

Tynecon '74

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Tynecon '74

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Tynecon '74 Programme Booklet

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Tynecon '74, the 1974 annual B.S.F.A. Easter Convention, is held at the Royal Station Hotel, Newcastle upon Tyne from 12th to the the 15th April. Guest of Honour is Bob Shaw and Fan Guest of Honour is Peter Weston.

The Gollancz—Sunday Times £1000 Science Fiction Competition

**Prize-winners will be announced in
the *Sunday Times* on Sunday, 14th April**

**The £500 cheques will be
presented to the winners
by John Bush,
Chairman of Victor Gollancz Ltd
during the Banquet
on Sunday evening**

GOLLANCZ



Thoughts of Chairman Maule

When a convention chairman writes an introduction to a programme booklet he almost always seems to start with a tale of woe describing in horrendous detail the problems that have beset him and his committee during the year leading up to the convention. So far, I am glad to say that if I were to start like that this introduction would be mercifully short. There have been no problems which on looking back particularly stand out, except for the rather happy one of welcoming a lot more people than we originally expected.

So welcome, all of you, to the Easter 1974 British Science Fiction Association Convention, Tynescon '74. This convention has been organised by a committee from the Gannet science fiction fan group, who first came together in 1970 as a purely social group with informal meetings. Which is what we still are. Last year's convention committee (Ompacon) were handicapped by being spread all around the country: this year we have been helped by our close ties: for example, we went on holiday last year and had a committee meeting on two boats in the middle of a lake in Cumberland. Not only do the committee live close to each other, but also during the past year this cohesion has been helped by other fans in the Newcastle area unconnected with the Gannet group. This indicates the striking number of people in the area who are interested enough in SF to give a lot of their time to help a convention. Not only in the Newcastle area does this interest run high, but all over the country there are surely many thousands of SF enthusiasts, including many who have no knowledge of any organisation of SF fans. Bringing SF fandom to the notice of these people can only be helpful.

To those of you who have only recently discovered the sub-culture of SF fans and fandom this convention may seem all rather strange, even overwhelming, in particular the famous names of the SF, literary and publishing world. This is a natural reaction, but it's one we expect you'll find very easy to overcome quickly. The authors at this convention greatly enjoy, even love, being talked to by fans, otherwise they wouldn't be here. Remember that the more you talk to them and make it obvious you enjoy talking to them the more they will enjoy talking to you. That doesn't only go for the authors; all the people here share the particular madness — enjoyment of SF — that brought you to the Convention, and love talking about it.

As an alternative to all this intense socialising you can always take a break and explore the city of Newcastle: most of the interesting features are detailed in the information leaflet sent out with Progress Report 4. If you would like another look at one of these we still have some to spare. Elsewhere in this programme booklet is a map showing the central area of the city.

On the central pages of this booklet are the programme timings and most of the basic information about the Convention: there is also a duplicate of this programme sheet provided separately for your reference. For meal breaks in the programme it has been customary in the past for the convention hotel to provide formal lunches and dinners for those who want them. In the

past these have been highly priced and poorly attended; as a change from this the hotel are keeping open, specially for members of the Convention, Oscar's Viking Restaurant in the basement of the hotel. This is convenient, cheap and good value. Those of you who are looking for a meal outside the hotel, however, will find it best to turn right, cross over and head for the Bigg Market region, where there are many Indian and Chinese restaurants among others (but beware the Indians — they're good but slo-o-w!)

Apart from the one plug for Oscar's Restaurant above, I'm not going to say anything here about what I want everybody to do at Tynecon — time enough to try to give orders at the con itself, when five rather meek committee members start trying to push 250 or so independent-minded fen around! Still, we are by no means the first con committee to bash its collective head against that particular brick wall,...

The mass of fannish folk-lore that has grown up about the behaviour of fans at cons is for all of us one of the most fascinating aspects of fandom: as this is the 25th in this series of conventions, we felt it worth while to try to bring together some of these legendary events and record them as a sort of history of conventions in Britain. We hope that all our writers have succeeded in capturing the spirit of fannishness at cons, and that this introduction will whet rather than sour the enthusiasm of those not yet familiar with fannish activities. This has made this booklet rather more substantial than most Eastercon booklets — as Andrew Stephenson described it when he sent some of his illustrations, our "one-shot fanzine." This is true. We hope it will be something of a permanent memento of what we very much hope will be a very enjoyable con for all of you. It only remains for me to wish you a good Tynecon — after all, all our work this past year has been to wish you a good Tynecon.

best wishes to
tynecon
 dave, ruth,
 a.c. and kerry
 kyle

The Tynecon '74 Committee



Ian Maule, Chairman, aged 21.
 Ian Williams, Secretary, aged 25.
 Rob Jackson, Treasurer, aged 23.
 Harry Bell, Press Officer, aged 26.
 Irene Bell, aged 23.

As you can see, this convention is in part a product of youthful exuberance. We are all, with the exception of Harry Bell, fans of the seventies. So we are new to convention organising, indeed to organising of any kind. But we've worked hard and listened to older and wiser heads even if we haven't always taken their advice. We are the ones to come to if you've got any problems, grievances or praise (try and make it just the third). It's also the committee's privilege to have an article about them in the convention booklet. Sometimes each member writes about himself, or the committee as a whole has someone write something about them. In this case this is being written by one of them in late December and is therefore far from objective.

Rather than being a collection of individuals who got together to form a committee for a common purpose, we are all very close friends and form part of the local fan group commonly known as Gannetfandom. Gannetfandom was founded in the summer of 1970. Ian Williams had returned home to Sunderland after three and a half years in Lancashire and three and a half months in London where he met SF fans for the first time in his life and attended his first convention — Sei-Con '70. He started a fan group for two reasons — the obvious one was that he liked the type of people he met in fandom and liked talking about SF, the other being that there was no-one left in Sunderland that he knew. After a couple of months the Gannet pub was chosen as a meeting place every Tuesday night because it was a quiet place and centrally located; the Tuesday night because Harry Bell couldn't get there any other night in mid-week with his fiancée Irene Taylor. At the first meeting four others apart from Harry, Irene and Ian Williams turned up — Thom Pezman, Ritchie Smith, Jim Marshall, and Ian Pezman. All seven still go, though the numbers have been known to swell on occasion

to sixteen. Ian Maule appeared in the December and for a few months only came every fourth week because of a chess club, but he soon knew when he was well off and gave the latter up. Rob Jackson was a late comer and has only been a regular Gannet for just under a year and a half and a fan for little more. His drive and keenness to do things (i.e. a natural sucker) made him a natural choice for the committee.

The committee was formed quite naturally; we were the only ones in the Gannet who were that keen and responsible enough to see it through; not because we form a sub-group in the Gannet — we don't.

So here we come to the individual biographies. These aren't in any particular order except for the first and last. Irene Bell is first because she's the prettiest, and Ian Williams is last because it was all his fault in founding the group in the first place.

Pleasantly petite, Irene used to be called Taylor until last September when she gave up the ghost to become Mrs. Harry Bell, thereby disappointing all single male Gannets with the exception of Ian Maule, whose hopes automatically rose (in-joke). Not an actfan, but a very important member of Gannetfandom, Irene has always been interested in fandom at large in that she enjoys reading fanzines and meeting fans. Her first convention was the last Novacon where she had a good time and which eased all of her qualms about this one.

Harry Bell is the oldest and longest standing fan of the group. He was very active in the mid- to late sixties producing the fanzine Grimwab and sending illustrations all over the place. Unfortunately he was the only fan in the area and this was one of the factors that made him leave fandom for a couple of years until Ian Williams contacted him. His interest renewed, he once again began producing artwork which first appeared in Maya, the fanzine started by Williams in late 1970. Once he started he couldn't stop, and has sent artwork, largely very funny and excellently drawn cartoons, to most of the current British fanzines — to name a few, Zimri, Egg, Cynic. Harry is the best British fan cartoonist and one of the best fanartists, and has won first place for two years running in the British Fanartist section of the Checkpoint Fan Poll. Harry is also quite a competent fanwriter and has recently begun his own personalzine The Grimling Bosch. He was absent from conventions for some time, his first in several years being the last Novacon. Apart from Irene and fandom, his major interest is painting. Like Irene and Ian Maule (and half of Gannetfandom) he's a civil servant.

Rob Jackson comes from a family of doctors and is following in the family tradition though he makes no secret of his pipe dream, which is to become a (shudder) professional writer. Of the committee, Rob is the most interested in writing and seriously discussing science fiction. He's also the most earnest and intense, unlike the rest not having learned to stick a healthy tongue in his cheek. Once Rob becomes involved in something he tends to devote a great deal of effort and enthusiasm to it and it's certainly true to say that he has been the most (voluntarily) hard-working member of the committee and deserves special commendation. He only took up fanwriting recently and so far little of his material has appeared except in Maya and Gannetserapbook. Although he hasn't sold professionally yet, several of his stories have appeared in the amateur fiction zine Sfinx.

Ian Maule is primarily interested in the fannish side of fandom and is widely known as the editor of Maya, one of the best British fanzines, which he took over with the third issue and transformed from an illegible but literate genzine into an attractive fannish one with a high standard of written contributions, artwork being mainly drawn by Harry Bell. Ian is dedicated to fandom, finding that it gives him a great deal in return for the effort he puts into it. He's been going to conventions since the excellent Eastercon 22 in 1971 and, apart from the first Novacon, hasn't missed one since. His efforts to restore contacts with overseas fandom which had rather frayed at the beginning of this decade have also served to make him one of the best known British fans. That, plus the fact that he was the only member of the committee not to have major distractions during the year's preparations, made him a natural choice for chairman. One thing that puzzles me about Mr. Maule is his large beer pot; puzzling because he's hardly ever known to drink the stuff.

Last and not least of the committee is Ian Williams, an overgrown dwarf who tends to write about himself in the third person (as now, in case you hadn't guessed already). A diffident sort of character, he gets very interested in something for a short time and then drops it. He's probably got the widest range of interests of the committee, though he's best known for his fannish writing and was voted Best British Fanwriter in the 1973 Checkpoint Fan Poll. He's very, if somewhat shamefully, interested in SF and SF criticism and really enjoys talking about it despite protestations to the contrary. Although very interested in SF and fandom he's been known to ignore them completely when a female engages his interests. Generally amiable and easy to get on with, he's not nearly as aggressive or critical as his writings seem to suggest. He claims that once the convention is over he's going to start rewriting the first draft of his novel. This will have to be seen to be believed.

This has also been a rather eventful year for the committee apart from the organising of the convention. Harry and Irene got married. Ian Williams took his librarianship finals, Rob Jackson will soon take his written medical finals, and Ian Maule has just been active. Yet despite all the distractions, for better or worse, we've got it organised; here you are, and we hope you think it was worth it.



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33rd World Science Fiction
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August 14th-17th, 1975.

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Guest-of-Honour: Ursula K. Le Guin

Fan Guests-of-Honour: Susan and Michael Glicksohn

Chairmen: Leigh Edmonds and Robin Johnson

Committee: Mervyn Binns, John Breden, Peter Darling, Bruce Gillespie, David Grigg, Carey Handfield, Gerd (Gary) Hoff, Eric Lindsay, Shayne McCormack, Christine McGowan, Gary Mason, Mike O'Brien, Barry Saigram, Alan Sandercock, Paul (Antifan) Stevens, and Bill Wright, aka The Cast of 1000s.

MEMBERSHIPS:

As a TYNECON '74 special, Peter Roberts, our UKgent, is selling AUSSIECON supporting memberships for 140p (memo to IBM: the pound is not dead - but sleeping!) Best place to look for him will probably be at, or under, the smokiest card-table, where he will be cleaning up, as usual. Otherwise, you may care to deal with him through Her Majesty's Postal Orifice at his London address: Flat 4, 6 Westbourne Park Villas, London W2. This way, a supporting AUSSIECON membership costs 1½ pounds. Our Continental agents include Michel Feron, Gian-Paolo Cossato, and Mario Bosniak, and the cost will be the local equivalent of \$A 2.00. Attending membership is \$A 7.00 and will probably rise in price in October 1974, except to those who have already joined as supporting members, who may convert any time for \$ 5.

