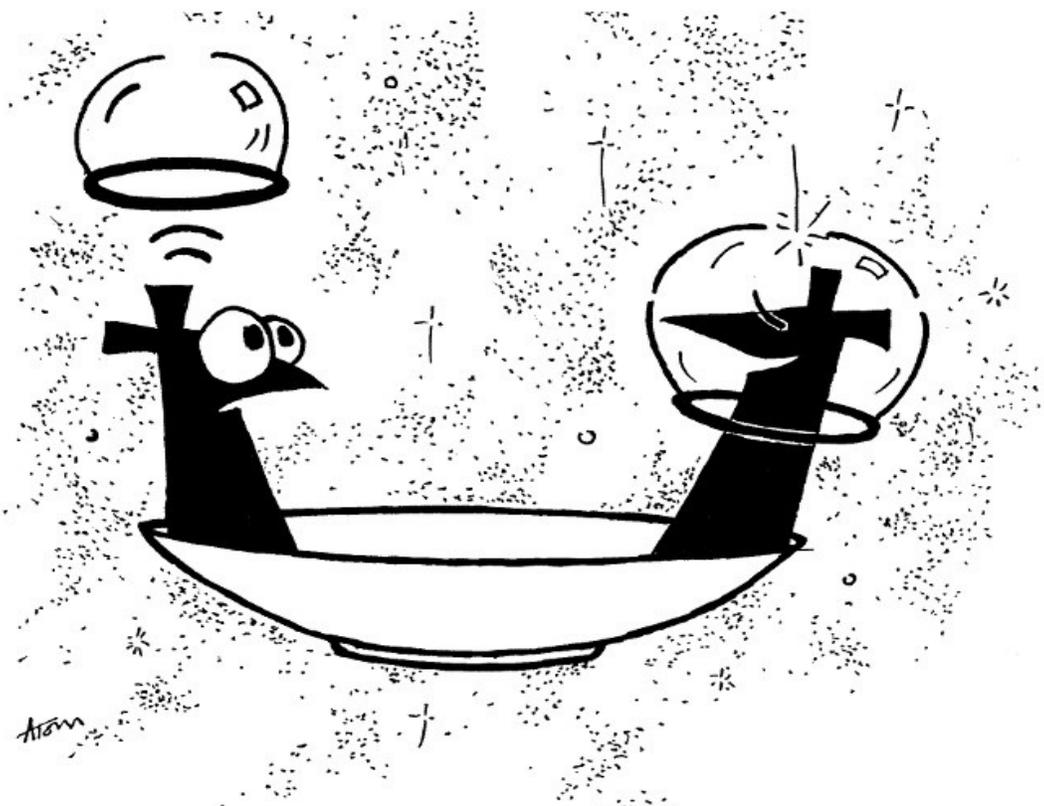


available



Second Series
2011-2020

Ansible Second Series **2001-2010**

Edited by David Langford

Published by

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Contents

[Title Page](#)

[Introduction](#)

[2011](#)

[Ansible 282, January 2011](#)

[Ansible 283, February 2011](#)

[Ansible 284, March 2011](#)

[Ansible 285, April 2011](#)

[Ansible 286, May 2011](#)

[Ansible 287, June 2011](#)

[Ansible 288, July 2011](#)

[Ansible 289, August 2011](#)

[Ansible 290, September 2011](#)

[Ansible 291, October 2011](#)

[Ansible 292, November 2011](#)

[Ansible 293, December 2011](#)

[2012](#)

[Ansible 294, January 2012](#)

[Ansible 295, February 2012](#)

[Ansible 296, March 2012](#)

[Ansible 297, April 2012](#)

[Ansible 298, May 2012](#)

[Ansible 299, June 2012](#)

[Ansible 300, July 2012](#)

[Ansible 301, August 2012](#)

[Ansible 302, September 2012](#)

[Ansible 303, October 2012](#)

[Ansible 304, November 2012](#)

[Ansible 305, December 2012](#)

[2013](#)

[Ansible 306, January 2013](#)

[Ansible 307, February 2013](#)
[Ansible 308, March 2013](#)
[Ansible 309, April 2013](#)
[Ansible 310, May 2013](#)
[Ansible 311, June 2013](#)
[Ansible 312, July 2013](#)
[Ansible 313, August 2013](#)
[Ansible 313 Supplement](#)
[Ansible 314, September 2013](#)
[Ansible 315, October 2013](#)
[Ansible 316, November 2013](#)
[Ansible 317, December 2013](#)

2014

[Ansible 318, January 2014](#)
[Ansible 319, February 2014](#)
[Ansible 320, March 2014](#)
[Ansible 321, April 2014](#)
[Ansible 322, May 2014](#)
[Ansible 323, June 2014](#)
[Ansible 323 Supplement](#)
[Ansible 324, July 2014](#)
[Ansible 325, August 2014](#)
[Ansible 326, September 2014](#)
[Ansible 327, October 2014](#)
[Ansible 328, November 2014](#)
[Ansible 329, December 2014](#)

2015

[Ansible 330, January 2015](#)
[Ansible 331, February 2015](#)
[Ansible 332, March 2015](#)
[Ansible 333, April 2015](#)
[Ansible 334, May 2015](#)
[Ansible 335, June 2015](#)
[Ansible 336, July 2015](#)
[Ansible 337, August 2015](#)

[Ansible 338, September 2015](#)
[Ansible 339, October 2015](#)
[Ansible 340, November 2015](#)
[Ansible 341, December 2015](#)

2016

[Ansible 342, January 2016](#)
[Ansible 343, February 2016](#)
[Ansible 344, March 2016](#)
[Ansible 345, April 2016](#)
[Ansible 346, May 2016](#)
[Ansible 347, June 2016](#)
[Ansible 348, July 2016](#)
[Ansible® 349, August 2016](#)
[Ansible® 350, September 2016](#)
[Ansible® 351, October 2016](#)
[Ansible® 352, November 2016](#)
[Ansible® 353, December 2016](#)

2017

[Ansible® 354, January 2017](#)
[Ansible® 355, February 2017](#)
[Ansible® 355½, February 2017](#)
[Ansible® 356, March 2017](#)
[Ansible® 357, April 2017](#)
[Ansible® 358, May 2017](#)
[Ansible® 359, June 2017](#)
[Ansible® 360, July 2017](#)
[Ansible® 361, August 2017](#)
[Ansible® 362, September 2017](#)
[Ansible® 363, October 2017](#)
[Ansible® 364, November 2017](#)
[Ansible® 365, December 2017](#)

2018

[Ansible® 366, January 2018](#)
[Ansible® 367, February 2018](#)

[Ansible® 368, March 2018](#)
[Ansible® 369, April 2018](#)
[Ansible® 370, May 2018](#)
[Ansible® 371, June 2018](#)
[Ansible® 372, July 2018](#)
[Ansible® 373, August 2018](#)
[Ansible® 374, September 2018](#)
[Ansible® 375, October 2018](#)
[Ansible® 376, November 2018](#)
[Ansible® 377, December 2018](#)

2019

[Ansible® 378, January 2019](#)
[Ansible® 379, February 2019](#)
[Ansible® 380, March 2019](#)
[Ansible® 381, April 2019](#)
[Ansible® 382, May 2019](#)
[Ansible® 383, June 2019](#)
[Ansible® 384, July 2019](#)
[Ansible® 385, August 2019](#)
[Ansible® 386, September 2019](#)
[Ansible 386 Supplement](#)
[Ansible® 387, October 2019](#)
[Ansible® 388, November 2019](#)
[Ansible® 389, December 2019](#)

2020

[Ansible® 390, January 2020](#)
[Ansible® 391, February 2020](#)
[Ansible® 392, March 2020](#)
[Ansible® 393, April 2020](#)
[Ansible® 394, May 2020](#)
[Ansible® 395, June 2020](#)
[Ansible® 396, July 2020](#)
[Ansible® 397, August 2020](#)
[Ansible® 398, September 2020](#)
[Ansible® 399, October 2020](#)

[Ansible® 400, November 2020](#)
[Ansible® 401, December 2020](#)

Introduction

Here is the third decade of the second series of David Langford's far from legendary British sf/fan newsletter *Ansible* in ebook form: issues 282 (January 2011) to 401 (December 2020). That's over 429,000 words of outdated trivia, against which insomnia stands no chance. Those who have followed *Ansible* from its early days or have rummaged in the web archive at news.ansible.uk are permitted to stop reading at this point. The first series has already been assembled in ebook form as *Ansible First Series 1979-1987* (2016), the first decade of the second series as *Ansible Second Series 1991-2000* (2017), and the second decade of the second series as *Ansible Second Series 2001-2010* (2017).

A little history for new readers. That first series of *Ansible* ran for fifty issues – really only forty-nine since the second and third were rashly combined as a double issue.* Taking over the subscription list of its predecessor *Checkpoint* (edited by Peter Roberts since 1971 and about to cease with issue 100), *Ansible* launched in August 1979 at Seacon '79, that year's World SF Convention in Brighton. The fiftieth and much more substantial issue, dated August/September 1987, was distributed at the *next* UK Worldcon: Conspiracy '87, also in Brighton. After that, numbed by the shock of winning its first Hugo award, *Ansible* gently subsided and didn't reappear until the October 1991 relaunch in slimmer form (a single sheet of A4) and with a rigorous monthly schedule that still continues unbroken as of 2021.

* A bad decision which probably discouraged several subscribers from renewing. It was supposed to be a double-sized Worldcon special, and so it was, but the only available paper was of decidedly inferior quality and the reproduction was pretty awful. The embarrassment lingers to this day.

Most visual material not directly linked to news stories or squibs has been omitted from this ebook edition. In particular, virtually all the masthead and filler cartoons were dropped to reduce the size of an already vast document – see news.ansible.uk if interested.

As *Ansible* crawled from the shallows of print to the storm-blown foreshore of online publication, various extras not featured in the paper version began to appear at the end of each digital issue. All such items were initially placed

under the heading **Geeks' Corner**, instituted in the electronic *Ansible* 90. This heading later became reserved for the technical bits: email and website addresses, how to subscribe, etc. Some late news and bonus items appeared in early instances of **Geeks' Corner**, but from *Ansible* 117 such possibly interesting material acquired its own subhead, **Endnotes**. Both **Geeks' Corner** and **Endnotes** persist to the present day. For this ebook, the now-obsolete **Geeks' Corner** bits have been deleted. Those with a desperate need to check long-dead email and web addresses can find them in the archived versions of *Ansible* at <http://news.ansible.uk/series2.html>.

Later issues of *Ansible* inevitably had a great many more active web links than in 1991-2000. A good number of those included here may no longer work. Sorry about that.

Dan Steffan's *Ansible* logo (below) initially appeared with different proportions in issue 50 – the swan song of the newsletter's first series – and has been used in this horizontally compressed form throughout the second series.

David Langford, January 2021



2011

Ansible 282, January 2011

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Web news.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Harry Bell**. Available for SAE, good resolutions, Black Tom or Leper Gin.

Traditional Sentiments. A happy 2011 to all of you, plus apologies once again to those who sent Christmas cards and didn't hear from us.

The Monster from Nowhere

Keith Brooke has relaunched InfinityPlus.co.uk (his sf website, dormant since 2007) as [an ebook imprint](#), publishing for the Kindle; other formats may follow. Five of the six initial titles consist of the collected short fiction of none other than Keith Brooke.

Roald Dahl's unfinished and long-forgotten children's story *The Eyes of Mr. Croaker* (two pages, 400 words), written in 1982 for a DIY storybook whose young readers were expected to complete the included tales, was sold on eBay for \$1,900. ([Guardian](#), 15 December) [AIP]

Michael Dirda is not afraid to admit it: 'For most of my adult life I've instinctively gravitated to works that were new, difficult, scholarly, innovative [...] As I've grown older, however, my reading has grown distinctly more childish. Not only have I gone back to Sherlock Holmes stories, I've also become a member of the Baker Street Irregulars. And the Ghost Story Society. I attend meetings of Capital! Capital!, the Washington DC chapter of the P.G. Wodehouse Society, and find myself travelling to fantasy and science fiction conventions.' (Michael Dirda, *Times Literary Supplement*, 10 December) [MV]

Harlan Ellison's first typewriter – vintage 1936-1940, used by him 1949-1954 – is being offered for a mere \$40,000 o.n.o. The great man will even include half a page of something typed on it. Serious enquiries only, to broker

David Silver: silver at photographyhistory dot com. Mr Ellison also revealed his inspiration: ‘A friend said “oh gee, you should sell it, they sold Cormac McCarthy’s typewriter.” And I said, “yeah, Cormac McCarthy who ripped off my story ‘A Boy and His Dog’ to do *The Road*.”’ That one fetched \$220,000. ([WSJ](#), 29 December) [AIP]

Frank Frazetta’s family is squabbling over the inheritance again, the former settlement having somehow become unsettled. One son, Frank Frazetta Jr (he of the backhoe attack on the paternal art museum: see A270), is suing his three siblings for alleged failure to provide accounts or his claimed 25% share of the estate. ([Boston.com](#), 16 December)

H.G. Wells, as revealed in a 1934 letter recently found in a copy of his autobiography, scorned an offer of the freedom of his home town Bromley: ‘Bromley has not been particularly gracious to me nor I to Bromley and I don’t think I want to add the freedom of Bromley to the freedom of the City of London and the freedom of the City of Brussels – both of which I have.’ This letter is now proudly displayed as a civic treasure in Bromley Museum. ([Independent](#), 29 December)

Constantia

Until 23 Jan • **Alien Invasion** (exhibition), Museum & Records Office, Portsmouth: www.portsmouthmuseums.co.uk/AlienInvasion.htm.

Until 27 Mar • **Shelley’s Ghost** (exhibition), Bodleian Library, Oxford. With *Frankenstein* MS; more. 9am-5pm; 11am-5pm Sun. Free.

26 Jan • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Antelope, 22 Eaton Terrace, London, SW1W 8EZ. 5pm for 6pm. Free. With Frances Hardinge.

3-5 Feb • **SFX Weekender 2**, Pontin’s Holiday Park, Camber Sands, E Sussex. Charged by accommodation; shared chalets only; no single rooms. See www.sfxweekender.com. Contact 08700 110034.

4-6 Feb • **Cre2c3ndo** (filk), Ramada Hotel, Grantham. Now £38/\$60/€45 reg; £25/\$47/€30 unwaged; 5-18s £1/\$1.50 per year; under-5s £1. Cheques to UK Filk Con, 16 Ann’s Rd, Cambridge, CB5 8TN.

5-6 Feb • **QED** (science/skeptics), Piccadilly Hotel, Portland St, Manchester,

M1 4PH. £99 (students £75) via www.qedcon.org only.

11-13 Feb • **SF Ball 17** (media), Carrington House Hotel, Bournemouth. Tickets from £84, £20/day Sat/Sun. See www.sfball.com.

19 Feb • **Picocon 28**, Imperial College Union, London. 10am-7/8pm. GoH Paul McAuley, Juliet McKenna, Kari Sperring. £10 reg, £8 concessions, £5 ICSF members, past GoHs free. Contact ICSF, Beit Quad, Prince Consort Road, London, SW7 2BB.

25-27 Feb • **Alt.Fiction** writing weekend, Diamond House, South Leverton, DN22 0BX. With George Mann, another TBA. £180 including food and two nights' accommodation. Contact 07896 228367.

25-27 Feb • **Redemption '11** (multimedia sf), Britannia Hotel, Fairfax St, Coventry, CV1 5RP. £60 reg. *Advance booking closes 11 February*; £65 at door, £40/day. Under-18s £15, £10/day; under 3 free. Contact 61 Chaucer Road, Farnborough, Hampshire, GU14 8SP.

26 Feb • **Cardiff International Comic Expo**, Mercure Cardiff Holland House Hotel, 24-26 Newport Road, CF24 0DD. Day ticket £5 via PayPal only at www.fantasyevents.org/cice/.

10-24 Mar • **Oxfam Bookshop**, Market Place, Reading: sf events/displays linked with sale of Brian Stableford's huge donation of books.

12 Mar • **ConJour**, Leeds Park Plaza Hotel, Leeds. CANCELLED mere weeks after being announced, and two days after its first *Ansible* listing on 1 December. See website: www.conjureevents.co.uk.

19 Mar • **Fred Hoyle Project Grand Finale** (exhibit/talks), St John's, Cambridge; part of the Cambridge Science Festival. 10am-4pm.

21-22 May • **Middle-earth Weekend**, Sarehole Mill, Cole Bank Rd, Hall Green, Birmingham. Free. See middleearthweekend.org.uk.

17-21 Aug • **Renovation** (69th Worldcon), Reno, NV, USA. \$180 reg *until 28 February*; \$50 supp; \$100 under-21s; \$75 under-17s; under-7s free. Contact PO Box 13278, Portland, OR 97213-0278, USA. Hugo nominations are now open, closing 26 March; hotel booking from 17 January; see PR3 at renovationsf.org/progress-reports.php.

30 Sep - 2 Oct • **Fantasycon 2011**, Royal Albion Hotel, Brighton. *Now £50*

reg (BFS members £45) or £40 day membership on Saturday only. Cheques (to Fantasycon 2011) to 10 Haycroft Gardens, Mastin Moor, Chesterfield, Derbyshire, S43 3FE.

4-7 Nov • **Irish Discworld Convention**, Falls Hotel, Ennistymon, Co. Clare, Ireland. €40 reg, students/under-19s €30, under-16s €15, under-8s free. See idwcon.org; irishdiscworldcon at gmail dot com.

6-9 Apr 2012 • **Olympus 2012** (Eastercon), Radisson Edwardian Hotel, Heathrow, London. *Now £55 reg, £45 unwaged.* £20 supp/under-17s, £5 under-12s, £1 under-5s. Contact 4 Evesham Green, Aylesbury, Bucks, HP19 9RX, or (email) enquiries at olympus2012 dot org.

Rumblings • *Chicon 7* (Worldcon 2012, Chicago) rates did not rise as threatened on 1 January but are being held until Spring 2011.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. Nicholas Barber reviews *Tron: Legacy*: ‘Just as often, though, it overshoots into the psychedelic campness of *Barbarella*. Not that there’s anything wrong with that. After all, isn’t science fiction supposed to be barmy? [...] *Tron: Legacy* is a Walt Disney sequel targeted at hippies whose shelves are piled with Isaac Asimov paperbacks.’ ([Independent On Sunday](#), 19 December) [MPJ] Oh, *those* hippies.

Awards. *The Arthur C. Clarke Award*, whose 25th presentation will be in 2011, has issued an open letter asking for thoughts on its future now that funding from the Clarke estate has ceased. Should it retain the focus on UK publication? (Most people seem to think so.) Would it be just as prestigious if the cash prize were £20.11 rather than £2011? (Er um.) More at <http://tinyurl.com/3xt9kq4>.

- **British Independent Film Awards:** Gareth Edwards won as director for *Monsters*, which also won for Achievement in Production and Visual Effects. [MPJ]

- **BSFA Awards** nominations are now open, closing on 14 January: members can email their choices to awards at bsfa dot co dot uk.

- **Women in Film and TV Awards:** writer’s category won by Jane Goldman, author of film screenplays for *Kick Ass* and the coming *X-Men: First Class*. [MPJ]

The Weakest Link. *Anne Robinson:* ‘In libraries, which hyphenated term includes all books, except novels or works inspired by the imagination?’ *Male Contestant:* ‘Science fiction.’ *AR:* ‘According to folklore, the plant wolfsbane is worn to ward off what – drunkenness or werewolves?’ *Female contestant:* ‘Drunkenness.’ *AR:* ‘In which 1968 science fiction film did Charlton Heston utter the line, “Take your stinking paws off me”?’ *Young male contestant:* ‘2001: A Space Odyssey.’ (1 December) *AR:* The artist who’s illustrated most of the books written by Roald Dahl is Quentin who? *Elderly female contestant:* Crisp. (2 December) [MPJ]

R.I.P. *Elisabeth Beresford* (1926-2010), UK children’s author whose *The Wombles* (1968) led to many further books and short BBC films about these cuddly and precociously eco-aware creatures, died on 24 December aged 84. Another series, the ‘Magic’ fantasies in the vein of E. Nesbit, began with *Awkward Magic* (1964). Beresford received the MBE in 1998.

- *Blake Edwards* (1922-2010), US screenwriter and director best known for the Pink Panther films, died on 15 December aged 88. His screenplays include the sf comedy *The Atomic Kid* (1954); he also directed and co-wrote the supernatural tv movie *Justin Case* (1988). [SG]
- *Anne Francis* (1930-2010), US actress who played Altaira in *Forbidden Planet* (1956) and made several later genre appearances, died on 2 January aged 80. [SG]
- *Lamont Johnson* (1922-2010), US film/tv director whose genre credits included eight 1960s *Twilight Zone* episodes and *Spacehunter: Adventures in the Forbidden Zone* (1983), died on 24 October aged 88. [MPJ]
- *Rebecca Neason* (1954-2010), US author who debuted with the *Star Trek:TNG* tie *Guises of the Mind* (1993), also publishing two *Highlander* spinoffs and three original fantasy novels, died on 31 August; she was 55. [JF via MG]
- *Ruth Park* (1917-2010), New Zealand-born Australian mainstream novelist whose children’s books include the fine time-travel fantasy *Playing Beatie Bow* (1980), died on 16 December aged 93. [PDF]
- *Pete Postlethwaite* (1946-2011), UK actor whose many genre credits include *Alien 3* (1993), *The Lost World: Jurassic Park* (1997), *Æon Flux* (2005) and *Inception* (2010), died on 2 January; he was 64. [AW]
- *Adrienne Roy* (1953-2010), DC comics colorist who worked on hundreds of issues of *Batman*, *Detective Comics* and *New Teen Titans*, died on 14 December. [SFS]

- *Takeshi Watabe* (1936-2010), Japanese actor who had voice roles in many anime series, including *Doraemon* and *Mobile Suit Gundam 0083*, died on 13 December aged 74. [SFS]

As Others See Us II. The *Bay Area Reporter* recommends San Francisco's Borderlands sf bookshop: 'The store's a treasure-trove for nerds of all shapes and sizes, and friendly guides like Jude Feldman will be happy to show you their favorite picks. Keep an eye out for *Surface Detail*, an operatic novel set in space ...' [JL] Thog is trying to construct a quip about Samuel Butler's *Erewhon* and its Musical Banks.

The Rank Is But The Genre Stamp. Sf/fantasy stamps from the Royal Mail this year include an 11 January homage to Gerry Anderson's tv productions: *Supercar* (50th anniversary in 2011), *Fireball XL5*, *Stingray*, *Thunderbirds*, *Captain Scarlet* and *Joe 90*, with innovative moving-image stamps of Thunderbirds 1 to 4 launching. On 8 March the theme is 'Magical Realms', not only Arthurian fantasy but modern works by Terry Pratchett and J.K. Rowling (not apparently moving). [DVB]

Outraged Letters. *M.K. Digre* on Google's cautious handling of Philip K. Dick (A279): 'On a similar note, one photo-sharing site displays pictures of small offset presses without complaint, but the captions sanitize the name of the manufacturer as "A. B. XXXX". R.I.P. Albert Blake etc.'

- *Steve Green* writes: 'I note that the executive producers on Channel Four's BAFTA-nominated superhero show *Misfits* include one Petra Fried. Perhaps she was an exceptionally scary baby.'
- *Steve Sneyd* heard Sarah Hall talking about her *The Carhullan Army* on Radio 4 Book Club and approved: 'Though book wasn't marketed as sf, was very upfront about it being sf, value of sf to her as a writer, and "cross-generational conversation" with earlier sf; she specifically cited Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*, saying her own tale [was] in part a reaction against passivity under oppression of female characters in *THT*.'
- *Gary Wilkinson* also remembered the idylls of Novacon (see A281): 'The experiment by a certain I. Banks to see if nipples do go spung was certainly memorable. One extra highlight, for me, was the lecture/panel on the science of sound in astronomy. This was really interesting but unfortunately time-tabled rather early and in a room with very subdued lighting ... at one point I looked around and just about everyone around me (naming no names ... well OK Ken MacLeod I remember) had nodded off. (I'm a natural insomniac and

even I felt a bit sleepy myself.) The lecture would be interrupted by the occasional loud, demonstrational bang or other sound effect, which would have everyone blinking awake before heads would start nodding again....’

As Others See Us III. Tolkien – who he? ‘When JK Rowling’s Harry Potter books became a literary sensation in the late 1990s, the fantasy genre – hitherto a characteristically nerdy corner of publishing – went mainstream.’ (Alice-Azania Jarvis, *Independent*, 2 December) [MPJ]

Random Fandom. *Jim Caughran* has abandoned his project to construct an updated *Fancylopedia* (see fancylopedia.editme.com), and hopes that someone else, or some committee, will take it over. [AIP] Fans who’d tried it said the editor interface was horrible.

- *Richard Lynch* proposes a [Fanzine/Semiprozine Hugo reform](#) which would exclude all paying publications from Fanzine, and audio/video from both categories, with a new ‘Best Fan Audio or Video Production’ category.

We Are Everywhere. More sf imagery in politics, as *Independent* columnist ‘High Street Ken’ distances himself from mockery of a squat and corpulent Tory: ‘Just this week, I’ve repeatedly declined suggestions I mention the Communities Secretary Eric Pickles is a “dead ringer” for Doctor Who’s dastardly alien foes the Sontarans.’ (16 December) [MPJ] Also, former David Cameron adviser Danny Kruger looks back at the coalition of 2010: ‘British politics represented a dystopian sci-fi vision in which a strange, beautiful creature arrived from another world, first to be worshipped, then reviled: carried aloft in April, poked to death with sharpened sticks in December.’ (ft.com, 22 December) [MMW]

The Dead Past. *Sherry Gottlieb* was moved to reminiscences of a long-past decade by the A281 item about aged sf professionals with wandering hands: ‘Back in the ’70s, I entered the lobby of a Worldcon hotel, wearing hip-hugger jeans and a midriff top (as I was then young and had the body for it); I had not yet checked in and wasn’t wearing a name tag. My progress was stopped by Isaac Asimov, whom I’d never met, so he couldn’t have known for sure that I was there for the Con. / Asimov put his finger in my navel and said, “Nice tits. May I cop a feel?” / I said no and walked on, noticing his surprise that he’d been turned down. / The next evening was the con’s Meet the Authors signing event, and I’d brought a few of my favorite first editions to get signatures, among them my first eds of Asimov’s Foundation Trilogy. I

went up to Asimov and said, “Mr. Asimov, would you please sign these for me?” He said, “Aren’t you the girl who wouldn’t let me cop a feel yesterday?” “Yes,” I said. “Then I’m not signing your books,” he replied. / I was aghast that the great author was an offensive old lech. Someone nearby – I believe it was John Douglas – overheard; he told me to give him my Asimov books to him, and he got them signed for me.’

Toy Story. One of Hasbro’s *Transformers* models in the ‘Power Core Combiners’ range has been deemed unsuitable for UK release owing to its evocative name: ‘Spastic with Stunticons’. ([The Register](#), 18 November)

Magazine Scene. *Locus* began e-publishing its full content with issue 600, January 2011: subscriptions are available in various formats.

- *Wendy Bradley* conducts the last rites: ‘... I must finally lay *Farthing* to rest by disposing of the unsold copies. I’ll be sending them off for recycling but before I do that, does anyone have a use for them? [...] Collect from Sheffield or pay for shipping: magazines free. Several hundred available, issues 1-4 only, mostly issue 1. Contact me by leaving a comment at my website, wendybradley.net.’

Fanfundery. *Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund* candidates for the 2011 race (from Europe to North America and Renovation) emerged in a sudden rush as the deadline neared, until there were four: Graham Charnock, John Coxon, Liam Proven and Paul Treadaway. The ballot is available at taff.org.uk in HTML, PDF and Word formats. Voting deadline: 12 March.

Thog’s Masterclass. *New Year Similes Special*. ‘... a very unpleasant smile had crept across his face like a melanoma in time-lapse.’ ‘Then he halted abruptly and the smile fell off his face like a badger off a billiard cue.’ (both Jonathan L. Howard, *Johannes Cabal the Necromancer*, 2009)

- ‘Diversity bounced around like marbles on concrete.’ (Steve Martin, *An Object of Beauty*, 2010) [MMW]

- ‘... the traced stains on her jeans looked as black as accusations’ ‘Infelice shed distress like damaged jewels.’ ‘Wreathed around her limbs, her bedizened garment resembled weeping woven of gemstones and recrimination.’ ‘... as profound as orogeny’ ‘At once, Infelice fled like a wail from the hollow.’ ‘... as sure of himself as a plinth of marble.’ ‘But it evaded him, illusive as a swarm of gnats.’ ‘The branching of the [*malachite*] veins through the obsidian gave them an eerie resemblance to the grass stains on

Linden's jeans.' 'Like the barking of ghouls, Jeremiah began to laugh.' 'He was merely a spectator, as oneiric as a figment ...' 'Stave and Pahni gained substance until they were definite as promises.' 'Around Linden, the wan glitter of starlight lay like immanence on the friable crust.' 'And Covenant's absence was as plain as a seizure.' '... flames as poignant as lamentation' '... as empty of consciousness as an abandoned farmhouse' '... as salubrious as a feast.' 'In hollows like denuded swales ...' 'Cold and scalding as congealed fire, the flat wilderland ached towards its illimitable horizons.' (all Stephen R. Donaldson, *Against All Things Ending*, 2010)

- *Apocalyptic Proctalgia Dept.* 'Ere long, its hunger will become a convulsion in the fundament of the Earth.' (*Ibid*)

- *Invective Dept, Possibly Commenting On Much Of The Above:* 'Puerile wight!' (*Ibid*)

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 14 January 2011: Brum Group, Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre: 7:30pm for 8pm. AGM/Auction. £4; members £3. Contact 07845 897760 or bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future meetings: 11 February, Quiz; 11 March, Frances Hardinge; 8 April, Robert Rankin; 13 May, John Meaney; 10 June, BSFG 40th anniversary party; 8 July, Ian Stewart; 12 August, Summer Social at different venue (Black Eagle); 9 September, Liz Williams TBC.

Editorial. As usual, several news items – especially the death of Anne Francis – were sent by multiple readers. Many thanks for all inputs, though for the sake of sanity *Ansible* normally credits the first source only. Special thanks too to Hazel, for taking this issue to the printers while I wasn't feeling too well.

- On the last day of 2010 your editor managed to publish another issue of *Cloud Chamber*, mostly notes on books read since July (you are warned that one contains eldritch theurgies, evanescent mansuetude and heinous brume): <http://ansible.co.uk/cc/cc162.html>

C.o.A. *Lilian Edwards* (yet again since 'the Sheffield home address is totally dead as is the Sheffield work address'), 39 (1F2) Viewforth, Edinburgh EH10

4JE. Sheffield email will also expire soon.

Autobiography. David Redd reports that friends of the late UK sf author Eric C. Williams (1918-2010; see A272) have published his ‘incomplete, but interesting’ autobiography through Lulu.com.

<http://www.lulu.com/product/paperback/for-mona/10672664>

Ansible 282 Copyright © David Langford, 2011. Thanks to David V. Barrett, Paul Di Filippo, Jim Fiscus, Mike Glyer, Steve Green, Rob Jackson/Inca, Martyn P. Jackson, Jeremy Lassen, Andrew I. Porter, SF Site, Andrew Wells, Martin Morse Wooster, and our Hero Distributors: Dave Corby (Birmingham SF Group), SCIS/Prophecy, Alan Stewart (Australia). 4 Jan 2011.

Ansible 283, February 2011

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Web news.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or remainders of *The Boke of Palimpsest*.

Theories of Everything

Orson Scott Card had a minor stroke on 1 January. From his website: ‘He is now back home, retraining his brain so that the fingers of his left hand strike the keys he’s aiming for. [... H]e is grateful for your good wishes and he promises not to die with any series unfinished.’ [L]

Neil Gaiman and Amanda Palmer were married on 3 January.

John Grisham explained his 2010 move into children’s fiction: ‘I’m trying to catch Harry Potter [...] Back in the Nineties I was routinely introduced as the bestselling author in the world and I was trying to act like it was no big deal, then along came Harry Potter and, suddenly, I became No 2. I really miss being No 1.’ ([Independent, 30 January](#)) [MPJ]

Alan Garner was awarded an honorary Doctor of Letters degree by the [University of Warwick](#) on 20 January, following 2010’s celebrations of the fiftieth anniversary of *The Weirdstone of Brisingamen*. [NJ]

Jack Ketchum (pseudonym of Dallas Mayr) is to be this year’s World Horror Convention Grand Master for life achievement. [L]

Ursula K. Le Guin mocked HarperCollins’s new contract clause threatening cancellation if ‘Author’s conduct evidences a lack of due regard for public conventions and morals, or if Author commits a crime or any other act that will tend to bring Author into serious contempt ...’ Le Guin reveals: ‘There is nothing for it now but to confess everything. Before I wrote my book *Emily Brontë and the Vampires of Lustbaden*, which you published this fall and which has been on the Times Best Seller List for five straight months, I

committed bad behavior and said bad words in public that brought me into serious contempt in my home town of Blitzen, Oregon. In fact the people there found me so seriously contemptible that I am now living in Maine under the name of Trespassers W.’ (© Ursulakleguin.com, January) There is much more.

Michael Moorcock reported new toe woes: ‘All efforts to save my wounded foot without resort to surgery have been made and now, somewhat inconveniently, I’m seeing a surgeon tomorrow (Monday) re. amputation. Shouldn’t be too serious, though, as I said somewhere, I feel a bit fed up with constantly supplying Mrs Lovett for tidbits for her bloody pies....’ (www.multiverse.org, 9 January) [RH] *Ansible* gathers that only one (more) toe was involved; the operation was a success; and Mike seems cheerful: ‘Main problem now is finding a shoe store that will sell me a size 11 and a size 8 as a pair....’ (*Ibid*, 13 January)

Shaun Tan’s film *The Lost Thing*, which he based on his illustrated book of the same name and co-directed with Andrew Ruhemann, is a 2011 Oscar finalist in the Short Film (Animated) category. [L]

Condorcet

3-6 Feb • **SFX Weekender 2**, Pontin’s Holiday Park, Camber Sands, E Sussex. Charged by accommodation; shared chalets only; no single rooms. See www.sfxweekender.com. Contact 08700 110034.

4-6 Feb • **Cre2c3ndo** (filk), Ramada Hotel, Grantham. £38/\$60/€45 reg; £25/\$47/€30 unwaged; 5-18s £1/\$1.50 per year; under-5s £1. Cheques to UK Filk Con, 16 Ann’s Rd, Cambridge, CB5 8TN.

5-6 Feb • **QED** (science/skeptics), Piccadilly Hotel, Portland St, Manchester, M1 4PH. £99 (students £75) via www.qedcon.org only.

11-13 Feb • **SF Ball 17** (media), Carrington House Hotel, Bournemouth. Tickets from £84, £20/day Sat/Sun. See www.sfball.com.

17 Feb • **SF & International Orders**, Sheikh Zayed Theatre, LSE, London. J.C. Grimwood, K. MacLeod, P. McAuley. 1:15pm. Free.

19 Feb • **Picocon 28**, Imperial College Union, London. 10am-7/8pm. £10 reg

at door; £8 concessions; £5 ICSF members; past GoHs free. Contact ICSF, Beit Quad, Prince Consort Road, London, SW7 2BB.

19-20 Feb • **Epic Con**, NUIM Campus, Maynooth, Ireland. €12 reg at the door only; €8 per day; €5 for local Omega Soc members; under-8s €2. Contact nuim dot omega at gmail dot com.

23 Feb • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Antelope, 22 Eaton Terrace, London, SW1W 8EZ. 5pm for 6pm. Free. With Matt Brooker.

25-27 Feb • **Alt.Fiction** writing weekend, Diamond House, South Leverton, DN22 0BX. Added speaker: Sarah Pinborough. £180 including food and two nights' accommodation. Contact 07896 228367.

25-27 Feb • **Redemption '11** (multimedia sf), Britannia Hotel, Fairfax St, Coventry, CV1 5RP. £60 reg. *Advance booking closes 11 February*; £65 at door, £40/day. Under-18s £15, £10/day; under 3 free. Contact 61 Chaucer Road, Farnborough, Hampshire, GU14 8SP.

26 Feb • **Cardiff International Comic Expo**, Mercure Cardiff Holland House Hotel, 24-26 Newport Road, CF24 0DD. Day ticket £5 via PayPal only at www.fantasyevents.org/cice/.

5-6 Mar • **Microcon 31**, Junior Common Room, University of Exeter. Various speakers. £14 reg at the door only; EUSFS members £8. Contact mp236 at exeter dot ac dot uk.

10-24 Mar • **Oxfam Bookshop**, Market Place, Reading: sf events/displays linked with sale of Brian Stableford's huge donation of books.

9-10 Apr • **Kapow!** (comics), Business Design Centre, Islington, London. Tickets £25.50 or £15.30/day from www.kapowcomiccon.com in advance only. Maura McHugh and others have noted without great surprise that the 40 confirmed guests include no women at all.

27 Apr • **Clarke Award** presentation, London. By invitation.

17-21 Aug • **Renovation** (69th Worldcon), Reno, NV, USA. \$180 reg *until 28 February*; \$50 supp; \$100 under-21s; \$75 under-17s; under-7s free. Contact PO Box 13278, Portland, OR 97213-0278, USA. Hugo nominations are now open, closing 26 March; hotel booking from 17 January; see PR3 at renovationsf.org/progress-reports.php.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. It's well known that Kazuo Ishiguro's clone-themed novel *Never Let Me Go* (shortlisted for the 2006 Clarke Award) can't be sf, simply because the author is too respectable ever to write such stuff. Now comes the rigorous explanation which makes it all clear: 'It isn't science fiction – indeed its procedures are the very reverse of generic, for there is no analogy at work in the text, which instead labours to produce its iterative naturalism as a kind of sub-set or derivation of our own.' (Rachel Cusk, *Guardian*, 29 January) Q.E.D. [CM]

Award Shortlists. **BSFA:** NOVEL Paolo Bacigalupi, *The Windup Girl*; Lauren Beukes, *Zoo City*; Ken Macleod, *The Restoration Game*; Ian McDonald, *The Dervish House*; Tricia Sullivan, *Lightborn*. **SHORT** Nina Allan, 'Flying in the Face of God' (*Interzone* 227); Aliette de Bodard, 'The Shipmaker' (*Interzone* 231); Peter Watts, 'The Things' (*Clarkesworld* 40); Neil Williamson, 'Arrhythmia' (*Music for Another World*). **NON-FICTION** Paul Kincaid, Blogging the Hugos: Decline (Big Other); Abigail Nussbaum, review: *With Both Feet in the Clouds* (Asking the Wrong Questions); Adam Roberts, review: *Wheel of Time* (Punkadiddle); Francis Spufford, *Red Plenty*; Jonathan Strahan and Gary K. Wolfe, the Notes from Coode Street podcast. **ART** (all covers) Andy Bigwood, *Conflicts*; Charlie Harbour, *Fun With Rainbows* by Gareth Owens; Dominic Harman, *Cat's Cradle* by Kurt Vonnegut; Joey Hi-Fi, *Zoo City* by Lauren Beukes; Ben Greene, *Crossed Genres 21*; Adam Tredowski, *Finch* by Jeff Vandermeer.

- **Edgar** (mystery) nominations include three fantasies: Barnabas Miller & Jordan Orlando, *7 Souls* and Robert Paul Weston, *Dust City* in YA; Duane Swierczynski, *Expiration Date* in PB Original. [L]
- **Oscars:** Best Picture nominees include *Inception* and *Toy Story 3*. (And the corresponding Razzies 'Worst Picture' shortlist features *The Last Airbender*, *Twilight: Eclipse* and *Vampires Suck*.)
- **Philip K. Dick:** Jon Armstrong, *Yarn*; Elizabeth Bear, *Chill*; Alden Bell, *The Reapers are the Angels*; Sara Creasy, *Song of Scarabaeus*; Mark Hodder, *The Strange Affair of Spring Heeled Jack*; Project Itoh (translated by Alexander O. Smith), *Harmony*; James Knapp, *State of Decay*. [GVG]

Weakest Links. *John Humphrys:* 'Which legendary king owned a magic sword called Excalibur?'? *Alleged Celebrity:* 'Herod.' (*Celebrity*

Mastermind, BBC1) [PI]

- *Anne Robinson*: ‘The surname of which *Star Trek* character is also the Swahili word for freedom?’ *Female contestant*: ‘Sulu.’ (*The Weakest Link*, BBC1, 11 January) [MPJ]

R.I.P. *Neil Barron* (1934-2010), US bibliographer and editor best known for the five editions of his massive *Anatomy of Wonder: A Critical Guide to Science Fiction* (1976 to 2004), died on 5 September 2010. [L] He received a 1982 Pilgrim Award for his work.

- *John Barry* (1933-2011), UK composer and conductor whose film credits included *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* (1972), *King Kong* (1976), *Starcrash* (1979), *The Black Hole* (1979), *Howard the Duck* (1986), *Peggy Sue Got Married* (1986) and 11 James Bond films, died on 30 January aged 77. [SG/AW]

- *Charlie Callas* (1924-2011), US comedian who voiced Elliot the dragon in *Pete’s Dragon* (1977) and had small parts in various genre films (also *The Munsters*), died on 27 January; he was 86. [AIP]

- *Nicholas Trofimovich Chadovich* (1948-2011), Byelorussian author who wrote much sf since 1983 in collaboration with Yuri Mikhailovich Brayder, died on 21 January; he was 62. [JCo]

- *Bernd Eichinger* (1949-2011), German film producer/director whose genre work includes *The NeverEnding Story* (1984), *Prince Valiant* (1997), three *Fantastic Four* films, four *Resident Evil* films, and much more, died on 24 January. He was 61. [AW]

- *John Iggulden* (1917-2010), Australian writer whose one sf novel was the dystopian *Breakthrough* (1960), died on 8 October last year; he was 93. [SL]

- *Melissa Mia Hall* (1956-2011), US author of short fiction for various anthologies and magazines, and editor of the anthology *Wild Women* (1997), died unexpectedly on 29 January. [HW via LP] *Later*: [the sad story](#).

- *Dick King-Smith* (1922-2011), UK author whose more than 130 books for children include animal stories such as *The Sheep-Pig* (1983, filmed as *Babe*) and magical fantasies such as *The Queen’s Nose* (1983; three BBC series 1995-1998), died on 4 January aged 88. He received the OBE in 2010.

- *Ruth Kyle* (1930-2011), popular US fan and convention-goer who was secretary of the 1956 NYC Worldcon and married for 53 years to Dave Kyle (who survives her), died on 5 January; she was 81. [AIP]

- *Jerry Weist* (1949-2011), US author, book/comics dealer and comics expert who wrote *Ray Bradbury: An Illustrated Life* (2002) and three editions of *The*

Comic Art Price Guide, died on 7 January aged 61. [L]

- *Lan Wright* (Lionel Percy Wright, 1923-2010), UK author whose first sf story appeared in *New Worlds* in 1952, and who published six novels 1957-1968, died last October aged 87. [JC]
- *Peter Yates* (1929-2011), UK-born film director whose sf venture was *Krull* (1983), died on 9 January; he was 81. [PDF] Yates directed the 1964 film of N.F. Simpson's bizarrely surreal play *One Way Pendulum* (1960).
- *Susannah York* (1939-2011), noted UK actress whose best-known genre part was as Superman's mother Lara in three *Superman* films (1978, II 1980, IV 1987), died on 14 January aged 72. [GD/AW]

As Others Avoid Us. The BBC's forthcoming *Outcasts* takes place on a far world colonized after Earth's nuclear holocaust: 'But don't call it sci-fi, which is pretty much a banned word on set,' warns the *Daily Mail*. Set designer James North of *Doctor Who* explains: 'Sci-fi has its own dedicated TV channel, and the BBC doesn't want to give the impression it's putting out a sci-fi show on prime-time BBC1.' Unthinkable! 'This is futuristic drama with the focus on pioneering humans who, out of necessity, just happen to be living on a planet that isn't Earth. There are sci-fi elements to the drama. But in terms of the sets and the dressing, we've tried to make it as Earthbound as possible. So no sonic screwdrivers.' Admittedly the South African setting has 'such spectacular and unusual scenery you could almost believe you were on an alien planet.' But series creator Ben Richards nervously adds '... an alien planet without scary monsters. Little green men and fearsome creatures isn't what *Outcasts* is about at all.' (all *Daily Mail*, 29 January) [JB]

Awards. *American Library Association (ALA)*, YA division: Margaret Edwards award for life achievement, Terry Pratchett; Prinz for novel, *Shipbreaker* by Paolo Bacigalupi. [FM]

- *Crawford* (fantasy by a new author): Karen Lord, *Redemption in Indigo*.
- *Fan Activity Achievement (FAAn)*: note that voting closes on 4 February, 8am PST. Email votes are allowed. See corflu.org/FaanBallot2011.pdf.
- *The Widely Derided Golden Globes*: Best Animation was won by *Toy Story 3*. [MPJ]

We Are Everywhere, Unfortunately. Let's all hope that future US profiling intended to spot potential lunatic gunmen doesn't focus too much on the genre content of Jared Loughner's reading list: 'Among the books that he would later cite as his favorites: "Animal Farm," "Fahrenheit 451," "Mein

Kampf” and “The Communist Manifesto.” Also: “Peter Pan.” (New York Times, 15 January) [TW]

As Others See Our Literati. ‘You Brits lack a daffy, antic, nincompoop side to your character. This is not to say that you’re all in your right minds. But you do not do things by halves. You are never *slightly* weird. In my personal experience everyone in the British Isles is either frightfully normal or Jeanette Winterson.’ (P.J. O’Rourke, 1995)

Magazine Scene. The Czech sf magazine *Ikarie* ceased with its 247th issue (November 2010): the publisher wanted to focus on lifestyle magazines. *XB-1*, launched in December, has the same editors and uses much material that had been prepared for *Ikarie* 248. [JS via SW]

Blurbismo. Cemetery Dance, announcing the publication of a new collection by Brian Hodge, quotes Stanley Wiater’s alluring judgement that Hodge offers ‘dark fiction so numbing cold and cutting edge you had better hold on to your ass with your free hand.’ [MMW]

Court Circular. In January, US judge Shira Sheindlin [threw out the claim](#) by the Adrian Jacobs estate that J.K. Rowling’s huge great fat *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* plagiarized Jacobs’s 36-page *The Adventures of Willy the Wizard*: ‘The contrast between the total concept and feel of the works is so stark that any serious comparison of the two strains credulity.’ The [identically meritless](#) UK lawsuit continues.

Random Fandom. [The Australian SF Bullsheet](#), the monthly newsletter which suspended publication last August, restarted with Wendy Palmer as editor. News to sfbullsheel at gmail dot com.

• *Mike Glicksohn* is again being treated for cancer, and for the first time in 38 years had to miss *Confusion* in Michigan (January). [AIP] Wish him luck.

Library of Babel. Philip Pullman’s tirade against Oxford library closures (<http://tinyurl.com/pullman-wrath>) has been much admired. Imagine his reaction to the associate director of a US library that’s going digital, who identifies the two main sources of Bad Attitude: ‘I blame Ray Bradbury and Hitler. People think of getting rid of books as being almost an immoral thing.’ (*Johns Hopkins Magazine*, 6 December) [PL]

The Dead Past. *50 Years Ago*, Kingsley Amis was announced as the Eastercon GoH: ‘I believe that this is the first time in the history of sf fandom

that a main stream writer who has but dabbled in sf has been invited to a convention in this honoured capacity and the move certainly reflects the committee's enterprise.' ([Skyrack 29](#), February 1961)

O Pioneers. 'The internet has altered our lives in ways television never did or could, but mainstream literary novelists – by which I mean writers who specialise in realistic, character-based narratives – have mostly shied away from writing about this, perhaps hoping that, like TV, it could be safely ignored. They've ceded the field to authors of speculative fiction, such as William Gibson and Cory Doctorow, whose hacker and brand-ninja characters exist primarily to explain or propound ideas about bleeding-edge technology, or thriller writers who concoct ingenious but outlandish tales about the potential nightmares lurking in same' (Laura Miller, *Guardian*, 15 January) [MMW]

Fanfundery. *Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund* candidates for the 2011 race (from Europe to North America and Renovation) emerged in a rush as the deadline neared, until there were four: Graham Charnock, John Coxon, Liam Proven and Paul Treadaway. Ballots – revised since first release, to include PayPal payment details – are available in [HTML](#), [PDF](#) and [Word](#) formats at taff.org.uk. The voting deadline, first announced as 12 March, has been extended to just after Eastercon: 26 April 2011.

Yo-Ho-Ho! 2010's most net-pirated films were *Avatar* (16.58 million downloads), *Kick-Ass* (11.4) and *Inception* (9.72), with further genre titles in the top ten. (BBC/TorrentFreak, 22 December) [MPJ] Tut-tut.

C.o.A. *Melbourne SF Club*, PO Box 23047, Docklands, Vic 8012, Australia. *Alan Stewart*, PO Box 7111, Richmond, Vic 3121, Australia. (Australia Post shut down their former World Trade Centre PO boxes.)

Prophet and Loss. Michael Flynn looked at *Analog* predictions in the magazine's 60th anniversary issue (January 1990), noting Hayden Howard's 'The Biggest Oil Disaster' (February 1970) as a title that 'may conjure thoughts of the Exxon Valdez, except that it involved a blowout of an off-shore oil platform. As usual, the *Analog* story involved the conflict between those who try to fix the problem and those who try to fix the blame.' Cut to 2010 and *Deepwater Horizon*.... [AL]

Thog's Masterclass. *Monster Metaphor Dept.* '... when beholding the

tranquil beauty and brilliancy of the ocean's skin, one forgets the tiger heart that pants beneath it; and would not willingly remember, that this velvet paw but conceals a remorseless fang.' (Herman Melville, *Moby-Dick*, 1851)

[ECL]

• *Dept of Female Emotion*. [She falls into his arms crying:] 'The teacup-sized tears splashed down the front of his shirt ...' (Silas Water, *The Man with Absolute Motion*, 1955)

• *Alternative Energy Sources Debunked*. '... you dare not use the power of the tides, for that would slow the Earth and destroy its entire ecology ...' (*Ibid*)

• *Neat Tricks Dept*. 'Her eyebrows did a confused dance across her forehead.' 'Her smile slid to the floor, melting with the frozen snow.' (both Sonny Whitelaw, *Stargate SG-1: City of the Gods*, 2005) [SM]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 11 February 2011: Brum Group, Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre: 7:30pm for 8pm. Quiz night. £4; members £3. Contact 07845 897760 or bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future meetings: 11 March, Frances Hardinge; 8 April, Robert Rankin; 13 May, John Meaney; 10 June, BSGF 40th anniversary party; 8 July, Ian Stewart; 12 August, Summer Social at different venue (Black Eagle); 9 September, Liz Williams TBC.
- 18 February 2011: Bryan Talbot talks to Steve Bell at LSE Literary Festival. 12.30-2pm. Free entry, open to the public. Wolfson Theatre, New Academic Building, Houghton St, Charing Cross, London, WC2A 2AE.
- 2 March 2011: Bryan Talbot presentation/signing. 5pm. Free. Room A46, Trent Building, University Park Campus, University of Nottingham.
- 26 March 2011: Bryan Talbot (what, him *again*?) signings. 12 noon at Forbidden Planet, 40-41 Southbridge Street, Edinburgh, EH1 1LL (0131 558 8226). 4pm, followed by 6pm presentation, at Plan B Books, 5 Osborne St, Glasgow. G1 5QN (0141 237 1137).

The Intellectual Fashion Accessory is the *Guardian's* term for a range of ladies' bags hand-stitched by Olympia Le-Tan (who?) to look just like books. Genre selections include not only *Nineteen Eighty-Four* but, rather less predictably, William Tenn's *Of All Possible Worlds* and Captain W.E. Johns's *The Quest for the Perfect Planet*. Perhaps we could send Le-Tan

some stylish, intellectual Badger books as future inspiration? (*Guardian*, 22 January, via David Garnett)

Editorial. Thog had to send out a distress call owing to shortage of material – special thanks to those who rallied round. Have we come to the bottom of the Thog barrel at last? Is no one perpetrating this stuff any more? (Please note that fanfiction and Bulwer-Lytton competition entries are not eligible. Thog preys on pros’ prose.) Your desperate editor had to bite the bullet and actually *read* a whole book from the Probable Thog shelf. There are no prizes for deducing which.

Thog’s Second Helping. *Safe Haven Dept.* [Our characters disembark into an alien dome surrounded by blue fire:] “We landed on a sun,” he said slowly. / “A sun?” / “A blue star – the double or triple companion of Regulus. Probably a small star but a hot one. Blue indicates a surface temperature of around 20,000 degrees Centigrade.” / “But why?” / “Probably for safety. What kind of being could come through this heat without proper preparation?” / “The dome must be a perfect insulator.” / “Either that, or they use the heat for refrigeration.” (Silas Water, *The Man with Absolute Motion*, 1955)

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Ansible 284, March 2011

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Web news.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE, flattery, or Ortnitz's unattainable end.

Yon Bonnie Banks

Iain Banks is now a recognized tourist attraction in VisitScotland's latest guide to literary Scotland: 'Iain Banks (b.1954), novelist, author of numerous sensational works combining fluent storytelling, political engagement and moral indignation, and many science fiction novels.' (issued 21 February) [DH] At least the sf isn't sensational.

Guillermo del Toro explained his personal vision of H.P. Lovecraft's *At the Mountains of Madness*: "The architecture of the Old Ones was based on "curves and cylinders," he said. "There are no steps, no ramparts. And the edifices are not at all human. There's no balconies or doorways." The city resembled a labyrinth of pneumatic tubes. / As del Toro had promised, the city's form intimated the silhouette of the Old Ones. "They are essentially suppositories," he said. "They sort of torpedo through the tubes." But didn't Lovecraft write that they had wings? Del Toro smiled: wings and tentacles had been hidden inside the ovoid silhouette. An Old One opened up "like a Swiss Army knife." His planned filmic subtleties are also revealed: 'Having read the script, I knew that the body count would be high.

("BAMMMMM!!!! A massive Shoggoth explodes out from the tower!!!! It grabs and devours Gordon in mid-sentence!") But del Toro promised that the film was "not gory." (Daniel Zalewski, [The New Yorker](#), 7 February) [MF]

Kazuo Ishiguro is not a science fiction denialist: 'It's almost like they've given us older writers licence to use it. Before, it was ghettoised and stigmatised. For years there has been a prejudice towards sci-fi writing, which I think has been to the loss of the literary world, and not vice versa. But with things like graphic novels now, people are taking it seriously.' Still,

he has misgivings: ‘In truth, the sci-fi label is misleading. I’m just wary like everybody else that it’ll bring in the wrong audience with the wrong expectations.’ ([Herald](#), 4 February) [PC]

Stephen King is being sued for plagiarism. The claim is that chunks of his 2008 novel *Duma Key* were stolen from plaintiff Rod Marquardt’s 2002 *Keller’s Den* (publishers: the dread PublishAmerica). The first smoking gun in Marquardt’s legal filing is an astonishing similarity between his book’s hypnotic state that ‘controlled him like the talons of an eagle wrapped around a harmless garter snake’, and King’s ‘I was like a bird hypnotized by a snake.’ What’s more, both novels use the word ‘earthbound’ and – in the rescue sense – ‘cavalry’! *Duma Key* mentions Garrison Keillor, whose name sounds uncannily like Keller! Digital clock-radios read 2:19 (original creation) and 3:19 (blatant theft). A fiancée in one novel and a frog in the other *both have sharp teeth*. Characters in each book say ‘What do you think?’, words never before strung together in that order.... Also cited are various horror/suspense tropes or clichés that weren’t new in 2002 either, in particular that of an artist whose talent is affected by occult influence. Marquardt has a bad case of Willy the Wizard syndrome: see [A264](#), [A272](#), [A283](#). King and his publishers have entered a robust defence asking for the complaint to be dismissed with prejudice. ([Making Light](#), 20 February)

Paul Krugman on US Gross Domestic Product figures: ‘Maybe the real point here is to remember, always, that economic statistics are a peculiarly boring sub-genre of science fiction; extremely useful, but not to be treated as absolute truth.’ (*New York Times*, 2 February) [KH]

Christopher Lee received the top British Academy of Film & TV Arts honour – a BAFTA Fellowship – at the 13 February awards. [MPJ]

George R.R. Martin and Parris McBride, having pondered this step carefully throughout their thirty years together, were married on 15 February. ([Grrm.livejournal.com](#)) [LP] Congratulations!

Contraveer

Current • **Doctor Who Experience** (exhibition), Olympia 2, London, W14 8UX. 10am-6pm daily. Tickets £17.05; £13.55 age 5-16; £1 booking fee. Some days sold out: check www.doctorwhoexperience.com.

4-6 Mar • **P-Con VIII**, Central Hotel, Exchequer St, Dublin 2. €35 reg; €40 at door; €25/day; €15 student. Cheques to Peter McClean c/o 6 Weston Ave, Lucan, Co. Dublin, Ireland. See www.pcon.ie.

5-6 Mar • **Microcon 31**, Junior Common Room, University of Exeter. Various speakers. £14 reg at the door only; EUSFS members £8. Contact mp236 at exeter dot ac dot uk.

10-24 Mar • **Oxfam Bookshop**, Market Place, Reading: sf events/displays linked with sale of Brian Stableford's huge donation of books.

19-20 Mar • **BritSciFi**, National Space Centre, nr Leicester. £13 admission, child/concessions £11. With Daleks! www.spacecentre.co.uk.

19 Mar • **Fred Hoyle Project Grand Finale** (exhibit/talks), St John's, Cambridge; part of the Cambridge Science Festival. 10am-4pm.

23 Mar • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Antelope, 22 Eaton Terrace, London, SW1W 8EZ. 5pm for 6pm. Free. BSFA Awards discussion.

25 Mar • **Tolkien Reading Day**, according to the Tolkien Society.

22-25 Apr • **Illustrious** (Eastercon), Hilton Metropole, NEC, Birmingham. £55 reg, £30 under-25s/unwaged, £20 under-18s, £10 under-12s, £1 under-5s until 1 April, noon. At the door: £15 Fri or Mon, £30 Sat or Sun. Contact 4 Burnside Ave, Sheffield, S8 9FR.

20 May - 25 Sep • **Out of this World** (sf exhibition), PACCAR Gallery, British Library, London. Free.

28 May • **Write Fantastic** event, St Hilda's College, Oxford. £15 reg; £12 concessions (£18/£15 at door). Cheques: The Write Fantastic, c/o 41 Wheatsheaf Rd, Alconbury Weston, Cambs, PE28 4LF.

17-21 Aug • **Renovation** (69th Worldcon), Reno, NV, USA. Now \$195 reg; \$480 family (2 adults, 2 kids). Contact PO Box 13278, Portland, OR 97213-0278, USA. NB: Hugo nominations close on 26 March.

22 Oct • **BristolCon**, Ramada Hotel, Bristol. Several guests of honour. £15 reg to 31 May; £20 to 21 Oct; £25 at the door. Cheques to 34 Dongola Road, Bishopston, Bristol, BS7 9HP.

11-13 Nov • **ArmadaCon 23**, Future Inns, Plymouth. £30 reg, £20 concessions. Contact 18 Wadham Road, Liskeard, Cornwall, PL14 3BD.

3-5 Feb 2012 • **Duple Time** (filk), Ramada Grantham Hotel. £35 reg; £25 unwaged; under 18 £1/year; under 6 free. Cheques: UK Filk Con, c/o 66 Railton Jones Close, Stoke Gifford, Bristol, BS34 8BF.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Our Films. Julian Assange of Wikileaks fame felt he had excellent reasons not to face his accusers in Stockholm: ‘The situation in Sweden is like a bad sci-fi movie. Forget everything you know about the common law system – we’re dealing with the radical feminist version of Saudi Arabia.’ (*Guardian*, 5 February) [PL]

- British film director Stephen Frears on *Inception*: ‘I’m a middle-aged man, I don’t understand those sort of films.’ (*Independent*, 25 February) [MPJ]

Liverpool Literary List. The back wall of the redeveloped Central Library in Liverpool is to showcase names of writers linked with the city. Those of genre interest include Clive Barker, Ramsey Campbell, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Brian Jacques (see R.I.P.), Edward Lear, John Masefield and Olaf Stapledon. (www.artinliverpool.com, 4 February).

Awards. *Fan Achievement* (FAAns). Writer: Roy Kettle. Artist: Steve Stiles. Fanzine: *Trap Door*, ed. Robert Lichtman. Correspondent: Robert Lichtman. Website: eFanzines.com. Lifetime Achievement: Art Widner. Past President fwa for 2010: Spike Parsons.

- *Skylark Award* (NESFA, general contributions to sf): Lois McMaster Bujold.

Tweets. *The Ubiquitous Stephen Fry*: ‘Off to Washington DC for one of the weirdest gigs of my life. Playing Hamlet on stage. In Klingon. Mad but true.’ (27 February) [MPJ]

- *Ken MacLeod*: ‘the unit of space opera is the hamilton. One page = 1 millihamilton.’ [BB]

R.I.P. *Brian Barritt* (1934-2011), UK counter-culture author who collaborated with Timothy Leary and wrote the ‘near-unpublishable’ sf sex comedy *The Nabob of Bombasta* (2010), died on 30 January aged 76. (*Independent*, 16 February) [SH]

- *Peder Carlsson* (1945-2011), Swedish sf fan (active mid-1960s to 1980s), novelist and translator of Dick, Delany, Le Guin and other sf notables, died

on 22 February; he was 65. [J-HH]

- *Nicholas Courtney* (1929-2011), UK actor best known and loved in sf circles as *Doctor Who*'s Brigadier Alistair Gordon Lethbridge-Stewart of UNIT, died on 22 February at the age of 81. He was a popular convention guest and honorary president of the Doctor Who Appreciation Society. [BB]
- *David F. Friedman* (1923-2011), US producer of exploitation horror films who launched the splatter subgenre with *Blood Feast* (1963), died on 14 February aged 87. [AIP]
- *Ion Hobana* (1931-2011), noted Romanian sf author, editor, translator and historian, several of whose stories appeared in English translation, died on 22 February aged 80. [L] He was a 1980 Eurocon award winner. [JCo]
- *Brian Jacques* (1939-2011), UK author of the lengthy Redwall series of animal fantasies for children that began with the mouse epic *Redwall* (1986), died on 5 February; he was 71. [PDF]
- *Bill Justice* (1914-2011), veteran Disney animator whose many credits included *Fantasia* (1940) and *Bambi* (1942, for which he created the rabbit Thumper), died on 10 February – the day after his 97th birthday. (*Telegraph*, 14 February) [MPJ]
- *Dwayne McDuffie* (1962-2011), US comics and tv writer who worked against racial stereotyping in comics, created the witty *Damage Control* for Marvel, co-founded the minority-friendly Milestone Media and worked on tv animations including *Static Shock* (his creation) and *Justice League Unlimited*, died on 21 February aged 49. [PDF]
- *Margaret K. McElderry*, US children's editor and publisher at Harcourt Brace and later Simon & Schuster, whose authors included Susan Cooper, Edward Eager, Andre Norton and Mary Norton, died on 14 February aged 98. She founded and named S&S's still-continuing McElderry Books imprint. [PDF]
- *L.K. Madigan* (Lisa Kay Wolfson), US YA novelist whose *The Mermaid's Mirror* (2010) is fantasy, died on 23 February; she was 47. [PDF]
- *Kenneth Mars* (1936-2011), US comedy actor whose genre credits included *Young Frankenstein* (1974), *The Little Mermaid* (voice work, 1989) and numerous tv series, died on 10 February; he was 74. [AIP]
- *Perry Moore* (1971-2011), an executive producer of the three Narnia films and author of the gay-superhero novel *Hero* (2007), died on 17 February; he was 39. His book about the making of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (2005) was a 2005-6 *New York Times* bestseller. [PDF]

- *Tura Satana* (1938-2011), Japanese-born stripper and actress best known for Russ Meyer's *Faster, Pussycat! Kill! Kill!* (1965), died on 4 February aged 72. Her main sf/horror appearances were in *The Astro-Zombies* (1968) and its sequels (2002, 2010). [MPJ]
- *Walter Seltzer* (1914-2011), US publicist and film-maker who produced *The Omega Man* (1971) and *Soylent Green* (1973), died on 18 February at the age of 96. [PDF]

Prediction Masterclass. British decimal coinage uncannily foretold, four years before the actual event: 'We adopted the same system [as America] but still called our chief unit a pound – one hundred shillings to the pound.' (Philip E. High, *These Savage Futurians*, 1967)

Film Awards. *Annies* (animation): *How to Train Your Dragon* had ten wins including best feature and direction.

- *BAFTAs*: 'outstanding British contribution to cinema' prize for the Harry Potter films. *Inception* and *Alice in Wonderland* won some technical categories (effects, make-up, etc); *Toy Story 3* won for animation.
- *London Critics' Circle*: Gareth Edwards took Breakthrough British Film-maker for *Monsters*.
- *Writers Guild of America*, best original screenplay: *Inception*. [MPJ]
- *Razzies* (worst in film): dominated, with five Golden Raspberry wins, by *The Last Airbender* and its director M. Night Shyamalan. (BBC, 27 February)
- *Oscars*: *Toy Story 3*, animation; *The Lost Thing*, short animation (congratulations to Shaun Tan). Technical: *Alice in Wonderland*, art direction, costumes; *Inception*, cinematography, sound mixing & editing, visual effects; *The Wolfman*, make-up. (BBC, 28 February)

Court Circular. The Tolkien estate – which has trademarked the name 'Tolkien', so watch it – sent a cease-and-desist notice warning Texan author Stephen Hilliard not to release his historical novel *Mirkwood*, featuring J.R.R. Tolkien as a character. Hilliard has filed a US lawsuit, asking the court to declare his right to publish based on fair use and the First Amendment. ([Hollywood Reporter](#), 18 February)

As Others See Themselves. Ethan Coen's latest remake isn't what you thought: 'Although *True Grit* has been heralded by many as the resurrection of the Western, Coen doesn't see it in genre terms. / "It's not a genre story, it does have people in cowboy hats and it does have six-shooters, but it's really

about the characters and the story.” (BBC, 21 February) [JB] The BBC asked whether he might make an sf film: ‘That’s one genre that I don’t know that we would know what we were doing. It’s funny given the degree to which some of our movies are stylised, but there has to be some kind of anchor in reality in order to get our minds around a story.’ (BBC, 24 February) [IC]

Magazine Scene. *Analog* now accepts, indeed prefers, electronic submissions via analog.magazinesubmissions.com – though not as email attachments.

- John Klima of *Electric Velocipede* is parting company with Night Shade Books, since ‘they are not in the business of periodicals and as such our subscription numbers and individual sales have suffered to the point that it made no sense to continue with our current model.’ *EV* will continue on-line, with no print edition. [PDF]

Nebula Ballot. NOVEL M.K. Hobson, *The Native Star*; N.K. Jemisin, *The Hundred Thousand Kingdoms*; Mary Robinette Kowal, *Shades of Milk and Honey*; Jack McDevitt, *Echo*; Nnedi Okorafor, *Who Fears Death*; Connie Willis, *Blackout/All Clear*.

- NOVELLA Paolo Bacigalupi, *The Alchemist*; J. Kathleen Cheney, ‘Iron Shoes’ (*Alembical* 2); Ted Chiang, *The Lifecycle of Software Objects*; Geoffrey A. Landis, ‘The Sultan of the Clouds’ (*Asimov’s* 9/10); Paul Park, ‘Ghosts Doing the Orange Dance’ (*F&SF* 1/10); Rachel Swirsky, ‘The Lady Who Plucked Red Flowers Beneath the Queen’s Window’ (*Subterranean* Summer 2010).

- NOVELETTE Christopher Barzak, ‘Map of Seventeen’ (*The Beastly Bride*); Alette de Bodard, ‘The Jaguar House, in Shadow’ (*Asimov’s* 7/10); Christopher Kastensmidt, ‘The Fortuitous Meeting of Gerard van Oost and Oludara’ (*Realms of Fantasy* 4/10); James Patrick Kelly, ‘Plus or Minus’ (*Asimov’s* 12/10); Shweta Narayan, ‘Pishaach’ (*The Beastly Bride*); Eric James Stone, ‘That Leviathan, Whom Thou Hast Made’ (*Analog* 9/10); Caroline M. Yoachim, ‘Stone Wall Truth’ (*Asimov’s* 2/10).

- SHORT Adam-Troy Castro, ‘Arvies’ (*Lightspeed* 8/10); Harlan Ellison, ‘How Interesting: A Tiny Man’ (*Realms of Fantasy* 2/10); Kij Johnson, ‘Ponies’ (*Tor.com* 1/10); Vylar Kaftan, ‘I’m Alive, I Love You I’ll See You in Reno’ (*Lightspeed* 6/10); Amal El-Mohtar, ‘The Green Book’ (*Apex* 11/10); Jennifer Pelland, ‘Ghosts of New York’ (*Dark Faith* 12/10); Felicity Shoulders, ‘Conditional Love’ (*Asimov’s* 1/10).

- BRADBURY (dramatic) *Despicable Me*, *Doctor Who* ‘Vincent and the Doctor’, *How to Train Your Dragon*, *Inception*, *Scott Pilgrim vs. the World*, *Toy Story 3*.
- ANDRE NORTON (YA); Paolo Bacigalupi, *Ship Breaker*; Holly Black, *White Cat*; Suzanne Collins, *Mockingjay*; Barry Deutsch, *Hereville: How Mirka Got Her Sword*; Pearl North, *The Boy from Ilysies*; Terry Pratchett, *I Shall Wear Midnight*; Megan Whalen Turner, *A Conspiracy of Kings*; Scott Westerfeld, *Behemoth*.
- Winners to be announced 21 May.

The Dead Past. *50 Years Ago*: Dr Arthur R. Weir, commemorated by the still-presented Doc Weir Award, died unexpectedly on 4 March 1961 after only two years in fandom. ([Skyrack 30](#), March 1961)

- *60 Years Ago*: H.P. Lovecraft’s *Haunter of the Dark* (Arkham House) was welcomed in Britain: ‘If you like your short stories reeking of unspeakable horrors with unpronounceable names committing unthinkable deeds this is your (putrescent) meat.’ ([Science Fantasy News](#) 7, March 1951)

C.o.A. Leigh Kennedy [*Priest*], 11 Robertsons Hill, Hastings, TN34 3NU. Email address unchanged.

Fanfundery. *Down Under Fan Fund*: Nominations for the 2011 Australasia-NA race close 31 March; voting closes 20 May. Winner to attend the Reno worldcon (above). More from admins: john_hertz2010 at hotmail dot com; ehawkes at iinet dot net dot au.

Thog’s Masterclass. *Moody Blues Dept.* ‘Only the uncounted, innumerable lakes of The-Blue-That-Blinded and shamed azure as a pale intonation.’ (Alan Dean Foster, *The Tar-Aiym Krang*, 1972) [JS]

- *Dept of Double Entendre.* “‘Hold onto your sister,’” she ordered [...] “How can I hold my snake at the same time?” She took the snake, of which she was mortally afraid, and settled him in the pouch at the front of Icarus’ loincloth. “He will think it’s his tube,” she reassured the boy.’ (Thomas Burnett Swann, *Day of the Minotaur*, 1966) [RF]

- *Social Concern Dept.* ‘I want something that’ll finish these two sneaking traitors, and at the same time get me into no trouble. If it has a twist of drama in it, so much the better. I’ve thought of calling in the emanation of Yoth, but that needs a child’s blood and I must be careful about the neighbours.’ (H.P. Lovecraft & Hazel Heald, ‘The Man of Stone’, *Wonder Stories*, October

1932) [RF]

- *Dept of Lines Which Remarkably Were Not Final*. ‘And then I lost consciousness. More or less permanently, this time.’ (Marion Zimmer Bradley, *The Door through Space*, 1961) [BA]
 - *Male Anatomy Dept*. ‘Manlike, he wore green tight-fitting trunks and a shirt of green fur that revealed bulging biceps where they shouldn’t be ...’ (*Ibid*)
 - *Dept of Uncomfortable Simile*. ‘The words hung in her ear like a crouton that was too dry to swallow.’ (Chris Redding, *Corpse Whisperer*, 2007) [Anon]
 - *True Romance Dept: Panopticon Division*. “‘I love you,” Jack told her as he drove into her, taking her completely with one stroke, making love to her all over the room wherever she looked, but the best place to look was right in front of her, directly into the head and passion of his gaze.’ (Anna Windsor, *Captive Heart*, 2011) [DN]
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Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 2 March 2011: Bryan Talbot presentation/signing. 5pm. Free. Room A46, Trent Building, University Park Campus, University of Nottingham.
- 11 March 2011: Brum Group, Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre: 7:30pm for 8pm. With Frances Hardinge. £4; members £3. Contact 07845 897760 or bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future meetings: 8 April, Robert Rankin; 13 May, John Meaney; 10 June, BSFG 40th anniversary party at Old Joint Stock pub; 15 July (changed from 8 July), Ian Stewart; 12 August, Summer Social at Black Eagle pub; 9 September, Liz Williams TBC; 14 October, David Wingrove.
- 26 March 2011: Bryan Talbot signings. 12 noon at Forbidden Planet, 40-41 Southbridge Street, Edinburgh, EH1 1LL (0131 558 8226). 4pm, followed by 6pm presentation, at Plan B Books, 5 Osborne St, Glasgow. G1 5QN (0141 237 1137).

Children of the Damned. A report that ‘vampires and their demonic counterparts’ now account for a quarter of Britain’s top 20 children’s bestsellers and 18 out of 20 on the YA list (January figures) produced this reaction: “[The new horror is] the worst kind of Mills & Boon stuff,” says Mary Hoffman, the author of the bestselling *Stravaganza* series. “Especially

when it takes the form of disguised propaganda against pre-marital sex.” (Stephenie Meyer, the author of *Twilight*, is a famously abstemious Mormon.) “Males as dangerous, females as victims or prey: what kind of message is that for young women?” ([Independent](#), 27 February) [MPJ]

Random Fandom. *Nelson Cunnington*, following his observations in *A281*, finds himself organizing two Eastercon panels on sexual harassment at sf conventions. ‘So, if anyone fancies being a panel member, has some useful experience in harassment policy or training (or even just a strong opinion), and is going to *Illustrious 2011* in Birmingham at the end of April, can I ask that they contact me at: nelson dot cunnington at gmail dot com. Please include the tag [SH] in the subject.’

- *Richard E. Geis* was expecting cataract surgery on his right eye in late February: let’s hope he can see this, or see it better.
- *Joe Haldeman* underwent ileostomy take-down surgery on 17 February and is reportedly recovering well.
- *Jim Worrada* liked the February link at news.ansible.co.uk to [an Oxfam page on the sale of John Brunner’s typewriters](#) (complete with Dymo labels like ‘NEVER UNDERESTIMATE THE STUPIDITY OF EDITORS’): ‘I’m now the proud owner of one. I’ve noticed it comes with an interesting feature – any spare change I leave on the table will slowly and inevitably collect in the empty space beneath the Typewriter. Whenever I need change for milk, I simply lift the machine up and help myself, always forgetting to thank Johnny B. Which is bad form, because so far there always seems to be enough pennies for whatever I’m intending to get from the offy. / I like to think Mr Brunner also scoured for change under it, but I guess we’ll never know.’
- *Lionel (Lan) Wright* (1923-2010) left his sf magazine collection to the SF Foundation collection in Liverpool: ‘The SFF gratefully acknowledges the donation ...’ [CM]

Editorial. Special thanks to all of you who rallied round with hand-picked, gamy morsels for *Thog* after last issue’s appeal. Some didn’t quite hit the spot and more have been held over for future *Ansibles*, but please don’t stop on that account. *Thog Always Hungry*.

- I still get the occasional query from readers who once received *Ansible* by email and are wondering why that stopped. The old mailing list died in September 2010 and a mass email in October invited all its members to join

the new list, but some invitations seem to have been blocked as spam. (Perhaps offering to hugely enlarge your throbbing *Ansible* enjoyment was a tactical error.) If you missed out, see ‘Subscriptions’ above; or I’ll add you by hand on request.

Bram Stoker Award nominations arrived at the last minute and are far too voluminous for the print edition, so here’s a link:

<http://nick-kaufmann.livejournal.com/646391.html>

Third Degree. Neil Daniels ruthlessly interviews various sf, fantasy, horror and comics people, including me (those dated 2010 have only just been posted):

<http://neildaniels.com/Interviews/Other.html>

Novae Terrae Lives! Rob Hansen’s latest archive project is to make the complete run of this fanzine predecessor of *New Worlds* available on line. Still in progress:

<http://www.fiawol.org.uk/FanStuff/THEN%20Archive/NewWorlds/NT.htm>

Thog’s Second Helping. *Exploring Our Solar System Dept:* ‘... We shall be travelling for between twenty-four and thirty hours before we sight our objective, which is several hundred thousand miles from Satellite Belt K. This objective is what is known as a minor galaxy, but that’s only a general term used to describe anything from a gas cloud to semi-solid spheres or a disc-shaped constellation. An example of a galaxy is what is known to Earth-people as the Milky Way. This is a group of insignificant satellites formed around a minor star. These small cool spheres of compacted star dust swing in a steady orbit around their original solar being. They are locked in position by an eternal balance between their centrifugal force and their sun’s attraction. Millions of years ago the Earth might have been one of these, and it’s the never-ending quest of space scientists to discover new worlds in the making.’ (E.C. Elliott [Reginald Alec Martin], *Kemlo and the Star Men*, 1955)
[RS]

Ansible 284 Copyright © David Langford, 2011. Thanks to Brian Ameringen, John Bark, Bob Blanchett, Paul Cockburn, Jonathan Cowie, Ian Covell, Paul Di Filippo, Ross Fletcher, David Haddock, Steve Holland, Ken Houghton, John-Henri Holmberg, Martyn P. Jackson, Paul Lagasse, Locus, Caroline Mullan, Dave Nee, Lawrence Person, Andrew I. Porter, Jon Singer, and Hero

Distributors: Dave Corby (Brum Group), SCIS/Prophecy, Alan Stewart
(Australia). 1 Mar 2011.

Ansible 285, April 2011

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Web news.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**.
Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE, or a hair from the beard of Prester John.

Seldom End

James Cameron was interviewed by sf enthusiast James Murdoch at the Abu Dhabi Media Summit, and couldn't resist quoting what he insisted was the first response of Murdoch senior's Fox film studio executives to his proposal for *Avatar*: 'Is there any way to reduce this tree-hugging hippy crap?' (*Independent*, 16 March) [MPJ]

Paul Cornell made an awful threat: 'I'm not shaving for Lent. That is, I'm growing a wild, untamed beard, which I won't interfere with in any way until Easter Sunday, 24th April, at which point, at Eastercon, I'll get rid. The aim of the exercise is to get you good people to sponsor me, to the tune of £1000, going towards Shelter ...' ([9 March](#))

Jasper Fforde, speaking at Waterstone's in Newcastle, said he never knows how he'll be introduced at US bookshops: 'crime author Jasper Fforde' here, 'science fiction author Jasper Fforde' there, and once in a while 'fantasy author Jasper Fforde'. (2 March) [MPJ]

Stephen Hunt was [enraged](#) by the BBC's World Book Night *Culture Show* special on 'The Books We Really Read', covering actual popular fiction but nevertheless managing not to mention a single work from the large section of the popular market that's tainted by the labels sf, fantasy and horror. An irate petition followed. ([Guardian, 11 March](#))

Diana Wynne Jones (1934-2011) died in a hospice in the early hours of 26 March; she was 76. Her death was no surprise – every extra week had been a bonus since she ceased chemotherapy last summer (see A275) – but nevertheless grim news for the great many people who loved her work and

Diana herself. As a children's and YA author, she was quite simply the best; additionally, no writer of equivalent stature was so much fun to be with. After three plays and the comic adult novel *Changeover* (1970), her long run of fantasies began with *Wilkins' Tooth* (1973) and continued to *Enchanted Glass* (2010), with a further novel and a nonfiction collection yet to come; highlights en route included the Dalemark quartet, the Chrestomanci sequence beginning with *Charmed Life* (1977), *Fire and Hemlock* (1985), *Howl's Moving Castle* (1986, filmed by Miyazaki) and *Deep Secret* (1997). Her mock travel book *The Tough Guide to Fantasyland* (1996) ruthlessly spoofed fantasy clichés; and then *The Dark Lord of Derkholm* (1998) imagined what it might be like to live and work in such a theme-park Fantasyland. Her many honours include the World Fantasy Award for life achievement. We were all hugely lucky to have Diana, and to have her work still.

- There are good UK newspaper obituaries by [Chris Priest \(Guardian, 28 March\)](#) and [Charlie Butler \(Independent, 31 March\)](#).

R.A. Lafferty's entire literary estate is up for sale, according to a small ad in *Locus* offering 'Exclusive Rights to Publish His 29 Novels and 229 Short Stories ... Current bid is \$70,000.' [SFS/SHS]

Laura J. Mixon is now writing sf as M.J. Locke. ([blog, 30 March](#))

Terry Pratchett's omnipresence extends to the *Independent* cryptic crossword: 'Senior Teacher introducing a branch of knowledge, one invented by Terry Pratchett (9)'. Answer in closing credits box.

Peter Watts had a horrific encounter with necrotizing fasciitis resulting from a routine biopsy, lost a great deal of flesh from one leg, and gleefully placed the quease-inducing photographic evidence on his website. If you follow the link, beware the post titled 'Moving Pictures'. (www.rifters.com/crawl, February-March) [GW] Much sympathy....

Constantan

Ongoing • **Mervyn Peake** centenary events: www.mervynpeake.org.

9-10 Apr • **Kapow!** (comics), Business Design Centre, Islington, London. Tickets £25.50 or £15.30/day from www.kapowcomiccon.com.

20 Apr • **BSFA Open Meeting**, The Antelope, 22 Eaton Terrace, London, SW1W 8EZ. 5pm for 6pm. Free; with David Weber. Avast!

22-25 Apr • **Illustrious** (Eastercon), Hilton Metropole, NEC, Birmingham. *Advance booking closes 13 April [extended from 1 April as previously announced]*. At the door: £15 Fri or Mon, £30 Sat or Sun. Contact 4 Burnside Ave, Sheffield, S8 9FR.

23 Apr - 2 May • **Sci-Fi London** (film), Apollo, Piccadilly Circus, London. Enquiries via www.sci-fi-london.com or 020 3239 9277. For eager royalists, the eve of the royal wedding (28 April) has a thematic all-nighter including *Bride of the Monster*, *Bride of Frankenstein*, *Bride of the Gorilla* and *I Married a Witch*. Allegedly ‘cheaper than a hotel’.

27 Apr • **Clarke Award** presentation, London. By invitation.

4 May • **Alan Moore’s Dodgem Logic**, Round Chapel, London. 7pm. £10. With AM, Steve Aylett. See www.londonwordfestival.com.

14-15 May • **Bristol International Comic Expo**, Ramada City & Mercure hotels, Bristol. £16 reg; £9 per day; child £6/£4. Tickets from www.fantasyevents.org/bristolcomicexpo (PayPal only).

20-22 May • **Alt.Fiction Writing Weekend**, Legacy Chesterfield Hotel, Malkin St, Chesterfield, S41 7UA. With Tony Ballantyne, Simon Clark. £180 inc food, 2 nights’ residence. Enquiries: alt dot fiction at writingeastmidlands dot co dot uk. Bookings: Aimee, 01159 597932.

25-26 Jul • **Creative Science** – ‘Science Fiction Prototyping for Technology Innovation’ (workshop), Nottingham. £144 reg (students £120), *rising to £180 on 1 May*. See www.creative-science.org.

24 Sep • **TitanCon**, Europa Exhibition Centre, Belfast. GoH Ian McDonald. £10 reg, £5 supp. Join at www.titancon.com (PayPal only).

30 Sep - 2 Oct • **Fantasycon 2011**, Royal Albion Hotel, Brighton. *Now £55 reg (BFS members £50)*. Cheques (to Fantasycon 2011) to 10 Haycroft Gardens, Mastin Moor, Chesterfield, Derbyshire, S43 3FE.

25-27 Feb 2013 • **Redemption ’13** (multimedia sf), Britannia Hotel, Fairfax St, Coventry, CV1 5RP. Guests TBA. £50 reg, *rising to £60 on 1 May 2011*; unwaged etc £20 less. £15 supp and under-18s; under-3s free. Contact 61 Chaucer Road, Farnborough, Hampshire, GU14 8SP.

Rumblings. *Worldcon 2013* [site selection voting](#) has begun. [Texas](#) is unopposed: no other bid met the February paperwork deadline.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See ET. Reviewing the ‘Aliens’ theme issue of *Granta*: ‘When I saw the silvery, star-speckled cover of *Granta*’s new issue, for one dizzying minute I thought the magazine’s theme was old-fashioned aliens – the extraterrestrial kind with ray guns and spaceships. I couldn’t wait to read the non-fiction and memoir pieces. Luckily, editor John Freeman has more sense than I do. [...] I didn’t get little green men from *Granta*, but the stories and histories collected here were just as weird and fantastic as anything dreamed up by sci-fi writers.’ (Alice Fisher, *Guardian*, 6 March) [SI] That must have been a relief.

Awards. *Arthur C. Clarke* shortlist announced 4 March: Lauren Beukes, *Zoo City*; Ian McDonald, *The Dervish House*; Patrick Ness, *Monsters of Men*; Richard Powers, *Generosity*; Tim Powers, *Declare* (2000, but first UK publication 2010); Tricia Sullivan, *Lightborn*.

- *Astrid Lindgren* (children’s): Shaun Tan.
- *Horror Writers Association*, Lifetime Achievement: Ellen Datlow, Al Feldstein.
- *James Tiptree Jr* (gender exploration): Dubravka Ugresic, *Baba Yaga Laid an Egg*.
- *Lambda* (LBGT), sf/fantasy/horror category: Sandra McDonald, *Diana Comet and Other Improbable Stories*; Tanith Lee, *Disturbed by Her Song*; Nene Adams, *Flowers of Edo*; Steve Berman, ed., *Wilde Stories 2010: The Year’s Best Gay Speculative Fiction*; Jane Fletcher, *Wolfsbane Winter*.

Soft Sell. Robert J. Sawyer, echoing the 1998 tv ad with [Harlan Ellison](#) (‘[Noted Futurist](#)’) plugging Geo Metro cars, has a Microsoft deal for free ebook download of his Webmind novels with IE9. He writes: ‘As it happens, the World Wide Web turns 21 this year: its childhood has ended. But the best is doubtless yet to come: as you probe all the Web’s marvels with Internet Explorer 9, you’ll be part of the next phase of the Web’s development, and I hope my books give you a little foretaste of what that wondrous future may hold for all of us.’ ([Microsoft.com](#)) [CH]

Ancient History. *Anne Robinson*: ‘In the TV series *Thunderbirds*, which pilot shared his name with a classical Roman poet?’ *Male contestant*: ‘Troy.’ (*The Weakest Link*, BBC1, 10 March) [MPJ]

R.I.P. *April Derleth* (1954-2011), August Derleth’s daughter and President/CEO of genre publisher Arkham House, died on 21 March aged 56. [GVG]

- *Marjorie Edwards*, UK fan who attended Eastercons from the mid-1960s to early 1970s and was involved since the 1990s with the Festival of Fantastic Films, died on 30 March aged 63. [BB]
- *Mike Glicksohn* (1946-2011), Canadian fan whose *Energumen* (1970-1981, coedited with his first wife Susan Wood) won the 1973 fanzine Hugo, died on 18 March from a stroke following lengthy treatment for cancer; he was 64. Mike was joint Fan GoH with Susan Wood at the 1975 Australian Worldcon. His other major fanzine was *Xenium* (1973-1990). At the peak of his activity in the 1970s he seemed to appear in the letter column of every fanzine everywhere. (Like so many others, I’m grateful for his encouragement in the early days of my own publications.) He is survived by his wife Susan Manchester, to whom all sympathy. Another friend lost.
- *Michael Gough* (1915/16-2011), UK character actor whose many genre appearances included *The Man in the White Suit* (1951), the 1966 *Doctor Who* sequence ‘The Celestial Toymaker’ (title role), several Hammer horror films, and Alfred Pennyworth in *Batman* (1989) and three sequels, died on 17 March aged 94 or 95 (he was unsure of his birth year). [PDF]
- *H.R.F. Keating* (1926-2011), prolific UK detective novelist and critic whose sf comprises *The Strong Man* (1971) and *A Long Walk to Wimbledon* (1978), died on 27 March; he was 84. [DG]
- *John Nettleship*, who as J.K. Rowling’s former chemistry teacher was the original inspiration for Severus Snape, died on 12 March aged 71. [A man of many talents](#), he was himself an enthusiastic and well-loved Harry Potter fan, and author of the nonfiction *Harry Potter’s Chesham*. [CMJ]
- *Edward (Ted) Russell* (1927-2011), early Australian fan, younger brother of Eric, whom he assisted in editing and publishing *Ultra*, one of the best known Aussie zines of the 1940s, died on 9 January 9 aged 83. [CN]
- *Joanne Siegel* (née Kovacs, 1917-2011), US artist’s model who posed for Lois Lane in the original *Superman* comic and married its co-creator Jerry Siegel, died on 12 February aged 93. [JY]
- *Wim Stolk* (1950-2011), award-winning Dutch fantasy novelist who wrote

under the pseudonym W.J. Maryson, died on 9 March. [NV]

- *Kan Tokumaru* (1941-2011), Japanese voice actor heard in many cartoons and games since 1975, died on 6 March. In the Japanese dub of *Live and Let Die* he was the voice of M. [JC]

- *Edward Wellen* (1919-2011), prolific US mystery author who published many sf stories and the sf/crime novel *Hijack* (1971), died on 15 January aged 91. [TM] His sf magazine debut was the non-fact ‘Origins of Galactic Slang’ (July 1952 *Galaxy*).

- *Gary Winick* (1961-2011), US film producer/director whose fantasy ventures were *13 Going on 30* (2004) and *Charlotte’s Web* (live-action version, 2006), died on 27 February; he was 49. [MMW]

Science Terminology Masterclass. *TMZ* helpfully glossed Charlie Sheen’s comment on Brooke Mueller’s court order requiring him to keep 100 yards away from her: ‘Charlie tells *TMZ*, “Great. I was already planning on staying 100 parsecs away from her.” BTW, a parsec is a “Star Wars” term for 3.26 light years.’ (*TMZ.com*, 1 March) [AL]

- ‘The orbit of a comet was not a parabola, but an ellipsis.’ (Marie Brennan, *A Star Shall Fall*, 2010) Evelyn C. Leeper adds: ‘I have visions of the comet winking out of existence, then re-appearing a few feet further on briefly, then winking out again, like a series of dots across the sky....’

Court Circular. Already thrown out by a US judge, the *Willy the Wizard* plagiarism suit against J.K. Rowling and Bloomsbury met further UK difficulties when Mr Justice Kitchin followed his October decision (‘I have reached the conclusion that this claim may succeed but that it is improbable it will do so.’) with a Chancery ruling that the case will be struck out unless plaintiff Paul Allen pays £1.5+ million into court as security to cover the defendants’ projected costs. ([Daily Mail, 21 March](#)) [PDF]

- *Doctor Who* fan Steven Clark is suing the BBC for allegedly stealing the name and appearance of Davros, the Daleks’ cyborg mastermind, from his entry in a 1972 *TV Action* magazine competition to create a comic-strip villain. Judges included Jon Pertwee and Terrance Dicks but not Terry Nation, who introduced Davros in the 1975 storyline *Genesis of the Daleks* – a title which Clark says he also invented. His competition submission didn’t win and wasn’t published, so the only hard evidence is a copy he supposedly mislaid for 20 years in a family encyclopedia. Produced in 1972 for the competition, or sketched from the telly in 1975? A tricky question. ([Daily](#)

[Mail, 19 March](#)) [DKMK]

- Lucasfilm is again fighting British engineer Andrew Ainsworth, who designed the *Star Wars* stormtrooper armour, in the UK Supreme Court. The High Court and Court of Appeal ruled that these creations are mere props – copyright-protected for 15 years, making it OK for Ainsworth to produce and sell copies – while Lucasfilm wants them to be artistic ‘sculptures’ protected for life (George Lucas’s?) plus 70 years. [MPJ]

As Others See Us. ‘As shown by *Battle: Los Angeles*, and hordes of films before it, science fiction is nothing if not mockable. [...] Science fiction is so inherently close to the absurd that the toughest challenge is not to lampoon it.’ (Anthony Lane, *New Yorker*, 21 March) [MMW]

Random Fandom. *Lilian Edwards* was in the news, talking about the legal status of robots and proposing three new Laws of Robotics: ‘1. Robots are multiuse tools. Robots should not be designed solely or primarily to kill, except in the interests of national security.’ ([Scotsman.com, 21 February](#))

- *John Francis William Richards* ‘formerly of Portsmouth now of Doncaster wishes to announce his marriage to Ms Maerryn Jill Smith to take place at Doncaster Registry Office on 8 July 2011.’ All friends welcome. Details: jfwrichards at bigfoot dot com.

We Are Everywhere. *Private Eye*’s ‘Pseudo Names’ feature – silly letters with daft signatures – plugged a legendary sf hack with the sage advice ‘read L. Ron Hubbard’, signed Diane Etticks. (1 April)

- Yet more genre imagery in UK politics! ‘... Steve Hilton, the Prime Minister’s characterful director of strategy, a man who is to formality what Silvio Berlusconi is to chastity. / Known as “Gollum” because of his shaven head and attractive manners ...’ (*Independent*, 28 March) [MPJ]

Corporate Pirates. Dorchester Publishing, hugely in debt, has a new business plan: selling digital books to which it no longer has rights, not paying the writers, and blaming all this on vendors like Amazon. Unpaid author [Brian Keene](#), who called for a boycott of Dorchester and its Leisure Fiction imprint, is far from alone. A literary agent who’s struggled with Dorchester said wearily, ‘We tell them to suppress [the ebook], and they do for a few weeks, and then it’s back up again.’ [JS]

Outraged Letters. *Simon R. Green* on [A283](#): ‘Turns out the BBC was right about *Outcasts* after all. It wasn’t sf. It was crap. Why do television people

insist on hiring people to write sf shows who've clearly never even read the stuff in their life before? Answer: Jobs for the boys.'

- *Claire M Jordan* remembers Diana Wynne Jones: 'The last time I saw her was at an SF con in Edinburgh in I think 1994. She had only just recovered from pneumonia when she allowed herself to be sold for charity in a slave auction while wearing nearly nothing at all with bells on, and gave herself a relapse.'

- *Priscilla Olson* corrects my [A284](#) phrasing: 'The [Skylark Award](#) (just won by Lois McMaster Bujold) isn't really for "general contributions to sf" – it's for nice people who are sf professionals. And Lois is, indubitably, a nice person.'

Pop Culture. Explaining 'this is a world I confess I don't regularly inhabit', the presenter of Australian Classic FM radio's *Star Trek/Doctor Who* music evening went on to identify Leonard Nimoy as 'He of the saturnine looks, predictably playing the villain Spock ...' (20 March) [P]

- Writing about the Moon in his *Oldie* sort-of-science column, James Le Fanu interestingly termed it the largest satellite in the solar system and referred to the sad plight of 'moonless Mars'. (*The Oldie*, March)

The Dead Past. *75 Years Ago*: '... one of the prominent features of scientific fiction is the lack of rudimentary scientific knowledge displayed by many of its authors. [...] the Theory of Relativity comes in for some appalling treatment ...' (D.R. Smith, [Novae Terrae 2](#), April 1936)

Fanfundery. *Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund*: don't forget that TAFF voting closes on 26 April. For race details and ballots, see taff.org.uk.

Thog's Masterclass. *Dept of Emotion Recollected in Tranquillity*.

'Memories unearthed themselves like zombies clawing themselves out of a freshly dug grave.' (Erin Brockovich with C.J. Lyons, *Rock Bottom*, 2011) [MMW]

- *Health & Safety Dept.* 'But he shrugged it aside, since no danger from any outside source could possibly exist in Space.' (Murray Roberts, *The Flying Globes* [a Captain Justice story], 1939) [DL]

- *Dept of Cerebral Activity.* 'His brain wouldn't look. It twisted in a mad desperation, like a body buried alive, and briefly, horrendously aware of its fate.' (A.E. van Vogt, *Supermind*, 1977) [EM]

- *True Romance Dept.* 'He ran his eyes into her like a serpent down a hole,

made her feel his slither in her heart and guts, made her tremble.’ (Daniel Woodrell, *Winter’s Bone*, 2006). [PB] ‘Her scent wafted into his nostrils and charged up his libido.’ (Chris Redding, *Corpse Whisperer*, 2007) [Anon]

- *Detached View Dept.* ‘His gaze studied her.’ (*Ibid*)

- *Dept of Scientific Romance.* ‘Her heavy breasts, each of whose moles and freckles he can project like constellations against the planetarium dome of his imagination, strain against the placket and pockets of her shirt.’ (Michael Chabon, *The Yiddish Policemen’s Union*, 2008) [MMW]

- *Sound of One Boot Clapping Dept.* ‘They walked in silence, the soles of their boots clapping the marble flooring, the sound echoing against stone walls.’ (Brandon Sanderson, *The Way of Kings*, 2010) [MK]

- *Dept of Alfresco Dessert.* ‘He turned suddenly to attend to some trifle on his horse.’ (Mary Robinette Kowal, *Shades of Milk and Honey*, 2010) [PC]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 8 April 2011: Brum Group, Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre: 7:30pm for 8pm. With Robert Rankin. £4; members £3. Contact 07845 897760 or bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future meetings: 13 May, John Meaney; 10 June, BSGF 40th anniversary party at Old Joint Stock pub; 15 July (changed from 8 July), Ian Stewart; 12 August, Summer Social at Black Eagle pub; 9 September, Liz Williams TBC; 14 October, David Wingrove.

Editorial. It’s time for the annual warning about rising UK Royal Mail postage rates. First-class stamps go up from 41p to 46p and second-class from 32p to 36p on 4 April.

- As noted on the *Ansible* website, Diana Wynne Jones’s funeral is for the family only. Anyone wanting to donate to a worthy cause in lieu of flowers is encouraged to help St Peter’s Hospice in Bristol, which eased Diana’s last weeks:

<http://stpetershospice.org.uk/>

As Others See Us II. ‘Without wishing to perpetuate any unkind stereotypes about sci-fi lovers, it must be tricky for the stars of such shows to deal with the unwanted physical attention they get from admirers at fan conventions. /

Farscape's Claudia Black has a rather neat trick for dealing with whiffy fans though. They invariably want their picture taken with her and will go to put their arm around her. Claudia counters that by putting her arm around them first, so she doesn't get the smell of their BO on her clothes.' (Popbitch, 31 March) [SG]

Late Good News. Norman Spinrad writes: 'I had a CAT scan and the results yesterday – after a year of chemotherapy and 5 weeks of radiation, no sign of cancer. They don't say *cured* until 5 years later, but this is called *remission*.' (31 March)

Thog's Second Helping. *Double Entendre Dept.* 'He remembered the policeman's vibrator. That would be far to the west of him by now, skipping at a thrown stone's velocity over waves whose tops were being cut off by the wind. Dan Henry's mouth twisted in a numb grimace. Now he'd have to buy one. They probably wouldn't let him get away that cheaply. They could make that stick for a robbery charge. And destroying public property.' (Algis Budrys, 'The Edge of the Sea', 1958) [TMcD]

Ansible 285 Copyright © David Langford, 2011. Thanks to Paul Barnett, Bill Burns, Jonathan Clements, Paul Cornell, Paul Di Filippo, Steve Green, Douglas Greene, Colin Hinz, Susha Ireland, Martyn P. Jackson, Claire M. Jordan, Morris Keesan, David K.M. Klaus, Denny Lien, Andrew Love, Tim McDaniel, Earle Martin, Todd Mason, Chris Nelson, 'Pandinac', SF Site, Steven H Silver, Ian Sorensen, Jim Steel, Gordon Van Gelder, Nico Veenkamp, Gary Wilkinson, Martin Morse Wooster, Jessica Yates, and our Hero Distributors: Dave Corby (Brum Group), SCIS/Prophecy, Alan Stewart (Australia). Crossword answer: Headology. 1 Apr 2011.

Ansible 286, May 2011

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Web news.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Ian Gunn**. Available for SAE, gleepsites or the country you have never seen.

Illustrious. The 2011 Eastercon was, as expected, a pleasant weekend in a painfully pricy venue: the NEC Hilton Metropole. I enjoyed myself but deafly failed to attend the programme. Old fogeys who remember UK convention dealers' rooms closing for the Guest of Honour speech remain bemused by the new tradition whereby all sorts of stuff is programmed against the guests (David Weber, Peter F. Hamilton, David A. Hardy, Vince Docherty, Roz Kaveney) but nothing can be allowed to clash with *Doctor Who*.

- **Awards** were presented. *BSFA*: NOVEL Ian McDonald, *The Dervish House*. SHORT Aliette de Bodard, 'The Shipmaker' (*Interzone* 231). ART Joey Hi-Fi, cover of *Zoo City*. NONFICTION Paul Kincaid, 'Blogging the Hugos: Decline' (*Big Other*).

- *Doc Weir*: Mark Young.

- *DnA (Daves'n'Anarchy)* or *Gamma Award* for deeply weird sf in any medium: K.W. Jeter, *Dr Adder* (1984). This was the first presentation; future DnAs will honour work from the previous year. See 'Magazine Scene' below.

- **2013 Eastercon.** No one seemed interested in holding this; the decision was postponed to next Easter.

- Good parties and [daily newsletters](#). Who knew the NEC had woods full of bluebells?

Extra(ordinary) People

Eoin Colfer reckons the secret of his villainous boy protagonist Artemis Fowl's success lay in being not the next Harry Potter (as so many others tried) but 'the anti-Harry Potter. If J.K. was the Beatles, I was the Rolling

Stones or something.’ (*Independent*, 10 April) [MPJ]

David Gestetner, developer of one of the duplicator brands once central to fanzine fandom, is commemorated with an [English Heritage blue plaque](#) at 124 Highbury New Park, Islington, where he lived from 1898 until his death in 1939. The plaque was unveiled by English Heritage and two of DG’s great-great grandchildren on 15 March. [JMcN]

Stephen Hunt’s [petition](#) protesting the invisibility of sf, fantasy and horror in the BBC World Book Night special on popular fiction was signed by 85 genre authors. The BBC’s ingenious response was that they *had too* mentioned that doyenne of space opera, Margaret Atwood.

George R.R. Martin has a high media profile thanks to the tv *A Game of Thrones*, and appears in the 2011 ‘Time 100’ list of the world’s most influential people. An *Independent* interview feature, after likening him to ‘a very friendly hobbit’, confirmed that some bitchy fan comments still rankle (the annotations are the *Indy*’s): ‘There’s nothing wrong with fans speculating about what’s going to happen, but it’s annoying when they suggest that I won’t finish it, or say there’s no chance of the new book coming out,’ he says. ‘I find it downright offensive when people say things like, “I hope he doesn’t pull a Jordan” [a reference to fantasy writer Robert Jordan, who died before finishing his *World of Time* (*sic*) series, now being completed by Brandon Sanderson]. I was friends with Jim [Jordan’s real name] ... no one wants to die before finishing their work. Anyone who uses that phrase “pull a Jordan” is an asshole.’ (Sarah Hughes, [Independent](#), 17 April) [MPJ] He has since completed book 5 of the planned 7, *A Dance with Dragons*.

Dr. Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury, reminisced in his Easter sermon: ‘Some of you might just remember an episode of *Doctor Who* a couple of decades ago called “The Happiness Patrol” where the Doctor arrives on a planet in which unhappiness is a capital crime, and blues musicians lead a dangerous underground existence.’ [MPJ]

Contrasto

4 May • **Alan Moore’s Dodgem Logic**, Round Chapel, London. 7pm. £10. With AM, Steve Aylett. See www.londonwordfestival.com.

11 May • **Heffers SFF Evening**, Heffers, 20 Trinity St, Cambridge, CB2 1TY. 6.30pm. Many guests. £5; under-17s £2.50. 01223 568568.

14-15 May • **Bristol International Comic Expo**, Ramada City & Mercure hotels, Bristol. £16 reg; £9 per day; child £6/£4. Tickets from www.fantasyevents.org/bristolcomicexpo (PayPal only).

20 May • **BSFA Extra Meeting**, The Antelope, 22 Eaton Terrace, London, SW1W 8EZ. 5pm for 7pm. Free. With Trudi Canavan.

20-22 May • **Alt.Fiction Writing Weekend**, Legacy Chesterfield Hotel, Malkin St, Chesterfield, S41 7UA. With Tony Ballantyne, Simon Clark. £180 inc food, 2 nights' residence. Enquiries: alt dot fiction at writingeastmidlands dot co dot uk. Bookings: Aimee, 01159 597932.

25 May • **BSFA Open Meeting**, The Antelope, 22 Eaton Terrace, London, SW1W 8EZ. 5pm for 7pm. Free. With Sarah Pinborough.

20 May - 25 Sep • **Out of This World** (sf exhibition), PACCAR Gallery, British Library, London. Free. Andy Sawyer is guest curator; Mike Ashley wrote the book. For associated sf/science talks and panels (£7.50, £5 concessions) May-September, see each month's BL events page, starting at www.bl.uk/whatson/events/date/may11/may11.html.

21-22 May • **Middle-earth Weekend**, Sarehole Mill, Cole Bank Rd, Hall Green, Birmingham. Free. See middleearthweekend.org.uk.

28 May • **Write Fantastic** event, St Hilda's College, Oxford. £15 reg; £12 concessions (£18/£15 at door). Cheques: The Write Fantastic, c/o 41 Wheatsheaf Rd, Alconbury Weston, Cambs, PE28 4LF.

4 Jun • **BSFA/SF Foundation** mini-convention and AGMs. GoH Mike Ashley (SFF), Tricia Sullivan (BSFA). 10am-5pm. Free. Royal Astronomical Society, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London, W1J 0BQ.

17 Jun • **David Gemmell/Legend** fantasy awards, Magic Circle HQ, 12 Stephenson Way, Euston, London, NW1 2HD. 7:30pm. 'Fan tickets' £20. Contact christineharrison_007 at hotmail dot com.

17-18 Sep • **From Imagination to Reality** (British Interplanetary Soc space/sf event), Berrill Lecture Theatre, Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes, MK7 6AA. £80 or £45/day, to end of June. Online booking only, at www.bis-space.com/products-page/symposia/.

24-27 Aug 2012 • **Discworld Convention**, Hilton Metropole, Birmingham. £48 reg, £33 concessions until 1 July 2011. £25 supp; under-13s free. PO Box 4101, Shepton Mallet, Somerset, BA4 9AJ.

31 Oct - 3 Nov 2013 • **World Fantasy Convention**, Hilton Brighton Metropole, Brighton. £75 reg *until 30 October 2011*; £50 supp; no at-door or day memberships. Cheques to 130 Park View, Wembley, Middlesex, HA9 6JU; PayPal payments at www.wfc2013.org.

Rumblings. *Satellite 4* (18-21 April 2014) is a UK Eastercon bid from the Satellite sf/science conventions team, aiming for a Glasgow venue – possibly even the fabled Central Hotel. See satellite4.org.uk. • *Year 2018!* A 2018 New Orleans Worldcon bid has been announced.

Infinitely Improbable

More Awards. *Arthur C. Clarke*: Lauren Beukes, *Zoo City*.

- *Philip K Dick*: Mark Hodder, *The Strange Affair of Spring Heeled Jack*.
- *SF Hall of Fame*: Vincent Di Fate, Gardner Dozois, Harlan Ellison, Moebius.

As Others See Us. Better to be forgotten than remembered in the wrong way by entirely the wrong sort of people: ‘Russian cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin must be so proud: The anniversary of his embarking on the first human space flight on April 12, 1961, is celebrated by sci-fi lovers the world over with alt-astro costumes, drink specials, funk bands, and burlesque shows.’ (*Washington Post*, 8 April) [MMW]

Magazine Scene. *New Worlds* is to relaunch as *Michael Moorcock’s New Worlds* this autumn under the aegis of the Daves Dream Company (Dick Jude, David Hodson, others) created to run the DnA award inaugurated at Eastercon in memory of Paul ‘Gamma’ Gamble. Writers and artists needed; enquiries, for now, to [redacted: David Hodson, whose address it was, has left the collective. The official website is newworlds.co.uk].

Astronomy Masterclass. *Anne Robinson*: ‘Which scientist first discovered the four moons of Jupiter?’ *Male contestant*: ‘Amadeus.’ (*The Weakest Link*, 26 April) [MPJ]

Hugo Shortlist. NOVEL Connie Willis, *Blackout/All Clear*; Lois McMaster

Bujold, *Cryoburn*; Ian McDonald, *The Dervish House*; Mira Grant, *Feed*; N.K. Jemisin, *The Hundred Thousand Kingdoms*.

- NOVELLA Rachel Swirsky, 'The Lady Who Plucked Red Flowers beneath the Queen's Window' (*Subterranean*, Summer 2010); Ted Chiang, *The Lifecycle of Software Objects*; Elizabeth Hand, 'The Maiden Flight of McCauley's Bellerophon' (*Stories*); Geoffrey A. Landis, 'The Sultan of the Clouds' (*Asimov's* 9/10); Alastair Reynolds, 'Troika' (*Godlike Machines*).
- NOVELETTE Sean McMullen, 'Eight Miles' by (*Analog* 9/10); Allen M. Steele, 'The Emperor of Mars' (*Asimov's* 6/10); Aliette de Bodard, 'The Jaguar House, in Shadow' (*Asimov's* 7/10); James Patrick Kelly, 'Plus or Minus' (*Asimov's* 12/10); Eric James Stone, 'That Leviathan, Whom Thou Hast Made' by (*Analog*, 9/10).
- SHORT Carrie Vaughn, 'Amaryllis' by (*Lightspeed*, 6/10); Mary Robinette Kowal, 'For Want of a Nail' by (*Asimov's* 9/10); Kij Johnson, 'Ponies' (*Tor.com* 17/11/10); Peter Watts, 'The Things' (*Clarkesworld* 1/10).
- RELATED WORK Gary K. Wolfe, *Bearings*; Mike Resnick & Barry N. Malzberg, *The Business of Science Fiction*; Lynne M. Thomas & Tara O'Shea, ed., *Chicks Dig Time Lords*; William H. Patterson, Jr., *Robert A. Heinlein: In Dialogue with His Century, Vol 1*; Brandon Sanderson, Jordan Sanderson, Howard Tayler & Dan Wells, *Writing Excuses, Season 4*.
- GRAPHIC Bill Willingham ill. Mark Buckingham, *Fables: Witches*; Phil & Kaja Foglio, colours Cheyenne Wright, *Agatha Heterodyne and the Guardian Muse*; Bryan Talbot, *Grandville Mon Amour*; Howard Tayler, colours HT & Travis Walton, *Schlock Mercenary: Massively Parallel*; Mike Carey ill. Peter Gross, *The Unwritten, Vol 2: Inside Man*.
- DRAMATIC, LONG *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 1*, *How to Train Your Dragon*, *Inception*, *Scott Pilgrim vs. the World*, *Toy Story 3*.
- DRAMATIC, SHORT *Doctor Who*: 'A Christmas Carol'; *Doctor Who*: 'The Pandorica Opens/The Big Bang'; *Doctor Who*: 'Vincent and the Doctor'; *F*ck Me*, *Ray Bradbury*; *The Lost Thing*.
- EDITOR, SHORT John Joseph Adams, Stanley Schmidt, Jonathan Strahan, Gordon Van Gelder, Sheila Williams.
- EDITOR, LONG Lou Anders, Ginjer Buchanan, Moshe Feder, Liz Gorinsky, Nick Mamatas, Beth Meacham, Juliet Ulman.
- PRO ARTIST Daniel Dos Santos, Bob Eggleton, Stephan Martiniere, John Picacio, Shaun Tan.
- SEMIPROZINE *Clarkesworld*, *Interzone*, *Lightspeed*, *Locus*, *Weird Tales*.

- FANZINE *Banana Wings*, *Challenger*, *The Drink Tank*, *File 770*, *StarShipSofa*.
- FAN WRITER James Bacon, Claire Brialey, Christopher J. Garcia, James Nicoll, Steven H Silver.
- *Fan Artist* Brad W. Foster, Randall Munroe, Maurine Starkey, Steve Stiles, Taral Wayne.
- JOHN W. CAMPBELL AWARD Saladin Ahmed, Lauren Beukes, Larry Correia, Lev Grossman, Dan Wells.
- 1006 ballots counted: 992 electronic, 14 paper.

Without Comment. A ‘Sci-Fi and Fantasy Friendly Church Service’ near Melbourne, encouraging fans to come in costume and hear moral lessons drawn from *The Lord of the Rings*, Harry Potter, *Doctor Who*, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and *Star Wars*, was frowned on by a rival pastor: “I don’t have a problem with people enjoying sci-fi, but church isn’t the place to encourage escapism and fancy dress,” Mentone Baptist minister Murray Campbell said.’ (*Herald Sun*, Australia, 6 April) [PB]

R.I.P. *Bill Blackbeard* (1926-2011), major US comics scholar and collector who saved vast numbers of newspaper strips from destruction by libraries converting their archives to microfilm, died on 10 March aged 84. [PDF]

- *Doug Chaffee* (1936-2011), US sf and space artist who worked with NASA and many games franchises including *BattleTech* and *Magic: The Gathering*, died on 26 April; he was 75. [AIP]
- *Osamu Dezaki* (1943-2011), Japanese animator and animé director best known in the West for directing *Golgo 13: The Professional* (1983), died on 17 April; he was 67. [JC]
- *Dave Lamb*, UK comics fan and early member of the Prime Amateur Press Association (later the British Amateur Press Association), died on 4 April following a lengthy illness. [SG]
- *Sidney Lumet* (1924-2011), noted US director whose films included *Fail-Safe* (1964) and *The Wiz* (1978), died on 9 April aged 86. [SG]
- *Yolande Palfrey* (1957-2011), UK actress with genre appearances in *Blake’s Seven*, *Dragonslayer* (1981), *Doctor Who* (*Terror of the Vervoids*, 1986) and *The Ghosts of Motley Hall*, died on 9 April; she was 54. [JP]
- *Jim Roslof* (1945-2011), US graphic artist who as TSR’s 1980s art director took *Dungeons & Dragons* illustration from black-and-white scrawls to full-colour paintings by professionals, died on 19 March aged 65. He also wrote

D&D game scenarios. [MPJ]

- *Joanna Russ* (1937-2011), US academic, author and critic renowned for passionate, clear-sighted and often very funny feminist writing (both fiction, notably her 1975 *The Female Man*, and nonfiction), died on 29 April; she was 74. She won a Nebula for her *Again, Dangerous Visions* story ‘When It Changed’ (1972), Hugo and *Locus* awards for ‘Souls’ (1982), two retro-Tiptrees, and the 1988 Pilgrim award for sf criticism. [More at Making Light.](#)
- *Sol Saks* (1910-2011), US radio/tv writer who created *Bewitched* (1964-1972), though he wrote only the pilot script, died on 16 April at the age of 100. [GW]
- *Elisabeth Sladen* (1948-2011), UK actress most famed and loved as Sarah Jane Smith in the Jon Pertwee/Tom Baker era of *Doctor Who* (1973-1976) – a role reprised in her own spinoff series *The Sarah Jane Adventures* (2007-2010) – died from cancer on 19 April. She was 63.
- *Craig Thomas* (1942-2011), Welsh author of 18 novels who was best known for such near-sf technothrillers as *Firefox* (1977, filmed 1982) and *Firefox Down* (1983), died on 4 April; he was 69. [MPJ]

Cross-Disciplinary Masterclass. *Optical Economics Dept:* ‘Today’s competitive markets, whether we seek to recognise it or not, are driven by an international version of Adam Smith’s “invisible hand” that is unredeemably opaque.’ (Alan Greenspan, *Financial Times*, 30 March) [HF]

Random Fandom. *Dave Hicks* revealed the result of last year’s poll of Novacon members to choose The Best SF Book Since 1971 (when Novacon began). The most popular nominee, Iain Banks with five titles, was wiped out by ruthless competition from himself; the winner, listed on five ballots and just edging out Chris Priest’s *The Prestige*, was *Stars in My Eyes* by Peter Weston. (*Novacon 41 PR1*)

We Are Everywhere. Ken Livingstone’s love of sf is never forgotten: ‘The Boris v Ken battle for London is really a fight about who gets to be Batman. Ken Livingstone was the original Batman, although his relationship with the Commissioner wasn’t great, particularly in his GLC days. In fact, the Commissioner (Baroness Thatcher) repossessed the Batmobile and smashed the Batsignal, stopping Ken from swooping from the skies wherever pensioners were in danger. / Now Boris Johnson is Batman – and a columnist for this newspaper [the *Telegraph*] – and this is agony for Ken.’ Later: ‘So it is no surprise to hear the only fiction he has ever re-read, he says, is the Frank

Herbert saga *Dune*, in which a messiah fuses with a sandworm and saves the world.’ Newts are mentioned. And tadpoles. (Tanya Gold, [Telegraph](#), 15 April) [JW]

Outraged Letters. *Jamie Barras*: ‘Some Western news outlets have picked up on Mainland China banning films and tv shows about, among other things, time travel.’ UK papers mostly opted for ‘easy Western-centric jokes – no more *Doctor Who*, *Star Trek* etc. These outlets haven’t appreciated, or chose to ignore, the fact that this ban comes weeks after the conclusion of the smash-hit homegrown time travel show *Gong*, about a modern woman who goes back to Qing Dynasty China and gets caught up in palace politics. Just a coincidence that *Gong* was a smash hit not for the state-owned CCTV, but for its main rival, Hunan TV?’

- *Steven E. McDonald* had a me-too moment: ‘The note about Peter Watts pictorially logging his bout of necrotizing fasciitis sounds like a wonderful way to cause involuntary weight loss via vomiting. It never occurred to me that I should similarly chronicle my various battles with MRSA (and lately with pseudomonas something-or-other – I wasn’t told the exact strain) which promise an equally upchuck-worthy experience. I do have photos from the first bout, which took a chunk out of my right thigh [...] I have none at all from the bout that began last year and ate away chunks of both right and left ankles. My Doctor, examining the damage, cheerfully noted that “well, we should be able to save the legs ... maybe.” Then she got all flustered and dropped things. [...] On the bright side, if there is such, the wounds are finally healing and I’m not leaking CSI-worthy goo much now.’ (1 April)

Blurbismo. Bookseller’s description of the film *Phantom From Space* (1953): ‘Nobody takes much notice when an asteroid crashes off the coast of Santa Monica. That is, until two people turn up dead ...’ [DL]

Fanfundery. *Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund*: John Coxon takes the trip to the Reno Worldcon despite placing third in raw voting figures. All other candidates were eliminated by the 20% rule introduced in 1986 to ensure winners have support on both sides of the Atlantic. Liam Proven would have won by a large margin but fell one vote short of 20% in N. America; next came Graham ‘Don’t Vote For Me!’ Charnock, who didn’t reach the European quota. 189 ballots cast. More in Steve Green’s [Taffline 2](#) at taff.org.uk.

- *Down Under Fan Fund*. Candidates for this year’s race from Australasia to

Renovation are David Cake and Paula McGrath. Voting deadline 31 May. PDF ballot at taff.org.uk/duff.html.

The Dead Past. *As a Communications Guru Saw Us:* ‘Instead of tending towards a vast Alexandrian library the world has become a computer, an electronic brain, exactly as in a piece of infantile science fiction.’ (Marshall McLuhan, *The Gutenberg Galaxy*, 1962) [MMW]

C.o.A. *Soren and Velma deSelby-Bowen*, 4119 Interlake Avenue North, Seattle, WA 98103, USA.

Thog’s Masterclass. *Hirsute Dept.* ‘In the center was a quiet commanding man whose brown beard was only slightly gray at the temples ...’ (Gerald Morris, *The Legend of the King*, 2010) [SG]

• *Eyeballs in the Sky.* ‘The Tapper’s eyes were burning brighter than ever – they illuminated his pale, cadaverous face like twin stars.’ ‘[His] eyes were burning like lanterns.’ (R.L. Fanthorpe, ‘The Devil from the Depths’, 1961) [BH] ‘His huge eyes always looked as if they were about to rip somebody apart ...’ (Jack Chalker, *Gods of the Well of Souls*, 1994) [BA]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 8 May 2011: Ben Aaronovitch and Suzanne McLeod signing at Waterstone’s, Covent Garden, 2pm-4pm.
- 13 May 2011: Brum Group, Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre: 7:30pm for 8pm. With John Meaney. £4; members £3. Contact 07845 897760 or bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future meetings: 10 June, BSFG 40th anniversary party at Old Joint Stock pub; 15 July (changed from 8 July), Ian Stewart; 12 August, Summer Social at Black Eagle pub; 9 September, TBA; 14 October, David Wingrove.
- 3 June 2011: Iain [M] Banks reading, Q&A, signing at Phoenix Square cinema/gallery/bar, Leicester. £8 (£7 concessions): Phoenix box office 0116 242 2800.
- 4 June 2011: Philip Pullman talks at the Hay Festival. 7pm, Barclays Wealth Pavilion. £10. Box office 01497 822 629. <http://www.hayfestival.com/>
- 5 June 2011: Iain [M] Banks talks to Paul Blezard at the Hay Festival. 7pm,

Elmley Foundation Theatre. £4. Booking as above.

Editorial. I didn't expect fandom to notice my personal landmark of having, for the first time since 1979, slipped off the Hugo nominations slate altogether; or to believe that this comes as something of a relief.

Congratulations to all those listed! So long, and thanks for all the rockets.

As Others See Us II. Ginia Bellafante of the *New York Times* deduced, presumably from close non-study of the book, that sex scenes were specially added for HBO's tv *A Game of Thrones*: 'The true perversion, though, is the sense you get that all of this illicitness has been tossed in as a little something for the ladies, out of a justifiable fear, perhaps, that no woman alive would watch otherwise. While I do not doubt that there are women in the world who read books like Mr. Martin's, I can honestly say that I have never met a single woman who has stood up in indignation at her book club and refused to read the latest from Lorrie Moore unless everyone agreed to "The Hobbit" first. "Game of Thrones" is boy fiction patronizingly turned out to reach the population's other half.' Leading to the conclusion, since apparently it's all dreadfully hard to understand: 'If you are not averse to the Dungeons & Dragons aesthetic, the series might be worth the effort. If you are nearly anyone else, you will hunger for HBO to get back to the business of languages for which we already have a dictionary.' (*New York Times*, 14 April)

Milford Writers' Conference 2011, 17-24 September. For published authors: back to Snowdonia and the Trigonos Centre, North Wales. Bookings are now open.

<http://www.milfordsf.co.uk/>

Group Gropes. *Sheffield*: additional lunch/afternoon meetings on the third Sunday of each month begin 15 May. Details from Fran Dowd, fran at sheffieldsf dot org dot uk.

Prometheus Shortlist (libertarian sf): Cory Doctorow, *For the Win*; Sarah Hoyt, *Darkship Thieves*; Kevin MacArdry, *The Last Trumpet Project*; John Ringo, *Live Free or Die*; L. Neil Smith, *Ceres*.

Another SF Exhibition. 'Visions of the Future: The Art of Science Fiction', Stanley & Audrey Burton Gallery, Parkinson Court, University of Leeds, until 11 June. 'The exhibition focuses on the important role Leeds played in

the early history of science fiction in England, including hosting what is widely regarded as the world's first science fiction convention in 1937'.
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-leeds-13216121>

Royal Wedding Links. A loyal Dalek, Charlie Stross's dip into instant alternate history, and the silly hat that went viral:

<http://www.neatorama.com/2011/04/27/the-royal-wedding-dalek/>

<http://www.antipope.org/charlie/blog-static/2011/04/making-news.html>

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-1382791/Royal-Wedding-Forget-Kate-Middletons-dress-Princess-Beatrices-hat-Facebook-hit.html>

Thog's Second Helping. *Numbers Dept.* 'It was the teenage boy, coming out of the woods. His face was smooth and beardless; he couldn't be more than twelve, Chris realized.' (Michael Crichton, *Timeline*, 1999). [PB]

• *Geography Dept.* 'Well, I grew up in Bangor, Maine, that is. I know there's one in England, too.' 'Yes, I think I would have detected a Welsh accent.' (Lev Grossman, *Codex*, 2004) [PB]

Ansible 286 Copyright © David Langford, 2011. Thanks to Brian Ameringen, Paul Barnett, Jonathan Clements, Paul Di Filippo, Henry Farrell, Steve Glennon, Steve Green, Brian Hunt, Illustrious, Martyn P. Jackson, Denny Lien, Jonathan Palfrey, Andrew I. Porter, Gary Wilkinson, Martin Morse Wooster, James Worrada, and as ever our Hero Distributors: Dave Corby (Brum Group), SCIS/Prophecy, Alan Stewart (Australia). 3 May 2011.

Ansible 287, June 2011

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Web news.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or the legendary riches of Vwopdingorp.

Out of This World. The [British Library sf exhibition](#), guest-curated by Andy Sawyer and with an official Book of the Show by Mike Ashley, opened on 20 May and has been well reviewed. Don't miss. A preview party on the night before was good fun, densely packed with the usual suspects, including the pride-swelled Ashley and Sawyer. There was much wine, plus strange canapés that may well have been homage to the more exotic alien cuisines of Jack Vance. Introductory speeches by Baroness Blackstone (British Library chair) and China Miéville bounced disconcertingly around the vast echoey foyer. Many of us were thrilled to meet Charles Chilton of BBC Radio *Journey into Space* fame, still going strong at 93. Overcome with emotion and free wine, I failed to notice on that first visit that the exhibition's cataclysm-and-doom segment includes a rare copy of the greatest disaster novel (or novelistic disaster) of all time, [Earthdoom!](#) by Modesty Forbids and John Grant. Gosh! We have made an exhibition of ourselves. Thanks, Andy....

The Hand-Reared Boy

Philip K. Dick, as a trivia answer, was the last straw that got the setter of a May *Canberra Times* quiz fired. The problem wasn't so much that final question ('Which American novelist wrote the sci-fi novel *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*') as the overall theme. Each innocuous answer ('What is the official currency of Vietnam?') was also slang for the, ahem, pork sword or one-eyed trouser snake. Some Australians, poor dears, are easily shocked. ([The Register](#), 25 May)

Neil Gaiman was bemused when the year-old teapot storm about his high

speaking fees (given to charity; see A275) was revived by some Minnesota politician called Matt Dean who characterized Neil, ‘who I hate,’ as a ‘pencil-necked little weasel who stole \$45,000 from the state of Minnesota’. Neil, *inter alia*: ‘I feel like this is one of those moments where I’m going to discover that I stole his parking space, or had sex with his sister and didn’t know. / There’s also the really sort of weird kinky Republican thing of maybe he likes me, and this is some sort of weird cry for attention. The whole “I hate you, you’re a pencil-neck” thing, and then he’ll try for some sort of reconciliation and then the next thing you know he’s putting his hand on my leg. It’s just going to be weird. It could be awkward.’ (*City Pages*, 4 May) Under pressure from his mother, Dean soon issued a semi-apology admitting that the name-calling was wrong without retracting the hate. (*Ibid*, 5 May) [JC]

Matthew Graham, co-creator of *Life On Mars* and *Ashes To Ashes* and writer of the May *Doctor Who* episode ‘The Rebel Flesh’, is less than enthusiastic about his audience, or at least one age-group: ‘*Doctor Who* fans can be very fascistic. But I don’t really take them seriously. I don’t write it for 45-year-old men.’ (*Total TV Guide*, 21-27 May) [MPJ]

Alex Kingston, River Song in *Doctor Who*, took up the tale on the Graham Norton Show. *Graham*: ‘Fans are incredibly resourceful; Alex, you’ve just been filming *Doctor Who* in the desert.’ *Rob Lowe*: ‘Oh, the *Who* fans have gotta be nuts.’ *Alex*: ‘Yeah. They are.’ *Graham*: ‘Weren’t you out in the middle of Utah somewhere?’ *Alex*: ‘We were in the middle of Utah ... and we’d never filmed *Doctor Who* in America before, obviously. And the American fans are amazingly resourceful because of Twitter. Everyone now knows that the minute they catch sight of one of you it goes out, and people know where you are. We were in the middle of Monument Valley, the middle of nowhere, and suddenly these fans just appeared, out of the scrub and the desert. They wear those funny anoraks.’ *Graham*: ‘So you know who they are!’ *Alex*: ‘It’s a bit like trainspotters really, it’s awful to say but they kind of are.’ (27 May) [JCox] But were they all 45-year-old men? We need to know.

Gary Shteyngart won the Wodehouse prize for comic fiction with *Super Sad True Love Story*, set in ‘a dystopian, near-future America’ and described by a prize judge as ‘great literature’ and ‘wild comedy’ but not of course anything sordid like sf. (*Guardian*, 24 May) [MK]

John Scalzi has been voted in for a second term as President of SFWA. Among his tastier campaign pledges was: 'I will also finish construction of the SFWA VOLCANO-POWERED LASER which we will use to VAPORIZE ERRANT PUBLISHERS WHO DARE TO DEFY US.'

Consobrine

Until 25 Sep • **Out of This World** (sf exhibition), PACCAR Gallery, British Library, London. Free. For associated sf/science talks and panels, variously priced, see www.bl.uk/whatson/exhibitions/outof/events/. Alas, there are too many of these to list individually in *Ansible*.

3 Jun • **British Fantasy Society Open Night**, Mug House, 1-3 Tooley St, London, SE1 2PF. 6pm-late. Free. All welcome.

4 Jun • **BSFA/SF Foundation** mini-convention and AGMs. GoH Mike Ashley (SFF), Tricia Sullivan (BSFA). 10am-5pm. Free. Royal Astronomical Society, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London, W1J 0BQ.

17 Jun • **David Gemmell/Legend** fantasy awards, Magic Circle HQ, 12 Stephenson Way, Euston, London, NW1 2HD. 7:30pm. 'Fan tickets' £20. Contact [christineharrison_007](mailto:christineharrison_007@hotmail.com) at hotmail dot com.

17-19 Jun • **Eurocon 2011/Swecon**, Stockholm. *Advance booking now closed*: SEK500 at the door; day rates SEK150 Fri or Sun, SEK250 Sat. Further convention details at www.eurocon2011.se.

18 Jun • **CRSF 2011** (academic), Rendall Building, Bedford St South, University of Liverpool, L69 7ZA. 9am for 9:30-6pm. £30 reg. See www.liv.ac.uk/english/conferences/crsf; CRSF2011 at gmail com.

25 Jun • **PKD-Day** (Philip K. Dick), George Eliot Building, Clifton Campus, Clifton Lane, Nottingham. 10am-5pm. Free, but tell them if you plan to come: [john_dot_goodridge](mailto:john_dot_goodridge@ntu_dot_ac_dot_uk) at ntu dot ac dot uk.

26 Jun • **Lint the Movie** world première, Brighton. With Steve Aylett. 7pm. Tickets £5. More at <http://tinyurl.com/6h5dayz>.

30 Jun • **BSFA Open Meeting**, The Antelope, 22 Eaton Terrace, London, SW1W 8EZ. 5pm for 7pm. Free. With Gillian Polack.

23 Jul • **Beer & Blake's 7**, Knight's Templar, Unit 1 Temple Sq, Temple Quay, Bristol, Avon, BS1 6DG. From 12:15pm. All welcome.

30 Jul • **Tolkien Society Seminar**, Bar Convent, York. £18; members £15. Booking closes 16 July. Contact c/o 20 York Rd, Stony Stratford, Bucks, MK11 1BJ. See www.tolkienesociety.org/seminar/.

14-20 Nov • **Thought Bubble** (comics), Leeds, inc. 19-20 Nov con at Saviles & Royal Armouries Hall. See www.thoughtbubblefestival.com.

2-4 Feb 2012 • **SFX Weekender 3**, Prestatyn Sands, Holiday Park, North Wales. 'Pre-launch' prices available until some time in June: call 08700 110034. Announcement at tinyurl.com/SFXWeekPreLaunch.

Rumblings. *Eastercon 2013*: a bid has emerged, EightSquared for Bradford. See www.eightsquaredcon.org; contact 19 Uphall Road, Cambridge, CB1 3HX. • *Worldcon 2015*: there's a bid to hold this in Spokane, Washington, in Summer 2015. Website at spokanein2015.org.

Infinitely Improbable

Nebula Awards. NOVEL Connie Willis, *Blackout* and *All Clear*. NOVELLA Rachel Swirsky, 'The Lady Who Plucked Red Flowers Beneath the Queen's Window' (*Subterranean* Summer 2010). NOVELETTE Eric James Stone, 'That Leviathan Whom Thou Hast Made' (*Analog* 9/10). SHORT (tie) Kij Johnson (Tor.com 17/1/10), 'Ponies'; Harlan Ellison, 'How Interesting: A Tiny Man' (*Realms of Fantasy* 2/10). BRADBURY (dramatic) *Inception*. NORTON (YA) Terry Pratchett, *I Shall Wear Midnight*.

As Others See Us. 'Even when we consider the realm of fantasy at large, including J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Wizard of Oz*, C.S. Lewis and George Lucas, there's a heavy dose of dourness in the mix. As expansive as fantasy and sci-fi can be, spewing forth know-it-all translation droids and winged monkeys and gigantic worms, it all seems to end in the same predictably doomed battles between factions – armies from the north, east, south, and west, clashing into the night.' (Heather Havrilesky on *A Game of Thrones*, *New York Times Magazine*, 17 April) [MMW]

World Brain. *Anne Robinson*: 'In 2006, the *Star Wars* character voted the most annoying film character ever was Jar Jar ... what?' *Contestant*: 'Gabor.'

Anne Robinson: ‘The road known as Watling Street, which now incorporates part of the A5, was built by which ancient civilization?’ *Contestant*: ‘Apes.’ (*The Weakest Link*, BBC1) [PI]

R.I.P. *William Campbell* (1923-2011), US actor seen in *Star Trek* (notably as the Klingon captain in *The Trouble with Tribbles*) and *ST:DS9*, died on 28 April aged 87. [DKMK]

- *Jeff Conaway* (1950-2011), US actor whose best-known genre role was as security officer Zack Allan in *Babylon 5* and its spinoff tv movies, died on 27 May aged 60. [IC]

- *Jackie Cooper* (1922-2011), US actor who played Perry White in *Superman* (1978) and three sequels, died on 3 May; he was 88. [GW]

- *Terry Jeeves* (1922-2011), long-time UK fan artist, writer and publisher, died on 29 May; he was 88. His solo fanzine *Erg* saw 166 issues from 1959 to 2005; he also co-edited *Triode* 1954-1977; his line artwork (including the trademark alien ‘Soggies’) appeared in many fanzines and won him the 2007 Rotsler Award; a founder member of the BSFA, he edited its critical journal *Vector* 1958-1959; he received the 1965 Doc Weir Award and was inducted into the First Fandom Hall of Fame in 2010. His name, with many others, will travel to Mars on the Mars Science Laboratory Rover. Throughout his long fan career he was well known for welcoming and helping newcomers to the world of fandom. Terry will be much missed. [CD/DR]

- *Jeff Jones* (1944-2011, latterly Jeffrey Catherine Jones following a 1998 sex change), major US fantasy, sf and comics artist often compared with Frazetta – who once praised Jones as ‘the greatest living painter’ – died on 19 May aged 67. Jones won the 1986 World Fantasy Award for best artist.

- *Mark Shepherd*, US author, composer and former secretary to Mercedes Lackey, whose novel debut was *Wheels of Fire* (1992) with Lackey and who wrote and co-wrote other novels in her fantasy series, shot himself on 24 May. [SFS]

- *Yvette Vickers* (1928-2010), US actress who starred in *Attack of the 50 Foot Woman* (1958) and *Demons of the Swamp/Attack of the Giant Leeches* (1959), died naturally at home about a year before being found mummified this April. [DKMK]

- *Dolores Fuller* (1923-2011), US actress who inspired Ed Wood (he famously loved to wear her angora sweater) and appeared in his *Glen or Glenda* (1953) and *Bride of the Monster* (1955), died on 9 May aged 88. [MPJ]

• Dana Wynter (1931-2011), US actress who co-starred in the fabled *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1956), died on 5 May; she was 79. [SD]

As Others Classify Us. *Dave Clements* writes: ‘It would appear that the Apple iBooks store knows some things about Al Reynolds’s books that we don’t. *Galactic North* is classified as humour, while *Diamond Dogs & Turquoise Days* is described as Children’s Fiction. Maybe children develop faster in California, and we know the sense of humour is different. But I was worried to find that many of the Revelation Space books, including *Revelation Space* itself, can be found under “religion and spirituality”. Maybe Al Reynolds knows more about the universe than we think, since *Century Rain* is classified as biography!’

More Awards. *Compton Crook*, first sf/fantasy/horror novel: James Knapp, *State of Decay*. [L]

• *Lambda* (LGBT), sf/fantasy/horror category: Sandra McDonald, *Diana Comet and Other Improbable Stories*. [L]

We Are Everywhere. On the relentless expansion of a 1970s punk rock collection at New York University library: ‘Taylor [*the librarian*] says the Downtown Collection is growing at the rate of “800 linear feet a year”, making it sound like one of those uncontrollable furry monsters from a 1950s sci-fi movie.’ (*Financial Times*, 14 May) [MMW]

Mythopoeic Awards shortlist. ADULT FICTION Guy Gavriel Kay, *Under Heaven*; Karen Lord, *Redemption in Indigo*; Patricia A. McKillip, *The Bards of Bone Plain*; Devon Monk, *A Cup of Normal*; Sharon Shinn, *Troubled Waters*.

• CHILDREN’S Catherine Fisher, *Incarceron and Sapphique*; Terry Pratchett, *I Shall Wear Midnight*; Polly Shulman, *The Grimm Legacy*; Heather Tomlinson, *Toads and Diamonds*; Megan Whalen Turner, ‘The Queen’s Thief’ series (*The Thief*, *The Queen of Attolia*, *The King of Attolia*, *A Conspiracy of Kings*).

• SCHOLARSHIP: INKLINGS Bradford Lee Eden, ed., *Middle-earth Minstrel: Essays on Music in Tolkien*; Verlyn Flieger & Douglas A. Anderson, eds. *Tolkien on Fairy-stories: Expanded Edition*; Douglas Charles Kane, *Arda Reconstructed: The Creation of the Published Silmarillion*; Steve Walker, *The Power of Tolkien’s Prose: Middle-earth’s Magical Style*; Michael Ward, *Planet Narnia*.

• SCHOLARSHIP: OTHER Don W. King, ed., *Out of my Bone: The Letters of Joy Davidman*; Ursula K. Le Guin, *Cheek by Jowl*; Farah Mendlesohn, *Rhetorics of Fantasy*; Leslie A. Sconduto, *Metamorphoses of the Werewolf*; Caroline Sumpter, *The Victorian Press and the Fairy Tale*.

Geometry Masterclass. ‘Vanning sat down, fingering the smock and staring at the metal locker. It was a cube, approximately 3 x 3 x 5, lined with what seemed to be grayish paint, sprayed on.’ (Lewis Padgett, ‘Time Locker’, January 1943 *Astounding*) [LA]

• ‘Using a spade, they had scooped off the topsoil with its grass stalks, leaving a square of earth some three feet wide by five feet long.’ (Jay Williams and Raymond Abrashkin, *Danny Dunn and the Heat Ray*, 1962) [PL]

Outraged Letters. *Sherry Gottlieb* broods on mortality: ‘Twenty years after I closed A Change of Hobbit (at that time, the oldest and largest SF bookstore in the world), I have had an epiphany: My ongoing and lifelong association with the field – beginning as a reader, then as a bookseller for a couple of decades, then as an agent’s assistant, a published author, and a book doctor – is over. I recognized very few names on the most recent Hugo Award shortlist published in *Ansible* 286 ... and realized that even fewer people would recognize my name. But even as I become increasingly mired in SF obscurity, there is some comfort in knowing that *Ansible* will probably run a brief obituary when I die (provided that someone tells Dave). Sic transit.’

• *Steve Green* listens: ‘Naomi Alderman’s *Borrowed Time* was described on BBC R4’s *World At One* today as “the first *Doctor Who* book to be written by a literary novelist”, which must come as a surprise to Michael Moorcock. To be fair to Naomi, she dismissed any distinctions between “literary” and “genre” in the subsequent interview.’ (5 May)

• *Bryan Talbot* reports from deeper in the ghetto: ‘You may think that SF gets short shrift from mainstream media but that’s nothing compared to how comics are treated. Recently a production company that regularly makes documentaries for Channel 4 proposed a programme centred on *Alice in Sunderland*. They even sent a copy of the book for the Controller to read. He claimed to have enjoyed it immensely but informed them that he couldn’t possibly commission a documentary based on it as “we did a programme [*Comics Britannia*] about comics four years ago”.’

Fanfundery. *Canadian Unity Fan Fund*. The lucky winner who will be

wafted all the way from Canada to far-off Canada is Kent Pollard.

Media Awards. *BAFTAs*. Production Design: Tom Bowyer for *Misfits* (E4). Visual Effects: The Mill for *Merlin* (BBC1).

- *BAFTA Cymru*. Children's Programme: *The Sarah Jane Adventures*. Sound, Lighting: both *Doctor Who*.
- *National Movie Awards*. Fantasy: *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows 1* (part 2 was 'Must See Movie Of The Summer'). Comedy: *Paul*. Animation: *Tangled*. Screen Icon: Johnny Depp. [MPJ]

The Dead Past. *30 Years Ago*, the Helmdon Council Election: '2801 votes cast, 14 spoilt; Tattersall (Con) 1860, Ian Watson (Lab) 927. "Not bad for a safe Tory seat," Ian told our reporter, adding: "The mob chose Barabbas."' (*Ansible* 18, June 1981)

- *40 Years Ago*, UK cuts and austerity: 'The Arts Council have discontinued their grants to both *New Worlds* (about £1500) and *Ambit* (£400). The latter will almost certainly fold as a result. Hurrah for jolly Conservatives ...' ([Checkpoint 5](#), June 1971).
- *50 Years Ago*, a teasing news item: 'John Campbell has joined Liverpool Group – as BASTION 2 will reveal....' ([Skyrack 33](#), June 1961) Not John W. Campbell of *Analog* but John Ramsey Campbell, who legally discarded that first name some 24 years later. (*Ansible* 42, March 1985)

C.o.A. *New Worlds* revival: submissions should no longer go to the 'hodson798' address in [A286](#). Try dickjude at googlemail dot com. *Dick and Leah Smith*, 855 S Harvard Drive, Palatine, IL 60067, USA.

Thog's Masterclass. *Radiology Dept*. 'Benson's attention was attracted by the whirring and hissing of the X-ray apparatus. [...] "Millstein, you've left your X-ray machine running!" / "Yes, I know," replied Don, eyeing the other closely. "It has a tight rotor bearing and I'm running it in...."' (Joseph William Skidmore, 'Murder by Atom', June 1937 *Amazing*) [KH]

- *Dept of Introductions*. 'I am Ayla of the Ninth Cave of the Zeladonii, acolyte of the Zeladonii, First Among Those Who Serve The Great Earth Mother, mated to Jondalar, Master Flint-Knapper and brother of Joharran, leader of the Ninth Cave of the Zeladonii. I was Daughter of the Mammoth Hearth of the Lion Camp of the Mamutoi, Chosen to be the spirit of the Cave Lion, Protected by the Cave Bear, and friend of the horses Whinney, Racer, and Gray, and the four-legged hunter, Wolf.' (Jean M. Auel, *The Land of*

Painted Caves, 2011) [EH via MMW]

- *True Romance Dept.* ‘You mean the babe? Wow! Isn’t she built like a force-field latrine, though?’ (Isaac Asimov, *The End of Eternity*, 1955) [PB]
 - *Eyeballs in the Sky.* ‘Waldo began to nod. His lids, yellow-swollen with exhaustion, would crawl down over his eyes like grubs over two rotting berries ...’ (Ellery Queen, *Double, Double*, 1950)
 - *Brain Strain Dept.* ‘... there was a swollen ache behind her eyes where the day’s experiences had kicked bruises in her brain.’ ‘Three exhausted men drew their horses up in a phalanx across Gally’s brain.’ (James Long, *Ferney*, 1998) [PB]
 - *Dept of Painful Metaphor.* ‘She towed him in her wake to Ferney’s house, caution overruled by the pressing need to be out of the jaws of this human nutcracker.’ (*Ibid*)
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Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 3 June 2011: Iain M. Banks reading, Q&A, signing at Phoenix Square cinema/gallery/bar, Leicester. £8 (£7 concessions): Phoenix box office 0116 242 2800.
- 4 June 2011: Philip Pullman talks at the Hay Festival. 7pm, Barclays Wealth Pavilion. £10. Box office 01497 822 629.
<http://www.hayfestival.com/>
- 5 June 2011: Iain M. Banks talks to Paul Blezard at the Hay Festival. 7pm, Elmley Foundation Theatre. £4. Booking as above.
- 7 June 2011: Iain M. Banks evening in Birmingham Libraries Theatre; co-organized with Brum Group. 6:30pm for 7pm. Tickets £4 plus 50p postage per address; cheques to ‘Birmingham SF Group’ c/o Rog Peyton (email below), 19 Eves Croft, Bartley Green, Birmingham, B32 3QL.
- 10 June 2011: Brum Group, 40th anniversary party at Old Joint Stock pub. With buffet. £12. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk or rog.peyton at btinternet com. Future meetings at the usual venue, Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre, 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for members. 10 June, BSFG; 15 July (changed from 8 July), Ian Stewart; 12 August, Summer Social at Black Eagle pub; 9 September, Stan Nichols & Peter Weston; 14 October, David Wingrove.

Editorial. For those wondering why this issue didn't appear on 1 June ... Hazel's father died on 14 May, his 88th birthday, and the funeral was yesterday. We are still pretty groggy. Thanks to all who had already heard about this and sent sympathy.

Thog's Second Helping. *Eyeballs in the Sky, Without the Balls.* 'An android stood below the wing. It appeared male and in its mid-twenties, although it was neither of those things. Also, it was naked. A perfectly sculpted specimen of humanity except for its neutered groin and eyes.' (Jennifer Campbell-Hicks, 'Malfunction', 15 May 2011 *Ray Gun Revival* #4) [PL]

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Ansible 288, July 2011

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Web news.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or the winning strategy for Arky-malarkey.

SF Encyclopedia. Recent developments have been so thrilling as to reduce John Clute to widely separated monosyllables, but the official announcement isn't quite ready. Keep watching the skies at sfe3.org. [Later: or [here](#).]

The Snowball Effect

Douglas Adams gets an approving nod in a feature on books for teenage boys, although he has one serious drawback: 'He's a big fan of Douglas Adams, whose work I suggest trying despite its being somewhat sci-fi.' ('Book Lover', [Wall Street Journal](#), 27 June) [DJH]

Bernard Cribbins, UK actor whose genre roles include *The Mouse on the Moon* (1963), *Daleks Invasion Earth: 2150 AD* (1966), *The Wombles* (1973-1975 as narrator) and several recent *Doctor Who* episodes, received an OBE in the Queen's Birthday honours in June. [JY] So did Tim Brooke-Taylor and Graeme Garden, whose best-known sf parts were in *The Goodies* and bits of *I'm Sorry, I'll Read That Again*. Who could forget 'Professor Prune and the Electric Time-Trousers'?

Harlan Ellison couldn't make it to his SF Hall of Fame induction in June, owing to illness: he darkly announced that he was in the 'last stages of something ... And I don't have a cold.' (CNN, 22 June) [AIP]

Robert Holdstock's memorial fund has achieved its goal. By arrangement with the Woodland Trust, three acres of Victory Wood near Canterbury – between the ancient Blean and Ellenden woodlands – are 'permanently and exclusively dedicated to Rob, and we also have a bench and oak sapling there in his memory.' [SB] As Rob said in 1993, 'The slap of a wet oak leaf is one

of the things I love most.’ His *Avilion* has won the 2010 Czech Academy of SF, Fantasy and Horror Award.

William Shatner, 80, received an honorary doctorate of letters from McGill University in his home town Montreal. ([CBC](#), 2 June) [BM]

Condryn

16 Jul • **Other Worlds 2** (Alt.Fiction), Central Library, Nottingham. 10:30am-4pm. £10.54: www.writingeastmidlands.co.uk/events/238954.

20 Jul • **Imagination and Interpretation**: Writing science into fiction. Discussion on ‘representing scientists and science in contemporary fiction.’ Royal Society, 6-9 Carlton House Terrace, London. 5:30pm for 6-7:30pm. Free; first come, first served.

23 Jul • **Beer & Blake’s 7**, Knight’s Templar, Unit 1 Temple Sq, Temple Quay, Bristol, Avon, BS1 6DG. From 12:15pm. All welcome.

25-26 Jul • **Creative Science** – ‘Science Fiction Prototyping for Technology Innovation’ (workshop), Nottingham. £180 reg; no concessions. See www.creative-science.org. It’s ... interdisciplinary!

27 Jul • **BSFA Open Meeting**, The Antelope, 22 Eaton Terrace, London, SW1W 8EZ. 5pm for 7pm. Free. With Sophia McDougall.

29 Jul - 27 Aug • **Bruce Pennington** art exhibition, Atlantis Bookshop, Museum St, London, WC1A 1LY. 10:30am-6pm, Mon-Sat.

30 Jul • **Tolkien Society Seminar**, Bar Convent, York. £18; members £15. Booking closes 16 July. Contact c/o 20 York Rd, Stony Stratford, Bucks, MK11 1BJ. See www.tolkiensociety.org/seminar/.

17-21 Aug • **Renovation** (69th Worldcon), Reno-Sparks Convention Center, Reno, NV, USA. \$195 reg; \$480 family (2 adults + n under-17s); \$100 under-21s – *rising on 18 July to \$220, \$500 and £120*. Unchanged: \$75 under-17s; under-7s free; \$50 supp. For day rates, varying with day and age, see www.renovationsf.org. Contact PO Box 13278, Portland, OR 97213-0278, USA; or info at renovationsf dot org.

19-21 Aug • **Festival in the Shire**: Tolkien art/book exhibition, ‘mini-

festival'. 10am-6pm, Wynnstay Hotel, Machynlleth.

14-15 September • **Opera Siam: Mae Naak** (the UK première of Somtow Sucharitkul's ghost opera), Bloomsbury Theatre, London. 7:30pm. £24; £17 concessions. Box office 020 7388 8822; for details and online booking see www.thebloomsbury.com/event/run/1593.

30 Sep - 2 Oct • **Fantasycon 2011**, Royal Albion Hotel, Brighton. *Now* £65 *reg* (BFS members £60) or £40/day, Saturday only. Cheques to 10 Haycroft Gdns, Mastin Moor, Chesterfield, Derbyshire, S43 3FE.

2-4 Feb 2012 • **SFX Weekender 3**, Prestatyn Sands, Holiday Park, North Wales. Charged by accommodation, from £250 for 2 (£545 for 5) 'basic' up to £400 for 2 'VIP'. Online booking (£6 booking fee) at www.sfxweekender.com. Contact & children's bookings: 08700 110034.

24-27 Aug 2012 • **Discworld Convention**, Hilton Metropole, Birmingham NEC. *Now* £53 *reg*, £36 *concessions*, rising again on 1 November 2011 to £58 and £39. £25 supporting; under-13s free. PO Box 4101, Shepton Mallet, Somerset, BA4 9AJ.

30 Aug - 3 Sep 2012 • **Chicon 7** (70th Worldcon), Hyatt Regency, Chicago. \$175 *reg*, \$100 YA (17-21), \$50 *child* (5-16), under-5s free – *until 30 September*. Contact PO Box 13, Skokie, IL 60076, USA.

25-27 Feb 2013 • **Redemption '13** (multimedia sf), Britannia Hotel, Coventry, CV1 5RP. £60 *reg*, rising to £65 on 1 September 2011; unwaged etc £20 less; £75 at door. £15 *supp* and under-18s; under-3s free. Contact 61 Chaucer Road, Farnborough, Hampshire, GU14 8SP.

Rumblings. *Eurocons.* June's Stockholm event was the largest Swedish convention ever. The 2012 Eurocon is in Croatia; Kiev won the 2013 vote; the 2014 Dublin bid, intended to complement that year's expected London Worldcon, now faces a rival bid from Romania. [JC]

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. Interviewing the actor playing Merlin in *Camelot* (Channel 4), journalist Benji Wilson deftly sums up the entire history of Arthurian legend: 'When did epic fantasy switch from being the nerdy stuff

that the Dungeons & Dragons kids played at break time to something that is currently asking for consideration as serious television?' (*Daily Telegraph*, 11 June) [MPJ]

Awards. *Carnegie Medal* (children's): Patrick Ness, *Monsters of Men*.

• *David Gemmell Legend* (heroic fantasy): NOVEL Brandon Sanderson, *The Way of Kings*; Cover Artist Olof Erla Einarsdottir (*Power and Majesty* by Tansy Rayner Roberts); NEWCOMER Darius Hinks, *Warrior Priest*.

• *Locus*: NOVEL Connie Willis, *Blackout* and *All Clear*. FANTASY NOVEL China Miéville, *Kraken*. FIRST NOVEL N.K. Jemisin, *The Hundred Thousand Kingdoms*. YA Paolo Bacigalupi, *Ship Breaker*. NOVELLA Ted Chiang, *The Lifecycle of Software Objects*. NOVELETTE Neil Gaiman, 'The Truth Is a Cave in the Black Mountains' (*Stories*). SHORT Neil Gaiman, 'The Thing About Cassandra' (*Songs of Love and Death*). MAGAZINE *Asimov's*. PUBLISHER Tor. ANTHOLOGY George R.R. Martin & Gardner Dozois, eds, *Warriors*. COLLECTION *Fritz Leiber: Selected Stories*. EDITOR Ellen Datlow. ARTIST Shaun Tan. NON-FICTION William H. Patterson, Jr., *Robert A. Heinlein: In Dialogue with His Century: Volume 1*. ART BOOK Cathy & Arnie Fenner, eds, *Spectrum 17*.

• *Bram Stoker* (horror) NOVEL Peter Straub, *A Dark Matter*. FIRST NOVEL (tie) Benjamin Kane Ethridge, *Black and Orange*; Lisa Morton, *Castle of Los Angeles*. LONG FICTION Norman Prentiss, *Invisible Fences*. SHORT Joe R. Lansdale, *The Folding Man (Haunted Legends)*. ANTHOLOGY Ellen Datlow and Nick Mamatas, ed., *Haunted Legends*. COLLECTION Stephen King, *Full Dark, No Stars*. NONFICTION Gary A. Braunbeck, *To Each their Darkness*. POETRY COLLECTION Bruce Boston, *Dark Matters*. SPECIALTY PRESS Dark Regions Press.

• [European SF Society](#) (Eurocon) included: GRAND MASTER Sam J. Lundwall. AUTHOR Alastair Reynolds. ARTIST David A. Hardy. TRANSLATOR Attila Németh. PROMOTER (tied) Louis Savy of Sci-Fi London.

Near Miss Dept. *Anne Robinson*: 'Which "T" is the wife of Oberon and Queen of the Fairies in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*?' Contestant: 'Tinkerbell.' (BBC1, *The Weakest Link*) [PI]

R.I.P. *James Arness* (1923-2011), US actor best known for Westerns but forever remembered by sf fans as *The Thing from Another World* (1951), died on 3 June aged 88. Other sf credits are *Two Lost Worlds* (1951) and *Them!* (1954). [SJD]

- *Gene Colan* (1926-2011), US comics artist best known for his work at Marvel – including *Iron Man*, *Tomb of Dracula*, *Daredevil*, *Doctor Strange* and *Howard the Duck* – died on 23 June aged 84. [DKMK]
- *Peter Falk* (1927-2011), US actor most famed as the tv detective Columbo, whose several sf/fantasy credits included *The Princess Bride* (1987) and most recently *Next* (2007), died on 23 June; he was 83. [SJD/AW]
- *John Glasby* (1928-2011), UK author who was hugely prolific in many genres in the 1950s and 1960s – including much sf and supernatural fiction for Badger Books and Curtis Warren under his own name, various house names and as A.J. Merak – died on 5 June; he was 82. Since retirement he had returned to fiction with ghost stories, plus novels including contributions to John Russell Fearn’s sf ‘Golden Amazon’ sequence. [PDF]
- *Martin H. Greenberg* (1941-2011), leading US anthologist who edited and co-edited well over a thousand anthologies in all genres – the *SF Encyclopedia* currently lists 575 of sf, fantasy and horror relevance – died on 27 June at the age of 70. Like so many others, I have fond memories of appearing in his anthologies – with prompt payment!
- *Kees Huizer* (‘Uncle Kees’), Dutch fan who ran security at the 1990 Hague Worldcon, died on 8 June aged 61; see letters below.
- *Joel Rosenberg* (1954-2011), Canadian-born author of several popular sf and fantasy series including ‘Guardians of the Flame’ (1983-2003), died unexpectedly on 2 June; he was 57. His debut story was ‘Like the Gentle Rains’ (*Asimov’s* 2/82). [SHS]
- *Alan Ryan* (1943-2011), US horror writer whose first novel was *Panther!* (1981) and who had begun to publish again after over 20 years’ silence, died on 3 June; he was 68. His 1984 story ‘The Bones Wizard’ tied for a World Fantasy Award. [TM]
- *Roy Skelton* (1931-2011), UK actor who voiced many Daleks (1967-1988), Cybermen, and the puppets Zippy and George in the children’s show *Rainbow*, died on 8 June aged 79. Interview quote: ‘I can walk down the street and no one knows who I am. People don’t say, “There’s Zippy”, or ask me to say, “Exterminate!” I sometimes wish they did.’ (*Telegraph*, 8 June) [MPJ/GW]
- *Larry Tritten*, US author of many articles and short stories including much sf (his 1974 ‘The Star Sneak’ entertainingly parodies Jack Vance), died on 6 April aged 72. (*Brum Group News*)
- *Margaret Tyzack* (1931-2011), noted UK actress seen in 2001, *A Clockwork*

Orange, the 1979 *Quatermass* and *Young Indiana Jones*, died on 25 June aged 79. [GD/AW]

• *Laura Ziskin* (1950-2011), US screenwriter and producer who worked on the psychic thriller *Eyes of Laura Mars* (1978) and, most famously, the 2002-2007 *Spider-Man* trilogy (plus the 2012 reboot *The Amazing Spider-Man*), died on 12 June; she was 61. [SG]

As Others See Us II. Erin McKean of wordnik.com shudders at the thought of an alternate time-track besmirched by shocking liberties: ‘In a world without standard spelling, writers would pledge allegiance to different spelling schools. Some would fancy double letters; others would dispense with the silent “e” or add decorative umlauts; romance writers would gravitate toward faux-French endings such as “-eau/x;” and science-fiction writers would use even more of the letters “x” and “q” than they do now.’ (*Washington Post*, 5 June) [MMW] Squirely xnot?

Award Shortlists. *Sidewise* (alternate history): LONG Adam Chamberlain & Brian A. Dixon, *Columbia & Britannia*; Robert Conroy, *Red Inferno: 1945*; Jay Lake, *Pinion*; Eric Swedin, *When Angels Wept*. SHORT Eleanor Arnason, *Mammoths of the Great Plains*; Barry B. Longyear, ‘Alter Kameraden’ (*Asimov’s* 4/10); Ken MacLeod, ‘Sidewinders’ (*The Mammoth Book of Alternate Histories*); Alan Smale, ‘A Clash of Eagles’ (*Panverse Two*); William F. Wu, ‘Goin’ Down to Anglotown’ (*The Dragon and the Stars*).

• *John W. Campbell Memorial*: Jon Armstrong, *Yarn*; Greg Bear, *Hull Zero Three*; William Gibson, *Zero History*; Tom McCarthy, *C*; Ian McDonald, *The Dervish House*; Adam Roberts, *New Model Army*; Hannu Rajaniemi, *The Quantum Thief*; Gavin Smith, *Veteran*; Sheri S. Tepper, *The Waters Rising*; Jean-Christophe Valtat, *Aurorarama*; E. O. Wilson, *Anthill*; Connie Willis, *Blackout / All Clear*; Charles Yu, *How to Live Safely in a Science Fictional Universe*.

Shock Horror Outrage. The most complained-about films of 2010 were *The Lovely Bones* and *Kick-Ass*, reports the British Board of Film Classification. Protesters felt these should have been rated higher than the BBFC’s 12A and 15. (BBC 13 June) [MPJ] The horror sequel *The Human Centipede II* was refused any BBFC certificate owing to excessive ickiness and ‘a real risk of harm to viewers’, who are perhaps in danger of being stitched together by the easily influenced. (BBC 7 June)

C.o.A. *James Bacon*, ‘Home for Wayward Bachelors’, 54 Bridge Road, Uxbridge, UB8 2QP.

Science Masterclass. A rather splendid paper in the *European Journal of Neurosurgery* analyses the 704 instances of traumatic head injury to be found in the *Asterix* comic canon, noting such common symptoms as ‘outstretched and sideward-pointing tongue’ (paresis of the hypoglossal nerve) and marvelling that even the 390 cases of ‘severe trauma’ were, for the ancient world, remarkably lacking in fatal consequences. ([Telegraph](#), 15 June) [MPJ]

Outraged Letters. *Simon R. Green* remembers his roots after [A287](#): ‘You know, reading the pieces on people who work in the sci-fi business slagging off the fans, still pisses me off big time. Like your good self, I started out as a fan, and even though I’ve been a Philthy Pro for some time now, I still think of myself as a fan. I still get just as big a kick out of wandering round a convention, dropping in on whatever panels I fancy, as I ever did. I still enjoy wandering round Forbidden Planet, picking up books and comics and magazines just on the impulse, looking for the good stuff. In fact, I think when you start thinking and feeling otherwise, it’s time to find another business to get into.’

- *Kees van Toorn* (see R.I.P. above): ‘Uncle Kees is a name associated with ConFiction, the world SF convention in the Hague. Organizing the con, chairman Kees van Toorn called all hands on deck and massive support was given by Anglo-American fans – supported, when it came to security, by Kees Huizer and his team, handling the official security side of the convention. Nicknamed Uncle Kees (he was indeed an uncle of Kees van Toorn) he brought in several squads of real police and used the event as training for his men: he worked for the Hague police as an instructor. With the US Ambassador present at the Hugo ceremony, it helped a lot to keep the Men in Black with their sunglasses at ease as Uncle Kees liaised with them – they knew him because of his police background. / A story he liked to tell about that convention was that the Worldcon bid winners took the cash from the vote and walked at ease to the bank ... protected on all sides by real police with squad cars standing by. He and his team got on really well with the fan-security and were part of the success of ConFiction.’

As Others See Others Seeing Us. More on that ‘terrific fantasy drama series’ *A Game of Thrones*: ‘The Beeb’s icky Merlin it ain’t. / Yet, as the critics have clocked that there is a groundswell of love for this show, they’ve

been frantically selling it as exactly what it isn't, trying to imbue it with the necessary cool to edge it into the exclusive zeitgeist club of acceptable media. / Phrases are rolled out like "defies the genre," or The Guardian's particularly irritating "breaks fantasy convention." / Of course Game Of Thrones doesn't break fantasy convention, because it is exactly fantasy convention. / The numpties write like that because they're afraid their readership might balk at the concept of fantasy. And why might their readership do so? / Because, over the years, those very same hegemonies of critical mass have nurtured exactly that disassociation.' (Morningstaronline.co.uk, 20 June) [MC]

Fanfundery. *Down Under Fan Fund.* David Cake won the 2011 trip from Australasia to the Reno Worldcon, with 80 first-place votes to Paula McGrath's 57. (No Preference 9, Hold Over Funds 1, write-in 1.)

The Dead Past. *60 Years Ago*, there was multimedia fun at the UK national convention ('Festiventation'): 'The last item of the day was a showing of the "Lost World", a film based on A. Conan Doyle's famous fantasy of a South American land in which dinosaurs and pterodactyls still exist. Made in 1925 and starring Wallace Beery and Bessie Love, the film was naturally silent, but by clever manipulation of gramophone records ("Night on Bare Mountain", "Rite of Spring", etc), and of the volume control, [William F.] Temple and Arthur C. Clarke managed a very appropriate accompaniment.' ([Science Fantasy News](http://ScienceFantasyNews.com) 8, July 1951). Less well received was the festival year's South Kensington Exhibition of Science: 'Frankly, from the coal mine blackness of the first section (designed to show the atomic structure of a lead pencil) to the final case showing the Universe (which during our visit was not working and invisible), the whole affair is very disappointing. [...] There are some extremely interesting Waltzing Mice (no information), a cinema show we didn't have the courage to see, and, best of all, an exit into the time-tested Science Museum proper.' (*Ibid*, July 1951)

Random Fandom. *Rich Lynch's* proposal for Fanzine/Semiprozine Hugo reform in its latest version: rwl.livejournal.com/41971.html.

Thog's Masterclass. *Dept of Just How Does He Know?* 'The face [of the woman who answered] the door was ghostly white, of a person who had been bled, veal-like, from the ankles.' (Peter Turnbull, *The Man With No Face*, 1998) [PB]

• *Sonic Stealth Attack Dept.* 'It was a silence that screamed.' (Brian Lumley,

Beneath the Moors, 1974) [LP]

- *Dept of Anatomy*. ‘Memories leaked out of his head and burned acid paths down his throat and into his lungs.’ (Allan Guthrie, *Hard Man*, 2006) [PB] “‘Who’s there?’” a voice called out of the darkness, causing Pearce’s stomach to shoot into his throat.’ (*Ibid*) [PB] ‘... something was niggling away at the back of his mind. He couldn’t quite put his finger on it.’ (Mack Reynolds, *The Cosmic Eye*, 1969) [IH]
 - *Surprise Package Dept*. ‘There was also something in his head. It was a brain.’ (Mervyn Peake, ‘Boy In Darkness’, in *Sometime, Never*, ed anon, 1956) [KM]
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Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 15 July 2011: Brum Group, Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre, 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for members. With Ian Stewart. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk or rog.peyton at btinternet com. Further meetings: 12 August, Summer Social at Black Eagle pub; 9 September, Stan Nicholls & Peter Weston; 14 October, David Wingrove .
- 23 July 2011: Bryan Talbot presentation, Lass O’ Gowrie Lit Fest ‘Pub Fiction’, 5pm. Tickets £5 from Lass O’ Gowrie, 36 Charles St, Manchester, M1 7DB, Tel: 0161 273 6932

Editorial. Haven’t been feeling very well of late (RSI-like pains mostly), but the show must go on.... Inspired by the appearance of my and John Grant’s *Earthdoom!* in the [British Library sf exhibition](#), our current US publisher Dark Quest should have their ebook edition available any day now, with the print version to follow. [My collaborator comments.](#)

Award Shortlists II. *British Fantasy*: NOVEL Adam Nevill, *Apartment 16*; Sam Stone, *Demon Dance*; Tom Fletcher, *The Leaping*; Gary McMahon, *Pretty Little Dead Things*; Graham Joyce, *The Silent Land*. NOVELLA Stephen King, *1922*; Simon Clark, *Humpty’s Bones*; Andrew Hook, *Ponthe Oldenguine*; Paul Finch, *Sparrowhawk*; Tim Lebbon, *The Thief of Broken Toys*. SHORT R B Russell, ‘The Beautiful Room’; Sam Stone, ‘Fool’s Gold’; Nicholas Royle, ‘The Lure’; Jan Edwards, ‘Otterburn’; Joe Essid, ‘Something For Nothing’. COLLECTION Stephen King, *Full Dark, No Stars*; Simon Clark,

The Gravedigger's Tale; Tim Lebbon, *Last Exit for the Lost*; Paul Finch, *One Monster Is Not Enough*; Paul Finch, *Walkers in the Dark*. ANTHOLOGY Johnny Mains, *Back From the Dead*; Jonathan Oliver, *The End of the Line*; Stephen Jones, *The Mammoth Book of Best New Horror 21*; Allyson Bird & Joel Lane, *Never Again*; Stephen Jones, *Zombie Apocalypse!*. NON-FICTION *Altered Visions: The Art of Vincent Chong*; Mark Morris, ed, *Cinema Futura*; Steven Savile, *Fantastic TV*; Harold Billings, *M P Shiel: The Middle Years 1897-1923*; Darrel Buxton, *The Shrieking Sixties*. ARTIST Ben Baldwin, Daniele Serra, Les Edwards, Paul Mudie, Vincent Chong. SMALL PRESS Atomic Fez, Gray Friar Press, Pendragon Press, Telos Publishing, TTA Press. MAGAZINE/PERIODICAL *Black Static*, *Cemetery Dance*, *Murky Depths*, *Shadows and Tall Trees*, *Strange Horizons*. COMIC/GRAPHIC NOVEL Mark Millar, *Clint*; Bryan Talbot, *Grandville Mon Amour*; Alan Moore & Jacen Burrows, *Neonomicon*; Ian Culbard, *The Mountains of Madness*; Mike Carey & Peter Gross, *The Unwritten Vols 1 & 2*. FILM *Alice in Wonderland*, *Inception*, *Kick-Ass*, *Monsters*, *Scott Pilgrim vs The World*. TELEVISION *A History of Horror With Mark Gatiss*, *Being Human*, *Doctor Who*, *Sherlock*, *True Blood*.

Bull Without End. Yesterday's email of the latest *Australian SF Bullsheet* newsletter has been repeating once an hour ever since. Has Australia fallen into the hands of rogue bots unconstrained by the Three Laws? Pleas to turn the bloody thing off have so far gone unheeded....

<http://www.bullsheetsf.org.au/bullsheets/july-2011/>

Thog Appreciated. Marty Halpern commits Thoggery-bloggery:

<http://martyhalpern.blogspot.com/2011/06/writing-101-thogs-masterclass-at-baycon.html>

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Ansible 289, August 2011

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Web news.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or umbral revelations of sempiternal Galexis.

Scooped! That *SF Encyclopedia* news, embargoed last issue, is now out at www.sfgateway.com and sf-encyclopedia.com. Life is one big panic.

The Final Encyclopedia

Jonathan Carroll, celebrated fantasy author, has turned up in DC's rebooted *Superman* comics continuity as Lois Lane's boyfriend. Tuckerization or just coincidence? No one seems quite sure. [PDF]

Chris Foss remembered the joys of working on the film *A.I.*: "Kubrick used to come in with a page of script and I'd visualise what he was doing. I told him that he'd got me started on my science fiction career when he made *2001: A Space Odyssey*. He said 'Yeah and I'll finish you too' and he damn nearly did. He was a hard taskmaster. I put a sign saying Prisoner Cell Block 8 on my office door." Still, things weren't all bad during that period: "I was bonking [Kubrick's] god daughter at the time, unbelievably. She was this naughty model".' (Interview by Matilda Battersby, [Independent](#), 29 July) [SG]

Walter Koenig will be honoured with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame in 2012, rather later than his captain and other crew members from the original *Star Trek* series and related films. [NSFC]

Tanith Lee's story 'Snow-Drop' became controversial when its inclusion in a Cairo University fantasy-fiction reading list was denounced, supposedly for the lesbian scene: 'Teaching homosexuality at Cairo University', ranted an Egyptian paper. The story was taught for a whole term without complaint; [the Guardian](#) (29 June) suggests a 'fabricated moral scandal' intended to

discredit the CU English department, whose staff is predominantly female and one of whose professors was recently elected as Cairo University's first-ever female dean. [MPJ]

Saci Lloyd's YA thriller *Momentum* is yet another of those books that Transcend Mere Genre despite containing skiffy stuff like 'carbon rationing and environmental meltdown [...] augmented reality, police brutality, surveillance, free running and secret codes hidden in a global communications system called the Dreamline. Oh, and a forbidden love story between privileged citizen Hunter and outsider-on-the-run Uma. / Put baldly like that, it sounds like too much for one book to pack in, too unlikely to be anything other than dystopian science fiction. Yet one of the more exciting and chilling aspects of the book is just how close to reality it comes.' (Michelle Pauli, [Guardian](#), 15 July) The author herself caps this with the famous Atwoodian clincher: 'It's not squids in outer space but just slightly removed from today's reality ...' [WP]

J.K. Rowling's split with her long-time literary agent Christopher Little made news headlines; he's unhappy and may sue. JKR switched to a new agency set up by Little's erstwhile business partner Neil Blair, a lawyer rather than a literary agent. ([Independent](#), 4 July) [MPJ] Also: the daft *Willy the Wizard* plagiarism claim against Bloomsbury and JKR (see A272) has finally collapsed in the UK, where the judge felt and the Court of Appeal agreed that its chance of success was so low that £1.5m must be paid into court as security for the defendants' expected costs. This was not forthcoming. ([BBC](#), 18 July) [JS] Good result: but a proper drubbing in court – as in the USA – would have been more satisfying.

Steph Swainston decided to cancel her current two-book contract with Gollancz and retrain as an A-level chemistry teacher ([Independent](#), 10 July): 'I suffer terribly from isolation while writing. I really need a job where I can be around people and learn to speak again. It's much, much healthier to be around people. Human beings are social animals.' Your editor muses: writing's a lonely business, but teaching ... argh!

Conistery

Until 27 Aug • **Bruce Pennington** art exhibition, Atlantis Bookshop,

Museum St, London, WC1A 1LY. 10:30am-6pm, Mon-Sat.

24 Aug • **BSFA Open Meeting**, The Antelope, 22 Eaton Terrace, London, SW1W 8EZ. 5pm for 7pm. Free. With Kim Lakin-Smith.

17-21 Aug • **Renovation** (69th Worldcon), Reno-Sparks Convention Center, Reno, NV, USA. *Now \$220 reg; \$500 family (2 adults + n under-17s); \$120 under-21s.* Unchanged: \$75 under-17s; under-7s free; \$50 supp. For day rates, see www.renovationsf.org. Contact PO Box 13278, Portland, OR 97213-0278, USA; or info at renovationsf dot org.

19-21 Aug • **Festival in the Shire**: Tolkien art/book exhibition, 'mini-festival'. 10am-6pm, Wynnstay Hotel, Machynlleth.

2 Sep • **Heartwood** (Rob Holdstock memorial discussion), British Library. 6:30-8pm. £7.50/£5 concessions. Online booking only? See www.bl.uk/whatson/exhibitions/outof/events (with other events too).

2-8 Sep • **SF Spectacular**, Oxfam Bookshop, Reading: a second promotion based on Brian Stableford's huge donation of sf texts.

15 Sep • **Robert Rankin** evening, Phoenix Square, Midland St, Leicester, LE1 1TG. 7pm. £5.50. Box office 0116 242 2800.

7-9 Oct • **Sci-Fi London Oktoberfest**, Odeon Camden Town and other Camden Town venues. Further details to follow.

15-16 Oct • **Octocon**, Camden Court Hotel, Dublin 2, Ireland. €30 reg; under-18s/concessions €20; supp €10; accompanied under-12s free. Contact: Apt 56 Shalimar, Monastery Rd, Clondalkin, Dublin 22.

6-9 Apr 2012 • **Olympus 2012** (Eastercon), Heathrow, London. £55 reg, £45 unwaged, *rising on 1 September to £65 and £55.* £20 supp/under-17s, £5 under-12s, £1 under-5s. Contact 4 Evesham Green, Aylesbury, Bucks, HP19 9RX, or enquiries at olympus2012 dot org.

25-27 Feb 2013 • **Redemption '13** (multimedia sf), Britannia Hotel, Coventry, CV1 5RP. £60 reg, *rising to £65 on 1 September 2011*; unwaged etc £20 less; £75 at door. £15 supp and under-18s; under-3s free. Contact 61 Chaucer Road, Farnborough, Hampshire, GU14 8SP.

Rumblings. *Worldcon 2015.* An Orlando, Florida bid has emerged to challenge the existing bid for Spokane: see orlandoin2015.org.

Infinitely Improbable

News Headline. [Telegraph](#), 29 July: ‘Harry Potter dwarf spared jail over juggler’s hat sex act’. As usual the story (an everyday saga of, ahem, dwarf-tossing) fails to match up to the headline’s promise.

Publishers and Sinners. Pan Macmillan is encouraging sf artists! From the promotional email: ‘I wanted to flag up the Peter F. Hamilton artwork competition we are running in conjunction with *SFX* magazine. Two lucky winners will see their jacket designs adorn special eBook editions of two stories from the collection.’ What rich rewards await the successful creators? From the T&C: ‘There are two prizes, the prizes consist of each winner having their artwork used by Pan Macmillan on the ebook format of a short story by Peter F. Hamilton [...] There is no fee, royalty or cash prize attached to this competition.’ Because this is austerity Britain and we mustn’t encourage talent too much. [DVB]

As Others See Us. On *Another Earth*: ‘Mike Cahill’s directorial feature-film debut sounds like a science-fiction movie, but it’s not. Yes, it features the appearance in the sky of an Earth identical to our own, one populated by doppelgangers [...] And yes, the dialogue sometimes bandies about concepts like synchronicity (sometimes annoyingly so). / But more than anything, the metaphysics function as a metaphor ...’ Which is of course unknown in sf. ([Globe & Mail](#), 29 July) [AIP]

Awards. *John W. Campbell Memorial*: Ian McDonald, *The Dervish House*.

- *Mythopoeic* (fantasy) ADULT Karen Lord, *Redemption in Indigo*. CHILDREN’S Megan Whalen Turner, ‘Queen’s Thief’ series. SCHOLARSHIP: INKLINGS Michael Ward, *Planet Narnia*. SCHOLARSHIP: OTHER Caroline Sumpter, *The Victorian Press and the Fairy Tale*.
- *Prometheus* (libertarian): Sarah Hoyt, *Darkship Thieves*. Prometheus Hall of Fame: George Orwell, *Animal Farm*.
- *Rhysling* (poetry): LONG C.S.E. Cooney, ‘The Sea King’s Second Bride’ (*Goblin Fruit* Spring 2010). SHORT Amal El-Mohtar, ‘Peach-Creamed Honey’ (*The Honey Month*, 2010) – initially announced in third place, after which the winner and runner-up were found to be ineligible (published 2009).
- *Sturgeon* (short story): Geoffrey A. Landis, ‘The Sultan of the Clouds’ (*Asimov’s* 9/10).
- *Cordwainer Smith Rediscovery* (unsung sf/fantasy authors): Katherine

MacLean.

Role Model. A rare sf moment in the UK phone-hacking scandal: James Murdoch ‘used to have a life-sized cardboard cut out of Darth Vader outside his office’. As one does. (*Independent*, 11 July) [MPJ]

Memories of the Space Age. ‘Email from someone who worked on the Shuttle Trajectory Server for Atlantis: “[Navigation Co-worker] shut down the Traj Server for the final time this morning. I’m told that before doing so he added to the messages the final words of Hal 9000, and then ‘Will I dream?’ Someone took video of this, and if they get it up to YouTube I’ll let you know.’” (Jonathan Clements, 21 July)

R.I.P. *Hans Joachim Alpers* (1943-2011), German sf author (sometimes as Jurgen Andreas), editor, critic, anthologist, publisher and literary agent, died on 16 February; he was 67. He co-edited the major reference work *Lexicon der Science Fiction Literatur* (1980). [GVG]

- *Toyo’o Ashida* (1944-2011), Japanese animator who founded Studio Live in 1976 and presided over the 152-episode sf/martial arts anime series *Fist of the North Star*, died on 23 July. [JC]

- *Linda Christian* (1923-2011), US actress who appeared with Johnny Weissmuller in *Tarzan and the Mermaids* (1948) and was the first ‘Bond girl’ (*Casino Royale*, 1954 tv), died on 22 July aged 87. [MPJ]

- *Robert Ettinger* (1918-2011), US cryonics advocate and founder of the Cryonics Institute, who also published some stories (starting 1948) and articles in the sf magazines, died on 23 July and was of course frozen. He was 92. [PDF]

- *Sakyo Komatsu* (1931-2011), leading Japanese sf author best known in the West for his influential disaster novel *Japan Sinks* (*Nippon Chinbotsu*, 1973; trans 1976) but also hugely prolific in untranslated works, died on 26 July; he was 80. [JC] He was a guest of honour at the 2007 Japanese Worldcon.

- *Anna Massey* (1937-2011), UK actress whose genre credits include *The Vault of Horror* (1973), *The Young Indiana Jones Chronicles* (1992-1993 tv) and *The Return of the Psammead* (1993 tv), died on 3 July aged 73. [AW]

- *Philip Rahman* (1952-2011), co-founder of the World Fantasy Award-winning US weird fiction publisher Fedogan & Bremer, died on 23 July aged 59. [L]

- *Theodore Roszak* (1933-2011), US historian and cultural critic who began publishing sf with *Bugs* (1981), gained a cult following for *Flicker* (1991)

and shared the Tiptree Award for *The Memoirs of Elizabeth Frankenstein* (1995), died on 5 July; he was 77.

- *Googie Withers* (1917-2011), UK-born actress best remembered for Hitchcock's *The Lady Vanishes* but with a few horror and fantasy credits like *Dead of Night* (1945) and *Miranda* (1948), died on 15 July aged 94. [AW]
- *Martin Woodhouse* (1932-2011), UK author of scripts for Gerry Anderson's *Supercar* (1961-1962, with his brother Hugh) and other tv sf including *The Avengers*, died on 15 May aged 78. He also wrote five technothrillers full of sf gadgetry, beginning with *Tree Frog* (1966). [CMJ]

As Others See Us II. Laurie Penny struggles to find something sinister in the crowds queueing for *Harry Potter 7* part 2: 'Many of the fans have drawn wobbly spectacles and lightning scars onto their faces as they shout in chorus, and I am reminded of Christopher Hitchens' observation that the lightning bolt on the forehead was also the symbol of Oswald Mosley's fascists. Fanaticism, however twee, is always disturbing.' And of course a cigar is never just a cigar. 'There is something clumsily Freudian in the way these young women are clutching their plastic and wooden wands ...' ([Independent](#), 13 July) [MPJ]

World Fantasy Award Shortlist. NOVEL Lauren Beukes, *Zoo City*; N.K. Jemisin, *The Hundred Thousand Kingdoms*; Graham Joyce, *The Silent Land*; Guy Gavriel Kay, *Under Heaven*; Karen Lord, *Redemption In Indigo*; Nnedi Okorafor, *Who Fears Death*.

- NOVELLA Elizabeth Bear, *Bone and Jewel Creatures*; Michael Byers, *The Broken Man*; Elizabeth Hand, 'The Maiden Flight of McCauley's Bellerophon' (*Stories*); Tim Lebbon, *The Thief of Broken Toys*; George R.R. Martin, 'The Mystery Knight' (*Warriors*); Rachel Swirsky, 'The Lady Who Plucked Red Flowers beneath the Queen's Window' (*Subterranean Summer* 2010).
- SHORT Christopher Fowler, 'Beautiful Men' (*Visitants*); Karen Joy Fowler, 'Booth's Ghost' (*What I Didn't See*); Kij Johnson, 'Ponies' (*Tor.com* 11/10); Joyce Carol Oates, 'Fossil-Figures' (*Stories*); Mercurio D. Rivera, 'Tu Sufrimiento Shall Protect Us' (*Black Static* 8/10).
- ANTHOLOGY John Joseph Adams, ed., *The Way of the Wizard*; Kate Bernheimer, ed., *My Mother She Killed Me, My Father He Ate Me*; Ellen Datlow & Nick Mamatas, eds., *Haunted Legends*; Neil Gaiman & Al Sarrantonio, eds., *Stories*; S.T. Joshi, ed., *Black Wings*; Jonathan Strahan &

Lou Anders, eds., *Swords & Dark Magic*.

- COLLECTION Karen Joy Fowler, *What I Didn't See*; Caitlín R. Kiernan, *The Ammonite Violin*; M. Rickert, *Holiday*; Angela Slatter, *Sourdough*; Jeff VanderMeer, *The Third Bear*.
- ARTIST Vincent Chong, Kinuko Y. Craft, Richard A. Kirk, John Picacio, Shaun Tan. SPECIAL, PROFESSIONAL John Joseph Adams, editing and anthologies; Lou Anders, editing at Pyr; Marc Gascoigne, *Angry Robot*; Stéphane Marsan & Alain Névant, *Bragelonne*; Brett Alexander Savory & Sandra Kasturi, *ChiZine Publications*.
- SPECIAL, NON-PROFESSIONAL Stephen Jones, Michael Marshall Smith & Amanda Foubister, *Brighton Shock!*; Alisa Krasnostein, *Twelfth Planet Press*; Matthew Kressel, *Sybil's Garage and Senses Five Press*; Charles Tan, *Bibliophile Stalker*; Lavie Tidhar, *World SF Blog*.
- LIFE ACHIEVEMENT winners: Peter S. Beagle, Angélica Gorodischer.

Outraged Letters. *Harry Bell* on how Radio 4 comedy sees us: 'On tonight's *Another Case of Milton Jones*: "Do you think some aliens who have difficulty forming natural relationships go to conventions where they all dress up as humans?" Maybe you had to be there.' (21 July)

Court Circular. George Lucas's lengthy lawsuit against Andrew Ainsworth, designer of the *Star Wars* stormtrooper armour, was finally defeated in the UK Supreme Court this July despite letters of support in which Steven Spielberg, Peter Jackson, James Cameron and Jon Landau tried to influence justice in Lucas's favour. The upheld decision is that Ainsworth's designs were indeed just props – copyright-protected for only 15 years, making it legal since 1992 for him to sell replicas – rather than artistic creations. Also controversial in some quarters was the court's observation that 'The *Star Wars* films are set in an imaginary, science-fiction world of the future ...' ([The Register](#), 27 July) [DKMK]

• Marvel Comics won its case against Jack Kirby's family, who claimed to own the copyright on 1958-1963 comics work created by Kirby despite the latter's own admission and signed agreement that it was done on the usual work-for-hire basis. The Kirby estate plans to appeal. ([BBC](#), 29 July) [MPJ]

The Sonic Screwdriver of Inescapability. An 'alternative census' poll claims the typical British family watches tv for 9 hours daily, with their favourite show being *Doctor Who*. (*Guardian*, 11 July) [MPJ]

The Dead Past. *40 Years Ago:* ‘NEW BRUM BOOKSHOP: Rog Peyton has formed the Andromeda Book Co. and has opened a shop at [...] Reddall Hill Rd, Old Hill, Warley, Worcs. which will be open on Saturdays only from August 7th.’ ([Checkpoint 7](#), August 1971)

Random Fandom. *Fancylopedia 3:* this fan project has been revived by Mark Olson and Joe Siclari and is now at the easier-to-update wiki site fancylopedia.wikidot.com. Knowledgeable volunteer editors are needed.

- *First Fandom Hall of Fame* nominees: Jay Kay Klein, Ray Bradbury, Keith Stokes and (posthumous) Oliver Saari. [F770]

- *Steve Green* (Nova administrator) momentarily reveals: ‘Moves are under way to open voting in the annual Nova Awards up to all fans resident in Britain and Eire, not just those who are members of Novacon. A formal announcement will be made shortly.’

- *Matrix* (1975-2011): the death of the long-running British SF Association newsletter (née *BSFA Newsletter*, 1975-1976) was announced by its current editor Ian Whates in *Vector 267* and a 23 July [BSFA website editorial](#). He blamed general contributor apathy (much increased since the 2007 shift from print to web publication) and competition from rival sf news sites.

As Others Saw Us. ‘In her 1969 essay “The Pornographic Imagination,” [Susan] Sontag insisted that *Story of O* could be correctly defined as “authentic” literature. She compared the ratio of first-rate pornography to trashy books within the genre to “another somewhat shady subgenre with a few first-rate books to its credit, science fiction.” She also maintained that like science fiction, pornography was aimed at “disorientation, at psychic dislocation.”’ (*Guernica*, June 2011) [BH]

Glittering Prizes. *James White Award:* the current competition is open to short story submissions from new writers until 31 January 2012. Further details from administrator at jameswhiteaward.com. No entry fee.

- *Aeon Award:* 2011 submissions are open to 30 November. €1000 first prize; other prizes; €7 entry fee. Send to 8 Bachelor’s Walk, Dublin 1, Ireland. See rules at www.albedo1.com/aeon_award.html.

Thog’s Masterclass. *Subtle Clues Dept.* ‘Inside lay a gleaming sapphire and in its center rested a spider! “This is it!” Nancy whispered excitedly. “The gem’s not synthetic! See, the spider has no spinnerets!”’ (Carolyn Keene, *The Spider Sapphire Mystery*, 1968. Our researcher explains: ‘This is a Nancy

Drew novel, and the stolen sapphire was formed around an actual, primitive, and presumably extremely durable spider.’) [PL]

- *Dept of Art Appreciation*. ‘The magic of this piece of Tom Gainsborough’s art never failed to have a profound effect on Professor Moriarty. He often thought that had his brain been equipped with taste buds, it would have been as though his mind had bitten into the most refreshing, deliciously ripe fruit, flooding his brain with juices that brought together all the great, exotic tastes – more than could ever be experienced in a lifetime.’ (John Gardner, *Moriarty*, 2008) [BA]

- *Amphiboly Dept*. ‘Walking the street, Jones slipped on a pair of dark sunglasses.’ (Jeffrey Thomas, ‘Immolation’, in *Punktown*, 2000) [GM]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 12 August 2011: Brum Group, Summer Social at Black Eagle pub: advance booking required. Normal meetings are at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre, 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk or rog.peyton at btinternet com. Further meetings: 9 September, Stan Nicholls & Peter Weston; 14 October, David Wingrove; 4 November, TBA.

- 6 September 2011: Frances Hardinge reading, Oxfam Bookshop, Market Place, Reading, RG1 2EA. 6:30pm. Free, I think.

Editorial. Well, apart from huge and increasing *SF Encyclopedia* pressures, the long struggle to clear Hazel’s late father’s house for sale (with much welcome help from Freegle) and the recurring pains in my fingers, things aren’t going too badly. I’m getting a bit worried, though, about my ability to keep *Ansible* to its relentless monthly schedule without arranging for extra hours in the day. Are there any good eBay deals on devices that produce useful TIME DISTORTION (a new *SFE* entry, by the way)?

- Meanwhile, in July [they melded my mind](#)....

Thog’s Second Helping. *Troublingly Hirsute Dept*. ‘His nose was long and sharp, his eyes deep-set, and a prehensile mustache dipped and clung to his chin below his lower lip.’ (Sara Wheeler, *Too Close to the Sun. The Audacious Life and Times of Denys Finch Hatton*, 2007) [MH]

Ansible 289 Copyright © David Langford, 2011. Thanks to Brian Ameringen, David V. Barrett, Jonathan Clements, Paul Di Filippo, File 770, Steve Green, Bob Ham, Margaret Hoyt, Martyn P. Jackson, Claire M. Jordan, David K.M. Klaus, Locus, Pamela Love, Gregg Marchese, Nashville SF Club, Will Plant, Andrew I. Porter, Jim Steel, Gordon Van Gelder, Andrew Wells, and our Hero Distributors: Dave Corby (Brum Group), SCIS/Prophecy, Alan Stewart (Australia). 1 August 2011.

Ansible 290, September 2011

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Web news.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster** (congratulations!). Available for SAE or used stass-pisistors.

Renovation: Worldcon. Reno. Happened. To no one's surprise, the unopposed Texas bid won the 2013 site selection: see LoneStarCon 3 below.

- **Hugo Awards:** *Ansible's* spies described the ceremony as 'interminable' and 'unfunny except for Robert Silverberg'. NOVEL Connie Willis, *Blackout/All Clear*. NOVELLA Ted Chiang, *The Lifecycle of Software Objects*. NOVELETTE Allen M. Steele, 'The Emperor of Mars' by (Asimov's 6/10). SHORT STORY Mary Robinette Kowal, 'For Want of a Nail' by (Asimov's 9/10). RELATED WORK Lynne M. Thomas and Tara O'Shea, ed., *Chicks Dig Time Lords: A Celebration of Doctor Who by the Women Who Love It*. GRAPHIC STORY Phil & Kaja Foglio, *Girl Genius, Volume 10: Agatha Heterodyne and the Guardian Muse*. DRAMATIC, LONG *Inception*. DRAMATIC, SHORT *Doctor Who: 'The Pandorica Opens'/'The Big Bang'*. EDITOR, SHORT Sheila Williams. EDITOR, LONG Lou Anders. PRO ARTIST Shaun Tan. SEMIPROZINE *Clarkesworld*. FANZINE *The Drink Tank*. FAN WRITER Claire Brialey. FAN ARTIST Brad W. Foster. JOHN W. CAMPBELL AWARD Lev Grossman.
- **Hugo Rules.** [Rules tinkering](#) was debated at the Business Meeting for several standlees (periods of near-infinite subjective time), leading to Best Fancast as a new category for audio/video fan publications, plus complementary amendments to the Semiprozine and Fanzine definitions, the latter now including 'periodical' to eliminate continually updated websites. Ratification is required in 2012.

The Assassination Weapon

J.G. Ballard was in the *Sunday Times* and other UK papers, thanks to a new book about him. Charles Platt comments: 'When John Baxter asked me to help him write his Ballard biography, I somehow got the feeling that I didn't

trust him. In email to my friend David Pringle on August 3rd, 2010, I wrote: “... He’ll probably misquote or misinterpret me, one way or another....” / Well, how prescient, and I’m glad that I didn’t help Mr Baxter very much. Unfortunately I had written for the *New York Review of SF* about a drunken party where Jimmy talked of “the ultimate car crash” involving his girlfriend, Claire. I presented that anecdote with some humour, some skepticism, and some affection. Deprived of this context, it reads like a bizarre mixture of two defunct publications: *New Worlds* and *News of the World*. How ironic that Jimmy, always so fascinated by tabloid treatment of celebrities, should find himself a victim of it – after being safely dead and unable to respond, of course. / If J.G. Ballard is now remembered as the man who wanted to kill his girlfriend in a car crash (much as William Burroughs is remembered for killing his wife when he tried to shoot an apple off her head), we will have John Baxter to thank. To anyone who finds this as offensive as I do, I would like to apologize for the extent to which I may have served as an enabler.’ (21 August)

David Fury, scriptwriter for *Lost*, recalled a memorable moment of liaison with the ABC-TV network: ‘There’s an episode in which [*the long-term character*] Said is being tortured by the French woman, and she is giving up the story of how she got there, and she was there with a research team, and Said asked her what were they studying, what was their expertise, and she said, “Time.” And the network said, “You can’t say that, that’s veering into science fiction.” [*Audience laughter.*] And at this point, we’d had a paraplegic stand up and walk, we’d had a smoke monster no one had seen, and they’re going “No, no, no, you can’t have this ‘Time’ thing, it’s too science-fiction, the audience won’t go for that.”’ (transcribed – ‘close paraphrase, eliding mostly Ums’ – from *The Nerdist Writers Panel #2* at www.nerdist.com, recorded 13 March 2011) [TM]

Marvin Kaye has bought *Weird Tales* from John Betancourt’s Wildside Press and plans to edit it himself. Current editor Ann VanderMeer, under whom the venerable magazine won its only Hugo (2009), sadly reports that she and other staff are to be dropped; her last issue will be #359, scheduled for February 2012. ([Weird Tales website](#), 23 August)

Martin Rees, Astronomer Royal, knows where his towel is. As he told the British Interplanetary Society this year, ‘It is better to read first-rate science fiction than second-rate science; it’s no more likely to be wrong and is far

more stimulating than the second-rate science. And I think it's good to read the great classics of science fiction.' [M]

Contesserate

2 Sep • **Heartwood** (Rob Holdstock memorial discussion), British Library. 6:30-8pm. £7.50/£5 concessions. Online booking only? See www.bl.uk/whatson/exhibitions/outof/events (with other events too).

2-8 Sep • **SF Spectacular**, Oxfam Bookshop, Reading: a second promotion based on Brian Stableford's huge donation of sf texts.

14-15 September • **Opera Siam: Mae Naak** (the UK première of Somtow Sucharitkul's ghost opera), Bloomsbury Theatre, London. 7:30pm. £24; £17 concessions. Box office 020 7388 8822; for details and online booking see www.thebloomsbury.com/event/run/1593.

14 Sep • **Christopher Priest** reading & *Prestige* showing, QUAD, Market Place, Derby, DE1 3AS. 7pm. £5.50. Box office 01332 290606.

15 Sep • **Robert Rankin** evening, Phoenix Square, Midland St, Leicester, LE1 1TG. 7pm. £5.50. Box office 0116 242 2800.

17-18 Sep • **From Imagination to Reality** (British Interplanetary Soc space/sf event), Berrill Lecture Theatre, Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes, MK7 6AA. £80 or £45/day. Online booking only, at www.bis-space.com/products-page/symposia/.

24 Sep • **TitanCon**, Europa Exhibition Centre, Belfast. GoH Ian McDonald. £10 reg, £5 supp. Join at www.titancon.com (PayPal only).

28 Sep • **BSFA Open Meeting**, The Antelope, 22 Eaton Terrace, London, SW1W 8EZ. 5pm for 7pm. Free. With Jo Fletcher.

30 Sep - 2 Oct • **Fantasycon 2011**, Royal Albion Hotel, Brighton. £65 reg (BFS members £60) or £40/day (Sat only). Cheques to 10 Haycroft Gardens, Mastin Moor, Chesterfield, Derbyshire, S43 3FE.

7-9 Oct • **Sci-Fi London Oktoberfest**, Odeon Camden Town and other Camden Town venues. [Further details to follow.](#)

28 Nov - 7 Jan • **Howl's Moving Castle** (play), Southwark Playhouse,

London. 3pm and 7:30pm Mon-Sat (not 24-26 Dec, 31 Dec, 1 Jan). £16; £14 concessions. Box office 020 7407 0234.

6-9 Apr 2012 • **Olympus 2012** (Eastercon), Radisson Edwardian Hotel, Heathrow, London. *Now £65 reg, £55 unwaged.* £20 supp/under-17s, £5 under-12s, £1 under-5s. Contact 4 Evesham Green, Aylesbury, Bucks, HP19 9RX, or enquiries at olympus2012 dot org.

25-27 Feb 2013 • **Redemption '13** (multimedia sf), Britannia Hotel, Coventry, CV1 5RP. *Now £65 reg, rising to £70 on 1 September 2012; unwaged etc £20 less.* £15 supp and under-18s; under-3s free. Contact 61 Chaucer Road, Farnborough, Hampshire, GU14 8SP.

29 Aug - 2 Sep 2013 • **LoneStarCon 3** (71st Worldcon), Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center, San Antonio, Texas. GoH Ellen Datlow, James Gunn, Willie Siros, Norman Spinrad, Darrel K. Sweet. \$160 reg; YA \$110; child \$75; family \$440; \$60 supp. For the usual labyrinth of presupporter and site-voter discounts, see www.LoneStarCon3.org. Contact PO Box 27277, Austin, TX 78755, USA.

Infinitely Improbable

Riotwatch. UK sf fans seem mostly unscathed by [August's upheavals](#), but Joe Gordon reported damage to the fronts of Forbidden Planet International outlets in Birmingham (cracked windows at [Nostalgia & Comics](#)) and Manchester, though no actual looting. However, Mike Ashley heard bad news when researching an *SF Encyclopedia* magazine entry: 'David Clark who now runs *The Edge* (Graham Evans's old mag) was going to bring me up to speed, except it turned out their office was trashed in last week's riots.' Ouch. According to DC, 'No data or files were lost, but there was some serious damage on two sites, and while I saw no rioters or criminals I had some problems with the police when I tried to go home.' Croydon fandom merely smelled the smoke. Media riot coverage was reportedly evocative of sf: 'And as that footage was beamed around the world, the images had their own kind of psychic velocity: a short-cut to viewers' unconsciousness provided by Britain's rich tradition of fictional visions of dystopia, from George Orwell's *1984* to Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* and of course anything by JG Ballard.' (Gautam

Malkani, *Financial Times*, 13 August) [MMW] We all remember 1984's proles looting TVs so Big Brother could watch them all the better, and the soma-crazed masses of *Brave New World* wildly setting fire to cities....

Awards. *Big Heart*: Gay Haldeman.

- [Chesley](#) life achievement (art): Boris Vallejo.
- *Clareson for Distinguished Service* (to sf): The Tiptree Motherboard (Karen Joy Fowler, Jeanne Gomoll, Ellen Klages, Pat Murphy, Debbie Notkin, Jeff Smith).
- *Sidewise* (alternate history): LONG Eric G. Swedin, *When Angels Wept: A What-If History of the Cuban Missile Crisis*; SHORT Alan Smale, 'A Clash of Eagles' (*Panverse Two*).

By Any Other Name. "“Battlestar”'s five-year run ended in March of 2009, the same week the Cataclysm occurred. That event was the announcement that the channel was changing its name from Sci Fi to SyFy, a crime against nature that had fans – no network has more devoted or opinionated fans – pulling out their light sabres and aiming them at executives and, of course, burning up the Internet with scathing, witty insults.... To switch from the noble Sci Fi, associated with so many groundbreaking, beloved writers, to something that looks like your Uncle Seymour's screen name – it's enough to make any earthling go berserk.' (Nancy Franklin, *New Yorker*, 1 August.) [MMW]

Publishers and Sinners. PublishAmerica, the notorious US vanity press, made its authors an irresistible offer linked to the Edinburgh International Book Festival. 'We will bring your book to the attention of Harry Potter's author next week while our delegation is in her hometown, and ask her to read it and to tell us and you what she thinks. Tell her what you think: in the Ordering Instructions box write your own note for JK Rowling, max. 50-100 words. We will include your note in our presentation for her!' Cost: \$49, or \$69 for multiple books. Alas, neither Rowling nor the Festival had ever heard of this interesting deal. 'Rowling spokesman Mark Hutchinson said Tuesday that the claim was “completely false” and promised “appropriate action.” PublishAmerica, based in Frederick, Md., has long been cited by industry watchdogs for allegedly deceiving authors.' (*Huffington Post*, 16 August) Meanwhile, PublishAmerica made blustery threats to sue for defamation. ([Writer Beware, 16/18 August](#)) [JS] *Publishers Weekly* found this PublishAmerica response 'notable because their legal representation utilizes

triple exclamation points.’ ([PWxyz](#), 19 August) [AIP]

R.I.P. L.A. Banks (Leslie Esdaile Banks, 1959-2011), US author of many urban fantasies including the ‘Vampire Huntress Legends’ vampire series and the ‘Crimson Moon’ werewolf series, died from adrenal cancer on 2 August. She was 51. [PDF]

- *Del Connell* (1918-2011), US old-timer of comics and animation – almost always anonymously owing to past industry practice – died on 12 August aged 93. He wrote thousands of comics, spent several decades from 1939 with Disney drawing Mickey Mouse and others, and created the storyline that became tv’s *Lost in Space*; his life work was at long last honoured with the Bill Finger award for Achievement in Comic Book Writing at Comic-Con this year. [PDF]

- *Colin Harvey* (1960-2011), UK sf author and anthologist whose small-press book debut was *Lightning Days* (2007) and whose career had since taken off with two novels from Angry Robot, died on 16 August following a stroke on the previous day. He was 50. [JS]

- *Richard A. Hoen* (1928-2010), US fan who in 1948 sent a joke letter to *Astounding SF* about its November 1949 contents – to which John W. Campbell famously responded by publishing the issue more or less as described – died on 2 August last year. [SHS]

- *Pat Jackson* (1916-2011), UK film/tv director who was the last surviving director of Patrick McGoohan’s *The Prisoner* (1967-1968), died on 3 June aged 95. [MPJ]

- *Robert Robinson* (1927-2011), popular UK tv and radio personality whose three novels include the sf satire *The Conspiracy* (1968), died on 12 August; he was 83. (BBC)

- *Jimmy Sangster* (1927-2011), UK Hammer Studios scriptwriter and, later, director who wrote *The Curse of Frankenstein* (1957), *Horror of Dracula* (1958) and other Hammer classics, died on 19 August aged 83. [SG]

- *William Sleator* (1945-2011), US author of more than 30 books including many children’s and young-adult sf and fantasy novels, died on 2 August aged 66. [AIP] An early sf title is *House of Stairs* (1974).

As Others See Our Dupes. ‘Most Australians duped by science fiction’ is an intriguing [ABC News headline](#). The Australian Nuclear Science & Technology Organization polled 1,250 people to learn if they could tell reality from sf: ‘More than three-quarters of Australians believe microscopic

life has been found on other planets and almost half believe humans can be frozen and thawed back to life, despite neither being true.’ (15 August) [AL] Could they possibly be remembering old news stories and pop-science articles rather than sf?

Outraged Letters. *Paul Barnett* on [A288 obits](#): ‘For me and I think many others, Peter Falk’s major role in a fantasy flick was in Wim Wnders’s *Wings of Desire* (1987).’

• *N. Lee Wood* on [A289](#): ‘I was really saddened to read that Sakyō Komatsu had died. He was a charming, funny, sweet, intelligent, lovely man, and his passing is a loss to the entire sf community. I spent a memorable evening at a science fiction convention (Den Haag? Italy?) when he and I ended up orphaned in the hotel restaurant together, too far away to join in with the rest of the gang’s conversation. He entertained me well into the wee hours with a thoroughly funny explanation of intricately Byzantine Japanese tax laws while drinking copious amounts of booze until his eyes became a peculiar shade of bloodshot. The next morning, when I saw him at breakfast, I said hello, and asked, as one does, “How are you this morning?” He bowed, always the polite Japanese gentleman, and with impeccable comedic timing said, “Very hungover, thank you very much.” He was a tireless and amazingly cheerful man who attended sf conventions all over the world, and did a great deal to promote Japanese sf into the English language market, as well as vice versa. I’ll miss him.’

As Others Remember Us. ‘[John W.] Campbell was the Editor of *Amazing Stories*, the first sci-fi magazine, with a group of contributors that included Frederik Pohl, Isaac Asimov, and Damon Knight.’ ([Comics Alliance.com](#) on the *New Worlds* revival, 20 August) [AIP]

Fanfundery. *TransAtlantic Fan Fund.* [The 2012 TAFF race begins.](#) N. American candidates for the trip to Olympus 2012 (Eastercon) must find nominators, write a platform, etc., by *30 September*. Contact Anne & Brian Gray (akg.netmouse at gmail.com; see CoA) or see [taff.org.uk](#).

We Are Everywhere. More genre imagery. ‘The phone-hacking scandal has reached a tipping point familiar to any viewer of science fiction: the moment when the monster, created in a secret laboratory, finally breaks free of any restraint and goes rampaging off amid a trail of mayhem.’ (Jenny McCartney, *Sunday Telegraph*, 21 August) [MPJ]

- ‘Enter a terrifying procession of ghouls. The US economy has started to stumble lethargically, as if bitten by a zombie. The eurozone countries, one by one, are being drained of lifeblood by a swift and merciless vampire. Even among the seemingly healthy emerging-market villagers, there are signs of a diabolical malady that brings first fever and then debilitation. Perhaps most worrying of all is that the forces of light – with their weaponry of silver bullets, decapitation machetes and powerful antibiotics – are scattered and disorganized, if not totally absent.’ (Alan Beattie, *Financial Times*, 6 August) [MMW]

Random Fandom. *Ted White* had a spinal laminectomy on 25 August and came through ‘in excellent shape’. [CP] He’s back home, can walk, and is active in his usual email lists.

- *Also Hospitalized* but recovering: Jan Howard Finder, who got to Reno but missed Worldcon owing to heart trouble, and Heinlein biographer Bill Patterson, who had to leave early with a necrotic foot that’s since been amputated.

- *Worldcon Attendance* estimated at over 4000, perhaps over 4100. [F770]

The Dead Past. *50 Years Ago:* London uproar! ‘JOHN BRUNNER is understood to be one of the many CND people who yesterday staged a Ban the Bomb sit down in Trafalgar Square. Although the rally was declared illegal by Home Secretary R.A. Butler, the demonstration went on. Chaos reigned in the Square and squatters were carted away constantly by the police in an attempt to get traffic moving. Well over 600 arrests were made. Not playing the game at all, what! And on Battle of Britain Day!!!’ (Ron Bennett, [Skyrack 37](#), 18 September 1961)

C.o.A. *Anne and Brian Gray*, 5006 Royene Ave NE, Albuquerque, NM 87110, USA. (‘We moved just ten days before Worldcon ...’)

Group Gropes. *London Fortean Society*, The Bell, 50 Middlesex St, London, E1 7EX. Last Thursday each month except August & December. First meeting 29 September; 7pm for 7:30; £3 or £2 concessions. [DVB]

Thog’s Masterclass. *Sensitivity Dept.* ‘Even from the corner of her eye when one of her sobs was carried to him like a fallen leaf, he, thankfully, let her be.’ (Taylor Holden, *The Sense of Paper*, 2006) [PB]

- *Dept of Existential Insight.* ‘Carnelian jerked awake. The cessation of pain was so instant he was sure he must be a corpse.’ (Ricardo Pinto, *The Third*

God, 2009) [BA]

- *Morning After Dept.* ‘She recoiled from herself.’ ‘But I woke the next morning with a fountain spurting from the pit of my stomach.’ (both William Brodrick, *The Sixth Lamentation*, 2003) [PB]
 - *Dept of Possible Perspiration.* ‘The boy’s face shone with the youthful dew that no one misses until it is gone.’ (David Ebershoff, *The 19th Wife*, 2008) [PB]
 - *Try It With A Log Dept.* ‘I lay awake upon the bed, unable to fall off.’ (*Ibid*)
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Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 6 September 2011: Frances Hardinge reading, Oxfam Bookshop, Market Place, Reading, RG1 2EA. 6:30pm. Free, I think.
- 9 September 2011: Brum Group, Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre, 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for members. With Stan Nicholls & Peter Weston. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk or rog.peyton at btinternet com. Further meetings: 14 October, David Wingrove; 4 November, TBA.
- 29 September 2011: Christopher Priest new book launch, The Gallery, Foyles, London. 6:30pm-7:30pm. Free, but reserve your place by emailing events at foyles co uk. More details and more such events at: <http://www.foyles.co.uk/events-at-foyles>

Editorial. In August, someone madly enquired about the ‘AIQ’ text-generator software produced by Ansible Information back in the days of MS-DOS and later transferred to this new-fangled Windows thing. (I have no evidence that any author actually used the ghastly fantasy novel titles spewed out by one of its many options, but there are dark suspicions.) Since I’ve had quite enough of software marketing, ‘AIQ’ is now available as a free, excitingly unsupported download:

<http://ai.ansible.co.uk/aiq.html>

Court Circular II. The patent war between Samsung and Apple took an interesting turn on 22 August, with a new legal filing from the former that cites Kubrick’s *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968). Apple wants Samsung’s tablet-like gadgets barred from US sale as infringing a 2004 Apple patent –

now challenged on ‘prior art’ grounds since closely similar tablet devices are seen and used in both *2001* and the 1970s Thames TV series *The Tomorrow People*. Which could be a worrisome precedent for future attempts to patent working time machines, matter transmitters or sonic screwdrivers. [TC]

<http://tinyurl.com/samsung2001>

The Naughty Bits. Dave Locke feels that Nicholson Baker’s new sex’n’skiffy epic *House of Holes* is a natural for Thog’s Masterclass, but I worry about getting Thog over-excited. Better to leave it in the safe hands of reviewer Charles McGrath: ‘The book coins dozens of new terms for the male member, like “thundertube,” “seedstick” and the “Malcolm Gladwell,” and near the end there is a sort of Joycean explosion, an “Atlas-shrug shudderation of arrival” that makes a young woman named Shandee “shiver her way through the seven, eight, nine, twelve seconds of worldwide interplanetary flux of orgasmic strobing happy unmatched tired coughing ebbing thrilled spent ecstasy.”’ (*New York Times*, 4 August) Personally I still haven’t recovered from the male-apparatus euphemism that Baker invented years ago in *The Fermata*: ‘my triune crotch-lump’.

<http://goo.gl/Fdd4h>

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Ansible 291, October 2011

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Web news.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE, sympathy or the secret of heather ale.

SF Encyclopedia. As *Ansible* goes to press, the official public launch at www.sf-encyclopedia.com is mere days away. Allegedly. While we're waiting, you can read the hot gossip at sfencyclopedia.wordpress.com.

The Library of Babel

James Cameron explains how it is that Sigourney Weaver's character in *Avatar*, though fatally wounded in that film, will return in the sequel: 'No one ever dies in science fiction.' (BBC, 18 September) [MPJ]

Roald Dahl famously wrote his books in the garden shed. When his family started campaigning to raise £500,000 to restore this decaying hut and transfer it to the Dahl Museum, some people were so unfeeling as to say things like 'The international model and TV star Sophie Dahl is asking us for money to restore a shed?' (Matthew Sweet). Others noted that the Museum accounts show it holds funds of £4.63 million and brings in £478,960 a year (but somehow spends £550,900), while Dahl's books still generate hefty royalties, leading to such comments as 'Can't the chocolate factory pay?' ([Independent](#), 14 September) [MPJ]

Harlan Ellison filed another of his famous copyright lawsuits on 14 September, asking to block the release of Andrew Niccol's new sf film *In Time* on grounds of substantial alleged borrowing from the 1965 Ellison story "'Repent, Harlequin!" Said the Ticktockman'. Both feature a 'dystopian corporate future in which everyone is allotted a specific amount of time to live', and both have enforcing authorities called Sandmen, sorry, Timekeepers. Interestingly, at least one critic – Richard Roeper – assumed after seeing the preview that *In Time* is in fact an adaptation of "'Repent,

Harlequin!” ...’ The film’s release was scheduled for 28 October. ([The Hollywood Reporter](#), 15 September) [DKMK/JS]

Chris Evans recently celebrated a significant birthday, and Gary Kilworth sends his party speech: ‘The Christopher Evanses of this world seem to proliferate. There are TV stars, film stars and well-known authors. My favourite Christopher Evans however, is a guy I met some 30-odd years ago who began his writing career by producing some exceptional science fiction novels. / I was introduced to Chris by our mutual friend Rob Holdstock, who pointed him out in a pub and whispered cryptically, “Beware of Welshmen wielding bunsen burners.” The warning was unnecessary. Chris turned out to be a warm and amiable man, whose friendship I came to value highly and whose advice and criticism regarding my work has always been invaluable to me. There is no side to our Christopher Evans and all those other famous ones pale to insignificance beside him when it comes to insightful and intelligent observation on writing, ideas and indeed, life itself. / Chris’s creative judgement became evident to me when he was editing the Other Edens anthologies with Rob Holdstock. I sent Rob and Chris three very short stories hoping they would take one of them. Chris suggested that I link the stories together under the generic title of “Triptych”, a set of three tales hinged together as one piece of work. It was a brilliant idea. / Something must be said here of Chris’s Welshness, because this is a deep, inherent part of the man and the writer. However, he doesn’t wear it like a gaudy coat that shouts “This is who I am” but more as something that quietly proclaims, “This is where I was made”. It gives him the air of a secretive, serious creature, like a lynx or a wildcat, that has emerged and appeared amongst us from an ancient landscape. To me, Christopher Evans the, the strong, confident Welshman, carries in his manner this line from a Ralph Waldo Emerson poem: *They know not well the subtle ways / I keep, and pass, and turn again.* / He is a good and treasured friend who I admire for his work and his ability to put a lightness in my step whenever we meet. As Shakespeare put it in one of his plays, “As well as impeccable integrity and loyalty, there are men on this Earth who hath stonking good brains that rattle out brave ideas.” Christopher Evans is one of those men. / Happy 60th Birthday, Chris!’ And so say all of us.

Dave McKean received an honorary doctorate of design from the University of Wolverhampton on 2 September. [\[JG\]](#)

Betsy Mitchell editor-in-chief at Del Rey Books, is taking early retirement in December – a move regretted by her authors. [L]

Jonathan Mostow, director of *Surrogates*, offers an interesting insight in the DVD audio commentary: ‘If you’re gonna make a movie about people staying at home operating surrogate robots, [...] you’re going to confront the issue, that you have multiple actors playing the same character. And how does that work? And since no one’s ever done it before, we don’t know.’ [LA] What, *never* ...?

Terry Pratchett is suing Paul Bamborough and Camel Productions, who had an option on film rights for his Discworld fantasy *Mort*. He reckons the rights have now run out; one suspects he’d prefer another Sky/Vadim Jean/The Mob production. ([Telegraph](#), 2 October) [MPJ]

Dave Prowse of Darth Vader fame long ago ‘encountered regrettable sarcasm from co-star Sir Alec Guinness, after once approaching him about cashing in with some signed photos. Prowse, 76, writes: “The ones where I’d signed ‘Dave Prowse is Darth Vader’, he’d written ‘Alec Guinness is Alec Guinness’.”’ (*Independent*, 13 September) [MPJ]

Concloutment

7-9 Oct • **Sci-Fi London Oktoberfest**, Odeon Camden Town (all screenings) and other Camden Town venues. £10.65/film; £7.50 teens and concessions. All-nighters: anime £32; *MST3K* £25; no concessions. See <http://www.sci-fi-london.com/festival/2011/oktoberfest>.

15-16 Oct • **Octocon**, Camden Court Hotel, Camden St, Dublin 2, Ireland. €30 reg; under-18s/concessions €20; supp €10; accompanied under-12s free. Contact: Apt 56 Shalimar, Monastery Rd, Clondalkin, Dublin 22, Ireland; info at octocon dot com.

21-23 Oct • **Festival of Fantastic Films**, Days Hotel, Sackville St, Manchester. £70 reg. Contact 95 Meadowgate Rd, Salford, Manchester, M6 8EN; Gil at manchesterfantasticfilms dot co dot uk.

22 Oct • **BristolCon**, Ramada Hotel, Bristol. Several guests of honour. £20 to 21 October; £25 at the door. Cheques to 34 Dongola Road, Bishopston, Bristol, BS7 9HP.

26 Oct • **BSFA Open Meeting**, The Antelope, 22 Eaton Terrace, London, SW1W 8EZ. 5pm for 7pm. Free. With Tanith Lee.

4-7 Nov • **Irish Discworld Convention**, Falls Hotel, Ennistymon, Co. Clare. €45 reg; students €35; under-19s €30, under-16s €15, under-8s free. See idwcon.org; irishdiscworldcon at gmail dot com.

11-13 Nov • **ArmadaCon 23**, Future Inns, Plymouth. £30 reg, £20 concessions. Contact 18 Wadham Road, Liskeard, Cornwall, PL14 3BD.

11-13 Nov • **Novacon 41**, Park Inn, Mansfield Road, Nottingham. £40 reg. Contact 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ.

23 Nov • **Starmaker: The Philosophy of Olaf Stapledon**, British Interplanetary Society, 27/29 South Lambeth Rd, London, SW8 1SZ. 9am-4:30pm. ‘Delegates’ £60; BIS members £50; students £25; *rates (including coffee, lunch) rise by £10 after 15 October*. Only £25 for ‘First Named Author’, so presumably Olaf Stapledon can come on the cheap. With Stephen Baxter, Andy Sawyer, others. See www.bis-space.com.

29 Jun - 1 Jul 2013 • **Swords, Sorcery, Sandals and Space: The Fantastika and the Classical World** (SF Foundation conference), Liverpool University. See www.sf-foundation.org/events/index.html.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others Research Us. TV critic Mary McNamara marvels at a new concept: ‘People flee a polluted Earth by going back 85 million years in executive producer Steven Spielberg’s promising new drama on Fox. / Easily the most exciting show of the fall season, Fox’s “Terra Nova” has such obvious, instant and demographically diverse appeal – sci-fi fans, fantasy fans, 5-year-olds, 50-year-olds, Al Gore – that you have to wonder why no one thought of it before.’ (*LA Times*, 26 September) [DB] Mass time-travel to the deep past! If only Julian May, Robert Silverberg or Clifford Simak could have come up with such a notion....

Magazine Scene. Steve Davidson (who [blogs](#) as The Crotchety Old Fan) has been granted the *Amazing Stories* trademark – abandoned by previous owners Hasbro – and plans to resurrect the magazine.

• *New Worlds*: the latest announcement of the relaunch as *Michael*

Moorcock's New Worlds says the first e-edition will appear online on 10 November. No URL given, but the originally announced domain newworlds.co.uk is (though content-free) still registered to team member Roger Gray.

Science Masterclass. Sunscreen Alert Dept. 'The Dog Star rises and sets with the sun during July and August. Those are called dog days and are the hottest part of the year, so you see the Dog Star does affect our sunburn.' (James B. Garfield, *Follow My Leader*, 1957) [PL]

R.I.P. *Jack Adler* (1917-2011), US comic artist, colorist, at DC Comics from 1946 and eventually DC production manager and vice-president 1975-1981, died on September 18; he was 94. [PDF]

- *Sergio Bonelli* (1932-2011), Italian comics writer and chairman of Sergio Bonelli Editore – publishers of many comics including the paranormal-investigator title *Dylan Dog* – died on 26 September aged 79. [PDF]

- *Eve Brent* (1929-2011), US character actress who played Jane in two 1958 Tarzan films and whose other genre credits include *The Green Mile* (1999), died on 27 August aged 81. [PDF]

- *Richard Datin* (1929-2011) US model-maker who created the first Starship *Enterprise* and headed the team that built the original *Star Trek's* eleven-foot version, died on 24 January. [SFS/SHS]

- *Sara Douglass* (Sara Mary Warneke, 1957-2011), Australian author of several fantasy series and standalones, whose *BattleAxe* (1995) sold over a million copies in Australia alone, died from ovarian cancer on 27 September. She was 54. [IN]

- *Norma Eberhardt* (1919-2011), US fashion model turned actress whose most famous genre role was in *Return of Dracula* (1958), died on 16 September; she was 82. [MPJ]

- *David Z Goodman* (1930-2011), US screenwriter whose film scripts included *Logan's Run* (1976) solo and *Eyes of Laura Mars* (1978) as co-author, died on 26 September aged 81. [MPJ]

- *Charles Hickson*, US shipyard worker famous for having supposedly been abducted by aliens in 1973, died on 9 September aged 80; his story was one of those incorporated into the dire sf film *Starship Invasions* (1977). [SJD]

- *Dan Hoey* (1951-2011), US fan once active in the Washington SF Association (he chaired the 1995 Disclave convention), committed suicide on 31 August; he was 59. [RL] Dan was an occasional *Ansible* correspondent who helped rekey paper issues for the online archive project.

- *George Kuchar* (1942-2011), US underground film director, comics artists and teacher who made over 200 films and videos, many of them sf/fantasy 'creature features', died on 6 September; he was 69. His 1975 cartoon biography *H.P. Lovecraft* had mixed reactions from HPL fans. [BT]
- *Bill Kunkel* (1951-2011), US fan best known in fanzine circles for his witty cartoons, died on 4 September aged 61. Arnie and Joyce Katz write: 'A man of vast and varied talents, Bill was a professional writer of both non-fiction and fiction, the co-founder of the world's first video and computer game magazine (*Electronic Games*), a game designer, a comic book writer and a cartoonist. / As a fan, Bill Kunkel was noted for his trenchant, insurgent wit and his biting satiric cartoons. He was a member of the Brooklyn Insurgents in the 1970s and the Vegrants in the 1990s and 2000s.'
- *Bill Trojan*, US fan and book dealer as Escape Books, died from a heart attack in his hotel room at the Reno Worldcon on 21 August. He was 63. [AC]
- *Mark W. Worthen* (1962-2011), US horror author (publishing since 1993) and editor of the online magazine *Blood Rose* 1998-2005, died on 19 September. [SFS/SHS]

For the Record. A chap in Doncaster called Rob Hull has made his way into the *Guinness Book of World Records* by amassing the world's largest collection of Daleks: 571 in all shapes and sizes. His wife fondly commented, 'I hate the bloody things and I've got a feeling this is only going to encourage him.' (*Metro*, 15 September) [MPJ]

Awards. BSFA: 2011 nominations for the 2012 presentation are now open; see bsfa.co.uk.

- *TV Choice*: best family drama, *Doctor Who*; best actress, Karen Gillan as Amy Pond in *Doctor Who*. [MPJ]
- *Emmy Awards*: best supporting actor, Peter Dinklage as Tyrion Lannister in *A Game Of Thrones*. [MPJ]
- *Heinlein Award* for sf or technical nonfiction that inspires human exploration of space: Connie Willis.

Fear & Loathing. Quoting Joss Whedon's *Firefly* is verboten at the University of Wisconsin-Stout, whose Professor Miller decorated his office door with a poster of starship captain Mal declaring (in reply to 'How do I know you won't kill me in my sleep?') his fair-play code: 'You don't know me, son, so let me explain this to you once: If I ever kill you, you'll be

awake. You'll be facing me. And you'll be armed.' Campus police removed this in horror, threatening a charge of 'disorderly conduct'. In protest Miller substituted a joke anti-fascism poster – likewise removed, with further threats. The UWS chancellor says: 'This was not an act of censorship. This was an act of sensitivity to and care for our shared community ...' ([Huffington Post](#), 29 September) [DKMK]

Outraged Letters. *Sam J. Lundwall*: 'As you might know, our best friend Harry Harrison is in rather bad shape, staying at a nursing home outside Lewes, Sussex. I think he would appreciate visits; however, they should be cleared through his daughter Moira, since he is very weak.' I don't yet have permission to pass on her e-address but have enquired. [**Later:** I can now relay visit requests to Moira. Use the [Ansible contact form](#) if you don't have my email address. DRL]

- *Robert Newman* notes that London's riots ([A290](#)) did indeed impact [Croydon](#) fans: 'The monthly Croydon pub meeting didn't take place (on 9 August), for the first time in 22 years. The Dog and Bull was in the heart of the rioting area and although it escaped the Monday night looting and burning unscathed (shops both sides were seriously damaged and looted) it was boarded up and closed on Tuesday, as was every other pub within miles. [...] I could see House of Reeves burning from my bedroom window. Croydon SF and comic shop A Place in Space is just around the corner from Reeves, 30ish yards away. Most of the block it is a part of was completely gutted by fire. The front of the shop survived but I believe that there was damage to the rear.'

Fanfundery. *TransAtlantic Fan Fund*. The 2012 TAFF race begins in earnest. North American candidates for the trip to Olympus 2012 (Eastercon) are Warren Buff, Kim Kofmel and Jacq Monahan. Contact Anne & Brian Gray (akg.netmouse at gmail.com) or see [taff.org.uk](#), now linking to what John Coxon calls 'new shiny places' where you can tweet or facebookify about TAFF. Ballot to follow soon, with an expected December voting deadline.

- *GUFF*: nominations are open for the northbound trip to Olympus 2012. Australasian candidates need to find nominators, write a 100-word platform, etc., by *14 October*; the voting deadline is to be 22 January. Contact Sue Ann Barber: activeim at hotmail com, or PO Box 249, Pascoe Vale South, VIC 3044, Australia.

We Are Everywhere. The *Oxford English Dictionary* online Word of the Day for 24 September was ‘Stepford, adj. Robotic; docile; obedient; acquiescent; (also) uniform; attractive but lacking in individuality, emotion, or thought.’ [MPJ]

- Jasper Fforde’s *The Last Dragonslayer* includes a villain named Gordon van Gordon, leading to speculation as to whether he was thinking of Gordon Van Gelder. [AD]

Random Fandom. *Phillip Greenaway*, fanzine editor, married Helen Cocking on 24 September. [SG]

- *Martin Lewis*, BSFA *Vector* reviews editor, triggered an online teacup storm with a very rude tweet – posted as ‘VectorReviews’ – about *Doctor Who*’s Steven Moffat. Mass Who-fan outrage; [grovelling BSFA apology](#); Moffat forgives; story over.

- *Nova Awards*: all UK and Irish fans (not just Novacon members) can now vote provided they’ve read at least six qualifying fanzines, says administrator Steve Green. The [Novacon.org.uk](#) website – where an online voting form is promised real soon now, deadline 7 November – merely requires Nova voters to have *received* the said six fanzines.

The Dead Past. *70 Years Ago* in London: ‘England’s biggest fan reunion for the last year was held over the weekend, September 20/21, when in spite of the manifold difficulties attending such a proposition – far in excess of anything the US fans encounter – a muster of some 14 was managed. At Saturday lunch time a party gathered to welcome Maurice Hanson, ex-editor of “*Novae Terrae*” who had wangled leave from Somerset. After some bookhunting in Charing X Road, the party saw the film “*Fantasia*”.’ ([Futurian War Digest](#), October 1941) In other *FWD* news, Ego (later Sir Arthur) Clarke had seen the film four times.

C.o.A. *Julia Daly & Douglas Spencer*, 2 Morton Gardens, Halfway, Sheffield, S20 8GJ.

Thog’s Masterclass. *Reliant Robin of Rhetoric Dept.* ‘As he stood there waiting for his lower brain to stop broadcasting retaliatory lizard thoughts, it occurred to him that this was a message loaded with semantic interference, a veritable Cadillac of cognitive dissonance.’ (Jim Young, ‘Ultraviolet Night’, *F&SF*, March 2004) [BA]

- *Multicoloured Eyeballs in the Sky.* ‘On his breast was the representation of

the sun, centred by an opal that changed color at every laboring breath. [...] Only his two eyes lived, and they mated the opal of the ornament.’ (J. Allan Dunn, *The Treasure of Atlantis*, 1916) [BA]

- *Artful Alliteration Dept.* ‘They told me of the Yagas [...] in the grim city of Yugga, on the rock Yuthla, by the river Yogh, in the land of Yagg [...] their ruler was a black queen named Yasmeena ...’ (Robert E. Howard, *Almuric*, 1939 *Weird Tales*; 1964) [CMG]

- *Dept of Anatomy.* ‘His thin mustache was neatly placed between a peaked nose and two eyes like black marbles.’ (Michael Avallone, *Assassins Don’t Die in Bed*, 1968)

- *Neat Tricks Dept.* ‘Every hair on my body joined those already upright on my neck.’ (Kathy Reichs, *Bones to Ashes*, 2007) [PB]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 14 October 2011: Brum Group, Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre, 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for members. With David Wingrove. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk or rog.peyton at btinternet com. Further meetings: 4 November, TBA.

- 18 October 2011: Terry Pratchett in conversation at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane. £35-£45 including his new book. See ...

<http://www.seetickets.com/Tour/AN-EVENING-WITH-TERRY-PRATCHETT>

- 20 October 2011: Richard Morgan talks and reads at Waterstone’s, Broad Street, Reading, Berks. 7:30pm. ‘Tickets are £2 available in store.’ 0118 958 1270. [19 October: event cancelled]

Editorial. There’s a certain lack of extra material down here, mainly because formatting and editing several hundred thousand words of *SF Encyclopedia* text has left me (along with John Clute and many of our hero contributors) distinctly groggy. I missed an awful lot of sleep in recent months, and despite a couple of bouts of catching-up still owe replies to some *Ansible* correspondents: sorry about that. Meanwhile Graham Sleight has been covering the Facebook, Twitter and blog aspects of the *SFE* launch. See in particular his post ‘What is a beta text?’ Reports of *SFE* finishedness are greatly exaggerated.

<http://sfencyclopedia.wordpress.com/2011/10/02/what-is-a-beta-text/>
<http://sfencyclopedia.wordpress.com/>
<http://www.sf-encyclopedia.com/>
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Sf-Encyclopedia/138995776178949>
<http://twitter.com/#!/sfencyclopedia/>

Roald Dahl's Shed II. Following the fuss [described above](#), *Private Eye* (30 September) detected some rapid rewriting of history when the museum announced that 'The Roald Dahl Museum and Story Centre is making no public appeal for funds'. Its earlier press release of 13 September had begun 'A fundraising campaign is officially launched today to save and share the humble but magical hut ...' and urged prospective donors to contact the museum director. Fancy that.

- The shed has or had some interesting contents: see the second paragraph of [this news diary](#).

Thog's Near Misses. Sometimes a Masterclass submission doesn't make it into the main *Ansible* showcase ([above](#)) because the central Thoggism, however tasty, needs too much voluminous context and/or fails to leap out at you. This, for example: 'Brak had been prisoned beneath a rubble-heap, badly knocked and gashed, but with no detectable damage besides general pain and a sharper one that might indicate a shattered bone somewhere in his left leg. He could barely support himself on that side [...] he gained his feet again [...] Weaving on his feet, struggling against the agony that seared his whole left side, Brak limped to the entrance hall [...] with his good right foot, rolled the wizard's corpse to the base of the throne ...' (John Jakes, *Storm in a Bottle*, 1977) More shattered-leg agony follows ('The pain climbed through his left leg and his torso to eat at his brain'). As indefatigable researcher Brian Ameringen says, it's interesting to speculate what Brak balanced on while using his good right foot to roll the corpse. But Thog, whose attention span is short, had lost the thread by then.

Fantasycon Extra. Too late to squeeze into the print edition or even the first email edition: [the British Fantasy Awards winners at *Locus*](#), [a querulous reaction from Steve Jones](#) and [an early repercussion](#). Mike Glycer offers [some commentary at *File 770*](#); and [then some more](#). Gosh, aren't Fantasycons exciting?

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Lise Andreasen, Paul Barnett, Damien Broderick, Amy Carpenter, Paul Di Filippo, Steven J Dunn, Alistair Durie, Christopher M. Geeson, Joe Gordon, Steve Green, Martyn P. Jackson, David K.M. Klaus, Locus, Pamela Love, Rich Lynch, Ian Nichols, SF Site/Steven H Silver, Jim Steel, Bruce Townley, Martin Morse Wooster, and our Hero Distributors: Dave Corby (BSFG), SCIS, Alan Stewart (Oz). 3 October 2011.

Ansible 292, November 2011

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Web news.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or information on Squig Stars and drunfilers.

SF Encyclopedia. The 'beta' release is out: www.sf-encyclopedia.com. This went up on 10 October, there was a major update on the 25th, and the *SFE* team is still madly busy. General thanks for all the feedback.

The Law's Delays

Ben Aaronovitch gloats: 'My novel *Rivers of London* has been nominated for the Galaxy National Book Awards in the category of Best New Author. I expect to be soundly beaten by *Pigeon English* but I thought you might find the inclusion of an SF book interesting. PS: Your bloody encyclopaedia is already eating into my writing time.'

Peter Beagle has at last settled his long-standing complaint about non-payment of royalties for the 1982 animated film of his *The Last Unicorn*. This had to wait until ITV, owners of the offending Granada Media, took on a new CEO who according to Beagle's publisher Connor Cochran 'had no reason to cover up for anyone's past bad judgment or mistakes'. Royalties on future takings and merchandise are now agreed, with back-payments to cover the moneyless years. And about time too. There's to be a \$5m 'renovation' of the film itself, for re-release with new footage, backgrounds and effects. (TeleRead.com, 15 October) [RC]

Philip K. Dick's estate filed suit against Media Rights Capital and others involved with the film *The Adjustment Bureau*, for trying to avoid coughing up \$500,000 in bonus payments on the flimsy pretext that Dick's original story 'Adjustment Team' is in the public domain. (Variety, 27 October) [PDF/AIP] Which it apparently is in the USA, though the film people didn't learn this until a month after release. The story was in *Orbit* magazine,

September-October 1954, and copyright wasn't renewed in 1982 as then required. Interestingly, though, the US copyright website records [a 1983 renewal claim](#) on the basis that 'Adjustment Team' first appeared in *Imaginative Tales*, September 1955 – an issue containing nothing by Dick. The Dick estate now insists that the *Orbit* publication was somehow 'unauthorized' and doesn't count.

Suzette Haden Elgin has conveyed through friends that she is now disabled, unable to concentrate or continue her blog. ([PW](#)) Alas.

David Gerrold confided to an intimate circle of 800 million Facebook users: 'I am told that David Langford is one of the most unpopular people in the SF community.' [CH] I couldn't possibly comment.

Mitchell Gross, a US author who as Mitchell Graham published a fantasy trilogy beginning with *The Fifth Ring* (2003), is undergoing federal prosecution for swindling women into investing some \$4.4 million in one of his other fantasies – a fraudulent company. ([AOL](#), 7 October) Martha Wells remembers his gift of the gab in sf circles: 'At the con, he told a panel audience that as a child he had corresponded with C.S. Lewis, and had a letter from Tolkien breaking the news to him that Lewis had died. He told me he had a multi-million dollar movie deal with Steven Spielberg for his fantasy trilogy. I could go on.'

Leonard Nimoy said goodbye to conventions at the Creation *Star Trek* con on 2 October – his final appearance. ([TrekMovie.com](#))

Steph Swainston has stepped down as a 2012 Eastercon guest.

Coningsby

4-7 Nov • **Irish Discworld Convention**, Falls Hotel, Ennistymon, Co. Clare. €45 reg; students €35; under-19s €30, under-16s €15, under-8s free. See [idwcon.org](#); [irishdiscworldcon](#) at gmail dot com.

11-13 Nov • **ArmadaCon 23**, Future Inns, Plymouth. £30 reg, £20 concessions. Contact 18 Wadham Road, Liskeard, Cornwall, PL14 3BD.

11-13 Nov • **Novacon 41**, Park Inn, Mansfield Road, Nottingham. £40 reg. Contact 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ.

14-20 Nov • **Thought Bubble** (comics), Leeds, inc. 19-20 Nov con at Saviles & Royal Armouries Hall. See www.thoughtbubblefestival.com.

23 Nov • **BSFA Open Meeting**, The Antelope, 22 Eaton Terrace, London, SW1W 8EZ. 5pm for 7pm. Free. With Stephen Baxter.

23 Nov • **Starmaker: The Philosophy of Olaf Stapledon**, British Interplanetary Society, 27/29 South Lambeth Rd, London, SW8 1SZ. 9am-4:30pm. 'Delegates' £70; BIS members £60; students £35. With Stephen Baxter, Andy Sawyer, others. See www.bis-space.com.

28 Nov - 7 Jan • **Howl's Moving Castle** (play), Southwark Playhouse, London. 3pm and 7:30pm Mon-Sat (not 24-26 Dec, 31 Dec, 1 Jan). £16; £14 concessions; £50 family. Box office 020 7407 0234.

3-4 Mar 2012 • **P-Con IX**, Irish Writers' Centre, Parnell Square, Dublin. GoH Robert Rankin, Bryan Talbot. €20 reg; payment accepted via PayPal only for the present. See www.pcon.ie.

10-11 Mar 2012 • **QED** (science/skeptics), Piccadilly Hotel, Portland St, Manchester, M1 4PH. £89 (students £68) via www.qedcon.org.

26-29 Apr 2012 • **Kontakt** (SFeraKon/Eurocon), Zagreb, Croatia. GoH Tim Powers, Charles Stross, Darko Macan. €17 reg, €28 deluxe (includes guided tour and airport shuttle) to 1 April 2012; then €20 and €30. See zagreb-eurocon2012.com. James Shields is Irish agent.

24-27 Aug 2012 • **Discworld Convention**, Hilton Metropole, Birmingham. *Now £58 reg, £39 concessions, rising on 1 March.* £25 supp; under-13s free. PO Box 4101, Shepton Mallet, Somerset, BA4 9AJ.

30 Aug - 3 Sep 2012 • **Chicon 7** (70th Worldcon), Hyatt Regency, Chicago. \$195 reg, \$540 family, \$100 YA (17-21), \$75 child (5-16), accompanied under-5s free. Contact PO Box 13, Skokie, IL 60076, USA.

6-9 Sep 2012 • **The Asylum** (steampunk), Lincoln. £22 basic reg, with a lunatic variety of discounts and extras. Online booking only: steampunk.synthasite.com. Contact majortinker at aol dot com.

27-30 Sept 2012 • **Fantasycon 2012**, Royal Albion Hotel, Brighton. Details awaited 'in late November' at fantasycon2012.org.

31 Oct - 3 Nov 2013 • **World Fantasy Convention**, Hilton Brighton

Metropole. £75 reg until 7 November 2011; £100 thereafter; £50 supp; no at-door or day memberships. Cheques to 130 Park View, Wembley, Middlesex, HA9 6JU; PayPal payments at www.wfc2013.org.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. Salman Rushdie risks another fatwa: ‘There was a series called “Game Of Thrones” which was very popular here in the United States, a post-Tolkien kind of thing. It was garbage, yet very addictive garbage – because there’s lots of violence, all the women take their clothes off all the time, and it’s kind of fun. In the end, it’s well-produced trash, but there’s room for that, too.’ ([Haaretz](#), 14 October 2011) [MPJ]

World Fantasy Awards. NOVEL Nnedi Okorafor, *Who Fears Death*. NOVELLA Elizabeth Hand, ‘The Maiden Flight of McCauley’s Bellerophon’ (*Stories: All-New Tales*). SHORT Joyce Carol Oates, ‘Fossil-Figures’ (*Stories: All-New Tales*). ANTHOLOGY Kate Bernheimer, ed., *My Mother She Killed Me, My Father He Ate Me*. COLLECTION Karen Joy Fowler, *What I Didn’t See and Other Stories*. ARTIST Kinuko Y. Craft. SPECIAL, PROFESSIONAL Marc Gascoigne for Angry Robot. SPECIAL, NON-PROFESSIONAL Alisa Krasnostein for Twelfth Planet Press. [L]

Political Coalitions Masterclass. From *Doctor Who and The Crusaders* (1965) by David Whitaker: ‘No decision was more difficult for Susan or easier for her grandfather [the Doctor], who knew in his heart that she must share her future with David Cameron.’ [JO]

R.I.P. *George Baker* (1931-2011), actor who was a Number Two in *The Prisoner* and appeared in the films *Curse of the Fly* (1965), *The Canterville Ghost* (1987) and *Back to the Secret Garden* (2001), died on 7 October aged 80. [SG]

- *David Bedford* (1937-2011), UK composer who was fond of fantasy, sf and astronomical themes, died on 1 October aged 74. Explicitly sf work included the 1989 concept album *Rigel 9* with Ursula K. Le Guin, and a 2001 cantata adaptation of *The City and the Stars* with Arthur C. Clarke narrating between movements. (*Guardian/SFE*)
- *Derrick Bell* (1930-2011), US lawyer and civil rights activist whose disturbing sf racial parable ‘The Space Traders’ (1992) was adapted for tv as

a segment of *Cosmic Slop* (1994), died on 5 October. He was 80. [PDF]

- *John Burke* (1922-2011), UK author and anthology editor who began publishing sf with 'Chessboard' (1953 *New Worlds*) and wrote much sf, fantasy and supernatural fiction, died on 20 September; he was 89. [PW] He also wrote as J F Burke, Jonathan Burke and – for novelizations like *Moon Zero Two* and *UFO* – Robert Miall.

- *John Dunning* (1927-2011), Canadian producer whose work included David Cronenberg's early films *Shivers* (1975) and *Rabid* (1977), died on 19 September; he was 84. [MPJ]

- *Charles Napier* (1936-2011), US actor with many genre credits for tv series (*Star Trek*, *Incredible Hulk*, and the animated *Legend of Tarzan*, *Men in Black* and *The Mummy*) and films (*Dragonfight* and the *Austin Powers* movies), died on 5 October aged 75. [SG]

- *Alastair Reid* (1939-2011), Scots tv director whose productions included *Doctor Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (BBC 1980) and *Artemis 81* (BBC 1981), died on 17 August; he was 72. [MPJ]

As Others See Us II. On the death of Steve Jobs, a little past context: 'Computers were for geeks, science fiction enthusiasts and others even further beyond the pale.' (Andrew Coyne, *MacLeans*, 14 October 2011) [JKS]

- On our kinship with rappers: 'Eminem will say things about chainsawing his granny but with him it's like science fiction.' (Wretch 32, *Guardian* Guide, 13-19 August 2011) [SS]

British Fantasy Awards. These generated much high melodrama in October. NOVEL Sam Stone, *Demon Dance*. NOVELLA Simon Clark, *Humpty's Bones*. SHORT Sam Stone, 'Fool's Gold' (*The Bitten Word*). COLLECTION Stephen King, *Full Dark, No Stars*. ANTHOLOGY Johnny Mains, ed., *Back From the Dead: The Legacy of the Pan Book of Horror Stories*. NONFICTION Vincent Chong, *Altered Visions: The Art of Vincent Chong*. ARTIST Vincent Chong. SMALL PRESS Telos Publishing. MAGAZINE Black Static. GRAPHIC NOVEL I.N.J. Culbard, *At the Mountains of Madness*. FILM *Inception*. TV: *Sherlock*. KARL EDWARD WAGNER (special award) Terry Pratchett. SYDNEY J. BOUNDS (newcomer): Robert Jackson Bennett for *Mr Shivers*.

- As pointed out by various people including Steve Jones (who posted but later deleted [a grumpy attack](#) on most of the above choices, complaining *inter alia* of too much small press and not enough mainstream publishing), the

British Fantasy Society chairman David J. Howe had found himself in the embarrassing position of having to stand in for the awards administrator – who’d abandoned this role for unstated personal reasons – and thus to preside over three wins for his own Telos Publishing and its authors (novella, nonfiction, small press) and two for his domestic partner Sam Stone. She, distressed by the subsequent controversy, returned her novel award. Howe resigned as BFS chair, replaced pro-tem by Graham Joyce, whose official statements included an announcement of the BFS committee’s ‘firm belief that no corruption or wrongdoing took place’. Joyce is working on an overhaul of the awards procedure, since ‘It was always a vulnerable system and with its weakness to “boosting” votes now only too exposed, it is in my view irreparable.’ A side-effect is that David Howe and Sam Stone pulled out as organizers of the 2012 Fantasycon planned for Corby, Northamptonshire; this event will now take place in Brighton.

Blurbismo. *Dept of 45 Years On and Still Getting It Wrong.* ‘The 34-year-old [Zachary] Quinto, known for his role on NBC’s *Heroes* and as Dr. Spock in JJ Abrams *Star Trek* reboot, talks about his sexuality in an interview with *New York* magazine.’ (Salon.com, 17 October) [AL]

As Others See Us III. Glen Duncan of the *NY Times* sympathizes with a slummer: ‘A literary novelist writing a genre novel is like an intellectual dating a porn star. It invites forgivable prurience: What is that relationship like? Granted the intellectual’s hit hanky-panky pay dirt, but what’s in it for the porn star? Conversation? Ideas? Deconstruction? [...] Colson Whitehead is a literary novelist, but his latest book, “Zone One,” features zombies, which means horror fans and gore gourmands will soon have him on their radar. He has my sympathy. I can see the disgruntled reviews on Amazon already [...] Broad-spectrum marketing will attract readers for whom having to look up “cathected” or “brisant” isn’t just an irritant but a moral affront. These readers will huff and writhe and swear their way through (if they make it through) and feel betrayed and outraged and migrained.’ (28 October) [JW] Those who wallow in H.P. Lovecraft and Clark Ashton Smith can’t be expected to cope with obscure or even eldritch words.

- But zombies transcend mere genre, according to Charlie Collier of the US network AMC, whose *The Walking Dead* is a major hit on cable tv: ‘This isn’t just a genre exercise. You get all the escapism of a post-apocalyptic world, but you also get the character drama that we’ve been delivering since

we launched *Mad Men*.' (Adweek.com, 19 October) [TM]

More Awards. *The Kitschies*, awards for 'progressive, intelligent and entertaining' sf/fantasy in the categories Novel (£750 prize), Debut (£250), Cover Art (£250) and Judges' Discretion, are collecting publishers' submissions for a January shortlist announcement. More at www.thekitschies.com.

- *Monica Hughes Award*: from the Canadian Children's Book Centre, for children's sf and fantasy, to be awarded annually from October 2012 with a \$5000 cash prize. To qualify, the author must be Canadian or a permanent resident of Canada. [FM]

The Rich List. 'Who are the wealthiest film characters?' is a question that apparently torments some people in the small hours. *Total Film* magazine did the sums, adjusted for inflation, and came up with a genre-heavy Top Ten: Adrian Veidt (*Watchmen*) \$74 billion, Richie Rich (*Richie Rich*) \$70bn, Bruce Wayne (*Batman* films) \$30.4bn, Lex Luthor (*Superman* films) \$29.3bn, Dr Eldon Tyrell (*Blade Runner*) \$25bn, Jabba The Hut (*Return of the Jedi*) \$25bn, Joh Fredersen (*Metropolis*) \$22bn, Tony Stark (*Iron Man* films) \$19.75bn, Willy Wonka (*Charlie And The Chocolate Factory*) \$19.5bn, Dr Evil (*Austin Powers* films) \$15.9bn. A recount is being urgently demanded by Scrooge McDuck.

Outraged Letters. Kyle McAbee adds a further note about Dan Hoey ([A291](#)): 'Dan was an active science fiction fan until his death. For many years he was a member of the Potomac River Science Fiction Society, hosting one of our monthly meetings each year at his apartment, usually in a summer month. Our June 2011 meeting was at his place. Dan was a genius, yet modest. He could solve Rubik's Cube while holding it behind his back. At his memorial service, we learned that he had struggled with depression for much of his adult life. He was a spirited and enthusiastic fan. We will miss him.'

We Are Everywhere. The BBC2 comedy quiz *Mock The Week* (13 October) had the traditional 'If this is the answer, what is the question?' round. *Answer*: 'Booze, blondes and dwarves.' *Question* (Andy Parsons): 'Why did Gandalf go missing for so long in *The Lord Of The Rings*?' *Question* (Chris Addison): 'What are Carrie Fisher's main recollections of filming *The Return of the Jedi*?' (The answer actually referred to the World Cup antics of the England rugby team.) [MPJ]

- More evidence that a genre fan is trapped in the *OED* and sending coded messages via its Word of the Day: the selections for 5-8 October were Planet X, Earthship, Multiverse (hello, Mr Moorcock) and Perigee. Late in the month came Foo Fighter. [MPJ/JAT]
- *Have I Got News For You* explained international finance. *Host*: ‘Does anyone know what a trillion actually is?’ *Ross Noble*: ‘A trillion is when a human mates with a Klingon.’ [MPJ]
- *Klingon Beauty Tips*. After repeated application of a £90+ eyelash serum, ‘your lashes will darken and fatten and seem to multiply like triffids.’ (‘Beauty’, *Evening Standard*, 28 October) [RH]

Change and Decay. Terry Martin of *Murky Depths* magazine [announced on 25 October](#) that the current issue #18 will be the last.

- Greg Ketter’s DreamHaven Books in Minneapolis will close as a physical shop at the end of January; catalogue/convention sales continue. [SHS]

By Any Other Name. Erik Masting reviewed an sf novel, *2030: The Real Story of What Happens to America* by Albert Brooks, in the *Times Literary Supplement*. How to describe it in suitably upmarket terms? Aha: ‘anticipatory fiction’. (30 September)

The Dead Past. *50 Years Ago*, Brian Aldiss revealed: “‘Hothouse’ has sold in hard covers on both sides of the Pond. Brian says that he is working on a sequel called “Greenhouse, a Novel of the Beet Generation” ...’ ([Skyrack 39](#), November 1961)

- *40 Years Ago*, Peter Roberts prophesied: ‘NOVACON SUCCESS: The first British November sf convention was held last weekend at the Imperial Centre Hotel, Birmingham, and was judged to be an exceedingly fine innovation with a pretty good chance of continuing.’ ([Checkpoint 12](#), November 1971)
- *20 Years Ago*: ‘Meanwhile ace reviewer John Clute was poring delightedly over his latest task, being *Futurespeak: A Fan’s Guide to the Language of SF* by Roberta Rogow [...]. “This entry has more mistakes than words,” he marvelled: *SLANS (literary): Superhuman successors to homo sapiens in a series of stories by A.E. van Vogt, beginning in 1925 with Galactic Lensman....*’ (*Ansible* 52, November 1991)

Fanfundery. *TransAtlantic Fan Fund*. The 2012 TAFF voting deadline is 9 December. North American candidates for the trip to Olympus 2012 (Eastercon) are Warren Buff, Kim Kofmel and Jacq Monahan. See taff.org.uk

for the ballot form.

- *GUFF*: Australasian candidates for the northbound trip to Olympus 2012 are Grant Watson and Kylie Ding. Voting deadline: 22 January. See taff.org.uk/guff.html for ballot form.

C.o.A. *Harry Harrison's* address is available to old friends.

Thog's Masterclass. *Art Dept.* 'Praetor Ming Lee resembled the Chinese Princesses hanging in the ancient art galleries of Beijing.' (Glenn Hough, 970 A.D.S., 2011) [PM]

- *Deep Emotion Dept.* 'Something salty and bright was searing a deep, angry streak in her chest, and it felt like tears clawing their way up her throat.' (Cherie Priest, *Boneshaker*, 2009) [FB]

- *War Against Allison Dept.* 'She had discussed possible projects for subtly revealing Military's gross misconduct of the war with Allison.' (L. Timmel Duchamp, *Tsunami*, 2007) [AK]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 4 November 2011: Brum Group, Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre, 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for members. With Ian Whates. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk or rog.peyton at btinternet com. Further meetings: 2 December, Christmas Social at Selly Park Tavern, entry by £10 advance ticket only; 13 January, AGM/Auction; 10 February, quiz.

Editorial. The editor is too tired to write one.

Tragi-Political SF. David Garnett sends a news item on Palestine's admission to full membership of UNESCO. According to Nimrod Barkan, Israel's ambassador to UNESCO: 'This resolution is a tragedy for UNESCO ... UNESCO deals in science and not science fiction and nevertheless adopted the science fiction reality.' (*Guardian*, 1 November)

Nova Awards. As announced last issue, UK and Irish fans can now vote by email in these fanzine awards, with a 7 November deadline. See ...

<http://efanzines.com/Nova/index.htm>

More Events.

9 Dec • **British Fantasy Society Open Night** and (for members only) [Extraordinary General Meeting](#) at the Mug House, London Bridge, London, SE1 2PF. Official meeting start 7:30pm; EGM 6:30pm.

10-12 Aug 2012 • Congenial (Unicon/RPG), Murray Edwards College (formerly New Hall), Cambridge. GoH Phil and Kaja Foglio. £30 reg to Congenial, 19 Uphall Road, Cambridge, CB1 3HX. Discount for room bookings before 10 January: see congenial.org.uk.

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 $1 + 1 = 1.5708$.

The Ship Who Mourned

Stephen Baxter learned that his former fan site bacterium.org.uk is now devoted to the sf dream of cosmetic dentistry: ‘Good God!’

Harlan Ellison’s lawsuit against the *In Time* movie people (see [A291](#)) has been voluntarily dropped, according to the [Hollywood Reporter](#) (30 November), after Ellison actually saw the film himself: ‘It’s conceivable that he wasn’t very impressed.’ Each side is to pay its own legal costs. The earlier online report that this case had been settled in Ellison’s favour, with a screen credit for him added to the film, was false: a Yahoo News contributor failed to check the claim found in an undocumented Wikipedia entry. ([Airlock Alpha](#), 10/15 November) [AIP]

Peter James, the thriller author, has a new book: *Perfect People*, about a geneticist offering a designer baby service selecting for traits like empathy, or the ability to survive on just a few hours’ sleep a night. On *Radio 5 Live*, the host asked him if this was sf. His Atwoodian reply: ‘No, it’s about the science of the near future.’ (30 November) [MPJ]

John Meaney remembers: ‘Anne McCaffrey was the finest, most accomplished and brightest human being I ever met, or could meet in any universe. She had the biggest heart of all, touching and helping so many people. / My first memory of Anne: in the elegant bar-with-indoor-swimming-pool of the Novacon hotel in ’78, a charismatic, silver-haired vision in a deep-turquoise gown strode into sight; and I asked the nearest person: “Is that Anne McCaffrey?” / After hearing yes, I said: “I have to meet her.” / By two o’clock in the morning, it was just the two of us in the bar, and

I was captivated by her warmth and intellect; and my life was altered forever. Her final gift to me came floating across the decades, when I was guest of honour at Novacon ten days before her death. Our mutual friend Rog Peyton related something Anne told him that weekend in 1978: a message I will carry always. / To visit Dragonhold (both the second and third incarnations) was to experience a near-mystical air of peacefulness permeating a busy hold filled with people, horses, cats and love. / And books, of course. / My debt to Anne is surpassed only by my love and admiration. She touched so many hearts because she employed emotion in her stories; and she accomplished that because she felt for other people: sympathy and empathy beyond imagining. / Her story “The Ship Who Sang” was a eulogy to her father. She could never read it without crying. / Neither, now, can I. / Bless you and thank you, Anne.’ (26 November)

Jason Quinn, working on a graphic-novel adaptation of H.G. Wells’s ‘The Chronic Argonauts’, explains why: ‘It’s like looking at Da Vinci’s doodles. Without “Argonauts” there would have been no *Time Machine*. Without *Time Machine* we’d have no *Doctor Who*, no *Time Tunnel*, none of the great sci-fi comics of the ’50s. Even Dr. Doom would be stuffed without his time machine.’ (*Wired*, November) [MMW]

J.K. Rowling gave evidence at the Leveson phone-hacking enquiry on 24 November, and Sky producer James Old provided a helpful note: ‘Needless to say the public seating area of the room is full. A sane and sensible looking lot. No crazed Potter fans in here.’ [MMcN]

Terri Windling and family have expensive ‘health and legal issues’. You can help: see the benefit auction at magick4terri.livejournal.com.

Contrectant

9 Dec • **British Fantasy Society Open Night** and (for members only) Extraordinary General Meeting at the Mug House, London Bridge, London, SE1 2PF. The open meeting starts 7:30pm; the EGM 6:30pm.

10 Dec • **Canny Comic Con**, Newcastle City Library, 10am-5:30pm-ish. Free. GoH Bryan Talbot, Mary M Talbot, Paul Davidson.

15 Dec • **London Xmas Meeting** (additional to First Thursdays), cellar bar,

Melton Mowbray, 18 Holborn, EC1N 2LE. All evening.

3-5 Feb 2012 • **Duple Time** (filk), Ramada Grantham Hotel. Now £40 reg; £27 unwaged; under 18 £1/year; under 6 free. Cheques: UK Filk Con, c/o Flat 1, 61 Marks Rd, Salisbury, SP1 3AY.

18 Feb 2012 • **Picocon 29**, Imperial College Union, London. 10am-7/8pm. £10 reg at door; £8 concessions; £5 ICSF members; past GoHs free. Contact ICSF, Beit Quad, Prince Consort Road, London, SW7 2BB.

22-24 June 2012 • **SF Foundation Criticism Masterclass**, London Middlesex University, Hendon. £190 reg. Applications with CV and writing sample to farah.sf at gmail.com by 28 February.

10-12 Aug 2012 • **Congenial** (Unicon/RPG), Murray Edwards College (formerly New Hall), Cambridge. GoH Phil and Kaja Foglio. £30 reg to Congenial, 19 Uphall Road, Cambridge, CB1 3HX. Book before 10 January for room discounts: see congenial.org.uk.

27-30 Sept 2012 • **Fantasycon 2012**, Royal Albion Hotel, Brighton. £50 reg (BFS members £45) *until 31 December*. Payment via PayPal at fantasycon2012.org/join.php, or to 10 Haycroft Gardens, Mastin Moor, Chesterfield, Derbyshire, S43 3FE.

20 Oct 2012 • **BristolCon**, Ramada Hotel, Bristol. Multiple guests of honour. £15 to 31 May; £20 to 19 October; £25 at the door. Cheques to 34 Dongola Road, Bishopston, Bristol, BS7 9HP.

9-11 Nov 2012 • **Armadacon 24**, Plymouth. Details are awaited at www.armadacon.org, currently 'under construction'.

9-11 Nov 2012 • **Novacon 42**, Park Inn, Nottingham. GoH Jaine Fenn. £40 reg. Contact 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ.

31 Oct - 3 Nov 2013 • **World Fantasy Convention**, Hilton Brighton Metropole. *Now £100 reg*; £50 supp; no at-the-door or day memberships. Cheques to 130 Park View, Wembley, Middlesex, HA9 6JU; PayPal payments at www.wfc2013.org.

Rumblings. As usual: no London BSFA meeting in December.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. Question to *Esquire* sex columnist Stacey Grenrock Woods: ‘I’ve been watching a lot of *Game of Thrones* lately. Does it give a historically accurate depiction of sex acts?’ Answer: ‘The *Game of Thrones* franchise has its hooves firmly dug into the genre known as “fantasy”, which, according to my *Norton Anthology*, relies on supernatural phenomena as a primary element of plot, theme, or setting, and permits the creator to put in as many tits as he wants.’ [MMW]

- *Dept of the Blindingly Obvious*: ‘The funny thing is that *Cat’s Cradle*, in the central structure of its plot, is essentially a genre novel: no more or less than an Agatha Christie mystery, a Georgette Heyer romance, or a Louis L’Amour western.’ (Joseph Bottum reviewing Kurt Vonnegut’s *Novels and Stories, 1963-1973*, *Weekly Standard*, 21 November) [MMW]

Awards. *Children’s BAFTAs*: best film was *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part 2*, which also won the ‘Kid’s Vote’ audience award. [MPJ]

- *Evening Standard Theatre Awards*: best actor, Benedict Cumberbatch and Jonny Lee Miller jointly for their alternating roles as creator and creature in the National Theatre *Frankenstein*. [MPJ]
- *First Fandom Hall of Fame*: Jay Kay Klein; (posthumous) Oliver Saari.
- *Gaylactic Spectrum* (gay etc sf/fantasy): Kathe Koja, *Under the Poppy*. [L]
- *Honorary Oscars* went to James Earl Jones (voice of Darth Vader) and make-up expert Dick Smith (*The Exorcist* etc). (BBC) [AW]
- *Nova Awards* for UK/Irish fan achievement: FANZINE *Head*, ed. Doug Bell & Christina Lake. FAN WRITER: Claire Brialey. FAN ARTIST: Dave Hicks. [SG]
- *Rotsler Award* for long-time achievement in fanzine art: D. West of the ‘sour wit and satirical eye’.
- *Scottish BAFTAs* (tv): Terry Pratchett personally accepted the Best Single Documentary award for his 2011 ‘Terry Pratchett: Choosing To Die’. (*Scotsman*, 14 November) [SB]

Science Masterclass. ‘Prehistoric Digs. Discover a hidden 3D dinosaur skeleton! Excavate and discover scale replica bones of your favorite dino embedded in soft, sedimentary rock. Then assemble the scattered bones to reveal your very own 10" museum quality reproduction of a 70 million year old 3D dinosaur skeleton. Specify T-Rex, Triceratops, Stegosaurus, or Mammoth.’ (Museum Tour catalogue, 2011-2012) [PL]

- *Weather Control Dept.* ‘In some sections of the planet it was literally raining bathtubs.’ [The cunning solution:] ‘He began burning the water in the

atmosphere, turning it into vapour which he then shot into space where it wouldn't harm any primitive spaceships that these people might some day send up.' (John M. Faucette, *Crown of Infinity*, 1968) [BA]

- *General Relativity Dept.* 'The earth's rotation slows and days lengthen, first by six minutes, then 12, then 24. As the phenomenon – known as "the slowing" – takes hold, days stretch to 48 hours, and gravity weakens, with birds ceasing to fly and astronauts stranded far from earth.' (*Guardian* summary of Karen Thompson Walker's 'eerily prescient novel' *The Age of Miracles*, forthcoming in mid-2012) [AL]

R.I.P. *Mick Anglo* (1916-2011), UK comics writer and novelist who created the British superhero Marvelman (much later renamed Miracleman) in 1954 and wrote over 730 issues of this and related comics, died on 31 October aged 95. [PDF]

- *Chris Croughton* aka *Keris*, popular UK fan, filker and sound-desk technician at various conventions, died in a road accident on 10 November; he was 55. He had been inducted into the Filk Hall of Fame in 2007. [RC]

- *Les Daniels* (1943-2011), US author of the 'Don Sebastian de Villanueva' historical vampire novels beginning with *The Black Castle* (1978), died in early November. He also edited horror anthologies and published nonfiction studies of horror and, extensively, comics. [PDF]

- *Richard Gordon* (1925-2011), London-born producer of many sf/horror B-movies including *Fiend Without a Face* (1958), *Corridors of Blood* (1958), *First Man into Space* (1959), *Devil Doll* (1964) and finally *Inseminoid* (1981), died on 1 November; he was 85. [AMB]

- *Anne McCaffrey* (1926-2011), Irish-resident US author who as the much-loved author of *Dragonflight* (1968) and many related books needs no introduction, died from a sudden stroke on 21 November. She was 85. Another hugely popular work that led to several sequels was *The Ship Who Sang* (1969). Her honours include the Hugo (she was the first woman to win one for fiction) and the Nebula (she and Kate Wilhelm were the first female winners) for *Dragonflight's* component stories 'Weyr Search' and 'Dragonrider'; the SFWA Grand Master Award in 2005; and entry to the Science Fiction Hall of Fame in 2006. See John Meaney's eulogy above.

- *Michelle Muijsert* (1962-2011), New Zealand-born fan, fanzine publisher (*The Space Wastrel*) and convention runner who was highly active in the 1980s and 1990s, died unexpectedly in Melbourne on 8 November. She was 49. [ML]

- *John Neville* (1925-2011), UK stage and later film actor whose best-known genre roles were the title part in *The Adventures of Baron Munchausen* (1988) and the ‘Well-Manicured Man’ in *The X-Files*, died on 19 November; he was 86. [MPJ]
- *Susan Palermo-Piscitello*, popular and multi-talented US fan who had been Vice President of Operations for Sandy Frank Productions (which imported Japanese sf films and tv) and more recently worked in independent horror videos, died on 23 November; she was 59. [JHB]
- *Anne Ridler* (circa 1930-2011), Shanghai-born UK actress who appeared in several genre tv series from the 1960s to the 1980s – *Doctor Who* ‘The Wheel in Space’, *Moonbase 3*, *Tom’s Midnight Garden*, *The Tomorrow People* and *Terrahawks* – reportedly died in early August. [DP]
- *Ken Russell* (1927-2011), UK film director whose work ranged from the bizarrely to the brilliantly eccentric, died on 27 November; he was 84. Films of genre interest include *Billion Dollar Brain* (1967, remotely based on the novel by Len Deighton), *Tommy* (1975), *Altered States* (1980; Paddy Chayefsky), *Faust* (1985), *Gothic* (1986; about Mary Shelley and *Frankenstein*), *The Lair of the White Worm* (1988; Bram Stoker) and *The Fall of the Louse of Usher* (2002; remixing Poe).
- *Alvin Schwartz* (1916-2011), US comics writer who from 1942 to 1958 scripted the adventures of many DC superheroes – notably Batman, Superman (where he took credit for inventing the Bizarro concept), Wonder Woman, The Flash and Green Lantern – died on 28 October aged 95. [PDF]
- *Karl Slover* (1918-2011), Austria-Hungary-born US actor who played four Munchkin roles in *The Wizard of Oz* (1939) and was one of the last surviving cast members, died on 15 November; he was 93. [MPJ]

As Others See Us II. On sf magazine letter columns and other ‘departments’ containing input from readers: ‘Pseudo-scientific and other specialized fiction sheets devote a bit more space to departments because so many of their readers are cranks who take a grim pleasure in finding flaws and showing off their juvenile knowledge.’ (Harold Brainerd Hersey, *Pulpwood Editor: The Fabulous World of the Thriller Magazines Revealed by a Veteran Editor and Publisher*, 1937) [BHi]

Court Circular. The lawyers of the Tolkien estate and The Saul Zaentz Company (t/a Middle-Earth Enterprises) have told the small Birmingham café The Hungry Hobbit to drop the trademarked word ‘Hobbit’ – though the

place had just been named as ‘official café’ of the authorized Tolkien tourist attraction across the road at Sarehole Mill. Would ‘Hungry Halfling’ be OK? (*Birmingham Mail*, 19 November) [SN]

Outraged Letters. *Simon R. Green* places his pulse on the cultural finger: ‘Back in the early sixties, when Dalekmania was at its height, the *Blue Peter* tv show demonstrated its favourite toys for Christmas. (Plugging? Perish the thought.) And one of them was the Daleks Cutomatic. A sheet of plastic with Dalek shapes on, and a heated electric wire you could use to cut round the shapes. I was eight, but even I could see the drawback; namely, cut-off little fingers dropping to the floor. I’m pretty sure the thing was withdrawn. But it’s just turned up on eBay! For six hundred pounds!’

- *SMS* on science fiction foreshadowings: ‘Remember the *Soylent Green* sequence of armoured police clearing tent-inhabiting protesters off the streets by treating them as “Refuse”? Were the events at Wall Street on 15 November 2011 a darkly humorous homage to Harry Harrison, or just The News?’

Magazine Scene. *Realms of Fantasy* has gone down for the third time at issue 102 – sold by Sovereign Media to Warren Lapine in 2009, by Lapine to Damnation Books in November 2010, and now cancelled by Damnation since it’s losing money still. (*SFScope*, 2 November).

- *New Worlds*: the promised November relaunch seems to have got no farther than a registration sign-up form at www.newworlds.co.uk.

As Others See Us III. *Never Too Late To Learn Dept.* ‘If you don’t know who the “Hugo” is named after, incidentally, SF is not for you.’ (John Sutherland on Vernor Vinge in *Lives of the Novelists*, 2011) [JB]

- *Spot the Omission Dept.* The December *Good Housekeeping* announces a ‘Best Novel from a New Author’ competition, run in collaboration with Orion Books, with a £25,000 prize (runners-up get laptops) for the best entry in ‘any grown up genre – whether it’s historical romance, whodunit, comedy or international spy thriller.’ [CM]

We Are Everywhere. Realizing that it’s about time we catalogued the Big Dumb Objects strewn through interstellar space by enigmatic Forerunners, the Australian National University is advertising for two Research Fellows in Galactic Archaeology. (jobs.anu.edu.au) [SU]

The Dead Past. *60 Years Ago*: “He thought that the Army was useless, and

that an international police force should be established. But he emphasised that he would be prepared to fight an invasion from Mars or some other planet.” (Glasgow Conscientious Objector’s Tribunal Report – “Morning Ad”.)’ ([Science Fantasy News 10](#), Christmas 1951)

- *30 Years Ago*, news of what (renamed) would be a major international remainder: ‘L. Ron Hubbard’s thrilling sf novel *Man, the Endangered Species* is being inspected by George Hay: apparently this snappily-titled tome runs to 20,000 pages....’ (*Ansible* 22, December 1981)

Fanfundery. *TransAtlantic Fan Fund*. Last reminder: the 2012 TAFF voting deadline is 9 December. See taff.org.uk for the ballot form. Likewise for GUFF at taff.org.uk/guff.html; deadline 22 January.

Theology Corner. Father Gabriele Amorth, former chief exorcist at the Vatican, pinpointed two manifestations of hell in a single sentence while introducing *The Rite* – another movie about exorcism – at a film festival in Umbria: ‘Practising yoga is Satanic, it leads to evil just like reading Harry Potter.’ (*Telegraph*, 25 November) [MPJ]

Random Fandom. *Chris Garcia & James Bacon* put sluggish *Ansible* to shame by publishing the 300th issue of [The Drink Tank](#) in November. Having 300 contributors would have been too obvious: there are 320.

Publishers & Sinners. The Night Shade Books term of ‘probation’ as a qualifying market for SFWA (see A277) was [ended by SFWA on 30 November](#).

- Michael Rowley is now Editorial Director at Ebury Press.

Editorial. My New Year resolution will be to write an editorial.

C.o.A. *Leigh Kennedy*, 212 Old London Road, Hastings, TN35 3LX. *Mike Sherwood*, 26 Steppingley Road, Flitwick, MK45 1AJ.

Thog’s Masterclass. *Dept of the Low-Minded*. ‘She twisted her body on top of his and Tengo could feel her pubic hair against his thighs. Thick, rich hair. It was like her pubic hair was part of her thinking process.’ (Haruki Murakami, *1Q84*, trans Philip Gabriel, 2011) [PY]

- *Introspection Dept*. ‘She watched, fascinated, as the resolution of her eyes improved quickly during the last three hundred metres of her descent.’ (Arthur C. Clarke & Gentry Lee, *Rama II*, 1989) [BH_a]

- *Dept of Fractal Geometry*. ‘Lily glanced into courtyards as they passed and

saw the children coming out of tiny doors in their school uniforms ...' (M.T. Anderson, *Jasper Dash and the Flame-Pits of Delaware*, 2009) [MMcA]

• *Woodshed of Gross Anatomy Dept.* '[I] shuddered as the denatured alcohol corroded its way through my GI tract, not stopping until it reached the basement, where my tailbone and testicles resided like an old croquet set.' (Joseph Gangemi, *Inamorata*, 2004) [PB]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

• 2 December 2011: Brum Group, Christmas Social at Selly Park Tavern, entry by £10 advance ticket only. Normal venue is the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre, 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk or rog.peyton at btinternet com. Further meetings: 13 January, AGM/Auction; 10 February, quiz.

SFWA Estates Page. A useful resource for people wanting to arrange reprint, translation etc. rights to deceased authors' works.

<http://www.sfw.org/estates-contact-information/>

Delta Film Awards. Entries are now invited, with a 1 September 2012 deadline.

<http://pics.livejournal.com/stevegreen/pic/000b6t08>

R.I.P Extra. Chris Nelson writes from Australia: '*Arthur Haddon* (1927-2011), early member of the Futurian Society of Sydney (under the name Arthur Duncan) and a key player later, died on 3 July aged 83. He served as Secretary of the FSS post-war, had roles in several of the early Australian conventions and published two issues of *Telepath*. *Loralie Glick* (née Giles, 1930-2011), widow of Phineas (Bluey) Glick, passed away on 29 August. The two met through Futurian Society friends and were both active in Sydney fandom for a period from the 1950s.'

Thog Remembers Anne McCaffrey. 'No planet-bound society can fight a voracious fungus that is falling upon the entire planet every second from the sky.' (John M. Faucette, *Crown of Infinity*, 1968) [BA]

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Rafe Culpin, Paul Di Filippo, Steve Green, Bob Ham, Bill Higgins, Martyn P. Jackson, Locus, Mark Loney, Andy Love, Pamela Love, Monica McAbee, Martin McNeill, Caroline Mullan, Stan Nicholls, Andrew I. Porter, David Pringle, Stewart Unwin, Andrew Wells, Martin Morse Wooster, Pete Young, and our Hero Distributors: Dave Corby (BSFG), SCIS/Prophecy, Alan Stewart (Australia). Seasonal good wishes to all readers, and may 2012 be less awful than 2011. 1 December 2011.

2012

Ansible 294, January 2012

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Web news.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or the manual for Computer 1578/32/W1.

Welcome to 2012. The *Ansible* staff wishes you all a Happy New(ish) Year, while privately thinking ‘At least it can’t be as bad as 2011....’

The End of the World

Douglas Adams was invoked as reassurance that it’s OK for a serious journalist to like *Doctor Who* and interview Matt Smith, because this is safely different from all that horrid sci-fi stuff: ‘Surely there are parallels with Douglas Adams – one of the early Who writers – who later, in *Hitchhiker’s*, created a universe to explore not science fiction but the human condition.’ (Euan Ferguson, *Observer*, 4 December) [PE]

Bea Ballard, J.G. Ballard’s daughter, broke silence in a newspaper interview about the John Baxter biography of her father that – as summarized by the subeditor – ‘brands him as racist, sexist and a stranger to truth.’ ([Telegraph](#), 18 December) ‘I do feel some of the things presented as fact in this book sully important aspects of my father’s and our lives.’ It is mentioned that she has ‘compiled a six-page list of the most obvious factual errors in the biography.’ [MPJ]

Penelope Lively, author of *Astercote* (1970) and other fine children’s fantasies as well as adult literary novels – one of which won the Booker – was made a Dame in the UK New Year Honours. Maggie Gee, who has written some sf and fantasy, received the OBE.

George R.R. Martin is *USA Today*’s Author of the Year (2011).

J.R.R. Tolkien would have been 120 today, 3 January 2012.

Convicious

18 Jan • **Clarke Odyssey Lecture** – ‘Arthur’s Vision for Man in Space’, BIS, 27/29 South Lambeth Rd, Vauxhall, London, SW8 1SZ. £10 (BIS members free): book online at www.bis-space.com.

19-28 Jan • **Neverwhere** (play), Progress Theatre, Reading. 7:30pm; matinees 2:30 on 21st, 28th. £10; £8 concessions. See www.progresstheatre.co.uk. Box office 0118 960 6060.

25 Jan • **BSFA Open Meeting**, ~~The Antelope, 22 Eaton Terrace, London, SW1W 8EZ.~~ 5/6pm for 7pm. With Christopher Priest. [*Venue change*: this month’s meeting has moved to the Melton Mowbray, the usual [London First Thursday](#) pub.

2-4 Feb • **SFX Weekender 3**, Prestatyn Sands, Holiday Park, North Wales. Charged by accommodation, from £250 for 2 (£545 for 5) ‘basic’ up to £400 for 2 ‘VIP’. Online booking (£6 booking fee) at www.sfxweekender.com. Contact & children’s bookings: 08700 110034.

3-5 Feb • **Duple Time** (filk), Ramada Grantham Hotel. £40 reg; £27 unwaged; under-18s £1/year; under-6 free. Cheques: UK Filk Con, c/o Flat 1, 61 Marks Rd, Salisbury, SP1 3AY.

18 Feb • **Picocon 29**, Imperial College Union, London. 10am-7/8pm. £10 reg at door; £8 concessions; £5 ICSF members; past GoHs free. Contact ICSF, Beit Quad, Prince Consort Road, London, SW7 2BB.

24-26 Feb • **Satellite 3**, Grand Central Hotel, Glasgow. GoH Charles Stross. £45 reg *until 31 January*; £10 supp or under-15s; £1 under-5s. Contact Satellite 3, PO Box 3738, Glasgow, G41 4YD.

6-9 Apr • **Olympus 2012** (Eastercon), Radisson Edwardian Hotel, Heathrow, London. £65 reg, £55 unwaged. £20 supp/under-17s, £5 under-12s, £1 under-5s. Contact 4 Evesham Green, Aylesbury, Bucks, HP19 9RX, or enquiries at olympus2012.org. *Membership refunds for those who find they can’t make it remain available until 31 January.*

18-20 May • **Discover Festival**, Snibston Discovery Museum, Coalville, Leicestershire. GoH Peter F. Hamilton, Graham Masterton. £45 reg plus £2 online booking fee at www.discoverfestival.co.uk.

27-30 Sept • **Fantasycon 2012**, Royal Albion Hotel, Brighton. GoH announced: Joe R. Lansdale, Mary Danby. Now £55 reg (*BFS members £50*) until 31 May. Payment at fantasycon2012.org/join.php, or to 10 Haycroft Gdns, Mastin Moor, Chesterfield, Derbyshire, S43 3FE.

31 Oct - 3 Nov 2013 • **World Fantasy Convention**, Hilton Brighton Metropole, Brighton. GoH announced: Richard Matheson, Richard Christian Matheson. £100 reg; £50 supp. Cheques to 130 Park View, Wembley, Middlesex, HA9 6JU; PayPal at www.wfc2013.org.

Rumblings. New Worldcon bids are New Orleans in 2018 and Montréal in 2019. Existing: London 2014, Orlando vs Spokane 2015, Kansas City 2016, Japan vs New York 2017, New Zealand 2020. [\[CM\]](#)

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. An unusual analysis of sf trends: ‘One way you can describe the collapse of the idea of the future is the collapse of science fiction. Now it’s either about technology that doesn’t work or about technology that’s used in bad ways. The anthology of the top twenty-five sci-fi stories in 1970 was, like, “Me and my friend the robot went for a walk on the moon,” and in 2008 it was, like, “The galaxy is run by a fundamentalist Islamic confederacy and there are people who are hunting planets and killing them for fun.”’ (PayPal cofounder Peter Thiel, profiled in *The New Yorker*, 28 November 2011) [MMW]

R.I.P. *Gilbert Adair* (1944-2011) Scots critic, translator and author whose two genre novels are sequels to famous children’s fantasies – *Alice Through the Needle’s Eye* (1984) and *Peter Pan and the Only Children* (1987) – died on 8 December; he was 66. [JC]

• *Bob Anderson* (1922-2012), UK Olympic fencer who played Darth Vader in light-sabre duels in *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return of the Jedi*, died on 1 January aged 89. [AW/MMW]

• *Shingo Araki* (1939-2011), major Japanese anime artist, writer and director whose best-known work in Britain was *Ulysses 31* (Greek mythology in space), died on 1 December. [JonC]

• *T.J. Bass* (Thomas J. Bassler, 1932-2011), US author whose linked novels *Half Past Human* (1971) and *The Godwhale* (1974) were highly regarded

- (but not, alas, followed up), died on 13 December. He was 79. [MJE]
- *John Berry*, Irish fan who published a huge amount of humorous writing in his own and others' fanzines (mostly from 1954 to the early 60s) and was Fan Guest of Honour at the 1959 Detroit Worldcon, died on 25 November. Sam Long writes: 'Did you know he held the British Empire Medal and was therefore entitled to put BEM after his name?'
 - *Richard Bessière* (1923-2011), prolific French sf author whose debut series 'Conquerors of the Universe' began in 1951, died on 22 December aged 88. [L]
 - *A.J. Barker* (Andre Barker Bridget), US fan married to Bill Bridget and active with him in the Southern Fandom Press Alliance in the 1980s, died on 23 December aged 64. [AIP]
 - *Gianluca Casseri* (1961-2011), Italian fantasy author and magazine editor, killed himself on 14 December after fatally shooting two Senegalese immigrants to Florence and wounding three others. [SHS]
 - *Cheetah-Mike*, a chimpanzee claimed to have played Cheeta/Cheetah in 1930s Tarzan films, died on 24 December at a supposed age of 80. [JCo] Many chimps (more than one per film) appeared in the role; whether any from the 1930s really survived to 2011 has been questioned. A debunked rival claimant, Cheeta, died on 3 January.
 - *Russell Garcia* (1916-2011), US composer and music arranger who scored George Pal's films *The Time Machine* (1960) and *Atlantis, The Lost Continent* (1961), died on 20 November; he was 95. [MMW]
 - *Václav Havel* (1936-2011), Czech playwright, poet, dissident, politician and former President of the Czech Republic, died on 18 December aged 75. His plays satirized Soviet bureaucracy through such sf-flavoured devices as the imposition of absurd artificial languages in *The Memorandum* (1965) and a demented computer in *The Increased Difficulty of Concentration* (1968).
 - *Rusty Hevelin* (1922-2011), long-time US fan, 1975 DUFF winner, 1981 Denver Worldcon Fan Guest of Honour, and co-founder of PulpCon, died on 27 December; he was 89. [BH]
 - *Russell Hoban* (1925-2011), US-born but long UK-resident writer best known for the remarkable children's fantasy *The Mouse and His Child* (1967) and the sf narrative tour-de-force *Riddley Walker* (1980), died after long illness on 14 December; he was 85. Many of his other novels, such as *Pilgermann* (1983) and *The Medusa Frequency* (1987), were threaded with fantastic themes. He was a charming GoH at the first UK Mexican in 1984.

[JC]

- *Glenn Lord* (1931-2011), US agent for the Robert E. Howard estate, editor of Howard collections and author of *The Last Celt: A Bio-Bibliography of Robert Ervin Howard* (1976), died on 31 December; he was 80. [SHS/AIP]
- *Thierry Martens* (1942-2011), Belgian author, anthologist, comics historian and former editor of the comic *Spirou*, died on 27 June aged 69. Under his *Spirou* writing pseudonym Yves Varende he also published sf and Sherlockian-pastiche novels. [PDF]
- *Jerry Robinson* (1922-2011), US comics artist generally acknowledged as the creator of Batman's most memorable foe the Joker (he also gave Robin his name), died on 7 December aged 89. [SG]
- *Bob Sabella* (1948-2011), long-time US fan, author of *Who Shaped Science Fiction?* (2000), publisher of the fanzine *Visions of Paradise*, and current Official Editor of the Fantasy Amateur Press Association, died on 3 December. He was 63. [SG/RL]
- *Ronald Searle* (1920-2011), celebrated UK cartoonist perhaps best known for creating St Trinian's and drawing Nigel Molesworth, died on 30 December aged 91. Genre-related work includes sf daydream sequences in the Molesworth books written by Geoffrey Willans, spoof mythology in his solo *Zodiac* (1977) and story character crossovers including Kafka/Lewis Carroll in *Marquis de Sade Meets Goody Two-Shoes* (1994). His style was inimitable, his range extraordinary.
- *Don Sharp* (1922-2011), Tasmanian-born film director best known for Hammer studio work, died on 18 December aged 89. Films included *The Kiss of the Vampire* (1963), *Witchcraft* (1964), *Curse of the Fly* (1965), *Rasputin, the Mad Monk* (1966), *The Face of Fu Manchu* (1966), *Jules Verne's Rocket to the Moon* (1967) and *Psychomania* (1973). As a radio actor he played 'Mitch' Mitchell in the 1953 BBC *Journey Into Space* and its sequel *The Red Planet*. [SG/MPJ]
- *Joe Simon* (1913-2011), US comics writer and artist who with Jack Kirby created Captain America in 1941 and worked on the 1940s *Sandman* for DC, died on 14 December aged 98. [MPJ]
- *Kathleen Stein*, US science writer who was a staff journalist at *Omni* for many years and wrote the popular-neuroscience book *The Genius Engine* (2007), died in a fall on 13 November. [SW]
- *Darrell K. Sweet* (1934-2011), noted US sf/fantasy cover artist since 1975, died on 5 December aged 77. His distinctive work appeared on several

popular series including Piers Anthony's Xanth books, Stephen R. Donaldson's Chronicles of Thomas Covenant, L.E. Modesitt's Recluce and Robert Jordan's Wheel of Time. [PDF]

- *Louis Thirion* (1923-2011), French sf author who published more than 30 novels beginning with *Waterloo, morne plaine* (1964), died on 9 December; he was 88. [L]
- *Shinji Wada* (1950-2011), prolific Japanese manga creator whose best-known works are the *Sukeban Deka* comics and media spinoffs, died on 5 July at the age of 61. [PDF]

The Weakest Link. *Danny Baker*, comedy quiz show host: 'Which science fiction film starring Sting also starred a giant worm?' *Tony Hawks: 'Moon.'* (*History Repeats Itself*, Radio 5 Live, 4 December) [MPJ]

- *Alex Trebek*: 'For \$1,000, name the author of the 1956 novel *The City and the Stars* who was knighted in 1998 by Queen Elizabeth II.' *Contestant*: 'Who was Isaac Asimov?' (*Jeopardy*, 2 December) [AIP]

Court Circular. Steven John Busti is suing the makers of the *Cowboys & Aliens* film based on a 2006 graphic novel, since 'he came up with the concept of a group of 19th Century cowboys who fend off an alien assault in a Wild West backdrop in 1994.' ([BBC](#), 2 December). [MPJ] And our own Howard Waldrop did it in 1987 with 'Night of the Cooters' (*Omni*).

- Gary Friedrich, creator of the Marvel Comics hero Ghost Rider in 1972, failed in his legal bid for a share of film and other spinoff rights: the judge ruled that 'If Friedrich ... had any rights to the character or the work at the time he endorsed the cheques ... he relinquished those rights to Marvel.' ([BBC](#), 30 December) [DVB]

- More *Avatar* lawsuits! Bryant Moore sued James Cameron and 20th Century Fox in December, asking \$2.5 billion damages since 'Cameron stole his idea for the movie from Moore's screenplays, entitled *Aquatica* and *Descendants: The Pollination*.' ([TMZ.com](#) via [TheCelebrityCafe.com](#), 19 December) The screenplays were allegedly submitted to Cameron's Lightstorm Entertainment in 1994 and 2003. Meanwhile sf author Eric Ryder says he worked for two years with Cameron on a film based on his own 'KRZ 2068', with 'striking similarities' to *Avatar*, while Gerald Morawski knows *Avatar* is based on his pitch to Cameron for his unfilmed *Guardians of Eden*. ([Entertainment Law Digest](#), 21 December).

- A change from cinema: Jeff Kinney's 'Wimpy Kid, Inc' company – whose

bestselling *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* series has been spoofed as *Diary of a Zombie Kid* (2011) by Fred Perry & David Hutchinson – is suing the latter’s publisher Antarctic Press for copyright and trademark infringement. ([PW](#), 22 December) [AIP] A previous lampoon, *Tales from the Crypt: Diary of a Stinky Dead Kid* (2009), was labelled PARODY in big letters and escaped legal reprisals. No such label on *Zombie Kid*.

As Others See Us II. “‘Harrison Bergeron’ had been published in 1961 in the *Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*, a paid-by-the-word, cultish monthly for hardcore admirers of literary science fiction.’ (Charles J. Shields, *And So It Goes: Kurt Vonnegut, A Life*, 2011) [MM] That paid-by-the-word sounds pretty damning, doesn’t it?

Outraged Letters. *Ric Cooper* responds to Simon R. Green ([A293](#)): ‘I had the Dalek Cutamatic too in the mid-60s, when I was about 9 or 10. It was a thin wire stretched across the jaws of a U-shaped frame, connected to a battery box (9v I think) to heat up the wire. The Daleks and their chums were printed on thick sheets of expanded polystyrene. My first thought, obviously, was to use it to torture my little brother, but after some experimentation I was bitterly disappointed to find that, although hot enough to cut polystyrene foam, I couldn’t so much as raise a burn on my hand with it. So no diced digits, more’s the pity.’

- *Martyn P. Jackson* confirms that politics and *Who* remain intertwined: ‘Doctor Who and Sherlock writer Mark Gattis was interviewed on Richard Bacon’s BBC Radio 5 Live show this afternoon, where he and Bacon revealed that the BBC preview screening of the Christmas episode of *Doctor Who* was attended by both George Osborne and Ed Balls, along with their children. Prior to the event the warm-up man had asked the kiddies to name a *Doctor Who* monster, and an adult voice piped up “George Osbourne”.’ (21 December)

Magazine Scene. Sheryl Tempchin’s *Zahir: A Journal of Speculative Fiction* has ceased publication, although online issues can still be read at www.zahirtales.com. [MA]

- *Lightspeed* (sf) and *Fantasy*, both edited and now published by John Joseph Adams, are to merge without any reduction in fiction content; there will be less nonfiction.

Random Fandom. *Guy H. Lillian III* missed Christmas: he ‘suffered a fairly

dramatic faint in a local superstore on December 18 and is only today, New Year's Eve, free of the horsepistol, two feet of guts to the lesser and woozy in the extreme. *Challenger 34* is delayed but I did publish once already in 2011.' Ouch!

- *Curt Phillips* has taken over as Official Editor of FAPA following Bob Sabella's death (above).
- *D. West* declined the Rotsler Award for life achievement in fanzine art (whose presentation was announced in [A293](#)). 'Basically, to accept an award with Rotsler's name attached would be to accept his (unspoken but very evident) opinion of fan art as worthless doodling.' Needless to say, this view is contested by admirers of the late Bill Rotsler.

The Dead Past. *75 Years Ago*, on 3 January 1937, that first sf convention as we know it was held in the Leeds Theosophical Hall. Rob Hansen (www.fiawol.org.uk/fanstuff/THEN_Archive/1937con.htm) has previously unpublished photos (including the young Clarke), the official souvenir report and Ted Carnell's delayed report: 'Everyone made speeches, plenty of ideas and suggestions floated around, an Association was formed. The last we remember of the meeting was sneaking off into a private sanctum, lighting a gas fire, and dropping off to sleep utterly worn out. But, as we remember, they did form the Science Fiction Association, and the noose was drawn a little tighter round our lily-white throats. / That original meeting really started the ball rolling in, this country, and from it all the fan clubs (all four of 'em), evolved and owed allegiance. They were the four Hells. Leeds, Liverpool, London and Leicester.' ([Sands of Time, January 1943](#))

- *70 Years Ago*: 'A letter from Arthur C. (Ego) Clarke, mad scientist of the B.I.S., informs us that he is now at No 2 RAF radio school as an instructor. [...] Damon Knight, well known fan and editor of "Snide" has broken into the pro magazines and is now illustrating for "Future" and "Astonishing Stories".....' ([Futurian War Digest, January 1942](#))

Fanfundery. *TransAtlantic Fan Fund*. The 2012 TAFF winner is Jacqueline (Jacq) Monahan. More at taff.org.uk.

- *GUFF* final reminder: the voting deadline is 22 January. See taff.org.uk/guff.html.

Thog's Masterclass. *My Name is Legion Dept*. 'Given his somewhat unassuming appearance, he looked no different from the teeming horde that had descended nightly on Glastonbury since war had begun reaching

England's shores.' (Barry Reese, 'Restoration: An Adventure Starring Devlin Jones', *Startling Stories*, Spring 2009) [DL]

• *Dept of Draculaic Homage*. 'She bent her head over the old book, her eyelashes heavy on her cheek.' 'When I grasped his hand, my heart leaped into my fingers.' '... it made all the blood in her veins suddenly writhe and coil.' 'When the waitress had returned with our tea, Helen stirred it with a somber face.' 'His feet were clad in narrow black boots indescribably different from any boots I'd ever seen.' (all Elizabeth Kostova, *The Historian*, 2005) [PB]

• *Neat Tricks Dept*. 'She reached into her pocket and pulled out her fist.' (Kiki Hamilton, *The Faerie Ring*, 2011) [PM] 'My hands are already dirty just from setting foot on this planet.' (Brian Herbert and Kevin J. Anderson, *Hellhole*, 2011) [PM]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

• 13 January 2012: Brum Group, AGM/Auction; Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre, 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk or rog.peyton at btinternet com. Further meetings: 10 February, quiz.

C.o.A. *Michael Walsh* (the Baltimore one) has changed his email to walshmichaelj at gmail dot com.

Ansible 294 Copyright © David Langford, 2012. Thanks to Paul Barnett, David V. Barrett, Jonathan Clements, John Clute, Jonathan Cowie, Philip Eagle, Malcolm Edwards, Paul Di Filippo, Steve Green, Bill Higgins, Martyn P. Jackson, Robert Lichtman, Denny Lien, Locus, Mario Milosevic, Petréa Mitchell, Cheryl Morgan, Andrew I. Porter, Steven H Silver, Sean Wallace, Andrew Wells, Martin Morse Wooster, and our Hero Distributors: Dave Corby (BSFG), SCIS/Prophecy, Alan Stewart (Australia). Once again, Happy New Year! 3 January 2012.

Ansible 295, February 2012

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Web news.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or the latest model of Outlandish Watch.

Eyeball in the Sky. More excitement I could have lived without: worries about a growing shadow in my right eye led to urgent retinal surgery on 20 January. This was successful, but things will be blurry for a while yet and *Ansible* may have (even) more typos than usual.

So Bright the Vision

Laurie Anderson, US performance artist, tries to predict the future: ‘I think we probably won’t be making things of the nature that we have now. I think we’ll just be trying to appreciate things more. Maybe we’ll develop better ears. I mean, our hearing’s crappy. We’ll have huge ears and we’ll be able to tune in to Mars, or we’ll have a hundred lenses which we can use to look onto the surface of Mars with our so-called “bore eyes,” or look through our hands. We’ll be able to be present more effectively.’ (*The Believer*, January) [MMW] Take that, H.G. Wells!

Russell T. Davies generalizes wildly: ‘Magic and science fiction are never combined.’ ([Guardian](#), 28 January) [TP]

Carrie Fisher carries on. *New York Times Magazine*: ‘You occasionally sign autographs at *Star Wars* conventions. Are you contractually obligated to wear the cinnamon buns?’ *Fisher*: ‘There’s a level of whoring that even I won’t do. But those autograph shows are celebrity prostitution because they give you cash. We work all our lives but never actually see the money we make. But this is like being a drug lord. Don’t talk too much about this, because the tax people will come.’ (6 January) [MMW]

Richard Garriot aka Lord British, videogame developer and 2008 space

tourist (at a reported cost of \$30m), shot an eight-minute movie called *Apogee of Fear* on the International Space Station – the first sf film made in space – which for unclear reasons NASA wouldn't allow him to release. [DKMK] Following many January news reports of the ban, a NASA spokesman indicated a rethink: 'NASA is working with Richard Garriott to facilitate the video's release. [...] We hope to resolve the remaining issues expeditiously ...' ([Wired](#), 19 January) One imagines a high-level NASA committee holding out for some less ominous title, such as *Apogee of Strong Arguments for Increased Agency Funding*.

Connie Willis has been named as the 2011 recipient of the SFWA Damon Knight Grand Master award for life achievement. [L]

Confitent

2-5 Feb • **SFX Weekender 3**, Prestatyn Sands, Holiday Park, North Wales. Charged by accommodation, from £250 for 2 (£545 for 5) 'basic' up to £400 for 2 'VIP'. Online booking (with £6 booking fee) at www.sfxweekender.com. Contact & children's bookings: 08700 110034.

3-5 Feb • **Duple Time** (filk), Ramada Grantham Hotel. £40 reg; £27 unwaged; under-18s £1/year; under-6 free. Cheques: UK Filk Con, c/o Flat 1, 61 Marks Rd, Salisbury, SP1 3AY.

9 Feb • **Open Day** for MA in Creative Writing (SF & Fantasy), Middlesex U, Hendon campus. Enquiries 020 8411 5555 (option 1).

18 Feb • **Picocon 29**, Imperial College Union, London. 10am-7/8pm. £10 reg at door; £8 concessions; £5 ICSF members; past GoHs free. Contact ICSF, Beit Quad, Prince Consort Road, London, SW7 2BB.

22 Feb • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Melton Mowbray (*new venue*), 18 Holborn, London, EC1N 2LE. 6pm for 7pm. With Liz Williams.

24-26 Feb • **Satellite 3**, Grand Central Hotel, Glasgow. GoH Charles Stross. *Now £50 reg*; same at the door; advance booking closes mid-month. Contact Satellite 3, PO Box 3738, Glasgow, G41 4YD.

25-26 Feb • **Microcon 32**, University of Exeter, Streatham Campus. 10am Sat, Devonshire House JCR; Sun in Cornwall House, Various speakers. £12

reg at door, students £10, EUSFS members £8.

2 Mar • **British Fantasy Society Open Night**, The Mug House, London Bridge, London, SE1 2PF. 5/6pm for 7:30pm. All welcome.

3-4 Mar • **P-Con IX**, Irish Writers' Centre, Parnell Square, Dublin 1. €20 reg: payment via PayPal only. See www.pcon.ie.

28 Mar - 27 May • **'It's Life Jimmy, but Not As We Know It'**: SF in Scotland (exhibition), National Library of Scotland, George IV Bridge, Edinburgh, EH1 1EW. Free. 10am-8pm; to 5pm Sat; 2-5pm Sun.

29 Mar - 1 Apr • **Dead by Dawn** (horror film festival), Filmhouse, Edinburgh. £70. Box office 0131 228 2688; www.deadbydawn.co.uk.

6-9 Apr • **Olympus 2012** (Eastercon), Radisson Edwardian Hotel, Heathrow, London. £65 reg, £55 unwaged. £20 supp/under-17s, £5 under-12s, £1 under-5s. Contact 4 Evesham Green, Aylesbury, Bucks, HP19 9RX, or enquiries at olympus2012.org.

18-20 May • **Waltz on the Wye** (steampunk), Chepstow. £40 including ball, £25 without, £10 day. 3% booking fee at wyewaltz.org.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. TV presenter Fern Britton, having opined that 'I think *Doctor Who* is the most dreary thing,' added: 'I tried to watch *Star Wars* three times but I've never got past the first 12 minutes as I've always fallen asleep. / I hate sci-fi as it's not real and all these people who are fans think it's real and it's some sort of religion to them.' (BBC2 *Room 101*, 20 January; previewed in *The Sun*, 17 January) [JS]

Award Shortlists. **BSFA:** NOVEL Kim Lakin-Smith, *Cyber Circus*; China Miéville, *Embassytown*; Christopher Priest, *The Islanders*; Adam Roberts, *By Light Alone*; Lavie Tidhar, *Osama*. SHORT Nina Allan, 'The Silver Wind' (*Interzone* 233); Paul Cornell, 'The Copenhagen Interpretation' (*Asimov's* 7/11); Kameron Hurley, 'Afterbirth' (author's website); China Miéville, 'Covehithe' (*Guardian*); Al Robertson, 'Of Dawn' (*IZ235*). NONFICTION Mike Ashley, *Out of This World: Science Fiction but Not as We Know it*; John Clute, Peter Nicholls & David Langford, eds., *The SF Encyclopedia, Third*

Edition (website); Abigail Nussbaum, review of *Arslan* by M.J. Engh (Asking the Wrong Questions blog); Ian Sales, ed., *SF Mistressworks* (website); Jared Shurin & Anne Perry, ed., *Pornokitsch* (website); Graham Sleight, Tony Keen & Simon Bradshaw, eds., *The Unsilent Library: Essays on the Russell T. Davies Era of the New Doctor Who*. ART Dominic Harman, cover of Ian Whates, *The Noise Revealed*; Jim Kay, cover/illustrations of Patrick Ness, *A Monster Calls*; Pedro Marques, cover of Lavie Tidhar, *Osama*; Anne Sudworth, cover of Liz Williams, *A Glass of Shadow*.

- *Philip K. Dick*: Jean Johnson, *A Solder's Duty*; Maureen F. McHugh, *After the Apocalypse*; Mira Grant, *Deadline*; Robert Jackson Bennett, *The Company Man*; Matthew Hughes, *The Other*; Drew Magary, *The Postmortal*; Simon Morden, *The Samuil Petrovich Trilogy*. [GVG]

- [Kitschies](#) (novel category): Jesse Bullington, *The Enterprise of Death*; China Miéville, *Embassytown*; Patrick Ness & Siobhan Dowd, *A Monster Calls*; Jane Rogers, *The Testament of Jessie Lamb*; Lavie Tidhar, *Osama*.

The Weakest Link. *Host*: 'Which writer's birthday is commemorated on Pooh Day?' *Contestant*: 'Shakespeare.' (ITV, *The Chase*) [PI]

R.I.P. *Robert E. Briney* (1933-2011), one of the founding partners of the important sf small press Advent: Publishers, died in November. He was valued for commentary on multiple genres including mysteries and sf. [EK]

- *John Celardo* (1918-2012), US comics veteran who drew and later wrote the *Tarzan* newspaper strip 1954-1967, died on 6 January aged 93. [PDF]

- *James Farentino* (1938-2012), US actor who co-starred in *The Final Countdown* (1980), died on 24 January aged 73. [PDF]

- *Carlo Fruttero* (1926-2012), Italian sf author – mostly in collaboration with Franco Lucentini, with whom he also edited the sf magazine *Urania* 1964-1985 – died on 15 January. [SHS]

- *Mark Hall* (1936-2011), who with Brian Cosgrove founded the animation studio Cosgrove Hall, died on 17 November; he was 75. Popular CH productions included *Danger Mouse* (1981-1992), *The Wind in the Willows* (1983; Bafta winner), *Count Duckula* (1988-1993), Roald Dahl's *The BFG* (1989) and three Terry Pratchett novel adaptations. [MPJ]

- *Reginald Hill* (1936-2012), popular UK author of the Dalziel and Pascoe detective series – of which *One Small Step* (1990) is sf set on the Moon – died on 12 January aged 75. As Dick Morland he wrote the sf dystopias *Heart Clock* (1973) and *Albion! Albion!* (1974). [JC]

- *Bob Holness* (1928-2012), South African-born radio/tv presenter and quiz host who in 1956 became the second actor to play James Bond (in a radio version of *Moonraker*), died on 6 January aged 83. [GD]
- *Howard Hopkins* (1961-2012), US author of graphic novels and the ‘Chloe Files’ urban fantasy/horror series, died from a heart attack on 12 January; he was 50. [PS]
- *Phyllis MacLennan* (1920-2012), author of several short sf stories 1963-1980 and the novel *Turned Loose on Irdra* (1970), died on 8 January aged 91. [SHS]
- *Lister Matheson* (1948-2012), Scots-born academic at Michigan State University who was a former director of the Clarion East sf workshop, died on 19 January aged 63. [SFS]
- *Martin Sherwood* (1942-2011), UK author of the sf novels *Survival* (1975) and *Maxwell’s Demon* (1976), died on 10 May 2011 aged 69. [DPB]
- *Arne Sjögren* (1940-2012), Swedish fan, critic and short-story author with several sales in the 1960s, died on 7 January; he was 71. [J-HH]
- *Dick Tufeld* (1926-2012), US voice actor who voiced the *Lost in Space* robot (‘Danger, Will Robinson! Danger!’), died on 22 January at age 85. He was also heard in *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea* and *The Time Tunnel*. [BB]
- *Alice E. ‘Badger’ Washburn*, US fan, convention-goer and filker active in the Boston area, died from acute respiratory distress syndrome on 26 December. [PT]
- *Nicol Williamson* (1936-2011), distinguished Scots stage and screen actor whose best-known genre role was Merlin in the 1981 *Excalibur*, died on 16 December aged 75. Other relevant film credits include *Return to Oz* (1985), *The Exorcist III* (1990), *The Wind in the Willows* (1996) and *Spawn* (1997). [PDF]

Stranger than Fact. In a poll of 1000 people carried out by the *Encyclopedia Britannica* to investigate scientific misconceptions, 16% believed the discoverer of radioactivity was Dr Emmett Brown of the *Back To The Future* films. (*Telegraph*, 6 January) [MPJ] This confirms the vital scientific principle that including stupid answers in a multiple-choice quiz ensures jolly amusing results from guesswork.

As Others See Us II. Yet another resistible opportunity: ‘MTV is looking to create a “Jersey Shore” for geeks. The network has put out a casting call for

something called “Fandom Rising”, which doesn’t make any bones that it’s a show tailored to the nerd set. “If you are a guy or girl and get all the references in ‘The Big Bang Theory,’ can quote the Original Trilogy, can spot a Cylon among us, wish you could’ve attended Hogwarts, Starfleet Academy, or Xavier’s School for the Gifted, join the horde, and revere masters of science fiction and fantasy we want you!” (*New York Post*, 23 December) [PL]

- Guess who wants to tap the mighty talent pool of *Ansible* readers? ‘Big Brother ... is BACK FOR 2012! / I am contacting you from Endemoluk, we are currently in the process of casting Big Brother 2012 and I wanted to get in contact with you. Big Brother returns to our screens on Channel 5 in summer 2012 and we’re looking for vibrant and interesting characters to enter the house. / Big Brother is widening the search and, as ever, is keen to represent all aspects of society. I wanted to pass on my contact details for any of your members that might be interested in applying?’ Contact, if you dare, frazer dot yorke [at] endemoluk dot com.

- An sf themed brothel is planned in Nevada (where this is legal), catering for ‘sci-fi nerds who dream of having sex with exotic alien women.’ Work continues on ‘the project’s finer details, like whether the girls themselves will be painted green.’ ([The Week](#), 4 January) [SL]

Media Awards. The best movie of 2011 was the sf *Melancholia*, according to the European Film Awards and US National Society of Film Critics. *Producers Guild*: best animation, *The Adventures Of Tintin*; Vanguard award, Stan Lee. *Golden Globes*: animated feature, *Tintin* again; best director, Martin Scorsese for *Hugo*; best supporting TV actor, Peter Dinklage as Tyrion Lannister in *A Game of Thrones*. *American Soc of Cinematographers Outstanding Achievement*: Harrison Ford. [MPJ]

- *Oscars*: Martin Scorsese’s sf *Hugo* had the most nominations (11) of the nine films contending for Best Picture in the Academy Awards.

Outraged Letters. *Earl Kemp* objects to [A294](#): ‘... too damned many obits. Stop the killing!’

- *Dave Lally* on the death of Don Sharp ([A294](#)): ‘He did two of his films using my home town in Ireland as a location: *The Face of Fu Manchu* (actually 1964) and *Jules Verne’s Rocket to the Moon*. As is I hope well known, this young SF buck played the dead boy – astride the bike, as a extra – when Fu Manchu (Christopher Lee) bombs (the fictional Essex coastal

village of) Fleetwick with his deadly-below-freezing-point gas. I remember his Assnt Dir/Prodr would produce wads of money in cash (usually English money as well – very welcome in Ireland at the time) to get instant locations (eg the half-eaten breakfast left in a living room in Fleetwick).’

- *Colin Smythe* on the death of Darrell K. Sweet ([A294](#)): ‘Darrell also painted cover illustrations for nine of the Signet/Roc editions of Terry’s works – *The Dark Side of the Sun*, *Sourcery*, *Wyrd Sisters*, *Pyramids*, *Guards! Guards!*, *Eric*, *Moving Pictures*, *Reaper Man* and *Witches Abroad*.’

O Tempora, O Mores. Keith Watson on the sad decline of UK nudism: ‘My guess is you’re more likely to see modern youth hanging out at sci-fi conventions than you are in the buff down the local naturist club.’ (*Metro*, 13 January) [MT] Depends which you go to, I suppose.

Refuseniks. A list – excluding the living – of those who declined UK honours 1951-1999 was released to the BBC after a Freedom of Information Act request. Names of genre interest include Roald Dahl (OBE 1986), C.S. Forester (CBE 1953), Robert Graves (CBE 1957, CH 1984), Alfred Hitchcock (CBE 1962), Aldous Huxley (knighthood 1959), C.S. Lewis (CBE 1952) and J.B. Priestley (life peerage 1965, CH 1969). [IC] Not listed, being post-1999: J.G. Ballard, who refused a CBE in 2003.

Random Fandom. *FAAn Awards* for 2011 fanzine activity: voting is open, with an 8 March deadline. Ballot form at [corflu.org](#).

- *Bruce Gillespie & Jan Stinson* are folding *Steam Engine Time* owing to Jan’s poor health. Read the final issue #13 at [efanzines.com/SFC/#set](#).
- *Pulpfest*, the pulp magazine convention, renamed its Munsey Award for service to the pulp cause as the Rusty Hevelin Service Award (or Rusty).

More Awards. *Bram Stoker* (horror) life achievement: Rick Hautala, Joe R. Lansdale.

- *Crawford* (fantasy): Genevieve Valentine, *Mechanique: A Tale of the Circus Tresaulti* (2011). [L]

The Dead Past. *50 Years Ago*, John Brunner peered with keen eyes into futurity: ‘Suppose I married a Chinese girl, say ...’ (*PITFCS* ed. Theodore R. Cogswell, February 1962)

- *70 Years Ago*, UK fans were polled about a national sf organization: ‘Name to be (i) British Fantasy Fan Federation..... (ii) Futurian Society of Great Britain..... (iii) British Fantasy Society..... (iv) Any other title.....’ ([Futurian](#)

[War Digest 17](#), February 1942) Winner: British Fantasy Society (not the present one).

Fanfundery. *GUFF* results for the northbound race to Olympus 2012: Kylie Ding wins with 47 votes to Grant Watson's 46 (no preference 5).

- *TAFF* voting figures were released in January. First round: Jacq Monahan 35 votes (27 NA + 8 Euro), Warren Buff 30 (28+2; eliminated by 20% rule), Kim Kofmel 27 (12+15), no preference 8 (6+2). After redistribution of WB voters' second choices, JM won the second round with 45 to KK's 42. Full details at taff.org.uk.

We Are Everywhere. More *Star Trek* in odd contexts.

- Anthony Quinn reviews the biopic *J. Edgar* [Hoover]: 'Let down by the make-up department, which turns his liver-spotted dotage into a Borg from *Star Trek*, [Armie] Hammer still conveys a strong pathos in the final stretch.' (*Independent*, 20 January) [MPJ]

- Tim Abrahams of Sky Sports on Abu Dhabi's cricket ground, venue of the Pakistan v England Test: 'It looks as if the starship *Enterprise* has landed in the middle of the desert. England need to boldly go where they've never played Test cricket before.' (23 January) [MPJ]

- Debate about *The Iliad* 'has led to bitter exchanges in the pages of scholarly journals, filled with abstruse proofs that, to the uninitiated, might seem like the dialogue to a "Star Trek" episode ("Movable *nu* was already being used in this early period for the sake of preventing hiatus caused by the loss of digamma").' (*New Yorker*, 7 November) [MMW]

- At the Jaipur Literature Festival, A.C. Grayling made the traditional error: 'One of the best known examples of this divide between emotions and reason was Dr Spock of *Star Trek*. He thought he was a poor logician because he was always in love with someone or the other. It's another matter that he was suspected to be in love with Captain Kirk ...' (*Hindustan Times*, 27 January) [JW]

C.o.A. Rose Fox, Josh Jasper and Xtina Schelin, 460 Prospect Place, Brooklyn, N.Y., USA. 'No incendiary devices, please.'

Thog's Masterclass. *Eyeballs in the Sky*. '... abandoned buildings where the homeless hide and hungry eyes that will take your cigarettes and your wallet.' (Joseph S. Pulver, Sr., 'To Live and Die in Arkham' in *The Book of Cthulhu* ed. Ross E. Lockhart, 2011) [NR]

- *Dept of Visible Poverty*. ‘Neela looked at him, her face destitute.’ (Dani & Eytan Kollin, *The Unincorporated Man*, 2009) [CH]
 - *Mirth of No Human Shape Dept*. ‘Gibbous laughter flicked at the edges of his consciousness.’ (Barbara Hambly, *The Witches of Wenshar*, 1987) [KAM]
 - *Dept of Central Casting*. ‘General Vigo, a tall, snowy-haired albino from Urinal, fourth satellite moon of Saturn’ ... ‘Morganus Thaeller, the Chief Control Commissioner of Troublesome Planets and Asteroids’ ... ‘Regina Zelda, loveliest and most delicately nurtured of all the inhabitants of the Four Worlds’ ... ‘Zelda, her soft comely breasts rising and falling rapidly beneath their torn flimsy coverings, stood beside him, her eyes alight with tenderness.’ ... ‘Carlyon, like all Martians, a brown-skinned giant of six hectares high’ (all ‘Bengo Mistral’, *Pirates of Cerebus*, 1953) [PH via BiB]
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Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 4 February 2012: Mary & Bryan Talbot are guests at the SWALC micro-arts festival, 1pm-6pm at the Lord Clyde pub, 340-342 Essex Road, London, N1 3PB.
- 10 February 2012: Brum Group, quiz night; Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre, 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk or rog.peyton at btinternet com. Further meetings: awaited.

Vampire Novel of the Century. To mark the centenary of Bram Stoker’s death on 20 April 1912, a Horror Writers Association jury is busy selecting the supposedly most influential vampire novel published 1912-2011. Their shortlist: Charles L. Grant, *The Soft Whisper of the Dead*; Stephen King, *Salem’s Lot*; Richard Matheson, *I Am Legend*; Kim Newman, *Anno Dracula*; Anne Rice, *Interview with the Vampire*; Chelsea Quinn Yarbro, *Hotel Transylvania*.

Some Links from Readers. Because I can’t face writing even a token editorial.

- Claire M. Jordan remembers the prototype of Severus Snape: http://www.whitehound.co.uk/Fanfic/A_true_original.htm

• Andrew I. Porter was the first of many to send this story about Tolkien and the Nobel Prize:

<http://tinyurl.com/7j2356e>

• Mike Glycer discovered a web page about a fictional character of curious interest to me:

<http://pipl.com/directory/name/Tappen/Roy/>

• Duncan Lawie points out a sports article revealing how a famed sf writer missed his true vocation: ‘The American writer Philip K Dick was a pretty sharp analyst of human psychology. He had a keen nose for paranoia, delusion and perceptive muddle, which made him a brilliant observer of McCarthy-era America, where paranoia was general currency and public discourse was doublespeak. / Dick mostly wrote sci-fi but today he would have been a handy football journalist.’ (*Evening Standard*, 26 January)

<http://tinyurl.com/dickandfootball>

Late R.I.P. *Ardath Mayhar* (1930-2012), long-time US author active since the 1940s and in sf/fantasy since 1973, has died at the age of 81. Her first science-fantasy novel was *How the Gods Wove in Kyrannon* (1979); many more followed, plus two story collections; she was honoured by SFWA as Author Emeritus in 2008. [LP/SHS]

<http://nofearofthefuture.blogspot.com/2012/02/ardath-mayhar-has-passed-away.html>

Thog’s Second Helping. *Headdesk Dept.* ‘Syme struck the table with a radiant face.’ (G.K. Chesterton, *The Man Who Was Thursday*, 1908) [JDB]

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Ansible 296, March 2012

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Web news.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or fayalin/delinade cocktail recipes.

Dark Tides

Clive Barker spent some time in hospital in January ‘thanks to a nearly fatal case of Toxic Shock brought on by a visit to my dentist. Apparently this is not uncommon. In my case the dental work unloaded such a spillage of poisonous bacteria into my blood that my whole system crashed, putting me into a coma. I spent several days in Intensive Care, with a machine breathing for me.’ He emerged twenty pounds lighter. (www.dreadcentral.com, 7 February) [GW]

William Gibson retains the power to surprise journalists: ‘For a science-fiction novelist, William Gibson is oddly reluctant to be called a prophet.’ (*The Week*, 10 February). [MMW]

Frank Muir (1920-1998) mentioned a possible literary influence in his autobiography: ‘I was told recently that the novelist J.G. Ballard much enjoyed the *My Word!* stories, and after hearing a story of mine in which, for purposes of the plot, I extolled the virtues of living in beautiful Shepperton, Surrey (Thorpe [*where Muir lived*] is about 5 miles away) – I described Shepperton as “the Malibu of the Thames Valley” – he was moved by this warm recommendation and drove over in his car, liked what he saw and bought a house there, in which he still lives. Could this be true? I do hope so.’ (*A Kentish Lad*, 1997) [IM]

Nick Park is merely ‘flattered’ by the succession of UK newspaper cartoons – especially in the *Times* – which transfer the likeness of his hapless inventor Wallace (of Wallace & Gromit fame) to the allegedly hapless Labour leader Ed Miliband. But staff at Aardman Animations worry that poor Wallace’s

image may be damaged by these repeated comparisons: ‘You have to protect the brand.’ Meanwhile, ‘A spokesman for Mr Miliband declined to comment.’ ([Independent](#), 6 February) [MPJ]

Conceill

Until 30 Mar • **LEM1** exhibition/installation by Herman Chong at Rossi & Rossi, 16 Clifford St, London, W1S 3RG: ‘... to transform our gallery space into a functioning second-hand Science-Fiction and Fantasy bookshop.’ 020 7734 6487; e-mail info at rossirossi dot com.

2 Mar • **British Fantasy Society Open Night**, The Mug House, London Bridge, London, SE1 2PF. 5/6pm for 7:30pm. All welcome.

3-4 Mar • **P-Con IX**, Irish Writers’ Centre, Parnell Square, Dublin 1. €20 reg: payment via PayPal or at door. See www.pcon.ie.

10-11 Mar • **QED** (science/skeptics), Piccadilly Hotel, Portland St, Manchester, M1 4PH. £89 (students £68) via www.qedcon.org.

27 Mar • **Jan Pienkowski** speaks, The Grove Building, Middlesex University, NW4 4BT. 7pm. Details: farah dot sf at gmail dot com.

28 Mar • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Melton Mowbray (*new venue*), 18 Holborn, London, EC1N 2LE. 6pm for 7pm. BSFA Awards discussion.

28 Mar - 27 May • **‘It’s Life Jimmy, but Not As We Know It’**: SF in Scotland (exhibition), National Library of Scotland, George IV Bridge, Edinburgh, EH1 1EW. Free. 10am-8pm; to 5pm Sat; 2-5pm Sun.

29 Mar - 1 Apr • **Dead by Dawn** (horror film festival), Filmhouse, Edinburgh. £70. Box office 0131 228 2688; www.deadbydawn.co.uk.

6-9 Apr • **Olympus 2012** (Eastercon), Radisson Edwardian Hotel, Heathrow, London. £65 reg, £55 unwaged. £20 supp/under-17s, £5 under-12s, £1 under-5s. Contact 4 Evesham Green, Aylesbury, Bucks, HP19 9RX, or enquiries at olympus2012 dot org.

13-15 Apr • **The Hub 8** (*Torchwood*), Park Inn, Northampton. Tickets from £78 to £195. See massiveevents.co.uk/hub8.

22 Apr • **Diana Wynne Jones Celebration** (informal, non-religious), St

George's, Brandon Hill, Bristol. 2pm for 2:30. Family members and close friends will share their memories of Diana. All are welcome.

1-7 May • **Sci-Fi London** film festival at Apollo Piccadilly Circus, BFI Southbank, other London venues. See www.sci-fi-london.com.

2 May • **Clarke Award** at Sci-Fi London. By invitation.

24-27 Aug • **Discworld Convention**, Hilton Metropole, Birmingham. Now £63 reg, £42 concessions. *Sold out; waiting list closed.*

26-28 Oct • **Festival of Fantastic Films**, Manchester Conference Centre, Sackville St. £70 reg. Contact 95 Meadowgate Rd, Salford, Manchester, M6 8EN; Gil at manchesterfantasticfilms dot co dot uk.

11-18 Nov • **Thought Bubble** (comics), Leeds, including 17-18 November comics convention. See www.thoughtbubblefestival.com.

23-25 Nov • **WexWorlds** (sf/fantasy festival), Wexford, Ireland. Assorted local events. More details awaited at www.wexworlds.net.

1-3 Feb 2013 • **Quarter Tone** (filk), Ramada Grantham Hotel. £35 reg; £22 unwaged; under-18s £1/year; under-6 free. Cheques: UK Filk Con, c/o 15 St. Catherine's Cross, Bletchingley, Surrey, RH1 4PX.

8-10 Feb 2013 • **SF Ball** (media), Carrington House Hotel, Bournemouth. Tickets from £104; £38/day Sat/Sun. See sfbevents.com/sfball.

Rumblings • *2012 Hugo Nominations* [close on 11 March](#).

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. A *Guardian* piece on the dark secrets of ebooks makes the pecking order clear: 'Kindle-owning bibliophiles are furtive beasts. Their shelves still boast classics and Booker winners. But inside that plastic case, other things lurk. Sci-fi and self-help. Even paranormal romance, where vampires seduce virgins and elves bonk trolls.' ([Antonia Senior, 5 February](#)) In short, 'The ebook world is driven by so-called genre fiction, categories such as horror or romance. It's not future classics that push digital sales, but more downmarket fare. No cliché is left unturned, no adjective underplayed.' [CP] No sneer unsneered.

Magazine Scene. *Arc*, a ‘digital magazine about the future’ from the *New Scientist* stable, launched on 20 February in various e-formats plus a ‘collectible print edition’ at an eye-watering \$29.95 (152pp, trade pb size). *Omni*-like mix of stories and articles. No unsolicited submissions, but there’s a fiction competition: see arcfinity.tumblr.com.

Awards. *Kitschies*: NOVEL Patrick Ness & Siobhan Dowd, *A Monster Calls*. DEBUT Kameron Hurley, *God’s War*. COVER ART Peter Mendelsund, for Glen Duncan’s *The Last Werewolf*. SPECIAL (discretionary): graphic novel publisher SelfMadeHero.

• *Skylark*: Sharon Lee & Steve Miller.

Publishers & Sinners. Following Amazon’s latest bullying – delisting over 4000 ebooks distributed by the Independent Publishing Group, because IPG wouldn’t accept an unfavourable Amazon rewrite of contractual terms – SFWA is [redirecting its Amazon links elsewhere](#).

R.I.P. *Ian Abercrombie* (1934-2012), UK character actor seen in various genre films (*Army of Darkness*, *The Lost World: Jurassic Park*) and tv series (*Twin Peaks*, *Birds of Prey*, *Wizards of Waverly Place*) as well as voicing for animations (*Shrek*, *Star Wars: The Clone Wars*, *Rango*), died on 26 January; he was 77. [MPJ]

• *Anders Åkerlind* (?1960-2011), highly active Swedish fan from the late 1970s to mid-1980s, died on 11 February 2011; his legacy is SFF (Swedish Fanzine Association), an open APA which he founded. [J-HH]

• *Jan Berenstain* (1923-2012), creator with her husband Stan (d. 2005) of the long-running Berenstain Bears talking-animal sequence for young children, died on 24 February aged 88. [PDF]

• *Mark Bourne* (1961-2012), US author of several short stories since 1993 and a number of planetarium presentations (two *Trek*-themed) died on 25 February; he was 50. [SFS]

• *Richard Carpenter* (1933-2012), UK screenwriter and author whose tv series creations included *Catweazle* (1970-1971) and *The Ghosts of Motley Hall* (1976-1978) – both of which he novelized – died on 26 February. [DH]

• *Lou Cameron* (1924-2010), US comics artist and author of over 300 novels – mostly Westerns – whose sf ventures included *The Spy with the Blue Kazoo* (1967 as by Dagmar) and *Cybernia* (1972), is confirmed as having died on 25 November 2010 aged 86. [SL] This had previously been denied by a family member when reported in March 2011.

- *John Christopher* (Sam Youd, 1922-2012), noted UK author of both adult and YA sf, died on 3 February after long illness; he was 89. Active in fandom in the 1930s, he began publishing with a 1941 *Weird Tales* poem and a 1949 *Astounding* story; the best-known of his strong adult disaster novels is *The Death of Grass* (1956, aka *No Blade of Grass*, under which title it was filmed); others include *The World in Winter* and *A Wrinkle in the Skin*. For younger readers, the part-televised Tripods sequence (1967-1968) and the Prince in Waiting trilogy (1970-1972) are especially memorable.
- *Bob Franklin*, UK fan in the 1960s whose one published sf story was 'Cinnabar Balloon Tautology' (March 1970 *New Worlds*), died on 22 February. Chris Priest remembers him as '... an old friend of mine from the 1960s. He was close to me and Graham Hall, and was on the fringes of the *New Worlds* group.'
- *Todd Frazier* (1954-2012), US fan who for many years helped produce Ed Meskys's *Niekas* (1962-1998; 1967 Hugo winner), died on 8 February aged 57. [EM]
- *Peter Halliday* (1924-2012), UK actor whose best-known star role was as Dr John Fleming in the BBC sf serials *A for Andromeda* (1961) and *The Andromeda Breakthrough* (1962), died in February; he was 87. [MPJ]
- *Bill Hinzman* (1936-2012), US cinematographer and actor who was the 'number one zombie' in *Night of the Living Dead* (1968), died on 5 February aged 75. Further zombie roles included the title part in *FleshEater* (1988, aka *Zombie Nosh*), which he directed. [MPJ]
- *Zalman King* (1942-2012), US director and screenwriter whose early genre credits as actor include *Blue Sunshine* (1978) and *Galaxy of Terror* (1981), died ON 3 February; he was 69. [SG]
- *Elyse Knox* (1917-2012), US actress best known for her starring role in *The Mummy's Tomb* (1942), died on 16 February aged 94. [SFS]
- *Sir Simon Marsden* (1948-2012), UK photographer specializing in ruins, graveyards and general eeriness, died on 22 January aged 63. His books include the Poe selection *Visions of Poe* (1988), the supernatural fiction anthology *The Twilight Hour* (2003) and *Vampires: The Twilight World* (2011). (*Telegraph*, 7 February)
- *Christoffer Schander* (1960-2012), leading 1980s Swedish fan who organized conventions and published the highly regarded genzine *Procul Este Profani*, died on 20 February; he was 51. [J-HH]
- *Mike White*, UK comics artist best known for *Roy of the Rovers*, died on 28

or 29 January. Genre work included the dystopian *Kids Rule OK for Action* (scripted by Jack Adrian) and various 2000 AD 'Future Shocks' and 'Time Twisters' features (many, among them the Abelard Snazz tales, scripted by Alan Moore). [GW]

Department of Strange Bedfellows. 'Harry Potter and Viagra have more in common than you may imagine. They came to market within a year of each other in the late 1990s; they enjoyed enormous success; and what was a boon for the companies that sold them could turn into a bane as their popularity fades and rivals emerge.' (Andrew Hill, *Financial Times*, 7 February) [MMW]

Nebula Shortlist. NOVEL Jo Walton, *Among Others*; China Miéville, *Embassytown*; Jack McDevitt, *Firebird*; Kameron Hurley, *God's War*; Genevieve Valentine, *Mechanique*; N.K. Jemisin, *The Kingdom of Gods*.

• NOVELLA Mary Robinette Kowal, 'Kiss Me Twice' (*Asimov's* 6/11); Catherynne M. Valente, 'Silently and Very Fast' (*Clarkesworld* 10/11); Carolyn Ives Gilman, 'The Ice Owl' (*F&SF* 11/11); Kij Johnson, 'The Man Who Bridged the Mist' (*Asimov's* 10/11); Ken Liu, 'The Man Who Ended History: A Documentary' (*Panverse Three*); Adam-Troy Castro, 'With Unclean Hands' (*Analog* 11/11).

• NOVELETTE Rachel Swirsky, 'Fields of Gold' (*Eclipse* 4); Brad R. Torgersen, 'Ray of Light' (*Analog* 12/11); Ferrett Steinmetz, 'Sauerkraut Station' (*Gigantosaurus* 11/11); Charlie Jane Anders, 'Six Months, Three Days' (Tor.com, 6/11); Katherine Sparrow, 'The Migratory Pattern of Dancers' (*Gigantosaurus* 7/11); Jake Kerr, 'The Old Equations' (*Lightspeed* 7/11); Geoff Ryman, 'What We Found' (*F&SF* 9/11). SHORT STORY Adam-Troy Castro, 'Her Husband's Hands' (*Lightspeed* 10/11); Tom Crosshill, 'Mama, We are Zhenya, Your Son' (*Lightspeed* 4/11); Nancy Fulda, 'Movement' (*Asimov's* 3/11); Aliette de Bodard, 'Shipbirth' (*Asimov's* 2/11); David W. Goldman, 'The Axiom of Choice' (*New Haven Review*, Winter 2011); E. Lily Yu, 'The Cartographer Wasps and the Anarchist Bees' (*Clarkesworld Magazine* 4/11); Ken Liu, 'The Paper Menagerie' (*F&SF* 3/11).

• DRAMATIC *Attack the Block*; *Captain America: The First Avenger*; *Doctor Who*: 'The Doctor's Wife'; *Hugo*; *Midnight in Paris*; *Source Code*; *The Adjustment Bureau*.

• ANDRE NORTON (YA) Nnedi Okorafor, *Akata Witch*; Franny Billingsley,

Chime; Laini Taylor, *Daughter of Smoke and Bone*; A.S. King, *Everybody Sees the Ants*; Greg van Eekhout, *The Boy at the End of the World*; Delia Sherman, *The Freedom Maze*; Rae Carson, *The Girl of Fire and Thorns*; R.J. Anderson, *Ultraviolet*.

As Others Classify Us. *Parade* magazine's 'Parade Picks' for 20 January include Daniel O'Malley's novel *The Rook*: 'The heroine, an operative at a U.K. agency that fights supernatural threats, must determine which snarky coworker is trying to off her. Utterly uncategorizable, yet fantastically fun.' Which publisher will be first to invent a category name for such work? Fantasy Urban, they might call it. [PL]

Random Fandom. *British Fantasy Society Awards*: reform details announced. BFS members having failed to vote right in 2011, winners will now be decided by a five-person jury, based on member nominations. 'The jury shall also have powers to add nominations where it identifies an egregious omission.'

- *John-Henri Holmberg* reports that the late Arne Sjögren (see [A295](#)) left SEK300,000 (~£29,000) to Cosmos – his old Gothenburg sf fan club – to reward promoters of the club and/or Swedish sf in general.
- *Doreen Rogers* (née Parker) spent December in hospital after breaking her arm and then – while in hospital – her hip, but returned home 'with a lot of extra care' in January. [SH]
- *Andrew Wells* saw an eBay listing for that essential designer product, a 'Girls Animal Ansible T-Shirt – Purple Heather'. Sadly, it's been sold....

The Dead Past. *30 Years Ago*, John Sladek attempted naked self-promotion: 'The second volume of *Roderick* is now called *Roderick at Random*; I'm hoping to sell a few copies to any Smollett scholars who happen to be buying books in a hurry.' (*Ansible* 24, March 1982)

- *Voice of Prophecy*, 1970: '... I must conclude that the staff of *New Worlds* is a very pessimistic lot. By their thinking, if the human race makes it to the 1980s, we'll be reduced to "totally subservient, humanized robots," obsessed with our materialism and subject to madness upon seeing the vastness of the universe. The lucky ones will be transformed into sex freaks with Dr. Ballard drooling over our deformed bodies.' (Tony Isabella, *Fantastic Fanzine* 12, 1970) [TM]

- *40 Years Ago*, *Checkpoint* was not afraid to report the Tolkien Society AGM in full statistical detail: 'The Society has about 90 members out of 200

known Tolkien fans in Britain.’ ([Checkpoint 16](#), March 1972)

More Award Shortlists. *Libertarian Futurist Hall of Fame*: Lois McMaster Bujold, *Falling Free* (1988); Harlan Ellison, “‘Repent, Harlequin!’ Said the Ticktockman’ (1965); E.M. Forster, *The Machine Stops* (1909); Rudyard Kipling, ‘As Easy as A.B.C.’ (1912).

- *Bram Stoker* (horror, selected categories): NOVEL Christopher Conlon, *A Matrix Of Angels*; Greg Lamberson, *Cosmic Forces*; Ronald Malfi, *Floating Staircase*; Joe McKinney, *Flesh Eaters*; Gene O’Neill, *Not Fade Away*; Lee Thomas, *The German*. SCREENPLAY *The Adjustment Bureau*; *American Horror Story*: ‘Afterbirth’; *Priest*; *True Blood*: ‘Spellbound’; *The Walking Dead*: ‘Pretty Much Dead Already’; *The Walking Dead*: ‘Save the Last One’.
- Further categories online at www.horror.org/blog/?p=2331.
- *Clarke Award*: the full 2012 submissions list (not a shortlist nor even a longlist) can be read at <http://tinyurl.com/6m3vhl>, giving omitted authors the opportunity to ring their publishers and cry ‘Bastards!’

As Others Subdivide Us. ‘I regard romantic comedies as a subgenre of sci-fi, in which the world operates according to different rules than my regular human world. For me, there is no difference between Ripley from “Alien” and any Katherine Heigl character. They are equally implausible. They’re all participating in a similar level of fakey razzle-dazzle, and I enjoy every second of it. / It makes sense, then, that in the romantic comedy world there are many specimens of women who – like Vulcans or Mothra – do not exist in real life.’ (Mindy Kaling, ‘Flick Chicks: A Guide to Women in the Movies’, *New Yorker*, 3 October) [PL]

Editorial. Many thanks for various cards and good wishes following last issue’s announcement of my affliction with the Evil Eye (detached retina; successful operation). I’m seeing better now, but still feel tired.

We Are Everywhere. Roger Protz on the sf horror of excess yeast fermentation at the Eldredge Pope brewery: ‘The head was enormous, threatening to over-run the container like some terrible extra-terrestrial beast from a John Wyndham novel.’ (*A Life on the Hop*, 2009) [MMW]

Media Awards. Four of the audience-voted Whatsonstage.com awards went to the Roald Dahl adaptation *Matilda the Musical*; Danny Boyle won best director for *Frankenstein*. ([BBC](#), 20 February) [MPJ]

- Thog's Masterclass.** *Socratic Dept.* 'The question hung there like an invisible cloud of flatulence.' (Neal Stephenson, *Reamde*, 2011) [PM]
- *Dept of Nautical Detail.* 'Stan and Olivia ate noodles together and then proceeded by taxi to Sembawang Wharves, where Olivia boarded an American destroyer in a long raincoat with the hood up while carrying a large umbrella.' (*Ibid*)
 - *Dept of Sudden Insight.* '... and saw that the entire train of thought concerning menstrual blood had been a dangerous exercise in self-absorption.' (*Ibid*)
 - *Watchslug Dept.* 'The iron door at the top stood unbolted and ajar, and across its threshold John lay unconscious, scavenger-slugs already sniffing enquiringly at his face and hands.' (Barbara Hambly, *Dragonsbane*, 1986) [SM]
 - *Master of Concealment Dept.* 'Gill Templar could not find Rebus. He had disappeared as though he had been a shadow merely and not a man at all. ... He might have been hiding under her feet, under her desk, in her clothes, and she would never have found him.' (Ian Rankin, *Knots & Crosses*, 1987) [SB]
-

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 9 March 2012: Christopher Priest talks to the Brum Group; Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre, 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk or rog.peyton at btinternet com. Further meetings: 13 April tba; 11 May tba; 8 June Graham Joyce.

Thog's Second Helping. *Deep Throat Dept.* 'The rapid-fire blasters huzzaed into automatic firing positions and let go with a hum and a deep-throated ping.' (A.E. van Vogt, 'The Rull', *Astounding*, May 1948) [MK]

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1 March 2012.



