



Ansible 204 July 2004

From **Dave Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU. www.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print) 1740-942X (online). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Atom**. Available for SAE or copies of *Dahlgren's Air Currents and Epidemic Diseases*.

The Starving Jubilee

J.G. Ballard's *Super-Cannes* may have eluded English-language sf award listings, but has won the Tähtivaeltaja prize as best sf novel published in Finland last year. Named for the magazine *Tähtivaeltaja* (Star Rover), this is Finland's only SF award for foreign books. [JN]

Ray Bradbury seems incandescent with wrath at Michael Moore for daring to call a film *Fahrenheit 9/11*. The juicy bits of his 2 June interview in the Swedish newspaper *Dagens Nyheter* were translated by Ahrvid Engholm for www.trufen.net: 'Michael Moore is a stupid asshole, that's what I think about it. [...] He stole my title and changed the numbers without ever asking me for permission. [...] He's a terrible person. Terrible person....' Could this anger be fuelled by political disapproval? Bradbury: 'That has nothing to do with it. He copied my title, that's what happened. It has nothing to do with my political views. [...] I could, tomorrow, write a novel and call it *Gone with the Wind*, right? But I won't, because it would be dishonest.... Just write that Michael Moore is dishonest and that I don't want to be associated with him in any way.' Oh dearie me. Would it be dishonest to publish a book called *Gone with the 9/11*? Answers on a postcard, please, but not to me.

Arthur C. Clarke is to receive the 2004 Robert A. Heinlein award, given for hard sf and/or nonfiction which inspires space exploration.

Harlan Ellison's long dispute with AOL about pirate postings of his fiction is settled at last. Although details are undisclosed, the 8 June release shows a remarkable mellowing of the great man's fiery rhetoric: 'I have come to realize that AOL respects the rights of authors and artists, and has a comprehensive system for addressing the complaints of copyright holders. I would not have settled this case if I were not sure that AOL is doing what it can do to fight online piracy.' Donations to his KICK Internet Piracy Fund are to be repaid, implying some financial element in the settlement. *Ansible* was shocked, shocked, that *The Inquirer* marked this occasion with the headline 'Trekkie Harlan Ellison settles four year-feud with AOL ... I cannae do it cap'n, I cannae remove the posts'. This earned them a stern Ellisonian phone call. [LE/CS]

Lisanne Norman won one of furry fandom's Ursa Major awards for *Between Darkness and Light* (2003), as Best Anthropomorphic Novel.

J.K. Rowling, very shortly after a hoax report that her sixth novel would be called *Harry Potter and the Something Implausible*, announced that it will in fact be *Harry Potter and the Something Else Implausible*. Be still, my beating heart. (Oh, all right, if you really insist on knowing: not *Pillar of Storgé* but *Half Blood Prince*.) [PL]

Contrecoup

Until 16 Jul • **Serious Moonlight** is Anne Sudworth's new art show: A&D Gallery, 51 Chiltern St, London, W1. 020 748 60534.

16 Jul • **British Fantasy Awards—Showcase**, The Tappit Hen, 5 William IV St, London, WC2N 4DN. 6pm for 7pm. Steve Jones hosts discussion of 2004 nominees, 'the worth of awards', etc. All welcome.

17 Jul • **Tolkien Society Seminar**, St Martin's College, Carlisle. 10am-5pm. £15 reg, inc lunch. Booking closes 2 July. Contact (SAE) 85 Wood Lane, Great Coates, Grimsby, DN37 9NB.

28 Jul • **BSEFA Open Meeting**, The Star pub, West Halkin Mews, London, SW1. 6pm on; fans present from 5pm. With Justina Robson.

