



FENCON

The
Programme
Book



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This convention is dedicated to the memory of Hugh Walker (1954-1979)

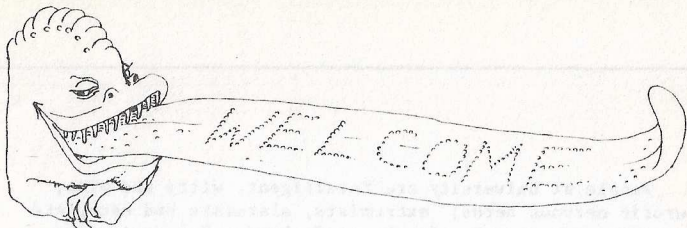
This Programme Book was brought to you by the FENCON committee:

Nick Lowe (Chairman)	Colin Fine (Memberships)
Tibs (Secretary)	Mike Hardy (Facilities)
Scott Goodfellow (Ops)	Paddy Leahy (Publications)
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Special Thanks to:

Colin Fine (Typing)	Margaret Welbank & Anne Warren (Artwork)
Shape Data Ltd. (Text processing)	Sirius Cybernetics Corp. (Paddy Leahy)
Margaret Welbank (Cover)	

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Actually, this convention is a mistake. It was originally intended to commemorate the 21st anniversary of the Cambridge University Science Fiction Society, but we found out a couple of weeks ago it's only the 19th. Since nineteen is one of the most stunningly useless numbers ever discovered, we decided, rather than leave it as a celebration of the 19th anniversary, to go for the obvious alternative and move the convention two years into the future.

So, welcome to Fencon 84, particularly to those of you who've arrived from the past. We've tried to restore the University Centre to exactly the condition it was in in October 1982: the topless escort agency converted back to a restaurant, the Smash Those Filthy Rotten Green-skinned Vermin from Antares into Interstellar Dust! Zap!! Whaam!!! Ka-BOOOOOM!!!! games machines removed from the stairwell and the displays disguised as mirrors, and of course the entrance to the new abattoir boarded up as best we could - though don't lean too hard against the wall in the Ladies or you might get a nasty surprise. As an extra-special touch of nostalgia, we've stocked the bar with old-style non-hallucinogenic beer. This will be served in authentic glass containers of Imperial capacities, and should (for the benefit of those of you who've forgotten) be lifted to the lips - in the glass! - and swallowed, not heaped on the back of the hand and snorted. Be careful you get this one right.

We hope that those of you who've stepped in from 1982 will find the present day interesting and enjoyable. Though it's only two years, many of us find it hard to remember what it used to be like in your day - when you could still get a bag of chips for 35p, and unemployment was only three million; when Reagan's 1952 sex change was still Washington's best-kept secret, Scotland was relatively neglected as a world power, and science had not yet demonstrated that nuclear fallout is good for you. Lord Lucan was still in hiding as the wife of a cabinet minister, the earth was still widely believed to be convex, and Efraim di Valpolicella was not the household name it is today. Most incredible of all to think back on now, in 1982 the Second Coming had not yet happened for the first time, and all that business with the universe bursting asunder in a blaze of incandescent how's-your-father was still in the future, together with all the palaver that followed.

Transporting an entire science fiction convention two years in time is not, of course, without its hazards, and you'll find that a couple of minor programme items advertised in the Progress Report have got routed to 1663 by mistake. The only serious loss is Ike Newton's talk on how he first became an sf writer; but we hope to have Ike back well before any detectable damage is done to the fabric of history. Baggage staff at Heathrow are trying to locate him now, and have the situation "almost completely under control".

Otherwise, we hope there's enough going on to keep you pleasantly dizzy: famous authors, excellent films, fascinating talks, absolutely ridiculous games, and a rich miscellany of inventive entertainments to celebrate, stimulate, and titillate the imagination. Enjoy it all, or as much of it as you can cram in without cloning. If you've any queries, complaints, or confusions, don't hesitate to accost a committee member: we're the ones whizzing up and down stairs like undetected neutrinos, wearing big rectangular badges and haunted expressions.

WARNING!