Ansible 297, April 2012

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Web news.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Art: *SF Encyclopedia* by Piet Mondrian. Available for SAE or simulated griamobots.

That Share of Glory

Phil Davis, the actor, gave sf a plug on BBC2's *My Life in Books* (6 March) by praising *The Sirens of Titan*, but nervously added 'It's not really science fiction, it's satire.' [RS] Asked whether he'd read any other Vonnegut novels, he confidently cited *Cat's Cradle* and *Fahrenheit 451*.

Carl Frederick, a 2002 finalist and 2003 winner in the L. Ron Hubbard Writers of the Future competition, [decided to sever all links with WotF](#) following a 12 March [Village Voice exposé](#) arguing that the supposed 'firewall' between competition organizers and the darker side of Scientology is distinctly leaky. Much online comment ensued. [JW]

Simon Ings, now editing the digital magazine *Arc*, had a write-up in the *Independent*: 'Science fiction starts to get a bad reputation when it stops being a source of play and starts to take itself seriously as a force in the real world, says Ings. "If you don't take it seriously then it can be useful, because you're freeing up your imagination and churning through ideas of what the future might be like. The moment you take it seriously is the moment you stop having ideas."' (23 March) [MPJ]

Chris Priest was mightily gobsmacked to learn he was the hidden theme of the *Independent*'s 2 March [cryptic crossword](#), by veteran setter 'Phi'. Besides Christopher and Priest, answers included Affirmation, Extremes, Glamour, Islander, Prestige, Scintilla and Separation. [PD]

J.K. Rowling is still news even for not being news: [Telegraph coverage](#) of the latest Forbes billionaires' list was headlined 'JK Rowling fortune under vanishing spell' to mark her absence owing to charitable donations and the

UK's 'heavy taxation burden'. (7 March) [MPJ]

Norman Spinrad's unproduced 1967 *Star Trek* script 'He Walked Among Us' was to appear at last in the fan-created online series *Star Trek New Voyages: Phase II* – until CBS, which owns the rights, issued a cease-and-desist order. There was, strangely, no such objection when David Gerrold's unused 1987 *Star Trek: The Next Generation* script 'Blood and Fire' appeared in that same series in 2007; but Spinrad told *File 770*, 'Not so mystifying when you consider that "Blood and Fire" was done well before J.J. Abrams came on the scene.' Our author was also told to stop selling copies of his script through online bookshops. ([New York Times](#), 29 March) *Star Trek* fans are not happy. So it goes.

Andrew Stanton, talking on Radio 5 Live, said the reason for Disney's title change of his Barsoom film *John Carter of Mars* to just *John Carter* was that 'audiences don't like science fiction.' [MPJ] Perhaps in some parallel world where *Avatar* flopped ... A more plausible story is that Disney lost serious money on the 2011 *Mars Needs Moms* and decided with arcane logic that 'Mars' in the title had to be the problem.

Bram Stoker's original 1897 contract for *Dracula*, drafted and handwritten by the author himself, is to be published for the first time in a new edition of the novel. Using arcane mental powers, Stoker had negotiated a princely 20% royalty deal. ([Independent](#), 25 March) [MPJ]

Connandscape

Until 27 May • **'It's Life Jimmy, but Not As We Know It'**: SF in Scotland (exhibition), National Library of Scotland, George IV Bridge, Edinburgh, EH1 1EW. Free. 10am-8pm; to 5pm Sat; 2-5pm Sun.

6-9 Apr • **Olympus 2012** (Eastercon), Radisson Edwardian Hotel, Heathrow, London. *Advance booking has closed. The convention is full and no memberships will be available at the door. No transfers of existing memberships after noon BST on 3 April.* Contact 4 Evesham Green, Aylesbury, Bucks, HP19 9RX, or enquiries at olympus2012 dot org.

13-15 Apr • **The Hub 8** (*Torchwood*), Park Inn, Northampton. Tickets from £78 to £195. See massiveevents.co.uk/hub8.

21 Apr • **Bradford After Dark** (film), Cineworld, Bradford: all-day showing in horror strand of Bradford Film Festival, 19-29 April. More at www.bradfordfilmfestival.org.uk; tickets www.cineworld.co.uk.

22 Apr • **Diana Wynne Jones Celebration** (informal and non-religious), St George's, Brandon Hill, Bristol. 2pm for 2:30. Family members and close friends will share their memories of Diana. All are welcome. For full travel details, see calcifer.co.uk.

25 Apr • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Melton Mowbray (new venue), 18 Holborn, London, EC1N 2LE. 6pm for 7pm. With Sharyn November.

26-29 Apr • **Kontakt** (SFeraKon/Eurocon), Zagreb, Croatia. *Advance booking now closed*. At the door: €20 reg, €30 deluxe (includes a guided tour). Further details at zagreb-eurocon2012.com.

1-7 May • **Sci-Fi London** film festival at Apollo Piccadilly Circus, BFI Southbank, other London venues. See www.sci-fi-london.com.

2 May • **Clarke Award** at Sci-Fi London. By invitation.

14 Jul • **Edge-Lit** sf/fantasy horror day, QUAD art centre, Derby, DE1 3AS. 10am-midnight. £25 reg. Box office 01332 290 606.

30 Aug - 3 Sep • **Chicon 7** (70th Worldcon), Hyatt Regency, Chicago. *Now \$195 reg; \$540 family; \$100 YA (17-21); \$75 child (5-16); under-5s free*. Contact PO Box 13, Skokie, IL 60076, USA.

22-29 Sep • **Milford UK** (writers' workshop), Trigonos, Snowdonia. £560 inc room and meals; £115 deposit required; published writers only. Contact c/o 40 Westhay Rd, Meare, Glastonbury, BA6 9TL.

3-4 Mar 2013 • **P-Con X**, Irish Writers' Centre, Parnell Square, Dublin 1. GoH Cory Doctorow, Sarah Pinborough. €20 reg (may rise later); payment via PayPal or at the door. See www.pcon.ie.

Rumblings • A Chicon press release announces that no 2014 Worldcon bidders other than London filed paperwork by the 2 March deadline. London in 2014 is unopposed and doomed to succeed! The Hugo shortlist will be announced on 7 April, during Eastercon.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Race. There was [a storm in a twittercup](#) as watchers of *The Hunger Games* tweeted bitterly that characters described in the novel as ‘dark brown’ or with ‘dark skin’ are shockingly portrayed in the film by black actors. One twit felt this ‘kinda ruined the movie’; another asked ‘why did the producer make all the good characters black’. [PD]

Awards. *Arthur C. Clarke Award* shortlist: Greg Bear, *Hull Zero Three*; Drew Magary, *The End Specialist*; China Miéville, *Embassytown*; Jane Rogers, *The Testament of Jessie Lamb*; Charles Stross, *Rule 34*; Sheri S.Tepper, *The Waters Rising*. Carrying on the great Clarke tradition of grumbling, Chris Priest posted [an online denunciation](#) of the judges and (almost) the entire shortlist; others sniped back, and [a fine cranky time was had by all](#); Charles Stross enshrined his description ‘internet puppy’ in t-shirt form.

- *James Tiptree Jr:* Andrea Hairston, *Redwood and Wildfire*.
- *Lambda (LGBT) shortlist:* Lee Thomas, *The German*; Geoff Ryman, *Paradise Tales: and Other Stories*; L.A. Witt, *Static*; JoSelle Vanderhooft, ed., *Steam-Powered: Lesbian Steampunk Stories*; J.M. Frey, *Triptych*.
- *SFWA Solstice Award:* Octavia Butler (posthumously), John Clute.
- *Service to SFWA:* Bud Webster.

Publishers & Sinners. Penguin UK is reviving the glorious tradition of Penguin SF with a new imprint called, actually, Berkley UK.

Sky at Night Masterclass. *Anne Robinson:* ‘In astronomy, a nucleus, a coma and a tail are all parts of which celestial body?’ *Contestant:* ‘A horse.’ (BBC1, *The Weakest Link*, now mercifully cancelled.) [PI]

R.I.P. M.A.R. Barker (Prof. Muhammad Abd-al-Rahman Barker, 1929-2012), creator of the science-fantasy world [Tékumel](#) as a setting for *Empire of the Petal Throne* (1975) and related role-playing games, died on 16 March aged 83. [AW] Tékumel outdoes even Tolkien’s Middle-earth for its density of historical, cultural and linguistic detail; besides ‘nonfiction’ treatises on the world, Barker also set five novels there, beginning with *The Man of Gold* (1984).

- *Peter Bergman* (1939-2012), US writer and member of the surreal comedy group The Firesign Theatre, died on 9 March aged 72. Firesign humour was often sf-themed: their albums *Don’t Crush That Dwarf*, *Hand Me the Pliers* and *I Think We’re All Bozos on This Bus* were Dramatic Presentation Hugo

nominees in 1971 and 1972 respectively. [BH]

- [Christine Brooke-Rose](#) (1923-2012), Swiss-born UK novelist and academic critic whose linguistically inventive fiction includes such sf novels as *Xorandor* (1986) and *Verbivore* (1990), died on 21 March at the age of 89.
- *Bruce Cornwell*, one of the original *Dan Dare* artists in Frank Hampson's *Eagle* comic team – specializing in hardware and spaceships – died on 2 March. [GW]
- *Robert Fuest* (1927-2012), UK director of various *Avengers* and *New Avengers* episodes, *The Abominable Dr. Phibes* (1971; also 1972 sequel), *The Final Programme* (1973), *The Devil's Rain* (1975) and *Revenge of the Stepford Wives* (1980), died on 21 March aged 84. [SFS]
- [Gene DeWeese](#) (1934-2012), US fan and author who began publishing with the *Man from U.N.C.L.E.* spinoff *The Invisibility Affair* (1967, with Robert Coulson) as by Thomas Stratton and contributed novels to the *Star Trek*, *Dinotopia* and other universes, died on 19 March; he was 78. [ML] With Coulson he wrote the light-hearted recursive sf romps *Now You See It/Him/Them* (1975) and *Charles Fort Never Mentioned Wombats* (1977).
- [Jean Giraud](#) (1938-2012), highly prolific and influential French comics artist who cofounded the seminal magazine *Métal Hurlant* in 1975, died on 10 March aged 73. [GW] Much of his sf work appeared as by Moebius. Genre films using his design concepts include *Alien*, *Tron*, *The Abyss* and *The Fifth Element*. He was commissioned to draw a 1988 French postage stamp in honour of himself, and was inducted into the SF Hall of Fame in 2011.
- *Paul Haines* (1970-2012), New Zealand-born horror and sf author (in Australia from the 1990s) who won several Ditmar and Aurealis awards for his fiction, died on 5 March; he was 41. [PDF]
- *Elyse Knox Harmon* (1917-2012), US actress fondly remembered for screaming, fainting and being carried off by a heavily bandaged Lon Chaney in *The Mummy's Tomb* (1942), died on 16 February; she was 94. [MPJ]
- *Sheldon Moldoff* (1920-2012), US comics artist whose work appeared in the 1938 *Action Comics* #1 (which introduced Superman) and whose cover art included the 1940 comics with the debuts of Flash and Green Lantern, died on 29 February aged 91. [PDF]
- *Noboru Ishiguro* (1938-2012), Japanese anime director best known for the long-running tv and film anime series *Space Cruiser Yamato*, died on 21 March. He also co-authored a 1980 history of Japanese animation. [JC]

- *Hans Kneifel* (1936-2012), German sf author who published his first novel in 1956, wrote over 80 Perry Rhodan books and scores more for other shared-world franchises, and returned to standalone work from the 1990s, died on 7 March aged 75. [J-HH]
- *Ralph McQuarrie* (1929-2012), US designer and illustrator whose conceptual designs helped define the look of the original *Star Wars* trilogy, the original *Battlestar Galactica*, *E.T.* and *Cocoon* (for which he won a visual-effects Oscar), died on 3 March. He was 82. [AIP]
- *Philip Madoc* (1934-2012), Welsh actor who appeared in *Doctor Who* (several times), the *Space: 1999* pilot, *Survivors* and *UFO*, died on 5 March aged 77. [AW]
- *Don Markstein* (1947-2012), US fan, co-founder in 1981 of the Apatoons animation APA, author of books about comics and creator of the encyclopedic Toonopedia site www.toonopedia.com, died after a long illness on 10 March. He was 64. [GHL]
- [Peter Phillips](#) (1920-2012), UK author of 21 distinctive short sf stories published 1948-1957, died on 28 March; he was 92. He is best remembered for 'Dreams Are Sacred' (1948 *Astounding*), adapted for the BBC's *Out of the Unknown* sf anthology series as 'Get Off My Cloud' (1969). [MA]
- *Robert B Sherman* (1925), US lyricist who with his brother Richard wrote the songs for various genre films including *Mary Poppins*, *The Jungle Book*, *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* and *Bedknobs and Broomsticks*, died on 5 March aged 86. [MPJ]
- *Warren Stevens* (1919-2012), US character actor who played Doc Ostrow in *Forbidden Planet* (1956) and appeared in various tv sf serials, died on 27 March aged 92. [PDF]

Cautionary Tales. The March/April *Accounting Technician* explains what not to say in an interview when asked about one's interests outside work. 'BAD – My partner and I like dressing up as Doctor Who villains and socializing with fellow sci-fi fans in full costume. GOOD – I like to spend time with my partner attending cultural events.' [IS]

Court Circular. The Southampton theme pub The Hobbit (so called for twenty years) became the latest target of the Saul Zaentz Company, owners of Tolkien-related trademarks. After very public complaints about this 'bullying' from Stephen Fry and Ian 'Fly, you fools!' McKellen, the SZC cease-and-desist order was followed by a friendlier offer from producer Paul

Zaentz: ‘When it’s an established business, we like to get the company to acknowledge they are using our trademarks, stop selling infringing articles and then we will grant them a licence for a nominal fee – approximately \$100 a year.’ ([BBC, 13 & 15 March](#); [Yahoo, 16 March](#))

Outraged Letters. *Ross Fletcher*: ‘Please may I nominate the following lyrics from “The A Team” (Ed Sheeran, +, 2011) for inclusion in the Sinking Faces and Screaming Pastry departments of Thog’s Masterclass? “Her face seems / Slowly sinking, wasting / Crumbling like pastries / And they scream / “The worst things in life come free to us””’

- *Yvonne Rousseau* on literary antecedents: ‘I was surprised to notice that in Georgette Heyer’s *The Foundling* (1948) there is a schoolmaster named Snape. Unlike the Snape of Hogwarts, he is acting as a private tutor to 15-year-old Tom Mamble. From Tom’s account (after Snape has been reading aloud about medieval history when on holiday and Tom has therefore hit Snape on the head and run away), the Duke of Sale judges Snape to be “a joyless individual”. Tom confides that Snape “is the greatest beast in nature, and I hate him.” Once encountered, Snape excites the Duke’s contempt: “Yes, I had thought from what Tom told me that you were a shabby, mean sort of a fellow.”’

- *Kip Williams* on an [A296](#) death notice: ‘Genre credits for Lou Cameron in comics are impressive. For *Classics Illustrated*, he drew very strong adaptations of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, “The Bottle Imp”, *The War of the Worlds* and *The Time Machine*. I like to think Cameron was responsible for the visual barb in a panel where The Time Traveler is moving across eras into the future, thinking “What wonderful progress mankind must be making!” The scene outside shows two men in gas masks struggling on a stark battlefield. / *The Count of Monte Cristo* is not in an SF genre, but I hate not to mention the fine job he did on it.’

As Others See Us. A.A. Gill knows our secret: ‘... people who don’t like or understand literature read science fiction.’ (*Paper View*, 2008)

Random Fandom. *Dave Lally* proposes a series of 6 ‘SF Linkcons’ as extra attractions for attendees of the expected 2014 London Worldcon (14-18 August) and Dublin Eurocon (22-25 August). Current plans: 12 Aug, Woking and H.G. Wells territory; 13 Aug, London Elstree studios; 20-21 Aug Portmeirion; 27-28 Aug, Irish C.S. Lewis sites; 28-29 Aug, Scots *Wicker Man* locations; 29 Aug, London ‘TunCon’ for 40th anniversary of One Tun

pub meetings, *not* at the Tun but at the Melton Mowbray or (if meetings move) the latest First Thursday venue.

Magazine Scene. Brit Mandelo is now Fiction Editor at *Strange Horizons*; additional short-fiction editors are still sought.

The Dead Past. *50 Years Ago*, the secrets of the 1962 Eastercon in Peterborough were revealed: ‘With several bills still to pay there is a small profit, but we are anticipating an unexpected bill from one hotel. Actual attendance, notwithstanding gatecrashers from the nobility and elsewhere, was 94 out of a 105 membership.’ ([Skyrack 42](#), April 1962)

The Governance of Britain. What do they do all day in the House of Commons? Edit Wikipedia, it seems. Genre-flavoured edits traced to Commons IP addresses include changing ‘Dalek’ to ‘Darlek’ and then back again, fiddling with Harry Potter-related entries, and improving *Lord of the Rings* film coverage with the description ‘12 hours of utter tripe about some little bender running around trying to find a ring with his equally bendersish mates.’ ([Independent](#), 9 March) [MPJ]

In Typo Veritas. From *Slate* magazine’s corrections list: ‘... Torie Bosch misspelled the science fiction award won by writer Bruce Sterling. It is of course the Hugo Award, not the Huge Award.’ [CM] Roy Kettle used to call sf’s two major awards the Huge and Knobbly.

We Are Everywhere. The economist W. Brian Arthur conveys the flavour of the annual World Economic Forum in Davos: ‘It’s as if we woke up and discovered we were now in a different world. It’s like that bit in *Lord of the Rings*, where they are underground, and they hear the distant rumblings of the Balrog. Here there are rumblings of dissatisfaction, but only rumblings.’ (*New Yorker*, 5 March) [MMW] The Saul Zaentz Company lawyers’ stern instruction to cease and desist from unauthorized use of the term Balrog® is no doubt in the post.

Empire Awards (cinema). Best film, overall: *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows – Part 2*. Director: David Yates (*HP&DH2*). SF: *Thor*. Art of 3D: *The Adventures of Tintin: The Secret of the Unicorn*. [MPJ]

Thog’s Masterclass. *Not Just Physical Dept.* ‘They knew that the loins of this dark girl beside me were a trap that had closed on my soul.’ (John D. McDonald, *Weep for Me*, 1951) [BT]

- *Dept of Melodious Twangs*. ‘The silence between them was as audible as the twang of an overstrained rope.’ (Barbara Hambly, *The Ladies of Mandrigyn*, 1984) [KAM]
 - *Future Baseball Dept*. ‘The game was tied, the Yanks one out shy of a win.’ (Chris Moriarty, *Spin State*, 2003; Thog not understand this one.) [AL]
 - *Dept of Sonic Weaponry*. ‘He froze as a man’s wail sounded from the zoo level. The sound visibly cut through every person below.’ (Kim Lakin-Smith, *Cyber Circus*, 2011) [DL]
 - *Nicholson Baker Memorial Euphemism Dept*. ‘I had too much altar boy in me to seize the bitch goddess of success by her ponytail and bugger the Zeitgeist with my throbbing baguette.’ (James Walcott, *Lucking Out*, 2011) [MMW]
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Endnotes

Apparitions.

• 13 April 2012: Bob Blackham on Tolkien at the Brum Group; Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre, 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk or rog.peyton at btinternet com. Further meetings: 11 May tba; 8 June Graham Joyce; 13 July tba; 10 August Summer Social meal at the Black Eagle pub.

April Foolery. The usual genre-related japes appeared online yesterday. For *Ansible*’s hasty roundup, see the first link below. The second goes to Lawrence Person’s development (at *Locus*) of the venerable Talking Squid in Outer Space theme: namedropping will get you anywhere.

<http://news.ansible.co.uk/misc/oldlink12.html#fools>

<http://tinyurl.com/loquacious-cephalopod>

Outraged Letters II. *Bob Ham*: ‘I must say I’m quite dismayed by your inclusion of the QED science/sceptic conference in the conference list in [A296](#). As a science-educated fan and a spiritual person, I see the sceptic/neo-atheist bunch as being quite opposed to genre work. Rigid defence of the scientific status quo seems at odds with speculative exploration of the possible. In my humble opinion, a meeting of those who would scoff at Arthur C. Clarke’s *Childhood’s End* has no place in a list of SF conferences.’ Do readers agree?

Thog's Second Helping. *Eyeballs in the Shattered Congealed Opaque Impenetrable Barrier Dept.* ‘The doctor slid his cold blue eyes to Sherwood, and the two men studied each other for a long, decisive moment, a division in time that suddenly congealed into an opaque, impenetrable barrier which the doctor shattered by saying, “What do you expect to gain by this intrusion, Dr. Sherwood?”’ (Jerry Sohl, *The Time Dissolver*, 1957) [BA]

Ansible 297 Copyright © David Langford, 2012. Thanks to Brian Ameringen, Mike Ashley, Jonathan Clements, Paul Di Filippo, Paul Dormer, Bill Higgins, John-Henri Holmberg, Martyn P. Jackson, Duncan Lawie, Guy H. Lillian III, Andy Love, Mike Lowrey, Klaus Æ. Mogensen, Cheryl Morgan, Andrew I. Porter, Private Eye, Ian Sewell, SF Site, Richard Simms, Bob Toomey, Andrew Wells, Gary Wilkinson, Martin Morse Wooster, James Worrada and our Hero Distributors: Dave Corby (BSFG), SCIS/Prophecy, Alan Stewart (Australia). 2 April 2012.

Ansible 298, May 2012

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Web news.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE, Whuffie, or an oyster shell inside a skull.

Olympus 2012. It was a big Eastercon. With 1400 members crowding the Heathrow Radisson hotel's fire limit, advance registration closed early and there were no at-door memberships – an Eastercon first. [The Guardian report](#) (9 April, with a photo of GoH George R.R. Martin looking cuddly) was summed up thus at Making Light: 'Iron law of universe violated – SF convention receives positive, level-headed coverage from local press'. Everyone, and especially GRRM himself, was photographed on his Iron Throne – conveniently placed in the hotel lobby.

Future Eastercons. GoH Paul Cornell's [call for panel gender parity](#) ('If I'm on, at any convention this year, a panel that doesn't have a 50/50 gender split (I'll settle for two out of five), I'll hop off that panel, and find a woman to take my place.') was hotly debated at Olympus and especially in Eastercon bidding, despite a lack of opposing bids. [EightSquaredCon](#) (Bradford 2013) went for a gender parity policy; [Satellite 4](#) (Glasgow 2014) wanted the best panellists irrespective of gender; controversy happened; both bids were voted in. Details below.

Namedrops. Also seen doing things highly characteristic of themselves were GOHs Cory Doctorow, Tricia Sullivan, Margaret Austin and Martin Easterbrook, plus Jacq Monahan ([TAFF](#)) and Kylie Ding (GUFF).

BSFA Awards. This presentation also included the James White Award for an unpublished short – being Colum Paget's 'Invocation of the Lurker' – and MC John Meaney's 40-minute attempt on the Audience Endurance Marathon, channelling (as Marion Pitman put it) his inner Bernard Manning to a [silently tweeted chorus](#) of 'hideous trainwreck', 'Walkout now in progress', etc. [[More here.](#)] NOVEL Christopher Priest, *The Islanders*. Priest to audience of voters: 'I suppose you all have to resign now.' SHORT Paul

Cornell, 'The Copenhagen Interpretation'. ARTWORK Dominic Harman. NONFICTION John Clute, David Langford, Peter Nicholls and Graham Sleight, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Science Fiction, Third Edition*. (Peter being in far-off Melbourne and John in abyssal Camden Town, the remaining chief editors were left to grab the glory.) Another first: [the BSFA Award](#) has never before taken the form of a cut-out plastic ray-gun on a base made from old sf paperbacks bolted together.

The Hugo Shortlist was announced on Saturday night; a record 1101 ballots had been cast.

- NOVEL (932 ballots) Jo Walton, *Among Others*; George R.R. Martin, *A Dance With Dragons*; Mira Grant, *Deadline*; China Miéville, *Embassytown*; James S.A. Corey, *Leviathan Wakes*.
- NOVELLA (473) Mira Grant, *Countdown*; Carolyn Ives Gilman, 'The Ice Owl' (*F&SF* 11/11); Mary Robinette Kowal, 'Kiss Me Twice' (*Asimov's* 6/11); Kij Johnson, 'The Man Who Bridged the Mist' (*Asimov's* 9/11); Ken Liu, 'The Man Who Ended History: A Documentary' (*Panverse* 3); Catherynne M. Valente, *Silently and Very Fast* (*WSFA*).
- NOVELETTE (499) Paul Cornell, 'The Copenhagen Interpretation' (*Asimov's* 7/11); Rachel Swirsky, 'Fields of Gold' (*Eclipse Four*); Brad R. Torgersen, 'Ray of Light' (*Analog* 12/11); Charlie Jane Anders, 'Six Months, Three Days' (*Tor.com*); 'What We Found' by Geoff Ryman (*F&SF* 3/11).
- SHORT STORY (593) E. Lily Yu, 'The Cartographer Wasps and the Anarchist Bees' (*Clarkesworld* 4/11); Mike Resnick, 'The Homecoming' (*Asimov's* 4/11); Nancy Fulda, 'Movement' (*Asimov's* 3/11); Ken Liu, 'The Paper Menagerie' by (*F&SF* 3/11); John Scalzi, 'Shadow War of the Night Dragons: Book One: The Dead City: Prologue'.
- RELATED WORK (461) John Clute, David Langford, Peter Nicholls and Graham Sleight, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Science Fiction, Third Edition*; Daniel M. Kimmel, *Jar Jar Binks Must Die ... and Other Observations about Science Fiction Movies*; Jeff VanderMeer and S. J. Chambers, *The Steampunk Bible: An Illustrated Guide to the World of Imaginary Airships, Corsets and Goggles, Mad Scientists, and Strange Literature*; Seanan McGuire, *Wicked Girls*; Brandon Sanderson, Dan Wells, Howard Tayler, Mary Robinette Kowal and Jordan Sanderson, *Writing Excuses, Season 6*.
- GRAPHIC STORY (339) Ursula Vernon, *Digger*; Bill Willingham and Mark Buckingham, *Fables Vol 15: Rose Red*; Joe Hill and Gabriel Rodriguez, *Locke & Key Volume 4, Keys to the Kingdom*; Howard Tayler and Travis

Walton, *Schlock Mercenary: Force Multiplication*; Mike Carey and Peter Gross, *The Unwritten (Volume 4): Leviathan*.

- DRAMATIC – LONG (592) *Captain America: The First Avenger*, *Game of Thrones* (Season 1), *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part 2*, Hugo, *Source Code*.
 - DRAMATIC – SHORT (512) *Doctor Who*: ‘The Doctor’s Wife’; ‘*The Drink Tank*’s Hugo Acceptance Speech’; *Doctor Who*: ‘The Girl Who Waited’; *Doctor Who*: ‘A Good Man Goes to War’; *Community*: ‘Remedial Chaos Theory’.
 - SEMIPROZINE (357) *Apex Magazine*, *Interzone*, *Lightspeed*, *Locus*, *New York Review of Science Fiction*.
 - FANZINE (322) *Banana Wings*, *The Drink Tank*, *File 770*, *Journey Planet*, *SF Signal*.
 - FANCAST (326) *The Coode Street Podcast*, *Galactic Suburbia Podcast*, *SF Signal Podcast*, *SF Squeecast*, *StarShipSofa*.
 - PRO EDITOR – LONG (358) Lou Anders, Liz Gorinsky, Anne Lesley Groell, Patrick Nielsen Hayden, Betsy Wollheim.
 - PRO EDITOR – SHORT (512) John Joseph Adams, Neil Clarke, Stanley Schmidt, Jonathan Strahan, Sheila Williams.
 - PRO ARTIST (399) Dan dos Santos, Bob Eggleton, Michael Komarck, Stephan Martiniere, John Picacio.
 - FAN ARTIST (216) Brad W. Foster, Randall Munroe, Spring Schoenhuth, Maurine Starkey, Steve Stiles, Taral Wayne.
 - FAN WRITER (360) James Bacon, Claire Briailey, Christopher J Garcia, Jim C. Hines, Steven H Silver.
 - JOHN W. CAMPBELL AWARD (396) Mur Lafferty, Stina Leicht, Karen Lord, Brad R. Torgersen, E. Lily Yu.
 - Several palpitating nominees attended the Olympus announcement. Graham Sleight introduced himself to George R.R. Martin, ‘and he very benignly asked who I was. I said I was one of the editors of the *SF Encyclopedia*. He paused, cogitated, and then said: “But you don’t look like Peter Nicholls.”’
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The Inexorability of the Specious

Philip K. Dick reacts to a tv piece on *Blade Runner*: ‘This indeed is not science fiction; it is not fantasy; it is exactly what Harrison [Ford] said:

futurism.’ ([letter](#), 11 October 1981, now at www.philipkdick.com) [DB]

Malcolm Edwards was described as ‘deceptively vicar-like’ in a 20 April *Private Eye* squib about Orion’s timely ‘saucy stunt’ of reissuing George R.R. Martin’s 1983 thriller *The Armageddon Rag* with a design just slightly reminiscent of the UK HarperCollins *A Dance with Dragons*.

Iain Gray, the former Scots Labour leader who presided over his party’s humiliating defeat in Scotland’s last parliamentary election, confesses in *The Scotsman* that he loves Iain M. Banks but wasn’t then allowed to say so: ‘those around me felt that admitting to enjoying science fiction would be political suicide.’ ([Scotsman.com](#), 18 April) The triumph of the SNP’s Alex Salmond, a long-uncloseted *Star Trek* fan, suggests that honesty may have advantages even in politics. [DJH/ARe]

Rob Holdstock is remembered in the revamped [British Fantasy Awards rules](#). Best Novel has been split in two: the August Derleth Award for horror and the Robert Holdstock Award for fantasy. [RK]

Confind

Until 7 May • **Sci-Fi London** film festival at Apollo Piccadilly Circus, BFI Southbank, other London venues. See www.sci-fi-london.com.

4-6 May • **Star Wars: May the 4th Be With You**, Fullcircle Gallery, Leeds. £3; £2 concessions; films £5/£4. See tinyurl.com/6qspang.

12-13 May • **Bristol Comic Expo** – see www.bristolexpo.co.uk.

12-13 May • **The Greatest Show in the Galaxy** (media), Peterborough Arena. From £11/day to silly prices. See tinyurl.com/8ykqvzz.

CANCELLED: 18-20 May • **Discover Festival**, Snibston Discovery Museum, Coalville, Leicestershire. See www.discoverfestival.co.uk.

18-20 May • **Waltz on the Wye** (steampunk), Chepstow. £40 including ball, £25 without, £10 day. 3% booking fee at wyewaltz.org.

19-20 May • **Kapow!** (comics), Business Design Centre, Islington, London. Tickets £35 (‘VIP’ £175) or £20/day, in advance only from www.kapowcomiccon.com with a £1.50 booking fee.

19-20 May • **Middle-earth Weekend**, Sarehole Mill, Cole Bank Rd, Hall Green, Birmingham. Free. See middleearthweekend.org.uk.

23 May • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Melton Mowbray (new venue), 18 Holborn, London, EC1N 2LE. 6pm for 7pm. With C.J. Lines.

27-30 Sep • **Fantasycon 2012**, Brighton. £55 reg (BFS members £50) *until 31 May*. Payment via PayPal at fantasycon2012.org, or to 10 Haycroft Gardens, Mastin Moor, Chesterfield, Derbyshire, S43 3FE.

13-14 Oct • **Octocon**, Camden Court Hotel, Camden St, Dublin. GoH Liz Williams. €20 reg; students/under-18s/unwaged €20; supp €10; accompanied under-12s free. Contact: Apt 9, Parliament Bldg, 38-40 Parliament St, Dublin 22, Ireland; info at octocon dot com.

20 Oct • **BristolCon**, Ramada Hotel, Bristol. £15, *rising to £20 on 1 June*. Cheques to 18 High Leaze Road, Patchway, Bristol, BS34 5AF.

29 Mar - 1 Apr 2013 • **EightSquaredCon** (Eastercon), Cedar Court Hotel, Bradford. GoH Walter Jon Williams, Fred Warrington, Anne Sudworth, Edward James. £50 reg; £25 supp/junior (12-17); £10 child (5-11); £1 infant. Contact 19 Uphall Road, Cambridge, CB1 3HX.

18-21 Apr 2014 • **Satellite 4** (Eastercon), Crowne Plaza Hotel, Glasgow. GoH John Meaney, Juliet E. McKenna, Jim Burns, Alice & Steve Lawson, Terry Pratchett. £45 reg and £40 unwaged, *rising to £55 and £45 on 1 June*; £20 supp/junior (12-17); £5 child (5-11); £1 infant. Contact c/o Flat 2/1, 691 Shields Rd, Pollokshields, Glasgow, G41 4QL.

Rumblings • *Eurocon 2014*. Dublin won the bidding against Romania by a large margin: 22-24 August 2014 is Shamrokon, Burlington Hotel, Dublin. GoH (so far) Seanan McGuire, Jim Fitzpatrick. €25 reg, held to September 2012. Details to follow at www.shamrokon.ie.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See China. In a bookshop. *Customer* (pointing at *Perdido Street Station* by China Miéville): ‘Excuse me, how do you pronounce this writer’s name?’ *Bookseller*: ‘Well, I’ve heard people say Mee-ville, but I think because of the accent, it’s Me-eh-ville.’ *Customer*: ‘No, I mean his first

name.’ *Bookseller*: ‘Well, it’s China – like the country.’ *Customer*: ‘The country?’ (Jen Campbell, [Financial Times](#), 7 April) [RD]

More Awards. *Philip K. Dick*: Simon Morden, the Samuil Petrovitch trilogy (*Equations of Life* etc). [GVG]

- *European SF Awards* include ... Website: [Concatenation.org](#). Magazine: *Galaxies*. Promoter: *The Encyclopedia of SF, Third Edition*. Author: Ian McDonald. Grand Master: Brian Aldiss. [CM]
- *Pilgrim Award* for sf studies: Pamela Sargent.
- *SF Hall of Fame*: Joe Haldeman, James Tiptree Jr., James Cameron and Virgil Finlay.
- *Prometheus* (libertarian) finalists: Vernor Vinge, *The Children of the Sky*; Delia Sherman, *The Freedom Maze*; Thomas L. James and Carl C. Carlsson, *In the Shadow of Ares*; Ernest Cline, *Ready Player One*; Ken MacLeod, *The Restoration Game*; Terry Pratchett, *Snuff*.
- *FAAn Awards* (fan activity). Website: [efanzines.com](#). Letterhack: Robert Lichtman. Per[sonal]zine: *A Meara for Observers*. Single Issue or Anthology: *Alternative Pants*. Artist: Steve Stiles. Writer: Mark Plummer. Genzine or Collaboration: *Banana Wings*. #1 Fan Face: Mark Plummer.
- *Shirley Jackson Awards* (suspense/horror) novel shortlist: Michael Cisco, *The Great Lover*; Glen Duncan, *The Last Werewolf*; Sheri Holman, *Witch on the Road Tonight*; S.P. Miskowski, *Knock Knock*; Reggie Oliver, *The Dracula Papers*; Donald Ray Pollock, *The Devil All the Time*.

Publishers & Sinners. Tom Doherty Associates [announced on 24 April](#) that by early July, ebooks from all its imprints (Tor, Forge, Orb etc) would be free of annoying DRM protection. Tor UK followed suit next day. This, Baen Books smirked, has been Baen policy for over ten years.

As Others See Us. The real problem with *John Carter*: ‘I wouldn’t trust the sanity of any critic who claimed to understand what goes on in this movie. I should add, though, that I haven’t any idea of how Burroughs’s gibberish should have been adapted. The Therns, the Tharks, Dejah Thoris? You can’t speak the names aloud without sounding like Daffy Duck.’ (David Denby, *New Yorker*, 26 March) [MMW]

R.I.P. *Ray E. Beam* (1932-2012), long-time US fan and member of First Fandom who received the 1993 First Fandom Hall of Fame Award, died on 8 April aged 79. [SFS/SHS]

- *Ernest Callenbach* (1929-2012), author of the high-selling sf *Ecotopia* (1975) and related fiction and nonfiction urging sustainable development, died on 16 April; he was 83. [JC]
- *Jonathan Frid* (1924-2012), Canadian actor who played the vampire Barnabas Collins in the tv series *Dark Shadows* (1966-1971), died on 14 April; he was 87. [DL]
- *Richard Harter* (1935-2012), US fan, stalwart of the New England SF Association and publisher of the fanzine *Personal Notes*, died on 20 April. [CH]
- *Nick Webb* (1949-2012), UK editor and publisher who among many other achievements commissioned Douglas Adams's first *Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* novelization and (a quarter of a century later) wrote the official Adams biography *Wish You Were Here*, died on 10 April. He will be much missed. [CW]
- *K.D. (Kathy Diane) Wentworth* (1951-2012), US author whose first of several solo sf novels was *Moon Speaker* (1994), died on 18 April aged 61. [SFS/SHS] She also collaborated twice with Eric Flint.

As Others Research Us. 'Disney has admitted that John Carter, based on the books of Conan the Barbarian author Edgar Rice Burroughs, will end up as a \$200m (£126m) hole in its pocket.' (Kev Geoghegan, bbc.co.uk, 3 April; since amended to 'Tarzan author') [PB]

Court Circular. The Philip K. Dick estate's suit against Media Rights Capital regarding *Adjustment Bureau* fees (based on a dodgy-looking copyright claim; see [A292](#)) was dropped when a federal court judge 'dismissed key claims' but re-filed in state court, while MRC has a federal-court countersuit asking for a ruling that Dick's original story is indeed in the public domain. ([Hollywood Reporter](#), 24 April) [SHS]

Outraged Letters. *Richard E. Geis* has left the building: 'I've had cataract surgery on both eyes and new glasses but my ability to read is still marginal. So please stop sending *Ansible*. Thanks and all best ...'

- *Sam J Lundwall*: 'As of next month, my wife Ingrid Olofsdotter and I will be living in a home for the elderly founded 150 years ago. No forwarding address, but our daughter Karin Lundwall will be taking over our house with her husband, so messages can reach me through them (and I will hold on to my e-mail address). [...] I will continue doing esseff, not in writing, but in music. I have a solid background in music and am happily returning to it as a

composer. My eyes are failing, but music can still be handled.’ (17 April) A week later someone reported Sam’s death to the *SF Encyclopedia*, but he feels this rumour is exaggerated: ‘I am pleased to report I am not yet dead, and I’m slowly getting back to being as mean as ever. Someone jumped the gun, or maybe a typical stupid fannish hoax. I remember many years ago rumours had it Brian Aldiss had died of a heart attack in the tender arms of some willing femmefan. This seemed rather plausible so no one dared call him and ask; I finally did it and he was doing fine ...’

Food Science Masterclass. ‘I always use aluminum-free baking powder because I don’t like the idea of eating metal.’ (Kay Stepkin, *Chicago Tribune*, 21 March) [PL] Don’t tell her about the sodium.

The Dead Past. *70 Years Ago*, UK fans learned of ‘Ron Bradbury’s interesting hobby of making fantaster [*sic*] models and drawings and then photographing them. [...] He enclosed a photo of a drawing of an “Atomic Power Plant” (*sic*) in a letter to U.S.A. only to have it returned by censor with a sternly worded admonition that photos of buildings, *plants*, and machinery were not allowed to be sent out of the country. Tell it to Campbell, somebody.’ ([Futurian War Digest 20](#), May 1942)

In Typo Veritas. On Ursula Le Guin: ‘It is known as the Earthsea Trilogy, and concerns the rise of God, a magician, from obscurity to great knowledge and fame.’ (Baird Searles, Martin Last, Beth Meacham & Michael Franklin, *A Reader’s Guide to Science Fiction*, 1979) [PL]

Magazine Scene. *New Worlds* email: submissions at newworlds dot co dot uk. (Not the former hodson798 address; David Hodson has left the NW collective.) Dick Jude reassures me that the launch issue is still imminent. Since November 2011 [the website](#) has timelessly announced: ‘The first issue of *New Worlds* will be available later this month.’

As Others Recall Us. *Customer*: ‘Do you have a copy of Nineteen Eighty-Six?’ *Bookseller*: ‘Nineteen Eighty-Six?’ *Customer*: ‘Yeah, Orwell.’ *Bookseller*: ‘Oh – *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.’ *Customer*: ‘No, I’m sure it’s Nineteen Eighty-Six; I’ve always remembered it because it’s the year I was born.’ (Jen Campbell, *Weird Things Customers Say in Bookshops*, 2012)

Media Awards. [The Register’s unofficial straw poll](#) for Worst Movie Ever heaped its ultimate dishonour on *Battlefield Earth* (1454 votes), followed by

The Phantom Menace (1022) and *Twilight* (998). [DKMK]

Super-Irony. The original cheque for \$130, with which Detective Comics (later DC) bought all rights to Superman from his creators Siegel and Shuster, sold at auction for \$160,000. ([BBC](#), 17 April) [MPJ]

C.o.A. *Sam J Lundwall*: see Letters above. *Craig Smith*, 1033 Sunset Blvd NE, Apt. 19, Renton, WA 98056-2994, USA.

Thog's Masterclass. *Music of the Spheres Dept.* 'Felix had said that a sonata could be written on the room's tempo, whose finale should be a demonstration of relativity.' (Mary Butts, *Death of Felicity Taverner*, 1932) [JA]

- *Eyeballs in the Sky.* 'The man's eyes worked their way around the main room all the way up the carved beams that reached high over-head.' (Anton Strout, 'Hooked', in *The Modern Fae's Guide to Surviving Humanity* ed. Patricia Bray & Joshua Palmatier, 2012) [KM]
 - *Manipulatory Dept.* 'He tore his hands off her hips and shoved them between their bodies, forcing her up by her shoulders.' (*Ibid.*)
 - *Dept of Runaway Metaphor.* 'England was such a little place. It would take so short a time to fan the poison out all over her lovely petite body.' (Margery Allingham, *Traitor's Purse*, 1941) [PN]
-

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 11 May 2012: Stephen Hunt talks to the Brum Group; Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre, 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for members. Contact [bhamsfgroup](#) at yahoo co uk or [rog.peyton](#) at btinternet com. Further meetings: 8 June Graham Joyce; 13 July tba; 10 August Summer Social meal at the Black Eagle pub.

Fanfundery. Southbound DUFF race nominations (North America to Australasia) open today, 1 May 2012, with what may be the most insanely tight schedule in the history of fan funds. Nominations close on 11 May, voting will 'probably' close on 31 May and the destination convention is Continuum in Melbourne, 8-11 June. Full release at *File 770*:

<http://file770.com/?p=8842>

Editorial. Special thanks to Hazel for doing all the *Ansible* fetching and carrying while I'm laid up with an afflicted foot – on the mend, I think, but still many sizes too large for any of my shoes. Thus I will not be at the Clarke Award thrash on 2 May, but plan to stick the result on the *Ansible* website when received. [Later, 2 May: the winner is Jane Rogers for *The Testament of Jessie Lamb* – identified in [Chris Priest's now celebrated Clarke polemic](#) as the 'only one which I think is something we should be proud of'.]

- Did you know that some copies of *Ansible* still travel by post? (Pause for online shock, horror, outrage and dismay.) Not a huge number, but I gloomily calculated the effect of the 30 April Royal Mail price increases and found that my monthly *Ansible* snailmail costs just rose by 25.2%. Most copies go out at the lowest second-class rate within the UK, where the price hike is very nearly 39%. There are no more airmail discounts for books and printed papers. Is this the War Against (Old-Style) Fanzines?

Outraged Letters II. Bob Ham's 'dismayed' objection (see [A297](#)) to the listing of the QED science/sceptic conference in [A296](#) provoked several comments.

- *Steven Gould*: 'This is right up there with saying "If you like SF you will dislike Science." QED (which stands for "Question, Explore, Discover" might as well be called "To Bravely Go Where etc." While there may be people in the skeptic movement who are anti-SF, my experience with them is that they are usually enthusiastic fans of genre fiction of all kinds with a clear understanding of the difference between "Fiction" and "Fact." The massive convention Dragon*Con, in Atlanta, always has a track of skeptical programming. The popular skeptical podcast "Skeptic's Guide to the Universe" (with an audience in the hundred thousands) recently spent several minutes worrying whether George R.R. Martin will tie things up successfully by Book 7 of *Game of Thrones*.'

- *Robert Newman*: "'Do readers agree [with Bob Ham]?" On behalf of all your readers, the answer is: "No!" I agree that a meeting of those who would scoff at Arthur C. Clarke's *Childhood's End* may well have no place in a list of SF conferences. Hardly applicable to the "science/sceptic/neo-atheist bunch" who include amongst their past greats the likes of Isaac Asimov and, er, a certain Mr Clarke. Real science has been inspired by SF as diverse as ACC's novels and Gene Roddenberry's popular TV series. Bob Ham (who he?) may "see the sceptic/neo-atheist bunch as being quite opposed to genre work" but that would just be yet another thing that "spiritual persons" are

wrong about. Being a fan of SF is endemic in skeptic circles, from Skeptics in the Pub being founded by SF fans and originally meeting in the same pub as the London Circle, through Carl Sagan, to Richard Dawkins being a fan of *Hitchhiker's Guide* and *Dr Who*. I've discussed SF more often at skeptic meetings than at SF meetings in the last ten years. Only today on the UKSkeptics forum a thread that started off querying the behaviour of a chaffinch turned into a discussion on China Miéville (admittedly my fault but two other people participated).'

- Further replies, none agreeing with Bob Ham's position, came from F.J. Bergmann, Karl Bunker, Chip Hitchcock, Alex E. Knight, Nick Melchior, Helge Moulding and Trevor Prinn.

- Meanwhile *Bob Ham* expanded on his first message: 'The issue I have with the sceptical movement is that their interest in science escalates to scientism. This is a whole different beast to just science and it's this beast that I think is in conflict with speculative fiction (almost by definition). / The newly emerging neo-atheist/militant-atheist worshippers of Richard Dawkins are not a group that I know to explicitly mock Arthur C. Clarke. However, they invariably have a dismissive attitude toward ideas of higher states of consciousness, higher planes of existence, and humanity's experience of them. To me these ideas are exemplified in SF through *Childhood's End*. It's this attitude, often explicitly and offensively stated, that seems to be in such contrast with the open-minded speculation of SF.'

Thog's Second Helping. *True Romance Interruptus Dept.* 'The light from this glorious girl's face would dispel the shadow of any plane alive. She pressed herself to him with animal passion, untutored and wild. Her breath came in gasps and her body pulsed beneath his hands. The firm back muscles at her waist came alive. She threw herself on her back and her burnished face arose from the dark pool of her shimmering hair like the face of a swimmer in a dark lake. A pulse throbbed in the golden arc of her throat. Her breasts brushed the velvet sheen of her housecoat. Mitch's lips found her throat, smooth as the cheek of a child, and when he kissed it he heard her stifle a tiny sob of passion. Then as soon as it had come it was gone. He knew with a grinding certainty that there would be nothing between them.' (Hank Searls, *The Big X*, 1959. Back-cover blurb: 'I enjoyed THE BIG X very much ... remarkable ARTHUR C CLARKE') [ARo]

Daniel Barlow, Paul Barnett, John Clute, Robert Day, David J. Haddock, Chip Hitchcock, Martyn P. Jackson, Roy Kettle, David K.M. Klaus, Hazel Langford as always, Denny Lien, Pamela Love, Kari Maund, Cheryl Morgan, Peter Nicholls, Alistair Rennie, Adam Roberts, SF Site, Steven H Silver, Gordon Van Gelder, Cat Webb, Martin Morse Wooster, and our Hero Distributors: Dave Corby (BSFG), SCIS/Prophecy, Alan Stewart (Australia).
1 May 2012.

Ansible 299, June 2012

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Web news.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or the dusty secret of Ookil' karabin.

Editorial. Should we get all excited about the coming *Ansible* 300? Should there be a colossal online supplement of wit, wisdom, anecdotes and lawsuit threats from *Ansible*'s glory years (1979-1987) and period of sad decline (1991-2012)? Will readers rally round with contributions to make *A300* the hugest and most glittering issue ever? I have no idea.

Standing on the Brink of Infinity

Robert Harris, best known for the alternate-history or counterfactual *Fatherland*, stated severely that all his work was factually based: 'I've no taste at all for fantasy.' (*Guardian*, 20 April) [IM]

Peter James, the crime novelist who's ventured into sf, explains his retaliation for being snubbed by Martin Amis. 'I told [*Ian Rankin*] I was going to get my revenge by writing Amis into the next book and giving him a very small penis. Rankin bet me a hundred quid I wouldn't. He's going to have to pay up.' In James's *Not Dead Yet*, 'Amis Smallbone is ridiculed by a prostitute, who compares his manhood to a stubby pencil. The gangster he is staying with says, "You've always traded on being your dad's son, but you was never half the man he was.'" James adds: 'I was rather pleased with that.' ([Sunday Telegraph](#), 27 May)

Steven Moffat received a special BAFTA Award for *Doctor Who*: 'Blimey! A Special Award! I didn't even know I was ill!' [MPJ] But he complained about certain reactions to *Who* and *Sherlock*: 'There's been a weird backlash among, I presume, fairly stupid people about the fact the shows are complicated and clever ...' ([Radio Times](#), 21 May)

Terry Pratchett won the Bollinger Everyman Wodehouse Prize for Comic Fiction with *Snuff*, after three previous shortlistings without a win. Part of the coveted reward is that some hapless Gloucestershire Old Spot pig will now be named Snuff. ([BBC](#), 30 May) [MPJ]

J.R.R. Tolkien blew the gaff in a 1967 letter to be included in a vast Berlin literary auction this month: 'I am afraid I cannot help you in the matter of children's books, one, because after a long absence, my own affairs take all of my present limited strength and secondly, because I have never been a lover of books for children and have seldom read any since my childhood.' ([Independent](#), 27 May) [MPJ]

Condoke

Until 30 Jun • **'It's Life Jimmy, but Not As We Know It'**: SF in Scotland (exhibition), National Library of Scotland, George IV Bridge, Edinburgh, EH1 1EW. Free. 10am-8pm; to 5pm Sat; 2-5pm Sun.

9 Jun • **Iain Banks & Kim Stanley Robinson** in conversation, Conference Centre, British Library, 5:30-7pm. £7.50; £5 concessions. See www.bl.uk/whatson/events/event131555.html. A signing follows.

16 Jun • **British Fantasy Society Open Day**, The Mug House pub, London Bridge, London, SE1 2PF. 1pm to late. All welcome.

18 Jun • **CRSF** (academic), University of Liverpool. £30 reg inc lunch, snacks. See currentresearchinspeculativefiction.blogspot.co.uk.

27 Jun • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Melton Mowbray pub, 18 Holborn, London, EC1N 2LE. 6pm for 7pm. With Paul McAuley.

14 Jul • **Edge-Lit** (sf/fantasy/horror), QUAD centre, Market Place, Derby, DE22 3PN. 10am-midnight. £25 reg. Box office 01332 290 606.

20-23 Jul • **Continuum 2012** (RPG), John Foster Hall, Leicester University. £35 reg (day: Fri £10, Sat or Sun £15) or £30+room charges. *Room booking deadline is 2 July*. See www.continuum.uk.net.

21 Sep • **The Hobbit at 75**, British Library, 6:30pm-8pm. £7.50, £5 unwaged. Final event in the current (June-September) BL exhibition: 'From William Blake to the 21st-century suburban hinterlands of J G Ballard,

Writing Britain examines how the landscapes of Britain permeate great literary works.’ Details and bookings at www.bl.uk.

27-30 Sept • **Fantasycon 2012**, Royal Albion Hotel, Brighton. Another GoH added: Muriel Gray. *Now £65 reg (BFS members £60)*. Payment via PayPal at fantasycon2012.org/join.php, or to 10 Haycroft Gardens, Mastin Moor, Chesterfield, Derbyshire, S43 3FE.

20 Oct • **BristolCon**, Ramada Hotel, Bristol. *Now £20 reg*, until 19 October when advance booking closes; £25 at the door. Cheques to 18 High Leaze Road, Patchway, Bristol BS34 5AF.

1-3 Mar 2013 • **Sci-Fi Weekender** (was *SFX Weekender*; the magazine is no longer involved), Hafan y Mor Holiday Park, Pwllheli, North Wales. Booking by accommodation from £199/person or shares; day passes £49, Friday and Saturday only: see www.scifiweekender.com.

18-21 Apr 2014 • **Satellite 4** (Eastercon), Crowne Plaza Hotel, Glasgow. *Now £55 reg and £45 unwaged*; other rates unchanged. £20 supp/junior (12-17); £5 child (5-11); £1 infant. Contact c/o Flat 2/1, 691 Shields Rd, Pollokshields, Glasgow, G41 4QL.

Rumblings. After some technical difficulties with large document downloads, the full Hugo Voter Packet sampler became available in late May to 2012 Worldcon members only: see chicon.org/hugo-packet.php.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others Remember Us. *Dale Winton*: ‘Which 1960s TV series had characters called Mr Chekov and Mr Sulu?’ *Contestant* (after long deliberation): ‘*Are You Being Served?*’ (BBC1, *In It To Win It*) [PE]

Awards. *Arthur C. Clarke Award*: Jane Rogers, *The Testament of Jessie Lamb*.

- *Compton Crook Award* (first novel): T.C. McCarthy, *Germline*.
- *Heinlein Award*: Stanley Schmidt.
- *Independent Book Blogger Awards* (inaugural presentation), Publishing News category: Victoria Strauss for *Writer Beware*.
- *Nebulas*: NOVEL Jo Walton, *Among Others* (the first ever Nebula winner to contain a plug for *Ansible?*). NOVELLA Kij Johnson, ‘The Man Who Bridged

the Mist' (*Asimov's* 10/11). NOVELETTE Geoff Ryman, 'What We Found' (*F&SF* 9/11). SHORT Ken Liu, 'The Paper Menagerie' (*F&SF* 3/11). RAY BRADBURY (dramatic) Neil Gaiman for *Doctor Who*: 'The Doctor's Wife'. ANDRE NORTON (young adult) Delia Sherman, *The Freedom Maze*.

Magazine Scene. With the appearance of the all-sf issue of *The New Yorker* (4/11 June), many fans muttered about the End Times and looked nervously overhead for V-formations of winged Gloucester Old Spots.

- *Weird Tales* (under new management; see [A290](#)) is again open to submissions: see weirdtalesmagazine.com/submission-guidelines/.

R.I.P. *David Bowman* (1957-2012), US novelist whose *Bunny Modern* (1998) is a satirical sf dystopia, died on 27 February at the age of 54. [PDF]

- *Ernie Chan* (1940-2012; also as Ernie Chua). Filipino/US comics artist who worked at length on Batman and Conan, died on 16 May at the age of 71.

[PDF]

- *Hal E. Chester* (1921-2012), US actor and film producer whose genre productions included *The Beast from Twenty Thousand Fathoms* (1953) and *Night of the Demon* (1957), died on 25 March; he was 91. [MPJ]

- *Tony DeZuniga* (1932-2012), Filipino/US comics artist and letterer who co-created Jonah Hex and The Black Orchid, died on 11 May aged 71. [PDF]

- *Leo Dillon* (1933-2012), US artist/illustrator who with his wife and collaborator Diane Dillon won many awards including the 1971 Hugo and Locus Awards for best professional artist and two Caldecott Medals, died on 26 May. He was 79. The Dillons' work for the original *Dangerous Visions* and the Ace SF Specials is fondly remembered; other genre awards include a 1982 Balrog and a 2008 World Fantasy Award, both for life achievement.

- *Carlos Fuentes* (1928-2012), celebrated Mexican magic-realist author whose work frequently included fantastic and/or futuristic elements, died on 15 May aged 83. [JC] He received a state funeral in Mexico City.

- *Joel Goldsmith* (1957-2012), US composer who scored various genre films (*Laserblast*, *The Man With Two Brains*, *Moon 44*, *Kull the Conqueror* etc) and almost the whole of the *Stargate* tv franchise – for which music he was best known – died on 29 April. He was 54. [KW]

- *Jay Kay Klein* (1931-2012), long-time US fan and tireless photographer of sf people and events, died on 15 May aged 80. He was the 1974 Worldcon's fan guest of honour, and entered the First Fandom Hall of Fame in 2011. (*File 770*)

- *Hilary Rubinstein* (1926-2012), UK publisher and literary agent who discovered Kingsley Amis for Gollancz, started the Gollancz sf list in 1961, and in his years at A.P. Watt (1965-1992) represented many sf authors, died on 22 May; he was 86.
- *Maurice Sendak* (1928-2012), major US children's book artist and storyteller whose best-known works include *Where the Wild Things Are* (1963, Caldecott Medal winner, live-action film 2009) and *In the Night Kitchen* (1970), died on 8 May. He was 83. [RC] Further honours include the Hans Christian Andersen Award, US Congress National Medal of Arts and Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award.
- *Kaneto Shindo* (1912-2012), noted Japanese film-maker and screenwriter who wrote and directed the horror classic *Onibaba* (1964), died on 29 May at the age of 100. His very long career included several films about nuclear weapons (he was born in Hiroshima) and their aftermath. [MPJ]
- *Late notice*, missed by both *Ansible* and the *SFE*: *Lindsay Gutteridge* (1923-2007), UK author of the miniaturized-men thriller *Cold War in a Country Garden* (1971) and its two sequels, died in June 2007 aged 84. [DPB]

As Others See Some of Us. 'The best thing about *Comic-Con Episode IV: A Fan's Hope*, the new Morgan Spurlock film, is that it will save you from going to Comic-Con. If you have, like me, felt a secret spasm of curiosity about this event – a vast annual splurge of pop culture, held in San Diego – then Spurlock's documentary will tell you how, and whether, you should join the pilgrimage. Because I have never watched "Battlestar Galactica," and because of my absurd reluctance to dress up like Wonder Woman, I wouldn't last five minutes.' (Anthony Lane, *The New Yorker*, 23 April) [MMW]

Award Shortlists. *British Fantasy Awards* (novel only): Joe Abercrombie, *The Heroes*; Stephen King, *11.22.63*; Kim Lakin-Smith, *Cyber Circus*; George R.R. Martin, *A Dance with Dragons*; Adam Nevill, *The Ritual*; Jo Walton, *Among Others*. Two winners to be chosen, one fantasy (Holdstock Award) and one horror (Derleth); it seems odd that there aren't separate shortlists. [[More here.](#)]

• *John W. Campbell Memorial*: Ernest Cline, *Ready Player One*; Kathleen Ann Goonan, *This Shared Dream*; Will McIntosh, *Soft Apocalypse*; China Miéville, *Embassytown*; Christopher Priest, *The Islanders*; Joan Slonczewski, *The Highest Frontier*; Michael Swanwick, *Dancing with Bears*; Lavie Tidhar, *Osama*; Daniel H. Wilson, *Robopocalypse*; Gene Wolfe, *Home Fires*; Rob

Ziegler, *Seed*.

• *Locus* (selected): SF NOVEL James S.A. Corey, *Leviathan Wakes*; Stephen King, 11/22/63; China Miéville, *Embassytown*; Charles Stross, *Rule 34*; Vernor Vinge, *The Children of the Sky*. FANTASY NOVEL George R.R. Martin, *A Dance with Dragons*; Terry Pratchett, *Snuff*; Patrick Rothfuss, *The Wise Man's Fear*; Catherynne M. Valente, *Deathless*; Jo Walton, *Among Others*. [\[More here.\]](#)

• *Mythopoeic* (fantasy): ADULT LITERATURE Lisa Goldstein, *The Uncertain Places*; Erin Morgenstern, *The Night Circus*; Richard Parks, *The Heavenly Fox*; Catherynne M. Valente, *Deathless*; Jo Walton, *Among Others*. CHILDREN'S Lisa Mantchev, *Théâtre Illuminata* series (*Eyes Like Stars*, *Perchance to Dream*, *So Silver Bright*); Tamora Pierce, *Beka Cooper* series (*Terrier*, *Bloodhound*, *Mastiff*); Delia Sherman, *The Freedom Maze*; Maggie Stiefvater, *The Scorpio Races*; Catherynne M. Valente, *The Girl Who Circumnavigated Fairyland in a Ship of Her Own Making*. SCHOLARSHIP: INKLINGS Jason Fisher, ed., *Tolkien and the Study of His Sources: Critical Essays*; Wayne G. Hammond and Christina Scull, *The Art of the Hobbit*; Carl Phelpstead, *Tolkien and Wales: Language, Literature and Identity*; Sanford Schwartz, *C.S. Lewis on the Final Frontier: Science and the Supernatural in the Space Trilogy*; Steve Walker, *The Power of Tolkien's Prose: Middle-earth's Magical Style*. SCHOLARSHIP: OTHER Ruth B. Bottigheimer, *Fairy Tales: A New History*; Bonnie Gaarden, *The Christian Goddess: Archetype and Theology in the Fantasies of George MacDonald*; Ursula K. Le Guin, *Cheek by Jowl*; Darrell Schweitzer, *The Fantastic Horizon: Essays and Reviews*; Jack Zipes, *The Enchanted Screen: The Unknown History of Fairy-Tale Films*.

As Others See Us. In a blog post arrestingly titled 'genre fiction fans are becoming like the Tea Party', Freddie deBoer opines: 'When I look at the broad culture of "fandom" – sci-fi fans, video game fans, comic book fans, etc. – I see a disturbing familiarity with the Tea Party. Both groups enjoy great power and cultural prominence; both commonly make complaints about oppression that simply cannot withstand scrutiny; and crucially, both seem far more invested in being recognized as marginalized and oppressed than in being freed from their supposed marginalization and oppression.' (*Balloon Juice*, 2 May) [RB]

Who Goes There? A hacked electronic road sign in Boulder, Colorado,

alarmed motorists with '[WARNING DALEKS AHEAD](#)'. [MPJ]

Outraged Letters. *Simon R. Green* watched tv: 'A certain Mr William Shatner appeared as guest host on *Have I Got News For You* [25 May]. There was a certain sense of My God, He's Not Dead Yet ... but there was also a definite warmth and affection for the old Captain from audience and team members. Good to see.'

• *Margaret Hoyt* on *John Carter*: 'My favorite explanation of why the film of *A Princess of Mars* didn't get to keep the original title was on some feminist site I stumbled across before the picture came out. They were – shocked! – that Disney would change the title to cater to crass commercial interests, namely that teenage boys, the most esteemed target audience, wouldn't pay up to see anything with "princess" in the title, and teenage girls, also known to have some spending money, couldn't be expected to turn out for anything with "Mars" in its title.' Logical, Captain.

The Class System, Explained. 'There was a club on campus called AOKP, or the Artorian Order of the Knights of Pendragon, which was a closed-doors sort of group, except for late nights, when members would take over the grassy quad near the language building and spar with foam swords while wearing tunics. I'd walk by them after playing the video game *007: Agent Under Fire* for five hours and think, "Wow, what a bunch of nerds." / It was an unjust criticism, sure. But there has always been a hierarchy to uncoolness, and video-gamers such as myself weren't at the bottom of the food chain – we were strongly in the middle even then, before smartphones and tablets gave everyone the portability and connectivity to play anywhere. But people who dressed up as medieval royals and spoke in Old English were most assuredly near the bottom.' (George Gonzalez, *Washington Post*, 6 May) [MMW]

Space Opera. After its worst-film poll ([A298](#)), *The Register* invited votes for the worst *unmade* movie. The clear winner was *The Phantom Menace: The Musical* (with Eddie Murphy as Jar-Jar Binks), beating *Diana – The 3D Movie!!!* and *The C Programming Language*. ([25 May](#))

The Dead Past. *50 Years Ago*, Eastercon had good press coverage: 'THE HARROGATE CONVENTION was first reported in the *Yorkshire Evening Post* for Easter Monday. For once the "green monster walking down the street" element was happily absent and the report was a straightforward account

quoting seven Germans attending the con, 150 attending in all, Brian Burgess the owner of one of the biggest SF libraries in Britain and the first conference of “the organisation” taking place in Leeds 35 years ago. Ah, well.....’

([Skyrack 43](#), 2 June 1962)

- *60 Years Ago* an anonymous postcard (Bob Shaw or Walt Willis?) showed how to plug a friend’s work: ‘I have been writing to fanzines for 75 years now, and yet I have never read one before. But something drove me to read James White’s story in the current *SFN*. I was profoundly stirred, as if I had swallowed an egg-beater ...’ ([Science Fantasy News 2:4](#), June 1952)
- *30 Years Ago*, the fan gutter press reported Maxim Jakubowski’s surprise confession in *New Musical Express*: ‘This is the first time I’ve told anyone: I masturbated to Robert A. Heinlein!’ ([Ansible 26](#), June 1982)

Fewmets! On swearing and BBFC film ratings: ‘Perhaps it was to avoid such disapproval that 12A blockbuster *Avengers Assemble* (2012) looked to the past for its single instance of swearing, with a word so long out of service in spoken English that it’s actually more shocking to hear: the evil Norse god Loki insults female super-agent Black Widow, calling her a “mewling quim”.’ ([Independent](#), 24 May) [MPJ]

- Old BBFC records now reveal that *Alien* was given its X (18) certificate in 1979 because one board member felt it ‘uses sexual imagery in a horror context. [...] presents a perverse view of the reproductive function. / I don’t want to flash [*sic*] ideas like this to teenagers who might not have come to terms with the normal sexual functions.’ A fate so much worse than mere hideous death. The BBFC chief added that if released today, *Alien* would be granted a 15 certificate. ([Telegraph](#), 29 May) [MPJ]

Editorial II. The *SF Encyclopedia* (www.sf-encyclopedia.com) passed a couple of interim landmarks in May: 3½ million words and 13,000 entries. The fifth of my too-short *Sunday Telegraph* magazine sf review columns [appeared on 27 May](#) and was widely unremarked.

Long Dark Teatime. No more episodes of the Douglas Adams-based series *Dirk Gently* will be made. A BBC spokeswoman blamed UK government austerity: ‘We’ve loved having Dirk on the channel but the licence-fee freeze means less British drama on BBC4.’ ([BBC](#), 29 May)

Thog’s Masterclass. *Dept of Circular Breathing*. ‘Then Smithson screamed! His open mouth poured out a steady, unwavering screaming, while his lungs

panted in and out ...' (Lester del Rey, 'For I Am A Jealous People!', *Star Short Novels*, 1954) [BA]

- *Singularity Dept.* 'Status quo! That is not a word one hears nowadays ...' (Jessamyn West, 'Little Men', *ibid*) [BA]

- *Dept of Science Awareness.* "One more question, Miss Ames. You can do laboratory tests, can't you?" "Yes, Doctor, the simple ones." "Very good. I don't expect you to be Eve Curie." (Helen Wells, *Cherry Ames: Ski Nurse Mystery*, 1968) [PL]

- *Supererogation Dept.* 'Cherry hurried along, hoping Bertha would have set a match to the blazing logs in the fireplace of their small room behind the makeshift clinic.' (*Ibid*)

- *Neat Tricks Dept.* 'Invisible man casts shadow over US-China talks' (Associated Press news headline, 2012) [PM]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 7 June 2012: Duncan Lunan book launch, 13th Note, King Street, Glasgow. 7pm.

- 8 June 2012: Graham Joyce talks to the Brum Group; Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre, 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk or rog.peyton at btinternet com. Further meetings: 13 July, Jo Fletcher; 10 August, Summer Social meal at the Black Eagle pub; September tba; October tba; November, Eric Brown; December, Christmas Social.

- 16 June 2012: Stephen Jones/Les Edwards launch and signing of M R James omnibus at BFS Open Day (see main events list).

- 19 June 2012: Duncan Lunan party and reading from new book; The Girvan bar, Portland Street, Troon. KA10 6EA. 8pm.

- 7 July 2012: Jaine Fenn talk and reading, Clevedon Community Bookshop, Copse Road, Clevedon, Somerset; 6pm for 6:30pm; £5 inc tapas & wine. Contact: enquiries at clevedoncommunitybookshop coop or 01275 218318.

We Are Everywhere. Sam Long spotted another fannish Word of the Day at Wordnik.com in May:

<http://www.wordnik.com/word-of-the-day/2012/05/25>

Fanfundery. The short-notice 2012 DUFF race – with a ten-day nominations period and just over two weeks for campaigning, fundraising and voting – ended on 1 June with ‘Hold Over Funds’ as the clear winner. A US DUFF delegate would normally be expected to arrange travel to the Australian national convention (difficult, since this begins on 8 June and the opportunity for early-booking discounts is long past) and perhaps the New Zealand one too (impossible, since it had already started when the votes were being counted).

<http://file770.com/?p=9152>

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Ansible 300, July 2012

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Web news.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or the last line of the Saaamaaa Ritual.

Editorial. Top number theorists confirm that, as was widely speculated after the appearance of *Ansible* 299, this issue is indeed the 300th.

One in Three Hundred

Gerry Anderson revealed in late June that he had been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease 18 months previously. (Fanderson.org.uk) [GD]

Dr Joanne Benford, the Open University creative writing tutor exposed as having plagiarized a Dylan Thomas story and taken similar liberties with Aleister Crowley and many others (Telegraph, 22 June), has also published genre-related nonfiction. According to Alex Keegan, who's been on the case since learning Benford had appropriated his story 'Postcards From BalloonLand', her *Sing of the City Electric* – on postmodern architecture with extensive references to *Blade Runner* – and *Living Doll: The Seduction of the Cyborg* both contain much plagiarism, 100% in the latter case: see his dossier at alexkeegan.blogspot.co.uk. Furthermore, Benford's *Postmodern Feminist Fantasy* overlaps or is included in her *Fanning the Flames*, in which researchers are reporting more and more pirated work, and whose content in turn overlaps that of *Living Doll*. One Keegan correspondent asserts that the first chapter of Benford's PhD thesis is 'largely stitched together' from nine articles by others (one from *Wired*), mostly about cyberspace, cyborgs or sf: 'It's an unsophisticated copy and paste job.' [JS] Oh dearie me.

Mitchell Gross, whose novels as by Mitchell Graham include a fantasy trilogy, pleaded guilty to fraud (see A292). He's been sentenced to over 12 years in a US prison and ordered to pay \$5.8 million to his victims. (*Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, 28 June; AthensPatch, 30 June)

Susan Hill, author of many supernatural and psychological suspense novels (including the recently filmed *The Woman in Black*) was made a Commander of the British Empire in the Queen's birthday honours, for services to literature.

Grant Morrison, comics writer and playwright, was honoured with the MBE for services to film and literature.

Michael Swanwick wrote about the passing of Hope Mirrlees's nephew Prince Robin Ian Evelyn Milne Stuart de La Lanne Mirrlees – ‘almost certainly the highest-ranking noble ever to be published in *NYRSF* [*New York Review of SF*]’ – and repeated a favourite family story: ‘Robin Mirrlees’ mother, Hope’s sister-in-law Frances de La Lanne Mirrlees, was a strikingly beautiful and of course aristocratic woman. One of her many friends was Ian Fleming. Who one day told her that he was writing a novel. / “Oh, Ian,” she said. “*Don’t* write a novel. You haven’t the brains for it.”’ ([Flogging Babel](#), 26 June)

Jeff Vandermeer was grumpy about *New Yorker* coverage of the BookExpo America sf panel. Despite legendary *NY* fact-checking, quotes were misattributed and Jeff was transmogrified into James VanderMeer.

F. Paul Wilson plunged Facebook into war by linking to a website about the coming tv series *The Fixer* – based on Jon F. Merz’s urban fantasies – with the comment ‘Let’s rip off Jack, shall we?’ Merz disliked the insinuation that his ‘Fixer’ vampire hunter was stolen from Wilson’s ‘Repairman Jack’, and asked for a retraction and apology, causing a loyal Wilson fan to denounce Merz as a pirate.... And so on, and on.

Convolancy

Until 16 Sep • **Tea with Alice/Storyloom** (exhibitions), Story Museum, Rochester House, 42 Pembroke St, Oxford, OX1 1BP. Each £5, £3 concessions. www.storymuseum.org.uk; enquiries 01865 790050.

14 Jul • **Edge-Lit** (sf/fantasy/horror), QUAD centre, Market Place, Derby, DE22 3PN. 10am-midnight. £25 reg. Box office 01332 290 606.

20-23 Jul • **Continuum 2012** (RPG), John Foster Hall, Leicester University. £35 reg (day: Fri £10, Sat or Sun £15) or £30+room charges. *Room booking*

deadline: 2 July. See www.continuum.uk.net.

25 Jul • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Melton Mowbray, 18 Holborn, London, EC1N 2LE. 5/6pm for 7pm. With Roz Kaveney.

10-12 Aug • **Congenial** (Unicon/RPG), Murray Edwards College, Cambridge. £30 reg (under-16s £15). Contact Congenial, 19 Uphall Road, Cambridge, CB1 3HX. See also congenial.org.uk.

16-20 Aug • **Return of the Ring** (Tolkien Society), Loughborough University. £90 reg; £75 child/concessions; £20 supp; £1 under-5s, to 20 York Rd, Stony Stratford, Bucks, MK11 1BJ; or register online at www.returnofthering.org. Day rate £35; £30 child/concessions.

23-27 Aug • **Frightfest** (horror film festival), Empire Cinema, Leicester Square, London. Booking: see www.frightfest.co.uk.

24-27 Aug • **Discworld Convention**, Birmingham. Sold out.

30 Aug - 3 Sep • **Chicon 7** (70th Worldcon), Hyatt Regency, Chicago. Rates *until 31 July*: \$215 reg, \$540 family, \$100 YA (17-21), \$75 child (5-16), accompanied under-5s free. Contact PO Box 13, Skokie, IL 60076, USA. Hugo final-ballot voting closes on 31 July.

16-18 Nov • **Armadacon 24**, Future Inns, Plymouth. *Date change from 9-11 Nov.* GoH Pat Harkin, Ian Edginton. £30 (£25 concessions) to 18 Wadham Rd, Liskeard, Cornwall, PL14 3BD. £35/£30 at the door.

29 Mar - 1 Apr 2013 • **EightSquaredCon** (Eastercon), Bradford. *Rates held to 31 July*: £50 reg; £25 supp/junior (12-17); £10 child (5-11); £1 infant. Online booking details at www.eightsquaredcon.org.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See GRRM. Here's how to say you like *Game of Thrones* without being overly uncool: 'To anyone who wasn't Hobbit-friendly previously, this genre – fantasy medieval – is as sexy as pubic dandruff. Viewers like me, non-Dr Who types, vehement Hobbit-knockers, fell for Game of Thrones sheerly by accident and then fretted for their identity ever after. No sane person intends to go down a path where Saturdays are spent changing from jeans to a Dothraki pelt-skin costume in the back of a Ford Focus in a Milton

Keynes conference centre car-park before meeting their friend Nige (him of the egg-box dragon costume and blow-torch mouth o' fire effect) but cosplay has to start somewhere. Game of Thrones, and its ilk, have made fancy-dress fools of wiser folk than us.' (Grace Dent, [Independent](#), 2 June) [MPJ]

Awards. *Campbell Memorial* (tie): Christopher Priest, *The Islanders* and Joan Slonczewski, *The Highest Frontier*.

- *David Gemmell Legend* (fantasy): NOVEL Patrick Rothfuss, *The Wise Man's Fear*. DEBUT Helen Lowe, *Heir of Night*. COVER ART Raymond Swanland for *Blood of Aenarion*.

- *Ditmar* (Australia) novel: Kim Westwood, *The Courier's New Bicycle*.

- *Lambda* (LGBT sf/f/horror): Lee Thomas, *The German*.

- *Locus*: SF NOVEL China Miéville, *Embassytown*. FANTASY NOVEL George R.R. Martin, *A Dance with Dragons*. FIRST NOVEL Erin Morgenstern, *The Night Circus*. YA Catherynne M. Valente, *The Girl Who Circumnavigated Fairyland in a Ship of Her Own Making*. NOVELLA Catherynne M. Valente, 'Silently and Very Fast' (*Clarkesworld*) NOVELETTE Catherynne M. Valente, 'White Lines on a Green Field' (*Subterranean*). SHORT Neil Gaiman, 'The Case of Death and Honey' (*A Study in Sherlock*). ANTHOLOGY Gardner Dozois, ed., *The Year's Best Science Fiction: Twenty-eighth Annual Collection*. NONFICTION Gary K. Wolfe, *Evaporating Genres: Essays on Fantastic Literature*. ART BOOK Cathy Fenner & Arnie Fenner, eds., *Spectrum 18: The Best in Contemporary Fantastic Art*. ARTIST Shaun Tan. EDITOR Ellen Datlow. MAGAZINE *Asimov's*. PUBLISHER Tor.

- *Theodore Sturgeon* (short story): Paul McAuley, 'The Choice' (*Asimov's* 2/11).

R.I.P. *Suzanne Allés (Sue) Blom* (1948-2012), long-time Milwaukee sf fan and author of the alternate-history novel *Inca: The Scarlet Fringe* (2000) plus unpublished sequels, died on 23 June. [MJL]

- *Ray Bradbury* (1920-2012), who for *Ansible* readers needs no introduction, died on 6 June at the age of 91 and was widely mourned by everyone from the usual sf suspects through media pundits to President Obama. Besides the landmark books *The Martian Chronicles* (1950) and *Fahrenheit 451* (1953, a 2004 Retro Hugo winner), his legacy included a great many magical and/or macabre short stories and a much-appreciated [1960s commercial for prunes](#). Bradbury received the World Fantasy Award for life achievement in 1977, the SFWA Grand Master Award in 1989, and entered the SF Hall of Fame in

1999. One proposed memorial is the introduction of web error 451, analogous to '404 Page Not Found' but denoting censored content.

- *Nora Ephron* (1941-2012), US writer, screenwriter and film-maker who wrote and directed the fantasy films *Michael* (1996) and *Bewitched* (2005, reinventing the tv series), died on 26 June; she was 71. [SFS]

- *Caroline John* (1940-2012) UK actress fondly remembered as *Doctor Who* companion Liz Shaw in the Jon Pertwee era (reappearing in *The Five Doctors* and other specials), died on 5 June aged 71. [O] 'I met Caroline at a Dimensions convention in Newcastle a few years back, where she revealed she used to refer to the short skirts Liz Shaw wore as "pussy pelmets".'

[MPJ]

- *Richard Lynch* (1936-2012), US actor whose many genre credits (usually as villains) included the tv *Battlestar Galactica*, *Buck Rogers in the 25th Century* and *Star Trek: TNG*, plus the films *Deathsport*, *Trancers II*, *Merlin*, *The Mummy's Kiss*, *Halloween* and (forthcoming) *The Lords of Salem*, died on 18 June. He was 76. [SG]

- *Anthony J. Wiener* (1930-2012), US futurist who with Herman Kahn wrote *The Year 2000: A Framework for Speculation on the Next Thirty-Three Years* (1967), died on 19 June aged 81. [PDF]

- *Peter Wragg* (1948-2012), UK visual effects designer who created the *Red Dwarf* spaceship (also Starbug and Kryten's head), died on 15 April aged 65. Other sf work included *Thunderbirds*, *Captain Scarlet* and *Doctor Who*.

[MPJ]

- *Jim Young* (1951-2012), US fan (once very active in Minneapolis fandom), former diplomat and author of the sf novels *The Face of the Deep* (1979) and *Armed Memory* (1995), died on 12 June. He'd recently been focusing on his acting career, and played Hitler in *Nazis at the Center of the Earth* (2012).

- *Matt Yuricich* (1923-2012) Croatian-born US visual effects artist who won an Oscar for work on *Logan's Run* and was shortlisted for *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* and *Blade Runner*, died on 28 May aged 89. His many film credits also included *Young Frankenstein*, *Planet of the Apes* and *Ghostbusters*. [MPJ]

- *Late notice: J.T. McIntosh* (James Murdoch MacGregor, 1925-2008), Scots author – very popular in his day – whose first sf novel was *World Out of Mind* (1953), died in 2008. [IC] He ceased publishing after *A Planet Called Utopia* (1979).

As Others Lump Us. 'But as Amazon's six other publishing imprints [...]

have discovered, in certain genres (romance, science fiction and fantasy) formerly relegated to the moribund mass-market paperback, readers care not a whit about cover design or even good writing, and have no attachment at all to the book as object. Like addicts, they just want their fix at the lowest possible price, and Amazon is happy to be their online dealer.’ (*The Nation*, 18 June) [JC]

Sidewise Award Shortlist, for alternate-history fiction: SHORT Michael F. Flynn, ‘The Iron Shirts’ (Tor.com); Lisa Goldstein, ‘Paradise Is a Walled Garden’ (*Asimov’s* 8/11); Jason Stoddard, ‘Orion Rising’ (*Panverse* 3); Harry Turtledove, ‘Lee at the Alamo’ (Tor.com). LONG Robert Conroy, *Castro’s Bomb*; Robert Conroy, *Himmler’s War*; Jeff Greenfield, *Then Everything Changed*; Ian R. MacLeod, *Wake Up and Dream*; Ian McDonald, *Planesrunner*; Ekaterina Sedia, *Heart of Iron*; Lavie Tidhar, *Camera Obscura*.

As Others See Us: The Last Resort. A sales pitch from The Writing School at Oxford Open Learning: ‘There are many different kinds of novel and part of the challenge is to find the kind of novel which you will enjoy writing and your audience will enjoy reading. Whether it is a thriller, a romance, comedy [*sic*], historical fiction, a whodunit or even science fiction, we will give you the technical skills to express your vision effectively ...’ (writingschool.co.uk) [TE]

Magazine Scene. The revived *Amazing Stories* has a ‘Relaunch Prelaunch’ issue online at www.amazingstoriesmag.com (1 July).

Outraged Letters. Claire M. Jordan on Simon R. Green’s [A299 letter](#): ‘Shatner didn’t just show up on *Have I Got News for You* – he was, or certainly appeared to be, as drunk as a skunk. The funniest bit was when he made some racy joke about Angela Merkel being a lesbian and then waved his hand expansively and said it would be cut out before the show went to air, and one of the others said “You haven’t watched this show, have you?” ... He wasn’t incapable, you understand – but sort of fuzzy and slurred, and suspiciously red in the face.’ Later he issued an apology for his mysterious impromptu quip about Ilfracombe, Devon: ‘The place is laced with prostitution.’ ([BBC](#), 20 June) [JD]

MTV Awards (film). *Twilight: Breaking Dawn 1* was overall winner; *The Hunger Games* won for best male and female performances, fight scene and

‘transformation’ (four wins in all); *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows 2* collected two awards, for best hero and cast. [MPJ]

Astronomical Scale Masterclass. An IEEE *Spectrum* piece on e-money conveys how vastly, hugely, mindbogglingly big space is: ‘Science-fiction writers once imagined a galactic currency that would grease the wheels of commerce from here to Alpha Centauri.’ (June 2012) [AT]

That Old-Time Religion. 2011 Australian census results reveal that the Lucky Country’s self-confessed Jedis now hugely outnumber its admitted Scientologists, by 65,000 to 2,163. ([ABC](#), 29 June) [AIP]

As Others See Ray Bradbury. He ‘wrote modern myths, not science fiction [...] Bradbury was not that popular among science fiction fans. He was not geeky enough.’ (*Telegraph*, 6 June) [MPJ]

- ‘Bradbury wasn’t so much a major science fiction writer. He was a major writer who specialized in science fiction.’ (*Boston Globe*, 1 July) [DK]

Random Fandom. *Ted Ball* of the late lamented Fantasy Centre is recovering from a recentish heart attack.

- *Stu Shiffman*, ace fanartist, had a stroke on 16 June. After two brain operations and one on his kneecap (broken in a hospital fall) he’s doing well. All good wishes to Stu and his partner Andi Shechter, who’s issuing regular bulletins.

The Dead Past. *50 Years Ago*, we became respectable: ‘Gone, it appears, are the days when fans tore off prozine covers so that they could read their purchases in the tube, when convention reports in newspapers began “If you see an alien monster walking down the street next Saturday,” when your colleagues told you they had once read Jules Verne at school. For SF has now attained the ultimate status symbol. TV, after delving condescendingly with the genre for so many years, has finally gone overboard for science fiction. My, I bet you’re proud.’ Thus Ron Bennett on the BBC serials *The Big Pull* (gosh, I remember that) and *Andromeda Breakthrough*, plus ITV’s *Out of This World* anthology series: ‘Well, it makes a change from Z Cars.’ ([Skyrack 44](#), 2 July 1962)

As Others ... ‘The usual move in science fiction is to remain vague about the dates, so as to render “the future” a zone of pure fantasy, no different than Middle Earth or Narnia, or like *Star Wars* “a long time ago in a galaxy far,

far away.” As a result, our science fiction future is, most often, not a future at all, but more like an alternative America, a dream-time, a technological Elsewhere, existing in days to come the same way elves and dragon-slayers existed in the past – another screen for the displacement of moral dramas and mythic fantasies in to the dead ends of consumer pleasure.’ (*The Baffler*, December 2011) [MMW]

Fanfundery. *DUFF*: ‘Hold Over Funds’ was a clear first-round winner with 57 votes (38 NA+19 Australasia) to 25 (24+1) for Juanita Coulson and 13 (11+2) for Murray Moore. This wasn’t a vote against the candidates but against the scheduling which made it impossible for a US winner to attend New Zealand’s national con (already in progress during the count) and nearly so for Australia’s on the next weekend.

Thog’s Masterclass. *Literal Dept.* ‘She literally flowed with stories and spunk.’ (Brad Torgersen, ‘Outbound’, *Analog* 11/2010) [NW]

- *Eyeballs in the Sky*. ‘Her eyes felt lost and confused ...’ (James Rollins, *Sandstorm*, 2004) [MCN]
- ‘Her eyes were like a condor’s, or some worse star-spawned bird of prey, crimson edged and bleeding into blank holes at the center that seemed to be pinpoint windows into her diseased soul. Kullervo thought he saw *things* crawling around behind those windows.’ (Emil Petaja, *Tramontane*, 1967)
- *Special 300th-Issue Technothriller Bons Mots Dept.* ‘He knew that he ought to have prepared his speech better ... but the tension within his intestine had proved too much.’
- ‘In the two weeks since Helena’s note had arrived he had stopped sleeping and begun waking in dreams.’
- ‘... the door opened to find their quarry at his elbows on the desk, his face enveloping his hands.’
- ‘Hartmann too smiled but it was not a creature of grace; it skitted, like a new-born faun and, in similar fashion, fell down completely before another second had died.’
- ‘He swallowed and smiled at the same time; perhaps, he at once realized, a mistake.’
- ‘The smell of cigarette smoke suffused directly into his stomach lining and into his strobing brain.’
- ‘... the telephone call from the Coroner had also caused a distinct rise in his anal sphincter tone ...’

- ‘That Eisenmenger found the look on her face odd would be untrue; he found it worrying. She looked as if she had appendicitis.’
 - ‘Which made the slap when it came all the more unexpected and all the more painful. It rang in his ears and made the mast cells in his skin explode with unpleasant substances.’
 - ‘Eisenmenger could feel the atmosphere [*between the two women*] beginning to reek with noxious gases.’
 - ‘Through the pain she tried to ignore the nihilism of the thought, finding it seditious.’
 - ‘*Where do you put a virus?*’
 - ‘She knew more about the inside of a Turkish wrestler’s underpants than she did about virology ...’
 - ‘She bent down again, profaned against her back, and pulled.’
 - ‘He picked up his coat from the back of the sofa and moved to the door, feeling distinctly like an ambulant and green soft fruit.’ (all Keith McCarthy, *The Silent Sleep of the Dying*, 2004) [PB]
-

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 7 July 2012: Jaine Fenn talk and reading, Clevedon Community Bookshop, Copse Road, Clevedon, Somerset; 6pm for 6:30pm; £5 inc tapas & wine. Contact: enquiries at clevedoncommunitybookshop coop or 01275 218318.
- 13 July 2012: Jo Fletcher talks to the Brum Group; Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre, 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk or rog.peyton at btinternet com. Further meetings: 10 August, Summer Social meal at the Black Eagle pub; September, Simon R. Green; October tba; November, Eric Brown; December, Christmas Social.

Clarke Award Redux. ‘The 2012 winner of the Arthur C. Clarke Award [...] is Rhianna White – the first female winner. The monolith trophy, together with a certificate, a copy of an Arthur C. Clarke book, and a cheque from the Foundation, were presented ...’ Before the outraged letters pour in from Pat Cadigan, Pat Cadigan and other past Clarke winners of a ladylike persuasion: this is the *other* Clarke Award, for science achievement at Huish College, Taunton, where ACC studied as a teenager in the 1930s. This, indeed, is the

Clarke Award that's still funded by the Arthur C. Clarke Foundation.
(www.clarkefoundation.org) [MT]

Outraged Letters II. Relaxing the stern *Ansible* rule of omitting mere egoboo, here's a selection from the 'Gosh, isn't 300 a shiny round number' postbag.

- *R.I. Barycz*, as is his wont, sends a longish handwritten letter of which parts elude my still-dodgy eyesight. After a round-up of comparable 2012 events like the *Titanic* centenary, the Queen's Jubilee, the London Olympics and the end of the world: 'I look forward to *A300* (and even more to *A301*, *302*, *303* ... to infinity and beyond!). Even though there is a certain melancholia to your R.I.P. section. Not so much that people die in alphabetical order, but now I notice more and more of them are younger than what I am. Oh my. Fans die both young and fair / Brightness falls from the air / I must write that novel, now or nevaire ...'
- *Bob Blanchett*: 'Delighted you've hit 300! I hope Thog's Jubilee barge (with operating replica Roman Catapult) was an accurate success.'
- *John Dallman*: 'Throughout its run, it has been essential reading. The rows of Hugos do convey some of this, but by no means all.'
- *Margaret Hoyt* hoped, in vain, 'that *Ansible* 300 will be an all-singing, all-dancing, all-Technicolor (or something like that) issue.'
- *Meccarello [at] gmail*: 'I'm not the first I imagine. 300 issues are quite the achievement. Congratulations.'
- *Murray MacLachlan*: 'Congrats on 300! You have always been a gracious and hospitable correspondent, and I've always felt that the fan lounge that is *Ansible* is dressed in the colours and style of the Langford's reception room. Thank you for inviting so many people in.'
- *Lloyd Penney*: 'Whether or not the 300th issue is a bumper e-pub or not, congratulations on hitting that impressive number. Few zines of any kind can brag about that number.' (Ah, but [The Drink Tank](#) passed that particular hurdle in 2011 despite having started 26 years later.)
- *Andrew Stephenson*: 'I'm waiting for *A380*: biggest ever; amazing range; engines that occasionally catch fire; and more levels than you can shake an innuendo at. [Regarding Terry Pratchett's renamed Gloucester Old Spot:] Considering what eventually happens to your average domesticated pig, I'd say "Snuff" is a smartly apt name. / I've just figured out these awards you keep mentioning. All one has to do is, write a story/novel/collection or maybe a blog and they give you money (maybe) and a chunk of ugly art. Sometimes

they name an animal. Over the years I have named several cats, which is okay, but the other stuff sounds really cool. Would a note to the milkman be enough, you think?’

- *Alexander Yudenitsch* shows arcane powers of precognition: ‘Well, I’d really like having a “special bumper #300 issue”, but something tells me it won’t really happen (and NOT because I haven’t prepared any contribution – besides, past efforts have proved that such things are usually met with a resounding silence, so I doubt anyone will miss it), but I’d like to at least let you know, once more, how important *Ansible* has been (and is) for me, and wish you both the best, now and forever!’

- Many thanks to all. For the sake of sanity I’m not even thinking about numbers like 400.

Thog Gets Fan Mail. *Margaret Hoyt* put in a request for ‘a pinup of dear Thog sometime in the future.’ The only known likeness of Thog the Mighty is Peter Andrew Jones’s cover painting for *The Book of the Magnakai* (1992) by Joe Dever and John Grant. Although *Ansible* doesn’t have a centrefold, Mr Grant kindly obliged with a scan – now added to Thog.org for your viewing pleasure:

JOE DEVER'S
LEGENDS OF LONE WOLF

THE BOOK OF THE MAGNAKAI



JOE DEVER AND JOHN GRANT

Ansible 300 Copyright © David Langford, 2012. Thanks to Paul Barnett, Jim Chandler, Ian Covell, Jim Darroch, Gordon Davie, Paul Di Filippo, Terry Edge, Steve Green, Martyn P. Jackson, Dan Kimmel, Michael J. Lowrey, Matt C. Neumann, Omega, Andrew I. Porter, SF Site, Jim Steel, Arthur Tansky, Markus Thierstein, Nicholas Whyte, Martin Morse Wooster, and Hero Distributors: Dave Corby (BSFG), SCIS/Prophecy, Alan Stewart (Australia). 2 July 2012.

Ansible 301, August 2012

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Web news.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE, Granek's Equation, Whitewick or Persholt.

Big Locog Is Watching. With current UK restrictions on free speech, *Ansible* dares not refer to the author Jack London, the sf stories *After London* and *London's Peril*, or the prophetic BBC comedy *Twenty Twelve*. It could be fatal to cite Jack Vance's *The Five Gold Bands* or to juxtapose Isaac Asimov's 'Gold' with Justina Robson's *Silver Screen* and Stephen Baxter's *Bronze Summer*. Above all, don't mention Nigel Kneale:

The Year of the Sex Olympics

Brian Aldiss revealed his infallible 1970s pickup technique. Having sat in a train opposite a young woman reading his raunchy *The Hand-Reared Boy*: "You're reading a book I wrote. Do you like it? ... Let's go and have a coffee, or go to your place?" A generous offer, I thought! But she was pretty snooty about it, or shy.' (*Independent*, 28 July)

Neil Clarke of *Clarkesworld* fame [had a heart attack](#) while setting up his dealer's table at Readercon on 12 July, and spent the rest of the convention in a hospital next door. He recovered well, with two stents, but on getting home had new trouble with a kidney stone. Ouch. [F]

Emanuel Cleaver exhorted fellow US Congress members in his weekly letter: 'I am protesting these new Twilight vampire movies. They are disgusting. After all, everyone knows that real vampires and werewolves don't date the same girl. This is a travesty that must be addressed by the horror scholars of this generation, otherwise millions of young kids will grow to adulthood thinking that Twilight movies are as accurate as Bram Stoker's *Dracula*.' (An actual political point follows.) Everyone's a critic these days. ([Politico](#), 23 July) [MMW]

Gareth Edwards, director of the new *Godzilla*, reassures those who doubt the plausibility of a huge city-smashing reptile: ‘There’s nothing scifi about this movie. It’s very grounded, very realistic.’ ([io9](#)) [cj]

Terry Goodkind took revenge on a fan who’d openly pirated the latest fantasy in his *Sword of Interminability* series (a self-published ebook), by posting the offender’s details and photo on Facebook after private contact efforts were ignored. ‘How ironic you claim to be a fan of books that uphold truth and honour above all else. We hope the price of fame is worth the cost of your infamy.’ The pirate’s Web page(s) and Twitter account soon vanished; onlookers debated whether this was praiseworthy rough justice – after all, ‘information wants to be free’ – or regrettable vigilantism. ([Guardian](#), 11 July) [AIP]

Peter Jackson’s and Warner Bros’ plan to expand the *Hobbit* project from two films to three – using spare *Lord of the Rings* material since ‘There’s so much good stuff in the appendices that we haven’t been able to squeeze into these movies’ ([Telegraph](#), 26 July) – was thoughtfully described by *The Independent*’s John Walsh as ‘stretching an ant’s arse over a rain barrel.’ ([Independent](#), 26 July) [MPJ]

Ursula K. Le Guin said in a July interview that in recent years the publishing industry – specifically, Harcourt – has been trying to tinker with the basics of her novels: ‘There was an increasing pressure to make them more like Harry Potter.’ ([Wired](#), 25 July) Imagine that: a Le Guin YA story about a young hero growing up in a school for wizards!

Barry N. Malzberg had successful knee replacement surgery on 24 July and has since been savouring the pangs of rehab therapy. [PDF]

Patrick Stewart carried some kind of torch through Croydon on 23 July. A long, witty report from Croydon fandom is awaited. [F770]

Controm

10-12 Aug • **Congenial** (Unicon/RPG), Murray Edwards College, Cambridge. £30 reg (under-16s £15). Contact Congenial, 19 Uphall Road, Cambridge, CB1 3HX. See also congenial.org.uk.

16-20 Aug • **Return of the Ring** (Tolkien Society), Loughborough

University. £90 reg; £75 child/concessions; £20 supp; £1 under-5s, to 20 York Rd, Stony Stratford, Bucks, MK11 1BJ; or register online at www.returnofthering.org. Day rate £35; £30 child/concessions.

18-19 Aug • **Caption** (small-press comics), East Oxford Community Centre, 44B Princes St, Iffley. Starts 10am. £10 or £5/day at door.

23-27 Aug • **Frightfest** (horror film festival), Empire Cinema, Leicester Square, London. Booking: see www.frightfest.co.uk.

24-27 Aug • **Discworld Convention**, Birmingham. Sold out.

28 Aug • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Melton Mowbray, 18 Holborn, London, EC1N 2LE. 5/6pm for 7pm. With Shaun Tan. *NB Tue, not Wed.*

30 Aug - 3 Sep • **Chicon 7** (70th Worldcon), Hyatt Regency, Chicago. *Now \$230 reg* (both in advance and at the door), \$560 family, \$100 YA (17-21), \$75 child (5-16), accompanied under-5s free. Day rates: Thu \$50; Fri, Sat, Sun \$70; Mon \$40. More at www.chicon7.org. Hugo voting has now closed and the main Worldcon hotel is full.

1-2 Sep • **SF Weekend** in Weaver Words festival (29 Aug-9 Sep), Frodsham, Cheshire. See www.weaverwords.org.uk; 0845 557 7469.

6-9 Sep • **The Asylum** (steampunk), Lincoln. £22 basic reg (plus £1.20 booking fee) with many discounts and extras. Online booking only: steampunk.synthasite.com. Contact majortinker at aol dot com.

15 Sep • **Bristol Beer & Blake's 7**, Knight's Templar, Unit 1 Temple Square, Temple Quay, Bristol, BS1 6DG. 12:15 to 7pm-ish.

21 Sep • **The Hobbit at 75**, British Library, 6:30pm-8pm. £7.50, £5 unwaged. Details and bookings at www.bl.uk.

21-23 Sep • **Oxonmoot** (Tolkien Soc), Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford. *Now £47 reg* (members £38); see www.tolkiensociety.org/oxon/ for various child discounts. Cheques to Tolkien Society, 149/4 Morrison St, Edinburgh, EH3 8AG. *Registration deadline is 3 September.*

22-23 Sep • **H.G. Wells Festival**, The Grand, The Leas, Folkestone, CT20 2XL. Comprises £40 dinner 7:30pm Sat; £15 lunch noon Sun with speech. Contact 01 303 222 222; www.wellsfestival.com.

22 Sep • **Titancon**, Europa Hotel, Belfast. £18 reg, *rising to £20 on 1*

September. Also GoH reading on previous evening in McHugh's pub as part of Belfast's free Culture Night. See www.titancon.com for more.

4-7 Oct • **Grimmfest 2012** (horror/cult film festival), Manchester. £45, *to rise soon*, plus £2 booking fee. Gory details at grimmfest.com.

25-27 Feb 2013 • **Redemption '13** (multimedia sf), Britannia Hotel, Fairfax St, Coventry, CV1 5RP. GoH Virginia Hey, Kim Newman; more TBA. £65 reg, *rising to £70 on 1 September*; unwaged etc £20 less; £75 at door. £15 supp and under-18s; under-3s free. Contact 61 Chaucer Road, Farnborough, Hampshire, GU14 8SP.

29 Mar - 1 Apr 2013 • **EightSquaredCon** (Eastercon), Bradford. *Now £60 reg*, rising to £70 on 1 February; £25 supp/junior (12-17); £10 child (5-11); £1 infant. Online booking www.eightsquaredcon.org.

25-28 Jul 2014 • **Continuum 2014** (RPG), John Foster Hall, Leicester University. Details TBA. See www.continuum.uk.net.

Rumblings. *London in 2014* (unstoppable Worldcon bid) issued its *Progress Report -1* in digital form only – see www.londonin2014.org – and I was deeply relieved to find I'm not on the committee.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Comic-Con. 'For those unwilling to carry a warlock's staff, wear spandex superhero tights, or daub themselves in green body paint to create the appearance of a slightly less Incredible Hulk, the Comic-Con convention in San Diego may look like an anomalous gathering of geeks, social recluses, and science fiction obsessives.' (Matthew Garrahan, *Financial Times*, 14 July) [MMW]

Awards. *Cordwainer Smith Rediscovery*: Fredric Brown.

- *Prometheus* (libertarian): Delia Sherman, *The Freedom Maze*, and Ernest Cline, *Ready Player One* (tie). CLASSIC E.M. Forster, 'The Machine Stops' (1909).

- *Eaton* (sf life achievement): Ray Harryhausen, Stan Lee, Ursula K. Le Guin. [L]

- *Pulitzer*: the 2012 poetry winner, Tracy K. Smith's collection *Life on Mars*, has much science and sf content. [SS]

- *Rhysling* (poetry). LONG Megan Arkenberg, ‘The Curator Speaks in the Department of Dead Languages’ (*Strange Horizons* 6/11). SHORT Shira Lipkin, ‘The Library, After’ (*Mythic Delirium* 6/11)
- *Seiun* (Japan) foreign categories: NOVEL Paolo Bacigalupi, *The Windup Girl*, trans Kazue Tanaka & Hiroshi Kaneko. SHORT Ted Chiang, ‘The Lifecycle of Software Objects’, trans Nozomi Ohmori.
- *Shirley Jackson* (suspense/horror), novel category: Sheri Holman, *Witches on the Road Tonight*.
- *World Fantasy, Life Achievement*: Alan Garner, George R.R. Martin.
- *Emmy Awards*: genre favourites are *American Horror Story*, nominated in 17 categories, and *Game of Thrones*, 12 categories.
- *Booker Prize* longlisted titles of alleged genre interest: Ned Beaman, *The Teleportation Accident*; Will Self, *Umbrella*; Sam Thompson, *Communion Town*. [L]

We Are Everywhere. Following reports of racist intimidation by Greece’s far-right Golden Dawn party: ‘Mr. Kasidiaris, the Golden Dawn spokesman, denied accusations of vigilantism, including charges of beatings and extremism. “This is not serious stuff,” he said. “It’s science fiction, a screenplay and an urban legend.”’ (*NY Times*, 10 July) [JB]

R.I.P. William Asher (1921-2012), US director of *The 27th Day* (1957) and *Bewitched* (1964-1972), died on 16 July; he was 90. [F]

- *Ernest Borgnine* (1917-2012), Oscar-winning US actor, died on 8 July aged 95. Genre credits include *The Devil’s Rain* (1975), *The Ghost of Flight 401* (1978), *The Black Hole* (1979), *Escape From New York* (1981), *Deadly Blessing* (1981), and *Alice in Wonderland* (1985); also the tv *Captain Video* (1951) and *Future Cop* (1976-1977, famously sued by Harlan Ellison). [SG]
- *Cathy Ball*, Oklahoma fan active and popular in UK fandom while stationed here in the late 70s/early 80s, died on 5 July; she was 59. [KC]
- *Tage Eskestad* (1920-2012), Danish author of several sf novels 1967-1981 – notably *Flygninge fra Himlen* (1973), an sf interpretation of The Book of Enoch, and *Matriarkatet* (1975), a post-apocalyptic dystopia – has died at age 92. [KAM]
- *Norman Felton* (1913-2012), UK-born producer of *The Man From U.N.C.L.E.* (1964-1968) and its spinoffs, died on 25 June; he was 99. [MPJ]
- *James Grout* (1927-2012), UK actor whose genre credits include *The Lord of the Rings* (1981 radio), *The Box of Delights* (1984 tv), *Man and Superman*

(1984 tv) and *Old Harry's Game* (1995-2010 radio), died on 24 June aged 84. [AW]

- *Margaret Mahy* (1936-2012), NZ author of 160 children's and YA books including many supernatural fantasies, died on 23 July; she was 76. Her numerous awards include two Carnegie Medals – she was the first Carnegie winner from outside Britain – and the Hans Christian Andersen Award. [JF]
- *Chris Marker* (1921-2012), French writer, artist and film-maker whose time-travel classic *La Jetée* (1962, composed almost entirely of stills) was the acknowledged inspiration for *Twelve Monkeys* (1995), died on 29 July, the day of his 91st birthday. [MJE]
- *Eric Sykes* (1923-2012), noted UK comic actor and writer whose genre credits range from 1950s *Goon Show* script contributions to parts in *Alice in Wonderland* (1985 tv), *Gormenghast* (2000 tv), *The Others* (2001) and *Harry Potter and The Goblet of Fire* (2005), died on 4 July. He was 89. [AW]
- *Mary Tamm* (1950-2012), UK actress best known as Tom Baker's Time Lady companion Romana in *Doctor Who* 1978-1979, died on 26 July aged 62. Another genre role was in *Tales that Witness Madness* (1973). [AW]
- *Ginny Tyler* (1925-2012), US voice actress heard in many genre animations including *The Sword in the Stone* (1963), *Mary Poppins* (1964), *Space Ghost* (tv 1966-1968) and *The Fantastic Four* (tv 1978), died on 13 July aged 86. [SFS]
- *Gore Vidal* (1925-2012), major US author and polemicist who made regular use of sf and fantasy devices, died on 31 July; he was 86. Works of genre importance include *Messiah* (1954), *Visit to a Small Planet* (1957 play), *Kalki* (1978), *Duluth* (1983), *Live From Golgotha* (1992), *The Smithsonian Institution* (1998) and various critical essays. [F]
- *Simon Ward* (1941-2012), UK actor seen in *Frankenstein Must Be Destroyed* (1969), *Holocaust 2000* (1977), *The Monster Club* (1981) and *Supergirl* (1984), died on 20 July aged 70. [MMW]
- *Richard D. Zanuck* (1934-2012), US film producer of *Jaws* (1975) fame, died on 13 July aged 77. Films include *Cocoon* (1985), *Chain Reaction* (1996), *Deep Impact* (1998), *Planet of the Apes* (2001 remake), *Reign of Fire* (2002), *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* (2005), *Alice in Wonderland* (2010), *Dark Shadows* (2012) and *Hidden* (due 2013). [SG]

As Others Appreciate Us. 'Iain M Banks's novel *Use of Weapons* has a narrative structure that, if it were not a work of science fiction, would qualify it as the most "literary" of literary fiction.' (John Mullan, [Guardian Book](#)

[Club](#), 20 July) [DH]

Outraged Letters. *Stephen Baxter*: ‘Well done Dave – 300 not out! Essential reading as ever.’ Thanks for all similar messages in the wake of the big 300.

- *Brad Foster* replies to email from your editor: ““Stand in the dock together?” Heck, you mean I might get a free trip to London out of this, too? Sounds like a deal to me. Besides, I have no idea what you are talking about, is it something to do with my cartoonist homage to the artistic field of cubism? Any other view is surely in mind of the beholder only, and in no way remotely the intention of the artist.’

- *Henry Wessells* invites me to join his [John Sladek Society](#). ‘The chief or only aim is to put a blue plaque on 221B [Camden High St]: “SLADEK – DISCH – ZOLINE / in a squalor worthy of today’s Mozambique / 1968”.’

- *Phil Stephensen-Payne* on alleged tiddliness in *HIGNFY* (Claire M. Jordan, [A300](#)): ‘This is utter nonsense. Shatner makes a career these days of this sort of character (just watch any series of *Boston Legal*) and while he was probably a little out of his depth, the suggestion that he was drunk is just plain silly.’ (Claire is prepared to accept that despite appearances it was all part of the act, but wonders: ‘Is he a good enough actor to *act* drunk? It’s quite a difficult thing to do.’)

Magazine Scene. With issue 23 (June-July), *Black Static* has shrunk from 20x27.5cm to 17x24cm and grown from 64pp to 96pp. Its sister magazine *Interzone* may do the same if readers don’t object to the discontinuity in their neat rows of back issues. Feedback is requested.

A Far, Far Batter Thing. Allegedly *The Dark Knight Rises* is ‘loosely based’ on *A Tale of Two Cities* (*Independent*, 15 July) [MPJ]

Random Fandom. *Readercon*’s stated ‘zero tolerance’ policy, whereby sexual harassment brings ‘permanent suspension of membership’, led to [controversy](#) when [the convention board chose to ban](#) a (serial, as it turned out, and persistent though told repeatedly to stop) offender for two years. The facts are undisputed; the last such ban was for life; what had changed, since the policy hadn’t? The former offender was an outsider but this time it’s a well-known fan who conveyed that he was ‘sincerely regretful’. Complaints that some are more equal than others soon followed, and a vast [protest petition](#) is growing online. [Later: [a public statement from Readercon](#).]

As Others Try to Love Us. ‘Lethem’s ambition to marry the crime novel

with science fiction tripped the sanctimonious alarm bells my newly-minted MFA had wired into my aesthetic sense, and I read *Gun (With Occasional Music)* without feeling like I understood it and made for *Amnesia Moon*, another dystopia that plainly read to me like science fiction (although I had never read science fiction). More alarm bells, precipitating an incipient loathing for genre.’ (Jaime Clarke, introducing *Conversations with Jonathan Lethem* ed. Clarke, 2011) [MMW]

The Dead Past. *70 Years Ago*, the world war had a chilling side-effect: ‘Doc Smith’s new [*Lensman*] book was slowed down for a while for he has gone to work for a big munitions firm as a Chemical Engineer, and since his work for the past twenty years or so has been Cereal Chemistry, and he had to do a little “boning up” on his explosives at first. But he expected to get at it soon the last time I saw him. so perhaps he is already working again in his spare time.’ (E. Everett Evans, [Futurian War Digest 22](#), August 1942) A critical insight from the same piece: ‘Doc really writes TWO stories in ONE; the “bang-bang” story for the casual reader, and the deeply-plotted, carefully worked out psychological story for the deeper reader and thinker.’

- *30 Years Ago*: ‘*Brain Of Britain* (radio) lately featured strange questions – e.g. about “Reindeers of the Lost Ark” – and strange answers also. “*Billion Year Spree. New Maps of Hell.* What do these books have in common?” “Er ... Drug addiction.”’ (*Ansible* 28, August/September 1982)

C.o.A. *Lilian Edwards*, 36 Gillespie Crescent, Edinburgh, EH10 4HX.

Fanfundery. Despite the lack of a North American DUFF winner to grace this year’s Australian NatCon, I gather DUFF was represented by ‘a small dazed looking stuffed teddybear called “Hold Over Funds”’. [YR]

Thog’s Masterclass. *Silence is Golden Dept.* ““Don’t talk.” Her words were soundless. “Just come with me.”” (Jack Williamson, ‘The Humanoid Universe’, June 1980 *Analog*) [CG]

- *Eyeballs in the Sky.* ‘Her eyes were rocking with water.’ (Sarah Hall, *Daughters of the North*, 2007) [PB]

- ‘The solid steel was back in those watery eyes.’ (Julie Hyzy, ‘Five Sorrowful Mysteries’ in *At the Scene of the Crime*, 2008, ed. Dana Stabenow) [PB]

- *Dept of Early Rising.* ‘Liam gave up trying to scrub his brain awake through his scalp.’ (Dana Stabenow, ‘On the Evidence’, in *At the Scene of the Crime*

as above)

- *Self-Introduction Dept.* ‘As she peered up at him, Jupiter suddenly realized she was a Gypsy. Her first words confirmed this. “I am Zelda, the Gypsy,” she said.’ (Robert Arthur, *The Mystery of the Talking Skull*, 1969) [PL]
 - *Neat Tricks Dept.* ‘It was an appropriate start to a night during which my heart rarely left my mouth except to sink to my boots.’ (Eric Ambler, *The Dark Frontier*, 1936) [PB]
 - ‘Her mind boiled coldly.’ (Felicity Savage, *Humility Garden*, 1995) [BA]
 - ‘And energy that she could never access any other time, not even when she needed it, welled up like clotted urgent speech in her fingers.’ (*Ibid*)
 - *Dept of Can This Be Euphemism?* ‘Jimmy looked over Nadine’s head at Annabeth and Sara, felt all three of them blow through his chest, fill him up, and turn him to dust at the same time.’ (Dennis Lehane, *Mystic River*, 2001) [PB]
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Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 1 August 2012: Iain M. Banks in conversation (*Guardian Book Club*), 7:30pm, Hall One, Kings Place, Kings Cross, London. 7:30pm. £9.50. Probably too late to book, but just in case:

<http://tinyurl.com/cmlqcos>

- 10 August 2012, Brum Group: Summer Social restaurant meal at the Black Eagle pub – advance booking essential, £5 deposit. Normal venue is the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre, 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk or rog.peyton at btinternet com. Further meetings: September, Simon R. Green; October tba; November, Eric Brown; December, Christmas Social.

Outraged Letters II. *Simon R. Green:* ‘I can’t believe we’ve lost three *Doctor Who* companions, in such a short space of time. Sarah Jane, Liz Shaw, and Romana. Of course, it’s three marvellous and talented actresses who’ve died, but I never knew them. I do feel that I knew the characters they played. Fictional characters from beloved shows are like extended family. They matter to us. I like to think that Liz Sladen, Caroline John and Mary Tamm are travelling through the real Outer Realms now, reunited with the Doctor, going places even the Tardis could never take them. Travel on, sweet

ladies. / I swear I'm getting more sentimental as I get older. It's probably time I killed you in a book again.' – As a bitter, twisted novelist said to Nero Wolfe on a similar occasion: 'You will die, sir, in the most abhorrent manner conceivable to an appalling infantile imagination. I promise you.' (Rex Stout, *The League of Frightened Men*, 1935)

Cold Trail. US fan J.B. Post is trying to trace a 1960s airletter sent to him by Arthur C. Clarke, regretting that Clarke couldn't be principal speaker at the Philadelphia SF Society's Philcon owing to current work on Stanley Kubrick's *2001*. The letter subsequently vanished from a PSFS meeting and, if not destroyed, *may* have found its way to some institutional archive. If so: 'I don't think PSFS would want it back, merely a note that it is on loan ...'
[AIP]

Thog's Second Helping. *Sleepy Simile Special*. 'Then he knew nothing until he was awaked in the early morning by what sounded exactly like the crack of doom. [New chapter:] It was not, however, the crack of doom.' (Murray Leinster, *Space Platform*, 1953) [KM]

- 'The sound [of the electronic doorbell] circulated round the dark room like a cat on the prowl, and padded onto the face of the sleeping man.' (Gordon Walters, 'Zelerinda' in *Amazing Stories*, August 1964) [CG]
- 'The man stirred in his sleep. Lines, like cracks in the hyperspace barrier, spread over his face.' (*Ibid*)

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1 August 2012.

Ansible 302, September 2012

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Web news.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or additional space on the mantelpiece.

Chicon 7. Here are the Hugos, for which a near-record 1922 valid ballots were cast: NOVEL Jo Walton, *Among Others*. NOVELLA Kij Johnson, 'The Man Who Bridged the Mist' (*Asimov's* 10/11). NOVELETTE Charlie Jane Anders, 'Six Months, Three Days' (Tor.com). SHORT STORY Ken Liu, 'The Paper Menagerie' (*F&SF* 3/11). RELATED WORK John Clute, David Langford, Peter Nicholls, Graham Sleight (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Science Fiction, Third Edition*. (Whoopee! The *SFE* team is deeply thrilled and gratified; thanks to all voters.) GRAPHIC STORY Ursula Vernon, *Digger*. DRAMATIC – LONG *Game of Thrones: Season 1*. DRAMATIC – SHORT *Doctor Who: 'The Doctor's Wife'*. PRO EDITOR – LONG Betsy Wollheim. PRO EDITOR – SHORT Sheila Williams. PRO ARTIST John Picacio. SEMIPROZINE *Locus*. FANZINE *SF Signal*. FANCAST *SF Squeecast*. FAN WRITER Jim C. Hines. FAN ARTIST Maurine Starkey. JOHN W. CAMPBELL AWARD E. Lily Yu. [L]

- Traditional tinkering with Hugo rules: the new Best Fancast category was ratified; likewise, with slight changes, the 2011 tweaks to Semiprozine and Fanzine definitions; Graphic Story at last becomes permanent; a proposed Young Adult category was voted down.
 - **More Chicon Awards.** *Big Heart*: Juanita Coulson. *Sidewise* (alternate history): LONG Ian R. MacLeod, *Wake Up and Dream*. SHORT Lisa Goldstein. 'Paradise Is a Walled Garden' (*Asimov's* 8/11).
 - **London in 2014**, to no one's surprise, won the Worldcon site selection vote. The convention name is Loncon 3; [details below](#).
 - **Nippon 2007 News.** The Japanese worldcon's report to Chicon confirmed a larger-than-expected net loss of \$116,384; a shade over \$84,000 remains unpaid.
-

The Sands of Mars

Lauren Beukes's *Zoo City* appeared in [an Observer list](#) titled 'The 10 best contemporary African books'; a welcome change from lists of 'The 10 best excluding that ghastly genre stuff'. (26 August) [EA]

Ray Bradbury was honoured again by NASA, which announced on what would have been his 92nd birthday (22 August) that the touchdown site of the Mars rover Curiosity is named Bradbury Landing. Less respectfully, released 1960s FBI files show that Bradbury was investigated as a possible Communist, an accusation made by B-movie screenwriter Martin Berkeley – who was a card-carrying Party member and denounced 155 Hollywood colleagues, telling the FBI that 'that the general aim of these science fiction writers is to frighten the people into a state of paralysis or psychological incompetence bordering on hysteria', whereupon World War III was as good as won. Bradbury received a clean bill of political health. ([Huffington Post](#), 28 August) [DL]

Parke Godwin, the US novelist, is sadly in decline with failing memory and concentration – unable to read or write. Messages from friends may be sent c/o connorfc at earthlink dot net. ([Weird Tales](#))

Rowena Morrill was unable to attend Chicon 7 as the Artist Guest of Honour owing to health problems from which she is recovering.

Stanley Schmidt has retired after spending (as did John W. Campbell) 34 years as editor of *Analog*. Trevor Quachri, current managing editor of both *Analog* and *Asimov's*, will take over. [L]

Michael Swanwick remembers Hazel's Language Lessons: 'My wanderings have brought me to Newfoundland, so ... greetings from Brigus! I write because in the dictionary of newfoundland english, an actual book, I found the following definition: "george martin: an ankle-high rubber boot with lacings. Also known as rubber lumps." and for some reason it seemed to me that you needed to know this.' (9 August)

Anne VanderMeer, sidelined by the new management at *Weird Tales* despite steering the magazine to its only Hugo while editor-in-chief, resigned from *WT* during the recent online furore (of which [more below](#)) and is now a consulting fiction editor for Tor.com.

Conquinate

Until 16 Sep • **Tea with Alice/Storyloom** (exhibitions), Story Museum, Rochester House, 42 Pembroke St, Oxford, OX1 1BP. Each £5, £3 concessions. www.storymuseum.org.uk; enquiries 01865 790050.

15 Sep • **Bristol Beer & Blake's 7**, Knight's Templar, Unit 1 Temple Square, Temple Quay, Bristol, BS1 6DG. 12:15 to 7pm-ish.

15 Sep • **From Imagination to Reality**, British Interplanetary Society, London. 9am-7pm. £40 reg at www.bis-space.com.

21 Sep • **The Hobbit at 75**, British Library, 6:30pm-8pm. £7.50, £5 unwaged. Details and bookings at www.bl.uk.

21-23 Sep • **Oxonmoot** (Tolkien Soc), Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford. £47 reg (members £38); see www.tolkiensociety.org/oxon/ for various child discounts. Cheques to Tolkien Society, 149/4 Morrison St, Edinburgh, EH3 8AG. Registration deadline is 3 September.

22-23 Sep • **H.G. Wells Festival**, The Grand, The Leas, Folkestone, CT20 2XL. Comprises £40 dinner 7:30pm Sat; £15 lunch noon Sun with speech. Contact 01 303 222 222; www.wellsfestival.com.

22 Sep • **Titancon**, Europa Hotel, Belfast. *Now £20 reg*. Additional GoH reading on previous evening in McHugh's pub as part of Belfast's free Culture Night. See www.titancon.com for more.

26 Sep • **BSFA Open Meeting**, The Argyle pub, Leather Lane, London (*new venue*). 5/6pm for 7pm. With Rob Shearman.

27-30 Sept • **Fantasycon 2012**, Royal Albion Hotel, Brighton. £65 reg (BFS members £60); day rate £40, Saturday only. Payment via PayPal at fantasycon2012.org/join.php, or to 10 Haycroft Gardens, Mastin Moor, Chesterfield, Derbyshire, S43 3FE.

4-7 Oct • **Grimmfest 2012** (horror/cult film festival), Manchester. £45, *to rise soon*, plus £2 booking fee. Gory details at grimmfest.com.

8 Oct • **Discovering Alternate Genres**, Custard Factory, Gibb St, Birmingham, B9 4AA. 7-8:30pm. Peter F. Hamilton, Stan Nicholls, others. £8; £5 concessions. See www.birminghambookfestival.org.

16-18 Nov • **Winter Horrors** (workshop), Dove Valley Centre, Derbyshire. £150 inclusive. Contact alexdavis@events.hotmail.co.uk

16-17 Feb 2013 • **Picocon 30**, Imperial College Union, London. GoH Peter F. Hamilton, others. Registration cost TBA. Contact ICSF, Beit Quad, Prince Consort Road, London, SW7 2BB; picocon at icsf co uk.

25-27 Feb 2013 • **Redemption '13** (multimedia sf), Britannia Hotel, Fairfax St, Coventry, CV1 5RP. Now £70 reg; unwaged etc £20 less; £75 at door. £15 supp and under-18s; under-3s free. Contact 61 Chaucer Road, Farnborough, Hampshire, GU14 8SP.

25-28 Apr 2013 • **Dead by Dawn** (horror film festival), Filmhouse, Edinburgh. Box office 0131 228 2688; www.deadbydawn.co.uk.

11-12 May 2013 • **Bristol Comic Expo**, Brunel's Old Station and Ramada Jarvis Hotel, Bristol. See www.bristolexpo.co.uk.

1-4 Nov 2013 • **Irish Discworld Convention**, Radisson Blu Limerick, Ennis Rd, Limerick, Ireland. €40 reg; €30 students/concessions, €15 teen (13-18), €10 junior (8-12), under-8s free. Online registration at www.idwcon.org.

14-18 Aug 2014 • **Loncon 3** (72nd Worldcon), ExCeL centre, London Docklands. GoH Iain Banks, John Clute, Malcolm Edwards, Chris Foss, Jeanne Gomoll, Robin Hobb, Bryan Talbot. £95.00 reg; £65.00 YA; £30.00 child; £2.00 infant; £230.00 family; £25.00 supp. See www.loncon3.org. No visible snailmail contact as yet.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. Joseph Bottum reviews that nice Mr Scalzi's *Redshirts*: 'Lots of its authors, and a slew of its readers, like to think that science fiction sails on the ocean of science, but mostly it just paddles in the shallows of literature.' (*Weekly Standard*, 20 August) [MMW] And sometimes it proudly wallows in the gutters of popularity.

Mythopoeic Awards (fantasy fiction and scholarship): ADULT Lisa Goldstein, *The Uncertain Places*. CHILDREN'S Delia Sherman, *The Freedom Maze*. SCHOLARSHIP – INKLINGS Carl Phelpstead, *Tolkien and Wales: Language, Literature and Identity*. SCHOLARSHIP – OTHER Jack Zipes, *The Enchanted Screen: The Unknown History of Fairy-Tale Films*.

When All Else Fails. 'Writer-director Judd Apatow, already thinking ahead

to his next movie, says, “I’ve covered college, marriage, having a baby, turning 40, and fatal diseases – there’s almost nothing left at this point. I’m going to have to switch to science fiction.” (*Entertainment Weekly*, 17/24 August 2012 double issue) [PL]

R.I.P. *Harry Harrison* (1925-2012), who for *Ansible* readers needs no introduction, died on 15 August; he was 87. Following early work as a comics artist and magazine editor, Harry was best known for his fiction, launching well-loved series characters in *Deathworld* (1960), *The Stainless Steel Rat* (1961) and *Bill the Galactic Hero* (1965); notable standalones include *Make Room! Make Room!* (1966, unfaithfully filmed as *Soylent Green*), *Captive Universe* (1969) and *A Transatlantic Tunnel, Hurrah!* (1972). He edited many anthologies, both solo and in collaboration with Brian Aldiss; he entered the SF Hall of Fame in 2004 and was made a SFWA Grand Master in 2009. His unflagging, wisecracking energy enlivened a great many conventions. Harry will be sadly missed.

- *Ken Hunt* (1955-2012) Chicago fan and con-runner who was Head of Logistics for Chicon 7, died on 20 August.
- *Joe Kubert* (1926-2012), noted US comics artist in many genres – his DC Comics *Hawkman* superhero work is much admired – died on 12 August aged 85. Kip Williams writes: ‘He did fantasy stories, Viking stories, caveman stories, war stories, SF stories, and anything else. A very bold, direct style of drawing. Founded a school for comic art. Left two sons who are both respected in the field.’
- *George Leech* (1921-2012), UK stunt arranger and performer who worked on *The Prisoner*, *Superman* (1978) and eleven James Bond films (1962-1985), died on 17 June aged 90. [MPJ]
- *Jerry Nelson* (1934-2012), US puppeteer and voice actor in many *Muppets* and (in particular as Count von Count) *Sesame Street* productions plus the 1980s tv series *Fraggle Rock*, died on 23 August; he was 78. [MPJ]
- *Adam Niswander* (1946-2012), US author of *The Charm* (1993) and several other Lovecraftian and dark-fantasy novels, died on 12 August aged 66. [PS]
- *Carlo Rambaldi* (1925-2012), Italian special effects artist who shared Oscars for his work on *Alien* (1979) and *ET* (1982; he created the lovable title character) and a special Academy Award for *King Kong* (1976), died on 10 August. He was 86. [SG/MPJ]
- *Graeme Roberts*, UK book dealer who for many years ran the Magpie Bookshop in Spitalfields and more recently traded online, died in August.

[BA]

- *Tony Scott* (1944-2012), UK-born producer and director whose genre credits include *The Hunger* (1983), *The Andromeda Strain* (2008 tv) and *Prometheus* (2012 with brother Ridley), committed suicide on 19 August; he was 68. Still forthcoming: *Coma* (tv), *Ion* and *Prometheus 2*. [LK]
- *Josepha Sherman* (1946-2012), US sf/fantasy author and editor whose debut (solo) novel *The Shining Falcon* (1989) won the Compton Crook award, died on 23 August aged 65. Other works included a *Star Trek* spinoff trilogy with Susan Shwartz and the hefty *Storytelling: An Encyclopedia of Mythology and Folklore*. [PDF]
- *Mel Stuart* (1928-2012), US film producer/director best known for the first version of *Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory* (1971), died on 9 August; he was 83. [MPJ]
- *Roland C. Wagner* (1960-2012), French sf author and anthologist whose first novel appeared in 1987 and whose alternate-history magnum opus *Rêves de Gloire* (2011) won several awards, died in a car accident on 5 August; he was 51. [J-DB]

Thog's Astronomy Masterclass. 'That up there's the constellation of Orion ... otherwise known as the Big Bear.' (John Huston, screenplay for *The Killers*, 1946) [PB]

As Others See Us II. Matt Chorley of the *Indie* probably annoyed a few sensitive fans with a *Doctor Who* polemic headlined 'The Emperor's New Clothes': 'There have been 784 episodes in total, all of which seem to involve a dandy peering at some odds and sods in the props department while someone rubs a cheese grater up a piano wire. [...] Doctor Who is one of the biggest commercial monsters on the planet. It is difficult to know where the drama ends and the lunch boxes begin. / It's over-complicated, over-hyped and it has taken over. It is the McDonald's of telly – all franchise, fries and barely-met expectations. And you can stick that sonic screwdriver in your black hole.' ([Independent](#), 2 September) [MPJ] Yes, yes, but does he like it?

Court Circular. Judge Lucy Koh of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California issued a 2 August order 'denying Samsung's motion to use devices seen in the films "2001: A Space Odyssey" and "Tomorrow People" to invalidate Apple's design patents.' ([Apple Insider](#), 2 August) [CJ] It would seem that for a 'prior art' effect on US patent law, you must actually invent something – here the tablet computer – and not just simulate it with

cunning special effects. Alas.

World Fantasy Awards novel shortlist: Christopher Buehlman, *Those Across the River*; Stephen King, *11/22/63*; George R.R. Martin, *A Dance with Dragons*; Lavie Tidhar, *Osama*; Jo Walton, *Among Others*.

We Are Everywhere. *Interviewee*: ‘This all ties in, of course, with the concept of the monomyth that Joseph Campbell put forward.’ *Presenter*: ‘Just to clarify, that’s the famous science fiction editor Joseph Campbell?’ *Interviewee*: ‘Uh yes, that’s right.’ (BBC Radio 4, *Material World*, 2 August) [PS-P] Long-time fans will remember the uproar when Campbell changed his magazine title from *Astounding Monomyths* to *Monolog*.

- ‘Newly strangled first by the Danes and then by the Normans, the special genius of English has been its ability to morph its enemies into itself, like some monstrous sci-fi extra-terrestrial growing ever stronger by gobbling up its opponents.’ (Andrew Roberts, *A History of the English-Speaking Peoples since 1900*, 2006) [MMW]

Magazine Scene. The British SF Association couldn’t produce a *Vector* for its summer mailing – having lost ‘a key individual’ thanks to ‘abuse via social media and in person following events at Eastercon’; see [A298](#) – and instead sent each member a random book of original fiction from BSFA chairman Ian Whates’s NewCon Press. (I got the 2008 BSFA anniversary anthology.) Design and layout volunteers are sought.

Outraged Letters. *Robert Newman* nearly saw Patrick Stewart’s moment of Olympic glory: ‘He was doing the stint that was two torchbearers after the one who ran past me. There was a long cavalcade of vehicles before the torch arrived; one of them was a coach with PS in it, pulling his shorts up. I had my camera in my hand but was so surprised that I didn’t get a snap. The large crowd were all so excited about seeing PS with his shorts around his knees that the actual torchbearer went past with barely any cheer or excitement.’

- *Kip Williams* adds a note on Ernest Borgnine ([A301 obituaries](#)): ‘Borgnine achieved something like a genre trifecta in his recurring voice-acting role as “Mermaid Man”, a * comic-book superhero in * the animated TV cartoon, * *SpongeBob SquarePants*. It also partakes of the nature of satire and meta. Funny, too.’

The Dead Past. *20 Years Ago.* ‘Too Good to Check: the story is that a young graduate newly employed by Radio 4 thought of a way to brighten it up, and

on his own initiative wrote to Douglas Adams asking if he'd ever thought of adapting *Hitch-Hiker's Guide* for radio....' (*Ansible* 62, September 1992)

- *30 Years Ago*, the imminent death of the UK SF Book Club and related Readers Union reprint clubs ('basically an outmoded idea') was reported here. (*Ansible* 28, September 1982)

Controversies. *Readercon* rethought its much-criticized decision (see [A301](#)) and banned the self-confessed stalker for life rather than two years.

- *Weird Tales* editor Marvin Kaye reacted to the online fracas about perceived racism in Victoria Foyt's self-published dystopian novel *Revealing Eden* by announcing on 15 August that *WT* would excerpt chapter 1 of this 'thoroughly non-racist book'. This led to an [epic storm of criticism](#) and, five days later, [a WT volteface](#) with publisher John Harlacher not only cancelling Kaye's decision but deleting his website post. Imagine their surprise on finding people had kept [screenshots](#).

Fanfundery. *GUFF* nominations for the 2013 southbound race (Europe to Australasia) are open, closing on 13 October with voting planned to continue to 7 January next year and the result announced on 13 January. Candidates wanted! See <http://guff.lostcarpark.com>.

- *TAFF* announced provisional 2013 westbound race plans: nominations 9 November to 31 December 2012, voting to mid-April, winner travels to the Texas Worldcon starting on 29 August. Newsletter at taff.org.uk.

Editorial. Harry Harrison's funeral and wake in Brighton on 31 August were highly memorable. Awaiting us by the crematorium was a parked camper-van containing something blue which (the double-take was universal) proved to be Harry's coffin, papered with world maps plus a few appliqué tour brochures and photos. The service was short, secular – Tom Shippey read an Old Norse poem – and heartfelt, ending with a mass charging of glasses from the big bottle of Teacher's perched on the coffin, for a farewell toast: 'Ad Astra, Harry, Ad Astra.' Much reminiscence and alcohol followed; sf notables at the lavish wake included Malcolm Edwards, Rog Peyton and Chris Priest. All thanks to Harry's family for doing him proud.

- Neil Armstrong (1930-2012) – who had shared a special 1969 Worldcon award for the Apollo Moon landing – was buried on the same day, under a blue moon.



Thog's Masterclass. Irresistible Narrative Hook Dept. 'I wonder how long it will be before that name pronounced soundlessly in the deep silence of my mind will fail to unleash in me such floods of nostalgia, rent through and through with fear and painful confusion, yet linked indissolubly with my memory of the strangest days I have ever known.' (Flora Armytage, *Sebastian*, 1946: first sentence) [BT]

• *Dept of Hirsute Versatility.* 'He is forty years old, with a black beard shaped like a spade, a lawyer and a judge ...' (Jo Walton, *Lifelode*, 2009) [DS]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 14 September 2012: Simon R. Green at the Brum Group, Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre, 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk or rog.peyton at btinternet com. Further meetings: 13 October, Adam Nevill; November, Eric Brown; December, Christmas Social.
- 26 September 2012: Peter F. Hamilton signing, Waterstone's (Oracle branch), Reading. 5-6pm.

Editorial II. Excitement over the *SF Encyclopedia* Hugo win continues, at least among the editors. Here's the brief note we put on the *SFE* site, followed by a triumphalist Gollancz blog post and the official voting and nominating statistics (PDF format):

<http://www.sf-encyclopedia.com/news/2012-hugos/>

<http://tinyurl.com/8utzc3l>

<http://www.thehugoawards.org/content/pdf/2012HugoVotingReport.pdf>

Outraged Letters II. *David Garnett:* ‘Broadcasting from an alternate publishing universe: *Open Book*, Radio 4, July 29, Mariella Frostrup reads from her script – “Anthony Cheetham has one of the most impressive track records in UK publishing ... He discovered a talent for finding new authors and exciting books, famously rescuing Frank Herbert’s *Dune* from the slushpile, which went on to sell over two million copies and spawned a David Lynch film and tv mini-series.” My radio must have been tuned into a universe where there was no *Analog*, no Hugo, no Nebula, no US editions ...’

Thog’s Second Helping. *Vocal Hair and Forbidden Knowledge Dept.* ‘The tangle of darkness that was her hair spoke of animal passion and desire, things no Psy should know about.’ (Nalini Singh, *Slave to Sensation*, 2006)
[GD]

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Ansible 303, October 2012

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Web news.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or Antagonistic Undecagonstring scores.

Tropical Storm Kirk

Desperate Dan, Korky the Cat and Beryl the Peril of *The Dandy* have reached their sell-by dates, according to the publishers D.C. Thomson, who plan to celebrate the comic's 75th anniversary on 4 December with a special issue which includes the first *Dandy* and will be the last.

Junot Diaz, Dominican-born author who used sf narrative devices in *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* (2007), is to receive a MacArthur Foundation 'genius grant' of \$100,000 a year for five years. [L]

Ralph Macchio, actor, fields a question about his 1999 sf role: 'Oh my God. This is like *This Is Your Life*. [Laughs.] You're standing there, you got the big book open. Yeah, it's *The Outer Limits*. Everybody does one. You go up to Vancouver, you shoot an *Outer Limits*. That's the law. I'm not a sci-fi guy – I know people who are nuts about the genre, but I don't really get it, it's not my thing – but it wasn't really sci-fi or gross horror or anything. It was more scientific.' (AVclub.com) [CL]

J.R.R. Tolkien, man of many commemorative plaques – there were already eight in places where he lived, stayed or lived nearby – had another unveiled on 1 October at 2 Darnley Road, West Park, Leeds, where the family lived 1924-1926. (Tolkien Society, 28 September)

John Wyndham is remembered by UK magazine hacks. 'According to new research from the University of Western Australia, maize plants may be communicating with each other by making clicking noises with their roots, an idea that John Wyndham had in his masterpiece *The Day of the Triffids*.' (Giles Wood, *The Oldie*, October) 'It may well be that Britain's homosexuals

have all gone quite mad recently, the sort of sinister and mysterious development that might occur in a John Wyndham novel.’ (Rod Liddle, *The Spectator*, 13 September) [MMW]

Consacre

Until 4 Oct • **Dickensian Hauntings**, The Basement, Shoreditch Town Hall, 380 Old St, London, EC1V 9LT. 11am-7pm (11am-10pm on 4 October). Free. See www.illuminevent.co.uk/2012/2012-main.htm. With ghost stories, magic lantern, Jack the Ripper talk 6-10pm Thur.

4-7 Oct • **Grimmfest 2012** (horror/cult film festival), Manchester. Weekend pass now £60 + £2 booking. Gory details at grimmfest.com.

8 Oct • **Discovering Alternate Genres**, Custard Factory, Gibb St, Birmingham, B9 4AA. 7-8:30pm. Peter F. Hamilton, Stan Nicholls, others. £8; £5 concessions. See www.birminghambookfestival.org.

10 Oct • **BSFA Special Meeting**, The Argyle pub, Leather Lane, London. 5/6pm for 7pm. With Chinese sf author Han Song. Free.

13-14 Oct • **Octocon**, Camden Court Hotel, Camden St, Dublin. €20 reg; students/under-18s/unwaged €20; supp €10; accompanied under-12s free. Contact: Apt 9, Parliament Bldg, 38-40 Parliament St, Dublin 22, Ireland; info at octocon dot com.

19-21 Oct • **Star Trek London**, ExCeL Centre, London. Tickets from £49 (day £29, 2-day £39) to silly prices (VIP pass £2999: control yourselves, these have sold out). See www.startreklondon.com.

20 Oct • **BristolCon**, Ramada Hotel, Bristol. Multiple guests of honour. £20 to 19 October when *advance booking closes*; £25 at the door. Cheques to 18 High Leaze Road, Patchway, Bristol BS34 5AF.

24 Oct • **BSFA Open Meeting**, The Argyle pub, Leather Lane, London. 5/6pm for 7pm. With Nina Allan. Free; all welcome.

25-28 Oct • **Bram Stoker International Film Festival**, Spa Pavilion, Whitby. £100 plus various optional extras, or £6 per film. See www.bramstokerfilmfestival.com. Enquiries 05602 722983.

26-28 Oct • **Festival of Fantastic Films**, Manchester Conference Centre, Sackville St. £70 reg. Contact 95 Meadowgate Rd, Salford, Manchester, M6 8EN; Gil at manchesterfantasticfilms dot co dot uk.

28 Oct • **Paperback & Pulp Book Fair**, Park Plaza Hotel, 239 Vauxhall Bridge Rd, London, SW1V 1EQ. 10am-3pm. £3.00 at the door only. Enquiries 01202 849212 or wardzinski at hotmail dot com.

9-11 Nov • **Novacon 42**, Park Inn, Mansfield Road, Nottingham. GoH Jaine Fenn. £40 reg. Contact 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ.

11-18 Nov • **Thought Bubble** (comics), Leeds, including 17-18 November comics convention. See www.thoughtbubblefestival.com.

16-18 Nov • **Armadacon 24**, Future Inns, Plymouth. *Date change from 9-11 Nov.* £30 (£25 concessions) to 18 Wadham Rd, Liskeard, Cornwall, PL14 3BD. £35 (£30) at the door.

16-18 Nov • **Winter Horrors** (workshop), Dove Valley Centre, Derbyshire. £150 inclusive. Contact alexdavisevents at hotmail co uk.

CANCELLED. 23-25 Nov • **WexWorlds** (sf festival), Wexford, Ireland. 'Due to unforeseen circumstances' is all it says at www.wexworlds.net.

29 Nov - 1 Dec • **The Dolls of New Albion** ('steampunk opera'), Oval House, 52-54 Kennington Oval, London, SE11 5SW. 8pm. Tickets £5. See www.ovalhouse.com/whatson/booktickets/DollsOfNewAlbion.

29 Aug - 2 Sep 2013 • **LoneStarCon 3** (71st Worldcon), San Antonio, Texas. \$180 reg; YA/military \$110; child \$75; family \$480; \$60 supp; next price hike 31 December. See www.LoneStarCon3.org.

31 Oct - 3 Nov 2013 • **World Fantasy Convention**, Hilton Brighton Metropole, Brighton. *Now £125 reg; £50 supp; no at-door or day memberships.* Cheques to 130 Park View, Wembley, Middlesex, HA9 6JU; PayPal at www.wfc2013.org. Hotel booking is now open.

Rumblings. *London 'First Thursday'* pub meetings began as weekly teashop sessions on Thursday 9 December 1937. Celebrate the 75th anniversary at the 6 December 2012 Melton Mowbray gathering! [JB] • *Loncon 3* (2014 Worldcon, London) rates won't rise until early 2013. Paid-up 'Friends' can upgrade to attending membership for just £25.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. *The Guardian* reported Stuart MacBride's plaint that while crime in any past setting passes as historical crime fiction, 'Set the same crime 20 years into the future and suddenly it's SCIENCE FICTION!!! RUN AWAY!!! And a lot of readers won't even try it. There's something about a book set in the future that makes them think of aliens, space ships, and pasty teenagers living in their parents' basements... So I call *Halfhead* a near-future thriller to try and encourage people to give it a go. And that's an approach that didn't go down too well with some sections of the Sci-Fi establishment.' Perhaps that means the pasty, basement-dwelling teenagers among us. Next came a more robust quote from journalist David Quantick: 'SF is also geeky because it's like a geek – it can't do relationships, its sex is all fantasy and it can build a warp engine but it can't make a cake. Crime, even the loner PI stuff, is about people who drink too much, have relationships, get lonely and – most importantly – feel sad when their loved ones die. Mark Billingham's very good on the human effects of murder. Harry Harrison isn't. I expect.' ([Guardian](#), 19 July) [NLW]

British Fantasy Awards. HORROR NOVEL (Derleth Award) Adam Nevill, *The Ritual*. FANTASY NOVEL (Holdstock Award) Jo Walton, *Among Others*. NOVELLA Lavie Tidhar, *Gorel and the Pot Bellied God*. SHORT Angela Slatter, 'The Coffin-Maker's Daughter' (*A Book of Horrors*). ANTHOLOGY *The Weird* ed. Ann & Jeff VanderMeer. COLLECTION Robert Shearman, *Everyone's Just So So Special*. SCREENPLAY Woody Allen, *Midnight in Paris*. MAGAZINE *Black Static*. GRAPHIC NOVEL Joe Hill & Gabriel Rodriguez, *Locke and Key*. SMALL PRESS Chomu Press. ARTIST Daniele Serra. NONFICTION Grant Morrison, *Supergods*. NEWCOMER (Sydney J. Bounds Award) Kameron Hurley. SPECIAL (Karl Edward Wagner Award) Nicky & Peter Crowther of PS Publishing. [ED]

R.I.P. *Waldo T. Boyd* (1918-2012), US science/technical author who published one sf story in *If* ('The Salesman', March 1953), died on 15 September. [SFS]

• *Michael Clarke Duncan* (1957-2012), US actor best remembered for his Oscar-nominated performance in *The Green Mile* (1999) died on 3 September aged 54. Other genre credits include *Armageddon* (1998), *Planet of the Apes* (2001 remake), *Daredevil* (2003), *The Island* (2005) and *Green*

Lantern (2011). [GD/SG]

- *Shirley Climo* (1928-2012), US folklorist and author of 24 books of retold fables and fairytales from many countries, died on 23 August; she was 83. [PDF]
- *Michael Embden* (1948-2012), UK landscape artist who in the 1970s and 1980s painted over 100 book covers, mostly for sf/fantasy titles (Poul Anderson, Gordon R. Dickson, Roger Zelazny *et al*), died on 21 August; he was 63. [RC]
- *Shulamith Firestone* (1945-2012), Canadian-born ‘cyberfeminist’ whose advocacy of new reproductive technologies such as artificial wombs in *The Dialectic of Sex* (1970) was influential in sf, died on 28 August aged 67 (io9). [DKMK]
- *Herbert Lom* (1917-2012), Prague-born actor whose career ran from 1937 to 2004 and who is best known for the Ealing comedy *The Ladykillers* (1955), died on 27 September aged 95. Genre credits include *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.* (1967), *Doppelgänger* (1967), *Count Dracula* (1970), *Dorian Gray* (1970), *Asylum* (1972), *Dark Places* (1973), – *And Now the Screaming Starts* (1973), *Whoops Apocalypse* (1988) and *Masque of the Red Death* (1989). [SG]
- *Michael O’Hare* (1952-2012), US actor most famed for his tv role as Commander Sinclair in *Babylon 5*, died on 28 September; he was 60. [PDF] Further genre credits include the horror film *C.H.U.D.* (1984).
- *Wendy Weil* (1940-2012), US literary agent whose authors included Karen Joy Fowler, Molly Gloss, Carol Emshwiller and James Morrow, died on 27 September. [SFS]
- Late notice: *Martin Green* (1927-2010), whose one sf novel was *The Earth Again Redeemed* (1977), died on 14 April 2010 aged 82. [DB]

The Weakest Link. *Interlocutor:* ‘Which character in A.A. Milne’s Winnie the Pooh books is named after his son?’ *Contestant:* ‘Pooh.’ (ITV1, *The Chase*; via *Private Eye*)

More Awards. One we missed earlier: Patrick Ness’s *A Monster Calls*, illustrated by Jim Kay, scored a first by winning both the Carnegie Medal for its story and the Kate Greenaway Medal for the illustrations.

- *Creative Emmy Awards* for arts/crafts/technical achievement: six wins for the tv *Game of Thrones*, including costumes and visual effects. (BBC)

As Others See Us II. Malcolm Tucker (who?) attempts to describe *Star Wars*

in a few ill-chosen words: ‘The one about the fucking space hairdresser and the cowboy. He’s got a tinfoil pal and a pedal bin. His father’s a robot and he’s fucking fucked his sister. Lego. They’re all made of fucking lego.’ (BBC2, *The Thick of It*, 15 September) [NE]

Outraged Letters. *Dave Lally*: ‘Good to see you at Harry Harrison’s funeral. As an addendum to that, his daughter (Moirá) has just posted that in the last few days – and at his request – his ashes were taken to Dalkey Harbour (just south of Dublin – on the east coast) and there scattered. (He held Irish Nationality – just like me!)’

• *Dave Row* has a Chicon footnote: ‘As you were probably distracted by the [technology-interrupted Hugo ceremony](#) [no, I’d gone to bed long before – Ed.], you may be amused that in the panel discussion “Bad writing – no cookie!” (with yes, real cookies!) consisting of excerpts of truly awful fiction snippets read to the audience (fortunately an early morning item so we were protected from the probably-inevitable brain death by being asleep), the chosen pieces were dominated by excerpts from Thogs Masterclass. The only piece of mainstream (?) fiction to come close to Thog for sheer awfulness was, interestingly, *Fifty Shades of Grey*...’

We Are Everywhere. From the *Financial Times* profile of billionaire Peter Thiel: ‘Mr Thiel often references the sci-fi promise and optimism of the 1950s and 1960s. His favourite book is *Lord of the Rings*. He pays homage to the fantasy series in the Tolkienesque names of his various investment vehicles, such as Mithril Capital Management, named for the lighter-than-air mythical metal; Lembas, a secret-formula bread made by elves, and Rivendell One, a haven city for the forces of good.’ (25 August) Does he get menacing letters from the Saul Zaentz Company ordering him to stop this misuse of Tolkien’s terms? [MMW]

Random Fandom. *The Nova Awards* for fanzine activity are open for voting (closing on 31 October, paper ballots to be available at Novacon):

www.novacon.org.uk/nova_awards.php. Sources hint that if low voter turnout persists when [voting is free online](#) and so are most eligible fanzines, this could be the end of the Novas. All the universe – or nothingness? Which shall it be, Passworthy? *Which shall it be?*

• *Ed Kramer*, co-founder of the huge US Dragon*Con, and his twelve-years-delayed trial on child molestation charges were covered in [Atlanta Magazine](#) for 1 September. *Petréa Mitchell* writes: ‘A lot of the material has been

previously reported, but this story gets into the financial details. It makes it clear that while Dragon*Con claims Ed Kramer has nothing to do with it these days, he's still getting about \$3 per attendee, and that it adds up to a nice living which directly provided the time and resources for him to travel and [allegedly] collect at least one new victim (and possibly more) until his latest arrest, and will now be financing another round of attempts to obstruct justice. / Hopefully this will convince a few more people to walk away from Omelas.'

Magazine Scene. Jonathan Strahan's *Eclipse* genre anthology series (four volumes to date) is switching to online publication as a free monthly magazine, *Eclipse Online* at Nightshadebooks.com. [PDF]

The Dead Past. *40 Years Ago:* before the Internet, conspiracy theorists had to write to sf newszines. 'A freind (sic) from Stockport warns me that a new "secret service of terrifying magnitude" has got my name down as a potential collaborator with alien invaders, who are apparently expected shortly. I'm not alone, however, since "everyone who has ever contributed to your zine or any other in the field of amatuer (sic) publishing" is also on the list. Ah well, at least someone is reading *Checkpoint ...*' (Peter Roberts, [Checkpoint 25](#), October 1972)

- *30 Years Ago*, a programme of daft games at Silicon 6 provided the tiny seed that grew into Mexican Accent Fandom and Mexicon (not to mention a then undreamed-of literary agency): "'Silicon vs Dostoevsky" was the silliest game of all – since it won John Jarrold the Sili Award, it must have been. It involved miming the missing part of a record of Basil Rathbone in *The Brothers Karamazov*, with points given for accent, style, passion and overall – Linda Pickersgill carried off the latter as the only contestant wearing overalls, but John J.'s impassioned gesticulations in a welter of accents (Mexican, the Fonz, Cagney ...) secured his victory.' (Judith Hanna, *Ansible* 29, October 1982)

James White Award. This competition for the best unpublished story by a non-professional author is now open for entries, with a 16 December deadline. Entry is free; £300 first prize plus publication in *Interzone*; £100 second prize. Details at www.jameswhiteaward.com.

C.o.A. Dan Goodman, 2740 Minnehaha Ave., Ste. 130, #64, Minneapolis, MN 55406, USA. Steve Stiles writes: 'My Comcast Mail has bombed for

unknown reasons, so I've gone over to Gmail.'

Editorial. This issue was supposed to appear on 1 October, but I couldn't manage that deadline; the [Encyclopedia of SF](#) continues to eat my life, and this has come to seem normal. Public service announcement: the *ESF* site (and likewise the linked Gollancz SF Gateway) will apparently be down for much of Sunday 7 October while the Hachette IT people do things of a cruel and unusual nature to the web servers. Will our Google rankings take another huge hit? Oh, the suspense.

Fanfundery. *Rob Hansen* is being honoured by the Corflu Fifty, a group of fans who club together to pay some worthy person's expenses to the next Corflu convention (Portland OR, May 2013). Ask UK administrator Rob Jackson for details of goodies available through a C50 online fundraising auction: jacksonshambrook at uwclub dot net.

- *2014 SFLinkcons*: these mini-events taking place around the London Worldcon and Dublin Eurocon will donate at least 20% of any surplus to UK fan funds, ditto to the SF Foundation, and 10% to the BSFA. [DL]

Rarities Nicked. Various sf/fantasy titles including first editions of Asimov, Burroughs (*Tarzan of the Apes*), Dick and Lovecraft are listed as stolen in August 2012 from the Temple University Libraries, Philadelphia. See <http://security.abaa.org/security/?p=473>. [AIP]

Thog's Masterclass. *Dept of Night and Day*. 'The man was whistling a Sinatra song, as he had been doing for all of the thirty years Per had known him.' (Brian Freeman, *Immoral*, 2005) [PB]

- *Thumbs Down Dept*. 'He reached for her panties and pushed his thumbs inside. She rose up from the beach, and he slid them off and tossed them away.' (*Ibid*)

- *Dept of Minimalism*. 'McKee caught Crawford's eye and shrugged with one eyebrow.' (Tim Powers, *Hide Me Among the Graves*, 2012) [PB]

- *Sacred Dept*. 'She met Prabhat's gaze. This modern day Brahman wouldn't cow her.' (Sarah K. Castle, 'The Information in a Dream', *Analog*, November 2012) [EM]

- *Metaphor Dept*. 'The whisper I'd heard upon reading about the Tracadie lazaretto geysered into my forebrain.' (Kathy Reichs, *Bones to Ashes*, 2007)

- *Eyeballs in the Sky*. "'Spent all night studyin', never worked so hard in my life," he'd gush, his eyes running around her face, desperate for praise like

spaniels after retrieving a shot duck.’ (Marisha Pessl, *Special Topics in Calamity Physics*, 2006) [PB]

- ‘Her eyes were bumper-stickered to my head.’ (*Ibid*)
 - ‘Shirley’s eyes were fixed respectfully on her knees.’ (J.K. Rowling, *The Casual Vacancy*, 2012) [CMJ]
 - *Dept of Heroines Who Have Seen Better Days*. ‘She struggled to shove the massive oak slab into the corner. Warped by fire, age and rain, she didn’t need to prop it open.’ (Tina L. Jens, *The Blues Ain’t Nothin’*, 2002) [PB]
 - *Neat Tricks Dept*. ‘Her supple arms drooped to the floor and encircled the lamp overhead. Then her long legs joined in.’ (Pavel Kohout, *The Widow Killer*, 1995; trans Neil Bermel 1998) [PB]
 - ‘He saw that Kate was watching him with an expression that was half puzzled, half irritated. He asked her if he could borrow it.’ (Paul Bryers, *The Prayer of the Bone*, 1998) [PB]
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Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 12 October 2012: Adam Nevill at the Brum Group, Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre, 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk or rog.peyton at btinternet com. Further meetings: 2 November, Eric Brown; 7 December, Christmas Social; 11 January, AGM; 8 February, Quiz; 8 March, James Brogden; 12 April, Brian Aldiss OBE.
- 28 October 2012: Adrian Cole, Les Edwards, Stephen Jones and others in a signing session at the London Paperback and Pulp Book Fair (details above), 1pm.

Strange Horizons has launched a new funding drive, as linked below. (*Ansible* is too Britishly embarrassed to attempt large-scale soliciting, but see the discreet option further below.)

http://strangehorizons.com/fund_drives/2012/main.shtml

2012 Chesley Awards. I may not know much about art, but I know what’s too voluminous for *Ansible*. Here’s a link with lots of lovely pictures.

<http://www.tor.com/blogs/2012/08/announcing-the-2012-chesley-award-winners/>

Outraged Letters II. *Lee Wood* writes, regarding one of [last issue's obituaries](#): 'Roland C. Wagner was an old friend, a very funny and talented writer, and an enthusiastic if eclectic musician. Somewhere I still have a small record (long before CDs!) he and his band recorded with the contribution of a somewhat perplexed operatic singer ad-libbing as best she could with the tune. It was terrible, but so terrible it turned out actually good. I once buried a small nod in his direction in my novel, *Looking for the Mahdi*: "... His Excellency was dressed in a pair of faded Levi's torn at the knees, a pair of scuffed Adidas track shoes, and a T-shirt with an iron-on photo of the deranged looking lead singer from the French rock group Brain Damage." The novel was later published in a French edition translated by someone who knew both me and Roland Wagner. Apparently, the translator had a bit of fun by ever so slightly embellishing this bit of the text. After it came out in France, Roland ran up to me during a Salon du Livre in Paris, his trademark bright red hair flying, and demanded to see what I'd written in the original. A bit worried, I showed him. He read it, then grinned and hugged me, while repeating, "Dérangé? Moi?" and laughing, pleased with the description. We were at many parties and had many dinners with him and his lovely partner, Sylvie Denis, and I remember how proud he was when he became a father. He was a beautiful, talented, amazingly optimistic man and the world is so much poorer without him in it. J'ai le coeur brisé, mon doux ami dérangé, tu nous manqueras.'

Ansible 303 Copyright © David Langford, 2012. Thanks to Paul Barnett, John Bray, Dirk Broer, Richard Cooper, Ellen Datlow, Gordon Davie, Paul Di Filippo, Nick Eden, Steve Green, Claire M.Jordan, David K.M. Klaus, Dave Lally, Christodoulos Litharis, Locus, Elise Matthesen, Andrew I. Porter, SF Site, N. Lee Wood, Martin Morse Wooster, and our Hero Distributors: Dave Corby (Brum Group), SCIS/Prophecy, Alan Stewart (Australia). 2 October 2012.

Ansible 304, November 2012

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Web news.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or a set of harmoniously grunting peels.

The Wu & Fabricant Guide

Ellen Datlow joined Tor.com as another consulting fiction editor.

Paul Krugman, introducing the Folio Society edition of the Foundation trilogy, has an Atwood Moment: ‘Maybe the first thing to say about “Foundation” is that it’s not exactly science fiction – not really. Yes, it’s set in the future, there’s interstellar travel, people shoot each other with blasters instead of pistols and so on. But these are superficial details, playing a fairly minor part in the story.’ [\[PDF\]](#) [KMacL]

David Mitchell, interviewed in the *Cloud Atlas* film’s context, is happy that genre conquered the world: ‘... both fantasy and S.F. have made inroads into literary fiction and influences even those novels whose imprint logo is reassuringly conservative. Murakami’s *Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* isn’t regarded as a fantasy novel, but the plot is propelled by occult magic. Kazuo Ishiguro’s masterly *Never Let Me Go* is old-money dystopian S.F., as is Margaret Atwood’s *The Handmaid’s Tale* and Cormac McCarthy’s *The Road*. Philip K. Dick would recognize both Michael Chabon’s *Yiddish Policemen’s Union* and Philip Roth’s *Plot Against America* as alternate-history S.F. in the grandest, proudest tradition. We imbibe more S.F. and fantasy than we notice. On my last visit to New York, by the by, I had a dinner with a group of literary writers, and the whole main course was spent in earnest and learned discussion of *A Game of Thrones*.’ ([New York Times](#), 18 October) [ZH]

Mo Yan, the internationally noted Chinese author whose stories of rural China often include fantasy, fairytale and magic-realist elements, won the

2012 Nobel Prize for Literature.

Terry Pratchett reminisced about his schoolboy visits to ‘a little shed which was a library run by a very nice old lady in a black dress who served you cups of tea, and who had a collection of eye-watering porn. She would have it all behind a pair of beaded curtains. I would go in there for the fantasy [...] The old lady quite liked me as her “kosher” customer so she’d keep stuff on the side for me. One day I was in there by myself, going through the box of books she’d kept for me, when a plain-clothes policeman walked in. He pointed to me with hostility and said “What is he doing here?” I will never forget her face. She picked up a copy of Robert A Heinlein’s “Stranger in a Strange Land” and said “Evil be to him who evil thinks”. The man grumbled and went.’ (Arifa Akbar interview, [Independent](#), 11 October) [MPJ]

N. Lee Wood suspects that although the word has been around since 1757 in another sense, ‘fabricant’ meaning ‘genetically engineered android/clone’ may be her very own coinage in *Looking for the Mahdi* (1996) – anticipating *Cloud Atlas* by 8 years. ‘So if [*that meaning*] is ever added as a definition for “fabricant” to the *OED*, I want the damn credit! Not fair if Mitchell gets both a gazillion bucks for the movie rights to his novel AND everyone thinks he coined the term as well.’

Conchiglie

Until 30 Nov • **Uncut** (marking 100 years of UK film censorship), BFI Southbank, London. Several genre selections. See www.bfi.org.uk.

Until 27 Jan • **Hollywood Costume** exhibition, V&A Museum, London. 10am-5:30pm (9:30pm Fri). £14 + fee: see www.vam.ac.uk. Includes Oz, Darth Vader, Terminator, Matrix, Indiana Jones, etc.

2-30 Nov • **Comica**: London International Comics Festival. Many, many events, relentlessly detailed at www.comicafestival.com.

2-3 Nov • **Horror in the East** (‘horror-lit’), Aspire Centre, Denes High School, Lowestoft, NR32 4AH. Various guests; admission free.

10 Nov • **Comica Comiket** Independent Comics Fair, The Great Hall, Bishopgate, Institute, 230, Bishopgate, London, EC2M 4QH. 11am-6pm. Admission free. Guests include Bryan Talbot, Alison Bechdel.

9-11 Nov • **Novacon 42**, Park Inn, Mansfield Road, Nottingham. GoH Jaine Fenn. £40 reg. Contact 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ.

9-11 Nov • **Sci-Fi London East** film mini-festival, Stratford Picture House, London. www.sci-fi-london.com; box office 0871 902 5740.

11-18 Nov • **Thought Bubble** (comics), Leeds, including 17-18 November comics convention. See www.thoughtbubblefestival.com. Weekend pass £20; day pass £12; under-12s free.

16-18 Nov • **Armadacon 24**, Future Inns, Plymouth. *Date change from 9-11 Nov.* £30 (£25 concessions) to 18 Wadham Rd, Liskeard, Cornwall, PL14 3BD. £35 (£30) at the door.

16-18 Nov • **Winter Horrors** (workshop), Dove Valley Centre, Derbyshire. £150 inclusive. Contact alexdavisevents at hotmail co uk.

CANCELLED. 23-25 Nov • **WexWorlds** (sf festival), Wexford, Ireland. 'Due to unforeseen circumstances' is all it says at www.wexworlds.net.

28 Nov • **BSFA Open Meeting**, The Argyle pub, Leather Lane, London. 5/6pm for 7pm. With Paul Cornell. Free; all welcome.

29 Nov - 1 Dec • **The Dolls of New Albion** ('steampunk opera'), Oval House, 52-54 Kennington Oval, London, SE11 5SW. 8pm. Tickets £5. See www.ovalhouse.com/whatson/booktickets/DollsOfNewAlbion .

22-26 Jan 2013 • **Dodger** (Pratchett novel stage première), Unicorn Theatre, Abingdon. 7:30pm; Sat matinee 2:30pm. £8.50: cheque (to STC) + SAE to STC (Dodger), PO Box 1486, Oxford, OX4 9DQ

1-3 Feb 2013 • **Quarter Tone** (filk), Ramada Grantham Hotel. £35 reg; £22 unwaged; under-18s £1/year; under-6 free. Cheques: UK Filk Con, c/o 15 St. Catherine's Cross, Bletchingley, Surrey, RH1 4PX. *Membership rates may rise on 1 December.*

23-24 Feb 2013 • **Microcon 2013**, Exeter University. Guests to be confirmed. £10.00 reg: cheques payable to Exeter University Sci Fi Society, 17 Eldertree Gardens, Exeter, EX4 4DE.

28 Apr 2013 • **Event Horizon**, Derby Conference Centre, London Rd, Derby. 11am-6pm. £5 at door; £10 for early entry (100 tickets only) at 9:30 or 10am. Contact ehnderbyevents at gmail com.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. Coverage of the new *Red Dwarf X* offers a hauntingly nostalgic sense of *déjà revu*: ‘The show has an obsessive fan base, which stereotype would suggest is mainly men in their thirties and forties with a penchant for sci-fi and gaming – see how I’m subtly avoiding the provocative words “nerd”, “geek” or “unsuccessful with women” here?’ (Michael Hogan, [The Telegraph](#), 4 October) [MPJ]

Random Penguin will not be the name of the merging publishers Random House and Penguin, but everyone feels it ought to be.

The Weakest Link. *Interlocutor*: ‘John Wyndham’s 1951 novel, Day of the what?’ *Contestant*: ‘Day of the Locusts?’

• Q: ‘This 1966 film starring Raquel Welch had two men extruded from the body. What happened to the submarine?’ *Contestant*: ‘What is The Incredible Shrinking Woman?’ (US *Jeopardy*, 10 and 17 October) [AIP]

You Read It Everywhere. Disney is buying LucasFilm, including all *Star Wars* rights, for 4 billion dollars. Expect *Star Wars 7* in 2015.

Acuracy Dept. Dorchester Publishing is reverting rights to all authors. Their online list of obscure names they are unable to trace includes: Lovecraft, Howard Phillips; Rice Borroughs, Edgar; Smith, Doc; and Stroker, Bram. You’d think *someone* there would have an inkling that Robert Louis Stevenson is out of copyright.... [AIP]

R.I.P. *Bernard Behrens* (1926-2012), London-born Canadian actor with voice roles in *Smurfs* (1981 tv), the radio *Star Wars* trilogy (as Obi-Wan Kenobi) and *Silver Surfer* (1998 tv), died on 19 September aged 85. [AIP]

• *Janet Berliner-Gluckman* (1939-2012), South African-born horror/dark fantasy author and anthologist who won a Stoker award for ‘Children of the Dusk’ (1997) with George Guthridge, died on 24 October; she was 73. [GVG]

• *Turhan Bey* (1922-2012), Turkish-Czech actor whose genre credits include *The Mummy’s Tomb* (1942), *The Mad Ghoul* (1943), *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves* (1944), *seaQuest DSV* and *Babylon 5*, died on 30 September; he was 90. [PDF]

• *John Clive* (1933-2012), UK actor seen in *A Clockwork Orange* (1971) and *Queen Kong* (1976), and heard as John Lennon’s voice in *Yellow Submarine*

(1968), died on October 14; he was 79. [SFS]

- *Dave Cox* (1944-2012), long-time UK convention-goer and Brum Group member, died from a heart attack on 16 October. He was 68. [RGP]
- *Jacques Goimard* (1934-2012), French critic, editor, novelist and anthologist, died on 25 October aged 78. [RL] As acquiring editor at the Paris-based Pocket paperback imprint, he published some 800 works of sf/fantasy.
- *Alan Hunter* (1923-2012), UK artist whose work included covers for *Nebula SF* in 1952-1953 and much interior art for *Nebula* and *New Worlds* through the 1950s, died on 1 August aged 89. [NB] He was unfailingly generous with artwork for semiprozines and fanzines including *Algol/Starship*, *Ansible*, *Banana Wings*, *Ghosts and Scholars*, *SF Chronicle*, *SFinx*, *Vector*, *Whispers* and many more.
- *Paul Kurtz* (1925-2012), humanist/sceptical author and founder of Prometheus Books in 1969, died on 20 October aged 86. [PDF] Prometheus published a number of genre works (including Martin Gardner's *No-Sided Professor*) before launching its sf/fantasy imprint Pyr in 2005.
- *Danny Lieberman* (1959-2012), New York fan, convention-goer and Worldcon gopher, died from leukaemia on 19 October; he was 52. [TM]
- *Dave Locke* (1944-2012), noted US fan whose fanzines and related publications included *Awry* (1972-1976), *The Really Incomplete Bob Tucker* (1974), *Gallimaufry* (1983-1985 with Joni Stopa) and *Time and Again* (1985-1986; 2005-2011), died on 26 October. Dave was long active in APAs and a valued member of several current fannish email lists. [BL/NB]
- *Marcus Swayze* (1913-2012), US comics artist and writer with Fawcett Comics from 1941 to 1953 – when he worked on Captain Marvel and co-created the Mary Marvel character – died on October 14. [PDF]

As Others Regulate Us. The UK government plans tax breaks for computer games using British characters and locations: ‘After lobbying from the producers of science fiction and fantasy games, which are often set on alien planets, the Government has proposed that stories which are “set in a location/world that cannot be determined” can be called culturally British. / Alien life forms will also be assimilated into British society. The proposed test says points will be awarded for lead characters “who are British citizens or residents or of a nationality/species that cannot be determined.” The games could be based around a UK “historical event”, showcase “British technical or creative innovations such as Artificial Intelligence” and embrace cultural

diversity, including representations of disability.’ ([Independent](#), 4 October) [MPJ] So there’ll be a strong incentive to design, say, a first-person shooter whose players must gun down wave after wave of racially diverse and variously gendered wheelchair users during the Chartist Riots.

Court Circular. Warner Bros won its case against the heirs of Superman’s co-creator Joe Shuster, and still owns all rights to the superhero character. The ruling was that ‘Shuster’s sister’s decision to accept higher annual payments [a pension from DC Comics] created a new agreement which cancelled any previous contract.’ ([BBC](#)) [AW]

Outraged Letters. *Simon R. Green* had his ear to the ground at Fantasycon: ‘Apparently, the next big thing is going to be hot sweaty elf porn. So I have decided to write *Fifty Shades of Fae*.’

- *Chip Hitchcock* on [A303 obituaries](#): ‘I suspect more people our age or younger would know Herbert Lom not from *The Ladykillers* but as the increasingly-deranged Commissioner Dreyfus in the “Pink Panther” movies. At least one of these, *The Pink Panther Strikes Again*, is genre: after threatening global destruction if Clouseau isn’t killed, Dreyfus ends up erasing himself with his own doomsday device – while playing an organ, as if in reference to his title role in the 1962 *Phantom of the Opera*.’

- *Claire M. Jordan*: ‘You may have noticed that in interviews, talking about the rather racy nature of *The Casual Vacancy*, J.K. Rowling has said that it would be unthinkable to write about sex in a fantasy context or anywhere near a unicorn, that that sort of thing Just Isn’t Done. If I knew her address I’d send her a copy of *The Particolored Unicorn* by Jon DeCles, which includes an extended group sex scene....’ Thog want! Thog want! On mature consideration, maybe Thog not want after all.

Critical Masterclass. Learn, from the professionals, which end of a book to start with: ‘Once you come to terms with reading “to be continued” on the last page, it’s easy to settle in and enjoy the sci-fi smorgasbord served up by Gregory Benford and Larry Niven.’ (Rob Merrill on *Bowl of Heaven*, Associated Press, 26 October) [MMW]

- *As We See Us*: ‘... science fiction is the one lasting American contribution to prose literature ...’ (Orson Scott Card, *Maps In A Mirror*, 1990) [BA]

Magazine Scene. *James Gunn’s Ad Astra* is a new online journal of fiction, nonfiction and poetry with a sedate schedule of one themed issue per year

plus 'ongoing content'. See <http://adastra.ku.edu/>.

As Others See Us II. Arthur Krystal of *The New Yorker* witters on about how genre fiction can be OK but never literature. 'Commercial novels, in general, whether they're thrillers or romance or science fiction, employ language that is at best undistinguished and at worst characterized by a jejune mentality and a tendency to state the obvious.' Good genre writers are simply not writing genre: 'It seems to me that Chabon, Egan, and Ishiguro don't so much work in genre as with genre. "All the Pretty Horses" is no more a western than "1984" is science fiction.' ([24 October](#)) [MW] So much for all those lowbrows like John Clute who thought the hugely commercial *1984* was indeed sf.

Random Fandom. *Doug Faunt* and crewmates on a replica of HMS *Bounty* (built for the 1962 film) were early victims of Hurricane Sandy: 'The ship sank beneath us, but we swam free and mostly got into two rafts,' Doug said on Facebook. [GS] Fourteen of the sixteen aboard were rescued; one is dead, alas, and the captain still missing.

The Dead Past. *30 Years Ago*, sordid commerce afflicted *The White Hotel*: "When you write the book, it's a virgin," explained D.M. Thomas to *Esquire*. "Then when it sells, it loses its virginity. It's the *off-white* hotel now ..." (*Ansible* 30, November 1982)

- *40 Years Ago*, Peter Roberts on the Novacon 2 fancy dress: 'An honourable mention should go to Fred Hemmings, brightly dressed in orange with a massive clockwork key protruding from his chest. Damn punster ...' ([Checkpoint 26](#), November 1972)

- *50 Years Ago*, an announcement of the next Eastercon GoH: 'BSFA Member Bruce Montgomery, better known to the world of literature by his pseudonym Edmund Crispin. Crispin is known to the sf world for his Faber published anthologies (Best SF) and for his thoughtful analytical essays on sf. He is the second Gentleman of Letters to turn to criticising sf and become a Convention Guest of Honour, following the invitation to Kingsley Amis two years ago.' ([Skyrack 47](#), November 1962)

- *60 Years Ago*, Roger Dard complained about Australia's 'new Minister for Customs, a fantasy-hating character named Senator O'Sullivan' who 'has unleashed a veritable Reign of Terror. *Operation Fantast* [UK fanzine] has been banned, and as *O.F.*'s Australian representative I was raided by the police, on Customs orders, and subjected to a thorough interrogation. / In

fact, as a result of the pressure which was brought to bear on me, I have been literally forced out of the field. I have resigned from *O.F.*, cancelled all my book orders from Ken Chapman, and will take no further part in fanactivity until Australia becomes a civilised nation again. [...] Genial, lovable Senator O’Sullivan meanwhile is joyously banning books which were never banned before in our history – and none of our previous Customs Ministers could be said to be very liberal in their outlook. *Alice in Wonderland*, Campbell’s *Who Goes There?* [...] and all of A Merritt’s books have already had the axe fall on them. We expect *Grimm’s Fairy Tales* to go at any time. / So you see, if any of you oppressed fans over there in the UK wanna know the joys of living in a really free country, why, just come to Australia.’ ([Science Fantasy News](#), Winter 1952)

C.o.A. Doreen Rogers has moved into residential care: Room 34, Briarfields, Raby Crescent, Belle Vue, Shrewsbury, SY3 7JN.

Fanfundery. *GUFF 2013*: the southbound race to Australasia is on, with candidates Julie McMurray and Mihaela Marija Perković. £5/€6/\$A8 to vote; deadline 7 January 2013. You can read the platforms and vote online using PayPal at <http://guff.lostcarpark.com/vote>; downloadable ballot forms (PDF and Word) at taff.org.uk/guff.html.

Editorial. Greg Pickersgill and I have a publishing project, soon to be revealed. Fans of Algis Budrys’s *F&SF* reviews should stay tuned.

Thog’s Masterclass. *Sharing Dept.* ‘Leaks were something Emma didn’t want to share.’ (Elizabeth Lowell, *Death Echo*, 2010) [PB]

- *The Legacy of Ralph 124C41+*. “‘The reason is a girl. I’m a poor man, and she’s heiress to fabulous – Well, frankly, she’s the daughter of 3W28W12 himself!’ / The executive started at mention of that universally known number.’ (Paul Ernst, ‘The Planetoid of Peril’, *Astounding*, November 1931) [DL]

- *Neat Tricks Dept.* ‘... while tonguing her love button, Carol began to moan in ecstasy.’ (Richard J. Lukenda, *A World Gone Crazy*, 2009) [PGA]

- *Dept of Girly Superlatives.* “‘Good girl,” said Dex, patting her satiny bare shoulder as he stood free again. “You’re a sport and a gentleman. You don’t understand the terms? They’re earth words, Greca, that carry the highest praise a man can give a woman.”’ (Paul Ernst, ‘The Red Hell of Jupiter’, *Astounding*, October 1931) [DL]

- *Eyeballs in the Sky: Centre of Gravity*. ‘Her eyes rolled into the back of her head and she almost took a step backward.’ (Percival Everett, *Assumption*, 2011) [PB]
 - *Acid Reflux Dept*. ‘Fegan cursed, bitter anger at the waste rising in him.’ (Stuart Neville, *The Ghosts of Belfast*, 2009) [SG]
 - ‘His own breakfast came up promptly, and he lost himself in it for a few bites.’ (Patricia McKillip, *The Bards of Bone Plain*, 2010) [NR]
-

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 2 November 2012: Eric Brown at the Brum Group, Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre, 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk or rog.peyton at btinternet com. Further meetings: 7 December, Christmas Social; 11 January, AGM/Auction; 10 February, quiz; 8 March, James Brogden; 12 April, Brian Aldiss OBE.
- 9 November 2012: Bryan Talbot graphic novel launch and conversation with Kim Newman at Foyle’s, Charing Cross Road, London. 6:30-7pm. Tickets £8.
- 14 November 2012: ‘An Evening with Jonathan Cape Graphic Novels’, Arnolfini Gallery, Bristol. 6pm-9.45pm. £12.00; £10.00 concessions.

Alan Hunter. *In memoriam*, a larger version of his masthead artwork for *Ansible* 260. His intricately detailed black-and-white ink drawings couldn’t normally be shrunk to fit the printed *Ansible*’s tiny art slot: this was a rare exception.



[Here is Alan Hunter's entry in the *SF Encyclopedia*.](#)

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Ansible 305, December 2012

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Web news.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**.
Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or the pie that bakes and eats itself.

Advertorial. This is a traditional time of year to wish you all a merry Christmas or seasonal festivity of your choice, and try with ill-concealed desperation to sell you things. The very small press Ansible Editions has emerged from its long coma with *Benchmarks Continued: F&SF 'Books' Columns 1975-1982* by Algis Budrys, collecting the first third of his long run of *F&SF* criticism as a trade paperback (with the blessing of his widow Edna Budrys). Read all about it at <http://ae.ansible.co.uk>. [Stop Press: [20% Xmas discount until 14 December!](#)]

The World in Winter

Michael Chabon apparently writes fast. 'It's true that Chabon is often fond of taking his sentences out for a lively swerving spin, letting the words purr as he shifts into higher verbal gears while simultaneously steering us toward precise pop-culture references until the whole high-flying passage feels like the Ferrari joy ride in *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*.' (Michael Cavanaugh, *Washington Post*, 14 October) [MMW]

C.S. Lewis is to be honoured with a memorial stone in Poet's Corner, Westminster Abbey, on 22 November 2013 – the fiftieth anniversary of his death. ([BBC News](#), 22 November) [MPJ]

Robert McCrum enjoyed himself by bashing every genre he could think of, each described as some kind of 'lit' (chick lit, ghost lit, gran lit, erotic lit etc; naturally only lit lit gets a free pass) except for ours: 'Science fiction is the cockroach in the house of books: it survives on scraps and never goes away. Occasionally, as in the work of HG Wells and JG Ballard, it becomes sublime.' ([Guardian](#), 19 November) [AMB]

Camille Paglia's enthusiasm for sf sublimities earned her a *Private Eye* 'Pseuds Corner' appearance in November: '... it is emotionally overwhelming, with the intensity and sweep of a Puccini opera. The long finale of *Revenge of the Sith*, leading up to Darth Vader's tortured fabrication and the birth and separation of the twin babies Luke and Leia, is in my view the most powerful work of art in any genre in the past 30 years – including literature.' ([Huffington Post](#) interview, 11 July)

Terry Pratchett 'nearly died' in a New York cab during his November US publicity tour. When his heart went into fibrillation, his assistant Rob Wilkins 'had to kneel on the back seat of the taxi and give him CPR. It was fingers down throat stuff.' After a rapid recovery, Terry remarked that he'd heard book-signing tours could kill you 'quicker than drugs, booze and fast women'. ([Telegraph](#), 28 November) [MPJ] He also announced that he will pass the Discworld novel franchise to Rhianna Pratchett when he's no longer able to write: 'The Discworld is safe in my daughter's hands.' (Interview, [New Statesman](#), 14 November)

Louise Robinson, president of the Girls' School Association, is not alone in attacking education secretary Michael Gove's retro plans for UK schools, but opens her argument with a slightly unexpected revelation: 'The Star Trek society is already here. We need to look at the way the world of the future is going.' ([Independent](#), 12 November) [MPJ]

Mary and Bryan Talbot are on the Costa Book Awards biography shortlist with their graphic novel *Dotter of Her Father's Eyes*, centred on James Joyce's daughter Lucia. ([Mail](#), 21 November) Bryan, sadly: 'Shame it's not SF so you could mention *Dotter* in *Ansible*.' Indeed this is a pity. It goes without saying that 'Most papers are leading with the "Shock horror! – Comics on Costa Shortlist" angle...'

Convoce

Until 27 Jan • **Hollywood Costume** exhibition, V&A Museum, London. 10am-5:30pm (9:30pm Fri). £14 + fee: see www.vam.ac.uk. Includes Oz, Darth Vader, Terminator, Matrix, Indiana Jones, etc.

7 Dec • **British Fantasy Society Christmas Open Night**, The Mug House, London Bridge, London, SE1 2PF. 6:30-11pm. All welcome.

9 Dec • **Atomic Bark!** (films, music), Palatine Bar, 97 Stoke Newington Rd, London, N16 8BX. 1pm-late. £3 donation suggested.

20 Dec • **London Christmas Meeting** (additional to First Thursdays), cellar bar, Melton Mowbray, 18 Holborn, EC1N 2LE. All evening.

1-3 Feb 2013 • **Quarter Tone** (filk), Ramada Grantham Hotel. *Now £40 reg; £27 unwaged*; under-18s £1/year; under-6 free. Cheques: UK Filk Con, 15 St. Catherine's Cross, Bletchingley, Surrey, RH1 4PX.

22-25 Mar 2013 • **Steampunk at the Seaside**, Park Resorts, Camber Sands. For pricing see steampunk.synthasite.com/seaside.php.

29 Mar - 1 Apr 2013 • **EightSquaredCon** (Eastercon), Cedar Court Hotel, Bradford. £60 reg, rising to £70 on 1 February 2013; £25 supp/junior (12-17); £10 child (5-11); £1 infant. Contact 19 Uphall Road, Cambridge, CB1 3HX; www.eightsquaredcon.org.

13-14 Apr 2013 • **QED** (science/skeptics), Mercure Piccadilly Hotel, Manchester, M1 4PH. SOLD OUT; see www.qedcon.org for waiting list.

11-12 May 2013 • **Middle-earth Weekend**, Shire Country Park, Hall Green, Birmingham. Details at middleearthweekend.org.uk.

15 Jun 2013 • **Futura**, Light House, Wolverhampton. 11am-late. GoH Ian R. Macleod. Contact alexdaviserevents at hotmail co uk.

9-11 Aug 2013 • **Fantastiq** (film festival), QUAD art centre, Market Place, Derby, DE22 3PN. Prices TBA at fantastiq.co.uk.

29 Aug - 2 Sep 2013 • **LoneStarCon 3** (71st Worldcon), Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center, San Antonio, Texas. \$180 reg *until 31 December*; YA/military \$110; child \$75; family \$480; \$60 supp. See www.LoneStarCon3.org. PO Box 27277, Austin, TX 78755, USA.

13-15 Sep 2013 • **The Asylum** (steampunk), Lincoln. Various prices. Online booking only: see steampunk.synthasite.com.

20-22 Sep 2013 • **Festival of Fantastic Films**, Manchester Conference Centre, Sackville St. £70 reg. Contact 95 Meadowgate Rd, Salford, Manchester, M6 8EN. See fantastic-films.com.

26 Oct 2013 • **BristolCon**, Ramada Hotel, Bristol. GoH Philip Reeve, Storm Constantine, Mark Buckingham. £15 reg to end of May; £20 to 25 October;

£25 at the door. Cheques to 18 High Leaze Road, Patchway, Bristol BS34 5AF.

1-2 Nov 2013 • **Horror in the East** ('horror-lit'), Aspire Centre, Denes High School, Lowestoft, NR32 4AH. Further details TBA.

8-10 Nov 2013 • **Novacon 43**, Park Inn, Nottingham. GoH Jo Walton. £45 reg. Contact 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ.

9-11 Aug 2014 • **Discworld Convention**, Palace Hotel, Manchester. Registration to open *circa* Easter 2013. See www.dwcon.org.

Rumblings. As usual, there's no London BSFA meeting in December. • *LonCon 3* (the 2014 London Worldcon) sent a PR update about the Hugo rule change that allows members to nominate in the previous Worldcon's Hugos as well as the current and next: 'This means that all members of Loncon 3 (other than children or infants) will be able to nominate for the 2013, 2014, and 2015 Hugo Awards.'

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. A little love in the *Firefly* reunion tv special: 'And for the fans – the greatest moment is this brief snippet where Gina Torres says, "There's nothing like a scifi fan. Like warm honey, poured all over you." I want to watch that clip over and over.' ([io9](#), 12 November) [JCo] I suppose it rather depends on which fan gets poured.

World Fantasy Awards. NOVEL Lavie Tidhar, *Osama*. NOVELLA K.J. Parker, 'A Small Price to Pay for Birdsong' (*Subterranean* Winter 2011). SHORT Ken Liu, 'The Paper Menagerie' (*F&SF* 3/11). ANTHOLOGY Ann & Jeff VanderMeer, eds., *The Weird*. COLLECTION Tim Powers, *The Bible Repairman*. ARTIST John Coulthart. SPECIAL: PROFESSIONAL Eric Lane of Dedalus Books for publishing in translation. SPECIAL: NON-PROFESSIONAL Raymond Russell & Rosalie Parker for Tartarus Press.

We Are Everywhere. Jon Stewart on the intimate emails between a US general and a married woman: '30,000 pages of emails – I could understand it if Stephen King and George R.R. Martin were having an affair!' (*The Daily Show with Jon Stewart*, 15 November) [MPJ]

- R.I.P.** *John Coates* (1927-2012), UK film-maker and tv executive best known for *Yellow Submarine* (1968) and *The Snowman* (1982, based on Raymond Briggs's book), died on 16 September aged 84. [MPJ]
- *Charles E. Fritch* (1927-2012) US author and editor whose stories are collected in *Crazy Mixed-Up Planet* (1969) and *Horses' Asteroid* (1970) died on 11 October; he was 85. One story, 'The Misfortune Cookie', was adapted for *The Twilight Zone*. [TM]
 - *David Grove* (1940-2012), US illustrator inducted into the Illustration Hall of Fame in 2007, died on 25 October aged 72. Genre work included the striking *Something Wicked This Way Comes* film poster, the *Eye of the World* ebook, and covers and interiors for Gene Wolfe titles. [PDF]
 - *Larry Hagman* (1931-2012), US actor best remembered as J.R. in *Dallas* and the harried Captain/Major Anthony Nelson in the fantasy sitcom *I Dream of Jeannie* (1965-1970), died on 23 November; he was 81. Hagman was also in *Fail-Safe* (1964) and *Superman* (1978). [CM]
 - *Julie Ann Jardine* (1926-2012), sf author and fan who with her then husband Jack Jardine wrote *The Sword of Lankor* (1966) and *The Mind Monsters* (1966) under the pseudonym Howard L. Cory, died in November; she was 86. [F770]
 - *Jeff Millar*, US *Houston Chronicle* film reviewer and columnist and creator of the *Tank McNamara* comic strip, died on 30 November at age 70. He had a story in Damon Knight's *Orbit 17* (1975). [LP]
 - *Carol Morton*, UK fan long involved with the Brum Group and Novacon, died on 8 November. [CB]
 - *Patrick O'Connor*, former editor-in-chief or senior editor for several US publishers including Pinnacle and Popular Library, died on 13 October aged 87. His authors included Ayn Rand and Andrew M. Greeley. [AIP]
 - *Kevin O'Donnell, Jr.* (1950-2012), US author of several entertaining sf novels including *Mayflies* (1979), *ORA:CLE* (1984) and the *Journeys of McGill Feighan* tetralogy, died on 7 November; he was 61. [JCI] He worked hard for SFWA in several capacities and received the Service To SFWA Award.
 - *John Piggott*, UK fan whose fanzines included *The Turning Worm* (3 issues 1972) and the games-centred *Ethil the Frog* (46 issues 1972-1974), died unexpectedly on 19 November; he was 60. [IM]
 - *Deborah Raffin* (1953-2012), US actress and producer who starred in various horror and sf films including *The Sentinel* (1977), *Dance of the*

Dwarfs (1983), and *Scanners II: The New Order* (1991), died on 21 November aged 59. [SFS]

- *Bengt-Olof Ringberg* (1923-2012), old-time Swedish fan, died on 6 November aged 89. Ahrvid Engholm remembers him as ‘editor of eg *Future Fan* and *Mirfak* fanzines, huge fan of pulps esp *Captain Future*, with much international correspondence.’

- *Spain Rodriguez* (Manuel Rodriguez, 1940-2012), US underground cartoonist who created the post-holocaust superhero Trashman, died on 28 November; he was 72. [BT]

- *Dinah Sheridan* (1920-2012), UK actress who played Chancellor Flavia in the 1983 *Doctor Who* special ‘The Five Doctors’, died on 25 November aged 92. [CM]

- *John D. Squires* (1948-2012), US book dealer, *New York Review of SF* contributor and authority on M.P. Shiel, died on 2 November; he was 64. [AIP]

- *Boris Strugatski* (1933-2012), Russian author whose collaborations with his brother Arkady (1925-1991) were among their country’s finest and most-translated genre sf, died on 19 November. Their best-known single work may be the story translated as *Roadside Picnic* (1972) and adapted as Andrei Tarkovsky’s *Stalker* (1979). Both brothers were popular guests of honour at the 1987 UK Worldcon in Brighton. After Arkady’s death Boris published only two solo novels, under the byline S. Vititsky.

As Others See Us II. A teachers’ magazine delivers a solemn warning: ‘Stress reality, not science fiction. Encourage kids to look at what’s needed in the *real world*, then come up with inventions to meet those needs. If kids get their inspiration from science fiction books or movies, they’re avoiding one of the prime criteria for inventing: Will it work?’ (Terry Borton, *Learning86*, October 1986) [PL]

More Awards. *First Fandom Hall of Fame*, 2012 inductees: Ray Bradbury, Larry Farsace, Claude Held, Rusty Hevelin and Jack Robins. First Fandom also presented the *Sam Moskowitz Archive Award for Excellence in Collecting*: Donn Albright.

- *Nova Awards*: FANZINE *Banana Wings*. FANWRITER Mark Plummer. FAN ARTIST (tie) Sue Mason, D. West.

- *Roald Dahl Funny Prize*, funniest book for 7-14 year olds category: Jamie Thomson, *Dark Lord: The Teenage Years*. [AIP]

- *Rotsler Award* for long-time achievement in fanzine art: Ross Chamberlain.
- *US National Book Awards*: the Young People's Literature category was won by a fantasy, William Alexander's *Goblin Secrets*. [L]
- *Writers' Guild of Great Britain* genre winners: SPECIAL AWARD FOR WRITING Steven Moffat. CHILDREN'S SCRIPT Phil Collison, *The Sarah Jane Adventures*: 'The Curse Of Clyde Langer'. TV DRAMA SERIES *Being Human*. VIDEO GAME SCRIPT Paul Crocker, *Batman: Arkham City*. [MPJ]



Publishers & Sinners. Fictionwise.com, the early e-publishing venture that was pretty good until bought up by Barnes & Noble, is closing on 4 December. Customers will be allowed to 'migrate' ebook purchases to the B&N Nook platform. After so many years I'll miss all those Fictionwise royalty checks for exciting sums like \$1.84.

As We See Others Seeing Us. 'We all "know" what the stereotypical gamer looks like. He is a white male between the ages of fourteen and forty-five, either comically skinny or egregiously fat, an inveterate mouth-breather with bad skin who never leaves his parents' basement, where he lives, and is constantly geeking out, if not to Dungeons and Dragons, then to Halo or to World of Warcraft. He's forgotten more about Captain Kirk than we will ever know, and when he's not doing 2d6 damage to an orc while eating Cheetos or drinking Mountain Dew, he's dreaming that one day a real live woman will talk to him.' (Lizzie Stark, *Leaving Mundania: Inside the Transformative World of Live Action Role-playing Games*, 2012) [MMW]

Magazine Scene. *Analog* and *Asimov's* announced higher short-fiction payment rates on 29 November, effective immediately. The rise is from 6-8

cents per word to 7-9 cents per word.

The Dead Past. *50 Years Ago*, a British national institution maintained or exceeded its normal level of hilarity: “Robert A. Henlein is the author of *The Day After Tomorrow* (Mayflower Books). In our September 19 issue he got misprinted as Hieline.” (Item in *Punch*, issue of 3rd October 1962.

Absolutely no comment about what some magazines will do to raise a laugh).’ ([Skyrack 48](#), December 1962)

• *20 Years Ago*, others continued to make important literary distinctions: ‘J.G. Ballard, 62 on 15 Nov, got a *Sunday Times* birthday notice as “science fiction writer and novelist”. What, both?’ (*Ansible* 65, December 1992)

C.o.A. Nonstop Press: domain name changed to nonstoppress.com, affecting all former nonstop-press.com (with hyphen) email addresses. *Howard Waldrop*, 5106 N Lamar #146, Austin, Texas 78751, USA. Much against his wishes, his phone number has changed too.

Precocious Engrams. Pianist Daniel Barenboim is interviewed by Rosanna Greenstreet: Q. ‘What is your earliest memory?’ A. ‘In my mother’s belly, I remember not liking the tempi my father played the Beethoven Sonatas in.’ (*Guardian*, 2 November) [PE]

Fanfundery. *TAFF 2013*: nominations are open for the westbound race to LoneStarCon 3, the Texas Worldcon. Candidates need to find three nominators, provide a platform and post £15 ‘bond’: further details at taff.org.uk. Nominations close 31 December 2012, and voting will continue until 5 April, allowing final campaigning at Eastercon.

• *BIFF*, the British & Irish Fan Fund intended to help hard-up fans attend conventions on the far side of the impassable Irish Sea, is still at the planning stage. More to follow from James Shields (whose brainchild this is), ably assisted by Claire Brialey as pro-tem English administrator.

SF Encyclopedia Update. After passing the 3.8 million word mark in early November, we hardly hoped to reach 3.9m by 1 December but did manage 3.85m. As a bonus, the 1997 Clute/Grant *Encyclopedia of Fantasy* (1.2 million words) is also now online in the same format as the *SFE*, though it hasn’t been updated. All free at sf-encyclopedia.com (main site) and sf-encyclopedia.co.uk (various editorial extras).

Random Fandom. *Fancylopedia 3* (fancylopedia.wikidot.com) has

interesting category tags: ‘List of pages tagged with *abomination*: Claude Degler / Richard Shaver / Scientology / Sci-Fi / Speculative Fiction / WSFS, Inc.’ [MM]

- The BSFA’s *Vector* remains in the toils: ‘There are still *Vectors* forthcoming! When, I am not currently certain, as our third layout volunteer has succumbed to a bad case of Life, with the current issue mostly done.’ ([Torque Control](#), 20 November)

Thog’s Masterclass. *True Romance Dept.* ‘Like the red oak tree, she could not remember a time when she hadn’t loved dark-haired, handsome, surly Adam Freneau.’ ‘The sturdy frame of his muscular young body, presaging the manhood that was to come, had engraved itself on her heart.’ ‘She had only to say his name to herself or see his face in her fancies and the blood in her body would stir warmly.’ ‘Cherry felt her heart stop beating, the lungs in her bosom squeeze unbearably.’ (all Edwina Noone [Michael Avallone], *The Second Secret*, 1966) [FMN via DL]

- *Dept of Trickle-Down.* ‘There, in his poky office, Simon Price gazed covetously on a vacancy among the ranks of insiders to a place where cash was now trickling down onto an empty chair with no lap waiting to catch it.’ (J.K. Rowling, *The Casual Vacancy*, 2012) [MMW]

- *Spung in a Cold Climate Dept.* ‘His nipples were standing so erect they looked like little pink pencil erasers.’ ‘I looked down and noticed my own chest made it look like I was trying to smuggle candy corn out of the country, two at a time.’ (Nancy A. Collins, *Right Hand Magic*, 2010) [CH]

- *Dept of Pet Names.* ‘When he got there, his Deputy, a portly bald man with a ginger moustache called Bo Sampson, was trying to calm down a hysterical man.’ (Adam Millard, *Dead West*, 2011) [MJS]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

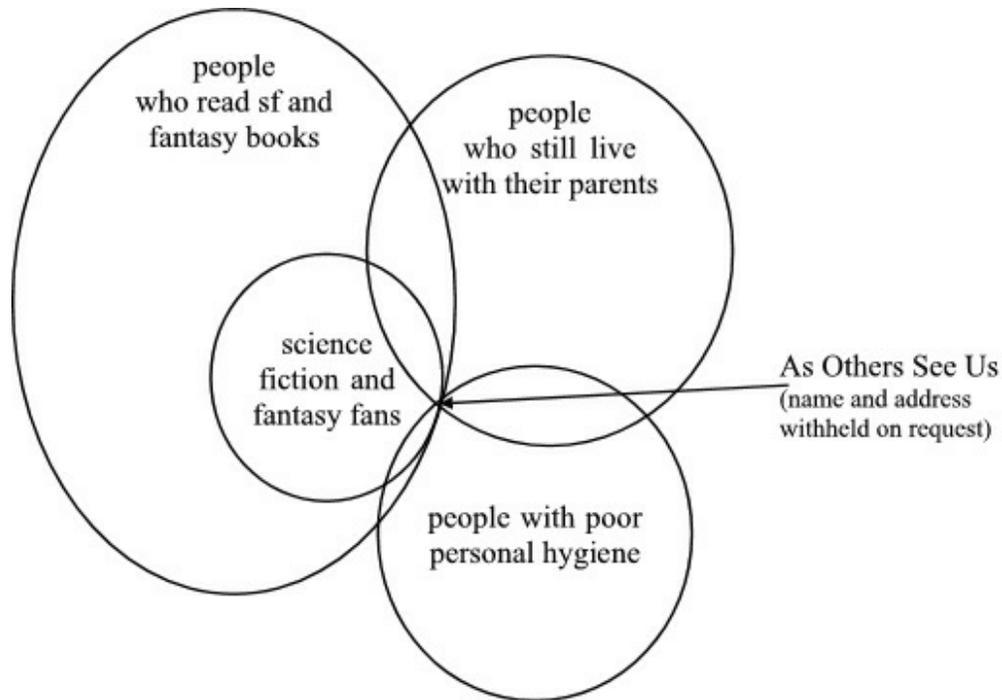
- 5 December 2012: M.J. Simpson (Simo) signing *Urban Terrors: New British Horror Cinema 1997-2008* at the University of Leicester Bookshop from 5:30pm.

- 7 December 2012: Brum Group Christmas Social, not at the usual venue; advance booking mandatory. Events are normally at Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre, 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for

members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk or rog.peyton at btinternet com. Future meetings: 11 January, AGM/Auction; 10 February, quiz; 8 March, James Brogden; 12 April, Brian Aldiss OBE.

• 11 December 2012: Paul Cornell signing *London Falling* at Reading Oracle branch of Waterstone's, 5pm-6pm.

Outraged Letters. Steve Jeffery sent a graphic analysis of the 'As Others See Us' tradition ...



Thog's Second Helping. Scroll down for an appreciation of the legendary Michael Avallone, from which Thog's above True Romance quotations were ruthlessly nicked:

<http://mysteryfile.com/blog/?p=20048>

Ansible 305 Copyright © David Langford, 2012. Thanks to Paul Barnett, Claire Brialey, Andrew M. Butler, John Clute, John Coxon, File 770, Paul Di Filippo, Chip Hitchcock, Martyn P. Jackson, Denny Lien, Locus, Pamela Love, Todd Mason, Ian Maule, Chryse Moore, Murray Moore, Francis M. Nevins, Lawrence Person. Andrew I. Porter, Private Eye, SF Site, M.J. Simpson, Bruce Townley, Martin Morse Wooster, and our Hero Distributors: Dave Corby (BSFG), SCIS/Prophecy, Alan Stewart (Australia). Wishing you all a happy New Year.... 3 December 2012.

2013

Ansible 306, January 2013

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Web news.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or evidence of mutual cake violating.

Happy New Year to All. It is an *Ansible* tradition that this sentiment is usually delivered days too late, but I do mean it all the same. Thanks for all the Christmas cards. As usual, I failed badly in this area.

After Doomsday

Hans Christian Andersen's unpublished MS 'The Tallow Candle', apparently written in the 1820s, was found in a box at Denmark's National Archives of Funen last October. ([BBC](#), 13 December) [MPJ]

Angela Carter (1940-1992) was honoured with the one-off James Tait Black Award 'best of best' selection: her fantasy *Nights at the Circus* was judged best fiction winner since the award began in 1919. [PDF]

Peter David announced on his blog (30 December) that he had had a stroke and 'lost control of the right side of my body'. [Further reports from Kathleen David](#) indicate that he's mentally in good shape and 'doing better every day' in hospital. Wishing him all luck.... [DKMK]

Malcolm Edwards appeared in *The Bookseller's* list of the '100 most influential people in the book industry', which describes him as 'The brainy fixer behind the scenes at Orion since 1998' and mentions the Gollancz SF Gateway. Also on the list is his wife Jacks Thomas. [RF]

George R.R. Martin may or may not find it strangely heart-warming that *Game of Thrones* was the internet's most-pirated tv show of 2012: 'one episode of the series had racked up 4,280,000 illegal global downloads – slightly more than its estimated US television audience.' (Torrentfreak via [BBC News](#), 24 December) [AIP]

Herman Melville inspired a new US beer: ‘White Whale Ale is infused with the sea-faring spirit of Moby-Dick.’ A rich bouquet of whale oil, blubber or other lovingly described cetacean by-products? No, it’s a conceptual collaboration between Powell’s Books and Rogue Ales and Spirits (both of Oregon), who reverently ripped pages from a copy of *Moby-Dick* and shoved them in the brewing kettle. What a swiz. [MMW] I imagine a far-off voice as the Saul Zaentz Company gives warning to the world: ‘Don’t even *think* of enhancing your home-brewed Shire Ale or Halfling’s Ruin with tasty pages torn from *The Hobbit*.’

Leo Szilard, physicist and sf author, is still highly valued. In a December auction in Los Angeles, a Szilard-signed letter about the ‘sensational new development’ of nuclear fission went for \$240,000, while autographed letters from Karl Marx, Ludwig von Beethoven and George Washington raised only \$114,000 to \$132,000 apiece. [GVG]

Mary and Bryan Talbot won the Costa Book Awards biography prize with their graphic novel *Dotter of Her Father’s Eyes*; [the BBC website](#) didn’t consider this headline news but briefly mentioned it after nine paragraphs about novel winner Hilary Mantel. (2 January) [AD]

Gene Wolfe is the 2012 SFWA Grand Master (Damon Knight Memorial Grand Master Award) for lifetime sf/fantasy achievement. In a burst of modesty he wrote: ‘You’d better watch your step, folks; you’re raising me to a height I would never have imagined. If you keep this up I’ll start thinking I’m a good writer.’ (www.sfwaworld.org, 13 December)

Condie

Until 27 Jan • **Hollywood Costume** exhibition, V&A Museum, London. 10am-5:30pm (9:30pm Fri). £14 + fee: see www.vam.ac.uk. Includes Oz, Darth Vader, Terminator, Matrix, Indiana Jones, etc.

22-26 Jan • **Dodger** (Pratchett-based play), Unicorn Theatre, Abingdon. 7:30pm; Sat matinee 2:30pm. £8.50: cheque (to STC) + SAE to STC (Dodger), PO Box 1486, Oxford, OX4 9DQ. *Sat night sold out*.

30 Jan [*rescheduled from the originally announced 23 Jan owing to a double booking*] • **BSFA Open Meeting**, The Argyle pub, Leather Lane, London.

5/6pm for 7pm. With Dave Hutchinson. Free; all welcome.

1-3 Feb • **Quarter Tone** (filk), Ramada Grantham Hotel. £40 reg; £27 unwaged; under-18s £1/year; under-6 free. Cheques: UK Filk Con, 15 St. Catherine's Cross, Bletchingley, Surrey, RH1 4PX.

8-10 Feb 2013 • **SF Ball** (media), Carrington House Hotel, Bournemouth. Tickets from £104; £35/day Sat/Sun. See sfbevents.com/sfball.

15-17 Feb • **Fantasy February** (residential workshop), Dove Valley Centre, near Buxton, Derbyshire. £150 including shared accommodation. Contact alexdavis@events.hotmail.co.uk.

16-17 Feb 2013 • **Picocon 30**, Imperial College Union, London. Registration cost still apparently TBA. Contact ICSF, Beit Quad, Prince Consort Road, London, SW7 2BB; picocon@icsf.co.uk.

22-24 Feb 2013 • **Redemption '13** (multimedia sf), Britannia Hotel, Fairfax St, Coventry, CV1 5RP. £70 reg or £40/day (concessions £50, £35); £15 supp and under-18s; under-3s free. *Advance booking closes 11 February*; £75 or £45/day at door (concessions £55, £40). Contact 61 Chaucer Road, Farnborough, Hampshire, GU14 8SP.

23-24 Feb 2013 • **Microcon 2013**, Exeter University. Various guest speakers. £10.00 reg; cheques payable to Exeter University Sci Fi Society, 17 Eldertree Gardens, Exeter, EX4 4DE.

3-4 Mar • **P-Con X**, Irish Writers' Centre, Parnell Square, Dublin 1. CANCELLED or indefinitely postponed owing to organizer Pádraig Ó Méalóid's health and other problems. See www.pcon.ie.

29 Mar - 1 Apr • **EightSquaredCon** (Eastercon), Cedar Court Hotel, Bradford. £60 reg and £25 supporting, *rising to £75 and £35 on 1 February*. Other membership rates unchanged: £25 junior (12-17); £10 child (5-11); £1 infant. Contact 19 Uphall Road, Cambridge, CB1 3HX; more at www.eightsquaredcon.org.

11-14 Apr • **Eurocon 2013**, Expo Plaza, Kiev, Ukraine. £25 reg (sterling cheque to 'D J Lally No 2 a/c' or cash in person) to UK agent Dave Lally, 64 Richborne Terrace, London, SW8 1AX, by 1 April; then cash at door. *The UK agent cannot process travel/accommodation costs.*

29 Aug - 2 Sep • **LoneStarCon 3** (71st Worldcon), San Antonio, Texas. Now

\$200 reg; family \$520; adult supp-to-attending conversion \$140. Unchanged: YA/military \$110; child \$75; \$60 supp. See www.LoneStarCon3.org. PO Box 27277, Austin, TX 78755, USA. Note that Hugo nominations are now open, closing on 10 March.

Rumblings. *Worldcon 2015* bids and proposed dates are: Helsinki, 6-10 August; Orlando, 2-6 September; Spokane, 19-23 August.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See *The Hobbit*. A film critique possibly not based on close textual study of the book: ‘Cate Blanchett has five solitary lines in *The Hobbit*, playing some sort of pretty princess, during one scene and has been placed there for matters of fluff and making film premieres actually worth photographing. / There are oak trees in *The Hobbit* with more input than Cate Blanchett has. Give me one bloody wisecracking woman Hobbit with a sword and a sense of derring-do!’ (Grace Dent, [Independent](#), 11 December) [MPJ] The Jackson film trilogy *Rose Cotton, Barbarian Swordsperson* remains far in the future.

More Awards. *New York Film Critics Circle*: best animated feature was Tim Burton’s *Frankenweenie*. [MPJ]

- *Delta Film Award* (amateur film): *Quedaté Conmigo* directed by Zoe Berriatúa (Spain).
- *Locus All-Time Poll, 20th Century*: SF NOVEL Frank Herbert, *Dune*. FANTASY NOVEL J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings*. NOVELLA Ted Chiang, ‘Story of Your Life’. NOVELETTE Daniel Keyes, ‘Flowers for Algernon’. SHORT Arthur C. Clarke, ‘The Nine Billion Names of God’. *21st Century*: SF NOVEL John Scalzi, *Old Man’s War*. FANTASY NOVEL Neil Gaiman, *American Gods*. NOVELLA Kelly Link, ‘Magic for Beginners’. NOVELETTE Ted Chiang, ‘Hell Is the Absence of God’. SHORT Ted Chiang, ‘Exhalation’.
- *A.E. van Vogt Award* (Western Canada only; first presentation): Brian J. Clarke, *Alphanauts*.

Headline-Fu. ‘The Hobbit dwarfs box office rivals’ (BBC News, 24 December)

- ‘Man Somehow Eats Entire Denny’s Hobbit Menu Without Dying’ (Uproxx.com/gammasquad, 3 January) [BT]

R.I.P. Michael Alexander, Clarion West graduate whose 2012 *F&SF* story debut was followed by at least 8 magazine and anthology sales, died on 4 December. [SFS]

- *Gerry Anderson* (1929-2012), UK creator with his then wife Sylvia of a string of much-loved children's tv series using their 'SuperMarionation' puppet technique, died on 26 December; he was 83. A generation of British kids imprinted on such Anderson highlights as the 1960s *Supercar*, *Fireball XL5*, *Stingray*, *Thunderbirds*, *Captain Scarlet* and *Joe 90* – all featured on a 2011 set of Royal Mail commemorative stamps. Early puppet series, also fondly remembered, were the 1950s *Twizzle* and *Torchy the Battery Boy*; later ventures into live-action sf drama included *UFO* (1970s), *Space: 1999* (1970s) and *Space Precinct* (1990s).
- *Charles Chilton* (1917-2013), UK author and radio presenter famed for his 1950s BBC Radio serial *Journey into Space* (the first three storylines of which he also novelized), died on 2 January. He was 95. For many long-time fans of *Journey*, his surprise appearance was the highlight of the British Library sf exhibition's launch party in May 2011. [DP/SH]
- *Charles Durning* (1923-2012), US actor whose film credits include *Twilight's Last Gleaming* (1977), *The Muppet Movie* (1980), *The Final Countdown* (1980), *The Land Before Time IV* (1986) and *Mother Ghost* (2002), died on 24 December aged 89. [MMW]
- *Michael Hopkins* (1959-2012), multiple Oscar-winning sound editor whose film work included the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy and the 2005 *King Kong* remake, died in a New Zealand rafting accident on 30 December; he was 53. [MPJ]
- *Kenneth Kendall* (1924-2012) BBC radio announcer and newsreader (the first to appear on BBC television) who featured as a newsreader in *Doctor Who*: 'The War Machines' (1966) and *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968), died in November aged 88. [GD/CM]
- *Jack Klugman* (1922-2012), US character actor seen in *The Twilight Zone* (multiple appearances 1960-1963), *I Dream of Jeannie* (1965) and *The Outer Limits* (2000), died on 24 December aged 90. [CM]
- *Alberto Lisiero* (1964-2013), Italian fan, editor, comics writer and convention-runner who in 1982 founded Italy's largest sf organization, the Star Trek Italian Club, died on 2 January aged 48. [PDF]
- *Huw Lloyd-Langton* (1951-2012), who as a guitarist with Hawkwind during most of the 1980s played at the UK conventions Seacon '84 and Conspiracy,

and with Michael Moorcock for Hawkwind albums and live gigs, died on 6 December aged 61. [PC]

- *Don Medford* (1917-2012), US tv director of 30+ episodes of *Tales of Tomorrow* and five of *The Twilight Zone*, died on 12 December; he was 95. [SFS]

- *Rusty Mills*, Emmy-winning US animator and director of various Warner Bros animated series including the sf *Pinky and the Brain* (1995-1998), died on 7 December; he was 49. [PDF]

- *Dolores Mantez* (1936/1938-2012), UK actress who played Lt Nina Barry in Gerry Anderson's *UFO*, died on 30 November; she was also in *The Avengers* (1961) and *Randall and Hopkirk (Deceased)* (1969). [MPJ]

- *Krsto Mazuranic*, Croatian fan, convention organizer, editor (of *Futura* magazine) and translator, reportedly died in December. He brought sf fandom to Croatia and the rest of former Yugoslavia. [GH]

- *Patrick Moore* (1923-2012), UK astronomer, author and tv personality who had presented the BBC's *The Sky at Night* since April 1957, died on 9 December; he was 89. His more than 20 novels for young readers were all sf; nonfiction works of genre interest include his sf survey *Science and Fiction* (1957), the spoof *How Britain Won the Space Race* (1972 with Desmond Leslie), and the oddball science round-up *Can You Speak Venusian?* (1972). He made a cameo appearance as himself in the *Doctor Who* episode 'The Eleventh Hour' (2010).

- *Eileen Moran* (1952-2012), digital effects editor at Weta who worked on *The Lord of the Rings*, *X-Men*, *Fantastic Four*, *The Hobbit* and other major films, died on 3 December aged 60. [SFS]

- *Harry Oakes*, special effects cameraman who worked with Gerry Anderson from *Fireball XL5* to *Space: 1999* (also *Space Precinct*), died on 11 December. Hollywood credits include *Superman* (1978), *Flash Gordon* (1980), *Superman III* (1983) and *Aliens* (1986). [CM]

- *Rick Olney* (1954-2012), US comics publisher and con promoter who seems most famous for not paying his artists (and suing them for going public with their woes), died on 28 December aged 58. [PDF]

- *Archie Roy* (1924-2012), Scots astronomer, academic and paranormal researcher whose six sf/horror novels include the 'Hitler Wins' alternate history *All Evil Shed Away* (1970), died on 27 December. He was 88. [JS]

Court Circular. A 'mockbuster' film parody of *The Hobbit*, titled *Age of Hobbits* and timed for release three days before the Tolkien/Jackson epic,

was blocked by a temporary restraining order from a US federal judge. The defendants, Global Asylum Ltd, claimed that their title referred only to the nickname given by scientists to an ancient Indonesian humanoid subspecies: this wasn't taken terribly seriously. 'The judge asserted that Warner Bros. and other plaintiffs [*MGM and the Saul Zaentz Co*] were likely to prevail in their claim that the parody infringes on their trademarks.' ([Variety Film News](#), 10 December) [MPJ]

New Year Honours. Quentin Blake, illustrator of many children's fantasies including J.P. Martin's *Uncle* books and most of Roald Dahl, was knighted. Ewan McGregor, Obi-Wan Kenobi in the *Star Wars* prequels, has an OBE; so does scriptwriter Jeremy Lloyd, best known for tv sitcoms other than his *Come Back Mrs Noah* (1977-1978). [CM]

Outraged Letters. *Simon R. Green* mourns a hero: 'And now Gerry Anderson's gone. A major part of my childhood, I watched his shows from the beginning. *Twizzle*; his arms stretched. That was it, the plot, the character, everything. *Torchy the Battery Boy*; stick a battery up his arse and his eyes lit up; but then, so would yours. *Four Feather Falls* and *Supercar* were fun; but then came *Fireball XL5*, and I loved that. And while I enjoyed the shows that came afterward, *XL5* was the show that really got to me. I want more like that, I said, and went looking for it in books and comics and television. And I suppose part of me still is.'

- *Wendell Wagner* looks on the bright side: 'Since every month in *Ansible* you tell us how literary people insult science fiction, it would be nice if you pointed out that a prominent literary institution has now made it clear that science fiction is a legitimate part of the literary scene. The nonprofit publishing company The Library of America puts out nice-looking hardback editions of classic American literature that stay permanently in print. They just put out a boxed two-volume set, *American Science Fiction: Four Classic Novels 1953-1956* and *American Science Fiction: Five Classic Novels 1956-1958*. The novels in the first volume are *The Space Merchants*, *More Than Human*, *The Long Tomorrow*, and *The Shrinking Man*. The novels in the second volume are *Double Star*, *The Stars My Destination*, *A Case of Conscience*, *Who?*, and *The Big Time*. [...] So here's a significant part of the American literary establishment saying that science fiction deserves to be taken seriously.'

Stamping Ground. For *Doctor Who*'s 50th anniversary year, the Royal Mail

has a set of 11 first-class stamps – one for each Doctor – plus a miniature sheet with a first-class Tardis and four second-class villains: Dalek, Cyberman, Weeping Angel and Ood. As *Doctor Who* fans everywhere have rapturously cried, ‘Why the bloody Ood?’ Out 26 March. ([ITV News](#))

Random Fandom. *Rob Hansen* has begun an online archive of the 1939-1942 fanzine *The Fantast* published by Sam Youd (‘John Christopher’): see tinyurl.com/bjumlxc.

• *Roger Robinson* confirmed booking of the Melton Mowbray on Holborn (cellar bar) for London First Thursday evening meetings throughout 2013, with a Christmas extra on 19 December. All welcome; more at news.ansible.co.uk/london.html.

C.o.A. *Dan Goodman* (as of 1 January), 1720 Como Ave SE, #A, Minneapolis, MN 55414, USA. *Robert Silverberg* has a new how-to-contact-me page at sites.google.com/site/robertsilverbergwebsite. [Later: not being particularly happy with this hastily constructed freebie site, RS plans to start again with a custom domain name. Treat this as a temporary URL only.]

The Dead Past. *20 Years Ago*, ‘Chris Priest got an unsolicited plug when the *Observer* looked back at the Best Young British Writers promotion he featured in long ago, and famous Julian Barnes explained: “Priest always was a chippy bugger.”’ (*Ansible* 66, January 1993)

Aeon Award for unpublished story: contest now open; €7.50 fee; various rounds to 30 November; see www.albedo1.com/?page_id=723.

Editorial. 2012 was the Year of Blur – in my right eye, that is, since retina-saving surgery in January. I managed to meet my usual deadlines (13 [columns for SFX](#), 12 [Ansibles](#), 8 [Sunday Telegraph review features](#) and 6 *Interzone* news digests), to format and edit over 600,000 words of [SF Encyclopedia](#) additions (total word count now 3.95 million) and to co-publish a [new collection of Algis Budrys’s F&SF reviews](#) ... but wrote no fiction at all. After an interesting talk with the eye specialist this week, I have hopes of becoming less blurry in 2013. We shall see.

Fanfundery. *GUFF reminder*: voting in this year’s southbound race closes at midnight GMT on Monday 7 January. The winner travels to Conflux, the 2013 Australian National Convention. For candidates, platforms and the online voting form, see guff.lostcarpark.com/vote.

Thog's Masterclass. *Bear Bones Dept.* 'The Mainland was in the first, heady months of the Great Change, and the federal government was being surgically dismembered, like a monstrous corpse undergoing a grizzly autopsy.' (Robert Rosell, *Civitas Island*, 2012) [PL]

• *Dept of Romantic Metaphor.* 'Steven's hand, firmly anchored to Sue's breast, inspired its twin which, like a five-fingered butterfly emerging from its chrysalis and taking flight for the first time, clumsily fluttered into the air.' (*Ibid*)

• *Eyeballs in the Sky.* 'Finally Garth took Tia's French-tipped fingers, gazed deeply into her dreamy, drunk eyes, and offered to get them a room.' (*Ibid*)

• *Euclidean Perkinsness Dept.* 'Natalie, with her angular face and gazelle legs and size-B boobs that shot perky parallel lines into the sunglasses of men and women who muttered, "Here comes trouble," in differing tones ...' (David Gilbert, 'Member/Guest', *The New Yorker*, 12 November 2012) [MMW]

• *Dept of Artful Pronoun Placement.* "'You've seen it?" / "Once." She fixed her eyes on the deck. "With my mother and brother. Long ago." / "What did they look like?" / "Fearsome. Spines of poison and teeth as long and sharp as katana.'" (Jay Kristoff, *Stormdancer*, 2012) [SG]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

• 11 January 2013: Brum Group AGM/Auction. Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre, 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk or rog.peyton at btinternet com. Future meetings: 10 February, quiz; 8 March, James Brogden; 12 April, Brian Aldiss OBE.

• 4 February 2013: Robert J. Sawyer reading and Q&A, Big Green Bookshop, Wood Green, London. 7pm-8:30pm. Free but let them know if you're coming:

http://www.biggreenbookshop.com/events-diary/info_6.html

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Site, Jim Steel, Bruce Townley, Gordon Van Gelder, Martin Morse Wooster,
and our Hero Distributors: Dave Corby (BSFG), SCIS/Prophecy, Alan
Stewart (Australia). 4 January 2013.

Ansible 307, February 2013

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Web news.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE, visual clarity or Martichorastic Minikins.

Editorial. Thanks for all the messages of cheer about my eyesight woes. New and horribly expensive glasses are helping, though not quite enough; the saga continues. Meanwhile the *SF Encyclopedia* text crept past four million words in January, and that continues too.

The Blurring of the Lines

Hugo Gernsback had little-known artistic talents, according to an essay on sf cover art by Scott Beauchamp which defines ‘the Golden Age of sci-fi: the magazine-dominated epoch lasting roughly from the 1920s until the 1950s, when graphic artists like Frank R. Paul and Hugo Gernsback set the standard for speculative fiction cover art.’ (‘Space Cartoons to Space Psychedelia’, [The Atlantic](#), 9 January) [MF/AIP]

William Shatner was unable to resist asking Chris Hadfield of the Canadian Space Agency (who is currently on the International Space Station): ‘Are you tweeting from space?’ The reply: ‘@WilliamShatner Yes, Standard Orbit, Captain. And we’re detecting signs of life on the surface.’ (Twitter, 3 January) [MPJ]

Lisa Tuttle has her finger on the pulse: ‘It is possible that a novel by India Knight called *Mutton* has not come to your attention (published 2012 by Figtree, an imprint of Penguin Books) but this may be of interest for the character called Bernard Frossage, who is rather obviously a romantic-fantasy version of George R.R. Martin. He is the author of “The Men of Granite Chronicles”, described as “this huge long epic saga with dragons and stuff, set in the imaginary land called Lapidosa ...” and because he’s blocked, his publishers have sent him to stay on a remote Hebridean island without even

internet access until he finishes the latest instalment. The book's narrator is (quite amusingly) rude about fantasy fiction ("I'll read anything, but there are limits.") but her son (in love with Bernard's daughter) and the narrator's best friend Gaby are huge fans ... in fact, it turns out that author India Knight is also a self-confessed fan of George's books and wishes he could be shackled to his desk until he finishes writing the series. Although Bernard is first described as "hobbity" and "looking like a little angry troll, all gnarly and covered in hair", when the women meet him he is more attractive: "He's built on an enormous scale, like a bear; his author photograph, taken from the waist up, gives no indication of his hugeness." He turns out to be a romantic hero in the end.... I have alerted George to his fictional alter-ego and am waiting to hear if he is annoyed or amused by it.' (email, 21 January)

Adam West's Batmobile from the 1960s ABC *Batman* tv series, a modified 1955 Lincoln Futura, sold at auction for \$4.2 million. The original cost to the customizer in 1965 had been \$1, plus \$15,000 for the makeover. ([The Register](#), 21 January) Other past owners complained that 'while I was at college my mother threw out my Batmobile.'

Jane Yolen, on 1 November, was the first woman to deliver the Andrew Lang Lecture since its founding at the University of St Andrews in 1927. J.R.R. Tolkien's 'On Fairy Stories' was the 1939 Lang lecture. ([Wired](#), 23 January)

Controve

8-10 Feb • **SF Ball** (media), Carrington House Hotel, Bournemouth. Tickets from £104; £35/day Sat/Sun. See sfbevents.com/sfball.

9-24 Feb • **Space Fiction** events, readings etc, National Space Centre, Leicester. Brian Aldiss, Alastair Reynolds, Peter F. Hamilton, many more. See www.spacecentre.co.uk/space-fiction-at-a-glance.

15-17 Feb • **Fantasy February** (residential workshop), Dove Valley Centre, near Buxton, Derbyshire. £150 including shared accommodation. Contact alexdavisevents at hotmail dot co dot uk.

16-17 Feb • **Picocon 30**, Imperial College Union, London. £20 reg; £15/day; concessions £15, £12/day. Contact ICSF, Beit Quad, Prince Consort Road,

London, SW7 2BB; picocon at icsf co uk.

22-24 Feb • **Redemption '13** (multimedia sf), Britannia Hotel, Fairfax St, Coventry, CV1 5RP. £70 reg or £40/day (concessions £50, £35); £15 supp and under-18s; under-3s free. *Advance booking closes 11 February*; £75 or £45/day at door (concessions £55, £40). Contact 61 Chaucer Road, Farnborough, Hampshire, GU14 8SP.

23-24 Feb • **Microcon 2013**, Streatha, Campus, Exeter University. Various guest speakers. £10.00 reg: cheques payable to Exeter University Sci Fi Society, 17 Eldertree Gardens, Exeter, EX4 4DE.

27 Feb • **BSFA Open Meeting**, The Argyle pub, Leather Lane, London. 5/6pm for 7pm. With Elizabeth Hand. Free; all welcome.

3-4 Mar • **P-Con X**, Dublin, Ireland. Still CANCELLED/POSTPONED.

9-10 Mar • **BritSciFi3** (media), National Space Centre, Leicester. Guest actors from *Blake's 7*, *Doctor Who*, *Red Dwarf*, *Space: 1999*. See www.spacecentre.co.uk/special-events/britscifi3.

11-14 Apr • **Eurocon 2013**, Expo Plaza, Kiev, Ukraine. £25 reg by sterling cheque to 'D J Lally No 2 a/c' (*not No 6 a/c as announced last issue; that account has died*) or cash in person to UK agent Dave Lally, 64 Richborne Terrace, London, SW8 1AX, by 1 April; then cash at door.

14-21 Sep • **Milford UK** (writers' workshop), Trigonos, Snowdonia. £585 inc room and meals; £115 deposit required; published writers only. Contact c/o 10 Park Head, Birdsedge, Huddersfield, HD8 8XW.

15-17 Nov • **Armadacon 25**, Future Inn, Plymouth. GoH TBA. £30 (£25 concessions) to 18 Wadham Rd, Liskeard, Cornwall, PL14 3BD.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others Quote Us. 'Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic, said Isaac Asimov ...' (Rory Carroll, guardian.co.uk, 10 January) But the writer inexplicably fails to cite Arthur C. Clarke's three laws of robotics. [DL]

Award Shortlists. *BSFA*: NOVEL Chris Beckett, *Dark Eden*; M. John

Harrison, *Empty Space: A Haunting*; Ken MacLeod, *Intrusion*; Adam Roberts, *Jack Glass*; Kim Stanley Robinson, *2312*. SHORT Aliette de Bodard, 'Immersion' (*Clarkesworld* #69); Chris Butler, *The Flight of the Ravens*; Rochita Loenen-Ruiz 'Song of the Body Cartographer' (*Phillipines Genre Stories*); Tim Maughan 'Limited Edition' by (*Arc Magazine*); China Miéville 'Three Moments of an Explosion' (*Rejectamentalist Manifesto*); Ian Sales, *Adrift on the Sea of Rains*. ARTWORK, all book covers: Ben Baldwin, *Dark Currents*; Blacksheep, Adam Roberts's *Jack Glass*; Dominic Harman, Eric Brown's *Helix Wars*; Joey Hifi, Simon Morden's *Thy Kingdom Come*; Si Scott, Chris Beckett's *Dark Eden*. NONFICTION Karen Burnham, 'The Complexity of the Humble Space Suit' (*Rocket Science*); Paul Kincaid, 'The Widening Gyre' (*LA Review of Books*); Edward James & Farah Mendlesohn, *The Cambridge Companion to Fantasy Literature*; Maureen Kincaid Speller, *The Shortlist Project*; Lavie Tidhar, ed., *The World SF Blog*.

- *Kitschies*: NOVEL Jesse Bullington, *The Folly of the World*; Nick Harkaway, *Angelmaker*; Frances Hardinge, *A Face Like Glass*; Adam Roberts, *Jack Glass*; Juli Zeh, *The Method* trans Sally-Ann Spencer. DEBUT Madeline Ashby, *vN*; Jenni Fagan, *The Panopticon*; Rachel Hartman, *Seraphina*; Karen Lord, *Redemption in Indigo*; Tom Pollock, *The City's Son*. COVER ART Tom Gauld, Matthew Hughes's *Costume Not Included*; Oliver Jeffers, John Boyne's *The Terrible Thing That Happened to Barnaby Rooker*; Dave Shelton, his own *A Boy and a Bear in a Boat*; Peter Mendelsund, Ben Marcus's *The Flame Alphabet*; La Boca, Ned Beaman's *The Teleportation Accident*.
- *Philip K Dick* (US paperback original): Ryan Boudinot, *Blueprints of the Afterlife*; Keith Brooke, *Harmony*; Eric Brown, *Helix Wars*; Moira Crone, *The Not Yet*; Nancy Kress, *Fountains of Age*; Andri Snær Magnason, *Lovestar*; Brian Francis Slattery, *Lost Everything*.

Jabbagate. 'The Turkish Cultural Community of Austria said in a statement that a Lego set of Jabba's Palace from the Star Wars series is racist because it appears to closely resemble the Hagia Sophia (formerly a mosque) in Istanbul, the Jami al-Kabir mosque in Beirut and a minaret and therefore reinforces negative stereotypes about the Middle East, according to the Austrian Times. The statement threatened legal action against Lego if it does not withdraw the toys.' ([Huffington Post](#), 24 January) [DKMK] Presumably it also closely resembles Jabba's Palace as portrayed in *Return of the Jedi* in 1983, in which case these expressions of shock, horror and outrage have been

a long time coming.

R.I.P. *Keith Armstrong-Bridges*, long-time UK fan and convention-goer who was a founder of the Tolkien Society in 1970, died on 11 January. [SN]

- Late report: *Mike Deckinger*, US fan involved with fanzines since the late 1950s, died on 2 February 2012. [RL]
- *David R. Ellis* (1952-2013), US stuntman and director of *Snakes on a Plane* plus two films in the *Final Destination* horror sequence, died on 7 January; he was 60. He was second unit director for many genre films including *Waterworld*, *Sphere*, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* and *The Matrix Reloaded*. [MMW]
- *Jon Finch* (1941-2012), UK actor who played Jerry Cornelius in *The Final Programme* (1973) and starred in the BBC sf series *Counterstrike* (1969; all tapes wiped), was found dead at home on 28 December; he was 71. [DP]
- *Sophiya Haque* (1971-2013), Bengali-UK actress whose genre credits include *Wanted* (2008) and *House of Anubis* (2012 tv), died on 17 January aged 41. [AW] She was also in the non-genre but controversially titled Indian film *Hari Puttar: A Comedy of Terrors* (2008).
- *Bernard Horsfall* (1930-2013), UK actor seen in 15 episodes of *Doctor Who* (1968-1976), died in January; he was 82. [BB] Further tv genre credits include *Pathfinders to Mars*, *The Avengers* and *Doomwatch*. [CM]
- *John N. Marx* (1937-2012), US fan, collector and genre book dealer since 1977 as Marx Books, died on 13 December; he was 75. [GVG]
- *Daphne Oxenford* (1919-2012), the voice of BBC Radio's *Listen with Mother* 1950-1971, died on 21 December aged 93. [MPJ] Besides this link with children's fantasy, she was in *Doctor Who*'s 'The Unicorn and the Wasp' (2008; scenes deleted but on DVD) and the *Sapphire and Steel* audio play *Cruel Immortality* (2007). [MPJ]
- *Denni Schnapp* (1964-2013), UK fan and member of the T Party Writers' Group, took her own life on 17 January after a long struggle with depression. She was 48. [GC]
- *Gloria Pall* (1927-2012), US model and actress seen in *Abbott and Costello Go to Mars* (1953), *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* (1954) and *The Twilight Zone* (1959), died on 30 December aged 85. [AIP]
- *Jacques Sadoul* (1934-2013), French editor, anthologist, writer and sf historian who presided for many years over the J'ai Lu sf imprint, died on 18 January aged 78. [RS] In 1972 he founded the Prix Apollo, given until 1990 for the year's best sf novel published in France.

- *Steve Utley* (1948-2013), US author of many admired short stories including ‘Custer’s Last Jump’ (1976) and ‘Black as the Pit, from Pole to Pole’ (1977) – both written with Howard Waldrop – died on 12 January all too soon after diagnosis of cancer. He was 64. [LP]
- *Riccardo Valla* (1942-2013), Italian science/sf writer and translator (of *The Da Vinci Code* and much sf) who was chief editor at Editrice Nord in the 1970s, died on 14 January aged 70. [SS]
- Late report: *H.R. (Henry Richard) Van Dongen* (1920-2010), prolific sf artist whose first magazine cover was for *Super Science Stories* in September 1949 and who painted covers for 46 issues of *Astounding/Analog* 1950-1985, died on 27 February 2010; he was 89. Many further book covers were for Ballantine/Del Rey and DAW. [JF]
- Late report: *Roger Waddington*, long-time Yorkshire fan who was once a very regular contributor to fanzines (including the BSFA’s *Vector* and *Matrix* 1969-1990), died on 23 July 2012; he was 66. [SL]
- *Michael Waite* (1936-2013), long-time US fan and FAPA member, died on 1 January aged 76. [RL]
- *Lynn Willis*, wargame and role-playing game designer important in the development of *RuneQuest*, *Call of Cthulhu* and other well-known games, died on 18 January. [MR]
- *Michael Winner* (1935-2013), UK director, writer, producer and controversial newspaper columnist whose genre films were *The Nightcomers* (1971, a prequel to *The Turn of the Screw*) and *The Sentinel* (1977), died on 21 January. He was 77. [AW/SG]
- *Sol Yurick* (1925-2013), US novelist whose 1980s story ‘The King of Maleputa’ anticipated the virtual data-haven theme of Neal Stephenson’s *Cryptonomicon* (1999), died on 5 January aged 87. [DP]

The Weakest Link: *Climate Change Dept.* Bradley Walsh: ‘What Shakespeare play has the coldest season of the year in the title?’ Contestant: ‘*A Midsummer Night’s Dream.*’ (ITV, *The Chase*) [PE]

More Awards. *American Library Association* winners included Tamora Pierce for life achievement in YA fiction and Rachel Hartman’s fantasy *Seraphina* as fiction debut. [L]

- *Heinlein Award:* Allen Steele and Yoji Kondo. [L]
- *National TV Awards:* Colin Morgan was the only genre winner, as Best Actor for his lead role in the BBC’s *Merlin*. [MPJ]

Court Circular. Warner Bros' commercial control of Superman was confirmed when the US 9th Circuit of Appeals 'unanimously ruled that Jerome Siegel's heirs must abide by a 2001 letter accepting Warner's offer for their 50% share of Superman.' ([BBC](#), 11 January) [MPJ]

Outraged Letters. *Paul Barnett* on scriptwriter Jeremy Lloyd (see [A306](#)): 'He also wrote two fantasy collections/fixups called *The Further Adventures of Captain Gregory Dangerfield* (1973) and *The Continuing Adventures of Captain Gregory Dangerfield* (1979) [...] They're modestly amusing. The premise is that our wannabe-writer narrator rents a bedsit in which a successful pulp novelist, now dead, once lived; the spirit of the latter enters our hero (through, I think, the typewriter left in the bedsit) so that not only does he start churning out lurid pulp stuff in the L. Ron Hubbard vein but he also lives the various pulp adventures.'

- *Sam Long* remembers the oft-told anecdote of how the late lamented Keith Armstrong-Bridges (see [R.I.P. above](#)) 'once painted himself purple with gentian violet for a con masquerade in the late '60s. Trouble was, the gentian violet wouldn't come off. It had to wear off as skin cells were replaced, and he was the Purple Man for weeks!'

- *Ina Shorrocks* asks me to send her no more printed *Ansibles* since 'My eyesight is failing and I'm writing this with a magnifying frame ... With Large Print Books I am OK, but soon it will be Talking Books.' All sympathy.

- *Andrew Wells* liked the closing words of the BBC News report on Gerry Anderson's funeral: 'Fans travelled from across the country, as well as from overseas to be at the funeral which featured tributes from former Thunderbirds cast and crew.' (11 January)

Magazine Scene. *Amazing Stories* has at last officially relaunched online, 'with more than 50 bloggers covering the field from more than 50 different perspectives'. See [amazingstoriesmag.com](#).

The Dead Past. *50 Years Ago*, an almost timeless news round-up: 'KEN SLATER & THE DAILY EXPRESS reported late December that ex-fan Kingsley Amis is resigning his fellowship at Cambridge to emigrate and start a fan club in Majorca ::: George Locke is buying a glider ::: Disney is filming T.H. White's "Sword in the Stone." ::: [...] Fracas in DC. Cutting from Larry Crilly states that a religious cult, the Founding Church of Scientology is denouncing the government for seizing its teaching equipment, the Hubbard

Electrometers, named after founder Ron Hubbard. L. Ron is described in the cutting as “British science fiction writer.” ...’ ([Skyrack 49](#), February 1963)

- *30 Years Ago* the news was less timeless: ‘L. Ron Hubbard Not Dead, reports our expert on the esoteric, George Hay [...] *Starlight SF*: an *Ansible* spinoff now lurks in the pages of Prestel, British Telecom’s fabulously unpopular viewdata system.’ (*Ansible* 31, February 1983) I barely remember editing that early and tatty digital sf newsletter, ten years before I had email.

Fanfundery. *GUFF 2013*: Mihaela Marija Perković won this southbound race with a simple majority (31 first-place European votes, 12 Australasian, 6 Other; total 49) over Julie McMurray (19, 5, 6; total 30). She will attend the Australian Natcon, Conflux, in late April.

- *TAFF 2013*: candidates for the eastbound race to LoneStarCon, the Texas Worldcon, are Theresa Derwin and Jim Mowatt. Voting has begun and continues until 19 April. See taff.org.uk for ballot etc.

- *DUFF 2013*: nominations are now open for a northbound race from Australasia to LoneStarCon. Candidates should contact administrator David Cake, 6 Florence Rd, Nedlands, WA 6009, Australia (e-mail dave at difference com au) with the names of nominators (3 Aus, 2 NA), a 100-word platform and \$A15 bond, by 31 March. Voting is expected to continue to 31 May.

Thog’s Masterclass. *Dept of In Space No One Can ...* ‘From near-Earth out to the cold, dark territory of the outer system, space hummed with intense, fevered scrutiny.’ (Alastair Reynolds, *Pushing Ice*, 2005) [JDB]

- *Ornithology Dept.* ‘He watched a bird the size and colour of a penny fly across the road ...’ (Ali Shaw, *The Girl with Glass Feet*, 2009) [PB]

- *Dept of Anatomy.* ‘Hairs on her lower leg trembled as if they were on the back of her neck.’ (*Ibid*) ‘When Midas spoke he fancied it came from his insides, maybe from some alliance of organs that didn’t have a name.’ (*Ibid*) ‘He could smell her perfume, something shocking and alcoholic that ghosted through his lungs into his guts.’ (*Ibid*) ‘She felt a sudden clamminess in her gullet, an oyster swallowed wrong, dropping through her stomach and into her bowels, becoming a numbing absence beneath her knees.’ (*Ibid*)

- *Eyeballs in the Sky.* ‘His teeth would grit, his eyes would bow.’ (*Ibid*) ‘He finished his drink and let his eyes slide away from hers into the empty cup.’ (Doyce Testerman, *Hidden Things*, 2012) [PB]

- *Mannerly Homicide Dept.* ‘I told him she had been strangled as gently as I

could.’ (Jody Shields, *The Fig Eater*, 2000) [PB]

- *Dept of Euphemism for Taboo Practices*. ‘One of his eccentricities jutted out from between clenched teeth and emitted regular puffs of cherry-flavored smoke.’ (William C. Dietz, *Andromeda’s Fall*, 2012) [PM]

- *Cunning Subterfuge Dept*. ‘An elderly, uniformed man strolled out of a gatehouse disguised as a cantina.’ (Harry Harrison and Marvin Minsky, *The Turing Option*, 1992) [CM]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

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Editorial II. I hope it’s mere coincidence (because it would be frightening to wield such power) that all five novels on the BSFA Award shortlist had featured in my sf review columns for the *Sunday Telegraph* magazine.

Even Yet More Awards. The Bram Stoker preliminary ballot is far, far too long to include in *Ansible*:

<http://www.sfscope.com/2013/01/2012-bram-stoker-awards-preliminary-ballot/>

Random Fandom. *Brian Ameringen* reports an alarming letter in *Sheppard’s Newsletter* 298, from a Cambridge mail-order bookseller who learned that since 14 January his local Royal Mail depot would no longer accept overseas printed-paper mailings, supposedly owing to changes in the International Civil Aviation Organization’s Technical Instructions for the Safe Transport of Dangerous Goods by Air. Books, and thus printed fanzines, are Dangerous Goods? It’s not at all clear whether they’re being regarded as ‘flammable solids’ (though not very) or potential pornography – the only applicable-seeming classifications in the Royal Mail guide to prohibited and restricted

items.

- *BSFA Triumphant*: after many complications caused by real-life problems last year, *Vector* is back with issue 271 dated Winter 2012 (received 1 February at *Ansible* HQ, along with *Focus* 59).

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Ansible 308, March 2013

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Web news.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or the paradoxes of Immenso Champernoan.

The Dove Descending

Stephen Baxter was thrilled to be not only the first pundit quoted in a 15 February [New York Times story](#) on sf reactions to that Russian meteor, but billed as ‘president of the British Science Fiction Association’: ‘Meteor smash results in shameless plug for BSFA,’ he exulted.

Orson Scott Card is scripting two issues of the digital *All-New Adventures of Superman* for DC Comics – to the annoyance of numerous fans who dislike the idea of Superman being even so tenuously linked with Card’s notorious anti-gay rights stance. The comics parody site www.the-gutters.com ran an alternative Superman origin story in which a grim Jor-El reveals the cause of Krypton’s destruction: ‘Gay marriage has *doomed* us all.’ [The Hollywood Reporter](#) suggests that film company Summit may be worrying about its adaptation of Card’s best-known book, scheduled for November: ‘Now Summit faces the tricky task of figuring out how to handle Card’s involvement. The first big challenge will be whether to include him in July’s San Diego Comic-Con program. Promoting *Ender’s Game* without Card would be like trying to promote the first Harry Potter movie without J.K. Rowling. But having Card appear in the main ballroom in front of 6,500 fans could prove a liability if he’s forced to tackle the issue head-on during the Q&A session. / “I don’t think you take him to any fanboy event,” says one studio executive. “This will definitely take away from their creative and their property.” Another executive sums up the general consensus: “Keep him out of the limelight as much as possible.”’ (20 February) [RF]

Nancy Collins, with *Transformers* producer Don Murphy and others, is urging a boycott of the Atlanta Dragon*Con. Despite some efforts to

disengage from founding organizer Ed Kramer (whose trial on paedophilia charges has been delayed by 13 years of legal wrangling and alleged health problems), Dragon*Con still has to pay him hefty sums each year as a shareholder owning 31% of the convention. Just to make it more interesting, Georgia law doesn't allow the company to be dissolved – and reformed without Kramer, as many wish – while it's involved in any legal dispute; there's just such a pending dispute with Kramer over his shareholder rights. ([Deadline.com](#), 19 February) [cj]

Christopher Tolkien, not a man for talking to the press, granted his first ever interview to *Le Monde* last year; a translation later appeared online. 'They eviscerated [*The Lord of the Rings*] by making it an action movie for young people aged 15 to 25,' he complained. 'Tolkien has become a monster, devoured by his own popularity and absorbed into the absurdity of our time. The chasm between the beauty and seriousness of the work, and what it has become, has overwhelmed me. The commercialization has reduced the aesthetic and philosophical impact of the creation to nothing. There is only one solution for me: to turn my head away.' *Le Monde* added: 'Invited to meet Peter Jackson, the Tolkien family preferred not to.' ([Worldcrunch](#), 5 December) [DKMK]

Confusely

1-3 Mar • **Sci-Fi Weekender**, Hafan y Mor Holiday Park, Pwllheli, North Wales. See www.scifiweekender.com.

9 Mar • **The Anachronism** (steampunk), Gateshead Library, 10am-4pm. With Bryan Talbot, others. £5. <http://tinyurl.com/ah6kyz3>

9-10 Mar • **BritSciFi3** (media), National Space Centre, Leicester. Guest actors from *Blake's 7*, *Doctor Who*, *Red Dwarf*, *Space: 1999*. See www.spacecentre.co.uk/special-events/britscifi3.

22-25 Mar • **Steampunk at the Seaside**, Park Resorts, Camber Sands. For pricing see steampunk.synthasite.com/seaside.php.

29 Mar - 1 Apr • **EightSquaredCon** (Eastercon), Cedar Court Hotel, Bradford. £70 reg; £35 supp; £25 junior (12-17); £10 child (5-11); £1 infant. *Advance booking closes 15 March*. £80 at the door; same junior and child

rates. Day rates £15 (£5 junior or child) Fri or Mon; £30 (£10 junior, £5 child) Sat or Sun. Contact 19 Uphall Road, Cambridge, CB1 3HX; www.eightsquaredcon.org.

22-24 Feb 2015 • **Redemption '15** (multimedia sf), Britannia Hotel, Fairfax St, Coventry, CV1 5RP. GoH TBA. £55 reg to 30 April 2013, £65 to 30 August 2013, £70 to 11 February 2015, £75 at door (concessions £20 off); £40/day, £45 at door (concessions £5 off); under-18s £25 or £15/day; £15 supp; under-3s free. Advance booking closes two weeks before the event. Contact 61 Chaucer Road, Farnborough, Hampshire, GU14 8SP.

Rumblings. [LoneStarCon](#) (the 2013 Texas Worldcon) reminds us all that the Hugo nominations deadline is getting close: 10 March.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. ‘Today the campaign for world government lives on mainly among kooks and science fiction fans.’ (Steven Pinker, *The Better Angels of Our Nature: Why Violence Has Declined*, 2011) [JB]

• ‘But *Star Wars* isn’t a Western; it’s a science-fiction story, which means anything goes.’ (Noah Berlatsky, *The Atlantic*, 19 February) [PDF]

Awards. *Crawford* (fantasy): Karin Tidbeck’s story collection *Jagannath*. [JV]

• *Horror Writers Association* awards for lifetime achievement: Clive Barker and Robert McCammon. (*SFscope*)

• *Kitschies*: NOVEL Nick Harkaway, *Angelmaker*. DEBUT NOVEL Karen Lord, *Redemption in Indigo*. COVER ART Dave Shelton for his own *A Boy and a Bear in a Boat*. DISCRETIONARY [The World SF Blog](#).

• *Oscars*: the win for *Argo*, about a CIA operation centred on a fake sf film production, is as close as sf has ever come to the Best Picture Oscar. [MPJ]

• *Razzies* (worst in cinema): dominated by *Twilight: Breaking Dawn, Part 1* with seven wins including Worst Picture. Kristen Stewart won Worst Actress for both this and her fantasy film *Snow White and the Huntsman*. [MPJ]

R.I.P. Ángel Arango (1926-2013), Cuban author who was the last survivor of his country’s three founding fathers of sf, died on 19 February; he was 86. [PDF]

• *W. Watts Biggers* (1927-2013), co-creator of the animated tv superhero

series *Underdog* and author of *The Man Inside* (1968), died on 10 February aged 85.

- *Richard Briers* (1934-2013), UK actor who narrated *Roobarb & Custard* (1970s) and voiced the rabbit Fiver in *Watership Down* (1978), died on 17 February aged 79. Other genre credits include *Doctor Who* (1987), *Frankenstein* (1994), *Torchwood* (2008) and *Cockneys vs Zombies* (2012). [AW/CM]

- *Robert Briggs*, old-time US fan who co-founded the Washington SF Association in 1947 and was still active in the SAPS amateur press association, died on 5 February. [RL]

- *Allan B. Calhamer* (1931-2013), designer of the board game *Diplomacy* – which had considerable impact on sf fandom – died on 25 February aged 81. [MR]

- *Antonio Caronia* (1944-2013), Italian sf activist, author of sf stories and books about sf (including a Philip K. Dick encyclopedia) and translator of J.G. Ballard, died on 30 January; he was 69. [SES]

- *Scott Clark* (1969-2013), US comics artist since the early 1990s for Aspen, DC and WildStorm, died on 21 February; he was only 43. [PDF]

- *Richard Collins* (1914-2013), US producer and screenwriter who scripted *Cult of the Cobra* (1955), *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1956) and an episode of *Planet of the Apes* (1974 tv), died on 14 February aged 98. [SFS]

- *Ray Cusick* (1928-2013), designer of the utterly iconic Daleks for *Doctor Who* in 1963, died on 21 February; he was 84. Cusick was production designer for 42 instalments of *Doctor Who*, 1963-1966. [RJ]

- *Jan Howard Finder* (1939-2013, alias Wombat), US fan, author, anthologist, and convention organizer, died on 25 February; he was 73. [MJL/CP] I fondly remember writing for his 1970s fanzine *The Spang Blah* and his sf anthology *Alien Encounters* (1982). As a Tolkien lover he organized the Middle-earth conferences (1969, 1971, 2011, another planned for 2014) and New Zealand film-setting tours; as an Anglophile he ran Novacon West (Albany, NY, 1979) in parallel with our Novacon 9.

- *Stuart Freeborn* (1914-2013), UK make-up artist whose most famous creations were the ape-men of *2001: A Space Odyssey* and Yoda in the *Star Wars* sequence, died on 5 February aged 98. His many other genre credits include *Dr Strangelove*. [MPJ] Jonathan Cowie recalls ‘the injustice ... in which *Planet of the Apes* got nominated for a Best Costume Design Oscar in 1969 but *2001: A Space Odyssey* did not: rumour has it the Hollywood folk

thought Kubrick used (got Freeborn to use) real apes!'

- *Peter Gilmore* (1931-2013), UK actor whose genre credits include *The Abominable Dr. Phibes* (1971), *Warlords of the Deep* (1978 aka *Warlords of Atlantis*) and a 1984 *Doctor Who* four-parter, died on 3 February; he was 81. [MPJ]
- *Anne Devereaux Jordan*, a 1980s editor at *F&SF*, anthologist and occasional poet in sf magazines, died on 2 February; she was 69. She founded the US Children's Literature Association in 1973 and in 1992 received its first Anne Devereaux Jordan Award, named for her and given annually by the CLA for outstanding contributions in that field. [GVG/AIP]
- *John Kerr* (1931-2013), US actor who co-starred in *The Pit and the Pendulum* (1961), died on 2 February aged 81. [MMW]
- *Marilee J. Layman*, US fan who was a well-loved stalwart of Usenet rec.arts.sf newsgroups and other online forums, died on 22 February after long illness. [JDN]
- *Henry Newton* (1944-2013), long-time UK fan and convention-goer who was a founder of the Warrington sf group in the 1980s and planned a comeback at Eastercon 2013, died on 18 February; he was 68. [RC]
- *Daniel Pearlman* (1935-2013), US sf/fantasy author and professor of creative writing who published in genre magazines and anthologies from 1988, died on 18 February aged 77. *The Final Dream* (1995) collects early stories; his first genre novel was the cyberpunk dystopia *Memini* (2003). [PDF]
- *James Plumeri*, cover art director for 15 years with New American Library and then 1985-2005 with Bantam Dell (where he designed the mass-market paperback covers for *Salem's Lot* and *The Shining*), died on 2 February aged 79. [AIP]
- *Robin Sachs* (1951-2013), UK actor whose genre credits include *Fantastic Four* (1994), *The Lost World: Jurassic Park* (1998), *Babylon 5* (1990s), *Galaxy Quest* (1999) and *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (1997-2000), died on 1 February; he was 61. [BB/MR]
- *Petro Vlahos*, a pioneer of blue- and green-screen filming ('the colour-difference travelling matte scheme') who received a 1964 Oscar for related work on *Mary Poppins*, died on 10 February. [MPJ]
- *Diane Wolkstein* (1942-2013), US children's fantasy author, folklorist and both exponent and promoter of public storytelling, died on 31 January aged 70. [PDF]

The Happy Breed. Of a lost race: ‘... they could not make a piece of glass, and their crockery is rather primitive ... They know nothing about steam, electricity, or gunpowder, and, mercifully for themselves, nothing about printing or the penny post. Thus they are spared many evils ...’ (H.R. Haggard, *Allan Quatermain*, 1887) [BA] If they didn’t spend their days reading Facebook via iPhone, this would be utopia.

Magazine Scene. Gardner Dozois is wearing yet another hat as *Clarkesworld*’s reprint editor, picking two older stories each month (from the last three decades, so no H.G. Wells or S.P. Meek). [AIP]

Court Circular. A 3-D printed iPhone dock in the shape of the Iron Throne from *Game of Thrones* has been ruthlessly suppressed by the rights owners HBO. ([Wired](#), 13 February) [SB]

- The Tolkien estate’s November lawsuit against the licensing of *Lord of the Rings* slot machines and online games (causing ‘irreparable harm to Tolkien’s legacy and reputation and the valuable goodwill generated by his works’, ho hum) has led to a countersuit by our old friends the Saul Zaentz Co. ([Middle-earth News](#), 1 February) [DKMK]

- Games Workshop lawyers decided that the GW trademark on *Warhammer 40,000* ‘Space Marines’ extended beyond games into fiction, and persuaded Amazon to block sales of author M.C.A. Hogarth’s ebook *Spots the Space Marine*; which, almost needless to say, has no connection to *Warhammer 40K* beyond the two offending words. Hogarth wrote: ‘In their last email to me, Games Workshop stated that they believe that their recent entrée into the e-book market gives them the common law trademark for the term “space marine” in all formats.’ (5 February) There was outrage in sf circles, not always to the point (the fact that Heinlein wrote about space marines in 1948 carries little weight in trademark law); but Amazon presumably decided GW had over-reached, as Hogarth’s book was reinstated three days after [her despairing blog post](#) about the ban.

As Others See Us II. The things which sf is not, as conveyed by rules for a US speech competition: ‘The selection for this category may include but is not limited to short stories, novels, science fiction, fiction, nonfiction, wit and humor, or fantasy.’ (University Interscholastic League Oral Interpretation Competition – Prose category rules) [PL]

Shortlists. *Bram Stoker*: ADULT NOVEL Benjamin Kane Ethridge, *Bottled*

Abyss; John Everson, *NightWhere*; Caitlin R. Kiernan, *The Drowning Girl*; Bentley Little, *The Haunted*; Joe McKinney, *Inheritance*. See www.horror.org/blog/?p=3211 for ten other categories. Winners: 15 June.

- **Nebulas:** NOVEL Saladin Ahmed, *Throne of the Crescent Moon*; Tina Connolly, *Ironskin*; N.K. Jemisin, *The Killing Moon*; Caitlín R. Kiernan, *The Drowning Girl*; Mary Robinette Kowal, *Glamour in Glass*; Kim Stanley Robinson, 2312.

- **DRAMATIC (Ray Bradbury Award):** *The Avengers*; *Beasts of the Southern Wild*; *The Cabin in the Woods*; *The Hunger Games*; *John Carter*; *Looper*.

- **ANDRE NORTON AWARD (YA):** Kelly Barnhill, *Iron Hearted Violet*; Holly Black, *Black Heart*; Leah Bobet, *Above*; Libba Bray, *The Diviners*; Sarah Beth Durst, *Vessel*; Rachel Hartman, *Seraphina*; Alethea Kontis, *Enchanted*; David Levithan, *Every Day*; Guadalupe Garcia McCall, *Summer of the Mariposas*; China Miéville, *Railsea*; E.C. Myers, *Fair Coin*; Jenn Reese, *Above World*.

- See www.sfgwa.org for short-fiction categories. Winners announced in May.

Outraged Letters. *Gardner Dozois* remembers: ‘I was at the convention where Keith Bridges dyed himself purple. I’m pretty sure that it was Eastercon 1969 in Oxford [*It was – Ed.*], and Keith was dressed, as “The Dustman from Uranus”, or it might have been “The Dustman from Neptune”. A group of us went punting on the Thames afterward, Keith poling, and he fell in. Somewhere, lost in old photos, I have a picture of Keith arising purple and dripping from the river. / He was a great guy. I’m sorry to see him go.’ *Howard Rosenblum* adds: ‘I believe the convention was in Oxford at the Randolph Hotel. Keith & Jilly were staying there, & Keith had a bath to try & get the dye off. What little that did come off stuck to the bath, much to the displeasure of the hotel management. / Keith was possibly the first chairman of the Tolkien Society.’

- *Michael J. Lowrey* read the new online *Amazing*: ‘Their Fantasy Art blogger, one Astrid Nielsch [...] has proclaimed that “fan art” is art based on TV shows and movies; and that what goes in fanzines and is eligible for the Fan Artist Hugo is “illustration”. She has been called to task for this re-definition of existing terminology, and haughtily informs the mere fans (Steve Stiles, John Purcell, Leah Zeldes, Kevin Standlee, Robert Lichtman, Lenny Bailes, Dennis Howard, Sandra Bond, Murray Moore, even me) trying to explain things to her that if we are fans, then she must be a mundane; and that’s OK with her. Our definition, you see, is “inane” and “makes no sense”.

We “should rename the Hugos then. And split them into more categories! That would give visual arts a bit more weight in the genre.”

We Are Everywhere. A profile of *Washington Post* columnist Ezra Klein notes that when young ‘... he read a lot, mostly bad science fiction. He devoured, for example, the entire *Dragonriders of Pern* series, but none of *The Lord of the Rings*. (*Dragonriders of Pern* consists of two dozen books about how the residents of the planet Pern commune telepathically with intelligent dragons to fight showers of a corrosive spore called “Thread.”)’ (*New Republic*, 12 February) [DK]

Random Fandom. *FAAns*: voting is open for the 2013 Fan Activity Achievement Awards, with a 6 April deadline. Anyone can vote; see corflu.org for the ballot form and a list of eligible fanzines published during 2012. New category added: Best Fanzine Cover. Bill Burns has a gallery of eligible covers at efanzines.com/covers2012.htm.

C.o.A. *Mike Glycer*, 1507 1/2 S. Sixth Ave, Arcadia, CA 91006, USA.

The Dead Past. *50 Years Ago* one could buy ‘THE DIRECTORY OF 1962 SCIENCE FICTION FANDOM. This eighth annual listing contains the addresses of over 500 fans around the world and is the most up to date and revised listing ever produced.’ ([Skyrack 50](http://Skyrack50), March 1963)

- *30 Years Ago*, Brian Aldiss announced: ‘HRH [*sic*] The Queen allowed the term “science fiction” to escape her lips without opprobrium in a speech in San Francisco. WE HAVE ARRIVED.’ (*Ansible* 32, March 1983)

Fanfundery. *DUFF* 2013 nominations close on 31 March. See A307.

Thog’s Masterclass. *Dept of Telling Phrases*. ‘The poor Freneaus. For all their wealth and position, they certainly had not had a barrel of skittles.’ (Edwina Noone [Michael Avallone], *The Second Secret*, 1966) [FN via TM]

- ‘She stood on the boarded sidewalks of the town, staring after the carriage, a bouquet of tulips sprayed over her worn fingers.’ (*Ibid*)

- ‘A peach that hung in their midst for years had been abruptly plucked from the communal tree and now no one knew what was in store for her.’ (*Ibid*)

- *Dept of Anatomy*. ‘Now on the ferry, he looked at the white hairs dashing along his forearms and the backs of his hands.’ (Ali Shaw, *The Girl with Glass Feet*, 2009) [PB]

- *Vernacular Dept*. ‘You had better come with me. I have something to show

you in the bog.’ (*Ibid*)

• *Dept of Sceptical Cryptozoology Down Under*. “Come to think of it, it could have been a kangaroo,” Coates agreed ... “Still, I’m certain this thing had wings, and tentacles on its head.” / “A leaping kangaroo can look like anything,” the Sergeant grunted.’ (Vol Molesworth, ‘Arkaroo’ in *The Forerunner*, 1953) [DL]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 1 Mar 2013, British Fantasy Society Open Night, Phoenix Artists Club, off Charing Cross Rd, London. Official period 6-11pm; bar continues to 2:30am. All welcome.
- 8 March 2013: James Brogden talks to the Brum Group, Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre, 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk or rog.peyton at btinternet com. Future meetings: 12 April, Brian Aldiss OBE; 10 May, tba; 14 June, Ian Drury; 12 July, Richard Denning.

Outraged Letters II. *Earl Kemp* reiterates: ‘... too damned many obits. Stop the killing!’ Even more so this issue, alas.

Editorial. I’ve probably mentioned those eyesight woes rather too often here, and should reassure jaded readers that the worst seems to be over. The expensive new glasses fixed most of the problem and the even newer glasses (just for work at the computer monitor) have cleared up the remaining headaches. Again thanks for all messages of sympathy. I regret that for reasons far too tedious to relate, I won’t be at Eastercon in Bradford.

- A couple of utterly frivolous image links and an *SF Encyclopedia* update:
<http://ansible.co.uk/images/thogpulpmag.jpg>
<http://www.heldfond.com/pictures/7688-1.jpg>
<http://sfencyclopedia.wordpress.com/2013/02/21/invisible-mending/>

Cancellation Reminder. Just in case anyone still has P-Con X (Dublin, 2-3 March) in their diary, please note that it isn’t happening:
<http://www.pcon.ie/>

Late Obituary Very soon after this issue was sent out, news came through of the 4 February death of Richard E. Geis (1927-2013), multiple Hugo-winning

fan/semiprozine writer, editor and publisher:

<http://efanzines.com/Taboo/>

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Ansible 309, April 2013

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Web news.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Steve Stiles**. Available for SAE or extracts from *The Anatomy of Nonscience*.

EightSquaredCon. Very brief notes on the [Bradford Eastercon](#):

- **Hugos**: nominations were announced; see [far below](#).
 - **BSFA Awards** winners were: NOVEL Adam Roberts, *Jack Glass*; SHORT Ian Sales, *Adrift on the Sea of Rains*; ARTWORK blacksheep, for the cover of *Jack Glass*; NONFICTION [The World SF Blog](#), chief editor Lavie Tidhar.
 - **In Typo Veritas**: Thog likes the hotel's plug, in every room's Guest Information book, for 'Our Four Season Brassiere'. Happily, 'our Brassiere has a no smoking policy ...' Also admired on the breakfast menu was the possible Aldiss homage 'Hand-reared pork sausages'. [BB]
 - **Eastercon 2015**: No official bid emerged; reportedly a one-year-notice London bid will be presented in Glasgow next Easter.
 - **Doc Weir Award** for unsung heroes of fandom: Jan van't Ent, the first non-British winner.
-

Against a Dark Background

Iain Banks's online announcement headed 'I am officially Very Poorly.' was widely circulated and brought widespread dismay: 'The bottom line, now, I'm afraid, is that as a late stage gall bladder cancer patient, I'm expected to live for "several months" and it's extremely unlikely I'll live beyond a year. So it looks like my latest novel, *The Quarry*, will be my last.' (www.iainbanks.net) Oh damn. There are no words for this.

Orson Scott Card's *Adventures of Superman* script for DC Comics, controversial not for its actual content but on account of Card's vigorous anti-gay polemics elsewhere, was put on hold when artist Chris Sprouse left the project. Sprouse stated: 'The media surrounding this story reached the point

where it took away from the actual work, and that's something I wasn't comfortable with.' ([Wired](#), 5 March) See A308.

Anders Celsius (1701-1744), Swedish astronomer who proposed the scale of temperature now named for him, indulged in sf speculations in his working diary *circa* 1735. Interplanetary travel and war; multi-century interstellar flights; Wellsian invisibility! This fragment, unpublished until 1991, remained untranslated and unknown in sf circles until very recently. ([European SF Portal](#), 26 February) [AE]

George Lucas had an alt-history moment: 'The sequence with the battleships at each other is from an old pirate movie or an old seafaring movie from the 1700s.' (*Revenge of the Sith* DVD commentary) [CM]

Mike Moorcock, according to one of the more subtly terrifying news stories posted on 1 April, had his beard shaved off. Credit went to 'the famous Texan barber Olaf Priol'. (*Moorcock's Miscellany*) [RH]

Confract

Until 11 Aug • **David Bowie Is** (exhibition), V&A, London. 10am-5:45pm (10pm Fri). See [Outraged Letters](#) below for a note on sf content. More at www.vam.ac.uk/content/exhibitions/david-bowie-is/.

Until 8 Sep • **Alien Revolution** (exhibition), Royal Observatory, Greenwich. Free. See www.rmg.co.uk/visit/events/alien-revolution.

11-21 Apr • **Bradford After Dark** (film), Bradford: horror strand of Bradford Film Festival. See www.bradfordfilmfestival.org.uk.

11-14 Apr • **Eurocon 2013**, Expo Plaza, Kiev, Ukraine. €35 reg online at eurocon.org.ua or at door; day rates €5 Thur, €15 Fri or Sat.

13-14 Apr • **QED** (science/skeptics), Mercure Piccadilly Hotel, Manchester, M1 4PH. SOLD OUT; see www.qedcon.org for waiting list.

16 Apr - 21 May • **Aliens in SF** (Tuesday evening course), Royal Observatory. £72. See www.rmg.co.uk/visit/events/aliens-in-sci-fi.

25-28 Apr • **Dead by Dawn** (horror film festival), Filmhouse, Edinburgh. Box office 0131 228 2688; www.deadbydawn.co.uk.

28 Apr • **Event Horizon**, Derby Conference Centre, London Rd, Derby. 11am-6pm. £5 at door; £10 for early entry (100 tickets only) at 9:30 or 10am. Contact ehnderbyevents at gmail com.

30 Apr - 6 May • **Sci-Fi-London** (film festival), BFI Southbank Strafford Picturehouse. See www.sci-fi-london.com/festival.

9-11 Aug • **Nine Worlds Geekfest** (multimedia), Renaissance Hotel and others, Heathrow. £75 reg to 31 May, £85 to 30 July, £95 to 8 August, £99 at door. Payment online only at ninemeworlds.co.uk. The seeming event philosophy is that UK Eastercons and Worldcons are too small and narrowly focused, and that we need something like the US GenCon, Dragon*Con or Comic-Con with their 40,000 to 130,000 attendees; early plans for 20,000 seem to have been scaled down a bit.

8 Nov • **The Weird** (conference on weird fiction), Inst of English Studies, Senate House, University of London. Cost TBA, £30 or less. Call for papers by 1 August: [theweirdconference at gmail dot com](mailto:theweirdconference@gmail.com).

7-9 Feb 2014 • **2emi6reve** (filk), Ramada Grantham Hotel. £37 reg; £24 unwaged; under-18s £1/year; under-5s free. Cheques: UK Filk Convention, c/o 159 Winns Avenue, Walthamstow, London, E17 5HB.

18-21 Apr 2014 • **Satellite 4** (Eastercon), Crowne Plaza Hotel, Glasgow. Rates until 4 April 2014 are £65 reg; £50 unwaged; £20 supp/junior (12-17); £5 child (5-11); £1 infant. Contact c/o Flat 2/1, 691 Shields Rd, Pollokshields, Glasgow, G41 4QL.

14-18 Aug 2014 • **Loncon 3** (72nd Worldcon), London Docklands. £95.00 reg and £230.00 family, *rising to £105 and £245 on 1 May 2013, when presupporter discounts cease*. Other rates unchanged: £65.00 YA; £30.00 child; £2.00 infant; £25.00 supp. Full membership can be paid for in 3 quarterly or 4 monthly instalments. See www.loncon3.org.

22-24 Feb 2015 • **Redemption '15** (multimedia sf), Britannia Hotel, Fairfax St, Coventry, CV1 5RP. £55 reg *rising to £65 on 1 May 2013*. Contact 61 Chaucer Road, Farnborough, Hampshire, GU14 8SP.

Infinitely Improbable

Just Not Cricket. ‘An Intellectual Property Officer has ruled that a London-based company cannot use “Batsman” as trademark for a range of cricket-related products because it is too close to “Batman” owned by DC Comics. The Officer accepted there was a “conceptual dissonance” between the two words but that they “may be easily mistaken for one another”. He also added that there was a comic book character called Batsman, who is the “disembodied consciousness of a future Batman”.’ (*The Cricketer* magazine, April 2013) [MPJ]

Awards. *Clarke Award* shortlist: Adrian Barnes, *Nod*; Chris Beckett, *Dark Eden*; Nick Harkaway, *Angelmaker*; Peter Heller, *The Dog Stars*; Ken MacLeod, *Intrusion*; Kim Stanley Robinson, *2312*.

- *Philip K. Dick*: Brian Francis Slattery, *Lost Everything*; special citation, Andri Snær Magnason, *Lovestar*. [GVG]
- *Tiptree*: Caitlín R. Kiernan, *The Drowning Girl*; Kiini Ibura Salaam, *Ancient, Ancient*.

Publishers & Sinners. Night Shade Books, whose difficulties have been rumoured for some while, was [struck off SFWA’s list of qualifying markets](#) on 3 April. Authors have the awkward choice of becoming part of a sell-off of NS assets to Skyhorse Publishing and Start Publishing on terms less attractive than existing NS contracts, or risking their rights being tied up indefinitely in NS’s possible Chapter 7 bankruptcy. The deal depends on enough NS authors agreeing to it.... ([Locus](#), [PW](#), [io9](#))

R.I.P. *Bob Clarke* (1926-2013), US artist who illustrated ‘Ripley’s Believe It or Not!’ and was a *Mad* magazine stalwart in the 1950s and 1960s, died on 31 March; he was 87. [PDF]

- *Didier Comès* (1942-2013), Belgian comics creator best known for the fantasy graphic novel *Silence* (1980) and its follow-ups, died on 7 March aged 70. [PDF]
- *Basil Copper* (1924-2013), UK author of many supernatural horror and Cthulhu Mythos tales (also of detective stories continuing the adventures of August Derleth’s *Solar Pons*), died on 3 April; he was 89. [SJ via MA] He was honoured as World Horror Grandmaster in 2010.
- *Richard E. Geis* (1927-2013), US author, publisher and fan who won many fan Hugos between 1969 and 1983 – seven (one tied) as fanwriter and six (one tied) for best fanzine with *Science Fiction Review/The Alien Critic* – died on 4 February aged 85. [DL] Most of his fictional output of 110+

volumes was soft porn, but there were several sf titles including collaborations with Elton T. Elliott. Geis published the online fanzine *Taboo Opinions* 2004-2010, and was an *Ansible* correspondent until eyesight failed him in 2012.

- *Richard Griffiths* (1947-2013), UK actor who played Vernon Dursley in five Harry Potter films (2001-2010), died on 28 March aged 65. Other genre credits include *Superman II* (1980), the tv *Gormenghast* (as Swelter, 2000) and *Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides* (2011). [BaB/SG]
- *Rick Hautala* (1949-2013), Finnish-US horror author and screenwriter whose *Night Stone* (1986) was a bestseller and who received the Bram Stoker Award for lifetime achievement in 2012, died on 21 March; he was 64. [AIP/JS]
- *Jane Henson* (1934-2013), wife of Jim Henson, who designed many of the Muppets and also worked as a puppeteer on the show, died on 2 April; she was 78. [MPJ]
- *James Herbert* (1943-2013), popular UK author of many bestselling horror novels beginning with *The Rats* (1974, filmed 1982 as *Deadly Eyes*) and including *The Fog* (1975), *The Survivor* (1976, filmed 1981), *Fluke* (1977, filmed 1995), *Haunted* (1988, filmed 1995) and *Creed* (1990), died on 20 March aged 69. He received the OBE in 2010.
- *Mitchell Hooks* (1923-2013), US artist who produced covers (including some sf) for several paperback imprints as well as much magazine work, died in March at age 89. [AIP]
- Late notice: *Dan Morgan* (1925-2011), UK guitarist and author of several sf novels including *The Richest Corpse in Show Business* (1966), the telepathy series beginning with *The New Minds* (1967) and the Venturer Twelve space adventure trilogy (1968-1973 with John Kippax), died on 4 November 2011 aged 85. [SW] At the time this went unreported in sf circles.
- *Milo O'Shea* (1926-2013), Irish character actor whose best known sf role was the wicked tyrant Duran Duran (or Durand-Durand) in the 1968 *Barbarella*, died on 2 April aged 86. [MPJ]
- *Eris Parsons* (formerly Zoe), UK fan and convention-goer who had been deeply troubled and often spoke of suicide, reportedly killed herself on 30 March.
- *Don Payne* (1964-2013), US writer/producer who scripted or co-scripted *My Super Ex-Girlfriend* (2006), *Fantastic Four: Rise of the Silver Surfer* (2007), *Thor* (2011), *Maximum Ride* (2013), *Thor: The DarkWorld* (2013)

and episodes of *The Simpsons*, died on 26 March aged 48. [PDF]

- *Jennifer Schwabach* (1967-2013), US author and poet whose novels are *Dark Winter* (2006) and *Curse's Captive* (2007), died on 26 March; she was 45. [SFS]

- *David B. Silva*, US horror writer (first published 1981), anthologist and editor of the magazine *The Horror Show* 1982-1991, died in March aged 62. [GVG]

- *Toren Smith* (1960-2013), US comics entrepreneur and translator whose Studio Proteus brought adapted Japanese manga to the American market, died on 4 March; he was 52. He co-wrote three series of English manga adaptations of the *Dirty Pair* sf franchise. [JonC]

- *Derek Watkins*, UK trumpet player on every James Bond film soundtrack from *Dr No* to *Skyfall*, died on 22 March aged 68. [PDF]

- *Paul Williams* (1948-2013), US author, editor and fan best known outside sf circles for inventing rock journalism in 1966 with *Crawdaddy* (using his fanzine publishing experience from the 1962-1963 *Within*), died after long illness on 27 March; he was 64. [DGH] As Philip K Dick's literary executor he promoted Dick's posthumous career and ran the PKD Society 1983-1992; his *Only Apparently Real* (1986) is an early contribution to the now vast field of Dick studies; he launched a notable project to collect all Theodore Sturgeon's short fiction, editing 11 of the resulting 13 volumes.

As Others See Us. Marvelling at the success of *Game of Thrones*, the *Telegraph* pinpoints its assumed minority audience: 'Aside from The Lord of the Rings, the thinking goes, audiences have always been resistant to grand fantasy. So it is strange that the programme, based on George RR Martin's bestselling books, is Sky Atlantic's most popular, and has drawn millions of unexpected fans: housewives and historians, as well as the expected men with beards.' ([2 April](#)) [MPJ]

The Inescapable Hugo Nominations. NOVEL (1113 ballots) Kim Stanley Robinson, *2312*; Mira Grant, *Blackout*; Lois McMaster Bujold, *Captain Vorpatril's Alliance*; John Scalzi, *Redshirts*; Saladin Ahmed, *Throne of the Crescent Moon*.

- NOVELLA (587) Nancy Kress, *After the Fall, Before the Fall, During the Fall*; Brandon Sanderson, *The Emperor's Soul*; Aliette de Bodard, *On a Red Station, Drifting*; Mira Grant, *San Diego 2014: The Last Stand of the California Browncoats*; Jay Lake, 'The Stars Do Not Lie' (Asimov's 10/12).

NOVELETTE (616) Thomas Olde Heuvelt, 'The Boy Who Cast No Shadow' (*Postscripts* 26/27); Catherynne M. Valente, 'Fade to White' (*Clarkesworld* 8/12); Pat Cadigan, 'The Girl-Thing Who Went Out for Sushi' (*Edge of Infinity*); Seanan McGuire, 'In Sea-Salt Tears' (self-published); Seanan McGuire, 'Rat-Catcher' (*A Fantasy Medley* 2).

- SHORT (662) Aliette de Bodard, 'Immersion' (*Clarkesworld* 6/2012); Kij Johnson, 'Mantis Wives' (*Clarkesworld*, 8/2012); Ken Liu, 'Mono no Aware' (*The Future is Japanese*) – others eliminated by a rules requirement for 5% of the category vote.

- RELATED WORK (584) Edward James & Farah Mendlesohn, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Fantasy Literature*; Lynne M. Thomas & Sigrid Ellis, ed., *Chicks Dig Comics: A Celebration of Comic Books by the Women Who Love Them*; Deborah Stanish & L.M. Myles, ed., *Chicks Unravel Time: Women Journey Through Every Season of Doctor Who*; John Helfers, ed., *I Have an Idea for a Book... The Bibliography of Martin H. Greenberg*; Brandon Sanderson, Dan Wells, Mary Robinette Kowal, Howard Tayler and Jordan Sanderson, *Writing Excuses, Season Seven*.

- GRAPHIC STORY (427) Bryan Talbot, *Grandville Bête Noire*; Joe Hill & Gabriel Rodriguez, *Locke & Key Volume 5: Clockworks*; Brian K. Vaughn & Fiona Staples, *Saga, Volume One*; Howard Tayler & Travis Walton, *Schlock Mercenary: Random Access Memorabilia*; Paul Cornell, Ryan Kelly, Jimmy Broxton and Goran Sudzuka, *Saucer Country, Volume 1: Run*.

- DRAMATIC – LONG (787) *The Avengers, The Cabin in the Woods, The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey, The Hunger Games, Looper*. DRAMATIC – SHORT (597) *Doctor Who: 'The Angels Take Manhattan', Doctor Who: 'Asylum of the Daleks', Doctor Who: 'The Snowmen', Fringe: 'Letters of Transit', Game of Thrones: 'Blackwater'*.

- EDITOR – SHORT (526) John Joseph Adams, Neil Clarke, Stanley Schmidt, Jonathan Strahan, Sheila Williams.

- EDITOR – LONG Form (408) Lou Anders, Sheila Gilbert, Liz Gorinsky, Patrick Nielsen Hayden, Toni Weiskopf.

- PRO ARTIST (519) Vincent Chong, Julie Dillon, Dan Dos Santos, Chris McGrath, John Picacio.

- SEMIPROZINE (404) *Apex Magazine, Beneath Ceaseless Skies, Clarkesworld, Lightspeed, Strange Horizons*.

- FANZINE (370) *Banana Wings, The Drink Tank, Elitist Book Reviews, Journey Planet, SF Signal*.

- FANCAST (346) *The Coode Street Podcast, Galactic Suburbia Podcast, SF Signal Podcast, SF Squeecast, StarShipSofa.*
- FAN WRITER (485) James Bacon, Christopher J Garcia, Mark Oshiro, Tansy Rayner Roberts, Steven H Silver.
- FAN ARTIST (293) Galen Dara, Brad W. Foster, Spring Schoenhuth, Maurine Starkey, Steve Stiles.
- JOHN W. CAMPBELL AWARD (476; * marks second and final year of eligibility) Zen Cho*, Max Gladstone, Mur Lafferty*, Stina Leicht*, Chuck Wendig*.

Crystal Balls. John W. Campbell opines, 1945: ‘Television may never reach the stage of being in everyone’s home, as radio receivers are now ... It can’t be unobtrusive; you have to watch it. But you can’t watch it if you’re doing housework, paying bills, playing bridge, or reading ... My own hunch is that too few people will buy the expensive, four hundred dollar television receivers to support the commercial advertiser’s very expensive show.’ (*Astounding SF*, June 1945) [MMW]

Outraged Letters. *Martyn P. Jackson:* ‘BBC Radio 5 Live’s coverage of the Cheltenham Festival has been enlivened by commentators and pundits taking part in a daily round of Call My Bluff [*based on racehorse names*]. Today’s horse was Bouggler and comedian Kevin Day stated that it was the french word for “hobbit” – the word “hobbit” being too close to a rude french word, so it was changed to “bouggler” for publication in France. Sadly this turned out to be a bluff.’ (14 March)

- *Andre Paine* on the V&A’s David Bowie exhibition (see events list above): ‘[This] includes a section on “inner space” with J.G. Ballard’s *The Atrocity Exhibition* on display. The catalogue is also full of SF references – it quotes Brian Aldiss’s *My Country ’Tis Not Only Of Thee: A Story Of The World After The Vietnam War* – and it seems Bowie was obsessed with SF.’ The catalogue commentary on Bowie’s 1976-1979 album covers wanders nostalgically into ‘As Others See Us’ territory: ‘Their harsh visual bleakness was irresistible to a generation of *NME*-reading sad young men (and they generally were young men) whose imaginative parameters were sketched out by the novels of J.G. Ballard, the music of Kraftwerk and the films of Nicolas Roeg.’ Poor chaps!

The Dead Past. *20 Years Ago*, punctuation was already in decline. ‘Apostrophe Watch. Erstwhile “quality” imprint Picador says of Jim Crace’s *Arcadia*: “... a celebration of the city, it’s energy, it’s optimism, it’s scale and

it's capacity to re-generate itself despite the deprivations which flourish in it's secrets.” (*Ansible* 69, April 1993)

More Awards. *The Barftas* (British Academy of Rubbish Films and Terrible Acting; the UK Razzies) had one genre winner at the inaugural presentation, Nicholas Cage as worst actor for his lead role in *Ghost Rider: Spirit of Vengeance*. (*Independent*, 1 March) [MPJ]

Random Fandom. *Chris Bell and Roger Burton West*, according to [the Eastercon newsletter FourCubed](#), are now married. Congratulations.

Thog's Masterclass. *Flowing Speech Dept.* ‘His accent slipped off his tongue like water.’ (Lisa Mangum, *The Hourglass Door*, 2009) [PB]

• *Dept of Permeability.* ‘Indescribable things rushed through him.’ (Brian W. Aldiss, *Cryptozoic!* aka *An Age*, 1967) [PB]

• *Eyeballs in the Sky.* ‘Sprawling out on the floor of the bar, Elvis's eyes fell on the underside of a nearby table ...’ (Stephen Bury [Neal Stephenson with J. Frederick George], *Interface*, 1994) [CM]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

• 12 April 2013: Brian Aldiss OBE talks to the Brum Group, Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre, 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk or rog.peyton at btinternet com. Future meetings: 10 May, Freda Warrington; 14 June, Ian Drury; 12 July, Richard Denning; 9 August, Summer Social at The Bull near Aston University; 13 September, Alice Lawson.

Editorial. I've been a bit ill and am not entirely better yet. Hence this delayed issue.

More R.I.P. *Roger Ebert* (1942-2013), leading US film critic and Pulitzer prizewinner who fondly remembered his early days in sf fandom (see for example his introduction to *The Best of Xero* ed. Pat and Dick Lupoff, 2004), died on 4 April; he was 70.

• *George Gladir* (1925-2013), long-time comics writer at Archie Comics and creator of *Sabrina the Teenage Witch* (first seen 1962; own comic 1971-1983), died on 3 April.

Comparative Thog. *Which Phrase of Feminine Appreciation is the Typo?*
'Her bottom was good and did not slop too much.' (Brian W. Aldiss,
Cryptozoic! aka *An Age*, 1967) [PB] 'Her bottom was good and did not slope
too much.' (Brian W. Aldiss, *An Age* aka *Cryptozoic!*, 1967)

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Martyn P. Jackson, Steve Jones, David Levine, Chryse Moore, Andrew I.
Porter, SF Site, Jim Steel, Gordon Van Gelder, Sean Wallace, Martin Morse
Wooster, and our Hero Distributors: Dave Corby (Birmingham SF Group),
SCIS/Prophecy, Alan Stewart (Australia). 6 April 2013.

Ansible 310, May 2013

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Web news.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**.
Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or health and safety instructions for a Foon.

The Pirates of Ersatz

Brian Aldiss OBE revealed his special relationship with Aung San Suu Kyi: ‘Since my novel *Forgotten Life* has extensive passages concerning Burma in it, I sent a copy out to Burma when she was confined to her house. She wrote back, thanking me, saying “I loved the sex.” (One entirely understands.)’ (letter, *Oxford Today*, Trinity Term 2013)

Colin Bateman, Irish crime writer, is not above a little sf homage. His latest novel *Nine Inches* features a Belfast pub called The Bob Shaw, eventually explained as being named for ‘an Irish scifi writer who had invented an ingenious method of looking into the past’. [JB]

Ann C. Crispin is the 2013 Grandmaster of the International Association of Media Tie-In Writers, for her contributions to the *Alien*, *Star Wars*, *Star Trek*, *V* and *Pirates of the Caribbean* franchises. [L]

Cory Doctorow on the news that links to his Creative Commons licensed novel *Homeland* were being taken down via DMCA requests from Fox, on the basis that Fox has an unrelated tv series with the same title: ‘I think you can safely say I’m incandescent with rage. BRING ME THE SEVERED HEAD OF RUPERT MURDOCH!’ ([TechCrunch](#), 21 April)

Michael Lindsay’s sf novel *Mind-Sprung* (1981) was central to an enthusiastic feature article, ‘Science Fiction and “Mind-Sprung”’ by one John Schellenberger, in *Foundation* 25 back in 1982. Now a fascinating *TLS* essay on alleged literary hoaxer A.D. Harvey strongly implies that Lindsay, Schellenberger, Nold Jonson (publisher of Lindsay and Harvey) and several others are all fronts for Harvey himself. There is more, much more, including

a bizarre theme of seemingly plagiarized nipples (*Mind-Spung!*); but can one plagiarize oneself? Read all about it in [‘When Dickens met Dostoevsky’ by Eric Naiman](#) (*TLS*, 10 April). [ML]

Gwyneth Paltrow, interviewed by Simon Mayo on his BBC Radio 5Live film show about her role as Pepper Potts in *Iron Man 3*, frankly admitted to being confused by the film’s plot: ‘I didn’t understand any of the science fiction bits.’ (26 April) [MPJ] But the rest made sense.

Michael Swanwick gloats: ‘I can now toss all my old trophies – the Nebula, the Hugos, that hideous bust of H.P. Lovecraft – in the trash. Geekadelphia has made me their Geek of the Week! Not surprisingly, my son and all his friends are very impressed. / *Philadelphia Weekly* which is, unsurprisingly, a Philadelphia weekly newspaper, threw this news into the same issue in which they covered the kickoff event for the petition to place a plaque honoring Isaac Asimov in front of the apartment house where he lived while working at the Naval Yard during WWII. A veritable Who’s Who of Philadelphia Geekdom were photographed, with Gardner Dozois, Gregory Frost, Tom Purdom, Victoria McManus, and paleoartists Bob Walters and Tess Kissinger, front of center. Along with, of course, Your Humble Correspondent ...’

N. Lee Wood has undergone surgery and chemotherapy for endometrial cancer. All sympathy. As ‘nonny mouse’ she writes about it here: crooksandliars.com/nonny-mouse/mouse-has-cancer.

Considine

Until 6 May • **Sci-Fi-London** (film festival), BFI Southbank Stratford Picturehouse. See www.sci-fi-london.com/festival.

4 May - June or later • **Mystery, Magic & Midnight Feasts**: Enid Blyton exhibition, Seven Stories, Newcastle. 10am-5pm (4pm Sun). £6.50; under-17s £5.50. See www.sevenstories.org.uk.

11-12 May • **Bristol Comic Expo**, Brunel’s Old Station and Ramada Jarvis Hotel, Bristol. See www.bristolexpo.co.uk.

11-12 May • **Middle-earth Weekend**, Sarehole Mill Recreation Ground, Cole Bank Rd, Hall Green, Birmingham. Mostly free, but some activities are

extra. Car park £2. Details at middleearthweekend.org.uk.

22 May • **BSFA Open Meeting**, The Argyle pub, Leather Lane, London. 5/6pm for 7pm. With Janet Edwards. Free; all welcome.

23 May - 27 Oct • **Magical Books** – From the Middle Ages to Middle-Earth (exhibition), Bodleian Library, Oxford. 9am-5pm Mon-Fri; 9am-4:30pm Sat; 11am-5pm Sun. Free. With accompanying lectures.

1 Jun • **BSFA/SF Foundation** joint event (including both AGMs), City of Westminster Archives Centre, 10 St Ann's St, London, SW1P 2DE. 9:30am-4:30pm (SFF flyer) or 10am-4:15pm (BSFA ad). Free.

15 Jun • **Futura**, Light House, Wolverhampton. 11am-late. GoH Ian R. MacLeod, Ken MacLeod and Adam Roberts. £25 reg. Contact alexdavisevents at hotmail co uk; <http://tinyurl.com/ctakzsa>.

20 Jul • **Bristol Beer & Blake's 7**, Knight's Templar, Unit 1 Temple Square, Temple Quay, Bristol, BS1 6DG. 12:15 to 7pm-ish.

18-19 Aug • **Caption** (small-press comics), East Oxford Community Centre, 44B Princes St, Oxford. Starts 11am. £10 or £6/day at door.

29 Aug - 2 Sep • **LoneStarCon 3** (71st Worldcon), Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center, San Antonio, Texas. *Now \$220 reg*. Other rates unchanged: YA/military \$110; child \$75; family \$520; \$60 supp. See www.LoneStarCon3.org; PO Box 27277, Austin, TX 78755, USA.

7 Sep • **TitanCon** (sf & *Game of Thrones*), Wellington Park Hotel, Belfast. Guests TBA. £25 reg; £5 supp. Join at www.titancon.com (PayPal only, with £1.20 surcharge on full membership).

14-21 Sep • **Milford UK**, Trigonos, Snowdonia. *Fully booked*, but two 2014 workshops are planned: 23-30 August (with half the places reserved for overseas attendees) and 13-20 September. £605 inc room and meals; £115 deposit required; published writers only. Contact 10 Park Head, Birdsedge, Huddersfield, HD8 8XW; www.milfordsf.co.uk.

8-10 Nov • **Novacon 43**, Park Inn, Mansfield Road, Nottingham. GoH Jo Walton. £45 reg, *unchanged* despite a threatened post-Eastercon price rise. Contact 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ.

14-18 Aug 2014 • **Loncon 3** (72nd Worldcon), ExCeL centre, London. *Now*

£105 reg and £245 family. Other rates unchanged: £65.00 YA; £30.00 child; £2.00 infant; £25.00 supp. See www.loncon3.org.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. From a review of the film *Upstream Color* (whose opening scenes include ‘a man harvesting little white worms from orchid root balls’): ‘The teenagers join the man, who does nasty things with worms and could be a concerned florist, an experimental entomologist, a budding serial killer or just a run-of-the-mill science-fiction freak.’ (Manohla Dargis, *New York Times*, 5 April) [GHL]

- From *The Hunger Games* DVD extras, a statement of intent: ‘I think my job as costume designer is really to create the vision that the director has, not necessarily the book. Gary (the director) wanted to make a movie that was real, that wasn’t a science fiction film.’ (Judianna Makovsky) [NR-S]

Awards. *Arthur C. Clarke*, presented at an invitation-only event following a one-day mini-convention at the Royal Society in London: Chris Beckett, *Dark Eden*.

- *Ditmar* (Australia) novel category: Margo Lanagan, *Sea Hearts*.
- *Eurocon 2013/European SF Society*. Grandmasters: Terry Pratchett, Iain Banks. Hall of Fame: AUTHOR Andrei Valentinov (Ukraine); ARTIST Nikolai Redka (Ukraine); TRANSLATOR Patrice and Viktoriya Lajoie (France); PROMOTER Istvan Burger (Hungary); PUBLISHER Shiko (Ukraine); MAGAZINE *SFX* (UK). Spirit of Dedication: PERFORMANCE “Vash Vikhod” (Your Move), “Raido” theatre (Ukraine); WEBSITE Europa SF – scifiportal.eu (Romania); ILLUSTRATOR Katerina Bachilo (Russia); FANZINE *Fandango* (Ukraine).
- *Prometheus* (‘best pro-freedom novel’) shortlist: Tobias Buckell, *Arctic Rising*; Dani and Eytan Kollin, *The Unincorporated Future*; Cory Doctorow, *Pirate Cinema*; Sarah Hoyt, *Darkship Renegades*; Daniel Suarez, *Kill Decision*.

The Weakest Link. *Bradley Walsh*: ‘What is the middle name of the science fiction writer Philip K. Dick?’ *Contestant*, after being offered three options to pick from: ‘Kindly.’ The rejected choices were ‘Kindred’ and ‘Killer’. (ITV *The Chaser*, 30 April) [MPJ]

R.I.P. *Allan Arbus* (1918-2013), US actor whose genre credits include

Damien: Omen II (1978), died on 19 April aged 95. [MMW]

- *Frédéric Othon Théodore Aristidès* (1931-2013), French comics artist and comic book creator in the Franco-Belgian tradition who published under the pseudonym Fred, died on 2 April aged 82. He is best known for his series *Philémon*. [AS]

- *Richard Brooker* (1954-2013), UK actor who played the killer Jason (becoming the third to do so) in *Friday the 13th Part III* (1982) and was also in the fantasy *Deathstalker* (1983), died on 8 April. [SFS]

- *Quentin Hoover* (1964-2013), fantasy artist who contributed many cards to *Magic: The Gathering* and other collectible card games, died on 20 April. [SFS]

- *Carmine Infantino* (1925-2013), US comics artist and editor, principally for DC – where he worked on both Golden and Silver Age comics and drew many early stories featuring The Flash in his second (Silver) incarnation – died on 4 April aged 87. [GD]

- *Richard LeParmentier* (1946-2013), UK actor who as Admiral Motti was famously Force-choked by Darth Vader in the original *Star Wars* (1977), died on 15 April aged 66. [MPJ/AW] Other genre credits include *Rollerball* (1975) and *Who Framed Roger Rabbit* (1988).

- *Robert Morales*, US comics creator best known for the 2003 Marvel mini-series *Truth: Red, White & Black* (a Captain America prequel), died on 18 April aged 54. He was a close friend – and the intended literary executor – of Samuel R. Delany, who wrote: ‘To say he will be deeply missed is an incredible understatement.’ [PDF]

- *Andrew J. Offutt* (1934-2013), US fan, anthologist and prolific author of sf, fantasy and (mostly as John Cleve) erotica, died on 30 April; he was 78. [GSM] He was twice president of SFWA, 1976-1978.

- *Nick Pollotta* (1954-2013), US author who contributed many titles to shared-world franchises – in particular the ‘Deathlands’ survivalist sf series, using the house name James Axler – died on 13 April. Popular standalone novels include *Illegal Aliens* (1989) and *That Darn Squid God* (2005 with Phil Foglio).

- *Jack Shea* (1928-2013), US tv sitcom director whose sf venture was the 1969 film adaptation of Keith Laumer’s *The Monitors* (1966), died on 28 April aged 84. [PDF]

- *Jonathan Winters* (1925-2013), Emmy-winning US actor/comedian whose best-known genre role was Mearth in *Mork & Mindy* season 4 (1981-1982),

died on 11 April; he was 87. [MPJ/AW]

- *Philip Wordley*, a 78-year-old found dead from natural causes in the River Exe on 8 January, *may* be the writer of this name who contributed four stories to *Science Fantasy* magazine in 1965. [PF]

It's Dead, Jim. 'I'm here to tell you that in a mere forty-five years the filmic genres of fantasy and science fiction have been wrung dry, have sprouted moss and ugly white squiggly things, and are no more. Gone. Done. Finis. Kaput ...' (Harlan Ellison, *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*, January 1986) [BA]

Stamped Out. US Postal Service plans to issue special stamps honouring Isaac Asimov, Ray Bradbury, Philip K. Dick, Robert A. Heinlein and Frank Herbert – originally intended for July 2013 release – have been postponed until 2014. (*Linn's Stamp News*, 29 April) [AIP] Maybe the USPS was tipped off about the talking squid in outer space....

As Others See Us II. A BBC website article about global threats to humanity ('Are we on the verge of our own unexpected extinction?') quoted scientist Dr Nick Bostrom: 'It's not science fiction, religious doctrine or a late-night conversation in the pub. / There is no plausible moral case not to take it seriously.' (24 April) [PM-R]

Wages of Collaboration. Covering the SyFy channel's planned 'Big Crazy Artefact' sf mini-series, the Bleeding Cool blogger instinctively added a second name to the novel credit: '*Ringworld*, by Larry Niven and Jerry Pournelle ...' (www.bleedingcool.com, 10 April) [AW]

Media Awards. *MTV*: Movie Of the Year, Best Villain (Loki) and Best Fight all went to *The Avengers*. Best Hero was Martin Freeman as Bilbo in *The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey*. Odder categories included Shirtless Moment (Taylor Lautner in *Twilight: Breaking Dawn – Part 2*) and Trailblazer (Emma Watson of Harry Potter film fame). [MPJ]

Not Dead, Jim. '... if I have to masticate my manuscripture, I'll do it in as flamboyantly gourmandising a manner as was my original pronouncement. I herewith eat my words. The belief that sf is dead ... was a precise and correct view of the universe except ... I hadn't seen *Brazil* ...' (Harlan Ellison, *F&SF*, March 1986) [BA]

- Moreover, '... to the reader who accepted at face value my statement that sf

was dead as a filmic gesture ... this was a literary technique called engrossment. Sometimes referred to as satire ...' (*Ibid*, May 1986) [BA]

Magazine Scene. Woe, gloom and misery in the Wildside Press customer newsletter: 'What happened to *Sherlock Holmes Mystery Magazine*? / WE WERE SCAMMED!! A woman purporting to represent the estate (as "Administrator of the Conan Doyle Copyrights") contacted us and requested that we license *SHMM* through her agent in London. We did so. But ... guess what? She was lying and has apparently been misrepresenting herself as the controller of the Doyle estate in the U.S. for years – despite many court cases which she has lost. *SHMM* is now duly licensed through the real representatives, who have been helpful and sympathetic.' Background at *NY Times*: <http://tinyurl.com/yba3z7s>.

Random Fandom. *Ray Nelson* gets credit in a story on 'CapNet – the world's first wireless mesh network to be deployed in 250 propeller beanies [as a technogeeky "happening" at DESIGN West, 22-25 April] ... The original propeller beanie was invented in 1947 by science fiction author Ray Faraday Nelson when he was a high school sophomore'. (*EE Times*, 25 March) [AIP]

- *Steve Stiles* torments me with a nifty *Ansible* masthead cartoon cunningly themed for issue 333. Can I keep going that long?
- *Taral Wayne* celebrated his 100th article since 2007 for that ultra-frequent fanzine *The Drink Tank*: 'As a Special Celebration of the Special Issue, I have ceased writing for *Drink Tank*.' [F770]

As Others See Us III. Digested film review of *Oblivion*: 'It's also an unashamed rip-off of other Sci-fi movies, said Wendy Ide in *The Times*. [...] *No sci-fi film can be entirely original*, but *Oblivion* "lacks the critical bite of a new idea".' (*The Week*, 20 April) [BD,R] Our italics.

The Dead Past. *70 Years Ago*, a fanzine 'Libelletter' from Douglas Birchby: 'Listen – we think science fiction is lousy. We think it stinks. Why do you read it why does anybody read it. Question mark. Therefore why should you devote all your spare time to writing about it, inveigling people to read it, collecting it holding Conventions about it and so on. ... / News: Sir Arthur Ego Clarke has at long last moved from Yatesbury, tearing up roots with reckless abandon on all sides and leaving 3 dozen bevvies of weeping local maidens all-forlorn behind him.' (*Futurian War Digest*, May 1943)

- *20 Years Ago*, Alex Stewart contributed a heartfelt elegy in *Private Eye* mode: ‘*Lines on the Removal of the SF Foundation to Liverpool: “So / Farewell then / North East London Polytechnic / As was. / “We can’t afford it.” / That was / Your catchphrase.*’ – E.J. Thribb, age 17½.’ (*Ansible* 70, May 1993)

C.o.A. *The Other Change of Hobbit* bookshop, 1600 Kearney St, Ste A, El Cerrito, CA 94530-2119, USA.

Small Object of Desire. The prop phaser wielded by Captain Kirk in the second 1960s *Star Trek* pilot episode was sold at auction for \$231,000, over four times the expected price. (*The Register*, 9 April)

Editorial. Again thanks for all good wishes and the tireless efforts of email correspondents who supply *Ansible* snippets. My personal news is that I’m getting a break from *Sunday Telegraph* sf reviewing owing to a summer redesign that makes less magazine space available for trivia like books; maybe I’ll be back on the case in August, but meanwhile laziness prevails. Except for the usual ongoing projects, including work with Greg Pickersgill on the remaining *Ansible Editions* volumes of Algis Budrys’s *F&SF* review columns – tentatively titled *Benchmarks Revisited* and *Benchmarks Concluded*. Here are some reviews of our first volume *Benchmarks Continued*: <http://tinyurl.com/cuyk48k>.

Fanfundery. *TAFF 2013*: Jim Mowatt won the westbound race from Europe to LoneStarCon with a first-round majority, 91 votes to Theresa Derwin’s 16. 13 no-preference votes and one for Hold Over Funds made up the total of 121. Fuller details in the administrators’ official newsletter *TAFFline* 6 at taff.org.uk/news/taffline-6.pdf.

- *DUFF 2013*: the ballot for the northbound race (Australasia to LoneStarCon) was at last released after the corresponding TAFF race was all over. Candidates are Bill Wright and Clare McDonald-Sims; voting continues to 10 June. Ballot form at taff.org.uk/ballots/duff2013.pdf.

Thog’s Masterclass. *Going Through the Motions Dept.* ‘She seemed to be made out of the same stuff that movement itself is made of.’ (Woody Guthrie, *House of Earth*, 2012 [written 1947]) [MMW]

- *Dept of Inanimate Threat.* ‘A circular carpet covered the centre. On it stood a large dark-oak table and several chairs, looking hostile.’ (John Wyndham, *Plan for Chaos*, 2009) [AK]

- *Count the Hands Dept.* ‘Now grabbing Pugachov by the collar, he started flinging open closet doors, training his revolver on each new opening of dark space.’ (Sam Bourne, *The Righteous Men*, 2006) [PB]
 - *Neat Tricks Dept.* ‘They fell into her apartment, her clothes falling willingly to the floor.’ (*Ibid*)
 - ‘The doors finally slid open, and her hips sashayed down the corridor.’ (Jo Nesbo, *The Snowman*, 2007; trans Don Bartlett 2010) [PB]
 - ‘A sharp zing raced through me.’ (Lisa Mangum, *The Hourglass Door*, 2009) [PB]
 - ‘The last time he’d seen her she’d been lively, despite being up to her elbows in a decapitation.’ (William Ryan, *The Holy Thief*, 2010) [PB]
 - ‘Babel seemed oblivious to the fact that Korolev’s blood had concentrated in his toes.’ (*Ibid*)
 - *Eyeballs in the Sky.* ‘Two sad brown eyes started at his waist and worked their way up.’ (*Ibid*)
 - *Spoon Animation Dept.* ‘She threw the wooden spoon at the wall, where it splattered tomato sauce into a Jackson Pollock pattern, turned, and fled for the bedroom.’ (Sam Bourne, *The Righteous Men*, 2006) [PB]
-

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 10 May 2013: Freda Warrington talks to the Brum Group, Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre, 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk or rog.peyton at btinternet com. Future meetings: 14 June, Ian Drury; 12 July, Richard Denning; 9 August, Summer Social at The Bull near Aston University; 13 September, Alice Lawson; 6 December, Christmas Social.
- 12 May 2013: Raymond E. Feist signing at the Reading Broad Street branch of Waterstones. 3pm. Admission free; ‘early arrival is encouraged’. Further information 0118 9581270.

Outraged Letters. *Simon R. Green:* ‘I still haven’t heard how James Herbert died. I like to think he was eaten by rats, in the dark, during a fog. It’s what he would have wanted.’

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Jim Barker, Paul Barnett, “BD, Ripon”, Paul Di Filippo, File 770, Paul Fraser, Martyn P. Jackson, Amanda Kear, Guy H. Lillian, Locus, Making Light, Neville Ridley-Smith, Paul March-Russell, Gary S. Mattingly, Andrew I. Porter, SF Site, Anton Sherwood, Andrew Wells, Martin Morse Wooster, and our Hero Distributors: Dave Corby (BSFG), SCIS/Prophecy, Alan Stewart (Australia). 2 May 2013.

Ansible 311, June 2013

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Web news.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**.
Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE, Lenlu Om, or a Shefth with a Zug-gun.

Editorial. In mid-May the *SF Encyclopedia* launched a ‘Picture Gallery’ of (mostly) sf book cover images – well over 3000 so far, all linked to relevant entries in the *SFE*’s 4.1 million words of text. See the pretty pictures at <http://sf-encyclopedia.co.uk/gallery.php> ...

A Diet of Thistles

Iain Banks reports a faint hope that chemotherapy may after all be possible for him. His main message: ‘I want to say thank you to all of you for your messages, your memories, your wit, your sympathy and your kind, supportive thoughts.’ (friends.banksophilia.com, 20 May)

Neil Gaiman’s *Doctor Who* episode ‘A Nightmare in Silver’ (11 May) includes a dialogue homage to Ursula Le Guin, or perhaps Orson Scott Card.... About nine minutes in, a character is heard to say: ‘It can’t be broken – it’s a solid state ansible-class communicator!’ [NG]

Graham Joyce wrote: ‘I’ve been diagnosed with lymphoma cancer and have begun a course of chemotherapy, which does knock you about a bit. So if I’ve not answered messages, enquiries and all the rest, please understand why. Anyway I’m upbeat: I’m surrounded by family and good friends so I’m not in a bad place and hope, like everyone in this situation, to win through. We’ll see!’ (Facebook, 12 May) [JS]

Jay Lake posted on his blog that his cancer has been diagnosed as terminal. Depending on the effectiveness of further chemotherapy, ‘I will most likely die within nine to twenty-four months from now [...] I will never again be out of treatment or free of cancer.’ ([8 May](#))

David R. Morgan, UK teacher and poet, received much free but unwelcome publicity when it emerged that huge swathes of his poetry had been lifted from others. Fellow-poet Ira Lightman said: ‘When an American poet spotted his own poem under David R Morgan’s name on a website that blogs new work, he contacted its editor, and its editor contacted me. Within around one hour, I’d found a dozen more. Everything online by David R Morgan that I could find since Jan 2011 I could trace 90% of to another person’s poem.’ ([Guardian](#), 22 May) Morgan declares himself ‘truly sorry’, so that’s all right then. The *Guardian* seemed unaware of reports that he has also targeted many sf/fantasy authors, copying passages from stories and recasting them slightly in poem form. Several *Strange Horizons* contributors are affected: this online magazine’s editors have contacted known victims (and would like to hear from any others who have suffered), are checking the legal position and expect to make a public announcement before long. [NH]

J.K. Rowling’s hand-annotated and illustrated first edition of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone* sold for £150,000. ([BBC](#)) [MPJ]

Matt Smith is to leave *Doctor Who* at the end of the year. ([BBC](#))

Con

1 Jun - 7 Oct • **Space: Fact and Fiction** (exhibition), Peterborough Museum. Free ‘except on special event days’. With some *Doctor Who* 50th anniversary links. Details at <http://tinyurl.com/kdsfb36>.

15 Jun • **Futura**, Light House, Wolverhampton. 11am-late. £25 reg. Contact alexdavisevents at hotmail co uk; <http://light-house.co.uk/featured/2013/05/futura-sci-fi-convention-guests-of-honour-and-schedule/>.

26 Jun • **BSFA Open Meeting**, The Argyle, Leather Lane, London. 5/6pm for 7pm. With ~~Catherynne M. Valente~~ James Smythe. Free; all welcome.

29 Jun - 1 Jul • **Swords, Sorcery, Sandals and Space** (SF Foundation conference), Foresight Centre, U of Liverpool. £150 inc meals, Sat banquet; £100 unwaged/student; day £50 (£40), no banquet. Book by 6pm on 17 June: <http://gridowl.com/conf/2/register/>.

13 Jul • **Edge-Lit 2**, QUAD Centre, Derby. 11am-midnight. Tickets £25. See

www.derbyquad.co.uk/film/edge-lit-2.

29 Aug - 2 Sep • **LoneStarCon 3** (71st Worldcon), San Antonio, Texas. \$220 reg; YA/military \$110; child \$75; family \$520; \$60 supp. *Day rates announced*: \$50 Thur; \$75 Fri, Sat, Sun; \$30 Mon (YA/military \$30/\$40/\$20; child \$15/\$25/\$10). See www.LoneStarCon3.org.

18-20 Oct • **Lakes International Comic Art Festival**, Kendal, Cumbria. 42 guests to date. Free exhibitions; day events £7; evening (7pm and after) £9; Comics Clock Tower venue £3.50/day; weekend and day passes offer savings. See www.comicartfestival.com.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. An author introspects in a radio play: ‘I write fantasy, so it’s only usually teenage Japanese boys who recognize me.’ (Ann Cleeves, *White Nights*, dramatized on Radio 4 Extra) [BT]

Awards. BAFTAs for TV: audience award, *Game of Thrones*. [MPJ]

- *Compton Crook* (first genre novel): Myke Cole, *Shadow Ops: Control Point*.

- FAAns (fanzine activity). Letterhack: Robert Lichtman. Fan writer: Andy Hooper. Single issue: *Trap Door* 29. Personalzine: *A Meara for Observers*. Genzine: *Chunga*. Cover: Dan Steffan, *Banana Wings* 50. #1 Fan Face: Andy Hooper. Website: efanzines.com. Fan Artist: Dan Steffan.

- *Nebulas*: NOVEL Kim Stanley Robinson, *2312*. NOVELLA Nancy Kress, *After the Fall, Before the Fall, During the Fall*. Novelette Andy Duncan, ‘Close Encounters’ (*The Pottawatomie Giant & Other Stories*). SHORT Aliette de Bodard, ‘Immersion’ (*Clarkesworld* 6/12). DRAMATIC *Beasts of the Southern Wild*. ANDRE NORTON (YA) E.C. Myers, *Fair Coin*. GRAND MASTER Gene Wolfe. SOLSTICE Carl Sagan, Ginjer Buchanan.

- *Peabody* (US), for media achievement: *Doctor Who*. [DKMK]

- *US National Magazine Award*: Stephen King and *Harper’s Magazine* for King’s ‘Batman and Robin Have an Altercation’ (9/12 *Harper’s*).

Thog’s Science Masterclass. An obituary for the co-inventor of the scanning tunnelling microscope reveals that those old valves and CRTs were cleverer than we knew: ‘The invention is dependent on a quantum-mechanical phenomenon known as tunnelling, so called because the electrons pass

through a supposedly impenetrable barrier, such as a vacuum.’ (Martin Childs, *Independent*, 1 June)

- *Units Dept.* ‘The required latitude ran on parallel forty-seven degrees, forty-five feet, he maintained.’ (Christopher Landon, *Unseen Enemy*, 1957) [AB]

R.I.P. *Dan Adkins* (1937-2013), US comics artist and penciller/inker who among other roles was art director at Marvel (where he drew 132 covers and worked on *Dr Strange*) and illustrated sf publications including *Amazing*, *Amra*, *Fantastic*, *Galaxy*, *If*, *Infinity* and *Xero*, died on 8 May; he was 76. [RB]

- *Bryan Forbes* (1926-2013), UK film director best known for *The Stepford Wives* (1975), died on 8 May aged 86. [MPJ] As an actor he appeared in the sf *Satellite in the Sky* (1956).

- *Jesús Franco* (1930-2013), Spanish director of countless trashy exploitation films such as *Drácula contra Frankenstein* (1972) and *Vampyros Lesbos* (1971), died on 2 April aged 82. His capsule view of cinema: ‘Blood! Tits! Fantastic!’ [MPJ]

- *Mike Gray* (1935-2013), US writer and film-maker who wrote the original script for *The China Syndrome* (1979) – which won him a Writers Guild of America award – died on 30 April aged 77. [PDF] He was also the producer for episodes of *Starman* (1986-1987) and *Star Trek: TNG* (1988-1989).

- *Andrew M. Greeley* (1928-2013), US Catholic priest, sociologist and author of many books, several of them sf and science-fantasy – titles include *God Game* (1986) and *Angel Fire* (1988) – died on 29 May; he was 85. [MMW]

- *Ray Harryhausen* (1920-2013), US film producer, director and special-effects wizard who created many unforgettable fantasy scenes with stop-motion animation, died on 7 May; he was 92. Notable film credits ranged from *Mighty Joe Young* (1949) and *The 7th Voyage of Sinbad* (1958) to *Clash of the Titans* (1981). He was a highly popular GoH at the 1987 UK Worldcon (where I was thrilled to have lunch with him). Simon R. Green adds some memories in the Letters section below.

- *Deborah J. Miller*, UK author and principal founder of the David Gemmell Awards for fantasy, died from cancer on 6 May. Her novels include *Swarmthief’s Dance* (2005) and, as by Miller Lau, the Last Clansman trilogy opening with *Talisker* (2001). Stan Nicholls writes: ‘Deborah faced her illness with courage and good humour. Her fiction and the Gemmell Awards will stand as permanent memorials to an exceptional person, an indomitable spirit and a good friend.’

- *Howard Rosenblum* (1948-2013), UK fan involved with the Tolkien Society since 1969 and publisher of the 1968-1977 fanzine *SONF* (*Son of New Futurian*), died on 26 May; he was 65 and had recently been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. [CB/AW]
- *Robert (Rob) Turner* (1944-2013), UK expert on the occult and translator of classic occult texts, died on 15 April aged 69. He made a large contribution to that non-fact volume *The Necronomicon* (1978) edited by George Hay (Colin Wilson and I were the other main authors) and its sequel *The R'Lyeh Text*. It was fun working with him.
- *Jack Vance* (1916-2013), US author who was deservedly one of the revered Great Old Ones of sf, died on 26 May at the ripe age of 96. His long career began with 'The World-Thinker' (*Thrilling Wonder Stories* 1945); *The Dying Earth* (1950) presented a haunting and hugely influential far-future milieu where the distinction between science and magic is long forgotten; *Big Planet* (1952) is a paradigm of what the *SF Encyclopedia* calls Planetary Romance; fascination with anthropological and sociological aspects of sf gave a special illumination to space-operatic revenge drama in the 1964-1981 Demon Princes quintet, and to coming-of-age rebellion in *The Blue World* (1966), *Emphyrio* (1969) and *The Anome* (1973). Vance's ironic prose and lovingly colourful choice of words remained highly effective in such later, longer series as the Lyonesse (fantasy) and Cadwal (sf) trilogies that appeared from 1983 to 1992; *Night Lamp* (1996) is a late sf work of considerable power. Shorter fiction won him two Hugos and a Nebula; a third Hugo went to his 2009 autobiography *This is Me, Jack Vance!* For life achievement Vance received the World Fantasy Award in 1984, the SFWA Grand Master Award in 1997, and SF Hall of Fame induction in 2001. Few sf authors have had a British Library volume devoted to them: *Jack Vance: Critical Appreciations and a Bibliography* ed. A.E.Cunningham (to which I was proud to contribute). Jack Vance had a good long run, but we still wish it had been longer.
- *Daoma Winston* (1922-2013), prolific US author of Gothic romances and horror thrillers – often with supernatural elements, as in *The Vampire Curse* (1971) – died on 1 April; she was 90. [PDF]
- *Aubrey Woods* (1928-2013), UK actor whose genre credits include *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory* (1971), *The Abominable Dr. Phibes* (1971), *Doctor Who* 'Day of the Daleks' (1972) and *Blake's 7* (1979), died on 7 May; he was 85. [SR]

- *Jerry Wright*, founder and publisher of the long-running ezine *Bewildering Stories* (since 2002), reportedly died in May; he was in his mid-60s. [PDF]

Cultural Cringe Redux. When is *Star Trek* not *Star Trek*? When it's *Star Trek Into Darkness*: 'The sequel is not simply called *Star Trek 2*, in part because, despite its vast cultural reach, the *Star Trek* brand has negative connotations: kitschy sets, hokey dialogue, William Shatner. "What J J Abrams has done with the franchise," says Alex Billington, founder of the film blog *FirstShowing.net*, "is to make it more cool on a mainstream level, so that you don't have to be nerdy to love *Star Trek*. He wants everyone to be as excited about it as the nerdy fans are." [...] Paramount's president of international distribution Anthony Marcoly told *The Hollywood Reporter*: "We've tried to get away from the Trekkiness of it all." (*Independent*, 6 May) [MPJ]

- Equally uncool is the prospect of strong AI. From an article on neurologist Henry Markram: 'In hype-driven contexts (such as his 2009 TED talk), Markram has hinted at the possibility that a sim embodied in a robot might become conscious. Hardwired with Markham's model and given sufficient experience of the world, the machine could actually start thinking (a la Skynet and HAL 9000). While that has gained him a following among sci-fi enthusiasts, he separates such speculations from the hard task of doing real science.' (Jonathon Keats, *Wired*, June) [MMW]

Outraged Letters. *Ramsey Campbell* on James Herbert (see A310): 'I was told that he said he thought he had a cold when he went to bed that night. In the morning he didn't wake up.'

- *Simon R. Green* remembers his ninth-birthday cinema treat: 'We went to see *First Men in the Moon*! And I loved it. I absolutely loved it. It was everything I wanted in a film, even if I didn't know it. And while I also enjoyed what sf television there was at the time, everything from *Fireball XL5* to *Doctor Who*, there was something about this film, with its spectacle, and colour, and Big Thoughts, that made it special. Nigel Kneale worked on the script, Ray Harryhausen worked on the Dynamation, and it all just looked so good.... / I can still watch the film now. All right, the opening scenes in the countryside drag, but once we're on the Moon, the film just picks you up by the scruff of the neck and doesn't let go. Sense of wonder. Big time. / I saw more Harryhausen films later, on television. I really liked *Jason and the Argonauts*, and the *Sinbad* films.... But *First Men in the Moon* was what woke me up and

told me what I wanted. What I needed. And made me want to write things that would have that kind of effect on other people. / I never got to meet the man. Like so many of my heroes; I never got to tell him how much his work meant to me. But he really did change my life.'

• *Jim Steel*: 'Cancer seems to have declared war on the speculative fiction genre. It's turning out to be a rotten year.' Yes indeed.

As Others Are Surprised To See Us. 'According to National Public Radio pop-culture contributor Glen Weldon, "Every Free Comic Book Day, people walk into shops prepared for dank nerd-pits smelling of must and Funyuns, only to find smart, friendly people like themselves.'" ('Comic Riffs' blogger Michael Cavanaugh, [washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com), 3 May; 'Funyuns are onion-ring shaped snacks.')

 [MMW]

Mythopoeic Award Shortlist. ADULT Alan Garner, *Weirdstone trilogy* (*The Weirdstone of Brisingamen, The Moon of Gomrath, Boneland*; I wonder how other nominees feel about having to compete with 1960s classics as well as the new book); Caitlin R. Kiernan, *The Drowning Girl*; R.A. MacAvoy, *Death and Resurrection*; Tim Powers, *Hide Me Among the Graves*; Ursula Vernon, *Digger* vols 1-6.

• CHILDREN'S Jorge Aguirre and Rafael Rosado, *Giants Beware!*; Sarah Beth Durst, *Vessel*; Merrie Haskell, *The Princess Curse*; Christopher Healy, *The Hero's Guide to Saving Your Kingdom*; Sherwood Smith, *The Spy Princess*.

• SCHOLARSHIP: INKLINGS Robert Boenig, *C.S. Lewis and the Middle Ages*; John Bremer, *C.S. Lewis, Poetry, and the Great War 1914-1918*; Jason Fisher, ed., *Tolkien and the Study of His Sources: Critical Essays*; Verlyn Flieger, *Green Suns and Faërie: Essays on J.R.R. Tolkien*; Corey Olsen, *Exploring J.R.R. Tolkien's The Hobbit*.

• SCHOLARSHIP: OTHER Nancy Marie Brown, *Song of the Vikings: Snorri and the Making of Norse Myths*; Jo Eldridge Carney, *Fairy Tale Queens: Representations of Early Modern Queenship*; Bonnie Gaarden, *The Christian Goddess: Archetype and Theology in the Fantasies of George MacDonald*; Michael Saler, *As If: Modern Enchantment and the Literary Prehistory of Virtual Reality*; David Sandner, *Critical Discourses of the Fantastic, 1712-1831*.

• See the May links at news.ansible.co.uk for other not-so-short shortlists: Campbell Memorial (12 titles), Sturgeon (12), Locus Awards (20 in the four novel categories alone).

As Others Judge Us. Natalie Haynes, in the traditional article on the terrible privations of Booker Prize judges, doesn't mind the *right sort* of sf: 'There's very little future fiction, which I hope is still the term used to describe things set in the future but without aliens/spaceships.' (*Independent*, 22 May) [JS] Talking squid in outer space need not apply.

Random Fandom. *Forrest J Ackerman* is communicating from beyond the grave, according to a silly-season story in *The Huffington Post* ([17 May](#)). [AIP] Rather than the expected dreadful puns and neologisms, he allegedly caused a *mysterious and inexplicable blot* on a sheet of paper. Scary stuff.

- *Michelle Rosenblum* would like to hear from fans wanting to attend Howard Rosenblum's funeral, at 1.40pm on 10 June at Worthing Crematorium, Sussex. Contact [eowyn](mailto:eowyn@uwclub.net) at [uwclub dot net](http://uwclub.net).

The Dead Past. *90 Years Ago*, the *New York World* asked pundits about the world 100 years hence. Film director D.W. Griffith predicted no live TV: 'I do not foresee the possibility of instantaneous transmission of living action to the screen within 100 years. There must be a medium upon which the dramatic coherence can be worked out, and the perfected result set firmly, before the screen will be permitted to occupy the public's attention. In the instantaneous transmission, there would be entirely too much waste of the public's time, and that is the most important thing – time.' (*Columbia Journalism Review*, May) [MMW]

C.o.A. *Vicki Rosenzweig*, 10495 NE 4th Street, Apt. N-411, Bellevue, WA 98004, USA.

Racist Cricket! Among the arguments in the new US academic potboiler *Doctor Who and Race* is this clincher from Amit Gupta: '[Peter Davison] portrayed the amateur English cricketer of the late 19th Century when the game was characterised by both racial and class distinctions. / Cricket also had a role in maintaining the status of British imperialism through the exercise of soft power as it was successfully inculcated by the colonial elites. Davison's cricketing Doctor once again saw the BBC using *Who* to promote a racial and class nostalgia that had already outlived its validity.' ([Mail Online](#), 28 May) [MPJ]

Fanfundery. *DUFF 2013*: a final reminder that the current voting deadline is 10 June. Ballot form at taff.org.uk/ballots/duff2013.pdf.

Thog's Masterclass. *Neat Tricks.* 'Rick was sitting disconsolately, his hands thrust into his pockets, his jaw propped on one fist.' (Jack McDevitt, *Moonfall*, 1998) [JA]

• *Eyeballs in the Sky.* 'She still didn't see the hot eyes melting and running all over her.' (Whit Harrison [Harry Whittington], *Any Woman He Wanted*, 1961) [PB]

• *More Haste Less Speed Dept.* 'It was a whirlwind courtship that ended in marriage at St. Malachy's three years later.' (Frank Kane, *The Living End*, 1957) [AB]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

• 14 June 2013: Ian Drury talks to the Brum Group, Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre, 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk or rog.peyton at btinternet com. Future meetings: 12 July, Richard Denning; 9 August, Summer Social at The Bull near Aston University; 13 September, Alice Lawson; 6 December, Christmas Social.

Editorial II. Anthony Boucher's contributions to Thog's Masterclass are quoted from his posthumous collection *Multiplying Villainies: Selected Mystery Criticism, 1942-1968* (1973), recently read and enjoyed at *Ansible HQ*.

Naomi Mitchison is the subject of an exhaustive online bibliography project jointly organized by Becon Publications and the SF Foundation:

<http://www.lxnen.com/rogerbecon/NMM/>

The Dead Past II. *40 Years Ago*, a new award emerged: 'THE BRITISH FANZINE AWARD is calling itself "The Nova" (Melbourne mobsters take note) and will be presented annually at the Brum Group's Novacon; the award is non-democratic, being presented by a panel of judges.' ([Checkpoint 39](#), June 1973)

Thog's Second Helping. *Thirty-Foot Town Dept.* 'The hills fell back, and the tumbling tributary which the people of Chough had always thought of as The River joined the *real* river. This was no shallow treacherous bandit of a river, ragged with foam. This was a sleek and powerful lordling, some thirty

feet wide. [...] Most of the town was built across the great two-tiered bridge, the little shops and houses flanking the main thoroughfare. [...] It was the first real town Mosca had ever seen, and it seemed too big and bright and busy to hold in her head all at once.' (Frances Hardinge, *Fly by Night*, 2005; there follows a long description of the vast number of boats plying this thirty-foot river.) [CMJ]

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Ansible 312, July 2013

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Web news.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or a cold voice in a room of iron clocks.

Shameless Puffery. The tiny publishing house Ansible Editions has assembled all the late Algis Budrys's more than 150 *Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction* 'Books' columns in three volumes. He'd wanted this work to appear under a title that was some variation of *Benchmarks*, his award-winning 1985 collection of criticism from *Galaxy*. Thus AE began with *Benchmarks Continued* in late 2012, and finished the job with the simultaneous publication on 1 July 2013 of *Benchmarks Revisited* and *Benchmarks Concluded*. Buy now! Act without thinking! Or if you *must* think, see descriptions and preview links at <http://ae.ansible.co.uk/>.

The Pressure of Time

Malorie Blackman, whose more than 60 children's/YA novels include sf (notably the *Noughts and Crosses* trilogy), became the eighth UK Children's Laureate in June: 'as the first black Children's Laureate, she promised to "bang the drum for diversity".' ([ALCS News](#), 18 June)

Pat Cadigan has been diagnosed with endometrial cancer, but the prognosis is good: 'My doctor tells me that removal of the offending parts will no doubt be the end of the matter and five years from now I can probably forget I ever had a problem.' ([LiveJournal](#), 27 June)

'**Vox Day**' (Theodore Beale), US writer and blogger who tries hard to live up to John Scalzi's succinct description 'racist sexist homophobic dipshit', posted [a racist attack](#) on black author N.K. Jemisin and copied the link to SFWA's Twitter feed – meant for 'relevant and appropriate content' only. Many are calling for his expulsion from SFWA.

Roger Dean, after years of brooding over it (see A271), filed a suit against James Cameron on 27 June for alleged copyright infringement, ‘unjust enrichment’, etc, by use of Deanish imagery in *Avatar*. ([BBC](#))

Neil Gaiman’s infant days in Portsmouth will be commemorated during his August ‘homecoming visit’ by naming a lane for his novel *The Ocean at the End of the Lane*. Neil is ‘Gobsmacked, befuddled, delighted and baffled. When you make things up, you never expect them to creep out into the real world.’ (Portsmouth City Council PR, 20 June)

Frank Herbert, not to be outdone by Neil Gaiman, may be further immortalized as a new waterfront park in Tacoma, Washington – on a site whose 1950s smelter pollution supposedly inspired *Dune*. The local Park Commissioner and Landmark Commissioner have started a campaign to name it for Herbert. (Associated Press, 20 June) [AIP]

Diana Wynne Jones had almost finished a new novel when she died in 2011: *The Islands of Chaldea*, a standalone not linked to any of her famous fantasy series. This has since been completed by her younger sister Ursula (also an author and playwright, who won the first Roald Dahl Funny Prize), for publication in 2014. ([PW](#), 20 June) [PB]

Elise Matthesen wrote about being sexually harassed at Wiscon this year, describing how she reported this to the convention and confirmed her report to the employers of the offender. He was later named as Tor editor James Frenkel. (www.jimchines.com, 28 June) Lawyers should please imagine the above as sprinkled with ‘allegedly’.

Contracrostipunctus

Until 20 Oct • **Memory Palace**: exhibition or ‘walk-in story’ with a future dystopian London theme, V&A, London. 10am-7:30pm. £7 with various concessions. Details/booking at

<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/exhibitions/exhibition-sky-arts-ignition-memory-palace/about-the-exhibition/>.

13 Jul • **Edge-Lit 2**, QUAD Centre, Derby. 11am-midnight. Tickets £25. See www.derbyquad.co.uk/film/edge-lit-2.

20 Jul • **Bristol Beer & Blake’s 7**, Knight’s Templar, Unit 1 Temple Square,

Temple Quay, Bristol, BS1 6DG. 12:15 to 7pm-ish.

24 Jul • **BSFA Open Meeting**, The Argyle pub, Leather Lane, London. 5/6pm for 7pm. With Cory Doctorow. Free; all welcome.

8-11 Aug • **LeakyCon** (Harry Potter), Grand Connaught Rooms, London. Reportedly SOLD OUT: see www.leakycon.com/london/.

9-11 Aug • **Fantastiq** (film festival), QUAD art centre, Market Place, Derby, DE22 3PN. Prices still TBA at fantastiq.co.uk [not working on 1 July; one hopes the site will be fixed]. Contact Reel Solutions, Dean Clough, Halifax, HX3 5AX.

9-11 Aug • **Nine Worlds Geekfest** (multimedia), Renaissance Hotel and others, Heathrow. Now £85, *rising to £95 on 1 August*; £99 at the door. Payment online only at ninemovels.co.uk.

29 Aug - 2 Sep • **LoneStarCon 3** (71st Worldcon), San Antonio, Texas. Rates *to 31 July*: \$220 reg; YA/military \$110; child \$75; family \$520; supp \$60. Day: \$50 Thu; \$75 Fri, Sat, Sun; \$30 Mon (military/YA \$30/\$40/\$20; child \$15/\$25/\$10). See www.LoneStarCon3.org. Contact address PO Box 27277, Austin, TX 78755, USA.

20-21 Sep • **Oxonmoot** (Tolkien Society), Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford. Apparently you need to register online at www.oxonmoot.org to learn the actual cost of booking and accommodation.

21 Sep • **Andromeda One**, Custard Factory, Birmingham. Doors open 8:30am; 11am-11pm. £25 reg; group of five £100. Register from 7pm Friday (social evening) or at terror-tree.co.uk/andromeda-one/.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. *Cli-Fi Dept.* Some novels about climate change are of course more equal than others: ‘Many of the 70-odd books written up to the late 1990s were science fiction, says Mr Trexler [*who has made a list*], and tended to treat climate change as one of several problems rather than the main one. / The pattern changed as growing numbers of notable writers began tackling the topic, from Margaret Atwood (*Oryx and Crake*) or Michael Crichton (*State of Fear*), Jeanette Winterson (*The Stone Gods*), Ian McEwan

(*Solar*) and Barbara Kingsolver (*Flight Behaviour*).’ (*Financial Times*, 1 June) [MMW] Poor J.G. Ballard was presumably too early an adopter to be notable for *The Drowned World*. Executive summary: ‘Don’t call it “science fiction”. Cli-fi is literary fiction.’ (*Christian Science Monitor* headline, 26 April) [BT]

Awards. *John W. Campbell Memorial*: Adam Roberts, *Jack Glass*.

- *Lambda* (LGBT) sf/fantasy/horror category: Tom Cardamone, *Green Thumb*.
- *Lifeboat to the Stars* (new, for stories of interstellar travel): Kevin J. Anderson & Steven Savile, *Tau Ceti*.
- *Locus*: SF NOVEL John Scalzi, *Redshirts*. FANTASY NOVEL Charles Stross, *The Apocalypse Codex*. FIRST NOVEL Saladin Ahmed, *Throne of the Crescent Moon*. YA China Miéville, *Railsea*. NOVELLA Nancy Kress, *After the Fall, Before the Fall, During the Fall*. NOVELETTE Pat Cadigan, ‘The Girl-Thing Who Went Out for Sushi’ (*Edge of Infinity*). SHORT Aliette de Bodard, ‘Immersion’, (*Clarkesworld* 6/12). ANTHOLOGY Jonathan Strahan, ed., *Edge of Infinity*. COLLECTION Elizabeth Bear, *Shoggoths in Bloom*. Nonfiction William Gibson, *Distrust That Particular Flavor*. ART BOOK Cathy Fenner & Arnie Fenner, eds., *Spectrum 19: The Best in Contemporary Fantastic Art*. ARTIST Michael Whelan. EDITOR Ellen Datlow. MAGAZINE *Asimov’s*. PUBLISHER Tor.
- *SF Hall of Fame*: David Bowie, H.R. Giger, Judith Merril, Joanna Russ and J.R.R. Tolkien.
- *Theodore Sturgeon Memorial* (short story): Molly Gloss, ‘The Grinnell Method’ (*Strange Horizons* 9/12).

Science Masterclass. ‘Botulinus, sir, is an organic poison – not a chemical one. The formula for it, in case you’re interested, Mr Petersen, is OV_2CICA_6HH .’ (Van Wyck Mason, *The Gracious Lily Affair*, 1957) [AB]

R.I.P. *Michael Baigent* (1948-2013), co-author with Richard Leigh and Henry Lincoln of the nonfiction alternate history – or woo-woo, as you prefer – *The Holy Blood and the Holy Grail*, died on 17 June. He and Leigh unwisely sued Dan Brown for making free use of the story in *The Da Vinci Code* (with an anagrammatic nod to ‘Sir Leigh Teabing’), and not only lost but were ruined by an order to pay £1.3 million in legal costs.

- *Iain Banks* (1954-2013), Scots author of many successful genre-blurring novels beginning with *The Wasp Factory* (1984) and of equally acclaimed

space operas beginning with *Consider Phlebas* (1987), died on 9 June – all too soon after announcing his terminal cancer diagnosis. He was 59. As well as a favourite writer – I’m always happy to reread his work and invariably gave top priority to a new Banks, with or without the M – Iain was a thoroughly nice man whose presence lit up any convention he attended. Why he never won a Hugo or Arthur C. Clarke award is a mystery.

- *Thomas George Cockcroft* (1926-2013), New Zealander who published an index to the *Weird Fiction Magazines* (including *Weird Tales*) in 1962 as T.G.L. Cockcroft and corresponded with fans all over the world as Tom Cockcroft, died on 12 April; he was 86. [NB]

- ‘*Dennis Dolbear* (1953-2013), much-loved New Orleans fan, host and raconteur, sloughed this mortal coil on 17 June. ♦ The retired attorney, 59, suffered from pneumonia and septicemia.’ – writes Guy H. Lillian.

- *Mark Fisher* OBE (1947-2013), UK stage designer noted for his spectacular sets for band performances and public events, died on 25 June aged 66. Genre credits include *Zardoz* (1974) and productions of *The Rocky Horror Show* and *We Will Rock You*. [MPJ]

- *Parke Godwin* (1929-2013), US author whose works include several sf and historical fantasy novels and who won a World Fantasy Award in 1982, died on 19 June; he was 84. Among his notable sf books are *Masters of Solitude* (1978) and its sequel, written with his friend Marvin Kaye), and the Snake Oil Wars diptych; his *Firelord* (1980) trilogy is Arthurian. [CC]

- *Annabel Johnson* (1921-2013), US author whose many YA novels include sf – e.g. *An Alien Music* (1982 with her husband Edgar Johnson) – died on 9 February aged 91. [DB]

- *Richard Matheson* (1926-2013), long-time US author and screenwriter famed for his edgy mingling of sf and horror in such novels as *I am Legend* (1954; film versions include *The Omega Man*) and *The Shrinking Man* (1956, filmed as *The Incredible Shrinking Man* with Matheson’s own script) – plus many short stories and *Twilight Zone* scripts – died on 23 June. He was 87. Steven Spielberg’s *Duel* (1971) was adapted by Matheson from his own short story. Career honours include the World Fantasy Award (1984), the Bram Stoker Life Achievement Award (1991) and induction into the SF Hall of Fame (2010).

- *Kim Thompson* (1956-2013), comics editor and publisher who co-founded Fantagraphics Books, was long involved with *The Comics Journal* since shortly after its founding and edited 204 issues of *Amazing Heroes*, died on

19 June; he was 56. [TM]

As Others See Us II. From episode 2 of ITV's 2013 gay sitcom *Vicious*: 'Will there be a lot of single men?' 'It's a science fiction fan club event. They'll be single but they'll be disgusting.' [CM]

Stoker Awards. NOVEL Caitlín R. Kiernan, *The Drowning Girl*. FIRST NOVEL L.L. Soares, *Life Rage*. YA NOVEL Jonathan Maberry, *Flesh & Bone*. GRAPHIC NOVEL Rocky Wood & Lisa Morton, *Witch Hunts: A Graphic History of the Burning Times*. LONG FICTION Gene O'Neill, *The Blue Heron*. SHORT FICTION Lucy Snyder, 'Magdala Amygdala' (*Dark Faith: Invocations*). SCREENPLAY *The Cabin in the Woods*. ANTHOLOGY Mort Castle & Sam Weller, eds., *Shadow Show*. COLLECTION (tie) Mort Castle, *New Moon on the Water*; Joyce Carol Oates, *Black Dahlia and White Rose*. NONFICTION Lisa Morton, *Trick or Treat: A History of Halloween*. POETRY COLLECTION Marge Simon, *Vampires, Zombies & Wanton Souls*.

Court Circular. Once again the Saul Zaentz Company has scored a mighty legal victory, by preventing the obscure 1970s UK band Bilbo Baggins from reforming under that name. The erstwhile lead singer said plaintively, 'There was never any problem with us using the name back in the 70s and the books had already been out for quite a while then.' The Group Which Is Now Nameless also had to pay £1200 costs after the humiliating decision: 'IPO hearing officer Ann Corbett said the band had not achieved enough success for people to distinguish them from the Tolkien character.' ([Edinburgh Evening News](#), 6 June) [MPJ]

- Americans' inalienable right to read werewolf erotica in prison was ringingly confirmed by a Californian court, two years after guards confiscated a copy of Mathilde Madden's *The Silver Crown* as 'obscene and likely to incite violence.' ([Independent](#), 23 June) [MPJ] Today's equivalent of having a bishop denounce your book from the pulpit.

As Others See Us III. *Granta* gets it right: 'If Iain (M) Banks leaves one significant literary legacy over and about his oeuvre, it is the diversity of that oeuvre. I was delighted that so many of the writers we chose for this decade's Best of Young British were unafraid of genre. That is the gift Banks has given us.' (*Granta* website, 14 June) [KH]

Outraged Letters. *Simon R. Green*: 'Have you been following the news/rumours about the appearance of missing *Doctor Who* episodes?'

