

SEACON '79



Progress Report 03

SEACON '79

37th World Science Fiction Convention

BRIGHTON, ENGLAND. 23rd - 27th AUGUST 1979

Permanent Address:-

14 Henrietta Street, London WC2

Tel: 01-836 2006

BIDDING COMMITTEE:

Peter Weston (Chairman)
John Steward (Treasurer)
Graham Charnock
Malcolm Edwards
Robert Jackson
Leroy Kettle
Peter Roberts

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CH-5443 Niederrohrdorf

Pre-supporting membership is £0.50, \$1.00 or equivalent,
deductible from eventual membership of the convention itself.

PROGRESS REPORT THREE -- APRIL 1977

Cover by HARRY BELL

mailed 7/12/77
recd. 8/22/77

Do another Progress Report they say; get it ready for Easter. But what do I say? All the important details were already settled last year, when PR2 came out, and I don't want to bore people by harping on about what a great place Brighton is, and what a superbly-equipped Worldcon site. Or by going on about all that behind-the-scenes work promoting the bid. Something different ... an article, that's the thing. Bob Shaw's the man. He agrees, but when the piece arrives do I find a loving celebration of British fandom's virtues? Hell no: a ruthless exposé of our ignominious decadence is what I get. Can no one be trusted nowadays? I don't know. (Ed.)

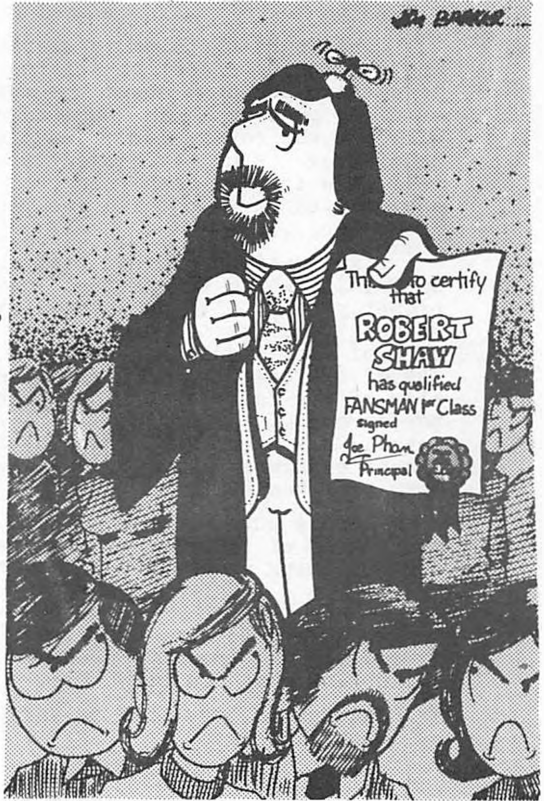
BOB SHAW

(Principal of the Fansmanship College)

THE TWO-YEAR WARNING

An impartial observer at British conventions in recent years will have noticed a disturbing fact, namely that the standard of Fansmanship has dropped to a shamefully low level. Indeed, sad to relate, the noble art has to all intents and purposes been abandoned! In those selfsame con halls where gifted and trained Fansmen could once be seen in all their glory -- causing envy on a grand scale, producing instantaneous inferiority complexes in all who ventured near them -- we are faced with the grim spectacle of pro authors, neofen, publishers, scientists, BNFs, artists, booksellers, editors and readers mixing together on terms of equality and actually enjoying themselves.

This shocking state of affairs is almost to be expected -- we all know the country is going through a bad patch -- but with the prospect of Britain hosting the World SF Convention in 1979 we must beware of letting overseas visitors see the depths of conviviality to which we have sunk. This,



therefore, is the ideal time to remind fans of the high principles of Fansmanship in general, and its subdivision Conventionmanship. The aim of the Fansman is, of course, to make himself appear a bigger BNF or pro than anyone else at a convention while at the same time convincing them he has no other ambition than to be a nice guy.

One of the best techniques in this field is the Just Passing Through ploy, developed by Fansman C. Warren of Middle Wallop. The essence of the method is to make people believe you had absolutely no intention of attending the convention, but -- by pure coincidence -- happened to be in the same area during the relevant week-end and decided to fill in an unexpected hiatus in your business programme.

Warren recommends hurrying into the reception area, looking rather breathless and distraught, ignoring everybody who knows you, grabbing a committee member by the arm and saying in a very loud voice, "Has Professor Kowalski* been trying to contact me?"

