

Ansible



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From David Langford, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Web news.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: Dan Steffan. Cartoon: Brad W. Foster. Available for SAE or additional space on the mantelpiece.

Chicon 7. Here are the Hugos, for which a near-record 1922 valid ballots were cast: NOVEL Jo Walton, *Among Others*. NOVELLA Kij Johnson, 'The Man Who Bridged the Mist' (*Asimov's* 10/11). NOVELETTE Charlie Jane Anders, 'Six Months, Three Days' (Tor.com). SHORT STORY Ken Liu, 'The Paper Menagerie' (*F&SF* 3/11). RELATED WORK John Clute, David Langford, Peter Nicholls, Graham Sleight (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Science Fiction, Third Edition*. (Whoopee! The *SFE* team is deeply thrilled and gratified; thanks to all voters.) GRAPHIC STORY Ursula Vernon, *Digger*. DRAMATIC—LONG *Game of Thrones*: Season 1. DRAMATIC—SHORT *Doctor Who*: 'The Doctor's Wife'. PRO EDITOR—LONG Betsy Wollheim. PRO EDITOR—SHORT Sheila Williams. PRO ARTIST John Picacio. SEMIPROZINE *Locus*. FANZINE *SF Signal*. FANCAST *SF Squeecast*. FAN WRITER Jim C. Hines. FAN ARTIST Maurine Starkey. JOHN W. CAMPBELL AWARD E. Lily Yu. [L] • Traditional tinkering with Hugo rules: the new Best Fancast category was ratified; likewise, with slight changes, the 2011 tweaks to Semiprozine and Fanzine definitions; Graphic Story at last becomes permanent; a proposed Young Adult category was voted down. • **More Chicon Awards.** *Big Heart*: Juanita Coulson. *Sidewise* (alternate history): LONG Ian R. MacLeod, *Wake Up and Dream*. SHORT Lisa Goldstein. 'Paradise Is a Walled Garden' (*Asimov's* 8/11). • **London in 2014**, to no one's surprise, won the Worldcon site selection vote. The convention name is *London 3*; details below. • **Nippon 2007 News.** The Japanese worldcon's report to Chicon confirmed a larger-than-expected net loss of \$116,384; a shade over \$84,000 remains unpaid.

The Sands of Mars

Lauren Beukes's *Zoo City* appeared in an *Observer* list titled 'The 10 best contemporary African books'; a welcome change from lists of 'The 10 best excluding that ghostly genre stuff'. (26 August) [EA]

Ray Bradbury was honoured again by NASA, which announced on what would have been his 92nd birthday (22 August) that the touchdown site of the Mars rover Curiosity is named Bradbury Landing. Less respectfully, released 1960s FBI files show that Bradbury was investigated as a possible Communist, an accusation made by B-movie screenwriter Martin Berkeley—who was a card-carrying Party member and denounced 155 Hollywood colleagues, telling the FBI that 'that the general aim of these science fiction writers is to frighten the people into a state of paralysis or psychological incompetence bordering on hysteria', whereupon World War III was as good as won. Bradbury received a clean bill of political health. (*Huffington Post*, 28 August) [DL]

Parke Godwin, the US novelist, is sadly in decline with failing memory and concentration—unable to read or write. Messages from friends may be sent c/o connorfc at earthlink dot net. (*Weird Tales*)

Rowena Morrill was unable to attend Chicon 7 as the Artist Guest of Honour owing to health problems from which she is recovering.

Stanley Schmidt has retired after spending (as did John W. Campbell) 34 years as editor of *Analog*. Trevor Quachri, current managing editor of both *Analog* and *Asimov's*, will take over. [L]

Michael Swanwick remembers Hazel's Language Lessons: 'My wanderings have brought me to Newfoundland, so ... greetings from Brigus! I write because in the dictionary of newfoundland english, an actual book, I found the following definition: "george martin: an ankle-high rubber boot with lacings. Also known as rubber lumps." and for some reason it seemed to me that you needed to know this' (9 August)

Anne VanderMeer, sidelined by the new management at *Weird Tales* despite steering the magazine to its only Hugo while editor-in-chief, resigned from WT during the recent online furore (of which more below) and is now a consulting fiction editor for Tor.com.

