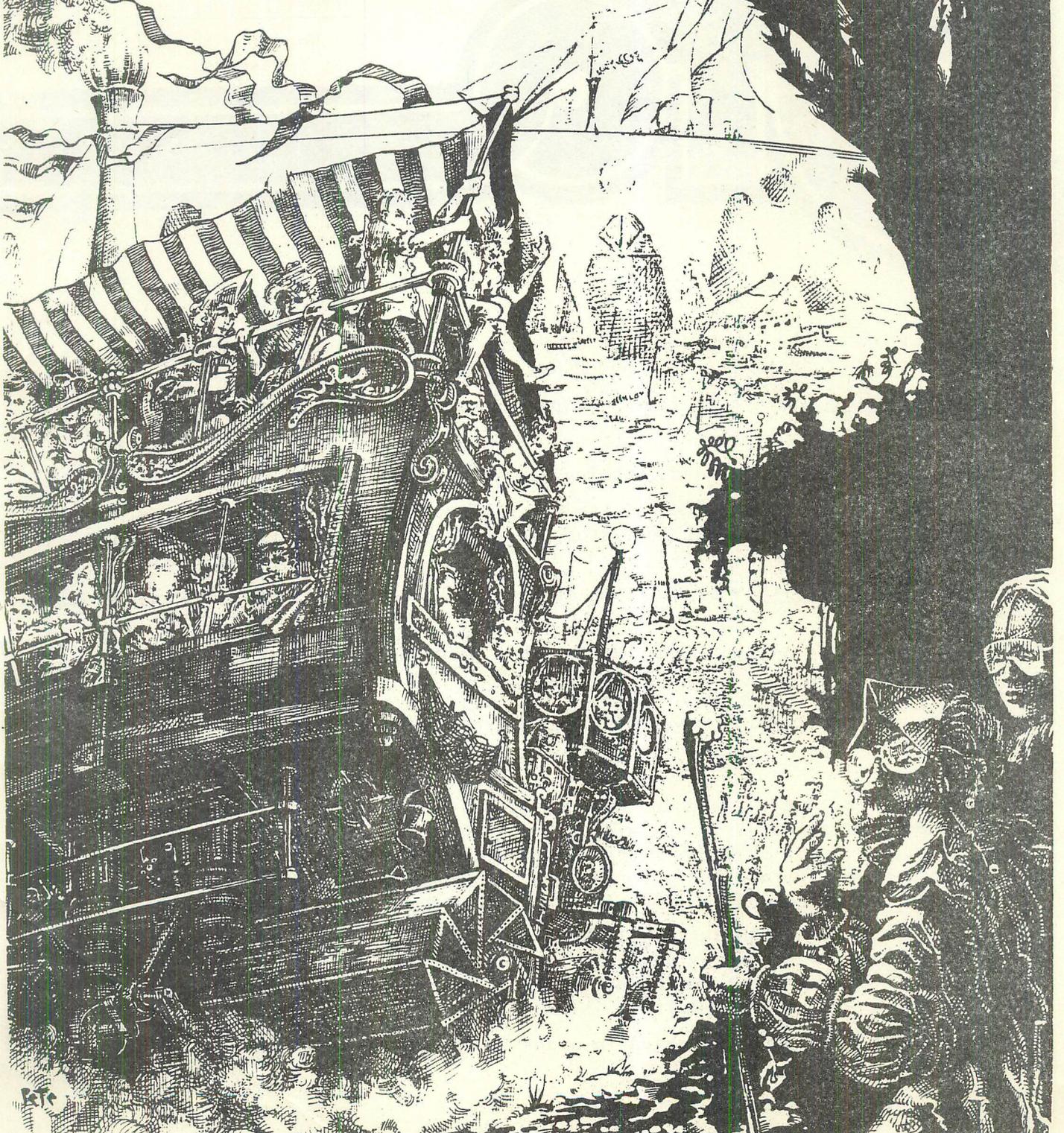


MATRIX

issue 46 • spring 1983



This is indeed MATRIX 46! This most excellent creation is the members news magazine of the BSFA, produced every two months to keep you up to date on SF events, media developments and anything reasonably contentious which the readership can come up with without needing legal aid.

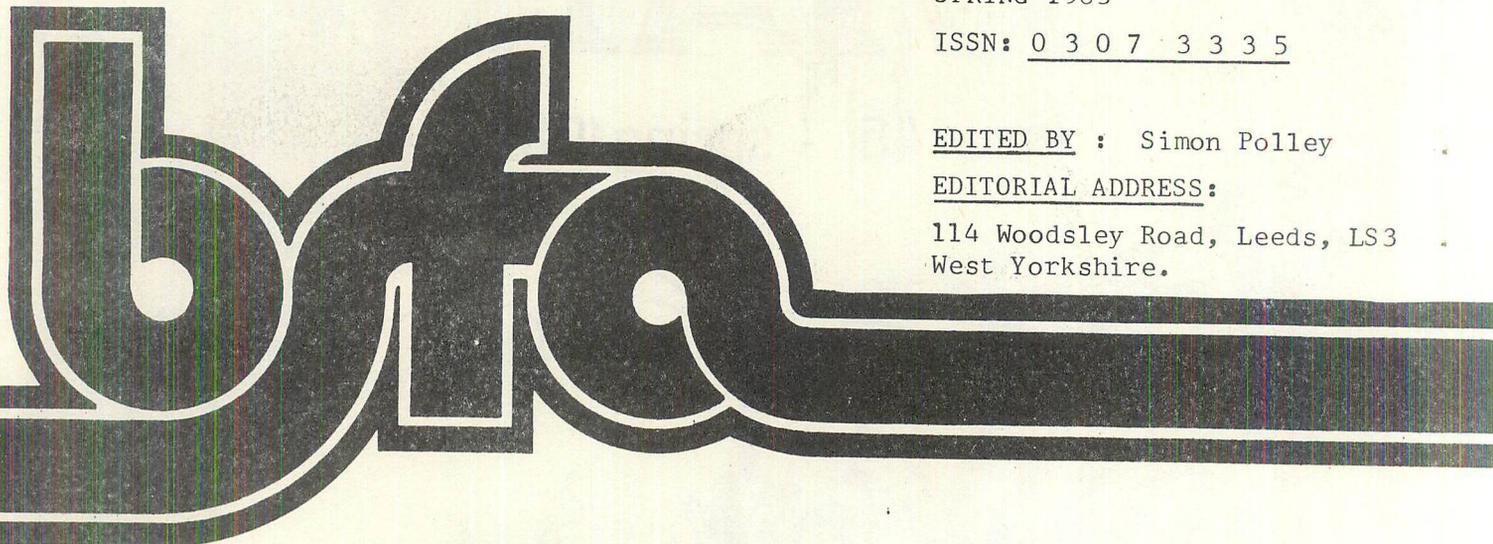
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EDITORIAL ADDRESS:

114 Woodsley Road, Leeds, LS3
West Yorkshire.



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Sandy Brown, 18 Gordon Terrace, Blantyre, Lanarkshire, G72 9NA or

Keith Freeman, 269 Wykeham Road, Reading, Berks, RG6 1PL

for further details on the BSFA and its activities. Sample mailings can be obtained for £1-50, the sum being deductible from the price of a full membership should one be taken out subsequently.

BSFA BACK NUMBER SERVICE - back issues of Matrix, Vector, Focus etc. are available from :

Roy Macinski, 2 Frogmill Cottages, Hurley, Nr. Maidenhead, Berks, SL6 5NH

CHAIRMAN of the BSFA is:

Alan Dorey, 22 Summerfield Drive, Middleton, Greater Manchester

Special thanks are due to John and Eve Harvey for their support (I promise to post it back soon!), Alan Dorey for passing all the relevant information and advice to yours truly, the Leeds SF Group for their tireless devotion to my alcohol consumption, and the noble contributors represented within these covers. Exceptionally special thanks to those unknown heroes who will be mailing Matrix 46 into the void for us.

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Some names have been left unchanged in order to spread as much scurrilous gossip as possible.

Matrix 46 : A Short List of the Bits to be Found Therein

.....being a careful and most assiduous attempt to catalogue and give zinospatial co-ordinates to a number of randomly generated elements which have adhered to this particular issue.....

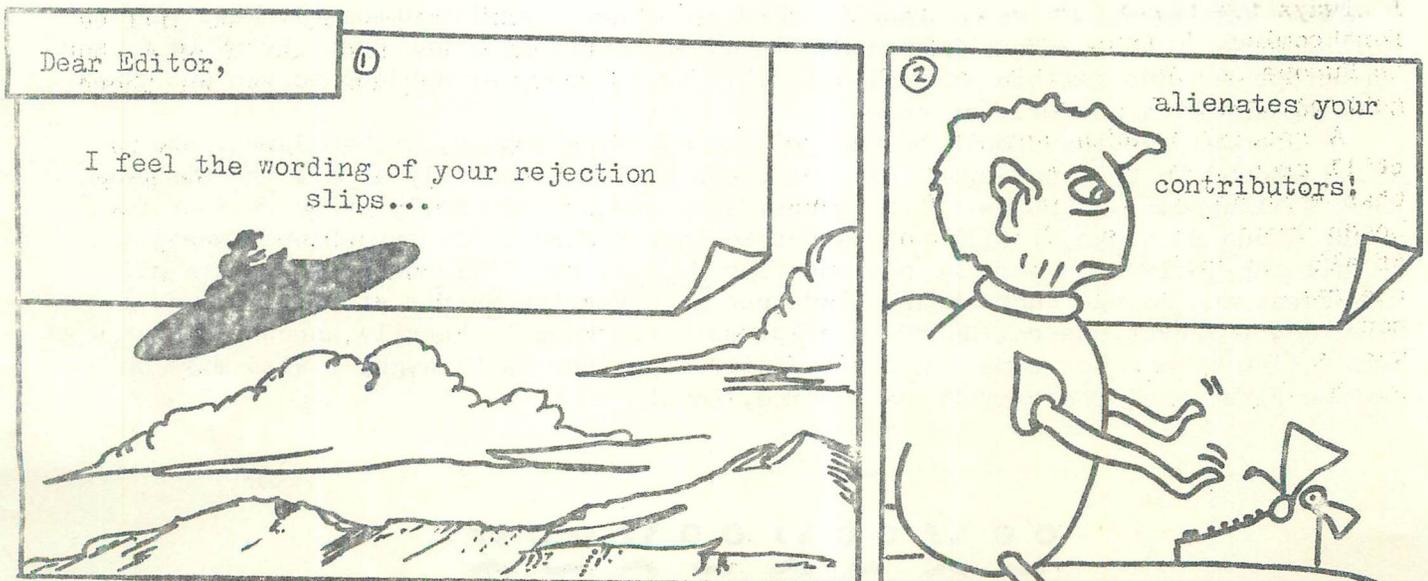
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D.West	P.20, 21, 22

"All the blame is mine, I'll bear the brunt of the whole lot, don't worry about me, I can manage, you've got to have a scapegoat..etc..etc..etc.....I'm not sure if I have mis-credited or misrepresented anyone, but the above should cover it, no?"

Martyred Editor.



EDITORIAL

A CAUTIONARY TALE

" Oh look - there's Sandy Brown now! " Eve cooed enthusiastically. " Why don't you pop over and join the BSFA? "

I peered feebly through the clouds of alcohol which happened to be occupying my eyeballs at the time and realised I couldn't see Eve that well, never mind Sandy. I made vague protestations about the inherent poverty of my system, the expenditure of energy needed to locate Sandy a little more precisely and so on. I then foolishly squeaked, in my usual commanding tones, that I wasn't sure I wanted to join anyway.

This was a bad move. Eve looked at me, and employed one of her Mark V stares. These are designed to convince you that you are about to undergo an Out-Of-Body Experience of the permanent kind. Hastily I reassessed the situation.

" Ah, er, yes, well there's always a cheque I suppose, and, er, I think I can just see a fragment of Sandy Brown's left leg protruding from that group in the corner, and, mm, I suppose it would be a little bit difficult to edit Matrix if I was not, so to speak.....Right! "

Thus it was that within a few months I not only joined the ranks of the faithful but found myself trapped inside a speeding Matrix with no seatbelt and no indicators. And it's all Eve Harvey's fault. Thanks, Eve. Ha!

THE ROAD AHEAD

This issue contains a number of bits and pieces which should have come out rather earlier this year, and a chunk here and there which had to be inserted at the last minute, so I won't make any great claims or heady pronouncements as yet. Apologies to all for the non-appearance of Matrix in the last mailing. Alan Dorey, who was filling in while an editor was chosen, had a lot of other things to juggle at the same time as trying to edit what material was available, and it proved impossible to get an issue to John and Eve in time. Howsomever, I hope a bright and bristly future awaits us - there are changes to come in issue 47 which should spark off a few comments, and I hope that all members will feel involved enough to tell me what they want to see in Matrix over the coming months. They may not get them, but at least I'll know whose toes I'm treading on when I shuffle things around. The emphasis must be on communication, sharing views, arguments and news with as wide an audience as possible. This means that I need information from all active groups in the UK, and all of us involved in Matrix would like to see copies of fannish and serious zines flooding in for review and listing (or even fannish serious zines - I always tie myself in knots when it comes to these classifications!). News will be forthcoming, I hope, about happenings in other countries - not just the US of A, but in Europe and Australasia as well. All this is, of course, subject to you out there getting involved and writing to us!

