

# BRUM GROUP NEWS

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE

## BIRMINGHAM SCIENCE FICTION GROUP

OCTOBER 2013

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## ***JANET EDWARDS Friday 11th October***

For those members who do not know her, Janet Edwards is a talented new science fiction writer and a member of the Brum Group. Her science fiction series, *Earth Girl* was accepted by Harper Voyager and the first novel EARTH GIRL was published in August 2012 and the sequel, EARTH STAR was released this August. The novels are set in the future where humanity can quickly travel between the planets using portal technology. Only the handicapped, those

with an immune system which cannot survive on other planets, remain on Earth. These “throwbacks” are mocked and pitied. The 18-year old heroine, Jarra is one of these people and the books follow her struggle to disguise her “handicap” and prove her worth.

The books have been published in a number of countries including the UK, USA (published by Pyr) and Germany. In November 2012 EARTH GIRL was picked as one of Amazon’s top ten Young Adult books. For more information see her website [www.janetedwards.com](http://www.janetedwards.com) CG

*The meeting will take place in the conference room on the first floor of The Briar Rose Hotel, Bennetts Hill, off New Street.*

*The doors open at 7.30pm and the meeting will normally commence at 8.00pm so please arrive early, get your drinks from the bar on the ground floor, and be seated in plenty of time. The entrance fee for our January AGM is free and the August and December socials are ticket only events. All other meetings the entrance fee is £3.00 for members and £4 for non-members*

### ***THE CHRISTMAS SOCIAL***

This year’s Social will be held at The Selly Park Tavern, 592 Pershore Road, Selly Oak, where we have once again hired the Skittles Room for our own private use from 7.00pm until 11.00pm on Friday 6th December. To get there take a 45 or 47 bus from outside Boots, opposite New Street Station’s old entrance on Smallbrook Queensway, or from near Boots in High Street. Bus stops are changing so check the destination sign carefully. Ask for The Selly Park Tavern - it is about 15 minutes ride. PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGE OF DATE FROM OUR USUAL SECOND FRIDAY.

Tickets are £10 each which includes the buffet etc but not your drinks. There will be prizes for individual games - you don’t have to know how to play skittles because we have our own variants of the game, designed to give everyone a chance, none of which would be allowed at competition or any other level. There will be a free half hourly raffle and, to judge from past comments, a good time to be had by all.

The buffet will consist of a selection of sandwiches, sausage rolls, quiche, chicken wings, pizza, salads etc., plus a separate selection for vegetarians, provided that this requirement is clearly stated when you order your ticket.

With this newsletter there should be an application form for one or two tickets. Please complete it as indicated and hand it to Pat, with the necessary money, at the October or November Group Meeting, preferably the former. Or send it to the Membership Secretary, together with a cheque/postal order for the appropriate amount, at the address on the back

page of the Newsletter. However, as there are sometimes problems with the postal system, if you apply by post please send her an email at the same time in case your application is delayed. **THE DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS IS MONDAY 25th NOVEMBER** because the Tavern needs food numbers that week. However, by that time NOVACON will have happened and there may not be any tickets left - numbers are restricted for safety reasons and we have reached that number almost every year and had to refuse latecomers.

**REMEMBER THAT TICKETS WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE ON THE NIGHT - GET THEM NOW!**

## ***HUGO AWARDS 2013***

The 2013 Hugo Award winners were announced on September 1st. The ceremony was held in San Antonio at LoneStarCon 3. There were 1342 valid ballots (1329 electronic and 14 paper).

**Best Novel:** REDSHIRTS: A NOVEL WITH THREE CODAS by John Scalzi (Tor)

**Best Novella:** THE EMPEROR'S SOUL by Brandon Sanderson (Tachyon Publications)

**Best Novelette:** "The Girl-Thing Who Went Out for Sushi" by Pat Cadigan (*Edge of Infinity*, Solaris)

**Best Short Story:** "Mono no aware" by Ken Liu (*The Future is Japanese*, VIZ Media LLC)

**Best Related Work:** WRITING EXCUSES, SEASON 7 by Brandon Sanderson, Dan Wells, Mary Robinette Kowal, Howard Tayler, and Jordan Sanderson

**Best Graphic Story:** SAGA, VOLUME 1 written by Brian K. Vaughan, illustrated by Fiona Staples (Image Comics)

**Best Dramatic Presentation (Long Form):** THE AVENGERS Screenplay and Direction by Joss Whedon (Marvel Studios, Disney, Paramount)

