

ANSIBLE

#22 (December 1981), from Dave Langford, 22 Northumberland Avenue, Reading, Berks, RG2 7PW, UK. Cartoon by D. West, mailing labels by Keith Freeman—if your label says SUB DUE the computer wants money, while if it says **** you have become an unperson sustained by (infrequent) editorial whim alone. Alas, printing and paper costs mean it's time for another subscription increase: rates are now 5 issues for £1 in the UK and 4 for £1 everywhere else (I spell this out because certain Diplomacy fans cannot decipher the formula 5/£1). Sterling cheques, pound notes or International Money Orders preferred, to the value of not more than £2... Complaints and warmish news may be telephoned to (0734) 863453; ANSIBLE 23 will probably appear in early February. Merry Christmas, etc.

*** SKIFFY MISCELLANY (YOU READ IT HERE LAST!) ***

GENE WOLFE, emerging from the savage hurly-burly of an editorial conference with Dave Hartwell of Pocket Books, has dazedly announced that his 'Book of the New Sun' tetralogy will be sprouting a fifth book (delivery Autumn 1982), to be titled *The Urth of the New Sun*... SIR FRED HOYLE is delivering the 3rd *Omni* lecture (Royal Institution, 12-1-82, tickets free from Andie Burland) on 'Evolution from Space'—for refutations of this rather silly theory, see *New Scientist*, *passim*... ANDIE BURLAND herself gets a whole page in the current *Gay News* for her full-time David Bowie look—well, how many of the Darth Vaderes at cons wear the same costumes back in their Civil Service jobs?... ROZ KAVENEY, not content with being sneered at in *Private Eye* (as 'Ros Caveney') has been working on a *Time Out* article which rips the lid off conventions: thus the fannish infiltration of everywhere continues. Having been asked to insert more quotations from these funny fans, Roz has been furiously phoning people with requests to say something witty and profound... CARL SAGAN's triffic though unwritten novel *Contact*—see almost any recent *Ansible* for rude comments—did well at the Frankfurt Book Fair, selling French (\$55,000), Spanish (\$100,000), Japanese (\$122,000) and German (\$100,000) rights. Surely this refutes rumours that the synopsis is such that publishers Simon & Schuster dare not show it to anyone? Actually, no: all these sales (reports Maxim Jakubowski) were made on the basis of a 'screen treatment' only... BRIAN ALDISS declines to comment further on the Booker Prize, of which he was a judge: "Trouble enough is what I think I've been in... [but] nobody could say it hasn't been fun of a kind, and they got what they asked for by inviting an sf buff in on the act. You probably saw Hermione Lee's long malevolent piece in the *TLS* last week, and my pleasant, even angelic, and Olympian response this week. [Dated 7-11-81] I'm afraid that some of these academic types want to keep the novel to themselves—which must not be allowed... Note that although old pals like Ballard, Moorcock and Priest didn't get into the finals, there was a distinct science-fictional (or 'metaphorical-structural', as we euphemistically say in Booker circles) aura to half the novels in the shortlist. Like: Lessing's *The Sirian Experiments* is definitely galactic empire stuff, if not a patch on Doc Smith; Thomas's *The White Hotel* opens with a poem, integral to the novel, which was published in *New Worlds* in its palmier days; and even the winner, Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*, is about Wyndhamesque telepathic kids..." GARRY KILWORTH plans to become a real full-time writer when he achieves redundancy next June: welcome to the poorhouse, Garry... MAXIM JAKUBOWSKI is still having fun with Virgin Books, this time with his and Malcolm Edwards's *Book of SF Lists*: "...sold to Berkley in the USA (for quite a sum, SF-wise) and Granada here. We're soon to deliver the book, in fact. My relationship with Virgin not having improved after my departure, my successor there—a guy called Devereux appointed barely 48 hours after I'd left, the fact he was Richard Branson's sister's boyfriend having of course nothing to do with it—heard about the project and suggested to my London agent that Virgin might be interested in the book. Highly suspicious of this, we declined to submit the outline..."

