

# Ansible



## Ansible® 353 December 2016

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 or turboaccumulator phase detractors.

**Editorial.** The Ansible Editions dealer table at Novacon 46 was surprisingly successful. With celebrity author Rob Hansen on hand to ensure that no copy of his *Then* could escape unsigned, we sold our entire convention stock. Thank you, fandom. • The latest AE release is the first ever ebook of Yvonne Rousseau's *The Murders at Hanging Rock*, a tour de force of tongue-in-cheek criticism that offers four mutually contradictory explanations (in fantasy, sf and detective-fiction terms) of what really happened in *Picnic at Hanging Rock*, plus an essay on the suppressed final chapter of *Picnic* that was later published and proved eerily similar to some of Yvonne's theories. By special request of the author this expanded edition has not been retitled *The Picnic Perplex*. Its official web page lurks enigmatically at [ae.ansible.uk/?t=murders](http://ae.ansible.uk/?t=murders). • Finally, the traditional Merry Xmas and Happy New Year to all readers!

### The Story of the Last Trump

**Forrest J Ackerman** was posthumously honoured in Los Angeles on 17 November by the naming and signposting of the corner of Franklin and Vermont Avenues—not far from his late-life home in Russell Avenue—as Forrest J. Ackerman Square. ([www.lfia.org](http://www.lfia.org)) [PDF] The street sign's uncanonical full stop after the J could yet be corrected.

**J.G. Ballard's** former home in Shepperton is on the market at £475,000, with the man himself cited as a selling point: 'The famous writer J.G. Ballard once lived at this property between 1952 and 2009.' Apparently 1952 is wrong—JGB didn't buy the house until late 1959.

**John Betancourt** announced: 'I'm now managing the estate of author John W. Campbell, Jr., former editor of *Astounding Stories/Analog*, author of "Who Goes There?" [...] I'm going to be writing a sequel.' (Wildside Press mailing, 23 November)

**Greg Egan** may have no photograph online, but the world's hugest search engine remains in denial about such deviancy: 'After fighting off stiff competition from Microsoft and Apple, Google has won my "Out of Their Depth on the Internet" Award for 2016, for confidently declaring that no less than six different people (including Vernor Vinge) and two fictional characters are "Australian SF writer Greg Egan". I'm so looking forward to having these sophisticated algorithms ever more widely empowered to decide which news sources are reliable and which are fake.' See [www.gregegan.net/ESSAYS/GOOGLE/Google.html](http://www.gregegan.net/ESSAYS/GOOGLE/Google.html) for more.

**Carrie Fisher** reveals all too much about what it was like to kiss Harrison Ford while making *Star Wars*: 'reading another person's face with your mouth with dedicated eagerness, swimming with your lips between a particular person's nose and chin, gently digging for jewels using your tongue as a makeshift shovel ... fishing face-to-face—like grouper, but without the water, the scales, and that awful fishy smell. But otherwise ...' (*The Princess Diarist*, 2016) [MMW] Otherwise?

**Bella Pagan** Tor been promoted to the lofty glory of editorial director at Pan Macmillan Fiction. (*The Bookseller*, 15 November)

**Jane Yolen** brags again: 'Closing in on 365 books. When that happens I am making bumper stickers: Read a Book a Day by Jane Yolen for a year! Of course if it's leap year, all bets are off!' (7 November) SFWA was quick to respond, and on 29 November named Jane as their next Damon Knight Grand Master—official presentation in May 2017.

### Contrefort

2 Dec • **British Fantasy Society Xmas Social**, The Counting House, 50 Cornhill, London, EC3V 3PD. 7pm-late. Free; all welcome.

3 Dec • **Dragonmeet** (gaming), Novotel London West, Hammer-smith. 10am-midnight. Tickets £10 (concessions £6); £12 at door; group discounts. Booking at [www.dragonmeet.co.uk](http://www.dragonmeet.co.uk).

3 Dec • **Yulemoot** (Tolkien Society), Old Cententplebs, Birmingham. All welcome. See [www.tolkienociety.org/events/yulemoot-2016/](http://www.tolkienociety.org/events/yulemoot-2016/).