A special mention should be made of the outgoing editor, Graham James, who is still around in this wonderful City of Leeds to laugh heartily at all the mistakes that will appear in the next few issues. As I see him virtually every week at the Leeds Group meetings, I will not bother to insert a suitably sycophantic mention of all the jolly good work he has done for Matrix, but I'll certainly salute all the sweat and aarrgh that he and Linda put into keeping Matrix storming along. I now know why everyone collapsed in helpless mirth when I cheerily announced that I was taking it on. How come I not only fail to get the last laugh, I also miss out on the first one? There ain't no justice, Lord!





NEWS SUPPLIED BY:

Jim Barker, Alan Dorey,
Joe Nicholas, The Editor.
Nik morton.

BSFA NEWS

As this is being written, Paul Kincaid is thinking of relinquishing the post of Vector features editor - due to pressure of work. Thus Geoff Rippington is looking for someone to take over the role. A few people have already expressed interest, but if anyone else is interested, it might be worth dropping Geoff a line at the Vector editorial address. In addition, our book-reviewing arrangements are being overhauled, and a new reviewing post could be created - Joe Nicholas expanded on various aspects of this in the last Paperback Inferno. More news to follow. As for Matrix itself, our regular Fanzine Reviewer is stepping down and a roving-eye system being brought in. Whilst I hope that Martin will be producing further pieces every so often for us, if anyone is interested in doing fanzine reviews on a one batch basis, please get in touch as soon as possible. The idea is to let a different reviewer express his views on the currently available fanzines each issue, with hopefully a wider coverage of fannish output and a number of startlingly different opinions.

Alan tells me that congratulations are in order for Kevin Smith, BSFA Company Secretary, and Diana Reed who recently announced their engagement. At least, it was recently when I heard about it!

Jim Barker writes with news of BSFA Regional meetings:

" The first Scottish BSFA meeting got off to a good start in Glasgow, with members showing up from the local group, from Edinburgh and a couple of solitary members from Dundee and Falkirk. Most of the meeting consisted of a discussion of the viability of such meetings and the direction that future meetings should take.

The general feeling was that regular meetings along the line of a combination BSFA One Tun would be a good thing though they shouldn't necessarily be restricted purely to BSFA members. Various ideas were discussed for future programme items along with suggestions for Guest Speakers (one of whom will be available, hopefully, for the next Glasgow Meeting).

For more details, please feel free to contact me at 113 Windsor Road, Falkirk, Stirlingshire, FK1 5DB. Tel. Falkirk 35452. "

The dazzling new BSFA poster is now ready for those who would like copies. Contact Alan Dorey for supplies. Size A3, they come in two styles - BSFA advert for sticking up in libraries, bookshops and so on, and also a BSFA outline poster with a blank space for advertising local groups and meetings. Please send LARGE STAMPED S.A.E. when applying. The new BSFA badge is imminent also.

OUT AND ABOUT

SF Chronicle editor Andy Porter's tip for the 1983 Hugo Award is (wait for it) L. Ron Hubbard's 800 page space opera Battlefield Earth - not because it will actually be the best book of the year but because thousands of his followers will join the 1983 Worldcon in Baltimore, Constellation, and vote it the trophy on the orders of the Church of Scientology (well, if the Nebula can be rigged....). The really interesting thing about his comments though (in the January 1983 issue) is that this is implied rather than stated overtly, and surrounded by qualifiers to the effect that the book may not be that bad, and that he's only suggesting its " victory " as a possibility.... due no doubt to the different libel laws pertaining in the USA, and (even less doubtfully)

the Church of Scientology's incredible touchiness about less-than-favourable printed comments on it (they sue at the drop of a hat, don't you know). But is Hubbard still alive? The 19th December 1982 Observer carried a fascinating news item to the effect that his estranged son is litigating for the title to his millions on the grounds that he died some years ago and the Church of Scientology has been misappropriating his fortune. The only evidence that the Church has so far produced to counter these claims is an autographed copy of the afore-mentioned book, Hubbard having adopted the mantle of the reclusive Howard Hughes and being in total hiding from everyone-including, one assumes, the various US Grand Juries that would like to subpoena him to give evidence for all sorts of Scientological robberies and break-ins and things...

Mack Reynolds recently underwent surgery for the removal of a cancerous growth of the oesophagus; when the intravenous tubing was later removed, on 22nd November 1982, all traces of the cancer seemed to have disappeared. He was due to be released from hospital in early December 1982, and will be recuperating at his home in Mexico. He recently sold three novels to Tor Books: Home Sweet Home, Eternity and one called The Lagrangists.

Philip Morris, masterminds of the " Come to Cancer Country " tobacco campaign, are sponsoring a line of SF books in France, called " Super Lights", to be published by Press de la Cite in Paris. " Super Lights", by a coincidence too astonishing to be believable, is also the name of their new cigarette...Pascal Thomas, what can you tell us about this shameless hype?

The contents of Maxim Jakubowski's two-volume fantasy anthology Lands of Never and Beyond the Lands of Never , to be published here by Allen and Unwin in 1983, are as follows: first volume- Dancers in the Time Flux by Robert Silverberg, The Museum Bell by William Horwood, The Coming of the Starborn by Joy Chant, Report on an Unidentified Space Station by J.G.Ballard, The Rites of Winter by Chris Evans, In The Mirror of Earth by Ian Watson, When All Else Fails by John Grant (a pseudonym for ex- David & Charles editor Paul Begg), When Coyote Takes Back the World by Steve Rasnic Tem, The Bridegroom by Angela Carter, The Girl Who Sang by Brian Aldiss; second volume- Draco Draco by Tanith Lee, Caves by Jane Gaskell, The Last of His Breed by Rob Chilson, The House That Joachim Jacober Built by Garry Kilworth, Hode of The High Place by Jessica Amanda Salmonson, Daniel the Painter by Paul Ableman, The Girl Who Went to the Rich Neighbourhood by Rachel Pollack, Oblique Strategies by Maxim Jakubowski (shurely shome mishtake?), The Boy Who Jumped the Rapids by Rob Holdstock, In the Place of Power by Dave (Let's hear it for the Deaf Man) Langford.

Berkley Books, in the USA, has bought Robin McKinley's The Blue Sword, Rob Holdstock's Mythago Wood (a novel developed from the BSFA Award-winning short story of the same name) the Sun's End trilogy by Richard Lupoff, and Greg Bear's Blood Music and Infinity Concerto.

Warner Books has bought the rights to some 2000 (yes!) titles on the Fawcett/ Popular Library backlist; the remaining 500 (yes!) titles will be sold individually. Thus are the mighty fallen: Popular Library was all that remained of the once galaxy-spanning Standard Magazines Empire. Andy Porter wonders what sort of killing is to be made from the rights still lying around on all those magazines and stories..... Speaking of magazines, Sheldon Jaffrey and Roy Torgeson have negotiated to revive Weird Tales as an original fantasy anthology and are now looking for stories in the mold of " Peter Straub, Dennis Etchison, Steve Rasnic Tem, Tanith Lee and Ramsey Campbell". Get your plagiarising caps on.

Joe Haldeman delivered the sequel to Worlds, Worlds Apart, to Viking Press at the end of October 1982 - if it turns into a trilogy, the third volume will no doubt be entitled Worlds Together in order to keep up the dumbness quotient, you bet.

The sequel to Beyond the Blue Event Horizon, on which Frederik Pohl was reported to be working last issue, is entitled The Last Heechee; hope it lives up to its title, and then he'll go on to write something else for a change.

Dave Langford's rilly terrific The Space Eater, featuring the same cover as the Arrow Arrow edition (for reasons beyond even Dave's understanding), will be published in the USA by Timescape books in early 1983.

FORTHCOMING AMERICAN PAPERBACKS

- From Ace: Joe Haldeman & Jack Haldeman: There Is No Darkness
H. Beam Piper: The Worlds of H. Beam Piper
Avram Davidson: The Phoenix and the Mirror
Harlan Ellison: Web of the City
Jessica Amanda Salmonson: Heroic Visions (edited by JAS)
Keith Laumer: Star Colony
Harlan Ellison & others: Partners in Wonder
Clifford Simak: The Trouble With Tyche
Harlan Ellison: Gentleman Junkie
- From Bantam: Samuel Delany: Neveryona
Stephen Leigh: Dance of the Hag
Robert Silverberg: The World Inside
Ray Bradbury: The Machineries of Joy
- From Berkley: Orson Scott Card: Hart's Hope
Robert Thurston: A Set of Wheels
LISA TUTTLE!!!: Familiar Spirit
Suzette Haden Elgin: Twelve Fair Kingdoms
Dean R. Koontz: Night Chills
Frank Herbert: The White Plague
Jack Vance: Lyonesse
- From DAW: Jo Clayton: Moonscatter
Brian Stableford: The Gates of Eden
Brian N. Ball: The Regiments of Night
Philip K. Dick: The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch
Gordon Dickson: Mutants
C. J. Cherryh: The Dreamstone
- From Timescape: Marion Dimmer Bradley: Web of Light
M. J. Harrison: The Floating Gods (poss. a retitling of In Viriconium)
Pamela Sargent: The Golden Space
Robin Bailey: Frost
A. E. Van Vogt: Renaissance
Michael Bishop: No Enemy But Time
Philip K. Dick: Transmigration of Timothy Archer
Jack Williamson: The Legion of Space
Nancy Springer: The Golden Swan
- From Tor: Harry Harrison: A Rebel in Time
Jerry Pournelle: There will be War (has there ever been a more
obvious conjunction of title
and author?)
J. Dalmas: The Varkaus Conspiracy
Poul Anderson: Twilight World
Fred Saberhagen: The First Book of Swords
David Drake: Skyripper
Cyril Judd (C. M. Kornbluth & Judith Merril): Gunner Cade

ANDROMEDA BOOKSHOP'S BESTSELLERS FOR JANUARY (remember January?)

- 1) Harry Harrison: The Stainless Steel Rat for President
- 2) Colin Kapp: Starsearch (Cageworld 4)
- 3) Terry Brooks: The Elfstones of Shannara (please tell me this is
a joke?)
- 4) Daniel Keyes: The Fifth Sally
- 5) = Brian Daley: Tron
= Jerome Agel: Making of Kubrick's 2001
- 7) Anne McCaffrey: The Crystal Singer
- 8) = Margaret Tabor: Eclipse
= Gordon McGill: Armageddon 2000 (Omen 4)
- 10) Robert Holdstock: Where Time Winds Blow

(Info. courtesy of the
Birmingham SF Group.)

FORTHCOMING UK TITLES

APRIL: Jeremy Lucas's Whale (Sphere), a first novel about a family of killer whales told from their viewpoint, critically acclaimed when Cape published the Hb. Maureen Duffy: Gor Saga (Methuen, £2-50) - a 'futuristic novel of a half-human, half-gorilla's struggle for acceptance by his fellows'. Robin Lloyd Jones: Lord of the Dance (Arena £2-50) - a 'full Rabelaisian romp, a rich tale set in 16th century India as an English surgeon searches for a treatment for leprosy to cure his wife. Accompanying him is his boyhood friend, now a priest, who has come to save Indian souls'. Robie Macauley: A Secret History of Time to Come (Corgi £1-95) - 'after the collapse of civilisation as we know it, a man fights for survival'; sounds terrific. Sharon Green's The Warrior Within is the first of a series in similar vein to the Gor books (aaarrgh!) but features heroines rather than heroes. (My April/May publicity material from Star books was a real gem. Underneath the aforementioned amazonian saga was the caption " A family torn apart by conflicts of love and power - and the rise of the Nazis" which didn't fit with the brazen, bronze-breasted beauty on the cover really. Shome mishtake, I fear. The cover illo of Dr. Who: Meglos nicely caught Tom Baker's features whilst proclaiming underneath " The new Dr. Who adventure featuring Peter Davison". The best bit was under Sharon Green's Jalav , where it said " The brilliant new SF author to rival John Norman" - I mean, you could probably sue for that!))

MAY: Raymond Briggs: When the Wind Blows (Penguin, £1-95) - his anti-nuclear comic strip, large format. SIOP (Single Integrated Operational Plan) by Peter Pringle and William Arkin (Sphere £2-95) is a study of the West's plans for avoiding nuclear war with the USSR. Robert Bloch: Psycho 2 (Corgi £1-50) - with a film to follow. Also, of course, Star Wars 3: Return of the Jedi. Marion Bradley: The Mists of Avalon 'a tale of magic and wonder through the lives and visions of women central to the Arthurian legend'. Brother Esau by Orgill and Gribben (Sphere £1-75) - 'archaeologists find in the Himalayas a half-man, half-ape, and through political and scientific entanglements, the female doctor in charge is determined that the creature shall go free'. If a theme sells, repeat it, thus - Shark by Robin Browne (Sphere £1-75) - 'a story of something as old as the Ice Age rising from a 30,000ft abyss in the ocean floor and wrecking a US submarine' ((can't be all bad, then?))).

