

Ansible



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From David Langford, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: Dan Steffan. Cartoon: Brad W. Foster. Available for SAE, hesid-shesids or a cloud of radioactive bats.

Seasonal Ebooks. Yet more freebies at <taff.org.uk/ebooks.php>. *The Frank Arnold Papers* collects thirty nonfiction pieces—most not previously published—by Frank, long-time stalwart of the London First Thursday meetings from the 1940s until his death in 1987. Edited by Rob Hansen, with an introduction by Michael Moorcock and afterward by Dave Rowe. *The Complete Skyrack* brings together the entire run of Ron Bennett's 1960s UK fanzine newsletter *Skyrack*, together with hoax issues devised by Ron to torment individual readers and parody issues devised by other fans to torment Ron. All human life is there.

The Winter Flies

S.T. Joshi, the noted and occasionally controversial authority on Lovecraft, allowed himself to be loftily entertained: 'Meanwhile, the antics of my enemies continue to provide rich amusement. Their staggering inferiority to me, in intellect and achievements, is becoming more and more apparent with each passing day; but what is now becoming increasingly obvious is that they are really not very nice people. Stupidity is one thing—a condition that is perhaps unalterable, and one that is more deserving of pity than anger; but duplicity, mendacity, hypocrisy, petty vindictiveness, and a host of other moral failings—well, I suppose these can only be attributed to bad upbringing and an insufficient exposure to civilised values.' (stjoshi.org, 22 November)

Nicholas Pegg, former Dalek operator and *Doctor Who Magazine* columnist, was widely reported—see all newspapers—as having been sacked over a very rude acoustic comment on the BBC and the magazine publishers Panini, hidden in his final 'Watcha' column. Apparently 'Watcha' and much else was to be axed anyway in a cost-cutting overhaul intended to curb *DWM's* irreverence about and even criticism of the *Who* franchise, so Pegg had little to lose. (*Private Eye*, 3 November)

Mike Resnick 'won the Galaxy Award, China's equivalent of the Hugo, for Most Popular Foreign Author. [...] I'm enough of a pro to know that half this award goes to my translators' (11 November)

Christopher Tolkien resigned as a director of the Tolkien Estate (incorporated 2011) on 31 August, though the news didn't become public until November. This may explain the timing of the *Lord of the Rings* tv rights sale to Amazon Video. (theonering.net, 15 November)

Connochaetes

2 Dec • **Dragonmeet** (gaming), Novotel London West, W6 8DR. 9am-midnight. £10 reg with group discounts: www.dragonmeet.co.uk.

2 Dec • **Yulemoot** (Tolkien Society), Gunmakers' Arms, 93 Bath Street, Birmingham, B4 6HG. 6pm onward. Open to all.

3 Dec • **Stars of Time** (media), Tropicana, Weston-super-Mare. 10:30am-5:30pm. £6.50; child £3.50. See www.starsoftime.co.uk.

8 Dec • **British Fantasy Society Xmas Social**, The Vintry, 119-121 Cannon St, London, EC4N 5AX. 7pm-11:30pm. Free—all welcome.

9 Dec • **2017: A Clarke Odyssey** (conference), Canterbury Christ Church University. £65 reg; concessions £50—including lunch, coffee, etc. See 2017aclarkedydesy.wordpress.com.

21 Dec • **London Xmas Meeting** (additional to First Thursdays), The Bishop's Finger, 9-10 West Smithfield, EC1A 9JR. All evening.

30 Dec - 2 Jan • **Steampunk New Year**, Mercure Hotel, Leicester. See www.asylumsteampunk.co.uk/steampunk-new-year-2017.

23 Jan 2018 • **Frankenstein and Its Legacy** (panel discussion), Royal Institution, 21 Albemarle St, London, W1S 4BS. 7-8:30pm. £16/£10 concessions; members and patrons £7. See tinyurl.com/y99qqrw6.