15 Dec • **London Xmas Meeting**, The Bishop's Finger, 9-10 West Smithfield. Evening; all welcome. See [news.ansible.uk/london.html](http://news.ansible.uk/london.html).

25 Jan 2017 • **Future Histories and Forecasting**, British Inter-planetary Society, 27/29 South Lambeth Road, London, SW8 1SZ. 10am-4:30pm. £55; BIS members £45; students £25. Book at [\[space.com/2016/09/07/17764/future-histories-and-forecasting\]\(http://space.com/2016/09/07/17764/future-histories-and-forecasting\).](http://www.bis-</a></p></div><div data-bbox=)

3-5 Feb 2017 • **Quoi de Neuf** (film), Best Western Hotel, Marks Tey, Colchester. *Now £38 reg/£27 unwaged*; under-18s £1/year of age; under-5s free. Cheques to UK Filk Convention, 20 Glynbridge Gardens, Cheltenham, GL51 0BZ. See [www.contabile.org.uk/quoideneuf](http://www.contabile.org.uk/quoideneuf).

4 Feb 2017 • **Birmingham Horror Con**, Edgbaston Stadium, Birmingham. 9am £15, 10am £10; other rates, see [www.horrorfan.co.uk](http://www.horrorfan.co.uk).

18 Feb 2017 • **Picocon**, Beit Quadrangle, South Kensington Campus, Imperial College, London. GoH Paul McAuley, Jaime Fenn, Al Robertson, Justina Robson. £12 reg; £10 concessions; £8 ICSF members; past GoHs free. See [www.union.ic.ac.uk/scc/icsf/picocon/](http://www.union.ic.ac.uk/scc/icsf/picocon/).

29 Apr 2017 • **Supernova** (sf film festival), Odeon Printworks, Manchester. See [grimmfest.com/grimmupnorth/supernova/](http://grimmfest.com/grimmupnorth/supernova/).

16-18 Jun 2017 • **U-Con** (Eurocon), Fritz-Henssler-Haus, Dortmund, Germany. €40 reg, rising again on 16 April 2017. For online registration see [www.dortmund-in-2017.com](http://www.dortmund-in-2017.com).

19 Aug 2017 • **Worcester Comic Con**, Worcester Arena. Tickets £10 from 11am, £15 from 10am. See [www.worcester-comiccon.com](http://www.worcester-comiccon.com).

31 Aug - 3 Sep 2017 • **LeakyCon** (Harry Potter), Dublin, Ireland. Venue and registration details awaited at [www.leakycon.com](http://www.leakycon.com).

6-9 Oct 2017 • **Irish Discworld Convention**, Cork International Hotel, Cork Airport, Ireland. With the usual guests. €50 reg; €40 concessions; accompanied under-13s €1. See [idwcon.org](http://idwcon.org).

28 Oct 2017 • **BristolCon**, Hilton Doubletree Hotel, Bristol. £20 reg/£15 concessions; £25/£20 from 1 June; £30/£25 at the door. Cheques to Flat 11, Beaufort Ct Flats, 1 Beaufort St (off Stapleton Rd), Easton, Bristol, BS5 0SQ. No PayPal as yet. See [www.bristolcon.org](http://www.bristolcon.org).

10-12 Nov 2017 • **Novacon 47**, Park Inn, Nottingham. GoH Adrian Tchaikovsky. £48 reg, rising to £50 after Easter 2017; under-17s £12; under-13s free. Contact 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ. PayPal registration now accepted at [www.novacon.org.uk](http://www.novacon.org.uk).

19-22 Jul 2018 • **Nemo 2018** (Eurocon), Amiens, France. €35 reg until U-Con (see above); €40 to end 2017; early-2018 rate unclear, TBA?; €50 at the door. See [eurocon2018.yolasite.com](http://eurocon2018.yolasite.com).

**Rumblings. Satellite 2018 Early Warning:** the sixth Satellite convention will be held in Glasgow on 25-27 May 2018. Further details TBA. • **Eurocon 2019:** Titancon in Belfast is bidding for the weekend of 22-26 Aug 2019, a week after the hoped Dublin Worldcon—a bid that's still unopposed. • **Worldcon 2023.** The French bid has announced Nice as its venue: see [worldconinfrance.org/?lng=en](http://worldconinfrance.org/?lng=en). It is reported that a rival 2023 bid from New Orleans will be announced very soon.