Amazing claims are being made for around ninety of the missing 106 episodes having survived in South Africa, of all places. There have been all kinds of claims, and denials, from all sides. I think I'm in the camp of Please Let It Be True. I wouldn't be at all surprised to see church attendance levels rising sharply as fans all across the UK pray fervently along the lines of Oh Please Please I Promise I'll Be Good If Only ...'

- *Steve Sneyd* posted from Parnassus: 'Footnote to plagiarist poet item in June *Ansible* – two folk I passed copies on to reminded was *déjà vu*, i.e. same guy/same offence back in '80s; so "dog to vomit" 30 yrs on (& even less chance of getting away with it, in age of twitterati!).'
- *Jane Yolen* brags: 'Hey, Big Dog, this is the 50th year of my continuous book publishing. How can that be when I am only 49? 'Tis a wonder!'

Magazine Scene. Marvin Kaye at *Weird Tales* has been un-accepting stories previously described by him as 'excellent' and accepted for publication: 'Dear Contributor, I regret to inform you that the publisher of *Weird Tales* has decided to pass on quite a few stories, yours included. This is a measure to reduce our huge fiction inventory. If you have not sold your submission elsewhere, try us again in 9 months. If we have room at that time, it will be an automatic sale (but do remind us of this message!).' [Later:] 'I don't like having to do this, but the pressure to reopen the submission portal has been growing and we can't ignore it any longer.' ([June 2013](#)) [JN] Actually publishing issues might help; there were just two in 2012, none as yet in 2013.

Random Fandom. *Pamela Boal* has lost much of her eyesight to cancer and would love phone calls from friends. Details from her son David Boal, truboal@tiscali.co.uk.

- *Brad Foster* is recovering well from surgery in May to repair a torn retina. Is *Ansible* bad for the eyes?

The Dead Past. *30 Years Ago*: 'Chinese SF Secrets: writing in the *Times Literary Supplement*, the possibly famous Yang Xianyi reveals all. "There is a vogue for sf in China today... [But] Chinese people do not have pessimistic ideas that the world is going to be dominated by insects, robots or creatures from outer space, or destroyed by a nuclear holocaust or other catastrophe; so they find most present-day Western sf too depressing and unacceptable.'" (*Ansible* 34, July 1983)

C.o.A. *Dave Lally* lost his another.com email address. Remove the space from his name and add 'outlook com' with suitable punctuation. *David Redd*, Beracah House, Redstock Lane, Johnston, Haverfordwest, Pembs, SA62 3NQ. (Only the 'Lane' and postcode are new.)

British Fantasy Awards shortlist, novel categories: FANTASY Lou Morgan, *Blood and Feathers*; Margo Lanagan, *The Brides of Rollrock Island*; China Miéville, *Railsea*; Joe Abercrombie, *Red Country*; Graham Joyce, *Some Kind of Fairy Tale*. HORROR Caitlin R. Kiernan, *The Drowning Girl*; Ramsey Campbell, *The Kind Folk*; Adam Nevill, *Last Days*; Gary McMahon, *Silent Voices*; Graham Joyce, *Some Kind of Fairy Tale*.

- [Full list here](#). I'm thrilled that *Ansible* is nominated in Nonfiction, but will gladly lose to strong opposition including that posthumous essay collection from Diana Wynne Jones.

Fanfundery. *DUFF*: Bill Wright won the 2013 race from Australasia to LoneStarCon3, with 66 votes (32 NA/34 Aus) to Clare McDonald-Sims's 64 (18/46). 1 vote for Hold Over Funds; 2 for No Preference.

Media Awards. *Daytime Emmy*: George Lucas won for the animated series *Star Wars: The Clone Wars*; David Tennant won as outstanding performer in this series.

- *Tony*: The Royal Shakespeare Company musical adaptation of Roald Dahl's *Matilda* won for Best Book and Best Featured Actor (Gabriel Ebert). [MPJ]
- *US Critics Choice*: Best Drama Series was won by *Game of Thrones*, tied with *Breaking Bad*. [MPJ]

Thog's Masterclass. *Upstairs Downstairs Dept.* 'It operated as a Goth club downstairs and an underground sex club on one of the upper levels.' (A.C. James, *Ruler: A Paranormal Erotica Short Story*, 2013) [PB]

- *Dept of Product Placement.* 'Jocelyn reclined at ease on a couch covered in kzin fur. She was smoking a cigarette of mildly narcotic Wunderland chew-bacca ...' (Hal Colebatch, 'Music Box' in *Man-Kzin Wars X: The Wunder War*, 2003) [AIP]

- *Sherlock Holmes Astrophysics Dept.* 'Even my morning shadow, following as I ran westward, seemed to have bad intentions ...' (Dean Koontz, *Deeply Odd*, 2013) [WG]

- *Dept of Alternative Automobile Engineering.* 'Of course, a casual visitor wouldn't have seen the visitors arriving in the back of unmarked Lincoln

Town Cars with smoked windows that sat oddly low on their suspension.’
(Charles Stross, *The Revolution Trade*, 2013) [SJ]

• *Had I But Known Dept.* ‘There was no premonition, as I opened my eyes in a sleepy sweet haze, that I was to be blown apart, and that the embers of the little fire at my core would be stamped out forever into ashes.’ ‘I felt little flames strong and bright inside me spreading a warm glow to my fingertips and toes. There was still no alarm bells.’ (Susan Greenfield, *2121*, 2013)
[AR]

• *Dept of Relativity.* ‘Though rooted to the spot in front of me, everything about her was on the move’ (*Ibid*) ‘The face, almost eye-level with mine despite its fleshy folds, seems constituted of granite’ (*Ibid*)

• *Eyeballs in the Sky (Surgical Division).* ‘From under bushy brows peered eyes of a peculiar golden-green hue; a thousand phosphorus needles flickered there in high-frequency movement, as in a battery’s spark gap, giving the pupils an expression of luminous penetration; these eyes literally cut into the body and examined its subject to the minutest fiber.’ (Stefan Grabinski, ‘On a Tangent’ [circa 1918] translated by Miroslaw Lipinski in *On the Hill of Roses*, 2012) [DL]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

• 12 July 2013: Richard Denning talks to the Brum Group, Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre, 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk or rog.peyton at btinternet com. Future meetings: 9 August, Summer Social at The Bull near Aston University; 13 September, Alice Lawson; 6 December, Christmas Social.

Editorial. Yes, Virginia, though sceptics doubt and carpers sneer, there is still a print edition of *Ansible*. This is available for stamped self-addressed envelopes within the UK. Distribution elsewhere is fickle and fugitive, but I understand that Down Under copies are now being circulated through ANZAPA.

Lavie Tidhar’s award-winning ‘The World SF Blog’ is no longer being updated, as of 18 June.

<http://worldsf.wordpress.com/2013/06/18/a-last-word/>

Outraged Letters II. *Sam J. Lundwall:* ‘I was sorry to learn about the demise of Ray Harryhausen, although it was far from unexpected. When I started in the movie business, many years ago, I always kept him in mind. Not by doing his sort of esseff, but by keeping his devotion to details in mind. He truly was great in his field, just because of this devotion. (I must admit his monsters mostly left me cold.) / For my own part, I am going blind but despite this I have gone back to my old love, movies. I have made one full-length esseff movie, and a short one, which was originally filmed in 1968 but languished in the vaults until I finally had it digitized and cut it. Am now doing another essef thing. Things are so much easier nowadays, what with computers and things. And lots of fun! [...] I have not commented upon Harry Harrison’s death. He was much too close a friend, I could not even attend the funeral. But we were close friends for more than 40 years, and I miss him terribly.’

Sidewise Awards for alternate history – the 2012 finalists have been announced:

<http://www.uchronia.net/sidewise/>

R.I.P. II. *Philip Slater* (1927-2013), US author, actor, playwright and former professor of sociology whose one sf novel is *How I Saved the World* (1985), died on 20 June; he was 86. [JC]

Thog’s Second Helping. *Lisa Tuttle* strip-mines the media landscape: ‘Full page ad in the Guardian’s *Weekend Magazine* last week (22.06.13) for Samsung Galaxy Note caught my eye – using the device of a bookmarked & annotated paperback morphing into a highlighted, bookmarked page on the screen of a Samsung tablet – clever, unless you actually read any of the text, and then it becomes ... well, the sort of book that can only have been self-published, and written by someone with an imperfect grasp of English. I must quote (mistakes & all):

‘DK close his eyes on Thousand.... then ... “Splash” ... Where am I going? how deeper will I go? It is cold as ice but I feel easy and peace. I am sorry Thousand but I want to meet my parents ...

‘Something also happened to Thousand. His entire wound has been healed and has two brilliant and gorgeous wings. And that is not all. He also has the most powerful and legendary Horn, Birusutal that can drill everything in the world.

‘Finally, DK has a power to fight with Sauron. He has reformed with unavoidable body. And Thousand with Birusutal and wings. No one can be their enemy. Nothing can stop them ... All of a sudden, the Darkest Forest vanished and all trees, plants and animals will give DK more power to defeat Sauron. This place has changed to the most brightest place where beyond of Sauron’s power.’

(Somebody set up us the bomb! – Ed.)

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Ansible 313, August 2013

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Web news.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**.
Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or fun, fantasy, confusion and catastrophe.

Me Again. As a trial run before releasing the Algis Budrys *F&SF* 'Books' column collections in ebook form to complement the utterly wonderful [trade paperbacks](#), my almost popular comic novel *The Leaky Establishment* is now available as an ebook. See ae.ansible.co.uk/ebooks.php.

The Shadow Out of Time

Iain Banks had a surprise memorial in a 24 June *Independent* crossword set by 'Alchemi', featuring the one-word answers BUSINESS CANAL DREAMS COMPLICITY CROW ROAD WALKING GLASS WASP FACTORY WHIT. [PM] On 23 June, asteroid 5099 was officially named Iainbanks by the International Astronomical Union 'and will be referred to as such for as long as Earth Culture may endure.' ([Minor Planet Center blog](#), 1 July)

Arthur C. Clarke will make it into space after all; at least a few of his scalp hairs will, in a late-2014 'space burial' launch of 'a giant kite which will sail through space like a galleon on solar winds' – called *Sunjammer* after his 1964 story. Your hairs can travel with the great man's for a mere £8000 per (fraction of a) head. ([Independent](#), 30 June) [MPJ]

Richard Driscoll, UK film producer who wrote and directed the horror comedy *Eldorado* (2012), was sentenced to three years in jail for a £1.5 million VAT fraud based on hugely inflating the actual expenses of this and other productions. ([BBC](#), 1 July) [MPJ]

James Frenkel is no longer an editor at Tor Books (see also [A312](#)). Patrick Nielsen Hayden announced the departure in a succession of tweets: 'James Frenkel is no longer associated with Tor Books. We wish him the best. /

We'll be contacting the authors and agents Mr. Frenkel worked with to discuss which editor here they'll be working with going forward. / This process will take some days or even weeks, so please be patient if you don't hear from us instantly. / Finally, if you had something on submission to Tor via Mr. Frenkel, you'll need to resubmit it via some other Tor editor. / If you don't have a particular editor in mind, you can re-submit it via Diana Pho (diana.pho [at] tor.com) who will route it appropriately.' (all 11 July)

H.P. Lovecraft will join Neil Gaiman and Frank Herbert (see [A312](#)) as a place name. The city council of Providence, Rhode Island, voted to give the name H.P. Lovecraft Square to the intersection of Angell Street, where HPL lived for years, and Prospect Street, home of his doomed character Charles Dexter Ward. ([Providence Journal](#), 17 July) [PDF] Eldritch geometries and blasphemous ichor are surely to be expected.

David Morris MP, a member of the House of Commons spaceflight committee, referred during a BBC spot on the Moon and space tourism to 'Lunar winds' covering the Apollo landers with dust. [CE]

Flann O'Brien (1911-1966) continues his posthumous career with a new story collection whose editors are convinced that he appeared in *Amazing Stories Quarterly* for Winter 1932 with the comic sf tale 'Naval Control', published as by John Shamus O'Donnell – a name resembling other O'Brien pseudonyms. ([The Irish Catholic](#), 11 July) [JN] There was an unseemly rush to add this vital datum to his *SF Encyclopedia* entry. *The Plain People of Fandom*: Of course we knew it all along, so we did.

J.K. Rowling, whose crime-fiction pseudonym Robert Galbraith was outed by the *Sunday Times* in July, sadly acknowledged the truth of the ancient adage: 'When you confide a deep dark secret in total confidence to your trusted solicitors (Russells of London), one of the firm's partners (Chris Gossage) will tell his wife's best friend and she will proceed to spill the beans via Twitter.' ([BBC, 14/18 July](#)) The inevitable conspiracy theory – 'it's all a publicity ploy to make the Galbraith novel *The Cuckoo's Calling* a best-seller' – was punctured by the discovery that UK bookshops had very few if any copies to meet the sudden demand.

Concavoconvex

Until 11 Aug • **David Bowie Is** (exhibition), V&A, London. 10am-5:45pm (10pm Fri). Last chance to see this; with a fair amount of sf content. More at www.vam.ac.uk/content/exhibitions/david-bowie-is/.

Until 27 Oct • **Space Age Archaeology**: Eduardo Paolozzi and Science Fiction, Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh. Free. 10am-5pm. See www.nationalgalleries.org/visit/introduction-118.

8-11 Aug • **LeakyCon** (Harry Potter), Grand Connaught Rooms, London. Reportedly SOLD OUT: see www.leakycon.com/london/.

9-11 Aug • **Fantastiq** (film festival), QUAD art centre, Market Place, Derby, DE22 3PN. £60 reg, day pass £30, via fantastiq.co.uk (see under 'News'). Contact Reel Solutions, Dean Clough, Halifax, HX3 5AX.

9-11 Aug • **Nine Worlds Geekfest** (multimedia), Renaissance Hotel and others, Heathrow. *Now £95 reg; £99 at the door.* Advance booking online only at ninemeworlds.co.uk.

18 Aug • **An Evening with Neil Gaiman**, Portsmouth Guildhall. 7:30pm. £6 plus booking fee. 023 9282 4355 or <http://www.portsmouthguildhall.org.uk/events/an-evening-with-neil-gaiman>.

28 Aug • **BSFA Open Meeting**, ~~The Argyle pub, Leather Lane, London.~~ 5/6pm for 7pm. With Ian Stewart. Free; all welcome. *8 August update*: BSFA London meetings, beginning with this one, have until further notice moved to The Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND.

29 Aug - 2 Sep • **LoneStarCon 3** (71st Worldcon), San Antonio, Texas. *Rates now and at the door*: \$240 reg; YA/military \$120; child \$75; family \$540. Day: \$50 Thu; \$75 Fri, Sat, Sun; \$30 Mon (military/YA \$30/\$40/\$20; child \$15/\$25/\$10). See www.LoneStarCon3.org. Contact address PO Box 27277, Austin, TX 78755, USA.

7 Sep • **TitanCon** (sf & *Game of Thrones*), Wellington Park Hotel, Belfast. £25 reg; £5 supp. Join online at www.titancon.com (PayPal only, with £1.20 surcharge on full membership).

16 Mar 2014 • **EM-Con** (mostly media/*Red Dwarf*), Albert Hall, Nottingham. Many guests. Tickets £12 'early entry' (10am-5pm), £9 'all day' (11am-5pm: the day starts late in Nottingham), under-5s free; £5 at door for evening live-music party elsewhere. See www.em-con.co.uk.

22-24 Feb 2015 • **Redemption '15** (multimedia sf), Britannia Hotel, Fairfax St, Coventry, CV1 5RP. £65 reg to 30 August 2013, £70 to 11 February 2015 (concessions £20 off); £40/day (concessions £5 off); under-18s £25 or £15/day; £15 supp; under-3s free. Contact 61 Chaucer Road, Farnborough, Hampshire, GU14 8SP.

Rumblings. For numerous August *Prisoner*-related tours and events, mostly in London, see www.theunmutual.co.uk/events.htm.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. *Nomenclature Dept.* On the Project Ansible integrated-communications thingy from Siemens: ‘The aspect of Ansible that I’d like to highlight is its name, which is some kind of sci-fi reference. You see, Ansible is the machine Lieutenant Uhura used to warn Chewbacca about Voldemort attacking the Tardis. Something like that.’ (Brian Riggs, NoJitter.com, 16 July) [TB]

Awards. *Branford Boase*, for both author and editor of a UK novel for children of 7 and up: Dave Shelton ed. David Fickling, *A Boy and a Bear in a Boat*. [MPJ]

- *Cordwainer Smith Rediscovery* for neglected authors: Wyman Guin, best known for ‘Beyond Bedlam’ (1951 *Galaxy*).
- *Munsey* ‘for the betterment of the pulp community’: Garyn G. Roberts.
- *Mythopoeic* (fantasy) ADULT FICTION Ursula Vernon, *Digger* volumes 1-6. CHILDREN’S Sarah Beth Durst, *Vessel*. SCHOLARSHIP – INKLINGS Verlyn Flieger, *Green Suns and Faërie: Essays on J.R.R. Tolkien*. SCHOLARSHIP – OTHER Nancy Marie Brown, *Song of the Vikings: Snorri and the Making of Norse Myths*.
- *Prometheus* (libertarian): Cory Doctorow, *Pirate Cinema*. Hall of Fame: Neal Stephenson, *Cryptonomicon*.

It’s the Arts. There was much *Schadenfreude* at the news that a UK artist who made a papier-mache sculpture from comics found in a skip (including a first edition of *The Avengers*) had transformed their value from £20,000-£50,000 to Not Very Much At All. ([BBC](http://www.bbc.com), 6 July) [GD/MPJ]

R.I.P. *Eileen Brennan* (1932-2013), US actress whose genre credits include *Freaky Friday* (1995), *Jeepers Creepers* (2001) and *The Hollow* (2004), died

on 28 July aged 80. [SFS]

- *Mick Farren* (1943-2013), UK writer and rock musician who wrote two dozen genre books – beginning with the counterculture-steeped and proto-cyberpunk *The Texts of Festival* (1973) and the *DNA Cowboys* trilogy – died after a heart attack on stage while performing with his group *The Deviants* on 27 July. He was 69. [CSM]
- *Louis S. Glanzman* (1922-2013), US artist and book illustrator whose career began at age 16 with Centaur Publications comics including *Amazing Man*, died in July. [PDF]
- *George Inzer*, Southern US sf fan, died from a heart attack on 12 February; he was 64. [GHL]
- *Len Leone* (1921-2013), US art director at Bantam Books from 1955 to 1984, died on 1 July aged 92. As well as working with Vincent Di Fate, Boris Vallejo and many other sf/fantasy artists, he was instrumental in the design of the Doc Savage pulp reprints. [AIP]
- *Briony McRoberts* (1957-2013), UK actress whose genre credits include the live-action *Peter Pan* (1976) and the Jekyll and Hyde film *Edge of Sanity* (1989), died on 17 July; she was 56. [AW]
- *David Rogers* (1927-2013), US playwright whose stage adaptations include *Brave New World* and musicals of *The Hobbit* and *Charlie and Algernon* (based on *Flowers for Algernon*), died on 5 June; he was 85. [PDF]
- *Mel Smith* (1952-2013), UK writer/actor best known for tv comedy and seen in the genre films *Morons from Outer Space* (1985), which he co-wrote, *The Princess Bride* (1987) and *The Wolves of Willoughby Chase* (1989), died on 18 July aged 60. [AW/SG]
- *Alan Whicker* (1921-2013), UK journalist, broadcaster and celebrity interviewer satirized in Monty Python's 'Whicker Island' sketch, died on 11 July aged 91 (87 according to most obits; he had 'adjusted' his birthdate to 1925). The sf link: he attended the 1957 London Worldcon and interviewed fans, if wearing sufficiently silly costumes, for the BBC TV *Tonight* programme. [JL]
- *John David Wilson* (1919-2013), UK-born animator, producer and director who worked on Disney's *Peter Pan*, *Lady and the Tramp* (opening credits) and Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck features, died on 20 June aged 93. [PDF] He also created the *Journey To The Stars* animation for NASA's Space Pavilion at the Seattle World's Fair, 1960. [MPJ]
- *Snoo Wilson* (1948-2013) UK playwright whose satirical sf novels are

Spaceache (1984) and *Inside Babel* (1985), died on 3 July; he was 64. [JC]

In Typo Veritas. ‘He wore no shirt, only a vest, with the white hair of his chest showing atop the plunging collar. A thin golden chain clung snugly to the folds of his neck.’ (Jeffrey Ford, ‘A Meeting in Oz’ in *Oz Reimagined* ed. John Joseph Adams, Douglas Cohen) [KS]

- [Muphry’s Law](#), formulated by John Bangsund, rarely fails: an *Analog* jeremiad about e-publications – with ‘common, easily correctable, obnoxious mistakes that even a so-so old school editor desperate for material would demand be fixed.’ – refers soon after to the ‘space travel non-fiction of Arthur C. Clark’. (Jeffery Kooistra, *Analog*, September 2013) [AL]

Sidewise Award (alt-history) shortlist: SHORT Lou Antonelli, ‘Great White Ship’ (*DailySF* 5/11/12); Sean McMullen, ‘Steamgothic’ (*Interzone* 7/12); Ian Sales, *Adrift on the Sea of Rains*; Catherynne Valente, ‘Fade to White’ (*Clarkesworld* 8/12); Rick Wilber, ‘Something Real’ (*Asimov’s* 4/12). LONG Thomas Brennan, *Doktor Glass*; Mark Hodder, *Expedition to the Mountains of the Moon*; Jack McDevitt & Mike Resnick, *The Cassandra Project*; Matt Ruff, *The Mirage*; C.J. Sansom, *Dominion*.

As Others See Us II. On Max Brooks: ‘Brooks has a deep understanding of history and geopolitics – he isn’t just a standard-issue sci-fi author hopping on the zombie train. Rather, he’s the engineer of that train, at least in its modern renaissance.’ And: ‘He (Brooks) appreciates that he has fans with streaks of nerd that run so deep that they appreciate the elaborate, chilling, too-real world he created in *World War Z*. As someone who can quote any episode of “*Babylon 5*,” he is very close to this demographic.’ (*NY Times* magazine, 23 June) [MMW]

Outraged Letters. *Steve Jeffery*: ‘Heard just now on tonight’s *I’m Sorry, I Haven’t a Clue*. In “Suggestions for books that are guaranteed not to sell”, one of the panel suggested *Alice in Sunderland*. Should someone tell that nice Mr Talbot?’ (29 July)

- *Dave Lally* on Simon R. Green ([A312](#)) and that rumoured trove of *Doctor Who* episodes: ‘I have just been given to understand from v. gd. authority that (i) Simon’s “Please Let It Be True” is indeed true, (ii) there are a no. of other lost TV eps, i.e. other than *Dr Who*, involved, (iii) negotiations are still at a v. delicate stage and (iv) if successful (keep praying!!), an announcement will be made (just in time for the gd. Dr’s big 50!).’ (27 July)

Magazine Scene. Andy Cox of *Interzone* and *Black Static* expostulated: ‘What idiot put the same barcode on *Interzone* 247 and *Black Static* 35?’ (Facebook, 31 July) At least the latter is correct....

We Are Not Everywhere. *Linn’s Stamp News* (27 May) reports that under a new US Post Office marketing manager, commemorative stamp plans ‘no longer include likely poorly selling subjects like science fiction.’ The planned Asimov, Bradbury, Dick, Heinlein and Herbert stamps, first postponed until 2014, may never appear. [AIP]

The Dead Past. *70 Years Ago*, frivolity was deplored: ‘I have noticed that you British fans have developed quite a tendency to ape the alleged “humor” of American fanzines – even in some cases reprinting humorous items verbatim. Generally speaking, the British fanzines I’ve seen so far display a decidedly sane and level-headed approach, and it is my sincere hope that you Britons will keep your magazines serious. If you must imitate or reprint from America, refrain from the giddy items disgracing so many of our publications. Some things should be allowed to moulder into oblivion.’ (Francis T. Laney, [Futurian War Digest 30](#), August 1943)

• *50 Years Ago*, news of a sought-after sf author: ‘The police are looking for a James White in connection with the recent Great Mail Train Robbery.’ ([Skyrack 57](#), August 1963)

Disgusted of Tunbridge Wells. According to the BBFC, the three most complained-about films of 2012 were *The Woman in Black* remake (‘too dark’ for its 12A certificate), *Men in Black III* (‘strong language, violence and sexual innuendo’) and, despite ‘edits to remove violent battle detail’, *The Hunger Games*. (*Digital Spy*, 11 July) [MPJ]

Random Fandom. [Dragon Con, Inc.](#) is a new company replacing the huge US convention’s former company Dragon*Con/ACE Inc. The significant change is that founding organizer Ed Kramer – still awaiting trial on child molestation charges dating back to 2000, which led to a vigorous Dragon*Con boycott campaign – is no longer involved.

C.o.A. *Jim Caughran*, 500 Duplex Ave, Apt 3310, Toronto, Ontario M4R 1V6, Canada. *Mike Scott and Flick*, Dane Farm House, Bladbean, Canterbury, CT4 6LY.

TV Poll. The Writer’s Guild of America voted on the 100 best-written tv

series: *The Twilight Zone* (1959) was top genre choice at #3. Also: 26 *The X-Files*, 27 *Lost*, 33 *Star Trek*, 35 *Twin Peaks*, 38 *Battlestar Galactica*, 40 *Game of Thrones*, 49 *Buffy*, 79 *Star Trek: TNG*, 90 *The Prisoner*. [SV] Outraged letter from Mr Lally to follow soon....

Thog's Masterclass. *Thog by Gaslight*. 'He looked down at the tiny silver piece. It was a Victorian-era shilling, worth only five pennies in its day.' 'Her body was hunched, shoulders right above the tips of her toes.' 'Got into fisticuffs with another railman and beat him over the head with his pint o' bitters. It was a grim sight.' 'Identically uniformed constables streamed in and out of the front gate and up into the five-story as if they were tiny bubbles of carbon dioxide in a great bunsen burner.' 'He ground his teeth as he pulled, and he thought he might bite through his own molars.' (all Graham Moore, *The Sherlockian*, 2010) [PB]

- *True Romance Dept*. 'But then the tips of her breasts became erect on their own, and the flood in her loins washed morals, despair, and all other abstract assessments away in a cloud of some sort of divine cologne of his. Now his big generative jockey was inside her pelvic saddle, riding, riding, riding, and she was eagerly swallowing it swallowing it swallowing it with the saddle's own lips and maw – all this without a word.' (Tom Wolfe, *Back to Blood*, 2012) [MMW]

- *Eyeballs in the Sky*. "Be quiet," Alison Marie whispered, her eyes darting toward the door so quickly that she thought they might tear themselves from their sockets and continue on without her.' (Barbara A. Barnett, 'Memories of Mirrored Worlds', *Daily Science Fiction*, 5 July 2013) [PB]

- *Dept of Prehistoric Adventure*. 'The torch of human life was burning very low, flickering the ever-present moist tepidity. It was a humid, vaporous world. In that particular cycle of evolution, scientists now academically compute, was millions of years ago, during the paleolithic age.' [*We meet the apeman Gowg:*] "Ghkr, rqrk, lkqr!" The guttural speech almost exhausted his limited vocabulary.' [*Gowg encounters a huge herbivore:*] 'He did not know that millions of years later man would guess at great length and profoundly name that creature a Brontossaurus.' [*More fauna:*] '... carnivorous, reptile beasts were gathered around a bubbling tar pit, trying to eat an unlucky saber-toothed tiger.' [*Pterodactyl attack!*] "Gngke!" Gowg snarled a warning to his family. [...] the weird winged made straight for Gowg, its fanged mouth drooling in anticipation of a tender morsel.' [*He clouts it:*] 'The mighty reptile, weighing possibly tons, was dazed for a moment.' [*But:*] 'Its almost

useless feet, that were attached to the webbed wings, lurched the enrage animal at Gowg with amazing speed.’ ‘Desperately he tried to think, and something seemed to snap in his small brain. Spurred mentally by the peril, he thought and reasoned quickly, for the first time in his life.’ [2001-style insight follows! *Pterodactyl succumbs to hurled rock. Cut to the moral:*] ‘Our ancestors had again bravely and heroically fanned the flame – of the torch of life – that we might exist. THE END’ (all Joe W. Skidmore, ‘The Torch of Life’, *Marvel Tales* July/August 1934) [DL]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 9 August 2013: Brum Group Summer Social at The Bull near Aston University; usual venue is the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre, 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk or rog.peyton at btinternet com. Future meetings: 13 September, Alice Lawson; 6 December, Christmas Social.

Stop Press! A follow-up to the Robert Galbraith pseudonym story ([see above](#)). J.K. Rowling sued Chris Gossage of Russells Solicitors and his wife’s tattletale friend Judith Callegari for breach of trust. They and Russells apologized; the firm paid Rowling’s legal costs and is to make a ‘substantial charity donation’ by way of damages. (BBC, 1 August) [MPJ]

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-23515054>

Plagiarism Follow-Up. Ira Lightman (see [A311](#)) has prepared a list of *Strange Horizons* contributors whose stories and poems are plagiarized in David R. Morgan’s poetry collection *Destinations*. [Here’s the link.](#)

A312 Correction. Several words vanished from one obituary in the digital editions only. Repeating in full: ‘*Dennis Dolbear* (1953-2013), much-loved New Orleans fan, host and raconteur, sloughed this mortal coil on 17 June. The retired attorney, 59, suffered from pneumonia and septicemia.’ – writes Guy H. Lillian.

Thog’s Second, Third and Fourth Helpings. Only a few of Adam Roberts’s copious gleanings from *2121* by Susan Greenfield (2013) appeared [last issue](#). Here is the complete list.

- ‘His wispy white beard was just long enough to move up and down,

seemingly as a separate entity, as he spoke.'

- 'She looked at me with hard blue, small bird-like eyes. She attempted a small smile that was unsuccessful presumably through lack of practice.'

- 'The silence swelled ominously between us. Fred seemed to shake himself mentally.'

- 'Time slowed, juddered to a halt. Fred flapped his hands helplessly, in vestigial little movements at his side.'

- 'As a reflex, I felt myself wildly, stupidly, looking around the room, seeking some kind of familiarity, a rationale'

- 'Fred's voice is a smoky whisper that hangs suspended.'

- 'She sat forward again, her body deflating, put both arms now, folded, on the table.'

- 'He was speaking in unremitting chunks'

- 'Fred looked far away, then visibly jerked himself back to me'

- 'Head, a dark man, [was] positioned between Fred's bright red seat and Sim's turquoise sofa.'

- 'The moment can fatten, swell, bloated with the reliving of recent times with Fred, looking and listening to that creased smiling face'

- 'She is propped up on one elbow, looking at me with tenderness and concern. Our lower limbs entwined of their own accord.'

- 'Do I really want power? What I really want is to escape on my lilac bicycle.'

- 'How hard it all is, once a path bifurcates and bifurcates, and bifurcates again, and you need to go down all the roads but then the roads don't meet up and there you are on your bicycle wondering where you are actually going.'

- 'The sudden thud of silence was heavy and suffocating'

- 'But, unusually on that last black, pre-dawn morning, he had just talked at me in long paragraphs.'

- 'But I needed to anticipate the obvious question Bill would ask at the newly asymmetric breakfast table.'

- 'The face, almost eye-level with mine despite its fleshy folds, seems constituted of granite'

- 'He had let the bicycle fall. It lay on its side, its wheels still slowly revolving, suddenly awkward, unloved, and lovely no longer'

- 'By now, Fred has also unwrapped all his layers of grey clothes; they lay about us like little colourless hills.'

- 'But what is happening? My thinking darts sideways'

- ‘I have no significance. I now feel too sad and small to ride the big, carefree bicycle.’
 - ‘I stared at the sky again, then looked back at Fred, his brain now working in a different way, in a lesser way.’
 - ‘There was no premonition, as I opened my eyes in a sleepy sweet haze, that I was to be blown apart, and that the embers of the little fire at my core would be stamped out forever into ashes.’
 - ‘The thinking would sooner or later trump the sensational – the understanding of who and where I was constantly kept me prisoner’
 - ‘I felt little flames strong and bright inside me spreading a warm glow to my fingertips and toes. There was still no alarm bells.’
 - ‘Sim burst everything. Her shrill siren wail swirled into my ears and deafened my brain.’
 - ‘The pink bloom on her face had been washed out and bleached white.’
 - ‘Though rooted to the spot in front of me, everything about her was on the move’
 - ‘The very last, the final, statement before her garble collapsed into complete incoherence, pitched me forward and over into the abyss.’
 - ‘With a shake of her yellow hair and a flick of her flimsy clothes she had stamped on my life-story with Fred. Like a malign fairy she had slid in, insinuating herself between me and my soul-mate’
 - ‘An unlovely trail of colourless fluid was inching unchecked from her nose. But her chin was still pointed upwards though perhaps teetering on defeat.’
 - ‘The cold dead heart inside me grew heavier and heavier until I was entirely just that, a cold heavy lump. Plodding towards what end?’
 - ‘I heard as though he had spoken at five hundred decibels. I was deafened, and the abyss cracked apart to open up yet further depths I tumbled down blinded into a blackness that was utter, complete, final.’
- Finally, a link to Adam’s review in the *Grauniad*, where comments include ‘I think we can safely assume that Susan Greenfield is not another of J K Rowling’s pen names.’:

<http://www.theguardian.com/books/2013/jul/11/2121-tale-century-greenfield-review>

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Lillian, Locus, Andy Love, Peter Mabey, Charles Shaar Murray, Jess Nevins,
Andrew I. Porter, Adam Roberts, Karen Schaffer, SF Site (Steven H Silver),
Steve Volk, Andrew Wells, Martin Morse Wooster, and our Hero
Distributors: Dave Corby (BSFG), SCIS/Prophecy, Alan Stewart (Australia).
1 August 2013.

Ansible 313 Supplement

The Plagiarism Roster Ira Lightman

[Expanding on [this report in Ansible 311](#) ...]

Here's my list of pieces in David R. Morgan's book *Destinations*, that have large chunks reused wholesale as the 80-90% body of the text (or 80-90% of a paragraph in the text where the other paragraphs are plagiarized too but from other writers) from [Strange Horizons](#) writers. He takes about a dozen from *Story Bytes*, and a lot from the <http://capa.conncoll.edu/> website, but only from about a dozen poets: Al Zolynas, Robert Peters, Colin Morton, Jascha Kessler, Barry Seiler, John Morgan, Daniele Gioseffi, Charles Hartman, Gerry La Femina, William Matthews, Lloyd Schwarz, Wendy Battin, James Bertolino, Halvard Johnson. At least three on average from each, and a whole book of poems: *Breughel's Pig* by Robert Peters, 1974, a book of short lined poems, run as consecutive prose with nearly no editing, as one 13 page short story.

Here is the [Strange Horizons](#) list:

1. Finisterre by Maria Deira as "Before we knew for certain"
2. Making Robot Poets Great by Greg Beatty as "Robobards"
3. Soul Searching by Tim Pratt as "Says the Green Man"
4. The Great Gnome Escape by Duane Ackerson as "Gnome is where the Heart is"
5. A Short Conversation with Destiny by David J Schwartz as part of "Echo and Narcissus"
6. The Planet of Ideal Readers by F. J. Bergmann as "Kindle surprise"
7. Grief by Wendy Rathbone as "The Werewolf's Grief"
8. Four Years Later by Chris Szego as "Beauty and the Beast"
9. Cities in Fog by Robert Frazier and Andrew Joron as "In the street of improbable books"
10. Painted by Becca de la Rosa as "Art for Art's Sake"
11. Dark and Light by David Lunde as part of "Somewhere near the front"

- row a cricket plays its legs”
12. Immaterial by Sharon M. White as “Bipolarity”
 13. Underground by Jennifer de Guzman as “The Dangerous Tomato”
 14. The Emerald King by J. Kenneth Sargeant as “Over the Rainbow”
 15. Wings by Andrea Blythe as “The devil of a tattoo”
 16. Moonomania by F.J. Bergmann as part of “The Lover”
 17. Eel Week by David C. Kopaska-Merkel as “Something really fishy”
 18. The Ghost of Onions by Marcie Lynn Tentchoff [*title of plagiarism omitted – to follow when Ira Lightman, currently away from home and references, is able to look it up*]
 19. Violet’s Hearts by Jeanie Tomasko as “Writing Lesson / Clever Cupid”
 20. How to Hold Your Breath by Meredith Schwartz as “Hold Your Breath”
 21. Wendy Darling Has Bad Dreams by Sally Rosen Kindred as “Hooked”
 22. Lizards and Wind by Bruce Boston as “Rhinos and Wind”
 23. Mathematics by Jennifer Crow as part of “School Daze”
 24. The Calendar of the Dead by Jacqueline West as part of “In Transit”
 25. A Winter’s Tale by Nora M. Mulligan as Chione
 26. In Their Element by M.J. Kirby as “The Particle Prom”
 27. A Face Like An Imperfectly Shaven Tennis Ball by Helena Bell as “A Body of Work”
 28. The Yew’s Embrace by Francesca Forrest as “Who Can Understand the Gods?”
 29. Estranged by Bruce Holland Rogers as “Newman”
 30. Ballade of the New God by Thomas M. Disch as “first thoughts of the foetus”
 31. Little Ghosts by Duane Ackerson as “Counter spell”
 32. Requiem for the Tooth Fairy by Robert Borski as “Down in the mouth”
 33. Birds by Benjamin Parzybok as “Flight”
 34. How the Mermaid Lost Her Song by Mark Teppo as “The mermaid’s song”
 35. Items Found in a Box Belonging to Jonas Connolly by Laura E. Price as part of “Skin of fish, bones of bird”
 36. John Travolta Stars in My Flick by Earl J. Wilcox as “John Wayne stars in my scene”
 37. Whiskers by Jamieson Ridenhour as “A close shave”
 38. Little Red Cap Grows Up by Amy Cummins as “Home Forever”
 39. If Wishes were Horses by Tiffani Angus-Bodie as “If wishes were

- camels”
40. Ghost Lakes by David C. Kopaska-Merkel as “Ghost lakes”
 41. Teacher’s Pet by Robert Borski as “Teacher’s pet”
 42. Impressions and Indentations by Jeff Jeppesen as “Where we’ve been”
 43. After All by Carol Emshwiller as “’Nother year older”
 44. Family Poet by Rolli as “Endangered species”
 45. Orpheus Among the Cabbages by Tim Pratt as part of “Why write wanker?”
 46. The Ghostly Barber Shop by Duane Ackerson as part of “Why write wanker?”
 47. A Ghost Story by Duane Ackerson as part of “Why write wanker?”
 48. The Space Between Stars by Cassandra Clarke as part of “Why write wanker?”
 49. The Fen-Queen’s Bride by P.K. Graves as part of “Why write wanker?”
 50. The God of the Crossroads by Tim Pratt as part of “Route 66”
 51. Making Monsters by Tim Pratt as part of “Film Buff”
 52. Changing Masks by John B. Rosenman as part of “Film Buff”
 53. The Desires of Houses by Haddayr Copley-Woods as “The desire of things”
 54. Before Paphos by Loretta Casteen as “Pygmalion”
 55. Father’s Day by Jen Larsen as “he hates the fish”

(You may want to check the spelling against the website, as these are all from annotations made in pencil on my copy of *Destinations*, and even I can’t always read my handwriting....) [*Done, and a few corrections made – Ed.*]

Ansible 314, September 2013

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Web news.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or Get Out Of The Dung Pits Of Glyve pass.

LoneStarCon 3. Hugo Awards: NOVEL John Scalzi, *Redshirts*. NOVELLA Brandon Sanderson, *The Emperor's Soul*. NOVELETTE Pat Cadigan, 'The Girl-Thing Who Went Out for Sushi' (*Edge of Infinity*). SHORT Ken Liu, 'Mono no Aware' (*The Future is Japanese*). RELATED WORK Brandon Sanderson, Dan Wells, Mary Robinette Kowal, Howard Tayler & Jordan Sanderson, *Writing Excuses, Season Seven*. GRAPHIC STORY Brian K. Vaughan & Fiona Staples, *Saga, Volume One*. DRAMATIC – LONG *The Avengers*. DRAMATIC – SHORT *Game of Thrones: 'Blackwater'*. EDITOR – SHORT Stanley Schmidt. EDITOR – LONG Patrick Nielsen Hayden. PRO ARTIST John Picacio. SEMIPROZINE *Clarkesworld*. FANZINE *SF Signal*. FANCAST *SF Squeecast*. FAN WRITER Tansy Rayner Roberts. FAN ARTIST Galen Dara. JOHN W. CAMPBELL AWARD Mur Lafferty.

- Proposals to remove the fan writer, fan artist and fanzine Hugos, to add a new Hugo for very short (<15min) dramatic presentations, and (again) to create a YA 'Best Youth Book' category, were all rejected at the first business meeting.
- *Spokane in 2015*: when the Orlando bid was eliminated and votes reassigned, Spokane's 645 votes beat Helsinki's 610. [KS]
- *Dublin in 2019?* This new Worldcon bid, announced at LoneStarCon, plans to use the CCD (Convention Centre Dublin), 14-19 August 2019.

Upon this Bank and Shoal

Margaret Atwood seemed to be backing away from her 'SF is All Talking Squid in Outer Space' position: 'SF is a form that allows an exploration of social structures in a more indirect and possibly more entertaining manner than does social realism.' (*Guardian Book Club*, 9 August) [DL] But her new book, despite the bioterrorism and massive human genetic engineering, is a

far cry from mere science fiction: ‘If I were writing about Planet Xenor, that would be different. It is our world, except with a few twists.’ ([Guardian](#), 24 August) [JC]

Neil Blomkamp feels much the same. His film *Elysium* may show all the world’s rich people living in space-station luxury while the Earth of 2154 is a poor folks’ dystopia, but he says firmly: ‘It’s not science fiction. This is now.’ ([BBC](#), 12 August) [MPJ] Well, *metaphorically*....

Peter Capaldi, the subject of a recent announcement (see [‘As Others ...’](#) below), was credited in *World War Z* as ‘W.H.O. Doctor’. [MPJ and many others] This proves it! (Copyright © Astral Leauge 1977 donot impinge copyright or the Leauge will TAKE MEASURES.)

Susan Cooper and **Tanith Lee** are to receive this year’s World Fantasy Awards for lifetime achievement. Very deserving choices.

Stieg Larsson, of *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* fame, wrote heaps of still-unpublished sf stories when in his teens; his ‘Brain Power’ is to appear in a 2014 US anthology of Swedish material. Traditional disclaimer follows: “‘I wouldn’t call it science fiction. It’s really a suspense story set in the future,” says publisher Otto Penzler.’ (*Guardian*, 8 August, in Kindle edition but not on website) [JS]

Steven Moffat featured in an *Independent* ‘Edinburgh Diary’ snippet headlined ‘The Time Lord’s creator ...’ To show that wasn’t a one-off slip, they call him ‘*Dr Who* creator’ in the text. Who knew that this strangely ageless fellow was on the scene in 1963? (17 August)

Lucius Shepard, while hospitalized in August, had a stroke and is in rehab, working on speech and reading difficulties. Get Well messages can be posted to [his Facebook page](#) and will be passed on. [ED/PDF]

Concentraption

7 Sep • **TitanCon** (sf & *Game of Thrones*), Wellington Park Hotel, Belfast. £25 reg; £5 supp. Join online at www.titancon.com (PayPal only, with £1.20 surcharge on full membership).

10 Sep • **SF Film Night** (*The Day the Earth Caught Fire* plus panel

discussion), Bloomsbury Theatre, London. 7pm for 7:45; £5 + £2.50 booking fee (!) at www.thebloomsbury.com/event/run/1834. Part of the European Planetary Science Congress 'Festival of the Planets'.

13-15 Sep • **The Asylum** (steampunk), Lincoln. Various prices. Online booking only: see steampunk.synthasite.com.

20-22 Sep • **Festival of Fantastic Films**, Manchester Conference Centre, Sackville St. £70 reg. Contact 95 Meadowgate Rd, Salford, Manchester, M6 8EN. See fantastic-films.com.

20-21 Sep • **Oxonmoot** (Tolkien Society), Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford. Apparently you need to register online at www.oxonmoot.org to learn the actual cost of booking and accommodation.

21 Sep • **Andromeda One**, Custard Factory, Birmingham. Doors open 8:30am; 11am-11pm. £25 reg; group of five £100. Register from 7pm Friday (social evening) or at terror-tree.co.uk/andromeda-one/.

25 Sep • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND (*note August venue change, announced too late for A313*). 5/6pm for 7pm. With Gareth L. Powell. Free; all welcome.

18-20 Oct • **Lakes International Comic Art Festival**, Kendal, Cumbria. Many guests. Free exhibitions; day events £7; evening (7pm and after) £9; Comics Clock Tower venue £3.50/day; weekend and day passes offer savings. See www.comicartfestival.com.

25-27 Oct • **Celluloid Screams** horror film festival, Sheffield. £60 (£50 concessions). Bookings 0114 275 7727 or celluloidscreams.co.uk.

26 Oct • **BristolCon**, Ramada Hotel, Bristol. £20 reg to 25 October; £25 at the door. Cheques to 18 High Leaze Road, Patchway, Bristol BS34 5AF. See www.bristolcon.org.

31 Oct - 3 Nov • **World Fantasy Convention**, Hilton Brighton Metropole. A *final block of £150 memberships* became available in late August: see www.wfc2013.org. No at-door or day registrations.

8-10 Aug 2014 • **Nine Worlds Geekfest** (multimedia), ?Radisson and Renaissance Hotels, Heathrow. 'Super-early rate' £70 reg; £35 child. Advance booking online only at nineworlds.co.uk.

5-6 Sep 2014 • **A Fantastic Legacy**: Diana Wynne Jones memorial conference, Newcastle University. More information and call-for-papers link (deadline 28 March 2014) at <http://conferences.ncl.ac.uk/dwj/>.

19-23 Aug 2015 • **Sasquan** (Worldcon), Spokane Convention Center, Spokane, WA, USA. GoH Brad Foster, David Gerrold, Vonda McIntyre, Tom Smith and Leslie Turek. See <http://sasquan.org/>.

Rumblings. *Dublin in 2019*: see more at <http://dublin2019.com/>.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See *Doctor Who*. Under the headline ‘What have football and Dr Who got in common? Crass hunger for a spectacle’, sports columnist Chris McGrath deplored the BBC1 show revealing that the next Doctor would be played by an actor: ‘It is bad enough that a new Dr Who must be introduced by the sort of puerile live show associated with reality TV evictions; worse, that such shrill self-aggrandisement should be complemented by a constant reel, across the screen, of inanities vouchsafed by viewers on Twitter.’ (*Independent*, 10 August) The *New York Times* helpfully explained: ‘For those readers who did not get beaten up in high school, “Doctor Who” is a beloved British sci-fi series about a character called the Doctor ...’ (7 August) [JB]

Awards. *Children’s Book Council of Australia Book of the Year*: Margo Lanagan, *Sea Hearts* aka *The Brides of Rollrock Island*. [L]

• *Elgin* (new sf poetry award, named for Suzette Haden Elgin): CHAPBOOK F.J. Bergman, *Out of the Black Forest*. BOOK Mary Turzillo, *Lovers & Killers*.

• *Encore* (for second novels): Ned Beaman, *The Teleportation Accident*.

• *First Fandom Hall of Fame* inductees include the great and good Earl Kemp; other names awaited.

• *Sidewise* (alternate history): SHORT Rick Wilber, ‘Something Real’ (*Asimov’s* 4/12); LONG C.J. Sansom, *Dominion*.

SFWA [announced on 14 August](#) that an unspecified member had been expelled from the organization for unspecified reasons. ‘We will continue to omit the expelled individual’s name and the details of his behavior on advice of counsel.’ SFWA-watchers assumed this must be Theodore ‘Vox Day’

Beale – see [A312](#) on calls for his expulsion – who was quick to wallow in infamy by confirming this on his website.

R.I.P. *David C Anderson*, UK assistant director on *Dr No* and two more early Bond films, died on 4 August aged 72. Further genre credits include *Flash Gordon* (1980) and the tv *Tales From The Crypt* (1996) and *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* (1997). [MPJ]

- *Michael Ansara* (1922-2013), Syrian-born US actor whose genre roles include Kang the villainous Klingon in *Star Trek* (also *ST:DS9* and *ST:Voyager*) and the voice of Mr Freeze in *Batman* animations, died on 31 July aged 91. [GD]

- *Karen Black* (1939-2013), US actress best known for *Easy Rider* and *Five Easy Pieces*, died on 8 August aged 74. Genre credits ran from *The Invaders* (tv 1967) to recent horror films *Soulkeeper* (2001), *House of 1000 Corpses* (2003) and *Nightmare Hostel* (2005). [SG]

- *Pamela Boal* (1935-2013), UK fan, con-goer, writer (attending early UK Milford workshops) and poet, whose letters appeared in many fanzines over the decades, died on 18 August; she was 78. [MR] David Boal writes: ‘As my mother’s illness became worse she was saddened by the number of people she had not contacted. I reassured her that you would all understand and on her behalf I apologise if this has come as a shock.’

- *John Boyd* (Boyd Bradfield Upchurch, 1919-2013), US author whose well-regarded sf debut was *The Last Starship from Earth* (1968) and who published a dozen more novels to 1978, died on 8 June. He was 93.

- Late notice: *Sol Dember* (1922-2011), US scientific illustrator whose sf work appeared in *Galaxy*, *If* and *Worlds of Tomorrow* from the late 1950s through the 1960s, died on 23 July 2011 aged 89. [JF via AIP]

- *David Fairbrother-Roe* RA, UK artist whose genre work included four striking dragon covers for British editions of Anne McCaffrey’s Pern series, died on 21 July. He also painted covers for books by John Barth and C.J. Cherryh.

- *Seamus Heaney* (1939-2013), Irish poet and 1995 Nobel Prize winner whose many achievements included a fine new translation of *Beowulf*, died on 30 August aged 74.

- *Elmore Leonard* (1925-2013), US author of Westerns and bestselling crime novels who was honoured as Mystery Writers of America Grand Master in 1992, died on 20 August aged 87. Rare ventures into the fantastic included *Touch* (1987) and *A Coyote’s in the House* (2004). [L]

- *Dan McCarthy* (1934-2013), New Zealand fan, writer, artist, con-runner and APA stalwart, died on 7 August a few days after a major stroke; he was 78. James Dignan describes him as ‘the elder statesman of New Zealand science fiction fandom.’
- *Stephenie McMillan* (1942-2013), Oscar-winning UK set decorator who worked on all eight Harry Potter films – also *Santa Claus: The Movie* (1985), *The Secret Garden* (1993) and *The Avengers* (1998) – died on 19 August aged 71. [MMW]
- *Douglas R. Mason* (1918-2013), UK sf author active from 1964 to 1981 both under his own name and as John Rankine, died on 8 August; he was 94. [AS] As Rankine (his middle name) he was best known for the Dag Fletcher space operas – including his debut story in John Carnell’s *New Writings in SF 1* (1964), and *Interstellar Two-Five* (1966) – and for several *Space: 1999* spinoffs.
- *Slawomir Mrozek* (1930-2013), Polish absurdist playwright and author whose short satires and fantasies were translated as *The Elephant* (1962) and *The Ugupu Bird* (1968), died on 15 August; he was 83. [JC]
- *Anne C. Petty* (1945-2013), US Tolkien scholar and novelist whose books include *One Ring to Bind Them All: Tolkien’s Mythology* (1979) and the Faustian fantasy *The Cornerstone* (2013), died on 21 July. [SFS/PDF]
- *Ted Post* (1918-2013), US director whose genre credits include four *Twilight Zone* segments (1960-1964), *Beneath the Planet of the Apes* (1970) and *Ark II* (1976-1979), died on 29 August aged 95. [MPJ]
- *J.C. Suares* (1942-2013), Egyptian-born US illustrator and graphic designer whose works included *Rocketship: An Incredible Voyage Through Science Fiction and Science Fact* (1977) with Robert Malone, died on 30 July aged 71. [AIP]
- *Gilbert Taylor* (1914-2013), UK cinematographer who worked on *Dr Strangelove* (1964), *The Avengers* (tv 1966-1969), *The Omen* (1976), *Star Wars* (1977) and *Flash Gordon* (1980), died on 23 August. He was 99. [AW]

The Weakest Link. Testing supernatural awareness. *John Moody*: ‘What plant is said to deter vampires?’ *Contestant (after a long pause)*: ‘Well, I was gonna say garlic but that’s not a plant, is it?’ *John Moody*: ‘You’ve just won ten pounds!’ (*Cash Cab* on Quest TV) [PE]

Forbes Report. 2012-2013 guesses at top-earning authors’ income begin with E.L. James’s fifty shades of \$95 million. The rest: James Patterson

\$91m, Suzanne Collins \$55m, Bill O'Reilly \$28m, Danielle Steel \$26m, Jeff Kinney \$24m, Janet Evanovich \$24m, Nora Roberts \$23m, Dan Brown \$22m, Stephen King \$20m, Dean Koontz \$20m, John Grisham \$18m, David Baldacci \$15m, Rick Riordan \$14m, J.K. Rowling \$13m, George R.R. Martin \$12m. [AIP] For Terry Pratchett's sceptical views about this kind of list, see *Ansible* 75 (October 1993).

Award Shortlists. *David Gemmell* (heroic fantasy): NOVEL Joe Abercrombie, *The Red Country*; Jay Kristoff, *Stormdancer*; Mark Lawrence, *King of Thorns*; Helen Lowe, *The Gathering of the Lost*; Brent Weeks, *The Blinding Knife*. FIRST NOVEL Saladin Ahmed, *Throne of the Crescent Moon*; Miles Cameron, *The Red Knight*; John Gwynne, *Malice*; Aidan Harte, *Irenicon*; Jay Kristoff, *Stormdancer*. COVER ART Didier Graffet and Dave Senior for *The Red Country* above; Dominic Harman for *Legion of Shadow* by Michael J. Ward; Clint Langley for *Besieged* by Rowenna Cory Daniells; Silas Manhood for *The Blinding Knife* above; Colin Thomas, for *Stormdancer* above; Stephen Youll for *The Black Mausoleum* by Stephen Deas. Presentation at WFC.

• *World Fantasy Award*, novels: N.K. Jemisin, *The Killing Moon*; Graham Joyce, *Some Kind of Fairy Tale*; Caitlín R. Kiernan, *The Drowning Girl*; Anna Tambour, *Crandolin*; G. Willow Wilson, *Alif the Unseen*. Presentation at WFC. Further categories online at www.worldfantasy.org/awards/.

As Others See Us II. A *Financial Times* piece on Amazon's Jeff Bezos offers two trivia nuggets, one to do with packets of vitamins in his socks. 'The only other personal detail about the opaque Mr Bezos is that he likes *Star Trek* – which isn't particularly interesting. A geek who doesn't like *Star Trek* – now, that would be a story.' (12 August) [MMW]

Outraged Letters. *Claire M Jordan*: 'Did you see the story about the 1990s-vintage replacement gargoyles on Paisley Cathedral, which parishioners have only just noticed include the alien from *Alien* and Puff the Magic Dragon?'

• *Dennis McCunney* on the new, Ed Kramer-free Dragon Con, Inc.: 'Alas, not quite a done deal. The other founders all moved their interests in the con to the new corporate vehicle. They've made Kramer an *offer* for his shares in the former entity, but he has not yet *accepted* it. (I believe he's quibbling about the price.) / Kramer had already sold some of his Dragon Con holdings to pay legal bills, reducing his stake from 50% to 33%. It's quite likely he'll have to dispose of the rest to pay his ongoing legal expenses.'

- *Norm Sherman* tweets from the Hugos: ‘George Martin says we’re living in the Golden Age of Science Fiction & Fantasy. So I guess that means he’s going to kill it.’

We Are Everywhere. Iain Banks was remembered at the Edinburgh International Book Festival with [Guardian-sponsored deckchairs](#) quoting *Consider Phlebas* in huge print: ‘Empathize with stupidity and you’re halfway to thinking like an idiot.’ [JG] A *Guardian* piece on games in his novels, titled ‘Iain Banks: A Player of Games’ ([22 August](#)), conspicuously fails to discuss the game-saturated *The Player of Games* or indeed anything at all by Iain M. Banks; could this be another case of Atwood’s Syndrome, morbid fear of spaceships on the cover?

Magazine Scene. *Omni Reboot* is, er, an online reboot of *Omni*. At [omnireboot.com](#) it’s also described as ‘a rag for the gonzo seeker.’

As Others See Some of Us. Film review of *The Mortal Instruments: City of Bones*: ‘Cassandra Clare, author of the bestselling books on which this movie is based, began as a writer of fan fiction inspired by the Harry Potter books, and it shows. / The characterisation and plot are painfully unimaginative.’ (Chris Tookey, *Daily Mail*, 23 August) Whether the scorn is for HP or fan fiction in general is unclear. [CMJ]

The Dead Past. *50 Years Ago* at the London First-Thursday pub meeting: ‘ARTHUR C. CLARKE was in the Globe 5th September, en route to the States where he will receive on 16th October the 1963 Stuart Ballantine Medal of the Franklin Institute of Philadelphia for “the early concept of the Communication satellite.” Arthur had with him lumps of coral coated bullion salvaged from the coasts of Ceylon and a bag of silver coins from the same source.’ ([Skyrack 58](#), October 1963)

Thog’s Masterclass. *Chef’s Special*. ‘Gaiety collapsed behind them like a startled soufflé.’ (Dave Duncan, *The Hunter’s Haunt*, 1995) [PM]

- *Neat Tricks Dept.* ‘He put Chris up against the wall more than once, raised his closed fist, and walked away before punching him.’ ‘Ben threw his ass out on Milton, got his own rebound, and passed it to Ali.’ (George Pelecanos. *The Way Home*, 2009) [PB]

- *Dept of Synchronized Bobbing.* ‘Guidry nodded, his adam’s apple bobbing along with his head.’ (Erica Spindler, *Justice for Sara*, 2013) [PB]

- *Averted Eyeballs in the Sky.* ‘Other visitors were clearly eavesdropping,

since they flicked averted eyes at our chairs with the swift, voracious motion of a lizard's tongue.' (Lionel Shriver, *We Need to Talk About Kevin*, 2003) [RC]

- *Literally Literal Dept.* 'The thought of Niamh made his heart feel heavy in his chest, literally, not metaphorically.' (Kate Atkinson, *Case Histories*, 2005) [PB]

- *True Romance.* 'The arrangement of her drawers was far too sophisticated for me.' 'Fermin gazed at that miracle of nature and let himself be embraced by a heart almost as old as his own.' (both Carlos Ruiz Zafon trans Lucia Graves, *The Prisoner of Heaven*, 2011) [PB]

- *Wild Hair Dept.* 'The tip of his long ponytail peeked out from beneath his cloak like a second penis.' (John Lawson, *The Loathly Lady*, 2013; this made Thog's eyes bulge like third and fourth testicles) [RF]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 13 September 2013: Alice Lawson talks about the [2014 London Worldcon](#) to the Brum Group, with support from James Bacon. Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre, 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk or rog.peyton at btinternet com. Future meetings: 11 October, Janet Edwards; 6 December, Christmas Social.

- 19 September 2013: Chris Lambert book launch, 7pm: Reading Central Library, Reading, Berkshire.

Editorial. Yes, I'm still selling my novel *The Leaky Establishment* as an ebook from Ansible Editions (link below). Thanks again to everyone who has already bought this. Likewise to all buyers of the three Algis Budrys *F&SF* column collections in trade paperback (same link). We'll be able to send Edna Budrys, his widow, some actual royalties at the end of the current accounting period. I'm not good at, or comfortable with, the relentless self-promotion now expected from authors and small presses; if you enjoyed the Budrys books (or *Leaky*) and can see your way to spreading the word of their availability via your fanzine, blog, review column or whatever, it will be appreciated.

<http://ae.ansible.co.uk/>

Random Fandom. *John Nielsen Hall's* domain radiofandom.co.uk ‘... was one of those ideas that never went anywhere. I still have the website if anyone wants it. I will transfer it for free and am even now renewing the domain up to March 2015, but after that if no one else has taken it on, I’m going to let it die.’ (johnsila32 at gmail com)

Hayao Miyazaki to Retire. See link below.

http://www.contactmusic.com/article/hayao-miyazaki-to-retire_3844136

R.I.P. II. The sad news that Frederik Pohl (1919-2013) had died on 2 September reached me after this *Ansible* had been printed, mailed and webbed. More next issue. Meanwhile, here’s [the Guardian obituary by Chris Priest](#).

Thog’s Second Helping. *Crawling Terror Dept.* ““Yes,” he said slowly – something terrified had crawled under his tired eyelids – “yes.”” (Ellery Queen as Barnaby Ross, *The Tragedy of X*, 1932) [PB]

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Ansible 315, October 2013

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Web news.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Jim Barker**. Available for SAE or detailed pedigree listing from *Twurp's Peerage*.

The Eye in the Pyramid

Margaret Atwood clarifies matters once and for all. 'I don't give a crap about how my books are described as long as it's accurate. When people say sci-fi they mean spaceships and other planets and my books aren't about that. I don't want people to feel cheated. I'm talking about things that could happen, like the [*lab-meat*] burgers, and then they do, just as Jules Verne was writing about things he thought could happen, like submarines, and they did.' (*Scotsman*, 31 August) [KM]

Richard Dawkins missed out on a Hugo nomination, according to the retired Pope Benedict XVI – who in a recently published letter declares: 'The Selfish Gene by Richard Dawkins is a classic example of science fiction.' (*Independent*, 25 September) [RC]

Vin Diesel, promoting his new film role, may be in need of a quick reality check. *Time*: 'You fight some scary aliens in *Riddick*. Are there any creatures that you're scared of in real life?' *Diesel*: 'Huh. Uh ... dinosaurs?' *Time*: 'I meant creatures that actually exist now.' *Diesel*: 'I would say King Kong, but I'm not really scared of King Kong. That would be inaccurate.' (*Time* interview, 6 September) [MPJ]

China Miéville issued a September e-circular announcing that as a result of unspecified 'circumstances' he has had to cancel all coming engagements including his World Fantasy Convention MC role. [GC]

Jennifer Ridyard explicates: 'I guess sometimes they just call the science fiction that girls love "fantasy", because girls tend to shy away from the tacky sci-fi label.' (*Guardian*, 24 September) [PS]

Spider Robinson [announced on 14 September](#) that he's recovering well from a heart attack and emergency operation on 31 August. [L]

Karen Russell, US author of supernatural and fantastic fiction, has received one of the 2013 MacArthur Foundation 'genius grants' of \$125,000 a year for the next five years, no strings attached. [L]

Conuzor

2 Oct • **From Sindbad to Sci-Fi: Reimagining Arab SF**, Science Museum, London. 7-9pm. Free booking needed: see sindbadscifi.com.

11-13 Oct • **Sci-Fi-London Oktoberfest** (film), Stratford Picturehouse, London. Films individually priced. See www.sci-fi-london.com.

12 Oct • **Starship London** (science/sf, linked to the above), The Crystal, London. From 11am. Free, but [register here](#).

18-20 Oct • **Lakes International Comic Art Festival**, Kendal, Cumbria. Many guests. Free exhibitions; day events £7; evening (7pm and after) £9; Comics Clock Tower venue £3.50/day; weekend and day passes offer savings. See www.comicartfestival.com.

21 Oct • **Starship Century** symposium, Royal Astronomical Society, Piccadilly, London. 10am-5pm. With Martin Rees, Stephen Baxter, Paul MacAuley, James and Gregory Benford, other sf/science speakers. Free. More at www.starshipcentury.com/blog/event-102113/.

25-27 Oct • **Celluloid Screams** horror film festival, Sheffield. £60 (£50 concessions). Bookings 0114 275 7727 or celluloidscreams.co.uk.

26 Oct • **Birmingham Beer and Blake's 7**, Dragon Inn, Hurst St, Birmingham, B5 4TD. 12:30pm-7pm. All welcome.

26 Oct • **BristolCon**, Ramada Hotel, Bristol. £20 reg to 25 October; £25 at the door. Cheques to 18 High Leaze Road, Patchway, Bristol BS34 5AF. See www.bristolcon.org.

30 Oct • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. With Mary Robinette Kowal. Free.

31 Oct - 3 Nov • **World Fantasy Convention**, Hilton Brighton Metropole.

Registration closes 1 October: 'we won't have time to process memberships after that date, plus we have to get the badges printed.' No at-the-door or day memberships; no transfer of already purchased memberships after 1 October. See www.wfc2013.org.

1-4 Nov • **Irish Discworld Convention**, Radisson Blu Limerick, Ennis Rd, Limerick, Ireland. €50 reg; €40 concessions, €20 teen (13-18), €15 junior (8-12), under-8s free. Register at www.idwcon.org.

1-2 Nov • **Horror in the East** ('horror-lit'), Aspire Centre, Denes High School, Lowestoft, NR32 4AH. See www.horrorintheeast.com.

7 Nov • **Weird Reading**, Horse Hospital, Colonnade, Bloomsbury, London, WC1N 1JD. 6:40pm for 7-11pm. £10 reg. See next item.

8 Nov • **The Weird** (conference on weird fiction), Senate House, Malet Street, London, WC1E 7HU. From 9:30am. £30 reg. Linked to the above. Details at www.ies.sas.ac.uk/events/ies-conferences/TheWeird.

8-10 Nov • **Novacon 43**, Park Inn, Mansfield Road, Nottingham. GoH Jo Walton. £45 reg. Contact 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ.

15-17 Nov • **Armadacon 25**, Future Inn, Plymouth. GoH TBA. £30 (£25 concessions) to 18 Wadham Rd, Liskeard, Cornwall, PL14 3BD.

7-9 Feb 2014 • **2emi6reve** (filk), Ramada Grantham Hotel. £37 reg, £24 unwaged, *rising to £42/£29 on 1 November*; £45/£30 at door. Under-18s £1/year; under-5s free. Cheques: UK Filk Convention, c/o 159 Winns Avenue, Walthamstow, London, E17 5HB.

14-18 Aug 2014 • **Loncon 3** (72nd Worldcon), London Docklands. *Now £115 reg and £260 family, to 28 February 2014*. Unchanged rates: £65 YA; £30 child; £2 infant; £25 supp. See www.loncon3.org.

Rumblings. *Beach of the Dead 2013*: the annual Brighton zombie parade has been cancelled owing to 'health and safety fears.' That's what this troubled world needs – safer and healthier zombies.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. A self-consciously sophisticated and literary formulation

of the ‘if it’s good it’s not genre’ tradition: ‘We do not publish genre fiction – mystery, crime, science fiction, fantasy, and the like – but are certainly not opposed to considering work that self-consciously employs the tropes of formulaic writing for more sophisticated literary ends.’ (*Gettysburg Review* submission guidelines) [TE]

Crimewatch. A collection of sf books by the late Patrick Moore, including two complete sets of his works, has been stolen from the Tavistock area where it was housed in three fire safes. All copies signed. If you see any of this material offered for sale, call Crimestoppers (0800 555 111) or email PC 2650 Tim Brooks of the Plymouth police: Tim dot Brooks2 at devonandcornwall dot pnn dot police dot uk. [BA]

The Weakest Link. *Dan O’Connell*: ‘How many dwarfs were there in the Snow White story?’ *Caller*: ‘Ten.’ (XFM)

• *Nick Knowles*: ‘What are the first two books in the Old Testament?’
Contestant: ‘Genesis ... and Exorcist.’ (BBC1 *National Lottery: Break the Safe*) [PE]

R.I.P. *Patricia Anthony* (1947-2013), US author whose 1987 story debut was followed by seven idiosyncratic novels from the sf *Cold Allies* (1998) to the World War I slipstream fantasy *Flanders* (1998), was reported on 2 August as having died; she was 66. [JDB]

• *Martha Bartter* (1932-2013), US critic, editor and author of some short sf whose major work was *The Way to Ground Zero: The Atomic Bomb in American Science Fiction* (1988), died on 18 June aged 80.

• *Bob Booth*, US writer, editor and publisher who founded the Necon workshop, Necon E-Books and (with others) the World Fantasy Convention, died on 7 September. [AIP]

• *Gary Brandner* (1933-2013), US horror/thriller author best known for his werewolf novel *The Howling* (1977), its two sequels and the film franchise it spawned, died on 23 September; he was 80. [GW]

• *A(nn) C. Crispin* (1950-2013), US author made Grandmaster by the International Association of Media Tie-In Writers for her *Star Trek*, *Star Wars*, *V* etc franchise novels, died on 6 September aged 63. Her solo work includes the sf *StarBridge* sequence; she was co-founder and chair of the essential scam-alert service [Writer Beware](#). [SHS]

• *Bobbie DuFault* (1958-2013), US organizer of 150+ conventions and co-chair of the 2015 Spokane Worldcon (Sasquan), died unexpectedly on 14

September; she was 55. [BH/L]

- *Haji* (Barbarella Cotton, 1946-2013), Canadian-US actress whose early career in Russ Meyer films included the sorceress role in *Good Morning ... and Goodbye!* (1967), died on 9 August aged 67. She was in the sf *Wham! Bam! Thank You, Spaceman!* (1975). [MPJ]
- *Delphyne Joan Hanke-Woods* (1945-2013), US artist whose professional cover and interior illustrations appeared 1977-1984 and who contributed art to many fanzines, died in mid-September aged 67. [RN] She won FAAn awards for artwork in 1979 and 1980, and – in her seventh successive year of nomination – the 1986 fan artist Hugo.
- *David Jacobs* (1926-2013), popular UK radio/tv broadcaster for over 65 years, died on 2 September aged 87. He played 22 parts in Charles Chilton's 1950s sf radio drama *Journey into Space*. [GD/CM]
- *Frederik Pohl* (1919-2013), US author, editor, agent and fan whose astonishingly long career ran from 1937 to a blog post on the day of his death, died on 2 September. He was 93. Highlights include editing *If* (winning three 1960s Hugos), such classic satires as *The Space Merchants* (1953) with Cyril Kornbluth, many memorable shorts including 'Day Million' and 'The Gold at the Starbow's End', a new maturity as novelist with *Man Plus* (1976) and the multi-award-winning *Gateway* (1977), and several life-achievement honours including 1993 SFWA Grand Master status. His *SF Encyclopedia* bibliography lists 150 books. One of the long-time greats.
- *Nick Robinson*, UK editor and publisher who founded Robinson Publishing in 1983 and chaired Constable & Robinson (merged 1999) from 2009, died on 30 August aged 58. He published a great many genre anthologies including the 'Mammoth Book Of' titles edited by Mike Ashley, Stephen Jones and others, and the UK editions of Gardner Dozois's *Year's Best SF*.
- *Herbert Thiery* (1955-2013), popular German fan who organized the 1996 Saar-Con in Saarbrücken Dudweiler, died on 21 September aged 58. [MAH]
- *Bill Wallis* (1937-2013), UK actor who played Mr Prosser and Prostetnic Vogon Jeltz in the original radio *Hitchhiker* and appeared in *Brazil* (1985), died on 6 September aged 76. TV credits include *The Avengers* (1966-1967), *The Box of Delights* (1984) and *The Silver Chair* (1990). [AW]
- *Jon Manchip White* (1924-2013), UK author and screenwriter whose genre works included borderline-fantasy novels, supernatural shorts, radio versions of *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (1949) and *The War of the Worlds*

(1950), and tv scripts for *The Avengers* and *Undermind*, died on 31 July aged 89. [SH]

Genre Purity Masterclass. Outing Lois McMaster Bujold as a writer of romance rather than True SF: ‘Bujold tips her hand in the eloquence of her language (normally a good thing) and the attention to detail that only women would find attractive: balls, courts, military dress, palace intrigues, gossiping, and whispering in the corridors. All of this is right out of Alexander Dumas.’ (Paul Cook, [‘When Science Fiction is Not Science Fiction’](#), *Amazing*, 4 September) [NL/JDN]

Court Circular. Gary Friedrich, creator of the hotheaded comics character Ghost Rider, came to a settlement with Marvel Comics about the film/spinoff rights after legal action beginning in 2007. Details of this settlement remain excitingly obscure. ([BBC](#), 10 September) [MPJ]

As Others See Us II. A reminder that we are spurned all the way to the bank: ‘What do the books of Terry Pratchett, the film *Iron Man 3* and the video game *Grand Theft Auto V* have in common? The answer is that they are all regarded as “geek” pursuits, and therefore are not part of the cultural mainstream. That is bizarre. Mr Pratchett has sold more than 70m copies of his Discworld series of novels. *Iron Man 3*, based on a character from Marvel Comics, has the best box-office receipts of any movie this year. And *Grand Theft Auto V*, released yesterday by Rockstar of Edinburgh, is expected to take in more than \$1bn in sales.’ (Helen Lewis, *Financial Times*, 18 September) [MMW]

Outraged Letters. *John Dallman* on Chris Tookey’s seeming disdain for fan fiction (see [A314](#)): ‘Since Tookey’s media career started by writing and producing an opera based on the works of a long-dead US fantasy author (James Branch Cabell), he might be thought to be in danger of calling the kettle black when it come to fan-fiction.’

- *Martyn P. Jackson* feels jubilee mania is getting out of hand, with the arrival of a Steiff/Danbury Mint flyer for the BBC-authorized ‘Doctor Who 50th Anniversary Bear’ in a limited edition of 5000. ‘The teddy bear is dressed as Matt Smith’s Doctor, complete with bowtie and sonic screwdriver. The pad of the bear’s right foot is embroidered with a Tardis bearing the legend “50 Years”, along with the BBC logo.’ Only £255!

Magazine Scene. Andy Cox speaks: ‘If anybody would like to submit a story

to *Interzone*, but has previously been put off by postage charges, why not email it instead?’ *Interzone* at ttapress dot com.

The Dead Past. *80 Years Ago*, without comment: ‘... he had heard of the impending execution of Scalzi, a member of that ill-begotten tribe who live and die by violence and whose passing is a boon to the rest of mankind.’ (‘Barnaby Ross’, *The Tragedy of Z*, 1933)

• *50 Years Ago*, British fandom belatedly discovered *Mars Attacks*: ‘SF has hit the bubble gum card world. Wonderful stuff, depicting insects eating people, men burning alive, burning cars falling off the Golden Gate Bridge, men charred by Martians, men crushed to death, giant flies, a tidal wave, removing victims etc etc. All good clean fun.’ (Ron Bennett, [Skyrack 58](#), October 1963) How different, how very different, from the home life of our own dear Dr Fredric Wertham. Speaking of whom, *40 Years Ago*: ‘If they’re keeping to their publication schedule, Southern Illinois Univ. Press should be putting out Dr. Fredric Wertham’s 208 page *The World of Fanzines: A Special Form of Communication* this November. It’ll cost \$10, but should prove interesting, to say the least. Part of the pre-publicity stuff (which included a poster!) talks of Dr. Wertham analyzing the influence of fanzines “as a manifestation of youth subculture”.’ (Peter Roberts, [Checkpoint 42](#), October 1973) Even then, some of us were a visibly ageing and greying youth subculture.

C.o.A. Noel Collyer & Diane Young, 22 Kingsway, Hayling Island, Hampshire, PO11 0LZ. *Shelby Vick*, [planetarystories at gmail dot com](mailto:planetarystories@gmail.com).

Fanfundery. Steven H Silver on accepting Joss Whedon’s Hugo for *The Avengers*: ‘I raised \$176 at LoneStarCon 3 for the Fan Funds by letting people hold the Hugo as I wandered around the party floors. I started this fundraiser in 2009 in Montreal when Aliette de Bodard and Christopher Kastensmidt asked if they could hold it and I jokingly asked for \$5. After they reached for their wallets, I kept it up and raised over \$200 that year to be divided between TAFF, DUFF and CUFF. Figured I’d continue this year, donating \$88 each to TAFF and DUFF.’

UK TV Choice Awards. The Best Drama Series and Outstanding Contribution categories were both won by *Doctor Who*. [MPJ]

Random Fandom. Martin Hoare recalls a brush with fame: ‘When I collected your Hugo in 1989 it was handed to me by Fred Pohl. He described

it as “a heavy sucker”.’

- *Nova Awards* for fanzine work: voting is open to all British Isles residents and Novacon members. The ballot is at

www.novacon.org.uk/nova_award_ballot.php. [SG]

- *Elliot Shorter*, long-time US fan and 1970 TAFF delegate, has been diagnosed with untreatable cancer. ~~Letters may be sent to the hospice: Harris Health Center, 833 Broadway, East Providence, RI 02914, USA.~~ [F770]
[Alas, he died on 1 October.]

Thog’s Masterclass. *Wilde Inaccuracy Dept.* ‘As Sherlock Holmes had said to Watson, to lose one wife was tragic, two was careless, and three – well, Holmes hadn’t had a word for that, as Whitney recalled.’ (Laura Lippman, *The Girl in the Green Raincoat*, 2008) [PB]

- *Dept of Ineluctable Insight.* ‘When she fixed her blue eyes on him he felt that he was seen.’ (Camilla Läckberg trans Steven T. Murray, *The Ice Princess*, 2010) [PB]

- *True Romance.* ‘She circled her finger round her nipples until they hardened and then purred, “Forgive me ...”’ (*Ibid*) ‘Cormac was silent for a time and she felt the emotions soften. His fingers slid across her hand, squeezing it gently. She smiled. “Are you feeling yourself again?”’ (David Gemmell, *Last Sword of Power*, 1988) [BA]

- *Mnemonic Dept.* ‘He tried to remember how many rungs there were, but with his brain bearing this gravest of news and him wondering whether this ladder would still hold his weight, it was impossible to remember.’ (R.S. Johnson, *The Genesis Project: The Children of CS-13*, 2011) [AR]

- *Dept of Unobtrusive Entrances.* ‘He knocked several times at the door in a sort of rhythmic fashion, pushed it open and crawled through.’ (*Ibid*)

- *Eyeballs in the Sky.* ““The first move has been made,” he said, not tearing his eye from the body.’ (*Ibid*)

- *Dept of Bilocation.* ‘A single walnut door stood either end of the long, grand hallway.’ (*Ibid*)

- *Secrets of Elegant Sentence Construction.* ‘But Zuberi did not see this, nor did anyone else, and as he slid his pistol back into its holster, the main door to the room flew open and about a dozen men and women, who had been sleeping only moments earlier, poured in, their weapons held and ready to fight if need be, a few more arrived soon after.’ (*Ibid*)

- *Multiple Messianic Mot Juste Dept.* ‘The look of Polish had begun finally to fit his eye-sockets without estrangement ...’ ““He’s on his way,” he heard

Heidi call from the back room. A moan: or not exactly a moan. Rather, the sound of indecipherable syllables evaporating at the bottom of the sea.’ ‘Lars threw off the quilt and stared as if his own eyeballs were two breathing bellows inflated by the bottommost power of his pumping lungs. His head was filled with the battering, plodding, butting force of that staring, that bulging.’ ‘Lars, looking with all his strength, felt his own ordinary [eye] pupil consumed by a conflagration in the socket. As if copulating with an angel whose wings were on fire.’ ‘Dr. Eklund, meanwhile, was nodding his big face up and down, cheering her on like a human baton.’ ‘One idea remained like an exclamation mark in the sweet-tasting pink wax of their heads: the stewpot, the stewpot!’ (all from Cynthia Ozick, *The Messiah of Stockholm*, 1987) [PB]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 11 October 2013: Ramsey Campbell reads and talks at Lingham's Booksellers, Heswall. 6:30pm. Tickets from the bookshop only: 0151 342 7290.
- 11 October 2013: Janet Edwards talks to the Brum Group. Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre, 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk or rog.peyton at btinternet com. Future meetings: 1 November still TBA; 6 December, Christmas Social; 10 January, AGM and book auction.
- 20 October 2013: Stephen Baxter, Gregory Benford and James Benford signing at Forbidden Planet London Megastore. 4:30-5:30pm.

Editorial. I usually aim to publish *Ansible* on the first of the month, but may delay the next issue until Monday 4 November to include the World Fantasy Awards.

- Yes, Ansible Editions continues to flog the Algis Budrys *F&SF* critical collections (trade paperback) and my own *The Leaky Establishment* (ebook with intro by Terry Pratchett). I didn't find time to add to the repertoire in September. One day ...
<http://ae.ansible.co.uk/>

Last Chance to See ...

• Until 7 October: **Space: Fact and Fiction** (exhibition), Peterborough Museum. Free ‘except on special event days’. With some *Doctor Who* content.

<http://www.vivacity-peterborough.com/event/space-fact-and-fiction-exhibition>

• Until 20 October • **Memory Palace**: exhibition or ‘walk-in story’ with a future dystopian London: heme, V&A, London. 10am-7:30pm. £7 with various concessions. Details/booking at:

<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/exhibitions/exhibition-sky-arts-ignition-memory-palace/about-the-exhibition/>

• Until 27 October: **Magical Books** – From the Middle Ages to Middle-Earth (exhibition), Bodleian Library, Oxford. 9am-5pm Mon-Fri; 9am-4:30pm Sat; 11am-5pm Sun. Free. With accompanying lectures.

<http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/bodley/whats-on/upcoming-events/2013/may/magical-books>

• Until 27 October: **Space Age Archaeology**: Eduardo Paolozzi and Science Fiction, Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh. Free. 10am-5pm.

<http://www.nationalgalleries.org/visit/modern-two/room-displays/space-age-archaeology-eduardo-paolozzi-and-science-fiction>

... And Coming Soon:

• 15 October - 19 January: **Alien Invasion** (exhibition), The Lightbox, Chobham Road, Woking, Surrey, GU21 4AA. 10:30am-5pm Tuesday-Friday, 11am-5pm Sunday. Free.

<http://www.thelightbox.org.uk/events1/october2013/15oct19janalieninvasion>

Thog’s Second Helping. *Dental Dept.* “‘Look here!’ shouted Conrad so suddenly that the Inspector’s eyes narrowed and his teeth stuck out in a fighting grin.’ *Disjointed Dept.* ‘Detective Pinkusohn was standing on the first floor juggling a dejected thumb as the Inspector went down.’ (both Ellery Queen as Barnaby Ross, *The Tragedy of Y*, 1932) [PB]

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Eye, Adam Roberts, John Scalzi, Steven H Silver, Phillip Spencer, Andrew Wells, Gary Wilkinson, Martin Morse Wooster, and our Hero Distributors: Dave Corby (Birmingham SF Group), SCIS/Prophecy, Alan Stewart (Australia). 1 October 2013.

Ansible 316, November 2013

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Web news.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or the final director's cut of *Parkroads*.

Amazing BBC Revelation. Wild rumours of 5,271,009 lost issues of *Ansible* discovered in a Nigerian outhouse were modified to the more realistic announcement that 315 had been unearthed in London Road, Reading. Elsewhere, they found [some episodes of Doctor Who](#) as well.

The Trail of Doom

David Birnbaum, US jeweller turned philosopher, has allegedly solved the mysteries of the universe in his self-published *Summa Metaphysica* (typical breathless aperçu: 'The cosmic trajectory is from the bottomless VOID to the limitless EXTRAORDINARY.'). According to a comment at the US *Chronicle of Higher Education* website, this 'reads like L Ron Hubbard had drunken sex one night with Ayn Rand and produced this bastard thought-child'. ([Guardian](#), 19 October) [PDF]

Sir Ben Kingsley argues that the *Ender's Game* film has qualities that mere sf fans won't appreciate: 'I think there's a much bigger audience than just your science fiction fans – we'll get them as well – but we'll also get people who want a philosophical journey, that journey of spirit through the film.' ([Getreading.co.uk](#), 23 October) [MPJ]

C.S. Lewis is in the news for the approaching 50th anniversary of his death on 22 November 1963; rather less is being said about Aldous Huxley, who died on the same day. There's to be a Lewis memorial in Poets' Corner at Westminster Abbey, dedicated on 22 November.

Robert Silverberg, in London en route to the World Fantasy Convention, had a heart attack on 29 October. Treatment went well, with a stent inserted

and discharge from hospital after only two days; but Bob and Karen Haber sadly had to skip the convention. [MJE/PCa] One Silverbergian comment from inside the system: ‘Lunch was lousy. I think I’m going to stop eating in hospitals and go back to restaurants.’

Kurt Vonnegut’s *Slaughterhouse-Five* was cleared by the *Sunday Times* literary tribunal of any horrid genre taint: ‘The cultish Vonnegut’s part memoir, part study of psychosis and escape is not the sci-fi it’s often dismissed as.’ (‘100 books to love’, 6 October) [LC]

Jacob Wallenstein ‘is the greatest science-fiction writer to never have lived’, declares a *Tablet* headline. The magazine had accepted an piece about this unknown Israeli’s forgotten 1955 sf epic *Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow* – revealed by research to be a hoax or Borgesian invention by article author Shay Azoulay. After an editorial preface explaining all this, it appeared as fiction. ([Tablet](#), 16 October) [MMW]

Condoc

Until 19 Jan 2014 • **Alien Invasion** (exhibition), The Lightbox, Chobham Road, Woking, Surrey, GU21 4AA. 10:30am-5pm Tuesday-Friday, 11am-5pm Sunday. Free. [See here.](#)

Until 26 Jan 2014 • **Picture This: Children’s Illustrated Classics** (fantasy art exhibition), British Library. Free. [See here.](#)

7 Nov • **Weird Reading**, Horse Hospital, Colonnade, Bloomsbury, London, WC1N 1JD. 6:40pm for 7-11pm. £10 reg. See next item.

8 Nov • **The Weird** (conference on weird fiction), Senate House, Malet Street, London, WC1E 7HU. From 9:30am. £30 reg. Linked to the above. Details at www.ies.sas.ac.uk/events/ies-conferences/TheWeird.

8-10 Nov • **Novacon 43**, Park Inn, Mansfield Road, Nottingham. GoH Jo Walton. £45 reg. Contact 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ.

15 Nov • **50 Years of Doctor Who**, Junction 3 Library, Bristol, BS5 0YL. 7pm-8:15pm. Also creative writing workshop for youngsters aged 11-18, 4pm-5:30pm. Free booking and enquiries: 0117 9223001.

15-17 Nov • **Armadacon 25**, Future Inn, Plymouth. £30 (£25 concessions) to

18 Wadham Rd, Liskeard, Cornwall, PL14 3BD.

23-24 Nov • **Comic Con** (comics), Clarence Dock, Leeds, LS10 1LT. Part of Thought Bubble, the Leeds Sequential Art Festival, running 17-24 November. £22 reg; £14/day. More at thoughtbubblefestival.com.

23 Nov - 27 Apr 2014 • **Robot!** (exhibition), Palace Green Library, Durham. See www.dur.ac.uk/palace.green/whatson/exhibitions/future/.

27 Nov • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. Celebration of *Doctor Who*. Free.

29 Nov • **New Age of Discovery** (steampunk/performance), Snibston Discovery Museum, Coalville, Leicestershire. 7pm-9:30pm. £25 reg inc meal, drink. See www.snibston.com; box office 01530 278444.

7-9 Feb 2014 • **2emi6reve** (filk), Ramada Grantham Hotel, Grantham. *Now £42 reg, £29 unwaged; £45 and £30 at door. Under-18s £1/year; under-5s free. Cheques: UK Filk Convention, c/o 159 Winns Avenue, Walthamstow, London, E17 5HB.*

12-13 Apr 2014 • **QED** (science/skeptics), Palace Hotel, Oxford St, Manchester, M60 7HA. £99 reg; £60 concessions. See www.qedcon.org.

24-27 Apr 2014 • **Dead by Dawn** (horror film festival), Filmhouse, Edinburgh. Box office 0131 228 2688; see www.deadbydawn.co.uk.

5-7 Sep 2014 • **FantasyCon 2014**, Royal York Hotel, York. GoH Kate Elliott, Toby Whithouse, Larry Rostant. £40 reg, £70 joint (2 adults), under-16s £20; BFS members £30, £55, £12.50; under-5s free. Join online at www.fantasycon2014.org. Rates rise 1 January.

20 Sep 2014 • **Andromeda Two**, Digbeth, Birmingham. GoH Sam Stone, David G. Hardy. 9am-10pm. £20 reg or £75 for a group of five, *rising to £25 and £100 on 1 January 2014*. More details and online registration at terror-tree.co.uk/andromeda-tw.

18 Oct 2014 • **BristolCon**, Ramada Hotel, Bristol. GoH Jon Courtenay Grimwood, Emma Newman. £20 reg, probably rising in Spring 2014. Cheques to 18 High Leaze Road, Patchway, Bristol BS34 5AF.

31 Oct - 2 Nov 2014 • **Festival of Fantastic Films**, ?Manchester Conference Centre, Sackville St. £25 reg (*short-term offer*). Contact 95 Meadowgate Rd,

Salford, Manchester, M6 8EN. See fantastic-films.com.

Rumblings. *Helsinki in 2017!* Recovering with a single bound from the narrow defeat of their 2015 Worldcon bid this year, the Finns are trying again for 2017: see helsinkiin2017.org. Existing bids are Japan and Montréal. • *London Paperback & Pulp Bookfair:* The October 2013 event was cancelled at short notice on 8 October, and no more of these fairs are planned. See paperbackandpulp.blogspot.co.uk.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Some of Us. ‘Take Arkham Gift Shoppe, for instance, a small comic book store on the northern fringe of Pittsburgh. When regulars arrive to pick up their monthly orders, some slip in with all the stealth of Catwoman eluding Batman. These guys carefully hide their comic-buying habit, or the extent of it, from their girlfriends, their wives (yes, they have those) because these women “aren’t cool with them spending their money on something so juvenile,” shop owner Jeff Bigley says.’ (Melissa Keyworth, Associated Press, 6 October) [MMW]

Awards at WFC. *British Fantasy.* FANTASY NOVEL Graham Joyce, *Some Kind of Fairy Tale*. HORROR NOVEL Adam Nevill, *Last Days*. NOVELLA John Llewellyn Probert, *The Nine Deaths of Dr Valentine*. SHORT Ray Cluley, ‘Shark! Shark!’ (*Black Static* 29). COLLECTION Robert Shearman, *Remember Why You Fear Me*. ANTHOLOGY Jonathan Oliver, ed., *Magic*. SMALL PRESS ChiZine Publications. NONFICTION Pornokitsch. MAGAZINE *Interzone*. ARTIST Sean Phillips. COMIC/GRAPHIC NOVEL Brian K. Vaughan & Fiona Staples, *Saga*. SCREENPLAY *The Cabin in the Woods*. NEWCOMER Helen Marshall for *Hair Side, Flesh Side*. SPECIAL Iain Banks.

• *Gemmell* (heroic fantasy): NOVEL Brent Weeks, *The Blinding Knife*. DEBUT NOVEL John Gwynne, *Malice*. COVER ART Didier Graffet & Dave Senior for Joe Abercrombie’s *Red Country*.

• *World Fantasy:* NOVEL G. Willow Wilson, *Alif the Unseen*. NOVELLA K.J. Parker, ‘Let Maps to Others’ (*Subterranean*). SHORT Gregory Norman Bossert, ‘The Telling’ (*Beneath Ceaseless Skies*). ANTHOLOGY Danel Olson, ed., *Postscripts* #28/#29. COLLECTION Joel Lane, *Where Furnaces Burn*. ARTIST Vincent Chong. SPECIAL PROFESSIONAL Lucia Graves, translation of

The Prisoner of Heaven by Carlos Ruiz Zafón. SPECIAL NON-PROFESSIONAL S.T. Joshi, *Unutterable Horror*.

The Analogizer™. ‘If Lord Justice Leveson is the Voldemort of press freedom, then I guess that makes the editor of the *Daily Mail*, Paul Dacre, Harry Potter.’ (Fearlessly outspoken *Daily Mail* columnist Sarah Vine on BBC Radio 4’s *What the Papers Say*) [PE]

R.I.P. *Nick Cardy* (1920-2013), US artist whose 1938 to mid-1970s comics career included work on DC’s *Aquaman* and *Teen Titans*, died on 3 November aged 93. [SFS]

- *Tom Clancy* (1947-2013), bestselling US author of spy thrillers and technothrillers, died on 1 October; he was 66. [GW] His ‘Jack Ryan’ sequence moves into near-future sf territory with nuclear terrorism in *The Sum of All Fears* (1991; filmed 2002), war with a nuclear-armed Japan in *Debt of Honor* (1994), and further doomsday scenarios.
- *Frank Dietz*, long-time US fan who was a founder of the Lunarians (New York SF Society) in 1956 and chaired its first 14 Lunacons, reportedly died in October. His fanzines included *Science, Fantasy and Science Fiction* (1948-1951) and *Luna Monthly* (1969-1977). [AIP]
- *Noel Harrison* (1934-2013), UK singer/actor who’s best known for ‘The Windmills of Your Mind’ and also co-starred in the sf-gadget-infested *The Girl from U.N.C.L.E.* (1966-1967), died on 22 October aged 79. [GD]
- *William Harrison* (1933-2013), US author and screenwriter who adapted his 1973 ‘Roller Ball Murder’ – title story of his 1974 collection – for the film *Rollerball* (1975; remade 2002), died on 22 October; he was 79. [SFS]
- *Anthony Hinds* (1922-2013), UK film producer and (as John Elder) scriptwriter who was chiefly responsible for the X-rated Hammer Horror film phenomenon, died on 30 September aged 91. His first productions in this vein were *The Quatermass Xperiment* (1955) and *The Curse of Frankenstein* (1956). [MPJ]
- *Stanley Kauffmann* (1916-2013), US critic, author, editor and film reviewer who while at Ballantine Books acquired Ray Bradbury’s *Fahrenheit 451*, died on 9 October aged 97. [RB]
- *Ed Lauter* (1938-2013), US character actor whose many genre credits include *King Kong* (1976), *The Clone Master*, *Timerider*, *The Rocketeer*, *Digital Man*, *The Prometheus Project* and *Starship Troopers 2* (plus the tv *ST:TNG* and *The X-Files*) died on 16 October aged 74. [MMW]

- *Dot (Dorothy) Lumley*, UK agent who ran the Dorian Literary Agency and represented various genre authors including former husband Brian Lumley, died on 5 October. In her early career as Dot Houghton she was a publisher's editor at NEL and Methuen. [PCo/JF]
- *Bruce C. Murray*, planetary geologist who headed NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in the late 1970s, died on 29 August aged 81. *Mars and the Mind of Man* (1973) by Ray Bradbury, Arthur C. Clarke, Murray, Carl Sagan and Walter Sullivan grew from a 1971 CalTech panel discussion of Mars as seen in science and sf. [AIP]
- *Philip Nutman* (1963-2013), UK journalist, horror author, comics writer and screenwriter who was *Fangoria's* British correspondent for ten years, died on 7 October. [AIP]
- *Leland Sapiro* (1924-2013) US fan who edited the 'sercon' academic fanzine *Riverside Quarterly* (formerly *Inside*, with others) from 1962 to 1993, died on 8 October aged 89. *RQ*, a three-time Hugo nominee, saw the first appearance of Alexei Panshin's *Heinlein in Dimension*. [PDF/AIP]
- *Lou Scheimer* (1928-2013), US tv producer whose animated series included *Star Trek* (1973-1974, winning him a daytime Emmy), the toy-based *He-Man and the Masters of the Universe* (1983-1985) and *Ghostbusters* (1986), died on 19 October; he was 84. [MPJ]
- *Elliot K Shorter* (1939-2013), long-time US fan, SCA stalwart, TAFF delegate to the 1970 Worldcon in Germany and former genre book dealer, died on 1 October. He was 74. [F/AIP]
- *Larry Tucker* (1948-2013), US fan and former con organizer active in the Stilyagi Air Corps, SF Oral History Association and Ann Arbor SF Association, died on 8 October. [SHS]
- *Takashi Yanase* (1919-2013), Japanese manga writer/ animator famed for his widely franchised manga/anime superhero Anpanman (whose replaceable head – sometimes fed to the needy – is an *anpan*, a bun stuffed with red bean paste), died on 13 October. He was 94. [MMW]

The Weakest Link. Richard Bacon interviewed author Susan Hill on his Radio 5 Live radio show on 31 October; they discussed children and Hallowe'en. *RB*: 'Is there a ghost story you would recommend for children under 11?' *SH*: 'Anything by M.R. James.' *RB*: 'Oh, she's great.' *SH*: 'She is a he.' *RB*: 'I did not know that.' [MPJ]

As Others So Very Rarely See Us. Ned Denny reviews *The Secret of Abdu*

el Yezdi by Mark Hodder: ‘Great fun, thought-provoking, highly literate and beautifully written, this is a perfect example of the all-round superiority of “genre” fiction over the dreary literary mainstream.’ (*Daily Mail*, 11 October) [CMJ]

Outraged Letters. *Simon R. Green* on Frederik Pohl: ‘He was there at the beginning of my discovery of sf. My father had a pile of old *Galaxy* magazines, which I discovered at a young age, and hungrily devoured. I can still remember *Galaxy* no 46, UK edition [... with] Fred Pohl’s “The Man who Ate the World”. It fascinated me. I’d never read anything like it. I have to say, it scared the hell out of the eight-year-old me; it wasn’t until I re-read it many years later, as a student, that I realized it was a satire. Still an amazing story, though. It seems like Fred Pohl was there with me for years, always turning out new work, always innovative, always fun. Now, more and more, the great voices are falling silent.’

- *Lee Wood* was thrilled to learn that, for only \$150 a bottle, one Australian vintner offers a Shiraz wine called Giant Squid Ink. ‘I wonder if this is what Margaret Atwood drinks? ... I could see it in a special bottle with rocket fin-tips....’ Checking the product page to learn what proportion of Giant Squid Ink this actually contains, I suspect it may not even be an ingredient. *Lee*: ‘Well, since Margaret Atwood “doesn’t write science fiction,” a bottle of Giant Squid Ink wine with no squid ink in it seems ... appropriate, somehow....’

Random Fandom. *Ian Schoenherr* seeks sf paintings and b/w artwork by his father John Schoenherr of *Dune* fame, hoping to scan or photograph them for a book. Contact [ianschoenherr](mailto:ianschoenherr@rcn.com) at rcn dot com.

The Dead Past. *11 Years Ago.* Danny Sichel points out that *Ansible* missed the 2002-2006 tv cultural phenomenon [Fantasy Bedtime Hour](#): ‘It’s two seminaked women in bed together, reading passages from *Lord Foul’s Bane* out loud, discussing what they’ve read, doing live re-enactments, and then consulting with experts (i.e., people who’ve actually read the whole book) ... There’s a lovely section in episode 2 where they try to figure out what the hell “preterite exaltation” means.’ Later guest experts included Stephen R. Donaldson, who should know.

- *40 Years Ago*, Novacon 3 presented the first Nova Award for UK fanzines – to Peter Weston, for *Speculation*. ([Checkpoint 43](#), November 1973)
- *50 Years Ago*: ‘A tragic gap will be left in the professional science fiction

field next March [1964] when Nova magazines *New Worlds* and *Science Fantasy* will follow their late sister magazine *Science Fiction Adventures* into limbo by ceasing publication.’ Editor John Carnell wrote: ‘It is with regret that I announce that with the March published issues of *New Worlds Science Fiction* and *Science Fantasy*, these two publications will be discontinued and Nova Publications Ltd. will cease to exist. This decision has been forced upon us by a steady decline in sales during the past few years ...’ ([Skyrack 60](#), November 1963) In the event, *New Worlds* was taken over by Roberts & Vinter/Compact Books with a new young editor, Michael Moorcock. Whatever became of him?

C.o.A. Rosy & Guy Lillian, c/o Green, 1389 Holly Avenue, Merritt Island, FL 32952, USA. (Email unchanged. PO Box address to follow.)

Fanfundery. *TAFF 2014*. Nominations are open for the eastbound race from North America to the London Worldcon. Intending candidates must arrange their nominees, platform etc by 31 December 2013 – see taff.org.uk/news/ann1310.html for more. Voting runs to 22 April 2014.

- *GUFF 2014*. Nominations are open for the northbound race, Australasia to (again) Loncon 3. Candidates need to get their acts together, as above, by 15 November 2013: see taff.org.uk/guff/ann-1310.html.

So Long, and Thanks for All the Fish. *The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy Radio Show 2013 UK Tour* was cancelled with immediate effect on 21 October owing to ‘extreme economic pressures ... Ticket holders are being contacted and should contact venues for refunds.’

Thog’s Masterclass. *Hostage to Fortune Dept.* ‘And then, as if written by the hand of a bad novelist, an incredible thing happened.’ (Jonathan Stroud, *The Amulet of Samarkand*, 2003) [JI via DVB]

- *Joy of Anatomy*. ‘The hole was off-centre, so the end of the belt projected upwards and then dangled down again under its own weight, like a failed erection.’ (Anne Holt, *Blind Goddess*, 1993; trans Tom Geddes 2012) [PB]

- *Dept of Free Fall*. ‘But now that they were in orbit the *Ingersoll* was operating in zero gravity.’ [*In which context:*] ‘Tarrant’s face twisted into a death’s head grimace, then he crumpled to the floor. [...] Siffra finally let go of him and stood up again ...’ (Gary Gibson, *Marauder*, 2013) [JC]

- *Tell-Tale Heart Dept.* ‘His heart pounded loudly inside his head.’ ‘His heart pumped loudly inside his head.’ ‘He could feel his heart thumping loudly

inside his head now.’ (Matthew Reilly, *Contest*, 1996) [GW] ‘His heart pounded loudly inside his head.’ ‘... and suddenly his heart was pumping very loudly inside his head.’ (Matthew Reilly, *Ice Station*, 1998) ‘He was breathing hard, his heart pounding loudly inside his head.’ (Matthew Reilly, *Temple*, 1999)

- *Dept of Complicit Carpeting*. ‘The blue carpet underfoot was embroiled with the CyberTech Defence Systems insignia every five meters or so.’ (R.S. Johnson, *The Genesis Project: The Children of CS-13*, 2011) [AR]

- *Neat Tricks Dept*. ‘A gang of priests gathered around Cushing’s old white head, kissing his ass.’ (John Flood, *Bag Men*, 1997) [PB]

- *Dept of Eyebrow Motility*. “‘Things here are just hopping,’” he told me, his eyebrows flying all over his narrow face.’ [*A different chap:*] ‘His eyebrows were winging around his face in interrogation.’ (both Charlaine Harris, *Real Murders*, 1990) [MP]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 6 December 2013: Brum Group Christmas Social at Selly Park Tavern. 492 Pershore Rd, Selly Oak. £10: advance booking essential. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk or rog.peyton at btinternet com. 2014 meetings return to the usual Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre, 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for members. Future meetings: 10 January, AGM and book auction.; 14 February, annual sf quiz.

Editorial. Further fiddling with the *Ansible* website has added an option for you to see the masthead artwork at larger size by clicking on the image. This mostly applies to recent contributions like the colour cartoons supplied by Brad Foster in addition to the black-and-white versions he sends for my print edition. Much of the older *Ansible* artwork, drawn for the paper version’s tiny art slot, isn’t suitable for this treatment: I’m doing it where it seems workable. Have fun.

<http://news.ansible.co.uk/images/slides.php?big>

Outraged Letters II. *Steven E. McDonald*: ‘(aka David Alexander McDonald, as many know me better), just letting you know, finally, that I am currently out of my Tucson home due to a September 12th arson fire

(directed at another tenant; I was just collateral damage in what appears to be a grudge match), currently imposed on friends to the south of town. Remarkably enough, though the fire was intense and the house was incredibly messed up by things such as the firefighters tearing down the ceilings, most of my books and music survived. Other things, not so much. The house is presently in line to be rebuilt. / If this wasn't enough, I've been diagnosed with severe-to-total blockages of coronary arteries, with the result that I'm to be scheduled for a quadruple bypass, something I'm hoping to put off until January simply because I want to avoid alarming my Mother, who's dying in Australia. / I had a miserable birthday, for the most part. But in the midst of this, who could really tell?!' (wyldemusick at gmail dot com)

Thog's German Movie Masterclass. 'He who fiddles with the truth is slapped with the violin!' (subtitle from *Wenn es Nacht Wird auf der Reeperbahn*, 1967) [PB]

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Ansible 317, December 2013

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Web news.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE, the Tongs, or the Thumbcaps of Enquiry.

Seasonal Whatsits. A very happy festival of Mithras – or whichever celebration you prefer – and New Year to all *Ansible* readers. Although I traditionally don't campaign for awards, I can't resist a shameless mention that the two Algis Budrys critical collections published by Ansible Editions this year are eligible for the 2014 BSFA, *Locus* and Hugo awards for nonfiction or 'related work'. See ae.ansible.co.uk.

The Sands of Time

Tim Armstrong, US author and former singer in a Gaelic punk rock band, shared the Saltire Society's First Book of the Year prize for his debut space opera, written in Gaelic: *Air Cuan Dubh Drilseach (On a Glittering Black Sea)*. The judging panel praised this as 'the first genuine sci-fi novel in Gaelic.' ([Scotsman](#), 15 November) [MV]

Isaac Asimov's FBI file, released after a US freedom-of-information request, revealed a lukewarm 1960s search for his alleged communist links (which even J. Edgar Hoover didn't take seriously). The evidence: his name appeared on a US Communist Party list of the 'possibly amenable', and one informant felt he had a bad attitude because 'I question the position he takes with respect to the first nuclear power plants being built by Soviet Russia.' That's it. ([Independent](#), 8 November) [PDF]

Margaret Atwood broadcast reassurance to a Radio 4 Saturday-morning chat programme audience: 'If you get caught by the zombie apocalypse, stick with me – I'll take care of you' (30 November) [CB] But who will save us from the talking squid in outer space apocalypse?

L. Frank Baum will be inducted into the Chicago Literary Hall of Fame on 7 December. [BGN] Baum lived in Chicago while writing his first books, including *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*. I suspect my brother Jon is not an old enough or dead enough Chicago resident to qualify.

Samuel Butler (1835-1902) was not available for comment on the Erewhon brand of gluten-free breakfast cereals distributed by Erewhon Markets of Los Angeles. [SL] 'Eerfnetulg,' he failed to say.

James Joyce gets an unexpected namecheck in the Novacon 43 guest-of-honour chapbook (a story by Jo Walton), whose back pages list him as author of the 1994 booklet and therefore GoH at Novacon 24. Splendid though it is to imagine him reading from *Finnegans Wake*, forensic analysis suggests that James is an easily made typo for Graham.... *Rog Peyton* grumbles: 'I spotted this error a few years ago, notified the committee and thought it had been corrected.'

Mary Shelley's original notebook drafts of *Frankenstein* can be viewed free online at shelleygodwinarchive.org/contents/frankenstein.

Conaphobia

13 Dec • **British Fantasy Society Open Night**, The Elephant, 119 Fenchurch Street, London, EC3M 5BA. From 7pm. All welcome.

19 Dec • **London Xmas Meeting** (additional to First Thursdays), cellar bar, Melton Mowbray, 18 Holborn, EC1N 2LE. All evening.

7-9 Feb 2014 • **SF Ball** (media), Carrington House Hotel, Bournemouth. Tickets £104; child £52; other options. See sfbevents.com/sfball.

8-9 Feb 2014 • **Phenomecon** (was Epic-Con), NUIM Maynooth, Co. Kildare, Ireland. Cost TBA? See www.facebook.com/phenomecon.

5-6 Apr 2014 • **Sci Fi Scarborough** (comics, media), The Spa, Scarborough. 10am-10pm. £35 reg; child £17.50. Day £20 Sat, £15 Sun (child £10, £7.50). See www.scifiscarborough.co.uk.

18-21 Apr 2014 • **Satellite 4** (Eastercon), Crowne Plaza Hotel, Glasgow. £65 reg until 4 April 2014; £50 unwaged; £20 supp/junior (12-17); £5 child (5-11); £1 infant. See www.satellite4.org.uk. Contact c/o Flat 2/1, 691 Shields

Rd, Pollokshields, Glasgow, G41 4QL.

14-18 Aug 2014 • **Loncon 3** (72nd Worldcon), ExCeL centre, London Docklands. £115 reg; £260 family; £65 YA; £30 child; £2 infant; £25 supp. See www.loncon3.org: recent announcements include an sf photography competition (closing 30 April) and free wifi at ExCel.

22-24 Aug 2014 • **Shamrokon** (Eurocon), Burlington Hotel, Dublin. €30 reg, *rising to €35 on 1 January*. Join online or ask where to send a cheque (because the address is sekret) at www.shamrokon.ie.

5-7 Sep 2014 • **FantasyCon 2014**, Royal York Hotel, York. £40 reg, £70 for 2 adults, under-16s £20; BFS members £30, £55, £12.50; under-5s free. See www.fantasycon2014.org. *Rates rise 1 January*.

20 Sep 2014 • **Andromeda Two**, Digbeth, Birmingham. 9am-10pm. £20 reg or £75 for a group of five, *rising to £25 and £100 on 1 January 2014*. Online registration at terror-tree.co.uk/andromeda-tw.

17-19 Oct 2014 • **Lakes International Comic Art Festival**, Kendal, Cumbria. Details awaited at www.comicartfestival.com.

23-27 Oct 2014 • **Bram Stoker International Film Festival**, Whitby. Further details awaited at www.bramstokerfilmfestival.com.

14-16 Nov 2014 • **Novacon 44**, Park Inn, Mansfield Road, Nottingham. GoH Kari Sperring, John Gribbin. £45 reg, 'subject to review after Easter'. Contact 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ.

Rumblings. *BSFA London pub meeting*: as always, there is none in December. • *Dysprosium 2015*, launched at Novacon in November, is a bid for the UK Eastercon: 3-6 April 2015 at The Park Inn, Heathrow. More to follow at www.dysprosium.org.uk. Presupporting memberships £15 to 101 Ninian Rd, Grovehill, Hemel Hempstead, Herts, HP2 6NB.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. Even *The New Yorker* ran a piece on the 50th anniversary of *Doctor Who*. Their regular writer Jill Lepore quoted what one of the show's original staff called (in a memo) its 'phoney science,' which Lepore then characterized as 'the sort of gobbledy-gook you'd come across in an

Arthur C. Clarke story.’ (11 November) [GF] Oh dear. If only poor Sir Arthur had had some scientific training....

Awards. *Arthur C. Clarke Award for Impact of Imagination on Society* (not the sf novel award): Ursula K. Le Guin. [L]

- *Eleanor Farjeon Award* for ‘outstanding contribution to the world of children’s books’: David Almond, author of *Skellig* and several others. (*Guardian*, 8 November)

- *Nova Awards* for British Isles fanzine activity: FANZINE *Banana Wings*. WRITER Mike Meara. ARTIST D. West. [SG]

- *UK Theatre Awards 2013*: the ‘best show for children and young people’ was *The Borrowers* as produced by Northern Stage, Newcastle.

Going Postal. The November release of twenty US stamps carrying images from the Warner Bros. Harry Potter films was deplored by the Citizens’ Stamp Advisory Committee, whose brief is to ensure that US stamp themes ‘have stood the test of time, are consistent with public opinion, and have broad national interest’, and who were thus not consulted. ‘Harry Potter is not American,’ gibbered a former president of the American Philatelic Society: ‘It’s foreign, and it’s so blatantly commercial that it’s off the charts.’ How long before the USPS follows the once proud Royal Mail further into the pit of commerce with un-American *Doctor Who* stamps? (*Washington Post*, 19 November) [MMW]

R.I.P. *Sheila Allen* (1929-2013), US actress who was married to Irwin Allen and appeared in several of his productions including *Lost in Space* (1965-1968), *Land of the Giants* (1969-1970) and *City Beneath the Sea* (1971), died on 15 November; she was 84. [SFS]

- *Lewis Collins* (1946-2013), UK actor whose tv genre credits include *The New Avengers* (1977) and *Tarzan* (1993-1994), died on 27 November aged 67. [IC]

- *Nigel Davenport* (1928-2013), UK actor who appeared in *Phase IV* (1974), *The Island of Dr. Moreau* (1977) and *Greystoke: The Legend of Tarzan, Lord of the Apes* (1984), died on 25 October aged 85. TV credits include *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1973) and *Bram Stoker’s Dracula* (1974). [SFS]

- *Joel Lane* (1963-2013), UK horror/urban fantasy author and editor whose collection *Where Furnaces Burn* won a 2013 World Fantasy Award, died unexpectedly on 25 November; he was only 50. [SN] He had published short stories since the 1980s, winning two British Fantasy Awards; his first novel

was *From Blue to Black* (2001). [SG]

- *Joseph J. Lazzaro* (1957-2013), US author of book-length nonfiction who published two collaborative stories and three essays in *Analog*, died on 18 November. [SFS]
- *Doris Lessing* (1919-2013), distinguished literary author who besides many other honours in her long career won the 2007 Nobel Prize for Literature (and was splendidly cranky about this award), died on 17 November at the age of 94. Several of her novels have fantastic content; she made unashamed use of traditional sf devices in the ‘Canopus in Argos: Archives’ sequence opening with *Shikasta* (1979), though this was not her finest work. She was a highly approachable if somewhat awe-inspiring guest of honour at the 1987 Brighton Worldcon: I still remember thinking, ‘Gosh wow, *Doris Lessing* was the first to congratulate me on that Hugo!’
- *Al Plastino* (1921-2013), US comics artist whose long career at DC began in 1948, died on 25 November aged 91. [PDF] He worked extensively on *Superman* and related comics, and co-created Supergirl, Brainiac and the Legion of Super-Heroes.
- *Robert Reginald* (Michael Roy Burgess, 1948-2013), US bibliographer, editor, publisher and author whose Borgo Press (1975-1998; 2004-current as an imprint of Wildside Press) issued a great many important critical monographs about sf and fantasy, died on 20 November aged 65. [JB] Of his own extensive bibliographical work, the magnum opus was the two-volume *Science Fiction and Fantasy Literature: A Checklist, 1700-1974* (1979).
- *Graham Stone* (1926-2013), Australian sf fan, bibliographer and publisher whose reference works began with *An Index to the Australian SF Magazines, Part One* (1955) and continued to the 2010 revision of his monumental *Australian SF Bibliography, 1848-1999* (2004), died on 16 November; he was 87. [JD]

The Weakest Link. *SF clue in the US Jeopardy show:* ‘This French author’s tomb was featured on the frontispiece of *Amazing Stories Magazine* for many years.’ *Contestant:* ‘Who is H.G. Wells?’ [AIP]

Court Circular. After Hummingbird Productions’ announcement in November of a 2015 sequel to Frank Capra’s *It’s a Wonderful Life* (1946), Paramount Studios made ominous noises about owning all the ‘necessary rights’ which according to Hummingbird are in the public domain. ([BBC](#), 21 November) Capra’s son Tom asks: ‘Why would you even attempt to make a

sequel to such a classic film?’ (Money.)

- Stef Coburn, whose father Anthony Coburn scripted the first ever *Doctor Who* storyline and introduced the Tardis, now claims copyright on the police-box time machine concept (registered by the BBC in the 1980s, never previously challenged) and demands better recognition of his father’s ‘seminal contribution’ plus ‘proper lawful recompense to his surviving estate’, i.e. money. ([Independent](#), 10 November)

Science Masterclass. This Irish creationist refutation of the Big Bang theory is now a few years old but retains its charm: ‘You’re telling me that cosmic balls of dust gathered and there was an explosion. We’ve had lots of explosions in Northern Ireland and I’ve never seen anything come out of that that was good.’ (Edwin Poots [DUP], NI Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety; [Grauniad](#), 11 November)

As Others See Us II. Doris Lessing was caught letting the literary side down: ‘By the late 1970s Lessing abandoned social themes for science fiction with her Canopus in Argus series, which she describes as her best work. / In it she outlined a bleak vision of the future with tyranny and natural catastrophes becoming the norm.’ (Nick Higham, [BBC obituary](#), 17 November) No social themes there, then. [SW]

SFWA will raise its qualifying payment rates from 5 to 6 cents per word on 1 July 2014. ‘SFWA considers it important to urge markets to pay writers more, and we hope this increase will encourage publishers to adjust their rates accordingly.’ ([sfwa.org](#), 26 November) The last such increase, from 3 to 5 cents per word, was in 2004. Runaway inflation!

We Are Everywhere. China Miéville storms the ultimate bastion of cultural acceptance – cricket commentary on the Ashes (Australia v England, 1st Test, Brisbane): ‘And should England not deliver, exhaustion will make the disappointment all the greater, a sense as China Mieville had it in Perdido Street Station, of scraping long nails against the surface of the moon.’ ([ESPNcricinfo.com](#), 20 November) [TK]

Random Fandom. *Ed Kramer’s* severance from Dragon*Con (as prematurely announced: see [A313](#), [A314](#)) is now total, following a final out-of-court settlement on 25 November: Kramer’s long-delayed trial on child molestation charges begins on 2 December.

- *Sam Long* on this issue’s publication day: ‘2 December is the feast of St

Bibiana or Vivian, patron of (i.e., invoked against) hangovers. I kid you not.'

- *Chris Morgan* overheard these sound-bites at Novacon 43: "I can't remember where we were before I deviated." – Farah Mendlesohn interviewing Jo Walton. "I've found a new on-line source for tentacles." – Peter Harrow.'

- *Washington DC SF Museum*: a group of US fans is raising funds for a 'preview location' as preliminary to 'the world's first comprehensive science fiction museum' – a phrase whose dismissal of the existing Seattle sf museum and Maison d'Ailleurs raised some fannish hackles. See www.museumofsciencefiction.org. Money pledged via Indiegogo is less than \$29,000 of the \$160,000 goal aimed for by 11 December.

Censored! The Saudi Arabian Commission for the Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice has reportedly raided bookshops and ordered them to stop selling the sf novel *H W J N* by Ibraheem Abbas and Yasser Bahjatt (translator of the English edition). This apparently treats jinni in sf terms and features human/jinn romance, horrifying the Saudi equivalent of our 'Harry Potter is satanic and must be burnt!' loons. A shocked Facebook post which may have led to the ban warned that the book not only includes jinni but could tempt teenage girls to experiment with ... Ouija boards. ([BoingBoing](#), 29 November)

The Dead Past. *40 Years Ago*: 'Some time ago, just before Christmas, Malcolm Edwards came up to me at the Globe and said "How about a British Worldcon, then?" Choking quietly on my Guinness, I managed a casual nod of agreement and produced a likely date. / So, let it be known that Great Britain intends to bid for the 1979 World Sf Convention.' (Peter Roberts, [Checkpoint 44](#), December 1973)

- *30 Years Ago*: 'William Golding – you must have heard this – picked up a Nobel Prize for *Lord of the Flies* (1954) and there was a terrific bust-up just like the Hugos, when one of the judges felt it ought to have gone to a French novel so obscure it's never been read or translated....' (*Ansible* 36, December 1983)

- *25 Years Ago*, our genre was boosted in North Korea: 'After a speech delivered by Kim Jong-Il in October 1988 called for the development of science fiction on a larger scale, the number of sci-fi works grew significantly. From space travel to immortality or underwater exploration, sci-fi stories cover a wide range of subjects within settings that usually

exceed the national boundaries of North Korea.’ ([Sinonk.com](#)) [AH]
Weapons-grade sf on a larger scale, threatening several neighbouring countries....

• *20 Years Ago*: ‘Tanith Lee won new fame in *Literary Review*’s “Bad Sex in Fiction” competition; [an extract from her *Heart-Beast*](#) was a runner-up. “A fine piece of bad writing, lacking only the element of perfunctoriness to reach high art in the field” – Auberon Waugh, judge.’ (*Ansible* 77, December 1993)

C.o.A. *Ed Meskys*, 3111 Hidden Pond Dr 205, Raleigh, NC 27613, USA
(temporary to 15 March; 1st/2nd-class mail will be forwarded).

As Others See Us III. The 1963 BBC background notes on *Doctor Who* explained what genre this isn’t: ‘Evidently, Dr. Who’s “machine” fulfils many of the functions of conventional Science Fiction gimmicks. But we are not writing Science Fiction. We shall provide scientific explanations too, sometimes, but we shall not bend over backwards to do so ...’
(www.bbc.co.uk/archive/doctorwho/6403.shtml) [BB]

Fanfundery. *TAFF 2014*. Candidates so far announced for the coveted TAFF trip from North America to Loncon 3: Brad and Cindy Foster are running as a couple, and Curt Phillips solo. I’m a Foster nominator – Brad has contributed more than 50 illustrations to *Ansible* over the years – but Curt would also be a worthy winner. There’s time for others to step forward, as nominations are open until 31 December. For details of how to become a candidate, see taff.org.uk.

• *GUFF 2014*. Candidates for the northbound race from Australasia to Loncon are Alison Barton, Samara Morgan, Gillian Polack and Shay Telfer. See their platforms at splanky.livejournal.com/250547.html; ballot to follow shortly at splanky.livejournal.com and taff.org.uk/guff.html.

Thog’s Masterclass. *Many a Slip Dept.* ‘With two fingers Karim picked up a banana slice and dropped it on the cement. ... Then he picked up a cherry, dropped it, and watched it rolling around underfoot. “You see?” he asked. “Cherries run away, but bananas hang in there. You are more a banana, my friend.”’ (Herbert Gold, *She Took My Arm as If She Loved Me*, 1997) [PB]

• *Dept of Avian Villains Who Do Not In Fact Have Laser Eyes.* ‘Displeased, Turnatt stared down his beak at his nervous captain, his bright eye burning a hole into the bothersome crow’s face.’ (Nancy Yi Fan, *Swordbird*, 2007) [PB]

- *Eyeballs in the Sky*. ‘Then his eyes moved up along the rough tweed of his trousers to the shorter motion of his thighs ...’ (Lester del Rey, ‘The Monster’, June 1951 *Argosy*) [BA] ‘Her eyes sat on purple cushions, not eye shadow.’ (Ellery Queen, *Cop Out*, 1969) [PB]
 - *Sudoku Addiction Dept*. ‘Hinch was spreadeagled in the entrance with a puzzle written on his face.’ (*Ibid*)
 - *Dept of Purple Skies*. ‘An indistinctly outlined, pearly moon seemed to drip down the sky, like a clot of incandescent tapioca thrown up against the night by a cosmic comic.’ (William Irish [Cornell Woolrich], *The Bride Wore Black*, 1940) [CJM via BA]
 - *Arithmetic Dept*. ‘The three of us have been a couple from the beginning ...’ (Laurell K. Hamilton, *Kiss the Dead*, 2012) [TMcD]
 - *Secret Kung-Fu Death Grip*. ‘Feng held the man’s eyes, shook his head.’ (Ramez Naam, *Nexus*, 2013) [PM]
-

Endnotes

Apparitions.

• 6 December 2013: Brum Group Christmas Social at Selly Park Tavern. 492 Pershore Rd, Selly Oak. £10: advance booking essential. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk or rog.peyton at btinternet com. 2014 meetings return to the usual Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre, 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for members. Future meetings: 10 January 2014, AGM and book auction; 14 February, annual sf quiz; 14 March 2014, Stan Nicholls and Anne Gay; 11 April 2014, Gavin Thorpe; 9 May 2014, Dr Nick Hawes, Senior Lecturer in Intelligent Robotics, University of Birmingham; 13 June 2014, Stephen Hunt.

Editorial. Where did 2013 go? As usual, the *SF Encyclopedia* was hugely demanding. The word count very recently crept past 4.2 million: 200,000 words of new material, mostly by John Clute, since we reached the four-million mark in January. The *SFE* Picture Gallery, introduced in May 2013, now has more than 8200 images (mostly captioned by Roger Robinson). Langford’s brain, introduced in 1953 and hard pressed by *SFE* work since 2005, is getting low on working cells but fortunately there’s no computerized count there. Again, Happy New Year!

<http://www.sf-encyclopedia.com/>

<http://sf-encyclopedia.co.uk/gallery.php>

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2014

Ansible 318, January 2014

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Web news.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or red leaves, scob liver and ginkle-string.

Happy New Year, as always, to *Ansible* readers near and far.

The Fish-Frying Academy

Brian Aldiss has successfully quit the skiffy habit: ‘I have to admit to you these days I don’t read any science fiction – or do I? Now I only read Tolstoy.’ ([Interview, *The Guardian*](#), 13 December) [DP]

Iain Banks was Twitter’s ‘top UK news trending topic’ for 2013, ahead of ‘UK storm’, ‘NHS’ and Seamus Heaney in second, third and fourth places. His pet hate Margaret Thatcher came eighth, beating Richard III at #9. (*Independent Review of the Year*, 28 December)

Samuel R. Delany was announced as the 2014 choice for SFWA’s Damon Knight Grand Master Award. ([SFWA](#), 4 December) [GVG] SFWA president Steven Gould observed: ‘When discussing him as this year’s choice with the board, past-presidents, and members, the most frequent response I received was, “He’s not already?” / Well he is now.’

Peter Nicholls has good news: ‘I have become, appropriately, the first cyborg editor of a science-fiction encyclopedia. It is now thirteen years since I was diagnosed with Parkinson’s disease and in the past twelve months the illness had reached the advanced stage which is both uncomfortable and unseemly: I lurched rather than walked, my voice became hoarse, guttural and almost unintelligible, and I spilled food all over my clothes at meal times. / Desperate times call for desperate remedies. Around four weeks ago I undertook an operation known as Deep Brain Stimulation, in which fine wires are inserted into the sub-thalamic nucleus of the brain (while

conscious), and run out through the skull, then subcutaneously down the neck and behind the collar bone, where they terminate in a battery. The battery can be turned off, but is generally left running. So now I am a cyborg (as defined in *SFE3*). As to how and why DBS works, nobody is completely sure, but there is interesting stuff available for googlers. / The result is immediate and spectacular. I now speak much more clearly, walk normally, no longer fear falls, look younger (and according to some women, handsomer). It is still early days, but my neurologist says that all the preliminary signs are very positive. My greatest worry, that there will be cognitive loss (there had already been some loss prior to the operation) has not yet been put to rest, but there are signs of possible improvement here also. Only four days after the operation I was invited to address fifty or so Chinese neurologists who were visiting Melbourne, and I received an ovation afterwards. I am hoping two things, the first being that soon I will be able to drive again, and the second being that I can do rather more work on the third edition of the *Science Fiction Encyclopedia*.’ (email, 27 December) Excellent news indeed, and I really must avoid rereading Michael Crichton’s *The Terminal Man*.

Manil Suri’s *The City of Devi* won the 2013 *Literary Review* Bad Sex award for the surprisingly science-fictional imagery in this description of a hot threesome’s climax: ‘Surely supernovas explode that instant, somewhere, in some galaxy. The hut vanishes, and with it the sea and the sands – only Karun’s body, locked with mine, remains. We streak like superheroes past suns and solar systems, we dive through shoals of quarks and atomic nuclei. In celebration of our breakthrough fourth star, statisticians the world over rejoice.’ ([Guardian](#), 3 December) [RJ] Who knew that statisticians have so much fun?

Concursive

22 Jan • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. With Adam Roberts. Free; all welcome.

7-9 Feb • **2emi6reve** (filk), Ramada Grantham Hotel. £42 reg, £29 unwaged; £45/£30 at door. under-18s £1/year; under-5s free. Cheques: UK Filk Convention, c/o 159 Winns Avenue, Walthamstow, London, E17 5HB.

7-9 Feb • **SF Ball** (media), Carrington House Hotel, Bournemouth. Tickets

£104; child £52; other options. See sfbevents.com/sfball.

8-9 Feb • **Phenomecon** (was Epic-Con), NUIM Maynooth, Co. Kildare, Ireland. Cost TBA; tickets should become available online this month. Keep watching the skies at www.facebook.com/phenomecon.

14-18 Aug • **Loncon 3** (72nd Worldcon), ExCeL centre, London Docklands. £115 reg; £260 family; £65 YA; £30 child; £2 infant; £25 supp. See www.loncon3.org; also loncon3.org/publications.php#prs for PR2 on hotel booking and Hugo/Retro Hugo nominations, *now open*.

22-24 Aug • **Shamrokon** (Eurocon), Burlington Hotel, Dublin. *Now €35 reg; concessions €25; under-22s €10*. Join at www.shamrokon.ie.

5-7 Sep • **FantasyCon 2014**, Royal York Hotel, York. £40 reg, £70 for 2 adults, under-16s £20; BFS members £30, £55, £12.50; under-5s free. See www.fantasycon2014.org. Rates were to rise on 1 January but the website still (2 January) lists only the above prices. [*Later: new rates appeared on 3 January. £50 reg, £85 for 2 adults, under-16s £27.50; BFS members £35, £60, £15.*]

20 Sep • **Andromeda Two**, Digbeth, Birmingham. 9am-10pm. *Now £25 reg or £100 for a group of five*. Online registration at terror-tree.co.uk/andromeda-tw.

19-23 Aug 2015 • **Sasquan** (Worldcon), Spokane Convention Center, Spokane, WA, USA. \$140 reg, *rising to \$170 on 31 January 2014*; \$40 supp (no increase). See <http://sasquan.org/>.

Rumblings. *Worldcon 2017*: The bid committee formerly known as ‘Northeast Corridor in 2017’ revealed that its bid is for Washington DC on 16-20 August 2017. Other contenders: Helsinki, Japan, Montréal. • Further newly announced bids: Fort Worth in 2021, Chicago in 2022.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. US District Judge Richard J. Leon, ruling in December ‘that the National Security Agency’s daily collection of virtually all Americans’ phone records is almost certainly unconstitutional’, rejected the Justice Department view that a 1979 Supreme Court decision makes it all

OK: ‘The “almost-Orwellian technology” that allows the government to collect, store and analyze phone metadata is “unlike anything that could have been conceived in 1979” and, “at best, the stuff of science fiction,” he said.’ (*Washington Post*, 16 December) [MMW]

Awards. *National Book Award Book of the Year* for UK publication, chosen by popular vote: Neil Gaiman’s *The Ocean at the End of the Lane* won ‘by a considerable margin’. ([BBC](#), 27 December) [MPJ]

• *Visual Effects Society Award*: Alfonso Cuarón, director of *Gravity*. ([BBC](#), 24 December) [MPJ]

Futurology Masterclass. Herman Kahn imagines the exotic twenty-first century: ‘We’re locating the pleasure centers in the brain. By the end of the century maybe we’ll have them wired to buttons on our chests, and be able to play sensations like a squeezebox. The major sensory chord produced by striking buttons one, three, and five simultaneously could be like “Wow!”’ (*Business Week*, 11 March 1967) [MMW]

R.I.P. *Joan Fontaine* (1917-2013), Oscar-winning actress whose rare genre film credits included *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea* (1961) and *The Witches* (1966), died on 15 December aged 96. [SG]

• *John Fortune* (1939-2013), UK actor and satirist whose BBC2 series *In the Looking Glass* (1978) explored various SF themes, died on 31 December aged 74. His 1971 *A Melon for Ecstasy*, a spoof erotic novel about a literal tree-lover, was not *quite* genre fantasy.... [MV]

• *Richard Gallen*, US publishing attorney, book packager and investor who provided financial backing and advice to various publishers including Baen Books, Bluejay, Tor and Carroll & Graf, died on 3 December aged 80. (*PW*, 13 December) [PDF/GVG]

• *Barry Jackson* (1938-2013), UK actor seen in *Adam Adamant Lives!* (1966, where he was also fight arranger), *Doomwatch* (1972), *Doctor Who* (1965, 1979), *Blake’s 7* (1978) and other genre tv, died on 5 December; he was 75. [MPJ]

• *Nancy Kemp* (1923-2013), US fan who was once married to Earl Kemp and with him co-edited the Hugo-winning symposium *Who Killed Science Fiction?* (1960), died on 22 December.

• *Édouard Molinaro* (1928-2013), French film writer and director whose genre films include the horror comedy *Dracula père et fils* (1976) and the fantasy *Tombé du nid* (1999 tv), died on 7 December aged 85. [AW]

- *Hugh Nissenson* (1933-2013), US author who published sf in *Playboy* as early as 1964 and whose sf novel was *The Song of the Earth* (2001), died on 13 December aged 80. [JC]
- *Peter O'Toole* (1932-2013), Irish-born UK stage and film actor famed worldwide for mainstream roles such as *Lawrence of Arabia* (1962), died on 14 December aged 81. Genre credits include *Supergirl* (1984), *The Ray Bradbury Theater* (1986 tv), *High Spirits* (1988), *Phantoms* (1998), *Ratatouille* (2007), *Stardust* (2007), *My Talks with Dean Spanley* (2008) and *Highway to Hell* (2012). [AW/SG]
- *Joseph Ruskin* (1924-2013), US character actor, died on 28 December aged 89. Among his many tv genre credits are *The Twilight Zone*, *The Outer Limits*, *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea*, *The Time Tunnel*, *Star Trek* (plus spinoff series and films), *Land of the Giants*, *Planet of the Apes*, *The Six Million Dollar Man*, *The Bionic Woman*, *Project U.F.O.*, *Airwolf*, *Max Headroom* and *Spider-Man*. [F770]
- *Ned Vizzini* (1981-2013), US author whose four YA novels include sf and fantasy, committed suicide on 19 December; he was 32. [SFS]
- *Colin Wilson* (1931-2013), UK author who achieved instant success with his study of literary and real-world 'outsiders' in *The Outsider* (1956), and later became better known for very many nonfiction works on crime and the paranormal, died on 5 December aged 82. His ideas about the unexplored potential of the human mind took sf form in his Cthulhu Mythos novels *The Mind Parasites* (1967) and *The Philosopher's Stone* (1969), and in more conventional sf terms in the late-1980s 'Spider World' sequence. *The Space Vampires* (1976), a homage to A E van Vogt's 'Asylum', was filmed as *Lifeforce* (1985). [JC] He was my last surviving collaborator on *The Necronomicon* (1978) edited by George Hay.
- *Rosemary Wolfe* (1931-2013), Gene Wolfe's wife of many years and a cheering presence at numerous conventions, died on 14 December after long illness; she was 82.

Ghost Story. 'Nelson Mandela revisited his cell several times after his death.' (BBC website caption, 5 December) [PE]

Court Circular. Asterix artist Albert Uderzo is in dispute with his daughter and son-in-law over the mighty cartoon franchise. He plans to sue them for 'psychological violence' while they (having in 2007 been 'dismissed by Asterix publisher Editions Albert Rene as managers of the Uderzo estate')

say he's mentally ill, being cruelly exploited, etc, and filed a lawsuit about this in 2011. ([BBC](#), 2 December) [MPJ]

- *Bob and Harvey Weinstein* of Miramax, which sold the *Hobbit* film rights to New Line/Warner in 1998, are suing the studio for \$75 million or more on the basis that the film was split into three 'solely to deprive plaintiffs' of money. In what Warner has tactfully called 'one of the great blunders in movie history', Miramax settled for 5% of the gross on the first film only, assuming there could be only one. ([BBC](#), 12 December) [MPJ]

- *Frank Darabont*, creator of the high-rated zombie tv series *The Walking Dead*, is suing the US AMC tv network for 'tens of millions of dollars' for (a) sacking him before the second series to avoid paying an increased profit share; (b) eliminating any paper profit through a 'self-dealing' fiddle whereby the AMC affiliate that makes the show licenses it to AMC at less than the cost of production. ([BBC](#), 18 December) [MPJ]

Magazine Scene. *Electric Velocipede* is ceasing publication with issue 27, and *Icarus: The Magazine of Gay Speculative Fiction* with issue 18, according to editorials in those issues by the respective editors John Klima and Steve Berman. [PDF]

- *Foundation* 115 ('Summer 2012/13', just published) is Graham Sleight's last issue: Paul March-Russell is the incoming editor.

- *SF Signal* was hacked shortly before Christmas; the problem was quickly fixed, but Google malware alerts continued for a while. [L]

- *SF Site* has abandoned its gruelling schedule of twice-monthly updates, owing to a falling-off in advertising. New stuff will henceforth appear at unexpected intervals, 'as it comes our way'. [L]

Outraged Letters. *Gordon Van Gelder* has news of possible interest to the WSFS Mark Protection Committee: 'I just did an online search for Worldcon 2014 and the World Congress on Coloproctology turned up.

<http://worldcon2014.com/> ... I wonder if they'll have filking?'

New Year Honours. Angela Lansbury, whose film credits include *Bedknobs and Broomsticks*, *The Court Jester*, *Beauty and the Beast* and *The Last Unicorn*, is now a Dame. [SFS]

- OBEs went to special effects supervisor Chris Corbold, who worked on several Bond films and won an Oscar for his contribution to *Inception*; and to Lynda Bellingham, who played the Inquisitor in the 14-part Colin Baker-era *Doctor Who* storyline *The Trial of a Timelord*, and was also in *Blake's 7*.

[MPJ]

- MBE: Kathleen Wendy Herald Peyton, Carnegie Medal-winning author of much children's fiction as by K.M. Peyton. Her supernatural novels include *A Pattern of Roses* (1972) and *Unquiet Spirits* (1997).

Random Fandom. *Jim Barker* won the 2013 Rotsler Award for life achievement in artwork for sf fanzines, receiving eternal glory and \$300 as his reward. His most recent *Ansible* cartoon was in issue 315.

- *Benchmarks Disqualified*: those 2013 Algis Budrys critical collections (see ae.ansible.co.uk) have been ruled ineligible for the BSFA Award ([nominations deadline 14 January](#)). I hadn't noticed the clause saying 'Whole collections comprised entirely of unrevised work that has been published elsewhere prior to 2013 are ineligible.'; nor did I know that obsessive correction, annotation and indexing of the texts doesn't count as revision. Fingers remain crossed for the less picky *Locus* Award and Hugo shortlists....
- *Roger Robinson* has booked the Melton Mowbray cellar bar for First Thursday fan meetings (see news.ansible.co.uk/london.html) throughout 2014. But the 18 December Xmas meeting is tentative only: the management would much prefer a lucrative party booking if only they can get one.

The Dead Past. *20 Years Ago*: 'Be Prepared. The New England SF Association notoriously plans for every contingency: "The rules for other organizations suing the clubhouse were re-stated ..." [*Instant Message* 538].' (*Ansible* 78, January 1994)

- *40 Years Ago*, a note on the fan production which became the world-bestriding *Fortean Times*: 'THE NEWS IS GOOD. That's my opinion, anyway. I have actually subscribed to Bob Rickard's new Fortean magazine, *The News*, so I've put my money where my mouth is too. For the totally ignorant, Charles Fort [...] was, for various reasons, fascinated by unexplained phenomena, particularly those scorned or glibly set aside by the dogmatic priests of science. *The News*, therefore, presents brief reports of oddities and strange events ...' (Peter Roberts, [Checkpoint 45](#), January 1974)

- *50 Years Ago*: 'Such is fame Dept. T.H. White died at the age of 57 on Friday 17th Jan. The author of *The Once & Future King*, on which the musical *Camelot* is based, and of *The Sword In The Stone* recently filmed by Disney rated a six line notice in the *Daily Mail* and suffered a spelling mistake in his name into the bargain' ([Skyrack 62](#), January 1964.)

C.o.A. *Andi Shechter & Stu Shiffman*, 13716 Lake City Way NE Apt. 321,

Seattle, WA 98125-2601, USA (phone numbers unchanged).

Fanfundery. *TAFF 2014.* The final line-up for the eastbound race from North America to Loncon 3 in London ([as above](#)): Brad and Cindy Foster standing jointly, Curt Phillips and Randy Smith. All worthy fans; *Ansible* naturally supports its regular masthead cartoonist. TAFF voting continues to 22 April. See taff.org.uk for the ballot form, candidates' platforms and a link to [the online PayPal donation/voting page](#).

- *GUFF 2014:* a PDF ballot form is now available via taff.org.uk/guff.html. The voting deadline is 9 June.

- *DUFF 2014:* nominations for the southbound race from North America to Australasia close on 6 January. For full details, see the *File 770* post at file770.com/?p=15084.

Thog's Masterclass. *Dept of Canine Ejaculation.* 'The minister's wife [*Madam Ho*] let out a Pekinese whelp.' (Colin Cotterill, *The Woman Who Wouldn't Die*, 2013) [MH]

- *Physio Dept.* 'Connie's brows swept down over her pale eyes.' 'She swayed, unsteady, as her stagnant blood moved down into her legs.' 'She moved the heels of her hands until they rested over her closed eyes, exhaling in the darkness behind her eyelids.' (Katherine Howe, *The Physick Book of Deliverance Dane*, 2009) [PB]

- *Dept of Feminist Awareness.* 'Her breasts were a smaller version of the woman herself – massive, firm and overpoweringly impressive.' (Isaac Asimov, *Foundation and Earth*, 1986) [SM] 'For a zoologist, a profession which tends to recruit the plainer girls, Shirley was outstandingly attractive.' (Chapman Pincher, *Not with a Bang*, 1965) [AR] 'Like many scientists, only about a quarter of his wakened time could have been spent in the presence of any wife.' (*Ibid*) 'He watched her drift out of earshot, her bottom, which had a life of its own, giving her dress a delightful motion.' (*Ibid*)

- *Necropody Dept.* 'The dead men's shoes remained filled by agile feet.' (*Ibid*)

- *Reacting to Mass Suicide at the Seaside.* 'On the shore, some of the young watchers screamed out hysterically, pressing their clenched fists to their faces, as they had done so often under happier circumstances.' (*Ibid*)

- *Anatomy Dept.* 'She owned a pair of well-filled legs ...' 'His tie hung limply like a lost erection.' 'His pale, watery eyes seemed to penetrate beyond the skin.' '“Coffee,” he said, his voice as cool as his neck was hot.' 'The gaudy

decor bounced off his eyeballs ...’ (all from Kitty Sewell, *Ice Trap*, 2005) [PB]

- *Dept of Modest Understatement*. ‘The main asteroid belt is over six million miles long ...’ (David V. Reed, *Murder In Space*, May 1944 *Amazing Stories*; [more below](#)) [BA]

- *True Romance (Hard-Boiled Dept)*. ‘Butler pumped hard now and felt himself getting crazy. Somebody had stuffed eight pigeons up his ass and he felt like he was going to explode. The pigeons flew through his penis and he bit his lip as they flew out the tip. He hung onto her shoulders for support and she fell back against the mirror on the wall, her eyes rolling in her head, because the pigeons had flown into her egg roll and were flapping their wings around in there.’ (Philip Kirk, *Chinese Roulette*, 1984) [AR]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 10 January 2014: Brum Group AGM and book auction, Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre, 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk or rog.peyton at btinternet.com. Future meetings: 14 February, annual sf quiz; 14 March 2014, Stan Nicholls and Anne Gay; 11 April 2014, Gavin Thorpe; 9 May 2014, Dr Nick Hawes, Senior Lecturer in Intelligent Robotics, University of Birmingham; 13 June 2014, Stephen Hunt.

Editorial. As you know, Professor, *Ansible* doesn’t normally plug books other than the editor’s. An arbitrary exception is made for *The Complete Uncle* by the late J.P. Martin, comprising all six ‘Uncle’ children’s novels (the last four having been increasingly hard to find for many years). Also included are all Quentin Blake’s illustrations, some not previously published, plus assorted reviews and appreciations including my own from *SFX* magazine. All this material was heroically assembled by Marcus Gipps. Good for him.

http://gipps.org.uk/The_Complete_Uncle.html

<http://www.infinityplus.co.uk/introduces/uncle.htm>

Outraged Letters II. *Simon R. Green* shares a thought: ‘I’m so used to seeing the List of Dead Names in *Ansible*, it only recently occurred to me that

perhaps you should have included one other. That being; Nelson Mandela. All right, he's not a sci-fi person like the rest of us, but, it is thanks to him that all of us are now living in an alternate future. / I grew up hearing the terrible stories coming out of South Africa, the horrors of apartheid. And I was convinced that the only way this could end, would be in a race war. A terrible rising up by the oppressed, leading to civil war and bloodshed on a massive scale. I just couldn't see how anything else was possible. And then they let Mandela out of prison. After everything he'd been through, it would have been perfectly understandable if he'd come out preaching fire and brimstone, saying make these people pay.... But he didn't. He came out a much better man than any of us had any right to expect. And as a result; no civil war, no mass murder. / He created an alternate history. Which I think, makes him one of us.'

Thog's Second Helping. *Weather and Other Asteroid Perils.* "... some of the miners who work the asteroid belt have to pass through bad areas. Every now and then there'll be a blow – what you might call a sort of storm –" / "Vacuum impact?" asked Ames. "You mean that or spacial glides?" / "Impact, I think," said Wylie, "Anyway, it means trouble. When those asteroids start acting up because the Hive's going crazy –" / "The Hive?" Ames asked doggedly. / "That's a big nest of them, close together, all sizes and shapes and full of crazy motions. When they start acting up, you daren't get your ship anywhere near the whole belt ..." [...] "So they pay close attention to the weather, and if it looks bad, they try to borrow an extra ship in advance so's they can get to their mines, load up fast, and bring both boats back before the blow sets in." *Later, still within the solar system's asteroid belt, we meet:* '... the Hive. It was still a few points dead ahead. It was a place where the worlds were almost infinitely more numerous and tightly packed. They were smaller worlds, some of them only a few acres, round and swift. Together their gigantic swirling mass was too great for the eye or the navigator's glass to encompass ...' (all David V. Reed, *Murder In Space*, May 1944 *Amazing Stories*) [BA]

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and Hero Distributors: Dave Corby (BSFG), SCIS/Prophecy, Alan Stewart
(Australia). 2 January 2014.

Ansible 319, February 2014

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Web news.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or videos showing the act of distimming.

Editorial Plug. Ebooks of Algis Budrys's *F&SF* critical collections *Benchmarks Continued*, *Benchmarks Revisited* and *Benchmarks Concluded* are now, at last, available at £5 apiece from ae.ansible.co.uk.

The Gostak and the Doshes

Iain Banks's *Consider Phlebas* has a new German edition from Heyne, translated 'Aus dem Amerikanischen' ('From the American'). [DH]

Russell Brand, here described as 'the usually liberal comedian', tried to silence students' uproar at the Cambridge University Union with 'Shut up you Harry Potter p**fs.' (*Independent*, 14 January) [MMW] Asterisks supplied by the newspaper, which shuddered at this 'homophobic slur'. As distinct from, say, a geeks-who-read-J.K. Rowling slur.

Glenn Brown, the artist once fond of 'appropriating' sf imagery, has been in the news again after his repainted version of an old Chris Foss cover was auctioned at Sotheby's for over £3.5 million, more than 100 times its 2002 price. (io9, January) Note that profits went to the seller, not Brown. Past sf appropriations included a Tony Roberts cover, which led to a lawsuit: see *A161* and *A166*. The background to the current stir: 'Foss says he had distractedly given Brown permission to homage his work while working long hours on Stanley Kubrick's *AI*, and professes to have been surprised – and outraged – by what he saw as the subsequent plundering of his art.' (*New Scientist*, 7 September 2011) The worst sort of plundering – fiendishly carried out *with permission!*

Chang-rae Lee's *On Such a Full Sea* may be reviewed as sf in the UK

Independent, but the Minneapolis *Star Tribune* is made of sterner stuff: 'Lee's futuristic America is redolent of the post-apocalyptic worlds of J.G. Ballard; not science fiction, more the speculative fiction that Margaret Atwood occasionally dabbles in.' (5 January) [DL]

George Orwell must be rotating in his grave after the announcement that the 1956 film of *1984* is being remade as *Equals*, described as a 'futuristic love story'. Kristen Stewart, playing the female lead, breathlessly comments: 'It's a love story of epic, epic, epic proportion ... I'm scared.' Is it she rather than the hapless Winston who at the end will really, really, really love Big Brother? ([US Weekly](#), 24 January) [LP]

Confeny

7-9 Feb • **2emi6reve** (UK filk convention #26), Ramada Grantham Hotel. Advance booking still possible: £42 reg, £29 unwaged; £45/£30 at the door. Under-18s £1/year; under-5s free. Cheques to UK Filk Convention, c/o 159 Winns Avenue, Walthamstow, London, E17 5HB.

7-9 Feb • **SF Ball** (media), Carrington House Hotel, Bournemouth. Tickets £104; child £52; other options. See sfbevents.com/sfball.

8-9 Feb • **Phenomecon** (was Epic-Con), NUIM Maynooth, Co. Kildare, Ireland. €15 reg or €10 per day. Look for the online ticket purchase link somewhere or other at www.facebook.com/phenomecon.

22 Feb • **Picocon 30**, Imperial College Union, London. GoH Sarah Pinborough, Charles Stross, David Southwood. £10 reg. Contact ICSF, Beit Quad, Prince Consort Rd, London, SW7 2BB; picocon at icsf co uk.

26 Feb • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. With Tom Pollock. Free.

Late Feb or early Mar • **Microcon**, Exeter University: CANCELLED.

16 Mar • **EM-Con** (multimedia), Albert Hall, Nottingham. Many guests. Tickets *including booking fees*: £14 'early bird' (10am-5pm) SOLD OUT; £9 day (11am-5pm); under-5s free; £6 evening live-music party at another venue – The Approach, Friar Lane. See www.em-con.co.uk.

May • **Middle-earth Weekend**, Sarehole Mill, Cole Bank Rd, Hall Green,

Birmingham. CANCELLED this year but should return in 2015.

2 May - 19 Aug • **Comics Unmasked: Art and Anarchy in the UK** (exhibition), PACCAR Gallery, British Library, London.

20 Jun • **CRSF 2014** (academic), U of Liverpool. Call for papers: currentresearchinspeculativefiction.blogspot.co.uk/p/crsf-2014.html

9-11 Aug • **Discworld Convention**, Palace Hotel, Manchester. £65 reg, £50 concessions, £25 supp, under-13s free. SOLD OUT: you can join the waiting list for cancellations at www.dwcon.org.

14-18 Aug • **Loncon 3** (72nd Worldcon), ExCeL centre, London Docklands. £115 reg; £260 family; £65 YA; £30 child; £2 infant; £25 supp; *may rise on 1 March*. Day tickets available: adults £25 Thur, £40 Fri, £45 Sat or Sun, £20 Mon. See www.loncon3.org for other rates. A 29 January release announced that Loncon has over 5000 members.

5-7 Sep • **FantasyCon 2014**, Royal York Hotel, York. *Now £50 reg, £85 joint (2 adults), under-16s £27.50; BFS members £35, £60, £15; under-5s free.* Join online at www.fantasycon2014.org.

Rumblings. *Beijing in 2016?* This Chinese Worldcon bid's website at www.guokr.com/zone/worldcon is not heavily laden with information. It must have come as a surprise to the existing Kansas City bid (kcin2016.org). Reportedly the new contender is ready to file the necessary bid paperwork with Loncon 3 by the 15 February deadline.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. Russell Banks, author and devotee of 'literary fiction', uttered a generalization for the ages when asked what he preferred to avoid: 'Anything described by the author or publisher as fantasy, which to me says, "Don't worry, Reader, Death will be absent here."' ([New York Times online](#), 2 January) [VJ-K] At a stroke the corpse-strewn Harry Potter saga, the *Game of Thrones* series and Discworld have suddenly become non-fantasy. Perhaps they're all literary fiction.

Awards. BSFA shortlist: NOVEL Kameron Hurley, *God's War*; Ann Leckie, *Ancillary Justice*; Paul McAuley, *Evening's Empires*; Gareth L. Powell, *Ack-*

Ack Macaque; Christopher Priest, *The Adjacent*. SHORT Nina Allan, *Spin*; Sofia Samatar, ‘Selkie Stories are for Losers’ (*Strange Horizons*); E.J. Swift ‘Saga’s Children’ (*The Lowest Heaven*); Tori Truslow, ‘Boat in the Shadows Crossing’ (*Beneath Ceaseless Skies*). ARTWORK Joey Hi-fi, cover, *Dream London* by Tony Ballantyne; Kevin Tong, *Metropolis* poster (tragicsunshine.com); Richard Wagner ‘The Angel at the Heart of the Rain’ (*Interzone* 246). NONFICTION Jeff VanderMeer, *Wonderbook*; John J. Johnston, ‘Going Forth by Night’ (*Unearthed*); Liz Bourke, ‘Sleeps with Monsters’.

- *Clarke Award*: a record 121 books from 42 imprints [have been submitted](#).
- *Crawford* (fantasy debut): Sofia Samatar, *A Stranger in Olondria*. [L]
- *Philip K. Dick* shortlist: Anne Charnock, *A Calculated Life*; Cassandra Rose Clarke, *The Mad Scientist’s Daughter*; Toh EnJoe, trans Terry Gallagher, *Self-Reference Engine*; Ann Leckie, *Ancillary Justice*; Jack Skillingstead, *Life on the Preservation*; Ian Whates, ed, *Solaris Rising 2: The New Solaris Book of Science Fiction*; Ben H. Winters, *Countdown City*. [GVG]
- *Robert A. Heinlein Award*: Geoffrey A. Landis.
- *Kitschies* shortlists. NOVEL Anne Carson, *Red Doc*>; Ruth Ozeki, *A Tale for the Time Being*; Thomas Pynchon, *Bleeding Edge*; Patrick Ness, *More Than This*; James Smythe, *The Machine*. DEBUT Monica Hesse, *Stray*; Anne Charnock, *A Calculated Life*; Ann Leckie, *Ancillary Justice*; Ramez Naam, *Nexus*; Robin Sloan, *Mr Penumbra’s 24-Hour Bookstore*. COVER ART Sinem Erkas for *Dreams and Shadows* by C. Robert Cargill; Will Staehle for *The Age Atomic* by Adam Christopher; Amazing15 for *Homeland and Pirate Cinema* by Cory Doctorow; Gianmarco Magnani for *Stray* by Monica Hesse; Joey Hi-Fi for *Apocalypse Now Now* by Charlie Human.
- *Newbery Medal* (children’s fiction): Kate DiCamillo, *Flora & Ulysses*. [PDF]

We Are Everywhere. The kind of fellow who sinks to publishing sf newsletters: ‘Langford, self-styled leader of the local vigilante group, shared the same basic mental genotype with playground bullies and third world secret policemen.’ (Zoe Sharp, *Riot Act*, 2002) [AR/RC]

R.I.P. Neal Barrett Jr (1929-2014), US author who began publishing sf in 1960 and late in his long career was named SFWA Author Emeritus at the 2010 Nebula Awards, died on 12 January; he was 84. [JC] His many novels include the Aldair and Through Darkest America series, contributions to

several franchises, and some notable standalone titles; story collections run from *Slightly Off Center* (1992) to *Other Seasons: The Best of Neal Barrett, Jr* (2012).

- *Alexandra Bastedo* (1946-2014), UK actress best remembered for the ITV superhero/spy series *The Champions* (1968-1969), died on 12 January aged 67. Other genre credits included *The Blood Splattered Bride* (1972), *The Ghoul* (1975) and a cameo in *Batman Begins* (2005). [GW/SG]

- *Jon Bing* (1944-2014), Norwegian law professor and sf author/editor of international repute (he was a guest of honour at the 1997 UK Eastercon), died on 14 January: he was 69. With his close friend Tor-Åge Bringsværd he effectively founded present-day Norwegian fandom and also provided its reading matter by assembling many anthologies, creating and editing the sf line of the leading Norwegian publisher Gyldendal (1967-1980) and publishing novels – Bing's most recent being *Oslo 2084* (2004). [J-HH]

- *Alan Burns* (1929-2013), UK author who ~~began in *Authentic and New Worlds*~~ and used sf devices in such novels as *Europe After the Rain* (1965), *Babel* (1969) and *Dreamerika!: A Surrealist Fantasy* (1972), died in December; he was 83. [JC] [*Later: I'm told that although *New Worlds* ran an extract from *Babel* in 1969, the earlier contributor to sf magazines was almost certainly a different Alan Burns. Thank you, David Pringle.*]

- *Peter Darling* (1946-2013), Australian fan deeply involved with the 1975 and 1985 Australian Worldcons and for many years a member of ANZAPA, died on 2 October 2013; he was 67. [BG]

- *Ruth Robinson Duccini* (1918-2014), the last surviving female Munchkin actor from *The Wizard of Oz* (1939), died on 16 January aged 95. (One male still remains.) [PDF]

- *Frederick Fox* (1931-2013), Australian-born milliner to HM the Queen whose one foray into sf was designing the space-stewardess hats for *2001*, died on 11 December; he was 82. [MMW]

- *Janrae Frank* (1954-2014), US author, editor, journalist and fan who with Forrest J Ackerman and Jean Marie Stine edited *New Eves: Science Fiction About the Extraordinary Women of Today and Tomorrow* (1994), died on 12 January; she was 59. Her dark fantasy appeared in many ebooks and the print collection *In the Darkness, Hunting* (2004). [CH]

- *Vic Ghidalia* (1926-2013), US tv publicist who edited and co-edited genre anthologies from *The Little Monsters* (1969 with Roger Elwood) to *Feast of Fear* (1977 solo), died on 28 May 2013 aged 87. [CMO'B]

- *Bernard Glasser* (1924-2014), US film-maker whose productions included *Space Master X-7* (1958), *Return of the Fly* (1959), *The Day of the Triffids* (1963 uncredited) and *Crack in the World* (1965), died on 2 January; he was 89. [PDF]
- *Michael Hemmingson* (1966-2014), US author and journalist whose first novel *Minstrels* (1997) uses the sf device of an implanted camera converting the protagonist's life into reality tv, died on 9 January; he was 47. *The Rose of Heaven* (2004) is fantasy. [MAM]
- *Gordon Hessler* (1930-2012), German-born director of *The Golden Voyage of Sinbad* (1973), died on 19 January aged 83. [SFS]
- *Russell Johnson* (1924-2014), US character actor best known as the Professor in *Gilligan's Island* (1964-1967) but with many sf genre credits including *It Came from Outer Space* (1953), *This Island Earth* (1955) and *Attack of the Crab Monsters* (1957), died on 16 January aged 89. [PDF]
- *Roger Lloyd-Pack* (1944-2014), UK actor who was first seen in *The Avengers* (1965 tv) and played the inventor of the New Cybermen in the 2006 *Doctor Who* storylines *The Age of Steel* and *Rise of the Cybermen*, died on 15 January aged 69. Film credits include *The Magus* (1968), *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1984), *Interview with the Vampire* (1994) and *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* (2005). [MPJ/SG]
- *Michael Sporn* (1946-2014), US animator and director of many animated features for children – including classic fairytale adaptations – died on 19 January aged 67. [PDF]
- *Hal Sutherland* (1929-2014), US animator, director and co-founder of Filmation, who worked on Disney's *Peter Pan* (1953), *Lady and the Tramp* (1955), and *Sleeping Beauty* (1959), died on 16 January aged 85. He directed 20 episodes of the original *Star Trek* and was production director for the tv *He-Man and the Masters of the Universe*.
- *Saul Zaentz* (1921-2014), US producer whose three Oscars were for films other than Ralph Bakshi's *Lord of the Rings* (1978), died on 3 January aged 92. His control of Tolkien film rights and trademarks led to much litigation in which the Saul Zaentz Company intimidated such potential rivals as a Southampton pub long called The Hobbit (see [A297](#)). [MMW]

Science Masterclass. 'As the gas touched the metal plate, it became solid, icy ... With every second the ice would get colder until it finally reached absolute zero.'

- 'A laser ray hit the wall and flashed towards her. She fell back and pulled

the table on its side. The ray hit it and glanced off ...' (both Marv Wolfman, *Doomsday*, 1979) [BA]

Publishers & Sinners. Quercus, with its genre imprint Jo Fletcher Books, was put up for sale in late January after announcing a 'significant trading loss' for 2013. ([Bookseller](#), 22 January)

- Simon & Schuster (US) announced a new, mainly digital sf imprint called Simon451. [L]

The Weakest Link. *Dale Winton*: 'Dame Judi Dench played which character with a single-letter name in James Bond?' *Contestant*: 'I'm thinking D or E. [Pause] D!' (BBC1, *In It to Win It*) [PE]

As Others See Us II. Nicholas Lezard selected *The Flame Alphabet* by Ben Marcus as one of his favourite 2013 paperbacks, explaining: 'It looks from a distance like a sci-fi dystopia, à la Margaret Atwood, but is, in fact, far more interesting than that.' (*Guardian*, 7 December) [EA]

- *Gravity*'s ten Oscar nominations include Best Picture. Over to the BBC pundits! *Colin Patterson*, *BBC entertainment correspondent*: 'No sci-fi film has ever won the Best Picture Oscar.' *Richard Bacon* (*show host*): '*Gravity* is science fiction? I thought science fiction was aliens and spaceships and stuff. This is science fact.' *Mark Kermode* (*film critic*): 'No, it's science fiction.' (BBC Radio 5 Live, 16 January) [MPJ]

- Meanwhile, Christopher Nolan's coming sf film *Interstellar* is described as 'ambitious and top secret'. Co-star Wes Bentley cagily explains that 'what's interesting about it is it's not really science fiction as such as it's based in real theoretical physics.' (MTV, 24 January)

Magazine Scene. *Interzone* for January/February 2014 is issue 250, with my 200th 'Ansible Link' column. Champagne all round!

The Dead Past. *30 Years Ago*, Rob Holdstock gloated after selling *Mythago Wood*: 'A follow-up novel [...] *Lavondyss* is in production. Other great recent works from the mighty-thewed pen include *Night Hunter 4: The Shrine*. The terrifying saga of Dan Brady's endless bloody quest to find his lost family in the foetid and haunted labyrinths of occult England, continues. Again, he totally fails to find them. It is very possible that Dan Brady is extremely inept. [...] *Realms of Fantasy*, new Edwards/Holdstock epic, is out from Dragonsworld: lavish illustrations of 10 fantasy worlds including Earthsea and Urth. The first publicity was an interview for Manchester radio. Rob was

totally flummoxed by almost every question the crazy DJ interviewer asked, but particularly by one about Mars: “There’s a chapter on Mars in the book, and the pictures are very red. And, like, Mars itself is very red, isn’t it. Do you have any opinions on that, Robert?” Listen carefully for the thud of someone’s jaw impacting the table.’ (*Ansible* 37, February 1984)

Media Awards. Besides its ten Oscar nominations including best picture, *Gravity* had the only genre win in the Golden Globes, for Alfonso Cuarón as best director, and won seven Critics Choice Awards: director, actress in action movie (Sandra Bullock), cinematography, editing, visual effects, sf/horror movie and musical score. Additionally, Cuarón received the top Directors Guild of America award (feature film director) and *Gravity* shared the Producers Guild of America award for outstanding producer; the PGA animated film award was won by *Frozen* from Disney.

- UK National TV Awards went to *Doctor Who* for best drama and best drama performance (from Matt Smith). [MPJ]

As Others See Us III. Advice from Sherlock (Benedict Cumberbatch) at Watson’s wedding, while checking out male guests on behalf of a bridesmaid in search of a new boyfriend: ‘He’s also a comics and sci-fi geek. They’re always tremendously grateful. Really put the hours in.’ (BBC1, *Sherlock*: ‘The Sign of Three’, 5 January) [MPJ]

C.o.A. *dwain Kaiser*, c/o The Magic Door Used Books, 155 West 2nd St., Pomona, CA 91766, USA.

Fanfundery. *DUFF*: Voting in the 2014 southbound race from North America to Australasia is now open, with candidates Aurora Celeste and Juanita Coulson. The voting deadline is 31 March. See taff.org.uk/duff.html for linked announcement and PDF ballot form.

- *TAFF and GUFF reminder*: voting ends 22 April and 9 June respectively.

Thog’s Masterclass. *Dept of Morbid Anatomy*. ‘Smiling John dangled his face out on the long stalk of his neck and knitted his face into an intentionally stupid smile.’ (Speer Morgan, *The Freshour Cylinders*, 1998) [PB]

- *Drunken Gunplay Dept*. ‘Still fully loaded, I slammed the magazine home and cocked a round into the chamber.’ (Vincent Zandri, *As Catch Can*, 1999) [PB]

- *Bad Hair Day*. ‘Her smooth long hair gravitated toward the floor.’ (*Ibid*)

- *Dept of Lazy Public Transport*. ‘She walked slowly up Dearborn Avenue,

barely noticing the buses that snored past her, resting every block or two on bus stop benches.’ (Stephen King, *Rose Madder*, 1995) [KMCA]

- *Personal Attention Dept.* ‘On the playground, Blaze followed her with his own eyes.’ (‘Richard Bachman’, *Blaze*, 2007)

- *Dept of Gastrology.* ‘He felt his stomach drop. Then it seemed to bounce, and cram itself halfway up his throat.’ (*Ibid*)

- *Precarious Dept.* ‘The generosity of her breasts, like an overhanging cliff, magnetized his gaze; he seemed to expect a landslide.’ (Thomas Burnett Swann, ‘The Blue Monkeys’ [*Day of the Minotaur*] part 2, *Science Fantasy* December 1964/January 1965) [BA]

- *Scandal at the Villa Diodati?* ‘Mary Shelley streaked across the table.’ (Stephen Marley, *Doctor Who: The Missing Adventures: Managra*, 1995) [CM]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 14 February 2014: Brum Group annual sf quiz, Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre, 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk or rog dot peyton at btinternet dot com. Future meetings: 14 March 2014, Stan Nicholls and Anne Gay; 11 April 2014, Gavin Thorpe; 9 May 2014, Dr Nick Hawes, Senior Lecturer in Intelligent Robotics, University of Birmingham; 13 June 2014, Stephen Hunt.

Vaster than Empires and More Slow. Phil Foglio expostulates about Tor and Patrick Nielsen Hayden responds, as linked below.

<http://girlgeniusadventures.com/2014/01/29/a-tale-of-two-tors-be-warned-im-annoyed/>

<http://nielsenhayden.com/makinglight/archives/015743.html>

Harry Potter is Everywhere. Liu Xiaoming, Chinese ambassador to the UK, put forward a subtle metaphor for China’s fears of Japanese military resurgence: ‘In the Harry Potter story, the dark wizard Voldemort dies hard because the seven horcruxes, which contain parts of his soul, have been destroyed. If militarism is like the haunting Voldemort of Japan, the Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo is a kind of horcrux, representing the darkest parts of that nation’s soul.’ (*Telegraph*, 1 January) [MMW]

More at <http://tinyurl.com/ofkq9uo>

Thog's Second Helping. *Lunar Patriotism Dept.* 'Compact, blue-black night rested outside, and the only light visible apart from the pale, flickering stars was a glaring yellow streak rushing out of the door which had been opened in the cave room. / The snow outside the doorway, wherever it had been pushed aside by the door, created a barrier which ran across the gleaming light from the cave. On this barrier of snow the electrical light shone as well. / "Look!" Nina exclaimed in amazement when they had walked a few steps, "Look!" / She pointed to the cross-formed river of light. / "The Swedish flag!" / And indeed. / The snow was a deep blue, and its blue hue deepened further in the vicinity of the yellow light. / The first thing to greet their arrival on the Moon was the blue and yellow Swedish flag.' (Otto Witt, 'How the Moon Was Conquered', 1915, trans from Swedish just for Thog by John-Henri Holmberg) [J-HH]

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Ansible 320, March 2014

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Web news.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or automatic twin-tube wishing machines.

Controversies. Despite tasty ironies in recent SFWA-related upheavals (one eminent author, having signed a dreadfully worded petition and then helped edit it heavily for public consumption, said: ‘Many veteran members of SFWA objected to the early text and have worked it over to keep it to the point that pre-censorship of published material is an Orwellian injury to free speech, period.’), I can’t face summarizing this. See links at news.ansible.co.uk/misc/oldlink14.html#sfwa1 (‘More SFWA fun’) and [two lines above](#).

- On 1 March, [Loncon 3](#) announced Jonathan Ross as their Hugo Awards MC; Farah Mendlesohn left the Loncon committee in protest; much online sound and fury ensued; Ross, who’d been persuaded by Neil Gaiman to appear free of charge, withdrew some hours later. The above web page has links in [its March section](#).

Report on Probability A

Brian Aldiss writes: ‘Congratulations on the accuracy of quotation from *The Guardian*, in your No.318. / However, these matters may not be entirely understood when taken out of content. / Late last year I suffered a TIA. This year I have suffered two heart attacks. On all three of these occasions I was in the local Headington hospital. As a result, I am somewhat seriously incapacitated. / This even to the extent of being unable to read Tolstoy. I assume you have read his final novel, *Resurrection*? Grandly full of criticisms of Church and state. / Despite the blows of fate, allied with age, from which I suffer, career events are prospering. Presumably you find them beyond your province? / A great delight is that my publisher is currently planning to issue a facsimile of my “Whip Donovan” adventures among the

Planets, written in two hardcover volumes and liberally illustrated by me – I at the age of fourteen. My career in SF is long and – so I’d imagine – pretty well unique. [...] Carry on the good work!’ (15 February)

Ginjer Buchanan is retiring as Ace/Roc editor-in-chief at the end of March 2014. She has been at Ace for 30 years and will be 70 in December this year. [CSt]

Katherine Bucknell sniffs: ‘For me, science fiction classic is an oxymoron. What could possibly go out of date more rapidly than a book imagining what will happen in a future time or place? I believe readers are attracted to them because they like to be amazed at how long such fantasies do continue to interest readers. And they like to be in on the game of prophesying and guessing. The discussions I hear about science fiction “classics” usually focus on how amazing it is that the author was so close to imagining how things really turned out. But real technological, scientific and also cultural change are far more interesting. Even the best-informed books about the future and the best-written soon become boring. I’m afraid *Brave New World* is the last of Huxley’s many interesting books that I would recommend. And I would ditch Jules Verne, H.G. Wells, and the like.’ (‘Which Books Should We Stop Calling Classics?’ symposium, [Flavorwire](#), 19 February) [CSm] By this logic, it would seem that *The Time Machine* can still be a classic because its predicted far future hasn’t yet not happened; but Jane Austen is of course no good because historians confirm *she made all those people up....*

Alfonso Cuarón, with the Oscars looming and sf (*Gravity*) tending not to win Best Picture, teetered on the Atwoodian brink: ‘To be honest, I never thought I was doing a science fiction movie ... I guess there’s a connotation that science fiction lacks gravitas.’ However: ‘I’m happy with whichever label.’ ([BBC](#), 28 February) [MPJ] He won the director and film-editing Oscars; *Gravity* got several more, but not Best Picture.

Continentious

Until 4 Apr • **Parallel Worlds** (exhibition of Iain Banks’s foreign editions), University of Stirling Library, Scotland. Free?

Until 25 Apr • **Other Worlds and Imaginary Beings** (exhibition), Christ Church, Oxford. Mon-Fri 9:30am-1pm, 2-4:30pm. Free.

15 Mar • **A Celebration of the Life & Works of Iain Banks**, University of Huddersfield. 2pm-7pm. Tickets £12; concessions £10. Advance booking at www.thelbt.org/celebration-life-works-iain-banks.

16 Mar • **EM-Con** (multimedia), Albert Hall, Nottingham. Many guests. Tickets *including booking fees*: £14 'early bird' (10am-5pm) SOLD OUT; £9 day (11am-5pm); under-5s free; £6 evening live-music party at another venue – The Approach, Friar Lane. See www.em-con.co.uk.

26 Mar • **Magical Tales: Wolves and Volumes**, Convocation House, Old Bodleian Library, Oxford. 10am-11am. £11. More at oxfordliteraryfestival.org/literature-events/2014/march-26.

26 Mar • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. BSFA Awards Panel. Free.

27-30 Mar • **Sci-Fi Weekender** (was *SFX* Weekender), Hafan y Mor Holiday Park, Pwllheli, North Wales. Booking by accommodation: *all on-site rooms have been booked*. Day passes £49 Friday or Saturday, £90 both, plus £10/person booking fee. See www.scifiweekender.com.

30 Mar • **The History of the Wizard**, Christ Church, Oxford. 2pm-3pm. £6. See 30 March events at Magical Tales link above.

5-6 Apr • **Sci Fi Scarborough** (comics, media), The Spa, Scarborough. 10am-10pm. £35 reg; child £17.50. Day £20 Sat, £15 Sun (child £10, £7.50). See www.scifiscarborough.co.uk.

8-10 Apr • **London Book Fair**, Earls Court. Terry Pratchett is Author of the Day for 8 April. See www.londonbookfair.co.uk.

9-10 Aug • **Sunderland Comic Con**, Sunderland Software Centre, Tavistock Place, Sunderland, SR1 1PB. £20 reg, £15 concessions; £14/£10 for one day. Tickets from sunderlandcomiccon.com.

11-13 Aug • **SF Foundation Critical Masterclass**, Royal Observatory, Greenwich. £200. Application deadline was 28 February, but maybe it's not full: enquiries to farah dot sf at gmail dot com.

14-18 Aug • **Loncon 3** (72nd Worldcon), ExCeL centre, London Docklands. *Now £125 reg; £280 family*. Unchanged: £65 YA; £30 child (6-15); £2 infant (0-5); £25 supp. These rates hold until 14 July 2014, and will then rise to at-the-door levels. See www.loncon3.org.

21 Aug • **Irradiating the Object: M. John Harrison** (conference), University of Warwick. Linked to *SF/F Now*, below.

22-23 Aug • **SF/F Now** (conference), University of Warwick. See www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/hrc/confs/sf. CFP deadline 31 March.

20 Sep • **Andromeda Two**, Digbeth, Birmingham. *Postponed to 2015 owing to venue problems*. More at terror-tree.co.uk/andromeda-tw.

18-20 Oct • **Lakes International Comic Art Festival**, Kendal, Cumbria. Many guests. Tickets on sale from May. Some parts free, including Comics Clock Tower venue. See www.comicartfestival.com.

14-16 Nov • **Armadacon 26**, Future Inn, Plymouth. GoH TBA. £30; day rates £15 Sat, £10 Sun (concessions £25, £12, £8); £5 evening from 6pm. Contact 18 Wadham Rd, Liskeard, Cornwall, PL14 3BD.

6-8 Feb 2015 • **Con27ilkin** (filk), Best Western Hotel, Marks Tey, Colchester. £37 reg, £27 unwaged. Cheques to UK Filk Convention, c/o 119 Whitehill Lane, Gravesend, DA12 5LU.

Rumblings. *Worldcon 2016*: Beijing and Kansas City are both bidding, with site selection voting to follow and a result expected at Loncon 3 this year. See www.loncon3.org/2016_bidder_filing.php.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. It must be true, it's on the net: 'John Clute and John Grant, as two of the forefathers of gaslight romance, commented that ...' (steampunk.wikia.com/wiki/Steampunk as at 3 March) [BA]

Awards. *Horror Writers Association Life Achievement*: Stephen Jones, R.L. Stine.

- *James Tiptree Jr* (exploring gender roles): N.A. Sulway, *Rupetta*.
- *Kitschies*: NOVEL Ruth Ozeki, *A Tale for the Time Being*. DEBUT Ann Leckie, *Ancillary Justice*. COVER ART Will Staehle for *The Age Atomic* by Adam Christopher.
- *Red House Children's Book Awards* (voted by children): overall winner Rick Yancey, *The 5th Wave*. [MPJ]

Publishers & Sinners. Constable & Robinson, famed for all those

‘Mammoth Book Of’ anthologies, was acquired by Little, Brown on 31 January. Pete Duncan from C&R remains its managing director at L,B.

Thog is Everywhere. Now moonlighting for the BBC website: ‘Singapore Airshow: The fight for eyeballs in mid-air’. (11 February) [JF]

R.I.P. *Aaron Allston* (1960-2014), US role-playing game designer and author – mainly of *Star Wars* spinoffs – died on 27 February; he was 53. [MR] *Nonie Rider* adds: ‘Aaron’s mostly known as a writer of *Star Wars* books, but for those of us who’ve been roleplaying for a few decades – the old-fashioned way, around a table with dice and pizza – he was also the best goddamn writer of genre supplements out there.’

- *Bill Baker*, US publisher, comics historian and author of *Icons: The DC Comics and WildStorm Art of Jim Lee*, died in February at the age of 55. [PDF]

- *Christopher Barry* (1925-2014), UK tv director who had the longest run as director of the original *Doctor Who* (1963-1979), died on 7 February; he was 88. Further genre credits are *Out of the Unknown* (1965), *Moonbase 3* (1973) and *The Tripods* (1984). [GW]

- *Erik Blegvad* (1923-2014), Danish-born artist who illustrated Mary Norton’s *Bed-Knob and Broomstick* (1957), his own translation of Hans Christian Andersen and other children’s fantasies, died on 14 January; he was 90. [PDF]

- *Richard Bull* (1924-2014), US actor who was in *Men into Space* (1959) and played the doctor in *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea* (1964-1968), died on 3 February aged 89. [MMW]

- *Stepan Chapman* (1951-2014), US author – mainly of offbeat short stories following a 1969 debut in *Analog* – whose one novel *The Troika* (1997) won the Philip K. Dick Award, died on 27 January. [AV]

- *Robert M. Fresco* (1930-2014), US screenwriter and Oscar-winning documentary film-maker whose early credits include the sf horror movies *Tarantula* (1955), *The Monolith Monsters* (1957) and *The Alligator People* (1959), died on 14 February; he was 83. [PDF]

- *Martin Greenberg* (1918-2013), co-founder with David Kyle of Gnome Press in 1948 and editor of several sf anthologies, died on 20 October 2013; he was 95. [WGC]

- *John Henson* (1965-2014), son of Muppets founder Jim Henson and occasional Muppet performer (his regular character being the huge, hairy

‘Sweetums’), died on 14 February aged 48. His films include *Muppets from Space* (1999). [O]

- *Ken Jones* (1930-2014), UK actor who played Archangel Derek in *Dead Ernest* (1982 tv) and was in *The Guardians* (1971 tv), *Thriller* (1974 tv), *Stanley’s Dragon* (1994) and *Turn on to T-Bag* (1988 tv), died on 13 February aged 83. [AW]
- *Christopher Malcolm* (1946-2014), Scots actor best known for *The Empire Strikes Back* (1980), *Labyrinth* (1986) and *Highlander* (1986), died on 15 February aged 67. [PDF]
- *Philip Seymour Hoffman* (1967-2014), Oscar-winning US actor and director whose genre credits include *The Invention of Lying* (2009) and *The Hunger Games: Catching Fire* (2013), died on 2 February aged 46. His character in *The Master* (2012) was, essentially, L. Ron Hubbard. [LP/SG]
- *Arthur Rankin Jr* (1924-2014), US producer, director and animator whose work included *Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer* (stop-motion, 1964), *The Hobbit* (1977), *The Last Unicorn* (1982) and *Thundercats* (1980s), died on 30 January; he was 89. [PDF]
- *Harold Ramis* (1944-2014), US screenwriter, actor and producer/director best known for *Ghostbusters* (1984, co-writer and star role), *Groundhog Day* (1993, writer/director) and the remake of *Bedazzled* (2000, writer/director), died on 24 February; he was 69. [GW/SG]
- *Mark E. Rogers* (1952-2014), US fantasy/horror author and illustrator whose work includes the 1980-1998 ‘Samurai Cat’ sequence, died on 2 February. His novella *The Runestone* became a 1990 film. [PB]
- *Maximilian Schell* (1930-2014), Oscar-winning Austrian actor seen in *The Black Hole* (1979) and *Deep Impact* (1998), died on 1 February aged 83. [LP]
- *Bhob Stewart* (1937-2014), US artist, writer, editor and fan influential in early comics fanzines and acting as 1960-1963 art director for the Hugo-winning *Xero*, died on 24 February aged 76. [F770]
- *Shirley Temple* (1928-2014), famed US child star who played fairytale fantasy roles in *The Blue Bird* (1940) and *Shirley Temple’s Storybook* (1958-1961 tv), died on 10 February; she was 85. [PDF]

We Are Everywhere. The novelty of Tolkien imagery never ceases to delight US political pundits: ‘President Obama apparently lost his magic ring. The sun broke through the pall of Republican despair, the fires of Mordor ceased and the spell of buffoonery and pettifoggery that had plagued the elephant herd was miraculously lifted.’ (Kathleen Parker, *Washington Post*,

19 February) [MMW] Oliphaunt herd, surely?

• Similarly: “‘It’s like what what’s-his-name told the hobbit,” Ohio’s Republican governor told me [...] “What’s the guy’s name? Gandel? Gandorf?”” (Matt Bai, *NY Times Magazine*, 9 September 2012) [MMW]

Award Shortlists. Best Novel categories only; see February 2014 links at news.ansible.co.uk for full listings.

• **BRAM STOKER** Joe Hill, *NOS4A2*; Stephen King, *Doctor Sleep*; Lisa Morton, *Malediction*; Sarah Pinborough and F. Paul Wilson, *A Necessary End*; Christopher Rice, *The Heavens Rise*.

• **NEBULAS** Karen Joy Fowler, *We Are All Completely Beside Ourselves*; Neil Gaiman, *The Ocean at the End of the Lane*; Charles E. Gannon, *Fire with Fire*; Nicola Griffith, *Hild*; Ann Leckie, *Ancillary Justice*; Linda Nagata, *The Red: First Light*; Sofia Samatar, *A Stranger in Olondria*; Helene Wecker, *The Golem and the Jinni*.

C.o.A. *Andy Sawyer* (home), 10 Kingsway West, Chester, CH2 2LA.

Outraged Letters. *Email Too Eldritch to Answer Dept:* ‘The Lovecraft Reference Resource are a new religious organisation established to represent that which is Lovecraftian on the Internet into one place. Our idea is that the Lovecraftian is being established on the Internet as a growing artistic, literary and religious movement, and that if we can organise this towards one resource, then a more cohesed movement can be organised. [...]’ Partly cohesed and partly squamous.

• *Gregory Feeley:* ‘Did you notice that with the release of the new Liam Neeson movie *Non-Stop*, there now is no way that Brian Aldiss’s first SF novel can be made into a movie without a title change? (The US title *Starship* has also been taken.) I think *Vanguard from Alpha* is still free, though.’

UPS and Downs. That set of US stamps depicting Asimov and other sf authors – thought to have been postponed indefinitely if not cancelled – may appear after all in 2015. (*Washington Post* blog) [GM]

Political Statistics Dept. ‘One study found 41% of Lib Dem supporters were fans of Doctor Who, compared with 31% of the general population ... Intriguingly, Lib Dems also bucked the national trend of preferring Star Wars over Star Trek.’ (*Guardian*, 3 February) [JS]

Random Fandom. *FAAn Awards:* voting is now open, closing on 5 April.

Ballot form at corflu.org/Corflu31/faan_ballot_2014.pdf.

The Dead Past. *50 Years Ago: 'New Worlds and Science Fantasy* have gained an eleventh hour reprieve. *New Worlds*, which has seen some fifteen years of continuous publication, and its sister *Nova* publication were due to fold this month. Both titles have now been bought by a new publisher, David Warburton of Roberts & Vinter Ltd., and will accordingly continue publication without a break. [...] Stepping into the world of professional sf is Kyril Bonfiglioli, the Oxford antiquarian bookseller, who will be responsible for *Science Fantasy*, whilst in charge at *New Worlds* will be Michael Moorcock who comes to the editorial chair via general fandom, editing *Tarzan Adventures* and the world of Elric. This is undoubtedly the most important elevation to prozine publishing since seventeen year old Charles Hornig was hired as editor to *Wonder Stories* just thirty years ago.' ([Skyrack 64](#), March 1964)

Media Awards. *BAFTAs*: the director (Alfonso Cuarón), UK film, cinematography, sound, music and visual effects categories all went to *Gravity*; *Frozen* won as animated film.

- *London Critics' Circle*: *Gravity* won for director and technical achievement/effects (Tim Webber).
- *Annies* (animation): *Frozen* took best feature film, music, production design, direction and voice acting (Josh Gad).
- *US Writers Guild*: Spike Jonze won original screenplay for *Her*, which he also directed. [MPJ]

Fanfundery. The ongoing reminder: [DUFF](#) 2014 voting ends on 31 March, [TAFF](#) on 22 April, [GUFF](#) on 9 June. See taff.org.uk for ballots.

Thog's Masterclass. *Dept of Engineering Insight*. 'Obviously, the main driving force will be the power units.' (John W. Campbell, *The Black Star Passes*, 1953)

- *Worth a Thousand Words*. 'Their photographs all look and sound a little bit like me.' (Austin Grossman, *Soon I Will Be Invincible*, 2007) [PB]
- *Dept of Frenzied Anatomy*. 'Swan's cheeks had turned hectic.' (Kim Stanley Robinson, *2312*, 2012) [KS]
- *Dribbling Dept*. 'I followed him as he kicked his feet angrily in front of him, as if dissatisfied with their progress.' (Antti Tuomainen, *The Healer*, 2010; trans Lola Rogers 2013) [PB]

- *Eyeballs in the Sky*. ‘Her eyes ran over me like mice.’ (Keith Laumer, *A Plague of Demons*, 1965) [JHM]
 - *Pitiless Chill of Space Dept*. ‘I had time then to notice a cut on my jaw and a swollen eye and register a cabin pressure of .9 PSI and a temperature of -56 K ...’ (Keith Laumer, *Star Treasure*, 1971) [BA]
 - *The Gap into Prose: A Dark and Hungry Thog Arises*. ‘Without warning, a tingle ran down Holt’s nearly strong spine and tightened around his scrotum.’ ‘When he lifted his head again, he was smiling like a corpse with an orgasm.’ “‘He didn’t say,” Scorz reported, as if he were fighting a knot in his throat.’ ‘A laser of inspiration shot along the synapses of Nick’s brain; his nerves were ablaze with coherent light.’ ‘She didn’t reply. Her only answer was the increasing stability of her strides.’ ‘In the privacy of his bowels, he feared Angus too intensely.’ ‘Angus Thermopyle laughed – a sound like the pulping of flesh.’ ‘Naturally no room, however private, could be secure from what Milos Taverner might have called “buggery”.’ “‘You’ve made us look like garbage, like weasels! You’ve curled their moral hair to the roots!’” (all Stephen R. Donaldson, *The Gap into Power: A Dark and Hungry God Arises*, 1992) [AR]
-

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 14 March 2014: Stan Nicholls and Anne Gay talk to the Brum Group, Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre, 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk or rog dot peyton at btinternet dot com. Future meetings: 11 April 2014, Gavin Thorpe; 9 May 2014, Dr Nick Hawes, Senior Lecturer in Intelligent Robotics, University of Birmingham; 13 June 2014, Stephen Hunt; 11 July 2014, Sam Stone and David Howe; 8 August 2014, Summer Social; 12 September 2014, Chris Morgan; 10 October 2014, Richard Ashton; 7 November 2014, Storm Constantine; 5 December 2014, Christmas Social.

Hugo Deadline, Last Call. Nominations must be in by 31 March 2014. It would perhaps be a bit crass to remind you *again* about the Ansible Editions collections of Algis Budrys’s criticism being eligible for Best Related Book, but I will anyway. For the last time.

<http://www.loncon3.org/nominations.php>

<http://ae.ansible.co.uk/>

Outraged Letters II. *Andrew I. Porter* sends an uplifting item from Morning Media Newsfeed (19 February): ‘The Guardian Corrects: Sir Patrick Stewart Isn’t Gay. A Guardian contributor mistakenly cited Sir Patrick Stewart as being gay, resulting in this correction: “This article was amended on 17 February 2014. The third paragraph originally said ‘Some gay people, such as Sir Patrick Stewart, think Page’s coming out speech is newsworthy.’ This should have read ‘Some people, such as Sir Patrick Stewart, think Page’s coming out speech is newsworthy.’” Stewart later responded: “Well, @guardian it makes for a nice change ... at least I didn’t wake up to the Internet telling me I was dead again.”’

Thog’s Second Helping. *Independent Voice Dept.* ““Sit down,” Joyce Parry’s mouth told him.’ (Ian Rankin as Jack Harvey, *Witch Hunt*, 1993) [PB]

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Ansible 321, April 2014

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Web news.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or a soirée with Lady Constance de Coverlet.

Editorial. Sorry, I won't be at Eastercon this year, for reasons too tedious even to concoct an April Fool jape about. Loncon 3, definitely.

The Electric Time Trousers

Isaac Asimov, as fans know but journalists don't, did not write 'The Man who Sold the Moon': 'For a long time the idea of commercial space was an eccentric billionaire's pipe dream. A fanciful desire of those with a penchant for Isaac Asimov novels.' (Izabella Kaminska on the commercialization of space, *Financial Times*, 15 March) [MMW]

Diana Gill, head of Harper Voyager US, moves to Ace/Roc/Berkley today to replace Ginjer Buchanan (now retired) as executive editor. [L]

Michael Moorcock unleashed a spate of LinkedIn invitations after incautiously allowing this site to 'search for contacts' (i.e. 'let LinkedIn spam everyone in your address book'). 'I appear to have fumbled the keys again. Another downside of neuropathy. 1500 replies ...' Oops.

Bryan Talbot has boldly ventured beyond the fields we know: 'I'm just back from a furry con in Sweden, where I was the only guest of honour, because of my work on the Grandville series of course. It wasn't half as weird as I'd feared and we raised lots of money for charity. Only about a third of the attendees were "fursuiters"; and furies, as a whole, seem very highly educated. Practically everyone I spoke to was either doing a PhD or already had one, or was a high-level software geek or a solicitor or something. At one point, someone asked me if it was any different from SF or comic conventions. I realised then that the biggest difference was this: members of

SF and comic cons are of any and all character types. Hence, you'll always get a proportion who are grumpy, cynical, overbearing or otherwise objectionable. The furies all seem to be universally, almost unbearably, nice, and are at the con following only one agenda: to be with like-minded people and to have fun. Lots of inter-furry hugging was involved. What went on in the private room parties, though, is beyond my ken but one of the night's con food buffets was titled "Sausage Fest".'

Conza

Until 13 Apr • **Brainstorm** (Bryan Talbot exhibition), The Muse at 269 Portobello Road, London, W11 1LR. Noon-6pm, Thursday-Sunday.

Until 22 Jun • **Science Fiction: New Death** (exhibition), FACT, 88 Wood St, Liverpool, L1 4DQ. Free. www.fact.co.uk/whats-on.aspx.

5-6 Apr • **Sci Fi Scarborough** (comics, media), The Spa, Scarborough. 10am-10pm. £35 reg; child £17.50. Day £20 Sat, £15 Sun (child £10, £7.50). See www.scifiscarborough.co.uk.

8-10 Apr • **London Book Fair**, Earls Court. Terry Pratchett is Author of the Day for 8 April. See www.londonbookfair.co.uk.

12-13 Apr • **QED** (science/skeptics), Palace Hotel, Oxford St, Manchester, M60 7HA. £99 reg; £60 concessions. See www.qedcon.org.

18-21 Apr • **Satellite 4** (Eastercon), Crowne Plaza Hotel, Glasgow. £65 reg; £50 unwaged; £20 supp/junior (12-17); £5 child (5-11); £1 infant. *Rates rise after 4 April to at-the-door levels*: £75 reg (day £20 Fri or Mon, £30 Sat or Sun), £60 unwaged (day £15/£25), £30 junior (day £10), £15 child (day £5), £3 infant (day £1). Contact c/o Flat 2/1, 691 Shields Rd, Pollokshields, Glasgow, G41 4QL; www.satellite4.org.uk.

24-27 Apr • **Dead by Dawn** (horror film festival), Filmhouse, Edinburgh. Box office 0131 228 2688; see www.deadbydawn.co.uk.

30 Apr • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. With Anne Perry. Free.

2 May - 19 Aug • **Comics Unmasked: Art and Anarchy in the UK** (exhibition), PACCAR Gallery, British Library, London.

19 Jul • **Edge-Lit 3**, Cinema One, QUAD Centre, Derby. 11am-midnight. GoH Joe Abercrombie, Charles Stross, more TBA. Tickets £25. Book online at www.derbyquad.co.uk/special-event/edge-lit-3.

12-21 Aug • **SF Linkcons**, various venues. See www.sflinkcons.org but note that events from 27 August (SFLC-D to SFLC-F) are CANCELLED.

14-18 Aug • **Loncon 3** (72nd Worldcon), ExCeL centre, London Docklands. £125 reg; £280 family; £65 YA; £30 child (6-15); £2 infant (0-5); £25 supp. See www.loncon3.org for innumerable further details.

22-24 Aug • **Shamrokon** (Eurocon), Burlington Hotel, Dublin. €35 reg, rising to €40 on 1 August; concessions €25; under-22s €10; supp €10. Online booking and further information at www.shamrokon.ie.

30 Aug • **CamCon** ('geek culture'), The Junction, Cambridge. Tickets £15; students £13; under-16s £11; under-10s £1 booking fee; £17, £15, £13 and free at door. Online booking at thecamcon.com.

12-14 Sep • **The Asylum** (steampunk), Lincoln. £21 'early bird' tickets sold out; more to come at £24. See steampunk.synthasite.com.

13 Sep • **TitanCon**, Wellington Park Hotel, Belfast. £15 reg; £5 supp. Join at titancon.com (PayPal only, with booking surcharge).

11-14 Sep • **Oxonmoot** (Tolkien Society), Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford. See www.tolkienociety.org/events/oxonmoot-2014/.

3 Oct - 27 Jan • **Terror and Wonder: The Gothic Imagination** (exhibition), British Library, London. More details to follow.

Rumblings. *Hugo Nominations* closed on 31 March. • *Worldcon 2016*: an anti-Beijing-bid site has appeared at beijing2016.org.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. In a 'Game Of Thrones ... from A to Z' newspaper spacefiller: '**Dragons** Were the show ever to devolve into silliness (what? "devolve" you say? Oh shush) ...' ([Independent](#), 31 March) [MPJ]

Awards. *Arthur C. Clarke Award* shortlist: Kameron Hurley, *God's War*; Ann Leckie, *Ancillary Justice*; Phillip Mann, *The Disestablishment of*

Paradise; Ramez Naam, *Nexus*; Christopher Priest, *The Adjacent*; James Smythe, *The Machine*.

- *Hans Christian Andersen Awards* for life achievement in children's fiction: AUTHOR Nahoko Uehashi; ARTIST Roger Mello. [L]
- *Ken Kesey Award for Fiction*: Ursula K. Le Guin, *The Unreal and The Real*.
- *Pilgrim Award* for life achievement in sf studies: Joan Gordon.
- *World Horror Convention Grand Master*: Brian Keene.

Publishers & Sinners. Hodder & Stoughton, owned by the world-bestrident Hachette, offered £12.6 million for Quercus, which (including its Jo Fletcher Books genre imprint) was put on sale early this year. The deal should be finalized by the end of this month. [L]

As Others See Us II. 'The Hugo award is a vaguely dildo-shaped silver rocketship ...' (Hayley Campbell, [New Statesman](#), 4 March)

R.I.P. *Stewart H. Benedict* (1924-2014), US journalist, author and playwright who edited the 1963 anthology *Tales of Terror and Suspense*, died on 19 March. [SFS]

- *Richard Coogan* (1914-2014), US actor who first played the lead role in the early tv sf series *Captain Video and his Video Rangers* (1949-1955), died on 12 March; he was 99. [JHB]
- *Philippe Ebly* (Jacques Gouzou, 1920-2014), French author of many sf shorts and novels that sold over two million copies since 1971 and were translated into several languages, died on 1 March aged 93. Popular series included 'Les Conquerants de l'Impossible' ('The Fantastic Conquerors'), 'Les Evades du temps' ('The Time Runaways') and 'Les patrouilleurs de l'an 4003' ('The 4003 Patrol'). [DS]
- *James Ellis* (1931-2014), Belfast-born actor whose genre credits include *Re-Animator* (1985), *Doctor Who* (1989), *Leapin' Leprechauns!* (1995) and *Dragonworld: The Legend Continues* (1999), died on 8 March aged 82. [AW]
- *Donald Malcolm* (1930-2013), Scots author of short sf in *Nebula*, *New Worlds* and *New Writings in SF* 1957-1976 – plus two 1976 novels for Laser Books, *The Unknown Shore* and *The Iron Rain* – died on 9 November 2013. [SFS/MA]
- *Derek Martinus* (1931-2014), UK tv director responsible for 26 early *Doctor Who* episodes 1965-1970 – including the debut of the Cybermen and

- the first storyline shot in colour – died on 27 March aged 82. [MPJ]
- *Steve Moore* (1949-2014), UK writer who scripted comics for *2000 AD*, *Doctor Who Weekly/Monthly* and *Warrior*, was an editor of *Fortean Times* and *Fortean Studies*, novelized the film *V for Vendetta* (2006) and published the 2011 fantasy *Somnium*, died on 14 March aged 64. [DVB]
 - *Oswald Morris* (1915-2014), Oscar-winning uk cinematographer whose films include *The Man with the Golden Gun* (1974), *The Wiz* (1978), *The Great Muppet Caper* (1981) and *The Dark Crystal* (1982, his last), died on 17 March; he was 98. [MMW]
 - *Kate O'Mara* (1939-2014), UK actress who played that villainous Time Lady the Rani in *Doctor Who* (1985, 1987), died on 30 March aged 74. She also appeared in the films *The Horror of Frankenstein* and *The Vampire Lovers*, both 1970. [DVB/GW]
 - *James Rebhorn* (1948-2014), US actor whose genre credits include *Independence Day* (1996), *From the Earth to the Moon* (1998 tv), *The Adventures of Pluto Nash* (2002) and *The Box* (2009), died on 21 March; he was 65. [SG]
 - *Alan Rodgers* (1959-2014), US author – mainly of horror but also of some sf – who won a Stoker award for his debut story 'The Boy who Came Back from the Dead' (1987), died on 8 March aged 54. [GVG] He had been associate editor of *Twilight Zone* magazine 1984-1987 and sole editor of *Night Cry* 1985-1987.
 - *Peter Ruber* (1940-2014), Australian-born author, editor and critic who was editor at Arkham House 1997-2004 and edited collections by H. Russell Wakefield and Seabury Quinn for Ash-Tree Press, died on 6 March. [RB]
 - *Jonathan Schell* (1943-2014), bestselling US nonfiction author whose *The Fate of the Earth* (1982) inspired the nuclear-holocaust film *The Day After* (1983), died on 25 March aged 70. [AIP]
 - *Lorenzo Semple Jr.* (1923-2014), US screenwriter whose films include *King Kong* (1976 remake), *Flash Gordon* (1980) and *Never Say Never Again* (1983), died on 28 March aged 91; his most utterly memorable contribution to sf was the 1960s Adam West *Batman* tv series. [O]
 - *Michael Shea* (1946-2014), US author of much fine dark fantasy and sf/horror – often echoing Jack Vance as in the World Fantasy Award-winning *Niff the Lean* (1982), or H.P. Lovecraft as in *The Color Out of Time* (1984) – died unexpectedly on 16 February; he was 67. His novella 'The Growlimb' (January 2004 *F&SF*) was another WFA winner. [SHS]

- *Lucius Shepard* (1943-2014), US author of much richly styled sf and fantasy flavoured with magic realism – a note established in his 1984 debut novel *Green Eyes* – died on 18 March at the age of 70. His many awards include the 1985 Campbell for best new writer, a Nebula for the 1986 ‘R&R’ – incorporated into *Life during Wartime* (1987) – and a Hugo for ‘Barnacle Bill the Spacer’ (1992). [RF] A personal favourite, from the Dragon Griaule fantasy sequence, is *The Scalehunter’s Beautiful Daughter* (1988).
- *John Rowe Townsend* (1922-2014), UK academic and author of young-adult novels – several sf, beginning with *Noah’s Castle* (1975) – died on 24 March. He was 91. [JC]
- *David A. Trampier* (1954-2014), writer and artist for TSR Inc in the 1970s-1980s, best remembered for his 1978 *Advanced D&D Players Handbook* cover art, died on 24 March. [SFS]
- *Ken Utsui* (1931-2014), Japanese actor who played his country’s first film superhero Super Giant aka Starman in short films released from 1957 and edited into US features beginning with *Atomic Rulers of the World* (1964), died on 14 March aged 82. [PDF]
- *Wu Ma* (1942-2014), Taiwanese actor, director, producer and writer, died on 4 February aged 71. *Kari Sperring* writes: ‘His long film career included many genre credits works, most famously the Taoist ghosthunter in *A Chinese Ghost Story*; others are *Encounters of the Spooky Kind* (actor), *The Dead and the Deadly* (dir, actor), *Portrait of a Nymph* (dir, actor), *Fox Legend* (dir, actor), *Magic Cop* (actor) and *Deadful Melody* [sic] (actor).’

The Weakest Link. *Jeremy Vine*: ‘Who wrote *I, Robot?*’ Contestant: ‘William Burroughs.’ (BBC2, *Revenge of the Egghead*, 12 March) [JL]

Court Circular. The forgotten 1970s Scots band Bilbo Baggins (see [A312](#)) is doomed to remain forgotten. After an objection from the dread Saul Zaentz Company, their court appeal was shut down by an IPO judge who was unimpressed by the band’s cunning compromise of rebranding with the erstwhile manager’s name: ‘Henry Spurway’s Bilbo Baggins’. SZC doesn’t *always* get its way, though: ‘Last year, however, it failed to stop the London-based marketing firm Ocean Outdoors from offering advertising space on two towers on either side of a motorway despite SZC’s claim that this was similar to the title of one of the volumes of the Lord of the Rings trilogy.’

([Independent](#), 31 March) [MPJ] If Elvis Presley ever makes a comeback, he too will be in trouble.

Outraged Letters. *Simon R. Green* takes up the tale: ‘Ginjer Buchanan is indeed retiring, after being my editor on and off for almost twenty-five years. I was made redundant in 1985, at the age of thirty, and went on the dole for the first time in my life. During the next three and a half years, I couldn’t find a job to save my life, so I decided that this was the time to be taking my writing seriously. I wrote seven novels, all of which were rejected. Many repeatedly. I finally got a job working at Bilbo’s Bookshop, in Bath. I started work on the Monday; on the Wednesday I got a letter from Ginjer. Saying that she wanted to buy my Hawk & Fisher novel. And would I be interested in writing five more books, featuring the same characters? And that was the start of my career. Now that is an editor.’ (27 March)

Fanfundery. *DUFF 2014* voting ended on 31 March and the results are now awaited.

- *TAFF* voting ends on 22 April (so that’s the last reminder here); *GUFF* voting on 9 June. See taff.org.uk for ballots.

Bode’s Law. Genre references creep insidiously into music reviewing, or at least its fashion notes: ‘... when Ellie Goulding saunters onto the stage wearing a flesh-tinted mesh, gold and black basque topped off with imitation yak-fur capelet which falls uncomfortably between Barbarella and the Night’s Watch from *Game Of Thrones*, it does not bode well.’ (Emily Mackay, *Independent*, 10 March) [MPJ]

Magazine Scene. John Klima is the new editor of *SFWA Bulletin*.

Random Fandom. *Milt Stevens* offered a chilling follow-up to the ‘Wossgate’ uproar briefly mentioned in [A320](#): ‘Shall we start the rumor that Loncon is replacing Ross with Orson Scott Card?’ (*File 770*, March)

The Dead Past. *40 Years Ago*, sf cinema was all played out: ‘*William S. Burroughs*: “I understand that you may play Valentine Michael Smith in the film version of *Stranger in a Strange Land*.” *David Bowie*: “No, I don’t like the book much. In fact, I think it is terrible. It was suggested to me that I make it into a movie, then I got around to reading it. It seemed a bit too Flower-Powery and that made me a bit wary.” *Burroughs*: “I’m not happy with the book either. You know, science fiction has not been very successful. It was supposed to start a whole new trend and nothing happened. For the special effects in *2001*, it was great. But it all ended there.”’ (Craig Copetas, ‘Beat Godfather Meets Glitter Mainman’, *Rolling Stone*, 28 February 1974)

[MMW]

- *50 Years Ago*, one young fan was more optimistic during an open discussion at Eastercon: ‘Terry Pratchett said that good sf is still being written.’ (*Skyrack* 65, April 1964)
- *70 Years Ago*, some wartime news from August Derleth at Arkham House: ‘Lovecraft’s *The Outsider and Others* is now out of print. I continue to hope, however, that it will be reprinted in England after the war, perhaps in a less expensive edition, or perhaps, with less stories in the book. We shall see as to this once this conflict is done ...’ (*Futurian War Digest*, April 1944)

Media Awards. *Oscars*: besides *Gravity*’s multiple awards (for which see [A320](#)), *Frozen* won for animated feature and original song; *Her* won for original screenplay.

- *Razzies*: three wins for *After Earth!* Worst actor, Jaden Smith; worst supporting actor, Will Smith; worst screen combo, Jaden and Will Smith.

[MPJ]

- *Royal Television Society*: best international programme was *Game of Thrones*.

Thog’s Masterclass. *Hyperinflation Dept.* ‘The creature sprang with a bigger snarl than any modern-day tiger ever gave out with. It came straight through the air. Those two saber teeth grew from ten inches to ten feet as the beast rocketed in.’ (Lester Del Rey, *Tunnel Through Time*, 1966) [BA]

- *Dept of Similes.* ‘He’d yawn like a whale on a plankton hunt and swallow like he was choking down a lump of concrete, but his head got more and more like a pressure cooker no matter what he did.’ ‘He looked like he’d lost about twenty pounds in stature.’ (Jack Harvey [Ian Rankin], *Bleeding Hearts*, 1994) [PB] ‘He slammed onto the hay floor like thirty anvils dropped out of a ten-story window.’ (Richard S. Meyers, *Cry of the Beast*, 1979) [BA]

- *Stardrive Physics Explained.* ‘Velocity was the porridge of commercial space travel. Too much or too little, and you got eaten by bears.’ (M.C. Planck, *The Kassa Gambit*, 2013) [CH]

- *A Suspicious Character.* ‘He couldn’t spread butter on toast without people checking their pockets to see if they’d been robbed.’ (*Ibid*)

- *Splits Dept.* ‘The punch hit Westie in the stomach and sent him backwards until he hit the wall, either side of a framed canvas.’ (Ian Rankin, *Doors Open*, 2010) [PB]

- *Dept of Free Association.* ‘Connie sorted through the different drawers in

her mind, rooting through the file labeled MISCELLANEOUS. For some reason the word made her think of Sam.’ (Katherine Howe, *The Physick Book of Deliverance Dane*, 2009) [PB]

• *A Dark and Hungry Thog Arises (2)*. ‘Even if his brain had decided to pull away from her before he became helplessly enmeshed in Angus’s plots, his body might have remained where it was.’ ‘Implications came into focus in the light as if his strong fingers held them down on the desktop for her to see.’ ‘With his mouth full of ash and fatality, he recognized that before long he was going to go mad.’ ‘His hands thrashed like dying fish at the end of his arms.’ ‘He’d run out of choices. His simple, reasonable, and above all secure buggery had been turned against him.’ ‘Locking his legs, he tried to thrust his hips up and forward. At exactly the wrong moment he stumbled.’ ‘Morn rose as if she were going to sail through the top of her head.’ (all Stephen R. Donaldson, *The Gap into Power: A Dark and Hungry God Arises*, 1992) [AR]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

• 11 April 2014: Gavin Thorpe talks to the Brum Group, Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre, 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk or rog dot peyton at btinternet dot com. Future meetings: 9 May 2014, Dr Nick Hawes, Senior Lecturer in Intelligent Robotics, University of Birmingham; 13 June 2014, Stephen Hunt; 11 July 2014, Sam Stone and David Howe; 8 August 2014, Summer Social; 12 September 2014, Chris Morgan; 10 October 2014, Richard Ashton; 7 November 2014, Storm Constantine; 5 December 2014, Christmas Social.

Editorial II. Oh joy: UK postal rates have risen again. *Ansible* stocked up with a few hundred second-class stamps for inland mail at 50p (now 53p); but Britain doesn’t have those handy ‘Forever’ airmail stamps like the USA, and the rise here was particularly cruel, from 88p to 97p.

• Meanwhile at the *SF Encyclopedia*, we’ve concocted an ‘Images of London’ cover slideshow in honour of Loncon 3, with various other themed slideshows available and in preparation. Enjoy:

<http://www.sf-encyclopedia.com/news/see-london,-new-york,-balloons,-authors-/>

Thog's Second Helping. *Dept of Unnatural Systole.* 'Arcadia ... felt the blood squeezing out of her heart for no reason at all.' (Isaac Asimov, '... And Now You Don't', December 1949 *Astounding*; unchanged in *Second Foundation*) [CG]

• *Lime Green Dept.* 'On the other side of the door, Homir, too, was living in a sea of gelatin.' (*Ibid*)

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Ansible 322, May 2014

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Web news.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE, news items or the lost Theorems of Wukim.

Hugos. As usual, the shortlist has something to annoy everyone: see many links at news.ansible.co.uk/misc/oldlink14.html#hugofuss.

- NOVEL (1595 ballots) *Ancillary Justice* by Ann Leckie; *Neptune's Brood* by Charles Stross; *Parasite* by Mira Grant; *Warbound* by Larry Correia; **The Wheel of Time** (entire series) by Robert Jordan & Brandon Sanderson.
- NOVELLA (847) *The Butcher of Khardov* by Dan Wells; 'The Chaplain's Legacy' by Brad Torgersen (*Analog* 7/13); 'Equoid' by Charles Stross (Tor.com 9/13); *Six-Gun Snow White* by Catherynne M. Valente; 'Wakulla Springs' by Andy Duncan & Ellen Klages (Tor.com 10/13).
- NOVELETTE (728) 'The Exchange Officers' by Brad Torgersen (*Analog*, 1/13); 'The Lady Astronaut of Mars' by Mary Robinette Kowal (Tor.com 9/13); 'Opera Vita Aeterna' by Vox Day (*The Last Witchking*); 'The Truth of Fact, the Truth of Feeling' by Ted Chiang (*Subterranean* Fall 13); 'The Waiting Stars' by Aliette de Bodard (*The Other Half of the Sky*).
- SHORT (865) 'If You Were a Dinosaur, My Love' by Rachel Swirsky (*Apex* 3/13); 'The Ink Readers of Doi Saket' by Thomas Olde Heuvelt (Tor.com 4/13); 'Selkie Stories Are for Losers' by Sofia Samatar (*Strange Horizons* 1/13); 'The Water That Falls on You from Nowhere' by John Chu (Tor.com 2/13).
- RELATED WORK (752) *Queers Dig Time Lords* ed. Sigrid Ellis & Michael Damian Thomas; *Speculative Fiction 2012* by Justin Landon & Jared Shurin; 'We Have Always Fought' by Kameron Hurley (*A Dribble of Ink*); *Wonderbook* by Jeff VanderMeer with Jeremy Zerfoss; *Writing Excuses Season 8* by Brandon Sanderson, Dan Wells, Mary Robinette Kowal, Howard Tayler and Jordan Sanderson.
- GRAPHIC STORY (552) *Girl Genius, Volume 13: Agatha Heterodyne & The Sleeping City* Phil & Kaja Foglio with Cheyenne Wright; 'The Girl Who

Loved Doctor Who' by Paul Cornell & Jimmy Broxton (*Doctor Who Special 2013*); *The Meathouse Man* by George R.R. Martin (original story) & Raya Golden; *Saga, Volume 2* by Brian K. Vaughan & Fiona Staples; 'Time' by Randall Munroe (*XKCD*).

- DRAMATIC – LONG (995) *Frozen*; *Gravity*; *The Hunger Games: Catching Fire*; *Iron Man 3*; *Pacific Rim*.
- DRAMATIC – SHORT (760) *An Adventure in Space and Time*; *Doctor Who: 'The Day of the Doctor'*; *Doctor Who: 'The Name of the Doctor'*; *The Five(ish) Doctors Reboot*; *Game of Thrones: 'The Rains of Castamere'*; *Orphan Black: 'Variations under Domestication'*.
- EDITOR – SHORT (656) John Joseph Adams; Neil Clarke; Ellen Datlow; Jonathan Strahan; Sheila Williams.
- EDITOR – LONG (632) Ginjer Buchanan; Sheila Gilbert; Liz Gorinsky; Lee Harris; Toni Weisskopf.
- PRO ARTIST (624) Galen Dara; Julie Dillon; Daniel Dos Santos; John Harris; John Picacio; Fiona Staples.
- SEMIPROZINE (411) *Apex*; *Beneath Ceaseless Skies*; *Interzone*; *Lightspeed*; *Strange Horizons*.
- FANZINE (478) *The Book Smugglers*; *A Dribble of Ink*; *Elitist Book Reviews*; *Journey Planet*; *Pornokitsch*.
- FANCAST (396) *The Coode Street Podcast*; *Galactic Suburbia Podcast*; *SF Signal Podcast*; *The Skiffy and Fanty Show*; *Tea and Jeopardy*; *Verity!*; *The Writer and the Critic*.
- FAN WRITER (521) Liz Bourke; Kameron Hurley; Foz Meadows; Abigail Nussbaum; Mark Oshiro.
- FAN ARTIST (316) Brad W. Foster; Mandie Manzano; Spring Schoenhuth; Steve Stiles; Sarah Webb.
- CAMPBELL AWARD (767; not a Hugo) Wesley Chu; Max Gladstone*; Ramez Naam*; Sofia Samatar*; Benjanun Sriduangkaew (*final year of eligibility).
- Some Hugo categories have 6 or 7 nominees owing to 5th-place ties; Short Story has only 4 since 5% of the vote is required.
- For fuller list with subtitles, media teams etc, see www.loncon3.org/2014hugos.php. For the 1938 Retro Hugo lists, see www.loncon3.org/1939_retro_shortlist.php.
- **Q.** Will this year's Hugo voter package therefore contain all 14 of those very fat main-sequence [Wheel of Time fantasies](#) in ebook form? **A.** [Yes, says Tor Books](#). Gulp.

View from a Half Roon

Brian Aldiss is looking forward to August 2015: ‘When and if I reach the age of ninety, my publishers plan to throw a grand thrash for me.’

Ari Handel, one of the screenwriters of *Noah*, responded to complaints about the film’s all-white cast by explaining how diversity leads to extreme uncoolness: ‘Either you end up with a Bennetton ad or the crew of the Starship Enterprise.’ (*Independent*, 17 April) [MPJ]

Peter Jackson’s altered subtitle for the third *Hobbit* movie was not, as I’d expected, *The Battle of the Three Armies* with a fourth film added to do proper justice to *The Battle of the Other Two Armies*.

George R.R. Martin’s death grip on the Zeitgeist becomes ever tighter: ‘Need a baby name? Try *Game of Thrones*! 146 Khaleesis were born in the USA in 2012. Strangely there are no recorded instances of a Joffrey.’ (*Independent on Sunday*, 13 April) [MPJ]

Convolvulin

Until 4 Jan 2015 • **Longitude Punk’d** (steampunk exhibition), Royal Observatory, Greenwich. 10am-5pm. Usual entry fees: £7 adult, £5.50 concessions, £2.50 child 5-15, under-5s free. Also family rates.

2 May - 19 Aug • **Comics Unmasked: Art and Anarchy in the UK** (exhibition), PACCAR Gallery, British Library, London.

9 May • **Mary Stewart’s Arthurian Novels: talk** by Andrey Ansimov, Helmore 222, Anglia Ruskin University. 1-3pm. Free.

10-11 May • **BCExpo** (comics), Future Inns Conference Centre and Hotel, Cabot Circus, Bristol. Tickets £16, child £8; Sat £10/£8, Sun £8/£4; family (2 adult 2 child) £38. See www.bristolexpo.co.uk.

28 May • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. With Tori Truslow and Alex Dally MacFarlane interviewed by Tony Keen. Free.

7 Jun • **BSFA/SF Foundation AGMs & mini-convention**, City of

Westminster Archives Centre, 10 St Ann's St, London, SW1P 2DE. From ? 11am. GoH Jo Fletcher (SFF), Frances Hardinge (BSFA). Free.

3-6 Apr 2015 • **Dysprosium** (Eastercon), Park Inn, London Heathrow. GoH Jim Butcher, Seanan McGuire, Herr Doktor, Caroline Mullan. *Now £60 reg*, rising to £70 on 20 August and £80 on 1 February; £25 supp/under-18s, £15 under-12s, £5 infants. Paid-up presupporters: deduct £15. Contact 101 Ninian Rd, Grovehill, Hemel Hempstead, Herts, HP2 6NB; online registration awaited at www.dysprosium.org.uk.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Some of Us. 'A savage internecine struggle is being fought between two rival factions: dorks who watch "Game of Thrones" and dorks who read "A Song of Ice and Fire," George R.R. Martin's as yet unfinished fantasy saga upon which the series is based. Whatever peaceful overlap may still exist between the two camps, well, that is almost assuredly going to end.' (*Washington Post*, 3 April) [MMW]

• 'You might have pooh-poohed the HBO series as the kind of programme watched by teenage boys and strange men who play Dungeons & Dragons, or spend alternative Thursday evenings standing in fields pretending to be knights. I understand because I used to think that, too.' (Bryony Gordon, *Telegraph*, 8 April) But it's OK to like it: 'Game of Thrones is more Dynasty than Lord of the Rings, more House of Cards than Xena: Warrior Princess. It may have pretensions to the fantasy genre but in reality it is pure soap opera, sex and gore, and family politics dressed up in corsets and fabulous costumes.' (*Ibid*) [MPJ]

Awards. *Arthur C. Clarke Award*: Ann Leckie, *Ancillary Justice*.

• *BSFA*: NOVEL (tie) Ann Leckie, *Ancillary Justice* and Gareth L. Powell, *Ack-Ack Macaque*. SHORT Nina Allan, *Spin*. ARTWORK Joey Hi-fi, cover, *Dream London* by Tony Ballantyne. NONFICTION Jeff VanderMeer, *Wonderbook*.

• *Compton Crook/Stephen Tall Award* (first novel): Charles Gannon, *Fire With Fire*.

• *International Prize for Arabic Fiction (IPAF)*: Ahmed Saadawi, *Frankenstein in Baghdad*. [MPJ]

- *PEN/Faulkner Award for Fiction*: Karen Joy Fowler, *We Are All Completely Beside Ourselves*.
- *Philip K. Dick Award*: Ben H. Winters, *Countdown City*. [GVG]

Safe Viewing. After long negotiation with the BBC and careful screening-out of vile Western corruption, North Korea has decided on three BBC television series which its people can be allowed to watch: *Doctor Who*, *Top Gear* and *The Teletubbies*. ([Independent](#), 6 April). [MPJ]

R.I.P. *John Clagett* (1916-2013), US author of the sf novels *A World Unknown* (1975) and *The Orange R* (1978), died on 5 November 2013 aged 97.

- *Bob Hoskins* (1942-2014), UK actor, screenwriter and director whose best-known genre role was in *Who Framed Roger Rabbit* (1988), died on 29 April aged 71. Other credits include Dennis Potter's *Pennies From Heaven* (1978), *Brazil* (1985), *Hook* (1991), *Super Mario Bros* (1993) and *Snow White and the Huntsman* (2012). [SG]

- *Alexander Malec* (1929-2014), US author whose sf stories are collected in *Extrapolasis* (1967), died on 1 January aged 84. [JC]

- *Gabriel García Márquez* (1927-2014), hugely popular and distinguished Colombian author who won the Nobel Prize for his works of magic realism – most famously the unforgettable *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (1967) – died on 17 April at the age of 87.

- *William H. Patterson Jr* (1951-2014), author of the *Locus* Award-winning 2010 biography *Robert A. Heinlein: In Dialogue With His Century, Vol. 1 (1907-1948): Learning Curve* (second volume to be published later this month), died on 22 April. [F770]

- *Juan José Plans* (1943-2014), prolific Spanish sf/fantasy/horror author who adapted many genre classics for radio, died on 24 February. [JCo]

- *Andy Robertson* (1955-2014), UK editor, publisher and author, with *Interzone* for some 20 years from 1984, and latterly running his own [Night Lands](#) project (stories in William Hope Hodgson's dying-earth milieu), died on 17 April aged 58. David Pringle writes: 'He was an unflagging assistant editor of *Interzone*, a consumer of vast slush piles, who helped in the discovery of numerous new writers.' SMS/Smuzz writes: 'The reason I first came to Eastercons was to sell comics. The reason I stayed was Andy Robertson. Andy Robertson was the Thinking man's Brian Blessed. A large, athletic man of massive love and enthusiasm who embraced a deep

understanding of science, a love of Nature and a passion for literature – most especially the finer SF.’

- *Mickey Rooney* (1920-2014), US actor whose long film career began in 1926, died on 6 April; he was 93. Genre credits include *The Atomic Kid* (1954), *The Twilight Zone* (1963), *Journey Back to Oz* (1974), *Little Nemo: Adventures in Slumberland* (1989), *Night at the Museum* (2006) and a forthcoming new version of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. [SG]
- *Hilbert Schenck* (1926-2013), Hugo- and Nebula-nominated author of several striking sf stories 1953-1993, whose novels include the fine *A Rose for Armageddon* (1982), died on 2 December 2013 aged 87. [SFS]

The Weakest Link. *Host:* ‘Buzz Lightyear was on the Apollo 11 space mission. True or false?’ *Contestant:* ‘True.’ (BBC1 *Perfection*) [PE]

- *Bradley Walsh:* ‘Which mythical ship is said to sail round the Cape of Good Hope?’ *Contestant:* ‘Titanic.’ (ITV1 *The Chase*) [MPJ]
- *Walsh:* ‘New Zealand was mapped out in the 1770s by which English explorer?’ *Contestant:* ‘Robinson Crusoe.’ (ITV1 *The Chase*) [PE]

Court Circular. Tess Gerritsen, whose 1999 novel *Gravity* has ‘a lone female astronaut trapped aboard a space station and struggling to get home’, is suing Warner Bros not for copyright infringement (they bought the book rights and then used a supposedly original screenplay) but for not giving her a ‘based on’ film credit. (Vulture.com, 30 April) [PDF]

- A US judge ruled that 118 alleged similarities between the *Matrix* trilogy and the screenplay ‘The Immortals’ by Thomas Althouse – who sued for plagiarism – are ‘too general for copyright protection ... or are commonly used, unoriginal ideas’. (BBC, 29 April) [MPJ]

Outraged Letters. *Chip Hitchcock* reminisces: ‘[Bryan] Talbot’s discovery of the intellects of furies brings to mind a tale of a recent Pennsic War (the largest SCA gathering). One of the groups that shows up is a Gorish set called Tuchux. My narrator observed a couple of Tuchix (his term) discussing affairs in their typical language (“Thog wife sad. Thog come home late, drunk, no good.”) when a cellphone rings and is extracted from a fur bikini or equivalent. Overheard: “How long ago was it? What are the vitals?” “Is an OR reserved?” “Who’s on for anesthesia?” “No, I won’t work with him. Who else?” “Him I can work with. I’ll be there [soon].” Then the callee turns to her commiserator and says “Thog wife go now.”’

Media Awards. *Empire*: overall film and director *Gravity*; British film *The World's End*; sf/fantasy *The Hobbit: The Desolation Of Smaug*; thriller *The Hunger Games: Catching Fire*; horror, *The Conjuring*.

• *MTV Movie Awards*: film of the year, *The Hunger Games: Catching Fire*. [MPJ]

Mysteries of Amazon. 'Best SF Stories from New Worlds 7 by H.E. Bates (Paperback, 1971) Used & New from: \$12.40.' [MFD] Another of Mike Moorcock's lesser-known pseudonyms exposed at last?

Gemmell Award (heroic fantasy) shortlists: NOVEL Peter V Brett, *The Daylight War*; Mark Lawrence, *Emperor of Thorns*; Scott Lynch, *The Republic of Thieves*; Brandon Sanderson & Robert Jordan, *A Memory of Light*; Adrian Tchaikovsky, *War Master's Gate*.

• DEBUT Mark T Barnes, *The Garden of Stones*; David Guymer, *Headtaker*; Brian McLellan, *Promise of Blood*; Antoine Rouaud, *The Path of Anger*; Luke Scull, *The Grim Company*.

• COVER ART Benjamin Carre for *The Republic of Thieves* (above); Jason Chan for *Emperor of Thorns* (above); Cheol Joo Lee for *Skarsnik* by Guy Haley; Gene Mollica & Michael Frost for *Promise of Blood* (above); Rhett Podersoo for *She Who Waits* by Daniel Polansky.

As Others Forget Us. The web page for 'Pier Zine: a series of drop-in zine making workshops' (Stromness, Orkney, 17-19 April) airbrushed away the sf fanzines of the 1930s to the 1960s with a sparkly new history of zines: 'Originating in 1970s America in a culture of D.I.Y. and collaboration, their popularity has since sky-rocketed ...' [AW]

Publishers & Sinners. Could there be any connection between the sale of Quercus Books and the mid-April appearance at Works remainder outlets of the Quercus/Jo Fletcher paperback of Sarah Pinborough's *Mayhem*, not supposedly published until 1 May? Whistleblower Steve Tollyfield grumbles: 'I tweeted Jo Fletcher Books yesterday that this was the case, but rather than expressing horror, they retweeted my tweet, so that anyone who wants this book can get it early at a bargain price!' As it is written in the classics, 'Do not meddle in the affairs of publishers, for they are subtle and quick to remainder.'

Crystal Balls. Another of those eerily prophetic sf moments: 'She did look a little strange, though, since she had a vestigial head cosmetically implanted in

her neck ... *Obviously from Babylon-5, I thought ...* (Somtow Sucharitkul, *Mallworld*, 1984) [BA]

Imperial Politics. ‘Ukrainian authorities banned a man who changed his name to “Darth Vader” from running in the country’s upcoming presidential election, suspecting he was being paid by Russia to discredit the vote.’ (*The Week*, April) [MMW]

The Dead Past. *80 Years Ago*, sf fan Otto Steinhardt was well ahead of his time in *Astounding*: ‘... I think some of your authors and artists don’t stop to reason things out. For instance, in [Harl] Vincent’s “Lost City of Mars” [February 1934], Kal Turjen, the Martian, is always reaching for a cigarette. I think that by the 22nd century people will have banished cigarettes because of their effect on health.’ (Readers’ letters, May 1934) [MA]

- *40 Years Ago*, the London First Thursday fan meetings had to switch pubs: ‘It looks like the story of the Globe is drawing to its close at last. The next regular meeting (Thursday June 6th) may well be the last one at the present venue, and the building itself will not be standing for much longer. As from the July meeting, (Thursday July 4th) the London Circle will be migrating to “THE ONE TUN” at 125 Saffron Hill, London E.C.1.’ ([Checkpoint 49](#), May 1974)

Fanfundery. *TAFF*: Curt Phillips won the 2014 eastbound race voting by a clear first-round majority and will attend Loncon 3 as TransAtlantic Fan Fund delegate. Voting figures: Curt 75 (54 NA/21 Europe), Brad & Cindy Foster 45 (31/14), Randy Smith 17 (15/2), No Preference 2 (0/2); 139 ballots in all. More at taff.org.uk.

- *Jim Mowatt* reports £390.20 raised for TAFF and GUFF in 45 minutes at the Eastercon fan funds auction.

- *GUFF* now has an online voting form at rantalica.com/GUFF_2014_Ballot.php (closes 9 June).

- *DUFF*: Juanita Coulson won the 2014 southbound race to the Australian NatCon, Continuum X in June, by a first-round majority: 42 votes (17 ANZ/25 NA) to Aurora Celeste’s 24 (6/18) with 6 No Preference. 72 ballots cast.

Thog’s Masterclass. *On The One Hand ...* ““There is one datum I can adduce, I believe,” said Leuret, scratching his beard with his left hand and manoeuvring a cigarette out of its case with his left ...’ (Adam Roberts,

Twenty Trillion Leagues under the Sea, 2014) [AB]

- *Eyeballs in the Sky*. ‘His eyes seemed to disconnect themselves.’ (Robert Moore Williams, ‘To the End of Time’, July 1950 *Super Science Stories*) [CG]

- *Easily Amused Corpse Dept*. ‘For half an hour they left the man on his bench. His dead eyes were open and seemed to smile slightly at a photograph of the Minister of Rest and Culture.’ (John Blackburn, *A Scent of New-Mown Hay*, 1958) [PW]

- *Dept of Guilt*. ‘... This planet and its creatures! The erection/detumescence of each instant he’d shared with them lay on his awareness with scalding pressure. He felt like a bivalve at the tide-edge of the universe. History was collapsing within him and he could only remember the ages of his crime ...’ (Frank Herbert, *The Heaven Makers*, 1968) [BA]

- *The Gap into Thogness: Clench and Aura*. ‘Angus’ heart clenched in a grimace which didn’t show on his face.’ ‘Her shoulders hunched into a clench of disgust, which she deflected into a shrug.’ ‘Nick let out a clenched laugh.’ ‘Above his open mouth, his eyes blinked like cries.’ ‘His aura yowled of furies that didn’t show on his face.’ ‘The smears on his lenses refracted his blue gaze into streams of hope and apprehension.’ ‘His eyes slid off as if they’d lost their grip.’ ‘The air had grown viscid with mortality.’ (all Stephen R. Donaldson, *The Gap into Madness: Chaos and Order*, 1994) [AR]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 9 May 2014: Dr Nick Hawes (Senior Lecturer in Intelligent Robotics, University of Birmingham) talks to the Brum Group, Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre, 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk or rog dot peyton at btinternet dot com. Future meetings: 13 June 2014, Stephen Hunt; 11 July 2014, Sam Stone and David Howe; 8 August 2014, TBA; 12 September 2014, Chris Morgan; 10 October 2014, Richard Ashton; 7 November 2014, Storm Constantine; 5 December 2014, Christmas Social.

R.I.P. II. *Al Feldstein* (1925-2014), US comics writer/artist – with EC Comics 1948-1956, working on *Tales from the Crypt* and other genre classics – and editor of *Mad* magazine for 28 years from 1956, died on 29 April aged

88. He received the 2011 Bram Stoker Award for life achievement in horror.
• *Carl Ruhen* (1937-2013), prolific Australian pulp author whose 78 books include some horror and, with Terry Hayes and George Miller, the novelization of *Mad Max 2* (1981), died on 28 November 2013 aged 76. [JC]

Editorial. I was wrong to complain [last issue](#) that the cost of airmailing *Ansible* had risen from 88p to 97p. This information came from my local post office, but the official rates leaflet reveals that 97p is for continental Europe only: Australasia and the USA, where all my airmailed copies go, now start at £1.28. Not a 10% rise but over 45%. Bloody hell.

• Here on a happier note is an interview with me and John Clute at *Amazing Stories*, and a teaser at SF Gateway about their ebook of my first Discworld quizbook:

<http://amazingstoriesmag.com/2014/04/interview-david-langford-and-john-clute-on-the-sf-encyclopedia/> [sic]

<http://blog.sfgateway.com/index.php/new-book-of-the-week-unseen-university-challenge/>

Outraged Letters II. *Petréa Mitchell* joins the Things Your Editor Didn't Know About Thog chorus: 'Were you previously aware of Thog's other life as a Muppet? I'm currently reading *Blood's a Rover* by D.J. Bershaw, where I came across this line: "For a minute or two, as we bounced along, I tried to think which muppets Farrell and I could be, but that turned out to be a dead end, except maybe Thag and Thog, the two big critters from that Christmas special with Art Carney." There's a complete dossier on Thog here:'

<http://muppet.wikia.com/wiki/Thog>

Thog's Second Helping. *Dept of Oh Sniffle, And I'll Come To You, My Lad:* 'The face that greeted him in his mirror was as wrinkled and used as a sheet of crumpled tissue.' (Stephen R. Donaldson, *The Gap into Madness: Chaos and Order*, 1994) [AR]

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2 May 2014.



Ansible 323, June 2014

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Web news.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or a wooden automaton called Ahududu.

SF Encyclopedia News. The [Encyclopedia](#)'s initial three-year contract with Orion/Gollancz has been renewed for at least three more years, with a mutual expectation that we will continue past that point. [JC]

Tanstaaf!

Ray Bradbury's house (for over 50 years) in Cheviot Hills, Los Angeles, went up for sale in May as a place of 'important cultural provenance' with an asking price of \$1,495,000. [GVG] 'I wonder if Uncle Einar is hiding somewhere in there,' muses Gordon Van Gelder.

Eoin Colfer, author of the 'Artemis Fowl' fantasies, is now the third Irish laureate for children's fiction: Laureate na nÓg. [SFS]

Luis Fairman, the dental mechanic whose company Precision Dental Technology made the steel teeth worn by 'Jaws' in *The Spy Who Loved Me* and *Moonraker*, had to pay over £1000 – fine plus costs – after prosecution by the dread UK General Dental Council for calling himself a dental technician (in a YouTube video) without being registered as such with the GDC. ([Telegraph](#), 14 May) [MPJ] We shall all sleep easier.

Tim Holman of Orbit UK announced that Hugo-nominated novels by Orbit authors Mira Grant, Ann Leckie and Charles Stross would be represented in the [Hugo Voter Packet](#) by 'extended previews' only. 'There are a lot of different attitudes to the idea of giving work away for free, but we hope most people would agree that writers and rights holders should be able to make their own choice, without feeling that their decision might have negative consequences.' ([Orbitbooks.net](#), 13 May) This was widely viewed as weasel-

worded: Orbit is *not* allowing its authors ‘to make their own choice’, as they’ve temperately explained in a joint statement (Antipope.org, 13 May). Still, Orbit is within its rights, and it would be spiteful to punish the authors by voting their books below No Award as some fans with a huge sense of entitlement say they plan to do. Though I wouldn’t dream of checking this, it seems that all three novels are easily obtained via naughty downloads....

Ian McEwan sold his paper and email archive to the University of Texas for \$2 million, and gave them an interview that revealed the skiffy delights now awaiting researchers: ‘Sometimes the path towards a finished novel takes surprising twists. It’s rarely an even development. For example, my novel *Atonement* started out as a science fiction story set two or three centuries into [the] future.’ (Guardian, 15 May) [MJE]

Adam Roberts delivered the second annual Tolkien Lecture at Pembroke College, Oxford, on 2 May. His strategy: ‘I shall lecture with my serious professor hat on for 45 minutes; and switch to a jester’s coxcomb for the last quarter hour ...’ (‘Excellent talk’ – John Clute.)

Frank M. Robinson was to be named SFWA Author Emeritus/Special Honoree at the Nebula ceremony. Owing to recent heart surgery he couldn’t make it in person: Robin Wayne Bailey was ready with his thank-you speech, but following ‘a combination of unintentional missteps’ (SFWA) or ‘amazing fuckitude’ (Bailey on Facebook), this item was omitted from the ceremony. SFWA President Steven Gould apologized and promised a presentation at the 2015 Nebulas. (SFWA, 18 May)

Convyne

Until 27 Jun • **House Clearance** (J.G. Ballard-related art show by Fay Ballard), 11 Princelet St, Spitalfields, London, E1 6QH. By appointment, 12 noon-6pm Mon-Fri. See www.elevenspitalfields.com for more.

7 Jun • **BSFA/SF Foundation AGMs** & mini-convention, City of Westminster Archives Centre, 10 St Ann’s St, London, SW1P 2DE. From ? 11am. GoH Jo Fletcher (SFF), Frances Hardinge (BSFA). Free.

20 Jun • **CRSF 2014** (academic), University of Liverpool. £35. See currentresearchinspeculativefiction.blogspot.co.uk for details.

25 Jun • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. With Stephanie Saulter. Free.

28 Jun • **Graham Park Day** (Iain Banks/*Walking on Glass* walk), London. Meet Theobald's Rd S/Southampton Row E, 3:15 for 3:33pm.

19 Jul • **Edge-Lit 3**, Cinema One, QUAD Centre, Derby. 11am-midnight. £25. Bookings: www.derbyquad.co.uk/special-event/edge-lit-3.

26 Jul • **Bristol Beer & Blake's 7**, The Knights Templar pub, 1 The Square, Temple Quay, Bristol, BS1 6DG. 12 noon to 7pm.

5 Aug - 8 Sep • **SF Linkcons**, various studio and location tours in and around London. Can you crack the code at www.sflinkcons.org?

11-12 Aug • **Science for Fiction**, Imperial College, London. Science presentations *for published authors only*. £35, inc lunch on 12 Aug. Contact Dave Clements, d dot clements at imperial dot ac dot uk.

14-18 Aug • **Loncon 3** (72nd Worldcon), ExCeL centre, London Docklands. £125 reg; £280 family; £65 YA; £30 child (6-15); £2 infant (0-5); £25 supp. *Rates rise to at-the-door levels on 13 July*. The Hugo Voter Packet went up on 30 May and will be available until 1 August: www.loncon3.org/hugo_vote/hugo_voter_packet.php. Voting closes 31 July. Ballot are in PR3, received May. See also www.loncon3.org.

16 Mar 2015 • **EM-Con** (multimedia), Capital Film Arena, Nottingham. Tickets online only, from £8 (11am-5:30pm) and £12.50 (10am-5:30pm) to £100 'gold' and £200 'platinum'. See www.em-con.co.uk.

27-29 Mar 2015 • **Tynecon III: the Corflu** (fanzines), Vermont Hotel, Castle Garth, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 1RQ. £50/\$85 reg, £15/\$25 supp. Cheque payments: sterling to John Nielsen Hall c/o 9 Haywards Farm Close, Verwood, Dorset, BH31 6XW; dollars to Robert Lichtman, 11037 Broadway Terrace, Oakland, CA 94611-1948, USA. More to follow at corflu.org; email contact alan10258 at aol dot com.

2-4 Oct 2015 • **Irish Discworld Convention**, Cork International Airport Hotel, Ireland. €50 reg, €40 concessions. See idwcon.org.

Rumblings. Octocon is skipping 2014: the next will be in the Camden Court Hotel, Dublin, 10-11 October 2015. See www.octocon.com.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others (And Maybe We Too) See *Godzilla*. ‘Appreciation of a movie like this requires an almost morbid degree of connoisseurship, which may, in practice, be hard to distinguish from bored acquiescence.’ (A.O. Scott, *New York Times* review, 17 May) [JB]

Awards. *Nebulas*: NOVEL Ann Leckie, *Ancillary Justice*. NOVELLA Vylar Kaftan, ‘The Weight of the Sunrise’ (*Asimov’s* 2/13). NOVELETTE Alette de Bodard, ‘The Waiting Stars’ (*The Other Half of the Sky*). SHORT Rachel Swirsky, ‘If You Were a Dinosaur, My Love’ (*Apex* 3/13). DRAMATIC *Gravity*. YOUNG ADULT Nalo Hopkinson, *Sister Mine*. GRAND MASTER, already announced: Samuel R. Delany.

- *Prometheus* (libertarian) special life achievement: Vernor Vinge.
- *Bram Stoker* (horror): NOVEL Stephen King, *Doctor Sleep*. DEBUT Rena Mason, *The Evolutionist*. YA Joe McKinney, *Dog Days*. GRAPHIC Caitlín R. Kiernan, *Alabaster: Wolves*. LONG FICTION Gary Braunbeck, ‘The Great Pity’ (*Chiral Mad* 2). SHORT David Gerrold, ‘Night Train to Paris’ (*F&SF* 1/13). SCREENPLAY Glen Mazzara, *The Walking Dead*: ‘Welcome to the Tombs’. ANTHOLOGY Eric J. Guignard, ed., *After Death*. COLLECTION Laird Barron, *The Beautiful Thing That Awaits Us All*. NONFICTION William F. Nolan, *Nolan on Bradbury*. POETRY Marge Simon, Rain Graves, Charlee Jacob and Linda Addison, *Four Elements*. SMALL PRESS Gray Friar Press, Whitby, UK.

Unequal Opportunity. The Directors UK survey of British TV shows directed by women led to [the Guardian headline](#): ‘Lights, camera, inaction: women directors cut out of British TV’ (12 May). In a radio discussion, Richard Bacon went further: ‘Not one woman directed an episode of a sci-fi series – I suspect that not one woman watched one either.’ (BBC Radio 5Live *Richard Bacon Show*, 13 May) [MPJ]

R.I.P. *Dick Ayers* (1924-2014), US comics artist who co-created *Ghost Rider* with Ray Krank in 1949 and entered the Eisner Comic Book Hall of Fame in 2007, died on 4 May aged 90. [SFS]

- *Ken Brown* (1957-2014), UK fan, convention-goer and regular book reviewer for *Interzone* in the David Pringle era, died from pancreatic cancer on 19 May; he was 57. [DP]
- *Leslie Carlson* (1933-2014), US-born character actor whose films include *The Neptune Factor* (1973), *Videodrome* (1983) and *The Fly* (1986), died on

3 May aged 81. [SFS]

- *Oscar Dystel* (1912-2014), US publisher who turned around the ailing Bantam Books in the early 1950s and remained chairman until 1980, died on 28 May; he was 101. His bestselling acquisitions included *The Exorcist* and *Jaws*. (*New York Times*, 29 May) [AIP]
- *Prof. Radu Florescu* (1925-2014), Romanian scholar whose *In Search of Dracula* (1972) and other works promoted the identification of Dracula with his own distant family connection Vlad Tepes (Vlad the Impaler), died on 18 May aged 88. [AIP]
- *H.R. Giger* (1940-2014), influential Swiss artist and designer noted for his surrealist/decadent 'biomechanoid' paintings and (most famously in sf circles) his creation of the alien technology and grotesque monster for the film *Alien* (1979), died on 12 May; he was 74. [GW] Giger received a Spectrum Grandmaster Award in 2005 and was inducted into the SF Hall of Fame in 2013.
- *Mihail Gramescu* (1951-2014), award-winning Romanian author of several sf novels and collections who was part of his country's 1980s 'New Wave', died on 13 May aged 63. [JCo]
- *Sam Greenlee* (1930-2014), US author of *The Spook who Sat by the Door* (1969) – a near-future novel of black uprisings in the USA, filmed in 1973 – died on 19 May aged 83. [JC]
- *Kim Knight* (1956-2014), UK fan, once a London meetings regular and co-organizer of many UK *Star Trek* conventions (the UFP Cons, 1980-1994), died on 11 May aged 57. [AH]
- *Jay Lake* (1964-2014), US author of the popular 'Mainspring' and 'Green' sf sequences plus many short stories, and editor with Deborah Layne of the *Polyphony* anthologies, died on 1 June from the cancer that had besieged him since 2008; he was 49. He won the 2004 John W. Campbell Award for best new writer.
- *Frank Marth* (1922-2014), US character actor seen in many genre TV series from *My Favorite Martian* (1964), *The Man from U.N.C.L.E* (1965) and *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea* (1966) to *The Incredible Hulk* (1980) and *Airwolf* (1984), died on 12 January aged 91. [HB]
- *Judi Meredith* (1936-2014), US actress who appeared in *Jack the Giant Killer* (1962), *The Night Walker* (1964) and *Queen of Blood* (1966), died on 30 April; she was 77. [F770]
- *Tony Palladino* (1930-2014), US illustrator and graphic designer who

created the distinctive fractured typographic title for *Psycho* (both Robert Bloch's book and the Hitchcock film posters), died on 14 May aged 84. [PDF]

- *Mary Stewart* (1916-2014), UK author most famed for her Arthurian 'Merlin Trilogy' – *The Crystal Cave* (1970), *The Hollow Hills* (1973) and *The Last Enchantment* (1979) – died on 10 May; she was 97. [PDF] Further genre works include romances with psychic/supernatural elements and some fantasy for children.

- *Patrick Woodroffe* (1940-2014), UK artist whose work appeared on many sf/fantasy book covers – also some music albums – died on 10 May aged 73. [GW] He published several art collections, plus such quirky self-illustrated stories as *The Dorbott of Vacuo* and *The Second Earth: The Pentateuch Re-Told* (both 1987).

The Weakest Link. *Host:* 'In the famous equation $E=mc^2$, what does the letter E stand for?' *Contestant:* 'Einstein.' (ITV *Tipping Point*)

- *Host:* 'Which G.O. wrote *Animal Farm*?' *Contestant:* 'I've got George Osborne in my head.' (BBC *Pointless*)

- *Host:* 'Which British author wrote *The Jungle Book*?' *Contestant:* 'E.L. James.' (ITV *Ejector Seat*)

- *Host:* 'In what novel by H.G. Wells does an inventor travel into the future?' *Contestant:* '*Great Expectations*.' (ITV *The Chase*) [PE]

Campbell Memorial Award shortlist: Max Barry, *Lexicon*; Stephen Baxter, *Proxima*; Dave Eggers, *The Circle*; Karen Joy Fowler, *We Are All Completely Beside Ourselves*; Nicola Griffith, *Hild*; Wolfgang Jeschke, *The Cusanus Game*; Ann Leckie, *Ancillary Justice*; Phillip Mann, *The Disestablishment of Paradise*; Paul McAuley, *Evening's Empires*; Linda Nagata, *The Red: First Light Press*; Christopher Priest, *The Adjacent*; Alastair Reynolds, *On the Steel Breeze*; Kim Stanley Robinson, *Shaman*; Charles Stross, *Neptune's Brood*; Marcel Theroux, *Strange Bodies*.

Dreams of Avarice. What's the science-fiction.org domain worth? In early May the minimum auction bid was \$2000, with a quick-sale option at \$10,000; now it's \$1000 and \$5000. In July, who knows?

Publishers & Sinners. Tor.com, besides being Tor's free fiction, news and commentary site, is now to be a Tor imprint for novellas, short novels etc, to be published in POD, ebook and audiobook form.

Prometheus Award shortlist: Cory Doctorow, *Homeland*; Sarah Hoyt, *A Few Good Men*; Ramez Naam, *Crux*; Ramez Naam, *Nexus*; Marcus Sakey, *Brilliance*. Winner to be announced at Loncon 3. The Hall of Fame shortlist for older work is partly familiar, with e.g. Kipling's "As Easy as A.B.C." making its ninth appearance (every year since 2006).

Outraged Letters. *Simon R. Green*: 'Well, the good news is that BFI are going to be releasing the old *Out of the Unknown* tv show on DVD in Autumn. The bad news is: just the twenty (out of forty-nine) episodes still known to exist.' (real paper letter, 28 May)

Locus Awards. Novel shortlists: SF Margaret Atwood, *MaddAddam*; James S.A. Corey, *Abaddon's Gate*; Karen Lord, *The Best of All Possible Worlds*; Kim Stanley Robinson, *Shaman*; Charles Stross, *Neptune's Brood*.

- FANTASY Neil Gaiman, *The Ocean at the End of the Lane*; Joe Hill, *NOS4A2*; Guy Gavriel Kay, *River of Stars*; Stephen King, *Doctor Sleep*; Scott Lynch, *The Republic of Thieves*.
- YOUNG ADULT Paolo Bacigalupi, *Zombie Baseball Beatdown*; Holly Black, *The Coldest Girl in Coldtown*; Cory Doctorow, *Homeland*; Alaya Dawn Johnson, *The Summer Prince*; Catherynne M. Valente, *The Girl Who Soared Over Fairyland and Cut the Moon in Two*.
- DEBUT Emily Croy Barker, *The Thinking Woman's Guide to Real Magic*; J. Kathleen Cheney, *The Golden City*; Ann Leckie, *Ancillary Justice*; Sofia Samatar, *A Stranger in Olondria*; Helene Wecker, *The Golem and the Jinni*.
- Winners are to be announced in late June. Full list: locusmag.com/News/2014/05/2014-locus-awards-finalists/.

The Dead Past. *70 Years Ago*, our fannish forebears wrestled with terminology: 'Fantast? Stefan? Futurian? Stefnist? Fantaisist? Slan? Cosman? Steffist? [...] Interlineations on the other side of this sheet consist of alternative titles in place of that horrible phrase "science fiction fan". (Bob Gibson wants to know if Sax Rohmer's "Si-Fan Mysteries" have any connection) ...' ([Futurian War Digest 35](#), June 1944)

- *50 Years Ago*, 'Peter Singleton mentions a recent nightmare in which *New Worlds*, *Science Fantasy* and all the U.S. prozines had succumbed to a take over bid from Badger [Books]' ([Skyrack 68](#), June 1964).
- *20 Years Ago*, your editor was immortalized: "She [...] typed: Whoever you are, be warned: I'm about to display the Langford Mind-Erasing Fractal Basilisk, so ..." (Greg Egan, *Permutation City*)' (*Ansible* 83, June 1994)

• *10 Years Ago*, Bob Dylan's 2004 memoir *Chronicles: Volume One* featured much 'sampling' of past work, including H.G. Wells's *The Time Machine*, *The Invisible Man*, *The Island of Dr. Moreau* and *The First Men in The Moon*. Wells in the last: 'Then began a vast throbbing hum that mingled with the music.' Dylan on a recording: '... a throbbing hum that mingled into the music.' (Scott Warmuth, 'Bob Charlatan: Deconstructing Dylan's *Chronicles: Volume One*', [New Haven Review](#), 2008) [GVG]

Random Fandom. *FAAn Awards* for fanzine activity: LIFE ACHIEVEMENT Ray Nelson. GENZINE *Banana Wings* ed. Claire Brialey & Mark Plummer. PERSONAL FANZINE *Flag* ed. Andy Hooper. SINGLE ISSUE *Trap Door* 30 ed. Robert Lichtman. WEBSITE [efanzines.com](#). COVER Harry Bell, *Inca* 9. FAN ARTIST/CARTOONIST Steve Stiles. FAN WRITER Andy Hooper. LETTERHACK Robert Lichtman. [GS] The coveted title 'Past President of fwa' went to John Nielsen Hall (*nem con, ne plus ultra, ipse dixit*).

C.o.A. *Chrissie Harper* (from 7 June), 33 Scott Rd, Solihull, B92 7LQ.

Fanfundery. *GUFF*: a last reminder that voting in the 2014 northbound race to bring an Australasian fan to Loncon 3 *closes on 9 June*. See the tasteful online ballot at [rantalica.com/guff/guff-voting-ballot/](#).

Media Awards. *BAFTA TV*: best mini-series, *In the Flesh* (BBC). *Radio Times Audience*: 'The Day Of The Doctor' (BBC *Doctor Who*) [MPJ]

Thog's Masterclass. *Landlocked Dept.* 'The short stretch of beach was a dazzling white, enclosed by rocky promontories on both sides and by low forested hills on the other.' (Ben Aaronovitch, *The Also People*, 1995) [NA]

• *Dept of Anatomy.* 'Her fingers got in the way of each other and tied themselves in knots.' (Robert Moore Williams, *World of the Masterminds*, 1960) [CG]

• *Ventriloquism Dept.* 'Foster issued a cry that came from his boots.' (Dan Waddell, *The Blood Detective*, 2007) [PB]

• *Eyeballs in the Sky.* 'He rolled a yellowing eyeball across the opposite wall ...' (Ellery Queen [Theodore Sturgeon], *The Player on the Other Side*, 1963) [RR]

• *This Day All Thogs Die.* 'A pallor of betrayal seemed to leach the color from her cheeks; even from her eyes.' 'Indignation and confusion appeared to flush through Chief Mandich in waves, staining his skin with splotches like the marks of an infection.' 'Anodyne Systems, the sole licensed manufacturer

of SOD-CMOS.’ ‘He appeared to shudder like a man being sickened by uncertainty.’ ‘He fluttered his hands in front of his face to ward off emotions for which he had no use.’ ‘He shook his head. Carried by its own momentum, his head continued rocking from side to side on his weak neck.’ ‘Her voice ached like Morn’s arm.’ ‘Food and coffee had rubbed the smudge from his gaze.’ ‘Min’s jaws clenched and loosened as if she were chewing iron.’ ‘Smoke seeped out of her hair as if the mind under it had been burned to the ground.’ ‘Lane hid a grin behind a fringe of unclean hair.’ ‘His voice sounded as bleak as hard vacuum.’ ‘Standing rigid, as if he were remembering a crucifixion, he shouted.’ ‘The sound of knives filled Hyland’s voice.’ ‘Mikka swallowed a knot of tears.’ ‘Every eye in the room clung to her urgently.’ ‘Blaine wore her sexuality like an accusation.’ ‘In response he brandished his beard at her like a club.’ (all Stephen R. Donaldson, *The Gap into Ruin: This Day All Gods Die*, 1995) [AR]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 13 June 2014: Stephen Hunt talks to the Brum Group, Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre, 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk or rog dot peyton at btinternet dot com. Future meetings: 11 July 2014, Sam Stone and David Howe; 8 August 2014, TBA; 12 September 2014, Chris Morgan; 10 October 2014, Richard Ashton; 7 November 2014, Storm Constantine; 5 December 2014, Christmas Social.

Editorial. Question: do we have any plans for the *SF Encyclopedia* donations page to accept Bitcoins? This had never occurred to me; until then I’d kept an eleven-foot pole at my side, for not touching Bitcoins with. But, being easily tempted by pointless and time-wasting geekery, I’ve added a tentative Bitcoin option to the *Ansible* tip jar above. If this actually works, something similar will appear on the *SFE* page at sf-encyclopedia.co.uk/donate.php ...

Last Orders. ‘Clive James, the Australian writer, critic and broadcaster who is terminally ill, has said that his dying wish is to live long enough to see the new series of *Game of Thrones* released on DVD. He said that his love of the series had broken his lifelong rule: “It’s vital to have nothing to do with any

art form which has dragons in it.”’ (*The Times*, 2 June)

Thog’s Second Helping. Adam Roberts’s blog overview of the Gap series by Stephen R. Donaldson is linked below. The second link collects all relevant examples sent by Adam to Thog – hence some overlap with his post. The third and fourth go to the [Nyanglish.com](http://nyanglish.com) ‘English example search’ site, where (#3) Denny Lien found Eyeballs in the Sky while investigating Frank L. Packard’s crime-fiction hero Jimmie Dale, and (#4) Thog himself appears in some unlikely contexts. Yvonne Rousseau unprecedentedly wanted to say ‘Unfair to Thog!’ when she came to the sentence ‘Thog wears a leprechaun costume, while he packs a giant wooden alpaca with potato salad.’

<http://sibilantfricative.blogspot.co.uk/2014/05/minding-gap.html>

<http://news.ansible.co.uk/a323supp.html>

<http://nyanglish.com/jimmie-dale-s-eyes>

<http://nyanglish.com/thog>

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Ansible 323 Supplement

The Gap into Thog Adam Roberts

Adam was moved by some quixotic impulse to read Stephen R. Donaldson's **Gap** sf series. From volume three he began collecting quotations for Thog, as below. [His own overview of the sequence appears at his Sibilant Fricative blog](#), from which it may be deduced that page numbers refer to the UK HarperCollins paperbacks. Now read on ...

The Gap Into Power: A Dark And Hungry God Arises **(1992)**

- [22] Without warning, a tingle ran down Holt's nearly strong spine and tightened around his scrotum.
- [87] When he lifted his head again, he was smiling like a corpse with an orgasm.
- [97] He felt too buoyant to sit down.
- [100] A sigh of relief or trepidation seemed to spread from him around the bridge.
- [100] 'He didn't say,' Scorz reported, as if he were fighting a knot in his throat.
- [100] A laser of inspiration shot along the synapses of Nick's brain; his nerves were ablaze with coherent light.
- [119] She didn't reply. Her only answer was the increasing stability of her strides.
- [124] Grinding his teeth to steady himself, he pushed her on down the corridor.
- [135] In the privacy of his bowels, he feared Angus too intensely.
- [137] Angus Thermopyle laughed – a sound like the pulping of flesh.
- [155] Naturally no room, however private, could be secure from what Milos Taverner might have called 'buggery'.
- [186] With a mental lift of his shoulders, Warden Dios trusted his fate to

people he couldn't control.

- [192] 'You've made us look like garbage, like weasels! You've curled their moral hair to the roots!'
- [192] Despite his calm, organic duplicity, the DA director had sweated through his lab coat.
- [267] Even if his brain had decided to pull away from her before he became helplessly enmeshed in Angus's plots, his body might have remained where it was.
- [337] Stumbling as if her neurons were no longer sure of their synapses, she left him alone.
- [350] Implications came into focus in the light as if his strong fingers held them down on the desktop for her to see.
- [381] With his mouth full of ash and fatality, he recognized that before long he was going to go mad.
- [425] His hands thrashed like dying fish at the end of his arms.
- [451] He'd run out of choices. His simple, reasonable, and above all secure buggery had been turned against him.
- [453] The silence which greeted him was so complete that he could taste it.
- [484] But in his weighted stomach he believed, knew, that Warden Dios didn't kill the people he was sworn to protect.
- [548] He saw the white glare of uncertainty from Davies' eyes.
- [550] Locking his legs, he tried to thrust his hips up and forward. At exactly the wrong moment he stumbled.
- [594] Morn rose as if she were going to sail through the top of her head.

The Gap Into Madness: Chaos and Order (1994)

- [109] Wheeling like a blow, he raged.
- [130] Angus' heart clenched in a grimace which didn't show on his face.
- [146] For reasons she couldn't name, premonitions of disaster burned in her palms.
- [165] Her shoulders hunched into a clench of disgust, which she deflected into a shrug.
- [170] His hands were steady as stones as he toggled his intercom.
- [174] If other means failed he probably had a dozen strategically placed buggers he could rely on.

- [176] Above his open mouth, his eyes blinked like cries.
- [177] His aura yowled of furies that didn't show on his face.
- [205] The smears on his lenses refracted his blue gaze into streams of hope and apprehension.
- [216] The face that greeted him in his mirror was as wrinkled and used as a sheet of crumpled tissue.
- [233] Perspiration turned to ice on his forehead and ran down the sides of his jaw.
- [237] Matter is 'frozen' energy ... Conversely energy may be understood as 'liquid' matter.
- [240] She discovered that most of her aches were gone, and her ears no longer registered everything against a background of pain. Nevertheless her anger remained.
- [251] She had to clench her teeth and grip her gun hard to prevent herself from flinging her stew across the galley.
- [252] Under his fat, his features hardened.
- [264] His grin was so abhorrent that Angus howled to himself; but he made no sound.
- [265] Davies looked like his chest was congested with shouts.
- [266] Angus looked straight at Nick, but with his peripheral vision he studied his readouts.
- [280] A clutch of loss lifted his shoulders like a shrug.
- [281] His eyes slid off as if they'd lost their grip.
- [295] Davies seemed to feel tremors run through Angus; neurons misfiring like a suppressed storm. He didn't care, however.
- [313] The air had grown viscid with mortality.
- [373] His scars looked like streaks of acid under his eyes, burning deeper and deeper into his cheeks. Heat poured off him as if he were overflowing.
- [381] Her heart beat in her ears, the veinous funeral march of her inadequacy.
- [395] [She was] shivering as if the cold had become metaphysical.
- [441] Sweat oozed like wax from his skin.
- [454] [Sib was] throwing the torque of his shoulders and the strength of his arms like projectiles at Nick's ribs and kidneys.
- [488] Koina regarded him with darkness stirring in the depths of her gaze. The restrained tension of her cheeks and forehead hinted at bleak

bones beneath the skin.

- [510] His eyes were so full of white fear that they appeared to have no irises.
- [527] Nick let out a clenched laugh.
- [538] Nick leered back at him from under his eyebrows.
- [577] His beard moved like a blade whenever he spoke or turned his head.
- [658] Through a red, squalling, visual knife of pain, he found the controls on his chestplate.

The Gap into Ruin: This Day All Gods Die (1995)

- [15] In the pockets of her labcoat her fingers twitched as if they were entering data on a purely metaphysical keypad.
- [38] A pallor of betrayal seemed to leach the color from her cheeks; even from her eyes.
- [38] Indignation and confusion appeared to flush through Chief Mandich in waves, staining his skin with splotches like the marks of an infection.
- [39] In one sense Hashi noticed the reactions of his companions. But in another he paid no attention to them at all.
- [46] Hashi spread his hands disingenuously.
- [46] Now at last Warden permitted himself a reaction, which may have been surprise.
- [47] Anodyne Systems, the sole licensed manufacturer of SOD-CMOS.
- [51-2] That substance is a coenzyme. Inherently inert ... it combines with some of the human body's natural apoenzymes to form an artificial holoenzyme.
- [63] Mandich murmured an obscenity between his teeth.
- [66] He appeared to shudder like a man being sickened by uncertainty.
- [67] The DA director wheezed. He fluttered his hands in front of his face to ward off emotions for which he had no use.
- [97] He shook his head. Carried by its own momentum, his head continued rocking from side to side on his weak neck.
- [109] Her voice ached like Morn's arm.
- [117] Food and coffee had rubbed the smudge from his gaze.
- [147] Dolph's deep, rumbling tone sharpened trenchantly.
- [168] His companions were vivid with tension. Their postures shouted

of dangers Min didn't know how to evaluate.

- [180] Angus snorted past his grin.
- [255] His eyes emanated a moist heat that Warden had never seen in them before.
- [317] Min's jaws clenched and loosened as if she were chewing iron.
- [342] Cleatus was full of explosives – metaphorically speaking ... his eyes held a lupine glitter, and his beard bristled like wire.
- [366] Smoke seeped out of her hair as if the mind under it had been burned to the ground.
- [375] Lane hid a grin behind a fringe of unclean hair.
- [420] Fasner spoke so fiercely that acoustic shatter fretted the edges of his voice.
- [471] His voice sounded as bleak as hard vacuum.
- [437] Darkness mottled his face: blood and dirt marked his skin like livid stigmata. His heavy arms beat anguish against his sides. 'Stop it!' ... Instinctively he aimed his rage like despair at Morn.
- [447] Standing rigid, as if he were remembering a crucifixion, he shouted.
- [474] She was a good fifteen centimeters taller. But the ominous intensity he radiated, the sense of critical mass he conveyed, made him seem larger. He gave the impression that there was no limit to how far he might expand.
- [476] Every eye in the room clung to her urgently.
- [480] Blaine wore her sexuality like an accusation.
- [485] Sen Abdullah gaped like a man who couldn't breathe well enough to grasp the opportunity Koina had given him.
- [499] In response he brandished his beard at her like a club.
- [525] Ceatus closed his mouth. But he left his demand hanging in the air.
- [525] The sound of knives filled Hyland's voice.
- [667] Mikka swallowed a knot of tears.

Ansible 324, July 2014

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Web news.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE, Bitcoins or first editions of *Prying Manticora*.

The Sea and Summer

John Barrowman – Captain Jack Harkness in *Doctor Who* and *Torchwood* – was made an MBE in the Queen’s Birthday Honours. So was composer Laurie Johnson, who scored *Dr Strangelove* and wrote the *Avengers* and *New Avengers* tv theme music. [DVB] Patrick Woodroffe, not the recently deceased sf/fantasy artist but the lighting designer of the 2012 Olympic ceremonies – whose stage projects include *Batman Live* – became a CBE in the same honours list. ([BBC](#), 14 June)

Guy Gavriel Kay was made a member of the Order of Canada for his contributions to fantasy literature. ([CBC News](#), 30 June) [PH]

‘**Captain Kaye**’ is the reported pseudonym for the subject of this *Daily Mirror* silly-season headline: ‘Retired US Marine claims he spent 17 years on MARS protecting five human colonies from Martians’ ([23 June](#)). ‘He added that training took place on a secret moon base called Lunar Operations Command, Saturn’s moon Titan, and in deep space. / Captain Kaye says he retired after a 20 year tour of duty, describing a retirement ceremony on the moon that he claims was presided over by VIPs including ex-Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld.’ Gosh.

George R.R. Martin offers two lucky people who can afford the £20,000 fee (all proceeds to worthy causes) the chance to appear in a future ‘A Song of Ice and Fire’ novel and undergo a grisly, horrific death. ([Marketing Magazine](#), 6 June) [MPJ] Too much for your editor, alas; and anyway, Simon R. Green regularly slaughters me for nothing.

J.R.R. Tolkien’s creation the Balrog is remembered in the naming of a 16-

foot, 900-pound crocodylian reptile from 60 million years ago:
Anthracosuchus balrogus. ([International Business Times](#), 3 June) [SHS] But
was it a giant *flaming* reptile? Did it wield a multi-thonged whip?

Condish

16 Jul • **London Fortean Society**, Gordon Rutter: 'Dr Who in An Exciting Adventure With Charles Fort', The Bell, 50 Middlesex St, London, E1 7EX. 7.45pm-10.45pm. £3 admission, £2 concessions.

19 Jul • **Edge-Lit 3**, Cinema One, QUAD Centre, Derby. 11am-midnight. GoH Joe Abercrombie, Charles Stross. Tickets £25. Book online at www.derbyquad.co.uk/special-event/edge-lit-3.

25-28 Jul • **Continuum 2014** (RPG), John Foster Hall, Leicester University. £35. See <http://www.continuumconvention.co.uk/> for full tariff.

26 Jul • **Bristol Beer & Blake's 7**, The Knights Templar pub, 1 The Square, Temple Quay, Bristol, BS1 6DG. 12 noon to 7pm.

30 Jul • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. With Geoff Ryman. Free.

2 Aug • **Super Relaxed Fantasy Club** (with the BSFA and British Fantasy Society), Brigantes Bar & Brasserie, 114 Micklegate, York, YO1 6JX. 4pm-late, with readings by various authors. Free to all.

5 Aug - 8 Sep • **SF Linkcons**, various studio and location tours in and around London. Can you crack the code at www.sflinkcons.org?

8-10 Aug • **Nine Worlds Geekfest** (multimedia), Radisson Blu Edwardian Hotel, Heathrow. *Current 'late rate' £90 reg; £95 1-6 August; £100 at the door.* Advance booking online at nineworlds.co.uk.

SOLD OUT 9-11 Aug • **Discworld Convention**, Palace Hotel, Manchester. Waiting list for cancellations at www.dwcon.org.

9-24 Aug • **Stripped 2014**: comics/graphic novel items at Edinburgh Book Festival. With Mike Carey, Brian & Mary Talbot, others. See www.edbookfest.co.uk/the-festival/whats-on/themes/stripped-2014.

POSTPONED 9-10 Aug • **Sunderland Comic Con**, Sunderland Software

Centre, Tavistock Place, Sunderland, SR1 1PB. Now 21-22 February 2015. See sunderlandcomiccon.com. Refunds given for 2014.

12 Aug • **Fantasy in the Court** (mass genre signing), Goldsboro Books, Cecil Court. London. 6-9pm. £5 redeemable against purchase.

14-18 Aug • **Loncon 3** (72nd Worldcon), ExCeL centre, London Docklands. £125 reg; £280 family; £65 YA; £30 child (6-15); £2 infant (0-5). *Rates rise on 14 July*, to £135, £300, £75, £35 and £5 respectively; supporting membership stays at £25. See www.loncon3.org.

20 Aug • **Biology and Manners: Worlds of Lois McMaster Bujold** (conference), Anglia Ruskin U, Cambridge. £60; £25 concessions. See anglia.ac.uk/ruskin/en/home/prospectus/cpd/bujold_conference.html.

22-24 Aug • **Shamrokon** (Eurocon), Hilton Doubletree, Burlington Road (formerly the Burlington Hotel), Dublin. €35 reg, *rising to €40 on 1 August*; concessions €25; under-22s €10; supp €10. Join online, or ask where to send a cheque, at www.shamrokon.ie.

Rumblings. *BCon* is a bid to hold the 2016 Eurocon in Barcelona, Spain, on 4-6 November that year. See www.eurocon2016.org. • *2018 Worldcon*. The San José bid now has a website at www.sjin2018.org; the only current rival bid is for New Orleans, neworleansin2018.org.

Infinitely Improbable

‘All You Zombies’ Dept. ‘Which Bafta and Emmy-winning actress is the great-grandfather of the former Prime Minister Herbert Asquith?’ (Christopher Maume, ‘The Quiz’, *Independent*, 21 June)

Awards. *Gemmell* (heroic fantasy): NOVEL Mark Lawrence, *Emperor of Thorns*. DEBUT Brian McClellan, *Promise of Blood*. COVER Jason Chan for *Emperor of Thorns*.

- *John W. Campbell Memorial*: Marcel Theroux, *Strange Bodies*.
- *Locus*: SF NOVEL James S.A. Corey, *Abaddon’s Gate*. FANTASY Neil Gaiman, *The Ocean at the End of the Lane*. YA Catherynne M. Valente, *The Girl Who Soared Over Fairyland and Cut the Moon in Two*. DEBUT Ann Leckie, *Ancillary Justice*. NOVELLA Catherynne M. Valente, *Six-Gun Snow White*. NOVELETTE Neil Gaiman, ‘The Sleeper and the Spindle’ (*Rags and Bones*).

SHORT Caitlín R. Kiernan, 'The Road of Needles' (*Once Upon a Time*).
ANTHOLOGY George R.R. Martin & Gardner Dozois, eds., *Old Mars*.
COLLECTION *The Best of Connie Willis*. MAGAZINE Asimov's. PUBLISHER Tor.
EDITOR Ellen Datlow. ARTIST Michael Whelan. NONFICTION Jeff VanderMeer,
Wonderbook. ART BOOK Cathy & Arnie Fenner, eds., *Spectrum 20*.
• *SF Hall of Fame*: Leigh Brackett, Frank Frazetta, Stanley Kubrick, Hayao Miyazaki and Olaf Stapledon.
• *Sturgeon Award* (short): Sarah Pinsker, 'In Joy, Knowing the Abyss' (*Strange Horizons* 7/13).

Publishers & Sinners. Angry Robot discontinued its Strange Chemistry (YA genre) and Exhibit A (crime) imprints with immediate effect on 20 June, 'due mainly to market saturation' – that is, others have more successfully saturated the market. 'The core Angry Robot imprint is robust, however ...' ([Angryrobotbooks.com](http://angryrobotbooks.com), 20 June) This traditional corporate spin is belied by reports about the parent company: 'The Osprey Publishing Group, as part of a financial restructuring and "strategic review" of its holdings, is moving away from publishing fiction and actively seeking a sale of its non-core components – and may consider an outright sale of the whole company.' As for the two doomed imprints, there is as always bad news for authors: 'unpublished manuscripts that were under contract have been cancelled.' (*Publishers Lunch*, 20 June)

• Andrew Burt's ReAnimus Press has acquired the long-running sf nonfiction imprint Advent:Publishers.

GRRM Is Everywhere. The BBC has apologized for accidentally sending test-only news alerts to millions of BBC News app subscribers, including the deeply shocking 'BREAKING NEWS No nudity in latest episode of Game of Thrones!!!' (BBC News online, 25 June) [MPJ]

R.I.P. Neal Arden (1909-2014), UK actor who was in *The Quatermass Experiment* (1953 tv) and *The Giant Behemoth* (1959), died on 4 June aged 104. [SFS]

• John Cocchi (1939-2014), US film historian whose *Second Feature: The Best of the 'B' Films* (2000) covers much sf and horror, was found to have died circa 16 June after being missing since April; he was 74. [F770]

• Philip Curtis (1920-2012), UK teacher and author of much sf including the 12-book 'Mr Browser' series for younger readers, opening with *Mr Browser and the Brain Sharpeners* (1979), died on 10 October 2012 aged 92. [DB]

- *Felix Dennis* (1947-2014), UK publishing baron who long ago featured in the *Oz* trial and whose Dennis Publishing magazines include *Bizarre*, *Fortean Times* and *Viz*, died on 22 June; he was 67. [DVB]
- *Nancy Garden* (1938-2014), US author of fantasy, horror and LGBT fiction for younger readers, whose genre work began with four books in the Weird and Horrible Library including *Werewolves* and *Vampires* (both 1973), died on 24 June aged 76. She won the 2003 Margaret Edwards Award for life achievement in YA literature. [SFS]
- *Martha Hyer* (1924-2014), US actress whose films include *Abbott and Costello Go to Mars* (1953), *Riders to the Stars* (1954), *First Men in the Moon* (1964) and *Picture Mommy Dead* (1966), died on 31 May; she was 89. [SFS/AIP]
- *Dan Jacobson* (1929-2014), South African-born novelist whose works include the dystopian *The Confessions of Joseph Baisz* (1977), the post-holocaust *Her Story* (1987) and the alternate-history *The God-Fearer* (1992), died on 12 June; he was 85. [JC]
- *Casey Kasem* (1932-2014) US actor who voiced Shaggy in many Scooby-Doo episodes from 1969, died on 15 June aged 82. Other genre credits include *The Batman/Superman Hour* (1968-1969 tv), *Battle of the Planets* (1979-1980 tv) and *Ghostbusters* (1984). [MPJ]
- *Daniel Keyes* (1927-2014), author of the powerful, unforgettable sf tragedy *Flowers for Algernon* (April 1959 *F&SF*; novel 1966), died on 15 June aged 86. The short *Flowers* won a Hugo and the novel a Nebula, both richly deserved. Numerous media adaptations include the film *Charly* (1968). SFWA honoured Keyes with its Author Emeritus life achievement award in 2006. His last published book was *The Asylum Prophecies* (2009). In person he was much loved.
- *Carla Laemmle* (1909-2014), US actress first seen in *The Phantom of the Opera* (1925) and speaking the first line of *Dracula* (1931), died on 12 June: she was 104. From 2001 she appeared in various horror documentaries and new films including the forthcoming *Mansion of Blood*.
- *Veronica Lazar* (1938-2014), Romanian-born actress whose horror films include *Inferno* (1980) and *The Beyond* (1981), died on 9 June at the age of 75. [SFS]
- *Philippa C. (Pip) Maddern* (1952-2014), Australian author and academic much admired for a number of stories beginning with 'The Ins and Outs of the Hadhya City-State' (1976 *The Altered I*), died on 16 June. [BRG] I fondly

remember her from UK Milfords, 1980-1982; she chaired the 1982 workshop.

- *Francis Matthews* (1927-2014), the voice of Captain Scarlet in *Captain Scarlet and the Mysterons* (1967-1968), died on 14 June aged 86. Other genre credits include Hammer's *The Revenge of Frankenstein* (1958) and *Dracula: Prince of Darkness* (1966). [BB/AW]
- *Rik Mayall* (1958-2014), UK actor and comedian whose genre credits include *An American Werewolf in London* (1981), *Whoops Apocalypse* (1982), *Drop Dead Fred* (title part, 1991) and *Watership Down* (voice, 1999), died on 9 June; he was 56.
- *Terry Richards* (1932-2014), US actor and stunt man who appeared in seven James Bond films and was the sword-wielder famously shot by Indiana Jones in *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, died on 17 June aged 81. [SFS] Other genre credits include *The Empire Strikes Back* (1980), *The Princess Bride* (1987) and *Total Recall* (1990).
- *Frank M. Robinson* (1926-2014), US sf author since 1950, noted for *The Power* (1956; filmed 1967), *The Dark Beyond the Stars* (1991) and the art book *Science Fiction of the Twentieth Century* (1999), died on 30 June aged 87. His technothriller *The Glass Inferno* (1974) with Thomas N. Scortia was half the source of *The Towering Inferno*. He received SFWA's 'Special Honoree' career award in 2014. [RWB]
- *Mary Rodgers* (1931-2014), author of the popular children's fantasy of identity exchange *Freaky Friday* (1972; twice filmed) and its sequels, died on 26 June; she was 83. [MPJ]
- *Pauline Wagner* (1910-2014), US actress who doubled for Fay Wray in the reshot Empire State Building climax of *King Kong* (1933), died on 2 May. She was 103.
- *Eli Wallach* (1915-2014), US character actor best known for parts other than his villain in *Batman* (1967 tv), died on 24 June aged 98. [MPJ] 'I did Mr. Freeze,' he wrote in his autobiography: 'I get more mail for him than anything I've ever done.'
- *Herbert Yellin* (1935-2014), whose Lord John Press (founded 1978) published signed, limited editions of authors including Ursula K. Le Guin, Stephen King, Dan Simmons and Ray Bradbury, died on 13 June aged 79. [F770]

The Weakest Link. *Host*, giving a (flawed) answer: 'In a novel by this classic sci-fi author, a planet with six suns goes dark.' *Contestant*, supplying

the question: ‘Who is Ray Bradbury?’ (*Jeopardy*, 3 June) [AIP]

Award Shortlists. *British Fantasy* (novels only; [more here](#)): FANTASY Emma Newman, *Between Two Thorns*; Lou Morgan, *Blood and Feathers: Rebellion*; Tom Pollock, *The Glass Republic*; Neil Gaiman, *The Ocean at the End of the Lane*; Sofia Samatar, *A Stranger in Olondria*. HORROR Adam Nevill, *House of Small Shadows*; Sarah Pinborough, *Mayhem*; Joe Hill, *NOS4R2*; Alison Littlewood, *Path of Needles*; Lauren Beukes, *The Shining Girls*; Graham Joyce, *The Year of the Ladybird*.

• *Mythopoeic* (novels only; [more here](#)): ADULT Yangsze Choo, *The Ghost Bride*; Neil Gaiman, *The Ocean at the End of the Lane*; Max Gladstone, *Three Parts Dead*; Mark H. Williams, *Sleepless Knights*; Helene Wecker, *The Golem and the Jinni*. CHILDREN’S William Alexander, *Ghoulisn Song*; Holly Black, *Doll Bones*; Joseph Bruchac, *Killer of Enemies*; Sara Beth Durst, *Conjured*; Robin McKinley, *Shadows*.

• *Sidewise* (alt-history): LONG Robert Conroy, *1920: America’s Great War*; Mark Hodder, *The Secret of Abdu el Yezdi*; D.J. Taylor, *The Windsor Faction*; Bryce Zabel, *Surrounded by Enemies: What If Kennedy Survived Dallas?* SHORT Vylar Kaftan, ‘The Weight of the Sunrise’ (*Asimov’s* 2/13); Ken Liu, ‘A Brief History of the Trans-Pacific Tunnel’ (*F&SF* 1/13); Adam Roberts, ‘Tollund’ (*The Book of the Dead* ed. Jared Shurin); Kristine Kathryn Rusch, ‘Uncertainty’ (*Asimov’s* 3/13); Harry Turtledove. ‘Cayos in the Stream’ (*Tor.com* 8/13); Ian Watson, ‘Blair’s War’ (*Asimov’s* 7/13).

Court Circular. The 50 pre-1923 Sherlock Holmes stories are in the public domain, ruled the 7th Circuit US Court of Appeals on 16 June – rejecting the ever-rapacious Conan Doyle estate’s argument that copyright protection for the remaining 1923-1927 tales should extend backwards over the entire Holmes canon, because ‘Many aspects of Holmes’ character, such as his growing friendship with Watson and his human warmth, were created in the last 10 stories, and remain protected by copyright.’ (Reuters, 16 June) [PDF]

As Others See Us. More Westeros backlash! (See Clive James in [A323](#).) ‘On his recent retirement from television criticism, the great Clive James observed that *Game of Thrones* (Sky On Demand) had helped him overcome a lifetime of resistance to any art form containing dragons. Well, I bow to Mr James’s wisdom on most things – the obvious exception being the Cuban dragon Margarita Pracatan – but the fire-breathing lizards, the three-eyed ravens, and the general sense that *GoT* is an unending riff on the duff

aesthetics of the prog rock era married to the hammy classicism of British middlebrow theatre do get in the way a bit.’ (Alastair McKay, *Evening Standard*, 20 June) [BA]

Magazine Scene. *SFX* celebrated its 250th issue (dated August, published late June) with a London party on 25 June, attended no doubt by innumerable sf glitterati. As the Oldest Inhabitant with a piece in every issue since the 1995 launch, I couldn’t possibly miss this but nevertheless I did: too much *SF Encyclopedia* work as usual, and not enough sleep. *The Plain People of Fandom*: You utter wimp, Langford.

Outraged Letters. *Michael Moorcock* is in Paris to mid-November. Will he cross the Channel for Loncon 3? ‘Nope. I only learned it was to be in London a few days ago. [\[Fay Ballard\]’s exhibition](#) is in Princelet Street where I set the last scene of *The Vengeance of Rome*.’ (7 June)

Random Fandom. *Kevin Standlee & Warren Buff* propose a WSFS rules change whereby Business Meeting amendments to the constitution (such as Hugo rules tinkering) must be approved by popular vote of the following year’s Worldcon membership rather than that year’s Business Meeting. Details at kevin-standlee.livejournal.com/1350599.html. [CM]

The Dead Past. *20 Years Ago*, Patrick Nielsen Hayden remarked on the AvoNova paperback of Nancy Kress’s *Beggars in Spain*: ‘The ornate cover type reads like it says *Beggars In Spam*. Of course, I speak as an employee of the company which, through the magic of Excessively Decorative Title Type, once managed to publish Greg Bear’s blockbuster novel *The Forge Of Goo*.’ (*Ansible* 84, July 1994)

- In the same issue a selling point emerged: ‘*Ansible* has “NO Nudity, Profanity, Overt Sex or Violence”, a declaration which on David Garnett’s advice I stole from *Offworld: The All-New Illustrated Magazine of SF and Fantasy* (USA). As Mr Garnett found himself thinking: “Hey! A magazine without nudity, profanity, sex, violence. Must buy it!”’ (*Ibid*)

Fanfundery. *GUFF*: Gillian Polack is the 2014 delegate who travels from Australasia to Loncon 3. It was a close race with several rounds of Australian-ballot elimination and redistribution before an overall majority was achieved. Other candidates were Alison Barton, Samara Morgan and Shay Telfer. Over 100 ballots were received.

Thog's Masterclass. *Dept of A Certain Age.* 'The hot breath of her fortieth birthday seared her neck ...' (Sheila Lowe, *Poison Pen*, 2007) [JG]

• *Oxymoron Dept.* 'His dark face was pale.' (Terry Brooks, *The Wishsong of Shannara*, 1985) [AR]

• *Dept of Possible Euphemism.* 'She stroked his clenching to reassure him.' (Stephen R. Donaldson, *The Illearth War*, 1977)

• *Alternate Chemistry Dept.* 'Your husband dealt with gold and diamonds, both highly explosive substances.' (Luiz Alfredo Garcia-Roza, *The Silence of the Rain*, 1996; trans Benjamin Moser 2002) [PB]

• *Dept of Feminist Awareness.* 'It occurred to him that in all the universe there was nothing quite as devious and demanding as a woman's mind.' (Theodore Sturgeon, 'The Golden Egg', August 1941 *Unknown*) [LP]

• *Radiophonic Workshop Dept.* 'He walked in and heard a sound like a tomb.' (Lee Child, *Tripwire*, 1999) [NR]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

• 11 July 2014: Sam Stone and David Howe talk to the Brum Group, Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre, 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk or rog dot peyton at btinternet dot com. Future meetings: 8 August 2014, TBA; 12 September 2014, Chris Morgan; 10 October 2014, Richard Ashton; 7 November 2014, Storm Constantine; 5 December 2014, Christmas Social.

• 14 July 2014: Mary Talbot, Kate Charlesworth and Bryan Talbot in conversation at The Lit & Phil, 23 Westgate Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 1SE. Free. Telephone: 0191 232 0192.

Marion Zimmer Bradley's dark side has been much discussed online in recent weeks. A Tor.com post for her birthday ('Marion Zimmer Bradley Gave Us New Perspectives', 3 June) generated angry comments and was deleted. Some relevant links:

<http://news.ansible.co.uk/misc/oldlink14.html#mzb>

Retro Hugo Voter Packet. This is now available to Loncon 3 members to download, using their Hugo access codes:

http://loncon3.org/hugo_vote/retro_hugo_voter_packet.php

As Others Remember 1995. ‘In those days, the internet was mainly used to get in touch with 20 bearded nerds to discuss the two episodes of *Star Trek: The Next Generation* in which the Bussard Ramscoop was employed for a different purpose than its intended function of gathering hydrogen molecules.’ (Richard Herring, *Metro*, 25 June) [SR]

Silly Season. ‘Giant super-rats that could become as big as cows are spreading across Britain at an “alarming” rate, scientists have warned.’ ([Daily Star](#), 27 June)

Thog’s Second Helping. Oh, if you insist ... Adam Roberts steeled himself to read the early Shannara books, and communicates a few more (in his phrase) ‘Baby-Thoggisms’: ‘The Dragon’s Crease was well named.’ ‘The features of the Troll were indescribably bland.’ ‘An eerie soundless shriek of terror ripped from the convulsed shroud.’ (all Terry Brooks, *The Sword of Shannara*, 1977) See also:

<http://sibilantfricative.blogspot.co.uk/2014/06/evry-shannannara-evry-woh-o-woh-woh.html>

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Ansible 325, August 2014

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Web news.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or a mulbus, a crawg, and a common creeb.

Loncon or Bust. Yes, I'll be at the [London Worldcon](#), though not with scores of programme appearances: only the heavily populated panel 'Evolution of the SF Encyclopedia' (6pm Friday). Otherwise I'll be wandering round seeking cutting-edge gossip and failing to hear it. [SF Encyclopedia](#) news: on 1 August the online text passed the 4.5 million words mark and John Clute's personal word count exceeded 2 million.

The Doom of the Great City

Ellen Datlow and **Chelsea Quinn Yarbro** are the two winners of the World Fantasy Award life achievement honour for 2014.

Albus Dumbledore headed the *Times Educational Supplement* poll for UK teachers' favourite role model. ([Independent](#), 25 July) [MPJ]

Gregory Feeley, reading a Hugo nominee, was 'fascinated by the eruption of eyebrows beginning in Chapter 5. Although it was only with the arrival of the character Strigan that eyebrows began to be raised, cocked, and twitched, pretty soon other characters were doing it, too. Is the author telling us, with Wolfean subtlety, that some kind of infection is spreading among her characters?' Thus, *Dept of Ancillary Eyebrows*: 'Strigan held the icon out, raised a steel-gray eyebrow.' 'She raised an eyebrow, tilted her head slightly.' 'Strigan said nothing, only twitched one gray eyebrow.' '... she walked into the main living space, stopped, folded her arms, and cocked an eyebrow.' 'Anaander Mianaai turned to her, eyebrow raised.' 'The eyebrow rose farther.' 'Strigan raised an eyebrow ...' 'Strigan raised one skeptical eyebrow.' '... the siren elicited no more than an upward glance and a raised eyebrow.' 'The Lord of the Radch raised one graying eyebrow.' 'Anaander

Mianaai [...] raised one grayed eyebrow.’ ‘Strigan cocked one gray eyebrow ...’ ‘She raised one eyebrow, and then another, disbelieving.’ ‘It was my turn to raise a skeptical eyebrow.’ ‘Lieutenant Issaia raised an eyebrow.’ ‘She raised an eyebrow.’ ‘Moments later, at the mention of Ime, eyebrows twitched.’ ‘Her eyebrows twitched just slightly.’ ‘She lifted an eyebrow.’ ‘It was guaranteed to lift Radchaai eyebrows ...’ ‘Inspector Supervisor Skaaiat raised an eyebrow ...’ ‘I raised an eyebrow.’ ‘I raised one eyebrow and a shoulder ...’ ‘At Inspector Supervisor Skaaiat’s raised eyebrow Seivarden added ...’ ‘[P]eople had stared and whispered, or just raised their eyebrows.’ ‘Seivarden lifted an eyebrow briefly.’ ‘I raised an eyebrow, incredulous.’ ‘I raised an eyebrow ...’ ‘Seivarden raised an eyebrow, sardonic.’ ‘I stopped and turned to look at Seivarden, raised an eyebrow.’ ‘This security officer did not even twitch an eyebrow.’ ‘The right-hand Mianaai lifted an eyebrow.’ ‘Mianaai lifted an eyebrow.’ ‘Anaander Mianaai raised an eyebrow ...’ ‘I didn’t answer, didn’t even raise an eyebrow.’ ‘I turned my head [...] and raised an eyebrow.’ (all Ann Leckie, *Ancillary Justice*, 2013)

Tove Jansson of Moomintroll fame appears on a new two-Euro coin from the Mint of Finland, marking her birth centenary in August.

Kim Newman announced: ‘So I’ll be letting my Horror Writers Association membership expire.’ This was in response to the HWA vote to allow self-published works as an active membership qualification, provided they earn \$2000 within two years of publication. Various commentators say SFWA [must never/urgently needs to] follow suit.

Terry Pratchett sadly cancelled his Discworld convention guest-of-honour appearance in August: ‘I am very sorry about this, but I have been dodging the effects of PCA [*posterior cortical atrophy*] and have been able to write for much longer than any of us ever thought possible, but now The Embuggerance is finally catching up with me, along with other age-related ailments.’ ([Guardian](#), 2 July) Ouch.

Conmit

2 Aug • **Super Relaxed Fantasy Club** (with the BSFA and British Fantasy Society), Brigantes Bar & Brasserie, 114 Micklegate, York, YO1 6JX. 4pm-late, with readings by assorted authors. Free to all.

5 Aug - 8 Sep • **SF Linkcons**, various studio and location tours in and around London. Can you crack the code at www.sflinkcons.org?

8-10 Aug • **Nine Worlds Geekfest** (multimedia), Radisson Blu Edwardian Hotel, Heathrow. *Now £95 reg until 6 August* when advance booking closes; £100 at the door. Book at nineneworlds.co.uk.

9-24 Aug • **Stripped 2014**: Edinburgh Book Festival comics and graphic-novel items. With Mike Carey, Brian & Mary Talbot, others. See www.edbookfest.co.uk/the-festival/whats-on/themes/stripped-2014.

SOLD OUT 9-11 Aug • **Discworld Convention**, Palace Hotel, Manchester. Waiting list for cancellations at www.dwcon.org.

12 Aug • **Fantasy in the Court** (mass genre signing), Goldsboro Books, Cecil Court. London. 6-9pm. £5 redeemable against purchase.

13 Aug • **Gollancz Festival** (talks, readings, signing), Waterstones Piccadilly, London. £6. See www.gollancz.co.uk/gollanczfestival2014/.

13 Aug & 19 Aug • **London Fannish Walking Tour** led by Rob Hansen. 2:30pm. See fiawol.org.uk/FanStuff/walktour/walkintro.htm.

14 Aug • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Canada Water Library, 21 Surrey Quays Rd, London SE16 7AR. 6pm prompt. With Ian MacDonald. Free.

14-18 Aug • **Loncon 3** (72nd Worldcon), ExCeL centre, London Docklands. £135 reg; £300 family; £75 YA; £35 child (6-15); £5 infant (0-5); supporting membership £25. See www.loncon3.org.

19 August 2014: **HarperVoyager Event**, Freemasons' Hall, 60 Great Queen St, London, WC2B 5AZ. With George R.R. Martin, Robin Hobb. £45 (inc new Hobb book). Tickets at <http://tinyurl.com/lleva72>.

20 Aug • **Biology and Manners**: Worlds of Lois McMaster Bujold (conference), Anglia Ruskin U, Cambridge. £60; £25 concessions. See www.anglia.ac.uk/ruskin/en/home/faculties/alss/deps/english_media/research/

22-24 Aug • **Shamrokon** (Eurocon), Hilton Doubletree, Burlington Road (formerly the Burlington Hotel), Dublin. *Now €40 reg*, and the same at the door: concessions €30 at door; under-22s €20 at door. Join online, or ask where to send a cheque, at www.shamrokon.ie.

18 Nov • **Tolkien in Oxford** (symposium), Merton College, Oxford. All day:

www.merton.ox.ac.uk/event/tolkien-oxford-symposium.

3-6 Apr 2015 • **Dysprosium** (Eastercon), Park Inn, London Heathrow. £60 reg, *rising to £70 on 20 August* and £80 on 1 February; £25 supp/under-18s, £15 under-12s, £5 infants. Contact 101 Ninian Rd, Grovehill, Hemel Hempstead, Herts, HP2 6NB. £20 discount *until 20 August* for presupporters joining online at www.dysprosium.org.uk.

Worldcon Bids. The Paris bid is now for 2023 – with Disneyland as likely venue; see Parisin2023.org – leaving [Dublin in 2019](http://Dublinin2019.org) unopposed.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. ‘And, of course, for those who still feel obliged to read something semi-respectable but prefer not to trouble themselves with heavy lifting, there is science fiction, as well as the fantastic adventure tales that don’t quite fit into that genre but are the next best thing.’ (Algis Valiunas on Jules Verne, *Weekly Standard*, 27 July) [MMW]

Awards. *Cordwainer Smith Rediscovery*: Mildred Clingerman. [JC]
Prometheus. NOVEL (tie): Cory Doctorow, *Homeland*, and Ramez Naam, *Nexus*. HALL OF FAME Lois McMaster Bujold, *Falling Free*. SPECIAL Leslie Fish, ‘The Horsetamer’s Daughter’ (filk song) and its novella retelling ‘Tower of Horses’.

• *Seiun* (Japanese) for translations: LONG Peter Watts, *Blindsight*, trans Yoichi Shimada. SHORT Ken Liu, ‘The Paper Menagerie’, trans Furusawa Yoshimidori. [L]

The Weakest Link. *Ewen Cameron*: ‘It lives in a hutch. Bugs Bunny is one of them.’ *Contestant*: ‘An owl?’ (Heart FM, Glasgow) [PE]

R.I.P. *Margot Adler* (1946-2014), US radio journalist (creator of the sf/fantasy reading programme *Hour of the Wolf*), Clarion attendee and author whose books include the nonfiction *Vampires Are Us* (2014), died on 28 July aged 68. [JS]

• *Skye Cole Bartusiak* (1992-2014), who debuted in Stephen King’s *Storm of the Century* (1999), died on 19 July aged 21. Other genre credits include *Firestarter 2: Rekindled* (2002), *Lost* (2005) and *Boogeyman* (2005). [MMW]

- *Thomas Berger* (1924-2014), US author best known for the quasi-Western *Little Big Man* (1964), several of whose novels explored sf themes – from cryonics in *Vital Parts* (1960) to androids in *Adventures of the Artificial Woman* (2004) – died on 13 July. He was 89. [AIP]
- *Dora Bryan* (1923-2014), BAFTA-winning UK actress whose genre credits range from *Vampire over London* (1952) and *Alice Through the Looking Box* (1960) to *MirrorMask* (2005), died on 23 July aged 91. [HB]
- *Neil Craig*, proprietor since the early 1980s of Glasgow's sf books and comics shop *Futureshock*, died unexpectedly on 29 June; he was 59. [JS]
- *J.T. Edson* (1928-2014), UK author famed for Westerns, who also wrote the Tarzan-inspired Bunduki sf series opening with *Bunduki* (1975), died on 17 July aged 86. [DP]
- *James Garner* (1928-2014), US actor whose genre credits include *Space* (1985 tv), *Fire in the Sky* (1993), *God, the Devil and Bob* (2000 tv as the voice of God), *Space Cowboys* (2000), *Atlantis: The Lost Empire* (2001) and *Battle for Terra* (2007), died on 19 July aged 86. [O]
- *Curt Gentry* (1931-2014), US author whose disaster novel *The Last Days of the Late, Great State of California* (1968) drops Los Angeles and most of California into the sea, died on 10 July aged 83. [JC]
- Late notice: *Isidore Haiblum* (1935-2012), US author of *The Wilk Are Among Us* (1975) and other comic sf infused with Yiddish humour, died on 25 October 2012 aged 77. [WGC]
- *Bob Hastings* (1925-2014), US actor whose early tv credits included *Captain Video* (1949), *Atom Squad* (1953) and *Tom Corbett, Space Cadet* (1955), died on 30 June aged 89. He appeared in many other sf series and frequently voiced Commissioner Gordon in *Batman* and *Superman* animations. [MMW]
- *C.J. Henderson* (1951-2014), US author whose work included horror, urban fantasy – the Teddy London series opening with *The Things That Are Not There* (1992) – and comics, died on 4 July aged 62.
- *Dickie Jones* (1927-2014), US actor who voiced the title character of the Disney animated film *Pinocchio* (1940), died on 7 July aged 87. [MPJ]
- Late notice: *Louise Lawrence* (Elizabeth Holden, 1943-2013), UK author of much tough-minded YA genre fiction including the 'Wyndcliffe' and 'Llandor' fantasy series plus several standalone sf novels with varied settings, died on 6 December 2013; she was 70.
- *Dave Legeno* (1963-2014), UK martial artist and actor who was in *Batman*

Begins (2005) and played werewolf Fenrir Greyback in three Harry Potter films, was found dead – apparently from heatstroke – near Death Valley on 6 July. He was 50. [MPJ]

- *Ray Lonnen* (1940-2014), UK actor in the tv *The Guardians* (1971), *Doctor Who* (1973), *Johnny and the Dead* (1995), *Budgie the Little Helicopter* (1994-1996 voice), *Starhunter* (2001) and others, died on 11 July aged 74. [MMW]

- *William C. Martin* (1924-2014), US fan involved in fandom since 1934, a member of First Fandom and the SF Research Association, died on 22 June; he was 89. [JLC]

- *Phillip Marshak*, US director of *Dracula Sucks* (1978), *Space Virgins* (1984), *Night Train to Terror* (1985) and others, died on 27 July aged 80. [GW]

- *Don Matheson* (1929-2014), US actor best known for *Land of the Giants* (1968-1970), died on 29 June aged 84; he also appeared in *Lost in Space* and *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea*. [PDF]

- *Ana María Matute* (1925-2014), distinguished Spanish author whose novels often included fantasy/supernatural elements, died on 25 June aged 88. Her many awards include the Cervantes Prize, the Spanish-speaking world's highest literary honour. [JCo]

- *Christopher Mitchell*, C.S. Lewis scholar who was director 1994-2013 of the Marion E. Wade Center of Wheaton College, Illinois – a research collection devoted to the Inklings, Chesterton and other UK authors – died on 10 July aged 63. [F770]

- *Walter Dean Myers* (1937-2014), US author whose popular YA stories (two were Newbery Honor Books) include the sf *Brainstorm* (1977), died on 1 July aged 76. [JC]

- *Frederick I. Ordway III* (1927-2014), US NASA scientist and author of books on spaceflight, died on 1 July aged 87. As Stanley Kubrick's 2001 scientific consultant, he designed several spacecraft for that film. [GD]

- *Lawrence P. Santoro*, US horror author and podcast host at *Tales to Terrify*, whose story collection is *Drink for the Thirst to Come* (2011), died on 25 July aged 71. [SFS]

- *Jan Shephard* (1935-2014), UK designer and art editor for various comics including *Valiant*, *2000 AD* (where she created the Judge Dredd title logo) from its 1977 launch and *Starlord*, died on 27 June. [GW]

- *Jory Sherman* (1932-2014), US author of many Westerns and the seven-

book 'Chill' psychic-investigator series beginning with *Satan's Seed* (1978), died on 28 June; he was 81. [SFS]

- *Dick Smith* (1922-2014), Oscar-winning US make-up artist whose films include *The Exorcist* (1973) and *Scanners* (1981), died on 30 July aged 92.

[GW]

- *Elaine Stritch* (1925-2014), US actress seen in *Cocoon: The Return* (1988) and *3rd Rock from the Sun* (1996-2001), died on 17 July aged 89. [JL]

- *Richard Vine* (1959-2014) UK fan – in Sweden for the last 20 years – who worked on the first three Unicons (1980-1982) and the UK worldcon Conspiracy '87, died on 29 June; he was 54. [CH]

Death of Print Predicted, 1968. 'I am perfectly willing to assume that the magazine of the year 2000 will be an attractively decorated gelatin capsule. The subscriber swallows it with a beverage of his choice and – VROOOOMMM! In iridescent colors, the whole of the magazine will be performed in the theater of the mind – small problems of separating fiction and nonfiction having been solved.' (William A. Emerson Jr, editor, *Saturday Evening Post*, 10 August 1968) [MMW]

World Fantasy Awards. Novel shortlist: Richard Bowes, *Dust Devil on a Quiet Street*; Marie Brennan, *A Natural History of Dragons*; Neil Gaiman, *The Ocean at the End of the Lane*; Sofia Samatar, *A Stranger in Olondria*; Helene Wecker, *The Golem and the Jinni*; Gene Wolfe, *The Land Across*. More at worldfantasy.org/awards/2014.html.

GRRM Is Still Everywhere. A US conservative columnist explains the Supreme Court's Hobby Lobby decision (that corporations, those devout creatures, can restrict contraceptive coverage by employee health insurance for religious reasons) in easy-to-understand terms: 'If I like to dress up as a character from *Game of Thrones* on weekends, pretending to fight snow zombies and treating my mutt like she's a mystical direwolf, that's none of my employer's business. But if I ask my employer to pay for my trip to a *Game of Thrones* fan convention, I am asking him to make it his business. If my employer refuses, that may or may not be unfair, but it's his right. If, in response, I go to the convention and have the government force my employer to pay for my travel, that only makes things worse.' (US syndicated papers, 2 July) [MMW]

Random Fandom. *Velma (Vijay) Bowen*, former TAFF winner, needs help

to survive the brutal cost of US cancer surgery and chemotherapy: see nielsenhayden.com/makinglight/archives/015933.html.

Man Booker Prize. Titles of genre interest on the 13-book longlist: Karen Joy Fowler, *We Are All Completely Beside Ourselves*; Howard Jacobson, *J*; David Mitchell, *The Bone Clocks*; Richard Powers, *Orfeo*. [L]

Court Circular. The US Supreme Court rejected the Conan Doyle estate's 'emergency petition' against the 7th Circuit decision (see A324) that pre-1923 Sherlock Holmes stories are in the public domain. [MPJ]

The Dead Past. *30 Years Ago*: 'Arthur C. Clarke was recently in town [Washington DC], making his cinematic debut as "a wine-sucking bum" in *2010: The Sequel*. Clarke's ascent to bumdom was reportedly not a success: attempts to film him feeding breadcrumbs to pigeons were interrupted by a marathon, a walkathon, Pres. Reagan's helicopter [etc ...]. As a result, the scene was cut from the film. "If you can't be a successful bum," Clarke says, "the next best thing is a writer.'" [MMW] (*Ansible* 39, August 1984)

• Neil Gaiman, in the same issue, gloated over how he'd aroused the wrath of Tanith Lee by tactfully describing her in an interview as 'obviously once attractive'. (*Ibid*)

C.o.A. Harry Bell, 7 Beaconsfield Crescent, Low Fell, Gateshead, NE9 5XR. Brian & Anne Gray, 791 Spring Lane, York, PA 17403, USA.

Fanfundery. *Corflu Fifty*: this informal fan fund, operating by consensus rather than vote, will bring Geri Sullivan to the 2015 Corflu in Newcastle; she hopes to attend Eastercon too. More C50 information available from Rob Jackson: jacksonshambrook at uwclub dot net.

Thog's Masterclass. *Tedious Eyeballs in the Sky*. 'His boring eyes fixed themselves in Jeremy's face. They deepened in color, became luminous, virulent, flaming again. And Jeremy, staggering from the force of them, reeled backward.' (Hugh B. Cave, 'Murgunstrumm', January 1933 *Strange Tales*) [BA]

• *Ejaculatory Dept.* "'The Automaton!" escaped involuntarily from all lips.' (*The Master Mystery* [Harry Houdini film novelization], Arthur B. Reeve & John W. Grey, 1919) [SC]

• *As Opposed to the Noisy Kind*: 'In Oland the dawn comes along the straight line of the horizon like a silent, dazzling light ...' (Johan Theorin, *Echoes*

from the Dead, trans Marlaine Delargy 2008) [PB]

- *Piercing Dept.* ‘The sound of Eddie’s voice had been an injection through the ear.’ (William McIlvanney, *The Papers of Tony Veitch*, 1983) [PB]
 - *Dept of Metaphor.* ‘She smiled, and Harkness’s head turned a somersault. [...] Harkness decided it was an Amazon of a smile and he knew what he wanted to be: an explorer.’ (*Ibid*)
 - *Reaction Shot.* ‘Calcified, he stood peering up, his heart collapsing inside him.’ (Philip K. Dick, ‘A Game of Unchance’ July 1964 *Amazing*) [BA]
 - *Neat Tricks Dept.* ‘I had barely time to secrete myself before he turned. Luckily, the wall beside me was irregular with protuberances, and I was able to pack myself into one of them.’ (Hugh B Cave, ‘The Door of Doom’, January 1932 *Strange Tales*) [BA]
 - ‘Masters hoisted his beef with two hands, took a bite, and looked at me through hunched shoulders as he chewed.’ (Michael Harvey, *The Chicago Way*, 2007) [PB]
 - ‘She looked back at Marnes, saw him frowning at her beneath his moustache.’ (Hugh Howey, *Wool*, 2011) [AK]
-

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 8 August 2014: Brum Group Summer Social at The Bull, 1 Price Street, Birmingham, B4 6JU. 7:30pm for 8pm. Places should be reserved in advance. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk or rog dot peyton at btinternet dot com. Future meetings (£4 or £3 for members) at the usual venue the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre: 12 September 2014, Chris Morgan; 10 October 2014, Richard Ashton; 7 November 2014, Storm Constantine; 5 December 2014, Christmas Social.
- 9 August 2014: Robin Hobb signing, Waterstone’s Reading Oracle, Reading. 1pm. Free. Enquiries 0118 9503400.
<http://tinyurl.com/6lbp2xp>

The Dead Past II. *30 Years Ago*, we were proud to offer a little spiritual uplift from William McGonagall: ‘And when Life’s prospects may at times appear dreary to ye, / Remember Alois Senefelder, the discoverer of lithography.’ (*Ansible* 39, August 1984)

R.I.P. II. *Robert Halmi* (1924-2014), Hungarian-born producer of many genre tv series and tv films including *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* (1997), *Gulliver's Travels* (1996), *Alice in Wonderland* (1999), *Animal Farm* (1999), *Earthsea* (2004), *Hogfather* (2006), *Neverland* (2011) and the forthcoming *Olympus* (2015), died on 30 July aged 90. [MPJ]

Fanfundery II. Some of Bob Shaw's home-made stained glass will feature in the fan funds auctions at Loncon 3 and perhaps also Shamrokon:

<http://taff.org.uk/news/BobShawGlass.html>

Thog's Second Helping. Claire M. Jordan shares a passage from *Dracula* which she and others found somehow too comical to finish reading aloud. 'If I remember correctly, it was the quivering nostrils which did it for me, the waggly eyebrows which did it for [a friend] and the lumpy forehead which reduced my mother to convulsions of hilarity.' Introducing the splendid and phrenologically notable Van Helsing:

'... he came towards me, a man of medium weight, strongly built, with his shoulders set back over a broad, deep chest and a neck well balanced on the trunk as the head is on the neck. The poise of the head strikes me at once as indicative of thought and power. The head is noble, well-sized, broad, and large behind the ears. The face, cleanshaven, shows a hard, square chin, a large resolute, mobile mouth, a good-sized nose, rather straight, but with quick, sensitive nostrils, that seem to broaden as the big bushy brows come down and the mouth tightens. The forehead is broad and fine, rising at first almost straight and then sloping back above two bumps or ridges wide apart, such a forehead that the reddish hair cannot possibly tumble over it, but falls naturally back and to the sides. Big, dark blue eyes are set widely apart, and are quick and tender or stern with the man's moods.' (Bram Stoker, *Dracula*, 1897)

Ansible 325 Copyright © David Langford, 2014. Thanks to Brian Ameringen, Paul Barnett, Harry Bell, Steve Carper, John Clute, Jonathan Cowie, William G. Contento, J.L. Coker, Gordon Davie, Paul Di Filippo, File 770, Martyn P. Jackson, Amanda Kear, Jim Linwood, Locus, Omega, Andrew I. Porter, David Pringle, Joyce Scrivner, SF Site, Steven H Silver, Jim Steel, Gary Wilkinson, Martin Morse Wooster, and our Hero Distributors: Dave Corby (Birmingham SF Group), SCIS/Prophecy, Alan Stewart (Australia). Onward to Loncon 3! 1 August 2014.



Ansible 326, September 2014

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Web news.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE, black seals or thrice around the maple tree.

Loncon 3. Where to start, where to finish? I enjoyed it no end. Statisticians already know this was the largest ever Worldcon in terms of registrations sold (10,833) and the second largest for actual attendance (7,951). With cunning forethought, the vast bleak spaces of the main ExCeL halls used were broken up into an intriguing maze of exhibits (many very clever, others unexpected), dealer tables and art-show displays on an upper level, with catering, special-interest tents, a library area and much else in the extensive 'Fan Village' below. A fake tree, a Tardis (thank you, David Wake) and a stray Iron Throne made useful landmarks and photo backgrounds. *Private Eye*'s 'Scene & Heard' cartoon coverage noted the Tiki Dalek, the Lost Tribble alert on the notice board and the Lego *Millennium Falcon*, but missed what I first thought must be a revival of Humming & Swaying – actually Tai Chi on the village green. All these whimsies worked rather well, and – remarkably for a UK worldcon – the real ale didn't run out. One favourite programme moment, orchestrated by Malcolm Edwards: Peter Nicholls getting a standing ovation as the first founder of the *SF Encyclopedia*. Otherwise I didn't do much programme, and sadly missed the closing-ceremony audience singing 'Happy Birthday to You' to Brian Aldiss, who was 89 that day. Meanwhile, the usual awards were presented ...

Hugos. NOVEL (1595 nominating ballots) Ann Leckie, *Ancillary Justice*. NOVELLA (847) Charles Stross, 'Equoid' (Tor.com 9/13). NOVELETTE (728) Mary Robinette Kowal, 'The Lady Astronaut of Mars', (*Rip-Off!* 2012; maryrobinettekowal.com 2/13). SHORT (865) John Chu, 'The Water That Falls on You from Nowhere' (Tor.com 2/13). DRAMATIC: LONG (995) *Gravity*. DRAMATIC: SHORT (760) *Game of Thrones*: 'The Rains of Castamere'. RELATED WORK (752) Kameron Hurley, 'We Have Always Fought' (*A Dribble of Ink* 5/13). GRAPHIC STORY (552) Randall Munroe, 'Time' (xkcd.com). PRO EDITOR:

LONG (632) Ginjer Buchanan. PRO EDITOR: SHORT (656) Ellen Datlow. PRO ARTIST (624) Julie Dillon. SEMIPROZINE (411) *Lightspeed*. FANZINE (478) *A Dribble of Ink*. FANCAST (396) *SF Signal Podcast*. FAN WRITER (521) Kameron Hurley. FAN ARTIST (316) Sarah Webb. JOHN W. CAMPBELL AWARD (767) Sofia Samatar.

This year's Hugos were enlivened by organized voting for the lengthy 'Wheel of Time' fantasy sequence (as a single just-completed novel) and for Larry Correia's 'Sad Puppies' slate of supposedly right-wing candidates. None did well, though only Vox Day received the special accolade of being ranked below No Award. Correia accepted the vote results with good grace, though author Dave Freer continued to froth: 'NO AUTHOR FROM ANY COUNTRY, OF ANY ETHNICITY OR ORIENTATION, who is *openly* anything but left wing can get onto the ballot, let alone win and that this situation has persisted for the better part of the last twenty years, by the most generous interpretation.' (Madgeniusclub.com, 20 August) Any counterexamples should be sent to him, please, not to me.

2016 Site Selection. Kansas City won by a reported 651 votes to the rival Beijing bid's 70, with write-ins and 'none of the above' votes making a total of 758 ballots. See the events list and 'Dead Past' below.

Retro Hugos for 1938 work. NOVEL T.H. White, *The Sword in the Stone*. NOVELLA John W. Campbell as Don A Stuart, 'Who Goes There?' (*Astounding* 8/38). NOVELETTE Clifford D. Simak, 'Rule 18' (*Astounding* 7/38). SHORT Arthur C. Clarke, 'How We Went to Mars' (*Amateur Science Stories* 3/38). DRAMATIC *The War of the Worlds* (radio). EDITOR John W. Campbell. PRO ARTIST Virgil Finlay. FANZINE *Imagination!* ed. Forrest J Ackerman et al. FAN WRITER Ray Bradbury. SPECIAL COMMITTEE AWARD Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster for Superman's 1938 debut.

More Loncon Awards. *Big Heart*: Vince Docherty. *Chesleys* (art): the life Artistic Achievement Award went to Jim Burns in absentia – not being on the ballot, he'd thought he could safely go to a party instead. Full list at www.asfa-art.org/pages/06-currentawardspage.html.

- *First Fandom Hall of Fame*: John Clute, plus John Carnell and Walter Gillings posthumously.
- *Sam Moskowitz Award for Collecting*: Mike Ashley.
- *Sidewise* (alternate history): LONG (tie) D.J. Taylor, *The Windsor Faction*;

Bryce Zabel, *Surrounded by Enemies: What If Kennedy Survived Dallas?*.
SHORT Vylar Kaftan, 'The Weight of the Sunrise' (*Asimov's* 2/13).

Other memories: meeting lots of people; failing to meet lots of others; a plethora of often clashing parties (thanks again to Dave Clements & Charlie Stross, Becon Publications, SFWA, Gollancz); being cheerily tracked down by autograph hunters (with no new book in years, I'd thought it wasn't worth applying for a signing session); [taking many more or less inept photographs](#); good cider; increasingly aching feet from trudging those endless hard floors; the Long March to the private-party rooms which threaded through and past a succession of bare unused ExCeL halls not unlike the parking bays of General Systems Vehicles as imagined by late Loncon GoH Iain M. Banks. Yes, [Loncon 3](#) was huge beyond belief, and the committee handled its size very well.

The Day After

Cory Doctorow accepted Randall Munroe's Hugo wearing the red cape and goggles in which [Xkcd.com](#) cartoons like to portray him.

Simon R. Green remembers the splendours of Loncon 3: 'I was delighted to see that the room for my one and only panel was packed, standing room only; until I realized Connie Willis was on the panel with me. At which point, much became clear.' (29 August)

Patrick McLaw, Maryland school teacher and sf author, was arrested, subjected to 'emergency medical evaluation', put on administrative leave and banned from all school premises. Police searched the school for weapons, found none. The only reason so far suggested is that one of McLaw's pseudonymous sf dystopias features a school shooting in the year 2902. He is, incidentally, black. ([Reason.com](#), 29 August) [PB]

Nalo Hopkinson worried in public that the Eaton Collection at UC Riverside – to whose archive so many of us have sent sf/fan material – could be downsized, sidelined or even split up by UCR's seemingly sf-hostile new library administration ([nalohopkinson.com](#), 10 August; [update](#)). The Collection recently received a donation of no less than \$3.5 million from the estate of the late fan photographer Jay Kay Klein. [\[F770\]](#)

Diana Wynne Jones's 80th birthday on 16 August was marked by an [animated 'Google doodle'](#) based on *Howl's Moving Castle*. There was also a ['Carmilla' theme](#) for Sheridan Le Fanu's 200th on 28 August.

Dave Kyle, who had attended very nearly all the previous Worldcons, skipped Loncon 3 on medical advice but sent thanks for the messages of sympathy.

Nnedi Okorafor, on the Afrofuturism panel at Detcon, 'gave an example of how our community has much to learn on such questions, informing us that she had been asked, "You've got Anansi in your book. Did you get that from *American Gods*?"' (*Nice Distinctions* #25) [ADH]

Robert Silverberg greeted your editor at Loncon 3 (his sixtieth consecutive worldcon, the longest unbroken streak of any attendee) with a cheering word of wisdom: 'Everyone who won a Hugo before me is now dead.'

Charlie Stross was seen counting Hugos on his fingers: 'All right, Langford, I just need another twenty-six to catch up with you.'

Confusticate

FULL UP 5-6 Sep • **A Fantastic Legacy**: Diana Wynne Jones memorial conference, Newcastle University. See conferences.ncl.ac.uk/dwj/.

5-7 Sep • **FantasyCon 2014**, Royal York Hotel, York. GoH Kate Elliott, Toby Whithouse, Larry Rostant. £60 reg, £95 joint (2 adults), under-16s £27.50; BFS members £45, £70, £15; under-5s free. Join online at www.fantasycon2014.org. *Rates good until 2 September*.

11-14 Sep • **Oxonmoot** (Tolkien Society), Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford. See www.tolkiensociety.org/events/oxonmoot-2014/.

12-14 Sep • **The Asylum** (steampunk), Lincoln. £24 reg; £13 junior (5-16); various specials/extras. See steampunk.synthasite.com.

13 Sep • **TitanCon**, Wellington Park Hotel, Belfast. £15 reg; £5 supp. Join at titancon.com (PayPal only, with booking surcharge).

24 Sep • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. With Sarah Maitland. Free.

27 Sep • **When the Lamps Went Out** (H.G. Wells Society conference), Palace Green Library, Durham University. £35 reg, £25 unwaged; members £30/£20. Contact 20 Upper Field Close, Hereford, HR2 7SW.

28 Sep • **Crossness Steampunk Convivial**, Crossness Engines, Belvedere Rd, Abbey Wood, SE2 9AQ. 10:30am-6pm. £8; £4 for 6-15s. See www.crossnessconvivial.co.uk. Contact 020 8311 3711.

3 Oct - 20 Jan • **Terror and Wonder: The Gothic Imagination** (exhibition), British Library, London. 'Two hundred rare objects ... 250 years of the Gothic tradition': www.bl.uk/whatson/exhibitions/gothic/.

24-26 Oct • **Celluloid Screams** (horror film festival), Showroom Cinema, Sheffield. See celluloidscreams.co.uk. 0114 275 7727.

14-15 Feb 2015 • **Picocon 32**, Imperial College Union, London. GoH TBA. £10 reg; £8 concessions; £5 ICSF members. Contact ICSF, Beit Quad, Prince Consort Rd, London, SW7 2BB; picocon@icsf.co.uk.

3-6 Apr 2015 • **Dysprosium** (Eastercon), Park Inn, London Heathrow. *Now £70 reg*, rising to £80 on 1 February; £25 supp/under-18s, £15 under-12s, £5 infants. Contact 101 Ninian Rd, Grovehill, Hemel Hempstead, Herts, HP2 6NB; join online at www.dysprosium.org.uk.

7-9 Aug 2015 • **Nine Worlds Geekfest** (multimedia), Heathrow. Already too late for the 'Super early rate'; *now 'early rate' of £85 reg; £42.50 child*. Advance booking online only at nineworlds.co.uk.

19-23 Aug 2015 • **Sasquan** (Worldcon), Spokane Convention Center, Spokane, WA, USA. *Now \$190 reg* (until 31 December); \$95 YA/military; \$85 child; \$40 supp. See sasquan.org for more.

17-21 Aug 2016 • **MidAmeriCon II** (74th Worldcon), Kansas City, MO, USA. GoH Kinuko Y. Craft, Patrick and Teresa Nielsen Hayden, Tamora Pierce, Michael Swanwick. \$150 reg; \$90 YA/active military service; \$60 under-16s; \$50 supp. See midamericon2.org for more.

4-6 Nov 2016 • **BCon** (Eurocon), Barcelona, Spain. GoH Aliette de Bodard, Richard Morgan, Jun Miyazaki, Enrique Corominas. Further information and online registration at www.eurocon2016.org.

Rumblings. The 2023 Paris Worldcon bid has been withdrawn for the time being but may yet relaunch: see parisin2023.org.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. The Jabberwocky music festival in the Loncon 3 venue was cancelled: ‘The ExCel Centre is not a known music space. Not only is it kind of a pain in the arse to get to, but nobody wants to see Nils Frahm in a sparsely populated, untested conference centre with a fucking science-fiction convention next door.’ (Fan website) [JL]

- *The Guardian*’s much friendlier coverage scored highly on the sf journalism bingo card with its headline ‘World Science Fiction Convention 2014 beams into London / Nowt so queer as filk as Loncon at the ExCel centre allies sci-fi and fantasy to draw a horde of fans’. ([15 August](#))

Still More Awards. *European SF Society Hall of Fame*: AUTHOR Wolfgang Jeschke. ARTIST Jim Fitzpatrick. PUBLISHER Angry Robot. MAGAZINE *Cosmoport*. TRANSLATOR Kersti Juva. PROMOTER Dave Lally. *Mythopoeic*: ADULT Helene Wecker, *The Golem and the Jinni*. CHILDREN Holly Black, *Doll Bones*. SCHOLARSHIP: INKLINGS Jason Fisher, ed., *Tolkien and the Study of His Sources: Critical Essays*. SCHOLARSHIP: OTHER G. Ronald Murphy, *Tree of Salvation: Yggdrasil and the Cross in the North*.

As Others See Us II. *Morning Joe* host Joe Scarborough explains *Game of Thrones* without the prejudice instilled by actually watching it: ‘I think there are, like, gnomes, and elves, and hobbits, and people with spikes coming out of the sides of their faces.’ (MSNBC, 18 June) [MMW]

R.I.P. *Alex Angulo* (1953-2014), Spanish comic actor seen in *Pan’s Labyrinth* (2006), died on 20 July aged 61. [MPJ]

- *Richard Attenborough* (1923-2014), Oscar-winning UK actor and director whose best known sf role was Prof John Hammond in *Jurassic Park* (1993) and its sequel, died on 24 August aged 90. Other genre credits include *Doctor Dolittle* (1967).

- *Lauren Bacall* (1924-2014), famed US actress who died on 12 August aged 89, had a few genre credits in her long career – including *Blithe Spirit* (1956), *Presence of Mind* (1999), *Birth* (2004), *Howl’s Moving Castle* (2004) and *Scooby-Doo and the Goblin King* (2004). [AW]

- *John Blundall* (1937-2014), UK artist and puppeteer who created several characters for Gerry Anderson’s Supermarionation shows – most famously

Lady Penelope's butler/chauffeur Parker – died on 18 August aged 77.

- *Marilyn Burns* (1949-2014), US 'scream queen' actress best known as the survivor of *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre* (1974), died on 5 August aged 65. [MPJ]
- *Madeleine Collinson* (1952-2014), Maltese-born model and actress best remembered for Hammer's *Twins of Evil* (1971) – where she was the bad sister who's vampirized and her identical twin Mary the virtuous one – died on 14 August aged 62. [MPJ]
- *Menahem Golan* (1929-2014), Israeli film producer whose best known sf credit was *Superman IV: The Quest for Peace* (1987), died on 8 August aged 85. [O/MPJ]
- *Charles Keating* (1941-2014), UK actor who played Zeus in both *Hercules: The Legendary Journeys* (1999) and *Xena: Warrior Princess* (2000), died on 9 August aged 72. [AW]
- *Arlene Martel* (1936-2014), US actress seen in many genre tv series since 1959 – perhaps most famously *The Outer Limits* 'Demon with a Glass Hand' (1964) and *Star Trek* 'Amok Time' (1967) – died on 12 August; she was 78. [DKMK]
- *J.J. Murphy*, Northern Irish actor whose first *Game of Thrones* scenes were shot a few days earlier, died on 8 August aged 86. He appears in the forthcoming *Dracula Untold*. [AW]
- *Chapman Pincher* (1914-2014), UK journalist and author whose works include the sf *Not with a Bang* (1965) and some borderline-fantastic novels, died on 5 August; he was 100. [JC]
- *Gianfranco Viviani* (1937-2014), Italian publisher and translator who in 1970 founded the important sf house Editrice Nord (first Italian publisher of *Dune* and many others), died on 29 August aged 77.
- *Robin Williams* (1951-2014), Oscar-winning US actor whose genre credits include *Mork & Mindy* (1978-1982 tv), *Popeye* (1980), *The Adventures of Baron Munchausen* (1988), *Dead Again* (1991), *Aladdin* (1992), *Jumanji* (1995), *Flubber* (1997), *Bicentennial Man* (1999), *A.I.* (2001), *Robots* (2005) and *Night at the Museum* (2006), committed suicide on 14 August; he was 63. [BB]

Paging Joe McCarthy. On the BFI open-air sf film festival: 'A film like *The Man Who Fell to Earth* is that fragile thing – sci-fi of which it is impossible to conceive of a spinoff or sequel. In that way, it is entirely anti-American.' (Antonia Quirke, *Financial Times*, 22 August) [MMW]

Magazine Scene. Samuel Montgomery-Blinn's *Bull Spec* (latest issue #8/9, Spring 2013) is ceasing publication as a printed fiction magazine; nonfiction continues online. (Bullspec.com, 14 August) [PDF]

The Force Is Against You. Laura Elizabeth Skywalker Matthews changed her name by deed poll: no problem with her UK bank cards, driving licence etc, but the Home Office is too scared of lawyers to allow it on her passport. They 'will not recognise a change to a name which is subject to copyright or trademark'. (BBC, 30 July) [MPJ]

Random Fandom. *Brian Ameringen's* Porcupine Books is up for sale ('Would you buy a used book business from this man?'): contact brian at porcupine demon co uk.

- *David Langford* notes there is a 1987 precedent for putting *Ansible* on hold for several years following the ravages of a UK Worldcon, and Hazel Langford wonders why he didn't do it again.

- *WSFS Business Meeting:* Worldcon/Hugo rules changes passed on for ratification next year include (a) a new process whereby changes are introduced at one Worldcon's business meeting, ratified as before by the next, and (the new bit) decided by a WSFS membership referendum in the third year; (b) audiobooks to count as equivalent to print publication; (c) shortlisted Hugo items renamed 'finalists' rather than 'nominees' – too many people having played the 'I nominated myself, so I can put HUGO NOMINEE on my book' publicity card.

The Weakest Link. *Bradley Walsh:* 'Which Irvine Welsh novel features a monologue by a tapeworm?' *Contestant:* 'Wuthering Heights.' (ITV *The Chase*) [PE]

The Dead Past. *50 Years Ago,* history began to repeat itself: 'LONDON IN '65. We made it! At the PacifiCon attendees voted that the 1965 World Convention will be held in London. The date to jot down on the bedroom ceiling is August bank holiday. Watch this space for further announcements.' (Skyrack 70, September 1964)

- *40 Years Ago,* more evidence of cyclic history à la Spengler and Toynbee: 'Kansas City won the bid for the 1976 Worldcon.' (Checkpoint 53, September 1974)

Fanfundery. Delegates at Loncon 3 were Curt Phillips (TAFF) and Gillian Polack (GUFF). The joint fan funds auction raised over £1700 (nearly £800

from three stained-glass panels by Bob Shaw) and the mock casino over £400, with more from the TAFF pub quiz and dealer table. See Jim Mowatt's [TAFFworld 1](#) at taff.org.uk for further details.

Thog's Masterclass. *Neat Tricks.* 'A hand took his, pressed it firmly, looked him straight in the eye.' (Neil Gaiman, *American Gods*, 2001) [HR]

• *Palaeometeorology Dept.* 'It was a gorgeous day, with gossamer clouds strung out like dinosaur bones across the blue sky.' (Mark Edwards, *The Magpies*, 2013) [AK]

• *Dept of Never Two Similes Alike.* 'Joentaa felt Elina Lehtinen's words like snowflakes cooling him for a while, before they began to melt inside his head.' (Jan Costin Wagner, *Silence*, 2007; trans Anthea Bell 2010) [PB]

• *Eyeballs in the Sky.* 'Rebecka tries to force herself to look up and meet Frans Zachrisson's eyes. But she can't. There are too many of them.' (Asa Larsson, *Sun Storm*, 2003; trans Marlaine Delargy 2006) [PB]

• *Talking Dirty Dept.* 'The boy tilted back his head to scream at the sky and words erupted from the hole in his face like sewage from a burst pipe.' (Tom Ward, 'A Departure', 2013) [VD]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

• 12 September 2014: Chris Morgan talks to the Brum Group at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre. 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for members. Contact [bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk](mailto:bhamsfgroup@yahoo.co.uk) or [rog dot peyton at btinternet dot com](mailto:rog.dot.peyton@btinternet.com). Future meetings: 10 October 2014, Richard Ashton; 7 November 2014, Storm Constantine; 5 December 2014, Christmas Social.

Editorial. The Loncon 3 committee cannot be held responsible for the widespread post-con lurgi which took a while to incubate but also proved epic in scale. All sympathy to fellow-sufferers. Even now I'm still coughing up [REDACTED]. Here are some of my Worldcon photos:

<https://picasaweb.google.com/104365906268490636609/Loncon3>

R.I.P. II. *Stan Goldberg* (1932-2014), US comics artist who worked for Marvel in the 1960s – creating the original colour designs for such characters as Spider-Man, the Fantastic Four and the Hulk – died on 31 August aged 82. [DKMK]

Thog's Second Helping. *Dept of Ancillary Infodump.* ““You know how annexations work. I mean, yes, they work by sheer, undeniable force, but after. After the executions and the transportations and once all the last bits of idiots who think they can fight back are cleaned up. Once all that's done, we fit whoever's left into Radchaai society – they form up into houses, and take clientage, and in a generation or two they're as Radchaai as anybody. And mostly that happens because we go to the top of the local hierarchy – there pretty much always is one – and offer them all sorts of benefits in exchange for behaving like citizens, offer them clientage contracts, which allows them to offer contracts to whoever is below them, and before you know it the whole local setup is tied into Radchaai society, with minimal disruption.” / Lieutenant Awn made an impatient gesture. She already knew this.’ (Ann Leckie, *Ancillary Justice*, 2013) [DH]

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Ansible 327, October 2014

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The Toppers' Club

Lou Anders, editorial/art director of the Prometheus Books sf imprint Pyr since its 2005 launch, is leaving to 'devote his professional energy to being a full-time author.' (*PW*, 19 September) Pyr may be in trouble, with 'flagging sales' and 'a long-standing reputation of failing to pay authors and artists on time'. (Staffersbookreview.com, 25 September)

Greg Bear needed emergency open-heart surgery on 23 September (aorta repair and installation of a mechanical aortic valve); he came through this well and is recovering with pleasing speed. [AB]

Charles Bolden, NASA chief and former space shuttle commander, remembers his roots. *Interviewer*: 'Astronauts weren't around when you were a kid. So what did you want to be when you grew up?' *Bolden*: 'Yes, they were! Astronauts were very prominent because there was Buck Rogers. And I saw people going to Mars every weekend at the theater in Columbia, South Carolina.' (*Washington Post*, 11 May) [PL]

Roger Dean's lawsuit against James Cameron for alleged theft of his imagery (floating islands, etc) in *Avatar* was dismissed by a New York judge on 17 September. 'The judge also noted that images from the film were cropped, rotated and otherwise taken "out of context" in an attempt to make them look similar to Dean's paintings, which were in turn also manipulated by the artist.' Several other *Avatar* plagiarism suits had already failed. ([The Hollywood Reporter](http://TheHollywoodReporter.com), 17 September)

Jack Kirby's Marvel Comics characters have been the focus of many rights lawsuits, now apparently over. Official joint statement: 'Marvel and the

family of Jack Kirby have amicably resolved their legal disputes, and are looking forward to advancing their shared goal of honoring Mr. Kirby's significant role in Marvel's history.' ([The Beat](#), 26 September)

Ursula K. Le Guin will be the 2014 recipient of the US National Book Foundation's Medal for Distinguished Contribution to American Letters, a high honour indeed – presentation on 19 November. [ML]

David Mitchell's novelistic success, most recently with *The Bone Clocks*, is explained by UK academic Sarah Dillon (editor of a book of essays on his writing): 'This is why his work is so addictive – he's creating his own universe.' (*New York Times*, 24 August) [DR] If only some science fiction or fantasy author had thought of that!

Albert Uderzo, co-creator of Asterix the Gaul, and his daughter Sylvie are now reconciled after long litigation over the mighty cartoon franchise: he's dropping his lawsuit against her and her husband, while her counter-suit was recently thrown out. ([BBC](#), 26 September) [MPJ]

Conquish

Until 31 Dec • **Days of Fear and Wonder:** BFI celebration of sf film, nationwide. See www.bfi.org.uk/sci-fi-days-fear-wonder and [links](#).

3 Oct - 20 Jan • **Terror and Wonder: The Gothic Imagination** (exhibition), British Library, London. 'Two hundred rare objects ... 250 years of the Gothic tradition': www.bl.uk/whatson/exhibitions/gothic/.

4-5 Oct • **Fahrenheit 451** performance, Southbank Centre, London. 7:45pm Saturday; 2pm and 5pm Sunday. £20 plus booking fee. See www.southbankcentre.co.uk/whatson/fahrenheit-451-85820.

4 Oct • **What is the Lure of the Dystopia?** (Cheltenham Lit Fest panel), The Inkpot, Imperial Square, Cheltenham. 5:30-6:30pm. £8.

6 Oct • **SF: Home of the Literary Activist?** discussion, Southbank as above. £8 plus fee. See www.southbankcentre.co.uk/whatson/.

10 Oct • **SF & Fantasy: A Celebration** (Cheltenham Lit Fest panel), cost and venue as for 4 October panel above. 8:30-9:30pm.

17-19 Oct • **Lakes International Comic Art Festival**, Kendal, Cumbria. Some parts free, including Comics Clock Tower venue. Tickets per item, most £7 plus booking fee. See www.comicartfestival.com.

20-25 Oct • **Arvon SF Course**, Totleigh Barton, Devon. £700 single room; £650 shared. See www.arvon.org/course/science-fiction/.

22 Oct • **The Science of Fiction: Future** (panel), Cambridge Science Centre. 7-9pm. £3. See www.cambridgesciencecentre.org.

23-27 Oct • **Bram Stoker International Film Festival**, Whitby. £120 plus optional extras. See www.bramstokerfilmfestival.com.

24-26 Oct • **Celluloid Screams** (horror film festival), Showroom Cinema, Sheffield. See celluloidscreams.co.uk. 0114 275 7727.

25 Oct • **BristolCon**, Doubletree (formerly Ramada) Hotel, Bristol. GoH Jon Courtenay Grimwood, Emma Newman, Julian Quayle. £25 reg; £30 at the door. Cheques to 18 High Leaze Road, Patchway, Bristol BS34 5AF.

29 Oct • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. With David Bradley of *SFX*. Free.

31 Oct - 2 Nov • **Festival of Fantastic Films**, Manchester Conference Centre, Sackville St. £25 reg; day rate £25. Contact 95 Meadowgate Rd, Salford, Manchester, M6 8EN. See fantastic-films.com.

15-16 Nov • **Thought Bubble** (comics), various halls, Armouries Square, Leeds; part of the Leeds Comic Art Festival, running 9-16 November. £24 or £15/day. See thoughtbubblefestival.com.

14-16 Nov • **Armadacon 26**, Future Inn, Plymouth. £30 reg; day rates £15 Sat, £10 Sun ('concessions' £25, £12, £8); £5 each evening from 6pm. Contact 18 Wadham Rd, Liskeard, Cornwall, PL14 3BD.

14-16 Nov • **Novacon 44**, Park Inn, Mansfield Road, Nottingham. £45 reg. Contact 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ.

18 Nov • **Tolkien in Oxford** (symposium), Merton College, Oxford. £10: see www.merton.ox.ac.uk/event/tolkien-oxford-symposium.

Infinitely Improbable

We Are Everywhere. Alex Salmond made a subtle literary allusion after the Scottish independence referendum: ‘The wrath of Khan will be as nothing to the wrath of a No voter who has been gulled by the Westminster leadership.’ ([Independent](#), 23 September) [MPJ]

As Others Fear Us. Fifty 1.5-metre statues of Paddington Bear are to be dotted around London as a November film tie-in, and auctioned for charity some weeks later. In posh Primrose Hill, the threat of even one temporary bear is viewed with horror. Phil Cowan: ‘a direct attack on the concept of what a neutral public space was designed for ... Primrose Hill Park is a cherished public space that offers a sanctuary from the world of commerce.’ Karen Ross calls it an ‘unwelcome precedent’ and very probably ‘a target for vandals’. ([Independent](#), 31 August) [MPJ]

High Camp. The autumn ‘Campfire’ literary weekend held by Jeff Bezos of Amazon – where it seems the first rule of Campfire is ‘You do not talk about Campfire’ – developed rifts after current Amazon/Hachette feuding, with avowedly pro-Hachette authors no longer invited or ‘having second thoughts about going’. Hugh Howey, a staunch Amazon man, was apparently there in September though ‘I asked not to be invited back this year, as I want to be able to speak my mind and not have any hint of a quid pro quo.’ Some authors seem too intimidated even to say whether they attend. ([New York Times](#), 20 September) [LW]

R.I.P. *Jane Baker*, who with her husband Pip scripted four 1980s *Doctor Who* storylines – including the first appearance of that villainous renegade Time Lord, the Rani – died on 8 September. [MPJ]

- *Donatas Banionis* (1924-2014), Lithuanian actor who played the lead role in Andrei Tarkovsky’s *Solaris* (1972), died on 4 September aged 90. [GF]
- *Vanna Bonta* (1958-2014), US actress best known for *The Beastmaster* (1982), whose ‘quantum fiction’ sf novel is *Flight* (1995), died on 8 July aged 56. [SS]
- *Deodato Borges*, Brazilian comics writer/artist who created his country’s wildly popular superhero Flame (radio from 1960, comic from 1963), died on 25 August; he was 80. [PDF]
- *Theodore J. Flicker* (1930-2014), US writer and film-maker who wrote and directed the sf spoof *The President’s Analyst* (1967), died on 12 September aged 84. [TF]
- *Eugie Foster* (1971-2014), US author and editor who won a 2009 Nebula

award for ‘Sinner, Baker, Fabulist, Priest; Red Mask, Black Mask, Gentleman, Beast’, died on 27 September; she was only 42. Her stories are collected in *Returning My Sister’s Face* (2009) and other volumes. [JV]

- *Don Keefer* (1916-2014), US character actor best remembered for the *Twilight Zone* segment based on Jerome Bixby’s ‘It’s a Good Life’ died on 7 September aged 98. Other genre appearances included *Sleeper* (1973) and *Liar Liar* (1997). [CH]

- *Graham Joyce* (1954-2014), UK author of distinguished fantasy, dark fantasy and horror novels which won him six British Fantasy Awards and a World Fantasy Award, died on 9 September; he was 59. [MJE] Five of his books are currently in development as feature films. [CP] Graham was a frequent highlight of UK conventions, where his cheering presence will be sadly missed.

