Vince labours under the impression that nothing has changed....since he gaffiated." Well, I do spend about 60% of the 'zine pointing out the

changes that have taken place in the last 20 years, but just for Martyn's sake, may I make it clear that Things Have Changed. I'm not saying they're better, just that they've changed.

"If something is bad, I'm not about to say it is good because it is called SF". An admirable declaration of principle, marred only by the fact that I hardly mention 'sf' - I think he means 'fannish'. Given that, I couldn't agree more. I expect Martyn would also agree that fanzines are just a goddamned hobby, and therefore we should encourage fellow-enthusiasts where possible, and not get into a tizzy about things with which we don't agree?

"Given some power" I might stop him from publishing...or something. It's a little difficult to sort out what he means. Dammit - I was hoping to keep that secret; when I become Dictator of Fandom, Martyn will be one of the first against the wall. No wonder he's fled to the Isle of Man....When I get him into the condemned cell, I'll make him read page 6 of NSFN, where waffling about the type of 'zine I'd like to publish, I write: "What I'd most like to do would be something which would hark back to the fifties for the cameraderie but still be attractive to the modern fan, with his different background."

I hope Martyn would agree that the generation gap in British fandom should be bridged; we can all be pretty nasty to each other, at whatever age, but to me fandom equals fellowship. This may be condemned as idealistic, but I would think it's a good objective.



ROELOF GOUDRIAAN,
Postbus 589,
8200 AN Lelystad,
Netherlands

My condolence on accepting the post of Matrix editors, a more than averagely frustrating job, seeing all smugly phrased letters which should arrive correcting statements made under the old editorship. In this case. Marjorie Brunner's report on

Eurocon 7. Shards of Babel, listed as Eurocon award winner in the fanzine category, is in the first place not a Belgian fanzine, but 100% Dutch (though written in English). More importantly, it has not won the award, as I withdrew it upon hearing it had been nominated. To the best of my knowledge, in the absence of other nominations no fanzine award was assigned.

I'd like to make it clear that my withdrawal is in no way connected with criticism on

the Eurocon awards; on the contrary, despite the obvious difficulty the award is confronted with, i.e. the problem to judge works in languages one is unfamiliar with, I feel that it could have a useful function, and a more meaningful one than many in 'egoboo' grounded 'national' awards. I hope this explains why I felt (and feel) disinclined to degrade myself as well as the Eurocon awards by accepting an award for a fanzine which at that time was three months old, with a grand total of ten pages published.

((Well, that's the letters column for this issue - please keep sending them to us for the moment until a new full time editor is announced. There are now just two candidates, and by the time you read this, the decision should have been made. Amongst those not fortunate enough to see print with their letters this issue were: Dorothy Davies - who wrote twice, generally bemoaning the problems of no longer being involved with Extro (R.I.P), and yet nobody appearing to notice - ; Ian Maule - who writes once again pointing out that he is no longer the BSFA information officer, even though he relinquished this post over a year ago! Would people needing Information on things science fictional, please write to me at the Matrix Editorial Address, and I'll help you out as best as I can; David Taylor - who wrote about ignorant BSFA reviewers in Paperback Inferno, fancy folk not knowing how to spell Nietzsche!; Mark A Kent - who took exception to Graham's comment regarding the setting up of a National Front Help-Line - I think Graham was not exactly supporting the NF, you know and Gary Andrews - who complains about the lack of discrimination being shown in BSFA publications - he doesn't like the reviewers being allowed to say what they like, and feels that Rob Hansen's article in the last Matrix was 'totally worthless...a statement everybody already knew.'. Well! Got anything to say, Rob?))

Send your letters to:

Rochelle & Alan Dorey, 22 Summerfield Drive, MIDDLETON, Greater Manchester, M24 2WW

WORDSEARCH COMPETITION ANSWERS

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Francis BACON
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JOSEPH CONRAD
Roald DAHL
Daphne DU MAURIER
FLAMMARION
G B SHAW
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The Neofan