



**ANSIBLE 17** (April 1981), the British sf/fannish newsletter which is the only logical successor to *Ansible 16*, comes once again from Dave Langford, 22 Northumberland Avenue, READING, Berkshire, RG2 7PW, UK. (Hot news may be phoned to 0734-863453.) Current sub rates: 6/£1 UK, 5/£1 Europe, 4/£1 elsewhere. No foreign cheques/notes or subs over £2, please. Credit given for nifty news or (this issue) response to polls; trades by infrequent arrangement only. This issue dedicated to kindly Keith Freeman's 5000th mailing label, coming up shortly; propitiate me swiftly should yours say SUB DUE or, worse, \*\*\*\*\*. Artwork above by Pete Lyon. Other artwork by Rob Hansen. Next issue: 4 June '81.

#### \* THE AWARD SEASON IS HERE AGAIN

Jim Barker (for it is he!) triumphed over the full-time pros at the recent Cartoonists' Club of Great Britain dinner, where he received a trophy for the best unpublished cartoon of 1981. Unfortunately his and Bob Shaw's strip for the *News of the World* fell through, though Jim once again lost his fannish virginity by getting paid for the sample material thanks to the efforts of his agent...

THE NEBULA AWARDS nominations (for work published in 1980) have been released, and for the second year running I must declare the Awards invalid owing to the illicit exclusion of voting members living in 22 Northumberland Avenue. Hell, if I didn't subscribe to *Loocus* (as well as paying vast SFWA dues) I wouldn't know who the nominees are: **NOVEL** *The Snow Queen* by Joan Vinge; *The Shadow of the Torturer* by Gene Wolfe; *Timescape* by Greg Benford; *Mockingbird* by Walter Tevis; *The Orphan* by Robert Stallman; *Beyond the Blue Event Horizon* by Frederik Pohl.

**NOVELLA** 'The Brave Little Toaster' by Tom Disch (F&SF); 'The Autopsy' by Michael Shea (F&SF); 'Unicorn Tapestry' by Suzy McKee Charnas (*New Dimensions*); 'There Beneath The Silky-Trees...' by Avram Davidson (*Other Worlds*); 'Lost Dorsai' by Gordon Dickson (*Densities*); 'Dangerous Games' by Marta Randall (F&SF).

**NOVELETTE** 'The Ugly Chickens' by Howard Waldrop (*Universe*); 'Strata' by Edward Bryant (F&SF); 'The Way Station' by Stephen King (F&SF); 'The Feast of St Janis' by Michael Swanwick (*New Dimensions*); 'Ginungagap' by Michael Swanwick (*Triquarterly*); 'Beatnik Bayou' by John Varley (*New Voices*).

**SHORT STORY** 'Secrets of the Heart' by Charles Grant (F&SF); 'A Sunday Visit with Great-Grandfather' by Craig Strete (*New Dimensions*); 'Window' by Bob Leman (F&SF); 'Grotto of the Dancing Deer' by Clifford Simak (*Analog*); 'The War Beneath the Tree' by Gene Wolfe (*Omni*).

**NEBULA NOTES** An extra title can be (and in the first three categories presumably was) slipped into the shortlist by a panel chaired by Terry Carr and including our very own Tom Shippey. Lovers of good SF will be interested to note the waning popularity of *Asimov's* and *Analog*; lovers of hype may note that although a blitz of free copies of Spinrad's *Songs from the Stars* failed to get it listed, Pocket Books had more luck with the simultaneously-distributed *New Dimensions 11*... three stories nominated!

THE BSFA AWARD nominations (for work first published in Britain in 1980) are also to hand, with some overlap—**NOVEL** *Timescape* by Greg Benford; *Transfigurations* by Michael Bishop; *Engine Summer* by John Crowley; *Beyond the Blue Event*

*Horizon* by Frederik Pohl; *Molly Zero* by Keith Roberts; *A World Between* by Norman Spinrad.

**SHORT** 'The Web of the Magi' by Richard Cowper (F&SF); 'Rautavaara's Chase' by Philip Dick (*Omni*); 'The Brave Little Toaster' by Tom Disch (F&SF); 'The Ink Imp' by R.M.Lamming (F&SF); 'The Lordly Ones' by Keith Roberts (F&SF); 'The World SF Convention of 2080' by Ian Watson (F&SF).

**MEDIA** *The Empire Strikes Back*, *Dr Who*, *The Flipside of Dominick Hide* (BBC TV), *The Martian Chronicles*, *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy 2nd Series* (BBC Radio 4).