### Infinitely Improbable

**As Others See Us.** 'Science fiction tells us that some day, entire meals will be available in a single pill. That doesn't sound very fun to us. What does sound like fun is an entire meal in a potato chip.' In this radio ad, Trader Joe's claims to have condensed Thanksgiving dinner into a turkey-and-stuffing flavoured potato chip. [LM] A whole packet may have the explosive effect of the pill equivalent to 13 Christmas dinners in Stephen Leacock's 'The New Food' (in *Literary Lapses*, 1910).

**Awards. European SF Society Grand Master:** Herbert W. Franke. **European SF Society Hall of Fame:** AUTHOR Tom Crosshill. ARTIST Stephan Martinière. **MAGAZINE** *Bifrost* (France). **PUBLISHER** Nova—Ediciones B (Spain). **PROMOTER** (three-way tie) James Bacon (Ireland); Roberto Quaglia (Italy); Organizers of Archipelacon (Finland & Sweden). **TRANSLATOR** Andrew Bromfield (UK). Further ESPS 'Dedication' and 'Encouragement' awards at [esfs.info/2016/11/06/esfs-awards-2016/](http://esfs.info/2016/11/06/esfs-awards-2016/). • **US National Book Award**, fiction category: Colson Whitehead, *The Underground Railroad*.

**Paging Mr Malaprop.** '[His] eyes popped extraneously from their sockets, as his face turned from a deep red to a sickly purple.' • 'The lamp's glow was very weak compared to the blue glow emanating from the basement.' • 'It infiltrated his lungs, filling them with a kind of innovativeness he had never felt before.' (all Aaron Rayburn, *The Shadow God*, 2005) [RWS]