JUNE: First volume of the famous Brian Aldiss' epic trilogy, Helliconia Spring (Granada) which he will promote - the publishers are already making a colourful fuss about it anyway. Try also The Book of Laughter and Forgetting by Milan Kundera (King Penguin £2-50) and The Voices of the Dead by Autran Dourado (Zenith £2-50). For all those members who are heavily into seeking for all the lost moments of their past ((usually somewhere between ten pints and fifteen pints)) there are the three volumes of Proust's Remembrance of Things Youknowwhat coming out at £5-95 each, which is pretty good value.

JULY: General Sir John Hackett's World War III Part 2 (NEL) is due. The mind boggles - will there be an interval between parts 1 and 2 I wonder....

CONVENTION NEWS

Still to come.....

BECCON '83 at the Essex Crest Hotel, Basildon, Essex, from July 29th to 31st 1983. Details from Becon, The Heights, Northolt, Middx, UB5 4BU.

UNICON 4 at the University of Essex from September 2nd to 4th. Guest of Honour is apparently John Sladek. Details from 11A Beverley Road, Colchester, Essex CO3 3NG.

Also ETHNICON (details over page) in Hull, where I used to live when it were t'East Riding like, not this 'Umberside crap, a city with at least one good pub in it (if it is still standing) and a wide variety of interesting young thugs and bombsites - although I'm told they've cleaned it up a lot; NOVACON at the Royal Angus Hotel in Birmingham in the first weekend of November (more details will be around soon) and SILICON at the Grosvenor Hotel in Jesmond, Newcastle-upon-Tyne over August Bank Holiday weekend. Overseas events include WORLDCON 41 in Baltimore, USA, from September 1st to 5th, and ORWELLCON 1983 , at Antwerp University, Belgium from November 11th to 13th. Why are the Belgians always so far ahead of everyone?

Conventions in 1984 will have been done to death at ALBACON, so I'll give all that a miss!

.. so what are YOU doing in '85?

Isn't it about time you gave a bit of thought to the year George Orwell so blatantly ignored? Let's face it, after all those years you've spent with the spectre of 1984 hanging over you (and we don't just mean the Brighton Metropole) you might feel like enjoying yourself by the time 1985 comes along. Well, you couldn't do better than to spend your Easter in the laid-back, fun-loving, stimulating atmosphere of the Leeds Dragonara Hotel!

If you weren't at Yorcon 1 in '79 or Yorcon 2 in '81, then you won't know about the Dragonara's large relaxing bar area and its sympathetic management. You probably won't have heard about its large car park or its close proximity to the railway and coach stations. You may not even realise that Leeds is pretty damned near the centre of the British Isles and therefore in the most convenient location for the greatest number of con-goers. Still, you can always ask someone who did go, and I think they'll bear us out.

The Dragonara can accomodate over 400 guests and there's a large overflow hotel only a few minutes walk away. John Hepworth, the Dragonara's representative, is overjoyed at the prospect of having us back (could it be anything to do with the amount of alcohol we consumed?) and has promised highly competitive room rates. Not only that, but as we're aware there's not a lot of money floating around nowadays for most of us, we're determined to keep the registration fee as low as possible and to give a concessionary rate for the unemployed (we probably all will be by 1985!).

We've assembled a committee that's a fine balance between experience and youthful enthusiasm, and we've every intention of building on the success of the previous Yorcons, two of the most popular cons in living memory (according to the 1981 Silicon poll), to produce a con that's going to make 1985 the memorable year from now on. OK, so the first two Yorcons weren't quite perfect- well, we've been saving that for.....

YORCON 3

The Committee includes: Mike Ford, Elaine Goswell, Graham James, Linda James, Pete Lyon, Simon Ounsley and Simon Polley.

Pre-supporting Membership (21) to:

Mike Ford, 45 Harold Mount, Leeds LS6, West Yorkshire.

COMING SOON TO A CITY NEAR YOU..

ETHNICON

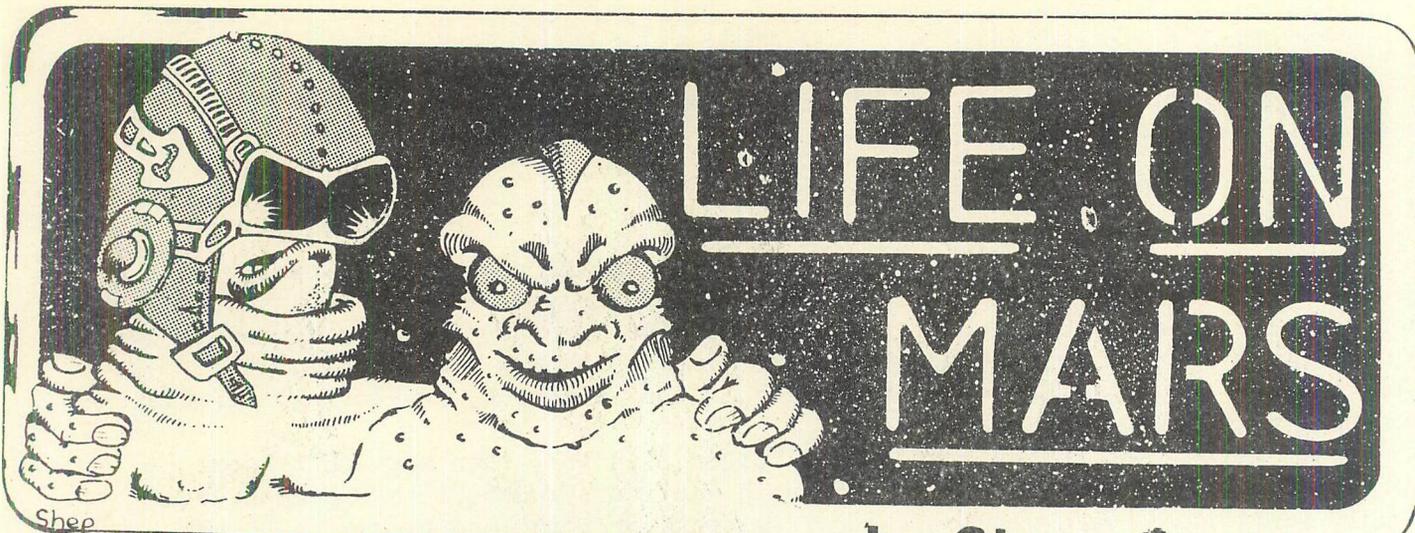
Details from - Mr.G.Derrick, 98 Cardigan Road, Hull, North Humberside.

--- Presented by the Hull University Union Science Fiction Society (HUUSFS) on Saturday 7th May 1983. HUUSFS write:

"HULL? WHERE THE HELL'S THAT?" - This is the general reaction from most people when our wonderful little city is mentioned. Those who have heard of it, but who have never been there, visualise it as a run down fishing port on the end of a railway line, but this is far from true.

Apart from the famous bridge (surely you've heard of that?) this city is full of surprises. For example, the gothic floodlit fountains full of flowers in one quarter, and the library theatre which shows films that the censors wouldn't even rate as XX.

However, the height of Ethnicity in Hull is the Hull University Union Science Fiction Society. HUUSFS, or Who Suffers? - that's us. As most of us here regard Hull as the navel of the Cosmos, we thought it was about time that we got the place on the Convention circuit! "



by Steve Green

January is a notoriously quiet month for news - everybody's far too shattered after the Christmas and New Year revelrie to manage anything newsworthy - and much the same is true of SF fandom. In the two years I've produced this column, I've yet to be mildly surprsied by any of fandom's post-yuletide activities.

Unltil the Birmingham SF Group elections on January 21st, that is. To the utter bewilderment of the more anachronistic members, not to mention the delight of the fannish underground, Vernon "chairman or nothing" Brown was toppled from his throne and reactivated trufan Peter Weston installed in command. Celebrations afterwards rivalled those in the streets after the rise to power of the socialist government in Spain...In the hours that followed, Pauline Morgan narrowly held her seat as newsletter editor against Eunice Pearson (then offered the post of assistant editor), Chris Suslowicz and Margaret Thorpe retained as secretary and treasurer respectively, Dean Bisseker brought in as publicity officer (hardly the easiest job whilst the BSFG continues to meet at the remote Ivy Bush Pub in Edgbaston) and Phill Probert confirmed as Novacon 13 chairman. The bloodstains will take a while to dry, but the mood amongst the membership hasn't been so optimistic since I joined six years ago.

Meantime the Solihull Group has rearranged its meetings to the second and fourth Sundays each month, at the Red House, Solihull; the group's fanzine Twilight Zine is available for £1/6 issues or selected trade - issue 2 features Leroy Kettle's FGH speech from Unicon 3.

The Colchester Group now meets at member's homes, explained Alex Stewart at Cymrucon 2 "because pubs in Colchester shut at 10.30 and we were pissed off with being thrown out". As well as organising the CSFG orgies on alternate Fridays, Alex is currently hard at work on Unicon 4. Potential bids for Unicon 5 include Oxford and Stoke-on-Trent. Alex also informs me that the Southend Group meets on Sunday afternoons and quite impressed him with their enthusiasm: "None of them are very fannish apparently - in fact they didn't even know the BSFA existed! and there's a high proportion of teenage trekkies, but we hope to guide them to the paths of true fannish enlightenment. In the meantime, the guy running it is Joe Beadle, whose phone number is 615233.

STOP PRESS: Unicon 4 FGoH will be Ken Slater; "Special Guest" honorary Solihull Grouper Garry Kilworth.

STEVE GREEN

IMPORTANT

Next issue LIFE ON MARS presents its annual clubs round-up; will all Chairman and/or Publicity Officers please contact the address below with updates on British SF groups since the last supplement (M41)
Steve Green,
11 Fox Green Crescent, Acocks Green, BIRMINGHAM, B27 7SD

Down Palace Walls

Right up to deadline I was convinced that this column would be dominated by negativity. The prospect was sufficiently depressing to prevent the committing of this review to paper in the vain hope that something might turn up. Every day brought the downer closer to home. Then, at the fifty ninth minute of the eleventh hour (who's writing this script, Howard Hawks?) came the cavalry in the shapely forms of Eve Harvey's Wallbanger 7 and Simon Ounsley's Still it Moves 3. Phew! Saved, and only an arrow through my hat.

I have remarked before on the merits of Wallbanger. It is a friendly zine which, while not reaching the heights that others sometimes reach, maintains a civilized, reliable maturity which is rarely matched. Issue 7 (dubbed 'The Southern Comfort Special' for reasons, as Eve remarks, long since overtaken by time and circumstance) has Eve herself, Pam Wells and Jim Barker tackling suitably fannish topics - cons, booze and parties - and John Harvey takes us to see the Stones at Wembley. Less fannishly, Paul Kincaid takes us to the races in a way so familiar to anyone who has ventured onto the turf as an interested, if bemused, outsider. Who needs aliens? We have the denizens of the Silver Ring! Then Judith Hanna takes the baseball bat of Feminist sensibility to such devious targets as Anne McCaffrey and Barbara Cartland. Only at the very end does she indicate that she is aware that her dogma has within it the seeds of something just as rank and anti-human as anything from the pen of, say, Heinlein. There is a lot I could say about the futility of labelling as a substitute for real and (self) critical analysis, but I will spare you that and merely advise that Judith's article be read in conjunction with Joseph Nicholas' transcribed speech in Death Rays 5. Food for thought there.

All of which is fair enough but hardly sufficient to deter the diligent critic from doing his duty, however unpleasant. But there is more in Wallbanger 7. There are 'Letters from America', penned by Alan Ferguson. I had previously regarded Alan as an interesting enough guy to talk to but someone who seemed to lose his grip whenever sat before a typewriter, probably as a consequence of an apparent determination to be fashionable and 'provocative'. Here, and in the latest Second Hand Wave, Alan shows himself capable of being an essayist of some distinction. In 'Letters ...' he has that most hackneyed of topics - 'What I did on my Holidays' - and takes us on a Ferguson tour of the U.S.A., impressionistically. This, again, is by no means a novelty, but Alan shows the intellectual restraint to present only those of his remembered images which he believes, rather than hopes, will be of interest to his reader. He also has the verbal economy to carry us from West Coast to East in 24 brief paragraphs. This may not be the most comprehensive of holiday recollections but it has power simply because Alan has given an evocative, sharp indication of how he saw the places and the people and, in so doing, manages to make sights not perhaps unknown to his reader something fresh and remarkable simply by the personal intimacy of the descriptions. This is most definitely a goodie, and well worth searching out.

