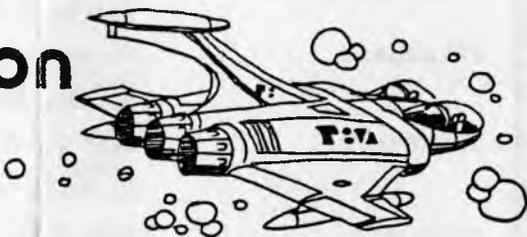


# Birmingham Science Fiction Group

(Honorary Presidents: Brian W. Aldiss  
and Harry Harrison)



Number 157

Sept 1984

The Birmingham Science Fiction Group meets on the third Friday of each month in the New Imperial Hotel in Temple Street, Birmingham City Centre. Details of our next meeting are shown below.

SEPTEMBER MEETING: FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 21ST AT 7.45 PM

## Tom Shippey

This month our guest speaker will be Tom Shippey, Professor of English at Leeds University. Tom is already well-known to many BSG members through his excellent convention talks including his discussion on women in sf at the last Novacon. He reviews sf for such journals as Times Literary Supplement and The Guardian and is also the man who prepares the sf questions for the BBC's Mastermind programme. More than that, however, Tom is an excellent speaker and a keen fan.

His talk this time will bring together such diverse works as 1984 and Le Guin's WORD FOR WORLD IS FOREST. It promises to be an interesting and enlightening evening!

## Birmingham SF Group Newsletter

NEWSLETTER EDITOR & EDITORIAL ADDRESS: Graham R. Poole, 86 Berwood Farm Road, Wylde Green, Sutton Coldfield, W. Midlands, B72 1AG

CHAIRMAN: Roger G. Peyton, c/o Andromeda Bookshop, 84 Suffolk Street, Birmingham B1 1TA

SECRETARY: Paul Brantingham, 33 County Park Avenue, Abbeyfields, Halesowen, W. Midlands, B62 8SU

TREASURER: Stan Eling, 124 Galton Road, Smethwick, Warley, West Midlands, B67 5JS

### MEMBERSHIP DETAILS OF THE BIRMINGHAM SCIENCE FICTION GROUP

The annual membership fee of £5 (£7.50 for two people at the same address) entitles members to a copy of this newsletter each month, reduced entrance fees to the monthly meetings, the opportunity of joining our free-to-members Amateur Press Association (APA-B) and the chance of meeting and corresponding with like-minded science fiction fans. All new membership fees and renewals should be sent to our treasurer

This issue of the Newsletter is copyright (c) 1984 Birmingham Science Fiction Group on behalf of the contributors to whom all rights revert upon publication.

## EDITORIAL

The eagle-eyed amongst you may have noticed a change above. Due to pressures of work Peter Weston has stood down as Chairman of the Group and at the last Committee Meeting Roger Peyton was appointed as Acting Chairman. Peter took over an engineering business at the start of the year and is the first to admit that he has not really been able to spend as much time on Group affairs as he would have liked. He will stay on the Committee until the AGM to assist as far as possible. Rog Peyton is, of course, known to all of you through Andromeda Bookshop and has served in the past a continuous term of ten years on the Committee, including four terms as Chairman. As such he has a vast wealth of knowledge and experience to draw upon and has many contacts through his bookshop. As such he is the ideal person to take over the position. I would like to join with Roger in thanking Peter for all his hard work for the Group in the past 18 months and wish him every success with his business venture.

*Graham*

# Group News

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

**OCTOBER:** Christopher Priest, being brought forward to the month (the 12th) to Priest's signing session GLAMOUR at Andromeda day.



The October meeting is the second Friday of coincide with Chris of his new novel THE Bookshop the following

**NOVEMBER:** Does the Team Think? A panel game where members of the audience can ask a panel of 'experts' such questions as "Does the team think that the public's impression of science fiction is demeaned by such programmes as Star Trek, Dr Who and V?" and "Does the team think that the publishers are onto a good thing by publishing such fiction?" (See Andromeda top ten)

**DECEMBER:** Christmas party. Tickets for our ever-popular Christmas Party will be on sale soon. Numbers will be strictly limited and will be allocated on a first come first served basis. Further details will be announced in the next Newsletter but events will be along the same lines as last year with a sit down meal, Guest of Honour, party games and much, much more.

## MEMBERSHIP NEWS

**MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS:** Welcome back to Dave Packwood, Stephen Jones and Barbara Russell.

**MYSTERY SOLVED:** We've finally tracked Mr Saville down and have his address at last! We can now commence sending him the Newsletter. New members please let our treasurer have your address when joining on a club night and please let us know of all changes of address as soon as possible.

