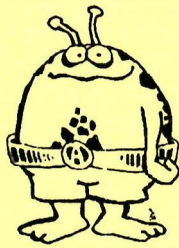


Ansible



Ansible 85 August 1994

From **Dave Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 5AU, England. Fax **0734 669914**. ISSN 0265-9816. E-mail ansible@cix.compulink.co.uk. Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Ian Gunn**. *Ansible* is available for stamped addressed envelopes.

WINCON III (29-31 Jul, Winchester) was Jolly Good, though **Algis Budrys** couldn't be a guest: on 25 July he learned that despite his early application for a US re-entry permit (as required by non-nationals), the State Department found itself strangely unable to issue one until just too late. Protests went to the US Embassy, which may also have been punitively added to the Writers of the Future mailing list. • **GoH Norman Spinrad** tactfully pictured sf as a black hole surrounded by this accretion disc of terrible things like 'Trekkies, Scientologists and costume fans', all emitting life-destroying radiations as they orbit the central core.... • Years of **SCI-FI FREAKS BEAM IN** headlines induced Wincon to introduce a special and wildly popular Press membership rate of £30; real people paid £25. • **Jack Cohen's** enthusiastic account of animal sperm collection techniques was heard with riveted attention in a McDonald's full of people drinking thick milk-shakes. • **The Horror! The Horror!** A film stream featured the 'gory home movie' *Crysis* (made on a colossal £250 budget for the 1993 Film Extremes festival; director Steve Ellis was present for discussion) ... leading to alarums when one Matthew Petty ('oh, how appropriate a surname'—Steve Green) grew over-excited at spectacles of sex and death, stalking out with cries of 'Jesus Christ!' and threatening to call the police about what he eventually declared was a 'simulated snuff movie'—probably very nearly as wicked as a real one. The con committee studied his later phone-directory researches with alarm and listened at vast length to his complaints, but declined to promise in writing never to show such material ever again. Inspector Knacker failed to materialize; Mr Petty's departure was discreetly cheered and his name, we suspect, entered on a little Wincon list.... [via SG] • **Jack Barron** of *Bug Jack Barron* fame was revealed in a new critical analysis (Terry Hunt, Wincon PR4) to be black—slightly boggling both his creator and the lovely Lee Wood, who has to get a mention somewhere. • **Martin Hoare** predictably held the booziest party (in aid of the 1998 Boston worldcon bid, which duly sold many memberships); he'd taken a van to Ostend just beforehand to stock up with uncountable quantities of duty-free beer and fizzy plonk. I recommend this bidding strategy, which helped me enjoy synchronized falling-over with the remaining GoH **James P.Hogan**. • Whither Wincon? Stay tuned....

Minions of the Moon

Damien Broderick bewailed his plight at an Aussie book launch: 'I've been known for years as the second-most famous Australian sf writer, after George Turner; then he gets put out of action for a year with a stroke, and Greg Egan comes along!'

John Brunner quietly brags (see A84): 'I don't know about Barry Malzberg, but while writing *Black is the Colour* I produced 18,000 words between getting up and going to bed. The 71,000-word novel took one week, one day and one and a half hours start to finish—and I took Wednesday off for talks with my agent.' • Unlucky JB recently lost three months of creative time to the beta-blocker drug Inderal (taken in fear of a possible stroke)—but was able to finish a formerly beta-blocked article within days of quitting. The article happened to be about how sf drugs work as intended, while real-world ones don't....

John Clute received the SF Research Association's 1994 Pilgrim Award for Distinguished Contributions to the Study of SF, on 10 July: 'Whoeee, I think. I'm really extraordinarily pleased.'

Bruce Gillespie reproves me: 'I still resent that the only 1993-4 sf awards of any sort that you did not run in *Ansible* were the Ditmars. My inglorious moment stolen from me! (An inglorious moment, because even I agree that Terry Frost should have won Best Fan Writer; but the published figures show that I won convincingly, so there.)'