Simon Ounsley, while towards the farther end of the verbal economy scale, has also taken one of the least promising of topics - moving home - and yet he too decks his familiar happenings in clothes novel enough to hold the reader all the way through 'A Case of Home-icide', and it's associated piece, 'Burnham Wood - a travelogue', in Still it Moves 3. I have no doubt that the events of Simon's move did not take place as described. Anglepoise lamps do not position themselves '... halfway up the drainpipe', not even in Leeds 6, not even in the time of a former occupant of 13a Cardigan Road who drew not one sober breath in the years I knew him. Be that as it may, most of us who have moved home will recognise the propensity of inanimate objects to take on a malign purpose of their own, and the suspicion that one is the butt of a conspiracy taking in everything from your domestic appliances to - in the case of my new neighbour - the elements themselves. In 'A Case ...' Simon demonstrates that it is possible

to take a topic which has been done to death and mint it anew by the application of that personal touch.

In the remainder of Still it Moves Simon Polley shares his enthusiasm for John Constable, Alan Ferguson provides a relatively mundane account of life among real folk folk (i.e. the ones who know that pewter tankards have uses other than hanging at the belt over Cambridge weekend) and the loccol is long but nevertheless interesting, largely because the correspondents have something to say other than what a fine fellow is Simon (not that his correspondents would tell him that, even if they thought it!), and add to what was said in issue 2 by their own anecdote, experience and opinion. The whole issue is topped off by Simon regaling us with the book of the making of the now purloined megastar video 'Ballards', during which he succeeds in making a potentially far more interesting topic than moving house considerably more boring. Oh well, you can't win 'em all, unless your name is ...

That sentence might well have been concluded by the name 'Malcolm Edwards', at least in a fannish content, until recently. Tappen numbers 1 to 4 were indeed fanzines of quality and distinction, even if the presence of Leroy Kettle prevented the addition of 'taste' to that list. What a disappointment, then, is Tappen 5. It begins well enough with regulars Chris Atkinson, on the subject of sexual harrassment, and Chris Evans, on the subject of canine harrassment. Perhaps these are not the best work of either writer but both pieces are still well crafted and stimulating reading. Then Malcolm himself disports himself on various aspects of literature, not to mention fatherhood. At the end comes a barrage of poisoned darts from Leroy Kettle, which is as good a way to end a zine as any, and better than most. What spoils it all are those 26 pages keeping the beginning apart from the end. Malcolm himself describes this as '... the D. West monstrosity.' He said it. This is a monstrosity, 26 pages of whining self pity and literary flatulence from a man whose major problems appear to be - on the evidence of this piece - living up to his own, assiduously fostered, fannish image and coping with the physical and financial consequences of his next excess. That he dots this desert of a piece with occasional eruptions of coherently expressed incisive thought and even wit only demonstrates more vividly the bankruptcy of the rest. Does anyone find this crap interesting, other than his happy little band of sycophants? I doubt whether he cares. In which case why should anyone else?

And so, on to the list. I had thought that the pile was a little smaller than it has been but on counting I discover 30 zines lurking there. That works out at one every other day, you busy people.

Ansible 30. Dave Langford, 94 London Road, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 5AU, U.K. £1 for 4 issues.

The zine which tells you what is happening where, to whom, why, and who will be picking up the bill; or would be, if only the universe were better ordered. It's been said before, this is indispensable.

Crab Droppings 1, 2. Simon Ounsley, 21 The Village Street, Leeds LS4 2PR, U.K. Availability? Ask Simon.

This is Simon's entry into the Pong substitute stakes, i.e. a regular, small genzine. Thus far it is remarkably parochial and not that entertaining, but I expect it to improve.

Death Rays 5. John Bark (for the South Hants Science Fiction Group) 5 Bryerley Close, Westbourne, Emsworth, Hants, PO10 8TS, U.K. Free to members, 50p per issue, £1.50 per four, or 'the usual'.

This issue is dominated by a transcript of Joseph Nicholas' 'Every Child's Guide to SF Criticism', which is rather more interesting than some of his critics might expect. There are also rather shorter contributions from Philip Plumbly (who may not be that fluent a writer, but is not afraid to put his heart into it), John Bark and Mike Cheater. As usual, a nicely produced, low key zine.

Dernier Salon Avant L'Auteroute 6, 7. Pascal J. Thomas, 11bis rue Vasco de Gama, 75015, Paris, France. Try 'the usual'.

Pascal's brief genzine (in French, as might be guessed from the title) just about manages to encompass the world within its pages.

Dragon Lords 13. Mike Lewis, 5 Yew Tree Close, Broadstairs, Kent, CT10 2LR, U.K. 60 pence per issue.

A nicely produced zine devoted to gaming (Dungeons and Dragon etc. rather than gaming) with very much the committed hobbyist viewpoint. Of interest to anyone who takes the pursuit seriously.

Electric Vulture 1. Andy Hobbs, 2 Post Office Yard, Hoveringham, Notts, NG14 7JR, U.K.. The usual, or stamps.

This is Andy's first attempt at a personalzine, and he has not yet found his own voice as he relentlessly seeks for fannish street credibility. Below the surface lurks an interesting individual - I think. Hope he doesn't drown before making it to the surface.

Fanzine Fanatique Quarterly. Keith and Rosemary Walker, 6 Vine Street, GREAVES, Lancaster, LA1 4UF, England. The usual - I think.

Walkerzines are beyond me. Slovenly thought expressed badly and duplicated atrociously. He thinks I'm pretentious. I suspect he doesn't know the meaning of the word. Oh well, he keeps on pumping them out so he must get satisfaction from it all.

Felicity. Jimmy Robertson, 27 Green Street, Glasgow, G40 2HN, U.K.

Ask the man, or 'the usual'.

A deliberately revelatory zine with items from Jimmy on pulling birds and the class struggle in the Glasgow of his youth, Joan Patterson on the psychology of weight loss, Phil Palmer on 'toy' soldiery, and Alan Ferguson on sex with another man's wife. You see, fandom isn't all booze and falling over.

Seriously, and this is a serious zine, those who have read this will need no recommendation from me and those of you who have not read it are advised to do so as soon as possible - if you have reached years of discretion. Thanks for this one, Jimmy. I appreciated it.

Icosahedron 2. Moira J. Shearman, Top Flat, 25 Scott Street, Dundee, DD2 2AH, Scotland, U.K. Available for the usual or at editorial whim.

In her personalzine Moira discusses such matters of weight as 'why fanac?', 'why Joseph Nicholas?' and even 'why fantasy?'. Her rather subdued style can obscure the fact that a real mind is at work here. I enjoyed it.

Indian Scout. Sandy Brown (they gave his address!) 18 Gordon Terrace, BLANTYRE, G72 9NA, Scotland, U.K.

Anyone who thinks I'm going to attempt to write about this has to be out of their tiny minds. You don't have to be Scots to be mad. It just helps. Imagine a group of Scots fans at chucking out time on Friday. Got that? Now try to imagine the sort of zine they might produce if they believed themselves to be the invincible Red Army Choir. Okay? Then you've got this edition of Indian Scout, and if you think that's God's own Pravda then you're as cracked as they are. Wonderful.

Interstellar Doxies on Majestic Orion 4. Chuck Connor, Sildan House, Chediston Road, Wissett, nr Halesworth, Suffolk, IP19 ONF, U.K. Available for the usual. Chuck's usual bumper bundle of reviews of all sorts of zines from all sorts of people, together with musings from the man and a loccol. This issue was accompanied by the cassette 'Suburban Relapse' (which I found to be occasionally interesting) and a flexidisc from 'The Get' (on which I am probably too old to comment). This issue seemed a little restrained by Chuck's standards. It age catching up on our boy?

Second Hand Wave 42. Alan Ferguson, 50 Durlston Road, Kingston, Surrey, England, U.K. No indication of availability, so try asking him, if you dare. Jimmy Robertson talks about music, Roger Weddall about drugs, 'Eno Sugarflan' about juvenile crime, and 'Nasal Fun-Gore' about eye abuse. Nothing wrong with any of this, but not much right with it either. Pete Lyon's chat about fireworks is more lively, and Dave Swinden talking about being busted is a cut above too. Alan's description of the death of one of his elderly lady

neighbours is just about in the same class as his 'Letters from America', which is just about enough reason to get this zine even if it is a right curate's egg. Self Abused but still Standing 4. Chuck Connor, address as for IDOMG.

Available for a large s.a.e. (start at 50p in stamps, this is 80 pages long) Chuck's fictionzine, which is as varied and eclectic as everything else from the man. It won't do you any harm and, who knows, it might do you some good, so why don't you get it.

Sing me a Song 7. Pete Presford, 'Ty Gwyn', Maxwell Close, Buckley, Clwyd, North Wales, U.K.. Try 'the usual'.

A diary of observations, letters and zines received, and reactions to same. Not promising on the face of it, but Pete puts himself into it and the result is pleausurably interesting.

Skullfuck 2. Owen Whiteoak, Top Flat (Left), 112 Polwarth Gardens, Edinburgh, EH11 1LH, U.K.. The usual.

When he puts his mind to it Owen can dig himself a pit before your very eyes, jump into it, and climb out as nonchalant as you please. Pity he does not do it in this issue, restricting himself to chat about the Birmingham Marathon and design faults in public buildings. He thinks I will find the loccol too long, but when you have correspondents like Nicholas and Watson (to name but first and last) the possibilities for boredom are minimised.

Still it Moves 3. Simon Cunsley, address as for Crab Droppings. Available for the usual.

Described in detail elsewhere, this has the best Pete Lyon cover of the month.

Tappen 5. Malcolm Edwards, 28 Duckett Road, London N4 1BN, U.K.

"It is mysteriously available ..."

Described in detail elsewhere. One bum article cannot obscure the track record of quality.

This Never Happens 2. Lilian Edwards and Christina Lake, RM EE 32, Cripps Court, Queens' College, Cambridge, U.K. Available for the usual.

The most pictorially inclined of this batch of zines, with production to match. Contributors include Jim Colbard, Dave Harwood and Jim Barker. I found that the words, though, had a curiously unfocussed quality, as though they were obscuring the thoughts of Lilian and Christina rather than expressing them. Explorations of lapsed faith and a review of 'Blade Runner' by Lilian are, however, significant exceptions. I look forward to future zines from this source.

The Time Crusaders. The Walkers, address as for Fanzine Fanatique.

A reprint of issue 5 of The Science Fiction Fan, from 1937. Doubtless you are asking yourself 'why'. So am I.

The Twilight Zone. Steve Green (for the Solihull Science Fiction Group) at the aptly named Gutter Press, 11 Fox Green Crescent, Birmingham B27 7SD, U.K.

Availability? Ask the man, he doesn't bite unless you name if Morgan. Six pages of social history, reviews and fiction (from Garry Kilworth, no less). That's a lot to pack into six pages.

Thyme 19,20,21. Roger Weddall, 106 Rathdowne Street, Carlton, 3053, Australia, U.K. agent Joseph Nicholas, 22 Denbigh Street, Pimlico, London SW1V 2ER, U.K. Available for the equivalent of A\$5 for 6 issues.

A relaxed, regular genzine that gives the Antipodean viewpoint, even if the view often seems to be through the eyes of Judith Hanna. Recommended.

Wait for the Ricochet 2. Pascal J. Thomas, address as for Dernier Salon.

This is Pascal's contribution to EURAPA and AAAPA, and is four pages of fireside chat about APAs in general and particular, with assorted by blows.

Wallbanger 7. Eve Harvey, 43 Harrow Road, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 3QH, U.K. Available for the usual, or 20p in stamps.

Described at length elsewhere. The best Jim Barker cover of the month.

Wing Window 4. John D. Berry, 525 19th Avenue East, Easttle, Washington, 98112, U.S.A. Available for the usual.

An exceptionally legible genzine which has Jay Kinney on Chicon and the Church of the SubGenius, John on community flyposting, William Gibson on varied topics some way divorced from reality, and Terry Hughes on the story that

(might have) saved the world. The American fanzine with the British restraint (what?) that scores this column's award for unexpected pith and pleasure. Highly recommended.

Which Fanzine. Kent TruFandom, who look not unlike Win Clarke, Terry Hill and others. Probably available only to those who received it just before Christmas. A collection of fannish cameo spoofs which brightened up one very cold and windy lunchbreak on Douglas promenade. I doubt whether anyone could have done it better, or would want to, which is part of its charm.

