

RED SHIFT	Maureen Porter	3
WALKING ON GLASS - <i>The BSFA Column</i>		4
Co-ordinator's Report - Maureen Porter		
Job Adverts		
London Meetings		
Regional Meetings		
BSFA Information Service - Phil Nichols		
London Writers' Group Meeting		
Minutes of the AGM		
1988 Accounts		
NEWS	Paul Kincaid et al	7
MEDIA NEWS	John Peters	12
LOCAL FANOMENA - <i>The Clubs Column</i>		13
Keith Mitchell		
MEMBERS' NOTICEBOARD		15
THE PERIODIC TABLE		16
Convention News		
Convention Roundup		
SCIENCE NEWS - John Peters		18
AUTUMN BOOKS - Paul Kincaid		19
The Drabble Project		19
COMPETITION CORNER		20
Roger Robinson		
MEDIA REVIEWS		20
<i>The Adventures of Baron Munchausen</i> - Colin Bird & John Peters		
<i>My Stepmother is an Alien</i> - John Peters		
<i>Who Framed Roger Rabbit?</i> - John Peters		
<i>The Lost Boys</i> - Lynne Bispham		
<i>The Woman in Black</i> - John Peake		
WRITEBACK - <i>The Letters Page</i>		22
SOAPBOX		24
Digging a Deep Grave: Science and Technology - Steve Palmer		

Cover	Ian Brooke
p. 3	David Griffiths
p. 11	Sean Friend
p. 19	Saml Toivonen

THE NEXT MATRIX DEADLINE IS
FRIDAY 14TH JULY

Maureen Porter	John Peters
114 Guildhall Street	299 Southway Drive
Folkestone	Southway
Kent	Plymouth
CT20 1ES	Devon PL6 6QN

Keith Mitchell
3Fl, 43 Iona St
Edinburgh
EH6 8SP

Roger Robinson
75 Rossllyn Avenue
Harold Wood
Essex RM13 0RG

NEWS - Paul Kincaid, address as *Matrix* editor

Any opinions expressed are those of individual authors, and do not necessarily reflect those of either the editor or the BSFA.

Copyright: ©BSFA Ltd 1989. Individual copyrights are the property of the authors and editors.

ISSN: 0307 3335

Production by Maureen Porter and Paul Kincaid.

Printed by: PDC Copyprint, 11 Jeffries Passage,
Guildford, Surrey, GU1 4AF

BSFA CO-ORDINATOR

Maureen Porter
114 Guildhall Street
Folkestone
Kent
CT20 1ES

BSFA MEMBERSHIP costs £10 per annum and is available from

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY:

Joanne Raine
33 Thornville Road
Hartlepool
Cleveland
TS26 8EW

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL S.

Keith Freeman
269 Wykeham Road
Reading
Berkshire
RG4 1PR

TREASURER

Brett Cockrell
40 Cyprus Road
Finchley
London
NW1 7BU

ADVERTISING

Dave Wood
1 Friary Close
Marine Hill
Clevedon
Avon

ADVERTISING RATES (for one insertion)

Cover (lfc, ibc, obc)	£25
Full page (rop)	£20
Half page	£15
Quarter page	£10

Rates for multiple insertions are negotiable. Distribution of loose flyers with BSFA mailings cost £20 per thousand sheets. Rates for booklets are negotiable. Requests for advertising and flyer distribution should be sent to Dave Wood.

• • • • •

PAPERBACK INFERNO EDITOR:

Andy Sawyer
1 The Flaxyard
Woodfall Lane
Little Neston
South Wirral
L64 4BT

(051 336 3355)

FOCUS EDITOR:

Liz Holliday
31 Shottesford
Wessex Gardens
London
W2

VECTOR CO-EDITORS

Kev McVeigh
37 Firs Road
Milnthorpe
Cumbria
LA7 7QF

Boyd Parkinson
11 Marsh Street
Barrow-in-Furness
Cumbria
LA14 2AE

INFORMATION OFFICER:

Phil Nicholls
19 Kendal Avenue
Copnor
Portsmouth
PO3 5AX

ORBITER CO-ORDINATOR

Sue Thomason
111 Albemarle Road
South Bank
York
YO2 1EP

British Science Fiction Association Ltd
Company no. 921500. Registered in England.
Registered Address - 114 Guildhall Street,
Folkestone, Kent, CT20 1ES. Limited by Guarantee.



Red Shift

"SO, WHAT ARE YOU DOING THIS TERM?" - THIS IS THE QUESTION I'VE most frequently been asked in the last few weeks. The answer has a curious effect on people. They either gasp, and make profuse exclamations of envy, or else fall around laughing. One or two people have looked vaguely disapproving. I've got used to all this as the term has progressed, but it's still rather frustrating to have to occasionally justify the fact that I'm studying science fiction, and at the tax payers' expense. Naturally, I see nothing wrong with studying the literature, but I'm inevitably biased. On the other hand, when you consider that it's perfectly possible to study children's literature at university, foreign literature, feminist literature, virtually any sort of genre literature you care to name, then why not science fiction? Other Australian universities have been doing it for years, and I know of one Australian university which was teaching courses in fantastic literature almost ten years ago. It seems to be more uncommon here, but I gather that Kent is not alone in running a course on the subject, and more universities are taking up the idea. Jolly good, say I.

So what's wrong with giving science fiction some academic attention? I'm none too certain about this, myself, and naturally I've been giving the subject a good deal of thought recently. One problem is still, I'm sure, the sense of science fiction being a literature which is, or which ought to be, read by male adolescents in need of a good dose of escapism. That was, perhaps, true in the early part of this century, when the pulp magazines held sway, but from all I can gather, the magazine readers of that time were a discriminating and critical audience who took a hand in the shaping of their favourite literature, and who created the social phenomenon which we are now participating in. You know some of their names as respected authors, which doesn't suggest to me that we are all slob and couch-potatoes who don't take any notice of what's going on around us.

Another possible objection, latterly at any rate, is that science fiction is only too readily perceived as nothing more than a publishing phenomenon, created by a bunch of guys with an eye for a few fast bucks. Well, it can't be denied that there are some books around which one can't help feeling would have deservedly died an ugly death without several thousand pounds worth of publicity behind them, but equally, there is some very fine and thoughtful writing being published under the label of science fiction, writing which deserves much wider attention. And there are still fans prepared to discuss their favourite literature, and about the initial 'gosh wow, this book is fantastic' level, and write about it.

But is there any good reason to take this approach into the academic setting, beyond the 'if you can do it with x, why not with SF' argument, which is limiting, and a trifle negative anyway. My feeling is, yes, putting aside all the bias. The SF genre, in all its variety, exhibits some of the freshest and most exciting writing around. It is a genre which invites innovation, in style as well as in content. Admittedly, current trends might not have the force of the 'New Wave' movement, but I don't think any genre can continually function at such a high level. And SF is still a literature of ideas. I have noticed, of late, that this is becoming a curiously unfashionable view to hold, or else that this is assumed to mean that SF does and should contain the latest in scientific development. It's an exceptional writer who can embody the latest research in a literate and entertaining form. I was thinking more in terms of SF being one of the few genres which enables us to hold a mirror up to our own time. Susan Sontag observed that only SF and pornography can take a global view. I'm not entirely convinced on the pornography part of that argument, but yes, I do know what she means where SF is concerned, and I'm not just talking about interminable world-building panels at conventions. SF has addressed ecological issues, the concept of nuclear winter, the perils of high-rise living, the simple fact of living in the late 20th century, all this and much more. For those reasons alone, it deserves to be studied as an academic discipline.

The theory, the historical development, the concepts and tropes used by SF make a fascinating study. For the first time, I find myself having to formalise and structure the information I carry round in my head. I find myself having to try and judge individual novels in a way not expected of me when I write reviews. I spend a lot of time wondering whether it's actually possible for SF to be judged according to the same criteria as, for example, what we call 'mainstream' literature, or 'classic' literature. Can one really judge Philip K Dick and George Eliot according to the same criteria. I'll let you know when I find out, if I ever do.

An interesting side-issue has arisen from this flurry of academic work. I spend my days overwhelmed with critical books, discovering what various people think about Ursula Le Guin, or Dick, or else endlessly consulting the Nicholls encyclopaedia to get a handle on the particular subject I'm working on. I ransack *Vector* and *Foundation* for the in-depth critical appraisals. Critical comment on SF literature is not as easily come by as in other genres, but I've grown used to carrying out the endless hunt. And yet, I've recently been talking to someone who queried the value of reviews in such magazines, particularly the two mentioned, where there is often a considerable time lag between book publication and the appearance of the review. *Locus* was cited as a model of brevity and immediacy.

I admit this has had me puzzled ever since the conversation, which is partly why I'm mentioning it now. The obvious answer is that there are two sorts of review, namely, the review which highlights the weaknesses and strengths of a novel and offers an opinion on whether it's worth buying, and the review which offers a critical insight on the strengths and weaknesses of the novel, and ... but wait a moment. Surely one could offer the same argument for either type of review. In writing a book review, I've always seen myself as examining the book, and offering an opinion on whether it's worth reading, justifying that opinion with various arguments. And I thought the same held true whether or not I used 200 or 800 words. Admittedly, in 200 words, a reviewer's shorthand comes into play, and one learns over a period of time that a certain expression carries a wealth of extra meaning.

So, the next question to ask is what it is that people want from a review? My friend clearly requires a quick guide to what's worth reading, whilst I've lately been using in-depth reviews as critical material. Why else would people buy books of collected reviews and articles, like Budrys' *Benchmarks*, or lovingly conserve back issues of magazines, just in case. Obviously, as a reviewer myself, and one hoping to make some sort of living from it over the next few years, I am concerned to find out what it is I'm supposed to be doing, what it is we all think we're doing, and what it is that is expected of us.

All comments on that, and on the worthiness of SF as an academic subject, will be gratefully received.

Currently, and this must surely be a novelty, I am feeling moderately happy with the state of *Matrix*. The news columns have never been better, thanks to the sterling work of Messrs Kincaid and Peters, and they're packing in plenty of information. Needless to say, I'm not entirely satisfied, and plan to spend part of my summer vacation revising both the look of the thing, and the contents. As usual, I would like to hear from you, the readers, about what you would like to see in the magazine. We're trying out a science column in this issue, to see if that raises any interest, and I'm hoping to get to work on various other specialist sections any moment now. I'm still looking for someone with an interest in comics and graphic novels who would be willing to draw information together in a more coherent form than we currently have. And how would you feel about more fan news? No, no, I'm not planning to flood the magazine with obscure references that only five people understand, but there are a lot of very active fans doing some interesting work, and I think it would be worthwhile to hear more about what they are

Continued overleaf...

WALKING ON GLASS

The BSFA Column

CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT

Part of the Co-ordinator's job is to keep the members of the BSFA informed about BSFA activities, naturally enough, so let's start with a quick resumé of the news.

The BSFA AGM was well attended, by previous standards, and it was a pleasure to meet so many members of the BSFA, and to learn that they were well pleased with what we are doing. The Minutes of the AGM, and the accounts for 1988, are printed elsewhere in this section of the magazine, and I hope that all meets with the approval of the membership.

A task I'm currently much preoccupied with is that of threading my way through the labyrinthine coils of the comings and goings of staff and Committee.

First of all, I'm glad to say that we now have a new editor for Vector, in place of a pair of editors. Kev McVeigh from Milnthorpe, Cumbria, is probably already well known to BSFA members, but Boyd Parkinson, from Barrow-in-Furness, whilst a long-time member of the BSFA is making his first foray into the limelight. As Kev and Boyd are both living in the same part of the country, and at some remove from other members of the BSFA Committee, they were asked if they felt up to the task of Co-editing, and have agreed to do so. Paul Kincaid remains as Reviews Editor. I would ask you to be patient as Boyd and Kev take up the editing reins, and try avoid criticising them because one comma was in the wrong place in the first issue.

JOBS*JOBS*JOBS*JOBS*JOBS

AWARDS ADMINISTRATOR

We have received one application for the post of Awards Administrator, but it's not too late for you to apply, if you think you would like to work for the BSFA. This is an important staff post within the BSFA, reporting to the Co-ordinator, and it entails producing ballot forms for nominations and final ballot for the BSFA Award. You'll also have to count the votes and handle the award ceremony, as well as sending out publicity on the award after the winners have been announced. The posts should certainly involve some promotional work both before and after the event, and the person who eventually gets the job should be prepared to give a lot of thought to working on improving the image of the awards. It may come but once a year, but it's still a challenging post. After all, you'll have to keep up to date with what's happening in SF enough to know whether a nomination is eligible or not. And you're going to have to be the sort of person whom nobody doubts has got the winner right.

If you think it's a job that would suit you, please contact me, and outline your plans.

FOCUS EDITOR

As you know, Liz Holliday, editor of Focus, has decided to give up the editorship at the end of the year.

"Editing Focus requires a weird blend of enthusiasm, tact, and patience - plus a touch of sheer bloody-minded honesty. You'll need lots of ideas, a commitment to high standards of content and production, and the ability to panic creatively. In return for all that, you'll get all the support you need from me and the rest of the committee, critical faculties will develop like never before, and you may even make a few useful professional contacts."

If you think you can do this job, please tell me why, and how you would fill Focus.

Continued from previous page...

doing, not just the pros.

Other plans are afoot, but I'm keeping the wraps on until they are further advanced. I would like to hear, though, from someone who would be willing to take on my listing of bookshops and mail order services and bring it up to date, as well as collecting news and information about bookselling. I'm still occasionally asked about the late lamented *Store Wars*, and I would be glad to include a small regular section in the news columns. Any takers?

Needless to say, if you have any news and information which you think might be of interest to BSFA members, don't keep

DESIGNER

The BSFA stands in sore need of someone willing to do general design work, from producing designs for stationery and badges to helping lay out future publications. If you feel you can offer any help in this direction, please contact the Co-ordinator. If able to, please send samples of your work (these will be returned).

Whichever post you're applying for, please write to me, Maureen Porter, 114 Guildhall Street, Folkestone, Kent CT20 1ES, with your thoughts and ideas. And remember that you shouldn't feel that you will be thrown in at the deep end and left to struggle. The rest of the Committee will provide support and encouragement.

* LONDON MEETINGS *

These have been lurching along, more or less successfully, over the last few months, mostly without my attendance as clashes with seminars continued. However, I did manage to overcome the railway strike, to give a brief talk on *The Gate*, to a much diminished audience. Last month's panel on the nature of different fandoms was apparently a roaring success, with attendance back to normal.

Although David Barrett has stood down as editor of Vector, we haven't lost him altogether, as he has been persuaded to take on the task of running the London meetings, organising the evening's entertainment as well as making sure that the pub hasn't double-booked us again. Problems with the bar are apparently intractable for the time being, as the landlord's mind seems to change from month to month.

The next meeting, on June 15th, will be an interview with Geoff Ryman, whilst July 20th will see a quiz, ably organised by Roger Robinson. Teams of two will be required for this.

Now that we have David's services as organiser, we hope to give more attention to publicising the meetings and ensuring a better attendance.

* REGIONAL MEETINGS *

There has been some recent criticism, yet again, suggesting that the BSFA has a Home Counties image. Apart from wondering exactly what it is that this means, given the fact that Folkestone, Cumbria, Hartlepool, and Merseyside hardly qualify as the Home Counties, and overlooking the fact that there is a larger concentration of fans in London than anywhere else in the country, so inevitably, the best place for an initial meeting is there, I am aware that there is some feeling that we should be doing more for those people who don't live within easy reach of London.

The question is 'what'. Well, I have received suggestions before now, most of which seemed to involve the Co-ordinator of the BSFA being constantly on the move round the country, organising regular meetings and presiding over them. This is unrealistic - I don't have the time or money to do that. Another possible problem involves conflict with other local groups. However, it is clear that we should be doing more.

During the course of Iconoclasm, I'll be taking part in a panel discussion on the possibility of BSFA Regional meetings. This has been organised independently by the convention, and not at the instigation of the BSFA. I'll report on the results of this in the next issue of *Matrix*. In the meantime, any thoughts that individual members might have on the matter would be gladly received.

CO-ORDINATOR or CHAIRMAN?

I'd like to quote from a letter I recently received from Tom Jones of Bracknell:

"I'd like to raise the issue of what you call the person

it to yourself, but contact me now. I'm also looking into the possibility I once previously mooted of reprinting work from fanzines. I've noticed one or two articles of late which would merit reprinting in *Matrix*, and would welcome suggestions from readers. Try and bear in mind what sort of thing would best suit *Matrix*, but don't be deterred from suggesting something a little bit different if you think it's worth reprinting. In the meantime, I hope you enjoy this issue of *Matrix*, and I look forward to reading your responses.

The deadline for material for the next edition of *Matrix* is: JULY 14th, 1989

who runs the committee. I've deliberately used the word 'run' because I don't believe committees can be a democracy. It's too easy for committees to become talking shops and not get around to doing anything, you need a strong person running them to stop this. You also need a strong leader to stop one or two people, or even a small clique, dominating. I.e. to give everyone a chance to contribute. Also, someone has to take responsibility for the decisions made. This is why I think it's more honest to use the word 'Chairman' rather than 'Co-ordinator'. Co-ordinator actually implies less responsibility than is actually associated with the job you have taken on."

When Paul Kincaid became Chairman, the committee decided to change the name because it was felt that it still carried unfortunate connotations from previous committee activities. Co-ordinator was chosen as we felt it gave the sense of the person in charge supervising the various activities. This could be argued as just a linguistic nicety, but the issue having been raised, I would like to hear opinions from members. What should I be called? I have no great feeling either way. I'm still doing the same job, but if it is felt that I should be the Chairman, so be it.