A good reason for joining might be that you feel like supporting the 1975 Hugo Awards, which are voted upon by all members of the annual World SF Convention. Nominating ballots for the Hugos will be distributed with Progress Report 3, late in 1974, voting ballots with PR 4 in May 1975. We are expecting to distribute ballots for the Tolkien and Campbell Memorial Awards, too. We hope to publish letters in the Progress Reports; write to us when something you'd like to see nominated comes to your notice so we can bring it to others'. The Rules for the Awards now permit works in any language to be nominated when first published, and again when translated into any other.

Then again, it could be because you collect Progress Reports and Programme Books, and we wouldn't knock that back. The Programme book really will be out of the box, not to say a bobby-dazzler. We hope to include a portfolio of artwork illustrating the work of Ursula Le Guin, our GoH, and of Cordwainer Smith, who had a special feeling for Australia.

By no means least, it might be that you are thinking of attending AUSSIECON. Check the special one-way rates offered by Australia House!



WIGAN
PIER
in

'84



Bob Shaw



Tynecon '74's Guest of Honour

An appreciation by JAMES WHITE

It is a law of nature that science-fiction convention Guests of Honour are already so famous and popular that they need no introduction, and Bob Shaw is no exception to this rule. Nobody here has to be told that for the past twenty years he has been producing consistently fine and original SF in all lengths, from the unforgettable and much anthologised — twenty-eight times at the last count — short story Light of Other Days to novels such as Nightwalk and The Palace of Eternity, which are singled out because they happen to be my own particular favourites.

Bob's early struggles are also widely known to his friends throughout fandom, as well as to MI5 and the Mounties. To these more mundane activities — structural draughtsmanship, small game hunting, Canadian taxi-driving, journalism and public relations — he brought the same high degree of professionalism and human insight which marks his science-fiction work. My local cinema, whose steelwork was measured and stressed by Bob over twenty years ago, still stands to this day despite two very near misses by car-bombs. And when he was going through his Gunner Cade period — some of you may be too young to remember that story — he once shot a spider with an air gun at thirty feet, killing it instantly. A measure of the man is that he derived no pleasure from this achievement, but explained afterwards that it was difficult to wing a moving spider because it didn't have any. Regrettably, no discussion is possible regarding his reasons for leaving Canada since, as most of you already know, these matters are still sub judice.

His later career as a journalist was also highly successful and full of incident, as were his years as a publicist and press officer for the Belfast aircraft company, Shorts, where we had the honour or misfortune — depending on what sort of mood the Boss was in — to share an office. Last year he decided to give up publicising these new-fangled heavier-than-air machines and changed to plugging heavier-than-water submarines for Vickers at Barrow-in-Furness — surely, one feels, a retreat into inner space. But he still haunts the old publicity department — at least, his puns do.

For this is the man, you will doubtless remember, who during an Irish Fandom party for a visiting BNF, on being asked if he had tried the gingerbread replied, "Yes, and found it not mmmmmmm guilty." At that time, and for many years afterwards, he produced one of the funniest fan columns ever written. Entitled The Glass Bughel — Bob did not take modesty to extremes and this was the only kind of bughel he was willing to hide his light under — it very often achieved a Chaplinesque dimension in its humour in that the jokes made one think after the freshly-split sides had healed.

There were lots of fan humourists about in those golden days of

Irish Fandom — Walt Willis, George Charters, John Berry, and mock modesty forbids me from mentioning ME! — but I have to remember that I am writing a totally unnecessary introduction to Bob Shaw. Not just to the Bob Shaw we know now, but to the younger, more earnest, rangy Bob Shaw with the brown wavy hair. As we all know now, Bob's hair at this time was straight and his head was corrugated, but this problem he has since ironed out.

However, a word of advice to those of you who may be thinking of approaching him and actually talking to him. He is very easy to approach — visually a bit like the Post Office Tower except that his head doesn't spin, at least not until a room party is several hours into mission — and even easier to talk to. Whether you are a new writer in need of advice or a reader asking for clarification on some obscure philosophical point in one of his stories — or one of anybody's stories, for that matter — he will gladly give you the benefit of his hard-won experience in the field. But don't expect too many serious answers.

You should already know by now that inside Bob Shaw, this doyen of SF authors whose works have won serious critical acclaim on both sides of the Atlantic, there is a fan trying to get out, and every few minutes he succeeds.



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An appreciation
by
Roger Peyton

Way back in 1960 I'd been reading SF for a couple of years and was already 'hooked'. During one of my many book-hunting expeditions I met another SF reader, Cliff Teague, and together we decided to start the Birmingham SF Group. The object was to seek out as many other keen SF readers as we could and try to get an active group together. This met with only mediocre success — we had found only half a dozen in two years. But it was at that time that a young man named Peter Weston joined — someone who was to change the shape of the BSFG completely.

I remember that first meeting quite well — after being introduced to everyone Pete spied Cliff's collection of books and he spent the rest of the evening in a trance looking through the items he didn't have. He never said more than a dozen words all evening!

After a couple of meetings, Cliff showed him some fanzines which immediately seemed to spark something in Pete. From that moment he only

talked about producing a fanzine. Within a few weeks he'd squeezed contributions out of each of us and a spirit duplicated Zenith 1 finally hit Fandom.

Quickly dissatisfied with the result and wanting bigger and better things, Pete started thinking of Gestetner production. At that time I was working in an office which had a Gestetner.... I had a key to the premises and knew how to work a duplicator.

Furtively entering the premises on a Saturday, loaded up with paper, ink and stencils, we would work throughout the weekend and mail it out on the Sunday evening after clearing all our traces from the office.

Issue 4 very nearly had us caught out and it would have been entirely my fault! Half the issue had been run off and part-collated on the Saturday and we'd agreed to meet after lunch on Sunday to complete it. But... I'd been to a party on the Saturday night... Sunday was a blank until I awoke about four o'clock in the afternoon. Suddenly remembering that Pete would be waiting outside the office, I dashed off and caught a bus into Bram.

Meanwhile, Pete had been waiting outside the office getting increasingly uneasy, wondering what would happen if I didn't turn up and my boss arrived the next morning and found hundreds of half-collated magazines over the desks (including his desk!), over the floor and on every available ledge in the office! Not to mention the fact that the duplicator had been used without permission. So after two hours of standing waiting and thinking what fate would befall his stencils and run-off pages, Pete boarded the bus to fetch me. Somewhere on the route we must have passed, I got to the office - no Pete. Pete arrived at my home to be told I'd just left. When Pete arrived back at the office after waiting for me and then two buses (they didn't run very often) he wasn't very happy. I think that was the only time Pete and I nearly came to blows.

But that's one of the nice things about Pete - he doesn't stay mad for very long. Very soon he was seeing the funny side of it and we managed to complete the issue and clear up.

Pete and Zenith helped keep the old BSFG together and very soon the membership was up to about 20. But the Group finally collapsed through a number of reasons.

Pete and I remained friends and we joined the Young Conservatives (honest!). When I was in danger of packing up reading SF altogether it was Pete who rekindled my interest.

Eventually, along with Vernon Brown, we reformed the BSFG. Pete's contacts in the SF field provided us with over 100 names and addresses of SF fans in the Birmingham area. Pete became the first Chairman - a position he has held ever since, being re-elected year after year.

BSFG Chairman, editor of 32 issues of Speculation, organiser of the Speculation conferences, chairman of the Worcester Convention (Eastercon-22), SF lecturer at Birmingham University, etc., etc. - all these achievements make Pete a most worthy Fan Guest of Honour and I am pleased that I, by starting the old BSFG, helped in a small way to bring Pete into fandom. I am more than pleased that I can count Pete among my closest friends.

So, on behalf of British Fandom, Pete, I'd like to say how proud we are to have you as Fan Guest of Honour this weekend. I know you'll upset people in the hotel by refusing eggs unless they're fried both sides but we've got to allow you some faults!

Whoever Goes Will Need YOUR Help !

*Naturally we would prefer
that you vote for*

PETER WESTON

as our TAFJ '74 representative

*but if you really can't,
then at least make a donation*

Please VOTE NOW —

— polling ends on Monday !

Bicycle to Betelgeuse

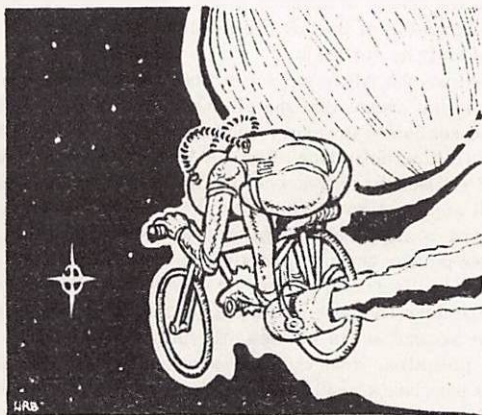
BOB SHAW asks:
Should we gaze
at the stars?
Our navels? Or what?

Science fiction needs more clichés.

Practically everybody connected with the writing trade knows that clichés are a Bad Thing. The need to stamp them out is one of the few points upon which writers and critics are in complete accord — and yet clichés play a vital role in maintaining the economic health of any brand of literature. They are the identification marks which enable the Average Reader to classify different forms of literature, to decide whether or not he likes any particular one, and to locate it in the shops when he decides to make a purchase.

I'm using "cliché" here in its broadest sense, meaning not only a hackneyed phrase, but also a stock image, a well-worked theme, or a very familiar treatment. (In fact, I'm using it in a sense which consultation of a dictionary does not justify — but this is an example of the desperate lengths to which authors sometimes go in search of a snappy introduction.) As an example of the identification function, consider the way in which SF cover artists use a very limited range of stock subjects which we look out for as if they were food package labels.

In case any of you are bristling a bit over being classed as an Average Reader — forget it. The fact that you are attending this convention, reading



this article, establishes at once that you are not an AR. You are an ER (Exceptional Reader). While this is nice for you — we all like to be a little bit different — it means that, to a large extent, your views about science fiction are of little value to SF publishers. In that interesting and complex process by which books are created there are three major parties: (i) the author; (ii) the editor/publisher; (iii) the AR. As far as the economics of the situation are concerned, the AR is the most important member of the trio, because he provides the hard cash upon which the other two depend for a living.

The AR achieves his importance in the scheme of things by sheer numerical superiority — he outnumbers us ERs by thousands to one. This means that if the AR were to decide in 1974 that a collection of the old Doc Methuselah stories would be a good thing, it would be a good thing in terms of publishing economics — even if every ER in the world boycotted the book on the grounds that he already had the stories in his Astounding collection. The lack of ER support wouldn't even be noticed by the publisher's accountants.

This brings us back indirectly back to another characteristic of the AR — his tolerance of and liking for clichés. I am not suggesting that this foible shows he is less perceptive than the ER. Again, it is simply a matter of statistics. Let's suppose that we have the facility for tracing the individual worldlines of a batch of 1,200 books, made up of 100 copies each of 12 titles, sold to ERs. You might find they had been bought by 150 people who ended up with an average of eight each on their shelves. A similar batch sold to ARs might have been bought by 1,000 people, giving them an average of 1.2 books each. The result is that the ER quickly reaches saturation point with any given cliché, while the AR may not even be aware of its existence.

How does that tie in with my original statement that science fiction needs more clichés?

Well, in its career to date, science fiction has used up two sets of clichés. The first lot was established 30 to 50 years ago and includes the rocket ship, the ray gun, the invading monster, the space patrol, the galactic empire, mutants, the mad scientist, emotional robots, telepathy, time travel, probability worlds, teleportation, atomic doom, immortality, and a few others. A damn good set of clichés, one must admit. An array of colourful labels which established the image of science fiction, which has the continuing power to attract the attention of the AR, and which can persuade him to pluck books from the shelves and pay for them.

Because the AR is such a diffused being — with his 1.2 books on his shelf — he is not aware that the clichés are clichés, and he does not exert his irresistible economic pressure on the publisher to make him bring out something new. (In this definition of an AR I would include people like the producers of the BBC's "Moonbase 3", who publicly congratulated themselves on bringing a new adult approach to science fiction, blissfully unaware that their ideas — e.g. the hard-headed administrator who worries about budgets while his team of scientists pursue their impracticable dreams, and the psychologist who watches for, but is seemingly never able to prevent, the onset of space madness — were done to death in the magazines thirty years ago.)