EXACTLY WHAT DOES HE MEAN BY 'SCIENCE FICTION'S COLLECTIVE UNCONSCIOUS'?

THE WHOLE AUDIENCE, BY THIS TIME



In September, Devereux informs me that he will no longer be interested in the book (never submitted to him!) in view of the legal battle between Virgin and myself. Malcolm and I then find out in October that Mike Ashley, who was interviewing Devereux on his publishing plans (nil for SF) for *Fantasy Newsletter*, mentions an old project of his in passing and is instantly commissioned by Devereux to do the book on the condition he modifies it and changes the title to... guess what... *The SF Book of Lists*! Another great example of the Virgin ethics... DAVID PRINGLE has started publishing a newsletter devoted entirely to J.G. Ballard, titled *News from the Sun*: "Well, if there's a Jackie Lichtenberg Appreciation Society, why not have something devoted to Jimmy?" Rush two 14p stamps to David at The Terminal Beach, 21 The Village St, Leeds, LS4 2PR... STEVE GALLAGHER sends lots of data about novels by Steve Gallagher, plus the news that Bob Shaw is the subject of a forthcoming programme in Granada's *Celebration* arts lots (northwest TV only)—including a 10-minute film adaptation of a Shaw story with additional illustrations (?) by 'Adam & the Ants' artperson Brian Talbot. Also: "Kiddies' corner: *Dr Who* is being moved from its Saturday slot (probably with as much howling and gnashing of teeth as would greet a shifting of the summer solstice) and is to go out twice-weekly in the hole that *Triangle* used to occupy. The really good news is that the obnoxious Adric is to be killed off." *Triangle*? Adric? Langford is out of his depth here... COLIN GREENLAND (who was hurt by my suggestion that he might publish something in *Interzone*) mentions the imminence of his book on *New Worlds*—*The Entropy Exhibition*—and has had another plug in the *Sunday Times*: "Dr Greenland has plans to start a quarterly of sci-fi *Interzone* which will be the first such in the country"... *EXTR0* magazine may well be dead, again, after the discovery by financial backer Paul Campbell that although whiz-kid Robert Allen had reported vast distribution agreements with Seymour Press (distributors), Smiths and Menzies, the existence of such agreements appeared to be unknown to Seymour, or Smiths, or Menzies... R.I. BARYCZ reports: "They were recruiting extras for *Revenge of the Jedi* last week. £40 a day and all the roast bantha you could eat. Provided of course you were under 4'6". Jawaana be a Jawa? The resources of *Equity* were soon exhausted, so they went round to the Job Centre in Boreham Wood and had a card put in the window and on the boards. There were no replies so they shifted them down a foot or two lower and had over 100 enquiries by the next morning. Well, there is a recession on. Cough. Rumours involving an unfortunate accident with chain-saw and anaesthetized knees at this address should be denied." DAVE GARNETT gloats: "I've had a story in *The Best of Mayfair*. Fantasy rather than hard, shall we say, sf. Always knew I'd make it to a 'Best' sooner or later..." Encouraged by *Ansible*, Dave has "decided to become a Fan." Our loss is literature's gain.

*** CYMRUCON 1981: CARDIFF, 14-15 NOV: BRIAN STABLEFORD ***

When your editor did me the honour of asking me to compile this report I naturally leapt at the chance to perform some small service in recognition of his generosity in sending me free copies of *Ansible*¹. Only later did it occur to me that I am not well-qualified to write con reports: I tend to go to bed at midnight, rarely have anything to drink, never attend room parties and spend most of my time either listening to programme items or standing in the nearest betting-shop. For these reasons I tend to miss all the exciting events which such pieces as this are supposed to immortalize for posterity, but I am sure there is no poss-

ibility that I will start a trend.

