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CLARKE AWARD. The usual slightly glittering crowd assembled in the Science Museum for the presentation of Sir Arthur's £1,000 cheque and single bookend. First, a special BSFA award not presented at Easter was given to David Pringle for general staunchness in continuing to publish *Interzone*. (The 1999 BSFA trophies are black cuboids designed to go on bedside tables, so lucky winners can reach out at dead of night and be comforted by the large friendly letters BSFA bulging from the sides in Braille.) After a suitable build-up of dramatic tension, administrator Paul Kincaid announced that the Clarke winner was *Dreaming in Smoke* by Tricia Sullivan, who was there to accept: the most common vox-pop reaction afterwards was, 'Oops, I haven't read that one.' As usual there were rumours of mayhem in the judges' final three-hour debate that picked this winner from the shortlist of six; one gleaned it wasn't an entirely unanimous decision. John Jarrold grumpily boycotted the ceremony since according to him only two finalists (Priest's *The Extremes* and MacLeod's *The Cassini Division*) had star quality, the rest being damned with faint Jarroldian praise: 'all perfectly good novels, but not award winners (this makes it almost certain that one of them will win!)'. Next day he e-mailed a triumphant footnote: 'Told you so!'

The Grey Gentlemen

Ronald Chetwynd-Hayes of horror/supernatural fame celebrated his 80th birthday on Sunday 30 May. [SJ]

Stephen Gallagher has a modest proposal to lay before us: 'John Clute's sharp description of the aim of the Richard Evans award makes me wonder whether, in the interests of cosmic balance, we shouldn't offer some form of recognition to those authors whose commercial success has far exceeded the intrinsic value of their work. It could take the form of a gilded turd. The "Gildo".'

Damon Knight issues a rallying-call for the fabled sf writers' forcing-house: 'The Original Clarion at MSU [Michigan State University] is about to undergo a review to decide whether it has value to the university and should be continued. Testimonials from former students and instructors would be very helpful. They should be sent to Lister M. Matheson, matheson@pilot.msu.edu. Please spread the word.'

Peter Nicholls (writes his alter-ego the Man With No Name from Melbourne) was, irritatingly, diagnosed on his 60th birthday in March with prostate cancer. It is, as yet, not troubling him, apart from an urgent need to pee at 4am. Treatment comes in two parts: the first is X-Ray therapy to burn out the offending bits of the organ in revolt, and the second is the insertion of a radioactive pebble not far from where he sits down. Like all sf encyclopedia editors, he has always wanted a radioactive pebble of his own, and probably deserves one. There is an 80% chance that all will be well after these actions have been taken, though it may be that people will no longer have to lock up their wives while he's in their vicinity. To all those who, observing his cigar smoking, prophesied lung cancer, sucks boo. You were wrong.'

David Pringle recalls a Brighton festival-fringe reading with Gwyneth Jones, Liz Counihan and Liz Williams: 'Gwyneth was asked which children's fantasy novels had particularly influenced her when she was very young. She replied something like: "Well, the conventional answer is C.S. Lewis, but I was especially impressed by a book called *Unicorn Magic*, by an author whose name I've been trying to remember for years ..." No sooner had she come out with the title than Liz Counihan and her sister, Deirdre, who was in the audience, chimed out simultaneously: "Our Dad wrote that!" He is Daniel Counihan, a former well-known journalist, now in his 80s. *Unicorn Magic* was the only work of fiction he ever had published—a strongly E.Nesbit-like fantasy, apparently. (A sequel, equally good according to his daughters, never made it into print.) Gwyneth was flabbergasted, and starting questioning them on plot points. Sure enough, it was the same book. Small world!'

Ian Watson adds a footnote to the A141 mention of his Star-ley Kubrick recollections: 'Actually, my piece on Stanley K in *The New Yorker* (22 March) wasn't quite "full" of reminiscences. I signed a contract late last year with the *NY* for a long memoir which would have

coincided with the release of *Eyes Wide Shut*. Time toddled by and suddenly Stanley died. Did the *NY* have a scoop in their hands, you may suppose? Surrealistically, the *NY* said they couldn't now use the piece because Stanley died "too suddenly" for them (eh?)—but could they use a few rejigged excerpts in their "Talk of the Town" section? Which duly appeared, rather mutated in-house. So my fuller memoirs are now due in the August *Playboy* on sale in July, 4,000 words of them. When *Playboy's* exclusivity expires I must see about getting the whole caboodle of 9,000 words into print somewhere for completists.'

Coney Honey Antimony ...

Until 24 Jun • **Don Lawrence** exhibition continues: Gardner Arts Centre, University of Sussex, Falmer. He was the *Trigan Empire* artist.