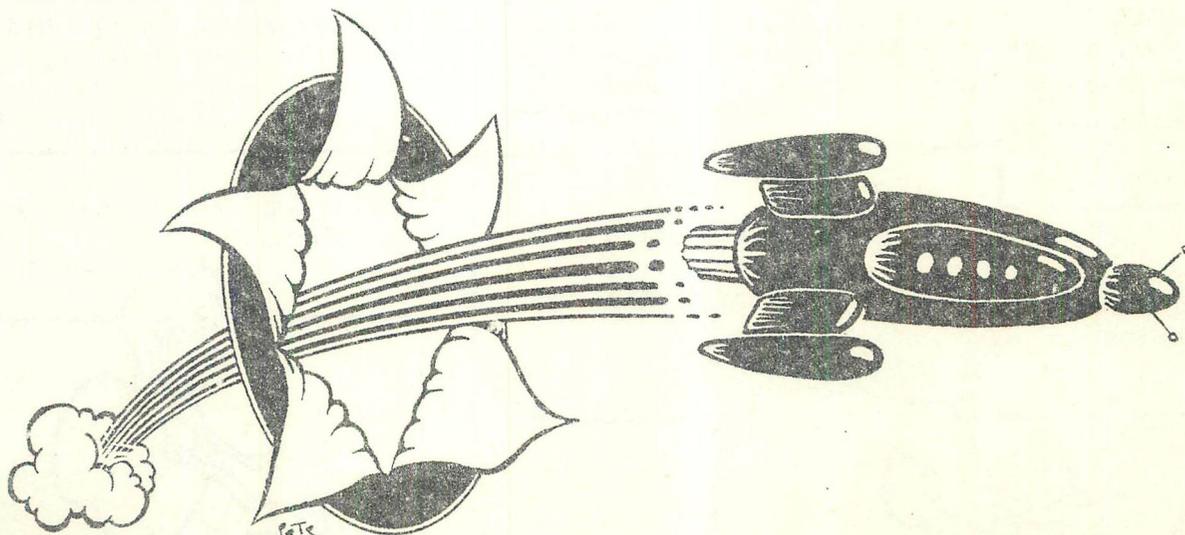
Yandro 256/257. Robert and Juanita Coulson, Route 3, Hartford City, IN 47348, U.S.A.; English Agent Alan Dodd, 77 Stanstead Road, Hoddesdon, Herts, England, U.K. Available for 50p a copy, £2 for 5, £4 for 10.

A large zine mostly given over to thumbnail reviews of zines and books, of little value to anyone other than Robert himself, and a 26 loccol which defines 'overlong' far better than I ever could. An improvement on the last issue I reviewed, but that was almost inevitable. This is for insiders only. Is Robert Coulson an American D. West?

Anyone who does not know what is meant by 'the usual' are hereby informed that it means that a zine is available for a Letter of Comment (on a previous issue, presumably, if you haven't read this one) a contribution, a trade of your fanzine (usually the best way), or a request in which you utterly abase yourself before the rampant ego of the editor and enclose vast quantities of stamps, negotiable bonds and bearer certificates. Seriously, most editors are decent enough sorts who are only to pleased to give you their zines, so be kind to them.

And that is it for the fourth helping of 'Down Palace Walls'. I do sometimes wonder about dismissing the hard work of so many in so few words, and given the opportunity I would like to write a column of individual locs to each editor. If I did that, though, not even all those miles of stormy Irish Sea would save me from the wrath of Keith and the mailing team. So, constrained as I am, I offer my thanks to all the editors and their contributors. Long may you continue to make fanzine reviewing a right bitch of a job.

I'm Martyn Taylor and I can usually be found at Flat 2, 17 Hutchinson Square, Douglas, Isle of Man.



MEDIA REVIEW: TV --'Another Flip for Dominick'

Reviewed by NOEL HANNAN

(Written by Jeremy Paul and Alan Gibson, screened on BBC 14-12-82, 85 min. long)

After the successful and award-winning The Flipside of Dominick Hide, writers Paul and Gibson were most probably approached by the Beeb to write a sequel. I can imagine them protesting but being persuaded by a fat fee. Ah well, it wasn't all bad....

Basically there was no original premise to either play. They dealt with time travel and time paradoxes, something which has been done to death in SF. The attraction of the original play was the excellent use of the situations of time travel to explore each character, the the humourous script. This wasn't put over as well in Another Flip for Dominick and the plot relies too much on coincidences.

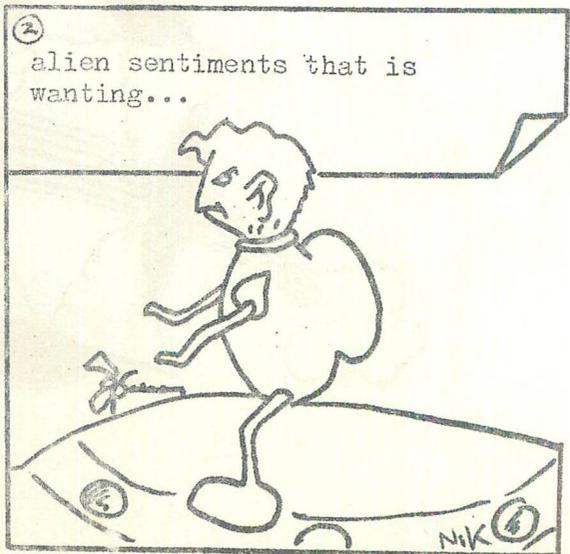
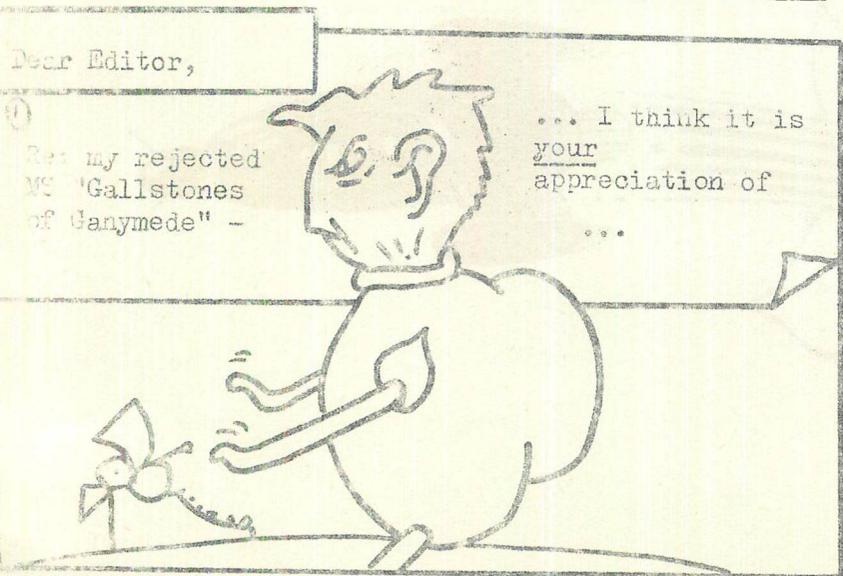
Now for the story. Dominick Hide has not made a flip for years, and is settling down to a happy Xmas with his wife Ava, son Dominick and his mother and aunt, when he is summoned by Caleb Line, the time controller, to go and find a traveller called Pilas Bonnington, who has not returned from a flip to the London of 1982. By an amazing coincidence, this is the place where Hide left his 1980 lover, Jane, and his twentieth century son who is also called Dominick (who will turn out to be Hide's great-great-grandfather). Dominick enlists her help to find Pilas, who is discovered in a police cell charged with being drunk and disorderly. Dominick frees him by posing as a "Father" of a religious order.

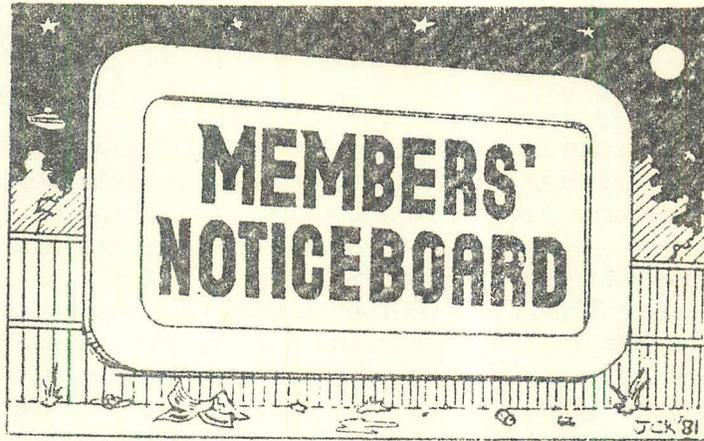
However, Pilas has lost his saucer, and during the search he gets waylaid into (believe it or not) rescuing a kidnapped princess, and , in the process, gets killed. (Of course, being a time traveller, all you have to do is nip back to the time before your mate was killed and save him!)

And that's the story. Nothing really exciting, well padded out with cliched, emotional conflicts between Dominick and Jane -and the fact that Dominick flips back to the point before a big argument, to stop it happening, and then tells Jane what he has done doesn't help matters. Actor Peter Firth does his best with a bland script, but it just doesn't capture the humour of the original. There are a few subplots to stop you getting really bored, the most interesting being Ava's departure from the Hide household in 2130 with a Home Help called Peter, when she finds out that Dominick's lied about Jane. Of course, she returns. Most traumatic for Dominick, who consoles her with the fact that his other woman, so to speak, is no competition for her, since in 2130 she is nearly 150 years old and quite dead.

The high point of Another Flip for me is the portrayal of time controller Caleb Line by the late Patrick Magee. Perhaps he wrote his own script? Either that, or Paul and Gibson returned to form with the character.

As SF, it is somewhat cliched, but intelligent. It is certainly better than any made-for-TV SF I've yet seen, but it is not clear whether or not Paul and Gibson were writing perfectly straight-lined or tongue-in-cheek. I'd opt for the latter, but the subtle humour of its predecessor doesn't quite come off. It is a pale imitation. We can only hope that the completing episode (if there is one) of the Dominick Hide trilogy will be a return to the style and excellence of the original. Perhaps Hide could return to the year 2010 to meet his adult son (presumably also played by Peter Firth?). As time is infinite, anything is possible.....





HARRY J.N.ANDRUSCHAK, POST OFFICE BOX 606, LACANADA-FLINTRIDGE, CALIFORNIA 91011 USA

Want to play chess by mail? Send your first move to the above address. Can also play checkers, Reversi and any other strategic board game you wish, including draughts.

JOHN FAIRWEATHER, 26 AVENELL ROAD, HIGHBURY, LONDON N5 1DP

I am trying to get hold of (beg, steal or borrow) a copy of episode 6 and episode 9 of Earthsearch 2 which I missed first and second times around. If some kind person could send me a copy tape with these two episodes on I will pay for postage, tape and a free pint sometime (preferably taped in VHF Stereo or Mono).

TREVOR HARWOOD, 20 WOOD VALE, FAREHAM, HANTS., PO15 5JA

I am trying to track down Moorcock's Elric at the End of Time. It's named inside most of his books, but I've never actually seen it in print. Can anyone supply further information please?

((Apparently it does exist, but I haven't got any clearer info than that to hand. Anyone got a copy?))

A.PRENTICE, 9 POLTON GARDENS, LASSWADE, MIDLOTHIAN, EH18 1BL

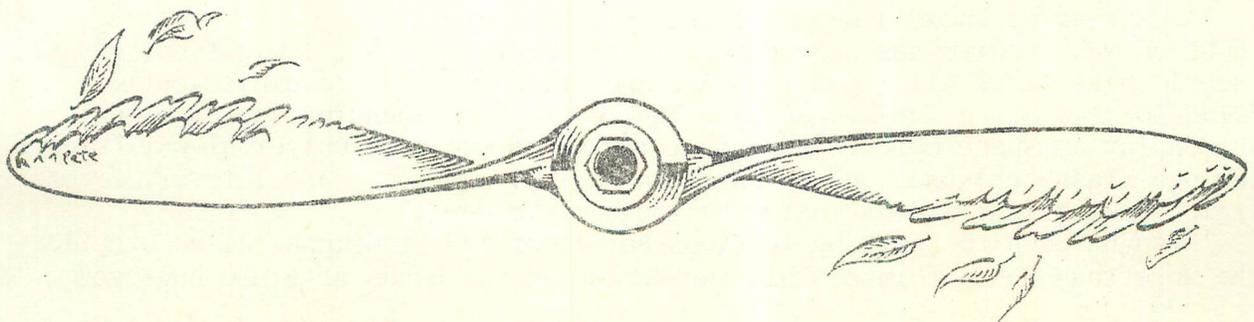
BSFA has a magazine chain, and somewhere I think I read of a writers chain. Why not an artists chain? I would like to hear from other artists (or would-be artists) of any status, with the purpose of exchanging work for criticism etc. I'd particularly like to hear from anyone who might be interested in a BSFA postal art group.

GEORGE TERNENT, 17 BELTON AVENUE, GRANTHAM, LINCS.

I am interested in tapes of the SF acidhead band Hawkwind. Anyone wishing to exchange material should contact me at the above address. Please send name, address, 'phone number and details of concerts.

ALAN J. THOMSON, 101 JORDANHILL DRIVE, GLASGOW, G13 1UQ

I urgently require a copy of Vector 92, for (believe it or not) aid with my 6th year English lessons. I have already tried the back issues, but it was sold out. If you do not wish to split your collection, then I am willing to post the copy back to you after I have read it.



