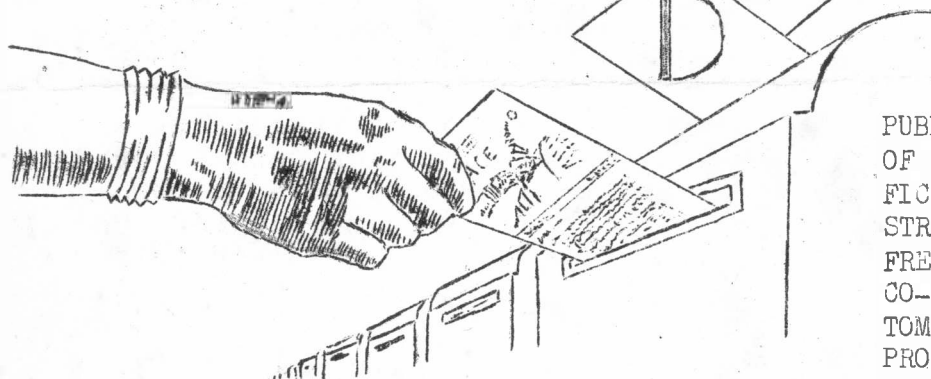


R6 N01

SPECIAL POST-CONVENTION ISSUE !

SPACE



PUBLISHED UNDER THE AUSPICES
OF THE LIVERPOOL SCIENCE -
FICTION SOCIETY, 13A ST. VINCENT
STREET, LIVERPOOL 3., AND ISSUED
FREE TO ALL MEMBERS.
CO-EDITORS;
TOM OWENS and JOHN ROLES.
PRODUCED BY;
DAVID GARDNER & NORMAN SHORROCK

VOLUME ONE
NUMBER ONE

JUNE - JULY 1952

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Greetings.....from the Space Divers,

As this publication is our first official communiqué to fandom in general, we think this is the opportunity to make known the policies and aims of our society.

First and foremost we are a reading group. We consider that the reading of Science-Fiction is the most important activity of a fan, and this is our aim; to promote amongst readers the critical faculty of discerning good and bad stories, remembering - "Never criticise a story for what it doesn't set out to be". 'Skylark' cannot be compared with 'Foundation', just as apples cannot be compared with oranges, there are good and bad qualities to be found in different varieties of both fruit.

To us the fan world, in addition to being only a minor facet of S.F. after all, is a treacherous vortex, into which one is all too easily drawn by other actifans, who, first losing sight of the main stream of science-fiction, put out magazines and organize conventions of their own, thereafter devoting all their time and interests to the building of a secondary and often irrelevant world of Fandom, instead of S-F.

This, as is shown by the history of Fandom, has happened all too frequently, but in moderation it can be amusing.

We propose to be just this.....moderate!

John Roles

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE LIVERPOOL S-F SOCIETY

by

Tom Owens

On Monday the 12th November 1951, we, the Liverpool Science-Fiction Society held our first meeting at the rear of the Milcross Book Shop. At that time we were not grouped under any name, but were just a number of fans who had met as a result of a Post Card sent to each of us by Jeff Espley, the founder of the Society.

Right from the beginning we all agreed upon the necessity of having our own clubroom. That was easier said than done however and it was fully two months before we were able to move to our present address. Temporarily we took up quarters over a café and in the interim got through a lot of business. In the main this business consisted of:

- 1/ Election of Club Officers, viz:
John Rolos - Chairman.
Jeff Espley - Secretary.
Norman Shorrocks - Treasurer.
- 2/ Club Motto:- "Thought, Time and Space." and
- 3/ Club Badge:- This consists of an open book with our motto on one page and a large upright Null A on the other.

Monday January 7th saw us installed in our new H.Q. (we believe that we are the only S-F society in Great Britain who rent their own premises). During the following fortnight members were to be seen at all hours of the day and night, painting, decorating, hammering and CURSING etc!! Not only did we have to completely renovate the 'Dive' but we also had to prepare it for our recruitment drive on the week commencing February the 10th. During this week the Gaumont were showing the then current "The Day The Earth Stood Still". We arranged with the manager to display a number of Science Fiction books and covers in the Foyer, and in return we advertised the film at our premises. We had the walls of the Space Dive covered with S-F magazines, for which display we are indebted to various members who placed parts of their extensive collections at the Society's disposal. In all there must have been about one thousand magazines gracing the, now clean, walls. In addition to this our Treasurer, Norman, constructed a model of a space ship which stood 5' 4" in height, this, placed in a lunar setting contrived by another of our members looked extremely effective. Several other members volunteered to stand outside the Gaumont and hand out a leaflet explaining the Society's activities and aims.

We were surprisingly successful and as a result of our increased membership it was found necessary to re-elect our committee. We thought this desirable so as to allow the new members a say in the constitution of the Society.

(A Short History Of The L.S.F.S. cont.)

The resulting committee is therefore as follows:-

Chairman : Frank Milnes
Treasurer: Norman Shorrocks) assisted by Tom Owens.
Secretary: Lewis Conway)
Librarian Trevor Donnan

Vice Chairman : John Roles.