When the committee member replies in the negative -- as is bound to happen, unless you are fantastically unlucky -- you say, "Thank God! He was worried in case he would have to fly on to Tokyo** without seeing me."

This sort of thing is guaranteed to have an overawing and depressing effect on all those within earshot, and there is no need to worry about the mythical celebrity never actually putting in an appearance. The experienced Fansman will use the cover story to explain his own absence from any crucial events he may happen to miss during the convention. "I'd like to have been there, of course -- to join in the fun and everything -- but I'd promised to help old Kowalski with his paper...."

Explanations of that sort are best delivered with a wry half-smile which suggests you never really stop work and, if properly done, will make the listener feel he is a useless hedonistic parasite on society. Warren was a master of this type of smile, and to perfect it actually invented a special set of exercises which strengthened the muscles on the right side of his face -- the ones which produce a rueful quirk at the corner of the mouth. There is no space here in which to detail his exercises, but a useful one which can be performed almost everywhere you go is always to turn on your bath taps with your teeth.

Before putting on a show of scientific authority or any other kind of importance, make certain -- and judging this sort of thing accurately is a vital part of Fansmanship --

* The name used can, of course, be varied to suit the individual Fansman's needs -- Nigel Calder, Stanley Kubrick, Ray Bradbury, etc.

** Place names, too, can be varied -- Moscow, Hollywood, Solihull, etc.

that your listeners are of a type who will be impressed suitably. If they are, it is worth while remembering the well-proven Fansmanship principle -- never react in a predictable manner. Should it happen that you really are well versed in some branch of science (or other field), and this fact is known to the people present, do not make the elementary mistake of holding forth at length on your specialist subject. This is almost certain to bore the audience -- which is not in itself an undesirable objective -- but it is bad Fansmanship in that you be seen to be trying to impress.

The preferred technique is one which was developed by Fansman R. Hodges of Portsmouth, who happened to be a fairly eminent cosmologist. At a convention he would allow all the sf authors in his presence to expound what little knowledge they had of his subject, but when eventually somebody turned to him -- as a genuine expert in the field -- for clarification of a point, he would shake his head, make his eyes twinkle, and say, "I'm afraid this is all much too advanced for me."

Hodges reports that this ploy never fails to make even the most intelligent and well-informed layman feel he has been talking arrant nonsense, thus making him lapse into embarrassed silence. The amused indulgent twinkle in the eye is a vital part of the technique, and Hodges has even been known to carry a phial of glycerine with which to anoint

his corneas at the right moment ... but here we are straying into the realms of Advanced Fansmanship. The ordinary Fansman, whose purpose is simply to make his friends feel inferior, has need to trouble himself with such perfectionism, though it is always worth remembering the heights to which one can aspire.

In most cases, however, you are likely to know very little, perhaps nothing, about the subject under discussion. In these circumstances a technique recommended by Fansman J. Holmes of Derby is: instead of appearing impressed, or even bored, become increasingly agitated and angry looking during the discussion (which might be about, say, proton transplants). At a suitable moment, when everybody has begun looking questioningly in your direction, burst out



VIM BARKER

with, "I've given up on the so-called proton transplant experts after all the nonsense that was talked at the Stockholm conference last wekk," and storm out of the room.

It is extremely important for the Fansman to appear to be much more international than anybody else, ideally creating the impression that there are multitudinous levels of international fandom/publishing/writing, and that the British-American-Canadian scene is only one of many in which he is equally at home. Perhaps the boldest and surest way of doing this, although it requires some verve to carry it off properly, was perfected by Fansman H. Bisley of Maidstone.

He would position himself near the platform during the introductory session of a convention, and at the first suitable lull in the proceedings would go on stage, unfolding a telegram, and say something like, "Sorry to interrupt, Mr Chairman, but I have here a message of good will from the combined fan clubs of Bydgoszcz and Grudziadz of Poland. They addressed it to me personally because I was the only person they knew who would be here today, and with your permission I'll read it out."

He then proceeded to read out a fake message, making sure to include his own name, thus establishing himself in the eyes of all present as a jet-set Secret Master of Fandom. It was Bisley, too, who invented the simple but effective Unique Badge ploy. He always carried in his case a selection of aerosol transparent paints of the sort used by commercial artists, and as soon as possible after registering would spray his convention badge with a colour which made it look as though it had been deliberately manufactured to distinguish it from those worn by everybody else. This was Fansmanship of a high order because, without having to utter a single word, he made people think he was a member of some powerful inner hierarchy recognised by the convention committee.