Our second set of clichés, the more current one, includes population explosion, pollution, drug culture, abuse of organ transplants, urban barbarism, mass psychosis, and computer domination of the individual. The thing which strikes me most is that — whereas most of the clichés in the earlier lot

were open-ended affairs, capable of leading anywhere the author and reader wanted to go — the second group have a convergent nature. Furthermore, they are synergistic. They work together to impose a direction on the mind, guiding it down a narrowing and darkening path towards a single, agreed, cut-and-dried future.

And, as a long-time science fiction enthusiast, I have to rebel.

It is true that stories in the second category reflect an adult sense of involvement with the real world, an increasing concern about present-day trends, but — even so — I still rebel.

One of the things I have always liked about science fiction is that it doesn't predict the future. Future writers for newspapers reveal their lack of understanding of the subject when they start listing all the modern marvels which were accurately predicted by science fiction writers: and we often go along with them, taking the easy road, by trotting out our story of how Cleve Cartmill was investigated by the FBI in 1945 for divining the workings of the atomic bomb. But the ER knows and delights in the fact that science fiction has a lousy record of accurate prediction, that it has gaily portrayed thousands of different futures, most of which are incompatible with the others. Any successes scored were achieved through the scatter-gun effect. There is even a thriving sub-group, especially in the cinema, of enthusiasts for science fiction which has been proved completely wrong in its prognostications. Wells's "The War of the Worlds", for example, has acquired a peculiar poignant charm it could not have possessed for its original readership.

This may sound like sacrilege in its present context, but I believe it is impossible to predict the future. If it were, science fiction would never have uncovered the crazy sparkling of treasures which has enriched all of us. It is true that certain world trends have become more clearly visible nowadays, and that the profession of "futurologist" has sprung up, but it would be disastrous if science fiction decided it knew enough about what lies ahead to enable it to trade in its scatter-gun for a rifle.

The easiest way to arrive at a vision of doom is to try solving tomorrow's problems with today's resources. This would be confirmed by Malthus, according to whom we should have died of starvation long ago.

And that is why our inventory of clichés, our list of what the future might hold, needs freshening up. The AR, whose money makes the publishing of science fiction possible, is beginning to show the first signs of dissatisfaction with the old set, but he is not particularly attracted by the later set. The field is therefore facing the challenge to create new visions of tomorrow, visions which draw their colouring from the full palette of imagination and reality instead of being either fairy-tale-bright or funeral-parlour-dark.

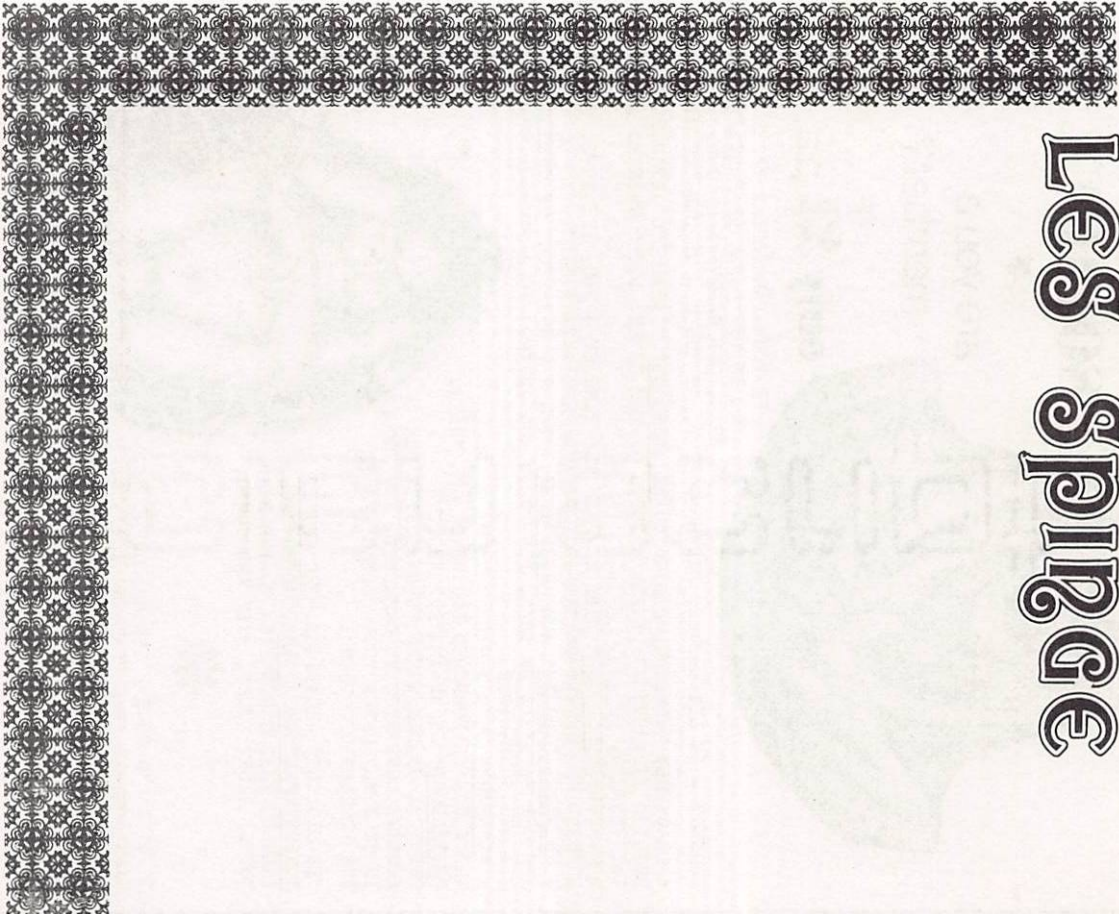
This is not saying that science fiction ought to be escapist, or mindlessly optimistic. There is an undeniable value in sounding timely warnings — but there is a great positive power in also showing what can be achieved, what to shoot for. If you give a bicycle to a child who has never seen one ridden, he may learn to get about on it and he may not, because a bicycle is hard to ride at first, and he will keep falling off it and bloodying his knees. But if you give a bicycle to a child who has seen one used, he will ride it — because he knows what is possible.

In the past, science fiction has shown the world how to ride a bicycle. This would be a bad time for it to stop giving lessons.

conventional
greetings



from
the
knights
of
saint
fantony



LES
SPAINGE
ADDIDS

Personalities

Pen pictures of some of the well-known writers, artists and SF fans who may be at Tynecon.

There are two major problems in the writing of this piece. The first is that, inevitably, not everyone mentioned will in the event be able to come to the Convention. The second is in the selection of whom to include. There just isn't the space to write even briefly about everyone who ought to be mentioned; please don't feel slighted if you aren't included. We would also have liked drawings of more than just those here, but photos are not always to hand, nor was it always possible for our poor over-worked band of British fanartists to come up with drawings in the rather short notice we gave them. In addition, there is no order of appearance; it's completely random and subject to the whims of the writer and the way the articles fit best on the page.

DAVE KYLE is Tynecon '74's Toastmaster. One of America's most venerated and longest serving SF fans, he was given the Big Heart Award at Torcon II, last year's World Science Fiction Convention in Toronto. He is now living in Surrey with his family, and is responsible for Press relations for this year's World Convention in Washington D.C.

SAM LUNDWALL is Sweden's leading science fiction personality. Author of the hilarious spoof SF novel "Bernhard the Conqueror" and the perceptive book "Science Fiction — What It's All About", he is now head of his own publishing firm Delta Förlags AB.

DON WOLLHEIM is a familiar visitor to British Easter conventions. He was responsible during the Sixties for the discovering of numerous talented young writers and publishing them in Ace Books. He now runs the very successful publishing house of DAW Books. His personal look at the SF field, "The Universe Makers", gained much attention.



JAMES BLISH has been a respected writer since the late forties and keeps writing better and more impressively than ever. An expatriate American, he has been living in England for over four years. Apart from his high reputation for fiction, his criticism as "William Atheling" set a standard rarely equalled, and has been collected in "The Issue at Hand" and "More Issues at Hand".

ANNE McCAFFREY is the American authoress of the well-loved Dragonweyr series among others; she has recently moved to Ireland and with

her cheerful family has become a familiar sight at British conventions. Recently she edited a book of recipes by SF authors which were as strange as any of their inventors' other creations.

JOHN BRUNNER is one of the most widely known of British SF writers and has published dozens of books; some of his most outstanding are "Stand on Zanzibar", "Telepathist", "The Productions of Time", and "The Sheep Look Up". Extroverted and sociable, John is a brilliant talker with many interests outside SF.

PHILIP HARBOTTLE was the editor of the only SF magazine to come from Newcastle. "Vision of Tomorrow" lasted only twelve issues but will be long remembered.

BRIAN ALDISS really needs no introduction. This large, genial and quick-witted gentleman is the author of numerous first rate SF novels (Barefoot in the Head, Hothouse, Frankenstein Unbound, etc) and the fascinating and controversial history of SF "Billion Year Spree", and is an asset to any convention.



Brian Aldiss

ROGER ZELAZNY will hopefully be paying his first visit to England for this convention. Many of his writings in the sixties have already gained the status of classics, such as the poignant "A Rose for Ecclesiastes", "Lord of Light", "This Immortal" and "He who Shapes". We look forward to meeting him.



ETHEL LINDSAY is a petite Scottish lady who has been an active and widely known fan for over two decades. Her fanzine Scottishe is one of the longest running fanzines known and still appears regularly.

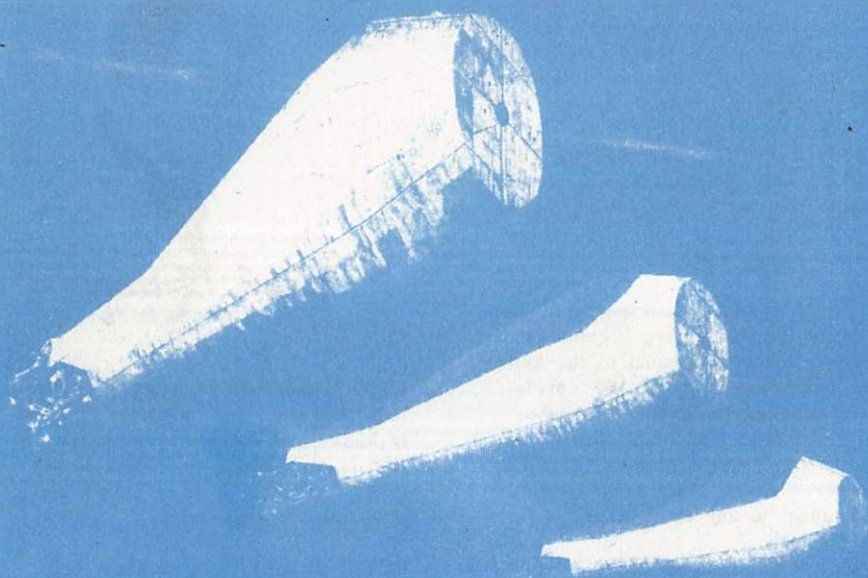
PETER ROBERTS is another well-known fan, editor of the newszine Checkpoint and the well-liked fanzine Egg. He's usually to be found at conventions clutching a Guinness and playing poker.

KAREL THOLE is the brilliant German artist whose covers more than anyone else's show sheer strangeness in their imaginative conception. His recent exhibition at the Beyond This Horizon festival was widely acclaimed.

MALCOLM EDWARDS is the genial, long-haired librarian editor of the BSFA magazine Vector. Malcolm was

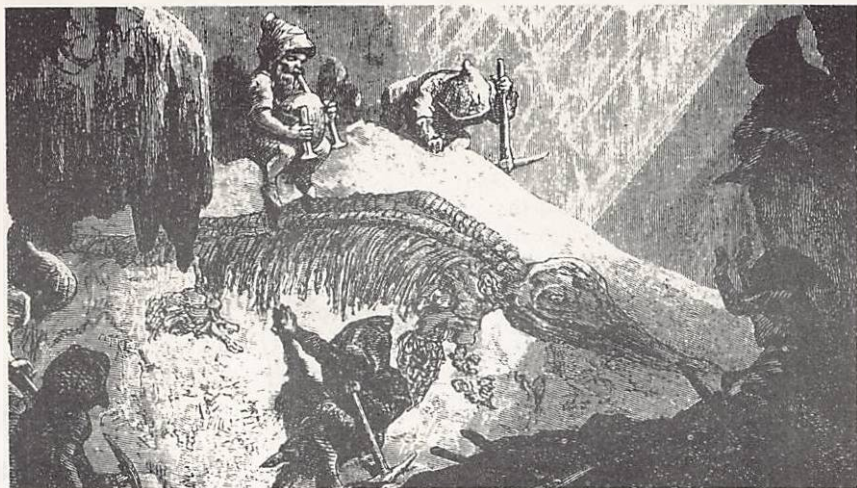
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THE NEWS is published bi-monthly and affiliated to the International Fortean Organisation (INFO). Besides the regular crop of clippings and notes, letters and occasional reviews, THE NEWS is eager to promote communication between Fortean, and promote research into any aspect of Fortean phenomena (especially from individuals or local groups). Submission of articles, reports or notes and clippings are always welcome.