(We are sorry to announce that Tom (co-editor 'though he is) refused to write any more of the Society's History - for this time at least. He demanded double rates of payment for anything over the first quarto page and as we are rather short of peanuts this month we told him what he could do with his second page. So you might get it in the next issue - provided he has not followed instructions as to where he can put it!)

(A.E. Van)

* * * * *

SPROCKETS, MISSALS & SPACE GABBLE

As

Babbled by Vargo Espley

Greetings Spacers!

Being the most out-of-this-world bloke that the ed: knew I was roped in to run this crazy column. He said that the job fitted me. I wonder what he meant?

Anyway if you want to read this news-letter you'll have to put up with me, that's called passive resistance!

DESTINATION LUNA - TIC

Last night at a gathering of leading scientists Prof. Bemboy spoke with authority upon his A to Z theory regarding the non-existence of the Future! He illustrated by saying that if one started at A which is the Present and travelled to B, then B is the Present and A is the Past.

"Ha!" said a heckler in the audience. "Then C is the Future."

Disdainfully the Professor replied that by ~~that~~ time one would arrive at C and then that would be the Present and B the Past. One could journey ad infinitum to Ultimate Time Z, and from there one would move back round the circle to the Starting Point A.

Someone in the audience cried out that there was no future in the lecture. Professor Bemboy smiled with great dignity, realising that he had proved his theory!

UNIVERSAL TITBITS
(still)

by this guy Espley

The 1952 London Convention went over with a bang this year. All the program proved popular especially the S-F auction at which everything was bought rapidly upon sight. Only one slight dampner was put upon this activity!

FLYING SAUCERS (OH NO NOT THAT!!!)

Oh yes, just that! One of those things has been seen again, this time over LIVERPOOL on the 30th May. It was of course not an official visit, as operatives of the Space Dive were not forewarned in the usual manner, however, natives of this town are now wondering if the saucer contained scouse!!

Here is this issue's dazzling poetic effort:

SEX LIFE!

Any Venusian Squid,
Will make an ardent bid
For a female Martian Flounder,
THE BOUNDER!!

Well folks, that wraps it up for this time (I know it's a good idea but don't be so insultin' -- darn yuh!)

Yours Faithlessly,

Vargo.

P.S. Don't forget to see "The Thing" to be released shortly.

P.P.S. I won't forget to see it either.

P.P.P.S. Dave said that he'll be going too, he was restrained from seeing the show at the Windmill over Whit and missed one sort of B.E.M. (beautiful Earth maiden) but he's interested in seeing what the other type of B.E.M. can be - heard it's to do with a monster - that's Dave all over!

Be seeing ya next issue (you're afraid)

sgd; Jeff (the Vargo) ESPlay.

* * * *

This is advertising space: If THE MILCROSSS BOOK SERVICE, 205, Brownlow Hill, Liverpool, 3; who only deal in Science Fiction and Fantasy had payed us any cash they could have used those few lines to good advantage. As they haven't payed us anything - well - we guess they got it free.

THE SUBMANCON

by

Frank Milnes

The Galactic Science-Fiction Committee (Galsificom) are to be congratulated on their recent SUBMANCON held in May and June of this year. As our members will realise, the magnanimous courage of the committee in nurturing a SUBUrban convention particularly in LONDON - (known to some as the southern dormitory of SUPERMANCHESTER) deserves great praise.

Being without such facilities as the famous BUFF ROOM of MANCHESTER, or LIVERPOOL'S palatial SPACE DIVE; it was necessary to requisition the Eating Room of one of the larger Dwelling Houses (Communal Type - Mark IIb) which, when suitably decorated and furnished, served the purpose admirably. Stained glass windows depicting various suburbs of SUPERMANCHESTER were a much appreciated feature of the decor. This was naturally carried through with minimum disturbance to the normal occupants.

It had been anticipated that the warm greetings of the members and the even warmer breezes from the dias would make temperature control essential. This, together with a positive humidity (to retard the onset of 'dry-up effect' - an occupational hazard of public speakers), was simply and effectively accomplished by a mobile unit of the FELIX Corporation whose Biological Department could be seen at work in a mews overlooking the Convention Hall. Some original light entertainment provided by the corporation was well received.

Due to the absence of Mr. J. ESPLEY (unavoidably detained by an experiment on the New Transparency), many noted personalities were somewhat delayed. Mr. H. Wolls, Mr. A. Doyle, and Mons. J. Verne were also late. However, authors K. Lang, G. Hunt, B. Shaw and E. Tubb were there to open the ceremonies, assisted morally by authors J. Wyndham, J. Boynton and B. Harris who were also present.

It is believed that Mr. W. Temple is to present absentee A. Clarke with a complete record of the proceedings of the SUBMANCON including a performance by Miss Y. Sumac who was visiting SUPERMANCHESTER at the time. The record will be suitably inscribed and packed for delivery when Mr. Clarke returns to a closer range. It is hoped the Mr. Temple will soon be able to contact Mr. Clarke.