It is a proud and lonely thing to be a top grade Fansman, and practitioners of the art, always realists, will be the first to admit that it has one rather irritating drawback -- namely that the successful Fansman, having sown the seeds of envy and ill will on all sides, rarely gets invited to room parties. This could be serious, because it is important for the Fansman to be seen at all the right social functions. Graduates of the Fansmanship College have various ways of dealing with this situation, but the last thing they will do is allow themselves to be seen going around trying to cadge invitations. One of the most inspired methods -- known as Trimble's Gambit -- was developed by Fansman D. Trimble of Basingstoke.

Instead of straining his ears to hear room numbers being whispered around, he would circulate widely among BNFs at the convention, passing out his own room number. That done, he then positioned himself at a good vantage point at

the stated hour, watched the crowd trying to get into his locked room, then cleverly mingled with them as they moved on to the next number on their list. One can only stand in awe of a man like that.

It was my privilege to witness the artistry of people like Hodges, Bisley and Trimble in its fullest flower, and -- much though I hate to say it -- I doubt if we shall ever see the likes of them in this country again. Regrettably, I have to predict that a British Worldcon in 1979 is likely to be marred by scenes of unbridled enjoyment by all those who attend.

Fansmen of yesteryear, one can only cry, where are you now?

--- Bob Shaw

THE GREAT SUNCON EXPEDITION A number of British fans will be making the trip to Miami in September, where the bid for Britain in '79 is to be presented. They include at least three intrepid committee members (Malcolm Edwards, Rob Jackson and Peter Weston) and perhaps another. A charter trip to New York is being arranged for anyone interested in going, at a return cost of £158. The travel agents will also arrange for you to get from New York to Miami if you so wish. The flight will leave London on Saturday 27th August (the convention begins the following Thursday), and you can stay 14, 21, or any other multiple of seven days. Bookings must be made at least 90 days in advance (i.e. before the end of May). If you've ever wanted to attend a Worldcon in America, this is surely the time to do it. For further details of the charter arrangements, contact Peter Weston (72 Beeches Drive, Erdington, Birmingham 24; tel. 021-373 0998) or Rob Jackson (71 King John St., Heaton, Newcastle upon Tyne; tel. 0632 655693).

British membership of Suncon still (as of the end of March) stands at £4.00 supporting, £5.50 attending. Supporting membership gets you all the convention literature, plus a vote for the Hugo Awards and a chance to vote on the site of the 1979 convention. British Agent is Marsha Jones (25 Mount Way, Bebbington Hall Park, Higher Bebbington, Cheshire). The address of Suncon itself is: P.O. Box 3427, Cherry Hill, N.J.08034, U.S.A.

Incidentally, among the promotional activities we will be undertaking at Suncon is the distribution of some 2,000 sticks of Brighton rock, courtesy of Brighton Corporation, in a fiendish attempt to undermine the dentition of a nation's entire fandom. Does the name go all the way through? Suck it and see.

