

Ansible



Ansible 63 OCTOBER 1992

From Dave Langford, 94 London Road, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 5AU. Fax 0734 669914. ISSN 0265-9816. Logo by Dan Steffan. Cartoon stolen shamelessly from Magicon. *Ansible* is available for SAE, whim, beer, intimidation or Hugos. (Thanks!)

MAGICON HORROR: in a traditional drunken phone call Martin Hoare broke the big news, 'It's 3:30am and the parties are great!' ... also mentioning 'a British double!' 'What, *Interzone* got a Hugo?' 'No, don't be silly, you won and so did Glasgow.' Then he fell over. A news analyst [SG] opined that the invisible UK profile of Glasgow's 1995 worldcon bid was just outclassed by the greater incompetence of its Atlanta rival—site selection saw a record 2564 votes, with a winning margin of only 163. Paying tribute to the total confidentiality of the process, Martin told me: 'We all had a good laugh—you voted twice!' Oops.

Those Hugos: novel *Barrayar* by Lois McMaster Bujold (beating Card's heavily tipped *Xenocide* and McCaffrey's *Another Bloody Dragon Book*. 'Oh God, I'd have preferred even Card.' [RK]), novella 'Beggars in Spain' by Nancy Kress, novelette 'Gold' by Isaac Asimov (the traditional Existence-Challenged Author Award), short story 'A Walk in the Sun' by Geoffrey Landis, nonfiction *The World of Charles Addams*, dramatic presentation *Terminator 2*, editor Gardner Dozois of *Asimov's*, artist and original artwork Michael Whelan, 'semiprozine' *Locus* (sorry, Mr Pringle), fanzine *Mimosa* ed. Dick & Nicki Lynch, fan writer me, and fan artist Brad Foster. [PNH] *Ansible* promises to spare you detailed Hugo voting statistics in any future issue.

'The most horrible part of Magicon,' quavered Martin, 'was having to wear kilts to push the Glasgow bid—I said "You won't have one in my waist size," and bloody Tim Illingworth just went "Ho ho." And the sporran was artificial fur pasted on this wooden board, so when you walked it kept thumping into your groin....' The impression gleaned by US con-goers was that authentically kilted Scots always walk very, very slowly.

The Utter Zoo

J.G. Ballard's favourite reading includes the Los Angeles Yellow Pages—see *The Pleasure of Reading* ed. Antonia Fraser and the revived *JGB News*, £2/year to 217 Preston Drove, Brighton, BN1 6FL.

Algis Budrys has cut his L.Ron Hubbard links, to edit Pulp-house's new *Tomorrow Speculative Fiction*—rush your stories, Mr Stross, to PO Box 6038, Evanston, IL 60204, U.S.A. [SFC]

David Garnett, self-confessed 'editor of Britain's most celebrated sf anthology', is pondering this enquiry from a potential new contributor of 'sci-fiction': 'I have wrote to three or four publishers and your relaunched *New Worlds* was mentioned by the last one, unfortunately it seems that none of the so called publishers want to handle any material that hasn't been handled by a solicitor, or that is what I assume when I read that they are not accepting unsolicited material ... I really wouldn't know where to begin dealing with a solicitor on a matter such as this.'

Patrick Nielsen Hayden reveals how Real Editors collaborate on anthologies (*Alternate Skiffy*—see A61): 'Breakfast at Magicon. Mike Resnick to PNH, blearily: "Er, you finished your story yet?" PNH takes coffee mug, upends over head, scrubs eyes furiously, falls asleep into plate of eggs. Wakes. PNH to MR: "Um, no, you?" MR shakes head, signals waiter, twists head off passing ibex, leaves for Africa.'

David Lally (Renaissance Fan) reportedly wowed the recent Mensa AGM with an old *Avengers* clip concerning incredibly intelligent people infiltrated by evil-doers who brainwashed them, culminating in the rescue of the bright folks' archetypal Nutty Professor leader with some such line as 'How did you come to let them brainwash you, Sir Clive?' Whereupon Sir

Clive (Absolutely No Sense Of Humour) Sinclair walked out....

Fritz Leiber died on 5 Sept, all too soon after his recent stroke. John Clute gave him a good and appreciative (but warts-and-all) obituary in *The Independent* [14 Sept].