The News

Editor: Robert JM Rickard.
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Birmingham B13 9AN. England.

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responsible for getting the magazine back on a regular basis and raising its quality so much as to put it among the very best journals specialising in SF criticism.

MARK ADLARD is the author of the unusual and excellent novels "Interface" and "Volteface" — unusual in that they deal with management, and because they are set in the North East, from where Mark originally hails. Mark is a recent convention-goer but quickly found them much to his liking.



Mark Adlard

JAMES WHITE is the popular author of the Sector General series and many more. Tall and bespectacled, he is a popular and regular visitor to conventions and was seen at one to carry round something that looked suspiciously like one of his alien characters but turned out to be a millipede.

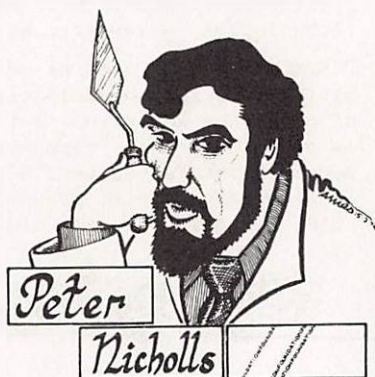
KENNETH BULMER is jovial and ebullient, looking just a bit like a bespectacled Dali. Once a prolific SF writer, Ken has recently been writing historical novels under a pseudonym. His wife Pamela is a perceptive and acute critic of SF.

as those who have read her "Kathryn Buckley" reviews in the late "Vision of Tomorrow" will testify.



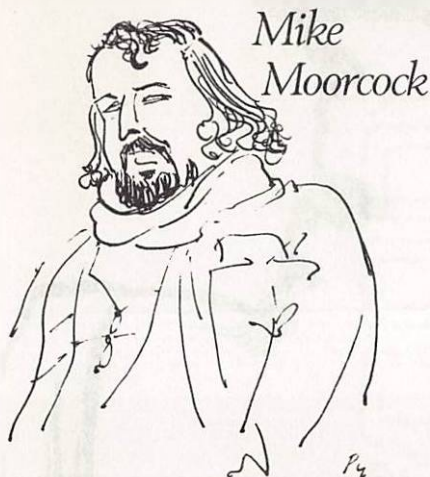
Ken Bulmer

PETER NICHOLLS is one of the mainstays of the Science Fiction Foundation and is responsible for its excellent journal, *Foundation*. He is shortly to have a book on SF published by Penguin.



MICHAEL MOORCOCK is a somewhat enigmatic character noted for his rapid production of sword and sorcery novels and his efforts to improve the

nature of SF through the magazine "New Worlds", now in quarterly form. His best novels include "An Alien Heat", "Behold the Man", "The Final Programme" and the unusual "Breakfast in the Ruins".

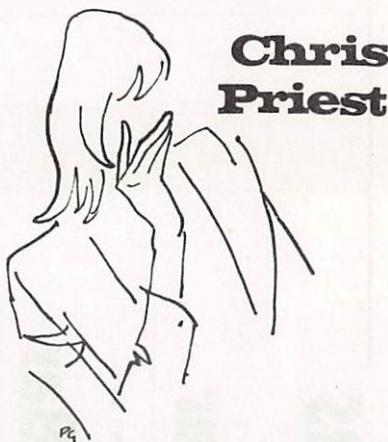


SAMUEL R. "CHIP" DELANY proved an excellent Guest of Honour at Ompacon. An innovative and sparkling writer, he seems to collect Hugo and Nebula awards almost annually. This year marks the publication of his epic and long-awaited novel "Dahlgren", and also the birth of a baby daughter.



EDDIE JONES is a fan of long standing, but in recent years has become widely known as a science fiction artist, many of his paintings having appeared as paperback covers, notably in this country on Sphere Books. Several of his paintings were exhibited at the SF festival "Beyond This Horizon" in Sunderland last year.

CHRISTOPHER PRIEST, long haired and languid, one of the youngest of our professional writers, has his third novel "The Inverted World" published this year. A fan for several years before turning pro, Chris is a familiar friendly sight at conventions.



LISA CONESA is the organiser of Tynecon's Poetry Soiree. For the last two years she has been publishing one of Britain's best fanzines, Zimri, which is noted for the high standard of its poetry, articles and illustrations. Her major interest outside of SF and poetry is music.

ANDREW STEPHENSON, young writer with one Analog story to his credit, is perhaps better known for his fine fanzine artwork; he has recently begun selling artwork professionally.

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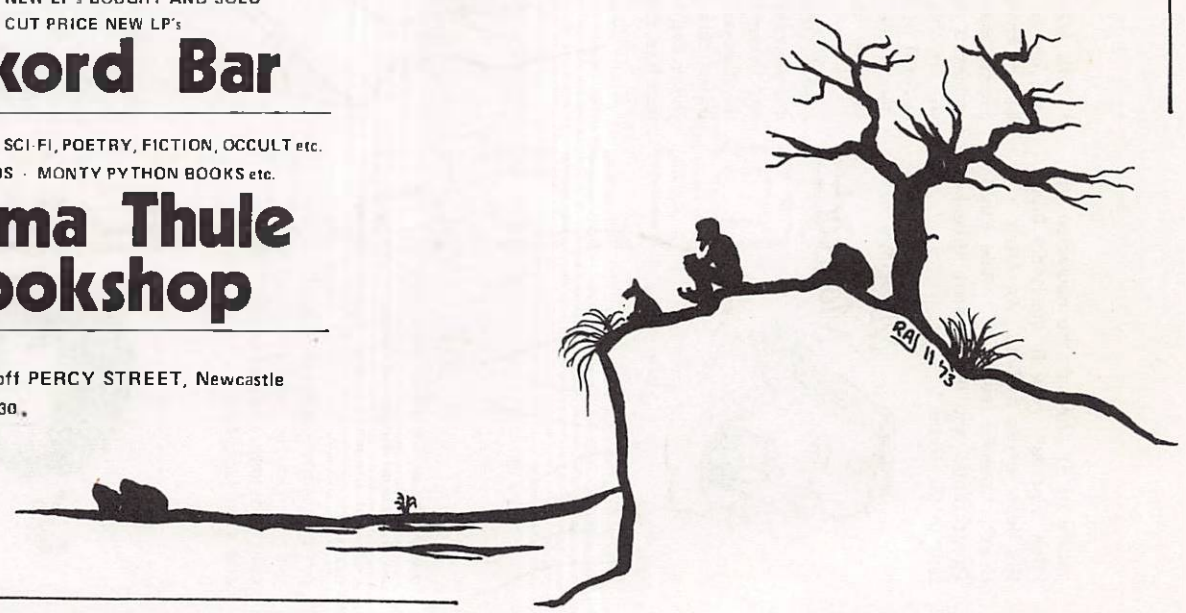
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SCIENCE FICTION ARCHAEOLOGY

by George Locke

THE past 30 years has seen the publication of many books which can be regarded as contributions towards the history of SF. A random sampling includes PILGRIMS THROUGH TIME AND SPACE, NEW MAPS OF HELL, EXPLORERS OF THE INFINITE, OF OTHER WORLDS, THE SCIENTIFIC ROMANCES OF H.G. WELLS, THE BILLION YEAR SPREE and the very recent THE CRYSTAL MAN (a collection of 1870-90 stories by Edward Page Mitchell edited by Sam Moskowitz).

The full history of SF's development, however, has yet to be written, for many of the basic facts remain still undiscovered. Only the past 50 years (from the inception of *Weird Tales* and *Amazing*) has been at all thoroughly researched and recorded. The period before that is largely virgin territory marked only by peaks of individual brilliance such as the work of Verne, Wells, Doyle and Mary Shelley. Consideration of such giants alone is not sufficient to provide a true picture of the early development of SF. The entire popular publishing milieu in which they worked has to be investigated. Books, paperbacks, magazines, sensational story papers, even newspapers, must all be researched carefully.

Britain and America possess a number of booksellers who specialise in SF and fantasy. They provide a valuable service by filling the personal wants of the collector and enabling scholars interested in SF to obtain otherwise unavailable reference material.

Ferret Fantasy Ltd is one such bookseller. We have spent many hours searching for early SF and fantasy on dusty shelves, peering through cobwebs, even wading through snow-white fungus acting as a carpet to a damp basement storeroom. We are archaeologists chipping at the strata of Victorian and Edwardian literature.

But excavating lost treasures is not enough. If a new title is discovered, the chances are that it will remain locked up in the collection of the single individual who finally buys it - still lost, to all intents and purposes, to the historian.

About 18 months ago, therefore, *Ferret* decided to help remedy this by extending its activities beyond those of buying and selling books. We decided to publish information of interest to collectors and students of SF, fantasy, and to a lesser degree, mystery fiction, and also to republish some of the stories we found buried in ephemeral magazines.

We felt it important that our publishing activities be self-supporting. However, the number of people likely to buy such specialised publications was very small. So we put out a pilot project, *FERRET FANTASY'S CHRISTMAS ANNUAL FOR 1972*, in November of that year. It comprised an annotated addendum (of 300 pre-1950 fantasy books) to the *Bleiler and Day Checklists*. This, together with other material, totalled 80 pages. We printed 400 copies, in plain paper wrappers, and calculated that, bearing in mind costs of compilation, materials, printing and time, we would have to charge £1.25 if we were to prevent it from sucking us into bankruptcy. Would we sell 'em at that price? The response was favourable, and encouraged us to produce more ambitious efforts. To date we have published *FROM AN ULTIMATE DIM THULE* (a review of the early work of Fantasy artist S.H. Sime); *AT THE MOUNTAINS OF MURKINESS* (an anthology of parodies of Wells, Haggard, etc; title parody by Arthur C. Clarke); and *THE LAND OF THE UNSEEN* (anthology of lost Victorian supernatural stories, including a Dumas vampire yarn, an 1872 Bram Stoker fantasy and an E.L. Arnold weird).

Future plans? This ad is being typed in mid-February amid industrial crises and gloomy economic prospects. It would be rash to announce any firm plans. But a somewhat belated *CHRISTMAS ANNUAL FOR 1973* is in production. It will contain a further annotated addendum to *Bleiler and Day*, comprising about 200 pre-1950 titles (including a comprehensive bibliography of the SF and fantasy in original wartime British paperbacks), and also a selection from the bibliographic writings of the late George Medhurst, a pioneer SF researcher. We hope also to produce a collection of SF stories by George Griffith and further material by and about Sidney H. Sime.

Last November, we introduced a magazine designed for researchers and collectors of SF, fantasy and mystery fiction called *Search & Research*. Number one featured details of the SF and fantasy in *The Red Magazine*, a number of shorter items and published a short fantasy story by Sime. Number 2 should be out by Easter, with *The Yellow Magazine* bibliography.

We also act as European representative of Donald M. Grant, specialty fantasy publisher. Titles currently available: Brennan *CASEBOOK OF LUCIUS LEFFING*; Jones/Robertson *TEMPLE OF THE TEN*; Dunn *THE TREASURE OF ATLANTIS*; Resnick *GODDESS OF GANYMEDE*. Ready soon: Robert E. Howard *WORMS OF THE EARTH*, a hard-cover collection of Bran Mak Morn stories.

Write for details, and for catalogues of early SF and fantasy fiction for sale, to *FERRET FANTASY LTD*, 27 Beechcroft Road, Upper Tooting, London, SW17, tel: 01-767 0029.