## NOVACON 14 NEWS

I have received a letter from Steve Green, the Novacon 14 Chairman in which he expressed considerable concern at the apparent lack of support for the Birmingham Science Fiction Group's own convention to be held this November (9th - 11th) at the Grand Hotel, Colmore Row, Birmingham. This matter was discussed at the last Committee Meeting and it was generally felt that he was wrong in thinking that the Brum Group members do not support their own convention because many members are the walk-ins, people who turn up at the convention without pre-registering. However, I can understand Steve's concern at what he believes to be lack of support and I would urge all members to register as soon as possible (and that includes me) and to offer whatever assistance Steve may require in helping out at the convention.

Progress Report 3, including the hotel booking forms, is now out. See enclosed flyer for further details.



First thing this month is more news of Arthur C. Clarke's screen debut. Martin Morse Wooster reports in the latest ANSIBLE (6 issues from Dave Langford, 94 London Rd, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, for a measly £2) that, "...Clarke was recently in town, making his cinematic debut as 'a wine-sucking bum' in '2010: The Sequel'. Clarke's ascent to bumdom was reportedly not a success: attempts to film him feeding breadcrumbs to pigeons were interrupted by a marathon, a walkathon, Pres. Reagan's helicopter and the unnerving tendency of Roy Scheider to parade in tight black shorts between takes. As a result, the scene was cut from the film. 'If you can't be a successful bum,' Clarke says, 'the next best thing is a writer'..." Still on the subject of the amazing Mr. Clarke, the serialization of his novel '2010: Odyssey Two' in the USSR has led to the dismissal of Vasili Zakharchenko, editor of the Soviet journal 'Technology For Youth'. The official reason for his dismissal was for "embarrassing the government", serialization of '2010' was also abruptly terminated in the middle of the novel.

Clarke had dedicated his novel to "General Alexei Leonov - Cosmonaut, Hero of the Soviet Union, Artist; and Academician Andrei Sakharov - Scientist, Nobel Laureate, Humanist." - Sakharov is currently in internal exile in Gorky, possibly on a hunger strike, his current condition unknown. All the Russian characters in the novel are named after dissidents and the Russian actors in the forthcoming film of the book are all Soviet exiles. Apparently the novel was censored by Zakharchenko but he allowed the names of some dissidents to slip through - a mistake which cost him his job.

Now finally, before we leave Mr. Clarke in peace in his Sri Lankan retreat, 'Science Fiction Chronicle' also reports that he has asked for, and received yet more record breaking advances. For 'Songs of Distant Earth' and '20,001: The Final Odyssey' the redoubtable Mr. Clarke has received the princely sum of \$1.10. No, that isn't a misprint, for the first book Clarke had originally planned to ask for one cent but he upped his asking price when it was pointed out that he would have some difficulty in paying his agent, Scott Meredith, a tenth of a cent commission. For the second book though he demanded a whole dollar.

Back in Britain there is good news on the jobs front - as long as you're taller than 4ft 8in and shorter than 5ft 3in! A job agency in Berks has a hundred vacancies for applicants aged 20 or over, who are fit and reliable, and of course the right height. Suitable applicants will appear as elves in the new film 'Santa Claus' starring Dudley Moore which began filming at Pinewood Studios in August...do you think Rog Peyton would be interested?

Still at Pinewood, the world famous 007 stage there was destroyed by fire on June 27th, built for the Bond movie 'The Spy Who Loved Me' in 1976 the stage had since been used for such films as 'Dragonslayer', 'Clash of the Titans' and the 'Superman' series. Unfortunately Pinewood was not the only British studio to suffer damage during our wonderful summer. On July 8th, fire caused an estimated £300,000 worth of damage at Bray Studios, near Maidenhead, traditionally the home of Hammer Films' Dracula and Frankenstein movies and currently being used by Gerry Anderson to make his puppet drama series 'Terrahawks'. The police believe the second fire was started deliberately, but are not linking the two incidents.

Having touched on the subject of British TV once or twice now, I suppose this is a good a time as any to mention that ITV's watchdog body the IBA received six complaints from discerning viewers about the TV commercials for L. Ron Hubbard's recent masterpiece 'Battlefield Earth'. The complaints were not about the quality of the writing or even the cheap looking advert, report Stephen Jones and Jo Fletcher in their 'London Report' column in 'Science Fiction Chronicle' (An excellent semi-pro news zine produced by Andy Porter from which most of this months news has been pinched. If you'd prefer your news fresh - and who wants regurgitated news? - you can get SFC on subscription, for a mere £17 a year, from Ethel Lindsay, 69 Barry Rd., Carnoustie Angus DD7 7QQ.), but were made on the grounds that Hubbard is a Scientologist. The IBA, however, dismissed the complaints on the grounds that, "This work of fiction has nothing to do with his other activities."