Conquinate

Until 16 Sep • **Tea with Alice/Storyloom** (exhibitions), Story Museum, Rochester House, 42 Pembroke St, Oxford, OX1 1BP. Each £5, £3 concessions. www.storymuseum.org.uk; enquiries 01865 790050.

15 Sep • **Bristol Beer & Blake's 7**, Knight's Templar, Unit 1 Temple Square, Temple Quay, Bristol, BS1 6DG. 12:15 to 7pm-ish.

15 Sep • **From Imagination to Reality**, British Interplanetary Society, London. 9am-7pm. £40 reg at www.bis-space.com.

21 Sep • **The Hobbit at 75**, British Library, 6:30pm-8pm. £7.50, £5 unwaged. Details and bookings at www.bl.uk.

21-23 Sep • **Oxonmoot** (Tolkien Soc), Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford. £47 reg (members £38); see www.tolkienociety.org/oxon/ for various child discounts. Cheques to Tolkien Society, 149/4 Morrison St, Edinburgh, EH3 8AG. Registration deadline is 3 September.

22-23 Sep • **H.G. Wells Festival**, The Grand, The Leas, Folkestone, CT20 2XL. Comprises £40 dinner 7:30pm Sat; £15 lunch noon Sun with speech. Contact 01 303 222 222; www.wellsfestival.com.

22 Sep • **Titancon**, Europa Hotel, Belfast. Now £20 reg. Additional GoH reading on previous evening in McHughs pub as part of Belfast's free Culture Night. See www.titancon.com for more.

26 Sep • **BSFA Open Meeting**, The Argyle pub, Leather Lane, London (new venue). 5/6pm for 7pm. With Rob Shearman.

27-30 Sept • **Fantasycon 2012**, Royal Albion Hotel, Brighton. £65 reg (BFS members £60); day rate £40, Saturday only. Payment via PayPal at fantasycon2012.org/join.php, or to 10 Haycroft Gardens, Mastin Moor, Chesterfield, Derbyshire, S43 3FE.

4-7 Oct • **Grimmfest 2012** (horror/cult film festival), Manchester. £45, to rise soon, plus £2 booking fee. Gory details at grimmfest.com.

8 Oct • **Discovering Alternate Genres**, Custard Factory, Gibb St, Birmingham, B9 4AA. 7 8:30pm. Peter F. Hamilton, Stan Nicholls, others. £8; £5 concessions. See www.birminghambookfestival.org.

16-18 Nov • **Winter Horrors** (workshop), Dove Valley Centre, Derbyshire. £150 inclusive. Contact alexdavisevents at hotmail co uk.

16-17 Feb 2013 • **Picocon 30**, Imperial College Union, London. GoH Peter F. Hamilton, others. Registration cost TBA. Contact ICSF, Beit Quad, Prince Consort Road, London, SW7 2BB; picocon at icfsc co uk.

25-27 Feb 2013 • **Redemption '13** (multimedia sf), Britannia Hotel, Fairfax St, Coventry, CV1 5RP. Now £70 reg; unwaged etc £20 less; £75 at door. £15 supp and under-18s; under-3s free. Contact 61 Chaucer Road, Farnborough, Hampshire, GU14 8SP.

25-28 Apr 2013 • **Dead by Dawn** (horror film festival), Filmhouse, Edinburgh. Box office 0131 228 2688; www.deadbydawn.co.uk.

11-12 May 2013 • **Bristol Comic Expo**, Brunel's Old Station and Ramada Jarvis Hotel, Bristol. See www.bristolexpo.co.uk.