The hotel had the disadvantage of being sited next to the railway², and was not what one might call well-appointed. It used to have the compensating advantage of being within walking distance of the Hayes Bookshop, one of the nation's few four-star second-hand bookshops, but the shop (and, for that matter, the Hayes) was demolished nine months before the con. Such is life. The number of people registered for the con was said to be 250 (many others were turned away, they say) but I never saw more than 30 in any one place at any one time. All programme items were scheduled to last 40 minutes, requiring ingenious timekeeping on the part of the 20 or so people who attended the more popular of them. Rumour has it that there was a continuous film-show, but the only evidence of this which became available to me was the sound-track of *Star Wars* emanating from behind a sinister curtain marking the boundary of the hotel restaurant. Centrepiece of the whole affair was the launching of the anthology *Pictures at an Exhibition*, edited by star guest Ian Watson and published by the indefatigable Lionel Fanthorpe under one of his many pseudonyms ('Grey-stoke Mobray')³. Lionel's attempt to drink, carouse and organize his way through the whole 48-hour marathon was confounded by an unexpected failure of metabolic endurance about Sunday mid-day. (No wonder he can't write books the way he used to.) The anthology is remarkable for its italic-less typography, its eccentric page numbering and its lack of a title-page. (Well, you can't remember *everything*, can you?)

Experienced con-goers like Martin Hoare and Roger Peyton (I was going to say 'hardened' but thought better of it) declared the affair to be a colossal success, the former placing it in his top five cons and the latter feeling that it had recaptured the spirit of 60s Eastercons⁴. Lionel Fanthorpe was so carried away by it all that he booked the hotel for a re-run next year. A special award for bravery should go to Patricia Fanthorpe, who at one stage overheard her husband described as 'a man of few words' and neither fainted nor broke down into hysterical laughter.

The undoubted highlight of the weekend for me was Henry Kissinger winning the Mackeson Gold Cup at 5-1, but what can you expect from a man who doesn't play Space Invaders?

(Brian Stableford)

EDITORIAL FOOTNOTE: (1) Occasionally. (2) Earplugs were available at 57p in a nearby chemist's. Hazel bought some. (3) Anthology also includes Stableford, Fanthorpe, Langford, all that riffraff. Buy it instantly. (4) I suppose Chairman Naveed Khan gets a bit of the credit for all this, even if slide-projectors disintegrate in his rough hands.

*** EUROSNIFFETS: TOM ÖLANDER & AHRVID ENGHOLM ***

An English-language edition of a Polish fanzine, Richard P. Jasiński's *Actual International SF-Magazine*, may be had for 50p/\$1 from Tom (Box 3, SF-00251 Helsinki 25, Finland). This is of special interest to 'Dupers for Poland': Jasiński has to have his fanzine printed in Finland since he's been expelled from the Communist-controlled Polish national SF club (OKMFISF) as a 'dangerous agent of the West'—this because he joined the American N3F. The person responsible is active Polish 'fan' Andrzej Pruszyński, who according to Tom was also instrumental in booting other fans and SF writers not only from the clubs but from their jobs—on similar grounds. Pruszyński apparently travels to many European cons at government expense; he was voted equal Best European Fan (with good old Waldemar Kummig) at the 1980 Eurocon in Stresa. An independent Polish SF Club has been formed as an alternative to OKMFISF: SPAN, 00-375 Warsaw, Al. Jerozolimskie 2, Poland.

*** NOVACON 11, 30 OCT - 2 NOV 1981: MALCOLM EDWARDS ***

Novacon 11 attracted the usual collection of drunken reprobrates to the Royal Angus Hotel for the weekend. Attendance was reportedly a little down on last year's high of 495, but the 450-odd fans present managed to keep up the standards expected of the British: it was reported on Monday that 67 11-gallon beer kegs had been drunk during the convention, which works out at over 12 pints per attendee. It is statistics like this that make one proud to be a fan.

The first evening was overshadowed by the absence of Messrs Chris Evans, Rob Holdstock and Andrew Stephenson,

who had failed to arrive on schedule in the car of the last named. This caused much speculation to the effect that they might all have been mangled in a motorway pile-up, thus depriving Britain of between 0 and 3 (depending on your predilections) of its most promising SF writers. The explanation turned out to be a more mundane breakdown, but all the sombre prediction that it was statistically long past time someone had such a smash going to or from a convention was proved right all too soon the following morning when the car bringing Graham, Linda and Naomi James, Kate Jeary and Helen Starkey to the convention performed a high-speed reverse triple somersault on the M1 in the vicinity of Barnsley. Luckily only (only!) various broken bones, cuts and bruises resulted¹.