Mr. van Gardner gave a mathematical display ably assisted by Mr. J. Roles and Mr. N. Shorrocks. He was successful in his effort to count up to 23 and was immediately presented with a beautiful work of art for this magnificent refutation of the Finger-Thumb-Toe Limitation Theory.

Mr. L. Johnson introduced several new names to the SUBMANCON including Mr. E. Carnell, who now edits SCIENCE-FANTASY, and Mr. van Gardner, whose stories Mr. Carnell rejects, and a Mr. Mackeson who, however, could not be found.

Mr. Tubb, broadly speaking, officiated as auctioneer, being relieved only when refreshment was available.

(The Submancon cont.)

Messrs. E. Bontcliffe, D. Cohen and D. Pickles engaged in debate over the site of the next SUBMANCON. It is believed that the matter will be revived at the SUPERMANCON to be held in the fall. This date has been chosen to take advantage of the remarkable autumnal colours visible in MANCHESTER at that time; the City being united about the colourful display.

In closing it should be noted that the many millions who will undoubtedly wish to attend the SUPERMANCON should book their accomodation in good time as SUPERMANCHESTER has limited the number of sleepers in its parks to two per bench.

* * * * *

AN APPEAL BY THE CO-EDITOR

(Tom Owens)

Originally we intended that 'Space Diversions' would only be a single page newsletter, something to send to our Country Member (take a bow, pal), but one or two of our members were ambitious. Possessing a literary frame of mind, and being unable to find any other market for their wares, they brought along some manuscripts with the suggestion: "Something like this might be included to liven it up." They failed to do any 'livening' as you can see for yourselves, but they started something.

It was obvious that what they wanted was a fanzine (this regardless of the editorial) and it was equally obvious that we couldn't do it - at least not just like that.

So, temporising, we are going to try and grow one.

Starting from this, our first issue, we will build, purely upon the suggestions, help and manuscripts of all who are interested. You need not be a member of the L.S.-F.S. to contribute. We are interested in stories, articles, news, gossip, technical advice on 'zine producing and anything else you think may help.

You can make a start by entering our competition, the winning prize being a map of the moon. Full details can be found at the end of "Henry Lee! Who's He?" which is the story starting on page 9

* * * * *

WANTED: ASTOUNDING SCIENCE FICTION (U.S.) August 1944.

Also any copies of FANSCIENT except numbers 4 & 6.

Write : John Roles,

26, Pine Grove,

Waterloo,

Liverpool, 22.

ROUND ROBIN.

Not wishing to under-rate your intelligence by attempting to explain exactly what a 'Round Robin' is; suffice to say that this is a fantastic adventure as 'dreamed up' by certain of our members and 'cleaned up' by John.

PART ONE BY JEFF ESLEY.

A whining roar suddenly broke the stillness of the hot summer afternoon. Across the aerodrome shot a silver dagger of light, narrowly missing the Ops. tower and rocketing off into the hazy distance marked by the lofty eminence of the Organ Mountains.

Prolific curses bounced from wall to wall as the Operations Officer of the USAAF station rose from his hasty dive to the floor of the control tower.

"That ---- Wigger is at it again," he swore, his face taking on the look of an irate guardian over one of his reckless charges. "He's gone too far this time. C.O.'s nephew or not I'll have him under close arrest the minute the purple-headed son of a gopher steps out of that crate!"

His companion grunted derisively.

"We've heard that story before," he drawled. "Dear old Bunny Wigger, the life and soul of the camp, our ace pilot and salvator." His tone changed and his face took on a rueful grin. "Come off it Lance, you know you won't harm a hair on the head of a man who bags thirty-two Russky planes in any one week. Man! We'd lose the war if we kept Wiggy out of the Air."

Meanwhile the subject of their conversation was blithely staggering across the sky clocking a steady 750 M.P.H. Pilot Officer Buntington Wigger, to give him his full title, was a tall gangling officer of some twenty-eight years. Into that brief life he had packed more adventures and thrills than a normal man could ever hope to steer clear of. It was a source of never ending wonder to his fellow pilots that Bunny had ever managed to reach the exalted age of twenty-eight. Nobody could decide whether the ace pilot had reached that enviable status by cold nerve and calculating brain or whether he just charged in where angels and his fellow flyers feared to tread. The fact remained, however, that Bunny had a higher number of "bags" to his credit than any other man in the service.

The Corsair he was flying plunged abruptly into a thick layer of cloud and instantly his view outside the cockpit consisted of cotton wool and more cotton wool. Bunny leaned forward in his seat and pressed a switch on the central board facing him. A small white disk glowed with an unearthly radiance and around the face of the disk, like the hand of a clock, ran a thin needle. He glanced from time to time at the glowing face of the radar dial and suddenly stiffened as the rotating finger began to leave a white streak in its wake. At about three o'clock on the dial was a small pinpoint of light.

Bunny studied it for a moment and then banked the plane sharply to starboard.

"Must be a big one," he mused. "Russky fighters haven't got this range unless they're using auxiliary tanks."