:: COMPETITION :: COMPETITION :: COMPETITION ::

M43: *Why Wittgenstein Is SF*

Dave Langford points the finger

The challenge of writing a review annexing some noted 'mainstream' or other work in the name of SF was... popular! At last, a popular competition! (Must be doing something wrong.) Points were given for audacity, for making me laugh, and for avoidance of easy options—it turned out to be all too easy to slag something which wasn't SF on the grounds of its being bad SF.

Among the entrants were TOTALLY ILLEGIBLE SIGNATURE (who my cryptanalysis department suspects may be Martin Tec) reviewing *The Spy Who Came In From The Cold*; ALEX STEWART on *The London Telephone Directory A-D* ('No one, after glancing at the welter of forewords, appendices, and the inevitable map, will be at all surprised to hear that it's the first of four volumes.' See also below...); HELEN McNABB on *Winnie-the-Pooh* and *Mansfield Park* ('The uprooting of Fanny into an alien environment with its strange mores and customs is handled with great skill...' and an all-time left-handed compliment in 'The subtlety, reminiscent of Shakespeare's skill at plotting—'); MARK BURLEY on *Arms and the Man* ('...a kind of anti-*Starship Troopers*'); IAN WRIGHT on *The History of Mr Polly* ('Mr Polly is tracked down by the evil ET known as Uncle Jim who attempts to assassinate him using diabolic means.' Ah yes, 'fighting with bols', manifestly advanced hand weapons...); KEITH MARSLAND on *The Mental Health Act* ('The way in which one can build up a picture of this society by drawing conclusions from its treatment of the insane is speculative fiction at its finest and I look forward to reading further works by this talented author') and *Ulysses* ('A tired farrago of clichés culled from the works of Silverberg, Sturgeon & Dick... Mr Joyce should learn that SF is not served by dragging noble ideals through the gutter. I would tell him that the province of the Speculative Fiction writer is all space, all time and all levels of consciousness, but he would probably reduce it to an account of a Dublin innkeeper's swinish slumber.');

MARGARET HALL on *Northanger Abbey* ('Not until *The Chronicles of Thomas Covenant* has anyone so successfully explored the boundaries between fantasy and reality...') and—winner of this issue's Perry Rhodan Award for Deep Badness—PHILIP COLLINS, whose searing essay on *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* noted that: 'The author's name is obviously a pseudonym. I think Mother Goose is a pseudonym for either the late Philip K. Duck or possibly J.G. Mallard.' Or, I suppose, Cordwainer Bird.

Nice Alan Dorey has begged me to fill up lots of space this issue, so I'll be quoting the finalists at some length. Better them than more of boring old me.

MARY GENTLE, unlike most of you, contrived to be deadpan...

'This reissued SF classic with a cult following can, it's true, appear dated. There is for example the deplorable tendency to national, racial and sexual chauvinism. The forerunner of the present fashion of writing SF in the style of fantasy, this book prefigures the use of S&S motifs in its depiction of an isolated small nation in a hostile alien environment battling a vast decadent empire; but balances this with such SF devices as aliens interfering in human history, kidnapping by space "chariots", and the turning of humans to sodium chloride fossils after the nuclear destruction of two rebel cities.

'Like the Lovecraft cycle this work has many different contributors (though it is attributed to one apocryphal 'Jehovah'). We have, in the second part, the first appearance of SF's great theme: the making of a superman. It degenerates into a rather messianic cliché, the "one man who can save the world"; however the authors are to be commended in having their superman triumph not by any right-wing fascist coup, but by peaceful protest.

'The concluding part depicts the final arrival of the aliens, and ends with that perennial SF motif, nuclear destruction.

'As far as we know, a sequel is not planned.' (MG)

PAT ENGLISH was erudite and nearly blew it by warning me that I might not get all the subtle bits (fie! All regular BSFA competition setters are omniscient)...

'OTHELLO: *The alien in Shakespeare*. The key to comprehending Shakespeare's screenplay as space epic is the counterpoint of romantic universal war (viewed through flashback) and squalid European nuclear war (poignant literary freeze-frame shows bright swords rusted by radioactive dew).

'Brought down to Earth by luscious-but-liberated Desdemona, alien Othello the More than Human foresees his own demise at the hands of green bug-eyed

monsters in the burning sulphur mines of another planet. He recalls nostalgically his outworld escapades among mutants whose heads grow beneath their shoulders.

'Othello is accused of witchcraft because his strange "cuckold" horns give him telepathic power over women (presaging Lindsay?) and he is epileptic. However, he regains favour by thwarting the illusion-shields of the enemy. Attitudes to sorcery were ever ambivalent.

'But what of the Japanese microtechnology of android arithmetician Casio the perfect lover, whose time-distort capabilities enable him to commit the act of shame with Desdemona 1000 times in just over a week? Men should be what they seem, moans Methuselah-man Iago the Ancient.

'Although Shakespeare left Ballard to elucidate the "world of chrysolite", his hidden-depth dialogue marks this as a classic study of alienation.' (PE) And VIC NORRIS, disregarding the petty restrictions of word-lengths and sanity, went completely over the top and from France sent the, er, winner--

'AVANT L'AVANT-GARDE: *Le Botin* by the mysterious PTT (surely a Gallic W.H.) excites acclaim as the decade's most revolutionary SF, SF not in its content but in its inspiration. An interminable list of telephone subscribers, exhaustive and exhausting, its ambitious encapsulation of humanity initially seems grotesquely reductionist. A simple parody of Society's view of Man: Man not as a metaphor but as an alphabet? No, *Le Botin* is more. In ordering Man according to letter, *Le Botin* subsumes language into mathematics and Man into his symbols; Group Theory has devoured us all.

'A mathematical treatise then? No, *Le Botin* is more. Magnificently, imperially, divinely impartial: Rothschild must cede to Dupont, Pasteur give way to Landru. But it is a chilling impartiality; in its remorseless unsparing ordering we lose our scale and sense our cosmic insignificance. At last SF has given us the celestial perspective, terrible and sublime. The ordering is horribly cruel--but must we endure it? Must we read page 2394 after page 2393? Only our reverence for the conventional imposes the *corvée* upon us. It is this reverence which is horrible and this *Le Botin* shows. Impossible to read as we are accustomed, *Le Botin* is oracular not narrative.

'It is not a simple story. It is not to be read. It cannot be read. SF not in its clichés but in its audacity, it startles us as no SF has done before. McLuhan, Chomsky, *New Worlds* have ill-prepared us for a book which calls in question the value of reading.

'*Le Botin* represents a new essay at interactive Art: electromagnetic fluctuations, printed symbols, human voices, *Le Botin* relates one system of communication to another. Apart from its philosophical import, apart from its literary iconoclasm, *Le Botin* is an Artistic Interface.

'As aficionados of Tolkien have "learnt" elvish so many will be tempted to "use" *Le Botin*. They will be disappointed. Here for once *Le Botin* slips into one of the tragedies of creation so familiar in SF: ahead of its time yet out-of-date.' (VN)

...all right, all right, enough, too much, the prize is Vic's if only he'll stop. Meanwhile, collectors of useful information will note from the above entries that BSFA members' favourite reading outside SF would appear to comprise Jane Austen's novels and telephone directories. I knew it all the time.

M46 (competition M44 succumbed to lack of time, and M45 to Alan Dorey's whim)

I don't usually set straight fiction competitions owing to a deep dread of having to read the entries. However, I'm sure you'll all be eager to try your literary skills on the 'mini-saga' format invented by Brian Aldiss, and rush me an SF story *exactly* 50 words long. Only one entry per person, please; strict Aldiss rules will apply, whereby titles (not included in wordcount) may not exceed 15 words in length. The best entry, as judged by totally unimpartial me, will win the traditional £5 book token; if there are enough Really Triffic entries we may even try to fiddle a special section in *Focus* for them, though don't tell the *Focus* editors since I haven't yet asked them. Thanks to Andy Hobbs we also have a subsidiary easy-to-enter competition (with an as yet undetermined prize of great value): Estimate the number of entries for M46. When Mr Aldiss set this in the *Telegraph* he got 33,000... Dave Langford, 94 London Rd, Reading, Berks RG1 5AU.

EPISODE ONE!
ATTACK OF THE AMAZING QUONGO RAYS!

Arnold Tharg's DEATH STAR SHIP REVENGEANCE

ACROSS THE INKY BLACKNESS OF THE STAR STUDDED EMPYREAN THE SILVERY SPACESHIP WENT VERY FAST

ADAPTATION & ART
BY D. WEST

AT THE CONTROLS OF THE STAR CRUISER 'MOBILE DICK' CAPTAIN ARTH PUDOR OF THE SPACEWAYS FROWNED INTENTLY

THIS MEANS TROUBLE!

EMERGENCY!
EMERGENCY!

SUDDENLY LIGHTS FLASHED AND ALARM BELLS BEGAN TO RING

* RASPED ARTH PUDOR THROUGH GRITTED JAWS

CALLING PROFESSOR ZODOFF!

WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM, KID?

LOOK PROFESSOR!

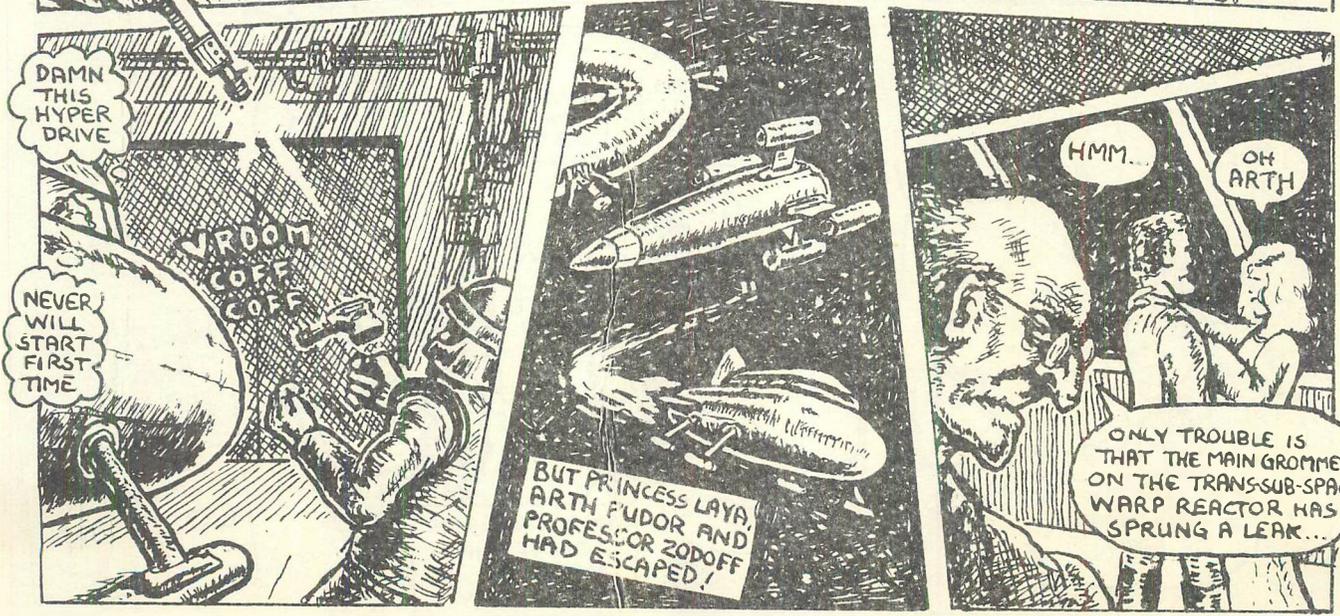
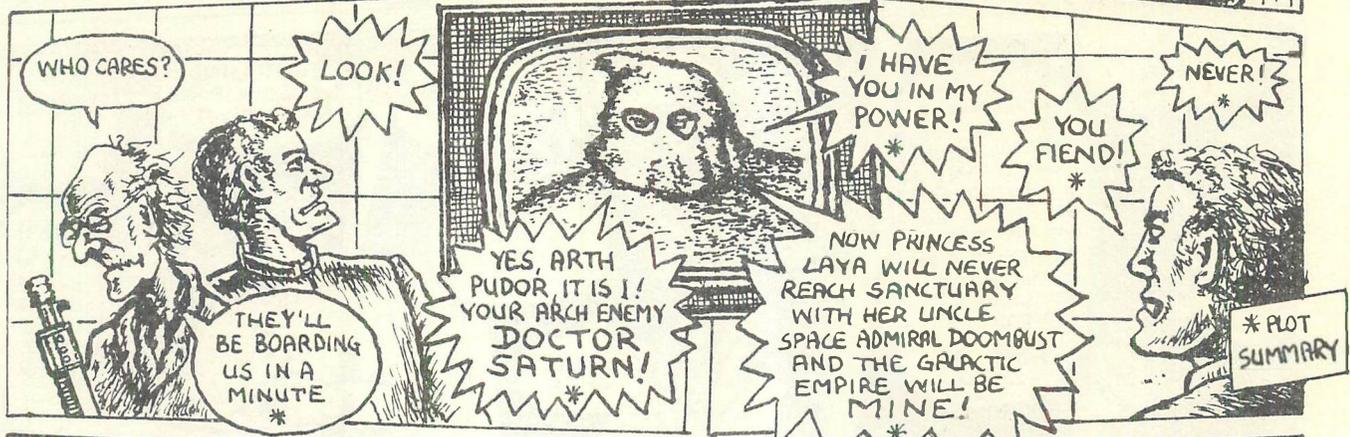
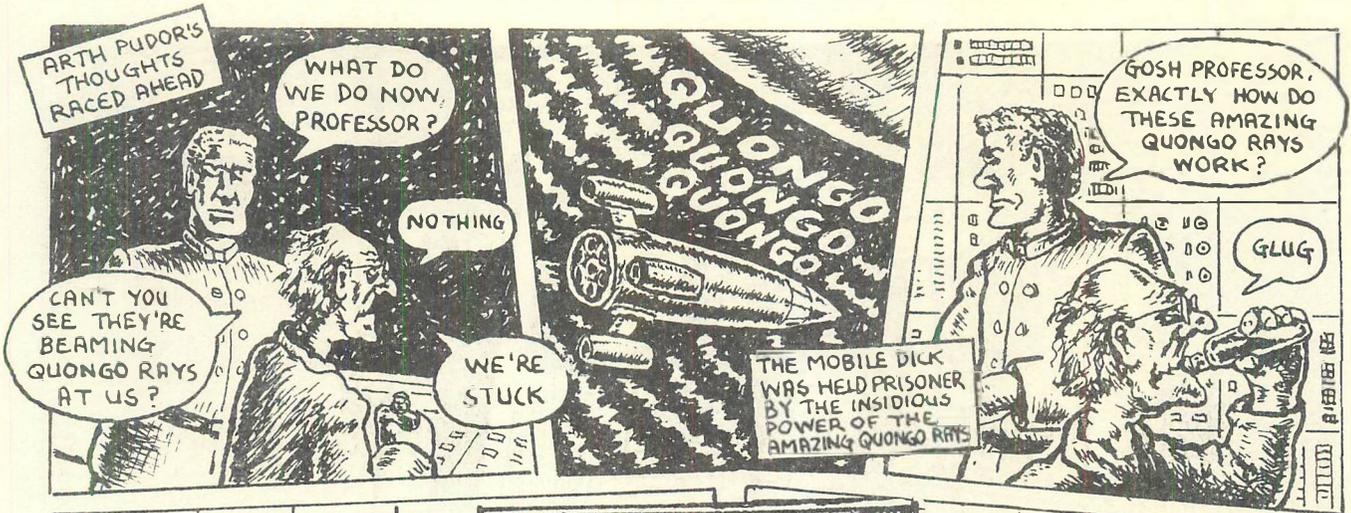
SON OF A BITCH