- *Bill Kerr* (1922-2014), Australian character actor whose genre credits include *Adam Adamant Lives!* (1967), *Doctor Who*: ‘The Enemy of the World’ (1967-1968) and *Peter Pan* (2003), died on 29 August aged 92. [PA]

- *Richard Kiel* (1939-2014), 7' 2" US actor who played Jaws in two James Bond films, died on 10 September aged 74. He was also in the 1962 *Twilight Zone* segment ‘To Serve Man’.

- *Angus Lennie* (1930-2014), Scots actor who came to sticky ends in the *Doctor Who* storylines ‘Terror of the Zygons’ (1967) and ‘The Ice Warriors’ (1975) and played Mr Tumnus in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (BBC 1969), died on 14 September aged 84. [MPJ]

- *Kirby McCauley* (1941-2014), major US literary agent during the 1980s – clients included Stephen King, George R.R. Martin, Robert Silverberg and Peter Straub – died on 30 August; he was 72. [GRRM] He chaired the first World Fantasy Convention in 1975 and edited the landmark horror anthology *Dark Forces* (1980). Charles Platt writes: ‘At Avon Books in the early 1970s, I received manuscripts from an insurance salesman in Minneapolis who described himself as a literary agent. During a phone call, he asked if I thought he could succeed in New York. Thus did I meet the unfailingly enterprising and amiable Kirby McCauley, a dear friend who earned his success the hard way.’

- *Denny Miller* (1934-2014), US actor who starred in *Tarzan, the Ape Man* (1959) – then regarded as the worst Tarzan film – died on 9 September aged 80. [MPJ] Another genre credit was *The Six Million Dollar Man*.

- *Donald Sinden* (1923-2014), noted UK actor whose occasional genre credits

include *The Prisoner* (1967), *The Island at the Top of the World* (1974), *The Canterville Ghost* (1996; 1997) and *Alice in Wonderland* (1999), died on 11 September aged 90.

- *Stanley C. Skirvin* (1927-2014), US fan who edited the programme and memory books for the 1949 Cincinnati Worldcon (Cinvention) died on 28 March aged 86. [BH]

The Weakest Link. *Host:* ‘Who wrote “The Ballad of Reading Gaol” after his incarceration there?’ *Contestant:* ‘Gary Glitter.’ (BBC2 *Two Tribes*)

- *Host:* ‘On what day of the week did Robinson Crusoe find his companion?’ *Contestant:* ‘Tuesday.’ (ITV *The Chase*)

- *Host:* ‘The Abominable Snowman is said to live in what mountain range?’ *Contestant:* ‘The Alps.’ (BBC2 *Two Tribes*) [PE]

Man Booker Prize. Of the four longlisted titles of genre interest (see [A325](#)), two have reached the six-book shortlist: Karen Joy Fowler’s *We Are All Completely Beside Ourselves* and Howard Jacobson’s *J*.

Court Circular. Yet another plagiarism suit against a hugely profitable film: US author Isabella Tanikumi claims that far from being loosely based on Hans Christian Andersen, Disney’s *Frozen* is stolen from her self-published autobiography *Yearnings of the Heart*, about growing up in the Peruvian Andes and learning to live in the USA. This terrible violation can only be healed by \$250 million in damages. Similarities would appear to be deeply metaphorical, or imaginary, but of course it’s great publicity. ([Sydney Morning Herald](#), 25 September)

As Others Research Us. Morten Tyldum is to direct *Pattern Recognition*: ‘Based on the novel *Neuromancer* by William Gibson, it centres on [thumbnail synopsis of Gibson’s novel *Pattern Recognition* follows] ...’ (*Independent*, 13 September)

- On urban-dystopia sf: ‘We see a similar portrait of the urban future in John Brunner’s *Stand on Zanzibar*, about an overcrowded off-world colony.’ ([Slate](#), September; since amended) [AL] Did Zanzibar seem an exotic off-world name?

British Fantasy Awards. FANTASY NOVEL Sofia Samatar, *A Stranger in Olondria*. HORROR NOVEL Lauren Beukes, *The Shining Girls*. NOVELLA Sarah Pinborough, *Beauty*. SHORT Carole Johnstone, ‘Signs of the Times’ (*Black Static* #33). ANTHOLOGY Jonathan Oliver, ed., *End of the Road*. COLLECTION

Stephen Volk, *Monsters in the Heart*. SMALL PRESS The Alchemy Press.
COMIC/GRAPHIC NOVEL Becky Cloonan, *Demeter*. ARTIST Joey Hi-Fi.
NONFICTION Justin Landon & Jared Shurin, eds., *Speculative Fiction 2012*.
MAGAZINE/PERIODICAL *Clarkesworld*. FILM/TV EPISODE *Game of Thrones: 'The Rains of Castamere'*. NEWCOMER Ann Leckie for *Ancillary Justice*. SPECIAL Farah Mendlesohn.

Outraged Letters. *Carl Glover* found [the Loncon 3 photo album link](#): ‘Not only were they not inept, but they were ept enough to bring to mind Stephen King’s famous question about con attendees: “Why are they all so fat?”’

- *Martyn P. Jackson* reports a Scottish Time Lord restraining himself from pontification on the now-past referendum: “‘As I chose to leave Scotland many years ago, I forfeited my right to tell Scottish residents how to run the country,” David Tennant drolly informs *The Sunday Times*. / Well said sir. / One could point out that he left his home planet in a stolen Tardis even longer ago, and that never stopped him interfering in Gallifrey’s time war against the Daleks, but that might verge on the pedantic.’ (Matthew Norman, *Independent*, 18 August)

- *Peter Mabey* remembers Loncon 3: ‘I had a pretty good time, in spite of missing at least 75% of what was going on. I was sad that Dave Kyle couldn’t make it, especially as his Dinosaurs of Fandom would likely have given me the opportunity to meet other veterans of Loncon1. After the event, I realised I should have suggested to the committee that it would have been nice for anyone from that one to be able to display some sort of identification. As it was, I only had a few words with Bob Silverberg, but not with Brian Aldiss who I only saw on the far side of the hall on his birthday. / I think that at The Hague there was a meeting of fans who had been to all six of the European Worldcons up to then, but I don’t recall any subsequently, and I don’t know of anyone else with the complete set of nine now.’

- *Robert Silverberg* adds a note on his personal Worldcon attendance record: ‘I have an unbroken streak myself from 1955 on, which I reckon as 60 in a row, but I missed the earliest ones because my mama wouldn’t let me go when I was of single-digit age.’

Random Fandom. *Nova Awards*. The Novacon 44 website should now (1 October) have online and downloadable voting forms for the Nova fanzine awards at novacon.org.uk/nova_awards.php.

- *Whoops!* Traditional post-con lurgi after Loncon 3 included reported

diagnoses of whooping-cough; Farah Mendlesohn and I both suspect we had this.

The Dead Past. *40 Years Ago*, the mould was broken: ‘The first British *Star Trek* convention was held September 28/9 in Leicester. Some fans who turned up and tried to register were told that the convention was full, and no more registrations were being taken. Imagine that happening at a SF convention!’ ([Checkpoint 54](#), October 1974)

- *30 Years Ago*: ‘A MARVELLOUS EAR FOR NAMES is one of the things that just about everyone grants Tolkien. Which is why I think it’s a bit mean of Unwin to publish (in *The Book Of Lost Tales II*) the fact that in callow 1917 he perpetrated, inter alia, an elf called Tinfang Warble ... BOB SHAW’s *Fire Pattern* has roused speculation; the hero rings an aging John Sladek to ask about spontaneous combustion in people, and can only extract flip, joky, content-free answers. Is Shaw needling Sladek, I was asked? Bob confesses: “John wrote all his own dialogue for that scene.”’ ([Ansible 40](#), October 1984)

C.o.A. *Doreen Rogers* (a change of care home), Coton Hill House, Berwick Road, Shrewsbury, SY1 2PG.

Stamp Out Crime. According to *Linn’s Stamp News* – though not confirmed by the USPS – there’s to be a US Batman stamp this month to mark the Caped Crusader’s 75th anniversary. [\[F770\]](#)

Fanfundery. [TAAF](#): 2015 TransAtlantic Fan Fund nominations will open at Novacon (14-16 November), with voting to start on 1 January: a westbound race, sending a Euro-delegate to the Spokane Worldcon.

Media Awards. *UK TV Choice*: Best International Show was won by the all-conquering *Game of Thrones* (BBC, 9 September). [MPJ]

- *Classic FM Poll* for all-time best film soundtrack: Howard Shore’s *Lord of the Rings* score was the winner, with John Williams in second place for the original 1977 *Star Wars* film music. (BBC, 26 August) [MPJ]

Thog’s Masterclass. *Dept of The Return Trip Was Much Shorter*. ‘At the full frightful measure of that velocity the super-ship literally annihilated distance ...’ (E.E. Smith, *Triplanetary*, 1948) [DD]

- *Feline Psychology Dept*. ‘Like a cat scenting an approaching storm, she had left with a pair of suitcases ...’ (Chris Fowler, *Soho Black*, 1998) [BA]

- *Eyeballs in the Sky*. ‘Raven’s eyes, watching the uneven ground, touched

the girl's quick feet and stayed there.' (Poul Anderson, *Let the Spacemen Beware!* (1963) [TS])

- 'He has kind eyes, the sort of eyes that haven't gotten used to handing out bad news.' (Michael C. White, *A Brother's Blood*, 1996) [PB]
 - 'Yet Salim's eye snagged on the pointed ears that sprang up to either side of the close-shorn, wiry hair.' (James L. Sutter, *The Redemption Engine*, 2014) [PM]
 - *Dept of Personal Idiosyncrasy*. 'Salim had no particular desire to explode.' (*Ibid*)
 - *Reaction Shot Dept*. 'Norlander dropped his gun. He had never felt so disarmed.' (Arne Dahl, *Misterioso*, 1999; trans Tiina Nunnally 2011) [PB]
 - *Dept of Doublethink*. 'Who is this man? he stopped himself from thinking, yet the thought stayed with him.' (*Ibid*)
 - *Neat Tricks Dept*. 'Under his beard, Torin frowned.' (Keith R.A. DeCandido, *Dragon Precinct*, 2004) [BT]
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Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 8 October 2014: Bryan Talbot talk, Murray Library Lecture Theatre, City Campus, University of Sunderland. 6:30pm. Free, but book here: <http://tinyurl.com/psganqq>
- 10 October 2014: Richard Ashton talks to the Brum Group at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre. 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk or rog dot peyton at btinternet dot com. Future meetings: 7 November 2014, Storm Constantine; 5 December 2014, Christmas Social.
- 25 October 2014: mass signing of multiple Steve Jones anthologies at London Forbidden Planet, 1pm-2pm (perhaps longer).

Editorial. Editor still unwell and grumpy. Cataract operation now scheduled for late October; whether this will affect the November *Ansible* remains to be blurrily seen through heavy showers of eye-drops. I'll probably skip Novacon. Traditional boring *SF Encyclopedia* statistics: the online text passed 15,000 entries and 4.6 million words in September.

Thog's Second Helping. *Dept of It Only SOUNDS like Racial Profiling.*

‘When Guy first came to be Duke of Bas-Tyra, he suffered some sort of personal dishonor – Father never told what that shame was – and took to wearing only black as a badge of sorts, earning him the name Black Guy.’ ‘As soon as you agree to keep your mouth shut, I’m ordering my own trusted troops to Krondor, under royal seal, to arrest Black Guy.’ ‘Black Guy is no man’s fool, whatever else may be said of him.’ ‘No traitorous easterner will leave to plot treason with Black Guy.’ (all Raymond E. Feist, *Magician: Master*, 1986) Researcher Tim McDaniel adds: ‘Oddly for the token black guy, he survives the work.’

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Ansible 328, November 2014

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or the Glass Clock of Bad Schüschlein.

Momentous Changes of Staggering Import. I couldn't resist acquiring the ansible.uk (as distinct from ansible.co.uk) net domain, and have now moved *Ansible's* web presence to news.ansible.uk. All existing links to news.ansible.co.uk pages should be automagically redirected. Likewise with sf-encyclopedia.co.uk and sf-encyclopedia.uk. If anything seems to have gone horribly wrong, please let me know.

- In other news, my long-awaited cataract operation took place on 25 October. A great success; but now, of course, I need new glasses.

E=mc² or Bust

Gillian Anderson promoted her debut sf novel *A Vision of Fire* – almost entirely, it seems, by co-author Jeff Rovin – on *Front Row* (BBC, 16 October), where the *X-Files* star explained her heavy involvement: 'I would do anything from changing a few sentences to take out a few paragraphs [and] rewrite them.' BBC presenter John Wilson wrong-footed her by pointing out a 3-page appendix of 'Gillian Anderson's favourite books' which was obviously news to this celebrity author. He, by now falling about laughing: 'There's no science fiction in that list.' She: 'I don't read science fiction,' and an embarrassed giggle. [ASa]

Richard Brittain, known (if not to me) as a winner on the UK game show *Countdown*, has self-published a fairytale whose title we won't publicize. The Goodreads reviewer who writes as Paige Rolland was unimpressed, and said so. In response, Brittain reportedly travelled from London to east Scotland to hit her from behind with a wine bottle: the attack was in her workplace, a shop whose security CCTV confirmed his identity. No skull

fracture, but much bleeding and six stitches required. Though police later arrested Brittain, he's out on bail and reviewers should take care. (Grouphink.jezebel.com, 21 October) [ASa]

Harlan Ellison suffered a stroke on 9 October, partially paralysing his right side, and was taken into hospital. His speech and mental acuity were not affected; he bounced back with remarkable speed and was home again on 27 October. ([File 770, 12/27 October](#))

William Gibson, sf prophet, still requires expert interpretation: 'When William Gibson, the cyberpunk novelist, declared at the turn of the century that "Japan is still the future," he was probably not thinking of bond yields.' (Peter Tasker, *Financial Times*, 14 October) [MMW]

Jack Kirby, following the settlement between his family and Marvel Comics reported in A327, is at last being credited as joint creator in such comics as *All-New X-Men*, *Fantastic Four* and *Inhuman*, all now 'Created By Stan Lee and Jack Kirby'. ([The Spire](#), 30 October)

Benjanun Sriduangkaew, mild-mannered Thai author of short fiction published from 2012 (earning her a 2014 John W. Campbell Award nomination) is also the [controversial](#) – in the sense of 'often vitriolic and abusive' – blogger who for many years posted and tweeted as Winterfox and Requires Hate. Nick Mamatas, though apparently disapproving of those who circulated this revelation privately, outed her in public [on the Ello website](#): 'I am writing this on ello because nobody reads ello.' BS has responded by deleting a number of self-incriminating past posts (I'm told that she has a long history of doing this), publishing [two generic apologies](#), and blaming some of the most offensive material on mysterious and never previously mentioned impersonators. [[Later: Laura J. Mixon posted a long round-up of related information on 6 November.](#)]

Henry Wessells's Endless Bookshelf 'Death of the Book Award' for 'the ugliest book issued from a publisher who should know better' went to the 2014 POD reissue of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* in the Oxford University Press Complete Works of Oscar Wilde series: 'Bound in brownish repellent silicon paper over boards, false gilt rules and titling on spine. Textblock stiffly glued and unopenable; narrow margins, poorly reproduced illustrations. From the reports of the judges: "it smells disgusting, too, oily synthetic hormones".' ([2 October](#))

Brianna Wu, sf videogame designer, temporarily fled her home with husband Frank Wu when persistent online abuse escalated from rape threats to death threats and tweeting of their home address. That Twitter account was closed; but such harassment of games-industry women – especially if they’re pushing for equality – is shamefully routine behaviour from the toxic ‘#GamerGate’ mob. ([Boston.com](#), 11 October) Brianna Wu is now [planning a fund](#) to subsidize targeted women’s legal actions for libel and defamation against the online bullies.

Conaster

Until 22 Feb 2015 • **Alasdair Gray**: From the Personal to the Universal (exhibition), Kelvingrove Museum, Glasgow. £5; £3 concessions.

14-16 Nov • **Armadacon 26**, Future Inn, Plymouth. £30 reg; day rates £15 Sat, £10 Sun (‘concessions’ £25, £12, £8); £5 each evening from 6pm. Contact 18 Wadham Rd, Liskeard, Cornwall, PL14 3BD.

14-16 Nov • **Novacon 44**, Park Inn, Mansfield Road, Nottingham. £45 reg. Contact 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ.

15 Nov • **Arab Science Fiction**: From Imagination to Innovation (panel), Science Museum, London. 7-9pm. £10; £8 concessions. See www.sciencemuseum.org.uk, specific link tinyurl.com/q7vydft.

15-16 Nov • **Thought Bubble** (comics), various halls, Armouries Square, Leeds; part of the Leeds Comic Art Festival, running 9-16 November. £24 or £15/day. See thoughtbubblefestival.com.

18 Nov • **Tolkien in Oxford** (symposium), Merton College, Oxford. £10: see www.merton.ox.ac.uk/event/tolkien-oxford-symposium.

22 Nov • **BFS/BSFA Pubmeet**, Brigantes Bar & Brasserie, 114 Micklegate, York, YO1 6JX. 4:30pm-11pm. With Justina Robson and Vincent Holland-Keen. Readings, raffle etc. Free to all.

24 Nov • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. With Claire Corbett. Free.

23-26 Apr 2015 • **Dead by Dawn** (horror film festival), Filmhouse Cinema One, 88 Lothian Rd, Edinburgh, EH3 9BZ. £75. Box office 0131 228 2688.

Further information at www.deadbydawn.co.uk.

12-19 Sep 2015 • **Milford UK** (workshop), Snowdonia. £605 with 7 nights' full board. See www.milfordsf.co.uk/attend.htm.

26 Sep 2015 • **BristolCon**, Doubletree Hotel, Bristol. GoH Jasper Fforde, Jaine Fenn. £20 reg to 30 April 2015; £25 thereafter; £30 at door. Cheques to 18 High Leaze Road, Patchway, Bristol BS34 5AF.

Rumblings. The Christmas edition of the London First Thursday pub meetings can't be in the usual Melton Mowbray cellar bar venue (it's been hired for a party) and is now booked for 18 December in the upstairs room at the One Tun on Saffron Hill, near Farringdon tube station. [RR] More at news.ansible.uk/london.html. • *France in 2023*: this cancelled Worldcon bid is now revived. See worldconinfrance.org.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. *Saving Grace Dept*: from a review of Michael Faber's *The Book of Strange New Things*. 'While the bulk of the book takes place on another planet – a vividly drawn environment with green water, no moon and frequent, spiraling rainstorms – it doesn't read like science fiction, or like any genre.' (*New York Times*, 26 October) [CB]

Yo-Ho-Ho! The highly respectable Internet Archive turns out to be hosting a mass of pirated sf and fantasy, not in 'Wayback Machine' website mirrors but as individual uploads. When Colin Kapp's *The Dark Mind* (definitely not public domain) was reported there [BB], I searched for the infamous 'David Langford' and found several unauthorized texts including *The Space Eater*, since removed after a formal DMCA takedown notice. Other genre authors offered as archive.org freebies include Greg Bear, Pat Cadigan, Peter F. Hamilton, K.W. Jeter, Juliet McKenna, Lyda Morehouse, Terry Pratchett, Chris Priest, J.K. Rowling, Charlie Stross, Michael Swanwick ('47 of my stories. '), J.R.R. Tolkien, Ian Watson and Liz Williams. All the URLs begin 'archive.org/details/rog-', from which I guess that archive.org user 'rog' is a very naughty boy. Unless he's merely an internal acronym for Ripped-Off Goodies.

R.I.P. *Ian Bambro*, UK fan whose 1980s fanzine title was *Somewhere*

Before, died on 1 November. [RG]

- *Lynda Bellingham* (1948-2014), Canadian-born actress whose best known genre role was The Inquisitor in *Doctor Who*: ‘The Trial of a Timelord’ (1986), died on 19 October aged 66. [SG]

- *Velma ‘Vijay’ de Selby-Bowen*, US fan and 1999 TransAtlantic Fan Fund delegate, died on 18 October from the intractable cancer diagnosed in July; she was 52. [DN]

- *Geoffrey Holder* (1930-2014), US actor, dancer and choreographer best remembered as Baron Samedi in *Live and Let Die* (1973), died on 5 October aged 84. Genre credits include *Doctor Dolittle* (1967) and *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* (2005). [MPJ]

- *Jan Hooks* (1957-2014), US actress whose genre work includes *Batman Returns* (1992), *Coneheads* (1993) and *3rd Rock from the Sun* (1996-2000), died on 9 October aged 57. [MMW]

- *Ann Methe*, Canadian con-runner, past chair of Con*Cept and a member of the Anticipation (Montréal) Worldcon committee, died from cancer on 6 August. [DL]

- *Gerard Parkes* (1924-2014), Irish-Canadian actor whose best known genre role as was Doc the inventor in *Fraggle Rock* (1983-1987), died on 19 October aged 90. [AIP]

- *Michel Parry* (1947-2014), Belgian-born horror/supernatural novelist whose many anthologies included the Mayflower Books of Black Magic Stories and the Reign of Terror collections of Victorian horror, died on 1 November; he was 67. [GA]

- *Elizabeth Peña* (1959-2014): Cuban-American actress and director, died on 14 October aged 55. Some genre credits: *#batteries not included* (1987), *Vibes* (1988), *Jacob’s Ladder* (1990), *The Invaders* (1995), *It Came From Outer Space II* (1995) and *Impostor* (2001), plus voice work in *The Incredibles* (2004) and others. [SG/LP]

- *Zilpha Keatley Snyder* (1927-2014), prolific US author of children’s and YA adventures and fantasies – three of which received Newbery Honor citations – died on 7 October aged 87. [PDF] I liked her borderline fantasy *The Headless Cherub* (1971, also retitled *A Witch in the Family*).

The Weakest Link. *Bradley Walsh*: ‘The Nun’s Priest’s Tale is a story by which fourteenth-century English author?’ *Contestant*: ‘J.K. Rowling.’

- *Walsh*: ‘The title of which Shakespeare play means “everything turns out OK”?’ *Contestant*: ‘*Macbeth*.’ (both ITV *The Chase*) [PE]

Court Circular. ‘State media in China are warning citizens to think carefully before adopting an English name to do business with Western companies. The official news website CCTV is warning that choosing famous names like Dumbledore could lead to a call from a “serious law firm.”’ (*The Week*, 31 October) [MMW] Also, avoid ‘Harlan Ellison®’.

As Others See Us II. Raymond Chandler dashes off a quick sf spoof and scores a prophetic hit regarding information sources: ‘The sudden brightness swung me around and the Fourth Moon had already risen. I had exactly four seconds to hot up the disintegrator and Google had told me it wasn’t enough.’ ([Letter](#), 14 March 1953).

Magazine Scene. *Flurb*, Rudy Rucker’s online sf magazine, has officially ceased after a hiatus since #13 in 2012. ‘I no longer feel like I have the time and energy to put together a *Flurb*. I did the thirteen issues in six years, and that’s going to have to be enough.’ ([Flurb.net](#), September 2014)

• [Michael Moorcock’s New Worlds](#), the latest (online only) incarnation of *New Worlds*, announced its demise via Facebook on 8 October: ‘I am sorry to inform everyone that this page and MMNW will be no more from this Friday. This is due to a massive lack of interest in paying a very nominal price for some cracking content. For all those who did support us, thanks and goodbye.’ One fears there was also a massive lack of promotion, as suggested by the long gap since the previous post on that page: a bare announcement of the second and final issue, dated 15 May 2013. Mike Moorcock himself writes: ‘I never saw it. Nobody there made any effort to let me see it!’ Warren Ellis adds: ‘After getting out (I think) two issues via a clunky, ugly and largely broken website, this was no more than raising a headstone over something that was already cold.’ ([morning.computer](#), 23 October)

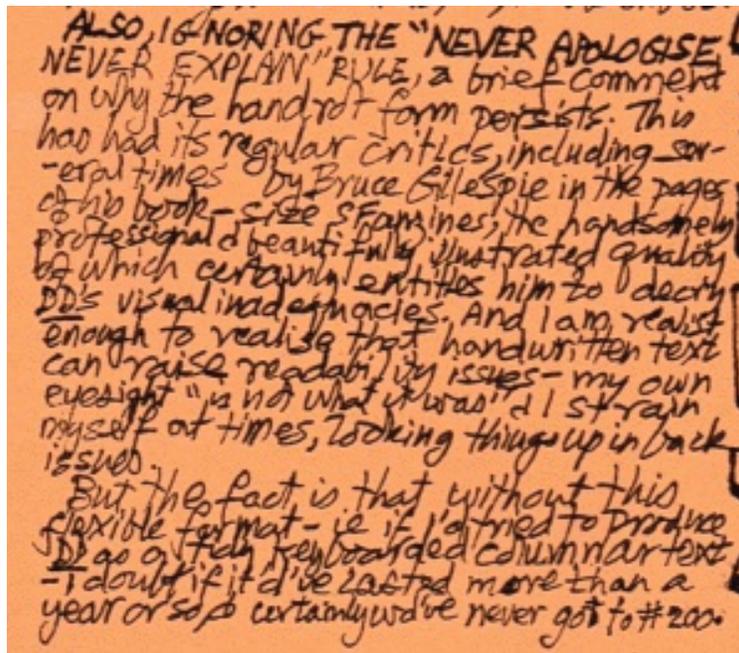
Money for Old Prop. Though dismissed as ‘a bit of plastic’ by BBC *Antiques Roadshow* presenter Fiona Bruce, a TIE fighter pilot’s helmet from the 1977 *Star Wars* set was valued by the experts at £40-£50,000. Must check the going rate of those rare *Doctor Who* fridge magnets that years ago came free with *SFX*.... ([Independent](#), 19 October) [GD]

Random Fandom. *Steve Green* confided the tense state of Nova Awards voting in mid-October: ‘Just to update you all, not a single bugging vote so far ...’ Alas, online voting has now closed; you can still vote at Novacon.

• *Stu Shiffman*, after long, slow progress towards recovery from his 2012

stroke, had a fall, a relapse and a number of seizures in October. We can only hope that he comes through this too. [ASc]

- *Steve Sneyd* proudly published the 200th issue of *Data Dump* (launched 1991) in October. He ascribes the longevity of this genre poetry newsletter to its flexible format based on minuscule ‘handrot’, inspired by terror-haunted realms and vertiginous spaces beyond the last line of the optician’s chart. See, or fail to see, for yourself: SAE to Hilltop Press, 4 Nowell Place, Almondbury, Huddersfield, HD5 8PB.



Outraged Letters. *Paul Barnett* chilled my blood by writing ‘you’ve published more issues than you thought ...’ and linking to the Amazon page for *Ansible 15715* – actually some chap’s self-published sf story.

- *Simon R. Green*: ‘I was very sad to hear about *Graham Joyce*’s passing. Always a good read, not least because you never knew where he was going, from book to book. I remember attending a speech he gave at a con when he was starting out. I went to sit in the front row, to be supportive. But it was just after a big lunch, in a hot cosy room ... and I slowly nodded off. The next thing I knew, this great God-like voice was saying: *Green! Wake up you bastard!* / Sorry, *Graham*.’

Awards. *Munsey Award* for promotional and research work related to pulp magazines and dime novels: *J. Randolph Cox*.

- *Science Fiction and Fantasy Translation Awards*: these, with the

Association for the Recognition of Excellence in SF & F Translation, are closing down owing to lack of time and of director/juror volunteers. ([30 October](#)) [CM]

The Dead Past. *50 Years Ago*, a brave but doomed project: ‘LONDON FANDOM is clubbing together to buy a club house, it says here. Financial details are not known but shares in the project may be obtained at £1 minimum from Michael Moorcock, [*street address here redacted*], London W.11. Could be a Good Thing.’ ([Skyrack 72](#), November 1964)

- ‘Further to the Hugos there’s a funny story going the rounds at the moment. Following the example of the Pacificon II, the [1965] London Worldcon Committee has decided against presenting an award for a dramatic work, such as a film or TV show. It is understood that a certain Committee member recently suffered a three a.m. phone call from an irate writer who stated that he had spent over \$300 in publicity for his own dramatic work, who asked how could he possibly win a Hugo for this work if one wasn’t to be presented and who announced that unless this decision was retracted he *would not join the convention*. I tell you putting on a Worldcon is great *fun*.’ ([Ibid](#))

- *John Christopher* is fondly remembered by David Mitchell: ‘Actually, I read a really good book published in the 1950s called *The Death of Grass*, where a killer virus doesn’t kill us, humans, as they do in many contemporary stories, but it gets the crops we eat. That’s more interesting to me. Wholesale zombie apocalypses in six days makes for a few good scenes in movies, but we’ve seen those films already. But when food becomes scarcer and scarcer, and it’s moving closer and closer to your part of the world, and first rice goes, but it’s ok, because we’ve still got wheat, and then wheat turns into a brown mush in the fields, and then barley, and then oats, and then everything?’ ([Interview, The Millions](#), 29 October) [PDF]

C.o.A. *Robert Day*, Flat 2, Heatherlea, 4 Station Road, Kirby Muxloe, Leicestershire, LE9 2EN.

- *Andrew Stephenson*: ‘My Lyng home is being rebuilt, with eco features, which my builder says will take a year. Upon moving back in I hope to score an Ansible first, a C.O.H. – much like a C.O.A. except the address stays the same and the house changes.’

Fanfundery. [TAFF](#): 2015 TransAtlantic Fan Fund nominations will open at Novacon (14-16 November), with voting to start on 1 January: a westbound race, sending a Euro-delegate to the Spokane Worldcon.

Media News. Film, tv and merchandise rights to John Carter of Mars have reverted to Edgar Rice Burroughs Inc, following the generally agreed failure of Disney's 2012 *John Carter of Mars*. ERB Inc hopes to find another studio to do better justice to Barsoom. (15 October) [AIP]

Thog's Masterclass. *Breakages Dept.* 'The fantasy snapped like a broomstick across someone's knee.' (Edward Lee, *The Backwoods*, 2005) [SS]

• *Dept of Time and Motion Study: The Dark Light-Minutes.* 'Grierson doubted if he would sleep at all during the voyage to Venus. Raven estimated that the ship would take almost a week. He stepped the ship up to close on supra-light velocity once they were well clear of Terra ...' [*Days later:*] 'As a precaution Raven had reduced velocity to sub-light. According to his reckoning they would close with Venus in two more days ...' (Denis Hughes as Gill Hunt, *Space Flight*, 1951) [BA]

• *Personal Charisma Dept.* 'The man's will drew back like a well-trained leopard, to remain poised behind the persuasiveness of his smile and eyes. The nose, neither straight nor aquiline, added to his expression of power consciousness ...' (E. Hoffmann Price, 'The Shadow of Saturn', 1950) [BA]

• *Eyeballs in the Sky.* 'As we walk the streets I once called home, conversations sputter and die, and eyes cling to my face and body.' 'The eyes follow me down the street, pinching the back of my neck.' (both Veronica Roth, *Insurgent*, 2012) [NR-S]

• 'He caught Bril's eye squarely as it returned from another disgusted and apprehensive trip to the boulder, and laughed outright.' (Theodore Sturgeon, 'The Skills of Xanadu', July 1956 *Galaxy*) [TS]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

• 7 November 2014: Theresa Derwin talks to the Brum Group at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre. 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for members. (Storm Constantine was scheduled to appear but had to cancel owing to a double-booking.) Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk or rog dot peyton at btinternet dot com. Future meetings: 5 December 2014, Christmas Social; 9 January 2015, AGM (ooh, the excitement); 13 February 2015, Quiz.

• 24 November 2014: William Gibson talks to the *Guardian* Review Book Club at The Tabernacle, 34-35 Powis Square, London, W11 2AY. 7pm. Tickets £15:

<https://membership.theguardian.com/event/13481019091>

• 26 November 2014: Bryan and Mary Talbot signing at Forbidden Planet, London. 6-7pm.

• 27 November 2014: Bryan Talbot on 'How I Create a Graphic Novel' followed by signing with Mary Talbot. 6-7pm. The Cartoon Museum, 35 Little Russell St, London, WC1A 2HH. Free, but book your seat:

<http://cartoonmuseum.org/events/events/bryan-talbot>

• 2 December 2014: Brian Aldiss in conversation at Big Green Bookshop, Unit 1, Brampton Park Road, Wood Green, London, N22 6BG. 7-8:30pm. Tickets £5.

<http://www.biggreenbookshop.com/>

Editorial. Those accustomed to pick up the latest *Ansible* from the sf section of Oxfam's Reading bookshop missed the October issue and won't find this one either. For the first time since the free-copies arrangement began in early 2009, the (new) Oxfam management has decided that this is incompatible with Christmas. *Ansible* was previously available from the sf shelves at Waterstone's in Broad Street, Reading, from 2003 until shortly after a fan-friendly staff member left in 2008. Rather than hunt for another local outlet, I think I'll cut the print run and save a little money.

Meanwhile, Nick Parisi interviewed me earlier this year for his Nocturnia blog. After teaser posts (in Italian) [about *Ansible*](#) and [the mysterious Langford phenomenon ...the interview itself has now appeared](#), happily with an English-language version below (scroll down) so I can find out what I said.

Kim Newman clearly has the power to cloud newspaper reviews editors' minds: his *An English Ghost Story* was covered in the *Independent's* 'Round-Up: Sci-Fi and Fantasy' on 25 October, and again in (same paper, same department) 'Round-Up: Horror and Ghost Stories' on 1 November. We await next Saturday's 'Round-Up: Books by Famous Film Critics'.

Greg Bear's get-well card from Project Thistledown at the Museum of Science Fiction featured the following cartoon, which I liked. Many thanks to artist Travis Getz for permission to use it here; also to Astrid and Greg Bear

for arranging this:



Ansible 328 Copyright © David Langford, 2014. Thanks to Brian Ameringen, Graham Andrews, Chaz Brenchley, Gordon Davie, Paul Di Filippo, File 770, Ron Gemmell, Steve Green, Martyn P. Jackson, Diane Lacey, Cheryl Morgan, Debbie Notkin, Lawrence Person, Andrew I. Porter, Private Eye, Neville Ridley-Smith, Andi Shechter, Roger Robinson, Andy Sawyer, Terry Somerville, Stuart Stratu, Martin Morse Wooster, and our Hero Distributors: Dave Corby (Birmingham SF Group), SCIS/Prophecy, Alan Stewart (Australia). 3 November 2014.

Ansible 329, December 2014

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo:
Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or a pack filled
with Big Beaver Essentials.

Season's Greetings, as always, to all the *Ansible* readers out there!

The Snuggily Winter

Adam-Troy Castro is disconcerted: 'Twitter just suggested that I follow Jay Lake. / I found that unnecessarily hostile.'

John Clute was declared a jolly good fellow – that is, an Honorary Visiting Fellow – at Anglia Ruskin University.

Peter Firmin, co-creator with Oliver Postgate of such Smallfilms genre classics as *The Clangers* and *Bagpuss*, received a special lifetime honour at the BAFTA Children's Awards on 23 November. [MPJ]

Stephen King on what still rankles: 'Early in my career, *The Village Voice* did a caricature of me that hurts even today when I think about it. It was a picture of me eating money. I had this big, bloated face. It was this assumption that if fiction was selling a lot of copies, it was bad. If something is accessible to a lot of people, it's got to be dumb because most people are dumb. And that's elitist. I don't buy it.' (Interview by Andy Greene for *Rolling Stone*, 31 October) [AIP]

Ursula K. Le Guin's fine National Book Awards acceptance speech caused some stir. 'Hard times are coming, when we'll be wanting the voices of writers who can see alternatives to how we live now, can see through our fear-stricken society and its obsessive technologies to other ways of being, and even imagine real grounds for hope. We'll need writers who can remember freedom – poets, visionaries – realists of a larger reality.' See/read it all at www.ursulakleguin.com/UKL_info.html.

Christopher Nolan reassured everyone who complained about inaudible dialogue in *Interstellar* – repeatedly drowned out by loud music and effects – that this ‘impressionistic’ approach was intentional, indeed ‘adventurous and creative’. So there. ([Hollywood Reporter](#), 15 November)

• Another view: ‘The film’s audio and complexity have both been hotbeds for debate, especially in regard to the scientific soundness of the plot. In the grand scheme of things, however, *Interstellar* is not a science fiction film; it is a film about humanity and the way people live.’ (Brett Stewart in [Liberty Voice](#), 30 November) [MK]

Conperseyner

5 Dec • **British Fantasy Society Xmas Open Night**, The Two Chairmen, 1 Warwick House St, London, SW1Y 5AT. 7pm-11pm. Free.

6 Dec • **Dragonmeet** (gaming), ILEC Convention Centre & Ibis Earls Court, 9am-midnight. £10 at door. See www.dragonmeet.co.uk.

18 Dec • **London Christmas Meeting** (NB not at the usual [First Thursday](#) venue): upstairs room, The One Tun, Saffron Hill, near Farringdon tube. All evening, 4/5pm to late; all welcome. Free.

Ending soon: 4 Jan 2015 • **Longitude Punk’d** (steampunk exhibition), Royal Observatory, Greenwich. 10am-5pm. £7 adult, £5.50 concessions, £2.50 child 5-15, under-5s free. Also family rates.

8 Jan 2015 • **London “First Thursday” Pub Meeting** (displaced since Thursday 1 January is a public holiday), Melton Mowbray cellar bar, 18 Holborn, London, EC1N 2LE. All evening, 4/5pm to late; all welcome. Free.

24 Jan 2015 • **SFSF Social**, Eten Café, York Street, Sheffield, S1 2ER. 4pm-late with guest readings and Q&A; all welcome. Free.

6-8 Feb 2015 • **Con27ilkin** (filk), Best Western Hotel, Marks Tey, Colchester. £37 reg, £27 unwaged. Cheques to UK Filk Convention, c/o 119 Whitehill Lane, Gravesend, DA12 5LU.

7-8 Feb 2015 • **Microcon**, Exeter University. Details awaited; the web page (and the whole societies.ex.ac.uk subdomain) has vanished. [*Later:* [new page found.](#)]

30-31 Mar 2015 • **Sideways in Time:** Alternate History and Counterfactual Narratives (conference), Liverpool University. Call for papers: deadline 15 December. See sidewaysintime.wordpress.com.

29 Apr 2015 • **Brave New Worlds** (academic conference on dystopian fiction), Newcastle University. Call for papers: deadline 15 December. See dystopianfictionconference.wordpress.com.

19-23 Aug 2015 • **Sasquan** (Worldcon), Spokane Convention Center, Spokane, WA, USA. \$190 reg; \$95 YA/military; \$80 child; \$40 supp. *Rates may rise on 1 January 2015.* See <http://sasquan.org/>.

23-25 Oct 2015 • **Fantasycon**, East Midlands Conference Centre & Orchard Hotel, Nottingham. Registration cost to follow at the fantasycon2015.org site. The hotel (linked from there) pretends to be full until you enter the special corporate booking code FANTASY15.

4-6 Nov 2016 • **BCon** (Eurocon), Barcelona, Spain. €30 reg to 27 April 2015; under-25s €10; under-16s free. See www.eurocon2016.org.

Rumblings. Following ancient tradition, there is no London BSFA pub meeting in December. Normal service resumes on 28 January.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. On PUA (pick-up artist) culture: ‘For it is easy to dismiss the men who look to Dapper Laughs for pulling advice, or who pay a shade under \$3,000 to attend one of Julien Blanc’s “boot camps”. They’re sci-fi saddos; they’re World of Warcraft weirdos.’ (Hadley Freeman, ‘Comment is free’, *The Guardian*, 12 November) [SW]

Awards. *Nova Awards.* FANZINE *Vibrator*; FANWRITER Christina Lake; FAN ARTIST D. West. Hot competition for these fanzine honours led to the casting of a mighty 17 ballots.

• *World Fantasy.* NOVEL Sofia Samatar, *A Stranger in Olondria*; NOVELLA Andy Duncan & Ellen Klages, ‘Wakulla Springs’ (Tor.com); SHORT Caitlin R. Kiernan, ‘The Prayer of Ninety Cats’ (*Subterranean*); ANTHOLOGY George R.R. Martin & Gardner Dozois, eds., *Dangerous Women*; ARTIST Charles Vess; COLLECTION Caitlin R. Kiernan, *The Ape’s Wife and Other Stories*; SPECIAL/PROFESSIONAL (tie) Irene Gallo, art director of Tor.com, and William

K. Schafer of Subterranean Press; SPECIAL/NON-PROFESSIONAL *Clarkesworld*. [MMW]

Bears in the News. Michael Bond, creator of Paddington Bear, was ‘very upset’ when the British Board of Film Classification gave the new film a PG certificate owing to ‘mild sex references’ (man disguised as woman flirts with another man; after some public mockery the BBFC changed this caveat to ‘innuendo’), bad language (one muffled ‘bloody’) and dangerous behaviour (e.g. Paddington hides in a fridge). Contrast this with the very much more violent *The Hunger Games: Mockingjay 1*, given a barely more restrictive 12A certificate. ([Independent](#) and [BBC](#), 18 November) [MPJ]

- *Winnie-the-Pooh* was considered as the patron of a playground in Tuszyn, Poland, but rejected by councillors outraged by the teddybear’s lack of ‘a complete wardrobe’ (this being the mini-t-shirted Disney animation rather than the unclad original) and possibly hermaphroditic nature. ‘The author was over 60 and cut [Pooh’s] testicles off with a razor blade because he had a problem with his identity,’ expostulated councillor Hanna Jachimska. ([Independent](#), 20 November)

R.I.P. *Russell Aitken*, who ran Obelisk Books in Glasgow (a shop specializing in second-hand sf and crime) from the 1980s to early this century, died on 21 November. [JS]

- *André Carneiro* (1922-2014), distinguished and much-anthologized Brazilian sf author whose debut collection was *Diário da nave perdida* (‘A Lost Ship’s Log’, 1963) and whose latest book appeared in 2013, died on 4 November; he was 92. [CMO’B]
- *Leigh Chapman* (1939-2014), US actress/screenwriter who was in *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.* (1965-1966) and wrote scripts for *My Favorite Martian* (1966) and *The Wild Wild West* (1966-1968), died on 4 November aged 75. [AIP]
- *Warren Clarke* (1947-2014), UK actor/producer who played one of the droogs in Kubrick’s *A Clockwork Orange* (1971), died on 12 November aged 67. [PDF] He was also in *The Avengers*.
- *André Coelho*, Brazilian artist whose comics appearances included *X-Men* and DC’s *Flash*, died in early November; he was 35. [PDF]
- *Helen Eling* (1937-2014), UK fan and convention-goer involved with the Birmingham SF Group and Novacon/Eastercon committees, died on 26 October aged 77. She is survived by her husband Stan, to whom all

sympathy. [RP] Rog Peyton recalls her convention disco fame: ‘I shall always remember her as the best dance partner I ever had.’

- *Stefan Ghidoveanu*, Romanian sf editor, translator, publisher and most famously broadcaster whose long-running nonfiction radio show *Explorers of Tomorrow’s World* was followed by the Romanian sf community for 30 years, died at the end of October; he was 59. [SF2C]

- *Jesus F. Gonzalez* (1964-2014), US horror author who as J.F. Gonzalez published over a dozen novels (some collaborative) and four collections, died on 10 November; he was 50. [TM]

- *Michael Hayes* (1929-2014), UK producer, director, actor and later newsreader responsible for the classic BBC sf serial *A for Andromeda* (1961) and three *Doctor Who* stories (1978-1979), died on 16 September; he was 85. (*Independent*, 7 November, whose obituary headline credits him with ‘the sci-fi series “The Andromeda Strain”’.)

- (*John*) *Hayden Howard* (1925-2014), US author of 19 sf magazine stories 1952-1971 and one novel, *The Eskimo Invasion* (1967), died on 23 October; he was 88. [LS]

- *P.D. James* (1920-2014), distinguished UK detective novelist – made a baroness in 1991 – whose one sf venture was *The Children of Men* (1992, filmed 2006), died on 27 November. She was 94.

- *Glen A Larson* (1937-2014), US tv producer whose sf series included *Battlestar Galactica* (1978-1979), *Buck Rogers in the 25th Century* (1979-1981), *Knight Rider* (1982-1986), *Manimal* (1983) and *Automan* (1983-1984), died on 14 November; he was 77. [LP]

- *Larry Latham*, US artist, animator, producer and director known for the Emmy-winning Disney series *Talespin* (1990-1991) and the web comic *Lovecraft is Missing* (2008-2004), died on 2 November. Further credits include *The Smurfs* (1981), *Challenge of the GoBots* (1984-1985) and *DuckTales the Movie: Treasure of the Lost Lamp* (1990). [SJ]

- *Michael Lennick* (1952-2014), visual effects artist whose films include *Videodrome* (1983), *The Dead Zone* (1983), *Millennium* (1989) and *Earthquake in New York* (1998), died on 7 November aged 62. [SFS]

- *Alan L. Lickiss*, US author of some ten short stories since 1996 (five collected as *High Heeled Distraction*, 2010), died on 10 November. [PDF]

- *Walter W. Lee Jr* (1931-2014), author of the monumental *Reference Guide to Fantastic Films* (three volumes 1972-1974) – an important early study of sf cinema that earned him a special award from the 1975 Worldcon – died on

23 November aged 83. [SL via KN] He also wrote the horror-sf novel *Shapes* (1987) with Richard Delap.

- *John Moat* (1936-2014), UK poet and novelist who with John Fairfax founded the Arvon creative writing workshops, and who contributed to Fairfax's *Frontier of Going: An Anthology of Space Poetry* (1969), died on 11 September; he was 78. [JWS via CC]
- *R.A. Montgomery* (1936-2014), US author of many genre-themed 'Choose Your Own Adventure' gamebooks and the 1990 *Trio: Rebels in the New World* post-holocaust sf series, died on 9 November aged 78. [PDF]
- *Mike Nichols* (1931-2014) Oscar-winning US director/producer whose genre ventures were *The Day of the Dolphin* (1973), *Wolf* (1994) and *What Planet Are You From?* (2000), died on 19 November; he was 83. [LP]
- *Stu Shiffman* (1954-2014), long-time US fanzine fan, artist and connoisseur of alternate history, died on 26 November aged 60. [DKMK] His quirkily distinctive artwork earned him the 1990 Hugo for best fan artist and the 2010 Rotsler Award for life achievement; he won TAFF in 1981; he was a friend. Much sympathy to his partner Andi Shechter.
- *George Slusser* (1939-2014), US academic critic whose sf studies range from *Robert A. Heinlein* (1976) to *Gregory Benford* (2014), and who also edited/co-edited many critical anthologies, died on 4 November aged 75. He was a co-founder and Curator Emeritus of the J. Lloyd Eaton Collection of SF & Fantasy Literature. [SHS]
- *Edward Summer* (1946-2014), best known as founder of the Buffalo International Film Festival but also (amid much else) a former New York comic-shop proprietor, writer for Marvel and DC, and associate producer and story writer of *Conan the Barbarian* (1982), died on 13 November aged 68. [MF]

Scholarly Insight Dept. 'I believe that [Sax] Rohmer's texts aim at effects that differ fundamentally from the effects that high modernist literature aspires to.' (Ruth Mayer, *Serial Fu Manchu – The Chinese Supervillain and the spread of Yellow Peril ideology*, 2014) [KCM]

Magazine Scene. *Terraform*, a new online sf news/fiction site at motherboard.vice.com/terraform, launched in November with a manifesto by editor Claire Evans (late of *OMNI Reboot*) that feigned ignorance of the vast competition: 'But, weirdly, there's a distinct dearth of science fiction in its purest, arguably its original, form – short fiction – in the environment to

which it seems best-suited. The internet.’ After many comments pointing out the existence of *Strange Horizons*, Tor.com and the rest, subtle changes were made: the first two words of ‘In fact, it’s strange that there isn’t more fiction commingling with the newsy posts and personality quizzes and status updates ...’ became ‘There are tons of great publishers of science fiction online – but still ...’ [ED]

Science Corner. ‘Amateur and professional astrologers alike captivated by “incredible” storms across Uranus.’ (Headline on the *Independent* website, 14 November) [PE]

Random Fandom. *Steve Green* has stepped down after more than ten years as administrator of the Nova Awards (see above).

- *Kim Huett* sends a Chicon III progress report’s ‘officialdom’ page, revealing that this 1962 Worldcon had a Morals Committee chaired by Algis Budrys. Gosh!
- *Scott Lynch* tweeted: ‘Holding out hope for Peter Jackson’s *Leaf by Niggle*, because I hear Legolas is only in it for about forty-five minutes.’ [PNH]
- *Adam Roberts* facebooked: ‘Ridley Scott has finally explained his decision to use an all-white cast in his movie of Alex Hayley’s *Roots*. Perfectly reasonable.’
- *Jeff VanderMeer* revealed the secret 2014 WFC code: ‘You can’t use the word party for World Fantasy Convention ... parties ’cause of the con hotel. So instead of the word “party” we’re using the words “orwellian sh*tstorm”.’ (His asterisk.)

Media Awards. *Hollywood Film Awards: Animation, How to Train Your Dragon 2; Blockbuster, Guardians Of the Galaxy.* [MPJ]

- *International Emmys:* the best drama series award went to *Utopia*, which in anticipation of this triumph had already been axed by Channel 4. [MPJ]

The Dead Past. *70 Years Ago*, Arthur C. Clarke reviewed Willy Ley’s *Rockets: the Future of Travel Beyond the Stratosphere:* ‘The first fifty pages of the book contain a detailed history of interplanetary fiction since the first imaginary voyage to the Moon, written in A.D. 120. It is a little odd to think that these stories, which have been popular for eighteen centuries, will soon be written no more.’ ([Futurian War Digest 38](#), December 1944)

- *Prediction Dept:* Kenneth Tynan foresees *Time Bandits* (1981): ‘... if a playwright were to revive the anthropomorphic conception of the deity and

write a play about God himself, and if he were then to ask my help in picking an actor for the central role, I know exactly in which direction I would point him. I would find it entirely credible that the creator of the universe as we know it was someone very like Sir Ralph [Richardson].’ (*The New Yorker*, 1977)

- *50 Years Ago*: ‘Another BBC sf feature, the children’s programme, Dr. Who, is to be censored after complaints that recent episodes have not been “ideal children’s viewing.”’ ([Skyrack 73](#), December 1964)

- *30 Years Ago*: ‘Frank Herbert turned up for a brief press conference on the *Dune* debacle – er, film – a few weeks ago. There were only two people there who had actually read anything he’d written – myself, and a bald journalist in a shabby mac (yes, I know that describes most of them) who tended to ask magnificent questions like “I read *Dune* the first time it came out and the thing that struck me then as indeed it seems to have struck most of the reading populace is that it’s a great story, a wonderful story, I thought the way it unfolded, the way it was sustained, there was so much imagination involved in it. Later on as the years went on, I suppose people have read things into it, I suppose the same thing happened with *Lord of the Rings* and lots of other things. The whole SF genre in general ... I’m sorry I shall get to the question ... is entertainment still your first priority, Mr Herbert?” *Herbert*: I’d feel a helluva lot more comfortable if you’d call me Frank, guys. *Bald Journalist in Mac who Woffled*: Er, thank you, er, Frank ... *Herbert*: Yes it is. Next question? ... etc, etc. Mainly he said what a nice, good, great, magnificent, marvellous, fab, cool, groovy, hip, zowie-gosh film *Dune* was. [...] It might have been a livelier time if *anybody* there had seen the film, but since it still hadn’t been previewed a scant month before release date ...’ (Neil Gaiman in *Ansible* 41, December 1984)

C.o.A. *Wilf James* writes: ‘I will be evicted in a Dickensian manner from my flat at 106 Jarden Letchworth G. C. after 51 years residency by North Hertfordshire Homes Ltd (NHH) on Tuesday 25th November. This means that I will not be able to support and promote Science, SF conventions and jazz events for the indefinite future.’ This sad development follows long legal conflict with NHH. New address not yet known.

Fanfundery. [TAFE](#): Declared candidates so far for the 2015 westbound race from Europe to the Spokane Worldcon (Sasquan) are Nina Horvath and Wolf von Witting. Ballot forms are expected to appear on 1 January: the voting

deadline will be midnight on 7 April 2015.

Thog's Masterclass. *Dept of Nuance.* 'This planet was different, but quite similar.' "Their brain is so much like ours, but different," the doc said.' 'Their blood is kind of like ours, only totally different.' (all Mike Shepherd, *Kris Longknife: Tenacious*, 2014) [PM]

- *Diet Fads Dept.* 'I noticed that she'd stopped smelling of yogurt, so she's either sorted out her thrush problem or given up eating it.' (Denise Mina, *Deception*, 2003) [PB]

- *Neat Tricks.* 'Arcadia's head moved sharply back of itself.' (Isaac Asimov, '... And Now You Don't', November 1949 *Astounding*) [CG]

- *Dept of Phase Change.* 'Arcadia solidified.' (*Ibid*)

- *Cognitive Centres Dept.* 'Dorothy's eyes were turned inward to her long-buried memories.' 'Thoughts ran thick and furious inside her head, pulsing through her unmoving body, throbbing between her legs.' (both Debra Ginsberg, *The Neighbors Are Watching*, 2010) [PB]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 2 December 2014: Brian Aldiss in conversation at Big Green Bookshop, Unit 1, Brampton Park Road, Wood Green, London, N22 6BG. 7-8:30pm. Tickets £5.

<http://www.biggreenbookshop.com/>

- 5 December 2014: Brum Group Christmas Social at (not the usual venue) Selly Park Tavern, 592 Pershore Road, Selly Oak. 7:30pm for 8pm. Normal meetings resume in the New Year at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre. 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk or rog dot peyton at btinternet dot com. Future meetings: 9 January 2015, AGM (ooh, the excitement); 13 February 2015, Quiz; 13 March 2015, TBA; 10 April 2015, Ian Stewart; 8 May 2015, TBA; 12 June 2015, Stephanie Saulter; 10 July 2015, TBA; 14 August 2015, Summer Meal.

Chris Priest remarks, perhaps regretfully, that 'I have become a mini internet storm again ...'

<http://www.comicbookmovie.com/fansites/nailbiter111/news/?a=111644>

Late Event Notice. 8 Jul 2015 • **Locating Fantastika** (conference), Lancaster University. Call for papers deadline: 1 April 2015. See fantastikaconference.wordpress.com.

Editorial. Juliet McKenna and Cheryl Morgan have been researching the disastrous implications of imminent “VATMOSS” European VAT rules changes, which are meant to nobble Amazon *et al* but are fraught with (perhaps) unintended consequences. As of 1 January 2015, countless small businesses selling digital products – including individual authors with their own ebooks – must jump through tricky bureaucratic hoops. These include applying VAT on sales to each EU country at that country’s appropriate local rate and recording two non-contradictory confirmations of each buyer’s geographical address: PayPal, as an example of a popular payment route, provides at most one ([unless you can work with the PayPal API](#), and it’s not clear that the resulting datum is truly independent of the PayPal “verified address”). There are also troubling data-protection issues. Those who took comfort from the fact that the normal UK turnover threshold for compulsory VAT registration is £81,000 had a rude awakening: the threshold for *this* VAT scheme is zero. Some small ebook publishers are already shutting down in despair. Advice supplied to date by HM Revenue & Customs ranges from the unhelpful to the contradictory. Read and weep:

Huge list of gloom-inducing links now moved to <http://ae.ansible.uk/?id=vatmoss> for convenience in further updating.

My own [Ansible Editions](#) is currently refusing to sell to non-UK EU customers, because I Haven’t Got Time For This.

And on that cheerful note: Happy New Year!

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Corby (BSFG), SCIS, Alan Stewart (Australia). 1 December 2014.

2015

Ansible 330, January 2015

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo:
Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or the address of
Petty, Smilodon and Ruth.

Kit Langford (1925-2014). [My beloved mother](#) died peacefully on 20
December after a short illness; she was 89. Brother Jon and I are desolated.
Though not keen on sf, Mum always loyally read *Ansible*.

The Great God Pan

Pat Cadigan is troubled by a recurrence of cancer (with chemotherapy to follow), but sneers at the ‘Diagnosis of Doom’ and gives warning that cancer should be very, very afraid. Good luck, Pat.

Arthur Machen is under threat: the major Machen collection in Newport, Gwent, seems at risk of being sold off or inadequately rehoused as a result of plans to save money by replacing the town’s central library (home of the collection) with very much smaller ‘hubs’. See wormwoodiana.blogspot.co.uk post at tinyurl.com/p67vg98. [MLV]

Gabriel García Márquez’s literary archive was acquired by the University of Texas for a sum kept determinedly secret for fear of inflating future prices. However, Associated Press is demanding full details under Texas state public records law. ([BBC](#), 11 December) [AW]

Jerry Pournelle had a small stroke in mid-December; he’s recovering well. ‘In a twist of fate far too strange to put into fiction, Jerry ended up in the exact same room as did Harlan Ellison a month earlier, after his own stroke.’ (www.jerrypournelle.com, 16/19 December) [AP]

David Pringle may plunge all (older) fandom into war with ‘a revelation that’s contained in my recent interview with Fay Ballard (in *Deep Ends: The J. G. Ballard Anthology 2014* ed. Rick McGrath, Toronto: Terminal Press,

2014). She confirms that her whole family attended the 1969 British Eastercon in Oxford, and also confesses that she and her brother let off stink bombs there. She thinks the stink-bombing was done on the Sunday morning of the con, and that the main programme had to be brought to a temporary halt while the odour dispersed.'

Conquinamine

8 Jan • **'First Thursday' Pub Meeting** (displaced since Thursday 1 January was a public holiday), Melton Mowbray cellar bar, 18 Holborn, London, EC1N 2LE. All evening, 4/5pm to late; all welcome. Free.

Ending soon: Until 20 Jan • **Terror and Wonder: The Gothic Imagination** (exhibition), British Library, London. See the web page at www.bl.uk/whatson/exhibitions/gothic/.

24 Jan • **SFSF Social**, Eten Café, York Street, Sheffield, S1 2ER. 4pm-late with guest readings and Q&A; all welcome. Free.

28 Jan • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. With Anne Charnock. Free.

28 Jan - 1 Feb • **Conception** (RPG), Hoburne Naish, Christchurch Road, New Milton, Hampshire, BH25 7RE. See www.conceptionuk.org.

6-8 Feb • **Con27ilkin** (filk), Best Western Hotel, Marks Tey, Colchester. £37 reg, £27 unwaged. Cheques to UK Filk Convention, c/o 119 Whitehill Lane, Gravesend, DA12 5LU.

7-8 Feb • **Microcon**, M&D Rooms, Exeter University campus. £12 reg; Exeter U students £10; sf club members £8. Online registration at www.exeterguild.org/societies/sciencefiction/.

14-15 Feb • **Picocon 32**, Imperial College Union, London. £10 reg; £8 concessions; £5 ICSF members; past GoHs free. Contact ICSF, Beit Quad, Prince Consort Rd, London, SW7 2BB; picocon at icsf co uk.

3-6 Apr • **Dysprosium** (Eastercon), Park Inn, London Heathrow. £70 reg, *rising to £80 on 1 February*; £25 supp/under-18s, £15 under-12s, £5 infants. Contact 101 Ninian Rd, Grovehill, Hemel Hempstead, Herts, HP2 6NB; register online at www.dysprosium.org.uk.

8 Jul • **Locating Fantastika** (conference), Lancaster University. CFP deadline: 1 April. See fantastikaconference.wordpress.com.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. Who could this be? ‘I met a grand old man whose last novel I had reviewed a couple of years ago. We shook hands, he graciously thanked me, when he didn’t really need to, and we agreed that science fiction, his genre, was cruelly and totally overlooked by all the books pages in this country ... It was strange, then, after the convivial exaggeration of our evening chat, to see him complaining again, in a further letter to the editor, about his foul mistreatment and what “literary fiction” snobs we all were. (Does anybody use the term “literary fiction” who doesn’t have one foot on a spaceship?)’ (Michael Caines, ‘Freelance’, *Times Literary Supplement*, 12 December) [MLV]

Awards. *Rhysling* (genre poetry). LONG Mary Soon Lee, ‘Interregnum’ (*Star*Line* 36.4). SHORT Amal El-Mohtar ‘Turning the Leaves’ (*Apex* 12/13). [L]

• *Rotsler Award* for lifetime achievement in fanzine art: our very own Sue Mason of *Plokta* fame, who has contributed nearly 40 teensy masthead cartoons to *Ansible*.

In Typo Veritas. From the *Radio Times* Quest Channel listings: ‘9.00pm. Attack of the Giant Jellyfish: A history of the British Isles from the Roman era to the present day, featuring re-enactments of major events and historic turning points.’ (30 November) [CMG] Jellyfish?

Passing for Literature. Here’s how to do it: ‘Last month, when the fiction finalists for the National Book Awards were announced, one stood out from the rest: “Station Eleven,” by Emily St. John Mandel. While the other nominated books are what, nowadays, we call “literary fiction,” “Station Eleven” is set in a familiar genre universe, in which a pandemic has destroyed civilization. The twist – the thing that makes “Station Eleven” National Book Award material – is that the survivors are artists.’ (Joshua Rothman, [The New Yorker](http://www.nytimes.com), 6 November 2014) [KF]

R.I.P. *Booth Colman* (1923-2014), US actor who appeared in *Them!* (1954) and tv series including *Science Fiction Theatre* (1955), *The Outer Limits*

- (1964), *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea* (1964), *I Dream of Jeannie* (1966-1967) and *Planet of the Apes* (1974), died on 15 December aged 91. [SFS]
- *Robert Conroy* (1938-2014), US author of a number of alternate-history novels beginning with *1901* (1995) and including the Sidewise Award winner *1942* (2009), died on 30 December. [SFS]
 - *Donna Douglas* (1933-2014), US actress whose best-known sf role was in her debut *Twilight Zone* episode 'The Eye of the Beholder' (1960), died on 2 January aged 81. [PDF]
 - *Lesley Hatch* (1954-2014), UK fan who wrote for the SCIS fanzine *Inception*, reviewed for *Vector* 1998-2005, and belonged to the Prophecy APA from its first mailing to the present, died on 6 December. [SJ/VL]
 - *Edward Herrmann* (1943-2014), US actor whose best-known genre role was in the vampire film *The Lost Boys* (1987), died on 31 December aged 71. [MPJ] Other credits include *The Electric Grandmother* (1982), *The Purple Rose of Cairo* (1985), *Here Come the Munsters* (1995), *Wonder Woman* (2011) and *Heaven's Door* (2013).
 - *Kris Jensen* (Kristine Marie Jensen, 1953-2014), US author of the Ardel sf trilogy comprising *FreeMaster* (1990), *Mentor* (1991) and *Healer* (1993), died on 21 November; she was 61.
 - *Sidney Kramer* (1915-2014), US publisher, agent and book dealer who was a founder of Bantam Books and later New American Library, died on 10 December; on 21 January he would have been 100. [GVG]
 - *Roberta Leigh* (1926-2014), UK author of romances and children's fiction who created and produced the tv puppet series *Torchy the Battery Boy* (1957-1959), *Twizzle* (1957) and *Space Patrol* (1963-1968; US *Planet Patrol*), died on 19 December; she was 87. [MPJ]
 - *Donald Moffitt* (1931-2014), US author of sf from 1960, his first sf novel being *The Jupiter Theft* (1977), died 10 December aged 83. As Paul Kenyon he wrote eight borderline-sf spy thrillers about the Modesty Blaise-like 'Baroness'.
 - *Patricia Nurse*, whose one sf story was the much-anthologized 'One Rejection Too Many' (July 1978 *Asimov's*), died on 3 March 2014. [AM]
 - *Francisco Porrúa* (1922-2014), Spanish editor whose Ediciones Minotauro published his own translations of *The Lord of the Rings*, *The Martian Chronicles*, *The Left Hand of Darkness* and many more, died on 18 December. [SFS]
 - *David Ryall* (1935-2014), long-time UK actor who played Elphias Doge in

Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows 1 died on 25 December aged 79. Other genre credits include *Truly Madly Deeply* (1990), *City of Ember* (2008) and *The Tractate Middoth* (2013). [PDF]

- *Robert San Souci* (1946-2014), US author of children's fiction who specialized in retelling international folktales, myths and ghost/supernatural stories – as in *Short & Shivery: Thirty Chilling Tales* (1987) and its successors – died on 19 December aged 68. [PDF]
- *Joseph Sargent* (1925-2014), US actor and Emmy-winning director who amid much else directed *Colossus: The Forbin Project* (1970) and episodes of *Star Trek* (1966), *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.* (1964-1966) and *The Invaders* (1967-1968), died on 22 December aged 89. [PDF]
- *Roy Scarfo* (1926-2014), US space artist who was creative art director at the General Electric Space Technology Center and illustrator/consultant for NASA and others, died on 8 December; he was 88. [AIP]
- *Eckhard Schwettmann* (1957-2014), German publisher and publicist who from 1996 to 2001 was head of marketing (as E S) and then head of publishing for the vast Perry Rhodan franchise, died on 4 November; he was 57. [SF2C]
- *Martha Sigall* (1917-2014), US inker and painter of animation cels who in her 53-year career worked on many classic Looney Tunes and Merrie Melodies films, died on 13 December; she was 97. Her autobiography is *Living Life Inside the Lines: Tales from the Golden Age of Animation* (2005). [PDF]
- *Peter Underwood* (1923-2014), UK ghost-hunter (once described as 'the Sherlock Holmes of psychical research') and author of some 50 books on the subject, died on 26 November; he was 91. [JE]
- *Ken Weatherwax* (1955-2014), US actor best known as young Pugsley in *The Addams Family* (1964-1966), died on 7 December; he was 59. [MPJ]
- *Billie Whitelaw* (1932-2014), UK actress whose genre credits included *The Secret Garden* (1952; 1987), *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1968), *The Omen* (1976), *The Dark Crystal* (1982) and *The Cloning of Joanna May* (1992), died on 21 December; she was 82. [PDF]
- *Rocky Wood* (1959-2014), New Zealand-born expert on Stephen King whose critical books include *The Complete Guide to the Works of Stephen King* (2003), died on 1 December aged 55. He was the current president of the Horror Writers Association. [L]

The Weakest Link. *Sandi Toksvig*: 'In which river did John the Baptist

baptize Jesus?’ *Contestant*: ‘The Amazon.’ (Channel 4, *Fifteen-to-One*)

• *Ben Shephard*: ‘According to Arthurian legend, King Arthur’s sword was forged on which island?’ *Contestant*: ‘I think I know this one. Yes, it’s either the Isle of Man or the Isle of Wight. I think I’ll say ... the Isle of Wight.’ (ITV, *Tipping Point*) [PE]

Court Circular. The UK Home Office, having feebly resisted the issue of a passport to Laura Skywalker Matthews (middle name acquired by deed poll) on grounds of trademark infringement, and then backed down after her threat of legal action, has rallied and cancelled the recently issued ‘L. Skywalker’ passport because they cannot be doing with frivolity. It seems that the triumphantly quoted guidelines say, or now say, ‘... we will refuse to recognise a change of name ... if it is made for a bet or frivolous purpose.’ ([BBC](#), 4 December) [MPJ]

As Others See Us II. From a review of David Mitchell’s *The Bone Clocks*: ‘First, the cosmology, which has the demented intricacy of science fiction.’ (James Wood, *The New Yorker*, 8 September) [MMW]

Finding Someone Worf Fighting For ... was the strapline of this irresistible email sent to *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*: ‘We all have our “thing”. Sometimes finding someone to love who has the same quirky interests as you can be difficult, even more so when your interests involve pointy ears and phasers. / Trek Dating is a US online dating site for people who love Star Trek. If you want a partner that’s passionate about Spock and isn’t afraid to go with you at Warp Speed then [TrekDating.com](#) is the dating site for you.’ [GVG]

Publishers and Sinners. Writer Beware posted its ‘[Alert: Questionable Terms of Use in HBO’s Game of Thrones Compendium](#)’ on 11 December. The Compendium is to be a crowdsourced volume financed with typical corporate minginess – payment for contributors to this likely bestseller is limited to one copy of the book – and with a typical corporate rights grab: ‘HBO will consider any Submissions and/or anything you contribute to this Service as available for its use free of any obligations to you.’ In perpetuity. With moral rights automatically waived. HBO later (18 December) modified these draconian terms to make the rights seizure non-exclusive, but the deal remains one that no professional would touch with the traditional ten-foot pole.

The Weakest Baskerville. *Host:* ‘The peat bogs of Dartmoor inspired the title of this 1902 novel.’ *Contestant 1:* ‘What is Dracula?’ *Contestant 2:* ‘What is Frankenstein?’ (*Jeopardy*, 9 December) [AIP]

Random Fandom. *Wendy Bradley* is quietly smug at having published her write-up of Loncon 3’s panel on the future of taxation in no less a magazine than *Taxation* ([18 December 2014](#)), with the tasteful subtitle ‘From androids to zombies: taxation of the undead’.

- *Team Fan Magazine* (no other contact name given) may soon supersede *Ansible*’s free event listings and allow me a well-deserved rest: ‘The reason I am contacting you is we are looking to starting a brand new magazine about conventions, exhibitions and meet ups with in the UK. / Our magazine will be a lot different to others that you find as will be a free magazine handed out at the events across the UK and articles will be written by the fans rather than someone in the media. This would give both a non biased view and can help expand the interest in to small and larger events that people may never of heard of or gone to before. [...] As this will be a free magazine we will have advertising space available which we can discuss costs later if you would wish.’ [SG]

- *Art Widner* (97) is now the first Lifetime Member of FAPA, ‘forever freed of any obligations to pay dues and/or to contribute to the mailings.’ [[F770](#)]

The Dead Past. *20 Years Ago:* ‘Dire warning from Little, Brown accompanying review copies of Gary Haynes’s *Carrion*: “No review should not appear before the date of publication.”’ (*Ansible* 90, January 1995)

- *40 Years Ago*, eternal truth was uttered: ‘The Eastercon has become too large; there are so many people about that there are always a lot of fans I’d like a quiet talk with, but never get around to.’ (Darroll Pardoe in [Checkpoint 58](#), January 1975) The terrifying figures for the then most recent Eastercon, Tynecon ’74, had been revealed in an earlier issue: ‘Attendance was a record; about 350 people actually turned up at the convention out of a total registration of 504. This is the first time the total has topped 500 at an Eastercon.’ ([Checkpoint 47](#), April 1974)

- *50 Years Ago*, an alleged response from that nice Mr Michael Moorcock at *New Worlds* magazine: ‘Thank you for letting me have advance news of your 400 word novel about Father Christmas being mistaken for an alien. Unfortunately, we are stocked up on Father Christmas stories for the next twelve years, and do not anticipate the continuation of the magazine or the

world beyond that point. However, if you would care to submit the story, changing the words “Father Christmas” to “Easter Bunny”, we may just have room for it. Could you do it in three parts of 133 1/3 words?’ ([Skyrack 74](#), January 1965)

C.o.A. *Tony Cullen* (from 6 January), 45 Glenforth St, Greenwich, London, SE10 0JQ. *Peter Wareham & Gwen Funnell* (since August), 1 Benfield Way, Portslade, East Sussex, BN41 2DA.

Outraged Letters. *Yvonne Rousseau* on the [A329 claim](#) that ‘*Interstellar* is not a science fiction film ...’: ‘The Australian government is not so easily deceived. Here, *Interstellar* is rated “M” because of “science fiction themes and occasional coarse language.” The classification “M” signifies “for mature audiences” (that is, recommended for teenagers aged 15 years and over). According to the Australian government, classifiable elements under “M” may include “violence and nudity of moderate impact that are not recommended for children under 15 years.” As for “science fiction themes” – I can only conjecture which kind of threat to innocence is deemed to lurk there.’

Blurbismo. ‘In 1857, Charles Dickens was probably the most famous and beloved Englishman alive – a cross between J.K. Rowling and Princess Diana.’ (Blurb for DVD, *Dickens’ Secret Love*) [JB]

Fanfundery. *TAFF*: the 2015 Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund race to the 2015 Worldcon in Spokane opened promptly on 1 January with two European candidates, Nina Horvath and Wolf von Witting. The online ballot can be found at tafftrip.com/taff-ballot-form-2015/. PDF ballot form downloadable at taff.org.uk. Voting continues to Tuesday 7 April.

Media Madness. The American Film Institute jury’s top 11 films of 2014 include *Interstellar* and the Disney version of Stephen Sondheim’s musical *Into the Woods*. (BBC, 9 December) [MPJ]

Thog’s Masterclass. *Dept of Punchy Opening Lines.* ‘At first there was only the cold, the Stygian inky iciness that held every muscle of his body in thrall and made his thoughts flow with the turgid slowness of treacly molasses.’ (Wilbur S. Peacock, ‘Spider-Men of Gharr’, Summer 1945 *Planet Stories*) [MFD]

• *Quickness of the Hand Dept.* ‘... he laughed, and before I could stop him,

stroked my face with the speed of light.’ (Debbie Johnson, *Dark Vision*, 2014) [AR]

- *Neat Tricks*. ‘He stood tall, in fact even taller than he usually was.’ (*Ibid*)
 - *Like a Huge Springing Beast Dept*. ‘The redhead springs deep and soars through the air. Flying like a spread-eagled amoeba ...’ (Kieran Shea, *Koko Takes a Holiday*, 2014) [AR]
 - *Dept of Useful Add-Ons*. ‘He rose to his spare elbows.’ (Charles E. Gannon, *Fire with Fire*, 2013) [AL]
 - *Shock of Hair Dept*. ‘His ginger hair with its generous dashes of grey sat on his head like an electrified cat.’ (J.D. Robb [Nora Roberts], *Strangers in Death*, 2008) [O]
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Endnotes

Apparitions.

• 9 January 2015, Brum Group AGM (ooh, the excitement), Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre. 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk or rog dot peyton at btinternet dot com. Future meetings: 13 February 2015, Quiz; 13 March 2015, TBA; 10 April 2015, Ian Stewart; 8 May 2015, TBA; 12 June 2015, Stephanie Saulter; 10 July 2015, TBA; 14 August 2015, Summer Meal.

Editorial. The dismaying saga of #VATMOSS saw several twists and turns since last issue’s quick summary. Campaigning so far has persuaded HM Revenue & Customs to make one concession, roughly ‘All right, we won’t force small ebook publishers out of business straight away, we’ll wait six months.’ [I’m still adding links here.](#)

Loncon 3 Post-Mortem. Latest figures discussed at Smofcon 32 in December include a total membership of 11,125 and actual physical attendance of 7,310; a modest surplus of less than £1,000 is expected, from a total income of some £940,000. [[F770](#)]

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Alex Pournelle, Private Eye, Adam Roberts, Science Fact & Fiction Concatenation, SF Site, Mark L. Valentine, Gordon Van Gelder, Andrew Wells, Martin Morse Wooster, and our Hero Distributors: Dave Corby (Birmingham SF Group), SCIS/Prophecy, Alan Stewart (Australia). Wishing you all the best for this Newish Year. 5 January 2015.

Ansible 331, February 2015

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE, ascomycin, melange, pilac or stroon.

Yet More Shamelessness. My latest ebook, just published, is a slight expansion (one extra story and some bits) of my 2003 parody/pastiche collection *He Do the Time Police in Different Voices*. For more than you wished to know about this, see ae.ansible.uk/?id=titles/timepolice.

The Secret Crocodile

Melissa Conway, highly successful director since 2001 of the vast sf/fannish Eaton Collection at the University of California Riverside, announced her retirement on 3 January. As a minor donor (of *Ansibles* etc.), I appreciated her regular acknowledgments and Christmas cards.

Charles Coleman Finlay is the new editor of *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*, as of the March/April 2015 issue. Gordon Van Gelder, formerly both publisher and editor, is still publisher. [L] Online submissions are welcome at submissions.ccfinlay.com/fsf/.

Rose Fox sends a forthcoming-novel blurb: “‘To call Clive Barker a ‘horror novelist’ would be like calling the Beatles a ‘garage band’ ... He is the great imaginer of our time. – Quentin Tarantino.” Personally, I think that to call Clive Barker a horror novelist would be like calling the Beatles a rock ‘n’ roll band: entirely accurate, entirely compatible with real talent, and the snobs can go hang.’ (29 January)

George Lucas, talking to Robert Redford at the Sundance Film Festival, confirmed the dark suspicions of many fans: ‘I really have no interest in science fiction at all.’ (*Independent*, 30 January) But after deploring the ‘circus’-like insubstantiality of too many recent films, he stoutly added: ‘If

you go into *Star Wars* and see what's going on there, there's a lot more substance than circus.'

Norman Spinrad has only just learned that an asteroid discovered in 2004 has been named for him: 186835 Normanspinrad.

Consigliori

6-8 Feb • **Con27ilkin** (filk), Best Western Hotel, Marks Tey, Colchester. Day rates at the door: £10 Fri, £20 Sat, £15 Sun. Contact 119 Whitehill Lane, Gravesend, DA12 5LU; con27ilkin.wordpress.com.

6-8 Feb • **SF Ball** (media), Grand Harbour Hotel, Southampton. See the various ticket prices at www.sfbevents.com/sfball.

7-8 Feb • **Microcon**, M&D Rooms, Exeter University campus. £12 reg; Exeter U students £10; sf club members £8. Online registration at www.exeterguild.org/societies/sciencefiction/.

14-15 Feb • **Picocon 32**, Imperial College Union, London. £10 reg; £8 concessions; £5 ICSF members; past GoHs free. Contact ICSF, Beit Quad, Prince Consort Rd, London, SW7 2BB; picocon at icsf co uk.

20-22 Feb • **Redemption '15** (multimedia sf), Britannia Hotel, Fairfax St, Coventry, CV1 5RP. £70 reg to 11 February 2015, when advance booking closes, and £75 at door (concessions £20 off); £40/day, £45 at door (concessions £5 off); under-18s £25 or £15/day; £15 supp; under-3s free. Contact 61 Chaucer Rd, Farnborough, Hants, GU14 8SP.

21-22 Feb • **Sunderland Comic Con**, Seaburn Centre, Whitburn Road, Sunderland, SR6 8AA. £15 reg or £8/day; concessions £10 and £6. See suncc.wordpress.com for more details and online booking.

27 Feb • **British Fantasy Society Open Night**, Bristol Central Library. 7pm-9pm. Free. Readings/Q&A: Joanne Hall, Gareth L. Powell.

14-15 Mar • **Sci Fi Scarborough** (comics, media), The Spa, Scarborough. £30.25 reg; under-16s £15.13. Day £18.70 Sat, £14.30 Sun; under-16s £9.35, £7.15; under-6s free. See www.scifiscarborough.co.uk.

27-29 Mar • **Tynecon III: the Corflu**, Vermont Hotel, Castle Garth,

Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 1RQ. £50/\$85 reg, *rising to £60/\$100 on 1 March*; £15/\$25 supp. *Day rates only after 15 March*: Fri £15, Sat £20. Contact 45 Kimberley Gardens, London N4 1LD. See corflu.org.

3-6 Apr • **Dysprosium** (Eastercon), Park Inn, London Heathrow. *Now £80 reg*; £25 supp/under-18s, £15 under-12s, £5 infants under 6. Contact 101 Ninian Rd, Grovehill, Hemel Hempstead, Herts, HP2 6NB; register online at www.dysprosium.org.uk.

19 Jul • **Edge-Lit 4**, Cinema One, QUAD Centre, Derby. Tickets £30. Book online at www.derbyquad.co.uk/special-event/edge-lit-4.

19-23 Aug • **Sasquan** (Worldcon), Spokane Convention Center, Spokane, WA, USA. *Now \$210 reg as of 1 February*; \$105 YA/military; \$90 child; \$40 supp. See sasquan.org.

22-25 Oct • **Bram Stoker International Film Festival**, Whitby. ‘Earlybird Pass’ £85 *to 1 March*. See www.bramstokerfilmfestival.com.

31 Oct - 1 Nov • **Festival of Fantastic Films**, Pendulum Hotel (formerly Days Manchester Hotel), Sackville St, Manchester, M1 3BB. £50 reg until 1 August 2015. Contact 95 Meadowgate Rd, Salford, Manchester, M6 8EN. See also fantastic-films.com.

13-15 Nov • **Novacon 45**, Park Inn, Nottingham. GoH Anne and Stan Nicholls. £45 reg; £50 at the door. Under-17s £12; under 13s free. Contact 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ. See www.novacon.org.uk.

16-21 Nov • **Arvon SF Course**, Lumb Bank, W. Yorks. £725 single room; £680 shared. See www.arvon.org/course/science-fiction-2/.

Rumblings. *Eastercon 2016*: Pasgon, the Cardiff bid launched at Novacon, has been postponed because the IAAF World Half Marathon is to be held in Cardiff on that weekend, with dire effects on overflow hotel pricing. It’s already an expensive city, and before relaunching for 2017 the Pasgon committee is asking presupporters how they feel about £100+/night for a double in an overflow. [RR] See www.pasgon.org.uk.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. “Radical life extension isn’t consigned to the realm of

cranks and science fiction writers any more,” says David Masci, a researcher at the Pew Research Centre, who recently wrote a report on the topic looking at the scientific and ethical dimensions of radical life extension. “Serious people are doing research in this area and serious thinkers are thinking about this.” ([Guardian](#), 11 January) [DB]

Awards. *Crawford Award* for debut fantasy (tie): Zen Cho, *Spirits Abroad*, and Stephanie Feldman, *The Angel of Losses*.

- *Philip K. Dick Award* shortlist: Jennifer Marie Brissett, *Elysium*; Rod Duncan, *The Bullet-Catcher’s Daughter*; Meg Elison, *The Book of the Unnamed Midwife*, Emmi Itäranta, *Memory of Water*; Cherie Priest, *Maplecroft: The Borden Dispatches*; Jonathan Strahan, editor, *Reach for Infinity*. [GVG]

- *James Herbert Award* (horror published in the UK), shortlist for first presentation: M.R. Carey, *The Girl with All the Gifts*; Nick Cutter, *The Troop*; Frances Hardinge, *Cuckoo Song*; Andrew Michael Hurley, *The Loney*; Josh Malerman, *Bird Box*; Kim Newman, *An English Ghost Story*.

- *National Book Critics Circle Awards* (USA): Chang-rae Lee’s sf novel *On Such a Full Sea* is on the shortlist of 5. [L]

- *Robert A. Heinlein Award*: Jack McDevitt, for all his sf novels and stories.

In Typo Veritas. ‘The matronly old houses seemed to wear the lush foliage of the street’s many oaks and maples like fir stoles.’ (John Shirley, *Wet Bones*, 1993) [BA]

R.I.P. *Terry Becker* (1921-2014), US actor and producer/director who played Chief Sharkey in *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea* (1965-1968) and directed *The Thirsty Dead* (1974), died on 30 December aged 93. [SFS]

- *Kan (Khan) Bonfils*, who played a Jedi master in *The Phantom Menace* (1999) and also appeared in Bond films and *Batman Begins* (2005), collapsed and died on 5 January during a rehearsal for the London stage production *Dante’s Inferno*. [MPJ]

- *Brian Clemens* (1931-2015), UK screenwriter who wrote for *The Avengers* in its 1960s heyday, died on 10 January aged 83. Other genre credits *Dr Jekyll & Sister Hyde* (1971), *The Golden Voyage of Sinbad* (1973), *Timestalkers* (1987) and *Highlander II: The Quickening* (1991). [CS]

- *Carl Djerassi* (1923-2015), Austrian-born chemist (best known for work on oral contraception) and author of ‘lab lit’ novels of which *Menachem’s Seed* (1997) is borderline sf, died on 30 January aged 91.

- *Anita Ekberg* (1931-2015), famed Swedish-born actress who had an early sf role in *Abbott and Costello Go to Mars* (1953), died on 11 January aged 83. Other genre credits include *Fangs of the Living Dead* (1969). [JL]
- *Suzette Haden Elgin* (1936-2015), US author and linguist whose popular Coyote Jones sf series began with *The Communitpaths* (1970), died on 27 January after long illness; she was 78. Other works include the Ozark and Native Tongue trilogies, the latter (her most significant work) making use of her invented women's language Láadan. In 1978 Elgin founded the SF Poetry Association, whose Elgin Award is named for her.
- *Gerry Fisher* (1926-2014), UK cinematographer whose genre credits include *The Island of Dr Moreau* (1977), *Wolfen* (1981), *Highlander* (1986), *Black Rainbow* (1989) and *The Exorcist III* (1990), died on 2 December aged 88. [MPJ]
- *Richard Graydon* (1922-2014), UK stunt man seen in *Star Wars* (1977), ten James Bond films including *Moonraker* (1979), and *Batman* (1989), died on 22 December aged 92. [PDF]
- *Kazumasa Hirai* (1938-2015), Japanese manga writer and sf novelist who created the manga/anime superhero 8 Man and the *Wolf Guy* manga/novel series, died on 17 January; he was 76. [PDF]
- *Barrie Ingham* (1932-2015), UK actor who voiced the star role in *The Great Mouse Detective* (1986), died on 23 January aged 82; he was also in *Dr. Who and the Daleks* (1965), the *Who* tv storyline 'The Myth Makers' (1965), and *Josh Kirby ... Time Warrior* (1995-1996). [SFS]
- *Michel Jeury* (1934-2015), French author of nearly 40 sf titles (some early work being bylined Albert Higon), died on 9 January; he was 80. His *Le temps incertain* (1973) was translated by Maxim Jakubowski as *Chronolysis* (1980). [J-DB]
- *Robert Kinoshita* (1914-2014), US cinema art director and model-maker who designed the celebrated robots in *Forbidden Planet* (1956) and *Lost in Space* (1965-1967), died on 9 December; he was 100. [PDF]
- *Colleen McCullough* (1937-2015), Australian writer best known for *The Thorn Birds* (1977), whose sf venture was *A Creed for the Third Millennium* (1985), died on 29 January; she was 77. [PDF] Her obituary in *The Australian* – 'Plain of feature, and certainly overweight, she was, nevertheless, a woman of wit and warmth.' – sparked many parody self-obit tweets, such as Neil Gaiman's 'Although his beard looked like someone had glued it on & his hair would have been unconvincing as a wig, he married a

rockstar.’ [MPJ]

- *Geraldine McEwan* (1932-2015), UK actress with voice roles in *The Curse of the Were-Rabbit* (2005) and *The Secret World of Arrietty* (2010), died on 31 January aged 82; she was also in the 1999 *Red Dwarf* episode ‘Cassandra’. [AW]
- *Valentin Nicolau*, Romanian sf publisher whose Nemira Publishing House (founded 1991) reissued very many world sf classics, died unexpectedly on 13 January; he was 54. [RQ via SF2C]
- *Dave Reason*, UK academic at the University of Kent who co-ran two sf courses there, died on 31 October. Andrew Bishop writes: ‘He was a brilliantly clever lecturer who turned many first year students into life-long sf fans (and also introduced us all to *Ansible!*).’
- *Rod Taylor* (1930-2015), Australian actor who starred in George Pal’s *The Time Machine* (1960) and Alfred Hitchcock’s *The Birds* (1963), died on 7 January aged 84. Other genre credits include *101 Dalmatians* (voice, 1961) and *The Warlord: Battle for the Galaxy* (1998). [PB]
- *Alice K. Turner* (1939-2015), US editor and critic who was fiction editor of *Playboy* 1980-2000 and compiled *The Playboy Book of Science Fiction* (1998), died on 16 January; she was 75. With Michael Andre-Driussi she edited *Snake’s Hands* (2001; expanded 2003), a critical anthology about John Crowley to which she also contributed several essays. [ED]

The Weakest Link. *Bradley Walsh*: ‘In Norse mythology, which palace has more than 400 doors?’ *Male Contestant*: ‘Versailles.’ (ITV1, *The Chase*) [MPJ]

- *John Humphrys*: ‘Which Andrew Lloyd Webber musical, first staged in 1971, is narrated by Judas Iscariot?’ *Georgia Henshaw*: ‘Phantom of the Opera.’ (BBC1, *Celebrity Mastermind*) [PE]

C.o.A. *F&SF* paper submissions: C.C. Finlay, *Fantasy & Science Fiction*, PO Box 8420, Surprise, AZ 85374-0123, USA.

As Others See Us II. We are so tiresome: ‘Recently I wrote a story about *Star Wars* and science fiction for *The Atlantic*. The comments section, as these things will, featured a large number of people telling me that I was unqualified to write about the topic because I hadn’t read enough sci-fi books, or hadn’t read enough recent sci-fi books, or hadn’t read the right sci-fi books, or hadn’t seen the right sci-fi movies. / I’m sure this is a familiar experience for anyone who’s published work on culture.’ (Noah Berlatsky,

[Los Angeles Review Of Books](#), 31 December) [MMW]

Magazine Scene. *Farrago's Wainscot*, online 'journal of the literary weird in fiction and poetry', resumed publication in January 2015 after a long hiatus since October 2009. See www.farragoswainscot.com.

Outraged Letters. *Gregory Feeley*, regarding '[As Others ...](#)' in [A330](#), quotes *Galleycat* from 5 January: "HarperCollins's William Morrow imprint has plans to introduce a new line of nonfiction and literary fiction." So in response to Michael Caine's snarky "Does anybody use the term 'literary fiction' who doesn't have one foot on a spaceship?", one can say, "The U.S. media press, asshole." (5 January)

- *Neil Ford*: 'Re [A330 "Outraged Letter"](#) on the subject of *Interstellar* being classified as containing "science fiction themes": The best, because stupidest, advisory description used by Australian Classification is "Mild themes".'

- *Michael Moorcock* on David Pringle's J.G. Ballard family revelation in, again, [A330](#): 'Absolutely true about Ballard and Oxford. I hadn't bothered to book a room, telling Judy I'd just take Jimmy's when he didn't turn up (as usual). The bugger did the dirty on me by arriving and staying. Not surprised to learn about the stink bomb.' (5 January)

Random Fandom. *Fanzine Activity Achievement (FAAn) Awards*: voting on 2014 work opened in January and continues until Saturday 14 March 2015. See www.corflu.org for the downloadable ballot form and a gallery of eligible fanzine covers.

- *science-fiction.org*, reported in [A323 \(June 2014\)](#) as on offer with a minimum bid of \$1,000 or \$5,000 for quick sale – reduced from an optimistic \$2,000/\$10,000 – has *still* attracted no bids; the current registration expires this month.... [JC]

The Dead Past. *50 Years Ago*: 'Following the ground-work put in by A.E. van Vogt last mid-summer on the idea of a sf writers' protection society, there now seems to be getting off the ground [...] a body known as the Science Fiction Writers of America. An introductory circular has appeared from Damon Knight informing would be members of a bimonthly bulletin and urging them to join the society. Subs are \$3 per year.' ([Skyrack 75](#), February 1965)

- *40 Years Ago*: 'SCIENCE FICTION 75 is the title of a series of talks being organised by ICA in London (The Mall, Nash House, London SW1). The

time is Wednesdays at 7.30 pm. February 26th is Brian Aldiss on “SF and the Nature of Time”; March 5th is Tom Disch on “SF and Cheese”; March 12th is Peter Nicholls on “SF: The Monsters and the Critics”; March 19th is Phil Dick on “The Man, The Android and the Machine”.’ ([Checkpoint 59](#), February 1975)

- *20 Years Ago*, Bruce Sterling shared a beautiful dream: ‘Perhaps some day, in stark futurity, people of goodwill (euphemism for you and me) will be able to dance a rickety arthritic fandango over the final grave of Scientology.’ (*Ansible* 91, February 1995)

As Others See Us III. Revealed at last: the problem with sf is its essential unlovability. ‘Those writers who feel the pressure of precursors and who successfully take poetry or prose in new directions deserve consideration beyond what we normally extend to writers who produce satisfactory work in various genres. Just because there is no objective list of Great Books does not mean there are no great books. I’m not suggesting that one can’t fully enjoy James Crumley, James Lee Burke, Robert Heinlein, Philip K. Dick, and Orson Scott Card, but I’m not sure one can love them in the way that one loves Shakespeare, Keats, Chekhov, and Joyce. One can be a fan of Agatha Christie, but one can’t really be a fan of George Eliot.’ (Arthur Krystal, ‘What We Lose If We Lose the Canon,’ *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 5 January) [MMW]

Editorial: Our Mailing List. Steve Jones writes: ‘I realized at Christmas that I have not received an electronic *Ansible* since last February. I have just tried to re-join the list ...’ only to be told ‘You are already subscribed to this group.’ This appears to be a known quirk of Google Groups which Google isn’t interested in fixing. Even with list owner privileges, the alleged existing subscription that’s causing the blockage can’t be found or removed. To get around this, I’ve set up an alternative email list based at [ansible.uk](#), to which the plain-text version of *Ansible* will be posted each month (as well as to the old list). If you can’t use or don’t like Google Groups, ask me for an invitation.

Media Miscellany. *Critics’ Choice Movie Awards*: seven awards went to *Birdman*; other winners of genre interest are *Guardians of the Galaxy*, *Interstellar* (sf/horror film), *Edge of Tomorrow*, *Rise of the Planet of the Apes* and *The Lego Movie* (animated feature).

- *Golden Globes*: animated feature, *How to Train Your Dragon 2*; actor

(musical or comedy), Michael Keaton in *Birdman*, which also won for screenplay. [MPJ]

- *Oscars*: best motion picture and screenplay finalists include *Birdman*.
- *Screen Actors Guild Awards* went to *Birdman* (film cast performance) and *Game of Thrones* (tv stunt ensemble performance). [SFS]

Thog's Masterclass. *Dept of Close Scrutiny*. '... Donchak continued to stare at him, his eye moving in minute arcs across his body as it gauged the temperature differentials between veins and arteries ...' (Mark Geston, *The Siege of Wonder*, 1976) [BA]

- *Solid Fuel Dept*. '... beyond it was the steel skeleton of the launching platform, and above that, steep and gleaming, towered the magnesium spire of the rocket.' (Robert Abernathy, *Deep Space* [a.k.a. *Axolotl*], 1953) [BA]
 - *Eyeballs in the Sky*. 'Her eyes were a rich, dark green, like a pair of verdantly forested planets.' (Joe Vasicek, *Star Wanderers: Outlander*, 2012) [JP]
-

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 13 February 2015, Quiz at the Brum Group, Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre. 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk or rog dot peyton at btinternet dot com. Future meetings: 13 March 2015, TBA; 10 April 2015, Ian Stewart; 8 May 2015, TBA; 12 June 2015, Stephanie Saulter; 10 July 2015, TBA; 14 August 2015, Summer Meal.

Fanfundery. *TAFF 2015 reminder*: voting in the current TransAtlantic Fan Fund race continues until 7 April. See taff.org.uk.

Random Fandom II. *Chris GarCia* is ceasing publication of his terrifyingly frequent fanzine *The Drink Tank* (a Hugo winner) after ten years and 400 issues. Gosh wow, excitable videos, capitals in the middles of words, and other expressions of Strong EmoTion! *Ansible* could theoretically catch up with its own four hundredth issue in late 2020, but may not last that long....

- *Peter Weston* is in transit; he expects to announce a CoA in 'five weeks or so' and meanwhile asks us not to post anything to the old Wyvern Road address.

Je Suis Sprague. Andrew I. Porter muses that L. Sprague de Camp, if writing today, might have thought twice about publishing some of his time-travelling hero's plans to reshape history in *Lest Darkness Fall* (1939 *Unknown*; 1941): 'Further, our slight ability to foresee the future informs us that in about thirty years there will be born in Arabia a man named Mohammed, who, preaching a heretical religion, will, unless stopped, instigate a great wave of barbarian conquest, subverting the rule both of the Persian Kingdom and the East Roman Empire. We respectfully urge the desirability of securing control of the Arabian Peninsula forthwith, that this calamity shall be stopped at the source.'

Ansible 331 Copyright © David Langford, 2015. Thanks to Brian Ameringen, Paul Barnett, Jean-Daniel Brèque, Damien Broderick, Jonathan Cowie, Ellen Datlow, Paul Di Filippo, Martyn P. Jackson, Jim Linwood, Locus, Private Eye, John Purcell, Roberto Quaglia, Roger Robinson, Science Fact & Fiction Concatenation, SF Site, Cat Sparks, Gordon Van Gelder, Andrew Wells, Martin Morse Wooster, and our Hero Distributors: Dave Corby (Birmingham SF Group), SCIS/Prophecy, Alan Stewart (Australia). 2 February 2015.

Ansible 332, March 2015

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.

Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE, egg-meat, gruts or the song of the Schi.

Forever Shameless. This month's offering from Ansible Editions is the first ever ebook of that man Langford's almost legendary SF/fantasy book review columns for *White Dwarf* et al: *The Complete Critical Assembly*. See ae.ansible.uk/?id=titles/critasm for the usual puffery.

The Reminders of the Day

'**Dracula** deserts Shropshire – to MPs' dismay' was the intriguing headline of a parliamentary sketch by Donald Macintyre (*Independent*, 26 February). MP Mark Pritchard (Con, Wrekin) complained to the House of Commons that location shooting for a Dracula film had moved from his constituency to ... 'another European country'. Macintyre: 'Though Pritchard could not bring himself to say so, the film is going to be made in Hungary, possibly because it's nearer Transylvania.' [MPJ]

Homer is [in the news again](#). Thanks to the film *The Boy Next Door*, in which the hero presents the heroine with a 'first edition' of *The Iliad* (printed, in remarkably clean dustjacket, found at a garage sale), this rarity became the most popular search at AbeBooks. But was it signed?

Kazuo Ishiguro doesn't seem to worry about genre labels, but others feel he must be saved from the stigma of having written a post-Arthurian historical fantasy: 'It would be too easy to call what Ishiguro is undertaking "fantasy" or "magical realism." Critics will summon such phrases to describe this book, but they would be wrong to do so. Such facile labels – suggesting that the author is relying on literary devices pulled from old bags of tricks – have no meaning here. Instead, what we are given in *The Buried Giant* has the clear ring of legend, original and humane as anything Ishiguro has written.' (Marie

Arana, *Washington Post*, 25 February) [MMW] Is even ‘magic realism’ no longer respectable? ‘It would be too easy and facile to call Ishiguro’s writing “prose” ...’

Later: [Here’s Ursula K. Le Guin on *The Buried Giant*](#).

Ken MacLeod’s *Independent* ‘Book of a Lifetime’ choice was perhaps inevitably headlined NECROMANCER BY WILLIAM GIBSON (28 February).

William F. Nolan is the World Horror Society Grand Master for 2015, as voted by the members of the World Horror Convention.

Conubium

11 Mar • **Cabot Institute Lecture:** ‘Past, future, and fantasy climate change – from the mid-Cretaceous to Middle Earth’ by Prof. Dan Lunt, Reception Room, Wills Memorial Building, Bristol U. 6pm. Free.

14-15 Mar • **Futurefest** (futurology), Vinopolis, Stoney St, London, SE1 9AA. £80 reg; £50 day; students £70, £40. See futurefest.org.

14-15 Mar • **Sci Fi Scarborough** (comics, media), The Spa, Scarborough. £30.25 reg; under-16s £15.13. Day £18.70 Sat, £14.30 Sun; under-16s £9.35, £7.15; under-6s free. See www.scifiscarborough.co.uk.

15 Mar • **EM-Con** (media), Capital FM Arena, Nottingham. ‘Silver’ tickets sold out; ‘general’ tickets £8. See www.em-con.co.uk.

19-22 Mar • **Sci-Fi Weekender**, Hafan y Mor Holiday Park, near Pwllheli. Booking by accommodation. See www.scifiweekender.com.

23-25 Mar • **North London Literary Festival**, Middlesex U, Hendon: sf panel 24 Mar, 5:30-7pm. Free. See northlondonlitfest.com.

25 Mar • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. With Suniti Namjoshi. Free.

27-29 Mar • **Tynecon III: the Corflu**, Vermont Hotel, Castle Garth, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 1RQ. *Now £60/\$100 reg as of 1 March*; £15/\$25 supp. *Day rates only after 15 March*: Fri £15, Sat £20. Contact 45 Kimberley Gardens, London N4 1LD. See corflu.org.

30-31 Mar • **Sideways in Time:** Alternate History and Counterfactual

Narratives (conference), Liverpool University. £43.05 at sidewaysintime.eventbrite.co.uk. See sidewaysintime.wordpress.com.

3-6 Apr • **Dysprosium** (Eastercon), Park Inn, London Heathrow. £80 reg; £25 supp/under-18s, £15 under-12s, £5 infants under 6. Contact 101 Ninian Rd, Grovehill, Hemel Hempstead, Herts, HP2 6NB; register online at www.dysprosium.org.uk.

14 Apr • **Yesterday's Tomorrow** (*Eagle*/Dan Dare), 27/29 South Lambeth Rd, Vauxhall, London, SW8 1SZ. £50 reg (£40 BIS/Eagle Soc). See www.bis-space.com/2015/02/12/14260/yesterdays-tomorrow.

8-10 May • **Fantastiq** (genre film festival), QUAD art centre, Market Place, Derby, DE22 3PN. £50 reg. See fantastiq.co.uk.

28 May - 6 Jun • **Sci-Fi-London** (genre film festival), London, various venues. See www.sci-fi-london.com/festival.

4 Jul • **Tolkien Society Seminar**, Hilton Hotel, Leeds, LS1 4BX.

See www.tolkiensociety.org/events/tolkien-society-seminar-2015/ .

17-19 Jul • **SF Foundation Masterclass in SF Criticism**, Royal Observatory, Greenwich. £200 (postgrads £150). For fuller details see www.sf-foundation.org/masterclass2015.

27-31 Aug • **Frightfest** (horror film festival), Glasgow Film Theatre. Bookings: www.frightfest.co.uk or 0141 332 6535.

28-31 Aug • **The Asylum** (steampunk), Lincoln. Dates announced; tickets available 'shortly' at steampunk.synthasite.com.

10-13 Sep • **Oxonmoot** (Tolkien Society), St Antony's College, Oxford. £50 reg. See www.tolkiensociety.org/events/oxonmoot-2015/.

16-18 Oct • **Lakes International Comic Art Festival**, Kendal, Cumbria. Some parts free. For tickets see www.comicartfestival.com.

22-25 Oct • **Bram Stoker International Film Festival**, Whitby. *Four-day pass now £125*. See www.bramstokerfilmfestival.com.

14-15 Nov • **Comic Con** (comics), Leeds. As usual this is part of Thought Bubble, the Leeds Comic Art Festival, running 9-15 November. Ticket prices TBA. More at thoughtbubblefestival.com.

27-31 Jan 2016 • **Conception** (RPG), New Milton, Hampshire. Booking by accommodation. Prices TBA at www.conceptionuk.org.

5-7 Feb 2016 • **Con2bil8** (filk), Best Western Hotel, Marks Tey, Colchester. £37 reg/£27 unwaged; children (5-17) £1 per year of age; under-5s free. Cheques to UK Filk Convention, c/o 119 Whitehill Lane, Gravesend, DA12 5LU. Online booking: con2bil8.wordpress.com.

5-7 Feb 2016 • **SF Ball** (media), Grand Harbour Hotel, Southampton. £150 reg; child £75; other options. See sfbevents.com/sfball.

Rumblings. *Dublin in 2019:* to raise campaign funds this Worldcon bid offers presupporting membership at £12 or dollar/Euro equivalent, pre-posing (or ‘Backer’) at £28, ‘Friend’ at £65 and ‘Super Friend’ at £160. The last two, giving full attending membership if you vote in the 2017 site selection and Dublin wins, *rise to £85 and £175 on 31 March*. That day also sees the addition of ‘YA Friend’ at £45, for those under 26 at the start of the convention in 2019. More at dublin2019.com.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. The *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* sets us right in its (favourable) review of *Game of Thrones*: ‘... oft fälschlicherweise dem Fantasy-Genre zugeordnet wird, obwohl es hier weder Zauberringe gibt noch einen fabulösen Sieg des Guten über das Böse.’ That is, ‘... often erroneously regarded as Fantasy, although there are neither magic rings here nor a fantastical triumph of good over evil.’ [LS]

Awards. *Skylark* (NESFA’s life achievement honour): Moshe Feder.

In Typo Veritas. *Bioengineering Dept.* ‘Gwen saw him as he glanced towards her, and realised that he reassembled the Duke of India.’ (Christopher Nuttall, *The Royal Sorceress*, 2012) [HP]

R.I.P. *Paul Anderson* (1943-2015), Australian fan active in the 1970s in ANZAPA and as a reviewer for Bruce Gillespie’s *SF Commentary*, died on 1 January. [BRG]

• *Andre Brink* (1935-2015), South African academic, writer and anti-apartheid campaigner during the bad times, died on 6 February aged 79. His novella *The First Life of Adamastor* (1993) has mythic and fantastic

elements. [AW]

- *John Cooper* (1942-2015), UK comics artist who drew many strips based on tv sf – including *Captain Scarlet*, *Joe 90*, *Thunderbirds* and *Lady Penelope* for *TV Century 21* and *Blake's 7* and *Doctor Who* for Marvel UK – died on 22 February.
- *Brett Ewins* (1955-2015) UK comics artist who worked on *Judge Dredd*, *Bad Company*, other *2000 AD* series, *Hellblazer*, *Skreemer* and *Swamp Thing*, died on 16 February aged 59. [GW]
- *Pauline Fisk* (1948-2015), UK author of unconventional fantasy for children whose first novel *Midnight Blue* (1990) won the Smarties Prize, died on 25 January; she was 66. [AIP]
- *Leonard Nimoy* (1931-2015), actor, writer and director universally known for his role as the half-Vulcan Mr Spock in the original *Star Trek* (1966-1969) plus its spinoff films (two of which he directed) and series, died on 27 February. [GM] He was 83. Pre-*Trek* sf film appearances include *Zombies of the Stratosphere* (1952), *Them!* (1954) and *The Brain Eaters* (1958). His two autobiographies were *I Am Not Spock* (1975) and *I Am Spock* (1995).
- *Mick O'Connor*, Irish fan involved with the 2019 Dublin Worldcon bid, died in hospital on 16 February. [AIP]
- *Demis Roussos* (1946-2015), Greek singer and performer who was lead singer of Aphrodite's Child for such apocalyptic Vangelis-composed albums as *End of the World* (1968) and *666* (1972), died on 25 January aged 68. [RF]
- *Carol Severance* (1944-2015), US author of *Reefsong* (1991; Compton Crook Award winner) and the 1992-1993 'Island Warriors' trilogy, died on 19 February. [SFS]
- *Bertrice Small* (1937-2015), US romance author who wrote several romantic fantasies including *A Moment in Time* (1991) and the 'World of Hetar' series (2005-2010), died on 24 February; she was 77. [PDF]
- *Ryder Syvertsen* (1941-2015), US author best known for the 1984-1991 'Doomsday Warrior' survivalist sf sequence as by Ryder Stacy (early volumes written with Jan Stacy), died on 24 February; he was 73. [JEL]
- *Melanie Tem* (1949-2015), US horror/dark fantasy author whose first novel was *Prodigal* (1991; Bram Stoker Award winner), died on 9 February. 'The Man on the Ceiling', written with her husband Steve Rasnic Tem, won Stoker, IHG and World Fantasy awards. [F770]

As Others See ISIS. 'He has the kind of unkempt facial hair one sees on certain overgrown fans of *The Lord of the Rings*, and his obsession with

Islamic apocalypticism felt familiar. He seemed to be living out a drama that looks, from an outsider's perspective, like a medieval fantasy novel, only with real blood.' (*The Atlantic*, March) [PP]

SFWA announced on 3 February that – following a members' vote that was six to one in favour of the policy change – SFWA membership would from 1 March be open to self-published and small-press authors with sufficient earnings. \$3,000 from a novel or 10,000 words of short fiction at 6¢/word qualifies for active membership; a mere 1,000-word short at the same rate is enough for associate membership. (SFWA.org) Some grumbling came from authors to whom 6¢/word is but a dream.

Awards Shortlists. **BSFA:** NOVEL Nina Allan, *The Race*; Frances Hardinge, *Cuckoo Song*; Dave Hutchison, *Europe in Autumn*; Simon Ings, *Wolves*; Ann Leckie, *Ancillary Sword*; Claire North, *The First Fifteen Lives of Harry August*; Nnedi Okorafor, *Lagoon*; Neil Williamson, *The Moon King* (8 not 5 finalists owing to a tie for fourth place). SHORT Ruth E.J. Booth, 'The Honey Trap' (*La Femme*); Octavia Cade, 'The Mussel Eater' (*The Book Smugglers*); Benjanun Sriduangkaew, *Scale Bright*. NONFICTION Karen Burnham, *Greg Egan*; Niall Harrison, ed., 'The State of British SF and Fantasy: A Symposium' (*Strange Horizons*); Edward James, *Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers in the Great War*; Paul Kincaid, *Call and Response*; Jonathan McCalmont, 'Deep Forests and Manicured Gardens: A Look at Two New Short Fiction Magazines' (*Ruthless Culture*). ARTWORK Richard Anderson, cover, Kameron Hurley's *The Mirror Empire*; Blacksheep, cover, Adam Roberts's *Bête*; Tessa Farmer, *Wasp Factory*; Jeffrey Alan Love, cover, Simon Ings's *Wolves*; Andy Potts, cover, Sophia McDougall's *Mars Evacuees*.

• **Kitschies:** NOVEL Nina Allan, *The Race*; William Gibson, *The Peripheral*; Nnedi Okorafor, *Lagoon*; Andrew Smith, *Grasshopper Jungle*; Will Wiles, *The Way Inn*. DEBUT Monica Byrne, *The Girl in the Road*; Becky Chambers, *The Long Way to a Small, Angry Planet*; Hermione Eyre, *Viper Wine*; Emmi Itäranta, *Memory of Water*; Hanya Yanagihara, *The People in the Trees*. COVER ART Emily Carroll & Sonja Chaghatzbanian, Carroll's *Through the Woods*; Steve Marking (design) & Kimberly Glyder (lettering), Valerie Martin's *The Ghost of the Mary Celeste*; Glenn O'Neill, Nick Harkaway's *Tigerman*; Rafaela Romaya & Yehring Tong, Michel Faber's *The Book of Strange New Things*; Ben Summers, Lavie Tidhar's *A Man Lies Dreaming*.

DIGITAL Cardboard Computer, *Kentucky Route Zero: Act III*; Meg Jayanth, *80 Days*; various on Twitter, *echovirus12*; Simogo, *The Sailor's Dream*.

• **Nebula Awards**, novels only: Katherine Addison, *The Goblin Emperor*; Charles E. Gannon, *Trial by Fire*; Ann Leckie, *Ancillary Sword*; Cixin Liu trans Ken Liu, *The Three-Body Problem*; Jack McDevitt, *Coming Home*; Jeff VanderMeer, *Annihilation*. For the other Nebula categories, see www.sfwawards.org/2015/02/2014-nebula-awards-nominees-announced/.

• **Stokers** (horror), main novel category only: Craig DiLouie, *Suffer the Children*; Patrick Freivald, *Jade Sky*; Chuck Palahniuk, *Beautiful You*; Christopher Rice, *The Vines*; Steve Rasnic Tem, *Blood Kin*. For the rest, see horror.org/final-ballot-bram-stoker-awards/.

As Others See Us II. Former chess champion Garry Kasparov gives an interview. *Reason*: ‘You have written recently that people in America don’t seem to have a kind of bold sense of vision, of innovation, of change. Can you talk a little bit about that? What happened to the idea that we were going to reinvent the world?’ *Kasparov*: ‘I wish I knew. In the 1950s and ’60s, science fiction was the most popular genre. It has disappeared. Now you talk about elves, or magic, or it’s dystopia. It’s all you talk about – machines attacking us. There’s no more positive vision of machines cooperating.’ (*Reason*, March) [MMW]

Borderlands Reprieve. The San Francisco genre bookshop Borderlands was to close on 31 March, owing to a local minimum-wage law that would eventually add 39% to the payroll. Loyal customers persuaded them to accept sponsorships at \$100 per year (giving various privileges – see borderlands-books.com), and enough have been sold to keep Borderlands going until 31 March 2016 at the least.

R.I.P. II: Late Reports. *James H. Cobb* (1953-2014), US author of futuristic naval technothrillers beginning with *Choosers of the Slain* (1996), died on 8 July 2014 aged 61. [DPB]

• *Frederic Mullally*, UK author, journalist and publicist whose alternate-history novel was *Hitler Has Won* (1975), died on 7 September 2014 aged 96. [DP]

The Dead Past. *70 Years Ago*, August Derleth revealed: ‘I have completed the Lovecraft novel for which notes and fragments were left under [the] title of *The Lurker at the Threshold*; pending magazine publication, it will later on

be issued as a collaboration under the Arkham House imprint.’ ([Futurian War Digest](#), March 1945)

- *40 Years Ago*, another UK debut: ‘FANTASYCON was the name the British Fantasy Society gave to its one-day meeting held at the Imperial Centre Hotel, Birmingham (scene of many a Novacon) on Saturday February 22nd. The meeting may fairly be said to have been a success. Attendance was more than fifty people.’ ([Checkpoint 60](#), March 1975)
- *30 Years Ago*: ‘SEX AUTHOR SLAMS VAT ON BOOKS ... was reportedly the modest headline surmounting Oxford *Star* coverage when “well known sex author Brian Aldiss” protested plans (A41: now scrapped?) to tax books and magazines at 15%. Will this revelation boost sales of the filthy *Helliconia Winter*? Or of his lewd essay collection *The Pale Shadow of Science*, being produced by Jerry Kaufman for Westercon [...] Brian’s buddy Ian Watson is also big news, with his council election campaign against Lord Hesketh (Con): “Extremely miniature headline in the Towcester & Brackley Post: SPACEMAN WILL TAKE ON LORD H.”’ (*Ansible* 42, March 1985)
- *20 Years Ago* in the Brighton local-events mag *Punter*: ‘... *Interzone*, which has actually been going since 1982, this month celebrates the 100th anniversary of Jules Verne’s portentous novel, *The War of the Worlds*.’ (*Ansible* 92, March 1995) ‘*Imminent Death of the Net Predicted!* “Please could you tell me how to get on to ‘Internet’?” writes the Rev. Lionel Fanthorpe.’ (*Ibid*)

C.o.A. Julie Bell & Boris Vallejo, www.borisjulie.com (new website).
Howard Waldrop, 3011 Whitis #106, Austin, TX 78705, USA.

Fanfundery. *TAFF 2015 reminder*: voting in the current TransAtlantic Fan Fund race continues until 7 April. See taff.org.uk.

Media Miscellany. *Annie Awards* (animation): *How to Train Your Dragon 2* won as best feature, and also for direction (Dean DeBlois), feature character design, storyboarding and music.

- *BAFTAs*: the animated film winner was *The Lego Movie*; *Birdman* won for cinematography award and *Interstellar* for Visual Effects.
- *Golden Raspberry*: Michael Bay was acclaimed as worst director for *Transformers: Age of Extinction*
- *Independent Spirit*: *Birdman*. [MPJ]
- *Oscars*: the best picture award went to *Birdman*, which also won for director (Alejandro G. Iñárritu), original screenplay and cinematography.

Animated feature: *Big Hero 6*. Visual effects: *Interstellar*.

- *Nebula* dramatic presentation shortlist: *Birdman*, *Captain America: The Winter Soldier*, *Edge of Tomorrow*, *Guardians of the Galaxy*, *Interstellar*, *The Lego Movie*.

Thog's Masterclass. *Neat Tricks*. 'Alex's snub-nosed face sagged open. His blue eyes revolved incredulously.' (Poul Anderson & Gordon R. Dickson, 'Heroes are Made' aka 'The Sheriff of Canyon Gulch', May 1951 *Other Worlds Science Stories*) [CG]

- 'Huddled on the armchair where he'd sat to read until late last night, Helenka was embracing her retracted knees.' 'Her anguish could be perceived only by the way her lips tightened in a peristaltic pucker.' (both Ben Pastor, *Lumen*, 1999) [PB]

- *Eyeballs in the Sky*. 'For a few seconds, behind Torstad's eyes, something rattled its chains.' (Poul Anderson, *There Will Be Time*, 1973) [MMW]

- 'Jim stared with all his eyes.' (Isabel Ostrander, *Anything Once*, 1920) [PB]

- *Digital Commerce Dept*. 'Daniel sat back, steepling his long fingers across his waistcoat. He bought them from a little shop in Brixton Market.' (Paul McAuley, *Something Coming Through*, 2015) [HF]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 13 March 2015, Peter Coleborn and Jan Edwards of Alchemy Press talk to the Brum Group, Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre. 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk or rog dot peyton at btinternet dot com. Future meetings: 10 April 2015, Ian Stewart; 8 May 2015, TBA; 12 June 2015, Stephanie Saulter; 10 July 2015, TBA; 14 August 2015, Summer Meal; 11 September 2015, TBA; 9 October 2015, TBA; 6 November 2015, Emma Newman; 4 December 2015, Xmas Social.

Editorial. A note to the spammy lady who keeps inviting me to pay money to have my websites spell-checked (and gives such shocking examples of bad English as quoted German and Latin words with their context ignored): against all the odds, *Ansible* is not a typo.

Thog's Second Helping. *Dept of But Can They Hear You Scream?* 'No one

escapes from the imperial navy any more than they do from the mines of Evron. But at least in space I can breathe ...' (E.E. Smith and Gordon Eklund, *Lord Tedric*, 1978) [BA]

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Ansible 333, April 2015

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo:
Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Steve Stiles**. Available for SAE or the awful mystery
of Gordelpus.

The Now Traditional Ebook Plug. *The Silence of the Langford*, my 1996 collection of funny nonfiction mostly written for fanzines (plus a very few stories), was a Hugo finalist in its day. At last there's an ebook version, with some corrections and five more 1980s articles for which there wasn't room in the book. See ae.ansible.uk/?id=titles/silence.

The Cupboard of the Yesterdays

David V. Barrett, two years after finding his *Sects, Cults and Alternative Religions* (1996, 1998) extensively plagiarized in University of the West of England (Bristol) academic Stephen J. Hunt's *Alternative Religions: A Sociological Introduction* (2003), was rewarded with a quarter-page grovel in *The Bookseller*: 'Professor Hunt and Ashgate Publishing apologise unreservedly to Dr Barrett for this infringement, and Ashgate Publishing confirm that their book has been withdrawn from sale and that all remaining copies including electronic versions have been destroyed.'

Ted Chiang acquired a surprise collaborator in an *Independent* snippet about the forthcoming Paramount film *Story of Your Life*: 'Adapted from a short story by Nebula and Ted Chiang ...' (15 March)

Kazuo Ishiguro, having worried in public about whether his *The Buried Giant* would suffer the stigma of genre ('Will readers follow me into this? Will they understand what I'm trying to do, or will they be prejudiced against the surface elements? Are they going to say this is fantasy?' – [New York Times](http://www.nytimes.com), 19 February) and received a ticking-off from Ursula K. Le Guin ('Well, yes, they probably will. Why not? It appears that the author takes the word for an insult.' – [Bookviewcafe.com](http://www.bookviewcafe.com), 2 March), retorted that Le Guin is

‘entitled to like my book or not like my book, but as far as I am concerned, she’s got the wrong person. I am on the side of the pixies and the dragons.’ ([Guardian](#), 8 March)

Holly Lisle posted an ‘Open Letter to SFWA Upon My Resignation’. As a fervent opposer of all taxation, she cannot be doing with SFWA’s reincorporation in California as a US 501c(3) organization which is hideously complicit with the tax system – e.g. donations to SFWA by US citizens are tax-deductible. It took a little while for this libertarian outrage to register; SFWA reincorporated in 2013 after its members voted to do so in 2011. ([Hollylisle.com](#), 18 March) [JN]

Farah Mendlesohn sadly reports that the ebook of *Terry Pratchett: Guilty of Literature*, planned as an Orangutan Foundation fundraiser, has had to be cancelled owing to those microbusiness-hostile European VAT changes. See [euvataction.org](#) and [ae.ansible.uk/?id=vatmoss](#); more [below](#).

Larry Niven is to receive the SFWA Grand Master honour for 2015.

W. Heath Robinson has been saved for the nation. A large collection of several hundred of his drawings was in danger of being broken up for sale but has been rescued with National Heritage Memorial Fund and Art Fund grants. The cartoons, including characteristically eccentric ‘Heath Robinson contraptions’ from World Wars I and II, will be shown in the William Heath Robinson Trust’s coming Heath Robinson Museum, which is to open in London next year. ([Independent](#), 23 March) [MPJ]

John Wyndham will be commemorated on 24 May by the naming of a presently nameless London NW3 passageway as Triffid Alley (see events list [below](#)). The idea came from local resident and Wyndham biographer David Ketterer, who identifies this wheelie-bin repository as the very alley used by the hero to escape vegetable horror in chapter 8 of *The Day of the Triffids*, and adds: ‘This tribute to John Wyndham will be the only public recognition he has received in England.’ [Later: [English Heritage passed him over.](#)]

Contraremonstrant

3-6 Apr • **Dysprosium** (Eastercon), Park Inn, London Heathrow. £80 reg; £25 supp/under-18s, £15 under-12s, £5 infants under 6. Contact 101 Ninian

Rd, Grovehill, Hemel Hempstead, Herts, HP2 6NB. *Advance booking has now closed. The convention website confirms that **no** memberships will be available at the door.* See www.dysprosium.org.uk.

14 Apr • **Yesterday's Tomorrow** (*Eagle/Dan Dare*), 27/29 South Lambeth Rd, Vauxhall, London, SW8 1SZ. £50 reg (£40 BIS/Eagle Soc). See www.bis-space.com/2015/02/12/14260/yesterdays-tomorrow.

22 Apr • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. With Den Patrick. Free.

6 May • **Telefantasy and Society** (symposium), University of Lincoln, from 9am. £45 reg; students £25. See tinyurl.com/njbbw4z.

8-10 May • **Fantastiq** (genre film festival), QUAD art centre, Market Place, Derby, DE22 3PN. £50 reg. See fantastiq.co.uk.

9 May • **BFS/BSFA York Pubmeet**, Brigantes Bar & Brasserie, 114 Micklegate, York. 5pm-late. Free. With readings, Q&A, raffle.

13 May • **Third Annual Tolkien Lecture**, Pichette Auditorium, Pembroke College, Oxford. With Lev Grossman. 6:30pm. Free, but you are asked to sign up in advance: see tinyurl.com/k6zxeyr.

24 May • **Triffid Alley** (see John Wyndham note [above](#)), official unveiling. Gather 11:30am at the drinking fountain, South End Green, London NW3 2DG. Then: '... speeches; walk over to the Alley to unveil the plaque; maybe a band or costumes.' Bring your triffid costume.

30 May • **Conan Doyle Con**, City Tavern, 38 Bishopsgate Street, Birmingham, B15 1EJ. Noon-8:30pm. £15. See tinyurl.com/pzwmpl7.

30 May • **Wonderlands**: The U.K. Graphic Novel Expo, Cityspace, Chester Road, Sunderland, SR1 3SD. Free entry to Publishers' Hall and all panels and talks. See www.wonderlands.org.uk for more.

4 Jun • **Sci-Fi and the Future** (Cheltenham Festival sf panel), Winton Crucible, Cheltenham. 8-9pm. £10. See tinyurl.com/nbeb3l3.

26 Sep • **BristolCon**, Doubletree Hotel, Bristol. £20 reg, *rising to £25 on 1 May*; £30 at the door. Cheques to 18 High Leaze Road, Patchway, Bristol BS34 5AF. See also www.bristolcon.org.

13-15 Nov • **Armadacon 27**, Future Inn, Plymouth. £35 or £20 per day

(concessions £30 or £15); £5 evening from 6pm. Contact 18 Wadham Rd, Liskeard, Cornwall, PL14 3BD; www.armadacon.org.

4-6 Nov 2016 • **BCon** (Eurocon), Barcelona, Spain. €30 reg *until 27 April 2015*; under-25s €10; under-16s free. Further information and online registration at www.eurocon2016.org.

Rumblings. *Arthur C. Clarke Award*: the presentation for 2014 work will be on 6 May. Full submissions list at sci-fi-london.com/acca. • *British Fantasy Society*: the next London Open Night is on 5 June, venue to follow. See links at news.ansible.uk/london.html.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. David Mitchell added his tuppence-worth on genre and Kazuo Ishiguro: “Fantasy plus literary fiction can achieve things that frank blank realism can’t,” said Mr. Mitchell, who added that he hoped “The Buried Giant” would help to “de-stigmatize” fantasy. “Bending the laws of what we call reality in a novel doesn’t necessarily lead to elves saying ‘Make haste! These woods will be swarming with orcs by nightfall.’” ([New York Times](http://www.nytimes.com), 19 February) As bad as having fairies spout stuff like ‘Ill met by moonlight, proud Titania.’

Awards. *The Bookseller YA Book Prize* (first presentation), Louise O’Neill, *Only Ever Yours*.

• *FAAn Awards*: PAST PRESIDENT FWA Graham Charnock. WEBSITE efanzines.com (Bill Burns). SINGLE ISSUE *Trap Door* 31 ed. Robert Lichtman. CORRESPONDENT Paul Skelton. ARTIST Dan Steffan. WRITER Mark Plummer. COVER D. West, *Banana Wings* 56. PERSONALZINE *Vibrator* ed. Graham Charnock. GENZINE *Banana Wings* ed. Claire Brialey & Mark Plummer. #1 FAN FACE Steve Stiles. LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT (not a FAAn Award) Peter Weston. [GS]

• *Horror Writers Association*: Jack Ketchum and Tanith Lee are both honoured for lifetime achievement; ChiZine Publications is best speciality press. [L]

• *Kitschies*: NOVEL Andrew Smith, *Grasshopper Jungle*. DEBUT Hermione Eyre, *Viper Wine*. COVER ART Glenn O’Neill, for Nick Harkaway’s *Tigerman*. DIGITAL Cardboard Computer, *Kentucky Route Zero: Act III*.

- *Prometheus* (libertarian): special Lifetime Achievement, F. Paul Wilson.

Deep Literary Insight Dept. ‘If you give Frodo Baggins a mobile phone, *The Lord of the Rings* becomes a considerably shorter book.’ (Paul Mason, *New Humanist*, January 2015) [MMW] Not unless you give someone else a mobile phone too. (See also: *palantír*.)

R.I.P. Ted Ball (1942-2015), long-time proprietor of London’s much-loved sf bookshop Fantasy Centre (1969-2009, initially in partnership with Dave Gibson and later with Erik Arthur), died on 18 March. He was 72. ‘One of life’s true gentlemen is no more,’ writes Erik. For funeral/wake details, contact erik at dreamcountry dot org.

- *Dennis Barker* (1929-2015), UK journalist and author whose future-dystopian novel is *Winston Three Three Three* (1987), died on 2 March aged 85. [JCI]

- *Harve Bennett* (1930-2015), US producer of four Star Trek films – *II: The Wrath of Khan* (1982), *III: The Search for Spock* (1984), *IV: The Voyage Home* (1986) and *V: The Final Frontier* (1989) – died on 25 February aged 84. [AW] TV series credits include *The Six Million Dollar Man* (1974-1978), *The Invisible Man* (1976), *The Bionic Woman* (1976-1977), *Time Trax* (1993-1994) and *Invasion America* (1998).

- *Richard Clear* (1943-2015), US books/comics dealer involved with Pulpcon in its early years, died on 21 March aged 71. [AIP]

- *Inge Eriksen* (1935-2015), noted Danish mainstream feminist author who published much highly regarded sf from 1980 to 1991 – beginning with the stage play *The Wind is Not for Sale* and continuing with several novels – died on 13 March; she was 79. [J-HH]

- *Fred Fredericks* (1929-2015), US newspaper strip artist who drew (and later scripted) *Mandrake the Magician* from 1965 until he retired in 2013, died on 10 March aged 85. [PDF]

- *Pete Gilligan*, UK fan and con-goer active in the Hatfield Poly SF society (PSIFA, founded 1978) and its early Shoestringcons, died on 14 March. [JCo]

- *Irwin Hasen* (1918-2015), US comics and newspaper-strip artist, with DC in the 1940s and early 1950s, died on 13 March aged 96. He worked on *The Flash*, *Green Lantern* and others, and co-created the character Wildcat. [PDF]

- *Norman Lee*, Marvel and DC comics artist who worked on *Avengers*,

Supergirl and *X-Men*, was lost while snorkelling off Grand Cayman on 5 March; he was 46. [SFS]

- *Tom Loback*, US artist and sculptor known for Tolkien-related artwork and gaming figures (including the popular Dragontooth Miniatures fantasy line), died on 5 March aged 66. [F770]

- *Roy McKie*, US cartoonist and illustrator best known for a number of children's-book collaborations with Dr Seuss, died on 8 January; he was 93. [PDF]

- *Ib Melchior* (1917-2015), Danish-born actor, screenwriter and director who scripted or co-scripted *The Angry Red Planet* (1959), *Reptilicus* (1961), *Journey to the Seventh Planet* (1962), *Robinson Crusoe on Mars* (1964) and others (some also directed or co-directed by him), died on 13 March aged 97. *Death Race 2000* (1975), remade as *Death Race* (2008), is based on his 1956 story 'The Racer'.

- *Mal Peet* (1947-2015), UK author whose YA fiction won the Carnegie Medal and *Guardian* Prize, died on 2 March aged 67. [AIP] *Cloud Tea Monkeys* (1999 with his wife Elspeth Graham) is a children's fairytale; the adult *The Murdstone Trilogy* (2014) sends up the heroic-fantasy industry.

- *Terry Pratchett* (1948-2015), who as the creator of the stupendously popular Discworld comic fantasies and many other bestselling novels needs no introduction, died on 12 March and was mourned worldwide. He was 66 and had been knighted in 2009; genre honours included a 2010 World Fantasy Award for life achievement. Terry carried on determinedly in the wake of his 2007 diagnosis with a rare form of Alzheimer's, but had to reduce public appearances from mid-2012 and was unable to attend the August 2014 Discworld Convention as guest of honour. I loved almost all his work, am proud of my small editorial involvement with Discworld, and have many reasons to be grateful to Terry.

- *Dave Rike* (1935-2014), long-time US fan and member of First Fandom, died on 1 November 2014. [RL] His 1950s-1990s fanzines included *Califan*, *Fandom Dispatch*, *Innuendo* 1-4 with Terry Carr (thereafter the sole editor), *Limbo* and *Reflects*.

- *Peggy Rae Sapienza* (1944-2015), long-time US fanzine fan and con-runner who as Peggy Rae Pavlat chaired the 1998 Baltimore Worldcon, died on 22 March. [SFS] She was fan guest of honour at the 2012 Worldcon in Chicago

- *Sam Simon* (1955-2015), US producer and screenwriter who was a co-creator of *The Simpsons* and co-wrote more than a dozen of its episodes

before leaving the show, died on 8 March; he was 59. [PDF]

- *Yoshihiro Tatsumi* (1935-2015), Japanese manga artist who pioneered the more adult ‘gekiga’ comics/graphic novel style and won multiple awards worldwide, died on 7 March aged 79. [PDF]

- *Gregory Walcott* (1928-2015), US actor who appeared in many films besides the one for which he was unfortunately best known – Ed Wood’s *Plan 9 from Outer Space* (1959) – died on 20 March aged 87. [MPJ] ‘Ed Wood has etched my name forever in the annals of film history.’

The Weakest Link. *Bradley Walsh*: ‘Which of these pairs is named after a French theologian and an English philosopher? Is it (a) Calvin and Hobbes, (b) Wallace and Gromit, or (c) Dastardly and Muttley?’ *Contestant*: ‘Dastardly and Muttley.’ (ITV, *The Chase*) [PE]

- *Mark Williams*: ‘What’s the link between Scott, Lee, Griffith, Anderson, Coen, Wilder, Welles, Kubrick ...?’ *Contestant*: ‘Is it the 1966 England World Cup team?’ (BBC1, *The Link*) [PE]

More Pottery. That Dumbledore thing still bothers some fans, one of whom quizzed J.K. Rowling via Twitter: ‘I wonder why you said that Dumbledore is a gay because I can’t see him that way?’ Rowling’s much retweeted reply: ‘Maybe because gay people just look like ... people?’ ([Daily Telegraph](#), 25 March) [AIP] The *Telegraph* website coverage of this story rapidly spawned a bigot-infested comment thread.

Awards Shortlists. *Lambda* (LBGT) sf/fantasy/horror category: Daryl Gregory, *Afterparty*; Chaz Brenchley, *Bitter Waters*; Lee Thomas, *Butcher’s Road*; A.M. Dellamonica, *Child of a Hidden Sea*; Max Gladstone, *Full Fathom Five*; Lea Daley, *FutureDyke*; Craig Lurance Gidney, *Skin Deep Magic*. *Lambda* winners are to be announced on 1 June.

Outraged Letters. *Simon R. Green*: ‘And now Spock is gone. I think my favourite story about him arose during an interview with William Shatner. The topic of Mr Nimoy came up, and Shatner asked “What’s he doing these days?” The answer: publishing books of photos of nude women. Shatner considered this for a moment and then said, “Why didn’t I think of that?”’

- *Andrew Stephenson* muses: ‘Have been wondering about a manual about the virtues of various designs of one-horse carriage and harnesses and whips best employed, tentatively titled *Fifty Grades of Shay*.’

- *Bryan Talbot* on another death reported in [A332](#): ‘Re: Demis Roussos – I do

believe he was also on one track of the *Blade Runner* soundtrack album, donating a high-pitched wail.'

Random Fandom. *Cardinal Cox* is to be the Poet-in-Residence of the Dracula Society.

- *The Nova Awards* for fanzine work have ceased owing to voter apathy; the occasional Nova 'Special Award for Special Fans' continues. (*Novacon 45 PR1*; see also [Steve Green](#))
- *Michael Z. Williamson*, heedless of the usual request to keep it confidential until the official (Easter) announcement, tweeted on 20 March: 'Guess Who's A Hugo Nominee?'

The Dead Past. *50 Years Ago*, the name of Discworld's creator-to-be was already one to conjure with in the fan press: '*The BSFA Convention* will be held over the forthcoming [*Easter*] weekend at the Midland Hotel, New Street, Birmingham [...] Ted Tubb, Brian Aldiss, Terry Pratchett and James White are expected to attend the conclave.' ([Skyrack 77](#), April 1965)

- *40 Years Ago*, a news item that gave me a terrible flashback: 'MANCON FIVE the 1976 Easter convention, will be held on a university campus, a new experiment for such occasions. The site is Owens Park, Manchester, and they quote a rate of £5.50 a person, full board.' ([Checkpoint 61](#), April 1975) Never again: it's been hotels ever since.

- *20 Years Ago*: 'Samuel R. Delany's tongue-in-cheek ploy to improve the political correctness of his reissued porno epic *Equinox* (aka *The Tides of Lust*) is to make all its characters 100 years older. No one could possibly complain about explicit underage sex scenes involving a boy and girl aged, respectively, 113 and 115....' ([Ansible 93](#), April 1995) '*SFX* is a new magazine about sf ("mainly films and TV, but also books, comics, models, toys ...") – out soon from Future Publishing in Bath, best known for their computer titles. Editor Matt Bielby; deputy editor Dave Golder. The usual suspects Barnett, Langford and Stableford are leaping aboard.' (*Ibid*) Langford is somehow still there after two decades of writing a column for every issue.

R.I.P. II: Late Reports. *Nancy Carrigan* (1933-2014), who with husband Richard Carrigan wrote *The Siren Stars* (1971) and *Minotaur in a Mushroom Maze* (1976 *Analog*), died on 18 July 2014 aged 81. [JS]

Fanfundery. *TAFF 2015 final reminder*: voting in the current TransAtlantic

Fan Fund race continues until 7 April. More at taff.org.uk.

- Thog's Masterclass.** *Displaced Organ Dept.* 'His heart didn't have the strength to do much of anything, except pound, and beat, and maybe squat in his mouth ...' (Gordon Eklund 'with E.E. Smith', *Space Pirates*, 1979) [BA]
- *Neat Tricks.* "“You look tired, Ted,” she said as he sat down and stretched his long feet before him.’ (Vin Packer, *Spring Fire*, 1952) [PB]
 - *Supervillain Angst.* 'If his present endeavours failed, he would surely be dead, and if they succeeded, the universe would be doomed. He had nothing left to look forward to – nothing at all.' (Gordon Eklund as E.E. Smith, *Lord Tedric: Alien Realms*, 1980) [BA]
 - *Secrets of the Illuminati.* 'Then he looked thoughtful, and slowly a crimson flush spread around his ears. Eventually his earlobes, unusually large and awkward, were illuminated like traffic lights.' (Anne Holt, *Death of the Demon*, 1995; trans Anne Bruce 2013) [PB]
 - 'He literally shone and, if he'd been hung from the ceiling, he'd have looked like another lamp.' (Alicia Giménez-Bartlett, *Death Rites*, 1996; trans Jonathan Dunne 2008) [PB]
 - *Hot Potato Dept.* 'They stared at me, squinting as if I were holding a supernova.' (Catherine Asaro, *Undercity*, 2014) [JMB]
-

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 10 April 2015, Peter V. Brett signing at Waterstones Reading Oracle, 12.30 pm. Other tour venues:
<http://www.petervbrett.com/appearances/>
- 10 April 2015, Ian Stewart talks to the Brum Group, Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre. 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk or rog dot peyton at btinternet dot com. Future meetings: 8 May 2015, TBA; 12 June 2015, Stephanie Saulter; 10 July 2015, TBA; 14 August 2015, Summer Meal; 11 September 2015, TBA; 9 October 2015, TBA; 6 November 2015, Emma Newman; 4 December 2015, Xmas Social.

Outraged Letters II. *Juliet McKenna* adds a few words about the background to the cancellation of that *Terry Pratchett: Guilty of Literature*

charity ebook ([see above](#)): ‘I have raised this particular case with No.10 Downing Street Policy Unit and also at a couple of meetings at the European Parliament, specifically highlighting how this new legislation now gives small charities the following thoroughly unpalatable options:

- Spending several thousand pounds on setting up a compliant shopping cart solution to continue with direct sales, for the sake of an unknown number of foreign sales which are highly unlikely to bring in enough revenue to justify those costs. Then incurring further administrative and accountancy costs to process the subsequent VATMOSS returns.
- Selling via a third party platform and thus paying both VAT and a substantial commission, effectively reducing every sale/donation by almost half its value. This incidentally also removes direct contact between the charity and the would-be purchasers, hampering a charity’s efforts to build an online community.
- Blocking direct sales outside the charity’s home country – with the option of manually processing such foreign orders via email, with the costs in time that will entail.

‘It’s hard to see how any of these options will be acceptable to either a charity’s trustees or its supporters. It’s yet another consequence of this legislation utterly failing to take into account the ways in which people actually use the Net for small scale direct ecommerce these days. At least when I brought this case up, these points did give people pause for thought.

‘The more pressure we can bring to bear, the more likely we are to see some meaningful change in these regulations. Please visit the www.euvataction.org website for more information on how to make your own voice heard.’

Editorial Just to save people from frenzied searching: despite the date, there are no merry April Fool japes in this issue. I linked to a few from the front page of the website, thus: [National Trust](#); [Charlie Stross](#); [“Hobbits are all bastards, claims Daily Mail”](#); [CERN researchers confirm existence of the Force](#); [Wonder Woman’s Invisible Jet Now on Display](#); [A Good Thing](#).

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Jackson, Robert Lichtman, Andrew I. Porter, SF Site, John Stevenson, Geri Sullivan, Andrew Wells, Martin Morse Wooster, and our Hero Distributors: Dave Corby (BSFG), SCIS/Prophecy, Alan Stewart (Australia). 1 April 2015.

Ansible 334, May 2015

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo:
Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE, 5 eggs,
dangerous flags or a Cephalotron.

Dysprosium & Puppygate. The 2015 Eastercon at the Park Inn, Heathrow, was a lot of fun: I'm not much of a programme-goer these days but among other things appreciated the newsletter (*Plokta* team), real ale/cider bar (wrangled by Martin Hoare) and Hugo Horrors panel. The last discussed the Hugo shortlist, which as heavily foreshadowed had been successfully gamed by slate votes organized by groups calling themselves Sad Puppies and Rabid Puppies. This is made possible by the huge spread of Hugo preferences: a relatively small percentage of voters following a party-line slate covering all five available slots in each category can swamp the usual unorganized vote. SP/RP candidates duly filled the entire initial ballot for Related Work, Short Story, Novelette and Novella, with just two non-slate options for Best Novel – at least one freed by a declined slate nomination. Two slate choices were then removed as ineligible; two more unprecedentedly withdrew after the shortlist announcement, Marko Kloos (novel) and Annie Bellet (short); later withdrawals, too late to affect the printed ballot, were *Black Gate* (fanzine) and Edmund R. Schubert of *Orson Scott Card's Intergalactic Medicine Show* (editor, short form). Novel finalists are now *Ancillary Sword* by Ann Leckie, *The Dark Between the Stars* by Kevin J. Anderson, *The Goblin Emperor* by Katherine Addison (Sarah Monette), *Skin Game* by Jim Butcher and *The Three Body Problem* by Liu Cixin, trans Ken Liu. Anderson and Butcher were slate choices; Cixin just missed nomination and moved up when Kloos withdrew. The online indignation level has been high since Easter. [George R.R. Martin](#) himself took time off writing for several long, sane blog posts on 'Puppygate'. I mostly burnt out on listing links at news.ansible.uk/misc/link15.html#hugonoms, but continue to link to Mike Glycer's heroic [File 770](#) coverage. Since I consider slate voting a thoroughly bad thing, I expect to make judicious – though not indiscriminate – use of the

No Award option on the final Hugo ballot. Meanwhile, all sympathy to John Lorentz's hard-pressed Sasquan Hugo committee; to Kevin Standlee and others who'll be running a perhaps overcrowded and fraught Worldcon business meeting at which anti-slate rules changes will be proposed; and to slate nominees who were unaware either that they'd been included or that this placed them in an exposed position on a new battlefield of the US culture wars.

The Puppies of Terra

Ramsey Campbell will receive an honorary fellowship from Liverpool John Moores University in July 'for his outstanding contribution to literature'. (news.cision.com announcement, 16 April)

Malcolm Edwards is to step down as Orion's deputy CEO and publisher at the end of the year, becoming chair of Gollancz and consultant publisher for Orion; he's glad to have found this 'way of stepping off the management roundabout.' (Bookseller, 29 April) [AIP]

H.R. Giger's name has been bestowed on a carnivorous *Nepenthes* pitcher-plant hybrid of 'nightmarish appearance' which in close-up looks like 'a frightening alien landscape'. (Telegraph, 10 April) [MPJ]

Jeet Heer on how the Hugos used to be: 'The nomination process works on the wisdom of crowds, which the final vote winnows to a winner. Slate voting undermines.' (Twitter, 18 April)

K.J. Parker, after much speculation (and a period of disinformation when this uncomic fantasy author was said to be female), has been revealed as the pseudonym of Tom Holt. (Pornokitsch, 21 April)

Lavie Tidhar summed up a great deal with his Hugo shortlist tweet: 'Truly it's an honour just to not be nominated.' (6 April)

Concepts

6 May • **Arthur C. Clarke Award** presentation, Foyles, 107 Charing Cross Road, London. See clarkeaward.com and 'Awards' below. Tickets £12.50:

www.foyles.co.uk/Public/Events/Detail.aspx?eventId=2521.

6 May • **Telefantasy and Society** (symposium), University of Lincoln, from 9am. £45 reg; students £25. See tinyurl.com/njbbw4z.

7 May • **London First Thursday** pub meeting. Upstairs bar, The Castle, 34-35 Cowcross St, London, EC1M 6DB, from 6pm – a temporary move while the Melton Mowbray is being refurbished in May and June.

8-10 May • **Fantastiq** (genre film festival), QUAD art centre, Market Place, Derby, DE22 3PN. £50 reg. See fantastiq.co.uk.

9 May • **BFS/BSFA Pubmeet**, Brigantes Bar, 114 Micklegate, York. 4:30pm on. Free. With K.T. Davies, Mark Morris readings/Q&A.

13 May • **In Conversation:** Penelope Lively and Philip Pullman, Waterstones Piccadilly. 6:30-8:30pm. £20 online or £22 offline; £15/£17 for Society of Authors members. See tinyurl.com/qgma7ja.

13 May • **Third Annual Tolkien Lecture**, Pichette Auditorium, Pembroke College, Oxford. With Lev Grossman. 6:30pm. Free, but you are asked to sign up in advance: see tinyurl.com/k6zxeyr.

17 May • **Paul ‘Gamma’ Gamble** wake, The Enterprise, 2 Haverstock Hill, London, NW3 2BL. 6-11pm. All friends of Gamma welcome.

24 May • **Triffid Alley**, named in honour of John Wyndham (see [A333](#)): unveiling 11:30am-12:15pm. Gather 11:30am at the drinking fountain, South End Green, London, NW3 2DG. Then: ‘... speeches; walk over to the Alley to unveil the plaque; maybe a band or costumes.’

27 May • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. With Edward James. Free.

28 May - 6 Jun • **Sci-Fi-London** (genre film festival), London, various venues. See www.sci-fi-london.com/festival.

30 May • **Conan Doyle Con**, City Tavern, 38 Bishopsgate Street, Birmingham, B15 1EJ. Noon-8:30pm. £15. See tinyurl.com/pzwmpl7.

30 May • **Wonderlands:** The U.K. Graphic Novel Expo, Cityspace, Chester Road, Sunderland, SR1 3SD. Free entry to Publishers’ Hall and all panels and talks. See www.wonderlands.org.uk for more.

4 Jun • **London First Thursday** at The Castle: see 7 May above.

4 Jun • **Sci-Fi and the Future** (Cheltenham Festival sf panel), Winton Crucible, Cheltenham. 8-9pm. £10. See tinyurl.com/nbeb3l3.

5 Jun • **BFS Open Night**, The Blacksmith & Toffeemaker pub, 292-294 Saint John St, London, EC1V 4PA. 7pm-11pm. Free; all welcome.

26 Sep • **BristolCon**, Doubletree Hotel, Bristol. Now £25 reg; £30 at the door. Cheques to 18 High Leaze Road, Patchway, Bristol BS34 5AF. See also www.bristolcon.org.

26 Sep • **TitanCon**, Wellington Park Hotel, Belfast. £25 reg; £5 supporting. See titancon.com.

16 Oct • **Gollancz Festival**, Waterstones Deansgate, Manchester. 6pm-9pm. Also online activity all day. More TBA at gollanczfest.com.

17 Oct • **Gollancz Festival**, Waterstones Piccadilly, London. 2pm-5pm. Also online activity all day. Again, more TBA at gollanczfest.com.

23-25 Oct • **Fantasycon**, East Midlands Conference Centre & Orchard Hotel, Nottingham. GoH (so far) John Connolly, Jo Fletcher, Brandon Sanderson. £65 reg; couples £110; under-16s £30; under-5s free. Rates rise 1 July. See fantasycon2015.org.

25-28 Mar 2016 • **Mancunicon** (Eastercon), Manchester. GoH Aliette de Bodard, David L. Clements, Ian McDonald, Sarah Pinborough. £60 reg; 13-17s £45; 4-12s £30; under-4s free. See mancunicon.org.uk.

28-29 May 2016 • **Satellite 5**, Marriott Hotel, Glasgow. Now £55 reg; 12-17s £20; 5-11s £5; under-5s £2. Rates good to 18 November. Membership forms and online registration at satellite5.org.uk.

14-17 Apr 2017 • **Pasgon** (Eastercon), Cardiff. GoH Jo Walton, Lyn Evans, David 'DC' Carlile, Judith Clute. See www.pasgon.org.uk.

Rumblings. *2017 Worldcon Site Selection* is open, with contenders Helsinki, Montréal, Nippon and Washington DC. Ballots, though not as yet online payment, at sasquan.org/site-selection/. • *Hugo Voting* (member number and PIN required): sasquan.org/hugo-awards/voting/.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. ‘If you haven’t seen any of Game of Thrones so far, you might be wondering if it’s worth ploughing through 40 hours of fantasy hokum to get you up to speed. It certainly looks, at first glance, like a load of old nonsense comprising bare breasts, fighting, dragons and not much else.’ (Charlotte Runcie, [Telegraph](#), 12 April) [MPJ] But after this cunning narrative hook, the article becomes a rave review.

Awards. *A. Bertram Chandler* (Australia; life achievement): Donna Maree Hanson.

- *Arthur C. Clarke* shortlist: M.R. Carey, *The Girl with All the Gifts*; Michel Faber, *The Book of Strange New Things*; Dave Hutchinson, *Europe in Autumn*; Emmi Itäranta, *Memory of Water*; Claire North, *The First Fifteen Lives of Harry August*; Emily St John Mandel, *Station Eleven*.

- *BSFA*: NOVEL Ann Leckie, *Ancillary Sword*. SHORT Ruth E J Booth, ‘The Honey Trap’ (*La Femme*). NONFICTION Edward James, *SF and Fantasy Writers and the First World War* ([fantastic-writers-and-the-great-war.com](#)).

ARTWORK Tessa Farmer, *The Wasp Factory* (sculpture).

- *Ditmar* (Australia) novel category, a tie: Glenda Larke, *The Lascar’s Dagger*; Trudi Canavan, *Thief’s Magic*.

- *Doc Weir*: Martin Hoare.

- *Edgars* (mystery) novel winner: Stephen King, *Mr. Mercedes*.

- *ESFS Hall of Fame*: AUTHOR China Miéville; ARTIST Manchu (France); MAGAZINE *Fantastica Almanac* (Bulgaria); PUBLISHER Gollancz; PROMOTER Mihaela Marija Perković (Croatia); TRANSLATOR Ekaterina Dobrohotova-Majkova (Russia).

- *James Herbert* (horror; (inaugural award): Craig Davidson as Nick Cutter, *The Troop*.

- *James Tiptree Jr* for gender-bending fiction (tie): Monica Byrne, *The Girl in the Road*; Jo Walton, *My Real Children*.

- *Norma K Hemming* (Australia; sf race, gender, sexuality, class and disability): Paddy O’Reilly, *The Wonders*.

- *Philip K. Dick*: Meg Elison, *The Book of the Unnamed Midwife*.

- *Prometheus* (libertarian) shortlist: Liu Cixin, *The Three-Body Problem* (trans Ken Liu); Terry Pratchett, *Raising Steam*; Marcus Sakey, *A Better World*; Daniel Suarez, *Influx*. Hall of Fame: Harlan Ellison, “‘Repent, Harlequin!’ Said the Ticktockman’ (December 1965 *Galaxy*).

- *Pulitzer Prize*: the shortlist of five includes Jordan Harrison’s sf play *Marjorie Prime*. [AIP]

- *Solstice* (SFWA life achievement award): Joanna Russ, Stanley Schmidt.

The Wildest Link. *Bradley Walsh*: ‘Who was famously imprisoned in cell C33 in Reading Gaol?’ *Contestant*: ‘Nelson Mandela.’ (ITV, *The Chase*) [PE]

- *Bradley Walsh again*: ‘The fictional land of Fantippo features in books about which doctor?’ *Beth Tweddle*, excusably: ‘Who.’ (ITV, *The Chase: Celebrity Special*, 5 April) [MPJ]

R.I.P. *Patrick H Adkins* 1948-2015) US author, editor, publisher and fan who wrote the Titan mythological fantasy trilogy (1997-1990) and the sf/horror *The Third Beast* (2000), died on 7 April aged 67. [GHL]

- *Karl Alexander* (1944-2015), US film worker and author whose novel *Time after Time* (1979) appeared in the same year as the film based on his story, reportedly died in late March at age 70. [SFS]
- *James Best* (1926-2015), US character actor seen in many sf productions from *The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms* (1953); *Riders to the Stars* (1954); *Forbidden Planet* (1956) and *The Killer Shrews* (1959) to *Return of the Killer Shrews* (2012), died on 6 April aged 88. [SG]
- *Claire Gordon* (1941-2015), UK actress seen in *Konga* (1961; aka *I Was a Teenage Gorilla*), died on 13 April aged 74. [MPJ]
- *Günter Grass* (1927-2015), Danzig-born German author who received the Nobel Prize in 1999, died on 13 April aged 87. Fantastic elements appear in some of his novels, in particular the famous *The Tin Drum* (1959; filmed 1979) and the animal fantasies *The Flounder* (1977) and *The Rat* (1986).
- *Andrew Lesnie* (1956-2015), Australian cinematographer whose films include *Babe* (1995), the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy (2001-2003), *King Kong* (2005), *The Last Airbender* (2010), *Rise of the Planet of the Apes* (2011) and the *Hobbit* trilogy (2011-2014), died on 27 April; he was 59. [MPJ]
- *Miroslav Ondricek* (1934-2015), Czech cinematographer who filmed *Slaughterhouse-Five* (1972), died on 28 March aged 80. [MPJ]
- *Rex Robinson* (1926-2015), UK actor seen in three *Doctor Who* serials (*The Three Doctors*, 1973; *The Monster of Peladon*, 1974; *The Hand of Fear*, 1975) and *Superman IV: The Quest for Peace* (1987), died in April; he was 89. [SFS]
- *Herb Trimpe* (1939-2015) US comics artist who during his long stint at Marvel drew *The Incredible Hulk* from 1968 to 1975 and co-created Wolverine, died on 13 April aged 75. [PDF]

- *Art Widner* (1917-2015), long-time US fan who was a 1940 founder member of Boston's first SF group The Stranger Club and published over 160 fanzines, died on 17 April; he was 97. [AR/AIP] The Stranger Club, including Art, was collective Fan Guest of Honour at the 1989 Boston Worldcon. Other honours included the 1989 Big Heart Award, a 1991 DUFF win and entrance to the First Fandom Hall of Fame. He was widely loved and will be very much missed.

Magazine Scene. Neil Clarke reported the most popular story titles from the *Clarkesworld* slushpile (50,000+ submissions to date). Top of the list was 'Dust' (18 stories); then 'The Gift', 'Home', 'Hunger', and 'Homecoming' (all 16); 'The Box' (15); 'Monsters' (14); 'Lost and Found' (13)... (neil-clarke.com, 9 April) Now I need to think up a new title for my current work in progress, 'A Homecoming Gift of Lost and Found Hunger-Monsters in a Box of Dust'.

We Are Everywhere. Madeleine L'Engle was big news in *The Wall Street Journal* when her granddaughter found three pages cut from the draft of *A Wrinkle in Time* (1962). 'The excerpt is the most direct discussion of politics in her writing, the scholars said, offering a richer explanation of the author's political views. / They agreed [...] that cutting it was the right decision, one which strengthened the narrative. The section was too didactic, and would have dated the book, some said.' (Galleycat, 21 April) [PB] Will there soon be an Uncut Edition?

Random Fandom. *Fancy That:* At the St Petersburg Eurocon in April, the programme book listed all the Russian nominations for ESFS awards but none from any other country.

- *Hugo Finalists for Best Fan Artist* (the one and only unPuppied category): Ninni Aalto, Brad W. Foster, Elizabeth Leggett, Spring Schoenhuth, Steve Stiles.

Outraged Letters. *David Redd* on Terry Pratchett: 'In Charles Platt's front room, 1965, I heard Terry observe sadly that he didn't want to be known as "the thirteen-year-old author" all his life. Well, I think he cracked that one. RIP.'

- *Andrew Stephenson* misses nothing: 'During a recent (in UK) episode of TV's *CSI*, a dead man is revealed as having worked for accountants "Baker, Smith, Capaldi".'

The Dead Past. *50 Years Ago*, Hugo controversy was not unknown: ‘The London Worldcon Committee, which originally followed the lead of last year’s Pacificon in dropping the drama award, have bowed before the general feeling prevalent in fandom and have heeded what has been a significant number of write-in nominations regarding this category. The Committee is undoubtedly to be congratulated, not only upon the reversal of its original decision, but upon the admirable manner in which it has conducted itself in the entire matter.’ ([Skyrack 79](#), May 1965) The reinstated Dramatic Presentation Hugo had just two nominees, *The Seven Faces of Dr. Lao* and *Dr. Strangelove* (which won).

- *30 Years Ago* there was a backlash in favour of good old-fashioned sf: “*Do You Remember* when humans were heroes, androids didn’t have social hang-ups and the only good alien was a dead one?” Thus the flyer for Hamlyn’s VENTURE SF line, edited by Andromeda Bookshop stalwarts Rog Peyton and Rod Milner.’ ([Ansible 43](#), May/June 1985)
- *20 Years Ago*, Stephen Baxter had a narrow escape: ‘I’ve come to an agreement with the H.G. Wells estate over approval for my *Time Machine* sequel *The Time Ships*. The estate approved publication in return for a modest share of the proceeds, and so the huge pulping machines have been turned back from HarperCollins’s Glasgow warehouse.’ ([Ansible 94](#), May 1995)
- Hugos: ‘Meanwhile, spies inform me that Shoemaker-Levy 9 was not ruled ineligible for Best Dramatic Presentation but merely failed to get enough votes.’ (*Ibid*)

Fanfundery. [TAFE](#): the 2015 European winner of the TransAtlantic Fan Fund is Nina Horvath, with 48 first-round votes to Wolf von Witting’s 40 (Hold Over Funds 1; No Preference 18). Nina will attend Sasquan, the Spokane Worldcon.

- [DUFF](#): there will be no 2015 race. Julian Warner and Justin Ackroyd are assisting Australasian administrator Bill Wright with the Down Under Fan Fund. Lucy Huntzinger is now acting as North American DUFF administrator, since the most recent NA winner Juanita Coulson is unable to handle the work.

Media Muchness. [BAFTA TV Craft](#): special visual/graphic effects, *Doctor Who* (BBC); original music, production design and make-up & hair, *Penny Dreadful* (Sky Atlantic).

- [Empire Film Awards](#): best film was *Interstellar*, with Christopher Nolan as

best director. Other winners included *Game of Thrones* ('Hero'), *Paddington* (comedy), *The Babadook* (horror) and *X-Men: Days Of Future Past* (sf/fantasy). [MPJ]

Thog's Masterclass. *Missing Link Dept.* 'He was wearing a grey cap, grey jacket, white shirt, navy-blue striped tie and white socks, which he'd pulled up almost to his pink kneecaps.' (Claire North, *The First Fifteen Lives of Harry August*, 2014) [AS]

• *Dept of Fractal Physics.* 'The fact is that such [black] holes can be very small, as small as the size of their constituent particles ...' (David A. Kyle, *Lensman from Rigel*, 1982) [BA]

• *Hothead Dept.* 'The human's brain began to function once more; he could almost feel it sweating.' (Poul Anderson and Gordon R. Dickson, 'In Hoka Signo Vinces', June 1953 *Other Worlds*) [CG]

• *Dept of Interplanetary Phrenology.* 'I was somewhat startled, then, in looking at the head and center of the great military system of Mars, to find in his appearance a striking confirmation of the speculations of our terrestrial phrenologists. His broad, misshapen head bulged in those parts where they had located the so-called organs of combativeness, destructiveness, etc.' (Garrett P. Serviss, *Edison's Conquest of Mars*, 1898) [JN]

• *Running Off at the Mouth Dept.* 'Dolusi let a smile drip toward the scientist.' (Curtis W. Casewit, *The Peacemakers*, 1960) [CG]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

• 8 May 2015, Iain Grant talks to the Brum Group, Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre. 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk or rog dot peyton at btinternet dot com. Future meetings: 12 June 2015, Stephanie Saulter; 10 July 2015, TBA; 14 August 2015, Summer Meal; 11 September 2015, TBA; 9 October 2015, TBA; 6 November 2015, Emma Newman; 4 December 2015, Xmas Social.

Editorial. I've been somewhat distracted from the noble labour of converting the Langford backlist into ebook form. Almost ready for release are the retrospective collection *Different Kinds of Darkness* (2004, now expanded)

[\[and now available!\]](#) and my 1980 TAFF trip report *The TransAtlantic Hearing Aid* (1985) – the latter with much help from Rob Jackson, who thirty years later still has all the original artwork from the print edition. More soon at:

<http://ae.ansible.uk/ebooks.php>

Still More Awards. Links to *ESFS Awards* in full; *Goldie Awards* (lesbian) shortlist – see genre categories; the final Hugo shortlist.

<http://esfs.info/esfs-awards/>

http://www.goldencrown.org/2015_Finalists

<http://www.thehugoawards.org/hugo-history/2015-hugo-awards/>

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Ansible 335, June 2015

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo:
Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or the
pyroflatulent sunpuppies of Band.

Ebookery Continued. The traditional Langford backlist release for May was my hefty retrospective collection *Different Kinds of Darkness*, with six stories added since the 2004 print edition. Click without thinking: ae.ansible.uk/?t=dkod. To vary the relentless hard sell I've also prepared some *free* ebooks for download at taff.org.uk/ebooks.php. These include four past TAFF trip reports – one of them my own – a couple of old fan classics, and Rob Hansen's massive *THEN: A History of UK Fandom 1930-1980* (with supplements taking the story to 1987).

The Total Library

Margaret Atwood is the first of 100 contributors to 'Future Library' (created by artist Katie Paterson), which will collect one unpublished MS a year and print them all in 2114 to coincide with *The Last Dangerous Visions*. Until then, fandom will be on tenterhooks as to whether the Atwood story contains talking squid in outer space. ([BBC](#), 26 May)

Simon Pegg expressed cautious second thoughts about current superhero film blockbusters: 'Obviously I'm very much a self-confessed fan of science-fiction and genre cinema. But part of me looks at society as it is now and thinks we've been infantilised by our own taste. We're essentially all consuming very childish things – comic books, superheroes. Adults are watching this stuff, and taking it seriously! / It is a kind of dumbing down because it's taking our focus away from real-world issues. Films used to be about challenging, emotional journeys. Now we're really not thinking about anything, other than the fact that the Hulk just had a fight with a robot.'
([Independent](#), 18 May) [MPJ]

Cat Rambo has been elected as the latest President of SFWA.

John Scalzi's \$3.4 million deal with Tor, for 13 books to be written over ten years (*Washington Post*, 28 May), caused much comment online. Various puppy-aligned pundits – see [A334](#) – indicated that this was a terrible calamity, signalling the imminent End Times for both author and publisher; Vox Day deplored Scalzi's failure to take the wiser course of self-publishing. Others, incredible though it may seem, disagreed.

Convoluta

4 Jun • **London First Thursday** pub meeting upstairs at The Castle, 34-35 Cowcross St, London, EC1M 6DB, from 6pm. Temporary move during Melton Mowbray refurbishment: back to that pub in July. Its name is being refurbished too, changing to the Inn of Court. [RR]

4 Jun • **Sci-Fi and the Future** (Cheltenham Festival sf panel), Winton Crucible, Cheltenham. 8-9pm. £10. See tinyurl.com/nbeb3l3.

5 Jun • **BFS Open Night**, The Blacksmith & Toffemaker pub, 292-294 Saint John St, London, EC1V 4PA. 7pm-11pm. Free; all welcome.

5 Jun • **Double the Horror** (Derby Book Festival), QUAD, Derby. 7:30pm-9pm. Tickets £10. See www.derbybookfestival.co.uk/whats-on.

6 Jun • **BSFA/SF Foundation AGM** event, Lecture Theatre 1, Blackett Laboratory Building, Imperial College, London. With Brian Aldiss, Pat Cadigan, others. 10am-5pm. Free admission. All welcome.

19 Jun • **Asian Dub Foundation: THX 1138** (rescored), Barbican, London. See barbican.org.uk/music/event-detail.asp?ID=17911.

19-20 Jun • **Space Spectacular** (sf-themed concert), Royal Albert Hall, London. 7:30pm; also 2:30pm Saturday. See tinyurl.com/os98nx2.

24 Jun • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. With Sarah Pinborough. Free.

4 Jul • **Tolkien Society Seminar**, Hilton Hotel, Leeds, LS1 4BX. See www.tolkiensociety.org/events/tolkien-society-seminar-2015/.

7-8 Jul 2015 • **Locating Fantastika** (conference), Lancaster University. Free.

See fantastikaconference.wordpress.com.

11 Jul • **Edge-Lit 4**, Cinema One, QUAD Centre, Derby. Tickets £30. Book online at www.derbyquad.co.uk/special-event/edge-lit-4.

23-25 Oct • **Fantasycon**, East Midlands Conference Centre & Orchard Hotel, Nottingham. £65 reg; couples £110; under-16s £30; under-5s free. *Rates rise 1 July*. See fantasycon2015.org.

4-5 Jul 2016 • **Global Fantastika** (conference), Lancaster University. See fantastikaconference.wordpress.com as above.

26-29 Aug 2016 • **Discworld Convention**, Chesford Grange Hotel Warwick. £64 reg; £49 concessions; £30 supp. Registration opened 4 May: ‘Due to unprecedented demand, on Friday evening, just 4 days, 8 hours and 57 minutes from opening membership sales, we appear to have sold out! Amazing.’ (8 May) See dwcon.org for waiting list.

Rumblings. *2015 Hugo Voting* continues at sasquan.org/hugo-awards/voting/ until 31 July. Your Sasquan membership number and PIN are required to vote online; likewise to get the Hugo Voter Packet of nominated works at sasquan.org/hugo-awards/packet_download/. Coverage is incomplete, largely owing to publishers’ preferences: for example, Best Novel has the whole of *The Dark Between the Stars*, *The Goblin Emperor* and *The Three-Body Problem* (all in Epub, Mobi and PDF format), but PDF extracts only from *Ancillary Sword* and *Skin Game*.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. The [New Statesman](http://www.newstatesman.com)’s Rachel Cooke was swift to spot the damning flaw in the BBC’s *Jonathan Strange & Mr Norrell*: the acting may be fine but it’s ‘aimed, it seems to me, at a generation brought up on Harry Potter and still feebly in mourning for it. I mean, there are CGI talking statues, for heaven’s sake.’ (21 May) Christopher Stevens at the [Daily Mail](http://www.dailymail.com) was horrified that it ‘is not Poldark. / There were no damsels with heaving bosoms, for a start. In fact, almost the only female under the age of 40 was lying on a couch, coughing herself to death with consumption.’ Which leads with inexorable geometric logic to: ‘... this mishmash of folklore and historical fantasy is revealed for what it really is – a J. K. Rowling rip-off.’

(18 May) Oh dearie me: Susanna Clarke began writing her novel several years Before Potter.

Awards. *Arthur C. Clarke*: Emily St. John Mandel, *Station Eleven*.

- *Compton Crook* (first novel) Alexandra Duncan, *Salvage* (2014).
- *Bram Stoker* (horror) novel winner: Steve Rasnic Tem, *Blood Kin*.

Science Corner. Mere speculation, but *just suppose*: ‘The only method of transmutation known to modern science is by radiation bombardment. The high-energy particles required are deadly to an unshielded operator. Only by the wildest stretch of imagination is it possible to suspect that some ancient alchemist found a natural radioactive energy source by accident, that he used it for transmutation and that he passed the secret to the Cathars (great healers who might have attended the dying alchemist) ...’ (Lionel and Patricia Fanthorpe, *The Holy Grail Revealed: The Real Secret of Rennes-le-Château*, 1982) [BA]

R.I.P. *Richard L. Bare* (1913-2015) US director and screenwriter who directed seven *Twilight Zone* segments including ‘To Serve Man’ (1962), died on 28 March; he was 101. [AIP]

- *William Bast* (1931-2015), Edgar-winning US screenwriter whose script credits include *The Outer Limits* (1964), *The Valley of Gwangi* (1969), *Ghost Story* (1972 segment) and *The Big One: The Great Los Angeles Earthquake* (1990), died on 4 May; he was 84. [PDF]
- *Marcia Brown* (1918-2015), US Caldecott Medal-winning children’s author and illustrator whose picture books often retold fairy tales as in *Cinderella* (1954), died on 28 April aged 96. [AIP]
- *Moyra Caldecott* (Olivia Brown Caldecott, 1927-2015), South-African-born UK author of many children’s and YA fantasies – the best known being the sequence beginning with and named for *The Tall Stones* (1977) – died on 23 May; she was 87. [MF]
- *Yvonne ‘Vonnie’ Carts-Powell* (1966-2015), US fan, reviewer and science writer whose *The Science of Heroes* (2008) examined the tv series *Heroes*, died on 22 May. [SFS]
- *Joël Champetier* (1957-2015), French-Canadian author and editor (with *Solaris* magazine) whose first adult sf novel was *La taupe et le dragon* (1991; trans 1999 as *The Dragon’s Eye*), died on 30 May aged 57. [GVG]
- *Robert Foshko*, US tv producer involved with episodes of *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.*, who wrote for the *Flash Gordon* comic and the tv series *Tales of*

- Tomorrow* (1951) and *The Unforeseen* (1960), died on 3 May aged 85. [AL]
- *Masayuki Imai* (1961-2015), Japanese actor/writer who wrote and starred in the timeslip film *Winds of God* (1995, based on his own earlier stage play) – additionally directing its remake *The Winds of God: Kamikaze* (2006) – died on 28 May aged 54. [PDF]
 - *Tanith Lee* (1947-2015), distinguished and prolific UK author of more than 100 fantasy, children’s fantasy, horror and sf novels and collections since 1971, died on 24 May; she was 67. Her honours include the British Fantasy Award for *Death’s Master* (1979), and three life-achievement accolades: World Horror (2009), World Fantasy (2013) and Bram Stoker (2015). Her talent was amazingly diverse. Many heartfelt tributes have already appeared.
 - *Chuck Miller* (1952-2015), US publisher, editor and author best known for the small press Underwood-Miller Inc (1976-1994 with Tim Underwood) which published Jack Vance and the collected stories of Philip K. Dick, died on 24 May aged 62. [PDF] He also coedited various U-M anthologies of Stephen King criticism.
 - *Betsy Palmer* (1926-2015), US actress who starred in horror films including *Friday the 13th* (1980) and *Bell Witch* (2007), died on 29 May aged 88. [PDF]
 - *Robert Rietty* (1923-2015), UK voice and character actor whose credits include *Blood Beast from Outer Space* (1965), *The Golden Voyage of Sinbad* (1973), *Space: 1999* (1975-1976), *The Omen* (1976) and various James Bond films, died on 3 April; he was 92. [MMW]
 - *Jannick Storm* (Finn Jannick Storm Jørgensen, 1939-2015), Danish author, critic, editor and translator (of Ballard, Dick and others) who did much to establish the sf genre in Denmark, died on 9 May aged 76. Three collections of his stories appeared; his 1970s sf novel *Hjerter er trumf* [*Hearts are Trumps*], though unpublished until 1995, became a major 1976 film. [J-HH]
 - *Doris Elaine Sauter*, friend of Philip K. Dick who co-edited *What If Our World Is Their Heaven? The Final Conversations of Philip K. Dick* (2000), died on 25 May aged 63. Her memoir of Dick remains unpublished. [GVG]
 - *John Stephenson* (1923-2015), US voice actor whose genre credits include *Charlotte’s Web* (1973), *The Hobbit* (1977) and many tv series (*Flintstones*, *Galaxy High School*, *Jetsons*, *Transformers*, *Scooby-Doo*, *Superman* etc), died on 15 May aged 91. [SFS]
 - *Nigel Terry* (1945-2015), UK actor best known as King Arthur in *Excalibur* (1981), died on 30 April aged 69. Other genre credits include *Feardotcom*

(2002) and *Doctor Who* (2008). [MPJ]

- *Norman Thaddeus Vane* (1928-2015), US writer/director who co-wrote *Shadow of the Hawk* (1976) and wrote and directed *Frightmare* (1983), died on 2 May aged 86. His *Exorcist*-like horror novel is *The Exorcism of Angela Gray* (1974). [PDF]
- *Grace Lee Whitney* (1930-2015), who played Yeoman Janice Rand in the 1960s *Star Trek* and reappeared in *Star Trek: The Motion Picture* (1979) and other film spinoffs, died on 1 May; she was 85. [DKMK]

The Weakest Link. ‘This author described a Utopian republic in his 1966 novel *The Moon is a Harsh Mistress*.’ *Contestant*: ‘Who is H.P. Lovecraft?’ (*Jeopardy*, 7 May) [BF/AIP]

- *Dale Winton*: ‘Who created the characters Tweedledum and Tweedledee? Was it J.R.R. Tolkien, Lewis Carroll or Dr Seuss?’ *Contestant*: ‘Well it’s not Lewis Carroll. He wrote *The Lion, The Witch And The Wardrobe*.’ (BBC1, *In It to Win It*) [PE]

Court Circular. Sherlock Holmes may be *mostly* in the public domain, but the Doyle estate is suing Miramax over its coming film *Mr Holmes*. This shows Holmes in later life, as in some late stories where copyright is still a live issue. ([Hollywood Reporter](#), 22 May) [DKMK] Thus marginal matters, like Holmes living in a lonely Sussex Downs farmhouse in sight of chalk cliffs, are sternly invoked as ‘protected elements’.

Outraged Letters. *Rog Peyton*: ‘So the news about K.J. Parker being Tom Holt is finally out. When Tom did a signing at Andromeda shortly after the second Parker book he let me into his secret but made me swear not to reveal it. He signed all the stock we had of the Parker books (as K.J. Parker) and when I listed them in the catalogue I stated that she had popped into the shop as she had relatives in Birmingham. I think I even said I’d learned that the K stood for Katherine. Yes, ’twas I who started the “female” story – I can now own up to my little fib. Sorry folks.’

- *Triffid Alley*. One comment on the unveiling of this London plaque (see [A333](#)): ‘... to be complete, they should have incorporated a blurb in braille.’ (‘Lord Blood’, Twitter, 26 May) [BB]
- *Lisa Tuttle* felt this legend should read DANGER: HEAVY PLANT CROSSING.

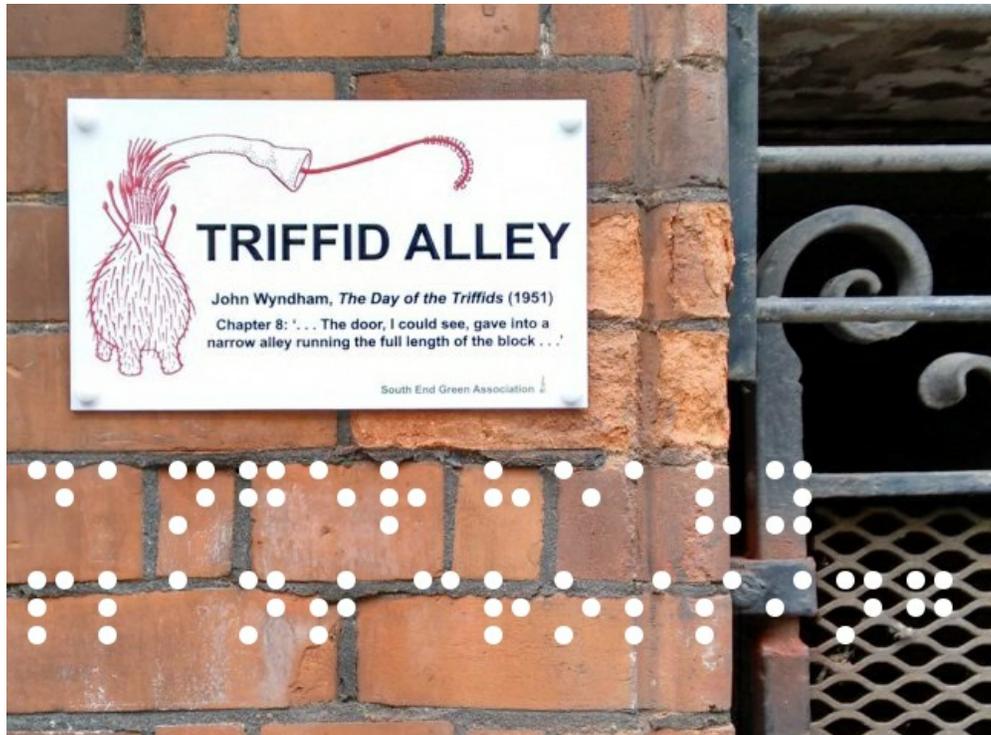


Photo by Jonathan Coleclough

Awards Shortlists, novels only. *John W. Campbell Memorial Award*: Nina Allan, *The Race*; James L. Cambias, *A Darkling Sea*; William Gibson, *The Peripheral*; Daryl Gregory, *Afterparty*; Dave Hutchinson, *Europe in Autumn*; Simon Ings, *Wolves*; Cixin Liu (trans Ken Liu), *The Three-Body Problem*; Emily St. John Mandel, *Station Eleven*; Will McIntosh, *Defenders*; Claire North, *The First Fifteen Lives of Harry August*; Laline Paull, *The Bees*; Adam Roberts, *Bête*; John Scalzi, *Lock In*; Andy Weir, *The Martian*; Jeff VanderMeer, *Area X* (The Southern Reach Trilogy: *Annihilation*, *Authority*, *Acceptance*); Peter Watts, *Echopraxia*.

- *Locus*: SF *The Peripheral*, William Gibson; *Ancillary Sword*, Ann Leckie; *The Three-Body Problem*, Cixin Liu; *Lock In*, John Scalzi; *Annihilation/Authority/Acceptance*, Jeff VanderMeer. FANTASY *The Goblin Emperor*, Katherine Addison; *Steles of the Sky*, Elizabeth Bear; *City of Stairs*, Robert Jackson Bennett; *The Magician's Land*, Lev Grossman; *The Mirror Empire*, Kameron Hurley. YA *Half a King*, Joe Abercrombie; *The Doubt Factory*, Paolo Bacigalupi; *Waistcoats & Weaponry*, Gail Carriger, *Empress of the Sun*, Ian McDonald; *Clariel*, Garth Nix.

- *Shirley Jackson* (suspense): *Annihilation*, Jeff VanderMeer; *Bird Box*, Josh

Malerman; *Broken Monsters*, Lauren Beukes; *Confessions*, Kanae Minato; *The Lesser Dead*, Christopher Buehlman; *The Unquiet House*, Alison Littlewood.

- *Scribe* (media ties): ORIGINAL, SPECULATIVE *Sleepy Hollow: Children of the Revolution* by Keith R. A. DeCandido; *Grimm: Chopping Block* by John Passarella; *Star Trek: Disavowed* by David Mack; *Star Trek: Foul Deeds Will Rise* by Greg Cox; *Grimm: The Killing Time* by Tim Waggoner; *Pathfinder: The Redemption Engine* by James Sutter; *Fringe: Sins of the Father* by Christa Faust. ADAPTED, GENERAL/SPECULATIVE *Dawn of the Planet of the Apes* by Alex Irvine; *Noah* by Mark Morris; *War of the Worlds: Goliath* by Adam Whitlach. YOUNG ADULT, ALL *Spirit Animals: Blood Ties* by Garth Nix & Sean Williams; *Battletech: The Nellus Academy Incident* by Jennifer Brozak; *Penguins of Madagascar* by Tracey West.

In Typo Veritas. A *Guardian* article explained a right-wing US blog title as homage to the revered Ayn Rand: ‘Atlas Shurgs.’ (4 May) [MM]

Random Fandom. *File 770* has proudly adopted a new motto on its website masthead: “... the 770 blog, that wretched hive of scum and villainy ...” – John C. Wright.’ Another satisfied customer! Mike Glycer is still running [daily roundups of commentary on current Hugo ructions](#) at [file770.com](#); rather him than me.

- *Making Light* (Public Enemy #2 in the Sad/Rabid Puppy pantheon, after John Scalzi at #1) hosted much constructive discussion of how the Hugo nominations process can be made more resistant to slate voting – regardless of any slate’s politics – and came up with what has been nicknamed ‘E Pluribus Hugo’. This, a truly remarkable system which this *Ansible* is too small to contain, will be proposed at the Sasquan WSFS Business Meeting. Read all about it at [nielsenhayden.com/makinglight/archives/016262.html](#).

The Dead Past. *70 Years Ago*, a familiar exhortation from a forerunner of the BSFA: ‘Whatever fan activity you wish to indulge in the BFS will give you every aid in its power, but if you do not wish to do anything then we cannot help you.’ ([British Fantasy Society Bulletin 22](#), June 1945)

- *50 Years Ago*, an appeal to a familiar market segment: ‘TAFF delegate Terry Carr is editing Doubleday’s *Science Fiction for People who Hate Science Fiction*.’ ([Skyrack 80](#), June 1965)

- *30 Years Ago*, a note on editorial policy: “A *Zine* is classed as a terror weapon. It rends and distorts, twisting the structure of the target completely

out of shape.” (Philip E. High: *Come, Hunt An Earthman*).’ (*Ansible* 43, May/June 1985)

- *20 Years Ago*: ‘The 8th Earl of Clancarty, famous for UFO books under the byline Brinsley Le Poer Trench (his actual name, minus an initial “William Francis”), died in May aged 83. Perhaps his finest hour was the 1979 House of Lords UFO debate, whose transcript in *Hansard* sold out on the following day....’ (*Ansible* 95, June 1995)

What I Missed. Ursula K. Le Guin posted a follow-up to her [A333-cited Bookviewcafe.com reproof](#) of Kazuo Ishiguro, apologizing for ‘my evidently over-hasty response’ ([10 March](#)). ‘Many sites on the Internet were quick to pick up my blog post, describing it as an “attack”, a “slam”, etc. They were hot on the scent for blood, hoping for a feud. I wonder how many will pick up this one?’ Oops. Well, eventually....

Thog’s Masterclass. *Out-of-Context Entendre*. ‘Dinah didn’t mention the other reason, which was that the biggest part of Sean’s package was so screamingly radioactive that it couldn’t be allowed anywhere near Izzy.’ (Neal Stephenson, *Seveneves*, 2015) [JC]

- *Dept of X-Ray Vision*. ‘Not for the first time, a cold fist appeared deep within her stomach.’ (Becky Chambers, *The Long Way to a Small, Angry Planet*, 2014)

- *Tone of Voice Dept*. ““Just for one, Miss?” the waitress asked in a long black-skirted uniform.’ (Fiona McIntosh, *The Last Dance*, 2015) [YR]

- *Neat Tricks*. ‘... having spent a sleepless night, filled with uncomfortable dreams ...’ (Priscilla Masters, *Slipknot*, 2007) [PB]

- *Dept of Synaesthesia*. ‘I heard Learner then, a noise so soft and invisible it wouldn’t mean anything unless you knew what it was.’ (John Burnham Schwartz, *Reservation Road*, 1998) [PB]

- *Feminist Sympathy Dept*. ‘Connie had a wry, compact intelligence, a firm little clitoris of discernment and sensitivity ...’ (Jonathan Franzen, *Freedom*, 2010) [J]

- *Dept of Extreme Etiquette*. ‘But one does not scream with a beer barrel tap inserted deep into one’s jugular vein ...’ (Jack Oleck, *The Vault of Horror*, 1973) [BA]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

• 12 June 2015, Stephanie Saulter talks to the Brum Group, Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre. 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk or rog dot peyton at btinternet dot com. Future meetings: 10 July 2015, Adrian Cole; 14 August 2015, Summer Meal; 11 September 2015, Edward James; 9 October 2015, TBA; 6 November 2015, Emma Newman; 4 December 2015, Xmas Social.

Origin Story. David Given shares his researches into a *Doctor Who* spinoff novel in which aliens are stranded on our planet: “We appeared halfway between Earth and Mars, and limped as close to Earth as we dared.” He was tapping keys, bringing up the inventory program. “Then we sent the ship on a course for the sun and crammed ourselves into an escape pod.” / “Where did you land?” / “In the Welsh countryside. We were lucky to come down over land. Hogan got married nine years ago. He’s living in Upper Norwood. Beilby died of the common cold. And no one knows what happened to Langford.” (Kate Orman, *Return of the Living Dad*, 1996)

Late-Breaking. *Gemmell Awards* (heroic fantasy) novel shortlist: *Half a King* by Joe Abercrombie; *Valour* by John Gwynne; *Prince of Fools* by Mark Lawrence; *Words of Radiance* by Brandon Sanderson; *The Broken Eye* by Brent Weeks. For the other categories, see www.gemmellawards.com.

The Dead Past II. *30 Years Ago* (very nearly), the voice of prophecy was heard in a TransAtlantic Fan Fund newsletter: ‘What we meant was that TAFF is an institution created for a specific purpose, with its own agenda – promoting greater transatlantic amity between fans – and should not be used as a mechanism for pursuing unrelated issues; no more than, say, the Hugos should be used as an exercise in block-voting by a group with an ideological axe to grind, rather than in recognition of the single outstanding work nominated.’ (Patrick and Teresa Nielsen Hayden, [TAFFlivia 2](#), August 1985)

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June 2015.

Ansible 336, July 2015

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE, collapsium or a piece of the congohelium.

Me Again with more musty old stuff. *Crosstalk: Interviews Conducted by David Langford* is a collection of (surprise!) interviews with genre writers, first published from 1976 to 2001. Trade paperback and ebook versions available. Read all about it at ansible.uk/books/crosstalk.html.

The Oracle of the Dog

Susan Allison, Berkley Publishing Group vice-president and editorial director, retires on 1 July after more than 40 years in publishing and more than 33 years with Penguin. (*Publishers Lunch*) [AIP]

Michael Bond, creator of Paddington Bear, received the CBE in the 2015 Queen's Birthday Honours. Other genre-related honours included an OBE for Steven Moffat, believed to have something to do with *Doctor Who*, and a CBE for the ubiquitous Benedict Cumberbatch.

- Down Under, ultra-prolific romance writer Valerie Parv – whose sf venture is *Birthright* (2012) – became a member of the Order of Australia. [PV]

Godzilla, alias Gojira, has been made an official resident of Shinjuku Ward, Tokyo, for 'Promoting the entertainment of and watching over the Kabuki-cho neighborhood and drawing visitors from around the globe in the form of the Godzilla head built atop the Shinjuku Toho Building.'

(Rocketnews24.com, 30 May) [MPJ] Also, presumably, for services to urban renewal by stepping on local eyesores.

Rhianna Pratchett made it clear: 'To reiterate – No I don't intend on writing more Discworld novels, or giving anyone else permission to do so. They are sacred to dad.' (Twitter, 5 June)

J.R.R. Tolkien was in the news again when a 1937 first edition of *The Hobbit* auctioned at Sotheby's on 4 June fetched a record £137,000. ([BBC](#), 4 June) Part of the attraction was Tolkien's calligraphic verse inscription, described in the Sotheby's catalogue as Elvish but very soon identified as Old English. Oops. ([The Globe and Mail](#), 5 June) [MPJ]

Contentement

2 Jul • **London First Thursday** pub meeting, from 6pm or earlier, now back at the old pub after refurbishment – name changed from The Melton Mowbray to The Inn of Court. 18 Holborn, London, EC1N 2LE.

4 Jul • **Tolkien Society Seminar**, Hilton Hotel, Leeds, LS1 4BX.

See www.tolkiensociety.org/events/tolkien-society-seminar-2015/ .

7-8 Jul • **Locating Fantastika** (academic conference), Lancaster University. Free. See fantastikaconference.wordpress.com.

11 Jul • **Edge-Lit 4**, Cinema One, QUAD Centre, Derby. Tickets £30. Book online at www.derbyquad.co.uk/special-event/edge-lit-4.

17-19 Jul • **SF Foundation Masterclass in SF Criticism**, Royal Observatory, Greenwich. £200 (postgrads £150). For fuller details see www.sf-foundation.org/masterclass2015.

22 Jul • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. With Rebecca Levene. Free.

7-9 Aug • **Nine Worlds Geekfest** (multimedia), Heathrow. £95; child £47.50. Advance booking online only at ninemovels.co.uk.

19-23 Aug • **Sasquan** (Worldcon), Spokane Convention Center, Spokane, WA, USA. \$210 reg; \$105 YA/military; \$90 child; \$40 supp. *Advance registration closes 2 August: \$240 at the door*. See sasquan.org.

28-31 Aug • **The Asylum** (steampunk), Lincoln. Tickets £35 (day £13), under-17s £18 (£6.50), plus fees. See steampunk.synthasite.com.

23-25 Oct • **Fantasycon**, Orchard Hotel, Nottingham. ~~£65 reg; couples £110; under-16s £30; under-5s free~~. *Rates to rise 1 July*, but no price update at fantasycon2015.org when *Ansible* went to press. [*Later update: £75 reg;*

couples £130; under-16s £35; under-5s free. Big discounts for British Fantasy Society members. Further increase on 1 September.]

12-15 Nov • **Gatecon** (*Stargate/Farscape*), Holiday Inn, Brentford Lock, London. ‘Early bird’ tickets £100; £45 per day Friday, Saturday or Sunday; banquet £30 extra. See www.gatecon.com.

4-5 Jul 2016 • **Global Fantastika** (academic conference), Lancaster University. See fantastikaconference.wordpress.com as above.

Rumblings. *Final Alert:* the 2015 Hugo voting deadline is 31 July. See sasquan.org/hugo-awards/voting/ ... Worldcon membership number and PIN required. For the WSFS Business Meeting agenda and proposed Hugo rules changes, go to sasquan.org/business-meeting/agenda/. More proposals may be yet added, up to the 6 August cutoff date.

Infinitely Improbable

Dept of Prophetic Speech: ‘I am Groot.’ (Michael Moorcock, *The War Hound and the World’s Pain*, 1981) [TMcD]

Awards. *John W. Campbell Memorial:* Claire North, *The First Fifteen Lives of Harry August*.

- *Lambda Award SF/F/H category*, Chaz Brenchley, *Bitter Waters*.
- *Nebulas:* NOVEL Jeff VanderMeer, *Annihilation*. NOVELLA Nancy Kress, *Yesterday’s Kin*. NOVELETTE Alaya Dawn Johnson, ‘A Guide to the Fruits of Hawai’i’ (7-8/14 *F&SF*). SHORT Ursula Vernon, ‘Jackalope Wives’ (1/7/14 *Apex*). DRAMATIC *Guardians of the Galaxy*. YA Alaya Dawn Johnson, *Love Is the Drug*.
- *Science Fiction Hall of Fame:* James E. Gunn, Georges Méliès, John Schoenherr and Kurt Vonnegut. [L]
- *Seiun* (Japan) for translated work: LONG Andy Weir trans Kazuko Onoda, *The Martian*. SHORT Pat Cadigan trans Yooichi Shimada, ‘The Girl-Thing Who Went Out for Sushi’. [SFS]
- *Sturgeon Award* (short): Cory Doctorow, ‘The Man Who Sold the Moon’ (*Hieroglyph: Stories and Visions for a Better Future*). [F770]

Happy Juxtaposition. Discovered in a listing of books for sale: ‘A student of archeology in a magical world comes across a sentient book that used to be a

sorcerer. No remainder marks, not price-clipped, does not appear to have been read. Minor bumping to one edge, slight edge wear to jacket ...' [BA] Pointy hat slightly foxed.

R.I.P. *Phil Austin* (1941-2015) of the radio/recorded comedy group The Firesign Theatre – whose albums *Don't Crush That Dwarf, Hand Me the Pliers* (1970) and *I Think We're All Bozos on This Bus* (1971) were Dramatic Presentation Hugo finalists – died on 18 June aged 74.

- *Paul Bacon* (1923-2015), US graphic artist whose more than 6,500 book covers include over 100 for sf novels, died on 8 June; he was 91. [PDF]
- *Katherine Chappell* (1985-2015), US film visual effects editor whose credits include *Game of Thrones*, *Captain America: The Winter Soldier* (2014) and *Godzilla* (2014), was killed by a lioness in Lion Park, Johannesburg, on 1 June; she was 29. [PDF]
- *Robert Chartoff* (1933-2015), Oscar-winning US producer whose best-known genre film was *Ender's Game* (2013), died on 10 June aged 81. [MPJ]
- *Callisto Cosulich* (1922-2015), Italian actor/writer who scripted the original *Planet of the Vampires* (1965), died on 6 June aged 92. [PDF]
- *Rick Ducommun* (1952-2015), Canadian actor/comedian whose genre films include *Spaceballs* (1987), *Gremlins 2* (1990) and *Groundhog Day* (1993), died on 12 June aged 62. [PDF]
- *Chris Gilmore* (1947-2013), *Interzone* reviewer in the David Pringle era, freelance copyeditor who worked on *Spectrum SF*, and author of a few short stories, died on 6 May 2013 aged 66. [DP]
- *Julie Harris* (1921-2015), Oscar-winning UK costume designer who worked on three James Bond films plus *The Land That Time Forgot* (1975), *Rollerball* (1975) and *The Great Muppet Caper* (1981), died on 30 May; she was 94. [MPJ]
- *James Horner* (1953-2015), Oscar-winning US composer of film scores whose genre credits include *Star Trek II* (1982), *Star Trek III* (1984), *Cocoon* (1985), *Aliens* (1986), *Field of Dreams* (1989), *The Rocketeer* (1991), *Deep Impact* (1998), *Bicentennial Man* (1999), *Avatar* (2009) and many more, died in a small-plane crash on 22 June; he was 61. [MH]
- *Wolfgang Jeschke* (1936-2015), Czech-born German sf author, fan, editor and publisher (the long-time sf specialist at Heyne) whose first novel was *Der letzte Tag der Schöpfung* (1981; trans as *The Last Day of Creation* 1982), died on 10 June; he was 78. [DP]
- *Richard Johnson* (1927-2015), UK actor whose credits include *The*

Haunting (1963), *Zombie* (1979) and *Lara Croft: Tomb Raider* (2001), died on 6 June aged 87. [PDF]

- *Hiroshi Koizumi* (1926-2015), Japanese actor seen in *Godzilla Raids Again* (1955) and many more films starring Godzilla/Gojira or other monsters, died on 31 May; he was 88. [MPJ]

- *Sir Christopher Lee* (1922-2015), UK actor most famed for his many Hammer Films portrayals of Dracula and perhaps most loved as the Laird in *The Wicker Man* (1973) – with further memorable appearances in the Fu-Manchu, James Bond, *Lord of the Rings*, *Star Wars* and *Hobbit* franchises – died on 7 June aged 93. Early monstrous rôles for Hammer included *The Curse of Frankenstein* (1957) and *The Mummy* (1959). His autobiography is *Tall, Dark and Gruesome* (1977; exp 1997). He was knighted in 2009.

- *Graham Lord* (1943-2015), Rhodesia-born UK author whose genre ventures were *God and All His Angels* (1976) and *A Party to Die For* (1997), died on 13 June aged 72. [PDF]

- *Patrick Macnee* (1922-2015), UK actor forever identified with *The Avengers* at its 1961-1969 classical best – which featured many weird and science-fictional tropes – died on 25 June aged 93. Other genre credits include *Battlestar Galactica* (1978-1979: several roles), *The Howling* (1981) and *Lobster Man from Mars* (1989). [AW]

- *Ron Moody* (1924-2015), UK actor whose genre credits included *The Mouse on the Moon* (1963), *Unidentified Flying Oddball* (1979) and *Into the Labyrinth* (tv 1981-1982), died on June 11; he was 91. [SFS]

- *Earl Norem* (1924-2015), US artist who painted for *Masters of the Universe* and other pop-culture franchises, died on 19 June; though 91 he was still working, on a *Mars Attacks* trading card project. [PDF]

- *Jack Rollins* (1915-2015), executive producer (usually jointly; not always credited) of Woody Allen's films, including *Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Sex ...* (1972), *Sleeper* (1973) and *The Purple Rose of Cairo* (1985), died on 18 June; he was 100. [MMW]

- *Charles W. Runyon* (1928-2015), US author of thrillers and some sf – including *Pig World* (1971) and three other novels – died on 8 June; he was 87.

- *Kazuya Tatekabe* (1934-2015), Japanese voice actor best known for the anime series *Doraemon* (1979-2005 tv, plus specials and films), died on 18 June aged 80. [PDF]

- *Mary Ellen Trainor* (1952-2015), US actress whose credits include *Back to*

the Future II (1989), *Death Becomes Her* (1992) and *Freaky Friday* (2003), died on 20 May aged 62. [PDF]

• *Dick Van Patten* (1928-2015), US actor whose films include *Westworld* (1973), *Freaky Friday* (1976), *Spaceballs* (1987) and *Robin Hood: Men in Tights* (1993), died on 23 June; he was 86.

The Weakest Link. *Bradley Walsh*: ‘In the works of Tolkien the Shire was originally made up of four sub-divisions known as what? A. Farthings. B. Pennies. C. Shillings. You’ve put – Pennies.’ *Contestant* (who had revealed earlier that his favourite book is *The Hobbit*): ‘That was another guess I’m afraid.’ (ITV, *The Chase*, 1 June) [MPJ]

Locus Awards SF Ann Leckie, *Ancillary Sword*. FANTASY Katherine Addison, *The Goblin Emperor*. DEBUT Mary Rickert, *The Memory Garden*. YA Joe Abercrombie, *Half a King*. NOVELLA Nancy Kress, *Yesterday’s Kin*. NOVELETTE Joe Abercrombie, ‘Tough Times All Over’ (*Rogues*). SHORT Amal El-Mohtar, ‘The Truth About Owls’ (*Kaleidoscope*). ANTHOLOGY *Rogues* ed. George R.R. Martin & Gardner Dozois. COLLECTION Jay Lake, *Last Plane to Heaven*. NONFICTION Jo Walton, *What Makes This Book So Great*. ART BOOK *Spectrum 21* ed. John Fleskes. ARTIST John Picacio. EDITOR Ellen Datlow. MAGAZINE Tor.com (first online winner of a category won by Asimov’s or *F&SF* every year 1987-2014). PUBLISHER Tor.

As Others See Some Of Us. Under the irresistible headline ‘Secret files reveal police feared that Trekkies could turn on society’, the *Telegraph* explained: ‘For years Star Trek fans – known as Trekkies – have been the butt of jokes about their penchant for wearing pointy ears and attending science fiction conventions. / But the police feared British fans of the cult American show might boldly go a little too far one day. / It has emerged that Scotland Yard kept a secret dossier on *Star Trek*, *The X-Files*, and other US sci fi shows amid fears that British fans would go mad and kill themselves, turn against society or start a weird cult. / The American TV shows *Roswell* and *Dark Skies* and the film *The Lawnmower Man* were also monitored to protect the country from rioting and cyber attacks. / Special Branch was concerned that people hooked on such material could go into a frenzy triggered by the millennium leading to anarchy.’ ([17 May](#)) [MC] One feels so protected.

Outraged Letters. *Barry N. Malzberg* heroically resists the urge to comment

on the revealed cutting edge of literary workshopping: ‘Claudia Ballard: I ran into Rob Spillman, the editor of *Tin House* recently and he was telling me that he’s teaching a class at his MFA program this semester that’s all first paragraphs ... All you can bring in is a first paragraph and those paragraphs are all you workshop the entire semester. I think that is so brilliant.’ (Literary agents’ panel in *Poets & Writers*, July 2015)

- *Mike Moorcock* on Simon Pegg’s qualms (see [A335](#)): ‘Pegg raises a valid point. I reached a crossroads in my life at 21 when I had to decide was I going to watch fantasy films and read comics for the rest of my life or was I going to watch only films about real life issues. A question millions face daily.’ (1 June)

Random Fandom. *Best Saga.* The proposed new Hugo category for novel series caused some stir, both in its own right (series novels are regular contenders for Best Novel) and because it came coupled with a proposal to abolish the long-established Best Novelette – leading N.K. Jemisin to post the noble sentence, ‘Do you mean to throw a level playing field under the bus, to give more affirmative action to successful white men?’ That unpopular clause has since been dropped; Best Saga still needs to be passed by the 2015 *and* 2016 WSFS business meetings.

Court Circular. Resolving a stupendously boring trademark dispute, Canadian disc jockey Joel ‘Deadmau5’ Zimmerman has reached an unspecified agreement with Disney about the vaguely Mickey-like mouse head (with ‘dead’ X-ed out eyes) that he wears on stage and insanely attempted to trademark in the USA last year. ([BBC](#)) [MPJ]

Mythopoeic Awards shortlist. ADULT Sarah Avery, *Tales from Rugosa Coven*; Stephanie Feldman, *The Angel of Losses*; Theodora Goss, *Songs for Ophelia*; Joanne M. Harris, *The Gospel of Loki*; Joe Hill and Gabriel Rodriguez, *Locke & Key* series (6 volumes).

- CHILDREN’S Jonathan Auxier, *The Night Gardener*; Merrie Haskell, *The Castle Behind Thorns*; Diana Wynne Jones and Ursula Jones, *The Islands of Chaldea*; Robin LaFevers, *His Fair Assassin* series (3 volumes); Natalie Lloyd, *A Snicker of Magic*.

- SCHOLARSHIP: INKLINGS Robert Boenig, *C.S. Lewis and the Middle Ages*; Monika B. Hilder, *C.S. Lewis and Gender* series (3 volumes); John Wm. Houghton, Janet Brennan Croft, Nancy Martsch, John D. Rateliff, and Robin Anne Reid, eds., *Tolkien in the New Century: Essays in Honor of Tom*

Shippey; John Garth, *Tolkien at Exeter College: How an Undergraduate Created Middle-earth*; J.R.R. Tolkien ed. Christopher Tolkien, *Beowulf: A Translation and Commentary, Together with Sellic Spell*.

- SCHOLARSHIP: OTHER Brian Attebery, *Stories About Stories: Fantasy and the Remaking of Myth*; Daniel Gabelman, *George MacDonald: Divine Carelessness and Fairytale Levity*; Sara Maitland, *From the Forest: The Hidden Roots of our Fairy Tales*; Michael Saler, *As If: Modern Enchantment and the Literary Prehistory of Virtual Reality*; Kristen Stirling, *Peter Pan's Shadows in the Modern Literary Imagination*.

The Dead Past. *40 Years Ago*, hubris was clobbered by nemesis: 'How about a new definition of science fiction? It's about things going wrong.' (Brian Aldiss, *Vector* 69, Summer 1975.)

- *20 Years Ago*, a note on the joy of freelancing: 'After nearly four years of heroic accountancy, I. Clark, Liquidator of Newsfield Ltd (remember *Fear?* *GMI?*), has scraped together some £200,000 of assets, awarded himself a meagre £30,000 fee, and paid off creditors at 8.87p in the pound. I am having my generous £17.72 cheque framed....' (*Ansible* 96, July 1995)

- *10 Years Ago*, the 7/7 London bombs did not prevent the First Thursday sf pub meeting – held with a turnout of just six fans in The Printer's Devil, since the usual pub had closed its doors. (*Ansible* 217, August 2005)

- *2 Years Ago*, Science Fiction Awards Watch urged us to cast our Hugo votes by 31 July 2013. That's still the latest post at sfawardswatch.com.

C.o.A. *Richard Curtis Associates Inc*, 200 East 72nd Street: Suite 28J, New York, NY 10021, USA. *Guy & Rosy Lillian*, 1390 Holly Avenue, Merritt Island, FL 32952, USA.

Fanfundery. *DUFF*: Lucy Huntzinger has launched the long-awaited official website for this fund, at downunderfanfund.wordpress.com.

- *GUFF 2016* 'will feature the suave and sophisticated Jukka Halme running against the ever-prestigious and somewhat mysterious Hold Over Funds.' [GP] Online voting and downloadable ballots coming soon at www.rantalica.com. The winner will attend the 2016 Brisbane NatCon.

Thog's Masterclass. *Dept of the Cruel and Unusual*. 'If they were captured wearing the enemy's uniform, they would probably be tortured to death before being shot.' (Giuseppe Filotto, 'Red Space', 2014) [AK]

- *Occupational Hazard Dept*. 'His eyes are blue but red rimmed. They bulge

from all his time spent reading.’ (Benjamin Percy, *The Dead Lands*, 2015) [ED]

- *Dept of Does My Mind Look Big In This?* ‘And she being who she was, the back of her mind was a substantial thing.’ (Ann Leckie, *Ancillary Justice*, 2013)
 - *Literally Dept.* ‘This was literally navigating by the seat of his pants ...’ (Roger Zelazny & Thomas T. Thomas, *Flare*, 1992) [BA]
 - *Neat Tricks.* ‘The six-year gap was conspicuous by its absence.’ (Larry Correia, *Monster Hunter International*, 2007) [F770]
 - *Lesser Evil Dept.* ‘The Mayor and the cops have tried really hard to keep it out of the papers. Or worse, the media.’ (Christopher Golden, *The Shell Collector*, 2006) [PB]
 - *True Romance.* ‘The penis passed from one mouth to the other, the tongues crossing like flights of swallows, lightly troubled, in the summer sky ... when they are ready to leave Europe for their winter pilgrimage.’ (Michel Houellebecq, *Submission*, trans Adam Gopnik 2015) [MMW]
 - *Wrath of Ouroboros Dept.* ‘He felt once again the desire to bite his own backside in fury.’ (Andrzej Sapkowski, *Blood of Elves*, 1994 trans 2008) [SS]
-

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 10 July 2015: Adrian Cole talks to the Brum Group, Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre. 7:30pm for 8pm; £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk or rog dot peyton at btinternet dot com. Future meetings: 14 August 2015, Summer Meal; 11 September 2015, Edward James; 9 October 2015, TBA; 6 November 2015, Emma Newman; 4 December 2015, Xmas Social.
- 17 July 2015: Joe Abercrombie signing at Waterstones Reading Oracle, 12.30 pm. ‘This event is not ticketed and free of charge so early arrival is encouraged as it will be popular.’ Further information 0118 9503400.

Blurbismo. *Dept of the Alarmingly Credible:* ‘The Americans have a top secret project – called the Black Planet – which they plan to send up 10,000 miles where it will rotate on its axis and by means of instruments, bring back a record of what’s happening all over the world. A new and strange element called Maggellarium [*this should read Magellanium*] is discovered. A piece

the size of a pill is so heavy that a man cannot lift it from the floor. At other times it is so light that it climbs the wall and pushes through to disappear at an angle. It is controlled by the position of Sirius, the Dog Star. These discoveries unleash jealousy among the scientists, sabotage, international incidents and United Nations intervention. A thrilling and alarmingly credible novel.' (on David Duncan, *Dark Dominion*, Consul Books 1961) [BA]

Thog's Second Helping. *Simultaneously Channelling Lionel Fanthorpe and Guy N. Smith:* 'Here the creatures [*crabs*] vastly outnumbered the men, and were very much alive, with the menace of inconceivable dark places still dripping from their shells.' 'Armies of crawling, scuttling, fighting crabs and lobsters flying like demons from hell in the night sky of the sea.' (Gordon Honeycombe, *Dragon Under The Hill*, 1972) [BA]

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Ansible 337, August 2015

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Steve Stiles**. Available for SAE, nudged-quantum storage units or sophons.

It's a Con! Another Langford ebook from Ansible Editions: *Don't Try This At Home: Selected Convention Reports*, an occasionally esoteric compilation ranging from Mancon 5 in 1976 to Loncon 3 in 2014. £1 goes to TAFF for each copy sold. See ae.ansible.uk/?t=dontrythis.

The Night's Plutonian Shore

George Lucas is one of those receiving 2015 lifetime honours from the John F. Kennedy Center for Performing Arts. The ceremony, hosted by some chap called Obama, will be in December. ([BBC](http://bbc.com), 15 July) [MPJ]

George R.R. Martin, as homage to his characters' gory deaths in *Game of Thrones*, makes a cameo appearance in an already much circulated clip from the aptly titled *Sharknado 3: Oh Hell No!* 'as a moviegoer who gets brutally attacked by a shark that somehow jumps out of the movie screen and into his face.' ([Cnet.com](http://cnet.com), 23 July)

Michael Moorcock's profile/interview ([New Statesman](http://newstatesman.com), 24 July) had a subhead saying he 'revolutionised science fiction with symbolism, sex and psychoactive drugs. Now, at 75, he has invented another genre.' Also included was the mandatory MM quotation 'I think Tolkien was a crypto-fascist'. Mike has since issued a disclaimer: 'He was a nice bloke and it's a generous, well-meant, piece but I'm afraid I read it saying "no I didn't" and "I never said that" so many times that it was a relief to get to the last, more accurate, para. My fault, maybe, for talking too fast and modifying too frequently. I've never claimed the authority of being working class! I'm from the class most artists come from, the hated petite bourgeoisie, though I had a variety of relatives who didn't. I have spent half my life saying that Jerry

Cornelius is not a “secret agent”. Feel like I’ve just taken a turn on the same old roundabout. But I’ll do a lot for four good pork pies. / Oh, and I absolutely LOVE hobbits. I’m just looking for the best recipe.’

(www.multiverse.org, 24 July) [JL]

F.W. Murnau, director of the classic vampire film *Nosferatu* (1922), was in the news again in July with reports that his skull was stolen from his grave in Stahnsdorf cemetery near Berlin. ([BBC](http://www.bbc.com), 15 July) [MPJ] If this were a Tim Powers novel there would be excellent magical reasons for this theft, and others too would lose random body parts.

Charles Platt and his long-time partner Erico Narita were married on 2 July in Arizona: ‘please, no wedding presents.’

Amy Schumer, US comedian, annoyed the galactic overlords of *Star Wars* by appearing dressed as Princess Leia in a naughty *GQ* magazine photo feature: in bed with ardent robots C-3PO and R2-D2, in a high-kicking chorus line with Imperial Stormtroopers, and so on. ‘Lucasfilm & Disney didn’t approve, participate in or condone the inappropriate use of our characters in this manner,’ thundered the official *Star Wars* Twitter feed. ([BBC](http://www.bbc.com), 17 July) [MPJ]

Benjanun Sriduangkaew, Thai author identified in 2014 as the former abusive blogger Requires Hate or Winterfox, has been further outed by a stalker who posted details of her ‘true identity and her extremely privileged extended family’. All online, but let’s not link to it.

J.R.R. Tolkien is now commemorated on [maps of Saturn’s moon Titan](#), where [by IAU convention](#) the mountains are named for those of Middle-earth and the hills for its characters: hence Mountains of Moria (Moria Montes) and Gandalf Hills (Gandalf Colles). [BH] Freta, straits or channels, get the names of characters in Asimov’s *Foundation* series. The IAU has yet to approve the *New Horizons* team’s name Cthulhu for a dark region on Pluto, where underworld connotations predominate – though ‘Writers associated with Pluto’ could give a chance to Disney.

Conceptaculum

7-9 Aug • **Nine Worlds Geekfest** (multimedia), Heathrow. £110; child (5-

15) £55. Day rates £47.50, £23.75. Advance booking online only at nneworlds.co.uk. *Rates rise on 1 August and at the door.*

12 Aug • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Blackett Lecture Theatre 1, Blackett Laboratory Building, Imperial College, London – *note venue and 2nd (not 4th) Wednesday of month.* 7pm. With Peter F. Hamilton. Free.

19-23 Aug • **Sasquan** (Worldcon), Spokane Convention Center, Spokane, WA, USA. \$210 reg; \$105 YA/military; \$90 child; \$40 supp. *Advance registration closes 2 August: \$240 at the door.* See sasquan.org.

21 Aug - 20 Sep • **Extra-Terrestrial**: Floating Cinema films and events at various Regent's Canal moorings, London. On board £5-£12; open-air free. See floatingcinema.info/events/2015/extra-terrestrial.

21-23 Aug • **Wadfest** (Discworld camp con), Wood Green, Animal Shelter, King's Bush Farm, London Road, Godmanchester, Cambs, PE29 2NH. Campers £35, visitors £17.50, *rising 1 August to £40 and £20.* See www.wadfest.co.uk; contact waddy at wadfest dot co dot uk.

27-31 Aug • **Frightfest** (horror film festival), Glasgow Film Theatre. Bookings: www.frightfest.co.uk or 0141 332 6535.

28-31 Aug • **The Asylum** (steampunk), Lincoln. Tickets £35 (day £13), under-17s £18 (£6.50), plus fees. See steampunk.synthasite.com.

23-25 Oct • **Fantasycon**, Orchard Hotel, Nottingham. Now £75 reg; couples £130; under-16s £35; under-5s free. *Rates rise 1 September.* There are discounts for BFS members: see fantasycon2015.org.

21 Nov • **Sledge-Lit** (Edge-Lit extra), QUAD Centre, Derby. Tickets £25. Book online at www.derbyquad.co.uk/special-event/sledge-lit

Rumblings. *Worldcon 2015:* Sasquan had over 10,000 members as of 15 July. Nearly 3,000 Hugo ballots were cast by 24 July. *Worldcon 2017:* mailed/mailed site selection ballots (Helsinki, Nippon, Montreal or Washington DC) must be received by 24:00 PDT on 10 August. See sasquan.org. *Worldcon 2022:* a bid for Doha, Qatar – challenging the Chicago bid – has appeared at worldcon.org/bids. No further details.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others Invoke Us. Charles Bukowski on Henry Miller: ‘*Star Trek* contemplation sperm-jizz babble’. (C. Bukowski, *On Writing*, 2015)

Awards. *Prometheus* (libertarian): Daniel Suarez, *Influx*.

- *Rhysling* (poetry): SHORT Marge Simon, ‘Shutdown’ (*Qualia Nous* ed. Michael Bailey). LONG F.J. Bergmann, ‘100 Reasons to Have Sex with an Alien’ (2014 SFPA Poetry Contest).
- *SF Poetry Association Grand Master*: Marge Simon, Steve Sneyd.
- *World Fantasy Life Achievement*: Ramsey Campbell, Sheri S. Tepper.
- *Shirley Jackson* (suspense/horror): NOVEL Jeff VanderMeer, *Annihilation*. NOVELLA Daryl Gregory, *We Are All Completely Fine*. SHORT Alison Littlewood, ‘The Dogs Home’ (*Spectral Book of Horror Stories*). COLLECTION Helen Marshall, *Gifts for the One Who Comes After*. ANTHOLOGY Ellen Datlow, ed., *Fearful Symmetries*.

As We See Us. Stephen Baxter explains Wellsian sf in a *Guardian* interview: ‘So it’s like therapy, you’re telling a story because you’re frightened of the future.’ ([25 July](#))

Career Advice to fugitives from US justice: don’t star in even a low-budget horror film under your own name, as did bank robber Jason Stange in *Marla Mae* (forthcoming 2016). Police relentlessly noticed him in advance-publicity photos, and pounced. ([BBC](#), 29 July) [MPJ]

R.I.P. *Renee Alper* (1957-2015), US filker and playwright long active in Tolkien fandom (she founded the American Hobbit Association in 1977) and the Mythopoeic Society, died on 27 July aged 58. [CC]

- *Theodore Bikel* (1924-2015), Austrian-born actor whose long career included genre tv roles in *The Amazing Spider-Man*, *The Return of the King* (1980, as Aragorn), *Beauty and the Beast*, *Star Trek: TNG*, *Babylon 5* and others, died on 21 July; he was 91. [DL]
- *Edward Burnham* (1916-2015), UK actor whose credits include *Quatermass and the Pit* (1959), *Doctor Who* (1968, 1974-1975), and *The Abominable Dr. Phibes* (1971), died on 30 June aged 98. [MPJ]
- *George Coe* (1929-2015), US actor seen in *The Stepford Wives* (1975), *The Entity* (1982), *Max Headroom* (1987-1988 tv) and *Star Wars: The Clone Wars* (2009 tv), died on 18 July aged 86. [PDF]
- *Douglas Cook*, US screenwriter best known for *The Rock* (1996), whose coming *Criminal* (2016) is an sf thriller involving identity transfer, died on

19 July; he was 56. [PDF]

- *E.L. Doctorow* (1931-2015), noted US author of historical fiction who used fantastic themes in *Big as Life* (1966) and the steampunkish *The Waterworks* (1994), died on 21 July; he was 84. [JC]

- *Blaine Gibson* (1918-2015), US animator whose Disney credits include *Alice in Wonderland* (1951), *Peter Pan* (1953), *Sleeping Beauty* (1959) and *101 Dalmatians* (1961), died on 5 July aged 97. As a sculptor he also created many statues and characters for Disneyland. [PDF]

- *Fred Hemmings*, UK fan active in the 1960s and 1970s, publishing the fanzine *Mescific* (later *Viewpoint*) and involved with the BSFA, died on 6 May; he was 71. [ME via GC]

- *Steve Kennedy* (1945-2015), US art dealer who specialized in pulp and represented various artists (or their estates) including Hannes Bok, Rafael DeSoto and J. Allen St. John, died on 4 July aged 70. [CP/AIP]

- *Alan Kupperberg* (1953-2015), US comics artist who worked on several titles for Marvel (*Defenders*, *Invaders*, *Punisher*, *Spider-Man*, *Thor*, *X-Men* etc) and later DC (including *Justice League of America*), died on 17 July aged 62. [PDF]

- *Aubrey Morris* (1926-2015), UK character actor whose genre credits include *The Prisoner* (1967 tv), *A Clockwork Orange* (1971), *The Wicker Man* (1973), *Lifeforce* (1985) and *Necessary Evil* (2008), died on 15 July aged 89. [PDF]

- *Tom Piccirilli* (1965-2015), prolific US horror, crime and sf author who won several Bram Stoker awards, died on 11 July; he was 50.

- *Olaf Pooley* (1914-2015), UK actor seen in *Doctor Who* (1970), *Doomwatch* (1971), *Beastmaster III: The Eye of Braxus* (1996) and *Star Trek: Voyager* (2000), died on 14 July. He was 101. [MPJ]

- *Roger Rees* (1944-2015), UK actor whose credits include *Robin Hood: Men in Tights* (1993), *The Scorpion King* (2002), *The Prestige* (2006) and *Warehouse 13* (2009-2013 tv), died on 10 July aged 71. [MMW]

- *Jeff Rice* (1944-2015), best known as creator of the tv series *Kolchak: The Night Stalker* (1974-1975), died on 1 July aged 71. The series pilot was *The Night Stalker* (1972), adapted by Richard Matheson from Rice's then-unpublished novel of the same title which appeared in 1973. [F770]

- *Alex Rocco* (1936-2015), US actor whose credits include *The Entity* (1982), *A Bug's Life* (1998) and *The Country Bears* (2002), died on 18 July aged 79. [MMW]

- *Leonard Starr* (1925-2015), US cartoonist who drew *Annie* from 1979 to 2000 and developed and wrote the animated *ThunderCats* (1985-1989) for Rankin/Bass (but had to sue for his share of merchandise profits), died on 30 June aged 89. [PDF]
- *Jerry Weintraub* (1937-2015), US film/tv producer whose genre work includes *Oh, God!* (1977), *My Stepmother Is an Alien* (1988), *The Avengers* (1998) and forthcoming *Tarzan* and *Westworld* tv series, died on 6 July; he was 77. [MMW]
- *John A. Williams* (1925-2015), US writer and poet whose sf novels – beginning with *The Man Who Cried I Am* (1967) – focused on America’s racial conflicts, died on 3 July; he was 89. [JC]
- *George ‘Foghorn’ Winslow* (1946-2015), erstwhile US child actor who starred in the sf comedy *The Rocket Man* (1954), died on 13 June aged 69. [MPJ]
- *Markus Wolfson* (pseudonym of Mark McCann, 1945-2015), UK author of *The Magonia Stone* (2015) and a number of short stories, died of cancer on 30 June; he was 69. [GC]

The Weakest But Very Topical Link. *Richard Osman*: ‘What is the title of the third book in the *Hunger Games* trilogy?’ *Contestant*: ‘*To Kill a Mockingbird*.’ (BBC2, *Two Tribes*) [PE]

Awards Shortlists. *British Fantasy*, novels: FANTASY K.T. Davies, *Breed*; Robert Jackson Bennett, *City of Stairs*; Frances Hardinge, *Cuckoo Song*; Lavie Tidhar, *A Man Lies Dreaming*; Neil Williamson, *The Moon King*; Edward Cox, *The Relic Guild*. HORROR Gary McMahon, *The End*; M.R. Carey, *The Girl with All the Gifts*; Rich Hawkins, *The Last Plague*; Adam Nevill, *No One Gets Out Alive*; Emily St. John Mandel, *Station Eleven*; Alison Littlewood, *The Unquiet House*.

- *Man Booker Prize* longlist of 13: one book of sf/fantasy interest, *The Chimes* by Anna Smaill. [L]
- *Sidewise* (alt-history): LONG Alexander M. Grace, Sr, *Second Front: The Allied Invasion of France, 1942-1943: An Alternative History*; Kristine Kathryn Rusch, *The Enemy Within*; Tony Schumacher, *The Darkest Hour*; Allen Steele, *V-S Day: A Novel of Alternate History*; Jo Walton, *My Real Children*. SHORT Ken Liu, ‘The Long Haul: From the Annals of Transportation, *The Pacific Monthly*, May 2009’ (11/14 *Clarkesworld*); Igor Ljubuncic, ‘The Girl with the Flaxen Hair’ (*Wars to End All Wars: Alternate*

Tales from the Trenches); Robert Reed, ‘The Principles’ (4/14 Asimov’s); Aaron Rosenberg, ‘Let No Man Put Asunder’ (*Europa Universalis IV: What If? The Anthology of Alternate History*); Lewis Shiner, ‘The Black Sun’ (Summer 2014 *Subterranean*); Harry Turtledove, ‘The More It Changes’ (*Europa Universalis IV* as above).

• **World Fantasy:** NOVEL Katherine Addison, *The Goblin Emperor*; Robert Jackson Bennett, *City of Stairs*; David Mitchell, *The Bone Clocks*; Jeff VanderMeer, *Area X: The Southern Reach Trilogy*; Jo Walton, *My Real Children*. For further World Fantasy categories see worldfantasy.org/awards/2015.html.

Court Circular. The iron jackboot of Disney came down hard on the British ‘Joker’s Masquerade’ fancy-dress retailer, which had long used starwars.co.uk and related domains for relevant themed costumes. Disney duly complained to Nominet, which ruled in its favour – ‘Star Wars cannot sensibly refer to anyone else other than the complainant’ – and described the registration as ‘abusive’. ([BBC](http://bbc.com), 9 July) [MPJ]

As Others See Us. Joshua Rothman tackles the genre rather as Julius Caesar dealt with Gaul: ‘Sci-fi stories divide roughly into three categories. First, there are stories about regular people who just happen to live in the future, like “Star Trek” and “Star Wars.” Second, there are transhumanist stories, such as “Dune” and “Sense8,” in which human nature is somehow altered. And third, there are robot stories, in which human nature is, for the most part, fixed, the better to be inherited by our technological replacements – the Cylons in “Battlestar Galactica,” say, or Ava, the robot in Alex Garland’s recent film, “Ex Machina.”’ ([The New Yorker](http://thenewyorker.com), 14 July) [SM] That should help us pare down the interminable list of *SF Encyclopedia* theme entries to, say, three.

Magazine Scene. A new Edinburgh-based sf magazine, *Shoreline of Infinity*, launched on 2 July with its Summer 2015 issue (both print and digital). Read all about it at www.shorelineofinfinity.com.

I Say It’s Spinach. ‘Popeye is very, very similar to these medieval sculptures. You have a sense of transcendence taking place here. Here with Popeye it’s transcendence of male energy. He eats that spinach and he transcends into the strength. And I think, you know, that’s the art; the spinach is art.’ (Jeff Koons in *Imagine ... Jeff Koons: Diary of a Seducer*, BBC1, as

featured in *Private Eye*'s 'Pseud's Corner', 24 July)

Random Fandom. 'Bill Burns is currently indisposed. There will be no updates until further notice.' Thus Bill's efanzines.com (host site to innumerable fanzines) in late July; he's recovering well from a bug picked up while in hospital for a routine minor op.

- Gary Farber is also not having fun: 'I crushed my foot, fracturing the calcaneus bone into at least five fragments, which will be requiring surgery.'
- James Nicoll posted 'my 109th review of a book by a woman this year, which means I can now say I have reviewed more books by women in 2015 than Tor.com, *Romantic Times* (spec fic only), *SFX*, [Strange Horizons](#), *Interzone*, io9, *F&SF*, *Vector*, *Analog*, *Asimov's*, *NYRSF*, *Science Fiction Studies*, *Foundation*, *CSZ*, and *LARB* did in 2014. / On track to exceed *Locus*' numbers in this matter on or around the 7th of August.' ([29 July](#))

The Dead Past. *60 Years Ago*, a touch of politics in UK fandom: 'European May '55 featured a 11 page article on s-f by one Gerald Hooley; an enthusiast's article one would never expect to see published in a prozine, mentioning over a 100 *Astounding* stories (man's an enthusiast) and others, plus a fairly well-balanced survey. Only drawback is, *European* is the leading Fascist organ in this country. Do we want to know Hooley or not?' ([Science Fantasy News 13](#), August 1955)

- *50 Years Ago*, the second London Worldcon was imminent with Brian Aldiss as guest of honour: 'The largest ever conclave of sf writers, editors, readers and fans will gather this weekend, 27th-30th August, at the Mount Royal Hotel, Marble Arch, London. Come along and join the fun. Better early than late. Many conventioners are already in attendance, expectant with baited breath!' ([Skyrack 82](#), August 1965)

C.o.A. Jordin & Mary Kay Kare, 1567 Keesling Avenue, San Jose, CA 95125, USA. Ian Watson & Cristina Macía, Avda de la Constitucion 15, 4 derecha, 33208 Gijon, Spain. Sarah Mooring (née Dibb): C/ San Ignacio de Loyola 9, 5 izda, 03013 Alicante, Spain.

Fanfundery. *GUFF 2016* voting is open: Jukka Halme is contending against Hold Over Funds. See rantalica.com/guff/guff-voting-ballot/.

Miscellaneous Media Minutiae. *Curt Siodmak Award* (German): SF FILM *Guardians of the Galaxy*; SF TV *Doctor Who*. [SFS]

Thog's Masterclass. *Pluto Revealed!* 'Originally it revolved around another sun, some star which was light-years away. How it tore loose from that star we'll probably never know – the star might have simply become too dim, their planet might have been on a shaky orbit, an experiment of theirs might have jarred it loose, many things could have happened.' (Donald A. Wollheim, *The Secret of the Ninth Planet*, 1959) [JN]

• *Neat Tricks*. "Why, yes, Simon," she said, looking up at him through her eyelashes.' (Susan Elia MacNeal, *Mr. Churchill's Secretary*, 2012) [PB]

• *Dept of Rocks and Hard Places*. 'We are between the wild throat of certainty and the mad zitidar of fact – we can escape neither.' (Edgar Rice Burroughs, *The Gods of Mars*, 1918)

• *Mot Juste Dept*. 'Rugolo glanced at the greenness carpeting the plain, which he had taken to be a variety of grass or moss, forms of verbiage common on many worlds ...' (Barrington J. Bayley, *Eye of Terror*, 1999) [BA]

• *Dept of Baleful Dessert*. '... a face pink and stern as frozen strawberry custard.' (Ayn Rand, *Ideal*, written 1934; published 2015) [PB]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

• 14 August 2015, Summer Meal for the Brum Group, 7:30pm for 8pm at the Bull, Price Street, Birmingham: £5 deposit required. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Normal venue is the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre. Normal meetings 7:30pm for 8pm there; £4 or £3 for members. Future meetings: 11 September 2015, Edward James; 9 October 2015, Justina Robson; 6 November 2015, Emma Newman; 4 December 2015, Xmas Social; 8 January 2016, AGM and Book Auction.

R.I.P. Supplement. *Toby English*, British book dealer who used to sell sf/fantasy in UK convention dealers' rooms, died from cancer on 25 July. His shop in Wallingford had closed earlier in 2015. [BA] • *Adrienne Martine-Barnes* (1942-2015), US author and costume fan who began publishing fiction in 1982 and produced both solo novels and multiple collaborations with Marion Zimmer Bradley and Diana L. Paxson, died on 20 July; she was 73. [SFS/Steven H Silver]

The Dead Past II. *30 Years Ago*, the screen flashed Game Over: 'Imagine

magazine bit the dust in August, the issue on the stands being appropriately numbered 30. This is all TSR's fault: "Der Fuhrer Amerikanisch has ordered the final solution," wailed erstwhile editor Paul Cockburn. "You lucky sod, Langford, you're the only contributor to issue 31 who's being paid," report envious (and premature) games fans. Within hours of the sinking, ace film reviewer Colin Greenland was scuttling aboard the rival ship *White Dwarf* (where his column resumes in January)... ' ([Ansible 44](#), September 1985)

Free Ebooks of fannish interest remain available at the TAFF site, with no more strings attached than a gentle suggestion that if you enjoy them a donation to TAFF would be welcome:

<http://taff.org.uk/ebooks.php>

Are You Going to the WSFS Business Meeting? It would be ever so helpful if you could let them know:

<http://kevin-standlee.livejournal.com/1480479.html>

Ramsey Campbell Cosplay Horror! Presumably because his formal Cthulhu outfit had been damaged by blasphemous ichor, Ramsey was reduced to academic robes on the occasion of his Honorary Fellowship from Liverpool John Moores University for 'outstanding contribution to literature'. Congratulations....



*Photo of Ramsey & Jenny Campbell
by Chris Clarke.*

Thog's Second Helping. *The Lumpy Eyes Have It.* 'Maybe it was his eyes, like two unpolished stones.' (Paul Halter, *The Invisible Circle*, 1996; trans John Pugmire 2014)

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Ansible 338, September 2015

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE, a Ripe Fruit Party, or That Which is Within.

Sasquan. The [Spokane Worldcon](#) tweeted on 21 August: ‘As of Thurs night, Sasquan has 11,149 total members & 4394 warm bodies, the biggest Worldcon ever re: total members.’

- *2017 Site Selection*: a first-round win for [Helsinki](#) with 1363 votes.

Washington DC received 878, Montréal 228 and Japan 120.

- *Hugo Awards*, after a record turnout of 5950 ballots: reportedly [a good ceremony](#) presented by Tananarive Due and David Gerrold (who said George R.R. Martin was in the audience but no longer on Twitter because he’d killed all 140 characters). CAMPBELL (‘not a Hugo’) for new writer: Wesley Chu. FAN ARTIST Elizabeth Leggett. FAN WRITER Laura J. Mixon. FANCAST *Galactic Suburbia Podcast*. FANZINE *Journey Planet*. SEMIPROZINE *Lightspeed*. PRO ARTIST Julie Dillon. PRO EDITOR Short Form: No Award. Long Form: No Award. GRAPHIC STORY *Ms. Marvel, Volume 1*. RELATED WORK No Award. DRAMATIC, SHORT (presented by a gold Dalek; ‘David, my eyestalk is up here. Are you staring at my bumps?’): *Orphan Black*, ‘By Means Which Have Never Yet Been Tried’. DRAMATIC, LONG *Guardians of the Galaxy*. SHORT STORY No Award. NOVELETTE Thomas Olde Heuvelt, ‘The Day the World Turned Upside Down’ (*Lightspeed*). NOVELLA No Award. NOVEL (presented via video from the International Space Station): Cixin Liu, *The Three Body Problem*, trans Ken Liu. The five No Awards were for categories wholly filled with Puppy slate nominees; no slated item won except the broadly popular *Guardians of the Galaxy*.

- *Other Awards* at the Hugo ceremony: BIG HEART Ben Yalow. FIRST FANDOM HALL OF FAME Julian May (living), Margaret Brundage, Bruce Pelz, F. Orlin Tremaine. SPECIAL COMMITTEE AWARDS Jay Lake, Julian May.

- *WSFS Business Meetings*, chaired by Kevin Standlee, went on at epic length. Hugo amendments included the anti-slate ‘E Pluribus Hugo’ (a new

algorithm for processing nominations) and ‘4+6’ (rather than the present 5+5: five nominations per member and five slots per final ballot category), both passed but needing ratification in 2016 to take effect in 2017. The Best Series Hugo proposal was referred to a committee which will report next year. More of this at kevin-standlee.livejournal.com/1491530.html.

The End of Summer

Brian Aldiss entered his Naughty Nineties on 18 August, and earlier that month gave a tasty interview to the *Telegraph*. On J.G. Ballard: ‘he fell in with a dreadful fellow, an artist who designed one of the Underground stations [Eduardo Paolozzi] and just ceased to be a friend. Perhaps because he didn’t like being associated with the label of science fiction. I don’t like the label, but I put up with it.’ ([7 August](#)) [MPJ]

Kevin J. Anderson on the reek of Washington State wildfires: ‘Arrived in Spokane for #Worldcon to the smell of smoke. Sigh. Some fan group must be doing human sacrifices again.’ (Twitter, 20 August)

Lou Antonelli, Hugo nominee (via the Puppies slate; see [A334](#)), distinguished himself by writing to Spokane’s chief of police warning that Worldcon GoH and Hugo MC David Gerrold is ‘insane and a public danger’, and bragging in a podcast about having done so. Disapproval of bloc-voting shenanigans apparently equates in some eyes to dangerous insanity. Antonelli would have been barred from Sasquan for violation of its code of conduct; but Gerrold accepted his apology and asked that he be allowed to attend. Meanwhile, because of the above, *Lakeside Circus* editor Carrie Cuinn had decided not to run a previously accepted story by Antonelli – who posted a carefully edited version of her private letter that led his supporters to bombard her with rape and death threats (though later he asked them to ‘knock it off’). After the Hugos he helpfully opined: ‘However, I’m sure had any Sad Puppies won any Hugos Saturday night, a bomb threat would have cleared out the performance hall in ten minutes.’ Is this called projection?

Suzette Haden Elgin’s papers, ‘hundreds of boxes’ of material from an abandoned storage unit, are now owned by a US antique dealer. Some likely universities have been alerted. [[F770](#)]

George R.R. Martin hired a Spokane mansion for his [Hugo Losers’ Party](#),

an invitation-only alternative to the official event ('I did exclude one group. The invite explicitly read No Assholes.'). There he presented unofficial Alfie awards – named for Alfred Bester, first ever novel Hugo winner, and made like the first Hugos from old car hood ornaments – to those who'd just missed nomination owing to this year's slates (as revealed by the just-released Hugo statistics), those who'd withdrawn rather than remain associated with slates, and a few other worthies.

Mike Moorcock on his *New Statesman* interview (see [A337](#)): 'At least Front Row gave me the chance to say it was nonsense but not before the hobbit lovers sprang up all over to say what a bad person and crap writer I was. Fiction confused with faith. Used to be a problem for SF, too, though that seems pretty much over these days. I remember when nobody had heard of the fucking *Hobbit*. The thing was heavily remaindered. Nobody from my generation remembers it. Healthier and happier times.' (1 August) *Later*: 'Spectator interview a bit better but I had to cancel the *Sunday Times* because of leaving [*Europe*] in a hurry. Funny how so many think it's a real autobiography. That's next.'

John C. Wright deplores the wrongthink of Hugo voters: 'I am, in all modesty, a skilled author, one of the finest writing today.' (23 August) There is more, very much more, at www.scifiwright.com.

Contaktion

3-5 Sep • **Company of Wolves** (conference: werewolves), de Havilland Campus, Hatfield. See opengravesopenminds.wordpress.com.

5-6 Sep • **Middle-earth Festival**, Sarehole Mill, Cole Bank Rd, Hall Green, Birmingham, B13 0BD. Free. See middleearthfestival.co.uk.

10-13 Sep • **Oxonmoot** (Tolkien Society), St Antony's College, Oxford. £50 reg. See www.tolkienesociety.org/events/oxonmoot-2015/.

19 Sep • **BSFA/BFS Pubmeet**, Ackhorne Pub, 9 St Martins Lane, York, YO1 6LR. 4:30pm-late. Free. With Marie O'Regan, Alex Davis.

23 Sep • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. With Simon Guerrier. Free.

26 Sep • **BristolCon**, Doubletree Hotel, Bristol. GoH Jasper Fforde, Jaine Fenn. £25 reg; £30 at door. Cheques to 18 High Leaze Road, Patchway, Bristol BS34 5AF. See also www.bristolcon.org.

26 Sep • **TitanCon**, Wellington Park Hotel, Belfast. £25 reg; £5 supporting. See titancon.com.

27 Sep • **Crossness Steampunk Convivial**, Crossness Engines, Belvedere Rd, Abbey Wood, SE2 9AQ. 11am-5pm. £8 admission; £4 for 6-15s. See crossnessconvivial.co.uk. Contact 020 8311 3711.

1-4 Oct • **Grimmfest** (horror/cult film festival), Odeon, The Printworks, Manchester. £65 reg plus booking fee. See grimmfest.com.

3 Oct - 15 Nov • **Anne Sudworth** exhibition, Pannett Park Art Gallery, Pannett Park, Whitby. 9:30am-4:30pm. 01947 605559.

23-25 Oct • **Fantasycon**, Orchard Hotel, Nottingham. Was £75 reg; couples £130; under-16s £35; under-5s free. *Rates rise 1 September*. There are discounts for BFS members: see fantasycon2015.org.

25-28 Mar 2016 • **Mancunicon** (Eastercon), Manchester. £60 reg; 13-17s £45; 4-12s £30; under-4s free. Rates reviewed 30 November. Hotel booking opened 5 August; the main hotel filled quickly. Contact 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ, or see mancunicon.org.uk.

8-10 July 2016 • **Anticipations** (H.G. Wells conference), Wells Conference Centre (Fri/Sat) and The Lightbox, Woking, Surrey (Sun). Call for papers by 15 April 2016. See anticipations2016.wordpress.com.

17-21 Aug 2016 • **MidAmeriCon II** (74th Worldcon), Kansas City, MO, USA. \$170 reg; \$90 YA/active military service; \$60 under-16s; \$50 supp. *Rates are to rise on 1 October*: act now if you want to vote in next year's Hugos! MidAmeriCon will also be running Retro Hugos for 1941, to honour notable work from 1940. See midamericon2.org for more.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others Invoke Us. Comparing one famously clownish figure with another: 'In a rough year for polling analysis, the Trump surge stands out. The first-time candidate whom so many people wrote off has done for 2016

what Isaac Asimov's Mule did for the psycho-historians of Foundation – a conquest from out of nowhere, unpredicted by any of the calculations, turning his enemies' blasted palaces into new (and classy) throne rooms.'

(*Washington Post*, 5 August) [AL]

Awards. *Chesley Award* (art) for life achievement: John Harris.

- *Gemmell Awards* (heroic fantasy): NOVEL Brandon Sanderson, *Words of Radiance*; DEBUT Brian Staveland, *The Emperor's Blades*; COVER Sam Green for *Words of Radiance*.

- *Munsey Award* (pulp-related achievement): Steve Miller, 'mainly for his two great reference books: *Mystery, Detective and Espionage Fiction* with Michael Cook and *Science Fiction, Fantasy and Weird Fiction Index* with Bill Contento'. [PS-P]

- *Mythopoeic* (fantasy): ADULT Sarah Avery, *Tales from Rugosa Coven*.

CHILDREN Natalie Lloyd, *A Snicker of Magic*. SCHOLARSHIP: INKLINGS Robert Boenig, *C.S. Lewis and the Middle Ages*. SCHOLARSHIP: OTHER Brian Attebery, *Stories About Stories: Fantasy and the Remaking of Myth*.

- *Sidewise* (alternate history): LONG Kristine Kathryn Rusch, *The Enemy Within*. SHORT Ken Liu, 'The Long Haul: From the Annals of Transportation, The Pacific Monthly, May 2009' (11/14 *Clarkesworld*).

In Typo Veritas. 'There was fresh corn so recent from the mill that it had not yet become infested with weasels.' (Nelson Algren, 'A Short History of the American Diet', circa 1941) [PL]

As Others Consume Us. 'The life of the scientist who consumes science fiction has historically been one of frustration.' (Terrence McCoy on *The X-Files*' science adviser; *Washington Post*, 10 August) [MMW]

R.I.P. *Ned (Cuyler) Brooks* (1938-2015), long-time US fan, collector of literary arcana and publisher of the fanzines *It Comes in the Mail* and *It Goes on the Shelf*, died on 31 August after a fall from his roof while carrying out repairs. [SHS]

- *George Cole* (1925-2015), UK actor most remembered as Arthur Daley in *Minder*, died on 5 August aged 90. Rare genre credits include *Scrooge* (1951), *The Vampire Lovers* (1970), *The Blue Bird* (1976) and *The Ghost of Greville Lodge* (2000).

- *Robert Conquest* (1917-2015), Anglo-US author and historian best known for documenting Soviet atrocities under Stalin, died on 3 August; he was 98.

[LP] His sf novel is *A World of Difference* (1955); with his long-time friend Kingsley Amis he co-edited the five *Spectrum* sf anthologies (1961-1966), whose verse epigraphs include his famous “‘Sf’s no good,” they bellow till we’re deaf. / “But this looks good.” – “Well then, it’s not sf.”” His *The Abomination of Moab* (1979) collects these verses and assorted essays, including sf criticism.

- *Yvonne Craig* (1937-2015), US actress fondly remembered as Batgirl in *Batman* (1967-1968 tv), died on 17 August aged 78. She also appeared in *Mars Needs Women* (1967) and *Star Trek* (1969)
- *Wes Craven* (1939-2015), US director and screenwriter most famed for the many-sequelled *A Nightmare on Elm Street* (1984), died on 30 August aged 76. [SG/AIP] Other films of genre interest include *Swamp Thing* (1982), *Shocker* (1989) and *New Nightmare* (1994).
- *Terrence Evans* (1934-2015), US actor seen in *Terminator 2: Judgment Day* (1991), *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* (1993), *Star Trek: Voyager* (1997), *Bigfoot the Movie* (2015) and others, died on 7 August; he was 81. [PDF]
- *Ray Girvan* (1956-2015), UK fan and writer whose stories include ‘The Lord of the Files’ with Steve Jones (in *Digital Dreams*, 1991), died on 30 June aged 59.
- *Coleen Gray* (1922-2015), US actress whose genre credits include *The Vampire* (1957), *The Leech Woman* (1960) and *The Phantom Planet* (1961), died on 3 August aged 92. [JDB/SG]
- *Clifford Hatts* (1921-2015), BAFTA-winning BBC head of design who masterminded the presentation of *Quatermass and the Pit* (1958-1959), died on 27 July; he was 93. [MPJ]
- *Richard Manginsay* (1971-2015), US animator and director whose credits include *Anastasia* (1997), *The Simpsons*, *Futurama*, *The Simpsons Movie* (2007) and *Dead Space: Downfall* (2008), died on 13 August aged 43. [PDF]
- *Jef Murray* (1960-2015), US artist who illustrated Tolkien and C.S. Lewis, died unexpectedly on 3 August aged 55. [F770]
- *Rick Obadia*, a co-founder in 1983 of the US alternative comics imprint First Comics, died on 16 August. First’s productions included Howard Chaykin’s *American Flagg*, adaptations of Michael Moorcock’s *Eternal Champion* saga, and the translated Japanese manga *Lone Wolf and Cub*. [PDF]
- *Roddy Piper* (1954-2015), US professional wrestler and actor/producer who starred in *They Live* (1988), died on 31 July aged 61. His other genre films

include *Hell Comes to Frogtown* (1988) and *Sci-Fighters* (1996). [LP]

- *Mark Sheeler* (1924-2015), US actor seen in *Captain Z-Ro* (1956 tv), *From Hell It Came* (1957) and *Adventures of Superman* (1958), died on 6 August aged 91. [PDF]

- *Susan Sheridan* (1947-2015), UK actress who played Trillian in the original radio *Hitch-Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy* (1978), died on 8 August aged 68. [MPJ] Other voice credits include *The Black Cauldron* (1985), *Moomin* (1990-1991 tv, based on Tove Jansson's work) and *Beauty and the Beast* (1992).

As Others See Terry Pratchett. Jonathan Jones, supreme arbiter of literary wossname, writes: 'It does not matter to me if Terry Pratchett's final novel is a worthy epitaph or not, or if he wanted it to be pulped by a steamroller. I have never read a single one of his books and I never plan to. Life's too short. / No offence, but Pratchett is so low on my list of books to read before I die that I would have to live a million years before getting round to him. [...] Because life really is too short to waste on ordinary potboilers.' ([Guardian](#), 31 August)

Outraged Letters. *Steve Jeffery* reports: 'In the letters column of *Radio Times* 1-7 Aug 2015, one David A. Hardy of Birmingham takes issue at a comment on a BBC news item about the new photos of Pluto: "There is no longer any need for artists' impressions."'

- *Sam J. Lundwall*, now living in a nursing-home flat with his wife, caught up on *Ansible* 'and am very happy for it. Found that several of my old chums have passed away, which was less cheerful of course. Even Tanith Lee, whom I always regarded as a young girl ... Perhaps you could mention the nursing home somewhere, that would explain why I have not attended cons or such for years.' (28 August)

- *Mike Moorcock*: 'The Jack Trevor Story Memorial Cup/Prix du Goncourt was announced at a meeting of the judges yesterday. After lunch at the Brasserie Goncourt, Boul. Parmentier, Paris, the judges (Moorcock, J-L Fromental, Guy Lawley, Lynn Hoggatt, Martin Stone) unanimously awarded the Prix to Nicholas Lezard. Previous winners include Steve Aylett and Howard Waldrop. The terms remain the same. After two weeks the recipient should not have a thing to show for it. The cup and the \$1,000 cheque will be accepted by Mr Lezard in London.' (1 August)

Court Circular. The owner of [starwars.uk](#) and [starwars.co.uk](#) is appealing

against Nominet's ruling – see A337 – that these and similar domains must be surrendered to Disney. ([BBC](#), 10 August) [MPJ]

As Others Criticize. ‘... *Jurassic World* epitomises four-quadrant-striving boardroom-delegated moviemaking and the quagmire resulting from fan-expectation-driven supersizing that's endemic to sequel-making and “rebooting.”’ (Nick Pinkerton, *Sight & Sound*) [PE]

Clute Apotheosis. The Telluride Institute of Colorado is acquiring John Clute's vast genre library as a research resource: the John Clute Science Fiction Library. More to follow at www.tellurideinstitute.org. [JC] John comments: ‘Applicants for vacated shelves queue to right.’

Random Fandom. [Black Hole Awards](#): my favourite of these traditional spoofs was an unspoofy response to this year's divisiveness – ‘Best Publisher: Tor Books and Baen Books, awarded jointly, for continuing to publish great science fiction of whatever kind.’ A deserved ‘Fortitude’ award went to Hugo administrators John Lorentz and Ruth Sachter.

C.o.A. Dan Goodman, 687 5th St E, St. Paul, MN 55106, USA. *Locus* (new street address for deliveries unsuitable for the unchanged PO Box), 1933 Davis St, Suite 295/297, San Leandro, CA 94577, USA.

The Dead Past. *50 Years Ago* there was appropriate solemnity at the London Worldcon: ‘Harry Harrison introduced his talk “SF – The Salvation of the Modern Novel” by promising that he would make no mention of meat pies, immediately ducking as pies were thrown at him by Brian Aldiss and Tom Boardman. Appearing somewhat loath actually to begin his talk Harrison invited Brian Aldiss onto the platform in order to say something serious. Aldiss merely said “*Greybeard* costs 18/-.”’ ([Skyrack 83](#), September 1965)
• *30 Years Ago*: ““But This Looks Good ...” An SFC listing of October (US) books features *Contact* by Carl Sagan. Publishers Simon & Schuster say it's “not science fiction. It is an engrossing, believable novel, rich in detail and peopled by characters about whose lives we care.”’ (*Ansible* 44, September 1985)

Fanfundery. Ulrika O'Brien reports [a successful fan funds auction at Sasquan](#) that raised \$1870 for TAFF, DUFF and GUFF.

Thog's Masterclass. *Science Dept.* Why the atom disintegrator failed to zap the enemy: ‘It is attuned to all forms of earthly matter.’ ... ‘But Nairn is

Jovian matter and composed of Jovian atoms and molecules.’ (Vargo Statten [John Russell Fearn], *Science Metropolis*, 1952) [BA]

- *Eyeballs in the Sky*. ‘John Shaka did not answer, though his eyes danced across the other’s face.’ (Perry A. Chapdelaine, ‘The Return of Prince John Israel Mcwayizeni Shaka’ in *Pulsar 2*, 1979) [CM]
 - *Dept of Well, It Would, Wouldn’t It?* ‘Sophie’s scream caused Rachel’s eardrums to vibrate.’ (Sarah Ward, *In Bitter Chill*, 2015) [PB]
 - *Neat Tricks*. ‘Earth shivered in a momentary absence of vibration.’ (A.E. van Vogt, *Earth Factor X*, 1974) [O]
 - *Conceptual Breakthrough Dept*. ‘His brain began to sway on its base, as the landslide of possibilities unreeled before it.’ (A.E. van Vogt, ‘Juggernaut’, August 1944 *Astounding*) [CG]
-

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 10 September 2015: An Evening with Patrick Ness, Waterstones New Street, Birmingham. 7pm. £3 admission. 0121 631 4333.
- 11 September 2015: Edward James talks to the Brum Group, 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre. £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future meetings: 9 October 2015, Justina Robson; 6 November 2015, Emma Newman; 4 December 2015, Xmas Social; 8 January 2016, AGM and Book Auction; 12 February 2016, Annual Quiz.
- 17 September 2015: Stephen Baxter signing at the Forbidden Planet London Megastore, 6pm-7pm.

Editorial. Profound apologies to Bill Higgins – let’s make that **BILL HIGGINS** – whose initials following a news item last issue were shamefully not matched by a corresponding **BILL HIGGINS** in the end credits. Other victims of this oversight in past issues include **MARTIN MORSE WOOSTER**, who reckons he has been an *Ansible* stringer for 35 years. Death will not release him.

- Meanwhile, in another part of the forest, Ansible Editions has two projects on the go. One is a new, much expanded and photo-illustrated trade paperback of Rob Hansen’s *THEN: A History of UK Fandom 1930-1980*, to appear when Rob has finished his revisions. The other is a ebook collection

of the late Vince Clarke's fanwriting (still in progress but approved by his daughter), to be added to the free ebooks page at the TAFF site:

<http://taff.org.uk/ebooks.php>

VATMOSS Horror Continues! The EU's inadvertent but brutal VAT attack on microbusinesses selling ebooks and other digital products has been recognized as a mistake, which doesn't mean that officialdom is actually rushing to correct it. Funds are being raised by EU VAT Action – co-founded by our very own Juliet McKenna – to lobby a coming EU summit conference in Ireland:

<http://euvataction.org/2015/08/13/the-euvat-vatmoss-campaign-fundraising-to-attend-a-vital-meeting/>

Worldcon 75 in Helsinki, Finland, 9-13 August 2017. Guests of Honour: John-Henri Holmberg, Nalo Hopkinson, Johanna Sinisalo, Claire Wendling and Walter Jon Williams. €95 reg (site selection voters €60), €35 supp, €80 youth (16-25), €55 child (6-15). For fuller details see:

<http://www.worldcon.fi/>.

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Ansible 339, October 2015

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo:
Dan Steffan. Cartoon: D. West by **D. West**. Available for SAE or
demonstrations of the Astral Pole.

Yet Another Ebook. A further free download from the TAFF site is the newly compiled *A Vince Clarke Treasury*. This grew from a short selection of the late Vince or Vinç Clarke's writings – as a key member of 1950s UK fandom and a genial presence from his 1982 return to his death in 1998 – to close on 150,000 words. See taff.org.uk/ebooks.php.

The Right Sort of People

Anthony Daniels of C-3PO fame grumbles about Disney paranoia over the new *Star Wars* film: “The secrecy has been beyond ludicrous ... For heaven's sake, it's a movie. When I got the script, it was typed in black on paper of the deepest red so you couldn't photocopy it. I got a hangover just reading it.” He was censured by the studio recently for mentioning on Twitter a fellow actor from *The Force Awakens*. “I said that I'd met so-and-so. An actor who plays a ... thing in the film. A character. Immediately I received a message from Disney: 'Remove the tweet! You're not allowed to say that!' Honestly. It's a kind of Kremlin attitude.” ([Interview in *The Guardian*](#), 3 September) [MPJ]

Jack Eason, a previously little-known sf author, achieved global fame with his Amazon review of the all-women space opera anthology *Dark Beyond the Stars*: ‘I'm sorry to offend fifty percent of the population but it has to be said that when it comes to writing Science Fiction, it still remains a purely male domain. [...] I applaud the ladies for giving it a try, but I would suggest they forget going any further. Leave the genre to those of us who know how to write scifi, being well versed in it's many nuances.’ (via [The Mary Sue](#), 15 September) [MPJ] Eason concedes that male anthology compiler David

Gatewood ‘expertly edited’ the stories. Though not, the review implies, expertly enough.

Christopher Eccleston was asked if he’d watched Peter Capaldi’s Doctor: ‘I never watched *Doctor Who* when I was a child ... I never watched MYSELF as Doctor Who!’ ([Radio Times](#), 3 September) [SHS]

• Meanwhile Capaldi imagines his postdoctoral future: ‘one day I’ll just be an overweight has-been, trying to get a meeting with Jenna Coleman [*Clara, the Doctor’s companion*] and being ejected from a Doctor Who Convention in Bolton for being drunk and disorderly. I mean, this is surely my high point, isn’t it?’ ([Telegraph](#), 12 September) [MPJ]

Stephen King was among the recipients of the US National Medal of Arts from President Obama on 10 September. (NPR, 10 September)

H.P. Lovecraft no longer needs any explanation when cited in political journalism: ‘Jeremy Corbyn is in charge of the Labour Party and – to hear some tell it – the epidemic birth of two-headed sheep, a rain of blood and the awakening of the Elder Gods in R’lyeh will follow.’ (Sam Leith, *Evening Standard*, 14 September) [MJE/SJ]

James Sallis, noted author of crime fiction and of sf since the Moorcock *New Worlds* era, resigned as adjunct professor at Phoenix College, Arizona (where he’d taught creative writing for 14 years), when required to sign a loyalty oath. ([12news.com](#), 29 September)

Charlie Stross tweeted: ‘For the 2016 Hugos: the ENTIRE DISCWORLD SERIES is eligible, as a completed work, under Best Novel. ... I think I’m going to nominate it.’ (Twitter, 14 September) But wouldn’t that plunge all fandom into war again? According to me, the ‘entire series’ is disqualified in ways that *The Wheel of Time* wasn’t: *The Science of Discworld* was on the 2000 Hugo ballot and *Going Postal* (though withdrawn) had *enough nominations* to be a 2005 finalist, which is the disqualifier. I’m strongly against gaming the Hugo rules; but if the final Discworld novel *The Shepherd’s Crown* truly deserves a Hugo on its own merits, there’s no question about its solo eligibility.

Conusee

Until 1 Nov • **Alice in Cartoonland** (exhibition), Cartoon Museum, 35 Little Russell Street, London, WC1A 2HH. 10:30-17:30 Mon-Sat, noon-17:30 Sun £7; concessions £5; students £3; under-18s and disabled-with-carer free. See www.cartoonmuseum.org.

1-4 Oct • **Grimmfest** (horror/cult film festival), Odeon, The Printworks, Manchester. £65 reg plus booking fee. See grimmfest.com.

2-5 Oct • **Irish Discworld Convention**, Cork International Hotel, Cork Airport, Ireland. GoH Bernard Pearson, Jacqueline Simpson, Colin Smythe, others. €50 reg; €40 concessions. See idwcon.org.

3 Oct - 15 Nov • **Anne Sudworth** exhibition of paintings, Pannett Park Art Gallery, Pannett Park, Whitby, YO21 1RE. 9:30am-5pm (to 4:30pm on Sundays). 01947 605559. See www.pannettartgallery.org.

9-11 Oct • **Octocon**, Camden Court Hotel, Camden St, Dublin, Ireland. GoH Maura McHugh, Emma Newman. €35 reg; concessions €25; accompanied under-12s free. Join online at 2015.octocon.com.

16 Oct • **Gollancz Festival**, Waterstones Deansgate, Manchester. 6pm-9pm. Also online activity all day. More at gollanczfest.com.

16-18 Oct • **Lakes International Comic Art Festival**, Kendal, Cumbria. Some parts free. For tickets see www.comicartfestival.com.

17 Oct • **Gollancz Festival**, Waterstones Piccadilly, London. 2pm-5pm. Also online activity all day. Again, more at gollanczfest.com.

17 Oct • **SFSF Social**, Eten Café, York Street, Sheffield, S1 2ER. 4pm-8pm with guest readings and Q&A; all welcome. Free.

22-25 Oct • **Bram Stoker International Film Festival**, Whitby. Four-day pass £125. See www.bramstokerfilmfestival.com.

23-25 Oct • **Celluloid Screams** (horror film festival), Showroom Cinema, Sheffield. Weekend pass £80, or £95 with all-nighter; concessions £70 and £85. See celluloidscreams.co.uk. 0114 275 7727.

23-25 Oct • **Fantasycon**, Orchard Hotel, Nottingham. Now £85 reg; couples £145; under-16s £40; under-5s free. There are hefty discounts for BFS members. See fantasycon2015.org.

28 Oct • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London,

EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. With Emma Newman. Free.

29 Oct • **Tolkien's Legacy**, Lecture Theatre, Weston Library, Broad Street, Oxford. Display of JRRT drawings and panel discussion on reactions to his works, 5pm-6pm.

30 Oct - 1 Nov • **Festival of Fantastic Films**, Manchester Conference Centre, Weston Building, Sackville St, Manchester, M1 3BB. Now £70 reg; day £25 Fri, £35 Sat, £30 Sun. Contact 95 Meadowgate Rd, Salford, Manchester, M6 8EN. See also fantastic-films.com.

13-15 Nov • **Armadacon 27**, Future Inn, Plymouth. GoH Dr Susan Blackmore, Adam Hart-Davis, Liesel Schwarz. £35 or £20 per day ('concessions' £30 and £15); £5 evening from 6pm. Contact 18 Wadham Rd, Liskeard, Cornwall, PL14 3BD; www.armadacon.org.

13-15 Nov • **Novacon 45**, Park Inn, Nottingham. GoH Anne and Stan Nicholls. £45 reg; £50 at the door. Under-17s £12; under-13s free. Contact 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ. See www.novacon.org.uk.

14-15 Nov • **Comic Con** (comics), Leeds. Tickets £27 for weekend pass; £17/day. Part of Thought Bubble, the Leeds Comic Art Festival, running 9-15 November. More at thoughtbubblefestival.com.

5 Dec • **Dragonmeet** (gaming), ILEC Convention Centre & Ibis Earls Court, 10am-11:55pm. Tickets £8 (concessions £6; group of six £40; group of £64); £10 at door. Booking at www.dragonmeet.co.uk.

6-9 Apr 2016 • **Terry Pratchett: The Shakespeare Codex** (play), Unicorn, Abingdon. See www.studiotheatreclub.com/whats-next.

29 Oct 2016 • **BristolCon**, Doubletree Hotel, Bristol city centre. GoH Fangorn, Ken MacLeod, Sarah Pinborough. £20 reg, rising to £25 in June; £30 at the door. Cheques to 18 High Leaze Road, Patchway, Bristol BS34 5AF. See also www.bristolcon.org.

Rumblings. *Sasquan*: the Spokane Worldcon's final membership figures are 11,648 in total and 5,171 attending (including one-days).

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. When Harry Rowohlt won the Kurd Laßwitz Prize for translating Kurt Vonnegut's *Timequake*, he feared the presentation audience must inevitably include 'two thousand trekkies, all wearing Spock ears. Eeek. [...] And there was no prize money, either.' (Harry Rowohlt, *In Schlucken-zwei-Spechte*, 2002) [FB]

Awards. *SF Poetry Association.* DWARF STARS (poems of 1-10 lines): Greg Schwartz, 'abandoned nursing home' (*Tales of the Talisman* 9:3). ELGIN: CHAPBOOK Mary McMyne, *Wolf Skin*. ELGIN: BOOK Marge Simon & Mary Turzillo, *Sweet Poison*. [L]

Ultra-Science Corner. 'Volsted Gridban is a powerful writer of Scientific Fiction whose services we have secured after a world-wide search for talent. / He introduces a hyper-space concept, and borders on the hair-raising. The alien universe is all about us all the time – but what is time? / Gridban, as well as having studied Cosmology and ultra-physics, has postulated the idea of there being tubes-of-flow in time and space, as in a material liquid under agitation, and is regarded as a pioneer of new knowledge in world Science circles.' (Introduction to *Alien Universe* by Volsted Gridban [here E.C. Tubb], 1952.) [BA]

R.I.P. Vicente Aranda (1926-2015) Spanish film director of *Fata Morgana* (*Left-Handed Fate*, 1971) and *The Blood Spattered Bride* (1972), died on 26 May aged 88. [MPJ]

- John Connell (1923-2015), US actor seen in *Fail Safe* (1964), *The Solarnauts* (1967 pilot for unmade sf tv series) and *Dark Shadows* (1967 tv), died on 10 September; he was 91. [AIP]

- Catherine E. Coulson (1943-2015), US actress who was the Log Lady in *Twin Peaks* (1990-1991) and the film *Fire Walk with Me* (1992), reprising the part in the coming *Twin Peaks* (2017), died on 28 September aged 71. Other credits include *Eraserhead* (1977) and *The Wrath of Khan* (1982) [MPJ]

- John Guillermin (1925-2015). UK film director whose credits include *Tarzan's Greatest Adventure* (1959), *Tarzan Goes to India* (1962), *King Kong* (1976 film) and *King Kong Lives* (1986), died on 28 September aged 89. [PDF]

- Jean Darling (1922-2015), US actress and mystery writer who contributed horror/fantasy stories to *Fantasy Book*, *Night Cry* and *Whispers*, died on 4 September aged 93. [AIP]

- Jor (*Marjorie*) Jennings, US fan who began publishing sf with 'The Devil

and All Her Works' (1978 *Galaxy*) and was a quarterly winner in the first Writers of the Future contest (1984), died on 27 August. [F770]

- *Dean Jones* (1931-2015), US actor whose genre credits include *Blackbeard's Ghost* (1968), *The Love Bug* (1968) plus sequels and tv series, *Mr Superinvisible* (1970), *The Million Dollar Duck* (1971), *The Computer Wore Tennis Shoes* (1995) and *Scrooge and Marley* (2001), died on 1 September aged 84. [MMW]
- *Jack Larson* (1928-2015), US actor and later playwright who played cub reporter Jimmy Olsen in *The Adventures of Superman* (1952-1958) starring George Reeves, died on 20 September aged 87. He also made cameo appearances in *Superboy* (1991), *Lois & Clark* (1996) and *Superman Returns* (1996). (*Independent*, 26 September)
- *Warren Murphy* (1933-2015), US author who with Richard Sapir created (and for the most part co-wrote) the long-running Destroyer sf/superman thriller sequence that began with *Created: The Destroyer* (1971), died on 4 September aged 81. [F770]
- *Lennart Sörensen* (1936-2014), Swedish critic, translator, academic and editor active in sf from 1956 to 1963 (especially in the magazine *Häpna!*) and helping to establish the genre's importance in Sweden, died on 18 May 2014. [J-HH]
- *Jeremy P. Tarcher* (1932-2015), US publisher whose Jeremy P. Tarcher Inc nonfiction imprint (now a Penguin Group imprint) published Alexei and Cory Panshin's *The World Beyond the Hill* (1989) and other books on sf, died on 20 September aged 83. [PDF]
- *Don West* (1945-2015), UK fanzine artist, writer and critic who signed all his work D. West, died from recently diagnosed cancer on 25 September; he was 70. His own fanzine was *Daisnoid* (Do As I Say Not As I Do), 1976-1997. His sardonic cartoons and increasingly ambitious cover art enlivened many fanzines since the 1970s, including *Ansible*; he was currently a regular in *Banana Wings* and *Chunga*. Don's writing and drawing won multiple Nova and FAAn awards, plus three Hugo nominations. He declined the Rotsler Award for life achievement in fanzine art. His fanwriting, including much trenchant criticism, was collected as *Fanzines in Theory and Practice* (1984) and *Deliverance* (1995); a professional venture was 'The Pit' in *Gollancz/Sunday Times Best SF Stories* (1975). With Brian Parker he invented the Astral League [sic], a parody of nut-cults which became an enduring fannish myth. It's hard to imagine UK fandom without his

distinctive talent and Yorkshire grumpiness. I miss him already.

As Others Remember Us. ‘Ants are Morlocks and aphids are Eloi! Similar to the storyline in H.G Well’s “Journey to the Center of the Earth”, all is not well in the world of ants and aphids.’ (*Exe Box Bulletin 21*, newsletter of the Calendar Club retail chain)

Netwatch. The web domains bladerunnerandroidsdreammovie.com and androidsdreammovie.com have been registered ‘by a company long used by Warner Bros’, leading to obvious guesses at the title of the coming *Blade Runner* sequel. (*Independent*, 23 September) [MPJ]

The Weakest Link. *Jeopardy* host: ‘This novel by Sinclair Lewis made fun of religious fundamentalism.’ *Contestant* (getting the right initials): ‘What is *Ender’s Game*?’ (*Jeopardy*, 17 September) [AIP]

• *Host*: ‘Although this comic character’s strip ended in 1975, he is still Georgia’s state animal.’ *Contestant*: ‘What is Li’l Abner?’ (*Jeopardy*, 23 September) The correct answer was ‘Pogo Possum’, once a great fan favourite. [AIP]

Magazine Scene. *The Singularity* is a new London-based sf/fantasy magazine edited by Lee P. Hogg, with the first issue dated September 2015. ‘Please note that payments unfortunately cannot be made for stories at this point ...’ See www.thesingularitymagazine.com.

We Are All British Now. ‘Imagine walking your fingers across the fabled locales of more than 600 British classics – from *Pride and Prejudice* to *The Catcher in the Rye* to Harry Potter – all merged together onto one seriously cool street map. Whether you roam the grounds of Pemberley, visit *Lake Wobegon Days* or meander north to the site of *A Room With a View*, this map will lead you down paths of yore to some of your favorite fictional places.’ (*Writer’s Digest*, September) [PL]

Carpe Diem. With an eye on the coming film, the Royal Mail will issue no fewer than eighteen *Star Wars* stamps on 20 October. (*BBC*, 12 September) [MPJ] Q: Will *Ansible* use these for snailmailed copies? A. No, they’re all first class and our cheapskate policy is second class (or airmail) only.

• Meanwhile the UK release of *The Martian* comes with an official tie-in potato, the red Albert Bartlett Rooster. (*Independent*, 28 September) [MPJ] ‘No potato was harmed during the filming.’

Random Fandom. *Graham Charnock's* fanzine *Vibrator* urges readers to advertise, 'to improve footfall on your website (tip, don't call it something stupid like Ansible).' (August)

- *The Future of Eastercon* is under unofficial consideration: cat-herders Steve Davies, Judi Hodgkin, Tim Kirk and Caroline Mullan have set up a website with a questionnaire for you to fill in at eastercon.wordpress.com.
- *Martin Hoare* is now co-chair of Pasgon, the 2017 UK Eastercon in Cardiff, as well as running hotel liaison. 'We will be releasing more details about an eight week plan to try to get Pasgon back on course by Novacon.' A recent breakthrough was the opening of a bank account to pay in membership cheques from Easter 2015. More to come at www.pasgon.org.uk.

We Are Everywhere. Alex Ross on the architectural delights of the Philharmonie de Paris, a new concert hall in that city: 'The midsection bulges out in twisting, rectilinear shapes, like the intestines of a sci-fi monster.' (*The New Yorker*, 20 April) [MMW]

The Dead Past. *50 Years Ago*, the deaths of Shirley Jackson and E.E. 'Doc' Smith were reported in the UK. ([Skyrack 84](#), October 1965)

- *20 Years Ago*: '**Spot the Ball.** "Who in this world ... would write a novel about a football team that falls victim to a group of wily elves?" asks a US HarperPrism ad in *SF Chronicle*. Who indeed? A small prize is offered to the first fan to locate a football team in the book concerned, Terry Pratchett's *Lords and Ladies*.' ([Ansible 99](#), October 1995)
- *In Typo Veritas*: 'The basic idea is that due to mass flow and back reaction, one end of a natural wormhole will become Greg Benford....' (Intersection [Worldcon 1995] pocket programme) (*Ibid*)

C.o.A. *Chris Donaldson & Paul Oldroyd*, Todo Papel – TP193, Avenida Constitución 31, Cómpeeta, Málaga, España/Spain 29754.

Fanfundery. *Corflu 50*: Grant Canfield is the chosen recipient of travel expenses to the 2016 Corflu in Chicago. More on this fund (which operates by consensus rather than voting campaigns) from richcoad at gmail dot com or jacksonshambrook at uwclub dot net.

Happy Media. *Game of Thrones* won eight creative-arts and four primetime Emmy Awards for a record total of twelve; *American Horror Story: Freak Show* won five for creative arts only. [MPJ]

- Even the UK Woodland Trust Tree of the Year Contest shortlist excited

journalists by including The Dark Hedges in Stranocum, Northern Ireland, a location in *Game of Thrones*. ([Independent](#), 21 September) [MPJ]

- *Bill Finger* (1914-1974) will at last receive due credit from DC Entertainment – if only in the coming *Gotham* tv series and *Batman vs Superman* film – for co-creating Batman with Bob Kane. ([Hollywood Reporter](#), 18 September)

Thog's Masterclass. *True Romance Dept*. 'His working hypothesis was that the breakup of the moon had made Doob young again, exfoliating layers of emotional callus from his soul and leaving a pink shiny impressionable heart just waiting to be colonized by the first appealing woman who came along.' (Neal Stephenson, *Seveneves*, 2015) [PM]

- *Eyeballs in the Sky*. 'Her eye, an inch away from his, was a grey fish caught in a mesh of lines.' (Pat Barker, *Border Crossing*, 2001) [PB]

- 'Franklin left his eyes on the floor, took half a step backward.' (Kelli Stanley, *City of Dragons*, (2010) [PB]

- *Dept of Neat Tricks*. 'The wind was shrieking, and so were her legs.' (*Ibid*)

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 9 October 2015: Justina Robson talks to the Brum Group, 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre. £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future meetings: 6 November 2015, Emma Newman; 4 December 2015, Xmas Social; 8 January 2016, AGM and Book Auction; 12 February 2016, Annual Quiz.

Editorial. This year's major source of stress has been the long struggle to sell my late mother's house, a process which still drags on and drains the *Ansible* energies.

- Linda Krawecka has set up a Don West memorial group on Facebook, where photos and artwork are being posted. I can't get to this without logging into Facebook, but others apparently can. The second link below is to D. West's entry in the *Ansible* site-map artist list, linking to all the cartoons he contributed here.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/423536974511424/>

<http://news.ansible.uk/sitemap.html#west>

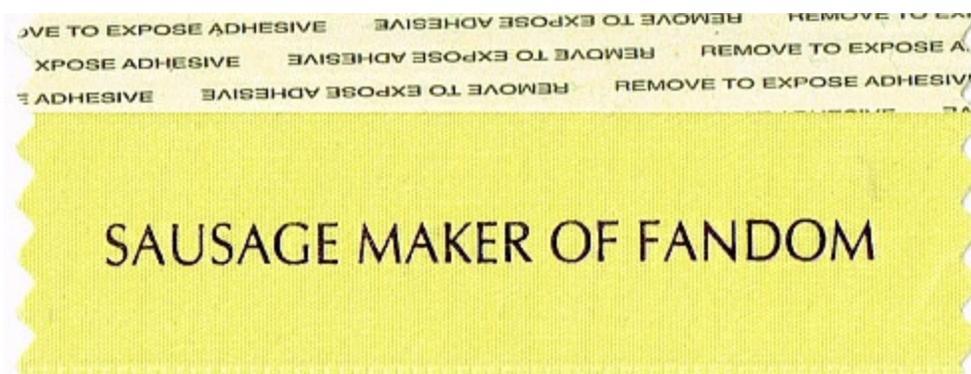
Thog's Second Helping. *Channelling Lionel Fanthorpe:* 'Before the leaders of the scientific, military, and political worlds began using the word "Agent" to denote whatever had blown up the moon, that word's most common interpretation, at least in the minds of the general public, had been in the pulp-fiction, B-movie sense of a secret agent or an FBI agent. Persons of a more technical mind-set might have used it to mean some sort of chemical, such as a cleaning agent. The closest match for how the word would be used forever after was the sense in which it was used by fencers and martial artists. In a sword-fighting drill, where one participant is going to mount an attack and the other is to respond in some way, the attacker is known as the agent and the respondent is known as the patient. The agent acts. The patient is passive. In this case an unknown Agent acted upon the moon. The moon, along with all the humans living in the sublunary realm, was the passive recipient of that action. Much later, humans might rouse themselves to take action and be agents once again. But now and for long into the future they would be nothing more than patients.' (Neal Stephenson, *Seveneves*, 2015) [PM]

Ansible 339 Copyright © David Langford, 2015. Thanks to Brian Ameringen, Paul Barnett, Frank Boehmert, Paul Di Filippo, Malcolm Edwards, File 770, John-Henri Holmberg, Martyn P. Jackson, Steve Jones, Locus, Pamela Love, Petréa Mitchell, Andrew I. Porter, SF Site, Steven H Silver, Martin Morse Wooster, and our Hero Distributors: Dave Corby (Birmingham SF Group), SCIS/Prophecy and Alan Stewart (Australia). 1 October 2015.

Ansible 340, November 2015

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE, asterzine, duodec, frack, PyrE or smashite.

Snitters, defined by Douglas Adams and John Lloyd in *The Meaning of Liff* as ‘rather unfunny newspaper clippings pinned to an office wall [whose] headline contains a name similar to one of the occupants of an office’, seems a useful header for the sensational news that ‘Red Hat is buying Ansible for more than \$100M’ (Venturebeat.com, 15 October) [HO’B] while ‘RGU lecturer Dr Dominic Ahiaga-Dagbu has been awarded the David Langford Commemorative Award at the annual Association of Researchers in Construction Management conference.’ (*Robert Gordon University Media Review*, 14-16 October) [RB]. Furthermore, Dave Lally sends a tasty full-colour brochure for ‘Langford’s, The Welsh Sausage Co Ltd’, which may at last explain why at Loncon 3 last year someone gave me a badge ribbon proudly lettered SAUSAGE MAKER OF FANDOM.



Space and Force and Fear

John Carpenter won a plagiarism suit against Luc Besson – plus his co-writers and the production company EuropaCorp – based on the close

resemblance between Carpenter's *Escape from New York* (1981) and *Lockout* (2012), which has essentially the same plot relocated into space. The French court duly 'noted many similarities between the two science-fiction films: both presented an athletic, rebellious and cynical hero sentenced to a period of isolated incarceration – despite his heroic past – who is given the offer of setting out to free the President of the United States or his daughter held hostage in exchange for his freedom; he manages, undetected, to get inside the place where the hostage is being held after a flight in a glider/space shuttle ...' etc. EuropaCorp was ordered to pay a modest €80,000. (Indiewire.com, 15 October)

Bernard Cornwell, author of the Saxon Stories novels on which the BBC's new Viking drama series *The Last Kingdom* is based, was not afraid to have a bash at the perceived opposition, *Game of Thrones*: 'So many characters. So many strands. You have to have large sections where the plot is explained; just have to sit there and be told what's going on. / This is very, very dull. So they put a lot of naked women behind it all ... They're called "sexplanations" in the trade. My programmes won't need sexplanations.' (Independent, 13 October) [MPJ]

David A. Hardy, for his space art, was one of four recipients of the American Astronautical Society's 'Ordway Award for Sustained Excellence in Spaceflight History' in its first year of presentation.

James T. Kirk was briefly prevented from boarding a flight at Heathrow when revealed as a mutant imitator of the USS *Enterprise* captain: former Scottish first minister Alex Salmond, an avowed Trekkie who likes to travel incognito. 'I just wanted BA to "beam me up, Scotty",' he hilariously explained. (Guardian, 4 October) [NJ]

David Mitchell knows where his towel is: 'Anything that is good grabs me, irrespective of its genre. The idea of confining an entire genre as being unworthy of your attention is a bizarre act of self-harm. So, "The Shining" is a great book. "The Haunting of Hill House" by Shirley Jackson is a great book.' (Salon interview, 26 October)

Tom Purdom, sf novelist and story writer, has been hospitalized with spinal and other injuries ever since a cyclist crashed into him from behind on the Schuylkill River Trail (Philadelphia) on 5 August. (Broad Street Review, 29 September) [SHS] May he soon recover.

John Williams, US composer of theme music for many genre films including *Star Wars*, *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, *Superman*, *Jurassic Park*, the *Harry Potter* sequence etc, is to receive the American Film Institute's lifetime achievement award for 2016. He is the first composer to be honoured since this award began in 1973. ([BBC](#), 9 October) [MPJ]

Conkane

Cancelled 12-15 Nov • **Gatecon UK** (*Stargate* etc), Holiday Inn, Brentford Lock, London, TW8 8GA. Page at www.gatecon.com deleted.

13-15 Nov • **Armadacon 27**, Future Inn, Plymouth. GoH Dr Susan Blackmore, Adam Hart-Davis, Liesel Schwarz. £35 or £20 per day ('concessions' £30 and £15); £5 evening from 6pm. Contact 18 Wadham Rd, Liskeard, Cornwall, PL14 3BD; www.armadacon.org.

13-15 Nov • **Novacon 45**, Park Inn, Nottingham. GoH Anne and Stan Nicholls. *Advance booking closes on 1 November*; £50 at the door; day membership £10 Fri, £25 Sat, £15 Sun. Under-13s free. Contact 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ. See also www.novacon.org.uk.

14-15 Nov • **Comic Con** (comics), Leeds. Tickets £27 for weekend pass; £17/day. Part of Thought Bubble, the Leeds Comic Art Festival, running 9-15 November. More at thoughtbubblefestival.com.

21 Nov • **Sledge-Lit** (Edge-Lit extra), QUAD Centre, Derby. Tickets £25. Book online at www.derbyquad.co.uk/special-event/sledge-lit.

24-25 Nov • **Starship Engineer Workshops** (day 2 on sf starships), BIS, 27/29 South Lambeth Rd, Vauxhall, London, SW8 1SZ. £99 or £59/day including lunch, coffee; concessions £79 or £49/day. See www.bis-space.com/2015/09/26/15288/starship-engineer-workshops.

25 Nov • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. With Adam Christopher. Free.

5 Dec • **Dragonmeet** (gaming), ILEC Convention Centre & Ibis Earls Court, 10am-11:55pm. Tickets £8 (concessions £6; group of six £40; group of £64); £10 at door. Booking at www.dragonmeet.co.uk.

17 Dec • **London Christmas Meeting**, upstairs bar, The Bishop's Finger, 9-

10 West Smithfield, EC1A. 6pm-late. Not the usual First Thursday venue (Inn of Court). [RR] See news.ansible.uk/london.html.

25-28 Mar 2016 • **Mancunicon** (Eastercon), Manchester. £60 reg; 13-17s £45; 4-12s £30; under-4s free. *Rates reviewed 30 November*. Contact 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ, or see mancunicon.org.uk.

28-29 May 2016 • **Satellite 5**, Marriott Hotel, Glasgow. Added GoH: Ed Buckley. £55 reg; 12-17s £20; 5-11s £5; under-5s £2. *Rates good to 18 November*. Contact c/o Flat 2/1, 691 Shields Rd, Pollokshields, Glasgow, G41 4QL. Online registration at satellite5.org.uk.

23-25 September 2016 • **Fantasycon**, Scarborough. Grand Hotel, St Nicholas Cliff, and The Royal, St Nicholas St. £50 reg (BFS members £40) plus £35 for awards banquet. See fantasyconbythesea.com.

Rumblings. *Blackpool Comic Con*: the aftermath of this 12 September 2015 event was an October newspaper announcement that the parent company The Comic Con Co Ltd will hold its creditors' meeting under the 1986 Insolvency Act on 3 November. Gosh, that was quick.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. Profiling serial killers and school shooters: 'Like all beta males, [Elliott] Rodger began to live a life outside of himself, or above the commonality he felt sure despised him. In the ordinary run of things, such boys get deep into the internet and chatrooms, drawing power from their anonymity, overarching their difficult years with TV shows and games and porn. They do no harm. They may read books – the audience for *Games of Thrones* [sic] is made up of such people – and they may be drawn to fantastical tales of the strong. So far, so what? Boys like that used to wear anoraks and read Tolkien and swap sci-fi comics, or get into heavy metal, overcoming shyness or adolescent angst with dark otherworldliness that lightened with age. But for some the darkness can prove engulfing. "I began a daily routine of walking to Barnes & Noble in Calabasas every day," Rodger writes in his manifesto ...' (Andrew O'Hagan, *London Review of Books*, 22 October) [DC]

Science Corner. "When an exponential hits the bend in the hockey stick

curve,” Doob said, “the result can be indistinguishable from a detonation.” (Neal Stephenson, *Seveneves*, 2015) [PM]

Awards. *Arthur C. Clarke Foundation Imagination in Service to Society Award*: Margaret Atwood. [L]

- *British Fantasy Awards*: ANTHOLOGY *Lightspeed: Women Destroy Science Fiction* ed. Christie Yant. ARTIST Karla Ortiz. COLLECTION Adrian Cole, *Nick Nightmare Investigates*. COMIC/GRAPHIC NOVEL Emily Carroll, *Through the Woods*. FANTASY NOVEL Frances Hardinge, *Cuckoo Song*. FILM/TV *Guardians of the Galaxy*. HORROR NOVEL Adam Nevill, *No One Gets Out Alive*. INDEPENDENT PRESS Fox Spirit Books. MAGAZINE/PERIODICAL: *Holdfast Magazine*, ed. Laurel Sills and Lucy Smee. NEWCOMER Sarah Lotz for *The Three*. NONFICTION *Letters to Arkham: The Letters of Ramsey Campbell and August Derleth, 1961-1971*, ed. S.T. Joshi, NOVELLA Stephen Volk, ‘Newspaper Heart’ (*Spectral Book of Horror Stories*). SHORT STORY Emma Newman, ‘A Woman’s Place’ (*Two Hundred and Twenty-One Baker Streets*). SPECIAL AWARD Juliet E. McKenna.
- *US National Book Awards* shortlists, Young People’s category genre titles: *Bone Gap* by Laura Ruby, *Challenger Deep* by Neal Shusterman and *Nimona* by Noelle Stevenson. [L]

As Others See Us II. *Tony Livesey*: ‘Tickets for the new *Star Wars* film go on sale today, so we’ll be talking to assorted oddballs in the queue later.’ (BBC Radio 5Live, 19 October) [MPJ]

R.I.P. *Murphy Anderson* (1926-2015), US comics artist active from the 1940s ‘Golden Age’ and best known for work on DC Comics characters (Adam Strange, Batgirl, Hawkman, the Spectre, Superman, Zatanna) from the 1950s to the 1970s, died on 22 October; he was 89. [AIP]

- *Ayerdhal* (Yal Soulier, 1959-2015), French sf and thriller writer who won the Grand Prix de l’Imaginaire in 1993 and 2004 for his novels *Demain une oasis* and *Transparences* respectively, died on 27 October aged 56. [PDF/J-DB]
- *Dave Gibson* (1939-2015), co-proprietor with Ted Ball of London’s well-loved Fantasy Centre bookshop from its 1969 founding until he retired to Scotland in 1991, died on 21 October; he was 76. [RR/AR] Ted Ball died this March; see [A333](#).
- *Alex Giannini* (1958-2015), UK character actor who played the Penguin in the 2011 touring production *Batman Live*, died on 2 October aged 57. [MPJ]

- *Árpád Göncz* (1922-2015) Hungarian politician who was President of Hungary 1990-2000 and also translated many English works including *Frankenstein*, *The Lord of the Rings* and multiple titles by William Golding, died on 6 October; he was 93. [NW]
- *Göran Hägg*, (1947-2015), Swedish author whose large output included three satirical sf novels – *Det automatiska paradiset* ('The Automatic Paradise', 1979); *Doktor Elgcrantz eller Faust i Boteå* ('Doctor Elgcrantz, or Faust in Boteå', 1983) and *Anders och Dafne* ('Anders and Daphne', 1987) – and short fiction in similar vein, died on 30 September aged 68. [J-HH]
- *Gordon Honeycombe* (1936-2015), UK newsreader for ITN, playwright, actor and author of the supernatural horror novels *Neither the Sea Nor the Sand* (1969) and *Dragon Under the Hill* (1972), died on 9 October; he was 79. [AW]
- *Bruce Hyde* (1941-2015), US actor and later academic remembered by fans for two appearances as Lt Kevin Riley in the original *Star Trek* (1966), died on 13 October aged 74. [F770/PDF]
- *Marty Ingels* (1936-2015), US actor who did much voice work for animated cartoons, among them *Pac-Man* (title role) and *Darkwing Duck*, died on 21 October aged 79. [MMW]
- *Nick Kisella* (1966-2015), US horror novelist and actor (in *Zombies Incorporated*, 2013), died unexpectedly on 28 October. [HS]
- *Eiji Maruyama* (1930-2015), Japanese voice actor in many 'sentai' superhero-team productions including *Kyoryu Sentai Zyuranger* (1992-1993), died on 24 September aged 84. [PDF]
- *Maureen O'Hara* (1920-2015), Irish-born actress whose film credits include *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* (1939), *Sinbad, the Sailor* (1947) and *Miracle on 34th Street* (1947), died on 24 October; she was 95. [PDF]
- *Noriyoshi Ohrai* (1939-2015), Japanese artist best known for his film posters – including the first three episodes of *Star Wars* in Japan and nine *Godzilla* productions – died on 27 October aged 79. [PDF/JC]
- *Liviu Radu* (1948-2015), respected Romanian sf author and translator, died on 16 October aged 66. [SF²C] His translations include novels by Isaac Asimov, Neil Gaiman, Dean Koontz, George R.R. Martin, A. Merritt and China Miéville.
- *Paul West* (1931-2015), UK-born US novelist, essayist and critic whose considerable output included fantasy – e.g. *Colonel Mint* (1973) – and absurdist sf shorts and fables, died on 18 October age 85. [PDF]

- *Christopher Wood* (1935-2015), UK author and screenwriter for the Bond films *The Spy Who Loved Me* (1977) and *Moonraker* (1979) – both of which he also novelized – died on 17 October; he was 79. [PDF]
- *Pat Woodell* (1944-2015), US actress whose films include the *Island of Dr Moreau*-based *The Twilight People* (1972), died on 29 September aged 71. [AIP]
- *Zdravko Zupan* (1950-2015), noted Yugoslav/Serbian comics creator and historian of his country's comics, died on 9 October aged 65. [PDF]

The Weakest Link. *Shane Richie*: 'The manager of the England football team between 1994 and 1996 was Terry who?' *Contestant*: 'Pratchett.' (BBC1, *Decimate*) [PE]

Court Circular. Another Nominet 'abusive registration' verdict: the Norfolk businessman who registered thebeano.co.uk must surrender this domain to D.C. Thomson & Co., publishers since 1938 of the UK kids' comic *The Beano*. ([BBC](http://bbc.com), 1 October) [MPJ]

- The owners of the real-life Rhode Island house whose (fake, they say) ghost stories inspired *The Conjuring* (2013) are suing Warner Bros for failing to protect their privacy: 'their property has been flooded with fans and unwanted visitors trespassing for a closer look'. ([Vulture](http://vulture.com), 27 October) [MPJ]

Bumper Sticker (warning – hotly controversial in USA): GUNS DON'T KILL PEOPLE. / GEORGE R.R. MARTIN KILLS PEOPLE. [via AC]

Outraged Letters. *Brett Davidson*, Andy Robertson's literary executor, reports that Andy's William Hope Hodgson/*The Night Land* site has been restored at nightland.website. 'We do not have contact details of all previous contributors to the site, so if there are any readers of *Ansible* who have contributed in the past and are not mentioned on the restored site, they can contact me at bidavids at hotmail dot com.'

- *Mike Moorcock* approves of [A Vince Clarke Treasury](http://www.vinceclarke.com): 'Glad the Vince Clarke book's out. I mention Vince quite a lot in *The Woods of Arcady*. Sequel to *Whispering Swarm*. [...] As I say in the book, Vince was something of a mentor to me and really helped me. Great bloke.' (2 October)

We Are Everywhere. Confirming that fan trivia have entered the sphere of general knowledge: 'Where ... in Britain was the 63rd World Science Fiction Convention held?' (*Metro* quiz, 23 October) [PCoh]

As Others Hire Us. A London Barbican job ad for an assistant curator (closed 31 October, alas) stipulates that ‘knowledge of the science fiction genre in the areas of contemporary art, design, film and music is desirable.’ (artsjobs.org.uk) [JL] Books are so twentieth century.

Random Fandom. *Dave Lally* insists that the highlight of Titancon came near the end of the all-female panel ‘Women in SF: Do We Need Them?’, when – given the five-minutes-left warning by a male committee member – Pat Cadigan cried ‘Typical. Men trying to hurry me up!’

The Dead Past. *30 Years Ago*, a poser from a *Battlefield Earth* promotional quiz with actual copies of *BE* as the prizes: ‘Who was the first man to set food on the moon?’ (*Waltham Forest Guardian & Gazette*, 8 November 1985) [PCol]

- *20 Years Ago*, another sf invisibling: ‘**Neal Stephenson** was not best pleased when *The Economist* quoted “a recent sf novel” (i.e. his *Snow Crash*) as saying that America will soon lead the world only in software, movies and pizza delivery – but without attribution. “I found two footnotes – but for other people’s books. Both, I note, are serious-sounding non-fiction works whose authors (unlike science-fiction novelists, alas) are evidently thought to deserve recognition for their work. / *The Economist* should feel free to quote my ideas with due attribution, or leave them to languish in the obscurity of mere genre fiction – but not to enjoy the convenience of having it both ways.”’ ([Ansible 100](http://ansible100.com), November 1995)

Auction Figures. Recent winning bids of unusual size are \$96,000 US for Princess Leia’s slave-girl bikini from *Return of the Jedi* ([Daily Mail](http://www.dailymail.co.uk), 4 October) and, in Hong Kong, \$1.2 million US for an original Hergé drawing of Tintin in Shanghai ([BBC](http://www.bbc.com), 6 October). Also, Blackwell’s is asking £60,000 for a map of Middle-earth hand-annotated by J.R.R. Tolkien for the illustrator Pauline Baynes. ([Guardian](http://www.guardian.co.uk), 23 October) [MPJ]

In Typo Veritas. The final 2015 World Fantasy Convention progress report assured convention members that at the World Fantasy Awards banquet, ‘all entrees are glutton and dairy free.’ [BV]

Fanfundery. *GUFF 2016*: Jukka Halme defeated his deadly rival Hold Over Funds and on 6 October was declared the winner of the 2016 GUFF race. He will attend Contact 16 in Brisbane next March.

- [TAFF 2016 and After](http://www.taff.org.uk). Jim Mowatt writes: ‘The TAFF admins (Nina

Horvath, Curt Phillips and Jim Mowatt) have been discussing the forthcoming races and have taken the decision to switch direction and run another East/West race for 2016. This means we are currently looking for nominees from Europe to visit North America in 2016 and to attend MidAmericon II in Kansas City on the 17th to 21st August. The knock-on effect of this decision is that the 2017 race will be West to East so that we can send someone from North America to Helsinki. This would also mean that we are going in the right direction to aim for New Orleans or San José in 2018 and Dublin in 2019. So onwards we go – To Kansas City and Beyond. It's TAFF nomination time.' Jim later added that the 2016 race nominations deadline is 11 December 2015.

Thog's Masterclass. *Dept of Fuzzy Geometry.* 'It was slightly rectangular.' (Andrea Camilleri, *The Treasure Hunt*, 2010; trans Stephen Sartarelli 2013). [PB]

• *Channelling Stephen R. Donaldson Dept.* 'The Operandi works provided we recharge the Lacuna every nine years by luring a gullible Engifted into a suitable orison ...' (David Mitchell, *Slade House*, 2015) [BT]

• *Dept of Culinary Simile.* 'Understanding Avi's motives is like peeling an onion with a single chopstick.' (Neal Stephenson, *Cryptonomicon*, 1999) [BA]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

• 6 November 2015: Emma Newman talks to the Brum Group, 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre. £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future meetings: 4 December 2015, Xmas Social; 8 January 2016, AGM and Book Auction; 12 February 2016, Annual Quiz; 11 March 2016, Christopher Priest; 8 April 2016, Jacey Bedford.

Dave Gibson. Andy Richards is looking for photos of Dave (see [obituaries](#) above) on behalf of his family, who have none. Digital photos and scans can be sent c/o Andy himself, to andy [insert the usual symbol] coldtonnage dot com.

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Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo:
Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or gifts at
Ecksmass from Kringle-san.

Numerology Redux. The editors of the online [SF Encyclopedia](#) had a little gloat on 18 November 2015 when the text reached and passed its latest milestone of five million words. Next: 5,271,009!

The Long Winter

John Joseph Adams is editing a new SF line, John Joseph Adams Books, for Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. ([Publishers Weekly](#), 9 November)

Don D'Auria, noted horror editor, was fired by Samhain Publishing less than 24 hours after the Samhain PR department had requested all their authors to write and post testimonials about his wonderfulness. A later public statement from Samhain implied that D'Auria had devoted too much of his time to such old-fashioned practices as editing, and neglected social-media promotion. Which one would have thought was the job of that PR department. (www.briankeene.com, 5 November)

Philip K. Dick can still cause trouble, with 300,000 copies of the 14 November *Guardian* Guide reportedly pulped because someone got cold feet about the Nazi imagery on its cover – illustrating a feature on the tv *The Man in the High Castle*. ([Press Gazette](#), 17 November) [SH] Amazon's promotion of this series with Nazified and Japanified US flag designs on New York subway seats led to some public outcry and swift removal of the offending ads. (nbcnewyork.com, 24 November) [AIP]

Jon Langford modestly failed to tell *Ansible* about his 'Lord of the Book Covers' win for favourite indie-press cover design: *Breakfast at Cannibal Joe's* by Jay Spencer Green, whose porcine artwork somehow suggests a

study of contemporary UK politics. (Completelynovel.com)

H.P. Lovecraft's caricatured head – as sculpted by Gahan Wilson – will [no longer be the World Fantasy Award trophy](#) after this year, said David Hartwell at the 2015 WFA ceremony on 8 November. During the same event, perhaps for the first time at any awards presentation ever, toastmaster Paul Di Filippo uttered the phrase 'eldritch miscegenation'. The trophy change was cheered by Daniel José Older and others who'd campaigned for it since last year, mainly on the basis of Lovecraft's overt racism and the discomfort caused by this association to such past WFA winners as Nnedi Okorafor. But the leading HPL scholar [S.T. Joshi](#) promptly returned his own 'irremediably tainted' World Fantasy Awards in protest against 'a craven yielding to the worst sort of political correctness'. Either way, it's goodbye to what was widely regarded as the ugliest prize in the long and chequered history of genre awards.

Beatrix Potter and **Richard Powers** are among the latest artists announced as having been inducted into the US Society of Illustrators Hall of Fame. (Irene Gallo, Tor.com, 20 November)

Simon Spanton, associate publisher at Orion's Gollancz sf imprint, left Orion on 20 November 'by mutual agreement'. [AIP]

Conopophaga

5 Dec • **Dragonmeet** (gaming), ILEC Convention Centre & Ibis Earls Court, 10am-11:55pm. Tickets £8 (concessions £6; group of six £40; group of £64); £10 at door. Booking at www.dragonmeet.co.uk.

5 Dec • **Yulemoot** (Tolkien Society), The Old Contemptibles, 176 Edmund St, Birmingham, B8 2HB. 5pm-late. All welcome; free entry.

17 Dec • **London Christmas Meeting**, upstairs bar, The Bishop's Finger, 9-10 West Smithfield, EC1A. 6pm-late. Not the usual First Thursday venue (Inn of Court). [RR] See news.ansible.uk/london.html.

27-31 Jan 2016 • **Conception** (RPG), New Milton, Hampshire. Booking by accommodation from £170 (double or twin) to £400 (2 double plus 2 twin). Details/booking forms at www.conceptionuk.org. Contact 23 Canberra Road, Christchurch, Dorset, BH23 2HN.

5-7 Feb 2016 • **Con2bil8** (filk), Best Western Hotel, Marks Tey, Colchester. £37 reg/£27 unwaged; children (5-17) £1 per year of age; under-5s free. Cheques to UK Filk Convention, c/o 119 Whitehill Lane, Gravesend, DA12 5LU. Online booking: con2bil8.wordpress.com.

5-7 Feb 2016 • **SF Ball** (media), Grand Harbour Hotel, Southampton. £150 reg; child £75; other options. See sfbevents.com/sfball.

25-28 Mar 2016 • **Mancunicon** (Eastercon), Manchester. *Now £75 reg* with other rates unchanged: 13-17s £45; 4-12s £30; under-4s free. Contact 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ, or see mancunicon.org.uk.

28-29 May 2016 • **Satellite 5**, Marriott Hotel, Glasgow. *Added GoH: Ed Buckley*. £55 reg; 12-17s £20; 5-11s £5; under-5s £2. Rates good to 4 April 2016. Contact c/o Flat 2/1, 691 Shields Rd, Pollokshields, Glasgow, G41 4QL. Online registration at satellite5.org.uk.

16 Jul 2016 • **Edge-Lit 5**, QUAD, Market Place, Derby. 10am-late. Tickets £30. See www.derbyquad.co.uk/special-event/edge-lit-5.

12-14 Aug 2016 • **Nine Worlds Geekfest** (multimedia), London. Early tickets £85; child £28.50. Book online at nineworlds.co.uk.

26-29 Aug 2016 • **The Asylum** (steampunk), Lincoln. Full details and online booking awaited at steampunk.synthasite.com.

11-13 Nov 2016 • **Novacon 46**, Park Inn, Nottingham. GoH Juliet McKenna. £46 reg '*until at least 31 December 2015*'. Contact 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ. More to come at www.novacon.org.uk.

14-17 Apr 2017 • **Pasgon** (Eastercon), Mercure Holland House Hotel, Cardiff, CF24 0DD. *Now £70 reg*; YA (14-17) £30; child (5-13) £15; supp £25. Contact 38 Cecil Court, Addiscombe Rd, Croydon, CR0 6SN. Online registration at www.pasgon.org.uk.

Rumblings. *UK Worldcon in 2024?* As announced at Novacon 45, a number of fans are discussing a possible 2024 bid – for the Worldcon ten years after Loncon 3. All are welcome to join in, ‘no matter their location, experience or fandom’: send email to FutureUKworldcons [at] googlegroups dot com. • **BSFA:** As you well know, Professor, the BSFA traditionally skips its regular open London meeting in December.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others Research Us. ‘Nothing like the RAND of the early 1950s has existed before or since. RAND may well have been the model for Isaac Asimov’s “Foundation” series, about a RANDlike organization full of hyper-rational social scientists.’ (Sylvia Nasar, *A Beautiful Mind*, 1998) Data point: RAND began in May 1948 when all but the last segment of the Foundation trilogy had appeared in magazine form. [AL]

Awards. *Guardian Children’s Fiction Prize:* David Almond, *A Song for Ella Grey* (a modern retelling of the legend of Orpheus and Eurydice).

- *Rotsler Award* for life achievement in fanzine art: Teddy Harvia (David Thayer).
- *US National Book Awards* (Young People’s category): Neal Shusterman, *Challenger Deep*. [L]
- *World Fantasy Awards:* NOVEL David Mitchell, *The Bone Clocks*. NOVELLA Daryl Gregory, *We Are All Completely Fine*. SHORT Scott Nicolay, *Do You Like to Look at Monsters?* ANTHOLOGY Kelly Link & Gavin J. Grant, ed., *Monstrous Affections*. COLLECTION (tie): Helen Marshall, *Gifts for the One Who Comes After*, and Angela Slatter, *The Bitterwood Bible and Other Recountings*. ARTIST Samuel Araya. SPECIAL – PROFESSIONAL Sandra Kasturi & Brett Alexander Savory for ChiZine Publications. SPECIAL – NONPROFESSIONAL Ray B. Russell & Rosalie Parker for Tartarus Press. [L]

Thog’s Alternate History Masterclass. The BBC press release for its Christmas programming includes a mindboggling what-if speculation: ‘**Sherlock.** “Dr John Watson, meet Mr Sherlock Holmes.” We’ve been here before – but what if this wasn’t the modern day but the late Victorian period? What if the world’s most famous consulting detective and his best friend lived in a Baker Street of steam trains, hansom cabs, top hats and frock-coats? / Welcome to “Sherlock” in 1895!’ [JM]

R.I.P. *Hazel Adair* (Hazel Joyce Marriott, 1920-2015), who with her husband Ronald Marriott scripted and novelized the early BBC children’s sf series *Stranger from Space* (1952-1953), died on 22 November aged 95. She is best known for such non-genre tv serials as *Crossroads*. [SH] Circa 1969 she and David Frost acquired film rights to J.G. Ballard’s *The Drought*, though the film was never made. [DP]

- *George Barris* (1925-2015), US car customizer whose designs included the

1966 tv Batmobile, the *Munsters* Munster Koach and later versions of KITT in *Knight Rider*, died on 5 November aged 89. [MR]

- *Perry A. Chapdelaine* (1925-2015), author of *Swampworld West* (1974) and other sf, and editor with Tony Chapdelaine and George Hay of *The John W. Campbell Letters* (two volumes, 1985 and 1993), died on 24 November aged 90. [JC]

- *Bruce Edwards* (1952-2015), US academic and C.S. Lewis scholar who was general editor of the multi-volume *C.S. Lewis: Life, Works, and Legacy* (2007) and published four solo books about Lewis and his work, died on 28 October aged 63. [F770]

- *Carl-Åke Eriksson* (1934-2015), Swedish actor whose best-remembered genre role was as a vampire in *Frostbitten* (2006), died on 7 November; he was 80. [PDF]

- *Johan Frick* (1965-2015), Swedish fan, fanzine publisher, translator (of Philip K. Dick, Katherine Keer, Patricia McKillip, Gene Wolfe and others), sf bookshop co-owner and sf/fantasy author, died on 14 November aged 49. [J-HH]

- *Kenneth Gilbert* (1931-2015), UK actor whose credits include *Wolfshhead: The Legend of Robin Hood* (1969) and *Doctor Who: 'The Seeds of Doom'* (1976), died on 29 October aged 84. [PDF]

- *Michael Gross* (1945-2015), US artist, designer and producer who was art director of *National Lampoon* 1970-1974, designed the *Ghostbusters* logo and produced the film, its sequel and its animated spinoff *The Real Ghostbusters* (tv 1986-1992), died on 16 November aged 70. [GW]

- *Gunnar Hansen* (1947-2015), Iceland-born US actor best known as Leatherface in *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre* (1974), died on 7 November aged 68. [GW] Other film credits include the sf horror spoof *Swarm of the Snakehead* (2006).

- *Charles Herbert* (1948-2015), former US child actor seen in *The Fly* (1958), *Men into Space* (1959-1960 tv), *13 Ghosts* (1960) and episodes of *The Twilight Zone* and *The Outer Limits*, died on 31 October aged 66. [AIP]

- *Martyn P. Jackson* (1963-2015), UK fan who was a frequent contributor of news items to *Ansible* since 2009, died on 8 November – the day after sending his last story. He was 52 and had long suffered from ME. [JAT]

- *Julia Jones* (1923-2015), UK playwright and tv screenwriter whose BBC adaptations include E. Nesbit's *The Enchanted Castle* (1979) and Philippa Pearce's *Tom's Midnight Garden* (1989), died on 9 October aged 92.

- *Al Markim*, US actor and producer who was Astro the Venusian in *Tom Corbett, Space Cadet* (tv 1950-1955), died on 24 November aged 88. [F770]
- *Melissa Mathison* (1950-2015), US screenwriter who scripted *E.T.: the Extra-Terrestrial* (1982), a segment of *Twilight Zone: The Movie* (1983) and the forthcoming Roald Dahl adaptation *The B.F.G.*, died on 4 November aged 65. [F770]
- *Warren Mitchell* (1926-2015), UK actor whose genre credits include *The Trollenberg Terror* (1956 tv; 1958), *The Curse of the Werewolf* (1961), *Help!* (1965), *Night Caller from Outer Space* (1965), *Moon Zero Two* (1969) and *Jabberwocky* (1977), died on 14 November aged 89. [AW]
- *K. Cassandra O'Malley* (1942-2015), US sf poet whose story 'Red Sky at Night' as by Jean Charlotte appeared in *New Worlds* 7 (1974; US *New Worlds* #6, 1975), died in mid-October; she was 72. [DL/RB]
- *Hans Rancke*, Danish fan and comics writer who co-created and co-wrote the *Valhalla* comic and its animated movie spinoff, died on 9 October aged 59. An expert on the *Traveller* RPG universe, he co-wrote the *Sword Worlds* source book for GURPS *Traveller*. [KÆM]
- *Rex Reason* (1928-2015), US actor seen in *This Island Earth* (1955, star role) and *The Creature Walks Among Us* (1956), died on 19 November aged 86. [SFS]
- *Jim Slater* (1929-2015), notorious UK financier who also wrote children's fiction including the sf *The Boy Who Saved Earth* (1979), died on 18 November aged 86. [RR]
- *Mike Sutton* (1971-2015), UK freelance journalist who wrote about sf/horror films for BFI Screenonline and booklets accompanying DVD/Blu-ray releases from Arrow and Eureka!, died on 5 November aged 44. [SG]
- *Rena Wolner*, US publisher who at various times was president of Berkley (where she signed up Tom Clancy, William Gibson and Dean Koontz), Pocket and Avon, died on 7 November aged 70. [PDF]
- *T.M. Wright* (1947-2015), US horror author whose debut novel was *Strange Seed* (1978) and who is perhaps best known for *A Manhattan Ghost Story* (1984) and its sequels, died on 31 October aged 68. [DAA]

The Weakest Link. *Ben Shephard*: 'In Christianity, Calvary is the location where which Biblical figure was believed to have been crucified?'
Contestant: 'Joan of Arc.' (ITV, *Tipping Point*) [PE]

As Others See the Hugos. 'The Hugos are the Oscars of sci-fi – with a

dollop of the Nickelodeon Kids' Choice Awards, because they aren't bestowed by members of an academy.' ([Wired](#), November) [MMW]

Hallowe'en Treats. Hodder & Stoughton promoted Thomas Olde Heuvelt's *Hex* with an 'Eye Sewing Kit' for the kiddies – black thread and a steel bodkin. 'Instructions: sew eyes shut. Tip: for extra swelling, dip your needle in chilli oil.' Roars of laughter! Breaks the ice at parties!

- Linus of *Peanuts* was at last vindicated in the *Independent's* Inquisitor crossword for 31 October: solvers who followed the hidden instructions were rewarded with a huge orange apparition of the [Great Pumpkin](#).

Outraged Letters. *Stephen Gallagher*: 'I'm reluctant to argue industry terminology with [Bernard Cornwell](#), but I've yet to come across the word "sexplanation" – the practice of propping up a dull dialogue scene with nudity or nookie is most commonly called "sexposition".'

We Are Everywhere. From a restaurant review: 'A helping of kale lay over the chicken like a drunken triffid.' (John Walsh, *Independent*, 21 November) Thog also liked the delicately evoked ambience of an old Yorkshire pub: 'The bar is as snug as a wombat's armpit ...'

Random Fandom. *The Future of Eastercon?* Responses to this poll were presented at Novacon; since many fans hadn't heard about it, the questionnaire has re-opened at [eastercon.wordpress.com](#).

- *Bill Kunkel* (1950-2011) is remembered in the US Society of Professional Journalists' new [Kunkel Awards](#) for excellence in video game journalism. [SFS]

Magazine Scene. *Crossed Genres* will close with the December 2015 issue, say co-publishers Bart R. Leib and Kay T. Holt. [L]

The Dead Past. *70 Years Ago*, fandom was so very different: 'From the few American fanzines I have seen lately (mainly *Acolyte*), I gather a somewhat unfavourable impression of continual bickering over trivia – distasteful trivia to boot. When talk of libel and courts of law crops up in fanzines it's high time someone got their finger out and swept the cobwebs away and started over afresh?' (Ken Bulmer in [British Fantasy Society Bulletin 24](#), December 1945)

- *60 Years Ago*: 'Biggest British prozine news of the year (and SFN's exclusive scoop) comes with the report that Bert Campbell, one of the most

colourful and bearded characters on the s-f scene, has relinquished his editorship of *Authentic Science Fiction*, and London fan-proauthor Ted Tubb has taken the vacant position.’ ([Science Fantasy News](#), Xmas 1955)

- ‘London fandom now has more active female fans than males in its ranks ...’ (*Ibid*)

- *50 Years Ago*, a nebulous intimation: ‘The Science Fiction Writers of America is/are instituting a series of awards for the year’s best SF, selected by members of the SFWA ...’ ([Skyrack 85](#), December 1965)

Fanfundery. *TAFF*: a final reminder that nominations for the 2016 westbound trip from Europe to MidAmericon II (Kansas City, 17-21 August) close on 11 December. See taff.org.uk for more, much more. So far the only declared candidate is Wolf von Witting.

- *Sasquan*, the 2015 Worldcon, has kindly donated \$2000 apiece to DUFF and TAFF.

The Image Job. The World Fantasy Society calls for a new trophy design (see also above) at www.worldfantasy.org. MidAmericon II has a competition for the 2016 Hugo base design, with an 18 January submissions deadline. Details at midamericon2.org/hugo-base-contest/.

In Typo Veritas. ‘We are also in negotiations with nearby hotels ...’ (on accommodation at Pasgon, Progress Report 1, November)

Magical Media Moments. Howard Shore’s Oscar-winning music for the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy has for the sixth year running won the popular vote, in the Classic FM Movie Hall of Fame poll, as the best film soundtrack of all time. ([BBC](#), 7 November) [MPJ]

Group Gropes. *Birmingham Horror Group*, Spread Eagle pub, Warwick Rd, Acocks Green, B27 7SD, on the first Saturday of each month, beginning 5 December. 7pm on. See birmingham-horror.co.uk. [SG]

Thog’s Masterclass. *Bad Hair Dept.* ‘His unruly shock of red hair towered six feet above the floor ...’ (Edmond Hamilton, *Captain Future and the Space Emperor*, 1940) [IC]

- *Dept of Anatomy.* ‘Her answer was a collection of shaking heads.’ (Mike Shepherd, *Vicky Peterwald: Survivor*, 2015) [PM] “‘Her neck may not have been on the line, but a good bit of her skin was in the game.’” (*Ibid*) “‘It seems to me that in times like this, with belts cinched in as tight as they are, it

might get hard to figure out just where honesty lies.”’ (*Ibid*)

- *Eyeballs in the Sky*. ‘The commander threw Vicky a cautionary eye.’ (*Ibid*) ‘... his eyes felt as if they had tendrils growing out of them, crawling like ants across the floorboards.’ (Sheng Keyi, *Death Fugue*, trans Shelly Bryant 2014) [JB]
 - *Doublethink Dept*. ‘Too weary to attempt subterfuge, John relied again on a false story to gain entrance.’ (Martin Caidin, *The Long Night*, 1956) [BT]
 - *Underwater Haircare Secrets*. ‘This is so weird it makes the hairs on the back of Beck’s neck stand up – and there’s a lot of hair there, because like most submariners, Beck hasn’t shaved in weeks.’ (Neal Stephenson, *Cryptonomicon*, 1999) [BA]
 - *Bicarbonate Dept*. ‘The pessimism of the twentieth century has been a massive burp of indigestion; but the stomach ache is passing.’ (Colin Wilson, *The Philosopher’s Stone*, 1969)
 - *Dept of Anatomy II*. ‘Maybe her stomach knew what it was doing when it threw up her toenails.’ (Mike Shepherd, *Kris Longknife: Unrelenting*, 2015) [PM] ‘Then the universe farted.’ (*Ibid*)
-

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 4 December 2015, Brum Group Xmas Social at a pub other than the usual one – too late to book now. Back to normal in the New Year: 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre. £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future meetings: 8 January 2016, AGM and Book Auction; 12 February 2016, Annual Quiz; 11 March 2016, Christopher Priest; 8 April 2016, Jacey Bedford.

Editorial. This issue has been an interesting struggle. My usual working computer for *Ansible* died immediately after Novacon, and since the ancient DTP kit used for the print edition won’t work with modern hardware (it insists on an old-style parallel port, none of your greasy USB kickshaws) it looked like a choice between recreating the *Ansible* design from scratch in newer software or declaring the death of the printed version and returning all those SAEs. Fortunately our local computer shop came to the rescue with a retro machine. Apologies for erratic email during the great interregnum.

Stan Lee, asked by a BBC Radio 4 interviewer what he thought of Marvel Comics' decision to have the Iceman character come out as gay – big enough news to make it into the *New York Times* – replied that he was unaware of this and never went into his creations' sexual predilections. (*Today*, 18 November) [*SF² Concatenation*]

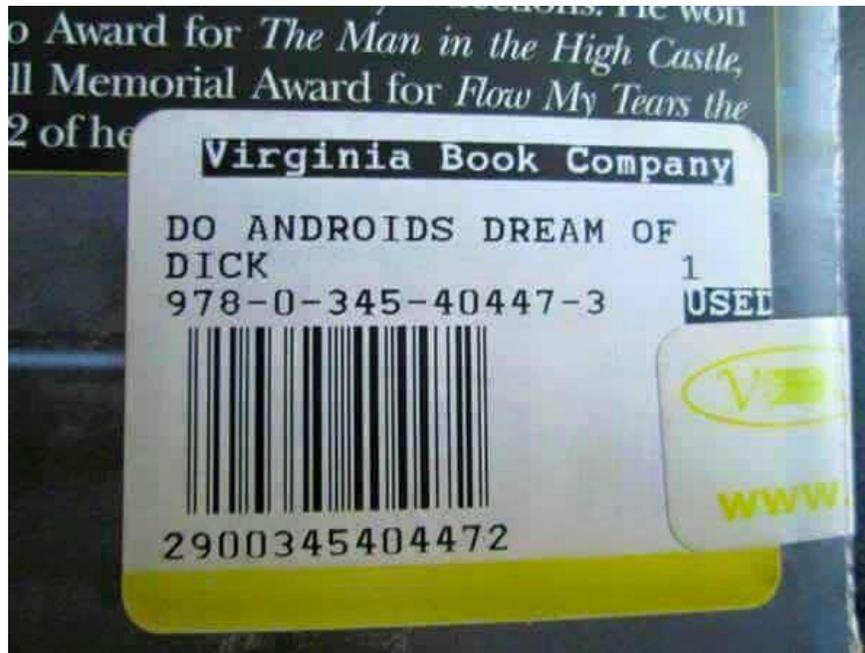
R.I.P. II. *Shigeru Mizuki* (1922-2015), multiple award-winning Japanese comics artist who created the influential *GeGeGe no Kitaro* fantasy-folklore manga series in 1960, died on 30 November; he was 93. [PDF]

Outraged Letters II. *Brian Ameringen* was tickled by a 19 November *Metro* article on the fledgling industry of teledildonics – so named, adopting the term used by the 1993 Eastercon panel on which Brian himself had solemnly pondered on payment issues: 'Surely, when you cross a teledildonics machine with a cashpoint you get someone coming into money?'

- *James D. Nicoll* brags again: '*Strange Horizons* didn't include my review site in their annual round up so I vowed to exceed in every parameter possible the sites that did make the cut. All in the sense of healthy competition, not sullenly nurturing a grudge. / I thought I needed 300 reviews to exceed everyone else but I got confused: it was just 297. Which I have done as of two days ago.' (27 November)

<http://james-nicoll.livejournal.com/5507499.html>

The Last Question. Image tweeted by Vex Godglove (@godglove, 29 November):



Thog's Second Helping. *Cheesy Grin Dept.* "My position doesn't allow me an opinion," I said through grated teeth.' (Ioanna Bourazopoulou, *What Lot's Wife Saw*, 2007; trans Yiannis Panas 2013) [PB]

Ansible 341 Copyright © David Langford, 2015. Thanks to Brian Ameringen, Douglas A. Anderson, Paul Barnett, Ruth Berman, John Boston, John Clute, Ian Covell, Paul Di Filippo, File 770, Steve Green, Steve Holland, John-Henri Holmberg, Martyn P. Jackson, Denny Lien, Locus, Andy Love, Joe McNally, Petréa Mitchell, Klaus Æ. Mogensen, Andrew I. Porter, Private Eye, Roger Robinson, Marcus Rowland, SF Site, Bob Toomey, James A. Tucker, Andrew Wells, Gary Wilkinson, Martin Morse Wooster, and our Hero Distributors: Dave Corby (BSFG), SCIS/Prophecy and Alan Stewart (Australia). Merry Christmas! 1 December 2015.

2016

Ansible 342, January 2016

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo:
Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE, a box of nothing
or a bone from a dry sea.

The Devil's Children

Piers Anthony replied to fans asking about the overdue 40th volume of his Xanth juvenile fantasy series. This and the next, though finished, are not scheduled 'because we ran into a roadblock. The publisher insists on taking life-of-copyright rights, which means I could not recover them until 70 years after I die. My response, after we delete the expletives, is not even over my dead body. So our patience has been exhausted, and we are working toward other publication, with the attendant delay.' (Newsletter, December 2015)
[IC] Long associated with Tor, the Xanth series moved elsewhere with volume 38; the 39th was published in all formats by Open Road Integrated Media.

Peter Beagle is suing his publisher Conlan Press and its proprietor Connor Freff Cochran (formerly known in sf circles as the artist Freff); the [long list of complaints](#) filed in November begins with 'elder abuse' in various categories, fraud, defamation, breach of fiduciary duty, breach of contract ...
[DW] Cochran claims the suit is frivolous. Conlan Press has a lengthy online history of customers protesting about delayed delivery and non-delivery of Beagle's books and merchandise.

Ray Bradbury and *Fahrenheit 451* are remembered in the newly approved Internet HTTP error code 451, denoting content that has been blocked for legal reasons – i.e. censorship. ([BoingBoing](#), 21 December)

Richard Brittain, self-published author who travelled from London to Glenrothes to bludgeon a young female reviewer with a full wine bottle (see [A328](#)), was sentenced to 30 months in prison and a further year of being

‘monitored in the community’. ([BBC](#), 17 December) [GD]

Doris Lessing’s personal papers and correspondence are now in the British Archive for Contemporary Writing, University of East Anglia. Further letters are sought: archives at uea.ac.uk. (*The Author*, Winter)

Michael Scott Rohan wasn’t best pleased to learn that the song ‘Gilded by the Sun’, recorded by British ‘neofolk/occultist’ band Fire & Ice and credited to lead singer Ian Read, is lifted nearly verbatim from *The Anvil of Ice*. [Since being rumbled](#) they’re apparently crediting it to Mike as if he approved – ‘which he sure as hell does not’. He doesn’t think this ‘bunch of fleabitten fascist oafs’ is worth suing, for now, but wants this wholly unauthorized and shameless theft on the record.

Connarite

13 Jan - 24 Feb • **Ionawr**: Rodney Matthews exhibition, Bishop’s Palace, Wells, Somerset, BA5 2PD. 10am-4pm; closed Mon/Tue until 10 February. See www.bishopspalace.org.uk/rodney-matthews-ionawr.

27 Jan • **BSFA Open Meeting** [NB “late” venue change] upstairs, The Reliance, 336 Old Street, London, EC1V 9DR. 6pm for 7pm. With Jeff Noon. Free.

27-31 Jan • **Conception** (RPG), New Milton, Hampshire. Booking by accommodation from £170 (double or twin) to £400 (2 double plus 2 twin). Details/booking forms at www.conceptionuk.org. Contact 23 Canberra Road, Christchurch, Dorset, BH23 2HN.

30 Jan • **BFS/BSFA Pubmeet**, Brigantes Bar, 114 Micklegate, York. 4:30pm on. Free. With Alison Littlewood, Marc Turner readings/Q&A.

5-7 Feb • **Con2bil8** (filk), Best Western Hotel, Marks Tey, Colchester. £37 reg/£27 unwaged; children (5-17) £1 per year of age; under-5s free. Cheques to UK Filk Convention, c/o 119 Whitehill Lane, Gravesend, DA12 5LU. Online booking: con2bil8.wordpress.com.

5-7 Feb • **SF Ball** (media), Grand Harbour Hotel, Southampton. £150 reg; child £75; other options. See sfbevents.com/sfball.

20 Feb • **Picocon 33**, Imperial College Union, London. GoH TBA. £12 reg;

£10 concessions; £8 ICSF members. Contact ICSF, Beit Quad, Prince Consort Rd, London, SW7 2BB; picocon@icsf.org.uk.

17-20 Mar • **Sci-Fi Weekender**, Hafan y Mor Holiday Park, near Pwllheli, Gwynedd, North Wales. Booking by accommodation from £500 for two; Fri+Sat day pass £89. See www.scifiweekender.com.

9-10 Apr • **Sci Fi Scarborough** (comics, media), The Spa Complex, Scarborough. More TBA at www.scifiscarborough.co.uk.

21-24 Apr • **Dead by Dawn** (horror film festival), Filmhouse Cinema One, 88 Lothian Rd, Edinburgh, EH3 9BZ. £75. Box office 0131 228 2688. Online booking via www.deadbydawn.co.uk.

30 Apr - 1 May • **EM-Con** (media), Motorpoint Arena, Nottingham. £160 reg with extras (2 photoshoots, 1 autograph); £10 day (11am); £15 day (10am); £115 day (10am) with extras. See www.em-con.co.uk.

16-18 Jun • **Roald Dahl Conference**, Cardiff University. Call for papers deadline 31 January. See dahlconferencecardiff.weebly.com.

12-14 Aug • **Wadfest** (Discworld camp con), Wood Green, Animal Shelter, King's Bush Farm, London Road, Godmanchester, Cambs, PE29 2NH. Adult campers £25. See www.wadfest.co.uk for other rates.

26-29 Aug • **The Asylum** (steampunk), Lincoln. £35 reg plus £7.24 booking fee at steampunk.synthasite.com.

17-18 Sep • **Futurefest** (futurology), Tobacco Dock, London. Prices TBA in February. See futurefest.org for 2016 'themes and curators'.

14-16 Oct • **Lakes International Comic Art Festival**, Kendal, Cumbria. Some parts free. For tickets see www.comicartfestival.com.

27-30 Oct • **Bram Stoker International Film Festival**, Whitby. Four-day pass was £85 as an 'early bird' offer closing 1 January; higher rate still awaited on 4 January at www.bramstokerfilmfestival.com.

9-11 Jun 2017 • **Lazlar Lyricon 3** (*Hitch-Hiker*), Quality Hotel, Stoke-on-Trent. £55 reg (ZZ9 members £50), 16-19s £25 (ZZ9 £20), 10-15s £10*, under-10s free* (*with adult). See lazlarlyricon3.com.

9-13 Aug 2017 • **Worldcon 75**, Helsinki, Finland. GoH John-Henri Holmberg, Nalo Hopkinson, Johanna Sinisalo, Claire Wendling, Walter Jon

Williams. €95 reg (site selection voters €60), €80 youth (16-25), €55 child (6-15), €35 supp. *Rates rise after 31 January*; those who join by then can nominate in the 2016 Hugos. See www.worldcon.fi.

Rumblings. *Worldcon 2019.* Asked whether they also plan to bid for Eurocon, the Dublin 2019 Worldcon bidding team said that they wouldn't. • *Worldcon 2021.* Boston is considering a Worldcon bid to oppose the already announced 2021 bid for Dallas/Fort Worth.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others Assimilate Us. Yet again, an innovative “[new](#)” genre is proclaimed! ‘It’s some time in the not too distant future. The American mid-west has turned into a dust bowl. Birds are dropping out of the sky. Cities are encapsulated in domes so that people can breathe clean, if recycled, air. / Billions of refugees, victims of drought and famine, are on the move. The streets are full of violent gangs and human traffickers. Pandemics are breaking out. / Welcome to a new literary genre – climate fiction, or cli-fi.’ (Truthdig.com, 26 December) Because mere sf could never encompass any of these brave new concepts. [JB]

Awards. *Anthropomorphic Literature and Arts Association Hall of Fame, 2015:* Walt Kelly, Hayao Miyazaki.

• *Grand Prix du Roman de l’Académie Française, 2015:* Boualem Sansal’s Orwell-inspired *2084: La fin du monde*. [J-HH]

• *Jerwood Fiction Uncovered Prize 2015* (British writers), late report of mid-2015 announcement: the eight £5,000 winners include Lavie Tidhar for *A Man Lies Dreaming*. [BA]

Court Circular. Paramount and CBS filed suit in December against the upcoming fan-made *Star Trek* film *Axanar*. The IP owners used to turn a blind eye to small fan productions, but *Axanar*’s crowdfunded budget of over \$1 million and promises of ‘fully-professional’ quality have evidently crossed some line. (Hollywood Reporter, 30 December)

By Any Other Name. A Bournemouth wholesaler bought a cheap job lot of *Star Wars* action figures to cash in on the new film, only to find that he’d invested in badly made fake tie-ins for *The Phantom Menace* labelled with such interesting names as The Emperor Daft Serious, Fly-Gone-Gin (surely

an improvement on Qui-Gon Jinn) and Little Girl, the packager's best guess at a small blond Anakin Skywalker. Fresh menace was added to the bogeyman figure of Darth Maul by renaming him as simply ... Dennis. ([Mail Online](#), 10 December)

R.I.P. *Tom Arden* (David Rain, 1961-2015), Australian-born author and academic best known for the inventive five-book 'Orokon' fantasy sequence opening with *The Harlequin's Dance* (1997), died on 15 December aged 54. [EJ] His mainstream novel *The Heat of the Sun* (2012) appeared under his own name.

- *Jon Arfstrom* (1928-2015), the last surviving cover artist for *Weird Tales* – active in this and other magazines from the early 1950s – died on 2 December; he was 87. [SJ via PDF]
- *Kathleen A. Bellamy* (1957-2015), Managing Editor at *Orson Scott Card's Intergalactic Medicine Show*, died on 19 December aged 58. [SFS]
- *Peter Dickinson* (1927-2015), UK author of a wide variety of fine writing of which his children's/YA work – in particular the 'Changes' trilogy, adapted as a 1975 BBC tv series – is perhaps best known, died on 16 December aged 88. Some of his adult detective novels contain sf elements; *The Green Gene* (1973), *King & Joker* (1976) and *Skeleton-in-Waiting* (1989) have alternate-history settings. *The Flight of Dragons* (1979) is a tour de force of tongue-in-cheek 'non-fiction'. He won Carnegie Medals for *Tulku* (1979) and *City of Gold* (1980), a Mythopoeic Award for *The Ropemaker* (2001), and was made OBE in 2009.
- *Daniel Grotta* (1944-2015), prolific US short-form author published in *Asimov's* and many other magazines, whose *J.R.R. Tolkien: Architect of Middle Earth* (1976 as by Daniel Grotta-Kurska) was the first Tolkien biography, died on 13 December aged 71. [PDF]
- *George Clayton Johnson* (1929-2015), US author and screenwriter who scripted several *Twilight Zone* stories and the first-aired *Star Trek* episode 'The Man Trap' (1966), and famously collaborated with William F. Nolan on the influential sf novel *Logan's Run* (1967; filmed 1976, tv 1977-1978), died on 25 December; he was 86. [PBJ] A 'much exaggerated' report of death on 22 December was widely circulated and made it into Wikipedia before being corrected.
- *Robert Loggia* (1930-2015), US actor whose genre films include *Psycho II* (1983), *Amazon Women on the Moon* (1987, uncredited), *Big* (1988), *Innocent Blood* (1992) and *Independence Day* (1996), died on 4 December

aged 85. Television credits include *Wild Palms* (1993 tv) and guest appearances in *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea*, *The Wild Wild West* and *The Bionic Woman*. [AIP]

- *Brooke McCarter* (1963-2015), US actor who appeared in *The Lost Boys* (1987) and a *Twilight Zone* episode that same year, died on 22 December aged 52. [SFS]

- *Florin Manolescu* (1943-2015), Romanian literary critic, literary historian and sf writer whose doctoral thesis was Romania's first on sf and who won the Romanian SF & Fantasy Society Award for his 2009 collection *The Mentalists*, died on 13 December; he was 72. [ESF]

- *Robert E. Margroff* (1930-2015), sf and fantasy author whose novels – *The Ring* (1968), *The E.S.P. Worm* (1970) and the five-book 'Kelvin of Rud' sequence – were all collaborations with Piers Anthony, died on 25 May 2015 aged 85; this went unreported in sf circles until mentioned in Piers Anthony's November newsletter. [IC]

- *Felice Maxam* (1934-2015), US Bay Area fan who under her former married name Felice Rolfe co-edited issues 6-20 of Ed Meskys's *Niekas* and shared its 1967 Hugo for best fanzine, died on 1 December. [SHS]

- *Jørn Uno Myrvoll* (1963-2015), Norwegian fan who for many years was treasurer of the Oslo sf club Aniara and ran the film programme at multiple conventions, died in December; he was 52. [J-HH]

- *Gerard Quinn* (1927-2015), Northern Irish artist who produced a number of memorable covers and some interiors for John Carnell's *New Worlds* and *Science Fantasy* from the 1950s to 1964 – plus a few paperback covers and later magazine appearances – died on 30 November aged 88. (io9)

- *Wayne Rogers* (1933-2015), US actor whose genre credits included *Chamber of Horrors* (1966), *The Invaders* (1967-1968 tv), *The Astro-Zombies* (1968 as co-writer) and *I Dream of Jeannie ... Fifteen Years Later* (1985), died on 31 December aged 82. [AW]

- *Luis Bermejo Rojo* (1931-2015), Spanish comics artist appearing in many titles including the UK *Fantastic* and *Eagle* and the US *Creepy* from Warren Publishing, died on 12 December aged 84. His Spanish comics adaptation of *The Lord of the Rings* appeared in 1980. [SG]

- *Nicholas Smith* (1934-2015), UK actor whose genre work included *Doctor Who* (1964), *Ace of Wands* (1971), Hammer's *Frankenstein and the Monster from Hell* (1974, uncredited) and *The Curse of the Were-Rabbit* (2005), died on 6 December aged 81. [PDF]

- *Rose Siggins*, US actress who lost her legs as an infant and played Legless Suzi in thirteen episodes of *American Horror Story* (2014-2015), died on 12 December aged 43. [NC]
- *Shirley Stelfox* (1941-2015), UK actress who appeared in the film *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1984), died on 7 December aged 74. [SG]
- *Carson Van Osten* (1945-2015), US comics creator who worked on Mickey Mouse and Goofy comics 1969-1976 and then became a Disney comics art director, died on 22 December aged 70. He received a 2015 Disney Legends award. [SFS]
- *Haskell Wexler* (1922-2015), Oscar-winning US cinematographer whose films include *The Fisherman and His Soul* (1961) and *The Loved One* (1965), died on 27 December aged 93.
- *Elmo Williams* (1913-2015), Oscar-winning (for *High Noon*) US film editor and producer who worked on *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* (1954), died on 25 November aged 102. [SFS]
- *Jason Wingreen* (1920-2015), US character actor who appeared in *Death in Space* (1974) and *The Terminal Man* (1974) and voiced Boba Fett in *The Empire Strikes Back* (1980, uncredited), died on 25 December aged 95.
- *Vilmos Zsigmond* (1930-2016), Hungarian-born cinematographer who worked on *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* (1977) and *The Witches of Eastwick* (1987), died on 1 January; he was 85. [SFS]

You'd Never See It In Analog. *Bradley Walsh*: 'What is a slide rule used for?' *Contestant*: 'Drawing straight lines.' *Chaser*: 'Drawing straight lines.' (ITV, *The Chase*) [PE]

Publishers and Sinners. Victoria Strauss of *Writer Beware* reported on Almond Press's dodgy anthology terms, whereby merely submitting a story grants Almond Press publication rights 'free of charge and irrevocably'. A frightful revenge followed, with each and every one of Strauss's own books given one-star ratings on Goodreads by – you guessed! – Almond Press. How classy. ([Writer Beware](#), 18 December)

We Are (Alas) Everywhere. *Jeopardy host*: 'Puppygate was a scandal that rocked these awards for science fiction authors.' *Contestant, correctly*: 'What are the Hugos?' (9 December) [AIP]

Magazine Scene. Tor.com is closing down its online submission system for unsolicited short fiction on 7 January; 'we do not plan to reopen in the

foreseeable future.’ (Tor.com, 21 December)

As Others Research Us. An obituary of George Clayton Johnson explains how to stand out from the sf crowd: ‘Mr. Johnson, a contemporary and colleague of writers like Richard Matheson, Ray Bradbury and Charles Beaumont, was recognizable on the science fiction and comic convention circuits by his unruly beard and eccentric clothing.’ (Daniel E. Slotnik, *New York Times*, 27 December) [GF]

Random Fandom. *Randy Byers* is recovering from surgery on 10 December to remove (most of) a brain tumour. This has been diagnosed as a stage 4 glioblastoma, bad news indeed, and intensive radiotherapy and chemotherapy will follow soon. Wish Randy all the luck he needs.

- *Pádraig Ó Méalóid* is retiring from conrunning and offers the Irish P-Con, goodwill and all, to whoever cares to revive it: ‘So, any takers?’

More Philately. The US Postal Service will issue four *Star Trek* stamps in 2016 to mark the original series’ fiftieth anniversary. (Trekmovie.com, 30 December)

Fanfundery. *TAFF 2016*: voting opened in December, with Anna Raftery and Wolf von Witting contending for the westbound trip to MidAmericon II in Kansas City this August. The voting deadline is 29 March 2016. See taff.org.uk for general background and a printable PDF ballot; vote online at tafftrip.com/taff-ballot-2016/.

- *GUFF*: James Shield’s 2010 trip report is out at last; see guff.lostcarpark.com.

The Dead Past. *80 Years Ago*, a pseudonymous letter in *Astounding* perpetrated the first Wilson ‘Bob’ Tucker death hoax: ‘Perhaps you may already know it by this time, but our friend Bob has passed on. Strangely enough, the last words I ever heard him say concerned your magazine. As I left the hospital, he gave me the inclosed letter to mail, and requested that when I returned the next day I bring a new copy of *Astounding Stories* with me. I did, but unfortunately I was too late. He was operated upon that morning and never regained consciousness.’ (‘Anne Smidley’ letter, *Astounding*, January 1936) [CP] Lies, all lies.

Thog’s Masterclass. *When Phone Calls Were Exciting Dept.* ‘A telephone buzzed, and through the electric nerves of a consummate civilization, Destiny

made the first outreach of its tentacles and contacted with Francis Morgan in the library of the mansion his father had builded on Eivenside Drive.’ (Jack London, *Hearts of Three*, 1920) [MMW]

• *Dept of Involuntary Reaction*. ‘He would surely see Nancy Drummond there, he thought with a spurt of excitement.’ (Barbara Cleverly, *The Last Kashmiri Rose*, 2001) [PB]

• *Flowers of Rhetoric Gone to Seed Dept*. ‘Her face had the fragrance of a gibbous moon. The scent of fresh snow. Her eyes were dark birds in fresh snow. They were the birds’ shadows; they were old mirrors; they were the legends on old charts. They were antique armor and the tears of dragons. Her brows were a raptor’s sharp, anxious wings. They were a pair of scythes. Her ears were a puzzle carved in ivory. Her teeth were her only bracelet; she carried them within the red velvet purse of her lips. Her tongue was amber. Her tongue was a ferret, an anemone, a fox caught in the teeth of a tiger. [...] Her buttocks were fresh-baked loaves; they were ivory eggs, they were the eggs of the lonely phoenix. They were a fist.’ (Ron Miller, *Silk and Steel*, 1992. The list of this lady’s features occupies [two pages](#); Thog became over-excited by ‘Her breasts ...’ and ‘Her pubes ...’.)

Endnotes

Apparitions.

• 8 January 2016: Brum Group AGM and Book Auction. 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre. £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future meetings/speakers: 12 February 2016, Annual Quiz; 11 March 2016, Christopher Priest; 8 April 2016, Jacey Bedford.

Outraged Letters. *Simon R. Green* anticipates: ‘I read an article on the old tv show *Doomwatch* recently, which ended with a note that the surviving episodes will be released on DVD next *[now this]* year. About time; this was an excellent series, that I enjoyed immensely. Including one episode in particular, “Tomorrow the Rat”, about super-intelligent rats that started eating people. That show traumatised me as a teenager. It was one of the few episodes released on DVD in the past, and when I saw it again ... it’s still really upsetting. Though the way the stunt rats were treated would raise a few eyebrows with the RSPCA today.’

- *Michael Moorcock* asks the key question: ‘If I send my World Fantasy awards back, do I get a replacement?’
- *Michael Swanwick* provides a welcome update to [Ansible 340](#): ‘After four months in rehab, Tom Purdom returned home on Christmas Eve. Though it will take some time before his injured arm recovers fully, he has regained sufficient use of it to resume his music column for the *Broad Street Review*.’