A curse broke through his lips as he again glanced at the luminous dial: the needle was motionless.

"Blast it!" he swore, "What a time to act up."

Round Robin (Jeff's part) contd.

He was now flying blind, his eyes constantly searching the opaque mist before him, in quest of the plane which was somewhere ahead.

Naturally he never knew the moment he died.

The Corsair hit the enemy plane head on, at a speed approaching 800 M.P.H. Added to this was the approximate speed of the oncoming bomber, making the speed of impact around 1300 M.P.H. As if that were not bad enough the enemy plane was loaded very heavily with bombs - not ordinary bombs - but a new and terrible H.E. of Russian ingenuity. According to the red hammer and sickle boys, five ounces of the new Batrabendite was equivalent to two tons of T.N.T.

The explosion looked quite picturesque from about fifty miles distance, making a tremendous flower of flame in the sky.

Back at his late base, Bunny's passing was marked by the upturning of his highly decorative beer mug, and the dividing of his kit among the still living of his friends. A "killed in the line of duty" telegram was dispatched to his only relative (a maiden aunt) and then Buntington Wigger, Ace and Purple Heart was forgotten, in the toils of a war still to be won.

ooo ooo ooo ooo ooo

Bunny came to his senses gradually as if recovering from an anaesthetic. He opened his eyes slowly and then shut them again quickly - convinced that he was going mad.

"Whew!" he thought to himself. "this continuous flying is cracking me up. I'll have to see the M.O. for a spot of leave." As yet the pilot had not realised that he was dead, so quickly had he passed over the great gulf.

Certainly the sight that confronted him was not the imagination of a normal mind.

Towering over him was a sombre grey figure of immense stature.

A thin saturnine face gazed down at him with unblinking intensity. From the creature's back sprouted a pair of great black wings, which enveloped its body like a cloak. When the thing spoke Bunny received another shock. In a broad Irish brogue it said

"Faith and Oi t'ought ye were going to be after difficult, and staying in the half-way life all day".

Bunny gulped and opened his eyes again.

"Go away," he gurgled. "D.T.s that talk when you haven't even been punching the bottle, it just isn't right. Shoo!"

The figure didn't 'shoo', but sighed wearily and turned to address the up-right figure of a huge wolf, which stood at his side.

"Begorra and haven't we picked ourselves a nice one?" he appealed to the lupine apparition, which was de-fleaing itself vigorously.

"Evidently the poor chappy doesn't realize what has happened to him, old boy," he drawled, in a languid, educated voice. "We had better explain to him."

By now Bunny was almost passing out again. An Irish speaking batman was bad enough, but when it came to an Oxford educated wolf.

"What's happened?" he moaned. "Who are you and where am I?"

The two figures approached him and helped him to a sitting position. The winged one reached beneath his wings-cum-cloak and produced a whiskey flask with the flourish of a conjurer producing a rabbit out of a hat.

"Genuine old Oirish," he breathed reverently. "A slug of that and you'll feel like lowering the boom me bhoy."

Buntington Wigger accepted the proffered flask and drank deeply.

HENRY LEE! WHO'S HE?

by

Tom Owens

One of our newest fem members (hereafter referred to as a 'fember') was approached the other day by our 'Bember'. Unfortunately she had not been warned about him and he succeeded in flogging her a time machine. "But," she explained, "nobody ever seems to buy anything from him and he said that he needed the capital to go into production on space warps. Besides," she added, brightly, "I want to present it to the Society."

Put like that, we had no option but to accept. And there it stands, lonely and forgotten, a rusting hulk of machinery, cowering in the corner, of no use to any one - or so we thought! For one day.....

Now it so happens that occasionally some misguided member of the public disregards the pleadings of friends and relatives and joins our club. Thus it happened that upon a certain fateful Monday night a young man, bright of eye and erect of carriage, stood in front of the rust heap twirling his handle-bar moustache. Little did we realise what fate held in store for this magnificent, virile youngster. For the next time we were to see him he.... but I digress. As I have previously stated, he was twirling his moustache. He looked at the time machine knowingly.

"Ah!" he said. "Time machine what! Matter of Fact I used to pilot one in the good old Battle of Britain days. I don't suppose you chaps would mind if I took her up a couple of hundred years and stooged around?"

We indicated that it was all his.

It was at this moment that the Treasurer happened to walk into the 'Dive', and in the ensuing rush to pay our subs we all forgot about the new member.

It must have been about three weeks later that the Treasurer remarked, "I haven't had any subs yet off that new member. I wonder what has happened to him?"

A deathly silence descended on the club. It was broken, as usual, by our 'Bember' who shouted in a high pitched voice: "Suffering Martian Sandcats, I forgot to tell him about the antirhodomagnetic control." He dashed over to the machine and frantically started to twist everything that would twist.

After long seconds the door opened with a creak, and out stumbled a drooling, wretched, broken figure. It was the new member. He kept up a low, monotonous babbling. It sounded like: "They've found Henry Lee. Woo! Woo!"