PS: We pay highest prices for SF and fantasy books and magazines and fanzines, both single items and in quantity - *Ferret*.

In conclusion, we wish you all a merry and successful convention.

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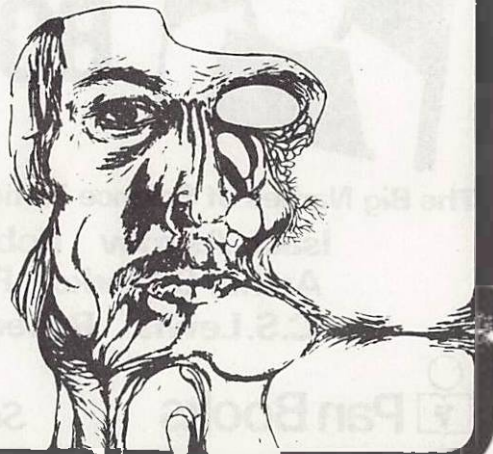
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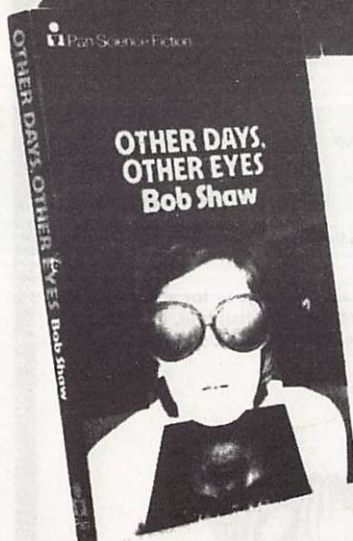
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Programme

Friday 12th April

- 2.00 pm FILM
Creature from the Black Lagoon.
- 3.30 pm CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME
Ian Maule says hello and starts the ball rolling.
- 3.45 pm CELEBRITY INTRODUCTION
The famous and infamous pointed out by Ken Bulmer. Followed by the CONVENTION PHOTOGRAPH, for which we would like every member of the Convention present, please, if you are here.
- 4.15 pm OUT OF THE SLUSHPILE
Four new writers discuss the problems of selling stories to reluctant editors. Chris Priest in the chair, with Ian Watson and Andrew Stephenson.
- 5.15 pm Coffee
- 5.45 pm WHAT'S WRONG WITH SCIENCE FICTION ART?
Eddie and Marsha Jones and friends cast a critical eye over the artistic tastes of SF editors and others. Illustrated with some of Eddie's own slides.
- 6.45 pm Dinner; book auction till 7.30
- 8.30 pm THE FUTURE OF FANZINES
Is there a future for these idiosyncratic publications? A panel of fanzine editors chaired by Gray Boak, with Peter Roberts, Ian Maule and Lisa Conesa.
- 9.30 pm LINGUISTICS IN SF
A talk by Ian Watson.
- 10.30 pm POETRY SOIREE
An informal evening organised by Lisa Conesa.

Saturday 13th April

- 9.00 am BFS A.G.M.
- 10.00 am THE GOLDEN FIFTIES
Bob Shaw chairs a panel who discuss how science fiction fandom has changed over twenty years.
- 11.00 am Coffee
- 11.30 am THE NEED FOR AN IDEOLOGY
John Brunner, James Blish and Anne McCaffrey examine the way SF has so far reflected Man's need for a belief in higher beings.
- 12.30 pm Lunch
- 2.15 pm ART IN FANZINES
A discussion of fanzine art illustrated by slides. Eddie Jones in the chair, with Andrew Stephenson, Dave Rowe and Harry Bell.
- 3.15 pm THE YEAR IN SF
A selection of the major works of 1973 discussed by a panel of expert critics: Pam Bulmer, Malcolm Edwards and Tony Sudbery, with Peter Nicholls chairing.
- 4.15 pm Coffee
- 4.45 pm STARSHIP STUDY Gerry Webb reports on the British Inter-planetary Society's progress towards designing a starship.
- 5.15 pm CRITICAL APPROACHES TO SF
Brian Aldiss and James Blish in discussion, with Peter Nicholls moderator.
- 6.15 pm Dinner; auction till 7.00
- 8.00 pm BOB SHAW
Bob delivers his major speech as Tynecon '74's Guest of Honour.
- 8.45 pm AWARDS CEREMONY
Some of the awards for achievement in the science fiction and fantasy field are presented.
- 9.00 pm FILM
The Omega Man
- 10.30 pm FANCY DRESS PARTY
with Fancy Dress Parade, Discotheque and Punch Bowl.
Everyone is invited -- come in fancy dress or mask if you can. The Parade itself will be about 45 minutes after the Party starts -- and the Disco starts up again afterwards.

Sunday 14th April

- 10.00 am BSFA A.G.M.
BSFA members only.
- 11.00 am Coffee
- 11.30 am FUTURE CONVENTIONS
Bids will be made for the 1975 Eastercon, and then Malcolm Edwards, Peter Roberts and Peter Weston will put forward their plans for a World Convention in Britain in 1979.
- 12.30 pm Lunch
- 2.00 pm DELTA FILM COMPETITION
The amateur films made specially for this competition are shown for your vote to decide the winner.
- 3.15 pm PUBLISHERS' PANEL
The problems of publishing SF seen from the "other" side of the fence. John Bush and Don Wollheim, Chairmen of Victor Gollancz Ltd and DAW Books respectively, with Sam Lundwall and Philip Harbottle.
- 4.15 pm Coffee
- 4.45 pm SF QUIZ
University Challenge was never quite like this! A not-too-serious battle between 4 teams.
- 6.15 pm
for 6.30 pm TYNECON '74 BANQUET
Meal followed by celebrity speeches and presentations, including the cheques for the winners of the Gollancz/Sunday Times £1,000 Science Fiction Competition presented by John Bush, Chairman of Victor Gollancz Ltd.
- 9.00 pm FILMS
The Cat People.
Slaughterhouse-5, the winner of last year's Hugo for Best Dramatic Presentation.

Monday 15th April

- 10.00 am WHITHER THE BSFA?
Has the BSFA failed in its original purpose? What is its future? Ken Bulmer chairs a panel in which Keith Freeman and Fred Hemmings defend the BSFA's record.
- 11.00 am FILMS
Apollo-17 film; Son of Kong

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Convention

Information

The Registration Desk will be open on Thursday between 6 pm and 10 pm, on Friday between 10 am and 8 pm, and on Saturday between 10 am and 6 pm.

Always wear your convention badge; otherwise, if you are not personally known to the Committee, your identity may be challenged.

All programme items will be in the Collingwood Hall. The Book Dealers' Room is the Dobson Room, and the private Bar is in the Grainger Room and the Grey Room. Further along the same corridor on the left is the Art Room. Coffee will be served in the open lounge next to the foyer, and the Banquet will be served in the ground floor Restaurant as will breakfast. Oscar's Viking Restaurant is in the basement, reached by stairs beyond the open lounge.

Meals: There will be a waiter service for breakfast; for the second course a Mixed Grill of bacon, sausage, eggs etc, will be brought unless other food is specifically requested: this will speed up service. Lunch is served buffet-style in Oscar's Viking Restaurant, as is dinner: see Chairman's Introduction for further details.

Small personal cheques can be cashed if accompanied by a Bankers Card.

Souvenir ballpoint pens: there is one free with each membership, but others are available from the Registration Desk at a price of 5p.

A Programme Board will be set up by the Committee, giving details of any amendments to the programme.

Art Show and Bookroom cannot unfortunately be kept open during the whole of the day: we will try to post exact times on the Programme Board.

Any other queries: please address them to a member of the Committee (you will be able to spot a committee member by the harrassed look on his face and the badge saying "Committee") or to whoever is manning the Registration Desk.



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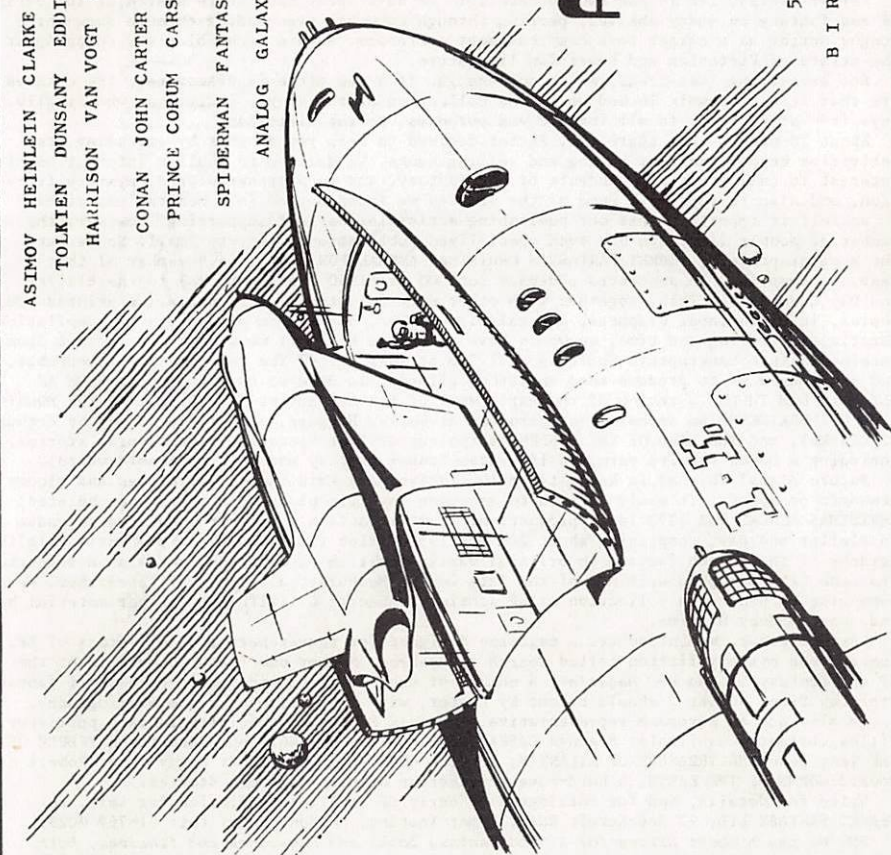
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A guide to SF fan institutions

The British Science Fiction Association

The BSFA was formed in 1958 at a time when organised science fiction fandom was showing signs of decline: conventions were decreasing in size and no-one new was entering fandom. The aims of the BSFA were: to attract new people to SF conventions, and to create a better image for the entire science fiction field. The Association's official organ is Vector, a magazine which has in the past been of variable quality, but recently has become an SF criticism magazine of genuine excellence. The BSFA runs a postal lending library and various other services for its members: recently its book lending service has been integrated with that of the Science Fiction Foundation. The BSFA's A.G.M. will be held at this Convention, and there will be a registration desk at which you can join the BSFA. If you are interested, have a word with Keith Freeman or any of the other BSFA council members here.

The British Fantasy Society

The BFS performs, for fantasy and horror readers, some of the functions served by the BSFA. If you would like to know more, ask Ramsey Campbell or Dave Sutton, both of whom will be at the convention.

The Knights of St. Fantony

The Knights were formed at the 1956 convention with the following intentions:

To bring ceremony and colour to conventions.

To honour those who have worked hard for the good of fandom.

To honour the names of those Knights now dead (including both their founders) by being a party-giving, happy and fun-loving group of people.

To help those who need it.

In particular, they aim to ensure that those who are at their first convention and may not know many people there are helped to make as many good friends as possible. You will recognise a St. Fantony member if he is wearing his S/F badge or blazer.

The Dr. A.R. Weir Memorial Award

Who... was 'Doc' Weir?

A fan: a schoolteacher, who came to fandom late in life, with a keen interest in both science fiction and fantasy, who enjoyed participating in many facets of SF fandom. He helped to get the infant B.S.F.A. on its feet

corresponded with a considerable number of fans and wrote scholarly and entertaining articles for their fanzines. was an active Cheltenham S.F. Circle member, and attended Conventions, where his talks were programme highlights.

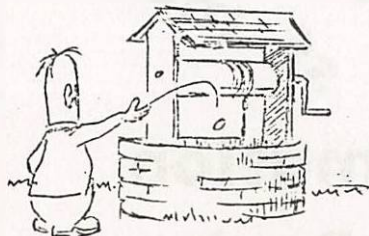
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How... is the winner chosen?

