

'EVE HARVEY GOES GUFF'

Eve Harvey has earned the privilege of representing British SF fandom at this years Worldcon in Melbourne, Australia. Our pictures show the ensuing celebrations with Eve practicing her awesome powers of mesmerism upon poor, innocent party nibbles and John refining that age old party trick of growing a Dave Hodson out of the back of ones head whilst drinking a very large scotch.

Congratulations John & Eve.



FACTSSHEETSFAC

NOW AVAILABLE !

Eight BSFA facts sheets providing up to date bibliographic information on Science Fiction authors :-

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6. JOHN BRUNNER
7. BOB SHAW
8. H. P. LOVECRAFT

Suggestions for further authors to be included in the series welcome.

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FACTSSHEETSFAC



EDITORIAL

by

Dave Rodson.

This issue of MATRIX sees the start of some new projects and, hopefully, is the turning point from the recent doldrums the magazine has suffered from. But, before I say anything more about that, I must first say good-bye to Sue Thomason as this issue sees her last to Sue review column. Still, as she says in the column, we haven't seen the last of Sue in MATRIX and I for one look forward to those items she intends to contribute. Next issue sees the debut of George Barnett on the Fansine column and, having been a fan of his comics fansine THE PANZEOLOGIST back in the seventies, I know he'll do a fine job.

Fansines and other fan publications cover quite a bit of space in this issue; the expansion of the fansines column started in this issue is to be a regular thing, and the inclusion of the Bob Shaw piece has made me wonder whether BSFA members who don't receive fansines would like to see some examples of what appears between their covers.

Paul Ward has more of his fine artwork in this issue, and he has promised me more of the same. It also seems that we haven't seen the last of Timothy after his encounter with the toilet demon. Paul has also asked me to add that he is more than willing to do fansine work. He can be contacted at 9 Rangrove House, Gambles Lane, Ripley, Surrey, GU23 5HL.

News coverage has started to pick up. Mark Greener is grafting away in order to ensure plenty of media news and Andy Sawyer will be sending me advance news of paperback releases as soon as he iron's out the problems of getting everything sent to him as opposed to ex-PAPERBACK INFERNO editor Joseph Nicholas.

Mark Greener is also endeavouring to contact regular film reviewers to work some system of making sure we cover everything that might appear and be of interest to MATRIX readers. (Whilst on the subject of media reviews, I must apologise to Chris Ogden for not being able to type up his excellent overview of the last Dr. Who series in time for this issue)

Simon Walker and Chris Carne are back with another fiendishly difficult crossword, and Liz Sourbut makes her debut as the new MATRIX quiz mistress. The best entries I will attempt to have converted into cartoons by Paul and Alex Prentice.

Unfortunately, Alan's profile failed to arrive in time (again) and his chairman's piece is also a casualty of lack-of-time-ious this time round, but he'll definitely be back imparting BSFA news next issue.

Well, as I type this, three days before the mailing session (at three o'clock in the morning to be precise), I start to feel that huge gush of relief when another issue is almost out of the way. I also think I should call it a night, work in the morning and no more news springs to mind immediately.

So, until next time, enjoy the nice weather and I'll no doubt see some of you at Beccon.

Dave

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 * MATRIX 60 DEADLINE:
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All contributions should be sent to: Dave Rodson, MATRIX editor, 104 Debdon, Gloucester Road, Tottenham, London, N17 5LN.

BSFA Membership costs £7 per year and can be had from: Sandy Brown, BSFA Membership Secretary, 18 Gordon Terrace, Blantyre, Lanarkshire, G72 9NA. Membership renewals should be sent to: Keith Freeman, 269 Wykeham Road, Reading, Berkshire, RG6 1PL.

Chairman of the BSFA is: Alan Dorey, 22 Summerfield Drive, Middleton, Greater Manchester.

The remaining mailing sessions of 1985 are on: August 3/4...October 5/6...December 7/8.

Don't forget this month's BSFA London meeting has Maxin Jakubowski as a guest speaker. Friday 21st June at the Coopers Arms, 87 Flood Street, Chelsea (off the Kings Road)



NEWS

* Dino De Laurentis seems set to take over the SF and fantasy film market. He has an option on two sequels to DUNE, and is currently producing RED SONJA (based on the Robert E. Howard heroine, with Danish model Gitte Nielson in the title role and a guest appearance from Arnold Schwarzenegger as Conan), TOTAL RECALL (to be directed by David Cronenberg and scripted by Dan O'Bannon and Ronald Shusett), SILVER BULLET (based on the Cycle of the Werewolf by Stephen King and directed by Dan Attias), CONAN III (to be scripted by Karl Edward Wagner), KING KONG IN MOSCOW (?), and has acquired the film rights to several other Stephen King stories and novels and Guy N. Smith's horror novel Night of the Crabs.

* Terry Jones, of Monty Python fame, is working on LABYRINTH, a sequel to DARK CRYSTAL.

* Wes Craven, of THE HILLS HAVE EYES fame, is filming V. G. Andrews FLOWERS IN THE ATTIC.

* A third INDIANA JONES film will be ready for the summer of 86. Harrison Ford (currently showing everybody how fine an actor he really is in WITNESS) will again star, Spielberg directs again, and, sticking to the winning formula, Lucas produces.

* Tobe Hooper, apart from directing a live action SPIDERMAN film, is also working on LIFEFORCE, the film of Colin Wilson's SPACE VAMPIRES, scripted by O'Bannon and Jakoby, special effects by Dykstra, and starring Steve Railsback, Peter Firth, Frank Finlay and Mathilda May.

* Lovecraft's HERBERT WEST - REANIMATOR is being filmed as REANIMATOR in Los Angeles during November. It will be directed by Stuart Gordon from a screenplay by Gordon, Dennis Paoli and William Norris.

* Lots of awards: William Gibson won the third annual PHILIP K. DICK AWARD for his novel NEOMANCER, Gene Wolfe won the French PRIX APOLLO SF award for the French edition of THE CITADEL OF THE AUTARCH (LA CITADELLE DE L'AUTARQUE) which was translated by William Desmond and published by EDITIONS DENOEL, the TWILIGHT ZONE magazine awards went to THE TALISMAN by STRAUB and KING for best book and INDIANA JONES AND THE TEMPLE OF DOOM and GHOSTBUSTERS (tied) for best film.

* A newly found PHILIP DICK novel, RADIO FREE ALBUQUERQUE, is to be published in the US this autumn by ARBOR HOUSE and DOUBLEDAY are to release a collection of his short stories in June called I HOPE I SHALL ARRIVE SOON.

* TWILIGHT ZONE magazine has a new editor - Michael Blaine, who replaces T. E. D. Klein intends to make the magazine more like OMNI.

* CASSANDRA SCIENCE FICTION WRITERS WORKSHOP are releasing two new magazines - STAR WINE, a collection of SF poetry, and a writers magazine.

* Ron Gennell is launching a small press amateur SF magazine and is looking for contributions of fiction, artwork and poetry and requests to join the mailing list. Fiction must be typed double-spaced on one side of an A4 sheet only and approximately 2000 words (or less), artwork must be a maximum size of A4 and black ink on white only. All contributions must have a cover sheet with the contributors name and address. The first issue - name as yet undecided, suggestions welcome - will be out in November with the second issue the following May and will consist of 30 A5 pages. Contact: RON GENNELL, 79 HANSFORD CLOSE, BIRCHWOOD, WARRINGTON, CHESHIRE, WA3 6RN, UK.

* In June Charisma/Virgin Records will be releasing the record of an 'opéra' written by David Bedford and featuring URSULA LE GUIN.

*** THE MEMBERS' NOTICEBOARD is a free advertising service for all BSA members who wish to buy, sell or exchange items or information, make contacts, publicise fannish ventures, etc. Just send your advertisement to the editor via the editorial address.

WANTED...Hardback copies of: PERS ANTONY'S "YATTA" series, TERRY BROOKES' "ELFSTONE OF SHANARA", ANNE McCAFFREY'S "DRAGONS OF PERNN" series, ALAN DEAN FOSTER'S "SPELLSINGER", N. HANCOCK'S "CIRCLE OF LIGHT" series. Contact: Tony Morris, 23 Woodward Rd., Prestwich, Manchester.

OBITUARY...It is with great sadness I must announce, after a valiant struggle against the constant pain of rising costs and overheads, the death of Thorne's Bookshop of Middleborough, sister shop to Thorne's of Newcastle in early May of this year. She leaves behind her a town now sadly lacking a bookshop of her calibre. She will be greatly missed.

Continued from page 14.

Michael Palin plays Jack, a long time friend, who is an information retrieval specialist. Which means he is a 9 to 5 torturer, and Palin plays him as a suave, urbane, utterly credible yuppie and is terrifying.

Whatever the actors do, however, the real stars of the show are Gilliam and his designers. The sets are at once hugely imposing and crampingly confined - massive blocks and columns and tiny personal rooms, overhead railways and ducting, ducting everywhere, like 'Things to Come' in a piping factory. These images are minutely constructed. Nothing you see does not serve some dramatic purpose - whether it be the absurdly long bill on Hoskins' cap, the tiny Messerschmidt 'personnel transport' with a jet exhaust on the back, the fact that every minion on level 30 of Information Retrieval has his hair dyegreened flat on his skull in imitation of boss Ian Richardson, or whatever. Everything exists for the reason of impelling the story - an all too rare feature in modern movies. When all this is added to spectacular camerawork and choreographed set pieces worthy of a ballet master you have something very fine indeed.