Meanwhile in the fannish world there has been some controversy over the non-appearance of ALBACON '84 Guest of Honour Harlan Ellison, said controversy being happily stirred by fake Bob Shaw. Ellison was forced to pull out at the last second due to some "rush work on 'The Last Dangerous Visions' (you know, that zippy little anthology he's been working on since 1971)" - to borrow the words of the ~~immortal~~ immortal Langford. In his

Continued on page 14....

## TOP TEN SF BOOKS

The top ten best selling books at Andromeda Bookshop in August were as follows:

1. STAR TREK III - SEARCH FOR SPOCK - Vonda McIntyre (Granada £1.95)
2. DR WHO - WARRIORS OF THE DEEP - Terrance Dicks (Target £1.50)
3. V - A.C.Crispin (NEL £2.50)
4. WORLDS APART - Joe Haldeman (futura £2.25)
5. A MATTER FOR MEN - David Gerrold (Futura £2.95)
6. LAST STARFIGHTER - Alan Dean Foster (Target £1.95)
7. DR WHO - DOMINATORS - Ian Marter (target £1.50)
8. THE OMICRON INVASION - E.E. 'Doc' Smith (Granada £1.75)
9. LYONESSE - Jack Vance (Granada £2.95)
10. HOUR OF THE GATE - Alan Dean Foster (Futura £2.50)

I need make no comment on the above list except to say that the publishers obviously know what the readers (Joe Public readers) want!

## W A N T E D

Brian Stableford wishes to purchase copies urgently of PARADOX OF SETS (Daw), written by himself. He is willing to pay up to full cover price. Contact Chris Morgan on 021-777-2777.

## DEATHS

A BERTRAM CHANDLER died on June 6th, two days after his wife, Susan, found him unconscious in their flat outside Sydney.

PETER BULL died in May at the age of 72. His many films included DR STRANGELOVE, THE OLD DARK HOUSE, DR DOOLITTLE, and ALICE'S ADVENTURES IN WONDERLAND. He was also the world expert on the care and psychology of teddy bears.

RICHARD HUNDRALL died on April 13th, aged 73. His film credits include I MONSTER and he portrayed the first DR WHO (replacing the late William Hartnell) in last year's BBC TV special THE FIVE DOCTORS.

JOSEPH LOSEY, the American film director died in London in June aged 75. His credits include THE BOY WITH GREEN HAIR, Hammer films SF drama THE DAMNED and the adaptation of MODESTY BLAISE.

EDWARD LLEWELLYN-THOMAS died on July 5th aged 66. He wrote five novels for DAW books under the name EDWARD LLEWELLYN; THE DOUGLAS CONVOLUTION (1979), THE BRIGHT COMPANION (1980), PRELUDE TO CHAOS (1983) and SALVAGE AND DESTROY (1984). His fifth novel FUGITIVE IN TRANSIT has yet to be published.

# Books Received

BLUESONG by Sydney Van Scyoc, Penguin pb £1.95 261 pages, published 30th August is the second of the Sunstone trilogy, the first in the series being DARKCHILD

NATFACT 7 by John Tully, Methuen (Children's Books) hb, £6.95, 208 pages, published on 20th September. "The aim of ACE is All Citizens Equal, and that means revolution in this dramatic story of the not-too-distant future that moves at breakneck speed....More than a political thriller, with a scenario that seems frighteningly possible in the wake of unemployment and High Technology, NATFACT 7 is the story of a group in their late teens and early twenties who have to make the choices everyone has to face in an imperfect world - but for them the results mean life or death."

PROTECTORATE by Mick Farren, New English Library pb, £1.95, 252 pages. "In the sprawling, decadent city lived the Lower dwellers and the Tower people. Brutally armed squadrons of Killers kept the Lower dwellers well away from the Tower people. For the Lower dwellers constituted a teeming menace to the Tower people as they chattered and brawled and surged through its dark alleways, cellars, taverns and market places. Only the poets, dancers and conjurers amongst the Lower dwellers were ever allowed up to entertain the Tower people. Yet, all were bound together when the aliens came to their planet with their absolute power, barely communicating and only concerned that the City did not threaten their galaxy-wide schemes. But, in the Lowers prophetic forces were at work and it was Jeen Vayim, the poet, who first noticed the changes...." Published on September 3rd.

TALES FROM THE VULGAR UNICORN Edited by Robert Asprin, Penguin pb, £1.95, 223 pages, published on 27th September. The second collection in this unique anthology series set in the city of Sanctuary in which several fantasy writers spin stories with each others characters (Farmer, Van Vogt, Asprin, Abbey, Morris, Drake and Offutt).