Graham Joyce's new *Critical Wave* column (issue #36 just going out, says plug-hungry Steve Green) claims thrilling new British Fantasy Award edicts: '1: No voting for anyone who won last year. 2: No voting for any magazine which published any of your stories. 3: No voting for anything the committee doesn't want to see win, particularly anything coming out of the East Midlands.' All this 'to avoid the kind of lack of controversy which dogged last year's awards'.... [CW]

Charles Platt will guest-edit (and design) an *Interzone*: 'the April 1995 issue, which is significant for me in two ways: it will be twenty-five years after I terminated my full-time editorial and production work on *New Worlds*, and it's the month of my fiftieth birthday.' Theme: 'the human impact of science and technology in the next twenty years. There are no taboos, and writers should feel free to pursue their strangest ideas.' CP, 1133 Broadway (Room 1214), New York, NY 10010, USA.

Philip G. Williamson riposted crushingly to an insensitive reviewer (oh all right, me) who asserted in *The Guardian* that his *Heart of Shadows* was standard fantasy fare: 'I may well don the outer garments of generic fantasy but my underwear is full of surprises, and I feel you simply didn't bother to look.' A noble phrase which surely deserves to sell a few copies.

Coniroster

19 Aug • **The Scottish Convention** open pub meeting: Wellington, Waterloo Rd. All evening. Play 'Guess the Hotel Prices!'

19-21 Aug • **Portmeiricon 94** (*Prisoner*), Portmeirion, Gwynedd. Contact PO Box 66, Ipswich with SAE.

26-9 Aug • **Archon** (*Trek*), Edwardian Int'l Hotel, Heathrow. Contact 43 Eastern Ave, Polegate, E.Sussex, BN26 6HG.

1-5 Sep • **Conadian** (52nd Worldcon), Winnipeg, Canada. Perhaps a bit late to sign up on impulse now....

3 Sep • **Summer SF Event** (co-hosts: BSFA and Friends of Foundation), Florence Nightingale pub, Lambeth Palace Rd—to be confirmed. 3pm-late. Free. Contact 0303 252939.

3-4 Sep • **Irecon 4**, Royal Hotel, Bray, Co.Wicklow. £18 reg. Contact (010) 353 18327491.

28-30 Oct • **Who's Seven** (*Dr Blake*), Queens Hotel, Church Road, SE19. £35 reg, £30 if you book a hotel room. Contact 131 Norman Road, Leytonstone, London, E11 4RJ.

5-6 Nov • **Armadacon VI**, Astor Hotel, Elliott St, The Hoe, Plymouth. GoH Mary Gentle and others. £20 reg + 3 A5 SAEs. Contact 4 Gleneagle Ave, Mannamead, Plymouth, PL1 2PS.

17-19 Mar 95 • **Trek Dwarf 3**, Holiday Inn, Leicester. £30 reg. Contact 47 Marsham, Orton Goldhay, Peterborough.

26-9 May 95 • **Masque IV** (costuming), Russell Hotel, Boxley Rd, Maidstone, Kent. £25 reg 'until Dec 94'. Don strange garb and contact 20 Westhall St, Brighton, BN1 3RR.

Rumblings • **Evolution** (Eastercon 1996), 'regrets to announce that negotiations with the Brighton Metropole have been unsuccessful. The management are not interested in proceeding to a contractual agreement with us. Their primary reason appears to be that they have unpleasant corporate memories of Conspiracy, the 1987 Worldcon held

there and in the Brighton Centre. It is interesting how similar their memories of the event are to general fannish memories. This is unfortunate.... The Metropole is a very suitable site, but as the management don't wish to work with us we must now find an alternative. We are considering various options in the Brighton area, and also sites in other parts of the country. If we do leave the Brighton area, we will offer membership refunds to anyone who joined before this date and doesn't want to attend an Eastercon held elsewhere. We hope to announce our new site in the autumn.... Finally, we would like to make it clear that we have no disagreement with the Brighton Metropole. The management have been very open with us and we appreciate their telling us immediately they decide they did not want our business.' [PMcM] (*Slightly cut—DRL*) • 1995's Swansea-based **UK Year of Literature** thrash has retained Lionel Fanthorpe as consultant for its sf/fantasy section in early Dec 95. Expect plugs for his Best Badger Books Bits anthology, now scheduled as *Out of the Badger Hole* (Portland, OR, 1995) with an intro by the great man himself. • **Sou'Wester**—A TAFF Administrator *Grovels!* This kindly convention donated £250 to TAFF once they'd traced its shy, elusive UK administrator. [AJF]