For my own part, I see a committee being an autocratic democracy, i.e. involving a democratic discussion process, but with the person leading the meeting, the Co-ordinator, taking the final decision, and if necessary, cutting through discussion to reach a final decision. I personally hope my time as Co-ordinator or whatever, will be characterised as a time of short, sharp effective meetings. Having worked in administration a good deal over the years, and attended many formal meetings, there is nothing worse than a meeting meandering on for hours without anything constructive being achieved.

THE THIRST OF RICHES

BSFA Information Service Update - Phil Nicholls

Desire of knowledge, like the thirst of riches, increases ever with the acquisition of it

(Laurence Sterne, *Tristram Shandy*)

The newly launched BSFA Information Service has got off to a respectable start, with enough questions and offers of help to keep me busy - sometimes too busy. Most of you who requested information using the flyer sent with the last mailing will by now have received at least an acknowledgement of your question, and many will have received complete answers. Many of those who volunteered to help answer questions will have had their knowledge tapped in my quest to track down elusive information.

To put some figures on it, at the time of writing (about a month before you read this) I have received 28 offers of help and 19 questions. Statistically insignificant when you consider the number of members in the BSFA, but pretty good going considering the frequently reported apathy of the general membership. As expected, the biggest response came immediately after the last mailing, but since then letters have been arriving at the rate of about one a day. Naturally, to reply to this many letters can be a strain on my finances so I would ask that all future correspondence be accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope if you expect a reply. Thanks.

I thought it might be a good idea to list the subjects we can now answer questions on, so here goes:

Aldiss, alternate histories/worlds, art, Asimov, astronomy, Blaylock, Bradbury, British SF, chemistry in SF, children's SF and fantasy, comics, contemporary SF, Dan Dare, Derleth, SF detectives, Ellison, ESP, fans and fanfiction, fantasy, Farmer, films, Garner, Gernsback, gothic, Haggard, hard SF, M.J. Harrison, Herbert, W.E. Johns, Lewis, Lovecraft, magazines, Mitchison, Moorcock, Patrick Moore, NASA, paranormal/supernatural, Peake, political/utopian SF, pseudonyms, pulp writers, radio, religion, Roberts, Russell, SF Foundation, Smith, space shuttle (!), television, time travel, Tolkien, weaponry, Wells, Wyndham.

If you want to know about any of those topics - or if you know all about a topic not listed above - then write to me at the address below.

In the next Matrix I'll give you an idea of some of the specific questions I've received, and perhaps beg for help with some of the more impossible ones. Oh, by the way: anyone know what the hell an 'impezer' is?

Phil Nicholls, 19 Kendal Avenue, Copnor, Portsmouth, PO3 5AX

LONDON WRITERS' GROUP MEETING

As advertised in *Focus*, a meeting was held on 6th May to discuss the idea of setting up a writers' workshop in London. By the standards of the last attempt at such a meeting, attendance was overwhelming. Present were Liz Holliday, Alan Sullivan and Jeff Hawthorn.

We decided that getting more people to join the group would be a good idea, and that we would advertise the group via word of mouth as well as through the BSFA publications, even if this meant not all the members were from the BSFA. While the group is small enough, it will meet in members' homes, transferring to larger space only when forced to do so.

Various styles of writing were discussed. At present it is our intention to set ourselves writing exercises, the results of which can be discussed, rather than to criticise complete stories. This will probably change as we become more comfortable with each other and the workshop situation. Naturally, the needs and wishes of new members will be taken into account.

We will be meeting every other Wednesday in the bar of The Plough pub in Museum St (same venue as BSFA meetings) at 6.30 pm, prior to the workshop. We very much hope more people will join us. Dates for the next few months are: May 24th; June 7th; June 24th; July 5th; July 19th.

More information is available from me, Liz Holliday, on 01 229-9298, but only until about June 20th, because I'm off to the Clarion Workshop in the USA.

Focus will be running an article on fictionazines, what they are, how they can help the beginning writer, and what they can lead to. If you edit a zine which publishes stories, I'd like to receive copies for inclusion. A statement of editorial policy would also be useful, and any writers' guidelines you publish. This won't be a *First* and *Hemlock*-style review, but will concentrate firmly on zines from the writers' viewpoint.

If you have submitted to such a zine, or been published by one, and would like to share your experiences, I'd be glad to hear from you. I'd be particularly interested in finding out whether you got a lot of feedback from readers, and whether you found it a help or hindrance in moving into the professional markets. General comments from editors, writers and readers are also warmly encouraged.

By the way, I'll be sending these out for review, so if anyone is worried that I may be biased because of my stated position on fan fiction - don't be. This is a genuine attempt on my part to redress the balance a bit, and see what I may have been missing.

Items for inclusion in this article should be sent to: Liz Holliday, 31 Shottsford, Wessex Gardens, London W2 5QL.

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the British Science Fiction Association, held on 27th May, 1989, at the Albany Hotel, Nottingham.

No apologies were received for absence, so the meeting moved on immediately to the reading of the minutes for the previous AGM. These were accepted as having been read, and it was proposed by Paul Kincaid, seconded by David Langford, and agreed by the meeting that the minutes should be accepted.

Paul Kincaid gave a brief report of his year as Co-ordinator, noting that the financial situation had improved considerably, and that membership was increasing steadily. He also noted that London meetings were now running smoothly. Mention was made of the fact that he had now stood down as Co-ordinator, and that the position had been handed on to Maureen Porter. David V Barrett had now stood down as *Vector* editor, and Liz Holliday was planning to relinquish her post as *Focus* editor towards the end of the year. It was noted that both David Barrett and Liz Holliday would be continuing to work on behalf of the BSFA.

Paul Kincaid then handed control of the meeting to Maureen Porter, who spoke briefly of her plans for the BSFA in the next year or two, stressing her concern that the administrative aspects of the Association should be considerably tightened up. She described her plans for a full BSFA survey, and for research into merchandising. She appealed for ideas and thoughts on various BSFA issues.

She announced the names of the new *Vector* editors, Kev McVeigh and Boyd Parkinson, who were introduced to the meeting.

Roy Gray proposed a vote of thanks to Paul Kincaid for his work on behalf of the BSFA, which was seconded by Mike Ford and passed by the meeting. Maureen Porter proposed a vote of thanks

to David Barrett, seconded by Brett Cockrell and passed by the meeting.

Brett Cockrell, Treasurer and Company Secretary, gave a financial report - accounts for 1988 are published with this report - noting that the BSFA made a profit of £2641 in 1988, after a very lean period necessitated by the reinstatement of the BSFA as a company. A vote of thanks to Brett Cockrell was proposed by David Barrett, seconded by Mark Plummer and passed by the meeting.

Various people were eligible for election or re-election to the Council.

Liz Holliday, proposed Roy Gray, seconded Kev McVaigh, passed nem con.

James White, proposed David Stewart, seconded Keith Freeman, passed nem con.

Andy Sawyer, proposed Bridget Wilkinson, seconded David Barrett, passed nem con.

David Barrett, proposed Maureen Porter, seconded Maira Shearn, passed nem con.

Kev McVaigh, proposed Roy Gray, seconded Michael Bernardi, passed nem con.

Boyd Parkinson, proposed Paul Kincaid, seconded Roy Gray, passed nem con.

It was noted that John Steward wished to stand down as auditor of the BSFA, owing to his forthcoming marriage, but he had agreed to remain auditor until such time as a new one had been appointed, otherwise, had the BSFA continued to function without an auditor, the authorities were in a position to appoint an auditor without consultation.

Any other business brought forward a query on the status of Arthur C Clarke and his position as President of the BSFA. It was noted that his ill-health precluded him taking an active part in BSFA business, but it was known that he read the BSFA publications, and took an interest in the activities of the BSFA.

The failure to award the BSFA Awards at the Eastercon was noted, and a categorical assurance was given that this had not been intended as a personal expression of Committee opinion about the convention, but had been the result of an administrative error.

Maureen Porter thanked people for attending the meeting, which was then closed.

BSFA Accounts, 1988

Council Members' Report

Council Members

A.C. Clarke	President
P. Kincaid	Co-ordinator
L. Flood	resigned 3 April 1988
B. Shaw	resigned 3 April 1988
J. White	re-elected
M.J. Edwards	
D.R. Langford	
S. Ounsley	
S. Thomason	resigned 30 November 1987
A. Sawyer	re-elected
D.V. Barrett	re-elected
M. Moir	resigned 4 January 1988
M.S. Porter	
D. Wood	
J. Raine	
B. Cockrell	Secretary
L. Holliday	co-opted 15 March 1988

The Council Members during the year ended 30 September 1988 were those listed above. J. White, A. Sawyer and D.V. Barrett retired by rotation and offered themselves for re-election. L. Flood, B. Shaw, S. Thomason and M. Moir resigned. L. Holliday was co-opted onto the council and offers her appointment for ratification.

Accounts

The Council Members submit the accounts for the year ended 30 September 1988. The excess of income over expenditure for the year was £2641, and is dealt with as shown in the income and expenditure account.

Activities

The principle activities of the Association during the period were the promotion of science fiction and the publication and distribution of science fiction magazines.

Auditor

The auditor, F.J. Steward, FCA, has agreed to stand for re-election.

By order of the Council

Brett Cockrell

Secretary

40 Cyprus Road

Finchley

London

N3 3SE

Report of the Auditor to the Members of the British Science Fiction Association Limited

I have audited the financial statements of the above Association for the year ended 30th September 1988 as set out on pages 2 to 4. These statements have been prepared under the historical cost accounting convention.

I have been unable to verify the existence or value of certain of the tangible assets.

Subject to this, in my opinion the balance sheet and income and expenditure account, prepared under the accounting convention stated above, give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Association at 30th September 1988 and of the excess of expenditure over income for the year then ended, and comply with the relevant sections of the Companies Act, 1985.

(Signed) F.J. Steward

Chartered Accountant

Income and Expenditure Account for the Year Ended 30th September 1988

	Note	1988 £	1987 £
TURNOVER	2	10910	8265
COST OF SALES		(5502)	(6963)
GROSS PROFIT		5408	1302
Distribution costs		(2451)	(2207)
Administrative expenses		(320)	(301)
Interest receivable			
Bank Deposit	5		8
Building Society Deposit			
	=	5	=
			8

SURPLUS (DEFICIT) ON ORDINARY ACTIVITIES BEFORE TAXATION (AND EXTRAORDINARY ITEM)

	3	2642	(1198)
Taxation on interest received	4	(1)	(2)
Extraordinary Item	5	-	(984)

RETAINED SURPLUS (DEFICIT)

FOR THE YEAR	2641	(2184)
--------------	------	--------

STATEMENT OF RETAINED SURPLUS

Balance at 30/9/87	22	2206
Surplus (Deficit) for the year	2641	(2184)

Balance at 30/9/88	2663	22
	----	----

Balance Sheet as at 30th September 1988

	Note	30/9/88 £	30/9/87 £
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible Assets	5	82	92
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors			
Trade debtors	1359		550
Cash at bank	2701		839
	4060		1389

CREDITORS: amounts falling due within one year		
Trade creditors	1262	164
Other creditors:		
Corporation Tax	19	39
Other	111	1029
Accruals	60	1452
		200 1432

NET CURRENT ASSETS (LIABILITIES)	2608	(43)
-------------------------------------	------	------

TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES	2650	49
--	------	----

CAPITAL AND RESERVES		
Other reserves	6	27
Income and Expenditure Account	2663	22
	2650	49

Signed by:
Maureen S. Porter Director
Brett Cockrell Director

Notes on the Accounts

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

a) The accounts are prepared according to the historical cost convention.

b) Depreciation is provided for on the cost of the library at one-tenth of the net book value each year. Due to the age and general condition of the office equipment it has been decided to provide sufficient depreciation in the current year to leave a nominal book value of £1.

2. TURNOVER consists of the following sources of income:

	1988	1987
	£	£
Subscriptions	9461	7718

Publications	664	364
Advertising	427	50
Magazine Chain	283	92
Badges	75	36
Other	-	5
	10910	8265

3. SURPLUS ON ORDINARY ACTIVITIES is stated after charging:

	1988	1987
Depreciation on tangible assets		
Library	£6	£7
Office Equipment	£4	£423
Auditor's remuneration	£20	£20
Provision for doubtful debts	£55	-

4. TAXATION

Corporation Tax provided at 27% on Bank Deposit interest.

5. FIXED ASSETS

	Library	Office Equipment	Awards	Total
	£	£	£	£
Cost at 1/10/87	913	1679	27	2619
DEPRECIATION				
At 1/10/87	853	1674	-	2527
Charge for year	6	4	-	10
At 30/9/88	859	1678	-	2537
NET BOOK VALUE				
At 30/9/87	60	5	27	92
At 30/9/88	54	1	22	82

7. OTHER RESERVES consist of:

	1988	1987
Award Funds:		
Doc Weir Memorial Fund	15	15
British Fantasy Award Fund	12	12
	£27	£27

NEWS

Compiled by Paul Kincaid (with a little help from *Locus*, *SF Chronicle* and other sources)

BSFA AWARD

The winners of the BSFA Award were announced at Mexican. They were:

BEST NOVEL: *Levondyss* - Robert Holdstock

BEST SHORT FICTION: "Dark Night in Toyland" - Bob Shaw

BEST MEDIA PRESENTATION: *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*

BEST ARTWORK: Cover of *Levondyss* - Alan Lee

NEBULA AWARD WINNERS

The winners of the 1988 Nebula Awards were:

BEST NOVEL: *Falling Free* - Lois McMaster Bujold

BEST NOVELLA: "The Last of the Winnebagoes" - Connie Willis

BEST NOVELETTE: "Schrödinger's Kitten" - George Alec Effinger

BEST SHORT STORY: "Bible Stories for Adults, No. 17: The Deluge" - James Morrow

GRAND MASTER: Ray Bradbury

FRESH INQUIRY INTO NET BOOK AGREEMENT

Sir Gordon Borrie, director general of the Office of Fair Trading, has ordered a fresh inquiry into the Net Book Agreement.

After receiving conflicting evidence on a number of points, he invited both sides in the dispute to submit further evidence by the end of May, and will decide by the end of July whether the NBA should be referred to the Restrictive Practices Court.

This follows moves by Pentos, which owns Dillons bookshops, to end the agreement which allows publishers to fix the retail price of their books. Dillons have argued that the NBA is an anachronism that should be abolished, allowing booksellers to offer certain books at cut price. Opponents have

■ HOLDSTOCK/SHAW WIN BSFA AWARDS ■ HUGO BLOCK VOTING CONTROVERSY ■ NEBULA AWARD WINNERS ■ GOLLANCZ FOR SALE

said that such a move would not be in the public interest since it would increase sales for a few bestsellers but restrict the middle range books held in stock by booksellers, decrease the variety of books published, and increase prices for anything but bestsellers.

The NBA has twice before been referred to the Restrictive Practices Court, in 1962 and 1968, and each time the Court decided in favour of those who opposed abolition. The issue to be decided this time is whether changes in the industry would lead the Court to take a different view.

GOLLANCZ FOR SALE

GOLLANCZ, still Britain's leading SF publisher, and one of the largest independent publishers remaining in this country, is up for sale.

Livis Gollancz, who runs the company as the successor to its founder, Victor Gollancz, informed the staff of the decision in a letter at the end of May. She is due to retire, and with no obvious successor in the family, there is no alternative to selling the company.

In the letter she expressed the desire that whoever buys the company should have the same commitment to literature that the publishers currently represent. As yet it is far too early to say who might be interested in buying the company, or what effect that might have upon the SF they publish. However, since SF forms a significant proportion of the GOLLANCZ output, it seems unlikely that any new owner would want to change things to any great extent.

RUSHDIE AFFAIR CONTINUES

The reverberations over Salman Rushdie's novel *The Satanic Verses* continue to be heard. A demonstration by Muslims in London on 27 May ended in violence and allegations that Iran had funnelled in millions of pounds to fund the march. Two London bookshops have been firebombed. In a televised discussion

HUGO AWARDS CONTROVERSY

Two nominations have been withdrawn from this year's Hugo Award ballot because of accusations of block voting.

The novel, *The Guardians* by P.J. Beese & Todd Cameron Hamilton, received enough nominations to appear on the final ballot; and Todd Cameron Hamilton was also nominated as best artist. After the nominations were announced, however, there were allegations of block voting.

It is possible to join the Worldcon at the same time that you make your nominations for the Hugo. In this case the Worldcon, Noreason 3, say that an unspecified number of people paid their Noreason membership with consecutively numbered postal orders drawn on a single New York post office, despite the fact that the nominations came from a wide variety of addresses. And these people made exactly the same nominations. In some categories this amounted to over 50 votes.

The block vote was sufficient to change the final list of nominees in five categories: Novel, Professional Artist, Fan Artist, Fan Writer, and the John W. Campbell Award. The Noreason committee decided not to invalidate the nominations, but added one more nominee in certain categories to "dilute" the effects of the block vote.

Neither Hamilton nor Beese were informed of these allegations, and only found out about them by a roundabout route. After discussions involving lawyers, Hamilton withdrew the two nominations to clear himself of charges of trying to buy a Hugo. He may follow up with legal action in an attempt to discover who did buy the postal orders.

The nomination for Hamilton and Beese for the John W. Campbell Award will stand.