THE HISTORY OF THE RUNESTAFF by Michael Moorcock, Granada pb, £2.95, 573 pages, published September. An omnibus edition of the Runestaff novels from the late '60s - THE JEWEL IN THE SKULL, THE MAD GOD'S AMULET, THE SWORD OF THE DAWN and THE RUNESTAFF. Good value for 573 pages.

ASIMOV ON SCIENCE FICTION by Isaac Asimov, Granada pb, £2.50, 384 pages, published September. Asimov's views on sf, it's history, writing, writers, fans, etc collected from a series of essays published in various places over a number of years and packaged together into this one volume.

CHEKHOV'S JOURNEY by Ian Watson, Granada pb, £1.95, 176 pages, published September 1984. "A soviet film units latest project is to make a picture called "Chekhov's Journey". They try out a new method of hypnosis on the star to help him reincarnate Anton Chekhov. Impossibly it seems that Chekhov knew about the famous Tunguska explosion in 1908, 18 years before it happened. Next, the actor is projected forwards in time into a Soviet time-ship which is plunging down towards the Tunguska region, completely out of control. Hypnotic reincarnation seems to have gone too far...."

# BRUM: 2184

© JOHN DELL 1984

BRUM 2184 - THE MIGHTY ROYAL ANGUS TOUCHES DOWN AT THE NEW STREET SPACEPORT...

PASSPORT CONTROL

Welcome to Earth Spaceman Smith... Is this your first visit?.....

Yeah, one weeks leave and I intend to make the most of it.....

← OUT

Just think, me Ernest Smith, from Mars, with a week on Earth.... and in ancient Birmingham, birthplace of the industrial revolution and the most exciting and exotic city in the galaxy! - It reminds me of an old video....

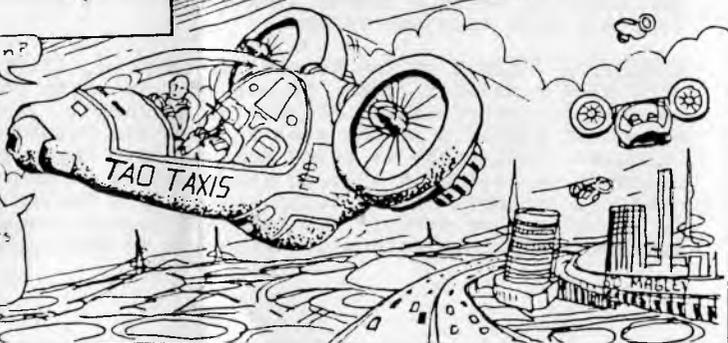
♪ BIRMINGHAM - ♪  
BIRMINGHAM -  
A WONDERFUL ♪  
TOWN! ♪

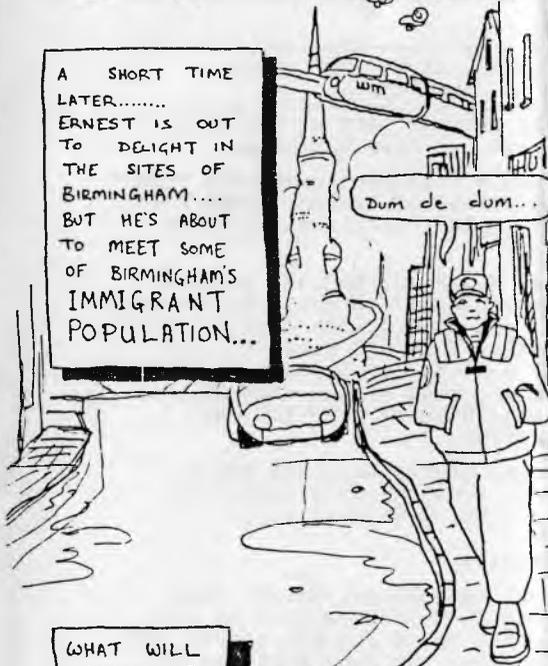
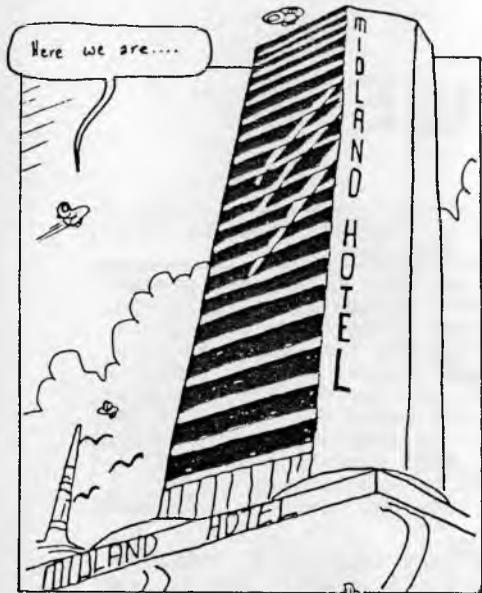
Just a few moments later.

where to spaceman?