1-4 Nov 2013 • **Irish Discworld Convention**, Radisson Blu Limerick, Ennis Rd, Limerick, Ireland. 40 reg; 30 students/concessions, 15 teen (13-18), 10 junior (8-12), under-8s free. Online registration at www.idwcon.org.

14-18 Aug 2014 • **London 3** (72nd Worldcon), ExCeL centre, London Docklands. GoH Iain Banks, John Clute, Malcolm Edwards, Chris Foss, Jeanne Gomoll, Robin Hobb, Bryan Talbot. £95.00 reg; £65.00 YA; £30.00 child; £2.00 infant; £230.00 family; £25.00 supp. See www.london3.org. No visible snailmail contact as yet.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. Joseph Bottum reviews that nice Mr Scalzi's *Redshirts*: 'Lots of its authors, and a slew of its readers, like to think that science fiction sails on the ocean of science, but mostly it just paddles in the shallows of literature.' (*Weekly Standard*, 20 August) [MMW] And sometimes it proudly wallows in the gutters of popularity.

Mythopoeic Awards (fantasy fiction and scholarship): ADULT Lisa Goldstein, *The Uncertain Places*. CHILDREN'S Delia Sherman, *The Freedom Maze*. SCHOLARSHIP—INKLINGS Carl Phepstead, *Tolkien and Wales: Language, Literature and Identity*. SCHOLARSHIP—OTHER Jack Zipes, *The Enchanted Screen: The Unknown History of Fairy-Tale Films*.

When All Else Fails. 'Writer-director Judd Apatow, already thinking ahead to his next movie, says, "I've covered college, marriage, having a baby, turning 40, and fatal diseases—there's almost nothing left at this point. I'm going to have to switch to science fiction.'" (*Entertainment Weekly*, 17/24 August 2012 double issue) [PL]

R.I.P. Harry Harrison (1925-2012), who for *Ansible* readers needs

no introduction, died on 15 August; he was 87. Following early work as a comics artist and magazine editor, Harry was best known for his fiction, launching well-loved series characters in *Deathworld* (1960), *The Stainless Steel Rat* (1961) and *Bill the Galactic Hero* (1965); notable standalones include *Make Room! Make Room!* (1966, unfaithfully filmed as *Soylent Green*), *Captive Universe* (1969) and *A Transatlantic Tunnel, Hurrah!* (1972). He edited many anthologies, both solo and in collaboration with Brian Aldiss; he entered the SF Hall of Fame in 2004 and was made a SFWA Grand Master in 2009. His unflinching, wisecracking energy enlivened a great many conventions. Harry will be sadly missed.