2-4 Feb 2018 • **Enharmonic** (filk), Best Western Hotel, Marks Tey, Colchester. Now £39 reg and £27 unwaged to 1 February, rising to £42 and £29 at the door; under-18s £1 per year of age; under-5s free. See www.contabile.org.uk/enharmonic.

2-3 Mar 2018 • **Frightfest** (film), Glasgow Film Theatre. £75 reg or £10.50 per film. See www.frightfest.co.uk. Also 2018 London events: Leicester Square, 23-27 August, and Empire Haymarket, 27 October.

30 Mar - 2 Apr 2018 • **Follycon** (Eastercon), the Majestic Hotel, Harrogate. Now £80 reg; £45 YA/unwaged; £30 child (5-17) and supp;

under-5s free. Cheques to Eastercon 2018 c/o 19 Uphall Rd, Cambridge, CB3 1HX. Credit cards (*preferred*) accepted at www.follycon.org.uk.

21-22 Apr 2018 • **Sci-Fi Scarborough** (multimedia), The Spa, Scarborough. Adult tickets including booking fees £28, £16.80 day; under-17s £11.20, £5.60 day; under-5s free. See sciifiscarborough.co.uk.

19-22 Jul 2018 • **Nemo 2018** (Eurocon), Amiens, France. €45 reg, rising to €50 on 1 January 2018; to €55 on 1 June; and to €60 at the door. See eurocon2018.yolasite.com.

16-20 Aug 2018 • **Worldcon 76** (Worldcon), San José, CA, USA. \$210 reg; \$105 YA (15-21) and military; under-15s \$75; under-6s free; \$50 supp. See worldcon76.org. Hotel bookings opened on 22 November and the nearer/cheaper venues sold out quickly, so within minutes.

17-19 Aug 2018 • **Wadfest** (camping; games, cosplay), 51 Mill Rd, via Church Road, Emmeth, Wisbech, Cambs, PE14 8AE. Adult campers £45; under-17s £5; under-5s free; visitors £20. See www.wadfest.co.uk.

28 Oct 2018 • **BristolCon**, Hilton Doubletree Hotel, Bristol. GoH Joanne Hall, Dave Hutchinson. £20 or £10 concessions and 14-17s, to 31 May; then £25/£15; £30/£20 at door. Flat 11, Beaufort Ct Flats, 1 Beaufort St, Easton, Bristol, BS5 0SQ. See www.bristolcon.org.

9-11 Nov • **Novacon 48**, Park Inn, Nottingham. GoH Chris Beckett. Contact 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ. See www.novacon.org.uk.

Rumblings. *B.S.F.A.* as usual, there's no London event in December.

• **Octocon 2018** (GoH Pat Cadigan) is taking in registrations at €25 or €20 concessions. Dates and ?Dublin venue awaited at octocon.com.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others Deplore Us. John Podhoretz reviews *Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri*: 'If I tell you that that Martin McDonagh is one of the most imaginative writers of our time, I expect you will immediately think he writes science fiction or fantasy—because the term "imaginative" has now devolved into a subject of the fantastic, the surreal, the unruly.' (*Weekly Standard*, 27 November) [MMW] Now I'm itching to write a new *SF Encyclopedia* entry on the nature of Unruly Fiction.

Awards. *Arthur C. Clarke Foundation*: LIFE ACHIEVEMENT Stephen Hawking. *INNOVATOR* John Hendricks. *IMAGINATION IN SERVICE TO SOCIETY* Kim Stanley Robinson. • *World Fantasy*: NOVEL Claire North, *The Sudden Appearance of Hope*. *LONG FICTION* Kij Johnson, *The Dream-Quest of Vellut Boe*. *SHORT G.V. Anderson*, 'Das Steingeschöpf' (*Strange Horizons*). *ANTHOLOGY* Jack Dann, ed., *Dreaming in the Dark*. *COLLECTION* Jeffrey Ford, *A Natural History of Hell*. *ARTIST* Jeffrey Alan Love. *SPECIAL—PROFESSIONAL* Michael Levy & Farah Mendlesohn, *Children's Fantasy Literature*. *NON-PROFESSIONAL* Neile Graham as Workshop Director of Clarion West. *LIFE ACHIEVEMENT* Terry Brooks, Marina Warner.