By you: the award is not given for any specific activity, but for things in general — the Award should go to the person you think most deserves it. There is no restriction on whom it may be given to: it does not have to be a member of the B.S.F.A. or of the Convention. By tradition, it usually goes to a fan whose activities for fandom have not been previously honoured, so a list of previous winners is given for you on the voting paper. Voting is kept secret — only the winner's name is announced.

TAFF, the Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund was created in 1953 for the purpose of providing funds to bring well known and popular fans across the Atlantic. Since that time, TAFF has regularly brought European fans to the U.S.A. and sent American fans to European conventions. TAFF exists solely through the support of fandom. The candidates are voted for by interested fans all over the world and each vote is accompanied by a donation of no less than 50p. These votes and the continued interest of fans are what makes TAFF possible.



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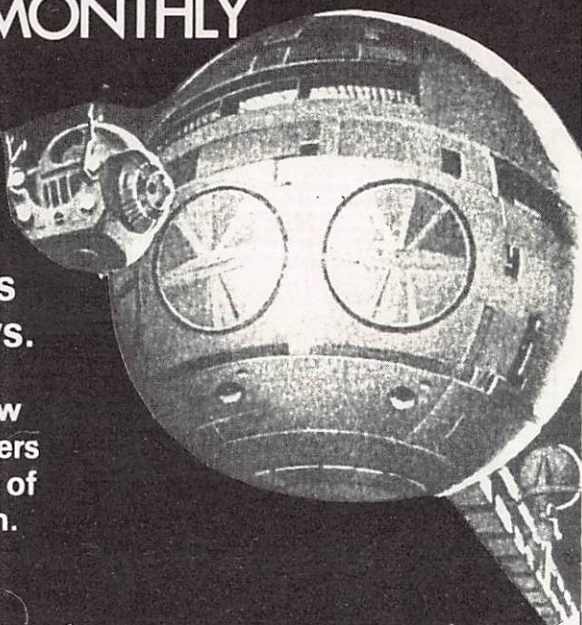
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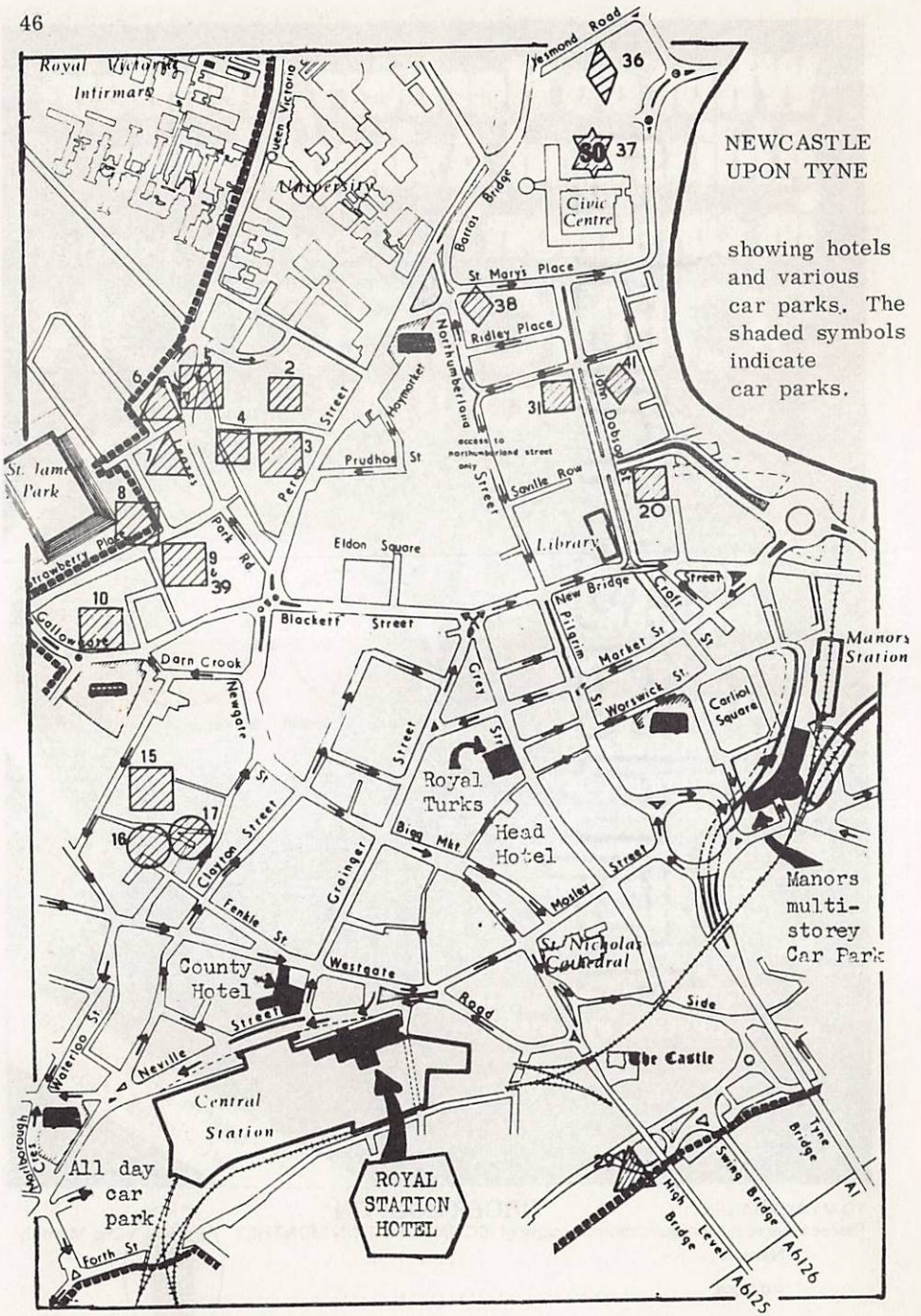
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Twenty-five Eastercons

Four writers tell how SF conventions began and remember some of the interesting and silly things which have happened at them. (A list of past British conventions will be found on page 64.)

In the beginning - SF by *Ron Holmes*

It is my belief that there is a natural law (call it Holmes' Law if you like) which states that the success of an S.F. Convention is directly proportional to the square of the usual distance between the fans who attend it. This is as basic as the first law of robotics. S.F. fandom was born when the isolated addicts first saw the names and addresses of their fellow fen in the pulp magazines, wrote to them and gained sheer delight from correspondence. Correspondence led, in many cases, to a keen desire to meet the correspondents in the flesh and the SF Convention was born. Much of its success has always depended upon the sense of occasion, the rarity of the event and the amount of trouble, travel, saving or planning which each individual had to put in to attain the starry goal of meeting his brethren.

In Britain, the main midwife at the birth of fandom was the Science Fiction Service, a book and magazine business run by Ted Carnell and Les Johnson, which freely used its business correspondence to customers as a means of promoting fandom. Les Johnson allowed his business premises in Liverpool to be the clubroom of the local fan club and Ted Carnell, who lived in London, was constantly in touch with William Temple, Arthur Clarke and many others. Eventually the mass of correspondence and fanzines which were circulating made a Convention inevitable.

The first Convention was held at the Theosophical Hall at Leeds in January 1937 and was sponsored by the Leeds Chapter of the Science Fiction League which had been formed by the prozine "Wonder Stories". Many of the members were also members of the British Interplanetary Society and included most of the so called First Wave of British Fandom - Doug Mayer, Harry Hanson, Les Johnson, Eric Frank Russell, Arthur Clarke, Ted Carnell and Walter Gillings. Michael Rosenblum was also present, being the librarian of the Leeds Chapter at the time. The S.F.L. almost immediately died, and from its ashes arose the Science Fiction Association, a completely British, country-wide association. (Not the same institution as the present-day B.S.F.A.)

London saw the next convention, on April 10th 1938 at a Druids' Hall which had a fine set-piece of a stone altar and lights which could simulate the dawn. The main feature was a lecture by Prof. A.M. Low. However, my most vivid memory was arriving at Euston Station with Dave McIlwain (Charles Eric Maine) where we were to meet Sam Youd (John Christopher)

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for the first time, where the crowd was so dense that Dave had to wave over his head the symbol of recognition — a copy of "Weird Tales" with a nude Blundage cover.

Both these events savoured more of an Annual General Meeting than the Conventions we know today, but the nation was sliding down the slippery slope to World War II; the S.F.A. went into suspended animation in September 1939 and the older fans were almost immediately in the forces. Conventions were planned but never happened and it looked as though British fandom was dead.

By mid-1942 those fans who were too young to go into the forces, or for some other reason were in no immediate danger of disappearing from the scene, began to reform. The British Fantasy Society was formed and Conventions were again planned. Inspired by the U.S.A. Conventions and the booklets which the Americans sent over about them (Chicago 1940. Denver 1941 etc) the present type of Convention was planned.

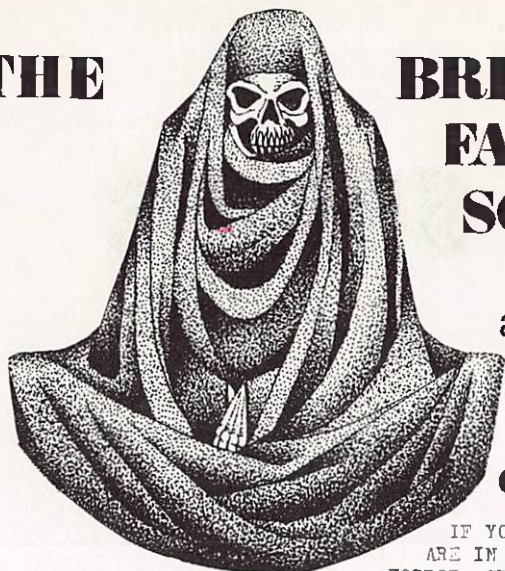
Although planned for Birmingham, the Midvention of 1943 took place in Leicester on April 23-26. The Director, R.R. Johnson, hired the hall of a girls' school and issued a Booklet in advance and a report afterwards in the American style. The programme included an auction, records, a debate, shopping for books and a sword-fight which was cancelled. The visitors were: B.H. Edwards, Art Williams, Bert Lewis, Terry Overton, Art Gardner, Don Houston, Peter Knott, Art Busby, Tom Hughes and myself — not a bad attendance for the war years. The sword-fight was intended to portray a scene from "Swords of Mars" and, as I am tall and blond, I imagined I would be a passable John Carter. However, when I found my opponent was over a foot shorter and we were to use naked sabres, I refused to perform on the stage — although we had some very interesting bouts in private and were well matched.

The Norcon took place in Manchester from December 31st 1943 to January 2nd 1944. The turnout was: Ron Lane (Director), Ron Bradbury, R.R. Johnson, Michael Rosenblum, George Ellis, "Gus" Willmorth (courtesy of the U.S. Army), Rita (my bride-to-be) and myself. No hall was necessary; it all happened at Ron Lane's house. The activities consisted of deciding that there should be a Convention Booklet and writing and producing it on the spot. A day was spent at the zoo and we all descended on the home of Harry Turner, the artist, for an hour or two. There was an auction too, I auctioneered for both these Conventions and had a lot of fun. Although Rita and I had booked single rooms at the hotel I was not a little surprised to find myself visited in bed the first night by Michael, Gus, and Roy — not that it did them any good.

Although the numbers were low, that event just managed to be a Convention because it published a booklet. The get-together at Michael's mother's cottage near Pendle Hill, Lancs, the following Easter could only be included if the term Convention is reduced to mean "fans visiting from other towns". Michael was there of course, and the two Rons from Manchester, and Rita and I cycled over from Liverpool. Two days were spent chatting and climbing up Pendle Hill — and that was that.

There were no more conventions in the 1940's. Fandom held together for the rest of the war through the good offices of individual fans who put effort into the B.F.S. on a postal basis, but it was not to die.

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Note. This particular part of the history of British fandom is very poorly documented (particularly 1935-39) and although Harry Warner's effort is magnificent, it has many errors from this point of view. If anyone has any documents or other information which would assist me in creating an accurate survey of this time, please contact me through the Tynecon Committee.