In his fingers was grasped a sheet of paper. Gently, we prised open his hand and removed the all important paper. Then

(Henry Lee! Who's He? cont.)

we led him to a vacant corner where he still stands, the light of insanity in his eyes. (Eventually he will be voted President)
Then - then we turned our attention to the paper!

WHAT WAS ON THE PAPER?

FOR THE BEST ANSWER WE WILL GIVE A MAP OF THE MOON.

ADDRESS ALL ENTRIES:

COMPETITION,

"SPACE DIVERsions",

THE SPACE DIVE,

13A, ST. VINCENT STREET,

LIVERPOOL, 3.

* * * * *

WANTED: All copies of 'THE SHAVER MYSTERY CLUB MAGAZINE'
and also the three copies of MAMMOTH ADVENTURES in
which Richard Sharpe Shaver's stories appeared.

Write: David Gardner,
63, Island Road,
Liverpool, 19.

* * * * *

'OUTLANDS'

READERS! COLLECTORS!

Have you read this British Promag.?

Editor: L. J. Johnson, contents, 'Pre-Natal', 'Strange Portrait',
'Bird of Time', 'Undying Faith', 'Rival Creators', 'The Opaque World', Plus
Articles, Departments, etc.

We have a few copies (Mint condition, as published in 1946), at the original
price.....1/6 (25c) Post Free, write Frank Milnes, at the 'SPACE DIVE'

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT.

1952 LONCON REPORT

by
David Gardner

These are my own views and do not necessarily express the sentiments of other members of the Society who also sneaked a ride in the luggage van to the LONCON.

Bright spots of the two day S-F Convention held at the Royal Hotel, London, were the Fantasy Awards and the auctioneer - TED (E.C.) Tubb, THE New Worlds author.

Although there was nothing outstanding about the Convention, it certainly provided enjoyment for all the fans who gathered there for a good time over the wet whit-weekend. The trouble with this sort of function is the fact that you usually come away remembering all the failings and very few of the successes, which is rather unfair to the Convention Committee who certainly deserve high praise for all the time and work they spent in preparing the setting. It all boils down to the fact that though it failed to live up to all that was expected of it, it was by no means a flop as it would have been if the L.S-F.S. had had a hand in it.

To business:

The Saturday afternoon sessions opened with Public speeches on the question 'Should London Monopolise Conventions?'

Derek Pickles of Bradford started the ball rolling. He brought forward the plea that the cost of train and bus fares from the North of England to London was prohibitive and that such people as the Tynesiders and the Scottish fans were left out of the picture due to the money question. He suggested Bradford as the next Convention centre for 1953 or one of the spas in the North, such as Harrogate.

Walt Willis from Ireland stepped up to the microphone next and for no apparent reason suggested that the Convention next year be held in Paris. There must have been more to his speech than that but all I heard were the words 'Convention' and 'Paris 1953'.

For Liverpool we had Les Johnson facing the audience, and on behalf of the L.S-F.S. he informed them that Liverpool certainly had no idea of trying to steal the convention honours from London - that we wouldn't take it over if they paid us. Hold a regional convention by all means but keep the main one down in London in the capable hands of the White Horse Tavern fans who by now are used to this sort of work. London, Les pointed out, is the proper place for fan activities as he believed when he passed over the control of the B.I.S. to London prior to the war, and where it has since flourished and grown.

Manchester had two guns to fire, in the persons of Eric Bentcliffe and Dave Cohen. Eric spoke first. MANCON this year - next year the SUPERMANCON. He disagreed with Les, instancing the United States where conventions are held in different cities each year and the site for the following year's convention is taken by vote. He appealed for the help of all clubs in plugging the Mancon and the Supermancon. In all of this he was supported by Dave who said that as London would be crowded out next year (it being Coronation year) they ought to make it a Central Convention - Manchester.

London pointed out that as it was Coronation year in 1953, we would be having visits from American Highlights in the S-F world and that whilst they would come to a LONCON they would think twice about travelling up North. And a Convention can't be a real success without celebrities.

The vote on where the 1953 Convention should be held, took place on the Sunday afternoon and London romped home an easy winner. So we'll be on our way to London next year too, by the looks of things.

 * FLASH! *
 * Received a Post Card from an unknown in San Francisco, dated *
 * the 28th May (received 12th June) telling me that a certain fan, *
 * WALT WILLIS of Northern Ireland passed away at 9-30am. on *
 * Thursday the 15th May. States that this is NOT a hoax. Now I *
 * know why I didn't get all of Walt's speech on Saturday 31st May, *
 * he'd been dead for over two weeks and his earthly ties were *
 * weakening. Poor Walt. How I wish that Post Card had been a *
 * HOAX! *

Following upon the Convention question came some news on the various activities which have taken place during the past year in the main S-F clubs in England.