The Critical Heritage. Brett Joseph Talley's *Which Should Not Be* (2011) seems to be a messy read, with 'awesomestatic gooeyness oozing from every page to where you will be licking it off your fingers and savoring it for days to come.' (review, *The Unlocked Diary*) [MMW]

R.I.P. *Jill Barklem* (1951-2017), UK author/illustrator whose *Spring Story* (1980) opened the Brambly Hedge children's fantasies about a community of rural mice, died on 15 November; she was 66. (*Guardian*) [AIP] • *Peter Berling* (1934-2017), German actor whose credits include *Tex* and *The Lord of the Deep* (1985), *The Name of the Rose* (1986) and *The Last Temptation of Christ* (1988), died on 21 November aged 83. [PDF] • *Rodney Bewes* (1937-2017), UK actor in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1972), *Jonah and the Whale* (1975), *Jabberwocky* (1977), *The Spaceman and King Arthur* (1979) and *Doctor Who* (1984), died on 21 November aged 79. [SG/AW] • *Perdita Boardman* (1931-2017), US fan, artist and designer who created the banner and other promotional art for the 1967 New York Worldcon bid, died on 26 November aged 85. [AIP] • *Randy Byers* (1960-2017), US fanzine fan and conrunner who was the 2003 TAFF winner, shared FAAn awards with co-editors Andy Hooper and carl juarez for *Chunga* in 2003, 2005, 2006 and 2016, and won a solo FAAn for *Alternative Pants* in 2013, died on 20 November; he was 57. Yet another friend gone. • *David Cassidy* (1950-2017), US pop star and actor whose one genre film was *The*