**R.I.P. Martin Aitchison** (1919-2016), UK artist whose comics work for the *Eagle* included an adaptation of Conan Doyle's *The Lost World*, and who also illustrated many Ladybird books 1963-1987, died on 22 October; he was 96. [JF] ● **Lon Atkins**, long-time US fan active in various APAs, who chaired DeepSouthCon 4 (1966) and received Southern Fandom's 1982 Rebel Award, died on 28 November. [GHL] ● **John Carson** (1927-2016), UK actor whose genre credits are mostly horror films, from *The Night Caller* (1965) to *Taste the Blood of Dracula* (1970) and *Captain Kronos—Vampire Hunter* (1972), died on 5 November aged 89. [PDF] ● **Paul A. Carter** (1926-2016), US author whose sf began with 'The Last Objective' (1946 *Astounding*) and included the notable anthology *The Creation of Tomorrow: Fifty Years of Magazine Science Fiction* (1977) and the 1989 novella *Iceborn* with Gregory Benford, has died at the age of 90. [GB] ● **Richard Cavendish** (1930-2016), UK historian of the occult whose nonfiction includes *The Black Arts* (1967) and *The Powers of Evil* (1975), and who edited the voluminous partwork encyclopedia *Man, Myth & Magic* (1970; rev 1995), died on 21 October aged 86. ● **Joe Dever** (1956-2016), UK author and game designer best known for the long-running Lone Wolf or Magnamund series of interactive fantasy gamebooks that began with *Flight from the Dark* (1984), died on 29 November; he was 60. [CT] ● **Gino Gavioli** (1923-2016), Italian cartoonist and animator who reimagined many fairy tales and children's fantasies including *Alice*, *Peter Pan* and *The Jungle Book*, died on 19 November aged 93. [PDF] ● **Ron Glass** (1945-2016), US actor whose best known genre role was *Shepherd Book* in *Firefly* (2002-2003) and *Serenity* (2005), died on 26 November aged 71; other credits include *Teen Angel* (1997-1998) and *Deep Space* (1988). [SG] ● **Tammy Grimes** (1934-2016), US actress whose genre credits include *The Borrowers* (1973), *The Horror at 37,000 Feet* (1973) and *The Last Unicorn* (voice, 1982), died on 30 October aged 82. [MMW] ● **Ellen Key Harris-Braun**, US editor whose early-1990s acquisitions for Ballantine/Del Rey included Nicola Griffith's *Ammonite* and *Slow River*, died on 28 October. [GVG] ● **Yumi Ho** (1964-2016), Korean-born US illustrator of folktales and children's stories—including fantasy and her own picture books—died in early November. [PDF] ● **Don Marshall** (1936-2016), US actor seen in *Land of the Giants* (1968-1970), *The Thing with Two Heads* (1972) and *The Incredible Hulk* (1978-1980), died on 30 October aged 80. [PDF] ● **Massimo Mongai** (1950-2016), Italian sf author who won the Urania Award for his debut novel *Memoirs of a Spaceship Cook* (1997, with recipes), died on 1 November aged 65. [PDF] ● **Tom Neyman** (1935-2016), US actor best known as *The Master* in *Manos: The Hands of Fate* (1966), died on 13 November; he was 80. [PDF] ● **André Ruellan** (1922-2016), French horror and sf author who was prolific in the 1950s (mostly under the pseudonym Kurt Steiner) and active into the new century, died on 10 November aged 94. ● **Martin Stone**, UK musician and book-dealer whose specialisms included weird fiction (in particular M.P. Shiel), died on 9 November. Mike Moorcock mourned 'My friend and music partner, the brilliant book-finder Martin Stone ...' ● **Kenichiro Takai**, Japanese manga creator who debuted in 1956 and was still active, died on 14 November aged 79. [PDF] ● **Sabina Theo** (1977-2016), Bulgarian fan and author who sold several stories to and collaborated once with Mike Resnick, died on 16 November '40 years too soon'. [MR] ● **Ron Thornton**, UK-born visual effects expert whose credits include *Spaceballs* (1987), *Babylon 5* (1994-1996), *Star Trek: Voyager* (1996-2001) and *Star Trek: Enterprise* (2001-2002), died on 21 November; he was 59. [JG] ● **Lupita Tovar** (1910-2016), Mexican co-star in Universal's simultaneously filmed Spanish-language *Dracula* (1931), died on 12 November at the age of 106. [SG] ● **William Trevor** (1928-2016), Irish mainstream author of very many highly regarded stories, some for supernatural anthologies such as the *Ghost Book* series, died on 20 November; he was 88. ● **Robert Vaughn** (1932-2016), US actor best remembered as Napoleon Solo in *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.* (1964-1968), died on 11 November aged 83. [PDF] Other genre credits include *The Mind of Mr. Soames* (1970), *Battle Beyond the Stars* (1980) and *Hangar 18* (1980). ● **Fritz Weaver** (1926-2016), US actor whose genre credits include *The Twilight Zone* (1960-1961 & 1985), *Mission: Impossible* (1966-1971), *The Day of the Dolphin* (1973), *Demon Seed* (1977), *The Martian Chronicles* (1980 tv) and *Creechlow* (1982), died on 26 November; he was 90. [A-TC]

**The Weakest Link Q:** 'What is the name of the star at the centre of our solar system?' A: 'Pass.' (BBC1, *Pressure Point*) [PE]

**Comic Circular.** The Dr Seuss estate is suing David Gerrold and ComicMix over *Oh, The Places You'll Boldly Go!*, a planned mash-up of Seuss-like artwork with *Star Trek*-themed verse. From its Kickstarter fundraiser page: 'While we firmly believe that our parody, created with

love and affection, fully falls within the boundary of fair use, there may be some people who believe that this might be in violation of their intellectual property rights. And we may have to spend time and money proving it to people in black robes. And we may even lose that.' Is this quotation too long for fair use? (Arstechnica.com, 16 November)

**As Others See Us II.** Harriet Gilbert on Matt Haig's *The Humans*: 'I hadn't even thought of this as science fiction, even though there is a Vonnadorian wandering amongst us on earth. ... The reason I don't consider this to be science fiction, one of the reasons, is that what it's really about is relationships, it's about humankind.' *Terry Christian*: 'Of course it's science fiction. All science fiction's about different things and not exactly what you think it's about!' (BBC Radio 4, *A Good Read*) [JM]