BRADFORD. There is no organisation in the club i.e. there is no committee. They meet twice a week, on Wednesdays and on Sundays, and the members pay a total of 1/6d per week - it is hoped to drop this to 1 shilling in the near future. They had an exhibition of Sf at Bradford Library, devoted to first issues from 300BC (??) to present date. There have been two film shows with an attendance of about 40 at each and during the next week or so they will be showing another film, this time a Tarzan epic, because, as Derek told us (most confidentially) there is a member in the club who likes Tarzan.

Last Xmas they had four members on roll, now they number 23 and 15 usually turn up to each meeting. Their ambitions are to enroll more members and have a good time which we in Liverpool sincerely hope they do. (By the way Derek, when are you joining up with Manchester and Liverpool? - numbers lend strength!)

MANCHESTER: Nor' West S-F Club. Fifteen months back had four members on the books, (shades of Bradford!) today they number fifty, of whom thirty-five are resident in Manchester and surrounding districts and there is usually an attendance of twenty per meeting(? Did I hear right there?). They pay a nominal sum of 5/- per year and 6d per meeting. They have organised a number of outings for the club; out of which one was to the Manchester University Observatory and another to Southport. Advertising was done for the film, 'The Day The Earth Stood Still' (only difference between their advertising campaign and ours was the fact that the Cinema Manager in Manchester appreciated their services - the one in Liverpool charged for our assistance! I wonder who was done - and if so by whom?)

A Newsletter is published and in the future they intend that it should roll off the presses at the rate of one per month - issues not copies. The big news from Manchester is of course the M A N C O N to be held on the 28th September this year. I hope that Eric will get in touch with me about the programmes and any other arrangements which they make for the MANCON, if he does you'll see them in SPACE DIVERsions - if he doesn't send the gen. - well here is his address write him and make him do some work for a living. Eric Bentcliffe, 47, Alldis Street, Stockport, Cheshire, I'm sure if you are interested he will supply any details you require.

Just to show that there are no hard feelings here is a plug for Eric. He is bringing out a three part CHECKLIST OF BRITISH SCIENCE- FICTION AND FANTASY. Part one which is already out and costs 2/6d, contains all you want to know on British magazines, original and reprint. Section two:- Pocket Books. Section three:- Hard Cover Books. Subscriptions taken for the last two parts now. You have his address above -use it!

LIVERPOOL Science-Fiction Society. Home ground here, but I think it just as well if I cover our group fairly thoroughly as this was intended primarily to inform folks of our existence. Les Johnson was asked to speak on the Society at the Convention and the quotes which you will find below are taken from some of his notes.

"In the first place I would like to say how pleased I am to be addressing this gathering, and to have the honour of being invited to do so. But I'm really here by the courtesy of David Gardner who wrote asking if I could say a few words, without first asking me if I had any words to say.

"Forry Ackerman, in a letter to Dave, referred to him as A.E. Van Gardner; I am therefore dedicating this address to Daivid Gardner and his collection of rejection slips.

"So far, A.E. Van Gardner's only claim to fame is that he was the first British fan met by Forry on arrival at Liverpool last year; David has thus acquired undying fame, and editors like Ted Carnell might kindly note that in view of such fame it's time they stopped sending David such regular rejection slips for his hack stories.

"To leave David Van Gardner for the moment, I am glad to report that the L.S.-F.S. is doing very well. The Society was formed last Autumn, and we have eight of our members here at the convention to-day."

The numbers on the Society's books run to 22, plus three Hon. members: Eric Frank Russell, Ted Carnell and Forry Ackerman. Usually we have a turn out of about a dozen members each meeting, one of these days we may even have everybody there and that would mean that we really would have to see about new premises. As with the Manchester group, we were approached by the Manager of the Gaumont (Toca~~DERO~~) Cinema, London Road. Les and Frank of the Milcross kindly lent some book-jackets and mags for a display in the foyer. Mock newspapers were also available to any who cared to pick one up, and both the Milcross and the Society had adverts on the back page of said paper. In the Society premises, which we had to decorate especially for the occasion, we had a display of S-F mags and art work, plus a five foot six model of a Space Ship built by Norman Shorrocks. The mags numbered about 1,000 and succeeded in hiding most of the blotches on the walls, but what a job hanging those blessed things up. They all had to be bound in cellophane and then strung up on racks which were hanging from the ceiling. We told ourselves that it was a job which could be done in an hour but found to our sorrow that it took nearly all day Sunday to fix the place up. Well, we had some visitors and also brought in some new members to the Society so we can't complain - except for one thing. We were all so busy arranging things and being on duty at the Dive the week that the film was showing - we didn't see the reputed epic. Can't anyone tell us the story or better still send us round the reels for a private showing? I doubt if we'll ever look after film publicity again!

(Les talking again) "We have our own Headquarters known as the Space Dive, (sorry - Space Dive) 13A, St. Vincent Street, Liverpool, and meetings are held there every Monday evening.

"Unfortunately, I'm not able to attend many meetings, because my wife won't let me out on Mondays. The Space Dive is very well named, because one has to Dive down several flights of steps to enter its precincts, and once inside there's certainly a lack of Space. But it's very cosy, and with the help of Oxygen cylinders we're usually able to survive in the smoke laden atmosphere.