**Best Dramatic Presentation (Short Form):** "Blackwater" from *Game Of Thrones*. Written by George R.R. Martin, Directed by Neil Marshall. Created by David Benioff and D.B. Weiss (HBO)

**Best Editor - Short Form:** Stanley Schmidt

**Best Editor - Long Form:** Patrick Nielsen Hayden

**Best Professional Artist:** John Picacio

**Best Semiprozine:** *Clarkesworld* edited by Neil Clarke, Jason Heller, Sean Wallace, and Kate Baker

**Best Fanzine:** *SF Signal* edited by John DeNardo, JP Frantz, and Patrick Hester

**Best Fancast:** *SF Squeecast* by Elizabeth Bear, Paul Cornell, Seanan McGuire, Lynne M. Thomas, Catherynne M. Valente (Presenters), and David McHone-Chase (Technical Producer)

**Best Fan Writer:** Tansy Rayner Roberts

**Best Fan Artist:** Galen Dara

**John W. Campbell Award for Best New Writer:** Mur Lafferty.

## ***ANDROMEDA ONE CONVENTION by Carol Goodwin***

The first Andromeda convention was held in the Custard Factory in Birmingham on Saturday 21st September. This convention had been organised by Brum SF group member, **Theresa Derwin**. The Guests of Honour were **Paul Cornell**, **Jaine Fenn** and our own **Rog Peyton**.



The site itself was somewhat confusing at first,

but the organisers did their best to direct everyone and as the site was relatively small, this was soon resolved. For a first convention, there was an impressive range of talent, both local and further afield, enough that the convention was able to run three threads as well as the Dealers' room, and I was not able to attend every session I would have liked. Some of the writers/publishers etc included **Adrian Tchaikovsky**, **Ian Whates**, **Stan and Anne Nicholls (Brum Group members)**, **Adam Nevill**, **Adam Christopher** and **Janet Edwards** (plus many others).

I attended the session with Guest of Honour, **Paul Cornell** who was interviewed by **Pauline Morgan**. This was very entertaining, covering his initial career writing for *Dr Who*, scriptwriting for *Marvel Comics* (and the perils of artists whose first language is not English - the hero was supposed to fight with a "chopper" ie axe but the picture came back with him holding a toy helicopter!) He also discussed his novel, **LONDON FALLING**, an urban fantasy.

As well as panel discussions, there were also a series of "Kaffeklatsches", something I personally had not been to before, where a small number of people sat down and chatted with an author. I attended a session with SF author, **Jaine Fenn** who read us a short story and we then had a free-roaming discussion about writing with some very useful tips for writers.

As the weather was lovely and sunny, people also had room to sit and talk around the outdoor pool as well as the café and dealers' room. There was also a book raffle, which then turned into a mini- auction as Rog Peyton kept drawing winning tickets (!) so he auctioned his prizes with proceeds to the Beornacare Charity set up by Fringeworks Press.

Unfortunately I was not able to stay for the evening which included a "Just a Minute" Panel Game and a guided walk around Digbeth, discussing its history and legends. This ties in with the Fringeworks Press new anthology **WEIRD TRAILS** which was launched at the convention. The first in a series of planned volumes which provide a map and guide of a specific area and contain stories based in that location. This first volume contains stories including some by Brum Group members including **Anne Nicholls, Theresa Derwin, Pauline Morgan** (writing as Pauline Dungate) and **Lynn Cochrane**.



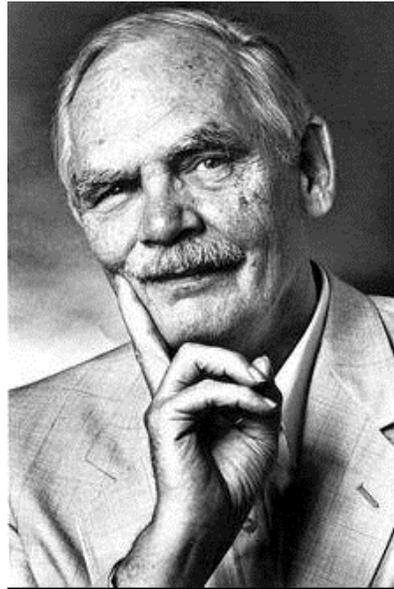
All in all, a very enjoyable (and affordable) convention. To those Brum Group members who didn't attend, I can definitely recommend that you try it next year. CG