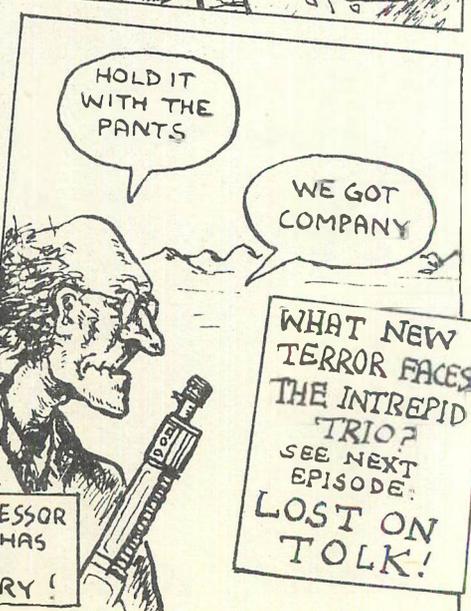
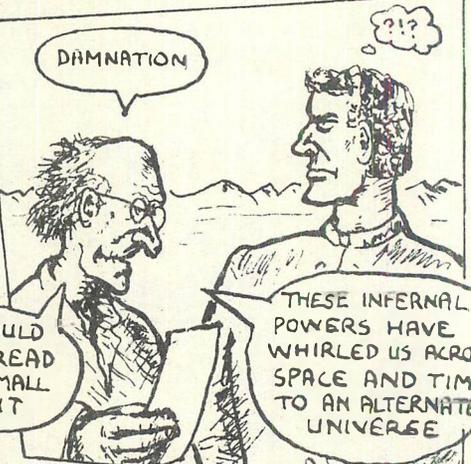
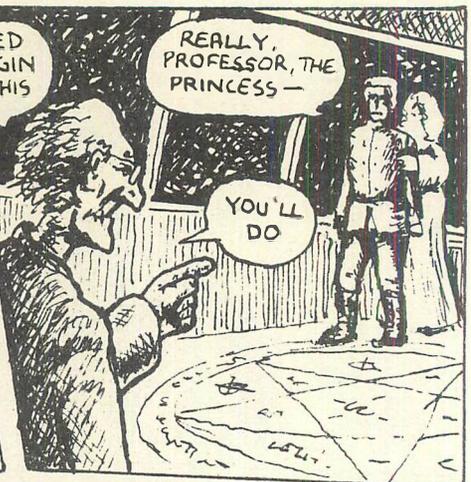
THE EVIL BASTARD SNEAKED RIGHT UP ON US

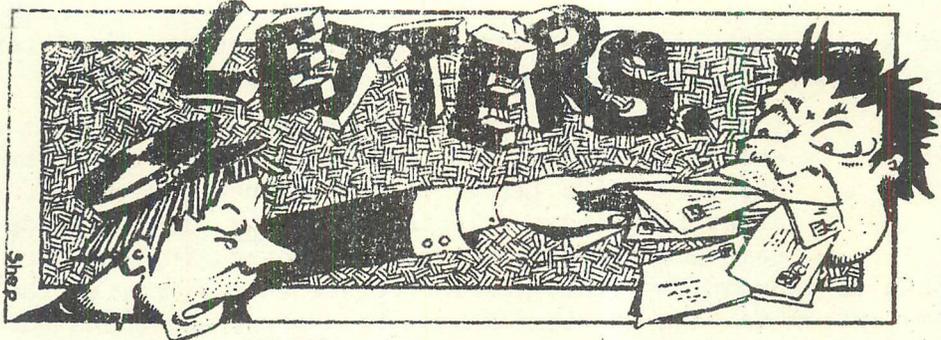
THE DEATH STAR DOUGHNUT!

THE EMINENT SCIENTIST TOOK IN THE SITUATION AT A GLANCE

WELL, WIN SOME, LOSE SOME.







I've always thought that this part of Matrix should be the most important, giving a chance as it does for members and non-members to express their views to the widest possible audience. As Alan said last issue, this column is the lifeblood of the magazine, even if sometimes it flows a little sluggishly. The response to issue 45 was quite extensive, and must be most remarkable for its lack of any reference to the Birmingham SF Group whatsoever. I did think of making a few up under the usual pseudonyms - you know, " Steve Green" or " Pauline Morgan ", but decided against it in the end. Instead, we have a new controversy, the Wonderful World of Smoking. As a registered, card-carrying non-smoker until the age of 25, I can understand some of the views expressed in the letters we received, but it should be said that as I now manage to croak through about 40 Gauloises a day, I do have a vested interest in not lining smokers against a wall and shooting them all through the head. My light on the road to Marlboro country left me with a feeling of general indifference on the whole matter. Not so our gentle readers....

DAVE BARRETT,
31 MAYFIELD GROVE,
HARROGATE,
HG1 5HD

As a smoker, I agree with Benedict S.Cullum, with one caveat: smoking should not be banned in public places; I don't mind being segregated, but I do object to being discriminated against. I keep meaning to put in an official complaint to the Station Manager at King's Cross, where you are not allowed to smoke at all in the cafeteria. I tend to go in with a cigarette, hang about for a moment before buying a coffee, and (it only ever takes a few seconds) be told, always rudely, that I am not allowed to smoke, whereupon I protest loudly about being discriminated against , and stalk out (to the bar next door, but don't tell them that...)

((Non-smoking areas have a certain value, I suppose, but at what point in the campaign do we reach the stage of only being able to smoke in specially licensed Smokatoria, strapped in beagle-fashion for our 18.8 mg tar, or whatever the Government allowance will be? My personal smoke-easy is at home, where all three of us are already wheezing wrecks and little offence is likely to be given. Judith Hanna makes a plea now on behalf of the Clean Ones:-

JUDITH HANNA,
22 DENBIGH ST.,
PIMLICO,
LONDON SW1V 2ER

Could convention committees be persuaded to set aside non-smoking areas? Non-SF conventions commonly divide their programme halls into smoking and non-smoking halves, as do SF conventions overseas. Why not here? Is it just that no-one's ever raised the matter with any committee? Have committees shrunk from the bother of making a simple announcement or two and moving the ash-trays out of one half of the programme rooms, or have they not liked to offend smokers by any suggestion that their noxious inhalations might be inconveniencing others?

We non-smokers are ever so polite; we try to stifle our coughing fits when smoke is blown into our faces, and we pretend that our red, stinging eyes don't bother us, but really, a whole weekend of late nights spent almost entirely in stuffy smoke-laden rooms gets a bit much. At present the only way to escape from the nasty air pollution is to retire to one's own room - which means missing out on the actual convention. For most of us, the smoking's no more than an annoyance , but there are actually some people who are made ill by cigarette smoke. As the situations stands it's impossible for such people to attend conventions. So how about these non-smoking areas? Are there any convention committee members out there?

((I suppose that's all pretty sensible, really. I think that the final word should go to Benedict Cullum, who has one more comment on the matter:-

BENEDICT S. CULLUM,
35 TOTTERIDGE LANE,
WHETSTONE,
LONDON N20.

In the unlikely event that my letter in M45 does cause other members to write in, it is only fair to say that I did send off a letter to the Brunner household the day after I posted the letter to Matrix. In it I made the same point, in addition to acknowledging the fact that I should have spoken to them at the time. A brief reference was made to the fact that I had used my option to make my views known via Matrix, as indeed they have done in the past. As I have written, it is not likely that anyone will pursue the matter in the letter pages ((!!!!!)) , but if this does happen, it should be made known that Marjorie Brunner did make an apology - not necessary, but very pleasant and reassuring - I knew that they could not be 'nasty people' !

((Ah...er...mmm...not a lot I can say there. I shall have a quick fag, and move on to a response to a response, if you see what I mean. The mighty Rob Hansen takes up arms against a sea of Pardoes and Lewises:-

ROB HANSEN,
5A GREENLEAF RD.,
EAST HAM,
LONDON E6 1DX

Having read the whole article from which the Walt Willis quote I used in my article came, and having read quite a few hundred pages of Walt's fanwriting in the last year or two, I can, I think, say with some confidence that it was not "...gentle leg-pulling at the expense of the 'old guard' of the day" as Darroll suggests, but meant exactly what it said. Also Darroll's claim that a gap didn't exist in the early 60s between those fans who had arrived on the scene since the birth of the BSFA and those who had been active prior to its formation ("...what Walt said is not (and was not) true ") is rather curious, particularly when he calls up Peter Weston as an example to prove his point, since Weston, in his SLICE OF LIFE column in Maya 12/13 (edited by Rob Jackson Jan 1977) said of that article and that period -

" ...there's some bite to it; clearly Walt had been concerned at the lack of understanding which he at least had detected between the Old and the New. He was among the first to spot the opening up of this generation gap in British fandom and to his great credit he was the first to try and do something positive to close it..."

Indeed. Why Darroll should imagine my article would lead to anyone to "...jump to the conclusion that Peter was one of the protestors that Walt says ' thought that ' fandom as we knew it was a useless excrescence' ", I can't imagine, as it never mentions Weston and I've never denied that "...Peter had his fannish side." If he hadn't, he wouldn't have accepted Walt's offer to do a fanzine review column for Zenith; it was Zenith, of course, that carried the final four installments of Walt's Fanorama column, the first forty having appeared in the Scottish professional SF magazine Nebula and the forty-first in Bob Lichtman's Psi-Phi. According to David V. Lewis I shouldn't, of course, know any of this, since it all happened before I came into fandom.

I have some difficulty understanding just why Lewis imagines the facts as he presents them in any way invalidate what I said in my article about the BSFA collapse. Yes, I was aware that the collapse occurred in 1974 and yes, I was fully aware that it was caused by certain individuals ducking out of the responsibility of dealing with the large number of membership applications resulting from advertising in the late and unlamented Science Fiction Monthly, but so what? I fail to see what any of this proves. Also he is wrong in claiming that " ...the BSFA's fanzine library was lost in mysterious circumstances..." since its final fate was revealed in Checkpoint 68 (April 1976) by Keith Walker who revealed that it had come up in the auction at the 1976 Eastercon. How it came to be there is rather mysterious, but how it came to be lost - it was auctioned off - isn't.