Infinitely Improbable

Who? A writer whom glossy flyers describe as of 'extraordinary breadth and variety', whose hot new bibliography 'brings into new and sharply studied focus his extraordinary place in the literature of our time' for 'students, teachers and scholars alike', while a volume-every-month 'Classic Fiction Series' of 100+ reprints ('a master ... these timeless stories ...') is spewing forth, with introductions that breathlessly reveal just 'what he was doing at the time he wrote the story'.... Barely controlling my spasms, I record that the author is L.Ron Hubbard. [DVB]

V.o.E. R.I.P? 'Victims of Ellison' has been laid to rest, says *Charles Platt*: 'Moved (somewhat) by Mr Ellison's claims that the VoE support group took six months out of his working life and reduced his wife to tears (supposedly, she sat on the end of his bed sobbing "Why won't they leave us alone?") I decided to suspend operations and returned the many cheques received from eager subscribers. I hadn't expected that my little exercise in self defence would generate such traumatic repercussions. I have accumulated a two-inch-thick file of testimonials, allegations, and complaints by various victims, as well as a large mailing list of interested parties, and it would take very little trouble to resurrect VoE if this should ever seem necessary.'

C.o.A. BSFA Matrix, 104 Debdon, Gloucester Rd, Tottenham, London, N17 6LN. *Alex McLintock*, 14 Lynton Avenue, St Albans, Herts, AL1 5PD. *Nigel E.Richardson*, 35 Cricketers Way, Kirkstall Lane, Leeds, LS5 3RJ. *Peter & Eileen Weston*, 'Four Winds', 2 Halloughton Rd, Sutton Coldfield, W.Midlands, B74 2QG. • **A84 corrections**: Ian Watson's postcode is really NN11 3SQ (mea culpa here) and Bloody Martin Smith's is KT6 4LU.

Hyperbollocks. The Fantasy & SF Book Club claims the *SF Encyclopedia* (offered at £30) is 'almost as big as the universe itself!' ... containing in fact 'OVER ONE MILLION PAGES'. On a similar heroic scale, *SF Chronicle* insists that one net fanzine listing calls me a '500-times Hugo award-winning fan author....'

Locus Awards (God, the things we print to fill space and annoy Gillespie) ... COLLECTION *Impossible Things*, Connie Willis. ART BOOK *The Art of Michael Whelan*. SHORT 'Close Encounters', Connie Willis (*Asimov's* 9/93). NOVELETTE 'Death in Bangkok', Dan Simmons (*Playboy* 6/93). NOVELLA 'Mefisto in Onyx', Harlan Ellison (*Omni* 10/93). 1ST NOVEL *Cold Allies*, Patricia Anthony. HORROR NOVEL *The Golden*, Lucius Shepard. FANTASY NOVEL *The Innkeeper's Song*, Peter S.Beagle. SF NOVEL *Green Mars*, Kim Stanley Robinson. Special award: the *SF Encyclopaedia*.

Publishing Horrors. Bertelsmann AG, the German owners of Bantam Doubleday Dell (USA), have seemingly raised a stink with a cost-cutting policy leading to the breaking of written and verbal agreements. After being much messed around, *Norman Spinrad* (for it is he) came up with the kamikaze gambit of threatening to frighten off US distributors by warning that they

could be legally involved should he sue BDD for publishing his new novel *Pictures at 11* in a way that violated the agreement. BDD capitulated. • After a July sale to *Asimov's*—owned by BDD—*David Redd* complains that their standard story contract comes with a five-clause rider grabbing performance rights ('for which you shall receive a sum to be negotiated and agreed upon by us'); electronic rights; game, calendar, toy and T-shirt rights in all one's characters.... • Spies tell *Chris Priest* that in defiance of an agreement allowing UK sales only on an individual, mail-order basis, Fantagraphics (not owned by BDD) are supplying *The Book on the Edge of Forever* in bulk to such UK outlets as Forbidden Planet. *Priest*: 'Blind eye time, I think.'