So, Gilliam has a good script, impeccable acting and a good looking movie. Why aren't we queuing round the block to see it? Well, as I say, this is a long movie and we don't have very long attention spans these days, especially for seriously inclined art, do we? You won't sell this sort of movie to Han Solo fans. Then it is a downer of a movie and the biggest market for English speaking movies today seems to be in the manically up mood, and its outlook is European despite Gilliam himself being American. Maybe if more of the budget had been spent on hype rather than footage, or more made of the Monty Python link... but what the hell? This is a GOOD MOVIE, the sort of movie Philip Dick might well make in another continuum. Go see it.

Nominations for The 1985 BSFA Awards : Analysis of votes

Mike Moir : Awards Administrator

This year nearly twice as many people as usual voted in the nomination stage of the awards. I can not tell what caused the increase in votes, it may have been the raffle, the reminder list or almost anything else.

The reminder list was a new feature which received considerable comment, nearly all in favour. There was only one major complaint and I agree with it totally : given time, I would have liked to have done extensive lists for short fiction, media items and artists as I did for novels. One of the major reasons for including the reminder list was to help with sorting out whether books like 'Empire of the Sun' and '1982 Janine' were eligible. (To take the American awards as an example, I believe they would be eligible for the Nebulas but not the Hugos.) This was the first year that this problem had occurred. The rules of the awards do no insist that any nominee has to be SF, so the way we interpreted the rules was : The awards are awarded by Science Fiction fans to the best novel (or whatever) published the previous year, and hence does not have to be SF or Fantasy. However I shall continue to compile reminder lists containing only items related to SF. It was up to the membership to decide what they want to vote for and you chose four novels and two media items which could be considered 'Non-SF'.

Due to this apparent increase in interest in the awards, I thought the members might be interested in seeing a breakdown of the preliminary ballot. In the lists below I have included all items receiving at least 5% of the total vote.

N.B. The orderings shown are from the short list and not the final ballot.

NOVELS

1st	Mythago Wood, Holdstock
2nd	The Glamour, Priest
3rd	Empire of the Sun, Ballard
4th=	Nights at the Circus, Carter
	Neuromancer, Gibson
6th=	Leaky Establishment, Langford
	Heretics of Dune, Herbert
	The Crucible of Time, Brunner
	The Book of the River, Watson
	West of Eden, Harrison
11th	1982 Janine, Gray
12th=	Laughter at Carthage, Moorcock
	So Long and Thanks for all the Fish, Adams
14th=	Divine Endurance, G. Jones
	The Zen Gun, Bayley
	Valentine Pontifex, Silverburg
17th=	A Rose for Armageddon, Schenck
	Job A Comedy of Justice, Heinlein
	Lies Inc., Dick
	Kelly Country, Chandler
	The Adversary, May
	Planiverse, Dewdney
	The Businessman, Disch
	Integral Trees, Niven

A total of 69 novels were nominated, slightly over half of which only received one vote each. Almost every book on the reminder list received at least one vote.

Although the fight for fifth place looks very close (five books on 6th=) there was in fact a large gap between 4th= and 6th=.

For people who like odd statistics I have noted a few more details. Although four of the five novels short listed were by British authors, the top 24 are split 12 British, 11 American and one Australian. Only six of the top 24 were available during the year as British Paperbacks (and one as American). 21 of the novels were written by men and only three by women (Julia May, Gwyneth Jones and Angela Carter). Six of the novel were parts of series and only three were first novels (Gibson, Jones and Dewdney). Gollancz, not surprisingly, takes the publishing honours with seven titles.

Eight of the 24 were packaged as mainstream fiction (Priest, Ballard, Carter, Langford, Gray, Moorcock, Jones and Chandler (no Americans)) and one as Non-Fiction (Dewdney). In fact there were only four books by British authors packaged as SF (Brunner, Watson, Adams and Bayley) and one as Fantasy (Holdstock). These are the classifications on the covers, I would not attempt to define their classification myself it would start too many arguments.

SHORT FICTION

1st	The Unconquered Country, Ryman
2nd	Spiral Winds, Kilworth
3rd	The Object of the Attack, Ballard
4th	Unmistakably The Finest, Bradfield
5th	The Man Who Painted The Dragon Graiule, Shepard
6th	The Dream of The Wolf, Bradfield
7th	The Malignant One, Pollack
8th=	Strange Memories of Death, Dick
	The Luck in the Head, M.Harrison
	Tissue Ablation..., Blunheim
11th	Talliamed, Sterling

A total of 53 short stories were nominated. Even though nine of the top eleven came from Interzone only four of the eleven are by British authors (Ryman, Kilworth, Ballard and Harrison). The only American magazine to make a showing was F + SF. Ten stories are by men and only one by a woman (Rachael Pollack).

MEDIA PRESENTATION

1st	The Company of Wolves
2nd=	The Transmigration Of Timothy Archer
	Dune
4th	Star Trek III
5th	1984
6th=	Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom
	Threads
8th=	Tripods
	They Came From Somewhere Else
	Gormenghast
	Lord Greystoke
12th	The Invisible Man
13th=	Bill The Galactic Hero
	The Box of Delights
	Gremlins

A total of 37 items were nominated. Although the top five consisted of four films and a play the top 15 included five TV and two radio programmes.

This category had the widest range of items voted for including: Hawkwind albums, Hill Street Blues, MASH, and my favorite vote : the US elections. (Definitely Fantasy ! But was it good ?)

ARTIST

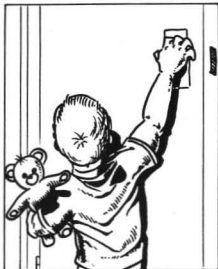
1st	Jim Burns
2nd	Tim White
3rd	Peter Jones
4th=	Bruce Pennington
	Ian Miller
6th	Patrick Woodroffe
7th=	Rodney Mathews
	John Macfarlane
	Bryan Talbot

A total of 46 artists were nominated, 31 of which only received one vote. This category received less than half as many votes as the novel category.

Apologies must go to the following : Harry Harrison and Mark Helprin for including their novels 'Rebel in Time' and 'Winter's Tale' which I listed as eligible and were not due to earlier hardback editions. Also to King and Straub for 'The Talisman', John Updike for 'The Witches of Eastwick' and Norman Spinrad for 'Void Captain's Tale' all of which I missed off the reminder list. On the final ballot apologies to Garry Kilworth for missing an 'r' out of Garry and to Michael Radford ('The Director of 1984') who I called Radfield. Finally apologies for any other mistakes and omissions that have not yet been pointed out to me.

Many thanks to Dave Langford for the help in compiling the reminder list and of course to everyone who voted.

Please remember the more votes, the better the awards, so lets try and double the votes again next year !



unconventional!

Round the Clubs

ALBAICON 85.

19th - 22nd July 1985 at the Central Hotel, Glasgow.

Guests of Honour: Harlan Ellison and Anne McCaffery.

Membership: £8.00 attending, £5.00 supporting.
Room Rates: Single room £15.00, single room with bath £17.50, twin room £12.50, twin with bath £16.00, double room with bath £16.00, triple room £12.00. All rates are per person per night and are fully inclusive of breakfast and VAT.

Information: Vincent J. Docherty,
20 Hillington Gardens, Cardonald, Glasgow,
G52 2TP.

CANCON 85/UNICON 6.

13th - 15th September 1985 at the New College Hall, Cambridge.

Guest of Honour: John Christopher.

Membership: £7.00 attending, £4.00 supporting.
Room Rates: £16.10 per person per night, inclusive of breakfast and VAT.

Registrations should be sent to Neil Taylor,
c/o Perspective Designs Ltd., 9 Pembroke Street,
Cambridge, CB2 3QY.

FANTASYCON V.

6th - 8th September 1985 at the Royal Angus Hotel, Birmingham.

Guest of Honour: Robert Holdstock.

Master of Ceremonies: Charles L. Grant.

Pre-registration: £1.50/£3.00.

Information: Fantasycon, 15 Stanley Road,
Morden, Surrey.

MEYCON II.

7th - 9th February 1986 at the Strathallan Hotel, Birmingham.

Membership: £9.00

Room Rates: £17.50 per person per night inc. bath, tea & coffee facilities in room, voucher for either full English breakfast or snack lunch, and VAT.

Registrations: Pam Wells, 24a Beech Road,

Bounds Green, London, N11 2DA.

Correspondence: Linda Pickersgill, 7a
Laurence Road, London, N5 4XJ.

BECCON.

26th - 28th July 1985 at the Essex Crest Hotel, Basildon.

Membership: £8.00

Room Rates: very few rooms left as of 21/5/85,
£16.00 per person per night. Probably sharing.

Day members or those not needing a bed very welcome.

Registrations: Mike Westhead, 191 The Heights,
Northolt, Middlesex, UB5 4EU.

(The Becon committee have also announced a bid for the 1987 Eastercon. Venue: Metropole Hotel, Birmingham. Pre-supporting membership of £1.00 to the above address.)