## ***FREDERIK POHL by Carol Goodwin***

Science Fiction legend **Frederik Pohl** has died. In his career which lasted an incredible eight decades he was a writer, critic, literary agent and editor. He was born in 1919 and was a leading member of the New York group, the Futurians, whose members included Isaac Asimov, Cyril Kornbluth and James Blish. His first published work was a poem **ELEGY FOR A DEAD PLANET:LUNA** in 1937. From 1939 (only 20 years old!) to 1943 he was the editor of both *Astonishing Stories* and *Super Science Stories*. After serving in World War II, he became a successful literary agent, before returning to writing and editing in the 1950's.

His short stories and novels often attacked capitalism, advertising and mass media including the famous **THE SPACE MERCHANTS** (jointly written with Cyril Kornbluth). In the 1950' and 60's he was editor of *Galaxy Science Fiction* and *Worlds of If* magazines. The latter won three successive Hugo awards for Best Professional magazine in this period.

He also won several prestigious awards for his writing including **MAN PLUS** (Nebula 1976), **GATEWAY** (Hugo, Nebula, Locus and the John W Campbell Award 1977/78). **GATEWAY** was the first of his famous *Heechee* series. He also earned Hugos for two stories ("The Meeting" with C. Kornbluth and "Fermi and Frost"). He was made a Science Fiction Grand Master in 1993 and was inducted into the Science Fiction Hall of Fame in 1998. He was still **active** in his old age, winning a Hugo Award for Best Fan Writer in 2010 for his blog "The Way the Future Blogs" and his last novel, **ALL THE LIVES HE LED** was published in 2011.



*CG*

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## **NEWS IN BRIEF ....**

The science fiction and fantasy writer **A C Crispin** has died from cancer. She published 23 novels including many studio-authorised tie-in novels including *Star Trek*, *Star Wars*, *V* and *Pirates of the Caribbean*. Separately from tie-in work she also wrote the *Star Bridge* series and collaborated on two books with Andre Norton. She also founded an online service “**Writers Beware**” which warns writers of online scams eg fake agents and publishers and assisted the FBI in sending several people to prison .... Author **Gary Brandner** has died. His werewolf novels, *The Howling* were adapted into the films of the same name ... **Spider Robinson**, Hugo and Nebula award winning author has survived a heart attack .... **The 2013 Nova Awards: Ballot** is open. Voting is open to all members of Novacon 43, and to any sf fan resident in the UK or Eire; the only criterion is that they have read at least six different eligible fanzines published between 1 October 2012 and 31 August 2013. A list of known eligible fanzines is available at [www.novacon.org.uk/nova\\_awards](http://www.novacon.org.uk/nova_awards). Votes must be received by 11:59pm on 31st October at [www.novacon.org.uk/nova\\_award\\_ballot.php](http://www.novacon.org.uk/nova_award_ballot.php) .... Brian **Aldiss**’ back catalogue continues to be published by The Friday Project. On October 24th, the novels ZODIACAL PLANET GALAXY (ISBN 978-0007478903), THE EIGHTY-MINUTE HOUR (ISBN 978-0007482443) and ENEMIES OF THE SYSTEM (ISBN 978-0007482467) will be re-issued .... Local author **James Brogden** has recently released his second novel, TOURMALINE (Snow Books, ISBN 978-1907777967) .... The online magazine, **Aethernet** features serialised science fiction and fantasy stories with new episodes with each edition. The first issue was March 2013 and is projected to run for 12 issues. Contributors to date include **Eric Brown**, **Juliet E Mckenna**, **Adrian Tchaikovsky** and Arthur C Clarke winner, **Chris Beckett**. Details at [www.aethernetmag.com](http://www.aethernetmag.com) .... An eruption of a blast of energy from a **black hole** in the centre of our galaxy is predicted to be visible (via telescopes) next year. Scientists have been monitoring a cloud which we should see fall into the black hole next year .... Scientists at Sheffield University believe they have found **proof of alien life**. A balloon sent 27 kilometres into the air returned with microscopic organisms believed to have originated from space. They are 95% convinced they cannot have come from Earth and are shed from comets. Another trip is planned for October to confirm their findings. CG