GoH Bob Shaw was his usual entertaining self; his speech was mostly a succession of well-delivered and funny anecdotes. Other programme highlights (*trans*: the bits I saw) included the humiliation of the Surrey Limpwrist at the hands of the Amazing Channelcon (and Bonzo) side comprising Jim Barker, Paul Kincaid and Modesty Forbids. The prize of a bottle of scotch each proved an unexpected bonus to the latter when his team-mates turned out not to touch the stuff. He accepted with equanimity the burden of carrying the lot home. On other occasions² the con hall seemed to be filled with D.Langford droning on as usual³.

The disco was the usual mix of fun and frustration. The former was personified by Harry 'Captain Trips' Bell, who turned before our eyes into an inert grinning monolith, chanting "Fun...fun...fun." The latter was brought about by the usual cretinous deejay who responded to a request for more dance music with 'The Birdie Song'...

Convention high- (and low-) lights: G.R.R.Martin *finally* discovered a video game he could beat people on, only to have C.Priest wreck it in spectacular style... C.Atkinson, having been given a cooked breakfast she hadn't ordered at the same time as her cereal one morning, ventured mildly that it wasn't what she wanted and anyway would be congealed by the time she'd finished her cornflakes. The waitress proceeded to abuse her for being impossibly awkward and told her to eat what she'd been given and be grateful... Everyone and their sibling was giving out fanzines, surely a hopeful sign after the long drought... M.Edwards and C.Evans spent much time in scholarly discussion of such fascinating topics as the different colours and textures of snot... R.Kaveney raced around looking repertorial, and ace photographer Joyce Agee—on assignment with R.K.—narrowly escaped a fate worse than death when unsuspectingly lured to the room of J.H.Finder. Her descriptions of what ensued cannot defile a family fanzine... G.Pickersgill and P.Palmer were observed in intense conversation during which G.P. was waving a Swiss army knife under P.P.'s nose. Ex-punk Palmer professed himself delighted to find such dramatic real life in boring old fandom, but shortly afterwards went and changed his silly multi-zippered T-shirt anyway... C.Atkinson, on a mission to Meet New People, went and struck up a conversation with one respected looking gent, who was most affronted; it turned out that he was the only person at the hotel not with the convention, and took her for the resident hooker... R.Holdstock said and did nothing, absolutely nothing, worth mentioning⁴... C.Hughes looked as tall as ever... Nova Awards went to triffic fan-writer C.Atkinson, fanartist P.Lyon and boring old fanzine *Tappen*⁵... Other famous attendees about whom I have no anecdotes included J.Brunner and H.Harrison.

Usual thanks to committee P.Oldroyd, S.&H. Eling, J. Nicholas, P.Probert. Next year's Novacon to be chaired—just for once—by R.Peyton. Change of venue mooted, as usual.

(M.Edwards)

EDITORIAL ADDENDA: (1) I gather that Naomi was unhurt, Kate merely bruised; Graham and Linda are recovering from more serious damage at home, and Helen S. is still confined to bed as of last report. Grim news is that police found herbal substances in the wreckage and intend to make themselves unpleasant. (2) Once. (3) Believed to be a subtle reprisal for DRL's failure to dwell unduly on Edwards/Atkinson victories in his Novaconrep for TAPPEN. (4) But see coming Novaconrep in TAPPEN. (5) As usual Nova runners-up were leaked: Hansen 2nd and Barker 3rd as fanartist, Evans (C) and Langford as fanwriter, SECOND-HAND WAVE and ANSIBLE as fanzine. But the winners did win decisively. (DRL)

COA MARGARET AUSTIN, 49 Conisborough, Toothill, Swindon, SN5 8ES / R.I.
BARYCZ, 30 Millmark Grove, London, SE.14 / MIKE DICKINSON & JACKIE GRE-
SHAM, 11 Montpelier, Cliff Rd, Leeds, LS6 2EX / AHRVID ERICHLIN, Maskinistgatan
9 ö.b., S-117 47 Stockholm, Sweden / KEN MANN, 87 Sillians Rd, Dundee, Scot-
land, DD3 9LA (temporary, pending a move to the Netherlands).