For the Record. ~~‘Last week’s column mistakenly misidentified a source. The European Commission president is Romano Prodi, not Buffy the Vampire Slayer.’—*The Prague Post*. [See below.]~~

- ‘Correction: An earlier version of this article misidentified the number of years E.B. White wrote for *The New Yorker*. It was five decades, not centuries.’ – *The New York Times*.
- ‘*The Argus* would like to apologize for suggesting that the director of the Brighton Science Festival believes the “21st century will be remembered for a terrible war between mankind and goats.” That contention, as well as another goat-obsessed comment, actually came in the form of a question submitted by a reader.’ – *Argus*, Brighton, England. (from [Pasadena Star-News](#), ‘The best (or worst) news media corrections of 2015’, 26 December) [BB]
- *Later*: [Language Log](#) notes that not all the *Star-News* cites (there are many more) are from 2015 as originally claimed, and that the Buffy item ascribed to *The Prague Post* is a spoof. The *Star-News* has deleted this one and added its own note of correction, ending ‘The irony of these corrections is not lost.’

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Ansible 343, February 2016

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo:
Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE, aposiderium,
identium or ondinium.

The Pain of the Goat

Gerry Anderson may yet be honoured with blue plaques at his early home (or at least its general location; the house is long gone) and school in Kilburn, London, if the Historic Kilburn Plaque Scheme can raise the needed £2,500. ([Brent & Kilburn Times](#), 21 January) [AH]

Theodore Beale and his ‘Rabid Puppy’ cronies decided it would be fun to game the Goodreads.com review ratings by organized bloc-voting, as with 2015 Hugo nominations. This rules violation very soon came to light: Beale and others were banned from Goodreads. [F770]

Neil Clarke is the new editor of the SFWA *Bulletin*. [PDF]

Joseph Green revealed his hitherto secret pseudonym, used since 1989 for stories in *Analog*, *F&SF* and elsewhere: Francis Marion Soty.

Rob Latham, noted sf critic, was fired from his position as a supposedly tenured Professor of English at University of California Riverside. This ‘incredibly rare step’ ([Academe Blog](#), 26 January) ignored the recommendation of UCR’s Faculty Senate and is, Latham believes, driven by ‘driven by political pressures, homophobic bias, and administrative hostility’. A civil-court case against UCR is to follow.

Steven Moffat is stepping down from *Doctor Who* after season 10, Spring 2017. ‘At the start of season 11, Chris Chibnall will become the new showrunner of Doctor Who. And I will be thrown in a skip.’ ([Ars Technica UK](#), 25 January) Peter Capaldi is leaving at the same time.

Terry Pratchett will also have a blue plaque, in his birthplace of

Beaconsfield – if the town council can win approval from the gods of Cori Celesti, i.e. Bucks County Council. ([Bucks Free Press](#), 22 January)

Lois Tilton, long-time reviewer of short fiction for *Locus Online* with 205 columns, [announced her resignation](#) in January because ‘Without consulting or informing me, they had begun deleting material they considered negative from my reviews.’ Liza Groen Trombi of *Locus* responded that there was a new policy of ‘folding the online columns in to the existing *Locus* editorial stream and applying the same standard to online reviews as the magazine.’ The offending edit was of the latest-written column, withdrawn by Tilton and so unpublished. [\[F770\]](#)

Conichalcite

Until 24 Feb • **Ionawr**: Rodney Matthews exhibition, Bishop’s Palace, Wells, Somerset, BA5 2PD. 10am-4pm; closed Mon/Tue until 10 February. See www.bishopspalace.org.uk/rodney-matthews-ionawr.

Until 17 Apr • **Alice in Wonderland** (exhibition), British Library, London. Free. See www.bl.uk/events/alice-in-wonderland-exhibition.

5-7 Feb • **Con2bil8** (filk), Best Western Hotel, Marks Tey, Colchester. £37 reg/£27 unwaged; children (5-17) £1 per year of age; under-5s free. Cheques to UK Filk Convention, c/o 119 Whitehill Lane, Gravesend, DA12 5LU. Online booking: con2bil8.wordpress.com.

5-7 Feb • **SF Ball** (media), Grand Harbour Hotel, Southampton. £150 reg; child £75; other options. See sfbevents.com/sfball.

20 Feb • **Picocon 33**, Imperial College Union, London. GoH Paul Cornell, Carrie Hope Fletcher, Michelle Payer. £12 reg; £10 concessions; £8 ICSF members; large-party discounts, past GOHs free. Contact ICSF, Beit Quad, Prince Consort Rd, London, SW7 2BB; picocon at icsf org uk.

24 Feb • **BSFA Open Meeting**, ~~upstairs, The Reliance, 336 Old Street, London, EC1V 9DR.~~ *Note new venue; but these meetings may soon move again. [In fact the February meeting subsequently reverted to the old venue: Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND.]* 5/6pm for 7pm. With Gareth L. Powell. Free to all.

26 Feb • **Alice's Adventures in Comics-Land** (panel), British Library, London. With Paul Gravett, Chie Kutsuwada and Bryan Talbot. 6:30pm-8pm. £10 admission; £8 over-60s; £7 under-18s and other concessions. See www.bl.uk/events/alices-adventures-in-comics-land.

11 Mar • **BFS Open Night**, The Blacksmith & Toffeemaker, 292-294 Saint John St, London, EC1V 4PA. 7pm-11pm. Free; all welcome.

25-28 Mar • **Mancunicon** (Eastercon), Manchester. £75 reg; 13-17s, concessions £45; 4-12s £30; under-4s free. Day (adult): £20 Fri or Mon, £30 Sat or Sun; see mancunicon.org.uk for the other day rates. *Note that no memberships, day or weekend, will be available at the door.*

3 Jul • **Tolkien Society Seminar**, Hilton Hotel, Leeds, LS1 4BX. £20. See www.tolkiensociety.org/events/tolkien-society-seminar-2016.

6 Aug • **Preston Comic Con**, Guild Hall, Preston. 10:30am-5pm. £8; children £4, under-5s free. See www.prestoncomiccon.co.uk.

12-14 Aug • **Nine Worlds Geekfest** (multimedia) *venue revealed*: Novotel London West, Hammersmith, London. Early tickets £85; child £28.50; *rates rise 1 April*. Book online at ninemeworlds.co.uk.

8-11 Sep • **Oxonmoot** (Tolkien Society), St Antony's College, Oxford. Cost TBA. See www.tolkiensociety.org/events/oxonmoot-2016/.

8 Oct • **Nor-Con 6** (tv/film/comics), Norfolk Showground Arena. 9:30am-6pm. Tickets £15 for 9:30 entry, £10 for 10:30 (under-15s £10 and £6) plus booking fees. See www.nor-con.co.uk.

14-16 Oct • **Octocon**, Camden Court Hotel, Camden St, Dublin, Ireland. Guests TBA. €25 reg; concessions €20; accompanied under-12s free. Rates will rise through the year. Join online at 2016.octocon.com.

24-26 Feb 2017 • **Redemption '17** (multimedia), Royal Victoria Hotel, Sheffield. Rates until 11 April: £55 reg, under-18s £25 (day £40 and £15); under-3s free; £15 supp. Contact 61 Chaucer Road, Farnborough, Hants, GU14 8SP. See www.redemption-convention.org.uk.

16-18 Jun 2017 • **U-Con** (Eurocon), Fritz-Henssler-Haus, Dortmund, Germany. €30 reg. See www.dortmund-in-2017.com.

9-13 Aug 2017 • **Worldcon 75**, Helsinki, Finland. €95 reg (site selection

voters €60), €80 youth (16-25), €55 child (6-15), €35 supp. *Rates are to rise on 14 February 2016.* See www.worldcon.fi.

Rumblings. *London First Thursdays:* 4 February will be at The Inn of Court (formerly the Melton Mowbray) as usual, but without exclusive fannish use of the cellar bar, Future gatherings from 3 March onward are moving to The Bishop's Finger; see news.ansible.uk/london.html. [Later: The Bishop's Finger proved to be double-booked for March, **so 3 March will again be at The Inn of Court as above**, with the move to the new venue delayed to 7 April. See also God's Final Message To His Creation.]• *Hugo Nominations* are open (closing 31 March) to those with Hugo PINs, currently being emailed; these should all have been sent out by 5 February. See midamericon2.org/the-hugo-awards/hugo-nominations/.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others Evaluate Us. *Made in Chelsea* star Lucy Watson expertly assesses the zombie threat in *The Walking Dead*: 'But it's not so far-fetched it could never happen.' (*Metro*, 5 January) [MH]

Awards. *American Library Association YA.* Michael L. Printz Award: Laura Ruby, *Bone Gap*. Margaret A. Edwards Award (life achievement): David Levithan. Alex Awards (adult with YA appeal): winners include Joe Abercrombie for *Half the World* and David Wong for *Futuristic Violence and Fancy Suits*. [L]

- *Costa Book of the Year:* Frances Hardinge, *The Lie Tree*.
- *Philip K. Dick Award* shortlist: Brenda Cooper, *Edge of Dark*; Douglas Lain, *After the Saucers Landed*; P.J. Manney, *(R)evolution*; Ramez Naam, *Apex*; Adam Rakunas, *Windswept*; Marguerite Reed, *Archangel*.
- *Prometheus* (libertarian), special life achievement award: L. Neil Smith.
- *Richard Gangel Art Director Award:* Irene Gallo of Tor Books.
- *Robert A. Heinlein Award:* Kim Stanley Robinson.

Language Lesson. 'Google has fixed a bug in an online tool after it began translating "Russian Federation" to "Mordor".' ([BBC](http://www.bbc.com), 7 January) This was apparently based on recent Ukrainian usage.

R.I.P. *Paul Aratow*, US film screenwriter, producer and director who co-wrote and directed *Doctor Dracula* (1978) and produced the comics-based

- Sheena* (1984) and *The Spirit* (1987), died on 15 November aged 78. [SG]
- *David Bowie* (1947-2016), renowned pop star and actor whose sf imagery in ‘Space Oddity’ (1969) and such albums as *Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars* (1972) and *Diamond Dogs* (1974) earned him [an SF Encyclopedia entry](#), died from cancer on 10 January; he was 69. He memorably played the title role in *The Man Who Fell to Earth* (1976); further film appearances include *Labyrinth* (1986) and *The Prestige* (2006); he entered the SF Hall of Fame in 2013.
 - *Frank Finlay* (1926-2016), UK actor whose genre credits include *Target Luna* (1960), *Count Dracula* (1977) *The Thief of Baghdad* (1978), *A Christmas Carol* (1984), *Lifeforce* (1985) and *Johnny and the Bomb* (2006), died on 30 January; he was 89.
 - *Dan Haggerty* (1941-2016), US stunt man, animal trainer and actor best known for *The Life and Times of Grizzly Adams* (1974 film; tv series), whose genre credits include *Elves* (1989), *Father Frost* (1996) and *Axe Giant: The Wrath of Paul Bunyan* (2013), died on 15 January aged 74. [AIP/MMW]
 - *Pat Harrington Jr.* (1929-2016), US actor whose many genre credits include *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.* (1965-1967), *The President’s Analyst* (1967), the animated tv *Aquaman* (1968-1969) and *The Computer Wore Tennis Shoes* (1969), died on 6 January aged 86. [SFS]
 - *David G. Hartwell* (1941-2016), major US sf editor at Tor Books (formerly Signet, Berkley/Putnam, Gregg Press and Pocket/Simon & Schuster/Timescape) who received a great many Hugo nominations as Best Editor and won three times, died on 20 January; he was 74. Among many other achievements he was the publisher and a founding editor of *The New York Review of SF*, and won two World Fantasy Awards, one for his colossal horror anthology *The Dark Descent* (1987). Patrick Nielsen Hayden wrote at Making Light: ‘It’s like a mountain range is gone, or nitrogen, or a verb tense. We can’t believe it. David. Goodbye.’ Amen to that.
 - *Paul Kantner* (1941-2016), US musician who co-founded Jefferson Airplane – reformed as Jefferson Starship – and recorded the Hugo-nominated sf concept album *Blows Against the Empire* (1970), died on 28 January aged 74. His title song in *Crown of Creation* (1968) takes its lyrics from John Wyndham’s *The Chrysalids*.
 - *Ian Fraser ‘Lemmy’ Kilmister* (1945-2015), UK Motörhead musician formerly (1971-1975) with the space rock band Hawkwind – he was lead vocalist for their sf hit single ‘Silver Machine’ (1972) – died on 28 December

aged 70. He also appeared in the film *Hardware* (1990).

- *Oleksiy Logvynenko* (1946-2016), Ukrainian translator who translated (among others) Günter Grass, Hermann Hesse, Franz Kafka and H.G. Wells, died on 18 January aged 69. [PDF]
- *Stanley Mann* (1928-2016), Canadian screenwriter who scripted *The Mouse That Roared* (1959), *Damien: Omen II* (1978), *Meteor* (1979), *Firestarter* (1984) and *Conan the Destroyer* (1984), died on 11 January aged 87. [PDF]
- *David Margulies* (1937-2016), US character actor whose best-known genre role was as Mayor of New York in *Ghostbusters* (1984) and *Ghostbusters II* (1989), died on 11 January aged 78.
- *Marvin Minsky* (1927-2016), much-honoured US computer scientist and pioneer of artificial intelligence, who advised Stanley Kubrick on AI possibilities for *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968), died on 24 January aged 88. [AIP] He co-wrote the sf thriller *The Turing Option* (1992) with Harry Harrison.
- *A.R. Morlan* (1958-2016), US author of many sf and horror stories since 1985 (assembled in nine collections), whose first novel was *The Amulet* (1991), committed suicide on 6 January; she was 58. [ED]
- *Joe Raftery*, UK filk singer and filk con organizer, reportedly died on 29 January. [SFS]
- *Alan Rickman* (1946-2016), Golden Globe-winning UK actor whose genre credits include *Truly Madly Deeply* (1990), *Galaxy Quest* (1999; ‘By Grabthar’s hammer ...’), *The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy* (2005, voicing Marvin) and the role of Severus Snape in all the Harry Potter films, died on 14 January aged 69.
- *Jack Robins* (1919-2015), original US member of First Fandom (entering its Hall of Fame in 2012) and the Futurians, whose fanzines were the late-1930s *The Scientific Thinker* and the early-1940s *Looking Ahead*, died on 23 December aged 95. [F770]
- *Angus Scrimm* (1926-2016), US actor best known for his horror role The Tall Man in *Phantasm* (1979) and its sequels, died on 9 January aged 89. Other credits include *Subspecies* (1991), *Automatons* (2006) and *Satan Hates You* (2010).
- *Robert Banks Stewart* (1931-2016), Scots tv scriptwriter who wrote episodes of *The Avengers* (1965, 1966) and two *Doctor Who* serials – ‘Terror of the Zygons’ (1975) and ‘The Seeds of Doom’ (1976) – died on 15 January aged 84. [GW]

- *Michel Tournier* (1924-2016), French screenwriter and Prix Goncourt-winning author whose novels were myth-based and/or dense with mythological allusion and resonance (see [his SF Encyclopedia entry](#)), died on 18 January; he was 91. [GF]
- *Abe Vigoda* (1921-2016), US character actor whose genre credits included *Dark Shadows* (1969-1970), *Fantasy Island* (1979) and *Batman: Mask of the Phantasm* (1993 voice), died on 26 January; he was 94. [MMW]

The Weakest Link. *Jeopardy* host, as a black-and-white photograph of H.G. Wells is shown: ‘This author saw many of the 20th century’s inventions [?] become true before anyone else.’ *Contestant*: ‘Who is Arthur C. Clarke?’ (*Jeopardy*, 5 January) [AIP]

- *Gabby Logan*: ‘Charles Babbage is best known for inventing an early version of what?’ *Contestant*: ‘The Hobbit.’ (BBC1, *The Edge*) [PE]

The Great Hwauk. There is now an official UK chapter of The Horror Writers of America, whose website can be found at hwauk.org.

Outraged Letters. *Simon R. Green* remembers: ‘So; Lemmy’s gone, and Bowie, and Alan Rickman. It’s not just that people I admire keep dying, it’s that they’re all so close to my age.... I wrote the novelization of *Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves*, and I can tell you that Alan Rickman’s Sheriff of Nottingham came mostly from him, not the script. Mind you, there was a lot in that film that wasn’t in the script I saw, and vice versa. I can remember seeing the film in the cinema for the first time, and being quite startled at how much of the plot was missing.’

For the Record. ‘Correction: An earlier version of this post stated that Nightcrawler [*of the X-Men*] says “Bamf” when he teleports. It is the sound that happens when he teleports. *City Paper* regrets the error.’ (*Baltimore City Paper*, 2015) [AL]

- ‘In yesterday’s report “Copernicus and Galileo: now stars in their own right”, we said Copernicus had demonstrated that the Sun goes round the Earth. It has been pointed out to us that this is wrong and, in fact, the Earth goes round the Sun. We are sorry for the mistake.’ (*Independent* ‘i’, 18 December) [PE]

Magazine Scene. *Apex* and *Lightspeed* are no longer (as far as the Hugos are concerned) semiprozines, according to Neil Clarke’s researches while updating the directory at semiprozine.org. [F770]

- SFWA's regular market reports are now available to everyone (not just members) on the SFWA blog: see www.sfwaworld.com/tag/market-report.

Discworld Is Everywhere. More than one fan noticed that in the season finale of the *Morse* prequel *Endeavour*, young Morse's veteran cop mentor Fred Thursday mentioned how he'd long ago cut his teeth under Sergeant Vimes on Cable Street.... (ITV, 24 January) [SB]

Random Fandom. *Linda Deneroff* of the WSFS Mark Protection Committee 'is assembling citations of usage of The Hugo Award in Europe (including the UK) in support of its application for registering it as a service mark in the EU. Things that could be useful include [...] references to the Hugo Awards in EU-based publications, including fanzines.' Contact lindandee at gmail dot com. (Relevant citations from the *Ansible*, *Checkpoint* and *Skylark* archives already communicated.)

- *FAAn Awards*: voting on 2015 fan/fanzine activity is open and will continue to 23 April. See corflu.org/Corflu33/faan2015.html.

The Dead Past. *30 Years Ago*, William Gibson wrote: 'I would like to point out, for the benefit of my massive and utterly devoted British following, that the version of my second novel, *Count Zero*, which will run in serial lumps (three) in *Asimov's SF*, is a special Lite version with reduced *motherfucker*-count and no graphic but intensely poetic and moving descriptions of oral sex. "At *IASFM*," I was told, "you can't come in anybody's mouth." I should also point out that these changes were made under my supervision and with my express approval. I agreed to go along with them, after due soul-searching, when it was pointed out to me how urgently young people in small towns in the US need fiction of this sort, and how much my new car is going to cost. / But with Gollancz, friends, you get it ALL!' ([Ansible 45](#), February 1986)

- *40 Years Ago*: 'The SF Foundation is sponsoring a new award for excellence in SF criticism. The first award is to be presented at this year's Mancon [*Eastercon*].' ([Checkpoint 64](#), February 1976; presumably this was the SFF's James Blish Award, presented only once, to Brian Aldiss in 1977.)

Media Madness. *Golden Globes*: Best Motion Picture – Musical or Comedy was somewhat mysteriously won by that non-musical, non-comedy, hard sf film *The Martian*.

- *Oscars*: the Best Picture shortlist of eight includes *Mad Max: Fury Road*

and, again, *The Martian*.

Thog's Masterclass. *Sound Effects Dept.* 'His voice had its usual quality of furtively rustling underbrush.' (Isaac Asimov, 'The C-Chute', October 1951 *Galaxy*) [CG]

• *Dept of This Door Is Alarmed.* 'The door went into histrionics.' (Garth Risk Hallberg, *City on Fire*, 2015) [SN]

• *How to Describe Cockroaches Dept.* '... six-legged forest creatures came lumbering out of the broiler grate ...' (*Ibid*)

• *Eyeballs in the Sky.* 'Eyes like anguished talons were clutching hers.' (Charles L. Harness, 'The Rose', March 1953 *Authentic*) [AWa]

• *Dept of Would That Be Fahrenheit or Celsius?* '... layer after layer of synthetic mercury, capable of withstanding temperatures as low as minus five hundred degrees.' (Robin Wayne Bailey, 'Tombaugh Station', 2015)

• *True Romance (With Side-Effects) Dept.* 'But then it's all right, because we're alone and naked on the bed with its flannel sheets. My sense of smell roars in my head and when Keller pushes – slowly, insistently – inside of me, it's as if we are sinking together two inches beneath the water, bobbing. The feelings are so different from what I experienced with Charlie, it's as if my own body is changing: I breathe water and grow gills. My hands and feet are distended, my toes curl, my lips and nipples turn orange, my eyes are webbed, golden scales spring up and shimmer over my body.' (Diana Abu-Jaber, *Origin*, 2007) [PB]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 12 February 2016: Brum Group Annual Quiz. 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre. £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future meetings/speakers: 11 March 2016, Christopher Priest; 8 April 2016, Jacey Bedford; 13 May 2016 tba; 10 June 2016 Ian Whates; 8 July 2016 Dave Lally; 12 August 2016 Summer Social meal; 12 September 2016 tba; 14 October 2016 Andy Lound; 4 November 2016 tba; 2 December 2016 Xmas Social.
- 27 April 2016: Thomas Olde Heuvelt signing, London Forbidden Planet Megastore, 6pm-7pm.

Editorial. My evil minions, the readers of *Ansible*, need no Hugo voting instructions from me. Nominate things you've read or watched or listened to (he cackled satanically) and which you really like! I believe the 2015 *Ansible* Editions ebook of Vince Clarke's fanwriting, *A Vince Clarke Treasury*, is eligible as Best Related Work – though I can't imagine it reaching the shortlist. All the same, here's the book page with a free download link.
<http://ansible.uk/misc/vince.html>

Fanfundery. *TAFF*: this is your interim reminder that the 2016 race is in progress, with candidates Anna Raftery and Wolf von Witting contending for the trip to the 2016 Worldcon in Kansas City. Voting deadline: 29 March. See taff.org.uk for the gory details.

Thog's Second Helping. Thanks to Vlatko Juric-Kokic for the link below, offering a great deal more from Garth Risk Hallberg's *City on Fire* (though arguably not every choice is Thogworthy):
<http://www.theawl.com/2016/01/the-50-most-unacceptable-sentences-in-city-on-fire-in-order>

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Ansible 344, March 2016

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo:
Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Other cartoon (below): **Steve Stiles**.
Available for SAE, Fwai-chi shags or Rhune Books of Deeds.

As Others Invoke Us. Only genre metaphors can cope with the hellish excesses of current US presidential campaigning: ‘But if Rubio’s tax plan is “puppies and rainbows,” then Donald Trump’s may be best described as “unicorns and time portals.” It’s so far beyond the plausible that science fiction, rather than children’s literature, feels like the right genre for capturing its essence.’ (Vox.com, 25 February) [HF]

Gharks and Hoos

C.J. Cherryh is to receive SFWA’s Damon Knight Grand Master lifetime achievement honour at the 2016 Nebula Awards weekend.

Daniel Clowes, whose graphic novel *Patience* centres on time travel, revealed his secret in a *Wired* interview: ‘How did you avoid science fiction clichés?’ ‘By not reading any science fiction.’ [PDF]

Harrison Ford was badly injured on the *Millennium Falcon* set while filming *Star Wars VII: The Force Awakens* at Pinewood Studios in mid-2014. Now at last the Health and Safety Executive strikes back, prosecuting the allegedly responsible Foodles Production (UK) Ltd for four breaches of health and safety law. (press.hse.gov.uk, 11 February)

George R.R. Martin is to receive an honorary degree from Texas A&M University, home of his archives. But first a certain book project needs to be finished: ‘When will I be returning to College Station to get the degree? Not till WINDS is done.’ (Winteriscoming.net, 10 February)

Robert Reed, according to his flash-fiction blurb in *Nature* (4 February), ‘is the author of several hundred stories and a few novels. He won a Hugo before

it was controversial.’ [MLO] Gosh, when was that?

John Whitbourn brags that Wikipedia records his blue-plaque equivalent: ‘In 2014 a new housing development in the village of Binscombe, Surrey, was named Whitbourn Mews in honour of the author and his “The Binscombe Tales” series.’ He proudly adds: ‘as my Family informed me at the time: “Dad – no one cares ...”’ (16 February)

Congleton

5 Mar • **Durham Sci-Fi & Fantasy Lit-Fest**, Kingsgate Room, Durham Students Union, New Elvet, DH1 3AN. 1pm-5pm. Tickets £1.50. Contact sf-f.society at durham dot ac dot uk.

11 Mar • **BFS Open Night**, The Blacksmith & Toffemaker, 292-294 Saint John St, London, EC1V 4PA. 7pm-11pm. Free; all welcome.

17-20 Mar • **Sci-Fi Weekender**, Hafan y Mor Holiday Park, near Pwllheli, Gwynedd, North Wales. Booking by accommodation from £500 for two; Fri+Sat day pass £89. See www.scifiweekender.com.

23 Mar • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. With Aliette de Bodard. Free.

25-28 Mar • **Mancunicon** (Eastercon), Manchester. £75 reg; 13-17s, concessions £45; 4-12s £30; under-4s free. Day (adult): £20 Fri or Mon, £30 Sat or Sun; see mancunicon.org.uk for the other day rates. *Note that no memberships, day or weekend, will be available at the door.*

6-9 Apr • **Terry Pratchett: The Shakespeare Codex** (play), Unicorn, Abingdon. See www.studiotheatreclub.com/whats-next.

9-10 Apr • **Sci Fi Scarborough** (comics, media), The Spa Complex, Scarborough. Tickets £27.50 (day £16.50); 6-16s £11 (day £5.50); under-6s free. See www.scifiscarborough.co.uk.

11 Apr - 20 Jun • **Doctor Who** (11-week Monday evening class), Aquinas College, Stockport. Contact Sheila Lahan, 0161 419 9163.

28 May • **Wonderlands**: The UK Graphic Novel Expo. Cityspace centre, Chester Road, Sunderland. Free. See www.wonderlands.org.uk.

28-29 May • **Satellite 5**, Marriott Hotel, Glasgow. £55 reg; 12-17s £20; 5-11s £5; under-5s £2. *Rates rise on 4 April.* Contact c/o Flat 2/1, 691 Shields Rd, Pollokshields, Glasgow, G41 4QL. Membership forms and online registration at satellite5.org.uk.

12-14 Aug • **Nine Worlds Geekfest** (multimedia), Novotel London West, Hammersmith, London. 'Early' tickets *until 31 March* £85; 5-15s £28.50; under-5s free. Book online at ninemeworlds.co.uk.

30 Oct • **Paperback & Pulp Fair**, Royal National Hotel, Bedford Way, Russell Sq, London, WC1H 0DG. Contact harry.np at virgin net.

3-5 Feb 2017 • **Quoi de Neuf** (filk), Best Western Hotel, Marks Tey, Colchester. GoH Cecilia Eng, Jackie Mitchell. £34 reg, £24 unwaged, *rising to £36 and £25 on 1 April.* Cheques to UK Filk Convention, c/o 20 Glynbridge Gardens, Cheltenham, GL51 0BZ. See www.contabile.org.uk/quoideneuf; email quoideneuf at hewett org.

Rumblings. *London First Thursdays*: another change of plan thanks to a double booking. 3 March will again be at the Inn of Court without exclusive use of the cellar bar. The move to The Bishop's Finger now begins with the 7 April meeting; see news.ansible.uk/london.html.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. 'Though there are extraterrestrials, *We Are the Ants* by Shaun David Hutchinson (*The Five Stages of Andrew Brawley*) isn't really a science fiction novel.' (Shelf Awareness, 19 February) [AIP] Like so much non-sf, it 'blends existential despair with exploding planets.'

Awards. *Crawford* (debut fantasy): Kai Ashante Wilson, *The Sorcerer of the Wildeeps*.

- *Horror Writers Association Life Achievement*: Alan Moore and George A. Romero.
- *IAFA Distinguished Scholarship*: Cristina Bacchilega.
- *Jack Gaughan* (best new artist): Tommy Arnold.
- *New York State Writers Hall of Fame*: 2016 inductees include Samuel R. Delany and Stephen Sondheim.
- *Skylark Award*: Gardner Dozois.

Apocalypse Soon. Amazon's terms and conditions for its Lumberyard Materials games development tools forbid use with drones, medical equipment, nuclear facilities, manned spacecraft or live military combat, *except* as permitted by Clause 57.10: 'This restriction will not apply in the event of the occurrence (certified by the United States Centers for Disease Control or successor body) of a widespread viral infection transmitted via bites or contact with bodily fluids that causes human corpses to reanimate and seek to consume living human flesh, blood, brain or nerve tissue and is likely to result in the fall of organised civilisation.' ([Guardian](#), 11 February)

R.I.P. *Bill Baldwin* (1935-2015), author of the eight-book 'Helmsman' space opera sequence opening with *The Helmsman* (1985), died in October 2015; he was 80. [JB]

- *Robert Beecher* (1924-2016), US character actor and theatre builder seen in *Space Patrol* (1950-1955 tv, his first role), *Quantum Leap* (1990), *Phantasm III* (1994) and *Thirst* (1998), died on 12 February aged 91. [PDF]
- *Umberto Eco*, Italian author and academic famed for his international bestseller *The Name of the Rose* (1980; filmed 1986), died on 19 February aged 84. The darkly comic tangle of conspiracy theories in *Foucault's Pendulum* (1988) edges into fantasy, and his children's story *The Three Astronauts* (1966) is sf. I love his work.
- *Wayne England*, UK artist known for games-related illustrations – *D&D* books, *Magic: The Gathering* cards, Games Workshop products and GW's magazine *White Dwarf* – died on 9 February. [F770]
- *Anthony Fredrickson* (1953-2016), US scenic and graphic artist who worked on Star Trek productions and props from *The Next Generation* onward, died on 15 February; he was 62. With Doug Drexler he illustrated the *Star Fleet Medical Reference Manual* (1977). [F770]
- *P.D. Angel Gabriele* (1956-2016), US comics artist and publisher who worked on DC's *Kobra* and published a comics adaptation of the manga-based tv animation *The Space Giants*, died in late February aged 59. [PDF]
- *Kim Gamble*, Australian artist best known for illustrating the popular Tashi children's fantasies by Barbara and Anna Fienberg, died on 19 February aged 63. [AIP]
- *Daniel Gerson* (1966-2016), US screenwriter who with Robert L. Baird co-scripted *Monsters, Inc.* (2001), *Monsters University* (2013), *Big Hero 6* (2014) and other Pixar/Disney animations, died on 6 February; he was 49.
- *Michael Hanlon* (1964-2016), UK science journalist who wrote *The Science*

of *the Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* (2005), died on 9 February aged 51. (*Independent*, 27 February)

- *Bayard Johnson*, US screenwriter and producer who co-scripted *The Second Jungle Book* (1997) and *Tarzan and the Lost City* (1998), died on 10 February aged 63. [PDF]
- *Mark Justice* (1959-2016), US sf/horror author and radio host who wrote the zombie-apocalypse 'Dead Earth' trilogy (2007-2013) with David T. Wilbanks, died on 10 February. A solo novel is *The Dead Sheriff: Zombie Damnation* (2012). [BK]
- *David J. Lake* (1929-2016), Indian-born UK author and academic, in Australia from 1967, whose distinguished sf career began with *Walkers on the Sky* (1976) – which like his Wellsian tales *The Man Who Loved Morlocks* (1981) and 'The Truth about Weena' (*Dreaming Down Under*, 1998) won a Ditmar Award – died on 31 January; he was 86. [BRG]
- *Tony Luke* (1970-2016), UK comics/anime and animation creator who drew *Dominator* for *Metal Hammer* (1988; film versions from 2003) and produced the animated feature *Archangel Thunderbird* (SyFy UK 1998), died on 18 February after long illness. [JC]
- *Nigel McDowell*, Northern Irish author of the children's fantasies *Tall Tales from Pitch End* (2013) and *The Black North* (2014), died on 7 February; he was only 34. A third novel awaits publication. [AIP]
- *Angelos Mastorakis* (1949-2016), Greek sf editor who founded the magazine *Nova* in 1978 and was chief editor of *Ennea* 2000-2010 – publishing both translated international and new Greek sf and comics – died on 10 February. He was a co-founder and President of the Greek SF Society. [SP]
- *Chiaki Morosawa* (1959-2016), Japanese anime screenwriter who supervised and scripted the *Mobile Suit Gundam Seed* tv series plus its sequel and related film compilations, died on 19 February aged 56. [PDF]
- *Jake Page* (1936-2016), US *Smithsonian* magazine editor and author (mostly of nonfiction) whose four fantastic novels include the alternate-history titles *Operation: Shatterhand* (1996) and *Apacheria* (1998), died on 10 February aged 80. [MMW]
- *Jon Rollason* (1931-2016), UK tv actor seen in *The Avengers* (1962) and *Doctor Who* 'The Web of Fear' (1968), died on 20 February aged 84. [PDF]
- *Chris Rush* (1965-2016), US artist who illustrated more than 100 *Magic: The Gathering* cards including the famously rare and expensive Black Lotus,

died on 10 February. (io9)

- *Douglas Slocombe* (1913-2016), UK cinematographer whose credits include *The Man in the White Suit* (1951), *The Fearless Vampire Killers* (1967), *Rollerball* (1975) and the first three Indiana Jones films, died on 22 February; he was 103. [PDF]
- *Murray Tinkelman* (1933-2016), US artist and academic who painted some 40 covers for genre books (mostly in the 1970s, including several John Brunner and Robert Silverberg paperbacks) and was honoured by the Society of Illustrators and various other non-genre organizations, died on 30 January aged 82. [AIP]
- *Bud Webster* (1952-2016), US author, sf critic/historian, book dealer, poetry editor of the late *Helix SF* and SFWA Estates liaison, whose most substantial works are the nonfiction collections *Anthopology 101* (2010, on genre anthologies) and *Past Masters* (2013), died on 13 February; he was 63. [PDF]
- *Andrzej Zulawski* (1940-2016), controversial Polish film director and writer whose surreal-horrific approach was applied to symbolic fantasy in *Possession* (1981) and to sf in *On the Silver Globe* (1988, based on sf by his great-uncle Jerzy Zulawski), died on 17 February aged 75. [AIP]

The Weakest Link. *John Pantry*: ‘Name a character in the Bible beginning with G.’ *Contestant*: ‘Gandalf.’ (Premier Christian Radio, *Breakfast Show*) [PE]

Court Circular. Sherrilyn Kenyon, author of the Dark Hunter urban fantasies, is suing Cassandra Clare over the latter’s Shadowhunter series, allegedly too similar and increasingly tending to imitate the DH ambience: ‘Both the Dark Hunter series and the Shadowhunter series are about an elite band of warriors that must protect the human world from the unseen paranormal threat that seeks to destroy humans as they go about their daily lives.’ What an utterly novel concept. (*The Bookseller*, 9 February) It seems that Clare (as Claire) has past form in the world of Harry Potter fan fiction, as recorded at tedious length at fanlore.org/wiki/The_Cassandra_Claire_Plagiarism_Debacle. But the general resemblances now cited hardly add up to a copyright case.

Proleptic Dept. Recent *Publishers Weekly* headline: ‘LAST OCTOBER, PW VISITED THE LATE UMBERTO ECO AT HIS MILAN APARTMENT’. [PDF]

Publishers and Sinners. Samhain Publishing announced on 26 February that

it will ‘soon’ cease operations. ([RT Book Reviews](#))

As Others See Us II. Hank Stuever, tv critic, notes a possible downside to the new sf series *Colony* – if only for some of us: ‘... what’s also immediately apparent is a care for setting and character-building. “Colony” probably won’t work for the passionate sci-fi fan who demands the blueprints up front, but it might appeal to those who generally avoid the genre.’ (*Washington Post*, 13 January) [SM]

Awards Shortlists. **BSFA:** NOVEL Dave Hutchinson, *Europe at Midnight*; Chris Beckett, *Mother of Eden*; Aliette de Bodard, *The House of Shattered Wings*; Ian McDonald, *Luna: New Moon*; Justina Robson: *Glorious Angels*. **SHORT** Aliette de Bodard ‘Three Cups of Grief, by Starlight’ (*Clarkesworld* 100); Paul Cornell, ‘Witches of Lychford’ (Tor.com); Jeff Noon, ‘No Rez’ (*Interzone* 260); Nnedi Okorafor, ‘Binti’ (Tor.com); Gareth L. Powell: ‘Ride the Blue Horse’ (*Matter*). **NONFICTION** Nina Allan: ‘Time Pieces: Doctor Change or Doctor Die’ (*IZ* 261); Alisa Krasnostein and Alexandra Pierce, eds, *Letters to Tiptree*; Jonathan McCalmont: ‘What Price Your Critical Agency’ (*Ruthless Culture*); Adam Roberts, *Rave and Let Die*; Jeff Vandermeer: ‘From Annihilation to Acceptance: A Writer’s Surreal Journey’, (*Atlantic* 1/15). **ARTWORK** Jim Burns, cover, *Pelquin’s Comet* (Newcon Press); Vincent Sammy, ‘Songbird’ (*IZ* 257); Sarah Anne Langton, cover, *Jews Versus Zombies* (Jurassic London).

• **Kitschies** novels: Margaret Atwood, *The Heart Goes Last*; Dave Hutchinson, *Europe at Midnight*; Hugo Wilcken, *The Reflection*; N.K. Jemisin, *The Fifth Season*; Adam Roberts, *The Thing Itself*. **DEBUT** Sara Taylor, *The Shore*; A. Igoni Barrett, *Blackass*; Kirsty Logan, *The Gracekeepers*; Paul Meloy, *The Night Clock*; Tade Thompson, *Making Wolf*. See www.thekitschies.com for more.

• **Nebula** novels: Charles E. Gannon, *Raising Caine*; N.K. Jemisin, *The Fifth Season*; Ann Leckie, *Ancillary Mercy*; Ken Liu, *The Grace of Kings*; Naomi Novik, *Uprooted*; Lawrence M. Schoen, *Barsk: The Elephants’ Graveyard*; Fran Wilde, *Updraft*. **YA** (Andre Norton Award): Tina Connolly, *Seriously Wicked*; Kate Elliott, *Court of Fives*; Frances Hardinge, *Cuckoo Song*; Nicole Kornher-Stace, *Archivist Wasp*; Fonda Lee, *Zeroboxer*; Daniel José Older, *Shadowshaper*; Laura Ruby, *Bone Gap*; Noelle Stevenson, *Nimona*, Fran Wilde, *Updraft*. More at www.sfwaworld.com/2016/02/2015-nebula-awards-nominees-announced/.

• *Stoker* novels: Clive Barker, *The Scarlet Gospels*; Michaelbrent Collings, *The Deep*; JG Faherty, *The Cure*; Patrick Freivald, *Black Tide*; Paul Tremblay, *A Head Full of Ghosts*; DEBUT Courtney Alameda, *Shutter*; Nicole Cushing, *Mr. Suicide*; Brian Kirk, *We Are Monsters*; John McIlveen, *Hannahwhere*; John Claude Smith, *Riding the Centipede*. YA Jennifer Brozek, *Never Let Me Sleep*; Michaelbrent Collings, *The Ridealong*; John Dixon, *Devil's Pocket*; Tonya Hurley, *Hallowed*; Maureen Johnson, *The Shadow Cabinet*; Ian Welke, *End Times at Ridgemont High*. More at stokercon2016.horror.org/?page_id=30.

Magazine Scene. *Cosmos*, the Australian popular-science magazine that regularly ran short sf stories, has downsized its editorial team; victims, alas, include the fiction editor Cat Sparks. [DB]

The Dead Past. *70 Years Ago*: ‘Hugo Gernsback issued in Jan. 36-page slick-paper 5x7 mag. called “Tame” in parody of “Time”. Dated Xmas 2045 the issue was devoted to a revue of the first 100 years of the atomic age; four-colour cover shows bald-headed stenographer writing letter with “mindwriter” machine; 29 interior pictures of people and things of 2045 – actress with hair being publicized throw-back because all normal people are “baldies”; advertisements in tune with rest of mag.....’ ([British Fantasy Society Bulletin 25](#), March 1946)

• *40 Years Ago*: ‘Those fans who read the British editions of Marvel Comics may be seeing artwork by a well known fanartist and not even realise it. Steve Stiles, American fanartist and former TAFF winner, is currently working for Marvel’s British comics. [... *But*] he does not get any credits.’ ([Checkpoint 66](#), March 1976)

• *20 Years Ago*, Ursula K. Le Guin wrote: ‘Tell me what I can send in exchange for *Ansible*. In Oregon we grow many large fir trees; also we have fish.’ (*Ansible* 104, March 1996)

Fanfundery. *TAFF*: your final reminder for 2016. Anna Raftery and Wolf von Witting are still contending for the westbound trip to MidAmericon II in Kansas City this August. The voting deadline is 29 March 2016. See taff.org.uk for more; vote online at tafftrip.com/taff-ballot-2016/.

• *DUFF* opened nominations for its 2016 race (northbound from Australasia to MidAmericon II) after the February *Ansible*, and they close today; the ballot is awaited at downunderfanfund.wordpress.com.

Media Awards. *BAFTAs and Oscars:* best animated film was *Inside Out*.
• *Razzies, Worst Film (tie):* *Fantastic Four* and *Fifty Shades of Grey*.

Thog's Masterclass. *Dept of Arresting Opening Lines.* 'The sun peeked over the horizon like the head of a giant radioactive manatee.' (Brandon Sanderson, *Calamity*, 2016) [DG]

• *Synaesthesia Dept.* 'Everything she did was for his benefit, but Tom couldn't see it; he was dumb to her games.' (Elizabeth Brundage, *A Stranger Like You*, 2010) [PB]

• *Eyeballs in the Sky.* 'His eyes fixed like grappling hooks on Ari's face ...' (Rachel Pollack, *Golden Vanity*, 1980)

• *Exotic Future Profanity Dept (Grindhouse Division).* 'That pair of toad droppings are trying to kill my ass!' 'Oh, bloody monkey-grinding CRAP!' 'What the bleep does it matter to a mother-grinding bear what I'm wearing!' 'Crapping mother-grinding lobsters!' 'What a monkey bleeping dry-dock you are!' 'Okay, you piece of monkey crap. You are under lobster-grinding arrest.' (all Carleton Grindle, 'Star Guard', Fall 2010 *Startling Stories*) [DL]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

• 11 March 2016: Christopher Priest talks to the Brum Group. 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre. £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future meetings/speakers: 8 April 2016, Jacey Bedford; 13 May 2016 tba; 10 June 2016 Ian Whates; 8 July 2016 Dave Lally; 12 August 2016 Summer Social meal; 12 September 2016 tba; 14 October 2016 Andy Lound; 4 November 2016 tba; 2 December 2016 Xmas Social.

• 27 April 2016: Thomas Olde Heuvelt signing, London Forbidden Planet Megastore, 6pm-7pm.

Arthur C. Clarke Award schedule for 2016: full list of all books submitted to be announced on 4 March, shortlist on 24 April and winner at the ceremony on 24 August.

Editorial. No, I'm not attending Eastercon this year but am sure it will be jolly splendid and wish everyone a great time. (*The Plain People of Fandom: So why not come? Myself:* It's all very complicated and tedious. The

Newport house sale drags on and on.) Meanwhile, some more eye candy: I've been cheering myself up by expanding that old list of Josh Kirby covers with links to a new Kirby gallery loosely based on the *SF Encyclopedia*'s. This is an ongoing project and many missing cover scans are sought:

<http://ansible.uk/misc/joshlist.html>

<http://ansible.uk/images/josh.php>

Random Fandom. *Liz Holliday* urgently needs to sell her Mancunicon adult membership and asks £55. Contact ~~liz~~ at ~~lizholliday~~ ~~co-uk~~. [Now sold.]

• *Bud Webster*'s wife Mary Horton has been left with horrifying expenses from his US medical treatment and hospice care. Fans are invited to help:

<https://squareup.com/market/marscon/bud-webster-medical-fund>

Fake Stephen Kings on Amazon are the bane of Brian Keene's life:

<http://www.briankeene.com/2016/02/17/what-it-takes-to-be-a-bestseller/>

Thog's Second Helping. *Pastel Flickering Dept*: 'The sun, flickering with films of pink and green, lifted over the horizon.' (Jack Vance, 'The Miracle Workers' in *Eight Fantasms and Magics*, 1969) [LP]

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Ansible 345, April 2016

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo:
Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or the radiant car
thy sparrows drew.

Axed! No champagne corks will pop for the 21st anniversary of my *SFX* magazine column (in every issue since the June 1995 launch). The next one, in *SFX* 274, is my last. Austere overlords counting beans at Future Publishing HQ have imposed a budget cut, and editor Richard Edwards can no longer afford what he kindly calls ‘star writers and illustrations’; column illustrator Andy Watt also gets the push.

- Free from the four-weekly *SFX* deadlines, I’ll be turning more of my backlist into ebooks. [Up Through an Empty House of Stars: Reviews and Essays 1980-2002](#) now has its first digital edition – see ae.ansible.uk. Also in preparation is a book of the 91 still uncollected *SFX* columns – plus extras to make the count up to 100 – all tentatively titled *The Last SFX Visions*.

Fool’s Gold

Pintér Bence cries ‘*J’accuse!*’ (though in Hungarian) with a post at sci-fi.mandiner.hu stating that almost all translated foreign content in the Hungarian magazine *Galaktika* is pirated from such online sources as *Clarkesworld*, *Lightspeed*, *Strange Horizons* and Tor.com, without rights-holders’ permission and of course without payment. ([23 March](#)) [SFS]

Arthur Krystal explains the literary Catch-22 that has so long perplexed the tiny minds of genre-lovers: ‘Literary work is not a genre. You can’t have bad literary writing in the way that you can have bad mysteries or bad science fiction, because then it wouldn’t be literary.’ (*Chronicle of Higher Education*, 6 March) [MMW]

Jack McDevitt officially has a heavenly body: the IAU-approved name of Asteroid 328305, discovered in 2006, is Jackmcdevitt. [L]

Sharyn November's senior editorial position at Viking Children's Books was 'eliminated' in a reorganization. She began at Puffin in 1990 and had been editorial director of Firebird from its 2002 launch.

Conk-Singleton

9-10 Apr • **Sci Fi Scarborough** (comics, media), The Spa Complex, Scarborough. Tickets £27.50 (day £16.50); 6-16s £11 (day £5.50); under-6s free. See www.scifiscarborough.co.uk.

11 Apr - 20 Jun • **Doctor Who** (11-week Monday evening class), Aquinas College, Stockport. Contact Sheila Lahan, 0161 419 9163.

21-24 Apr • **Dead by Dawn** (horror film festival), Filmhouse Cinema One, 88 Lothian Rd, Edinburgh, EH3 9BZ. £75 reg. Box office 0131 228 2688. Online booking via www.deadbydawn.co.uk.

27 Apr - 6 May • **Sci-Fi London** (film), various London venues. Clarke shortlist to be announced at opening. See sci-fi-london.com.

30 Apr - 1 May • **EM-Con** (media), Motorpoint Arena, Nottingham. £160 reg with extras (2 photoshoots, 1 autograph); £10 day (11am); £15 day (10am); £115 day (10am) with extras. See www.em-con.co.uk.

27-30 May • **Supernova** sf film festival, Odeon Printworks, Manchester. Tickets £50. See grimmfest.com/grimmupnorth/.

28-29 May • **Satellite 5**, Marriott Hotel, Glasgow. £55 reg; 12-17s £20; 5-11s £5; under-5s £2. *Rates rise on 4 April*. Contact c/o Flat 2/1, 691 Shields Rd, Pollokshields, Glasgow, G41 4QL. Membership forms and online registration at satellite5.org.uk.

12-14 Aug • **Nine Worlds Geekfest** (multimedia), Novotel London West, Hammersmith, London. *Now £100 reg*, rising to £115 on 1 July; 5-15s £33; under-5s free. Book online at ninemeworlds.co.uk.

3-4 Sep • **Middle-earth Festival**, Sarehole Mill, Cole Bank Rd, Hall Green, Birmingham, B13 0BD. Free. See middleearthfestival.co.uk.

17-18 Sep • **Futurefest** (futurology), Tobacco Dock, London. 'Early bird' tickets £70, *rising to £80 on 1 May*; day tickets to be available in June. See

futurefest.org for 2016 ‘themes and curators’.

1 Oct • **TitanCon**, Wellington Park Hotel, Belfast. £25 reg; £5 supporting; tickets available from 9 April. See titancon.com.

7-9 Oct • **Destination Star Trek**, NEC, Birmingham. Day £29; 2 days £39; 3 days £49; VIP £145 to £2999! See destinationstartrek.com.

28-30 Oct • **Festival of Fantastic Films**, Pendulum Hotel, Manchester. £75 reg; day £30 Fri or Sun, £40 Sat. Contact 95 Meadowgate Rd, Salford, Manchester, M6 8EN. See also fantastic-films.com.

28 Nov - 3 Dec • **Arvon SF Course**, The Hurst, Shropshire. £750 per single room. See www.arvon.org/course/speculative-fiction/.

3-5 Feb 2017 • **Quoi de Neuf** (filk), Best Western Hotel, Marks Tey, Colchester. *Now £36 reg, £25 unwaged.* Cheques to UK Filk Convention, c/o 20 Glynbridge Gardens, Cheltenham, GL51 0BZ. See www.contabile.org.uk/quoideneuf; email quoideneuf at hewett org.

3-5 Feb 2017 • **SF Ball** (media), Grand Harbour Hotel, Southampton. £132 reg; child £66; other options. See sfbevents.com/sfball.

10-12 Feb 2017 • **Conrunner 4** (conrunning), Park Inn, Nottingham. £35 reg *until 31 May*. Contact 56 Jackmans Place, Letchworth Garden City, Herts, SG6 1RH. See also www.conrunner.co.uk. (First announced for 3-5 February; moved to avoid clash with filk con.)

24-26 Feb 2017 • **Redemption '17** (multimedia), Royal Victoria Hotel, Sheffield. £55 reg *rising to £65 on 12 April* (day £40); under-18s £25 (day £15); under-3s free; £15 supp. Contact 61 Chaucer Rd, Farnborough, Hants, GU14 8SP. See www.redemption-convention.org.uk.

30 Mar - 1 Apr • **Sci-Fi Weekender**, Hafan y Mor Holiday Park, near Pwllheli, Gwynedd, North Wales. Booking by accommodation from £520 for two; Fri+Sat day pass TBA? See www.scifiweekender.com.

CANCELLED. 14-17 Apr 2017 • **Pasgon** (Eastercon), Mercure Holland House Hotel, Cardiff. Cancellation announced at www.pasgon.org.uk on 10 March, owing to ‘location issues’ believed to be unfeasible hotel facilities charges. Refunds are planned; members who didn’t receive email about this should contact membership at pasgon.org.uk.

14-17 Apr 2017 • **Innominate** (Eastercon), Hilton Metropole, NEC, Birmingham – replacing Pasgon. GoH Pat Cadigan, Judith Clute, Colin Harris. £55 reg; £40 YA/unwaged; £20 child; £1 infants – *rising on 1 May to £60 reg, £45 YA/unwaged*. Cheques to Eastercon 2017 c/o 3 Deveron Rd, Halfway, Sheffield, S20 8GE. See www.eastercon2017.uk.

30 Mar - 2 Apr 2018 • **Follycon** (Eastercon), Majestic Hotel, Harrogate. GoH Kieron Gillen, Christina Lake, Nnedi Okorafor, Kim Stanley Robinson. £60 reg; £45 YA/unwaged; £30 supp. Cheques to Eastercon 2018 c/o 19 Uphall Rd, Cambridge, CB3 1HX. Credit cards (*preferred*) via www.follycon.org.uk. Email: info at follycon org uk.

Rumblings. *London First Thursdays*: still moving to The Bishop's Finger as of the 7 April meeting. See news.ansible.uk/london.html.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others Abuse Us. 'No self-respecting adult should buy comics or watch superhero movies'. (*Daily Telegraph* headline, 28 March)

• 'Like most science fiction, this is a pack of lies meant for babies.' (Sam Biddle, Gawker.com, 4 January) [TM]

Awards. *A. Bertram Chandler* (Australia): James (Jocko) Allen.

• **BSFA**: NOVEL Alette de Bodard, *The House of Shattered Wings*. SHORT Alette de Bodard, 'Three Cups of Grief, by Starlight' (*Clarkesworld* 100). NONFICTION Adam Roberts, *Rave and Let Die: The SF and Fantasy of 2014*. ARTWORK Jim Burns, cover for *Pelquin's Comet*.

• *Ditmar* (Australia), best novel: Lisa L. Hannett, *Lament for the Afterlife*.

• *Doc Weir* (unsung UK fan heroes): Kathy Westhead. [BB]

• *James White* (unpublished short): David Cleden, 'Rock, Paper, Incisors'.

• **Kitschies**: NOVEL Margaret Atwood, *The Heart Goes Last*. DEBUT Tade Thompson, *Making Wolf*. COVER Jet Purdie, *The Door That Led to Where* by Sally Gardner. NATIVELY DIGITAL FICTION *Life Is Strange*. SPECIAL Patrick Ness's refugee-crisis Save the Children fundraiser.

• *Kate Wilhelm Solstice Award* (SFWA; formerly just Solstice Award) for career achievement: Sir Terry Pratchett.

• **Lambda Awards** (LGBT) sf/f/horror shortlist: John Inman, *The Boys on the Mountain*; Fletcher DeLancey, *The Capphenon*; Ally Blue, *Down*; Robert

Levy, *The Glittering World*; Kirsty Logan, *The Gracekeepers*; J.A. Rock, *Minotaur*; Kate Sherwood, *Sacrati*; Jude McLaughlin, *Wonder City Stories*.

- *Norma K. Hemming Award* (Australia): Louise Katz, *The Orchid Nursery*.
- *Philip K. Dick Award*: Ramez Naam, *Apex*.

Future Chic. ‘The 21st-century man will abandon tie, shirt, and trousers. Instead he will be outfitted in the masculine version of the one-piece stretch moonsuit for travelling, and will strip down to long tights and a short toga, reminiscent of the free-swinging styles of the Roman charioteer.’ (*Saturday Evening Post*, 17 October 1964) [MMW]

R.I.P. *Sir Ken Adam* (1921-2016), German-born UK production designer whose sets included the villain’s HQ in *Dr No* (1962) and the War Room in *Dr Strangelove* (1964), died on 10 March aged 95. He worked on seven Bond films in all, and designed the car for *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* (1968).

- *Sylvia Anderson* (1927-2016), UK tv/film producer, writer and voice actress, co-creator with her husband Gerry of the much-loved *Thunderbirds* (in which she famously voiced Lady Penelope) and other sf tv series using their trademark ‘Supermarionation’ puppets, died on 15 March; she was 88. [AW]

- *Ken Barr* (1933-2016), Scotland-born US artist whose magazine work appeared in *Nebula SF*, various DC and Marvel titles, *Eerie* and *Vampirella*, and who later painted hundreds of book covers beginning with Zelazny’s *The Guns of Avalon* (1974), died on 25 March aged 83. [SQP]

- *Howard Berk* (1925-2016), US screenwriter and novelist whose one sf title was *The Sun Grows Cold* (1971) and who wrote a few 1969-1972 episodes of *Mission: Impossible*, died on 27 March aged 91. [PDF]

- *Terry Brain*, UK animator who created the children’s tv series *The Trap Door* (1984, 1986) and worked on Aardman productions including *Chicken Run* (2000), *The Curse of the Were-Rabbit* (2005) and *Shaun the Sheep Movie* (2015), died on 25 March; he was 60.

- *Tony Burton* (1937-2016), US heavyweight boxer turned character actor seen in *The Shining* (1980), *Exorcism* (2003) and several genre tv series from *The Invisible Man* (1975) to *Poltergeist: The Legacy* (1996), died on 25 February. [MMW]

- *Adrienne Corri* (1931-2016), UK actress whose genre credits include *A Clockwork Orange* (1971), *Vampire Circus* (1972) and other horror films, and *Doctor Who*: ‘The Leisure Hive’ (1980) died on 13 March aged 84.

- *Richard Davalos* (1930-2016), US actor seen in *Battle Beyond the Stars* (1980) and *Something Wicked This Way Comes* (1983), *died on 18 March aged 85. [PDF]
- *Patty Duke* (1946-2016), US actress whose genre credits include *The Daydreamer* (voice, 1966), *She Waits* (1972), *The Sixth Sense* (1972), *Look What's Happened to Rosemary's Baby* (1976), *Curse of the Black Widow* (1977), *The Swarm* (1978) and *Grave Secrets: The Legacy of Hilltop Drive* (1992), died on 2 March; she was 69. [PDF]
- *Tony Dyson* (1947-2016), UK special effects creator who built eight R2-D2 droid models for the first *Star Wars* films and also worked on *Moonraker* (1979), *Altered States* (1980), *Superman II* (1980) and *Dragonslayer* (1981), died on or before 4 March; he was 68. [PDF]
- *Earl Hamner, Jr.* (1923-2016), US screenwriter/producer who scripted eight *Twilight Zone* episodes (1962-1964) and the film of *Charlotte's Web* (1973), died on 24 March aged 92. [F770]
- *Barry Hines* (1939-2016), UK author and screenwriter who scripted the BAFTA-winning docudrama *Threads* (1984) – about a nuclear strike on Sheffield and its aftermath – died on 18 March aged 76. (BBC)
- *Ken Howard* (1944-2016), US actor with tv credits for *Batman: The Animated Series* (voice, 1993), *Captain Planet and the Planetears* (voice, 1994), *Ghost Whisperer* (2006) and *Eli Stone* (2008), died on 23 March aged 71. [MMW]
- *Gary Hutzel* (1955-2016), multiple Emmy-winning US visual effects artist whose credits include *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* and the rebooted *Battlestar Galactica*, died on 3 March aged 60. [PDF]
- *Morris Keesan*, long-time US fan and active participant at the *File 770* blog, died on 30 March; he was 63. [AIP]
- *Justin Leiber* (1938-2016), US academic and author – Fritz Leiber's son – whose work on the philosophy of the mind was dramatized in his sf novel *Beyond Rejection* (1980) and its thematic sequels, died on 22 March; he was 77. [MD]
- *Eric Medalle* (1973-2016), US *Pokémon* artist and designer, died in a storm accident on 13 March when a tree fell on his car; he was 42.
- *Peggy Ranson* (1948-2016), Hugo-winning US fan artist who created small-press book covers and much interior art (including cover and interiors for George Alec Effinger's *Maureen Birnbaum*, *Barbarian Swordsman*), died

on 19 March aged 67. [GHL]

- *Nancy Reagan* (1921-2016), former US First Lady and actress who starred in *Donovan's Brain* (1953), died on 6 March aged 94. [PDF]
- *Paul Ryan* (1949-2016), US comics artist who worked for Marvel (*Spider-Man*, *Avengers*, *Iron Man*, *Fantastic Four*) and DC (*Superman*, *Flash*, *Batman*) and drew many coloured Sunday instalments of the newspaper-syndicated *Phantom* strip, died on 6 March aged 66. [PDF]
- *Augie Scotto* (1927-2016), US comics artist and cartoonist who worked for Will Eisner's *PS* magazine, Marvel Comics and DC Comics, died on 15 March aged 88. [PDF]
- *Garry Shandling* (1949-2016), US comedian whose film credits include *What Planet Are You From?* (2000) as writer/producer and *Iron Man 2* (2010) and *Captain America: The Winter Soldier* (2014) as actor, died on 24 March aged 66. [DL]
- *James Sheldon* (1920-2016), US director whose genre credits include episodes of *The Twilight Zone* (1961-1962), *Batman* (1966) and *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.* (1967), died on 12 March aged 95. [PDF]
- *Pauline Whitby* (1928-2015), UK author who wrote as Paul Ash, Paul Ashwell and Pauline Ashwell – under which name her debut was the Hugo-shortlisted 'Unwillingly to School' (1958 *Astounding*) – died on 23 November 2015. 'The Lost Kafoozalum' (1960 *Analog*) was also a Hugo finalist; both form part of her *Unwillingly to Earth* (1993).
- *Michael White* (1936-2016), UK theatre and film producer whose credits include *The Rocky Horror Show* (1973 London stage premiere), *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* (1975) and *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* (1975), died on 7 March; he was 80. [F770]

As Others See That Thing of Wonder Woman's. 'What are we to make of the gender codes in Batman v Superman? Is it confused or certain, modern or prehistoric? To reach a clear conclusion, I might have to tell you the end, or at least flesh out my analysis that the lasso in the final battle is a metaphor for the omnipotent but non-lethal vagina.' (Zoe Williams, *The Guardian*, 23 March) [JCo]

Outraged Letters. *Steve Sneyd*: 'In upfronting US election daftitudes in [A344](#), you exercised extraordinary self-restraint, as a mega Sladekist, in not pointing out that Trump himself is clearly influenced by sf for his tentpole policy, viz. John Sladek's "The Great Wall of Mexico" (1973; reprinted in

Keep the Giraffe Burning), a terrifying prophecy of a Trump presidency! John's earlier masterpiece of political satire, in *The Müller-Fokker Effect* (1970), was President Ronald Reagan.

The Weakest Link. *Bradley Walsh*: 'In *Julius Caesar*, which character said "Cry Havoc! and let slip the dogs of war?"' *Contestant*: 'Macbeth.' (ITV, *The Chase*) [PE]

The Dead Past. *50 Years Ago*: 'LAFAYETTE RON HUBBARD and his dear old Sussex-based Scientology were cut to ribbons in a long feature in the 14th February *Daily Mail* which pointed out that "Doctor" Hubbard's Ph.D degree was awarded by the non-existent Sequoia University. In *The Times* of 8th March Hubbard ran a 15 guinea advert to renounce his bogus doctorate because of "the damage being done in our society with nuclear physics and psychiatry by persons calling themselves 'doctor'." Hey ho.' ([Skyrack 87](#), April 1966)

• *40 Years Ago*, another strange and powerful cult was born: '*The Astral League* is a new group hoping to promote peace and understanding should extraterrestrials land on Earth. High Priest is Don West ...' ([Checkpoint 68](#), April 1976)

Harlan Is Everywhere. On the tortured aspect of the US politician required to stand mutely behind Donald Trump at the latter's 1 March press conference and elsewhere: 'Chris Christie has no mouth, but he must scream.' (Alexandra Petri, *Washington Post*, 2 March) [LW]

Fanfundery. *TAFF 2016 result*: Anna Raftery 94 votes (69 Europe/25 NA), Wolf von Witting 82 (56/26), No Preference 14 (4/10); 190 ballots cast. Anna Raftery wins and travels to MidAmeriCon II in August. Details and newsletter at taff.org.uk.

• *DUFF 2016*. The race from Australasia to MidAmeriCon has only one candidate, Clare McDonald-Sims:

ozfanfunds.com/duff/DUFF_onlineballot2016.html. Deadline 16 May.

• *GUFF*: another trip report! Gillian Polack's *Gillian's Book of Lists* (2014 trip) can now be bought online: see taff.org.uk/guff.html for the link.

• *Fan Funds Auction Bonanza*: £866 was raised at Mancunicon, to be split equally between TAFF and GUFF. A further \$700A was raised at the Australian Natcon in Brisbane, mostly for GUFF.

Group Gropes. *A2Z SF Group* meets on the third Thursday each month at

The United Brethren Pub, New Writtle Street, Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 0LF.
8pm onward. 'All SF fans welcome.'

Thog's Masterclass. *Out of Context Dept.* 'But when she took the warm shaft in her hands, she found that she did not know how to call upon its strength.' (Stephen Donaldson, *The Runes of the Earth*, 2004) [JaC]

• *Dept of Musical Quakes.* '... for several minutes he went on quaking and hyperventilating. He sounded like a Brazilian musical instrument.' (Jean-Patrick Manchette, *3 to Kill*, 1976; trans Donald Nicholson-Smith 2002) [PB]

• *Eyeballs in the Sky.* 'Her eyes have the puckered sheen of day-old ripe olives.' Perhaps this is why '... fifty percent of his eye contact is below her collar bone.' (Ed Bryant, 'Their Thousandth Season', *Clarion II*, 1972) [BA]

• *Back of an Envelope Dept.* Scientist: '... we will start the rocket off [*from Earth*] at a moderate speed.' Reporter: 'What do you consider a moderate speed?' Scientist, twinkling: 'Oh, perhaps two miles a second.' Reporter, after rapid calculation: 'Then the rocket will reach the moon in about thirty-five seconds, Doctor?' (John Blaine, *The Rocket's Shadow*, 1947) [RR]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

• 8 April 2016: Jacey Bedford talks to the Brum Group. 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre. £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future meetings/speakers: 13 May 2016 tba; 10 June 2016 Ian Whates; 8 July 2016 Dave Lally; 12 August 2016 Summer Social meal; 12 September 2016 tba; 14 October 2016 Andy Lound; 4 November 2016 tba; 2 December 2016 Xmas Social.

• 27 April 2016: Thomas Olde Heuvelt signing, London Forbidden Planet Megastore, 6pm-7pm.

World Fantasy Award. The competition to design a new trophy is open: 'The ideal design will be simple and elegant, *representing both fantasy and horror*, without bearing any physical resemblance to any person, living or dead.' (Jim Henley at *File 770*: 'So, an elf impaled on a stake?') Perks including ten years of complimentary World Fantasy Convention memberships are offered, though no actual money.

<http://www.arctera.com/wfa/wfadmin-design-rules.htm>

<http://file770.com/?p=28255>

Tiptree Award News! Pat Murphy excitingly confides that the 2016 results announcement will be just too late for this issue.

C.o.A. *Kim Huett*, 4D 36 Glenorchy St, Lyons, ACT 2606, Australia.

BSFA London Meeting. As we go to press, the April event date remains unconfirmed: the normal fourth Wednesday, 27 April, clashes with the opening ceremony of Sci-Fi London and the Clarke shortlist announcement. Other expected details: Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. With Tessa Farmer. Free. Keep watching the skies at:

<http://www.bsfa.co.uk/>

<http://news.ansible.uk/london.html>

~~Later: Dave Lally informs me that this meeting will be on **20 April 2016**, venue and guest as above.~~

Still later, 19 April 2016: Cancelled at short notice owing to illness.

Thog's Second Helping. *Pathetic Fallacy Dept.* 'Billions of stars looked down on me like the eyes of cold and disapproving nuns at the world's worst Catholic school.' (Allison M. Dickson, *Colt Coltrane and the Lotus Killer*, 2013) [WM]

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1 April 2016.

Ansible 346, May 2016

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo:
Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or the which of
the what-she-did.

All Over. *SFX* #274, published in late April, carried the magazine's 274th and last Langford column. To mark the occasion I've prepared an expanded ebook edition of *The SEX Column and Other Misprints* (2005), containing the first 128 instalments plus various other special features written for *SFX*. See, if you dare, ae.ansible.uk/?t=sexcolumn. Further columns are collected in *Starcombing* (2009, ebook coming soonish) and the final Götterdämmerung of *The Last SFX Visions* (in preparation).

The State of the Art

Iain Banks would surely have been thrilled by SpaceX's first successful tail-down landing of a booster rocket, on one of two robot ocean platforms named for his Culture starships: *Of Course I Still Love You*. The other recovery barge is called *Just Read the Instructions*. (8 April)

Kelly Link's collection *Get in Trouble: Stories* was one of the two finalists that didn't quite win the 2016 Pulitzer Prize for fiction.

Alistair McDowall, according to a BBC report, 'doesn't regard X [his play set on Pluto] as science fiction.' He explains: 'It's a play set in space but I don't think it's a space play. I think of it more as a psychological drama. Like a lot of science fiction, it's not about space or Pluto. It's about people on Earth.' However, 'I was very aware of its space setting and its genre tropes, so I tried to ground myself as much as possible and wrote it with pen and paper.' ([BBC](http://bbc.com), 7 April) [KM]

David A. Riley withdrew from the HWA's Bram Stoker Awards anthology jury in the wake of considerable muttering about his past (long past, he

insists) membership of the racist UK National Front.

Andy Weir was grilled by lady interviewer Michelle Z. Donahue about his astonishing choice of protagonist for a forthcoming sf novel: ‘Your next book will have a woman as the central character. Given that “gender wars” in science fields is still a contentious topic, why did you decide to go with a lady lead?’ (Smithsonian.com, 19 April) Oh dear.

Concettism

Until 24 Jul • **The Great British Graphic Novel** (exhibition), Cartoon Museum, London. £7; £5 unwaged. See www.cartoonmuseum.org.

7 May • **Stars of Time** (film/comics), Helicopter Museum, Locking Moor Rd, Weston-super-Mare, BS24 8PP. £12.50; £7.50 concessions and children. Bookings 01934 635227, www.starsofetime.co.uk or at door.

20-29 May • **Bradford Literature Festival**, with some sf, comics and graphic novel content. See www.bradfordliteraturefestival.co.uk.

25 May • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. With Justina Robson. Free.

27-30 May • **Supernova** sf film festival, Odeon Printworks, Manchester. Tickets £50. See grimmfest.com/grimmupnorth/.

28-29 May • **Satellite 5**, Marriott Hotel, Glasgow. £55 reg; 12-17s £20; 5-11s £5; under-5s £2. *Advance booking closes 14 May*; £60 or £30/day (12-17s £20 or £10/day) at the door. See satellite5.org.uk.

28 May • **Wonderlands**: The U.K. Graphic Novel Expo, Cityspace, Chester Road, Sunderland, SR1 3SD. See www.wonderlands.org.uk.

29 May • **Triffid Alley** plaque anniversary (see A333). 11:30am at drinking fountain, South End Green, London, NW3 2DG. David Ketterer will unveil his evidence that John Wyndham met George Orwell.

25 Jun • **BSFA/SF Foundation AGMs & mini convention**, Lecture Theatre 1, Blackett Laboratory, Imperial College, London, SW7 2AZ. GoH David A. Hardy, Liz Williams. 9:30am-4:30pm. Free; all welcome.

28-29 Jun • **Science for Fiction**, Imperial College, London. Science

presentations *for published authors only*. Circa £30, inc lunch on 29th. Contact Dave Clements, d dot clements at imperial dot ac dot uk.

28-30 Jun • **SFRA/CRSF Conference**, Rendall Building, Liverpool University. £169.99 inc banquet. See tinyurl.com/hdryznq.

30 Jun - 29 Aug • **Daydreaming with Stanley Kubrick** (exhibition), Somerset House, London. 10am-6pm. £12.50; £9.50 concessions.

23-25 Jul • **SF Foundation Masterclass in SF Criticism**, Royal Observatory, Greenwich. £200 reg; registered postgraduates £150. For fuller details see www.sf-foundation.org/masterclass.

12-15 Aug • **Continuum 2016** (RPG), John Foster Hall, Leicester University. £35 reg; also day rates. See continuumconvention.co.uk.

25-29 Aug • **Frightfest** (horror film festival), VUE Shepherds Bush, London. Bookings: www.frightfest.co.uk or 020 8296 0555.

9-10 Sep • **Andromeda 2**, Moseley All Services Club, 91 Church Rd, Moseley, Birmingham, B13 9EA. £30 reg inc Fri evening buffet; £25 Sat only (£100 for five); 12-16s £10. See ac2.greatbritishhorror.com.

17-18 Sep • **Futurefest** (futuresology), Tobacco Dock, London. *Now £80 reg*; day tickets to be available in June. See futurefest.org.

4-6 Nov • **Armadacon 28**, Future Inns, Plymouth. £35 reg; day £20 Sat, £15 Sun (concessions £30, £15, £10). Contact Moor Cottage, Cardinham, Bodmin, Cornwall, PL30 4BR; or see www.armadacon.org.

5-6 Nov • **Comic Con** (comics), Leeds. As usual this is part of Thought Bubble, the Leeds Comic Art Festival, running 1-6 November. Ticket prices TBA. More at thoughtbubblefestival.com.

10-12 Feb 2017 • **Conrunner 4** (conrunning), Park Inn, Nottingham. £35 reg *rising to £40 on 1 June*. Contact 56 Jackmans Place, Letchworth Garden City, Herts, SG6 1RH. See www.conrunner.co.uk.

24-26 Feb 2017 • **Redemption '17** (multimedia), Royal Victoria Hotel, Sheffield. *Now £65 reg* (day £40); under-18s £25 (day £15); under-3s free; £15 supp. Contact 61 Chaucer Rd, Farnborough, Hants, GU14 8SP. See www.redemption-convention.org.uk.

14-17 Apr 2017 • **Innominate** (Eastercon), Hilton Metropole, NEC,

Birmingham. Now £60 reg; £45 YA/unwaged; £20 child; £1 infants. Cheques to Eastercon 2017 c/o 3 Deveron Rd, Halfway, Sheffield, S20 8GE. Online registration and more at www.eastercon2017.uk.

Rumblings. *Irish Discworld Convention 5*: announced for 6-9 October 2017, with details to appear at 2017.idwcon.org on 25 May 2016.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See *Game of Thrones*. ‘The Seven Kingdoms are divided into nine regions, with a logic that will be familiar to all fans of fantasy, and even to a few normal people.’ (*New Yorker*, 18 April) [LG] ‘Research reveals that there have been 60 flashes of female breasts in the HBO show so far, but only a pair of penises’. (*Guardian*, 23 April) [AIP]

Awards. *Arthur C. Clarke* shortlist: Becky Chambers, *The Long Way to a Small Angry Planet*; Dave Hutchinson, *Europe at Midnight*; Nnedi Okorafor, *The Book of Phoenix*; Iain Pears, *Arcadia*; J.P. Smythe, *Way Down Dark*; Adrian Tchaikovsky, *Children of Time*.

- *Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award* for life achievement in children’s literature: Meg Rosoff, best known for her YA future-war novel *How I Live Now* (2004). [AE]

- *Hugo Shortlist* (novels): Ann Leckie, *Ancillary Mercy*; Jim Butcher, *The Cinder Spires: The Aeronaut’s Windlass*; N.K. Jemisin, *The Fifth Season*; Neal Stephenson, *Seveneves*; Naomi Novik, *Uprooted*. For the full list see midamericon2.org/home/hugo-awards-and-wsfs/.

- *Prometheus* (libertarian) shortlist: Pierce Brown, *Golden Son*; Ramez Naam, *Apex*; Neal Stephenson, *Seveneves*; Jo Walton, *The Just City*; Gene Wolfe, *A Borrowed Man*.

- *Retro Hugo* shortlist for 1940 work (novels): E.E. Smith, **Gray Lensman*; T.H. White, *The Ill-Made Knight*; Karin Boye, *Kallocain*; Jack Williamson, **The Reign of Wizardry*; A.E. van Vogt, **Slan* (*magazine appearances). Again, for the full list of all categories see the MidAmeriCon II link above.

- *Robert A. Heinlein Award* (US National Space Society): Jerry Pournelle. [F770]

- *Tiptree Award* (sf/f gender exploration) winners: Eugene Fischer, ‘The New Mother’ (*Asimov’s* 4/2015); Pat Schmatz, *Lizard Radio*.

Hugo Aftermath. Several categories were swept by ‘Rabid Puppies’ slate-voting; as in 2015, No Award is likely to be a popular choice. But besides political axe-grinding and self-promotion for the Arch-Rabid’s publishing venture Castalia House, this year’s RP slate includes ‘human shield’ selections that could have reached the final ballot unaided. Novella examples are *Penric’s Demon* by Lois McMaster Bujold and *Slow Bullets* by Alastair Reynolds, both authors having asked in vain to be removed from any slate; likewise, Neil Gaiman’s and J.H. Williams III’s *Sandman: Overture* (Graphic Novel) and Mike Glycer’s *File 770* (Fan Writer, Fanzine) hardly needed Puppy assistance. Of course Rabids will claim victory whether such finalists win (‘har har, our slate worked!’), don’t win, or finish below No Award (‘har har, we have manipulated you into denying this worthy thing a Hugo!’). Better not to be manipulated and to vote on actual merit.

- Tom Mays withdrew his ‘The Commuter’ after learning that all the other Short Story finalists were also from the Rabid slate: ‘Rather than eat a shit sandwich, I choose to get up from the table.’ ([Improbableauthor.com](http://improbableauthor.com), 26 April)

- The ‘E Pluribus Hugo’ nominations counting algorithm, specifically designed to reduce the power of Hugo bloc-voting, needs WSFS Business Meeting ratification at MidAmeriCon II this year in order to take effect in 2017.

- The *Guardian* coverage of this Hugo shortlist provoked all too many online comments, perhaps the most cogently argued being ‘Is it too late to nominate my favourite author, Spacey McSpaceface?’ (26 April) [PB]

In Typo Veritas. ‘George R.R. Martin has been given an honorary dungaree from Texas A&M University.’ ([SF² Concatenation, Summer](http://sf2concatenation.com))

R.I.P. *Arthur Anderson* (1922-2016), US actor whose genre credits include *Gnomes* (1980 voice), *Zelig* (1983) and *Courage the Cowardly Dog* (2002 voice) but who is best remembered for 29 years as Lucky the Leprechaun in US Lucky Charms cereal ads, died on 9 April; he was 93. [MMW]

- *Erik Bauersfeld* (1922-2016), US actor who voiced Admiral Ackbar in *Return of the Jedi* (1983) and *The Force Awakens* (2015), died on 3 April aged 93; another voice credit was *A.I.: Artificial Intelligence* (2001). [AW]

- *Adrian Berry* (1937-2016) – Viscount Camrose since 2001 – UK science journalist and spaceflight advocate whose books included the pop-science *The Next Ten Thousand Years* (1974) and *The Iron Sun: Crossing the*

Universe through Black Holes (1977) plus the sf novel *Koyama's Diamond* (1982), died on 18 April; he was 78. [DP]

- *Jill Calvert*, formerly Jill Moorcock (née Riches), died on 3 April from kidney failure; she was 63. Mike Moorcock writes: 'She illustrated a number of my books including covers for *An Alien Heat* and *Gloriana* and interiors for *My Experiences in the Third World War*, *Legends from the End of Time* and *The Condition of Muzak*. She later worked with Robert Calvert in various sf orientated stage productions.'

- *Rod Daniel* (1942-2016), US director and producer whose films include *Teen Wolf* (1985), *Like Father Like Son* (1987) and *Things That Go Bump* (1997), died on 16 April aged 74. [PDF]

- *Mike Docherty*, Scots comics artist who drew various Conan the Barbarian storylines for Marvel, plus the graphic novel *Conan: The Horn of Azoth* (1990, written by Roy Thomas), died on 19 January. [PDF]

- *Ed Dravecky III* (1968-2016), well-known US convention runner who co-founded FenCon (2004) and WhoFest (2013), died on 23 April at the 2016 WhoFest. [F770]

- *Gallieno Ferri* (1929-2016), Italian artist who from 1961 drew the fantasticated Western superhero comic *Zagor* (scripted by Sergio Bonelli), died on 2 April aged 87. [PDF]

- *Peggy Fortnum* (1919-2016), UK children's book illustrator who first and definitively drew Paddington Bear for the famed children's stories by Michael Bond, died on 28 March; she was 96. [MMW]

- *Lars Gustafsson* (1936-2016), major Swedish author, poet and academic who used fantastic themes in novels and published both essays on sf and short sf stories – notably. in *The Strange Beast from the North and other Science Fiction Tales* (1999) – died on 3 April; he was 79. [J-HH]

- *Guy Hamilton* (1922-2016), UK director of the James Bond films *Goldfinger* (1964), *Diamonds Are Forever* (1971), *Live and Let Die* (1973) and *The Man with the Golden Gun* (1974), died on 20 April; he was 93. PDF

- *Peter Janson-Smith* (1922-2016), UK literary agent who represented Ian Fleming and (for *A Clockwork Orange*) Anthony Burgess, died on 15 April aged 93. [AIP]

- *Philip Edward Kaldon*, US physicist, academic and author of several genre stories beginning with 'The Gravediggers' (2004 *CrossTIME Anthology III*), died on 20 April. [PDF]

- *Scott Nimerfro*, US film/tv producer and writer whose credits include *Tales*

from the Crypt (1993-1995), *Perversions of Science* (1997), *X-Men* (2000), *Pushing Daisies* (2007-2009), *The Gates* (2010) and *Once upon a Time* (2014-2016), died on 18 April. [PDF]

- *Madeleine Sherwood* (1922-2016), US actress whose genre credits include *The Flying Nun* (1967-1970 tv), *The Changeling* (1980) and *The Electric Grandmother* (1982, co-scripted by Ray Bradbury from his own story), died on 23 April aged 93. [PDF]

- *Gareth Thomas* (1945-2016), Welsh actor who played Blake in *Blake's 7* (1978-1981), died on 13 April aged 71. Other genre credits include *Star Maidens* (1976), *Children of the Stones* (1977), *Knights of God* (1987), *Merlin* (1998) and *Torchwood* (2006). [O]

- *Kit West* (1936-2016), UK special effects expert who worked on *First Men in the Moon* (1964), *Raiders of the Lost Ark* (1981, for which he shared an Oscar), *Return of the Jedi* (1983), *Dune* (1984), *Universal Soldier* (1992) and many more, died on 16 April. [PDF]

As Others See Us. Gemma Chan of C4's *Humans* on the series' appeal: 'I think someone called it sci-fi for non sci-fi fans ... It was more thoughtful.' (*Radio Times*, 30 April) [SG]

- 'To call *The X-Files* "science fiction" is to degrade it and to elevate Sci-fi to a standard it doesn't deserve.' (Christopher Loring Knowles, *Secret Sun*, August 2015) [LH]

Court Circular. The \$800,000 defamation suit filed by America Star Books (formerly the infamous PublishAmerica) against Victoria Strauss and Writer Beware, on the basis of WB blog posts about ASB/PA exploitation of naive authors, was settled out of court on condition that WB seeks no recovery of legal fees. ([Writer Beware](#), 23 March)

Opportunity Knocks. 'We at ITV are making a brand new studio based entertainment show to be hosted by Stephen Mulhern and broadcast on Saturday nights on ITV1. We're on the hunt for amazing people with unique skills and talents to take on a challenge with the chance to win a cash prize! Skills can be as serious or as daft as you like but the show promises to be fun, exciting and at all times nail biting! / I was wondering if you knew any guys that have such an in-depth knowledge of comic books/movies or superheroes that they could feel confident taking on a challenge. Maybe they'd be confident answering questions on Batman or being able to name the comic from seeing a small picture or piece of text? Maybe you collect figures or

memorabilia, all of these things could make for a great challenge!’ [MH]

SF Hall of Fame. This year’s choices will be decided by popular vote from shortlists of ten creators – Douglas Adams, Jorge Luis Borges, Neil Gaiman, Aldous Huxley, Stephen King, Stan Lee, Terry Pratchett, Nichelle Nichols, J.K. Rowling and Lana & Lilly Wachowski jointly – and ten creations, for which see empmuseum.org/vote. Deadline: 11 May.

The Weakest Alien Link. *Host:* ‘In this film, John Hurt had to get something off his chest.’ *Contestant:* ‘What is *Invasion of the Body Snatchers?*’ (*Jeopardy*, 13 April) [AIP]

Random Fandom. *Linda Bushyager’s* 1974-1978 fannish newszine *Karass* has been placed online at Fanac.org, as images rather than searchable text: fanac.org/fanzines/Karass/.

- *Dragon Con* announced its very own Dragon Awards in many categories, with free online voting from anywhere in the world (what could possibly go wrong?). Several pundits were quick to announce the imminent death of the Hugos.
- *H.P. Lovecraft* is on the Retro Hugo ballot as Best Fan Writer of 1940 despite having died in 1937. ‘That is not dead which can eternal lie ...’

Outraged Letters. *Liz Counihan* is sad: ‘Visited Forbidden Planet (Shaftesbury Ave) last week to (attempt to) buy some sf mags. They’ve never heard of *Asimov’s* and were surprised to find they did stock *F&SF* which they had never heard of either. I saw *Locus*. Nil else. Haven’t been there for several years but they used to stock *Interzone* and even dear departed *Scheherazade* as well as the American magazines. Sad!’

The Dead Past. *20 Years Ago:* ‘H.G. Wells has become a theme pub: HG’s in Peterborough. In homage to Wells’s most famous sf creations, the PR company had the new pub opened by Jon Pertwee and a brace of Daleks (since “Tom Baker was too expensive”), while its press release credits Wells with *Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea*. According to CAMRA spies, the quality of research accurately reflects that of the beer.’ ([Ansible 106](#), May 1996) ‘Science Masterclass (from a Voyager flyer about *Blue Mars*): “Ten things you didn’t know about the red planet. [...] 9. Mars is the only planet in the solar system that could sustain human life.”’ (*Ibid*)

- *40 Years Ago*, activities at the US Lunacon included ‘two pie-in-the-face attacks on Ted White. The second was paid for and instigated by, we are told

by Spy X, Charles Platt.’ [AIP] ([Checkpoint 69](#), May 1976) ‘David Gerrold has announced that he will sever all connection with fandom other than normal paid appearances and keeping in touch with friends.’ ([Karass 21](#), April/May 1976)

Fanfundery. *DUFF 2016*. Final reminder from *Ansible*: the voting deadline in the current one-horse race from Australasia to MidAmeriCon II is 16 May. See ozfanfunds.com/duff/DUFF_onlineballot2016.html.

Thog’s Masterclass. *Gastric Anomaly Dept*. ‘His stomach came up and shook hands with his throat ... Fear forced it back again.’ (‘Lionel Roberts’, *The In-World*, 1960)

- *Eyeballs in the Sky*. ‘... their eyes shifted uneasily, sliding off Perrin’s.’ (Robert Jordan, *The Shadow Rising*, 1992) [AR]
 - *Dept of Rising Elevation in Zero G*. ‘Tom had fastened himself to the examining table and sliced his throat. Clouds of burgundy bubbles rose from his neck [...] The table was tilted to elevate his head.’ (Sarah Zettel, ‘Kinds of Strangers’, 1999 *Analog*) [KB]
 - *Craft Brewery Dept*. ‘I made a cup of tea in my undershorts and drank it while watching the news.’ (Mark Pryor, *Hollow Man*, 2015) [PB]
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Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 4 May 2016: Mary M. Talbot and Bryan Talbot on their new graphic novel, 6:30pm. Cartoon Museum, 35 Little Russell Street, London, WC1A 2HH; 0207 5808155. Free.
- 6 May 2016: Mary M. Talbot and Bryan Talbot as above, 6pm. Waterstones, The Bridges, Sunderland, SR1 3LB; 0191 567 4331. Free.
- 13 May 2016: David A. Hardy talks to the Brum Group. 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre. £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future meetings/speakers: 10 June 2016 Ian Whates; 8 July 2016 Dave Lally; 12 August 2016 Summer Social meal; 12 September 2016 tba; 14 October 2016 Andy Lound; 4 November 2016 tba; 2 December 2016 Xmas Social.
- 21 May 2016: Paul Cornell signing, 13:00-14:00 at Forbidden Planet Bristol, Clifton Heights, Bristol, BS8 1EJ.

Editorial. This May issue excitingly appears on Friday 29 April for the usual reason: the printers close for the weekend and the 2 May bank holiday, and despite habitual stupor your editor would rather not wait until 3 May.

• For those who can't get enough Hugo coverage and discussion, I heartily recommend Mike Glycer's round-up posts at *File 770* (which crashed under the initial surge of interest and had to move to a new server). There will doubtless be many more through the summer:

<http://file770.com/?p=28622> (Retro Hugo finalists)

<http://file770.com/?p=28620> (Hugo finalists)

<http://file770.com/?p=28616> (slate impact examined)

<http://file770.com/?p=28662> (Mays withdraws)

<http://file770.com/?p=28674>

<http://file770.com/?p=28681>

<http://file770.com/?p=28687>

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Ansible 347, June 2016

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo:
Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or the thing that
is neither god nor beast.

A Word from Our Sponsor. The latest Langford ebook from Ansible Editions is *Starcombing* (introduction by Adam Roberts!), slightly expanded from the print edition. See ae.ansible.uk/?t=starcombing.

The Thirty-First of June

John Gilbert of *Fear* magazine writes: ‘The deed is done. I have signed a Heads of Agreement giving 55% of my rights in *Fear* to The Brighthelm Group, a publisher in Brighton. They will return *Fear* to print in July and have appointed me Editorial Director of the magazine with immediate effect on a retainer with a share of an Assistant Editor, Designer and Ad Manager. The mag will be published every two months and the publisher will start working on Smiths etc. It’s pretty much the deal I had with Newsfield but I have a much better idea of print and publishing than I had then. The plan is that if the mag succeeds I go full time as publisher of all their mags.’
(Facebook, 6 May)

Ursula K. Le Guin broadens our scope: ‘I don’t know if Thog is interested in opening his Masterclass to anyone outside science fiction, let alone the writer some people call The Master. But I know he likes the more violent anatomical disjunctions and peculiarities, and humbly offer him this one, from Chapter 30 of *The Awkward Age* by Henry James (p.301 in the 1981 Penguin Modern Classics edition):

“‘But we have, you know, as Van says, gone to pieces’ she went on, twisting her pretty head and tossing it back over her shoulder to an auditor of whose approach to her from behind, though it was impossible she should have seen him, she had visibly, within a minute, become aware.”

‘I can’t tell you the joy this passage gave me, as by page 301 I was in danger of tossing the book back over my shoulder into a fireplace of whose location, though I might be uncertain, I had become willing to imagine, as offering me a final, if less than admirable, escape from endless thickets of clauses introducing incomprehensibly allusive conversations carried on by disagreeable people, among whom the owner of the pretty head is, perhaps, the most tedious.’ (6 May)

Robert Silverberg had a bad heart attack on 9 May while visiting Siena, Italy. He reports: ‘Repairs performed, I am home now, and all seems well, though as of this morning it appears recovery will be slow. I do expect to attend the worldcon.’ (16 May)

Andy Weir struggled to retain his cool on receiving an official US Congress invitation to testify at a hearing of the Space Subcommittee of the House Committee on Science, Space and Technology. The 18 May hearing was titled *Next Steps to Mars: Deep Space Habitat*. (Facebook, 11 May) Hal O’Brien felt this item should be headlined ‘Author Hauled Before Congressional Committee for Writing Novel’.

Terri Windling gave the annual [Tolkien Lecture](#) at Pembroke College, Oxford, on 26 May – news that came too late for the *May Ansible*.

Conquian

10 Jun • **British Fantasy Society Social**, The Fine Line Bow, 1 Bow Churchyard, London, EC4M 9DQ. 7pm-11pm. Free; all welcome.

15 Jun • **The Thing Itself** (discussion), Great Saint Mary’s, Cambridge. With Alan Jacobs, Adam Roberts, Francis Spufford and Rowan Williams. 7:30pm-8:30pm. Free. See tinyurl.com/zn6wv7e.

16-18 Jun • **Roald Dahl Conference**, Cardiff University. Call for papers deadline was 31 January. See dahlconferencecardiff.weebly.com.

22 Jun • **BSFA Open Meeting**, ~~Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND~~. 6pm for 7pm. With Charles Stross. Free. [Venue change announced](#): Keynes Library, Birkbeck University, 43 Gordon Square, London, WC1H 0PD.

25 Jun • **BSFA/SF Foundation** mini-convention & AGMs, Lecture Theatre 1, Blackett Laboratory, Imperial College, London, SW7 2AZ. GoH David A. Hardy, Liz Williams. 9:30am-4:30pm. Free; all welcome.

28-29 Jun • **Science for Fiction**, Imperial College, London. Science presentations *for published authors only*. £30 including catering. Contact Dave Clements, d dot clements at imperial dot ac dot uk.

28-30 Jun • **SFRA/CRSF Conference**, Rendall Building, Liverpool University. £169.99 inc banquet. See tinyurl.com/hdryznq.

30 Jun - 29 Aug • **Daydreaming with Stanley Kubrick** (exhibition), Somerset House, London. 10am-6pm. £12.50; £9.50 concessions.

3 Jul • **Tolkien Society Seminar**, Hilton Hotel, Leeds, LS1 4BX. £20. See www.tolkiensociety.org/events/tolkien-society-seminar-2016.

4-5 Jul • **Global Fantastika** (conference), Lancaster University. See fantastikaconference.wordpress.com.

12-14 Aug • **Nine Worlds Geekfest** (multimedia), Novotel London West, Hammersmith, London. £100 reg, *rising to £115 on 1 July*; 5-15s £33; under-5s free. Book online at nineworlds.co.uk.

17-21 Aug • **MidAmeriCon II** (74th Worldcon), Kansas City, MO, USA. \$210 reg; \$100 YA/active military service; \$60 under-16s; \$50 supp. Rates will rise at the door. See midamericon2.org for more.

21 Aug • **Worcester Comic Con**, Worcester Arena. Tickets £10 from 11am, £15 from 10am. See www.worcester-comiccon.com.

26-28 Aug • **Starburst Film Festival**, MMU Student Union, Manchester. £60 'early bird', then £99. See www.starburstfilmfest.co.uk.

29 Oct • **BristolCon**, Doubletree Hotel, Bristol city centre. *Now £25 reg*; £30 at the door. Cheques to 18 High Leaze Road, Patchway, Bristol BS34 5AF. See also www.bristolcon.org.

4-6 Nov • **BCon** (Eurocon), Barcelona, Spain. €35 reg; under-25s €10; under-16s free. Register at www.eurocon2016.org. 'Bcon warns that members are joining very fast from Spain itself and that the cap is 800. Fans from other European countries are urged to join now. Late and at-door memberships are unlikely to be possible.'

Rumblings. *Hugo and Retro Hugo Voting* opened on 15 May 2016, though there were some initial difficulties with the online form. Voting closes on 31 July. See midamericon2.org/home/hugo-awards-and-wsfs/.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. ‘People buy romance novels, sci-fi and other genres because they know they will encounter no unhappiness, no depression, no angst, no killings, no family conflict, etc., the way they will in all of modern fiction.’ (Letter, *New York Times Book Review*, 8 May) [JB]

• ‘Written at the height of Britain’s imperial project, those 23 little tales are really a primer for navigating the merciless currents of amoral capitalism’. (Subhead for ‘Into the dystopian world of Beatrix Potter’ by Kathryn Hughes, *Guardian*, 10 May) [PE]

Awards. *British Book Industry:* BOOK OF THE YEAR Andrew Michael Hurley, *The Loney*. CHILDREN’S David Solomons, *My Brother is a Superhero*.

• *Compton Crook* (sf/fantasy debut novel): Fran Wilde, *Updraft*.

• *Fanzine Activity Achievement* (FAAn): GENZINE (tie) *Chunga* and *Raucous Caucus*. PERSONAL ZINE *Vibrator*. SPECIAL PUBLICATION *The MOTA Reader*.

WEBSITE eFanzines.com. WRITER Roy Kettle. ARTIST Steve Stiles. LETTERHACK Paul Skelton. FANZINE COVER D. West with Harry Bell, *Raucous Caucus* 4. #1 FAN FACE Dan Steffan. LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT John Bangsund.

• *Nebulas*. NOVEL Naomi Novik *Uprooted*. NOVELLA Nnedi Okorafor, *Binti* (Tor.com). NOVELETTE Sarah Pinsker, ‘Our Lady of the Open Road’ (*Asimov’s* 6/15). SHORT Alyssa Wong, ‘Hungry Daughters of Starving Mothers’ (*Nightmare* 10/15). ANDRE NORTON (YA) Fran Wilde, *Updraft*. RAY BRADBURY (film) *Mad Max: Fury Road*.

• *Prometheus* (libertarian): special award to the graphic novel sequence *Alex + Ada* by Jonathan Luna and Sarah Vaughn.

• *Stoker* (horror). NOVEL Paul Tremblay, *A Head Full of Ghosts*. DEBUT Nicole Cushing, *Mr. Suicide*. YA John Dixon, *Devil’s Pocket*. GRAPHIC NOVEL Sam Weller, Mort Castle, Chris Ryall & Carlos Guzman (ed.), *Shadow Show: Stories in Celebration of Ray Bradbury*. LONG FICTION Mercedes M. Yardley, *Little Dead Red*. SHORT John Palisano, ‘Happy Joe’s Rest Stop’ (*18 Wheels of Horror*). SCREENPLAY David Robert Mitchell, *It Follows*. ANTHOLOGY Michael Bailey (ed.), *The Library of the Dead*. COLLECTION Lucy A. Snyder, *While the*

Black Stars Burn. NON-FICTION Stephen Jones, *The Art of Horror*. POETRY COLLECTION Alessandro Manzetti, *Eden Underground*.

Hugo Aftermath II. Tom Mays's withdrawn 'The Commuter' was replaced as a Short Story finalist by Naomi Kritzer's 'Cat Pictures Please' (*Clarkesworld*, 1/15). In Fanzine, *Black Gate* withdrew as in 2015, and was replaced by *Lady Business*. The official shortlist has been amended: midamericon2.org/2016-hugo-finalists/.

- Chuck Tingle, whose Short Story listing for 'Space Raptor Butt Invasion' was a blatant Rabid Puppies attempt to embarrass the Hugos by bloc-voting for gay erotica, rose to the occasion with a new epic titled *Slammed in the Butt by My Hugo Award Nomination* and won fannish hearts (if perhaps not votes) by extensive mockery of the Rabids and their greasy eminence Theodore 'Vox Day' Beale. This included registering www.therabidpuppies.com as a puppy-taunting platform.

As Others Research Us. 'Authors like Laurel K Hamilton, Charlaine Harris and of course E L James have made sexy vampire tales mainstream ...' (Damien Walter, damiengwalter.com, 18 May) E.L. James? Did we all miss a vampire epic called *Fifty Shades of Blood*?

R.I.P. *Adolf Born* (1930-2016), Czech painter and cartoonist who also created popular fantasy animations for children, died on 22 May aged 85. [PDF]

- *Darwyn Cooke* (1962-2016), Canadian comics artist and writer who worked on Warner's 1990s *Batman* and *Superman* animations, plus DC's 2001 *Catwoman* reboot and award-winning miniseries *The New Frontier*, died on 14 May. [PDF]

- *Katherine Dunn* (1945-2016), US author and journalist best known for her bestselling horror/paranormal novel *Geek Love* (1989), died on 11 May; she was 70.

- *Nicholas Fisk* (David Higginbottom, 1923-2016), UK author of much challenging and often unnerving sf for children, including *Space Hostages* (1967), *Trillions* (1971), *Grinny* (1973), *Antigrav* (1978) and the uncompromisingly grim *A Rag, a Bone and a Hank of Hair* (1980), died on 10 May; he was 94. [GW]

- *Joe Fleishaker* (1954-2016), outsized US character actor whose genre films include *Citizen Toxie: The Toxic Avenger IV* (2000) plus others in this franchise, *Tales from the Crapper* (2004) and *Poultrygeist* (2006), died on 23

May aged 62.

- *Makiko Futaki* (1958-2016), Japanese animator who worked on *Akira* (1988) and many Studio Ghibli films including *My Neighbor Totoro* (1988), *Princess Mononoke* (1997), *Spirited Away* (2001) and *Howl's Moving Castle* (2004), died on 13 May; she was 57.
- *Roberta L. Gellis* (1927-2016), US author of historical romances and fantasies (including the 'Scepter'd Isle' series with Mercedes Lackey) and of sf as by Max Daniels in the 1970s and under her own name with *Overstars Mail: Imperial Challenge* (2004), died on 6 May; she was 88. [GVG]
- *Gene Gutowski* (1925-2016), Polish film producer whose credits include Roman Polanski's *Repulsion* (1965) and *The Fearless Vampire Killers* (1967), died on 10 May; he was 90. [MMW]
- *Bill Herz* (1916-2016), last surviving participant in Orson Welles's notorious 1938 *War of the Worlds* broadcast – in which Herz played two ham radio operators – died on 10 May at the age of 99. [PDF]
- *H.B. Hickey* (Herbert B. Livingston, 1916-2016), author of some 80 stories including much sf from 1946 to 1970 (when 'Gone are the Lupo' appeared in the Delany/Hacker anthology *Quark/1*), died on 8 March; he was 99. [WC]
- *Mike Jencevice* (1955-2016), US fan whose fanzine was *Trilevel* and who ran the Windycon dealers' room for over 30 years, died on 16 May. [SHS]
- *Buck Kartalian* (1922-2016), US character actor whose genre credits include *Planet of the Apes* (1968), *Conquest of the Planet of the Apes* (1972) and *My Favorite Martian* (1999), died on 24 May aged 93. [PDF]
- *Burt Kwouk* (1930-2016), UK actor seen in *The Avengers* (1961-1965 tv), *Curse of the Fly* (1965), *Doctor Who*: 'Four to Doomsday' (1982), *I Bought a Vampire Motorcycle* (1990) and various James Bond, Fu Manchu and (most famously) Pink Panther films, died on 24 May aged 85.
- *Tomohiro Matsu* (1972-2016), Japanese author of 'light novels' made into anime series, and scriptwriter for the fantasy anime *Queen's Blade: The Exiled Virgin*, died on 2 May aged 42. [PDF]
- *Angela Paton* (1930-2016), US actress whose best-known genre role was in *Groundhog Day* (1993), died on 26 May aged 86. [PDF]
- *Stewart Perkins* (1967-2016), UK comics and especially *2000 AD* fan active since the 1990s, whose *Judge Dredd* fanzine was *Class of '79*, died on 21 May. [GW]
- *Paul Pinn* (1955-2016), UK writer of horror and other genres whose first novel was *The Pariah* (2000), died from cancer on 4 February at the age of

60. [GC]

- *Stephen Prestwood*, UK small-press comics artist who co-founded Evolutionary Comics in the early 1990s and drew for many other publishers, died in late May. [GW]
- *Michael Roberds* (1964-2016), US actor who played Uncle Fester in *The New Addams Family* (1998-1999), with further credits including *Elf* (2003), *Hot Tub Time Machine* (2010), *Bong of the Dead* (2011) and *Finding Mrs. Claus* (2012), died on 15 May aged 52. [PDF]
- *Ian Sander* (1947-2016), US tv producer best known for *Ghost Whisperer* (2005-2010), died on 3 May aged 68. Other genre productions include *Brimstone* (1998-1999) and *Frankenstein* (2004). [PDF]
- *William Schallert* (1922-2016), US actor seen in *Star Trek*: ‘The Trouble with Tribbles’ (1967), *The Wild Wild West* (1967-1969), *Colossus: The Forbin Project* (1970), *Innerspace* (1987) and *Bag of Bones* (2011), died on 8 May aged 93.
- *Isao Tomita* (1932-2016), Japanese composer and performer of electronic music, often with sf themes as in his 1979 album *Bermuda Triangle*, died on 5 May aged 84. [JonC]
- *George Wildman* (1927-2016), US cartoonist who for many years drew *Popeye* and was a senior editor at Charlton Comics 1971-1985, died on 22 May; he was 88. [PDF]
- *Alan Young* (1919-2016), UK-born actor whose genre credits include George Pal’s *The Time Machine* (1960), *Mr Ed* (1961-1966), *Battle of the Planets* (1978-1980), *The Cat from Outer Space* (1978), *The Incredible Hulk* (1982-1983) and *DuckTales* (1987-1990), died on 19 May; he was 96. [F770]

As Others See Us II. ‘Mainstream writers duck into our field to achieve or perpetrate a novel and then slip rapidly out again, protesting that they were somewhere else all the time or at worst only slumming. When I complimented Robert Graves on his masterly *Watch the North Wind Rise* (*Seven Days in New Crete* in England), he hastily replied, “Oh, but that’s not science fiction.”’ (Fritz Leiber, *F&SF*, May 1962) [VS]

Court Circular. Marvel’s and DC’s joint ownership of a trademark on the word ‘superhero’ was nearly tested in court after they tried to squelch UK author Graham Jules over a self-help book titled *From Business Zero to Superhero*. The big companies backed down shortly before the scheduled hearing at the Intellectual Property Office in London. ([Guardian](#), 24 May)

- J.J. Abrams said in mid-May that the Paramount/CBS lawsuit against Axanar Productions for *Star Trek* IP infringement was ‘going away’; a settlement is implied, but Axanar filed a counterclaim against the studios on 25 May. (www.trektoday.com, 25 May)

Closing Down. *Black Clock* is ceasing publication with the current issue 21; this and back numbers, both print and PDF, will no longer be on sale after 15 June. (Blackclock.org) [MI]

- Gary Fry announced the immediate closure of his horror-oriented Gray Friar Press on 23 May.

Outraged Letters. *Charles Platt* on the 1976 *Checkpoint* pie report ([A346](#)): ‘At no time did I ever pay for any pie or pies thrown at Mr. Ted White. Other people were happy to contribute; in fact one gentleman insisted on paying for his very own pie. I was agenting for the pie thrower at the time (a sixties radical friend) but took no commission. I apologized to Ted long ago and cannot even remember why there was such interest in pieing him back then. / I did however pay for the pie that was thrown at William Shatner at a *Star Trek* convention a year or so later. To my embarrassment, Shatner heroically stepped in to prevent the pie thrower from being torn apart by the mob.’

Blog’s the Stuff. John DeNardo announced on 5 May that the SF Signal blog is to close down; an archive will no doubt be preserved. Charlie Jane Anders announced her departure from io9 on 29 April: ‘I need to spend some serious quality time working on my next novel, without any distractions.’ This blog’s new editor is Rob Bricken.

Random Fandom. *Joyce Katz* suffered a stroke on 3 May but seems to be recovering well. [AK]

- *Mic Rogers*, long a familiar face at UK conventions, has moved into a care home for reasons that include failing eyesight: please send no more fanzines to her St Albans address.

- *Marcus Rowland’s* *Forgotten Futures* role-playing game no longer accepts shareware registration: see ffutures-news.insanejournal.com.

The Dead Past. *500 Years Ago:* Thomas More’s *Utopia* had its first edition (in Latin) in 1516.

- *200 Years Ago:* Lord Byron’s suggestion of a story-writing contest during three rainy June days at the Villa Diodati in Switzerland led to John Polidori’s *The Vampyre* and Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*. They were spared

the knowledge of having launched a horror tradition that would later include sparkly vampires and *Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein*.

- *50 Years Ago*: ‘PETER GEORGE, creator of Doctor Strangelove, who was awarded a Hugo at the 1965 London World SF Convention for his novel *Red Alert*, was found dead with head injuries at his home on 26th May. A shotgun lay between his knees.’ ([Skyrack 90](#), June 1966; the film, not the book, won a Hugo.)

Fanfundery. *DUFF*: Clare McDonald-Sims of Australia, the only candidate, unsurprisingly won the northbound race to MidAmeriCon II.

Thog’s Masterclass. *Walk Before You Run Dept*. ‘The torment in his side slowed him to a dizzy, infirm walk. He ran face-first into a tree ...’ (Patricia Anthony, ‘Two-bag Goddess’ in *Eating Memories*, 1997) [BA]

- *Dept of Anticipating Chuck Tingle*. ‘The gun, with its specially made, tiny butt, felt comforting to his hand ...’ (H.K. Bulmer, *Encounters in Space*, 1952) [BA]

- *The Critical Heritage*. ‘*The Handmaid’s Tale* was a dystopia about the oppression of women by a feminist Canadian novelist from outside of the genre.’ (Andrew M. Butler, *Foundation* 123, 2016) [BW]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 10 June 2016: Ian Whates talks to the Brum Group. 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre. £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future meetings/speakers: 8 July 2016 Dave Lally; 12 August 2016 Summer Social meal; 12 September 2016 tba; 14 October 2016 Andy Lound; 4 November 2016 tba; 2 December 2016 Xmas Social.

Editorial. Here in the mighty throbbing powerhouse of [Ansible Editions](#), your editor is gaping at the near-final proof copy of Rob Hansen’s *THEN: Science Fiction Fandom in the UK: 1930-1980*. It’s a pretty massive trade paperback – currently 428pp of smallish print with hundreds of photos, even without the index on which Rob is even now toiling.

We Are Everywhere. Steve Sneyd points out that the leaked Panama Papers tax-haven story is tinged with genre, since the now infamous law firm

Mossack Fonseca set up a secret email system: ‘Wealthy clients could correspond using invented names. Some in the files leap out at you: Harry Potter, Winnie Pooh and Daniel Radcliffe. Obviously not the real one. / One customer used the name Isaac Asimov, a nod to the master of twentieth-century science fiction, whom he admired.’ (*Guardian*, 9 April)

Thog’s Second Helping. *Vivid Symbolism Dept.* “‘Interestingly,” Sparkes told Matthews later, as they sat in the cafeteria, “not all porn addicts get erections.” / Ian Matthews raised an eyebrow as he rested his sausage sandwich on the Formica table. “Do you mind, boss? I’m eating.”” (Fiona Barton, *The Widow*, 2016) [PB]

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Ansible 348, July 2016

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
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Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE, quadratic
religion or complex defamation.

Futurology. ‘But Britain was declining. As part of unified Europe – deprived of tools of macroeconomic policy like control of exchange and interest rates, and yet unsheltered by the imperfectly integrated greater economy – the British government was unable to arrest a sharp economic collapse. At last, in 2010, social unrest and climate collapse forced Britain out of the European Union, and the United Kingdom fell apart, Scotland going its own separate way. [...] Then in 2019, England, with Wales, ceded Northern Ireland to Eire, packed off the Royals to Australia – where they were still welcome – and had become the fifty-second state of the United States of America.’ (Arthur C. Clarke and Stephen Baxter, *The Light of Other Days* [chapter 1], 2000) [S]

The World Is Quiet Here

Douglas Adams was remembered in an ‘Inquisitor’ crossword (*i*, 11 June) whose solvers were told to make unspecified thematic changes to eight unspecified answers in accordance with an unspecified book title. Several answers proved to be varieties of fish, and changing all these to synonyms of ‘So Long’ and ‘Thanks’ [revealed our author’s name](#).

Brian Blessed received the OBE in the Queen’s Birthday Honours; his many credits include *Space: 1999*, *Flash Gordon* (1980), *Doctor Who*: ‘Trial of a Time Lord’, *Johnny and the Dead* (1995), *The Phantom Menace* (voice, 1999), *Tarzan* (1999) and *Wizards vs. Aliens* (2012-2013).

Michael Blumlein, a doctor as well as an sf author, revealed in a 12 June San Francisco ‘SF in SF’ reading of his essay-cum-memoir ‘Unrestrained and Indiscreet’ that he is awaiting death from lung cancer, all treatment having failed. (www.rudyrucker.com, 13 June) [AIP] Alas.

Roz Kaveney won the Transgender Fiction category of the 2016 Lambda Awards with her non-genre novel *Tiny Pieces of Skull*.

George Lucas's plan for a vast George Lucas Museum of Narrative Art on the Chicago lake front was abandoned after the 'Friends of the Parks' group – very unreasonably, the mayor conveyed – defended the 1836 regulation that forbids such lakeside development. A federal judge agreed; the *Chicago Tribune* coverage began 'Lucas reaps bitter fruits of arrogance ...' ([24 June](#)); the museum is now to be in California. [AIP]

Barry N. Malzberg deplored Judith Merrill's 1960s sf New Wave promotional activities in an online column: 'A decent writer and a highly intelligent person, she did the field more damage than Raymond Palmer or Roger Corman, Ed Earl Repp or Ed Wood. The field certainly survived, it had demonstrated the pre-Lucas capacity to survive anything, but it was irreversibly damaged. [...] She had been on an increasingly evident, now unapologetic campaign to destroy science fiction.' ([Galaxy's Edge May/June](#); since replaced by next column, and hence the archive.org link) [F770]

Robert J. Sawyer is 'Absolutely thrilled today to be named a member of the Order of Canada, the highest civilian honour bestowed by the Government of Canada.' (30 June) For his sf and futurology.

A.B. Yehoshua, eminent Israeli novelist, explains: 'I deeply respect literature and expect to gain insight from a book and to identify emotionally with its characters. I therefore avoid reading suspense novels or science fiction.' (*New York Times* Book Review, 16 June) [MV]

Conglutinate

3 Jul • **Tolkien Society Seminar**, Hilton Hotel, Leeds, LS1 4BX. £20. See www.tolkiensociety.org/events/tolkien-society-seminar-2016.

4-5 Jul • **Global Fantastika** (conference), Lancaster University. Free to all? See fantastikaconference.wordpress.com.

8-10 Jul • **Anticipations** (H.G. Wells conference), Wells Conference Centre (Fri/Sat) and The Lightbox, Woking, Surrey (Sun). £90; £75 unwaged; £30 day. See anticipations2016.wordpress.com.

16-17 Jul • **Lavecon** (sf/fantasy/gaming), Sedgebrook Hall Hotel, Northants. Tickets from £15/day. See laveradio.com/lavecon-2016.

27 Jul • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. With Tessa Farmer. Free. *[Later: the speaker had to cancel; there are hopes of multiple guests talking about their books.]*

6 Aug • **Preston Comic Con**, Guild Hall, Preston. 9:30am-5pm. Adults £12 (£8 from 10:30), under-15s £6 (£4 from 10:30), under-5s free. See www.prestoncomiccon.co.uk.

12-14 Aug • **Nine Worlds Geekfest** (multimedia), Novotel London West, Hammersmith. £100 reg (day £45) *rising to £115 on 9 July*; 5-15s £33 (day £15); under-5s free. Book at ninenworlds.co.uk.

12-14 Aug • **Wadfest** (Discworld camp con), Wood Green Animal Shelter, King's Bush Farm, London Road, Godmanchester, Cambs, PE29 2NH. Adult campers £25. See www.wadfest.co.uk for other rates.

17-21 Aug • **MidAmeriCon II** (74th Worldcon), Kansas City, MO, USA. \$210 reg (*\$240 at door*); \$100 YA/active military service (*\$120 at door*); \$60 under-16s; \$50 supp. Adult day rates (others at door only) \$40 Wed, Sun; \$70 Thu, Fri, Sat. Adult weekend (Fri-Sun) \$150. *Advance booking closes on 5 August*. See midamericon2.org for more.

20-21 Aug • **Creaturegeddon** (monsters etc), Langley Conference Suite, Watford. £49 reg or £28.50/day. See www.creaturegeddon.net.

24 Aug • **Clarke Award Ceremony**, Foyles Bookshop, Charing Cross Rd, London. Evening. Tickets to be available at www.foyles.co.uk.

26-28 Aug • **Starburst Film Festival**, MMU Student Union, Manchester. *Now £75 'early bird'*, then £99. See www.starburstfilmfest.co.uk.

28-29 Aug • **Stars of Time** (film/comics), The Tropicana, Weston-super-Mare. 10:30am-5pm. £6; child £3. See www.starsoftime.co.uk.

24-25 Sep • **Tolkien Weekend**, Newcastle Castle. 10am-5pm each day. Free admission. See newcastlecastle.co.uk/tolkien-weekend-2016.

6-9 Oct • **Grimmfest** (horror/cult film festival), Odeon, The Printworks, Manchester. Tickets now available: £65 from grimmfest.com.

27-30 Oct • **Bram Stoker International Film Festival**, Whitby. 4-day pass

£125; various extras. See www.bramstokerfilmfestival.com.

30 Oct • **Paperback & Pulp Fair**, Royal National Hotel, 38-51 Bedford Way, Russell Sq, London, WC1H 0DG. 9:30am-3pm. Admission £1.50. Contact 020 8249 8278; harry.np at virgin net.

SOLD OUT: 4-6 Nov • **BCon** (Eurocon), Barcelona, Spain. €35 reg; under-25s €10; under-16s free. There is now a waiting list for transfer of cancelled memberships: see www.eurocon2016.org/membership/.

Rumblings. *2016 Hugos*: voting closes on 31 July. Don't forget!

Infinitely Improbable

As Others Group Us. 'The kind of literary criticism [...] which Book Marks collects, represents a relatively narrow swath of what's actually published. Yes, there are tabs for Mystery and Science Fiction and Romance, but the works displayed are comfortably literary, even if some have genre elements. [...] These are, with a few exceptions, books that could be considered as National Book Award contenders. There's no Jackie Collins, no Jennifer Weiner, no James Patterson, no hard sci-fi.' (*New Republic* on Lit Hub 'Book Marks' site, 8 June) [JME]

Awards. *Kate Greenaway Medal*: Chris Riddell (his third win) for illustrating Neil Gaiman's *The Sleeper and the Spindle*. [NG]

• *Kurd Laßwitz Preis for Best Foreign SF*: Neal Stephenson, *Seveneves*, translated into German as *Amalthea*.

• *Lambda* (LGBT etc) sf/f/horror category: Kirsty Logan, *The Gracekeepers*.

ANTHOLOGY (not genre-specific): *Beyond: The Queer Sci-Fi & Fantasy Comic Anthology* ed. Sfé R. Monster with Taneka Stotts.

• *Locus*: SF NOVEL Ann Leckie, *Ancillary Mercy*. FANTASY NOVEL Naomi Novik, *Uprooted*. YA NOVEL Terry Pratchett, *The Shepherd's Crown*. FIRST NOVEL Ken Liu, *The Grace of Kings*. NOVELLA Alastair Reynolds, *Slow Bullets*. NOVELETTE Neil Gaiman, 'Black Dog' (*Trigger Warning*). SHORT Naomi Kritzer, 'Cat Pictures Please' (*Clarkesworld* 1/15). ANTHOLOGY George R.R. Martin & Gardner Dozois, eds., *Old Venus*. COLLECTION Neil Gaiman, *Trigger Warning*. MAGAZINE *Asimov's*. PUBLISHER Tor. EDITOR David G. Hartwell. ARTIST Michael Whelan. NONFICTION Alisa Krasnostein & Alexandra Pierce, eds., *Letters to Tiptree*. ART BOOK Julie Dillon, *Julie*

Dillon's Imagined Realms, Book 2.

- *Rhysling* (poetry). SHORT Ruth Berman, 'Time Travel Vocabulary Problems' (*Dreams and Nightmares* 100). LONG (tie): Krysada Panusith Phounsiri, 'It Begins With A Haunting' (*Dance among Elephants*); Ann K. Schwader, 'Keziah' (*Dark Energies*).
- *Stephen Hawking Medal for Science Communication*: inaugural winners include composer Hans Zimmer (*Gladiator, Lion King, Dark Knight* trilogy) for his *Interstellar* film score.

Blurbismo. 'A most exciting and thrilling science fiction novel full of sensible philosophy which makes the reader feel less of a cretin than some science fiction would make us.' (from the cover of Clifford D. Simak's *Ring Around The Sun*, 1960 WDL Books paperback) [TB]

R.I.P. *Daniel Atterbom* (1959-2016), Swedish fan, journalist and comics expert who edited the comics journal *Bild & Bubbla* and two books on the subject, died from cancer on 4 June; he was 56. [J-HH]

- *Rhoda Blumberg* (1917-2016), US author of many historical books for children plus such 'non-fact' works as *The First Travel Guide to the Moon* (1980) – addressed to 21st-century kids and assuming space tourism from 1995 on – died on 6 June aged 98. [AIP]
- *James H. Burns*, US fan and writer for *Starlog, Fantastic Films* (as contributing editor), *Cinefantastique, Starburst, Heavy Metal, Twilight Zone* and (regularly since 2012) *File 770*, was found dead on 2 June; he was about 56. [MG]
- *Michael McCurdy* (1942-2016), US publisher and illustrator whose artwork appeared in more than 200 books – his first for children being Asimov's *Please Explain* (1973); another was the Centennial Edition of *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* – died on 28 May aged 74. [PDF]
- *Marina Malfatti* (1933-2016), Italian actress seen in the fairytale *More Than a Miracle* (1967) and such Gothic horror films as *The Night Evelyn Came Out of the Grave* (1971) and *All the Colors of the Dark* (1972), died on 8 June aged 83. [PDF]
- *Michu Meszaros* (1939-2016), 2' 9" Hungarian-born actor with midget roles in *Waxwork* (1988), *Freaked* (1993), *Warlock: The Armageddon* (1993) and others, died on 13 June aged 76. He was best known as the furry Alien Life Form of the sf sitcom *ALF* (1986-1990). [SFS]
- *Gordon Murray* (1921-2016), UK creator of the well-loved BBC children's

puppet series *Camberwick Green*, *Trumpton* and *Chigley*, whose earlier *A Rubovian Legend* (1955-1961) is fantasy, died on 30 June aged 95. [SB]

- *Willis Pyle* (1914-2016), US animator who worked on Disney's *Pinocchio* (1940), *Fantasia* (1940) and *Bambi* (1942), plus the Dr Seuss-based *Gerald McBoing-Boing* (1950, Oscar winner) and *Halloween Is Grinch Night* (1977, Emmy winner), died on 2 June; he was 101. [SFS]

- *Gregory Rabassa* (1922-2016), noted US translator of Gabriel Garcia Marquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* and many other major works by Latin American authors, died on 14 June; he was 94. [PDF]

- *Richard Selzer* (1928-2016), US surgeon and author whose works include some short horror fiction, died on 5 June aged 87. [AIP]

- *Yumi Shirakawa* (1936-2016), Japanese actress whose sf credits include *Rodan* (1956), *The Mysterians* (1957) and *The H-Man* (1958), died on 14 June aged 79. SFS

- *Robyn Sisman* (1955-2016), US-born author and editor who published J.G. Ballard reprints and the first *Interzone* anthology while at J.M. Dent, plus sf titles including Kim Newman's *The Night Mayor* and Brian Stableford's *The Empire of Fear* at Simon & Schuster, died on 20 May. [DP]

- *Trevor Steedman* (1954-2016), UK actor and stuntman whose credits include *Aliens* (1986), *Superman IV* (1987), *The Tomorrow People* (1995), *Children of Men* (2006) and *Johnny and the Bomb* (2006), died on 25 June aged 62. [BB]

- *Alvin Toffler* (1928-2016), US writer whose futurological works – especially *Future Shock* (1970) – influenced much contemporary sf, died on 27 June aged 87. [JC]

- *Janet Waldo* (1920-2016), US actress who voiced many Hanna-Barbera cartoon characters including Judy Jetson in *The Jetsons* (1962-1963, 1985-1987) and Penelope Pitstop in *Wacky Races* (1968-1969), died on 12 June; she was 96. [PDF]

- *Anton Yelchin* (1989-2016), Russian-born US actor who played Chekov in the rebooted *Star Trek* (2009) and its sequels, died in a freak car accident on 19 June; he was just 27. His other genre credits include *Terminator Salvation* (2009), *Fright Night* (2011) and *Only Lovers Left Alive* (2013).

Odd Volumes. *Transvestite Vampire Biker Nuns from Outer Space*, a genre contender for the 2016 Diagram Prize for oddest book title, was beaten into third place by *Too Naked for the Nazis* (#1) and *Reading from Behind: A Cultural History of the Anus*. (*The Author*, Summer)

Award Shortlists. *British Fantasy* (novel categories): FANTASY Adrian Tchaikovsky, *Guns of the Dawn*; Joe Abercrombie, *Half a War*; Jen Williams, *The Iron Ghost*; Silvia Moreno-Garcia, *Signal to Noise*; Zen Cho, *Sorcerer to the Crown*; Naomi Novik, *Uprooted*. HORROR Alison Littlewood, *A Cold Silence*; Sarah Pinborough, *The Death House*; Adam Nevill, *Lost Girl*; Catriona Ward, *Rawblood*; Tim Lebbon, *The Silence*; Joseph Fink and Jeffrey Crano, *Welcome to Night Vale*. NEWCOMER Becky Chambers, *The Long Way to a Small Angry Planet*; Zen Cho, *Sorcerer to the Crown*; Peter Newman, *The Vagrant*; Steven Poore, *The Heir to the North*; Marc Turner, *When the Heavens Fall*.

- *John W. Campbell Memorial Award*: Paolo Bacigalupi, *The Water Knife*; Dave Hutchinson, *Europe at Midnight*; Eleanor Lerman, *Radiomen*; Ian McDonald, *Luna: New Moon*; James Morrow, *Galapagos Regained*; Linda Nagata, *Going Dark*; Nnedi Okorafor, *The Book of Phoenix*; Kit Reed, *Where*; Adam Roberts, *The Thing Itself*; Kim Stanley Robinson, *Aurora*; Neal Stephenson, *Seveneves*.

- *Mythopoeic*: ADULT Holly Black, *The Darkest Part of the Forest*; Kazuo Ishiguro, *The Buried Giant*; E.K. Johnston, *A Thousand Nights*; Naomi Novik, *Uprooted*; Daniel José Older, *Shadowshaper*. CHILDREN'S Cassie Beasley, *Circus Mirandus*; Robert Beatty, *Serafina and The Black Cloak*; Sarah Beth Durst, *The Girl Who Could Not Dream*; Terry Pratchett, the entire 'Tiffany Aching' series opening with *The Wee Free Men*; Ursula Vernon, *Castle Hangnail*. SCHOLARSHIP: INKLINGS Verlyn Flieger, ed. *The Story of Kullervo by J.R.R. Tolkien*; Grevel Lindop, *Charles Williams*; Alistair E. McGrath, *C.S. Lewis – A Life*; Abigail Santamaria, *Joy: Poet, Seeker, and the Woman Who Captivated C.S. Lewis*; Christopher Tolkien, ed., *Beowulf: A Translation ... by J.R.R. Tolkien*. SCHOLARSHIP: OTHER Stefan Ekman, *Here Be Dragons: Exploring Fantasy Maps and Settings*; Daniel Gabelman, *George MacDonald*; Melanie Keene, *Science in Wonderland: The Scientific Fairy Tales of Victorian Britain*; Heather O'Donoghue, *English Poetry and Old Norse Myth*; Jamie Williamson, *The Evolution of Modern Fantasy*.

Random Fandom. *Chuck Tingle* commemorated recent upheavals with a new sf epic titled *Pounded by the Pound: Turned Gay by the Socioeconomic Implications of Britain Leaving the European Union*.

Outraged Letters. *Jonathan Cowie* of *SF² Concatenation* pounces on the MidAmeriCon II press release saying Alan Dean Foster's 'novel *Shadowkeep*

was the first ever book adaptation of an original computer game'. *SF²C* says: 'Actually the first ever book adaptation of an original computer game was the late great Rob Holdstock's *Elite* game story *The Dark Wheel*, published in September 1984.' *Shadowkeep* (arguably the first such novel, *TDW* being a 48pp chapbook) was in November 1984.

Wisdom of the Ancients. Time travel may be a lost art, but ... '1611: English explorer Henry Hudson, his son and several other people were set adrift in present-day Hudson Bay by mutineers aboard the *Discovery*.' ('Today in History', *Tampa Bay Times*, 22 June) [MS]

Group Gropes. *Birmingham Horror Group*: the new venue from 2 July is The Anchor Inn, Digbeth. See www.birmingham-horror.co.uk.

The Dead Past. *60 Years Ago*: 'I can only say that anyone with the faintest interest in imaginative literature must at least sample *The Lord of the Rings*. Not everyone will find it to his taste; it will never appear on any bestseller lists ...' (Anthony Boucher, *F&SF*, July 1956)

- *50 Years Ago*: 'In recent months, *The Lord of the Rings* has been at the top of college best-seller lists across the country, and although the Tolkien people wince at the word "fad" as if it were sheer blasphemy, even they will admit that their enthusiasm has gone – perhaps inevitably – beyond all reason. The Tolkien people may be less noisy than the LSD-heads, but there are more of them. / At the Harvard Coop, the Tolkien books occupy an honored place next to the cash register where, like cigarettes, they are readily available in large quantities.' (Harry Resnik, 'The Hobbit-Forming World of J.R.R. Tolkien', *Saturday Evening Post*, 2 July 1966) [MMW]

- *20 Years Ago*, in the wake of the first Discworld Convention: 'Terry Pratchett, despite earlier misgivings, allotted measured praise to the chairman: "I am now prepared to say that Paul Rood can leave very high marks on tall buildings."' ([Ansible 108](#), July 1996)

Fanfundery. *DUFF Statistics*: Clare McDonald-Sims, with 33 first-place votes, defeated old-timers No Preference (2) and Hold Over Funds (1) in the race from Australasia to Worldcon as reported [last issue](#).

Thog's Masterclass. *Dept of Neat Tricks*. 'He sat cross-legged before the Prisoner's Pillar, a smile held to his face only by the fortitude of his small flat ears.' (Anne Edwards, *Haunted Summer*, 1972) [SS]

- 'One of the sailors, who must have been about forty, had only one hand and

a star tattooed on the back of the other.’ (Patrick Leigh Fermor, *The Broken Road*, 2013) [AR]

• *Hard-Boiled Dept.* ‘A cold front was sticking its tongue out at New York, tasting the edges of it, and – not liking what it found – spitting it back in a short, chilly blast.’ (Mickey Spillane and Max Allan Collins, *Murder Never Knocks: A Mike Hammer Novel*, 2016) [RF]

• *Dept of Sedentary Posture.* ‘... she sat down beside him, unmindful of the gravel beach that cut into her knees.’ (Donald Kingsbury, *Courtship Rite* alias *Geta*, 1982)

• *Future Business English Dept.* Context: Van is annoyed because his stockbroker has failed to sell some shares. “No buyers? Hop down, father, and jest me not! I’m in no mood for –” “Bible stuff, Van, s’help me. I’ve been shagging since yesterday. The market’s dim.” “Then you haven’t been shagging hard enough.” (Evan Hunter, ‘Malice in Wonderland’, January 1954 *If*) [CN]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

• 8 July 2016: Dave Lally talks to the Brum Group. 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre. £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future meetings/speakers: 12 August 2016 Summer Social meal at the Black Eagle; 12 September 2016 tba; 14 October 2016 Andy Lound; 4 November 2016 Film Night; 2 December 2016 Christmas Social.

SF Research Association Awards, Late-Breaking. *Pilgrim*

(criticism/scholarship): Mark Bould. *Clareson* (services to sf academia): Farah Mendlesohn. *Mary Kay Bray* (essay/article in *SFRA Review*): Amy Ransom. *Pioneer* (any essay/article): Scott Selisker.

Editorial. Work still continues on the expanded, definitive edition of Rob Hansen’s *THEN: Science Fiction Fandom in the UK: 1930-1980* as a hefty trade paperback from Ansible Editions. The current length is some 214,000 words (with the index still to come) and there are over 300 photos of sensitive fannish faces through the decades, plus dozens of representative fanzine cover scans.

The Dead Past II. 40 Years Ago: ‘The British prozine *SF Monthly* has died, but New English Library is publishing the quarterly *SF Digest*.’ ([Karass 23](#), July 1976) The latter replacement lasted for precisely one quarterly issue.

Court Circular. For ever so much more about the ongoing copyright lawsuit against the unauthorized *Star Trek* film *Axanar*, see the detailed and voluminous coverage at [axamonitor.com](#).

Thog’s Research Department. Here’s one that Thog won’t after all be using: ‘For a moment he stood there looking into her eyes. Between them was a bowl of hyacinths.’ This is quoted in *Wrotten English* (2004), a merry book of literary lapses compiled by the late Peter Haining, who says the line comes from *Under the Southern Cross* by Elizabeth Robins. That 1907 novel is available at Project Gutenberg, so I idly checked ... and couldn’t find this quote or anything remotely similar. It does however appear in one of Denys Parsons’ collections of typos and oddments, *Funny Ha Ha and Funny Peculiar* (1965), credited only to ‘A women’s magazine’ (far too vague for Thog’s high standards). The inference is that Peter Haining – sometimes described as a tiny bit bibliographically unreliable – lifted the Parsons quotation and added a spurious source for greater verisimilitude. Thog is shocked, shocked.

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Ansible® 349, August 2016

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or Morishill's Voozy, with Lacto-Ecto.

Ansible®! My application to register *Ansible* as a UK trademark was [approved on 8 July](#). This began when I worried online that a mooted new sf magazine might usurp 'my' title, and there was a surprise flood of contributions towards trademark registration. Thanks very much to everyone who chipped in; and to Ursula K. Le Guin, as ever, for smiling on all the terrible things I've done with her word since 1979.

Tenser, said the Tensor

Luc Besson was found guilty by an appeals court of plagiarizing John Carpenter's *Escape from New York* (1981) in his film *Lockout* (2012), and ordered to pay €450,000 damages. ([IndieWire](#), 29 July)

Robert E. Howard's Western collection *A Gent from Bear Creek* is worth a few bob if you happen to have the 1937 first edition from Herbert Jenkins. Brian Ameringen confides: 'On 6 July a jacketless ex. lib. copy of this was auctioned by Ebay for British Heart Foundation for £1020 – around a dozen copies are known to exist. On 24 May the only known copy with a 7/6d D.J. was similarly put up for auction. It has a signature from August Derleth and was being sold on behalf of the family of Glenn Lord. Starting bid was \$19,500 – no takers!'

Stephen King is to be honoured by the Library of Congress for 'his lifelong work promoting literacy.' (www.loc.gov/bookfest/) [L]

Rob Latham on 8 July: 'Yesterday, after twenty years of service on the board of *Science Fiction Studies*, I submitted my resignation as editor, effective with the March 2017 issue. It has been a joy working with the

greatest editorial collective in the world, including my brilliant coeditors, all the hard-working consultants, and the scores of incredible essayists and reviewers who have made *SFS* the greatest journal on this or any planet.’ Has he never seen the Rigellian edition of *Ansible*?

Patrick Nielsen Hayden is now Associate Publisher of Tor, and Devi Pillai of Orbit is joining Tor with the same role. (Tor.com, 26 July)

Jane Yolen brags of having been chosen as one of the 125 – by your editor’s count – Unsung Heroines of Massachusetts for 2016, and asks meaningfully: ‘How does a body get sung around here?’ (18 July)

Conopholis

Until 1 Oct • **Sci-Fi Under the Stars** (BFI summer film season), various venues. See www.thelunacinema.com/sci-fi/4592658751.

Until 2 Oct • **Adventures in Space** (exhibition; sf architecture), The Lighthouse, Glasgow. Free. See www.thelighthouse.co.uk.

6 Aug • **Preston Comic Con**, Guild Hall, Preston. 9:30am-5pm. Adults £12 (£8 from 10:30), under-15s £6 (£4 from 10:30), under-5s free. See www.prestoncomiccon.co.uk.

12 Aug • **Fantasy in the Court** (mass signing), Goldsboro Books, Cecil Court, London. ‘Evening.’ Tickets £5. See fantasyinthecourt.com.

12-15 Aug • **Continuum** (RPG), John Foster Hall, Leicester University. Cost revealed when you sign up at continuumconvention.co.uk.

12-14 Aug • **Nine Worlds Geekfest** (multimedia), Novotel London West, Hammersmith. *Now £115 reg (day £50); 5-15s £38 (day £17); under-5s free.* Book online at nineneworlds.co.uk.

12-14 Aug • **Wadfest** (Discworld camp con), Wood Green Animal Shelter, King’s Bush Farm, London Road, Godmanchester, Cambs, PE29 2NH. Adult campers £25. See www.wadfest.co.uk for other rates.

17-21 Aug • **MidAmeriCon II** (74th Worldcon), Kansas City, MO, USA. \$210 reg (\$240 *at door*); \$100 YA/active military service (\$120 *at door*); \$60 under-16s; \$50 supp. Adult day rates (others at door only) \$40 Wed, Sun; \$70

Thu, Fri, Sat. Adult weekend (Fri-Sun) \$150. *Advance booking closes on 5 August.* See midamericon2.org for more.

20-21 Aug • **Creaturegeddon** (monsters etc), Langley Conference Suite, Watford. £49 reg or £28.50/day. See www.creaturegeddon.net.

21 Aug • **Worcester Comic Con**, Worcester Arena. Tickets £10 from 11am, £15 10am; under-8s £5. See www.worcester-comiccon.com.

24 Aug • **Clarke Award Ceremony**, Foyles Bookshop, Charing Cross Rd, London. 6:30pm-9:30pm. Tickets from <http://www.foyles.co.uk/event-clarke2016>.

25-29 Aug • **Frightfest** (horror film festival), VUE Shepherds Bush, London. Bookings: www.frightfest.co.uk or 020 8296 0555.

26-29 Aug • **The Asylum** (steampunk), Lincoln. £35 reg plus £2.24 fee (under-17s £17.50 + £1.72) at www.asylumsteampunk.co.uk.

SOLD OUT 26-29 Aug • **Discworld Convention**, Chesford Grange Hotel, Warwick. £75 reg. See dwcon.org to join the waiting list.

26-28 Aug • **Starburst Film Festival**, MMU Student Union, Manchester. Tickets £75; day £25.50. See www.starburstfilmfest.co.uk.

28-29 Aug • **Stars of Time** (film/comics), The Tropicana, Weston-super-Mare. 10:30am-5pm. £6; child £3. See www.starsoftime.co.uk.

3-4 Sep • **Middle-earth Festival**, Sarehole Mill, Cole Bank Rd, Hall Green, Birmingham, B13 0BD. Free. See middleearthfestival.co.uk.

CANCELLED 9-10 Sep • **Andromeda 2**, Moseley, Birmingham. Cancelled owing to 'low advance sales'. The website instantly vanished.

12-18 Sep • **Gollancz Festival**, London (Phoenix Artist Club 17 Sep; Foyles 17-18 Sep) and online (12-16 Sep). See gollanczfest.co.uk.

5-16 Oct • **London Literature Festival: 'Living in Future Times'**, Southbank Centre, London. See www.southbankcentre.co.uk.

26 Nov • **Sledge-Lit**, QUAD Centre, Derby. 10am-6pm. Tickets £25. See www.derbyquad.co.uk/special-event/sledge-lit-2016.aspx.

3 Dec • **Dragonmeet** (gaming). *New venue announced:* Novotel London West, Hammersmith. 10am-midnight. Tickets £10 (concessions £6); £12 at

door; group discounts. Booking at www.dragonmeet.co.uk.

24-26 Feb 2017 • **Redemption '17** (multimedia), Royal Victoria Hotel, Sheffield. £65 reg, *rising to £70 on 1 Sep* (day £40); under-18s £25 (day £15); under-3s free; £15 supp. Contact 61 Chaucer Rd, Farnborough, Hants, GU14 8SP. See www.redemption-convention.org.uk.

Rumblings. *Conception*, the long-running RPG convention held in New Milton, Hants, has been discontinued: see www.conceptionuk.org.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. Forget boring old cli-fi! Here's the latest future-fiction category that's untainted by sf. 'This future is only 13 years away, as Lionel Shriver depicts it in "The Mandibles: A Family 2029-2047," her searing exemplar of a disquieting new genre – call it dystopian finance fiction.' (Ruth Franklin, *New York Times*, 11 July) [GF]

Awards. *Cordwainer Smith Rediscovery Award*: Judith Merril.

- *Munsey* (pulp community): Laurie Powers.
- *Man Booker Prize*: the 13-book longlist includes one sf novel, David Means's alternate-1970s *Hystopia*. [KM]
- *Prometheus* (libertarian): NOVEL Neal Stephenson, *Seveneves*. HALL OF FAME Donald M. Kingsbury, *Courtship Rite*.
- *Scribe* (tie-in) genre novel winners. ORIGINAL/SPECULATIVE Dayton Ward, *Star Trek The Next Generation: Armageddon's Arrow*. ADAPTED Stephen D. Sullivan, *Manos – The Hands of Fate*.
- *Seiun* (Japan), translation: NOVEL Ann Leckie, *Ancillary Justice* trans Hideko Akao. SHORT Ken Liu, 'Good Hunting' trans Yoshimichi Furusawa.
- *Shirley Jackson Award* (suspense etc) novel winner: Gemma Files, *Experimental Film*.
- *World Fantasy Award* for life achievement: David G. Hartwell and Andrzej Sapkowski.

As Others See Us II. The baseball angle: 'Not long ago, Terry Collins, baseball lifer, would not have pulled an effective reliever after only a few pitches. Pitchers are now plug-in robots and managers are bound by "The Book", the latest edition filled with science fiction read as repetitive formulas for success.' (*New York Post* sports, 31 May) [PL]

R.I.P. *Caroline Aherne* (1963-2016), UK comic actress, writer and producer whose main genre credit was *Strange Hill High* (2013-2014), died on 2 July aged 52. (*Telegraph*, 2 July)

- *Michael Cimino* (1939-2016), Oscar-winning US producer, director and screenwriter who co-wrote *Silent Running* (1972), died on 2 July aged 77. [PDF]

- *Ron Cummins*, US actor seen in *Capricorn One* (1977), *Ghostbusters II* (1989) and *The Relic* (1997), died on 1 July.

- *Maurice G. Dantec* (1959-2016), French writer (in Quebec from 1999) whose sf includes *Babylon Babies* (1999; trans 2005; filmed as *Babylon A.D.* 2008) and *Cosmos Incorporated* (2005; trans 2008), died on 25 June; he was 56. (Europa SF)

- *Jack Davis* (1924-2016), US cartoonist whose genre work was mostly for EC Comics – including *Tales from the Crypt*, *Haunt of Fear*, *Vault of Horror*, *Incredible Science Fiction* and the early *Mad* – died on 27 July; he was 91.

- *Jerry Doyle* (1956-2016), US actor and radio host who played Garibaldi in *Babylon 5* (1994-1998) and its tv-film spinoffs, died on 27 July; he was 60. Other genre credits include *Captain Simian & The Space Monkeys* (1996-1997) and *The Outsider* (1998). [BB]

- *Corrado Farina* (1939-2016), Italian director, screenwriter and novelist best known for his film *Baba Yaga* (1973, aka *The Devil Witch* and *Kiss Me, Kill Me*), which he adapted from Guido Crepax's comics, died on 11 July aged 77. [SG]

- *Robin Hardy* (1929-2016), UK film director and writer best known for *The Wicker Man* (1973), died on 1 July aged 86. (BBC, 2 July)

- *Aharon Ipalé* (1941-2016), Morocco-born actor who played Pharaoh Seti I in *The Mummy* (1999) and *The Mummy Returns* (2001), died on 27 June aged 74. Another genre credit is *Xanadu* (1980). [SFS]

- *Joyce Katz* (1939-2016), long-time US fan who co-chaired the 1969 Worldcon, published many fanzines (including the 1970s newszine *Fiawol* with husband Arnie Katz) and was a mainstay of Las Vegas fandom, died on 30 July. All sympathy to Arnie.

- *Tim LaHaye* (1926-2016), US evangelist and author who with Jerry Jenkins wrote the 13-book 'Left Behind' sequence of near-future Bible-thumping apocalyptic fantasies, died on 25 July aged 90. (*Washington Post*, 25 July)

- *Norman Longmate* (1925-2016), UK novelist and military historian whose

If Britain Had Fallen (1972, based on the BBC tv series of that name) is an alternate-nonfiction study of the Hitler Wins scenario, died on 4 June; he was 90. [JC]

- *William Lucas* (1925-2016), UK actor whose genre credits include *The Strange World of Planet X* (1956 tv), *X the Unknown* (1956), Hammer's *The Shadow of the Cat* (1961), *Night of the Big Heat* (1967), *Doctor Who*: 'Frontios' (1984) and *Vampire Cop* (1990), died on 8 July aged 91.
- *John McMartin* (1929-2016), US actor whose rare genre credits include *Beauty and the Beast* (1987-1989), *Touched by an Angel* (1997-1998) and *Into the Woods* (2002 Broadway revival), dies on 6 July aged 86. [MMW]
- *Garry Marshall* (1934-2016), US film/tv writer/producer whose best-known genre creation was *Mork & Mindy* (1978-1982), died on 19 July aged 81. (Variety, 19 July)
- *Noel Neill* (1920-2016), US actress who played Lois Lane in the film serials *Superman* (1948) and *Atom Man vs. Superman* (1950), and also the tv *Adventures of Superman* (1953-1958) – with later appearances in *Superman* (1978) and others – died on 3 July; she was 95. [PDF]
- *Carlos Nine* (1944-2016), Argentinian illustrator and sculptor whose work appeared in Alejandro Dolina's fantasy collection *Gray Angel Chronicles* (1988) and the magazines *Playboy*, *Le Monde* and *L'Écho des Savanes*, died on 16 July aged 72. [SG]
- *Marni Nixon* (1930-2016), US singer with many uncredited ghost performances including Audrey Hepburn's songs in *My Fair Lady* (1964), died on 24 July aged 86. Her genre films are *Cinderella* (1950), *Jack and the Beanstalk* (1967) and *Mulan* (1998). [AIP]
- *Robert Nye* (1939-2016), UK poet and historical novelist whose stylistically rich works include some fantasy – *Merlin* (1978) and *Faust* (1980) for adults plus many more for younger readers – died on 2 July; he was 77. [DP]
- *Joe Napolitano*, US director whose genre credits include *Earth Angel* (1991), *Quantum Leap* (1990-1992) and *Earth 2* (1994-1995), died on 23 July. [SFS]
- *Sandy Pearlman* (1943-2016), producer, manager and lyricist for Blue Öyster Cult, whose sf-themed album *Imaginos* draws on his unpublished alien-conspiracy verse cycle 'The Soft Doctrines of Imaginos', died on 26 July aged 72. [AIP]
- *Carolyn See* (1934-2016), US author whose sf novels were *Golden Days* (1986) and *There Will Never Be Another You* (2006), died on 13 July; she

was 82. [JC]

- *April Rose Selley*, US academic who published at least one genre story and whose writings on popular culture often dealt with *Star Trek*, died on 13 July aged 61. [PDF]
- *The Shawshank Tree*, a white oak in Ohio featured in the Stephen King-based film *The Shawshank Redemption*, blew down circa 22 July; it was 180-200 years old.
- *Richard Thompson* (1957-2016), US cartoonist best known for his strip *Cul de Sac*, whose early work appeared from the 1980s in such fan publications as *Science Fiction Eye*, *Blat!* and the Disclave programme book, died on 27 July. [F770]
- *Carolyn Whitaker*, UK literary agent who founded her London Independent Books agency in 1971 and represented Alex Bell, Joe Delaney, Elizabeth Kay, Richard Morgan and Chris Wooding, died on 17 June; she was 79. [AIP]

Prophetic Dept. James Thurber gives an imaginary example of terrifying broadcast statistics: ‘Every eleven seconds in America some man, woman or child is stricken with Googleman’s disease.’ (*Lanterns and Lances*, 1961) The infection rate is much higher these days.

SFWA now admits writers of sf/fantasy/horror game narratives – as distinct from nonfiction game instructions or mechanics – who meet the stated paid-word-count criteria. (www.sfwaworld.org, 21 July)

As Others Research Us. A new DVD box-set of *Timeslip* (BBC 1970-1971) includes a ‘making of’ book by Andrew Pixley that says: ‘By the start of October [1971], it transpired that *Timeslip* – and Cheryl Burfield in particular – had won an award. The actress was awarded the Nova Cup because Liz Skinner had been voted the Best Character in Science Fiction (Production of British Television 1971); this was part of the forthcoming Novacon, a science fiction convention being held at Birmingham’s Imperial Centre in November 1971.’ Whatever was that? Novacon’s Nova Award (for fanzines) didn’t launch until 1973. [SG]

Award Shortlists. *Gemmell* (heroic fantasy): NOVEL Miles Cameron, *The Dread Wyrms*; Larry Correia, *Son of the Black Sword*; David Guymer, *Gotrek & Felix: Slayer*; John Gwynne, *Ruin*; Mark Lawrence, *The Liar’s Key*. DEBUT Stephen Aryan, *Battlemage*; Seth Dickinson, *The Traitor*; Francesca Haig,

The Fire Sermon; Lucy Hounsom, *Starborn*; Peter Newman, *The Vagrant*; Sabaa Tahir, *An Ember in the Ashes*. Cover Art Kerem Beyit, *The Dread Wyrms* by Miles Cameron; Jason Chan, *The Liar's Key* by Mark Lawrence; Larry Elmore & Carol Russo Design, *Son of the Black Sword* by Larry Correia, Raymond Swanland, *Archaon: Lord of Chaos* by Rob Sanders; Paul Young, *Ruin* by John Gwynne.

- *Sidewise* (alternate history): LONG FORM Julie Mayhew, *The Big Lie*; Tony Schumacher, *The British Lion*; Harry Turtledove, *Joe Steele*. SHORT FORM Eneaszi Brodski, 'Red Legacy' (*Asimov's* 2/15); Eric Cline. 'Elizabethtown' (*Galaxy's Edge*, 11/15); Bill Crider. 'It Doesn't Matter Anymore' (*Tales from the Otherverse*); Rev Dicerto, 'Losing Amelia' (*Deco Punk*); Ken Poyner. 'The Last of Time' (*Daily SF*, 5/11/15). James Reasoner. 'The Hero of Deadwood' (*Tales from the Otherverse*).

- *World Fantasy* (novels only): Kazuo Ishiguro, *The Buried Giant*; N.K. Jemisin, *The Fifth Season*; Naomi Novik, *Uprooted*; K.J. Parker, *Savages*; Anna Smail, *The Chimes*; Paul Tremblay, *A Head Full of Ghosts*. For other categories see www.locusmag.com/News/2016/07/11044/.

Publishers and Sinners. Ian Whates's NewCon Press celebrated ten years of publishing at a 9 July London pub party. Books were released; birthday cake was eaten; toasts and various guests were drunk.

Outraged Letters. *Stephen Baxter* on his and Arthur C. Clarke's Brexit 'prediction' ([A348](#)): 'If only Clarke had got his prediction of cold fusion right, instead of that! / I vaguely remember cooking that up with him. He was an advocate of world government, etc. I doubt he would have voted Brexit. But he liked to be playful. When we worked on that book there was a rumour circulating that President Lincoln had been gay (he once shared a bed with another young lawyer in digs, but at a time when everybody did that, innocently). In the end we decided to have him accepted as a gay icon, but then have our time viewer prove he wasn't after all. "Good," said Arthur. "That will annoy everybody!"'

Magazine Scene. Scott M. Roberts took over from Edmund Schubert as editor of *Orson Scott Card's Intergalactic Medicine Show*, the first issue under the new regime being dated July/August 2016. [SFS]

Random Fandom. *Jonathan Coleclough's SF/Fantasy Literary Map* – the UK built from authors' names – flatteringly plasters me all over Reading.

Search for Coleclough at www.theliterarygiftcompany.com.

The Dead Past. *70 Years Ago: 'New Worlds.* Most of you will have seen a copy of this, the first post-war British science-fiction magazine. In my opinion the best story, though it is not s-f and hardly even fantasy, is William F. Temple's "The Three Pylons". It is a neat, well-printed magazine.' (D.R. Smith, *British Fantasy Society Bulletin* 27, August 1946) Useful to know that the *New Worlds* tradition of destroying the sf canon by printing non-sf stories goes right back to issue 1.

- *60 Years Ago*, Kingsley Amis wistfully imagined contemporary mainstream writers broadening their scope: 'only the hyper-sensitive could greet without warm emotion [...] an imagined invasion of Earth by Vegan vegetables from the pen of Miss Ivy Compton-Burnett.' (*Spectator*, June 1956)

C.o.A. Brad Foster (email) jabberwocky2000 at hotmail dot com.

Thog's Masterclass. *Simile Dept.* 'Rolant seemed to shrink into himself like a dried garlic clove.' (Lionel Fanthorpe, 'Curse of the Khan', *Supernatural Stories* 105, 1966)

- *À la Recherche des Eyeballs Perdus.* 'The letter, of whose provenance he knew absolutely nothing, fascinated him and at any moment I expected his glittering eyeballs to detach themselves from their sockets and fly to the letter, insignificant in itself, which his curiosity had magnetised.' (Marcel Proust, *Sodom et Gomorrhe*, trans C.K. Scott Moncrieff and Terence Kilmartin, 1989) [JFH]

- *Hitler Was a Martian Dept.* '... Robot Army ... From a million metal throats burst a terrifying roar – the Martian Cry of Victory: / "Zhig Gheil! Zhig Gheil!"' (Errol Collins, *Mariners of Space*, 1949) [RR]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 12 August 2016: Brum Group Summer Social meal at the Black Eagle. Normal Brum Group meetings are 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre. £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future meetings/speakers: 12 September 2016 Jasper Bark (Andromeda 2 joint meeting, plus panel discussion); 14 October 2016 Andy Lound; 4 November 2016 Film Night; 2 December 2016

Christmas Social.

Editorial. Again fervent thanks to all who contributed to the *Ansible*® trademark registration fee. In order of response: Andrew Wells, Mike Cobley, Liz Williams, Alison Scott, Catherine Pickersgill, Jayne Nelson, Fiona Scarlett, Camilla Pomeroy, Mark Slater, Esther MacCallum-Stewart, Jonathan Lewis-Jones, John Waggott, Kari, Brian Nisbet, Nicholas Gibbins, Vanessa May, Steve Glover, Sarah Mooring, Ian Collier, Mark Yon, Paul Lagasse, Sean Ellis, John Bangsund, Carl Allery, James Shields, Becky Thomson, Beale-Williams Enterprise, David Weingart, James Viner, Douglas Faunt, Philip Dyson, Judith Mortimore, Eddie Cochrane, Peter Mabey, James Bacon, George Wells, Colin Harris, Susan Shwartz, Mark Price, Harry Payne, Jody Lynn Nye. This surge of generosity, which raised the needed amount in less than 48 hours, arose from a friends-only discussion on Facebook; please don't feel slighted if you didn't see it. I'm also most grateful to Simon Bradshaw for his legal advice.

BSFA London Open Meeting. The usual fourth-Wednesday timing gives 24 August, clashing with the Clarke Award presentation. Watch the BSFA site and/or *Ansible* London events page for news of rescheduling or cancellation. [*Later: cancellation finally announced on 18 August.*]

<http://www.bsfa.co.uk/>

<http://news.ansible.uk/london.html>

Yet More Events (2017 Preview).

29-30 Apr 2017 • **EM-Con** (media), Motorpoint Arena, Nottingham.

Labyrinthine tickets/extras pricing to follow at www.em-con.co.uk.

2 Jun - 1 Sep 2017 • **Into the Unknown: A Journey through Science Fiction** (exhibition), Barbican, London. See www.barbican.org.uk.

The Dead Past II. *70 Years Ago:* H.G. Wells died on 13 August 1946.

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Ansible® 350, September 2016

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or a reliable second-hand Sending Boat.

Now: Then! At last, Ansible Editions proudly presents Rob Hansen's *Then: Science Fiction Fandom in the UK: 1930-1980* in its first book edition, hugely revised and expanded from the long-ago fanzine incarnation. 454 pages, nearly 228,000 words, heavily photo-illustrated: \$22.50 in trade paperback and \$36.50 (with an introductory 10% discount) in hardback. Read all about it at ae.ansible.uk/?t=then.

MidAmericon II Awards

Hugos. NOVEL N.K. Jemisin, *The Fifth Season*. NOVELLA Nnedi Okorafor, *Binti*. NOVELETTE Hao Jingfang trans Ken Liu, 'Folding Beijing' (1/15 *Uncanny*). SHORT Naomi Kritzer, 'Cat Pictures Please' (1/15 *Clarkesworld*). RELATED WORK No Award. GRAPHIC Neil Gaiman and J.H. Williams III, *The Sandman: Overture*. DRAMATIC, LONG *The Martian*. DRAMATIC, SHORT *Jessica Jones*: 'AKA Smile'. EDITOR, SHORT Ellen Datlow. EDITOR, LONG Sheila E. Gilbert. PRO ARTIST Abigail Larson. SEMIPROZINE *Uncanny Magazine*. FANZINE *File 770*. FANCAST No Award. FAN WRITER Mike Glycer. FAN ARTIST Steve Stiles. CAMPBELL (Not a Hugo): Andy Weir.

- *Retro Hugos* for 1940 work. NOVEL A.E. Van Vogt, *Slan*. NOVELLA Robert A. Heinlein, 'If This Goes On ...'. NOVELETTE Heinlein, 'The Roads Must Roll'. SHORT Isaac Asimov 'Strange Playfellow' aka 'Robbie'. GRAPHIC *Batman #1*. DRAMATIC, LONG *Fantasia*. DRAMATIC, SHORT *Pinocchio*. EDITOR John W. Campbell. PRO ARTIST Virgil Finlay. FANZINE *Futura Fantasia*. FAN WRITER Ray Bradbury.

- *Big Heart*: Joe Siclari and Edie Stern.
- *Campbell Memorial*: Eleanor Lerman, *Radiomen*.
- *First Fandom Hall of Fame*: Ben Bova, Roy V. Hunt, Lew Martin, Olon F.

Wiggins, Joseph Wrzos.

- *Sam Moskowitz Archive Award*: Stephen D. Korshak, Ned Brooks.
 - *Sidewise*. SHORT Bill Crider, 'It Doesn't Matter Anymore' (*Tales from the Otherverse*). LONG Julie Mayhew, *The Big Lie*.
 - *Sturgeon* (short): Kelly Link, 'The Game of Smash and Recovery' (10/15 *Strange Horizons*)
 - George R.R. Martin again threw a lavish Hugo Losers' Party and gave hood-ornament 'Alfie' awards to worthies pushed off the Hugo ballot by slate voting: SHORT Alyssa Wong, 'Hungry Daughters of Starving Mothers'. RELATED Alisa Krasnostein & Alexandra Pierce, *Letters to Tiptree*. GRAPHIC *Bitch Planet, Volume 1*. ARTIST Julie Dillon. FANZINE *Journey Planet*. FANCAST *Tea and Jeopardy*. FAN WRITER Alexandra Erin. Plus 'special committee awards' to *Black Gate* and *Locus*.
-

The Way of the Wender

Jim Butcher is being honoured by Hull City Council! A new street on Alexandra Dock will be named Jim Butcher Way; sadly for Dresden Files fans, *this* Jim Butcher was a pioneering trade unionist. [CN]

Gregory Feeley on the unmentionable: 'The *New York Times*'s refusal to use the term "science fiction" continues apace. Colson Whitehead's new novel *The Underground Railroad*, in which the Underground Railroad of the antebellum American South is rendered literal, is not called a "fantasy"; moreover the reviewer refers to his previous novels by noting that *The Intuitionist* had "dystopian concerns and [a] futuristic mood," while *Zone One* represented "Whitehead's contribution to the unquenchable American thirst for zombies." Neither "science fiction," "fantasy," nor "horror" are ever identified by name.' (14 August) In certain contexts the term is allowed: see 'As Others Avoid Us' below.

Neil Gaiman wasn't at MidAmeriCon, but his Hugo acceptance speech was read out at the ceremony and included the following: 'It meant a lot to see *Sandman: Overture* nominated for a Hugo Award, and was disappointing to see that it had been dragged into the unfortunate mess that the pitiable people who call themselves Puppy had attempted to inflict on Worldcon and its awards. I would have withdrawn it from consideration, but even that seemed

like it would have been giving these sad losers too much acknowledgement.’

Franz Kafka’s papers belong to the national library of Israel, according to an Israeli court ruling against the heirs of Max Brod. Having preserved these papers – which Kafka himself wanted burnt – Brod asked that they should go to the Hebrew University in Jerusalem; his heirs had different and more profitable ideas. An original copy of *The Trial* from this cache sold for \$2m in 1988. (*Times*, 10 August) [PF]

Ursula K. Le Guin this month joins the highly select company of living authors honoured with a Library of America edition – not outright sf or fantasy but (her own choice) an omnibus of the Orsinia stories.

Consound

3-4 Sep • **Middle-earth Festival**, Sarehole Mill, Cole Bank Rd, Hall Green, Birmingham, B13 0BD. Free. See middleearthfestival.co.uk.

8-11 Sep • **Oxonmoot** (Tolkien Soc), St Antony’s College, Oxford. Now £55-£75 reg. See www.tolkiensociety.org/events/oxonmoot-2016/.

CANCELLED 9-10 Sep • **Andromeda 2**, Moseley, Birmingham. Cancelled in July owing to ‘low advance sales’. The website has vanished.

12-18 Sep • **Gollancz Festival**, London (Phoenix Artist Club 17 Sep; Foyles 17-18 Sep) and online (12-16 Sep). See gollanczfest.co.uk.

17-18 Sep • **Futurefest** (futurology), Tobacco Dock, London. £80 or £50/day; 50% off for students with NUS cards. See futurefest.org.

23-25 Sep • **Fantasycon**, Scarborough. Grand Hotel, St Nicholas Cliff, and The Royal, St Nicholas St. £50 reg (BFS members £40) plus £35 for awards banquet. See fantasyconbythesea.com.

24-25 Sep • **Tolkien Weekend**, Newcastle Castle. 10am-5pm each day. Free admission. See newcastlecastle.co.uk/tolkien-weekend-2016.

28 Sep • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. With Ed Cox. Free; all welcome.

1 Oct • **TitanCon**, Wellington Park Hotel, Belfast. £25 reg (plus £1.20 PayPal transaction fee); £5 supporting. See titancon.com.

5-16 Oct • **London Literature Festival**: ‘Living in Future Times’, Southbank Centre, London. See www.southbankcentre.co.uk.

14-16 Oct • **Octocon**, Camden Court Hotel, Dublin, Ireland. €30 reg and €20 concessions, *rising on 14 September to €35 and €25*; free entry for accompanied under-13s. Join online at 2016.octocon.com.

23-25 Oct • **Celluloid Screams** (horror film festival), Showroom Cinema, Sheffield. See celluloidscreams.co.uk. 0114 275 7727.

24-26 Feb 2017 • **Redemption ’17** (multimedia), Royal Victoria Hotel, Sheffield. *Now £70 reg* (day £40); under-18s £25 (day £15); under-3s free; £15 supp. See www.redemption-convention.org.uk.

5 Jul 2017 • **Edge-Lit 6**, QUAD Centre, Derby, DE1 3AS. 10am-late. Tickets £30. See www.derbyquad.co.uk/film/edge-lit-6.aspx.

16-20 Aug 2018 • **Worldcon 76** (Worldcon), San José, CA, USA. GoH Chelsea Quinn Yarbro, Spider Robinson, others. \$160 reg; \$90 YA (15-21) and military; under-15s \$60; \$50 supp; under-6s free. Usual discounts for presupporters and site voters. See worldcon76.org.

Rumblings. *2018 Worldcon Site Selection*: Worldcon 76 (as above) defeated the rival bid from New Orleans by 675 votes to 594.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others Research Us. ‘Anglo-Saxon democracies, which were never invaded in the 20th century, have produced a rich series of alternative histories of resistance. When the Nazis win the Second World War, audiences can flatter themselves that they would never have collaborated with Robert Harris’s *Fatherland* or Amazon’s *Man in the High Castle*.’ (Nick Cohen, *Guardian*, 30 July) [DM]

More Awards. *Arthur C. Clarke*: Adrian Tchaikovsky, *Children of Time*. Self-published novels may in future be eligible.

• *Mythopoeic*: ADULT FANTASY Naomi Novik, *Uprooted*. CHILDREN’S Ursula Vernon, *Castle Hangnail*. SCHOLARSHIP/INKLINGS Grevel Lindop, *Charles Williams: The Third Inkling*. SCHOLARSHIP/OTHER Jamie Williamson, *The Evolution of Modern Fantasy: From Antiquarianism to the Ballantine Adult*

Fantasy Series.

- *Prometheus* (libertarian) Life Achievement: L. Neil Smith.

The Joy of OCR. James Lovegrove's Amazon author biography says he was 'Sheri-listed for the Arthur C. Clarke Award', reviews for the *Financial Times* and wrote *Sherlock Holmes: The Sniff of Nightmares*. His title *Untied Kingdom* was mysteriously 'corrected'. (31 August)

R.I.P. Kenny Baker (1934-2016), UK actor who played R2-D2 in *Star Wars* (1977) and several sequels and prequels, died on 13 August; he was 81. Other genre credits include *Wombling Free* (1978), *Flash Gordon* (1980), *Time Bandits* (1981) and *Labyrinth* (1986).

- *Michel Butor* (1926-2016), French *nouveau roman* novelist and pioneering sf critic who wrote on Jules Verne and published a once mildly notorious 1953 essay translated as 'Science Fiction: The Crisis of its Growth', died on 24 August aged 89. [PDF]

- *Stephanie Clarkson* (1970-2016), Canadian/US fan who was in charge of disabled access at the 2003 Toronto Worldcon, died on 19 July; she was 45. [JDN]

- *Guy Dessicy* (1924-2016), golden-age Belgian comics colourist who worked on Hergé's *Tintin* albums 1946-1954 and was instrumental in founding the Belgian Comics Centre in Brussels in the early 1980s, died on 29 July; he was 92. [JG]

- *John G. Fantucchio* (1938-2016), US comics artist who drew mainly for such 1960s/1970s fanzines as *Rocket's Blast Comicollector* but also appeared in *Vampirella* and *Creepy*, reportedly died in early August; he was 78. [PDF]

- *Fyvush Finkel* (1922-2016), US character actor who was in the revived *Fantasy Island* (1998-1999) and *The Brave Little Toaster Goes to Mars* (voice, 1998), died on 14 August aged 93.

- *David Huddleston* (1930-2016), US actor whose credits include *Bewitched* (1970-1971), *Blazing Saddles* (1974), *Computercide* (1981) and *Santa Claus* (1985), died on 2 August aged 85.

- *Barry Jenner* (1941-2016), US actor who played Admiral Ross in *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*, died on August 9 aged 75; other genre credits include *Looker* (1981). [SFS]

- *Marvin Kaplan* (1927-2016), US actor whose genre credits include *Angels in the Outfield* (1951), *Top Cat* (1961-1962 voice) and *Freaky Friday* (1976), died on 25 August aged 89. [SFS]

- *Víctor Mora* (1931-2016), Spanish comics writer who in 1956 created the highly popular series *Capitán Trueno* ('Captain Thunder', inspired by *Prince Valiant*), died on 17 August; he was 85. [PDF]
- *Robert C. 'Bob' Peterson* (1921-2016), long-time fan, publisher of 1940s sf bibliographies including *The Fantasy Index*, editor of the anthology *The Science-Fictional Sherlock Holmes* (1960) and member of the First Fandom Hall of Fame, died on 15 August. [SFS]
- *Jack Riley* (1935-2016), US comic actor whose credits include *The Addams Family Fun House* (1973), *Attack of the Killer Tomatoes!* (1978), *C.H.U.D. II – Bud the Chud* (1989) and *Rugrats* (1991-2005), died on 19 August aged 80. [MMW]
- *Ruth Stuart* (1964-2016), Canadian fan and author who helped run WilfCon 1984-1994 and published stories in genre anthologies from 2004, died on 12 August; she was 52. [JDN]
- *Gene Wilder* (1933-2016), US actor best known and loved in genre circles for star roles in *Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory* (1971) and *Young Frankenstein* (1974), died on 29 August aged 83. [DK] As co-screenwriter he shared *Young Frankenstein's* Hugo and Nebula awards with Mel Brooks. Other credits include *Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Sex But Were Afraid to Ask* (1972), *Blazing Saddles* (1974), *The Little Prince* (1974) and *Haunted Honeymoon* (1986).

The Weakest Link. Q: 'Which Shakespeare play shares its name with a Christian festival celebrated on January 5th?' A: '*Macbeth.*' (ITV, *Tipping Point*) [PE]

• Q: 'What is the name given to the series of conflicts fought in mediaeval England between the houses of Lancaster and York?' A: '*Game of Thrones.*' (Channel 4, *The Question Jury*) [PE]

Show Me the Money. *Forbes* magazine guessed at the earnings of 14 top authors, most with genre links: James Patterson \$95 million, Jeff Kinney \$19.5m, J.K. Rowling \$19m, John Grisham \$18m, Stephen King \$15m, Danielle Steel \$15m, Nora Roberts \$15m, E.L. James \$14m, Veronica Roth \$10m, John Green \$10m, Paula Hawkins \$10m, George R.R. Martin \$9.5m, Rick Riordan \$9.5m and Dan Brown \$9.5m. [AIP]

Thog's Science Masterclass: *In Space No One Can Hear You Diet.* 'It was the weightlessness that woke Trey: the sudden, disorienting loss of body mass.' (Elizabeth Bonesteel, *The Cold Between*, 2016) [AK]

Court Circular. Hachette Book Group is suing Seth Grahame-Smith – of *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* notoriety – for half of the \$1m advance he received in 2010 for a two-book contract. Book one was duly published in 2015; book two was very late and allegedly not only on an unapproved subject but the wrong length and ‘in large part an appropriation of a 120-year-old public-domain work’. ([Hollywood Reporter](#), 26 August). Well, that’s what he does, isn’t it?

As Others Avoid Us. ‘I am confident that my streak of never having read a work of science fiction will remain intact.’ (Jeffrey Toobin, *NY Times*, 7 August) [JB]

- ‘I do not like espionage, science fiction or romance novels, because I don’t believe half of them, they feel totally implausible; and because I either know how they’re going to end or don’t care. (Terry McMillan, *NY Times*, 18 August) [PDF]

Outraged Letters. *Simon R. Green* liked Brad Foster’s ‘Box Bat of Cardboard City’ cartoon ([A349](#)): ‘I had my own street of weird homeless people in the Nightside books. Including my favourite image: an Alien Grey in a tattered pressure suit, holding a handwritten sign, *Will probe for food.*’

- *Patrice Louinet* on that Robert E. Howard rarity (see [A349](#)): ‘There are currently fifteen known copies of the Jenkins *Gent*. It has been my good fortune to unearth two of those, incidentally. As to Glenn[Lord]’s copy, it is the only copy in the world with *a* dustjacket. There are no known copies of the jacket for the so-called cheap edition. Glenn’s copy *did* find a taker, but outside eBay.’

We Are Everywhere. The company that makes the uninvitingly sf-titled drink Soylent has followed up with a coffee-like derivative called Coffiest – which in Frederik Pohl’s and C.M. Kornbluth’s *The Space Merchants* was laced with an addictive alkaloid. Expect Can-D, Chew-Z and thionite products any day now. ([Arstechnica.com](#), August)

Random Fandom. *Hugo Tweaks* at Worldcon business meetings include ratification of the anti-slate measures E Pluribus Hugo (a complex nomination-counting algorithm) and ‘5 and 6’: 5 nominations allowed in each category for 6 final ballot slots (amended from 4 and 6, the current practice being 5 and 5). Newer proposals needing 2017 ratification include EPH+ (an improved EPH) and 3SV or 3-Stage Voting, a remarkable system which this

margin is too small to contain.

- *Chuck Tingle*, as predicted by 5,271,009 fan pundits, lost no time in releasing his new mini-epic *Pounded in the Butt by My Hugo Award Loss*.

Still More Awards. The inaugural Nommo Awards for African sf/fantasy are to be presented in November under the aegis of the newly formed African Speculative Fiction Society. The winning novel, novella, short story and graphic novel will share \$3000 prize money. [L]

The Dead Past. *5 Years Ago*, John Pelan introduced the first *Best of Richard Wilson* collection: ‘I am very much indebted to Harlan Ellison for making “At the Sign of Boar’s Head Nebula” available (originally written specifically for *The Last Dangerous Visions*) ... his only concern was our ability to get the book out in a timely manner.’ (*The Story Writer and Other Stories*, Ramble House, 2011) [BS]

- *40 Years Ago*, there came news of the founding of the UK Daedalus Society: “the Society is being set up so that Science Fiction fans may also make their own contributions to man’s conquest of space.” [...] If you have some spare time at weekends and feel like conquering space, drop the society a line.’ ([Checkpoint 74](#), September 1976)

- *50 Years Ago*, William F. Temple wrote about a star-studded party, ‘almost a small convention, at Mike Moorcock’s flat [...] Among those present were Judy Merrill, who is over here to compile an anthology of British sf for U.S. readers, Arthur C. Clarke, who is still working on the Kubrick Cinerama film, Brian Aldiss, William Burroughs (he brought his lunch with him – naked, of course), Arthur and Gladys Sellings [...], J.G. Ballard, George MacBeth the poet and BBC producer, Jim McConnell of Ann Arbor, Keith Roberts and myself.’ ([Skyrack 92](#), September 1966)

Court Circular II. David Kelso-Mitchell, sentenced earlier this year to ten years’ jail for attempted murder ([South Wales Evening Post](#), 16 March) is also the author and publisher D.M. Mitchell who edited such Lovecraftian anthologies as *The Starry Wisdom* (1994) and compiled the definitive history of [Savoy Books](#), *A Serious Life* (Savoy 2004). [DP]

Fanfundery. *Corflu 50*: Pete Young was chosen by this consensus-based fan fund to travel to Corflu 2017 in Los Angeles (see [corflu.org](#)).

Publishers and Sinners. Alex Davis announced the shutdown of his small press Boo Books on 10 August. The closing sale is now over.

Thog's Masterclass. *Dept of Anticipation.* 'Rapid sonorous beats of turmoil and uncertainty pulsed in his head to near unimaginable proportions as the potential ramifications perpending if what he expected to discover was to come true overtook him.' (Peter Senese and Robert Geis, *Cloning Christ*, 2002) [PB]

• *In Your Face Dept.* 'She was comely; a slight skew of the cheekbones only lent her face a stronger punch.' (Greg Vilk, *Golem*, 2005) [PB]

• *Pathetic Fallacy Redivivus.* 'The air grew so thick with tension that even the wind outside backed off to a safe distance.' (*Ibid*)

• *Sherlockian Technology Dept.* 'Holmes leant over the gasogene and lit his cigarette.' (Anthony Horowitz, *The House of Silk*, 2011) [RR/AM]

• *Dept of Astrogation Equipment.* 'She gestured at the powerful prism binoculars, a part of the uniform of every officer of space.' (E.E. Smith, *First Lensman*, 1950)

• *Simile Dept.* 'Like black pudding, the maze threatened to congeal around him ...' (Alan Dean Foster, *Reunion*, 2001) [PB]

• *Paging Lionel Fanthorpe.* 'Did clouds moot before resolving to rain? Did atmosphere argue prior to sending a breeze northward, or to the east? When a whirling magnetar blew off overwhelming quantities of gamma rays, was the direction and moment of eruption a consequence of cognizant confutation?' (*Ibid*)

Endnotes

Apparitions.

• 9 September 2016: Best SF Film discussion (replacing joint event with the cancelled Andromeda 2). 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre. £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future meetings/speakers: 14 October 2016 Andy Lound; 4 November 2016 Film Night; 2 December 2016 Christmas Social.

Editorial. Yes, there will also be an Ansible Editions ebook of Rob Hansen's expanded *Then*, which should be available before long in the usual formats. After that, AE returns to the Langford backlist with an ebook of *The Space Eater* – cover by the great David A. Hardy!

Thog's Second Helping. 'Her eye has been caught by a rogue tulip, a pink

one.' 'My insides have turned to red.' (both Sabine Durrant, *Remember Me This Way*, 2015) [PB]

Ansible® 350 Copyright © David Langford, 2016. Thanks to Paul Barnett, John Boston, Paul Di Filippo, Paul Fraser, Joe Gordon, Amanda Kear, Dan Kimmel, Locus, Adrian Middleton, Dez Mundie, Chris Nicole, James D. Nicoll, Andrew I. Porter, David Pringle, Private Eye, Robert Rankin, Bill Seabrook, SF Site, Martin Morse Wooster, and our Hero Distributors: Dave Corby (Brum Group), SCIS/Prophecy and Alan Stewart (Australia). 1
September 2016.

Ansible® 351, October 2016

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or texts on Prehumous Morbid Bibliomancy.

Ebookery. Ansible Editions ebook releases in September included the much expanded 2016 version of Rob Hansen's *Then: Science Fiction Fandom in the UK: 1930-1980*, plus my own skiffy novel *The Space Eater*. Read all about it at ae.ansible.uk and ae.ansible.uk/ebooks.php.

- Hardback and trade paperback editions of *Then* should be available in the Novacon 46 dealers' room, with Rob himself there to sign them. Please email me if interested; I have no idea how many copies to bring.

The Moment of Thlabber

Margaret Atwood is to receive the PEN (Harold) Pinter Prize, given to authors who cast an 'unflinching, unswerving gaze upon the world', in a 13 October event at the British Library, London. (www.bl.uk)

Neil Clarke allowed himself a little editorial gloat in the October issue of *Clarkesworld*, now online at clarkesworldmagazine.com and marking this magazine's tenth anniversary. Congratulations!

Ed Fortune, books man at *Starburst*, insists he's flattered by this published reader's letter: 'Liking the book news, even if your book guy is really just a pound shop David Langford.' (Twitter, 16 September)

Nalo Hopkinson is the Honorary Graduand – for services to letters – at this month's Anglia Ruskin University graduation ceremony. [FM]

Cat Rambo, speaking as President of SFWA, updated the saga of that Hungarian sf magazine *Galaktika* and its habit of publishing translated English-language stories without permission or payment. The publisher, István Burger, has 'explained' that he had a verbal agreement with 'the leader

of one of the most respected literary agencies' whereby he was allowed to make free with short stories as loss leaders for novels to be published in Hungarian and even paid for. Since the respected agency has yet to be named, and since the *Galaktika* depredations were not confined to any one agency's authors, this claim was greeted with [hoots of incredulity](#) and even sarcasm. Cat Rambo therefore summed up: 'SFWA formally recommends that authors, editors, translators, and other publishing professionals avoid working with *Galaktika* until the magazine has demonstrated that existing issues have been addressed and that there will be no recurrence.' ([SFWA.org](#), 26 September)

Conturbation

5-16 Oct • **London Literature Festival**: 'Living in Future Times', Southbank Centre, London. See www.southbankcentre.co.uk.

6-9 Oct • **Grimmfest** (horror/cult films), Odeon, The Printworks, Manchester. Day passes £20 Thu; £25 Fri, Sat, Sun; see grimmfest.com.

7-9 Oct • **Destination Star Trek**, NEC, Birmingham. Day £29; 2 days £39; 3 days £49; VIP £145 to £2999! See destinationstartrek.com.

8 Oct • **Nor-Con 6** (tv/film/comics), Norfolk Showground Arena. 9:30am-6pm. Tickets £15 for 9:30 entry, £10 for 10:30 (under-15s £10 and £6) plus booking fees. See www.nor-con.co.uk.

14-16 Oct • **Lakes International Comic Art Festival**, Kendal, Cumbria. Some parts free. For tickets see www.comicartfestival.com.

14-16 Oct • **Octocon**, Camden Court Hotel, Dublin, Ireland. Now €35 reg, €25 concessions; under-13s free. See 2016.octocon.com.

23-25 Oct • **Celluloid Screams** (horror film festival), Showroom Cinema, Sheffield. See celluloidscreams.co.uk. 0114 275 7727.

26 Oct • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. With Jason Arnopp. Free to all.

27-30 Oct • **Bram Stoker International Film Festival**, Whitby. 4-day pass £125; various extras. See www.bramstokerfilmfestival.com.

28-30 Oct • **Festival of Fantastic Films**, Pendulum Hotel, Manchester. £75

reg; day £30 Fri or Sun, £40 Sat. Contact 95 Meadowgate Rd, Salford, Manchester, M6 8EN. See also fantastic-films.com.

29 Oct • **BristolCon**, Doubletree Hotel, Bristol city centre. £25 reg; £30 at the door. Cheques to 18 High Leaze Road, Patchway, Bristol BS34 5AF. See also www.bristolcon.org.

30 Oct • **Paperback & Pulp Fair**, Royal National Hotel, 38-51 Bedford Way, Russell Sq, London, WC1H 0DG. 9:30am-3pm. Admission £1.50. Contact 020 8249 8278; harry.np at virgin net.

4-6 Nov • **Armadacon 28**, Future Inns, Plymouth. £35 reg; day £20 Sat, £15 Sun (concessions £30, £15, £10). Contact Moor Cottage, Cardinham, Bodmin, Cornwall, PL30 4BR; or see www.armadacon.org.

SOLD OUT: 4-6 Nov • **BCon** (Eurocon), Barcelona, Spain. See www.eurocon2016.org for waiting list for cancelled memberships.

5-6 Nov • **Comic Con** (comics), Leeds. Part of Thought Bubble, the Leeds Comic Art Festival, running 1-6 November. Tickets £26 weekend or £16/day (plus booking fees) from thoughtbubblefestival.com.

11-13 Nov • **Novacon 46**, Park Inn, Nottingham. £46 reg; under-17s £12; under-13s free. Contact 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ. PayPal registration now accepted at www.novacon.org.uk.

10-12 Feb 2017 • **Conrunner 4** (conrunning), Park Inn, Nottingham. £40 reg, *rising to £45 on 1 November*. Contact 56 Jackmans Place, Letchworth Garden City, Herts, SG6 1RH. See www.conrunner.co.uk.

11 Jun 2017 • **Blake** (*Blake's 7*), Steventon Village Hall, Oxon. 10am-5pm. Tickets £15 plus booking fee. See tinyurl.com/j99unhx.

Rumblings. [Worldcon 75 \(Helsinki, 2017\)](#) is doing a trial run of the proposed Best Series Hugo category as its permitted special Hugo option, with a series defined as three or more linked volumes (at least one published in 2016) totalling 240,000 words or more. How long is a novel? The qualifying length for the Hugo category is 40,000 words, and 60,000 or 70,000 used to be regarded as decent novel lengths; but a whole trilogy of such puny little things doesn't now count as a series. I suspect that Asimov's original *Foundation* trio, given a one-off Hugo as All-Time Best Series in 1966, would now be reckoned too short.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Politicians. ‘Like Wotan in Wagner’s Ring, [David] Cameron clearly judges that, once the spear that symbolises his power has been broken, it is time to slip away quickly and without fuss.’ (Martin Kettle, *Guardian*, 12 September; a *Private Eye* ‘Pseud’s Corner’ selection) The Spear of State?

- Conversely, Donald Trump ‘is like the blond alien in the 1995 movie *Species*, who mutates from ova to adult in months, regenerating and reconfiguring at warp speed to escape the establishment, kill everyone in sight and eliminate the human race.’ (Maureen Dowd, *New York Times*, 5 March) [MMW]

Awards. *British Fantasy*: ANTHOLOGY Ellen Datlow, ed., *The Doll Collection*. ARTIST Julie Dillon. COLLECTION Tananarive Due, *Ghost Summer*. GRAPHIC NOVEL Kelly Sue DeConnick, Valentine De Landro, Robert Wilson IV & Cris Peter, *Bitch Planet*. FANTASY NOVEL Naomi Novik, *Uprooted*. FILM/TV *Jonathan Strange & Mr Norrell*. HORROR NOVEL Catriona Ward, *Rawblood*. INDEPENDENT PRESS Angry Robot. MAGAZINE *Beneath Ceaseless Skies*. NEWCOMER Zen Cho for *Sorcerer to the Crown*. NONFICTION Alexandra Pierce & Alisa Krasnostein, ed., *Letters to Tiptree*. NOVELLA Usman T. Malik, *The Pauper Prince and the Eucalyptus Jinn*. SHORT Priya Sharma, ‘Fabulous Beasts’. SPECIAL FantasyCon redshirts.

- *Eugie Foster Memorial Award* (short): Catherynne M. Valente, ‘The Long Goodnight of Violet Wild’ (*Clarkesworld* 1-3/15).

- *Forrest J Ackerman Award for Service to SF*: Gregory Benford. [GB]

- *Gemmell Awards* (heroic fantasy): NOVEL Mark Lawrence, *The Liar’s Key*. DEBUT Peter Newman, *The Vagrant*. COVER ART Jason Chan for *The Liar’s Key*.

- *SF Poetry Association*: DWARF STAR (short poem) Stacey Balkun, ‘We Begin This Way’. ELGIN/BOOK Mary Soon Lee, *Crowned*. ELGIN/CHAPBOOK Shannon Connor Winward, *Undoing Winter*. [SFS]

As Others Rank Us. ‘Say what you like about nurses, garbage collectors, or mechanics, it’s obvious that were they to vanish in a puff of smoke, the results would be immediate and catastrophic. A world without teachers or dock-workers would soon be in trouble, and even one without science fiction writers or ska musicians would clearly be a lesser place.’ (David Graeber, Economics.com, 27 September) [HF]

R.I.P. *Alexis Arquette* (1969-2016), US actress whose genre credits include *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (1992 film), *Bride of Chucky* (1998), *Children of the Corn V* (1998) and *Xena: Warrior Princess* (2001 tv), died on 11 September aged 47. [MMW]

- *Terence Bayler* (1930-2016), New Zealand-born actor seen in *Monty Python's Life of Brian* (1979), *Brazil* (1985), *She-Wolf of London* (1990-1991 tv) and *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* (2001), died on 2 August; he was 86. [PDF]

- *Bernard Bergonzi* (1929-2016) UK literary academic whose many publications include *The Early H.G. Wells: A Study of The Scientific Romances* (1961) and *H.G. Wells – A Collection of Critical Essays* (1976, as editor), died on 20 September aged 87. [DP]

- *Sören Cardfeldt*, long-time member of Club Cosmos, Sweden's oldest still-active sf club, and founding member of the country's Tolkien Society, died on 19 August; he was 68. [J-HH]

- *Giuliano Carnimeo* (1932-2016), Italian spaghetti-western director and screenwriter whose sf films include *Exterminators of the Year 3000* (1983 as Jules Harrison), *Computron 22* (1988) and *Rat Man* (1988 as Anthony Ascot), died on 10 September aged 84. [SG]

- *C. Martin Croker* (1962-2016), US comics artist, animator and voice actor who drew and played multiple parts in *Space Ghost Coast to Coast* (1994-2004 tv) – of which he was animation director – *Aqua Teen Hunger Force* (2000-2012 tv) and others, died on 17 September aged 54. [PDF]

- *Jorge De Abreu* (1963-2016), Venezuelan author of much short genre fiction who was president of the Venezuelan Association of Fantasy and SF and edited two of its online magazines, died on 28 September; he was 52. [SS]

- *Doug Fratz* (1952-2016), US fan best known for his fanzine/semiprozine *Thrust* (1973-1993, renamed *Quantum* in 1990), which received five Hugo nominations, died on 27 September; he was 63. His many reviews appeared in various places from *The Washington Post* to *The New York Review of Science Fiction*. [AS/MF] I was grateful to Doug for publishing several Langford essays in *Thrust/Quantum*.

- *Duane E. 'Doc' Graveline* (1931-2016), US doctor – briefly a NASA astronaut in 1965 – and self-published sf author whose novels include *The Ark* (1997) and *Brothers of the Perseids* (1998), died on 5 September aged 85. [AIP]

- *W.P. Kinsella* (1935-2016), Canadian author best known for baseball stories including the fantasies *Shoeless Joe* (1982, filmed 1989 as *Field of Dreams*), *The Iowa Baseball Confederacy* (1986) and *If Wishes Were Horses* (1996), died on 16 September; he was 81. [PB]
- *Dave Kyle* (1919-2016), long-time (since 1933) fan, writer, illustrator and publisher who was a member of the Futurian group, co-founded Gnome Press in 1948, chaired the 1956 Worldcon, was fan guest of honour at the 1983 Worldcon and entered the First Fandom Hall of Fame in 1988, died on 18 September 2016; he was 97. [AIP] Professional publications include three novels set in E.E. 'Doc' Smith's Lensman universe and two lavishly illustrated coffee-table books about sf, the first being the BSFA award-winning *A Pictorial History of Science Fiction* (1976).
- *Herschell Gordon Lewis* (1929-2016), 'Godfather of Gore', US splatter-movie director whose cult films include *Blood Feast* (1963), *Two Thousand Maniacs!* (1964), *Something Weird* (1967) and many more, died on 26 September aged 87. *Herschell Gordon Lewis' Bloodmania* is currently in post-production. [SG]
- *D. Keith Mano* (1942-2016), US author whose novels of religious dilemmas include fantasies and the future-apocalyptic sf *The Bridge* (1973), died on 14 September aged 74. [PDF]
- *Leslie Martinson* (1915-2016) US director of *Batman: The Movie* (1966), *The Bionic Woman* (1976) and *Small Wonder* (1985-1989) plus multiple episodes of *Batman* (1966), *The Immortal* (1969-1971), *The Six Million Dollar Man* (1974-1975), *Wonder Woman* (1978-1979) and *Fantasy Island* (1981-1983), died on September 3; he was 101. [SFS]
- *Richard T. 'Sparky' Moore* (1925-2016), highly prolific though generally uncredited comics artist who drew for Western Publishing (often Disney characters), Dell Comics and such 1960s animations as *Marvel Super Heroes* and Hanna-Barbera's *Jonny Quest*, *Mightor* and *Space Ghost*, died on 7 September aged 91. He published an uncertain but substantial amount of ghosted work in others' styles. [ME/PDF]
- *Hugh O'Brian* (1925-2016), US actor best known for Westerns but also seen in *Rocketship X-M* (1950), *Fantasy Island* (1977-1982) and *Doin' Time on Planet Earth* (1988), died on 5 September; he was 91. [PDF]
- *Jon Polito* (1950-2016), US actor whose genre credits include *C.H.U.D.* (1984), *The Rocketeer* (1991), *Blankman* (1994), *Tale of the Mummy* (1998), *Stuart Little* (1999), *Black Mask 2* (2002), *Rock Monster* (2008), *Super*

Capers (2009) and voice work for animated tv series, died on 1 September aged 65. [SG]

- *Robert E 'Bob' Weinberg* (1946-2016), US author, bibliographer, book dealer, prolific anthologist, small-press publisher, sf/fantasy art connoisseur and expert on the pulp magazines whose heritage he did much to preserve, died on 25 September; he was 70. His first novel was *The Devil's Auction* (1988); he received a special committee award from the 2012 Worldcon for 'years of service and devotion given to advancing the field of science fiction, fantasy, and horror.' [SHS]

- *Bill Woodrow* (1970-2016), Canberra fan – particularly of *Doctor Who* – died on 4 September. He was cremated (writes Chris Nelson) in an immaculate TARDIS coffin fashioned by a cousin.

- *M.K. Wren* (Martha Kay Renfroe, 1938-2016), US author of the 1981 Phoenix Legacy space-opera trilogy and the critically praised post-holocaust novel *A Gift Upon the Shore* (1990), died on 20 August; she was 78. [AIP]

Gollanczfest! During its London festival in September, Gollancz held a boozy party on the acoustically-challenged top floor of Foyles in Charing Cross Road, celebrating five glorious years of SF Gateway and of the online *SF Encyclopedia* – which had just reached the landmark of having added Two Million Words since the launch party in 2011. Gollancz digital supremo Darren Nash became over-excited by a 1970s photo of Malcolm Edwards in a proof copy of *Then*, and rushed around showing it to everyone while Malcolm watched with narrowed eyes.

Court Circular. The creators of the US tv series *Timeless*, whose innovative premise is the tracking of crime via time machine while avoiding any damage to history, are being sued by Onza Entertainment of Spain for allegedly stealing this unprecedented concept from Onza's proposed *El Ministerio del Tiempo*, whose startlingly original gimmick is ... (AVclub.com, 29 September) [AIP] Commenters on the AVclub.com post seem mysteriously fixated on Harlan Ellison, who is not involved.

As Others Avoid Us. 'I have never been drawn to science fiction or fantasy. In fact, I can say with some certainty that I have never read a fantasy novel.' (Daniel Silva, *NY Times Book Review*, 4 September) [JB]

Outraged Letters. *Avedon Carol* remembers Doug Fratz: 'he started the sf club at University of Maryland (College Park), and even managed to throw a

little convention (where Fred Pohl and Tom Monteleone roped me into a bridge game and some other guy none of us knew so Tom just wrote “X” on the scorecard, which is how he was known for a while before we finally learned his name was Jack Heneghan). And he made a fanzine called *Thrust*, and seemed genuinely embarrassed when someone made a sexual joke about it – “I was just thinking of, y’know, a rocket thrust!” / I liked him. I’m glad I knew him. I’m really sad that he’s already gone.’ Amen to that. [*Various corrections since received, in particular that the University of Maryland SF Society was founded years before Doug Fratz arrived there, and that its Unicon conventions were organized by others though he ran the dealers’ room for a few years. More in our next.*]

The Dead Past. *20 Years Ago:* ‘Stan Nicholls, reviewing Clive Parker’s *Sci-Fi and the Internet* for *Time Out*, puked at “the dreadful word ‘sci-fi’ (a derogatory term among aficionados)”’; his column is unfortunately titled *Sci-Fi Books.*’ (*Ansible* 111, October 1996) • Penguin Books distinguished itself with a computer virus alert that propagated around the world – ‘Please be careful and forward this mail to anyone you care about ... Alert your friends and local system users.’ – and proved to be a deliberate hoax perpetrated as teaser for an interactive novel by good old Stephen Baxter (who was *not* consulted). A back-peddling non-apology followed: ‘the release was sent in hard copy by post to named individuals [*i.e. news journalists*] to avoid any wider dissemination.’, etc. (*Ibid:* more at news.ansible.uk/a111.html#17)

C.o.A. *Yvonne Rowse & Ian Sorensen* ‘decided to doom their relationship by moving in together’: 61 Flaxpiece Road, Clay Cross, S45 9HD.

We Are Everywhere. A newspaper correction of sf relevance: ‘The house was the setting of the “Mork and Mindy” TV show, not the residence of the poet Allen Ginsberg.’ (*New York Times*, 11 September) Further correction needed: it’s *Mork & Mindy* with an ampersand.... [AC]

Fanfundery. *GUFF* nominations for the 2017 race from Australasia to the Helsinki Worldcon are now open until 17 November. Voting will follow, closing on 1 April 2017. Further details at rantalica.com/2026/.

Thog’s Masterclass. *Self-Taut Dept.* ‘I felt myself clench. Tight as a mollusk.’ (S.J. Watson, *Before I Go to Sleep*, 2011) [PB]

• *Dept of Losing Face.* ‘Ruth Ann’s face drifted off ...’ (Christina George, *The Publicist*, 2012) [MR]

- *Hypernasality Dept.* ““There are ways, there are ways!” declared Drecke, winking and laying his finger along the cucumber-sized lump of his nose.’ (Jack Vance, ‘The Man From Zodiac’, August 1967 *Amazing*) [BA]
 - *Dept of Describing a Woman’s Bottom.* ‘... two wrestlers full of muscles in a crush, each one in turn gaining an inch on their opponent who immediately takes it back, deadlocked so that they merely seem to heave from side by side.’ (Alan Moore, *Jerusalem*, 2016) [MMW]
 - *If Badger Books Had Sex Scenes.* ‘Color it purple and fill out your vision with pulsing, pistoning, driving, churning, sliding, surging, suctioning, gripping, kneading, undulating, writhing, twisting, rocking, swaying, bucking, heaving, jerking, convulsing, ecstatic movements of your own devising ...’ (Clyde Ames [William H. Knoles], *Gorgonzola, Won’t You Please Come Home?*, 1967) [BA]
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Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 14 October 2016: Andy Lound talks to the Brum Group. 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre. £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future meetings/speakers: 4 November 2016 Film Night; 2 December 2016 Christmas Social; 13 January 2017 AGM; 10 February 2017 Quiz.
- 25 October 2016: Chris Beckett in conversation at Waterstones, Birmingham. 7pm-9pm. Free booking at shop, or call 0121 633 4353.

BSFA Awards for 2016 work: first-round nominations are open, to close on 31 December. As I understand the current rules, Rob Hansen’s much-expanded *Then* is eligible for the Best Nonfiction category: it has my far from impartial recommendation.

<http://www.bsfa.co.uk/bsfa-awards/nominate-for-the-bsfa-awards/>

Fantasycon: the next will be held in Daventry, 22-24 September 2017. So far the event has only a Facebook page and a ‘coming soon’ website with no obvious way to sign up:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/355584034780689/>

<http://www.hwsevents.co.uk/>

Editorial. My personal good cheer is somewhat boosted because the sale of

that vacant house in South Wales seems to be going through at last, after far too many months of stressful delay and expensive survey reports. (So many horrors came to light during this process that we expected at any moment to be told there was a plague pit under the lawn.) To be precise, we've exchanged contracts for the sale; I keep telling myself nervously that it's rare for problems to crop up after that point. Hoping to see some of you at [Novacon 46](#) in November and/or at [Innominate](#), the 2017 Eastercon.

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Ansible® 352, November 2016

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo:
Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Alexis Gilliland** (1992). Available for SAE, jersey-
pods or neptune's shawl.

Novacon 46. I hope to see the usual suspects in Nottingham, where I will quite frequently be *not in the bar* but at a dealers'-room table selling that nice Rob Hansen's *Then* – with Rob on hand to sign copies.

The Weed of Crime

Hillary Clinton, according to supposedly leaked email, thinks 'Doctor Who is boring garbage that feels like everyone is in on a joke nobody told her about.' That could be fatal to her campaign if it weren't a hoax tweet by comedian Mike Drucker. (Doctorwhowatch.com, 23 October)

Adrian Greenwood, UK antiques dealer, was tortured and stabbed to death on 6 April for the sake of his first edition of *The Wind in the Willows* – worth £50,000. So the court was told by prosecuting counsel in the trial of Michael Danaher, who planned this crime months in advance and kept detailed notes on his laptop. He was found guilty of murder and sentenced to life imprisonment. ([Guardian, 4 & 24 October](#))

Stephen King tweeted, 'My newest horror story: Once upon a time there was a man named Donald Trump, and he ran for president. Some people wanted him to win.' (21 October) Not for nothing is the University of Maine creating the Stephen E. King Chair in Literature in his honour. [AIP] But who would be so foolhardy as to sit on it?

George R.R. Martin is #4 in the 2016 *Hollywood Reporter* list of 'most powerful' authors: 'I seem to recall dimly that I was number seven a few years ago, so I guess I am getting more powerful by the day. *Soon I will rule the world.*' ([blog](#), 1 October) [GRRM] Those ranked higher are James

Patterson (3), Stephen King (2) and J.K. Rowling (1); others include Neil Gaiman (9), Margaret Atwood (16) and Patrick Ness (24).

Sunil Patel is no longer published by The Book Smugglers, a decision announced after ‘several women put forward their encounters with a well-known male SFF author, citing his history of manipulation, gaslighting, grooming behavior, and objectification of women in the speculative fiction community. We have read all of the accounts. We are listening to the stories. We stand with the women who have been the subject of this author’s behavior. / In light of these revelations, we have made the decision to no longer publish Sunil Patel’s work.’ ([16 October](#)) [F770] Patel himself has responded with tweeted promises of reform.

Alice B. Wilson, author of the only post-1972 story in *The Folio SF Anthology* (2015), is apparently a pseudonym of the book’s editor Brian (Wilson) Aldiss. C.C. Shackleton and Jael Cracken didn’t make the cut.

Wonder Woman’s enlistment as Honorary UN Ambassador for the empowerment of women and girls caused all the feminist and other controversy you might expect; some outraged folk seem to believe the UN had no idea that the 75-year-old comics character – who debuted in 1941 – is in fact ... fictional. ([Variety](#), 11 October)

Consute

4-6 Nov • **Armadacon 28**, Future Inns, Plymouth. £35 reg; day £20 Sat, £15 Sun (concessions £30, £15, £10). Contact Moor Cottage, Cardinham, Bodmin, Cornwall, PL30 4BR; or see www.armadacon.org.

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5-6 Nov • **Comic Con** (comics), Leeds. Part of Thought Bubble, the Leeds Comic Art Festival, running 1-6 November. Tickets £26 weekend or £16/day (plus booking fees) from thoughtbubblefestival.com.

5 Nov • **Not-Oxonmoot Moot** (Tolkien Society), Oxford. All welcome. See www.tolkiensociety.org/events/not-oxonmoot-moot.

11-13 Nov • **Novacon 46**, Park Inn, Nottingham. £46 reg; under-17s £12;

under-13s free. Contact 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ. PayPal registration now accepted at www.novacon.org.uk.

11-13 Nov • **Starship Engineer Workshops**, BIS HQ, London. £99 or £59/day. See www.i4is.org/news/starship_engineer_2016.

23 Nov • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. With [Ian Whates](#). Free to all.

26 Nov • **Sledge-Lit**, QUAD Centre, Derby. 10am-6pm. Tickets £25. See www.derbyquad.co.uk/special-event/sledge-lit-2016.aspx.

3 Dec • **Dragonmeet** (gaming), Novotel London West, Hammersmith. 10am-midnight. Tickets £10 (concessions £6); £12 at door; group discounts. Booking at www.dragonmeet.co.uk.

3 Dec • **Yulemoot** (Tolkien Society), Old Contemptibles, Birmingham. All welcome. See www.tolkiensociety.org/events/yulemoot-2016/.

10-12 Feb 2017 • **Conrunner 4** (conrunning), Park Inn, Nottingham. *Now £45 reg.* Contact 56 Jackmans Place, Letchworth Garden City, Herts, SG6 1RH. See www.conrunner.co.uk.

8-9 Apr 2017 • **Sci-Fi Scarborough** (multimedia), The Spa, Scarborough. £25 reg, £15/day; other rates at scifiscarborough.co.uk.

20-23 Apr 2017 • **Dead by Dawn** (horror film festival), Filmhouse Cinema One, 88 Lothian Rd, Edinburgh, EH3 9BZ. £75. Box office 0131 228 2688. Online booking opens in 2017: www.deadbydawn.co.uk.

4-6 Aug 2017 • **Nine Worlds Geekfest** (multimedia), Novotel London West, Hammersmith, London (provisional venue). £99 reg (this will rise); children free. Book online at nineworlds.co.uk.

11-13 Aug 2017 • **Wadfest** (Discworld camping event), King's Bush Farm, London Road, Godmanchester, Cambs, PE29 2NH. Adult campers £45; child £5. See www.wadfest.co.uk.

25-28 Aug 2017 • **The Asylum** (steampunk), Lincoln. Booking details will presumably follow at www.asylumsteampunk.co.uk.

27-28 Aug 2017 • **Stars of Time** (media), Tropicana, Weston-super-Mare. 10am-5pm. £6.50; child £3.50. See www.starsovertime.co.uk.

9 Sep 2017 • **International Comics Expo (ICE)**, Birmingham Conference Centre, Smallbrook, Birmingham. Tickets from £12; students £6; VIP £35 (etc). See www.thecomicsshow.co.uk.

6-8 Oct 2017 • **Octocon**, Camden Court Hotel, Camden St, Dublin, Ireland. €20 reg; concessions €20 (it says here); accompanied under-13s free. Rates will rise. Join online at octocon.com.

Rumblings. *Worldcon 2024*: The UK bid discussion group now has a web page at www.ukin2024.org; the opposing Washington DC bid is at dcin2024.org. • *London Christmas Meeting* in the [First Thursday pub](#) (The Bishop's Finger): booked for the evening of 15 December.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others Saw Us. Thomas Hobbes on superheroes: 'There are some that are not pleased with fiction, unless it be bold, not only to exceed the *work*, but also the *possibility* of nature; they would have impenetrable Armors, Incharmed Castles, invulnerable bodies, Iron Men, flying Horses, and a thousand other such things, which are easily feigned by them that dare.' ('Answer to Davenant's Preface to *Gondibert*', 1651; cited in *The New Yorker*, 16 May) [MMW]

• 'I felt wonderful. Then he started talking. It's better if nothing is said. Once you find he's a librarian in Walthamstow, with a special interest in science fiction and lives with his aunt, then forget it.' (Caryl Churchill, *Cloud 9*, 1979) [MMW]

Awards. *Gaylactic Spectrum* (novel exploring LGBT themes): Ian MacDonald, *Luna: New Moon*.

• *World Fantasy*: NOVEL Anna Smaill, *The Chimes*. LONG FICTION Kelly Barnhill, *The Unlicensed Magician*. SHORT FICTION Alyssa Wong, 'Hungry Daughters of Starving Mothers' (*Nightmare* 10/15). ANTHOLOGY Silvia Moreno-Garcia and Paula R. Stiles, eds., *She Walks in Shadows*. COLLECTION C.S.E. Cooney, *Bone Swans*. ARTIST Galen Dara. SPECIAL – PROFESSIONAL Stephen Jones for *The Art of Horror*. SPECIAL – NONPROFESSIONAL John O'Neill for *Black Gate*.

Yo-Ho-Ho. The Hungarian magazine *Galaktika* has had a bad press for its many unauthorized translations of English-language sf (see [A345](#), [A351](#)).

Belated payment is now being offered to some. I never got around to complaining – the queue seemed far too long – but in October *Galaktika* emailed me with an apology and an offer of modest fees for two Langford stories they'd used. This money has since been paid.

As Others Write Us Off. Recent non-fantastic YA novels ('realist ... grittier') mark the end of genre as we knew it. 'Now, though, the appetite for paranormal lunacy has abated, and issue-driven fiction set very much in a universe of urbanism's chief concerns is having a renaissance.' (Ginia Bellafante, *New York Times*, 21 October) [JB]

R.I.P. *Natalie Babbitt* (1932-2016), US children's author best known for the immortality fantasy *Tuck Everlasting* (1975; filmed 1981, 2002), died on 31 October aged 84. [PDF]

- *Paul Brazier*, UK fan who edited the Brighton-based semiprozine *Nexus* (1991-1993) and for ten years was typesetter and graphic designer for *Interzone* (which absorbed *Nexus* in 1994), died on 10 October; he was 66. [DP]

- *Jack Chick* (1924-2016), US cartoonist whose ultra-fundamentalist comic-strip tracts – such as the notorious 'Dark Dungeons', where *D&D* equals witchcraft and Satanism – often seemed like crude parody to the uninitiated, died on 23 October aged 92.

- *Arthur Jean Cox* (1929-2016), long-time LA fan and writer who helped run the 1946 Worldcon and published sf from 1951 onward – his first novel being *Nude in Orbit* (1968) as by Gene Cross – recently died; he was 87. [F770]

- *Dennis M. Cummins* (1951-2016), US musician, author of short horror stories and Horror Writers Association member, died on 18 October aged 64. [AIP]

- *David Delamare* (1956-2016), UK artist whose first collection was *Mermaids and Magic Shows* (1994) with Nigel Suckling, died on 19 September aged 59. [SFS]

- *Steve Dillon* (1962-2016), UK comics artist who featured in *Doctor Who Magazine* and *Warrior*, drew *Judge Dredd* and *Rogue Trooper* episodes for *2000 AD*, co-created *Preacher* with Garth Ennis and worked with Ennis on *Hellblazer* and *The Punisher*, died on 22 October; he was 53. [PDF/GW]

- *Ed Gorman* (1941-2016), popular US crime, western and horror author who as Richard Driscoll co-wrote the 1992 *Star Precinct* sf trilogy with Kevin D Randle, died on 14 October; he was 74. Gorman co-edited several sf/fantasy

anthologies with Martin H. Greenberg and others. [GVG]

- *Per G. Hvidsten*, Norwegian fanzine and comics fan, publisher, artist, editor, and author of sf/fantasy stories (many collected as *Dead and Cheerful in New York*, 1979) under his birth name Per G. Olsen, died after long illness on 11 October. [J-HH]
- *Austin 'Rocky' Kalish* (1921-2016), US tv writer/producer whose genre credits include multiple episodes of *My Favorite Martian* (1963-1966) and *The Flying Nun* (1967-1968), died on 5 October aged 95. [BM]
- *Barry R. Levin* (1946-2016), noted US antiquarian sf/fantasy book dealer (as Barry R. Levin Books of California) since 1973, committed suicide on 14 September; he was 70. [AIP]
- *Michael Masee* (1955-2016), US actor seen in *The Crow* (1994), *Tales from the Hood* (1995), *Lost Highway* (1997), *Catwoman* (2004), *Flashforward* (2009-2010) and *The Amazing Spider-Man* (2012; also 2014 sequel), died on 26 October aged 61. PDF
- *Kevin Meaney* (1957-2016), US actor/comedian whose genre credits include *Big* (1988), *The Brave Little Toaster to the Rescue* (voice, 1997), *Mad Jack the Pirate* (voice, 1998) and *Hey Monster, Hands Off My City* (2014), died on 21 October aged 59.
- *Ted V. Mikels* (1929-2016) US cult film-maker whose genre productions include *The Astro-Zombies* (1968, plus three sequels/remakes), *Blood Orgy of the She-Devils* (1973), *The Worm Eaters* (1977) and *Demon Haunt* (2009), died on 16 October aged 87. [PDF]
- *Cornel Robu* (1938-2016), Romanian academic and sf critic/historian who chronicled and anthologized his country's sf, and wrote for *Foundation* and the *SF Encyclopedia*, died on 27 October; he was 78. [AS/RR]
- *Norman F. Stanley* (1916-2016), US fan, original member of First Fandom (entering its Hall of Fame in 2013) and member of the early-1940s Boston Stranger Club – collective Fan Guests of Honour at the 1989 Worldcon – died on 26 October at the age of 100. His best known fanzine was the 1940s *Fan-Tods*. [JDS/JLC]
- *Kazunari Tanaka* (1967-2016), Japanese voice actor in videogames and many anime productions including *Haikyuu!!* and various incarnations of *Mobile Suit Gundam* and *Sailor Moon*, died on 10 October aged 49. [PDF]
- *Sheri S. Tepper* (1929-2016), US author of much notable sf with strong ecological and feminist themes, including *The Gate to Women's Country* (1988) and *Grass* (1989), died on 22 October; she was 87. Her genre novels

began with the popular *True Game* science-fantasies (nine books, 1983-1986); her straight sf debut was *The Revenants* (1984); frequently shortlisted for major awards, she received the 2015 World Fantasy Award for life achievement. [MJE]

- *John Vulich* (1961-2016), US special effects makeup artist for many genre productions including *The Lost Boys* (1987), *Babylon 5* (1994-1998) and spinoffs, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (1997-2002), *The X-Files* (1998-1999), *Being John Malkovich* (1999) and *Angel* (2000-2001), died on 12 October aged 55. [PDF]

- *Bill Warren* (1943-2016), US fan and genre film historian who worked with Walt Lee on *Reference Guide to Fantastic Films* (1972-1974) and wrote the 1950s-focused reference *Keep Watching the Skies!* (1982, 1986; combined edition 2009), died on 7 October; he was 73. [DK]

- *Kate Yule* (1961-2016), US fan since 1984, past President of the Portland OR sf club, whose best-known fanzine was the small but charming *Bento* (produced with her husband David D. Levine), died on 4 October. Alas.

The Weakest Link. Q: ‘Which part of the Medusa’s body was made up of snakes?’ *Contestant:* ‘Her lower abdomen’. (ITV, *The Chase*) [PE]

As Others Avoid Us. From a ‘By the Book’ interview with author and historian H.W. Brands: ‘For enjoyment I read almost everything but history (see previous), fantasy and sci-fi. The real world is bizarre enough for me.’ (*New York Times Book Review*, 9 October) [JB]

Outraged Letters. *Steven Goldstein* on [A351](#): ‘Avedon Carol is incorrect in stating that Douglas Fratz “started the sf club at University of Maryland (College Park), and even managed to throw a little convention”. In actuality the club existed prior to my entering the University in 1969 which was a year or two prior to Doug’s appearance. The club and its associated Unicon conventions were run by a group of students but Doug’s only contribution was to run the dealer’s room for a few years. *Thrust* was originally published by the University of Maryland Science Fiction Society with Doug as editor-in-chief and myself as managing editor for 6 issues. After leaving college he took the magazine with him, causing a bit of fannish feuding.’

- *Simon R. Green* grumbles: ‘... the RIP section is taking over. It’s running to almost half the material now, taking up space that might more profitably be devoted to gossip. Maybe you could start a separate newsletter; call it Dearly Departed, or Missing In Action, or People Who’ve Died That You Didn’t

Know Were Still Alive.’ Stop dying, fandom, and gossip more!

Magazine Scene. Warren Lapine: ‘*Fantastic Stories of the Imagination* has terminated its relationship with Sunil Patel. He will no longer be editing the POC Take Over issues.’ (Facebook, 17 October)

- Mur Lafferty: ‘Sunil Patel has resigned as Fiction Assistant Editor at *Mothership Zeta*, effective immediately.’ (mothershipzeta.org, 18 Oct)

Random Fandom. *Brian Aldiss* recently had a stroke and spent ten days in hospital, but is home again and recovering well. [RP] May this continue.

- *Yvonne Rousseau*, who traditionally forwards paper copies of *Ansible* to select Australian fans, is stepping down after this issue owing to life complications that include plans to move house. Bereft readers should check their online options at ansible.uk.

The Dead Past. *50 Years Ago*: ‘Interesting 2 page leaflet recently circulated round British fandom. Posted in London this was stated to have originated with Ted Tubb, Archie Mercer, Chris Priest, Brian Aldiss, Mike Moorcock, Ken Slater and Pete Weston. The circular discussed the possibility of the BSFA forming regional committees and asked interested parties to send 2/6 to Chris. If you haven’t already heard, this was a fake, parties’ names being used without their knowledge.’ ([Skyrack 93](#), November 1966)

- *40 Years Ago*, UK politics was rather less fraught: ‘Pamela Boal notes that the Liberal candidate for Abingdon is a keen sf reader and voices a rather far-fetched hope that fandom might gain its first MP. Actually it’s already been done, since I remember meeting an MP at the 1970 Scicon – Raymond Fletcher, a well-established Conservative. This reminds me that [a fannish Lord](#) has been turning up at One Tun meetings recently, thereby unhappily encouraging Pete Weston’s fantasies about the Queen opening the 1979 UK Worldcon (I wouldn’t mind, but we’ve already invited the Archbishop of Canterbury).’ ([Checkpoint 76](#), November 1976)

- *30 Years Ago*: ‘David Garnett is proud, or not, of writing “the Christmas sex story which is to appear in the next issue of *Mayfair*, with hero and heroine called Hugo and Nebula”....’ (*Ansible* 47, November 1986)

Fanfundery. *TAFF 2017*: nominations are now open (closing at the end of November) for the eastbound race to the Helsinki Worldcon. Prospective candidates and nominators should contact NA administrator Curt Phillips, Absarka_prime (at) comcast.net. See also taff.org.uk.

Thog's Masterclass. *Dept of Purpureal Prose.* 'The glassy scaurs and grim ramparts of Mount Voormithadreth, highest and most formidable of the Eiglophians, had beetled above them, wedging the sun with dark scoriac peaks at mid-afternoon, and walling the blazonries of sunset wholly from view.' (Clark Ashton Smith, 'The Seven Geases', 1934) [LP]

- *Literally Dept.* 'In loyalty to his lord, he had literally kept his eyes shut for seventeen years.' (Randall Garrett, 'The Eyes Have It', January 1964 *Analog*)
 - 'Every trick of sexual technique he had ever learned, every last ounce of his masculinity was being literally pumped into me like a transfusion of blood.' ('Petra Christian', *Hitch-Hiker*, 1971) [BA]
 - *Dept of Truly Alien Aliens.* 'I suppose you might liken us to huge steaming lumps of purple jelly, anchored to metallic plates which are embedded within rubberized constructions of great architectural beauty.... And we emit a soft, musical blurring sound for the purposes of communication.' (Alexander Thynn, *The King is Dead*, 1976)
-

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 3 November 2016: Ben Aaronovitch signing at Waterstones, Reading Broad Street, 12:30pm. 'This event is not ticketed and free of charge so early arrival is encouraged as it will be popular [...] for further information please call 0118 9581270.'

<https://www.waterstones.com/events/meet-ben-aaronovitch/reading-broad-street>

- 4 November 2016: Film Night at the Brum Group. 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre. £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future meetings/speakers: 2 December 2016 Christmas Social (different venue, advance booking essential); 13 January 2017 AGM; 10 February 2017 Quiz.

Editorial. Many thanks to Yvonne Rousseau for all those years of forwarding the printed *Ansible* to a select few Down Under; by her own request she wasn't listed as a Hero Distributor in the credits box each issue. The next ebook from Ansible Editions is likely to be Yvonne's mock-critical tour de force *The Murders at Hanging Rock*. For other recent AE releases including that man Langford's *The Space Eater* and *The Limbo Files*, see ...

<http://ae.ansible.uk/>

Galaktika Again. At least they put my name on the cover ...



Forty Signs of Snobbery. Amitav Ghosh plaintively asks ‘where is the fiction about climate change?’ in a *Guardian* article that – conveniently ruling out a horde of obvious answers – makes it clear that anything marketed as sf is beneath consideration: ‘Indeed, it could even be said that fiction that deals with climate change is almost by definition not of the kind that is taken seriously: the mere mention of the subject is often enough to relegate a novel

or a short story to the genre of science fiction. It is as though in the literary imagination climate change were somehow akin to extraterrestrials or interplanetary travel.’ (28 October)

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2016/oct/28/amitav-ghosh-where-is-the-fiction-about-climate-change->

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Ansible® 353, December 2016

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo:
Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or
turboencabulator phase detractors.

Editorial. The Ansible Editions dealer table at Novacon 46 was surprisingly successful. With celebrity author Rob Hansen on hand to ensure that no copy of his *Then* could escape unsigned, we sold our entire convention stock.

Thank you, fandom.

- The latest AE release is the first ever ebook of Yvonne Rousseau's *The Murders at Hanging Rock*, a tour de force of tongue-in-cheek criticism that offers four mutually contradictory explanations (in fantasy, sf and detective-fiction terms) of what really happened in *Picnic at Hanging Rock*, plus an essay on the suppressed final chapter of *Picnic* that was later published and proved eerily similar to some of Yvonne's theories. By special request of the author this expanded edition has not been retitled *The Picnic Perplex*. Its official web page lurks enigmatically at ae.ansible.uk/?t=murders.
 - Finally, the traditional Merry Xmas and Happy New Year to all readers!
-

The Story of the Last Trump

Forrest J Ackerman was posthumously honoured in Los Angeles on 17 November by the naming and signposting of the corner of Franklin and Vermont Avenues – not far from his late-life home in Russell Avenue – as Forrest J. Ackerman Square. (www.lfia.org) [PDF] The street sign's uncanonical full stop after the J could yet be corrected.

J.G. Ballard's former home in Shepperton is on the market at £475,000, with the man himself cited as a selling point: 'The famous writer J.G. Ballard once lived at this property between 1952 and 2009.' Apparently 1952 is wrong – JGB didn't buy the house until late 1959.

John Betancourt announced: 'I'm now managing the estate of author John

W. Campbell, Jr., former editor of *Astounding Stories/Analog*, author of “Who Goes There?” [...] I’m going to be writing a sequel.’ (Wildside Press mailing, 23 November)

Greg Egan may have no photograph online, but the world’s hugest search engine remains in denial about such deviancy: ‘After fighting off stiff competition from Microsoft and Apple, Google has won my “Out of Their Depth on the Internet” Award for 2016, for confidently declaring that no less than six different people (including Vernor Vinge) and two fictional characters are “Australian SF writer Greg Egan”. I’m so looking forward to having these sophisticated algorithms ever more widely empowered to decide which news sources are reliable and which are fake.’ See www.gregegan.net/ESSAYS/GOOGLE/Google.html for more.

Carrie Fisher reveals all too much about what it was like to kiss Harrison Ford while making *Star Wars*: ‘reading another person’s face with your mouth with dedicated eagerness, swimming with your lips between a particular person’s nose and chin, gently digging for jewels using your tongue as a makeshift shovel ... fishing face-to-face – like grouper, but without the water, the scales, and that awful fishy smell. But otherwise ...’ (*The Princess Diarist*, 2016) [MMW] Otherwise?

Bella Pagan has been promoted to the lofty glory of editorial director at Pan Macmillan Fiction. (*The Bookseller*, 15 November)

Jane Yolen brags again: ‘Closing in on 365 books. When that happens I am making bumper stickers: Read a Book a Day by Jane Yolen for a year! Of course if it’s leap year, all bets are off!’ (7 November) SFWA was quick to respond, and [on 29 November](#) named Jane as their next Damon Knight Grand Master – official presentation in May 2017.

Contrefort

2 Dec • **British Fantasy Society Xmas Social**, The Counting House, 50 Cornhill, London, EC3V 3PD. 7pm-late. Free; all welcome.

3 Dec • **Dragonmeet** (gaming), Novotel London West, Hammersmith. 10am-midnight. Tickets £10 (concessions £6); £12 at door; group discounts. Booking at www.dragonmeet.co.uk.

3 Dec • **Yulemoot** (Tolkien Society), Old Contemptibles, Birmingham. All welcome. See www.tolkiensociety.org/events/yulemoot-2016/.

15 Dec • **London Xmas Meeting**, The Bishop's Finger, 9-10 West Smithfield. Evening; all welcome. See news.ansible.uk/london.html [*where it is later reported that owing to a party booking, fans will have access to the usual room only after 6:30pm*].

25 Jan 2017 • **Future Histories and Forecasting**, British Interplanetary Society, 27/29 South Lambeth Road, London, SW8 1SZ. 10am-4:30pm. £55; BIS members £45; students £25. Book at www.bis-space.com/2016/09/07/17764/future-histories-and-forecasting.

3-5 Feb 2017 • **Quoi de Neuf** (filk), Best Western Hotel, Marks Tey, Colchester. *Now £38 reg/£27 unwaged*; under-18s £1/year of age; under-5s free. Cheques to UK Filk Convention, 20 Glynbridge Gardens, Cheltenham, GL51 0BZ. See www.contabile.org.uk/quoideneuf.

4 Feb 2017 • **Birmingham Horror Con**, Edgbaston Stadium, Birmingham. 9am £15, 10am £10; other rates, see www.horrorfan.co.uk.

18 Feb 2017 • **Picocon**, Beit Quadrangle, South Kensington Campus, Imperial College, London. GoH Paul McAuley, Jaine Fenn, Al Robertson, Justina Robson. £12 reg; £10 concessions; £8 ICSF members; past GoHs free. See www.union.ic.ac.uk/scc/icsf/picocon/.

29 Apr 2017 • **Supernova** (sf film festival), Odeon Printworks, Manchester. See grimmfest.com/grimmupnorth/supernova/.

16-18 Jun 2017 • **U-Con** (Eurocon), Fritz-Henssler-Haus, Dortmund, Germany. €40 reg, rising again on 16 April 2017. For online registration see www.dortmund-in-2017.com.

19 Aug 2017 • **Worcester Comic Con**, Worcester Arena. Tickets £10 from 11am, £15 from 10am. See www.worcester-comiccon.com.

31 Aug - 3 Sep 2017 • **LeakyCon** (Harry Potter), Dublin, Ireland. Venue and registration details awaited at www.leakycon.com.

6-9 Oct 2017 • **Irish Discworld Convention**, Cork International Hotel, Cork Airport, Ireland. With the usual guests. €50 reg; €40 concessions; accompanied under-13s €1. See idwcon.org.

28 Oct 2017 • **BristolCon**, Hilton Doubletree Hotel, Bristol. £20 reg/£15 concessions); £25/£20 from 1 June; £30/£25 at the door. Cheques to Flat 11, Beaufort Ct Flats, 1 Beaufort St (off Stapleton Rd), Easton, Bristol, BS5 0SQ. No PayPal as yet. See www.bristolcon.org.

10-12 Nov 2017 • **Novacon 47**, Park Inn, Nottingham. GoH Adrian Tchaikovsky. £48 reg, rising to £50 after Easter 2017; under-17s £12; under-13s free. Contact 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ. PayPal registration now accepted at www.novacon.org.uk.

19-22 Jul 2018 • **Nemo 2018** (Eurocon), Amiens, France. €35 reg until U-Con (see above); €40 to end 2017; early-2018 rate unclear, TBA?; €50 at the door. See eurocon2018.yolasite.com.

Rumblings. *Satellite 2018 Early Warning*: the sixth Satellite convention will be held in Glasgow on 25-27 May 2018. Further details TBA. • *Eurocon 2019*: Titancon in Belfast is bidding for the weekend of 22-26 Aug 2019, a week after the hoped Dublin Worldcon – a bid that’s still unopposed. • *Worldcon 2023*. The French bid has announced Nice as its venue: see worldconinfrance.org/?lng=en. It is reported that a rival 2023 bid from New Orleans will be announced very soon.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. ‘Science fiction tells us that some day, entire meals will be available in a single pill. That doesn’t sound very fun to us. What does sound like fun is an entire meal in a potato chip.’ In this radio ad, Trader Joe’s claims to have condensed Thanksgiving dinner into a turkey-and-stuffing flavoured potato chip. [LM] A whole packet may have the explosive effect of the pill equivalent to 13 Christmas dinners in Stephen Leacock’s ‘The New Food’ (in *Literary Lapses*, 1910).

Awards. *European SF Society Grand Master*: Herbert W. Franke. *European SF Society Hall of Fame*: AUTHOR Tom Crosshill. ARTIST Stephan Martinière. MAGAZINE *Bifrost* (France). PUBLISHER Nova – Ediciones B (Spain). PROMOTER (three-way tie) James Bacon (Ireland); Roberto Quaglia (Italy); Organizers of Archipelacon (Finland & Sweden). TRANSLATOR Andrew Bromfield (UK). Further ESFS ‘Dedication’ and ‘Encouragement’ awards at esfs.info/2016/11/06/esfs-awards-2016/.

- *US National Book Award*, fiction category: Colson Whitehead, *The Underground Railroad*.

Paging Mrs Malaprop. ‘[His] eyes popped extraneously from their sockets, as his face turned from a deep red to a sickly purple.’

- ‘The lamp’s glow was very weak compared to the blue glow emancipating from the basement.’

- ‘It infiltrated his lungs, filling them with a kind of innovativeness he had never felt before’. (all Aaron Rayburn, *The Shadow God*, 2005) [RWS]

R.I.P. Martin Aitchison (1919-2016), UK artist whose comics work for the *Eagle* included an adaptation of Conan Doyle’s *The Lost World*, and who also illustrated many Ladybird books 1963-1987, died on 22 October; he was 96. [JF]

- *Lon Atkins*, long-time US fan active in various APAs, who chaired DeepSouthCon 4 (1966) and received Southern Fandom’s 1982 Rebel Award, died on 28 November. [GHL]

- *John Carson* (1927-2016), UK actor whose genre credits are mostly horror films, from *The Night Caller* (1965) to *Taste the Blood of Dracula* (1970) and *Captain Kronos – Vampire Hunter* (1972), died on 5 November aged 89. [PDF]

- *Paul A. Carter* (1926-2016), US author whose sf began with ‘The Last Objective’ (1946 *Astounding*) and included the notable critical study *The Creation of Tomorrow: Fifty Years of Magazine Science Fiction* (1977) and the 1989 novella *Iceborn* with Gregory Benford, has died at the age of 90. [GB]

- *Richard Cavendish* (1930-2016), UK historian of the occult whose nonfiction includes *The Black Arts* (1967) and *The Powers of Evil* (1975), and who edited the voluminous partwork encyclopedia *Man, Myth & Magic* (1970; rev 1995), died on 21 October aged 86.

- *Joe Dever* (1956-2016), UK author and game designer best known for the long-running Lone Wolf or Magnamund series of interactive fantasy gamebooks that began with *Flight from the Dark* (1984), died on 29 November; he was 60. [CT]

- *Gino Gavioli* (1923-2016), Italian cartoonist and animator who reimagined many fairy tales and children’s fantasies including *Alice*, *Peter Pan* and *The Jungle Book*, died on 19 November aged 93. [PDF]

- *Ron Glass* (1945-2016), US actor whose best known genre role was

Shepherd Book in *Firefly* (2002-2003) and *Serenity* (2005), died on 26 November aged 71; other credits include *Teen Angel* (1997-1998) and *Deep Space* (1988). [SG]

- *Tammy Grimes* (1934-2016), US actress whose genre credits include *The Borrowers* (1973), *The Horror at 37,000 Feet* (1973) and *The Last Unicorn* (voice, 1982), died on 30 October aged 82. [MMW]

- *Ellen Key Harris-Braun*, US editor whose early-1990s acquisitions for Ballantine/Del Rey included Nicola Griffith's *Ammonite* and *Slow River*, died on 28 October. [GVG]

- *Yumi Heo* (1964-2016), Korean-born US illustrator of folktales and children's stories – including fantasy and her own picture books – died in early November. [PDF]

- *Don Marshall* (1936-2016), US actor seen in *Land of the Giants* (1968-1970), *The Thing with Two Heads* (1972) and *The Incredible Hulk* (1978-1980), died on 30 October aged 80. [PDF]

- *Massimo Mongai* (1950-2016), Italian sf author who won the Urania Award for his debut novel *Memoirs of a Spaceship Cook* (1997, with recipes), died on 1 November aged 65. [PDF]

- *Tom Neyman* (1935-2016), US actor best known as The Master in *Manos: The Hands of Fate* (1966), died on 13 November; he was 80. [PDF]

- *André Ruellan* (1922-2016), French horror and sf author who was prolific in the 1950s (mostly under the pseudonym Kurt Steiner) and active into the new century, died on 10 November aged 94.

- *Martin Stone*, UK musician and book-dealer whose specialisms included weird fiction (in particular M.P. Shiel), died on 9 November. Mike Moorcock mourned 'My friend and music partner, the brilliant book-finder Martin Stone ...'

- *Kenichiro Takai*, Japanese manga creator who debuted in 1956 and was still active, died on 14 November aged 79. [PDF]

- *Sabina Theo* (1977-2016), Bulgarian fan and author who sold several stories to and collaborated once with Mike Resnick, died on 16 November '40 years too soon'. [MR]

- *Ron Thornton*, UK-born visual effects expert whose credits include *Spaceballs* (1987), *Babylon 5* (1994-1996), *Star Trek: Voyager* (1996-2001) and *Star Trek: Enterprise* (2001-2002), died on 21 November; he was 59. [JG]

- *Lupita Tovar* (1910-2016), Mexican co-star in Universal's simultaneously

filmed Spanish-language *Dracula* (1931), died on 12 November at the age of 106. [SG]

- *William Trevor* (1928-2016), Irish mainstream author of very many highly regarded stories, some for supernatural anthologies such as the *Ghost Book* series, died on 20 November; he was 88.

- *Robert Vaughn* (1932-2016), US actor best remembered as Napoleon Solo in *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.* (1964-1968), died on 11 November aged 83. [PDF] Other genre credits include *The Mind of Mr. Soames* (1970), *Battle Beyond the Stars* (1980) and *Hangar 18* (1980).

- *Fritz Weaver* (1926-2016), US actor whose genre credits include *The Twilight Zone* (1960-1961 & 1985), *Mission: Impossible* (1966-1971), *The Day of the Dolphin* (1973), *Demon Seed* (1977), *The Martian Chronicles* (1980 tv) and *Creepshow* (1982), died on 26 November; he was 90. [A-TC]

The Weakest Link. Q: ‘What is the name of the star at the centre of our solar system?’ A: ‘Pass.’ (BBC1, *Pressure Point*) [PE]

Court Circular. The Dr Seuss estate is suing David Gerrold and ComicMix over *Oh, The Places You’ll Boldly Go!*, a planned mash-up of Seuss-like artwork with *Star Trek*-themed verse. From its Kickstarter fundraiser page: ‘While we firmly believe that our parody, created with love and affection, fully falls within the boundary of fair use, there may be some people who believe that this might be in violation of their intellectual property rights. And we may have to spend time and money proving it to people in black robes. And we may even lose that.’ Is this quotation too long for fair use? (Arstechnica.com, 16 November)

As Others See Us II. Harriett Gilbert on Matt Haig’s *The Humans*: ‘I hadn’t even thought of this as science fiction, even though there is a Vonnadorian wandering amongst us on earth. ... The reason I don’t consider this to be science fiction, one of the reasons, is that what it’s really about is relationships, it’s about humankind.’ *Terry Christian*: ‘Of course it’s science fiction. All science fiction’s about different things and not exactly what you think it’s about!’ (BBC Radio 4, *A Good Read*) [IM]

Outraged Letters. *David Garnett* on ‘The Dead Past’ in [A352](#): ‘I do remember the “sci-fi and hi-fi” issue of *Men Only*, which was advertised on the back cover of the Skycon booklet, and my pen name in that issue was Hugo A Ward. Must write them all down before I forget. There was once a

piece by Tom Disch on Things Authors Should Do, one of which was write down a list of what you've had published and where. Bit late now.'

- *Mike Moorcock* on a certain [A352](#) quotation: 'Having branded me the anti-Tolkien, the *New Yorker* now quotes Hobbes on the subject of contemporary fantasy as quoted in *Wizardry and Wild Romance*. Makes me suspect they have a copy knocking about the office.'

- *Rog Peyton* writes from the far-off Glades of Gafia: 'I still enjoy hearing about the SF world even if most of the people I remember are appearing in the Obituaries section. Simon Green was right last issue – the section is getting too long and a lot of the people are from the movie world who we've never heard of. Stick to the literary world – I'm sure that's where the vast majority of your readers are from.'

Magazine Scene. *Analog* and *Asimov's* are switching to bimonthly publication as of January 2017. Issues will be 16pp longer than double numbers in the current regime of 8 singles and 2 doubles per year.

The Dead Past. *40 Years Ago*, Darrell Schweitzer wrote a gourmet review: 'The 1976 World Fantasy Con, held in New York over Halloween, was less Lovecraft-oriented than the one in Providence last year and lacked the special atmosphere that that one had, though the banquet was said to be a true eldritch horror. [...] I heard that Frank Belknap Long & party made their protest by sending out for a box of Colonel Sanders' Kentucky Fried Chicken – they dined better than everyone else.' ([Checkpoint 77](#), December 1976)

- *30 Years Ago*, there came another doom-laden epitaph: 'What about science fiction? – or rather I will advise you that science fiction ran out of ideas about twenty-four years ago.' (Kingsley Amis, *Independent*, 18 December 1986)

C.o.A. *Anne & Brian Gray*, 1471 Sleepyhollow Road, York, PA 17403-3804, USA.

Fanfundery. *GUFF* candidates for the 2017 race to Worldcon 75 in Helsinki are: Donna Maree Hanson, Sam Hawke, Belle McQuattie and (jointly) Alexandra Pierce and Alisa Krasnostein. The voting form is awaited at the Australian Fan Funds site: ozfanfunds.com/?page_id=6.

Thog's Masterclass. *Dept of Needed Capitals*. '... he almost walked into a newspaper billboard across his path: transport barge adrift on flooded po.' (Valerio Varesi, *River of Shadows*, 2003, trans Joseph Farrell 2010, ebook) [PB]

- *Equinoctial Dept.* ‘Two years and eight months later, it was another equinox – this time the December equinox of 1968 –’ (J.W. Ironmonger, *The Notable Brain of Maximilian Ponder*, 2012) [YR] ‘Just before the summer equinox, I believe it was. The moor is at its loveliest then, and the nights so short –’ (Laurie R. King, *The Moor*, 1998) [YR]
 - *Dept of Rejuvenation.* “... I was eighteen then. You were – what was it? – eleven, I think. In those days I was proud of your schoolgirl crush, but of course infinitely too old for you. I am not so old any more ...” (James Blish, ‘There Shall Be No Darkness’, April 1950 *Thrilling Wonder Stories*) [BA]
 - *Neat Tricks Dept.* ‘I did a major fist-pump in my head.’ (Kanae Minato, *Confessions*, 2008, trans Stephen Snyder 2014) [PB]
 - *Stalking the Wild Thesaurus.* ‘Now I am hardly a man of what might be called a tremulous diathesis ...’ (M.P. Shiel, ‘Huguenin’s Wife’, April 1895 *Pall Mall Magazine*)
 - ‘Eager editors played Ellen’s trial to a fare-thee-well, while an equally avid public welcomed the concupiscent and caitiff affair as an antidote for estival doldrums.’ (James A. Brussel, *Just Murder, Darling*, 1959) [AB]
-

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 2 December 2016: Brum Group Christmas Social (not at usual venue; advance booking was essential, so no more here). Normal meetings 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre. £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future meetings/speakers: 13 January 2017 AGM and Auction (free); 10 February 2017 Quiz; 10 March 2017 Gerry Webb; 7 April 2017 Dave Hutchinson; 12 May 2017 Adrian Tchaikovsky.
- 1 April 2017: Steph Swainston, Reddit AMA ‘Ask Me Anything’ at Reddit Fantasy as below. 7am to midnight (GMT/UTC).

<https://www.reddit.com/r/Fantasy/>

Late-Arriving R.I.P. *Paul Sylbert* (1928-2016), Oscar-winning US production designer whose genre credits include *Heaven Can Wait* (1978), *Resurrection* (1980) and *Wolfen* (1981), died on 19 November aged 88. [AIP]

Random Fandom. *Gary Farber*’s sixty or so boxes of beloved fanzines and

other stuff, having after 28 years overstayed their welcome in Bill Burns's attic, are now stowed in the garage of kindly Moshe Feder. *Ansible* may not be around for their next status update in 2044.

Thog's Second Helping. *Introspective Dept.* 'Of all the things to think, he thought he'd never think that.' (Aaron Rayburn, *The Shadow God*, 2005)
[RWS]

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2017

Ansible® 354, January 2017

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo:
Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE but not for cards
drawn by Dworkin Barimen.

The Deplorable Word

Sir Ken Dodd, who was ‘highly tickled’ at being knighted in the UK New Year Honours, is not best known for his genre roles in *Red Riding Hood* (1955), *Doctor Who* (1987) and *Alice in Wonderland* (1999).

Stephen Gallagher: ‘Frank Belknap Long’s KFC protest at the 1976 World Fantasy Con [see [A353](#)] was echoed at 2015’s Fantasycon in Nottingham, where con-goers showed up to find the hotel’s rather attractive brasserie menu withdrawn and replaced by a small selection of burger-van options. Said hotel being part of a campus conference centre and miles from any other eatery, fans responded by ordering-in from Domino’s and piling up the empty pizza boxes in the foyer.’

George R.R. Martin, who reacted to the US election result with deep despair – ‘Winter is coming. I told you so.’ – may be struggling to forget that the first UK hardback of *A Game of Thrones* proudly declares on the copyright page that it’s ‘Set in Trump Medieval’. [\[PD\]](#)

Robert Sawyer adds further gloom: ‘Truth is, there’s very little ambitious science fiction left; most of what little is still published is fungible military SF or space opera, with no intellectual or emotional heft. The genre that was once rich with speculation and social comment has shrunk to a tiny puddle of escapism.’ (Facebook, 30 Dec) [\[PDF\]](#)

Henry Wessells persuaded the London *Times* Nature Notebook to run three paragraphs on the sf significance of W.H. Hudson (*A Crystal Age*) and Richard Jefferies (*After London*): ‘These two English nature writers now take their place along with Arthur C Clarke and Isaac Asimov as some of our most

influential science fiction authors in a new book and [exhibition](#) mounted by Mr Wessells.’ (23 December) [RR]

Philip Wylie was seemingly the first sf author to name and shame 2017 in the title of a book, blurbed as ‘What will happen when man’s poisoned atmosphere drives him underground? ... The startling novel of men and women trapped in [Los Angeles: A.D. 2017](#)’. (1971)

Coniaccian

15 Jan • **British Fantasy Society Pubmeet**, The Falcon Tap, 94 Micklegate, York, YO1 6JX. 4:30pm-8pm(ish). With Joanne Harris. All welcome, but please book a free ticket via tinyurl.com/hlzfjcy.

25 Jan • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. With Leslie McMurty and Edward Gomez on the science of *Doctor Who*. Free; all welcome.

25 Jan • **Future Histories and Forecasting**, British Interplanetary Society HQ, 27/29 South Lambeth Road, London, SW8 1SZ. 10am-4:30pm. £55; BIS members £45; students £25. Book at www.bis-space.com/2016/09/07/17764/future-histories-and-forecasting.

28 Jan • **DurhamCon**, DSU, Dunelm House, New Elvet, Durham. GoH Farah Mendlesohn, Charles Stross. From 11am. £5; students £4.

3-5 Feb • **Quoi de Neuf** (filk), Best Western Hotel, Marks Tey, Colchester. £38 reg/£27 unwaged; under-18s £1/year of age; under-5s free. Cheques to UK Filk Convention, 20 Glynbridge Gardens, Cheltenham, GL51 0BZ. See www.contabile.org.uk/quoideneuf.

3-5 Feb • **SF Ball** (media), Grand Harbour Hotel, Southampton. £132 reg; child £66; other options. See sfbevents.com/sfball.

4 Feb • **Birmingham Horror Con**, Edgbaston Stadium, Birmingham. 9am £15, 10am £10. See www.horrorfan.co.uk.

5 Feb • **Sci-Feb** (superheroes), Humber Royal Hotel, Little Coates Road, Grimsby. £4 reg. See www.daydreamevents.uk/sci--feb.html.

10-12 Feb • **Conrunner 4** (conrunning), Park Inn, Nottingham. £45 reg (day

rate £25 for Saturday or Sunday), *rising to £50 (day rate £30) on 1 February*. Contact 56 Jackmans Place, Letchworth Garden City, Herts, SG6 1RH. See also www.conrunner.co.uk.

18 Feb • **Picocon**, Beit Quadrangle, South Kensington Campus, Imperial College, London. £12 reg; £10 concessions; £8 ICSF members; past GoHs free. See www.union.ic.ac.uk/scc/icsf/picocon/.

24-26 Feb • **Redemption '17** (multimedia), Royal Victoria Hotel, Sheffield. £70 reg (day £40); *advance booking closes on 11 February*; £75 (day £45) at door. Other rates remain unchanged at the door: under-18s £25 (day £15); under-3s free. Contact 61 Chaucer Road, Farnborough, Hants, GU14 8SP. See also redemptioncon.org.uk.

25-26 Feb • **Digi-Con 3** (sf/comics/anime), Doncaster Deaf Trust, Leger Way, Doncaster. From £25 reg; see www.digi-fest.co.uk.

14-17 Apr • **Innominate** (Eastercon), Hilton Metropole, NEC, Birmingham. £60 reg; £45 unwaged; £40 YA (under 26); £20 child (under 16); £1 infant (under 6). Cheques to Eastercon 2017 c/o 3 Deveron Rd, Halfway, Sheffield, S20 8GE. See www.eastercon2017.uk.

4 Jul • **Twentieth-Century British Periodicals** (conference), Museum of English Rural Life, Redlands Rd, Reading. Call for papers deadline 31 January. Fans with sf magazine expertise are welcome. See blogs.reading.ac.uk/english-at-reading/2016/11/16/call-for-papers/.

9-13 Aug • **Worldcon 75** (Worldcon), Helsinki, Finland. €145 reg; €95 first-timers (no past Worldcon membership); €90 youth (16-25); €60 child (6-15); accompanied under-6s free; €35 supp. See www.worldcon.fi.

27-31 Aug • **Edinburgh Horror Festival**, various city venues and programme to be announced. See www.edhorrorfest.co.uk.

16-20 Aug 2018 • **Worldcon 76** (Worldcon), San José, CA, USA. \$160 reg, *to rise on 1 February 2017*; \$90 YA (15-21) and military; under-15s \$60; \$50 supp; under-6s free; the usual discounts for presupporters and site voters apply. See worldcon76.org for details.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. A letter from Peter Steinfelds in the *New York Times Book Review* deplores this paper's scanty coverage of religion and mentions a few more privileged genres: 'The Book Review does publish regular roundup columns on self-help, science fiction and fantasy, and crime. Some of my friends believe that those categories already address religion sufficiently. I hope the editors disagree.' (23 December) [JB]

Awards. *Rotsler Award* for life achievement in sf fanzine art: Ditmar (Dick Jenson).

- *BSFA Awards*: the first round of nominations closed on 31 December and the second should be announced shortly.

Feminism Masterclass. 'And he was suddenly a very different man. A man! That was it. He was so excessively masculine. / How could she have blundered around so, looking for a *mind* that was superior to hers, completely overlooking the fact that a woman's most important function in life begins with physical domination?' (Anne McCaffrey, 'A Meeting of Minds', 1969; collected in *Get Off the Unicorn*, 1977)

R.I.P. *Richard Adams* (1920-2016), UK author most famous for the epic rabbit quest *Watership Down* (1972, a Carnegie Medal winner that was filmed in 1978), died on 24 December; he was 96. Further works of genre interest – though none received quite the same level of international acclaim as his debut – include *Shardik* (1974), *The Plague Dogs* (1977; filmed 1982) and *The Girl in a Swing* (1980; filmed 1989). [MJE]

- *Gillon Aitken* (1938-2016), UK literary agent at Aitken Alexander and Associates, whose clients included the Orwell estate and Salman Rushdie, died on 28 October aged 78. [MMW]
- *Don Calfa* (1939-2016), US actor in such horror comedies as *The Return of the Living Dead* (1985), *Chopper Chicks in Zombietown* (1989) and *Corpses Are Forever* (2004), died on 1 December aged 76. [PDF]
- *Billy Chapin* (1943-2016), US child actor in numerous 1950s productions including the sf thriller *Tobor the Great* (1954), died on 2 December aged 72. [PDF]
- *Alice Drummond* (1928-2016), US character actress whose genre credits include *Dark Shadows* (1967), *Ghostbusters* (1984), *Tales from the Darkside* (1990) and *Synecdoche, New York* (2008), died on 30 November aged 88. [DKMK]
- *Don 'Duck' Edwing* (1934-2016), US cartoonist and gag writer who

contributed to *Mad* magazine from 1962 to 2012, died on 26 December aged 82.

- *Carrie Fisher* (1956-2016), US actress, writer and script doctor whose most famous role was as Princess Leia in the original *Star Wars* trilogy (1977-1983) plus related productions including *The Force Awakens* (2015) and its coming sequel, died on 27 December; she was 60. Remembering George Lucas's insistence that Leia couldn't wear a bra – because in the weightlessness of space 'your body expands but your bra doesn't, so you get strangled by your own underwear' – she wrote: 'I think that this would make for a fantastic obituary. I tell my younger friends that no matter how I go, I want it reported that I drowned in moonlight, strangled by my own bra.'
- *Bernard Fox* (1927-2016), Welsh character actor seen in *Bewitched* (1966-1972) and its spinoff *Tabitha* (1977-1978), *The Bamboo Saucer* (1968) and *The Mummy* (1999), died on 14 December aged 89.
- *Zsa Zsa Gabor* (1917-2016), Hungarian-born US actress who starred in *Queen of Outer Space* (1958), died on 18 December aged 99. Further genre credits include *Frankenstein's Great Aunt Tillie* (1984) and *A Nightmare on Elm Street 3* (1987). [PDF]
- *Gotlib* (Marcel Gottlieb, 1934-2016), French comics writer, artist and publisher who in his own magazine *Fluide Glacial* co-created the beret-wearing French superhero Superdupont, died on 10 December aged 82.
- *Alex Hamilton* (1930-2016), author and journalist who wrote many horror/macabre stories – his first solo collection being *Beam of Malice* (1966) – and compiled several such anthologies, died on 2 November aged 85.
- *Gordon Hunt* (1929-2016), sound/recording director of many Hanna-Barbera animated series including *The Flintstone Comedy Show* (1980-1981), *The Smurfs* (1981-1989), *The Jetsons* (1985-1987), *Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventures* (1990) and *The Addams Family* (1992-1993), died on 17 December; he was 87. [SFS]
- *George S. Irving* (1922-2016), US actor whose voice work includes *The Year Without a Santa Claus* (1974), *Pinocchio's Christmas* (1980) and *A Miser Brothers' Christmas* (2008), died on 26 December aged 94. [PDF]
- *Richard Kyle*, comics fan, dealer and publisher (in particular of *Graphic Story World*, later *Wonderworld*) who in 1964 coined the term 'graphic novel', died on 10 December; he was 87. [AB]
- *Robert C. Lee* (1931-2016), US author of YA and children's sf novels beginning with *The Iron Arm of Michael Glenn* (1965), died on 31 August

2016; he was 84. [DB]

- *Roger Leiner* (1955-2016), prolific Luxembourg cartoonist who with Lucien Czuga in 1988 created Superj hemp – their country’s humorous/satirical equivalent of Superman – died on 29 December aged 61. [PDF]
- *Tricia McCauley*, US actress seen in the short fantasy *Never Dream: The Beginning* (2012), was found dead in her car on 27 December; she was 46.
- *Kathleen Meyer* (1948-2016), Chicago-area US fan who chaired several conventions including the 1991 Chicago Worldcon, died on December 13. [SHS]
- *Paul Peter Porges* (1927-2016), Vienna-born writer and cartoonist who wrote and drew for *Mad* magazine from 1966 to issue #500 in 2009, died on 20 December; he was 89. [PDF]
- *Debbie Reynolds* (1932-2016), long-time US star actress whose few genre credits include *Charlotte’s Web* (1973), *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer* (1998) and the *Halloweentown* series (from 1998), died at the age of 84 on 28 December – a day after her daughter Carrie Fisher. [F770]
- *John Calvin ‘Rez’ Rezmerski*, US academic and poet whose sf poems included the Rhysling-winning ‘A Dream of Heredity’ (1986), died on 5 November; he was 74. [DL]
- *Patricia Robins* (1921-2016), UK romance author whose early work included such children’s fantasies as *Tree Fairies* (1945) and *Sea Magic* (1946), died on 4 December aged 95.
- *Andrew Sachs* (1930-2016), German-born actor best loved for *Fawlty Towers*, whose genre credits include *Monkey* (1978-1980 voice), *Doctor Who* ‘Shada’ (2003) and *Going Postal* (2010), died on 23 November aged 86.
- *Philip Saville* (1930-2016), UK film/tv director whose productions included *Count Dracula* (1977) and *The Cloning of Joanna May* (1991), died on 22 December aged 86. [PDF]
- *Robert E. Scholes* (1929-2016), US academic and sf/fantasy critic whose nonfiction books include *Science Fiction: History – Science – Vision* (1977) with Eric S. Rabkin, died on 9 December; he was 87. [PDF]
- *Liz Smith* (1921-2016), UK actress whose genre credits include *Tom’s Midnight Garden* (1999), *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* (2005) and *The Curse of the Were-Rabbit* (2005), died on 24 December aged 95. [PC]
- *Robert Stiller* (1928-2016), Polish writer and editor whose many translations include Anthony Burgess, Lewis Carroll, Ian Fleming, Edward

Lear, Vladimir Nabokov and Ayn Rand, died on 10 December; he was 88.

- *Jeremy Summers* (1931-2016), UK film/tv director whose credits include *The Vengeance of Fu Manchu* (1967) and *Randall and Hopkirk (Deceased)* (1969-1970), died on 14 December aged 85. [KN]

- *Nila Thompson* (1954-2016), US *Star Trek*, convention and local (St. Louis) club fan, wife of David K.M. Klaus, died on 10 December; she was 62. [DKMK]

- *Rochelle Marie Uhlenkott* (1960-2016), US writer whose story ‘The Gift’ as by Rochelle Marie was in Marion Zimmer Bradley’s *Sword and Sorceress XI* (1994), died shortly before Christmas. [F770]

- *Peter Vaughan* (1923-2016), UK actor seen in *Village of the Damned* (1960), *Time Bandits* (1981), *Brazil* (1985), *Fatherland* (1994) and *Game of Thrones*, died on 6 December; he was 93.

- *Van Williams* (1934-2016), US actor who starred in *The Green Hornet* (1966-1967 tv), with crossover appearances in the Adam West *Batman*, died on 28 November aged 82. [F770]

- *Tyrus Wong* (1910-2016), Chinese-born US artist who created the distinctive backgrounds of Disney’s *Bambi* (1942), died on 30 December aged 106. (*New York Times*)

New Year Language Lesson: Frisian. *rûgelje*, ‘to drop needles all over the floor, as a Christmas tree in January.’ (Julie Phillips) [JDB]

Court Circular. ComicMix, the publisher sued by the Dr. Seuss estate for its proposed Seuss/*Star Trek* mashup *Oh, The Places You’ll Boldly Go!* (written by David Gerrold), has asked a US federal judge to dismiss the case on the ground that the book is a parody protected by ‘fair use’ exceptions to copyright. (GeekNation.com, 22 December)

Outraged Letters. *David V. Barrett* on Rog Peyton’s [A353](#) request for fewer obituaries (especially of media folk): ‘Leave them how they are, Dave. It’s right that we should read obits of people we’ve never heard of (but are significant to SF) alongside people we do know of – and sometimes sadly know.’

- *Ramsey Campbell*: ‘The obituaries are sad (what else would they be?) but I don’t think you should truncate them.’

- *Simon R. Green*: ‘I think hearing about Carrie Fisher hit me hardest, because it was so unexpected. I like to think she’s meeting Peter Cushing in the Hereafter, and saying “I still can’t believe you made us do our big

dramatic scene together with you wearing carpet slippers.”

Talking Squid Dept. Catherine Aboard reassures anyone nervous of lurking skiffiness in *Arrival*: ‘Yes, it’s set among space beasties, but it is a movie absolutely about the human condition, about how we choose who to love and how to love them.’ (*Guardian*, 14 December)

Random Fandom. [FAAn Awards](#): nominations are open but only to last year’s 41 voters and administrator, whose choices will fill four of five slots for each category (the fifth being left blank for a write-in) on the final ballot to be released after 28 February. Anyone interested can then vote. [MM]
• *Rob Hansen’s* famous workplace, the Whitechapel Bell Foundry, is closing; the listed building has already been sold. If this 500-year-old business can’t relocate to somewhere cheaper than London, Rob anticipates early retirement at the end of April.

The Dead Past. *20 Years Ago*, Jon Langford wrote about his visit to William Burroughs: ‘The garage door was pocked with shotgun pellets, and there were all these bits of wood that had been blown apart ... I asked Burroughs what he thought about gun control, and he rasped, “I am a member of the NRA. But I don’t pay any dues.”’ Snapshots from the great meeting show a priceless cultural artefact in the Burroughs garden: his very own orgone box. (*Ansible* 114, Jan 1997)



C.o.A. *Lou Antonelli*, 1100 West Jackson St, Clarksville, TX 75426, USA.
• *Edward James & Farah Mendlesohn* (together with Vor Lord cats), The Hollies, 67 James St, Penkhull, Stoke-on-Trent, ST4 5HR.

Fanfundery. *TAFF*: Voting is open for the 2017 eastbound race, with candidates Sarah Gulde, Alissa McKersie and John Purcell contending for the trip to Worldcon 75 in Helsinki. See tafftrip.com for the ballot with their platforms; if voting online via PayPal, click the 'TAFF voting using PayPal' tab for advice. Voting ends on 4 March.

• *GUFF*: The 2017 ballot is online at ozfanfunds.com/?page_id=63.
Candidates are Donna Maree Hanson, Sam Hawke, Belle McQuattie and

(jointly) Alexandra Pierce and Alisa Krasnostein. Voting ends on 1 April.

• *DUFF*: nominations for the 2017 southbound race (NA-Australia) are open, closing on 22 January. See downunderfanfund.wordpress.com.

Thog's Masterclass. *Sartorial Niceties Dept.* 'The protesters had come prepared. With khaki flak jackets and backpacks, and their socks tucked into their trousers ...' (Christopher Fowler, *Bryant & May: The Burning Man*, 2015) [CH]

• *Dept of Sensitive Observation.* 'She laughed so hard her breasts jiggled.' (Camilla Lackberg, *The Stonecutter*, 2005; trans Steven T. Murray 2010) [PB]

• *Neat Tricks.* 'Justin kicked off the wall and rode his roller chair across the floor, fetched up at the front counter and went adroitly erect.' (James Sallis, *Driven*, 2012) [PB]

• *Cruel and Unusual Anatomy Dept.* 'The sword opened his chest and he fell to the street, his intestines heaving from his body like a spill of ghastly streamers.' (Charles de Lint, *Svaha*, 1989) [BA]

• *Dept of Esoteric Nomenclature.* 'Emerson took a deep breath to steady himself and closed his eyes, reciting the formulae, making the proper gestures and invoking the names of nameless gods.' (Nancy A. Collins, 'The Land of the Reflected Ones' in *Avenue X and Other Dark Streets*, 1995) [BA]

• *Count the Tentacles Dept.* 'His penis looked naked and sad, hanging between his legs like a dead squid.' ('Furies in Black Leather', *ibid*) [BA]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

• 13 January 2017: Brum Group AGM and Auction (free). 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre. Normally £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future meetings/speakers: 10 February 2017 Quiz; 10 March 2017 Gerry Webb; 7 April 2017 Dave Hutchinson; 12 May 2017 Adrian Tchaikovsky.

• 1 April 2017: Steph Swainston, Reddit AMA 'Ask Me Anything' at Reddit Fantasy as below. 7am to midnight (GMT/UTC).

<https://www.reddit.com/r/Fantasy/>

Publishers and Sinners. The 31 December 2016 closure of US

publisher/distributor All Romance eBooks was announced (to ensure everyone had plenty of time to think about it) on 28 December, with authors offered ten cents per dollar of their contracted royalties for the last quarter of 2016, and explicitly warned that if they don't accept this as full settlement ARE may file for bankruptcy. That's the deal for authors *distributed* by ARE; their own authors, in a gesture of corporate loyalty, get nothing. Much online comment ensued:

<http://smartbitchestrashybooks.com/2016/12/romance-closing-effective-12312016/>

<https://www.patreon.com/posts/business-musings-7624150>

<https://www.rwa.org/p/bl/et/blogid=20&blogaid=1721>

<http://blogcritics.org/publisher-all-romance-ebooks-closing-hits-new-low-in-stealing-from-authors/>

<http://blogcritics.org/court-documents-regarding-all-romance-e-books-disturbing-business-practices-surface/>

More New Year Honours. Canadian film composer Howard Shore, who scored the *Lord of the Rings* and *Hobbit* films (also *Ed Wood*, *Dogma*, *Big, The Fly*, *Naked Lunch* and other David Cronenberg productions), has been named an Officer of the Order of Canada 'for his contributions to the film music industry'. [BMcC]

- Professor Anthony Phillip Mann, who writes sf as Phillip Mann, received the New Zealand Order of Merit for services to literature and drama. [F770]

Editorial. Readers will be relieved to know that 2017 has so far spawned no new Ansible Editions publishing projects requiring massive promotion here. See ae.ansible.uk for recent titles and the backlist. If time permits I hope to put together an ebook anthology of unfinished TransAtlantic Fan Fund trip reports and other good material from the TAFF website (taff.org.uk), to be added to the free downloads page at taff.org.uk/ebooks.php. Suggestions are welcome.

Thog's Second Helping. *Compleat Angler Dept.* 'Cissy, crouching between his spread-eagled legs, rammed the dildo upwards, spearing the boy like a fish.' [BA] (Nancy A. Collins, 'Furies in Black Leather', in *Avenue X and Other Dark Streets*, 1995)

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Lien, Bennett McCardle, Murray Moore, Kim Newman, Roger Robinson, SF
Site, Steven H Silver, Martin Morse Wooster, and our Hero Distributors:
Dave Corby (Birmingham SF Group), SCIS/Prophecy, Alan Stewart
(Australia). Happy New Year. 3 January 2017.

Ansible® 355, February 2017

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE, fantods or an admonitory hippopotamus.

The Radishes of Doom

Iain Banks, together with Doris Lessing and Colin Wilson, was added to the *Dictionary of National Biography* in its 11 January 2017 update – the first to admit notables who died as recently as 2013. [DH]

Harold Bloom opined: ‘Computers have as much to do with literature as space travel, perhaps much less.’ (*Paris Review*, 1991) [MMW]

Arthur C. Clarke’s estate is one of several suing literary entrepreneur Fredrik Colting, whose Moppet Books publishes unauthorized rewrites of ‘classic’ novels – including *2001: A Space Odyssey* – thinly disguised as study guides for schoolchildren. All allegedly ‘in complete disregard of copyright law.’ (*Hollywood Reporter*, 19 January) [AIP]

Jeffrey Dwight & Steve Ratzlaff announced that their 20-year-old Internet community at SFF.net – hosting many sf forums and authors’ websites – will close at the end of March. (SFF.net, 18 January) The private SFWA forums had already moved away from SFF.net in 2014.

George Orwell has for some reason been frequently invoked when discussing the current US administration. In BBC Radio 4’s *Today*, a pundit alluded to that sf classic whose tormented hero’s ultimate perception is that $2 + 2 = 5$... ‘*Brave New World*.’ (30 January) [SF²C]

Charles Stross’s January book release had problems at Amazon: ‘I’ve been panicking a bit – Amazon indicating the book is unorderable a week before launch doesn’t give me the warm fuzzies – but they finally sorted it out today ... Except for the author bio. Apparently I am 26 years old, Female, and live

in London. Who knew?' (19 January) Charlie has since had a substantial biographical makeover.

Contemplamen

3-5 Feb • **Quoi de Neuf** (filk), Best Western Hotel, Marks Tey, Colchester. £38 reg/£27 unwaged; under-18s £1/year of age; under-5s free. Cheques to UK Filk Convention, 20 Glynbridge Gardens, Cheltenham, GL51 0BZ. See www.contabile.org.uk/quoideneuf.

3-5 Feb • **SF Ball** (media), Grand Harbour Hotel, Southampton. £132 reg; child £66; other options. See sfbevents.com/sfball.

5 Feb • **Sci-Feb** (superheroes), Humber Royal Hotel, Little Coates Road, Grimsby. £4 reg. See www.daydreamevents.uk/sci--feb.html.

10-12 Feb • **Conrunner 4** (conrunning), Park Inn, Nottingham. *Now £50 reg (Sat/Sun day rate £30)*. Contact 56 Jackmans Place, Letchworth Garden City, Herts, SG6 1RH. See www.conrunner.co.uk.

18 Feb • **Picocon**, Beit Quadrangle, South Kensington Campus, Imperial College, London. £12 reg; £10 concessions; £8 ICSF members; past GoHs free. See www.union.ic.ac.uk/scc/icsf/picocon/.

22 Feb • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. Guest to be announced. Free.

24-26 Feb • **Redemption '17** (multimedia), Royal Victoria Hotel, Sheffield. £70 reg (day £40); *advance booking closes on 11 February*; £75 (day £45) at door. Other rates remain unchanged at the door: under-18s £25 (day £15); under-3s free. Contact 61 Chaucer Road, Farnborough, Hants, GU14 8SP. See also redemptioncon.org.uk.

25-26 Feb • **Digi-Con 3** (sf/comics/anime), Doncaster Deaf Trust, Leger Way, Doncaster. From £25 reg; see www.digi-fest.co.uk.

14-17 Apr • **Innominate** (Eastercon), NEC, Birmingham. *Now £80 reg (£90 at door); YA/concessions £55 (£60); under-16s £20 (£25); under-6s £1 (£5)*. Adult day rates £20 Fri, £30 Sat or Sun, £10 Mon. *Advance booking closes 7 April*. See www.eastercon2017.uk for more.

27-28 May • **Birmingham FearFest** (horror), Gunmakers Arms, Bath St, Birmingham. More at www.birmingham-fearfest.co.uk.

30 Mar - 2 Apr 2018 • **Follycon** (Eastercon), Majestic Hotel, Harrogate. *2016 rates still good until Easter*: £60 reg; £45 YA/unwaged; £30 supp. Cheques to Eastercon 2018 c/o 19 Uphall Rd, Cambridge, CB3 1HX. Credit cards (*preferred*) via www.follycon.org.uk.

Rumblings. *2017 Hugo Nominations* opened in January and close on 17 or 18 March depending on time zone. Worldcon 75 members are being sent personalized links rather than login-with-PIN details. Further information on voting dates appears at www.worldcon.fi/wsfs/hugo/.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others Deny Us. Neil Cross insists that his coming pre-apocalyptic tv police procedural shouldn't get an *SF Encyclopedia* entry: 'Imagine the world you see when you look out your window ... except it's been given a death sentence. This isn't science fiction. This is the real world. There's no hero to come save us; no contingency plan. We've got five years. This is the world of *Hard Sun* ...' ([io9](#), 6 January) [LT]

Outrage Dept. PETA UK has sternly instructed the CEO of Games Workshop to ban the fictional game characters in *Warhammer 40,000* from wearing fictional fur cruelly taken from poor, suffering fictional animals. ([30 January](#)) Strangely enough, this is not an *Onion* spoof. By the year 40,000 AD, isn't it all vat-grown synthifur anyway?

Awards. *Golden Globes* animated film category: *Zootopia*.

- *Oscars*: *Arrival* has 8 nominations including Best Picture.
- *Philip K. Dick* shortlist: Kristy Acevedo, *Consider*; Eleanor Arnason, *Hwarhath Stories: Transgressive Tales by Aliens*; Claudia Casper, *The Mercy Journals*; Matt Hill, *Graft*; Susan diRende, *Unpronounceable*; Yoss (trans David Frye), *Super Extra Grande*. [GVG]
- *SF & Fantasy Hall of Fame* (a bumper intake for the twentieth anniversary): Douglas Adams, Margaret Atwood, Keith David, Guillermo del Toro, Terry Gilliam, Jim Henson, Jack Kirby, Madeleine L'Engle, C.S. Lewis, H.P. Lovecraft, Leonard Nimoy, George Orwell, Terry Pratchett, Rumiko Takahashi, John Williams. Plus works: *2001: A Space Odyssey*, *Blade*

Runner, Dungeons & Dragons, The Matrix, Myst, The Princess Bride, Star Trek, Wonder Woman, The X-Files. [F770]

- *SFWA Solstice*: Peggy Rae Sapienza (1944-2015), Toni Weiskopf.

Thog's Mathematical Masterclass. *BBC Weatherman*: 'I'm not going to try to tell you how much snow you'll have: it might be zero, it might be twice that.' (12 January) [DAH]

R.I.P. *Hilary Bailey* (1936-2017), UK author whose early work included 'The Fall of Frenchy Steiner' (1964 *New Worlds*), who co-edited *New Worlds Quarterly* #7-#10, and whose later literary fiction often included fantastic elements, died on 18 January [according to early reports; 11 January is correct]. Her former husband Michael Moorcock wrote: 'She was greatly loved by her family and will be sadly missed by them. She was a successful novelist, critic, editor and writer of non-fiction.'

- *Ivo Brešan* (1936-2017), Croatian author and playwright whose novels include the Faustian *Astaroth* (2001), died on 3 January; he was 80. [PDF]

- *James C. Christensen* (1942-2017), US artist who produced many sf and fantasy covers and interiors, died on 8 January; he was 74 and had won three Chesley Awards, two for sculpture. [PDF]

- *William Christopher* (1932-2016), US actor with voice parts in *The Smurfs* (as Angel Smurf, 1984-1988) and *The Little Troll Prince* (1987), died on 31 December aged 84. [MMW]

- *Babette Cole* (1949-2017), US children's author and illustrator whose books include the 2010-2011 Fetlocks Hall saga of magic and ponies, died on 15 January aged 67. [PDF]

- *Mike Connors* (1925-2017), US actor whose films include *Day the World Ended* (1955), *Voodoo Woman* (1957) and *Earthlings* (1984), died on 21 January aged 91.

- *Paula Dell* (1926-2017), acrobat and Hollywood stuntwoman (usually uncredited) whose genre films include *Son of Flubber* (1963), *Camelot* (1967), *Death Race 2000* (1975), *Logan's Run* (1976), *Freaky Friday* (1977) and *Mystery Men* (1999), died on 9 January aged 80. [AIP]

- *Mike Dickinson* (1947-2017), UK fan who co-chaired the 1979 Leeds Eastercon and was toastmaster at its 1981 sequel, died on 20 January aged 69. His fanzines included the 1970s *Bar Trek* with Lee Montgomerie and the 1980s *Spaghetti Junction* with Jackie Gresham. [RK/DP]

- *Buchi Emecheta*, (1944-2017) Nigerian-born UK writer whose genre work

- includes the sf *The Rape of Shavi* (1983), died on 25 January aged 72. [JC]
- *Mark Fisher* (1968-2017) alias K-Punk, UK writer on music and politics whose *The Weird and the Eerie* – a study of fantastic authors and films – appeared in December, died on 14 January aged 48. [PDF]
 - *Pascal Garray* (1965-2017), Belgian illustrator who drew 17 Smurfs albums, died on 17 January aged 51. [PDF]
 - *Dick Gautier* (1931-2017), US actor whose genre credits included *Get Smart* (1966-1968, as Hymie the Robot), *Mr. Terrific* (1967), *When Things Were Rotten* (1975, as Robin Hood) and *The Transformers* (1986-1987), died on 13 January aged 85. [SFS]
 - *Barbara Hale* (1922-2017), US actress seen in *Science Fiction Theatre* (1955 tv) and *The Giant Spider Invasion* (1975), died on 26 January aged 94.
 - *Bob Holiday* (1932-2017), US actor who starred in the Broadway musical *It's a Bird, It's a Plane, It's Superman!* (1966), died on 27 January aged 84. [PDF]
 - *John Hurt* (1940-2017), UK actor whose genre work includes *Alien* (1979), *1984* (1984), *Frankenstein Unbound* (1990), *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* (2001), *Hellboy* (2004), *V for Vendetta* (2005) and *Doctor Who* (2013), died on 27 January; he was 77. [MR]
 - *George Kosana* (1935-2017), US actor best remembered as the Sheriff in *Night of the Living Dead* (1968), died on 2 January aged 81. [PDF]
 - *Harry Mathews* (1930-2017), US author whose novels – beginning with the Pynchonesque *The Conversions* (1962), *Tlooth* (1966) and *The Sinking of the Odradek Stadium* (1975) – are intricately surreal if not quite fantastic, died on 25 January aged 86. [JC]
 - *David Meltzer* (1937-2016) US jazz guitarist, poet and novelist whose erotic sf written for Essex House included the 1968-1969 *Agency* trilogy, died on 31 December; he was 79. [JC]
 - *Jack Mendelsohn* (1926-2017), US comics writer and artist who wrote for DC Comics and EC, co-wrote the Beatles' Hugo-shortlisted *Yellow Submarine* (1968), scripted many tv series including *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* (1990-1993) and received a Lifetime Achievement Award in Animation from the Writers Guild, died on 25 January aged 90. [AL]
 - *Masaya Nakamura* (1925-2017), Japanese founder of the arcade-game company Namco which gave us *Galaxian* (1979), *Pac-Man* (1980), *Tekken* (1994) and others, died on 22 January; he was 91. [MR]
 - *Linn Prentis* (1944-2016), US literary agent whose authors included Kage

Baker, Patricia Briggs, Rick Bowes, A.M. Dellamonica and James Morrow, died on 24 December aged 72. [PDF/L]

- *Sarah Prince* (1954-2017), US fan once active in fanzines and convention-running, who stood for TAFF in 1999, died in late January. [TG]
- *Om Puri* (1950-2017), Indian actor whose genre films include *Code 46* (2003) and *Time Traveller* (2013), died on 6 January aged 66. He received an honorary OBE in 2004. [SFS]
- *Larry Smith* (1946-2017), well-known US fan and bookseller who ran the dealers' room at many conventions including Worldcons, died on 20 January aged 70.
- *Dan Spiegle* (1920-2017), US comics artist best known for film/tv adaptations including *Space Family Robinson/Lost in Space*, *The Green Hornet*, *The Invaders* and *Scooby-Doo*, died on 28 January; he was 96. [PDF]
- *Vicky Stock* (1979-2017), UK fan who worked on the committees of past Fantasycons and the Birmingham SF Group, died on 11 January; she was 37.
- *Emma Tennant* (1937-2017), UK author whose first acknowledged novel was the sf *The Time of the Crack* (1973) and who often returned to fantastic themes, died on 20 January aged 79. She founded the magazine *Bananas* and was a close friend of Hilary Bailey (above). [JC]
- *Annemarie van Ewijck* (1943-2017), Dutch fan, translator and editor of the semiprozine *Holland SF* for 19 years, a mainstay of the national fan club and of Dutch conventions, died on 15 January aged 73. Her favourite author to translate was Jack Vance. [KvT/J-HH]
- *Igor Volk* (1937-2017), former USSR cosmonaut and Hero of the Soviet Union who with Valery Anisimov co-wrote the sf thriller *Kosmicheskii kolpak* (1990), died on 3 January aged 79. [MA]
- *John Watkiss* (1961-2017), UK artist whose credits include Neil Gaiman's *Sandman*, Disney's animated *Tarzan* (1999) and *Treasure Planet* (2002), and *The Walking Dead* (tv), died on 20 January aged 55. [PDF]
- *Peter Weston* (1943-2017), leading UK fan since the 1960s, who co-founded the Birmingham SF Group and Novacon, ran the Speculation sf conferences, edited the three *Andromeda* original anthologies, was the 1974 TAFF winner, chaired the 1979 UK Worldcon and was fan GoH at the 2004 Boston Worldcon, died on 5 January aged 73. His fanzines included *Zenith/Speculation*, a forum for sf criticism, and *Prolapse/Relapse*, whose focus was UK fan history; his autobiographical *With Stars in My Eyes: My Adventures in British Fandom* (2004) was a Hugo finalist. Tom Shippey's

funeral eulogy for him fills *Ansible* 355½: see news.ansible.uk/pdf/a355x.pdf.
• *Francine York* (1936-2017), US actress whose genre films include *Space Probe Taurus* (1965) and *Curse of the Swamp Creature* (1966), died on 6 January aged 80. [SFS]

The Weakest Link. *Host*: ‘What is the only planet in our solar system capable of supporting life?’ *Contestant*: ‘Mars.’ (ITV, *The Chase*) [PE]

Court Circular. The *Star Trek vs Axanar* lawsuit was settled in January, with plaintiffs CBS and Paramount agreeing that the *Trek*-based film can go ahead with substantial changes in accordance with (most of) the fan-film guidelines belatedly announced in mid-2016. Going after the \$1.4 million crowdfunded for *Axanar* production was apparently not feasible, since the project’s prime mover Alec Peters had spent it all on studio construction and ‘personal expenses’. [F770]

As Others See Us II. Not content to state that ‘A literary highpoint, well beyond the reach of genre fiction, was reached with Kashuo [sic] Ishiguro’s highly acclaimed novel, *Never Let Me Go.*’, John Sutherland shoots down such predecessors as *Frankenstein* and *The Reefs of Space*: ‘These scenarios, however, were fantasy, since medicine had not at that time developed the techniques by which body parts could be successfully transplanted.’ (in *Literary Wonderlands: A Journey Through the Greatest Fictional Worlds Ever Created*, ed. Laura Miller) [PL]

Magazine Scene. Warren Lapine announced that *Fantastic Stories of the Imagination* is closing after its January 2017 issue. [F770]

Insert Name Here. ‘The <blank> Award for Best Young Adult Book’ is the new, as yet unnamed, Worldcon not-a-Hugo. Do you prefer Anansi, Lodestar, Ouroboros, Spellcaster, Tesseract or Worldcon? The WSFS survey at tinyurl.com/hse9txm closes on 15 March. [AIP]

As Others Research Us. Several people (hello, Whitley Strieber!) unwisely believed every word of my 1979 UFO spoof *An Account of a Meeting with Denizens of Another World, 1871*; but Eddie Brazil in *Secret High Wycombe* (2017) is the first to attribute it to ‘science journalist and sci-fi writer David Frankland’. Who is this man and is he getting my royalties? One side-effect of *An Account* may have been the naming of a High Wycombe pub after my local ‘contactee’ William Robert Loosley. This recently closed [MC] but has

reopened under new management.

C.o.A. [Chris Priest](#) & *Nina Allan* are now in Rothesay, Isle of Bute.

The Dead Past. *40 Years Ago*, a fandom was born: ‘David Barrie, an enthusiastic follower of the British tv series, *The Prisoner*, managed to get his name and address on the small screen after a recent episode (apparently it’s still being repeated in some ITV areas ten years after it was first shown). Within a couple of hours he had his first visitors and within a couple of days he had his first 400 letters. Once he recovers he intends organising some kind of appreciation society.’ ([Checkpoint 79](#), February 1977)

- *30 Years Ago* we reported the end of Bruce Sterling’s pseudonymous fanzine of invective and cyberpunk, which ran its own obituary: ‘Node Zero, the global info-nexus of the *Cheap Truth* publishing empire, has been reduced to smouldering wreckage in a poorly-realized action-sequence right out of the worst tradition of macho adventure fiction. A dead Hollywood stunt dummy, with several burst squibs of chicken-blood attached to its head and torso, was discovered by hard-boiled investigators [and] identified as that of *Cheap Truth* editor Vincent Omniaveritas...’ (*Ansible* 48, February 1987)

Random Fandom. *Leigh Edmonds* is working on a history of Australian fandom 1956-1975: more details at efanzines.com/iOTA/.

Editorial. Peter Weston knew what was coming, made preparations and enjoyed life to the end. In early December I noticed and told him that his *With Stars In My Eyes* is one of the few books on fandom cited in *Brave New Words: The Oxford Dictionary of Science Fiction* (Oxford University Press 2007). He wrote: ‘That’s nice to know, though I’ll dispute your point that egoboo never comes too late. Without wishing to be dramatic, or a bit premature like Clive James, another couple of months might be sufficient.’ Only one month, alas. Peter was a good friend who encouraged my early sf career; I can’t believe he’s gone.

Fanfundery. *DUFF*: Paul Weimer is the only candidate for the 2017 trip from NA to Australia (Continuum, Melbourne, 9-12 June). The ballot is at ozfanfunds.com/?page_id=77; voting closes on 10 March.

- *Reminder*: TAFF voting ends on 4 March and GUFF voting on 1 April.

Thog’s Masterclass. *Provocative Clothing Dept.* ‘... a young lady’s garment, with a bustle that rustled and, as Billie walked, made passes at the air behind

her as if it had its own appetites and interests.’ (Elizabeth Knox, *Billie’s Kiss*, 2002) [PB]

- *Neat Tricks*. ‘Rader jumped up, then caught himself in the almost absent gravity.’ (William Rotsler, *The Far Frontier*, 1980) [BA] ‘Felicity sits up so quickly I can still feel the warmth of her next to me, trailing behind her by seconds.’ (Libba Bray, *A Great and Terrible Beauty*, 2003) [PB]
 - *Something Fishy Dept*. ‘His feet, in black socks, were long and limp as dead salmon.’ (Jack Vance, ‘Parapsyche’, August 1958 *Amazing*) [BA]
 - *Dept of Alpine Allure*. ‘Time had refined her so that now, in her forties, she had the spare beauty of a mountaintop blown clean of snow.’ (Julia Spencer-Fleming, *In the Bleak Midwinter*, 2002) [PB]
 - *Don’t Try This At Home*. ‘Russ cleared his throat. Officer Durkee fell in.’ (*Ibid*)
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Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 10 February 2017: Quiz at the Brum Group. 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre. £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future meetings/speakers: 10 March 2017 Gerry Webb; 7 April 2017 Dave Hutchinson; 12 May 2017 Adrian Tchaikovsky; 9 June 2017 Aliette de Bodard; 11 August 2017 Summer Social; 13 October 2017 Andy Sawyer.
- 1 April 2017: Steph Swainston, Reddit AMA ‘Ask Me Anything’ at Reddit Fantasy as below. 7am to midnight (GMT/UTC).
<https://www.reddit.com/r/Fantasy/>

Editorial. Various fans’ accounts of Peter Weston’s well-attended humanist funeral (there was standing room only in the packed crematorium chapel) will appear soon in Graham Charnock’s *Vibrator* 2.0.36, in print and at the efanzines.com page below. As noted in the depths of the [A355 obituary section](#), the ancient tradition of an *Ansible* ‘half issue’ has been revived for Tom Shippey’s eulogy of Peter, published as *Ansible* 355½.

<http://efanzines.com/Vibrator/>
<http://news.ansible.uk/pdf/a355x.pdf>
<http://news.ansible.uk/a355x.html>

The Dead Past II. *20 Years Ago*, the Usborne Spinechillers series was blurbed as ‘Full length spiningling tales – too scary to read in the dark!’ (*Ansible* 115, February 1997) [PB]

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Ansible® 355½, February 2017

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Web: news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-924X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Photograph of Peter Weston in 2005 supplied by **Bill Burns**. In memory of Peter, 1943-2017.

Tom Shippey on Peter Weston

I never said this to Peter – because he would have dismissed it as sappy – but I admired Peter as much as anyone else I ever knew. And I have met many people who were officially designated as admirable, people with knighthoods and OBEs and Medals of Honour, a Companion of Merit and even a member of the Privy Council. I thought more of Peter than of any of them, and for at least three reasons.

One was his courage. Peter and I are the same age, which meant we started our working lives at the start of a long depression. I was made redundant six months into my first proper job, and Peter was made redundant three times, if I've got that right, as British manufacturing industry collapsed around him – by BSA, by Dunlop (or was it GKN?), and by Wilmot Breedon. He told me that in 1983 he found himself redundant again, looking out of his office window, in Smethwick, at the canal, between an abattoir and a scrapyards, and thinking, 'well, is this all there is?'

So he organized a management buy-out, and it was a bad time to do it. He told me that when he went to the bank-manager for a loan in 1983 the manager smiled at him and said, patronizingly, 'Well, Mr. Weston, metal-bashing isn't very fashionable these days.'

Despite the bank manager, Peter went ahead and set up in a factory in Redditch. The only collateral he had was his house in Erdington, and he had a wife and a mortgage and three children. I wouldn't have had the nerve to do that. But he turned his little unit – 14 staff and a tea-boy – into a profitable business employing more than 100 people.

What powered that success was not government assistance but reason number two, Peter's complete lack of pretence. The success of Weston Body Hardware was not based on cunning marketing or managerial tricks, it was based on Peter's 150-page catalogue of door locks, and unlike many managers Peter knew everything about his product. He took every picture in his catalogue himself, and in each one you could tell left-hand from right-hand.

He usually had a screwdriver in his pocket as well, for removing interesting locks from derelict vehicles, and he could tell a Hillman Minx lock from a Ford Capri blindfolded. I recall one occasion in Texas, 1988, when his attention was caught by a beautifully-refurbished sports car in a car-park. He stepped smartly over to it, looked down, shook his head and remarked (to himself, not the yuppie owner who was standing proudly by), 'How very disappointing! An Austin-Healey 3000, and all they've found to put on the boot is a left-over lock from a Singer Vogue!' It sounded absolutely apocalyptic.

Once his factory was established in Redditch – and for a time it was the only unit occupied in the business park, which tells you something about the recession – I saw him managing. He walked round the factory, he knew what every operator was doing, and he looked over their shoulders and said things like, 'you'll need a locking washer on that one.' He was not a desk manager. Which is why he never had any union trouble, unlike all those firms which made him redundant. His book about door locks is also an incidental indictment of British management culture back in the Heath / Wilson era.

And the third, unrelated reason for my admiration was Peter's intellectual curiosity, which took him into science fiction. He wasn't led into this at school, he got no outside encouragement, and he sacrificed a lot out of pure devotion. His memoir *With Stars in My Eyes* – which was a Hugo nominee for Best Related Book in 2005 – details what he used to do: for more than a year he spent a quarter of his meagre salary on paying off a Roneo machine so he could produce his fanzines, and to begin with he didn't have an office or even a desk, he tapped everything out on a portable typewriter balanced on his knees. And those were the days when even spending \$10 on paperbacks – if you had the equivalent of \$10 – needed permission from the Ministry of Something-or-Other to buy an International Money Order.

But what Peter produced, over a 40+ year span, is now recognized as a significant historical resource. Some of it's on line now, and I hope all of it will be. People will be writing PhDs about it, and they've already started! Not that Peter would have approved of that, but he would have been amused.

Peter was also, of course, prominent in British sf fandom, and a leading light of the active Birmingham sf group. I'm not quite sure of the details, because although in the later 1960s Peter and I were actually living on opposite sides of the Birmingham to Worcester Canal, I don't know exactly when we first met each other.

Local fans in the 1960s used to go round the bookshops and public libraries of Birmingham, leaving notes in sf books inviting people interested in sf to come to the next meeting of the fan group, and it may be I read one of those and turned up, meeting Peter there. What I do remember is the way Peter powered fan conventions: Eastercons, which were for the UK as a whole, but also the first Novacons, which always met in Birmingham.

As a result, in 1979 he reached the very pinnacle of science fiction fandom. He organized the successful campaign to bring the World Convention to England, with the slogan 'Britain is fine in '79', and was made Chairman of the resultant Seacon in Brighton, which even suspicious Americans admitted was a great success for slick organization and imaginative programming.

In 1973 he got a Best Fanzine Award for *Speculation*, though I'm not sure who from [*this was the juried Nova Award presented at Novacon 3*]. In 2008 he got a Fanzine Activity Achievement Award in Las Vegas, for *Prolapse*, and in 2015 a Lifetime Achievement Award from Tynecon III. He also edited the three *Andromeda* sf anthologies and got them published. And even after business started taking up much of Peter's time and energy, he continued to attend and support the Birmingham group, and remained well-known and well-liked in America. He was Fan Guest of Honour at Boskone in 2000, and at Noreascon 4 in 2004. The New England SF Association made him a lifetime member – and are printing a tribute to him in the Souvenir Book given to attenders at Boskone 2017. At one of the International Conferences for the Fantastic and the Arts in Florida, he attended and gave a paper about his favourite author, Jack Vance, which ought to have been published, only Peter reacted with horror at the thought of looking like – well, like a professor!

NESFA also published Peter's fandom memoir, *With Stars in My Eyes*. Reading that memoir reminds me not just of the trials and tribulations of '50s and '60s Britain, but of the startlingly high quality of the fanzines Peter produced. He got letters of comment and reviews from, well, everyone, including the major authors.

I'm very glad, anyway, that he lived long enough to see the book I wrote about sf and dedicated to him, 'Peter Weston, true fan, true friend.'

One final comment on sf is that Peter did not like most modern sf, but in his last few weeks I sent him a new book by Allen Steele, *Arkwright*, which he told me he enjoyed very much. The theme of it was, how much better things would have gone in space if they'd been run by sf fans, starting from a recorded meeting back in I think 1940.

Well, that's right. And going further I often think – and I see I actually wrote this in the *Guardian* more than 20 years ago – that if the affairs of the nation as a whole had been entrusted to Peter, we'd all have been a great deal better off. He made his way without a springboard, and without assistance – except the very considerable one of his happy and settled domestic life, thanks to Eileen and the family of whom he was so proud. I always envied Peter his houses, his security, and his supportive family.

Peter Weston was a wise man, and an honest one, and I regret very much, more than I can say, that we will never be able to share a room at conventions again, hang out together again, just talk to each other again. He leaves a great gap, for all of us. *Tom Shippey*



*Ken Bulmer presents the Nova Award to Peter
Weston at Novacon 3, November 1973.
(Photo: David Langford)*

Peter Weston Links

- [Graham Charnock's *Vibrator 2.0.36*](#) (January 2017) – tribute and funeral reports
- [Fancylopedia 3 entry](#)
- [Internet SF Database](#)
- [SF Encyclopedia](#)
- [Covers at SF Encyclopedia Gallery](#)
- [Prolapse/Relapse at Efanazines.com](#)
- [Speculation at Fanac.org](#)

Ansible® 355½ © David Langford, 2017. The main text is a very slightly edited version of Tom's eulogy for Peter at the funeral on 23 January 2017.
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Ansible® 356, March 2017

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or personal congenital radiation detector.

Editorial. Rob Hansen and I are suitably thrilled that his *Then: Science Fiction Fandom in the UK 1930-1980*, published late last year by Ansible Editions, is on the BSFA Awards final ballot (below) for best nonfiction. See ae.ansible.uk?t=then for a special offer on the ebook.

- Meanwhile, Ian Whates's NewCon Press plans to launch *All Good Things: The Last SFX Visions* at Eastercon. This collects the final run of my columns for *SFX* magazine, plus extras to bring the total to a round 100 pieces, and a selection of Andy Watt's illustrations for the original appearances in *SFX*. [Trade paperback and limited-edition hardback](#); ebook to follow.

Cram Me With Eels

John Clute has given his name to an institution, the Clute Science Fiction Library in Telluride, Colorado, whose 11,000 volumes came from his private sf collection. It's now a public collection under the auspices of the nonprofit Telluride Institute, whose trustees include John and Pamela Lifton-Zoline – yes, that's Pamela Zoline of 'The Heat Death of the Universe' fame. ([Telluride Daily Planet](#), 18 February)

Ursula K. Le Guin has been invited into the American Academy of Arts and Letters, a formerly genre-hostile institution that accepted Kurt Vonnegut but never Ray Bradbury. ([SFgate.com](#), 27 February)

Jonathan Lethem is not immune to fashion-related cliché: 'The American [...] was dressed in layers of baggy, unwashed black polyester, too tight on his paunch, and a windbreaker over black jeans and running shoes – a costume exhumed from some Dungeons and Dragons basement.' ('A Gentleman's Game', *New Yorker*, 5 September) [MMW]

Cat Rambo's 'Red in Tooth and Cog' (*F&SF*) was announced as a Nebula novelette finalist and then found to be too short to qualify. In its proper category, short story, it would break the three-way tie for fifth place – see below. Rather than disappoint three announced finalists, Rambo (SFWA President) withdrew her story. ([Blog](#), 20 February)

Adam Roberts: 'Fielding a query from a publisher on whether a ("new, major, 750,000 word") Encyclopedia of Science Fiction might be a viable publishing project, I gently pointed them in the direction of a certain online SF Encyclopedia with a few more than 750K words.' (Facebook, 13 February) Now 5.3 million words at sf-encyclopedia.com.

Contraptious

10 Mar - ? Oct • **Beyond Dredd & Watchmen: The Art of John Higgins** (exhibition), Victoria Gallery & Museum, Liverpool.

11 Mar • **BSFA/BFS Pubmeet**, New York Club WMC, 22-26 Blossom Street, York, YO24 1AJ. 5pm-8pm(ish). With A.J. Dalton. Free to all, but please book in advance at tinyurl.com/h4jl9nq.

17 Mar • **Sisters in Science Fiction (1/12): Writers** (Black History Walks), starts from University of Westminster, 4-12 Little Titchfield St, London. 6:30pm-9pm. Free. See tinyurl.com/h8btcxa.

18 Mar • **Canny Comic Con** (comics), Newcastle City Library, 10am-3:30pm. Free. See cannycomiccon.blogspot.co.uk.

22 Mar • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. With Andrew Wallace. Free.

30 Mar - 2 Apr • **Sci-Fi Weekender**, Hafan y Mor Holiday Park, near Pwllheli, Gwynedd, North Wales. Booking by accommodation from £640 for two; Fri+Sat day pass £89; More at www.scifiweekender.com.

8-9 Apr • **Sci-Fi Scarborough** (multimedia), The Spa, Scarborough. Adult tickets £25, or £15 per day; under-17s £10, £5; under-5s free. See scifiscarborough.co.uk.

14-17 Apr • **Innominate** (Eastercon), NEC, Birmingham. £80 reg (£90 at door); YA/concessions £55 (£60); under-16s £20 (£25); under-6s £1 (£5).

Adult day rates £20 Fri, £30 Sat or Sun, £10 Mon. *Advance booking closes on 7 April.* See www.eastercon2017.uk for more.

27 Apr - 6 May • **Sci-Fi London** (film festival), various London venues. For more details see sci-fi-london.com/festival/2017.

29 Apr • **Supernova** (sf film festival), Odeon Printworks, Manchester. Further details at grimmfest.com/grimmupnorth/supernova/.

2 May • **Sci-Fi London Pub Quiz**, Juju's Bar and Stage, 15 Hanbury St, E1 6QR. 7pm-10pm. £30/team of 6. See tinyurl.com/hqvovd9.

3 Jun • **Wonderlands**: UK Graphic Novel Expo. Cityspace Centre, Chester Rd, Sunderland. 10am-6pm. Free. Guests include John Wagner and Martin Rowson. More TBA at www.wonderlands.org.uk.

9-24 Jun • **Visions of Space 2**: IAAA Exhibition of Astronomical and Space Art, Wells & Mendip Museum, 8 Cathedral Green, Wells, BA5 2UE. 10am-5pm (closed Sun). Free. See www.wellsastronomers.org.uk.

27 Jul • **Clarke Award**, Foyles, Charing Cross Road, London. Tickets should become available later in the year.

8-9 Sep • **TitanCon**, Wellington Park Hotel, Belfast. Friday afternoon free; £28 reg Saturday; £5 supporting. See titancon.com.

21-24 Sep • **Oxonmoot** (Tolkien Soc), St Antony's College, Oxford. £60/£70 reg. See www.tolkiensociety.org/events/oxonmoot-2017/.

23 Sep • **Crossness Steampunk Convivial**, Crossness Engines, Belvedere Rd, Abbey Wood, SE2 9AQ. See crossnessconvivial.co.uk.

23 Sep • **Preston Comic Con**, Guild Hall, Preston. 10:30am (9:30 'early bird') to 5pm. See www.prestoncomiccon.co.uk.

23-24 Sep • **Comic Con**, Leeds. As usual this is part of Thought Bubble, the Leeds Comic Art Festival, running 18-24 September. Ticket prices and other details are awaited at thoughtbubblefestival.com.

13-15 Oct • **Lakes International Comic Art Festival**, Kendal, Cumbria. Some parts free. For tickets see www.comicartfestival.com.

20-22 Oct • **Festival of Fantastic Films**, Pendulum Hotel, Manchester. £85 reg. Cheques c/o 8 Glenfield, Altrincham, Cheshire, WA14 4QH. For other

payment routes see fantastic-films.com.

2 Dec • **Dragonmeet** (gaming), Novotel London West, Hammersmith. 9am-midnight. Booking from June at www.dragonmeet.co.uk.

2-4 Feb 2018 • **Enharmicon** (filk), Best Western Hotel, Marks Tey, Colchester. GoH The Crooklets (UK), Betsy Tinney (US), Omega (Special). More TBA at www.contabile.org.uk/enharmicon/.

30 Mar - 2 Apr 2018 • **Follycon** (Eastercon), Majestic Hotel, Harrogate. £60 reg, *rising to £70 on 1 May*; £45 YA/unwaged; £30 child (5-17)/supp; under-5s free. Cheques to Eastercon 2018 c/o 19 Uphall Rd, Cambridge, CB3 1HX. Credit cards (*preferred*) via www.follycon.org.uk.

Rumblings. *2017 Hugo Nominations* close on 17 or 18 March depending on time zone. More details at www.worldcon.fi/wsfs/hugo/. • *Eurocon 2019: the TitanCon* (Belfast) bid is at titancon.com/2019/.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others Saw Us. ‘For years, sensible adults have been amused by the talk of small fry about spaceships, interplanetary travel, and the weirdly-garbed science-fiction characters of extra-terrestrial domains.’ (‘The Astronauts Are Coming’, *Harper’s Magazine*, May 1952) [MMW]

Awards. *Jack Gaughan* (emerging artist): Kirbi Fagan.

- *Oscar* for animated film: *Zootopia*.
- *Robert A. Heinlein Award*: Robert J. Sawyer.
- *Skylark Award* (NESFA): Jo Walton.
- *William L. Crawford Award* (fantasy by new author) Charlie Jane Anders, *All the Birds in the Sky*.

Communications Masterclass. ‘As things turned out, Bitomsky was working in Santa Clarita, California, not far from where I live, which made an email interview easy to do.’ (Donald M. Scott, *The Life and Truth of George R. Stewart*, 2012) [JB]

R.I.P. *Alan Aldridge* (1943-2017), UK artist and designer who created several memorable Penguin sf covers and illustrated *The Penguin Book of Comics* (1971, text by George Perry) and *The Butterfly Ball and the*

Grasshopper Feast (1973, verses by William Plomer), died on 17 February; he was 73. [DP]

- *Dick Bruna* (1927-2017), Dutch children's author/illustrator who created the 124 best-selling *Miffy the Bunny* picture books, died on 16 February aged 89. [MMW]

- *Edward Bryant* (1945-2017), highly regarded US author of short sf who won Nebula awards for 'Stone' (1978) and 'giANTS' (1979), was found dead on 10 February; he was 71. He published several fine collections, notably *Cinnabar* (1976). [ED]

- *Susan Casper* (1947-2017), US short-story author and Gardner Dozois's wife for 47 years, died on 24 February. They co-edited the anthology *Ripper!* (1988) and collaborated on stories included in Gardner's *Slow Dancing through Time* (1990). [GD]

- *Börje Crona* (1932-2017), Swedish author who published two humorous sf novels, five collections and a vast amount of humorous nonfiction, and was active as an sf translator from 1958 to the 1990s, died on 14 February; he was 84. [J-HH]

- *Neil Fingleton* (1981-2017), UK actor named 'Britain's Tallest Man' at 7' 7", with credits for *X-Men: First Class* (2011), *47 Ronin* (2013), *Jupiter Ascending* (2015), *Avengers: Age of Ultron* (2015; stunts, motion capture for Ultron) and *Game of Thrones*, died on 25 February; he was 36. [AIP]

- *Richard Hatch*, US actor who played Captain Apollo in *Battlestar Galactica* (1978-1979 tv; 1978 film) and Zarek in the 2004-2009 reboot, died on 7 February aged 71. He collaborated on spinoff novels such as *Battlestar Galactica: Armageddon* (1997) with Christopher Golden. Further film credits include *Prisoners of the Lost Universe* (1983), *InAlienable* (2008), *Alien Hunger* (2014) and *Starship II: Rendezvous with Ramses* (2016). [SG]

- *Dave Holmes*, UK fan, convention-goer and book dealer at Birmingham's former Andromeda Bookshop (later Magic Labyrinth in Leicester), died on 13 February; he was 61. [SH/RP]

- *Alec McCowen* (1925-2017), UK actor seen in *The Witches* (1966) and *Never Say Never Again* (1983), died on 6 February aged 91. [MMW]

- *William Melvin Kelley* (1937-2017) US author who used fantastic tropes to explore his country's racial issues in the near-future sf *A Different Drummer* (1959) and other works, died on 1 February; he was 79. [PDF]

- *Bill Paxton* (1955-2017), US actor seen in *The Terminator* (1984), *Weird Science* (1985), *Aliens* (1986), *Brain Dead* (1990), *Future Shock* (1994),

Thunderbirds (2004), *The Colony* (2013), *Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D.* (2013), *Edge of Tomorrow* (2014) and others, died on 26 February aged 61. (BBC)

- *Richard Purtill* (1931-2016), US author of books on C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien, the six Kaphtu Universe fantasies opening with *The Golden Gryphon Feather* (1979), and the sf *The Parallel Man* (1984), died on 4 December; he was 85. [F770]

- *Raymond Smullyan* (1919-2017), US mathematician, philosopher and author who like Martin Gardner framed mathematical and logical puzzles with fantastic themes and settings, died on 6 February aged 97. His non-puzzle books include *5000 B.C. and Other Philosophical Fantasies* (1983).

- *Jiro Taniguchi* (1947-2017), prolific Japanese manga writer/artist since 1970, whose 1998-1999 time-travel fantasy *A Distant Neighbourhood* was filmed in 2010, died on 11 February aged 69. PDF

- *Tzvetan Todorov* (1939-2017), Bulgarian-born literary critic long resident in France, whose 1970 study translated as *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to Literary Genre* (1973) has been influential, died on 7 February; he was 77. [PDF]

- *Nancy Willard* (1936-2017), prolific US author and 1982 Newbery Medal winner whose fantasies include the Anatole trilogy for children and, for adults, *Things Invisible to See* (1984; Crawford winner) and *Sister Water* (1993), died on 19 February; she was 80. [GVG]

- *Loren Wiseman* (1951-2017), US co-founder of Game Designers' Workshop and a developer of the sf role-playing games *Traveller*, *Space 1889* and *Twilight 2000*, died on 15 February aged 65. [MR]

The Weakest Link. Q: 'Which Elizabethan playwright had twins called Hamnet and Judith?' A: 'The only playwright I know with twins in it is Cinderella. So I'm going to say Cinderella.' (ITV, *Tipping Point*) [PE]

BSFA Awards Shortlist. NOVEL Chris Beckett, *Daughter of Eden*; Becky Chambers, *A Closed and Common Orbit*; Dave Hutchinson, *Europe in Winter*; Tricia Sullivan, *Occupy Me*; Nick Wood, *Azanian Bridges*.

- SHORT Malcolm Devlin, 'The End of Hope Street' (*Interzone* 266); Jaine Fenn, 'Liberty Bird' (*Now We Are Ten*); Una McCormack, 'Taking Flight' (*Crises and Conflicts*); Helen Oyeyemi, 'Presence' (*What is Not Yours is Not Yours*); Tade Thompson, 'The Apologists' (*Interzone* 266); Aliya Whiteley, 'The Arrival of Missives' (*Unsung Stories*)

- NON-FICTION Rob Hansen, *Then: Science Fiction Fandom in the UK 1930-*

1980; Erin Horáková, *Boucher, Backbone and Blake: The Legacy of Blakes Seven*; Anna McFarlane, 'Breaking the Cycle of the Golden Age: Jack Glass and Isaac Asimov's Foundation Trilogy' (*Adam Roberts: Critical Essays*); Paul Graham Raven, 'New Model Authors? Authority, Authordom, Anarchism and the Atomized Text in a Networked World' (*Ibid*); Geoff Ryman, '100 African Writers of SFF' (Tor.com); Ann & Jeff VanderMeer, Introduction to *The Big Book of Science Fiction*.

- ARTWORK (all covers) Juan Miguel Aguilera, *The 1000 Year Reich* by Ian Watson; Tara Bush, 'Transition' (*Black Static* 53); Suzanne Dean and Kai & Sunny, *The Sunlight Pilgrims* by Jenni Fagan; David A. Hardy, *Disturbed Universes* by David L. Clements; Sarah Anne Langton, *Central Station* by Lavie Tidhar; Chris Moore, *The Iron Tactician* by Alastair Reynolds.
- Detailed list with voting link at <http://www.bsfa.co.uk/bsfa-2016-awards-voting-form/>.

In Typo Veritas. *Knell of Doom Dept.* 'Let them know that their asses will be in the ringer if they do.' (Kate White, *Hush*, 2010) [PB]

Nebula Shortlist. NOVEL Charlie Jane Anders, *All the Birds in the Sky*; Mishell Baker, *Borderline*; N.K. Jemisin, *The Obelisk Gate*; Yoon Ha Lee, *Ninefox Gambit*; Nisi Shawl, *Everfair*.

- NOVELLA S.B. Divya, *Runtime*; Kij Johnson, *The Dream-Quest of Vellitt Boe*; Victor LaValle, *The Ballad of Black Tom*; Seanan McGuire, *Every Heart a Doorway*; John P. Murphy, 'The Liar'; Kai Ashante Wilson, *A Taste of Honey*.
- NOVELETTE William Ledbetter, 'The Long Fall Up' (*F&SF*); Sarah Pinsker, 'Sooner or Later Everything Falls Into the Sea' (*Lightspeed*); Jason Sanford, 'Blood Grains Speak Through Memories' (*Beneath Ceaseless Skies*); Bonnie Jo Stufflebeam's 'The Orangery' (*Beneath Ceaseless Skies*, replacing Cat Rambo's 'Red in Tooth and Cog' from *F&SF*); Fran Wilde, *The Jewel and Her Lapidary*; Alyssa Wong, 'You'll Surely Drown Here If You Stay' (*Uncanny*).
- SHORT Brooke Bolander, 'Our Talons Can Crush Galaxies' (*Uncanny*); Amal El-Mohtar, 'Seasons of Glass and Iron' (*The Starlit Wood*); Barbara Krasnoff, 'Sabbath Wine' (*Clockwork Phoenix* 5); Sam J. Miller, 'Things With Beards' (*Clarkesworld*); A. Merc Rustad, 'This Is Not a Wardrobe Door' (*Fireside*); Alyssa Wong, 'A Fist of Permutations in Lightning and Wildflowers' (Tor.com); Caroline M. Yoachim, 'Welcome to the Medical

Clinic at the Interplanetary Relay Station ...' (*Lightspeed*).

- BRADBURY (dramatic): *Arrival*, *Doctor Strange*, *Kubo and the Two Strings*, *Rogue One*, *Westworld*: 'The Bicameral Mind', *Zootopia*.
- NORTON (YA) Kelly Barnhill, *The Girl Who Drank the Moon*; Roshani Chokshi, *The Star-Touched Queen*; Frances Hardinge, *The Lie Tree*; David D. Levine, *Arabella of Mars*; Philip Reeve, *Railhead*; Lindsay Ribar, *Rocks Fall, Everyone Dies*; Delia Sherman, *The Evil Wizard Smallbone*.

Random Fandom. *Ted White*, on the verge of losing his home to the ever-huger property taxes of Falls Church, Virginia, launched a GoFundMe campaign which very soon (see www.gofundme.com/44r62-save-my-house) solved the immediate problem; he thanks all the fans and others who generously responded. Further support will be needed since these tax demands continue to arrive every six months.

Still More Awards. *Clarke*: submissions list revealed 14 February at www.clarkeaward.com/2017-submission-list/; shortlist 3 May.

- *Gemmell Awards*: longlists announced 17 February; voting in progress at www.gemmellawards.com with shortlists expected on 21 April.
- *Stoker* (horror) novel shortlist: Barbara Barnett, *The Apothecary's Curse*; Greg Chapman, *Hollow House*; Tom Deady, *Haven*; Michelle Garza & Melissa Lason, *Mayan Blue*; Stephanie Wytovich, *The Eighth*. For the rest see horror.org/2016-bram-stoker-awards-final-ballot/.

Groves of Academe. The Anglia Ruskin Centre for Science Fiction and Fantasy has been launched, with a website at csff-anglia.co.uk.

Magazine Scene. The long-running horror glossy *Fangoria* may never see another print edition, [says its editor](#) (or ex-editor since mid-December) Ken W. Hanley. Even the digital version is struggling.

The Dead Past. *40 Years Ago*: 'The fannish peer who's been turning up at the London One Tun meetings recently is [...] Jestyn Reginald Austen Plantagenet Philipps, Baron Strange Of Knokin, Baron Hungerford, Baron de Moleyns, and Viscount St Davids, Bart. That should put the St Fantony hoi-polloi in their place.' (Peter Roberts, [Checkpoint 80](#), March 1977)

- *20 Years Ago*: 'Jeremy Paxman to University Challenge teams (5 Mar): "Published in 1996, *The Unseen University Challenge* quizbook is based on the works of which author?" *Hopeful Irish Student* (Queen's, Belfast): "Er ... the Marquis de Sade?" Discworld quizbook author swoons, fulfilled at last.'

(*Ansible* 116, March 1997)

C.o.A. *Yvonne Rousseau*, 66a Royal Parade, Reservoir, Victoria 3073, Australia.

Fanfundery. *TAFF* voting has been extended from the former 4 March deadline to the end of Eastercon on 17 April. Some campaign links from candidates can be found at taff.org.uk/#Feb2017.

- *Last warning:* 2017 DUFF voting ends on 10 March; GUFF voting on 1 April.

Thog's Masterclass. *Facial Dept.* 'Her nose held the memory of Spanish conquistadors. Her skin was the color of leaves just starting to turn. And beneath her dark eyes were full lips that looked as if they'd never smiled.' (Weston Ochse, *Grunt Life*, 2014) [AK]

- *Dept of Inspiration.* 'An idea suddenly gurgled up in her mind.' (Kate White, *Hush*, 2010) [PB]

- *Chronoclasm Dept.* 'She was dressed in a clinging medieval tea gown ...' (Agatha Christie, 'At the Crossroads', 1926)

- *Dept of See-Through Opacity.* 'She wore something long, opaque and diaphanous in a vivid shade of lime green.' (Mike Ripley, *Mr Champion's Fault*, 2016) [CH]

- *Service with a Smile Dept.* 'His grin shot to my loins.' (Becky Masterman, *Rage Against the Dying*, 2013) [PB]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 10 March 2017: Gerry Webb talks to the Brum Group. 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre. £4 or £3 for members. Contact [bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk](mailto:bhamsfgroup@yahoo.co.uk). Future meetings/speakers: 7 April 2017 Dave Hutchinson; 12 May 2017 Adrian Tchaikovsky; 9 June 2017 Aliette de Bodard; 11 August 2017 Summer Social; 13 October 2017 Andy Sawyer.

- 15 March 2017: Stephen Gallagher in conversation with Stephen Laws, Northern Mining Institute, Neville Hall, Westgate Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 1SE. 7pm; tickets £3.

<http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/2864960>

• 1 April 2017: Steph Swainston, Reddit AMA ‘Ask Me Anything’ at Reddit Fantasy as below. 7am to midnight (GMT/UTC).

<https://www.reddit.com/r/Fantasy/>

Editorial. Another month with no new titles from Ansible Editions, doubtless to the relief of the sf world. Current titles and the backlist remain copiously available at the website, and I’ll also add the pre-order link for my coming NewCon Press collection:

<http://ae.ansible.uk/>

<http://www.newconpress.co.uk/info/book.asp?id=85>

Outraged Letters. *Steve Jones* (of the Birmingham SF Group) on Vicky Stock and [Peter Weston](#): ‘It was a terrible tragedy for the Brum Group to lose two on the same day. Vicky was as important for the later days of the Brum Group as Peter was for the beginning.’

• *Simon R. Green*: ‘I only met Peter a few times, but he was always very encouraging to me.’

• *Lloyd Penney*: ‘My condolences to you, and to all British fandom who saw Peter Weston as one of its brightest lights. He was one of the many I wanted to meet, but never did.’

Magazine Scene II. The 1990s UK sf-oriented magazine *Infinity* is to return on 27 April as a sister title to the horror organ *The Dark Side*. Like its sibling, it will be six-weekly. [SG]

Even Still Yet More Awards. Special marks for interminability to the Rhysling (SF poetry) longlist:

<http://www.sfpoetry.com/ra/rhyscand.html>

Thog’s Second Helping. *Was It Perhaps Circular?* ‘Madame Rosa’s voice dropped to a whisper. “I took Victor’s hand to read his palm. It was the life-line, Doctor ... I could see no end to it. They must be immortal, those Brains!”’ (Sidney J. Bounds, *The Robot Brains*, 1958) [AK]

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March 2017.

Ansible® 357, April 2017

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo:
Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or the secret of
tying an Instrumental Knot.

My Eastercon Schedule. NewCon Press is launching various new books at a party and signing at 6:30pm on Good Friday. These include the final collection of Langford columns from a certain glossy magazine, now titled *All Good Things: The Last SFX Visions*. I'm also representing Rob Hansen at the BSFA Awards, where his *Then* is a nonfiction finalist. Otherwise I'll just be wandering around failing to hear people as usual.

The Lure of Fantasy

Judy Blish would like her old sf friends to know: 'My Greek partner Takis Nikolaou who was in England with me for a bit died in November. We had been together since I moved here.' (2 March)

Pat Cadigan returned safely to London after a March US visit; unfortunately Michael Swanwick's Facebook post 'Pat Cadigan has left the continent. North Americans are all the poorer.' was misinterpreted by one fan as a death notice, and much online alarm ensued. Pat: 'News of my passing has been greatly exaggerated. Unless this is a reference to all the fibre I've been eating lately.' (15 March)

Judge Neil Gorsuch, grilled by a US Senate committee about his worthiness for the Supreme Court, was asked an easy one by Senator Ted Cruz: 'What is the answer to the question of life, the Universe, and everything?' He got it right. (21 March) [BH]

John Scalzi's new skiffy novel *The Collapsing Empire* (Tor, March) was waylaid by the famously Scalzi-obsessed Theodore 'Vox Day' Beale, whose Castalia House rushed out *The Corroding Empire* by 'Johan Kalsi' with a

very, very similar cover design. Imagine Beale's astonishment when Amazon decreed that his title, cover and author were 'misleading' and removed it from sale (at least temporarily; it came and went for a while). Cronies of a rabidly puppoid disposition complained this was unfair leftist censorship of a jolly amusing parody, an argument hardly supported by Beale's own assertion: 'This isn't a lame *Bored of the Rings*-style parody, it is, quite to the contrary, a legitimate *Foundation*-style novel that effectively demonstrates how hapless Tor's latest imitative mediocrity is by comparison.' [F770] A mediocrity so mediocre, it would seem, that someone hoped to grab a few dodgy sales by imitating it.

Jeff VanderMeer was dismayed to find that UK dance artist James Finnemore had not only based his production *Bloom* on the Area X trilogy (*Annihilation*, *Authority*, *Acceptance*) without permission or any attempt to acquire rights, but publicly raised money for *Bloom* and promoted it through Londondance.com on the strength of the VanderMeer/Area X connection. (*Ansible*'s first thought: "The title was the title of Wil McCarthy, but the spores were the spores of Jeff VanderMeer!") Lawyers were reluctantly invoked and the 28 March premiere of *Bloom* at The Point, Eastleigh, Hants, was cancelled.

Convergence

8-9 Apr • **Sci-Fi Scarborough** (multimedia), The Spa, Scarborough. Adult tickets £25, or £15 per day; under-17s £10, £5; under-5s free. See scifiscarborough.co.uk.

10 Apr • **David Brin**, Keynes Library, 43 Gordon Square, London, WC1H 0PD. 6:30-8:45pm. Free, but register: tinyurl.com/n38gkmj.

14-17 Apr • **Innominate** (Eastercon), NEC, Birmingham. £80 reg (£90 at door); YA/concessions £55 (£60); under-16s £20 (£25); under-6s £1 (£5). Adult day rates £20 Fri, £30 Sat or Sun, £10 Mon. *Advance booking closes on 7 April*. See www.eastercon2017.uk for more.

20-23 Apr • **Dead by Dawn** (horror film festival), Filmhouse Cinema One, 88 Lothian Rd, Edinburgh, EH3 9BZ. £75. Box office 0131 228 2688. Online booking via www.deadbydawn.co.uk.

26 Apr • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. With Nik Abnett. Free.

27 Apr - 6 May • **Sci-Fi London** (film festival), various London venues. For more details see sci-fi-london.com/festival/2017.

27 Apr • **Tolkien Lecture**: Susan Cooper. Pichette Auditorium, Pembroke College, Oxford. 6:30pm. Free; register via tolkienlecture.org.

29-30 Apr • **EM-Con** (media), Motorpoint Arena, Nottingham. Labyrinthine tickets/extras pricing at www.em-con.co.uk.

29 Apr • **Supernova** (sf film festival), Odeon Printworks, Manchester. Further details at grimmfest.com/grimmupnorth/supernova/.

2 May • **Sci-Fi London Pub Quiz**, Juju's Bar and Stage, 15 Hanbury St, E1 6QR. 7pm-10pm. £30/team of 6. See tinyurl.com/hqvovd9.

15 Jun • **The Explorers' Club** (panel linked to Into the Unknown exhibition), Frobisher Auditorium 1, Barbican, London. With Stephen Baxter, Adam Roberts. 7:30pm. Tickets £25. Further panels (same venue, time, cost) 29 June, 13 July, 27 July. See tinyurl.com/lg2qmbd.

16-18 Jun • **U-Con** (Eurocon), Fritz-Henssler-Haus, Dortmund, Germany. €40 reg, *rising on 16 April*. See www.dortmund-in-2017.com.

24-25 Jun • **Lavecon** (sf/fantasy/gaming), Sedgebrook Hall Hotel, Northants. Many ticket options at www.hwsevents.co.uk/shop-1.

2 Jul • **Tolkien Society Seminar**, Hilton Hotel, Leeds, LS1 4BX. £30 (members £25). See www.tolkiensociety.org/events/seminar-2017/.

25-29 Aug • **Frightfest** (horror film festival), Cineworld Leicester Square, London. Tickets at www.frightfest.co.uk from 1 July.

16 Sep • **Organic Systems: Environments, Bodies and Cultures in SF** (conference), Keynes Library, 43 Gordon Square, London, WC1H 0PD. Call for papers: londonsfsymposium at gmail com by 31 May. See tinyurl.com/mte628u (Facebook login required, unfortunately).

29 Sep - 1 Oct • **Fantasycon**, Bull Hotel, Peterborough. Many registration and booking options at www.hwsevents.co.uk/shop-2.

30 Sep • **Super Sci-Fi Festival**, Doncaster town centre. Free, with dealer

stalls. See www.digi-fest.co.uk/dssf2017.

6-9 Oct • **Grimmfest** (horror/cult film festival), Odeon Printworks, Manchester. Ticket prices long awaited at grimmfest.com.

20-22 Oct • **Celluloid Screams** (horror film festival), Showroom Cinema, Sheffield. See celluloidscreams.co.uk. 0114 275 7727.

20 Oct • **Out of This World**, Sheffield city centre. Free, with dealer stalls. See www.digi-fest.co.uk/ootw-trader-tables.

4-6 Nov • **Armadacon 29**, Future Inns, Plymouth. £35 reg; day £20 (concessions £30 and £15). Contact Moor Cottage, Cardinham, Bodmin, Cornwall, PL30 4BR; or see www.armadacon.org.

10-12 Nov • **Novacon 47**, Park Inn, Nottingham. £48 reg, rising to £50 after Easter; under-17s £12; under-13s free. Contact 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ. PayPal registration at www.novacon.org.uk.

5 Feb 2018 • **Sci-Feb** (media), Humber Royal Hotel, Little Coates Road, Grimsby. £4 reg. See www.daydreamevents.uk/sci--feb.html.

30 Mar - 2 Apr 2018 • **Follycon** (Eastercon), Majestic Hotel, Harrogate. £60 reg, rising to £70 on 1 May; £45 YA/unwaged; £30 child (5-17)/supp; under-5s free. Cheques to Eastercon 2018 c/o 19 Uphall Rd, Cambridge, CB3 1HX. Credit cards (*preferred*) via www.follycon.org.uk.

22-24 Feb 2019 • **Redemption** (multimedia), Royal Victoria Hotel, Sheffield. £55 reg; concessions £35; under-18s £25; under-3s free. Online registration and day rates at www.redemption-convention.org.uk.

Rumblings. *Worldcon 75* (Helsinki, August) tweeted: 'Looks like we have the second highest participation ever in Hugo nominations!' The record is currently held by the 2016 Worldcon, with 4032 ballots.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. A party at the RSA cybersecurity conference in San Francisco: 'Instead of bringing out go-go dancers, clearly inappropriate in an industry with a sexism problem, two yellow, eight-foot Transformers appeared to get the party started. The pair robot-danced, bent down for selfies

with all who were up for them, and elicited much excitement from a geeky crowd surely more comfortable with nights in watching sci-fi.’ (Hannah Kuchler, *Financial Times*, 25 February) [MMW]

Awards. *Compton Crook* (first sf/f/h novel): Yoon Ha Lee, *Ninefox Gambit*; David D. Levine, *Arabella of Mars*; Kathy MacMillan, *Sword and Verse*; Sylvain Neuvel, *Sleeping Giants*; Ada Palmer, *Too Like the Lightning*; T.C. Weber, *Sleep State Interrupt*.

- *Horror Writers Association*: SPECIALTY PRESS AWARD Omnium Gatherum. LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT Dennis Etchison and Thomas F. Monteleone.
- *IAFA Distinguished Scholarship*: Edward James.
- *James Tiptree Jr*: Anna-Marie McLemore, *When the Moon Was Ours*.
- *Prometheus* (libertarian) shortlist: Ken MacLeod, *The Corporation Wars: Dissidence*; Ken MacLeod, *The Corporation Wars: Insurgence*; Lionel Shriver, *The Mandibles: A Family, 2029-2047*; Johanna Sinisalo, *The Core of the Sun* (trans Lola Rogers); L. Neil Smith, *Blade of p’Na*.
- *SFPA Grand Master* shortlist: Ruth Berman, Terry A. Garey, David C. Kopaska-Merkel, Ann K. Schwader.

Mysteries of Geography. A connoisseur of Bookscan statistics reports another year in which most copies (4800 or so) of the *Writers of the Future* anthology sold ‘next door’ to major Scientology headquarters in Florida and California. Outside these hotspots of enthusiasm, it seems, there were barely 500 sales. Whatever can this mean?

As Others See Us II. ‘Imaginative writers should make more frequent ventures into the bounds of science (I don’t mean the fantastic fake science of science fiction.)’ (Robert O’Brien, ‘Time To Revisit The Two Cultures’, *Standpoint*, March 2017) [MMW]

R.I.P. *John Calnan* (1932-2016), US comics artist who was with DC c1967-1982 and drew Batman, Metamorpho, Superman and Wonder Woman, died on 27 December aged 84. [PDF]

- *Gino D’Achille* (1935-2017), Italian-born artist and illustrator best known in sf for his 1970s/1980s Ballantine, DAW and Granada/Grafton paperback covers – in particular Ballantine’s 11-volume set of Edgar Rice Burroughs’s *Barsoom* novels that join into a Martian panorama also issued as a poster – died on 10 February aged 81. [RR]
- *Thomas Endrey* (1940-2017), Hungarian-born US fan and convention-goer

who was assistant editor of *Science Fiction Chronicle* in the late 1990s, died in mid-February; he was 77. [AIP]

- *John Forgeham* (1941-2017), UK actor best remembered for *Crossroads*, whose genre credits include *The Stone Tape* (1972), *Sheena* (1984) and *Cold Lazarus* (1996), died on 10 March aged 75. [SG]
- *Jack H. Harris* (1918-2017), US producer of *The Blob* (1958), its sequel *Beware! The Blob* (1972) and the 1988 remake, died on 14 March aged 98. Further credits include *Dinosaurus!* (1960), *Schlock* (1973) and *Dark Star* (1974). [PDF]
- *Tony Haygarth* (1945-2017), UK actor whose genre credits include *Dracula* (1979), *Kinvig* (1981), *T-Bag Bounces Back* (1987), *The Borrowers* (1992), *The Return of the Borrowers* (1993), *Chicken Run* (2000) and *Ghostboat* (2006), died on 10 March; he was 72.
- *Dave Hunt* (1942-2017), US comics artist with Marvel 1972-1978 (*Captain America*, *Fantastic Four*, *Spider-Man* etc), DC from 1978 (*Superboy*, *Wonder Woman* etc) and Disney from 1991 (*Darkwing Duck*, *The Little Mermaid* etc), died on 5 March aged 74. [PDF]
- *Jay Lynch* (1945-2017), US comics artist/writer who was important in 1960s/1970s underground comics and collaborated with Frank Cammuso on the children's graphic fantasies *Otto's Orange Day* (2013) and *Otto's Backwards Day* (2013), died on 5 March aged 72. [AIP]
- *Lawrence Montaigne* (1931-2017), US actor seen in 1960s episodes of *Batman*, *The Invaders*, *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.* and *Star Trek*, and in the films *The Power* (1968) and *Escape to Witch Mountain* (1975), died on 17 March aged 86. [SFS]
- *Robert Neagle*, US convention fan and Rebel Award winner who chaired Crescent City Con in New Orleans for its entire 1985-2005 run, died on 22 March; he was 61. [GL]
- *John Richard Newell Jr* (1935-2017), US genre book-dealer as 'Klon' of Klon's Interplanetary Books – by mail order and at many sf/fantasy conventions – died on 25 February aged 81. [AIP]
- *Mervyn 'Skip' Williamson* (1944-2017), US underground cartoonist who lavishly illustrated Arthur C. Clarke's silly 1972 story 'When the Twerms Came' for *Playboy*, died on 16 March; he was 72. [AIP]
- *Bernie Wrightson* (1948-2017), award-winning comics artist specializing in horror, who worked for Marvel, DC (where he famously co-created Swamp Thing) and Warren (adapting Lovecraft, Poe, and others), died on 19 March

aged 68. [A-TC]

• *Hugh Zachary* (1928-2016), best known in sf for *The Book of Rack the Healer* (1973) and other novels as by Zach Hughes, died on 5 September 2016 aged 88. [WC] Further sf includes the 1980s series ‘America 2040’ as by Evan Innes, and erotica under various names.

As Others See Us III. On BBC2’s *Incredible Medicine – Dr Weston’s Casebook*: ‘While science-fiction tells stories of oddbods, freaks and mutants being hidden away to avoid investigation by boffins – real-life scientists ask people with unusual attributes if they can harness their powers for good’ (*Sunday Times* tv guide, 26 February) [P&EK]

Court Circular. Gary Goldman, screenwriter of *Total Recall*, sued Disney in March for (he claims) stealing key features of its animated *Zootopia* from a project he’d submitted in 2000 and 2009 only to be rejected. Alleged thefts include themes, characters, dialogue and even the film title. Of course Disney calls this ‘an unprincipled attempt to lay claim to a successful film he didn’t create’. (*Variety*, 21 March)

Awards II. The Kitschies were not presented in 2016 ‘due to job and sponsorship changes’ but will return this year with Blackwell’s Books as the main sponsor. More to come at www.thekitschies.com.

By Any Other Name. According to [its 21 March announcement](#), the Science Fiction Poetry Association ‘will henceforth and forevermore (at least until the next member vote) be known as: The Science Fiction and Fantasy Poetry Association.’ [L] In homage to the invisible second F in SFWA (see below), the short form will continue to be SFPA.

Outraged Letters. *Curt Phillips* is aiding the emergency fund to cover Ted White’s property taxes (see [A356](#)) with a benefit sale of ‘Ted’s massive collection of science fiction magazines which covers almost the entire pulp era’. These are now being catalogued. Interested collectors should contact Curt via email: [Absarka_prime](mailto:Absarka_prime@comcast.net) at comcast dot net.

The Doctor Is Everywhere. Among the revelations in a mass of CIA documents released by Wikileaks in March is that one item of agency malware designed to infect and bug Macintosh firmware has the codename Sonic Screwdriver. (*Naked Security*, 24 March) [DKMK]

Magazine Scene. Kristine Kathryn Rusch and Dean Wesley Smith hope to

relaunch *Pulphouse: A Fiction Magazine* (last seen 1996) in January 2018. Fundraising will begin later this year. [SFS]

- *Samovar*, under the aegis of *Strange Horizons*, is a new quarterly online magazine of sf and fantasy in translation. See samovar.strangehorizons.com.

Random Fandom. *Mike Glycer* of *File 770* disambiguates: ‘The Michael Glycer who’s on Twitter is not me. I don’t have a Twitter account because occasionally I’d fly off the handle and tweet something dumb and there it would be for the rest of time.’ [F770]

The Dead Past. *40 Years Ago*, Peter Roberts pondered ‘a daft list of questions from an egregious and haphazard bookshop in London which labours under the name of the “Einstein Intersection” (or “Intersexion” – depending on which of their handouts you’re reading). They’re apparently looking for serious answers to such eternal queries as this: *Do you have any specific requests with regard to stocking items such as particular authors?* (Can I have half a pound of Heinlein, please, and some Vargo Statten for the dog) ...’ ([Checkpoint 81](#), April 1977)

- *30 Years Ago* we reported ‘a fecund event: Conception, held in Leeds on 13-15 Feb to celebrate fifty fertile years of seminal SF cons. Little tadpole-like things writhed all over the convention badges (to Hazel’s vast embarrassment), and even escaped to work their evil way with the inexplicable bubbles of the Contrivance ’89 bid posters. The Queens Hotel threw itself into the yeasty spirit of the occasion, with a Saturday notice-board offering successive delights in various suites: ENGAGEMENT PARTY. WEDDING RECEPTION. CONCEPTION.’ ([Ansible 49](#), April 1987)

- *20 Years Ago*: ‘Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America decree – following a referendum – that the organization’s initials are not the spluttery SFFWA but SFWA.’ (*Ansible* 117, April 1997)

Disclaimer. US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, an executive producer of *The Lego Batman Movie* financed by his company, explained federal ethics rules to an interviewer: ‘I’m not allowed to promote anything that I’m involved in [...] I am not promoting any product. But you should send all your kids to *Lego Batman*.’ ([CNN](#), 28 March) [BH]

Fanfundery. *GUFF*: See ozfanfunds.com/?page_id=63 for extended voting deadline (17 April) and revised candidate list: Donna Maree Hanson, Sam Hawke, Belle McQuattie and Alexandra Pierce (formerly standing with Alisa

Krasnostein, who has dropped out).

- **TAFF**: the extended voting deadline is the same as GUFF's: 17 April. See also taff.org.uk. Jacq Monahan published her TAFF trip report, *Same Planet Different World*, earning the fund a \$500 bounty from SCIFI (Southern California Institute for Fan Interests). Well done!
- **DUFF**: Paul Weimer, the only contender for the 2017 southbound trip, duly won with 37 votes; Hold Over Funds had two votes and No Preference one.

Thog's Masterclass. *Small Craft Warning Dept.* 'McWhirter tore his eyes away from her mouth with a visible tug.' (Larry Niven & Steven Barnes, *Dream Park*, 1981) [MM]

- *Dept of Over-Exertion.* 'Louis attacked the door with all the barbaric savagery of a pagan neo-goth prying jeweled eyes out of a statue of Saint Kurzweil.' ('Johan Kalsi', *The Corroding Empire*, 2017) [F770]
 - *Neat Tricks.* 'The sinister doctor pointed a long emasculated finger ...' (Lionel Fanthorpe as Trebor Thorpe, 'Voodoo Hell Drums', *Supernatural Stories* 39, 1961) 'I am among the last to retire, brushing my teeth with one drooping eyelid.' (Tim Dowling, *The Guardian*, 4 March 2017) [DA]
 - *Transfusion Dept.* 'The blood that had abandoned her countenance rushed into his.' (Elizabeth Peters, *The Lion in the Valley*, 1986)
 - *Dept of My Vegetable Love Should Grow.* 'She wanted to wrap her legs around him the way a tree wraps itself around a mountain' (Jan Stacy, *Bodysmasher*, 1988)
-

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 1 April 2017: Steph Swainston, Reddit AMA 'Ask Me Anything' at Reddit Fantasy as below. 7am to midnight (GMT/UTC).
<https://www.reddit.com/r/Fantasy/>
- 7 April 2017: Dave Hutchinson talks to the Brum Group. 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre. £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future meetings/speakers: 12 May 2017 Adrian Tchaikovsky; 9 June 2017 Aliette de Bodard; 14 July 2017 John Jarrold; 11 August 2017 Summer Social; 8 September 2017 Jackie Burns; 13 October 2017 Andy Sawyer; 3 November 2017 Peter F. Hamilton.

Editorial. NewCon Press tells me that the limited-edition hardback of *All Good Things: The Last SFX Visions* – with Andy Watt’s illustrations in colour – is selling quite fast. I hope there will be spare copies at Innominate, where I’ll be signing the entire print run; but anyone really keen on this edition is advised to pre-order via the link below. I don’t expect there to be any shortage of the black-and-white-illustrated trade paperback.

• Rob Hansen’s *Then* remains available at ae.ansible.uk; Ansible Editions won’t have a dealer table at Innominate, but I could bring a very few copies for private sale, by request only. Email me a.s.a.p. if interested.

<http://www.newconpress.co.uk/info/book.asp?id=85>

Outraged Letters II. *Brian Aldiss* sent an enthusiastic postcard about Tom Shippey’s eulogy for Peter Weston in [Ansible 355½](#), but it was addressed to Tom and presumably not meant for publication.

This Just In. 23 July 2017, *Star Trek: The Ultimate Voyage* (orchestra and film), Royal Festival Hall, London. 2:30pm for 3pm and 6:30pm for 7pm. Tickets from £25. See ...

<http://senbla.com/concerts/star-trek-ultimate-voyage/>

Thog’s Second Helping. *Continuity Dept: Page 171.* ““A one-month-old child?” he repeated carefully. “A baby?” / “That’s the layman’s term for them, yes,” Gyasi said dryly. “He’s the son of two Institute employees – they’ve got an apartment on the grounds.”” *Same Baby, Page 247.* ‘The baby was asleep, her eyes pinched shut against the gentle night-light in the room, a delicate pattern of veins crisscrossing her eyelids.’ Her name is Angelica. (Timothy Zahn, *Angelmass*, 2001) [AL]

Tailpiece. *The Plain People of Fandom: Why publish the April issue on 30 March? Myself:* To get to the other side. That is, real-life complications would otherwise postpone it to 3 April, and I’d rather not wait for *Ansible* HQ to be besieged by a mob of outraged readers brandishing torches and pitchforks. *The Plain People of Fandom: A likely story.*

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Corby (Birmingham SF Group), SCIS/Prophecy, Alan Stewart (Australia). 30
March 2017.

Ansible® 358, May 2017

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE, queens, or emperors with the double whorl.

The Masks of Time

Wolf Erlbruch, German illustrator and author, won Sweden's 5-million-krona Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award for children's literature.

Peter Logan, a Glasgow sf author who had not previously crossed my radar (his novel appeared in 2015), was found guilty in March of multiple rapes of an unnamed mother and daughter, and sentenced in April to 11 years in prison. ([BBC, 3 March](#) & [11 April](#)) [CMJ]

Adam Roberts, on a mission from Thog, read Laurence James's *Simon Rack: New Life For Old* (1975) and 'was struck by James's fondness for the fruitier variety of simile': 'Bogie laughed ... like thick oil trickling down a slimy sump.' 'Abraham Razan's voice was unbelievably rich and soft ... like rubbing the inside of a woman's thigh with a piece of black velvet.' 'He caressed her gently, like trying to pick a butterfly off a meadow flower.' 'It felt as though his genitals had been sand-blasted and then caught in a cross between a vacuum pump and a vice.' 'Wallace turned his head on his thin neck like a trapped rat.' 'Corman chuckled, a jolly sound like bubbles being blown through honey.'

Ardian Syaf, Indonesian freelance artist working for Marvel Comics on *X-Men Gold*, caused outrage with buried references to a Koran verse often read as anti-Christian and anti-semitic (and invoked in recent legal/political controversy in his homeland). Marvel made 'nothing to do with us' noises and very soon fired the artist. ([BBC](#) & [Paste](#), 11 April) [CMJ] Syaf, who had worked on two Hugo-shortlisted comics, issued a kind of apology which did not save his career – because, he said, 'Marvel is owned by Disney. When

Jews are offended, there is no mercy.' [[Coconuts Jakarta](#), 12 April]

Contrafissura

23 May • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. Speaker still TBA. Free.

27-28 May • **Birmingham FearFest** (horror), Gunmakers Arms, Bath St, Birmingham. More at www.birmingham-fearfest.co.uk.

2 Jun - 1 Sep • **Into the Unknown: A Journey through Science Fiction** (exhibition), Barbican, London. See www.barbican.org.uk.

3 Jun • **Wonderlands: UK Graphic Novel Expo**. Cityspace Centre, Chester Rd, Sunderland. 10am-6pm. Free. See wonderlands.org.uk.

9-11 Jun • **Lazlar Lyricon 3** (*Hitch-Hiker*), Quality Hotel, Stoke-on-Trent. £60 reg (ZZ9 members £55), 16-25s £30 (ZZ9 £25), 10-15s £10*, under-10s free* (*with adult). See lazlarlyricon3.com.

16-18 Jun • **U-Con** (Eurocon), Fritz-Henssler-Haus, Dortmund, Germany. Now €45 reg. See www.dortmund-in-2017.com.

17 Jun • **BSFA/SF Foundation** mini-con & AGMs, Lecture Theatre 1, Blackett Laboratory, Imperial College, London, SW7 2AZ. GoH Anne Charnock, Stephanie Saulter. 9:30am-4:30pm. Free; all welcome.

30 Jun - 2 Jul • **SFF Masterclass in SF Criticism**, Royal Observatory, Greenwich. £225 (postgrads £175). Deadline was 24 April but there may still be places: see www.sf-foundation.org/node/228.

6 Jul • **Last and First Men** (film, narration, live orchestra), Bridgewater Hall, Manchester. 7:30pm. Tickets from £15. Box office 0161 907 9000; see mif.co.uk/mif17-events/last-and-first-men/.

23 Jul • **Star Trek: The Ultimate Voyage** (orchestra and film), Royal Festival Hall, London. 2:30pm for 3pm and 6:30pm for 7pm. Tickets from £25. See senbla.com/concerts/star-trek-ultimate-voyage/.

9-13 Aug • **Worldcon 75** (Worldcon), Helsinki, Finland, added Ian Stewart as Science Guest. €170 reg; see www.worldcon.fi for more.

7-8 Oct • **SFW in the City** (Sci-Fi Weekender spinoff), O₂ Academy, Sheffield. Various priced: see www.sfwinthecity.com.

28 Oct • **BristolCon**, Hilton Doubletree Hotel, Bristol. £20 reg/£15 concessions), *rising to £25/£20 on 1 June*; £30/£25 at the door. Cheques to Flat 11, Beaufort Ct Flats, 1 Beaufort St (off Stapleton Rd), Easton, Bristol, BS5 0SQ. PayPal registration at www.bristolcon.org.

10-12 Nov • **Novacon 47**, Park Inn, Nottingham. *Now £50 reg*; under-17s £12; under-13s free. Contact 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ. PayPal registration at www.novacon.org.uk.

30 Mar - 2 Apr 2018 • **Follycon** (Eastercon), Majestic Hotel, Harrogate. £70 reg; £45 YA/unwaged; £30 child (5-17) and supp; under-5s free. Cheques to Eastercon 2018 c/o 19 Uphall Rd, Cambridge, CB3 1HX. Credit cards (*preferred*) via www.follycon.org.uk.

19-22 Apr 2019 • **Ytterbium** (Eastercon), Park Inn, London Heathrow. GoH Frances Hardinge, Sydney Padua, John Scalzi, DC. *Now £60 reg*; £30 concessions; £25 under-18s; £5 infants under 5; £20 supporting. Online registration at <http://ytterbium.org.uk/>.