The best hotel in town please....

I should have known. You British Space Fleet Guard types are always loaded with credit when you hit port.....





A SHORT TIME LATER..... ERNEST IS OUT TO DELIGHT IN THE SITES OF BIRMINGHAM.... BUT HE'S ABOUT TO MEET SOME OF BIRMINGHAM'S IMMIGRANT POPULATION...

WHAT WILL HAPPEN? FIND OUT NEXT ISSUE...

FOA:LDQVLDQ LHOZLGO!



# REVIEWS

---

TWILIGHT AT THE WELL OF SOULS by Jack L. Chalker, Penguin, £2.50, 304 pages.  
Reviewed by Anne Gay.

---

In which a rabbi becomes a pink centaur. This fifth and (probably) last volume of the Well World saga finds Nathan Brazil's forces assembled in the varied ecologies, ready to mend the Well World and the rest of the universe - providing the baddies don't stop them. Both sides have some interesting aliens: Chalker places no constraints on his imagination. There is, for example, the most entertaining sexual revolution I've ever heard of. The plot is reasonably well-paced and planned, though some of the motivations are a little specious. Every now and then there's a spot of moral-ethical lecturing which tends to be simplistic, a fine example of collected truisms and cliches, but the book ends with an aaah!

If you like gung-ho escapism and have read vols 1 - 4, TWILIGHT is good fun. But if you've read vols 1 - 4 no doubt you'll read vol 5 with-out my say-so anyway.

---

THE WHITE HART by Nancy Springer, Corgi, £1.75, 202 pages  
Reviewed by Anne Gay.

---

The white hart is a stag, mystically bearing part of the King of Isle's soul. As he has magical powers, so does the stag.

Bevan's god-like family have long since renounced earth and when the youth returns it is through the forces of destiny alone that he comes to defeat all evil (except Death) and claim the crown and the Queen.

Ms Springer's tale is a composite of Welsh and English legends stirred by Tolkien et al. An entertaining if slightly vapid tale, it's style is at first striking, a well-judged High Kingly sort of speech. It has one drawback in that tone and pace are more difficult to adopt, with the result that the most exciting events are badly related and don't necessarily seem highly significant. By the end of this first volume in The Book of Isle trilogy, I wished she had written in normal English.

A nice book if you like fantasy images neatly packaged and a pleasant, undemanding holiday if your brain needs a rest. It might be worth reading the second and third volumes too.

## Publicity details

Nancy Springer, a graduate of Gettysburg College, taught High School English and then began writing in her spare time in 1982. Her first novel - THE BOOK OF SUNS (the basis for THE SILVER SUN, the second of her triumphant Isle series) was soon followed by THE WHITE HART. Book 2 will be published by Corgi in November and book 3 - THE SABLE MOON - a month later. Her books, she says, are about "loneliness, comradeship, bravery and falling in love."

This is nearly a good book. Unfortunately the author has forced it into a science fiction rather than a fantasy mould by the presence of aliens and spaceships lurking just outside the solar system. It does not matter to this story that the fathers of Keva and Danior, the principal characters, are clones placed on this world to study the culture. When Keva discovers that her father travelled on believing her to be dead and leaving her to be brought up by weed-fishers she decides to search for him. Danior, unable to see a future for himself in his home valley, sets out to find one. Both young people are inexperienced and unsure of themselves. Keva in particular has to change her views on some of the beliefs of her childhood. Both learn and mature. There are many nice things, like the teaching pools of the red-mane herds and the ecology of the warm-streams. Others don't quite work: the act of killing a beast could release the body chemicals needed to change a girl into a bahrona - a woman able to store the sun's energy in special stones and release it at will, but the accompanying physical changes are a little implausible. Also, as this is the second volume in a trilogy, I would have preferred a prologue rather than a mass of information in chapter 2.