The revised list of Hugo nominations is:

BEST NOVEL

Falling Free - Lois McMaster Bujold
Red Prophet - Orson Scott Card
Cyteen - C.J. Cherryh
Mona Lisa Overdrive - William Gibson
Islands in the Net - Bruce Sterling

BEST NOVELLA

"The Calvin Coolidge Home for Dead Comedians" - Bradley Denton (F&SF)
The Scalehunter's Beautiful Daughter - Lucius Shepard (Zeisling/IASFM)
"Journals of the Plague Years" - Norman Spinrad (Full Spectrum)
"Surfacing" - Walter Jon Williams (IASFM)
"The Last of the Winnebagoes" - Connie Willis (IASFM)

BEST NOVELETTE

"Ginny Sweetlips' Flying Circus" - Neal Barrett Jr. (IASFM)
"Schrödinger's Kitten" - George Alec Effinger (Omni)
"The Function of Dream Sleep" - Harlan Ellison (*Midnight Graffiti*/IASFM/Angry Candy)
"Peaches for Mad Molly" - Steven Gould (Analog)
"Do Ya, Do Ya, Wanne Dance" - Howard Waldrop (IASFM)

BEST SHORT STORY

"The Giving Plague" - David Brin (*Interzone*/Full Spectrum)
"Stable Strategies for Middle Management" - Eileen Gunn (IASFM)
"Ripples of the Dirac Sea" - Geoffrey A. Landis (IASFM)
"The Fort Moxie Branch" - Jack McDevitt (Full Spectrum)
"Kirinyaga" - Mike Resnick (F&SF)
"Our Neutral Chernobyl" - Bruce Sterling (F&SF)

BEST NON-FICTION BOOK

Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror: 1987 - Charles N. Brown & William G. Contanto
The Motion of Light in Water - Samuel R. Delany
The New Encyclopedia of Science Fiction - James Gunn (Ed)
First Meltz - Don Meltz
A Bibliographical Dictionary of Science Fiction and Fantasy Artists - Robert Weinberg

BEST DRAMATIC PRESENTATION

Alien Nation
Beetlejuice
Big
Who Framed Roger Rabbit
Willow

BEST PROFESSIONAL EDITOR

Gardner Dozois
 Edward L. Ferman
 David G. Hartwell
 Charles C. Ryan
 Stanley Schmidt

BEST PROFESSIONAL ARTIST

Thomas Centry
 David Cherry
 Bob Eggleton
 Don Maitz
 Michael Whelan

BEST SEMIPROZINE

Interzone
Locus
The New York Review of Science Fiction
Science Fiction Chronicle
Thrust

BEST FANZINE

File 770
Fosfax
Lan's Lantern
Niekas
Other Realms

BEST FAN WRITER

Avedon Carol
 Mike Glyer
 Arthur D. Hlavaty
 Dave Langford
 Guy H. Lillian III
 Chuq Von Rospach

BEST FAN ARTIST

Brad W. Foster
 Teddy Harvia
 Merle Ingsing
 Stu Shiffman
 Terai Wayne
 Diana Gallagher Wu

JOHN W. CAMPBELL AWARD

P.J. Beese & Todd Cameron Hamilton
 Christopher Hinz
 Melanie Rawn
 Michaela Roessner
 Kristine Kathryn Rusch
 William Sanders
 Della Sherman
 *2nd year of eligibility.

The only British nominations this year are *Interzone* as Semiprozine, and Avedon Carol and Dave Langford as Fan Writer. This is the last year *Interzone* is eligible as Semiprozine, during the year its circulation rose past the 10,000 cut-off figure so that in future it will count as a professional magazine.

"Kirinyaga" by Mike Resnick received nominations in both the Novelette and Short Story categories, but was counted as a Short Story because it received most votes there.

A *Brief History of Time* by Stephen Hawking received enough nominations to make the ballot in the Non-Fiction Book category, but was disqualified because its subject is 'not in the field of SF or fantasy or fandom' as the rules for the Hugo dictate.

on the affair prominent Moslems, including Yusuf Islam (Cat Stevens), have voiced their support for the sentence of death passed on Rushdie by the Ayatollah Khomeini. Other Moslems have pointed out that the death sentence is invalid under Islamic law, which provides that no death sentence can be passed unless the accused has the opportunity to defend himself in court. A book about the Rushdie affair, written with the backing of the Institute of Contemporary Arts, was dropped at the last minute by its intended publisher, COLLINS. And a play, *Iranian Nights*,

was written about the affair by Howard Brenton & Caryl Churchill, and staged at the Royal Court at the end of April, despite two members of the cast leaving the production during rehearsals because of fear. The play was later shown on Channel 4. Following the death of the Ayatollah Khomeini on the night of 3-4 June, and the inevitable struggle for power that will result in Iran, it is impossible to guess at the next act in this strange and tragic drama.

AWARDS

Interzone announced the results of their first annual readers' poll at Mexico.

The Best Short Story award went to "The Time Lapsed Man" by Eric Brown, who received £100.

The Best Artist award went to SMS, who received £50.

The All-Time Best Writers were named as:

- 1: Philip K. Dick
- 2: Arthur C. Clarke
- 3: J.G. Ballard

Two other magazines have announced the results of their readers' ballots.

The results from *Analog* were:

- BEST NOVELLA/NOVELETTE: "Sanctuary" - James White
 BEST SHORT STORY: "The Circus Horse" - Amy Bechtel
 BEST FACT ARTICLE: "An Introduction to Psychohistory" - Michael F. Flynn
 BEST COVER ARTIST: Vincent DiFate for *Falling Free*.

The results from *Isaac Asimov's SF Magazine* were:

- BEST NOVELLA: "The Last of the Winnebagoes" - Connie Willis
 BEST NOVELETTE: "Dowser" - Orson Scott Card
 BEST SHORT STORY: "A Midwinter's Tale" - Michael Swanwick
 BEST COVER ARTIST: Hisaki Yasuda
 BEST INTERIOR ARTIST: Laura Lecky

The winner of the 1988 Compton Cook Award for best first novel was *Sheepfarmer's Daughter* - Elizabeth Moon. The Award was established in 1982 in memory of Stephen Tall, whose real name was Compton Cook. It is selected by judges appointed by the committee of Balticon, and the winner received \$500.

The Horror Writers of America have announced the nominations for the *Bram Stoker Award*. They are:

BEST NOVEL

- The Silence of the Lambs* - Thomas Harris
The Drive-In - Joe R. Lansdale
Flesh - Richard Laymon
Stinger - Robert R. McCammon
Queen of the Damned - Anne Rice
Black Wind - F. Paul Wilson

BEST FIRST NOVEL

- Resurrection, Inc.* - Kevin J. Anderson
Fear Book - John Byrne
Deliver Us From Evil - Allen Lee Harris
Cities of the Dead - Michael Paine
Demon Night - J. Michael Straczynski
The Sulting - Kelley Wilde

BEST NOVELETTE

- "The Function of Dream Sleep" - Harlan Ellison
 "Horrorshow" - John Farris
 "Nightflyer" - Stephen King
 "The Skin Trade" - George R.R. Martin
 "Orange is for Anguish, Blue for Insanity" - David Morrell
 "The Juniper Tree" - Peter Straub

BEST SHORT STORY

- "The Thing at the Top of the Stairs" - Ray Bradbury
 "She's a Young Thing and Cannot Leave Her Mother" - Harlan Ellison
 "Night They Missed the Horror Show" - Joe R. Lansdale
 "Nobody Lives There" - Carol Orlock
 "Jack's Decline" - Lucius Shepard
 "The Music of the Dark Tent" - Chet Williamson

BEST COLLECTION

- Charles Beaumont: Selected Tales* - Charles Beaumont
The Toybee Convector - Ray Bradbury
Angry Candy - Harlan Ellison
The Blood Kiss - Dennis Etchison
Scare Tactics - John Farris
Blood and Water and Other Tales - Patrick McGrath

The Australian SF Achievement Awards were announced at the Australian National Convention in Perth over Easter. The winners were:

- BEST INTERNATIONAL FICTION: *Seventh Son* - Orson Scott Card
 BEST AUSTRALIAN LONG FICTION: *Striped Holes* - Damien Broderick
 BEST AUSTRALIAN SHORT FICTION: "My Lady Tongue" - Lucy Sussex
 BEST FANZINE: *Get Stuffed* - ed. Jacob Blake

BEST FAN WRITER: Bruce Gillespie
 BEST FAN ARTIST: Ian Gunn
 WILLIAM ATHELING AWARD FOR CRITICISM: Russell Blackford

The winners of the 1988 Rhysling Awards for SF poetry have been announced. They are:

- BEST LONG POEM: "White Trains" - Lucius Shepard
 BEST SHORT POEM: "Rocky Road To Hoe" - Suzette Haden Elgin tied with "The Nightmare Collector" - Bruce Boston.

The full panel of judges for the 1990 Arthur C. Clarke Award has now been announced. In addition to Maureen Porter and David V. Barrett for the BSFA and Mary Gentle and Maxim Jakubowski for the Science Fiction Foundation, as reported last issue, the judges for the International Science Policy Foundation will be A.V.S. DeReuck and Professor A.L. Mackay.

The 1989 National Fantasy Fan Federation Amateur Short Story Contest is now open for submissions. Following a long tradition, BSFA members have the same low entry fee as NSF members, \$1 as opposed to \$2.

The competition is open to anyone who has sold no more than 2 stories professionally, and entries must be an original, unpublished story of not more than 7,500 words. 1st prize is \$25, 2nd prize is \$15, 3rd prize is \$10. Entries must be received by 1 December 1989.

Copies of the entry form are available from Maureen Porter at the editorial address.

PEOPLE

Bob Shaw has been writing a film script based on the short story "Super Toys Last All Summer Long" by Brian Aldiss. The film, if it comes off, will be directed by Stanley Kubrick who has owned the film rights on the story for around five years.

Aldiss, however, can be sure of seeing one of his works on the screen in the foreseeable future. *Frankenstein Unbound* has been adapted by Roger Corman and stars Raul Julia and Bridget Fonda.

Still on the subject of films, Stephen Gallagher looks set to have a good year as far as films are concerned. *Valley of Lights* began filming in Arizona in March from Gallagher's own screenplay. He has also written the screenplay for *October*, which will be produced as a TV serial this year. While the same company currently making *Valley of Lights*, AGWO/Zenith, have bought the rights to his latest novel, *Down River*, which will come out as either a film or a TV series in 1990.

Mary Gentle has just sold her new novel, the working title is *Rais and Gargoyles*, to BANTAM UK as the first book in a three-book deal.

Meanwhile she is working with comics artist Fox on a series of graphic novels, and they are currently looking for a publisher.

Fox has announced that issue 20 of *Redfox*, which is currently being printed, will be the last, since he now wants to concentrate on other projects, including these graphic novels.

Gerry Kilworth reports that the success of *Hunter's Moon* has meant that his career is suddenly taking off. UKWHL have a retainer in for his next three books - a collection of short stories, a follow-up to *Hunter's Moon* about wolves rather than foxes, and an autobiography about his life as a child in Aden. Meanwhile METHUEN have approached him to do a book of original fantasy stories for young adults. And BODLEY HEAD are reported to be anxious to see his next mainstream novel.

S.M. Baxter is the first British writer to appear in one of the *Writers of the Future* collections with "Blue Shift" in volume 5. The story is set in the same universe as his first story, "The Xeelee Flower", which appeared in *Interzone*.

A collection of horror writers, including Ramsey Campbell, James Herbert, Brian Lumley and Guy N. Smith have formed Scare Care Trust to aid battered and abused children.

These authors, together with C. Dean Anderson, Rosal Dahl, Harlan Ellison, Charles L. Grant, Stephen Linn, William F. Nolan, Kit Reed, Alan Rodgers, Steve Rasnic Tem, Peter Tremayne and J.N. Williamson along with cover artist Thomas Canty and editor Graham Masterton have contributed their work free to a new anthology of original horror stories, to be titled *Scare Care*, to be published both in this country and the USA.

PEOPLE

edn of 4th part of Neverjon series.

Joe DEVER & John GRANT *Eclipse of the Kai* (BEAVER, pbk, £2.50) & *The Dark Door Opens* (BEAVER, pbk, £2.50) 1st edn of Books 1 & 2 of Joe Dever's Legends of Lone Wolf developed out of game books.

Philip K. DICK *The Divine Invasion* (GRAFTON, pbk, £2.99) Reprint (Corgi, 1982) of the follow-up to VALIS.

Gordon R. DIKSON *Chantry Guild* (SPHERE, pbk, £3.99) 1st UK edn of latest in the Dorsal Cycle.

David EDDINGS *Demon Lord of Karande* (BANTAM, pbk, £6.95) Reprint (Bantam, 1988) of 3rd book in The Malloreon.

John FARRIS *Scare Tactics* (HODDER, hbk, £11.95) 1st UK edn of horror novel.

Alan Dean FOSTER *To the Vanishing Point* (SPHERE, pbk, £3.50) 1st UK edn of SF novel.

C.S. FRIEDMAN *In Conquest Born* (LEGEND, pbk, £3.99) 1st UK edn of highly praised SF novel.

David S. GARNETT Ed. *Zenith* (SPHERE, pbk, £3.50) 1st edn of orig. anthology with stories by Tuttle, Holdstock, Bayley, Greenland, Stephenson, Constantine, Kilworth, McDonald, Sourbut, Aldiss, King & Evans.

Parker GOWIN *Waiting for the Galactic Bus* (BANTAM, pbk, £2.99) 1st UK edn of SF novel.

Colin GREENLAND *Other Voices* (UNWIN, pbk, £3.99) Reprint (Unwin, 1988) of his most recent novel.

Ed GREENWOOD *Swirlfire* (PENGUIN, pbk, £3.99) 1st UK edn of Forgotten Realms fighting fantasy saga.

Raymond HARRIS *Shadows of the White Sun* (HEADLINE, pbk, £2.99) 1st UK edn of SF novel.

M. John HARRISON *The Committed Men* (VG&F, pbk, £3.50) Reprint (New Authors, 1971) of 1st novel, VG&F Classic 32.

Robert A. HEINLEIN *The Moon is a Harsh Mistress* (NEL, hbk, £11.95) Reprint (Dobson, 1967) of Hugo winning novel.

James P. HOGAN *The Gentle Giants of Gynemede* (GRAFTON, pbk, £2.99) 1st UK edn of 2nd part of the Giants trilogy.

L. Ron HUBBARD *The Enemy Within* (NEW ERA, pbk, £3.95) Reprint (New Era, 1987) of Vol 3 of Mission Earth.

Berry HUGHART *The Story of the Stone* (BANTAM, pbk, £6.95) 1st UK edn of sequel to *Bridge of Birds*.

Peter JAMES *Dreamer* (GOLLANCZ, hbk, £11.95) 1st edn of horror novel.

K.W. JETER *Morlock Night* (GRAFTON, pbk, £2.99) 1st UK edn of "sequel" to *The Time Machine*.

Stephen JONES & David SUTTON (Eds) *Fantasy Tales Vol 10, No 2* (ROBINSON, pbk, 99p) Latest issue contains stories by Bulmer, Nolan, Lane, Lumley, Gaiman & Johnson.

Janet KAGAN *Uhura's Song* (TITAN, pbk, £3.95) 1st UK edn of Star Trek Giant Novel 3.

Katherine KERR *Darkspell* (GRAFTON, pbk, £3.99) Reprint (Grafton, 1988) of Vol 2 of the Deverry Series.

Richard A. KNAK *The Legend of Iuma* (PENGUIN, pbk, £3.99) 1st UK edn of Vol 1 of Dragonlance Heroes.

Richard LA PLANTE *Tegné: Warlord of Zendow* (SPHERE, pbk, £3.50) 1st UK edn of fantasy novel.

Stanislaw LEM *Fiasco* (ORBIT, pbk, £4.99) Reprint (Deutsch, 1987) of Clarke Award shortlisted novel.

Roy LEWIS *The Evolution Man* (Hutchinson, 1960, as *What We Did To Father*) of classic prehistoric comedy.

Megan LINDHOLM *The Reindeer People* (UNWIN, pbk, £6.99) 1st UK edn of prehistoric fantasy.

Winsor McCAY *The Complete Little Nemo in Slumberland, Volume One (1905-1907)* (TITAN, hbk, £12.95) Reprint of the original strips.

Mike McQUAY *Suspicion* (ORBIT, pbk, £2.99) 1st UK edn of Book 2 of Isaac Asimov's Robot City.

George R.R. MARTIN *Fevre Dream* (VG&F, pbk, £3.50) Reprint (Gollancz, 1983) of horror novel set aboard riverboat.

Adrienne MARTINE-BARNES *The Fire Sword* (HEADLINE, pbk, £3.99) 1st UK edn of novel of time travel back to alternate middle ages.

Richard MATHESON *Earthbound* (ROBINSON, hbk, £10.95) 1st UK edn of horror novel.

Michael MOORCOCK *The Fortress of the Pearl* (GOLLANCZ, hbk, £11.95) 1st edn of new Elric novel.

Grant MORRISON & Steve YEMWELL *Zenith 2: The Hollow Land part one* (TITAN, pbk, £4.95) 1st edn of comic featuring superhuman pop star.

Paul PARK *Soldiers of Paradise* (GRAFTON, pbk, £3.99) 1st UK edn of The Starbridge Chronicles.

Hayford PEIRCE *Napoleon Disentitled* (BANTAM, pbk, £3.50) 1st UK edn of time travel novel.

Steve PERRY *The Man Who Never Missed* (SPHERE, pbk, £2.99) 1st UK edn of Vol 1 of the Matador Trilogy.

Rachel POLLACK *Unquenchable Fire* (LEGEND, pbk, £3.99) Reprint (Legend, 1988) of Clarke Award winner.

Jerry E. POURNELLE *Storms of Victory* (ORBIT, pbk, £3.50) 1st UK edn of Janissaries Book 3.

Terry PRATCHETT *Pyramids* (GOLLANCZ, hbk, £11.95) 1st edn of new Discworld novel; *Sourcery* (CORG, pbk, £2.99) Reprint (Gollancz, 1988) of 5th Discworld book.