"Of course, before the war, Liverpool was one of the major strongholds of Science-Fiction; the British Interplanetary Society was founded in Liverpool in 1933 by Phil Cleator, Colin Askham and myself, and we had some of our first Science-Fiction meetings about 1931.

"I don't wish to drag on this diatribe too long, but there are a few more points that I would like to make. I am, I suppose, classified amongst "Northerners" and I know that amongst us Northerners there is a number of fans who complain and ask why it is that the Conventions must always be held in London. I am not one of these. I consider London is the best natural centre for a Convention, just as I thought in 1937 that it should be the

natural Headquarters of the B.I.S., when in spite of protests and the 'Better judgement' of Cleator and Askham, I passed control to the London group.

"There's no reason why we Northerners could not have our own conventions, as and when we may be able to organise them. But to my mind London is definitely the right and proper centre for a main Convention, especially in these days when S-F has grown to almost the stage of a nationally recognised avocation.

"Finally I just want to make certain that A.E. Van Gardner is still here and has not as yet departed for the Windmill Theatre, because between you and me, his main purpose in coming to London was not to be at the Convention, but to go to the Windmill, where he'd heard tales that there were Beautiful Earth Maidens in various stages of undress. So if there are any others in the audience who would like to make up a party to visit the Windmill on Monday before going back home, I'm sure that if they contact Dave after tea he will make all the arrangements."

Know something? Only one person asked if I really did intend going to see the B.E.Ms. It was somebody from Manchester; I think he wanted to come along if I was going, however, I won't mention any names, it might make Eric Bentcliffe feel rather embarrassed.

GILLINGHAM. The Medway S-F Fan Club has recently been born and seems to be thriving, especially on the art side of Fantasy and Science Fiction. They have 25 members on the books, of whom 12 are active fans, and out of this round dozen, 10 of them are capable artists, as John Roles and A.E. Van (that's me) Gardner can vouch, each having bid for and obtained an oil painting apiece.

They have no organised meetings but I think that it is Anthony Thorne who has a shop in Gillingham and the Medway fans drop in there whenever they feel like a taste of fandom.

LANCASTER. has a postal club for Teenage Fans and they are certainly keen, having fixed up a display in the Convention Hall and printed a lot of advertising material concerning a new fanmag. Ken Potter is the Editor of this fanmag titled 'Peri' which is due out on the 1st August. If you would like a copy of it send one shilling to Ken Potter, 5, Furness Street, Marsh, Lancaster.

After tea break on Saturday afternoon we settled down at 5 o'clock to listen to a recording by Arthur C. Clarke - Arthur at the moment is in America, following on the 'Book of The Month Club' choice of his 'Exploration of Space' - more on this book later.

The speech started off with a few digs at Bill Temple of 'Four-Sided Triangle' fame and then settled down to a recording of a broadcast made some time back for the B.B.C., on the up and coming vogue in S-F films. Excerpts from the sound tracks of various films had been dubbed in and produced a well balanced whole, maintaining interest right to the very end.

5-30p.m. - a debate - and I can't attempt to try and report any of it! Subject - 'That S-F is true to the facts of human experience'. Come to think of it I'm sure that none of those taking part in it knew what it all meant - we got some pretty weird and wonderful for's and againsts such as bamboo space ships and 8 foot spiders indulging in the rape of innocent fems. Try and draw your own conclusions as to the main subject matter - you can tell from the above sentence why I dare not attempt it, you can never tell where you end up on these sort of things(probably in the spider's web as a last refuge from factual reporting).

Came 6p.m. and the highlight of the day. The auction, in the capable hands of Ted Tubb. Now the auction itself is nothing - it's Ted who makes it interesting. So if you've never been to a Convention and you feel as if you could do with a good laugh at least twice a year(auctions are held on both days of the Con), save up your £5 notes for a weekend trip to a LONCON just for the pleasure of seeing and hearing Ted in action. It's worth every penny of it!

As I mentioned, the auction itself wasn't up to much. The first day it was all mags and books and as none of it was rare or particularly hard to get, it would have been very slow but for 'Spider' Tubb. Actually the people to blame for a slow auction are folks like myself who don't take anything with them in the nature of books and hard-to-get-mags. If you want good stuff on show - well, you have to take it with you and trust that others do the same. And remember, that besides a fast auction with plenty of excitement, you also help the Convention Committee gain some funds for the next year's show.

A word of warning! Don't expect to have a meal in comfort during the breaks in the convention proceedings - it's impossible! You run like hell to a café - wait about $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour before you finally get served - then, whilst you are cramming eatables into your mouth as fast as you can the clock hands take it into their heads to go twice as fast as is usual, and before the coffee comes up you are already an hour or two late for the next session. Moral - take sandwiches with you. (All this leads up to the fact that I have a nice line in Plastic Sandwich Wrappers - guaranteed to keep the bread fresh and moist etc. PRICE: one Solar Credit.)