Jerry Pournelle correspondence goes on: 'Having dealt with JP at our local con a decade ago, I'd say Joseph Nicholas was being pleasant in his descriptions. I won't go into anything libellous (most of us know about his violent nature, argumentativeness, lechery and occasional knife-pulling), but the warnings from our con and a US con that hosted him previously put fandom in the know about Jerry and his proclivities ... not even the computer conventions want him, now.' [LP]

David Redd is most Disappointed by the 'Ansible' column in *Interzone*: 'No coloured paper! No special type for **Chung Kwo!**'

Kevin Smith lives: 'I saw (from *Matrix*) that you didn't have to present the BSFA award to Paul McAuley for *Eternal Light*. I'm sure this must have come as a relief. I read as far as page two, and found this: "Sitting in his air-conditioned subterranean hutch in the middle of the secret excavation site on the flanks of Arrul Terrek, Major Sebastian Artemio Pinheiro wondered, not for the first time, if he was becoming as crazy as everyone said the zithsa hunters were." In the days when I edited *Vector*, that would have been a bottom of the page filler, on a par with *The Troglodytes* by Nal Rafcam. Yet people seem to think this McAuley character can write a bit. They nominate him for awards. They interview him in *Vector* and things....'

Brian Stableford winces when asked about the understated cover of his new vampire epic *Young Blood* (Simon & Schuster, 21 Sept). 'I was not consulted. I never saw the jacket....'

D.West deplores TAFF 'dirty politics' wielded by the Berry faction against his favoured candidate Michael Ashley: 'Martin Tudor persuaded Steve Green to declare for Michael. Trouble is, we can't retaliate with the standard pig-fucking routine since that might make Tony Berry seem more interesting.'

Cherry Wilder's husband Horst Grimm died suddenly of a heart attack on 9 Sept. They had been on the point of moving house, and from 15 Oct Cherry's address will be 36 Kurt Schumacher Strasse, 6070 Langen/Hessen, Germany. She had been about to finish *Signs of Life*, a sequel to *Second Nature*. Cherry intends to remain in Germany for three more years, and may move to an English-speaking country thereafter.' [W]

Conquassation

First Thursday • Fissiparous London Meetings • Hamilton Hall bar, Liverpool St Station—the 'too crowded with bloody commuters in suits' option; some hopes of reserving the upper level if enough fans start going there. • *The Wine Vaults*, Fenchurch St—Bernie Peek's Fancy: 'People don't insist on lots of real ales in the 1990s....' [RK] • *Turnmills*, corner of Clerkenwell Rd and Turnmill St—the Nic Farey Alternative: 'At 11pm it turns into a disco!' • *The Wellington*, last seen in chaos while becoming an 'upmarket wine bar'—the 'wait and see/can't be bothered/move? what move?' factions. • *Which shall it be, Passworthy?*

9-11 Oct • Festival of Fantastic Films, Charterhouse Hotel, Manchester. £30 reg; fantastic popcorn may cost extra. Contact 95 Meadowgate Rd, Salford, Manchester, M6 8EB.

9-12 Oct • IFT Con (Trek), Holiday Inn, Leicester. *Event presumed cancelled*. [CW] No reply to urgent enquiries about this rumour; the committee, even if still active, doesn't seem interested.

16-18 Oct • Octocon 92, Royal Marine Hotel, Dun

Laoghaire, Ireland. £13 reg. GoH Orson Scott Card etc. Contact 30 Beverly Downs, Knocklyon Rd, Templeogue, Dublin 16.

24 Oct • **Dangercon 4**, *Dangermouse* thingy, Cedar Hall, Ruskin House, Croydon, 11am-11pm. £3.50 reg. Contact 37 Keens Rd, Croydon, CR0 1AH; 081 686 6800 (eve). *No kids*.

24 Oct • **DraCon** ('an imitation Microcon ... I am calling it Teenycon' [CB]), U of Bristol Students' Union. £3 reg. Contact UBSU, Queen's Rd, Clifton, Bristol, BS8 1LN; 0272 735935. Claims to be 'Bristol's first fantasy and sf convention': little do these infants know of OMPACON, the 1973 Bristol Eastercon....