CONS Announcement from the Britain in '84 Worldcon Bidding Committee: "When
we formulated our contingency bid for the 1984 Worldcon we were nat-
urally unaware that similar ideas were being mooted in Melbourne, and the ann-
ouncement of Melbourne in '85 has put us in a quandary. After much deliberat-
ion we have decided to withdraw, and would urge all our supporters to vote in-
stead for Australia in '85... and Britain in —? Meanwhile, many thanks to all
the people who wrote to express support for our bid." ...CHANNELCON (Eastercon
'82) has issued a second PR and hotel booking form. Chairman Eve Harvey also
sends an ever so formal letter explaining that last issue's reference to Chann-
elcon's being offered money by Yorcon was incorrect... EUROCON 82 is finalized
at last: 10-15 Aug 82 at La Chaux-de-Fonds, Switzerland. Membership currently
30 Swiss Fr to Pascal Ducommun, Cheminots 23, CH-2300 La Chaux-de-Fonds, Swit-
zerland. Attending membership rises to SwFr 50 in January; supporting SwFr 15.
Join and vote for a British EUROCON 84, still being organized by John Brunner
(Square House, Palmer St, South Petherton, Somerset, TA13 5DE) with the Brighton
Metropole (again!) as the planned hotel... BECCON: no repeat in 1982, but a
follow-up is planed for 83—191 The Heights, Northolt, Middlesex, UB5 4BU...
RA COW will be Edinburgh's first: 4-6 Feb 83, GoH Harry Harrison FGoH Pete Lyon,
£3.50 supp £7 att to 77 Baron's Ct Terrace, Edinburgh, EH8 7EN... 'HERMAN', the
Scandinavia-in-83 Worldcon bidding committee, will be running a national con-
vention instead, probably in Lund (south Sweden)... SPACE-EX 1984, planned huge-
con, persists despite the denunciations of such as R.Peyton and K.Slater: a
second newsletter is to hand, looking like what the Astral League might produce
if loaned a nice typewriter. No word from 'Project Starcast' (82?). Small mercies...

INFINITELY RIP: Andy Ellsmore (London fan, congoer 75-79, runner of Compendium
IMPROBABLE Books' sf section, *Other Times* editor), murdered by stabbing at his
home on 21 Nov. Also Greg Birchall (Newcastle fan 75-78), following
a motorcycle accident... BIRTHS: as was not recorded last issue, Rochelle and Alan
Dorey are scheduled to become ancestors around May 82... AND: December 11 sees the
marriage of Martin 'Harkonnen' Hoare and Katie 'I was thrown out of Oxford, you
know' McAulay... FILMCON: all those membership refunds are now said to have been
made (if only to refute the insinuations of Steve Green)... BRIAN HAMPTON covered
himself with glory in September by designing the winning vehicle in a distance
trial of amateur-built battery-powered deathwagons... GUFF is the newest of fan
funds, and is intended to transport indigent Canadian fans to, actually, Canada...
BARKEN TO BOSTON FUND: remember that? Our Jim has just received a timely \$75 to
help get him to Noreascon 1980 (courtesy of Bruce Pelz); overwhelmed by the hon-
our, he's splitting the cash between GUFF and the ever-unpopular TAFF. Speaking
of which, Stu Shiffman has sent copies of *Sweetmeats*, a collection of fanwriting
by huge name US fan Sandra Miesel: 75p-for-TAFF from me while stocks last. Don't
forget to send in your vote for Rog Peyton, Kev Smith or Holdover Funds (who I
can reveal is lagging far behind)... WORLD SF: Gerald Bishop was bitterly hurt
when in March I printed his request that no subscription cheques be sent and
referred to World SF as 'struggling'. This should have read 'struggling to open
a sterling bank account': one has now been opened and everyone should send their
£5 subscriptions instantly, to 2 Cowper Rd, Cambridge, CB1 3SN. New members are