People at university are intelligent, witty and wise; neurotic nervous nerds; extremists, alarmists and escapists - anything but normal. People at Cambridge University are handpicked for their inability to cope with Life Out There. So it was the obvious thing for a group of the more erratic of these creatures, trapped in the Seething Sixties, to band together to create - gasp! - the "Cambridge University Science Fiction Society". What weapon of revenge so great had ever been launched upon the innocent populace of hippies, beatniks and Ordinary People?

Well, all this happened a long time ago, in 1963, and you might well question its relevance to your life today. (Its relevance to mine is that I sit around writing nonsense like this when I should be reading 600 pages of computer programming.) For, like a shy maiden, CUSFS has sheltered behind her dreaming spires, bashfully producing occasional seasoned Fans, coyly luring the odd author (and some of them were very odd indeed!) into giving her a speech, and hoarding with little-girl sentimentalism a stack of musty paperbacks labelled "SF". But now, as she attains her twenty-first year, she has exploded onto the convention scene with FENCON!! What more dazzling début could a girl ask for?

As for me, I'm the present chairman of CUSFS, Vicki King. While I am not myself responsible for any part of FENCON, I've watched it develop since last spring under the management of the most experienced and/or most enthusiastic of the CUSFS members (a good reason for me not to be on the committee!). For all new CUSFS members present, FENCON represents one of the best efforts of the society to satisfy the needs of its membership. For all our visitors from outside Cambridge, we're glad to take this opportunity to get closer to established SF fandom. For everyone, I hope you have a good day here, with any luck one containing novel forms of amusement (besides the bar!), and one you'll consider worthwhile. I would also like on behalf of CUSFS itself to thank all the members of the Fencon committee - Nick, Colin, Tibs, Paddy, Jonathan, Mike, Scott (and semi-members Duncan, Anne, Ye Gerbish and Steve) - for all the effort and hard work they've put in.

Vicki King

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BLACK HOLE!



The Programme:

Guest Speakers



Bernard Carr

Bernard Carr, of the Institute of Astronomy, Cambridge, has spent the last ten years working in some of the most exciting fields in relativistic cosmology. Much of his work revolves around the central problem of how the Universe we live in today was generated by the laws of physics from the 'Big Bang'. He is particularly well known for his studies of primordial black holes, and is one of the originators of the concepts of the 'Shear Hell Hole' (a particularly hairy kind of singularity) and the 'Cool Big Bang', which provides an alternative explanation of the cosmic microwave background, and proved that cosmologists still don't have all the answers.

In 1979 Bernard Carr and Martin Rees co-authored a paper in Nature, exploring the consequences of the Anthropic Principle, a revolutionary concept that accounts for the laws of physics we observe by appealing to the necessary existence of an observer. Whether the AP is science or metaphysical speculation is still debated by some, but it certainly explains a remarkable amount of the structure of our Universe, from the rate of certain nuclear reactions to why there are exactly three space and one time dimensions. We've given Bernard just one hour to explain all this to you.

John Conway

John Conway's name is well known to anybody who was a regular reader of Martin Gardner's Mathematical Games column in Scientific American. As well as being an eminent mathematician in academic circles (he led the team which in 1980 isolated and described "The Baby", one of the two remaining unexhibited Sporadic Finite Simple Groups, of order 86,775,571,046,077,562,880) he has gained a large following among recreational mathematicians, and particularly game-theorists, for the sparkle and inventiveness of the ideas he strews behind him on his safari-tours through the undiscovered parts of mathematics.

Recently he has published much delightful work on the structure of games, particularly in Winning Ways (with Elwyn Berlekamp and Richard Guy), which tells you how to win every game you have ever heard of, and many more you haven't.

But ironically, probably his most widely-disseminated invention has outstripped his own fame, and become known in quarters where its inventor's name is not. Nearly everybody who has ever got the 'programming bug' has at some time written a program to play Life, but not many know who invented it. Further, many regard it as an interesting programming exercise, but once it is working they spend no time playing with it.

John, who invented the Game of Life, has spent a great deal of time ~~with~~ researching it, and he will be explaining the game and various of its more interesting features at Fencon.