- **Ken Hunter** (1955-2012) Chicago fan and con-runner who was Head of Logistics for Chicon 7, died on 20 August.
- **Joe Kubert** (1926-2012), noted US comics artist in many genres—his DC Comics *Hawkman* superhero work is much admired—died on 12 August aged 85. Kip Williams writes: 'He did fantasy stories, Viking stories, caveman stories, war stories, SF stories, and anything else. A very bold, direct style of drawing. Founded a school for comic art. Left two sons who are both respected in the field.'
- **George Leach** (1921-2012), UK stunt arranger and performer who worked on *The Prisoner*, *Superman* (1978) and eleven James Bond films (1962-1985), died on 17 June aged 90. [MPJ]
- **Jerry Nelson** (1934-2012), US puppeteer and voice actor in many *Muppets* and (in particular as Count von Count) *Sesame Street* productions plus the 1980s tv series *Fraggle Rock*, died on 23 August; he was 78. [MPJ]
- **Adam Niswander** (1946-2012), US author of *The Charm* (1993) and several other Lovelcraftian and dark-fantasy novels, died on 12 August aged 66. [PS]
- **Carlo Rambaldi** (1925-2012), Italian special effects artist who shared Oscars for his work on *Alien* (1979) and *ET* (1982); he created the lovable title character and a special Academy Award for *King Kong* (1976), died on 10 August. He was 86. [SG/MPJ]
- **Graeme Roberts**, UK book dealer who for many years ran the Magpie Bookshop in Spitalfields and more recently traded online, died in August. [BA]
- **Tony Scott** (1944-2012), UK-born producer and director whose genre credits include *The Hunger* (1983), *The Andromeda Strain* (2008 tv) and *Prometheus* (2012 with brother Ridley), committed suicide on 19 August; he was 68. Still forthcoming: *Coma* (tv), *Ion* and *Prometheus 2*. [LK]
- **Josepha Sherman** (1946-2012), US sf/fantasy author and editor whose debut (solo) novel *The Shining Falcon* (1989) won the Compton Crook award, died on 23 August aged 65. Other works included a *Star Trek* spinoff trilogy with Susan Shwartz and the hefty *Storytelling: An Encyclopedia of Mythology and Folklore*. [PDF]
- **Mel Stuart** (1928-2012), US film producer/director best known for the first version of *Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory* (1971), died on 9 August; he was 83. [MPJ]
- **Roland C. Wagner** (1960-2012), French sf author and anthologist whose first novel appeared in 1987 and whose alternate-history magnum opus *Rèves de Gloire* (2011) won several awards, died in a car accident on 5 August; he was 51. [J-DB]

Who's Astronomp Masterclass. 'What up there's the constellation of Orion ... otherwise known as the Big Bear.' (John Huston, screenplay for *The Killers*, 1946) [PB]

As Others See Us II. Matt Chorley of the *Indie* probably annoyed a few sensitive fans with a *Doctor Who* polemic headlined 'The Emperor's New Clothes'. There have been 784 episodes in total, all of which seem to involve a dandy peering at some odds and sods in the props department while someone rubs a cheese grater up a piano wire. [...] *Doctor Who* is one of the biggest commercial monsters on the planet. It is difficult to know where the drama ends and the lunch boxes begin. / It's over-complicated, over-hyped and it has taken over. It is the McDonald's of telly—all franchise, fries and barely-met expectations. And you can stick that sonic screwdriver in your black hole.' (*Independent*, 2 September) [MPJ] Yes, yes, but does he like it?

Court Circular. Judge Lucy Koh of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California issued a 2 August order 'denying Samsung's motion to use devices seen in the films "2001: A Space Odyssey" and "Tomorrow People" to invalidate Apple's design patents.' (*Apple Insider*, 2 August) [CJ] It would seem that for a 'prior art' effect on US patent law, you must actually invent something—here the tablet computer—and not just simulate it with cunning special effects. Alas.

World Fantasy Awards novel shortlist: Christopher Buehlman, *Those Across the River*; Stephen King, *11/22/63*; George R.R. Martin, *A Dance with Dragons*; Lavie Tidhar, *Osama*; Jo Walton, *Among Others*.

We Are Everywhere. Interviewee: 'This all ties in, of course, with the concept of the monomyth that Joseph Campbell put forward.' Presenter: 'Just to clarify, that's the famous science fiction editor Joseph Campbell?' Interviewee: 'Uh yes, that's right.' (BBC Radio 4, *Material World*, 2 August) [PS-P] Long-time fans will remember the uproar when

Campbell changed his magazine title from *Astounding Monomyths* to *Monolog*. ● 'Newly strangled first by the Danes and then by the Normans, the special genius of English has been its ability to morph its enemies into itself, like some monstrous sci-fi extra-terrestrial growing ever stronger by gobbling up its opponents.' (Andrew Roberts, *A History of the English-Speaking Peoples since 1900*, 2006) [MMW]

Magazine Scene. The British SF Association couldn't produce a *Vector* for its summer mailing—having lost 'a key individual' thanks to 'abuse via social media and in person following events at Eastercon'; see A298—and instead sent each member a random book of original fiction from BSFA chairman Ian Whates's NewCon Press. (I got the 2008 BSFA anniversary anthology.) Design and layout volunteers are sought.