invited from the ranks of authors, editors, publishers, filmmakers, translators, artists and even critics professionally involved with sf. The next World SF meeting will be at the 3-day Ars Electronica/Austrian TV symposium: Linz, Austria, Sept 82... L. RON HUBBARD's thrilling sf novel *Man, The Endangered Species* is being inspected by George Hay: apparently this snappily-titled tome runs to 20,000 pages... MORE CONS: NOVACON 12 is in the Royal Angus (Birmingham) still—5-7 Nov 82, GoH Harry Harrison; £6 att to c/o Andromeda Book Co (shortly to move but still, I think, at 57 Summer Row, Birmingham, B3 1JJ). LEXICON is another new one: Wigston Stage Hotel, Leicester, 28-31 May 1982, GoH Bob Shaw, £8 att to 43 Station Rd, Kirby Muxloe, Leicester LE9 9EL. Lexicon is denounced in the Brum Group newsletter as 'a big rip-off' (though if you figure Novacon at 2½ days and Lexicon at 4 days the latter is better value for money—why *does* Novacon cost barely less than Eastercons these days?): certainly one hopes it's offering a Lot for that price... THE METRIC TUN is a secret alternative fan meeting held in the 'Doggets Coat & Badge' (it says here), S end of Blackfriars bridge, 8pm on the 3rd Wednesday each month—which reminds me that the exiguous Reading meets continue in the Osborne Arms, 8pm on the 3rd Thursday... FANTOME PRESS (720 N Park Ave, Warren, OH 44483, USA) send a catalogue of such joys as '16 scratchboard portraits of mystery authors—\$4.95' (the reproduced art looks dreadful) and single sonnets by such as Poe in tarted-up editions at similar rates. One can imagine what the Brum Group newsletter would say, and so would I... SWEDEN: the sf mag *Jules Verne Magasinet* recently (August) featured a 16-page fandom section (ed. Andersson/Engholm) which is a fanzine-within-a-prozine. (Inspired by this, James Manning is looking for someone to edit a professional supplement to go in *Ad Astra*.) Lucasfilm threaten to sue Swede Jonan Söderblad for publishing 'a pornographic *Star Wars* story' (it was shown them beforehand but they failed to comment). And following certain fabrications by an ex-fan, several Swedish papers have been running stories about Nazi infiltration in local fanclubs. No wonder Swedish fans complain about encirclement... EXTRO AGAIN: a stop-press letter announces that the problems are entirely the fault of lying distributors, that no announcement about the mag should be made yet (oh damn: ignore those bits, all of you) and that Something May Yet Turn Up... WORLD FANTASY AWARDS: life achievement C.L. Moore, novel *Shadow of the Torturer*, short 'The Ugly Chickens'/Waldrop, anthology *Dark Forces*. 1982 World Fantasy Con to be held in New Haven, Connecticut... EASTERCON 83: still two bids going strong, Metrocon (which *Ansible* supports, surprise surprise) with 80-odd presupporting members, and Albacon II (no further data)... RIP: G. Ken Chapman (British SF/antiquarian bookdealer), died Oct 9 after a stroke which earlier forced him to close down his business... UNMITIGATED FILTH! Why, at Novacon 11, did John and Eve Harvey sleep in separate single beds while a double bed went to young couple Geoff Rippington and John Pairey? Further revelations will probably not appear in *Ansible* 23. Why was Rob Holdstock barred from *his* Novacon room? Aha.

HAZEL'S LANGUAGE LESSONS

Number Fourteen: Dyrbal

[for room parties]

gulgiṛigulgiṛi lots of prettily painted men

bananangaynangay with absolutely no water at all

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***** 10
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