**ARTIST** Brian Bolland, Carlos Ezquerro, Peter Goodfellow, Peter Jones, Chris Moore, Tim White.

**BSFA AWARD NOTES** Final voting at Yorcon; one wonders if the old principle of 'give an award to the GoH' will hold. (Note how Ian Watson's title feebly attempts to cash in on a great and famous book which modestly forbids me to mention.) The short-fiction list certainly shows you which mag is Joseph's—I mean the BSFA membership's—favourite... Incidentally, the BSFA shortlists were released as given, in alphabetical order (by author for novel and short): I cannot fathom the ordering of the Nebulas (by votes?).

THE CHECKPOINT/ANSIBLE POLL, infinitely more important than the above, is now open for fannish doings in the period (just after) Easter '80 to (just after) Easter '81. Forms attached where weight permits; if not, you can still send in up to 5 ranked nominations for best British fanzine (*Ansible* ineligible), fanwriter and fanartist, and up to three unranked nominations for single issue, article/column, fanzine cover and the free-for-all Worst Thing Award. Deadline 30 May 1981. Voting extends *Ansible* subs.

#### \* THE EXTREMELY NICE LETTER COLUMN

These (occasionally condensed) extracts are dedicated to the proposition that fandom is all one great big happy family. Like *Sawney Bean's*.

**RICHARD EVANS:** 'A quote in *Ansible* [15] caught my eye—the one accusing Peter Jones of ripping off American artists. I know the Americans are prone to chauvinism over SF art but this is ridiculous. Peter did a lot of jackets for *Futura* when I was there and I can't think of one that bore any relation at all to the American jacket. Of course he is influenced by other artists—just as Boris, for instance, must have looked at a few Frazetta covers in his time. But [Andy] Porter's accusations are crap—have a look at Peter's covers for Tanith Lee's *Birthgrave* and *Storm Lord*, or Larry Niven's *Protector* and *Neutron Star*.'

**AVEDON CAROL:** '...my friend Fritz's handy tip on how to tell a good Norman Spinrad book from a bad one. Fritz says that if it has one of his lousy cock-sucking scenes in it, it's gonna be a bad one. I must say, Norman does have an amazing facility for writing a bad cock-sucking scene.'

**IAN WATSON:** 'COSMIC NEWSFLASH! Did not W.B. Yeats remark: *The intellect of man is forced to choose/Perfection of the life, or of the work;/And if it choose the latter, must refuse/A heavenly mansion, raging in the dark.* I've had enough of raging in the economic dark brought on by the mad Tory monetarists. So in the May elections I'm standing as the official Labour Party candidate for Northamptonshire County Council, in the Helmdon division of this fair county—an area which compares to the other electoral divisions rather as Texas to any other state. I am also now Press Officer of the Towcester & District Labour Party.

"We shall overcome.

"It is, in fact, very unlikely that I will get in, as Helmdon is an impossible division, full of squires and fox-hunters. But I suspect that life will never be quite the same again.

"And let everyone be aware that the first public utterance by the hotch-potch of Social Democrats was in favour of retaining nuclear weapons."

*The more I mumble about Ansible being apolitical, the more this sort of thing creeps in. Abi Frost (see COA) asks for money (see flyer where weight permits) for suffering Poles (see Roz Kaveney last issue). And then there's the connexion between Tolkien and Italian neofascists...*

**PASCAL THOMAS:** "Of course it's all news to US fans, but it's a fact of life to Italian fans. Even more so than in France, *everything* is political in Italy... a left-wing fan sent me a photograph of the entrance to the infamous 'Campo Hobbit', a sort of holiday-cum-combat training camp used by neofascist groups." **GRAHAM ENGLAND:** "It's understandable that LOTR should be loved by neofascists. It describes an elitist society in which the elite is right to be there, & as they have a lifespan longer than those ruled, it's a bit difficult to displace them."

**MARTIN MORSE WOOSTER:** "I did sell that history of fandom... It will be called *Children of the Universe: the social history of science fiction, 1869-1980*, and should be published by Greenwood Press sometime in 1982."

**IAN WATSON AGAIN:** "Re Albacon accounts: Albacon owes me £15.00 for cancelled hotel reservations. They agreed to refund the money, as I cancelled in time—but they have never done so, despite repeated pleas to send the money. So, if they show a profit of £192.00, £15.00 of that belongs to me. Their financial behaviour is disgraceful."