5-8 Aug • **Bulgacon 2004** (Eurocon), Plovdiv, Bulgaria. Admission free. Contact <http://www.bgcon.org>, [info\[at\]bgcon.org](mailto:info[at]bgcon.org). Foreign liaison for English speakers: Rositsa Decheva, [rossie\[at\]bgcon.org](mailto:rossie[at]bgcon.org). [BS]

5-8 Aug • **A Commonwealth of SF** (SFF), Liverpool Foresight Centre. £150/\$270 inc meals; £110/\$198 for those earning <£15,000 p.a. Contact SF Foundation, 22 Addington Rd, Reading, RG1 5PT.

6-8 Aug • **Brentcon** (Sproutlore), diverse activities around Brentford. £22 reg for Sproutlore members and their guests; non-members £30. Cheques to Sproutlore, 211 Black Horse Ave, Dublin 7, Ireland.

20-23 Aug • **Discworld Convention IV**, Hanover International Hotel, Hinckley, Leics. GoH: Guess Who, plus The Usual Suspects. £50 reg. Contact PO Box 102, Royston, Herts, SG8 7ZJ. 07092 394940.

2-6 Sep • **Noreascon 4** (62nd Worldcon), Boston, MA. *Advance registration closes at the end of July*. \$180 reg; children \$105; \$35 supp. Contact PO Box 1010, Framingham, MA 01701, USA.

24-26 Sep • **Fantasycon 2004**, Quality Hotel, Walsall. GoH Rob Holdstock, Muriel Gray. £50 reg; £45 for BFS members and students with ID. Day membership £20 on Sat only. Contact Beech House, Chapel Lane, Multon, Cheshire, CW9 8PQ.

29-31 Jul 05 • **Accio 2005** (H. Potter), U of Reading. £160 reg (room & all meals); £120 (lunch, dinner); £20 discount until 31 Oct 04. £25 supp. Contact 26 Discovery House, Newby Place, London, E14 0HA.

Rumblings • **Mecon 8** (Belfast, 11-13 Mar 05) seems doomed to lose its cheap Queen's University SCR venue, thanks to impending closure of the SCR club. Alternatives are likely to cost far more. [DL]

Infinitely Improbable

Court Circular. Another lawsuit! Ubaldo DiBenedetto, a professor at Harvard who in 1993 published the instant-Ice-Age disaster novel *Polar Day 9* (as by Kyle Donner), is suing Roland Emmerich and Twentieth Century Fox Deutschland. His claim is that key plot elements of Emmerich's film *The Day After Tomorrow* are plagiarized from *Polar Day 9*—a copy of which DiBenedetto says he sent to Emmerich in 1998, without any movie offer following. The report in *Der Spiegel* says this case is being brought in Germany because courts there are more sympathetic to victims of intellectual property theft. Allegedly.

Thog's Astrometallurgy Corner. Pobjoy Mint is offering 'the world's first palladium bi-metal coin', to celebrate the bicentenary of the naming of palladium. Their ad explains that it was named in 1804 after the asteroid Pallas, which was made up of palladium.... [PM]

R.I.P. *Kay Allan* (1915-2004), Scots fan who never missed a Glasgow convention until a 1996 stroke, died at her Isle of Arran retirement home on 29 May. She was 88. Angus McAllister writes: 'Kay attended Eastercon annually for many years, as well as some Novacons and the Worldcons at Brighton 1987, The Hague 1990 and Glasgow 1995.' • *Marlon Brando* (1924-2004), legendary actor who played Jor-El in *Superman* (1978), died on 1 July aged 80. • *Anthony Buckeridge* (1912-2004), OBE, author of the long-running 'Jennings' boarding-school comedy sequence published since 1950, died on 28 June aged 92. Long before *The Simpsons*, Buckeridge made 'Doh!' the favourite expletive of a short-tempered schoolmaster; in later life he dismissed Harry Potter as 'perfectly ordinary books that have been hyped up'. • *Hugh B. Cave* (1910-2004), British-born US author of over 1,000 pulp and slick magazine stories plus several supernatural fiction novels, died on 27 June. He would have been 94 on 11 July. Cave received 1978, 1997 and 1999 World Fantasy Awards, the last for his life achievement—also honoured by Bram Stoker (1991) and International Horror Guild (1998) awards. • *Robert Lees*, retired US screenwriter who co-scripted the comedies *Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein* (1948) and other genre films, was stabbed and beheaded on 13 June. He was 92, and one of the last surviving Hollywood writers who was blacklisted in the 1950s. The murderer killed again soon after; a suspect was arrested on 14 June. [BB] • *Max Rosenberg* (1914-2004), US producer of many low-budget horror films beginning with *The Curse of Frankenstein* (1957), died on 14 June aged 89. His other productions include *Dr Terror's House of Horrors* and *Dr Who and the Daleks*, both 1965. [PDF]