NEW MEMBERSHIPS RECEIVED SINCE PROGRESS REPORT 02

568 Chris Morgan	621 Sandra Parker (US)	674 Debbie Bloom (US)
569 Richard Wilson (US)	622 Donald Dailey (US)	675 Bea Bloom (US)
570 Dave Wixon (US)	623 Janet Dailey (US)	676 Sam Bloom (US)
571 Tim Kyger (US)	624 Mark Grand (US)	677 Chris Dennison (US)
572 Joseph Major (US)	625 Martin Massoglia (US)	678 Ken Scher (US)
573 Linda Doneroff (US)	626 Cliff Amos (US)	679 Marcia Anstey (US)
574 Cynthia Levine (US)	627 Bill Bowers (US)	680 Randy Rohrbough (US)
575 James Mann (US)	628 Trina King (US)	681 Cindy Leichter (US)
576 Samuel Scheiner (US)	629 Diane M. Brown (US)	682 Gavin Claypool (US)
577 Dave Estrado (US)	630 F. Jones	683 Gordon Garb (US)
578 Leigh Couch (US)	631 Kathy Sterry	684 Gary Blievernicht
579 Ken Amos (US)	632 David Wingrove	(US)
580 Richard Newsome (US)	633 John C. Kerr	685 Ronald Salomon (US)
581 Mark Gisleson (US)	634 Cathy McGuire (US)	686 Susan Wood (C)
582 Nigel Sellars (US)	635 Ray Harrison	687 Bob Carter
583 Mary L. Sherred (US)	636 Sam Lundwall (Sw)	688 Lynn Carter
584 T.L. Sherred (US)	637 Ingrid Olofsdotter	689 Helmut Hornlein (G)
585 T.M. Sherred (US)	(Sw)	690 Walter Ernsting (G)
586 Karen Trego (US)	638 Gil Gaier (US)	691 C. Hargrave
587 Chris Donaldson (US)	639 Colin Hingston	692 Robert Shaw
588 Mary Ann Turner (US)	640 Marjorie Brunner	693 Friends of Kilgore
589 Ira Kaplowitz (US)	641 J. Myers	694 Trout
590 Sharon Sinner (US)	642 Deirdre Mansfield	695
591 David Travis (US)	643 Dick Patten (US)	696
592 N.S. Parris (US)	644 Kathy Patten (US)	697
593 Joanne de Bernardi	645 Robin Patten (US)	698
(US)	646 David Patten (US)	699
594 Terry Hughes (US)	647 Mike Kring (US)	700
595 Edith Stern (US)	648 Victoria Wayne (C)	701
596 Craig Miller (US)	649 Kevin Williams	702
597 Linda Miller (US)	650 Dave Cockfield	703 A.R. Pook
598 Ann Dietz (US)	651 Dave Hutchinson	704 Michael Hamilton
599 Karl Dietz (US)	652 Dartelle Twomey (US)	705 A. Richardson
600 Frank Dietz (US)	653 Bob Vardeman (US)	706 Graham England
601 Dana Werson (US)	654 Dan Goodman (US)	707 Walter Reinecke (G)
602 Judy Clark (US)	655 Tom Digby (US)	708 Klausgerd Berger (G)
603 Diane White (US)	656 Don Fitch (US)	709 Gary Kluepfel (G)
604 Kent Bloom (US)	657 Barry Workman (US)	710 Uschi Kluepfel (G)
605 Roby Furber (US)	658 Frank Ellersiaek (US)	711 Axel Melhardt (Aus)
606 Bill Colsher (US)	659 Mary Ellers (US)	712 Tilly Melhardt (Aus)
607 Michelle Colsher (US)	660 Virginia Bauer (US)	713 John Grigg
608 Terry Williams (US)	661 Michael Luwish (US)	714 Giuseppi Marciano (I)
609 Carl Mendelow (US)	662 Harry Andruschak (US)	715 Gian F. Pizzo (I)
610 Ed Kawasaki (US)	663 Beverly Cantor (US)	716 Giuseppe Caimmi (I)
611 Karen Kasting (US)	664 Harrison Rose (US)	717 P. Nicolazzini (I)
612 Doug Price (US)	665 Gail Selinger (US)	718 Eugenio Ragone (I)
613 Elliot Chikofsky (US)	666 Lucille Hutchinson	719 Vittorio Catani (I)
614 Mary Kennard (US)	667 Diana Thatcher (US)	720 Vittorio Curtoni (I)
615 Douglas Brainard (US)	668 Patrick O'Neill (US)	721 Robot (I)
616 Douglas Faller (US)	669 A.M. Sherlock (US)	722 Gianni Montanari (I)
617 Phyllis Ann Karr (US)	670 Robert Alvis (US)	723 Marcia Workman (US)
618 Jay W. Watson (US)	671 Alyson Abramowitz (US)	724 Jan Snyder (US)
619 Becky Bearden (US)	672 Linda Mason (US)	725 Beverley Clark (US)
620 James Young III (US)	673 Leslie Bloom (US)	726 Fran Evans (US)

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stories by

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Martin Ricketts, Michael Stall,