---

PAWN OF PROPHECY (258pp), QUEEN OF SORCERY (327pp), MAGICIAN'S GAMBIT (305pp) all by David Eddings, Corgi, £1.75 each  
Reviewed by Pauline Morgan

---

In a good series each book can be read and enjoyed in isolation but here someone has sliced one huge manuscript into five parts without any bridging material. These are the first three parts 'The Belgariad' which contains all the traditional elements of a fantasy novel. In PAWN OF PROPHECY we are introduced to an ordinary boy, Garion, who has been brought up in secrecy by the legendary sorceress Polgara. He finds himself caught up in a hunt for the stolen orb of Aldur. In this volume there is a certain charm and enough interest to hold the reader's attention, although it is obvious from early on that Garion will turn out to be the missing heir to the Rivan throne. The questing party increases in number in QUEEN OF SORCERY, picking up on the way the wilful princess Ce'Nedra, destined one suspects to become Garion's bride. They have adventures but the quest does not seem to progress much. The transition from this to the third, MAGICIAN'S GAMBIT, is abrupt. None of the characters are re-introduced, the action continues as if you had merely turned a page rather than waiting six months for its publication. It is a volume impossible to follow in isolation. The party continues to grow in size but with a sense of direction. The chief motivator of the quest, the wizard Belgarath, is trying to fulfil a prophecy. Now they venture into enemy territory in order to try and rescue the stolen Orb of Aldur. I don't think I'll bother to wait for the revelations to come; the hope in the first book has long ago been extinguished by predictability and I have lost interest.

---

MONKEY by Wu Ch'eng-en, translated by Arthur Waley, Unicorn, £2.95, 336 pages  
Reviewed by Pauline Morgan

---

This sixteenth-century Chinese novel is fun. Monkey is a creature that is born from a rock, becomes immortal and wreaks havoc in heaven. When he is finally captured by Buddha and

imprisoned under a mountain for five hundred years. It is only when he promises to accompany the priest, Tripitaka, to India to fetch some scriptures for the Chinese Emperor that he is let out. On the way he and his friends Pigsy and Sandy battle all kinds of monsters. This is the book on which the television series MONKEY was based and is very enjoyable, if bizarre, reading.

---

THE INCREDIBLE SHRINKING MAN by Richard Matheson, Corgi, £1.75, 188 pages  
Reviewed by Chris Morgan

---

You must have seen the film. In the old traditions of the unscientific SF of the 1930s a man begins to shrink at the rate of one seventh of an inch per day. If you accept it as fantasy it's a marvellously exciting story, even better in the novel than on the silver screen. Scott Carey's final week, at less than an

inch high, is graphically described, including the scaling of the gigantic cliffs (cellar furniture) and battles with a spider. In between are flash-backs to taller days. Matheson's style here is over sensational

and over emotional.  
It's fun, though.




---

BALANCE OF POWER by Brian M. Stableford, Hamlyn £1.75, 138 pages.  
Revised by Pauline Morgan