First off, an apology. In my piece last time I ill-advisedly referred to members of the Friends of Kilgore Trout by the term 'piss-artists'. To me this is not an insult, but almost a term of endearment! However, it seems to have connotations in Glasgow I was completely unaware of and has annoyed some people. So, I withdraw the term and apologise to all FoKT members - I hope that no-one will take offence where none was intended.

Thank you to all those who responded to my plea for information made last time. I now have details of a fair number of clubs, though more certainly wouldn't go amiss! Don't forget that whilst I write this column in Matrix it really is only a small part of the Clubs Officer's job. Matching fans with clubs is the most important thing. Fandom is an active hobby from which you can only get the best by participating. If you don't know of any groups near you, don't hesitate to drop me a line. Obviously I can't guarantee to know of a club near you, but I'll do my best. If all else fails, why not try to start a group of your own? I'll be more than happy to publicise it.

On that note, a couple of people have asked for a mention for groups they are trying to get going. Michael Bernadi would like to hear from anyone interested in starting a society in Sussex (particularly Mid-Sussex) as he'd like to have a group nearer to him than Brighton! (Michael Bernadi, The Rectory, St. Mildred's Way, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 3QH.) Incidentally, the Brighton group themselves meet on Fridays from 8pm at the Druids Arms, 81 Ditchling Rd., Brighton. The person to contact for more information is Andy Robinson, 20 Kingston Rd., Brighton (0273 - 558775).

Pete Crump is interested in trying to revive CaDs - the Chester and District Group (although 'District' tends to include a lot of North Wales and some of Chester). There are a few members (mostly at university) and they met put out a group sign and hope to do so again one day. Unfortunately, the group seems to have almost died out due to lack of interest. If anybody in the area fancies getting it going again then write to Pete at 9 Llys Mylfa, Mynydd Isa, Mold, Clwyd CH7 6XA.

Chris Ogden informs me that the Bolton and District Group have moved to the Man and Scythe, Churchgate (sort of diagonally opposite Preston's of Bolton). They still meet every Tuesday.

Finally, in the same sort of area, does anyone out there know what's happened to the Manchester and District Group? They've moved from their old pub and, whilst the landlord is getting a number of enquiries about them, he doesn't know where they've gone! Can anybody enlighten both him and me?

That's all for now. Clubs contact address is, as usual, Trevor Hendhan, 53 Towncourt Crescent, Petts Wood, Kent BR5 1PH.



NON PROFILES OF THE FUTURE

BOB SHAW

One of the things I've always liked about science fiction is that it doesn't predict the future.

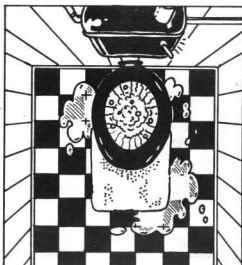
Lots of people think it does, and feature writers for the newspapers reveal their lack of understanding of the subject when they start listing all the modern marvels which were accurately foretold by science fiction writers. We writers often go along with them, taking the easy road, by trotting out our old story about how Cleve Cartmill was investigated by the FBI in 1945 for divining the workings of the atomic bomb.

But the true fan of science fiction knows and delights in the fact that it has a lousy record of accurate prediction, that it has gaily portrayed thousands of different futures, most of which are incompatible with the others. There is even a thriving sub-group, especially in the cinema, of enthusiasts for science fiction that has been proved to be completely wrong. Well's "The War of the Worlds", for example, has acquired a peculiar poignant charm it could not have possessed for its original readership.

This may sound slightly odd coming from a person who earns his living solely by writing science fiction, but I believe it is impossible to predict the future. If it were, science fiction would be dull. It would never have uncovered the crazy sparkling of treasures which have enriched all of us. It is true that certain world trends have become more clearly visible lately, and that the profession of futurologist has sprung up, but in the main any successful predictions in science fiction were achieved through the scatter gun effect. If you predict everything you're bound to get something right.

It would be disastrous if science fiction decided it knew enough about what lies ahead to enable it to trade in its scatter gun for a rifle - so heres to that band of imaginative writers who make wildly inaccurate guesses about the future. Long may they continue to do so!

Reprinted from RON'S RAYGUN 3 (available for all the usual reasons from Ron Gemmell, 79 Mansfield Close, Birchwood, Warrington, Cheshire, WA3 6RN) with the permission of both Bob and Ron. Ta, chaps!



GOODBYE, AND FAREWELL, AND AMEN

...and I heave a huge sigh of relief at the thought that this is ABSOLUTELY THE LAST fanzine review column I have to write for Matrix. It's been more work than fun, in many ways. I now have a bigger mailing list than I can really afford (yes, Virginia, fanzines cost money to produce and more money to post), because I felt bound to respond to all the zines I received in some form -- trade, if not loc. And I've never really felt happy about my competency as a zine reviewer, nor how the task of reviewing zines for Matrix should be approached. I've seen more and more zines that seem to have been produced simply to have something to trade with, rather than because the writer had something of importance to say. It's time for a change, a fresh, enthusiastic new look, and I welcome my successor and wish him well.

I've had very little feedback about how useful (or otherwise) people out there in BSFaland have found my work -- a couple of enquiries for addresses, one comment that the SHORT TITLE CATALOGUE was useful. In fact, the CATALOGUE has never been much trouble to do. I started by making a card-index of all the zines I received, adding each new arrival in its alphabetical place. I now do it on my word processor, which means only one set of typing-up to do. There's not more than three or four hours' work in each CATALOGUE.

But oh, the spectre of the actual reviews... Those scant few paragraphs are the result of much painful thought, rumination over which are the best zines, should I be reviewing the best (or what I think are the best) or issuing Awful Warnings about not-very-good zines? If I keep on thinking the same dozen or so zines are Really Triffic, (CRYSTAL SHIP, WEBERWOMANS WREVENGE, ANSIBLE, ATU XVIII, THIS NEVER HAPPENS, to name but several) should I keep on, and on, reviewing successive issues, or should I try to cover new ground with each column? How the hell does one review fanzines anyway? I could do a Lit. Crit. job on them, but lots of people don't read (or write) fanzines as Literature? I may find a fanzine which spends 34 pages talking about synthesizers incomprehensible and/or boring; however if you're into synthesizers, you may find it the most exciting thing you've read since DUNE and/or LORD OF THE RINGS.

Never mind. It's not my problem any more.

There have been benefits -- getting zines I'm sure I would never otherwise have seen is the main one, and the reason why I took the job on in the first place. And now I'm free, I don't intend disappearing from the pages of Matrix forever. I've got a series of occasional articles on fanzines planned. Perhaps now I'll find time to write them...

TIMOTHY AND THE TOILET DEMON

*Story & Art
Paul RD Ward*

A SHORT TITLE CATALOGUE OF CURRENT FANZINES

AFTER EIGHT MINCE. From: Ian Sorensen, 142 Busby Road, Clarkston, Glasgow G76 8BG. For: usual. 14pp. An absolutely mincestrous zine.

ATU XVIII 14. From: Trevor Mendham, 53 Twoncourt Crescent, Petts Wood, Kent BR5 1PH. For: usual, 50p. 30pp, brill, triffic zine.

BIG EYED BEANS FROM VENUS 3, 4. From: Chuck Connor, Sildan House, Chediston Road, Wissett, Nr. Halesworth, Suffolk, IP19 0NF. For: Members of The Organisation, whim. 10pp, 12pp, usual eclectic Connor stuff, cuttings and all...

CLOUD CHAMBER 35. From: Dave Langford, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks RG1 5AU. For: Frank's Apa, and a few others.

CONRUNNER TWO. From: Ian Sorensen, 142 Busby Road, Clarkston, Glasgow G76 8BG. For: any interested party (print run 200). 13pp, the fanzine for convention organisers or would-be organisers, and very useful and informative. Read it, if you're involved with con running.

DRINKING WATER IN A MENACING MANNER. From: Kate Davies, 79 Dando Crescent, Kidbrooke, London SE3 9PB. For:?? 20pp, main article on what's wrong with Star Trek fandom.

FANZINE FANATIQUE 60. From: Keith and Rosemary Walker, 6 Vine Street, Greaves, Lancaster LA1 4UF. For: usual. 4pp, indispensable reviewzine, 31 zines listed.

GEGENSCHEIN 48. From: Eric Lindsay, PO Box 42, Lyneham, ACT 2602, Australia. For: usual. 16pp, perzine, a number of thought-provoking ideas in this issue, on timesaving, angst, etc.

JAWZ 5. From: Alex Zbyslaw, 197 Herbert Avenue, Poole, Dorset BH12 4HR. For: money (35p), loc. 20pp, perzine. And thank you for disapproving of the AIDS scare, Alex.

NEW BLOOD. From: CADS, c/o 42 Green Lane, Belle Vue, Carlisle, Cumbria. For: usual. Carlisle and District Science Fiction Groupzine. 40pp, illos by Shep, articles, LoCcol etc.

NUTZ 3. From: Pam Wells, 24A Beech Road, Bowes Park, London N11 2DA. For: usual. 22pp, articles by Rob Hansen, Marc Ortlieb, Lilian Edwards and Maverick the Mole, plus LoCcol. Good value.

PSYCHEDELIC FRUIT JUICE 1. From: Simon Bostock, 18 Gallows Inn Close, Ilkeston, Derbyshire, DE7 4BU. For: 75p (one issue), £2.00 (3 issues). 23pp, articles on drugs, love, video censorship, and a Hawkwind concert.