However, joking aside, we did get back in time for the film show due to start at 8 p.m. - it started at 8.25! The shorts were all poorish and one of the films for the double feature did not arrive -(Pari Qui Dort). The one long film that they did show, 'The Man Who Could Work Miracles', was excellent in every way and a credit(not solar) to Wells the Master.

Close of the 1st day of the Convention and a general movement by the members of the L.S-F.S. down town to paint it vermillion.

SUNDAY.

Informal sessions in the pre-lunch period - nothing of interest - informal means walking where you wish and talking to those who are foolish enough to look as if they have nothing to do, or else those who are still too sleepy to avoid you. In the background to this enlightening interlude was played a repeat of the Clarke speech of Saturday afternoon - still enjoyable.

We started off the afternoon sessions with a group of authors (Ted Tubb, H.J. Campell (also editor of Authentic), Frank Arnold, Berry and one artist Alan Hunter) discussing why they wrote, drew - in the case of Hunter Science Fiction and why they all read it. This proved so interesting and in many cases so amusing, that I am sorry to say, I completely forgot to take any notes and now....a blank. But it was good! All in all I suppose it all boils down to the same reasons why you and I read S-F - new - exciting - thought provoking - imaginative and anything else you care to tag on to it.

Now The FANTASY AWARD 1952.

The awards themselves first of all. The Fiction Award: A chrome table lighter mounted on a wood base and at the rear of the lighter a wonderful, sleek, gleaming model space ship (this stands about 14 inches high).

The Non-fiction Award: is almost the same - in fact the only difference is that it is worked in bronze instead of chrome.

The Fiction Award went to JOHN COLLIER for his book: "FANCIES AND GOODNIGHTS" published by Doubleday and Co. Inc., New York. 364 pages and priced 4 dollars. (See 'Galaxy's Five Star Shelf' by Conklin in Galaxy May 1952)

Second place went to John Wyndham - a very, very close second with: "THE DAY OF THE TRIFFIDS". Published in U.S.A. as a slick serial, hard covers and then pocket book, and over here as a hard cover book published by Michael Joseph, 302 pages and priced at 10/6d.

Third, also very close: Ray Bradbury's "THE ILLUSTRATED MAN", published by Doubleday and Co. Inc., N.Y., U.S.A. 252 pages and the price: 2 dollars 75 cents. Brought out over here at 11/6d by Rupert Hart-Davies who published his Martian Chronicles as the 'Silver Locusts'.

There is only one award, due to the lack of funds, and Wyndham and Bradbury only receive an honourable mention apiece.

The Non-fiction Award went to ARTHUR C. CLARKE for his book "EXPLORATION OF SPACE" published over here by Sidgwick and Jackson - 198 pages and priced at 12/6d. In the States it is either out or very shortly coming out by Gnome Press. This book was well ahead of the rest of the non-fiction field.

Second: W.Ley's "DRAGONS IN AMBER" Published by the Viking Press New York, 320 pages and price: 3 dollars 75 cents. In this country by Sidgwick and Jackson priced 21/-.

Third came Fletcher Pratt with: "ROCKETS, JETS, GUIDED MISSILES AND SPACE FLIGHT". Published by Random House in America and Canada and in England by Sidgwick and Jackson at 9/6d

Once again lack of funds give Ley and Pratt a mere honourable mention.

As neither of the award winners are in England at the moment the awards had to be presented by proxy: Ted Carnell of New Worlds accepted Collier's award from D. Chapman, and A.C. Clarke's brother accepted the non-fiction award from Frank Cooper; to be held until Arthur returns from the States.

A list of the judges for the awards can be found on pages 42 and 43 of the May '52 issue of New Worlds.

ANY ORDERS FOR ANY BOOKS MENTIONED IN SPACE DIVERSIONS MAY BE
PLACED WITH THE MILCROSS BOOK SERVICE, 205 BROWNLOW HILL,
LIVERPOOL, 3. LANCs. ENGLAND. (IF A BOOK CAN BE GOT WE CAN GET IT)
Mention my name when placing orders and I may be lucky enough to
get a cut - after all this is a free plug and they should be more
than grateful - maybe I'll even get a copy of their next free
catalogue - maybe - if I pay for it.

Next in importance came the second part of the auction with
Ted Tubb on the stand once more. This time the material up for
bids was of a much better standard than on the Saturday, due to
Gnome Press donating a stack of books through the Fantasy Book
Centre, London, and also the fact that art work made its appearance
in the hands of the auctioneer.

The auction was interrupted first of all by Supper break and
then by the final film show. On the screen were: 'Atomic Bomb'
a short, and 'Metropolis' by Thea von Harbou, directed by her husband
Fritz Lang. As soon as the film interlude was over the auction
resumed and bidding continued until one by one the fans drifted
off to their various hotels and benches, with empty pockets and
laden arms, heads and tongues buzzing with memories of the two-day
1952 SCIENCE-FICTION CONVENTION - THE LONDON.

.The End.

VOTE FOR LIVERPOOL FOR THE YEAR 20,000 SCIENCE-FICTION
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ACCOMODATION ARRANGEMENTS IN LONDON FOR THE 1953 CORONATION
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