Spirit of '76 (1990), died on 21 November aged 67; he also guested in *The Flash* (1991) and *Kim Possible* (2004). [AW/SG] • **Michael 'DiKMiK' Davies** (1944-2017), UK keyboard and synthesizer player with Hawkwind 1969-1973, died on 16 November. [PDF] • **Lou Donato** (1940-2017), co-founder with his wife Myrna of the Las Vegas bookshop Amber Unicorn Books in 1981, died on 8 November aged 77. Both were regulars in US Worldcon and regional convention dealers' rooms. [PT] • **Karin Dor** (1938-2017), German actress whose films include *The Invisible Dr Mabuse* (1962), *The Face of Fu Manchu* (1965), *The Torture Chamber of Dr Sadism* (1967), *You Only Live Twice* (1967) and *Assignment Terror* (1970), died on 6 November aged 79. [SG] • **Carl T. Ford**, UK horror fan whose small-press magazine *Dagon* (27 issues 1983-1990; two British Fantasy Award wins) focused on Lovecraftian fiction and the *Call of Cthulhu* role-playing game, died on 13 November. [FC] • **Scott Fredericks** (1943-2017), Irish actor in *Doctor Who's* 'Day of the Daleks' (1972) and 'Image of the Fendahl' (1977), died on 6 November. [SR] • **John Gordon** (1925-2017), UK author of many fine children's/YA fantasy, supernatural and horror tales often set in the Fens—early books of note being *The Giant Under the Snow* (1968) and *The House on the Brink* (1970)—died on 20 November, the day after his 92nd birthday. [PDF] • **Anthony Harvey** (1931-2017), UK film editor for *Dr Strangelove* (1964) and director of *Svengali* (1983), died on 23 November aged 86. [SFS] • **Rance Howard** (1928-2017), US actor whose films include *Bigfoot: The Unforgettable Encounter* (1994), *Independence Day* (1996), *Mars Attacks!* (1996), *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* (2000) and *Angels & Demons* (2009), died on 25 November aged 89. [MR] • **Earle Hyman** (1926-2017), US actor whose best-known genre credit was for voicing Panthro in *Thundercats* (125 episodes, 1985-1989), died on 17 November aged 91. Another voice role was in the L. Frank Baum-based *The Life & Adventures of Santa Claus* (1985). [PDF] • **Clytie Jessop** (1929-2017), Australian art gallery owner, director, and actress in *The Innocents* (1961, based on *The Turn of the Screw*), *Nightmare* (1964) and *Torture Garden* (1967), died in April. [GC] • **Annika Johansson**, Swedish critic who published *Fantasy's Forests* [translated title] and other books and essays on fantasy and horror, died on 31 October aged 57. [AE] • **M.M. (Meg) Justus** (1959-2017), US author whose fantasies include the Unearthly Northwest supernatural/historical series opening with *Sojourn* (2014), died on 22 November. [F770] • **Ray Lovelock** (1950-2017), British-Italian actor in *Queens of Evil* (1970), *The Living Dead at Manchester Morgue* (1974) and *House of Shadows* (2013), died on 10 November aged 67. [SG] • **Jim Nabors** (1930-2017), US actor best known for credits other than *The Lost Saucer* (1975), died on 30 November aged 87. [SFS] • **Julio Oscar Mechoso** (1955-2017), US actor in *Jurassic Park III* (2001), *Invasion* (2006 tv) and *Planet Terror* (2007), died on 25 November aged 62. [SFS] • **D. Potter**, US fan affectionately known as the 'tall black woman with one blond shoe', active in many APAs including A Woman's APA and the music-themed ALPS (which she founded), died on 25 October. She was the fan guest of honour at the 1982 Balicon. [GF] • **Della Reese** (1931-2017), US actress in *Touched by an Angel* (1994-2003) and *Dinosaur* (2000), died on 19 November aged 86. [SFS] • **Paddy (Patricia) Russell** (1928-2017), UK tv director who after lesser roles in the BBC's *The Quatermass Experiment* (1953) and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1954) became the first woman to direct *Doctor Who* with 'The Massacre of St Bartholomew's Eve' (1966), has died aged 89. She also directed three 1970s *Doctor Who* storylines. [DP] • **Dudley Simpson** (1922-2017) Australian composer and conductor whose music featured in 200+ episodes of *Doctor Who* (1964-1980; he had a cameo part in 'The Talons of Weng-Chiang,' 1977) and all 68 of *The Tomorrow People* (1973-1979), died on 4 November aged 95. Other credits include *Out of the Unknown* (1965-1966), *Blake's 7* (1978-1979) and *The Legend of King Arthur* (1979). [SG/GW]

Burbismo. 'Her glittering cat's eyes dug into the marrow of men, searching, prying, hating, and loving, all at once.' (blurb for Edwin J. Becker's novel *Earth Woman*, 1952) [MMW]

BSFA Awards 2018. The first round of nominations is already open at tinyurl.com/BSFA2017nominations, closing on 31 December, with a second round from 1-30 January to generate the final ballot. Nominations in the usual categories (novel, short, artwork, nonfiction) may alternatively be emailed to awards at bsfa dot co dot uk.

In Typo Veritas. '... Beethoven was in a flurry of musical writing. Being dead did not stop him in the slightest from recovering quickly and going on with his music.' (Sam Rogers, *What's So Great About Beethoven?: A Biography of Ludwig van Beethoven Just for Kids*, 2014) [CO'R]

As Others See Us. 'Science fiction triggers "poorer reading", study finds' was the *Guardian* headline for a story whose first paragraph said:

'reading science fiction actually makes you read more "stupidly", according to new research.' (23 November). This echoes researcher Chris Gavaler's clickbait summary 'SCIENCE FICTION MAKES YOU STUPID' (blog, 30 October) of his co-written study which involved no sf. What was actually found—as the *Guardian* later admitted—was that readers who dislike sf have difficulty with a non-genre text after it's been sprinkled (in Bat Durston style) with futuristic terminology. A better headline might thus have been 'Snobbery triggers "poorer reading" ...'

Magazine Scene. *Interzone* is skipping an issue: #274 will be March/April 2018 rather than January/February as expected. Andy Cox reassures subscribers that they'll get all the issues they've paid for.