RECOMMENDED RETAIL PRICE. From: Terry Broome, who didn't put his address on his zine, so I can't even LoC him. For: usual. 11pp, good luck with getting hold of it°

RIM RUNNER 35/ FROM THE RIM 4. From: Don C. Thompson, 3735 W. 81st Place, Westminster, Colo. 80030, USA. For: D'APA and "about 50 individuals carefully screened for literacy, lucidity and loquaciousness" (who, me?). 6pp.

RON'S RAYGUN 3. From: Ron Gemmell, 79 Mansfield Close, Birchwood, Warrington, Cheshire WA3 6RN. For: usual. 23pp. Poems, articles, illos, fiction, LoCcol.

SIC BUISCUIT DISINTEGRAT 7. From: Dave Rowley and Joy Hibbert, 11 Rutland Street, Staffordshire ST1 5JG. 38pp, good articles, good illos, good value. Together with THE BUISCUIT RELIGIOUS SUPPLEMENT from Joy Hibbert, address as above. 16pp. Religious supplements seem to be becoming the fashionable additive to today's fanzine diet; like bran, perhaps.

SIRIUS MOONLIGHT 8.4. From: University of St. Andrews SF and F Society, c/o Students' Union, St. Mary's Place, St. Andrews, Fife KY16 9UZ. For: Good question. Try money. 18pp.

SQUAT ON MY GRUNT 5. From: Owen Whiteoak, Top Flat (left), 112 Polwarth Gardens, Edinburgh EH11 1LH. For: usual?? many pages, several of them yellow.

SPUNG° 2. From: Christopher Ogden, 202 Heywood Road, Prestwich, Manchester M25 5LD. For: usual. 11pp, perzine.

STOMACH PUMP 7. From: Steve Higgins, 200 Basingstoke Road, Reading, Berks. RG2 0HH. For: usual? 22pp, mostly letters on SP6.

TESSERACT. From: er, me, i.e. Sue Thomason, 1 Meyrick Square, Dolgellau, Gwynedd LL40 1LT. For: whoever's had it already. 11pp, four accounts of an anomalous spacetime event at Novacon 14.

THE FOETUS 1. From: The Embryo Collective, 79 Dando Crescent, Kidbrooke, London SE3 9PB. For: usual? 14pp, er um well wow, um, yeah, like, what can I say about this?

THE FIVE YEAR PLAN 8: WALL OF WEST INDIAN WITCHCRAFT. From: Denis Jones, 22 Beechhill Road, Eltham, London SE9 1HH. For: 25p plus postage. 24pp, gameszine.

WEBERWOMAN'S WREVENGE Vol 4, No. 3. From: Jean Weber, PO Box 42, Lyneham, ACT 2602, Australia. For: Trade, loc. 21pp, articles on love, friendship, etc.

WHOOPESEY. From: Jeanne Gomoll, 909 Jenifer Street, Madison, WI 53703. For: the UNusual. 4pp.

WHIMSEY 3. From: Jeanne Gomoll, 409 S. Brooks Street, Madison WI 53715, USA. For: usual? 14pp.

MASTERS OF FANTASY 2: August Derleth.

British Fantasy Society booklet No. 7.
Edited by Nic Howard.

Reviewed by Ros Calverley.

Not really a fanzine, this one; save in the all-embracing sense that it is an amateur publication in the SF/Fantasy field, produced by fans of a particular writer for love of that writer rather than for financial reward. And, as such, within the limitations of the genre, it performs its task pretty well.

Derleth is a writer little known in this country save for the numerous, and uniformly poor, Lovecraft pastiches and "posthumous collaborations" of his which have appeared in collections of Lovecraft's work and of Lovecraftian fiction. The avowed intention of the present booklet is to remedy the British public's ignorance of the 'serious' side of Derleth's output. Much of the zine is taken up with an article by Nic Howard which gives an overview of this output and attempts to give the reader an idea of why Derleth was once a writer well regarded by such luminaries as Sinclair Lewis; Howard describes all the major works and points out the irony of Derleth's life: that he doomed himself to failure as a serious writer because he was himself a fan. Running Arkham House Publications, through which he promoted his beloved Lovecraft and others, eventually took up so much of Derleth's time and energy that he ceased to write at all save for such needed money; which meant in the popular horror/fantasy vein.

The chief defect of the booklet is that it is, inevitably, too brief. The main article falls short of its target through attempting to do too much in too little space; the reader does not gain much idea of the quality or otherwise of Derleth's work, simply because there is not room to convey such a thing in the space available. Instead the article consists mainly of a series of capsule reviews. There is a second article in the zine, also by Howard, which functions as a précis of the longer piece and adds little to it; plus a brief account by Ramsey Campbell of the influence Derleth had on him at the beginning of his writing career. Last, but perhaps of most significance to the collector, is a short piece by Derleth himself, seeing print for the first time this side of the Atlantic. This, a brief vignette on the theme of lost love, demonstrates that Derleth could write; but it is again too short to give more than a taste of his literary ability.

These reservations apart, the booklet will be of interest to fans and collectors of Lovecraft and Lovecraftian fiction. In addition it contains enough to provoke a certain amount of curiosity; and if any reader becomes sufficiently interested to seek out any of Derleth's non-fantasy work, then the zine will have achieved its avowed purpose.

The numerous illustrations are by Allan Kosowski and are by themselves enough to justify the booklets existence: some of the best Lovecraftian artwork I have ever seen anywhere, particularly in a fanzine.

CASSANDRA ANTHOLOGY No. 7

Published by the Cassandra Science Fiction Workshop, 8 Mansford Walk, Northampton.
52 pages, 50p.

Reviewed by Dave Hodson.

Fan fiction has been extremely prominent in the MATRIX letter pages over the last few months and new outlets seem to be springing up every day. Unmistakably the best known of these outlets amongst BSFA members is the Cassandra Workshop Anthology. On the whole, this latest issue was an entertaining read, with several fine stories.

THE RIOTOUS HOUR is the collections first piece; an evenly paced story which tries to become frantic about half-way through. The story concerns an Atlantean Empress and her lover, due to be ritually killed at the end of his year in this role, being chased through the catacombs of the palace by the revolting populace. Unfortunately author ALAN DUNNETT's style of writing is unable to make the change of pace and the tale is further marred by a weak ending; the final two paragraphs ruin any good work leading up to them. I was left wondering whether Dunnett had either lost interest in the tale or ran out of ideas.

20K AND BEYOND by DAVE CLEMENTS is a humorous little tale of hi-fi freaks and purity of sound; nothing special, but entertaining. Any technical faults in the writing are minor and, almost certainly, due to lack of experience.

Next up is one of the two most impressive pieces in the collection. MARTYN TAYLOR's THE SEX BOMB is a pleasure to read and would be deserving of a place in any professionally produced magazine or anthology. This story of two nations at war unfolds beautifully and the examination of the village elders, who stay at home whilst the young bucks go to fight, is caustically accurate. The story works up to a thoughtful conclusion and one can easily imagine Taylor as a star professional writer of the future.

That having been said, it is a shame that the next story in the collection is such bilge. THE SEARCH by STEVE BOWKETT is a pseudo-meaningful, 'Ettleslar Galactic' with essence of '2001' style tale. A two person survey team begin the examination of a planet and the conversation revolves around 'is this the lost planet Earth?' Unexcusable rubbish.

NIK MORTON's ON A SHOUT is the other excellent piece included herein; good use of vocabulary, perfect pacing and a good eye for detail in a small amount of space make this tale, about racist arson attacks and a fireman's misguided form of mercy, well worth remembering when the next BSFA Awards come around...

More humour follows in the form of JUST THINK OF IT AS AN ELASTIC BAND by DEAN WEBB: a time travel tale that ignores all the age-old paradoxes and concentrates on being entertaining and fun. I particularly liked the jokes about minority pressure groups at the start, I just hope nobody from the GLC or London Borough of Islington has read this.

Last, but certainly not least, comes JIHAD by BERNARD SMITH, which employs a story-line similar to that of Colin Wilson's 'The Mind Parasites'. Earth is about to be invaded by creatures with vastly better mental abilities than the average human being and a select band learn how to fight back. An unusual, if not entirely original, ending make this quite a strong tale, although not as strong as the Morton and Taylor pieces.

In closing, it must be pointed out that the anthology is very well edited, with the shorter, usually more light-hearted, pieces acting like commercial breaks, allowing for a bit of mental refreshment, to the longer stories. I'm impressed by nearly all aspects of this issue, although I can't help but wonder whether the strength of the collection may be because of some sort of lash-back after the recent 'fan fiction' arguments within the BSFA.

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MEDIA REVIEWS EDITORIAL.

by

MARK GREENER.

I do not intend to make editorials a regular feature of the media reviews section, however, as I have recently taken over this column, I feel that I should make a statement concerning editorial policy.

I see this section as complimentary to the reviews section of VECTOR and PT and, as such, subject to the same writing standards. I don't think this ideal will be difficult to achieve as most of the reviews published recently have easily attained this standard.

I will accept either typewritten or handwritten copy on any aspect of the media not already covered by either the other BSFA or the other columns in MATRIX. The reviews may be of any length although, as editor of the section, I reserve the right to edit. I am aware of some of the problems that might have arisen in the past, so I am publically stating my intention to answer everyone that writes to me. To save my bank manager any more ulcers an SAE would be appreciated.