Bram Stoker Awards included: NOVEL *The Throat*, Peter Straub. COLLECTION *Alone with the Horrors*, Ramsey Campbell. NON-FICTION *Once Around the Bloch*, Robert Bloch. [SFC]

Random Fandom. *Dave Hodson's* dynamic, new-broom editorship of the BSFA newsletter *Matrix* led to, er, no *Matrix* in the current mailing.... • *Steve Sneyd*, skiffy poet, was burgled in July: losses were minimal, but he grew interested when the investigating cop 'said very accusingly "You were typing when I arrived." Suddenly wondered if this had been made an offence in the new Criminal Justice Bill, or if it's just on the police list of activities that harbinger general badhattedness.' • *Tim Stannard* won recent media fame (*Birmingham Evening Mail*, *Daily Star*, Central TV news), not for contributions to Brummie and business meeting fandom but for owning 500,000 beer mats. MY LIVING HELL AS BEER MAT WIDOW, REVEALS WIFE DOREEN.... [CS]

Fanfundery. TAFF: Andy Hooper is said to have dropped out, leaving **DAN STEFFAN** contending with Joe Wesson for the 1995 trip to *The Scottish Convention*. Nominations close 30 Sept. • **GUFF**: Joseph Nicholas was first to spot the early ballots' wrong address for Euro-administrator Eva Hauser (who's in the Czech and *not* the Slovak republic). Guilty party Roman Orszanski blames Aussie reference sources.... VITAL EURO PUBLIC SERVICE BIT: don't send GUFF money to Eva, but to Joseph at 15 Jansons Rd, South Tottenham, London, N15 4JU, UK ... and *please* don't reproduce the early ballot which omits this now-official address for European donations. • The usual letter from GUFF candidate Kim Huett begins 'Langford you manipulating bag of protoplasm,' and has been hastily mislaid.

Hazel's Language Lessons: Pure English. From a bygone crusade to 'remove any whiff of olive oil and garlic from the language', some Pure equivalents: *active* doingsome. *ambiguous* twysided. *bibulous* soaksome. *botany* wortlore. *depilatory* hairbane. *forceps* nipperlings. *genuflection* kneebowing ('A genuflection is any kneebowing, but all kneebowing is not kneeling, which is kneegrounding'). *irrelevance* unbyholdingness. *meteor* welkinfire. *parenthesis* an inwedging of a sentence within another. *plagiarist* thoughtpilferer. *rhetoric* redespeech. *sentence* a one thoughtwording. *syntax* speechtrimming. [LS]

Beyond is to be a new UK sf/fantasy magazine (A4, 60+pp) appearing bimonthly from March 1995. David Riley, 130 Union Rd, Oswaldtwistle, Lancs, BB5 3DR. • Another is the non-paying *Substance*, whose guidelines somehow suggest a preference for very short stories: 'Manuscripts should be double-spaced, on a single side of A4 paper.' Paul Beardsley, 16 Blenheim Gdns, Denvilles, Havant, PO9 2PN.

Thog's Masterclass. A new evocation of nipples: 'hard, sticking up as if they were trying to listen' ('Riptide', Peter Benson). 'For that elusive *Spung* sound no doubt,' muses Dave Wood....

15 Years Ago. At the first Brighton worldcon in August 1979, the sf world was totally unamazed by *Ansible 1* and its incautious claim that 'future issues will contain news'.

Ansible 85 © Dave Langford, 1994. Thanks to Mike Allum, John Bark, Paul Barnett, David V.Barrett, John Clute, Critical Wave, Cuddles, Ellen Datlow, Stefan Dziemianowicz, Abigail Frost, Steve Green, Pat McMurray, Necronomicon Press, Joseph Nicholas (Ace Researcher), Chris Priest, Roger Robinson (Friend to Authors, Foe to Banks), SF Chronicle, Cyril Simsa, Chris Suslawicz, Lucy Sussex, Dave Wood, Lee Wood and our Hero Distributors: Janice Murray (NA), SCIS, Alan Stewart (Oz), Martin Tudor and Bridget Wilkinson. 4 Aug 94