Historicons by Terry Jeeves

My first convention was way back in 1948 at the White Horse Tavern. Groups met in the St. Pancras rotunda - identification by displaying a pro-mag - and then made mini-tours of London before meeting in a smallish upstairs room at the pub. Some 80-odd (very odd) people were present, and as far as I can recall only one woman, who later became Daphne Buckmaster. We all drooled over some original Tales of Wonder covers before settling down to an afternoon of serious and constructive speeches. These competed with the strident ringing of the alarm bell in a local jeweller's, a din which continued all afternoon ignored by public and police alike.

For the first few years, Cons were small affairs, but by the time I could afford an overnight stay things were warming up. In 1950 and 1951 we took over the Royal Hotel. One highlight of this was a black cat which strolled to and fro over the glass-roofed con hall and entertained everyone during a muffled tape recording from Arthur Clarke. One of these cons boasted two programmes running simultaneously - shades of today's hour-long gaps between searing hot panel discussions! Treasurer Charlie Duncombe, who only de-hibernated into fandom once a year to do that job, seemed to spend all his weekends playing chess on a pocket board. Then he would vanish for another year.

1953 saw the Bonnington Hotel, and the famous 'roof-on' when fans, chivvied from room to room by an unsympathetic staff, finally emerged onto the rooftops and ambled around dropping old paint pots and other debris down every available chimney. That was the year I shared a room with Eric Jones: having turned in around 2 am I was awakened by a weird slithering sound. Investigation revealed it to be a paralytic Eric Jones, returned to base by Eric Bentcliffe and propped up outside the room door, whereupon he slid slowly down onto the floor.

In 1954 the 'bloody provincials' (so named by H. J. Campbell) wrested the convention from London and brought it to Manchester. Irate Londoners planned 'Project Armageddon' to sabotage the Supermancon, but it wasn't needed - the programme went haywire as sercon items got halled up. Things became lannish to such an extent that it proved the most successful convention to date. Zap gun fandom roamed the corridors, engaging in water pistol battles throughout the night. On the platform, Ted Tubb and I were scheduled for the 'Trial of Bert Campbell'. We threw the scripts away in the first minute and ad-libbed the rest with hilarious results.

Then came the glorious Kettering years. A sympathetic hotel staff, meandering corridors, an isolated con hall, and regular though abortive police raids. Also a local chip shop from which supplies were string-hauled up to bedrooms. In those days, fen could have their own display tables free, and these ringed the con hall flogging fanzines, books, mags, art, etc. On the programme were such delicacies as the famed Liverpool tape operas, 'First

and Last Fen', and 'March of Slime'. One of these produced the immortal 'Blog', a product which so fired attendees that it appeared neatly lettered on the foot of every cafe menu in town in such guises as 'Curried Blog', 'Blog and Chips' and so on.

In 1957 Eric Bentcliffe and I flew to Antwerp for a week's hectic fanning with Jan Jansen, returning for the Worldcon in a scrubby hotel with a hall ten yards wide and half a mile long. Telescopes and hearing aids were on hire to those at the back, and a harrassed staff implored fans to avoid walking through the dining room after midnight as it scattered dust on the cornflakes laid out for breakfast. Most memorable item for me was a private little chat with John W. Campbell when he came across me guarding the Hieronymus machine. It is a canard that we got stuck on it together.

Then came the final Kettering, and from its ashes emerged the BSFA, which in turn saddled me with Chairmanship of the next year's Brumcon. Gloucester saw Kingsley Amis attending. Then came Harrogate and a pair of Peterboroughs, at one of which the locals were staggered to see a fancy dress parade, including a bandaged mummy, strolling up the high street. Minor cons also flourished in places like Bradford, Medway and Manchester, and the date of the main convention fluctuated between Easter and Whit. Then as now, despite changes the most important aspect of conventions remains unchanged - meeting old friends, making new ones. Even if this was the only achievement of the annual meeting, which it isn't, it would still be great fun and well worth while.

The Sixties remembered by *Mary Legg*

One finds sometimes, on reflection, that certain events occur which might be said to symbolise particular times. But how hard it is to pick out such events for a decade of conferences - and in a thousand words, too! So I trust that the following brief impressions will at least convey a flavour of some very happy Easter weekends, and (hopefully) usher in one at Newcastle.

Paradoxically, my first conference was the second Peterborough con. in 1964. Petercon II saw the crest of the quote-card¹ craze; it was afterwards rumoured that ten thousand had been loosed at Peterborough. (This craze has been revived in recent years, but not, I think, to such telling effect.) It was also the time that the writer actually met Walt Willis, a particularly precious memory now that the work of him and his compatriots seems to be so little seen; when one of the films shown was The Running, Jumping and Standing Still Film; and when an unofficial highlight of the weekend was a wrestling match between Max Jacobowski and Pat Kearney², with Mike Moorcock as commentator. It was at Petercon that I first heard that old fannish classic We Met on the Steps of a Moscow Latrine, and when the first (they say) Hum and Sway Ceremony³ for about ten years was performed. (Come to think of it, it's about due for another revival at the Newcastle con, if it goes in ten year

cycles!) And it was then that I saw the effects of incautious imbibing of home brew. The fan concerned closed his eyes, and fell over backwards, just like a tree being felled. Two other fan carried him to his room, and when we enquired next day if he was in better health, we were asked if he was the man who had fallen down the stairs and knocked over the manager. So be warned.

The following year, in Birmingham, the hotel possessed a rather interesting, if curious, optical illusion. The corridors on each level ran around in a square, and were all seemingly on the same level, but had a few stairs up at each corner. This gave the impression that one had strayed into an Escher drawing. It was at this conference that two events occurred which have since passed into fannish legend. The first I did not see, but according to eyewitness accounts in contemporary conreps, in the middle of a speech by Harry Harrison he (Harry) threw a meat pie at Brian Aldiss, who was in the audience. Thereafter, whenever Harry rose to speak he would be greeted by a barrage of meat pies. And it was around one of those Escher-like corridors that one morning there wound a solemn procession, clinking bottles together rhythmically and chanting mournfully "Go back to your wives... go back to your wives!"

In contrast to the snow which drifted around the Birmingham hotel, Great Yarmouth in 1966 was entirely enshrouded in heavy mist all weekend, in the best traditions of horror films. Generally speaking, it was a quieter con that weekend. There was a poetry session one afternoon which was most enjoyable, and we spent some time on the virtually deserted beach (and Big Dipper). One fan was almost cut off by the incoming tide, but clung to the underside of the pier for a few moments and was able to get ashore safely. Everyone seemed to be gripped with an urge to leave some trace of their passage, and a veritable menagerie of objects were circulated for signature - including a wooden spoon as long as your arm, and what resembled nothing so much as the thighbone of an ox.

Bristol in 1967 was the year of two notable films - La Jeteé (probably the finest con film ever shown) and Ems's Relativity, which resulted in attendees humming a catchy little tune from it for the rest of the weekend. Anyone present at the Briscon will probably still be able to recall it.

The following year, in Buxton, proceedings opened in fine fannish style with a telegram signed "Harry 'Meat Pie' Harrison" being read out, wishing the con success. It too is a kaleidoscope of impressions - the rendering of The Death March on kazoo (a popular fannish instrument in those days) during Nosferatu; the gastap inside my wardrobe; but particularly the reminiscences of times past in Ken Bulmer's Guest of Honour speech. He told of the 1953 con which was held in a teetotal hotel, and enlivened by the London Circle's ballet

Footnotes

1. Oblong cards measuring about 2" by 1", inscribed with an amusing or appropriate motto: sometimes in a series "running" over several cards, but usually standing alone.
2. Who was in the film It Happened Here. This was shown at a later con, and also recently on BBC TV.
3. This ceremony was performed in order to demonstrate (it was said) the power of faith in "rasing the sacrifice".

performed with balloons up their jumpers, and the suggestion made at the height of the vogue for zagguns that the 1954 conference be held in the Isle of Wight, on the ground that it was surrounded by ammunition. There was also the delightfully mad teaparty which gradually took over the hotel lounge, and the non-con-attendee who was heard to enquire if it was a "religious gathering"

I paid only a flying visit to the Oxford con of 1969, but will never forget the sight of Keith Bridges painted purple for the Fancy Dress Competition. Attendees included a crew from Swedish TV who were recording the conference for a series of programmes dealing with sf. A couple of years before, tourneys had become popular, and it was at Oxford that the only accident I remember happening during one occurred. One of the contestants was wounded on the head, but I'm pleased to say suffered no ill effects.

And as this brings us up to 1970 and a new decade, I will hand over to the next scribe, with the wish that every attendee may enjoy the 1974 con as much as any in the past.

The Seventies Conventions by Ian Williams

According to more experienced fans, Sci-Con '70 should have put me off convention going completely: but I had a simply great time. I suppose one of the reasons was that I wasn't staying at the hotel itself, having a flat in Earls Court at the time, and therefore the appalling service didn't bother me. Also I'd never been to a hotel before and didn't realise that bars were supposed to be kept open after pub licensing hours for residents. I didn't notice that most of the programme wasn't too successful because I attended little of it, missing in the process the great Scientology debate and the infamous poetry reading. I wasn't completely new to things as I'd been attending the Globe for about three months and had gotten used to the odd behaviour of science fiction fans. I was still very much a newcomer and to find that some of the big names (to me anyway) such as Peter R. Weston were quite human came as a great shock. I was even asked to write a piece for *Speculation*, but that's another long and irrelevant story. I remember in all my innocence, attempting to ask Michael Moorcock, who reminded me of a stoned Tommy Cooper, about Jerry Cornelius. Possibly the most vivid memory I have is of attending the all-night film show when very drunk and attempting to converse, in French, with a Belgian fan who'd made the mistake of sitting next to me. It was a scrappy, seedy, uncomfortable convention but I loved it.

There's a standing cliché that your first convention is always the best. This is rubbish, and is put about by people who prefer to look at the world through rose-coloured spectacles. A good convention is a good convention whether it's your first or fifteenth. And by any standards Eastercon 22 was a

bloody good one. Whether or not you enjoy yourself really depends on your frame of mind. I was just getting established in fandom, having produced the highly praised first issue of *Maya*, and had about eighty issues of the second in my rucksack ready to distribute. So I was very happy about going and felt very optimistic walking along a country lane to the hotel in the centre of Worcester at 5.30 on a fine Easter's morning. It lived up to my expectations. The hotel was excellent and the staff efficient. This is probably the deciding factor in what makes or breaks a convention. The siting was good too. The cathedral stood directly opposite providing a good view from the lounge window, and the river flowed gently about five minutes away down winding streets. Then there was the programme which turned out to be well-balanced and stimulating. My outstanding memories of the convention are again the trivial ones. There were very funny incidents concerning lifts, there were two short fat people who gravitated together to the great amusement of certain sections of the fannish community, and the Book of Ecclesiastes. Although I hate to mention his name again, it was mainly Pete Weston's fault that the event was a success. It also introduced Gannettfandom to conventions for the first time -- a great mistake....

The attractive city of Chester was the venue for the 1972 Easter convention. This convention has several strikes against it. Apart from professional writers and the convention committee there seemed to be hardly anyone else actually living in the hotel. It was so small that most fans were shoved in several overspill hotels often some distance away. The only bar that stayed open all night was ridiculously tiny and ludicrously expensive. Another thing was that one of the bars in the aptly named Blossoms Hotel turned out to be the local gay bar, something that proved embarrassing though occasionally funny such as the incident when one of its inhabitants, misunderstanding something I'd said to another fan, started calling me Tiger. The lack of a large enough room or bar prevented people from getting together properly. The programme was all right, though it lacked a certain excitement, and the films were something of a disappointment.

OMPACon at Bristol was a great improvement, again, I suspect, due to the quality of the hotel plus the fact that it was large enough to house all attending members. I'll always have a soft spot for this convention because of all the hustling Rob Jackson and I did in getting support for our bid for the 1974 convention. It was also the first time I'd been invited to appear on the programme. I was very nervous but once I started talking really enjoyed myself. It wasn't a total success partly because all the panellists agreed with each other and found it difficult to adopt extreme points of view. I met a number of new and interesting people, unlike the previous year when I'd tended to stick to people I knew. Other than the fact that the films went on too late at night, it was a difficult convention to fault. Most of the credit for this convention goes to Fred Hemmings.

And that brings me up to Tynecon '74. The trend for Easter conventions recently seems to have been one good, one bad. I feel pretty certain that this trend is going to stop there, but then the only judges of that are you.