The rest is up to you. Hopefully you'll prove the hypothesis that everyone is a critic.

Send reviews to : MARK GREENER,
2 WHITE HART CLOSE
BUNTINGFORD
HERTS.
(tel: 0763 71689 -
evenings (if you're lucky))

A QUICK WORD...

by

DAVE HODSON.

First off, my apologies to Mark for not being able to forward Martyn Taylor's review of BRAZIL included in this issues column. It arrived a couple of days after the deadline and I decided to include it whilst the film was still topical.

Secondly, in order to help Mike Voir with the media presentation section of the ESFA Awards it is intended that we run a section of capsule reviews every issue. If you hear of anything that you suspect would not normally be reviewed here, or that could be easily forgotten, write and tell us. In order to be truly representative not only does everybody need to vote in the awards, they also need to know exactly what is eligible.

And finally, regardless of what the presentation is, or where it appears, or how famous or not it may be, send Mark a review. They'll be judged regardless of how long you've been a member, what you've said in the previous issues letter column or anything else you may feel might prejudice the issue. We're looking for the best that the BSFA membership can produce and I won't be satisfied until every member at least sends a LoC, getcha pens out...

STARMAN.

Starring Jeff Bridges and Karen Allen.
Directed by John Carpenter.

Reviewed by Roy Macinski (Smith in Romanian).

STARMAN sees John Carpenter turning away from his normal stomping ground of shock-horror style of movie to direct a love story. And a very fruitful departure it is too, because, for my money, STARMAN is his best film to date.

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After being beckoned to come and visit us by the Voyager 2 probe, the starman crash lands on Earth and, in the form of a glowing ball of energy, enters the home of recently widowed Jenny Hayden (Karen Allen). Once inside it retrieves the genetic structure of Allen's husband from a lock of hair (and what it thinks is his personality from an outrageously camped up performance for a home movie) and, whilst the horrified Allen watches, grows within a matter of minutes from a baby to a fully developed man, physically identical in every way to her recently departed husband.

Via a series of tricks and half formed English phrases, the Starman (Jeff Bridges) explains that he needs Allen to drive him several hundred miles in order that he can make a rendezvous that, if missed, will spell his death.

I found this opening section of the film rather unconvincing, almost as if Carpenter was well aware of the need to set the story up and give some sort of background but would have in fact been much happier going straight into the main part of the movie. I say this because once the journey starts and STARMAN turns into 'a road movie', everything suddenly starts to gel and come together to spell binding effect.

Whilst Karen Allen is at first reluctant to undertake this race against time (fearing for her life), as she becomes aware of Bridges' child-like vulnerability, and also the fact that he has effectively placed his life in her hands, she starts to respond to the seriousness of his predicament. As the journey continues and they help steer each other through a series of misadventures, their relationship slowly changes from an unwilling partnership to mutual respect, fondness and, finally, love.

All of this may sound sloppy and corny to you, and, in truth, in lesser hands STARMAN could have been truly awful. But, in the hands of writers Evans and Weldon, director John Carpenter and performers Jeff Bridges and Karen Allen, this somewhat leaden material is transformed into pure gold. For his part Carpenter, in a juggling act of remarkable dexterity, never allows either the humour, suspense or romance to totally dominate the film and, in so doing, strengthens and sharpens each of these different elements and helps to create a richly satisfying mixture of adjectives. For their part, Bridges and Allen perfectly project their characters to the point where I became totally convinced by, and involved in, their developing relationship.

STARMAN is, without doubt, a light weight film. It's hardly likely to set you pondering the fundamental questions of life, nevertheless, it is funny, exciting, genuinely touching and, in my opinion, the most expertly crafted piece of popular entertainment to come along in ages.

BRAZIL

Directed by Terry Gilliam.

Reviewed by Martyn Taylor.

The movie biz these days being business first and any form of art a long way after last means that most films are fairly rigidly and obviously formulaic - 'Cute of ET and dirt of Karry, toupee of Burt and tit of Bo', with music by John Williams, of course. SF movies tend to replace the toupee and tit with computer graphics and maybe music by Vangelis. Now BRAZIL may have a formula, but bet when Terry Gilliam took it to tinseltown and told the accountant it was a bit like 1984 with a hint of METROPOLIS and a dash of TIME BANDITS, no star names and not even music by Distrikt Honkin, he was shown the door, and quick. My God, the screenplay is by Tom Stoppard, just about the nibblest and most philosophically agile playwright breathing today! Who in hell is going to watch a movie by him?

If we have any sense or sensibilities, my friends, we will. You see, Mr. Gilliam's BPAAII is one of those brilliant, dazzling, ambitious movies you thought they didn't make anymore. Oh, it isn't perfect. It's a good thirty minutes too long and, for a couple of chaps who made their names by making us laugh, Messrs. Gilliam and Stoppard don't fill the auditorium with the sound of fun and frolics - but it is a work of art, serious in content and spectacular in execution, which does not treat its audience like children. We are served with solid nourishment - meat and three veg - with not a glisspe of candy floss to be found, a crown roast of a movie, not a big mac.

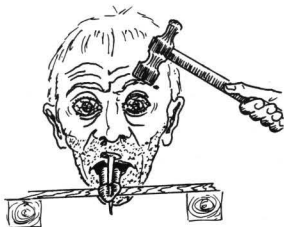
Okay, so what is it and what is it about? Well, we find ourselves in one of those crowded, regimented cities made famous by Fritz Lang and Alexander Korda. People live grey, damp and meaningless lives watched over by a Ministry of Information as hearty and big brotherish as we ever saw in the war. Sam Lowry pushes paper in records and keeps his head down despite being able to get anything he likes out of the computer (glorious confessions of bakelite and old Remington Keyboards, 4 inch screens and cloth covered two core cable). In his dreams, Sam is a silver birdman who rescues his dream girl from the clutches of a giant, masked samurai and it's cohorts of baby-faced mutants. Sam wants to live in peace until he dies, but he has an ambitious mum, whose lover is the big bossman at the Ministry, and she wangles him a promotion to Information Retrieval, which Sam promptly turns down. Then he actually sees his dream girl - pursuing a neighbour who has been arrested by mistake and then disappears (as in the Argentinian meaning of disappear) - and the only way Sam can find out about her is by pulling her record, which is classified and can only be accessed at Information Retrieval.

Which is all the plot I'm going to tell you, except to say that Sam gets into big trouble. You see, his dream girl is a crop-haired, leather jacketed, Dr. Martened trucker who is convinced is a terrorist. She isn't: she's just a working girl trying to live down on the streets without getting herself killed. But Sam doesn't let that bother him. He's romantically in love with terrorists, seeing them everywhere, wanting to be one himself, if only he had the nerve. He even identifies a lunatic renegade central heating engineer (played by Robert de Niro in a ski mask) as a terrorist - and thereby hangs the tale. Mind you, Sam can't be entirely blamed for this as Heating Engineer Tuttle comes on like the action man that the SAS and RM Commandos dream about being.

So Sam's dream girl isn't a terrorist, until he makes her one - which doesn't bother the Ministry one bit. To them we are all undiscovered terrorists. Who is she? Well, she bears more than a passing resemblance to Sam's mother (played by a splendidly voracious Katherine Helmond) when she was young - as she becomes again under the plastic surgeon's knife. Except Sam's ma is an orange haired man eater who wears a shoe for a hat and his lover is a tough, independent woman who turns soft and pliable when it's time for bed. Which is, more or less, the sort of woman you'd expect Sam's dream girl to be - just like mum, only modern (and, as played by Kim Greist, I expect she won't be only Sam's dream girl).

Sam himself is played by Jonathon Pryce, an actor who adds whole new dimensions of meaning to the term 'nervous tension'. Those who know Pryce's work will not be surprised, except pleasantly, by this strong performance - nervy, elated, frightened and terrorised by all and sundry but especially his domestic appliances after an official repairman gets at them. Around Pryce flower predictably exotic performances from the likes of Ian Holm (Sam's fretful boss), Peter Vaughan (as the big boss himself, with a delicious line in sporting clichés), Bryan Pringle (incredibly oleaginous as a maitre d'), Bob Hoskins and Ian Richardson.

Continued on page 3.



Nail em down...

First off, the BSFA Awards forum...

Dave Swinden
Flat 2C
14 Avenue Elmers
Surbiton
Surrey

only get a crack at the award before they've reached the greater part of their potential readership. Surely this is an absurd situation. Why can't the qualification be first publication in hardback or paperback, with the stipulation that no book can win the award twice? (I don't see anything wrong in a book being nominated twice - it would be ridiculous for it to be barred from nomination in paperback purely because it had been popular enough in hardback to be nominated then.)

If this system were to be adopted I might find that, in some years at least, I'd read enough of the material nominated to actually vote for something.

Martyn Taylor
Flat 2
17 Hutchinson Square
Douglas, I of Man.