Edward Allen, Cliff Lawther

FROM FABER

727 Allan Rothstein (US752	Uwe Luserke (G)	777 Jesper Semitjov (Sw)
728 Ken Porter (US)	753 Per Osterman (Sw)	778 Gunnar Spade (Sw)
729 Susan L.Fox (US)	754 Urban Gunnarson (Sw)	779 Christer Nordin (Sw)
730 Milt Stevens (US)	755 Jan Osterman (Sw)	780 John Hall (Sw)
731 Colin Lester	756 Ulf Westblom (Sw)	781 Bo K.Eriksson (Sw)
732 David Kemper	757 Kjell Borgström (Sw)	782 Ulv Bennetter (Sw)
733 David Griffin	758 Anders Reuterswärd	783 Bruno Smidt (Sw)
734 David Flint	759 Jörgen Peterzen (Sw)	784 Nils-Olov Holgeson
735 A. Bray (A)	760 Kait Bessing (Sw)	785 Michael Petersen (Sw)
736 Ron Bounds (US)	761 Gabriel Stein (Sw)	786 Christian Primel (Sw)
737 Bobbi Armbruster (US762	Gun Jansson (Sw)	787 Karl Wårnereyd (Sw)
738 Ben Burr	763 Mikael Segersten (Sw)	788 Annie Forsberg (Sw)
739 Madge Aalto (C)	764 Tomas Ruden (Sw)	789 Torbjörn Wårnheim (Sw)
740 Charles McKee (C)	765 Lennart Borg (Sw)	790 Ulf Hellsing (Sw)
741 Raymond Alexander (C)	766 Jan Ponteus (Sw)	791 Lars Sydolf (Sw)
742 Polly Freas (US)	767 Gustav Gullberg (Sw)	792 Olle Wallen (Sw)
743 Kelly Freas (US)	768 Torun Lidfeldt (Sw)	793 Rich Coad (US)
744 Peter Gill (C)	769 Sverre Schriwer (Sw)	794 Tim Seefeld (US)
745 Bakka (C)	770 Ylva Spangberg (Sw)	795 Tom Longo (US)
746 Valeria Starr (C)	771 Stefan Littsenius	796 Maureen Leshendok (US)
747 David Starr (C)	772 Anders Stenström (Sw)	797 Ira Thornhill (US)
748 Sam McCoy (C)	773 Anna M.Hogberg (Sw)	798 Alan Luck (US)
749 Tom Robe (C)	774 Per Lindqvist (Sw)	799 Leah Friedman (US)
750 Roberta Corey (C)	775 Henry Skoglund (Sw)	800 Susan Toker (US)
751 Maurizio d'Adamo (I)	776 Eugene Semitjov (Sw)	(as of 29 March 1977)

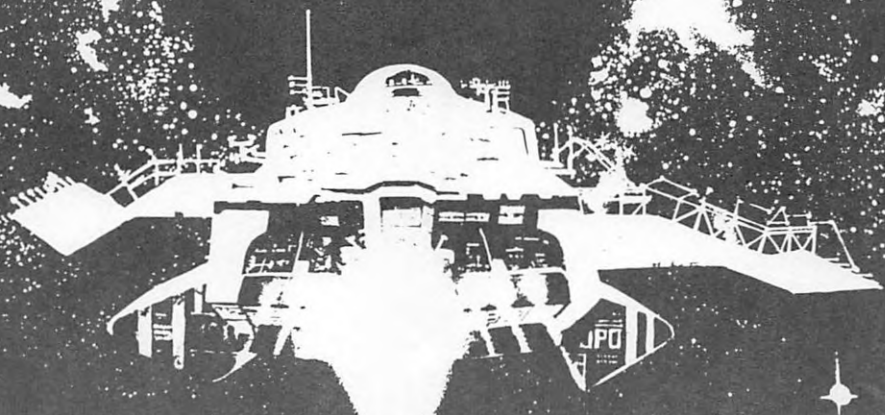
Membership breakdown as follows: USA, 358; UK, 245, Sweden, 45; Australia, 41; Belgium, 30; Canada, 23; Italy, 23; Holland, 14; Germany, 13; Austria, 2; Denmark, 2; France, 2; Argentina, 1; Switzerland, 1.

Help, please! We do not have addresses for any of the following members, and would be most grateful if anyone could oblige with the information: Ramsey Campbell, Gail Kaufman (US), Paul Stevens (A), Peter House (A), John Litchen (A), Nellie Pardoel (Hol), Jan Hammenecker (Bel).

AND THEN THERE WERE SEVEN Our committee still continues to grow. We felt the need of a man of mature years and a receding hairline to cope with advertising and publicity, and soon hit upon the ideal victim in Graham Charnock, a man of vast experience in the advertising world and in fandom. Fans with very long memories still recall nostalgically his fanzine PHILE. Lovers of incomprehensible New Wave writing still remember affectionately his stories in NEW WORLDS (of which he later became Associate Editor), where he appeared in the famous new-writers issue alongside the vast festering foot of Robert P. Holdstock -- an experience which haunts him to this day. Later, he became (in no particular order) a bookseller and rock-and-roll star (playing in a punk rock group, The Burlingtons, and featuring on Mike Moorcock's still-to-be-deleted album "New Worlds Fair"), was on the committee of Season '75, and assisted (as he does to this day) the lovely and talented Pat Charnock (no relation) with her fanzine The Wrinkled Shrew.

LASTLY a special word of thanks to Bob Shaw, for finding time in a busy schedule to write his article; and to Jim Barker, for providing excellent illustrations literally by return of post. Heroes both.

CORGI



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