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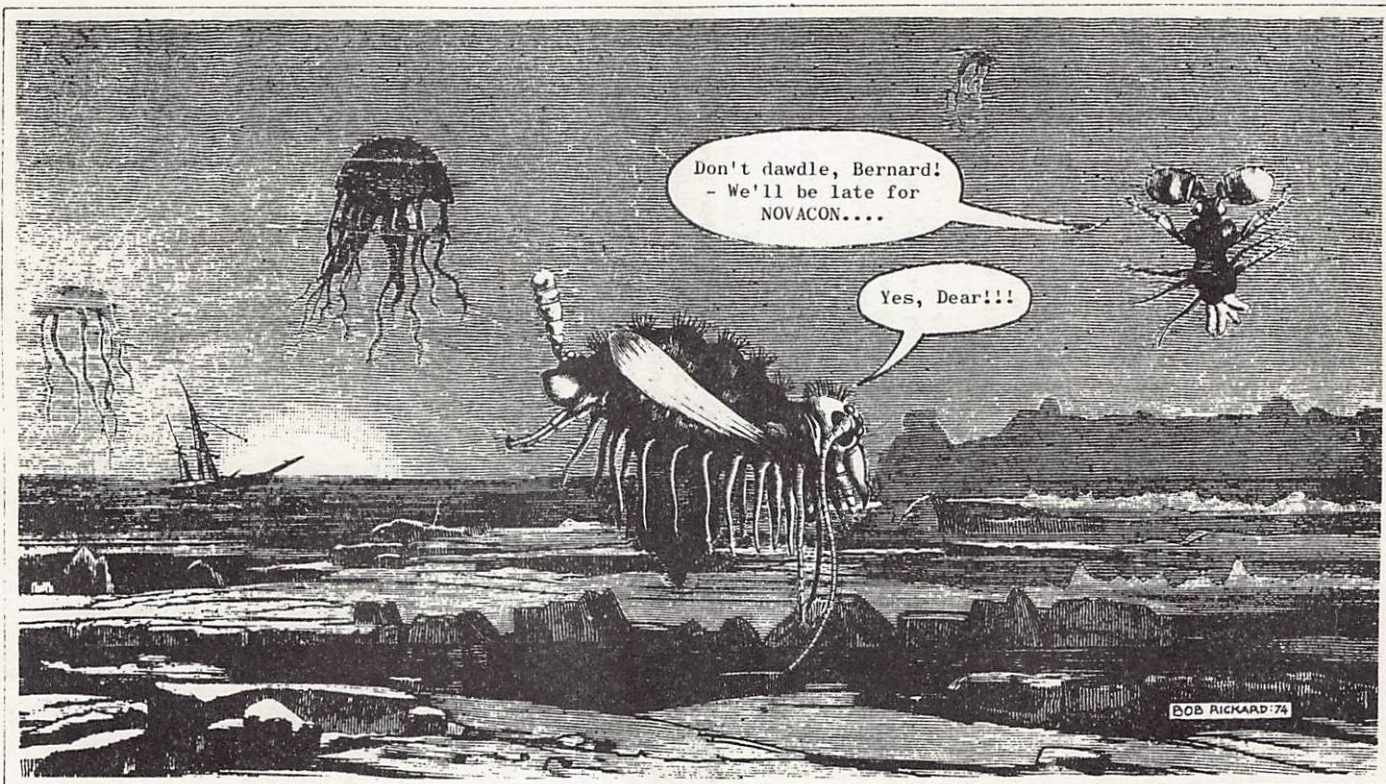
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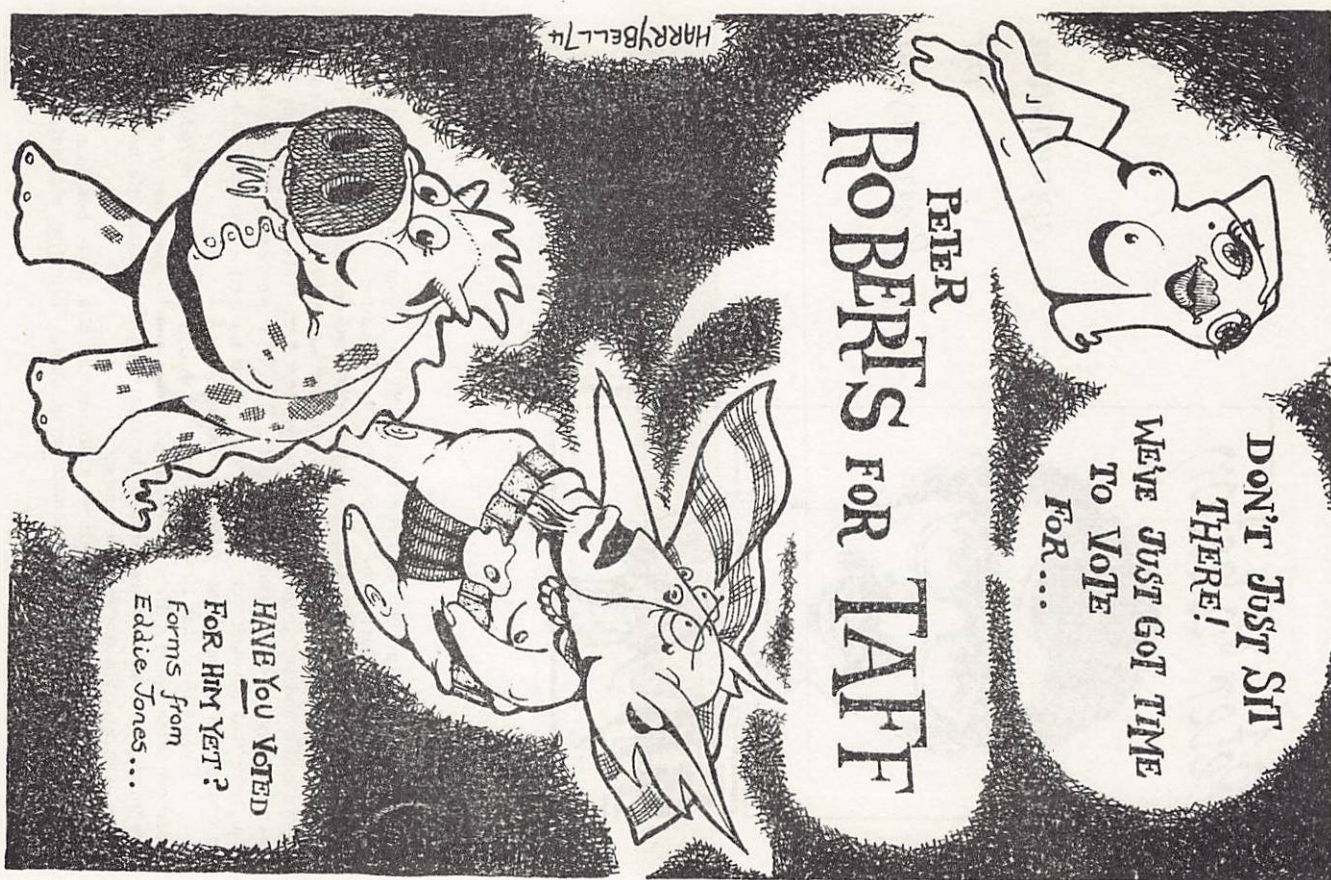
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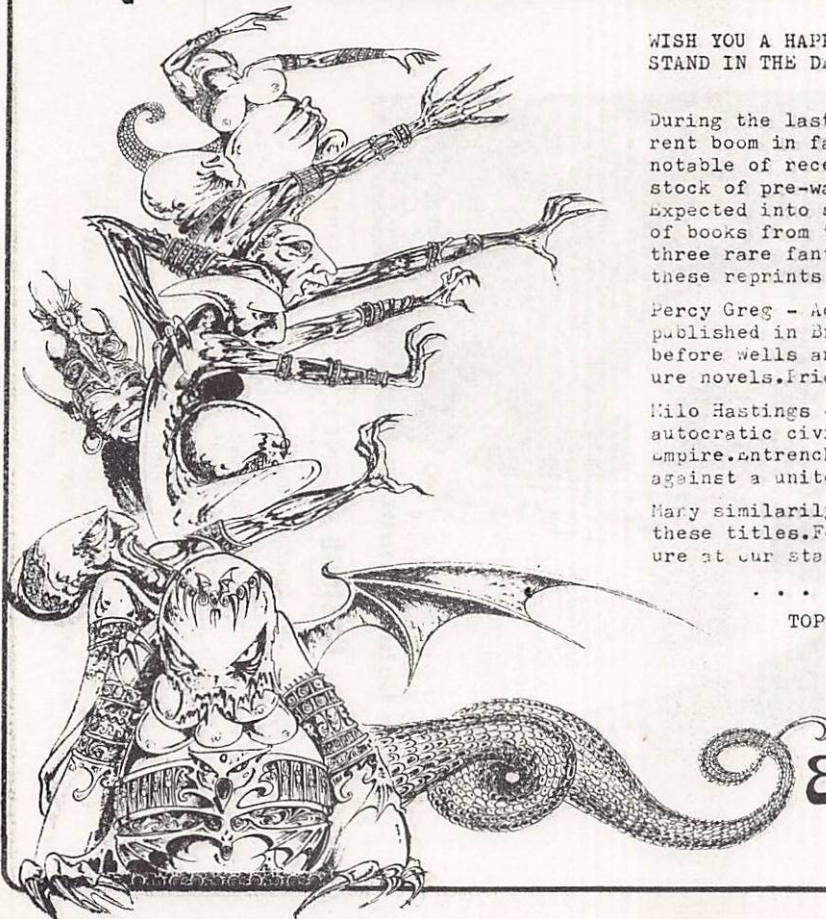
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15	1964	Peterborough	Repetercon
16	1965	Birmingham	Brumcon
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17	1966	Yarmouth	Yarcon
18	1967	Bristol	Briscon
19	1968	Buxton	Thiridmancon
20	1969	Oxford	Galactic Fair
21	1970	London	Scicon '70
22	1971	Worcester	Eastercon 22
23	1972	Chester	Chessmancon
24	1973	Bristol	OMPAcon
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Malcolm Watt of the Newcastle Tape Recording Society and the BSFA, for doing all our taping.

Kevin Williams and Peter Roberts for setting the quiz questions, and Kevin for preparing the slides and for much Xeroxing.

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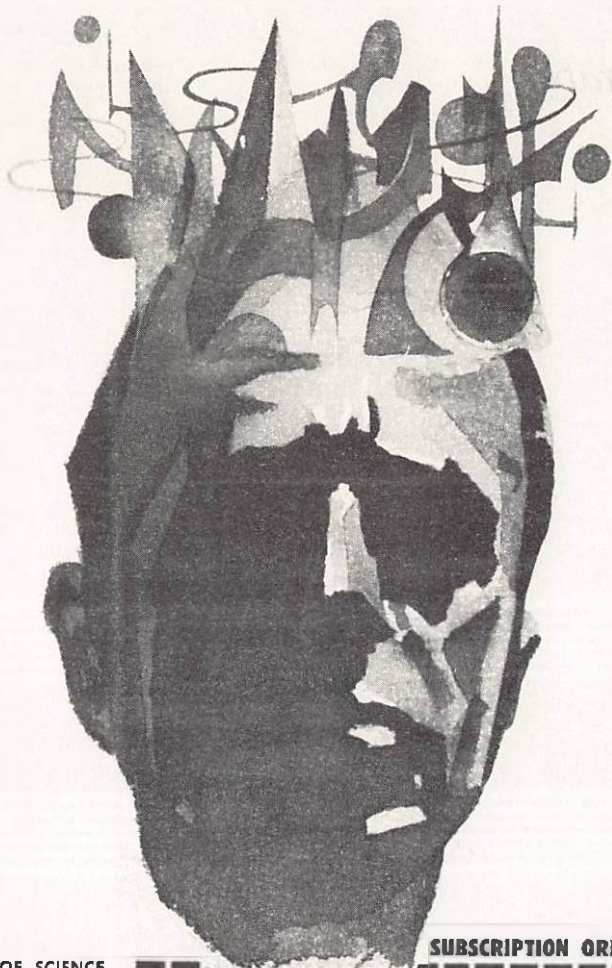
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