Fountain Award. Alison Smith's 'The Specialist' (in *McSweeney's Quarterly Concern*) was the first winner of this juried short story award.

Publishers and Sinners. Our man Joe at Waterstone's Bookshop in Edinburgh had to postpone a planned discussion event on John Wyndham's *The Midwich Cuckoos*, 'due to Penguin being in a total mess right now. The entire book trade is ticked off with what has to be the most famous publisher around. They are relocating their warehouse, which is obviously disruptive. Add to that a new automated system which was untried and, yep, you guessed it, didn't actually work, and you have a recipe for disaster. Bookstores up and down the UK are having enormous trouble trying to source Penguin titles, from John

Wyndham to James Joyce. Great fun for booksellers having to explain this to every customer who asks why they can't get hold of famous books.... And it looks like costing Penguin millions in lost business.'

Sidewise Awards for alternate history: it's shortest time again. Except in universes where, frighteningly and paradoxically, it isn't.... LONG Murray Davies, *Collaborator*; Mitchell Freedman, *Disturbance of Fate*; Larry Kirwan, *Liverpool Fantasy*; S.M. Stirling, *Conquistador*. SHORT Ricard de la Casa & Pedro Jorge Romero, 'The Day We Went Through the Transition' (*Cosmos Latinos*); Geoffrey Landis, 'The Eyes of America' (*Sci Fiction* 5/03); Robert L. O'Connell, 'The Cuban Missile Crisis: Second Holocaust' (*What Ifs?*); Chris Roberson, 'O One' (*Live Without a Net*); Robert Silverberg, 'The Reign of Terror' (*Asimov's* 4/03).

Random Fandom. Martin Hoare became legless again: 'My leg has been quite bad. Something happened to it when I was in Holland for Kees van Toorn's 50th birthday at the end of May. It suddenly started to hurt and it stopped working. Not good when you are you are on your own and have to drive back! [The hospital] decided it was not a DVT but probably a massive infection. They prescribed enough antibiotics to cure a whole Welsh Rugby team after a week in Amsterdam.' • Terry Jeeves writes in *Erg* 166 (July 2004): 'This will almost certainly be the last issue of ERG. I shall be 82 on October 1st and have several medical problems getting in the way of publishing.' Terry's quarterly fanzine first appeared in April 1959. • Mark & Vanessa Loney announce the birth of their first child, Alexandra Louise Loney, in Canberra on 20 June.

Bram Stoker Awards (horror), announced 5 June. NOVEL Peter Straub, *lost boy lost girl*. FIRST NOVEL Brian Keene, *The Rising*. LONG FICTION Jack Ketchum, 'Closing Time'. SHORT Gary A. Braunbeck, 'Duty'. COLLECTION Jack Ketchum, *Peaceable Kingdom*. ANTHOLOGY *Borderlands* 5 ed. Elizabeth & Thomas Monteone. NON-FICTION Thomas F. Monteone, *The Mothers and Fathers Italian Association*. ILLUSTRATED Neil Gaiman, *The Sandman: Endless Nights*. SCREENPLAY Bubba Ho-Tep. YOUNGER READERS J.K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*. POETRY Bruce Boston, *Pitchblende*. ALTERNATIVE FORMS Michael Arntzen, *The Gorolets*. LIFE ACHIEVEMENT Anne Rice, Martin H. Greenberg.