Kim Stanley ROBINSON *The Gold Coast* (ORBIT, pbk, £6.99) 1st UK edn of novel set in 21st century California.

Fred SABERHAGEN *Sightblinder's Story* (ORBIT, pbk, £2.99) 1st UK edn of The Second Book of Lost Swords.

R.A. SALVATORE *Streams of Silver* (PENGUIN, pbk, £3.99) 1st UK edn of Book 2 of The Icewind Dale Trilogy.

Fay SAMPSON *Wise Woman's Telling* (HEADLINE, pbk, £2.99) 1st edn of 1st adult novel, start of series about King Arthur; *The Serpent of Sengard* (LION, pbk, £1.99) 1st edn of latest volume in saga of Penur Ben the white cat.

Bob SAW *The Wooden Spaceship* (ORBIT, pbk, £3.50) Reprint (Gollancz, 1988) of 2nd part of his trilogy.

Charles SHEFFIELD *Trader's World* (NEL, pbk, £2.99) 1st UK edn of SF novel.

Julius SHEPARD *Life During Wartime* (PALADIN, pbk, £4.99) Reprint (Grafton, 1988) of Clarke Award shortlisted novel.

Robert SIEGEL *Alpha Centauri* (LION, pbk, £2.25) Reprint (1981) of children's fantasy novel.

Robert SILVERBERG *To the Land of the Living* (GOLLANCZ, hbk, £12.95) 1st UK edn of novel featuring Gilegamesh in the afterlife.

Clifford D. SIMAK *House of Eternity* (MANDARIN, pbk, £2.99) Reprint (Severn House, 1987) of one of his last novels.

John SLADEK *Bugs* (MACMILLAN, hbk, £12.95) 1st edn of new novel.

George E. SLUSSER & Eric S. RABKIN (Eds) *Mindscape: The Geographies of Imagined Worlds* (SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY PRESS, hbk, £29.95) 1st edn of coll. of essays by Anderson, Brin, Benford and others.

Nancy SPRINGER *Mindbond* (ORBIT, pbk, £3.50) 1st UK edn of 2nd volume of Sea King trilogy.

Jim STARLIN, Jim APARO & Mike DeCARLO *Batman: A Death in the Family* (TITAN, pbk) The Batman story that features the death of Robin.

Michael SWANWICK *Vacuum Flowers* (LEGEND, pbk, £3.50) Reprint (Simon & Schuster, 1988) of cyberpunk novel.

Judith TARR *A Fall of Princes* (PAN, pbk, £3.99) 1st UK edn of Vol 3 of Avarian Rising.

Sheri S. TEPPER *The Awakeners* (CORG, pbk, £3.99) Reprint (Bantam, 1988) of novel about "the savage and magical world of the River".

John WAGNER, et al. *Judge Dredd's Crime File 1* (TITAN, pbk, £3.50) Reprint collection of 4 stories.

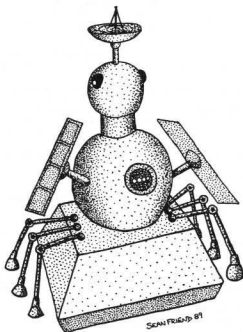
John WAGNER, Alan GRANT & Ron SMITH *Judge Dredd 24* (TITAN, pbk, £5.50) Reprint collection of 4 stories.

Redmond WALLIS *Starbloom* (PURNELL FRONLINES, pbk, £1.99) 1st edn of 1st part of SF trilogy for teenagers.

Howard WEINSTEIN *The Covenant of the Crown* (TITAN, pbk, £2.95) 1st UK edn of Star Trek 23: *Power Hungry* (TITAN, pbk, £2.95) 1st UK edn of Star Trek: The Next Generation 6.

Walter Jon WILLIAMS *Voice of the Whirlwind* (ORBIT, pbk, £6.99) 1st UK edn of new novel by the author of Hardwired.

Jane YOLEN *Sister Light, Sister Dark* (ORBIT, pbk, £3.50) 1st UK edn of fantasy novel.



Media News

Compiled by John Peters

Rumours that Robin the Boy Wonder is to be killed early on in Tim Burton's new version of *Batman* are apparently true. This is only one of the bits of news coming from Pinewood studios, where shooting is still continuing. In fact, the budget has become a serious cause of worry to Warner Brothers, the film's financiers, because it has gone \$15 million over budget - most of this expenditure going on the extremely lavish Gotham City, Batcave and Joker's Lair sets created on the Pinewood lot. The newly designed Batmobile, based on a Chevrolet chassis, cost over \$50,000 alone. And while Kim Basinger has replaced Sean Young because of injury, the script itself has not escaped drastic surgery. *Sam Ham's* original script - highly rated by those who've read it - has been rewritten by Warren Skarsen, who's only other produced script was *Beverly Hills Cop II*. Spectral make-up will enhance Jack Nicholson's already demonic face, lending credence that The Joker has a very sick sense of humour indeed. The film is also said to be full of violent confrontations, climaxing in an extremely bloody massacre that will shock many. Warner Brothers are touting *Batman* as "The most expensive horror film ever made", hoping that its extreme violence will ensure that it won't become an object of camp humour, like its 60's predecessor. The problem is that a trailer already showing in American cinemas has attracted a negative reaction wherever it's been shown - the audiences, on seeing Michael Keaton dressed in his Batcape and mask have booed and jeered. Obviously this type of reaction is making Warner's very nervous indeed.

Though *Batman* has now been allotted a late summer release, and despite these nerves, a sequel has been announced and will begin shooting in July - before the premiere of the first film. It is rumoured that Robin Williams has been offered \$5 million to play The Riddler, and that Jack Nicholson could return as The Joker due to the original film having had two different endings shot.

More information has been released about Clive Barker's new film, *Nightbreed*. With a budget of \$10 million, it began filming on March 6th at Pinewood Studios and will include some location work in Canada. Due to be completed in nine weeks, it is already booked into US cinemas for an August release. Based on Barker's new novel, *Cabal*, this fantasy adventure promises to have some of the most exotic and terrifying monsters ever shown (Image Animation are supplying anything up to 200). This will be Barker's second film as writer/director, and he has put together an intriguing cast - while the leading roles go to actors I haven't heard of before: Craig Sheffer as Boone (though both Rutger Hauer and Christopher Lambert were reportedly in the running) and Anne Bobby as his girlfriend, Lori. The big draw for horror fans will be the serious dramatic debut of director David Cronenberg as Decker, a mad(?) psychologist who becomes involved with Boone's strange powers. Another strange signing is rock singer/bassist Suzi Quatro who has appeared in the TV series *Happy Days* and *Minder* over the years, as well as starring in the recent revival of *Annie Get Your Gun*.

Due to *Roger Rabbit's* success, there is to be an animation boom - Disney are definitely planning a sequel, but before that Roger Rabbit will appear in his own "normal" cartoon film: *Tummy Trouble*, directed by Rob Minkoff and with Charles Fleischer back as Roger's voice. This will be shown with *Honey, I Shrunk the Kids!* Both Bob Hoskins and Roger Rabbit have achieved another sort of immortality - they are now on show in Madame Tussauds.

Meanwhile, Steven Spielberg is to launch a Warner Brothers TV series, *Tiny Toons*, which will feature the classic Looney Tunes characters in their baby days. Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck, Yosemite Sam and Foghorn Leghorn are amongst the first to get the treatment.

Conversely, the trend for plundering the comics grows. Warren Beatty's long announced *Dick Tracy* is now on, with George C. Scott playing Big Boy, Michael J. Pollard as an unnamed hood, Madonna as Breathless Mahoney, Sean Young (trying again after flunking *Batman*) as Tess Trueheart.

Other comicbook characters aiming for the big screen include: *American Flag*, *Svamp Thing II* (already completed and possibly released by the time you read this); *The Shadow*; *Sub-Mariner*; *Watchmen*; *Wolverine*; *Plastic Man*; *Sgt Rock* (possibly still with Schwarzenegger); *Judge Dredd*; *Dr Strange*; *Blade*; *Annie II*; *The Fantastic Four*; *Spiderman*; *Tales from the Crypt*; *The Punisher* (with Dolph Lundgren); and *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*.

It seems that we'll have to wait some time for a sequel to *Highlander*, as director Russell Mulcahy refuses to use any of the current scripts. Currently preparing *The Legend of Boomerang*, he has script control over any sequel he and Christopher Lambert make. Since leaving *Boomer III* during early production, he has been making pop videos, directed a successful pilot for a new TV series, *Cyberforce*, and has refused several films. Boomerang has a \$10 million budget and is set in Queensland, and deals with an Aboriginal youth who searches for the magic his people lost thousands of years ago.

Cher is to make *Pin Cushion*, though the plot sounds rather similar to *The Omega Man* in some ways. She plays a woman whose blood contains the only antidote to a plague sweeping America after World War 3 ... *The Applegates* are the new family in suburbia - they may seem human, but in fact they're mutant giant insects from the Amazon rain forest, out to destroy the human world. Starring Ed Begley Jr., Stockard Channing and Debrah Farentino, this New World International film should be on the circuit sometime this summer ... Instead of just one *Back to the Future* sequel, there are going to be two! They will be shot back-to-back and released this Christmas and next summer. Robert Zemeckis will direct both, and though no scripts have been written yet Michael J. Fox will play both Marty McFly and his son and daughter! ... *Star Trek V: The Final Frontier* sounds interesting - the Enterprise crew land on nimbus 3, a western frontier-style world which is going through an ecological disaster. It isn't stated if this results from Spock removing his socks after their five year mission to boldly go etc ... Meanwhile that perky porn star *Flesh Gordon* returns in a sequel, *Flesh Gordon Meets the Cosmic Cheerleaders*. Emperor Wang is at it again as he aims his impotency ray on Earth again ... Ozzy Osborne, Britain's only official bat-biter, is to host a series of Cannon horror video releases which include: *Dracula's Last Rights*; *Crucible of Horror*; *Beast in the Cellar* and *Blood on Satan's Claws* ... There will be a third *Hellraiser* film. *Hell on Earth* will go into production next year. Meanwhile, *Heilbloom* took over \$3 million over the Christmas weekend after it was released in 1180 screens. It will be released here on June 16, and will have approximately two minutes of footage edited out for the censors ... New Line Productions have announced that they are investing \$6.5 million in *A Nightmare on Elm Street 5: The Dream Child* and \$4 million in *Texas Chainsaw Massacre 3: Leatherface*, which could be directed by Tobe Hooper ... *A Beetlejuice* sequel has been confirmed, though there are no details of cast and director. There is also to be an animated series to be produced by Nelvana.

Rick Astley and Michael Kamen's theme song and soundtrack score for the new Bond film, *Licence to Kill*, have been rejected by the producers, and a search is being hurriedly conducted for a composer who can score the film in less than the nine weeks remaining before the premiere. Veteran soul artist Gladys Knight has now been signed to sing the theme song, while the long-time character to be killed in the film is thought to be CIA agent Felix Leiter - Bond's longtime friend - played for the second time by David Hedison.

Director Ron Howard has once more teamed up with George Lucas to shoot *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, a longtime project of Lucas'. They last worked together on the disappointing *Willow* ... Despite John Carpenter's much acclaimed *They Live* not being released here until July, there are plans to make a sequel in the next year ... *Beetlejuice* (cast me music!) Nielsen is to star in *Westworld*, a futuristic thriller to be filmed in Mexico ... sfx specialist Rick Baker has been signed to work on *Gremlins II: Gremlins go to Las Vegas* ... Dustin Hoffman is reputedly being considered for Wolfgang Petersen's version of *Phantoms of the Opera* ... Meanwhile Steven Spielberg is rumoured to be directing the Andrew Lloyd-Webber version ... Meryl Streep and comedian Roseanne Barr are to star in the film version of *The Life and Loves of a She Devil* ... The Statue of Liberty makes its acting debut in *Ghostbusters II* ... Jeff Goldblum's next film is *The Mad Monkey* ... Michael Parra is to appear in *Moon 44* ... Robert Forster is to meet *The Princess of Darkness* ... Beware of *Ghoules III* ... Gene Wilder and Richard Pryor are to team up for the third time in *See No Evil* ... Stuart Gordon's *Robojax* has been renamed *Robot Jax* and should be finally released this year - It was delayed by the collapse and resultant sale of Empire Films ... Jamie Lee Curtis returns to her horror roots when she plays a cop being stalked by an obsessed psycho in *Blue Steel* - It's directed by Kathryn Bigelow who made the excellent *Near Dark* ... Ken Russell's next pair of films for Vestron are a remake of *Dracula* and *Ketchup* a comedy about making a slasher film ... *Evil dead III* begins shooting this summer and includes location filming in Hungary ... There are rumours of a sequel to *Willow* ... *Pet Sematary* should have been released by now in the

US, we get it around Christmas ... Horror writing team Skipp & Spector have been signed to script *Nightmare on Elm Street 5*, production starts late spring ... New World have announced *House III* and *Petals in the Wind* a sequel to the abysmal *Flowers in the Attic* ... The Nic Roeg - Jim Henson film of Roald Dahl's *The Witches* has been delayed, and will not be released until late summer.

The following low budget productions have been announced: *Beverly Hills Bodymancer* starring Frank Gorshing; *The Dead End the Living: Demon Sword* starring Russ Tamblyn; *The Journey out of the 23rd Century* starring Linnea Quigley; *Memorial Valley Massacre* starring Cameron Mitchell; *Mutant on the Bounty*; *Psychos on Parade*; *Scream Dream*; and SF celebrity Forest J. Ackerman and Ferdy Mayne star in *My Lovely Monster*.

The following videos have recently been released. From BraveWorld: *Evil Alter & The Running Man* from Cannon; *The Shout*; from CBS/Fox: *Alien*, *Aliens*, *Bad Dreams*, *Big, Date with an Angel*, *Enemy Mine*, *The Entity*, *The Queen Trilogy*, *Vengeance*, *The Demon* (aka *Pumpkinhead*); from Medusa: *976-EVIL & Out of the Body*; from MGM/UA: *Poltergeist 3*; from President Video: *Fright Night III*, *Howling III*, *King Kong Lives*, *Maid to Order*; from RCA/Columbia: *My Demon Lover*; from Vestron: *Manwork*, *Cutting*

Class, *Tunnels*, *Vampire in Venice*; from Warner Home Video: *Amityville II*, *Audrey Rose*, *The Possession*, *Deadly Friend*, *Doin' Time on Planet Earth*, *Empire of the Sun*, *It's Alive*, *It's Alive II*, *It Lives Again*, *It's Alive III*, *Island of the Alive*, *Mesque of Red Death*, *Plague of Zombies*, *The Swamp Thing*.

Mutants is a science fiction stage play written and directed by Ivor Benjamin that will be performed at the Edinburgh Fringe from 13 August to 2 September. The publicity material describes its "characters, setting and structure are taken from well-recognised stereotypes - a quest fraught with treachery, a reluctant warrior, urban anarchy in a future wasteland. As the play unfolds, the audience is forced to re-examine traditional theatrical expectations and to confront disturbing and exciting ideas about the future of the human mind and the human race."

More traditional SF fare at the theatre not only includes Jon Pertwee returning to the rôle of Doctor Who in a musical in London, but Tom Baker also playing the Doctor in *The Ultimate Adventure of Dr Who* at the Nottingham Playhouse on the week commencing 12 June, followed by a C.S. Lewis double bill with *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* and *The Magician's Nephew* on the week commencing 19 June.

LOCAL FANOMENA

The Clubs Column

By Keith Mitchell

HERE, AS PROMISED LAST ISSUE, IS MY SUMMARY OF ALL THE LOCAL SF groups in the UK. I have tried to make this as comprehensive and accurate as possible, but no doubt time and human error will mean a few mistakes have crept in. I have not included University/College/Politechnic groups, mainly for space reasons. Hopefully I will cover these later in the year.

A few points about the list - as I have said before, information like this gets out of date very easily. To try and give you some idea of how accurate a particular entry is, I have included a "Last Update" line. This is when I last heard from, or of, the group.

The oldest entries are dated August 87, and are based on the list Pam Wells compiled for Conspiracy. Obviously I'm not 100% certain about these ones, and if you can at all update me I would be very grateful. This of course goes for all the entries. If there is anything about your group which is wrong or out of date, or if you have been missed out altogether, then I don't mind you complaining, so long as you let me know and put me right. Groups I am particularly keen on hearing about include those for which I have no contact person listed. I can only apologise for anything I have got wrong.

I will be keeping this list up to date on an ongoing basis, so if any BSFA members with a copy of the latest version of it, I will be happy to supply one in return for an SAE. In general I will be able to do this more quickly than responding to specific queries.

Finally, my thanks again to Ian Brooks on behalf of Warped, the Manchester University SF Society, and Paeony Lewis for the Norwich SF Group, both of whom have sent me publications telling me about forthcoming events. Space prevents me from telling you much about what they've been up to recently, but Warped have Bryan Talbot coming as a guest soon, as well as all the usual activity, which includes publishing their newsletter and running a writers workshop. Ian can be contacted c/o the Student's Union.

In Norwich there is a talk on Medieval Magic being given by Sherry Ward on 14 June, and SF Treasure Hunt on 2 July, and a barbecue on 12 August. Contact Paeony at the address below for details.