10-19 Jun (not Mon/Tue) • **Flow My Tears, the Policeman Said** stage adaptation, Oval House Theatre, 52-4 Kennington Oval, next to Oval tube. 7:45pm. Tickets £7.50; £4.50 concessions. By Linda Hartinian, who appears in PKD's autobiographical *The Dark Haired Girl*.

11 Jun • **BES Open Night**, Princess Louise pub, High Holborn, WC1. 6pm on. With launch and multiple signing for Pumpkin Books.

12 Jun • **Incense & Insensibility**: 'SF, Psychodelia & the 1960s/70s' conference, U of Liverpool. Advance booking preferred, but some walk-ins allowed: £15, £10 unwaived. Contact Andy Sawyer, SF Foundation, Sydney Jones Library, PO Box 123, Liverpool, L69 3DA.

23 Jun • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Florence Nightingale pub, on York Rd/Westminster Bridge Rd roundabout. 7pm on; fans present c5pm. With special transatlantic guests Patrick and Teresa Nielsen Hayden.

25-7 Jun • **Poets & Small Presses** on, Barlow Theatre, Langley, Birmingham. With Steve Sneyd talking on sf poetry. £4 advance reg to Geoff Stevens 25 Griffiths Rd, West Bromwich, B71 2EH.

13-15 Aug • **Wincon V** (Unicon), King Alfred's College, Winchester. £28 reg, £18 supp, to rise again on 1 Jul. Contact 53 Havant Road, North End, Portsmouth, Hants, PO2 7HH. *Steve Green* begs donations for the fanzine table: 33 Scott R, Olton, Solihull, B92 7LQ.

27-31 Jul 00 • **Millennium Hand and Shrimp** (Discworld con 3), Radisson Edwardian Hotel, Heathrow, London—a venue at last! Contact PO Box 189, Patchway, BS32 8YE.

2-6 Aug 00 • **Tricity** (combining Eurocon, Polcon and Balcon), Gdynia, Gdansk, Sopot, Poland. Guests tba. £17/\$25 reg, rising to £20/\$30 1 Jan 00. Contact (Europe) Gdanski Klub Fantastyki, PO Box 76, 80-325 Gdansk 37, Poland; (UK) B.Wilkinson, Ground Floor Flat, 8 West Ave Rd, Walthamstow, E17 9SE ... fax 0181 925 7126.

Rumblings • **Avalon** (*Trek*, 4-6 Jun, Burton upon Trent) is postponed to late Aug/early Sept: many sponsors withdrew, and organizer Sean Clark is in hospital. This news emerged only on 28 May, leaving unhappy fans with flights booked from overseas. Updates from Avalon c/o 19 St Modwens Walk, Burton upon Trent, Staffs, DE14 1HL; 01283 500047/539718. • **Millennium** (Dec 99 - Jan 00) in 'a Benelux country or UK' has folded for lack of an affordable venue. Memberships can be refunded, passed to charity, or transferred to Hogmanaycon (Glasgow, New Year 00-01) or ConTreaty (Maastricht, Nov 00). Contact Larry van der Putte, Kottter 5, 1186 WH Amstelveen, Netherlands.

Infinitely Improbable

Seccon in Stevenage (28-30 May) was a welcome return of the Small Relaxed British Convention. Possibly its most awesome coup was the rediscovery of the long-hoped-lost *Fundament*, the Oxford USF Group's musical version of the entire Foundation trilogy. This is somewhat, er, telescoped (THE MULE: 'Curse! I forgot that my mutation renders me so weak that the effort of singing could at any time kill me stone dead.... Aaargggghhhhh...') and was performed with great enthusiasm but no actual music, drawing praise from Ian Sorensen: 'They're making my productions look professional!' Asimov purists were intrigued by Dave Clements's evocation of Hari Seldon lurching up from his Time Vault wheelchair at the close of *Second Foundation*, with the words, 'Mein Fuhrer ... I can walk!' • A panel devoted to the traditional

slugging-off of *SFX* magazine ('Six pages of pictures of bimboes!' cried Alison Scott) led Teresa Nielsen Hayden to wonder just why it had been called after St Francis Xavier. • The rest is all a happy blur, punctuated by the gibbering of overworked bar staff as Everything Ran Out. Maybe hero organizers Bridget & Simon Bradshaw will do more Seasons?

FTL is a new British mag of 'SF, Space and Science', ed. Wendy Graham of *Space Voyager* fame. Also involved: Patrick Moore, Ian Stewart, Jack Cohen, Rog Peyton, Dave Holmes. It exists only as a website, the intended print edition having been put on hold for now. *Wendy*: 'Basically what has happened is that I have decided to leave the parent Miranda Group and take the website (which is mine) and thus the essence of *FTL* with me.' <http://ftlmagazine.com>; fax 01253 313141.