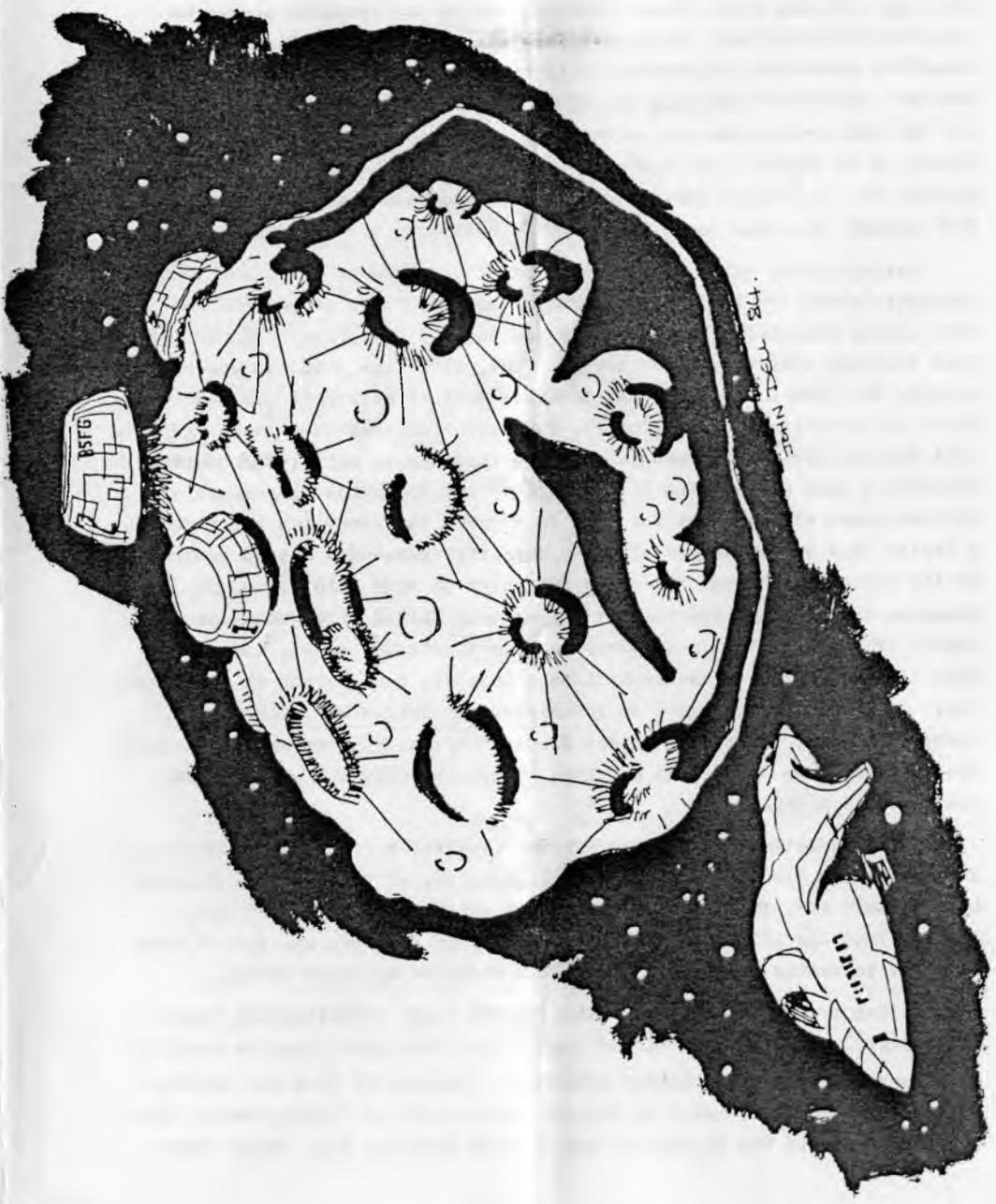
---

The fifth in the 'Daedalus Mission' series this is a good, fast paced adventure. The colony the crew of the Daedalus find on Attica is in trouble. It is losing its struggle with the environment. This can be put right but the only hope for the future is contact with the planet's other continent. Alexis Alexander and Mariel, an empath, from the Daedalus go with an expedition under sail. They find problems not only with the inhabitants but also with a mutinous crew.

---

#### BOOKS RECEIVED Continued...

THE INTEGRAL TREES by Larry Niven, Gollancz hardback, £8.95, 240 pages, published 23rd August. "For a long time the State used slower-than-light spacecraft to prepare their systems for colonisation by man. Normally the ramseeders travelled centuries-long circuits which began and ended at Earth. Normally the mixed crew of citizens and convicts remained with their ship. Normally ultimate control of the mission was exercised by a built in cyborg cop. When they find The Smoke Ring 'paradise' the crew flee to it, leaving behind only the cyborg cop. Five centuries pass and most of the mutineers' descendants forget about the humans. But somewhere, just outside the Smoke Ring, he waited..."



Bell 84.  
NINE

BSTG

THUNDER

stead he sent his buddy Norman Spinrad, who by all accounts proved an excellent surprise GoH. The ersatz Shaw claims that the ALBACON '84 committee knew about Ellison's inability to come (perhaps I should rephrase that?) - Ellison's impending non-arrival (?) as far back as February and not the week before the con as they claimed...and having stuck the knife firmly in he twists...and announces yet another bid for Eastercon '86, ALBACON 86 - a Glasgow based bid not to be confused with the other Scottish bid ALBACON III, also based in Glasgow...confusing up there isn't it?

Moving south, quite a bit south actually, there is more news from Australia about the truly terrific SHAW FUND. For those of you who haven't been paying attention to previous Jophan Reports I suppose I should explain that the SHAW FUND is yet another fan fund, this time with the aim of raising the cash to get the REAL Bob Shaw down to Melbourne for next years World SF Convention - AUSSIECON II. The Australian newszine 'Thyme' reports that Bob has decided to take part in the fundraising activities of this worthwhile fund himself and has "announced his intention to produce a stained glass window panel for sale to support the fund. Bob explained in a letter that he would have liked to have incorporated a map of Australia in the design, but found the shape difficult to work into glass. He suggests that we have the Gulf of Carpentaria filled with cement or beer cans." If you wish to donate money to this worthwhile cause, and at the same time to pick up a really hilarious booklet, send either £1 (unsigned copy) or £1.50 (signed copy) to Eve Harvey, 43 Harrow Rd., CARSHALTON, Surrey, SM5 3QH, for a copy of Bob Shaw's 'Serious Scientific Talks' from the Eastercons in 1982, 1983 and 1984. There are only a limited number available so hurry...

Still on matters antipodean 'Thyme' (Available from Roger Weddall c/o British Agents Judith Hanna and Joseph Nicholas, 22 Denbigh St., Pimlico, LONDON, SW1V 2ER, for trade or various other things - write and ask.) reports that the AUSSIECON II Chairperson, John Foyster, has had to step down due to family problems and has been replaced by David Grigg.