The fact that the BSFA novel award is confined to first publications, regardless of format, means that the majority of novels

are not eligible for the award. I am intrigued by the delightful but appropriately synthetic furor over the inclusion of 'Empire of the Sun' on the shortlist for the BSFA awards. Synthetic? Why, yes. How else can we account for a definition of SF which includes 'Mythago Wood' and 'Company of Wolves' but excludes 'Empire of the Sun'. Of course 'Empire' contains no more science than the other two works (which doesn't make it so very different to vast numbers of other books marketed as SF) but it is informed by the imagination and authorial stance which characterizes much of what we have lately come to accept as SF. It

may not be marketed as SF, but surely that is for the simple reason that the famous yellow jacket (Yes, I know Cape don't use yellow jackets) would be the kiss of death for the book to the broad audience for serious works of fiction, most of whom believe SF is space opera and clod-hopping scientification on gaudy covers. Would the purists have the best of our SF rooted authors deny themselves the audience their work deserves for the sake of someone else's ideology?

The fact is that SF has long since spread far beyond the forgotten boundaries of 'science' fiction, and if the broad membership of the BSFA have the good sense to acknowledge this then hurrah for us, I say. Let us apply a lesson from 'real' science. If the description 'SF' no longer fits the reality of imaginative and fantastic fiction we change the description rather than wait that the world is wrong. Or do the purists still propound the phlogiston theory?

Which brings me to Jane Reynolds and Miss Hender, transient members because of a lack of missionary zeal on the part of the BSFA, and bad manners on the part of individuals. Surely the lesson is simple. If the BSFA doesn't do what any of us, the members, want it to do then we get off our backsides and MAKE it do what we want it to do. Not easy, I know, and hard work for certain, but nothing of any worth is easy, is it? If Miss Hender wants the BSFA to say 'we told you so' about each discovery why doesn't she volunteer for the job? (although I fancy she might find the labour a little less straightforward than she imagines)

Which is not to say their complaints are not valid. For instance, what has happened to the news services in Matrix? The individuals concerned are mostly still active members, so why don't we have notice of forthcoming books, films, events, etc. as well as the gaming column?

Jane Reynolds missive in the last issue has continued the spate of moans began by Philip Collins...

Dorothy Davies
3 Cadels Row
Faringdon, Oxon.

What Jane Reynolds calls whining I thought was keeping Orbit up in people's minds...

I HAVE NEVER RECEIVED A LETTER FROM JANE REYNOLDS ASKING FOR ORBITER INFORMATION. I'm sending a carbon of this letter, plus Orbit info, to her by the same post I despatch this to you. If I receive a letter I will answer it, usually the same day. I have also answered letters that do not have SAEs! I know letters go astray. I know because one prospective Orbit member thought I had refused to answer his first letter due to the lack of an SAE, when in fact it was the first time he had been in touch - as far as I was concerned.

OK, folks, no more Orbit ads, in case anyone else thinks I'm whining. But, if I take longer that 3 months to put a group together for you, please don't blame me entirely...

Margaret Hall
5 Maes yr Odyn
Doigellau
Gwynedd LL40 1UT.

I wonder how many people think like Jane Reynolds? Perhaps this explains the lack of good

fiction submissions to Focus.

I know Sue Thomason has been disappointed with both the quantity and the quality of the fiction submissions received so far (though she has had far more than three stories sent in and has also published more than two). Surely there are some talented writers out

there in the BSFA? There have been enough cries for a fiction magazine, yet the present outlet is being ignored. Do members think that if a story of theirs appeared in FOCUS it would (to quote Jane) 'ruin their credibility as a writer'?

Why?

Surely the FOCUS readership have enough critical sense to spot a good story when they see one, and the more good stories we get submitted, the higher the standard will become. It's ridiculous to suppose that a brilliant story will be condemned as rubbish merely because it appears in FOCUS! The only thing that would ruin an author's credibility would be the appearance of a POOR story.

I am pleased that the BSFA have decided to go ahead with the fiction magazine idea, but if so few BSFA members are submitting to Focus, will they submit to the new one? I hope so, but if they don't, then it will just give the anti-fiction brigade in the BSFA the ammunition they need to knock amateur fiction writers. In the meantime, why not submit a story to FOCUS?

Bernard Smith
8 Mansford Walk
Thrplands Brook
Northampton NN3 4YF.

I'm obviously not the only one sick and tired of Dorothy Davies' constant whining about her not being sent

fiction. It was she who exclaimed that the BSFA is for fans, not writers. It was she who remarked (in the latest Focus newsletter) that the proposed BSFA Anthology was a 'pretty stupid idea'. When I first joined, I sent a copy of the first Cassandra Anthology to her for comment. The letter I received was at best egotistical, at worst downright insulting. To quote - '...every writer needs to write the rubbish out of their heads...if you encourage too many people to have this rubbish printed, there will be no hope for them. I remain apprehensive to what you may be doing to the worthwhile writer.' Seven issues on, we've seen many writers improve their work and not had a single suicide. If nobody is sending fiction to Dorothy Davies it may be due to her utterances making it obvious that she is the very last person to whom one should send work for either support or intelligent criticism. So, why are people leaving the BSFA? After ploughing through various publications a few things become plain. There is an absolute refusal by the committee to acknowledge the fact that they may actually be doing something wrong. Apart from their foul-up over Tangent being used to smear every amateur writer, and the recent business over 'Empire of the Sun' reducing the BSFA award to the level of farce, recent letters have made it clear that many members have had their enquiries and offers of help totally ignored. I can't help feeling that this is just the tip of the iceberg, with many members not bothering to voice complaints on the grounds that nobody is listening. The excuse that these are simply individual fits of pique just won't wash. Since joining, I have made several requests for information and have never had a single reply, so add another to the list.

The Chairman claims that there is excellent communication between the officers. This may be true, but the fact remains that there are about 1,000 or so fee-paying members who would also like to know what the hell is going on, what decisions are being made in their name - and WHY. To claim that the nature of the BSFA works against efficient communications doesn't stand up for a minute. There are six mailings a year, the committee are all literate and take part in the decision making process. What is to prevent a regular update on committee discussions and decisions? It seems a matter of policy, not geography. It has, however, reached a ludicrous situation when Miss Bender (and plenty of others like her) feel totally alienated from the BSFA because their sole interest is science fiction

and seeing it promoted properly. And this brings me to the point where I must commit an act (to some) of sheer heresy.

The BSFA claims to be an organisation that promotes science fiction. The simple fact is, it doesn't. It promotes itself and, quite often, in such a way as to perpetuate the atrocious image so many people have of SF and those who read and enjoy it. Little wonder that so many leave, or are put off joining, an organisation so obsessed with itself that it has become incapable of interacting with the outside world and reaching out to future generations of SF readers, and many adults who are waiting, and willing, to be convinced of the value of the genre. There is much talk of apathy amongst the membership. Apathy to what? (Not SF, or they wouldn't have joined). Could it not be that the lack of interest is with the endless petty intrigues, gossip, personality cults, self promotion, incestuous behaviour and perpetuation of the old boy network that is driving out so many good people? The time has come for those running the BSFA to either start living up to its stated aims or make it clear that it is interested only in perpetuating the eternal triangle of fandom, cons and criticism, and those whose aims and priorities are science fiction proper had better start looking elsewhere.

Ken Lake
115 Markhouse Avenue
London E17 8AY.

Every few years, it seems, the BSFA goes through a period of self-doubt, self-examination and vigorous attack from within, mostly on the content and slant of editorial and book-review material in Matrix and the other titles we are supposed to receive with each sending of news.

Much of the attack comes from new members, who have joined the BSFA expecting it to be what it is not, and who have perhaps not grasped that the organisation suffers from exactly the same drawback as any human creation - the overweening self-love of a small elite which has clattered into prominence within the ranks almost solely by their seniority - or who have gained control and the exercise of quite improper power by dirty tricks which have ousted the former leadership (which occurs when the latter becomes soft, complacent or, if you like, "human").

At present we bedevilled with overkill on the subject of CND, to the point where acceptance of this creed is implied to be a sine qua non for continued membership. We are, as so often in the past, overrun with people who consider that open confessions of drunkenness and licentiousness at conventions indicate their status in fandom and their fitness to preach to us (though I think in the past stricter standards of self-censorship saved us from more than the "hint" rather than the blatant boast we read today).

We can never get enough "news", it seems - I wonder how, when such publications as LOCUS manage to get it? We get far too much childishness in the way of games, crude cartoons, and comicbook discussions - but what else should we expect, when we sit back quietly and allow people with juvenile tastes to take over the association's publications? And we get far too much political and sociological posturing under the cover of book reviews - but what can we expect, again, when we examine the names of those we have appointed to these tasks?

Now, I see, we even have that basic ploy of all American organisations, be they SF or any other hobbyist grouping: the rallying call to start a NEW Association, purged of all the faults and sins of the present outfit. This is, of course, not the answer for (no matter how hard they try or how loudly they protest their intentions) the new people will set up in time their own oligarchy, proselytise their own dogmas and grow as rigid and unreal as the present lot.

What really is the trouble? Can we analyse it so that everyone can at least start from an agreed basis of terminology and an agreed declaration of aims (no matter how contradictory)? I propose the following statements, if not for acceptance as revealed truth at least as a basis for discussion:

1. Newcomers to the BSFA join because they are convinced readers of SF.
They do not necessarily have any real understanding of the many forms of literature that (rightly or wrongly) masquerade under the title of SF.

3. The BSFA should seek always to encourage newcomers to try, and to learn to appreciate, forms of SF other than those they have come to the BSFA through.

4. Members of the BSFA come from all strata of society and all age groups.

5. The likelihood of their sharing any single belief about politics or religion, economic theory or anything else is negligible.