*Which reminds that the Bob Shaw who used to chair a convention up Glasgow way has been complaining that 'Project Starcast' booked rooms and dealer's tables at the Glasgow 'Hithercon' last year, and to everyone's annoyance failed to turn up. This particular Bob Shaw, you will remember from last issue, is being sued by Duncan Lunan:*

**PAUL BARNETT (EDITORIAL):** "Jeez... now I understand why Duncan Lunan was so enraged with the fake Shaw. I had heard from Duncan about the proposed suit, and had assumed it was just one of those cases where irritation had bred over-reaction. Actually, there may be more to it than meets the eye:

"You see, last year Shaw made a fairly concerted effort to oust Duncan as ASTRA chairman—surprising, in view of his opinion that they were just a bunch of children and nitwits, that Shaw should wish to do so. I gather that his tactics were rather devious. Nevertheless, he signally failed in his enterprise, since most ASTRA members feel a natural, healthy revulsion towards him, and for general malpractice he was booted out of the society. Hell hath no fury like a Shaw spurned, etc. Naturally Duncan Lunan was rather upset by this attempted coup since, whether or not he is an able chairman of ASTRA (for obvious reasons, I simply don't know), he has manifestly put a lot of work into it. Moreover, he can't really be accused of having reduced its membership to 'half a dozen children', as Shaw claims—I hardly think the aforementioned six kids could have mounted the exhibition 'The High Frontier', which ASTRA put on a while back. So, all in all, I'm firmly on Duncan's side in this jolly little burst of repartee. Mind you, when it comes to Gavin Roberts..."

*I can't imagine why space-eating controversies which threaten to devour whole fanzines always start in Glasgow. Further proliferation will be Edited with a sharp knife.*

\* 3 ACROSS: NUNNERY'S CHARGED PARTICLES (11)

**DENVENTION II** (Worldcon 1981) has redeemed itself slightly by sending PRs 2 & 3 (while Harry Andruschak says he's sending 1 & 2—watch for spare Denvention PR2 in a TAFF auction later this year). Some people called Seaforths Travel have written saying they want to organize group travel from the UK to Worldcons: will report if anything comes of this. **WORLDCON 1983:** Avedon Carol insists the Baltimore bid is really triffic; Graham England rumours that "when I last heard Scandinavia hadn't got in its nominating papers & no-one knew why not. Should make the ballot shorter." We shall see. Rune Forsgren reports that the Scandinavian bid has inexplicably changed its address ("cannot figure out why I got the COA: haven't seen a word from them before") to Box 3054, 220 03 LUND, Sweden. Nowt from Australia.

**NOVACON 11** (Birmingham, 30 Oct to 1 Nov): the fabled PR1 is out at last. Royal Angus again; £10.50 per person dbl/twin, £13.50 sngl; £5.50 att £2.50 supp; *no conversion from supp to att membership at the con*; 49 Humber Tower, Francis St, Birmingham, B7 4JX. Chris Morgan informs me that this perfectionist PR was typed out thrice by Paul Oldroyd and at least once by Jean Frost.

**FANTASYCON:** the venue change mentioned in A16 is (Chris Morgan thinks) because the Grand Hotel in Birmingham makes a £500 charge for the use of its convention facilities, unless the con fills at least half the bedrooms, and Fantasycon is notoriously small...

**BECCON** (Essex Centre Hotel, Basildon, 31 July to 2 August): the committee of this one complains about lack of *Ansible* coverage, which merely proves (to everyone's surprise) that I'm not infallible... £5 att £2 supp, GoH Barry Bayley; 191 The Heights, Northolt, Middlesex.

**FUTURE UK EASTERCONS:** at the time of typing I know of no opposition to Channelcon in '82 (4 Fletcher Road, Chiswick, London W4 5AY), a strong-looking bid of fine fannish folk chaired by Eve Harvey. For '83 there seem to be two incipient bids, one bearing the fearful name of Albacon II and the other a southerly, nameless and at least partially limp-wristed affair. You will hear more of this. '84 remains a long way off in Eastercon terms, but not so long when it comes to Eurocon and that possible merger...

**EUROCON FLIPFLOPS AGAIN:** An exasperated John Brunner reports that the Hungarian venue has fallen through *again*—the Hungarian Writers' Union has withdrawn its support, apparently because Hungarian con boss Peter Kuczka (who started the trouble by announcing the con was off simply because he had to drop out through illness) has contacted the Union behind the backs of the forty-odd SF clubs who were planning the con, and persuaded said Union that the convention could not succeed without Kuczka in charge. Which, I suppose, takes Eurocon '82 back to Switzerland and long-suffering Pascal Ducommun. Aaaaaaaaaaargh.