Outraged Letters. Paul Barnett on A203: 'Since the press reports that Chrysalis's book division was up for sale, Chrysalis has announced that it's not for sale, and that all such talk is hawing, etc. My sources tell me that it is in fact being groomed for sale, but not for a year or two yet; a sort of "reports of the death are premature" situation.' • John M. Ford frowns: 'A while back I finally read Dick Jude's "10 Best Skiffy Books" in the *Guardian*, and while it's about mid-range for such lists, I noticed down at the end that it was, quote, "Dedicated to the memory of Andre Norton." / The list was posted in October of 1999. She's alive now, which would strongly imply that she was alive then. / I e-mailed the *Guardian* about this. No reply, naturally, and no adjustment to the piece. In the way of things, five years is not a terribly long time for an error of this nature to stand, but, well, erm, as they say.' • M.J. 'Simo' Simpson brags (7 June): 'Just got back from spending the day on the *Hitchhiker's Guide* film set, albeit in a slightly wrecked state (me, not the film set) after a night of heavy drinking with the SFX gang to celebrate *Hitchhiker: A Biography of Douglas Adams* winning Best Non-Fiction in the SFX Reader Awards. In the light of my success at yesterday's awards, I would like to make it clear that I have never, ever suggested that SFX has gone downhill since I left and is now a glorified *Buffy* fanzine. In fact I have maintained all along that the magazine is a bastion of good taste and high class genre journalism.' • David Lee Stone was at Book Expo America in Chicago: 'Ursula Le Guin gave an incredible speech about colour in fantasy fiction, and Jamie Lee Curtis gave an equally empowered but not quite so incredible talk on how hard it is to be five. Surprisingly, Ursula came off best.... Other Brits I noticed there were *Artemis Fowl* author Eoin Colfer, Paul Stewart and Chris Riddell, author and illustrator of the *Edge Chronicles*, and Ed Greenwood, the Merlin-look-alike author of the *Cormyr Saga*.'

Worldbuilding Corner. 'So they gathered bilbys, and scythed grain and collected panniers of gleeb, and then it was time to fleece the mereens again, and the days slid by ...' (John Rackham, *The Double Invaders*, 1967) [BA] What, no smearps? See also the A203 masthead.

Small Press. *Saucer Smear* gets a plug from Steve Dunn: 'It is to the UFO community (what the magazine calls "UFoology") what *Ansible* and *File 770*, etc. are to science fiction, i.e., a fanzine.' Fandom ... but not as we know it. <http://www.martiansgohome.com/smeat/>

As Others See Us. Belatedly, here's film critic Paul Byrne of the *Sydney Morning Herald* issuing the traditional disclaimer about Charlie Kaufman's utterly skiffy *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*: 'Kaufman writes with an imaginative freedom that only sci-fi writers usually have,

but his stories are not strictly sci-fi. He doesn't so much transform the natural world into something bizarre or futuristic, as make a bizarre world of his creation seem natural.' Which is very different. [SC]

Bombed Sites. Bigengine.co.uk, the on-line relic of Ben Jeapes's small press Big Engine—liquidated in early 2003—has finally faded away. Chris Priest has not been liquidated, but Christopher-priest.co.uk expired in June after renewal reminders (if any) failed to reach him; it, or a close equivalent, will shortly rise again.

Fanfundery. TAFF: James Bacon won the 2004 race to represent European fandom at this year's Worldcon, Noreascon 4 in Boston, with 112 first place votes to Anders Holmstrom's 82. (19 votes went to No Preference and just one to Hold Over Funds.) James assures the world: 'I hope to do my best and intend to be dignified and respectable, even when I drop my trousers.' • *Bring Bruce Bayside*: this fund is on course to waft that fine Australian Bruce Gillespie to Corflu 2005 in San Francisco; a brief London visit is also hoped. Supporters can now donate via PayPal: send to JoyceWorley1 [you know what goes here]cox.net. *The Incomplete Bruce Gillespie* (ed. Irwin Hirsh) is a BBB fundraiser that collects his best fanwriting—available in the UK for £5 post free, from Mark Plummer/Claire Brialey, 14 Northway Rd, Croydon, CR0 6JE.