Town: Aylesbury
Group: Aylesbury Area SF Group
Last Update: Aug 87
Meets on: Monthly
Contact: Nick Shears, 27 Chiltern Rd., Wendover, Aylesbury, Bucks. HP22 6DA

Town: Birmingham
Group: BSFG
Last Update: Aug 88
Meets on: 3rd Friday, 8pm
Meets at: Penguin Hotel, New Street
Contact: David Wake (Treasurer), 160 Beaumont Rd.,

Birmingham B30 1NY
Contact: David Hardy (Newsletter), 99 Southam Rd., Birmingham B28 0AB. 021 777 1802
Comments: Meetings £1.50 for non-members

Town: Bolton
Group: BoD SFG
Last Update: Jun 88
Meets on: Every Tuesday, 8pm
Meets at: The Old Three Crowns, 14 Deansgate

Town: Bournemouth
Group: Bournemouth SF and Fantasy Group
Last Update: Jun 88
Meets on: 1st & middle Mondays
Meets at: The Dolphin Hotel (front bar), Holdenhurst Rd.
Contact: Dave Syme, 0202 432489

Town: Bradford
Group: Quest SF Club
Last Update: Aug 87
Meets on: Every Wednesday, 7.30
Meets at: Room 9, 2nd Floor, The Bridge Project, 40 Piccadilly, B01 3NN
Contact: Simon Bromwich

Town: Brighton
Group: Dec 88
Last Update: Every Friday
Meets on: Andy Robertson, 38 South Way, Lewes, Sussex BN7 1LY. 0273 474468

Town: Bristol
Group: TAMSAAF
Last Update: Mar 89
Meets on: Every Wednesday
Meets at: The White Hart, next to Bristol bus station
Contact: Christina Lake, 47 Wessex Avenue, Bristol BS7 0DE. 0272 514223

Town: Canterbury
Group: Oct 88
Last Update: Lawrence dean, 47 Forrester Close, Canterbury CT1 1DZ. 0227 458509
Contact: Trying to get a group started

Town: Carlisle
Group: Carlisle & District
Last Update: Jun 88
Meets on: Every other Friday
Meets at: Various venues
Contact: Shep Kirkbride, 0228 27168

Town: Chester
Group: CADS
Last Update: Aug 88
Meets on: 1st & 3rd Sunday, 8.30pm
Meets at: The Old Custom House Inn, Watergate St.
Contact: Alison Scott, 2 Craithe Rd., Vickers Cross, Chester CH3 5JL. 0244 42396
Comments: Marston's Pedigree

- Town: Croydon
Group: Croydon SF & Fantasy Group
Last Update: Jun 88
Meets on: 2nd & last Friday
Meets at: Windsor Castle, Brighton Rd. (A23)
Contact: Des Lewis, 01-668 1931
- Town: Dartford
Group: The Barnehurst Group
Last Update: Jul 88
Meets on: 2nd Thursday
Meets at: The Phoenix, Lower Hythe St.
Contact: Jonathan Cowie, 5 Charlieville Rd., Erith, Kent DA8 1HJ
- Town: Dundee
Group: Dundee
Last Update: Jun 88
Meets on: 1st Thursday, 7.30
Meets at: The Globe
Contact: Jon Wallace, 21 Charleston St., Dundee. 0382 623399
- Town: Edinburgh
Group: FORTH
Last Update: May 89
Meets on: Every Tuesday, 8.30
Meets at: The Malt Shovel Too, Cockburn St.
Contact: Jim Darroch, 8 Montague St., Edinburgh EH8 9QU
Keith Mitchell
Comments: Beer highly recommended
- Town: Glasgow
Group: Friends of Kilgore Trout
Last Update: Sep 88
Meets on: Every Thursday
Meets at: Cairns, Miller St. (off Argyll St.)
Contact: Mark Meenan, "Burnawn", Stirling Rd., Dumbarton G82 2PJ
Comments: Venue may have changed recently
- Town: Glasgow
Group: Friends of Admiral Benbow
Last Update: This issue
Meets on: Every Thursday, 9pm
Meets at: Ingram Bar, off George Square
Contact: Sandy Brown, 18 Gordon Terrace, Bantyre G72 9NA
John Mooney, 041 952 9286
Comments: New venue this month
- Town: Kent
Group: Kent Tru Fandom
Last Update: Aug 87
Meets at: Vince Clarke, 16 Wendover Way, Welling, Kent DA16 2BN
- Town: Leeds
Group: Leeds
Last Update: Jun 88
Meets on: Every Thursday
Meets at: West Riding
Contact: Simon Ounsley, 0532 75616
- Town: Leicester
Group: Leicester
Last Update: Aug 88
Meets on: 1st Friday, 8pm
Meets at: The Rainbow & Dove, 155 Charles St.
Contact: George Clark, 71 Wolverton Rd., Leicester LE3 2AJ. 0533 823405
Comments: Affiliate of BSFG
- Town: London
Group: "Welling-Tun"
Last Update: May 89
Meets on: 1st Thursday
Meets at: The Welling Tavern, Waterloo
- Town: London
Group: BSFA
Last Update: May 89
Meets on: 3rd Thursday
Meets at: The Plough (upstairs room), Museum St.
- Town: London
Group: City Illiterates
Last Update: Apr 89
Meets on: Every Friday, 5.30pm
- Meets at: City Literary Institute bar (Autumn/Spring terms); The Cock, Euston Tower (Euston Sq. & Warren St. tubes)
Contact: Roger Robinson, 75 Rossllyn Avenue, Harold Wood, Essex RM3 ORG. 04023 42304
- Town: London
Group: Women Only Group
Last Update: Jun 88
Meets on: 2nd Wednesday after Tun
Meets at: The Wellington Tavern
Contact: Caroline Mulian, 01 863 8849
- Town: London
Group: London
Last Update: Mar 89
Meets on: 2nd & 4th Thursday
Meets at: The White Horse, Fetter Lane (Chancery lane tube)
Contact: Owen Whiteoak, 01 704 7029
Comments: Pub closing down soon
- Town: Manchester
Group: SF & Fantasy Film Society
Last Update: Oct 88
Contact: Harry Nadler, 15 Fennel St., Manchester. 061 835 1055
- Town: Newcastle
Group: The Gannets
Last Update: Jun 88
Meets on: 1st Tuesday, 8pm
Meets at: The Green Dolphin
Contact: Harry Bell, 091 478 2559
- Town: Norwich
Group: Norwich
Last Update: This Issue
Meets on: Every other Wednesday, 8pm
Meets at: Ribs of Beef (basement), Fye Bridge
Contact: Paeony Lewis, Walnut Tree Cottage, Low Road, Fornett St Mary, Norfolk NR16 1JN. 050 841 8380
- Town: Peterborough
Group: Peterborough SF Club
Last Update: Jun 88
Contact: c/o 181 Eyescroft, Bretton, Peterborough, Cambs. PE3 8EX
- Town: Portsmouth
Group: South Hants. Group
Last Update: Jun 88
Meets on: 2nd & 4th Friday, 6pm
Meets at: Dorchester Arms, Market Way
Contact: Phil Plumby, 0705 673401
- Town: Plymouth
Group: Drake SF Association
Last Update: Feb 89
Meets on: 1st & 3rd Saturday (roughly)
Meets at: King's Head, Bretonside (near bus station)
Contact: John Peters, 299 Southway Drive, Southway, Plymouth, Devon PL6 6QN. 0752 785853
- Town: Preston
Group: Preston
Last Update: Jun 88
Meets on: 2nd Wednesday
Meets at: Stanley Arms, Lancaster Road
- Town: Reading
Group: GLOMERULE
Last Update: Jun 88
Meets on: Every Sunday, 9pm
Meets at: Turk's Head, London Rd.
Contact: Steve Rothman, 07356 71089
- Town: Romsey
Group: Romsey SF Society
Last Update: Jun 88
Meets on: Every other Wednesday, 8pm
Meets at: Abbey Hotel
- Town: Saltcoats
Group: Saltcoats
Last Update: May 89
Meets on: Every Wednesday
Meets at: The Crown Inn, Chapelwell St.
Contact: Dave Ellis, 0294 603184

THE PERIODIC TABLE

WASHINGTON WITHDRAWS WORLDCON BID

Washington DC has withdrawn from the race for the 1992 Worldcon, leaving the race to Orlando, Florida, who win by default.

The decision was reached by the Washington bid committee after the main hotel and convention facilities they were planning to use, at the Sheraton Washington Hotel, were booked by the Jewish organisation B'nai B'rith for the weekend of Worldcon. To preserve their option on the rooms the bid committee would have had to pre-pay thousands of dollars for the space, with no guarantee that they would actually win the bid after it all.

The other Washington hotels the committee planned to use - the Omni Shoreham with 700 rooms, and the Washington Hilton with 1,100 rooms - were planned as overflow hotels and could not compensate for the loss of 1,500 rooms, 38 meeting rooms and 95,000 square feet of exhibition space at the Sheraton.

The decision to withdraw from the race by the Discon III bidding committee was not, however, unanimous. The following letter has been circulated by five members of that committee:

This is in response to the letter circulated by the Discon III Executive Board concerning the dissolution of the DC in 1992 Worldcon Bid. We, the undersigned, wish to state to all interested parties that said letter, and the decision contained therein, were not unanimous.

The two main points of the letter were that the Board felt it could no longer trust the Sheraton, and that our Worldcon was fatally damaged by the resulting "new" package.

On the first point, there were some of us who were more than willing to trust Jim Harris, Convention Coordinator for the Hilton, to hold the Sheraton to its word under the terms of their corporate entity, the "Connecticut Collection". He had proven himself (to us, at least), by turning down the very same group which had bought out the Sheraton! Had he known of what they were going to do, he would have prevented it. In the slim/fat chance of the Sheraton finding another group in the meager five months between the "disaster" and the voting, we are certain he would have watched out for our interests like the proverbial hawk.

The second point is even more easily debunked. The real reason the Board didn't like any changes in the venue were 1) they were sure we'd look like buffoons who couldn't manage our business affairs (which makes it doubly strange that the Board wishes to hold what could appear to be a celebration of this at Noreascon), and 2) it'd be a "logistical nightmare". Are we then given to understand that, under normal circumstances (if they can be said to exist!) Worldcons run themselves? That we did not rise to this challenge reduces our much-vaunted superiority to mere propaganda. As such a thing does not exist on Earth, any members of the Board wishing to hold a "perfect" Worldcon should move to another planet!

(Some of the following agree with the sentiments of the foregoing letter, but voted for dissolution for reasons other than were stated by the Board. Some felt that the overwhelming pessimism and caution of the Board was too great an impediment to continuing. Others, having had time to pause and reflect, now realise that we have acted too hastily.)

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Cohen
Lance Oszko
Eve Whitley
Jack Quaker
Julie Owings

Convention News Compiled by Maureen Porter

First of all, confirmation that the Tyneside International Science Fiction Festival will not be taking place this year, due to various problems. Amanda Cable is now attempting to organise something for 1991. More details as I receive them.

Information on Fanderson 90, to be held in London, at the Mount Royal Hotel, Marble Arch, has also been received. No information on guests as yet, but I can tell you that Attending membership is £25 until 31/7/89 and will increase proportionately after that. Supporting membership is £12. Those interested are encouraged to book as soon as possible as attending membership

is strictly limited, as is hotel accommodation. Contact Fanderson 90 Info - Barbara Heywood, 50 Albion Road, London, N16 9PH, for further information.

Thanks to Chris O'Shea's exhaustive (or even exhausting) con listing for information on 1990's Union bids. 1990 sees a battle between the Light Blues and the Dark Blues. Cambridge is bidding with Unicorn, to be held over 6-8th July, at the ever-popular New Hall, Cambridge venue. Oxford offers *Spaw of Conine*, for 13-15 July, provisionally. Contact 298 Ifrley Road, Oxford for further information. I would give you the Cambridge address, but I don't have it yet. (This is nothing to do with my dark blue roots.)

Tim Illingworth, doyen of con ops, is running a one-day event on how to run large conventions. A veteran of worldcons, Eastercons, etc, he seems about the right person for the job. Conclusion is to be held in Chessington on 1 July at the Blackmorr's Head public house. Contact Tim at 63 Drake Road, Chessington, Surrey KT9 1LQ for further information. Membership is £2.

SCAM (Strip Cartoons and Associated Media) is a comics convention to be held at the polytechnic in Coventry, 12-13 August. Guests include Dave Sim and Gerhard, Simon Bisley, Tony Bennett, Phil Elliott, Glenn Fabry, Duncan Fegredo, Fox, Neil Gaiman, Ian Gibson, John Higgins, Julie Hollings, Bryan Talbot, Steve Yeowell. Attending membership is £15.00. Contact SCAM, c/o Belgrade Theatre, Belgrade Square, Coventry, CV1 1GS. Cheques to be made payable to Belgrade Theatre Trust Ltd.

Speculation won the bid for the 1991 Eastercon, despite some close voting, both on the show of hands and the lobby vote. It is rumoured that the spoof bid seemed more likely to win, at one point. However, Speculation, it is, to be held at the Hospitality Inn, Glasgow, 29th March to 1st April, 1991. Attending membership is £15, supporting £10, and this holds until November this year. Pre-supporters please deduct £2. The Guest of Honour is Rob Holdstock. Contact: 35 Buller Road, London, N17 9BH.

Reconnaissance is to be held in Cardiff in 1991, and describes itself as a convention about change, hoping to find out more about the edges of SF, its boundaries and fringes. "We will be looking forward to where SF is going (and where it should be going), and backwards at the great experiments and innovations of the past". Contact 5 St Andrews Road, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 2DY for further information.

Millennium is a novel concept. Plans are afoot for a convention to celebrate the end of the century. An international convention committee is planning to see the future in by holding a convention between 29 December 1999 and 2 January 2000. A firm decision on location won't be made until the mid '90's, but it will be held in Northern Europe with a preference for a Benelux country or the UK. This con, as it's planned so far in the future, has adopted a new method of paying for membership. Each year members pay £2 which is then deducted from the eventual cost of membership. This spreads the cost of membership. Contact Malcolm Reid, 55 Cedewood Ave, Newton Mearns, Glasgow, G77 5LP.

Convention Roundup Compiled by Maureen Porter

Please enclose an s.a.e. when writing for information. Most cons run on a tight budget and this is always appreciated. If you are running a convention or know of one which I've missed, please send information to the editorial address. Entries should ideally include dates, site, membership rates, guests, contact address and some indication of the con's theme. All listings are free, and will continue until the convention has taken place. Entries are correct, to the best of my knowledge, by the BSFA cannot take responsibility for any inaccuracies.

Please consider writing a review for *Matrix* should you attend any of these conventions.

1989 CONVENTIONS

1000CLASH (formerly Lucon II) - 16-18 June, Griffin Hotel, Leeds. Guests: Diane Duane, Peter Morwood. Membership: Attending £13, Supporting £7. Contact: Jenny Glover, 16 Avriary Place, Armley, Leeds, LS12 2NF. General con.

CAROUSEL - 24-25 June, Holiday Inn, Cardiff. Membership: both days £15, one day £8, supporting £4. Contact: Carousell '89, 76 Thwaite Ave, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria, LA14 1AN. Dr Who con.

NASACON 10 - 30 June-2 July, Sweden. Organised by the Stockholm club, Sigma Terra Corps. Contact: Mats Lignell, Harpungen 12, S-133 43 Seltisjodalen, or Sigma TC, Box 4011, S-133 43 Seltisjodalen, Sweden. Fannish relaxacon.

BIRMINGHAM COMIC MART - 1 July, New Imperial Hotel, Temple St, Birmingham. Admission free, doors open at noon. Contact: N J Potter, 348a Shenley Fields Road, Birmingham, B29 5BQ. "Dr Who day", with guest John Freeman (Dr Who monthly) and others.

K-CON - 8-9 July, Pennine Hotel, Derby. Membership: £7.59 attending. Guest: Walter Koenig. A "Walter weekend", a small con for 60-100 people, which will show Moontrap Rooms at £23. Contact: K-Con, PO Box 628, Britsol, BS99 1TZ.

INTERCON 89 - Narcon 8, 4-6 August, Oslo, Norway. Guests: Samuel R Delaney, Tor Age Bringsvaerd, Angela Carter. Membership: £10. Contact: UK Agent: Kev McVeigh, 37 Firs Rd, Milnthorpe, Cumbria, LA7 7QF. General con.

UNICON - Unicon, 1989, 11-13 August, Queens University Halls of Residence and Student Union, Belfast. Guests: Terry Pratchett, Harry Harrison. Membership: £3. Accommodation: £6.50 per night, £3.50 with NUS card. Cheques should be made payable to Queens University of Belfast. Contact: 34 College Park Avenue, Belfast, BT7 1LR.

FINCON 89 - 12-13 August, Old Student House, Helsinki, Finland; Guest: John Brunner. Contact: Toni Jermann, Viikiläntie 4-6 D 103, 00410 Helsinki, or Juhani Hinkkanen, Minna Canthinkatu 18 A 19, SF-00250 Helsinki.

FANTASTIKA - 17-20 August, Stockholm, Sweden. Guests: Martin Tudor and others to be announced. Free to non-Scandinavians. Contact: Kaj Harju, Russinavägen 43.1, S-123 59 Farsta, Sweden.

LIVERPOOL COMIC MART - 19 August, Bluecoat Concert Hall, School Lane, Liverpool. Comic, film and fantasy mart. Doors open noon.

RUBICON IV - 25-28 August, Chequers Hotel, Newbury. Membership: £5. Contact: Krystyna Oborn, Bishop's Cottage, Park House Lane, Reading, Berks RG3. Small relaxacon, very laidback.

HONEYCOMB - 25-28 August, Wiltshire Hotel, Swindon. Membership: Attending £18. Contact: Daniel Cohen, 48 Gurney Drive, East Finchley, London, N2. Media/Dr Who con.

REC-CON - 25-28 August, Hilton National (formerly Dragonara Hotel), Leeds. Membership: Attending £20, day membership £5. Contact: Alec Lewis, 230 Dyas Ave, Great Barr, Birmingham, B42 1HG. Trek con, plus all night horror programme.