Outraged Letters. Robert Newman nearly saw Patrick Stewart's moment of Olympic glory: 'He was doing the stint that was two torchbearers after the one who ran past me. There was a long cavalcade of vehicles before the torch arrived; one of them was a coach with PS in it, pulling his shorts up. I had my camera in my hand but was so surprised that I didn't get a snap. The large crowd were all so excited about seeing PS with his shorts around his knees that the actual torchbearer went past with barely any cheer or excitement.' ● Kip Williams adds a note on Ernest Borgnine (A301 obituaries): 'Borgnine achieved something like a genre triecta in his recurring voice-acting role as "Mermaid Man", a * comic-book superhero in * the animated TV cartoon, * *SpongeBob SquarePants*. It also partakes of the nature of satire and meta. Funny, too.'

The Dead Past, 20 Years Ago. Too Good to Check: the story is that a young graduate newly employed by Radio 4 thought of a way to brighten it up, and on his own initiative wrote to Douglas Adams asking if he'd ever thought of adapting *Hitch-Hiker's Guide* for radio...? (*Ansible* 62, September 1992) ● **30 Years Ago**, the imminent death of the UK SF Book Club and related Readers Union reprint clubs ('basically an out-moded idea') was reported here. (*Ansible* 28, September 1982)

Controversies. *Readercon* rethought its much-criticized decision (see A301) and banned the self-confessed stalker for life rather than two years. ● *Weird Tales* editor Marvin Kaye reacted to the online fracas about perceived racism in Victoria Foys's self-published dystopian novel *Revealing Eden* by announcing on 15 August that *WT* would excerpt chapter 1 of this 'thoroughly non-racist book'. This led to an epic storm of criticism and, five days later, a *WT* volteface with publisher John Harlacher not only cancelling Kaye's decision but deleting his website post. Imagine their surprise on finding people had kept screenshots.

Fanfunder. *GUFF* nominations for the 2013 southbound race (Europe to Australasia) are open, closing on 13 October with voting planned to continue to 7 January next year and the result announced on 13 January. Candidates wanted! See <http://guff.lostcarpark.com>. ● *TAFF* announced provisional 2013 westbound race plans: nominations 9 November to 31 December 2012, voting to mid-April, winner travels to the Texas Worldcon starting on 29 August. Newsletter at taff.org.uk.

Editorial. Harry Harrison's funeral and wake in Brighton on 31 August were highly memorable. Awaiting us by the crematorium was a parked camper-van containing something blue which (the double-take was universal) proved to be Harry's coffin, papered with world maps plus a few appliqué tour brochures and photos. The service was short, secular—Tom Shippey read an Old Norse poem—and heartfelt, ending with a mass charging of glasses from the big bottle of Teacher's perched on the coffin, for a farewell toast: 'Ad Astra, Harry, Ad Astra.' Much reminiscence and alcohol followed; sf notables at the lavish wake included Malcolm Edwards, Rog Peyton and Chris Priest. All thanks to Harry's family for doing him proud. ● Neil Armstrong (1930-2012)—who had shared a special 1969 Worldcon award for the Apollo Moon landing—was buried on the same day, under a blue moon.

Who's Masterclass. *Irresistible Narrative Hook Dept.* 'I wonder how long it will be before that name pronounced soundlessly in the deep silence of my mind will fail to unleash in me such floods of nostalgia, rent through and through with fear and painful confusion, yet linked indissolubly with my memory of the strangest days I have ever known.' (Flora Armatage, *Sebastian*, 1946: first sentence) [BT] ● *Dept of Hirsute Versatility.* 'He is forty years old, with a black beard shaped like a spade, a lawyer and a judge ...' (Jo Walton, *Lifelode*, 2009) [DS]

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