## **NEW CINEMA FILM RELEASES**

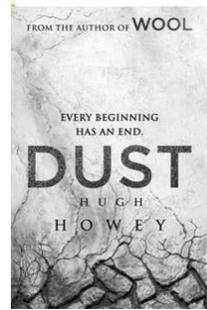
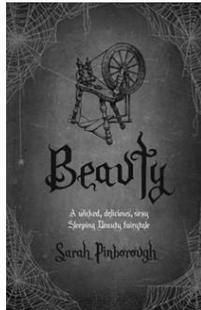
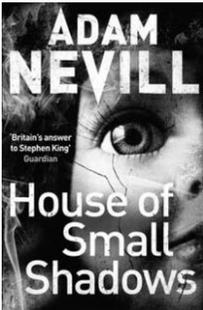
Listings should not be necessarily taken as recommendations. Release dates are subject to change. View at your own *peril!*

**ENDER'S GAME** - Release date October 25th. SF. Screen adaptation of Orson Scott Card novel of children recruited to fight aliens.

**NOSFERATU** - Release date October 25th. Re-release of the 1922 horror classic starring Max Shreck as the vampire

**THOR: THE DARK WORLD** - Release date 30th October. *Marvel Comics* Thor fights villainous dark elf, Malekith (Christopher Eccleston)

## **FORTHCOMING BOOKS**



**HOUSE OF SMALL SHADOWS** by Adam Nevill / Pan / 384 pgs / £7.99 paperback / ISBN 978-0330544245 / October 10th. Horror. After the death of a genius puppeteer, Catherine Howard is appointed to value the contents of his home, Red House.

**BEAUTY** by Sarah Pinborough / Gollancz / 224 pgs / £9.99 hardback / ISBN 978-0575093058 / October 17th. Darker and more sexual re-telling of the fairy tale of *Beauty and the Beast*

**THE WILFUL PRINCESS & THE PIEBALD PRINCE** by Robin Hobb / Harper Voyager / 160 pgs / £14.99 hardback / ISBN 978-0007498130 / October 24th. Fantasy. Prequel to her *Farseer* series. Nobles conspire

against a royal bastard, the Piebald Prince because of his ability to communicate with animals

***DUST (Wool 3)*** by **Hugh Howey** / Century / 416 pgs / £14.99 hardback / ISBN 978-1780891873 / October 24th Dystopian SF. Rigidly controlled survivors of an apocalypse living in underground silos have rebelled, but other threats remain.



***THE VIOLENT CENTURY*** by **Lavie Tidhar** / Hodder & Stoughton / 352 pgs / £18.99 hardcover / ISBN 978-1444762877 / October 24th. Alternate world where superheroes exist, a secret from the World War II has consequences into the present day.

***ECKO BURNING (Ecko series 2)*** by **Danie Ware** / Titan Books / 528 pgs / £7.99 paperback / ISBN 978-1781169087 / October 25th SF/Fantasy mix. Ecko and companions follow rumours to a ruined city.

***LOOKING LANDWARDS: STORIES COMMEMORATING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INSTITUTION OF AGRICULTURAL ENGINEERS*** edited by **Ian Whates** / NewCon Press / 272 pgs / £29.99 hardback / ISBN 978-1907069581 / October 28th SF anthology with a theme of farming and food production

***PARASITE*** by **Mira Grant** / Orbit / 512 pgs / £7.99 paperback / ISBN 978-0356501925 / October 29th SF. A genetically engineered parasite protects humanity from illness but unforeseen problems arise.

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### ***FORTHCOMING EVENTS***

*All details are correct to the best of our knowledge, we advise contacting organizers before travelling. Always enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope when writing to any of the contact addresses.*

*Any information about forthcoming SF/Fantasy/Horror events is always welcome - please send to Carol at [goodwincd@yahoo.com](mailto:goodwincd@yahoo.com)*

**MAGICAL BOOKS - FROM THE MIDDLE AGES TO MIDDLE-EARTH, 23rd May - 27th October, Oxford** Exhibition at the Bodleian Library (Broad Street, Oxford OX1 3BG) featuring original artwork and manuscripts from JRR Tolkien, CS Lewis, Alan Garner, Susan Cooper and Philip Pullman. Admission Free [www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/bodley/whats-on/](http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/bodley/whats-on/) (Tel: 01865 287400)