NOREASCON III - The 47th Worldcon; 31 August - 4 September, Boston, MA; Guests: Andre Norton/Betty & Ian Ballantine/The Stranger Club; Contact: Colin Fine, 28 Abbey Rd, Cambridge, CB5 8HQ.

September 1989 - a mooted relaxacon to be held in Scarborough. For further details, contact: Terry Jeeves, 56 Red Scar Drive, Scarborough, YO12 5RQ.

PORTMEIRION '89 - The Annual Six of One (Prisoner Appreciation Society) Convention; 1-3 September, Portmeirion, N.W. Wales. All outdoor events free (Small hotel toll to non-residents), inside events solely for Six of One members. Contact: Six of One, PO Box 60, Harrogate, HG1 2TP or PO Box 172, Hatfield, PA 19440, USA.

FRENCH NATIONAL SF CON - 7-10 September, Albert Camus Cultural Space, Toulon, France. Contact: Editions Antares, La Malag, Chemin Calabro, 83160 La Valette-du-Var, France.

UFORIA 2 - 8-10 September, Owens Park, Manchester. Guests include Ed Bishop and Gerry Anderson. Membership: £25. Contact: Katie Runciman, 87 Arran Way, Corby, Northants, NN17 2ER. Weekend accommodation and meals package for £48.70. Con dedicated to Anderson's UFO series. Charities supported include International Rescue and Great Ormond St Hospital.

PREFAB TROUT - 22-24 September, Swallow Hotel, Glasgow; Membership: £10 attending, £5 supporting. Guests: Iain Banks, Angus McAllister. Contact: Malcolm Reid, 55 Cedarwood Ave, Newton Meerns, Glasgow G77 5LP. General con.

FANTASYCON XIV - 6-8 October, Midland Hotel, Birmingham. Guests: Thomas F Monteleone, Stephen Law, Brian Lumley. Membership: Attending £14 (£12 for BFS members), supporting £5.00. Contact: 15 Stanley Road, Morden, Surrey, SM4 5DE.

NOVACON 19 - Annual Brum Group con, 17-19 November, Excelsior Hotel, Birmingham. Guest: Geoff Ryman. Membership: £10; Contact: Bernie Evans, 7 Grove Avenue, Acoccks Green, Birmingham, B27 7UY. General con.

TV89 - 25-26 November, Birmingham. Membership: £12 attending, £7.50 for one day. Contact: 9 Titford Road, Oldbury, Walsley, West Midlands. "The ultimate experience in television conventions". Charities supported: Children in Need.

AMERICAN GoH SAMUEL R. DELANY BRITISH GoH ANGELA CARTER NORWEGIAN GoH TOR AGE BRINGSVAERD

Extensive 3 track program of talks, panels, films, fannishness and virtually anything else you may expect to find at a con; as well as some things you won't expect to find at a con, like roomparty in a street-car, a real viking battle and free lunch for gophers. At least one third of the program will be in English and all SCANDIFANS speak English.

Private accommodation and guided tours of Oslo will be available for those who book in advance.

REDUCED RATES FOR NON-SCANDINAVIAN RESIDENTS (not speaking Norwegian/Swedish/Danish) £10/\$18

CONTACT ADDRESS:
HEIDI LYSHOL, MARIDALSVEIEN 235 A
N-0467 OSLO, NORWAY

SCIENCE FICTION-CONVENTION
OSLO, NORWAY, AUGUST 4-6

SCIENCE NEWS

Compiled by John Peters

With the successful launches of the Shuttles "Discovery" and "Atlantis", and completion of the ring of TDRS satellites around the Earth, NASA hope to regain the "High Ground" of space technology which they lost over the last two years. While both the Shuttle system and the unmanned launcher systems have had their share of problems, the Russian *Glasnost* agency, the Soviet equivalent of NASA, has had a relatively successful period, building up the MIR station and adding to the longevity records of man in space.

Despite the repeatedly stated non-competitiveness of both agencies, NASA must be apprehensive of the success of the new Russian Shuttle as it begins a series of test flights. Designated *RAM-R*, the first (unmanned) flight was achieved by "Buran", which means "Snowstorm". The Soviet Shuttle is similarly shaped to its NASA counterpart, but there is one major difference - *RAM-R* does not have any rocket engine capability of its own. It will depend on launch totally on the *Energia* launcher system, and on re-entry will glide in, unpowered, just like the American Shuttles do now.

Though *RAM-R* is about the same size as the Shuttle, it is big enough to bring back the current-sized Soviet space-stations such as *MIR* (when sectionalised) and *Soyuz-7* in its cargo bay. The current test programme for manned *RAM-R* flights has just been set back due to the untimely death, last August, of one of the two cosmonauts trained to test the prototype. The death of Anatoli Levchenko, one of *Glasnost*'s most experienced cosmonauts must have a detrimental effect on their Shuttle programme - at the very least there will be a delay while another of the experienced cosmonauts is selected and trained to replace him.

Meanwhile, NASA are investigating the option of using their Shuttles in an unmanned mode in the near future. They have a large number of the pre-Challenger disaster-rated solid fuel boosters in their stores, and while they have been modified, they are not considered safe enough for man-rated flight use. So NASA is looking at the option of modifying one Shuttle for unmanned flight and using it to launch the backlog of satellites that have jammed their flight schedule to the exclusion of scientific missions.

As a footnote, the TDRS - Tracking and Data-relay Satellite - which "Discovery" launched is extremely important to future Shuttle launches. This ring of powerful comsats are NASA's own telecommunications system between Earth and orbiting spacecraft, especially the Shuttles and "Freedom" - when it is built.

One victim of this delay is the Hubble Space Telescope, which should have been launched last year. Its delay is costing millions of dollars in storage and technical costs, and the launch date has been pushed back several times. A delicate instrument, the telescope was not built to stand the Earth's gravity, and technicians are fighting to keep it in operational condition.

Of course the ultimate use of the Shuttles, irrespective of nationality (Japan, China and Europe all have plans for their own equivalent Shuttles) will be to service the space stations destined to fly in the next century. The NASA/ESA station has been named *Freedom* a rather safe and unadventurous choice, that reflects well with the English language translation of *MIR*: "peace".

Exactly what these stations will do when in orbit is still a matter of debate. While they are civilian projects, they will have some military financing, and a certain amount of the experimental work done aboard them will reflect that. But their priority use will be as research units for both science and industry.

One problem that the Shuttles and the stations are going to encounter in later years is the amount of space junk in orbit around the Earth. It isn't just the case of dead satellites up there, but over sixty thousand pieces of booster rockets, debris from discarded launchers, etc, which could be dangerous as near-orbital space becomes the equivalent of the M25. Rather than becoming the high battlefield that some diatribe red-baiters believe in, space is becoming a cosmic junkheap. One that is going to have to be cleaned up before it will be safe for the space boom that is coming.

An interesting facet of the Shuttle programme is the large number of aircraft used to support each Shuttle launch. An

astronaut's first taste of weightlessness comes with flights aboard the infamous "Vomit Comet", an adapted Boeing 707 airliner that carries them on high-altitude parabolic flights, which briefly simulate zero-gravity. When selected for Shuttle training, astronauts use a specially adapted Grumman Gulfstream 2, called a "Shuttle Training Aircraft" which has a cockpit converted to the Shuttle's instrumentation. These aircraft are continually used to acclimatise the astronauts to the Shuttle's controls, and flight characteristics. Then there is the flight of Northrop T38 chase planes, flown by other astronauts during every Shuttle landing. These are the familiar jet trainers seen on TV, "ghosting" and herding the Shuttle towards the runway at Edwards Airforce Base, or at the Cape. They are used to monitor the Shuttle, and to guide it down if its own internal landing guidance systems fail. It also gives non-experienced astronauts a chance to see how a Shuttle orbiter handles on the landing approaches - the only time it actually flies like a normal aircraft. Lastly, the largest aircraft in the Shuttle support fleet is the Boeing 747-100 "Shuttle Carrier Aircraft". This jumbo jet carries the Shuttle, piggy-back fashion, from Edwards Airforce Base in California, cross country, to Cape Canaveral, where it is refurbished for subsequent launch.

Still in space, the Russians are planning to use hot-air balloons on Mars. French-designed helium balloons have already been used to explore the atmosphere of Venus, and despite the considerably thinner atmosphere on Mars recent studies have suggested that a dual-balloon system using a small helium or hydrogen balloon on top of a much larger hot-air balloon could operate in the Martian atmosphere. Gondolas would carry a total payload of 30kg (Earth weight) consisting of cameras and other instruments to survey the surface, and long guide rope with a "snake" payload to take measurements of the surface. The system is designed to operate for about ten days, and should cover around 1,000 kilometres. This device is intended to be part of the Mars '94 mission, and favourable launch windows in 1996 and 1998 should produce developments of the idea which, hopefully, will gather soil samples which can be returned to Earth for analysis.

Meanwhile we are all heading off in the direction of the Southern Cross, whether we like it or not. 60 years ago Edwin Hubble discovered that the universe is expanding. Now, a group of British, American and Argentinian astronomers, have discovered that all the galaxies within a radius of 200 million light years around us are moving at a speed of 700 kilometres per second in the direction of the Southern Cross. The simplest explanation is that there is something, called the "Great Attractor", about 500 million light years away, which is the biggest thing in the universe. Scientists are now trying to see further than 500 million light years away, to see if other galaxies are moving in the opposite direction. We could be in for an slimy crash.

If we all live that long, of course. The Greenhouse Effect caused by pollution, holes in the ozone layer, and all the other things we are doing to the planet, is becoming more and more obvious. The latest global temperature figures show that 1988 was the warmest year since reliable records began about a century ago. In fact the average temperature for 1988 was 0.34°C warmer than the long-term average for the 30 years up to 1979, while temperatures at the beginning of the century were 0.25°C below this long term average. The six warmest years since 1900 have been, in order, 1988, 1987, 1983, 1981, 1980 and 1986. The figures aren't conclusive proof of the Greenhouse Effect, but if they continue through the 1990s there will come a point when we are certain.

Turning from space to the depths of the sea, in May a Victorian submarine, known as the *Curate's Egg*, was raised from the sea off North Wales for the first time in 109 years. The world's first mechanically propelled submarine, the *Resurgam* was 45 feet long, shaped like a cigar, and displaced 38 tons. It was invented by a Manchester curate, Rev George Garrett, and sank on its maiden voyage in February 1880. Now, with the aid of computer maps and a scientific analysis of Colwyn Bay's Victorian seabed, searchers have located the submarine.

Finally, mathematicians have proved that we can do the impossible. In other words, a Hungarian mathematician, Miklos Laskowicz, has managed to square the circle. This feat has been recognised as impossible for as long as we've known about pi, but it hasn't stopped a regular string of cranks coming forward with supposed proofs, most of which have been dismissed instantly.

But that's not the case with Laskowicz. He has developed some equally fantastic work by Banach and Tarski in

the 1920s who demonstrated that it was possible to cut a solid sphere into 5 pieces, and reassemble those pieces into two spheres the same volume as the original. This mind-boggling piece of work has remained little more than a scientific curiosity since then - we certainly haven't seen it put to practical use by people suddenly doubling their gold reserves or mysteriously increasing their supplies of uranium. And part of their proof apparently demonstrated that while this was mathematically possible with three-dimensional figures it couldn't be done in two dimensions. But now Lovaskovic has done just that. He has found a way of cutting a circle into a large but finite number of pieces - something in the order of 10^{30} - and reassembling them into a square. Okay - there's your circle, there's your pair of scissors, go to it.

AUTUMN BOOKS

The publishers' catalogues for the second part of the year are starting to appear, so here is the first part of a survey of the delights we have to look forward to this autumn.

ROBINSON'S list begins in June with a trio of books edited by Isaac Asimov, Martin M. Greenberg & Charles G. Vaughn. *Isaac Asimov's Magical World of Fantasy: Devils* contains 18 stories of black magic and demonic enchantment by such writers as Arthur C. Clarke, Robert Bloch, Philip José Farmer and Theodore Sturgeon. *Isaac Asimov's World of Science Fiction: Monsters*, on the other hand, includes Robert Silverberg, Philip José Farmer, Roger Zelazny, A.E. Van Vogt and Murray Leinster. The biggie of the three, however, has to be *The Mammoth Book of Golden Age SF: Short Novels of the 1940s*, a collection of 10 novelettes and novelets including "The Mule" by Isaac Asimov, "Nerves" by Lester Del Rey, "The Weapon Shops of Isher" by A.E. Van Vogt, "Killozder" by Theodore Sturgeon, and "No Woman Born" by C.L. Moore.

The same indefatigable trio of editors also offer us, in August, *Robots*, with stories by Philip K. Dick, Algis Budrys, Lester Del Rey, Frederik Pohl, Henry Kuttner and Howard Waldrop; and in October, *Ghosts*, with a cast list of Robert Aickman, Edith Wharton, W.W. Jacobs, Tanith Lee and Charles L. Grant.

In July there's a collection of stories by Thomas Ligotti, *Songs of a Dead Dreamer*, described by Ramsey Campbell as "one of the most important horror books of the decade". While in October there's *The Pandragon Chronicles*, edited by Mike Ashley which is, as the name implies, a collection of Arthurian stories by, among others, André Norton, Jane Yolen, Darrell Schweitzer, John Steinbeck, John Brunner, Phyllis Ann Karr, and "a complete short novel by Vera Chapman".

The biggest, and if past performance is anything to go by probably the best value, of these books comes out in August. *Best New SF 3* edited by Gardner Dozois is the third of his annual Best of the Year anthologies, this time promising stories by Walter Jon Williams, Brian Stableford, Harry Turtledove, Bruce Sterling, Robert Silverberg, Howard Waldrop, Lucius Shepard, Kim Newman, John Kessel, Kim Stanley Robinson, Connie Willis, Pat Cadigan and Michael Swanwick among others.

TRANSWORLD, whose imprints include CORGI, BANTAM and DOUBLEDAY, have simply sent a list of titles, without blurb or other details, so I'll present it for what it's worth.

July: *Lightless Kingdom*, the 2nd part of *The Unbalanced Earth* trilogy by Jonathan Wylie; and *Triumph of the Darksword*, 3rd part of the *Darksword* trilogy by Margaret Weis & Tracy Hickman.

August: *Prime Evil*, a collection of 13 new horror stories edited by Douglas Winter; and *Riddle of the Seven Realms* - Lyndon Hardy.

September: *Truckers*, a new juvenile novel by Terry Pratchett appearing in the new DOUBLEDAY UK hardback imprint. Also *Heir of Ringarth* - Carole Nelson Douglas, *Ragnarok* - Anne Thackeray, and *Still Life* - Sheri S. Tepper.

October: *Nemesis* - Isaac Asimov, a DOUBLEDAY hardback; also *Graves* - Sheri S. Tepper which appears in both BANTAM hardback and trade paperback. This month also offers us *The Unbalanced Earth* - Jonathan Wylie, *Blood of the Tiger* - Thomas Griffin, *Darksword Adventures* - Margaret Weis & Tracy Hickman and *Mother Love* - Domini Taylor.

November: *Azazel* - Isaac Asimov another DOUBLEDAY hardback, though listed at the surprisingly low price of £9.95, and I know nothing further about either of the two Asimov books on this list. Another hardback, from BANTAM, is *The Sorceress of Darshive* - David Eddings, Book 4 of *The Mallorean*. There's also *Wyrd Sisters* - Terry Pratchett, *Of Men and Mantras & Battle Circle* - Piers Anthony, *From a Changeling Star* - Jeffrey A.

Carver, *Creature* - John Saul and *The Josh Kirby Poster Book*. December: *Demon Lord of Karanda* - David Eddings, *A Pride of Princes* - Jennifer Robertson, *Dungeon 1: The Black Tower* - Philip José Farmer and *Bloodline* - David St. Clair.

LEGEND have similarly been content with just a list, though they have at least separated out the hardbacks and trade paperbacks from their other paperbacks.

July: *The Warlord's Domain* - Peter Morwood (hbk/tp); *The Forge of God & Blood Music* - Greg Bear, *The Wang* - The Military Form - Christopher Rowley.

August: *The Dragonbone Chair* - Tad Williams (hbk/tp), *Tarot Tales* - Rachel Pollack & Caitlin Matthews (Eds) (tp), *Dark Fantasies* - Chris Morgan (Ed) (hbk/tp); *Deryni Rising* - Katherine Kurtz, *Shadow* - Dave Duncan.

September: *A Child Across the Sky* - Jonathan Carroll (hbk/tp), *Them Bones* - Howard Waldrop (hbk/tp); *Sleeping In Flame, Land of Laughs & Bones of the Moon* - Jonathan Carroll, *Strange Things In Close Up: The Nearly Complete Howard Waldrop* - Howard Waldrop, *The Luck of Reilan Kru* - Paula Volisky.

October: *An Alien Light* - Nancy Kress, *Surrogate Child, Pin & Brainchild* - Andrew Nieldman, *Myth Conceptions & Another Fine Myth* - Robert Asprin, *Islands in the Net* - Bruce Sterling, *Songmaster, Ender's Game & Speaker for the Dead* - Orson Scott Card.

November: *Ivory* - Mike Resnick (hbk/tp), *The Last Guardian* - David Gemmell (hbk/tp), *Tales from Planet Earth* - Arthur C. Clarke (hbk/tp); *Knights of Dark Renown* - David Gemmell, *Arrow's Fall* - Mercedes Lackey.