6. The chance that the view expressed by any given member or group of members, no matter how senior, is universally valid or even worthy of serious discussion is minimal.

7. Most readers of SF enjoy the medium because it faces them with multiple choices in matters of religion, ethics, politics, economics, homebuilding...etc.

8. Any organisation which hopes to grasp and hold the interest and support of such people must by definition leave its pages open for the realistic (and the fantastic) discussion of absolutely any topic with no holds barred and no possibilities excluded - there can be no orthodoxy within SF.

9. Where an argument can be seen to be basically two-sided or three-sided (unilateral vs multilateral, and/or vs non-disarmament, for example) equal space should be given to each argument if at all possible.

10. In NO case should an editor insist in adding his approbation to any statement that supports him, and his arguments (reasonable or not) against any statement he disapproves of - editors should EDIT IN, not edit out, and should PRESENT, not seek to persuade.

11. It is incumbent upon anyone taking on any position within the Association that they should be totally reliable so far as meeting deadlines is concerned: members pay a hefty sum for the benefits of the BSFA and for most of them the publications are the greater part of those benefits, and to treat one's contribution lightly or to ignore the requirements of one's work is never meritorious.

12. Having said that, of course any outfit gets the bosses it deserves - so it's up to disgruntled members to get their act together and show they can do better.

13. To this end, it may well be that within an organisation like the BSFA, where NO salaries are paid for any work and no contributors repaid for their writings, there should be an automatic change in every single postholder at regular intervals - I would suggest annually, and would also suggest that this be done by a poll of members who would be sent brief resumes of the life and times of the current postholder, and ideology of all prospective appointees for all the posts.

14. As a personal postscript, I wish to make the strongest possible demand for the rejection from any post of anyone unable to spell or use English grammatically - the standard of both writing and typing in recent issues has become farcical. To that end, I suggest that every potential contributor be given precise measurements for copy area so that his work (typed in all cases, surely?) may be reproduced (even if cut for length) verbatim, and without the gratuitous addition of typographical bloopers, as camera-ready copy. I confess that such as I would like, I dare not pass on copies of my own published writings in BSFA publications to friends, colleagues or business contacts because it would appear from them that I am virtually illiterate.

To summarise: if the BSFA hierarchy wishes to continue as a self-perpetuating clique of CID supporters, besotted with their personal beliefs about literature and their personal hangups over juvenilia in all its forms, then they should be honest enough to tell all potential members that this is the sort of organisation they are running. If they wish to keep members, please members, offer members the opportunity to assist in the creation of a BSFA that actually reflects all aspects of both SF and the members themselves, then changes are needed - and drastic ones at that.

And if anybody asks why I am not putting myself forward as Leader for this crusade, the answer is simple: I make a vocal opponent, but a lousy organiser! In other words, when the BSFA wants an advocatus diaboli, I'm ready; when it seeks a creative organiser, I'll point them at several, all standing with their faces turned carefully away from me.

Tom A. Jones
39 Ripplesmere
Bracknell
Berks RG12 3QA.

I would like to comment on the apparent move of the BSFA back to a commercial printer. In my last year as chairman, the committee tried to accumulate funds to purchase our own litho equipment and when Alan Dorey took over this was pursued with even greater vigour.

Perhaps the present committee are not aware of the problems of commercial printers, i.e. cost and reliability: reliable printers cost money, cheap printers are unreliable. I'm sure this generalisation has many exceptions but during my period as chairman we had great difficulty finding one.

We the members have had little explanation for this change in policy and I think we are entitled to some answers:

- Why has the BSFA equipment ceased to work?
- Has it been adequately maintained?
- How much would it cost to repair?
- How much is a commercial printer going to cost?
- How does this cost compare to what we paid using our own equipment?
- What guarantee of reliability do we have from a commercial printer and has this been obtained in writing?

Perhaps my fears are unfounded but only a clear statement from the committee can clarify the situation and this is something which we have not had.

This seems symptomatic of the fact that the amount of information being given to members by the chairman seems to have declined over the last twelve months or so, I hope this trend is soon reversed.

The lack of a news section in MATRIX was bad news. As editor you can't just hope someone else will provide it, you have to pressure the members who do what's happening. Why not ask Ken Slater if you can reprint the publishing notes from his Fantast (Medway) Ltd catalogue? If you don't want to do this most publishers are happy to let you have their forthcoming books list. Advanced information on books, TV, film and plays can be gleaned from specialist magazines. Having been editor of MATRIX myself I know it's not as easy as this. Nonetheless this is an important aspect of the BSFA for the majority of members who probably couldn't care less about the fanish things such as clubs, fanzines and conventions.

Elizabeth Sourbut
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The Mount
York YO2 2DG.

I would like to express my delight that at last the committee has decided to take notice of the members and publish a fiction magazine. OK, OK, so far it's only a one-off, but you have to start somewhere. Now it's up to us to submit. I hope that all those members who have been writing in, and the others who have been quietly listening, will now show what they can do. I'll certainly be putting my pen where my mouth is over the next few weeks. One small point, Alan, if instead of writing like Ballard or Clarke, or Donaldson or Dick I want to write like me, are you still interested?

While I'm in such an expansive mood, I'd like to add that, unlike several of your correspondents, I will be renewing my membership for another year. I look forward to receiving the BSFA mailing, and enjoy reading it when I get it. I find Matrix does help to keep me informed about what is going on in the SF world: not all of us have such a fantastic set of contacts amongst publishers, authors, agents, etc. as Miss S. Hender (MS8) appears to have. I'm an amateur writer, and so I find Focus to be the most helpful magazine, but I enjoy the articles and reviews in Vector, and even the reviews in PI of all the books I'm never likely to read. I also receive all 4 of the major American magazines (which would be quite beyond my pocket otherwise) through the magazine chain and am a member of an active Orbiter group. What you get out of the BSFA does depend to a certain extent on what you put in, but isn't that true of anything? Of course the BSFA isn't perfect, but it's a lot better than the recent lettercols seem to suggest.

*** Thanks for the kind words. I agree that the BSFA isn't perfect but things can only get better what with all the enthusiasm being generated by all the new editors and contributors. There are undoubtedly going to be some very interesting developments in the next few months.

Roy Hill
14 Alexandra Road
Margate
Kent CT9 5SP.

We will gain a greater appreciation of why members leave the BSFA if we ask ourselves why they joined in the first place. I joined in response to an advert promising me a deluge of mailings per year and that is what I receive. However, before my first envelope arrived, I had no real understanding of what it would contain. At the back of my mind was the vague image of a commercial package full of badges and glossy photographs. Of course, I was disappointed when what I got was dowdy and poorly printed with a letters section that seemed to be from people who considered themselves mental giants (eg. prats) and worst of all, those same people seemed to have done the book reviews, savaging the authors I love and dismissing such factors as entertainment and enjoyment as beneath contempt.

If I had gotten the commercial package I would have been happy but I would not have bothered renewing my membership. For what would such a package contain? It would be the bland equivalent of a grown up Nicky Mouse club. Although what we get is of variable quality it does have character and adds a new dimension to SF. The people who do the work and get involved are entitled to express their own opinions which at least set me thinking, if only to refute what they are saying.

It may be that the majority of people joining the BSFA do not know what to expect (with a minority expecting too much). If so, I would advise them to stick with the BSFA - it grows on you. If they choose not to persevere then fair enough, we are probably better off without one another.

*** After all the carping in recent issues this is probably the most perceptive letter I've received on the subject of what's wrong with the BSFA. I, personally, don't think there's an awful lot wrong; certainly accusations of cliquishness don't seem to carry a lot of weight when somebody with no connection to SF fancies before, such as myself, is allowed to take over one of the BSFA journals. Since then I've been invited to join in with a lot of other activities and generally welcomed into the fold with open arms: it really is a case of reaping what you sow.

Joseph Nicholas
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London SW1V 2ER.

My listing, in my letter in Matrix 58, of the various letters I'd received from Philip Collins while he was still a member of the BSFA was unfortunately incomplete. In Inferno 46, he entered a rather confused complaint to the effect that we shouldn't devote any space to reviewing non-English-language SF, presumably on the grounds that because it wasn't available in English no one would ever be able to read it; and here I admit I did rather jump on him, more for his parochialism than anything else. And while I regret that he may have taken offence at what I said, I continue to stand by it: science fiction is not a solely English-language literature, and to ignore the SF that's published elsewhere because it's written in some other language is to my mind quite stupid (I'd have published a lot more such reviews, too, if I could only have found more people to write them).

I see, though, that others are now following in Philip's wake - Jane Reynolds, for example, who states that she's never received any reply to the letters she's sent me. I don't keep complete files of all the correspondence I receive and send (and the files I do maintain were recently subjected to a drastic pruning), and I'm pretty sure that I've never heard of her until this moment. Her name rings no mental bells, anyway. I mean, I'm sure I would at least have mentioned her in Inferno's MANF list, and would certainly have replied to a request to become a regular contributor (I recall, albeit dimly, receiving a letter about a year or so ago from someone in East London querying the "first British publication" criterion of the BSFA Award rules, to which I certainly did reply; can Jane Reynolds have been this same person?). I fully sympathise with her failure to get a reply out of Geoff Rippington, though; one of the reasons I stepped down as Vector's Reviews Editor was his refusal to answer my letters.