**BIRMINGHAM LITERATURE FESTIVAL, 3rd - 12th October, Birmingham** Tickets are now available. Lots of different literature themed events at various venues around the city. Includes workshops on "Science Fiction for Beginners" with Alex Davis and "The Horror, the Horror" with Adam Nevill. Details/tickets at [www.birminghamliteraturefestival.org/](http://www.birminghamliteraturefestival.org/)

**THIS IS HORROR, 5th October, Coventry** Coventry Central Library hosts horror writers Howard Linskey, Alison Littlewood and Sarah Pinborough. Jasper Bark hosts readings, interview and Q&A. 2 till 4 pm. Free event but if attending please email [Michael@thisishorror.co.uk](mailto:Michael@thisishorror.co.uk) with subject line "Coventry Library Event" to allow numbers to be gauged.

**HALLOWEEN SILENT MOVIE SPECIAL: NOSFERATU, 15th October, Birmingham** Screening of the 1922 classic with live orchestral accompaniment, Birmingham Crescent Theatre, Sheepcote Street, B16 8AE. Start 7:30pm Tickets £7.50 Box Office 0121 643 5858 or [www.crescent-theatre.co.uk](http://www.crescent-theatre.co.uk)

**ADAM NEVILL AND FRANK TALLIS, 24th October, Birmingham** Free talk (as part of Central Library Discovery Season) with Horror novelists. 7pm in Room 101, Library of Birmingham

**AN EVENING WITH ROBIN HOBB, 29th October, Nottingham.** Robin Hobb will be discussing her work and signing her new book at Waterstones Nottingham Bridle at 7pm. Tickets £5/3 with loyalty card. Details 0843 290 852. Other venues see [www.waterstones.com](http://www.waterstones.com)

**ANGRY ROBOT PRESS HALLOWEEN TAKEOVER, 31st October, London** Meet the writers including Wesley Chu, Adam Christopher, Joseph D'Lacey, Matthew Hughes, Anne Lyle, James A Moore, Emma Newman, David Tallerman, Mike Sheydon and Kaaron Warren. 7 to 8pm. Forbidden Planet, London Megastore, 179 Shaftesbury Avenue, WC2H 8JR

**HALLOWEEN SILENT MOVIE SPECIAL: NOSFERATU, 31st October, Birmingham** Screening of the 1922 classic with live organ accompaniment, Birmingham Town Hall, 7:30pm £15 plus online transaction fee. Book at Town Hall/Symphony Hall Box Office or [www.thsh.co.uk](http://www.thsh.co.uk)

## ***CONVENTIONS***

**WORLD FANTASY CON, 31st October - 3rd November, Brighton.** Guests of Honour include Alan Lee, Brian Aldiss and Tessa Farmer with China Mieville as Master of Ceremonies. Numbers are limited so book early. Attending membership £125 at <http://wfc2013.org/howtojoin01.html>

**NOVACON 43, 8th - 10th November 2013, Nottingham.** Guest Of Honour: Jo Walton. Membership is £45. See [www.novacon.org.uk](http://www.novacon.org.uk) for details

**EM CON (EAST MIDLANDS CON), 16th March 2014, Nottingham.** First year of one day mixed media convention. Guests to date include Virginia Hey (Farscape), Craig Charles (Red Dwarf) and Sam Stone (horror/fantasy writer). Tickets £8.50/£12 (early bird). Details at [www.em-con.co.uk/](http://www.em-con.co.uk/)

**LONCON 3 (WORLDCON 72), 14th - 18th August 2014, London.** Held at ExCel exhibition centre. Guests of Honour include Chris Foss, and Robin Hobb. £95 Adult membership. See [www.loncon3.org](http://www.loncon3.org)

### ***FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE BSFG***

November 1st - TBA

December 6th - **CHRISTMAS SOCIAL** - Skittles and buffet

January 10th - Annual **AGM** and Book Auction

February 14th - Annual **SF Quiz**

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***ABOUT US...*** The Birmingham Science Fiction Group meets on the second Friday of each month. Membership is £16 per year per person (or £21 for two members living at the same address). This includes the 12 free issues of the Newsletter plus reduced entrance fee at each meeting. Cheques should be made payable to "The Birmingham Science Fiction Group" and sent to our Membership Secretary, 10 Sylvan Avenue, Northfield, Birmingham, B31 2PG