December: *Practise Alvin* - Orson Scott Card (the Tales of Alvin Maker 3) (hbk/tp), *The Harrowing of Gwynedd* - Katherine Kurtz (hbk/tp); *Red Prophet* - Orson Scott Card, *A Mask for the General* - Lisa Goldstein, *Deryni Checkmate* - Katherine Kurtz.

Lastly, let's not forget the small presses. One of the latest is KINELL, whose 1989 list includes: *Slinger* - Robert McCammon, a new novel from the joint winner of the 1988 Bram Stoker Award for best horror novel. Another horror novel is *Act of Love* - Joe R. Lansdale, the first UK publication of Lansdale's first novel, which appeared in 1981.

The SF and fantasy list features the first hardcover editions of *The Orphan* by Robert Steinman and *Our Friends from Frolix 8* by Philip K. Dick. There's also the first UK edition of Jack McDevitt's second novel, *A Talent for War*.



THE DRABBLE PROJECT

THE 'DRABBLE PROJECT' HAS BEEN RUNNING FOR FIVE YEARS NOW. IF you attend conventions regularly, you may have heard of it. A 'Drabble' is a story of exactly one hundred words, with up to fifteen additional words for the title. The aim of the project is to collect and publish Drabbles from amateur and professional authors, and give the proceeds from the publications to charity.

We have already published a collection entitled *The Drabble Project*, consisting of one hundred Drabbles, primarily science fiction in content, though our definition of SF was very broad: the collection was a limited edition hard-cover book of 1000 copies, which included stories from over eighty authors, and all profits from the book are to be donated to the Royal National Institute for the Blind "Talking Book" Fund. A first cheque for around £750 will be handed to the RNIB in the near future, with more to follow.

Following this success, we are collecting stories for volume II of the Drabble Project (working title *Double Century*) and we would be pleased if you would contribute to it. Once again, we will publish, in a similar format, a collection of one hundred stories selected from those we have received, but in *Double Century* we plan to include one hundred different authors. As before, we will reward authors whose stories are published in the final selection with no payment other than a copy of the book.

The deadline for contributions is September 1989.

Contact: The Drabble Project, 160 Beaumont Road, Bournville, Birmingham, B30 1 NY

COMPETITION CORNER

By Roger Robinson

ANSWERS TO COMPETITION 81

There were a round dozen entries for Competition 81, with scores ranging from 13.75 up to 29.25 - I had to use quarter points to separate the three contenders for runner-up spot. The winner by 2 full points was Caroline Mullan who will get the £5 book token. Andy Mills was a worthy runner-up with Malcolm Edwards third. Thanks to everybody who attempted the quiz, especially those who had never entered a *Matrix* competition before, especially the entry for Norway who scored 19.75 out of 30.

Nobody was completely correct on 17 or 27, but almost everybody got both nearly correct. 17 was perhaps badly worded; Ceres was the first asteroid discovered, but the list I gave was of asteroids by size. I'll have to be more careful in future. A surprising number of people suggested Blakes 7 for 14, and this sent me scurrying to the bookshelf to check that the two events were on the same day. The bookshelf was no help - but Romford library checked the radio and TV programmes and confirmed that Blakes 7 was on in January of that year.

Answers to Competition 81 - "Firsts"

- 1st ever convention (in Leeds)
- 1st Damon Knight short story
- 1st words of *On Wings of Song* by Thomas M. Disch
- 1st book by Samuel R. Delany
- 1st winner of the Nebula for Best Novelle
- 1st SF volume by Brian Aldiss
- 1st SF magazine from Scotland
- 1st Hugo for Best Novel
- 1st words of *Ringworld* by Larry Niven
- 1st John Brunner novel
- 1st Cordwainer Smith short story
- 1st *Worldcon* held
- 1st Dunstons book
- 1st episode of *Hitchhiker* on radio

- 1st sentence of *The Dispossessed* by Ursula LeGuin
- 1st professionally published story by Bob Shaw
- 1st asteroid, in order of size
- 1st words of *Stranger in a Strange Land* by Robert Heinlein
- 1st SF book by Robert Silverberg
- 1st book by Jack Vance
- 1st editor of the *Nebula Award* series of anthologies
- 1st story in the 1st issue of *Astounding*
- 1st Arkham House book
- 1st words of *Little, Big* by John Crowley
- 1st SF novel by E.C. Tubb
- 1st entry in the Nicholls' *Encyclopedia*
- 1st Hugo to be awarded at the 1st ceremony
- 1st satellite launched (Sputnik)
- 1st John Baynon novel
- 1st words of *Neuromancer* by William Gibson

COMPETITION 82

TYPO

And now for something completely different! After the rush to the bookshelves of Competition 81, something requiring a little thought and, I hope, wit. All I want is a list of 5 or less genuine SF titles, each containing a single typo. For this competition a typo is defined as one of the following:

- A single letter added
- A single letter subtracted
- A single letter altered
- Two adjacent letters transposed

Some examples - the slightly pedantic whom by Algis Budrys, and the risqué *A Dream of Wet Sex* by Christopher Priest.

Entries to Roger Robinson, 75 Rosslyn Avenue, Harold Wood, Essex RM3 0RG by 14 July 1989, and the best set will receive the usual £5 book token.

MEDIA REVIEWS

THE ADVENTURES OF BARON MUNCHHAUSEN

Directed by Terry Gilliam

Reviewed by Colin Bird

This film is about the precious nature of imagination, stemming from the outrageous lies of an historic 18th century figure. Baron Munchausen's tales have been passed down in written and illustrated forms until they were transferred to celluloid, most notably by the German, Joseph von Baky in 1943. Terry Gilliam's modern version is massive in scope, and cost in excess of \$40 million.

As a company of actors perform a staged version of the Baron's exploits, the real character appears in the audience. He continues the story in his own words, and the crowd are spellbound as the besieged city crumbles around them. But the spell is broken by a heavy artillery bombardment, and only a young girl believes him to be the true Baron. With the help of a balloon made from 18th century bloomers, the Baron and young Sally Salt take to the skies to seek the Baron's trusted old colleagues, in an attempt to defeat the armies outside the city walls. The film also becomes a voyage of rediscovery as the Baron journeys to the moon to start the search which leads him deeper into his mythical world, a world where the Baron's lies are truth and reason and logic are worthless.

It's Gilliam's perverse affection for the bizarre that makes this one of the most consistently wonderful fantasy films of recent times. The moon sequences are full of delicious invention, including a glimpse of a derelict 2001 space station on the lunar surface. Robin Williams and Oliver Reed make the two most successful of many star cameo performances.

The film attempts to deal with the clash between reality and fantasy, but Gilliam is at his best in realising the

magnificent visuals. He renders each set piece with an artist's insight, and Richard Conway's special effects are charming and convincing. I loved the scene where the Baron and company climb along a crescent moon, throw a rope over the top and slide down to earth as the astral shapes of the zodiac glide around in majestic arcs. Make no mistake, this is an entertaining and unique vision and much too good to waste on adults. A film for the child in all of us.

Reviewed by John Peters

The Adventures of Baron Munchausen has generated a lot of publicity lately - some of it good, but most of it bad, and most of that has been to do with the over-running of its budget and the resultant production problems. When it actually comes to burn-on-seats time, and you watch the film, it amazes that Terry Gilliam ever made the film in the first place. The term 'epic' hasn't been bandied about so much lately, the *Star Wars* trilogy probably being the last SF films to warrant that term, but *Munchausen* is an epic - and a flawless one at that.

There's little point in retelling the story - both on and off the screen - save to realise that the actors must have had an appalling time during the production, when they must have expected to have the film closed down around their ears. As it is, their acting is consummate, and the film is the best this year - quite simply. Gilliam, and actors John Neville, Eric Idle, Jonathan Pryce and the rest have made the definitive *Munchausen*. I've never been a great fan of Robin Williams, and his section, as the Moon King, does drag a little. The real gem, though, is Oliver Reed as Vulcan - easily the funniest performance in the film; his TUC-style negotiating with his minions had me in stitches.

Terry Gilliam has one of the most recognisable film signatures of a director - it's a mixture of surreal effects, absurdist sets, wild imagination and hell of a lot of nerve. He probably needed to be bloodminded, too! Forget what the critics said in the papers, Munchausen is a great film - go and see it.

MY STEPMOTHER IS AN ALIEN

Reviewed by John Peters

Somewhere deep amongst the hyper-active hysteria of *Stepmother* is a very funny film. It could have been hilarious, but facile posturing and enthusiastic ripping off of other films has left it gutted of any originality. To be honest, I've never been impressed by Dan Aykroyd - together with Bill Murray and Chevy Chase, he is part of that extremely bland clique of current American comedy actors who have very little going for them in the way of talent. There is very little here to show me that I may be wrong.

Stepmother is another in a long line of incestuous productions that plagiarise recent box-office hits in the hope that some of their success will rub off onto it. Watch it long enough, and you are aware of films as disparate as *ET*, *Basketcase*, the musical *Time*, *Weird Science*, *CE3K* ad nauseum. Characters are so badly introduced at the beginning, the dialogue garbled and badly recorded that I found it nearly impossible to understand what was going on.

Aykroyd is a scientist sending SETI-type radar signals to another galaxy - the signal, which causes disaster on an unseen planet, brings Kim Basinger's Celeste to Earth on a rescue mission. She has 24 hours to get Aykroyd to send another signal, or else her home world will be destroyed. There are scientific gaffes in the film's logic - according to Aykroyd, the signal strikes a solar system in another galaxy, whereas Celeste reveals that her home is two solar systems away, in this galaxy. Considering that she arrives almost immediately, I'd say she was living in downtown Burbank! We never see her world, or the damage his signal has wrought, and three crotchety old men in BOLD-washed nightshirts do not make a pan-galactic civilisation!

The only joy in this film is Kim Basinger. She is undoubtedly the sexiest alien to visit Earth since Fiona Lewis became an Avon lady in *Strange Invaders*. That she is able to evince innocence, surprise and sheer sexuality in a bit of rubbish like this says much for her acting skills.

The film has its funny moments, it is true, and the sfx are seamless - which is to be expected of a master like John Dykstra - but, like eating a cheap hamburger, you need more than Dan to give the film the body it lacks.

WHO FRAMED ROGER RABBIT?

Reviewed by John Peters

Every so often, Hollywood goes way over the top when it comes to publicising a film - *ET* comes to mind, for one. *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?* is the latest in the long line. Don't get me wrong: being a lover of animation - and especially the Warner Brothers style used extensively here - there is much to admire in this new release. But I do wish they had come up with a better storyline.

While the publicity hyperbole doesn't overstate the case regarding the technical perfection of the film, I'm afraid the story can't match the visual excitement. Briefly: Bob Hoskins is Eddie Valiant, a down-and-out private dick in Hollywood. He becomes involved in a murder case concerning Toons, a race of animated characters who live in a ghetto off Hollywood. Judge Doom, played with his usual maniacism by Christopher Lloyd, but without the necessary menace, wants to redevelop Toontown for his own benefit - to do this, he frames Roger Rabbit and his friends in a murder rap. Eddie Valiant has to save the day.

Well, it doesn't sound very exciting, does it? Fortunately, there are enough sight gags and surprise appearances by cartoon stars to keep your mind off the hackneyed plot. The opening five minutes, with the classic Warner Brothers cartoon, are breathtaking. Bob Hoskins' performance is superb, especially when he has to interact with animated characters, but all the fun and laughs tend to wipe away any attempt to create tension between opponents or during cliff-hanging moments.

Another problem is the publicity. With a comprehensive campaign both in the papers, and especially on tv - in particular, film clips on virtually every programme going - foreknowledge tends to spoil any surprises or shocks waiting for you in the cinema. I enjoyed *Who Framed Roger Rabbit* very much, but it could have been so much better - frittering away

its homage to the film noir genre and becoming just another dazzling, over the top - and over the budget - comedy.

THE LOST BOYS (Warner Bros video)

reviewed by Lynne Bispham

The Lost Boys is a bizarre mixture of stylish horror and comedy. The film opens to the strains of Jim Morrison's *People Are Strange*, as the camera focusses on some of the more unusual-looking inhabitants of the town of Santa Carla, and also on 'missing' posters of lost children. Teenage Mike (Jason Patric) becomes involved with a gang of wild youths whose exotic appearance may not be out of place in Santa Carla, but whose nocturnal habits certainly are. Like their namesakes, these *Lost Boys*, David Kletter (Sutherland) and the rest of the gang, will never grow old, but in their case they feed ... on human blood. Their transformation into vampires is one of several very effective and frightening scenes in the film. Mike is in danger of becoming a vampire himself, but fortunately his younger brother Sam (Corey Haim) teams up with a pair of what can only be described as Junior "Ghostbusters" (Corey Feldman and James Newland) who have no quibbles about the timely use of a wooden stake. Much of the humour provided by these two is somewhat juvenile (reminiscent of the film *The Goonies* in which Corey Feldman also appeared). There is, however, one amusing scene in which Sam attempts to prove that his mother's (Diane West) suitor is a vampire with unfortunate results.

The actors all turn in good performances, particularly Jason Patric, while Kletter Sutherland's portrayal of a latter-day vampire - decadent and dangerously attractive - is a splendid updating of the Dracula figure who both repels and attracts his Victorian victims in so many horror films. Ultimately, the plot is plain silly, especially the second half, but, if approached in the right frame of mind, *The Lost Boys* remains a fun film, and an enjoyable hour and a half's entertainment - worth hiring on video, if not worth the expense and effort of a cinema visit.

THE WOMAN IN BLACK adapted by Stephen Mallatrat from the novel by Susan Hill, The Playhouse Theatre

Reviewed by John Peake

WATCHING A PLAY, JUST LIKE READING A SCIENCE FICTION NOVEL, IS an active act: imagination is a willing suspension of disbelief. I have never seen this so vividly and convincingly demonstrated than during the performance of this play.

We are presented with an empty stage. There's a curtain at the back, a few desultory bits of scenery that might have been left over from another performance, a wicker basket occupies centre stage. On, hesitantly, walks a dowdy, middle-aged lawyer, Arthur Kipps, who begins to read without expression from a thick manuscript. Barely a paragraph into the turgid recital and there is a cry of "No!" from the audience, and up stalks the actor. Put some expression into it, he instructs Kipps, try again.

Kipps, it emerges, has a tale to tell, something that has haunted him for years, something that he must get off his chest. That's why he has hired the actor, to coach him in the performance so that he can reveal the story properly to his family and exorcise what troubles him. Gradually the actor takes on the rôle of Kipps, while Kipps fills in the other characters that surround his tale. And the stage is transformed, we begin to see in its emptiness all the scenes that contain this chilling story. The wicker basket becomes, in our imagination, a railway carriage, a pony and trap, a chest containing vital documents. While two people fill the stage with a host of figures. A skilful use of sound effects and lighting tricks helps, but it is mainly the brilliant performance of Charles Kay as Kipps and John Duttine as the actor, along with a remarkable script by Stephen Mallatrat, that makes the illusion real.

We are being told a story. We know it's a story, and we know it is being performed for us by actors upon a stage - not only is there no attempt to disguise this fact, but a positive virtue is made of it. Yet we are caught up in the story, we are swept along by the telling, we see what we are told to see, imagine what we are told to imagine. And it works, it works so well that the whole audience jumped as one not on a solitary occasion, but two or three times during the performance. It worked so well that you could feel the chill of apprehension, sense the held breathe, share the alert tension.

It should not work. This is an old fashioned ghost story, the sort that has not been written for decades, the type

that now is more likely to make us laugh than shiver. It is a deliberate compilation of every cliché in the book. A lonely, mysterious house on an island that's only accessible for part of the day when the tide is out. Country yokels who shake their heads and mutter imprecations at every opportunity, and who repeat their unwillingness to go anywhere near the house. A young lawyer from the big city who doesn't believe any of this nonsense and who is forced by circumstance to spend the night there as he sorts through the papers of the recently deceased. Go on, you've heard it all before haven't you, you can complete the story without me having to tell you.

Yet, despite the fact that every step along the way is predictable, the play is spellbinding. You don't care that you know what's going to happen next because the drama is so powerful, and the inevitability only makes it that much more

terrifying. Besides, there's a twist in the tale that's sufficient to give goosebumps to your goosebumps.

And it shouldn't work because ghost stories aren't supposed to work on stage. Spectral presences on the stage have always presented a special problem. You're in a warm crowded theatre, the intimacy that makes a good story work chillingly to the heart cannot, by definition, be present. Yet I defy you not to gasp at the ghastly visitation, not to start and feel your heart beat that much more loudly at certain key points within the tale.

The play, in short, is a triumph. If you care for good ghost stories, treasure good performances, enjoy good drama, or want to experience the most startling demonstration of what suspension of disbelief is all about, I urge you to see this play.

WRITE BACK

A SHORT SHARP LETTER PAGE THIS TIME ROUND, OWING TO SPACE constrictions. But keep the letters rolling. Next time, some more Desert Planet Books.

The next deadline for letters is:

14th JULY, 1989

We kick off with the topical subject of censorship - these letters were written before the death of the Ayatollah.

Peter Tennant

9 Henry Cross Close, Shipham, Thetford, Norfolk, IP25 7LQ

Your comments on censorship are entirely apt, I'm afraid. We are living in dangerous times for freedom of expression. Religious and political intolerance on the one hand; on the other, a wave of righteous indignation against 'sexual deviants', given impetus by AIDS hysteria (the queer-bashers' turn to come out of the closet - 'see, we were right after all!'). I suppose it all comes down to a belief in simple solutions. No Rambo movies equals no Michael Ryans; if we all believe in Jesus and do what the Bible tells us, then we'll have Heaven on Earth. It sounds marvellous in theory, but unfortunately real life is far more complicated than the censors would have us believe. There are no simple solutions and to act as if there were is sheer folly. We don't need more censorship; we need more understanding. And to get that, we must have access to all viewpoints even, and perhaps most importantly, those we personally find offensive.