**Outraged Letters.** David Garnett on 'The Dead Past' in *A352*: 'I do remember the "sci-fi and hi-fi" issue of *Men Only*, which was advertised on the back cover of the Skycon booklet, and my pen name in that issue was Hugo A Ward. Must write them all down before I forget. There was once a piece by Tom Disch on Things Authors Should Do, one of which was write down a list of what you've had published and where. Bit late now.' ● **Mike Moorcock** on a certain *A352* quotation: 'Having branded me the anti-Tolkien, the *New Yorker* now quotes Hobbes on the subject of contemporary fantasy as quoted in *Wizardry and Wild Romance*. Makes me suspect they have a copy knocking about the office.' ● **Rog Peyton** writes from the far-off Glades of Gafia: 'I still enjoy hearing about the SF world even if most of the people I remember are appearing in the Obituaries section. Simon Green was right last issue—the section is getting too long and a lot of the people are from the movie world who we've never heard of. Stick to the literary world—I'm sure that's where the vast majority of your readers are from.'

**Magazine Scene.** *Analog* and *Asimov's* are switching to bimonthly publication as of January 2017. Issues will be 16pp longer than double numbers in the current regime of 8 singles and 2 doubles per year.

**The Dead Past.** 40 Years Ago, Darrell Schweitzer wrote a gourmet review: 'The 1976 World Fantasy Con, held in New York over Halloween, was less Lovecraft-oriented than the one in Providence last year and lacked the special atmosphere that that one had, though the banquet was said to be a true eldritch horror. [...] I heard that Frank Belknap Long & party made their protest by sending out for a box of Colonel Sanders' Kentucky Fried Chicken—they dined better than everyone else.' (*Checkpoint 77*, December 1976) ● 30 Years Ago, there came another doom-laden epitaph: 'What about science fiction?—or rather I will advise you that science fiction ran out of ideas about twenty-four years ago.' (Kingsley Amis, *Independent*, 18 December 1986)

**C.o.A.** Anne & Brian Gray, 1471 Sleepyhollow Road, York, PA 17403-3804, USA.

**Fanfundery.** *GUFF* candidates for the 2017 race to Worldcon 75 in Helsinki are: Donna Maree Hanson, Sam Hawke, Belle McQuattie and (jointly) Alexandra Pierce and Alisa Krasnostein. The voting form is available at the Australian Fan Funds site: [ozfanfunds.com/?page\\_id=6](http://ozfanfunds.com/?page_id=6).

**Ujog's Masterclass.** *Dept of Needed Capitals*. '... he almost walked into a newspaper billboard across his path: transport badge ardent on flooded po.' (Valerio Varesi, *River of Shadows*, 2003, trans Joseph Farrell 2010, ebook) [PB] ● *Equinoctial Dept*. 'Two years and eight months later, it was another equinox—this time the December equinox of 1968—' (J.W. Ironmonger, *The Notable Brain of Maximilian Ponder*, 2012) [YR] 'Just before the summer equinox, I believe it was. The moon is at its loveliest then, and the nights so short—' (Laurie R. King, *The Moor*, 1998) [YR] ● *Dept of Rejuvenation*. '... I was eighteen then. You were—what was it?—eleven, I think. In those days I was proud of your schoolgirl crush, but of course infinitely too old for you. I am not so old any more ...' (James Blish, 'There Shall Be No Darkness', April 1950 *Thrilling Wonder Stories*) [BA] ● *Neat Tricks Dept*. 'I did a major fist-pump in my head.' (Kanae Minato, *Confessions*, 2008, trans Stephen Snyder 2014) [PB] ● *Stalking the Wild Thesaurus*. 'Now I am hardly a man of what might be called a tremulous diathesis ...' (M.P. Shiel, 'Huguenin's Wife', April 1895 *Pall Mall Magazine*) ● 'Eager editors played Ellen's trial to a fare-thee-well, while an equally avid public welcomed the concupiscent and catiff affair as an antidote for estival doldrums.' (James A. Brussel, *Just Murder, Darling*, 1959) [AB]

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