**FILMCON:** "SF/fantasy horror film convention"; Grand Hotel, Birmingham, 27-29 Nov, £5 supp £13 att £14 walk-in; 75 Willows Crescent, Cannon Hill, Birmingham.

**HUGECONS:** Starcast rang to call Ken Mann a liar for saying they'd shifted to a smaller venue. Space-Ex, after a near lawsuit, have paid their debts to Unicon—the 7-month delay in payment being because of "loss of £700 staging a small event called Star One 80..." This rousing stuff lifted from Chris Hughes' *Fantasmagoria*: he gets all the Unicon scoops.

# Pseud's Corner

In his bag Tom Baker always carries a speech by Solzhenitsyn. Often there is sliced salami and Parma ham too.

DANIEL FARSON  
Sunday Telegraph Magazine

With almost no surface, but with infinite depth, *Other People* resembles a geometric conundrum devised by a paranoid mathematician. In an extraordinary way it conveys the actual contours and texture of the uneasy realm wrapped around us by that ambiguous conspiracy between the universe and our own psyche—everyday reality. Reason attempts to rationalise that reality for us, but like the polite fictions of the bourgeois novel it somehow fails to convince, whereas *Other People* has the authority of a waking nightmare.

J.G. BALLARD  
Teller

Discovered in PRIVATE EYE (13 March '81) by ace Ansible muckraker Michael Ashley. Hoho.



COA GRAHAM ENGLAND, 70 Woodfield Close, Ickenham, Uxbridge, Middlesex (with a probable move back to Germany later in the year) // ABIGAIL FROST, 69 Robin Hood Gardens, Cotton St, London, E.14 // ROB HANSEN, 9a Greenleaf Rd, East Ham, London, E6 1DX // DUNCAN LUNAN, c/o A.Graeme Adam, Solicitor, 158a High St, Irvine, Ayrshire, Scotland, KA12 8AN (which should make Bob (Scot) Shaw cringe)

**INFINITELY** R.A.LAFFERTY sends a letter (with ten signatures to be cut out and  
**IMPROBABLE** tipped into books by him for TAFF sale—other pros please copy) asking "are you one of those sinister persons without a face?" Dunno how he knew about my recent accident with a shaver which nearly... PSIFACON is a successor to Polycon (Hatfield Poly): GoH Rob Holdstock, £2 att to Mark Bunce, 2 Ryders Ave, Colney Heath, St Albans, Herts. Date 9 May (ends 2am next morning) ... **SMALL MAMMAL** from Martin Easterbrook calls *Foundation* 'the acadenic journal': I know what he means... PAMELA BOAL begs a plug for her *ABC of Home Hints* for disabled folk: £1.25 from D.Smaje, 2 Westfield Way, Wantage, Oxon... SUPERMAN II has been showing in various countries such as Germany and S Africa, where Nick Shears thought it "more like the comic come to life than the first film, and highly entertaining. I don't remember Lois going to bed with Superman in the days of DC"... MILLIONS OF BOOKS have been converted into toilet rolls and suchlike in the US, where a 1979 Supreme Court decision has effectively made it uneconomic for publishers to maintain backlists. Reporter Chris Priest adds that his US publishers are remaindering *The Perfect Lover*, and: "This move to turn books into toilet paper is another step along the way to cutting out the middleman altogether. A pioneer in the field was our Harlan, who while in London did one of his writing-in-a-shop-window stunts. Unfortunately for Harlan, the shop he was writing in was a remainder-store, a fact which most people felt was too delicate to point out to the hapless author. Haigh-ho"... ASIMOV'S & ANALOG have lost favour as markets with some US writers who've found that their not over-generous rates cover foreign editions of the magazines also, ie. you get paid once for sales in eight or more languages... BIRTHS etc: Eric Mayer and Kathy Malone have had a child, as have David V. Lewis and (actually he doesn't mention his wife's name, but the boy's called Ross). Linda Karrh & Greg Pickersgill were married on 14 March (the lady registrar being baffled by the roars of laughter which ensued when she asked Greg if he thought he'd make a good hubby); Linda Strickler and Graham James will be married ever so soon, as, probably, will Lisa Tuttle and Chris Priest... BENELUXCON (28-30 August, Rotterdam, GoHs Pohl, Vance and Wilhelm) costs f.35 (40 from 1 May) and is "easier to reach from London than (say) Glasgow" says Roelof Goudriaan. Info from Hans van der Zee, Sneeuwgaans 6, 3435 DK Nieuwegein, Netherlands... THE NUMBER OF THE BEAST (NEL hardback, world first edition, £6.95) has been sighted in Charing Cross Rd, remaindered at 50p... BELIEVE IT OR NOT section: Karl Edward Wagner is a psychiatrist. Ben Bova refused to allow quotation of his praise for the Tuttle/Martin *Windhaven* on the paperback, owing to a grudge he has against not the authors but Pocket Books, the publishers. Spider Robinson (ho ho) now gets invited to so many things as GoH that he now has a printed rejection slip for declining... (Pause for C.Priest story: when he was in the ops room at Noreascon he overheard a phone call to the effect of "I'm Spider Robinson—just arrived—hear you've got an exhibition of the history of SF—I've brought my John W Campbell award in case you'd like to exhibit that...") And it's rumoured that when first submitted, Donaldson's *The One Tree* (you know—sequel to *The Wounded Land*) was bounced by Lester Del Rey because it violated Del Rey house style by being written in the first person. Rumoured conversation: "Well, gee, Lester, I'll just take it somewhere else then." "You do that, Steve, and just out of spite I'll have all our copies of *The Wounded Land*