Sue Thompson

111 Albemarle Road, York, North Yorks, YO2 1EP

I think this is actually a much more complicated issue than I'd like it to be. I wonder to what extent Rushdie consciously intended to 'stir it' by writing what he did. The short out-of-context extracts that I've read in newspapers do sound to me like cheap mud-slinging; they certainly put me off reading the rest of the book. I feel myself that Rushdie may well have misused/abused his position of privilege and responsibility as a writer. This does not mean I think he deserves summary killing.

On book-burning; actually I think the burning of one copy of *The Satanic Verses* by Muslims in Bradford may well have been a responsible symbolic action, a public catharsis of the vast pain and anger felt by the Muslim community. As far as I know, unlike eg. the Nazi book-burnings, British Muslim communities have made no effort to round up and destroy ALL copies of the work. As far as the symbolic power of the action goes, personally, I feel less revolted by the burning of one copy of a book, than by the burning of political figures in effigy, a not infrequent occurrence in Britain. I feel much less happy about the firebombing of London bookshops, because the rage has spread to include the destruction of property (and the possibility of harming people) not directly involved. Also I don't know who was responsible for the firebombing. Although it's easy to jump to the conclusion that it was done by "extremist fundamentalist Muslim groups", it occurs to me the firebombing has been a common form of racist attack in the past, and that some extreme rightwing/racist groups might relish the opportunity to build up a misleading picture if Muslims = immigrant foreigners = troublemakers. It's also worth remembering that the Ayatollah's pronouncement was probably not motivated by personal hatred of Rushdie, but the political desire to drive a wedge into the (previously narrowing) gulf between Iran and the West.

Chris C Bailey

52 Druids Walk, Didcot, Oxon, OX11 7FF

RUSHIE DEATH THREAT"" I hear you cry? What's all the goddam fuss about? I have never in my natural born days seen such a ruckus as this! You know, it all comes down to censorship again, doesn't it, except that in this case, it isn't just any old "censorship", it is cloaked around the word "death", which I find EXTREMELY repulsive. By what right has "someone" in a faraway land got to say: "if Fred Bloggs writes so-and-so, then kill him because I find it offensive"? How do you reason with a fanatical madman? You don't, you lock him up and throw away the key, or failing that, give him a lobotomy, that will cure him. As you can see, Maureen, I am only "slightly" biased towards the Ayatollah Khomeini, I don't think I support the right of freedom of speech, the freedom to write whatsoever; after all "sticks and stones may break my bones but words will never hurt me."

I queried the reasons why people write:

Peter Tennant

I've had a yen to put pen to paper for as long as I can remember. Initially, it grew out of my love of reading, the attempt at creating my own stories seeming a natural progression from enjoying those of others. Think of it, if you like, as an attempt to pay back some of the pleasure I had received. Of course, my motives have changed as I've grown older. My stories are not regarded purely as entertainments, but I hope they in some way reflect my views on the world and life. Financial considerations don't come into it much, nice as it would be to earn the odd million. I write first and foremost to please myself. If others like what I do, then that's a bonus, but it isn't important, and may even be a hindrance to further writing.

Lynne Blispham

16 Medip Road, Bushey, Watford, Herts, WD2 3QL

Surely there can be very few writers motivated entirely by money. After all, the number of writers who earn their money entirely by writing, let alone make their fortunes, is minuscule. If anything, I would have thought that money is the means rather than the end; authors earn in order to be able to write, not the other way round. Speaking for myself, as a totally unpublished would-be writer, the reason I keep bombarding publishers with my unsolicited manuscripts is simply the desire to be read. Although why anyone should have the need, compulsion even, to inflict the outpourings of their imaginations on total strangers is probably an unanswerable question.

Changing tack entirely:

John F Connor

Room 132, Broomgrove Hall, Broomgrove Rd, Sheffield 10

I'm sick of all this crap about television. It costs several orders of ten times more to make, record and transmit a television programme than it does to write, print and distribute a book. Hence, books can be aimed at narrow, specialist, 'arty' niches, like your typical BSFA reader, without endangering the pockets of those who stand to benefit.

However a television programme is dealing with economies of scale. (This is why satellite television is such a retrogressive step - it covers the whole of Europe, instead of a region of the country, or a single country.) So, programmes must be transmitted which appeal to a mass audience. By definition, there is almost no way in which material transmitted in this economic set-up will find favour with a minority of

1,000, and a damn peculiar minority at that.

Why peculiar? They enjoy reading, they enjoy new ideas, they enjoy indulging their imaginations, they have a relatively high level of intelligence (if not that, then analytical and creative abilities).

Why art cinema exists, however, is beyond me, perhaps it is because films get much wider distribution than TV programmes, and are watched in a much more selective way, thus amplifying the power of a BSFA-style minority.

Ian Sales is certainly not happy with the medias' treatment of SF and SF fans

Ian Sales
56 Southwell Road East, Mansfield, Notts, NG21 0EW

Did anyone see the Open Air programme over the May Day Bank Holiday? I had heard the term "science fiction" mentioned in a trailer, and decided to watch it. The three guests, Sylvester McCoy, Heather Couper and Mike Nichols (and, of course, an interview with George Takei) made it sound like a worthwhile and interesting debate. The basic premise, whether or not SF has been successful in predicting the future, seemed a bit daft. Ignoring the fact that SF has never been extrapolative in this way, I still expected to hear something thought-provoking and entertaining.

So what did they talk about? UFOs and SETI. They even interviewed some people from the Star Trek convention in Liverpool, on their opinions on flying saucers.

What a load of crap!

The programme only encouraged the mistaken belief that all SF fans are slightly wrong in the head. I'm an SF fan, but I don't believe in flying saucers or little green men from Outer Space. Yes, there may be life on earth worlds - but why on earth (if you'll forgive the pun) would they want to come here? And why keep it secret? How do they keep it secret? I suppose one answer to this last question could be that well-known Conspiracy Theory, but the only conspiracies I believe in are the injustices perpetrated by insurance companies and other earthly institutions. Besides, what's this got to do with predicting the future.

The inclusion of Sylvester McCoy in the Open Air debate also proved to be a mistake. Just because he plays Dr Who, it doesn't necessarily follow that he's an expert on SF - as he in fact pointed out himself. It's like asking Tom Cruise for his opinion on the shooting down of the Libyan MIG-23s by US Navy F-14 Tomcats, simply because of the part he played in Top Gun.

The whole programme (well, that part devoted to the "great SF debate") was a mistake, and insulting to fans of the SF genre.

Was it only last year that a group of well-known SF writers, attending a week-long workshop, found themselves being pointed out in the village pub as 'that UFO lot'. Any ideas on what we can do to improve our media image, or, more controversially, should we bother?

Ian, in full flow, moves on to another pet hate.

I was in a bookshop the other day, idly debating with myself, which particular novel to invest my hard-earned cash in, when a youth strolled up, clutching a list of books on a scrap of paper. I was impressed. Here is a true fan of the genre, I thought. He's made himself a reading list. I then heard him say to a shop

just about the most powerful human instinct there is, should be relegated to invisibility is suggestive of disturbing undercurrents. It is also indicative of the typically male inability to come to terms with the other gender via sex. Yes, it is now visible and even discussed a little, but it is somewhat disappointing to continually ingest the absurd notions of dim males. My only hope is that female authors don't defect, as they do seem to be doing, to fantasy trilogies.

Even more toe-curling is the almost complete absence of women connected in some realistic way with technology (by which I do not mean operating the latest computerised laser egg-timer). Is it because women sense the massive gulf between them, real power and real technology, that they write escapist (though often superb) fantasy novels? personally, I long suspected that those men who operate, design and eulogise technology have the same emotional age as your typical labrador puppy. 'Toys for boys' is right.

assistant, 'Er, excuse me. Do you have Book 5 of the Belgariad?' I started laughing. I couldn't help it.

I've lost count of the number of times I've been stood before the SF shelves with some five or six perfect strangers. For several minutes, we silently regard the large number of titles, and I think it's nice to see so many SF fans. And then they begin to lean forward and grab their choice of novel: Dragonlance Chronicles or books x, y and z in some clichéd sword-and-sorcery saga. And my heart sinks.

Now I can't be the first person to bemoan this, and I hope I'm not the last. I blame: a) television, b) the present government (whoops, Ben Elton-style political comment slipping in there), c) role-playing games (specifically Dungeons and Dragons).

I can't blame the film industry since going to the cinema requires making an effort in the first place, and with the recent exception of *Willow*, it seems that sword-and-sorcery are currently cinema non grata (to coin a phrase). TV is at fault, because it is easy, mindless entertainment and encourages people not to think as to how they might like to amuse themselves. Dungeons and Dragons is to blame because it has generated this craze for hack-and-slay wish-fulfilment fantasy.

Before anyone starts accusing me of not knowing what I'm talking about so far as role-playing games are concerned, I'd like to point out that I've been playing them for about ten years. There are plenty of RPGs on the market that don't depend on iron-thewed barbarians dicing up dragons with magical weapons. There are games based on Larry Niven's Ringworld, cyberpunk, hard SF, Wellsian/Victorian "scientific romances", Arthurian legend - the list is endless. Unfortunately, 90% of the gamers I have known and do know, prefer orc-bashing hack-and-slay games and this taste is reflected in their choice of literature.

I tried to explain to some friends who were playing the cyberpunk RPG precisely what cyberpunk was, and its relationship to SF in general. They hadn't even heard of William Gibson. Yet they've read every one of the Dragonlance books.

This can't be right.

I'm sure that letter will generate some heated response - I'll be disappointed if it doesn't.

Steve Palmer
22 Glebe Road, Egham, Surrey, TW20 8BT

I'd like to answer points made in *Matrix* 81 about my future 'projection'. Firstly, and I state this categorically, comrades, anyone who thinks I'm a Socialist is entirely mistaken. Richmond Hunt detected the idealism of my letter, but I think, failed to spot the realism that lay behind it. For example, the appearance of women in meaningful numbers on the world stage is the most important social phenomenon for centuries. I am glad, too, that humour was spotted. We shall need that in the future.

In reply to John Mills, I would replace religion (and I did not mean Just Christianity) with humanism. Perhaps John would consider, if it were possible, reading his letter to victims of the Inquisition? Buddhism is easily the world's most charitable and compassionate religion. As for Hitler and Stalin, it is true that they rejected religion, but they abused themselves before two other God equivalents - History and Nature.

And that's your lot - write soon, write frequently, and remember the deadline.

Science fiction must not show technology as an end in itself, but as a means to an end. Computers cannot be uninvited and they must be put to those uses that best serve all humanity. If we truly can destroy the world (which I doubt, but future developments may change that) it is madness to be in a position that allows us no freedom to change. Worshipping the machine to the detriment of humanity is conducive to the alienation of every human being. If we cannot hang in together, we certainly can't hang in as separate beings.

I believe science fiction has a duty, amongst its other objectives of entertaining, informing, shocking, etc, to point out a sane way forward. People must be encouraged to think for themselves on the basis of knowledge which exists in the human sphere. If technological knowledge is extrapolated via science fiction with no extrapolation of human values, a distorted vision will inevitably follow, in which the machine looks down upon the human and says 'well, you don't really matter'.

People read these visions and may believe them. Either way, they will be implanted in their subconscious, there to fester.

SOAPBOX

DIGGING A DEEP GRAVE
Science Fiction and Technology

by Steve Palmer

SCIENCE FICTION IS ABOUT SCIENCE, AND THEREFORE TECHNOLOGY. IT is also about ideas. This may seem tame and obvious, since science fiction and technology are both essentially twentieth century developments. Why then, if writers have been concerned for so long, is science fiction how it is? Dispensing with the squabbling over exactly what it is (as if that mattered), we should perhaps look at technology, since that appears to be the main root of science fiction. Another root might be this century's speedy social changes.

There is a common misperception these days that human progress is equivalent to technological progress. This is not the case. Technological progress is entirely separate; it is stunting human progress almost to the point of extinction. By devising machines of ever greater power, humanity strangles its emotional response to the world. Instead of coexisting with Nature, humanity tries to control it. This is not to say that technology is inherently evil and should somehow be stopped, rather that people should step back awhile, take a deep breath and think. As Kev McVeigh rightly points out, nobody is really encouraged to think these days. Reason is dying.

At the point of greatest actual impotence, we imagine humanity to be in control of everything. Convinced we are the masters of technology, we dehumanise ourselves and become the servants of technology. The machine is elevated to a god, and we think we become godlike in the process. Science fiction gives us the supposedly awesome vision of immortal human machines floating in a computer-generated environment.

So it is encouraging that many of this century's greatest physicists - Einstein, Bohr, Schrödinger, Heisenberg, Feynman, Dirac - have been philosophers or overt lovers of life. To balance them, we have warmongers, alienated from the human world, who are themselves almost machines. That, for example, the American economy should be so dependent on the arms business is not a healthy prospect.

Cyberpunk has provided an excellent example of machine idolatry, typified by the computer. I would be the first to say that computers have aided humanity, but at the same time, I cannot help but notice those avid faces reading William Gibson's latest vision of the future world. Gwyneth Jones' *Escape Plans* hits so hard because the computers have become the environment.

Cyberpunk is conspicuous by its lack of human values. Bruce Sterling's *Schismatrix* is entirely devoid of them - deliberately so, according to the author - but I am hardly reassured by this statement from a self-confessed gadget addict. Meanwhile, William Gibson's future is all superficial images and brand names. That we should be so manipulated by advertising (there are now adverts for adverts! Aren't you worried?) is a problem of the age. That is should be so exalted in a book is regrettable, however well it works. I wonder how many people fondly imagine themselves buying an *Ono-Sendel* in 2025, as they replace their copy of *Neuromancer* on the bookshelf for the fortieth time?

People today are not what they could be, they are what they're supposed to be. The aim of people today is to function in the big machine. This means having a chameleon personality, able to accommodate any shift in society, always in demand, always attractive. Consequently, true humanity is suppressed or killed off entirely. Nothing remains inside, except a vague longing for something that is more satisfying, but which cannot quite be pinned down. Another consequence of human alienation is violence. Amply depicted by every cyberpunk novel I have ever read, it walks hand in hand with the power brought by technology.

In worshipping the machine, we become a machine ourselves. We lose any empathy that patriarchy allowed us to develop. We only comprehend other people by what is different in them, not what is the same. We come to hate life.

The relationship between technology and the death instinct is well documented, and rather frightening. How ironic, then, to see that the possession of technology has become the criterion for being human. It is easy to show that the human

whose skin is not white is inhuman only when powerless. The Japanese became humans at the start of this century, when they acquired power, as did the Chinese more recently. So technology is equated with humanity, or rather, humanity as visualised by the white male.

All this is illustrated by Niven, Pournelle and Barnes, who between them have cobbled together some of the most atrocious science fiction ever published. *Lucifer's Hammer* is a particularly noxious example. Meanwhile, in *Footfall*, the authors drool over their lovely nuclear ship while huge quantities of deaths are relegated to the level of the statistic. As for *The Mote in God's Eye*, this is an interesting book rather unbalanced by the lone woman, whose function is to be manhandled by aliens and married to the hero (in that order, I suspect). I haven't read any of their other stuff...

In the current mode of living, technology represses humanity's potential for loving life. The inevitable consequence is that a love of death, under various guises, subconscious or otherwise, is fostered.

I think the alien-killing mentality is a symptom of this love of death. It is symptomatic of inhumanity. Of course, aliens represent the blacks, the yellows, the browns, the Commies, the Jews, etc, but that is hardly the point. Life is being destroyed. If you take the number of books in which aliens are annihilated on their own planet or on Earth (it wasn't our fault, honest, they hit us first) and divide it by the number in which peaceful, reasoned relations are instigated, you end up with a very large number.

In a similar manner, the spaceship has descended to the level of a bigger car, an enlarged home for witless male egos. As with the car, aggressiveness is accentuated. A symbiotic relationship develops between the spaceship and the captain; by coming into such power, the ego is boosted. The captain senses he possesses augmented power, and is deluded into thinking he and the ship are the same entity. Any humanity is driven underground.

Then there are the post-Holocaust novels. A generic blurb for such a novel runs, 'Earth has been destroyed by a cataclysm. But life has to go on, and so...' If you take the number of novels in which humanity has blithely been all-but-destroyed by an author unwilling to work out any other way of making his absurd fantasy real, and divide it by the number in which some kind of liveable future emerges from the dirty roots of today, you end up with another very large number. I think this is what narks me most of all; most people just can't be bothered to think how events, of whatever nature, might be averted.

The twentieth century has been conspicuous by its lack of utopias. Frederick Pohl's *The Years of the City* was a worthy attempt at realistic optimism. *Gateway* was honest and real, and therefore struck a nerve deep down in the conscience. Perhaps he has the knack of of writing about real people.

Noteworthy too were the pair of consecutive Nebula Awards won Orson Scott Card for *Enders Game* and *Speaker for the Dead*. The first was excellent, the second poor. Card's idea of radical, emotional honesty is to have his characters weeping every three and a half pages. And yet the novels, clearly moving into a deeper characterisation of people, won Nebulas. I find that quite promising, even encouraging.

Science fiction has been notorious for cardboard characters, precisely because humanity has been sacrificed for technology. This was more pronounced in early days; I am pleased to see recent shifts in attention by authors who sell reasonable numbers of books. Dave Langford once wrote, 'as in much science fiction by scientists, the most interesting characters are the computers'. Few scientists are inhuman, but science has that dehumanising touch through technology. It takes effort to change the balance. It won't get better on its own.

This repression of humanity in science fiction has, as a major consequence, the almost complete absence of sex. That sex,