30 Oct-1 Nov • **ConCert**, King's Manor Hotel, Edinburgh. £20 reg. Contact 97 Harrison Rd, Edinburgh, EH11 1LT.

30 Oct-1 Nov • **Who's 7**, *Dr Blake* con; Moat House Hotel, Telford. Contact 137 High St, Plaistow Broadway, E13 9HH.

?-? 93 • **Milford (UK) SF Writers' Conference**, 21st anniversary thrash. An old lags' reunion (with Judy Blish) is hoped. [PB]

24-8 Aug 95 • **Intersection**, 53rd Worldcon, Glasgow. Rates yet to be announced, at least to me. GoHs Samuel R. Delany, Gerry Anderson. Contact 121 Cape Hill, Smethwick, Warley, B66 4SH (I've seen that address before). The huge site selection voting turn-out was a mixed blessing for Glasgow: it meant 2,500+ paid-up members at once, but they paid a rock-bottom bargain price. *Overheard at Reading of meeting*: 'The co-chairman Vince Docherty is going off to work in Oman.' 'How did Tim Illingworth arrange that?'

Rumblings • **Dangercon 6**, in order to annoy Sou'Wester, will be held in Bristol over Easter 1994, 'for 150-250 people, about £15 reg, rooms £25-30/person/night. More details will follow.' [RN] A beermat drunkenly signed by Sou'Wester's David V. Barrett arrived: 'Liverpool? Isn't that somewhere sou'west of Bristol? I'm going to Dangercon myself.' • The alternative media con **Elydore** could be resurrected for Easter '94 'because of media fans' hatred of the Liverpool Adelphi hotel.' [RN] • Future **Worldcon** bids include 1996 Los Angeles; 1997 San Antonio, St Louis; 1998 Baltimore, Boston, New York, Niagara Falls; 1999 Australia; 2000 Kansas City (slogan: 'KC in 2K', which as any computerate fule kno is 2048).

Infinitely Improbable

TAFF: *Ansible* asked candidates to cast aside all inhibition and say why we should *really* vote them a trip to the 1993 San Francisco Worldcon. *Michael Ashley*: 'Fan of saliromania (the activity—not the fanzine). Founder member: Nieces Across Woodside. Personal friend of Walt Willis. My pubic and under-arm hair is clean.' *Tony Berry*: 'Because I'm such a wonderful guy. And if they don't vote for me, I'll sulk.' *Abigail Frost*: 'I've organized more conventions than Michael Ashley; won more fanwriting awards than Ashley Watkins; and look more interesting in a mini-skirt than Tony Berry.' *Ashley Watkins*: no response. Administrator *Pam Wells* adds: 'Please can I have some TAFF auction material for Novacon? Books, clothes, fanzines, illegal fudge, erotic stimulators, anything.' *Richard Brandt*, past and possibly future US candidate: 'TAFF *Hopeful Struck in Jaw by Arrow* ... is this worth a story?' *Me*: 'No.' *RB*: 'How about *DUFF Hopeful*...?'

SF Encyclopaedia Soap Opera Continues! By Sept, the letters A and B had been delivered (370,000 words). After tussling with the Little Brown Production Manager over the latter's idea of a *whole new typestyle* for acronyms (which would have meant 'some poor sod picking through 1.2 million words of text to find and code all the acronyms'), the Bearded Copy-Editor was delighted to hear from the Jolly Typesetter: 'Er, you know that inordinately complicated system of coding for small capitals, italics and boldface that we insisted you use from the outset, sunshine? Well, er, our machines can't read it.' [PB]

Redistribution. Forbidden Planet and Titan are splitting, with Nick Landau continuing as FP Bookshops Boss and Mike Lake flogging Titan Distributors to the US comics distributor Diamond (likely to abandon books and handle only comics henceforth, thinks awesome pundit Maxim Jakubowski). The

fate of FP's Titan Books line is uncertain: if it dies, who will carry on its valuable work of reissuing US comics without their original colour (rather like reprinting novels on the cheap by leaving out the adjectives)? • Kosmos Distributors has already gone bust, owing *Interzone* around £500. [DP]

Hazel's Language Lessons: Japanese. *Honban manaita*, live sex shows (*honban*=the real thing, *manaita*=chopping board for the preparation of raw fish). [via Dave Wood-san]