The oddest thing about the Lewis letter, however, is his incredible assertion that since I didn't come into fandom until 1975 I can have no idea of what occurred previous to then. I suppose that he would argue that since I was born in 1954 I can know nothing (or 'owt' as he so quaintly puts it) about what happened in the world prior to that either, eh? Strange.

((As all of this is extremely prior to my poor self, I shall merely ask whether anyone has anything of interest to add on the matter. Will the real Peter Weston now stand up? Meanwhile, we move on to the present BSFA, surveys, membership and all:-

TREVOR HARWOOD,
20 WOOD VALE,
FAREHAM,
HANTS.
PO15 5JA

One relevant point that wasn't brought up in the BSFA survey in Matrix 45 was the length of time members had been reading SF. I only really started about 6 years ago - before that I had only read a handful of books which could be classed as SF, so the question " Who were your favourite authors of 6 years ago? " was unanswerable, as it would have been any author by whom I had read two or three books (such as Asimov and Van Vogt) At that time if I had been asked " Read anything by Phil Dick? " the reply would have been "Who?". This is illustrated by the fact that of the 13 authors named in the top ten of six years ago, I had only read books by five of them, which is the situation many others would have been in.

There was also the Old/ New Wave question. In his recent interview on Channel 4's Book Four programme, J.G.Ballard gave the division as the optimistic fiction from American authors as opposed to the pessimistic, down-to-earth fiction from British writers. This is a fairly good dividing line, but where does that put American authors such as Phil Dick - nobody would say that A Scanner Darkly gives an optimistic view of the future, or could Dick be the exception that proves the rule? Does it show, as seems more likely, that there is no definite rule as to what is Old/ New Wave? Another possible question for future surveys, especially after the interview with Gregory Benford in Vector, is ont to find out the proportion of SF readers who have a scientific background.

((Although I haven't got the survey responses to hand, I hope that enough members were reading SF 6 years ago to give some idea of the way an individual's tastes might change. I accept that this question couldn't be answered by some, but as an idle exercise down the pub one night, I tried listing novels I was reading 6 and 12 years ago, and the answers were curious, to say the least. I think the only survivors were Burroughs and Dick, both of whom I still read but for totally different reasons from 6 or 12 years ago. Yes, best beloved, I do still read SF, though usually with furrowed brow and a sad shaking of the hoary head. Now, Andrew Hobbs questions the turnover of BSFA members which he has deduced from rashly exposed figures:-

ANDREW HOBBS,
2 POST OFFICE YARD,
HOVERINGHAM,
NOTTS.,
NG14 7JR

Reading between the lines of the membership figures quoted in the BSFA survey, and coupling this with the debate on methods of attracting new members, it would seem that there is a case for examining why so many people are leaving the BSFA. If over 1200 new members have been gained since Easter 1973 and there are now 800-900 members, what has happened to the rest? At least 1000 members must have left (this figure being a guesstimate or Tebbitism), and this large turnover of members must have some cause. There must be dissatisfaction or apathy at the root of it. If it is the former then there should be a way found to analyse why the members are leaving (what that would be is very difficult to imagine) If apathy is the reason, then there is no chance of stopping it.

You are trying to increase the membership; is there not a case for saying that this would be better served not through advertising, but through the retention of present members?

((The rapid turnover of members is a problem, but one of the strongpoints must be the attraction of new people with new outlooks all the time, otherwise the BSFA would begin to stagnate (no jokes, please!) Dave Barrett also had a few words on this matter:-

I'd be interested to know how many members leave after their first year - and how many don't join after receiving their rtial membership package. Could Sandy Brown supply some figures? It seems that a lot of trufans get their enjoyment by saying what utter crap this year's batch of SF is, instead of picking out the odd good one and giving it some rightful appreciation. A former joint editor of Matrix told me a couple of weeks ago "I've not read any SF since I left the States." Perhaps the

true mark of the TRUFAN is that he (or in this case, she) no longer touches the stuff. Maybe that's it, the secret initiation ceremony: going cold turkey, giving it up for good. If you still crave for the occasional SF fix, then sorry, chum, you're no fan, not even a neofan.

Lawrence O'Donnell makes a point that probably nags at most new BSFA members: just what is this big thing fandom? I'm still not sure, and I've been a member for 5 or 6 years. So far as I'm concerned, I joined the BSFA because I enjoyed reading SF, and wanted to read reviews, news, articles and letters about SF, not about squabbles between members of a group in Birmingham ((Damn! They DID get a mention; still, that really is the only one...))- a place I have to go through now and then on the train, and that's bad enough. Maybe it's having to live there that does it...

((It would certainly be a bit rash to start categorising fans on their level of SF consumption. It would only be my own muddled opinion to say that one of the best things about fandom, however you might try to define it, is that it resists any final definition. If you want to sit in a corner cramming SF in to your capacious literary maw, you can - if you want to play dominoes, travel the world and break your bank manager, well, you can get away with that also. Some of us try to do both. But but but...what about a few comments from those rogue fans who have left and then rejoined... or even those who have no intention of ever rejoining but still manage in some mysterious way to read Matrix each issue? I know you're out there somewhere...and We are Waiting for You!

Now comes more criticisms of our exquisitely-carved paperback review magazine. Joe Nicholas has already made some pretty pertinent points, in Paperback Inferno last issue, on the approach taken by PI and on possible changes. Neil Allan wrote in with his own comments:-

NEIL ALLAN, I have just received my first mailing, and I have to say that
CAIRDS CROFT, I am a little surprised with the Paperback Inferno publication
TOMNAVOULIN, included. Vol. 6, No. 3 contained 20 reviews and out of that
BALLINDALLOCH, number only 6 or 7 of them were favourable towards the book
BANFFSHIRE. under review. In the editorial of Vector, Geoff Rippington
betrays the fact that there is a growing amount of bad material
masquerading under the title of SF. I therefore find it quite odd that PI should be
used to spotlight that bad material.

When I joined the BSFA I got various info sheets, and on one of them it says - "The BSFA is an amateur organisation which aims to promote and encourage the reading, writing and publication of science fiction in all its forms..." Surely, if the organisation wishes to promote reading would it more achieve its aims using PI to inform the readers of the good and worthwhile material? Why waste so much space on a long review which ultimately tells me that the book is not worth reading and should be avoided at all costs? I want to be informed about the good books coming out so that I can rush out to my local bookshop and ask if they have any of them available - thus creating an interest in the titles and perhaps persuading the shop to purchase a number of the new books .

I feel that PI attacks the problem of bad material from the wrong side - 14 or 15 reviews telling people that the books are not worth buying means 14 or 15 new titles not bought (fair enough - the publishers see that there is a low interest in these titles) while 20 reviews telling people of good books means 20 new titles bought: the publishers then see an interest in the field and sign up for new titles.

((The obvious problem here is that if we all go out and buy God-Elfstone of Lord Valentine's Edge, the benevolent despots in the publishing houses will go ahead and commission more of the same trash - they will not say " Hymie, now we have coined it on this junk, let's invest our money in an exciting alternative fiction venture! " Still, point made, I suppose. As a young gentleman whose generative organs are in the scaly grasp of retail bookselling, I suppose I should applaud all attempts to sell more SF. One way out of the above situation would be for the BSFA to be a little more careful when it writes the info sheets, or am I missing the point?

((One more comment only on this sorry subject:-

MIKE LEWIS, It's interesting to note that in the last Paperback Inferno,
5 YEW TREE CLOSE, there were in total only 3 or 4 reviews that consider their books
BROADSTAIRS, good - and one of those is a historical novel (Dr.Mirabilis by
KENT James Blish). I wonder if this is a reflection of the state of
the science fiction paperback, or the state of the reviewing?

((I am now going to hide in the cellar in case Joe produces an entirely favourable
issue of PI and the guns really start blasting. Imagine the outcry! " This weak
attempt to pretend that any decent SF has been produced in the last..." " This
glossing over of such obvious defects in the..." " Never in all my life.." and
so on. People are just contrary, and dat's de truth.

Our final letter of this issue is from the pen of ageless fan Dennis Tucker,
and indeed the most pleasant letter we received:-

DENNIS TUCKER, It takes a great deal to rouse me from my customary state
20 KING EDWARD'S PARK, of lethargy: not abnormally I browse through each mailing
BADDESLEY ROAD, in a leisurely fashion, for the most part enjoy it, and
NORTH BADDESLEY, sadly - from your viewpoint - as a satisfied customer, I
SOUTHAMPTON, fail to respond. Not so with Matrix 45, when in the letter
S05 9JU column, my eye fell upon the name of A.Vincent Clarke. I
could hardly believe it. My flabber was utterly gasted. I

had thought that I was the last "still interested" survivor of First Fandom (or
was it Second Fandom?) If my memory serves me right, Vinç was already around
when I first discovered fandom in 1940. Egad, he must be even more incredibly
ancient than I am! And further, he still lives at the same address....I recall
that in my early days in fandom, I used to confuse him with Arthur C. of the same
ilk. Memories came flooding back, chiefly names - names I thought I had forgotten
years ago: Arthur Williams, Doug Webster, Don Smith (The Saga of Nuneaton),
"Renny" Rennison, Edwin Macdonald, Harry Turner (the finest fantasy artist of
all time), Dave McIlwain, Walt Willis, R.G.Medhurst, Sam Youd (who later wrote
as John Christopher), Ron Lane, and so on. Where are they now?

In those dim and distant days, Arthur C.Clarke, ('Ego'), Ted carnell, Ken Bulmer,
Walter Gillings and James White were fans in the truest sense. Most of them
published fanmags (not fanzines in those days).....What did a fanmag cost then?
I really can't remember, but probably 1d or 2d. I can remember what a junior
clerk, starting work in 1940, was paid: twenty five bob a week! ((more than I
get now)) Ah well, who was it who said: " Nostalgia ain't what it used to be."?
He could just be wrong..... Nice to know you're still around, Vinç.

((Having run through First Fandom and Second Fandom etc., could it be true we
are now part of Fandom's Edge? Is today's fandom a sad sequel to days of Greater
Glory? I think we should have the right to know. Then I can go back to breeding
salamanders, like normal boys, and give up all this silly space-rockets stuff.

But apart from all this, let us now examine the lucky correspondents whose
letters did not suffer from extraction or my typing mistkaes. They are, of
course, the Also Heard Froms.....a big hand, folks, for.....

SUE THOMASON, 9 FRIARS LANE, BARROW IN FURNESS, CUMBRIA LA13 9NP who popped in
a True Story! concerning the value of BSFA membership. She approached her Building
Society and they demanded proof of identity to withdraw the old greenies, needing
a signature on a National Organisation membership card. Now, you'll not believe
this bit, but they actually accepted a BSFA card!!!!!! Obviously the whole story
is fabricated, but it was written with a rather nice red felt pen. I wonder if
we could get a deal with Barclays.....?

I.M.BARRINGTON, HELVELLYN, GRAINEPARK, ST.OLA, ORKNEY who would have got into
print had I been able to understand any of the letter. Written in ye traditional
stream of consciousness style, it left me wondering slightly..ah well, how about
a printable one next time, M'sieur?

HAROLD POWELL, 29 CLARENCE SQUARE, BRIGHTON BN1 2ED commented on the crediting
of a role in a recent film to Sissie SpaceK, which leads him to muse about the
various theories of alternate and sub-spaces - as in I'm very SpaceD etc?Hmm....

A.PRENTICE, 9 FOLTON GARDENS, LASSWADE, MIDLOTHIAN, EH18 1BL who wrote concerning art and artists.. see Members Noticeboard for further details...And finally, the ever helpful NIK MORTON, who once again supplied one of his cartoons, and also commented that if science fiction becomes Sci Fi, then many other common phrases should get contracted in the same manner, such as General Post Office to Gen Po Of etc. This makes me a Bra Man, and at that point I think I'll change the subject (or even a Bran Man, which is just as bad!). Many thanks to all correspondents - don't forget to send your next batch of virulence and vitriol to yrs trly in time for the next forgettable issue, the marasmic but not yet mangy Matrix 47. See Contents page for contributors deadlines and other dull stuff like that.

AFTERWORD

One of the most obvious things scratching my eyeballs at the moment is the lack of any main article in this issue - and also the lack of media reviews. Surely there is someone out there who can still afford to go to the pictures? Anyone had any good ideas for lead articles? Send 'em in! I will be snuffling around over the next few weeks trying to con quite innocent people into acts of the most truly offensive literary depravity, and I hope that we'll have an Albacon report or three in issue 47. This is assuming my kidneys have survived the event and this is not a posthumous publication.

This entire issue should really be dedicated to our cat, Idiot, who faithfully proof-read every page until quite abominable hours of the morning. Without her loyalty, where would we be? The answer to this and other questions will be found in.....you guessed it - Matrix 47! Be happy...

Simon