Moving closer to home, but still on the topic of Worldcons, (isn't it wonderful how all these varied topics just drop into place in such an organised manner - you'd almost believe I'd planned it this way wouldn't you? Oh well be like that.) in the very same issue of 'Thyme' daring Dave Langford leaps to the defence of the British Worldcon Bid, "Since Mike

Glyer has raised the question of how it comes about that both 1986 and 1987 conventions are campaigning with reference to the '50th anniversary of the first ever convention', I shall now clarify the point. It was all Sam Moskowitz's fault. Unable, for apparently chauvinistic reasons, to accept that the first con was held in Britain in January 1937, he insists on the honours going to the 1936 event. This consisted of a social outing of New York (I think) fans who visited Philadelphia, gathered in the home of a local fan, and as an afterthought declared the gathering to be a convention. 'A bit of officiality that gave them the uncontested title of the first convention in fan history', babbles Moskowitz. Nonsense, say I. A convention implies pre-organisation and, I rather think, the use of public facilities. Out upon this heresy!" Now whether you agree with Langford or that low colonial Moskowitz I don't care just as long as you send at least £1.00 to Malcolm Edwards, BRITAIN IN '87, 28 Duckett Road, London, N4 1BN, for pre-supporting membership of what should easily be the 1987 World SF Convention...

Remaining on what you might have guessed is one of my favourite topics - conventions, I have news of one convention that I forgot to mention last time, namely the 'national' convention of Wales CYMRUCON. Having inadvertently swapped places with NOVACON this year, the con will be held over the weekend of the 2nd of November at the Central Hotel in Cardiff. Attending membership £5 from 56 Honinton Rd., Llanrumney, Cardiff, CF3 9QL. The afore said NOVACON will be held a week later (9-11 Nov.) at the Grand Hotel in beautiful Birmingham, GoH Rob Holdstock, attending membership £6 to Ann Green, 11 Fox Green Crescent, Acocks Green, Birmingham, B27 7SD. This years NOVACON will be a truly amazing event which you really don't want to miss with a stupendous programme - of this you can be sure because yours truly is no longer responsible for organising it...

But moving on from the insular world of fandom and conventions and back to the ever fascinating world of entertainment, well television any way, we have news of a "sophisticated and sensitive" treatment of disparate characters coping with living in isolation in the aftermath of a nuclear war. The proposed sitcom is being touted around the US TV networks by Al Burton (whose credits include such sophisticated and sensitive works as 'Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman' and 'The Jeffersons') - but keep your fingers crossed, he hasn't found a buyer yet...

On this side of the Atlantic TV seems to have gone 'sci-fi' crazy again. Between them ITV and Channel Four are currently screening; 'He-Man

and Masters of the Universe', 'The Champions', 'Starstrider', 'Knight Rider', 'Inspector Gadget', 'The Addams Family', all SF cum fantasy related programmes, whilst the BBC pile it on with; 'The Tripods', 'Mighty Mouse', 'Dungeons and Dragons', 'Wacky Races', 'Star Trek', 'The Invisible Man', 'Liberal Party Assembly', 'Battle of the Planets', 'The Black Adder', 'The Martian Chronicles' and 'The Invaders'. Not a bad selection 15 or 16 programmes a week for a minority interest...and all pretty good viewing - if you're eight years old.

Now just a quick couple of items before I finish. Wolf von Witting the new official editor of EURAPA, the European Amateur Press Association, is looking to swell the ranks of the apa with more British SF fans. If you're interested contact Wolf c/o Hans-Jurgen Mader, Postfach 5126, D-6642 Mettlach 5, West Germany. Back in Brum The General Wolfe, meeting place for both the MiSFits and the Informal BSFG is still facing closure due to the Aston Science Park's desperate need for yet more large grass verges. MAKE YOUR PRESENCE FELT. Get down to the General Wolfe for either the next MiSFits meeting on Friday the 29th of September (around 8pm) or the next informal meeting of the BSFG on Friday 5th of October (again around 8pm). The General Wolfe is of course situated on the corner of Holt St. and Aston Road near Aston University, the Pot of Beer, Sack of Potatoes, the loathsome Science Park and myriad other landmarks...see you there.

Well that's your lot for now. I've got to get over to mein editor Graham now, and explain how the three sides I promised him the other night just grewed and grewed....

-- MARTIN TUDOR.

---

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to all contributors to this issue of the newsletter; Chris and Pauline Morgan; Martin Tudor for his marathon; John Dell for Brum: 2184 strip, and the illustrations on pages 1 and 13; Peter Weston; Lucy Huntzinger (illo page 4); Roger Peyton for the Andromeda Top Ten; the anonymous artists on pages 3 and 12 (anyone claim credit?); the publishers for their review books; and finally thanks to all of you for reading this far!