Jane's comments on Focus and a BSFA fiction magazine are, however, quite absurd. Magazines cannot publish what they don't receive; and if Focus has never published a piece of good fiction then it's unlikely to be because its editors have deliberately picked out the worst from a pile of submissions. Editor after editor of Focus has lamented the dearth of fiction submissions of a good, publishable quality and the amount of junk they receive instead; why does Jane imagine that the editors of a fiction magazine would experience anything different? (Christ Almighty, she ought to see some of the stuff that gets submitted to Intersons!) It's not lack of contributors, as she contends, that keep the quality down, but the lack of good contributions (And if she thinks that her stuff is so much better than everyone else's, then why hasn't she submitted it? Fear of being rejected, perhaps?).

Ms S. Hender's idea that all scientific discoveries should be accompanied by a BSFA press release is equally absurd. In the first place, very few scientific discoveries have been predicted by SF authors (although George Hay will make strenuous efforts to convince you otherwise); and in the second place, a self-respecting news editor would probably regard such a press release as so bonkers that it would be thrown straight in the bin. Never mind the simple fact that not every news release an editor receives gets translated into a story...

C. R. Laker
NPC
B-4460 Glons
Belgium.

"Reading your article reminds me...", I wonder just how many times people have written that, then to continue with a distant echo of fond-remembered youth. Days when summers were always hot and winters snowy and fun. Spring was full of bright yellow primroses and autumns crowned by copper and gold. School was something that interrupted the fun; fun of holidays, weekends; stolen hours after church and tea. Life punctuated by picnics beside sparkling, clean rivers. Ah, those were the days. Not a walkman or break-dancer in sight, marry a BIX nor disco. We had twigs, bent sticks with notches in them that were ray guns that could do amazing things to enemies. Scrumping apples was just fun; nowadays it's stealing. Hm!

What, you may ask, has any of this got to do with you? Well, as we agreed last time I rapped you, the ESFA is supposed to be into SF, and it occurred to me that, in an attempt to lead (astray) your readership down a new avenue, I'd drop you a line or two on nostalgia.

The reason I reckon you and the others might be interested is the fact that the children of today are having SF bred into them. Their fond childhood memories will be glossy-eyed remembrances of 'Close Encounters' and 'Mr. Spock', but in a much bigger way than we had with 'Dan Dare' and 'Flash Gordon'. Too, 'trends' seem to be preparing them for this clean-cut, organised living. Take computers (if we must). When we were young we had our heads; and for the less bright, fingers and toes; nowadays mega number crunching is all done by electronic wizardry. True many establishments still discourage such 'cheating' but most readily accept machines as part of the student's tools. Before they can even read properly infants can calculate majestically, the same way they discerningly manipulate the Rubik's Cube (does anyone remember them? Can anyone in fact find the one they had?). But I digress, intuitively children achieve the right result, whereas I, and I suspect others like me can only look on goggle-eyed having run out of digits long since.

For good or ill, they're having their lives, their actions and reactions, their very thinking processes geared for them towards the technological. The wonders of 'Star Trek' (did I say wonders?) are common-place to them, they think like it, accept it. Believe in it. I wonder why? Is it necessary that their future be organised for them? Must they be prepared in order to do something special? Are they being trained for some task? Or has Laker flipped his lid and is just being paranoid?

Well, look around, you tell me. I don't say it's wrong, it's different is all. Our SF is fast becoming their life and I wonder what that bodes for the future.

He? Hm, I'd swap it all for a notchy stick that I could zap Spotty Fenton with as he crawled noisily through the long, summer ferns, but then I'm no longer a child. Am I?

Which brings me on to a bit of a plug. Well, a plug is supposed to fill a hole, and for me one of the biggest holes in all the "zine" business is something I've been thinking of producing; a (or THE?) Nostalgiazine. I know it'd work, I can see you grinning now as you stare off past, not through the salt pot thinking back to, to; well I won't go on. I wonder if anybody else is interested? Probably not!

*** A 'Nostalgiazine', huh? Presumably a fanzine for nostalgic Freaks, or maybe Nostalgiape. Well, whatever it is, I'll contribute football stories, cricket stories, old TV series, ex-girlfriends and jobs, standing in the hospital at four in the morning, not a cigarette for hours, waiting for Colette to have Daniel (something I'll be doing for a second time this November). Sounds marvellous.

COMPETITION

by ELIZABETH SOURBUT.

Wonderful things sometimes come out of watching television. Yes, really. It was whilst watching the captivating Spook puppet on "Spitting Image" that I came up with the idea for this month's quiz. It goes like this:

If the Bard were alive today, he would undoubtedly choose to direct his talents towards the most energetic, stimulating and original art-form around. Now we all know this is SF, don't we people? Nod, please.

That's better. In particular he would be drawn to SF on TV and film. I can see it now: "The Merchant of Riverworld", "The Taming of the Phagor". And his immortal lines would doubtless be as widely quoted as ever. But they wouldn't turn out in quite the same way...

What I'm looking for is your idea of how Shakespeare might have written his plays for a modern SF audience, or alternatively how the dialogues of famous films might have turned out if Shakespeare had had a hand in their creation. For example:

"Alas, poor Yorick: he's dead, Jin."

"Life, don't talk to me about life. Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player who struts and frets his hour upon the stage..."

Make them as elaborate as you like, but they must be direct quotes. Rush me up to six immortal passages or phrases by the next Matrix deadline -- and could I have the sources for each please. The above were, of course:

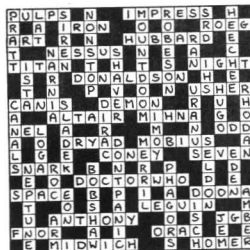
Hamlet/Star Trek.

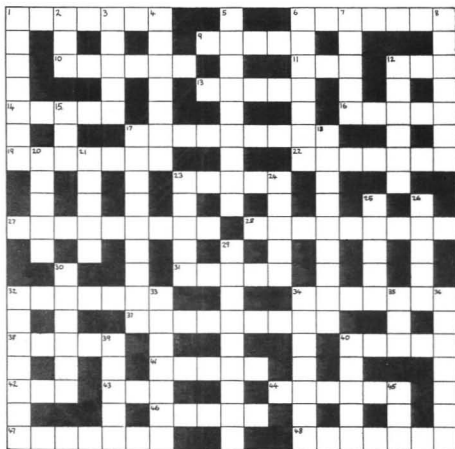
The Hitchhiker's Guide/Macbeth.

The address to send entries to is:
10, TRENTOLME DRIVE, THE MOUNT, YORK YO2 2DG.

The prize is a £5 book token.

Billion Year Crossword No. 1





Billion Year Crossword

No. 2, June '85

Simon Walker &
Chris Carne.

ACROSS

1. Inner spaceman ? (7)
6. Monstrous opponent of Beowulf. (7)
9. Neville writes by the sea. (5)
10. King of the Fairies. (6)
11. Seminal play introducing Asimov's speciality. (3)
12. See 45 down.
13. Location of Van Vogt's weapon shops. (5)
14. Heston's Greek character. (5)
16. Aspect of Moorcock's champion eternal. (5)
17. Record of events, e.g. Covenant. (9)
19. Conan Doyle's Deep. (7)
22. Author, 'Caltraps of Time'. (1,6)
23. Fast SF precursor ! (5)
27. A micro, macro masterpiece (6,3)
28. Remodel in our planetary image. (9)
31. Chief product of Arrakis. (5)
32. Pohl novel, more than Hom. Ssp. (3,4)
34. Lover of Catherine Cornelius. (7)
37. Stapledon's stellar constructor. (9)
38. Form of electromagnetic radiation. (5)
40. Bestial fable writer. (5)
41. Farmer's world is crying. (5)
42. Schrödinger has one ? (3)
43. Has Dave Langford only got half this? (3)
44. Author of 'Michaelmas'. (6)

46. British comic. (5)
47. In Covenant, mother of Lena. (7)
48. Movement started by Moorcock, Ballard, Aldiss, et al. (3,4)

DOWN

1. E.R.B.'s Mars. (7)
2. Constellation. (3)
3. Gladiatorial short story by Fredric Brown. (5)
4. I Across wrote about this natural disaster. (7)
5. Kornbluth's version of '1984'. (3,6)
6. Author, 'The Man Who Folded Himself'. (7)
7. Moorcock's swordsman extraordinaire. (5)
8. 'Doc's' photographers! (7)
12. Viking 1 landing site. (6)
15. To do this is human. (3)
17. Androgynous hero of 'The Final Programme'. (9)
18. The mechanics of his world stopped. (1,1,7)
20. Protagonist of 'Clone'. (5)
21. Great earth-mother of Hindu mythology. (5)
23. Vessels of sea and space. (5)
24. Aliens, clones, disasters, utopias, sex, can all be this in SF. (5)
25. 'Chunky' artist ! (1,4)
26. The Ring-Bearer. (5)

29. Three jewels made by Feanor. (9)
30. Damon, editor and writer. (6)
32. Aldice's decaying, baroque world. (7)
33. Had a British SF Mag. (7)
34. P/B publisher. (7)
35. The Kope, by Anthony. (3)
36. Trident-toting sea-god. (7)
39. Simeon Krug built his of glass. (Silverberg). (5)
40. Cupid's aphrodisiac projectile. (5)
- 45 and 12 across. Fannish meeting on the South Coast. (3,3)