pulped, bestseller or not." We gather a compromise was reached... THE WEST MIDLANDS SF GROUP (to call it a Society is heresy) is—Jean Frost notwithstanding—peculiarly warm and friendly to newcomers, says ringleader Geoff Boswell... HAMLYN paperbacks, egregious as ever, have remaindered 20,000 copies of a romantic novel (at 5p each wholesale) while almost simultaneously the thing has been short-listed for a romantic fiction award. If it wins that's an awful lot of guaranteed sales, and they'll have to reprint, and the remaindering will be seen to have been a Mistake. Thus it is that Hamlyn are hoping one of their books does *not* win a moderately important award... (By the way, don't ask Hamlyn when their editions of *Destinies* mag are coming out. They may have paid a \$250,000 advance and guaranteed to publish 8/12 issues within 18 months, but they are highly embarrassed when people write and ask what's happened to *Destinies*.) GOLLANCZ have axed both the intro by Delany and the appendices by Disch from their edition of the collection *Fundamental Disch*... BRIAN ALDISS writes: "...the Aldiss family have moved house again. Our psychiatrist seems powerless to act. As usual I'm in debt to the tax man, as usual I've just come back from a trip to the USA, and as usual I'm about to have a novel published. The items involved are usually quoted as £20,000, Florida and *Helliconia*... Since resigning—more in sorrow than anger, it's true—from the boards of SFS and the JWC Memorial Award, I have been invited to become one of the four judges under Malcolm Bradbury for this year's mundane Booker Prize. There's a chance for you yet, Langford; slip your book into the NBL with a hefty cheque between pp 100 and 101 and you'll be up there with the Goldings and Murdochs... More fun is the suit brewing over Carl Sagan's \$2m novel, but I expect you know all about that." In fact I know very little, even after several phone calls, about the Sagan affair. The rumour, and it's no more than hearsay, is that S. delivered his fabled novel, and some sharp-eyed sf fan got a peep at the MS and said "Wot?" Hardly any of it by Sagan, goes the rumour; something he and a girlfriend dashed off while at college; girlfriend knew damn all about sf and stole large chunks from Heinlein; writes flying everywhere; sounds too boggling to be true, but more when I hear it... RIP: Christopher, son of Jennifer Bryce and John Foyster, died shortly after his premature birth on 22 January... YOU READ IT IN LOCUS: "Peter King and Stephen Straub are collaborating on a book"... DENNIS DOBSON LTD has been placed on the Society of Authors 'sick list' after complaints from authors who'd received no royalty statements nor replies to letters for 4 years... PUBLIC LENDING RIGHT: the first payments to long-suffering British authors are promised for Autumn 1982... 'SEVENTH VICTIM COLLEGE CRAZE' is the *Locus* headline on a stalk-&-pretend-to-kill game running among Florida U students. The police think it could lead to 'disaster', apparently because cops will be tempted to shoot suspiciously lurking students. Gerald Lawrence gave me lurid descriptions of a similar game running in Manchester years ago: UK police weren't bothered, being less tempted to pull guns... MERVYN PEAKE SOCIETY now £3/year: 5 Elm Park Gdns, Flat 36, London, SW10 9QQ... STOP PRESS! YORCON HAPPENS!

HAZEL'S LANGUAGE LESSONS #9: Sesuto

*malito* something which a person lets fall and which his cousin can pick up and keep if the owner does not say *ngaêlê*.

*ngaêlê* [not listed in dictionary]

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