Random Fandom. Paul Barnett savours New York joys like 'dinner at ... THE ALGONQUIN ROUND TABLE!!! Yay!!! We couldn't quite manage the level of sophisticated waspish literary quips the venue might have demanded. Instead the highlight was watching Sue Perrotto try to cope with a recalcitrant baby squash/suede. This proved so adroit at dodging her fork that it seemed to be both intelligent and motile. "The vegetable's performance was well worth the entrance money on its own" — Thog the Mighty.' • Paul Kincaid's recently injured knee is being soothed by a prescription drug whose name (in Yvonne Rousseau's words) others find funnier than he does: 'Slofenac'. • Linda Krawecki is UK agent for the 'Ace double' of Corflu and Potlatch on successive weekends (same Seattle venue, Feb & Mar 00). Contact—quickly for low June prices—1A Mountney Rd, Eastbourne, E Sussex, BN21 1RJ. • Robert Lichtman says that the auction catalogue of Sam Moskowitz's collection should be available now: catalogue 7330, \$34 from Sotheby's, PO Box 5111, Norwalk, CT 06856-5111, USA. The auction itself is on 29 Jun. Some lower-quality material has already been disposed of through another auction house. • D.M. Sherwood regrets he won't be sending any more spicy web snippets to *Ansible* for a while: 'have been banned from the only convenient Cyber Café—downloading of Porn held to be unacceptable by local community standards.'

As Others See Us. A TV & *Satellite Week* (10-16 April) feature on *Event Horizon* star Laurence Fishburne dwelt on his delight at playing a brave, competent black space captain in the movie, since he's much concerned about positive portrayals of African-Americans. After listing his further virtuous efforts as a UNICEF ambassador, the magazine deftly delivered its punchline: 'With serious views like these, it is perhaps surprising to discover that Fishburne is a sci-fi fan.' [KM]

Mythopoeic Awards shortlist.... ADULT LITERATURE Charles de Lint, *Someplace to be Flying*; Neil Gaiman and Charles Vess, *Stardust*; R.E. Klein, *The History of Our World Beyond the Wave*; Patricia A. McKillip, *Song for the Basilisk*; James Stoddard, *The High House*. • CHILDREN'S Kara Dalkey, *Heavenward Path*; Diana Wynne Jones, *The Dark Lord of Derkholm*; Gail Carson Levine, *Ella Enchanted*; Gerald Morris, *The Squire's Tale*; J.K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*. • SCHOLARSHIP (INKLINGS) Lionel Adey, *C.S. Lewis: Writer, Dreamer & Mentor*; Roland Hein, *Christian Mythmakers*; Walter Hooper, *C.S. Lewis: A Companion & Guide*; J.R.R. Tolkien (ed. Wayne G. Hammond & Christina Scull), *Roverandom*. • SCHOLARSHIP (OTHER) Susan Cooper, *Dreams and Wishes: Essays on Writing for Children*; Michael Riley, *Oz and Beyond: The Fantasy World of L. Frank Baum*; Marina Warner, *No Go the Bogyman: Scaring, Lulling, and Making Mock*; Donna R. White, *A Century of Welsh Myth in Children's Literature*. [DB]

Outrageous Letters ... John Douglas of HarperCollins adds that Chris Priest's pen-name (A142) is an even worse-kept secret in the US: 'I can't resist adding the information that the John Luther Novak pseudonym for the novelization of *eXistenZ* appears nowhere on the US edition and the author's true name is on the cover for all to see.' • David Goldfarb scoffs at Simon R. Green's A142 report of "TeleThuggies" in DC comics: 'While the insidious TV program of the Kali cult is clearly a takeoff on "Teleubbies", the name does not stray so close to trademark violation—it's "Hugga-Tugga-Thuggues".' • Steve Holland on Dirk Bogarde's death in May: 'As far as I know, his only contribution to the field of sf was appearing in *The Mind Bender* (1963) which was a mad scientist thing.'

Small Press. *The Last Wizard with A Letter of Explanation* (12pp plus wraps) consists of Avram Davidson's famed short-short plus the letter in which he patiently explained the point of the story to a baffled editor at *Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine*. \$10 post free from Temporary Culture, PO Box 43072, Upper Montclair, NJ 07043-0072, USA.

C.o.a. *Black Petals Publications*, 708 S 15th, Manitowoc, WI 54220, USA (11 Jun). Leigh Edmonds & Valma Brown, 12 Raglan St North, Ballarat, Victoria 3350, Australia. Tim & Marcia Illingworth, Bell House, 14 Main St, Coveney, Ely, CB8 2DJ. Amanda Kear, 7 Greenbank Ave West,

Easton, Bristol, BS5 6EP. Fred Lerner, 81 Worcester Ave, White River Junction, Vermont 05001, USA: 'I haven't moved; they've just renumbered my street.' *Paragon* (Eastercon 2001) address correction: 379 Myrtle Rd, Sheffield, S2 3HQ. Andy Sawyer, 1 The Flaxyard, Woodfall Lane, Little Neston, Neston, CH64 4BT: 'I haven't moved ... the post office sorting code has changed.' *Talebones/Fairwood Press*, 5203 Quincy Ave SE, Auburn, WA 98092, USA. Cheryl Wilder, Flat 6, 17A Miro St, Trentham, New Zealand.