GW Books Exhumed. An outfit called Boxtree ('their entire catalogue consists of TV spinoffs and books about fishing') plans to release six GW titles in January: three David Ferring/Garnett fantasies, one unpublished, and three *Warhammer 40k* books including at least one unpublished Ian Watson epic. Former GW Books editor David Pringle was not consulted; also out in the cold are voluminous GW authors Brian Stableford and Kim Newman. ('"Brian Craig" and "Jack Yeovil" were the ones who won the praise and good reviews; but it's Ferring they want to publish. Give the readers what they want, that's the way....' [AoF]) Our own spy described the Boxtree packaging Führer as 'clearly a man who had never read a book in his life'.

R.I.P. Reginald Bretnor of 'The Gnurrs Come from the Voodwork Out' fame, *Alan E. Nourse*, and Superman's co-creator *Joe Shuster* all died in July. [SFC etc]

More Awards. *John W. Campbell* for new writer: Ted Chiang. *Campbell Memorial Award* for novel: *Buddy Holly is Alive and Well on Ganymede* by Bradley Denton. *Sturgeon* for short: John Kessel's 'Buffalo'. ('So Denton & Kessel, ex-students of James Gunn, have won these awards ... chairman of the judges being James Gunn. Just proves how well he taught them!') [AoF] *SF Chronicle Reader Award* for novel: *Stations of the Tide* by Michael Swanwick. (*SFC* fanzine and fanwriter winners are *Ansible* and me, ho ho.)

Forbidden Works: 'Jane [Barnett] tells me that various authors' books are banned from her school library because of their unsuitability for the little dears. Foremost among them? Salacious Terry Pratchett, no less.' [PB]

Air Mail. Size of HarperCollins box: 23"x15"x5". Contents: 2 books for review. Empty space mailed out: 93.8% of parcel.

Modesty Forbids ... in the Oct *The Dark Side*, Steve Green's rave review of *Critical Wave* neglects to mention who edits it.

C.O.A. Ken Lake has left Britain but will pick up his fan mail in Feb 93 ... c/o John Bull Stamps Ltd, PO Box 10.009, GPO Hong Kong. *Tibs/Joan Paterson*, 1/L 30 Falkland St, Glasgow, G12 9QY. *Cherry Wilder* (to whom all sympathy), see over.

Magicon Moments. Over 5,900 people attended. 'Great time, outside of walking 4-5 miles a day just from your hotel to the convention centre and back (I was at the main hotel, too).' [LP] • The Peabody Hotel boasted the four 'Peabody Ducks', which each morning were led from a lift along a red carpet to the lobby duckpond and each afternoon ushered back by the same route to their \$250,000 Duck Palace upstairs. *Martin Hoare*: 'That one, please, with orange sauce.' *Icy Waitress*: 'We don't joke about the ducks.' • Best cock-up: the wrong card in one Hugo envelope—*Mimosa's* fanzine award was presented to and snatched back from *Lan's Lantern*. 'The deserving were rewarded and the guilty punished in one fell swoop,' said cruel Andy Hooper. [RB] • The 1995 NASFiC (North American alternate con for overseas-Worldcon years) went to Atlanta despite hot competition from the spoof 'I-95 in 95' alias Roadkillcon; a serious New York bid came fourth, after 'None of the above'. Removal of this event from the Worldcon constitution is under discussion, again. • The Hugo rockets reverted from tacky plastic to Peter Weston's massive castings, gold-plated for Worldcon #50; their bases incorporated bits of old Cape Canaveral launch complex gantry—real skiffy. (*Cringing Answer To Most Frequent Question of September*: 'Er ... seven.') • Magicon newsletter reaction to Glasgow victory party: the headline *Men in Skirts!* •

Ansible 63 © Dave Langford, 1992. Thanks to Anonymous of Ferring, Paul Barnett, Chris Bell, Richard Brandt, Eddie Cochrane, *Critical Wave*, Ethel the Aardvark, David Garnett, Steve Green, Patrick Nielsen Hayden (Hugo Fax Master), Martin Hoare (Official Hugo & Herma Collector), Roz Kaveney, Robert Newman, Lloyd Penney, David Pringle, *SF Chronicle*, Brian Stableford, Ian Watson, Pam Wells and hero distributors listed last issue. 1/10/92