Infinitely Improbable

Hugo Novel Shortlist. Charlie Jane Anders, *All the Birds in the Sky*; Becky Chambers, *A Closed and Common Orbit*; Cixin Liu, *Death's End* (translated by Ken Liu); Yoon Ha Lee, *Ninefox Gambit*; N.K. Jemisin, *The Obelisk Gate*; Ada Palmer, *Too Like the Lightning*. Now that there are 18 categories each having six rather than the traditional five finalists, this is the most voluminous Hugo ballot ever, with 108 items in all. Dramatic Presentation Long Form is compact enough to fit in here – *Arrival*, *Deadpool*, *Ghostbusters*, *Hidden Figures*, *Rogue One* and *Stranger Things* (season 1) – but for the full story please see the official page at www.worldcon.fi/wsfs/hugo-finalists/. Of the 2,464 valid Hugo nominating ballots (the second-highest total ever), just six were in paper form – perhaps not so much a sign of the times as a consequence of the Helsinki Worldcon being very slow to mail out paper ballots.

As Others Saw Us. ‘One of the most extraordinary and significant things

about science fiction is its almost total lack of sex, even of fake sex – except, of course, in the “mad scientist’s” operating chambers particularly prominent in the movie versions [...] The reason for this is neither due to oversight nor external censorship, but the fact that the largest percentage of the *echt*-pulp literature is composed of adolescent boys (who continue reading it even after they are grown up), who are terrified of women, sex, and pubic hair.’ (G. Legman, *The Horn Book: Studies in Erotic Folklore and Bibliography*, 1964) [SM via MMW]

Awards. *Bailey’s Women’s Prize for Fiction*: the shortlist includes Naomi Alderman’s sf novel *The Power*.

- *BSFA*: NOVEL Dave Hutchinson, *Europe in Winter*. SHORT Jaine Fenn, ‘Liberty Bird’ (*Now We Are Ten*). NONFICTION Geoff Ryman, ‘100 African Writers of SFF’ (Tor.com). ARTWORK Sarah Anne Langton, cover for *Central Station* by Lavie Tidhar (Tachyon).
- *Doc Weir* (unsung heroes of fandom): Serena Culfeather and John Wilson.
- [FAAn Awards](#) (fanzine activity). ARTIST Steve Stiles. COVER Harry Bell for *Beam 10*. GENZINE *Banana Wings*. LETTERHACK Paul Skelton. PERZINE *The White Notebooks*. SPECIAL ISSUE [Then: Science Fiction Fandom in the UK 1930-1980](#) (book version). WRITER Andy Hooper. WEBSITE [eFanzines.com](#).
- *Olivier Awards* (London theatre): *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* won in nine categories including best play, the previous record being seven; the musical *Groundhog Day* won two including best musical.
- *Philip K. Dick*: Claudia Casper, *The Mercy Journals*.
- *Pulitzer Prize* for fiction: Colson Whitehead, *The Underground Railroad*.
- *Stoker* (horror) novel categories: NOVEL John Langan, *The Fisherman*. DEBUT Tom Deady, *Haven*. YA Maria Alexander, *Snowed*. GRAPHIC James Chambers, *Kolchak the Night Stalker: The Forgotten Lore of Edgar Allan Poe*. See [horror.org](#) for the rest.

As Others Excuse Us. ‘None of which, I hasten to add, is a reason to skip *Arrival*. It may be weaker in the resolution than the setup, but that is an inbuilt hazard of science fiction ...’ (Review by Anthony Lane, *The New Yorker*, 14 November) [MMW]

R.I.P. *Michael Ballhaus* (1935-2017), German cinematographer whose films include *Bram Stoker’s Dracula* (1992), *Wild Wild West* (1999) and *What Planet Are You From?* (2000), died on 12 April aged 81. [AIP]

- *Leo Baxendale* (1930-2017), UK children’s comics creator for D.C.

Thomson (*Minnie the Minx*, *The Bash Street Kids*) and others, died on 23 April aged 86. [DP] In 1964 Odhams Press made him central to the new *Wham!*, where such strips as *Eagle-Eye: Junior Spy* (introducing arch-villain Grimly Feendish) used variously bizarre sf elements.

- *Adrian Booth* (1917-2017), US actress who as Lorna Gray was in *The Man They Could Not Hang* (1939) and such Republic serials as *Captain America* (1944), with later credits as Booth in *Valley of the Zombies* (1946) and others, died on 30 April; she was 99. [PDF]

- *Chelsea Brown* (1947-2017), US *Laugh-In* actress seen in *The Thing with Two Heads* (1972) and *The Return of Captain Invincible* (1983), died on 27 March; she was 69. [AIP]

- *Kathleen Crowley* (1929-2017), US actress with early credits in the sf/horror B-movies *Target Earth* (1954), *The Flame Barrier* (1958) and *Curse of the Undead* (1959), died on 23 April aged 87. [F770]

- *Grania Davis* (1943-2017), US author and editor who devoted great effort to the memory of her former husband Avram Davidson – with whom she wrote *Marco Polo and the Sleeping Beauty* (1987) – died on 28 April aged 73. She completed Davidson's *The Boss in the Wall* (1998) and co-edited *The Avram Davidson Treasury* (1998), plus other notable AD collections.

- *Jonathan Demme* (1944-2017), US film-maker who directed *The Silence of the Lambs* (1991) and the remade *The Manchurian Candidate* (2004), died on 26 April aged 73.

- *Martin Greim*, US comics fan and con-runner whose professional credits include a Donald Duck storyline, died on 15 April aged 74. [PDF]

- *Peter Hansen* (1921-2017), US actor who starred in *When Worlds Collide* (1951) and was in several episodes of *Science Fiction Theatre* (1955-1957 tv), died on 9 April aged 95. A later genre role was in *Dragonfly* (2002). [AIP]

- *Lars Erik Helin* (1937-2017), long-time Swedish fan who was the second member – after its founder – of the Gothenburg Club Cosmos in 1954 and co-published the first true Swedish fanzine (*Cosmos News*, later *Cosmos Bulletin*) in July that year, died on 7 February aged 79. [J-HH] [*Later: it turns out that there is disagreement about “the first true Swedish fanzine”. Ahrvid Engholm argues vigorously for an earlier candidate, a 1952 school magazine which John-Henri Holmberg thinks of as a proto-fanzine since its producers made no contact with the wider world of fandom.*]

- *William Hjortsberg* (1941-2017) US screenwriter and author of the sf *Gray*

Matters (1971) and the supernatural-horror *Falling Angel* (1978, filmed 1987 as *Angel Heart* with his own script), died on 22 April aged 76. [PDF]

- *Dahlov Ipcar* (1917-2017), US illustrator and author of three fantasy novels beginning with *The Warlock of Night* (1969), died on 10 February; she was 99.

- *Clifton James* (1920-2017) US actor in *The Werewolf of Washington* (1973) and – as Sheriff J.W. Pepper – two James Bond films, died on 15 April aged 96. [MMW]

- *Carolyn Kelly*, US cartoonist who for a short time drew her father Walt Kelly's creation *Pogo* and worked on the four volumes to date of the definitive reprint *The Complete Pogo*, died on 9 April. [PDF]

- *Waldemar Kuming* (1924-2017), pioneering German fan, publisher and convention-goer honoured with the 1993 Kurd Lasswitz Award and the 2005 Worldcon's Big Heart Award, died on 5 April; he was 92. His long-running fanzine *Munich Round Up* (with Walter Reinicke until the latter's death in 1981) typically featured translations into German, an English-language summary for monoglots, and his famous multi-page photocollages of fans at conventions. He was a 1984 UK Eastercon/Eurocon guest of honour. [IN]

- *Michael (Mike) Levy* (1950-2017), US academic, fan and critic who was an editor of *Extrapolation* from 2006 and wrote *Children's Fantasy Literature: An Introduction* (2016) with Farah Mendlesohn, died on 3 April aged 66; he had entered a hospice in late March. [FM]

- *George McGinnis* (?1931-2017), Disney 'imagineer' (the last to be personally hired by Walt Disney) whose many designs for Disneyland and Walt Disney World included the Space Mountain, the EPCOT Horizons Pavilion, monorails and much other transportation, died on 7 April aged 87. [PDF]

- *Patricia C. McKissack* (1944-2017), US children's author whose books include *The Dark-Thirty: Southern Tales of the Supernatural* (1992) and the 2010-2012 sf trilogy *The Clone Codes* (with John and Fredrick L. McKissack), died on 7 April aged 72. [PDF]

- *V.E. Mitchell* (Victoria Estelle Mitchell Gustafson, 1954-2017), US author of four novels set in the *Star Trek* universe – beginning with *Enemy Unseen* (1990) – died on 13 April aged 62. [SFS]

- *Erin Moran* (1960-2017), US actress seen in *Galaxy of Terror* (1981) and *Not Another B Movie* (2010), died on 22 April aged 56. [SG]

- *Charlie Murphy* (1959-2017), US actor, comedian and writer seen in *Night*

at the Museum (2006), *Unearthed* (2007) and *Frankenhood* (2009), died on 12 April; he was 57. [PDF]

- *Tim Pigott-Smith* (1946-2017), UK actor whose credits include *Doctor Who* (1971, 1976), *V for Vendetta* (2005) and *Alice in Wonderland* (2010), died on 7 April; he was 70.

- *Don Rickles* (1926-2017), US actor and tv personality who appeared in *X: The Man with the X-Ray Eyes* (1963), guested in *The Addams Family* (1964) and other genre tv series, and had voice roles in *Toy Story 2* (1999 as Mr Potato Head; also sequels) and *Zookeeper* (2011), died on 6 April at the age of 90.

- *Roger C. Schlobin* (1944-2017), US academic critic whose first and last books were *A Research Guide to Science Fiction Studies* (1977 with L.W. Currey and Marshall B. Tymn) and *Phantasmagoria: Collected Essays on the Nature of Fantasy and Horror Literature* (2013), died on 25 April; he was 72. [JC]

- *Norio Shioyama* (1940-2017), Japanese illustrator involved with anime since the 1960s and perhaps best known for creating *Armoured Trooper VOTOMS* in 1983, died with his wife in a 12 April house fire. [JonC]

- *Trish Vrandenburg* (1946-2017), US author whose 2001 play *Surviving Grace* centres on a wonder drug that reverses the effects of Alzheimer's (though only temporarily), died on 17 April aged 70. [MMW]

Malgorithms. A recent news page at Wn.com headlined 'Second Doctor Arrested in US Female Genital Mutilation Case' was [helpfully illustrated](#) with a stock photo of Patrick Troughton (1920-1987). [RR]

Magazine Scene. Niall Harrison has stepped down as editor-in-chief of *Strange Horizons*, and is replaced by former associate editors Jane Crowley and Kate Dollarhyde. ([Strangehorizons.com](#), 3 April)

Follow the Money. *J.R.R. Tolkien*, a 1,480-page reprint anthology of critical assessments published by Routledge in April, will set you back \$1,485.

[MJW] Douglas A. Anderson explains the rationale for this 50-copy edition – 'Basically, they are out to soak money out of 50 large libraries.' – and is annoyed that he appears in the contents list although neither he nor his publishers were approached for permission (since explicitly refused). 'As far as I can tell, this is an academic publishing scam of the worst type, and it should be called out for what it is.' [F770]

Random Fandom. *The James White Award*, for an unpublished story by a non-pro author, was delayed this year but should be announced by 19 May. See www.jameswhiteaward.com/archives/3677.

- *Steve Stiles* didn't quite make the original Hugo shortlist for Best Fan Artist but moved up as a substitute when Alex Garner (a Rabid Puppies slate choice through no fault of his own) declared that his entire 2016 output had been 'professional and not fan art'. [W75]

The Dead Past. *20 Years Ago*: 'Neil Gaiman was presented in March with a GLAAD (Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation) Award for "positive portrayals of Gay and Lesbian characters" in *Sandman*. "It's the only time I've ever had a room of people cheer the correct pronunciation of my name – all of them undoubtedly convinced it was some kind of political statement." ([Ansible 118](#), May 1997)

Fanfundery. [TAFF](#): initial votes were Sarah Gulde 9 in North America, 9 in Europe; Alissa McKersie 29/30; John Purcell 11/48; Hold Over Funds 1/0; No Preference 2/5. [After elimination and redistribution, John won](#) with 68 votes to Alissa's 67 and will attend the Helsinki Worldcon in August.

- [GUFF](#): initial votes Donna Maree Hanson 25, Sam Hawke 6, Belle McQuattie 10, Alexandra Pierce 16, HoF 0, No Pref 4 and a single write-in. After eliminations and redistributions, Donna won with 33 votes to Alexandra's 18 and will attend Worldcon as above.

- *Eastercon Fan Funds Auction*: 'A towel and two pint glasses raised £212 for the special fund to bring the Brazilian fans to Lazlar Lyricon 3. The rest of the auction raised £888 through bids and donations, which is being split equally between TAFF and GUFF.' [CB]

Thog's Masterclass. *Zen and the Gateless Gate*. 'The fence stretched on endlessly, somehow, and the mud of spring was thick under Walt's feet. Tired of looking for a gate or door, he made a brace with his hands and boosted Lenore over, then popped up atop the gate and, with some struggling, managed to swing his heavy legs over.' (Nick Mamatas, 'Dead Media' in *The Nickronomicon*, 2014)

- *Neat Tricks*. '... after a moment the hand reappeared, curved round the door and slowly drew it shut, leaving bloody fingerprints on the woodwork.' (Gerald Durrell, 'The Entrance' in *The Picnic and Suchlike Pandemonium*, 1979) [BA]

- *Dept of Anatomy*. 'The worst leg cramp in history hit every muscle in his

body at once.’ (James Corey, *Leviathan Wakes*, 2011) [AT]

- *Optimism Dept.* ‘Ethan spoke to him, using the language of the Tzar which he had learned in the age a million years before this, and which he hoped was still spoken in this further time ...’ (Edmond Hamilton, ‘Armies From the Past’, *Weird Tales*, 1939) [BA]
 - *Early Disco Lighting.* ‘The nigrine candles, suitable to the deed, cast their black light throughout the Sanctum ...’ (H. Warner Munn, ‘The Diary’ in *Lost Fantasies* 6, 1977) [BA]
 - *Fashion Dept.* ‘The joke came from a brunette wearing seamed stockings and a mole beside her mouth.’ (Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, *Murder in the Central Committee*, 1981; trans 1984 by Patrick Camiller) [PB]
 - *Music of the Spheres.* ‘As Gladys jumped out of bed, all her orbs visually jingled like bells.’ (*Ibid*)
 - *Dept of Something In His Eye.* ‘Santos spoke with passion; even, one might have said, with a moist warmth in those eyes which harboured the immortal remains of his friend and comrade Fernando Garrido.’ (*Ibid*)
 - *True Romance Dept.* ‘The car stopped and they kissed, Carvalho’s tongue on the edge of the abyss, hers lightly perched on the railings.’ (*Ibid*)
-

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 5 May 2017: Robin Hobb signing, Waterstones Reading Broad Street, 12.30pm. See ...
<https://www.waterstones.com/events/meet-robin-hobb/reading-broad-street>
- 12 May 2017: Adrian Tchaikovsky talks to the Brum Group. 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre. £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future meetings/speakers: 9 June 2017 Aliette de Bodard; 14 July 2017 John Jarrold; 11 August 2017 Summer Social; 8 September 2017 Jackie Burns; 13 October 2017 Andy Sawyer; 3 November 2017 Peter F. Hamilton.

Editorial. Good to see (if not always hear) some of you at Eastercon. During unusually prolonged post-con lurgi I distracted myself by beginning work on another Langford ebook, which collects ever so many short reviews omitted from my past nonfiction outbreaks: 160,000 words and counting.... The tentative title *Pieces of String Too Short to Use* has been tentatively rejected

in favour of *Short Shrift*. More in our next. Also in preparation is a corrected, somewhat expanded ebook of Chris Morgan's and my *Facts & Fallacies: A Book of Definitive Mistakes and Misguided Predictions* from 1981; this too is still being tinkered with.

The Dead Past II. *20 Years Ago*: 'Colin Wilson enthusiastically reviewed the *Fantasy Encyclopedia* (for *Literary Review*) and thought the H.P. Lovecraft entry particularly nifty; he then discovered it had been written years ago by himself.' ([Ansible 118](#), May 1997)

Thog's Second Helping. *Fine Writing Dept.* 'Hearing Jane's northern voice bring her this rumor of a homosexual come up from Manhattan to invade them, Alexandra felt intersected where she was, in this mysterious crabbed state of Rhode Island. She had been born in the West, where white and violet mountains lift in pursuit of the delicate tall clouds, and tumbleweed rolls in pursuit of the horizon.' (John Updike, *The Witches of Eastwick*, 1984) [LP]

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From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo:
Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or the initiation
rite of the Ten Teacups.

Yet Another Ebook. More Langfordiana in *Short Shrift: A Big Book of Little Reviews 1976-2017*, collecting over 650 reviews, book columns and other oddments judged too short for my more pretentious nonfiction collections. Well over 800 books are covered at a total length of some 262,000 words, including multiple indexes. Gluttons for punishment can learn more about this at ae.ansible.uk/?t=shortshrift.

The Margrave of Daventry

Ken MacLeod is ‘moving to the other side of Scotland on 23 June ... like many a fan before me I’m trying to get rid of a vast accumulation of fanzines, semi-prozines, con programmes, copies of *Locus* and other SF/F ephemera.’ Willing to drive to South Queensferry and haul some stuff away? Contact [kenneth dot m dot macleod at gmail dot com](mailto:kenneth.m.macleod@gmail.com).

Cat Rambo, speaking *ex cathedra* as SFWA President, says that ‘all forms of game writing will be eligible’ for the new Nebula category Best Game Writing, to be first presented in 2018 for 2017 work. [L]

Adam Roberts strolled with Thog through Walter Harris’s *The Fifth Horseman* (1976): ‘In a world of rabbits, it pays to be a hare.’ ‘Tarkis Mavrolados came into his board-room like a wolf into a funeral parlour.’ ‘The ocean held aloft its might like a mugger his black-jack.’ ‘The face was set, the young creamy face which had managed to produce an absurd black moustache pale with sorrow.’ ‘A girl was running swiftly across the pitted field; her terror could be felt a half-mile away; long legs thrust desperately against the tattered material of her dress giving her the appearance of an elegant but terrified scarecrow.’ ‘Gusts of alcoholic breath flickered around

the face like the tongue of an adder.’ “I love you darling!” Rosalind cried, an avowal of love. ... “I love you too.” Lorca voiced his response in the litany of lovemaking.’ ‘Wales disappeared in the evening mist like a sin absolved.’ Yes, it does that.

John Wyndham’s influence still persists: ‘It’s impossible for an Englishman to stand in an agave field and not think of *The Day of the Triffids*.’ (Tim Hayward, *Financial Times*, 6 May) [MMW]

Contraposaune

2 Jun - 1 Sep • **Into the Unknown: A Journey Through SF** (exhibition), Barbican, London. Tickets £14.50. See www.barbican.org.uk.

3 Jun • **BSFA/BFS Pubmeet**, New York Club WMC, 22-26 Blossom Street, York, YO24 1AJ. 4:30pm-8pm(ish). With Maxin Gee, Steve Toase. Free to all, but please book in advance at tinyurl.com/n3edwxa.

3 Jun • **Wonderlands**: UK Graphic Novel Expo. Cityspace Centre, Chester Rd, Sunderland. 10am-5pm. Free. See wonderlands.org.uk.

9-11 Jun • **Lazlar Lyricon 3** (*Hitch-Hiker*), Quality Hotel, Stoke-on-Trent. £60 reg (ZZ9 members £55), 16-25s £30 (ZZ9 £25), 10-15s £10*, under-10s free* (*with adult). See lazlarlyricon3.com.

9-24 Jun • **Visions of Space 2**: IAAA Exhibition of Astronomical and Space Art, Wells & Mendip Museum, 8 Cathedral Green, Wells, BA5 2UE. 10am-5pm (closed Sun). Free. See www.wellsastronomers.org.uk.

11 Jun • **Blake** (*Blake’s 7*), Steventon Village Hall, Oxon. 10am-5pm. Tickets £15 plus booking fee. See tinyurl.com/j99unhx.

15 Jun • **The Explorers’ Club** (panel linked to Into the Unknown exhibition), Frobisher Auditorium 1, Barbican, London. With Stephen Baxter, Adam Roberts. 7:30pm. Tickets £25. Further panels (same venue, time, cost) 29 June, 13 July, 27 July. See tinyurl.com/lg2qmbd.

16-18 Jun • **U-Con** (Eurocon), Fritz-Henssler-Haus, Dortmund, Germany. €45 reg. See www.dortmund-in-2017.com.

17 Jun • **BSFA/SF Foundation** mini-con & AGMs, Lecture Theatre 1,

Blackett Laboratory, Imperial College, London, SW7 2AZ. GoH Anne Charnock, Stephanie Saulter. 9:30am-4:30pm. Free; all welcome.

24-25 Jun • **Lavecon** (sf/fantasy/gaming), Sedgebrook Hall Hotel, Northants. Many ticket options at www.hwsevents.co.uk/shop-1.

28 June • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. Speaker TBA. Free.

1 Jul • **How to Write Fantasy Fiction** (seminar), Bloomsbury Publishing, London. 8:30am-5:30pm. £149! See tinyurl.com/y7l4mwgp.

2 Jul • **Tolkien Society Seminar**, Hilton Hotel, Leeds, LS1 4BX. £30 (members £25). See www.tolkiensociety.org/events/seminar-2017/.

4 Jul • **Twentieth-Century British Periodicals** (conference), MERL, Reading. 9am-7pm. £35 reg; £15 concessions. Some sf content was hoped, but there's none. See 20thcbrishperiodicals.wordpress.com.

5 Jul • **Edge-Lit 6**, QUAD Centre, Derby, DE1 3AS. 10am-late. Tickets £30. See www.derbyquad.co.uk/film/edge-lit-6.aspx.

5-6 Jul • **Science for Fiction**, Imperial College, London. Science presentations *for published authors only*. £30 including catering. Contact Dave Clements, d dot clements at imperial dot ac dot uk.

6 Jul • **Last and First Men** (film, narration, live orchestra), Bridgewater Hall, Manchester. 7:30pm. Tickets from £15. Box office 0161 907 9000; see mif.co.uk/mif17-events/last-and-first-men/.

26-28 Aug • **Starburst Film Festival**, MMU Student Union, Manchester. £65 'early bird' reg. See starburstmagazine.com/filmfestival.

28 Oct • **BristolCon**, Hilton Doubletree Hotel, Bristol. *Now* £25 reg/£20 concessions; £30/£25 at the door. See www.bristolcon.org.

4-5 Nov • **Gollancz Festival**, Phoenix Artist's Club & Foyles, London. £25 Saturday; no information on Sunday. See gollanczfest.com. [*Later, 5 June: Sunday events may be scheduled if Saturday sells out and there's a demand for more.*]

9 Dec • **2017: A Clarke Odyssey** (conference), Canterbury Christ Church University. With Stephen Baxter, Dr Sarah Dillon. Call for papers deadline: 30 July. See 2017aclarkedyyssey.wordpress.com.

25 Feb 2018 • **Digi-Con 3** (sf/comics/anime), Doncaster Deaf Trust, Leger Way, Doncaster. From £10 reg; see www.digi-fest.co.uk.

30 Mar - 2 Apr 2018 • **Follycon** (Eastercon), Majestic Hotel, Harrogate. £70 reg; £45 YA/unwaged; £30 child (5-17) and supp; under-5s free. Sorry for rate errors in an early [A358](#). See www.follycon.org.uk.

30 Mar - 2 Apr 2018 • **Sci-Fi Weekender**, Hafan y Mor Holiday Park, near Pwllheli, Gwynedd, North Wales. Booking by accommodation from £520 for two; 3-day pass £120; more at www.scifiweekender.com.

5-6 May 2018 • **EM-Con** (media), Motorpoint Arena, Nottingham. Various priced tickets and extras available at www.em-con.co.uk.

Rumblings. *Birmingham Fearfest* (28 May) was indefinitely postponed – news too late for [A358](#). See www.birmingham-fearfest.co.uk.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others Categorize Us. ‘It is telling that *The Handmaid’s Tale* is sometimes miscategorised as science-fiction – we don’t like to consider it as a possibility.’ (Sian Cain, *The Guardian*, 25 May) [AK/HR]

Awards. *Arthur C. Clarke Award* shortlist: Becky Chambers, *A Closed and Common Orbit*; Yoon Ha Lee, *Ninefox Gambit*; Emma Newman, *After Atlas*; Tricia Sullivan, *Occupy Me*; Lavie Tidhar, *Central Station*; Colson Whitehead, *The Underground Railroad*.

• *Compton Crook Award* (first novel) Ada Palmer, *Too Like the Lightning*.

• *Nebulas.* NOVEL Charlie Jane Anders, *All the Birds in the Sky*. NOVELLA Seanan McGuire, *Every Heart a Doorway*. NOVELETTE William Ledbetter, ‘The Long Fall Up’ (*F&SF* 5/16). SHORT Amal El-Mohtar, ‘Seasons of Glass and Iron’ (*The Starlit Wood*). DRAMATIC *Arrival*. YA David D. Levine, *Arabella of Mars*.

• *SFPA Grand Master*: David C. Kopaska-Merkel.

• *Special Prometheus Award* (libertarian): Mark Stanley for his webcomic *Freefall* (‘Chapter One’, 2835 instalments 1998-2016).

The Way the Future Was. ‘[I]nsofar as s-f does depend on technological and scientific “predictions”, our generation’s crop of imagination has, I suspect, just about run dry and fiction will have to pause while science

catches up.... I can see about as much hope for science fiction as we have known it as there is for the detective novel, unless this insistence on novelty relaxes. It cannot hope to be accepted as part of the mainstream while it is bound by conventions more rigid than the ones it claims to be destroying.’ (Kyril Bonfiglioli, editorial, *Science Fantasy* 74, July 1965) [BA]

R.I.P. *Edmund Bagwell* (1966-2017), UK comics/animation artist best known for his work on *Cradlegrave* (2009) and *Indigo Prime* (2011) for *2000 AD*, died in mid-May; he was 50. [SH]

- *Yoshimitsu Banno* (1931-2017), Japanese film-maker who co-wrote and directed *Godzilla vs. Hedorah* (1971) and was an executive producer of *Godzilla* (2014), died on 7 May aged 86. [PDF]
- *Geoffrey Bayldon* (1924-2017), UK actor who starred in *Catweazle* (1970-1971), died on 10 May aged 93. [PDF] Other genre credits include *Horror of Dracula* (1958), *The Pink Panther Strikes Again* (1976) and *Worzel Gummidge* (1979-1981).
- *Powers Boothe* (1948-2017), US actor in *Justice League/Justice League Unlimited* (voice, 2002-2006), *The Avengers* (2012) and *Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D.* (2015-2016), died on 14 May aged 68. [PDF]
- *James Burnett* (1968-2017), US actor in *Transcendence* (2014) and *Maze Runner: The Scorch Trials* (2015) died on 30 May aged 48. [PDF]
- *Louis Charbonneau* (1924-2017), US author of several sf novels – beginning with *No Place on Earth* (1958) – novelizations, and two 1960s *Outer Limits* scripts, died on 11 May; he was 93.
- *Richard Dalby* (1949-2017), UK scholar of supernatural fiction, book dealer and editor of many ghost/horror anthologies beginning with *The Sorceress in Stained Glass* (1971) and including the three *Virago Books of Ghost Stories* (1987-1992), died on 21 April at the age of 68. [MV/MA]
- *Karen Lynn Davidson* (1958-2017), wife of Steve Davidson of *Amazing Stories* magazine – to which she quietly provided much valuable behind-the-scenes support – died on 19 May; she was 59. [SD]
- *Howard Frank* (1941-2017), noted sf/fantasy art (and book) collector who with his wife Jane published two books of images from their famous collection – the first being *The Frank Collection: A Showcase of the World’s Finest Fantastic Art* (1999) – died on 1 May aged 75. [SFS]
- *Jacque Fresco* (1916-2017), US designer, engineer and futurist who created the spaceship miniatures for *Project Moon Base* (1953) and whose nonfiction *Looking Forward* (1969) with Ken Keyes Jr. imagined an ideal cybernetic

society in the 21st century, died on 18 May aged 101. [PDF]

- *Don Gordon* (1926-2017), US actor in many genre tv series such as *Space Patrol* (1951), *The Outer Limits* (1964), *The Twilight Zone* (1960s) and *Knight Rider* (1980s), died on 24 April aged 90. Film credits include *The Final Conflict* (1981) and *The Exorcist III* (1990). [F770]
- *Brad Grey* (1957-2017), US film-maker who was CEO of Paramount 2005-2017 and whose producer/executive producer credits include *Scary Movie* (2000), *What Planet Are You From?* (2000) and *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* (2005), died on 14 May aged 59. [MMW]
- *Marie Jakober* (1941-2017), Canadian author of *The Mind Gods: A Novel of the Future* (1976), died on 26 March aged 75. [JC]
- *Daliah Lavi* (1940-2017), Israeli actress in *The Demon* (1963), *Casino Royale* (1967) and the Verne-based *Those Fantastic Flying Fools* (1967), died on 3 May aged 76. [PDF]
- *Quinn O'Hara* (1941-2017), Edinburgh-born actress seen in *The Ghost in the Invisible Bikini* (1966) and *In the Year 2889* (1967), died on 5 May; she was 76. [AIP]
- *Jared Martin* (1941-2017), US actor in *Westworld* (1973), *The Fantastic Journey* (1977 tv), *The Sea Serpent* (1984), *Aenigma* (1987) and *War of the Worlds* (1988-1990 tv), died on 24 May aged 75. [PDF]
- *Dina Merrill* (1923-2017), US actress seen in 1960s episodes of *Batman* and *Mission: Impossible*, plus *Anna to the Infinite Power* (1983) and *Mighty Joe Young* (1998), died on 22 May aged 93.
- *Roger Moore* (1927-2017), UK actor best known for playing The Saint (1962-1969 tv) and James Bond – *Moonraker* (1979) being especially science-fictional – died on 23 May aged 89. He also starred in *The Man Who Haunted Himself* (1970) and has a voice role in the coming *Troll Hunters*. [SG]
- *Michael Parks* (1940-2017), US actor whose credits included *The Savage Bees* (1976), *Night Cries* (1978), *Nightmare Beach* (1989), *Twin Peaks* (1990-1991), *Sorceress* (1995), *From Dusk Till Dawn* (1996) and *Planet Terror* (2007) died on 10 May aged 77. [SG]
- *Ama Patterson* (1961-2017), US short-fiction author and former Tiptree Award judge, died on 1 May. [SFS]
- *Molly Peters* (1942-2017), UK model and actress best remembered as a 'Bond girl' in *Thunderball* (1965), died on 30 May; she was 75. [PDF]
- *Doreen Rogers* née Parker, long-time UK fan who was active in the 1960s

BSFA and won the 1967 Doc Weir Award, died on 3 May aged 87. She was a 1968 St Fantony initiate, Guest of Honour at Novacon 2 (1972) and a cheering presence at UK cons for many further years. [TR]

- *Pierre Seron* (1942-2017), Belgian cartoonist best known for his long-running strip *Les petits hommes* (1972-2011) – starring villagers shrunk to tiny size by contact with a meteorite – died on 24 May aged 75. [PDF]
- *Lord Thomas of Swynnerton* (1931-2017), UK historian whose sf novel was *The Oxygen Age* (1958), died on 7 May aged 85. [JC]
- *Richard Tucholka* (1954-2017), US role-playing game designer and comics publisher whose games include *Fringeworthy* (1982) and *Bureau 13/Stalking the Night Fantastic* (1983), died on 27 April aged 63. [MR]
- *Yves Velan* (1925-2017), Swiss author whose future-dystopian sf novel is *Soft Goulag* (1977), died on 6 May; he was 91. [PDF]
- *Moray Watson* (1928-2017), UK actor whose tv credits include *The Quatermass Experiment* (1953), *Catweazle* (1971) and *Doctor Who* (1982), died on 2 May aged 88. [PDF]
- *Stanley Weston* (1933-2017), creator of the GI Joe action figure and of various animated series including *Thundercats* (1985-1989), died on 1 May aged 84. [AIP]

The Weakest Link. *Michael Ball*: ‘Which former US president recently announced that he would be co-writing a novel with James Patterson?’
Caller: ‘Kennedy.’ (BBC Radio 2) [PE]

Random Fandom. *Rob Hansen* has added a 1991-2000 section to the British Fanzine Bibliography at www.fiawol.org.uk/fanstuff/biblio/. Additions and corrections are welcomed: see email link on the tastefully designed front page.

- *Elizabeth Leggett* is the second fan artist, after Steve Stiles, to replace a disqualified 2017 Hugo finalist: Mansik Yang (on the Rabid Puppies slate through no fault of his own) told administrators that he’d published no non-commercial work in 2016. [W75]
- *Steven Ogden* writes: ‘The next mailing of FAPA (Fantasy Amateur Press Association) will mark the 80th year of FAPA (Aug 1937 to Aug 2017) and we intend to do something special by inviting all members past and present to contribute something and include some historical musings about their time in FAPA or Science Fiction/Fantasy fandom in general.’ Press date is 12 August. Contact [steven dot ogden at yahoo com](mailto:steven_dot_ogden@yahoo.com).

As Others See Us. John Burnside's *Havergey* (time-travel to island utopia after a Dark Time of plague, depopulation, pollution, etc) has an unusual reason for not being SF: 'The premise sounds like a post-apocalyptic sci-fi novel, but Mr Burnside is more interested in exposition than plot and characterisation. [...] The fictional premise is a scaffold on which the author hangs his theories about how to create an ecological and economic Utopian society.' (Anon, *The Economist*, 20-26 May) [TH]

The Dead Past. *50 Years Ago*, the announced nickname for the fan Hugos was de-announced by the 1967 Worldcon: 'The NYCon Committee has decided, because of adverse reaction in fandom, to withdraw the name "Pong" from the fan achievement awards, in the categories of best fanzine, best fan writer and best fan artist.' (*SF Weekly* 185, 2 June 1967)

• *20 Years Ago*, Neil Gaiman suffered the Curse of *Fantasy Encyclopedia* pp380-1: authors whose dates were OK in proof arcanelly appeared as e.g. (1960-FRANKENSTEIN MOVIES). He wrote: 'I hope it's not a prediction of things to come: "Mr Gaiman did not die, exactly, but many bits of him have attained a virtual immortality starring in Frankenstein Movies. Mr Gaiman's right hand is on the shelf in the castle in *Frankenstein Has Risen Up Again* and his stomach is attached to the monster in *Scary Terror of Frankenstein*. His arms and kidneys were in the 'organ donor' scene of *Frankenstein Goes Disco Mama*, but wound up on the cutting room floor...."' (*Ansible* 119, June 1997)

Fanfundery. *TAFF*: John Purcell's 2017 travel schedule to and from Worldcon 75 was announced in May and can be read at taff.org.uk. New additions to the *TAFF* Free Ebooks page at taff.org.uk/ebooks.php include James Bacon's *WorldConNomicon* (PDF only), John Berry's *The Goon Omnibus*, Walt Willis's *Fanorama* (the *Nebula* etc. fandom columns as assembled by Robert Lichtman) and *The Harp at Chicon*, and a second *Ansible* compilation – *Ansible Series Two 1991-2000*, issues 51 to 161. If you enjoy any of these, a donation to *TAFF* is appreciated.

Thog's Masterclass. *True Romance*. 'She went to Simon, pressing her soft lips to his, sucking his tongue into the sexual cavern of her mouth' (Laurence James, *Simon Rack: New Life for Old*, 1975) [AR] 'As always, the sight of her almost-too-rounded body and almost-too-full lips turned his inside into a volcano which had its base somewhere in his loins and its flame-belching apex right behind his eyes.' (Bob Shaw, *The Palace of Eternity*, 1969) [LP]

• *Dept of Anatomy*. '... strange feelings popped across my bones ...' 'I shoood

her along, my wrist a flick and crunch’ ‘My teeth were cold against my teeth’ (all from Sarah Schmidt, *See What I Have Done*, 2017) [PB]

- *Paging Heath Robinson*. ‘Martin had discovered a way to boil a kettle by generating power from steam. He used a mini boiler fire in which he burned a piece of coal. This created steam that in turn ran a small engine, “not unlike trains”, Martin had explained, and it warmed the water.’ (Sam Stone, *Zombies at Tiffany’s*, 2012) [DD]

- *Sock That Metaphor*. ““Shut it, Holmes!” Petal bellowed back, giving him a hefty sock on the jaw with one of her spade-like hands. Holmes’s face blew up something rotten. Within seconds, it looked as though a pair of fuller-figured jelly-fish were fornicating all over it.’ (Kyril Bonfiglioli with [i.e. completed by] Craig Brown, *The Great Mortdecai Moustache Mystery*, 1999) [BA]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 9 June 2017: Aliette de Bodard talks to the Brum Group. 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre. £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future meetings/speakers: 14 July 2017 John Jarrold; 11 August 2017 Summer Social; 8 September 2017 Jackie Burns; 13 October 2017 Andy Sawyer; 3 November 2017 Peter F. Hamilton.

Editorial. Further Langford ebooks are vaguely planned, but after the huge *Short Shrift: A Big Book of Little Reviews 1976-2017* and the substantially huger *Ansible Series Two 1991-2000* (which runs to nearly 360,000 words), I think I need a rest from this particular brand of obsessiveness.

Thog’s Second Helping. *Autonomous Dept*. ‘Amused by his thoughts, Bond’s right hand came out of his pocket and lit a cigarette for him, quietly and obediently. It had stopped going off chasing rabbits on its own.’ (Ian Fleming, *The Man With The Golden Gun*, 1965) [NW]

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Amanda Kear, Lawrence Person, Andrew I. Porter, Private Eye, Haydn Rawlinson, Trish Rogers, Adam Roberts, Marcus Rowland, SF Site, Mark Valentine, Nick Watkins, Martin Morse Wooster, Worldcon 75, and our Hero Distributors: Dave Corby (Birmingham SF Group), SCIS/Prophecy, Alan Stewart (Australia). 1 June 2017.

Ansible® 360, July 2017

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE, photoids, or a dual-vector foil for cleansing.

Back Numbers. For those who like to ignore old *Ansibles* as ebooks rather than on paper, the 1979-1987 and 1991-2000 compilations at taff.org.uk/ebooks.php have been joined by a third: 2001-2010. All free!

Pan-Galactic Gargle Blasters

Margaret Atwood is to receive this year's €25,000 Peace Prize, not the Nobel but awarded by the German book trade. (Dw.com, 13 June)

Malcolm Edwards reports: 'We visited the new Henrietta Hotel this afternoon. The ground floor of no.14 Henrietta Street is transformed into a cocktail bar. We sat in the front window, where Gollancz's reception used to be (presided over by the ancient and formidable Margot). There's a short menu of 10 cocktails. Four are named for the general list: the Down and Out, the Lucky Jim, the Language, Truth and Logic and The Citadel. Four are named for the SF list: the Sirens of Titan, the Dune, the A Fall of Moondust and the Cat's Cradle. Two have no connection with Gollancz that I could discern: the Reaching the Port and the Ralph's Rigamarole [*sic*]. [...] There was a small display shelf of yellow jacketed Gollancz titles, and when we asked the waiter if he knew the history he told us that it was on the site of a famous London publisher. At this point I shyly produced my business card, which identifies me as Chairman of Gollancz. He was duly impressed, though not enough to discount our bill at all (curses!).' (10 June) *A footnote*: 'Might be worth mentioning that the cocktails are not priced to appeal to Orwell – between £10 and £15 each....' Gulp.

Herbert W. Franke was presented with a special Kurd Laßwitz Award for his lifetime achievement in German science fiction.

John Gilbert announced the demise of *Fear* on 7 June. ‘There will be no further issues. Whilst my publisher organised the print side of the magazine I was left to produce the editorial but have so far received no recompense for the outgoings so far and this situation does not look as if it will change. Another £300 bill for the annual maintenance of the website and shop is due this month and I just cannot afford to pay out these sorts of sums any more.’ The *Fear* website goes dark on 4 July.

J.K. Rowling became a Companion of Honour in the Queen’s Birthday honours list. Others on this list who have genre links include Billy Connolly (*The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies* etc), knighted; Julie Walters (Mrs Weasley in the Harry Potter films), a dame; and Raymond Briggs of *Snowman* and *Fungus the Bogeyman* fame, an OBE.

Zoran Živković was honoured as European Grand Master for life achievement in the ESFS Awards at Eurocon in Dortmund (see [below](#)).

Conumerary

CANCELLED 1-2 Jul • **Swansea Horror Con**, Swansea Leisure Complex, Oystermouth Rd, Swansea. See www.swanseahorrorcon.com.

2 Jul • **Tolkien Society Seminar**, Hilton Hotel, Leeds, LS1 4BX. £30 (members £25). See www.tolkiensociety.org/events/seminar-2017/.

4 Jul • **Twentieth-Century British Periodicals** (conference), MERL, Reading. 9am-7pm. £35 reg; £15 concessions. Some sf content was hoped, but there’s none. See 20thbritishperiodicals.wordpress.com.

5 Jul • **Edge-Lit 6**, QUAD Centre, Derby, DE1 3AS. 10am-late. Tickets £30. See www.derbyquad.co.uk/film/edge-lit-6.aspx.

5-6 Jul • **Science for Fiction**, Imperial College, London. Science presentations *for published authors only*. £30 including catering. Contact Dave Clements, d dot clements at imperial dot ac dot uk.

6 Jul • **Last and First Men** (film, narration, live orchestra), Bridgewater Hall, Manchester. 7:30pm. Tickets from £15. Box office 0161 907 9000; see mif.co.uk/mif17-events/last-and-first-men/.

13 Jul • **The Gamers’ Club** (panel linked to Into the Unknown exhibition),

Frobisher Auditorium 1, Barbican, London. 7:30pm. £25. Last panel – same venue, time, cost – 27 July. See tinyurl.com/lg2qmbd.

23 Jul • **Star Trek: The Ultimate Voyage** (orchestra and film), Royal Festival Hall, London. 2:30pm for 3pm and 6:30pm for 7pm. Tickets from £25. See senbla.com/concerts/star-trek-ultimate-voyage/.

26 Jul • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. Speaker TBA. Free.

27 Jul • **Clarke Award Presentation**, Foyles, Charing Cross Road, London. 7pm-9m. ♦13: [tickets from Foyles](http://ticketsfromfoyles.com).

4-6 Aug • **Nine Worlds Geekfest** (multimedia), Novotel London West, Hammersmith, London. £119 reg; day £49.99; children free. Life entry plus dinner: £1000. Book online at ninemeworlds.co.uk.

9-13 Aug • **Worldcon 75** (Worldcon), Helsinki, Finland. €195 reg; €95 Worldcon first-timers; €110 youth (16-25); €75 child (6-15); under-6s free. Day rates: see www.worldcon.fi. *Advance booking closes 26 July; online Hugo voting closes 15 or 16 July depending on time zone.*

12-28 Aug • **Edinburgh International Book Festival**. Five sf panels on 15-18 August, organized and moderated by ‘Guest Selector’ Ken MacLeod. See <http://tinyurl.com/y9bl5z4r> for participants.

9-10 Sep • **Middle-earth Festival**, Sarehole Mill, Cole Bank Rd, Hall Green, Birmingham, B13 0BD. Free. See middleearthfestival.co.uk.

2-4 Feb 2018 • **Enharmonicon** (filk), Best Western Hotel, Marks Tey, Colchester. £37 reg/£25 unwaged until 1 Dec; under-18s £1/year of age; under-5s free. See www.contabile.org.uk/enharmonicon/.

25-27 May 2018 • **Satellite 6**, Crowne Plaza Hotel, Glasgow. GoH Paul McAuley. £65 reg *rising on 1 July*: see six.satellitex.org.uk.

3-6 Aug 2018 • **Discworld Convention**, Chesford Grange Hotel, Warwick. £74 reg; £50 concessions; £30 supp. *Registration opens 1 July at dwcon.org [since delayed to 10 July]*. Note that the 2016 event sold out within five days.

19-21 Oct 2018 • **Destination Star Trek**, NEC, Birmingham. Day £29; 2 days £39; 3 days £49; silly ‘VIP’ rates at destinationstartrek.com.

22-24 Aug 2019 • **Eurocon/TitanCon**, Waterfront Convention Centre and

Hilton Hotel, Belfast. £50 reg; £10 supp. PayPal accepted at titancon.com/2019/ (£52 reg with fee); credit card option to follow.

Rumblings. *2019 Worldcon Site Selection* opened at the Worldcon 75 site: www.worldcon.fi/wsfs/site-selection/. Dublin is unopposed. • *Worldcon 2021*: the Boston bid withdrew (no ‘affordable, workable’ venue found) and the 2024 Washington DC bid has as a result switched to 2021 – see dcin2021.org – leaving no *current* opposition to the planned UK in 2024 Worldcon bid whose website is at www.ukin2024.org.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others Ignore Us. Siddhartha Deb’s article subtitled ‘Why won’t novelists reckon with climate change?’ ponders this eternal mystery with two mentions of ‘genre fiction’ (but no examples) and none of sf. ‘For [*Amitav*] Ghosh, this is in great part the result of literary fiction’s need to keep the fluky and the exceptional out of its bounds, conceding the terrain of improbability – cyclones, tornadoes, tsunamis, and earthquakes – to genre fiction.’ (thebaffler.com, 5 June) As [Robert Conquest](#) famously did not write: “*Lit-fic shuns climate change,*” they bellow till we’re sick. / “*But this book tackles it.*” – “Well then, it’s not lit-fic.”

Awards. *Baileys Women’s Prize for Fiction*: Naomi Alderman, *The Power*.

• *ESFS Hall of Fame Awards at Eurocon*: AUTHOR Dario Tonani (Italy). ARTIST (tie) Aurélien Polce (France), Judith Clute (UK). PUBLISHER Tracus Arte (Romania). PROMOTER Ian Watson (UK). TRANSLATOR Natalia Osoianu (Russia).

- *James White* (debut short): Stewart Horn, ‘The Morrigan’.
- *John W. Campbell Memorial*: Lavie Tidhar, *Central Station*.
- *Kurd Laßwitz Award* novel categories: GERMAN Andreas Brandhorst, *Omni*. FOREIGN Cixin Liu, *Die drei Sonnen* [*The Three-Body Problem*] trans Martina Hasse (also winner as best sf translation).
- *Lambda Awards* (LGBTQ) sf/f/horror category: Indra Das, *The Devourers*.
- *Locus Awards* novel categories: SF Cixin Liu, *Death’s End*. FANTASY Charlie Jane Anders, *All the Birds in the Sky*. HORROR Joe Hill, *The Fireman*. YA Alastair Reynolds, *Revenger*. DEBUT Yoon Ha Lee, *Ninefox Gambit*. [L]
- *Sturgeon* (short): Catherynne M. Valente, ‘The Future is Blue’ (*Drowned*

Worlds).

R.I.P. *Sergio Altieri* (1952-2017), Italian sf author, screenwriter and translator of George R.R. Martin's Song of Ice and Fire saga, died on 16 June aged 65. [PDF/AIP]

- *Alan Austin*, long-time UK comics fan and dealer who edited *Fantasy Unlimited/Comics Unlimited* from the 1970s, co-published the first UK *Comics Price Guide* and for years ran the Islington shop Heroes, died on 9 May. (30thcenturycomics.co.uk) [F770]
- *Michael Bond* (1926-2017), creator of Paddington in *A Bear Called Paddington* (1956) and of the animated BBC series *The Herbs* (1968), died on 27 June aged 91; he received a CBE in 2015. Paddington starred in many book sequels to 2014, plus a 1976 BBC tv series and 2014 film. [JBa]
- *Morton N. Cohen* (1921-2017), US critic and biographer of Lewis Carroll, H. Rider Haggard and Rudyard Kipling, died on 12 June aged 96. [DP]
- *Andy Cunningham* (1950-2017), UK comic actor, ventriloquist and puppeteer best known for *Bodger & Badger* (1989-1999 tv), who was the uncredited animator of Jabba's head of security in *Return of the Jedi* (1983), died on 5 June aged 67. (i, 10 June)
- *John Dalmas* (John Robert Jones, 1926-2017), US author of *The Yngling* (1969 *Analog*; 1971) and many further sf novels until 2013, died on 15 June aged 90. [SF]
- *Helen Dunmore* (1952-2017), UK author and Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature whose novels include the ghost story *The Greatcoat* (2012), died in early June; she was 64. [PDF]
- *Stephen Furst* (1955-2017), US actor in *The Day After* (1983), *Babylon 5* (as Vir Cotto, 1994-1998), *Buzz Lightyear of Star Command* (voice 2000-2001) and *Basilisk: The Serpent King* (2006), died on 16 June aged 62.
- *James Galton*, president and CEO of Marvel 1975-1991, who's said to have saved the comics company from 1970s bankruptcy, died on 12 June aged 92.
- *Geoffrey Hayes* (1947-2017), US cartoonist and creator of over 50 illustrated children's books including animal and monster fantasies, died on 2 June aged 69. His 'dream project', the graphic-novel fairytale *Lovo and the Firewolf*, remains unfinished. [PDF]
- *Glenn Headly* (1955-2017), US actress in *The Purple Rose of Cairo* (1985), *Making Mr. Right* (1987), *Babe: Pig in the City* (1998), *Breakfast of Champions* (1999) and *The Circle* (2017), died on 8 June aged 62. [MMW]
- *Rodney Leighton* (1948-2017), Canadian fan whose [recent fanzines](#) –

produced without a computer or net access – included *Rodney's Fanac* and *Life of Rodney*, died on 18 June; he was 68. [CC]

- *Arthur Mather* (1925-2017), Australian illustrator who drew the *Captain Atom* comic, later publishing *The Pawn* (1975) and other thrillers or technothrillers with sf elements, died on 4 June aged 91. [PDF]
- *Patrick Meadows* (1934-2017), US author of five stories in *Analog* and *F&SF* 1965-1971, died on 22 April. [GVG]
- *Anita Pallenberg* (1944-2017), Italian-born model and actress in *Barbarella* (1968), *Performance* (1970) and *4:44 Last Day on Earth* (2011), died on 13 June aged 73. [SG]
- *Peter Sallis* (1921-2017), UK actor who voiced Rat in *The Wind in the Willows* (1984-1988 plus follow-up *Oh! Mr Toad*) and Wallace in the Wallace & Gromit films from *A Grand Day Out* (1989) onwards, died on 5 June aged 96. Further genre credits include *Doctor Who*: 'The Ice Warriors' (1967), *The Ghosts of Motley Hall* (1967-1968) and *Frankenstein: The True Story* (1973).
- *Ulf Stark* (1944-2017), award-winning Swedish author of children's fiction (some fantastical), died on 13 June; he was 72. [PDF]
- *William F. Touponce* (1948-2017), US academic and critic who published extensively about Ray Bradbury and also wrote books on Isaac Asimov and Frank Herbert, died on 15 June; he was 68. [RB] He co-founded the Center for Ray Bradbury Studies at Indiana University and *The New Ray Bradbury Review*.
- *James Vance* (1953-2017), US author and playwright who scripted *Mr. Hero the Newmatic Man* and other comics, died on 5 June aged 64. [PDF]
- *Elena Verdugo* (1925-2017), US actress whose early credits include *House of Frankenstein* (1944), *The Frozen Ghost* (1945) and the 'Bomba the Jungle Boy' movie *The Lost Volcano* (1950), died on 30 May aged 92. [PDF]
- *Adam West* (1928-2017), much-loved US actor identified with his star role in *Batman* (1966-1968 tv) and *Batman: The Movie* (1966), died on 9 June aged 88. He voiced Batman in animations from *The New Adventures of Batman* (1977) to the forthcoming *Batman vs. Two-Face*, with many other voice roles in between. [MR]
- *Stewart Wieck* (1968-2017), US role-playing game designer and publisher who with his brother Steve founded *White Wolf* magazine (1986-1995) – leading to White Wolf Game Studio and White Wolf Fiction – died on 22 June aged 49. He was a designer of White Wolfe's RPG *Mage: The*

Ascension (1993). [MR]

The Weakest Link. *Alexander Armstrong*: ‘Which novel featured the characters Arthur Dent, Ford Prefect and Zaphod Beeblebrox?’ *Contestant*: ‘*Pride and Prejudice*.’ (BBC1, *Pointless*) [PE]

Court Circular. Progress in the Dr Seuss Enterprises lawsuit against the Seuss/*Star Trek* mash-up *Oh, The Places You’ll Boldly Go!* by David Gerrold and Ty Templeton: the US court dismissed claims of trademark infringement by this ‘highly transformative work that takes no more than necessary [from Seuss] to accomplish its transformative purpose and will not impinge on the original market for Plaintiff’s underlying work’. The copyright claim continues, with DSE required to prove actual harm to their sales and licensing. ([File 770](#), 13 June)

Award Shortlists. *Mythopoeic*: ADULT Andrea Hairston, *Will Do Magic For Small Change*; Mary Robinette Kowal, *Ghost Talkers*; Patricia A. McKillip, *Kingfisher*; Maggie Stiefvater, ‘Raven Cycle’ (4 vols 2012-2016); Jo Walton, ‘Thessaly Trilogy’ (3 vols 2015-2016).

- CHILDREN’S Adam Gidwitz, *The Inquisitor’s Tale*; S.E. Grove, ‘Mapmakers Trilogy’ (3 vols 2014-2015); Bridget Hodder, *The Rat Prince*; Grace Lin, *When the Sea Turned to Silver*; Delia Sherman, *The Evil Wizard Smallbone*.

- SCHOLARSHIP: INKLINGS Lisa Coutras, *Tolkien’s Theology of Beauty*; Srina Higgins, ed., *The Chapel of the Thorn by Charles Williams*; Leslie Donovan, ed., *Approaches to Teaching Tolkien’s The Lord of the Rings and Other Works*; Christopher Tolkien, ed., *Beowulf / Sellic Spell by J.R.R. Tolkien*; Philip Zaleski and Carol Zaleski, *The Fellowship: The Literary Lives of J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, Owen Barfield, Charles Williams*.

- SCHOLARSHIP: OTHER Aisling Byrne, *Otherworlds: Fantasy and History in Medieval Literature*; Richard Firth Green, *Elf Queens and Holy Friars: Fairy Beliefs and the Medieval Church*; Michael Levy and Farah Mendlesohn, *Children’s Fantasy Literature: An Introduction*; Gabrielle Lissauer, *The Tropes of Fantasy Fiction*; Jack Zipes, *Grimm Legacies*.

- *Sidewise* (alt-history): SHORT Anna Belfrage, ‘The Danish Crutch’ (1066 Turned Upside Down); Daniel Bensen, ‘Treasure Fleet’ (*Tales from Alternate Earths*); Brent A. Harris & Ricardo Victoria, ‘Twilight of the Mesozoic Moon’ (*Ibid*); G.K. Holloway, ‘The Battle of London Bridge,’ (1066 ...); Adam Rovner, ‘What If the Jewish State Had Been Established in East Africa’ (*What Ifs of Jewish History*); Bruce Sterling, *Pirate Utopia*.

- LONG Richard Beard, *Acts of the Assassins* (aka *The Apostle Killer*); Ben Winters, *Underground Airlines*; Nick Wood, *Azanian Bridges*.

As Others See Us. Spy novelist Joseph Kanon is undogmatic about his dislikes. ‘I read pretty much everything except science fiction. It’s odd because I often enjoy sci-fi movies, mostly for the visual effects, but the books bore me. I think it’s because they’re not really interested in character, which for me is the essential element of all good fiction, but maybe it’s just a blind spot. In fact, I concede the point now before complaining emails start arriving – my fault.’ (*NY Times*, 15 June) [JBo]

Closure. Jack Rems announced that his Dark Carnival bookshop (Berkeley, CA) is to close after 41 years, the exact date depending on returns from the current clearance sale. (Berkeleyside.com, 12 June)

Random Fandom. *BSFA AGM, June.* Electing a new Chair wasn’t on the agenda, but Gerard Earley of www.sciencefictionbookclub.org came armed with proxies for a coup against the current Chair, Donna Scott. The AGM compromised by appointing Earley as a BSFA director and webmaster of www.bsfa.co.uk, which thanks to his attentions has been down for several days. [*Back again on 2 July.*]

- *Steve Stiles* writes: ‘Alas, I have a tumor in my right lung ... Surgery probably in July. According to the doctor who will do the operation, it doesn’t look too bad and the “mass” (probably cancer) hasn’t spread to the lymph nodes or anywhere else, so once it’s out chemo probably won’t be necessary and there’s a good chance (65%) it won’t be back. Fingers crossed.’ Mine are crossed too.

The Dead Past. *50 Years Ago:* ‘*New Worlds*, the British sf magazine, has received an arts council grant of 1,800 pounds, about \$5,040 in American funds. [*Michael Moorcock comments:*] “I am a little surprised we’ve got this grant. I didn’t think it was that sort of magazine.”’ (SF Weekly 191, 17 July 1967)

- *20 Years Ago:* ‘Arthur C. Clarke is battling against natural modesty to tell the world about his Feb 97 fan letter from the Dalai Lama: “Your short story titled ‘The Nine Billion Names of God’ was particularly amusing.”’ (Ansible 120, July 1997)

C.o.A. *Lauryn and Loren MacGregor*, The New Haven, 13000 Linden Ave. N, Apt. #550, Seattle, WA 98133, USA.

Fanfundery. *TAFF Trip Report Anthology*: this long-planned ebook of unfinished reports since 1964, plus ‘teaser’ chapters from newer ones still in progress, is now a free download at taff.org.uk/ebooks.php.

Thog’s Masterclass. *Dept of Neat Tricks*. ‘I freeze my face and slide it against the back of my neck ...’ (Charles Stross, *Saturn’s Children*, 2008) [JDB]

- *SM Dept*. ‘Ah, yes, milady! The hand ... when strongly leveled against the flech of the rump – the bare rump, that is – has long been known as a most satisfactory chastisement!’ (Shannon Drake, *Ondine*, 1997)
 - *Can You Do This Indescribably?* ‘The dealer gave an indescribable, simultaneous shrug of his shoulders and his eyebrows.’ (Clark Ashton Smith, ‘Ubbo-Sathla’, 1942) [BWF]
 - *Dept of Method Acting*. ‘His haggard face at first registered great perplexity; then it registered worry, thoughtfulness, or whatever other movements of consciousness that might cause his face to look as it did.’ (Jean-Patrick Manchette, *The Prone Gunman*, 1981; trans James Brook 2002) [PB]
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Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 14 July 2017: John Jarrold talks to the Brum Group. 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre. £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future meetings/speakers: 11 August 2017 Summer Social; 8 September 2017 Jackie Burns; 13 October 2017 Andy Sawyer; 3 November 2017 Peter F. Hamilton; 1 December (date TBC) Christmas Social.
- 11 October 2017: Reading University ‘Monsters and the Monstrous’ season opens with *Nosferatu* (1922). 7pm in Van Emden lecture theatre, Edith Morley, Whiteknights campus. £5. With introductory talk.
- 18 October 2017: *Frankenstein* (1931), as for *Nosferatu* above.
- 23 October 2017: ‘Hybrids and Health Humanities: Ceroplasty, Couplets, Chimeras’ discussion, 7pm in LO22, G01, Reading University London Road campus. Free.
- 25 October 2017: *Freaks* (1932), as for *Nosferatu* above.

Editorial. The threatened ebook of Chris Morgan’s and my *Facts &*

Fallacies: A Book of Definitive Mistakes and Misguided Predictions (first published 1981) exists in draft form and has been admired by a small audience of Chris Morgan and David Langford, but keeps being delayed by obsessive tinkering. August, maybe.

• Although Lord Buckethead the ‘intergalactic space lord’ got most media attention, there were other candidates in the UK General Election who were not of this world. Here in Reading East the most interesting campaign flyer was from the subtly acronymic Movement for Active Democracy, as below. Shades of *Illuminatus!*, or the Astral League ...

Living in a 'Direct Democracy' need no longer be a fantasy

The pyramid (dollar bill & M15 logo) symbolises the world order today.

- ← The 1% elite, banks and corporations
- ← Government, who follow orders from the 1% via Chatham House and un-elected permanent secretaries.
- ← We, the people, virtually powerless and dictated to by a puppet government.

The crystal ball depicts how it will be in the future. When? It's up to you.

- ← The people at the top, celebrating life and choosing what we truly want. One person - one vote - on everything.
- ← The government under us, doing our bidding as true servants of the people.
- ← The mega-wealthy 1% elite, no power and no longer controlling us.

Election Communication
Andy Kirkwood
Movement for Active Democracy
Reading East

How? See overleaf.

Fuller Listings for ESFS and *Locus* Awards, plus Ken MacLeod’s own blog post about his Edinburgh Festival programming:

<https://esfs.info/2017/06/17/esfs-awards-2017/>

<http://www.locusmag.com/News/2017/06/do-not-touch-2017-locus-awards-winners/>

<http://kenmacleod.blogspot.co.uk/2017/06/science-fiction-stars-at-biggest-ever.html>

Outraged Letters. *Ian Covell* on Adam Roberts in [A359](#): ‘I rather liked the disputatious Walter Harris, and wish he’d managed to publish some more of the books that were scheduled. / Anyway, I don’t think Thog would have much meat from the quotes, some of which were spot-on. I suggest finding

the (to me) incredible *The Day I Died*, which is beautifully written, charming, and healthily sexy.’

Thog’s Second Helping. *Expressive Eyes Dept.* ‘... Her eyes were huge, purple, limpid. They were round and sober with the innocence of a child’s; they were inscrutable with ageless wisdom; they were dark wells of agony, ancient and ageless ... I knew she was nothing human. Yet my fancy made her ever so, for her eyes and lips and even the impudent flirt of her crimson plume held all the essence of humanity: wisdom and the vain yearning to forget, pride and bitter defeat, bright courage and consuming fear, living joy and ultimate, infinite agony.’ (Jack Williamson, ‘Dreadful Sleep’, 1938 *Weird Tales*) [BA]

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Ansible® 361, August 2017

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo:
Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or the reason for
the names Jin and Neu.

Advt. Yet another ebook from Ansible Editions! *Facts & Fallacies: A Book of Definitive Mistakes and Misguided Predictions* by Chris Morgan and David Langford first appeared in 1981. This is now revised and expanded with bonus material (including, alas, the *Scotsman* review that promised it ‘Will prove to be a runaway best-seller ...’), making the ebook about 20% longer than the original. See ae.ansible.uk/?t=fandf.

The Surreptitious Fabric

Mike Ashley, CEO at Sports Direct, had an sf moment while assuring the High Court that his management style is far from dictatorial: ‘I am not Obi-Wan Kenobi controlling the Death Star’. (BBC, 5 July) [RF]

Zachary Mason’s novel *Void Star* has been praised as cyberpunk in the Gibson vein, but Mason deplored an interviewer’s use of the C-word: ‘Not even remotely. I’m not even exactly sure what it means. Bionic implants and mirrored sunglasses? Yes, the definition eludes me. / I think of it more as literary fiction that uses science fiction and genre elements.’ ([KCRW, 29 June](#)) Which makes all the difference. [NA]

Darren Nash, digital supremo at Orion with power of high, middle and low justice over SF Gateway and the *SF Encyclopedia*, has decided after many years in the UK to return with his family to Melbourne, Australia. Marcus Gipps will take over his Orion and Gollancz roles.

George Orwell was very nearly quoted when US Vice-President Mike Pence enthused about the space programme at Cape Canaveral: ‘Our nation will return to the Moon and we will put American boots on the face of Mars.’

(*Washington Examiner*, 7 July) Forever!

Harry Potter may be to blame for a sharp rise in illicit owl trading in Indonesia, according to a recent ecological study: ‘Harry Potter normalized keeping owls as pets.’ Even their usual Malay name *Burung Hantu* has now become *Burung Harry Potter*.... (*Nature*, 28 June) [SF²C]

Tracy K. Smith, poet whose 2011 collection *Life on Mars* (a Pulitzer winner) is sf-themed, was named as US Poet Laureate in June. [L]

Contrapospita

3 Aug • **Fantasy in the Court** (mass signing), 23-27 Cecil Court, London. 6pm-9pm. Tickets £5 (redeemable) from tinyurl.com/y7htcudj.

4-6 Aug • **Nine Worlds Geekfest** (multimedia), Novotel London West, Hammersmith, London. £119 reg; day £49.99; children free. Life entry plus dinner: £1000. Book online at nineworlds.co.uk.

9-13 Aug • **Worldcon 75** (Worldcon), Helsinki, Finland. €195 reg; €95 Worldcon first-timers; €110 youth (16-25); €75 child (6-15); under-6s free. Day €25 Wed, Sun; €45 Thu; €50 Fri, Sat. *Hugo voting and site selection voting by mail both closed in July; site selection ballots can still be delivered in person at Worldcon 75.* See www.worldcon.fi.

11-13 Aug • **Wadfest** (Discworld camping event), King’s Bush Farm, London Road, Godmanchester, Cambs, PE29 2NH. Adult campers £45; child £5. See www.wadfest.co.uk.

12-28 Aug • **Edinburgh International Book Festival**. Five sf panels on 15-18 August, organized and moderated by ‘Guest Selector’ Ken MacLeod. See tinyurl.com/y9bl5z4r for all the participants.

Cancelled 19 Aug • **Worcester Comic Con**, Worcester Arena. Tickets £10 from 11am, £15 from 10am. See www.worcester-comiccon.com.

23 Aug • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. With Jeff Noon. Free.

25-28 Aug • **The Asylum** (steampunk), Lincoln. Tickets £38; under-16s £19; for day rates and extra charges for many evening events (e.g. Dead Dog Party

£14), see www.asylumsteampunk.co.uk.

25-29 Aug • **Frightfest** (horror film festival), Cineworld Leicester Square, London. £195 reg; day passes etc at www.frightfest.co.uk.

26-28 Aug • **Starburst Film Festival**, MMU Student Union, Manchester. £65 ‘early bird’ reg. See starburstmagazine.com/filmfestival.

27-28 Aug • **Stars of Time** (media), Tropicana, Weston-super-Mare. 10am-5pm. £6.50; child £3.50. See www.starsoftime.co.uk.

31 Aug - 3 Sep • **LeakyCon** (Harry Potter), Citywest, Dublin, Ireland. \$160 reg plus fee; other rates at www.leakycon.com.

2 Sep • **Fighting Fantasy Fest 2**, University of West London, Ealing. 9am-8pm. With onlie begetters Jackson & Livingstone. Advance booking only: £48.38 including fees from tinyurl.com/y8th9u4u.

8-9 Sep • **TitanCon**, Wellington Park Hotel, Belfast. Friday afternoon free; £28 reg Saturday; £5 supporting. See titancon.com.

9 Sep • **International Comics Expo** (ICE), Birmingham Conference Centre, Smallbrook, Birmingham. 11am-11pm. Tickets £12; early entry (10am) £15. See www.thecomicsshow.co.uk.

9-10 Sep • **Middle-earth Festival**, Sarehole Mill, Cole Bank Rd, Hall Green, Birmingham, B13 0BD. Free. See middleearthfestival.co.uk.

29 Sep - 1 Oct • **Fantasycon**, Bull Hotel, Peterborough. £56.50 reg (BFS members £46.50); see www.hwsevents.co.uk/shop-2 for day and other rates. ‘Prices will go up about a month or so before the event.’

13 Oct • **British Fantasy Society Social**, The Counting House, 50 Cornhill, London. 7pm to late. Free; all welcome.

25-27 May 2018 • **Satellite 6**, Crowne Plaza Hotel, Glasgow. *Now £70 reg* until 31 December when advance booking closes (five months before the event – is this a record?); £60 YA 18-24; under-18s £20; accompanied under-12s £5 and under-5s £2. See six.satellitex.org.uk.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. ‘Fantasy’s most popular sub-genre is science fiction,

whose central struggle is generated from the technology and tools of a futuristic world. Other subgenres include superheroes, alien invasion, mad scientist, monster, and mutant.’ (Jon Bernstein in *Cut to the Chase: Writing Feature Films with the Pros* ed. Linda Venis, 2013) [PL]

- On a planned Universal Cable tv adaptation of Kurt Vonnegut’s *The Sirens of Titan*: ‘Despite the sci-fi nature of the plot (that just so happens to feature an invasion of Earth by Martians), the issues of omniscience, free will, and man’s purpose in the grand scheme of existence are explored.’ (Cinemablend, 19 July) How un-sciencefictional.

Awards. *Arthur C. Clarke*: Colson Whitehead, *The Underground Railroad*.

- *Clareson* (sf/f promotion): Pawel Frelik.
- *Cordwainer Smith Rediscovery* (neglected writers): Seabury Quinn.
- *Gemmell* (heroic fantasy): NOVEL Gav Thorpe, *Warbeast*. DEBUT Megan E O’Keefe, *Steal the Sky*. COVER ART Alessandro Baldasseroni for *Black Rift* by Josh Reynolds.
- *Man Booker* longlist (genre-ish titles only): Paul Auster, *4 3 2 1*; Mohsin Hamid, *Exit West*; George Saunders, *Lincoln in the Bardo*; Colson Whitehead, *The Underground Railroad*. [L]
- *Munsey Award* (services to pulp community): Phil Stephensen-Payne.
- *Mythopoeic* (fantasy): ADULT Patricia A. McKillip, *Kingfisher*. CHILDREN’S Adam Gidwitz, *The Inquisitor’s Tale*. SCHOLARSHIP: INKLINGS Philip & Carol Zaleski, *The Fellowship: The Literary Lives of J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, Owen Barfield, Charles Williams*. SCHOLARSHIP: OTHER Richard Firth Green, *Elf Queens and Holy Friars*.
- *Pilgrim* (life contribution to sf/fantasy scholarship): Tom Moylan.
- *Prize for American Fiction*, Library of Congress non-genre life award: Denis Johnson (see R.I.P. below). [MMW]
- *Prometheus* (libertarian): Johanna Sinisalo, *The Core of the Sun*. Hall of Fame: Robert Heinlein, ‘Coventry’ (1940).
- *Rhyslings* (poetry): SHORT Marge Simon, ‘George Tecumseh Sherman’s Ghosts’ (*Silver Blade* 32). LONG Theodora Goss, ‘Rose Child’ (*Uncanny* 13).
- *World Fantasy Award* for life achievement: Marina Warner; Terry Brooks. Full 2017 WFA shortlist at www.locusmag.com/News/2017/07/world-fantasy-award-nominees/.

As Others Cheese Us. On the contents of a Tampa (Florida) bookshop’s overstock space: ‘There are classics, out-of-print titles, steamy romance

novels, cheesy science fiction stories and biographies on an assortment of characters ...' (*Tampa Bay Times*, 10 July) [BA]

R.I.P. *Trevor Baxter* (1932-2017), UK actor whose credits include *Doctor Who*: 'The Talons of Weng-Chiang' (1977) and *Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow* (2004), died on 16 July aged 84. [SFS]

- *Wally Burr* (1924-2017), US voice director for many animated series including *Akira*, *Conan the Adventurer*, *Godzilla*, *Inspector Gadget*, *Jem*, *Spider-Man*, *Transformers* and *Valley of the Dinosaurs*, died on 10 July aged 93. [PDF]

- *Jeff Carlson* (1969-2017), US author of the sf trilogies *Plague Year* (2007-2009) and *The Frozen Sky* (2012-2016), died on 17 July aged 47. [GVG]

- *Tommy Castillo*, US comics artist active from 1996 who drew *Batman*, *Green Arrow* and others for DC, died on 23 June. [PDF]

- *Patti Deutsch* (1945-2017), US voice actress in *Capitol Critters* (1992), *Tarzan* (1999), *The Emperor's New Groove* (2000), *Monsters, Inc.* (2001) and others, died on 26 July aged 71. [MMW]

- *Alan Dorey* (1958-2017), UK fan associated with the Leeds Group, whose fanzine was *Gross Encounters* (main run 1978-1998), died on 23 July aged 59. Active in the BSFA from the late 1970s as chairman and *Vector* co-editor, he was also part of the original *Interzone* editorial collective. [RRD] Another friend gone. Huge sympathy to Rochelle Dorey and the family.

- *Nelsan Ellis* (1977-2017), US actor best known as Lafayette Reynolds in *True Blood* (2008-2014), died on 8 July aged 39. [AIP]

- *June Foray* (1917-2017), US voice actress in many animated features including Disney's *Cinderella* (1950), *The Phantom Tollbooth* (1970), *Who Framed Roger Rabbit* (1988) and *The Legend of Sasquatch* (2006), died on 26 July aged 99. [AS]

- *Sam Glanzman* (1924-2017), long-time US comics artist who drew *Tarzan* and *Hercules: Adventures of the Man-God* for Charlton in the 1960s, died on 12 July aged 92. [PDF]

- *John Heard* (1945-2017), US actor in *C.H.U.D.* (1984), *Big* (1988), *The Seventh Sign* (1988), *Locusts* (2005) and *Sharknado* (2013), died on 21 July aged 72. [PDF]

- *Loren Janes* (1931-2017), US stuntman in many films including *Planet of the Apes* (1968), *Back to the Future* (1985), *The Abyss* (1989), *Wild Wild West* (1999) and *Spider-Man* (2002), died on 24 June aged 85. [PDF]

- *Denis Johnson* (1949-2017), highly regarded US author whose sf novel is

- the post-holocaust *Fiskadoro* (1985), died on 24 May aged 67. [PDF/MMW]
- *Jordin Kare* (1956-2017), US fan, aerospace engineer and filker – a partner in the pioneering filk songbook publisher Off Centaur – died on 19 July aged 60. All sympathy to his wife Mary Kay Kare. [SFS]
 - *Dwain Kaiser* (1947-2017), long-time US fan, fanzine publisher, APA contributor, book dealer (Magic Door Used Books) and member of LASFS, was shot and killed on 3 July; he was 69. [F770]
 - *Martin Landau* (1928-2017), US actor whose many genre credits include *Mission: Impossible* (1966-1969), *Space: 1999* (1975-1977), *The Fall of the House of Usher* (1979), *Meteor* (1979) and *Frankenweenie* (2012 voice), died on 15 July aged 89. [SG/MR]
 - *Joan Lee*, Stan Lee's wife for 69 years, who had several voice roles in *Fantastic Four* (1994) and other Marvel animated series plus a cameo in *X-Men: Apocalypse* (2016), died on 6 July aged 95. [MR]
 - *Bob Lubbers* (1922-2017), US comics artist for the *Tarzan* newspaper strip 1950-1954, who worked on *Li'l Abner* and drew *The Human Fly* for Marvel 1978-1979, died on 8 July; he was 95. [PDF]
 - *Elsa Martinelli* (1935-2017), Italian model and actress in *Blood and Roses* (1960) and *The 10th Victim* (1965), died on 10 July aged 82. [AIP/GM]
 - *Naiyer Masud* (1936-2017), Indian academic, novelist and translator of Kafka's stories into Urdu, died on 24 July. [PDF]
 - *Barry Norman* (1933-2017), UK journalist and film critic whose sf novel was *End Product* (1975) and who scripted storylines for the Wally Fawkes ('Trog') satirical-fantasy strip *Flook*, died on 30 June aged 83. [JC]
 - *George A. Romero* (1940-2017), US film-maker best known for the zombie cult classic *Night of the Living Dead* (1968) and sequels, died on 16 July aged 77. Other genre films include *The Crazies* (1973), *Creepshow* (1982), *Monkey Shines* (1988) and *The Dark Half* (1993, like *Creepshow* scripted by Stephen King). [SG/MR]
 - *William Sanders* (1942-2017), US author of the alternate-history *Journey to Fusang* (1988) and other genre novels, who with Lawrence Watt-Evans edited *Helix SF* 2006-2009, died on 30 June aged 75. [GD]
 - *Flo Steinberg* (1939-2017), who in 1963 was half the Marvel Comics staff (the other half being Stan Lee) but left to publish her pioneering underground *Big Apple Comix* in 1968, died on 23 July aged 78. [PDF]
 - *Galip Tekin* (1958-2017), Turkish sf/fantasy comics artist and dystopian novelist, was found dead on 6 July; he was 59. [PDF]

- *Deborah Watling* (1948-2017), UK actress who was Patrick Troughton's companion Victoria in 40 episodes of *Doctor Who* (1967-1968), died on 21 July aged 69. Other credits included *H.G. Wells' The Invisible Man* (1958-1959) and *Where Time Began* (1977). [SG]
- *David Widdicombe* (1962-2017), Canadian playwright and film-maker whose play *Science Fiction* (2000) won an Aurora award, died on 8 July 8; he was 55. [SFS]
- *Heathcote Williams* (1941-2017), UK writer/actor whose 1977 play *The Immortalist* ponders themes of time and immortality, died on 1 July aged 75. Genre films include *Slipstream* (1989), *Orlando* (1992), *Alice in Wonderland* (1999), *The Sandman* (2000) and *City of Ember* (2008). [SG]

The Weakest Link. Q: 'What Irvine Welsh novel had a monologue by a tapeworm?' A: '*Wuthering Heights*.' (ITV, *The Chase*) [PE]

Science Masterclass. 'Neuroskeptic' of *Discover* magazine found four allegedly peer-reviewed science journals happy to accept a paper on *Star Wars* 'midi-chlorians', based on Wikipedia's mitochondria entry (after a quick search-and-replace and thesaurus shuffling), peppered with references to the Force, Darth Plagueis of the Sith, etc., and signed as by Dr Lucas McGeorge and Dr Annette Kin. Of nine targeted journals, five rejected this nonsense (full marks to *JSM Biochemistry and Molecular Biology* for 'The authors have neglected to add the following references: Lucas et al., 1977, Palpatine et al., 1980, and Calrissian et al., 1983'); three published the paper; one accepted it but wanted a \$360 publication fee which was not forthcoming. ([Discover blog, 22 July](#)) [PB]

Court Circular. Penthouse Global Media has [acquired or re-acquired](#) Bob Guccione's magazine *Omni*, with a print relaunch planned for late October. Ellen Datlow is to return as fiction editor. [ED] PGM is suing Jerrick Media and others over the [omni.media](#) 'Omni Reboot' site, which uses the old *Omni* trademarks (e.g. the logo), covers, fiction and nonfiction without apparently having bothered to acquire rights. Jerrick's attempt to register *Omni Reboot* as a trademark was denied owing to the already existing *Omni* marks. ([Hollywood Reporter](#), 7 July)

Hello, Sailor! 'This is why magic is worse even than quantum physics. Because, while both spit in the eye of common sense, I've never had a Higgs boson turn up and try to have a conversation with me.' (Ben Aaronovitch,

Whispers Under Ground [US edition], 2012) [CH]

As Others See Us II. A polemic by one Kyle Smith mentions J.K. Rowling but somehow manages to forget all about her (and about Stephenie Meyer too) before its triumphant closing line: ‘To be slightly less reductionist than the [Bechdel Test](#), women tend to write movies about relationships, and men tend to write movies about aliens and shootouts. Have a wander through the sci-fi and fantasy section of your local bookstore. How many of these books’ authors are female? Yet these are where the big movie ideas come from. If a woman wants the next *Lord of the Rings*-style franchise to pass the Bechdel Test, then a woman should come up with a story with as much earning potential as J.R.R. Tolkien’s.’ ([National Review](#), 10 July) [MMW]

Publishers & Sinners. Christopher Teague announced the closure of his Wales-based horror imprint Pendragon Press, established in 1999. See www.pendragonpress.net for more. (15 July) [RF]

Random Fandom. The *New York Times* magazine has sensationally discovered printed fanzines, or rather, ‘the resurgence of zines’. One publisher explains their charm: ‘He described zines as the successor to personal blogs, but personal blogs have been in the decline over the past decade. And zines can’t get replies or hateful remarks in a comments section.’ (*NY Times*, 7 March) [MMW] An agonizing reappraisal may follow when they rediscover the concept of the letter column.

The Dead Past. *50 Years Ago*, a note on the large-format, Arts Council-supported *New Worlds*: ‘Whilst the magazine’s departure from traditionalism will displease those who have in the recent past criticised “the Ballard cult,” it must be appreciated that flexibility is desirable, that change is inevitable and that Michael Moorcock’s endeavours to ensure the continuation of a market for British science fiction writers are to be entirely applauded.’ (Ron Bennett, [Skyrack 94](#), August 1967)

• *40 Years Ago*, local democracy was seen to be done: ‘The Oxford Sf Group’s elections were held a few weeks ago [...] Voting was conducted by the “single transferable candidate” system, whereby losing contenders were transferred to the murky waters of the River Cherwell. A small plastic duck was elected President.’ ([Checkpoint 84](#), August 1977)

Fanfundery. *TAFF*: 2017 delegate John Purcell’s official address for *TAFF* email and PayPal donations is 2017taff2019 at gmail dot com.

Thog's Masterclass. *Work-Out Dept.* '... his face made a sudden gymnastic move.' (Danny Birt, *Ending an Ending*, 2008) [MC]

- *Romancing the Thesaurus.* 'It was a titanic airplane – monstrous, gargantuan, and every other word that denoted immensity.' (John W. Campbell Jr, 'Solarite', *Astounding*, Nov 1930) [DL] 'She was pulchritudinous, buxom, callipygous, leggy. Her torso was slender, and her abdominal muscles as well defined as those of a belly dancer, so that her navel was like a period between two cursive brackets. Her hair was lustrous, and tied in a loose knot at the back of her swanlike neck. Hair, eye, and skin color were optional. She was, of course, naked.' (John C. Wright, 'An Unimaginable Light', *God, Robot*, 2016)
 - *Eyeballs in the Sky.* 'Startled, her eyes flew up like birds and collided with his jet black ones ...' (Tanith Lee, 'You Are My Sunshine', *Chrysalis 8*, 1980) [BA]
-

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 11 August 2017: Summer Social for the Brum Group at The Black Eagle, Hockley – places limited, deposit and advance booking required, so check by email (it may well be Too Late). Meetings are normally 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre. £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future events/speakers: 8 September 2017 Jackie Burns; 13 October 2017 Andy Sawyer; 3 November 2017 Peter F. Hamilton; 1 December (date TBC) Christmas Social.
- 11 October 2017: Reading University 'Monsters and the Monstrous' season opens with the film *Nosferatu* (1922). 7pm in Van Emden lecture theatre, Edith Morley, Whiteknights campus. £5. With introductory talk.
- 18 October 2017: *Frankenstein* (1931), as for *Nosferatu* above.
- 23 October 2017: 'Hybrids and Health Humanities: Ceroplasty, Couplets, Chimeras' discussion, 7pm in LO22, G01, Reading University London Road campus. Free.
- 25 October 2017: *Freaks* (1932), as for *Nosferatu* above.

Editorial. For some easily disappointed fans, Shakespeare's *Hamlet* died forever when Sarah Bernhardt played the title role in 1899. Apparently [a similar fate has overtaken Doctor Who](#), a show now doomed to become as

utterly forgotten as *Hamlet* is today.

- Would anyone like a signed hardback first edition of my first solo book, *War in 2080: The Future of Military Technology* (1979)? Copies are available while stocks last for the cost of inland postage (in the UK only, I'm afraid). Allowing for PayPal's depredations, £3.50 should cover it. <http://ansible.uk/paypal.html> [For the duration I've added a dedicated War in 2080 button on this page to avoid confusion between this and other donations.]

R.I.P. Extra. *Jeanne Moreau* (1928-2017), French actress, screenwriter and director whose genre films include *The Trial* (1962), *Hu-Man* (1975) and *Until the End of the World* (1991), was found dead on 31 July; she was 89. [SG]

- *David E.H. Jones* (1938-2017), UK scientist who wrote hundreds of humorous columns for *New Scientist* (as Ariadne) and *Nature* (as Daedalus) proposing bizarre and sometimes prophetic inventions – collected in *The Inventions of Daedalus: A Compendium of Plausible Schemes* (1982) and its sequels – died on 19 July; he was 79. [AIP]

- *Sam Shepard* (1943-2017), US actor, director and playwright who played Chuck Yeager in *The Right Stuff* (1983), died on 27 July aged 73. Genre credits include *The Return* (2006) and, as writer and director, the supernatural western *Silent Tongue* (1993). [SG]

- *Marty Sklar* (1934-2017), Disney 'imagineer' involved in the company's 1964 New York World's Fair attractions and the development of EPCOT Center at Disney World, died on 27 July aged 83. [MMW]

Outraged Letters. *Andre Paine* writes: 'Of possible interest for *Ansible*, the Pink Floyd exhibition *Their Mortal Remains* (at the V&A until 1 October) includes Michael Moorcock's *The Sleeping Sorceress* alongside the soundtrack to *2001: A Space Odyssey*, a *Daily Mirror* front page (MAN WALKS ON THE MOON) and a Penguin paperback, *The Rise of Enoch Powell*, in a red phone box of objects from the Sixties. [...] The exhibition also features the CD of *The Dark Side of the Moon* that the late British astronaut played in space on board the Space Shuttle. (The band, however, have always resisted the "space rock" label; the record's lyrical themes are more earthly concerns of conflict, greed and insanity.)' Here's the official V&A web page:

<https://www.vam.ac.uk/exhibitions/pink-floyd>

Thog's Second Helping. *Continuity Dept.* Narrator describes sister: 'Now Becky is somewhere around my age, maybe even a little older – fifteen, say.' Narrator addresses sister: “*Everybody* knows stuff I don't!” I said. “Even you! And you're a lot younger!” (Roger Zelazny, *A Dark Traveling*, 1987) [PL]

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From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo:
Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or the antidote to
Psycho-Chemical Aerosols.

Worldcon 75. Post-con committee tweet: ‘We are the second biggest Worldcon ever. 10516 Members and Day Passes / 7119 Warm Bodies on Site.’ Thanks to an unexpected late surge of registrations, there was much overcrowding and queueing (even for items other than George R.R. Martin autographs, a four-hour wait) until more function space could be brought into play.

• **Hugos**: NOVEL N.K. Jemisin, *The Obelisk Gate*. NOVELLA Seanan McGuire, *Every Heart a Doorway*. NOVELETTE Ursula Vernon, ‘The Tomato Thief’ (*Apex* 1/16). SHORT Amal El-Mohtar, ‘Seasons of Glass and Iron’ (*The Starlit Wood*). RELATED Ursula K. Le Guin, *Words Are My Matter*. GRAPHIC Marjorie Liu & Sana Takeda, *Monstress, Volume 1: Awakening*. DRAMATIC – LONG *Arrival*. DRAMATIC – SHORT *The Expanse: ‘Leviathan Wakes’*. EDITOR – SHORT Ellen Datlow. EDITOR – LONG Liz Gorinsky. PRO ARTIST Julie Dillon. SEMIPROZINE *Uncanny*. FANZINE *Lady Business*. FANCAST *Tea and Jeopardy*. FAN WRITER Abigail Nussbaum. FAN ARTIST Elizabeth Leggett. SERIES Lois McMaster Bujold, *Vorkosigan Saga*. CAMPBELL AWARD (not a Hugo): Ada Palmer.

• **Business Meeting**. Proposed changes to the Hugo nomination process (EPH+ and three-stage voting) were voted down, while Best Series was ratified as a permanent category and the YA not-a-Hugo award approved for 2018.

• **Worldcon 2019**: the unopposed Dublin bid won, of course, with 1,227 site selection votes cast. See events list below.

The Impossible Star

Brian Aldiss (1925-2017), who needs no introduction as a major and

amazingly various SF author (since the 1950s), anthologist and critic, died in his sleep early on 19 August after enjoying his 92nd birthday celebrations on the 18th. [MJE] Awards include two Hugos, a Nebula, the Campbell Memorial Award, multiple BSFA awards and such career honours as the Pilgrim, SFWA Grand Master Award and OBE. Brian loved fandom, warts and all, and entertained and enlightened us at countless conventions including the 1965 and 1979 UK Worldcons at which he was guest of honour. *Michael Moorcock writes*: ‘A generous friend I’ve known since 1957. Sixty years a king. I remember many kindnesses, many arguments and a couple of quarrels, but nothing that ever stopped us talking. He and I were close and affectionate friends and I was able to pay a bit of a tribute to him in my recent introduction to *Frankenstein Unbound*. The world really is a little darker for his passing. A massive talent, a genial presence, a complicated lust for life.’ See news.ansible.uk/a362supp.html for further tributes and memories.

Duncan Lunan is fleeing the horrors of Brexit; or rather, his wife Linda is going home to Eire and taking him with her. They will be in Co. Cork from 2 October (CoA to follow). ‘I’m donating my entire collection of books, journals, magazines etc to University College Cork, so that I will still have access to it ... 2500+ SF books and a similar number of SF mags, as well as my nonfiction collections, at least another 3000 books plus journals etc.’ See also www.duncanlunan.com.

Terry Pratchett’s unfinished work – or at least, a single elderly and perhaps merely symbolic IDE hard drive – was in accordance with his wishes crushed by a steamroller on 25 August. ([Guardian](#), 30 August)

John Scalzi’s ‘net worth is estimated to be in the range of approximately \$629464287 in 2017, according to the users of vipfaq. The estimated net worth includes stocks, properties, and luxury goods such as yachts and private airplanes.’ The man himself cautiously added, ‘Spoiler: I may not actually be worth this much.’ (Twitter, 16 August)

Robert Silverberg scorns the new-fangled: ‘I use the male as the generic third person. Those of you who can’t stomach this can take it up with my agent. Or my lawyer.’ (Worldcon 75 panel)

Conoclinium

2 Sep • **Fighting Fantasy Fest 2**, Univ of West London, Ealing. 9am-8pm. With Steve Jackson & Ian Livingstone. See tinyurl.com/y8th9u4u.

8-9 Sep • **TitanCon**, Wellington Park Hotel, Belfast. Friday afternoon free; £28 reg Saturday; £5 supporting. See titancon.com.

9 Sep • **International Comics Expo (ICE)**, Birmingham Conference Centre, Smallbrook, Birmingham. 11am-11pm. Standard tickets £12; £15 for early entry at 10am. See www.thecomicsshow.co.uk.

9-10 Sep • **Middle-earth Festival**, Sarehole Mill, Cole Bank Rd, Hall Green, Birmingham, B13 0BD. Free. See middleearthfestival.co.uk.

16 Sep • **Organic Systems: Environments, Bodies and Cultures in SF** (conference), Keynes Library, 43 Gordon Square, London, WC1H 0PD. See tinyurl.com/mte628u for details.

16 Sep - 13 Jan • **Terry Pratchett: HisWorld** (exhibition), Salisbury Museum. Tickets £7.50; child £3.60. See pratchetthisworld.com.

21-24 Sep • **Oxonmoot** (Tolkien Soc), St Antony's College, Oxford. £60/£70 reg. See www.tolkiensociety.org/events/oxonmoot-2017/.

23 Sep • **Crossness Steampunk Convivial**, Crossness Engines, Belvedere Rd, Abbey Wood, SE2 9AQ. £15 at crossnessconvivial.co.uk.

23 Sep • **Preston Comic Con**, Guild Hall, Preston. 10:30am-5pm. £8; 9:30am 'early bird' entry £12. See www.prestoncomiccon.co.uk.

29 Sep - 1 Oct • **Fantasycon**, Bull Hotel, Peterborough. £56.50 reg (BFS members £46.50), *rising soon*; see www.hwsevents.co.uk/shop-2.

30 Sep • **Super Sci-Fi Festival**, Doncaster town centre. Free, with dealer stalls. See www.digi-fest.co.uk/dssf2017.

6-9 Oct • **Grimmfest** (horror/cult film festival), Odeon Printworks, Manchester. Tickets £75 or £80 'premium' from grimmfest.com.

6-9 Oct • **Irish Discworld Convention**, Cork International Hotel, Cork Airport, Ireland. €50 reg; €40 concessions; accompanied under-13s €1. SOLD OUT; WAITING LIST AT WEBSITE. See idwcon.org.

6-8 Oct • **Octocon**, Camden Court Hotel, Camden St, Dublin, Ireland. €35 reg; concessions €20; accompanied under-13s free; €10 supp. Join online at

octocon.com.

7-8 Oct • **Nor-Con** (media), Norfolk Showground Arena. Tickets at various prices from www.nor-con.co.uk.

7-8 Oct • **SFW in the City** (Sci-Fi Weekender spinoff), O₂ Academy, Sheffield. Various priced: see www.sfwinthecity.com.

28 Oct • **Writing Horror Stories** (workshop), QUAD Centre, Derby, DE1 3AS. 10am-4pm. £30 reg; £25 concessions. For details see [derbyquad.co.uk/creative-course-\(adult\)/writing-horror-stories.aspx](http://derbyquad.co.uk/creative-course-(adult)/writing-horror-stories.aspx).

27 Nov • **J.G. Ballard and the Sciences** (conference), LAB 9, Anglia Ruskin University, East Road, Cambridge, CB1 1PT. £20 reg; £10 concessions. Lunch not included. See tinyurl.com/y9zdyje5.

2 Dec • **Dragonmeet** (gaming), Novotel London West, W6 8DR. 9am-midnight. £10 reg with group discounts: www.dragonmeet.co.uk.

17 Feb 2018 • **Picocon 35**, Beit Quadrangle, Imperial College, London. Guests TBA. £12 reg; £10 concessions; £8 ICSF members; past GoHs free. See www.union.ic.ac.uk/scc/icsf/picocon/.

10-12 Aug 2018 • **Nine Worlds Geekfest** (multimedia): currently exploring London and Birmingham venues, with a decision expected in October. Now £99 reg; under-18s free. Book online at nineworlds.co.uk.

22-24 Feb 2019 • **Redemption** (multimedia), Royal Victoria Hotel, Sheffield. £65 reg; concessions £45; under-18s £25; under-3s free. Online booking (5% fee), day rates: www.redemption-convention.org.uk.

15-19 Aug 2019 • **Dublin 2019** (Worldcon), Dublin, Ireland. GoH Bill & Mary Burns, Diane Duane, Ginjer Buchanan, Ian McDonald. Jocelyn Bell Burnell, Steve Jackson (US). €160 reg; €100 under-26s or first-time Worldcon members; €60 under-13s; €5 under-6s; €40 supp. The usual discounts for presupporters, Friends and site selection voters. Rates good until 28 February 2018. See dublin2019.com.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us, Momentarily. ‘Gucci made fashion headlines this week

with its sci-fi-inspired autumn/winter 2017 campaign. [... M]odels pose in *Star Trek*-influenced scenarios, fend off dinosaurs and fall prey to extra-terrestrial creatures that emerge from deep, dark lakes. If the Fifties and Sixties science fiction theme feels familiar, it's because the futuristic genre is having a moment.' ([Vogue](#), 26 July) [JF]

Awards. *Big Heart*: Carolina Gomez Lagerlöf.

- *First Fandom Hall of Fame*: Les and Es Cole, Jim Harmon.
- *Sidewise*: SHORT (tie) Daniel Bensen, 'Treasure Fleet' (*Tales from Alternate Earths*); Adam Rovner, 'What If the Jewish State Had Been Established in East Africa?' (*What Ifs of Jewish History*). LONG Ben H. Winters, *Underground Airlines*.
- *US Society of Illustrators Hall of Fame*: Beatrix Potter, Richard Powers. [AIP]

The Shape of Things to Come in James S.A. Corey's *Expanse* series: 'Someplace they're not going to start killing Earthers for shits and giggles if things go pear-shaped.' (*Leviathan Wakes*, 2011) "'Because he's the reason things went pear-shaped?" Holden replied ...' 'This was something that had been prepared for since well before Ganymede went pear-shaped.' (*Caliban's War*, 2012) "'It's all gone pear-shaped.'" (*Abaddon's Gate*, 2013) 'All goes pear-shaped.' 'No stations or relief ships if things went pear-shaped.' 'We start going pear-shaped, we can let go.' (*Cibola Burn*, 2014) 'If it was going to go pear-shaped, she should be the one to deal with it.' (*Babylon's Ashes*, 2016) [KJ]

R.I.P. *Hywel Bennett* (1944-2017), UK actor whose tv debut was in *Doctor Who* (1965), died on 25 July aged 73. Other genre credits include *Percy* (1971), *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1972), *Artemis 81* (1981) and *Neverwhere* (1996). [SG]

• *Joe Bologna* (1934-2017), US actor in *The Big Bus* (1976), *Transylvania 6-5000* (1985) and *Not Quite Human* (1987), died on 13 August aged 82. Animation voice credits include *Superman* (1997-1998 tv) and *Ice Age: The Meltdown* (2006). [F770]

• *Gregg Calkins* (1934-2017), long-time US fan whose fanzines included *Oops!a!* (1952-1961) and *The Rambling Fap* (for FAPA, 1950s-late 1990s), died on 31 July; he was 82. [AIP]

• *Paul Doherty*, US Exploratorium staff scientist who collaborated with Pat Murphy on scores of *F&SF* science columns (1997-2017) and the 2016

novelette 'Cold Comfort', died on 18 August. [PDF]

- *Ty Hardin* (1930-2017), US Western actor with sf/fantasy roles in *The Space Children* (1958), *I Married a Monster from Outer Space* (1958) and *Image of the Beast* (1980), died on 3 August aged 87. [PDF]
- *Robert Hardy* (1925-2017), UK actor whose genre credits include *Demons of the Mind* (1972), *Dark Places* (1973), *Gawain and the Green Knight* (1973), *The Pied Piper of Hamelin* (1981), *Mary Shelley's Frankenstein* (1994), *Gulliver's Travels* (1996), *The 10th Kingdom* (2000), *The Lost World* (2001), *Thunderpants* (2002) and four Harry Potter films 2002-2007, died on 3 August; he was 91. [SG]
- *Lars Helander* (1939-2017), former Swedish fan whose late-1950s *Sfaria* was his country's first English-language fanzine, has died aged 78. [AE]
- *Tobe Hooper* (1943-2017), US director of 'Salem's Lot (1979 tv), *Poltergeist* (1982), *Lifeforce* (1985), *Invaders from Mars* (1986), *The Mangler* (1995) and others, died on 26 August aged 74. [GW]
- *Sonny Landham* (1941-2017), US actor in *Poltergeist* (1982), *Predator* (1987) and *Disintegration* (2007), died on 17 August aged 76.
- *Jerry Lewis* (1926-2017), US actor and slapstick comedian whose genre films include *Visit To A Small Planet* (1960), *The Nutty Professor* (1963) and *Way ... Way Out* (1966), died on 20 August aged 91.
- *Thomas Meehan* (1929-2017), US writer and producer who scripted Mel Brooks's *Spaceballs* (1987), died on 22 August aged 88. [PDF]
- *Mark Merlis* (1950-2017), US author whose gay fantasy *An Arrow's Flight* (1998) won a Lambda Award, died on 15 August aged 67. [MMW]
- *Haruo Nakajima* (1929-2017), Japanese actor who wore the rubber monster suit for Toho's *Gojira/Godzilla* (1954) and 11 sequels, died on 7 August aged 88. [RR]
- *Diane Pearson*, senior editor at Corgi/Transworld 1964-2002, who ran Corgi SF from the 1960s and in 1984 began to publish the first paperbacks of Terry Pratchett's Discworld books, died in August; she was 85. [PDF/MJE]
- *Victor Pemberton* 1931-2017, UK *Doctor Who* actor, writer and script editor whose 1968 storyline 'Fury from the Deep' (which he also novelized) introduced the famous sonic screwdriver, died on 13 August aged 85. Other script credits include *Timeslip* (1971) and *Ace of Wands* (1972).
- *Kim Poor* (1952-2017), noted US space artist whose many cover credits include *Analog*, *Asimov's*, *Omni* and some sf books, and whose work appeared as backgrounds in *Alien Nation*, *seaQuest DSV* and *Babylon 5*, died

on 16 August. [PDF]

- *Jay Thomas* (1948-2017), US actor in *Mork & Mindy* (1979-1981 tv), *Hercules* (1998-1999 tv), *Dragonfly* (2002), *The Santa Clause 2 & 3* (2002, 2006) and *Horrorween* (2011), died on 24 August aged 69. [MMW]
- *Gordon Williams* (1934-2017), Scots author of the horror thriller *The Bornless Keeper* (1974 as P.B. Yuill) and the sf *Micronauts* series opening with *The Micronauts* (1977), died on 20 August aged 83. [JC]
- *Jack Wodhams* (1931-2017) UK-born Australian author of many hard sf stories (mostly for *Analog* 1967-1990), three solo novels beginning with *The Authentic Touch* (1971) and one 2015 children's book with Adam Wallace, died on 3 August; he was 85. [PC]

Publishers and Sinners. The Harper Voyager UK website [was hacked on 4 August](#), and for days showed many 'Admin' posts extolling the virtues of cheap Chinese NFL jerseys in strange prose traceable to spam comments elsewhere online. Sample headline: 'CHEAP JERSEYS IS NOT JUST THE DEATH OF A CELEBRITY ...' (Harpervoyagerbooks.co.uk)

Random Fandom. *Theodore 'Vox Day' Beale*, whose Rabid Puppies bloc-vote made him a Hugo finalist as best editor (long form), received 32 first-place votes on the final ballot; the more charismatic No Award had 186.

- *Steve Stiles's* cancer operation on 9 August was a success; he's now recovering at home, minus two-thirds of his right lung.

C.o.A. *Duncan Lunan*, from 2 October: somewhere in Clonakilty, Co. Cork. *Howard Waldrop*, 5426 Manchaca #123, Austin, TX 78745, USA.

Here Today, Gone Today. On 24 August, Lani Sarem's fantasy *Handbook for Mortals* was briefly number one on the *New York Times* YA hardback bestseller list. That a debut novel from a new publisher, not widely available from retail outlets, could sell 18,000 copies in a week roused suspicion and even suggestions of strategic bulk ordering from selected bookshops that report sales figures to *NYT*. Within hours a replacement *NYT* list appeared, with Sarem no longer included. ([NPR](#), 25 August) All in the great tradition of L. Ron Hubbard!

In Typo Veritas. *Egg-Throwing Dept:* 'Sixty years after Dresediel Lex cast off the gods' yolk, its masters still demanded blood.' (Max Gladstone, *Two Serpents Rise*, 2013).

Court Circular. More on the lawsuit against Moppet Books and its KinderGuides (see [A355](#)) by publishers and literary estates including Arthur C. Clarke's: a US judge ruled on 28 July that these 'unauthorized derivatives' of copyright texts, though framed as study guides for kids, weren't protected by fair use. (*PW*, 1 August). A later injunction against their further distribution made little difference, since takedown notices had removed the offending KinderGuides from sale months ago. (*PW*, 17 August). Yet more court proceedings begin on 2 October. [AIP]

The Dead Past. *12 Years Ago*, Brian Aldiss told us about his OBE: 'I was greatly chuffed by the award "for services to Literature" – a euphemism in this case for SF... But when chatting to Her Majesty, I was disappointed to find she had only got as far as John Wyndham and the triffids. "What do you like about it?" I asked. She replied, "Oh, it's such a cosy catastrophe." I blushed.' ([Ansible 216](#), July 2005)

- *30 Years Ago*, a Court Circular: "It's UFOs By Royal Appointment!" says a clipping sent by bibliophile David Garnett. "Head-in-the-Stars Prince Charles has joined a galaxy of celebrity space-watchers who believe in little green men. He's at the centre of a new cosmic controversy after graciously accepting weirdo sci-fi novels by the founder of the evil Scientology cult L. Ron Hubbard. The mystical Hubbard trilogy *Mission Earth* – stories of futuristic heroes zapping across the universe in flying saucers – is now sitting on the Prince's personal bookshelves," etc. "Sick and dangerous ... corrupting works ... the wacky Prince ..." Thus spake the mainstream *Sunday Sport*. (*Ansible* 50, August/September 1987)

Fanfundery. *TAFF*: John Purcell returned from his trip with 5,862 photos, and now takes on the duties of North American Administrator.

- Worldcon 75 fan fund auctions, sales and donations raised nearly €2,300, divided between *TAFF*, *GUFF* and *DUFF*: see taff.org.uk. [AR]

Thog's Masterclass. *Astronomy Dept.* 'Ganymede didn't revolve on its own axis. It went around the mother planet about once a week, but always with the same surface facing it ...' (Lester del Rey [ghostwritten by Paul W. Fairman], *The Runaway Robot*, 1965) [BA]

- *Dept of Vacuum Engineering.* 'A flat stone closed the cave tight. When we were inside, we could make a vacuum by packing dirt round the edges [...] so Paul could use his portable air unit and take off his suit.' (*Ibid*) [BA]

- *My Vegetable Love Should Grow.* 'Anne Marie sighed, a sigh so deep it

caused her breasts to swell – like two young pears as fresh as spring, thought Lars.’ (Neal Barrett, Jr, *The Karma Corps*, 1984) [DAg]

• *Dept of Pointed Looks*. ‘Lars turned on him, his eyes slivers of glass.’ (*Ibid*) [DAg]

• *Dept of Nature Study*. ‘The Ministry of Defence bred acronyms like a mangrove swamp.’ (Douglas Board, *Time of Lies*, 2017) [MMW]

• *Neat Tricks*. ‘Her fingertips moved like small warm feet across his back.’ (Dean Owen, *Konga* [film novelization], 1960) [DAn]

• *Eyeballs in the Sky*. ‘She had very nice tits, large with pink nipples and fricking gorgeous blue eyes ...’ (John Ringo, *Ghost*, 2005) [IC] ‘Amamiya was standing in the middle of the hallway, eyes still half-down but looking straight at him.’ (Hideo Yokoyama, *Six Four*, 2012; trans Jonathan Lloyd-Davies 2016) [PB] ‘He suspected his eyes had barked the order.’ (*Ibid*) [PB]

• *Mot Juste Dept*. “‘Like you hustling that toilet paper, right?’ / I flushed at the mention.’ (Emma Cline, *The Girls*, 2016)

Endnotes

Apparitions.

• 8 September 2017: Jackie Burns talks to the Brum Group. 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre. £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future events/speakers: 13 October 2017 Andy Sawyer; 3 November 2017 Peter F. Hamilton; 1 December (date TBC) Christmas Social.

• 11 October 2017: Reading University ‘Monsters and the Monstrous’ season opens with the film *Nosferatu* (1922). 7pm in Van Emden lecture theatre, Edith Morley, Whiteknights campus. £5. With introductory talk.

• 18 October 2017: *Frankenstein* (1931), as for *Nosferatu* above.

• 23 October 2017: ‘Hybrids and Health Humanities: Ceroplasty, Couplets, Chimeras’ discussion, 7pm in LO22, G01, Reading University London Road campus. Free.

• 25 October 2017: *Freaks* (1932), as for *Nosferatu* above.

Editorial. Despite having bought an attending membership out of general solidarity, I didn’t make it to Worldcon 75 and am not planning any convention appearances for some while. Maybe after I’ve reached the top of a long, long waiting list for hearing aid reassessment. Meanwhile here are links

to the latest at Ansible Editions (no hard sell this time) and, as a reminder, the above-mentioned Brian Aldiss memorial supplement.

<http://ae.ansible.uk/>

<http://news.ansible.uk/a362supp.html>

Hugo Statistics Etc. All you could possibly wish to know, revealed by Hugo administrator Nicholas Whyte in official reports, personal blog posts and the Hugo Packet Debrief:

[http://www.worldcon.fi/wp-](http://www.worldcon.fi/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/HugoReport1_voting.pdf)

[content/uploads/2017/08/HugoReport1_voting.pdf](http://www.worldcon.fi/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/HugoReport1_voting.pdf)

http://www.worldcon.fi/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/HugoReport2_nominations.pdf

http://www.worldcon.fi/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/HugoReport3_nomination_details.pdf

http://www.worldcon.fi/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/HugoReport4_systems_comparison.pdf

http://www.worldcon.fi/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/HugoReport5_decisions.pdf

<http://nwhyte.livejournal.com/2865435.html>

<http://nwhyte.livejournal.com/2866074.html>

<http://nwhyte.livejournal.com/2866499.html>

Further Worldcon 75 Oddments. Publications, including the at-con newsletter; the traditional spoof newsletter; WSFS Division Post-Con Report:

<http://www.worldcon.fi/publications/>

<http://theinferior4.livejournal.com/1081142.html>

<http://blog.michaell.org/2017/08/worldcon-75-wsfs-division-post-con.html>

Outraged Letters. *Steve Sneyd's* famously handwritten *Data Dump* roundup of sf poetry news hasn't been seen for some while, but he reassures *Ansible* that he's alive and well: 'Gist is, after *DD* 25th anniversary end of last year, reptile brain went on strike demanding a break. Since then been a mix of mental and physical inertia, *still* not managed to motivate to get back to it, though must do RSN as nightmare backlog of data/review copies silted up. So it goes.'

Last-Minute R.I.P. *Richard Anderson* (1926-2017), US actor best remembered as Oscar Goldman in *The Six Million Dollar Man* (1973-1978), *The Bionic Woman* (1976-1978) and spinoffs to 1994, died on 31 August aged 91. Further credits include *Forbidden Planet* (1956), *Seven Days in May*

(1964), *Seconds* (1966), *Ghostbreakers* (1967), *The Night Strangler* (1973) and *The Stepford Children* (1987). [SG/LP]

Thog's Second Helping. *Simile Dept.* 'Her lips wore smugness like a slipper.' ('Michael Morgan', *Decoy*, 1953)

- *Dept of Strong Language.* 'Langly, sinking rapidly now, expleted: "You!"' (William L. Rivera, *Panic Walks Alone*, 1976)
- *Nautical Commands Dept.* 'All hands on deck and the cook!' (Cromwell Gibbons, *The Bat Woman*, 1938)

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Ansible® 363, October 2017

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo:
Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or anything
that's zymolose polydactile.

Me and Nd-YAG. Very soon I hope to look like Brad Foster's cartoon, after having the post-cataract fog lasered out of one eye. Wish me luck.

The Scarlet Capsule

Leigh Brackett was revealed as the first ever woman finalist for the best-novel Hugo (with *The Long Tomorrow*) when the 1956 shortlist was at last unearthed from an old Worldcon PR. (www.thehugoawards.org)

Omar el Akkad's story of a new US civil war, *American War*, is happily free from genre taint despite being set in 2075: 'I certainly never intended to write a book about the future. The reason the book is set in the future is simply because I needed time for the fictional world to sort of marinate. I needed time for the sea levels to rise 60 meters or whatever ridiculous amount that I dreamed up to bury the coasts. I needed time for the Bouazizi Empire, which is sort of the rising empire in the book, to take form. That was the only reason to sort of set it in the future, but I certainly never set out to write science fiction or anything like that.' (Vox.com interview, 21 September) [JB]

Nigel Kneale's widow Judith Kerr conveyed his views on SF: 'He always said he hated science fiction and never read it because science fiction tends to happen in someplace where anything can happen, so it's not interesting. It's like writing about drunks, which is also terribly boring because they can do anything. I think the Quatermass stories are not so much science fiction as ideas. They're all based on an idea and what might happen to quite ordinary people if this particular thing happened.' (Interview, *Quatermass and the Pit* Blu-ray Extra) [RJS]

Steve Matchett tweeted from the Outer Planets: ‘If this final transmitted message from Cassini is not “My God ... it’s full of stars!” I will be really very, very disappointed.’ (15 September) [JG]

Adam Roberts is busy ‘reading through the whole of H.G. Wells’s oeuvre, and am now up to *Bealby* (1915). Not one of his SFnal titles, of course, and for that reason perhaps not of interest to Thog. But one of the characters in the book, the Lord Chancellor no less, has some quite remarkable eyebrows, to wit: he has eyebrows which he is “able to furl or unfurl at will”. I find that a little hard to picture, myself. And there’s more: “By the end of dinner the Lord Chancellor kept his eyebrows furled only by the most strenuous relaxation of his muscles.” ““No,’ shouted the Lord Chancellor, losing all self-control and waving his eyebrows about madly.” “With his eyebrows spread like the wings of a fighting-cock the Lord Chancellor in five vast noiseless strides had crossed the intervening space and gripped the butler by his collarless shirt.” It’s a rarely exploited superpower, that.’ (27 September)

Conringia

6-9 Oct • **Grimmfest** (horror/cult film festival), Odeon Printworks, Manchester. Tickets £75 or £80 ‘premium’ from grimmfest.com.

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7-8 Oct • **SFW in the City** (Sci-Fi Weekender spinoff), O₂ Academy, Sheffield. Various priced: see www.sfwinthecity.com.

13 Oct • **British Fantasy Society Social**, The Counting House, 50 Cornhill, London. 7pm to late. Free; all welcome.

13-15 Oct • **Lakes International Comic Art Festival**, Kendal, Cumbria.

Some parts free. For tickets see www.comicartfestival.com.

Cancelled 14 Oct • **M.A.S.H.** (Manchester Alternative SciFi Horror), Trafford Park. 10am-4pm & 7pm-1am. £10; £12 at door. See pod.events [*domain now expired, very soon after being checked for this issue; see instead <https://www.facebook.com/events/572682289602510/>*].

20-22 Oct • **Celluloid Screams** (horror film festival), Showroom Cinema, Sheffield. See celluloidscreams.co.uk. 0114 275 7727.

20-22 Oct • **Festival of Fantastic Films**, Pendulum Hotel, Manchester. £85 reg; day rates £35 Fri or Sun, £50 Sat. Cheques c/o 8 Glenfield, Altrincham, Cheshire, WA14 4QH. See fantastic-films.com.

20 Oct - 28 Feb • **Harry Potter: A History of Magic**, British Library, London. See www.bl.uk/events/harry-potter-a-history-of-magic.

25 Oct • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. With Gaie Sebold. Free.

25 Oct - 28 Jan • **Tove Jansson** (exhibition), Dulwich Picture Gallery. £15.50; £7 concessions. See tinyurl.com/y725rdts.

27-31 Oct • **Edinburgh Horror Festival**, various city venues and programme to be announced. See www.edhorrorfest.co.uk.

28 Oct • **BristolCon**, Hilton Doubletree Hotel, Bristol. £25/£20 concessions; £30/£25 at the door. Cheques to Flat 11, Beaufort Ct Flats, 1 Beaufort St (off Stapleton Rd), Easton, Bristol, BS5 0SQ. PayPal registration at www.bristolcon.org.

28 Oct • **Frightfest**, Empire Cinema, Haymarket, London. Tickets £45 or £14.50 per film. See www.frightfest.co.uk/2017films/.

28 Oct • **Writing Horror Stories** (workshop), QUAD Centre, Derby, DE1 3AS. 10am-4pm. £30 reg; £25 concessions. For details see [derbyquad.co.uk/creative-course-\(adult\)/writing-horror-stories.aspx](http://derbyquad.co.uk/creative-course-(adult)/writing-horror-stories.aspx).

29 Oct • **Out of This World**, Sheffield city centre. Free, with dealer stalls. See www.digi-fest.co.uk/ootw-trader-tables.

1-30 Nov • **Grandville: Force Majeure** (Bryan Talbot exhibition), Orbital Comics, London, WC2H. See tinyurl.com/ycjzy5ss.

4-6 Nov • **Armadacon 29**, Future Inns, Plymouth. £35 reg; day £20 (concessions £30 and £15). Contact Moor Cottage, Cardinham, Bodmin, Cornwall, PL30 4BR; or see www.armadacon.org.

4-5 Nov • **Gollancz Festival**, Phoenix Artist's Club & Foyles, London. £25 Saturday; no information on Sunday. See gollanczfest.com.

10-12 Nov • **Novacon 47**, Park Inn, Nottingham. £50 reg (*may rise in November*); under-17s £12; under-13s free. Contact 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ. Online registration at www.novacon.org.uk.

25 Nov • **Sledge-Lit**, QUAD Centre, Derby. 10am-6pm. Tickets £25. See www.derbyquad.co.uk/events/sledge-lit-3.aspx.

3 Dec • **Stars of Time** (media), Tropicana, Weston-super-Mare. 10:30am-5:30pm. £6.50; child £3.50. See www.starsoftime.co.uk.

9 Dec • **2017: A Clarke Odyssey** (conference), Canterbury Christ Church University. *Rates now announced*: £65, concessions £50, including lunch etc. See 2017acl Clarke Odyssey.wordpress.com.

30 Dec - 2 Jan • **Steampunk New Year**, Mercure Hotel, Leicester. See www.asylumsteampunk.co.uk/steampunk-new-year-2017.

15-22 Sep 2018 • **Milford UK**, Trigonos, Snowdonia. £636 including room and meals; £150 deposit; published writers only. Booking has already begun for 14-21 September 2019. See www.milfordsf.co.uk.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others Fail to See Us. John Clute grumbled about the *Guardian's* 'ineffably poshlosty article by Alison Flood announcing the 2017 [*Man Booker*] shortlist, gingerly skirting the clear fact that at least three titles are fantastika – there are entries on Paul Auster, George Saunders and Mohsin Hamid in the *SF Encyclopedia*, where each of the shortlisted titles is described – and that the novel that had been in contention from the surprise non-listed author Colson Whitehead was also transgressively non-mimetic (*The Underground Railroad* is also described at length in the *SFE*). Just to be clear: science fiction, fantasy, the fantastic, non-mimetic are among the relevant terms that do not pass the *Guardian* good-taste filter.' (Facebook, 14

September)

Awards. *Elgin* (poetry collection): BOOK Jeannine Hall Gailey, *Field Guide to the End of the World*. CHAPBOOK Neil Aitken, *Leviathan*.

• *Emmy* (television) genre winners include: DRAMA *The Handmaid's Tale*. TV MOVIE *Black Mirror: San Junipero*.

• *Lord Ruthven* (vampires): NONFICTION David J. Skal, *Something in the Blood: The Untold Story of Bram Stoker*. FICTION Anne Rice, *Prince Lestat and the Realms of Atlantis*. POP CULTURE *Vamped / The Vampire Historian*. [F770]

• *PastWords Award*: a new career honour from the Historical Writers of America for an 'outstanding body of work.' The five inaugural winners include the learned historian of Westeros, George R.R. Martin. [L]

Alt-History. A Saudi Arabian social studies text was withdrawn because its photo of King Faisal signing the UN Charter in 1945 also includes Yoda from the *Star Wars* universe. The artist Abdullah Al Shehri, creator of many such mash-up images, has no idea how this one found its way into a schoolbook. (*NY Times*, 21 September) [AIP]

R.I.P. *Hasse (Hans) Alfredson* (1931-2017), Swedish actor, director and author whose novels include the 1996 alternate history *Attentatet i Pålsjö Skog (The Pålsjö Woods Attack)*, died on 10 September aged 86. [PDF/AH]

• *Francis Xavier Atencio* (1919-2017), Disney animator since 1938 (his first on-screen work being uncredited in *Pinocchio*) and Disneyland imagineer from 1965 to 1984, died on 10 September aged 98. [SFS]

• *Walter Becker* (1950-2017), US musician whose band Steely Dan used sf themes in such songs as 'King of the World' (1973), died on 3 September aged 67. [MJE]

• *Shelley Berman* (1925-2017), US actor/comedian seen in *Beware! The Blob* (1972), *Teen Witch* (1989) and various genre tv series, died on 1 September aged 92.

• *Bernie Casey* (1939-2017), US actor in *Never Say Never Again* (1983), *In the Mouth of Madness* (1994), *Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure* (1989) and *Vegas Vampires* (2007), died on 19 September aged 78. [PDF]

• *Jennifer Daniel* (1936-2017), Welsh actress in *The Kiss of the Vampire* (1963), *The Reptile* (1966) and others including *Christmas with the Dead* (2012), died on 16 August aged 81. [PDF]

• *Andy England*, UK fan, convention art auctioneer and dedicated book,

magazine and ammonite collector long associated with Fantasy Centre (helping in the shop and at con dealer tables), died on 22 September; he was 63. [EA/BA/RR]

- *Basil Gogos*, US artist of Greek ancestry best known for his *Famous Monsters of Filmland* cover paintings – collected in *Famous Monster Movie Art of Basil Gogos* (2005) – died on 14 September aged 68. [GW]
- *Haiyan Xu*, Chinese academic and translator of sf by William Gibson, Robert A. Heinlein, Nancy Kress, Charles Stross and others, died in a diving accident on 6 September. [PDF/AIP]
- *H.A. Hargreaves* (1928-2017), US-born Canadian sf author whose stories – beginning in 1963 – are collected in *North by 2000* (1976; expanded 2012), died on 27 July aged 89. [F770]
- *Hugh Hefner* (1926-2017), US founder in 1953 of *Playboy* magazine – for decades a usefully high-paying market for sf authors – died on 27 September aged 91.
- *Harvey Jacobs* (1930-2017), US author of sf/fantasy fables collected in *The Egg of the Glak* (1969) and of such novels as the satirical dystopia *Beautiful Soup* (1993), died on 23 September; he was 87. [AJ]
- *Anne Jeffreys* (1923-2017), US actress whose credits include *Zombies on Broadway* (1945) and *Topper* (1953-1955 tv), died on 27 September aged 94. [GVG]
- *Cris Jones* (1980-2017), UK-born writer and director of the Australian sf/fantasy film *The Death and Life of Otto Bloom* (2016), died on 7 September aged 37. [GC]
- *Charles H. King* (1934-2017), US author whose one known sf story was ‘The Rememberers’ (May 1952 *Future SF*) as H. Charles Blair, died on 15 September. [TM]
- *Tim Poston* (1945-2017), UK mathematician who with Ian Stewart wrote the sf novels *The Living Labyrinth* (2016) and *Rock Star* (2017) – intended as two-thirds of a trilogy – died unexpectedly on 22 August; he was 72. [IS]
- *Jerry Pournelle* (1933-2017), US author initially known for his CoDominium sequence of military and libertarian sf, who won the first John W. Campbell Award for best new writer in 1973 and was president of SFWA 1973-1974, died on 8 September aged 84. [LP] His most popular and successful novels were collaborations with Larry Niven, in particular *The Mote in God’s Eye* (1974), *Lucifer’s Hammer* (1977) and *Footfall* (1985).
- *Kit Reed* (1932-2017), US author of many quirky and often subversive

stories and novels, from her 1958 debut in *F&SF* to the recent *Mormama* (2017), died on 24 September aged 85. Collections include *The Killer Mice* (1976) and *Other Stories And ... The Attack of the Giant Baby* (1981). I miss her.

- *Dave E. Romm* (1955-2017), US fan active in Minneapolis fandom, in APAs and online since the Usenet era, died on 4 September aged 62. He had produced the *Shockwave* sf/science fact radio show since 1979. [SFS]
- *Harry Dean Stanton* (1926-2017), US character actor in *Alien* (1979), *Escape from New York* (1981), *Repo Man* (1984), *Dream a Little Dream* (1989), *The Green Mile* (1999), *The Avengers* (2012) and *Twin Peaks* (2017 tv), died on 15 September aged 91. [CS/MR]
- *Yoshio Tsuchiya* (1927-2017), Japanese actor in many Toho SF/Kaiju films including the Godzilla/Rodan epic *Invasion of Astro-Monster* (1965), died on 5 September aged 90. [BE]
- *Len Wein* (1948-2017), US comics writer and editor who co-created Swamp Thing for DC and Wolverine for Marvel, edited *Watchmen* and was a key figure in the 1975 X-Men revival, died on 10 September aged 69. [GF]

The Weakest Link. Q: ‘The mythical horse-like creature, the unicorn, has what protruding from its head?’ A: ‘An icicle.’ (ITV, *Tipping Point*) [PE]

• Q: ‘Which object orbits the Earth at an approximate distance of 250,000 miles?’ A: ‘The Sun.’ Q: ‘What is the largest body in the solar system?’ A: ‘The galaxy.’ (ITV, *The Chase*) [PE]

Court Circular. Ongoing: a deeply tedious trademark dispute between descendants of Philip Francis Nowlan, creator of Buck Rogers, and those of John Flint Dille, whose newspaper company syndicated the Buck Rogers comic strip. The Nowlan Family Trust came off best in the previous lawsuit and is now being challenged by the Dille Family Trust. Evidence includes a fame survey in which 63% of those who responded recognized Buck Rogers – well behind Captain America (91%) and Luke Skywalker (87%) but ahead of John Carter of Mars, the Doctor in *Doctor Who* and HAL 9000. According to Judge Wendy Beetlestone, Buck Rogers is therefore *not quite famous enough* to validate a Dille claim about ‘trademark dilution’. ([Hollywood Reporter](#), 28 August) [AIP]

As Others See Us. ‘We scoured the literary world for everything from funny fiction and serious science fiction to knitting manuals and alternative art in search of the odd and the obscure.’ (AbeBooks) [BA]

Magazine Scene. *Apex Magazine* returns to print with the January 2018 double issue, confides editor Jason Sizemore. Ebook publication continues, with the POD version following. (www.apex-magazine.com)

In Typo Veritas. A *Guardian* book-blog piece on 80 years of *The Hobbit* made mention of Fritz Leiber and his ‘fantasy duo Fafhrd and the Gravy Mouser’. (21 September; all too soon corrected, alas.)

Random Fandom. *Jim Barker*, ace cartoonist, writes: ‘I’m Not Well and will probably need a liver transplant soon.’

• *Greg Pickersgill*’s 2005 Worldcon fanwriting collection *Can’t Get Off the Island* is the latest addition to the TAFF free ebooks page at taff.org.uk/ebooks.php.

The Dead Past. *20 Years Ago*: ‘Walter Jon Williams has been enjoying, or not enjoying, a run-in with *Wired* magazine over his 1986 novel title *Hardwired* ... a title subsequently licensed by WJW for games, action figures, cars, etc, and (nearly) as Paramount’s “improved” title for *Johnny Mnemonic*. Imagine his joy when menacing *Wired* lawyers forced cancellation of NovaLogic’s 1996 *Hardwired* CD-ROM game, costing WJW a heap of licence money, on the basis that (a) *Wired* owns everything with “Wire” in the title [...]; (b) *Wired*’s brand-new imprint HardWired Books obviously has a prior claim over anything published in 1986.’ (*Ansible* 123, October 1997) *Later in that issue*: ‘Most of the cyber-sf titles scheduled for *Wired* magazine’s new HardWired imprint are on hold and may never appear, owing to *Wired*’s 1997 financial crises. Retrenchment looms. (*SF Chronicle*) *Ansible* has asked Walter Jon Williams for an exclusive giggle.’ (*Ibid*)

British Fantasy Awards. BOUNDS (newcomer) Erika L. Satifka, *Stay Crazy*. MAGAZINE Tor.com. NONFICTION Kameron Hurley, *The Geek Feminist Revolution*. GRAPHIC Marjorie Liu & Sana Takeda, *Monstress, Vol 1: Awakening*. INDY PRESS Grimbold Press. ARTIST Daniele Serra. ANTHOLOGY *People of Colour Destroy SF*. COLLECTION Adam Nevill, *Some Will Not Sleep*. FILM/TV *Arrival*. NOVELLA Victor LaValle, *The Ballad of Black Tom*. SHORT Georgina Bruce, ‘White Rabbit’. DERLETH (horror novel) Paul Tremblay, *Disappearance at Devil’s Rock*. HOLDSTOCK (fantasy novel) Adrian Tchaikovsky, *The Tiger and the Wolf*. WAGNER (important contribution) Jan Edwards. LEGENDS OF FANTASYCON David & Sandra Sutton.

Thog’s Masterclass. *Dept of 1% Inspiration*. ‘The sweat poured from under

Thomas' conical steel helmet, down the sides of his neck to the nape, where the salt streams of Tigris and Euphrates joined to trickle down the cataracts of his spine. That was while he stood silently at attention with his brother knights. When they moved forward, new freshets of moisture sprouted from his armpits and rolled across his kidneys.' (Roger Zelazny & Thomas T. Thomas, *The Mask of Loki*, 1990) [BA]

- *Fire When You See ...* 'His shadow was thick and dark – except for the whites of his eyes ...' (*Ibid*) [BA]
 - *Eyeballs in the Empyrean*. 'His eyes left the sky, falling back to Earth to where she stood.' (G.X. Todd, *Defender*, 2017)
 - *Auto-Extrusion Dept*. 'Auchinek left the car like toothpaste from a tube.' (Michael Moorcock, 'Voortrekker', 1971) [BA]
 - *Dept of Feline Simile*. '... when Miss Joan brung his vittles, he grabbed her arm and leered like a cat eating prickly pears, and says, "Gimme a kiss, gal!"' (Robert E. Howard, *Knife-River Prodigal*, 1937) [BA]
 - *Puberty Dept*. 'There was an adult beefswelling in his loins and he felt his mouth open, holding, clinging to the girdershape of ecstasy.' (Frank Herbert, *Children of Dune*, 1976) [BR]
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Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 5 October 2017: Ramsey Campbell at Birkenhead Central Library, Borough Rd, Birkenhead. 6pm. See link: <https://tockify.com/wirralview/detail/673/1507222800000>
- 11 October 2017: Reading University 'Monsters and the Monstrous' season opens with the film *Nosferatu* (1922). 7pm in Van Emden lecture theatre, Edith Morley, Whiteknights campus. £5. With introductory talk.
- 13 October 2017: Andy Sawyer talks to the Brum Group. 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre. £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future events/speakers: 3 November 2017 Peter F. Hamilton; 1 December (date TBC) Christmas Social.
- 18 October 2017: *Frankenstein* (1931), as for *Nosferatu* above.
- 23 October 2017: 'Hybrids and Health Humanities: Ceroplasty, Couplets, Chimeras' discussion, 7pm in LO22, G01, Reading University London Road

campus. Free.

- 25 October 2017: *Freaks* (1932), as for *Nosferatu* above.
- 30 October 2017: Alison Littlewood and M.R. Carey, Waterstones Gower Street, 6.30pm. See link:

<https://www.waterstones.com/events/sci-fi-sessions-the-halloween-edition-with-alison-littlewood-and-mike-mr-carey/london-gower-street>

- 15 November 2017: Bryan Talbot *Grandville: Force Majeure* signing and exhibition launch. 5:30pm-7pm at Orbital Comics, 8 Great Newport Street, London, WC2H. See link below.

<http://www.orbitalcomics.com/bryan-talbot-grandville-force-majeure-the-exhibition-extraordinaire/>

Editorial. As a spinoff from his *Then* archive researches, the industrious Rob Hansen is preparing collections of writing by old-time fans for Ansible Editions, to be added to the twenty current titles on the TAFF free ebooks page at taff.org.uk/ebooks.php. The first of these to appear is likely to be a selection of comic pieces from William F. (Bill) Temple, who's best remembered for his science fiction – *Four-Sided Triangle* and others – but was also Britain's first notable fanzine humorist. Watch this space.

Late Event Note: 14 October 2017, BFS/BSFA York Pubmeet, The Falcon Tap, 94 Micklegate, York, YO1 6JX. 4:30pm-7:30pm. Free, but booking is requested via <http://tinyurl.com/yc72m5he>.

Thog's Second Helping. *Satanic Similes Dept.* 'It was as though his soul, like some infernal yo-yo on the end of demonic string, had been lowered to within inches of the very caverns of Hell itself and now was reascending by that same strange method.' (R.L. Fanthorpe, *The Golden Chalice*, 1961)

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2 October 2017.

Ansible® 364, November 2017

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or when Owl Friday falls on a Wednesday.

Ebooks Amok at the Bar. Still more free downloads at the TAFF site, taff.org.uk/ebooks.php.... *Running Amok in the Fun Factory* is an anthology of favourite UK convention reports selected and introduced by Graham Charnock. *Temple at the Bar* by sf author and early UK fan William F. (Bill) Temple, edited and introduced by the ever-industrious Rob Hansen, collects Temple's humorous fanzine writing from 1938 to 1960 – with many a dig at his good friend Arthur C. 'Ego' Clarke. Further titles are on the way, including at least one December release.

The Devil Makes the Law

Peter S. Beagle, long in bitter dispute with his former manager Connor ('Freff') Cochran, now finds it necessary to issue a statement that Cochran 'did not write my stories, as he is now claiming publicly. They are my work, and no one else's – as are all my other books, all the way back to that first one, published in 1960, when I was twenty-one. They are my legacy. [...] For fifteen years, over the counsel of true and knowledgeable friends, I trusted Connor Cochran implicitly with all that I believed to be of any real value: my work, and the future of my legacy. I was certain beyond any question that he was a man of honor and creativity. I will forever regret that I was wrong.' (supportpeterbeagle.com, October 2017)

Gregory Benford on Margaret Atwood's 'Peace Prize' awarded by the German book trade (see [A360](#)): 'Atwood lifted much of *Handmaid* from Heinlein. Yet the world thinks she's an original.' (*File 770* comment, 15 October) Two days later, Atwood received the 2017 Franz Kafka international literary prize at a ceremony in Prague.

Kazuo Ishiguro, author of the sf novel *Never Let Me Go* and the fantasy *The Buried Giant*, won the 2017 Nobel prize for literature.

H.B. Marriott Watson (1863-1921), author of the 1893 ‘The Devil of the Marsh’, is not among us to challenge ‘The Gas Fields of Mars’ (*Bewildering Stories*, 2009) by Scott Wilson. In this blatant plagiarism, ‘Marsh’ is cunningly replaced by ‘Martian gas’ – ‘I have the Martian gas in my blood’ – and ‘witch or devil of the marsh’ by ‘demon or devil of the Gas Field’, etc, etc. When an alert reader detected this naughtiness in October 2017, *Bewildering* removed the story from its website. [MFD]

Peter Nicholls retired to a Melbourne nursing home earlier this year owing to the continuing advance of Parkinson’s Disease, and is no longer in email communication with fandom or professional colleagues. [CC] Clare Coney writes: ‘He’s not unhappy. He’s living in the moment.’ Let’s remember the standing ovation Peter received at the 2014 Worldcon for creating the 1979 *SF Encyclopedia* and shaping its later editions.

J.R.R. Tolkien is the subject of a canonization campaign by the Catholic Fellowship for Tolkien: ‘We are pursuing Tolkien’s Cause for Sainthood in the Catholic Church.’ (Causefortolkien.org) The first Mass praying for this process to begin was held in Oxford Oratory on 2 September, the 44th anniversary of his death. [F770] Good grief.

Conus

Until 28 Jan • **Tove Jansson** (exhibition), Dulwich Picture Gallery. £15.50; £7 concessions. See tinyurl.com/y725rdts.

3-5 Nov • **Sci-Fi London Experiment** at EXP, Swan Wharf, 60 Dace Rd, London, E3 2NN. £28 or £15 per day; the announced all-night film session has been cancelled. See sci-fi-london.com/exp/.

4-6 Nov • **Armadacon 29**, Future Inns, Plymouth. £35 reg; day £20 (concessions £30 and £15). Contact Moor Cottage, Cardinham, Bodmin, Cornwall, PL30 4BR; or see www.armadacon.org.

4-5 Nov • **Gollancz Festival**, Phoenix Artist’s Club & Foyles, London. Saturday: Foyles £25 all day (£12 a.m., £15 p.m.), Phoenix £30 a.m. and £30 p.m. Sunday: Foyles only, £20 p.m. See gollanczfest.com.

6 Nov • **Ghost Stories at Keele Hall**, SCR, Keele University. 7:30-9:30pm. Free booking: 01782 734340 or tinyurl.com/ya4caog3.

6 Nov - 5 Dec • **Grandville: Force Majeure** (Bryan Talbot exhibition), Orbital Comics, London, WC2H. See tinyurl.com/ycjzy5ss.

10-12 Nov • **Novacon 47**, Park Inn, Nottingham. £50 reg (*may rise before con*); under-17s £12; under-13s free. Contact 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ. Online registration at www.novacon.org.uk.

11 Nov • **A Day of Horror** (HWA UK), Royal George, 133 Charing Cross Rd, London, WC2H 0EA. 1pm-6pm. Free. See hwauk.org/news/.

22 Nov • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. With Anne Charnock. Free.

25 Nov • **Sledge-Lit**, QUAD Centre, Derby. 10am-6pm. Tickets £25. See www.derbyquad.co.uk/events/sledge-lit-3.aspx.

27 Nov • **J.G. Ballard and the Sciences** (conference), LAB 9, Anglia Ruskin University, East Road, Cambridge, CB1 1PT. £20 reg; £10 concessions. Lunch not included. See tinyurl.com/y9zdyje5.

2 Dec • **Dragonmeet** (gaming), Novotel London West, W6 8DR. 9am-midnight. £10 reg with group discounts: www.dragonmeet.co.uk.

3 Dec • **Stars of Time** (media), Tropicana, Weston-super-Mare. 10:30am-5:30pm. £6.50; child £3.50. See www.starsoftime.co.uk.

9 Dec • **2017: A Clarke Odyssey** (conference), Canterbury Christ Church University. *Attendance rates now announced*: £65, concessions £50, including lunch etc. See 2017acl Clarkeodyssey.wordpress.com.

30 Dec - 2 Jan • **Steampunk New Year**, Mercure Hotel, Leicester. See www.asylumsteampunk.co.uk/steampunk-new-year-2017.

2-4 Feb 2018 • **Enharmonicon** (filk), Best Western Hotel, Marks Tey, Colchester. £37 reg/£25 unwaged, *rising 1 Dec*; under-18s £1/year of age; under-5s free. See www.contabile.org.uk/enharmonicon/.

30 Mar - 2 Apr 2018 • **Follycon** (Eastercon), Majestic Hotel, Harrogate. £70 reg (*rising to £80 on 1 December* while the other rates remain unchanged); £45 YA/unwaged; £30 child (5-17) and supp; under-5s free. Cheques to Eastercon 2018 c/o 19 Uphall Rd, Cambridge, CB3 1HX. Credit cards

(preferred) accepted at www.follycon.org.uk.

19-22 Apr 2018 • **Dead by Dawn** (horror film festival), Filmhouse Cinema One, 88 Lothian Rd, Edinburgh, EH3 9BZ. £90. Box office 0131 228 2688. Online booking via www.deadbydawn.co.uk.

26 May 2018 • **LawGiver 4** (Judge Dredd), Hilton Doubletree Hotel, Bristol. Booking from Jan/Feb 2018. See tinyurl.com/mmw3awd.

8-10 Jun 2018 • **Lavecon** (sf/fantasy/gaming), Sedgebrook Hall Hotel, Northants. Booking awaited at www.hwsevents.co.uk/shop-1.

4-6 Aug 2018 • **Nine Worlds Geekfest** (multimedia), Novotel London West, Hammersmith, London – *venue now confirmed*. £99 reg (this will rise); children free. Book online at nineworlds.co.uk.

29-30 Sep 2018 • **Nor-Con** (media), Norfolk Showground Arena. Tickets at various prices awaited at www.nor-con.co.uk.

12-14 Oct 2018 • **Lakes International Comic Art Festival**, Kendal, Cumbria. £35 reg; £25 concessions. ‘Friday gala’ extra, £8/£5. Day rates: Sat £22/£17, Sun £19/£14. See www.comicartfestival.com.

Rumblings. Matthew D’Ancona, in a strongly pro-sf article centred on *Blade Runner 2049*, mentions that ‘the Science Museum (of which I am a trustee) is planning a definitive exhibition of science fiction and its influence for 2020.’ (*Evening Standard*, 11 October)

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. ‘It gave me a feeling I identify with my teenage years, back when I used to visit a store that carried science fiction, comic books, and porn: one-stop shopping for shame.’ (Eliot Borenstein, *Huffington Post*, 30 October)

Awards. *Booker Prize*: George Saunders, *Lincoln in the Bardo*. [MJE]

Bibliomania. For the fan who has everything including that 1953 limited edition of *Fahrenheit 451* bound in asbestos, the French publisher Super Terrain is releasing a ‘heat sensitive’ *F451* whose black-coated pages reveal the text beneath only when fire is applied. [AW] Next, the long-awaited H.P.

Lovecraft collection bound in gorgonzola?

- R.I.P.** *Jack Bannon* (1940-2017), US actor whose genre tv series include *Tarzan*, *Lord of the Jungle* (1976-1979), died on 25 October aged 77. [PDF]
- *Gerald Bishop* ('Ye Gerbish'), UK fan most active in the 1970s – London First Thursday meetings, convention committees (often as projectionist for con film showing) and the 1971-1974 fanzine *Howl of Feedback* – died on 9 October. (CAMRA East Anglia mailing list) [PT]
 - *Brent Briscoe* (1961-2017), US actor in *The Green Mile* (1999), *The Dark Knight Rises* (2012), *Atlas Shrugged: Who Is John Galt?* (2014) and *Twin Peaks* (2017), died on 18 October aged 56. [GW]
 - *Dian Crayne* (1942-2017), US author and fan who published sf stories 1974-1988 as Dian Girard and novels as J.D. Crayne – including the thriller *Murder at the Worldcon* and the Captain Spycer space-opera trilogy 2005-2009 – was found dead on 4 October; she was 75. [F770/AIP]
 - *Paul Day* (Jean-Paul Breault-Day, 1937-2017) Boston-born chemist who ran the Black Hole book shop in Adelaide from 1978 to 1984, died circa 6 October aged 80. [MD]
 - *Digby Diehl* (1940-2017), US editor, author and critic whose books included the EC Comics study *Tales from the Crypt: The Official Archives* (1996), died on 26 September aged 76. [AIP]
 - *Roy Dotrice* (1923-2017), famously versatile UK actor whose credits include *Toomorrow* (1970), *Space: 1999* (1975), *Beauty and the Beast* (1987-1990), *Alien Hunter* (2003), *Hellboy II* (2008) and *Game of Thrones* (2012; he also recorded the audiobooks), died on 16 October aged 94. [PDF] I fondly remember him as Albert Haddock in *Misleading Cases* (1967-1971).
 - *Roger Garland* (1950-2017), UK illustrator of J.R.R. Tolkien's works for Allen & Unwin, Unwin Hyman and HarperCollins from 1981 to the early 1990s, died on 26 October aged 67. [TG]
 - *ElizaBeth Gilligan*, US author of the Silken Magic trilogy opening with *Magic's Silken Snare* (2003) and concluded this year after delays caused by illness, died on 9 October. [GVG]
 - *Robert Guillaume* (1927-2017), US actor in *The Kid with the Broken Halo* (1982), *John Grin's Christmas* (1986), *Fish Police* (1992), *The Meteor Man* (1993), *The Lion King* (1994), *Crystal Cave* (1996), *Alchemy* (1996), *Merry Christmas George Bailey* (1997), *13th Child* (2002) and the *Half-Life 2* videogames, died on 24 October aged 89. [SG]
 - *Yoji Kondo* (1933-2017), Japanese-US astrophysicist who wrote sf as Eric

- Kotani – including the Island Worlds trilogy with John Maddox Roberts, opening with *Act of God* (1985) – died on 9 October aged 84. [GVG]
- *Rosemary Leach* (1935-2017), UK character actress whose credits include *The Plague Dogs* (1982), *The Tomorrow People* (1995) and *The Great Ghost Rescue* (2011), died on 21 October aged 81.
 - *Umberto Lenzi* (1931-2017), Italian director of *Nightmare City* (1980), *Ironmaster* (1983), *Ghosthouse* (1988), *The Hell's Gate*, *House of Lost Souls*, *Nightmare Beach*, *The House of Witchcraft* (all four 1989), *Black Demons* (1991) and others, died on 19 October aged 86. [SG]
 - *Federico Luppi* (1936-2017), Argentinian actor in Guillermo del Toro's *Cronos* (1993), *The Devil's Backbone* (2001) and *Pan's Labyrinth* (2006), died on 20 October aged 81. [GW]
 - *Trevor Martin* (1929-2017), UK actor who was first to play the Doctor on stage – in *Doctor Who and the Seven Keys to Doomsday* (1974) – and also featured in 1969 tv and 1999 radio versions of the show, died on 5 October aged 87. [SFS]
 - *Julian May* (1931-2017), US author whose sf debut was 'Dune Roller' (1951, filmed as *The Cremators*) and who is best known for her long Pliocene Exile/Galactic Milieu series opening with *The Many-Colored Land* (1981), died on 17 October aged 86. [ARB] She was active in 1940s fandom and in 1952 chaired the Worldcon, the first woman to do so.
 - *John Mollo* (1931-2017), UK costume designer who won an Oscar for his work on *Star Wars* (1977) and was also involved with *Alien* (1979), *The Empire Strikes Back* (1980), *Outland* (1981), *Greystoke* (1984) and *Event Horizon* (1997), died on 25 October aged 86. [GW/MR]
 - *Iona Opie* (1923-2017), folklore expert who with her husband Peter published *The Oxford Dictionary of Nursery Rhymes* (1951), *The Oxford Nursery Rhyme Book* (1955), *The Classic Fairy Tales* (1974) and much more, died on 23 October; she was 94. Her many honours include a 1999 CBE. [PDF]
 - *Charles Osborne* (1927-2017), Australian author, critic and former UK Arts Council director whose books include *Kafka* (1967) and *The Bram Stoker Bedside Companion* (edited 1973), died on 23 September aged 89. *Interzone* received its 1982-1983 Arts Council grant during his administration. [MJE/PF/DP]
 - *Michael Satran*, US game designer who besides sourcebooks and adventure modules for various game systems wrote the fantasy novel *Hellbow Rune*

(2014), died on 28 October. [SFS]

- *Milt Stevens* (1942-2017), US fan since 1960, who published fanzines for many APAs including FAPA and co-chaired the 1984 Los Angeles Worldcon, died on 2 October; he was 75. [GG via GC]

- *Birgitta Margaretha Ulfsson* (1928-2017), Finnish-Swedish actress who played Moominmamma in the Swedish live-action *Moomintroll* tv series, died on 8 October aged 89. [PDF]

As Others Research Us. Interviewing Ross Noble about the Mel Brooks *Young Frankenstein* musical, the *Daily Express* conveyed that this production was based on the novel by Bram Stoker. [DS]

Outraged Letters. *Mike Christie*: ‘A sfnal trivia item re Hugh Hefner that many people probably won’t know: Hefner joined the *Weird Tales* Club and listed his address in the magazine in 1943 – see the Wikipedia article on *Weird Tales*, which cites Robert Weinberg’s history of *WT*. (I wrote the article, which is how I know about it.)’ (2 October)

Magazine Scene. Steve Davidson of *Amazing* had a long dispute with NBC about their plans to produce another Spielberg *Amazing Stories* tv series while diligently not making the agreed payment to him as trademark holder. ‘I want nothing to do with NBC and I want them to have nothing to do with *Amazing Stories*’, he wrote in frustration on 11 October. Ten days later, though, perhaps after NBC had noticed the storm of bad publicity from fandom, a new deal was in the offing after all. As a result, *Amazing* hopes ‘to pay better than SFWA rates for at least one short story per week’. (Amazingstoriesmag.com, 21 October)

As Others Introduce Us. ‘Vonnegut’s invention of *ice-nine*, a substance capable of freezing all the world’s water in rapid contagion, makes the book in some sense a piece of science fiction, and like most sci-fi, the book will disappoint any reader who insists on the evolving, three-dimensional characters of the realist novel. But unlike most sci-fi novels, as well as most realist ones, *Cat’s Cradle* doesn’t concern itself with the creation of a coherent world corroborated in all its details.’ (Benjamin Kunkel introducing *CC*, Penguin Modern Classics, 2008) [DA]

Random Fandom. *Rusty Hevelin*’s collection of 10,000+ fanzines is being transcribed into searchable digital form as a crowdsourced online ‘DIY History’ project at the University of Iowa. Anyone can sign up to help: see

diyhistory.lib.uiowa.edu/hevelin. [KB]

- *Andrew I. Porter* found more sf in *Jeopardy*: ““Any member of the World Science Fiction Society can vote for this literary award, which has led to some drama.” No one could answer, “What is the Hugo Award.”” (27 October)

The Dead Past. *20 Years Ago*: ‘Anne Rice was ruled innocent of libel when a New Orleans judge held that her abuse of a local café as “an abomination ... gaudy, tacky ... less dignified than a flophouse”, was constitutionally protected. Horror critics, concerned to describe Rice’s works only in legal, constitutionally protected ways, may or may not have been taking notes.’ ([Ansible 124](#), November 1997)

- *30 Years Ago*: Steve Green had a flashback to that October/November 1987 weekend when ‘Martin Tudor and I published the first issue of *Critical Wave*, at Novacon 17 and Nikon II. How time flies ...’ (Email, 24 October)

- *40 Years Ago*: ‘The Guardian Award for Fiction was recently presented to Mike Moorcock for his novel, *The Condition of Muzak*, last of the Jerry Cornelius series. And that’s all the sf news you’re likely to get this issue – unless you hadn’t noticed a new BBC tv sitcom featuring a housewife marooned on a space station, if indeed that’s even worthy of note.’ (Peter Roberts, [Checkpoint 85](#), Winter 1977)

C.o.A. *Duncan Lunan*’s announced move to Ireland (see [A362](#)) fell through ‘due to unexpected problems and plain bad luck’; he’s back in Troon though not at the former address.

- *Andy & Angela Richards*/[Cold Tonnage Books](#), Poundwater, Farway, Colyton, Devon, EX24 6EG.

Fanfundery. [TransAtlantic Fan Fund](#). John Purcell writes: ‘Nominations for the 2018 East to West TAFF race, bringing a European Fan to the San José WorldCon next August, are officially open. Nominations close 30 November 2017, and the tentative voting dates are 4 January to 4 April (90 days, and not another day longer) in 2018.’ See his newsletter at taff.org.uk/news/TaffNews01.pdf. Email: askance73 at gmail dot com, or Euro admin Anna Raftery at Anna.raftery (at) gmail.com.

Editorial. The laser eye treatment that I nervously awaited last issue was a great success, instantly clearing the fog that had made it impossible to read with my right eye all this year. Morale is hugely improved. For eyesight and

other reasons I've been reluctant for some while to commit to attending sf conventions, and don't yet know when or if I'll get back into the habit again. Apologies to everyone who was looking forward to buying me copious drinks at Novacon 47.

Thog's Masterclass. *Inner Secrets of Bestseller Research*. 'According to dictionary.com, a "regent" is someone appointed to oversee an organization while its leader is incapacitated or absent.' (Dan Brown, *Origin*, 2017) [MMW]

• *Dept of Pencil Sentience*. 'Frank folded his notes up and slid them into his coat pocket. The pencil hurried after them.' (Philip K. Dick, 'Human Is', 1955 *Startling*) [JCo]

• *Year of the Sex Olympics*. 'What did they have in common anyway? Good sex. They'd trained for the Twin Cities Marathon together.' (Theresa Monsour, *Cold Blood*, 2004) [PB]

• *Nerve Endings Dept*. 'She was tired of it, and her own resentments toward him had begun to grow like warts on the ends of her nerves.' (Tami Hoag, *Prior Bad Acts*, 2006) [PB]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

• 3 November 2017: Peter F. Hamilton talks to the Brum Group. 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre. £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future events/speakers: 1 December (date TBC) Christmas Social.

• 11 November 2017: *The Art of Horror Movies* multi-signing, 12:30pm-2pm at Forbidden Planet, 179 Shaftesbury Ave, London, WC2H 8JR. In conjunction with 'A Day of Horror' in the main events list above.

<https://forbiddenplanet.com/events/2017/11/11/great-art-horror-signing/>

• 15 November 2017: Bryan Talbot *Grandville: Force Majeure* signing and exhibition launch. 5:30pm-7pm at Orbital Comics, 8 Great Newport Street, London, WC2H. See link below.

<http://www.orbitalcomics.com/bryan-talbot-grandville-force-majeure-the-exhibition-extraordinaire/>

More Editorial. The traditional distribution of *Ansible* with *Brum Group*

News has been suspended for several months. A few loyal readers asked why; *BGN 553*, the October issue, explains that after losing its cheap printing service the Brum Group can no longer afford to print *Ansible* as well as its own newsletter. (The same issue includes a plug for Chris Morgan's and my *Facts & Fallacies* ebook as described at ae.ansible.uk/?t=fandf, for which many thanks.) Fair enough: bereft group members can still send me SAEs for printed copies or read *Ansible* on the website at news.ansible.uk.

Outraged Letters II. *Simon R. Green* on [A363](#): 'It's a shame Nigel Kneale never embraced fandom, because it would have loved to embrace him. I remember seeing him at the Brighton WorldCon in '79. He turned up with the first three tv episodes of *Quatermass and the Pit*, and it played to a house that wasn't just packed; it was shoulder to shoulder in the aisles. We were all so entranced, you could have heard a pin drop. At the end, Mr Kneale came on pushing something under a sheet, and it was an actual Martian from the tv series. He got a standing ovation. Everyone there loved and admired his work; we would happily have carried him shoulder high through the streets of Brighton. Which might have been the problem. I get the feeling it was too much; he didn't believe it. / All I know is, his work is one of the reasons I write what I write.' (29 October)

Fantasycon 2018 will be at The Queen Hotel in Chester, 19-21 October. The actual website will presumably be revealed at ...
<https://www.hwsevents.co.uk/>

Thog's Second Helping. *Anatomy Dept.* 'Phrrg felt as an intelligent blood corpuscle would feel when caught in the circulation and fed unceremoniously through a palpitating aorta!' ('John E. Muller', *Dark Continuum*, 1964)

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Ansible® 365, December 2017

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo:
Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE, hesid-shesids or
a cloud of radioactive bats.

Seasonal Ebooks. Yet more freebies at <taff.org.uk/ebooks.php>. [*The Frank Arnold Papers*](#) collects thirty nonfiction pieces – most not previously published – by Frank, long-time stalwart of the London First Thursday meetings from the 1940s until his death in 1987. Edited by Rob Hansen, with an introduction by Michael Moorcock and afterword by Dave Rowe. [*The Complete Skyrack*](#) brings together the entire run of Ron Bennett’s 1960s UK fannish newsletter *Skyrack*, together with hoax issues devised by Ron to torment individual readers and parody issues devised by other fans to torment Ron. All human life is there.

The Winter Flies

S.T. Joshi, the noted and occasionally controversial authority on Lovecraft, allowed himself to be loftily entertained: ‘Meanwhile, the antics of my enemies continue to provide rich amusement. Their staggering inferiority to me, in intellect and achievements, is becoming more and more apparent with each passing day; but what is now becoming increasingly obvious is that they are really not very nice people. Stupidity is one thing – a condition that is perhaps unalterable, and one that is more deserving of pity than anger; but duplicity, mendacity, hypocrisy, petty vindictiveness, and a host of other moral failings – well, I suppose these can only be attributed to bad upbringing and an insufficient exposure to civilised values.’ (stjoshi.org, 22 November)

Nicholas Pegg, former Dalek operator and *Doctor Who Magazine* columnist, was widely reported – see all newspapers – as having been sacked over a very rude acrostic comment on the BBC and the magazine publishers Panini,

hidden in his final ‘Wotcha’ column. Apparently ‘Wotcha’ and much else was to be axed anyway in a cost-cutting overhaul intended to curb *DWM*’s irreverence about and even criticism of the *Who* franchise, so Pegg had little to lose. (*Private Eye*, 3 November)

Mike Resnick ‘won the Galaxy Award, China’s equivalent of the Hugo, for Most Popular Foreign Author. [...] I’m enough of a pro to know that half this award goes to my translators.’ (11 November)

Christopher Tolkien resigned as a director of the Tolkien Estate (incorporated 2011) on 31 August, though the news didn’t become public until November. This may explain the timing of the *Lord of the Rings* tv rights sale to Amazon Video. (theonering.net, 15 November)

Connochaetes

2 Dec • **Dragonmeet** (gaming), Novotel London West, W6 8DR. 9am-midnight. £10 reg with group discounts: www.dragonmeet.co.uk.

2 Dec • **Yulemoot** (Tolkien Society), Gunmakers’ Arms, 93 Bath Street, Birmingham, B4 6HG. 6pm onward. Open to all.

3 Dec • **Stars of Time** (media), Tropicana, Weston-super-Mare. 10:30am-5:30pm. £6.50; child £3.50. See www.starsofetime.co.uk.

8 Dec • **British Fantasy Society Xmas Social**, The Vintry, 119-121 Cannon St, London, EC4N 5AX. 7pm-11:30pm. Free – all welcome.

9 Dec • **2017: A Clarke Odyssey** (conference), Canterbury Christ Church University. £65 reg; concessions £50 – including lunch, coffee, etc. See 2017acl Clarkeodyssey.wordpress.com.

21 Dec • **London Xmas Meeting** (additional to First Thursdays), The Bishop’s Finger, 9-10 West Smithfield, EC1A 9JR. All evening.

30 Dec - 2 Jan • **Steampunk New Year**, Mercure Hotel, Leicester. See www.asylumsteampunk.co.uk/steampunk-new-year-2017.

23 Jan 2018 • **Frankenstein and its Legacy** (panel discussion), Royal Institution, 21 Albemarle St, London, W1S 4BS. 7-8:30pm. £16/£10 concessions; members and patrons £7. See tinyurl.com/y99qqrw6.

2-4 Feb 2018 • **Enharmicon** (filk), Best Western Hotel, Marks Tey, Colchester. *Now £39 reg and £27 unwaged* to 1 February, rising to £42 and £29 at the door; under-18s £1 per year of age; under-5s free. See www.contabile.org.uk/enharmicon.

2-3 Mar 2018 • **Frightfest** (film), Glasgow Film Theatre. £75 reg or £10.50 per film. See www.frightfest.co.uk. Also 2018 London events: Leicester Square, 23-27 August, and Empire Haymarket, 27 October.

30 Mar - 2 Apr 2018 • **Follycon** (Eastercon), the Majestic Hotel, Harrogate. *Now £80 reg; £45 YA/unwaged; £30 child (5-17) and supp; under-5s free.* Cheques to Eastercon 2018 c/o 19 Uphall Rd, Cambridge, CB3 1HX. Credit cards (*preferred*) accepted at www.follycon.org.uk.

21-22 Apr 2018 • **Sci-Fi Scarborough** (multimedia), The Spa, Scarborough. Adult tickets including booking fees £28, £16.80 day; under-17s £11.20, £5.60 day; under-5s free. See scifiscarborough.co.uk.

19-22 Jul 2018 • **Nemo 2018** (Eurocon), Amiens, France. €45 reg, *rising to €50 on 1 January 2018; to €55 on 1 June; and to €60 at the door.* See eurocon2018.yolasite.com.

16-20 Aug 2018 • **Worldcon 76** (Worldcon), San José, CA, USA. \$210 reg; \$105 YA (15-21) and military; under-15s \$75; under-6s free; \$50 supp. See worldcon76.org. Hotel bookings opened on 22 November and the nearer/cheaper venues sold out quickly, some within minutes.

17-19 Aug 2018 • **Wadfest** (camping; games, cosplay), 51 Mill Rd, via Church Road, Emneth, Wisbech, Cambs, PE14 8AE. Adult campers £45; under-17s £5; under-5s free; visitors £20. See www.wadfest.co.uk.

27 Oct 2018 • **BristolCon**, Hilton Doubletree Hotel, Bristol. GoH Joanne Hall, Dave Hutchinson. £20 or £10 concessions and 14-17s, to 31 May; then £25/£15; £30/£20 at door. Flat 11, Beaufort Ct Flats, 1 Beaufort St, Easton, Bristol, BS5 0SQ. See www.bristolcon.org.

9-11 Nov 2018 • **Novacon 48**, Park Inn, Nottingham. GoH Chris Beckett. Contact 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ. See www.novacon.org.uk.

Rumblings. *BSFA:* as usual, there's no London event in December. • *Octocon 2018* (GoH Pat Cadigan) is taking registrations at €25 or €20 concessions. Dates and ?Dublin venue awaited at octocon.com. [*Late news:*

dates 12-14 October 2018.]

Infinitely Improbable

As Others Deplore Us. John Podhoretz reviews *Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri*: ‘If I tell you that Martin McDonagh is one of the most imaginative writers of our time, I expect you will immediately think he writes science fiction or fantasy – because the term “imaginative” has now devolved into a subject of the fantastic, the surreal, the unruly.’ (*Weekly Standard*, 27 November) [MMW] Now I’m itching to write a new *SF Encyclopedia* entry on the nature of Unruly Fiction.

Awards. *Arthur C. Clarke Foundation*: LIFE ACHIEVEMENT Stephen Hawking. INNOVATOR John Hendricks. IMAGINATION IN SERVICE TO SOCIETY Kim Stanley Robinson.

• *World Fantasy*: NOVEL Claire North, *The Sudden Appearance of Hope*. LONG FICTION Kij Johnson, *The Dream-Quest of Vellitt Boe*. SHORT G.V. Anderson, ‘Das Steingeschöpf’ (*Strange Horizons*). ANTHOLOGY Jack Dann, ed., *Dreaming in the Dark*. COLLECTION Jeffrey Ford, *A Natural History of Hell*. ARTIST Jeffrey Alan Love. SPECIAL – PROFESSIONAL Michael Levy & Farah Mendlesohn, *Children’s Fantasy Literature*. NON-PROFESSIONAL Neile Graham as Workshop Director of Clarion West. LIFE ACHIEVEMENT Terry Brooks, Marina Warner.

The Critical Heritage. Brett Joseph Talley’s *That Which Should Not Be* (2011) seems to be a messy read, with ‘awesomestatic gooeyness oozing from every page to where you will be licking it off your fingers and savoring it for days to come.’ (review, *The Unlocked Diary*) [MMW]

R.I.P. *Jill Barklem* (1951-2017), UK author/illustrator whose *Spring Story* (1980) opened the Brambly Hedge children’s fantasies about a community of rural mice, died on 15 November; she was 66. (*Guardian*) [AIP]

• *Peter Berling* (1934-2017), German actor whose credits include *Tex and the Lord of the Deep* (1985), *The Name of the Rose* (1986) and *The Last Temptation of Christ* (1988), died on 21 November aged 83. [PDF]

• *Rodney Bewes* (1937-2017), UK actor in *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* (1972), *Jonah and the Whale* (1975), *Jabberwocky* (1977), *The Spaceman and King Arthur* (1979) and *Doctor Who* (1984), died on 21 November aged

79. [SG/AW]

- *Perdita Boardman* (1931-2017), US fan, artist and designer who created the banner and other promotional art for the 1967 New York Worldcon bid, died on 26 November aged 85. [AIP]
- *Randy Byers* (1960-2017), US fanzine fan and conrunner who was the 2003 TAFF winner, shared FAAn awards with co-editors Andy Hooper and Carl Juarez for *Chunga* in 2003, 2005, 2006 and 2016, and won a solo FAAn for *Alternative Pants* in 2013, died on 20 November; he was 57. Yet another friend gone.
- *David Cassidy* (1950-2017), US pop star and actor whose one genre film was *The Spirit of '76* (1990), died on 21 November aged 67; he also guested in *The Flash* (1991) and *Kim Possible* (2004). [AW/SG]
- *Michael 'DikMik' Davies* (1944-2017), UK keyboard and synthesizer player with Hawkwind 1969-1973, died on 16 November. [PDF]
- *Lou Donato* (1940-2017), co-founder with his wife Myrna of the Las Vegas bookshop Amber Unicorn Books in 1981, died on 8 November aged 77. Both were regulars in US Worldcon and regional convention dealers' rooms. [PT]
- *Karin Dor* (1938-2017), German actress whose films include *The Invisible Dr Mabuse* (1962), *The Face of Fu Manchu* (1965), *The Torture Chamber of Dr Sadism* (1967), *You Only Live Twice* (1967) and *Assignment Terror* (1970), died on 6 November aged 79. [SG]
- *Carl T. Ford*, UK horror fan whose small-press magazine *Dagon* (27 issues 1983-1990; two British Fantasy Award wins) focused on Lovecraftian fiction and the *Call of Cthulhu* role-playing game, died on 13 November. [PC]
- *Scott Fredericks* (1943-2017), Irish actor in *Doctor Who*'s 'Day of the Daleks' (1972) and 'Image of the Fendahl' (1977), died on 6 November. [SR]
- *John Gordon* (1925-2017), UK author of many fine children's/YA fantasy, supernatural and horror tales often set in the Fens – early books of note being *The Giant Under the Snow* (1968) and *The House on the Brink* (1970) – died on 20 November, the day after his 92nd birthday. [PDF]
- *Anthony Harvey* (1931-2017), UK film editor for *Dr Strangelove* (1964) and director of *Svengali* (1983), died on 23 November aged 86. [SFS]
- *Rance Howard* (1928-2017), US actor whose films include *Bigfoot: The Unforgettable Encounter* (1994), *Independence Day* (1996), *Mars Attacks!* (1996), *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* (2000) and *Angels & Demons* (2009), died on 25 November aged 89. [MR]
- *Earle Hyman* (1926-2017), US actor whose best-known genre credit was for

voicing Panthro in *Thundercats* (125 episodes, 1985-1989), died on 17 November aged 91. Another voice role was in the L. Frank Baum-based *The Life & Adventures of Santa Claus* (1985). [PDF]

- *Clytie Jessop* (1929-2017), Australian art gallery owner, director, and actress in *The Innocents* (1961, based on *The Turn of the Screw*), *Nightmare* (1964) and *Torture Garden* (1967), died in April. [GC]
- *Annika Johansson*, Swedish critic who published *Fantasy's Forests* [translated title] and other books and essays on fantasy and horror, died on 31 October aged 57. [AE]
- *M.M. (Meg) Justus* (1959-2017), US author whose fantasies include the Unearthly Northwest supernatural/historical series opening with *Sojourn* (2014), died on 22 November. [F770]
- *Ray Lovelock* (1950-2017), British-Italian actor in *Queens of Evil* (1970), *The Living Dead at Manchester Morgue* (1974) and *House of Shadows* (2013), died on 10 November aged 67. [SG]
- *Jim Nabors* (1930-2017), US actor best known for credits other than *The Lost Saucer* (1975), died on 30 November aged 87. [SFS]
- *Julio Oscar Mechoso* (1955-2017), US actor in *Jurassic Park III* (2001), *Invasion* (2006 tv) and *Planet Terror* (2007), died on 25 November aged 62. [SFS]
- *D. Potter*, US fan affectionately known as the 'tall black woman with one blond shoe', active in many APAs including A Woman's APA and the music-themed ALPS (which she founded), died on 25 October. She was the fan guest of honour at the 1982 Balticon. [GF]
- *Della Reese* (1931-2017), US actress in *Touched by an Angel* (1994-2003) and *Dinosaur* (2000), died on 19 November aged 86. [SFS]
- *Paddy (Patricia) Russell* (1928-2017), UK tv director who after lesser roles in the BBC's *The Quatermass Experiment* (1953) and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1954) became the first woman to direct *Doctor Who* with 'The Massacre of St Bartholomew's Eve' (1966), has died aged 89. She also directed three 1970s *Doctor Who* storylines. [DP]
- *Dudley Simpson* (1922-2017) Australian composer and conductor whose music featured in 200+ episodes of *Doctor Who* (1964-1980; he had a cameo part in 'The Talons of Weng-Chiang,' 1977) and all 68 of *The Tomorrow People* (1973-1979), died on 4 November aged 95. Other credits include *Out of the Unknown* (1965-1966), *Blake's 7* (1978-1979) and *The Legend of King Arthur* (1979). [SG/GW]

Blurbismo. ‘Her glittering cat’s eyes dug into the marrow of men, searching, prying, hating, and loving, all at once.’ (blurb for Edwin J. Becker’s novel *Earth Woman*, 1952) [MMW]

BSFA Awards 2018. The first round of nominations is already open at tinyurl.com/BSFA2017nominations, closing on 31 December, with a second round from 1-30 January to generate the final ballot. Nominations in the usual categories (novel, short, artwork, nonfiction) may alternatively be emailed to awards at bsfa dot co dot uk.

In Typo Veritas. ‘... Beethoven was in a flurry of musical writing. Being dead did not stop him in the slightest from recovering quickly and going on with his music.’ (Sam Rogers, *What’s So Great About Beethoven?: A Biography of Ludwig van Beethoven Just for Kids*, 2014) [CO’R]

As Others See Us. ‘Science fiction triggers “poorer reading”, study finds’ was the *Guardian* headline for a story whose first paragraph said: ‘reading science fiction actually makes you read more “stupidly”, according to new research.’ ([23 November](#)). This echoes researcher Chris Gavaler’s clickbait summary ‘SCIENCE FICTION MAKES YOU STUPID’ ([blog, 30 October](#)) of his co-written study *which involved no sf*. What was actually found – as the *Guardian* later admitted – was that readers who dislike sf have difficulty with a non-genre text after it’s been sprinkled (in Bat Durston style) with futuristic terminology. A better headline might have been ‘Genre prejudice triggers “poorer reading” ...’

Magazine Scene. *Interzone* is skipping an issue: #274 will be March/April 2018 rather than January/February as expected. Andy Cox reassures subscribers that they’ll get all the issues they’ve paid for.

Random Fandom. *Jim Barker* has been approved for a liver transplant and is now on the waiting list. He has set up a GoFundMe page at www.gofundme.com/jimbairn to help with expenses for the three weeks he expects to be in hospital. All donations gratefully received.

• *Jeanne Gomoll* is the 2017 recipient of the Rotsler Award for long-time achievement in fanzine art, founded in 1988. [MG] Congratulations!

The Weakest Link. *Bradley Walsh*: ‘“Down With Big Brother” is a quote from which George Orwell novel?’ *Contestant*: ‘1986.’ (ITV, *The Chase*) [PE]

• *Jeopardy* answer, question to be supplied: ‘On TV in the 1960s we learned that its mission was “to seek out new life and new civilizations.”’ *Contestant*: ‘What is Apollo?’ (3 November) [AIP]

Court Circular. Peter S. Beagle’s lawsuit against his former business manager Connor (Freff) Cochran grinds on, with the trial at last beginning on 5 January. A countersuit by Cochran was dismissed with prejudice on 7 November ‘because of prolonged failure to comply with court orders to produce documents and answer interrogatories’. [[F770](#)]

As Others Research Us. ‘David Tennant looks unrecognisable as he continues to showcase his fiery red locks on the London set of Terry Pratchett TV series *Bad Omens*.’ (*Mail Online*, 3 November) [JM]

The Dead Past. *40 Years Ago*, Sandra Miesel had a bad time after reselling (to Chilton’s *The Many Worlds of Poul Anderson*, with a DAW Books paperback reprint) an essay she’d published in Leland Sapiro’s fanzine *Riverside Quarterly*, ‘without ever noticing it had been copyrighted in Sapiro’s name. [...] Sapiro felt he held all rights even in the absence of any contract or payment. He felt that “his” property had been “pirated” and began threatening to sue people including Chilton, Thomas Nelson & Sons, DAW, Don Wollheim, SFWA, Jerry Pournelle, and every book dealer who’d sold the disputed volume.’ ([Karass 35](#), December 1977) Oh dearie me.

• *20 Years Ago*, ‘David Gemmell was alarmed to hear he’d been rubbished in *The Times*, by a reviewer who claimed to like Gemmell-style action-adventure fantasy but thought his latest novel was dull. DG glumly bought the paper, to find a review of “*Polgara the Sorceress*, by David Gemmell”. Such is the peril of having a surname so very similar to Eddings.’ ([Ansible 125](#), December 1997)

C.o.A. *John Betancourt and Wildside Press LLC*, 7945 MacArthur Blvd, Suite 215, Cabin John, MD 20818, USA.

Come Into My Parlour. New York Tyrant/Tyrant Books must have an interesting standard contract: ‘Dear agents, please stop sending inquiries to Tyrant. We no longer consider agented writers. Writers w/agents: feel free to send, just know you have to drop your agent if we want to sign you. Thanks, Tyrant staff’. (Twitter, 22 November)

Fanfundery. *TAFF 2018*: TransAtlantic Fan Fund candidates for the

westbound race to Worldcon 76 in San José, California, are Johan Anglemark, Fia Karlsson and Helena McCallum (Adela Terrell). Voting continues to 3 April. See taff.org.uk for [ballot](#) and [official newsletter](#).

Thog's Masterclass. *Trigger Warning Dept.* 'Potent black magic around an unstable mind is like enriched uranium near a fuse.' (Marisha Pessl, *Night Film*, 2013) [PB]

- *Dept of Magnetic Orbs.* 'His eyes were a pair of dark stars, drawing me to my feet, pulling me toward him ...' (Roger Zelazny, *Knight of Shadows*, 1990) [BA]

- *Lifetime Guarantee Dept.* 'As long as it [*a magical tree*] lives, the demons are locked up for all eternity.' (Episode 1, *The Shannara Chronicles*, 2016 tv) [BJ]

- *True Gastropod Romance.* 'So he slides inside me: slow dance of swelling tissues, hot muscle, nerves aglow ... ours is a snail-love: the slow mutual twining of molluscs. In this sliding world we move only by muscle waves, snails both of us, his love dart lodged beneath my mantle.' (Ian Watson, *God's World*, 1979) [VS]

Endnotes

Editorial. The *SF Encyclopedia* reached another numerical landmark in November, with 20,000 cover images in the associated Picture Gallery at sf-encyclopedia.uk/gallery.php. One of the new covers (he mentioned immodestly) is from [The Astounding Illustrated History of Science Fiction](#) (London, Flame Tree, 15 December), a huge great coffee-table book by various hands. I was consultant editor: this didn't involve much more than vetting the text, writing an introduction and sneaking in a plug for *Ansible*, but it's always nice to have another book credit. *The Plain People of Fandom*: Trailing your coat for a nonfiction BSFA Award nomination, eh? *Myself*: I'd be happier for Rob Hansen, as editor, to get the nod for [The Frank Arnold Papers](#). My own [Short Shrift: A Big Book of Little Reviews](#) from earlier in 2017 may also be eligible despite the rule against straight reprint collections (it includes a couple of dozen items never before published, and a great many more that owing to savage editorial cuts had never appeared as written), but I can't imagine people actually voting for it.

The Weakest Link II. *Bradley Walsh:* ‘In which film did Charlton Heston play Moses?’ *Contestant:* ‘*Lawrence of Arabia.*’ (ITV, *The Chase*) [PE]

Octocon 2018 Stop Press Drama. Dave Lally tells me (alas, after this *Ansible* had been printed and mailed) that despite the lack of dates on the website it’ll be 12-14 October 2018. Venue still uncertain but probably central Dublin.

Thog: Behind the Scenes! Thog’s Masterclass has the occasional false alarm. A correspondent sent the following for the Neat Tricks Dept: ‘Sellon, his large hands clasped around the stone, stood awkwardly and scratched his head with his pencil.’ (Dorothy L. Sayers, *Busman’s Honeymoon.*) I found this hard to believe, and – while Thog shrieked ‘Too good to check! Print the legend!’ – consulted Gollancz and Penguin editions of the novel. Both have ‘large hand’ in the singular, eliminating any difficulty. The quotation, it emerged, came from an ebook with lots more typos. Just another of the eight million stories in the naked city which is *Ansible*.

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2018

Ansible® 366, January 2018

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo:
Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or solutions to
the Blackett-Dirac equations.

Happy New Year. It seems that 2 January 2018 is a highly appropriate *Ansible* publication day for our US readers: ‘National Science Fiction Day is celebrated annually on January 2nd by millions of science fiction fans across the United States.’ (Nationaldaycalendar.com) [DB] Who knew?
• Pardon this intrusion, but 1 January 2018 was the 200th anniversary of the first publication of Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*.

Year 2018!

Arthur C. Clarke’s 100th birthday on Saturday 16 December was noted by various newspapers, with the *Grauniad* celebrating it several days early. Crossword-setter and sf fan ‘Phi’ marked the occasion with a Clarke-themed puzzle whose solvers had to construct and spot the missing term in the sequence MMXMMLXIMMMI. ([i, 16 December](#))

Bill Crider, US author and critic who is best known for crime fiction but has also written horror and supernatural stories and won a Sidewise Award for alternate history, has had cancer for some years and on 5 December announced his move into hospice care: ‘A few weeks, a few months is about all I have left.’ (billcrider.blogspot.co.uk)

Bill Finger (1914-1974), uncredited during his lifetime as co-creator of Batman, was immortalized on 8 December by the renaming of East 192nd Street in the Bronx, New York, as Bill Finger Way. [AIP]

Mark Hamill bursts free from a cruelly confining pigeonhole: ‘From the start the *Star Wars* films have been about the greater good. We get pigeonholed as science fiction, but there’s much more to it than that. All

those themes you find in fairy tales – friendship, loyalty, heroism – well, “A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away” is pretty close to “Once upon a time.”” (*Parade* magazine, 3 December) [MMW]

Frank Herbert looks likely to be honoured in his home town of Tacoma, Washington – assuming the final decision this month goes as expected – with part of a new park being called the Dune Peninsula, featuring the Frank Herbert Trail. (*News Tribune*, 7 December) [AIP]

Adam Roberts festively tweeted: ‘Marley was Dredd, to begin with. “I AM THE LAW,” he bellowed, gunning down carol singers with his Lawgiver and sending Tiny Tim to the isocubes for being in breach of megacity regulations regarding leg functionality.’ ([21 December](#))

Jodie Whittaker, according to the all-knowing BBC, ‘made her debut as the first female Time Lord in the Christmas special of *Doctor Who*.’ (BBC, 25 December) 5,271,009 fans duly pointed out that female Time Lords have long been part of the *Doctor Who* canon and that this is rather like calling Margaret Thatcher the first female MP.

Liz Williams feels even more than usually doomed: ‘my novella [*Phosphorus*] has been printed, but in being delivered by courier to my publisher, all the copies have gone missing. But it turns out they have been accidentally kidnapped by the United States Air Force, in that they were mistakenly delivered to an airbase instead of my publisher and someone who now cannot be traced signed for them. / Ian [*Whates*] can’t just rock up at an airbase and demand a load of books set on Mars because he’ll be shot or sent to Area 51 or something, so the courier now has to sort this out on Tuesday. / Why does this sort of thing always happen to me? Don’t answer that.’ (Facebook, 30 December)

Convocant

23 Jan • **Frankenstein and Its Legacy** (panel discussion), Royal Institution, 21 Albemarle St, London, W1S 4BS. 7-8:30pm. £16/£10 concessions; members and patrons £7. See tinyurl.com/y99qqrw6.

24 Jan • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. Speaker to be announced. Free.

2-4 Feb • **Enharmicon** (filk), Best Western Hotel, Marks Tey, Colchester. £39 reg and £27 unwaged to 1 February, *rising to £42 and £29 at the door*; under-18s £1 per year of age; under-5s free. See www.contabile.org.uk/enharmicon.

5 Feb • **Sci-Feb** (media), Humber Royal Hotel, Little Coates Road, Grimsby. £4 reg. See www.daydreamevents.uk/sci--feb.html.

17 Feb • **Picocon 35**, Beit Quadrangle, Imperial College, London. Guests are Ben Aaronovitch, Emma Newman, Chris Riddell and Paul Stewart. £12 reg; £10 concessions; £8 ICSF members; past GoHs free (I like that one). See www.union.ic.ac.uk/scc/icsf/picocon/.

25 Feb • **Digi-Con 3** (sf/comics/anime), Doncaster Deaf Trust, Leger Way, Doncaster. From £10 reg; see www.digi-fest.co.uk.

30 Mar - 2 Apr • **Follycon** (Eastercon), Majestic Hotel, Harrogate. £80 reg; £45 YA/unwaged; £30 child (5-17) and supp; under-5s free. Day memberships TBA. Credit-card registration at www.follycon.org.uk. 19-22 Jul • **Nemo 2018** (Eurocon), Amiens, France. *Now €50 reg*, rising to €55 on 1 June; €60 at door. See eurocon2018.yolasite.com.

16-20 Aug • **Worldcon 76** (Worldcon), San José, CA, USA. \$210 reg; \$105 YA (15-21) and military; under-15s \$75; under-6s free; \$50 supp. *Instalment-plan memberships require a first payment by 31 January*. It's now too late to join to become a 2018 Hugo nominator, for which the deadline was 31 December 2017 (but New Year members can still vote in the Hugos). See worldcon76.org.

24-27 Aug • **The Asylum** (steampunk), Lincoln. Ticket prices and extra event charges awaited at www.asylumsteampunk.co.uk.

26-27 Aug • **Stars of Time** (media), Tropicana, Weston-super-Mare. 10am-5:30pm. £6.50; child £3.50. See www.starsoftime.co.uk.

12-14 Oct • **Octocon**, ?Camden Court Hotel, Camden St, Dublin, Ireland (venue TBC). GoH Pat Cadigan. €25 reg; concessions €20; accompanied under-13s free; €10 supp. Join online at octocon.com.

26-31 Oct • **Edinburgh Horror Festival**, various city venues and programme to be announced. See www.edhorrorfest.co.uk.

26-28 Oct • **Festival of Fantastic Films**, Pendulum Hotel, Manchester. £85

reg. Other rates TBA at fantastic-films.com.

2-4 Nov • **Armadacon 30**, Future Inn, Plymouth. £35 reg; other rates TBA. PayPal registration at www.armadacon.org.

9-11 Nov • **Novacon 48**, Park Inn, Nottingham. Now £48 reg, to be reviewed after the 2018 Eastercon. Contact 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ. See www.novacon.org.uk.

Rumblings. *BristolCon*'s date was mistyped in A365: it's 27 not 28 October 2018. [DA] See www.bristolcon.org. • *Retro Hugos*: The 2018 (San José) and 2019 (Dublin) Worldcons will present these awards for 1943 and 1944 respectively, honouring work from 1942 and 1943. • *Worldcon 75* (Helsinki, 2017) announced a distribution of surplus funds that includes €12,000 to each of the 2018, 2019 and 2020 Worldcons.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us Frothing. Actor Patrick Gilmore of *Stargate* etc. fame told an interviewer the secret of his success: 'The thing about science fiction is that it has something other genres don't have, and that is a rabid fan base.' (*Vancouver Sun*, 22 December) [FW]

Awards. *New Year's Honours 2018*. Michael Morpurgo, noted author of children's fiction including some fantasy, was knighted; so was Ringo Starr, whose genre credits include *Help!* (1965), *Son of Dracula* (1974) and voice work in the galaxy-spanning *Thomas the Tank Engine* franchise. Hugh Laurie, now a CBE, has also played occasional sf roles – not only in the various alternate histories of *Blackadder*.

Crystal Balls. French film director Jean-Pierre Melville said in a 1970 interview: 'I don't know what will be left of me fifty years from now. I suspect that all films will have aged terribly and that the cinema probably won't even exist any more. I estimate the final disappearance of cinemas as taking place around the year 2020, so in fifty years' time there will be nothing but television.' (*New Yorker*, 1 May 2017) [MMW]

R.I.P. *Jim Baikie* (1940-2017), Scots comics artist best known for *2000 AD* artwork, including Alan Moore's *Skizz* (1983-1995) – with two sequels written and drawn by Baikie – and episodes of *Judge Dredd*, died on 29

December aged 77. [GW]

- *Harold Billings* (1931-2017), US librarian, supernatural fiction author and biographer of M.P. Shiel (two volumes published 2005 and 2010, the third ~~still awaited~~ [correction: published 2015]), died on 29 November aged 86. [PDF]
- *Keith Chegwin* (1957-2017), UK actor and tv presenter whose credits include *The Troublesome Double* (1967), *The Tomorrow People* (1975 tv) and *Shaun of the Dead* (2004), died on 11 December aged 60. [JB]
- *Alfie Curtis* (1930-2017), UK actor who was Dr. Evazan in *Star Wars* (1977), died on 26 December aged 87.
- *Dominic Frontiere* (1931-2017), US composer of theme and incidental music for the first season of *The Outer Limits* (1963-1964 tv), died on 21 December aged 86. [RCh] Further music credits include *Incubus* (1966), *The Flying Nun* (1967), *The Invaders* (1967-1968) and *The Immortal* (1969-1971).
- *Bob Givens* (1918-2017), US artist and animation worker with Disney from 1937 (Donald Duck, *Snow White*) and Warner Bros. from 1940 (where he redesigned Bugs Bunny and later drew *Tom & Jerry*), died on 14 December aged 99. [PDF]
- *Annie Goetzinger* (1951-2017), award-winning French comics artist, died on 20 December aged 66. [F770]
- *Howard Gottfried* (1923-2017), US producer of *Altered States* (1980), died on 8 December aged 94. [AIP]
- *Alain Jessua* (1932-2017), French director and screenwriter whose films include *Shock Treatment* (1973), *Paradis pour tous* (1982), *Frankenstein 90* (1984) and *The Colours of the Devil* (1997), died on 30 November; he was 85. [GC/PDF]
- *Suzanna Leigh* (1945-2017), UK actress whose films include *Tom Thumb* (1963), *The Deadly Bees* (1966), *The Lost Continent* (1968), *Lust for a Vampire* (1971), *Beware My Brethren* (1972) and *Son of Dracula* (1974), died on 12 December aged 72. [SG]
- *Rose Marie* (1923-2017), US comedy actress whose occasional genre credits include *Witchboard* (1986) and *Sandman* (1993), died on 28 December aged 94. [PDF]
- *Heather Menzies-Urich* (1949-2017), Canadian-born US *Sound of Music* actress with genre credits in *Sssssss* (1973), *Logan's Run* (1977-1978 tv), *Piranha* (1978), *Captain America* (1979) and *Endangered Species* (1982),

died on 24 December aged 68. [GD]

- *Heather North* (1945-2017), US actress who from 1970 voiced Daphne in *Scooby-Doo, Where Are You* and its many spinoffs, died on 30 November aged 71. [F770] Another voice credit was *Captain Caveman and the Teen Angels* (1977-1980).
- *Dick Orkin* (1933-2017), US actor and radio producer who created and starred in the widely syndicated superhero-spoof radio series *Chickenman* (launched 1966 as a *Batman* parody), died on 24 December aged 84. [PDF]
- *Martin Ransohoff* (1927-2017), US film/tv producer whose credits include *The Fearless Vampire Killers* (1967) and *Nightwing* (1979), died on 13 December aged 90. His tv production house Filmways was responsible for *Mister Ed* (1961-1966) and *The Addams Family* (1964-1966). [AIP]
- *Lona Rietschel* (1933-2017), award-winning German comics artist, died on 19 December 2017 aged 84. [F770]
- *Tommy Silverros* (1961-2017), Swedish fan who was active in the Malmö sf group, comics and Tolkien fandoms, and worked on the Helsinki Worldcon, died on 24 November aged 55. [J-HH]
- *Michiru Shimada* (1959-2017), Japanese writer for much anime from 1980 to the 2017 tv series *Little Witch Academia*, died on 15 December aged 58. [PDF]
- *Joe Wehrle, Jr*, US author, illustrator and fan whose artwork appeared in *Galaxy, If, Whispers* and various small-press publications, died on 10 December aged 76. [F770]
- *Leslie H. Whitten* (1928-2017), US author of the horror novels *Progeny of the Adder* (1965), *Moon of the Wolf* (1967), *The Alchemist* (1973) and *The Fangs of Morning* (1994), died on 2 December aged 89. [MMW]

The Weakest Link. *Jeopardy* answer: ‘The Ministry of Information Retrieval may or may not be in South America in this 1985 dystopian film.’
Contestant: ‘What is *Blade Runner*?’ (28 December) [AIP]

Court Circular. The Lexis-Nexis Top 10 Copyright Rulings of 2017 include the decision in favour of publishers and literary estates in the suit against Fredrik Colting and his Moppet Books, whose KinderGuides were abridged children’s versions of copyright texts (among them Arthur C. Clarke’s *2001*) with brief study notes. As District Judge Jed Rakoff put it: ‘Fair use ... is not a jacket to be worn over an otherwise infringing outfit. One cannot add a bit of commentary to convert an unauthorized derivative work into a protectable

publication.’ [AIP]

As Anthologists Saw Us. ‘Ten years ago, a collection such as this would have been a collection of technological nightmares – crazy robots, poisoned wastelands, megalomaniac computers, fiendish subliminal advertising techniques, mega-death dealing microbes and warheads. [...] Today these nightmares are no longer the preserve of the science fiction writers. They are part of our daily lives.’ (Anthony Cheetham introducing his *Science Against Man*, 1970) What a surge of nostalgia one feels for those crazy robots and other everyday perils of 1970.

SF Encyclopedia. The magic-number landmark of 2017 was 20,000 cover images in the [SFE Picture Gallery](#), achieved in November.

Magazine Scene. Kelly Abbott’s app-based multi-genre fiction magazine *Great Jones Street*, launched in 2016, closed down on 31 December – although ‘Our catalog is for sale, and there are some interested buyers.’ The app itself will also be for sale. [PDF]

Random Fandom. *Leroy Kettle*’s collected fanzine writing from the 1970s and 1980s (including the complete run of his poll-topping fanzine *True Rat*, with a few strategic omissions to protect the guilty) is now available as [True Rat: The Beast of Leroy Kettle](#), edited by the indefatigable Rob Hansen. This is the latest of 25 free fandom-related ebooks downloadable from taff.org.uk/ebooks.php. If you enjoy any of these, a contribution to TAFF is always welcomed.

- In response to fan demand, all TAFF ebooks are now also available as PDF documents.

The Dead Past. *70 Years Ago*, a leading UK stage critic mused: ‘Am thinking of starting a movement to be called “Kafka Is Balls”, with a club of which I propose to make myself Perpetual President. Not on the strength of having read Kafka – indeed, I have never opened him – but because of what the high-brow magazines tell me about him. Am considering a button with the letters P.P.K.I.B.C. Perpetual President Kafka Is Balls Club.’ (James Agate, *Ego* 9, 1948)

- *20 Years Ago*, a cheery editorial now overlaid with much sadness: ‘News of Arthur C. Clarke’s New Year knighthood for “services to literature” led to debate over whether this is a first for sf. The obvious contender Kingsley Amis was probably knighted in spite of, not because of, his sf/fantasy; the

same goes for Compton Mackenzie and Angus Wilson. Fred Hoyle got it for science. Rather dispiritingly, Conan Doyle's and H. Rider Haggard's knighthoods were for Approved Politics, as indeed was Thomas More's ... (Lord Dunsany inherited his title and doesn't count.) So dear old Arthur C. does seem to be the first wholly science-fictional knight. Which of the usual suspects could be next? No doubt Ladbroke's will soon announce their long-term odds on Sir Brian Aldiss, Sir Iain Banks, Sir Terry Pratchett, Sir Iain M. Banks ...' ([Ansible 126](#), January 1998)

C.o.A. *Chuck Connor*, 81 Peterborough Road, Crowland, Lincolnshire, PE6 0BB.

Outraged Letters. *Lloyd Penney* on Gregory Benford in [A364](#): 'Margaret Atwood is such a revered figure here, I actually cannot see anyone here trying to take her down, in any way possible, so it is good to see non-Canadians doing so, and at least attempting to take the piss out of her. Good on yer, Greg.' (27 December)

R.I.P. II. A few that *Ansible* missed in 2017: *William L. Hamling* (1921-2017), US author, editor and original First Fandom member who began to publish sf in 1939, died on 29 June aged 96. He was managing editor of *Amazing* and *Fantastic Adventures* 1948-1951, and editor and publisher of *Imagination* 1951-1958 and of *Rogue* (which he founded) from 1955.

- *Vic Lockman* (1927-2017), hugely prolific comics artist and writer of Disney, Hanna-Barbera and Warner Bros scripts for Western Publishing's Dell and Gold Key titles c1950-1984, thereafter producing countless Christian-themed comics (*Link Lizard Defeats Evolution*), died on 1 June aged 89. [ME]

- *Hank Searls* (1922-2017), US author and screenwriter whose best-known novel is the sf *The Pilgrim Project* (1964, filmed 1968 as *Countdown*), died on 17 February aged 94.

Fanfundery. *DUFF*: Nominations are open until 31 January for the 2018 Down Under Fan Fund race from Australia or New Zealand to North America for, most probably, the San José Worldcon. For more details see downunderfanfund.wordpress.com.

- *GUFF*: nominations are open for the 2018 Going Under Fan Fund southbound race from Europe to Australasia, closing on 15 February with voting until 3 April. The winner will attend Continuum in Melbourne (8-11

June). For full details see ozfanfunds.com/?page_id=92.

- *TAFF*: 2018 candidates (see taff.org.uk) are mercilessly interrogated in John Purcell's third newsletter, posted in late December at taff.org.uk/news/TaffNews03.pdf.

Thog's Masterclass. *Self-Improvement Dept.* 'His stunned brain groped to pull itself up by its bootstraps.' (Emil Petaja, *Lord of the Green Planet*, 1967)

- *Classical Eyeballs in the Sky.* 'It seemed that I was struck by some such light / That broke, reflected back, ahead of me, / Causing my eyes, in flight, to speed away.' (Dante Alighieri, *Purgatorio*; trans Robin Kirkpatrick, Penguin Classics, 2007) [JFH]

- *One-Legged Horde Dept.* 'The oncoming horde tripped over three writhing forms at its foot ...' (Robert E. Howard, 'The Slithering Shadow', 1933) [MJE]

- *Dept of Scornful Sibillance.* "'You disgust me," I said, each word a hiss.' (Francesca Haig, *The Forever Ship*, 2017) [DVB]

- *Stealth Flyer Dept.* '... they'd carted him across the Atlantic Ocean in an airship wrapped up in gauze bandages and disguised as a patient recovering from a facelift.' (Margaret Atwood, *The Year of the Flood*, 2009) [RCo]

- *The Fruits of Rhetoric.* 'His enormous hand closed over the telephone receiver like a bunch of bananas falling off a tree and landing on a small black beetle.' ('Karl Zeigfreid' [guess who], *Android*, 1962)

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 12 January 2018: Brum Group AGM and auction. 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre. Normally £4 or £3 for members, but I think this one is free. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future events/speakers: 9 February 2018, awaited; 9 March 2018, awaited; 13 April 2018, Mike Carey; 11 May 2018, Janet Edwards; 8 June 2018, Alastair Reynolds; 13 July 2018, awaited; 10 August 2018, summer social; 12 October 2018, David Leach; 16 November 2018, Professor Bill Chaplin, 7 December 2018, Christmas social.

Editorial. Your editor is feeling the silent touches of time, and not only the usual disorganization of Christmas-card logistics (thanks to all who sent

them; sorry to all who didn't receive them). In late December, despite firm assurances from the authorities that this dread thing could not happen until well into the New Year, I took delivery of an Old Person's Free Bus Pass. Meanwhile the Department for Wonky Pensions has begun to send menacing letters headed 'Approaching State Pension age'. I expect a complimentary coffin will arrive any day now. Clearly it's time to start acting my age, perhaps by denouncing the New Wave, the casting in *Doctor Who*, and younger sf people in general ('Get off my lawn, Stross!').

Thog's New Year Special. *Feminine Hygiene Dept:* 'The desire to clean her teeth grew absolutely compulsive, she could no more have resisted it than she could have flown unaided between two planets.

'Moving quickly from the radio to her living quarters, she squeezed a little water into a plastic container and put a few dabs of toothpaste on her brush. She slipped the brush into her mouth and pressed the small button in the end which activated its electric motor. The bristles – soft, gentle bristles, guaranteed not to damage the enamel or the gum – moved swiftly against the teeth. She began with the top left molars, worked round to the bicuspid, and came round again from them to the incisors, the canines, the laterals and the centrals. Once she had reached the front of her mouth, she changed her grip on the brush so that it moved round to the top right, travelling over the bicuspid and molar as it moved. Coming down the sides of her teeth, she paused and took a deep breath, placed a little more paste on the brush and moved round again this time beginning with the actual chewing surface of [the] upper right molars, coming round and cleaning again between the crevices until she had worked round to the left-hand molars.

'Once more she put paste on the brush in this same elaborate ritual and concentrated her attention now on the inside of the upper left molars, the inside of the upper left bicuspid, round across the incisors and so back to the right-hand masticators. She rinsed the brush, reapplied the paste, and repeated the whole ritualistic process with the lower teeth. She cleaned the brush very carefully and then, in a set way, put it down and moved back toward the radio set.

'She had taken barely a dozen paces when she was assailed by a horrible thought that she had not cleaned the top left inside molars. She stood in an agony of uncertainty for five minutes, then went back to the bathroom area of

her living quarters, recharged the brush, and carefully cleaned again the top left molars on their inside surfaces. She looked at her reflection in the mirror; it foamed back at her like a rabid dog.’

(‘John E. Muller’, *Dark Continuum*, 1964)

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Ansible® 367, February 2018

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo:
Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or the cake laid
by Mayor Snorkum.

Ursula K. Le Guin (1929-2018) needs no introduction. She won five Hugos – the first being for *The Left Hand of Darkness* (1970) – six Nebulas and far too many other awards to tally here, including several life achievement honours such as the World Fantasy Award (1999) and SFWA Grand Master Award (2003). She was much loved and admired for many novels, shorter stories and critical essays. Book-length career highlights include the Earthsea fantasies (beginning with *A Wizard of Earthsea*), *The Lathe of Heaven*, *The Dispossessed*, and *Always Coming Home*. She died on 22 January, aged 88. It's hard to add to the extensive and deserved [media coverage](#) of her passing, but I particularly valued her sharp sense of humour – see *Ansible* 240 – and enthusiastic support for the dark doings of Thog. Thank you, Ursula, for everything.

The Word of Unbinding

Peter S. Beagle's lawsuit against his former manager Connor Cochran would have come to court in January but has been delayed by Cochran's last-minute move of filing for US Chapter 11 bankruptcy. [[F770](#)] Much commentary at: fansagainstfraud.com/bankruptcy-conlan-press/.

Alberto Manguel, author, fantasy anthologist (*Black Water*) and translator, was made an Officer of the Order of Canada at the end of 2017. So were William Shatner, for among other things 'his iconic contributions to popular culture', and Denis Villeneuve – director of *Arrival* – for 'his acclaimed work as a filmmaker'. [AIP]

Adam Roberts writes: 'The late and genuinely lamented Ursula Le G once sent you a Henry James thoggism [see [A347](#)]. I'm sure you don't want to

start a Jamesian annex to Thog, but in her honour I thought I'd send you my favourite HJ Eyeballs in the Sky moment – it's from 1897's *What Maisie Knew* ch 11. "Mr. Perriam was short and massive – and it would have been difficult to say of him whether his head were more bald or his black moustache more bushy. He seemed also to have moustaches over his eyes, which, however, by no means prevented these polished little globes from rolling round the room as if they had been billiard-balls impelled by Ida's celebrated stroke." (28 January)

John Scalzi discovered yet another Glittering Prize for sf/fantasy authors: '4chan has declared me a degenerate science fiction writer and I could not be more delighted.' (Twitter, 13 January) The 4chan roster of infamy – "Degenerate, avoid (interracial sex, homosexuality etc)' – goes: 'Heinlein 1907, Joe Haldeman 1943, Iain M. Banks 1954, Neal Stephenson 1959, Neil Gaiman 1960, Alastair Reynolds 1966, John Scalzi 1969.' H'mm. Are women writers all too nice to be degenerate?

Conphaseolin

2-4 Feb • **Enharmicon** (filk), Best Western Hotel, Marks Tey, Colchester. £42 reg and £29 unwaged at the door; under-18s £1 per year of age; under-5s free. See www.contabile.org.uk/enharmicon.

3 Feb • **DurhamCon**, DSU, Dunelm House, New Elvet, Durham. GoH Sarah Lohmann, Justina Robson. From 11am. £5; students £4.

5 Feb • **Sci-Feb** (media), Humber Royal Hotel, Little Coates Road, Grimsby. £4 reg. See www.daydreamevents.uk/sci--feb.html.

17 Feb • **Picocon 35**, Beit Quadrangle, Imperial College, London. £12 reg; £10 concessions; £8 ICSF members; past GoHs free (I do like that bit). See www.union.ic.ac.uk/scc/icsf/picocon/.

25 Feb • **Digi-Con 3** (sf/comics/anime), Doncaster Deaf Trust, Leger Way, Doncaster. From £10 reg; see www.digi-fest.co.uk.

28 Feb • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. With Tade Thompson. Free.

2-3 Mar • **Frightfest** (film), Glasgow Film Theatre. £75 reg or £10.50 per

film. See www.frightfest.co.uk. Also 2018 London events: Leicester Square, 23-27 August, and Empire Haymarket, 27 October.

16-18 Mar • **Starburst Media City Festival** (film), The Landing, Salford. Free. See starburstmagazine.com/filmfestival/.

24 Mar • **Highlighting Horror**, QUAD Centre, Derby. 10am-6pm. £35 reg. See www.derbyquad.co.uk/courses.aspx, which also has details of QUAD genre writing classes/courses on 5, 17 and 24 February.

30 Mar - 2 Apr • **Follycon** (Eastercon), Majestic Hotel, Harrogate. £80 reg; £45 YA/unwaged; £30 child (5-17) and supp; under-5s free. Day rates TBA. Credit cards (*preferred*) via www.follycon.org.uk.

30 Mar - 2 Apr • **Sci-Fi Weekender**, Hafan y Mor Holiday Park, near Pwllheli, Gwynedd, North Wales. Booking by accommodation from £520 for two; 3-day pass £120; more at www.scifiweekender.com.

1 May • **Tolkien Lecture**: V.E. Schwab. Pichette Auditorium, Pembroke College, Oxford. 6:30pm. *Waiting list* via tolkienlecture.org.

29 June - 1 July • **SF Foundation Masterclass** in sf criticism, Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge. £225 reg; postgraduates £175. Apply by 1 March. See www.sf-foundation.org/masterclass.

1 Jul • **Tolkien Society Seminar**, Hilton Hotel, Leeds, LS1. £30 (members £25). See www.tolkiensociety.org/events/seminar-2018/.

24-26 Aug • **TitanCon**, Wellington Park Hotel, Belfast. £42 reg; YA (16-25) £30; under-16s £15; under-6s £5; £6 supp. See titancon.com.

20-23 Sep • **Oxonmoot** (Tolkien Society), St Antony's College, Oxford. £70 reg or £60 for members, *rising to £75/£65 in May and £85/£75 in August*. See www.tolkiensociety.org/events/oxonmoot-2018/.

2-4 Nov • **Armadacon 30**, Future Inn, Plymouth. £35 reg; concessions £30; under-16s free. PayPal registration at www.armadacon.org.

Rumblings. *Worldcon 2020*: the only known bid – Wellington, New Zealand – has filed its paperwork for this year's site selection voting. See nzin2020.nz. Any emerging rival bid must file by 17 February to appear on the site selection ballot. (It's possible to file later and run as a write-in bid, but the technical term for this approach is 'doomed'.)

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. Reviewing *The Last Jedi*, John Podhoretz offers no comfort to fans of low stuff like H.G. Wells's *The Time Machine*: 'Now that the Force is just sitcom magic, you can bet that Episode IX is all about time travel, the deadly scourge of all that is good in science fiction.' (*Weekly Standard*, 1/8 January) [MMW]

Awards. *Golden Globes* genre winners include *Coco* (animated film), Guillermo del Toro (director, for *The Shape of Water*, which also won for best original score) and *The Handmaid's Tale* (tv drama, with Elisabeth Moss as best tv actress).

- *Horror Writers Association Lifetime Achievement, 2017*: Linda Addison.
- *Oscars*: best picture finalists include *Get Out* and *The Shape of Water*.
- *PEN America Literary Service Award, 2018*: Stephen King.
- *Philip K. Dick Award* shortlist: Meg Elison, *The Book of Etta*; Mur Lafferty, *Six Wakes*; Deji Bryce Olukotun, *After the Flare*; Tim Pratt, *The Wrong Stars*; Alastair Reynolds, *Revenger*; Carrie Vaughn, *Bannerless*; Martha Wells, *All Systems Red*. [GVG]
- *SFWA Damon Knight Grand Master Award*: Peter S. Beagle.

Blurbismo. Health warning on Gollancz ebooks by Thog's favourite author: 'Do not read too much Lionel Fanthorpe at one go. Your brains will turn to guacamole and drip out of your ears.' – Neil Gaiman. [PR]

R.I.P. *Raymond Buckland* (1934-2017), UK-born author long in the USA whose novels include the sf Committee Against Evil sequence comprising *The Committee* (1993) and *Cardinal's Sin* (1996), died on 27 September aged 83. (*Fortean Times*, Christmas) [DL]

- *Frank Buxton* (1930-2018), US actor/director who voiced the 1960s cartoon superhero Batfink and directed episodes of *Mork & Mindy* (1981), died on 2 January aged 87. [PDF]
- *Bob Carlton* (1950-2018), UK theatre director and writer who created the 1980s musical *Return to the Forbidden Planet*, died on 18 January aged 67. [F770]
- *Peggy Cummins* (1925-2017), UK actress in *Meet Mr. Lucifer* (1953) and the M.R. James-based *Night of the Demon* (1957), died on 29 December aged 92. [SG]
- *Bradford Dillman* (1930-2018), US actor in *Escape From The Planet Of*

- The Apes* (1971), *Moon of the Wolf* (1972), *Bug* (1975), *Demon, Demon* (1975) and *The Swarm* (1978), died on 16 January aged 87. [PDF]
- *Robert Dowdell* (1932-2018), US actor in *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea* (1964-1968) and *Wicked Stepmother* (1989), died on 23 January aged 85. [SFS]
 - *Bella Emberg* (1937-2018), UK actress seen in *Doomwatch* (1970-1971), *Doctor Who* (1970, 1974, 2006) and *The Tomorrow People* (1977), died on 12 January aged 80. [SG]
 - *David Fisher* (1929-2018), UK tv screenwriter who scripted four *Doctor Who* storylines including *The Creature from the Pit* (1979) and *The Leisure Hive* (1980) – both of which he novelized – plus part of what Douglas Adams and Graham Williams reworked as *City of Death* (1979), died on 10 January aged 88. [GW]
 - *Bill Harris*, US comics writer/editor who wrote for Lee Falk's *The Phantom* and edited this and other genre titles for King Features, died on 8 January aged 84. [ME]
 - *Jack Ketchum* (Dallas Mayr, 1946-2018), US horror author who won four Stoker Awards including the 2014 life-achievement honour, died on 24 January aged 71. Several of his novels were filmed; he received the World Horror Convention's 2011 grandmaster award. [TM]
 - *Julius Lester* (1939-2018), US author whose books include the fantasies *Time's Memory* (2006) and *Cupid* (2007), died on 18 January aged 78. [TM]
 - *Dorothy Malone* (1925-2018), US actress whose rare genre credits include *The Day Time Ended* (1979) and *The Being* (1983), died on 19 January aged 92. [PDF]
 - *Terence Marsh* (1931-2018), Oscar-winning film production designer and art director whose credits include *Scrooge* (1970), *Magic* (1978), *Spaceballs* (1987) and *The Green Mile* (1999), died on 9 January aged 86. [AIP]
 - *John Morris* (1926-2018), US composer of music for many Mel Brooks films including *Young Frankenstein* (1974) and *Spaceballs* (1987), died on 25 January aged 91. [AIP]
 - *David Dean Oberhelman* (1966-2018), US academic librarian who for many years administrated the Mythopoeic Awards, died on 25 January. [F770]
 - *Jean Porter* (1922-2018), US actress seen uncredited in *One Million BC* (1940), died on 13 January aged 95. [PDF]
 - *Donnelly Rhodes* (1937-2018), Canadian character actor in *Battlestar*

Galactica (2004-2009, as Dr Cottle) and *Tron: Legacy* (2010), died on 8 January aged 80. [PDF]

- *Mark Salling* (1982-2018), US *Glee* actor also seen in *Children of the Corn IV: The Gathering* (1996) and *The Graveyard* (2006), was found dead – apparent suicide – on 30 January; he was 35. [AIP]
- *Allison Shearmur*, US film producer and studio executive whose credits include *The Hunger Games* (2012) and sequels, *Clan of the Cave Bear* (2015), *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* (2016) and the coming *Solo: A Star Wars Story* and *Chaos Walking*, died on 19 January; she was 54. [AIP]
- *Jon Paul Steuer* (1984-2018), US actor in *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, died on 1 January aged 33. [F770]
- *Rick Sullivan*, US fan whose influential horror-film fanzine *Gore Gazette* had 110 issues from 1980 to 1994, died in December. [SG]
- *Greta Thyssen* (1933-2018), Danish-born actress in *Terror Is a Man* (1959, loosely based on *The Island of Doctor Moreau*) and *Journey to the Seventh Planet* (1962), died on 6 January aged 84. (*Hollywood Reporter*, 9 January)
- *Jerry Van Dyke* (1931-2018), US actor whose main genre credit was *My Mother the Car* (1965-1966), died on 5 January aged 86. (*Hollywood Reporter*, 6 January)
- *Mort Walker* (1923-2018), US cartoonist famous for *Beetle Bailey*, whose strips included the Noah-esque fantasy *Boner's Ark* (1968-2000), died on 27 January aged 94.
- *Jeremy Wilkin* (1930-2018), UK actor in *Thunderbirds* (voicing Virgil Tracy from 1966) and other Gerry Anderson productions including *Captain Scarlet*, *Joe 90* and *UFO*, died on 19 December; he was 87. Another credit was *Doctor Who*: 'Revenge of the Cybermen' (1975). [S]
- *Peter Wyngarde* (1927-2018), UK actor whose genre films include *The Dybbuk* (1952), *The Innocents* (1961), *Night of the Eagle* (1962) and *Flash Gordon* (1980), died on 15 January aged 89. [SG]
- *Doug Young* (1919-2018), US voice actor in several animated series including *The Flintstones* (1962-1966) and *Jonny Quest* (1964-1965), died on 7 January aged 98. [PDF]

As Others Gush. '... through her sci-fi and fantasy Le Guin tackled issues that no other writer had ever attempted, themes like feminism, gender identity, and the inevitable corruption of capitalist societies.' (Tiffany Kelly, *Popular Mechanics*, 24 January)

Court Circular. *Playboy* is suing the fan-founded BoingBoing website for linking in 2016 to a since-deleted Imgur image archive of ‘Every Playboy Playmate Centerfold Ever’. The Electronic Frontier Foundation has called this suit ‘frankly mystifying’. As BoingBoing puts it: ‘Rather than pursuing the individual who created the allegedly infringing archive, *Playboy* is pursuing a news site for pointing out the archive’s value as a historical document.’ ([The Register](#), 22 January)

Outraged Letters. *Simon R. Green*: ‘Apparently Robert E. Howard’s Conan is now officially out of copyright. (In Europe, not the US.) So if you ever had a Conan story you wanted to write ...’ The stories entered European public domain in 2006; the current news buzz is because the French publisher Glénat has announced a series of comics adaptations. ([Bleedingcool.com](#), 17 January)

- *James Morton*: ‘Just got a copy of Chris Brookmyre’s *Places in the Darkness* (2017) – murder mystery set on a space station. The back has an endorsement from Iain M. Banks. “Fascinating, fast-paced but thoughtful,” says the late Mr Banks. Is there a section in *Ansible* for author endorsements from beyond the veil?’

Random Fandom. *BSFA*: a special issue of *Vector* is planned to mark the 60th anniversary of this mighty organization’s founding at the 1958 Eastercon in Kettering.

- *FAAn Awards* for 2017 fanzine work: voting is open and continues to 15 March. Email votes to administrator Nic Farey (fareynic at gmail dot com). Details at [eFanzines.com/TIR/](#).
- *John-Henri Holmberg* reports that long-time Swedish fan Lars-Olov Strandberg, active since 1956, is in hospital and unable to communicate after a severe stroke. Hopes of recovery are uncertain. Lars-Olov was the first Swede to be a Worldcon guest of honour (Glasgow, 2005).
- *TAFF Free Ebooks*: the latest addition to the canon is *You Only Live Once*, a hefty collection of John Brosnan’s fanzine and other writing edited by Kim Huett. Expanded from Kim’s 2007 PDF edition still hosted at [eFanzines.com](#), this can be found at [taff.org.uk/ebooks.php?x=Brosnan](#). Future plans include an enlarged ebook of *Down the Badger Hole: R. Lionel Fanthorpe: The Badger Years* (1995) edited by Debbie Cross. A blurb writer whose name cannot be traced said: ‘Strange Weird Eerie’.

SFWA Announcement. ‘Recently, a science fiction writer made a very

public announcement of his application to join SFWA. SFWA Bylaws section VI.1.c.i gives discretion to the membership credentials committee “regardless of qualifications.” Based on the behavior of and online statements by this writer over the preceding year or so, which the credentials committee believes is inconsistent with the obligations that SFWA members have to one another, the committee has determined that it has good and sufficient cause to deny this membership.’ (Sfwa.org, 20 January) Jon Del Arroz promptly identified himself as this applicant, and [seemed surprised](#) that a campaign of self-promotion via [online harassment](#) of fans and professionals – including SFWA members and the SFWA president Cat Rambo – could have such consequences.

The Dead Past. *40 Years Ago:* ‘The first couple of issues of Dez Skinn’s new British prozine, *Starburst*, have been published: contents are pretty lively with cartoon strips (including *Jeff Hawke*), material by Harrison and Bradbury, *Star Wars* stuff, film and tv material, and a lot of garish artwork. It appears, in other words, to be aimed at the teenage market. // Meanwhile, in the sercon strongholds of The Sf Foundation, Malcolm Edwards has replaced Peter Nicholls as boss, and David Pringle has moved in as an Igor figure.’ ([Checkpoint 86](#), February 1978)

- *50 Years Ago*, the announced winners of the 4th Annual 11-Foot Poll included ‘Lin Carter, *The Star Magicians* as Worst Novel; Lin Carter, Worst Pro Writer; *Amazing*, Worst Prozine; *The Retief Series* by Keith Laumer, Worst Series ...’ ([SF Weekly 216](#), 5 February 1968)

- *75 Years Ago:* to help voters in this year’s 1943 Retro Hugos, Fanac.org has scans of some eligible 1942 fanzines at fanac.org/fanzines/Retro_Hugos.html.

Fanfundery. *GUFF 2018* reminder: nominations must be in by 15 February. For full details of the race see ozfanfunds.com/?page_id=92.

- *TAFF 2018:* TransAtlantic Fan Fund voting is still in progress and continues to 3 April. See taff.org.uk for the ballot and platforms. For no very logical reason the TAFF webmaster has also registered taff.info.

Thog’s Masterclass. *Classic Crab Moments.* ‘What a beautiful night ... If only we didn’t have to worry about giant crabs!’ ‘Every so often he felt the striking claws missing him by inches.’ ‘There’s a colossal crab which leads them. I’ve named him King Crab.’ ‘The big crab shambled forward ... His revolting features appeared to crease into a lusting grin.’ ‘The giant crabs had

grossly mistimed their attack on the Blue Ocean Holiday Camp.’ ‘The crabs were spoiling everybody’s holiday....’ (Guy N. Smith, *Night of the Crabs*, 1976)

- *Love Among the Crabs*. ‘She reached down and fondled him, her fingers demonstrating their expertise even on a morning following a night which had seen one of the most terrifying battles in history.’ (Guy N. Smith, *Killer Crabs*, 1978) [SS]

- *Post Hoc Ergo Propter Hoc Dept*. ‘Laura ran her fingers through her hair and raised her breasts.’ (Robert Rankin, *The Suburban Book of the Dead*, 1992) [JC]

- *The Smile That Wins*. ‘He smiled at me coldly, and the rotten stains on his teeth stood out like the craters of the moon.’ (Norman Kagan, ‘Four Brands of Impossible’, September 1964 *F&SF*) [BA]

- *More True Romance*. ‘He flung himself on her and embraced her enthusiastically and she clung to him in return, her famous breasts squashed against his chest, her hair, scented like some tropical fruit, tickling his nose so that he had to smooth it down....’ (K.K. Beck, *Revenge of Kali-Ra*, 1999) [BA]

- *She Sleeps with the Fishes Dept*. ‘As children Princes William and Harry fed the koi with their mother, Diana, Princess of Wales.’ (*The Times*, 16 December) [PE]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 9 February 2018: Andrew Bannister talks to the Brum Group. 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre. £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future events/speakers: 9 March 2018, Jeff Noon; 13 April 2018, Mike Carey; 11 May 2018, Janet Edwards; 8 June 2018, Alastair Reynolds; 13 July 2018, awaited; 10 August 2018, summer social; 12 October 2018, David Leach; 16 November 2018, Professor Bill Chaplin, 7 December 2018, Christmas social.

Editorial. For bereft readers who would like to donate to some good cause in Ursula K. Le Guin’s memory, her family has mentioned the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge as a non-profit organization that was close to her heart.

https://www.fws.gov/refuge/Malheur/what_we_do/donate.html

Late-Breaking. *Kathryn Hinds*, US author and poet whose first novel was the fantasy *The Healer's Choice* (2015), died on 30 January. [PDF]

Thog's Second Helping. *Racial Profiling Dept.* 'Both were cases of idiotic destructiveness, and the agent in each was evidently a moral imbecile who was a professed enemy of society. Such persons are rare in this country [*Britain*], and when they occur are usually foreigners, most commonly Russians, or East Europeans of some kind.' (R. Austin Freeman, 'A Sower of Pestilence', 1925)

• '... too many of the landlords and tenants in the Avenue d'Iéna [*Paris*] have names ending in "escu", "ovitch", "ski" and "stein", and these are sometimes not the endings of respectable names.' (Ian Fleming, *Thunderball*, 1961)

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From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo:
Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or specifications
for the Flazgaz Heatray.

Editorial. According to past tradition, media adaptations of Langford stories never actually happen. I'm thus thrilled to report that the noted actor LeVar Burton – clearly a man of excellent taste – released his free podcast reading of 'Different Kinds of Darkness' (*F&SF* Jan 2000) on 27 February. See www.stitcher.com/podcast/stitcher/levar-burton-reads and itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/levar-burton-reads/id12446493 84.

The Thing from Sheol

Diane Duane & Peter Morwood feared they'd lose their Irish home owing to a temporary cashflow problem and rent arrears; but fans rallied round in mid-February with donations and ebook purchases, and the problem went away with remarkable speed. (Dianeduane.com)

Lionel and Patricia Fanthorpe kindly authorized an ebook of Debbie Cross's 'Fanthorpe's greatest hits' compilation *Down the Badger Hole* (1995), now added to the TAFF site's free downloads page – see taff.org.uk/ebooks.php?x=BadgerHole. This corrected, much expanded edition includes the 1999 *Bibliographic Supplement* by Debbie Cross and Brian J. Hunt, plus further tasty Fanthorpeana from the annals of Thog.

Rhys Hughes discovered that silence is golden when he mentioned online that he wasn't too keen on H.P. Lovecraft's writing or racism, and was very soon told by his publisher Derrick Hussey of Hippocampus Press: 'Get f*cked, Rhys. Your unprofitable book is out of print as of this moment and in the unlikely event if you ever see me on the sidewalk, I'd advise you step the other way.' (Facebook, 25 February)

Terry Goodkind disliked the cover art (by Bastien Lecouffe-Deharme) on his latest novel, and invited all of Facebook to a mockery competition. ‘*Shroud of Eternity* is a great book with a very bad cover. Laughably bad. So let’s have some fun with it.’ (23 February) John Picacio commented: ‘Heads up to everyone in the publishing industry: Authors, please take note, especially those new to the sf/f field. Pictured here is some of the most unprofessional behavior you will ever witness. This is a writer publicly throwing his cover artist under the bus, while embarrassing his publisher and their art director. This is the behavior of a child throwing a tantrum.’ (24 February) Goodkind apologized, saying his real quarrel is with the Tor Books art department. The story spread worldwide, with *Guardian*, *Bookseller* and much other coverage.

S.T. Joshi marked the film premiere of *Annihilation* by reposting his important views (‘An Aesthetic Catastrophe’) on Jeff VanderMeer’s novel: ‘The first-person narrator of *Annihilation* is a biologist, and she is part of an expedition – consisting of exactly three other members (all, implausibly, women) ...’ (stjoshi.org, 23 February)

Robert J. Sawyer was inducted into the Order of Ontario on 27 February and may now be addressed as Robert J. Sawyer O.Ont. [AIP] Somehow I keep remembering the first line of a famous Poul Anderson story: ‘Please, mister, could I have a cracker for my O.Ontatherium?’

Consocieties

2-3 Mar • **Frightfest** (film), Glasgow Film Theatre. £75 reg or £10.50 per film. See www.frightfest.co.uk. Also 2018 London events: Leicester Square, 23-27 August, and Empire Haymarket, 27 October.

16-18 Mar • **Starburst Media City Festival** (film), The Landing, Salford. Free. See starburstmagazine.com/filmfestival/.

20 Mar • **An Afternoon with Brian Aldiss** in association with the Oxford Literary Festival: Weston Library Lecture Theatre, Broad Street, Oxford, OX1 3BG. 2pm-3pm (Chris Priest *et al*, Aldiss celebration) and 4pm-5pm (Philip Pullman *et al*, sf in general). Each event £12.50; students £7. Bookings at oxfordliteraryfestival.org.

22-25 Mar • **Sci-Fi Weekender**, Hafan y Mor Holiday Park, near Pwllheli, Gwynedd, North Wales. Booking by accommodation from £490 for two; 3-day pass £120; more at www.scifiweekender.com.

24 Mar • **Highlighting Horror**, QUAD Centre, Derby. 10am-6pm. £35 reg. See www.derbyquad.co.uk/courses.aspx.

28 Mar • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. Speaker to be announced. Free.

30 Mar - 2 Apr • **Follycon** (Eastercon), Majestic Hotel, Harrogate. £80 reg; £45 YA (18-24)/unwaged; £30 child (5-17) and supporting; under-5s free. *Day rates* Fri £25; £15 YA/unwaged; child £10. Sat or Sun £35; £20; £10. Mon £10; £10; £5. Register at www.follycon.org.uk.

1 May • **Tolkien Lecture**: V.E. Schwab. Pichette Auditorium, Pembroke College, Oxford. 6:30pm. *Waiting list* via tolkienlecture.org.

6-7 Jul • **Futurefest** (futurology), Tobacco Dock, London. Tickets £80; Friday or Saturday only, £50. More at www.futurefest.org.

7-8 Jul • **Comics Uncovered**, BCEC, Birmingham. £85 reg; £45/day; students £45 and £25. More at www.comicsuncovered.co.uk.

14 Jul • **Edge-Lit 7**, QUAD Centre, Derby, DE1 3AS. 10am-late. GoH Frances Hardinge and Paul Tremblay. Tickets £30. Box office 01332 290 606. See www.derbyquad.co.uk/events/edge-lit-7.aspx.

20-23 Jul • **Continuum** (RPG), John Foster Hall, Leicester University. Cost revealed when you register at continuumconvention.co.uk.

16-20 Aug • **Worldcon 76** (Worldcon), San José, CA, USA. \$230 reg; \$115 YA (15-21) and military; under-15s \$75; under-6s free; \$50 supp. See worldcon76.org. *Hugo Award nominations close on 16 March*.

24-27 Aug • **The Asylum** (steampunk), Lincoln. £42.50 reg; £21 ages 5-16; also pricier options with extras. Rates rise after each 1,000 sales. No day tickets until April. See www.asylumsteampunk.co.uk.

1-2 Sep • **Middle-earth Festival**, Sarehole Mill, Cole Bank Rd, Hall Green, Birmingham. Free. See middleearthfestival.wordpress.com.

29 Sep • **Preston Comic Con**, Guild Hall, Preston. 10:30am £8 (9:30 ‘early bird’ £12) to 5pm. See www.prestoncomiccon.co.uk.

19-21 Oct • **Celluloid Screams** (horror film festival), Showroom Cinema, Sheffield. See celluloidscreams.co.uk. 0114 275 7727.

19-21 Oct • **FantasyCon**, The Queen, City Rd, Chester, CH1 3AH. Still (as of 1 March) ‘coming soon’ at www.hwsevents.co.uk, so how to become a member and what it costs remain shrouded in mystery. The hotel is reportedly taking bookings at FantasyCon rates on request.

9-11 Nov • **Novacon 48**, Park Inn, Nottingham. £48 reg (*this rate may rise after Easter*); under-17s £12; under-13s free. Contact 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ. More at www.novacon.org.uk.

1-3 Feb 2019 • **31-ET** (filk), Best Western Hotel, Marks Tey, Colchester. GoH Chantelle Smith (UK), Cheshire Moon (international). £33 reg/£27 unwaged *until 31 March 2018*; under-18s £1/year of age; under-5s free. Further details at www.contabile.org.uk/31et/.

15-19 Aug 2019 • **Dublin 2019** (Worldcon), Dublin, Ireland. €160 reg, €100 under-26s or first-time Worldcon members, and €60 under-13s – *rising on 3 April to €180, €110 and €65*. The following rates will remain unchanged: €5 under-6s; €40 supporting. See dublin2019.com.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others ... ‘Although commonly considered a science fiction author, Le Guin was also widely acknowledged as a literary voice of significant depth and insight.’ (Finebooksmagazine.com, 24 January) [JDB]

• *Explaining Douglas Adams*: ‘[Kevin Jon] Davies says the key to Adams’ work is that he is not a science fiction writer: he is a satirist and Hitchhiker is a modern Gulliver’s Travels. “Douglas didn’t set out just to do sci-fi,” he explains, “but he said that whatever he was writing ended up with robots and spaceships.”’ (*Guardian*, 27 February) [DA]

Awards. *BAFTA Best Director*: Guillermo Del Toro for *The Shape of Water*.

• *Gaughan* (emerging artist): Alessandra Maria Pisano.

• *Gemmell* (heroic fantasy) longlist voting is open, closing on 30 March; see www.gemmellawards.com/award-voting-2018/. Shortlist voting will run from 20 April to 1 June.

• *Horror Writers Association Specialty Press Award*: Eraserhead Press.

- *IAFA Distinguished Scholarship Award*: Fred Botting.
- *IAFA William A. Crawford Award* (fantasy debut): Carmen Maria Machado, *Her Body and Other Parties*.
- *PEN Art of the Essay*: Ursula K. Le Guin for *No Time to Spare*. [AIP]
- *Robert A. Heinlein Award*: Neal Stephenson.
- *SFWA Kate Wilhelm Solstice Award*: Gardner Dozois and Sheila Williams.
- *Skylark Award*: Dan Kimmel.

Prediction Corner. ‘But I wonder: are we heading for an era, a decade or two hence, when science fiction, our soaring and mind-expanding literature, is a musty and ritualized entertainment consumed only by elderly Baby Boomers, hearkening back nostalgically to the good old days of their twenties, while the illiterate young ’uns divert themselves with the electronic hardware that science fiction predicted?’ (Robert Silverberg, *Amazing*, July 1983) [MMW]

R.I.P. *David F. Case* (1937-2018), US horror author contributing to the *Pan Book of Horror Stories* series in the early 1970s, whose Arkham House novel was *The Third Grave* (1981), died on 3 February aged 80. [SJ]

- *Reg E. Cathey* (1958-2018), US actor in *The Mask* (1994), *Tank Girl* (1995) and *Fantastic Four* (2015), died on 9 February aged 59. [SG]

- *Nanette Fabray* (1920-2018), US actress whose genre credits include *Alice Through the Looking Glass* (1966) and *The Man in the Santa Claus Suit* (1979), died on 22 February aged 97. [SG]

- *Bill Crider* (1941-2018), US author of crime fiction plus sf and supernatural stories, who won a Sidewise Award for ‘It Doesn’t Matter Anymore’ (2015), died on 12 February aged 76. He had entered hospice care in December. [LP]

- *John Gavin* (1931-2018), US actor in *Psycho* (1960), died on 9 February aged 86. [PDF]

- *Lewis Gilbert* (1920-2018), director of *Haunted* (1995) and three Bond films including *Moonraker* (1979), died on 23 February aged 97. [MMW]

- *Hugh Hancock*, UK game designer who co-founded the machinima group Strange Company in 1997 and created such machinima animations as *Bloodspell* (2007), died unexpectedly on 5 February. [MLR]

- *Jóhann Jóhannsson* (1969-2018), Icelandic composer whose scores include *Arrival* (2016), died on 9 February aged 48. [SG]

- *Mickey Jones* (1941-2018), US musician and actor in *Starman* (1984), *Total Recall* (1990), *It Came From Outer Space II* (1996), *Penny Dreadful* (2006)

and *Necrosis* (2009), died on 7 February aged 76. [SG]

- *Bud Luckey* (1934-2018), US animator who designed characters for Pixar films including *Toy Story* (1995) and had voice roles in *The Incredibles* (2004) and several others, died on 24 February aged 83. [CH]

- *John Mahoney* (1940-2018), UK-born actor whose voice work included *Antz* (1998), *The Iron Giant* (1999) and the *Atlantis* videogame series from 2001, died on 4 February aged 77. [SG]

- *Victor Milán* (1954-2018), prolific US novelist in fantasy – beginning with *The Sundered Realm* (1980) with Robert E Vardeman – and sf, beginning with the Prometheus-winning *The Cybernetic Samurai* (1985), died on 13 February. He contributed a novel and shorter stories to the Wild Cards series. [F770]

- *Peter Miles* (1928-2018), UK actor whose *Doctor Who* roles included Davros's evil henchman Nyder in 'Genesis of the Daleks' (1975), died in late February aged 89. [PDF]

- *William O'Connor* (1970-2018), US artist whose work featured in *Dungeons & Dragons* and *Magic: The Gathering*, died on 2 February aged 47. [SFS]

- *David Thomas*, Coventry-based UK fan and convention-goer, died on 22 February; he was 64. [KM] Kari Maund writes: 'He was a genuinely nice man, which was his main feature, really.'

- *John Anthony West* (1932-2018), US author of a handful of genre stories, mostly for *F&SF* and *Omni* 1961-1980, died on 6 February aged 85. [PDF]

The Weakest Link. *Host:* 'What does the MI stand for in MI5 and MI6?'
Contestant: 'Mission Impossible.' (BBC1, *Celebrity Mastermind*) [PE]

- *Jeopardy Mad Scientist Dept.* Answer requiring the correct question: 'I collected the instruments of life around me, that I might infuse a spark of being into the lifeless thing that lay at my feet.' *Contestant:* 'What is Pinocchio?' (26 February) [AIP]

Award Shortlists. *BSFA:* NOVEL Nina Allan, *The Rift*; Anne Charnock, *Dreams Before the Start of Time*; Mohsin Hamid, *Exit West*; Ann Leckie, *Provenance*. SHORTER Anne Charnock, *The Enclave*; Elaine Cuyegkeng, 'These Constellations Will Be Yours' (*Strange Horizons*); Greg Egan, 'Uncanny Valley' (Tor.com); Geoff Nelder, 'Angular Size' (*SFerics 2017*); Tade Thompson, 'The Murders of Molly Southbourne' (Tor.com). NON-FICTION Paul Kincaid, *Iain M. Banks*; Juliet E. McKenna, 'The Myth of

Meritocracy ...' (*Gender Identity and Sexuality in Current Fantasy and SF*); Adam Roberts, 'Wells at the World's End' 2017 blog posts; Shadow Clarke Award jurors (blog); Vandana Singh, 'The Unthinkability of Climate Change ...' (*Strange Horizons*). ARTWORK Geneva Benton, cover, *Fiyah Magazine* #3; Jim Burns, cover, *The Ion Raider* by Ian Whates; Galen Dara, illustration for 'These Constellations Will Be Yours' by Elaine Cuyegkeng (*Strange Horizons*); Chris Moore, cover, *The Memoirist* by Neil Williamson; Victo Ngai, illustration for 'Waiting on a Bright Moon' by JY Yang (Tor.com); Marcin Wolski, cover, 2084 ed. George Sandison. Fuller details at www.bsfa.co.uk/bsfa-2017-awards-voting-form/.

- *Compton Crook* (genre debut): Nicky Drayden, *The Prey of Gods*; Elan Mastai, *All Our Wrong Todays*; Robyn Bennis, *The Guns Above*; Karin Tidbeck, *Amatka*; Vic James, *Gilded Cage*; Theodora Goss, *The Strange Case of the Alchemist's Daughter*; Cat Sparks, *Lotus Blue*. [SFS]
- *Nebulas* (selected): NOVEL Lara Elena Donnelly, *Amberlough*; Theodora Goss, *The Strange Case of the Alchemist's Daughter*; Daryl Gregory, *Spoonbenders*; N.K. Jemisin, *The Stone Sky*; Mur Lafferty, *Six Wakes*; Fonda Lee, *Jade City*; Annalee Newitz, *Autonomous*. DRAMATIC *Get Out*; *The Good Place*: 'Michael's Gambit'; *Logan*; *The Shape of Water*; *Star Wars: The Last Jedi*; *Wonder Woman*.
- *Andre Norton* (YA book): Fonda Lee, *Exo*; Kari Maaren, *Weave a Circle Round*; Sam J. Miller, *The Art of Starving*; Cindy Pon, *Want*. For shorter fiction categories, see nebulas.sfwaworld.com/2017-nebula-award-finalists-announced/•; *Starburst Brave New Words* (inaugural): Katie Khan, *Hold Back the Stars*; Adrian Tchaikovsky, *Dogs of War*; Margrét Helgadóttir, editor, *Pacific Monsters*; Cassandra Khaw, 'Degrees of Ellision' (2084); Claire North, *The Sudden Appearance of Hope*; Jeannette Ng, *Under the Pendulum Sun*.
- *Stokers* (horror; best novel only): Christopher Golden, *Ararat*; Stephen King and Owen King, *Sleeping Beauties*; Josh Malerman, *Black Mad Wheel*; S.P. Miskowski, *I Wish I Was Like You*; Steve Rasnic Tem, *Ubo*. For the other categories see horror.org/2017-bram-stoker-awards-final-ballot/.

As Others See Us II. BBC News arts editor Will Gompertz explains reassuringly that it's all right to like *The Shape of Water*: 'But when I left the cinema 123 minutes later, I was elated. / Not because the film was thankfully over, but because I had just been treated to an intelligent, tender, beautifully shot, meticulously crafted work of art. / It's not really a fantasy at all.' ([BBC](http://www.bbc.com),

17 February) [JH]

Random Fandom. *Jim Barker*, after frustrating delays, had his much-needed liver transplant on 13 February. [JS]

- *Jon Del Arroz* is outraged that Worldcon 76 (like SFWA – see [A367](#)) decided that it didn't want a member with his history of abusive online behaviour, and therefore refunded his membership. He's now trying to raise \$10,000 through GoFundMe for a lawsuit against the convention. [[F770](#)]

C.o.A. Eaton Collection (preferred address for donations), Erika Quintana, Acquisitions Unit Supervisor, UCR Library, P.O. Box 5900, Riverside, CA 92517-5900, USA.

- *Patrick & Teresa Nielsen Hayden*, 485 6th Ave #2R, Brooklyn, NY 11215-4036, USA.

The Dead Past. *20 Years Ago:* 'Wild turtles could not persuade me to print the long extract from Dan Gallagher's *The Pleistocene Redemption* – selected for the author's own PR as a specially good bit – in which a “monstrous turtle” subtly makes its presence known: “It sliced off Abrih's entire jaw from ear to ear, just missing the carotid artery and jugular vein. Abrih's upper larynx, ripped completely out of his neck, formed a lump of bloody sinew and cartilage floating from the right side of the hungry reptile's hideous head.” Further hostilities take us into **Thog's Elegant Variations**

Masterclass as in rapid succession this turtle becomes “the eight foot long horror”, “the voracious monster”, “the vicious animal”, “the nightmarish turtle”, “the Meiolania” (thrice), “the horrendous eating machine”, “the monster”, “the grotesque turtle”, “the gigantic spiked turtle” and “the terror”, all in four very busy paragraphs. Thog smack lips....' ([Ansible 128](#), March 1998)

- Also: 'Lionel Fanthorpe sightings continue unchecked despite sceptics' sneers: showers of inexplicable Fanthorpeana are regularly reported in crop-circle territory, on motorbikes and on TV.' (*Ibid*)

Fanfundery. *GUFF 2018:* voting is open for the southbound race from Europe to Continuum (Melbourne, June) with candidates Marcin Klak (Poland) and, jointly, Steve and Alice Lawson (UK). Voting deadline: 3 April. See ozfanfunds.com/?page_id=101 for the ballot and full details.

- *DUFF 2018:* Down Under Fan Fund voting for the northbound trip is open and closes on 31 March. The only candidate is Marlee Jane Ward. See

downunderfanfund.wordpress.com.

• *TAFF 2018*: TransAtlantic Fan Fund voting is still in progress and continues to 3 April. See taff.org.uk for the ballot and platforms.

Thog's Masterclass. *Bilingual Dutchman Dept.* ““Glub!” said a startled Hudman aloud, in English.’ (A.E. van Vogt, ‘Pendulum’, 1978) [BA]

• *When Yoga Goes Bad.* ‘How long before I found myself curled in a sweating knot, furiously caressing myself?’ (N.K. Jemisin, *The Kingdom of Gods*, 2011) [JC]

• *Out of Context.* ‘Resting one hand caressingly upon the huge member, he explained exultantly that it was the ultimately last word in strength ...’ (E.E. Smith, *Skylark of Space*, 1928) [HW]

• *Soiled Dept.* ‘She stated that she felt like a piece of sullied cloth removed from a boiled pudding.’ (Terence Haile, *Space Train*, 1962)

• *Literary Review Bad Sex Award Winner.* ‘Her face and vagina are competing for my attention, so I glance down at the billiard rack of my penis and testicles.’ (Christopher Bollen, *The Destroyers*, 2017)

Endnotes

Apparitions.

• 2 March 2018: Bryan and Mary Talbot talk about their work in the Colin Matthew Room, Ground Floor, Radcliffe Humanities Building, University of Oxford. 5.15pm-6.45pm. Free.

• 3 March 2018: Bryan and Mary Talbot signing at Inky Fingers, Cowley Road, Oxford, OX4 1HZ. 12 noon-2pm.

<http://www.inkyfingers.net/>

• 9 March 2018, Jeff Noon talks to the Brum Group. 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre. £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future events/speakers: 13 April 2018, Mike Carey; 11 May 2018, Janet Edwards; 8 June 2018, Alastair Reynolds; 13 July 2018, awaited; 10 August 2018, summer social; 12 October 2018, David Leach; 16 November 2018, Professor Bill Chaplin, 7 December 2018, Christmas social.

Editorial II. February's *SF Encyclopedia* landmark came when the word count passed 5,500,000. Not admittedly as science-fictionally exciting as the

earlier 5,271,009....

Jack Cohen had a stroke in November and lost contact with everyone, but is now much improved and hoping to hear from friends by phone (no email, apparently). Thanks to Ian Stewart – who kindly passed on the above information – I have the phone number and snailmail address. Available on request.

Magazine Scene. Many copies of the March/April *Analog* and *Asimov's* distributed to US retailers proved to have been bound with an incorrect signature and were recalled by the publisher for replacement. International and subscriber issues should be unaffected. [SW]

Thog's Research Lab. While expanding the ebook of *Down the Badger Hole: R. Lionel Fanthorpe: The Badger Years* with extra quotations, I naturally consulted the legendary compilation *Ghastly Beyond Belief* (1985) by Neil Gaiman and Kim Newman. One cherished line there is the Badger Books typesetter's alleged improvement of the intractable philosophical conundrum that destroys a super-mind in *Flame Mass* (1961): 'What happens when an irrisitable force meets an immoyable object.' Sadly I made the mistake of checking this against the original book and found only: 'Then, tell, me, what happens when an irresistible force meets am immovable object.' What a disappointment!

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Ansible® 369, April 2018

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo:
Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or the
immanentization of the Eastercon.

Follycon. *Ansible* coverage of the 2018 UK Eastercon is scanty because *Ansible* wasn't there (sorry).

- *BSFA Awards*. Novel: Nina Allan, *The Rift*. Shorter fiction: Anne Charnock, *The Enclave*. Nonfiction: Paul Kincaid, *Iain M. Banks*. Artwork (tie): Jim Burns for *The Ion Raider* by Ian Whates, and Victo Ngai for 'Waiting on a Bright Moon' by JY Yang (Tor.com).
 - *Doc Weir Award* for unsung fan efforts: Flick.
 - *Eastercon 2020*: a bid for the Birmingham NEC hotel is currently taking shape.
-

The Airs of Earth

Brian Aldiss was remembered at the Oxford Literary Festival on 20 March, with talks by Chris Priest and others, a panel on sf in general with Philip Pullman, and an evening champagne reception.

Patrick Nielsen Hayden is now vice president and editor-in-chief at Tor Books; Devi Pillai is now vice president and publisher. Fritz Foy became president and publisher of the parent company Tom Doherty Associates. (Tor.com, 1 March)

Jack Posobiec's *Wade Asher: Agent of Admiralty* (2015, as by Jack Michael Doyle) expands the boundaries of sf language: 'Posobiec also goes big on the sci-fi tradition of mixing up regular words to make it sound like the future. Jokes are "wisdomcracks," and offices are now "cubifices." / Cows are "beefcows," and you'll never believe what chickens are called in this extremely inventive world. In the far future, they're called "chikkens."' (Will Sommers, Right Richter, 21 March) [PB]

Philip Pullman provided a surprise ‘As Others See Us’ moment at his Oxford panel (see [Aldiss](#) above) by saying he’d been put off all modern sf by going to a convention and finding ‘all those young men sitting around and speaking Klingon.’ From the audience, an *Ansible* reader mentioned having spent a lot of time at conventions, often in conversation with Brian Aldiss, without a word of Klingon being heard.

Rudolf Schonegger, UK book dealer, was found guilty in March of nicking an allegedly rare signed copy of *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* ‘worth £1,675’ from Hatchards. The CCTV evidence showed him furtively substituting a book of ‘very little value’. ([BBC](#), 27 March)

Contourné

19-22 Apr • **Dead by Dawn** (horror film festival), Filmhouse Cinema One, 88 Lothian Rd, Edinburgh, EH3 9BZ. £90. Box office 0131 228 2688. Online booking via www.deadbydawn.co.uk.

20-22 Apr • **Springmoot** (Tolkien Soc), Kingston Theatre Hotel, Hull. See www.tolkiensociety.org/events/springmoot-and-agm-2018/.

21-22 Apr • **Sci-Fi Scarborough** (multimedia), The Spa, Scarborough. Adult tickets including booking fees £28, £16.80 day; under-17s £11.20, £5.60 day; under-5s free. See scifiscarborough.co.uk.

25 Apr • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. Speaker to be announced. Free.

28 Apr • **Spicing Up Sci-Fi: The Dunes Strike Back** (Mfest panel), British Library, London. 2pm-3pm. £5; £3 unwaged; 20% discount code MFestSINDBAD valid to 13 April at tinyurl.com/ybrgmqa7.

1-7 May • **Sci-Fi London** (film festival), various London venues. For more details see sci-fi-london.com/festival.

1 May • **Tolkien Lecture**: V.E. Schwab. Pichette Auditorium, Pembroke College, Oxford. 6:30pm. *Waiting list* via tolkienlecture.org.

5-6 May • **EM-Con** (media), Motorpoint Arena, Nottingham. Various priced tickets and extras available at www.em-con.co.uk.

8-11 Jun • **To See the Invisible** (opera based on story by Robert Silverberg), Britten Studio, Snape Maltings, Snape, Suffolk. Tickets £5-£25. See snapemaltings.co.uk/whats-on/to-see-the-invisible/. [AIP]

29 Jun - 1 Jul • **Two Centuries of Frankenstein: 1818-2018** (course), ICE, Cambridge. With Professor Edward James. £280. See www.ice.cam.ac.uk/course/two-centuries-frankenstein-1818-2018.

20-23 Sep • **Oxonmoot** (Tolkien Society), St Antony's College, Oxford. £70 reg or £60 for members, *rising to £75/£65 in May and £85/£75 in August*. See www.tolkiensociety.org/events/oxonmoot-2018/.

15-19 Aug 2019 • **Dublin 2019** (Worldcon), Dublin, Ireland. Now €180 reg, €110 under-26s or first-time Worldcon members, and €65 under-13s. Unchanged: €5 under-6s; €40 supp. See dublin2019.com.

Infinitely Improbable

The Critical Heritage. 'This is an entire pre-summer slate of would-be event movies getting steamrolled by one very big tentpole.' (Scott Mendelson on *Black Panther*, Forbes.com, 20 March) [PDF]

Awards. *American Academy of Arts and Letters* inaugural \$100,000 for life achievement: Thomas Pynchon. [JB]

- *Astrid Lindgren Memorial*: Jacqueline Woodson.
- *Ditmar* (Australia) best novel: Thoraiya Dyer, *Crossroads of Canopy*.
- *Oscars*. Best Film: *The Shape of Water*, whose other wins included Best Director for Guillermo del Toro. Animated film: *Coco*. Original screenplay: *Get Out*. Cinematography, visual effects: *Blade Runner 2049*.
- *Philip K. Dick*: Carrie Vaughn, *Bannerless*.
- *SFRA Pilgrim Award* (scholarship): Carl Freedman. *SFRA Thomas D. Clareson Award*: Veronica Hollinger.
- *Starburst Brave New Words Award*: Margrét Helgadóttir for editing *Pacific Monsters*.
- *Stoker Awards* (selected). Novel: Christopher Golden, *Ararat*. First novel: Robert Payne Cabeen, *Cold Cuts*. YA novel: Kim Liggett, *The Last Harvest*.
- *Tiptree Award*: Virginia Bergin, *Who Runs the World?* (US title *The XY*).

Signage. Some naughty person has been improving – or according to

Oxfordshire County Council, vandalizing – roundabout signs in and around Didcot by adding more interesting destinations: Emerald City, Gotham City, Middle Earth, Narnia and Neverland. ([BBC](#), 19 March)

R.I.P. *Karen Anderson* (1932-2018), US author and fan who collaborated with her husband Poul Anderson (1926-2001) on several books including the *Last Viking* (1980) and *King of Ys* (1986-1988) series, died on 17 March; she was 85. Her fan activities included costuming, filk and the SCA; she received the 2010 LASFS Forry Award for life achievement in sf. [AB]

- *Don J. Arneson* (1935-2018), US comics writer/editor who wrote *Frankenstein*, *Dracula* and *Werewolf* scripts for Dell and the *Dark Shadows* comic for Western Publishing, died on 1 February aged 82. [PDF]
- *Adrian Barnes* (1963-2018), UK-born Canadian author of *Satan a la Mode* (2006) and the Clarke-shortlisted *Nod* (2012), died on 5 January aged 54.
- *David Bischoff* (1951-2018), prolific US author whose early novel *Tin Woodman* (1979) with Dennis R Bailey was based on their Nebula-shortlisted story, died on 19 March aged 66. [JDC] Besides his own books and series he wrote many novelizations and shared-world ties, and edited *Starlog* with Ted White 1985-1986.
- *Harry Blamires* (1916-2017), UK author of a theological fantasy trilogy influenced by his mentor C.S. Lewis, opening with *The Devil's Hunting Grounds* (1954), died on 21 November aged 101.
- *Martin G. Cameron*, artist whose work included many interiors for Analog, 3D art for Lucasfilm games and other game companies, and the steampunk *Major Arcanum Gazette* (2018) with Robert E. Vardeman, died on 26 March. [F770]
- *Debbie Lee Carrington* (1959-2018), US actress and stunt artist in *Return of the Jedi* (1983), *Total Recall* (1990), *Batman Returns* (1992) and others, died on 24 March aged 58. [PDF]
- *Fred Crippen* (1928-2018), US animator who created *Roger Ramjet* (1965) and worked on many series including *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* (1996), *Men in Black* (1997-1998) and *Godzilla* (1999-2001), died on 22 March aged 90. [SFS]
- *Erwin C. Dietrich* (1930-2018): Swiss 'sexploitation' film-maker whose genre releases include *Jack the Ripper* (1976) and *Killer Condom* (1996), died on 15 March aged 87. [SG]
- *Michael Fleisher* (1942-2018), US comics writer and novelist remembered for his work on the DC Comics characters The Spectre and Jonah Hex (also

for [an unwise lawsuit](#) against Harlan Ellison and *The Comics Journal*), died on 2 February aged 75. [SG/GW]

- *Stephen Hawking* (1942-2018), distinguished UK theoretical physicist who incidentally had cameo roles in *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, *The Simpsons* and *Futurama*, died on 14 March aged 76.

- *Bill Maynard* (1928-2018), UK actor in *You Too Can Have a Body* (1960), *The Boy with Two Heads* (1974) and *Worzel Gummidge* (1980), died on 30 March aged 89. [SG]

- *Peter Nicholls* (1939-2018), founder of the *SF Encyclopedia*, has died after a long illness. ‘Science fiction critic, encyclopedist, bon vivant, and pontificator. Died on 6th March 2018, aged 78, surrounded by family. Inspired adoration and exasperation in equal measure. Remembered with enormous love by [family listed here].’ (*The Age*, Melbourne, 9 March) *Foundation* was never livelier than when he was editor 1974-1978; the first *Encyclopedia* was a revelation and each edition (1979, 1993, 2011-current) won a Hugo, while Peter received the 1980 Pilgrim Award for criticism; other books included *The Science in Science Fiction* (1982, with me and Brian Stableford) and *Fantastic Cinema* (1984). Another sad though not unexpected farewell.

- *Jörgen Peterzén* (1941-2018), long-time Swedish fan who was a founder of the Stockholm Tolkien society (Forodrim), died in early March aged 76. [J-HH]

- *Mary Rosenblum* (1952-2018), US author who won the Compton Crook Award for her first novel *The Drylands* (1993), and also a 2009 Sidewise Award, died in a solo plane crash on 11 March; she was 65. [F770]

- *Clive Sinclair* (1948-2018), UK author – not the inventor – whose work includes some short fantasy and the Beelzebub-narrated novel *Augustus Rex* (1992), died on 5 March aged 70. [JC]

- *David Ogden Stiers* (1942-2018), US actor in *THX 1138* (1971), *Oh, God!* (1977), *Beauty and the Beast* (1991) and several other Disney animations, *Justice League of America* (1997), *Lady in the Water* (2006) and *Neil Stryker and the Tyrant of Time* (2017), died on 3 March aged 75. [MR/MMW]

- *Lars-Olov Strandberg* (1926-2018), major Swedish fan, died on 3 March aged 88. John-Henri Holmberg writes: ‘Active in Swedish fandom since early 1956, one of the founders of the still active Scandinavian SF Society (SFSF), committee member of many Swedish sf conventions, a founder of the Alvar Appeltofft Memorial Foundation. He was one of the central fans in Swedish

fan history; a link to its beginnings, an attendee of the country's first convention, and a tireless worker, often behind the scenes. Until the last two or three years Lars-Olov attended every con held in Sweden, as well as hundreds in the US and throughout Europe; he was the first Swedish fan to be GoH at a worldcon, at Glasgow in 2005.'

- *Daniel Walther* (1940-2018), French editor and author since 1965 of much sf (including the Swa/Shai series, first two books translated by C.J. Cherryh) and heroic fantasy, died on 3 March aged 77. [PDF]

- *Kate Wilhelm* (1928-2018), US author much valued not only for her substantial and varied output of fiction – including the Hugo-winning *Where Late the Sweet Birds Sang* (1976) – but for encouraging younger writers through the Milford (with her late husband Damon Knight) and Clarion workshops, died on 8 March aged 89. Her many further accolades include three Nebulas for shorter fiction, the SF Hall of Fame in 2003, and SFWA's 2009 Solstice Award, a career honour since renamed the Kate Wilhelm Solstice Award.

The Weakest Link. *Bradley Walsh:* 'Brueghel the Elder painted the biblical character Jonah leaving which sea creature?' *Contestant:* 'The Loch Ness Monster.' (ITV, *The Chase*)

- *John Humphrys:* 'What pantomime, usually set in China, is taken from a story in the *Arabian Nights*?' *Louis Payne:* '*Withnail and I*.' (BBC1, *Celebrity Mastermind*) [PE]

Hugo Shortlist. NOVEL John Scalzi, *The Collapsing Empire*; Kim Stanley Robinson, *New York 2140*; Ann Leckie, *Provenance*; Yoon Ha Lee, *Raven Stratagem*; Mur Lafferty, *Six Wakes*; N.K. Jemisin, *The Stone Sky*. NOVELLA Martha Wells, *All Systems Red*; Sarah Pinsker, 'And Then There Were (N-One)' (*Uncanny* 3/17); Nnedi Okorafor, *Binti: Home*; JY Yang, *The Black Tides of Heaven*; Seanan McGuire, *Down Among the Sticks and Bones*; Sarah Gailey, *River of Teeth*. NOVELETTE Aliette de Bodard, 'Children of Thorns, Children of Water' (*Uncanny* 7/17); Yoon Ha Lee 'Extracurricular Activities' (Tor.com 15/2/17); Suzanne Palmer. 'The Secret Life of Bots' (*Clarkesworld* 9/17); Vina Jie-Min Prasad, 'A Series of Steaks' (*Clarkesworld* 1/17); K.M. Szpara, 'Small Changes over Long Periods of Time' (*Uncanny* 5/17); Sarah Pinsker 'Wind Will Rove' (*Asimov's* 9/17). SHORT Caroline M. Yoachim, 'Carnival Nine' (*Beneath Ceaseless Skies* 5/17); Fran Wilde, 'Clearly Lettered in a Mostly Steady Hand' (*Uncanny* 9/17); Vina Jie-Min Prasad,

‘Fandom for Robots’ (*Uncanny* 9/17); Linda Nagata, ‘The Martian Obelisk’ (Tor.com 19/7/17); Ursula Vernon, ‘Sun, Moon, Dust’ (*Uncanny* 5/17); Rebecca Roanhorse, ‘Welcome to your Authentic Indian Experience™’ (*Apex* 8/17). RELATED WORK Zoe Quinn, *Crash Override*; Paul Kincaid, Iain M. Banks; Nat Segaloff, *A Lit Fuse*; Alexandra Pierce & Mimi Mondal, eds., *Luminescent Threads*; Ursula K. Le Guin, *No Time to Spare*; Liz Bourke, *Sleeping with Monsters*. GRAPHIC *Black Bolt, Volume 1; Bitch Planet, Volume 2; Monstress, Volume 2; My Favorite Thing is Monsters; Paper Girls, Volume 3; Saga, Volume 7*. DRAMATIC/LONG *Blade Runner 2049, Get Out, The Shape of Water, Star Wars: The Last Jedi, Thor: Ragnarok, Wonder Woman*. DRAMATIC/SHORT *Black Mirror: ‘USS Callister’; ‘The Deep’ [song]; Doctor Who: ‘Twice Upon a Time’; The Good Place: ‘Michael’s Gambit’; The Good Place: ‘The Trolley Problem’, Star Trek: Discovery: ‘Magic to Make the Sanest Man Go Mad’*. EDITOR/SHORT John Joseph Adams, Neil Clarke, Lee Harris, Jonathan Strahan, Lynne M. Thomas & Michael Damian Thomas, Sheila Williams. EDITOR/LONG Sheila E. Gilbert, Joe Monti, Diana M. Pho, Devi Pillai, Miriam Weinberg, Navah Wolfe. PRO ARTIST Galen Dara, Kathleen Jennings, Bastien Lecouffe Deharme, Victo Ngai, John Picacio, Sana Takeda. SEMIPROZINE *Beneath Ceaseless Skies, The Book Smugglers, Escape Pod, Fireside Magazine, Strange Horizons, Uncanny*. FANZINE *File 770, Galactic Journey, Journey Planet, nerds of a feather flock together, Rocket Stack Rank, SF Bluestocking*. FANCAST *The Coode Street Podcast, Ditch Diggers, Fangirl Happy Hour, Galactic Suburbia, Sword and Laser, Verity!*. FAN WRITER Camestros Felapton, Sarah Gailey, Mike Glycer, Foz Meadows, Charles Payseur, Bogi Takács. FAN ARTIST Geneva Benton, Grace P. Fong, Maya Hahto, Likhain (M. Sereno), Spring Schoenhuth, Steve Stiles. SERIES Martha Wells, **The Books of the Raksura**; Robert Jackson Bennett, **The Divine Cities**; Seanan McGuire, **InCryptid**; Marie Brennan, **The Memoirs of Lady Trent**; Brandon Sanderson, **The Stormlight Archive**; Lois McMaster Bujold, **World of the Five Gods**.

- NON-HUGOS: *John W. Campbell Award*: Katherine Arden, Sarah Kuhn, Jeannette Ng, Vina Jie-Min Prasad, Rebecca Roanhorse, Rivers Solomon. *WSFS YA Award*: Nnedi Okorafor, *Akata Warrior*; Sam J. Miller, *The Art of Starving*; Philip Pullman, *La Belle Sauvage*; Sarah Rees Brennan, *In Other Lands*; Frances Hardinge, *A Skinful of Shadows*; T. Kingfisher, *Summer in Orcus*.

- See www.thehugoawards.org/hugo-history/2018-hugo-awards/ for a more

detailed list with subtitles and full credits, plus Retro Hugos at www.thehugoawards.org/hugo-history/1943-retro-hugo-awards/.

The Dead Past. *50 Years Ago*, kindly George Hay was ‘declared to be a Suppressive Person and an ENEMY to Scientology.’ (HCO ETHICS ORDER, 19 April 1968) L. Ron Hubbard himself added the damning handwritten comment ‘This is an old enturbulator.’

- *20 Years Ago*, in the Lauray of Salisbury plant catalogue: ‘EPIPHYLLUMS Small Flowered Hybrids [...] “Ursula Le Guin” – Broad, deep raspberry pink petals form tulip-shaped funnel. Recurved sepals have beige overtones. [...] “Robert Silverberg” – Small, satiny, watermelon red flowers, recurved petals. Free flowering, basket type growth.’ ([Ansible 129](#), April 1998)

More Shortlists. *Kitschies*: NOVEL Michelle Tea, *Black Wave*; Nina Allan, *The Rift*; William Sutcliffe, *We See Everything*; Deon Meyer trans L. Seegers, *Fever*; Jess Richards, *City of Circles*. DEBUT Carmen Marcus, *How Saints Die*; Alex ‘Acks’ Wells, *Hunger Makes the Wolf*; RJ Barker, *Age of Assassins*; JY Yang, *The Black Tides of Heaven*; Liz Ziemska, *Mandelbrot the Magnificent*. COVER ART David Dean for *The Land of Neverendings* by Kate Saunders; Rose Stafford for *Black Wave* by Michelle Tea; Jack Smyth for *The History of Bees* by Maja Lunde; Black Sheep for *The Real-Town Murders* by Adam Roberts; Richard Shailer for *Our Memory Like Dust* by Gavin Chait.

- *Prometheus* (libertarian sf): Doug Casey and John Hunt, *Drug Lord: High Ground*; Travis Corcoran, *The Powers of the Earth*; Karl Gallagher, *Torchship, Torchship Pilot and Torchship Captain*; Sarah Hoyt, *Darkship Revenge*; Ken MacLeod, *The Corporation Wars: Emergence*; Andy Weir, *Artemis*.

As Others See Us. ‘Yet there isn’t anything inherently unfeminine about science fiction. Some might say the dystopic fantasy, apocalyptic tales and paranormal romance so popular with today’s teenage girls are actually couched “girl-friendly” variants of science fiction. Perhaps.’ (Pamela Paul on *A Wrinkle in Time*, *NY Times*, 27 January 2012) [JonC]

Magazine Scene. Penthouse Global Media, which relaunched *Omni* as a quarterly in late 2017, has filed for US Chapter 11 bankruptcy. ‘The future of *Omni* is currently uncertain.’ ([Locus](#), 22 March)

Thog’s Masterclass. *In Typo Veritas*. ‘... I was seated in the head – the

bathroom – with my red USMC shorts at my ankles when the Gunny appeared and sat down on the toilet next to mine. This was in the “Old Corps,” when there were no patricians separating the porcelain thrones.’ (Dan Emmett, *At Arm’s Length*, 2014) [TP]

• *Neat Tricks Dept.* ‘Lin turned and held out her arms, her face dissolving.’ (Elizabeth Bonesteel, *Remnants of Trust*, 2016) [SS]

• *Dept of Physiology.* ‘Balls, Malin thinks. Balls in my head now.’ (Mons Kallentoft, *Midwinter Blood*, trans Neil Smith 2011) ‘Börje Svärd walks with his stomach muscles clenched, feeling how their power spreads throughout his whole body.’ (*Ibid*) ‘Malin feels a warm glow course through her body. A warmth that is icy cold.’ (*Ibid*) [PB]

• *Hollywood Eyeballs.* ‘Five years ago, she [*Jennifer Lawrence*] klutzily tripped over her puffy pink princess gown while accepting an Oscar for a peppy indie romcom, and audiences watched with bursting hearts in their eyes.’ (Guy Lodge, *Guardian*, 2 March) [PB]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

• 13 April 2018: Michael Carey talks to the Brum Group. 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre. £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future events/speakers: 11 May 2018, Janet Edwards; 8 June 2018, Alastair Reynolds; 13 July 2018, awaited; 10 August 2018, summer social; 14 September 2018, awaited; 12 October 2018, David Leach; 16 November 2018, Professor Bill Chaplin, 7 December 2018, Christmas social.

Steve Aylett was bemused to discover on 6 March that his Wikipedia entry had been deleted in December for the traditional Wikicrime of Not Being Notable. Multiple novels from major print publishers like Gollancz were not considered worthy of mention in the brief editorial discussion; neither were such references as ISFDB and the *SF Encyclopedia*. Happily for Mr Aylett, kindly hands soon restored and improved the entry.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Articles_for_deletion/Steve_Aylett

Random Fandom. Familiar faces spotted at the reception after that Brian Aldiss memorial afternoon in Oxford ([see above](#)) included members of the

Aldiss family, Sarah Biggs, Pat and Vernon Brown, John and Judith Clute, Edward James, Dave Lally, Farah Mendlesohn, Patrick Parrinder, Chris Priest, Philip Pullman and Andy Sawyer. And me, they let me in too.

• *Bruce Gillespie* expressed delight that his traditional fanzine *SF Commentary*, rather than a blog or podcast, won Best Fan Publication in the Ditmar Awards.

Editorial. With all those obituaries and awards listings, I didn't have room to mention in the main text that I'll be reaching one of Those Birthdays in April and becoming a pensioner. Fancy that. I almost came to regret my modest retirement fund with Aviva, an outfit whose policy of handling claims only by phone feels very like systematic discrimination against the hearing-impaired. Eventually I extracted this sensitive response: 'Thank you for your email. I have passed the information onto our admin team to see what changes we can make to our process to make it easier for Death people when it comes to taking their pension.' I've sent off for my black robe and scythe.

In Memoriam. John Kessel adds a word: 'Writer Kate Wilhelm has died. It's hard for readers today to understand, I think, how important a writer she was for my generation of aspiring sf writers in the late 1960s and early 1970s. She was writing short fiction at the absolute top of her form at that time, stories like "Baby, You Were Great" and "The Village" and novels like *Where Late the Sweet Birds Sang* and *Juniper Time* which perhaps do not shine so brightly today as they did then, but that were eye opening to those of us who wanted to write literary sf. To a lot of people, including me, she seemed at that time as important a figure as Le Guin. She explored feminist issues, wrote real socially aware science fiction, had strong characters, engaging narratives, and beautiful writing.

'I know she was important to generations of writers through Clarion; I was never a Clarion student and did not know her in that capacity. I never met her until the 1980s and that was only briefly.

'Later she moved away from sf, and I did not follow her work the way I had when I was young. But it would be a shame if her best work and her influence were forgotten. It makes me wonder about what makes for an enduring reputation, and how times change.'

Fanfundery. *TAFF and GUFF 2018*: voting in both races closes today, and announcements will soon follow.

• *DUFF 2018* voting closed on 31 March and the winner is of course the sole candidate, Marlee Jane Ward.

Thog's Second Helping. Sean Penn, [now launched as a novelist](#), has taken a tip from those who claim to transcend genre and tries his level best to transcend Thog. 'While the privileged patronize this pickle as an epithet to the epigenetic inequality of equals, Bob smells a cyber-assisted assault emboldened by right-brained Hollywood narcissists.' 'Behind decorative gabion walls, an elderly neighbor sits centurion on his porch watching Bob with surreptitious soupçon.' 'She begins to writhe, cackle, and cough out her laughter uncontrollably. Her eyes watering, she nearly poos. Bob spies what might be a dime-sized and expanding moisture blossom from her rear-end center, signifying perhaps some minimal ass-piss.' (Sean Penn, *Bob Honey Who Just Do Stuff*, 2018) [MMW]

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Ansible® 370, May 2018

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or the sago scooper of the Hoorgi House.

The Darling Bots of May

Octavia E. Butler is now commemorated by Butler Mons, a mountain on Pluto's moon Charon. Other hilly features there have been named by NASA for Clarke and Kubrick, and craters for fictional characters including L. Frank Baum's Dorothy, Stanislaw Lem's Pirx (the Pilot) and Jules Verne's Nemo. ([NASA New Horizons](#), 11 April) [SHS/SFS]

Mark Z. Danielewski announced a pause in publication of his vast fantastic sequence *The Familiar* (27 fat volumes planned, five published 2015-2017), having sadly agreed with his New York publisher Pantheon Books 'that for now the number of readers is not sufficient to justify the cost of continuing.' ([Instagram](#), February) [GF]

Rodrigo Fresán's just-translated *The Bottom of the Sky* (*El fondo del cielo*, 2009) may involve nonlinear time and alien observers, but the publicity reassures us that 'This is high-concept literature at its best. A novel that, in Frésan's own works [*sic*], "is not a novel of science fiction. It is – it was and it will be – a novel with science fiction."' [RF]

China Miéville is one of the 175 recipients of Guggenheim Memorial Foundation fellowships for 2018, in – as you might expect – the category Creative Arts/Fiction ([Artforum.com](#), 5 April) [FM]

Mike Moorcock on [A369](#) and the Brian Aldiss memorial event: 'Mention of George Hay reminds me that he started off as a recruiter for Scientology and it was from him, after he became disillusioned, that I started to hear the kind of scams they ran. Sladek and I went to him first when we planned an exposé. Nice bloke. Sorry you didn't mention that, while I couldn't be at Brian's

memo, I did send a piece which Wendy liked, read by Marcus Gipps. P. Pullman must have gone to one of those media conventions. I'm going to one in San José this weekend. Authors very low on totem pole. D. Tennant's the big draw. I won't charge for autographs or photos and the organisers aren't happy since they get a percentage of all charges!' (3 April)

Conicle

Until 7 May • **Sci-Fi London** (film festival), various London venues. For more details see sci-fi-london.com/festival.

3 May • **Sci-Fi London Charity Pub Quiz**, Pitch, Bridge Rd, London, E15 3PA. 7pm-11pm. £10 plus booking fee: tinyurl.com/y9lck7bj.

5-6 May • **EM-Con** (media), Motorpoint Arena, Nottingham. Various priced tickets and extras available at www.em-con.co.uk.

10 May - 30 Sep • **Astérix in Britain** (exhibition), Jewish Museum, 129-131 Albert Street, London, NW1 7NB. 10am-5pm (closes 2pm Fridays). See www.jewishmuseum.org.uk/asterix.

23 May • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. Speaker to be announced. Free.

25-27 May • **Satellite 6**, Crowne Plaza Hotel, Glasgow. GoH Paul McAuley. Advance booking closes on 18 May. £70 reg (£80 at the door); £60 YA 18-24; under-18s £20; accompanied under-12s £5 and under-5s £2. See six.satellitex.org.uk.

26 May • **LawGiver 4** (Judge Dredd), Hilton Doubletree Hotel, Bristol. £26.50 reg; under-16s free. See lawgiver.co.uk.

1 Jun - 28 Oct • **Tolkien: Maker of Middle-earth** (exhibition), Weston Library, Oxford: www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/news/2017/mar-17.

8-10 Jun • **Lavecon** (sf/fantasy/gaming), Sedgebrook Hall Hotel, Northants. Tickets at various prices: www.hwsevents.co.uk/shop-1.

8-11 Jun • **To See the Invisible** (opera based on story by Robert Silverberg), Britten Studio, Snape Maltings, Snape, Suffolk. Tickets £5-£25. See snapemaltings.co.uk/whats-on/to-see-the-invisible/.

23 Jun • **BSFA/SF Foundation AGMs** and mini-con, Bread & Roses Theatre, 68 Clapham Manor St, Clapham, London, SW4 6DZ.

29 Jun - 1 Jul • **Two Centuries of Frankenstein: 1818-2018** (course), ICE, Cambridge. With Professor Edward James. £280. See www.ice.cam.ac.uk/course/two-centuries-frankenstein-1818-2 018.

16-20 Aug • **Worldcon 76** (Worldcon), San José, CA, USA. \$230 reg; \$115 YA (15-21) and military; under-15s \$75; under-6s free; \$50 supp. Hugo voting should begin soon. See worldcon76.org.

1 Sep • **Whooverville** (Doctor Who), QUAD Centre, Derby, DE1 3AS. £48; £33 concessions; under-12s £10. See whooverville.org.

15 Sep • **Sublime Cognition: SF and Metaphysics** (conference), Birkbeck School of Arts, London. See <http://tinyurl.com/y73kvj6d>.

20-23 Sep • **Oxonmoot** (Tolkien Society), St Antony's College, Oxford. *Now £75 reg or £65 for members, rising to £85/£75 in August.* See www.tolkiensociety.org/events/oxonmoot-2018/.

22-23 Sep • **Comic Con**, Leeds Town Hall. Part of Thought Bubble, the Leeds Comic Art Festival, running 17-23 September. £29.68 weekend pass or £18.02/day including fees. See thoughtbubblefestival.com.

5-7 Oct • **SFW in the City** (Sci-Fi Weekender spinoff), O₂ Academy, Sheffield. Weekend passes from £40: see www.sfwinthecity.com.

19-21 Oct • **FantasyCon**, Queen Hotel, City Rd, Chester, CH1 3AH. *New rates* with £10 off for BFS members: £61.50 adult, £56 student, £31 under-16s. Under-4s free. See www.hwsevents.co.uk/shop-2.

9-11 Nov • **Novacon 48**, Park Inn, Nottingham. *Now £52 reg, until 8 November;* under-17s £12; under-13s free. Contact 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ. See www.novacon.org.uk.

1-3 Feb 2019 • **31-ET** (filk), Best Western Hotel, Marks Tey, Colchester. £38 reg/£28 unwaged plus booking fees; under-18s £1/year of age; under-5s free. Further details at www.contabile.org.uk/31et/.

5 Feb 2019 • **Sci-Feb** (media), Humber Royal Hotel, Little Coates Rd, Grimsby. £4 reg. See www.daydreamevents.uk/sci--feb.html.

29 Mar - 1 Apr 2019 • **Irish Discworld Convention**, Cork International

Hotel, Cork Airport, Ireland. €55 reg and €45 concessions, *rising to €60/€55 on 1 October 2018*; under-13s €1. See idwcon.org.

7-11 Aug 2019 • **Tolkien 2019** (Tolkien Society), Macdonald Burlington Hotel, Birmingham. £95 reg. See www.tolkien2019.com.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. ‘For anyone under 40, Gollancz is merely a science fiction imprint – “the oldest specialist sci-fi and fantasy (SFF) publisher in the UK.” Gollancz indeed published many award-winning and successful SFF authors, J G Ballard and Terry Pratchett among them, but Gollancz is far more important than that, which makes the story of its last two decades a tragedy.’ (Liz Thomson, *Bookseller*, April) [JJ]

Awards. *Compton Crook/Stephen Tall* (debut sf, fantasy or horror novel): Nicky Drayden, *The Prey of Gods*. [L]

• *Kitschies*: NOVEL Nina Allan, *The Rift*. DEBUT Alex ‘Acks’ Wells, *Hunger Makes the Wolf*. COVER ART Jack Smyth for *The History of Bees* by Maja Lunde.

In Typo Veritas. ‘The other man’s skin was black as tar and he wore but a small cloth that covered his lions.’ (Isaac D. Hardman, *The Black Viking*, 2013) [DA]

R.I.P. *Harry Anderson* (1952-2018), US actor in *The Absent-Minded Professor* (1988 remake), *It* (1990 tv) and *Harvey* (1996 remake), died on 16 April aged 65. [MMW]

• *Alex Beckett* (1982-2018), Welsh actor seen in *Space Ark* (2014) and *The Aliens* (2016), died on 12 April aged 35. [SG]

• *Gil Brealey* (1932-2018), Australian media creator who directed his country’s first sf tv series *The Stranger* (1964-1965), died on 1 April aged 85. [GC]

• *R. Lee Ermey* (1944-2018), US actor whose genre credits include *Deathstone* (1990), *The Terror Within II* (1991), *Body Snatchers* (1993) and the *Toy Story* franchise, died on 15 April aged 74. [MMW]

• Late report: *Cyril Frankel* (1921-2017), UK film/tv director whose credits include *The Witches* (1966) and episodes of *Randall and Hopkirk (Deceased)* (1969-1970), died on 7 June 2017 aged 95. [GC]

- *Livia Gollancz* (1920-2018), Governing Director (CEO) of Gollancz from 1967 to 1990, died on 29 March aged 97. [MJE]
- *Regina Gottesman* (1948-2018), US *Star Trek* fan writer and fanzine publisher (co-editing issues of *Time Warp* 1979-1980), died on 17 or 18 April aged 69. [AIP]
- *Juraj Herz* (1934-2018), Czech film-maker whose titles include *Beauty and the Beast* (1978), *The Ninth Heart* (1979) and *Ferat Vampire* (1982), died on 8 April aged 83. [AB]
- *Palle Juul Holm* (1931-2018), Danish sf critic and author whose *Syzygy og den sorte stjerne* (1975) was the first Danish educational text on the genre, and who wrote short sf as Bernhard Ribbeck, died on 7 April aged 86. [KÆM]
- *Chuck McCann* (1934-2018), US actor whose many genre credits include *Far Out Space Nuts* (1975), *DuckTales the Movie* (1990), *Attack of the Killer Tomatoes* (1991), *Fantastic Four* (1994-1995, voicing The Thing) and *Dracula: Dead and Loving It* (1995), died on 8 April aged 83. [PDF]
- *Tim O'Connor* (1927-2018), US actor in *Ssssss* (1973), *The Man with the Power* (1977) and *Buck Rogers in the 25th Century* (1979 film; 1979-1980 tv), died on 5 April aged 90. [PDF]
- *Gianfranco Parolini* (1930-2018), Italian director and screenwriter often billed as Frank Kramer, reportedly died on 26 April aged 88. Genre credits include *The Fury of Hercules* (1962), *The Three Fantastic Supermen* (1967) and the Yeti film *Giant of the 20th Century* (1977). [SG]
- *Tony Plank* (1940-2018), UK-born author who published stories in Australian genre magazines and anthologies from 1994 to 2017, died on 21 March. [EH]
- *William Prochnau* (1937-2018), US author and journalist whose novel *Trinity's Child* (1983) – in the tradition of *Fail-Safe* and *Dr Strangelove* – was filmed as *By Dawn's Early Light* (1990), died on 28 March aged 80. [MMW]
- *Alice Provensen* (1918-2018), US artist who – with her husband Martin until his death in 1987, and then solo – wrote and/or illustrated many children's books including classic myths, folk-tales and fairy-tales, died in late April aged 99. [PDF]
- *Isao Takahata* (1935-2018), Japanese anime director who co-founded Studio Ghibli and whose productions included *Grave of the Fireflies* (1988) and the Oscar-shortlisted *Tale of the Princess Kaguya* (2013), died on 5 April

aged 82. [GW]

- *Ahmed Khaled Towfik* (1962-2018; also spelt Tawfiq), Egyptian author whose many genre titles include *Utopia* (2008; trans 2011), died on 2 April aged 55. [SS-F]

- *Verne Troyer* (1969-2018): US actor best known as Mini-Me in *The Spy Who Shagged Me* (1999) and *Goldmember* (2002), died on 21 April aged 49. Further credits include *Pinocchio's Revenge* (1996), *Jingle All the Way* (1996), *Men in Black* (1997), *Wishmaster* (1997), *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* (2000), *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (2001), *The Imaginarium of Doctor Parnassus* (2009) and *Gnome Alone* (2015). [SG]

- *Ralph Woolsey* (1914-2018), US cinematographer whose genre credits include *Batman* (1966 tv) and *Oh, God! Book II* (1980), died on 23 March aged 104. [GC]

The Weakest Link. *Sounds A Bit Like Quist Dept.* 'I am no doubt showing my age but, amid all the excitement about plastic-devouring enzymes (April 18), I seem to remember an episode of *Quatermass* about bugs that ate plastic, and that didn't end so well ...' (Reader's letter in the *Financial Times*, April)

Outraged Letters. *Simon R. Green:* 'It's a shame what happened to Michael Fleisher; a man pretty much driven from the comics writing game because of his badly-advised legal action. His run on the Spectre was truly disturbing, his Jonah Hex was ground-breaking, and one of the last things he did for DC, the *Haywire* mini series, was glorious fun. (High concept; what if someone gave Rorschach Iron Man's armour.) All right, the stuff he did for *2000AD* was forgettable, to put it kindly. But I think he should be remembered for the good work he did, and not one infamous lack of judgement.' (26 April)

Infinity War Spoilers! 'Iron Man, Black Panther, Thor, Hulk, Maybot, Black Widow, Hawkeye, Captain America, Sweep from *Sooty and Sweep*, Vision, Spiderman, Heimdall, Drax the Destroyer, Tinky Winky, Nebula, Rocket Raccoon, Rocket Ronnie O'Sullivan, Scarlet Witch, Groot, Toilet Duck, Star-Lord, Winter Soldier, Pepper Potts, Dr Strange, Dr Pepper ... If I have imagined some of the above and missed out others who do appear, the deluge made it almost impossible to keep track.' (Matthew Norman, *Evening Standard*, 26 April)

Magazine Scene. *Amazing Stories* opened for general submissions on 23

April. See amazingstoriesmag.com and editor Steve Davidson's specific post, linking to guidelines etc, at tinyurl.com/y7lh5czj.

The Critical Heritage. Edward Gorey laid down the law about a film subgenre: '*Bowanga! Bowanga!* is the definitive jungle movie – unless you care to make a case for *Wild Women of Wongo*.' (Quoted by Alexander Theroux in *The Strange Case of Edward Gorey*, 2010)

Award Shortlists. *Gemmell* (heroic fantasy): NOVEL Miles Cameron, *The Fall of Dragons*; Robin Hobb, *Assassin's Fate*; Mark Lawrence, *Red Sister*; Steve McHugh, *Scorched Shadows*; Brandon Sanderson, *Oathbringer*. DEBUT NOVEL RJ Barker, *Age of Assassins*; Melissa Caruso, *The Tethered Mage*; Nicholas Eames, *Kings of the Wyld*; Ed McDonald, *Blackwing*; Anna Smith-Spark, *The Court of Broken Knives*. COVER Richard Anderson, *Kings of the Wyld* by Nicholas Eames; Kerem Beyit, *The Fall of Dragons* by Miles Cameron; Sam Green, *Oathbringer* as above; Jackie Morris and Stephen Raw, *Assassin's Fate* as above; Kerby Rosanes, *Godsgrave* by Jay Kristoff.

- *Locus*: too long for *Ansible*, but see locusmag.com/2018/04/2018-locus-awards-finalists/ ... fifty nominees in the five novel categories, plus much more.

- *Seiun* (books translated into Japanese): Christopher Priest, *The Adjacent* trans Yoshimichi Furusawa & Yoko Miki; Roman Arbitman writing as Rustam Katz, *The History of Soviet Fantastika* trans Hiroaki Umemura; Sylvain Neuvel, *Sleeping Giants* trans Chiori Sada; Kim Stanley Robinson, *Blue Mars* trans Yutaka Oshima; Jack Vance, *Space Opera* trans Hisashi Asakura & Ro Shiraishi; Jo Walton, *My Real Children* trans Takeshi Mogi; Gene Wolfe, *A Borrowed Man* trans Akinobu Sakai. (Europa SF, 23 April)

Blurbismo. Sarah Silverman rose to the challenge of Sean Penn's *Bob Honey Who Just Do Stuff* (see [A369](#)): 'Before I started reading, I glanced over the table of contents. The first chapter is called "Seeking Homeostasis in Inherent Hypocrisy." I rolled my eyes and said aloud to no one, "fuuuck you." Then, I read it, and it turns out it's a goddamned novel for the ages. A straight-up masterwork, more relevant to this very moment than anything I've seen. Tom Robbins, Mark Twain, E.E. Cummings and Billy Bragg all just came in Charles Bukowski's pants.' [MMW]

Random Fandom. *Samuel Montgomery-Blinn* of *Bull Spec* was bemused to receive carefully targeted email from a cybersquatter offering to sell him, for

an undisclosed huge sum, the coveted web domain ianwhates.com. Ian Whates of NewCon Press, while neither confirming nor denying having been offered samuelmontgomeryblinn.com, told *Ansible* that (until mislaid by a careless webmaster) ianwhates.com had once been his.

- *Jim Mowatt* announced the publication of his 2013 TAFF report, *Wherever I Lay My Hat!* – see taff.org.uk for details.
- *TAFF Site Free Ebooks*: I'm trying to muster the energy to assemble an ebook of *Ansible's* 1970s predecessor *Checkpoint* (variously edited by Peter Roberts, Darroll Pardoe and Ian Maule). But don't hold your breath.
- *Writers of the Future* and its Scientology connection once again became sf talking points. Past WotF winner Jim C. Hines considers the issues here: www.jimchines.com/2018/04/wotf-and-scientology-2/. (24 April)

The Dead Past. *50 Years Ago*: 'Due to hit the presses later this year is a book titled Pop-Corn, written by James Sallis and Michael Moorcock. Pop-Corn has been described as "a fierce attack on the world of pop culture and the cults that surround it." Tolkien, James Bond and Alfred Hitchcock are just three targets of the way of life some of us hold dear. The book, not yet quite complete, is already scheduled for joint publication by Gollancz and Penguin.' ([Skyrack 95](#), May 1968)

- *10 Years Ago*, the *Sunday Herald* ran a generally positive article on the presence of sf (and Ken MacLeod) at the Glasgow Science Festival: 'The whole basis of the internet was famously inspired by William Gibson's book *Neuromancer* and Isaac Asimov, who recently died, "invented" earth-orbiting satellites in one of his tales.' ([Ansible 250](#), May 2008)

C.o.A. *Bruce Gillespie's* old pacific.net.au address went away on 30 April; he can now be reached only via gandc001 at bigpond dot com.

Court Circular. Obscure author Jon Del Arroz – [better known for online trolling](#) – did indeed file suit against Worldcon 76 for its committee decision that, just like SFWA soon afterwards, the con didn't want him as a member. Details at *File 770*: file770.com/?p=41778.

Fanfundery. *GUFF*: Marcin Klak won with 47 votes to 38 for Alice & Steve Lawson and 5 no-preference; 90 ballots in all.

- *TAFF*: Johan Anglemark won with 100 final-round votes to 87 for Fia Karlsson; 214 ballots were cast, with Helena McCallum eliminated in the first round. See taff.org.uk for details and the full breakdown in *TAFF News* #6.

Thog's Masterclass. *Freudian Dept.* 'It was a sword fashioned from matter so rare and ethereal that no mortal or even ordinary immortal could hope to wield it. Only when the favoured hero gripped its elusive shaft would its billions of atoms solidify into a firm and erect mass ...' (Michael Butterworth, *Queens of Deleria*, 1977) [BA]

- *Dept of Understatement.* 'She looked up, and the silence stopped. The carbonized sky howled as the Milky Way cracked its sternum, exposing its galactic heart.' (Bryn Chancellor, *Sycamore*, 2017) [PB]

- *Blindsight Dept.* 'Her eyes were closed. [...] She was staring up at the ceiling, her eyes closed.' (Alastair Reynolds, *On the Steel Breeze*, 2013) [JA]

- *Fundamentalism and the Sands of Time.* 'Hope was a classic, a classic barmaid, one whose broad behind leaves an imprint on the pages of history.' (Robert Leckie, *Helmet for My Pillow*, 1957) [MMW]

- *Dept of Easy Interplanetary Communication.* 'We have, of course, had radio for a long time, and by that means know your languages: indeed we adopted them as our own.' (Vargo Statten [John Russell Fearn], *Earth 2*, 1955) [BA]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 11 May 2018: Janet Edwards talks to the Brum Group. 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre. £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future events/speakers: 8 June 2018, Alastair Reynolds; 13 July 2018, awaited; 10 August 2018, summer social; 14 September 2018, awaited; 12 October 2018, David Leach; 16 November 2018, Professor Bill Chaplin, 7 December 2018, Christmas social.

Thog's Second Body. *Whole-Body Transplant Dept.* 'This body was built for intercontinental hauling and had the apparatus that was made for endurance. It had everything a man could want in a woman. It was the wanton, uncivilised body that all men had longed to possess since the days of the cave man. It exuded purely animal sexuality.' (Sue Payer, *Second Body*, 1979)

- *Variable Geometry Dept.* 'Her dieting had paid off, and she was flat where women ought to be flat and curvy where women should be curvy. Doubly so, in fact, in both directions.' (*Ibid*)

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From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
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Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Joe Mayhew**. Available for SAE or substantial
quantities of Psycho-Ergs.

When the Great Days Come

Isaac Asimov's Laws of Robotics, according to some EU member states, are Essential Health and Safety Requirements that should be incorporated into the EU Machinery Directive thus: '(ii) improve the current Directive by incorporating Asimov's laws⁴⁵ into the EHSR of the Directive', where footnote 45 quotes the Three Laws – though not the johnny-come-lately Zeroth Law – in full. ([7 May](#)) [LK]

Jerry Cornelius is enjoying several Further Adventures, including a new story by Michael Moorcock himself, at www.faojc.com. [MR]

Larry Eisenberg, still going strong at 98, protested that his *SF Encyclopedia* entry gave him a spurious middle name (lifted from the Internet SF Database, where it had leaked across from the *other* Lawrence Eisenberg). After fixing this I was rewarded with one of his famous limericks (see *New York Times*):

Middle name Benjamin does annoy,
There's been none since I was a boy,
Its wrongful bestowal
Did irk on the whole,
Your effort has given me joy. (26 May)

Ursula K. Le Guin was remembered at the SFWA Nebula Awards Weekend banquet in May, where every place-setting included a little blue badge with the legend THANK YOU, URSULA. [*Update, 2 June: I'm told that this was arranged by Ellen Klages.*]

Philip Pullman was named author of the year at the British Book Awards for

The Book of Dust: La Belle Sauvage; the illustrator of the year is Axel Scheffler of *Gruffalo* fame. (BBC, 17 May)

Cat Rambo, tweeting *ex cathedra* as SFWA President, revealed the new must-have accessory for members: the [SFWA Secret Decoder Ring](#), at a mere \$20. (Twitter, 16 May) Crack the editorial code and learn what those bland-seeming rejection slips *really* mean!

George Saunders's *Lincoln in the Bardo* is the one genre contender in the shortlist of five for the Golden Man Booker Prize, showcasing past winners 'that have best stood the test of time'. [L]

H.G. Wells appeared in an unexpected context last month, as the cover photo of Oregon Publishing's free Kindle ebook of *The Shadow over Innsmouth* by H.P. Lovecraft. He's a deep one, that Wells.

Convive

1 Jun - 28 Oct • **Tolkien: Maker of Middle-earth** (exhibition), Weston Library, Oxford: www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/news/2017/mar-17.

8-10 Jun • **Lavecon** (sf/fantasy/gaming), Sedgebrook Hall Hotel, Northants. Tickets at various prices: www.hwsevents.co.uk/shop-1.

8-11 Jun • **To See the Invisible** (opera based on story by Robert Silverberg), Britten Studio, Snape Maltings, Snape, Suffolk. Tickets £5-£25. See snapemaltings.co.uk/whats-on/to-see-the-invisible/.

23 Jun • **BSFA/SF Foundation AGMs** and mini-con, Bread & Roses Theatre, 68 Clapham Manor St, Clapham, London, SW4 6DZ. 10am-5pm. Guests include Rob Hansen. Free to all.

27 Jun • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. With Dan Jones, Brian Wigmore.

29 Jun - 1 Jul • **Two Centuries of Frankenstein: 1818-2018** (course), ICE, Cambridge. With Professor Edward James. £280. See www.ice.cam.ac.uk/course/two-centuries-frankenstein-1818-2 018.

1 Jul • **Tolkien Society Seminar**, Hilton Hotel, Leeds, LS1 4BX. £30 (members £25). See www.tolkiensociety.org/events/seminar-2018/.

4-5 Jul • **Science for Fiction**, Imperial College, London. Science presentations *for published authors only*: afternoon of 4th, all day 5th. £30 including catering. Contact Dave Clements, davecl at mac dot com.

6-7 Jul • **Futurefest** (futurology), Tobacco Dock, London. Tickets £80; Friday or Saturday only, £50. More at www.futurefest.org.

7-8 Jul • **Comics Uncovered**, BCEC, Birmingham. £85 reg; £45/day; students £45 and £25. More at www.comicsuncovered.co.uk.

18 Jul • **Clarke Award Ceremony**, Foyles, Charing Cross Road, London. From 6:30pm. Tickets £13 from <http://tinyurl.com/y98k35f7>.

16-20 Aug • **Worldcon 76** (Worldcon), San José, CA, USA. \$230 reg; \$115 YA (15-21) and military; under-15s \$75; under-6s free; \$50 supp. Hugo voting opened 3 May; ends late July. See worldcon76.org. Voting Packet for members only: www.worldcon76.org/hugo/packet.php.

8-10 Feb 2019 • **SF Ball** (media), The Grand Harbour Hotel, Southampton. Further details to follow at sfbevents.com/sfball.

19-22 Apr 2019 • **Ytterbium** (Eastercon), Park Inn, London Heathrow. £70 reg, rising to £80 on 14 November 2018 and £90 on 1 April 2019; £30 concessions; £25 under-18s; £5 infants under 5; £20 supporting. Online registration at <http://ytterbium.org.uk/>.

11-12 May 2019 • **HorrorCon UK**, Magna Science Adventure Centre, Sheffield Rd, Rotherham, S60 1DX. Further details such as prices are awaited at www.horrorconuk.com.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others Date Us. *Alexandra Borowitz* chose her top five authors for Shelf Awareness, beginning with: ‘Margaret Atwood, because she’s essentially the godmother of dystopian science fiction.’ (4 May) [AIP]

Awards. *Clarke Award* shortlist: C. Robert Cargill, *Sea of Rust*; Anne Charnock, *Dreams Before the Start of Time*; Omar El Akkad, *American War*; Jaroslav Kalfar, *Spaceman of Bohemia*; Jennie Melamed, *Gather the Daughters*; Jeff VanderMeer, *Borne*.

• *FAAn Awards* for 2017 fan activity. Fanzine: *Beam* ed. Nic Farey & Ulrika

O'Brien. Perzine: *Vibrator* ed. Graham Charnock. Special Publication: *Same Planet, Different World: Jacq Monahan's TAFF Report*. Fan Writer: Randy Byers. Fan Artist: Steve Stiles. Fanzine Cover: Graham West for *Rubber Crab* #8. Online Activity: eFanzines.com by Bill Burns. #1 Fan Face: Jacq Monahan. Letterhack (tie): Robert Lichtman, Milt Stevens.

- *Gaylactic Spectrum*, best novel: Heather Rose Jones, *Mother of Souls*.
- *Nebulas*. Novel: N.K. Jemisin, *The Stone Sky*. Novella: Martha Wells, *All Systems Red*. Novelette: Kelly Robson, 'A Human Stain' (Tor.com). Short: Rebecca Roanhorse, 'Welcome to Your Authentic Indian Experience™' (*Apex*). Dramatic: *Get Out*. Norton (YA): Sam J. Miller, *The Art of Starving*.

Science Masterclass. 'As an asteroid (a kind of giant starship) flies through the stars ...' (*Publishers Weekly* description of Poul Anderson's *Tales of the Flying Mountains*, 1970)

- 'Volcano on Hawaii may spew fridge-sized refrigerators.' (Newspaper headline for AP story, May)
- 'The findings [...] suggest dandruff evolved sometime in the late Jurassic period' (*i*, 26 May. *Hazel*: 'Later it learned to hunt and fish.' *Me*: 'And still later became President of the United States.')

R.I.P. *John Altamura*, US actor who starred in *The Toxic Avenger II* and *III* (both 1989), died on 4 May. [PDF]

- *Michael Anderson* (1920-2018), UK-born director of *1984* (1956), *Doc Savage: The Man of Bronze* (1975), *Logan's Run* (1976), *Millennium* (1989), *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* (1997) and others, died on 25 April aged 98. [MMW]
- *Eddy C. Bertin* (1944-2018), Belgian author and translator who from 1968 to 2013 published many short sf and horror stories and (often pseudonymous) novels, died on 19 May aged 73. His one English-language collection is *The Whispering Horror* (2013). [FR]
- *Joseph Campanella* (1924-2018), US character actor whose credits include *Ben* (1972), *Meteor* (1979), *Hangar 18* (1980), *Space Case* (1992) and *Spider-Man* (1994-1997 tv), died on 16 May aged 93. [PDF]
- *Noble Craig*, US actor in *Sssssss* (1973), *Big Trouble in Little China* (1986), *Poltergeist II* (1986), *The Blob* (1988), *A Nightmare on Elm Street 5* (1989) and *Bride of Re-Animator* (1989), died on 26 April. [SG]
- *Renate Dorrestein* (1954-2018), Dutch author of the first Gothic novels to be written in that language, died on 4 May aged 64. [PDF/JdV]

- [Gardner Dozois](#) (1947-2018), US author and hugely influential genre editor, died after a short illness on 27 May; he was 70. [MS] As editor he is remembered for his long stint at *Isaac Asimov's SF Magazine* from 1986 to 2004, and for a great many anthologies including the 35 authoritative volumes of *The Year's Best Science Fiction* (1984-2018). He won fifteen Hugos as best professional editor and two Nebulas for best short story, and was inducted into the SF Hall of Fame in 2011. Gardner was also much loved as a cheerfully rumbustious and irreverent presence at countless sf gatherings – always guaranteed to lift the spirits while lowering the tone.
- *Pamela Gidley* (1965-2018), US actress in *Cherry 2000* (1987), *Highway to Hell* (1991), *Twin Peaks: Fire Walk With Me* (1992), *Strange Luck* (1995-1996 tv), *Aberration* (1997), *The Little Vampire* (2000) and *Twin Peaks: The Missing Pieces* (2014), died on 16 April aged 52. [SG]
- *Bill Gold* (1921-2018), US graphic designer who created hundreds of posters for films including *A Clockwork Orange* (1971), *The Exorcist* (1973) and *Space Cowboys* (2000), died on 20 May aged 97. [GW]
- *Yuriko Hoshi* (1943-2018), Japanese actress in various Toho kaiju films including *Ghidorah the Three-Headed Monster* (1964), *Mothra vs. Godzilla* (1964) and *Godzilla vs. Megaguirus* (2000), died on 17 May aged 74. [PDF]
- *Margot Kidder* (1948-2018), Canada-born actress best known as Lois Lane in the Christopher Reeve *Superman* (1978) and sequels, died on 13 May aged 69. Further films include *The Reincarnation of Peter Proud* (1975), *The Amityville Horror* (1979) and *Halloween II* (2009). [MR]
- *Peter Mayer* (1936-2018), UK-born publisher and former CEO of Penguin (whose ailing fortunes he restored) who famously published Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses* (1988) and had his due share of death threats, died on 11 May aged 82. [PDF/AIP]
- *Richard Peck* (1934-2018), Newbery Medal-winning US author whose novels for children and young adults include supernatural and sf titles – such as *The Ghost Belonged to Me* (1975) and its sequels, and *Lost in Cyberspace!* (1995) – died on 24 May aged 84. [PDF]
- *Susan Ann Protter* (1939-2018), New York literary agent who represented many sf people including Terry Bisson, Kathryn Cramer, David Hartwell and Rudy Rucker, died on 26 April aged 78. [GVG]
- *Kottayam Pushpanath*, prolific Malayali author best known for crime fiction, whose 300+ novels include sf and horror and who translated *Dracula* into Malayalam, died on 2 May aged 80. [PDF]

- *Harry Robinson* (1930-2018), UK actor who doubled the part of Dumbledore in *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (2002) and appeared in all the sequels, died on 30 April aged 87. [SFS]
- *Philip Roth* (1933-2018), US mainstream author best known for *Portnoy's Complaint* (1969), died on 22 May aged 85. [BV] Fantastic themes feature in his novels *Our Gang* (1971), *The Breast* (1972), *The Plot Against America* (2004) – a Sidewise Award-winning alternate history – and *Everyman* (2006).
- *Dean Stefan*, animation writer who scripted *He-Man and the Masters of the Universe: The Beginning* (2002) and episodes of many sf series from *Darkwing Duck* (1991) to *Transformers: Rescue Bots* (2012-2016), died on 15 May. [PDF]
- *Tom Swale*, writer and producer whose script credits include *Land of the Lost* (1975-1976), *Smurfs* (1981) and *Alvin & the Chipmunks* (1983), reportedly died in late May. [DG]
- *Clint Walker* (1927-2018), US actor in *The Ten Commandments* (1956), *Scream of the Wolf* (1974), *Killdozer* (1974), *Snowbeast* (1977) and *Small Soldiers* (voice, 1998), died on 21 May aged 90. [DP]
- Late report: *Robin Scott Wilson* (1928-2013), US editor, academic and author who published short sf and one collaborative novel but is best known for the US Clarion writers' workshop, its spinoff *Clarion* anthologies (1971-1973) and *Those Who Can* (1973), died in September 2013; his family chose not to announce this at the time. [GVG]
- *Tom Wolfe* (1931-2018), US author and journalist valued in sf circles for his study of the early US aerospace programme, *The Right Stuff* (1979) – whose 1983 film adaptation was a Hugo finalist – died on 14 May aged 87. [MR]
- Late report: *Glover Wright* (Geoffrey Glover-Wright, 1940-2017) Indian-born rock guitarist and thriller writer whose sf novels are *The Hound of Heaven* (1984) and *Aurora* (2003), died on 11 October 2017.

We Are Everywhere. Yes, it's satire: 'UK Brexit proposals nominated for Hugo Award in Fantasy category' (Newsthump.com, 29 May) *Please* don't all write to tell me that there is in fact no such category.

Outraged Letters. *Chris Priest* on A370: 'Traditional old-fart comment (with apologies): from the depths of my lifetime's familiarity with the SF world, of this month's RIPs I recognize only one name, and that is Madame Gollancz ... who famously wouldn't have anything to do with the Gollancz sf list.' (1 May) But familiar names are more painful.

Pubwatch. The Edward Lear pub in Islington reopened on 3 May with a new name as ‘tribute to two of the locale’s most famous sons’: The Owl & Hitchhiker. See www.owlanhitchhiker.pub. [DH] Thematic features include Pan Galactic Gargle Blasters and runcible spoons.

Court Circular. Tony Perez of *Tin House* reports a ‘sovereign citizen’ submission that laughs heartily at the rights of mere editors: ‘Should you continue to enforce your policy as it is emphasized in the Writers’ Market and on your website in the Submissions Guidelines section, please mark my submission as “rejected as unagented” and let me know immediately. I would be happy to send you the proposed declaratory judgment action I included with the packet forwarded to WGAW so your legal staff can prepare whatever arguments they think the federal court will tolerate. Blackballing me will constitute the majority of the damages such a suit would engender, so please consider this submission in the light in which it is delivered, ergo, a good faith effort to demonstrate that you may be breaking the law and have a chance to correct it voluntarily by realizing the book submitted outside your policy is the template for freeing all Americans who have been subjected to patterns and practices which deprive them of the freedoms governments are instituted to protect.’ (Twitter, 18 May) Coor gosh.

The Weakest Link. Q: ‘Which legendary English figure stole from the rich to give to the poor?’ A: ‘Dick Turpin.’ (ITV, *The Chase*) [PE]

Mythopoeic Award shortlists. ADULT John Crowley, *Ka: Dar Oakley in the Ruin of Ymr*; Alice Hoffman, *The Rules of Magic*; G.A. Kathryns, *Snow City*; Ellen Klages, *Passing Strange*; Victor LaValle, *The Changeling*.

• CHILDREN’S Cassie Beasley, *Tumble and Blue*; Stephanie Burgis, *The Dragon with the Chocolate Heart*; Nidhi Chanani, *Pashmina*; A.F. Harrold, *The Song from Somewhere Else*; Garth Nix, *Frogkisser*.

• SCHOLARSHIP: INKLINGS Jane Chance, *Tolkien, Self and Other*; Lisa Coutras, *Tolkien’s Theology of Beauty*. Verlyn Flieger, *There Would Always Be a Fairy Tale*; S&oring;rina Higgins, *The Inklings and King Arthur*; Christopher Tolkien, ed., *Beren and Luthien*.

• SCHOLARSHIP: OTHER Aisling Byrne, *Otherworlds: Fantasy and History in Medieval Literature*; Dimitra Fimi, *Celtic Myth in Contemporary Children’s Fantasy*; Michael Levy & Farah Mendlesohn, *Children’s Fantasy Literature: An Introduction*; Elizabeth M. Sanders, *Genres of Doubt*; Mark J.P. Wolf, ed., *The Routledge Companion to Imaginary Worlds*.

As Others Remember Us. ‘I was just thinking of George Orwell’s *1984* and wondering which animal you would be.’ (Danny Mills, Radio 5 Live) [PE]

Random Fandom. *Hazel Ashworth* is now Hazel Ashworth West, in memory of her late partner Don West.

- *Follycon* (Eastercon 2018) created enamel pins for members who also attended Follycon in 1988, and there are some spares for 1988 members who didn’t join the 2018 con. Ask chair@follycon.org.uk, giving your name, address, and 1988 name/badge name if different. First come first served.
- *London First Thursdays*: the page at news.ansible.uk/london.html has been updated to note the awkward fact that meetings are currently held upstairs with no wheelchair access. [CM]
- *Steven H Silver*’s long-running SF Site news page is officially ‘on hiatus’. (www.sfsite.com/news, 14 May)

The Dead Past. *40 Years Ago*: ‘Screen Actors Guild has filed a \$25,000 lawsuit against Gene Roddenberry, his Norway Corp. and Paramount Pictures for what the union says is an illegal exhibition of a *Star Trek* TV pilot and seeks an injunction against Roddenberry’s showing of the blooper reel. The reel “makes the actors look ludicrous.” The article in *Variety* gives no mention as to why the actors are complaining now, 10 years after the blooper reel was first shown.’ ([Karass 37](#), June 1978)

- *10 Years Ago* at Cracked.com: ‘If you’ve been in any bookstore in your lifetime, you’re probably familiar with that most peculiar of book retail locales: the Fantasy & Science Fiction section. This strange and sweaty place is kept separate from the rest of the bookstore so that its residents, the soap-averse fans of Fantasy & Science Fiction novels, can go about their plots and dark rituals without disturbing any of the normal-smelling clientele.’ ([Ansible 251](#), June 2008)

C.o.A. Gary Farber, 1871 Wilson Avenue, Apt 112, Saint Paul, MN 55119, USA.

Thog’s Masterclass. *Similes in Space*. ‘... and the unfiltered vacuum tightened around me like bathwater.’ (Jaroslav Kalfar, *Spaceman of Bohemia*, 2017) [IS]

- *Super-Ova Dept*. ‘Millions of eggs circumvent a small green planet.’ (*Ibid*) [IS]
- *Pause During Infodump*. The President of the USA speaks: ‘Please go on.

As for its being confusing, it is a bit complicated. But I get it all in a sort of – of fuliginous adumbration!’ (Harry Stephen Keeler, *Cleopatra’s Tears*, 1940)

- *Déjà Vu Dept.* ‘The servant looked familiar in a way that suggested Vasin had seen him before.’ (Peter Newman, *The Deathless*, 2018) [AR]

- *Dept of Anatomy.* ‘She had sprained muscles in her shoulders, thighs and ankles.’ ‘His legs finally got the message and they ran.’ ‘She glared into his armpit, appalled.’ (*Ibid*) [AR]

- *Literally Dept.* “‘It was returned by the bank,’ he said flatly. The voice swallowed that; literally as well as metaphorically.’ (William Irish [Cornell Woolrich], *Deadline At Dawn*, 1944) [BA]

- *Dept of Neat Tricks.* ‘Quinn dipped his tongue in, hauled it out again in a hurry. He quickly blocked the verbal opening that had been made by shoving his foot into it.’ (*Ibid*) [BA]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

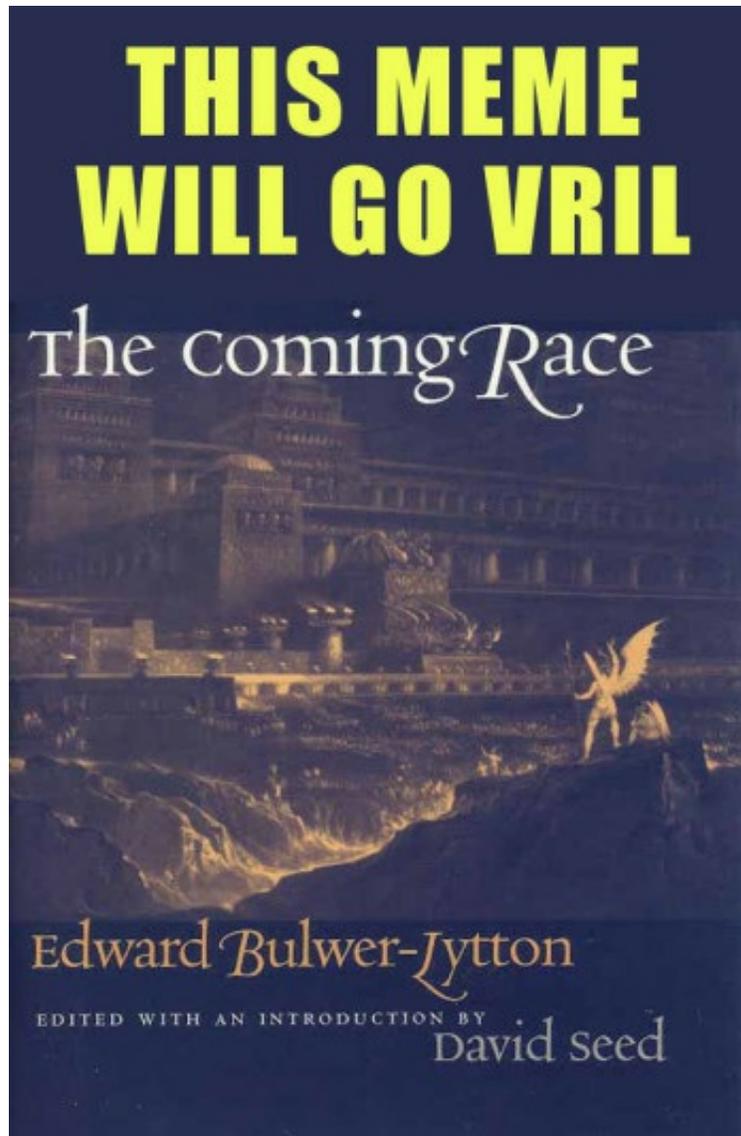
- 3 June 2018: Duncan Lunan book launch celebration, Troon. See the link below for times and venues.

<http://www.duncanlunan.com/blog.asp?blogid=14436>

- 8 June 2018: Alastair Reynolds talks to the Brum Group. 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre. £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future events/speakers: 13 July 2018, awaited; 10 August 2018, summer social; 14 September 2018, awaited; 12 October 2018, David Leach; 16 November 2018, Professor Bill Chaplin, 7 December 2018, Christmas social.

- 12 June 2018: Farnham Flash Festival sf evening, from 7:30pm at The Hop Blossom, Long Garden Walk, Farnham, Surrey, GU9 7HX.

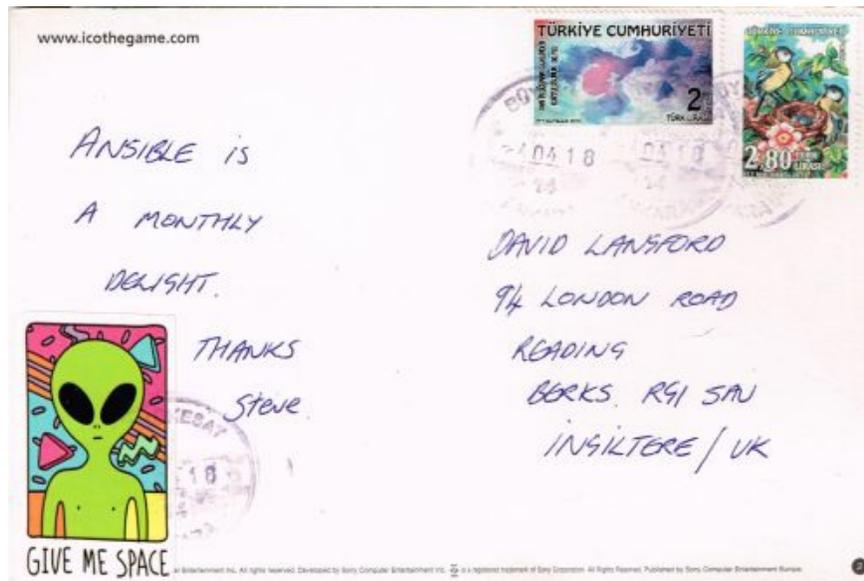
Editorial. The things I do to annoy people on Facebook and Twitter:



The Dead Past II. *20 Years Ago:* ‘Diana Wynne Jones sends a picture of chaps apparently mud-wrestling in their underpants, and with evil glee points out the caption: “The Langford Ha-Ha Game, a muddy version of five-a-side rugby played in the ha-ha. It was discontinued about ten years ago.” I refuse to answer Diana’s probing questions about what I was doing in 1988.’ (*Ansible* 131, June 1998)

Magazine Scene. Peter Tennant, after ten and a half years, is putting an end to his ‘Case Notes’ book reviews section in *Black Static*. A new reviewing team will be formed: see the link below. (31 May)
<http://ttapress.com/1979/time-to-say-goodbye/0/5/>

Outraged Letters II. This cheered me no end, but I have no idea which *Ansible*-reading Steve sent it ...



Thog in the Fog. *Small Betraying Detail Dept.* ‘... And so since 10.18 this morning, Mr. President, I can confidently say that were a man on any island in Big River he would hardly know – so close would impenetrable fog walls be to him – whether he were on an island or on a prairie! Except, of course, for the angry purling of tons of dun-grey water flowing past him, each side.’ (Harry Stephen Keeler, *Cleopatra’s Tears*, 1940)

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Ansible® 372, July 2018

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE, thushol, grethlanth or shleath.

Who Remembers Books? ‘How useful can a literary history of science fiction be when science fiction hasn’t been a primarily literary form for almost a century? Fritz Lang’s *Metropolis* came out in 1927.’ (Alexi Sargeant reviews Roger Luckhurst’s *Science Fiction: A Literary History* [2018] in *The American Interest*, 1 June). [MMW]

The Moth that Ate Peanuts

David A. Hardy had every excuse for late response to [Ansible 370](#): ‘Your item under Thog was a bit too near the bone for me: “... the carbonised sky howled as the Milky Way cracked its sternum, exposing its galactic heart.” A month ago that was just what happened to me – or at least my sternum was sawn in half, exposing I don’t know what (or want to know), as I was unconscious at the time. I was having open-heart surgery, to repair my mitral and tricuspid valves.... Back home, I seem to be making satisfactory progress, but still pretty weak.’ (6 June)

Kazuo Ishiguro was knighted for services to literature in the Queen’s Birthday honours announced in June; Emma Thompson (seen in three Harry Potter films) became a dame for services to drama. Other honorees with genre links include Ken Follett (CBE for literature), Brian Cosgrove of *Count Duckula*, *Danger Mouse* and Cosgrove Hall fame (OBE for UK animation) and Jeanette Winterson (CBE for literature).

Mike McCormack, Irish author whose output includes one sf novel, won the €100,000 International Dublin Literary Award for his 2016 fantasy *Solar Bones* – written as a single sentence spoken by a ghost and covering more than 270 pages. (*Guardian*, 13 June) [JC]

Juliet E. McKenna is another author whose Wikipedia entry has been threatened with deletion for ‘non-notability’. No doubt it needed better citations, but it seems some wiki editors actively prefer deletion to such repair work. Juliet ponders the bias against non-US, women and minority writers at www.julietemckenna.com/?p=2945. In comments there, Jo Fletcher remarks that her British and World Fantasy Awards, plus years of having her own trad-publishing genre imprint Jo Fletcher Books, somehow failed to make her notable: her entry was duly zapped.

Adam Roberts ‘was one of the latest batch of Fellows elected to the Royal Society of Literature’ on 4 June. New inductees are asked to sign the big book used since the RSL began in 1820: ‘To sign our name we were offered the choice of: Byron’s quill, George Eliot’s quill, or T.S. Eliot’s fountain pen. I chose the last of these.’ (Adamroberts.com, 5 June) Other honorees in the same intake included Bryan Talbot and Neil Gaiman, who respectively opted for Byron’s and T.S. Eliot’s pens. [*Later*: several million readers pointed out that Frances Hardinge became a Fellow on the same occasion; her choice of pen is not known.]

Cavan Scott, UK author of *Doctor Who* and *Star Wars* spinoffs among others, reports that ‘I have had people try to post comments on my website saying they hope I get terminally ill. I am, apparently, a cist on humanity’s corpse.’ (Twitter, 8 June) The anonymous online hate comes from *Warhammer* games fans because he’s working on the forthcoming *Warhammer Adventures* novels for children, which these ‘adult’ fans know (without needing to read them) are a Bad Thing. [SG]

Consertal

Until 7 Jul • **Nine Foot Nine** (sf play), The Bunker, London. £15; £12 concessions. See www.bunkertheatre.com/whats-on/nine-foot-nine/.

Until 14 Jan 2019 • **Alasdair Gray** exhibition, Viktor Wynd Museum of Curiosities, 11 Mare St, London, E8 4RP. Admission £6.

4-5 Jul • **Science for Fiction**, Imperial College, London. Science presentations *for published authors only*: afternoon of 4th, all day 5th. £30 including catering. Contact Dave Clements, davecl at mac dot com.

6-7 Jul • **Futurefest** (futuresology), Tobacco Dock, London. Tickets £80;

Friday or Saturday only, £50. More at www.futurefest.org.

7-8 Jul • **Comics Uncovered**, BCEC, Birmingham. £85 reg; £45/day; students £45 and £25. More at www.comicsuncovered.co.uk.

14 Jul • **Edge-Lit 7**, QUAD Centre, Derby, DE1 3AS. 10am-late. GoH Frances Hardinge and Paul Tremblay. Tickets £30. Box office 01332 290 606. See www.derbyquad.co.uk/events/edge-lit-7.aspx.

19-22 Jul • **Nemo 2018** (Eurocon), Amiens, France. €55 reg, rising to €60 on 15 July; €65 at door. See eurocon2018.yolasite.com.

20-23 Jul • **Continuum** (RPG), John Foster Hall, Leicester University. Cost revealed when you register at continuumconvention.co.uk.

SOLD OUT 3-6 Aug • **Discworld Convention**, Chesford Grange Hotel, Warwick. You can join a waiting list for cancelled memberships (£74 reg; £59 concessions; £30 supp) at dwcon.org.

4-6 Aug • **Nine Worlds Geekfest** (multimedia), Novotel London West, Hammersmith, London. £119 reg; \$49.99 per day; under-18s free. Book online at ninenworlds.co.uk.

16-20 Aug • **Worldcon 76** (Worldcon), San José, CA, USA. \$230 reg; \$115 YA (15-21) and military; under-15s \$75; under-6s free; \$50 supp. See worldcon76.org. Hugo voting continues, ending in late July.

20-23 Sep • **Oxonmoot** (Tolkien Society), St Antony's College, Oxford. £75 reg or £65 for TS members, *rising to £85/£75 on 1 August*. See www.tolkiensociety.org/events/oxonmoot-2018/.

2-6 Oct • **War with the Newts** (play, Karel Čapek 're-imagined'), Royal Exchange Theatre, St Ann's Square, Manchester, M2 7DH. £13; £11 concessions; £6 under-16s. Bookings tinyurl.com/yd24tt6x. [AIP]

Rumblings. *Worldcon 2020* site selection voting is open, with New Zealand as the only bid. See www.worldcon76.org/wsfs/site-selection. New Zealand has just announced a change of its Worldcon dates: 29 July to 2 August 2020, rather than 12-16 August. (nzin2020.nz, 1 July)

Infinitely Improbable

As Others Fear Us. Flann O'Brien is writing *The Dalkey Archive*:

‘Generally I am satisfied with the quality of the material to date, though I have a horrible feeling that some stupid critic (and which of them is not?) will praise me as a master of science fiction.’ (March 1963 letter in *The Collected Letters of Flann O’Brien* ed. Maebh Long, 2018)

Awards. *Grand Prix de l’Imaginaire*, translation-into-French category: James Morrow, *Galápagos Regained*.

- *John W. Campbell Memorial*: David Walton, *The Genius Plague*.
- *Kurd Laßwitz Preis*, translation-into-German category: Nnedi Okorafor, *The Book of Phoenix*.
- *Lambda Awards*, sf/fantasy/horror category: Annalee Newitz, *Autonomous*.
- *Locus Awards* novel winners: SF John Scalzi, *The Collapsing Empire*. FANTASY N.K. Jemisin, *The Stone Sky*. HORROR Victor LaValle, *The Changeling*. YA Nnedi Okorafor, *Akata Warrior*. DEBUT Theodora Goss, *The Strange Case of the Alchemist’s Daughter*. Also NONFICTION Alexandra Pierce & Mimi Mondal, eds., *Luminescent Threads: Connections to Octavia E. Butler*. See locusmag.com/2018/06/2018-locus-awards-winners/ for many more categories.
- *SF and Fantasy Hall of Fame 2017*: J.K. Rowling, Stan Lee, *The Legend of Zelda* (videogame), *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (tv).
- *Theodore Sturgeon* (short story): Charlie Jane Anders, ‘Don’t Press Charges and I Won’t Sue’ (in *Global Dystopias*).

Alternate History Masterclass. ‘Anthony Ray Hinton (featured) talks about the thirty years he spent on death row with Oprah.’ (Seattle Arts and Lectures descriptions of upcoming talks, 30 June) [JDB]

R.I.P. Late report: *Shirley Bellwood* (1931-2016), UK artist and illustrator active from the 1950s in girls’ comics – including *Misty*, *Jinty* and the serial ‘The Ghost Hunters’ in *Sally* – died on 1 February 2016; she was 84. [O]

- *Martin Bregman* (1926-2018), US producer whose films include *The Shadow* (1994), *Matilda* (1996) and *The Adventures of Pluto Nash* (2002), died on 16 June aged 92. [AIP]
- *(Raymond) Reid Collins* (1929-2018), US radio/tv broadcaster who contributed four stories to *F&SF* 1978-1984, died on 19 April aged 88. [TM]
- *Peter Eisler*, Australian fan and member of the Futurian Society of Sydney, died in a 26 June fire at the block of flats where he lived; he was only 50. The presence of his high-piled book collection sadly led to his being described in press reports as a hoarder. [CS]

- [Harlan Ellison](#) (1934-2018), US author, anthologist, screenwriter and controversialist whose many trophies include seven Hugos and four Nebulas for short fiction (plus a further Hugo for his *Star Trek* script ‘The City on the Edge of Forever’), died in his sleep on 28 June; he was 84. [JDB] His noted anthologies *Dangerous Visions* (1967) and *Again, Dangerous Visions* (1972) both received special Worldcon awards, while even the non-appearance of *The Last Dangerous Visions* became legendary. Among his life achievement honours are the World Fantasy Award (1993), Bram Stoker Award (1996), SFWA Grand Master (2006) and SF Hall of Fame (2011). Ellison’s flamboyant, hyperbolic, take-no-prisoners approach to life and literature won him much admiration and some enmity; the sf world is a drearier place without him.
- *Peter Firmin* (1928-2018), co-creator with Oliver Postgate of the much-loved Smallfilms stop-motion animations – including *Noggin the Nog* (from 1959), *The Clangers* (1969-1972) and *Bagpuss* (1974) – died on 1 July aged 89. (BBC)
- *Michael Ford* (1928-2018) UK art director and set decorator whose films included *The Empire Strikes Back* (1980), *Raiders of the Lost Ark* (1981) – for which he won an Oscar – and *Return of the Jedi* (1983), died on 31 May aged 90. [PDF]
- *Eunice Gayson* (1928-2018), UK actress in *The Revenge of Frankenstein* (1958) and the first two James Bond films, died on 8 June aged 90. [MMW]
- *Helen Griffin*, Welsh actress seen in *Doctor Who* (2006) and *The Machine* (2013), died on 29 June. [SG]
- *Bill Lignante* (1925-2018), US comics artist who from 1961 drew and sometimes wrote many issues of *The Phantom* for three publishers, died on 27 February aged 92. He also worked for 16 years on Hanna-Barbera animations. [PDF]
- *Deanna Lund*, US actress best known for *Land of the Giants* (1968-1970), died on 22 June aged 81; her films include *Elves*, *Superstition 2* and *Transylvania Twist* (all 1989). [F770]
- *Robert Mandan* (1932-2018), US actor whose credits include *Zapped!* (1982) and a 1993 guest spot in *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*, died on 29 April aged 86. [LP]
- *Jerry Maren* (1920-2018), US actor who was the last surviving Munchkin from *The Wizard of Oz* (1939), died in late May aged 98. [PDF] He had many more genre credits, most recently *Frankenstein Rising* and *Dahmer vs. Gacy* (both 2010).

- *June Moffatt* (1926-2018), long-time Los Angeles-area fan, fanzine publisher, member of First Fandom, FAPA, LASFS and many committees, and 1973 TAFF delegate (jointly with her husband and collaborator Len Moffatt, 1923-2010), died on 31 May aged 92. [LG]
- *Tony Morphett* (1938-2018), Australian novelist and screenwriter who co-wrote the screenplay of *The Last Wave* (1977), died on 2 June aged 80. [PDF]
- Late report: *Luan Peters* (1946-2017), UK actress in *Lust for a Vampire* (1971), *Twins of Evil* (1971), *The Flesh and Blood Show* (1972), *Old Dracula* (1974) and *Land of the Minotaur* (1976), died on 24 December 2017 aged 71. [SG]
- *William Phipps* (1922-2018), US actor whose many genre credits include *Cinderella* (voice, 1950), *Five* (1951), *The War of the Worlds* (1953), *Cat-Women of the Moon* (1953) and *The Snow Creature* (1954), died on 1 June aged 96. [F770]
- *Richard ‘Dick’ Siegel* (1955-2018), author, comics artist, film-maker and former head writer for *Weekly World News*, reportedly died in June aged 63. Books include *Alien Creatures* (1978 survey of aliens in sf) with J-C Suarés, the joky *The Extraterrestrial Report* (1978) and one sf novel, *Alien Plague* (1979) as by Stephard Noir. [PDF]
- *Steve Sneyd* (1941-2018), UK sf poet, bibliographer and small-press publisher named as a Grand Master by the SF Poetry Association in 2015, died on 13 June aged 77. [PP via CC] His Hilltop Press published much research into fanzine poems and brought such sf poets as Lilith Lorraine back into print; his crabbedly handwritten newsletter of genre poetry, *Data Dump* (222 issues 1991-2016) remains a valuable though hard-to-read resource. Steve was a long-time *Ansible* correspondent and a good friend.
- *Christopher Stasheff* (1944-2018), US author best known for the long-running Gallowglass/Warlock science-fantasy series opening with *The Warlock in Spite of Himself* (1969) and continuing to 2004, died on 10 June; he was 74. [PDF]
- *Brad Steiger* (Eugene E. Olson, 1936-2018), US author of both novels and supposed nonfiction about UFOs, alien abduction, the paranormal, Atlantis etc., died on 6 May aged 82. [AIP]
- *Shelby Vick* (1928-2018), long-time US fan who began reading SF in the 1940s, published letters in prozines from 1948 and his first fanzine *Confusion* in 1951, and was still posting *Planetary Stories* online in 2017, died on 9 June aged 89. [PDF/RL] ‘ShelVy’ – his fan nickname – organized the

successful 1952 Walt Willis travel fund which was the direct precursor of TAFF.

- *Lucy Zinkiewicz*, Australian fan, fanzine publisher and academic who was the first National Australian Fan Fund winner and conducted the ‘Sense of Community in Science Fiction Fans’ study at Aussiecon 3, died unexpectedly in June.

As Others Value Us. The most expensive item in a May sf auction at Swann Galleries, New York, was a signed first of *The Man in the High Castle*, sold for \$10,400. Other eye-watering figures included \$9,100 for uncorrected proofs of *The Stand* and \$7,500 for an inscribed *Fahrenheit 451* (limited author’s edition; the famous asbestos-bound version went for \$5,200). [JDB] *Ansible* is unable to confirm the rumour that a complete *Mission Earth* dekalogy very nearly reached its reserve of \$1.25.



Random Fandom. *Jeanne Gomoll*, who long ago created the James Tiptree Jr. Award’s ‘Space Babe’ symbol, has now published a 36pp *Space Babe Coloring Book* available from tinyurl.com/y9yoquwp, with all proceeds helping to fund the award.

- *John Linwood Grant* ‘scored some hard-core Enid Blyton’, including *The Folk of the Faraway Tree*: ‘Internet people tell you why the search engine is called Google, but they lie. I’m not kidding – the word was coined in 1946 by Blyton, who writes of Google Buns on p30 of *Folk*. Aha! I wonder if her estate could sue them?’ (5 June) Raymond Chandler’s brief but notorious sf spoof in a letter to his agent (‘My breath froze into pink pretzels ... I had

exactly four seconds to hot up the disintegrator and Google had told me it wasn't enough.') came several years later, in 1953. [Later: several million readers pointed out that the *Barney Google and Snuffy Smith* comic strip dates back to 1919.]

- *Steve Sneyd's* funeral will take place at 12 noon on Friday 6 July at the Rose Hill Burial Ground, 161 Birkby Hall Road, Huddersfield, HD2 2BS.

All Your Base ... Jason Sanford warned of a new power grab: 'I'm surprised more people aren't talking about this. Someone named William M. Gaines applied for a trademark on the words "Weird Fantasy." Trademark would apply to fictional works, books, comics, plus LOL leather, collars, whips, & "playthings.'" (Twitter, 26 June) The actual filing is by 'William M. Gaines, Agent, Inc.', which presumably claims ownership of the defunct (since 1956) EC Comics titles published by William M. Gaines (1922-1992) of *Mad* magazine fame, including *Weird Fantasy* and *Weird Science*. [There are trademark applications for both.](#)

Editorial. This has been the special disaster issue of *Ansible*, owing to the failure of the ancient laser printer required by the even older software platform. Many thanks to Steve Davies of *Plokta* fame for donating another printer, which greatly helped the rescue work.

- I was sorry to hear that John Julius Norwich (1929-2018) had died on 1 June aged 88. Though his numerous history and travel books had no sf connection, he was a long-time *Ansible* subscriber who used occasional *Ansible* items in his *Christmas Cracker* commonplace-book selections (1970-2017) and was particularly fond of Thog's Masterclass – to which he devoted a page of the 2017 *Cracker*.
- The May release of a Foxtel tv mini-series based on *Picnic at Hanging Rock* caused a new flurry of interest in the *Ansible* Editions ebook of Yvonne Rousseau's splendidly erudite *The Murders at Hanging Rock*: see ae.ansible.uk/?t=murders. (Advt.)

Magazine Scene. *Shimmer* magazine will cease with the November 2018 issue. See www.shimmerzine.com/2018/06/18/the-end/.

The Dead Past. *40 Years Ago*, Andrew Stephenson reported from the Dublin SF Writers' Conference: 'The World Sf Association, a loose, mutual-bonhomie group hopeful of enhancing international literary relations, got itself organised, more or less, at the Dublin conference. Nine people from

various countries (USSR, Hungary, France, USA, Sweden & Brazil, I think) were voted-in to coordinate the consolidation of its aims during the first year.’ ([Checkpoint 90](#), July 1978) World SF officially ceased operation in 2002.

- *20 Years Ago*, no one had heard of doxxing: ‘Dave Wolverton wasn’t quite outraged to be outed as the writer behind David “Runelords” Farland – “This is one of those loosely kept secrets” – but hopes the leak won’t affect sales. For a small fee, *Ansible* will announce that its story was hopelessly wrong and that Farland is really Lionel Fanthorpe.’ ([Ansible 132](#), July 1998)

- *10 Years Ago: ‘As Others See Buckminster Fuller*. “Fuller’s themes often had the hallucinatory quality associated with science fiction (or mental hospitals).” (Elizabeth Kolbert, *New Yorker*)’ ([Ansible 252](#), July 2008)

C.o.A. Nic & Jennifer Farey, 2657 Rungsted St, Las Vegas, NV 89142, USA.

- *Vicki Rosenzweig*, 270 Highland Avenue, Apt 31, Somerville, MA 02143, USA. (‘I expect to be here for another year or so.’)

Fanfundery. *GUFF*: Donna Maree Hanson’s 26,000-word report of her 2017 GUFF trip to Worldcon 75 in Finland is available as an ebook for \$7 (Australian) at donnamareehanson.com/guff-trip-report/.

Thog’s Masterclass. *Eyeballs in the Sky*. ‘My eyes bound around the sterile room.’ (Mary Kubica, *Pretty Baby*, 2015) [PB]

- *Mysteries of Anatomy*. ‘She’s built like a lamp-post, tall and thin, with a sphere at the top that glows.’ (*Ibid*) [PB] ‘When she looked at him, something inside her lurched, and she swallowed her errant innards down, holding them still by not breathing for a time.’ (Sheri S. Tepper, *Sideshow*, 1992)

- *Dept of PR Problems*. ‘When a man takes off some three hundred square miles of territory spang in the center of Europe in an atomic explosion, you can’t blame the rest of the world for being a bit skittish about atomic power research.’ (John W. Campbell Jr, ‘The Brain Stealers of Mars’, December 1936 *Thrilling Wonder Stories*)

- *Male Gaze Dept*. ‘Loghu had a beautifully rounded posterior; her buttocks were like two eggs.’ (Philip José Farmer, *To Your Scattered Bodies Go*, 1971) [SM-G]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

• 13 July 2018: Anna Stephens talks to the Brum Group. 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre. £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future events/speakers: 10 August 2018, summer social; 14 September 2018, awaited; 12 October 2018, David Leach; 16 November 2018, Professor Bill Chaplin; 7 December 2018, Christmas social.

Editorial II. One happy side-effect of *Ansible's* recent technical upheavals is that the downloadable and printable PDFs of each issue available from the page below are now (from #372) of full print quality rather than being grotty bitmap scans. I've always been a bit ashamed of them because of this, but am now less reluctant to mention their existence.

<https://news.ansible.uk/pdf/>

The Dead Past II. Who remembered that 2018 saw the fortieth anniversary of *Blake's 7*? This was duly commemorated by one of the Inquisitor crossword setters:

<http://www.fifteensquared.net/2018/06/20/inquisitor-1546-craft-show-by-triton/>

As Others Semi-See Us. 'He began to think of the itch as sense data from the exterior, caused by some outlying substance, unanalyzable, the air in the room or on the street or in the atmosphere itself, a corruption of the planetary environment. / He thought of this but did not believe it. It was semi-science fiction.' (Don DeLillo, 'The Itch' in *The New Yorker*, 7-14 August 2017)
[MMW]

Ansible® 372 © David Langford, 2018. Thanks to Paul Barnett, John D. Berry, John Clute, Chuck Connor, Steve Davies again, Facebook friends, Paul Di Filippo, *File 770*, Lee Gold, Steve Green, Robert Lichtman, Todd Mason, Silvia Moreno-Garcia, Omega, Lawrence Person, Andrew I. Porter, Peter Presford, Cat Sparks, Martin Morse Wooster, and our Hero Distributors: Durdles Books (Brum Group), SCIS/Prophecy, Alan Stewart (Australia). 2 July 2018

Ansible® 373, August 2018

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo:
Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or second-hand
skrode wheels.

Trademark Wars. US author Michael-Scott Earle, not content with applying for a US trademark on the words ‘Dragon Slayer’ (found in various forms in 652 existing titles at Amazon), has gone further with a blanket application for every possible cover design featuring the unique visual concept of – following any title – ‘one or more human or partially human figures underneath, at least one of the figures holding a weapon’. (Cory Doctorow, BoingBoing.net, [14 June](#) and [19 July](#))

• Meanwhile in the UK, sf fans are alarmed by BrewDog PLC’s [now formally published application](#) to trademark the word ‘fanzine’ in any and every beer-related context (20 July). Which sounds like bad news for traditional fanzines that might discuss pub meetings or convention real-ale bars....

Hexapodia Is the Key Insight

Bruce Boston, SF Poetry Association Grand Master, joined the Facebook thread of congratulations to this year’s Rhysling winners (see Awards below) with: ‘I suspect someone is stuffing the ballot box by getting friends and relatives to join SFPA just so they could vote for them. This has happened before with SFPA and a winning poem was disqualified.’ (4 July) Since the sole evidence for this charge was that he didn’t like one of the winning poems, Boston was suspended from SFPA for six months under the terms of their Code of Conduct. [F770]

Harlan Ellison was remembered in a great many obituaries, the following appearing somewhat late in the day: ‘The dustjacket of one book called him “possibly the most contentious person on Earth.” The “possibly” was a bit namby pamby.’ (*The Economist*, 7 July) [MLO]

• Elsewhere, more paradoxically: ‘The Los Angeles resident and former lord of the architectural marvel known as the Lost Aztec Temple of Mars did not pass on, nor is he resting in peace. He’s dead, an existential reality that he’d probably be the first to acknowledge were he still with us.’ (Simon Abrams, RogerEbert.com, 28 June) [BH] Would he really?

Chuck Palahniuk of *Fight Club* fame is one of the authors who between them lost \$3.4 million or more to embezzlement at the New York literary agency Donadio & Olson. Darin Webb, accountant at D&O, was arrested in May and is now out on \$200,000 bail. (Locus, 21 July)

E.H. Shepard’s original 1926 map of the Hundred Acre Wood in *Winnie-the-Pooh* – in a private collection for many years – was auctioned by Sotheby’s in July and sold for a record £430,000. (Guardian, 10 July)

John Sladek featured in a *New York Times* article about weird Amazon pricing: ‘Mr. Sladek, who died in 2000, is little read now, which naturally means his books are often marketed for inordinate sums on Amazon. One of his mystery novels, “Invisible Green,” has a Red Rhino “buy box” – Amazon’s preferred deal – offering it for \$664.’ (‘Amazon’s Curious Case of the \$2,630.52 Used Paperback’, 15 July) [PNH]

Condalia

SOLD OUT 3-6 Aug • **Discworld Convention**, Chesford Grange Hotel, Warwick. Perhaps too late to join the waiting list for cancelled memberships (£74 reg; £59 concessions; £30 supp) at dwcon.org.

10-12 Aug • **Nine Worlds Geekfest** (multimedia), Novotel London West, Hammersmith, London. £119 reg; £49.99 per day; under-18s free. Book online at nineworlds.co.uk.

16-20 Aug • **Worldcon 76** (Worldcon), San José, CA, USA. Now \$250 reg; \$125 YA (15-21) and military; under-15s \$75; under-6s free. \$50 supp. Day rates \$50 Thur and Mon; \$80 Fri, Sat and Sun. See worldcon76.org. Hugo voting has ended; site selection voting continues.

17-19 Aug • **Wadfest** (camping; games, cosplay), 51 Mill Rd, via Church Road, Emneth, Wisbech, Cambs, PE14 8AE. Adult campers £45; under-17s £5; under-5s free; visitors £20. See www.wadfest.co.uk.

24-27 Aug • **The Asylum** (steampunk), Lincoln. £42.50 reg and £21 ages 5-16, plus £0.30 fee. Day tickets for adults and juniors have different prices each day: see www.asylumsteampunk.co.uk.

24-26 Aug • **TitanCon**, Wellington Park Hotel, Belfast. £42 reg; YA (16-25) £30; under-16s £15; under-6s £5; £6 supp. See titancon.com.

26-27 Aug • **Stars of Time** (media), Tropicana, Weston-super-Mare. 10am-5:30pm. £6.50; child £3.50. See www.starsoftime.co.uk.

1-2 Sep • **Middle-earth Festival**, Sarehole Mill, Cole Bank Rd, Hall Green, Birmingham. Free. See middleearthfestival.wordpress.com.

1 Sep • **Whooverville** (*Doctor Who*), QUAD Centre, Derby, DE1 3AS. £48; £33 concessions; under-12s £10. See whooverville.org.

15-16 Sep • **Comics Uncovered**, BCEC, Birmingham. £85 reg; £45/day; students £45 and £25. More at www.comicsuncovered.co.uk.

15 Sep • **Sublime Cognition: SF and Metaphysics** (conference), Birkbeck School of Arts, London. See <http://tinyurl.com/y73kvj6d>.

20-23 Sep • **Oxonmoot** (Tolkien Society), St Antony's College, Oxford. Now £85 reg or £75 for Tolkien Society members. Further information at www.tolkiensociety.org/events/oxonmoot-2018/.

4-7 Oct • **Grimmfest** (horror/cult film festival), Odeon Printworks, Manchester. Tickets £80 – £75 concessions – from grimmfest.com.