Random Fandom. **Jim Barker** has been approved for a liver transplant and is now on the waiting list. He has set up a GoFundMe page at www.gofundme.com/jimbairn to help with expenses for the three weeks he expects to be in hospital. All donations gratefully received. • **Jeanne Gomoll** is the 2017 recipient of the Rotslar Award for long-time achievement in fanzine art, founded in 1988. [MG] Congratulations!

The Weakest Link. **Bradley Walsh:** "'Down With Big Brother' is a quote from which George Orwell novel?' Contestant: '1986.' (ITV, *The Chase*) [PE] • **Jeopardy** answer, question to be supplied: 'On TV in the 1960s we learned that its mission was "to seek out new life and new civilizations."' Contestant: 'What is Apollo?' (3 November) [AIF]

Court Circular. Peter S. Beagle's lawsuit against his former business manager Connor (Freff) Cochran grinds on, with the trial at last beginning on 5 January. A counter suit by Cochran was dismissed with prejudice on 7 November 'because of prolonged failure to comply with court orders to produce documents and answer interrogatories.' [F770]

As Others Research Us. 'David Tennant looks unrecognisable as he continues to showcase his fiery red locks on the London set of Terry Pratchett TV series *Bad Omens*' (*Mail Online*, 3 November) [JM]

The Dead Past. **40 Years Ago.** Sandra Miesel had a bad time after reselling to Chilton's *The Many Worlds of Poul Anderson*, with a DAW Books paperback reprint) an essay she'd published in Leland Sapriro's fanzine *Riverside Quarterly*, 'without ever noticing it had been copyrighted in Sapriro's name. [...] Sapriro felt he held all rights even in the absence of any contract or payment. He felt that "his" property had been "pirated" and began threatening to sue people including Chilton, Thomas Nelson & Sons, DAW, Don Wollheim, SFWA, Jerry Pournelle, and every book dealer who'd sold the disputed volume.' (*Karas* 35, December 1977) Oh dearie me. • **20 Years Ago.** 'David Gemmell was alarmed to hear he'd been rubbished in *The Times*, by a reviewer who claimed to like Gemmell-style action-adventure fantasy but thought his latest novel was dull. DG glumly bought the paper, to find a review of "Polgara the Sorceress, by David Gemmell". Such is the peril of having a surname so very similar to Eddings.' (*Ansible* 125, December 1997) C.o.A. **John Betancourt and Wildside Press LLC**, 7945 MacArthur Blvd, Suite 215, Cabin John, MD 20818, USA.

Come Into My Parlour. New York Tyrant/Tyrant Books must have an interesting standard contract: 'Dear agents, please stop sending inquiries to Tyrant. We no longer consider agentted writers. Writers w/agents: feel free to send, just know you have to drop your agent if we want to sign you. Thanks, Tyrant staff.' (Twitter, 22 November)

Fanfundery. **TAFF 2018:** TransAtlantic Fan Fund candidates for the westbound race to Worldcon 76 in San José, California, are Johan Anglemark, Fia Karlsson and Helena McCallum (Adela Terrell). Voting continues to 2 April. See taff.org.uk for ballot and official newsletter.

Wig's Masterclass. **Trigger Warning Dept.** 'Potential black magic around an unstable mind is like enriched uranium near a fuse' (Marisha Pessl, *Night Mind*, 2013) [PB] • **Dept of Magnetic Orbs.** 'His eyes were a pair of dark stars, drawing me to my feet, pulling me toward him ...' (Roger Zelazny, *Knight of Shadows*, 1990) [BA] • **Life-time Guarantee Dept.** 'As long as [a magical tree] lives, the demons are locked up for all eternity.' (Episode 1, *The Shannara Chronicles*, 2016 tv) [BJ] • **True Gastropod Romance.** 'So he slides inside me: slow dance of swelling tissues, hot muscle, nerves aglow ... ours is a snail-love: the slow mutual twining of molluscs. In this sliding world we move only by muscle waves, snails both of us, his love dart lodged beneath my mantle.' (Ian Watson, *God's World*, 1979) [VS]

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