Technical Hitch. Douglas Adams speaks from beyond the grave in 'a brand new series' of *The Hitch-Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy* (BBC Radio 4, from 21 September). 'Brand new' here means a radio adaptation of *Hitcher* books 3, 4 and 5, the ones that didn't begin as radio scripts. According to the BBC, Adams is featured 'thanks to the wonders of digital technology. Douglas always intended to play the part of Agrajag and recorded himself in the part a few years ago.' These digital wonders consist not of voice-simulating supercomputers but simple cut-and-paste from the great man's taped reading of his books. [BB] • Meanwhile, the BBC couldn't reach agreement with Terry Nation's estate (which wanted 'unacceptable levels of editorial control') about use of the Daleks in the new *Dr Who* series. So these favourite villains won't appear. [BB]

C.o.A. Interzone, TTA Press, 5 Martins Lane, Witcham, Ely, Cambs, CB6 2LB. *Christina Lake & Doug Bell*, 35 Gylling St, Falmouth, Cornwall, TR11 3EL. *Margaret Little*, 12 Meadowbank Close, Stevenage Rd, London, SW6 6PD. *Patrick & Teresa Nielsen Hayden*, 201 31st St #1, Brooklyn, NY 11232-1809, USA. *David Pringle*, 47 Forest Rd, Selkirk, Borders, TD7 5DA. (Send him no more *Interzone* submissions, please!)

The Science Fiction Museum in Seattle had its grand opening on 18 June. Your reporter, straining his telepathic receptors from thousands of miles away, dimly gleaned that it's quite impressive.

A203 Update. Brian McNaughton died on 13 May, not 14 May; he was 68. • *Horia Ursu* of Romania illuminates the Language Lesson's collective noun for penguins in the water, 'a raft', and *Ansible's* vision of bobbing Penguin books: 'As a curiosity, in Romanian, "raft" means "bookshelf". How about this? In a parallel world, where Romanians rule the world, the term is absolutely fit.' A Sidewise Award nomination awaits! • *Tim Kirk*, like several million others, wrote: 'To correct or at least provide original attribution for Brian Aldiss, "So funny it was banned in Norway" might have been used by *Lost In Translation* (but not that I'd heard of); was definitely used for *Life of Brian* in Sweden though ...' By Jove, could that tricky fellow Mr Aldiss have been jesting?

Thog's Masterclass. *Zero Tolerance Dept* (or, *The Wages of Washing*). 'I merely refer you to our "Code of Light" drawn up in the dark days of 1979 [...] if a girl comes home here covered in oil and grease or the soil itself she can travel unmolested. Otherwise she is liable to get picked up on a trumped vice charge [...] such as being a "person of known vicious private habits loitering for immoral purposes etc".' (Paul Charkin, *The Living Gem*, 1963) [ARRRR] • *Dept of Urban Metamorphosis*. 'Like a man in wonderland Gordon Drew watched them for a while, then he went further up the main street and finally turned into a small teashop.' (Hugo Blayn [John Russell Fearn], *Flashpoint*, 1950) [SH] • *Bearded Lady Dept*. 'At least his face was unmarked; in the bandages it looked like an unshaven nun's face' (Ramsey Campbell, *Ancient Images*, 1989) [LC] • *Hazards of Smoking Dept*. 'Smith struck a match and relighted his pipe. He began to pace the room again. His eyes were literally on fire.' (Sax Rohmer, *The Mystery of Dr Fu Manchu*, 1913) [LC]

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