12-14 Oct • **Lakes International Comic Art Festival**, Kendal, Cumbria. £35 reg; £25 concessions. See www.comicartfestival.com.

16-19 Apr 2020 • **StokerCon** (horror), Royal and Grand Hotels, Scarborough – the first StokerCon outside the USA. Details awaited.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others Remember Us. Michael Moorcock was interviewed for the Shakespeare & Co (Paris) website by Hari Kunzru, who began by explaining that before Mike arrived on the scene the science fiction field consisted of 'gentlemen in sports jackets with slide rules.' (5 July) [JL]

Science Masterclass. 'Virgin Galactic's space plane VSS Unity traveled

more than twice the speed of light in a test flight.’ (*Newsweek*, 28 July)

Awards. *Arthur C. Clarke*: at the ceremony on 18 July, the engraved bookend and £2018 cheque went to Anne Charnock for *Dreams Before the Start of Time*.

- *Cordwainer Smith Rediscovery*: Frank M. Robinson.
- *European SF Society* (selected): GRAND MASTER, Gerard Klein. FICTION Alette de Bodard, *The House of Binding Thorns*. FANZINE *Journey Planet* 33. INTERNET *nooSFere*.
- *Gemmell* (fantasy): NOVEL Robin Hobb, *Assassin’s Fate*. DEBUT Nicholas Eames, *Kings of the Wyld*. ARTWORK Richard Anderson, cover of *Kings of the Wyld*.
- *Man Booker* longlist titles of genre interest (out of 13): Daisy Johnson, *Everything Under*; Sophie Mackintosh, *The Water Cure*; Richard Powers, *The Overstory*. [L]
- *Munsey* (pulp community): William Lampkin.
- *Mythopoeic* (fantasy): ADULT John Crowley, *Ka: Dar Oakley in the Ruin of Ymr*. CHILDREN’S Garth Nix, *Frogkisser*. SCHOLARSHIP Michael Levy and Farah Mendlesohn, *Children’s Fantasy Literature: An Introduction*. SCHOLARSHIP – INKLINGS Sorina Higgins, *The Inklings and King Arthur*.
- *Prometheus* (libertarian): NOVEL Travis Corcoran, *The Powers of the Earth*. HALL OF FAME Jack Williamson, ‘With Folded Hands ...’ (1947)
- *Rhysling* (poetry): SHORT Mary Soon Lee, ‘Advice to a Six-Year-Old’ (Spring 2017 *Star*Line*). LONG Neil Gaiman, ‘The Mushroom Hunters’ (26 April 2017 *Brainpickings*).
- *Scribe Grandmaster/Faust* (life achievement in media tie-ins): Greg Cox.
- *Seiun* (Japan), international translation categories: NOVEL Sylvain Neuvel, *Sleeping Giants* trans Chiori Sada. SHORT Jingfang Hao, ‘Folding Beijing’ trans Mayumi Otani. [F770]
- *Shirley Jackson* (suspense) novel winner: Hye-young Pyun, *The Hole*.
- *Sidewise* (alt-history) finalists: SHORT Tom Anderson & Bruno Lombardi, ‘N’oublions Jamais’ (*Altered Europa*); Dave D’Alessio, ‘The Twenty Year Reich’ (*Ibid*), Nisi Shawl, ‘Sun River’ (*Clockwork Cairo*); Harry Turtledove, ‘Zigeuner’ (*Asimov’s* 9/17). LONG Gregory Benford, *The Berlin Project*; Brent Harris, *A Time of Need*; Elan Mastai, *All Our Wrong Todays*; Alan Smale, *Clash of Eagles* trilogy; Bryce Zabel, *Once There Was a Way*.
- *Will Eisner Hall of Fame* (comics): Carol Kalish, Jackie Ormes.
- *World Fantasy Awards*: LIFE ACHIEVEMENT Charles de Lint, Elizabeth

Wollheim. NOVEL shortlist: S.A. Chakraborty, *The City of Brass*; John Crowley, *Ka: Dar Oakley in the Ruin of Ymr*; Theodora Goss, *The Strange Case of the Alchemist's Daughter*; Daryl Gregory, *Spoonbenders*; Victor LaValle, *The Changeling*; Fonda Lee, *Jade City*. See worldfantasy.org for many more categories.

Blurbismo. *Automated Etiquette Dept.* 'The Bastard Legion are hired to pull off a daring power-armoured heist of propriety tech.' (Back cover of Gavin G. Smith's *Friendly Fire*, Gollancz, 2018)

R.I.P. *James B. Adair*, US sf author who with Gordon Rottman wrote the 'WWIII: Behind the Lines' trilogy opening with *Target Texas* (1990), died on 2 July. [GR]

- *Gary Beach* (1947-2018), US actor in *Beauty and the Beast* (1995) and *Spamalot* (2008 NA tour), died on 17 July aged 70. [AIP]

- *Yvonne Blake* (1940-2018), UK-born, Oscar-winning costume designer whose work appeared in *Fahrenheit 451* (1966), *Superman* (1978) and *Superman II* (1980), died on 17 July aged 78. [PDF]

- *Steve Ditko* (1927-2018), US comics artist and writer who while working at Marvel in the 1960s created (nominally with Stan Lee) Spider-Man, several regular Spider-Man villains, and Doctor Strange, was found dead at home on 29 June; he was 90. [MR/GW]

- *Jack Gonzalez* (1945-2018), US rare-book dealer specializing in sf, died on 1 July aged 72. [GVG]

- *Shinobu Hashimoto* (1918-2018), Japanese writer and director best known for films more famous than *Tidal Wave* (1973) – the *Japan Sinks* adaptation which he scripted – died on 19 July aged 100. [PT]

- *Bernard Hepton* (1925-2018), UK actor whose credits include *The Plague Dogs* (1982) and *The Woman in Black* (1989), died in 27 July aged 92.

- *Jeff Heusser* (1957-2018), US visual effects creator whose credits include *Deep Impact* (1998), *Æon Flux* (2005), *Fantastic Four* (2005) and *X-Men: The Last Stand* (2006), died on 23 July aged 61. [PDF]

- *George Jenson* (1930-2018), US visual effects artist whose work featured in *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* (1977), *Return of the Jedi* (1983), *2010* (1984), *Dune* (1984) and others, died on 25 May aged 87. [F770]

- *Alan Johnson* (1937-2018), US choreographer of several Mel Brooks films including *Young Frankenstein* (1974) and director of *Solarbabies* (1986), died on 7 July aged 81. Other genre credits are *Dracula: Dead and Loving It*

(1995) and *Neverland* (2003). [LP/MMW]

- *Clive King* (1924-2018), UK children's author best known for *Stig of the Dump* (1963), died on 10 July aged 94. [AW] This classic tale of a Stone Age caveman in modern times was twice adapted for tv (ITV 1981, BBC 2002).

- *Oliver Knussen* (1952-2018), UK composer best known for the opera *Where the Wild Things Are* (1983, with libretto by Maurice Sendak), died on 8 July aged 66. [MMW]

- *Dame Gillian Lynne* (1926-2018), UK choreographer of the musicals *Cats* (1981), *Phantom of the Opera* (1986) and *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* (2002), plus 17 *Muppets* episodes, died on 1 July aged 92. [MMW]

- *Darrell McNeil* (1957-2018), US animation artist, writer and historian who worked on many Hanna-Barbera series since 1976, died on 4 July aged 60; further productions include *Star Trek: The Motion Picture* (1979), *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* (1989-1991) and *Jetsons: The Movie* (1990). [NF-G]

- *Robby Müller* (1940-2018), Dutch cinematographer who worked on *Repo Man* (1984) and *Until the End of the World* (1991), died on 3 July aged 78. [SG]

- *Christine Nöstlinger* (1936-2018), Austrian author of many children's/YA books including sf/fantasy titles such as *Conrad: The Factory Made Boy* (1975), died on 28 June aged 81. [MMW]

- *Derrick O'Connor* (1941-2018), Irish actor whose films include *Jabberwocky* (1977), *Time Bandits* (1981), *Brazil* (1985), *Daredevil* (2003) and *Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest* (2006), died on 29 June aged 77. [F770]

- *Jon Schnepp* (1967-2018), US animator and director whose work includes *Space Ghost Coast to Coast* (1995-1999), *Aqua Teen Hunger Force* (2000-2002) and *Metacocalypse* (2006-2012), died on 19 July aged 51. [SG]

- *Carlo Vanzina* (1951-2018), Italian screenwriter and director whose genre work included *Nothing Underneath* (1985), *A spasso nel tempo* (1996), *A spasso nel tempo – L'avventura continua* (1997) and *2061: Un anno eccezionale* (2007), died on 8 July aged 67. [SG]

- *Elmarie Wendel* (1939-2018), US actress best known for *3rd Rock from the Sun* (1996-2001), with other credits including *The Immortalizer* (1990) and *The Lorax* (2012), died on 21 July aged 78. (Syfy.com)

- *Hugh Whitmore* (1936-2018), UK playwright and screenwriter whose genre credits include *The Blue Bird* (1976) and *The Haunting of Helen Walker* (1995), died on 18 July aged 82. [AW]

The Weakest Link. *Ben Shephard:* ‘The mythical creature the unicorn had what structure on its head?’ *Contestant:* ‘An icicle.’ (ITV, *Tipping Point*) [PE]

Roving Reportage. John Clute was at the big event in San Diego: ‘Entering last day of Comic-Con, about to return to main hall. Getting inside is a bit like docking into a generation starship way into its mission. The long labyrinth of the place is riddled with timeslips and alternate story lines, clashing families of costumes, incests and reboots: cross-functional storytelling nodules breeding everywhere, multiple origin stories eyeing each other up and down the hugely congested aisles like ghosts or revanchists. Stephen King’s Castle Rock as imagined by Max Ernst. Costumes galore, inside the costumes bare skin. A lot of smiling faces. Smiling as they are emptied into product, but hey: they know that? The sense one comes away with is that Comic-Con, and multiplex universes like Marvel or (as it turns out) Stephen King, are really kind of versions of one another. Fargo a chamber opera version of this enabling structure.’ (Facebook, 22 July, slightly revised)

Lost Moons. A huge display model of the Moon, 23 feet across, was mislaid in transit between Bristol – home of its creator Luke Jerram – and Austria for one of several scheduled appearances this summer (BBC, 21 July) No one who knows the couriers, TNT, is particularly surprised.

As J.G. Ballard Saw Us. ‘Exuberance, an attractive and abundant quality in science fiction, is comparatively rare among its writers, as anyone attending an sf convention soon notices. For some reason there is a marked contrast between the personal style of the genre’s fans, a happy, beer-swilling, hotel-wrecking contingent – in short, the charge of the light ale brigade – and that of the writers themselves, for the most part shy and rather Thurberish figures with intimidating wives, who are plainly terrified by the silence of those infinite spaces.’ (J.G. Ballard review column in *The New Statesman*, 27 March 1977) [DP]

Random Fandom. *John D. Berry* pondered the Powell’s bookshop sign FANDOM BOOK CLUB. ‘I think they probably just mean books that they really, really like.’

• *Dermot Dobson* was disappointed that the headline ‘Scientologists’ sewage is ten times the limit’ (*Times*, 30 July) was literal (the East Grinstead HQ is

polluting the River Medway) rather than a measured comment on their teachings.

- *Graham Sleight* hoped for an allusion to Doc Smith in the World Cup headline ‘Lensman caught in Croatia victory pile’ (BBC, 12 July); it was merely a chap with a camera.

Magazine Scene. The horror-themed *Fangoria*, founded in 1979, is to relaunch this autumn with its first print issue since October 2015.

The Dead Past. *20 Years Ago*, Tom Holt revealed the inside story: ‘Enquiring minds might want to know what was in the mystery parcels handed to Messrs Boxleitner & Co by two damozels dressed in white samite at the orgiastic climax of the recent *SFX/Babylon 5* thrash, just outside the lost city of Heathrow. When, awestruck, Boxleitner tore away the shimmering gold paper, he was delighted beyond words to find he’d been given a pictorial history of the River Thames. So stunned was he by the munificence and aptness of this gift that he omitted to take it with him when he left the stage.’ ([Ansible 133](#), August 1998)

- *60 Years Ago*: ‘*Infinity* and *Galaxy* have both dropped the “Science Fiction” portion of their logos. *Infinity* has become plain *Infinity*, while *Galaxy* has become *Galaxy Magazine*. / We called up Larry Shaw and Bob Guinn and asked their reasons for the name change. In both cases we obtained the same answer. Both informed us that they thought that many persons who actually enjoyed science fiction were not buying because the wording science fiction on the cover scared them away. So, they are experimenting by not placing the name science fiction on their covers.’ ([Science-Fiction Times 298](#), Second August 1958 Issue)

C.o.A. *Locus Publications*, 655 13th St, Suite 100, Oakland, CA 94612, USA.

Another Headline. ‘Inside the World of Racist Science Fiction’ ([NY Times, 30 July](#)) alarmed many sf people but proved to be about nasty tracts (mostly self-published) by white supremacists – *The Turner Diaries* and the like – rather than anything from the idols of our genre. [AIP]

Fanfundery. *TAFF*. Jim Mowatt writes: ‘I have recently sent copies of my 2013 TAFF report to SCIFI and FANAC and both happily paid 500 dollars each into the TAFF coffers, so helping us to keep sending more delegates across the ocean to strengthen the science fictional bonds that enhance our

community. Many thanks to both these fine organizations for their encouragement and support for the Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund.’ • Johan Anglemark’s current TAFF trip itinerary has been published by John Purcell as *TAFF News Special Report*, available at taff.org.uk.

Thog’s Masterclass. *Per Something Ad Astra*. ‘...the firm mounds of her breasts lifted their rubbery, coral tipped nipples toward the sky.’ (Michael Knerr, *The Sex Life of the Gods*, 1962) [SS]

• *Hard-Boiled Dept.* [*Private eye encounters good liquor.*] ‘Then his earlobes warmed up like radiant heaters, and there came a feeling in his throat as if it had grown an internal pelt of finest mink.’ (Theodore Sturgeon, ‘Excalibur and the Atom’, August 1951 *Fantastic Adventures*)

• *Dept of True Romance* (see also [Ansbible 372](#)). ‘Her buttocks were like huge unshelled soft-boiled eggs.’ (Philip José Farmer, *The Image of the Beast*, 1979) [DA]

• *Eggs Redux*. ‘Mrs Grasatchow still lay on her back, arms and legs outflung, her mouth open, and her eyes open and showing white, as if hardboiled eggs had been stuffed into the sockets.’ (*Ibid*) [DA]

• *Neat Tricks*. ‘Childe [...] felt his entrails slip about each other and knot each other and, their tails coiled around his backbone, pull until they were choking each other.’ (*Ibid*) [DA]

• *Mot Juste Dept.* [*Courtney has just thrown up, and is being helped by narrator Emma.*] ‘“You’re the best friend ever,” she gushed.’ (Rosalind Noonan, *Pretty, Nasty, Lovely*, 2017) [PB]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

• 10 August 2018: Brum Group summer social at the Black Eagle (booking required). Guest speaker events as below are 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre. £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future events/speakers: 14 September 2018, 200th anniversary celebration of Mary Shelley and *Frankenstein*; 12 October 2018, David Leach; 16 November 2018, Professor Bill Chaplin; 7 December 2018, Christmas social.

• 3 September 2018: Christopher Priest in conversation at Waterstone’s, Argyle St, Glasgow, 6:30pm-8pm. Free but booking required. See link below for more, and further book tour appearances.

<https://christopher-priest.co.uk/bute-scribblers>

In Memoriam. *R.I. Barycz* mourns: ‘I was saddened to learn that Steve Sneyd had joined the Great Alphabetical List of Common Clay. I never met the gentleman but he turned out to be “my” publisher – to wit, in all his excursions into the barely charted papyrus, twiltone and lithopaper swamps of Fandom he discovered (and no doubt subdued with a .45 round or two) a Poem by yours truly of sfictional intent which he thought Adequate Enough to reprint as a pamphlet with a virulent yellow cover (and back the pamphlet with a reprint of a piece of Victorian Arthuriania by a distant relative of his? Waste not, want not as the saying goes). And he did it all with his own money, at his own risk. Because he liked it. The only definition of a publisher worth an edition.

‘Your mention that he made a habit of such researching reminded me of that scene in one of the *LOTR* chapters. Gandalf, in flowing and billowing robes, wearing a hat with an inflammable rim and carrying a flambard with enormous flames, descending the stairs into the Archives, there to research the One Ring among shelves of tottering bone-dry paper and vellum and parchment, the flambard handle stuck casually into a knot-hole in the table on which his chosen folio rests. I’m sure Mr Sneyd would have kept a small fire-extinguisher well within reach.

‘Peace to his ashes.’ (13 July)

Editorial. A reminder of the new *Ansible* regime: good-quality printable PDFs, rather than the former bitmap scans, are available from issue 372 onward at ...

<https://news.ansible.uk/pdf/>

Thog’s Second Helping. *Literary Review Bad Sex Prize Finalist.* ‘She was leaning against the wall in Hogan’s living room, allowing him to lift her dress and remove her rebel green underwear... / Man and superman! With his melted black shorts around his ankles and his buttocks flexing like the rump of a great stone goat god of mythology. One hand was propped against the wall for support. In the other, he held the luminous green knickers up to his nose and inhaled deeply.’ (Hugo Hamilton, *Sad Bastard*, 1998)

Ansible® 373 © David Langford, 2018. Thanks to Dev Agarwal, Paul Barnett, Steve Davies yet again, Paul Di Filippo, *File 770*, Nola Frame-Gray,

Steve Green, Patrick Nielsen Hayden, Bill Higgins, Jim Linwood, *Locus*, Mark L. Olson, Lawrence Person, Andrew I. Porter, David Pringle, *Private Eye*, Gordon Rottman, Marcus Rowland, Sally Smith, Paul Treadaway, Gordon Van Gelder, Andrew Wells, Gary Wilkinson, Martin Morse Wooster, and our Hero Distributors: Durdles Books (Brum Group), SCIS/Prophecy, Alan Stewart (Australia). 1 August 2018

Ansible® 374, September 2018

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo:
Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Sue Mason**. Available for SAE or a reliable portal to
Tanjecterly.

From Worldcon 76. *First Fandom Hall of Fame Award*: Robert Silverberg, Len & June Moffatt. *Moskowitz Archive Award*: Hal W. Hall. *Big Heart*: Mike Glycer.

- *Retro Hugos* for 1942 work: NOVEL Robert A. Heinlein as Anson MacDonald, *Beyond This Horizon (Astounding)*. NOVELLA Heinlein as MacDonald, 'Waldo' (*Astounding*). NOVELETTE Isaac Asimov, 'Foundation' (*Astounding*). SHORT Henry Kuttner & C.L. Moore as Lewis Padgett, 'The Twonky' (*Astounding*). DRAMATIC *Bambi*. EDITOR John W. Campbell. ARTIST Virgil Finlay. FANZINE *Le Zombie*. FAN WRITER Forrest J Ackerman.
- *Hugo Awards*: NOVEL N.K. Jemisin, *The Stone Sky*. NOVELLA Martha Wells, *All Systems Red*. NOVELETTE Suzanne Palmer, 'The Secret Life of Bots' (*Clarkesworld* 9/17). SHORT Rebecca Roanhorse, 'Welcome to your Authentic Indian Experience™' (*Apex* 8/17). SERIES Lois McMaster Bujold, 'World of the Five Gods'. RELATED WORK Ursula K. Le Guin, *No Time to Spare*. GRAPHIC STORY Marjorie M. Liu & Sana Takeda *Monstress 2: The Blood*. DRAMATIC – LONG *Wonder Woman*. DRAMATIC – SHORT *The Good Place*: 'The Trolley Problem'. EDITOR – SHORT Lynne M. Thomas & Michael Damian Thomas. EDITOR – LONG Sheila E. Gilbert. PRO ARTIST Sana Takeda. SEMIPROZINE *Uncanny*. FANZINE *File 770*. FAN WRITER Sarah Gailey. FAN ARTIST Geneva Benton.
- *Non-Hugos* presented with the Hugos: YOUNG ADULT BOOK (whose mooted name the Lodestar has been ratified for future Worldcon use): Nnedi Okorafor, *Akata Warrior*. CAMPBELL (new writer): Rebecca Roanhorse.
- *Worldcon 2020*: the unopposed New Zealand bid duly won with 643 of 726 votes cast (No Preference 33; None of the Above 2; the rest were joky write-ins). The official name is CoNZealand, of which more in the events list below.

- *Sidewise Awards* (alt-history): LONG Bryce Zabel, *Once There Was a Way*. SHORT Harry Turtledove, 'Zigeuner' (*Asimov's* 9/17). [SHS]
- *Worldcon Membership Count* (tentative, posted 20 August): 5,440. [KS]

All the Goo and Dribble

N.K. Jemisin suffered technological distractions while trying to read her [Hugo acceptance speech](#) from her phone: 'STOP TEXTING ME!'

Terry Pratchett seemingly rose from the grave with an August tweet of praise for the late children's comedian Barry Chuckle – duly quoted as authentic Pratchett by the *Daily Mail*, *Daily Post* and others unaware that the @terryandrob Discworld news account on Twitter is run by Terry's assistant Rob Wilkins. (*Private Eye*, 10 August)

Manon Steffan Ros won the National Eisteddfod's highest award for Welsh-language fiction – y Fedal Ryddiaith, the Prose Medal – for her sf novel *Llyfr Glas Nebo* (*The Blue [or Green] Book of Nebo*), about the aftermath of a nuclear accident in near-future Wales. [GM]

Andy Sawyer, after 25 years as librarian in charge of the sf collections at Liverpool University Library, is retiring at the end of September. See C.O.A. below for the SF Foundation Collection donations address.

Colson Whitehead (*The Intuitionist*, *The Underground Railroad*) is to be honoured as the next official state author of New York State. [F770]

Concutient

1-2 Sep • **Middle-earth Festival**, Sarehole Mill, Cole Bank Rd, Hall Green, Birmingham. £1; under-14s free. See middleearthfestival.wordpress.com.

1 Sep • **Whooverville** (*Doctor Who*), QUAD Centre, Derby, DE1 3AS. £48; £33 concessions; under-12s £10. See whooverville.org.

14-15 Sep • **Sublime Cognition**: SF and Metaphysics (conference), Birkbeck School of Arts, London. See <http://tinyurl.com/y73kvj6d>. [Later: here is [a more informative link](#).]

15-16 Sep • **Comics Uncovered**, BCEC, Birmingham. £85 reg; £45/day; students £45 and £25. More at www.comicsuncovered.co.uk.

20-23 Sep • **Oxonmoot** (Tolkien Society), St Antony's College, Oxford. £85 reg, or £75 for Tolkien Society members. Further information at www.tolkiensociety.org/events/oxonmoot-2018/.

22-23 Sep • **Comic Con**, Leeds Town Hall. Part of Thought Bubble, the Leeds Comic Art Festival, 17-23 September. £29.68 weekend pass or £18.02/day including fees. See thoughtbubblefestival.com.

26 Sep • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. Speaker(s) TBA. Free.

29 Sep - 26 Jan • **The Art of the Gestetner** (exhibition by art group exploring retro tech with input from fandom), Bruce Castle Museum, Lordship Lane, N17 8NU. Opening hours 1pm-5pm Wed-Sun each week. Free. [Later: the opening day, Saturday 29 September, appears to be a preview by invitation only. The [art group website](#) has only vague information.]

29-30 Sep • **Nor-Con** (media), Norfolk Showground Arena. £30 reg; under-14s £20; family £90; plus fees. See www.nor-con.co.uk.

29 Sep • **Preston Comic Con**, Guild Hall, Preston. 10:30am £8 (9:30 'early bird' £12) to 5pm. See www.prestoncomiccon.co.uk.

4-7 Oct • **Grimmfest** (horror/cult film festival), Odeon Printworks, Manchester. Tickets £80 – £75 concessions – from grimmfest.com.

5-7 Oct • **SFW in the City** (Sci-Fi Weekender spinoff), O₂ Academy, Sheffield. Weekend passes from £40 at www.sfwinthecity.com.

12-14 Oct • **Lakes International Comic Art Festival**, Kendal, Cumbria. £35 reg; £25 concessions. See www.comicartfestival.com.

19-21 Oct • **FantasyCon**, Queen Hotel, City Rd, Chester, CH1 3AH. Current rates with £10 off for BFS members: £61.50 adult, £56 student, £31 under-16s. Under-4s free. See www.hwsevents.co.uk/shop-2.

19-21 Oct • **Octocon**, Crowne Plaza Hotel, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15, Ireland. (Venue is 12km from city centre.) €45 reg; concessions €20; accompanied under-13s free; €10 supp. Join online at octocon.com.

9-11 Nov • **Novacon 48**, Park Inn, Nottingham. £52 reg, *rising to £55 on 1 October* (same rate at door); under-17s £12; under-13s free. Contact 379

Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ. See www.novacon.org.uk.

16 Feb 2019 • **Picocon 36**, Beit Quadrangle, Imperial College, London.
Details to follow at www.union.ic.ac.uk/scc/icsf/picocon/.

SOLD OUT 29 Mar - 1 Apr 2019 • **Irish Discworld Convention**, Cork, Ireland.
€55 reg, €45 concessions, *rising to €60/€55 on 1 October 2018*; under-13s
€1. See idwcon.org for membership waiting list.

19-22 Apr 2019 • **Ytterbium** (Eastercon), Park Inn, London Heathrow. £70
reg, rising to £80 on 14 November and £90 on 1 April 2019; £30 concessions;
£25 under-18s; £5 infants under 5; £20 supporting. See ytterbium.org.uk.
Committee news: Judi Hodgkin stepped down as the convention Chair and
has been replaced by Farah Mendlesohn.

5-7 Jul 2019 • **Lavecon** (sf/fantasy/gaming), Sedgebrook Hall Hotel,
Northants. Booking awaited at www.hwsevents.co.uk/shop-1.

15-19 Aug 2019 • **Dublin 2019** (Worldcon), Dublin, Ireland. €180 reg, €110
under-26s or first-time Worldcon members, and €65 under-13s, *rising to*
€210, €130 and €70 respectively on 3 September. Not changed: €5 under-6s
and €40 supporting. See dublin2019.com.

29 Jul - 2 Aug 2020 • **CoNZealand** (Worldcon 78), Wellington, New
Zealand. GoH Mercedes Lackey, Larry Dixon, Greg Broadmore, Rose
Mitchell. NZD \$375 reg, \$225 YA/unwaged, \$105 child (born 2005+),
infants (born 2015+) free, \$75 supporting. See conzealand.nz.

Rumblings. *Worldcon 2023*: a Chinese bid to hold this event in Chengdu
was announced at Worldcon 76, challenging the existing bids for Nice in
France and New Orleans in the USA.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. Will Self on ‘The book I think is most overrated: All that
bullshit about how the Harry Potter books were going to turn a generation of
otherwise uninterested boys into literary mavens – we could’ve done without
that. The truth is that the books ushered in the dumb kidult era we’re
currently having to endure, with illiteracy rates significantly on the rise for
the first time in a century!’ (*Guardian*, 17 August) Nothing like obsessive
reading of fat books to boost illiteracy.

More Awards. *American Book Awards 2018*: winners include Victor LaValle's *The Changeling*. [F770]

- *James White Award* (unpublished story by new author): Dustin Blair Steinacker, 'Two Worlds Apart'.
- *New Academy Prize* (Sweden, unofficially replacing the non-awarded 2018 Nobel Prize for Literature): three of the shortlist of four are genre authors, being Maryse Condé, Neil Gaiman and Haruki Murakami. [L]

In Memoriam. A Worldcon panel on Harlan Ellison closed with the moderator's pious remark that we would not look upon his like again – to which Robert Silverberg responded, 'One was more than enough.'

Science Masterclass. *Things You Didn't Realize About Our Moon*: 'The only natural source of illumination on the far side is starlight.' (Nicholas Christopher, *A Trip to the Stars*, 2000) [PB]

R.I.P. *K.C. Ball*, US author of 65 stories – some in *Analog* and 24 collected as *Snapshots from a Black Hole* (2012) – died on 26 August. [GVG]

- *John Calder* (1927-2018), Canadian-born publisher best known for Calder Publishing and Calder & Boyars, died on 13 August aged 91. He published two stories in *New Worlds* (1966, 1968). [PDF]
- *Mary Carlisle* (1914-2018), US actress whose last film was the zombie-horror *Dead Men Walk* (1943), died on 1 August aged 104. [MMW]
- *Robert Dix* (1935-2018), US actor whose films include *Forbidden Planet* (1956), *Frankenstein's Daughter* (1958) and *The Last Frankenstein* (2018), died on 6 August aged 83. [PDF]
- *Gary Friedrich* (1943-2018), US comics writer who co-created Ghost Rider for Marvel, died on 30 August aged 75. [PDF]
- *Joseph Giddings* (1973-2018), US reviewer for *Bull Spec* and *Tangent Online* who also published several short stories 2010-2012, died on 16 August aged 45. [SM-B]
- *Doug Grindstaff* (1931-2018), US sound editor who created the sound effects of devices – and tribbles – in the original *Star Trek* (1967-1969), died on 23 July aged 87. [AT]
- *Barbara Harris* (1935-2018), US actress in *Freaky Friday* (1976) and *Peggy Sue Got Married* (1986), died on 21 August aged 83. [CH]
- *Michael Howells* (1957-2018), UK production designer/art director whose films include *Orlando* (1992), *FairyTale* (1997), *Ever After* (1998) and *Nanny McPhee* (2005), died on 19 July aged 61. [MMW]

- *Lindsay Kemp* (1938-2018), UK actor/dancer whose films include *The Vampire Lovers* (1970) and *The Wicker Man* (1973), died on 25 August aged 80.
- *Richard H. Kline* (1926-2018), US cinematographer whose films include *The Andromeda Strain* (1971), *Soylent Green* (1973), *Battle for the Planet of the Apes* (1973), *King Kong* (1977), *Star Trek* (1979), *Howard the Duck* (1986) and *My Stepmother Is an Alien* (1988), died on 7 August aged 91. [AT]
- *John Blair Moore* (1948-2018), US comics writer/artist who worked on various Disney characters including Roger Rabbit and Darkwing Duck, died on 5 August. [PDF]
- *Miriam Nelson* (1919-2018), US choreographer whose credits include *Visit to a Small Planet* (1960) and *Buck Rogers in the 25th Century* (1979), died on 12 August aged 98. [AIP]
- *Michael Pickwood* (1945-2018), UK production designer whose credits include *The Prisoner* (2009 reboot) and *Doctor Who* (62 episodes 2010-2017), died on 27 August aged 73.
- *Charlotte Rae* (1926-2018), US actress whose credits include *The Worst Witch* (1986), *Tom and Jerry: The Movie* (1992), *101 Dalmatians* (1997-1998 tv) and *The Tangerine Bear* (2000), died on 5 August aged 92. [MMW]
- *Pete Richens* (1952-2018), UK co-writer and assistant director of many Comic Strip productions including *Space Virgins from Planet Sex* (1993), died on 6 August aged 65. [PDF]
- *Michael Scott Rohan* (1951-2018), Scots author of the sf *Run to the Stars* (1983) and the well-received ‘Winter of the World’ and ‘Spiral’ fantasy series, died on 12 August aged 67. [DR] Mike was an old friend from the Oxford SF Group of the early 1970s, a member of the long-running Pieria writer’s workshop, a highly entertaining correspondent, and incidentally best man at my wedding, all of which makes this hard to bear.
- *Barbara Russell* (1933–2018), US actress in *Day of the Dead* (1985), died on 25 August aged 85.
- *Claude Seignolle* (1917-2018), French author of supernatural horror fiction such as *The Accursed* (1967), died on 13 July aged 101. [DP]
- *Marie Severin* (1929-2018), long-time US comics artist/colorist for EC, Marvel – where she co-created Spider-Woman – and DC, died on 30 August aged 89. [PDF]
- *Wes Shank*, US collector of sf film memorabilia known to many as The

Caretaker of *The Blob* (for his specimen of the original red silicone from *The Blob*), died on 10 August aged 72. [AT]

- *Michael Sissons* (1934-2018), UK literary agent at PFD who edited three 1960s genre anthologies including the sf *Asleep in Armageddon* (1962), died on 25 August; he was 83. [MJE]
- *Stefán Karl Stefánsson* (1975-2018), Icelandic actor best known as Robbie Rotten in the children's series *Lazy Town* (2002-2014), died on 21 August aged 43. [TM]
- *Piotr Szulkin* (1950-2018), Polish director whose genre films include *Golem* (1980) and *The War of the Worlds: Next Century* (1981), died on 5 August aged 68. [PDF]
- *Walter Velez* (1939-2018), US artist with many sf/fantasy book and magazine credits since 1979 – in particular, covers for Robert Asprin's fantasies – died on 24 August aged 78. [GVG]
- *Vladimir Voinovich* (1932-2018), Russian author whose one sf novel is *Moscow 2042* (1986), died on 28 July aged 85. [MMW]
- *Gerald M. Weinberg* (1933-2018), US author and computer scientist whose first sf novel was *The Aremac Project* (2007), died on 7 August aged 84. [KKR via PDF]
- *Vicky Wyman*, US comics creator whose self-published furry fantasy sequence *Xanadu* (1988) was reissued as a 1993 graphic novel, died on 3 August. [PDF]

The Weakest Link. *Bradley Walsh*: 'Michael Bond called his 1958 book *A Bear Called ... what?*' *Contestant*: 'Steve.' (ITV, *The Chase*) [PE]

Magazine Scene. John Teehan announced that *SFWA Bulletin* will henceforth be all-digital with no print edition. (Facebook, 1 August)

- Steve Davidson, at Worldcon, launched the first printed *Amazing Stories* (following various ebook and webzine issues) since he acquired the Gernsback-founded magazine. Quarterly print publication is planned.

Time Warp Masterclass. '... weather-beaten farmers herd flocks of sheep much as their descendants may have done in Marco Polo's day.' (*The Guardian*, 31 July) [PE]

- 'Was *Vanity Fair*'s Becky Sharp the original Instagram star?' (*Daily Telegraph*, 14 August) [PE]

Random Fandom. *Mike Glycer* withdrew himself and *File 770* (as fan writer

and fanzine respectively) from all future Hugo ballots. He missed the Hugo ceremony after being hospitalized for mysterious dizziness, and has since been fitted with a heart pacemaker.

- *Joe Gordon* at Forbidden Planet International has bad news: on 7 September he's 'being made redundant from webstore, blog and social media side of things here after thirteen and a half years, which as you can imagine is stressful and depressing.'
- *Andrew I. Porter* was not greatly impressed by the Retro Hugo presenter's announcement of a win for 'Lewis Padgett, who wrote under the pseudonym Henry Kuttner and Catherine Moore.'
- *Allan Scott* maintains the official memorial website for Mike Scott Rohan at www.michaelscottrohan.org.uk. 'Feel free to post memories, comments, and anything else you feel moved to write.'
- *Wadfest*, the Discworld-themed UK campsite convention scheduled for 17-19 August, was cancelled 'for health reasons ... all ticket monies will be refunded' (Facebook, 12 August). See also wadfest.co.uk.
- *Daniel Whitson* of Nine Worlds Geekfest (London, August) announced this event's need for 'reconstitution' with a new organization, following personal burnout from the stress of having to rely on future membership sales to cover a huge loss by the 2016 convention. See ninemeworlds.co.uk/future. [CM]

Trademark Wars. Regarding the BrewDog PLC application for a trademark on the word 'fanzine' in any and every beer-related context (see [A373](#)), it can be revealed that M'Learned Friends have been consulted and constructive engagement with BrewDog is being attempted in an effort to clarify exactly how this trademark is likely to be used.

The Dead Past. *50 Years Ago*, Christopher Priest began his freelance writing career: more at christopher-priest.co.uk/50-not-out (28 August).

- *20 Years Ago*: 'Tomorrow SF is having convulsions. By late August, all visible website stories were reprints by editor Algis Budrys; story submissions are being returned unread, though nonfiction and cartoons still seem acceptable.' (*Ansible* 134, September 1998)
- Also: 'Welsh SF News! This year's National Eisteddfod Prose Medal was won (for the first time ever?) by an sf novel: *Blodwyn Tatws* by Eirug Wyn, published 7/98. The title means, of course, *Potato Flower*.' (*Ibid*)

C.o.A. *SF Foundation Collection*, Special Collections and Archives, Libraries Museums and Galleries, University of Liverpool, PO Box 123,

Liverpool, L69 3DA; email (*pro tem*) scastaff at liverpool dot ac dot uk.

Fanfundery. The combined Fan Funds auction at Worldcon 76 raised \$1,982 for TAFF and DUFF. [JG]

Schadenfreude. Fans are shocked, shocked that the Sad Puppies 4 website – last remnant of that infamous campaign to game the Hugo nominations – has been hacked and now begins by linking to an article in Italian about the joy of online slot machines. ([30 August](#)) [CF]

Thog’s Masterclass. *True Romance.* ‘... there is always something magical about the moment when your eyes touch nipples running free; nipples are a door from one world to another, from the grey of the everyday to a place of enchantment.’ (Francesco Dimitri, *The Book of Hidden Things*, 2018) [JCh via NH]

- *Defrosting Dept.* [*Our hero is trying to ‘borrow’ a plane.*] ‘... the Lockheed’s flaps were frozen ... We’re going to irrigate the vanes with liquid hydrogen ...’ (Richard Bachman [Stephen King], *The Running Man*, 1982) [BA]

- *Dept of Sibling Rivalry.* ‘Aya trembled, her face burning red and her nose pouring down her lip.’ [*Her brother:*] ‘The entirety of his face collapsed into itself, and he wailed with bitter injury.’ (both Becky Chambers, *Record of a Spaceborn Few*, 2018) [SS]

- *Neat Tricks.* ‘Steve’s eyebrows circumnavigated his face as he flicked a switch and cuddled the microphone to his chest.’ (Eric Frank Russell, ‘Symbiotica’, 1943 *Astounding*) [AL]

- *Heavy Breathing Dept.* ‘The frozen ground stings my feet and pricks my lungs as I inhale.’ (Carrie Jones, *Flying*, 2016) [AL]

- *Classics Revisited.* ‘Some women, Commander Norton had decided long ago, should not be allowed aboard ship; weightlessness did things to their breasts that were too damn distracting. It was bad enough when they were motionless; but when they started to move, and sympathetic vibrations set in, it was more than any warm-blooded male should be asked to take.’ (Arthur C. Clarke, *Rendezvous with Rama*, 1973) [AM]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 14 September 2018: 200th anniversary celebration of Mary Shelley and

Frankenstein at the Brum Group. 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre. £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future events/speakers: 12 October 2018, David Leach; 16 November 2018, Professor Bill Chaplin; 7 December 2018, Christmas social.

• 3 September 2018: Christopher Priest in conversation at Waterstone's, Argyle St, Glasgow, 6:30pm-8pm. Free but booking required. See link below for more, and further book tour appearances.

<https://christopher-priest.co.uk/bute-scribblers>

Worldcon 76 Links. As the Worldcon lumbered on, *Ansible* added links to such heart-stopping excitement as the daily newsletters and detailed voting breakdowns of the Hugos and Retro Hugos:

<https://news.ansible.uk/misc/link18.html#w76>

Editorial. A reminder of the new *Ansible* regime: good-quality printable PDFs, rather than the former bitmap scans, are available from issue 372 onward at ...

<https://news.ansible.uk/pdf/>

1000 Years of Fandom. The Fan History Project at Fanac.org began this exciting initiative at Worldcon, writes a breathless Joe Siclari. It's less arduous than it sounds: fans are encouraged to send group photos of themselves and friends, each holding a card inscribed with the number of years they've been in fandom. These figures are then solemnly added up, and when the total reaches nine billion we all know what will happen. Send pics to fanac at fanac dot org.

Ansible® 374 © David Langford, 2018. Thanks to Brian Ameringen, Paul Barnett, Simon Bradshaw, Jo Charman, Paul Di Filippo, Malcolm Edwards, Camestros Felapton, *File 770*, Janice Gelb, Niall Harrison, Chip Hitchcock, *Locus*, Andrew Love, Gatch Madeley, Anna Maltese, Caroline Mullan, Todd Mason, Samuel Montgomery-Blinn, Andrew I. Porter, David Pringle, *Private Eye*, Debby Rohan, Kristine Kathryn Rusch, Steven H Silver, Sally Smith, Kevin Standlee, Arthur Tansky, Gordon Van Gelder, Martin Morse Wooster, and as always our Hero Distributors: Durdles Books (Brum Group), SCIS/Prophecy, Alan Stewart (Australia). 31 August 2018

Ansible® 375, October 2018

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo:
Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Ulrika O'Brien**. Available for SAE or Snipehazer's
Vinegar.

Trademark Wars. On behalf of your editor and other concerned fans, fannish IP lawyer Simon Bradshaw asked BrewDog PLC about the intended scope of their 'fanzine' trademark application (see [A373](#), [A374](#)). The response was a written assurance that '... we would not envisage ever taking action against writers and publishers of fanzines, even if such fanzines were about beer or beer related products.' (3 September)

- SFWA has joined Douglas Phillips, author of the 2016 sf 'Quantum Series', in opposing a romance author's 2018 application for a US trademark on 'quantum series'. (SFWA.org, 7 September)

And No Beginning

Stephen Baxter had a 'so near and yet so far' moment when Bradley Walsh of *The Chase* posed the question 'Stephen Baxter's *The Time Ships* was a sequel to which H.G. Wells novel?' and the contestant replied ... '*War of the Worlds*.' (ITV, 7 September)

Brett Graham was not best pleased to discover that with a single exception, every 'chapter' in *No Clocks, Mirrors, or Windows* by Steven Marshall (self-published for Amazon Kindle, 2018) was a verbatim plagiarism of a story by Brett Graham. (Facebook, 11-16 September) Even the epigraph was a pilfered Graham poem, while the solitary non-Graham piece proved to have been swiped from another author. Marshall, who has past form in this area, creatively changed some of the titles. The ebook has since been removed from sale at Amazon.

S.T. Joshi posted the contents list for his critical epic *21st-Century Horror*, in three sections: The Elite (six writers I don't know, not being up to date

with horror), The Worthies (seven ditto) and The Pretenders, some familiar: ‘Laird Barron: Decline and Fall; Joe Hill: Like Father, Like Son; Brian Keene: Paperback Writer; Nick Mamatas: Failed Mimic; Paul Tremblay: Borrowing from His Predecessors; Jeff VanderMeer: An Aesthetic Catastrophe.’ (stjoshi.org, 27 September) [F770]

Ian McEwan will show sf writers how to do it in *Machines Like Me* (April 2019), whose ‘love triangle’ involving a male ‘synthetic human’ causes a ‘profound moral dilemma’. (*Guardian*, 28 September). Ground-breaking stuff, and it was doubtless very wrong of Graham Sleight to get the impression from the *Guardian* puff-piece that this will be ‘Lester del Rey’s “Helen O’Loy” (1938), but less good.’ (Twitter, 29 September)

Haruki Murakami withdrew from the shortlist of the Swedish ‘New Academy Prize’ (see [A374](#)), to be presented this month as an unofficial replacement for the scandal-ridden Nobel. Presumably he’d rather hold out for the real thing. The remaining shortlist: Neil Gaiman, Maryse Condé and Kim Thúy. (*Guardian*, 17 September) [PDF]

Philip Pullman has searched his famous writing shed in vain: ‘Lost: a green leather pen case, containing a Montblanc ballpoint pen and an ordinary pencil. I’m particularly attached to the pen, because I wrote His Dark Materials with it.’ (Twitter, 25 September)

Cat Rambo reported contact with alien ways of thought at DragonCon: ‘Best part of SFWA business meeting might have been the guy standing in the doorway who refused to come in and said, “I’m just here to burn down the Hugos,” at which point, several people mentioned that SFWA has no connection to the Hugos.’ (Twitter, 1 September)

Conemaugh

Until 26 Jan 2019 • **The Art of the Gestetner** (exhibition by [art group](#) exploring retro tech), Bruce Castle Museum, Lordship Lane, N17 8NU. Opening hours 1pm-5pm Wednesday-Sunday every week. Free.

2-6 Oct • **War with the Newts** (play, Karel Čapek ‘re-imagined’), Royal Exchange Theatre, St Ann’s Square, Manchester, M2 7DH. £13; £11 concessions; £6 under-16s. Bookings tinyurl.com/yd24tt6x.

4-7 Oct • **Grimmfest** (horror/cult film festival), Odeon Printworks, Manchester. Tickets £80 – £75 concessions – from grimmfest.com.

5-7 Oct • **SFW in the City** (Sci-Fi Weekender spinoff), O₂ Academy, Sheffield. Weekend passes from £40 at www.sfwinthecity.com.

12-14 Oct • **Lakes International Comic Art Festival**, Kendal, Cumbria. £35 reg; £25 concessions. See www.comicartfestival.com.

19-21 Oct • **Celluloid Screams** (horror film festival), Showroom Cinema, Sheffield. See celluloidscreams.co.uk. 0114 275 7727.

19-21 Oct • **Destination Star Trek**, NEC, Birmingham. Day £29; 2 days £39; 3 days £49; silly ‘VIP’ rates at destinationstartrek.com.

19-21 Oct • **FantasyCon**, Queen Hotel, City Rd, Chester, CH1 3AH. Current rates with £10 off for BFS members: £61.50 adult, £56 student, £31 under-16s. Under-4s free. See www.hwsevents.co.uk/shop-2.

19-21 Oct • **Octocon**, Crowne Plaza Hotel, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15, Ireland. (Venue is 12km from city centre.) *Now €50 reg; concessions €25; accompanied under-13s free; €10 supp.* Day rates €10 Friday, €30 Saturday and €20 Sunday. Join online at octocon.com.

24 Oct • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. Speaker(s) TBA. Free.

26-31 Oct • **Edinburgh Horror Festival**, various venues; MonsterCon ‘micro convention’ on Saturday. See www.edhorrorfest.co.uk.

26-28 Oct • **Festival of Fantastic Films**, Pendulum Hotel, Manchester. £85 reg; accompanied children 12-16 £15 , 8-11 £10 , under 7 (presumably meaning under 8) free. Day rates: see fantastic-films.com.

27 Oct • **BristolCon**, Hilton Doubletree Hotel, Bristol. £25 or £15 concessions and 14-17s; £30/£20 at door. Contact Flat 11, Beaufort Ct Flats, 1 Beaufort St, Easton, Bristol, BS5 0SQ. See www.bristolcon.org.

2-4 Nov • **Armadacon 30**, Future Inn, Plymouth. £35 reg; concessions £30; under-16s free. PayPal registration at www.armadacon.org.

3 Nov • **Frightfest**, Cineworld, Leicester Square, London. Ticket prices TBA in October. See www.frightfest.co.uk/filmsevents.html.

8 Nov - 9 Dec • **Fanatical: A Sci-Fi Convention Musical**, Playground Theatre, London. Various ticket prices from £11 to £25 (£10 to £22 concessions) at theplaygroundtheatre.london/events/fanatical/. The description makes it sound a little bit like *Galaxy Quest: The Musical*.

8 Nov • **Science Fictions** (lecture, on scientific imagination more than sf), Oxford Examination Schools, 5pm. See tinyurl.com/ydxfs07k.

9-11 Nov • **Novacon 48**, Park Inn, Nottingham. Now £55 reg (same rate applies at the door); under-17s £12; under-13s free. Contact 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ. See www.novacon.org.uk.

10 Nov • **SFX Book Con**, Foyles, Charing Cross Rd, London. 12:30-6:30pm. £18 reg; £15 for students and (oh dear) 'Foyalty' members. See www.foyles.co.uk/Public/Events/Detail.aspx?eventId=3747.

24 Nov • **Sledge-Lit**, QUAD Centre, Derby. 10am-6pm. Tickets £25; 16-25s £15. See www.derbyquad.co.uk/special-event/sledge-lit-4.aspx.

19-22 Apr 2019 • **Ytterbium** (Eastercon), Park Inn, London Heathrow area. £70 reg, *rising to £80 on 14 November* and to £90 on 1 April 2019; £30 concessions; £25 under-18s; £5 infants under 5; £20 supporting. See ytterbium.org.uk.

15-19 Aug 2019 • **Dublin 2019** (Worldcon), Dublin, Ireland. Now €210 reg, €130 under-26s or *first-time Worldcon members*, and €70 under-13s. Unchanged: €5 under-6s and €40 supporting. See dublin2019.com.

Rumblings. *Eurocon 2021*. A Romanian bid has been announced: DistopiCon in Timisoara, 13-16 May 2021. See distopicon.eu.

Infinitely Improbable

As the FBI Saw Us. From a 1959 interview transcript found in Ray Bradbury's FBI file: '[Martin] Berkeley stated that it has been his observation that some of the writers suspected of having Communist backgrounds have been writing in science fiction and it appears that science fiction may be a lucrative field for the introduction of Communist ideology.' (*Writers Under Surveillance: The FBI Files*, 2018) [MMW]

Awards. *American Book Award* winners include Victor LaValle's *The*

Changeling.

- *Man Booker* shortlist titles of genre interest: Daisy Johnson, *Everything Under*; Sophie Mackintosh, *The Water Cure*; Richard Powers, *The Overstory*. [L]

- *Planete-SF Prize* (France): N.K. Jemisin, *The Fifth Season*.

- *Primetime Emmy* (Drama Series): *Game of Thrones*.

- *SFPA Dwarf Star* (poem of 1-10 lines): Kath Abela Wilson, ‘The Green’ (*Carrying the Branch: Poets in Search of Peace*). [L]

- *SFPA Elgin* (poetry collection): BOOK Christina M. Rau, *Liberating the Astronauts*. CHAPBOOK F.J. Bergmann, *A Catalogue of the Further Suns*. [F770]

Science Masterclass. ‘And when they do make it all the way down to Earth, meteorites strike at tremendous speeds – as much as 90,000 miles per second.’ (Kenneth C. Davis, *Don’t Know Much About Geography*) [AT]

R.I.P. Alan Abel (1924-2018), US author and hoaxer who chronicled his spoof Society for Indecency to Naked Animals (‘A nude horse is a rude horse’) in *The Great American Hoax* (1966; UK title *Yours for Decency*), died on 14 September aged 94. [GF] Of genre interest is his mockumentary *Is There Sex After Death?* (1971).

- *Norm Breyfogle*, US comics artist who worked on *American Flagg*, *Batman* and *Prime*, died on 24 September aged 58. [PDF]

- *Bill Daily* (1927-2018), US actor in *I Dream of Jeannie* (1965-1970), *ALF* (1987-1989), *Alligator II: The Mutation* (1991) and *Horrorween* (2011), died on 4 September aged 91. [MMW]

- *Peter Donat* (1928-2018), Canadian-born actor whose credits include *Time Trax* (1993-1994), *The Game* (1997) and *The X-Files* (1995-1999), died on 10 September aged 90. [AIP]

- *Fenella Fielding* (1927-2018), UK actress in *Carry on Screaming!* (1966), *The Prisoner* (1967, voice only) and *Uncle Jack* (4 series, 1990-1993), died on 11 September aged 90. [IC]

- *Russ Heath* (1926-2018), long-time US comics artist whose output included sf, horror and superhero stories, died on 29 September aged 91. [CH] His air dogfight panels for DC’s *All-American Men of War* were notoriously ‘appropriated’ without permission or payment by the Pop artist Roy Lichtenstein.

- *Gary Kurtz* (1940-2018), US producer of *Star Wars* (1977), *The Empire*

Strikes Back (1980), *The Dark Crystal* (1982), *Return to Oz* (1985) and *Slipstream* (1989), died on 23 September aged 78. [GW]

- *Christopher Lawford* (1955-2018), US actor whose films include *Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines* (2003) and *Slipstream* (2007), died on 5 September aged 63. [AIP]
- *Roger Mainwood*, UK director and animator whose credits include *The Snowman* (1982), further Raymond Briggs adaptations, and *The Wind in the Willows* (1995), died in late September aged 65. [PDF]
- *Vanessa Marquez* (1968-2018), US actress in *Maniac Cop 3: Badge of Silence* (1993) and the *Star Wars* spoof *Return of Pink Five* (2006), died on 30 August aged 49. [SG]
- *Al Matthews* (1942-2018), US actor in *Superman III* (1983), *Aliens* (1986), *The Fifth Element* (1997) and *Tomorrow Never Dies* (1997), died on 22 September aged 75. [GW]
- *Zienia Merton* (1945-2018), Burmese-English actress best known as Sandra Benes in *Space: 1999* (1975-1977), died on 14 September aged 72. [PDF]
- *Annette Michelson* (1922-2018), influential US film critic who wrote a notable 1969 essay on *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968), died on 17 September aged 95. [AIP]
- *Thad Mumford* (1951-2018), US tv writer who was supervising producer of *ALF* (1986-1987) and wrote four episodes, died on 6 September aged 67. [PDF]
- *Jacqueline Pearce* (1943-2018), UK actress fondly remembered as Servalan in *Blake's 7* (1978-1981), died on 3 September aged 74. Early films include Hammer's *The Plague of the Zombies* (1966) and *The Reptile* (1966).
- *Vladimir Radunsky* (1954-2018), Russian-born illustrator of children's books including folktales and fairytales, died on 11 September aged 64. [PDF]
- *Burt Reynolds* (1936-2018), US actor who famously refused to play James Bond or Han Solo, died on 6 September aged 82. Genre credits include *Frankenstein and Me* (1996), *Universal Soldier II* (1998), and *Universal Soldier III* (1998). [SG]
- *Roger Robinson* (1940-2018), US actor whose films include *Meteor* (1979), died on 26 September aged 78.
- *Margit Sandemo* (1924-2018), Norwegian-born author of many historical fantasies in Swedish – notably the 47-volume series *The Legend of the Ice People* (1982-1989) – died on 1 September aged 94. [AE]

- *Carole Shelley* (1939-2018), UK-born actress whose films include *The Aristocats* (1970), *Hercules* (1997) and *Bewitched* (2005), died on 31 August aged 79. She was also in the Broadway musical *Wicked* (2003). [AIP]
- *Dudley Sutton* (1933-2018), UK actor whose films include *A State of Emergency* (1986), *Orlando* (1992), *The Door* (2011) and *Cockneys vs Zombies* (2012), died on 15 September aged 85. [SG]
- *Sven Wernström* (1925-2018), Swedish author of many children's/YA sf novels from 1949 to 2001, died on 6 September aged 93. [AE]
- *Jack N. Young* (1926-2018), US stuntman, actor, location manager etc. whose films include *Creature from the Black Lagoon* (1954, uncredited), *The Wraith* (1986) and *Timemaster* (1995), died on 12 September aged 91.
- *Craig Zadan* (1949-2018), US producer whose tv credits include *Flowers for Algernon* (2000) and the musical revivals *Peter Pan Live!* (2014) and *The Wiz Live!* (2015), died on 20 August aged 69. [AIP]

Alternate History Masterclass. ‘Jack the Ripper’s victims [...] were murdered in Whitechapel, East London, in a killing spree between September and November 1988.’ (MailOnline, 16 September) [PE]

As Others See Us. Oona Chaplin on Doris Lessing’s *Canopus in Argus* sequence: ‘I suppose it falls under science fiction, although it is much more than that.’ (*The Observer*, 23 September) [JG]

Random Fandom. *BSFA Awards*: nominations (members only) have opened at bsfa.co.uk/bsfa-awards-2018/. Ebooks and works first published outside the UK or Ireland are now eligible for Best Novel.

- *Camestros Felapton* unveiled the Space Opera Cover Maker, which does what it says on the tin, at camfelapton.ihostfull.com. All results are in the public domain!
- *Leroy Kettle* authorized the reissue of his and John Brosnan’s non-bestselling *The Dirty Movie Book* (1988) as a free ebook at taff.org.uk. This treasury of steamy inside information (‘Did you know that Greta Garbo was a secret Australian, born Doris Pringle on a sheep station at Wanga Wanga?’) should become available in November if not before. Perhaps the most impressive prediction, seven years before the launch of *SFX*, was that magazine’s perennial cover gag: ‘I discovered that when he had seen the term *SFX* he had misread it as *SEX*.’

Magazine Scene. *Space and Time* is to close after 52 years of publication

since it ‘no longer has enough subscribers to remain viable’, says editor-in-chief Hildy Silverman. Two more issues are planned. [L]

The Dead Past. *20 Years Ago*, a riddle: ‘Q: What sort of idiots would beg your editor to drop everything and put together some gems from Thog’s Masterclass at short notice to fill a slot in a discussion programme, and then cease all communication as soon as the sucker had agreed to this? A: The BBC World Service.’ (*Ansible* 135, October 1998) Also: ‘*Classic Glamour Photography* by Iain M. Banks. (1989, Amphoto; ISBN: 0817436723). Is there no end to the man’s talents?’ (*Ibid*)

Pottermania. The Royal Mint’s 2016 limited edition of 50p coins showing characters from Beatrix Potter’s *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* has been doing well on eBay, with the silver version of Peter Rabbit himself selling for up to £1,000. ([Banbury Guardian](#), 27 September)

Editorial. The ‘Art of the Gestetner’ exhibition listed above had its private view on 29 September, with unexpected – at least by me – champagne, and a select fan presence consisting of Pat Charnock (who had introduced the perpetrators to fandom), Rob Hansen (with issues of *Epsilon* and a battered old Gestetner as exhibits) and myself. Three whole display cases are devoted to fanzines as we know them, including in [catalogue](#) order *Novae Terrae*, *Fantast*, *Hyphen*, *Duplicating Without Tears*, Mike Moorcock’s *Jazz Fan* from 1957, *Femizine*, *Stellar*, *Boonfark*, *DNQ*, *Bastion*, *Raffles*, *Placebo*, *Gambit*, *Burroughsania* (that nice Mr Moorcock again), *The Enchanted Duplicator*, *Scottishe* and *Warhoon* 28 – though not *Ansible* since its early duplicated issues were produced on a R*neo. Elsewhere, an impressive two-colour cover depicting a space rocket proved to be from the in-house *Gestetner Head Office News*. As expected I deafly failed to comprehend the speeches made by the Mayor of Haringey (including Tottenham, former home of the mighty Gestetner factory), by Jonathan Gestetner (grandson of The Founder), and by Oscar Mac-Fall, a leader of the art group [Alt Går Bra](#) that organized all this. It is a proud and lonely thing.

- The Langford readership is set to expand to galactic proportions with the translation of my story ‘Different Kinds of Darkness’ into Klingon. First Shakespeare and now me. Well, a few others too.

Fanfundery. *TAFF 2019*: nominations for the 2019 eastbound race to the Dublin Worldcon open on 1 October 2018, closing 22 November; voting will

run from 1 December to the closing date 22 April 2019. Candidates need three North American and two European nominators and must also provide a promotional platform of not more than 101 words plus \$20 bond. Watch the skies at taff.org.uk for further announcements.

Thog's Masterclass. *Solid Geometry Dept.* 'So three-sided spheres do exist.' (Nina George, *The Little Paris Bookshop*, 2015; trans Simon Pare 2016).

[PB]

• *The Physics of Funfair Rides.* 'The fall takes two and a half seconds, and as the ride brakes, passengers are subjected to a force equivalent to three and a half Gs. / In other words, when it lands each human body weighs more than three times as much as normal. / Body weight matters on the way down. / A person traveling at a speed of a hundred kilometers an hour weighs over twelve tons.' (Erik Axl Sund, *The Crow Girl*, trans Neil Smith 2015) [PB]

• *CSI Dept.* 'A hack collective had blown the images to one thousand percent in an attempt to isolate actual nipple pigmentation ...' (John Sandford and Ctein, *Saturn Run*, 2015) [JC]

• *Eyeballs in the Sky.* 'Ayo slides her eyes to the kitchen window and out towards the barn.' 'His eyes graze Urvisha's huge suitcase.' (both from Katie Khan, *The Light Between Us*, 2018) [AR]

• *Dept of Post-Holocaust Prose.* 'A pang stings my throat at the memory of pigs.' 'I stare at her little head. Why are young adults' heads so little?' 'His eyes gleam like succulent black holes.' 'Jean de Men stares at her. Is his smile losing its sureness, are his eyes starting to boil?' 'What kind of population emerges up among the stars? A wad of alabaster meated things driven only by appearance and entertainment.' (all from Lidia Yuknavitch, *The Book of Joan*, 2017) [AR]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

• 12 October 2018: David Leach talks to the Brum Group. 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre. £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future events/speakers: 16 November 2018, Professor Bill Chaplin; 7 December 2018, Christmas social.

Rob Hansen has a 1 October blog post about the '[Art of the Gestetner](#)' exhibition, with photographs, at www.fiawol.org.uk/fanstuff/Blog/. The

fannish sections of the (heretically photocopied) catalogue can be seen at news.ansible.uk/images/big/fanex.gif – which, as Pat Charnock points out, omits a non-fanzine by UK fan Ken Cheslin that was displayed elsewhere. Photographs below all (except the last) taken by Tim Bowditch for [Alt Går Bra](#) and copyright © Alt Går Bra – many thanks to Oscar Mac-Fall for sending a selection from the official record. [For the exhibition photos please see [Ansible 375](#) online.]

R.I.P. II. Z.S. (*Sophy*) Adani, whose sf collection is *The Last Outpost* (2011) and who co-edited *Destination: Future* (2010) with Eric T. Reynolds, reportedly died on 21 July. [PDF]

• *Carlos Ezquerra* (1947-2018), highly regarded Spanish comics artist who co-created Judge Dredd for *2000 AD* and Strontium Dog for *Starlord* (later merged into *2000 AD*), died on 1 October; he was 70. Other work included comics adaptations of Harry Harrison's *The Stainless Steel Rat* and two of its sequels. [GW]

Gollancz Festival? As *Ansible* goes to press, www.gollanczfest.com is still showing exciting news of the 2017 event. Rather than a full-blown festival there is to be a Gollancz Writers' Day on 2 November, with details to be announced soon.

Thog's Second Helping. *Metaphor Dept.* 'The sky exploded above them, a bruised flower.' 'Holly's heart seemed to throw itself on to barbed wire.' (Freda Warrington, *A Dance in Blood Velvet*, 1994) [BA]

Ansible® 375 © David Langford, 2018. Thanks to Brian Ameringen, Paul Barnett, Simon Bradshaw, Jamieson Cobleigh, Ian Covell, Ahrvid Engholm, Gary Farber, *File 770*, Paul Di Filippo, John Goodridge, Steve Green, Rob Hansen, Chip Hitchcock, *Locus*, Andrew I. Porter, *Private Eye*, Adam Roberts, Arthur Tansky, Andrew Wells, Gary Wilkinson, Edward Willett, Martin Morse Wooster, and as always our Hero Distributors: Durdles Books for the Birmingham SF Group, SCIS/Prophecy and Alan Stewart (Australia).
1 October 2018

Ansible® 376, November 2018

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE or cure for misplaced pervulsions.

The Pot Was Awful

Poul Anderson's ashes were scattered in Puget Sound by Astrid Anderson Bear and her children on 14 September. ([Locus](#), 26 October)

Paul Cornell, whose connections with *Doctor Who* include many tie-in novels since 1991 and scripts for three broadcast episodes, dared to tweet that Jodie Whittaker was 'A great new Doctor'; he was swiftly put in his place by Twitter twit Jr Hunter with 'Yea... I could tell you never seen previous doctor who's'. (7 October) Another such pundit dealt with Neil Gaiman, also a long-time *Who* enthusiast and scriptwriter: 'ahh so your a new fan because the doctor is a woman not a real fan of the show since the 60's then'. Truly all knowledge is contained in Twitter.

Liz Gorinsky, Hugo-winning editor who in 2018 left Tor after 15 years there, is now President and Publisher at the new independent genre publisher Erewhon Books: see www.erewhonbooks.com. [F770]

Kelly Link has joined the select list of sf/fantasy authors to receive MacArthur 'genius' fellowships. Responding to news of the \$625,000 grant, she mused 'I believe the traditional reaction is to feel that someone must be pulling your leg ...' (*Washington Post*, 4 October)

George R.R. Martin had a little gloat when his *Game of Thrones* books placed 48th in the Great American Read voting: 'Pretty cool. I was in the top 50, anyway, and I edged out the *Foundation* series and *War and Peace*. Not half bad.' (georgerrmartin.com/notablog, 25 October)

Bram Stoker plumbed greater depths of evil than we ever knew. While

researching *Dracula* at The London Library, of which he was a member, he *defaced library books* with crosses, underlinings, instructions for passages to be transcribed, and so forth: 25 such marked-up works including Sabine Baring-Gould's *The Book of Were-Wolves* can still be found in the collection. See www.londonlibrary.co.uk/dracula. [AIP]

Beau Willimon, creator of the coming Channel 4 drama *The First* – about a manned mission to Mars – pre-empts any thoughtless fans who might call this science fiction: ‘Mars is the latest iteration of a very old narrative [...] going back to the first cave people who wondered what was on the other side of the horizon. I see this as an ancient tale that happens to be set in the near future.’ (*Total TV Guide*, October) [JMcN]

Connex

Until 24 Nov • **2001: A Space Odyssey** (IMAX), Science Museum, London. Showings on 1, 3, 7, 10, 21 and 24 November. Further details and ticket sales (various prices) at bit.ly/2J4Ze0Q.

2-4 Nov • **Armadacon 30**, Future Inn, Plymouth. £35 reg; concessions £30; under-16s free. PayPal registration at www.armadacon.org.

3 Nov • **Frightfest**, Cineworld, Leicester Square, London. Tickets £45 all day or £15 per film. See www.frightfest.co.uk/filmsevents.html.

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9-11 Nov • **Novacon 48**, Park Inn, Nottingham. Now £55 reg (the same rate applies at the door); under-17s £12; under-13s free. Contact 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ. See www.novacon.org.uk.

10 Nov • **HumberSFF** (readings etc), Waterstones, Jameson St, Hull. 4:30-7:30pm. Free registrations at tinyurl.com/y8z6bb8t.

10 Nov • **SFX Book Con**, Foyles, Charing Cross Rd, London. 12:30-6:30pm. £18 reg; £15 for students and (oh dear) ‘Foyalty’ members. See

www.foyles.co.uk/Public/Events/Detail.aspx?eventId=3747.

24 Nov • **Sledge-Lit**, QUAD Centre, Derby. 10am-6pm. Tickets £25; 16-25s £15. See www.derbyquad.co.uk/special-event/sledge-lit-4.aspx.

25 Nov • **Expelicon** (Harry bloody Potter), Humber Royal Hotel, Little Coates Rd, Grimsby. 10am-4pm. Tickets £4; child £2; family (2 adults + 2 kids) £10. See patchworkevents.co.uk/expelicon.html.

28 Nov • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. Speaker(s) TBA. Free.

1 Dec • **Dragonmeet** (gaming), Novotel London West, W6 8DR. 9am-midnight. £12 reg with group discounts: www.dragonmeet.co.uk.

1 Dec • **Yulemoot** (Tolkien Society), Gunmakers' Arms, 93 Bath Street, Birmingham, B4 6HG. 6pm to late. Open to all.

2 Dec • **Stars of Time** (media), Tropicana, Weston-super-Mare. 10:30am-5pm. £7.50; under-12s, OAP and disabled £4; under-4s free. Family of 2+2 kids £18; 2+3 kids £19. See www.starsoftime.co.uk.

3 Feb 2019 • **Sci-Feb** (media), Humber Royal Hotel, Little Coates Rd, Grimsby. 10am-4pm. ?£4. Website moved from defunct domain to patchworkevents.co.uk/sci--feb.html, where 'Buy Tickets' doesn't work.

29-30 Mar 2019 • **Sci-Fi Weekender Part 1**, O₂ Academy, Sheffield. From £99 reg; other packages at www.scifiweekender.com.

6-7 Apr 2019 • **Sci-Fi Scarborough** (multimedia), The Spa, Scarborough. Adult ticket including booking fees: £28. £15/day; students and under-17s £5 day; under-5s free. See scifiscarborough.co.uk.

19-22 Apr 2019 • **Ytterbium** (Eastercon), Park Inn, London Heathrow area. £70 reg, *rising to £80 on 14 November* and to £90 on 1 April 2019; £30 concessions; £25 under-18s; £5 infants under 5; £20 supporting. See ytterbium.org.uk.

16 May - 26 Aug 2019 • **AI: More Than Human** (exhibition), Barbican Centre, London. Tickets £15 Monday to Friday, £17 Saturday or Sunday (plus fees). See www.barbican.org.uk/morethanhuman.

18 May 2019 • **Lawless** (UK comics – expanded from the *Judge Dredd*-only LawGiver), Hilton Doubletree Hotel, Bristol. Tickets on sale in January: see

www.facebook.com/groups/1417073338554565/.

13 Jul 2019 • **Edge-Lit 8**, QUAD Centre, Derby, DE1 3AS. 10am-9pm. Ticket prices to follow (this month) at www.derbyquad.co.uk.

31 Aug 2019 • **Whooverville** (*Doctor Who*), QUAD Centre, Derby, DE1 3AS. Tickets should go on sale this month at whooverville.org.

28-29 Sep 2019 • **Nor-Con** (media), Norfolk Showground Arena. Tickets to become available in the New Year. See www.nor-con.co.uk.

11-13 Oct 2019 • **Lakes International Comic Art Festival**, Kendal, Cumbria. Ticket prices to follow at www.comicartfestival.com.

25-27 Oct 2019 • **Destination Star Trek**, NEC, Birmingham. Day £29; 2 days £39; 3 days £49; silly 'VIP' rates at destinationstartrek.com.

30 Oct - 3 Nov 2019 • **Sci-Fi Weekender Part 2**, Vauxhall Holiday Park, Great Yarmouth. Weekend pass £99; for camping and various accommodation packages see www.scifiweekender.com.

Rumblings. *London First Thursday Meetings*: Roger Robinson has booked the Bishop's Finger pub throughout 2019; the 2018 Christmas meeting will be on 20 December. See news.ansible.uk/london.html.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others Group Us. 'Hell of course will have a library, but one stocked exclusively with science fiction, six-hundred-odd page novels by men whose first name is Jonathan, and books extolling the 1960s.' (Joseph Epstein, *First Things* magazine, November) [SL]

Awards. *British Fantasy*: ANTHOLOGY *New Fears* ed. Mark Morris. ARTIST Jeffrey Alan Love. AUDIO *Anansi Boys* (Radio 4). COLLECTION Joe Hill, *Strange Weather*. GRAPHIC Marjorie Liu & Sana Takeda, *Monstress* vol. 2. HOLDSTOCK (fantasy novel) Jen Williams, *The Ninth Rain*. FILM/TV *Get Out*. DERLETH (horror novel) Victor LaValle, *The Changeling*. INDEPENDENT PRESS *Unsung Stories*. MAGAZINE *Shoreline of Infinity*. NEWCOMER Jeanette Ng for *Under the Pendulum Sun*. NONFICTION *Gender Identity and Sexuality in Science Fiction and Fantasy* ed. FT Barbini. NOVELLA Ellen Klages, *Passing Strange*. SHORT Laura Mauro, 'Looking for Laika' (*Interzone* #273). WAGNER

(services to fantasy) N.K. Jemisin.

- *New Academy Prize for Literature* (the alternative Nobel): Maryse Condé.
- *Not the Booker Prize* (another alternative award, given by the judges – in defiance of popular vote – to a genre novel): Rebecca Ley, *Sweet Fruit, Sour Land*. (*Guardian*, 15 October)
- *SFPA Grand Master*: Ann K. Schwader.

Prediction Masterclass, 1902. *On the future of transport*: ‘... I do not think it at all probable that aeronautics will ever come into play as a serious modification of transport and communication – the main question here under consideration. Man is not, for example, an albatross, but a land biped, with a considerable disposition towards being made sick and giddy by unusual motions ...’ (H.G. Wells, *Anticipations*, 1902)

- *On the future of warfare*: ‘I must confess that my imagination, in spite even of spurring, refuses to see any sort of submarine doing anything but suffocate its crew and founder at sea.’ (*Ibid*)

R.I.P. Tim Bateman (?1961-2018), UK comics fan and fanzine contributor who was a founder member of the Prime (later British) Amateur Press Association, died on 13 October. [SG]

- *Richard Bausch* (1945-2018), US author whose one fantasy novel was *Almighty Me* (1991) – filmed as *Bruce Almighty* in 2002 – died on 9 October; he was 73. [AIP/MMW]
- *Anthea Bell* (1936-2018) UK translator best known for her creative punning in 35 *Asterix* graphic novels, died on 18 October aged 82. She also translated fantastic fiction by Kafka and others. [PDF]
- *Roger Donald*, US editor and publisher for 30 years at Little, Brown, died on 11 October aged 82. [PDF] His authors who have *SF Encyclopedia* entries include Edward Abbey, John Barth, Thomas Berger and Norman Mailer.
- *Dave Duncan* (1933-2018), Scottish-born Canadian author of 60 sf and (predominantly) fantasy novels beginning with the sf *A Rose-Red City* (1987), died on 29 October aged 85. [F770] He was a founder member of SF Canada and won two Aurora Awards for best novel.
- *J.R. Hammond* (1933-2018), UK academic who founded the H.G. Wells Society in 1960 and wrote critical works about Wells (several volumes), Orwell, Poe and others, died on 20 September aged 85. [JC]
- *H.M. (Helen Mary) Hoover*, US author of *Children of Morrow* (1973), *The Delikon* (1977) and about a dozen more well-received children’s/YA sf

novels, died on 22 August; she was 83. [A]

- *Takanobu Hozumi* (1921-2018), Japanese actor in *The X from Outer Space* (1967) who also dubbed voices in Japanese releases of the *Back to the Future* films and others, died on 19 October aged 97. (Thus IMDb: Wikipedia has 1931-2018 and age 87.)
- *Jin Yong* (Louis Cha, 1924-2018), Chinese publisher and bestselling author of heroic martial-arts (*wuxia*) fiction that often – especially in the original newspaper serializations – had mystic and supernatural elements, died on 30 October; he was 94. [PDF]
- *James Karen* (1923-2018), US actor in *Capricorn One* (1977), *Topper* (1979), *Poltergeist* (1982), *Return of the Living Dead* (1985), *Invaders from Mars* (1986) and many more, died on 23 October aged 94. [PDF]
- *John D. Lamond* (1947-2018), Australian film-maker who wrote and produced the heavily Spielberg-influenced sf movie *Sky Pirates* (1985, aka *Dakota Harris*), died on 24 October aged 71.
- *Pat Lupoff* (1937-2018), long-time US fan who married Richard A. Lupoff in 1958 and shared a Hugo for their and Bhub Stewart's fanzine *Xero* (1960-1963) – becoming the second female Hugo winner – died on 18 October. [GVG]
- *Sue Martin-Smith* (1960-2018), New Zealand fan who founded the long-running 'Phoenix' sf club and co-created FFANZ (Fan Fund of Australia and New Zealand), died on 23 September. [AR]
- *Ngok Wah* (1942-2018), Shanghai-born actor often billed as Hua Yueh, who starred in *Monkey Goes West* (1966, based on *Journey to the West* aka *Monkey*) and had other fantasy film roles, died on 20 October aged 76.
- *Jim Novak*, Marvel Comics letterer and logo designer who also worked for other comic publishers, was belatedly revealed to have died in late April. [PDF]
- *Derrick Sherwin* (1936-2018), UK tv producer, writer and actor whose *Doctor Who* work included scripting 'The Invasion' (1968, introducing UNIT) and producing 'Spearhead from Space' (1969-1970) – in which he also had a cameo part – died on 20 October aged 82. (From Doctorwhonews.net)
- *Diana Sowle* (1930-2018), US actress in *Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory* (1971) and the *Fallout 3* videogame (voice, 2008), died on 18 October aged 88. [PDF]
- *Greg Stafford* (1948-2018), US game designer who founded the RPG

publisher Chaosium in 1975 and created the Glorantha setting of his own *White Bear and Red Moon* (1975) and Steve Perrin's *RuneQuest* (1978), died on 11 October; he was 70. [GW]

- *Will Vinton* (1947-2018), filmmaker and stop-motion animator who coined the term Claymation – as in his fantasy movie *Claymation Easter* (1992) – died on 4 October aged 70. [PDF]
- *Audrey Wells* (1960-2018), US filmmaker who scripted the genre productions *George of the Jungle* (1997), *A Dog's Purpose* (2017) and *Over the Moon* (forthcoming), died on 4 October aged 58. [PDF]
- *David Willoughby*, bookseller and collector who was a long-established presence in US convention dealers' rooms, died on 5 October. [SE]
- *Scott Wilson* (1942-2018), US actor in *The Exorcist III* (1990), *The Host* (2006), *The Walking Dead* (2011-2014) and *The OA* (2016), died on 6 October aged 76. [PDF]
- *Celeste Yarnall* (1944-2018), US actress whose screen credits include *Star Trek* (1967), *Beast of Blood* (1970) and *The Velvet Vampire* (1971), died on 7 October aged 74. [DG]

As Our Friends See Us. *Dept of 1973 Fashion Sense*. 'He seemed to be wearing some kind of leather biker's outfit more suited to a science-fiction convention than the NFT cafeteria.' (Christopher Fowler, *Seventy-Seven Clocks*, 2005) [PC]

Outraged Letters. *Mike Moorcock* on his inclusion in 'The Art of the Gestetner' and on Philip Pullman's lost-property woes (see [A375](#)): 'Hate to tell you that ALL my fanzines were done on a R*neo. While they're looking for Philip Pullman's Mont Blanc ballpoint readers might keep an eye out for my MB fountain pen which was lost "somewhere in France" in June 2018. They might be trying to get together.' (2 October)

Random Fandom. ANZAPA (Australia and New Zealand Amateur Press Association) celebrated its 50th anniversary with a gathering in Melbourne on 7 October. [BG]

- *The Dirty Movie Book* by John Brosnan and Leroy Kettle is now a free ebook download at the TAFF site, with a new Kettle introduction. See taff.org.uk/ebooks.php?x=DirtyMovie. Also released on 1 November: *The Complete Checkpoint* repackages the web archive of Peter Roberts's fondly remembered 1970s UK fan newsletter *Checkpoint* – predecessor of and inspiration for *Ansible* – as a 300,000-word ebook, again free. See

taff.org.uk/ebooks.php?x=Checkpoint.

Editorial. Mike Scott Rohan was remembered in an informal service at the Quaker Meeting House in Oxford on 29 October, led by his widow Debby Rohan with support from his long-time friend and novel collaborator Allan Scott (still gathering tributes and anecdotes for inclusion at michaelscottrohan.org.uk); several other authors and fans involved with the 1970s-era Oxford University SF Group and the Pieria writers' workshop contributed their memories. Toasts to Mike were then drunk at The King's Arms, scene of many past OUSFG excesses. Wish he'd been there. As Terry Pratchett put it in a long-past *Ansible*, 'I think I liked it better when I was in the age group that went to each other's weddings.'

The Dead Past. *30 Years Ago*: 'Chris Priest learned again that sf is ok if written by the Right People, like novelist Maggie Gee. Radio 4's *Start the Week* featured hard man Jeremy Paxman grilling her approximately thus: "Now don't get me wrong. I can't stand science fiction. All those stupid ideas. But your book is SET IN A PLAUSIBLE FUTURE! It takes TRENDS FROM THE REAL WORLD! You are a woman but you WRITE IN THE VOICE OF A MAN! It has GLOBAL COOLING! I'm impressed, I'm amazed, where do you get ideas like that?"' ([Ansible 136](#), November 1988)

• *40 Years Ago*, there was hot media news: 'The first part of *The Lord of the Rings* will be released in November. [...] 20th Century Fox is suing MCA saying that the latter's *Battlestar Galactica* is a copy of *Star Wars*. MCA is countersuing, saying SW is a copy of its properties *Buck Rogers* and *Silent Running*.' ([Karass 38](#), October/November 1978)

Con Horrors. Much bad feeling followed the postponement (from 30 June/1 July to September) and then cancellation (announced on Facebook, 11 July) of Victor Wright's London Horror Con. The money had been eaten up by a failed Edinburgh event in May, and LHC soon found itself unable to refund either ticket fees or extras like photo opportunities presold at £95. At least one guest, Alex Vincent from the *Child's Play* films, felt not only ill-treated but actively insulted. The website (www.horrorconbirmingham.com) vanished; Wright declared that the holding company couldn't afford a liquidator and would be voluntarily struck off the register – apparently problematic when you have lots of annoyed creditors. ([Horror.land](#), 12 July) [SG]

• *Nine Worlds Geekfest*: blank pages only at nineworlds.co.uk as this *Ansible*

goes to press. [*Happily the site returned next day, 2 November.*]

Fanfundery. *TAFF 2019*: nominations for the 2019 race from North America to the Dublin Worldcon remain open until 22 November; voting will run from 1 December to 22 April 2019. See taff.org.uk for official announcement.

- *GUFF*: nominations for the 2019 race from Australasia to the Dublin worldcon opened on 8 October and close on 5 December; voting will end on 22 April 2019. See ozfanfunds.com/?page_id=6.

IP Wars. The romance author wanting a US trademark on ‘Quantum Series’ ([A375](#)) was persuaded to amend her application, restricting it to romance novels – so the existing sf series is safe – and to the full two-word term, omitting ‘quantum’ alone. Phew. (SFWA.org, 29 October)

Thog’s Masterclass. *Optical Illusion Dept.* ‘Her breasts were soft and bigger than you might think to look at them.’ (Keigo Higashino, *Under the Midnight Sun*, trans Alexander O. Smith & Joseph Reeder, 2016) [PB]

- *Dept of Exobiology.* ‘Mars has two-fifths the gravity of Earth. They’d need a double heart to drive their blood or whatever it is they have in their veins.’ (Richard Matheson, ‘Mother by Protest’ [aka ‘Trespass’], 1953 *Fantastic*)

- *So Sharp You’ll Cut Yourself Dept.* ‘The black man was tall and thin as a stick, and his eyes were green razors stropped to a keen edge by the sunset.’ (Matt Ruff, *Sewer, Gas and Electric*, 1997) [BA]

- *That Small Betraying Detail.* ‘These vampires can usually pass as humans until someone notices that they possess a third eye.’ (White Wolf, *The Vampire Players Guide*, second edition, 1993) [AK]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 16 November 2018: Professor Bill Chaplin talks to the Brum Group. 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre. £4 or £3 for members. Contact [bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk](mailto:bhamsfgroup@yahoo.co.uk). Future events/speakers: 7 December 2018, Christmas social.

Creature Feature. The creatures-and-monsters con Creaturegeddon has long promised a 2018 event at its www.creaturegeddon.net site, which still has no specific information but links to a Facebook page containing (as *Ansible*

recently discovered) the announcement that 2018 will be skipped, that the next Creaturegeddon will be at the end of February 2019, and that ‘there are some unscrupulous individuals out there who take pleasure in trying to destroy Creaturegeddon!’ Gosh, that sounds exciting.

Outraged Letters II. *Simon R. Green* on [A375](#): ‘Seeing the S.T. Joshi piece made me think the three sections on modern horror should be: Things we’d seen before but not done nearly as well; I can’t believe it’s not Stephen King; and of course ... Let’s make vampires even less scary than they used to be. / I am definitely moving into broody old fart territory.’ (23 October)

Gollancz Non-Festival. The limited-attendance Gollancz Writers’ Day event replacing the 2018 Festival was announced at some point in October (though not at www.gollanczfest.com): 2 November at Hachette HQ in London, with tickets at £80 plus booking fees. Sales end on 1 November, so this link may well appear too late for the eager public ...

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/gollancz-writers-day-tickets-51027279968>

Cruciverbalism. A couple of Inquisitor crosswords in the *i* newspaper during October had genre themes: an insanely difficult one to mark the latest regeneration of *Doctor Who*, and a rather more typical challenge featuring various works by Franz Kafka:

<http://www.fifteensquared.net/2018/10/17/inquisitor-1563-just-in-time-by-poat/>

<http://www.fifteensquared.net/2018/10/31/inquisitor-1565-keep-trying-by-radler/>

Editorial II. To clear a little space at Ansible HQ in Reading, I’m tempted to dispose of my long run of *SFX* magazine beginning with #1 in June 1995 and still increasing: somehow I stayed on the complimentary list despite the cancellation of my regular column in 2016. Not complete, since owing to postal and other glitches a few issues never reached me, but nearly so; too massive to be shipped; is anyone prepared to haul the whole lot away?

Thog’s Second Helping. Ramsey Campbell sends a link that Thog durst not follow: ‘I do believe *The Eye of Argon* may be toppled from its plinth ...’

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B07BVZHT2T>

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Edelman, *File 770*, David Gerrold, Bruce Gillespie, Steve Green, Amanda Kear, Simon Litton, *Locus*, Joe McNally, Andrew I. Porter, Alan Robson, Debby Rohan, Gordon Van Gelder, Gary Wilkinson, Martin Morse Wooster, and as always our Hero Distributors: Durdles Books for the Birmingham SF Group, SCIS/Prophecy and Alan Stewart (Australia). 1 November 2018

Ansible® 377, December 2018

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Ulrika O'Brien**. Available for SAE or cerebrative psittacoids.

The Hermeneutical Doughnut

Arthur C. Clarke featured in the 27 November *Jeopardy* quiz: ‘This *Space Odyssey* author: “I predict that a new species could well appear on Earth – what I call Robosapiens.”’ No one could supply his name. [AIP]

Greg Egan contributed to the mathematical canon with new work on the maximum lengths of ‘superpermutations’ that include all possible permutations of a given set of numbers (see tinyurl.com/y8eecyph for an explanation in terms of video binge-watching). Not for nothing do our man’s sf novels include *Permutation City*. (*Quanta*, 5 November) [AT]

Marc Gascoigne, founder and publisher at Angry Robot Books, is leaving at the end of 2018 in hope of ‘a new challenge’.

Ada Lovelace, who has an *SF Encyclopedia* entry for being generally iconic, is on the Bank of England’s longlist of past UK scientists nominated to appear on the new £50 note. Further nominees with *SFE* entries include J.D. Bernal, Margaret Cavendish, Erasmus Darwin, John Dee, John (J.B.S.) Haldane, Fred Hoyle, Patrick Moore and Bertrand Russell.

George R.R. Martin explained the genesis of *A Game of Thrones* to a *Guardian* interviewer: ‘When I began, I didn’t know what the hell I had. I thought it might be a short story ...’ ([10 November](#)) [AIP]

Robert Silverberg has much to say about his personal non-racism and non-sexism at file770.com/racism-and-sexism/. (27 November)

Consecute

Until 9 Dec • **Fanatical: A Sci-Fi Convention Musical**, Playground Theatre, London. Various ticket prices from £11 to £25 (£10 to £22 concessions) at theplaygroundtheatre.london/events/fanatical/.

Until 16 Mar 2019 • **Frank Hampson** – The Man Who Drew Dan Dare (exhibition), The Atkinson, Lord St, Southport. 10am-4pm, Mon-Sat. Free; donations welcome. See theatkinson.co.uk/whats-on/events/.

7 Dec • **British Fantasy Society Social**, Central Station Pub, 37 Wharfdale Rd, King's Cross, London. 7pm-11:30pm. Free; all welcome.

15 Dec - 9 Feb • **Discworld & Beyond** (exhibition), N. Herts Museum, Hitchin. See www.paulkidby.com/event/discworld-beyond-6/.

20 Dec • **London Xmas Meeting** (additional to First Thursdays), The Bishop's Finger, 9-10 West Smithfield, EC1A 9JR. All evening. 18-20 Jan 2019 • **Redemption** (multimedia), Royal Victoria Hotel, Sheffield. £70 reg; concessions £50; under-18s £25; under-3s free. *Advance booking closes 5 January: £75 (concessions £50) at the door.* For online booking (5% fee) and day rates, see redemptioncon.org.uk.

1-3 Feb 2019 • **31-ET** (filk), Best Western Hotel, Marks Tey, Colchester. £38 reg or £28 unwaged plus booking fees; under-18s £1/year of age; under-5s free. Further details at www.contabile.org.uk/31et/.

8-10 Feb 2019 • **SF Ball** (media), Grand Harbour Hotel, Southampton. £135 reg or £15/day; child £45 or £5. See sfbevents.com/sfball.

16 Feb 2019 • **Picocon 36**, Blakett Building, Imperial College, London. Several guests of honour. £12 reg; £10 concessions; £8 for ICSF members; past GoHs free. See www.union.ic.ac.uk/scc/icsf/picocon/.

1-2 Mar 2019 • **Frightfest** (film), Glasgow Film Theatre. Details to follow at www.frightfest.co.uk/filmsevents.html. Also London events: Leicester Square, 22-26 August 2019, and a Hallowe'en special TBA.

12-13 Apr 2019 • **Corroding the Now: Poetry + Science|SF** (conference), Egham, Surrey. Details and CFP at corrodingthenow.com.

19-22 Apr 2019 • **Ytterbium** (Eastercon), Park Inn, London Heathrow area. *Now £80 reg*, rising to £90 on 1 April 2019; £30 concessions; £25 under-18s; £5 under-5s; £20 supporting. See ytterbium.org.uk.

9-19 May 2019 • **Sci-Fi London** (film festival), various London venues. Further details awaited at sci-fi-london.com/festival.

7-9 June 2019 • **Cymera**: Scotland's Festival of SF, Fantasy & Horror Writing, Edinburgh. See www.cymerafestival.co.uk,

13 Jul 2019 • **Edge-Lit 8**, QUAD Centre, Derby, DE1 3AS. 10am-9pm. £30. See www.derbyquad.co.uk/whats-on/events/edge-lit-8.

15-19 Aug 2019 • **Dublin 2019** (Worldcon), Dublin, Ireland. €210 reg; under-26s €130; under-13s €70; under-6s €5; supp €40. *Join by 31 December to qualify as a 2019 Hugo nominator.* See dublin2019.com.

22-25 Aug 2019 • **Eurocon/TitanCon**, Waterfront Convention Centre and Hilton Hotel, Belfast. £50 reg; 16-25s £35; 6-15s £20; £10 supp; all rates subject to PayPal fees at titancon.com/2019/.

31 Aug 2019 • **Whooverville** (*Doctor Who*), QUAD Centre, Derby, DE1 3AS. Tickets £50; £33 concessions and under-16s; £10 under-12s; bookings at QUAD site (Edge-Lit above) but not yet at whooverville.org.

25-27 Oct 2019 • **Festival of Fantastic Films**, Pendulum Hotel, Manchester. Membership costs awaited at fantastic-films.com.

8-10 Nov 2019 • **Novacon 49**, Park Inn, Nottingham. GoH Mike Carey. Contact 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ. Registration form awaited at www.novacon.org.uk.

Rumblings. As usual, there is no December BSFA pub meeting.

- *Daydream Events/Patchwork Events* cons were all cancelled owing to illness (Facebook post, 5 November), including the Harry Potter-themed Expelicon (Grimsby, 24 November) and the Sci-Feb media event (ditto, 3 February 2019); patchworkevents.co.uk died in early November.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. 'I avoid science fiction – religious traditions already are packed with fantasy stories.' (Elaine Pagels, religious historian, in the *New York Times Book Review*, November) [JB]

- On Norwegian author Karl Ove Knausgaard: 'I would suggest that time spent reading almost *anything* (with the exception of science fiction, fantasy,

and celebrity autobiographies – almost) would be time better more enrichingly spent than reading Knausgaard.’ (Metafilter, 23 November) [WM]

Awards. *Edgar Grand Master* (crime): Martin Cruz Smith. The same honour went to Linda Fairstein but proved controversial and was swiftly withdrawn.

- *Gaylactic Spectrum* novel: Ellen Klages, *Passing Strange*. (2018 award for 2017 work, presented in November; the one given in May this year was 2017’s for 2016 work.)

- *Imagination in Service to Society* (Arthur C. Clarke Foundation): Cixin Liu. [L]

- *J.F. Gonzalez Lifetime Achievement Award* (for horror): David G. Barnett. [F770]

- *National Book Award for Translated Literature* (USA): Yoko Tawada, *The Emissary* (2014), a dystopia set in future Japan. (Europa SF, 15 November)

- *Rotsler Award* for life achievement in fanzine art: Ken Fletcher.

- *World Fantasy Awards*: NOVEL (tie) Victor LaValle, *The Changeling*; Fonda Lee, *Jade City*. NOVELLA Ellen Klages, *Passing Strange*. SHORT Natalia Theodoridou, ‘The Birding’ (*Strange Horizons* 18/12/17). ANTHOLOGY Peter S. Beagle and Jacob Weisman, eds., *The New Voices of Fantasy*. COLLECTION Jane Yolen, *The Emerald Circus*. ARTIST Gregory Manchess. SPECIAL – PROFESSIONAL Harry Brockway, Patrick McGrath & Danel Olson for *Writing Madness*. SPECIAL – NON-PROFESSIONAL Justina Ireland & Troy L. Wiggins for *FIYAH: Magazine of Black Speculative Fiction*.

Prediction Masterclass. ‘I predict that a small town in Nebraska will produce a woman physicist in the late 1970s who will develop a theory of magnetism that overcomes gravity. Practical application of her theory will result in aircraft and space vehicles that require no sustained rocketry propulsion.’ (*Criswell Predicts from Now to the Year 2000!*, 1968)

R.I.P. *John Bluthal* (1929-2018), Polish-born UK actor whose genre credits include *Superman III* (1983), *The Fifth Element* (1997) and *Dark City* (1998), died on 15 November aged 89. [JM]

- *Andrew Burt* (1945-2018), UK actor who starred in the tv *Legend of King Arthur* (1979) and *Gulliver in Lilliput* (1982) – also appearing in *Doctor Who*: ‘Terminus’ (1983) – died on 16 November aged 73. [DWN]

- *George A. Cooper* (1925-2018), UK actor in *Doctor Who*: ‘The Smugglers’ (1966), *Dracula Has Risen from the Grave* (1968) and *The Light Princess*

(1978), died on 16 November aged 93. [DWN]

- *Maurine Dorris*, long-time US fan and convention worker who chaired the 1987 World Fantasy Convention and co-founded the World Horror Convention – first held in 1991 – died on 11 November. [MI]
- *Pablo Ferro* (1935-2018), Cuba-born film title designer for *Dr Strangelove* (1964), *A Clockwork Orange* (1971), *Being There* (1979), *Beetlejuice* (1988), *Darkman* (1990), *The Addams Family* (1991) plus sequel, *Men in Black II* (2002) plus sequel, *Cthulhu* (2007) and many more, died on 16 November aged 83. [MMW]
- *William Goldman* (1931-2018), US winner of two Oscars for screenwriting, whose novels include the much-loved fantasy *The Princess Bride* (1973) and the psychological-horror *Magic* (1976) – filmed in 1987 and 1978 respectively with his own scripts – plus the genre-switching thriller *Control* (1982), died on 15 November aged 87. [AS] Other genre screenplays include *The Stepford Wives* (1975), *Misery* (1990) and *Dreamcatcher* (2003).
- *Stephen Hillenburg* (1961-2018), creator of the multiple award-winning animation *SpongeBob SquarePants* that launched in 1999 and still continues, died on 26 November aged 57. [TP]
- *Ricky Jay* (1946-2018), US magician and actor whose films include *The Water Engine* (1992), *Tomorrow Never Dies* (1997) and *The Prestige* (2006), died on 24 November aged 72. [PDF]
- *Gloria Katz* (1942-2018), US screenwriter and producer whose credits include *Messiah of Evil* (1973), *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* (1984) and *Howard the Duck* (1986), died on 25 November aged 76. [SG]
- *Stan Lee* (1922-2018), famed comics writer and publisher best known for the superhero characters he co-invented for Marvel in the 1960s, died on 12 November aged 95. With Jack Kirby he created the Fantastic Four, Incredible Hulk, Thor (well, the comics version), Iron Man, X-Men and the Avengers team including some of the above; with Bill Everett, Daredevil; and with Steve Ditko, Doctor Strange and Spider-Man. Lee made regular cameo appearances in the resulting Marvel Cinematic Universe productions.
- *Bertil Mårtensson* (1945-2018), Swedish philosopher and notable sf, fantasy, and crime novelist who was also active in fandom in the 1960s and 1990s, died on 4 November; he was 73. [J-HH]
- *Akira Miyazaki* (1934-2018), Japanese anime director and screenwriter who scripted *The Wizard of Oz* (1982), *Happy Moomin Family* (1990-1991) and many more, died on 25 November aged 84. [HM]

- *Mike Noble* (1930-2018), UK comics artist whose work included the *Fireball XL5* and *Captain Scarlet* strips for *TV Century 21*, died on 19 November aged 88. [JF]
- *Kitty O’Neil* (1946-2018), US stuntwoman and racing driver who was stunt double for the stars of *The Bionic Woman* (1976-1978) and *Wonder Woman* (1977-1979), died on 2 November aged 72. [AIP]
- *Fred Patten* (1940-2018), US fan, collector and scholar of fan history, anime, manga and anthropomorphic (‘furry’) fiction – of which he edited several anthologies – died on 12 November aged 77. [LG] His work was honoured with a special committee award from the 2006 Worldcon.
- *Douglas Rain* (1928-2018), Canadian actor who voiced HAL 9000 in *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968) and *2010* (1984) – also the Evil Computer in *Sleeper* (1973) – died on 11 November aged 90. [S]
- *Nicolas Roeg* (1928-2018), UK director of *The Man Who Fell to Earth* (1976), *The Witches* (1990, based on Roald Dahl’s novel), *Cold Heaven* (1991) and *Puffball* (2007, based on Fay Weldon’s novel), died on 24 November aged 90. [CH] As cinematographer he worked on *The Masque of the Red Death* (1964) and *Fahrenheit 451* (1966).
- *Domingo Santos* (Pedro Domingo Mutiñó, 1941-2018), major Spanish author, editor, publisher and translator who co-founded the magazine *Nueva Dimensión* in 1968, died on 2 November aged 76. [MV] He did much to popularize sf in Spain, publishing Spanish authors and translating many English-language classics.
- *Carl Sargent* (1952-2018), UK parapsychologist and author of source material for the role-playing games *D&D*, *Shadowrun* and *Warhammer* – plus ‘Fighting Fantasy’ novels and gamebooks as Keith Martin – died on 11 November aged 65. [MR]
- Late report: *Rosie Scott* (1948-2017), New Zealand-born author whose sf novel is *Feral City* (1992), died on 4 May 2017 aged 71. [SH]
- *Harold Stein*, US filk fan and unofficial sound archivist of the filk community, died on 26 October. [AT]
- *Ken Swofford* (1933-2018), US actor in *The Andromeda Strain* (1971), *Black Roses* (1988) and *The Stepford Children* (1987), died on 1 November aged 85. [PDF]
- *Terry Wiley* (1961-2018), UK comics artist whose independent comics *More Tales From Sleaze Castle* and *Petra Etcetera* both won awards, died on 9 September aged 56. [SG/SH]

- Late reports: *Chloe Zerwick* (1923-2018), US author, editor and artist who co-wrote *The Cassiopeia Affair* (1968) with Harrison Brown, died on 13 June aged 95. [JC]
- *Norman Zierold* (1927-2018), US author whose sf novel was *The Skyscraper Doom* (1972), died on 7 March aged 90. [JC]

The Weakest Link. *Joe Lycett*: ‘Emma Hamilton was the mistress of which naval hero?’ *Contestant*: ‘I don’t know. Popeye?’ (BBC1, *The Time It Takes*)

• *Bradley Walsh*: ‘Witches are most often depicted flying on what object?’ *Contestant*: ‘A UFO.’ (ITV, *The Chase*) [PE]

As Others See Climate Change Fiction. ‘There is something counterintuitive about cli-fi, about the fictional representation of scientifically substantiated predictions that too many people discount as fictions.’ (Katy Waldman, *New Yorker* review, 9 November) [AIP]

Court Circular. The Satanic Temple filed a \$50m lawsuit against Netflix and Warner Bros. for using a copy of the Temple’s notorious statue of the horned deity Baphomet in *The Chilling Adventures of Sabrina*. Besides copyright violation, the complaint was that ‘prominent use of this symbol as the central focal point of the school associated with evil, cannibalism and murder blurs and tarnishes the TST Baphomet with Children as a mark of TST.’ ([Hollywood Reporter](#), 8 November) [AIP] On 21 November the suit was announced as ‘amicably’ settled, with any tasty details kept confidential. (*Guardian*, 22 November) [LK]

Nebula Award rules changes made public in November include adding the new category Game Writing and extending the award voting to associate as well as full members of SFWA. ([SFWA.org](#), 9 November)

The Dead Past. *40 Years Ago*, Peter Roberts reviewed *The International Science Fiction Yearbook* edited by Colin Lester: ‘A 400 page handbook of sf & fandom, *The International Sf Yearbook* is divided into 29 sections, covering everything from Latin American sf, sf libraries, and sf pseudonyms, to tv, apas, and fan awards. Each section has some sort of an introduction followed, in most cases, by a bibliography or relevant listing. Contributors include Ben Bova, Ramsey Campbell, Malcolm Edwards, and Darko Suvin (whose contribution is sufficiently incomprehensible to deserve a mention in “Pseud’s Corner” for its abuse of the English language). Strangely enough, most of these guest contributors receive only hidden credit and their names

can only be winkled out by a thorough reading of the text – they’re not even listed on the contents page. Still, that’s their problem. / The listings are undoubtedly the most important part of the book and there’s enough of them to prove useful as a reference source and address list. If you need someone to translate an sf story into Hungarian, Flemish, or Turkish, you’ll find your man in here; or if you’ve ever wanted to join the International Wizard Of Oz Club Inc or even, believe it or not, the mysterious Astral League itself, you can turn to the Yearbook for help.’ (*Checkpoint* 92, December 1978) Despite hopes for improvement in future editions, this was the *International SF Yearbook*’s one and only appearance.

- *100 Years Ago*, Robert Ripley’s first *Believe It Or Not* strip appeared (as *Champs and Chumps*) in the *New York Globe* – on 19 December 1918 according to Ripley Inc, but research by Art Lortie indicates [it was really 15 December](#). Unbelievable!

Publishers & Sinners. Prometheus Books ‘decided to return to its nonfiction roots’ and sold off its Pyr (sf/fantasy) and Seventh Street (crime) imprints to Start Books. (*Publishers Weekly*, 12 November)

Fanfundery. *TAFF 2019*: candidates for the 2019 race from North America to the Dublin Worldcon are Teresa Cochran, Sarah Gulde, Mike Lowrey, and Geri Sullivan (announced 23 November). Voting runs from 1 December to 22 April 2019. See taff.org.uk for the ballot form.

- *GUFF*: nominations for the 2019 race from Australasia to the Dublin worldcon opened on 8 October and close on 5 December; voting will end on 22 April 2019. See ozfanfunds.com/?page_id=6.

As Others Saw Us. ‘An experienced writer in the pseudo-scientific field, John W. Campbell, Jr., is the new editor of *Astounding Stories*. He is also a trained physicist, and stands ready to help writers with scientific details and formulas – an important phase of these stories.’ (*Writer’s Digest* market report, December 1937) [JL/MMW]

Editorial. For many years my most hated *Ansible* chore was the regular search through a vast ‘limbo list’ of past convention websites for updates to the overseas events page at news.ansible.uk/conlisti.html. Enough! Henceforth, con listings will still vanish as they pass into history, but that page will otherwise be updated only when committees or other interested fans tell me about new or repeated events. Worldcons and Eurocons are listed in

any case, and the UK events list is unaffected.

- Meanwhile, seasonal greetings and best wishes to all *Ansible* readers. To help blight the festivities I've added my 2015 fannish ebook *Don't Try This At Home: Selected Convention Reports* to the free downloads page at the TAFF site: see taff.org.uk/ebooks.php?x=DontTryThis. As always, readers who enjoy any of these freebies are urged to donate to TAFF.

Thog's Masterclass. *Dept of Pleonasm.* 'Aro started to laugh. "Ha, ha, ha," he chuckled.' (Stephenie Meyer, *New Moon*, 2006)

- *Paddington Bear Hard Stare Dept.* 'The vitriol in his eyes could have melted glass.' (Freda Warrington, *The Dark Blood of Poppies*, 1995) [BA]

- *More Neat Tricks.* "'But whatever it means to you," she said, long mouth wrapping the words before it sent them out, packaged like presents ...' (Justina Robson, *Mappa Mundi*, 2001) [PB] "'What?" I said without joining lips together.' (Cornell Woolrich, *The Black Angel*, 1943) [PB]

- *Ring of Confidence Dept.* 'Val's face was more confident now that he had sphincter control.' (T.G. Bass, *Half Past Human*, 1971) [DA]

- *Dept of Autopsy Reports.* 'At the moment of her death, her heart had weighed four grams, her brain seven.' (Thomas Cook, *Flesh and Blood*, 1989)

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 7 December 2018, Brum Group Christmas social at Selly Park Tavern: too late to book if you haven't already. Brum Group guest speaker evenings normally 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre. £4 or £3 for members. Contact [bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk](mailto:bhamsfgroup@yahoo.co.uk). Future events/speakers: 14 January 2019, AGM and book auction (free); 8 February 2019, Gareth Powell; 8 March 2019, TBA; 12 April 2019, TBA; 10 May 2019, Daniel Godfrey; 14 July 2019, Jeanette Ng and Micah Yongo.

Outraged Letters. Owen Whiteoak on [Ansible 376](#): 'I think you're very mean on poor old H.G. [Wells] and his comments on the future of air transport and of submarines, while ignoring his many successes. He did, after all, predict intelligent life on Mars and the invention of a time machine. Credit where credit's due.' (6 November)

Imminent Events. The following have been deported from the above events list since the printed *Ansible* (which ends with Thog's Masterclass) won't reach anyone in time.

1 Dec • **Dragonmeet** (gaming), Novotel London West, W6 8DR. 9am-midnight. £12 reg with group discounts: www.dragonmeet.co.uk.

1 Dec • **Yulemoot** (Tolkien Society), Gunmakers' Arms, 93 Bath Street, Birmingham, B4 6HG. 6pm to late. Open to all.

1-2 Dec • **For the Love of Sci-Fi** (comics), Trafford Park, Manchester. See fortheLoveofsci-fi.com.

2 Dec • **Stars of Time** (media), Tropicana, Weston-super-Mare. 10:30am-5pm. £7.50; under-12s, OAP and disabled £4; under-4s free. Family of 2+2 kids £18; 2+3 kids £19. See www.starsoftime.co.uk.

Thog's Second Helping. 'This one stood even taller with a massive haunch of muscle around her shoulders.' 'Linden's horse snailed from the green.' 'A handful of shanten children were hurling stones from the flat top of an officious building.' (all Jay Norhearn, *Beyond Falcon's Reach*, 2018) [BJ]

Ansible® 377 © David Langford, 2018. Thanks to Dev Agarwal, Brian Ameringen, Paul Barnett, John Boston, John Clute, Paul Di Filippo, *Doctor Who News*, *File 770*, John Freeman, Lee Gold, Steve Green, Chip Hitchcock, Steve Holland, John-Henri Holmberg, Marcia Illingworth, Ben Jeapes, Leroy Kettle, John Locke, *Locus*, Helen McCarthy, Joe McNally, Wayne Myers, Tony Peak, Andrew I. Porter, *Private Eye*, Marcus Rowland, Alison Scott, Siadwell, Arthur Tansky, Mariano Villarreal, Martin Morse Wooster, and as always our Hero Distributors: Durdles Books for the Birmingham SF Group, SCIS/Prophecy and Alan Stewart (Australia). 30 November 2018

2019

Ansible® 378, January 2019

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE, boko-maru, foma, sinookas or a stuppa.

The Grand Ah-Whoom

Enid Blyton was fondly remembered as only British newspapers can do it: ‘Golly! Today marks the 50th anniversary of Enid Blyton’s death. More than half a decade has passed, then, since she was at the height of her literary powers ...’ (*Daily Telegraph*, 28 November) [PE]

John-Henri Holmberg shared the major Translator Award given along with other prizes by Sweden’s Samfundet De Nio (‘The Nine Society’), and will receive SEK 100,000 – close to £9,000. [AE] His translations into Swedish include much sf and crime, 22 books by Stephen King, and Lemony Snicket’s *A Series of Unfortunate Events*.

George Orwell is commemorated by the Orwell Prize for political writing – until now nonfiction-only, but with a fiction category ‘including short stories, graphic novels and YA’ added in the 2019 awards for 2018 work. See orwellfoundation.com/the-orwell-prizes/. [ESF]

Adam Roberts’s timbers were shivered by a new literary term for the female bosom: ‘Slowly one by one, he unfastened the hooks and eyes and slid the dress from the sorceress’s shoulders. After that he utterly devoted his hands and attention to a pair of galleons under full sail. Galleons one would search for in vain on all the maritime routes, harbours, ports, and registers of the admiralty.’ (Andrzej Sapkowski, *Season of Storms*, 2013; translated 2018) Naturally all this nautical excitement involves the lady’s bed: ‘An enormous one. The bed was huge and had a canopy. The bed linen was of silk. It’s no exaggeration to say that they made use of the entire bed, of every single inch. Every inch of the bed linen. And every fold of the sheets.’ ([Morphosis blog](#),

30 November) After which, no doubt, they needed to lie down for a bit.

Sara Taylor, whose story cycle *The Shore* (2015) has magic-realist and post-apocalyptic sections, won the £20,000 Eccles British Library Writer's Award (fiction) for 2019 – to help research her next book. [L]

Confloption

Until 14 Jan • **Alasdair Gray** exhibition, Viktor Wynd Museum of Curiosities, 11 Mare St, London, E8 4RP. Admission £6. Closed Mondays.

Until 26 Jan • **The Art of the Gestetner** (exhibition by art group exploring retro tech), Bruce Castle Museum, Lordship Lane, N17 8NU. Opening hours 1pm-5pm Wednesday-Sunday every week. Free.

12 Jan • **Writing Fantastic Tales** (workshop), QUAD Centre, Derby. 2pm-5pm; £13. Also 'Writing Fantastic Plots And Players' on 19 January and 'Writing Fantastic Worlds' on 26 January: same venue, price and time. See www.derbyquad.co.uk/whats-on/get-creative/adults.

18-20 Jan • **Redemption** (multimedia), Royal Victoria Hotel, Sheffield. £70 reg; concessions £50; under-18s £25; under-3s free. *Advance booking closes 5 January: £75 (concessions £50) at the door.* For online booking (5% fee) and day rates, see redemptioncon.org.uk.

1-3 Feb • **31-ET** (filk), Best Western Hotel, Marks Tey, Colchester. £38 reg or £28 unwaged plus booking fees; under-18s £1/year of age; under-5s free. Further details at www.contabile.org.uk/31et/.

8-10 Feb • **SF Ball** (media), Grand Harbour Hotel, Southampton. £135 reg or £15/day; child £45 or £5. See sfbevents.com/sfball.

16 Feb • **Picocon 36**, Blakett Building, Imperial College, London. Several guests of honour. £12 reg; £10 concessions; £8 for ICSF members; past GoHs free. See www.union.ic.ac.uk/scc/icsf/picocon/.

1-2 Mar • **Frightfest** (film), Glasgow Film Theatre. Tickets £75 weekend, or (limited numbers) £11.50 per film: on sale 14 January at www.frightfest.co.uk/filmsevents.html. Also London events at Leicester Square: 22-26 August plus a Hallowe'en special on 2 November.

10 Mar • **Birmingham International Horrorshow**, Victoria pub, John

Bright St, Birmingham. See www.birmingham-horror.co.uk.

19-22 Apr • **Ytterbium** (Eastercon), Park Inn, Heathrow. £80 reg, rising to £90 on 1 April; £30 concessions; £25 under-18s; under-5s free. Some bursaries are available to help low-income members with hotel costs: see ytterbium.org.uk/about/convention-policies/bursaries/.

25-26 Aug • **Stars of Time** (media), Tropicana, Weston-super-Mare. 10am-5pm. £7.50; under-12s, OAP and disabled £4; under-4s free. Family of 2+2 kids £18; 2+3 kids £19. See www.starsoftime.co.uk.

25-27 Oct • **Festival of Fantastic Films**, Pendulum Hotel, Manchester. £85 reg. For hotel rates see fantastic-films.com/festival/.

31 Oct - 3 Nov • **Edinburgh Horror Festival**, The Banshee Labyrinth, Niddry St, and other city venues including Lauriston Castle. Poe-themed in part. Many events are free. See www.edhorrorfest.co.uk.

7-8 Dec • **For the Love of Sci-Fi** (comics), Trafford Park, Manchester. Tickets at various prices from fortheloveofsci-fi.com.

Rumblings. *Dublin 2019*: this Worldcon's Special Hugo – and also Retro-Hugo – category will be Best Art Book. (Twitter, 30 November)

• *Concentric 2020* is an Eastercon bid with the Hilton Metropole Hotel (Birmingham NEC) as venue and dates 10-13 April 2020; its fate will be decided at the 2019 Eastercon. See www.concentric2020.uk.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. A futuristic parallel-world virtual reality system in *Come With Me* by Helen Schulman narrowly avoids the taint of all-out skiffyness: 'This perhaps suggests that Schulman has left behind the hyper-realism of her two most recent novels for the realms of speculative fiction. Fortunately, that's true only in a small way. Multiverse theory functions primarily as a thematic framework here, and the headphones and glasses make only a few appearances.' (*NY Times*, 19 December) [JB]

UK New Year Honours. Listed names of genre interest include Margaret Atwood (Companion of Honour, for services to literature), Julia Donaldson (CBE; literature), Thandie Newton (OBE; film, charity), Christopher Nolan (CBE; drama), Sophie Okonedo (CBE; drama), Michael Palin (knighted;

travel, culture, geography), Philip Pullman (knighted; literature) and Chris Riddell (OBE; illustration, charity).

Futurology Masterclass. ‘I predict that the farsightedness of many persons in Wyoming will make them the safest persons in the atomic holocaust of 1987. They will have shelters, and, after the brief but costly war, we will depend on the many survivors who live in Wyoming to help rebuild many cities of the country.’ (*Criswell Predicts*, 1968)

R.I.P. *John Allard* (1928-2018), UK comics artist, writer and editor long associated with the *Daily Mirror* sf strip *Garth* and at one period co-author of *The Perishers*, died on 7 November aged 90. [SH]

- *Paul Dale Anderson* (1944-2018), US author of much horror, sf and fantasy including the ‘Winds’ series of supernatural thrillers opening with *Abandoned* (2015), died on 13 December aged 74. [PDF]

- *Peter Armitage* (1940-2018), UK actor in *The Second Coming* (2003 tv), died on 4 December aged 78. [SG]

- *Terry Bave* (1931-2018), UK comics artist whose first children’s fantasy strip was *Sammy Shrink* for *Wham!* in 1967 and who later ghosted *Grimly Feendish* for Leo Baxendale, died on 6 December. His illustrated autobiography is *Cartoons and Comic Strips* (2013). [SG]

- *Ken Berry* (1933-2018), US actor whose credits include *Herbie Rides Again* (1974), *The Cat from Outer Space* (1978) and episodes of *Fantasy Island* (1978-1982), died on 1 December aged 85. [JP]

- *John D.F. Black* (1932-2018), US writer and producer who wrote *The Unearthly* (1957), the Hugo-nominated ‘The Naked Time’ for the original *Star Trek* (1966; he was associate producer for ten episodes), *Wonder Woman* (1974) and *The Clone Master* (1978), died on 29 November aged 85. [F770]

- *Morgan J. Bolt* (?1991-2018), US author of the young-adult ‘Tamyth’ trilogy (2013-2015) and dystopian sf novel *The Favored* (2018), died on 18 December. [PDF]

- *Ian Cameron* (Donald Gordon Payne, 1924-2018), UK author whose first sf novel *The Lost Ones* (1961) was filmed as *The Island at the Top of the World* (1974), died on 22 August aged 94. [GC]

- *Graham Connor*, UK fan, convention-goer and event organizer who co-edited *SF² Concatenation* from its 1987 print-format launch to the current web incarnation, died in late December; he was 61. [SF²C]

- *Penny Cook* (1957-2018), Australian actress whose genre film was *The*

Dreaming (1988), died on 26 December aged 61. [GC]

- *Emeka Walter Dinjos*, Nigerian sf/fantasy author with several short stories published and forthcoming, died on 12 December aged 34. [F770]

- *Hugues Douriaux* (1947-2018), French author of both sf and fantasy novels (sometimes erotic), died last March; this was not reported until November. [AS]

- *Larry Eisenberg* (1919-2018), contributor to *Dangerous Visions* and author of the ‘Emmett Duckworth’ sf comedies – many collected as *The Best Laid Schemes* (1971) – died on 25 December aged 99. [GF] From 2008 he gained new fame by posting over 13,000 verse comments to the *New York Times* website, mostly limericks; he contributed one to [Ansible 371](#).

- *Wendy Freeman* (1939-2018), long-time UK fan and cheerful presence at many past conventions – inducted into the Knights of St Fantasy in 1967 – died just before Christmas. She is survived by her husband Keith Freeman, to whom all sympathy.

- *Toshiko Fujita* (1950-2018), Japanese voice actress whose anime credits include *Fist of the North Star* (1984-1987) and *Digimon Adventure* (1999), died on 28 December aged 68.

- *Audrey Geisel* (1921-2018), widow of Theodor ‘Dr Seuss’ Geisel who ran his estate since his death in 1991 and had executive producer credits for the film adaptations *Horton Hears a Who!* (2008), *The Lorax* (2012) and *The Grinch* (2018), died on 19 December aged 97. [CH]

- *Norman Gimbel* (1927-2018), Oscar-winning composer and lyricist whose many film soundtrack credits include *V for Vendetta* (2005), *Repo Men* (2010) and *Logan* (2017), died on 19 December aged 91. [AL]

- *Jorge Grau* (1930-2018), Spanish screenwriter and director whose films include *The Legend of Blood Castle* (1973) and *The Living Dead at the Manchester Morgue* (1974, aka *Let Sleeping Corpses Lie*), died on 26 December aged 88. [SG]

- *Fred Isaacs*, US convention-running fan in the Boston area whose many roles included being treasurer of the 1971 Worldcon and chairing Boskone 9, died on 26 December. [SS]

- *Quentin Kenihan* (1975-2018), Australian disability advocate with acting roles in *Dr. Plonk* (2007) and *Mad Max: Fury Road* (2015), died on 6 October aged 43. [GC]

- *Ringo Lam* (1954-2018), Hong Kong director and screenwriter whose films include *Esprit D’Amour* (1983), *Mad Mission 4: You Never Die Twice* (1986)

and *Replicant* (2001), died on 29 December aged 64. [MMW]

- *Jane Langton* (1922-2018), US author best known for crime fiction, who also wrote children's fantasies such as the Hall Family series opening with *The Diamond in the Window* (1962), died on 22 December aged 95. [L]
- *Giuseppe Lippi* (1953-2018), Italian editor and translator who worked on *Robot* magazine from 1977 and was best known as editor of the major sf magazine *Urania* from 1990 to 2018, died on 14 December aged 65. Authors he translated include H.P. Lovecraft and Robert E. Howard. [PDF]
- *Sondra Locke* (1944-2018), US actress and director who appeared in *Willard* (1971), died on 3 November aged 74. [PDF]
- *Don Lusk* (1913-2018), US animator who worked on Disney productions 1938-1960 – including *Pinocchio*, *Fantasia*, *Bambi*, *Cinderella*, *Peter Pan*, *Sleeping Beauty* and *101 Dalmatians* – and later directed many tv series and films for Hanna-Barbera, died on 31 December aged 105. [PDF]
- *Galt MacDermot* (1928-2018), Canadian-American composer whose musicals include *Hair* (1967), the Grimm-based fairytale *Isabel's a Jezebel* (1970) and the sf *Via Galactica* (1972), died on 17 December – one day short of his 90th birthday. [MMW]
- *Penny Marshall* (1943-2018), US actress and film-maker who directed *Big* (1988), co-produced *Bewitched* (2005) and had a voice part in *Scooby-Doo! and Kiss: Rock and Roll Mystery* (2015), died on 17 December aged 75. [JS]
- *Peter Masterson* (1934-2018), US director and actor seen in *The Exorcist* (1973) and *The Stepford Wives* (1975), died on 18 December aged 84. [F770]
- *Donald Moffat* (1930-2018), UK actor whose credits include *The Terminal Man* (1974), *Exo-Man* (1977), *Logan's Run* (1977-1978 tv), *Popeye* (1980), *The Thing* (1982) and *Monster in the Closet* (1986), died on 20 December aged 87. [S]
- *Billie Sue Mosiman* (1947-2018), US author of suspense novels and dark fantasies such as *Banished* (2011), died in late December aged 71. [AIP] She edited the all-women anthology *Fright Mare: Women Write Horror* (2016).
- *Bill Sellars* (1925-2018), UK tv producer who directed the four-part *Doctor Who* storyline 'The Celestial Toymaker' (1966), died on 19 December aged 93. [DWN]
- *Barbara Brooks Wallace* (1922-2018), US author of young-adult mysteries whose seven fantasies include a five-book series about the witch Miss Switch – opening with *The Trouble with Miss Switch* (1980) – died on 27 November aged 95. [MMW]

- *June Whitfield* (1925-2018), UK actress whose genre credits include *The Lion, the Witch & the Wardrobe* (1979), *Wyrld Sisters* (1997, as Nanny Ogg) and *Doctor Who: 'The End of Time'* (2009-2010), died on 28 December aged 93. [FM]

- *Lia Wyler* (1934-2018), award-winning Brazilian translator of J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter saga as well as books by Margaret Atwood, Arthur Conan Doyle, Stephen King, Joyce Carol Oates, John Updike and others, died on 11 December aged 84. [PDF]

The Weakest Link. *Jeopardy* 'Posthumous Books' answer for which the correct question had to be supplied: 'After death, this horror author still talked about the *Necronomicon* in his novel, *The Case of Charles Dexter Ward*.' Contestant: 'Who is Asimov?' (11 December) [AIP]

Magazine Scene. Jason Sizemore of *Apex Magazine* announced the immediate end of its print edition – after one trial and 11 monthly issues – and reversion to digital-only publication. ([Blog post](#), 10 December) [L]

As Others Avoid Us (But Politely). '... when I get time to read on my own, I prefer something that provides a bit of an escape. That said, I don't need to escape too much – I'm not looking to travel to outer space or a fantasy world. Science fiction isn't really for me.' (Michelle Obama, *New York Times Book Review*, 12 December) [JB]

The Dead Past. *70 Years Ago*, a humble British Interplanetary Society member made good: 'Congratulations to Arthur C. Clarke, B.I.S. councillor and s-f author, recently appointed Assistant Ed. of technical journal *Science Abstracts*.' ([Science Fantasy News 1](#), January 1949)

- *20 Years Ago*, 'Ned Brooks discovered Revealed Truth in his local paper *The Atlanta Constitution*: "J.R.R. Tolkien (1892-1973) was the creator of the imaginary *Lord of the Rings* and *The Silmarillion*, which spawned the entire genre of fantasy science fiction.'" (*Ansible* 138, January 1999)

Fanfundery. *TAFF 2019* voting began in December and continues to 22 April 2019. See taff.org.uk for the ballot and online voting form.

- *GUFF*: voting in the 2019 race from Australasia to the Dublin worldcon also began in December and continues to 22 April 2019. The candidates are Lynelle Howell, Simon Litten and Nicole Murphy; the online ballot can be found at ozfanfunds.com/?page_id=127.

- *DUFF*. Administrator Paul Wiemer writes: 'There will be no 2019 Down

Under Fan Fund delegate, with the expectation that the 2020 race will send a delegate from North America to Worldcon in New Zealand in 2020.'

SFWA has 'decided to formally and publicly acknowledge the multiple complaints and expressions of concern made both publicly and privately in recent months by former Writers of the Future finalists who state that they have had negative experiences during or after the event.' (SFWA.org, 3 December) No sordid details are given. In August 2018, WotF was removed from the list of SFWA qualifying markets.

Outraged Letters. *Matthew Davies* reports a rarity missed by bibliographers and by *Maps: The Uncollected John Sladek*: 'Nearly 20 years too late for the anthology, but here's another piece by John Sladek.' – in *Strange Faeces* #10b (1973/4), readable online at tinyurl.com/ycrj5slh. Which reminds me of how long it's been since Sladek prophetically published 'The Great Wall of Mexico' (in *Bad Moon Rising*, 1973).

Convention Woes. 'Reconstitution' of the loss-making [Nine Worlds Geekfest](#) (see [A374](#)) has gone so slowly that – as supporters complained in tweets – the November deadline to take up the 2019 repeat booking option for the established Novotel London West venue in Hammersmith was missed. Thus there may be a 'small, one day interim event' this year, but no full-scale Nine Worlds until 2020. ([Twitter](#), [16-22 December](#))

Cult Crosswords. Easy clue in a Christmas prize puzzle: 'Cruise into this colony? It's e.g. "swinging". (11)' (*Private Eye*, 22 December)

Editorial. Happy New Year to all readers of *Ansible*, which has its (gulp) fortieth anniversary in August. I hope to see some of you at Picocon (possibly) and Ytterbium (probably), but for tiresome personal reasons don't expect to attend the utterly wonderful [Dublin Worldcon](#).

Thog's Masterclass. *Channelling T. Lobsang Rampa*. 'With all my eyes I stared at him.' (A.M. Williamson, *The House by the Lock*, 1899) [PB]

- *Anatomy Dept.* 'Jack felt a twitch of fear working its way up her legs from the base of her spine.' (Annalee Newitz, *Autonomous*, 2017) [MM]
- *Whatever Turns You On.* 'Trails of exquisite fire were licking his loins, his abdomen, spreading upwards to tantalise his throat and the tips of his fangs ...' (Freda Warrington, *The Dark Blood of Poppies*, 1995) [BA]
- *Guinness Book of Records Please Copy.* 'The bodyguard [...] was a half

breed, the result of a cross between an ogre and a dwarf. The result was a bald dwarf with a height of well over seven feet.’ (Andrzej Sapkowski, *Season of Storms*, 2013; translated 2018) [AR]

- *The Smile That Wins*. ‘Sorel Degerlund grinned a vicious smile, a smile calling to mind centipedes squeezing through gaps under doors.’ (*Ibid*)
- *Astrogation Dept*. ‘I noted, as I shot past it, a constellation to my left very near, and my astronomical knowledge informed me that it was one of the remotest in our solar system.’ (Nictzin Dyalhis, ‘The Eternal Conflict’, October 1925 *Weird Tales*) [DL] ‘On and on, past planets and suns and constellations, galaxies and nebulae and asteroids, into, through, and beyond the great solar system hurtled that Spirit-Spark that was I.’ (Nictzin Dyalhis, ‘The Dark Lore’, October 1927 *Weird Tales*) [DL]
- *The Morning After the Night Before*. ‘Billie’s legs are noodles. The ends of her hairs are poison needles. Her tongue is a bristly sponge, and her eyes are bags of bleach.’ (Kelly Link, ‘Secret Identity’ in *Get in Trouble*, 2015) [MM]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

• 11 January 2019, Brum Group AGM and book auction (free event). 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre. Normally £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future events/speakers: 8 February 2019, Gareth Powell; 8 March 2019, Chris Morgan; 12 April 2019, TBA; 10 May 2019, Daniel Godfrey; 14 June 2019, Jeanette Ng and Micah Yongo; 12 July 2019, Christopher Priest and Nina Allan.

Creature Feature Redux. The [Creaturegeddon](#) creatures-and-monsters convention remains implacably determined to give no useful information on its website, but according to another Facebook post the 2019 event will *not* be on the last weekend of February as previously announced (see [Ansible 376](#)). Keep watching the skies....

Thog’s Second Helping. Thog sneers at the contenders for the 2018 *Literary Review* Bad Sex Award, especially when the first quotation is from a book that’s *meant* to be funny:

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2018/nov/30/bad-sex-award-2018-the-contenders-in-quotes>

Ansible® 378 © David Langford, 2019. Thanks to *Amazing Stories*, Brian Ameringen, Paul Barnett, John D. Berry, John Boston, Gary Couzens, Paul Di Filippo, *Doctor Who News*, Ahrvid Engholm, Europa SF, Gary Farber, *File 770*, Steve Green, Chip Hitchcock, Steve Holland, Denny Lien, *Locus*, Andrew Love, Farah Mendlesohn, Murray Moore, *Private Eye*, Andrew I. Porter, John Purcell, Adam Roberts, John Scalzi, *SF² Concatenation*, Siadwell, Alison Scott, Somtow Sucharitkul, Martin Morse Wooster, and as always our Hero Distributors: Durdles Books for the Birmingham SF Group, SCIS/Prophecy and Alan Stewart (Australia). 2 January 2019

Ansible® 379, February 2019

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo:
Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Ulrika O'Brien**. Available for SAE or an elephant
with a wooden leg.

A Celery of No Compass

Lady Penelope Creighton-Ward of *Thunderbirds* fame – salvaged by the Anderson production team puppeteer Mary Turner – was valued at £38,000 by the BBC *Antiques Roadshow* pundits. Captain Scarlet's valuation in the same show was a mere £20,000. (BBC, 6 January)

Claire Eddy has been promoted to executive editor at Tor/Forge Books.
(*Publishers Lunch*, 8 January) [MJW]

Michel Houellebecq was awarded France's highest civilian distinction, the Legion of Honour, in January. Innovatively, the latest 'novel by the celebrated but controversial author predicts the doom of western civilisation.'
(*Telegraph*, 1 January) [DP]

Sherrilyn Kenyon, US author of the 'Dark-Hunter' paranormal romance series, filed a lawsuit against her husband Lawrence Kenyon (divorce in progress) and his assistant Kerrie Ann Plump for having 'systematically poisoned her since 2015' and stolen 'hundreds of thousands of dollars of her personal income'. Lawrence Kenyon's attorney says: 'These astonishing and unsubstantiated allegations may stand as her best fantasy creation yet'.
(*Publishers Lunch*, 16 January) [AIP/PB]

Michael Moorcock's farewell stage performance will be as part of the band Moonhawks in a celebration of '50 Years of the Music of Hawkwind' at North American Space Ritual 2019 (Austin, Texas, 30 March 2019; comeandtakeitproductions.com). [JL] The Moorcockian version of the event poster can be seen at tinyurl.com/ydh4gc4v.

J.K. Rowling continued to provide Too Much Information about her wizarding world when her Pottermore site broadcast the vital datum – years old at Pottermore but new to Twitter – that ‘Hogwarts didn’t always have bathrooms. Before adopting Muggle plumbing methods in the eighteenth century, witches and wizards simply relieved themselves wherever they stood, and vanished the evidence.’ (4 January) SF fans may be reminded of similar effects achieved via permeable clothing and absorptive furniture in Theodore Sturgeon’s ‘The Skills of Xanadu’.

Gahan Wilson, whose 89th birthday is on 18 February, [announced his retirement](#) from cartoon work in January. [PW]

Contragredient

Until 9 Feb • **Discworld & Beyond** (exhibition), N. Herts Museum, Hitchin. See www.paulkidby.com/event/discworld-beyond-6/.

Until 24 Feb • **The Art of the Gestetner** (exhibition), Bruce Castle Museum, Lordship Lane, N17 8NU. Closing date extended from 26 January: see below. Open 1pm-5pm, Wednesday to Sunday. Free.

1-3 Feb • **31-ET** (filk), Best Western Hotel, Marks Tey, Colchester. £38 reg or £28 unwaged plus booking fees; under-18s £1/year of age; under-5s free. Further details at www.contabile.org.uk/31et/.

7-8 Feb • **The Art of the Mimeograph** (conference linked to exhibition above), University of Westminster, 35 Marylebone Rd, London, NW1 5LS. 9am-6pm. Free, but booking is required: see goo.gl/t3dizP. Thursday-afternoon events include an interview with Rob Hansen.

8 Feb • **The Hitchhiker’s Guide to Alice** (Lewis Carroll Society talk on Douglas Adams), Art Workers’ Guild, 6 Queens Sq, London. 6:30pm for 7pm. £5; LCS members free. See lewiscarrollsociety.org.uk.

8-10 Feb • **SF Ball** (media), Grand Harbour Hotel, Southampton. £135 reg or £15/day; child £45 or £5. See sfbevents.com/sfball.

13 Feb • **The Shakespeare of SF**: talk on H.G. Wells by Michael Sherborne, Century Club, Soho, London W1. 6:30pm for 7pm. Tickets £12: acuriousinvitation.com/scientificromanceandhgwells.html. More talks (same venue, time, price): *Brave New World*, 20 March; Philip K. Dick, 24 April; A

Clockwork Orange, 15 May; Aleister Crowley, 10 July.

16 Feb • **Picocon 36**, Blackett Building, Imperial College, London. Several guests of honour. £12 reg; £10 concessions; £8 for ICSF members; past GoHs free. See www.union.ic.ac.uk/scc/icsf/picocon/.

26 Feb • **Tolkien Lecture**: Marlon James. Pichette Auditorium, Pembroke College, Oxford. 6pm. Free booking at tolkienlecture.org.

27 Feb • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 6pm for 7pm. Speaker(s) TBA. Free.

1-2 Mar • **Frightfest** (film), Glasgow Film Theatre. Tickets £75 for the full weekend, or (limited numbers) £11.50 per film: now on sale at www.frightfest.co.uk/filmsevents.html. Also London events at Leicester Square: 22-26 August plus a Hallowe'en special on 2 November.

10 Mar • **Birmingham International Horrorshow**, Victoria pub, John Bright St, Birmingham. See www.birmingham-horror.co.uk.

11 Mar • **John Wyndham** event on the 50th anniversary of his death. 6pm for 6:15pm talk at his one-time home The Penn Club, 21-23 Bedford Place, London; later at The College Arms pub, 18 Store Street. Further details and poster at triffidalley.com/50_Anniversary.html.

15-16 Mar • **Starburst Film Festival**, The Landing, Salford. 5pm-1:15am. Tickets £33.25. See starburstmagazine.com/filmfestival/.

SOLD OUT 29 Mar - 1 Apr • **Irish Discworld Convention**, Cork. Waiting list for membership transfers at idwcon.org (deadline 1 March).

5-7 Apr • **Springmoot** (Tolkien Society), Ambassadors Bloomsbury Hotel, London. AGM for members only; dinner with GoH speech £36. Details at www.tolkiensociety.org/events/springmoot-and-agm-2019/.

11-12 May • **HorrorCon UK**, Magna Science Adventure Centre, Sheffield Rd, Rotherham, S60 1DX. Tickets £40 for 11am entry, £50 for 10am; accompanied under-17s £16. Bookings at horrorconuk.com.

23 May - 26 Aug • **Manga** (exhibition), British Museum, London. Tickets £19.50; under-19s and concessions £16; accompanied under-16s free. See britishmuseum.org/whats_on/exhibitions/manga.aspx.

15-19 Aug • **Dublin 2019** (Worldcon), Dublin, Ireland. €210 reg; under-26s

€130; under-13s €70; under-6s €5; supp €40. *Hugo nominations opened in January and close on 15 March.* See dublin2019.com. Also the academic programme track has a call for papers (closing on 22 February) at: dublin2019.com/whats-on/programming/academic/.

28-29 Sep • **Nor-Con** (media), Norfolk Showground Arena. Tickets inc fees: £31.03; £20.33 child; £96.30 family. See www.nor-con.co.uk.

26 Oct • **BristolCon**, Hilton DoubleTree Hotel, Bristol. GoH Diane Duane, Gareth L. Powell, Andy Bigwood. Membership rates and online registration form awaited at www.bristolcon.org.

1-3 Nov • **Armadacon 31**, Future Inn, Plymouth. £35 reg; concessions £30; under-16s free. PayPal registration at www.armadacon.org.

28-31 Aug 2020 • **Redemption** (multimedia), Royal Victoria Hotel, Sheffield. Guests of honour TBA. £55 reg to 31 April 2019 (then £65 to 31 April 2020; then £70 to 31 July; £75 at door); concessions £20 less; under-18s £25; under-3s free; supp £15. See redemptioncon.org.uk.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. ‘I don’t enjoy science fiction because there are things in science fiction that violate the laws of physics. I like science and I like fiction separately.’ (Avi Loeb, chair of Harvard’s astronomy department – interviewed in *The New Yorker*, 16 January) [SD]

Awards. *Academy Awards* (Oscars): *Black Panther*, with seven nominations, is the first superhero film to be shortlisted for Best Picture.

- *Golden Globes*, Animated Film: *Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse*.
- *Golden Kite* (children’s): Jane Yolen, *Mapping the Bones*. [L]
- *Philip K. Dick* shortlist: Ian McDonald, *Time Was*; Jeff Noon, *The Body Library*; Claire North, *84K*; Abbey Mei Otis, *Alien Virus Love Disaster: Stories*; Audrey Schulman, *Theory of Bastards*; Vandana Singh, *Ambiguity Machines and Other Stories*. [GVG]
- *Robert A. Heinlein Award* for 2019: Gregory Benford.
- *SFWA* career awards: *Damon Knight Grand Master*, William Gibson; *Kate Wilhelm Solstice*, Nisi Shawl and Neil Clarke.

Miniaturization Masterclass. ‘Cern physicists plan collider four times the

size of Large Hadron’. (*Guardian* headline, 16 January) [JG]

R.I.P. *Diana Athill* (1917-2019), UK writer and editor who during her long publishing career at André Deutsch worked with Margaret Atwood, Philip Roth, John Updike and many more, died on 23 January aged 101.

- *Russell Baker* (1925-2019), Pulitzer-winning US humorous columnist whose rare genre work included *The Upside-Down Man* (1977) with Gahan Wilson, died on 21 January aged 93. [AIP]

- *Kaye Ballard* (1925-2019), US singer and actress whose genre credits include *Cinderella* (1957 tv musical), *Freaky Friday* (1976), *Eternity* (1990), *What a Dummy* (1990-1991) and *Little Insects* (2000, voice), died on 21 January aged 93. [TM]

- *Mervyn ‘Merv’ Barrett* (1932-2019), New Zealand fan active in Australia and London fandom in the 1960s and 1970s, and a co-organizer of the first NZ national convention – Wellcon, 1979 – died on 15 January aged 86. [TC]

- *Verna Bloom* (1938-2019), US actress whose films include *Where Have All the People Gone?* (1974), died on 11 January aged 80. [IC]

- *John Burningham* (1936-2019), UK creator of children’s picture-books – some fantasy – who illustrated the original three-volume edition of Ian Fleming’s *Chitty-Chitty-Bang-Bang* (1964-1965) and twice won the Kate Greenaway Medal, died on 11 January aged 82. [RK]

- *Carol Channing* (1921-2019), US actress whose voice credits include *Shinbone Alley* (1970, as Mehitabel the cat), *The Addams Family* (1992-1993, as Grandma), *Thumbelina* (1994) and *The Brave Little Toaster Goes to Mars* (1998), died on 15 January aged 97. [PDF]

- *Dean Cain*, Canadian stuntman whose films include *The Incredible Hulk* (2008), *Pacific Rim* (2013) and *RoboCop* (2014), died on 22 January.

- *Windsor Davies* (1930-2019), UK actor in *Doctor Who*: ‘The Evil of the Daleks’ (1967), *Frankenstein Must Be Destroyed* (1969), *Terrahawks* (1983-1986, voice) and *Gormenghast* (2000), died on 17 January aged 88. [SG/CM]

- Late report: *Paula E. Downing* (1951-2017), US author of several sf novels beginning with *Mad Roy’s Light* (1990 as Paula King) and including the ‘Cloudships of Orion’ space operas (1994-1996 as P.K. McAllister, died on 17 December 2017 aged 66. She also wrote fantasy as Diana Marcellas. [JOW]

- *Bob Einstein* (1942-2019), US comedy writer and actor with a genre credit for *Strange Magic* (2015, voice), died on 2 January aged 76. [PDF]

- *John Falsey* (1951-2019), US tv writer and producer whose co-creations

- include the *Amazing Stories* (1985-1987) anthology series with Steven Spielberg and Joshua Brand, died on 3 January aged 67. [AIP]
- *Eric Ferguson*, US fan once active in the Southern Fandom Press Alliance APA, died on 3 January. [GL]
 - *Robert S. Friedman*, US publisher whose first venture was The Donning Company in 1974 – producing sf, fantasy and graphic novels under the Starblaze imprint – died on 9 January aged 76. [PDF]
 - *GAK* (Gregg Kanefsky), US artist who from 1996 produced covers for *Nova Express* plus other magazines and books, died on the weekend of 12/13 January. [PDF]
 - *Merwin Goldsmith* (1937-2019), US actor in *Hercules in New York* (1970) and *Unholy* (2007), died on 21 January aged 81. [PDF]
 - *Lindig Hall Harris*, long-time US fan, con-goer and bookshop owner ('Lin Digs the Book') whose fanzine was *Yclept Yarbro*, died on 1 January aged 76. [PT]
 - *Batton Lash* (1953-2019), US comics creator best known for the humorous *Wolff and Byrd*, *Counselors of the Macabre* (1979-1987, relaunched 1994 as *Supernatural Law*), died on 12 January aged 65. [PDF]
 - *Michel Legrand* (1932–2019), Oscar-winning French composer whose many film scores include *Gulliver's Travels* (1977), *Never Say Never Again* (1983), *Revenge of the Humanoids* (1983) and *Eternity* (1990), died on 26 January aged 86. [MMW]
 - *Dick Miller* (1928-2019), US character actor with many genre credits from *It Conquered the World* (1956) via *Little Shop of Horrors* (1960), *The Howling* (1981), *Gremlins* (1984), *The Terminator* (1984) and *Innerspace* (1987) to *Burying the Ex* (2014), died on 30 January aged 90.
 - *Muriel Pavlow* (1921-2019), UK actress in *Hansel and Gretel* (1937) and *Project M7* (1953), died on 19 January aged 97. [SG]
 - *Sam Savage* (1940-2019), US author of *Firmin: Adventures of a Metropolitan Lowlife* (2006) – whose hero is a rat – died on 17 January aged 78. [PDF]
 - *Matt Rose*, make-up artist and sculptor whose films include *Invaders from Mars* (1986), *Predator* (1987), *Alien Nation* (1988), *Hellboy* (2004; also sequel) and *Star Trek Beyond* (2016), died in late January. [PDF]
 - *Annis Shepherd*, 1979 Clarion graduate whose first story appeared in Lee Harding's *The Altered I* (1976), reportedly died in January. [SE]
 - *William Morgan Sheppard* (1932-2018), UK actor whose genre films

include *Elvira: Mistress of the Dark* (1988), *Star Trek VI* (1991), *The Prestige* (2006) and *Transformers* (2007), died on 6 January aged 86. [PDF]

- *Cecil Smith*, former art director at New English Library who worked with Bruce Pennington and others in the 1960s and 1970s, died on 31 December. [SH]

- *Ron Smith* (1924-2019), long-time UK comics artist who worked for D.C. Thomson 1951-1972 and from 1979 drew many Judge Dredd strips for *2000 AD*, died on 10 January aged 94. [PDF]

- *Solomon Strange*, UK author of the nautical-supernatural novel *The Haunting of Gospall* (2018), died on 4 January. [PDF]

- *Gary Tesser* (1952-2018), US fan active in APAs and in New York's fan club the Lunarians, died on 8 December. [GL]

- *Erica Yohn* (1928-2019), US actress in *An American Tail* (voice, 1986) and its sequels, and in *Amazon Women on the Moon* (1987), died on 27 January aged 90.

The Weakest Link. *John Humphrys*: 'The authors Brian Aldiss, Robert Heinlein and Isaac Asimov all wrote what kind of fiction?' *Contestant*: 'Children's?' (BBC1, *Celebrity Mastermind*, 5 January) [RJ]

- *Jeopardy* answer requiring the right question: 'This Poe story's title is realized as the narrator flees the "House" as it cracks and is torn asunder.' *Contestant*: 'What is the house with a crack in its wall?' (24 January) [AIP]

- *John Humphrys*: 'The Merchant, the Knight and the Wife of Bath are among the storytellers in which work by Chaucer?' *Contestant*: 'Shakespeare.' (BBC1, *Celebrity Mastermind*) [PE]

Magazine Scene. Angela Yuriko Smith has taken over as publisher of the long-running sf print magazine *Space and Time*, founded by Gordon Linzner in 1966. (Angelaysmith.com, 1 January) [GVG]

As Others Use SF Images. 'I was furious, feeling my children had been raped, or beaten, by an alien.' (Sylvia Plath, 1956 journal, after a friend returned borrowed books with passages underlined in pencil.)

Random Fandom. *Jack Cohen*, noted UK fan and biologist, hasn't been too well in recent years; but now there are plans for a June micro-convention in a Poole teashop where a few friends can chat with him. For details, see www.concatenation.org/stuff/jack-cohen-2019.html.

Precognition Dept. 'Ben H. Winters's new novel, *Golden State*, unfolds in

such a place, an alternate-future California ...’ (Jon Michaud review in *The Washington Post*, 23 January) [PL]

The Dead Past. *70 Years Ago*, the 1949 British Eastercon was announced: ‘On Easter Saturday, April 16th, the Science Fantasy Society is holding the second British post war Convention, for all science-fiction and fantasy “fans”, authors and editors. Present plans include holding this Convention, the LONCON, at a hall in the Central London area from approximately 3pm to 10.30 pm.; having a buffet and bar available early in the evening; interesting talks and “free for all” discussions and an auction of magazines and books.’ Memberships cost a brutal 7/6d including buffet charges. (*Science Fantasy News Minor 1*, February 1949)

• *20 Years Ago*: ‘Michael Crichton unveiled an all-purpose argument against anyone loathsome enough to grumble about dodgy or misleading science in his work: “In a story like *Jurassic Park*, to complain of inaccuracy is downright weird. Nobody can make a dinosaur. Therefore the story is a fantasy. How can accuracy have any meaning in a fantasy?” Um.’ (*Ansible 139*, February 1999)

Fanfundery. *TAFF 2019* voting continues to 22 April 2019. See taff.org.uk for the ballot and online voting form. Jim Mowatt’s 2013 trip report (published March 2018) is now freely downloadable at the TAFF site: taff.org.uk/ebooks.php?x=MowattReport.

• *GUFF 2019*: voting continues until 22 April 2019. See ozfanfunds.com/?page_id=127.

SFWA currently decrees that short fiction markets must pay at least 6¢ per word to qualify their authors for SFWA membership. This will rise to 8¢ per word on 1 September this year. (SFWA.org, 16 January)

Outraged Letters. *Simon R. Green* has been a bad boy: ‘Talking about the Dublin 2019 Worldcon: I volunteered to be a part of the programming, and was sent a massive e-mail form to fill in. Asking things like: what’s your background, your class, your sexuality ... I made up some plausible lies. Because, after all, that’s what I do for a living.’

As We Saw Others. After defining science fiction at some length: ‘So much for classification and description, couched deliberately in the chilliest and most elementary terms; and if science-fiction were no more than this, it would no doubt deserve the derision with which the stupider of the

intellectuals are already, on occasion, condescending to favour it.’ (Edmund Crispin introducing his first *Best SF* anthology, 1955)

Small Press. Ansible Editions is back on the John Sladek trail with the tentatively titled *New Maps: More Uncollected John Sladek* – bringing together stories and oddities that have come to light since *Maps* (2002), plus many essays and reviews. 90,000 words so far; publication date to follow at ae.ansible.uk/?t=newmaps.

- With Hazel Ashworth West’s blessing, the late D. West’s two monumental fanwriting collections are now free downloads at taff.org.uk/ebooks.php: *Fanzines in Theory and in Practice* (1984; huge page-image PDF by Mick West, plus compact PDF and ebooks) and *Deliverance* (1995; PDF and ebooks).

- Catherine Pickersgill and former Ansible Editions henchman Greg Pickersgill have launched Gostak Publishing with famous Welsh author David Redd’s *Collected Stories*, as detailed at www.gostak.cymru/reddbook.htm.

Thog’s Masterclass. *Bright-Eyed and Bushy-Tailed*. ‘He was an ex-regiment man, quick-witted and built like a fox.’ (Scott Mariani, *The Mozart Conspiracy*, 2008) [PB]

- *Simile Dept*. ‘... his mind was like a blind octopus, squirming in an agony of knife-cuts ...’ (Ford Madox Ford, *No More Parades*, 1925) [BT] ‘From here the fire in the marina looked like a conflagration.’ (David Lindsey, *An Absence of Light*, 1994) [PB]

- *Dept of Neat Tricks*. “‘Oh,’ Paula said again, and Graver could see her brain working all over her face.’ (*Ibid*) [PB]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 8 February 2019: Gareth Powell talks to the Brum Group. 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre. £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future events/speakers: 8 March 2019, Chris Morgan; 12 April 2019, TBA; 10 May 2019, Daniel Godfrey; 14 June 2019, Jeanette Ng and Micah Yongo; 12 July 2019, Christopher Priest and Nina Allan.

- 19 February 2019: Stephen Cox reading from *Our Child of the Stars*. 7pm at

Max Minerva's, 39 North View, Westbury Park, Bristol, BS6 7PY. Tickets £5:

<https://maxminervas.co.uk/collections/events/products/our-child-of-the-stars-stephen-cox-reading>

Found Online. Thanks to Matthew Davis for pointing my John Sladek researches to this site which archives many obscure little magazines including *Strange Faeces*, launched in 1970 with an all-Sladek issue:

<http://voices.revealdigital.com/cgi-bin/independentvoices>.

Dylan Thomas Prize. *Locus* notes that this £30,000 bonus for some lucky writer under 40 has longlisted a few novels of genre interest: *Friday Black* by Nana Kwame Adjei-Brenyah, *Folk* by Zoe Gilbert and *Melmoth* by Sarah Perry. (1 February) [L]

Thog's Research Department. [Ansible 348](#) recorded Thog's wrath on discovering that a droll quotation in Peter Haining's *Wrotten English* (2004) didn't exist – nor anything remotely like it – in the Project Gutenberg text of the alleged source novel. Here's another: 'His disappointment was keen, yet in after days he looked upon the evening as that date on which he burst from the chrysalis and became a caterpillar.' (E. Lynn Linton, *The World Well Lost*, 1877) Searches for relevant key words in both volumes of *The World Well Lost* at Hathi Trust suggest that once again Mr Haining was being naughty.... However, the very first quotation in *Wrotten English* is indeed authentic Charles Dickens: 'Mr. Pickwick proceeded to put himself into his clothes, and his clothes into his portmanteau.' (*The Pickwick Papers*, 1837).

Ansible® 379 © David Langford, 2019. Thanks to Paul Barnett, Tom Cardy, Ian Covell, Paul Di Filippo, Steve Davidson, Scott Edelman, Steve Green, John Gribbin, Steve Holland, Rob Jackson, Roy Kettle, Guy Lillian, Jim Linwood, *Locus*, Pamela Love, Todd Mason, Chryse Moore, Andrew I. Porter, David Pringle, *Private Eye*, Bruce Townley, Peter Tyers, Gordon Van Gelder, Michael J. Walsh, J.O. Williams, Paul Winters, and our Hero Distributors: Durdles Books for the Brum Group, SCIS/Prophecy and Alan Stewart (Australia). 1 February 2019

Ansible® 380, March 2019

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo:
Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Sue Mason**. Available for SAE or scenes from
Thibetan Torture peepshow.

The Chinese Obelisks

Liu Cixin, China's Mr Science Fiction, got into trouble when – thanks to the success of the film adaptation *Wandering Earth* – there was much sharing on social media of his 2015 interview that mentions writing lots of sf while working at a state-owned power station. 'Everyone was sitting in front of a computer, and nobody knew what anyone else was doing ... You have to be in the office. But when you're there, you are free to write.' (*Bloomberg News*, 13 February) [F770] How your editor managed to write *War in 2080* and a spoof UFO book while working full-time for the Ministry of Defence must remain an official secret.

Nick Lowe received the supreme literary accolade when a sentence from his *Interzone* 279 'Mutant Popcorn' film column was enshrined in the venerable 'Pseud's Corner' department of *Private Eye* (22 February).

Mainstream franchised film is steadily and irreversibly appropriating techniques incubated in the hothouse of silver-age superhero comics, which devised a universal narratological system for the generation and regeneration of unlimited megatextual content in forms that are classically shaped yet indefinitely rebootable and retconnable, bottomlessly ironic, metareferential, and tropologically savvy, and unbounded by the directionality and singularity of time's arrow or the traditional architectures of canonicity versus transformative work.

NICK LOWE reviews the latest Spiderman movie, *Interzone*

Vonda N. McIntyre, very sadly, has inoperable pancreatic cancer. No emails, please: see www.caringbridge.org/visit/vondanmcintyre.

Eric Frank Russell would have enjoyed NASA's plan to include an official comedian in their hypothetical future Mars mission, easing stress and uniting the astronaut team (*Guardian*, 15 February). [JS] The EFR story about just this is 'A Little Oil' (*Galaxy* magazine, October 1952).

Amélie Wen Zhao's debut YA fantasy *Blood Heir* was met with much Twitter outrage – including accusations of plagiarism and racism – based on a few advance copies and a lot of people who piled on anyway despite not having read it. Zhao asked her publishers to cancel the book. According to an assessment at Vulture.com, 'the plagiarism allegations are shaky at best – and the charge of racism, led by a series of caustic tweets from YA fantasy author L.L. McKinney, relies on both a subjective interpretation of the word "bronze" and an exclusively American reading of scenes involving slavery.' (31 January) Oh dear.

Conoidal

Until 16 Mar • **Frank Hampson** – The Man Who Drew Dan Dare (exhibition), The Atkinson, Lord St, Southport. 10am-4pm, Mon-Sat. Free; donations welcome. See theatkinson.co.uk/whats-on/events/.

1-2 Mar • **Frightfest** (film), Glasgow Film Theatre. Tickets £75 for the full weekend, or (limited numbers) £11.50 per film: now on sale at www.frightfest.co.uk/filmsevents.html. Also London events at Leicester Square: 22-26 August plus a Hallowe'en special on 2 November.

9-10 Mar • **Film & Comic Con Cardiff**, Motorpoint Arena, Cardiff. Tickets £8 or £15 for early entry. See filmandcomicconcardiff.com.

CANCELLED: 10 Mar • **Birmingham International Horrorshow**, Victoria pub, Birmingham. See www.birmingham-horror.co.uk.

11 Mar • **John Wyndham** event on the 50th anniversary of his death. 6pm for 6:15pm talk at his one-time home The Penn Club, 21-23 Bedford Place, London; later at The College Arms pub, 18 Store Street. Further details and poster at triffidalley.com/50_Anniversary.html.

15-16 Mar • **Starburst Film Festival**, The Landing, Salford. 5pm-1:15am. Tickets £33.25. See starburstmagazine.com/filmfestival/.

DATE CHANGE: 20 Mar • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 6pm for 7pm. BSFA Awards discussion panel. Free.

20 Mar • **Engineering Paradise**: talk on *Brave New World* by Nicholas Murray, Century Club, Soho, London W1. 6:30pm for 7pm. Tickets £12: see acuriousinvitation.com/aldoushuxley.html.

SOLD OUT: 29 Mar - 1 Apr • **Irish Discworld Convention**, Cork. No membership transfers allowed after 1 March. See idwcon.org.

29-30 Mar • **Sci-Fi Weekender Part 1**, O₂ Academy, Sheffield. From £99 reg; other packages at www.scifiweekender.com.

5-7 Apr • **Springmoot** (Tolkien Society), Ambassadors Bloomsbury Hotel, London. AGM for members only; dinner with GoH speech £36. Details at www.tolkiensociety.org/events/springmoot-and-agm-2019/.

6-7 Apr • **Sci-Fi Scarborough** (multimedia), The Spa, Scarborough. Adult ticket including booking fees: £28. £15/day; students and under-17s £5 day; under-5s free. See scifiscarborough.co.uk.

18-21 Apr • **Dead by Dawn** (horror film festival), Filmhouse Cinema One, 88 Lothian Rd, Edinburgh, EH3 9BZ. £75. Box office 0131 228 2688. Online

booking via www.deadbydawn.co.uk.

19-22 Apr • **Ytterbium** (Eastercon), Park Inn, London Heathrow. £80 reg, *rising to £90 on 1 April*; £30 concessions; £25 under-18s; infants under 5 free; £20 supporting. See <http://ytterbium.org.uk/>.

3-4 Jul • **Science for Fiction**, Imperial College, London. Science presentations *for published authors only*: afternoon of 3rd, all day 4th. £30 including catering. Contact Dave Clements, davecl at mac dot com.

7-11 Aug • **Tolkien 2019** (Tolkien Society), Macdonald Burlington Hotel, Birmingham. £125 reg. See www.tolkien2019.com.

15-19 Aug • **Dublin 2019** (Worldcon), Dublin, Ireland. *Now €235 reg; under-26s and Irish First Worldcon €150; under-13s €70; under-6s €5; supp €40*. Hugo Awards nominations close on 15 March.

22-25 Aug • **Eurocon/TitanCon**, Waterfront Convention Centre and Hilton Hotel, Belfast. GoH George R.R. Martin. *Now £65 reg; 16-25s £40; 6-15s £25; no more supporting memberships to be sold; supporting-to-full upgrades (now £42) cease on 30 March*. See titancon.com/2019/.

26 Oct • **BristolCon**, Hilton DoubleTree Hotel, Bristol. GoH Diane Duane, Gareth L. Powell, Andy Bigwood. £25 reg; £15 under-18s and concessions; under-15s free. Full details at www.bristolcon.org.

9-10 Nov • **Comic Con**, Leeds Town Hall. Part of Thought Bubble, the Leeds Comic Art Festival, running 4-10 November. £28 weekend pass or £17/day. See thoughtbubblefestival.com.

7-9 Feb 2020 • **DemiSemiQuaver** (filk), Best Western Hotel, Marks Tey, Colchester. GoH Annie Griffith (UK), Sunnie Larsen (international). £37 reg/£25 unwaged, *rising to £39/£29 on 1 April 2019* and again on 1 December; under-18s £1/year of age; under-5s free. Further details to follow at www.contabile.org.uk/demisemiquaver/.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. ‘The recovery of the past represents a sheer enrichment of human thought. It is a sort of time travel in which, unlike in science fiction in which we encounter generally pitiful creations of an ethnocentric imagination

in alien worlds, we make acquaintance with fellow humans who represent aspects of ourselves which temporal and cultural boundaries have made impossible to actualize.’ (Miguel Civil, foreword to Samuel Noah Kramer’s *In the World of Sumer*, 1986) [PL]

Awards. BAFTA and Oscars, best animated film: *Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse*.

- *Crawford* (debut fantasy): R.F. Kuang, *The Poppy War*.
- *Horror Writers Association* life achievement: Graham Masterton.
- *IAFA Distinguished Scholarship*: Mark Bould.
- *Jack Gaughan* (new artist): Nicolas Delort. [F770]
- *Skylark*: Melinda M. Snodgrass.
- *Society of Illustrators Hall of Fame*: 2019 inductees include Vincent Di Fate.

R.I.P. *Julie Adams* (1926-2019), US actress best remembered as the heroine of *Creature from the Black Lagoon* (1954), died on 3 February aged 92.

• *Chelo Alonso* (1933–2019), Cuban-born actress in such Italian sword-and-sandal epics as *Son of Samson* (1960) and *Atlas Against the Cyclops* (1961), died on 20 February aged 85. [PDF]

• *Carmen Argenziano* (1943-2019), US actor with many genre credits from *Grave of the Vampire* (1972) via *Stargate SG-1* (25 episodes 1998-2005) to *Future World* (2018), died on 10 February aged 75. [MR]

• *Betty Ballantine* (1919-2019), US publisher fondly remembered for launching Ballantine Books with her husband Ian in 1952, died on 12 February aged 99. Ballantine Books published much important sf and the first Tolkien-approved US paperbacks of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*. [MJE]

• *Victor J. Banis* (1937-2019), US author best known for gay fiction who wrote some supernatural tales beginning with *The Gay Haunt* (1970), died on 22 February aged 82. [TM]

• Late report: *Russell Bates* (1941-2018), US author of short sf and a co-written episode of *Star Trek: The Animated Series* (1974), died on 9 April 2018 aged 76. [GVG]

• *Larry Brand* (1949-2019), US writer/director who co-wrote and directed *Masque of the Red Death* (1989), died on 9 February aged 69. [PDF]

• *W.E. Butterworth* (1929-2019), prolific US author of military and police fiction as W.E.B Griffin and other work including the sf *Next Stop, Earth*

- (1978) under his own name, died on 12 February aged 89. [PDF]
- *Graeme Curry* (1965-2019), UK writer of *Doctor Who*: ‘The Happiness Patrol’ (1988), died on 24 February aged 54. [DWN]
 - *Clark Dimond* (1941-2019), US musician and writer who contributed to *Castle of Frankenstein* (1962-1975) and with his friend Terry Bisson co-scripted stories for the Warren comics *Creepy* and *Eerie*, died on 19 February. [TB via PDF]
 - *Stanley Donen* (1924-2019), US film-maker whose genre ventures were *Bedazzled* (1967), *The Little Prince* (1974) and *Saturn 3* (1980), died on 23 February aged 94. [SD]
 - *Carol Emshwiller* (1921-2019), highly regarded US author of many short stories since 1955 and several novels since *Carmen Dog* (1988) – including the Philip K. Dick award winner *The Mount* (2002) – died on 2 February aged 97. [LO] She received World Fantasy Awards for her collection *The Start of the End of It All* (1991) and for life achievement in 2005.
 - *Albert Finney* (1936-2019), UK actor whose genre credits include *Scrooge* (1970 musical whose title role won him a Golden Globe), *Looker* (1981), *Wolfen* (1981), *The Green Man* (1990 tv), *Cold Lazarus* (1996) and *Corpse Bride* (voice, 2005), died on 8 February aged 82. [AW]
 - *Bruno Ganz* (1941-2019), Swiss actor best known for *Downfall* (2004), whose genre films included *The Boys from Brazil* (1978), *Nosferatu the Vampyre* (1979) and *Wings of Desire* (1987), died on 15 February aged 77. [A-TC/AW]
 - *Richard Gregory*, UK effects and animatronics designer who worked on Gerry Anderson’s *Terrahawks* (1983) and *Space Precinct* (1984-1985), and films including *The Lost World* (2001), *The Dark Knight* (2008) and *John Carter* (2012), died on 12 February. [S]
 - *Glen D. Johnson*, long-time US comics fan who edited issues 26-40 of *The Comic Reader* (1964-1965), died on 16 February. [PDF]
 - *George Locke* (1936-2019), long-time UK fan, sf book dealer, bibliographer and publisher (as Ferret Fantasy), died on 1 February aged 82. [JL] His *Spectrum of Fantasy* bibliographies (1980-2004) annotated many rare or unknown genre works and have been of great value to sf researchers.
 - *André Previn* (1929-2019), German-born conductor and composer whose film credits include *Rollerball* (1975), died on 28 February aged 89. [JJ]
 - *Dave Reeder* (1950-2018), UK horror writer and editor of the first four issues of *Fantasy Macabre* (1980-1983) and the last four of *Skeleton Crew*

(1991), died last November. [SN]

- *Carrie Richerson* (1952-2019), US convention organizer, and author of short sf from 1992 to 2006 – some collected as *Something Rich and Strange* (2001) – died on 2 February aged 66. [GVG]
- *Dave Smith* (1940-2019), founder of the Walt Disney archives and editor of the official company encyclopedia *Disney A to Z* (first edition 1996), died on 15 February aged 78. [PDF]
- *Ted Stearn* (1961-2019), US cartoonist and animator whose credits include episodes of *Futurama* (2008-2013) and *Rick and Morty* (2015), died in early February; he was 57.
- *Tony ‘Blindpew’ Smith* (1953-2019), long-time UK fan and convention-goer (with his guide dog), died on 9 February. [N49/CC]
- *Clive Swift* (1936-2019), UK actor whose credits include *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1980), *Excalibur* (1981) and *Doctor Who* (1985, 2007), died on 1 February aged 82. [CM]
- *Morgan Woodward* (1925-2019), US character actor in several sf tv series – including *Star Trek* (1966, 1968) – and *Battle Beyond the Stars* (1980), died on 22 February aged 93. [PDF]

The Weakest Link. *Jeopardy* answer requiring a question: ‘Aviation writer Robert Serling helped little bro Rod with “The Odyssey of Flight 33” episode of this series.’ *Contestant:* ‘What is *Star Trek*?’ [AIP]

- *Bill Turnbull:* ‘Which author wrote the novel *Dracula* in 1897?’ *Contestant:* ‘Well, I know Mary Shelley wrote *Frankenstein*, so maybe it was her husband, Tom Shelley.’ (*Think Tank*, BBC1)
- *Joe Lycett:* ‘In *Life on Mars*, David Bowie wonders if there was life on which planet?’ *Contestant:* ‘Hmm, *Life on Mars*.... Was it Jupiter?’ (*The Time It Takes*, BBC1) [PE]

BSFA Awards Shortlist. NOVEL Dave Hutchinson, *Europe at Dawn*; Yoon Ha Lee, *Revenant Gun*; Emma Newman, *Before Mars*; Gareth L Powell, *Embers of War*; Tade Thompson, *Rosewater*.

- SHORTER Nina Allan, ‘The Gift of Angels’ (*Clarkesworld*); Malcolm Devlin, ‘The Purpose of the Dodo Is to Be Extinct’ (*Interzone* 275); Hal Duncan, *The Land of Somewhere Safe*; Ian McDonald, *Time Was*; Martha Wells *Exit Strategy*; Liz Williams, *Phosphorus*; Marian Womack, ‘Kingfisher’ (*Lost Objects*).
- NON-FICTION Nina Allan, ‘Time Pieces’ column (*Interzone*); Ruth E.J.

Booth, 'Noise and Sparks' (*Shoreline of Infinity*); Liz Bourke, 'Sleeps With Monsters' column (Tor.com); Aliette de Bodard, 'On motherhood and erasure' (Intellectus Speculativus blog); Adam Roberts, *Publishing the Science Fiction Canon: The Case of Scientific Romance*.

• ARTWORK Ben Baldwin, *Strange Tales* slipcase set; Joey Hi-Fi, cover for *Paris Adrift* by EJ Swift; Sarah Anne Langton, cover for *Unholy Land* by Lavie Tidhar; Sing Yun Lee and Morris Wild, artwork for 'Sublime Cognition' conference; Likhain, *In the Vanishers' Palace: Dragon I and II*; Bede Rogerson, cover for *Concrete Faery* by Elizabeth Priest; Del Samatar, art for *Monster Portraits* by Sofia and Del Samatar; Charlotte Stroomer, cover for 'Rosewater' by Tade Thompson. Winners announced at Ytterbium.

Plagiarism Corner. When romance writer Cristianne Serruya was caught stealing easily identifiable passages from novels by other people, she 'explained' this was the fault of the ghostwriter she'd hired through the cheap-services site Fiverr. The Twitter hashtag #CopyPasteCris drew much attention, and perennial bestseller Nora Roberts aka J.D. Robb weighed in with an angry screed about theft of her material. Not only had Serruya's offending novel *Royal Love* been submitted to the Romance Writers of America awards, but she herself was a judge in some categories: there were loud calls for the RWA to exclude ghosted works or at least insist that they be clearly identified as such. SF, fantasy and horror awards may yet face similar demands. [SG]

Small Press. Bad luck for ChiZine Publications, whose entire dealers'-room stock at Boskone (15-16 February) was mistakenly dumped on the freebies table and vanished with great speed. After the error was announced, about a third of the books were returned. [A-TC]

Outraged Letters. Klaus Æ. Mogensen writes: 'On Friday, 15 February, the Copenhagen sf book and comic-book store Fantask announced that it would most likely close by the end of June after several years of running a deficit. Founded in 1971, Fantask is the world's oldest still active sf bookstore. Upon hearing the news, a fan of the store started a GoFundMe raiser, and by noon the following Monday, more than £50,000 was collected. This monetary injection will allow Fantask to look for a new location where it is hoped the store will thrive better.'

Magazine Scene. Orson Scott Card's *Intergalactic Medicine Show* will cease

with issue 69 in June, says its editor Scott M. Roberts. [F770]

More Shortlists. *Compton Crook* (genre debut novel): S.A. Chakraborty, *The City of Brass*; R.F. Kuang, *The Poppy War*; Rebecca Roanhorse, *Trail of Lightning*; Rena Rossner, *Sisters of the Winter Wood*; Lauren Teffeau, *Implanted*; Nick Clark Windo, *The Feed*. [F770]

• *Nebula* novel finalists: Mary Robinette Kowal, *The Calculating Stars*; R.F. Kuang, *The Poppy War*; Sam J. Miller, *Blackfish City*; Naomi Novik, *Spinning Silver*; C.L. Polk, *Witchmark*; Rebecca Roanhorse, *Trail of Lightning*. • ANDRE NORTON (YA): Tomi Adeyemi, *Children of Blood and Bone*; Roshani Chokshi, *Aru Shah and the End of Time*; A.K. DuBoff, *A Light in the Dark*; Rachel Hartman, *Tess of the Road*; Justina Ireland, *Dread Nation*; Henry Lien, *Peasprout Chen: Future Legend of Skate and Sword*. Further categories: www.sfga.org/2019/02/nebula-award-finalists-announced/.

Quotes from Boskone sent by Bob Devney: ‘Patrick Nielsen Hayden lets the mask slip for a single fatal instant: “I’m editor-in-chief at Tor Books. So I’m responsible for everything that’s wrong with science fiction. I also control the Hugo Awards.” ... *John Clute*: “I like 45-minute sentences.” ... *Grady Hendrix*: “Horror is a women’s genre going back to the 19th century. The boys are a late arrival.” ... *Frank Wu* [reading his own short story]: “Kailo brought a telescope to his largest left eye.”’

The Dead Past. *70 Years Ago*, an unusual letter of complaint from a reader of the American Rocket Society journal: ‘.....the main thing wrong with s-f today is the fact that the editors write most of the stories. When you realise that the leading monthly s-f magazine comes out twelve times a year, and averages four and half stories per issue, with perhaps one half of them written by the editor, and the rest by leading “names”, it becomes apparent why they fall into ruts, or shall we say, “vortexes in hyper-space bunk”?’ ([Science Fantasy News 2](#), March 1949)

• *20 Years Ago*, a comment now sadly past its sell-by date: ‘Spot the living sf author in the BBC News website poll’s 10 Greatest Writers of the Millennium: Shakespeare (#1), Austen, Orwell, Dickens, Banks, Tolkien, Joyce, Dostoyevsky, Cervantes and Twain.’ (*Ansible* 140, March 1999)

Fanfundery. *TAFF 2019* voting continues to 22 April 2019. See taff.org.uk for the ballot and online voting form.

- *GUFF 2019*: voting continues until 22 April 2019. See ozfanfunds.com/?page_id=127.

Editorial. The first proof copy looks good, and I hope that [New Maps: More Uncollected John Sladek](#) (98,000 words) will appear in April.

Thog's Masterclass. *The Tell-Tale What?* 'Her insides loosen and her heart ricochets.' (Sarah Vaughan, *Anatomy of a Scandal*, 2017) [PB]

- *Neat Tricks Dept.* 'It was the same message Kinnear sent while we were together, though it took me longer to translate, distracted by the cursive swirls of his tongue.' (Hayley Stone, 'Cold Iron Comfort', *Apex* #117, February 2019) [JM]

- *If Looks Could Kill.* 'Beau Quicksilver's tempered steel glance gouged the chief's countenance.' (Florence M. Pettee, 'Blistering Tongues', 31 March 1923 *Argosy*) [DL]

- *True Romance, or Promethea Unbound.* 'She shrugged, quivers manifest beneath the thin material of her blouse, the breasts, unbound, moving like oiled balloons.' (E.C. Tubb, *Eye of the Zodiac*, 1975) [KÆM]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 8 March 2019: Chris Morgan talks to the Brum Group. 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre. £4 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future events/speakers: 12 April 2019, Zen Cho; 10 May 2019, Daniel Godfrey; 14 June 2019, Jeanette Ng and Micah Yongo; 12 July 2019, Christopher Priest and Nina Allan.

Some Links from the home page at news.ansible.uk.

- 20booksto50 indy-publishing slate for Nebula nominations is definitely not a slate (from Camestros Felapton; final overview post by Cora Buhlert):
<https://camestrosfelapton.wordpress.com/2019/02/21/the-nebulas-20booksto50-not-a-nudge-nudge-slate/>
<https://camestrosfelapton.wordpress.com/2019/02/23/just-an-additional-note-on-the-20booksto50k-nebula-not-a-slate/>
<https://camestrosfelapton.wordpress.com/2019/02/28/its-worth-talking-about-lmbpn-publishing-when-talking-about-the-nebula-nominees/>
<http://corabuhlert.com/2019/02/28/some-reactions-to-the-2018-nebula-award-finalists/>

- Bram Stoker Awards finalists:
<https://www.prlog.org/12755922-2018-bram-stoker-awards-final-ballot.html>
- *Locus* Poll/Awards longlist (from *Locus* of course):
<https://locusmag.com/2019-locus-poll-and-survey/>
- Retro Hugo fanzine eligibility research at Fanac.org:
http://fanac.org/fanzines/Retro_Hugos1943.html
- Setback for Jon Del Arroz in his lawsuit against Worldcon 76 (from *File 770*):
<http://file770.com/court-rules-against-del-arroz-on-four-issues-in-lawsuit-against-worldcon-76-allows-litigation-to-continue-on-a-fifth/>

Editorial II. Every so often I have to remind some readers that the convention list in each monthly *Ansible* – see ‘[Conoidal](#)’ above – is confined to newly announced, significantly changed and more or less imminent events. The fuller list is far too long for the print edition (still a single sheet of A4) and can be found at news.ansible.uk.

Thog Redux. By diligent online research, Lee Gold has found a plausible origin for the chrysalis/caterpillar Thoggism attributed by Peter Haining to a novel that conspicuously does not contain it (see [Ansible 379](#) for more). A ‘Northern News’ round-up in *The Naturalist* magazine for February 1910 has a snippet about Lord Walsingham presenting his collection of Microlepidoptera to the British Museum: ‘According to the *Grand Magazine*, “in after days he looked upon that evening as the date on which he burst from the chrysalis and became a caterpillar.” To this *Punch* naturally adds, “and the date lower down in his calendar, with the two red lines round it, marks the occasion when he finally burst into an egg.”’

Ansible® 380 © David Langford, 2019. Thanks to Paul Barnett, Terry Bisson, Bill Burns, Adam-Troy Castro, Cardinal Cox, Stephen Dedman, Bob Devney, Paul Di Filippo, *Doctor Who News*, Malcolm Edwards, *File 770*, Steve Green, John Jarrold, Denny Lien, Jim Linwood, Pamela Love, Jason McGregor, Todd Mason, Klaus Æ. Mogensen, Chryse Moore, Stan Nicholls, Novacon 49, Luis Ortiz, Andrew I. Porter, *Private Eye*, Marcus Rowland, Siadwell, Joyce Scrivner, Gordon Van Gelder, Andrew Wells, and as always our Hero Distributors: Durdles Books (Birmingham SF Group), SCIS/Prophecy and Alan Stewart (Australia). 1 March 2019

Ansible® 381, April 2019

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo:
Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Ulrika O'Brien**. Available for SAE or origami model
of Buckingham Palace.

Stop Me and Buy One. The latest Ansible Editions release, *New Maps: More Uncollected John Sladek*, has been finalized at 98,000 words – a 255pp trade paperback now available from Lulu. I will be at Ytterbium with copies at a special convention price of £15 (please let me know if you'll be there and want one reserved for you; it would be useful to have some idea of Eastercon demand). See ae.ansible.uk/?t=newmaps for the contents and Lulu order link. Ebook editions will follow after Easter.

The Lost Nose

David Gerrold and ComicMix scored a success in the court action by Dr. Seuss Enterprises to halt their Kickstarter-funded mashup of *Star Trek* and Seuss in *Oh, The Places You'll Boldly Go!* – which a Federal judge decided was 'highly transformative' rather than plagiaristic, and a legitimate fair use of the right 'to build freely upon the ideas and information conveyed by a work.' ([File 770, 12 March](#)) DSE disagrees, and with much twirling of moustachios announced that 'defendants developed their book in bad faith' and that DSE was considering such dread options as 'an immediate appeal to the Ninth Circuit'. Onward....

James Gunn, spectacularly fired by Disney last July after long-ago (and certainly ill-judged) social media messages were publicized by Fox News and other right-wing news outlets 'as payback for Gunn being a vocal critic of President Donald Trump', has been reinstated as writer/director of *Guardians of the Galaxy 3*. ([Deadline, 15 March](#)) James Gunn should not of course be confused with long-time sf author James Gunn.

Philip Pullman has won the 2019 J.M. Barrie award, given by the charity

Action for Children's Arts to reward a 'lifetime's achievement in delighting children'. ([Guardian, 21 March](#))

Francis Spufford wandered into the sunlit uplands of fan fiction by writing an unauthorized Narnia novel titled *The Stone Table* (sliding into the continuity between *The Magician's Nephew* – whose lead characters Polly and Digory here revisit Narnia – and *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*). Having asked the C.S. Lewis estate about the possibility of publication and had no reply, Spufford printed 75 copies for friends including Adam Roberts, who calls it 'superb'. ([Guardian, 19 March](#)) Don't worry, readers, the series drops out of copyright in 2034!

Jodie Whittaker is to receive the Freedom of the City of London, entitling her by ancient tradition to drive Daleks across London Bridge and be pursued by low-budget monsters through cobwebbed Underground tunnels whenever she so desires. [DWN]

Conplane

5-7 Apr • **Springmoot** (Tolkien Society), Ambassadors Bloomsbury Hotel, London. AGM for members only; dinner with GoH speech £36. Details at www.tolkiensociety.org/events/springmoot-and-agm-2019/.

6-7 Apr • **Sci-Fi Scarborough** (multimedia), The Spa, Scarborough. Adult ticket including booking fees: £28. £15/day; students and under-17s £5 day; under-5s free. See scifiscarborough.co.uk.

12-13 Apr • **Corroding the Now: Poetry + Science|SF** (conference), Egham, Surrey. Details at corrodingthenow.com.

13 Apr • **Bedford Who Charity Con** (*Doctor Who*), University Theatre, Bedford, MK41 9EA. 10am-5:30pm. Tickets £42.50; under-18s, students £22.50; under-14s £15. More at bedfordwhocharitycon.co.uk.

18-21 Apr • **Dead by Dawn** (horror film festival), Filmhouse Cinema One, 88 Lothian Rd, Edinburgh, EH3 9BZ. £75. Box office 0131 228 2688. Online booking via www.deadbydawn.co.uk.

19-22 Apr • **Ytterbium** (Eastercon), Park Inn, London Heathrow. Now £90 reg; £30 concessions; £25 under-18s; infants under 5 free; £20 supporting. See <http://ytterbium.org.uk/>.

24 Apr • **Philip K. Dick**: talk by Roger Luckhurst, Century Club, Soho, London W1. 6:30pm for 7pm. Tickets £12: further details can be found at acuriousinvitation.com/philipkdick_century.html.

8 May • **FutureFest Lates** (evening talks): Jim Al-Khalili on sf and prediction, 6:15pm at The Vaults, Waterloo, London. £12 (students £9) ‘early bird’ rates *until 15 April*. See www.futurefest.org/lates. The next full-scale FutureFest will be held in London in March 2020.

11-12 May • **HorrorCon UK**, Magna Science Adventure Centre, Sheffield Rd, Rotherham, S60 1DX. Tickets £40 for 11am entry, £50 for 10am; accompanied under-17s £16. Bookings at horrorconuk.com.

1-2 Jun • **Film & Comic Con Collectormania**, Birmingham NEC. £10/day; £15 early entry. See filmandcomicconbirmingham.com.

20 Jul • **Avon Valley Railway SF Day**, Bitton Station, 3 Bath Rd, Bristol, BS30 6HD. £8.50; over-60s £7.50; under-15s £6.50; under-5s free. See www.avonvalleyrailway.org/events/sci-fi-fun/.

15-19 Aug • **Dublin 2019** (Worldcon), Dublin, Ireland. *Now €235 reg; under-26s and Irish First Worldcon €150; under-13s €70; under-6s €5; supp €40. Hugo Awards nominations closed on 15 March.*

22-25 Aug • **Eurocon/TitanCon**, Waterfront Convention Centre and Hilton Hotel, Belfast. GoH George R.R. Martin. £65 reg; 16-25s £40; 6-15s £25; no more supporting memberships. See titancon.com/2019/.

31 Aug • **Preston Comic Con**, Guild Hall, Preston. 9:30am (‘early bird’) or 10:30 to 5pm. See www.wonkyrocketevents.co.uk/preston/.

18-20 Oct • **FantasyCon**, Golden Jubilee Conference Hotel, Clydebank, Glasgow. £65 reg; £60 concessions; under-18s £30; all plus booking fees. See www.fantasycon.org. The 2020 venue is Sheffield.

19 Oct • **Gamesfest** (gaming), Victoria Hall, Tring. From 10am. Ticket prices and further information awaited at www.gamesfest.co.uk.

24-27 Oct • **Celluloid Screams** (horror film festival), Showroom Cinema, Sheffield. £90; £80 concessions. See celluloidscreams.co.uk.

7-9 Feb 2020 • **DemiSemiQuaver** (filk), Best Western Hotel, Marks Tey, Colchester. *Now £39 reg and £25 unwaged, rising again on 1 December;*

under-18s £1/year of age; under-5s free. Further details at www.contabile.org.uk/demisemiquaver/.

7-9 Feb 2020 • **Sci-Fi Ball** (media), Grand Harbour Hotel, Southampton. Ticket prices awaited at scifiball.com, whose lapsed security certificate makes web browsers reluctant to visit this site. Just saying.

28-31 Aug 2020 • **Redemption** (multimedia), Royal Victoria Hotel, Sheffield. £55 reg *rising to £65 on 1 May*; concessions £20 less; under-18s £25; under-3s free; supp £15. See redemptioncon.org.uk.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. ‘The nerds have taken over Hollywood, America and the world. It wasn’t just superheroes either. Zombies, androids, vampires, wizards, aliens, werewolves, intergalactic sagas, Lego, H.P. Lovecraft, Tolkien, board games based on TV shows – though these things were never unpopular *per se*, they always belonged to children, or to people at the lonelier fringes of the culture. Now they are the culture. President Obama praised the trend: / ‘*I think America’s a nerdier country than it used to be when I was a kid – and that’s a good thing!*’ / Obama, with typical glibness, had forgotten a crucial general point about nerds: they are not happy people. There were good reasons why there was a stigma around being a nerd; those who loved stories about dragons and superheroes into adulthood tended to be nebbish, poorly-tailored and sexually inadequate. They needed to escape into fantasy worlds because the real world was brutal, cruel and completely uninterested in playing tabletop wargames.’ (Will Lloyd, ‘How nerds smothered American culture’ in [Spectator USA, 7 March](#)) [SC]

Awards. *Carnegie Medal* shortlisted titles of genre interest: *The Poet X*, Elizabeth Acevedo; *The House with Chicken Legs*, Sophie Anderson; *A Skinful of Shadows*, Frances Hardinge; *The Land of Neverendings*, Kate Saunders. [L]

- *HWA Specialty Press Award*: Raw Dog Screaming Press.
- *Kitschies* novel shortlists: *Circe*, Madeline Miller; *Record of a Spaceborn Few*, Becky Chambers; *Rosewater*, Tade Thompson; *The Smoke*, Simon Ings; *Unholy Land*, Lavie Tidhar. DEBUT *Children of Blood and Bone*, Tomi Adeyemi; *Frankenstein in Baghdad*, Ahmed Saadawi; *Semiosis*, Sue Burke; *Sweet Fruit, Sour Land*, Rebecca Ley; *The Poppy War*, R.F. Kuang.

- *Tiptree Award*: Gabriela Damián Miravete, “They Will Dream in the Garden” translated by Adrian Demopoulos (*Latin American Literature Today*, May 2018). [PM]

As Others Date Us. A profile of the architect: ‘[Sir Nicholas] Grimshaw is probably best known for The Eden Project, a froth of bubbly domes across an abandoned quarry in Cornwall. Even in its name there is a hint of a 1970s utopian sci-fi.’ (*Financial Times*, 23 February) [MMW]

R.I.P. *Leslie Sternbergh Alexander*, US comics artist whose work appeared in *Mad*, *Twilight Zone Magazine* and the film *Alien Space Avenger* (1989, in which she also acted), died on 27 March. [PDF]

- *Janet Jeppson Asimov* (1926-2019), US author of both adult and children’s sf novels – the latter including the Norby series opening with *Norby, the Mixed-Up Robot* (1983), written with her husband Isaac Asimov – died on 25 February aged 92. [BNM]

- *Ken Bald* (1920-2019), US comics artist since the 1940s who worked for Fawcett (*Captain Marvel*, *Bulletman*), Street & Smith (*Mandrake the Magician*, *Doc Savage*), Timely/Marvel (*Captain America*, *The Human Torch*, *Namor the Sub-Mariner* etc) and newspaper syndication (*Dark Shadows* 1971-1972 as ‘K. Bruce’), died on 17 March aged 98. [PDF]

- *Charles Black*, UK horror author, editor and publisher whose *Black Book of Horror* anthologies ran to 11 volumes 2007-2015, died on 15 March. [PDF]

- *John Boni* (1937-2019), US comedian, writer and producer whose genre credits include *Space Force* (1978) and *Out of This World* (1987-1988), died on 9 March aged 81. [PDF]

- *John Carl Buechler* (1952-2019), US director and special effects artist whose many genre films include *A Nightmare on Elm Street 4* (1978), *Ghoulies* (1984), *Troll* (1986), *Friday the 13th VII* (1988) and *Bride of Re-Animator* (1989), died on 18 March aged 66. [PDF]

- *François Camoin* (1939-2019), French-born US writer of mostly nonfantastic short fiction who appeared in *Omni* and *Twilight Zone Magazine*, died on 18 March aged 79. [PDF]

- *Larry Cohen* (1941-2019), US producer, director and screenwriter who created the series *The Invaders* (1967-1968) and whose films include *It’s Alive* (1974), *God Told Me To* (1976), *The Stuff* (1985) and *Q* (1982), died on 24 March aged 77. [PDF]

- *Allan Cole* (1943-2019), US tv screenwriter and author whose works

- include the Sten sf series and Anteros fantasies (both initially written with Chris Bunch), died on 30 March aged 75. [PDF]
- *Lawrence G. DiTillio*, US tv writer – credits include *He-Man and the Masters of the Universe* (1983-1985) and *Transformers: Beast Wars* (1996-1999) – and story editor for *Babylon 5* (44 episodes 1994-1995) died on 16 March aged 79. [F770]
 - *Richard Erdman* (1925-2019), US actor who guested in *The Twilight Zone* and many other sf series, plus films including *The Brass Bottle* (1964) and *Trancers* (1984), and voice work in *Further Adventures of SuperTed* (1989) etc, died on 16 March aged 93. [LP/MMW]
 - *Gillian Freeman* (1929-2019), UK author perhaps best known for her nonfiction pornography study *The Undergrowth of Literature* (1967), died on 23 February aged 89; her sf novel is the near-future *The Leader* (1965), about fascism in England. [DP]
 - *Katherine Helmond* (1929-2019), US actress whose films include *Time Bandits* (1981), *Brazil* (1985) and *Cars* (voice, 2006; also sequels and spinoffs), died on 23 February aged 89. [S]
 - *Norman Hollyn* (1952-2019), Hollywood film editor who as Norm Hochberg was prominent in 1970s New York fandom with the fanzines *Xrymph* (with Lou Stathis) and *Big Mac*, died on 17 March. [MG]
 - *Rachel Ingalls* (1940-2019), US-born author long resident in the UK whose fantasies include many short stories and her best-known novel *Mrs Caliban* (1982), died on 6 March aged 78. [RR]
 - *Frank Johnson* (1954-2019), US fan and con-goer whose first fanzine was the co-edited *Advocates of the Infinite* (1968), died on 19 March. [JZ]
 - *Hugh Lamb* (1946-2019), UK editor of many anthologies of vintage horror and supernatural stories, from *A Tide of Terror* (1971) to *Gaslit Horror* (2008), died on 2 March aged 73. [KN via TM]
 - *Steve Ogden*, US fan, comics researcher and long-time FAPA member whose publications included *Ouroboros*, *Metaphysical Pornographic Funnies* and a huge checklist of Brad W. Foster's artwork, died on 1 March. [RB via PDF]
 - *David Palladini*, US illustrator of books by Jane Yolen, Stephen King and others, who also created two covers for *F&SF*, died on 13 March. [JY]
 - *Luke Perry* (1966-2019), US actor whose films include *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (1992), *The Fifth Element* (1997), *Supernova* (2005) and *Dudes & Dragons* (2015), died on 4 March aged 52. He had voice roles in *The*

Incredible Hulk (1996-1997) and other animated series. [MR]

- *Joseph Pilato* (1949-2019), US actor in *Dawn of the Dead* (1978), *Day of the Dead* (1985), *Alienator* (1990), *Empire of the Dark* (1990) and others, died on 24 March aged 70. [PDF]
- *Ace G. Pilkington* (1951-2019), US academic and sf poet/scholar whose books include *The Fantastic Made Visible: Essays on the Adaptation of Science Fiction and Fantasy from Page to Screen* (2015) with Matthew Wilhelm Kapell, died on 20 February aged 67. [A]
- *Wilum H. Pugmire* (1951-2019), US author of much highly regarded Lovecraftian fiction since 1973 – a major retrospective collection being *The Tangled Muse* (2010) – died on 26 March aged 67. [SG]
- *Mike Raub*, US comics fan, publisher, shop owner and later broadcaster at ComicMix, died on 19 March aged 68. [PDF]
- *Shane Rimmer* (1929-2019), Canadian actor who voiced Scott Tracy in *Thunderbirds* (1965-1966 and spinoffs to 2015), died on 29 March aged 89. [FM] His many more genre credits include *Dr Strangelove* (1964), *Rollerball* (1975), *Warlords of the Deep* (1978), *Superman II* (1980) and *Batman Begins* (2005).
- *James Rochelle*, US comics colorist since 1994, who worked at WildStorm, at CrossGen and as a freelance, died on 2 February aged 48. [PDF]
- *Sid Sheinberg* (1935-2019), Universal Studios executive who ‘discovered’ Steven Spielberg and worked behind the scenes on *E.T.* (1982) and others, died on 7 March aged 84. [AIP] His producer credits include *The Devil’s Tomb* (2009) and *Creature* (2011).
- *Fuyumi Shiraishi* (1941-2019), Chinese-born voice actress best known outside Japan for the anime *Mobile Suit Gundam* (1979), died on 28 March aged 77. [PDF]
- *Jeff C. Stevenson*, US author of short horror fiction and the supernatural novel *The Children of Hydesville* (2018), reportedly died in March. [PDF]
- *Ellen Vartanoff* (1951-2019), US fan – Scott Edelman’s sister-in-law – and long-time attendee of sf and comics conventions, died on 17 March aged 67. [SE]
- *Jan-Michael Vincent* (1944-2019), US actor in *Damnation Alley* (1977), *Xtro II: The Second Encounter* (1990), *Abducted II: The Reunion* (1995) and *Jurassic Women* (1996), died on 10 February aged 74.

Censored. The RPG publisher Sons of the Singularity thriftily had its *Call of Cthulhu/Trail of Cthulhu* sourcebook *The Sassoon Files* printed in China. On

20 March all copies were destroyed by order of the local bureaucracy, some of the Lovecraftian content apparently being ‘problematic’. At least the printer returned the deposit.... ([BoingBoing, 25 March](#))

Random Fandom. *Francis T. Laney’s* infamous 1948 fan memoir and polemic *Ah! Sweet Idiocy!* is the latest addition to the free ebooks list at the TAFF site: see taff.org.uk/ebooks.php?x=ASI for details and other material included.

- *Joe Siclari* had heart bypass surgery at the end of February; despite multiple complications in the following weeks he is now recovering well at home.

[ES]

- *The Doc Weir Award* for unsung contributions to fandom will be voted at the Eastercon as usual; a collection of past winners’ biographies is in preparation, for Easter release and to be hosted at efanzines.com with a downloadable PDF option.

- *Jon Langford* arrived here in Reading on 29 March for a pub breakfast with a crowded tour to follow: www.facebook.com/pg/mekons/events/.

By Crom! The David Gemmell Awards for heroic fantasy, first presented in 2009 for best novel only and continuing with additional categories 2010-2018, have ceased ‘with immediate effect’ owing to a shortage of volunteers to do the needed work. Sad news; a decision not taken lightly, says awards chair Stan Nicholls. (Press release, 29 March)

The Dead Past. *80 Years Ago:* ‘Thrilling WONDER Stories is now making plans to sue WONDER COMICS, because of the name WONDER being used. To every reader of Thrilling WONDER Stories, the magazine is, to them, just plain WONDER and it is quite confusing to ask for WONDER and being handed WONDER COMICS. We predict that Thrilling WONDER Stories will win the case without a bit of trouble. WONDER COMICS is also being sued by ACTION COMICS because of the lead cartoon WONDER MAN, which is a direct copy of the cartoon THE SUPER MAN than ran in ACTION COMICS.’ (*Fantasy News* 43, April 1939)

- *20 Years Ago:* ‘Josh Kirby, interrogated about certain 1960s cover paintings credited to “Ron Kirby”, broke down and confessed to having been born Ronald William Kirby. Whence the nickname? “When I was at Art School, some wag thought I painted like Sir Joshua Reynolds!”’ (*Ansible* 141, April 1999)

Fanfundery. *TAFF and GUFF 2019* final reminder: voting in both races continues to 22 April 2019, to allow final campaigning and voting at Eastercon and other Easter events. See taff.org.uk for the TAFF ballot, online voting form and the new *TAFF Redux 2* in which the candidates are interviewed; and for GUFF see ozfanfunds.com/?page_id=127.

Thog's Masterclass. *The Future of Swearing.* ““Great bouncing Alean eyeballs!” said Andrek softly.’ (Charles Harness, *The Ring of Ritornel*, 1968).
• *Inflammability Dept.* ““That would be fatal – with such a man,” said Lenoir, hurriedly. “As fatal as tossing a naked flame into a container of helium, Robert! ...”” (Brian Shaw [Brian Holloway], *Lost World*, 1953) [BA]
• *Searching Within a Solar System.* ‘... heading on into the blue and still with no sign of any astral body within a kilo-parsec ...’ (*Ibid*) [BA]
• *Radiophonic Workshop Dept.* ‘There were noises: glutinous, coagulant, semi-liquid sounds like vexatious geese being drowned in a slow torrent of treacle.’ ... ‘Perhaps twenty individual voices predominated over the general babble, and these prime spokesmen rippled across the audible spectrum in a hideously broken yodel, as though their voices were modulated by large bubbles rising through a silo of molasses.’ (both Colin Kapp, *The Patterns of Chaos*, 1972)

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 12 April 2019: Zen Cho talks to the Brum Group. 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre. £6 or £3 for members. Contact [bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk](mailto:bhamsfgroup@yahoo.co.uk). Future events/speakers: 10 May 2019, Daniel Godfrey; 14 June 2019, Jeanette Ng and Micah Yongo; 12 July 2019, Christopher Priest and Nina Allan.
- 24 April 2019: BSFA Open Meeting, ~~Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND~~. **Post-Ansible venue change:** [The Star of Kings](http://TheStarofKings.com) (near Kings Cross), 126 York Way, London, N1 OAX. 6pm for 7pm. With Una McCormack. Free. Date and venue changes may be announced after *Ansible* has gone to press: always check bsfa.co.uk for the latest information.
- 25 April 2019: John Scalzi signing at Forbidden Planet London Megastore, 6-7pm.
<https://forbiddenplanet.com/events/2019/04/25/john-scalzi-forbidden-planet/>

Outraged Letters. *Tony Keen* sees that *Wired* magazine has discovered a stupendous upheaval in the sf genre, as witness their tweet: ‘Sci-Fi is starting to get more political. In recent months, dozens of writers have contributed to stories that present a wide variety of marginalized perspectives.’ (31 March) Well I never.

- *Denny Lien*, ace library researcher, reports on his early copy of *New Maps*: ‘Just a note to confirm that I received the new Sladek book in the mail yesterday, and it looks fine, though I haven’t yet had time to scrutinize it with an intense scrute. (I assume the frequent typos of the name “John Sladek” as “Festus Fanthorpe Jr” are just some sort of private joke which will eventually become clear, so I’m not worrying about that or about the various pages printed upside down or the footnotes in Hindi or the live cobra that sprang out at me. These things *will* happen, I hear.)’
- *Lawrence Person* on an [Ansible 379](#) obituary: ‘the consensus of GAK’s friends is that Gregg Kanefsky is different than the *Nova Express* artist GAK, whose name was evidently Glenn A. Klinger.’

Some Links from the home page at news.ansible.uk.

- Kitschies Awards full shortlist:
<http://www.thekitschies.com/>
- Lambda Awards shortlists of genre interest:
<http://file770.com/2019-lambda-literary-awards-nominees/>
- Sturgeon Award shortlist:
<http://file770.com/2019-theodore-sturgeon-memorial-award-finalists/>

Thog Redux. Keith Freeman presents the *Spacesuit Insulation Dept*. ‘He was zipped into a silver-coloured pressure suit of rubber and nylon; an armour against the cold and airless void of space. [...] Melanie kissed him. Reaching his lips beyond the projecting visor proved to be difficult, but she managed it. He felt the animal warmth of her body as she strained against him.’ (Sydney J. Bounds, *Murder in Space*, 1962)

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as always our Hero Distributors: Durdles Books (Brum Group),
SCIS/Prophecy and Alan Stewart (Australia). 1 April 2019

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From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo:
Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Sue Mason**. Available for SAE, stygian haunts or the
surly beard of Mrifk.

Ytterbium. You read it here last: the [2019 Eastercon](#) has happened!

- [The UK in 2024 Worldcon Bid](#), chaired by Esther MacCallum-Stewart, announced its venue: the Scottish Event Campus (SEC), Glasgow. Pre-supporting memberships will be taken at Dublin 2019 and thereafter. See www.ukin2024.org.
 - *Concentric*, the only serious bid for Eastercon 2020, was confirmed and guests announced: see events list below.
 - *David A. Hardy* was made an honorary fellow of the British Interplanetary Society (presentation by Gerry Webb) for long service to space art.
 - *Doc Weir Award* for unsung fannish achievement: Jamie Scott.
 - *Your Editor* was glad to see people but too often unable to hear them.
- Thanks to all who bought *New Maps: More Uncollected John Sladek*, and to the con newsletter *The Daily Drone* for plugs. See ae.ansible.uk for paperback and (*just released*) ebook orders.
- *John Clute* broke his femur on the Friday – a misstep on a bus while loaded with books – and attended only in spirit via an emailed x-ray image; he’s now recovering at home.

The Norgolian Empire

Jean M. Auel must be less than pleased with Amazon after its email telling a customer that her novel *The Shelters of Stone* had been removed from the catalogue: ‘This product has been identified as a Rhino male enhancement supplement. Rhino male enhancement supplements are prohibited for listing or sale by Amazon policy.’ [BA] It’s back now.

Michael Davis, US comics creator, is not dead despite an online announcement of his suicide on 29 April: the perpetrator had hacked Davis’s

Facebook and other accounts. ([Bleeding Cool](#), 29 April) [MR]

N.K. Jemisin's Patreon supporters were privileged to read the somehow familiar opening of her alleged next novel: 'The weather beaten trail wound ahead into the dust racked climes of the baren land which dominates large portions of the Norgolian empire ...' (1 April) [DG]

Ian McEwan, according to a *Guardian* interview by Tim Adams, 'has little time for conventional science fiction' but nevertheless knows what sf authors have unaccountably failed to do with AI. In his own words: 'There could be an opening of a mental space for novelists to explore this future, not in terms of travelling at 10 times the speed of light in anti-gravity boots, but in actually looking at the human dilemmas of being close up to something that you know to be artificial but which thinks like you. If a machine seems like a human or you can't tell the difference, then you'd jolly well better start thinking about whether it has responsibilities and rights and all the rest.' Later, on *Frankenstein*: 'There the monster is a metaphor for science out of control, but it is ourselves out of control that I am interested in.' ([Guardian](#), 14 April) [E]

Ken MacLeod tweeted: 'I have little time for romance fiction, but there could be an opening of a mental space for novelists to explore a situation where two people are attracted to each other but seem deeply incompatible, and the vicissitudes of how this is resolved.' (16 April)

J.R.R. Tolkien, in July 1961, sent a letter to young Chris Gilmore (not the late *Interzone* reviewer) which recently sold at auction for over £6,000 in aid of a Somerset hospital. I hope it's safe to quote a bit here: 'I shall not write a sequel to *The Lord of the Rings* because, as is really clearly stated in the course of the story, it is the end of the kind of world about which I write: the twilight in which mythology and history are blended. After that there is only history.' ([SomersetLive](#), 2 April) [PF]

Condon

Until 15 Sep • **Stanley Kubrick** (exhibition), Design Museum, Kensington, London W8. Tickets £14.50 (£16 with suggested donation); more at designmuseum.org/exhibitions/stanley-kubrick-the-exhibition.

8 May • **FutureFest Lates** (evening talks): Jim Al-Khalili on sf and

prediction, 6:30pm at The Vaults, Waterloo, London. Now £15 (students £9): 'early bird' rates ceased in April. See www.futurefest.org/lates.

11-12 May • **HorrorCon UK**, Magna Science Adventure Centre, Sheffield Rd, Rotherham, S60 1DX. Tickets £40 for 11am entry, £50 for 10am; accompanied under-17s £16. Bookings at horrorconuk.com.

15 May • **Anthony Burgess & A Clockwork Orange**: talk by Andrew Biswell, Century Club, Soho, London W1. 6:30pm for 7pm. £12: see acuriousinvitation.com/burgessandaclockworkorange.html.

15-22 May • **Sci-Fi London** (film festival), Prince Charles Cinema and Stratford Picturehouse, London. Further details at sci-fi-london.com.

16 May - 26 Aug • **AI: More Than Human** (exhibition), Barbican Centre, London. Tickets £15 Monday to Friday, £17 Saturday or Sunday (plus fees). See www.barbican.org.uk/morethanhuman.

18 May • **Lawless** (UK comics – expanded from the *Judge Dredd*-only LawGiver), Hilton Doubletree Hotel, Bristol. For ticket purchases see www.facebook.com/groups/1417073338554565/.

23 May - 26 Aug • **Manga** (exhibition), British Museum, London. Tickets £19.50; under-19s and concessions £16; accompanied under-16s free. See britishmuseum.org/whats_on/exhibitions/manga.aspx.

1-2 Jun • **Film & Comic Con Collectormania**, Birmingham NEC. £10/day; £15 early entry. See filmandcomicconbirmingham.com.

7-9 Jun • **Cymera**: Scotland's Festival of SF, Fantasy & Horror Writing, Edinburgh. From £6.25 per event: www.cymerafestival.co.uk.

17 Jul • **Arthur C. Clarke Award** presentation, Foyles, Charing Cross Road, London. Tickets booking link awaited.

23-26 Aug • **The Asylum** (steampunk), Lincoln. £40 reg; £21 junior (5-16). For day tickets etc. see www.asylumsteampunk.co.uk.

3-6 Oct • **Grimmfest** (horror/cult film festival), Odeon Manchester Great Northern cinema. Ticket prices awaited at grimmfest.com.

26 Oct • **BristolCon**, Hilton DoubleTree Hotel, Bristol. £25 reg, *rising on 1 June*; £15 under-18s, concessions and disabled; under-15s free. Full details at www.bristolcon.org.

10-13 Apr 2020 • **Concentric** (Eastercon), Hilton Metropole near Birmingham NEC. GoH Rhianna Pratchett, Tade Thompson, Alison Scott. £70 reg; concessions £40; under-18s £20. See www.concentric2020.uk.

16-19 Apr 2020 • **StokerCon** (horror), Grand and Royal Hotels, Scarborough. Editor GoH Gillian Redfearn. £100 reg; HWA members £90. Further details and online registration at stokercon-uk.com.

28-31 Aug 2020 • **Redemption** (multimedia), Royal Victoria Hotel, Sheffield. *Now* £65 reg until May 2020; concessions £20 reduction; under-18s £25; under-3s free; supp £15. See redemptioncon.org.uk.

Rumblings. *Eurocon*: 2021 bids are from Italy (eurocon2021.it) and Romania (distopicon.eu); 2023, Sweden (twitter.com/Uppsala2023); 2024, the Netherlands (eurocon2024.ncsf.nl).

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. ‘Venturing into outer space, Claire Denis’s film has very different concerns from other sci-fi movies.’ is the subhead of a *High Life* review that wonders whether interstellar flight is sf: ‘Whether or not this movie counts as science fiction, one thing’s for sure: the fiction is more plausible than the science. The ship, we learn, whips along at close to the speed of light, although it appears to have been modelled on a large shoebox.’ (Anthony Lane, *The New Yorker*, 5 April 2019) [LP] If only the budget could have run to fins and shiny streamlining. Claire Denis agrees this is not sf because ‘a sci-fi movie, it’s a sort of structure that creates other planets, other beings, things like that. I was more interested in what we know.’ (*Washington Post*, 23 April) [MMW] Such as everyday life in a convict starship hurtling towards a black hole.

Awards. *BSFA*: NOVEL *Embers of War* by Gareth L Powell. SHORTER *Time Was* by Ian McDonald. NONFICTION ‘On motherhood and erasure ...’ by Aliette de Bodard. ARTWORK Likhain for *In the Vanishers’ Palace: Dragon I and II*.

- *Compton Crook* (debut novel): *The Poppy War* by R.F. Kuang. [L]
- *Faust Award* (media tie-in life achievement): Nancy Holder.
- *Kitschies*. NOVEL *Circe* by Madeline Miller. DEBUT *Frankenstein in Baghdad* by Ahmed Saadawi. COVER ART Suzanne Dean for Haruki Murakami’s *Killing*

Commendatore. [L]

- *Philip K. Dick* (paperback original): *Theory of Bastards* by Audrey Schulman.
- *Pulitzer Prize* for fiction: *The Overstory* by Richard Powers.

Eldritch Science. A many-tentacled ancestor of sea cucumbers found by palaeontologists at a Herefordshire site – 430 million years old, with a terrifying maximum size of 3cm – has been named *Sollasina cthulhu*. (Sputniknews.com, 10 April) [SvdK] Take a bow, HPL.

R.I.P. *Mark Alessi* (1953-2019), US businessman who founded CrossGen Comics (1998-2004), died on 30 March aged 65. [PDF]

- *Jonathan Baumbach* (1933-2019), US experimental novelist whose satire *D-Tours* (1998) plays with many sf/fantasy tropes, died on 28 March aged 85. [PDF]
- *John Bowen* (1924-2019), Indian-born UK author and playwright whose best known sf novel is *After the Rain* (1958; stage version 1966), died on 18 April aged 94; tv credits include seven episodes of the dystopian *The Guardians* (1971).
- *James D. Hudnall* (1957-2019), US comics writer and novelist whose 1986 comics debut was *Espers* for Eclipse and whose *Harsh Realm* (1994 with Andrew Paquette) was adapted for tv – with no creator credit until after a lawsuit – died on 9 April aged 61. [PDF]
- *Edward Kelsey* (1930-2019), UK *Archers* actor whose genre credits include *Doctor Who*: ‘The Creature from the Pit’ (1979), *Danger Mouse* (1981-1992), *Truckers* (1992) and *The Curse of the Were-Rabbit* (2005), died on 23 April aged 88. [CM]
- *Kazuo Koike* (1936-2019), prolific and influential Japanese manga writer and novelist whose comics debut was *Lone Wolf and Cub* (1970-1976, with six film adaptations), died on 17 April aged 82. [PDF]
- *Michael Lynne* (1941-2019), US producer, co-chair and co-CEO of New Line Cinema and executive producer of the *Lord of the Rings* films (2001-2003), *The Golden Compass* (2007) and others, died on 24 March aged 77. [AIP]
- *Tania Mallet* (1941-2019), UK model and actress who was a ‘Bond girl’ in *Goldfinger* (1964), died on 30 March aged 77. [PDF]
- *John McEnery* (1943-2019), UK actor whose rare genre credits include *The Land That Time Forgot* (1974), died on 12 April aged 75. [PDF]

- *Tom McGovern*, US fan and long-time member of the Southern Fandom Press Alliance, reportedly died on 21 or 22 April. [GL]
- *Vonda N. McIntyre* (1948-2019), highly regarded US author who won Nebula awards for 'Of Mist, and Grass, and Sand' (1973), for the novel *Dreamsnake* (1979) incorporating that story, and for *The Moon and the Sun* (1997), died on 1 April aged 70. Other stories are collected in *Fireflood* (1979); contributions to the *Star Trek* universe began with *The Entropy Effect* (1981) and include three film novelizations. A very recently completed novel awaits publication.
- 'Monkey Punch' (Kazuhiko Katō, 1937-2019), Japanese manga artist best known for the Bondian crime-romp series *Lupin III* (1967-1969), died on 11 April aged 81. He also illustrated superhero comics and the translation of Harry Harrison's *The Technicolor Time Machine*. [JCI]
- *Mya-Lecia Naylor* (2002-2019), UK actress in *Cloud Atlas* (2012), *Code Red* (2013) and *Index Zero* (2014), died on 7 April aged 16. [MMW]
- *Berto Pelosso*, Italian screenwriter who was assistant director of *The 10th Victim* (1965), died on 6 April aged 85. [PDF]
- *David V. Picker* (1931-2019), US producer of *The Man with Two Brains* (1983) and *Back to the Secret Garden* (2000), died on 20 April aged 87. [MMW]
- *Nadja Regin* (1931-2019), Yugoslavian-born actress in *The Magic Sword* (1950), *The Man Without a Body* (1957), *Goldfinger* and others, died on 7 April aged 87. [PDF]
- *Moira J. Shearman*, Edinburgh fan active since the late 1970s in fanzines (in particular TWP, the women's APA) and at conventions, died on 17 April. Kari writes: 'She was always interesting, friendly and welcoming: one of those rare people who everyone liked.'
- *Ron Sweed* (1949-2019), US tv horror host as title character of *The Ghoul* (1998-2003), died on 1 April aged 70. [LP]
- *Greg Theakston* (1953-2019), US comics artist who worked for DC, Marvel, Warren, *Mad* and many others, founded the Pure Imagination imprint and gave his name to the 'Theakstonizing' process for restoring old comics, died on 22 April aged 65. [SG]
- *Geoff Thorpe* (1954-2019), UK fan, convention-goer and South Hants SF Group member, died in March. [MC]
- *David Winters* (1939-2019), UK-born actor/director/producer whose genre films include *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1973), *Space Mutiny* (1988), *Deadly*

Reactor (1989) and *Future Force* (1989), died on 23 April aged 80. [LP]

- *Gene Wolfe* (1931-2019), much-praised US author of many fine stories and novels – perhaps best known for *The Fifth Head of Cerberus* (1972) and *The Book of the New Sun* (1980-1983), whose second volume *The Claw of the Conciliator* won a Nebula – died on 14 April aged 87. Career honours include the World Fantasy Award for life achievement in 1996, the SF Hall of Fame in 2007 and the SFWA Grand Master Award in 2012. His often deceptively simple-seeming narratives, with fractal labyrinths lurking beneath the surface as in *Peace* (1975), demand and greatly reward careful reading and rereading.

The Critical Heritage. ‘By conjuring a 1980s that is more technologically advanced than our present, Ian McEwan has established a promising new genre of fiction: futurist nostalgia.’ (Janan Ganesh reviewing *Machines Like Me* in the *Financial Times*, 12 April) [MMW]

Ansible 380 Updates. *Nora Roberts* is suing the Brazilian author [Cristiane Serruya](#) aka ‘#CopyPasteCris’ for multiple plagiarism, and lawyers are already smacking their lips. (AP, 24 April) [F770]

- *Amélie Wen Zhao* will release a modified version of her novel *Blood Heir*, withdrawn after an excess of [online outrage](#). (*NY Times*, 29 April) [PY]

Random Fandom. *Terry Carr*’s 1986 fanwriting collection *Fandom Harvest* is the latest addition to the TAFF site’s free ebooks page: see taff.org.uk/ebooks.php?x=FanHarvest.

- *Flick*’s biographies of past Doc Weir award winners appeared in booklet form at Ytterbium and online at efanzines.com/DocWeir/history.htm, to be updated yearly.

- *David Pringle* reports excitedly that one scene of *Avengers: Endgame* features a security guard visibly reading *The Terminal Beach* by J.G. Ballard.

Award Finalists (novel categories). HUGOS: *The Calculating Stars* by Mary Robinette Kowal; *Record of a Spaceborn Few* by Becky Chambers; *Revenant Gun*, by Yoon Ha Lee; *Space Opera* by Catherynne M. Valente; *Spinning Silver* by Naomi Novik; *Trail of Lightning* by Rebecca Roanhorse.

- HUGO BEST SERIES: *Centenal Cycle* by Malka Older; *Laundry Files* by Charles Stross; *Machineries of Empire* by Yoon Ha Lee; *October Daye* by Seanan McGuire; *Universe of Xuya* by Aliette de Bodard; *Wayfarers* by Becky Chambers.

- **LODESTAR** (young adult): *The Belles* by Dhonielle Clayton; *Children of Blood and Bone* by Tomi Adeyemi; *The Cruel Prince* by Holly Black; *Dread Nation* by Justina Ireland; *The Invasion* by Peadar O’Guilin; *Tess of the Road* by Rachel Hartman.
- **PROMETHEUS** (libertarian): *Causes of Separation* by Travis Corcoran; *Kingdom of the Wicked* by Helen Dale; *State Tectonics* by Malka Older; *The Fractal Man* by J. Neil Schulman; *The Murderbot Diaries (All Systems Red and three sequel novellas)* by Martha Wells.
- **RETRO HUGOS** for 1943 work: *Conjure Wife* by Fritz Leiber; *Earth’s Last Citadel* by C.L. Moore and Henry Kuttner; *Gather, Darkness!* by Fritz Leiber; *Das Glasperlenspiel [The Glass Bead Game]* by Hermann Hesse; *Perelandra* by C.S. Lewis; *The Weapon Makers* by A.E. van Vogt.
- For the complete list of Hugo and Retro Hugo categories, see dublin2019.com/hugo-finalists/.

The Dead Past. *80 Years Ago*, a tale of ragged horror: ‘The July Unknown hasn’t even edges! Some have the top and side edges trimmed, while a good many of them aren’t trimmed at all. The reason for this is that the ad on the back cover has writing too close to the bottom edge to trim it. This was done by Street & Smith without Editor Campbell knowing it. [...] Mr. Campbell wants it known that it will absolutely never happen again ...’ ([Fantasy News Weekly 49](#), 28 May 1939)

- *20 Years Ago*: ‘In a simple yet profoundly silly ceremony after my talk at Reconvene, Cheryl Morgan and Kevin Standlee presented *Ansible* with a Californian car licence plate bearing the word ANSIBLE. This came “From The Automobile of Galen A. Tripp”. Er, thanks to all....’ ([Ansible 142](#), May 1999) It still has pride of place on the office notice-board.

Magazine Scene. After ten years of publishing, says editor Jason Sizemore, ‘*Apex Magazine* will go on an indefinite hiatus’ with the May issue, #120. He needs a rest, but *Apex* may yet return. ([Blog](#), 15 April)

C.o.A. *Jack Cohen*, Waterloo Care Home, Ringwood Rd, Three Legged Cross, Dorset, BH21 6RD. Letters from fan friends are welcome.

Fanfundery. *TAFF*: 211 ballots cast. Geri Sullivan, with 136 votes, won by a first-round majority and will represent North America at Dublin 2019.

[JP/JA] Full voting details at taff.org.uk/news/2019-PR.pdf.

- *GUFF*: 73 ballots cast. Simon Litten was the winner by one vote in the

second round (after eliminating the trailing candidate) and will represent Australia and NZ at Dublin 2019. [DMH/MK]

- *A TAFF Guide to Beer* edited by Claire Brialey and Mark Plummer collects writing and artwork about fandom's favourite fluid by many past TAFF winners and all four 2019 candidates: see taff.org.uk/ebooks.php?x=Beer.
- The Fan Funds auction at Ytterbium raised over £1000, with further sales, donations and voting fees taking the weekend total well past £2000. [CB]

Thog's Masterclass. *Just the Older Stuff Dept.* '... not much progress had been made in installing modern sewage.' (Iain Pears, *Stone's Fall*, 2009) [PB]

- *Dept of Double Entendre.* "“We've got all night, remember?” she said, and headed across the shag rug to the small fieldstone fireplace.' (Natalie West, *The Girls in Publishing*, 1974) [PB]
- *Wrinkly Dept.* 'A pair of blue eyes sparkled with intelligence, and wrinkled charmingly as she smiled hello.' (*Ibid*) [PB]
- *Dept of Unique Skills.* 'Ayoola is wearing dungarees – she is the only person I know who can still pull those off.' (Oyinkan Braithwaite, *My Sister, The Serial Killer*, 2018) [PB]
- *Method Acting Dept.* 'His thoughts were etched as almost visible manifestations on the pale fire which writhed on his countenance.' (Basil Copper, *The Great White Space*, 1974) [BA]
- *Mainstream Metaphor Mastery.* 'Unable to push her tongue against the word, Briony could only nod, and felt as she did so a sulky thrill of self-annihilating compliance spreading across her skin and ballooning outwards from it, darkening the room in throbs.' (Ian McEwan, *Atonement*, 2001) [LS]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 9 May 2019: Shoreline of Infinity Event Horizon, Edinburgh. See link below for details.

<https://www.shorelineofinfinity.com/category/event-horizon/>

- 10 May 2019: Daniel Godfrey talks to the Brum Group. 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre. £6 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future events/speakers: 14 June 2019, Jeanette Ng and Micah Yongo; 12 July 2019, Christopher Priest and Nina Allan; 9 August 2019, summer social; 13 September 2019 TBA, 11

October 2019, Dr Amaury Triaud; 1 November 2019, TBA; 6 December 2019, Christmas social.

- 22 May 2019: BSFA Open Meeting at another new venue: Central Station, 37 Wharfdale Road, King's Cross, N1 9SD. 6pm for 7pm. Guest TBA [Later: announced as Gavin Smith]. Free. Date and venue changes may be announced after *Ansible* has gone to press: always check bsfa.co.uk for the latest information.

R.I.P. II. Late notice: *Wade Wellman* (1937-2018), who collaborated with his father Manly Wade Wellman (1903-1986) on the stories collected as *Sherlock Holmes's War of the Worlds* (1975), died on 25 January 2018. [LP]

- *Malcolm Willits*, long-time US pop-culture collector who with Leonard Brown founded Collector's Bookstore in Hollywood (selling film memorabilia and old comics), died on 15 April. [AIP]

Special Thanks to Martin Hoare for transporting a box of paperback copies of [*New Maps: More Uncollected John Sladek*](#) to Ytterbium in his legendary Big Red Van.

Some Links from the *Ansible* home page.

- Arthur C. Clarke Award complete submissions list
<https://medium.com/@arthurccclarkeaward/a-record-breaking-year-the-complete-submissions-list-of-eligible-titles-for-the-arthur-c-clarke-f1c765626adb>
- As Others Use Us in an Example (via John D. Berry)
<https://boldmonday.typhenetwork.com/news/article/bold-monday-sails-to-new-horizons>
- Brave New Words shortlist
<https://www.starburstmagazine.com/brave-new-words-award-nominees-announced>
- *Carl Brandon* edited by Jeanne Gomoll
<https://tinyurl.com/CarlBrandon>
- Ed Naha medical expenses fundraiser
<https://www.gofundme.com/honey-i-shrunk-naha039s-medical-bills>
- Retro Fan Hugos reader at [Fanac.org](http://fanac.org)
http://fanac.org/fanzines/Retro_Hugos.html
- Writers of the Future again (the URL title is unrelated to the post)
<https://tonyortega.org/2019/04/05/scientology-admits-in-planning-docs-it-expects-only-6-walk-ins-daily-at-new-facility/>

Thog's Second Helping. *Antifreeze Dept.* Our characters have found an ancient mystery spaceship: '... the air rushing in. / "It's still got an atmosphere," Sherrill said. / "Want to take your helmet off, Sarge?" Ganis said. / "I wouldn't suggest it," Hanton said. "Not unless you like breathing air that's 270°C below zero." (John Scalzi, *The Consuming Fire*, 2018) [SF²C]

- *Uses of Upholstery.* 'These two women treated me like a seat cushion – something to be suffocated and smothered.' (You-Jeong Jeong, *The Good Son*, 2016; trans Chi-Young Kim 2018) [PB]
- *We've All Felt This Way.* 'I was so nervous that I wanted to rip my ears off my head.' (*Ibid*) [PB]

Ansible® 382 © David Langford, 2019. Thanks to Brian Ameringen, Johan Anglemark, Paul Barnett, Claire Brialey, Mike Cheater, Jonathan Clements, Paul Di Filippo, Everybody (re Ian McEwan), *File 770*, Paul Fraser, David Goldfarb, Steve Green, Donna Maree Hanson, Marcin Klak, Guy Lillian, *Locus*, Chryse Moore, Lawrence Person, David Pringle, Andrew I. Porter, John Purcell, Marcus Rowland, *SF² Concatenation*, Lucy Sussex, Saskia van de Kruisweg, Martin Morse Wooster, Pete Young, and as always our Hero Distributors: Durdles Books (Brum Group), SCIS/Prophecy and Alan Stewart (Australia). 1 May 2019

Ansible® 383, June 2019

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo:
Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Ulrika O'Brien**. Available for SAE or a tower of beer
cans to the Moon.

The Grunch and the Eggplant

John Carpenter the cult sf/horror film director (*Dark Star*, *The Fog*, *Escape from New York*, *The Thing* etc) received a special award for life contributions to cinema at the Cannes festival in May. ([Reuters](#), 15 May)

Malcolm Edwards has stepped down as Consultant Publisher to Orion and Chair of Gollancz, where among many other things he presided over the SF Masterworks list, the SF Gateway ebook library and (linked to Gateway) the online *Encyclopedia of SF*. His last day with the company was 31 May; career celebration to follow. (Hachette PR, May)

Frank Frazetta's *Egyptian Queen* (a 1969 *Eerie* cover) sold for \$5.4 million at a Heritage Auctions sale in May, reportedly the highest price ever for original comics art sold at auction. ([Heritage](#), 16 May) [F770]

Hugo Gernsback also did well at auction, with the first edition of *Ralph 124C 41+* (1925) going for \$9,375 in a 14 May Swann Galleries sale. Bargain-hunters had to content themselves with Edgar Rice Burroughs: *Tarzan the Invincible* (inscribed first edition, 1931) sold for \$3,500 and *At the Earth's Core* (signed first, 1922) for \$3,750. [BA]

Mary Robinette Kowal was elected unopposed as SFWA President in May, and will replace the current incumbent Cat Rambo on 1 July.

Ian McEwan has distanced himself slightly from his apparent position on sf as quoted in *Ansible* 382: “I’d be very happy for my novel to be called science fiction, but it’s also a counterfactual novel, it’s also a historical novel, it’s also a moral dilemma novel, in a well-established traditional form within

the literary novel,” he says. “I’m very happy if they want to call my novel science fiction, even honored. But it’s much else, that’s all I’m trying to say.” (Interview in [Wired](#), 4 May) [DA]

Peter Nicholls is remembered in the renamed SF Foundation Essay Prize, now the Peter Nicholls Essay Prize. Only postgraduates and non-tenured researchers with recent PhDs can enter. Deadline 2 December; full details at www.sf-foundation.org/sf-foundation-essay-prize.

Colin Smythe’s name was taken in vain for many spoof emails asking his contacts for a ‘favor’ (not the way he spells it), which proved to be sending his impersonator iTunes or Walmart vouchers for a fictitious birthday present. He hopes that no one fell for it.

Conflatulence

7-9 Jun • **Cymera**: Scotland’s Festival of SF, Fantasy & Horror Writing, Edinburgh. From £6.25 per event: www.cymerafestival.co.uk.

8 Jun • **BSFA/SF Foundation AGMs** and mini-con, Blackett Building Lecture Theatre 1, Imperial College, London. From 10am; SFF AGM noon; BSFA AGM 1pm. Free. See [BSFA post](#).

3-4 Jul • **Science for Fiction**, Imperial College, London. Science presentations *for published authors only*: afternoon of 3rd, all day 4th. £30 including catering. Contact Dave Clements, davecl at mac dot com.

5-7 Jul • **Lavecon** (sf/fantasy/gaming), Sedgebrook Hall Hotel, Northants. Tickets at various prices from www.hwsevents.co.uk/shop-1.

5-7 Jul • **London Anime & Gaming Con**, London Met, N7 8DB. £29 reg; for day and VIP rates see summer.londonanimecon.com.

13 Jul • **Summer Comic Jam**, Tyne Bank Brewery. Noon to midnight. Canny Comic Con event (see cannycomiccon.blogspot.com) on Small Press Day, whose links list is awaited at smallpressday.co.uk.

13 Jul • **Edge-Lit 8**, QUAD Centre, Derby, DE1 3AS. 10am-9pm. £30. See www.derbyquad.co.uk/whats-on/events/edge-lit-8.

17 Jul • **Arthur C. Clarke Award** presentation, Foyles, Charing Cross Road, London. Tickets booking link awaited.

15-19 Aug • **Dublin 2019** (Worldcon), Dublin, Ireland. *Now €260 reg; young adult and Irish First Worldcon €160; child €80.* Unchanged: infant €5; supp €40. See dublin2019.com. (Price rises announced on 3 May and effective from 6 May – hence no warning in the *May Ansible*.)

23-26 Aug • **The Asylum** (steampunk), Lincoln. £40 reg; £21 junior (5-16). For day tickets etc. see www.asylumsteampunk.co.uk.

26 Oct • **BristolCon**, Hilton DoubleTree Hotel, Bristol. *Now £30 reg* (£35 at the door); £20 under-18s, concessions and disabled (£25 at the door); under-14s free. Full details at www.bristolcon.org.

16-17 May 2020 • **HorrorCon UK**, Magna Science Adventure Centre, Sheffield. Tickets sales awaited at horrorconuk.com.

29 Jul - 2 Aug 2020 • **CoNZealand** (Worldcon 78), Wellington, New Zealand. NZD \$370 reg and \$225 YA/unwaged, *rising to \$400 and \$250 on 17 June 2019*. Other rates are unchanged: \$105 child (born 2005+), infants (born 2015+) free, \$75 supporting. See conzealand.nz.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us, Ad Nauseam. ‘Once upon a time, when I was young and naive, an ex-boyfriend coerced me into spending an evening playing Dungeons & Dragons with his boy pals. A covert little gang, the fantasy board game enthusiasts were well aware that their hobby made them look like massive losers, and so the gathering was a fairly clandestine affair, hosted in one or another’s flat and played, as I remember it, crouched on the floor, like hobbits round a brazier. / Within five minutes of observing four adult males role-playing and strategising over which path might best suit their “quest”, I realised two things. First, that Dungeons & Dragons is the most painfully boring activity in the world. And second, that any affection I might have felt for my young wizard, or Prince Twgwyidd, or whatever guise he had assumed as his fantasy alterego, had clean disappeared. I had a similar reckoning a few years later when another boyfriend revealed a disturbing adoration for the work of comic fantasy writer Terry Pratchett. Love may conquer all, but Discworld will never be sexy. / The fantasy genre still makes me shudder.’ (Jo Ellison, *Financial Times*, 18 May) [MMW]

Awards. *Arthur C. Clarke* shortlist: *Semiosis* by Sue Burke, *Revenant Gun*

by Yoon Ha Lee, *Frankenstein in Baghdad* by Ahmed Saadawi, *The Electric State* by Simon Stålenhag, *Rosewater* by Tade Thompson, *The Loosening Skin* by Aliya Whiteley.

- *Nebulas*: NOVEL *The Calculating Stars* by Mary Robinette Kowal. NOVELLA *The Tea Master and the Detective* by Aliette de Bodard. NOVELETTE *The Only Harmless Great Thing* by Brooke Bolander. SHORT ‘The Secret Lives of the Nine Negro Teeth of George Washington’ by Phenderson Djèlí Clark (*Fireside* 2/18). GAME WRITING *Black Mirror: Bandersnatch*. RAY BRADBURY (dramatic): *Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse*. ANDRE NORTON (young adult): *Children of Blood and Bone* by Tomi Adeyemi.
- Neil Cross on his Man Booker Prize longlisting, an example to us all: ‘It was like waking up to find a sewer rat squirming its way between your teeth and into your throat.’ (*BBC Writersroom*) [PE]

As Others See *Game of Thrones*. ‘How did a show that could have been dreamed up between dice tosses in a Dungeons & Dragons session become the stuff of watercooler conversations?’ (Theunis Bates, editorial in *The Week*, 17 May) [MMW]

R.I.P. Roslyn Alexander (1924-2019), US actress in *Child’s Play* (1988) and *The Unborn* (2009), died on 30 May aged 94.

- Max Arthur (1939-2019), UK military historian and actor in *Doctor Who* ‘Planet of Fire’ (1984), died on 2 May aged 80.
- Nikolai Baturin, (1936-2019), Estonian author whose work included such sf novels as *Sõnajalg kivis* (*A Fern in the Stone*, 2006), died on 17 May aged 82. [PDF]
- Tim Bolgeo (1949-2019), long-time US fan and con organizer whose fanzines were *The LibertyCon Newsletter* and *The Revenge of Hump Day*, died on 12 May aged 70. [AIP]
- Jack Cohen (1933-2019), UK reproductive biologist, author and (since the late 1960s) fan and convention-goer, a consultant to many sf authors including Brian Aldiss and Anne McCaffrey on the design of plausible aliens, died on 6 May aged 85. His books include *The Science of Discworld* (1999) with Terry Pratchett and Ian Stewart, which had three sequels; two sf novels with Stewart, of which the first was *Whealers* (2000); and *Evolving the Alien: The Science of Extraterrestrial Life* (2002, aka *What Does a Martian Look Like?*) again with Stewart. He was an old friend, always fine company (and a good speaker) at conventions.

- *Tim Conway* (1933-2019), US comedian with voice roles in *SpongeBob SquarePants* (1999-2012) and *Dragons: Riders of Berk* (2012-2013), died on 14 May aged 85. [PDF]
- *Tommy Donbavand* (1968-2019), UK children's and comics author who wrote the *Doctor Who* novel *Shroud of Sorrow* (2013) and with Michael Anderle co-wrote the 'Gravity Storm' ebook sf adventures as Tom Dublin, died on 14 May aged 51. [SH]
- *Dennis Etchison* (1943-2019), US horror author who won multiple British and World Fantasy Awards – including both for his first collection *The Dark Country* (1982) – died on 28 May. [L] He received the HWA life achievement award in 2017.
- *Steve Golin* (1955-2019), US producer whose films include *Candyman* (1992), *Being John Malkovich* (1999) and *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* (2004), died on 21 April aged 64. [AIP]
- *Isaac Kappy* (1977-2019), US actor in *Terminator Salvation* (2009), *Thor* (2011) and others, committed suicide on 13 May; he was 42. [MMW]
- *Judith Kerr* (1923-2019), German-born UK author and illustrator of much-loved children's books beginning with *The Tiger Who Came to Tea* (1968), died on 22 May aged 95; she was married to Nigel Kneale from 1954 until his death in 2006.
- *Everett Kinstler* (1926-2019), noted US portrait artist whose early pulp/comics work included a stint on Avon's 1950s *White Princess of the Jungle*, died on 26 May aged 92. [PDF]
- *Terry Allen Kramer* (1933-2019), Tony-winning Broadway producer whose shows included *Gorey Stories* (1978), *Frankenstein* (1981), *The Addams Family* (2010) and *Spider-Man: Turn Off the Dark* (2011), died on 2 May aged 85. [AIP]
- *Peggy Lipton* (1946-2019), US actress in *Twin Peaks* (1989-1991; 1992 film spinoff) and *The Postman* (1997), died on 11 May aged 72. [PDF]
- *Bronco McLoughlin* (1938-2019), Irish actor and stuntman whose films include *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* (1984), *Hellbound: Hellraiser II* (1988), *Willow* (1988) and *Total Recall* (1990), died on 26 March aged 80.
- *Pua Magasiva* (1980-2019), Samoan actor in *Power Rangers Ninja Storm* (2003 tv) and *30 Days of Night* (2007), died on 11 May aged 38. [MR]
- *Peter Mayhew* (1944-2019), US actor who played Chewbacca in the original *Star Wars* trilogy plus later films and spinoffs, died on 30 April aged

74. [F770]

- *Glen Mehn*, US-born ‘all round geek, author of speculative fiction, and a Director of The Kitschies’, died in May according to a British Fantasy Society tweet (23 May); he was a contributor to *alt.sherlock.holmes*.
- *H. Stanley (Stan) Nuttall* (1926-2019), long-time UK fan and stalwart of the Liverpool Group for many years, died on 26 April aged 92. With John Owen he wrote the fanfiction adventures of Sir William Makepeace Harrison for the club fanzine *Space Diversions*. [RC]
- *Makoto Ogino* (1959-2019), Japanese comics creator best known for the fantasy sequence *Kujaku-Ō* (*Peacock King*, 1985-1989), died on 29 April aged 59. [JonC]
- *Justin Ponsor* (‘J-Po’), comics colorist for WildStorm, CrossGen, Marvel and DC, died on 18 May aged 42. [PDF]
- *Terry Rawlings* (1933-2019), UK film and sound editor whose credits include *Watership Down* (1978), *Alien* (1979), *Blade Runner* (1982) and *The Core* (2003), died on 23 April aged 86. [PDF]
- *Chris Reccardi* (1964-2019), US animation writer and director whose many credits include *SpongeBob SquarePants* (1999-current) and *Super Robot Monkey Team Hyperforce Go!* (2004-2006), died on 2 May aged 54. [PDF]
- *Alvin Sargent* (1927-2019), Oscar-winning US screenwriter who scripted *Spider-Man 2* (2004) and co-wrote the 2007 sequel, died on 9 May aged 92. [PDF/CH]
- *Dennis Neal Smith*, US comics fan and con organizer (he chaired the infamous 1966 Westercon) whose artwork inspired several Harlan Ellison stories including ‘I Have No Mouth and I Must Scream’, died in May aged 73. [PDF]
- *Peggy Stewart* (1923-2019), US actress whose credits include *The Vampire’s Ghost* (1945), *The Fall of the House of Usher* (1979) and *FlashForward* (2009), died on 29 May aged 95.
- *Stephen Thorne* (1935-2019), UK actor in three 1970s *Doctor Who* serials (‘The Daemons’, ‘The Three Doctors’, ‘The Hand of Fear’) and radio adaptations including *The Magician’s Nephew*, *The Lord of the Rings* and *Guards! Guards*, died on 26 May aged 84. [DWN]
- *Herman Wouk* (1915-2019), Pulitzer-winning US author whose sf venture was the minor *The ‘Lomokome’ Papers* (1956 *Collier’s Weekly*; 1968), died on 17 May aged 103. [PDF] *A Hole in Texas* (2004) is a borderline-sf satire.

The Weakest Link. Q: ‘The marsh in Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress* is called

The Slough of ... what?' A: 'Newcastle.' (*The Chase*, ITV) [PE]

Shed of Doom. The tiny Museum of Classic Sci-Fi in Allendale, Northumberland (www.museumofclassicsci-fi.com) tested the limits of what's possible for its Grade II listed house: having a Dalek outside is OK, but adding a little wooden shed to keep the rain off this merciless exterminator roused the wrath of the county planning department. Controversy ensued; a consultation is in progress. (*Guardian*, 21 May)

Alien News. 'Oxford Professor Claims Invisible Aliens Are Interbreeding with Humans' (Firsttoknow.com, 29 April) was one of many recent headlines about Dr. Young-Hai Chi of the Oxford Oriental Institute, who argues that aliens among us are mingling genes because they feel threatened by climate change and nuclear weapons. [MMW]

Random Fandom. *FAAn Awards* at Corflu (2-5 May). FANZINE: overall *Banana Wings*; genzine *Banana Wings*; personalzine (tie) *Flag, Vibrator*; newszine *Ansible*; apazine *Lofgeornost*; special *Lake's Folly*. WRITING: overall Mark Plummer; fannish article 'Worldcon Kaleidoscope' by John-Henri Holmberg; sercon article 'Weisinger's Worldcon' by Andy Hooper; series/column 'Roadrunner' by Mark Plummer; letterhack Paul Skelton. ART: overall Alan White; special award Steve Stiles; cover Brian Parker for *Beam 13*; cover design Geri Sullivan for *The Corflu 35 Bheer Tasting Guide*; fan illustrator Steve Stiles; photographer/digital artist Ditmar; graphic design Pete Young for *The White Notebooks*. ONLINE: special award eFanzines.com; archive/resource Fanac.org; news/info resource *Ansible*; group or list In the Bar. OTHER: #1 fan face Mark Plummer (your editor was ever so surprised to be listed as #2); services to the hobby Andy Hooper; 'smooooth operator' Spike; unrecognized fan achievement Taral Wayne; life achievement Paul Skelton.

- *Bob Madle*, long-time US fan, bookdealer and founding member of First Fandom (see below) who was the TAFF delegate to the first London Worldcon in 1957, celebrated his 99th birthday on 2 June. [CP]

The Dead Past. *60 Years Ago*, a golden opportunity dawned for those active in fandom before 1 January 1938: 'BOB MADLE AND DON FORD announce the formation of a new fan club, FIRST FANDOM, a non-profit organisation with dues of one dollar per annum. "Most of the money," they say, "will be expended in a club bulletin which will maintain an up to date roster of

members...” ([Skyrack 3](#), 1 June 1959)

- *40 Years Ago*: ‘LANGFORD KOS CHECKPOINT IN GRIM FAN STRUGGLE! Well, perhaps not, but it sounds more interesting that way. In fact *Checkpoint* will be folding with the 100th issue, that being more than enough for any sane fan editor, and Dave Langford will be starting up an entirely new publication by the name of *Ansible*.’ (Peter Roberts in [Checkpoint 97](#), June 1979)
- *20 Years Ago*, the UK relaxacon Seccon (in Stevenage) saw ‘the rediscovery of the long-hoped-lost [Fundament!](#), the Oxford U SF Group’s musical version of the entire Foundation trilogy. This is somewhat, er, telescoped (THE MULE: “Curses! I forgot that my mutation renders me so weak that the effort of singing could at any time kill me stone dead.... Aaargggghhhh...”) and was performed with great enthusiasm but no actual music, drawing praise from Ian Sorensen: “They’re making *my* productions look professional!” Asimov purists were intrigued by Dave Clements’s evocation of Hari Seldon lurching up from his Time Vault wheelchair at the close of *Second Foundation*, with the words, “Mein Fuhrer ... I can walk!” (*Ansible* 143, June 1999)

Encyclopedia Galactica News. Andy Sawyer’s old position has been filled at last: the SF Foundation announced that from the end of May the SFF Librarian at Liverpool University is Phoenix Alexander. [RR]

As Others See Us II. *Interviewer*: ‘Which genres do you avoid?’ *George F. Will*: ‘Science fiction. Reality is weird enough.’ (*NY Times*, 31 May) [JB]

- ‘*High Life* is not a science-fiction film in any usual sense of the term, despite deploying some classic tropes of the genre. Neither is it a horror film, although it does contain some horrifying imagery. In essence, this is an existential, philosophical treatment of the prison movie genre taken to its logical conclusion ...’ (*The Quietus*, 10 May) [R]

Fanfundery. *TAFF Site Free Ebooks.* The latest release is a new collection of Terry Carr’s fanzine writings, *Fandom Harvest II* – not to be confused with last month’s ebook reissue of the 1986 *Fandom Harvest*. This follow-up is substantially longer, with over 118,000 words, and includes everything from *The Incomplete Terry Carr* (1972) that’s not also in *Fandom Harvest*, plus lots and lots of previously uncollected material. Downloadable at taff.org.uk/ebooks.php?x=FanHarvest2.

Thog’s Masterclass. *Fish in a Barrel Dept.* ‘He had some pigeons and a

couple of rabbits he'd shot in the freezer.' (Martin Walker, *A Taste for Vengeance*, 2018) [SR]

- *Eternal Verities*. 'One didn't question sociologists and their computers.' (Isaac Asimov, *The Naked Sun*, 1957)

- *The Simile of Understatement*. '... not unlike falling nude into a morass of itching powder while two sadistic dentists drilled into one's teeth at the instant of apogee of alcoholic history's most profligate hang-over.' (Richard Condon, *The Manchurian Candidate*, 1959) [MMW]

- *Eyeballs in the Sky*. 'He walked straight into Falcón's eyes and caught the blue flash of his lover's.' (Robert Wilson, *The Blind Man of Seville*, 2003) [PB]

- *Running Gag Dept*. '... legs and buttocks raw from sitting in his uncontrollable urine.' (*Ibid*)

- *Marital Duties Dept*. 'As he spoke his eyes darted about under cover of some heavy, dark eyebrows, which his wife was not keeping under control.' (*Ibid*) [PB]

- *Morbid Metaphor Moments*. '... he lowered himself into a chair in front of his doctor, hesitant as a man with elephant haemorrhoids that ran from nose to tail.' (*Ibid*) [PB]

- *Firestarter Dept*. 'The sound of sizzling nylon reached him as she sawed her legs together.' (*Ibid*) [PB]

- *Neat Tricks*. 'He searched the inside of his head, reached for a cigarette, lit it and inhaled deeply.' (*Ibid*) [PB]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 8 June 2019: Shoreline of Infinity Event Horizon, Edinburgh. 7:30pm. Free. See link below for details.

<https://www.shorelineofinfinity.com/category/event-horizon/>

- 14 June 2019: Jeanette Ng and Micah Yongo talk to the Brum Group. 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre. £6 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future events/speakers: 12 July 2019, Christopher Priest and Nina Allan; 9 August 2019, summer social; 13 September 2019 TBA, 11 October 2019, Dr Amaury Triaud; 1 November 2019, TBA; 6 December 2019, Christmas social.

- 26 June 2019: BSFA Open Meeting, Central Station, 37 Wharfdale Road,

King's Cross, N1 9SD. 6pm for 7pm. Guest(s) TBA. Free. Date or venue changes may be announced after *Ansible* has gone to press: always check bsfa.co.uk for the latest information.

Late R.I.P. News from Joe McNally and Konrad Walewski:

- *Paul Darrow* (1941-2019), UK actor best remembered as Avon in *Blake's 7* (1978-1981), died on 3 June aged 78. He was also in the *Doctor Who* serials *Doctor Who and the Silurians* (1970) and *Timelash* (1985).
- *Maciej Parowski* (1946-2019), Polish author, editor, critic and comics writer whose most important novel is the alternate history *Burza. Ucieczka z Warszawy '40* (*The Storm. Escape from Warsaw '40*, 2010), died on 2 June aged 72.

Remembering Jack Cohen. Tabitha Cohen writes: 'Dad, like many, was affected by cancer and therefore we would prefer donations to be made to cancer research rather than flowers. You can help raise money for this great cause by donating directly to my fundraising page –

<https://www.justgiving.com/Drjackcohen>

JustGiving sends your donation straight to Cancer Research UK and automatically reclaims Gift Aid if you are a UK taxpayer, so your donation is worth even more. Thank you for your support!

Some Links from the *Ansible* home page.

- Bram Stoker Awards

<http://file770.com/2018-bram-stoker-awards/>

- GRRM: 'An Ending'

<http://georgermartin.com/notablog/2019/05/20/an-ending/>

- Horror Author Responds at Stupefying Length to Unseen Review

<https://www.scifiandscary.com/this-is-not-a-review-of-hells-shadows/>

- Locus Award 'shortlist' with ten items in each of 16 categories:

<https://locusmag.com/2019/05/2019-locus-awards-finalists/>

Thog's Second Helping. *More Eyeballs and Eyebrows.* 'He sat there like a girl on a lawn and stared at me, inky pupils bleeding outward, threatening to tar out the green.' 'When she was out of earshot, Luke leaned toward me with his eyebrows.' 'Her eyes filled with hurt and pleading and sought the ketchup on the table.' (all Steph Cha, *Follow Her Home*, 2013) [PB]

Ansible® 383 © David Langford, 2019. Thanks to Dev Agarwal, Brian

Ameringen, Paul Barnett, John Boston, Claire Brialey, Ramsey Campbell, Carol Carr, Jonathan Clements, *Doctor Who News*, *File 770*, Paul Di Filippo, Chip Hitchcock, Rob Hansen, Steve Holland, Robert Lichtman, *Locus*, Curt Phillips, Andrew I. Porter, *Private Eye*, Steve Rice, Richard, Roger Robinson, Marcus Rowland, Martin Morse Wooster, and our Hero Distributors: Durdles Books (Birmingham SF Group), SCIS/Prophecy and Alan Stewart (Australia). 3 June 2019

Ansible® 384, July 2019

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo:
Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Arthur Thomson**, 1987. Available for SAE or an
invisible whistling octopus.

The Mandrake Shrieks

Peter S. Beagle won a technical victory in his lawsuit against his former manager Connor Cochran when on 21 June a US state judge ruled that while some claims had not been proven (elder abuse by causing mental suffering, conversion of assets), others had (financial elder abuse, fraud, breach of fiduciary duty, defamation), and awarded \$332,500 damages plus ‘reasonable’ legal fees. But owing to Cochran’s filing of Chapter 11 bankruptcy in January 2018, both collection of damages and further litigation about co-owned companies remain on hold pending action by the US Bankruptcy Court. ([File 770](#), 24 June)

Brian Eno received the Stephen Hawking Medal for Science Communication in June; and asteroid 81948 has been given his full name, Brian Peter George St John le Baptiste de la Salle Eno, but mercifully will be called Eno for short. (Consequenceofsound.net, 26 June) [SB]

Neil Gaiman was thrilled – and so would Terry Pratchett have been – that 20,000 Americans organized by the ‘Return to Order’ Christian campaign signed a petition demanding that the *Good Omens* tv series be cancelled. Among the outraged complaints are that this is ‘another step to make satanism appear normal, light and acceptable’, that it ‘mocks God’s wisdom’, and worst of all that God is voiced by a woman. By way of punchline, the petition was addressed to Netflix rather than the makers BBC/Amazon Prime. Neil tweeted: ‘... This is so beautiful ... Promise me you won’t tell them?’ ([Guardian](#), 20 June) But somehow they found out, and redirected their wrath. ([Guardian](#), 21 June)

Irene Gallo, multiple award-winning art director at Tor Books, is now vice president and publisher of Tor.com. (Tor.com, 20 June)

Jim Jarmusch, discussing his zombie film *The Dead Don't Die*, revealed a personal nightmare: 'Also, I've been kind of obsessed for some years about what might happen if the earth slipped off its axis. It's been tipping very slightly for some time, but what if there's a jump in that? We'd be totally screwed.' (*Sight and Sound*, July 2019) [SC]

Philip Pullman was asked, 'If you could walk out of the back of a wardrobe into a fictional world, which would it be?' *Answer*: 'There are so many ... But if I wanted to live in a world that was full of strangeness and delight, of fear as well as reassurance, of both transience and permanence, I'd hope to find myself among Tove Jansson's Moomins.' (Interview by James McConnachie, *The Author*, Summer 2019)

Consubstantiation

3-4 Jul • **Science for Fiction**, Imperial College, London. Science presentations *for published authors only*: afternoon of 3rd, all day 4th. £30 including catering. Contact Dave Clements, davecl@mac.com.

4 Jul • **Bram Stoker & Dracula in London**: talk by Roger Luckhurst, Carlyle's House, Chelsea, London SW3. Tickets (inc glass of prosecco) £15 from acuriousinvitation.com/stokeranddracula.html.

5-7 Jul • **Lavecon** (sf/fantasy/gaming), Sedgebrook Hall Hotel, Northants. Tickets at various prices from www.hwsevents.co.uk/shop-1.

5-7 Jul • **London Anime & Gaming Con**, London Met, N7 8DB. £29 reg; for day and VIP rates see summer.londonanimecon.com.

10 Jul • **Aleister Crowley on Drugs**: talk by Gary Lachman, Century Club, Soho, London W1. 6:30pm for 7pm. Tickets £12 from acuriousinvitation.com/aleistercrowleyondrugs.html.

13 Jul • **Summer Comic Jam**, Tyne Bank Brewery. Noon to midnight. Canny Comic Con event (see cannycomiccon.blogspot.com) on Small Press Day, whose links list is at smallpressday.co.uk/spd-2019/.

13 Jul • **Edge-Lit 8**, QUAD Centre, Derby, DE1 3AS. 10am-9pm. £30. See

www.derbyquad.co.uk/whats-on/events/edge-lit-8.

17 Jul • **Arthur C. Clarke Award** presentation, Foyles, 107 Charing Cross Road, London. 6:30-9pm. Tickets £13 at tinyurl.com/y2u792zl.

17 Jul • **Plan 9 from Outer Space** 60th anniversary showing at Fontaine's, 176 Stoke Newington Rd, London N16. 8pm for 8:30. Free?

CANCELLED. 20 Jul • **Avon Valley Railway SF Day**, Bitton Station, 3 Bath Rd, Bristol, BS30 6HD. £8.50; over-60s £7.50; under-15s £6.50; under-5s free. See www.avonvalleyrailway.org/events/sci-fi-fun/.

7-11 Aug • **Tolkien 2019** (Tolkien Society), Macdonald Burlington Hotel, Birmingham. £125 reg. See www.tolkien2019.com.

15-19 Aug • **Dublin 2019** (Worldcon), Dublin, Ireland. €260 reg; young adult and Irish First Worldcon €160; child €80; infant €5; supp €40. See dublin2019.com. Adult day rates: €35 Thu or Mon, €50 Fri, €75 Sat or Sun; more at dublin2019.com/memberships/day-passes/. *Note that the voting deadline for the Hugo Awards is 31 July 2019.*

22-26 Aug • **Frightfest** (film), Leicester Square, London. Tickets on sale from 6 July at www.frightfest.co.uk/filmsevents.html. There's also a Hallowe'en special at a Leicester Square venue on 2 November.

7-8 Sep • **Film & Comic Con Cardiff**, Motorpoint Arena, Cardiff. Tickets £8 or £15 for early entry. See filmandcomicconcardiff.com.

3-6 Oct • **Grimmfest** (horror/cult films), Odeon Manchester Great Northern cinema. £90 (£76 concessions) plus fees from grimmfest.com.

14-15 Sep • **Other Worlds Workshop Weekend**, Nottingham. £27.50 plus £2.40 booking fee per day. See tinyurl.com/yy7fawgo.

13 Oct • **Octocon**, Crowne Plaza Hotel, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15, Ireland. (Venue is 12km from city centre.) At last we have a date – NB one day only – and online registration is awaited at octocon.com.

25-26 Oct • **Bicentennial Vampyre Ball**, Century Club, Soho, London W1. 9pm-3am. 'Super early bird' tickets £20 (five or more £15) at acuriousinvitation.com/halloween2019.html.

25-27 Oct • **Festival of Fantastic Films**, Pendulum Hotel, Manchester. £85 reg. See fantastic-films.com/festival/ for hotel booking (rooms are held to 31

July only). The rumour mill says this 30th event may be the last unless there's a significant change of organization.

SOLD OUT. 30 Oct - 3 Nov • **Sci-Fi Weekender Part 2**, Vauxhall Holiday Park, Great Yarmouth. Weekend pass £99; for camping, accommodation and possible cancellations see www.scifiweekender.com.

8-10 Nov • **Novacon 49**, Nottingham Sherwood Hotel (was the Park Inn). Contact 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ. £49 reg to end of August; under-17s £12; under-13s free. See www.novacon.org.uk.

30 Nov • **Dragonmeet** (gaming), Novotel London West, W6 8DR. 9am-midnight. £10 reg, £12 from 1 October: www.dragonmeet.co.uk.

23-26 Apr 2020 • **Sci-Fi Weekender**, Vauxhall Holiday Park, Great Yarmouth. Basic weekend pass £99; for camping and accommodation packages see www.scifiweekender.com.

16-17 May 2020 • **HorrorCon UK**, Magna Science Adventure Centre, Sheffield. Ticket sales awaited at horrorconuk.com.

5-7 Jun 2020 • **Cymera**: Scotland's Festival of SF, Fantasy & Horror Writing, Edinburgh. See www.cymerafestival.co.uk,

29 Jul - 2 Aug 2020 • **CoNZealand** (Worldcon 78), Wellington, New Zealand. Now NZD \$400 reg; \$250 YA/unwaged. \$105 child (born 2005+), infants (born 2015+) free, \$75 supporting. See conzealand.nz.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. 'UFOs are usually the preserve of science fiction ...' (Miranda Bryant, *Guardian* story headlined "'We're watching": Trump stokes UFO rumors during ABC News interview', 22 June) [PB]

Awards. *Betty Trask* (under-35s) winners of genre interest: *The Mermaid and Mrs. Hancock* by Imogen Hermes Gower; *The Water Cure* by Sophie Mackintosh.

- *Ditmar* (Australia) best novel: *City of Lies* by Sam Hawke.
- *Grand Prix de L'imaginaire* (France) for translated novel: *Underground Airlines* by Ben H. Winters. [ESF]
- *John W. Campbell Memorial: Blackfish City* by Sam J. Miller.

- *Kate Greenaway Medal: The Lost Words* by Robert Macfarlane, illustrated by Jackie Morris.
- *Kurd Laßwitz Preis* (Germany) for translated novel: *Eiswelt [Early Riser]* by Jasper Fforde. [ESF]
- *Lambda* (LGBTQ) sf/fantasy/horror category: *The Breath of the Sun* by Isaac R. Fellman. [F770]
- *Locus* (novels only): SF *The Calculating Stars* by Mary Robinette Kowal. FANTASY *Spinning Silver* by Naomi Novik. HORROR *The Cabin at the End of the World* by Paul Tremblay. YA *Dread Nation* by Justina Ireland. DEBUT *Trail of Lightning* by Rebecca Roanhorse.
- *Sturgeon* (short story): ‘When Robot and Crow Saved East St. Louis’ by Annalee Newitz (Slate.com).

Plagiarism Latest. ‘So someone just tried to submit *The Three-Body Problem* (the novel by Cixin Liu, translated by Ken Liu) to *Clarkesworld* as their own work. Stunned.’ (Neil Clarke, Facebook, 28 June)

R.I.P. *Milan Asadurov* (1949-2019), Bulgarian sf author, publisher (the ‘Galaxy’ imprint) and translator (notably of the Russian Strugatsky brothers), died on 8 June aged 69. [PDF]

- *Adrish Bardhan* (1932-2019), Bengali author, editor, translator and publisher who launched Bengali sf (‘kalpavigyan’) in 1963 with the magazine *Ashchorjo* – edited as by Akash Sen – died on 21 May aged 86.
- Late report: *Paul Barrett* (1940-2019), UK rock-and-roll agent, Festival of Fantastic Films regular and occasional actor in such horror films as *Bloody New Year* (1987), died on 20 January aged 78. [SF²C]
- *Edward P. Berglund*, US Lovecraftian author, scholar and editor – magazines *From Beyond the Dark Gateway* (1972-1977) and *Nightscares* (1997-2001); anthologies include *The Disciples of Cthulhu* (1976) – reportedly died in June. [PDF]
- *Keith Birdsong* (1959-2019), US Native American artist best known for his prolific output of covers for *Star Trek* novelizations, died on 4 June from car-crash injuries; he was 59. [PDF]
- *William F. Brown* (1928-2019), US playwright, librettist and cartoonist who wrote the book for the Oz-based hit musical *The Wiz* (1975), died on 23 June aged 91. [PDF]
- *Alistair Browning* (1954-2019), New Zealand actor whose credits include *Hercules* (1997-1998), *The Lord of the Rings* (2002, 2003) and *Power*

- Rangers Dino Charge* (2016), died on 2 June aged 65. [PDF]
- *Paul Darrow* (1941-2019), UK actor and author best remembered as Avon in *Blake's 7* (1978-1981), died on 3 June aged 78. He was also in the *Doctor Who* serials *Doctor Who and the Silurians* (1970) and *Timelash* (1985); his novels include the B7-related *Avon: A Terrible Aspect* (1989). [JM]
 - *Bob Dorian* (1934-2019), US magician, tv host and actor in *The Curse of the Jade Scorpion* (2001) and *The Evil Dead* (2013), died on 15 June aged 85. [PDF]
 - *Billy Drago* (1945-2019), US actor in *Vamp* (1986), *Cyborg II* (1993), *Lunarcop* (1995), *Sci-fighters* (1996), *Tremors 4* (2004), *Demon Hunter* (2005) and others, died on 24 June aged 73. [PDF]
 - *Peter Allan Fields*, US screenwriter and producer with many genre credits from *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.* (1965-1966) to *Star Trek: The Next Generation* and – as both writer and producer – *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* (1993-1999), died on 19 June. [PDF]
 - *Yuzuru Fujimoto* (1935-2019), Japanese voice actor in *Gigantor* (1963) and many more anime productions to 2015, died on 10 June aged 83.
 - *Eddie Garcia* (1929-2019), noted Filipino director, tv personality and actor seen in *Beast of the Yellow Night* (1971), died on 20 June aged 90.
 - *Nonnie Griffin* (1933-2019), Canadian actress with voice roles in *Star Wars: Ewoks* (1985-1986), *Care Bears* (1986-1988) and *The Care Bears Movie* (1986), died on 7 June aged 85.
 - *Steve Hawkes* (1942-2019), US actor born Stjepan Šipek in Croatia, whose films include *Blood Freak* (1972) and unauthorized Spanish-language Tarzan adventures (character name changed to Zan for English release), died on 23 June. [PDF]
 - *Sean Hewitt* (1935-2019), Canadian actor in *Vampire Circus* (1972), *Thinner* (1996), *Battlefield Earth* (2000) and *Crimson Peak* (2015), died on 6 June aged 83.
 - Late report: *Sandra Rae Laney Holland* (1940-2018), Francis Towner Laney's daughter and former child mascot of the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society (see *Ah! Sweet Idiocy!*), died on 11 September aged 78. [RH]
 - Late report: *Timothy Wade Huntley* (1939-2018), US author of *One on Me* (1980) and the 1999-2002 Earthgame trilogy, died on 13 June 2018 aged 79. [PV]
 - *Andrey Kharitonov* (1959-2019), Russian actor who starred in the Wells-based Soviet film *The Invisible Man* (1984), died on 23 June aged 59.

- *Kevin Killian* (1952-2019), US poet, editor and gay fiction author who contributed to several genre anthologies, died on 15 June aged 66. [PDF]
- *Yoshio Kobayashi* (1951-2019), Japanese fan, editor and (as Takashi Ogawa) translator of much English-language sf for publication in Japan, died on 13 June. [L]
- *Al Johnston*, UK fan and convention-goer – a familiar figure at Novacons – died on 8 June. [TD]
- *Sean McCann* (1935-219), Canadian character actor in *Starship Invasions* (1977), *The Uncanny* (1977) and *Naked Lunch* (1991), died on 13 June aged 83.
- *Bryan Marshall* (1938-2019), UK actor in *The Witches* (1966), *Quatermass and the Pit* (1967), *The Boy Merlin* (1979) and *Selkie* (2000), died on 25 June aged 81. [SG]
- *Sylvia Miles* (1924-2019), US actress whose genre films include *The Sentinel* (1977), *The Funhouse* (1981) and *Sleeping Beauty* (1987), died on 12 June aged 94. [F770]
- *Nickianne Moody*, UK academic who was a trustee of the SF Foundation and contributed to books of genre criticism including *The Parliament of Dreams* (1998) and *Terry Pratchett: Guilty of Literature* (2000), died on 9 June. [AS]
- *John Llewellyn Moxey* (1925-2019), Argentina-born UK director whose genre productions include *The House That Would Not Die* (1970) and *The Night Stalker* (1972), died on 29 April aged 94. [AIP]
- *Holly Prado* (1938-2019), US author who explored mythic themes in *Esperanza: Poems for Orpheus* (1998) – one selected for *Year's Best Fantasy and Horror* – died in June aged 81. [PDF]
- *Carl Schell* (1927-2019), Austrian actor in *Lycanthropus* (1961, aka *Werewolf in a Girls' Dormitory*), died on 6 June aged 91.
- *Edith Scob* (1937-2019), French actress whose films include the sf/horror classic *Eyes Without a Face* (1960), died on 26 June aged 81. [PDF]
- *William Simons* (1940-2019), Welsh actor in *Doctor Who*: 'The Sun Makers' (1977) and *The Woman in Black* (1989), died on 21 June aged 78.
- *Andrew Sinclair* (1935-2019), UK author of *The Project* (1960) – which ends on the brink of nuclear holocaust – and the fantastical Albion trilogy opening with *Gog* (1967), died on 30 May aged 84. [MJE]
- *Peter Whitehead* (1937-2019), UK film-maker and author whose film *Fire in the Water* (1977) and novel *The Risen* (1977) both have fantasy elements,

died on 10 June aged 82. [SG]

- *Max Wright* (1943-2019), US actor best known for the sf sitcom *ALF* (1986-2004), died on 26 June aged 75. Other credits include *Misfits of Science* (1985-1986). [CH]

Kaiju Horror! ‘Rogue slug blamed for Japanese railway chaos’, says the BBC headline (22 June), and the story can only be an anticlimax.

- Another headline full of sf sense-of-wonder is ‘The Latest: Trump to Nominate Esper to Lead Pentagon’ (Associated Press, 21 June). [PDF]

Comic Cuts. DC Comics has announced that its Vertigo imprint – and also the DC Zoom and DC Ink imprints – will close in January 2020, laid waste by a ‘new publishing strategy’. ([Hollywood Reporter](#), 21 June)

Infodump Masterclass. “‘They’re the Glashan, fallen Seruvim and followers of Pyratheon. They intend to capture the Keruvim and wage war against Riathamus ...’” (G.P. Taylor, *Shadowmancer*, 2002/2003) [BA]

- “‘Tell me of the ships as if I know nothing of them. Tell me as if I were a child.’” (Becky Chambers, *Record of a Spaceborn Few*, 2018)

Random Fandom. *Bruce Gillespie* received Australian fandom’s rarely presented Eternity Award, given for ‘a huge amount of work for SF fandom over an impossibly long time’.

- *Martin Hoare* is booked for an operation on 9 July: ‘They are going to remove 10cm of my bowel.’ He sternly warns me against making ‘semi colon jokes’. Good luck, boss.

- *Remembering Vonda*, memories of Vonda N. McIntyre ed. Stephanie A. Smith and Jeanne Gomoll, is available as a paperback and a free PDF: tinyurl.com/RememberingVonda, tinyurl.com/RememberingVondaPDF.

The Dead Past. *20 Years Ago:* ‘Another conflicting origin story for our barbarian critic Thog the Mighty! In *Imaginary Worlds* (1973) the late Lin Carter deplored Robert E. Howard’s inept coining of fantasy names ... “Thak, Thaug, **Thog**, Yog, Yara, Yogah, Zang, Zogar, Sag.” I confidently expect Tom Holt to set this catchy chorus to music.’ ([Ansible 144](#), July 1999)

- *40 Years Ago* (argh): ‘AND TAFF, ALREADY seems to have two probable candidates in the shape of Jim Barker and the ubiquitous Dave Langford.’ (Peter Roberts in [Checkpoint 98](#), July 1979)

- *80 Years Ago*, the first Worldcon was held in New York, 2-4 July 1939, with Frank R. Paul as GoH and 200 attending fans. A twentieth anniversary

report by co-organizer James V. Taurasi in [Science Fiction Times 239](#) (July 1959) gave great prominence to “the communist element then in fandom” who “wanted the World Con for their propaganda machine” and were very properly Excluded. Thus science fiction was saved from the red menace of Cyril Kornbluth, Frederik Pohl, Donald A. Wollheim....

Fanfundery. *TAFF Site Free Ebooks.* Newly added: *The Complete Patchin Review*, assembling all issues of Charles Platt’s controversial 1980s magazine about sf and publishing, with a new introduction by Charles himself: download at taff.org.uk/ebooks.php?x=Patchin. *The Complete Cheap Truth*, the full run of the polemical cyberpunk ‘samizdat’ fanzine from impenetrably pseudonymous Vincent Omniaveritas (Bruce Sterling): taff.org.uk/ebooks.php?x=CheapTruth. *The Meadows of Fantasy*, Archie Mercer’s humorous 1965 novel of UK fandom (also hosted by Bill Burns at eFanzines.com): taff.org.uk/ebooks.php?x=Meadows.

- *CUFF* (Canadian Unity Fan Fund): the 2019 winner is Fran Skene.

C.o.A. *The Cartoon Museum*, 63 Wells Street, London, W1A 3AE.

Thog’s Masterclass. *Line of Sight Dept.* ‘... such a firm, round, lively and truly impressive behind that the haunting vision of this interesting aspect of her personality frequently obscured the face of my math teacher at school.’ (Romain Gary, *Promise At Dawn*, 1960; trans John Markham Beach, 1961) [MMW]

- *Dept of Expressive Eyes.* “‘Well, m’boy,” the physiologist’s fleshy eyelids quivered....’ (Isaac Asimov, ‘Blind Alley’, *Astounding SF*, March 1945) [DR]

- *In Space, No One Can Hear You Complain.* ‘Interstellar travel, though it had improved over the last five hundred years, was still anything but quick, and boredom had replaced death as the most common complaint.’ (Gustavo Bondoni, *Outside*, 2017) [AK]

- *None So Blind.* ‘His feet were sure, but they could not see.’ (Guy Gregory, *Heroes of Zara Keep*, 1982) [TPR]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- ? July 2019: Shoreline of Infinity Event Horizon, Edinburgh. 7:30pm. Free. See link below for details (date not announced when this *Ansible* went to press)_.

<https://www.shorelineofinfinity.com/category/event-horizon/>

- 12 July 2019: Christopher Priest and Nina Allan talk to the Brum Group. 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre. £6 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future events/speakers: 9 August 2019, summer social; 13 September 2019 TBA, 11 October 2019, Dr Amaury Triaud; 1 November 2019, TBA; 6 December 2019, Christmas social.
- 24 July 2019: BSFA Open Meeting, Central Station, 37 Wharfedale Road, King's Cross, N1 9SD. 6pm for 7pm. Guest(s) TBA. Free. Date or venue changes may be announced after *Ansible* has gone to press: always check bsfa.co.uk for the latest information.

Late R.I.P. *Paul Darrow's* death was reported after *Ansible* 383 had been printed and mailed, and the obit appeared only in digital editions under this heading; now expanded in the main R.I.P list above.

Shameless Puffery. *New Maps: More Uncollected John Sladek* (Ansible Editions, 2019) has sold modestly well in paperback, and doing the half-yearly royalty statement reminded me that I still have a few spare copies of the first-state printing left over from Eastercon. Available *within the UK only* for just £17.00 including postage and packing. If interested, please email me at the usual address or via ansible.uk/contact.php. Also available worldwide from Lulu: see ae.ansible.uk/?t=newmaps.

Some Links from the *Ansible* home page.

- *Amazing Stories* events calendar
<https://calendar.amazingstories.com/>
- Ian Stewart remembers Jack Cohen
<https://www.theguardian.com/science/2019/jun/03/jack-cohen-obituary>
- *Locus* Awards: full list of winners
<https://locusmag.com/2019/06/2019-locus-awards-winners/>
- Mythopoeic Awards finalists
<https://mythsoc-rohan.blogspot.com/2019/06/mythopoeic-awards-finalists-for-2019.html>

Thog's Second Helping. *Portrait of a Scientist.* 'The professor was muttering contentedly in the brush, pocketing plant specimens and dissecting small vermin with his fingernail clippers.' (John Silbersack [anonymously], *No-Frills Science Fiction*, 1981) [TPR]

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July 2019

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Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo:
Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Ulrika O'Brien**. Available for SAE or Scapsile Vault
Craft schematics.

Forty Years On. It was at the Brighton Worldcon in August 1979 that [the first issue of Ansible](#) appeared, ending with the rash promise that ‘future issues will contain news.’ Confronted with the evidence of this appalling gulf of years, your editor uttered a heartfelt ‘Bloody hell!’

The Plain People of Fandom: And so say all of us.

The Interesting Times Gang

Margaret Atwood’s *The Testaments*, her still unpublished sequel to *The Handmaid’s Tale*, is on the 13-book [Booker Prize longlist](#). (BBC, 24 July) So is Jeanette Winterson’s Mary Shelley-meets-AI novel *Frankissstein*.

Neil Clarke has for the third time won the Chesley Award for best art director. Full list at file770.com/2019-chesley-award-winners/.

Cressida Cowell, author of the *How to Train Your Dragon* and *The Wizards of Once* series, is the new UK children’s laureate. [AIP]

Boris Johnson’s notorious alter-ego role as the inept resistance leader in *Agent of Chaos* by Norman Spinrad – revealed by the *Guardian* Diary in 2005 and pondered by me in *SFX* (ansible.uk/sfx/sfx131.html) – was rediscovered in *Private Eye* for 26 July. ‘If we save Boris Johnson for no rational reason whatever, are we not remaining true to Chaos?’

Alan Moore has yet again announced that he’s retiring from comics writing, his last script being the much-delayed final instalment of *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*. ([Guardian](#), 18 July)

Mike Resnick explained his long recent silence online: ‘Sorry to be absent for a month. 4 weeks ago I was walking from one room to the next when I

collapsed. Carol called the ambulance, and 2 days later I woke up in the hospital minus my large intestine. Just got home last night. / I don't like growing old.' (Facebook, 3 July)

Neal Stephenson is flattered by *Reason* magazine's joky suggestion that he is Satoshi Nakamoto, the mysterious creator of Bitcoin; but says it isn't so. Well, he would, wouldn't he? (MarketWatch, 18 July) [PDF]

Conversazione

Until 26 Aug • **AI: More Than Human** (exhibition), Barbican Centre, London. Tickets £15 Monday to Friday, £17 Saturday or Sunday (plus fees). See www.barbican.org.uk/morethanhuman.

Until 26 Aug • **Manga** (exhibition), British Museum, London. Tickets £19.50; under-19s and concessions £16; accompanied under-16s free. See britishmuseum.org/whats_on/exhibitions/manga.aspx.

7-11 Aug • **Tolkien 2019** (Tolkien Society), Macdonald Burlington Hotel, Birmingham. £125 reg. See www.tolkien2019.com.

15-19 Aug • **Dublin 2019** (Worldcon), Dublin, Ireland. Online registration at dublin2019.com *closes at midnight on 1 August; there will be no memberships for sale at the door*. Several fan families were annoyed to learn that, for tortuous legal reasons, under-15s in (most of) the main convention centre must be accompanied by an adult at all times. The committee forgot to mention this important point until 17 July.

17 Aug • **Forbidden Planet** screening plus George R.R. Martin in conversation, Irish Film Institute, Dublin: see ifi.ie/worldcon-tickets.

22-25 Aug • **Eurocon/TitanCon**, Waterfront Convention Centre and Hilton Hotel, Belfast. £65 reg; YA (16-25) £40; child (6-15) £25. More details including day membership rates at titancon.com/2019/.

22-26 Aug • **Frightfest** (film), Leicester Square, London. Tickets now on sale at www.frightfest.co.uk/filmsevents.html.

23-26 Aug • **The Asylum** (steampunk), Lincoln. £40 reg; juniors (5-16) £20. For day tickets etc. see www.asylumsteampunk.co.uk.

25-26 Aug • **Stars of Time** (media), Tropicana, Weston-super-Mare. 10am-

5pm. £7.50; under-12s, OAP and disabled £4; under-4s free. Family of 2+2 kids £18; 2+3 kids £19. See www.starsoftime.co.uk.

31 Aug • **Preston Comic Con**, Guild Hall, Preston. 9:30am (£12) or 10:30am (£8) to 5pm. See www.wonkyrocketevents.co.uk/preston/.

31 Aug • **Whooverville** (*Doctor Who*), QUAD Centre, Derby, DE1 3AS. Tickets £50; concessions/under-16s £33; under-12s £10; bookings via www.derbyquad.co.uk (no visible link from whooverville.org).

7-8 Sep • **Film & Comic Con Cardiff**, Motorpoint Arena, Cardiff. Tickets £8 or £15 for early entry. See filmandcomicconcardiff.com.

14-15 Sep • **Other Worlds Workshop Weekend**, Nottingham. £27.50 plus £2.40 booking fee per day. See tinyurl.com/yy7fawgo.

3 Oct - 1 Nov • **London Month of the Dead**, various venues and events, a few of genre interest: see londonmonthofthedeath.com.

29 Nov - 1 Dec • **UK Ghost Story Festival**, Derby – multiple venues, apparently. Details awaited at tinyurl.com/yypqyq37.

11-12 Jul 2020 • **Edge-Lit 9**, QUAD Centre, Derby, DE1 3AS. Details awaited at www.derbyquad.co.uk/whats-on/events/.

7-10 Aug 2020 • **Discworld Convention**, Hilton Metropole, Birmingham NEC. £85 reg; £60 concessions; £30 supporting; accompanied under-13s free. Further details at dwcon.org.

Rumblings. *Eastercon*®: some fans out there are reportedly talking about creating a limited company to run the annual UK Eastercon, while neglecting so far to consult the trademark holders Harry Payne and Tim Kirk. See murphys-lawyer.dreamwidth.org/318759.html. [HP]

• *Middle-Earth Festival*: still no date, but on past form the 2019 event could be as early as 31 August. Keep an eye on middleearthfestival.wordpress.com.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. Asked the traditional question about genre preferences, Delia Owens gave the traditional answer: ‘I do not read heavy crime books or science fiction. There is too much great, real science to be had.’ (*New York Times Book Review* interview, 11 July) [RH]

Awards. *Arthur C. Clarke: Rosewater* by Tade Thompson.

- *Brave New Words: Empire of Sand* by Tasha Suri.
- *Cordwainer Smith Rediscovery*: Carol Emshwiller.
- *Prometheus* (libertarian): NOVEL *Causes of Separation* by Travis J.I. Corcoran. HALL OF FAME 'Harrison Bergeron' (1961) by Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.
- *Rhysling* (poem): LONG 'Ursula Le Guin in the Underworld' by Sarah Tolmie (*On Spec*, April 2018). SHORT 'After Her Brother Ripped the Heads from Her Paper Dolls' by Beth Cato (*Mythic Delirium* 4.3).
- *Seiun* (Japan) for translations: NOVEL *Mecha Samurai Empire* by Peter Tieryas, trans Naoya Nakahara. SHORT 'The Circle' by Liu Cixin, trans Naoya Nakahara. [F770]
- *Shirley Jackson Award* novel category: *Little Eve* by Catriona Ward.
- *World Fantasy Award* for life achievement: Hayao Miyazaki, Jack Zipes.

As Others Digest Us. On the heroine of Jackson Ford's novel *The Girl Who Could Move Sh*t With Her Mind*: 'Teagan's jokes, internal monologue and pop culture references are sure to please those looking for an adventure with a digestible amount of sci-fi thrown in.' (Chris Pickens in *Book Page* magazine, July 2019) [GW]

R.I.P. *Ben Barenholtz* (1935-2019), US pioneer of midnight-movie showings who launched David Lynch's *Eraserhead* (1977) thus and became its distributor, died on 26 June aged 83. Cameo acting credits include *Dawn of the Dead* (1978) and *Liquid Sky* (1982). [AIP]

- *Artur Brauner* (1918-2019), Polish-born German producer of both respected films and less serious money-earners such as *Vampire Lesbians* (1971) and *The Vengeance of Doctor Mabuse* (1974), died on 7 July aged 100. [F770]
- *Richard Carter* (1953-2019), Australian character actor whose films include *The Punisher* (1989), *Babe: Pig in the City* (1998), *Happy Feet* (2006) plus sequel, and *Mad Max: Fury Road* (2015), died on 13 July aged 65. [PDF]
- *Valentina Cortese* (1923-2019), Italian actress whose many credits include *Ring of Darkness* (1979) and *The Adventures of Baron Munchausen* (1988), died on 10 July aged 96. [PDF]
- *Sam Gafford* (1962-2019), US author, editor, critic and publisher (as Ulthar Press) of weird fiction in the H.P. Lovecraft and William Hope Hodgson vein, who co-edited *Occult Detective Quarterly*, died in July. [JLG]
- *Lee Garvin*, US games designer who created *Tales from the Floating Vagabond* and wrote for the *Star Wars* and *Indiana Jones* RPGs, died on 29

June.

- *Rutger Hauer* (1944-2019), Dutch actor whose many genre films include *Blade Runner* (1982), *Ladyhawke* (1985), *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (1992), *Batman Begins* (2005) and *Valerian and the City of a Thousand Planets* (2017), died on 19 July aged 75. [LP] ‘All those moments will be lost in time, like tears in rain. Time to die.’
- *David Hedison* (1927-2019), US actor in *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea* (1964-1968), *The Power Within* (1979), *Megiddo: The Omega Code 2* (2001) and others, died on 18 July aged 92. [A-TC]
- *Martin Hoare* (1952-2019), long-time UK fan who worked on innumerable conventions, co-chaired the 1984 and 2002 Eastercons and was honoured with the Doc Weir Award in 2015, died on 26 July. See my [personal note](#) below.
- *Paul Hugli* (1951-2019), US author of several genre stories since 2010 (see ISFDB), died on 17 March aged 67. [PDF]
- *Charlee Jacob* (1952-2019), US horror and dark fantasy author who won Stoker awards for her novel *Dread in the Beast* (2005; tied award) and poetry collection *Sineater* (2005), died on 14 July. [GVG]
- *Arte Johnson* (1929-2019), US *Rowan & Martin's Laugh-In* actor (‘Very ... interesting’) whose genre credits include *The President's Analyst* (1967), *Love at First Bite* (1979) and *Evil Toons* (1992), died on 3 July aged 90. [PDF]
- *Ben Johnston* (1926-2019), US composer who scored the opera *Carmilla* (1970, based on J. Sheridan Le Fanu's vampire novella), died on 21 July aged 93. [AIP]
- *Freddie Jones* (1927-2019), UK actor in *Frankenstein Must Be Destroyed* (1969), *Son of Dracula* (1973), *Krull* (1983), *Dune* (1984) and *The Black Cauldron* (voice, 1985), died on 9 July aged 91. [JM]
- *Jeremy Kemp* (1935-2019), UK *Z-Cars* actor seen in *Dr. Terror's House of Horrors* (1965) and *Conan* (1997-1998), died in late July aged 84. [JJ]
- *Charles Levin* (1949-2019), US actor whose films include *The Golden Child* (1986), was found dead on 12 July. [GF]
- *Josh Lukin* (1968-2019), US academic who published essays on Samuel R. Delany, Philip K. Dick, Kate Wilhelm and other sf authors, died in late July aged 50. [SRD]
- *Robert Mayer* (1939-2019), US journalist who wrote the satirical superhero novel *Superfolks* (1977) and the afterlife fantasy *I, JFK* (1989), died on 23

July aged 80. [AIP]

- *Zanda Myrande* (also known as Zander Nyronde), UK fan, author and noted filker, following an apparent stroke or seizure that led to a serious head injury on 21 July, died on the night of 23/24 July. [HM/MB] As Jonathan Waite, Zanda was a past contributor to *Ansible*.
- *Denise Nickerson* (1957-2019), US actress in *Dark Shadows* (1968-1970) and *Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory* (1971), died on 10 July aged 62. [PDF]
- *Suzan Pitt* (1943-2019), US animator and director whose short films include *Asparagus* (1979), *El doctor* (2006) and *Visitation* (2013), died on 16 June aged 75. [PDF]
- *Christian Rosenfeldt* (1956-2019), Swedish fan once active in publishing and writing for fanzines, died in late July. [J-HH]
- *Maggie Secara* (1950-2019), US RenFaire costumer and author of the Harper Errant fantasy trilogy opening with *The Dragon Ring* (2012), died on 27 July aged 68. [PDF]
- *Andi Shechter*, US fan who helped run many conventions including Boskones, Bouchercons and Noreascon 3, and was the long-time partner of Stu Shiffman (they married in 2014), died on 15 July. [LM]
- *Greg Shoemaker* (1947-2019), founder and editor of the pioneering *The Japanese Fantasy Film Journal* (1968-1984), died on 19 July. [PDF]
- *Malaika Rose Stanley*, UK children's author whose works include the sf *Spike and Ali Enson* (2011) and *Spike in Space* (2012), died in late June aged 65. [AIP]
- *Russi Taylor* (1944-2019), US voice actress who played Minnie Mouse in nearly 30 years of Disney cartoons, died on 26 July aged 75. Further credits include *DuckTales* (1987-1990, as Huey, Louie, Dewy and others), *Who Framed Roger Rabbit* (1988), many *Simpsons* episodes 1990-2019, *Babe* (1995) and sequel, *The Brave Little Toaster Goes to Mars* (1998) and *The Simpsons Movie* (2007). [MMW]
- *Rip Torn* (1931-2019) US actor in *Men in Black* (1997) and its sequels, died on 9 July aged 88. [PDF]

As Others Recruit Us. 'The French army has said it is looking to recruit four or five sci-fi writers and futurologists to staff a "Red Team" that predicts future threats and how to disrupt or defend against them.' (*The Register*, 19 July) Only established French sf authors need apply.

More on Martin. It seemed to have gone well. Having prepared for his big cancer operation (see [A384](#)) by attending a weekend beer festival in Ostend, Martin Hoare posted from the Royal Berkshire Hospital: ‘In the recovery unit after four and a half hours in surgery. I have more pipes than the Pompidou Centre.’ (Facebook, 9 July) They sent him home on the 16th, but too much bad luck followed: a septic infection and worse. Martin died in the RBH on the morning after an emergency operation late on 25 July; Hazel and I were with him at the last. He was my oldest friend, from early schooldays and the same Oxford college – where I fondly recall him showing me the ropes, and the pubs – to living for decades in the same town. Hard to believe there’ll be no more of the Reading Christmas celebrations where he swapped ever-sillier gifts with Hazel and myself. As official Langford Hugo acceptor at many overseas Worldcons, Martin delivered my little speeches with great and entertaining gusto. His tireless work for fandom included putting on memorable fireworks displays with the Skyburst team; driving a massive, lovingly tended sound system to smaller conventions such as Novacons and UK Corflus in his fabled Big Red Van, and then spending more or less the entire weekend operating it; or alternatively he’d organize the real ale bar and spend the con supervising *that*, personally tapping every cask at Ytterbium this Easter despite not feeling at all well. How on earth will fandom cope without him?

- No date has yet been set for the funeral.

Award Shortlists. *British Fantasy Award* novel categories: FANTASY (Holdstock): *The Bitter Twins* by Jen Williams; *Empire of Sand* by Tasha Suri; *Foundryside* by Robert Jackson Bennett; *The Green Man’s Heir* by Juliet E. McKenna; *The Loosening Skin* by Aliya Whiteley; *Priest of Bones* by Peter McLean. HORROR (Derleth): *The Cabin at the End of the World* by Paul Tremblay; *Little Eve* by Catriona Ward; *The Way of the Worm*, by Ramsey Campbell; *Wolf’s Hill* by Simon Bestwick. Full list with all categories at tinyurl.com/yxuhqc7t.

- *World Fantasy* best novel: *In the Night Wood* by Dale Bailey; *The Mere Wife* by Maria Dahvana Headley; *The Poppy War* by R.F. Kuang; *Witchmark* by C.L. Polk; *Trail of Lightning* by Rebecca Roanhorse. Full list at tinyurl.com/y6qny6fc.

- *ESFS Hall of Fame*: the UK nominees are Charles Stross (author), Dominic Harman (artist) and PS Publishing (publisher). Full list: tinyurl.com/y2bm6pda.

Court Circular. The Bonzo Dog Doo-Dah Band (of ‘Urban Spaceman’ fame; [see SFE entry](#)) found their name had been trademarked by Anglo Atlantic Media Limited, which claimed ownership at the Intellectual Property Office website – no evidence required, just a £200 fee – and then sued them for using their established name. Directors of AAML include the band’s former promoter Bob Carruthers. A fundraiser for the Bonzos’ legal costs at www.crowdjustice.com/case/bonzodogbanned/ reached its £15,000 target on 26 July, but more would be welcome. [JD] The IPO has scheduled a hearing of the case for 5 September 2019.

Magazine Scene. After rumours that *Mad* magazine was closing down, the big revelation is that it will shamle onward in zombie mode – publishing only reprint material, with just a little original content in the traditional end-of-year special issue. (*Gizmodo*, 5 July)

Random Fandom. *Doris Panda*, Martin Hoare’s puppet alter-ego, is to travel the convention circuit forever in memory of Martin. As Terry Pratchett very nearly put it, a man is not dead while his panda is still spoken of. [JA]

- *Escape Pod*, the long-running sf story podcast at escapepod.org, has had a species of wasp named after it: *Zelomorpha effugia*. [F770]

- *Lisa Conesa*, who edited the fine UK fanzine *Zimri* (1971-1976) and the sf poetry collection *The Purple Hours* (1974) but dropped out of fandom in the late 1970s, died in 1991 according to recent online researches; she was 55. [ITB]

- *Retro Hugo Glitch*: ten days before the 31 July voting deadline, an error in the Best Fanzine ballot was revealed. *Fantasy News* ed. Sykora had fewer nominating votes than, and so was replaced by, *Guteto* ed. Morojo. Voters for *Fantasy News* via the online ballot were informed and could alter their choice . [NW]

The Dead Past. *40 Years Ago*, the gutter press reported a ‘*Huog Award Error*: a few days ago, the engraved Hugos arrived complete with creative spelling – the Dramatic Presentation Hugo is a SCIENCE FICTION AGHIEVEMENT trophy. Panic began at once, though the engravers promised corrections by Seacon (SGIENGE FIGTION ACHIEVEMENT ...). The Campbell award was marked SEACON 1978.’ (*Ansible* 1, August 1979)

- *70 Years Ago*, a newszine tradition that *Ansible* is proud to inherit: ‘L. Ron Hubbard, *not* Robt. Heinlein, has had *Slaves of Sleep* translated into Dutch. We pretend we do these little things just to keep you mentally alert.’ (Bob

Tucker, [Bloomington Newsletter 11](#), August 1949)

Fanfundery. *TAFF*: discussion of race directions for the next few years has begun.

- *TAFF Free Ebooks*. The new release is *THEN Again: A UK Fanhistory Reader 1930-1979* edited by Rob Hansen and Vince Clarke, an anthology companion to Rob's *THEN* in which fans who were there tell the stories of UK/Irish fan groups, zines, activities, politics, and more. Over 120,000 words. See taff.org.uk/ebooks.php?x=ThenAgain.

Thog's Masterclass. *Simile Dept*. 'Val got the impression that Plumbus was almost offensively inoffensive. He was like a living drop of oil.' ('Bron Fane', *The Intruders*, 1963) [GW]

- *Those Were The Days*. 'Once the information is in the computer it's completely safe!' (Thames Television, *The Sweeney*, 1976) [DH]
- *Eyeballs in the Sky*. 'And those eyes – when they raked him they bathed him with ecstasy!' 'She gathered up his eyes and she's still got 'm.' (L. Ron Hubbard, *Typewriter in the Sky*, 1940)
- *As One Does*. 'He felt a brief tingle in his nuts and adjusted his tunic.' (Neal Stephenson, *Fall; or Dodge in Hell*, 2019) [JC]
- *Whatever Turns You On*. 'When the train did come, it came in an orgasmic rush of hot diesel-oil odor, trailing a veil of orange blossom like a bride ...' (Brion Gysin, *The Process*, 1969) [BA]
- *The Globes of Gloom*. 'Alana crossed her arms and lifted off her own shirt, revealing small, slightly pessimistic breasts.' (Meg Wolitzer, *The Female Persuasion*, 2018)

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 9 August 2019: Summer Social for the Brum Group. 7:30pm for 8pm at the Bull pub – not the usual venue, which is the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre. £6 or £3 for members. Contact [bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk](mailto:bhamsfgroup@yahoo.co.uk). Future events/speakers: 13 September 2019, Catherine Webb (aka Kate Griffin, Claire North); 11 October 2019, Dr Amaury Triaud; 1 November 2019, TBA; 6 December 2019, Christmas social.
- 21 August 2019: Shoreline of Infinity Event Horizon, Edinburgh. 7pm. Free. See link below for details.

<https://www.shorelineofinfinity.com/category/event-horizon/>

• 28 August 2019: BSFA Open Meeting, Central Station, 37 Wharfdale Road, King's Cross, N1 9SD. 6pm for 7pm. Guest(s) TBA. Free. Date or venue changes may be announced after *Ansible* has gone to press: always check bsfa.co.uk for the latest information.

As Others Fear Us. A radical suspended-animation technique devised to buy time for the badly injured has one major problem, according to a surgeon at UPMC Presbyterian Hospital in Pittsburgh: 'We are suspending life, but we don't like to call it suspended animation because it sounds like science fiction.' (*New Scientist*, 2014) [AY]

Some Links from the *Ansible* home page.

• Dublin 2019 bombshell for parents of under-15s

<https://dublin2019.com/about/important-information-for-members-under-18-years-of-age/>

• Dublin 2019 programme schedule

<https://dublin2019.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/ProgrammeScheduleWeb.pdf>

• *Game of Thrones* tapestry

<https://www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/2019/jul/06/blood-sex-and-needlework-game-of-thrones-recreated-in-90-metre-tapestry>

• Martin Hoare, 1952-2019, at *File 770*

<http://file770.com/martin-hoare-1952-2019/>

• New York street to be named for Stan Lee

<https://geektyrant.com/news/new-york-city-council-votes-to-name-a-street-after-stan-lee-in-the-bronx>

• Shirley Jackson Award winners

<http://file770.com/2018-shirley-jackson-awards/>

Thog's Second Helping. *Dark and Stormy Night Dept.* "“Ho, Diomed, well met! Do you sup with Glaucus to-night?” said a young man of small stature, who wore his tunic in those loose and effeminate folds which proved him to be a gentleman and a coxcomb." (Edward Bulwer-Lytton, opening of *The Last Days of Pompeii*, 1834)

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Grant, Rob Haley, Dave Hicks, John-Henri Holmberg, InTheBar, John Jarrold, Helen McCarthy, Joe McNally, Laurie Mann, Harry Payne, Lawrence Person, Andrew I. Porter, Gordon Van Gelder, George Wells, Gary West, Nicholas Whyte, Martin Morse Wooster, Alexander Yudenitsch, and as always our Hero Distributors: Durdles Books (Birmingham SF Group), SCIS/Prophecy and Alan Stewart (Australia). 1 August 2019

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From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo:
Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE, youth sublime,
or the fairy tales of science.

Dublin 2019. A good time was reportedly had by some 5,800 attendees despite the too-small facilities which led to a great deal of queueing, fans being turned away from overcrowded panels, etc. The *Irish Times* called this Worldcon ‘an extraordinary event that has brought thousands of sci-fi enthusiasts to Ireland from all over the world’ and – switching into more traditional mode – added ‘If you see any strange-looking people wandering around Dublin this weekend, it’s them.’ (16 August) [SF²C]

• *Hugo Awards*: NOVEL *The Calculating Stars* by Mary Robinette Kowal. NOVELLA *Artificial Condition* by Martha Wells. NOVELETTE ‘If at First You Don’t Succeed, Try, Try Again’ by Zen Cho (B&N SFF Blog 29/11/18). SHORT ‘A Witch’s Guide to Escape: A Practical Compendium of Portal Fantasies’ by Alix E. Harrow (*Apex* 2/18). SERIES ‘Wayfarers’ by Becky Chambers. RELATED WORK *Archive of Our Own* (website). GRAPHIC STORY *Monstress, Volume 3: Haven* by Marjorie Liu (writing) and Sana Takeda (art). DRAMATIC – LONG *Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse*. DRAMATIC – SHORT. *The Good Place*: ‘Janet(s)’. EDITOR – SHORT Gardner Dozois. EDITOR – LONG Navah Wolfe. PRO ARTIST Charles Vess. SEMIPROZINE *Uncanny Magazine*. FANZINE *Lady Business*. FANCAST *Our Opinions Are Correct*. FAN WRITER Foz Meadows. FAN ARTIST Likhain (Mia Sereno). ART BOOK (one-off category this year) *The Books of Earthsea: The Complete Illustrated Edition* by Ursula K. Le Guin (writing) and Charles Vess (art). *Non-Hugos*: LODESTAR (YA): *Children of Blood and Bone* by Tomi Adeyemi. JOHN W. CAMPBELL AWARD Jeannette Ng.

• *Retro Hugos* for 1943 work: NOVEL *Conjure Wife* by Fritz Leiber. NOVELLA *The Little Prince* by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. NOVELETTE ‘Mimsy Were the Borogoves’ by ‘Lewis Padgett’. SHORT ‘King of the Gray Spaces’ aka ‘R is for Rocket’ by Ray Bradbury. GRAPHIC STORY *Wonder Woman #5*. DRAMATIC –

LONG *Heaven Can Wait*. DRAMATIC – SHORT *Frankenstein Meets the Wolfman*.
PRO EDITOR John W. Campbell. PRO ARTIST Virgil Finlay. FANZINE *Le Zombie*.
FAN WRITER Forrest J Ackerman.

- *First Fandom Hall of Fame*: Ray Faraday Nelson and (posthumous) Bob Shaw, James White and Walt Willis.
- *Moskowitz Archive Award*: Dr Bradford Lyau.
- *Big Heart Award*: Alice Lawson. [TSOK]
- *Worldcon 2021*: inevitably the unopposed Washington DC bid won with 798 votes out of 878 valid ballots (36 No Preference; 18 None of the Above; 26 assorted write-ins including 3 for Minneapolis in '73). [GS] See DisCon III listing below.
- *Alfie Awards*. At the Hugo Losers' Party organized by CoNZealand and George R.R. Martin, the latter presented two more of his car-hood-ornament trophies to those he felt should have won Hugos: editors Malcolm Edwards, late of Gollancz, and Jane Johnson of Voyager.
- *Special Committee Award*: George R.R. Martin and Parris McBride.

The Long Result of Time

Steve Davidson had an 'As Others See Us' moment: "I'm not into that *Star Trek*, *Star Wars* stuff but I do believe in some crazy shit like alien abductions," said the customer standing in the AT&T store with me after I explained that I published *Amazing Stories*.' (Email, 6 August)

Malcolm Edwards, having left Hachette/Orion/Gollancz (see [A383](#)), starts a new career this month as publisher of André Deutsch. His brief is to revive the fiction backlist and publish new genre titles – crime fiction as well as sf/fantasy/horror. (*Publishers Lunch*, August) [AIP]

Jennell Jaquays, US games designer, was interested to discover that the recent *Dungeons & Dragons* expansion book *Xanathar's Guide to Everything* (from Wizards of the Coast, 2017) copies various character generation tables from her *Central Casting Heroes of Legend* (1988) with little modification and no acknowledgement. ([Imgur.com](#), 14 August)

Jeannette Ng's Campbell Award acceptance speech caused some controversy at Dublin 2019 and online, beginning as it did: 'John W. Campbell, for whom this award was named, was a fucking fascist! Through his editorial control of *Amazing Stories*, he is responsible for setting a tone of

science fiction that still haunts the genre to this day....’ Full text, corrected and without the f-word, at tinyurl.com/y4lwdtj3. Soon after, *Analog*’s editor Trevor Quachri announced that this award is to become The *Astounding* Award for Best New Writer ([blog, 27 August](#)).

Art Spiegelman of *Maus* fame withdrew his introduction to a Folio Society collection of golden-age Marvel comics, because Marvel objected to the overly ‘political’ sentence ‘In today’s all too real world, Captain America’s most nefarious villain, the Red Skull, is alive on screen and an Orange Skull haunts America.’ ([Guardian](#), 16 August)

J.R.R. Tolkien was remembered in an obituary of Anthony Price: ‘Tolkien taught at Oxford, and Mr. Price sat down with him for what turned out to be Tolkien’s first newspaper interview. “He wasn’t very popular,” Mr. Price recalled. Another Oxford scholar, he said, complained, “Yes, Tolkien: very clever fellow, dear boy. Didn’t teach much. He used to bring that Elvish stuff, and I said, ‘Don’t let’s have any more of this Elvish nonsense!’” (*Washington Post*, 23 June) [PL]

Congreve

7-8 Sep • **Film & Comic Con Cardiff**, Motorpoint Arena, Cardiff. Tickets £8 or £15 for early entry. See filmandcomicconcardiff.com.

13-15 Sep • **Oxonmoot** (Tolkien Society), St Antony’s College, Oxford. £55 reg, or £45 for Tolkien Society members; day rates £35 and £30. More at www.tolkiensociety.org/events/oxonmoot-2019/. The 2020 Oxonmoot will be in St Anne’s College, 3-6 September.

14-15 Sep • **Other Worlds Workshop Weekend**, Nottingham. £27.50 plus £2.40 booking fee per day. See tinyurl.com/yy7fawgo.

28-29 Sep • **Nor-Con** (media), Norfolk Showground Arena. Tickets inc fees: £31.03; £20.33 child; £96.30 family. See www.nor-con.co.uk.

3-6 Oct • **Grimmfest** (horror/cult films), Odeon Manchester Great Northern cinema. £90 (£76 concessions) plus fees from grimmfest.com.

3 Oct - 1 Nov • **London Month of the Dead**, various venues and events, a few of genre interest: see londonmonthofthedead.com.

11-13 Oct • **Lakes International Comic Art Festival**, Kendal, Cumbria. £35 reg; students and under-16s £25. Day passes: Saturday £22 (£17); Sunday £19 (£14). More at www.comicartfestival.com.

13 Oct • **Octocon**, Crowne Plaza Hotel, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15, Ireland. (One day only. Venue is 12km from city centre.) €35 reg; €25 concessions; accompanied under-13s free. More at octocon.com.

18-20 Oct • **FantasyCon**, Golden Jubilee Conference Hotel, Clydebank, Glasgow. *Now £75 reg; £65 concessions; under-18s £30; all plus booking fees.* See www.fantasycon.org. The 2020 venue is Sheffield.

2-3 Nov • **Bristol Anime & Gaming Con**, Bristol Future Inns. £18 reg; day rates £11 Sat, £9 Sun. See bristolanimecon.com.

CANCELLED 23-24 Nov • **London Film & Comic Con**, Olympia. Brexit uncertainty blamed: see Exhibition World, tinyurl.com/y6yyqpyt.

2-9 Dec • **Talos III**: SF Theatre Festival of London, Omnibus Theatre, Clapham. More at www.cyborphic.com/talos-2019.

14-16 Feb 2020 • **London Anime & Gaming Con**, London Met, N7 8DB. £29 reg; for day and other rates see londonanimecon.com.

4 Apr 2020 • **Bedford Who Charity Con** (*Doctor Who*), University Theatre, Bedford, MK41 9EA. 10am-5:30pm (doors open 9:30am or earlier). Ticket prices to follow at bedfordwhocharitycon.co.uk.

29 Jul - 2 Aug 2020 • **CoNZealand** (Worldcon 78), Wellington, New Zealand. NZD \$400 reg, *rising to \$425 on 1 October*. Other rates are unchanged: \$250 YA, \$225 unwaged, \$105 child (born 2005+), infants (born 2015 +) free, \$75 supporting. See conzealand.nz.

28-31 Aug 2020 • **The Asylum** (steampunk), Lincoln. Membership rates to follow at www.asylumsteampunk.co.uk.

2-4 Oct 2020 • **Futuricon** (Rikon/Eurocon), Rijeka, Croatia. €15 reg, rising on 1 June 2020; €5 supp; under 14s free. See futuricon.eu.

18-21 Mar 2021 • **Eurocon 2021**, Fiuggi, Italy. Membership rates and other details awaited at eurocon2021.it.

25-29 Aug 2021 • **DisCon III** (Worldcon), Washington DC, USA. GoH Nancy Kress, Malka Older, Sheree Renée Thomas, Toni Weisskopf, and Ben

Yalow. \$155 reg; YA (under 26) \$80; under-13s \$65; accompanied under-7s free. Rates held to 31 December 2019. See discon3.org.

Rumblings. *Worldcon 2023*. The established bids for Chengdu and Nice now have a US rival: Memphis, Tennessee. Read all about it at www.memphis23.org.

- *Glasgow in 2024*: this UK Worldcon bid was officially launched at Dublin 2019 and announced its planned dates as Thursday to Monday, 8-12 August 2024. £20 presupporting membership; £120 ‘friend’ (£60 YA); £300 ‘super friend’. More at glasgow2024.org.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others Forgive Us. On *Aniara* by that mere Nobel Prize-winner Harry Martinson: ‘In true epic fashion, its matter acquires authenticity through the persuasive force of its utterance, even the parts manifestly pasted together from old space adventure magazines.’ (Geoffrey O’Brien, *New York Review of Books*, 15 August) [MMW]

Awards. *ESFS Hall of Fame*. AUTHOR Charles Stross (UK). ARTIST Nicolas Fructus (France). MAGAZINE *Windumanoth* (Spain). PUBLISHER Future Fiction (Italy). PROMOTER Petra Bulic (Croatia). TRANSLATOR Mihai-Dan Pavelescu (Romania). [ESF]

- *Mythopoeic*: ADULT Naomi Novik, *Spinning Silver*. CHILDREN’S Wendy Mass and Rebecca Stead, *Bob*. SCHOLARSHIP: INKLINGS Verlyn Flieger, *There Would Always Be a Fairy Tale: More Essays on Tolkien*. SCHOLARSHIP: OTHER Dimitra Fimi, *Celtic Myth in Contemporary Children’s Fantasy: Idealization, Identity, Ideology*.

- *Splatterpunk* (horror) best novel: Kristopher Triana, *Full Brutal*. [L]

Ancient Engineers. ‘I wonder what seagulls ate before humans arrived on the scene? Road kill, I expect.’ (Steve Allen, LBC) [PE]

R.I.P. *Pedro Bell* (?1950-2019), US artist whose Funkadelic album covers and liner notes made play with sf themes, died in late August. [PDF]

- *Tom Boardman* (1930-2017), UK publisher whose family company was T.V. Boardman and who became sf adviser to Gollancz, Four Square, Macdonald and NEL, editing *Connoisseur’s Science Fiction* (1964) and other anthologies, died on 15 June 2017 aged 86. [MA]

- *Gordon Bressack* (1951-2019), US screenwriter for *Animaniacs* (1993-1997) and *Pinky and the Brain* (1995-1998), died on 30 August aged 68. [BM]
- *Mike Brunton* (1962-2019), UK magazine editor and writer of role-playing and computer games who edited *White Dwarf* in the late 1980s, died on 25 July. [MG] He was my editor for many instalments of the ‘Critical Mass’ book review column.
- *Ernie Colón* (1931-2019), Puerto Rico-born US comics letterer and artist perhaps best known for Marvel’s *Damage Control* and (as co-creator) DC’s *Amethyst, Princess of Gemworld*, died on 8 August aged 88. [F770]
- *Nigel Dobbyn* (1963-2019), UK comics artist who worked for *2000 AD* on *Future Shocks*, *Medivac 318*, *Strontium Dog*, *Ace Trucking Co.* and others, died on 24 August aged 56. [PH] He is also known for artwork in *Sonic the Comic*, 1995-1999.
- *Susan Evans*, New Zealand fan, worker on conventions – including the first NZ national sf con in 1982 – and APA contributor, died on 25 July aged 58. [TC]
- *Peter Fonda* (1940-2019), US actor, producer, screenwriter and director seen in *Spirits of the Dead* (1968), *Future World* (1976), *Spasms* (1983), *Escape from L.A.* (1996), *Supernova* (2005), *Ghost Rider* (2007), *The Gathering* (2007) and *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2008), died on 16 August aged 79. [SG]
- *Cosmo Genovese* (1923-2019), US script supervisor for tv series including *Star Trek: The Next Generation* (176 episodes 1987-1994) and *Star Trek: Voyager* (99 episodes 1995-2000), died on 30 July aged 95. [F770]
- *Lee Bennett Hopkins* (1938-2019), prolific US children’s author and editor whose vast output included some fantasy/horror anthologies, died on 8 August aged 81. [GVG]
- *Barry Hughart* (1934-2019), author of the highly regarded mock-Chinese fantasy *Bridge of Birds* (1984) and its sequels *The Story of the Stone* (1988) and *Eight Skilled Gentlemen* (1991), died on or before 1 August according to www.barryhughart.org; he was 85. *Bridge of Birds* won World Fantasy and Mythopoeic Fantasy awards. [LP]
- *Kristin Landon* (1958-2019), author of the 2007-2009 ‘Cold Minds’ trilogy and *Windhome* (2017), died on 5 March aged 60. [MKS]
- *Edward Lewis*, (1919-2019), US producer of *Spartacus* whose films include *Seconds* (1966), *Rhinoceros* (1974) and *The Blue Bird* (1976), died on 27

July aged 99. [AIP]

- *Brad Linaweaver* (1952-2019), US libertarian sf author who won a Prometheus Award for *Moon of Ice* (1988), died on 29 August aged 66.

[PDF]

- *Rick Loomis* (1946-2019), US game designer who created *Nuclear Destruction* (1970) and *Starweb* (1976) and co-founded Flying Buffalo – publisher of *Tunnels & Trolls* (1975) – died on 23 August aged 72. [KR]

- *Barbara March* (1953-2019), Canadian actress in *Star Trek: The Next Generation* (1991-1994) and *Star Trek Generations* (1994), died on 11 August aged 65. [PDF]

- *Melisa Michaels* (1946-2019), US author whose sf includes the ‘Skyrider’ series opening with *Skirmish* (1985), died on 30 August aged 73. [PDF]

- *Barrington Pheloung* (1954-2019), Australian composer who scored various genre films including *Sleep of Reason* (1989), *The Mangler* (1995) and *Ghosthunter* (2000), died on 1 August aged 65. [SG]

- *Stu Rosen* (1939-2019), US voice actor and voice director of many animated series including *MASK* (1985), *Defenders of the Earth* (1986-1989), *Attack of the Killer Tomatoes* (1990-1991) and *Phantom 2040* (1995-1996), died on 4 August aged 80. [F770]

- *Charles Santore* (1935-2019), US illustrator of children’s books including *Alice’s Adventures Under Ground*, *Snow White* and *The Wizard of Oz*, died on 11 August aged 84. [AIP]

- *J. Neil Schulman* (1953-2019), US author of libertarian sf whose novels include the Prometheus-winning *The Rainbow Cadenza* (1983), died on 10 August aged 66. [GVG]

- *Larry Siegel* (1925-2019), US writer of humour for tv and for *Mad* magazine 1958-1990, died on 20 August aged 93. [PDF]

- *Carl Slaughter* (1958-2019), prolific US fan writer, reviewer and interviewer for *File 770*, *SF Signal*, *Tangent* and others, died in a car accident on 11 August. [F770]

- *Robert N. Stephenson* (1961-2019), Australian author, publisher (as Altair Australia) and editor of four *Worlds of Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Horror* anthologies since 2016, committed suicide on 14 August; he was 57.

- *Yasuhiro Takemoto* (1972-2019), Japanese anime writer/director whose genre credits include *Gate Keepers* (2000), *Beyond the Boundary* (2013) and *Miss Kobayashi’s Dragon Maid* (2017), was confirmed as one of more than 30 victims of the arson attack on the Kyoto Animation studio on 18 July; he

was 47. [AIP]

- *Richard Williams* (1933-2019), Canadian-born animator whose work appeared in two Pink Panther films and who was animation director of the Hugo-winning *Who Framed Roger Rabbit* (1988) – for which he won two Oscars – died on 16 August aged 86. [PB]

The Weakest Link. *Host:* ‘What Indian yogurt drink sounds like a famous TV dog?’ *Contestant:* ‘Scooby-Doo.’ (ITV, *The Chase*) [PE]

The Company They Keep. The British Fantasy Society, incorporated in 2017 as Brit Fantasy Soc Ltd, is to be [struck off the register](#) – presumably for not filing its returns – unless action is taken soon. [ST]

Outraged Letters. *Mike Ashley* poses a pub quiz question. ‘Apparently only one play has ever been performed in the House of Commons and it happens to be sf.’ Can you guess it? See ‘The Dead Past’ below.

Award Shortlists. *Sidewise:* LONG Mary Robinette Kowal, *The Calculating Stars*; Hannu Rajaniemi, *Summerland*; Charles Rosenberg, *The Trial and Execution of the Traitor George Washington*; Lavie Tidhar, *Unholy Land*. SHORT Rick Wilber, ‘The Secret City’ (*Asimov’s* 9/18); Oscar (Xiu) Ramirez and Emmanuel Valtierra, *Codex Valtierra*.

Random Fandom. *Martin Hoare* was celebrated with a toast at the London First Thursday meeting in August, and at Dublin 2019 with a memorial pub crawl and the naming of the fan bar as Martin’s [JB] ... though he would hardly have approved of ‘his’ bar serving only keg beer and no real ale. Martin’s crowded funeral was on 29 August; his TARDIS coffin was tearfully admired; a larger celebration (with fireworks?) should follow. To donate to his favourite cause, the Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust, see memorygiving.com/martinanthonyhoare.

- *Worldcon Business.* From the traditional hoax newsletter: ‘Under-50s in the WSFS Business Meeting must be accompanied by an adult at all times.’ Discussion of a proposed Hugo for Best Translated Novel was postponed indefinitely; Best Series was ratified as a permanent category; the proposed Best Game or Interactive Experience was referred to a committee for consideration; less momentous decisions were also made.

The Dead Past. *40 Years Ago*, in the wake of the first Brighton Worldcon, *Ansible* had its finger on the fannish pulse: ‘Useless Facts Dept: 19,000 pints

were drunk at Seacon by the time of the closing ceremony....' ([Ansible 2/3](#), September 1979)

- *Much Longer Ago*, the only play ever performed in the House of Commons was Lionel Britton's J.W. Dunne-inspired time fantasy *Spacetime Inn*, in 1931. A UK theatre licence had been refused because the characters include Queen Victoria. [MA]

Fanfundery. The fan funds auction at Dublin 2019, together with table sales of left-over auction material, raised some €3,345. [CB]

- *TAFF Ebooks*. New additions at taff.org.uk/ebooks.php?all are *Hyphen 37* (the 1987 revival issue) and the deeply esoteric *The Astral League Dossier* (do not impinge copyright or THE ASTRAL LEAGUE WILL TAKE MEASURES).

Follow-Up. Defying the wrath of planners, the shed protecting the Dalek at the Museum of Classic Sci-Fi in Allendale (see [A383](#)) was given a year's reprieve by Northumberland County Council. (BBC, 13 August)

Thog's Masterclass. *Dept of Wokeness*. 'Now even the primitive villagers knew that psychological disturbances were simply a byproduct of the mind, and that Ticky George was not "different". Just inferior.' ('Leo Brett', *March of the Robots*, 1961)

- *Fun for Young and Old Alike*. 'The Men, who'd spent the last long hour with their heads between their legs, renewed their favorite pastime ...' (Neal Barrett, Jr., *Aldair: The Legion of Beasts*, 1982) [BA]

- *True Romance Dept*. 'Capitulating from their combined sexual efforts, the two spent forms separated from whence they were joined, their genitalia virtually licking their proverbial wounds!' (Vince Laurie, *Dial 'O' for Orgy*, early 1970s) [KL]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 13 September 2019: Catherine Webb (aka Kate Griffin, Claire North) talks to the Brum Group. 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre. £6 or £3 for members. Contact [bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk](mailto:bhamsfgroup@yahoo.co.uk). Future events/speakers: 11 October 2019, Dr Amaury Triaud; 1 November 2019, TBA; 6 December 2019, Christmas social.

- 25 September 2019: BSFA Open Meeting, Central Station, 37 Wharfdale Road, King's Cross, N1 9SD. 6pm for 7pm. Guest(s) TBA. Free. Date or

venue changes may be announced after *Ansible* has gone to press: always check bsfa.co.uk for the latest information.

Complaints Dept. *Ahrvid Engholm* was so affronted by Jeannette Ng's above-cited Campbell Award acceptance speech that he formally reported it as a supposed violation of the Dublin 2019 Code of Conduct.

- *Simon R. Green* writes: 'I had a great time at the Worldcon in Dublin, though regretfully I have to report that there was an official complaint made to the Con committee, concerning a panel I was on. Saying that I had interrupted the discussion with flippant remarks. / Me? Really?'

R.I.P. II. Stop press: *Terrance Dicks* (1935-2019), UK author and screenwriter who was script editor for *Moonbase 3* (1973), 156 episodes of *Doctor Who* (1968-1974) and *The Invisible Man* (1984) – also writing several *Doctor Who* serials and scores of novelizations – died on 2 September aged 84. He received the 2015 Scribe Grandmaster career award for tie-in works.

- Late notices, recently reported: *Boris Beizer* (1934-2018), Belgian-born US software engineer who as Ethan I. Shedley wrote *Earth Ship and Star Song* (1979) and *The Medusa Conspiracy* (1980), died on 7 October 2018. [DB]

- *Pat Gorman* (1933-2018), UK character actor in *The Tomorrow People* (1975-1979) and 105 episodes of *Doctor Who* (1964-1985), died on 9 October 2018 aged 85. [GC]

Magazine Scene. *Science Fiction Trails*, specializing in weird sf Western fiction, has ceased; the final issue was #14 for April 2019. [L]

Some Links from the *Ansible* home page.

- Dublin 2019 newsletter, *The Salmon of Knowledge*

<https://dublin2019.com/at-con-newsletter/>

- Hugo and Retro Hugo winners in full detail

<http://www.thehugoawards.org/2019/08/2019-hugo-awards-announced/>

<http://www.thehugoawards.org/2019/08/1944-retro-hugo-awards-announced/>

- Hugo statistics and administrator's comments

[https://dublin2019.com/wp-](https://dublin2019.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/201Hu@o%5Efulre@su@lt@s.pdf)

[content/uploads/2019/08/201Hu@o%5Efulre@su@lt@s.pdf](https://dublin2019.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/201Hu@o%5Efulre@su@lt@s.pdf)

<https://nwhyte.livejournal.com/3244665.html>

Rumblings II. *Middle-Earth Festival* (Sarehole Mill, Birmingham): no date was ever announced for the 2019 event expected in September, whose status on the website quietly shifted to 'cancelled' at some point in August.

According to middleearthfestival.wordpress.com, the next one will be in September 2020.

Fifteen Nanoseconds of Fame. *Private Eye* 1502, dated 9 August, surprised me by publishing my comment on their big sf scoop from the previous issue (see also [A385](#)):

Time lapse

Sir,

Nice to see Just Fancy That (p24, Eye 1501) catching up with the 2005 Grauniad scoop about Boris Johnson's science fiction connection, a story to which the Graun returned in 2017. See also SFX magazine, June 2005.

DAVID LANGFORD.

Ansible® 386 © David Langford, 2019. Thanks to Brian Ameringen, Mike Ashley, James Bacon, Paul Barnett, Claire Brialey, Dirk Broer, Tom Cardy, Gary Couzens, Paul Di Filippo, Europa SF, *File 770*, Marc Gascoigne, Steve Green, Peter Hogan, Kessily Lewel, *Locus*, Pamela Love, Beth Meacham, Lawrence Person, Andrew I. Porter, *Private Eye*, Kevin Redfern, *The Salmon of Knowledge*, *SF² Concatenation*, Maureen Kincaid Speller, Stephen Theaker, Gordon Van Gelder, Martin Morse Wooster, and as always our Hero Distributors: Durdles Books (Birmingham SF Group), SCIS/Prophecy and Alan Stewart (Australia). 2 September 2019

Ansible 386 Supplement

Martin Hoare Eulogy by Keith Oborn

While I thought about Martin's many qualities and achievements, I must admit that I started to feel quite inadequate. But here goes.

There are so many tales of Martin's life. I won't tell any now, we'd be here all day! Those are best left for the pub, which somehow seems appropriate.

Martin was a man of huge talents, great appetites, and many and varied achievements. He was known and loved by hundreds – no thousands – of people from many walks of life.

Martin was unassumingly intelligent, independent of thought and action, but always modest. He was the first individual to win a landmark legal case against HMRC, without legal representation, and subsequently took a Law degree in his early sixties 'just for interest'!

His determination to do things 'his way' could sometimes seem to be stubborn, but many is the time he dragged us with him to a place we would never have reached without him.

Martin was interested in everything, and tried to collect and keep everything he was interested in. That made for interesting domestic logistics.

In partnership with Dermot Dobson he helped advance the technology of medical imaging, and this work undoubtedly saved or improved the lives of countless people in the UK and abroad.

He was a great enthusiast for all things connected with beer – particularly the drinking bit, although even here his intellect shone through. Ask me later about the Hoare Exponential Drinking Technique.

Martin worked tirelessly on countless SF cons to help give thousands of people a great time. He ran sound and light systems, radios, real ale bars, programme items, served as chairman, and a hundred other things.

He was a master pyrotechnician, and together with a group of friends put on a

huge number of excellent firework displays. Although some of the fallout could be worrying: for instance, one day a stray mortar was found on his bed!

Martin was very organized when it mattered, but also spectacularly untidy – a difficult balance to maintain!

And he was a proud Welshman!

I could go on with this list for a long time, but I only have a few minutes.

There is one word that sums Martin up more than any other: He was my friend. He was *our* friend.

•

Martin's will asked for a religious service to begin with 'Cwm Rhondda' and end with 'Always Look on the Bright Side' (played at the funeral of his wife Jean, who died exactly twenty years before Martin). The service was conducted by his old friend Richard Hughes, formerly vicar of Whitchurch. Also included were the above eulogy and the Doctor Who theme music. There followed a wake at the Outlook pub in Reading, continuing – when that venue had been drunk dry of real ale – at The Alehouse.

Ansible® 387, October 2019

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo:
Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Ulrika O'Brien**. Available for SAE, Tundist texts or
a zest for crumpled things.

The Crunlop Experiment

Lynda Barry, US cartoonist, graphic novelist (whose titles include the 2002 *One! Hundred! Demons!*) and academic, is one of the 2019 recipients of the MacArthur Foundation ‘genius’ grants. [BT]

Elinor Busby, the first woman to win a Hugo, celebrated her 95th birthday in late September amid family, friends and fans. [JDB]

John W. Campbell Jr may or may not be rotating in his grave at the news that – soon after the renaming of ‘his’ not-a-Hugo award for best new writer as the Astounding Award – the Gunn Center for the Study of SF has decided that its John W. Campbell Memorial Award will also be given another name, to be announced. ([Facebook](#), 5 September)

Susanna Clarke, long silent at book length owing to poor health since *Jonathan Strange and Mr Norrell* (2004), has delivered her second novel – scheduled for September 2020. ([Guardian](#), 30 September) [GF]

David Gerrold cancelled his guest appearance at the October Sci-Fi Weekender event – see below – because with scant weeks to go, ‘They never got back to me on travel arrangements.’ ([Facebook](#), 23 September)

Gary Larson has a visual teaser at www.thefarside.com, indicating that his fabled cartoon sequence *The Far Side* – which he ‘retired’ on 1 January 1995 – is to return in a new online incarnation.

J.K. Rowling’s Harry Potter books were removed from the library of a Catholic school in Nashville, TN, after exorcists claimed that they contain ‘actual curses and spells, which when read by a human being risk conjuring

evil spirits'. ([Guardian](#), 2 September) [PB]

James Tiptree Jr (Alice Sheldon) is another name seemingly destined to be removed from a well-established award, this time because of the variously interpreted 1987 suicide pact in which she killed her ailing husband and herself. ([Tiptree.org blog](#), 2, 4 and 11 September)

Gahan Wilson, now 89, survived surgery in late September; but his additional care needs have created a new financial crisis. There is a fundraiser page at www.gofundme.com/f/gahan-wilson-team-effort.

Congeliturbate

3-6 Oct • **Grimmfest** (horror/cult films), Odeon Manchester Great Northern cinema. £90 (£76 concessions) plus fees from grimmfest.com.

3 Oct - 1 Nov • **London Month of the Dead**, various venues and events, a few of genre interest: see londonmonthofthedeath.com.

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18-20 Oct • **FantasyCon**, Golden Jubilee Conference Hotel, Clydebank, Glasgow. £75 reg; £65 concessions; under-18s £30; all plus booking fees. See www.fantasycon.org. The 2020 venue is Sheffield.

18 Oct - 20 Feb 2020 • **Moving to Mars** (exhibition), Design Museum, London. £12. See designmuseum.org/exhibitions/moving-to-mars.

24-27 Oct • **Celluloid Screams** (horror film festival), Showroom Cinema, Sheffield. £90; £80 concessions. See celluloidscreams.co.uk.

25-26 Oct • **Bicentennial Vampyre Ball**, Century Club, Soho, London W1. 9pm-3am. Tickets £25 (five or more £20 each) until midnight on 1 October. See acuriousinvitation.com/halloween2019.html.

25-27 Oct • **Destination Star Trek**, NEC, Birmingham. Day £29; 2 days £39; 3 days £49; silly 'VIP' rates at destinationstartrek.com.

25-27 Oct • **Festival of Fantastic Films**, Pendulum Hotel, Manchester. £85 reg. For hotel rates see fantastic-films.com/festival/.

26 Oct • **BristolCon**, Hilton DoubleTree Hotel, Bristol. £30 reg (£35 at the door); £20 under-18s, concessions and disabled (£25 at the door); under-14s free. Full details at www.bristolcon.org.

SOLD OUT. 30 Oct - 3 Nov • **Sci-Fi Weekender Part 2**, Vauxhall Holiday Park, Great Yarmouth. See www.scifiweekender.com.

31 Oct - 3 Nov • **Edinburgh Horror Festival**, The Banshee Labyrinth, Niddry St, and other city venues including Lauriston Castle. Poe-themed in part. Many events are free. See www.edhorrorfest.co.uk.

1-3 Nov • **Armadacon 31**, Future Inn, Plymouth. £35 reg; concessions £30; under-16s free. PayPal registration at www.armadacon.org.

2-3 Nov • **Bristol Anime & Gaming Con**, Bristol Future Inns. £18 reg; day rates £11 Sat, £9 Sun. See bristolanimecon.com.

2 Nov • **Frightfest** (film) Hallowe'en special, Leicester Square, London. Tickets soon from www.frightfest.co.uk/filmsevents.html.

3 Nov • **Gamesfest** (gaming), Iron Room, Station Road, Tring, HP23 5QT. 10am-5pm. Website gone; tickets £6 according to Facebook. *[See also [GamesFest concerns](#) elsewhere. Facebook and Twitter accounts deleted 2 October.]*

8-10 Nov • **Novacon 49**, Nottingham Sherwood Hotel (was the Park Inn). Contact 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ. *Now £53 reg*; under-17s still £12; under-13s free. See www.novacon.org.uk.

9-10 Nov • **Comic Con**, Harrogate Convention Centre. Part of Thought Bubble, the Comic Art Festival, 4-10 November. £28 weekend pass or £17/day. See thoughtbubblefestival.com.

1 Dec • **Stars of Time** (media), Tropicana, Weston-super-Mare. 10am-5pm. £7.50; under-12s, OAP and disabled £4; under-4s free. Family of 2+2 kids £18; 2+3 kids £19. See www.starsoftime.co.uk.

4-5 Apr 2020 • **Sci-Fi Scarborough** (multimedia), The Spa, Scarborough. Ticket sales awaited at scifiscarborough.co.uk.

12-20 May 2020 • **Sci-Fi London** (film festival), Prince Charles Cinema and

Stratford Picturehouse, London. See sci-fi-london.com.

16 May 2020 • **Lawless** (UK comics), Hilton Doubletree, Bristol. Details awaited at www.facebook.com/groups/1417073338554565/.

29 Jul - 2 Aug 2020 • **CoNZealand** (Worldcon 78), Wellington, New Zealand. Now NZD \$425 reg. Other membership rates are unchanged: \$250 YA, \$225 unwaged, \$105 child (born 2005+), infants (born 2015 +) free, \$75 supporting. See conzealand.nz. *This Worldcon will present 1945 Retro Hugos for works published in 1944.*

27-31 Aug 2020 • **Frightfest** (film), Leicester Square, London. Tickets awaited in July 2020 at www.frightfest.co.uk/filmsevents.html.

28-30 Aug 2020 • **TitanCon**, Belfast. Membership rates and further details are awaited at titancon.com.

5-6 Sep 2020 • **Film & Comic Con Collectormania**, Birmingham NEC. £10/day; £15 early entry. See filmandcomicconbirmingham.com.

Rumblings. *Nine Worlds Geekfest* is unlikely to return, say those in charge of its reorganization, since no one seems willing to take on the daunting legal and financial obligations. ([Twitter](#), 6 September)

• *Picocon 2020* at Imperial College, London, with a ‘Pride’ theme, will happen ‘at least 1 week after Valentine’s Weekend’ : 22 or 29 February? All will be revealed one day at www.union.ic.ac.uk/scc/icsf/picocon/.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others Saw Us. Anthony Burgess on Brian Aldiss’s *Enemies of the System*: ‘it contrives to be rich, allusive, full of real people, and unfailingly interesting. It is not, then, real SF.’ (*Homage to Qwert Yuiop*, 1986)

Awards. *Harvey Awards Hall of Fame* (comics): Alison Bechdel, Mike Mignola, and posthumously to 1950s *Mad* team members: Jack Davis, Will Elder, Ben Oda, John Severin, Marie Severin. [F770]

• *Primetime Emmy* (tv): *Game of Thrones* won as drama series for the fourth time.

Publishers & Sinners. The new Gollancz/Rivers of London award for sf/fantasy by BAME (black, Asian, minority ethnic) authors opens for

submissions on 1 October, closing 31 January. First prize £4,000; other prizes too. (*The Bookseller*, 27 September) See www.gollancz.co.uk.

- Two of the five titles shortlisted for the 2019 Fitzcarraldo Editions prize (no, I'd never heard of this London publisher either) seem to be sf. [MV]

As Others See Us. *The New Yorker* offers us a whole new nadir: 'But is fandom becoming as toxic as politics?' (16 September) [JDB]

R.I.P. *Robert Axelrod* (1949-2019), US actor whose many genre credits include *The Blob* (1988), *Mighty Morphin Power Rangers* (1993-1996 tv; 1995 film) and *Transformers* (2000 tv), died on 7 September aged 70. [PDF]

- *Hal Colebatch* (1945-2019), Australian author of contributions (one novel-length) to Larry Niven's 'Man-Kzin Wars' anthologies, and of the H.G. Wells sequel *Time Machine Troopers* (2011), died on 10 September aged 73. [AB]

- *Charles 'Charlie' Collins* (1935-2019), US publisher's rep whose 1969-1981 small press Centaur (with Donald M. Grant) revived many out-of-print genre works from the early twentieth century, died on 26 August aged 83. [AIP]

- *Rod Coneybeare* (1930-2019), Canadian tv presenter and actor with voice roles in *The Friendly Giant* (1958-1985) – where he was also a puppeteer – *The Adventures of Super Mario Bros. 3* (1990) and *X-Men: The Animated Series* (1992-1994), died on 5 September aged 89. [PDF]

- *Jack Donner* (1928-2019), US actor in *Mission: Impossible* (1966-1973), *Johnny Mysto: Boy Wizard* (1997), *Retro Puppet Master* (1999), *Demon Under Glass* (2002) and others, died on 21 September aged 90.

- *Aron Eisenberg* (1969-2019), US actor best known as Nog in *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* (1993-1999), died on 21 September aged 50.

- *Rob Garrison* (1960-2019), US actor in *Starship Invasions* (1977), died on 27 September aged 59.

- *Mordicai Gerstein* (1935-2019), US author/illustrator of children's books including such fantasies as *Fox Eyes* (2005) and *The Old Country* (2005), died in late September aged 83. [PDF]

- *David Hagberg* (1942-2019), US author whose sf includes *The Capsule* (1976), six Flash Gordon novels (1981-1981, anonymously) and the 2003 *Terminator 3* novelization, died on 8 September aged 76. [AIP]

- *Sid Haig* (1939-2019), US actor in *Jason of Star Command* (1978-1979), *Wizards of the Lost Kingdom II* (1989), *Creature* (2011), *Zombex* (2013) and

others, died on 21 September aged 80. [BE]

- *David Hurst* (1926-2019), German-born actor in *The Perfect Woman* (1949), *Vampire over London* (1952), *The Boys from Brazil* (1978) and others, died on 15 September aged 93.

- *Frank Key* (Paul Byrne, 1959-2019), UK author, illustrator and latterly broadcaster long cherished by a select audience for his surreal, semi-nonsense tales from 'Hooting Yard' – collected in *Twitching and Shattered* (1989), *Befuddled by Cormorants* (2006), *Unspeakable Desolation Pouring Down from the Stars* (2007) and further (as he would say) curdled and frowsty volumes – died on 13 September aged 60. (Resonance FM)

- *Jack Lasenby* (1931-2019), New Zealand author of children's/YA fiction whose *Because We Were the Travellers* (1997) and its sequel are post-apocalyptic sf, died on 27 September aged 88.

- *Carol Lynley* (1942-2019), US actress in *The Shuttered Room* (1967), *The Night Stalker* (1972) and *Beware! The Blob* (1972), died on 3 September aged 77. [ATC]

- *Katherine MacLean* (1925-2019), long-time US author of much short sf since 1949 – some collected in *The Diploids* (1962) and *The Trouble with You Earth People* (1980) – plus novels including *Cosmic Checkmate* (1962, aka *Second Game*) with Charles V. De Vet, died on 1 September aged 94. [CM] She received the SFWA Author Emeritus award in 2003 and the Cordwainer Smith Rediscovery Award in 2011.

- *J. Michael Mendel* (1964-2019), Emmy-winning US producer whose credits include *The Simpsons* (1994-2015) and *Rick and Morty* (2013-2017), died on 23 September aged 54. (CNN, 24 September)

- *Jan Merlin* (1925-2019), US character actor in *Tom Corbett, Space Cadet* (1951-1954), *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea* (1964-1967), *The Twilight People* (1972) and *Time Trackers* (1989), died on 20 September aged 94. [DFG]

- *Kazuko Nakamura*, pioneering Japanese animator whose anime credits include *Panda and the Magic Serpent* (1958), *Magic Boy* (1959) and many more to 1999, died on 3 August aged 86. [HM]

- *Andrzej Polkowski*, Polish translator of C.S. Lewis and of the Harry Potter saga, died on September aged 80. [PDF]

- *Lee Salem* (1946-2019), US editor and later president at Universal Press Syndicate who worked with Gary Larson on *The Far Side* and Bill Watterson on *Calvin and Hobbes*, died on 2 September aged 73. [PDF]

- *Bill Schelly* (1951-2019), US comics fan and historian who published the fanzine *Sense of Wonder* and such books as *The Golden Age of Comic Fandom* (1995), died on 12 September aged 67. [PDF]
- *Anne Rivers Siddons* (1936-2019), US author whose novels include the supernatural bestseller *The House Next Door* (1978), died on 11 September aged 83. [PDF]
- Late report: *Steven Hilliard Stern* (1937-2018), Canadian director of *The Ghost of Flight 401* (1978), *The Devil and Max Devlin* (1981), *Mazes and Monsters* (1982), *Murder in Space* (1985) and others, died on 27 June 2018 aged 80. [TM]
- *Curt Stubbs* (1948-2019), long-time Arizona fan and con worker involved with the successful Phoenix in 1978 Worldcon bid, died on 14 September. [F770]
- *Brian Turk* (1970-2019), actor in *The Lost World: Jurassic Park* (1997), *A.I.* (2001) and *Carnivàle* (2003-2005) died on 13 September aged 49. [MMW]
- *Jack Weaver* (1926-2019), US fan and convention-goer who was the webmaster and software developer at Fanac.org for 20 years from 1997, died on 2 September aged 92. [MLO]
- *John Wesley* (1947-2019), US actor in *The Computer Wore Tennis Shoes* (1995), *13th Child* (2002) and *Cursed Angel* (2016), died on 8 September aged 72. [PDF]

The Weakest Link. Q: ‘Played by Cesar Romero on television and by Heath Ledger on film, which villain shares his name with a playing card?’
 Contestant: ‘The Jack of Clubs?’ (Radio 4, *Brain of Britain*) [PE]

The Clarke Award in association with the Rumble Museum has announced an sf competition for young people (under 16), who are not asked actually to write sf but to provide outlines from which presumably non-young professionals will then create the stories. The deadline is 31 October 2019. Further information at tinyurl.com/y2d6pmxy.

Random Fandom. Online fannish resources keep growing, with Fanac.org constantly posting scans of more old fanzines (including newszines shamelessly pillaged for The Dead Past below), *Fancylopedia 3* at fancylopedia.org adding convention publications to the relevant convention entries, and Rob Hansen regularly extending his historical pages at fiawol.org.uk/FanStuff/THEN Archive/archive.htm. My own copious spare

time tends to be absorbed by the *SF Encyclopedia* at sf-encyclopedia.com, which even in a sluggish September (I have been tiresomely unwell) added 15,000 words of new entries and updates.

Marketry. SFWA's new qualifying rate of 8¢/word for short fiction took effect last month. The August market report at sfwa.org listed 33 qualifying markets; the post-change September report has 22.

The Dead Past. *20 Years Ago:* 'Iain M. Banks, man of versatile initials, told the *Telegraph*: "If I do cowboy novels I'll be Iain Z. Banks. And Iain X. Banks for pornography."' ... '*That Hideous Acronym.* On 6 August, the UK government betrayed its spin-doctors' unfamiliarity with C.S. Lewis by launching the National Institute for Clinical Excellence, or N.I.C.E.... Who is its Head? Where are Merlin and Mr Fisher-King now that we need them?' (both from *Ansible* 147, October 1999)

- *30 Years Ago,* Isaac Asimov presented L. Sprague de Camp with a First Fandom Award and explained the rigorous selection criteria: 'great age, a withered appearance and miserable habits. We keep Fred Pohl around as an example.' (*File* 770 82, October 1989)

- *70 Years Ago,* fannish rapture at a plug for the new *The Magazine of Fantasy* in the Press section of *Time* (10 October 1949) was somewhat modified by the phrasing: '*Time* stated that the pulp stf field is populated with "... lithe heroes, bosomy heroines, bug-eyed monsters and space-suited villains from Mars..." Ouch!' (*Fantasy Times* 91, October 1949)

Fanfundery. *TAFF 2020:* 'We, the current administrators of The Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund, issue a call for nominations for the 2020 TAFF race, to go from North America to Europe. The winner will attend Concentric: Eastercon 2020, in Birmingham, UK (www.concentric2020.uk), from April 10 to April 13, 2020. Yes, it is an eastbound race for the second consecutive year.

Looking at the next five Worldcons and Worldcon bids, that makes the most sense, we think. The nomination deadline is 31 October, 2019.' [JA/GS] For the full announcement in PDF format, see taff.org.uk.

- *Free Ebooks* at the TAFF Site: the latest release is the 2015 Gannet fanthology *Tyne Capsule* edited by Rob Jackson, with many illustrious contributors. See taff.org.uk/ebooks.php?x=TyneCapsule. An ebook of all Bob Shaw's Serious Scientific Talks is also planned, but one speech has yet to be traced. Can anyone help with a copy or recording of the talk Bob gave at both Confabulation and Intersection in 1995?

- *GUFF*: nominations for the 2020 race should open later in October.

Thog's Masterclass. *Eyeballs in the Sky*. 'He caught the boy's eye, threw it down to the bed.' (Kevin Egan, 'The Visit', *Ellery Queen Mystery Magazine*, September 2019) [MMW]

- *Clean Air Dept*. 'Despite his empty belly, he would have been completely content with his pipe. He had always loved the land, any land that had not been spoiled by the stinks of civilization.' (Chad Oliver, *Unearthly Neighbors*, 1960) [PL]

- *Dept of Travelling Companions*. 'Heather kissed Sarah's head, patted her back, and straightened her shirt and skirt, as if they were about to embark on a long journey together.' (Lisa Grunwald, *New Year's Eve*, 1997) [PB]

- *Secrets of US Teamaking*. 'She turned on the hot pot and tore open an Earl Grey packet and poured milk over the tea bag as she waited for the water to boil.' (Helen Phillips, *The Need*, 2019) [PB]

- *Nobel Prize Winner Dept*. 'Wilhelm let out a long, hard breath and raised the brows of his round and somewhat circular eyes.' (Saul Bellow, *Seize the Day*, 1956) [AR]

- *Mysteries of Femininity*. "'She has breasts that smile.'" (Philip K. Dick, *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*, 1968) [KL] 'Akiko removed her brassiere to reveal her champagne glass-sized tits.' (Min Jin Lee, *Pachinko*, 2017) [KL] 'Then Min Feng stood up and peeled her shirt off. She was only wearing a skin-colored brasserie.' (Joyce Chng, *Phoenix with a Purpose*, 2009) [RBW]

- *Machismo Dept*. 'I became abruptly aware that I was swinging a hard-on like a filled fire hose.' (Richard Morgan, *Altered Carbon*, 2002) [BA]

- *Neat Tricks*. 'A muscle flexed in his jaw, and he snapped it up from the table and shoved it under his arm.' (Lily Graham, *The Paris Secret*, 2018) [PB]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 11 October 2019: Dr Amaury Triaud talks to the Brum Group. 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre. £6 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future events/speakers: 1 November 2019, James Brogden; 6 December 2019, Christmas social at the Selly Tavern, £10; 10 January 2020, AGM and

auction, free.