Drolleries. A *Washington Post* competition requested titles and blurbs for merged books, attracting some skiffy entries like the winning '*Fahrenheit 451 of the Vanities—An '80s yuppie is denied books. He does not object, or even notice.*' Additionally: '*2001: A Space Iliad—The Hal 9000 computer wages an insane 10-year war against the Greeks after falling victim to the Y2K bug.*' • '*Tarzan of the Grapes—The beleaguered Okies of the dust bowl are saved by a strong and brave savage who swings from grapevine to grapevine.*' • '*Rikki-Kon-Tiki-Tavi—Thor Heyerdahl recounts his attempt to prove Rudyard Kipling's theory that the mongoose first came to India on a raft from Polynesia.*' [CC/MD]

The Phantom Menace is, by all accounts, a movie. Most fans report it as visually stunning. *Joe Mayhew* for one: 'It was a billionaire Saturday morning kid show. Its plot was a herd of pandering clichés played out across some awesome electronic scenery and had the plausibility of a five-year-old's daydream. It was rather like a starlet: pretty but empty.' • *Lawrence Person* liked the subtle characterization: 'Darth Maul has a black robe, a black shirt, black pants, red eyes, a red and black face, a red light saber, and horns, but for some reason left his "I'M EVIL!" T-shirt at home.' • *Steve Green* quoted *Film Threat Weekly*: 'A couple from the Washington DC area got married while standing in line for *Star Wars*. The bride was dressed as Queen Amidala; the groom was dressed as Darth Maul. The priest said, "If anyone has any just cause for these two not to be wed, let him speak now or forever hold his light-saber in his holster." This is all 100% true.' (*Steve*: 'And 200% sad. Anyway, Simo and Hilary did it first last year.') • *Barbara Barrett* found the latest plagiarism rumour from [paranormal] researcher Frank Joseph, who says George Lucas may have been inspired to create *Star Wars* after remembering a past life on a sunken continent called Lemuria....'

The Dead Past. 'Songmaster' is my last novel to be marketed as science fiction.' (Orson Scott Card, letter to *SF Review*, 1980) [MP] • 32 Years Ago come September, that Patrick McGooan cult success *The Prisoner* was first aired on TV. Now, after many years of trading, Max Hora's *Prisoner* memorabilia shop in 'Number 6's flat' at Portmeirion has closed—another side-effect of the village management's recent hostility to series fans and their regular summer conventions. Sic transit. [DL]

Group Gropes. Reading meetings (9pm on) remain peripatetic: 7 Jun, Back of Beyond, King's Rd; 14 Jun, Ho Leaf, Southampton St.

Editorial. One item of rare old Langfordiana that a number of fans have asked for is that 1979 Victorian-UFO spoof *An Account of a Meeting with Denizens of Another World, 1871*. Surprise, surprise: A May clear-out of our loft cupboards disclosed a forgotten box of first editions. £12 or \$20 post free (surface) while stocks last; cheques to David Langford. An ideal Xmas or birthday present to give to Whitley Strieber! • What I've been writing lately: text and captions for *A Cosmic Cornucopia*, a new Paper Tiger collection of Josh Kirby's paintings scheduled for 7 Oct. Josh isn't usually considered a controversial artist, but life is different in rustic Shelvinger, Norfolk: 'I was almost drummed out of the village after an Anglia TV "Folio" programme on me. Villagers unaccustomed to scantily clad maidens slaying giants gave me an uneasy time for a while where urban sophisticates wouldn't have batted an eyelid.... Role-playing game books even attracted flak from the local vicar' Oh dear.

Thog's Masterclass. 'Terror quacked like a choking duck in Dirk's chest, and he couldn't get his voice to work.' (A.A. Attanasio, *Arc of the Dream*, 1986) [RB] • *Dept of Inadvertent Mooking*: 'Before, however, the moon had glided more than a soundless pace or two on her night journey, Myfanwy and her incomparable ass were safely out of sight ...' (Walter de la Mare, 'The Lovely Myfanwy', 1925) [PH] • 'Stripped of their ceremonial robes and wearing only leather shorts, the men's arm muscles bulged and flattened ...' (Jane Yolen, *A Sending of Dragons*, 1987) [PB] • 'Laser cannon erupted like acid-stomached giants, belching forth corrosive froth that even the alloy hulls could not withstand for any appreciable length of time.' (Dean R. Koontz, *Star Quest*, 1968) [GF]

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