- 19 October 2019: Bryan and Mary Talbot presentation on their new graphic novel. 6.30pm at The Space, Town Hall, St George's St, Hebden Bridge HX7 7BY. £5 entry, followed by free 8pm book signing.
- 24 October 2019: BSFA Open Meeting, Central Station, 37 Wharfedale Road, King's Cross, N1 9SD. 6pm for 7pm. Guest(s) TBA. Free. Date or venue changes may be announced after *Ansible* has gone to press: always check bsfa.co.uk for the latest information.
- 26 October 2019: Bryan and Mary Talbot signing as above, 1-2pm at Gosh!, 1 Berwick Street, Soho, London, W1F 0DR.

Some Links from the *Ansible* home page.

- Dan Simmons, Climate Scientist, Speaks Out
<http://file770.com/dan-simmons-criticized-for-remarks-about-thunberg/>
- SF² Concatenation Autumn 2019 Newscast
<http://www.concatenation.org/news/news9~19.html>
- TAFF race announcement: official PDF
http://taff.org.uk/news/StandforTAF2020_A4.pdf

Editorial. I know, I know, there's usually more extra material down here in Endnotes (appearing in digital versions of *Ansible* though not the print edition), but this has been a difficult issue to finish at all. Sorry! Here instead is a bonus cartoon by *Ansible* stalwart Brad W. Foster ...



Ansible® 387 © David Langford, 2019. Thanks to Brian Ameringen, Johan Anglemark, Paul Barnett, John D. Berry, Alasdair Brown, Adam-Troy Castro, Fanac.org, Paul Di Filippo, Bob Eggleton, Gregory Feeley, *File 770*, Donald F. Glut, Kessily Lewel, Pamela Love, Helen McCarthy, Christopher Mason, Todd Mason, Mark L. Olson, Andrew I. Porter, *Private Eye*, Adam Roberts, Geri Sullivan, Bruce Townley, Mark L. Valentine, Roger Burton West, Martin Morse Wooster, and as always our Hero Distributors: Durdles Books (Birmingham SF Group), SCIS/Prophecy and Alan Stewart (Australia). 1 October 2019

Ansible® 388, November 2019

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo:
Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Ulrika O'Brien**. Available for SAE or copies of *The Bastard Aims for Your Groin*.

The Rule of Names

Michael Moorcock on the soon-to-be-renamed John W. Campbell Memorial Award: 'While I'm glad Campbell's name is off the award, what on earth am I supposed to call mine now ? I'd prefer mine to be named after MY favourite SF editor. So from now on it will be known as either the Thrilling Wonder Award, Startling Award or Sam Merwin Jnr Award. At least mine will be. Once I find it.' (Email, 1 October)

James Tiptree Jr's name is indeed to be removed from the long-established Tiptree Award, which will henceforth be the Otherwise Award. See tiptree.org/2019/10/from-tiptree-to-otherwise. (13 October)

Olga Tokarczuk of Poland, who has published novels containing such fantastic elements as archangel characters and psychic powers, won the belatedly announced 2018 Nobel Prize for Literature. [AE]

Navah Wolfe, winner of two Shirley Jackson awards and the 2019 Hugo for best editor (long form), has been rewarded by the elimination of her editorial position at Saga Press. (Twitter, 29 October) [F770]

Congoleum

1-3 Nov • **Armadacon 31**, Future Inn, Plymouth. £35 reg; concessions £30; under-16s free. PayPal registration at www.armadacon.org.

2-3 Nov • **Bristol Anime & Gaming Con**, Bristol Future Inns. £18 reg; day rates £11 Sat, £9 Sun. See bristolanimecon.com.

2 Nov • **Frightfest** (film) Hallowe'en special, Leicester Square, London. Tickets soon from www.frightfest.co.uk/filmsevents.html.

8-10 Nov • **Novacon 49**, Nottingham Sherwood Hotel (was the Park Inn). Contact 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ. £53 reg; under-17s £12; under-13s free. See www.novacon.org.uk.

9-10 Nov • **Comic Con**, Harrogate Convention Centre. Part of Thought Bubble, the Comic Art Festival, running 4-10 November. £28 weekend pass or £17/day. See thoughtbubblefestival.com.

CANCELLED 23-24 Nov • **London Film & Comic Con**, Olympia. Brexit uncertainty blamed: see Exhibition World, tinyurl.com/y6yyqpyt.

24 Nov • **Paperback & Pulp Fair**, Royal National Hotel, Russell Square, London. 9:30am-3pm. £1.50. (*Date changed from 27 October.*)

29 Nov - 1 Dec • **UK Ghost Story Festival**, Derby – multiple city venues. £55 reg; £35 for Saturday only. Ticket purchase, speakers and schedule at www.derbyquad.co.uk/UKGhostStoryFestival.

30 Nov • **Dragonmeet** (gaming), Novotel London West, W6 8DR. 9am-midnight. *Now £12 reg*; group rates at www.dragonmeet.co.uk.

1 Dec • **Stars of Time** (media), Tropicana, Weston-super-Mare. 10am-5pm. £7.50; under-12s, OAP and disabled £4; under-4s free. Family of 2+2 kids £18; 2+3 kids £19. See www.starsofetime.co.uk.

2-9 Dec • **Talos III**: SF Theatre Festival of London, Omnibus Theatre, Clapham. More at www.cyborphic.com/talos-2019.

7-8 Dec • **For the Love of Sci-Fi** (comics), Trafford Park, Manchester. Tickets at various prices from fortheloveofsci-fi.com.

7-9 Feb 2020 • **DemiSemiQuaver** (filk), Best Western Hotel, Marks Tey, Colchester. £39 reg and £29 unwaged, *rising on 1 December to £42 and £32*; under-18s £1 per year of age; under-5s free. See www.contabile.org.uk/demisemiquaver/.

22 Feb 2020 • **Picocon 36**, Blackett Building, Imperial College, London. Guests of honour TBA. £12 reg; £10 concessions; £8 for ICSF members; past GoHs free. See www.union.ic.ac.uk/scc/icsf/picocon/.

22-24 May 2020 • **Satellite 7**, Glasgow. GoH Alette de Bodard. £70 reg (£80

at the door); under-25s £60; under-18s £20; under-12s £5; under-5s £2. Day: £20 Fri, £35 Sat or Sun. See seven.satellitex.org.uk.

3-5 Jul 2020 • **Lavecon** (sf/fantasy/gaming), Sedgebrook Hall Hotel, Northants. Tickets awaited at www.hwsevents.co.uk/shop-1.

11-12 Jul 2020 • **Edge-Lit 9**, QUAD Centre, Derby, DE1 3AS. £50 reg. For guests see www.derbyquad.co.uk/whats-on/events/edge-lit-9.

26 Jul 2020 • **Maximum Power** (Blake's 7), ?Steventon. Venue to be confirmed at www.facebook.com/TeamBlakeMaximumPower.

26-27 Sep 2020 • **Nor-Con** (media), Norfolk Showground Arena. Tickets to be available 'soon' at www.nor-con.co.uk.

9-11 Oct 2020 • **Octocon**, Crowne Plaza Hotel, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15. (12km from city centre.) GoH Michael Carroll. €60 reg; €50 concessions; accompanied under-13s free. More at octocon.com.

13-15 Nov 2020 • **Destination Star Trek**, ExCel, London. Day £29; 2 days £44; 3 days £54; silly 'VIP' rates at destinationstartrek.com.

Rumblings. *Gamesfest*, announced for 3 November in Tring, may or may not be happening: the website is long gone, and following many reportedly far-right and/or racist tweets from the Gamesfest account in September – some deleted by Twitter as hate speech – the Twitter and Facebook presences have both vanished. (GeekNative.com, 1 October)

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. Scarlett Curtis shared her feminist vision of the world in 2030, beginning with a strangely familiar disclaimer: 'I am not a fan of science fiction. It's a genre that bores me and as much as I have tried, over the years, to muster up excitement for Star Wars, Doctor Who or even Nineteen Eighty-Four, I inevitably end up switching off and losing interest.' (BBC website '100 Women' feature, 18 October) [EC]

Awards. *Booker Prize*: shared this year by Margaret Atwood for *The Testaments* and Bernardine Evaristo for *Girl, Woman, Other*.

• *British Fantasy Awards*. HOLDSTOCK (fantasy novel): *The Bitter Twins* by Jen Williams. DERLETH (horror novel) *Little Eve* by Catriona Ward. NOVELLA

The Tea Master and the Detective by Aliette de Bodard. SHORT 'Down Where Sound Comes Blunt' by G.V. Anderson (*F&SF* 3/18). COLLECTION *All the Fabulous Beasts* by Priya Sharma. ANTHOLOGY *Year's Best Weird Fiction*, Vol. 5 ed. Robert Shearman & Michael Kelly. INDEPENDENT PRESS Unsung Stories. NONFICTION *Noise and Sparks* by Ruth E.J. Booth. MAGAZINE *Uncanny*. ARTIST *Vince Haig*. GRAPHIC NOVEL *Widdershins*, Vol. 7: *Curtain Call* by Kate Ashwin. AUDIO *Breaking the Glass Slipper Podcast*. FILM/TV *Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse*. BOUNDS (newcomer): Tasha Suri for *Empire of Sand*. WAGNER (special achievement): Ian Whates.

- *Elgin* (poetry collections). BOOK *War* by Marge Simon & Alessandro Manzetti. CHAPBOOK *Glimmerglass Girl* by Holly Lyn Walrath.
- *Polari Prize* (LGBT) novel winner: the dystopian *XX* by Angela Chadwick. [L]
- *Sidewise* (alternate history): LONG FORM *The Calculating Stars* by Mary Robinette Kowal. SHORT FORM *Codex Valtierra* by Oscar (Xiu) Ramirez and Emmanuel Valtierra. SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENT Eric Flint.

Magazine Scene. When *Nature* acquired a 'new look' with its 23 October issue, the 'Futures' short-sf-story page vanished from both the printed magazine and the website contents list. The feature continues online but you have to know where to look for it: nature.com/futures.

As Others See Us II. On *Human Compatible: Artificial Intelligence and the Problem of Control* by Stuart Russell: 'A professor of computer science at the University of California, Berkeley, Russell is grounded in the realities of the technology, including its many limitations, and isn't one to jump at the overheated language of sci-fi favoured by the likes of Musk.' (Richard Waters, *Financial Times*, 19 October) [MMW]

R.I.P. *Berthe Amoss* (1925-2019), US children's author and illustrator whose books included such fantasies as *Lost Magic* (1993), died on 6 October aged 94. [AIP]

• *Harold Bloom* (1930-2019), US author and critic who was series editor for many Chelsea House critical anthologies on genre themes and specific authors (including Mary Shelley, Poe, Le Guin, Lessing and Orwell) died on 14 October aged 89. His one novel was *The Flight to Lucifer: A Gnostic Fantasy* (1979).

• *Michael Blumlein* (1948-2019), highly regarded US author whose first novel was *The Movement of Mountains* (1987) and whose first collection *The*

Brains of Rats (1990) includes his sf debut ‘Tissue Ablation and Variant Regeneration’ (1984) – one of the strongest and most discussed stories from the early days of *Interzone* – died on 25 October aged 71. [RR]

- *Sam Bobrick* (1932-2019), US tv writer/producer who scripted episodes of *The Flintstones* (1964-1965), *Get Smart* (1967) and *Bewitched* (1968), died on 11 October aged 87. [PDF]
- *Diahann Carroll* (1935-2019), US actress with genre credits in *The Man in the Moon* (1960), *The Star Wars Holiday Special* (1978) and *From the Dead of Night* (1989), died on 4 October aged 84. [TM]
- *Edgar L. Chapman* (1936-2019), US academic and sf critic whose works include *The Magic Labyrinth of Philip José Farmer* (1984) and *The Road to Castle Mount: The Science Fiction of Robert Silverberg* (1999), died on 11 October aged 83. [PDF]
- *Marshall Efron* (1938-2019), US actor whose genre films include *THX 1138* (1971), *Robots* (2005) and *Ice Age: The Meltdown* (2006), died on 30 September aged 81. [PDF]
- *Robert Evans* (1930-2019), US film-maker whose time as Paramount production VP saw *Rosemary’s Baby* (1968) and *Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory* (1971), and whose producer credits include *Popeye* (1980) and *The Phantom* (1996), died on 26 October aged 89. [MMW]
- *Robert Forster* (1941-2019), US actor in *The Darker Side of Terror* (1979), *The Black Hole* (1979), *Scanner Cop II* (1995), *Supernova* (2000), *Twin Peaks* (2017) and others, died on 11 October aged 78. [PDF]
- *Alex J. Geairns* (1964-2019), UK fan, author and tv presenter who ran the Cult TV festivals (1994-2007) and published the sf novel *Mindful* (2015) as by alex:g, died on 20 October. [CC]
- *Philip Gips* (1931-2019), US graphic designer who created the posters for *Rosemary’s Baby*, *Tommy*, *Superman*, *Alien* and other films, died on 3 October aged 88. [BE]
- *Norm Metcalf* (1937-2019), long-time US fan, member of FAPA and SAPS, whose fanzines included *New Frontiers* (1959-1964) and who published *The Index of Science Fiction Magazines 1951-1965* (1968), died on 21 September aged 81. [RL]
- *Stephen Moore* (1937-2019), UK actor who voiced Marvin in the original radio *Hitch-Hiker* (1978-1980) and the tv version (1981), died on 4 October aged 81. Other credits include the BBC Radio *Adventures of Tintin* (as Professor Calculus), *Black Hearts in Battersea* (1995-1996) and *The Queen’s*

Nose (1995-2001).

- *J.A. Pitts* (1965-2019), US author of the ‘Sarah Beauhall’ urban fantasies opening with *Black Blade Blues* (2010), died on 3 October aged 54. [PDF/L]
- *Anna Quayle* (1932-2019), UK actress whose films include *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* (1968), *James and the Giant Peach* (1976) and *The Light Princess* (1978), died on 16 August aged 86. [AIP]
- *Irene Shubik* (1929-2019), UK tv producer who created the sf anthology series *Out of This World* (1962, as story editor) and *Out of the Unknown* (1965-1971, as producer and script editor for the first two seasons), died on 26 September aged 89. [FM]
- *Bernard Slade* (1930-2019), Canadian tv writer who scripted 17 episodes of *Bewitched* (1964-1968), co-created *The Flying Nun* (1967-1970) and created *The Girl with Something Extra* (1973-1974), died on 30 October aged 89. [PDF]
- *Rip Taylor* (1934-2019), US actor in *Sigmund and the Sea Monsters* (1973-1974), *DuckTales the Movie* (1990), the animated *The Addams Family* (as Uncle Fester, 1992-1993) and others, died on 6 October aged 85. [F770]
- *Tome* (Philippe Vandeveld, 1957-2019), Belgian comics writer who worked 1980-1998 on the occasionally sf-themed strip *Spirou et Fantasio* (1938-current), died on 5 October aged 62. [PDF]
- *David Weisman* (1942-2019), US film-maker whose credits include *Raiders of the Living Dead* (1986), died on 9 October aged 77.
- *John Witherspoon* (1942-2019), US actor in *Killer Tomatoes Strike Back!* (1991), *The Meteor Man* (1993), *Vampire in Brooklyn* (1995) and others, died on 29 October aged 77.
- *Alan Zaslove* (1927-2019), US animator/director whose credits include *The Phantom Tollbooth* (1970), *The Smurfs* (1984-1985), *The Jetsons* (1985 reboot), *DuckTales* (1981-1990), *Darkwing Duck* (1991-1992) and *Aladdin* (1994-1995), died on 3 October aged 92. [PDF]

The Weakest Link. The US *Jeopardy* quiz had a ‘What’s that award presented for?’ round. *Answer requiring the correct question:* ‘The Arthur C. Clarke Award.’ *Contestant:* ‘What is tennis?’ (1 October) [AIP]

• *Ben Shephard:* ‘In Disney’s 1937 animated film, how many dwarves did Snow White share a house with?’ *Contestant:* ‘101.’ (ITV, *Tipping Point*) [PE]

Court Circular. Videogame developer Anas Abdin sued CBS on the basis

that *Star Trek: Discovery* plagiarized important ideas – in particular that of giant star-travelling tardigrades – from his still unreleased game *Tardigrades*. The case was dismissed in September: Abdin said ‘I respect the ruling and I expect everyone to do so,’ but in October began crowdfunding an appeal. This will almost certainly not succeed, because (a) it can’t be proved and indeed seems less than likely that the *Discovery* creators stole from the videogame, while (b) general concepts like ‘Boy Goes to Wizarding School’ or ‘Huge Teleporting Tardigrades’ aren’t protected by copyright. But apparently *Trek* fans who don’t like *ST:D* can be relied on for considerable outraged support, irrespective of mere legalities. (PlagiarismToday.com, 15 October and earlier posts) [F770]

As Others See Us III. Emma Renault, self-proclaimed author of ‘literary fiction’, was challenged about her posted description of all genre writers as fascists. She tactfully qualified the point: ‘... whether they intend to or not, they’re writing fascist propaganda. That’s what escapist fiction is under capitalism. Not to mention the fact that SF/F is structurally and thematically fascist.’ (via Facebook, 21 October) [PF]

Random Fandom. *Brad W. Foster’s* home in the Dallas/Fort Worth area was ‘square in path of the E-3 tornado last night. Major damage all trees, fences, and most of roof peeled back from front house, but managed to get much art out of way. We are ok. Cats are ok. Major cleanup and repairs next few weeks. No power, might not have any for a week or more. Apologies to all I owe some art to right now, might be a bit of a delay!’ (22 October) [CP]

• *Free Ebooks* at the TAFF site: the library continues to grow with Rob Hansen’s anthology *Challenging Moskowitz: 1930s Fandom Revisited* (taff.org.uk/ebooks.php?x=ChalMosk), collecting responses to and alternative versions of 1930s fan history as depicted in Sam Moskowitz’s *The Immortal Storm*; and *The Serious Scientific Talks* (taff.org.uk/ebooks.php?x=ShawTalks), comprising 14 of Bob Shaw’s legendary convention speeches, four never previously collected. (Alas, Rob Jackson and I have still not traced the final talk delivered at the 1995 Eastercon and Worldcon – but will add it if we ever find a copy.)

More Trademark Bullying. Monster Energy, the people who make the unhealthy canned drink, sternly told Justin Drazin – author of *Albert and the Amazing Pillow Monsters* (2013) – not to write any further children’s books with their very own word ‘monster’ in the title. Silly, but Drazin didn’t dare

publish his two already-written sequels for fear of the monstrous cost of litigation. ([Washington Post magazine](#), 27 October) [MMW] Can we look forward to a death struggle with the Tolkien estate over the next reissue of 'Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics' (1936)?

Potterism. A presciently preserved first edition of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (1997) was auctioned for £46,000 in October. The print run was just 500, and 300 went to libraries. ([BBC](#), 10 October)

Group Gropes. Sf/fan communities using Yahoo Groups email lists were dismayed by the mid-October announcement that after 28 October new content would no longer be accepted at the YG website, and that on 14 December all existing message archives, photos and documents will vanish, leaving only a bare email bounce. Some saw this coming and moved long ago to Groups.io ... which is now overloaded with panic-stricken Yahoo refugees. Owing to this sudden pressure, the \$110/year 'premium' membership fee at Groups.io – necessary for the first year if you want your Yahoo archive transferred – was soon increased to \$220.

The Clarke Award is now open for submissions, which close on 31 December. Strangely, this isn't front-page news at the Clarke site but is hidden away behind the 'Contact' button: clarkeaward.com/#contact.

The Dead Past. *60 Years Ago*, there was a great disturbance in the UK force: 'London Circle Disrupts. Although it had been hoped that the overnight Symposium held at the beginning of October would strengthen internal relationships, the London Circle was disbanded at its business meeting of Friday, 16th October, following the resignation of Chairman Ted Tubb. It was agreed to revert to the system of seven months ago, social meetings at the Globe and no business meetings at the White Horse. The Globe meetings will continue to take place on the first Thursday of each month.' ([Skyrack 9](#), 1 November 1959)

Fanfundery. *TAFF 2020*: nominations for the eastbound race from North America to the 2020 UK Eastercon (Concentric) closed on 31 October. [Confirmed candidates](#) are Michael 'Orange Mike' Lowrey and Ann Totusek. Ballots should follow on 4 November at taff.org.uk, where there will also be an online voting form.

• *GUFF 2020*: nominations for the southbound race from Europe to CoNZealand opened on 11 October and will close on 10 January 2020.

Voting should open soon after, closing on 13 April 2020. Details at ozfanfunds.com/?page_id=146.

• *2018 GUFF Report*: Marcin Klak's trip report *The Giant Leap to Never* is now available in PDF format from ozfanfunds.com/?page_id=143.

Follow-Up. 'Brit Fantasy Soc Ltd' [escaped compulsory strike-off](#) from the UK companies register (see [A386](#)) thanks to a flurry of activity in late October, with a change of directors and overdue accounts filed at last.

Thog's Masterclass. *Far Away Is Close At Hand*. 'He heard his own sobbing in his helmet. Distant.' (Derek Künsken, *The Quantum Garden*, 2019). [AR]

• *Wet T-Shirt Dept.* '... below one raised arm her right breast filled the slack of her T-shirt like fruit, like water.' (Richard Morgan, *Altered Carbon*, 2002) [BA]

• *Dept of Cognitive Estrangement.* 'With a shudder, the alien's movements froze; like a diarrhetic horse, the nostril flap sounded. Even zouched, the E'Gliiz realized it had spilled the legumes ...' (F.M. Busby, 'Wrong Number', *Asimov's*, December 1981) [VS]

• *Bad Sex Award Dept.* '... a dangerous and clamorous rollercoaster coil of sexually violent rotation with Eliza's breasts barrel-rolled across Ezra's howling mouth and the pained frenzy of his bulbous salutation extenuating his excitement as it whacked and smacked its way into every muscle of Eliza's body except for the otherwise central zone.' (Morrissey, *List of the Lost*, Penguin Classics, 2015)

Endnotes

Apparitions.

• 1 November 2019: James Brogden talks to the Brum Group. 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre. £6 or £3 for members. Contact [bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk](mailto:bhamsfgroup@yahoo.co.uk). Future events/speakers: 6 December 2019, Christmas social at the Selly Tavern, £10 (booking required by 22 November); 10 January 2020, AGM and auction, free; 7 February 2020, R.J. Barker; 13 March 2020, Ian Stewart; 3 April 2020, Danie Ware.

• 14 November 2019: Christopher Priest and others discuss Anna Kavan at Waterstone's, Notting Hill. 7-8:30pm. £3.95. Tickets from ... <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/anna-kavan-life-and-writing-with-special->

[guests-tickets-77808275647](#)

- 15 November 2019: Alan Lee signing at Waterstone's, Reading. 12:30pm. Free, 'on a first come first served basis, so early arrival is recommended'.
<https://www.waterstones.com/events/meet-alan-lee-the-illustrator-of-much-of-j-r-r-tolkiens-middle-earth-series/reading-broad-street>
- 27 November 2019: BSFA Open Meeting, Central Station, 37 Wharfdale Road, King's Cross, N1 9SD. 6pm for 7pm. Guest(s) TBA. Free. Date or venue changes may be announced after *Ansible* has gone to press: always check bsfa.co.uk for the latest information.
- 14 December 2019: David Hardy space art presentation 'To the Stars on a Paintbrush'. 6pm in the Conference Room, Bone Mill, New Street, Charfield, South Gloucestershire, GL12 8ES. No entry fee mentioned.
<https://i4is.org/public-presentation-to-the-stars-on-a-paintbrush/>

Some Links from the *Ansible* home page.

- 'Philip Pullman on Children's Literature and the Critics Who Disdain It'
<https://lithub.com/philip-pullman-on-childrens-literature-and-the-critics-who-disdain-it/>
- Stupid 'Sci-fi makes you stupid' study refuted by scientists behind original research
<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2019/oct/01/sci-fi-makes-you-stupid-study-refuted-by-scientists-behind-original-research>

Correction: The November *Locus* carries an apology for giving J. Neil Schulman's date of death as 11 August 2019 (as did *Ansible*) when it was in fact 10 August. [RR]

Editorial. Strangely tedious but true: if we count the early double number *Ansible* 2/3 as one issue and add in the thirteen extras that were given half numbers from 57½ to 362½, *Ansible* 388 is in fact the 400th issue of *Ansible*. Another occasion for your editor to remember his illustrious predecessor Peter Roberts's 1979 announcement that '*Checkpoint* will be folding with the 100th issue, that being more than enough for any sane fan editor ...'

Ansible® 388 © David Langford, 2019. Thanks to Brian Ameringen, Cardinal Cox, Ahrvid Engholm, ErsatzCulture, Paul Di Filippo, Bob Eggleton, *File 770*, Patrick Freivald, InfinityBox Press LLC, Robert Lichtman, *Locus*, Todd Mason, Fiona Moore, Curt Phillips, Andrew I. Porter, *Private Eye*, ReAnimus Press, Adam Roberts, Roger Robinson, Rudy

Rucker, Vernon Speed, Martin Morse Wooster, and as always our Hero
Distributors: Durdles Books (Birmingham SF Group), SCIS/Prophecy and
Alan Stewart (Australia). 1 November 2019

Ansible® 389, December 2019

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo:
Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Sue Mason**. Available for SAE or a set of five
Necklin field generator rods.

The Scholars of Night

John M. Ford (Mike Ford) is mostly out of print because – so the oft-told story goes – his family inherited his copyrights and chose to suppress the work since they disapproved of it, or of him. Another version of events has now been offered in [a 15 November Slate article](#) by Isaac Butler, which recounts his researches as a Ford fan and the discovery that family members say they repeatedly wrote to Mike’s agent about reprint possibilities but had no reply; while the agent, who had given up or was in process of giving up agency work owing to various personal problems, says she never received those enquiries. Whether or not there’s an element of historical revisionism here, the good news is that communication has been re-established and that Mike’s ‘lost’ work – plus new material including his ambitious, unfinished novel *Aspects* – will be published by Tor with family consent, beginning in 2020. [ML]

Alan Moore is sufficiently horrified by current UK politics that he’s breaking a 40-year streak of anarchist refusal to participate and voting in the upcoming General Election for ... can you guess? ([20 November](#))

Geoff Ryman is puzzled by the motives of the entity that bagged his presumably expired domain ryman-novel.com – home of the hypertext novel 253 – and filled it with gushing (bot-generated?) posts about Geoff’s work while removing the novel itself. (Facebook, 25 November)

William Shatner was made an Officer of the Order of Canada on 21 November; another actor with sf credits, Donald Sutherland, was promoted from a mere lowly Officer to a Companion of the Order.

Navah Wolfe, mysteriously cast out as senior editor at Saga Press (see [A388](#)), has now joined Subterranean Press. [F770]

Conyrine

2-9 Dec • **Talos III**: SF Theatre Festival of London, Omnibus Theatre, Clapham. More at www.cyborphic.com/talos-2019.

7-8 Dec • **For the Love of Sci-Fi** (comics), Trafford Park, Manchester. Tickets at various prices from fortheloveofsci-fi.com.

7-8 Dec • **A Victorian Steampunk Christmas**, Crewe Heritage Centre and town centre. Free by day; tickets £6 for Saturday evening music programme 7pm-10:30pm. See www.asylumsteampunk.co.uk.

8 Dec • **BSFA EGM**: Extraordinary General Meeting, Doggett's Coat and Badge pub, Blackfriars Bridge, London. Noon-2pm. Members only. See bsfa.co.uk/bsfa-egm-sunday-8th-december-2019/.

13 Dec • **BFS Xmas Social**, Doric Arch, Euston Station. 7pm-11:30. Free. See britishfantasysociety.org/event/bfs-london-xmas-social.

19 Dec • **London Christmas Meeting** (additional to First Thursdays), The Bishop's Finger, 9-10 West Smithfield, EC1A 9JR. All evening.

7-9 Feb 2020 • **DemiSemiQuaver** (filk), Best Western Hotel, Marks Tey, Colchester. *Now* £42 reg; £32 unwaged; under-18s £1 per year of age; under-5s free. See www.contabile.org.uk/demisemiquaver/.

7-9 Feb 2020 • **Sci-Fi Ball** (media), Grand Harbour Hotel, Southampton. Tickets £145, £35 child; day rate £15, children free; more expensive options ('mingle with our guests' etc.) at scifiball.com.

22 Feb 2020 • **Picocon 36**, Blakett Building, Imperial College, London. Guests of honour Roz Kaveney, Tamsyn Muir and Natasha Ngan. £12 reg; £10 concessions; £8 for ICSF members; past GoHs free. See www.union.ic.ac.uk/scc/icsf/picocon/.

8 Mar 2020 • **Hitchhikers Guide** 42nd anniversary event, Knowledge Centre, British Library, London. Noon-8pm. Adults £30; for other rates see www.bl.uk/events/the-hitchhikers-guide-to-the-galaxy-at-42.

20 Mar 2020 • **Futurefest** (futurolgy), Tobacco Dock, London. 10am-10pm.

Tickets £80; students £35. More at www.futurefest.org.

4 Apr 2020 • **Bedford Who Charity Con** (*Doctor Who*), University Theatre, Bedford, MK41 9EA. 10am-5:30pm. £42.50 reg; under-19s/students £22.50; under-14s £15. More at bedfordwhocharitycon.co.uk.

10-13 Apr 2020 • **Concentric** (Eastercon), Hilton Metropole near Birmingham NEC. Added GoH: Adam Roberts. *Now £80 reg; concessions £50; under-18s £25*. See www.concentric2020.uk. Hotel booking opened in early October, announced via social media but with no mass email to members until early November, when early booking was advised to get the best rates. See www.concentric2020.uk/hotel/accommodation.

23-26 Apr 2020 • **Dead by Dawn** (horror film festival), Filmhouse Cinema One, 88 Lothian Rd, Edinburgh, EH3 9BZ. Box office 0131 228 2688. Prices and online booking awaited at www.deadbydawn.co.uk.

7-10 Aug 2020 • **Continuum** (RPG), John Foster Hall, Manor Road, Leicester University, Oadby. Ticket prices are a state secret, revealed only to those who register at continuumconvention.co.uk.

28-30 Aug 2020 • **TitanCon**, Hilton Hotel, Belfast. GoH Jeannette Ng, Jodi Taylor and Robert J. Sawyer. £30 reg; first-timers and under-18s £25; under-15s £15; under-8s free. See titancon.com for day rates.

19 Sep 2020 • **International Comic Expo**, Edgbaston Stadium, Birmingham. Tickets from £10 (students £5); VIP passes £50; to go on sale in January at internationalcomicexpo.wordpress.com.

31 Oct 2020 • **BristolCon**, Hilton DoubleTree Hotel, Bristol. GoH Anna Smith Spark and Adrian Tchaikovsky. Online registration to become available in the New Year at www.bristolcon.org.

31 Oct 2020 • **Frightfest** (film) Hallowe'en special, Cineworld Cinema, Leicester Square, London. In addition to the 27-31 August event. Tickets awaited at www.frightfest.co.uk/filmsevents.html.

13-15 Nov 2020 • **Novacon 50**, Mercure Nottingham Sherwood Hotel, Nottingham. GoH Fangorn, Emma Newman, Claire North and Christopher Priest. £50 reg. Registration awaited at novacon.org.uk.

25-29 Aug 2021 • **DisCon III** (Worldcon), Washington DC, USA. \$155 reg; YA (under 26) \$80; accompanied under-13s \$65; accompanied under-7s free.

Rates may rise on 1 January 2020. See discon3.org.

Rumblings. *Ytterbium* (Eastercon 2019) published its final accounts in November, showing a profit of £29,818.09. For the full details, see www.ytterbium.org.uk/accounts. The high figure is attributed to a membership surge resulting from the collapse of Nine Worlds Geekfest.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. Another book cleared of genre taint: ‘Ursula Todd dies over and over again in Kate Atkinson’s *Life After Life* – from falling off a roof, from drowning, from succumbing to the flu. But the deaths are just a device: this is a book about living, and above all, finding new ways to do it until you finally get it right. Atkinson made her name as a mystery writer, but *Life After Life* defies genre.’ (*Time*, 12 November)

Awards. *Rotsler Award* ‘for long-time wonder-working with graphic art in amateur publications of the science fiction community’: Alison Scott.

• *World Fantasy Awards*: NOVEL *Witchmark* by C.L. Polk. NOVELLA ‘The Privilege of the Happy Ending’ by Kij Johnson (*Clarkesworld*, 8/18). SHORT (tie) ‘Ten Deals with the Indigo Snake’ by Mel Kassel (*Lightspeed*, 10/18) and ‘Like a River Loves the Sky’ by Emma Törzs (*Uncanny*, 3/18).

ANTHOLOGY *Worlds Seen in Passing: Ten Years of Tor.com Short Fiction* ed. Irene Gallo. COLLECTION *The Tangled Lands* by Paolo Bacigalupi and Tobias S. Buckell. ARTIST Rovina Cai. SPECIAL – PROFESSIONAL Huw Lewis-Jones for *The Writer’s Map: An Atlas of Imaginary Lands*. SPECIAL – NON-PROFESSIONAL Scott H. Andrews for *Beneath Ceaseless Skies*.

Magazine Scene. *Startling Stories* (first published 1939) is to be revived as an annual publication by John Betancourt’s Wildside Press.

As Others See Us II. ‘Given how swiftly *The Handmaid’s Tale* catapulted Atwood into global literary stardom, it’s easy to miss the on-the-ground work that went into what many (over Atwood’s objections) promptly labeled “science fiction,” suggesting its distance from real events.’ (Sophie Gilbert, *Atlantic*, December) [MMW]

R.I.P. *Allen Adams*, long-time UK fan – especially of *Doctor Who* – organizer of two *Who*-themed ‘Writers Gate’ conventions in Peterborough 1994-1995, and co-author with Jim Mortimore and Roger Clark of *Babylon 5*

- Security Manual* (1998), died on 9 or 10 November. [CC]
- *Stephen Dixon* (1936-2019), prolific US author of absurdist and surreal humour that sometimes verged on sf/fantasy – as in *Letters to Kevin* (2016) – died on 6 November aged 83. [PDF]
 - *Jack Enyart*, US cartoon artist and writer who scripted various Bugs Bunny specials plus episodes of *Bionic Six* (1987), *Attack of the Killer Tomatoes* (1990) and others, died on 13 October aged 69. [PDF]
 - *Godfrey Gao* (1984-2019), Taiwan-born actor whose films include *The Mortal Instruments: City of Bones* (2013) and *Shanghai Fortress* (2019), died on 27 November aged 35. [MMW]
 - *Michael Hanson* (1940-2019), US radio broadcaster and jazz drummer whose *Mindwebs* radio series of sf/fantasy readings featured 188 stories in its main run from 1976 to the mid-1990s, died on 9 September aged 78. [F770]
 - *Diarmuid Lawrence* (1947-2019), UK tv director of *The Witches and the Grinnygog* (1983), episodes of *Dramarama* (1983-1985), and *Peter and Wendy* (2015), died on 20 September aged 71. [AIP]
 - *Virginia Leith* (1925-2019), US actress who starred as a disembodied head in *The Brain That Wouldn't Die* (1962), died on 4 November aged 94; other credits include *On the Threshold of Space* (1956). [LP]
 - *Lisa Lepovetsky* (1951-2019), US author who published over 100 genre stories and poems since 1985, died on 11 October aged 68. [BC]
 - *Tom Lyle* (1953-2019), US comics artist who worked on *Airboy* for Eclipse, *Starman* and *Robin* for DC, and *Spider-Man* for Marvel, died on 19 November aged 66. [PDF]
 - *Spike McPhee*, US fan, collector and dealer who ran the Science Fantasy bookshop in Harvard Square 1977-1989, died on 13 November. [F770]
 - *Taku Mayumura* (Takuji Murakami, 1934-2019), Seiun Award-winning Japanese author of many sf novels (both adult and YA), several adapted as anime productions, died on 3 November aged 85. [JonC] He translated Wells's *The Time Machine* and also enjoyed mainstream success.
 - *Jonathan Miller* (1934-2019), noted UK director, scriptwriter and actor who made his debut in *Beyond the Fringe* (1960) and whose genre credits include *Alice in Wonderland* (1966) and the M.R. James adaptation *Whistle and I'll Come to You* (1968), died on 27 November aged 85. [JM]
 - *Walter J. Minton* (1923-2019), US publisher who was president and later chairman of Putnam's from 1955 to 1978 – publishing *Lord of the Flies* and notable sf by Blish, Dick, Heinlein, Herbert, Knight (as editor of *Orbit*) and

others, died on 19 November aged 96. [AIP]

- *Jin Nakayama* (1942-2019), Chinese-born actor whose credits include *Ultraman 80* (1980-1981), *Space Travelers* (2000) and *Ghost Shout* (2004), died on 12 October aged 77. [BE]

- *Anne Page*, long-time UK fan, convention runner and costumer who was on the 1987 Brighton Worldcon steering committee and was a guest of honour at the 1990 Eastercon, died in November. [GC]

- *Lawrence G. Paull* (1938-2019), US production designer for *Blade Runner* (1982), *Back to the Future* (1985) and *Escape from L.A.* (1996), died on 10 November aged 81. [SF²C]

- *Maria Perego* (1923-2019), Italian animation artist who created the popular puppet character Topo Gigio ('Louie Mouse') – seen in 94 episodes of *The Ed Sullivan Show* and several films including *Topo Gigio and the Missile War* (1967) – died on 7 November aged 95. [MMW]

- *Michael J. Pollard* (1939-2019), US character actor in *Scrooged* (1988), *Dark Angel* (1990), *The Arrival* (1991) and others, died on 22 November aged 80.

- *Alison Prince* (1931-2019), UK author of children's fiction including many ghost/supernatural stories and the genre novels *The Others* (1986) and *Bird Boy* (2000), died on 12 October aged 88. [SH]

- *Tom Spurgeon* (1968-2019), Eisner Award-winning US comics writer, editor and historian who edited *The Comics Journal* 1994-1999, co-wrote *Stan Lee and the Rise and Fall of the American Comic Book* (2003) with Jordan Raphael and was an influential writer at his blog site *The Comics Reporter* (launched 2004), died on 13 November aged 50. [PDF]

- *Joan Staley* (1940-2019), US actress in *Valley of the Dragons* (1961) and genre tv series including *Batman* (1966), died on 24 September aged 79. [PDF]

- *Niall Tóibín* (1929-2019), Irish actor whose rare genre credits include *Rawhead Rex* (1986) and *Rat* (2000), died on 13 November aged 89. [JM]

- *Gahan Wilson* (1930-2019), much-loved US cartoonist with a special gift for macabre humour and grotesque figures, died on 21 November aged 89. [PW] His drawings appeared regularly in *Playboy*, *The New Yorker* and *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*, and are collected in many books from *Gahan Wilson's Graveside Manner* (1965) to *Gahan Wilson's Out There* (2016). He received World Fantasy Awards as best artist in 1996 and for lifetime achievement in 2004.

The Weakest Link. *Jeopardy* on ‘Authors’ Fictional Places’ ... *Answer:* ‘Loompaland.’ *Contestant:* ‘Who is Baum?’ (20 November) [AIP]

Publishers & Sinners. The horror-oriented Canadian small press ChiZine Publications, run by Sandra Kasturi and Brett Savory, has been in the news thanks to a growing storm of allegations about slow payment, non-payment and an often contemptuous or bullying attitude to authors and even ChiZine’s own staff. SK and BS announced on 11 November that they were stepping down in favour of ‘interim publisher’ Christie Harkin and hoped to ‘clear all outstanding arrears as soon as possible’. [F770] Many ChiZine authors have asked for reversion of rights and/or withdrawn stories from this publisher’s planned Christmas anthology. See multiple links at news.ansible.uk/misc/link19.html#chiz.

The Alternate 1930s. ‘Yahoo message boards and email lists were crucial to the early days of fandom.’ (*Daily Dot*, 17 October)

Her Dark Materials. Christine Feehan, fantasy/romance author, has applied for a US trademark on the word ‘Dark’ to describe her series with amazingly original titles like *Dark This* and *Dark That*. Whether the trademark will be granted remains to be seen. (*File 770*, 26 November)

BSFA Awards. Longlist nominations are open to members, closing on 31 December: tinyurl.com/BSFA2019suggestions. Shortlist voting then follows, closing on 31 January; voting on the resulting ballot will run from early February until noon on presentation day at Eastercon.

As Others See Us III. ‘Lest you think this concept is limited to snake-oil salesmen and science-fiction writers, the idea that aging is not inevitable is now in the mainstream of modern medical research at major institutions around the world.’ (Arthur C. Brooks, *Washington Post*, 16 November.) [MMW]

Random Fandom. *John Nielsen Hall* had his long-awaited kidney transplant on 19 November. [LRAK] Get well soon, boss, says *Ansible* imperiously.
• *Meredith MacArdle*’s Diana Wynne Jones fan website at leemac.freemove.co.uk vanished with the demise of Freemove and is being slowly recreated at the posher venue dianawynnejones.com.

The Dead Past. *80 Years Ago*, the secrets of pre-CGI special effects were revealed: ‘The bluebird used in the technicolor version of the Maeterlinck

fantasy *The Bluebird* was actually a yellow bird made up for the part, because it was impossible to obtain a bird sufficiently blue naturally to reproduce on the film.’ (*Fantasy News* 79, December 1939)

- *40 Years Ago*, the first shy hint of what was to become Thog’s Masterclass: ‘Great Moments of SF Prose: “Dimly they/it perceived the final annihilation of a minuscule agglutination of refined masses ...” (Alan Dean Foster, *The Black Hole*, 1979)’ ([Ansible 5](#), December 1979)

Fanfundery. *TAFF 2020* voting began on 4 November when the ballot form was released: see taff.org.uk for a printable PDF and the online voting form. Both candidates – Michael ‘Orange Mike’ Lowrey and Ann Totusek – are standing on a ‘Vote for Lowrey’ platform, which has confused some fans. Voting closes on 12 January 2020. TAFF is again active on Twitter as @taffnews, after a heroic struggle to transfer this account from Jim Mowatt to the current NA administrator Geri Sullivan.

- *DUFF 2020* nominations opened on 1 December and will close on 17 January 2020; voting runs to 27 March 2020. See tinyurl.com/vp5v8e4.

As Others Saw Us. ‘I sincerely hope that science and scientists differ from science fiction and its practitioners. Heaven help us if they don’t: We may be headed for a very boring world indeed.’ (*Star Wars* review in *New York*, 26 June 1977 – by John Simon [1925-2019], the acerbic US critic who died on 24 November aged 94.) [MMW]

Editorial. Ansible Editions continues remorselessly, with more than one project on the go. The latest ebook is *All Our Yesterdays: The Fanzine Columns* by Harry Warner Jr, now added to the free library at the TAFF site. Discerning readers will understand this isn’t his history of 1940s fandom – *All Our Yesterdays* (1969) – but a book of columns that appeared under the same overall title, published by Chuck Connor in 1991, released on disk in 1997 and added to Bill Burns’s eFanzines site in 2006. Now with many corrections, restorations of lost text, and even a previously uncollected column: taff.org.uk/ebooks.php?x=AOY.

Thog’s Masterclass. *Anatomy Dept.* ‘Picard felt his shoulder muscle contract with expectation.’ (Leslie Whitten, *Progeny of the Adder*, 1965) [LP]

- *Wobbly Bits.* ‘... breasts like poached eggs ...’ (Jilly Cooper, *Riders*, 1985)
- *Astrogation Dept.* ‘We’re moving away from the Milky Way, which means we must be travelling in the direction of our solar system.’ (Vargo Statten

[John Russell Fearn], *Laughter in Space*, 1952) [DR]

- *In Space No One Can...* ‘fear was a sibilant whispering in the ether’. (Lee Gregor [Milton A. Rothman], ‘Asteroid’, *Astonishing*, February 1940)
- *Dept of Bodily Enhancement*. ‘Her powerful, supple arms were corded with the smooth-flowing muscles of a boa constrictor.’ (Don A. Stuart [John W. Campbell], ‘Cloak of Aesir’, *Astounding*, March 1939) [BA]
- *As We See Us Dept*. ‘It’s axiomatic that a man with a rifle is the most efficient predator.’ (H. Beam Piper, *Fuzzies and Other People*, 1984)
- *Flowers of Rhetoric*. ‘She put her book in her lap and squinted at him as if he were a marmalade cat she happened upon in a cemetery on the moon.’ ‘... because he was nothing but a little impotent nothing – a Dutchman with his canals drained and sluices clogged.’ ‘... the coup de foudre, into his brain into his heart into his cock and balls, straight down to his big toe.’ ‘... forms suggestive of blurry sexual organs decomposing in space.’ (all Frederic Tuten, *Van Gogh’s Bad Café*, 1997) [PB]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 6 December 2019: Brum Group Christmas Social at the Selly Tavern (too late now to book). Normal meetings are 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre. £6 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future events/speakers: 10 January 2020, AGM and book auction, free; 7 February 2020, R.J. Barker; 13 March 2020, Ian Stewart; 3 April 2020, Danie Ware; 15 May 2020, Una McCormack.
- 14 December 2019: David Hardy space art presentation ‘To the Stars on a Paintbrush’. 6pm in the Conference Room, Bone Mill, New Street, Charfield, South Gloucestershire, GL12 8ES. No entry fee mentioned.
<https://i4is.org/public-presentation-to-the-stars-on-a-paintbrush/>
- December 2019: as usual there is no BSFA Open Meeting this month. The next should be on 22 January 2020 at the Central Station pub, 37 Wharfdale Road, King’s Cross, N1 9SD. 6pm for 7pm. Guest(s) TBA. Free. Date or venue changes may be announced after *Ansible* has gone to press: always check bsfa.co.uk for the latest information.

Typo Corner. ‘NOTE: This story has been updated. Alexander Vindman received a Purple Heart after being wounded by an IED, or improvised explosive device, not an IUD, or intrauterine device. We regret the error.’

(GQ magazine, November)

Court Circular. Progress report on the Bonzo Dog Band trademark case (see [A385](#)): ‘The next court date has been set for the last week of February 2020 and the band and their advisers remain confident that they will strike out what is left of the legal action that was initiated against them and their witnesses on the back of a bogus trademark, which has now been invalidated. / Unfortunately the whole sorry episode remains an insanely expensive process. Once Parliament returns the issue will be pursued further in Westminster with the assistance of some supportive MPs so that other bands do not have to suffer the same nightmare.’ (27 November). More at the link below:

<https://www.crowdjustice.com/case/the-bonzo-dog-banned-please-ma/>

Some Links from the *Ansible* home page.

- CoNZealand Hugo design competition (for New Zealanders only)
<https://conzealand.nz/blog/2019/11/27/conzealand-competition-to-design-2020-hugo-and-1945-retro-hugo-bases>
- ‘An inward looking outer space’: a brief history of Corridor [AIP]
<https://corridor8.co.uk/article/an-inward-looking-outer-space-a-brief-history-of-corridor/>

Thog’s Second Helping. *From the 2019 Bad Sex Awards Nominees.* ‘The earthy taste surprised her. When he was alive, when it swelled inside Miyuki’s mouth, Katsuro’s penis had tasted of raw fish, of warm young bamboo shoots, and of fresh almonds when she finally released its juices. Now it was insipid and muddy to her tongue, like the pools of the temples of Heian Kyō when the Office of Gardens and Ponds had them drained for cleaning.’ (Didier Decoin, *The Office of Gardens and Ponds*, 2019) [BA]

• ‘He clung to her, crying, and then made love to her and went far inside her and she begged him to go deeper and, no longer afraid of injuring her, he went deep in mind and body, among crowded organ cavities, past the contours of her lungs and liver, and, shimmying past her heart, he felt her perfection.’ (Mary Costello, *The River Capture*, 2019) [BA]

Ansible® 389 © David Langford, 2019. Thanks to Brian Ameringen, Paul Barnett, Graham Charnock, Bill Contento, Jonathan Clements, Cardinal Cox, Paul Di Filippo, Bob Eggleton, *File 770*, Steve Holland, Leroy Kettle, Joe McNally, Making Light, Lawrence Person, Andrew I. Porter, David Redd,

SF² Concatenation, Paul Winters, Martin Morse Wooster, and as always our Hero Distributors: Durdles Books (Birmingham SF Group), SCIS/Prophecy and Alan Stewart (Australia). Merry Christmas to all. 2 December 2019

2020

Ansible® 390, January 2020

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo:
Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Ulrika O'Brien**. Available for SAE or details of how
to live with the fluxus quo.

The Dark Is Rising

Brian Aldiss was headline news at the *Oxford Mail* for 24 December – as ‘Brain Aldiss’ until they fixed it – thanks to his daughter Wendy’s photo sequence ‘My Father’s Things’. Some of these, including a Hugo, various books and magazines, and Brian’s last Scrabble game, are linked from the *Mail* story at tinyurl.com/sc3mrk6. All will be on view 22-26 January at Photo50, part of the London Art Fair: see events below. [AW]

Mark Bould, looking back over his experiences in 2019, made special mention of ‘the not-so-rare distinction of being mocked in *Private Eye*’s Pseuds Corner’ for his International Conference for the Fantastic in the Arts GoH speech titled ‘Our Frightful Hobgoblin, or, Notes Towards Full-On Fully-Automated Luxury Green Interspecies Feminist Queer Space Communism of Colour’. (Markbould.com, 28 December)

Lois McMaster Bujold is the latest recipient of the SFWA Damon Knight Grand Master award for life achievement. (SFWA, 9 December)

Christine Feehan, following predictable outrage at her application for a US trademark on the word ‘Dark’ as a series title (see [A389](#)), has back-pedalled – after ‘a crash course in trademark law’ that might have been more useful at an earlier stage – and ‘asked my trademark lawyer to withdraw all of the current single word applications that have been filed and are causing so much distress.’ She added: ‘clearly I’m pretty clueless on these types of legal issues.’ (Twitter, 5 December) [F770]

Vonda N. McIntyre (1948-2019) left her literary copyrights and a cash bequest of \$387,129 to the Clarion West sf/fantasy writers’ workshop that

she founded in 1971. (*Locus*, 7 December) Clarion's 'Sentient Squid' scholarship programme – named for a McIntyre character – is to become the Vonda N. McIntyre Sentient Squid Scholarship. [F770]

Kim Newman captained the University of Sussex alumni team for Christmas University Challenge, defeating Royal Holloway but not with a high enough score to reach the semi-finals. (BBC2, 27 December) [DG]

Consuetude

22-26 Jan • **London Art Fair**, Business Design Centre, Islington. £18.75/day; concessions £14.75; see 10times.com/london-art-fair. (The official site www.londonartfair.co.uk has a dodgy security certificate.)

25-26 Jan • **Science of the Time Lords**, National Space Centre, Leicester. £15. See spacecentre.co.uk/event/science-of-the-timelords/.

7-9 Feb • **DemiSemiQuaver** (filk), Best Western Hotel, Marks Tey, Colchester. £42 reg; £32 unwaged; under-18s £1 per year of age at time of joining. See www.contabile.org.uk/demisemiquaver/.

7-9 Feb • **Sci-Fi Ball** (media), Grand Harbour Hotel, Southampton. Tickets £145, £35 child; day rate £15, children free; more expensive options ('mingle with our guests' etc.) at scifiball.com.

22 Feb • **Picocon 36**, Blackett Building, Imperial College, London. £12 reg; £10 concessions; £8 for ICSF members; past GoHs free. See www.union.ic.ac.uk/scc/icsf/picocon/.

25 Feb • **Women in SF and Fantasy** (Bristol Women's Literature Festival panel) with Emma Geen, Kate Macdonald (moderator), Cheryl Morgan, Emma Newman and Liz Williams. Foyles, Philadelphia St, Bristol, BS1 3BU. 7:30pm-9pm. £8; £6 concessions. Online booking at www.ideasfestival.co.uk/events/women-in-science-fiction-and-fantasy.

8 Mar • **Hitchhikers Guide** 42nd anniversary event, Knowledge Centre, British Library, London. Noon-8pm. Adults £30; for other rates see www.bl.uk/events/the-hitchhikers-guide-to-the-galaxy-at-42.

13-14 Mar • **Starburst Film Festival**, The Landing, Salford. 5pm-1am. Tickets £33.25. See starburstmagazine.com/filmfestival/.

20 Mar • **Futurefest** (futurology), Tobacco Dock, London. 10am-10pm. Tickets £80; students £35. More at www.futurefest.org.

23-26 Apr • **Dead by Dawn** (horror film festival), Filmhouse Cinema One, 88 Lothian Rd, Edinburgh, EH3 9BZ. Box office 0131 228 2688. Tickets available at £80 from www.deadbydawn.co.uk.

16-17 May • **HorrorCon UK**, Magna Science Adventure Centre, Sheffield Rd, Rotherham, S60 1DX. Tickets £45 for 11am entry, £55 for 10am; accompanied under-17s £20. Day rates etc at horrorconuk.com.

2-6 Jun • **Outlander Conference**, Glasgow University. Call for papers by 31 January. See www.outlanderconferenceglasgow.com.

26 Jul • **Forever Avon** (*Blake's 7*; formerly Maximum Power), Steventon Village Hall, Steventon, Oxfordshire. Eventbrite booking link awaited. See www.facebook.com/TeamBlakeForeverAvon.

7-10 Aug • **Continuum** (RPG), John Foster Hall, Manor Road, Leicester University, Oadby. £35 reg, *rising to £45 after 1 April*; day and room rates at continuumconvention.co.uk (see the 'Other Stuff' menu).

30-31 Aug • **Stars of Time** (media), Tropicana, Weston-super-Mare. 10am-5pm. £7.50; under-12s, OAP and disabled £4; under-4s free. Family of 2+2 kids £18; 2+3 kids £19. See www.starsoftime.co.uk.

25-27 Sep • **Fantasycon 2020**, Resource for London, 356 Holloway Road, London, N7 6PA. (Previously announced for Sheffield.) Guests TBA. £55 reg, rising to £75 after 100 ticket sales or in any case on 1 February. More information at www.fantasycon.org.

9-11 Oct • **Octocon**, Crowne Plaza Hotel, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15. €60 reg; concessions €40; under-18s €35; accompanied under-13s free. At-the-door rates will be higher. More at octocon.com.

5-6 Dec • **For the Love of Sci-Fi** (comics), BEC Arena, Stretford, Manchester. Tickets at various prices from fortheloveofsci-fi.com.

25-29 Aug 2021 • **DisCon III** (Worldcon), Washington DC, USA. \$155 reg; YA (under 26) \$80; accompanied under-13s \$65; accompanied under-7s free. *These rates are now valid to 31 May 2020 rather than 31 December 2019 as previously announced.* See discon3.org.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. ‘Lists of the worst films of all time always generally comprise plenty of space movies.’ (Geoffrey Macnab reviewing *Lucy in the Sky* in *The Independent*, 6 December)

Awards. *New Year Honours* list includes Felicity Bryan, literary agent for various genre authors, MBE for services to publishing; and Sam Mendes, director of *Skyfall* (2012) and *Spectre* (2015) and producer of *Penny Dreadful* (2014-2016), knighted for services to drama.

We Are Everywhere. The scientific paper ‘Preventing undesirable behavior of intelligent machines’ (*Science*, 22 November 2019) contains the interesting words ‘This expression has the following form, which we call a Seldonian optimization problem after a fiction character(13) ...’ where footnote 13 reads: ‘I. Asimov, *Foundation* (Gnome 1951).’ [MLO]

R.I.P. *Tom Adams* (1926-2019), American-born UK artist best known for his Agatha Christie paperback covers, who also produced cover art for several genre and near-genre books including *The Magus*, *The Alteration* and *Ghost Story*, died on 17 December aged 93. [PDF]

- *Javier Aguirre* (1935-2019), Spanish director of many films including *Count Dracula’s Great Love* (1974), died on 4 December aged 84.

- *Gerry Alanguilan* (1968-2019), Filipino comics creator who published the graphic novel *Elmer* (2009) and inked various comics for DC (*Superman: Birthright*) and Marvel (*Fantastic Four*, *Wolverine*, *X-Men*), died on 29 December aged 51.

- *Patricia Alice Albrecht*, US actress in *The Ghost Dance* (1982), *Jem and the Holograms* (1985-1988), *Snorks* (1987-1988) and others, died in late December. [LP]

- *René Auberjonois* (1940-2019), US actor whose genre credits include *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* (1993-1999), *Batman Forever* (1995), *Xyber 9: New Dawn* (1999-2007) and *Ben 10: Omniverse* (2012-2014), died on 8 December aged 79.

- *Claudine Auger* (1941-2019), French actress in *Thunderball* (1965, as Bond girl Domino), *The Devil in Love* (1966) and *The Bermuda Triangle* (1978), died on 18 December aged 78. [MMW]

- *John Briley* (1925-2019), US screenwriter whose credits include *Children of the Damned* (1963) and *The Medusa Touch* (1978), died on 14 December

aged 94.

- *Tony Britton* (1924-2019), UK actor whose rare genre credits include *The Risk* (1960) and *The People That Time Forgot* (1977), died on 22 December aged 95. [PDF]
- *Andrew Clements* (1949-2019), US author of many children's/YA books including an sf trilogy opening with *Things Not Seen* (2002), died on 28 November aged 70. [PDF]
- *Lester Cole*, long-time US fan who chaired the 1954 San Francisco Worldcon and – with his wife Esther – was inducted into the First Fandom Hall of Fame in 2017, died in September aged 93. [EC/RL]
- *Ian Covell* (1953-2019), long-time UK fan, critic and bibliographer whose books include *J.T. McIntosh, Memoir and Bibliography* (1987) and *An Index to DAW Books* (1989), and who provided the UK book listings for *Locus* 1994-2019, died on 11 December aged 66. [DP]
- *Howard Cruse* (1944-2019), US cartoonist best known for gay-themed work, who drew the surreal strip *Barefootz* and was art director of *Starlog* 1977-1978, died on 26 November aged 75. [PDF]
- *D.C. (Dorothy Catherine) Fontana* (1939-2019), US tv scriptwriter and story editor – notably for the original *Star Trek*, to whose long sequence of novel spin-offs she contributed *Vulcan's Glory* (1989) – died on 2 December aged 80. [LP] She worked on several further sf series including *ST:TNG* and *ST:DS9*.
- *David Foster* (1929-2019), US producer of *Caveman* (1981), *The Thing* (1982), *Short Circuit* (1986) plus sequel, *The Core* (2003) and others, died on 22 December aged 90.
- *Alasdair Gray* (1934-2019), distinguished Scots author and artist who famously designed and illustrated his own books – from the monumental *Lanark* (1981) onward – died on 29 December aged 85. Other works of genre relevance include *1982*, *Janine* (1984), *Poor Things* (1992, which won the Whitbread and Guardian awards), *A History Maker* (1994) and many fine short stories, his first major collection being *Unlikely Stories, Mostly* (1983). He had published two volumes of his new translation of Dante. Many UK fans fondly remember his appearance as guest of honour at Tynecon II: The Mexicon in 1984. [MKS]
- *Nicky Henson* (1945-2019), UK actor whose credits include *Old Dracula* (1974), *The Green Man* (1990) and *Narcopolis* (2015), died on 15 December aged 74.

- *Neil Innes* (1944-2019), UK musician – The Bonzo Dog Doo-Dah Band, The Rutles – and actor in *Monty Python’s Flying Circus* (1974), several Python-team films and *Puddle Lane* (1985-1988), died on 29 December aged 75.
- *Anna Karina* (1940-2019), Danish-born French ‘Nouvelle Vague’ actress whose films include *Scheherazade* (1963), *Alphaville* (1965), *The Magus* (1968) and *Morel’s Invention* (1974), died on 14 December aged 79. [AIP]
- *Johanna Lindsey* (1952-2019), best-selling US romance author whose novels (mainly historical) include the sf Ly-San-Ter trilogy (1990-2001) and the time-travel fantasy *Until Forever* (1995), died on 27 October aged 67. [TM/AIP]
- *Sue Lyon* (1946-2019), US actress best known for *Lolita* (1962) and also seen in *End of the World* (1977), *The Astral Factor* (1978) and *Alligator* (1980), died on 26 December aged 73. [MMW]
- *Syd Mead* (1933-2019), US ‘visual futurist’ whose influential designs featured in *Star Trek: The Motion Picture* (1979), *Blade Runner* (1982), *TRON* (1982), *2010* (1984), *Aliens* (1986) and many more to 2017, died on 30 December aged 86. [JB]
- *Sonny Mehta* (1942-2019), noted publisher – with Knopf since 1987 – whose 1972-1987 stint at Pan Books saw Douglas Adams’s debut and much upmarket fantasy (Borges, Angela Carter, Rushdie et al) in the revived Picador imprint, died on 30 December aged 77. [DP]
- *Lee Mendelson* (1933-2019), US tv producer/executive producer of a great many animated *Peanuts* films and shorts 1965-2006, died on 25 December aged 86. [MMW]
- *Shelley Morrison* (1936-2019), US character actress in *Castle of Evil* (1966), *The Flying Nun* (1967-1970), *The Night That Panicked America* (1975), *Shark Tale* (2004) and others, died on 1 December aged 83. [MMW]
- *Elizabeth Spencer* (1921-2019), noted US author who five times won the O. Henry award and whose considerable output includes a handful of genre stories listed at ISFDB, died on 23 December aged 98. [PDF]
- *Caroll Spinney* (1933-2019), US actor/puppeteer who played Big Bird and Oscar the Grouch in *Sesame Street* (1969-2018), with spinoff appearances including *The Muppet Movie* (1979) and *Night at the Museum: Battle of the Smithsonian* (2009), died on 8 December aged 85.
- *Brian Taves* (1959-2019), author, critic and film/Jules Verne scholar whose works include *The Jules Verne Encyclopedia* (1996) with Stephen Michaluk

Jr and *Hollywood Presents Jules Verne: The Father of Science Fiction on Screen* (2015), died in December aged 60. [JT]

- *Tatsuo Umemiya* (1938-2019), Chinese-born actor in many Japanese films including *Prince of Space* (1959) and *World War III Breaks Out* (1960), died on 12 December aged 81. [LP]
- *Robert Walker Jr.* (1940-2019), US actor whose credits include *Star Trek* (1966), *Beware! The Blob* (1972) and *Death in Space* (1974), died on 5 December aged 79. [F770]
- *Andrew Weiner* (1949-2019), UK-born Canadian author whose debut was in *Again, Dangerous Visions* (1972), followed by many stories and three novels beginning with *Station Gehenna* (1987), died on 3 December aged 70. [GVG]
- *Martin West* (1937-2019), US actor whose films include *Mac and Me* (1988), died on 31 December aged 82. [LP]
- *Wendy Williams* (1934-2019), UK actress in *Doctor Who: 'The Ark in Space'* (1975), died on 17 October aged 84. [SF²C]

We Are Everywhere II. Wakanda, the imaginary East African home of Marvel superhero Black Panther, interestingly appeared on a list of US free trade partners at the US Department of Agriculture website. It was used for systems testing, said a USDA spokesman, and should never have become visible. Now gone. ([Guardian](#), 18 December) [AS]

As Others See Us II. 'The novel is both comically amoral and insufferably pretentious. To be fair, these traits were common in 1970s sci-fi.' ([Vice.com](#) on Donald Barr's *Space Relations*, 16 August) [TM]

Prediction Corner. Paul Valéry foresees the Internet and, very nearly, the mouse-click: 'A work of art will cease to be anything more than a kind of source or point of origin whose benefit will be available and quite fully so, whenever we wish. Just as water, gas, and electricity are brought into our houses from far off to satisfy our needs in response to a minimal effort, so we shall be supplied with visual, or auditory, images, which will appear and disappear as a simple movement of the hand, hardly more than a sign.' (*The Conquest of Ubiquity*, 1928) [MMW]

Random Fandom. *Don Ashby*, long-time Australian fan, lost his home in the devastation of Mallacoota by east Victoria bush fires on 31 December. [MF]

- *Europa SF*, the sf news portal at [scifiportal.eu](#), was to cease on 20 December: 'hosting costs and portal's maintenance are the main reasons'

(Facebook, 10 December). Several fans volunteered to help keep the site going, and a January 2020 relaunch was announced on 18 December. See scifiportal.eu/we-need-your-help/.

- *Fancylopedia 3* moved to a new platform – Mediawiki rather than Wikidot – in mid-December, while keeping the traditional fancylopedia.org address. It looks much nicer now, though some links need to be fixed because linking is now case-sensitive (e.g. ‘Serious Scientific Talks’ no longer auto-links to the entry ‘Serious scientific talks’).
- *Fan Activity Achievement (FAAn) Awards for 2019*: the ballot is now available at corflu.org.

The Dead Past. *20 Years Ago*, the answer was for once not 42: ‘ITV teletext (5 Jan) announced the winners of their challenging *Watership Down* quiz, featuring tough questions like “Who wrote *Watership Down*?” Their answer: Douglas Adams.’ ... ‘Douglas Adams has withdrawn his claim of not writing sf (see *A144*). Over the radio on 2 January he admitted that he’d *tried* not to write sf, but those damned robots and spaceships still kept creeping in....’ (*Ansible* 150, January 2000)

- *70 Years Ago*, the future was big: ‘... Progressive Sequence Memory Recording Selective Electronic Calculator, that fabulous man-made mechanical brain of thousands upon thousands of moving parts and vacuum tubes, uncounted miles of wire, hundreds of fuses, valves, cables, leads and switches that had taken a year, and three quarters of a million dollars, to build ...’ (Paul Gallico, *The Terrible Answer*, 1950) [BA]

Fanfundery. *TAFF 2020* voting continues, closing on 12 January 2020: see taff.org.uk for a printable PDF ballot, the online voting form, and the TAFF administrators’ December newsletter *TAFFish* 1, with candidate interviews and a report on the fund’s current finances.

- *DUFF 2020* nominations are still open, closing on 17 January 2020; voting runs to 27 March 2020. See tinyurl.com/vp5v8e4.

Editorial. Further free ebooks at the TAFF site are the Walt Willis collection *The Willis Papers* (1961), covering the first 11 years of his fanwriting career – taff.org.uk/ebooks.php?x=WaWP – and his and James White’s sequel to *The Enchanted Duplicator* (1954), *Beyond the Enchanted Duplicator ... To the Enchanted Convention* (1991, illustrated by Stu Shiffman):

taff.org.uk/ebooks.php?x=BEDEC.

- During 2019 we added 20 ebooks to the site: there are now [51 titles](#).

Coming soon is *Homefront: Fandom in the UK 1939-1945* edited by Rob Hansen, a huge (158,000 words) collection of wartime fanwriting showing how fans kept in touch and even had fun despite call-up, the Blitz and all the rest.

Thog's Masterclass. *Unnatural Habitat Dept.* 'It was as beautiful as watching a jaguar run across the plains of Africa.' (Jamie Hyneman quoted in Keith and Kent Zimmerman's *Mythbusters*, 2005) [PL]

- *Audible Eyeballs.* 'Her eyes were deep, deep green, large and elfin. They laughed by themselves, and promised things without names.' (Norman Spinrad, 'A Child of Mind', *Amazing*, January 1965) [JB]

- *Arcane Physics Dept.* '[The lyre's] body was made of a metallic material that is closest to platinum, an element that has never been classified and cannot be considered an earthly element.' (Danielle Trussoni, *Angelology*, 2010) [PB]

- *Neat Tricks.* 'I felt the sharp decline in the floor as we walked and adjusted my weight to bolster myself.' (*Ibid*) [PB] 'I could feel him shaking his head on the other side of the phone.' (Kent Kiehl, *The Psychopath Whisperer*, 2014) [SS]

- *Fairly Safe Bet Dept.* 'The reader has probably never experienced the very grateful embrace and caress of a nearly naked primordial female ...' (John Bloodstone [J. Stuart Byrne], *Thundar, Man of Two Worlds*, 1971) [BA]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 10 January 2020: Brum Group AGM and book auction. 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre. Free; normally £6 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future events/speakers: 7 February 2020, R.J. Barker; 13 March 2020, Ian Stewart; 3 April 2020, Danie Ware; 15 May 2020, Una McCormack.

- 22 January 2020: BSFA Open Meeting at the Central Station pub, 37 Wharfdale Road, King's Cross, N1 9SD. 6pm for 7pm. Guest(s) TBA. Free. Date or venue changes may be announced after *Ansible* has gone to press: always check bsfa.co.uk for the latest information.

Outraged Letters. *Simon R. Green* has noticed the elephant in the pressroom: 'Thanks as always for the amazingly informative *Ansible*, or List

of Dead Names, as I'm starting to think of it.'

BSFA Awards. Shortlist voting opens 5 January, closing on the 31st; final ballot voting runs from early February until Easter weekend.

Some Links from the *Ansible* home page.

- Alasdair Gray obituaries

<https://canongate.co.uk/news/alsadair-gray-author-and-artist-has-died-aged-85/>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-glasgow-west-50938892>

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2019/dec/29/alsadair-gray-influenial-scottish-writer-and-artist-dies-aged-85>

- Christopher Priest: 'A Hundred Books'

<https://christopher-priest.co.uk/a-hundred-books>

- Romance Writers of America turmoil (via *File 770*)

<http://file770.com/courtney-milan-suspended-by-rwa-banned-from-leadership/>

<http://file770.com/courtney-milan-controversy-decimates-rwa-leadership/>

<http://file770.com/as-criticism-snowballs-rwa-keeps-trying-to-justify-treatment-of-courtney-milan/>

Thog's Golden Oldies from *Ansible* 150, January 2000:

- *Dept of Hello Sailor!* 'His hands began to probe [*the lady*] more fiercely. / No, not that way. She required the same delicate, experienced touch as the sails and the tiller of the *Pegeen*.' (Andrew M. Greeley, *Ascent Into Hell*, 1983) [PB]
- *Dept of Low-Slung Cheeks*. 'The tears burned his cheeks as they ran down under his shirt collar.' (James Patterson, *Cat & Mouse*, 1997) [PB]

Ansible® 390 © David Langford, 2020. Thanks to Brian Ameringen, Paul Barnett, John Boston, Jim Burns, Esther Cole, Moshe Feder, Paul Di Filippo, *File 770*, David Garnett, Martin Hoare (for Christmas memories), *Locus*, Pamela Love, Rich Lynch, Todd Mason, Mark L. Olson, Lawrence Person, Andrew I. Porter, Christopher Priest, David Pringle, Alison Scott, *SF² Concatenation*, Maureen Kincaid Speller, Stuart Stratu, John Teehan, Gordon Van Gelder, Andrew Wells, Martin Morse Wooster, and as always our Hero Distributors: Durdles Books (Birmingham SF Group), SCIS/Prophecy and Alan Stewart (Australia). Happy Newish Year! 2 January 2020

Ansible® 391, February 2020

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Atom**, from 1986. Available for SAE or a nice slice of Crustimoney Proseedcake.

The Meaning of Life

Isaac Asimov was the theme of the Inquisitor crossword ‘Lawgiver’ (*i*, 18 January) that teased solvers with Laws of Robotics but required them to know his First Law of Dietetics. (Fifteensquared.net, 28 January)

Keith Brooke reports another publishing secret: ‘So... Apple Books reject a book published there several years ago on the grounds that it uses the word “kindle” at one point, and they don’t allow “competitor reference”. That’s one smart algorithm at work.’ (Facebook, 20 January)

Jonathan Clements had a New Year gloat: ‘Kim Newman may have fallen at the first hurdle with Sussex (as reported in last month’s *Ansible*), but authors Jonathan Clements and Henry Gee were both on the victorious Leeds team, the first from a non-Oxbridge institution to ever win Christmas University Challenge, scoring 235 points against Wadham College, Oxford, in January 2020.’ (Email, 3 January)

Robert Downey, Jr., who plays Dr. Dolittle in the new film *Dolittle*, answered the key question ‘What animal would you talk to if you could?’ with: ‘Probably one of the ancient ones, like a Gila monster. I mean, seriously, what was it like? Did you see that asteroid hit the Yucatan?’ (Interview in *Parade* magazine, 5 January) [PL]

Harlan Ellison, it now emerges in contradiction of the story list at harlanellison.com, didn’t write ‘Biddy and the Silver Man’ (February 1957 *Fantastic*). Its byline E.K. Jarvis was a house name used by several others besides HE, and Harlan Ellison Books has denounced Armchair Fiction for marketing this as an Ellison story. (Email, 30 January) [AIP]

Constat

7-9 Feb • **DemiSemiQuaver** (filk), Best Western Hotel, Marks Tey, Colchester. £42 reg; £32 unwaged; under-18s £1 per year of age at time of joining. See www.contabile.org.uk/demisemiquaver/.

7-9 Feb • **Sci-Fi Ball** (media), Grand Harbour Hotel, Southampton. Weekend passes from £145, £35 child; day rate £15 (no access to evening events), children free; more expensive options at scifiball.com.

10 Feb • **Royal Society Lates: Science Fiction**, 6-9 Carlton House Tce, London, SW1Y 5AG. 6:30pm-10pm. Free; over-18s only. See royalsociety.org/science-events-and-lectures/2020/02/science-fiction.

22 Feb • **Picocon 36**, Blackett Building, Imperial College, London. £12 reg; £10 concessions; £8 for ICSF members; past GoHs free. See www.union.ic.ac.uk/scc/icsf/picocon/. Natasha Ngan has had to drop out as a guest of honour; Juliet Kemp has joined the guest list.

25 Feb • **Women in SF and Fantasy** (Bristol Women's Literature Festival panel) with Emma Geen, Kate Macdonald (moderator), Cheryl Morgan, Emma Newman and Liz Williams. Foyles, Philadelphia St, Bristol, BS1 3BU. 7:30pm-9pm. £8; £6 concessions. Online booking at www.ideasfestival.co.uk/events/women-in-science-fiction-and-fantasy.

Sold out 8 Mar • **Hitchhikers Guide** 42nd anniversary event, Knowledge Centre, British Library, London. Noon-8pm. Adults £30; for other rates see www.bl.uk/events/the-hitchhikers-guide-to-the-galaxy-at-42.

13-14 Mar • **Starburst Film Festival**, The Landing, Salford. 5pm-1am. Tickets £33.25. See starburstmagazine.com/filmfestival/.

20 Mar • **Futurefest** (futurolology), Tobacco Dock, London. 10am-10pm. Tickets £80; students £35. More at www.futurefest.org.

4-5 Apr • **Sci-Fi Scarborough** (multimedia), The Spa, Scarborough. Tickets (per day only) are available at scifiscarborough.co.uk.

10-13 Apr • **Concentric** (Eastercon), Hilton Metropole near Birmingham NEC. £80 reg; other rates at www.concentric2020.uk.

16-19 Apr • **StokerCon** (horror), Grand and Royal Hotels, Scarborough. £130 reg; HWA members £120. See stokercon-uk.com.

17-19 Apr • **Springmoot** (Tolkien Society), Mercure Exeter Rougemont Hotel. Includes AGM for members only. Booking details awaited at www.tolkienesociety.org/events/springmoot-and-agm-2020/

15-21 Jun • **Talos IV**: SF Theatre Festival of London, The Cockpit, London. Call for proposals at www.cyborphic.com/talos-2020.

29 Jul - 2 Aug • **CoNZealand** (Worldcon 78), Wellington, New Zealand. NZD \$425reg, *rising to \$450 on 15 February*; \$250 YA; \$225 unwaged; \$105 child (born 2005+), infants (born 2015 +) free, \$75 supp. *Hugo nominations are open, closing 13 March*. See conzealand.nz.

25-27 Sep • **Fantasycon 2020**, Resource for London, 356 Holloway Road, London, N7 6PA. (Previously announced for Sheffield.) Guests TBA. Now £75 reg (BFS members £65) at www.fantasycon.org.

7-11 Oct • **Grimmfest** (horror/cult films), Odeon Manchester Great Northern. £99 reg (£84.50 concessions) plus fees from grimmfest.com.

9-11 Oct • **Lakes International Comic Art Festival**, Kendal, Cumbria. Ticket sales awaited at www.comicartfestival.com.

22 Oct - 1 Nov • **Edinburgh Horror Festival**, The Banshee Labyrinth; Lauriston Castle; other city venues. See www.edhorrorfest.co.uk.

6-8 Nov • **Armadacon**, Future Inns, Plymouth. £35 reg; concessions £30; accompanied under-16s free. Guests TBA at www.armadacon.org.

14-15 Nov • **Comic Con**, Harrogate Convention Centre. Part of Thought Bubble, the Comic Art Festival, running 9-15 November. £28 weekend pass or £17/day. See thoughtbubblefestival.com.

Rumblings. *Worldcon 2022*: two bids were filed with CoNZealand by the 31 January deadline. Chicago (chicagoworldconbid.org) has been an established bid for years; Jeddah in Saudi Arabia (jeddicon.com) had no visible bidding presence until January 2020. The latter's dearth of convention-running experience is likely to deter site selection voters, even before considering Saudi Arabia's woeful human rights record.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. The poet Robert Hass came terrifyingly close to the brink

but was saved: ‘I tend to binge, so I have to try to avoid genre fiction [...] When I read Ursula Le Guin, who grew up in Berkeley, I thought that I had discovered that I loved science fiction, and read a lot of it and discovered that I just loved Ursula Le Guin, unless Calvino and Borges count as science fiction.’ (*NY Times* interview, 2 January) [JB]

Awards. *BAFTAs*: the film *Joker* won for best actor (Joaquin Phoenix), score and casting.

- *Philip K. Dick* shortlist: *The Outside* by Ada Hoffmann; *Velocity Weapon* by Megan E. O’Keefe; *All Worlds Are Real* by Susan Palwick; *Sooner Or Later Everything Falls Into the Sea* by Sarah Pinsker; *The Little Animals* by Sarah Tolmie; *The Rosewater Redemption* by Tade Thompson. [GVG]
- *Robert A. Heinlein Award*: Vernor Vinge.

Death Will Not Release You. Reviewing the Amy Binns biography of John Wyndham, Alvaro Zinos-Amaro quotes a mention by Peter Nicholls in the *SF Encyclopedia* that the still unpublished David Ketterer bio is awaited with impatience: ‘Nicholls’s wait is now over.’ Peter (1939-2018) was unavailable for comment. ([Locus](#), 20 January)

R.I.P. *Charles Alverson* (1935-2020), US novelist and screenwriter who co-scripted Terry Gilliam’s *Jabberwocky* (1977) and the first draft of *Brazil* (1985), died on 19 January.

- *Neda Arnerić* (1953-2020), Serbian actress in *Venom* (1971), died on 10 January aged 66.
- *Alex Brewis*, US talent agent who represented (among others) *Star Trek*’s D.C. Fontana and Leonard Nimoy, died on 26 December aged 92. [AIP]
- *David Brider* (1969-2020), UK fan – especially of *Doctor Who* – and convention-goer, died unexpectedly on 20 January aged 50. [PBr]
- *Jack Burns* (1933-2020), US actor, writer and producer whose credits include *Peter Pan* (1976), *The Muppet Show* (1978-1979), *The Muppet Movie* (1979) and *Animaniacs* (1993-1995), died on 27 January aged 86. [PDF]
- *Da Chen* (1962-2019), Chinese author living in the USA whose novels include the YA fantasy *Wandering Warrior* (2003), died on 17 December. [PDF]
- *Mary Higgins Clark* (1927-2020), bestselling US author of suspense novels, sometimes with fantasy themes as in *The Anastasia Syndrome* (1989), died on 31 January aged 92. [TM/LP]
- *Andrew Dunbar*, Northern Irish extra in *Game of Thrones* and many other

productions, died on 24 December; he was in his thirties. [AIP]

- *Marj Dusay* (1936-2020), US actress who stole Spock's brain in the original *Star Trek* and was also in *A Fire in the Sky* (1978), *Galactica 1980* (1980) and *Made in Heaven* (1987), died on 28 January aged 83. [PDF]

- *Derek Fowlds* (1937-2020), UK *Yes Minister* actor with genre credits in *Frankenstein Created Woman* (1967), *The Basil Brush Show* (1969-1973) and *Rules of Engagement* (1989), died on 17 January aged 82.

- *Wolfgang J. Fuchs* (1945-2020), German comics author, historian and translator whose *Comics: Anatomy of a Mass Medium* (1971; trans 1972) with Reinhold C. Reitberger was a pioneering work of German comics scholarship, died on 20 January aged 74. [PDF]

- *Tony Garnett* (1936-2020), UK producer of *Earth Girls Are Easy* (1988), died on 12 January aged 83.

- *Harry Hains* (1992-2020), US actor in various genre series and *A Haunting at Silver Falls: The Return* (2019), died on 7 January aged 27. [LP]

- *Buck Henry* (1930-2020), US actor, producer, director and screenwriter who co-created *Get Smart* (1965-1970) and created *Quark* (1977-1978), died on 8 January aged 89. Further credits include *Captain Nice* (1967), *The Day of the Dolphin* (1973), *The Man Who Fell to Earth* (1976), *Heaven Can Wait* (1978) and *Shakespeare's Plan 12 from Outer Space* (1991). [LP]

- *Terry Jones* (1942-2020), utterly famous UK comic writer, comic actor and serious historian best known for *Monty Python's Flying Circus* (1969-1974) and many later Python-team films and performances, died on 21 January aged 77. [JB] Further credits include *Labyrinth* (1986), *Erik the Viking* (1989) and *Mr Toad's Wild Ride* (1996).

- *John Karlen* (1933-2020), US actor in *Dark Shadows* (1967-1971), *Daughters of Darkness* (1971), *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1973) and others, died on 22 January aged 86. [PDF]

- *Stan Kirsch* (1968-2020), US actor in *Highlander* (1992-1998 tv), *The Sky's on Fire* (1999) and *Invincible* (voice, 2008), committed suicide on 11 January aged 51. [MMW]

- *Michelle Lapautre*, French literary agent whose Paris agency represented many English-language writers including Ray Bradbury, died on 3 January aged 88. [AIP]

- *Peter S. Larkin* (1926-2019), US stage/production designer whose credits include the Broadway musical *Peter Pan* (1954) and who co-created the 'Mothership' flying saucer used in Parliament-Funkadelic arena

- performances from 1977 onward, died on 16 December aged 93. [AIP]
- *Gerry Lewis* (1928-2020), UK marketing expert who was close to Steven Spielberg and organized publicity campaigns for many of his films from *Duel* (1971) to *Ready Player One* (2018), died on 5 January aged 91. [AIP]
 - *Jean Migrenne* (1938-2020), French poetry translator who translated parts of Samuel R. Delany's *Atlantis: Model 1924* (1995), has reportedly died. [SRD via GVG]
 - *Lan O'Kun* (1932-2020), US composer, writer and producer whose genre credits include *The Littlest Angel* (1969) and eight episodes of *Highway to Heaven* (1985-1989), died on 9 January aged 87. [PDF]
 - *Nicholas Parsons* (1923-2020), UK radio/tv personality whose immensely long career included genre credits for *Four Feather Falls* (1960), *The Ghost Goes Gear* (1966), *Doctor Who: The Curse of Fenric* (1989), *The Wotwots* (2010) and *Good Omens* (2019), died on 28 January aged 96. [SG]
 - *Alan Pattillo* (1929-2020), UK writer and director who worked on Gerry Anderson's *Supercar*, *Fireball XL5*, *Stingray* and *Thunderbirds*, died on 16 January aged 90.
 - *Gudrun Pausewang* (1928-2020), German YA author whose sf includes *The Last Children of Schewenborn* (1983) and *The Cloud* (1987), died on 24 January aged 91. [CB/F770]
 - *Neil Peart* (1952-2020), Canadian drummer with Rush and writer of *Clockwork Lives* (2015) and other genre stories in collaboration with Kevin J. Anderson, died on 7 January aged 67. [DKMK]
 - *Mike Resnick* (1942-2020), popular and prolific US sf author who began to publish genre fiction in 1965 and won five Hugos (the first for 'Kirinyaga' in 1988), a Nebula and a Locus Award for his short fiction, died on 9 January aged 77. He received the 1995 Skylark Award for career contributions to sf and was a guest of honour at the 2012 Chicago Worldcon. [LR]
 - *Carol Serling* (1929-2020), widow of Rod Serling (1924-1975) who launched *The Twilight Zone Magazine* in 1981, edited it until 1989, and also edited various related anthologies, died on 9 January aged 91. [PDF]
 - *Jo (Joe) Shishido* (1933-2020), Japanese action-film star whose genre credits include *Fugitive Alien* (1987, plus sequel), *8 Man* (1992) and *The Final Judgement* (2012), died on 21 January aged 85. [JAS]
 - *Earl Staggs*, US mystery author whose *Memory of a Murder* (2008) features psi powers, died on 3 January. [PDF]
 - *Steve Stiles* (1943-2020), much-loved cartoonist and illustrator for

underground comics, fanzines, newspapers and occasional book covers, winner of the 2016 fan artist Hugo, died on 11 January aged 76 – just three days after reporting bad news from his long-running cancer treatment: ‘So the word is: I’ve got a few months, more or less.’ [MD] Steve won TAFF in 1968, was unfailingly generous with unpaid artwork for fanzines (including *Ansible*), received many FAAn awards, and in 1998 became the first winner of the Rotsler Award for life achievement in fan art. He was a friend who is much missed.

- *Christopher Tolkien* (1924-2020), UK author, editor and academic, J.R.R. Tolkien’s third son and the last surviving member of the Inklings, died on 15 January aged 95. [AW] He drew the original *Lord of the Rings* maps and became best known for editing a vast amount of his father’s unpublished work for posthumous publication, beginning with – assisted by Guy Gavriel Kay – *The Silmarillion* (1977).

- *Shozo Uehara* (1937-2020), Japanese anime writer best remembered for *Return of Ultraman* (1971-1972), its successors, and the Japanese *Spider-Man* (1978), died on 2 January aged 82. [LP]

- *Monique van Vooren* (1927–2020), Belgian-born actress in *Tarzan and the She-Devil* (1953), *Fearless Frank* (1967), *Flesh for Frankenstein* (1973) and the Broadway musical fantasy *Man on the Moon* (1974), died on 28 January aged 92. [AIP]

As We Saw Us. ‘In *Star Trek*, the tribe includes a Martian ...’ (Madeleine L’Engle, *A Stone for a Pillow* [nonfiction], 1986) [PL]

Magazine Scene. *Compelling SF*, whose demise was announced by its editor Joe Stech last September, has been saved by a co-publishing deal with Nick Wells of Flame Tree and will appear quarterly. [F770]

As Others Saw Us. ‘There can’t be that many science fiction fans who are interested in how many electrical engineers can stand on the head of a cathode.’ (*Biography in Sound*, NBC radio, 1956) [MMW]

- ‘Audiences who came to *2001* expecting a sci-fi movie got, instead, an essay on time.’ (Dan Chiasson, *The New Yorker*, 23 April 2018) [MMW]

Random Fandom. *Fan Activity Achievement (FAAn) Awards.* Voting for 2019 work closes on 13 February; for the ballot form, see corflu.org.

The Dead Past. *25 Years Ago*, Harry Warner Jr. said of the Internet (in *The Reluctant Famulus* #37): ‘I hope it will all go away soon like CB radio did.’

([Ansible 91](#), February 1995)

- *50 Years Ago*, 'Isaac Asimov has donated his (recently removed) kidney stone to be auctioned off at the Boskone this March.' ([Winnie vol 4 #7](#), February 1970)
- *60 Years Ago*, Klaus Eylmann explained the mysteries of German fandom: 'There are 3 big SF Organisations. The SFCE with Fanclub SFCD e.V., the SFCD and the SSFI. It is a unique situation in fandom that two different fanclubs have the name SFCD, but no one will give it up, because the very first club which was founded by Walter Ernsting has been the SFCD. Now both clubs, which are calling themselves SFCD are not the original clubs, but both organisations are saying that they are the successors of the original SFCD. There is a terrific feud running [...] In a short time a law suit will be filled out in this matter.' ([Skyrack 14](#), 22 February 1960)

Awards II. Submissions are open for the third year of 'Brave New Words': www.starburstmagazine.com/bravenewwordsaward2020.

Editorial. As promised, the latest addition to the free ebook library at the TAFF site is *Homefront: Fandom in the UK 1939-1945* edited by Rob Hansen, a huge (161,500 words) collection of wartime fanwriting showing how British fans maintained their lines of communication and even had fun despite call-up, overseas postings, the Blitz and all the rest. See taff.org.uk/ebooks.php?x=HomeFront.

- The next Ansible Editions project follows on from our three-volume collection of Algis Budrys's *F&SF* reviews (see ae.ansible.uk/?a=budrys) and will, if the plans work out, be a fat book containing virtually all his major essays on the genre.

Fanfundery. *TAFF 2020*: Michael 'Orange Mike' Lowrey won this race with a simple majority (83 of 92 ballots expressing a preference) in the first round of voting and will attend the coming UK Eastercon. 103 ballots were cast, with 5 for Ann Totusek, 4 for Hold Over Funds, and 6 no preference. Further details at taff.org.uk.

- *DUFF 2020*: candidates for the southbound race to CoNZealand are Richard Auffrey, Shaun Duke, James Davis Nicoll, and Erin Underwood. For details and ballot form see

downunderfanfund.files.wordpress.com/2020/01/2020-duff-race-ballot.pdf.

The voting deadline is 27 March.

- *GUFF 2020*: candidates for the southbound race to CoNZealand are Cora

Buhlert, Hisham El-Far & Lee Fletcher (jointly), Hanna Hakkarainen, Elizabeth Jones & Claire Rousseau (jointly), Dave Lally, and Alison Scott. Voting deadline is 13 April. Ballot at ozfanfunds.com/?page_id=152.

- *European Fan Fund*: Marcin Klak reports progress on this planned Eurocon-bound fund at fandomrover.com/2020/01/27/european-fan-fund-update. (27 January) [F770] It may yet be possible to launch EFF with a first race to Eurocon 2020 (Rijeka, Croatia) or Eurocon 2021 (Fiuggi, Italy).

Thog's Masterclass. *Body Horror Dept.* 'You could push a human body to do some incredible things but it would always come back to bite you in the ass later.' (T.J. Berry, *Five Unicorn Flush*, 2019) [PM]

- *Dept of Blinding Insight.* 'Jack thought of the possibility of being murdered in some bizarre experiment here, and he didn't like the idea at all.' (Raymond Z. Gallun, 'Magician of Dream Valley', *Astounding*, October 1938) [BA]

- *Cosmology Dept.* 'And now the universe, from a physical standpoint, was approaching entropy, a state in which every atom in the universe – numbering one to the 420,000,000,000th – would be in a condition of stasis ...' (Silas Water [Noel Loomis], *The Man with Absolute Motion*, 1955)

- *Neat Tricks.* 'I hang on my own lips, all ears.' (Harry Mulisch, *The Procedure*, 1998; trans Paul Vincent 2001). [PB]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

- 7 February 2020: R.J. Barker talks to the Brum Group. 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham city centre. £6 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future events/speakers: 13 March 2020, Ian Stewart; 3 April 2020, Danie Ware; 15 May 2020, Una McCormack.

- 26 February 2020: BSFA Open Meeting at the Central Station pub, 37 Wharfdale Road, King's Cross, N1 9SD. 6pm for 7pm. Guest(s) TBA. Free. Date or venue changes may be announced after *Ansible* has gone to press: always check bsfa.co.uk for the latest information.

BSFA Awards. Final ballot voting runs from early February until the Easter weekend. See bsfa.co.uk/bsfa-awards/.

Some Links from the *Ansible* home page.

- Adapting H.G. Wells for TV

https://www.theregister.co.uk/2020/01/28/verity_stob_is_disgusted_of_hg_welsh/

- Asimov's Empire, Asimov's Wall

<https://www.publicbooks.org/asimovs-empire-asimovs-wall/>

- Locus Recommended Reading List

<https://locusmag.com/2020/02/2019-locus-recommended-reading-list/>

- Walt Willis and Nudge Theory

<https://robertday154.wordpress.com/2020/01/18/weirdos-and-misfits/>

Thog's Golden Oldies from *Ansible* 151, February 2000: *Dept of Paws for Thought.* 'Only Lily could tell there was more to it, because whatever was haunting the back of his eyes made a trail of uneasy paw prints up her own spine.' (Charles de Lint, *Someplace to be Flying*, 1998)

- *Dept of Non-Euclidean Geometry.* 'She wore a thin metal necklet of some sort, as well, and he scrutinised it with almost equal curiosity. It supported a plastic cube a half-inch square and a quarter-inch thick.' (David Weber, *The Apocalypse Troll*, 1998)

- 'Although the project would ultimately be aborted, this represented the moment that *Star Trek: Phase II* was born.' (Ed Gross, *SFX* #61, February 2000)

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From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo:
Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Ulrika O'Brien**. Available for SAE or schematics for
building a contradragon.

The Blue World

Dominic Cummings is profiled: ‘His voluminous writings suggest no cultivated interest in the study of art or music, nor, a few allusions to Dostoevsky and Tolstoy aside, in literature, or anyway not in literary criticism, though one wonders whether he might not have a taste for certain forms of science fiction.’ (*Guardian*, 6 February) [MMW]

Boris Johnson’s synopsis of his 2015 film script *Mission to Assyria* came to light in late 2019. This ‘glorious wish-fulfilment dream movie, a mixture of *Golan-Globus* and *Raiders of the Lost Ark*’, stars Marmaduke Montmorency Burton, an ‘old Clooney/Connery/Eastwood-type geezer in his fifties, and a ‘gorgeous but scholarly archaeologist’ (Angelina Jolie or Scarlett Johansson). The mission: to save an ancient Syrian city from ISIS bad guys led by ‘a horrible cologne-drenched jihadi with an air of mincing menace’. Helicopters go ‘Dugga dugga dugga thwok thwok thwok’, enemies are ‘spifflicated’ with a shovel, and Marmaduke finishes off that cologne-drenched mincing jihadi with the memorable words ‘Aargh. Splatteroo.’ The script itself is apparently lost, leaving *Plan 9 from Outer Space* safe on its pedestal of fame. (*The Author*, Winter 2019)

Stephen King announced (via Twitter) his departure from Facebook, saying he wasn’t comfortable with the ‘flood of false information allowed in its political advertising’. (*Guardian*, 3 February) [PB]

Dean Koontz’s use of ‘Wuhan-400’ for an engineered virus in *The Eyes of Darkness* has, er, gone viral – though that 1981 novel called it Gorki-400; it was changed in a 2008 reprint. (Snopes.com, 18 February)

George R.R. Martin is pleased that palaeontologists have named a ‘new’ genus of pterosaur for House Targaryen in *Game of Thrones*: *Targaryendraco wiedenrothi*. ([Guardian](#), 26 February) [EJ]

Conquistador

13-14 Mar • **Starburst Film Festival**, The Landing, Salford. 5pm-1am. Tickets £33.25. See starburstmagazine.com/filmfestival/.

20 Mar • **Futurefest** (futurolology), Tobacco Dock, London. 10am-10pm. Tickets £80; students £35. More at www.futurefest.org.

3 Apr • **H.G. Wells & the Spiders From Mars** (play-in-progress, ‘partly fully staged and partly a readthrough’), Cockpit Theatre, London: www.rawillumination.net/2020/02/hg-wells-spiders-from-mars.html.

4 Apr • **Bedford Who Charity Con** (*Doctor Who*), University Theatre, Bedford, MK41 9EA. 10am-5:30pm. £42.50 reg; under-19s/students £22.50; under-14s £15. More at bedfordwhocharitycon.co.uk.

4-5 Apr • **Sci-Fi Scarborough** (multimedia), The Spa, Scarborough. Tickets (per day only) are available at scifiscarborough.co.uk.

10-13 Apr • **Concentric** (Eastercon), Hilton Metropole near the Birmingham NEC. *Now £90 reg; concessions £60; under-18s £30*. Day rates £20 Fri or Mon, £40 Sat or Sun: more at www.concentric2020.uk.

16-19 Apr • **StokerCon** (horror), Grand and Royal Hotels, Scarborough. £130 reg; HWA members £120. See stokercon-uk.com.

17-19 Apr • **Springmoot** (Tolkien Society), Mercure Exeter Rougemont Hotel. Includes AGM for members only, and annual dinner. See www.tolkiensociety.org/events/springmoot-and-agm-2020/.

6 Jun • **Carlisle Comic Con**, Carlisle. 9:30am (£10) or 10:30am (£8) to 5pm. Other rates at www.wonkyrocketevents.co.uk/carlisle/.

1-2 Jul • **Science for Fiction**, Imperial College, London. Science presentations *for published authors only*: afternoon of 1st, all day 2nd. £30 including catering. Contact Dave Clements, [davecl at mac dot com](mailto:davecl@mac dot com).

26 Jul • **Forever Avon** (*Blake’s 7*; was *Maximum Power*), Steventon Village Hall, Steventon, Oxfordshire. 10am-4pm. Tickets £26.64 including fee.

Booking via www.facebook.com/TeamBlakeForeverAvon.

29 Jul - 2 Aug • **CoNZealand** (Worldcon 78), Wellington, New Zealand. *Now NZD \$450 reg; \$250 YA; \$225 unwaged; \$105 child (born 2005+), infants (born 2015 +) free, \$75 supp. Hugo nominations are still open, closing on 13 March.* See conzealand.nz.

9-11 Oct • **Lakes International Comic Art Festival**, Kendal, Cumbria. ‘Early bird’ weekend passes now on sale at £30; students and under-16s £20; *rates rise on 1 April.* See www.comicartfestival.com.

24 Oct • **Whooverville 12** (*Doctor Who*), QUAD Centre, Derby, DE1 3AS. Tickets £50; concessions £33; under-12s £10; bookings are open at www.derbyquad.co.uk, now linked from whooverville.org.

31 Oct • **BristolCon**, Hilton DoubleTree Hotel, Bristol. £25 reg; £15 concessions and under-18s (£30/£20 from June, £35/£25 at door); under-14s free. Online registration now open at www.bristolcon.org.

31 Oct - 1 Nov • **Festival of Fantastic Films**, Manchester. £90 reg, *rising to £99 on 1 April.* See fantastic-films.com/festival/.

13-15 Nov • **Novacon 50**, Mercure Nottingham Sherwood Hotel, Nottingham. £50 reg (*may rise at or after Easter*); under-17s £12; under-13s free. Registration is now open at novacon.org.uk.

5-7 Feb 2021 • **Long Play**, ‘33 (and ½)rd UK Filk Convention’, Union Hotel, Grantham. GoH Leslie Hudson (overseas), Chris O’Shea (UK). £40 reg; £30 concessions. See www.contabile.org.uk.

Rumblings. Worries about the COVID-19 coronavirus are bound to have an impact on large fan gatherings. Concentric is liaising with public health bodies and will discuss the situation with the hotel on 6 March.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. ‘According to the statistics on display in Helen Taylor’s lavishly publicised new study [*Why Women Read Fiction*], women bought 76 percent of the general fiction sold in the UK in 2017 and blokes a paltry 24 percent. Even when it came to the classics, women were still ahead (52 to 48) and it was only when you reached questionable sub-genres such as horror

(46/54) and sci-fi (25/75) that the guys really came into their own.’ (*Private Eye*, 7 February) [RF]

Awards. *Compton Crook* (first sf/f/h novel) shortlist: Mike Chen, *Here and Now and Then*; Alix Harrow, *The Ten Thousand Doors of January*; Ada Hoffman, *The Outside*; Arkady Martine, *A Memory Called Empire*; Sarah Pinsker, *A Song for a New Day*.

- *Crawford* (debut fantasy novel): Tamsyn Muir, *Gideon the Ninth*. [L]
- *Gaughan* (emerging artist): Iris Compier.
- *Horror Writers Association Life Achievement*: Owl Goingback, Thomas Ligotti. [F770]
- *Irish Comic News Hall of Fame*: Pádraig Ó Méalóid.
- *Nebula* novel shortlist: Charles E. Gannon, *Marque of Caine*; Alix E. Harrow, *The Ten Thousand Doors of January*; Arkady Martine, *A Memory Called Empire*; Silvia Moreno-Garcia, *Gods of Jade and Shadow*; Tamsyn Muir, *Gideon the Ninth*; Sarah Pinsker, *A Song for a New Day*.
- *Oscars*: two wins for *Joker*, Joaquin Phoenix for best actor and Hildur Guðnadóttir for best score. Best animation: *Toy Story 4*.
- *Society of Illustrators Hall of Fame*: Thomas Blackshear, Barbara Nessim, Drew Struzan; posthumously, Edmund Dulac, Jean Giraud (Mœbius), Jeffrey Catherine Jones. [AIP]
- *Skylark*: Betsy Wollheim.

Seven-Sided Dinosaurs. Three new UK 50p pieces, not for circulation but on sale at £10 per coin – coloured versions £20 – depict the Megalosaurus, Iguanodon and Hylaeosaurus. ([Natural History Museum](#))

R.I.P. *Paul Barnett* (1949-2020), Scots author and editor active since the 1970s, usually as ‘John Grant’ – the first book with this byline being the 1979 sf anthology *Aries 1* – died on 3 February aged 70. He wrote 12 ‘Lone Wolf’ novelizations based on Joe Dever’s gamebooks; several solo novels of which the cosmological fantasy *The World* (1992) was most critically acclaimed; and much nonfiction including *Encyclopedia of Walt Disney’s Animated Characters* (1987) and *A Comprehensive Encyclopedia of Film Noir* (2013). He was technical editor of the second edition of *The Encyclopedia of Science Fiction* (1993) and co-editor with John Clute of *The Encyclopedia of Fantasy* (1997). On a personal note, he commissioned my first solo book back in the 1970s, collaborated with me on various sf convention newsletters and the genre parodies *Earthdoom* (1987) and *Guts* (2001), created the character

Thog the Mighty who still presides over Thog's Masterclass, and was a close friend. His last email to me, shortly before his unexpected death, began: 'Many thanks for [Ansible 391]: lots of great reading, as always, and blessedly no nasty surprises among the obits.' (3 February)

- *Orson Bean* (1928-2020), US actor whose genre credits include *The Star Wagon* (1966), *The Hobbit* (voice, 1977), *The Return of the King* (voice, 1980) and *Being John Malkovich* (1999), died on 7 February aged 91. [PDF]
- *Zoe Caldwell* (1933-2020), Australian-born actress whose films include *The Purple Rose of Cairo* (1985) and *Lilo & Stitch* (2002), died on 16 February aged 86. [GC]
- *Bob Cobert* (1924-2020), US composer with several genre credits from *Dark Shadows* (1966-1971) to *X-Men: Apocalypse* (2016), died on 19 February aged 95. [LP]
- *Robert Cogger* (1964-2019), UK fan who was an early committee member of ZZ9 Plural Z Alpha and an organizer of the first Lazlar Lyricon in 1985, died on 29 December aged 55. [CB]
- *Raphaël Coleman* (1994-2020), UK actor in *Nanny McPhee* (2005), *The Fourth Kind* (2009) and *It's Alive* (2009), died on 6 February age 25. [PDF]
- *Robert Conrad* (1935-2020), US actor in *The Wild Wild West* (1965-1969 plus spinoff films), *The Fifth Missile* (1986) and *Jingle All the Way* (1996), died on 8 February aged 84. [MMW]
- *Kevin Conway* (1942-2020), US actor in *Slaughterhouse-Five* (1972), *The Lathe of Heaven* (1980), *Lawnmower Man 2: Beyond Cyberspace* (1996) and *Black Knight* (2001), died on 5 February aged 77. [PDF]
- *Clive Cussler* (1931-2020), US author of *Raise the Titanic!* (1980) and many more technothrillers often including sf elements, died on 24 February aged 88.
- *Nick (Nicola) Cuti* (1944-2020), US author, artist, screenwriter and animation designer (*101 Dalmatians: The Series* and others), whose Moonchild/Moonie character featured in both comics and novels, died on 21 February aged 75. [SG]
- *Ellie de Ville*, long-time letterer for *2000AD* – working on *Slaine*, *Strontium Dog*, *Defoe*, *Lawless* and many others – died on 24 December aged 72. [SF²C]
- *Kirk Douglas* (1916-2020), famed veteran US actor whose genre credits include *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* (1954), *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1973), *Saturn 3* (1980) and *The Final Countdown* (1980), died on 5

February aged 103. [LP]

- *George Dugdale*, horror director and screenwriter whose films were *Slaughter High* (1986) and *Living Doll* (1990), died on 14 January. [SG]
- *Freeman Dyson* (1923-2020), UK-born physicist who inspired many sf authors with his far-out speculations – most famously the ‘Dyson sphere’ (which he credited to Olaf Stapledon) – died on 28 February aged 96.
- *Victor Gorelick* (1941-2020), US comics editor who worked for over 60 years at Archie Comics and was editor-in-chief there from 2007, died on 7 February aged 78. [PDF]
- *Ron Haddrick* (1929-2020), Australian actor in *The Stranger* (1964-1965), *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur’s Court* (1970), *Shirley Thompson versus the Aliens* (1972), *The Haunting of Hewie Decker* (1976), *A Journey to the Center of the Earth* (1977) and others, died on 11 February aged 90. [GC]
- *Terry Hands* (1941-2020), noted UK theatre director with the Royal Shakespeare Company whose Broadway productions included the unsuccessful 1988 musical of Stephen King’s *Carrie*, died on 4 February aged 79. [AIP]
- *Alan Harris* (1938-2020), UK stand-in and character actor in *Space: 1999* (1975-1977), several *Star Wars* films, two *Doctor Who* storylines (1977, 1986) and *Hellraiser* (1987), died on 25 January aged 81. [PDF]
- *Nancy Jean Holland*, US academic who wrote the nonfiction *Ontological Humility: Lord Voldemort and the Philosophers* (2013) and the Witch King fantasy trilogy (2018-2019), died on 25 January aged 72. [DL]
- *Patrick Jordan* (1923-2020), UK actor in *The Pink Panther Strikes Again* (1976), *Star Wars* (1977) and *Lifeforce* (1985), died on 10 February aged 96. [PDF]
- *Hisashi Katsuta* (1927-2020), Japanese voice actor best known as Professor Ochanomizu in *Astro Boy*, died on 21 February aged 92. [JC]
- *Paula Kelly* (1943-2020), US actress in *The Andromeda Strain* (1971), *The Spook Who Sat by the Door* (1973) and *Soylent Green* (1973), died on 9 February aged 76. [GD]
- *Douglas Knapp* (1949-2020), US cinematographer with credits for *Escape from New York* (1981), *Beetlejuice* (1988), *Star Trek: Voyager* (1995-2001) and *Star Trek: Enterprise* (2001-2005), died on 3 February aged 70. [AIP]
- *Myron Levoy* (1930-2019), US children’s author whose *The Magic Hat of Mortimer Wintergreen* is fantasy, died on 30 December aged 89. [PDF]

- *Ron McLarty* (1947-2020), US actor in *The Postman* (1997), died on 8 February aged 72. [PDF]
- *Michael Medwin* (1923-2020), UK actor in *Scrooge* (1970), *Never Say Never Again* (1983) and others, died on 26 February aged 96. [PDF]
- *Kellye Nakahara* (1950-2020), US M*A*S*H actress who was in *Doctor Dolittle* (1998), died on 16 February aged 70. [PDF]
- *Barbara Remington* (1929-2020), US illustrator who created the cover art for the first Ballantine paperbacks of J.R.R. Tolkien and E.R. Eddison, died on 23 January aged 90. [SE]
- *Gene Reynolds* (1923-2020), US M*A*S*H producer who directed episodes of *The Munsters* (1966), *The Ghost & Mrs. Muir* (1968), *Lois & Clark* (1993) and *Touched by an Angel* (1995-1998), died on 3 February aged 96.
- *Elyse Rosenstein*, US fan who proposed and co-organized the first *Star Trek* convention (New York, January 1972), died on 20 February aged 69. [AIP]
- *John Shrapnel* (1942-2020), UK actor in *Fatherland* (1994), *101 Dalmatians* (1996), *Invasion: Earth* (1998), *Apparitions* (2008) and *Mirrors* (2008), died on 14 February aged 77. [SG]
- *George Steiner* (1929-2020), French-born author and literary critic in whose controversial novella *The Portage to San Cristobal of A.H.* (1981) Hitler is found alive and self-justifying thirty years after World War II ended, died on 3 February aged 90.
- *Dyanne Thorne* (1936-2020), US actress in *Pinocchio* (1971), *Blood Sabbath* (1972), *Wham Bam Thank You Spaceman* (1975) and *House of Forbidden Secrets* (2013), died on 28 January aged 83. [PDF]
- *Eugen V. Witkowsky* (1950-2020), Russian author and translator whose works include the historical fantasy *Paul II* (2000) and two Strugatsky Prize-winning sequels, died on 3 February aged 69. [PDF]

As Others See Us II. Anne Fadiman on Clifton Fadiman: ‘Our father’s library spanned the globe and three millennia, although it was particularly strong in English poetry and fiction of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The only junk, relatively speaking, was science fiction ...’ (*Ex Libris: Confessions of a Common Reader*, 1998)

Publishers & Sinners. Marcus Gipps, editorial director of Gollancz and its SF Gateway ebook operation, was upgraded to publishing director in mid-February. (*The Bookseller*, 13 February). [CP] In other news, there have been hints that future funding of the online *SF Encyclopedia* – linked with and

feeding referrals to SF Gateway – may not be assured.

Random Fandom. *John D. Berry* reports that Fort George Brewery won an Oregon Beer Award Gold Medal for its Fanzine IPA. ([20 February](#))

Words, Words, Words. A 2020 discovery: all the dictionaries seem to have missed Alfred Bester's coinage in *The Demolished Man* (serialized 1952 in *Galaxy*) of the then futuristic word 'audiobook'. [DS]

BSFA Awards Shortlist. NOVEL Juliet E. McKenna, *The Green Man's Foe*; Emma Newman, *Atlas Alone*; Gareth L. Powell, *Fleet of Knives*; Adrian Tchaikovsky, *Children of Ruin*; Tade Thompson, *The Rosewater Insurrection*.

- SHORTER Becky Chambers, *To Be Taught, If Fortunate*; Amal El-Mohtar & Max Gladstone, *This is How You Lose the Time War*; Fiona Moore, 'Jolene' (*Interzone* 283); Gareth L. Powell, *Ragged Alice*; Tade Thompson, *The Survival of Molly Southbourne*; Ian Whates, 'For Your Own Good' (*Wourism*).

- NON-FICTION Farah Mendlesohn, *The Pleasant Profession of Robert A. Heinlein*; Glyn Morgan & C Palmer-Patel, eds., *Sideways in Time: Critical Essays on Alternate History Fiction*; Gareth L. Powell, *About Writing*; Adam Roberts, *H.G. Wells: A Literary Life*; Jo Lindsay Walton, *Away Day: Star Trek and the Utopia of Merit*.

- ARTWORK (all covers): Aitch & Rachel Vale, *Deeplight* by Frances Hardinge (UK); Chris Baker (Fangorn), *Wourism* by Ian Whates; Julia Lloyd, *Fleet of Knives* by Gareth L. Powell; Charlotte Stroomer, *The Rosewater Redemption* by Tade Thompson; Richard Wagner, *Interzone* 284.

The Dead Past. *25 Years Ago*, 'The U of Liverpool's student newspaper covered the Arthur C. Clarke degree conferment [...]: the book of which ACC said "no other ... had a greater influence on my life" is cited as *Last and First Nun*. I look forward to appropriate plot summaries.' (Andy Sawyer, [Ansible 92](#), March 1995)

- *80 Years Ago*, a warning came from the office of *Astounding SF*: 'One Benedict Frank Unsel has been causing a bit of trouble recently by alleging to various publishers that L. Ron Hubbard is his pseudonym. Unsel is of medium height, medium build, and has short, sandy-brown hair. [...] Mr L Ron Hubbard is naturally on the lookout for this imposter. / Anyone who had met Mr Hubbard would describe him as tall, gaunt and rugged in appearance;

his hair is flaming red.’ ([Science Fiction Weekly 4](#), March 1940)

Editorial. *Beyond the Outposts*, that fat Ansible Editions collection of Algis Budrys essays, is nearing publication with a first proof copy now awaited: 366 pages, 203,600 words, and 97 footnotes. Stay tuned....

Fanfundery. *GUFF 2020* reminder: the voting deadline is 13 April.

Candidates and ballot at ozfanfunds.com/?page_id=152.

• *DUFF 2020* reminder: the voting deadline is 27 March. See downunderfanfund.files.wordpress.com/2020/01/2020-duff-race-ballot.pdf.

Thog’s Masterclass. *Eyes Wide Shut*. Introducing a character: ‘She was a honey blonde, deeply tanned, with light-brown eyes, full pale lips, and a sleek, elegant body. [...] She wore nothing, and she was in a deep sleep ...’ (Robert Silverberg, ‘How It Was When the Past Went Away’, 1970) [AB]

• *Engineering Dept.* ‘Alarm calls went out to guard the world destroying super-hydrogen plant, where chemicals had been manufactured for the purpose of disintegrating certain of the furthest planets so that the entire solar system could be reshuffled to give earth more light and warmth, and to make light and heat controllable.’ (Ralph L. Finn, *Freaks Against Supermen*, 1950) [BA]

• *Obstacle Course of True Love*. ‘I was still unable to come close to her, feeling her full heavy bosom pressed against my chest ...’ (*Ibid*) [BA]

• *Neat Tricks*. ‘Despite the cold lava dust both his hands were eating into his brain.’ (Roy Sheldon [H.J. Campbell], *Gold Men of Aureus*, 1951) [BA]

Endnotes

Apparitions.

• 12 March 2020: Shoreline of Infinity, Pleasance Cabaret Bar, Edinburgh. 7:30pm. £5; low earners free.

<https://www.shorelineofinfinity.com/event-horizon-12th-march-2020-international-womens-day-celebration/>

• [CANCELLED owing to ‘circumstances’; April meeting will take place as below] ~~13 March 2020: Ian Stewart talks to the Brum Group.~~ 7:30pm for 8pm at the Briar Rose Hotel, Bennett’s Hill, Birmingham city centre. £6 or £3 for members. Contact bhamsfgroup at yahoo co uk. Future events/speakers: 3 April 2020, Danie Ware; 15 May 2020, Una McCormack.

• 25 March 2020: BSFA Open Meeting at the Central Station pub, 37

Wharfedale Road, King's Cross, N1 9SD. 6pm for 7pm. Guest(s) TBA. Free. Date or venue changes may be announced after *Ansible* has gone to press: always check bsfa.co.uk for the latest information.

Some Links from the *Ansible* home page.

- Nebula finalists in full

<https://nebulas.sfgwa.org/2019-nebula-award-finalists-announced/>

- Retro Hugo fanzines online

http://www.fanac.org/fanzines/Retro_Hugos1944.html

Thog's Golden Oldies from *Ansible* 152, March 2000. *Dept of Arcane Cartography*: '... Dan stretched his hand toward Kim and began murmuring sharp, crystalline words. They hung in the air, twisting over and under and around each other like the streets of London ...' (Patricia C. Wrede, *Mairelon the Magician*, 1991) [PB] • *Dept of Beetling Brows*: '... small eyes that never seemed still. They darted up and down her own figure now, Hester thought, like a pair of those black beetles that ran from the light at night if one had reason to go into the nether regions of a house.' (Robert Bloch & Andre Norton, *The Jekyll Legacy*, 1990) [BA] • *Eyeballs in the Sky*: 'They all felt Michael's adrenaline kick in and watched his eyes bounce off his legal pad ...' (Rock Brynner, *The Doomsday Report*, 1998)

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March 2020

Ansible® 393, April 2020

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.

Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Sue Mason**. Available for SAE or the strangling fruit from the hand of the sinner.

HARD TIMES. The London Book Fair (10-12 March) was cancelled at six days' notice after major publishers pulled out for fear of coronavirus. Also cancelled/postponed were Futurefest (London, 20 March), Leicester Horror (28 March) and many coming events below; see news.ansible.uk for some overseas cancellations. Owing to New Zealand's closed borders and ban on indoor events with more than 100 people, the NZ Worldcon is to be online only; likewise the Nebulas. Keep watching the websites.

The UK government clampdown on pub gatherings (from 21 March) affects many regular fan events including London First Thursdays. The Birmingham SF Group had already cancelled all meetings *sine die*, and the BSFA was about to discontinue its London open meetings. The ban extends to hotel restaurants and bars, forcing the cancellation of the Eastercon – whose hotel had felt obliged to stick to its contract until the last – the postponement of StokerCon, and so on as below.

The Satan Bug

Iain M. Banks inspired the undersea record-setter Victor Vescovo, who visited the deepest points of every ocean in the sub *Limiting Factor* and other vessels named for Banks spaceships or drones. (BBC, 10 February)

William Gibson is disappointed: 'He thought the Internet would be a mysterious and sexy place. "Cyberspace, as described in *Neuromancer*, is nothing at all like the Internet that we live with, which consists mostly of utterly banal and silly stuff.'" (www.npr.org, 19 March) [PDF]

John Jakes's and Barrington J. Bayley's 1970 Ace Double paperback *Mask of Chaos/The Star Virus* was frowned on by Amazon: 'Banned as being a

medical device.’ (AbeBooks forum, 27 March) [BA]

Stephen King told the panic-stricken world: ‘No, coronavirus is NOT like *The Stand*. It’s not anywhere near as serious. It’s eminently survivable. Keep calm and take all reasonable precautions.’ This being a social media post, the rapid reply was of course: ‘And how the hell would you know?! Did you even read that book?’ (Twitter, 8 March)

Confection

ONLINE. 2 Apr • **Virtual First Thursday**, 6-10pm, replacing the London pub meeting at the Bishop’s Finger. See tinyurl.com/uow6hqn.

POSTPONED. 3 Apr • **H.G. Wells & the Spiders From Mars** (play-in-progress; part staged, part readthrough), Cockpit Theatre, London. £5. See www.thecockpit.org.uk/show/hg_wells_the_spiders_from_mars.

POSTPONED TO AUTUMN. 4 Apr • **Bedford Who Charity Con** (*Doctor Who*), Bedford. See bedfordwhocharitycon.co.uk.

CANCELLED. 4-5 Apr • **Sci-Fi Scarborough** (multimedia), The Spa, Scarborough. Tickets valid for 2021. See scifiscarborough.co.uk.

CANCELLED. 10-13 Apr • **Concentric** (Eastercon), Birmingham NEC. See www.concentric2020.uk. *The BSFA Awards will be announced online.*

POSTPONED TO AUGUST. 16-19 Apr • **StokerCon**, Scarborough.

POSTPONED TO 2021. 17-19 Apr • **Springmoot** (Tolkien Soc). For online AGM see tolkiensociety.org/events/springmoot-and-agm-2020/.

POSTPONED. 23-26 Apr • **Dead by Dawn** (horror film festival), Edinburgh. See www.deadbydawn.co.uk.

POSTPONED. 23-26 Apr • **Sci-Fi Weekender**, Vauxhall Holiday Park, Great Yarmouth. See www.scifiweekender.com.

POSTPONED. 26 Apr • London Vintage Paperback & Pulp Fair, Royal National Hotel – this event is now also looking for a new venue.

POSTPONED TO JULY. 2-3 May • **EM-Con** (media), Nottingham.

POSTPONED. 12-20 May • **Sci-Fi London** (film festival), Prince Charles Cinema and Stratford Picturehouse. See sci-fi-london.com.

CANCELLED. 16 May • **Lawless** (UK comics), Hilton Doubletree, Bristol. More at www.facebook.com/groups/1417073338554565/.

21 May • **Ballard's Londons** (talk), Goldfinger's, 2 Willow Rd, Hampstead, London, NW3. 7pm. With Roger Luckhurst. £15 (including a glass of prosecco) from acuriousinvitation.com/jgballard.html.

22 May - 3 Jan • **Fantastic Beasts: The Wonder of Nature** (exhibition), Natural History Museum, London. £18. See www.nhm.ac.uk/visit/exhibitions/fantastic-beasts-the-wonder-of-nature.html. *Note that the museum is now closed, with hopes of reopening in 'early summer'.*

POSTPONED TO 2021. 22-24 May • **Satellite 7**, Glasgow.

POSTPONED. 30 May • **Orwell Day** (talks), 17 High St, Rothesay, Isle of Bute. With Anne Charnock, Ken MacLeod, Chris Priest and others. 11am-5pm. See www.facebook.com/events/230880794748821.

CANCELLED. 2-6 Jun • **Outlander Conference**, Glasgow University. See www.outlanderconferenceglasgow.com.

CANCELLED. 5-7 Jun • **Cymera**: Scotland's Festival of SF, Fantasy & Horror Writing, Edinburgh. See www.cymerafestival.co.uk.

CANCELLED 1-2 Jul • **Science for Fiction**, Imperial College, London.

ONLINE ONLY. 4 Jul • **Tolkien Society Seminar**, *now to be held online*. See www.tolkiensociety.org/events/seminar-2020/.

18-19 Jul • **EM-Con** (media), Motorpoint Arena, Nottingham. *New date*. Weekend tickets £30, or £40 early entry; see www.em-con.co.uk.

ONLINE ONLY. 29 Jul - 2 Aug • **CoNZealand** (Worldcon 78), New Zealand. New sign-up rates expected by 15 April. See conzealand.nz and conzealand.nz/blog/2020/03/25/conzealand-special-announcement.

6-9 Aug • **StokerCon** (horror), Grand and Royal Hotels, Scarborough. See stokercon-uk.com. *These new dates remain tentative.*

21-23 Aug • **Reunicon 2020** (celebrating ConFiction 1990), The Hague. With Joe Haldeman. €50 reg, €25 supp. See confiction1990.com.

28-31 Aug • **The Asylum** (steampunk), Lincoln. Admission wristbands on

sale at various prices from www.asylumsteampunk.co.uk.

POSTPONED TO 2021. 28-31 Aug • **Redemption** (multimedia), Royal Victoria Hotel, Sheffield. See redemptioncon.org.uk.

REGISTRATION SUSPENDED. 25-27 Sep • **Fantasycon 2020**, Resource for London, 356 Holloway Road, London, N7 6PA. GoH Liz Williams; others TBA. £75 reg (BFS members £65) at www.fantasycon.org.

9-11 Oct • **Lakes International Comic Art Festival**, Kendal, Cumbria. *Rates were to rise on 1 April* but ‘early bird’ weekend passes are still £30; students/under-16s £20. See www.comicartfestival.com.

31 Oct - 1 Nov • **Festival of Fantastic Films**, Pendulum Hotel, Manchester. *Now £99 reg*. More at fantastic-films.com/festival/.

5-7 Feb 2021 • **Long Play**, ‘33 (and 1/3)rd UK Filk Convention’, Union Hotel, Grantham. GoH Leslie Hudson (overseas), Chris O’Shea (UK). £40 reg; £30 concessions; under-18s £1 per year of age; under-5s free. Further information at www.contabile.org.uk.

19-21 February 2021 • **Satellite 7**, Glasgow. *New date*. £70 reg (£80 at the door); under-25s £60; under-18s £20; under-12s £5; under-5s £2. Day: £20 Fri, £35 Sat or Sun. See seven.satellitex.org.uk.

18-21 Mar 2021 • **Sci-Fi Weekender**, Vauxhall Holiday Park, Great Yarmouth. Basic weekend pass £99; for camping and accommodation packages see www.scifiweekender.com.

26-28 Mar 2021 • **Corflu 38**, Mercure Holland Hotel, Bristol. £50/\$60 reg (£40/\$50 to 31 May for Corflu 37 members). See corflu.org.

9-11 Apr 2021 • **Springmoot/AGM** (Tolkien Society), Exeter. See www.tolkiensociety.org/events/springmoot-and-agm-2021/

Infinitely Improbable

As We See Us. ‘I never really cared for science fiction. I guess I just didn’t get it.’ (Admiral Jean-Luc Picard in *Picard*, episode 2) [JM]

Awards. *Astrid Lindgren Memorial*: artist Baek Heena. [F770]

• *British Book Awards* fiction shortlist includes *The Testaments* by Margaret Atwood; *The Book of Dust: The Secret Commonwealth* by Philip Pullman.

[L]

- *Fanzine Activity Achievement (FAAn)*: OVERALL *Banana Wings*. GENZINE (tie) *Banana Wings*, *Chunga*. PERSONAL ZINE *This Here*. WHATCHAMACALLIT ZINE (tie) *Ansible* (thanks, everyone!), *Lofgeornost*. SPECIAL PUBLICATION *Thy Life's a Miracle*. FAN WRITER Mark Plummer. LETTERHACK Stephen Jeffery. ONLINE ACHIEVEMENT Fanac.org. FAN ARTIST Ulrika O'Brien. COVER ART Ulrika O'Brien for *Thy Life's A Miracle*. fwa LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT Robert Lichtman. fwa PAST PRESIDENT, 2019: Rob Jackson.
- *Kitschies* novel shortlists: *Always North* by Vicki Jarrett; *From the Wreck* by Jane Rawson; *The Fire Starters* by Jan Carson; *The Memory Police* by Yoko Ogawa; *This Is How You Lose the Time War* by Amal El Mohtar & Max Gladstone. DEBUT *Jelly* by Clare Rees; *My Name Is Monster* by Katie Hale; *She Would Be King* by Wayétu Moore; *The Ten Thousand Doors of January* by Alix E. Harrow; *Wilder Girls* by Rory Power.
- *SFWA Kate Wilhelm Solstice Award*: John Picacio, David Gaughran.

R.I.P. *Ulrich Bettermann*, German fan and convention organizer, died on 11 February. [KvT]

- *Rolf Bingenheimer* (1946-2020), German fan who owned the bookshop Transgalaxis, died on 26 February aged 73. [KvT]
- *Brian Blume* (1950-2020), US game designer who was once a business partner of Gary Gygax in the *Dungeons & Dragons* publisher TSR (and co-wrote the 1976 game supplement *Eldritch Wizardry* with Gygax), died on 31 March aged 70. [PDF]
- *R.D. Call* (1950-2020), US actor in *Waterworld* (1995) and episodes of some genre tv series, died on 27 February aged 70. [LP]
- *Grace Chan*, Canadian author and cover designer whose space opera sequence opening with *The Empire* (2010) appeared as by Elizabeth Lang, died on 27 February. [BJM]
- *David Collings* (1940-2020), UK actor in *Scrooge* (1970), three *Doctor Who* serials (1975-1983), *Monkey* (1978-1980 UK), *Dark Towers* (1981) and *Sapphire & Steel* (1981-1982) died on 23 March aged 79. [SG]
- *Tomie dePaola* (1934-2020), US children's author and artist best known for his tales of the Italian witch Strega Nona (1975 onward), died on 30 March aged 85. [PDF]
- *William Dufries/Dufries* (1958-2020), US voice actor in English versions of *Space Adventure Cobra* (1982), *Patlabor: The Movie* (1989), *Venus Wars* (1989) and others, died on 24 March aged 62. [JS]

- *Dan Goodman* (1943-2020), US fan active in New York, LA and most recently Minneapolis fandom – also in several APAs – died on 25 March. [F770]
- *Stuart Gordon* (1947-2020), US film-maker who directed *Re-Animator* (1985), *From Beyond* (1986), *The Dolls* (1987), *Space Truckers* (1996) and others, died on 24 March aged 72. [RC]
- *Roy Hudd* (1936-2020), UK comedian and actor in *The Blood Beast Terror* (1968), *Hitchhiker's Guide* (1978 radio), *Cold Lazarus* (1996) and *Robot Overlords* (2014), died on 15 March aged 83. [SG]
- *Andrew Jack* (1944-2020), UK dialect coach and actor in *The Force Awakens* (2016), *The Last Jedi* (2017) and others, died on 31 March aged 76. [LP]
- *Earl Kemp* (1929-2020), US fan, editor and publisher who co-founded Advent:Publishers (which printed much important sf criticism) in 1956, won a fanzine Hugo for his symposium *Who Killed Science Fiction?* (1960) and chaired the 1962 Worldcon, died on 6 February aged 90. [EJK] His online fanzine *eI* ran for 60 issues, 2002-2011 (see eFanzines.com/EK/); to the last he made a point of commenting on every issue of *Ansible*.
- *Gary B. Kibbe* (1941-2020), US cinematographer whose credits include *They Live* (1988), *RoboCop 3* (1993), *Village of the Damned* (1995) and *Ghosts of Mars* (2001), died on 9 March aged 79. [AIP]
- *Eduard Limonov* (1943-2020), Russian author whose novels include the dystopian *316 punkt V (Section 316V, 1998)*, died on 17 March aged 77. [PDF]
- *James Lipton* (1926-2020), US academic, actor, tv presenter (etc., etc.) with genre credits in *Bewitched* (2005) and *Bolt* (2008), died on 2 March aged 93. [PDF]
- *Frank Lunney* (1952-2020), US fan who published the fanzines *BeABohema* 1968-1971 and *Syndrome* 1972-1994, and was a valued member of the Corflu and Inthebar communities, died on 28 February aged 67. [GS]
- *Frank McLaughlin* (1935-2020), US comics artist and inker with Charlton (*Blue Beetle*, *Captain Atom* and others), Marvel (*Captain America*, *Defenders* ...) and DC (*Flash*, *Wonder Woman*, *Green Arrow* ...), died on 4 March aged 84. [PDF]
- *Detto Mariano* (1937-2020), Italian composer of music for anime including *Gundam* and *Astro Boy*, and films including *The Exterminators of the Year 3000* (1983) and *Miami Golem* (1985), died on 25 March aged 82. [LP]

- *Vincent Marzello*, US actor in *Superman* (1978) and *The Witches* (1990), died on 31 March aged 78. [PDF]
- *Claudette Nevins* (1937-2020), US actress in *The Mask* (1961), *Return to the Planet of the Apes* (1975), *The Possessed* (1977) and *Star Trek: Insurrection* (1998), died on 20 February aged 82. [AIP]
- *Krzysztof Penderecki* (1933-2020), Polish composer whose music features in *The Exorcist* (1973), *The Shining* (1980), *Children of Men* (2006), *Inland Empire* (2006), *Twin Peaks* (2017) and others, died on 29 March aged 86. [AIP]
- Late report: *William Spencer* (1925-2018), contributor to *New Worlds* (as Bill Spencer) and *New Writings in SF* in the 1960s and to *Interzone* in the 1990s, died on 16 November 2018 aged 93. [DP/MA]
- *Michael Svensson*, Swedish fan, conrunner, publisher of fanzines including *Ziméria*, and an executive of the Sf-bokhandeln sf bookshops, has died in his late 50s. [J-HH]
- *Nicholas Tucci* (1981-2020), US actor whose credits include *Chilling Visions: 5 Senses of Fear* (2013) and voice work for *Wolfenstein* games, died on 3 March aged 38. [F770]
- *Albert Uderzo* (1927-2020), French comics artist who created *Astérix* with René Goscinny (1926-1977) – writing as well as drawing the stories from 1977 until he retired in 2011 – died on 24 March aged 92. [FM]
- *Max von Sydow* (1929-2020), Swedish actor whose genre credits include *The Seventh Seal* (1957), *The Exorcist* (1973), *Flash Gordon* (1980), *Dune* (1984), *Judge Dredd* (1995), *The Force Awakens* (2015) and *Game of Thrones* (2016), died on 8 March aged 90. [AW]
- *Lyle Waggoner* (1935-2020), US actor in *Journey to the Center of Time* (1967), *Wonder Woman* (1975-1979), *Wizards of the Demon Sword* (1991) and others, died on 17 March aged 84. [LP/MR]
- *Stuart Whitman* (1928-2020), US actor in *City Beneath the Sea* (1971), *Night of the Lepus* (1972), *The Cat Creature* (1973) and others including *Superboy* (1988-1992), died on 16 March aged 92. [PDF]
- *David Wise* (1955-2020), US Clarion graduate and animation writer who sold to *The Last Dangerous Visions* and whose many credits include *Transformers* (1985-1987), *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* (1987-1997, as writer/co-creator) and *Beastmaster III: The Eye of Braxus* (1996, as writer/producer), died on 3 March aged 65. [PDF/LT]

The Weakest Link. *Alexander Armstrong*: ‘Who was the author of the 1949

novel *Love in a Cold Climate*, who was one of six aristocratic sisters?’
Contestant: ‘George Orwell.’ (BBC1, *Pointless*) [PE]

Random Fandom. *From online chat:* ‘Are you really telling me that it’s easier and quicker to destroy the civil liberties of every country in the world than to amend the WSFS constitution?’ [AS]

• *Nic Farey* studied the FAAn voting figures and noted that in Online Achievement, ‘TAFF eBooks’ and ‘Ansible Free Books’ placed equal third but would have won if recognized as being the same thing. Oops. ([This Here 27](#), 28 March)

As Others See Us. On Amber Sparks’s *And I Do Not Forgive You*: ‘Set during a time when “the rain is heavy and endless with sludge” and featuring an apocalyptic cult, “We Destroy The Moon” might, like a few of the other stories, be termed science fiction. Yet unlike a lot of sci-fi, the piece is all about feelings ...’ (*Washington Post*, 26 February) [MMW]

The Dead Past. *40 Years Ago*, ‘Brian Aldiss soared to fame in *Private Eye*’s “Pseuds Corner” when he wrote of James Joyce: “this Torquemada of tale-telling began as an insipid poet: *Lean out of the window / Goldenhair, / I heard you singing / A merry air*. Whether or not the first word was a misprint for ‘leap’ has been disputed.”’ (*Ansible* 25, April 1980)

• *60 Years Ago*: ‘The 1960 National Convention which was held in London from Good Friday, 15th April to Easter Monday, 18th April will take its place in fannish history as a gathering of surprises. [...] The first surprise was the shattering announcement by the management of the Sandringham Hotel, the advertised meeting place, cancelling the convention ...’ ([Skyrack 17](#), 25 April 1960) Loncon was hastily moved to another hotel.

Outraged Letters. *Stephen Gallagher* on A392: ‘The obit notice for Ron Haddrick, “Australian actor in *The Stranger* (1964-1965)”, triggered the memory of a letter to *Junior Points of View* in which a young girl suggested that having repeated the series a number of times, the BBC should retitile it *The Acquaintance*.’ (2 March)

Editorial. *Beyond the Outposts*, that fat Ansible Editions collection of Algis Budrys essays, is now available with a final count of 378 pages, 211,000 words, and 97 footnotes: see ae.ansible.uk/?t=budrys4. Use Lulu.com discount code LULU20 for 20% off the paperback until 2 April.

Fanfundery. *TAFF*: 2020 delegate Michael Lowrey reluctantly cancelled his European trip as conventions and borders closed; he hopes to travel at some less troubled time, possibly to Novacon in November.

- Jeanne Gomoll has published her 1987 *TAFF* trip report as *TAFForensic Report: A Cold-Case Investigation*. Lulu.com print and PDF editions are available via tinyurl.com/JGTAFF, with all proceeds to *TAFF*.
- *GUFF 2020* final reminder: the voting deadline is 13 April. Candidates and ballot at ozfanfunds.com/?page_id=152.
- *DUFF 2020*: Erin Underwood won with a first-round majority from the 60 ballots cast. [PW] Both *DUFF* and *GUFF* had the New Zealand Worldcon as their major destination; as with *TAFF*, it's hard to decide what form the trip should take, and when.

Thog's Masterclass. *Meteorology Dept.* 'Vivid flashes of lightning, preceded by rumbling bursts of thunder, illuminated the small, unprepossessing village ...' (N. Wesley Firth, *Terror Stalks by Night*, 1946) [DR] 'The sun like an uncooked pancake hung low in the sky.' (Dianne Neral Ell, 'Such Good Friends', *Sherlock Holmes Mystery Magazine* 27, 2019) [DL]

- *Neat Tricks*. 'It seemed to them as if every feature of the girl's face had leapt into her eyes ...' (Hall Caine, *The Scapegoat*, 1891) [MP] 'Annie accelerates, long legs exploding out of her willowy body.' (Jackson Ford, *The Girl Who Could Move Sh*t With Her Mind*, 2018) [AR]
- *Bad Language Dept (or, Another Government Announcement)*. 'Those words emitted the stench of decomposed bodies and the greasy smoke of cremation fires and echoes of alarm bells and the howl of manual sirens.' (Dmitry Glukhovsky, *Metro 2033*, trans Natasha Randall, 2010) [SS]
- *Dept of Mutant Poultry*. '... during which they must have eaten nothing but chicken to judge by the feathers, heads, and hooves scattered around.' (Glen Cook, *Bitter Gold Hearts*, 1988) [BA]

Endnotes

Plague Year. Should I add to the gloom with an ongoing tally of *Ansible*-listed deaths from COVID-19? Andrew Jack and Detto Mariano this issue were both reported as coronavirus victims. Further events still shown as taking place are likely to be cancelled: London 'Curious Invitation' talks up to 14 April have been postponed and the May 'Ballard's Londons' in this

series will surely follow. *Ansible* is keeping watch on British Isles events whose websites have yet to register any awareness of the pandemic. Expect regular updates to the increasingly depressing list at news.ansible.uk.

Meanwhile, ever-cheery Dave Hodson reports that ‘According to Amazon Prime, two of the most watched films at the moment are *The Andromeda Strain* and *Contagion* ...’ (Facebook, 31 March)

The Weakest Link II. *Bradley Walsh*: ‘Which John Bunyan novel features the “Delectable Mountains”?’ *Contestant*: ‘*Brokeback Mountain*.’ (ITV, *The Chase*) [PE]

Virtual First Thursday: 2 April 2020. *Alison Scott* writes: ‘London SF fans have met up every first Thursday of the month for a long time, and April 2020 is no exception. But we can’t do it in person, so we’re going to be at [for link and alternatives see URL below] from 6pm to 10pm. / Please share this with people who you know typically come to the Bishop’s Finger, but aren’t on Facebook.’

<https://medium.com/@BohemianCoast/first-thursday-london-sf-fan-virtual-drinks-5232021e961f>

Some Links from the *Ansible* home page.

- DUFF 2020 result

<https://downunderfanfund.wordpress.com/2020/04/01/erin-underwood-wins-duff/>

- Kitschies 2019 shortlists (in full)

<http://file770.com/the-kitschies-2019-shortlists/>

- London Book Fair cancelled – the first of many UK events

<https://www.thebookseller.com/news/london-book-fair-cancelled-coronavirus-prh-and-harpercollins-pull-out-1194551>

- Adam Roberts on Stephen R. Donaldson

<http://sibilantfricative.blogspot.com/2020/02/stephen-donaldson-war-within-2019.html>

Thog’s Golden Oldies from *Ansible* 153, April 2000. ‘Satisfied at seeing all of them go down, one by one, through his keyhole, Morgan, fully dressed but wearing only his socks, eased out of his room ...’ (Jack Chalker, ‘Now Falls the Cold, Cold Night’, *Alternate Presidents*)

- ‘Her languid arms reached up for him, her nipples curled convulsively.’ (Paul Di Filippo, ‘Distributed Mind’, *Interzone* 94)
-

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Ansible® 394, May 2020

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo:
Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Ulrika O'Brien**. Available for SAE or boarding pass
for the last flight of Dr. Ain.

VIRTUAL REALITY. This year's Eastercon bidding session took place online: the unopposed bid for Easter 2021 was Confusion (see below), with the same venue as the cancelled 2020 event. A 2022 bid is in preparation.

• *BSFA Awards* are to be announced online on 17 May – expect an access link at bsfa.co.uk shortly beforehand.

The Bliss of Solitude

The Bonzo Dog Doo-Dah Band has at last reported a High Court success in defeating the writs issued against them by Anglo Atlantic Media Ltd and Robert Kirk Carruthers for using their own band name – whose registration as a trademark by AAM/RKC had been rejected as unlawful by the Intellectual Property Office last October. Describing Carruthers's claims as 'totally without merit', and his further intimidating writs against band witnesses as 'an abuse of process', the judge awarded the Bonzos indemnity costs of more than £50,000. ([9 April](#))

Ezri Carlebach, looking forward to beginning an MA in SF and Fantasy at Anglia Ruskin University on 4 May, was told on 29 April that this course was cancelled and will not be offered again in the future.

J.K. Rowling's Salazar Slytherin inspired the name of a 'new' Indian species of green pit viper: *Trimeresurus salazar*. ([CNN](#), 22 April) [EF]

Constriction

ONLINE. 7 May • **Virtual First Thursday**, 6-10pm, replacing the London pub meeting at the Bishop's Finger. See tinyurl.com/uow6hqn.

POSTPONED TO SEPTEMBER. 16-17 May • **HorrorCon UK**. See below.

CANCELLED. 21 May • **Ballard's Londons** (Roger Luckhurst talk), London. Described at acuriousinvitation.com/jgballard.html.

22 May - 3 Jan • **Fantastic Beasts: The Wonder of Nature** (exhibition), Natural History Museum, London. £18. See www.nhm.ac.uk/visit/exhibitions/fantastic-beasts-the-wonder-of-nature.html.
Note that the museum is now closed, with hopes of reopening in 'early summer'.

POSTPONED TO AUTUMN. 6 Jun • **Carlisle Comic Con**, Carlisle. See www.wonkyrocketevents.co.uk/carlisle/.

POSTPONED TO NOVEMBER. 11-12 Jul • **Edge-Lit 9**, Derby – see below.

18 Jul • **Small Press Day** events throughout UK and Ireland. Likely to be postponed or held online only: see smallpressday.co.uk.

ONLINE ONLY. 29 Jul - 2 Aug • **CoNZealand** (Worldcon 78), New Zealand. *New membership rates* announced 15 April (refunds available from 1 May for those who paid more): \$300NZ reg, \$150 unwaged (NZ only), \$150 YA (born after 2000), \$75 child (born 2005-2010), 'kid in tow' (born after 2010) free, \$75 supporting. See conzealand.nz.

POSTPONED TO 2021. 21-23 Aug • **Reunicon**, The Hague. See below.

14-19 Sep • **Arvon Sci-Fi and Fantasy Course**, Lumb Bank, West Yorkshire. £815 including single-room accommodation. See www.arvon.org/writing-courses/courses-retreats/sci-fi-and-fantasy/.

26-27 Sep • **HorrorCon UK**, Magna Science Adventure Centre, Sheffield Rd, Rotherham, S60 1DX. *New dates*. Tickets £45 for 11am entry, £55 for 10am; accompanied under-17s £20. See horrorconuk.com.

9-11 Oct • **Lakes International Comic Art Festival**, Kendal, Cumbria. *Weekend passes now £35; students and under-16s £25*. For day rates, see www.comicartfestival.com.

17 Oct • **Bedford Who Charity Con** (*Doctor Who*), The King's House, Ampthill Road, Bedford, MK42 9AZ – *new date and venue*. 10am-5:30pm. £42.50 reg; under-19s/students £22.50; under-14s £15. More at bedfordwhocharitycon.co.uk.

22-25 Oct • **Celluloid Screams** (horror film festival), Showroom Cinema, Sheffield. £90; £85 concessions. See celluloidscreams.co.uk.

31 Oct • **BristolCon**, Hilton DoubleTree Hotel, Bristol. £25 reg; £15 concessions and under-18s, *rising to £30/£20 in June*; £35/£25 at the door; under-14s free. Online registration at www.bristolcon.org.

6-8 Nov • **Dead by Dawn** (horror film festival), Filmhouse Cinema One, 88 Lothian Rd, Edinburgh, EH3 9BZ. *New dates*. Box office 0131 228 2688. Tickets £80 from www.deadbydawn.co.uk.

7-8 Nov • **Edge-Lit 9**, QUAD Centre, Derby, DE1 3AS. £50 reg. For guests etc see www.derbyquad.co.uk/whats-on/events/edge-lit-9.

2-5 Apr 2021 • **Confusion** (Eastercon), Birmingham NEC Hilton. GoH Dan Abnett, Dave Lally, Nik Vincent. See confusion2021.uk.

20-22 Aug 2021 • **Reunicon** (celebrating ConFiction 1990), The Hague. *New dates*. €50 reg, €25 supp. See confiction1990.com.

8-11 Oct 2021 • **Irish Discworld Convention**, Cork International Hotel, Cork. Registration details awaited at idwcon.org.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. Joseph E. Stiglitz, Nobel-winning economist, is another sufferer from skiffyphobia: ‘I never go near science fiction. Not sure why. I just don’t. Perhaps it’s because I think it’s hard enough to understand our own world and try to fix it. It’s escapism to try to create another one.’ (Interview, *The New York Times*, 9 April) [JB]

Awards. *Bram Stoker* (horror) novel categories: NOVEL *Coyote Rage* by Owl Goingback. DEBUT *The Bone Weaver’s Orchard* by Sarah Read. YA *Oware Mosaic* by Nzondi. GRAPHIC *Neil Gaiman’s Snow, Glass, Apples*.

- *Compton Crook* (sf/f/h debut): *A Memory Called Empire* by Arkady Martine.
- *Philip K. Dick* (paperback original): *Sooner or Later Everything Falls Into the Sea: Stories* by Sarah Pinsker.
- *Otherwise* (formerly the Tiptree): *Freshwater* by Akwaeke Emezi.
- *Prometheus* (libertarian) shortlist: *The Testaments* by Margaret Atwood; *Alliance Rising* by C.J. Cherryh and Jane S. Fancher; *Ruin’s Wake* by Patrick

Edwards; *Luna: Moon Rising* by Ian McDonald; *Ode to Defiance* by Marc Stiegler.

- *Spectrum Grand Master* (fantastic art): Terryl Whitlatch.

As Others See *Solaris*: ‘Though it’s a sci-fi movie, it’s about these very simple human emotions between Chris (George Clooney) and his wife Rheya (Natascha McElhone).’ (theatlantic.com, 8 April) [CW]

R.I.P. Asterisks mark reported COVID-19 deaths.

- *Bruce Allpress* (1930-2020), New Zealand actor in *Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers*, (2002) and *Power Rangers Jungle Fury* (2008), died on 23 April aged 89. [PDF]
- *Reed Andrus*, US fan and reviewer whose fanzines included *Laughing Osiris* and *The Bull of the Seven Battles*, died in April. [PDF]
- *Sean Arnold* (1941-2020), UK actor in *Earthsearch*, *The Lord of the Rings* (both BBC radio 1981), *Haunters of the Deep* (1984) and *Speaking of the Devil* (1991), died in April aged 79. [AW]
- *Pip Baker* (1928-2020), UK scriptwriter whose credits with his wife Jane Baker include *Night of the Big Heat* (1967), *Captain Nemo and the Underwater City* (1969), 11 episodes of *Doctor Who* (1985-1987) and *Watt on Earth* (1991-1992), died on 14 April. [DWN]
- **Jay Benedict* (1951-2020), US character actor in *Aliens* (1986), *Mansquito* (2005), *The Dark Knight Rises* (2012) and others, died on 4 April aged 68. [MMW]
- **Julie Bennett* (1932-2020), US actress best known for voice work including *Yogi Bear* (as Cindy Bear in various series/films 1961-1988) and *Spider-Man* (as Aunt May, 1997), died on 31 March aged 88. [AIP]
- *Merv Binns* (1932-2020), noted Australian fan who co-founded the Melbourne SF Club, ran the country’s first specialist bookshop *Space Age Books* and published various fanzines including the Ditmar-winning *Australian SF News* (1978-1994), died on 7 April aged 85. His career achievement honours include the Chandler (1993), Big Heart (2010) and Infinity (2012) awards. [BG]
- *Honor Blackman* (1925-2020), UK actress in *The Avengers* (1962-1964), *Goldfinger* (1964), *To the Devil a Daughter* (1976), *Doctor Who* (1986) and many more – a late genre credit being *Cockneys vs Zombies* (2012) – died on 5 April aged 94.
- **Tim Brooke-Taylor* (1940-2020), UK comic actor in *I’m Sorry, I’ll Read*

That Again (BBC radio 1964-1973, with several sf spoofs), *The Goodies* (1970-1982), *Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory* (1971), *The Comet Is Coming!* (1981), *Bananaman* (1983-1986) and others, died on 12 April aged 79. [CM/AW]

- **John Horton Conway* (1937-2020), noted UK mathematician whose incidental work in recreational maths (such as the Game of Life) inspired many Martin Gardner columns for *Scientific American* which in turn influenced sf authors, died on 11 April aged 82. [JS]
- *Dale Crain*, US comics artist (*Thor*, *Batman*) and archival editor at DC Comics, died recently in Vietnam. [PDF]
- *Allen Daviau* (1942-2020), US cinematographer who worked on *E.T.* (1982), *Van Helsing* (2004) and others, died on 15 April aged 77. [CH]
- *Gene Deitch* (1924-2020), award-winning US animator/director whose credits include *Popeye* (1960-1962), *Krazy Kat* (1963) and a short adaptation of *The Hobbit* (1966), died on 16 April aged 95. [PDF]
- *Brian Dennehy* (1938–2020), US actor in *Cocoon* (1985) and sequel, *Ratatouille* (voice, 2007) and others, died on 15 April aged 81. [AW]
- *Malcolm Dixon* (1953-2020), UK actor in *Flash Gordon* (1980), *Time Bandits* (1981), *Return of the Jedi* (1983), *Labyrinth* (1986) and others, died on 9 April aged 66. [PDF]
- *Shirley Douglas* (1934-2020), Canadian actress with voice credits in *Flash Gordon* (1996-1997), *Silver Surfer* (1998) and *Franklin* (1998-2000), died on 5 April aged 86. [PDF]
- *Mort Drucker* (1929-2020), US artist and caricaturist who drew many SF film/tv satires for *Mad* magazine, died on 9 April aged 91. [BT]
- *James Drury* (1934-2020), US *Virginian* actor seen in *Forbidden Planet* (1956), died on 6 April aged 85. [F770]
- *Hilary Dwyer* (1945-2020), UK actress in *The Body Stealers* (1969), *The Oblong Box* (1969) and *Cry of the Banshee* (1970), died on 30 March aged 74. Producer credits as Hilary Heath include *The Worst Witch* (1986). [SG]
- *Sergio Fantoni* (1930-2020), Italian actor in *Hercules Unchained* (1959), *Atom Age Vampire* (1960), *Mission: Eureka* (1989) and others, died on 17 April aged 89. [SJ]
- *Andrew J. Fenady* (1928-2020), US producer whose films include *Black Noon* (1971) and *Terror in the Wax Museum* (1973), died on 16 April aged 91. [LP]
- *Henry Keith Ferrell* (1953-2020), US author and editor, biographer of Wells

and Orwell, who was editor-in-chief of *Omni* from 1991 to 1995, died on 11 April aged 66. [SM-B]

- **Al Fitzpatrick*, UK fan and con-goer who moved to Australia and then the USA – active in both countries’ fandoms – died on 6 April. [JS]
- *Hy Fleishman* (1927-2020), US artist for many Silver Age comics publishers in various genres including sf and horror, died on 2 April aged 92. [PDF]
- **Allen Garfield* (1939-2020), US actor in *Miracle Beach* (1992), *Cyborg 2: Glass Shadow* (1993), *The Ninth Gate* (1999) and *The Elf Who Didn’t Believe* (2000), died on 7 April aged 80. [LP]
- *Jill Gascoine* (1937-2020), UK actress in *Peter Pan* (TVM 1976), died on 28 April aged 83. [AW]
- **Juan Giménez* (1943-2020), Argentine comics artist who worked on *Metal Hurlant*, the film *Heavy Metal* (1981) and his own ‘Time Paradox’ sequence of sf shorts, died on 2 April aged 77. [TC]
- *Margot Hartman* (1933-2020), US actress in *The Curse of the Living Corpse* (1964) and *Voyage to the Planet of Prehistoric Women* (1968), died on 11 April aged 86. [PDF]
- *Aarón Hernán* (1931-2020), Mexican actor in *Deathstalker and the Warriors from Hell* (1988), died on 26 April aged 88. [LP]
- *Peter H. Hunt* (1938-2020), US director whose credits include *The Mysterious Stranger* (1982) and *Touched by an Angel* (1996-2003), died on 26 April aged 81. [PDF]
- *Irrfan Khan* (1967-2020), Indian actor in *The Amazing Spider-Man* (2012) and *Jurassic World* (2015), died on 29 April aged 53. [AW]
- *Shirley Knight* (1936-2020), US actress in *The Sender* (1982), *Dad, the Angel & Me* (1995), *The Uninvited* (1996), *Ghost Cat* (2004) and others, died on 22 April aged 83. [SJ]
- *Dieter Laser* (1942-2020), German actor in *Lexx* (1998-2000), *The Human Centipede* (2009) and others, died on 29 February aged 78. [AIP]
- *Jean Little* (1932-2020), Canadian author of children’s fiction including the fairytale mash-up *Once Upon a Golden Apple* (1991), died on 6 April aged 88. [PDF]
- *Ryder W. Miller* (1965-2020), US Inklings critic and compiler of *From Narnia to a Space Odyssey: The War of Letters Between Arthur C. Clarke and C.S. Lewis* (2005), died on 15 March. [DAA]
- *Neale Mittenshaw-Hodge* (1962-2020), UK fan and tireless worker on many

conventions for many years, died on 17 April aged 58. [CO]

- **Jerrold Mundis* (1941-2020), US author who published stories in the 1960s *New Worlds* and wrote suspense/horror novels as Julia Withers, died on 5 April aged 79. [PDF]
- *Bruce Myers*, UK actor in *No Blade of Grass* (1970), *The Awakening* (1980), *The Mahabharata* (1989-1990) and *Let There Be Light* (1998), died on 15 April. [PDF]
- *Nobuhiko Ōbayashi* (1938-2020), Japanese director whose genre films include *House* (1977), *The Little Girl Who Conquered Time* (1983), *The Drifting Classroom* (1987), *The Discarnates* (1988) and *Labyrinth of Cinema* (2019), died on 10 April aged 82. [AIP]
- *George Ogilvie* (1931-2020), Australian co-director of *Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome* (1985), died on 5 April aged 89. [GC]
- *Joseph S. Pulver* (1955-2020), US author and anthologist best known for Lovecraftian horror and noir fiction, died on 24 April aged 64. [EM]
- *Rebecca Ramsey* (1966-2020), US visual effects producer whose many genre credits include *The Matrix Revolutions* (2003), *Hellboy* (2004), *I, Robot* (2004), *Spider-Man 3* (2007) and *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows 2* (2011), died on 7 March aged 53. [MMW]
- *D.J. Rowe*, co-founder of the Moorcock fan club Nomads of the Time Stream ('my first fan club' – MM) and co-editor of its magazine *The Time Centre Times*, has died aged 83. [MM]
- **Adam Schlesinger* (1967-2020), US bass player with Fountains of Wayne whose credits include soundtrack work for *Ice Age: Continental Drift* (2012) and *The Haunted Hathaways* (2013-2015), died on 1 April aged 52. [LP]
- **Ann Sullivan* (1929-2020), US animator whose credits include *The Little Mermaid* (1989), *Cool World* (1992), *The Lion King* (1994), *Atlantis: The Lost Empire* (2001) and *Treasure Planet* (2002), died on 13 April aged 91. [AIP]
- **Alexander Thynn* (1932-2020), 7th Marquess of Bath, whose genre novels were *The Carry-Cot* (1972) and *The King is Dead* (1976 from his own Longleat Press), died on 4 April aged 87.
- **Brian Varley*, old-time UK fan since 1952 who worked on the 1954 Supermancon and 1965 London Worldcon, and wrote the 'Machiavarley' column for *Scottishe*, died on 31 March. [RH]
- *Tim White* (1952-2020), UK sf artist who painted many book covers from 1974 onwards – his first collection being *The Science Fiction and Fantasy*

World of Tim White (1981) – died on 5 April aged 68. [BE] He won the 1983 BSFA Award as best artist.

- *Logan Williams* (2003-2020), Canadian-born actor in *The Flash* (2014-2015), died on 9 April aged 16. [MMW]
- *Hal Willner* (1957-2020), US music producer whose credits include *The Duxorcist* (1987), other Daffy Duck cartoon features and *Bewitched* (2005), died on 6 April aged 63. [LP]

The Weakest Link. *Mike Moorcock* writes: ‘Final *Jeopardy* question, category British Authors: “Born in 1866, he has been called The Shakespeare of Science Fiction.” Contestant #1: “Asimov.” #2: “Clarke.” #3: “Verne.” Ho hum.’ (12 April)

Hugo Shortlist. Selections from the full list (with Retro Hugos) at conzealand.nz/blog/2020/04/08/hugo-and-retro-hugo-finalists-announced:

NOVEL *The City in the Middle of the Night* by Charlie Jane Anders; *Gideon the Ninth* by Tamsyn Muir; *The Light Brigade* by Kameron Hurley; *A Memory Called Empire* by Arkady Martine; *Middlegame* by Seanan McGuire; *The Ten Thousand Doors of January* by Alix E. Harrow.

• SERIES *The Expanse* by James S.A. Corey; *InCryptid* by Seanan McGuire; *Luna* by Ian McDonald; *Planetfall* by Emma Newman; *Winternight* by Katherine Arden; *Wormwood* by Tade Thompson.

• RELATED WORK *Becoming Superman: My Journey from Poverty to Hollywood* by J. Michael Straczynski; *Joanna Russ* by Gwyneth Jones; *The Lady from the Black Lagoon: Hollywood Monsters and the Lost Legacy of Milicent Patrick* by Mallory O’Meara; *The Pleasant Profession of Robert A. Heinlein* by Farah Mendlesohn; 2019 John W. Campbell Award Acceptance Speech by Jeannette Ng; *Worlds of Ursula K. Le Guin* produced and directed by Arwen Curry.

• GRAPHIC/COMIC *Die, Volume 1: Fantasy Heartbreaker*; *LaGuardia*; *Monstress, Volume 4: The Chosen*; *Mooncakes*; *Paper Girls, Volume 6*; *The Wicked + The Divine, Volume 9: Okay*.

• DRAMATIC – LONG FORM *Avengers: Endgame*; *Captain Marvel*; *Good Omens*; *Russian Doll* (Season One); *Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker*; *Us*.

• LODESTAR (YA; not a Hugo) *Catfishing on CatNet* by Naomi Kritzer; *Deeplight* by Frances Hardinge; *Dragon Pearl* by Yoon Ha Lee; *Minor Mage* by T. Kingfisher; *Riverland* by Fran Wilde; *The Wicked King* by Holly Black.

The Dead Past. *50 Years Ago*, a writers’ organization wielded its awesome

power: ‘The SFWA has asked its members not to buy Jerome Agel’s *The Making of 2001*, because of unsatisfactory arrangements with the contributors.’ ([Winnie 46](#), May 1970)

- *20 Years Ago*, Steve Sneyd sent a heartfelt status report from his Hilltop Press: ‘Poetry continues to sell like condoms at a Vatican conclave.’ (*Ansible* 154, May 2000)

Fanfundery. *GUFF 2020*: 102 valid ballots were received, and [the winner is Alison Scott](#) with a plurality of 50 in the first round and a majority of 52 in the second. ‘As one candidate withdrew from the race because of the current global situation ballots cast for them were allocated to the second preference.’

- *DUFF 2020*: voting details for Erin Underwood’s win can be found at downunderfanfund.wordpress.com/2020/04/01/erin-underwood-wins-duff/.
- The GUFF and DUFF winners will both attend New Zealand’s virtual Worldcon this year, with hopes (as with TAFF) of a physical trip at some later date.

Thog’s Masterclass. *Secure Repository Dept.* ‘She sat there completely at her ease, her big breasts ready for any secrets.’ (Graham Greene, *Brighton Rock*, 1938) [MMW]

- *As Thingy as a Very Thingy Thing.* ‘He twisted suddenly and finished erect, his velour-padded feet sticking to the velour-carpeted deck as a velvet letter sticks to a velvet bulletin board.’ (Hank Searls, *The Pilgrim Project*, 1964) [NW]

- *Excitable Dept.* ‘Her pulse slowed to a gallop.’ (Jay Kristoff, *Nevernigh 3: Darkdawn*, 2019) [AR]

- *Neat Tricks.* ‘Mia woke to the ring of heavy footfalls, hackles rising down her back.’ (*Ibid*) [AR]

- *Understated Dept.* ‘Her knee collided with his groin the way falling comets kiss the earth.’ (*Ibid*) [AR]

- *Dept of Over-Egged Simile.* ‘Her face resembled poorly-kneaded pastry, with currants for eyes, a baked fig for a nose, and a mouth like a line of silvered almonds.’ (Stephen R. Donaldson, *The War Within*, 2019) [AR]

Endnotes

Editorial. My thanks to everyone who bought the new Algis Budrys essay collection *Beyond the Outposts*, published in April and described at

ae.ansible.uk/?t=budrys4. For some while this was the only Ansible Editions POD title to survive Lulu.com's disastrously incompetent website redesign on 25 April, which not only 'invisibled' the backlists of countless small publishers using that platform but also left most of us unable for several days to log in and check the damage. 'Just keep calm and wait for the data to migrate,' said Lulu spokesmen, but some of it has apparently gone forever. (See my [30 April 2020 post at ansible.uk](#).)

- As a promotional complement to the big Budrys volume, AE has now released the free ebook *A Budrys Miscellany*, with over 100,000 words of material not included in *Beyond the Outposts*. Downloadable from the TAFF site at taff.org.uk/ebooks.php?x=BudrysMisc (as always, donations to TAFF are appreciated if you like it).

- Rob Hansen has added a newly unearthed wartime article by E.J. 'Ted' Carnell to his *Homefront: Fandom in the UK 1939-1945*, and the expanded edition – now 163,000 words – is still free at taff.org.uk/ebooks.php?x=HomeFront.

Lockdown Reading. Following last issue's note about the sudden popularity of *The Andromeda Strain* and *Contagion* in DVD, Marion Pitman reports from the book trade that 'Camus's *La Peste* is selling like hot cakes.' Meanwhile the Project Gutenberg download figures (apparently a rolling average over 30 days) reached 49,000 for Daniel Defoe's *A Journal of the Plague Year*, at a time when the more famous *Robinson Crusoe* registered only a little over 8,500. Nothing like a spot of comfort reading....

Virtual Fan Meetings.

- 7 May 2020, evening: Alison Scott set up this alternative to the physical London First Thursday meeting, which was reportedly a great success in April: 'Please share this with people who you know typically come to the Bishop's Finger, but aren't on Facebook.'

<https://medium.com/@BohemianCoast/first-thursday-london-sf-fan-virtual-drinks-5232021e961f>

- 17 May 2020 (and every other third Sunday of the month), afternoon/early evening: Sheffield SF and Fantasy Society online meeting using Zoom. For access details contact Fran Dowd, thesofa [at] gmail dot com.

R.I.P II: Late Reports. *Paul Alkon* (1935-2020), US academic and critic whose books include *Origins of Futuristic Fiction* (1987), died on 13 January aged 84. [GW]

- *Gene Dynarski* (1933-2020), US actor in *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* (1977) and various sf tv series, died on 27 February aged 86. [AIP]
- *Laurie Yates-Kunkel*, US fan who co-founded the Fantastic Fiction Club at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, and published fanzines including *Doodlebug* (1992-1994 with her husband Bill Kunkel), died on 11 September 2019. [NR]

Spielung Chequer Dept. ‘Wonton acts of destruction scattered marble and yellow brick in the street alike.’ (Frog & Esther Jones, ‘Balancing the Scales’ in *Swords, Sorcery and Self-Rescuing Damsels* ed. Lee French & Sarah Craft, 2019) ‘Rota’s golden paladin armour shown in the spell-light, and the demons swarmed her.’ (Jeffrey Cook & Katherine Perkins. ‘Remember to Thank Your Healer’, *ibid*) [MC]

Some Links from the *Ansible* home page.

- Anti-plague superheroes
https://www.theregister.co.uk/2020/04/22/singapore_grounds_coronasmashin
- Bram Stoker Awards winners (full list)
<http://horror.org/winners-bram-stoker-awards/>
- John Horton Conway (1937-2020) remembered at SMBC and xkcd
<https://www.smbc-comics.com/comic/life-2>
<https://xkcd.com/2293/>
- James D. Nicoll on the *SF Encyclopedia*
<https://www.tor.com/2020/04/10/all-hail-the-science-fiction-encyclopedia-bringer-of-knowledge/>
- Retro Hugo fanzines at [Fanac.org](http://fanac.org)
http://fanac.org/fanzines/Retro_Hugos.html

R.I.P. III: Stop Press. *Cis Corman*, US producer and casting director of *The Sentinel* (1977) and *Wolfen* (1981), died on 27 April. [LP]

- *B.J. Hogg* (1955-2020), Northern Irish actor whose film credits include *The Second Jungle Book: Mowgli & Baloo* (1997), *City of Ember* (2008) and *Your Highness* (2011), died on 30 April aged 65. [James Millar]
- **Joel Rogosin* (1932-2020), US producer/director whose tv credits include *Circle of Fear* (1972-1973), *Mr Merlin* (1981-1982) and *Knight Rider* (1983-1984), died on 21 April aged 87. [AIP]
- *Matty Simmons*, co-founder of *National Lampoon* and producer of various spinoff films, died on 29 April aged 93. [PDF]

Thog's Golden Oldies from *Ansible* 154, May 2000. 'They were both roughly the same age, in their very early fifties, though a hundred years earlier they would have appeared much younger.' (D.F. Jones, *Colossus*, 1966)

- 'The police report said there had been a thunderclap, as if the burning house had disappeared so suddenly that the air had rushed back inaudibly.' (John Barnes, *Finity*, 1999)

- *Dept of Scientific Units*: '... the world would do well to stick to the [ramjet] system, accepting that Mach 2 as an average transit time was fast enough for anyone.' (D.F. Jones, *Colossus and the Crab*, 1977)

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1 May 2020

Ansible® 395, June 2020

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Atom**, from 1986. Available for SAE or the social distancing facilities of Ullward's Retreat.

The Door with Seven Locks

Michael Crichton (1942-2008) asserts from beyond the grave on the copyright page of *The Andromeda Evolution* (HarperCollins UK), a sequel by another hand to *Andromeda Strain*: 'Michael Crichton and Daniel H. Wilson assert the moral right to be identified as the author of this work'.

John Crowley had a targeted Facebook ad: 'New Loans for Small Businesses / As someone who manages John Crowley, you can now use Facebook to learn more about the available programs.' (29 May)

Elizabeth Knox, fantasy author, became a Companion of the Order of Merit for services to literature in the Queen's NZ Birthday Honours. Also honoured, for services to film, was Taika Waititi (*What We Do in the Shadows*, *Wellington Paranormal*, various sf films forthcoming). [F770]

Michael Moorcock reports: 'Heard today that some companies are turning down Elric project because it reminds them too much of *GOT* and *The Witcher*. A pretty irony. So much for "homages"....' (23 May)

Samanta Schweblin's latest novel gets a free pass: '*Little Eyes* may function as a sci-fi story, but its central concern is the purpose of humanity.' (Bethanne Patrick, *Washington Post*, 20 May) [MMW]

SFWA members voted on the referendum question: 'Should SFWA allow writing of graphic novels and comics in science fiction, fantasy, horror, and related genres to be used as qualification for membership?' The results were 95.18% 'Yes' to 4.82% 'No'. (sfwa.org, 11 May)

Bruce Sterling's 17-year-old 'Beyond the Beyond' spot at *Wired* came to an

end in May owing to cutbacks at Condé Nast that somehow required the trimming of such unpaid ‘loose ends’: ‘My weblog is a collateral victim of Covid19, which has become a great worldwide excuse to stop whatever you were doing.’ (Wired.com, 17 May) [F770]

Condolement

ONLINE. 4 Jun • **Virtual First Thursday**, 6-10pm, replacing the usual London pub meeting at the Bishop’s Finger. See tinyurl.com/uow6hqn.

ONLINE. 5-7 Jun • **Cymera**: Scotland’s Festival of SF, Fantasy & Horror Writing, Edinburgh. See www.cymerafestival.co.uk.

VENUE CLOSED. 15-21 Jun • **Talos IV**: SF Theatre Festival of London, The Cockpit, London. See www.cyborphic.com/talos-2020.

CANCELLED. 3-5 Jul • **Lavecon** (sf/fantasy/gaming). See below.

ONLINE. 4 Jul • **Tolkien Society Seminar**, on adapting Tolkien to the screen etc. See www.tolkiensociety.org/events/seminar-2020/.

POSTPONED TO 2021. 18-19 Jul • **EM-Con**, Nottingham. See below.

POSTPONED TO 2021. 26 Jul • **Forever Avon** (*Blake’s 7*). See below.

ONLINE. 29 Jul - 2 Aug • **CoNZealand** (Worldcon 78), New Zealand. Virtual attendance rates: \$300NZ reg, \$150 unwaged (NZ only), \$150 YA (born after 2000), \$75 child (born 2005-2010), ‘kid in tow’ (born after 2010) free, \$75 supporting. See conzealand.nz. *The Hugo Voter Packet, for members only, became available at the end of May.*

CANCELLED. 7-10 Aug • **Continuum** (RPG), Oadby. See below.

POSTPONED TO 2022. 7-10 Aug • **Discworld Convention**, Hilton Metropole, Birmingham NEC. £85 reg, £60 concessions; the 2020 event had sold out. New dates in August 2022 are awaited at dwcon.org.

28-31 Aug • **The Asylum** (steampunk), Lincoln. Admission wristbands sold out at www.asylumsteampunk.co.uk. *Considering postponement or a reduced-scale campus event ; full-size festival seems unlikely.*

CANCELLED. 28-30 Aug • **TitanCon**, Hilton Hotel, Belfast. See below.

CANCELLED. 30-31 Aug • **Stars of Time** (media), Tropicana, Weston-super-

Mare. Refunds in process. See www.starsoftime.co.uk.

CANCELLED. 3-6 Sep • **Oxonmoot** (Tolkien Society), St Anne's College, Oxford. See www.tolkiensociety.org/events/oxonmoot-2020/.

31 Oct • **BristolCon**, Hilton DoubleTree Hotel, Bristol. *Now £30 reg; £20 concessions and under-18s (£35/£25 at door); under-14s free.* For other rates and online registration see www.bristolcon.org.

2-5 Apr 2021 • **Confusion** (Eastercon), Birmingham NEC Hilton. GoH Dan Abnett, Dave Lally, Nik Vincent. See confusion2021.uk.

1-2 May 2021 • **EM-Con** (media), Motorpoint Arena, Nottingham. *New dates: originally postponed from 2-3 May to 18-19 July 2020.* Weekend tickets £30, or £40 early entry; other rates at www.em-con.co.uk.

2-4 Jul 2021 • **Lavecon** (sf/fantasy/gaming), Sedgebrook Hall Hotel, Northants. *2020 membership refunds or carry-over available.* More to follow at www.hwsevents.co.uk/shop-1.

18 Jul 2021 • **Forever Avon** (*Blake's 7*), Steventon Village Hall, Steventon, Oxfordshire. *New dates.* 10am-4pm. Tickets £26.64 including fee. Booking via www.facebook.com/TeamBlakeForeverAvon.

6-9 Aug 2021 • **Continuum** (RPG), John Foster Hall, Manor Road, Leicester University, Oadby. *New dates.* £45 reg; other rates to follow at continuumconvention.co.uk (see the 'Other Stuff' menu).

20-22 Aug 2021 • **TitanCon**, Hilton Hotel, Belfast. *2020 membership refunds or carry-over available.* £40 reg, *rising on 1 July*; first-timers and under-18s £25; under-15s £15; under-8s free. See titancon.com.

29-30 Aug 2021 • **Stars of Time** (media), Tropicana, Weston-super-Mare. 10am-5pm. See www.starsoftime.co.uk.

Rumblings. All Arvon writing course centres are currently closed until the end of June. The next sf/fantasy course is in mid-September.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. 'The coronavirus pandemic has taken hold of everyday life so quickly and completely that things suddenly feel like a science-fiction film, albeit one in which being a couch potato is part of our civic duty.'

(Anna Nicolaou, *Financial Times*, 18 April) [MMW]

• '[Anna] Kavan resists most literary comparisons as easily as she eludes the frequent and misguided attempts to categorise her as a writer of science fiction.' (*New York Review of Books*, 28 May) [JC]

Awards. BSFA (presented online on 17 May): NOVEL Adrian Tchaikovsky, *Children of Ruin*. SHORTER FICTION Amal El-Mohtar & Max Gladstone, *This Is How You Lose the Time War*. NON-FICTION Farah Mendlesohn, *The Pleasant Profession of Robert A. Heinlein*. ARTWORK Chris Baker (Fangorn), cover for *Wourism* by Ian Whates.

• *Kitschies*: NOVEL *The Fire Starters* by Jan Carson. DEBUT *Jelly* by Clare Rees. COVER DESIGN Tyler Comrie for *The Memory Police* by Yoko Ogawa.
• *Nebulas* (presented online, 30 May): NOVEL *A Song for a New Day* by Sarah Pinsker. NOVELLA *This Is How You Lose the Time War* by Amal El-Mohtar & Max Gladstone. NOVELETTE *Carpe Glitter* by Cat Rambo. SHORT 'Give the Family My Love' by A.T. Greenblatt (*Clarkesworld* 2/19). ANDRE NORTON (YA): *Riverland* by Fran Wilde. GAME WRITING *The Outer Worlds* by Leonard Boyarsky, Megan Starks, Kate Dollarhyde & Chris L'Etoile. RAY BRADBURY (dramatic): *Good Omens*: 'Hard Times' by Neil Gaiman.

Mostly Armless. *Quiz Host*: 'In the Bible, Samson lost his strength after what was cut off?' *Contestant*: 'His arm.' (ITV, *The Chase*) [PE]

R.I.P. Asterisks mark reported COVID-19 deaths.

- *Michael Angelis* (1952-2020), UK actor who narrated and did other voices for *Thomas the Tank Engine & Friends* (1991-2012) plus many sequels and spinoffs to 2019, died on 30 May aged 68. [IS]
- *G-J Arnaud* (1928-2020), French sf author best known for the long 'Ice Company' sequence beginning with *La Compagne des glaces* (1980), died on 26 April aged 91. [L]
- *Gregory Tyree Boyce* (1989-2020), US actor in *Twilight* (2008), died on 13 May aged 30. [MMW]
- *Cindy Butler* (1955-2020), US actress in the Bigfoot film *Boggy Creek II: And the Legend Continues* (1984), died on 26 May aged 64. [SJ]
- **Matteo De Cosmo* (1968-2020), Marvel TV art director whose credits include *Luke Cage* (2016-2018), *The Punisher* (2017-2019) and *Emergence* (2019-2020), died on 21 April aged 52. [PDF]
- *Brian Dennehy* (1938-2020), US actor in *Ants!* (1977), *Cocoon* (1985), *Fail Safe* (2000) and *Ratatouille* (2007), died on 15 April aged 81.

- *Arthur Dignam* (1939-2020), Australian actor in *Grendel Grendel Grendel* (1981), *The Return of Captain Invincible* (1983), *Ghosts CAN Do It* (1987), *Escape from Jupiter* (1994 tv) and others, died on 9 May aged 80. [LP]
- *John Ericson* (1926-2020), German-born actor in *7 Faces of Dr. Lao* (1964), *The Bamboo Saucer* (1968), *Bedknobs and Broomsticks* (1971) and others, died on 3 May aged 93. [LP]
- ?**Samantha Fox* (Stasia Micula, 1950-2020), US actress in *Dracula Exotica* (1980) and *The Devil in Miss Jones II* (1982), died on 22 April aged 69. [GC]
- *Danny Goldman* (1939-2020), US actor in *Beware! The Blob* (1972), *Young Frankenstein* (1974), *Wholly Moses!* (1980) and others, died on 12 April aged 80. [SG]
- *Richard Herd* (1932-2020), US actor in *Hercules in New York* (1970), *Terror Out of the Sky* (1978) and many genre series from *V* (1983) to *Star Trek: Renegades* (2015), died on 26 May aged 87. [MMW]
- *Anthony James*, (1942-2020), US actor in *Burnt Offerings* (1976), *Return from Witch Mountain* (1978), *Ravagers* (1979) and others, died on 26 May aged 77. [SJ]
- *Eizo Kaimai*, Japanese ‘kaiju’ suit and model maker who worked on the original *Godzilla* (1954) plus many sequels and other monster films including *Rodan* (1956) and *Mothra* (1961), died on 24 April aged 90. [SJ]
- *Michael Keenan* (1939-2020), US actor in *Star Trek: TNG* (plus later series) and *Earth vs. the Spider* (2001), died on 30 April aged 80. [LP]
- *Graham Kennedy*, UK fan who created and wrote the content of the *Star Trek* reference site ‘Daystrom Institute Technical Library’ (ditl.org), died on 4 May aged 51. [CM]
- *John Lafia* (1957-2020), US writer/director who co-wrote *Child’s Play* (1988) and directed *Child’s Play 2* (1990), died on 29 April aged 63; other credits include *Repo Man* (1984). [PDF]
- *Silvia Legrand* (1927-2020), Argentinian actress whose tv credits include *Robot!* (1970), died on 1 May aged 93. [PDF]
- **Charles Lippincott* (1939-2020), US publicist for genre films including *Westworld* (1973), *Star Wars* (1977) and *Alien* (1979), and producer of *Judge Dredd* (1995), died on 20 May aged 80. [GvG]
- *Sam Lloyd* (1963-2020), US actor in *Flubber* (1997), *Galaxy Quest* (1999) and *Waking up with Monsters* (2007), died on 1 May aged 56. [PDF]
- *Helen McCabe*, UK author of romance and horror – the latter including the

Piper trilogy opening with *Piper* (2008) – reportedly died in early May.
[SLH]

- *George T. McWhorter* (1931-2020), US singer and bibliophile who for many years was curator of the Edgar Rice Burroughs Collection at the University of Louisville, died on 25 April aged 88. [AIP]
- *John Mahon* (1938-2020), US actor in *The Exorcist* (1973), *Lifepod* (1993), *Natural Selection* (1994), *Armageddon* (1998) and others, died on 18 May aged 82. [SJ]
- *Monique Mercure* (1930-2020), French-Canadian actress in *Quintet* (1979), *Naked Lunch* (1991) and *Master Key* (2009), died on 17 May aged 89. [SJ]
- *Barry Newton*, US fan, con-runner (including Worldcons) and SFWA member, a past president of the Washington SF Association and active in the SCA and Baltimore SFA, died on 12 May aged 70. [JN]
- **Kumiko Okae* (1956-2020), Japanese voice actress in *The Cat Returns* (Studio Ghibli 2002), *Pokémon: Lucario and the Mystery of Mew* (2005) and others, died on 23 April aged 63. [PDF]
- *Martin Pasko* (1954-2020), Canadian comics writer who worked on many titles for DC (*Superman*, *Doctor Fate*, *Wonder Woman*, *Swamp Thing* ...) and Marvel (*Star Trek* ...), died on 10 May aged 65. [GD]
- **Pilar Pellicer* (1938-2020), Mexican actress in *The World of the Dead* (1970), *Dulce espíritu* (1985) and others, died on 16 May aged 82. [SJ]
- *Richard 'Little Richard' Wayne Penniman* (1932-2020), influential US singer, songwriter and musician seen in *Purple People Eater* (1988) and *Last Action Hero* (1993) – with soundtrack credits for *Predator* (1987) and others – died on 9 May aged 87. [LP]
- *Michel Piccoli* (1925-2020), French actor whose credits include *The Creatures* (1966), *Danger: Diabolik* (1968), *Themroc* (1973), *The Timekeeper* (1992) and *Holy Motors* (2012), died on 12 May aged 94. [SJ]
- **Joel M. Reed* (1933-2020), US horror actor/writer/director whose films include *Blood Sucking Freaks* (1976), *Night of the Zombies* (1981) and the forthcoming *Killer Zombies from the Titanic*, died on 12 April aged 86. [PDF]
- *Richard Sala* (1955-2020), US comics artist and creator whose darkly humorous horror/mystery comics include *The Chuckling Whatsit* (1997), *Peculia* (2002) and *The Bloody Cardinal* (2017), has died aged 64 or 65. [PDF]
- *Tony Scannell* (1945-2020), Irish actor in *Flash Gordon* (1980) and *Evil*

Never Dies (2014), died on 27 May aged 75. [SJ]

- *Florian Schneider-Esleben* (1947-2020), German musician and founding member of the influential electronic band Kraftwerk that made frequent use of sf themes, died on 30 April aged 73. [DKMK]

- *Geno Silva* (1948-2020), US actor in *My Mom's a Werewolf* (1989) and *The Lost World: Jurassic Park* (1997), died on 9 May aged 72. [MMW]

- *Jerry Stiller* (1927-2020), US comedy actor in *A Rat's Tale* (1977) and as guest in various genre series, died on 11 May aged 92. [LP]

- *Peter Thomas* (1925-2020), German film/tv composer with genre credits for *Zurück aus dem Weltall* (*Moonwolf*, 1959), an adaptation of G.K.

Chesterton's *The Man Who Was Thursday* (1966) and *Raumpatouille Orion* (*Space Patrol Orion*, 1966), died on 19 May aged 94. [CB]

- *Marshall B. Tymn* (1937-2020), US academic and sf scholar whose many books include *A Research Guide to Science Fiction Studies* (1977, with L.W. Currey & Roger C. Schlobin) and *Science Fiction, Fantasy & Weird Fiction Magazines* (1985, with Mike Ashley), died on 24 May aged 82. He received the 1990 Pilgrim Award for life achievement in sf scholarship. [L]

- *Fred Willard* (1933-2020), US comic actor in *WALL-E* (2008) and various genre series including the new *Space Force* (2020), died on 15 May aged 86. [MR]

- *Pong Fong Wu* (1964-2020), Taiwanese actor in *Silk* (2006), *The Wall* (2008), *The Ghost Tales* (2012) and *Soul* (2013), died on 25 May aged 55. [LP]

Nature Study. 'The National Trust reports that while 30 percent of eight-to-11 year olds could not identify a magpie, 90 percent could spot a Dalek.' (Horatio Clare, *Financial Times*, 9 May) [MMW]

Publishers & Sinners. Penguin is launching a new Penguin Classics Science Fiction line with ten titles in August and ten more in November; authors include the little-translated Andreas Eschbach (Germany) and Angélica Gorodischer (Argentina), plus such familiar names as Sheckley, Tiptree and Vonnegut. ([The Bookseller](#), 28 May)

Blurbismo. *Tom Clancy* offered a careful compliment: 'The scope of Larry Niven's work is so vast that only a writer of supreme talent could disguise the fact as well as he can.' (Back cover, *The Draco Tavern*, 2006)

Random Fandom. *The Doc Weir Award* for unsung heroes of fandom was

skipped in this year of no Eastercon; it should resume in 2021.

- *Bob Madle*, long-term US fan and 1957 TAFF delegate, will celebrate his 100th birthday on 2 June amid a deluge of messages from fandom.
- *Uncle Hugo's*, the long-established Minneapolis sf bookshop, was burnt down – along with its next-door mystery sibling *Uncle Edgar's* – in riots on the night of 29/30 May. *DreamHaven*, another specialist genre bookshop a mile away, was broken into and vandalized (several attempts to start fires failed) but defended and later boarded up by local fans. [JS]

The Dead Past. *80 Years Ago*: ‘Virgil Finlay was the best man at the wedding of C.L. Moore and Henry Kuttner in New York City recently.’ ([Fantasy News](#), 23 June 1940).

- *60 Years Ago*, the queue began to form: ‘Orders are now being taken by the publishers for Professor J.R.R. Tolkien’s promised new work, provisional title, *The Silmarillion*, which recounts the earlier history of The Ring. The publishers still can’t give a date or a price for the work, but this acceptance of orders is a step forwards.’ ([Skyrack 20](#), June 1960) Only seventeen years to wait!

- *40 Years Ago*, ‘Chris Evans, known as C.D. Evans on the Faber list owing to the existence of Dr Christopher Evans, has now, following the death of Dr Christopher Evans, been permitted to change his name, as regards Faber, from C.D. Evans to Chris Evans.’ ([Ansible 10](#), June 1980)

Magazine Scene. Jason Sizemore’s *Apex*, on ‘indefinite hiatus’ since May 2019, plans to return on a bimonthly schedule in January 2021.

The Critical Heritage. ‘... the husband and wife team, who wrote under the name [Eando Binder](#), that gave us the robot hero Adam Link.’ (Forrest J Ackerman and Brad Linaweaver, *Worlds of Tomorrow: The Amazing Universe of Science Fiction Art*, 2004) [PL]

Editorial. [Ansible Editions](#) has no new titles on sale, but hasn’t been idle during lockdown: the promotional ebook *A Budrys Miscellany: Occasional Writing 1954-2000* (note change from 1960-2000) was expanded by 11,000 words in May. See taff.org.uk/ebooks.php?x=BudrysMisc. Hoped future releases include *The Jonbar Point* by Brian Aldiss (two long essays from *SF Horizons*), *Puff Love* by John Sladek (an offbeat mystery novel), the first complete edition of Bob Shaw’s ‘Glass Bushel’ columns for *Hyphen*, and volume 4 of the collected *Ansible* – covering the decade 2011-2020, with 6

issues yet to be added. Unless I succumb to the lure of round numbers and stop at #400 in November. Decisions, decisions.

C.o.A. Fans who kept demon.co.uk email addresses despite growing hostility from Demon's current owner Vodafone were told they'd be shut down on 29 May; but there's a plague-year extension to 1 September.

Thog's Masterclass. *And Still They Move.* 'It was the woman's eyes. They were as still and as malignant as the eyes of a snake. She could see them quite plainly – flat eyes that stared at her – wandering over her body, assessing and appraising her from head to foot.' (Ann Petry, *The Street*, 1946) [PC]

- *When Chaos Theory Goes Bad.* 'The fire continued burning, the wood cracking and breaking, the sizzle and hiss of water hitting flame filling the night like the beating wings of a thousand butterflies.' (Stav Sherez, *Eleven Days*, 2013) [J-HH]

- *Arrest Snapshot Dept.* 'Her skin was pale and finely textured and it made her eyes appear unnaturally green and defiant. There was a dangerous curve to her lips and her hair was dyed purple and hung across her forehead in a set of uneven bangs that concealed as much as they revealed. She seemed squeezed into the photo's frame, its strict parameters unable to contain her, but even in this single snapped moment Carrigan could see a wealth of buried history lurking in her eyes, storms and resentments and things that happened to her when she was four years old.' (*Ibid*) [J-HH]

- *In Typo Veritas.* 'She breathed in his ear, rubbed the hard band of her public bone over his thigh.' (Kim Stanley Robinson, *Pacific Edge in Three Californias*, 2020) [RG]

Endnotes

Virtual Fan Meetings.

- 4 June 2020, evening: Alison Scott has set up this alternative to the physical London First Thursday meeting: 'Please share this with people who you know typically come to the Bishop's Finger, but aren't on Facebook.'

<https://medium.com/@BohemianCoast/first-thursday-london-sf-fan-virtual-drinks-5232021e961f>

- 21 June 2020 (and every other third Sunday of the month), afternoon/early evening: Sheffield SF and Fantasy Society online meeting using Zoom. For access details contact Fran Dowd, thesofa [at] gmail dot com.

Editorial II. The Lulu.com print-on-demand service is *almost* back to normal as far as Ansible Editions is concerned – except that records of book sales before the 25 April disaster (sorry, ‘hugely improved website design’) are still invisible after more than five weeks of relentless data ‘migration’. In mid-May I had a substantial payment for April, but how it should be divided up between Budrys, Hansen, Langford and Sladek titles remains a mystery. Calculating the royalties due on 1 July could be ... interesting. Still, I’m lucky compared to Jeanne Gomoll, who found that one of the book sizes she used has been discontinued – without, of course, any prior warning that would have allowed her to stock up.

Some Links from the *Ansible* home page.

- *Beyond the Outposts* review in *Locus*
<https://locusmag.com/2020/05/paul-di-filippo-reviews-beyond-the-outposts-essays-on-sf-and-fantasy-1955-1996-by-algis-budrys/>
- BSFA Awards (video)
<https://youtu.be/5RO2uB3E-U0>
- Gollancz BAME SFF Award shortlist
<https://www.gollancz.co.uk/news/2020/05/07/gollancz-announce-bame-sff-award-shortlist/>
- GUFF 2020 results
<https://ozfanfunds.com/guff/g2020results.html>
- ‘Horror Has A Leadership Problem’
<https://medium.com/@coinoperatedboy28/horror-has-a-leadership-problem-c6211ac6b46b>
- *Locus* Awards Finalists
<https://locusmag.com/2020/05/2020-locus-awards-finalists/>
- Adam Roberts: Sketches by Zod
<https://amechanicalart.blogspot.com/2020/05/sketches-by-zod.html>

Thog’s Golden Oldies from *Ansible* 155, June 2000. *Dept of Carnivorous Weather*. ‘Rain came as a wet drizzle that clings to your face like a hungry leech fighting to hang on, only to slip down over the scars and dive into the abyss of excrement and refuse at your feet.’ (Bradley Snow, *Andy*, 1990)

- *Dept of Good Moods*. ‘It was as if her insides put italics on the feeling of superb.’ (Stanley Crouch, *Don’t the Moon Look Lonesome*, 2000)
- *Dept of Planetary Physics*. As a Velikovskian doomsday impact is threatened, our hero has a nice snooze and wakes to find the morning

mysteriously dark: ‘Switching on the searchlight, Joseph Brock saw, caught in its brilliant beam, Jupiter. It was hovering a few thousand miles up. He had reckoned that the planet would come with an extra rush as it drew within the gravity of the Earth, or vice-versa. But the gravities of both planets seemed ineffective.’ (Desmond Wilcox, *Into Existence*, 1941)

Ansible® 395 © David Langford, 2020. Thanks to Cora Buhlert, Peter Cohen, Jonathan Coleclough, Gary Couzens, Gordon Davie, Paul Di Filippo, *File 770*, Rip Gooch, Steve Green, John-Henri Holmberg, Samantha Lee Howe, Steve Jones, David K.M. Klaus, *Locus*, Pamela Love, Chris Moore, Judy Newton, Lawrence Person, Andrew I. Porter, *Private Eye*, Marcus Rowland, Joyce Scrivner, Ian Shuttleworth, Gordon van Gelder, Martin Morse Wooster, and Hero Distributors: Durdles Books (BSFG), SCIS/Prophecy and Alan Stewart (Oz). 1 June 2020

Ansible® 396, July 2020

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo:
Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Ulrika O'Brien**. Available for SAE, Tarn-Bird,
Thunder Goblin or Sea-Dragon Conqueror.

Don't Lesnerize!

Richard Adams's estate succeeded in its bid to recover all the rights to his rabbit epic *Watership Down*, which Martin Rosen – director of the 1978 animated film adaptation – had claimed were his, making hefty profits from unauthorized sublicensing. The high court judge ordered payment of an immediate \$100,000 in damages plus £28,000 in costs and further damages to be decided at a later hearing. ([Guardian](#), 1 June)

John Brunner's *Meeting At Infinity* (1961), featuring the White Death plague, has (with hindsight) its prophetic moments: 'The doctor was a small man with a barking voice who wore a sterile mask night and day; to the patients he treated, and especially the present patient, the greatest danger was from unfiltered human breath.' [BA]

Eric Carle's *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* was exposed as a starkly alienated Outsider figure: '... more than just a caterpillar: it is a classic existentialist antihero, a lonely creature of pure greed, guided only by its own ravenousness, skirting the knife's edge between self-destruction and growth.' (Sam Anderson, [New York Times Magazine](#), 21 May) [PE]

John Clute's personal tally of *SF Encyclopedia* contributions has just crept past 2.7 million words, and our total count at sf-encyclopedia.com is a mere few hundred words short of six million. The first and second print editions ran to 730,000 and 1.3 million words respectively.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's estate is suing Netflix for claimed breach of copyright with the film *Enola Holmes*, based on novels by Nancy Springer (included in the lawsuit, along with her publishers Penguin Random House)

that give Sherlock a teenage sister. The key assertion is that although Holmes is mostly in the public domain, he displayed human emotions and respected women only in late stories still under the control of the estate. ([Raw Story](#), 26 June) [JB] Some readers will remember that the very first of the short stories begins with clearly indicated respect: ‘To Sherlock Holmes she is always *the* woman.’

Contusion

ONLINE. 2 Jul • **Virtual First Thursday**, 6-10pm, replacing the usual London pub meeting at the Bishop’s Finger. See tinyurl.com/uow6hqj.

ONLINE. 4 Jul • **Tolkien Society Seminar**, on adapting Tolkien to the screen etc. See www.tolkiensociety.org/events/seminar-2020/.

18 Jul • **Small Press Day** events throughout UK and Ireland. Likely to be postponed or held online only: see smallpressday.co.uk.

ONLINE. 29 Jul - 2 Aug • **CoNZealand** (Worldcon 78), New Zealand. Virtual attendance rates: \$300NZ reg, \$150 unwaged (NZ only), \$150 YA (born after 2000), \$75 child (born 2005-2010), ‘kid in tow’ (born after 2010) free, \$75 supporting. See conzealand.nz. *Hugo voting closes on 15 July, when the Voters’ Packet will be taken down. Ballots can be sent by mail to the administrator (in USA); online voting is not yet available.*

POSTPONED AGAIN. 6-9 Aug • **StokerCon** (horror). See below.

POSTPONED TO LATE OCT. 27-31 Aug • **Frightfest** (film), Leicester Square, London. *New dates awaited* at frightfest.co.uk/filmsevents.html.

CANCELLED. 28-31 Aug • **The Asylum** (steampunk), Lincoln. Next event: August Bank Holiday 2021. ‘Indomitable’ tickets to be transferred to 2021 and ‘wristband’ bookings refunded. Full announcement at www.facebook.com/groups/WelcomeToTheAsylum/ ... more to follow at www.asylumsteampunk.co.uk.

CANCELLED. 25-27 Sep • **Fantasycon 2020**, Resource for London. Refunds offered; or memberships transferable to 2021 (Midlands) or 2022 in London again, this time in an actual hotel, with GoH Liz Williams and Rivers Solomon. More to come at www.fantasycon.org.

ONLINE. 2-4 Oct • **Futuricon** (Rikon/Eurocon), Rijeka, Croatia. €10 reg; €5 supporting; under-14s free. See futuricon.eu.

ONLINE. 9-11 Oct • **Lakes International Comic Art Festival**, Kendal, Cumbria. *Free virtual event*. See www.comicartfestival.com.

POSTPONED TO 2021. 31 Oct • **BristolCon**, Bristol. See below.

CANCELLED. 31 Oct - 1 Nov • **Festival of Fantastic Films**, Manchester. Next event Autumn 2021. See fantastic-films.com/festival/.

2-8 Nov • **Talos IV**: SF Theatre Festival of London, The Cockpit, London. *New dates; was 15-21 June*. See cyborphic.com/talos-2020.

POSTPONED TO NOVEMBER 2021. 13-15 Nov • **Novacon 50**, Mercure Sherwood Hotel, Nottingham. Same venue; dates to follow; 2020 memberships will be refunded or transferred. See novacon.org.uk.

POSTPONED TO 2021. 14-15 Nov • **Comic Con**, Harrogate. See below.

28-31 Jan 2021 • **StokerCon** (horror), Grand and Royal Hotels, Scarborough. *Tentative new dates depending on developments; event first postponed from April to August*. Memberships and hotel bookings to be carried over. £100 reg; HWA members £90. See stokercon-uk.com.

30 Oct 2021 • **BristolCon**, Hilton DoubleTree Hotel, Bristol. GoH Anna Smith Spark and Adrian Tchaikovsky. See www.bristolcon.org.

13-14 Nov 2021 • **Comic Con**, Harrogate Convention Centre. Part of Thought Bubble festival. *New dates; 2020 tickets refunded or carried over*. £28 weekend pass or £17/day. See thoughtbubblefestival.com.

Rumblings. *Worldcon 2022*: Chicago, Illinois, vs Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. Site selection voting opened in June and closes on 29 July. See conzealand.nz/about/explore-worldcon/world-science-fiction-society-about/2022-worldcon-site-selection. • *Arvon Writing Courses*: venue closure extended to 31 August; the next sf course is 14-19 September.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others Report Us. Isaac Asimov is remembered in a characteristic pose: ‘Today, though, his image – with its wide smile behind heavy black eyeglass frames ...’ (Jay Gabler, ‘What to Make of Isaac Asimov, Sci-Fi Giant and

Dirty Old Man?', [Literary Hub](#), 14 May) [JH]

Awards. *Arthur C. Clarke* shortlist: *The City in the Middle of the Night* by Charlie Jane Anders; *The Light Brigade* by Kameron Hurley; *A Memory Called Empire* by Arkady Martine; *The Old Drift* by Namwali Serpell; *Cage of Souls* by Adrian Tchaikovsky; *The Last Astronaut* by David Wellington.

• *Lambda* (LGBTQ) genre winners: NONFICTION *In the Dream House* by Carmen Maria Machado. LESBIAN ROMANCE *Aurora's Angel* by Emily Noon. SF/FANTASY/HORROR *The Deep* by Rivers Solomon, Daveed Diggs, William Hutson and Jonathan Snipes. [KB]

• *Locus Awards*: SF NOVEL *The City in the Middle of the Night* by Charlie Jane Anders. FANTASY NOVEL *Middlegame* by Seanan McGuire. HORROR NOVEL *Black Leopard, Red Wolf* by Marlon James. YA NOVEL *Dragon Pearl* by Yoon Ha Lee. FIRST NOVEL *Gideon the Ninth* by Tamsyn Muir. NOVELLA *This Is How You Lose the Time War* by Amal El-Mohtar and Max Gladstone. NOVELETTE 'Omphalos' by Ted Chiang (*Exhalation*). SHORT STORY 'The Bookstore at the End of America' by Charlie Jane Anders (*A People's Future of the United States*). ANTHOLOGY *New Suns: Original Speculative Fiction by People of Color* ed. Nisi Shawl. COLLECTION *Exhalation* by Ted Chiang. MAGAZINE *Tor.com*. PUBLISHER *Tor*. EDITOR Ellen Datlow. ARTIST John Picacio. NONFICTION *Monster, She Wrote: The Women Who Pioneered Horror and Speculative Fiction* by Lisa Kröger & Melanie R. Anderson. ILLUSTRATED/ART *Spectrum 26: The Best in Contemporary Fantastic Art* ed. John Fleskes. SPECIAL AWARD *Writing the Other* by Nisi Shawl, Cynthia Ward and K. Tempest Bradford.

• *Rhysling* (poetry): SHORT 'Taking, Keeping' by Jessica J. Horowitz (*Apparition Lit* 1/19). LONG "Heliobacterium daphnephilum" by Rebecca Buchanan (*Star*Line* Summer 2019).

• *SFRA Award for Lifetime Contributions to SF Scholarship* (renamed because 'Pilgrim Award' was too much of a mouthful?): Sherryl Vint.

Horror-Free Zone. Plans for a *Frankenstein* museum in Bath (where Mary Shelley lived and wrote from September 1816 to March 1817) have been approved. A leader of the project said: 'It's in the top 100 most influential books of all time – but no-one in Bath mentions it.', and added the reassurance 'There won't be any blood or gore.' What, no charnel-houses or workshop of filthy creation? ([BBC](#), 4 June) [AIP]

R.I.P. *Kelly Asbury* (1960-2020), US filmmaker who directed *Shrek 2* (2004)

and *Gnomeo & Juliet* (2011, which he also co-wrote), with art/animation credits for *The Black Cauldron* (1985), *The Little Mermaid* (1989), *The Nightmare Before Christmas* (1993) and others, died on 26 June aged 60. [AIP]

- *Milena Benini* (1966), Croatian sf novelist, translator (of Moorcock and others) and fan with some short stories in English translation, died on 4 June. She contributed to such works as *The Complete Guide to Writing Fantasy* (2003, ed. Darin Park & Tom Dullemond). [VJ-K]

- *Steve Bing* (1965-2020), US film producer and writer who invested some \$80m of his inherited fortune in the production of *The Polar Express* (2004), committed suicide on 22 June; he was 55. [SJ]

- *Frank Bolle* (1924-2020), US comics artist who worked on many genre titles including *Captain Marvel*, *Doctor Solar*, *Flash Gordon*, *The Phantom* and the *Tarzan* newspaper strip, died on 12 May aged 95. [PDF]

- *Charly Bravo* (Ramón Carlos Mirón Bravo, 1943-2020), Spanish actor in many genre films including *1001 Nights* (1968), *Night of the Werewolf* (1981), *The Sea Serpent* (1985) and *Eliminators* (1986), died on 23 June aged 77. [SJ]

- *Pat Brymer*, US puppeteer and stuntman whose credits include *My Stepmother Is an Alien* (1988), *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* (1989) and *Team America: World Police* (2004), died on 12 April aged 70. [AIP]

- *Wendy Cooling*, UK author, editor and promoter of children's books, founder of Bookstart and MBE for services to children's literature, died on 23 June. [AIP] She edited several genre anthologies including *Out of This World: Stories of Virtual Reality* (1997).

- *Stuart Cornfeld* (1952-2020) US producer/actor whose credits include *The Fly* (1986), *Megamind* (2010) and *Vamps* (2012), died on 26 June aged 67. [AIP]

- *Linda Cristal* (1931-2020), Argentinian actress best known for *The High Chaparral*, with genre credits in various tv series and *The Dead Don't Die* (1975), died on 27 June aged 89. [SJ]

- *Denise Cronenberg*, Canadian costume designer for her brother David Cronenberg's *The Fly* (1986) and many later films, died on 22 May aged 81. [TM]

- *Wally K. Daly* (1940-2020), UK writer whose three-part radio sf trilogy opened with *Before the Screaming Begins* (Radio 4, 1978), and who novelized his cancelled 1985 *Doctor Who* story as *The Ultimate Evil* (1989),

died on 30 April aged 79. [S]

- *Bruce Jay Friedman* (1930-2020), US author and screenwriter who published short sf and co-scripted *Splash!* (1984), died on 3 June aged 90. [PDF]
- *Mark Glamack*, US animator who worked on many productions from Disney's *The Jungle Book* (1967) to *Courage the Cowardly Dog* (1999-2002) and directed the tv series *She-Ra: Princess of Power* (6 episodes, 1985) and *Bionic Six* (22 episodes, 1987), died on 29 May aged 73. [AIP]
- *Milton Glaser* (1929-2020), noted US graphic designer who created (amid much else) the **I ♥ NY** logo, the DC Comics 'bullet' logo and a number of sf book covers, died on 26 June aged 91. [AIP]
- *Mary Pat Gleason* (1950-2020), US actress in *I, Madman* (1989), *Evolution* (2001), *Bruce Almighty* (2003), *The Middleman* (2008), *Earth to Echo* (2014) and others, died on 2 June aged 70. [SJ]
- *James S. Henerson* (1936-2020), US screenwriter/producer who wrote many episodes of *I Dream of Jeannie* (1967-1970) and was executive producer of *Starman* (1986-1987), died on 18 June aged 84. [AIP]
- *Jim Holloway*, US artist whose work appeared in *Dragon* magazine and games products including *BattleTech*, *D&D* and *Paranoia*, died on 28 June. [PDF]
- *Sir Ian Holm* (1931-2020), distinguished UK actor whose many genre credits include *Alien* (1979), *Time Bandits* (1981), *Brazil* (1985), *eXistenZ* (1999), *The Lord of the Rings* (2001, 2003) and *The Hobbit* (2012, 2014), died on 19 June aged 88. [LP]
- *Anita Linda* (1924-2020), Filipino-US actress in 200+ films including *Magica blanca* (1955), *The Devil's Daughter* (1974), *Lorelei* (1975), *Kill Barbara with Panic* (1995) and *Seance* (2007), died on 10 June aged 95. [SJ]
- *Louis Mahoney* (1938-2020), Gambian-born UK actor in three *Doctor Who* stories (1973, 1975, 2007) and films including *The Plague of the Zombies* (1966) and *Omen III: The Final Conflict* (1981), died on 28 June aged 81.
- *Colin Manlove* (1942-2020), Scots fantasy scholar and anthologist whose ten books of criticism began with *Modern Fantasy* (1975) and include studies of J.K. Rowling (2010) and George MacDonald (2019), died on 1 June aged 78. [DAA]
- *Fabrizio Mioni* (1930-2020), Italian actor in *Hercules* (1958), *Hercules Unchained* (1959), and some genre tv series, died on 8 June aged 89. He was married to Maia 'Vampira' Normi (1922-2008). [SG]

- *Lennie Niehaus* (1929-2020), US composer whose film credits include *Ratboy* (1986) and *Space Cowboys* (2000), died on 28 May aged 90. [AIP]
- *Michael O’Hear*, US actor and producer seen in many genre productions from *FrightWorld* (2006) to *Captain Isotope & The Enemy of Space* (2018-2020), died on 24 June. [SJ]
- *Dennis O’Neil* (1939-2020), US comics writer who worked on *Green Lantern/Green Arrow* and *Batman*, editing DC’s *Batman* titles 1986-2000, died on 11 June aged 81. [F770]
- *Stella Pevsner* (1921-2020), US children’s/YA author who used supernatural themes in *Footsteps on the Stairs* (1984) and *Why the Ghost Cat Wore Rubies* (2019), died on 11 June aged 98. [PDF]
- *Peggy Pope* (1929-2020), US actress in *The Last Starfighter* (1984) and *Once Bitten* (1985), died on 27 May aged 91. [AIP]
- *Taryn Power* (1953-2020), US actress in *Sinbad and the Eye of the Tiger* (1977) and *The Sea Serpent* (1985), died on 26 June aged 66. [SJ]
- *Jean Raspail* (1925-2020) French author whose sf novel was the racially controversial *Le camp des saints* (1973, trans as *The Camp of the Saints*), died on 14 June aged 94. [AIP]
- *Carl Reiner* (1922-2020), multiple Emmy-winning US comic actor and film-maker whose genre credits include *Oh, God!* (1977), *The Man with Two Brains* (1983, which he co-wrote) and *All of Me* (1984) as director, and *The 2000 Year Old Man* (1975, written with Mel Brooks), *The Blue Elephant* (2006), and *Toy Story 4* (2019) as actor, died on 29 June aged 98. [AS]
- *Ramon Revilla* (1927-2020), Filipino actor whose films include *The Killing of Satan* (1983) and *Exodus: Tales from the Enchanted Kingdom* (2005), died on 26 June aged 93. [SJ]
- *Joel Schumacher* (1939-2020), US director whose films include *The Lost Boys* (1987), *Flatliners* (1990), *Batman Forever* (1995) and *Batman & Robin* (1997), died on 22 June aged 80. [PDF]
- *Joe Sinnott* (1926-2020), Marvel Comics artist and inker active from 1965 to 2019, working on *Fantastic Four*, *Spider-Man* and others, died on 25 June aged 93. [PDF]
- *Monica Stephens*, long-time employee of Steve Jackson Games and companion of Steve Jackson, who was active in fandom (*inter alia* co-editing the 1988 Worldcon daily newsletter), died on 18 June aged 59. [F770]
- *Mel Winkler* (1941-2020), US actor in various genre series including *The New Batman Adventures* (voice, 1997-1998) and *Oswald* (2001-2003), died

on 11 June aged 78. [AIP]

- Late report: *John Winston* (1927-2019), UK actor in the original *Star Trek* (1967-1969, as transporter chief), *The Wrath of Khan* (1982) and *Max Headroom* (1987), died on 19 September 2019 aged 91. [DSTN]
- *Carlos Ruiz Zafón* (1964-2020), Spanish author best known for the Gothic mystery *La sombra del viento* (*The Shadow of the Wind*, 2001), who also wrote horror and supernatural fiction, died on 19 June aged 55. [MJE]

The Weakest Link. *Jeopardy* answer requiring the correct question: ‘We got this word from a 1920 play by Karel Čapek about mechanical [sic] men and women.’ *Contestant*: ‘What is Android?’ (*Jeopardy*, 6 June) [AIP]

- *Ben Shephard*: ‘*The Honourable Schoolboy* and *Smiley’s People* are sequels to which 1974 John Le Carré novel?’ *Contestant*: ‘*Frankenstein*.’ (ITV, *Tipping Point*) [PE]

Magazine Scene. Andy Cox tells me that *Interzone* is skipping the July/August issue: number 288 will be dated September/October.

- Neil Clarke bemusedly reports: ‘Someone tried to submit “The Nine Billion Names of God” by Arthur C. Clarke to *Clarkesworld*. All they changed was the author’s name and one word in the title.’ (Twitter, 19 June)
- John Joseph Adams of Adamant Press says that *Fantasy* magazine, dormant since 2016, will return in November: see fantasy-magazine.com.

Random Fandom. *The Fandom Directory* stirred to life in June with an unexpected flurry of update requests. Entries at fandata.com that located me and *Ansible* in the city of Berkshire have duly been amended.

The Dead Past. *20 Years Ago*: ‘I think we may say that Harry Potter fever is getting out of hand when the *Washington Post* devotes 39 column inches, including two pictures, to the astonishing story that some kid managed to buy this year’s manifestation before the release date.

- Nancy Stouffer’s plagiarism charges include a claim to have invented the term Muggles, conflicting somewhat with the *Oxford English Dictionary* – which lists “muggle” as 1205 Kentish dialect for “tail” and, better still, 20th-century slang for marihuana. Children’s Author In Covert Drugs Advocacy Scandal!’ ([Ansible 156](http://Ansible156), July 2000)

Editorial. *Ansible Editions* is pleased to announce the release of *The Full Glass Bushel* by Bob Shaw, edited by Rob Jackson and myself: this collects all Bob’s ‘Glass Bushel’ columns for *Hyphen*, plus his several non-Bushel

articles in *Hyphen* and the two further Bushels published 1984 in *Science Fiction Review*. Another free ebook from the TAFF site (where donations are appreciated): taff.org.uk/ebooks.php?x=Bushel. Work continues on the tentatively titled *Slow Pint Glass*, collecting Bob Shaw's *other* fanwriting not included in the above or in last year's *The Serious Scientific Talks*.

- *Puff Love*, the final mystery novel by John Sladek, has been delayed but should appear before long as a trade paperback.

C.o.A. Brian Ameringen/Porcupine Books www.porcupinebooks.co.uk.

Thog's Masterclass. *Simile Dept.* 'The exultant expression clung to his face for a moment, like a stopped movie, and then it cracked and slid slowly away, like thick snow cracking and sliding from a canted roof.' (Ira Levin, *A Kiss Before Dying*, 1953)

- *Alternate Geography.* 'On the Western shores of the Atlantic, the British appear to be forgetting their obsession with submerged nations – again, except for Wells. While on the Eastern shores, the Americans ...' (Brian W. Aldiss, *Billion Year Spree*, 1973)

- *Dept of Sibilant Susurrus.* 'After a moment, he spoke hissing. "You lie!"' (John Brunner, *Meeting at Infinity*, 1961) [BA]

- *Neat Tricks Dept.* 'His unnatural eyes floated back to mine [...] One of his thick, black eyebrows rose into the shape of a question mark.' (Deborah Harkness, *A Discovery of Witches*, 2011) [BR]

Endnotes

Virtual Fan Meetings.

- 2 July 2020, evening: Alison Scott has set up this alternative to the physical London First Thursday meeting: 'Please share this with people who you know typically come to the Bishop's Finger, but aren't on Facebook.'

<https://medium.com/@BohemianCoast/first-thursday-london-sf-fan-virtual-drinks-5232021e961f>

- 16 July 2020, 8pm-9pm: Event Horizon online.

<https://www.shorelineofinfinity.com/>

- 19 July 2020 (and every other third Sunday of the month), afternoon/early evening: Sheffield SF and Fantasy Society online meeting using Zoom. For access details contact Fran Dowd, thesofa [at] gmail dot com.

- 10 August 2020, 8pm-9:30pm: Event Horizon online.

<https://www.shorelineofinfinity.com/>

Editorial II. More than two months later, I'm still wrestling with the aftermath of the Lulu.com site redesign. The Ansible Editions mid-year royalty statements have been a pain because the glacial 'migration' of data from the old site still hasn't revealed the actual sales breakdown for April. Also lost in migration was my registered status as a UK taxpayer, which I first discovered when the June payment had 30% withholding tax deducted from US income. That one has since been sorted out, but I'm nervously waiting for the next nasty surprise....

Outraged Letters. *Vernon Speed* writes: 'Just in case you missed it, there was a significant reference to J.G. Ballard in yesterday's (Tuesday 30th) BBC 4 programme *The Hidden Wilds of the Motorway*. Mentioned (and showed) his house, talked about *Concrete Island* and his influence on the presenter. Turned out that she is a big fan. / The whole programme was very interesting, but I wasn't expecting this extra bonus.' (1 July)

Some Links from the *Ansible* home page.

- *Beyond the Outposts* review in *Locus*

<https://locusmag.com/2020/05/paul-di-filippo-reviews-beyond-the-outposts-essays-on-sf-and-fantasy-1955-1996-by-algis-budrys/>

- Official fundraiser for Uncle Hugo's and Uncle Edgar's bookshops

<https://www.gofundme.com/f/let-us-help-save-uncle-hugo039s>

Thog's Golden Oldies from *Ansible* 156, July 2000. *Dept of Suggestive Motor Launches*. 'Discords of remote activity rose above the more intimate throbbing of our screw.' (Sax Rohmer, *The Mystery of Dr Fu Manchu*, 1913)

- *Dept of Scientific Method*. 'For one, Hackett found a way to find a way to discover how the broadcast-power receivers worked.' (Murray Leinster, *The Greks Bring Gifts*, 1964)

- *Dept of Non-Fiction*. 'Quotation marks of worry cleaved the aging man's forehead.' (Dan Baum, *Citizen Coors*, 2000) 'Which illuminates again the nerd underbelly that is an inclination towards the human-transcending and the synthetic-universe preferring.' (Paulina Borsook, *Cyberselfish*, 2000)

- *Elementary Dept*. 'Sodium is what stars are made of.' (Adam Roberts, *Salt*, 2000)

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A. Anderson, Karen Babich, John Boston, Malcolm Edwards, *Daily Star Trek News*, Paul Di Filippo, *File 770*, Steve Green, Jon Hancock, Steve Jones, Vlatko Juric-Kokic, Todd Mason, Lawrence Person, Andrew I. Porter, *Private Eye*, Bob Rickard, Siadwell, Al Sirois and Hero Distributors: Durdles Books (BSFG), SCIS/Prophecy and Alan Stewart (Oz). 1 July 2020

Ansible® 397, August 2020

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Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Ulrika O'Brien**. Available for SAE, flapping tatters,
or songs that the Hyades shall sing.

CoNZealand: news from [the first virtual Worldcon!](#)

- *Worldcon 2022*: as expected, voters preferred Chicago over Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, by 517 to 33 votes: see Chicon 8 in the events list below.
- *Hugo Awards*: NOVEL *A Memory Called Empire* by Arkady Martine. NOVELLA *This Is How You Lose the Time War* by Amal El-Mohtar and Max Gladstone. NOVELETTE *Emergency Skin* by N.K. Jemisin. SHORT ‘As the Last I May Know’ by S.L. Huang (Tor.com). SERIES ‘The Expanse’ by James S. A. Corey. RELATED WORK ‘2019 John W. Campbell Award Acceptance Speech’ by Jeannette Ng. *Graphic LaGuardia* by Nnedi Okorafor, Tana Ford, James Devlin. DRAMATIC – LONG *Good Omens*. DRAMATIC – SHORT *The Good Place: ‘The Answer’*. EDITOR – SHORT Ellen Datlow. EDITOR – LONG Navah Wolfe. PROFESSIONAL ARTIST John Picacio. SEMIPROZINE *Uncanny Magazine*. FANZINE *The Book Smugglers*. FANCAST *Our Opinions Are Correct*. FAN WRITER Bogi Takács. FAN ARTIST Elise Matthesen.
- ‘Not a Hugo’: LODESTAR (YA): *Catfishing on CatNet* by Naomi Kritzer. ASTOUNDING (formerly John W. Campbell): R.F. Kuang.
- *Retro Hugos* for 1944 work: NOVEL ‘Shadow over Mars’ (also as *The Nemesis from Terra*) by Leigh Brackett (*Startling*). NOVELLA ‘Killdozer!’ by Theodore Sturgeon (*Astounding*). NOVELETTE ‘City’ by Clifford D. Simak (*Astounding*). SHORT ‘I, Rocket’ by Ray Bradbury (*Amazing*). SERIES ‘The Cthulhu Mythos’. RELATED WORK ‘The Science-Fiction Field’ by Leigh Brackett (*Writer’s Digest*). GRAPHIC *Superman: ‘The Mysterious Mr. Mxyztplk’*. DRAMATIC (tie): *The Canterville Ghost* and *The Curse of the Cat People*. EDITOR John W. Campbell, Jr. ARTIST Margaret Brundage. FANZINE *Voice of the Imagi-Nation*. FAN WRITER Fritz Leiber.
- *First Fandom Hall of Fame*: Roger Sims and (posthumous) Chad Oliver. *Moskowitz Archive Award*: John Carter Tibbetts. *Big Heart*: Janice Gelb &

Stephen Boucher.

- In the absence of a million monkeys with typewriters, the official [ConNZealand 'newsletter' Cruise Log](#) was constructed as a dump from social media feeds. Oh dear.

The Pallid Mask

Adam-Troy Castro can afford to be philosophical about all the copies of his novel *Pharos* offered as naughty downloads from pirate websites, finding consolation in the strong likelihood that these are laden with hideous digital infections, not to mention the interesting fact that he has never written a novel called *Pharos*. (Facebook, 17 July)

Ann Leckie takes her pleasures where she can: 'Pleased to note that Google Translate still thinks the Spanish title of *Ancillary Justice* is "Assistant Attorney General".' (Twitter, 7 July) [F770]

George R.R. Martin, hosting [the online Hugo presentations](#), made a resolute attempt on the record for interminability: a heavily cut video soon appeared on YouTube, titled [When the Toastmaster Talks Less](#).

J.K. Rowling still has many loyal fans, but may be privately thinking that some are a bit too loyal: 'Not long before Rowling was published, women authors were unheard of.' (Twitter, 6 July)

John Sladek, perpetrator of the hoax *Arachne Rising: The Thirteenth Sign of the Zodiac* (1977 as by James Vogh), would if he were still with us be chuckling at recent Twitter excitement over a not even very new claim that NASA has wickedly upset the astrological apple-cart by adding the thirteenth 'sign' Ophiuchus (actually known about for millennia).

Betsy Wollheim of DAW Books broke the code of *omertà* and grumbled on Facebook about her author Patrick Rothfuss's tardiness with his third 'Kingkiller' fantasy. A fan had speculated about lengthy editorial processes at DAW, but: 'I've never seen a word of book three ... I don't think he's written anything for six years.' ([Newsweek](#), 27 July)

Conjugatae

ONLINE. 6 Aug • **Virtual First Thursday**, 6-10pm, replacing the usual

London pub meeting. See tinyurl.com/uow6hqj. *The Bishop's Finger reopens on 3 August, but it still seems too soon for such a gathering.* [RR]

ONLINE. 15 Aug • **Small Press Day** events throughout UK and Ireland. Postponed from 18 July: see smallpressday.co.uk.

ONLINE. 23 Aug • **BSFA AGM**, members only. 2:30-5:30pm. With proposal of a new constitution! Discord link is discord.gg/hfaHTWV.

ONLINE. 28-31 Aug • **Frightfest** (film festival), 'geo-locked for viewers in the UK only'. Tickets from frightfest.co.uk/filmsevents.html.

29-30 Aug • **Sanctuary** steampunk gathering, Kelham Hall Park, NG23 5QX. Replaces the cancelled Lincoln 'Asylum' festival. Outdoor event with social distancing and masks required. Prebooking only – no at-the-door tickets. See www.tickettailor.com/events/asylumxi/390265.

ONLINE. 18-20 Sep • **Oxonmoot** (The Tolkien Society). *New dates.* £30 'per connection' for all events; Tolkien Society members £20. More details at www.tolkiensociety.org/events/oxonmoot-online/.

POSTPONED TO 2021. 19 Sep • **International Comics Expo** (ICE), Edgbaston Stadium, Birmingham. See www.thecomicsshow.co.uk.

CANCELLED. 26-27 Sep • **HorrorCon UK**, Rotherham. *See below.*

CANCELLED. 26-27 Sep • **Nor-Con** (media), Norfolk. *See below.*

ONLINE. 7-11 Oct • **Grimmfest** (horror/cult films), was to be at Odeon Manchester Great Northern. See grimmfest.com.

CANCELLED. 9-11 Oct • **Octocon**, Crowne Plaza Hotel, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15. Memberships rolled over to 2021; refunds offered. An online substitute event for 2020 is planned. See octocon.com.

CANCELLED. 6-8 Nov • **Armadacon**, Future Inns, Plymouth. Memberships will be transferred to the 2021 event. See www.armadacon.org.

28-31 Jan 2021 • **ChillerCon UK** (horror), Grand and Royal Hotels, Scarborough. The renamed StokerCon, postponed from April to August 2020 and then to 2021; there will be no Stoker Awards presentation, presumably because it's the wrong time of year. *Now £130 reg; HWA members £120; £50 supp.* Day rates etc. at chillercon-uk.com.

2-5 Apr 2021 • **ConFusion** (Eastercon), Birmingham NEC Hilton. £70 reg until 22 November; £40 concessions; accompanied under-18s £20, under-5s £1. Online registration now live at confusion2021.uk.

15-16 May 2021 • **HorrorCon UK**, Magna Science Adventure Centre, Sheffield Rd, Rotherham, S60 1DX. 2020 tickets transferred; refunds on application *before 31 August*. See horrorconuk.com.

25-26 Sep 2021 • **Nor-Con** (media), Norfolk Showground Arena. Tickets £13 (£16 early entry); child £9 (£10) from www.nor-con.co.uk.

1-5 Sep 2022 • Chicon 8 (80th Worldcon), Chicago, IL, USA. GoH Charles de Lint (author), Floyd Norman (artist), Edie Stern & Joe Siclari (fan), Erle Korshak (First Fandom). \$170 reg; under-25s \$90; under-18s \$70; under 14s \$50; under-10s free; \$50 supporting; all valid to 30 April 2021. Special rates for site selection voters etc. at chicon.org.

Rumblings. *Worldcon Bids*. Nice in 2023 (France) is postponed owing to COVID-19 disruption; Brisbane, Australia, will bid for 2025; Jeddahcon, the failed Saudi Arabian 2022 bid, is trying again for 2026.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. *Interviewer (Hannah Beckerman):* ‘Are there any genres you avoid in your own reading?’ *Kit de Waal:* ‘Yes, I don’t read any fantasy. I’ve never even read *Lord of the Rings* or *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. I only really like things that can happen or did happen. As soon as you introduce a talking horse or Mr Tumnus, I’m just not interested.’ ([Guardian](http://guardian.com), 18 July) [JH] But magic realism is just fine.

Awards. *Cordwainer Smith Rediscovery:* Rick Raphael.

- *Kate Greenaway Medal* (children’s illustration): Shaun Tan for *Tales from the Inner City*.
- *Library of Congress Prize for American Fiction:* Colson Whitehead. [F770]
- *Prometheus* (libertarian): NOVEL *Alliance Rising* by C. J. Cherryh and Jane S. Fancher. CLASSIC ‘Sam Hall’ (1953) by Poul Anderson.
- *SF and Fantasy Hall of Fame:* Ted Chiang, D.C. Fontana, the *Star Wars* film series, and *Watchmen* (the original graphic novel). [L]
- *Scribe/Faust* for life achievement in media tie-in work: Jean Rabe.
- *Shirley Jackson* (suspense/horror) best novel: *The Book of X* by Sarah Rose

Etter. [ED]

- *World Fantasy* life achievement: Karen Joy Fowler, Rowena Morrill.

Not Since *Conan the Barbarian* ... Tom Shippey's appreciative review of Sarah Kozloff's fantasy tetralogy is mostly hidden behind a paywall, but the headline added by the *Wall Street Journal* caused some fannish outcry and even sarcasm: 'Science Fiction: Finally, a Grown-up Fantasy / The "Nine Realms" sequence has the scope and much of the gusto of Robert E. Howard's famous Hyboria ...' (17 July)

R.I.P. Late report: *F. Alexander Brejcha* (1957-2019), who began selling to *Analog* in 1989 and published the collections *No World Warranty* and *People First!* (both 2004), died on 11 February 2019 aged 61. [SHS]

- *Wilford Brimley* (1934-2020), US actor in *The Thing* (1982), *Cocoon* (1985; also sequel) and *Ewoks: Battle of Endor* (1985), died on 1 August aged 85.

[LP]

- *Earl Cameron* (1917-2020), Bermuda-born UK actor with many genre credits from *Tarzan the Magnificent* (1960), *Thunderball* (1965) and *Doctor Who* (1966) to *Neverwhere* (1996), *Revelation* (2001) and *Inception* (2010), died on 3 July aged 102. [DC]

- *Lewis John Carlino* (1932-2020), US screenwriter/director whose script credits include *Seconds* (1966) and *Where Have All the People Gone* (1974), died on 17 June aged 88. [AIP]

- *Victor Chizhikov* (1935-2020), Russian illustrator of more than 100 childrens' books (including fantasy) and designer of the 1980 Olympics bear mascot, died on 20 July aged 84. [PDF]

- *Harry Clein*, Hollywood publicist for *Star Wars* (1977), *Batman Returns* (1992), *Toy Story* (1995), *The Blair Witch Project* (1999) and many more, died on 18 June aged 82. [AIP]

- *Joanna Cole* (1944-2020), prolific US children's author best known for the 'Magic School Bus' sequence opening with *At the Waterworks* (1986, with illustrator Bruce Degen) – which became a long-running tv series – died on 12 July aged 75. [PDF]

- *Nick Cordero* (1978-2020), Canadian actor who played the title role in the off-Broadway musical of *The Toxic Avenger* (2010-2011), died on 5 July aged 41. [F770]

- *Gary William Crawford* (1953-2020), US author, critic and publisher who founded Gothic Press in 1979 and wrote books on Robert Aickman, Ramsey

Campbell and J. Sheridan Le Fanu, died on 9 July aged 67. [DAA]

- *Charlie Daniels* (1936-2020) US musician who used supernatural themes in his best-known country song 'The Devil Went Down to Georgia' (1979, a #1 hit) and in 'The Legend Of Wooley Swamp' (1980), died on 6 July aged 83.

[LP]

- *Olivia de Havilland* (1916-2020), noted UK actress whose rare genre credits include *The Swarm* (1978), died on 25 July aged 104. [LP]

- *Bent Fabricius-Bjerre* (1924-2020), prolific Danish film/tv composer whose credits include *Jasper's Ghost* (1992), died on 28 July aged 95. [MMW]

- *Carl Gafford* (1953-2020), US comics fan who joined DC in 1973 and also worked for Marvel and others, mostly as editor and colorist, died on 13 July aged 66. [PDF]

- *Galyn Görg* (1964-2020), US actress in *The Wizard of Speed and Time* (1988), *RoboCop 2* (1990), *Twin Peaks* (1990), *M.A.N.T.I.S.* (1994-1995) and others, died on 14 July aged 55. [PDF]

- *Mavis Haut* (1936-2020), author and critic who reviewed for *Foundation* and wrote *The Hidden Library of Tanith Lee: Themes and Subtexts from Dionysos to the Immortal Gene* (2001), died on 6 July. [JC]

- *Grant Imahara* (1970-2020), US electronics/animatronics expert whose effects credits include all three *Star Wars* prequels, *The Lost World: Jurassic Park* (1997), *Galaxy Quest* (1999), *A.I.: Artificial Intelligence* (2001) and two *Matrix* sequels, died on 13 July aged 49. [TM] Actor credits include *Star Trek Continues* (as Sulu, 2013-2017).

- *Jean-Pierre Laigle* (1947-2020), French writer, critic, sf historian, translator from many languages for many French sf publishers, and editor/publisher of *Antares* (as Jean-Pierre Moumon), died on 1 July. [J-HH]

- *Moonyeenn Lee*, South African casting director whose credits include *Curse III: Blood Sacrifice* (1991) and *Tarzan and the Lost City* (1998), died on 18 July aged 76. [SJ]

- *Johnny Mandel* (1925-2020), Oscar-winning US composer who scored *Escape to Witch Mountain* (1975), *Freaky Friday* (1976), *Brenda Starr* (1989) and others, died on 29 June aged 94. [MMW]

- *Bob Martin* (1948-2020), founding editor in 1979 of *Fangoria*, with screenwriter credits for *Frankenhooker* (1990) and *Basket Case 3* (1991), died on 20 July aged 71. [PDF]

- *Henry Martin* (1925-2020), long-time *New Yorker* cartoonist who also contributed over 100 cartoons to *F&SF*, died on 30 June aged 94. [AIP/GVG]

- *Kurt Mitchell*, US writer, artist, comics creator and videogame developer whose novels include *A Stranger Side of Red* (2012), died on 1 July aged 67. [SJ]
- *Haruma Miura* (1990-2020), Japanese actor in *Attack on Titan* (2015) and the tv mini-series *Never Let Me Go* (2016), died on 18 July aged 30. [AIP]
- *Ennio Morricone* (1928-2020) , Italian film/tv composer whose credits include *The Thing* (1982), *Red Sonja* (1985), *Genesis: The Creation and the Flood* (1994) and *Mission to Mars* (2000), died on 6 July aged 91. [SG]
- *Ro Nagey* (1953-2020), US fan, con-goer, fanzine publisher, co-founder of the Stilyagi Air Corps fan club and juggler (sometimes with Stephen Leigh as Cosmos and Chaos) who had for some years lived in Wales, died on 27 July aged 67. [JZ]
- *Ted Newsom* (1952-2020), US film-maker, film historian and screenwriter whose documentaries on genre topics include the *100 Years of Horror* series (1996), and who had many director credits from *Evil Spawn* (1987) to *Superman and the Secret Planet* (2013), died on 4 July aged 67. [SG]
- *Jonathan Oppenheim* (1952-2020), US film editor best known for documentaries, with a genre credit for *The Muppets Take Manhattan* (1984), died on 17 July aged 67. [AIP]
- *Alan Parker* (1944-2020), award-winning UK filmmaker whose productions include *Pink Floyd – The Wall* (1982) and *Angel Heart* (1987), died on 31 July aged 76. [SG/JJ]
- *Regis Philbin* (1931-2020), US tv host and actor in *Little Nicky* (2000), *Pinocchio* (2002), *Shrek the Third* (2007) and *Shrek Forever After* (2010), died on 24 July aged 88. [LP]
- *Kelly Preston* (1962-2020), US actress in *SpaceCamp* (1986), *Amazon Women on the Moon* (1987), *Battlefield Earth* (2000) and *The Cat in the Hat* (2003), died on 12 July aged 57. [AIP]
- *Naya Rivera* (1987-2020), US actress in *The Master of Disguise* (2002), *Frankenhood* (2009) and *At the Devil's Door* (2014), died on 8 July aged 33. [SJ]
- *Maurice Roëves* (1937-2020), Scots actor whose genre credits include *Doomwatch* (1970), *The Nightmare Man* (1981), *Doctor Who: 'The Caves of Androzani'* (1984) and *Judge Dredd* (1995), died on 15 July aged 83. [S]
- *Annie Ross* (1930-2020), UK singer and actress in *The Beast Must Die* (1974), *Superman III* (1983), *Witchery* (1988) and *Basket Case 2 and 3* (1990, 1991), died on 21 July aged 89. [SJ]

- *John Saxon* (1935-2020), US actor in *Planet Earth* (1974), *Strange New World* (1975), *Battle Beyond the Stars* (1980), *A Nightmare on Elm Street* (1984), *Death House* (1988, which he also directed) and *From Dusk Till Dawn* (1996), died on 25 July aged 84. [LP]
- *Ronald L. Schwary* (1944-2020), Oscar-winning US producer whose credits include *Shadow of the Hawk* (1976), **batteries not included* (1987) and *Medium* (2005-2011), died on 2 July aged 76. [AIP]
- *Jacqueline Scott* (1931-2020), US actress whose genre credits include *Empire of the Ants* (1977), died on 23 July aged 89. [PDF]
- *Susan Sizemore* (1951-2020), US author of bestselling paranormal romances whose series include the vampire-themed ‘Laws of the Blood’ (6 novels) and ‘Primes’ (9 novels), died on 20 July aged 69. [JLN]
- *Phyllis Somerville* (1943-2020), US actress in *It All Came True* (1998), *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* (2008) and *Daredevil* (2015), died on 16 July aged 76. [AIP]
- *Guy Thomas*, US screenwriter who scripted *Wholly Moses!* (1980), died on 10 July aged 66. [AIP]
- *Glen Warminger* (1957-2020), UK fan and convention-goer – initially active in the Norwich sf group – whose fanzine was *This Farce* (5 issues 1980-1984), died on 17 July aged 62. [RS]
- *Brad Watson* (1955-2020), US author of two novels and much short fiction – some, like ‘Water Dog God: A Ghost Story’, fantastic – died on 8 July aged 64. [GVG]

The Weakest Link. Q: ‘What celestial body orbits the Earth at a distance of about 239,000 miles?’ A: ‘The Sun.’ (ITV, *The Chase*.) [PE]

Sword and Sordidry. Lin Carter’s literary executor Robert M. Price revived Carter’s fantasy anthology series with *Flashing Swords 6* (Pulp Hero Press, August), but contrived to sabotage it with his introduction. This wildly irrelevant political rant persuaded several contributors – who hadn’t seen it until Amazon let them ‘Look inside’ – to withdraw their stories, and the publisher to delist the book. ([Bleeding Cool](#), 31 July)

Random Fandom. *Fan Funds*: the CoNZealand online auction raised \$NZ2,190 for DUFF, FFANZ, GUFF and TAFF.

- [The Retro Hugo Statistics](#) reveal that a single Fan Writer nomination for 1944 work (it took three to get on the final ballot and no one had more than six) went to some chap called David Langford. Ho ho, very satirical....

The Critical Heritage. Clifton Fadiman introduces a James Blish story: ‘This one, by an English science-fictioneer who at his best is as good as any of our home products ...’ (*The Mathematical Magpie*, 1962)

Editorial. Ansible Editions has just released John Sladek’s last completed novel, the offbeat mystery *Puff Love*, as a trade paperback and in the usual ebook formats. More at ae.ansible.uk/?t=pufflove.

Thog’s Masterclass. *eyeballs in the Simile.* ‘... Harrowhark was quivering like a maggot next to a dead duck. As the Third traipsed out – as noisy as if they were leaving a play, not a sickroom – Harrow’s eyes went with them.’ (Tamsyn Muir, *Gideon the Ninth*, 2019) [NE]

• *Neat Tricks.* ‘He was standing face-to-face with the man without a face.’ (Alfred Bester, *The Demolished Man*, 1953) [J-HH]

• *Familiar Scene in the Chemistry Lab.* ‘... there were test tubes, beakers and a few graduates broken and lying around.’ (Jerry Sohl, *The Haploids*, 1952) [BA]

• *Expressionist Dept.* ‘She stamped her foot, but a merry smile contradicted her stern frown.’ (Miles J. Breuer, ‘The Captured Cross-Section’, *Amazing Stories*, 1929)

• *Servants of the What?* ‘... then he saw two pheasants balancing on the rim of the fountain. A wanking and flapping from behind made him wince ...’ (Pamela C. Dean, *The Secret Country*, 1985) [BA]

• *Radiophonic Workshop Dept.* ‘She pushed her chair forward and tried to drown out all of the noise around her: Marianne on the telephone, Charlie banging away, the persistence of a clock ticking somewhere in the room, and the sound of Mr. Babcock’s eyeballs on her back.’ (Susie Orman Schnall, *We Came Here to Shine*, 2020) [KM]

Endnotes

The Dead Past. *40 Years Ago*, a plunge was taken: ‘For reasons shrouded in official secrecy and middle-class reticence [...] this humble editor has left AWRE for the far more thrilling and less remunerative field of pro writing. Undaunted by the encouragement of publishers (“It’s an easy decision to make, but ...”) and agents (“The book trade is in the worst depression it has known for a great many years ...”), your hero freed himself with a single bound and is now self-employed! Some day I must write a book....’ (Ansible

[11](#), August 1980) Some day I must.

Virtual Fan Meetings.

- 6 August 2020, evening: Alison Scott has set up this alternative to the physical London First Thursday meeting: ‘Please share this with people who you know typically come to the Bishop’s Finger, but aren’t on Facebook.’
<https://medium.com/@BohemianCoast/first-thursday-london-sf-fan-virtual-drinks-5232021e961f>
- 10 August 2020, 8pm-9:30pm: Event Horizon online.
<https://www.shorelineofinfinity.com/>
- 16 August 2020 (and every other third Sunday of the month), afternoon/early evening: Sheffield SF and Fantasy Society online meeting using Zoom. For access details contact Fran Dowd, thesofa [at] gmail dot com.

Editorial II. Four of the free ebooks at the TAFF site were significantly updated in July with added material: *All Our Yesterdays: The Fanzine Columns* (December 2019) by Harry Warner Jr, *A Budrys Miscellany* by Algis Budrys (May 2020), *The Full Glass Bushel* (June 2020) by Bob Shaw and *The Serious Scientific Talks* (November 2019) by Bob Shaw. See taff.org.uk/ebooks.php?all&chron.

Some Links from the *Ansible* home page.

- CoNZealand Hugo and Retro Hugo statistics; watch the Hugo ceremony; condensed version *When the Toastmaster Talks Less*
<https://conzealand.nz/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/2020-Hugo-statistics.pdf>
<https://conzealand.nz/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/1945-Retro-Hugo-statistics.pdf>
<https://watch.thefantasy.network/the-2020-hugo-awards-livestream/> (3hr 35min)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7yGPBIQvs0Y> (1hr 42min)
- New Michael Moorcock bibliography under construction
<http://moorcography.org/>
- Scribe Awards for media tie-in work
<https://www.facebook.com/jonathan.maberry.5/posts/10158583193348270>
- World Fantasy Awards shortlist
<https://www.wfc2020.org/world-fantasy-award>
- Worlds Apart: Sci-Fi Visions of Altered Reality
<https://www.nybooks.com/daily/2019/07/25/worlds-apart-sci-fi-visions-of->

[altered-reality/](#)

Late-Breaking Awards Extra: Mike Ashley has won the Munsey Award for services to the pulp community.

<https://www.pulpfest.com/2020/08/our-2020-munsey-award-winner/>

Thog's Golden Oldies from *Ansible* 157, August 2000. 'Out came the contents of his stomach in a heaving, gelatinous rush – the mixed grill he had eaten for breakfast at the hotel, the sandwich and the can of 7-Up he had had for lunch ...' (J.M.H. Lovegrove, *The Krilov Continuum*, 1998)

• *Pre-Copernican Dept.* 'The lurid light was as bright as the day of a planet circled by a red sun.' (Barbara Michaels, *Houses of Stone*, 1993)

• *Dept of Unexpected Positioning.* 'The sky over Vattown was a dull, flat, grey, and Ada Chichelski walked beneath it.' (Anne Harris, *Accidental Creatures*, 1998)

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Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Atom**, from 1986. Available for SAE or a Project for
a General Illumination of the Human Mind.

The Happy Hypocrite

John Boyne's research for his very serious historical novel *A Traveller at the Gates of Wisdom* led him to include a recipe for red dye, allegedly used at the court of Attila the Hun, with such specialist ingredients as keese wing, Octorok eyeball, red lizalfos tail and Hylia shrooms. Incautious Googling had unearthed dye-making instructions from the fantasy videogame *Zelda: Breath of the Wild*. ([Guardian](#), 3 August)

Brendan DuBois spotted a tasty new adverb in the *New York Times Book Review* for 23 August: 'Sometime between then and now, the writer Kurt Andersen argues in his essential, absorbing, infuriating, full-of-facts-you-didn't-know, saxophonely written new book....' (Facebook, 23 August) The time has perhaps come for all of us to act accordionly.

Mike Moorcock, speaking for the Jack Trevor Story Memorial Prize committee, announced Peter S. Beagle as winner of the 2020 award – a cup plus \$500 to be spent in 'a week to a fortnight'. (11 August) As Jack Trevor Story once told a bankruptcy court: 'You know how it is, judge. Two hundred or two thousand. It always lasts a week to a fortnight.'

Marc Zicree, a member of SFWA, spammed its membership directory with mass email plugging his television project. The SFWA Board was not pleased, and fast-tracked an already planned announcement that the directory 'is not to be used for marketing or promotional purposes', with hideous penalties such as 'a formal letter of censure' and (second offence) ejection from SFWA. Zicree responded with a video non-apology consisting mostly of further self-promotion. [F770]

Consistory

ONLINE. 3 Sep • **Virtual First Thursday**, 6-10pm, replacing the usual London pub meeting. See tinyurl.com/uow6hqj. *The Bishop's Finger reopened on 3 August, but only 12 people are allowed in 'our' bar.* [RR]

ONLINE. 16 Sep • **Launch Event** for the Centre for Fantasy and the Fantastic, University of Glasgow. 6pm-8pm. With Ellen Kushner, Terri Windling, Brian Attebery, Robert Maslen. Free ticket booking via the CFF website at fantasy.glasgow.ac.uk (see the post for 24 August).

ONLINE. 18-20 Sep • **Oxonmoot** (The Tolkien Society). *New dates.* £30 'per connection' for all events; Tolkien Society members £20. More details at www.tolkiensociety.org/events/oxonmoot-online/.

ONLINE. 2-4 Oct • **Futuricon** (Rikon/Eurocon); original venue was Rijeka, Croatia. €10 reg; €5 supp; under-14s free. See futuricon.eu.

ONLINE. 7-11 Oct • **Grimmfest** (horror/cult films); original venue was Odeon Manchester Great Northern. See grimmfest.com.

ONLINE. 9-11 Oct • **Lakes International Comic Art Festival**, Kendal, Cumbria. Free virtual event. See www.comicartfestival.com.

ONLINE. 16-18 Oct • **The Ineffable Con 2** (*Good Omens*). Guests include Neil Gaiman, Rob Wilkins. £25 reg. See theineffablecon.org.uk.

POSTPONED AGAIN. 17 Oct • **Bedford Who Charity Con**: see below.

22-25 Oct • **Celluloid Screams** (horror films), Showroom Cinema, Sheffield. £90; £85 concessions. Still on, according to twitter.com/sheffhorrorfest, though celluloidscreams.co.uk is seriously broken. [*Later: website repaired circa 4 September but still content-free.*]

POSTPONED. 24 Oct • **Whooverville 12** (*Doctor Who*): see below.

CANCELLED. 7-8 Nov • **Edge-Lit 9**, QUAD Centre, Derby.

19 Mar 2021 • **Futurefest** (futurolgy), Tobacco Dock, London. 10am-10pm as usual? 'If you are a current ticket holder, we'll be in touch.' 2021 ticket sales awaited at www.futurefest.org.

10 Apr 2021 • **Bedford Who Charity Con** (*Doctor Who*), The King's House, Amptill Road, Bedford, MK42 9AZ. *New date; 2020 tickets*

refunded or carried over. 10am-5:30pm. £42.50 reg; under-19s/students £22.50; under-14s £15. More at bedfordwhocharitycon.co.uk.

4 Sep 2021 • **Whooverville 12** (*Doctor Who*), QUAD Centre, Derby, DE1 3AS. *New date*. Tickets £50; concessions £33; online booking at www.derbyquad.co.uk/whats-on/events/whooverville-12.

19-22 Aug 2022 • **Discworld Convention**, Hilton Metropole, Birmingham NEC. *New dates*. £85 reg, £60 concessions. See dwcon.org.

Rumblings. *Worldcon 2023*. The bid committee for Memphis, Tennessee – opposed only by Chengdu, China – announced that owing to the ‘increasingly mixed’ reaction to the Retro Hugos they don’t plan to award 1948 Retros for 1947 work. The next 1948 opportunity is in 2048.

- *Surrey Steampunk Convivial* (Epsom), normally thrice yearly but not held this July, may just possibly take place on 10-11 October: developments are awaited at bumpandthumper.wixsite.com/steampunkconvivals.
- *Whitby Goth Weekend*, cancelled in April, remains unsure about its own hoped return in October. See www.whitbygothweekend.co.uk.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. From a story about the COVID-19 era: ‘Life as he – and everybody else on the planet – had known it had been replaced, seemingly overnight, with some pulp-science-fiction approximation of itself.’ (John Wray, ‘Barcelona: Open City’, *New York Times*, 12 July) [MMW]

- On a writing workshop held by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie: ‘Many students in the workshop loved science fiction, but she thought sci-fi was childish, because anything could happen.’ (Larissa MacFarquhar, *New Yorker*, 4/11 June 2018) [MMW]

Awards. *Gollancz/Rivers of London BAME*: ‘The Principles of Moments’ by Esmie Jikiemi-Pearson.

- *The James White Award* for short stories by new writers will not be presented this year, owing to both pandemic and website problems.
- *Seiun* for translation into Japanese: *The Three-Body Problem* by Liu Cixin (trans. Nozomi Ohmori, Toya Tachihara, Sakura Mitsuyoshi, Wan Zai) [F770]
- *This Is Horror Awards* best novel: *The Bone Weaver’s Orchard* by Sarah

Read.

- *World Fantasy Awards* novel shortlist: *Queen of the Conquered*, by Kacen Callender; *The Ten Thousand Doors of January* by Alix E. Harrow; *The Raven Tower* by Ann Leckie; *Gideon the Ninth* by Tamsyn Muir; *The Memory Police* by Yoko Ogawa (trans. Stephen Snyder).

Twinned with Innsmouth. News from a lake in Gosport: ‘Over the weekend, those living in the area spotted hundreds of dead fish, including a local councillor.’ (BBC, *South Today*, 16 August) [RJ]

R.I.P. *Raymond Allen* (1929-2020), US actor in *Fight That Ghost* (1946), died on 10 August aged 91. [LP]

- *John Bangsund* (1939-2020), noted Australian editor and one of the greats of Aussie fandom, died from COVID-19 on 22 August; he was 81. From the Melbourne *Age* death notice by Sally Yeoland: ‘John will always be remembered as the Australian ambassador for science fiction to the rest of the world, and as Toastmaster at Aussiecon Worldcon 1975. And also for *Australian Science Fiction Review*, *Scythrop*, *John W. Campbell: An Australian Tribute*, *Philosophical Gas*, *Parergon Papers* and many other fanzines, newsletter editor for the Victorian Society of Editors, [Muphry’s Law](#) and Assistant Editor *Meanjin*.’ Visiting him was a highlight of my only trip to Australia. Somewhere in Flann O’Brien territory, Keats and Chapman are in deep mourning and laying the groundwork for a dreadfully sombre pun.

- *Chadwick Boseman* (1977-2020), US actor who was in *Gods of Egypt* (2016) and played T’Challa/Black Panther in *Captain America: Civil War* (2016), *Black Panther* (2018), and *Avengers: Infinity War/Endgame* (2018/2019), died on 28 August aged 42. [SG/LP]

- *Richard Bright*, UK producer/director of arts documentaries including *Angela Carter: Of Wolves & Women* (2018) and *Paddington: The Man Behind the Bear* (2019), has reportedly committed suicide aged 51. [SJ]

- *Elisar Cabrera* (1971-2020), UK film-maker and critic whose low-budget horror productions ran from *Demonsoul* (1995) to *The Tombs* (2019), died in early August aged 49. [AIP]

- *Brent Carver* (1951-2020), Tony-winning Canadian actor whose films include *Millennium* (1989) and *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* (1999), and who played Gandalf in the 2006 *Lord of the Rings* musical, died on 4 August aged 68. [AIP]

- *Ben Cross* (1947-2020), UK actor whose many genre credits include *Paperhouse* (1988), *The Unholy* (1988), *Dark Shadows* (1991), *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* (1997), *The Invader* (1997), *Exorcist: The Beginning* (2004), *Species: The Awakening* (2007), *Hellhounds* (2009) and *Star Trek* (2009), died on 18 August aged 72. [SG]
- *André-Paul Duchâteau* (1925-2020), Belgian author who created the long-running detective/fantastic comic *Ric Hochet* in 1955 (with artist Tibet) and scripted the dystopian sf series *Hans* (1980-2000), died on 26 August aged 95. [PDF]
- *Kathleen Duey* (1950-2020), prolific US children's author whose work includes much fantasy – such as the 'Resurrection of Magic' series opening with *Skin Hunger* (2007) – died on 26 June aged 69. [AIP]
- *Susan Ellison* (1960-2020), UK fan and convention-goer, business partner and widow of Harlan Ellison, and author of the 'Through the Lens' media column in *Aboriginal SF* 1988-1996, died on 3 August aged 60.
- *Leslie H. Freas* (1956-2020), twin sister of Linda Hamilton and her body double in *Terminator 2* (1991), died on 22 August aged 63. [MMW]
- *Rolf Gohs* (1933-2020), Estonian-born Swedish comics artist who created over 900 covers for the Swedish edition of *The Phantom*, died on 25 August aged 86. [PDF]
- *Billy Goldenberg* (1936-2020), US composer whose credits include *Circle of Fear* (1972-1973), *The Sixth Sense* (1972), *Frankenstein* (1986) and *Annabelle Comes Home* (2019), died on 3 August aged 84. [AIP]
- *P.M. (Pauline Margaret) Griffin* (1947-2020), US author of the 12-book 'Star Commandos' military sf series (1986-2004) and contributions to various Andre Norton series (some in collaboration with Norton), died on 10 August aged 73. [L]
- *Pete Hamill* (1935-2020), US journalist and author whose novels *Snow in August* (1997) and *Forever* (2003) have fantastic elements, died on 5 August aged 85. [PDF]
- *Paul Hammond*, UK artist, translator and historian whose books include *Marvellous Méliès* (1974) – first English-language study of the film-maker – has died aged 72. [AIP]
- *Neil Kaden* (1954-2020), US fanzine publisher, con-runner (chair of Ditto 13 in 2000) and contributor to various APAs, died on 28 August aged 66. [F770]
- *James Keast* (1957-2020), UK costume designer with genre credits for

- Clash of the Titans* (1981), *Truly, Madly, Deeply* (1990) and Arthur Conan Doyle's *The Lost World* (2001), died on 11 July aged 63. [AIP]
- *Paul Knight* (1944-2020), UK tv producer with credits for *Robin Hood* (1984-1985) and *Stanley's Dragon* (1994), died on 16 August aged 76. [AIP]
 - *Linda Manz* (1961-2020), US actress whose films include *The Game* (1997), died on 14 August aged 58. [PDF]
 - *Bob March*, who in the title role hosted the sf-themed Californian children's tv programme *Captain Satellite* (1958-1968), died on 8 March. [PDF]
 - *Andrei Moscovit* (pseudonym of Igor Markovich Efimov, 1937-2020), Russian-born US author whose sf novel is *The Judgement Day Archives* (1982; trans 1988), died on 12 August aged 83. [AM]
 - *Elaine Moss*, UK author, critic and publisher's reader of books for children – who wrote some fantasy and a 1961 children's abridgement of *Gulliver's Travels* – died in August aged 96. [AIP]
 - *Lori Nelson* (1933-2020), US actress in *Revenge of the Creature* (1955), *Day the World Ended* (1955) and *The Naked Monster* (2005), died on 23 August aged 87. [LP]
 - *Svetozar Obradović* (1950-2020), Serbian comics writer who worked on *Tarzan* and co-created the Serbian titles *Cat Claw* and *Kobra*, died on 15 August aged 69. [PDF]
 - *Tom Pollock* (1943-2020), US producer whose credits include *Evolution* (2001, plus two animated spinoffs) and *Ghostbusters* (2016), died on 1 August aged 77. [MMW]
 - *Roberta Jane Pournelle* (1955-2020), US fan and convention-goer, widow of Jerry Pournelle, who had published nonfiction in *Analog*, died on 2 August aged 65.
 - *André Ptaszynski* (1953-2020), UK theatre producer whose credits include the musicals *Return to the Forbidden Planet* (1990), *Matilda* (2011) and *Groundhog Day* (2016), died on 29 July aged 67. [AIP]
 - *Allan Rich* (1926-2020), US actor in *The Archer: Fugitive from the Empire* (1981), *Highlander II: The Quickening* (1991) and *Rise: Blood Hunter* (2007), died on 22 August aged 94. [MMW]
 - *Jean Rosenthal* (1923-2020), French publisher and translator of English-language fiction who translated Isaac Asimov ('Foundation' trilogy), Clifford D. Simak (*City*, as *Demain les chiens*), A.E. van Vogt and many others, died on 26 August aged 97. [PDF]
 - *Joe Ruby* (1933-2020), US producer and writer who co-created *Scooby-Doo*

and whose credits include *Planet of the Apes* (1974 tv), *Bigfoot and Wildboy* (1977-1979) and *Rumpelstiltskin* (1995), died on 26 August aged 87. [AIP]

- *Reni Santoni* (1939-2020), US actor in *Manimal* (1983), *Radioactive Dreams* (1985) and *Doctor Dolittle* (1998 plus sequel), died on 1 August aged 81. [PDF]

- *Gillian White* (1945-2020), UK author whose psychological thrillers beginning with *The Plague Stone* (1990) sometimes hinted ambiguously at supernatural influences, died on 24 July aged 75. [AIP]

The Critical Heritage. *Warm Words Dept:* ‘You only need to read a handful of Cat Sparks’s stories before you start feeling the need for some shade and a nice margarita.’ (Gary K. Wolfe, *Locus*, August) [MMW]

- *Dept of Literary Precedence.* From an Amazon.com review of Sarah Hoyt’s *Ill Met by Moonlight:* ‘I don’t like the title which reminds too much of *Fafred* and the Grey Mouse by Leiber.’ (*sic*, 15 July) [GF]

Yo-Ho-Ho. The Ukraine-based ebook pirate website KISS Library was taken down following a US court’s restraining order, requested by Penguin Random House, Amazon and various authors. ([Locus](#), 22 August) No doubt they’ll soon be back under a different name.

The High Castle. Fawkner, Australia (a suburb of Melbourne), can boast the world’s second tallest skyscraper at 2,300 feet, an awesomely towering sight in a flattish urban area – at least when seen in Microsoft Flight Simulator. This game takes its data from OpenStreetMap, where someone had accidentally or naughtily listed the building as having 212 storeys rather than its actual two. ([The Register](#), 20 August)

Voices Propheying War. As you well know, Professor ... the dangerous, rabble-rousing, violence-inciting US demagogue in Octavia Butler’s dystopian sf novel *Parable of the Talents* (1998, set in 2032) is particularly fond of the slogan ‘make America great again’.

Random Fandom. [The Eye of Argon](#) saw its 50th anniversary on 26 August. [JM] Also overlooked in the August *Ansible* were the 35th anniversaries of the final UK *Silicon* and my first Hugo.

- *Fanac.org* has redesigned its archive of Worldcon publications at fanac.org/conpubs/Worldcon/.

- *Chris Garcia* and his family had to flee the wildfires threatening their North California home, and are living in hotels: there’s a fannish fundraiser at

www.gofundme.com/f/garciagatepenguins-need-a-new-home. [F770]

- *Ian Sorensen* brags: ‘Sept 26th marks my 40th anniversary in fandom – I went to Hitchercon 1 in Glasgow.’

As Others See Us II. ‘The devastation of [Hurricane] Laura in Louisiana and Texas has felt “like a week out of a bad science fiction novel,” one mayor said ...’ (NBC-2.com, 28 August)

- On the return of the SpaceX astronauts: ‘Fifty-one years ago, 63 percent of U.S. households watched at least some of Apollo 11’s historic trip to the moon. Sunday’s return, by contrast, mostly enthralled space geeks who’ve been planning to colonize Mars since they were old enough to read their first science fiction.’ (Megan McArdle, *Washington Post*, 5 August) [MMW]

The Dead Past. *40 Years Ago*, Peter Roberts reported from the doomed UK SF Book Club: ‘No, I’m not in charge of the SFBC. As you might have guessed, *nobody* is.... All 10 Readers Union societies are run together, so I write copy for the SF newsletter along with the Sports, the Gardening *et al.*.... Look out for overuse of the word “eldritch” and other hallmarks of Roberts copywriting.’ ([Ansible 12](#), September 1980)

- *20 Years Ago*: ‘Piers Anthony’s web newsletter contains a shock revelation that the controversial rape episode in *Lord Foul’s Bane* stemmed from Stephen R. Donaldson’s having been gang-raped 60 times in prison in 1973, leading to his death from AIDS in 1996. A little research shows that PA has confused “our” still-living Donaldson with an entirely different one.’ ([Ansible 158](#), September 2000) ‘The *New York Times* makes a careful and pointed distinction in its 23 August article on writers who retire, which mentions Iain Banks’s current sabbatical year in the wake of “a relentless writing schedule that has resulted in an annual novel or science fiction title for the last 16 years.”’ (*Ibid.*)

One of Us? A striking recent US obituary begins: ‘Holly Blair exploded into glitter and bats on Aug. 17, 2020.’ It goes on to say: ‘Her future plans include drinking beer with Terry Pratchett and flying across the moon on her broomstick on Halloween.’ ([Twitter](#), 31 August)

Editorial. The latest from Ansible Editions is *The Jonbar Point* by Brian Aldiss, at last collecting his two long essays from *SF Horizons* in the mid-1960s, with a new introduction by Chris Priest. Read all about it at ae.ansible.uk/?t=jonbar (and don’t forget the recent *Puff Love* by John

Sladek: ae.ansible.uk/?t=pufflove).

- The ‘Complete BoSh’ project to collect all Bob Shaw’s fan writing as free TAFF ebooks concludes with *Slow Pint Glass*, a vast (167,000 words) compendium of material outside the scope of *The Serious Scientific Talks* and *The Full Glass Bushel*. Though Rob Jackson and I still hope to add a few minor, hard-to-find items, it’s time to release this third volume: taff.org.uk/ebooks.php?x=Shaw3.

Publishers and Sinners. Head of Zeus announced its new ‘high-concept SFF’ imprint, innovatively called Ad Astra (11 August). [L]

Thog’s Masterclass. *Parlour Games Dept.* ‘... dark-blue eyes straying towards the window whenever he tried to catch them ...’ (John Dickson Carr, *Dark of the Moon*, 1967) [BA]

- *A Villain Gloats Over Her Captive.* ‘It is a species of boa constrictor [...] This particular boa is very fond of detectives, having developed that taste, from the fact that fate made it possible for him to swallow four in the last two years.’ (David H. Keller, ‘The Menace’, *Amazing Stories Quarterly*, July 1928)

- *Philosopher’s Reversible Stone Dept.* ‘We finally were able to take a piece of the synthetic gold and shoot a special X-ray at it over half a mile and, pop, it would turn back to lead.’ (*Ibid.*)

- *Neat Tricks.* ‘Her mental jaw dropped at prince Bifalt’s willingness to concede.’ ‘If lines marked his face, they were obscured by his short, blond beard.’ (both Stephen R. Donaldson, *The War Within*, 2019) [AR]

- *Dept of Sensual Simile.* ‘I looked at her breasts jutting against the soft fabric of her dress, nipples like split infinitives.’ (Max Byrd, *Fly Away Jill*, 1981)

Endnotes

Virtual Fan Meetings.

- 3 September 2020, evening: Alison Scott has set up this alternative to the physical London First Thursday meeting: ‘Please share this with people who you know typically come to the Bishop’s Finger, but aren’t on Facebook.’ <https://medium.com/@BohemianCoast/first-thursday-london-sf-fan-virtual-drinks-5232021e961f>
- 20 September 2020 (and every other third Sunday of the month), afternoon/early evening: Sheffield SF and Fantasy Society online meeting

using Zoom. For access details contact Fran Dowd, thesofa [at] gmail dot com.

- 15 October 2020, 8pm-9pm: Event Horizon online.

<https://www.shorelineofinfinity.com/>

Editorial II. It's a long time since I remembered any dialogue from dreams, but I woke up on 26 August (after a roughish night) with crystal-clear recollection of being told: 'If you wrote a book about John Clute, nobody would be punished.' Reassurance or warning? What does it mean, Dr Freud, what does it mean?

Some Links from the *Ansible* home page.

- Arkham Board of Health evaluates Miskatonic University reopening plans
<https://www.mcsweeneys.net/articles/arkham-board-of-health-feedback-on-miskatonic-universitys-draft-plan-for-a-safe-campus-reopening>

- John Bangsund (1939-2020)

<https://tributes.theage.com.au/obituaries/140560/john-bangsund/>

http://www.sf-encyclopedia.com/entry/bangsund_john

- A Conversation Larger than the Universe

<https://temporary-culture.com/exhibition/>

- *Cloud Chamber* 164

<http://ansible.uk/cc/CC164.pdf>

- Richard Glyn Jones likes Thog

<https://rglynjones.com/2020/08/30/thog/>

- Seiun Awards at *File 770*

<http://file770.com/2020-seiun-awards/>

Thog's Golden Oldies from *Ansible* 158, September 2000. *Dept of Wooden Handshakes*. "Pleased to meet you," Arnstein said, and took the offered hand. It felt like a wooden glove inside a casing of cured ham ...' (S.M. Stirling, *On the Oceans of Eternity*, 2000)

- *Dept of Advanced Darwinism*. 'In every human being there is the genetic code for mutation.' (*X-Men* ad, 2000)

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Alan Stewart (Australia). 1 September 2020

Ansible® 399, October 2020

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Ulrika O'Brien**. Available for SAE or despicable secrets whispered by masked heresiarchs.

The Twelve Figures of the World

John Clute celebrated his eightieth birthday on 12 September, and as a special treat did not write any [SF Encyclopedia](#) entries that day.

Jenny Colgan, author in various genres, revealed one of the pitfalls of *Doctor Who* novelizations: ‘... there is a very strict list of things you’re not allowed to do. For Matt Smith’s Doctor I wrote a scene where he pulled off his shoes and trousers, and it came back with: “The Doctor does not remove his trousers.”’ (*i*, 12 September) What, *never*?

Mark Hamill tweeted: ‘That debate was the worst thing I’ve ever seen & I was in The Star Wars Holiday Special.’ (Twitter, 30 September)

Howard V. Hendrix, a volunteer firefighter as well as an sf author, sadly lost his home in Pine Ridge, California, to the Creek Fire in mid-September. ([San Francisco Chronicle](#), 15 September) [PN]

George R.R. Martin’s failure to get planning permission for a ‘medieval’ castle on his Santa Fe property had substantial UK newspaper coverage. (*i*, 12 September) Intended to house a great many books and collectibles, with ‘a roof deck and a lift tower’, this edifice would have been four feet higher than allowed by local building regulations. Whether the specs included resistance to dragon fire is not known.

Rhianna Pratchett noticed a subtle omission in an Instagram post by Simon Allen thanking many people involved with his new production: ‘This is the show-runner of *The Watch*, failing to thank MY FATHER. This should tell you everything you need to know.’ ([Twitter](#), 14 September)

David Redd reports on the ‘Welsh Book of the Year 2020 (Welsh-language section). The steampunk novel *Babel* by Ifan Morgan Jones was an unusual triple winner, collecting the main prize, the fiction award and the people’s choice. The book features a crusading female journalist amid Victorian heavy industry and heavy crime, and being Welsh includes airships to Patagonia. (Steampunk is so new to Welsh that the author had to create the equivalent term himself, rather neatly as “agerstalwm”.)’ (4 September)

Consubsistency

ONLINE. 1 Oct • **Virtual First Thursday**, 6-10pm, replacing the usual London pub meeting. See tinyurl.com/uow6hqj.

ONLINE. 2-4 Oct • **Futuricon** (Rikon/Eurocon); original venue was Rijeka, Croatia. €10 reg; €5 supp; under-14s free. See futuricon.eu.

ONLINE. 7-11 Oct • **Grimmfest** (horror/cult films); original venue was Odeon Manchester Great Northern. See grimmfest.com.

ONLINE. 9-11 Oct • **Lakes International Comic Art Festival**, Kendal, Cumbria. Free virtual event. See www.comicartfestival.com.

CANCELLED. 10-11 Oct • **Surrey Steampunk Convivial**, Epsom. More at bumpandthumper.wixsite.com/steampunkconvivials.

ONLINE. 16-18 Oct • **The Ineffable Con 2** (*Good Omens*). Guests include Neil Gaiman, Rob Wilkins. £25 reg. See theineffablecon.org.uk.

SOLD OUT. 22-25 Oct • **Celluloid Screams** (horror films), Showroom Cinema, Sheffield. £90 reg. Still on, ‘with reduced capacity and social distancing measures in place’. See celluloidscreams.co.uk.

22 Oct - 1 Nov • **Edinburgh Horror Festival**, now ‘to be about 95% digital’ but including ‘a socially distanced walking tour and access to the Edinburgh Dungeon combo’. See www.edhorrorfest.co.uk.

ONLINE. 22-25 Oct • **Frightfest** (film); was to be held at Cineworld, Leicester Square, London. See www.frightfest.co.uk/filmsevents.html.

CANCELLED? 2-8 Nov • **Talos IV**: SF Theatre Festival of London, The Cockpit, London. *No longer visible in the Cockpit theatre events list.*

POSTPONED AGAIN. 6-8 Nov • **Dead by Dawn** (horror film festival), Filmhouse

Cinema One, 88 Lothian Rd, Edinburgh, EH3 9BZ. *New dates 22-25 April 2021.* Tickets £80 from www.deadbydawn.co.uk.

CANCELLED. 13-15 Nov • **Destination Star Trek**, ExCel, London. *Next event 12-14 November 2021.* See destinationstartrek.com.

ONLINE. 14-15 Nov • **Punctuation**, UK, via Discord, Zoom and other platforms. £5 reg: see punctuationcon.uk. Bring your own semicolons.

CANCELLED. 5-6 Dec • **For the Love of Sci-Fi** (comics), BEC Arena, Manchester. *Next event 4-5 December 2021.* See fortheloveofsci-fi.com.

CANCELLED. 5-7 Feb 2021 • **Long Play**, ‘33 (and 1/3)rd UK Filk Convention’, Grantham. Details awaited at www.contabile.org.uk. [RR]

Rumblings. *Whitby Goth Weekend* for October is cancelled: see www.whitbygothweekend.co.uk. Hoped 2021 dates are 23-25 April and 29-31 October.

- *Into the Unknown: A Journey through SF*, the London Barbican exhibition (see [A359](#)) that visited Athens, Odense and Rotterdam, has ceased touring for pandemic reasons. [BT]
- *Lawless*, the UK comics con, feels it’s ‘not looking bright for May 2021’ and may postpone to 2022. (Facebook, 8 September)
- *Sci-Fi London* still expects to run ‘sometime in 2020’ according to sci-fi-london.com, but I doubt it.

Infinitely Improbable

The Critical Heritage. A review of Stephen Baxter’s latest *World Engines* novel casts a new light on the sf concept of the multiverse which may surprise Michael Moorcock. Its multiversal recommendations sidebar includes: ‘*The Number of the Beast*. Robert A. Heinlein’s is the first and best in this genre.’ (Sally Adee, *New Scientist*, 22 August) [PDF]

As Others See Us. On B. Johnson’s *Operation Moonshot*: ‘But some public health officials are dubious. Some say the plan is not a moonshot, but a Jules Verne fantasy.’ (*Washington Post*, 13 September) [MMW]

Awards. *American Book Award* winners include *The Memory Police* by Yoko Ogawa. [L]

- *Arthur C. Clarke: The Old Drift* by Namwali Serpell.

- *Ditmar* (Australia) best novel: *The Year of the Fruit Cake* by Gillian Polack.
- *Dwarf Stars* (short poems): ‘Standing Up’ by John C. Mannone (*Nadwah: Poetry in Translation*, 12/19)
- *Elgin* (poetry collection): *Soft Science* by Franny Choi. CHAPBOOK *The Book of Fly* by John Philip Johnson. [F770]
- *National Book Foundation Medal for Distinguished Contribution to American Letters*: Walter Mosley.
- *Norma K. Hemming* (Australia): LONG (tie) *From Here On, Monsters* by Elizabeth Bryer; *Ghost Bird* by Lisa Fuller. SHORT *Winter’s Tale* by Nike Sulway & Shauna O’Meara.
- *Primetime Emmy*: ‘best limited series’ was *Watchmen*, with several other wins.
- *SF Poetry Association*: LONG ‘Which is Which’ by F.J. Bergmann. SHORT ‘Skylarking’ by F.J. Bergmann. DWARF ‘Where Do We Go From Here?’ by Ojo Taiye
- *Sidewise* (alt-history): awards for 2019 work will be presented at the 2021 Worldcon together with those for 2020.

Iä! Iä! Academia! ‘Inhabiting the Chthulucene: Forging Tentacular Intimacies at the End of the World’ (*Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment*, Autumn 2019) says and indeed gibbers it all. [PE]

Publishers and Sinners. Eagle-eyed fans complained that the cover art for Gollancz’s new audiobooks of Anne McCaffrey’s Pern series used some inappropriate dragon silhouettes, including Smaug and the dragon from *Shrek*. These were soon traced to a Shutterstock clip-art package which presumably costs money. Gollancz: ‘We apologise for the use of copyright images in our recent PERN covers. These were provided by a 3rd party and we’ve informed them they’re hosting copyright material. We’ll be redesigning them and thanks to everyone who raised this. The incorrect ones will soon be sent *between*’. ([Twitter](#), 2 September)

As Others Savour Us. ‘Ridley Scott and sci-fi go together like peanut butter and jelly.’ ([Forbes.com](#), 2 September) [MMW]

R.I.P. *Sei Ashina* (1983-2020), Japanese actress in the superhero series *Kamen Rider Hibiki* (2005) and the film *Nanase: The Psychic Wanderers* (2010), committed suicide on 14 September; she was 36. [AIP]

- *Michael Bernander* (1959-2020), Swedish fan who in the 1980s co-edited

the noted sercon fanzine *Ziméria*, died on 1 September aged 61. [J-HH]

- *Althea Braithwaite* (1940-2020), UK author, illustrator and publisher best known for ‘Desmond the Dinosaur’ children’s books such as *Desmond and the Monsters* (1975) – some adapted for tv – died on 27 August aged 80.

[AIP]

- *Kevin Burns* (1955-2020), US producer of many genre-related documentaries and the rebooted *Lost in Space* (2018-2019), died on 27 September aged 65. [DKMK]

- *Bart Bush*, US comics fan, collector, con-runner (OAFcon), publisher of fanzines including the 1970s *Comic Detective* and compiler of *The Art of Lou Fine #4* (1987), died in early September. [PDF]

- *Michael Chapman* (1935-2020), US cinematographer for *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1978), *The Man with Two Brains* (1983), *The Lost Boys* (1987), *Scrooged* (1988), *Ghostbusters II* (1989), *Evolution* (2001) and others, died on 20 September aged 84; director credits include *Annihilator* (1986) and *The Clan of the Cave Bear* (1986). [SJ]

- *Ron Cobb* (1937-2020), US-born (though long resident in Australia) cartoonist, animator and film designer who worked on *Dark Star* (1974), *Star Wars* (1977), *Alien* (1979), *Back to the Future* (1985), *Total Recall* (1990) and others, died on 21 September aged 83. [PDF]

- *Mac Davis* (1942-2020), US composer/songwriter with genre film credits for *Next* (2007) and *Passengers* (2016), died on 29 September aged 78. [A-TC]

- *Bob Fujitani* (1921-2020), US comics artist of Japanese/Irish descent whose career ran from 1940 to the 2000s and included a long stint on *Flash Gordon*, died on 6 September aged 98. [PDF]

- *Terry Goodkind* (1948-2020), bestselling US author of the lengthy ‘Sword of Truth’ epic-fantasy sequence that began with *Wizard’s First Rule* (1994), died on 17 September aged 72. [AIP]

- *Ronald Harwood* (1934-2020), South African playwright and screenwriter who scripted a dozen episodes of Roald Dahl’s *Tales of the Unexpected* (1979-1981), died on 8 September aged 85. [SJ]

- *Jim Janes*, US comics artist whose many credits since 1972 include DC’s *House of Mystery* and *Legion of Super-Heroes*, and the animated *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* (1988), died in early September. [PDF]

- *Randall Kenan* (1963-2020), US author who used supernatural themes ambiguously in *A Visitation of Spirits* (1989) and overtly in his collection *Let*

- the Dead Bury Their Dead* (1993), died on 28 August aged 57. [AIP]
- *Shiro Kishibe* (1949-2020), Japanese actor who played Sandy in the tv series *Monkey* (1978-1980), died on 28 August aged 71.
 - *Stevie Lee*, US wrestler (as Puppet the Psycho Dwarf) and actor in *American Horror Story* (various iterations), *Oz the Great and Powerful* (2013) and *The True Tale of Ole Splitfoot vs. The Lesbian Warrior Nuns of the Great White North* (forthcoming), died on 9 September aged 54. [AIP]
 - *Michael Lonsdale* (1931-2020), Anglo-French actor whose films include *Hibernatus* (1969), *Moonraker* (1979, as Bond villain Sir Hugo Drax), *Chronopolis* (1982) and *Kaena: The Prophecy* (2003), died on 21 September aged 89. [MMW]
 - *Sam McBratney* (1943-2020), Northern Irish author whose works – mostly for younger readers – include the sf novel *The Final Correction* (1978) and the supernatural *The Ghosts of Hungryhouse Lane* (1988), died on 18 September aged 77. [AIP]
 - *Sue Nichols Maciorowski* (1965-2020), US animation visual development and story artist best known for her work on Disney films from *Beauty and the Beast* (1991) and *Aladdin* (1992) to *Moana* (2016), died on 1 September aged 55. [F770]
 - *John J. Myers* (1941-2020), former archbishop of Newark (New Jersey) who collaborated with his lifelong friend Gary K. Wolf on a 2006 sf story (pseudonymously) and the 2008 novel *Space Vulture*, died on 24 September aged 79. [SHS]
 - *Ernie F. Orsatti* (1940-2020), US stuntman and stunt co-ordinator whose films include *The Swarm* (1978), *The Entity* (1982), *Phantasm II* (1988), *Tremors II: Aftershocks* (1996) and *Doctor Dolittle* (1998), died on 12 September aged 80. [AIP]
 - *Helen Reddy* (1941-2020), Australian singer and actress with a genre film credit for *Pete's Dragon* (1977), died on 29 September aged 78. [A-TC]
 - *Franco Maria Ricci* (1937-2020), Italian publisher, editor and collector whose arts magazine *FMR* featured Borges, Calvino, Eco, Barthes and others, and who also published slim anthologies of fantastika selected and introduced by Borges, died on 10 September aged 82. [PDF/RB]
 - *Chandler Rice*, US comics fan, dealer and convention runner who owned Desert Wind Comics in Las Vegas, died on 29 September. [PDF]
 - *Dame Diana Rigg* (1938-2020), noted and beloved UK actress whose genre credits include *The Avengers* (1965-1968), *On Her Majesty's Secret Service*

(1969), *The Great Muppet Caper* (1981), *The Worst Witch* (1986), *Snow White* (1987) and *Game of Thrones* (2013-2017), died on 10 September aged 82. [MJE]

- *Cecilia Romo* (1945-2020), Mexican actress who began her career as an extra in *Dune* (1984), died on 31 August aged 74. [AIP]
- *Lizzie Sanders* (1950-2020), noted UK botanical artist who also illustrated and painted covers for books including such children's fairytales as *Princess Stories* (1998) by Geraldine McCaughrean, died in July aged 70. [AIP]
- *Charles R. Saunders* (1946-2020), US author of much African-rooted fantasy since 1974, including the 'Imaro' and 'Dossouye' series, reportedly died in May aged 73. He edited *Stardock* (1977-1978) and *Dragonbane/Dragonfields* (1978-1983, latterly with Charles de Lint). [GVG]
- Late report: *Charles Schlessiger* (1933-2019), US literary agent who represented Joan Aiken and Kate Wilhelm, died on 3 December aged 86. [GVG]
- *Norm Spencer* (1958-2020), Canadian actor best known for voice work in such Marvel-based productions as *X-Men: The Animated Series* (1992-1997, as Cyclops) and *Silver Surfer* (1998), died on 31 August aged 62. [PDF]
- *Bo Stenfors* (1928-2020), Swedish fan and author active from the 1950s beginnings of fandom in Sweden until about 2015, died on 30 August aged 92. Fanzines included *Sexy Venus*, *Candy Fantasy* and *Drunken Saturnus*; he edited *SF Forum* 1962-1963 for the Stockholm fan club SFSF, which he co-founded. [J-HH]
- *Yūko Takeuchi* (1980-2020), Japanese actress in *Ringu* (1998), *Flashforward* (2009-2010) and others, committed suicide on 27 September aged 40. [PDF]
- *Tony Tanner* (1932-2020), UK director of the original Broadway *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* (1982), whose actor credits include *Robin Hood: Men in Tights* (1993), *Exorcism* (2003) and *Return to the Batcave* (2003), died on 8 September aged 88. [AIP]
- *Carl-Henning Wijkmark* (1934-2020), award-winning mainstream Swedish author who used such sf tropes as dystopia in *Den svarta väggen* (*The Black Wall*, 2002) and timeslip in *Vi ses igen i nästa dröm* (*See You Again in the Next Dream*, 2013), died on 4 September aged 85. [J-HH]
- *Jimmy Winston* (1945-2020), UK actor and Small Faces musician whose credits include *No Blade of Grass* (1970), *Tam Lin* (1970) and *Doctor Who*: 'Day of the Daleks' (1972), died on 26 September aged 75. [GC]

- *Arthur Wooster* (1929-2020), UK assistant director and cinematographer whose many credits include *Warlords of the Deep* (1978), *Arabian Adventure* (1979), *Highlander II* (1991), *The Avengers* (1998) and several Bond films, died on 1 September aged 91. [SJ]
- *Jerome M. Zeitman* (1930-2020), Hollywood agent and producer of *The Starlost* (1973-1974) and *Damnation Alley* (1977), died on 17 September aged 90. [AIP]

As Others Praise Us. ‘If you want to see TV and film truly explore morally compromised women complicit in corporate greed and government surveillance and outright murder, your best bet is science fiction. Try *Westworld*.’ (Sonia Saraiya, *Vanity Fair*, July/August) [DMK]

The Dead Past. *20 Years Ago*, there was traditional viewing with alarm: ‘*Geoffrey Wheatcroft* on the late Kingsley Amis: “He became a science-fiction fan, rarely a good sign ...”’ ([Ansible 159](#), October 2000)

- *50 Years Ago*, Terry Carr admired a neologism by Harry Warner Jr: ‘the term “prohh” to serve as a kind of analogy of “faaan” as spake by Tucker, i.e. to indicate obnoxiousness. The prohh is the guy who harangues everyone with tales of everything he writes or sells, or plans to write or sell ...’ ([Focal Point 2:15](#), October 1970) He is now on Facebook.

- *81 Years Ago*, an early and tasty As Others See Us example: ‘Thus the science pulps. What’s to be made of them? It is easy enough to classify these exhibits in paranoid phantasies connected to trivial fiction for the titillation of tired, dull, or weak minds.’ (Bernard De Voto, ‘Doom Beyond Jupiter’, *Harper’s Magazine*, October 1939) [PDF]

Outraged Letters. *Gregory Feeley* sends a stern warning: ‘According to the *New York Times*, the Booker prize nominees include “Diane Cook’s *The New Wilderness*, set in a dystopian future in which almost all of the natural world has been destroyed.” I hope that you lot over at *Ansible* are not going to take advantage of this and claim this distinguished novel for science fiction.’ (email, 15 September)

Editorial. Four years after registering *Ansible*® as a UK trademark (with much help from fan friends), I felt a shudder of nameless dread on learning that sf critic Sean Guynes was to launch an online *Ansible Review of Books* and had already set up a website. Before I could send my tactful email mentioning trademarks, Hugos and 40-odd years of publication, others had

alerted him and his co-editors to the clash and the title had been changed. Of course I have no problem with *Ancillary Review of Books* (ancillaryreviewofbooks.org) and hope it does well.

Random Fandom. *Europa SF* has shut down, perhaps for good. They said goodbye last December, mentioning that the scifiportal.eu domain would expire in August 2020; fannish support led to a January relaunch, but presumably the domain registration was never renewed.

Thog's Masterclass. *Neat Tricks for Mask-Wearers.* 'The bookdealer at the other end of the wire actually smiled audibly.' (Harry Stephen Keeler, *The 16 Beans*, 1945) [RGJ] 'His brownish-gray hair rustled in the breeze, and he smoothed it with an irritated glance at the sky.' (Erik Henry Vick, *Claw & Warder 1: Seduction*, 2020) [JLG]

- *Belly Flop Dept.* 'For his stomach hung out like a great flabby breast – and he held on to it with both hands like a woman guarding her breasts from an invader.' (Harry Stephen Keeler, *The Search for X-Y-Z*, 1943) [RGJ]

- *Dept of Watching Too Much Anime.* 'The boy's wide eyes were impossible moons in his unstubbed face.' (Frank Herbert & Bill Ransom, *The Lazarus Effect*, 1983) [BA/CM]

- *Logistics Dept.* 'The tower was instantly forced, and a thousand swords were plunged at once into the bosom of the unfortunate Probus.' (Edward Gibbon, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, 1776-1789)

- *Pantone Number Needed.* "'Then what, pray tell, good officer, can I do for you?" Wirth's eyes had turned a deadly shade of brown.' (W. Michael Gear, *Abandoned*, 2018) [AK]

Endnotes

Virtual Meetings.

- 1 October 2020, evening: Alison Scott has set up this alternative to the physical London First Thursday meeting: 'Please share this with people who you know typically come to the Bishop's Finger, but aren't on Facebook.' <https://medium.com/@BohemianCoast/first-thursday-london-sf-fan-virtual-drinks-5232021e961f>
- 6 October 2020, from 7:30pm: Handheld Book Club with Una McCormack and Nicola Griffith. £3.60.

<https://www.handheldpress.co.uk/the-handheld-book-club/>

• 15 October 2020, 8pm-9pm: Event Horizon online.

<https://www.shorelineofinfinity.com/>

• 18 October 2020 (and every other third Sunday of the month), afternoon/early evening: Sheffield SF and Fantasy Society online meeting using Zoom. For access details contact Fran Dowd, thesofa [at] gmail dot com.

Fanfundery. *GUFF*: Alison Scott has taken over the role of European administrator from Marcin Klak, along with the contact/donations address guffeurope at gmail dot com.

Naming The Guilty Man. ‘If it had not been for Prof. Albert Einstein and his famous equation on the interrelation of matter and energy, it is improbable that science fiction would be the rising star of literary respectability it is today. There have been science fiction writers (in the space opera sense of the term) since Roman days, and some of them have been great, H.G. Wells and Jules Verne as examples. But only recently has science fiction become widely read, and Dr. Einstein can be thanked – or blamed – for its emergence.’ (William Hines, ‘Belles-Lettres Go Out Of This World As Science Fiction Grows Up’, *Washington Star*, 16 March 1952) [PDF/MMW]

Me, Me, Me. In a stupendous departure from tradition, no free ebooks were released this month at taff.org.uk. Items in the pipeline include a Langford fanwriting collection in the general vein of *The Silence of the Langford* (1996), tentatively titled *Beachcombing*; and – at some undetermined point after the December issue has appeared – volume four of the collected *Ansible*, covering the decade 2011-2020. *Beachcombing* may possibly also have a POD paperback incarnation if I can muster the energy.

Tardigrades Banned! A recent discovery is that PayPal automatically blocks any payment involving the word ‘tardigrade’. As they explained in tones of deep non-apology, ‘Certain words can trigger our security system. Unfortunately, this cannot be overridden. I would advise you to change the wording on your website to prevent this from happening.’ One suggested explanation is that an arms company called Tardigrade Ltd is included in a US sanctions list: of course there is no conceivable way for PayPal to distinguish between this outfit and people selling models of cute little animalcules. (BoingBoing, 11 September)

<https://boingboing.net/2020/09/11/paypal-wont-run-transactions.html>

Some Links from the *Ansible* home page.

- Ditmar Awards (Australia) full results

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ditmar_Award_results#2020: Swancon 2020

- Michael Hogan medical fundraiser

<https://www.gofundme.com/f/michael-hogan-fund>

- Michael Moorcock interviewed

<https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2015/jun/12/michael-moorcock-my-family-values>

- *SF² Concatenation* Autumn 2020 Newscast

<http://www.concatenation.org/news/news9~20.html>

- Speculative Fiction Showcase (with thanks for Ansible Editions plugs)

<http://indiespecfic.blogspot.com/>

Thog's Golden Oldies from *Ansible* 159, October 2000. *Dept of Communications*: ‘They went back to the pilot’s room where Solly blinked the running lights. / “Please inform us if you can hear this transmission,” came the reply. “One blink for yes. Two for no.”’ (Jack McDevitt, *Infinity Beach*, 2000)

- ‘The housekeeper found her way into the bedroom and lay down in a pathetic crumble.’ (James Patterson, *Virgin*, 1980)

- ‘And he burst himself with chortles.’ (Sheri S. Tepper, *The Family Tree*, 1998)

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Ansible® 400, November 2020

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Atom**, 1980s. Available for SAE or notes on the correct use of salt and sea-kelp and gold.

The Intelligence Gigantic

J.G. Ballard's bibliographers had an October Surprise regarding an ITV novel adaptation: 'JG Ballard's Empire trilogy (of which *The Singapore Grip*, 1978, is the final part) in fact uses piercing satire to mock the British colonials and the commercial exploitation of the colonies.' (Chris Kelt, Letter of the Week, *Radio Times*, 17-23 October) [DG]

Alfred Bester is no longer safe for work: when Gully Foyle's famous line 'Vorga, I kill you filthy' was quoted in an M.R. James discussion group, Facebook threatened the administrators with shutdown. [RP]

Beth Meacham, long-time editor at Tor Books, announced that she is retiring at the end of this year – although the temptations of future freelance/consultancy work cannot be ruled out. (Facebook, 7 October)

N.K. Jemisin is one of the 2020 recipients of the MacArthur Foundation's \$625,000 'genius' fellowship grants. (Tor.com, 6 October)

Roger Penrose was awarded a half-share of the 2020 Nobel Physics Prize for his influential 1965 paper on black holes, 'Gravitational Collapse and Space-Time Singularities'. Fans will remember his sf credentials as co-author with Brian Aldiss of *White Mars* (1999).

J. Michael Straczynski is annoyed by rumours, supposedly direct from the executor's mouth, about Harlan Ellison's estate. ('Didja hear? All of Harlan's stories and IP have been sold to Paramount for next to nothing to pay off debts!') He explained: 'I am the Executor of the Harlan and Susan Ellison Trust. [...] Everything that Harlan ever owned, did or wrote will be fiercely

protected.’ ([Facebook](#), 16 October)

Contrafibularity

PARTLY ONLINE. 2-8 Nov • **Talos IV**: SF Theatre Festival of London, The Cockpit, London. See www.cyborphic.com/talos-2020.

ONLINE. 5 Nov • **Virtual First Thursday**, 6-10pm, replacing the usual London pub meeting. See tinyurl.com/uow6hqn.

ONLINE. 6-8 Nov • **Armadacon 2020**; former venue Future Inns, Plymouth. See www.armadacon.org.

ONLINE. 14-15 Nov • **Punctuation**, UK, via Discord, Zoom and other platforms. £5 reg; see punctuationcon.uk. Bring your own semicolons.

POSTPONED AGAIN. 28-31 Jan 2021 • **ChillerCon UK** (horror), Grand & Royal Hotels, Scarborough. *New dates awaited*. See chillercon-uk.com and in particular chillercon-uk.com/coronastatement.htm.

18-21 Mar 2021 • **Eurocon 2021**, Fiuggi, Italy. €50 reg; see eurocon2021.it for hotel booking packages with registration included.

SOLD OUT. 18-21 Mar 2021 • **Camp SFW** (was Sci-Fi Weekender), Vauxhall Holiday Park, Great Yarmouth. See www.scifiweekender.com.

ONLINE/HYBRID. 2-5 Apr 2021 • **ConFusion** (Eastercon), notional venue Birmingham NEC Hilton. ‘We do not see how an “in person only” convention will be possible by Easter of 2021, but we are continuing to make plans to allow those who want to be there in person to be able to attend if the guidelines change to the point where this will be permitted.’ (8 October) Online reg £50; concessions £30. See confusion2021.uk.

11-14 Nov 2021 • **Camp SFW**, Vauxhall Holiday Park, Great Yarmouth. Adult three-day pass £120 (Fri/Sat £99); for extras, camping and accommodation packages see www.scifiweekender.com.

7-10 Apr 2022 • **LuxCon** (Eurocon), Luxembourg. Further details and dedicated website awaited at www.facebook.com/LuxConvention/.

Rumblings. *Octocon 2021* (venue and exact October date TBA): upgradable supporting membership €20 from 2021.octocon.com; 2020 memberships automatically transferred. • *Eurocons*. Finland is bidding to hold the 2025

Eurocon in the Åland Islands as Archipelacon II. [F770]

Infinitely Improbable

As Others Cite Us. ‘Even parts of Washington, a family-minded place, could pass for a sci-fi film in which our species’ reproductive knack has been unaccountably misled.’ (*Financial Times*, 3 October) [MMW]

- *US President’s Election Rhetoric Summarized* by Rep. Denver Riggleman (R, Virginia): ‘I just think we have jumped the shark, crossed the Rubicon, and now we’re on the crazy train about to run into the ice cliffs that guard the flat earth.’ (*Washington Post*, 15 October) [MMW]
- *On the UK Prime Minister*: ‘He has created a sort of Covid Westeros, where local warlords rail and scheme against him, as do some of his own courtiers.’ (Marina Hyde, *Guardian*, 16 October) [DA]

Awards. *Academy of British Cover Design* sf category: Alycia Raynaud/Jo Walker for *Dead Astronauts* by Jeff VanderMeer. [L]

- *European SF Society Achievement*. ART Dublin 2019 Hugo bases. FICTION *Luna: Moon Rising* by Ian McDonald. DRAMATIC *Good Omens*. FANZINE *Journey Planet – A Half Pint of Flann*. FOR CHILDREN *The Invasion* by Peadar Ó Guilín. INTERNET PUBLICATION (tie) Irish Fandom Community Group on Facebook; *Fantascientificast*.
- *European SF Society Hall of Fame*. ARTIST Sergey Shikin. AUTHOR Milena Benini. PUBLISHER L’Atalante. PROMOTER Cristina Jurado. MAGAZINE *Esensja*. TRANSLATOR Pilar Ramírez Tello.
- *Starburst*: BRAVE NEW WORDS Nisi Shawl as editor of *New Suns: Original Speculative Fiction by People of Color*. HERO Jenni Hill, senior commissioning editor at Orbit Books.
- *Theodore Sturgeon Memorial* (short): ‘Waterlines’ (*Asimov’s* 7/19) by Suzanne Palmer.
- *World Fantasy*: NOVEL *Queen of the Conquered* by Kacen Callender. NOVELLA *Silver in the Wood* by Emily Tesh. SHORT ‘Read After Burning’ by Maria Dahvana Headley. ANTHOLOGY *New Suns* edited by Nisi Shawl. COLLECTION *Song For the Unraveling of the World* by Brian Evenson. ARTIST Kathleen Jennings. SPECIAL/PROFESSIONAL Ebony Elizabeth Thomas for *The Dark Fantastic*. SPECIAL/NON-PROFESSIONAL the editors of *Fafnir – Nordic Journal ...*

Headline of the Year. ‘Escaped cloned female mutant crayfish take over Belgian cemetery’. (*Telegraph*, 26 October, via nzherald.co.nz)

Publishers and Sinners. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt has decided to discontinue its sf/fantasy imprint John Joseph Adams Books, says JJA himself: ‘We’ve still got several books forthcoming, and those will still be published, but nothing new beyond those, alas.’ ([Facebook](#), 7 October)

As Others Grudgingly Acknowledge Us. ‘Which writers [...] do you admire most?’ *David Byrne*: ‘Some of Ted Chiang’s stories, which might be called science fiction....’ (*New York Times*, 8 October) [JB]

R.I.P. *Karen Babcock* (1964-2020), US con-goer, freelance editor/proofreader and acquisitions editor for Double Dragon Publishing, died on 20 October. [SHS]

- *Brian N. Ball* (1932-2020), UK author whose many sf novels included his debut *Sundog* (1965), *Timepiece* (1968) and *Night of the Robots* (1972, aka *The Regiments of Night*), died on 23 July aged 88. [RR]

- *Dana Baratta* (1961-2020), US tv writer/producer with credits for *Warehouse 13* (2009-2010), *The Secret Circle* (2011-2012) and *Jessica Jones* (2015), died on 18 October aged 59. [SHS]

- *Ed Benguiat* (1927-2020), US typographer and typeface designer whose fonts and logos feature in *Planet of the Apes*, Stephen King’s 1980s novels, two *Star Trek* films and *Stranger Things*, died on 15 October aged 92. [PDF]

- *Rachel Caine* (Roxanne Longstreet Conrad, 1962-2020), US author of many fantasy and sf novels since *Stormriders* (1990), died on 1 November aged 57.

- *Chris Carnel* (1963-2020), US stuntman and fight arranger whose many films include *Spider-Man* (2002), *Iron Man* (2008), *Captain America: The Winter Soldier* (2014) and *Guardians of the Galaxy* (2014), died on 5 October aged 57. [SJ]

- *Marge Champion* (1919-2020), US dancer and choreographer who was the model for Disney’s *Snow White* (1937), Blue Fairy (*Pinocchio*, 1940) and others, died on 21 October aged 101. [PDF]

- *Sir Sean Connery* (1930-2020), utterly famous and multiple award-winning Scots actor in seven James Bond films – with many more genre credits including *Zardoz* (1974), *Time Bandits* (1981), *Highlander* (1986), *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* (1989) and *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* (2003) – died on 31 October aged 90.

- *Richard De Croce*, former BBC America VP and executive producer of four

- documentaries about *Doctor Who* (2009-2010) plus *The Real History of Science Fiction* (2014), died on 18 October aged 53. [GVG]
- *Gianni Dei* (1940-2020), Italian actor in *The Seventh Grave* (1965), *Sex of the Witch* (1973), *Sex, Demons and Death* (1975) and *Patrick Still Lives* (1980), died on 19 October aged 79. [SJ]
 - *Debra Doyle* (1952-2020), US author of much sf/fantasy with her husband James D. Macdonald since 1988, died on 31 October aged 67. [F770]
 - *Robert Eighteen-Bisang*, Canadian scholar, collector and anthologist of vampire literature whose books include the Ruthven-winning *Bram Stoker's Notes for Dracula* (2013, with Elizabeth Miller), died on 29 September aged 73. [GVG]
 - *Edward S. Feldman* (1929-2020), US producer whose genre films include *Honey, I Blew Up the Kid* (1992) and *The Truman Show* (1998), died on 2 October aged 91. [SHS]
 - *Conchata Ferrell* (1943-2020), US actress in *Edward Scissorhands* (1990), *Teen Angel* (1997-1998), *Modern Vampires* (1998) *K-PAX* (2001), *Krampus* (2015) and others, died on 12 October aged 77. [AIP]
 - *Rhonda Fleming* (1923-2020), US actress in *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* (1948) and *The Nude Bomb* (1980), died on 14 October aged 97. [PDF]
 - *Janet Freer*, whose own literary agency represented various *New Worlds* authors in the 1960s (Disch, Ellison, Moorcock, Priest) and whose later clients at MBA included Le Guin and McCaffrey, died in October; she was 89. (*Guardian*, 11 October)
 - *David Gale* (1955-2020), US children's book editor who worked with many genre authors during his 25 years as editorial director of the Simon & Schuster Young Readers imprint, died on 9 October aged 65. [PDF]
 - *Gerald Gardner* (1929-2020), US screenwriter for *Get Smart* (10 episodes 1965-1967) and *The Magnificent Magical Magnet of Santa Mesa* (1977), died on 12 October aged 91. [SJ]
 - *Jacques Godin* (1930-2020), French-Canadian actor in *Dans une galaxie près de chez vous 2* (2008), died on 26 October aged 90. [SHS]
 - *Arvinder Grewal*, US production designer/art director whose genre credits include *eXistenZ* (1999), *Land of the Dead* (2005) and *Resident Evil: Afterlife* (2010), died on 22 October. [SHS]
 - *Al Kasha* (1937-2020), US composer and songwriter with genre credits for *Freaky Friday* (1976). *Pete's Dragon* (1977), *Mystery Science Theater 3000*

(1992-1997) and *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer* (1998), died on 14 September aged 83. [MMW]

- *Pamela Kosh* (1930-2020), UK actress whose credits include *Star Trek: The Next Generation* (1992, 1994) and *Superman vs. The Elite* (2012), died on 21 October aged 90. [SJ]

- *Len Lakofka* (1944-2020), US game designer and writer involved in the development of *Dungeons & Dragons*, died in October. [PDF]

- *Bob Laurent*, US filk fan who published the songbook *Save the Wails* and founded Consonance and the Interfilk Fan Fund, died on 14 September; his wife *Lindy Laurent* (née Sears, 1956-2020), filk convention runner, committed suicide on 25 September. [SHS]

- *Richard (Dick) Lupoff* (1935-2020), US author, publisher, Edgar Rice Burroughs scholar and long-time fan whose co-edited fanzine *Xero* won a 1963 Hugo and whose first novel was *One Million Centuries* (1967), died on 22 October aged 85. Comics-related essays from *Xero* formed the core of *All in Color for a Dime* (1970), co-edited with Don Thompson. [SE]

- *Martin McKenna* (1969-2020), UK artist for various small-press magazines – winning a 1995 British Fantasy Award – and Games Workshop’s *White Dwarf*, *Warhammer*, etc., died in early September. Books include *Digital Fantasy Painting Workshop* (2004). [SJ]

- *Armelia McQueen* (1952-2020), US actress in *Ghost* (1990), *Adventures in Wonderland* (1992) and others, died on 4 October aged 68. [SJ]

- *Tom Maschler* (1933-2020), German-born UK publisher of many authors as literary director and chair of Jonathan Cape 1960-1988 – including Kingsley and Martin Amis, J.G. Ballard, Roald Dahl, John Fowles, Ian McEwan, Gabriel García Márquez, Philip Roth and Salman Rushdie – died on 15 October aged 87. (*The Bookseller*, 16 October)

- *Chris Meadows*, US sf/games/comics fan, contributor and former editor at *Telereads.org*, and author of *The Geek's Guide to Indianapolis* (2015), died on 12 October aged 47. [F770]

- *Clark Middleton* (1957-2020), US actor in *Fringe* (2008-2013), *Snowpiercer* (2013) and *Twin Peaks* (2017), died on 4 October aged 63. [HB]

- *Margaret Nolan* (1943-2020), UK model and actress in *Goldfinger* (1964), *After Many a Summer* (1967), *Dracula* (1968), Spike Milligan’s *The World of Beachcomber* (1968-1969) and *Toomorrow* (1970), died on 5 October aged 76. [MMW/SH]

- *Jill Paton Walsh* (1937-2020), UK author who published several genre

novels including the prehistoric-sf *Toolmaker* (1974) and the timeslip fantasy *A Chance Child* (1978), died on 19 October aged 83. (BBC, 19 October) [LW]

- *Mykola Petrenko* (1925-2020), Ukrainian poet and playwright whose huge output included fairy tales, died on 10 October aged 95. [PDF]
- *Stephen Prickett* (1939-2020), UK academic and critic, long-time president of the George MacDonald Society, whose books include *Victorian Fantasy* (1979; expanded 2005), reportedly died in October. [PM-R]
- *Tommy Rall* (1929-2020), US dancer and actor who played the werewolf in *Saturday the 14th Strikes Back* (1988), died on 6 October aged 90. [SJ]
- *James ‘The Amazing’ Randi* (1928-2020), Canadian magician and escapologist who applied his skills to debunking paranormal claims – for example in *Flim-Flam!* (1980) – and published short sf in *Omni* and *Destinies*, died on 20 October aged 92. [LP]
- *Gene Reed*, US comics fan, convention-goer and Grand Comics Database indexer, died in September. [SR]
- *Ryszard Ronczewski* (1930-2020), Polish actor in *The Two Who Stole the Moon* (1962) and *The Saragossa Manuscript* (1965), died on 17 October aged 90. [SHS]
- *Murray Schisgal* (1926-2020), US producer of *The Devil's Arithmetic* (1999, based on Jane Yolen's timeslip novel), died on 1 October aged 93. [SHS]
- *Keith Short* (1941-2020), UK sculptor/modeller whose work appeared in many genre films from *Aliens* (1979), *Raiders of the Lost Ark* (1981) and *Return of the Jedi* (1983) to *Prometheus* (2012), died on 11 September aged 79. [AIP]
- *George J. Steiner Jr.* (1952-2020), founding president of the now defunct Filmworks New Orleans, who had crew credits in *Ender's Game* (2013), *Dawn of the Planet of the Apes* (2014) and *Terminator Genisys* (2015), died on 25 September aged 68. [AIP]
- *David Toole* (1964-2020), noted double-amputee UK dancer and actor whose stage credits include *The Fall of the House of Usher* (2000) and *They Only Come at Night: Resurrection* (2012), died on 16 October aged 56. [AIP]
- *Kent L. Wakeford* (1928-2020) US cinematographer for *Doctor Death: Seeker of Souls* (1973), *Last Lives* (1997), *The Shadow Men* (1997) and others, died on 10 October aged 92. [SHS]
- *Frank Windsor* (1928-2020), UK actor in *A for Andromeda* (1961) and the

Doctor Who storylines ‘The King’s Demons’ (1983) and ‘Ghost Light’ (1989), died on 30 September aged 92. [JM]

The Weakest Link. *Jeopardy* answer (category ‘The World is Not Enough’) requiring the correct question: ‘In a Larry Niven novel, a motley crew of explorers travel to this ribbon-like “world” that encircles a star.’ *Contestant:* ‘What is Discworld?’ (8 October) [AIP]

Court Circular. Margaret Weis and Tracy Hickman filed a lawsuit against Wizards of the Coast on 16 October for cancelling their new Dragonlance fantasy trilogy, allegedly breaching the contract ‘in stunning and brazen bad faith’. (Epicstream.com, 19 October) They feel they have suffered damages ‘believed to be in excess of \$10 million’.

The Dead Past. *20 Years Ago:* ‘Uri Geller is suing Nintendo for “hundreds of millions of dollars” over the Pokémon monster “Yun Geller”, who wields a spoon, “uses psychic mind-waves to give his victims bad headaches”, and worst of all has not only lightning bolts on his chest which are *obviously* SS insignia, but a forehead star which *can only be* the Star of David! “Nintendo turned me into an evil, occult Pokémon character ... Nintendo stole my identity by using my name and my signature image of a bent spoon.”’ (Ansible 160, November 2000) The (five-pointed) star and three-wavy-lines symbols are from the Zener ESP testing cards; still, this character hasn’t appeared in anime since 2005.

- *97 Years Ago*, a word whose original invention was later disputed: ‘by an ingenious arrangement of hidden wires the artful Muggles had contrived ...’ (Ernest Bramah, *The Eyes of Max Carrados*, 1923)

Fanfundery. *TAFF:* in view of pandemic uncertainties, the next westbound race from Europe to a Worldcon will be to Chicon 8 in 2022 rather than DisCon III in 2021 (taff.org.uk). It’s hoped that the 2020 winner Michael Lowrey can make his delayed eastbound trip before then.

Editorial. Paul Barnett (John Grant) and I had been talking idly about an ebook of our extremely tasteless horror spoof *Guts* (2001), but he died in February. With the kind permission of Pam Scoville, this is now available from the Ansible Editions site: ae.ansible.uk/?t=guts.

- Proof copies of the new Langford collection *Beachcombing* are awaited.

Random Fandom. *Jim Barker* was deeply thrilled to be the cover-featured

artist – and subject of a 12-page interview inside – for the October issue of *The Jester*, magazine of the Cartoonists’ Club of Great Britain.

- [*The Return of Hyper Comics*](#) (Thintwhistle Books, 2020, ISBN 9798645729363) is a substantial collection of graphic weirdness by the great Steve Stiles, largely assembled by himself before his death.

Thog’s Masterclass. Anatomy Dept. ‘He had gotten hold of a knife somewhere and had it clenched firmly between his teeth. If he bumped into a tree, he would slit his own throat ...’ (Gary K. Wolf, *Who Censored Roger Rabbit?*, 1981) [BA]

- *Obvious Once You Know*. ‘There is scarcely a man in this class who has not heard of how Professor P222D29333Male accidentally stumbled upon the scientific fact that the effect of gravity is reversed upon any body which vibrates perpendicularly to the plane of the ecliptic with a frequency which is an even multiple of the logarithm of 2 of the Napierian base “e”.’ (Harry Stephen Keeler, “John Jones’s Dollar”, 1915)

- *When Relativity Goes Bad*. ‘The ship trembled, twisted, shuddered as full mass returned with the disruption of the field. Mass flooded back into the vessel, titanic mass, mass impossible to contain, it transformed into sheer energy, blasted through the nulgrav generator and poured from there into outer space.’ (Volsted Gridban, *Planetoid Disposals Ltd.*, 1953) [BA]

- *Neat Tricks*. ‘I scratched my head, internally ...’ (Conrad Williams, *Loss of Separation*, 2010) [DB]

Endnotes

Prophetic Corner: Hindsight Dept. ‘With the launching ceremony being beamed live to the entire planet – and the 2016 elections barely ten months away – no one wanted to risk that kind of fiasco.’ (Timothy Zahn, *Spinneret*, 1987) [AA]

Group Gropes. The end is nigh for any fans still using Yahoo Groups email lists. A year after deleting all its users’ message, document and photo archives, Yahoo plans to shut down what remains of the service – a bare email bounce with no frills – on 15 December 2020. [TM]

The Critical Heritage. ‘However, [Alan] Garner’s third novel, *Elidor* (1965), had nothing to do with the theme or characters of the first two books and was lighter in tone. Subsequent books, like *The Owl Service* (1967), are

disappointing. It is regrettable to see an author of great potential failing to fulfill that promise.’ (Lin Carter, *Imaginary Worlds*, 1973)

Virtual Meetings.

- 4 November 2020, 8pm-9pm: Event Horizon online.
<https://www.shorelineofinfinity.com/>
- 5 November 2020, evening: Alison Scott has set up this alternative to the physical London First Thursday meeting: ‘Please share this with people who you know typically come to the Bishop’s Finger, but aren’t on Facebook.’
<https://medium.com/@BohemianCoast/first-thursday-london-sf-fan-virtual-drinks-5232021e961f>
- 10 November 2020, from 7:30pm: Handheld Book Club. £3.60.
<https://www.handheldpress.co.uk/the-handheld-book-club/>
- 15 November 2020 (and every other third Sunday of the month), afternoon/early evening: Sheffield SF and Fantasy Society online meeting using Zoom. For access details contact Fran Dowd, thesofa [at] gmail dot com.

As Others See the Blindingly Obvious. ‘This is a year that is finally delivering on the dystopian promises of late-20th century science fiction.’ (Tim Harford, *Financial Times*, 3 October) [MMW]

R.I.P. II. Last-minute report from Steve Green: *Charles Gordon* (1947-2020), US producer of *Night of the Creeps* (1986), *Leviathan* (1989), *Field of Dreams* (1989), *The Rocketeer* (1991), *Waterworld* (1995) and *Things That Go Bump* (1997), died on 1 November aged 73.

British Fantasy Award novel shortlists. HOLDSTOCK (fantasy) *The Bone Ships*, R.J. Barker; *The Migration*, Helen Marshall; *The Poison Song*, Jen Williams; *The Ten Thousand Doors of January*, Alix E. Harrow. DERLETH (horror) *The Institute*, Stephen King; *The Migration*, Helen Marshall; *Mistletoe*, Alison Littlewood; *The Plague Stones*, James Brogden; *The Reddening*, Adam Nevill; *The Twisted Ones*, T. Kingfisher. See below for more.

Some Links from the *Ansible* home page.

- British Fantasy Awards full shortlists
<http://www.britishfantasysociety.org/awards/british-fantasy-awards-2020-shortlists/>
- Chesley Awards

<http://file770.com/2020-chesley-awards/>

- European SF Society Awards: full results

<https://www.esfs.info/2020-2/>

- Kickstarter for Wendy Aldiss's photobook *My Father's Things*

<https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/wendyaldiss/my-fathers-things-a-beautifully-designed-photobook>

- TAFF: no 2021 race (administrators' announcement)

<https://taff.org.uk/news/20201007-PR.pdf>

Thog's Golden Oldies from *Ansible* 160, November 2000. *Dept of Flexibility*: 'He encircled her hand with his arm ...' (Marion Zimmer Bradley, *Endless Voyage*, 1975) [BA]

- 'She pouted, her lower lip projecting like the bottom drawer in a chest of drawers which has jammed open on account of too many clothes being stuffed inside.' (Mary Scott, *Murder on Wheels*, 2000)

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Ansible® 401, December 2020

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.
Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo:
Dan Steffan. Cartoon: **Harry Bell**, 'Wisp'. Available for SAE or the precise
whereabouts of the surplus population.

The Five Staves

Wendy Aldiss's Kickstarter fundraiser for *My Father's Things*, a lavish photobook of Brian Aldiss memorabilia, reached and passed its £6,800 target on 2 November. She thanks the *Ansible* readers who helped.

Anthony Burgess, in a verse first published in the huge *Collected Poems* (out this month), warned his audience: 'Advice: don't read / A Clockwork Orange – it's a foul farrago [*two lines nervously omitted here*] Read Hamlet, Shelley, Keats, Doctor Zhivago.' ([Guardian, 8 November](#))

Adam-Troy and Judi Castro lost their home in November owing to identity thieves who drained their savings and hijacked mortgage payments. A Gofundme campaign to keep them afloat has raised more than \$35,000, but they're still having to live expensively in hotels.

Nigella Lawson, famous tv cook, embraced her inner fan by comparing a dish in preparation to *gagh* – 'That's a Klingon delicacy.' Which is made from serpent worms, preferably served live. Er um. [LW]

Robert Macfarlane, UK author and academic, was asked what book he couldn't finish: 'Frank Herbert's *Dune*. Wild landscapes, weird nature, science fiction – this really should be my jam. But no; the violence came to sicken me by halfway through, as did aspects of the politics. So I junked it.' (Interview, *New York Times*, 19 November) [AIP]

Sheree Renée Thomas will replace C.C. Finlay as editor of *The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction* as of the March/April 2021 issue. Gordon Van Gelder continues as publisher. ([Facebook, 3 November](#)) [GVG]

Bud Webster (1952-2016) has a new memorial: the SFWA Legacy Kit, helping authors – not only SFWA members – organize their literary estates. See www.sfwaweb.org/member-links/projects/estate/legacy-kit/.

Coniopterygidae

ONLINE. 3 Dec • **Virtual First Thursday**, 6-10pm, replacing the usual London pub meeting. See tinyurl.com/uow6hqj.

ONLINE. 5 Dec • **Dragonmeet** (gaming), normally held in London. 9am-midnight. Further details at www.dragonmeet.co.uk.

ONLINE. 8-13 Dec • **Sci-Fi London** film festival. See sci-fi-london.com; details of added talks and panels at sci-fi-london.com/events/.

9 Dec - Aug 2021 • **Fantastic Beasts: The Wonder of Nature** (exhibition), Natural History Museum, London. £22. See www.nhm.ac.uk/visit/exhibitions/fantastic-beasts-the-wonder-of-nature.html.

ONLINE. 11-12 Dec • **Grimmfest Xmas Horror Nights** (film); see xmahorrorights.eventive.org/welcome for details.

ONLINE. 17 Dec • **Virtual Christmas Meeting**, 6-10pm, replacing the usual extra London pub meeting. See tinyurl.com/uow6hqj.

ONLINE. 13 Feb 2021 • **Tolkien Society Seminar**. See www.tolkiensociety.org/events/tolkien-society-seminar-2021-no-1/

POSTPONED AGAIN. 19-21 Feb 2021 • **Satellite 7**, Glasgow. *New dates 21-23 May 2021*. GoH Aliette de Bodard and Margaret Walty. £70 reg (£80 at the door); under-25s £60; under-18s £20; under-12s £5; under-5s £2. Day: £20 Fri, £35 Sat or Sun. See seven.satellitex.org.uk.

POSTPONED. 18-21 Mar 2021 • **Eurocon 2021**, Fiuggi, Italy. *New dates 15-18 July 2021*. €50 reg; see eurocon2021.it.

POSTPONED. 26-28 Mar 2021 • **Corflu 38**, Mercure Holland Hotel, Bristol. *New dates 5-7 November 2021*. £50/\$60 reg. FAAn Awards ceremony and business meeting still on 27 March, via Zoom. See corflu.org.

Rumblings. *Worldcon 2021*: DisCon III is exercising its option to add an extra, temporary category to the Hugo awards: Best Video Game.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others Avoid Us. Fareed Zakaria on genre preferences: ‘I read everything, except for fantasy and horror. The latter I find particularly pointless. Why pay money to be scared? There is one exception, Stephen King, who writes so well that I will on rare occasions overcome my resistance.’ (‘By the Book’ interview, *New York Times*, 6 November) [JB]

Awards. *Goldsmiths Prize* of £10,000 for mould-breaking fiction written and published in the UK or Eire: *The Sunken Land Begins to Rise Again* by M. John Harrison. [L] ‘Harrison [...] has described the novel as not “science fiction or folk horror or psychogeography, but it contains parodic elements of all three, and more”.’ (*Guardian*, 11 November)

- *Mystery Writers of America Grand Masters* now include Charlaine Harris.
- *Rotsler Award* for life achievement as fan artist: Alan White.

Publishers and Sinners. Harlan Ellison’s literary executor J. Michael Straczynski promised that the long-stagnant anthology *The Last Dangerous Visions* – announced in Ellison’s introduction to *Again, Dangerous Visions* (1972) as coming in six months – would be completed and ready for submission to publishers in Spring 2021. (Twitter, 13 November) The many stories cited in past contents lists but withdrawn and often published elsewhere will not be included; others unspecified are to be dropped; new fiction never seen by Ellison will be added; as to whether any Ellison story introductions (regarded as highlights of *DV* and *A,DV*) were actually written for *TLDV*, there is a great silence.

- Of course Chris Priest was asked to comment.... ([Guardian, 16 November](#))

As Others See Us. John Wain noted that C.S. Lewis ‘developed in later years a telltale interest in science fiction, which is usually a reliable sign of imaginative bankruptcy.’ (‘A Great Clerke’ in *C.S. Lewis at the Breakfast Table* ed. James T Como, 1979) [VS]

- *Pauline Kael* on *2001*: ‘It’s fun to think about Kubrick really doing every dumb thing he wanted to do, building enormous science-fiction sets and equipment, never even bothering to figure out what to do with them... maybe some people love *2001* just because Kubrick did all that stupid stuff, acted out a kind of super sci-fi nut’s fantasy.’ (*Harper’s Magazine*, February 1969) [MMW]

- R.I.P.** *Joseph Altairac* (1957-2020), French sf scholar who published books on Wells and van Vogt, the fanzine *Lovecraftian Studies*, and (with Guy Costes) *Rétrofictions* (2018), a two-volume encyclopedia of Francophone genre fiction, died on 9 November aged 63. [SJ]
- *Carol Arthur* (1935-2020), US actress whose Mel Brooks films include *Dracula: Dead and Loving It* (1995), died on 1 November aged 85. [SHS]
 - *Charles (Chuck) Bail* (1935-2020), US actor, director, stuntman and stunt arranger whose credits include *The House of Seven Corpses* (1974) and *Knight Rider* (1985-1986), died on 25 November aged 85. [SJ]
 - *Ben Bova* (1932-2020), US editor and prolific author who began publishing sf with *The Star Conquerors* (1959) and won the Campbell Memorial Award for *Titan* (2006), died on 29 November aged 88. He edited *Analog* 1971-1978 – winning six Hugos as best pro editor – and *Omni* 1978-1982.
 - *Vittorio Catani* (1940-2020), Italian author whose sf career began in 1962 and whose novel *Gli universi di Moras* (*The Universes of Moras*) won the first Urania Prize in 1990, died on 23 November aged 80. [PDF]
 - *Mila del Sol* (1923-2020), Filipino actress whose genre credits include *Prinsipe Teñoso* (1942) and *Rosalka* (2010), died on 10 November aged 97. [AW]
 - *Tony Eastman* (1942-2020), US artist and animator whose credits include *Courage the Cowardly Dog* (1999-2002) and *Harvey Birdman, Attorney at Law* (2002-2003), died in early November. [PDF]
 - *Sean Ellis* (1966-2020), UK fan and con-goer long active in the Reading SF Group and Hampshire Sceptics, died on 21 November. [MY]
 - *Janet Ann Gallow* (1937-2020), former US child actress best known as the little girl abducted by the monster (Lon Chaney Jr) in Universal's *The Ghost of Frankenstein* (1942), died on 13 November aged 83. [SJ]
 - *Eddie Hassell* (1990-2020), US actor in *Surface* (2005-2006) and *2012* (2009), died on 1 November aged 30. [MMW]
 - *David Hemblen* (1941-2020), UK actor in *Brainscan* (1994), *X-Men: The Animated Series* (1992-1997, voicing Magneto), *Earth: Final Conflict* (1997-2002), *Rollerball* (2002) and others, died on 16 November aged 79. [SHS]
 - *Jery Hewitt* (1949-2020), stuntman and stunt arranger with many genre credits from *Wolfen* (1981), *C.H.U.D.* (1984) and *Ghostbusters II* (1989) to *The Tomorrow People* (2013-2014) and *Forever* (2014-2015), died on 21 November aged 71. [LP]
 - *Michael Z. Hobson* (1936-2020), US comics publisher who had been

- executive vice president of Marvel, died on 12 November aged 83. [PDF]
- *Kenneth V. Jones*, US actor in *Phantasm* (1979) and – via recycled footage – its 2016 and 2017 sequels, died on 6 November aged 90. [SJ]
 - *Johnny Kevorkian* (1972-2020), Cyprus-born director of *Await Further Instructions* (2018) and *The Disappeared* (2018) died on 4 November aged 48. [SHS]
 - *Yasumi Kobayashi* (1962-2020), Japanese author of sf, mystery and horror active since 1995, died on 23 November aged 58. [PDF]
 - *Akira Kubodera* (1977-2020), Japanese actor best known for *Pretty Guardian Sailor Moon* (2003-2004), died on 13 November aged 43; suicide was suspected. [PDF]
 - *Tom La Farge* (1947-2020), US author whose first novel was the animal fantasy *The Crimson Bears* (1993), died on 22 October. [GF/HW]
 - *Miriam Dyches Carr Knight Lloyd*, US fan active in the 1950s and 1960s with fanzines including various ‘Goojie Publications’ titles as Dyches or Carr, *Klein Bottle* and later issues of *Fanac* with her first husband Terry Carr, and *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to Poughkeepsie* with her second husband Jerry Knight, died on 23 October. [RL]
 - *Kay McCauley*, US literary agent at Aurous (founded by her late brother as Kirby McCauley Ltd) whose authors included Ramsey Campbell, Gardner Dozois, George R.R. Martin and Melinda Snodgrass, died on 1 November. [MS]
 - *Anita Mason* (1942-2020), UK author of the historical fantasy *The Illusionist* (1983) and the dystopian sf *The War Against Chaos* (1988), died on 8 September aged 78. [DP]
 - *Jan Morris* (1926-2020), acclaimed UK travel writer and historian whose genre or genre-adjacent book was *Last Letters from Hav* (1985; expanded 2006 as *Hav*), died on 20 November aged 94. [PDF]
 - *Kirby Morrow* (1973-2020), Canadian actor whose very many credits include *Mobile Suit Gundam Wing* (English versions 1995-1997), *Ninja Turtles: The Next Mutation* (1997-1998), *Stargate: Atlantis* (2005-2008) and *Transformers: Cybertron* (2006-2006), died on 18 November aged 47. [SJ]
 - *Daria Nicolodi* (1950-2020), Italian actress and writer seen in many horror films from *Deep Red* (1975) and *Suspiria* (1977, which she co-scripted) to *Mother of Tears* (2007), died on 26 November aged 70. [SG]
 - *John O’Brien*, US founder of the Dalkey Archive Press which published many fantastic works (often in translation) including the collected short

fiction of Flann O'Brien – from whose *The Dalkey Archive* the press took its name – died on 21 November aged 75. [PDF]

- Late report: *Dennis O'Neil* (1939-2020), US author whose first novel was *The Bite of Monsters* (1971) and who wrote various Batman novelizations and scripted such Marvel titles as *Spider-Man*, *Iron Man* and *Daredevil*, died on 11 June aged 81. [RHo]

- *Geoffrey Palmer* (1927-2020), UK actor in *Doctor Who and the Silurians* (1970) and *Stig of the Dump* (2002), died on 6 November aged 93. [AW]

- *Hayford Peirce* (1942-2020), US author active since 1974, whose first novel was *Napoleon Disentimed* (1987), shot himself on 19 November; he was 78. His wife Wanda Zhang Peirce was found dead – also shot – at the same address. [SHS]

- *David Prowse* (1935-2020), UK actor whose films include *The Horror of Frankenstein* (1970), *A Clockwork Orange* (1971), *Vampire Circus* (1972), *Frankenstein and the Monster from Hell* (1974), *Jabberwocky* (1977), *The People That Time Forgot* (1977) and the first *Star Wars* trilogy (1977-1983), died on 29 November aged 85. [SG]

- *Elsa Raven* (1929-2020), US actress in *The Amityville Horror* (1979) and *Back to the Future* (1985), died on 3 November aged 91. [LP]

- *Luke Rhinehart* (George Powers Cockcroft, 1932-2020), US author best known for *The Dice Man* (1971), who also wrote several sf novels, died on 6 November aged 87. [JL]

- Late report: *Suzanne Roquette* (1942-2020), German actress in *Space: 1999* (1975-1976) and *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* (1989), died on 28 May aged 77. [S]

- *José Montalbán Saiz*, Spanish movie-poster artist whose best known poster was for *Pánico En El Transiberiano/Horror Express* (1972), died on 25 October aged 94. [SJ]

- *John Sessions* (1953-2020), Scots actor and comedian whose genre credits include *The Sender* (1982), *Whoops Apocalypse* (1986), *Gormenghast* (2000), *Doctor Who: 'Death Comes to Time'* (2001-2002), *Five Children and It* (2004) and *Jonathan Strange & Mr Norrell* (2015), died on 2 November aged 67. [SG/PE]

- *Herbert F. Solow* (1930-2020), US tv executive who while at Desilu Studios sold the original *Star Trek* series (which credited him as 'executive in charge of production') to NBC and *Mission Impossible* to CBS, died on 19 November aged 89. He co-wrote *Inside Star Trek: The Real Story* (1996).

[F770]

- *Ken Spears* (1938-2020), US producer and screenwriter who with Joe Ruby (1933-2020; see [A398](#)) co-created *Scooby-Doo* and *Electra Woman and Dyna Girl* (1976) and whose credits include *Planet of the Apes* (1974 tv) and *Bigfoot and Wildboy* (1977-1979), died on 6 November aged 82. [PDF]
- *Philip Voss* (1936-2020), UK actor whose credits include *Doctor Who* (1964; 1968), *Frankenstein and the Monster from Hell* (1974), *Octopussy* (1983), *The Lord of the Rings* (1981 radio) and *About Time* (2013), died on 13 November aged 84. [AIP]
- *Richard C. West* (1944-2020), Tolkien scholar who published *Orcrist* 1966-1977 and edited *Tolkien Criticism: An Annotated Checklist* (1970), died on 29 November aged 76. [AIP]
- *Sven Wollter* (1934-2020), Swedish actor in *The Sacrifice* (1986) and the Michael Crichton-based *The 13th Warrior* (1999), died on 10 November aged 86. [AW]

As Others Appreciate Us. A good word from Shaun Bythell's enjoyably grumpy *Seven Kinds of People You Find in Bookshops* (2020): 'A postscript brings the tally up to nine with a description of *Clients perfectus* (Perfect Customer). Among the subtypes in this vanishingly small contingent are the ingenuously passionate readers whom Bythell prizes above the misers, time wasters and poseurs. He has nothing but love for the collectors of books about steam locomotives, rare editions of modern fiction, and – in their uniform of black T-shirt and white trainers – science-fiction fans.' ([Guardian review, 11 November](#)) [SL] How did I survive all those decades in sf fandom while shockingly out of uniform?

Court Circular. SFWA and Alan Dean Foster launched their campaign #DisneyMustPay on 18 November. Since Disney took over publishing rights to ADF's multiple *Alien* and *Star Wars* novelizations in 2015, the books continue to be sold but the royalties specified in the contracts are no longer paid. As SFWA grimly puts it, 'Disney's argument is that they have purchased the rights but not the obligations of the contract. In other words, they believe they have the right to publish work, but are not obligated to pay the writer no matter what the contract says. If we let this stand, it could set precedent to fundamentally alter the way copyright and contracts operate in the United States. All a publisher would have to do to break a contract would be to sell it to a sibling company.' See www.sfw.org/2020/11/18/disney-

[must-pay/](#).

Doctor Who and the Kipper, a storyline new to fans, was created by BBC house style (no italics or quotes for titles) in their Geoffrey Palmer obit. Next words: ‘and the Corpse episode of Fawlty Towers.’ [BB]

Magazine Scene. *Starburst* magazine announced that because of pandemic-induced distribution problems the printed issue #476 – expected in November – is on hold until April 2021. Meanwhile, online and video updates should continue at starburstmagazine.com. [SG]

The Dead Past. *20 Years Ago*: ‘David Eddings chilled our blood in a Del Rey newsletter interview: “The first thing a fantasist needs to do is to invent a world and draw a map. Do the map first.” Silly old Tolkien, starting with languages!’ (*Ansible* 161, December 2000)

- ‘Recent research into the catchphrase of Discworld’s Librarian led to a possible literary source. James Joyce, *Ulysses*, 1922, p424 of Penguin Modern Classics edition: “Ook.” Terry Pratchett comments: “Dunno. Never read more than a few pages of Joyce – thought he was a berk.”’ (*Ibid*)
- *90 Years Ago*, a UK item that should have run in [A399](#): ‘The first meeting of our first fan group was held in Ilford on 27th October 1930.’ [RHa]

Publishers and Sinners II. Penguin Random House (i.e. Bertelsmann) plans to buy the Simon & Schuster publishing imprint from ViacomCBS for \$2.18 billion. ([Publishers Weekly, 25 November](#))

Fanfundery. *TAFF*: John Coxon’s report on his 2011 TAFF tour – titled *Best. Trip. Ever.* – was published last month as a paperback and ebook, with all proceeds to the fund. See taff.org.uk/#Nov2020.

- Coming soon to the free ebooks library: *The Harpy Stateside* by UK fan Ella Parker, whose unfinished report of a long 1961 US/Canadian trip is here expanded by Rob Hansen with others’ published tales of her travels; *Atom Abroad*, Arthur (Atom) Thomson’s lively 1964 TAFF trip report; and the immense *Ansible Second Series 2011-2020* (issues 282-401).

Random Fandom. *Greg Ketter* of DreamHaven Books in Minneapolis was assaulted – along with his employee Ryan – and robbed on 9 November; the miscreants escaped pursuit. ‘2020,’ he wrote philosophically, ‘is just the gift that keeps on giving.’ (Facebook) [MJL]

- *Outworlds 71/Afterworlds*, a 500+ page memorial to *Outworlds* editor Bill

Bowers (1943-2005) was published in November by a US collective and sent to his entire mailing list. It's \$20 via Amazon with proceeds to the fan funds. Is this monster huger than the legendary Walt Willis issue of *Warhoon*? Not quite; that's 616pp and weighs nearly a pound more....

Thog's Masterclass. *Male Gaze Dept.* 'With each breath she took, her breasts swelled out through the cloth, nodding wisely at me.' (Ledru Baker Jr, *Brute Madness*, 1961) [RWS]

- *Mission Statement.* 'I shall ride the galaxy on wings of flame, my fleet of starships fuelled and powered by my discovery. I shall rule as no man has ever ruled, and you want me to give up that for the empty praises of cowardly fools?' (Volsted Gridban [E.C. Tubb], *Fugitive of Time*, 1953) [BA]

- *Big Science Dept.* "Is this the great invention?" "Part of it, the rest is a complex mathematical equation impossible to duplicate."

- '... a blast of energy which will literally jerk the electrons and neutrons from their orbits.' (*Ibid*) [BA]

- *Trouser Racing.* 'He pulled on his clothes as she scrambled to do the same.' (Jane Jordan, *The Beekeeper's Daughter*, 2016) [RC]

- *The Last Dangerous Horticulture.* '... her nipples are like man-devouring flowers ...' (Frederick Turner, *A Double Shadow*, 1978) [BA]

Endnotes

Ho, Ho, Ho. As always, a Merry Christmas – or seasonal festival of your choice – and Happy New Year to all readers. Keep safe and have fun.

- Early copies of the threatened Langford collection, *Beachcombing and Other Oddments*, have now been sent to a select few. The official release date is 21 December, when the trade paperback and ebook will be available from Ansible Editions (ae.ansible.uk) on a sordid commercial basis. Contents: 78,000 words of (mostly) fanzine-published essays, speeches, silliness and unreliable autobiography.

R.I.P II. *Paul-Jean Héroult* (Michel Rigaud, 1934-2020), French sf author best known for the 'Cal de Ter' space opera sequence beginning with *Le Rescapé de la Terre* (*The Survivor of Earth*, 1975), died on 26 October aged 86. [L/RR]

- A late report that only recently came to light in sf circles: *Duncan Long* (1949-2016), US author and artist whose first novel was *Anti-Grav Unlimited*

(1988) and whose cover art appeared on *Asimov's* and elsewhere, died on 31 December 2016 aged 67. [SHS]

The Dead Past II. *58 Years Ago*, William Rotsler in his fanzine *Kteic* 118 (June 1962) proposed the idea of Retro Hugos long, long before they were first awarded in 1996. [RHa]

Virtual Meetings.

- 3 December 2020, evening: Alison Scott has set up this alternative to the physical London First Thursday meeting: 'Please share this with people who you know typically come to the Bishop's Finger, but aren't on Facebook.'
<https://medium.com/@BohemianCoast/first-thursday-london-sf-fan-virtual-drinks-5232021e961f>
- 8 December 2020, from 7:30pm: Handheld Book Club. Free.
<https://www.handheldpress.co.uk/the-handheld-book-club/>
- 20 December 2020 (and every other third Sunday of the month), afternoon/early evening: Sheffield SF and Fantasy Society online meeting using Zoom. For access details contact Fran Dowd, thesofa [at] gmail dot com.

Some Links from the *Ansible* home page.

- Adam-Troy and Judi Castro "Wiped out by Identity Theft"
<https://www.gofundme.com/f/26ohtpc1ao>
- 'Harlan Ellison's *The Last Dangerous Visions* may finally be published, after five-decade wait'
<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2020/nov/16/harlan-ellison-the-last-dangerous-visions-anthology-may-be-published>
- H.G. Wells Short Story Competition reopens early 2021
<https://hgwellscompetition.com/>

Thog's Golden Oldies from *Ansible* 161, December 2000. *Dept of Cruel and Unusual Geography*: 'Columbus never set foot on the continent that bore his name.' (Gregory Benford, *The Martian Race*, 1999)

- 'She [J.K. Rowling] has sold forty million copies in as many countries.'
(Sue Lawley, Radio 4)
 - *Dept of Weights and Measures*: '... reduced to Earthly terms, Professor Jameson learned that a borg measured 7.193 feet and some few inches.' (Neil R. Jones, *Twin Worlds*, 1967)
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December 2020

The End

This free ebook version of *Ansible Second Series 2011-2020* is exclusive to the unofficial TAFF website at taff.org.uk. If you enjoy reading it, a donation to TAFF is a fine way to express your appreciation.

Table of Contents

Ansible Second Series 2001-2010

Contents

Introduction

2011

Ansible 282, January 2011

Ansible 283, February 2011

Ansible 284, March 2011

Ansible 285, April 2011

Ansible 286, May 2011

Ansible 287, June 2011

Ansible 288, July 2011

Ansible 289, August 2011

Ansible 290, September 2011

Ansible 291, October 2011

Ansible 292, November 2011

Ansible 293, December 2011

2012

Ansible 294, January 2012

Ansible 295, February 2012

Ansible 296, March 2012

Ansible 297, April 2012

Ansible 298, May 2012

Ansible 299, June 2012

Ansible 300, July 2012

Ansible 301, August 2012

Ansible 302, September 2012

Ansible 303, October 2012

Ansible 304, November 2012

Ansible 305, December 2012

2013

Ansible 306, January 2013

Ansible 307, February 2013

Ansible 308, March 2013

Ansible 309, April 2013

Ansible 310, May 2013
Ansible 311, June 2013
Ansible 312, July 2013
Ansible 313, August 2013
Ansible 313 Supplement
Ansible 314, September 2013
Ansible 315, October 2013
Ansible 316, November 2013
Ansible 317, December 2013
2014
Ansible 318, January 2014
Ansible 319, February 2014
Ansible 320, March 2014
Ansible 321, April 2014
Ansible 322, May 2014
Ansible 323, June 2014
Ansible 323 Supplement
Ansible 324, July 2014
Ansible 325, August 2014
Ansible 326, September 2014
Ansible 327, October 2014
Ansible 328, November 2014
Ansible 329, December 2014
2015
Ansible 330, January 2015
Ansible 331, February 2015
Ansible 332, March 2015
Ansible 333, April 2015
Ansible 334, May 2015
Ansible 335, June 2015
Ansible 336, July 2015
Ansible 337, August 2015
Ansible 338, September 2015
Ansible 339, October 2015
Ansible 340, November 2015
Ansible 341, December 2015
2016

Ansible 342, January 2016
Ansible 343, February 2016
Ansible 344, March 2016
Ansible 345, April 2016
Ansible 346, May 2016
Ansible 347, June 2016
Ansible 348, July 2016
Ansible® 349, August 2016
Ansible® 350, September 2016
Ansible® 351, October 2016
Ansible® 352, November 2016
Ansible® 353, December 2016
2017
Ansible® 354, January 2017
Ansible® 355, February 2017
Ansible® 355½, February 2017
Ansible® 356, March 2017
Ansible® 357, April 2017
Ansible® 358, May 2017
Ansible® 359, June 2017
Ansible® 360, July 2017
Ansible® 361, August 2017
Ansible® 362, September 2017
Ansible® 363, October 2017
Ansible® 364, November 2017
Ansible® 365, December 2017
2018
Ansible® 366, January 2018
Ansible® 367, February 2018
Ansible® 368, March 2018
Ansible® 369, April 2018
Ansible® 370, May 2018
Ansible® 371, June 2018
Ansible® 372, July 2018
Ansible® 373, August 2018
Ansible® 374, September 2018
Ansible® 375, October 2018

Ansible® 376, November 2018
Ansible® 377, December 2018
2019
Ansible® 378, January 2019
Ansible® 379, February 2019
Ansible® 380, March 2019
Ansible® 381, April 2019
Ansible® 382, May 2019
Ansible® 383, June 2019
Ansible® 384, July 2019
Ansible® 385, August 2019
Ansible® 386, September 2019
Ansible 386 Supplement
Ansible® 387, October 2019
Ansible® 388, November 2019
Ansible® 389, December 2019
2020
Ansible® 390, January 2020
Ansible® 391, February 2020
Ansible® 392, March 2020
Ansible® 393, April 2020
Ansible® 394, May 2020
Ansible® 395, June 2020
Ansible® 396, July 2020
Ansible® 397, August 2020
Ansible® 398, September 2020
Ansible® 399, October 2020
Ansible® 400, November 2020
Ansible® 401, December 2020