Tim Souster

Tim Souster was responsible for all the music on the record of The Hitch-Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy.

He is an eclectic musician, having taught at King's College Cambridge and the West Berlin Artists' Programme (in both cases as Composer-in-residence), at Cologne State Music High School (with Karl-Heinz Stockhausen), and at the

University of Keele (as Leverhume Research fellow in Electronic Music); but also having toured with the electronic groups Intermodulation and OdB. The Hitch-Hiker music demonstrates his interest in both rock and electronic sounds.

Last June, Tim appeared at Colnecon, a one-day sf convention in Colchester, and talked about his music, with illustrations. We are privileged to have him speaking at Fencon.

Don Turnbull

Don Turnbull has been involved in gaming for many years. In the late sixties he produced Albion, one of the major games magazines of the time. During this time he became friendly with Steve Jackson and Ian Livingstone, and when fantasy role playing arrived on the scene in the form of D&D, it seemed natural that he would become involved. For a long time he edited the 'Fiend Factory', a section of White Dwarf.

When TSR Hobbies (the originators of D&D) printed a collection of the monsters from this section, as the Fiend Folio, Don was asked to be editor. He is now head of TSR Hobbies (UK) Ltd.

As you can see, Don Turnbull has long been interested in gaming as a hobby, and has seen its growth from a minority interest to its present widespread popularity. His talk will be on this growth, from the point of view of a long standing hobbyist.

Other Talks

'The Well-tempered Plot-Device'

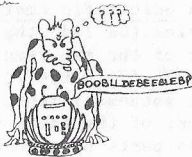
In which Nick Lowe explains in excruciating detail just how to create the kind of book that made the reputations of Messrs L. Carter and S. Donaldson.

'The Languages of SF'

Colin Fine examines some of the ways in which science fiction and fantasy writers have used the ideas of Language.

'Life in an Exploding Universe'

Paddy Leahy presents some cosmic pyrotechnics from the Mullard Radio Astronomy Observatory slide collection.



Panels

Introduction to Fandom

If this is your first science-fiction convention, you may not have heard the word 'fandom' before. If this is your second convention you might think you know what it is. If you've been to more than two, you probably realise you'll never know what it is.

Fandom is a community and culture of people who - for the most part - are on the same wavelength. Science fiction is usually the thing that brings them together, but is not always much in evidence once fannish activities get going. (In Vonnegutian terms it is the wampeter about which the carass of fandom hinges.)

And what are these 'fannish activities'? Well, they're various pursuits which intelligent, articulate, gregarious and above all open-minded people like to do: writing, publishing, reading and arguing over fanzines; planning, organizing, tearing-their-hair-out-over and attending conventions; meeting in pubs, libraries, slums to talk about science fiction (or more often not to) ...

You don't know what we're talking about? Came along to the Introduction to Fandom panel and find out!

The Year in SF

Most sf readers hear little about what authors and publishers are doing in the field; generally only those well into a group in contact with the Wide SF World; or those who subscribe to a newszine such as Ansible or Locus. In this panel we have collected some people whose ears are close to the ground in the field (how's that for an extended metaphor), and so can tell you everything you never wanted to know about who has written what, who refused to publish it, and who sued the author for libel and/or plagiarism over it. Or more mundanely, what has been happening in the last Year in SF. To let you into these secrets we have a panel of critics, specialist book-dealers, and others "in the know".

Celebrity Panel

Entertainment from Fencon's most illustrious members: Charles Platt, Frederik Pohl and Brian Aldiss. All three are distinguished as both authors and critics, and should need no further introduction to any of you.

For constellations of paperbacks, **heffers:**

Paperback Shop 13 Trinity Street (Tel. 61815)

A first-class range of paperbacks. Monday to Saturday, 9.00-5.30.

Penguin Bookshop 51 Trumpington Street (Tel. 358351)

An attractive shop devoted entirely to Penguin books. Open Monday to Saturday, 9.00-5.30.

Heffers Paperbacks 31 St Andrew's Street (Tel. 354778)

A cheerful, modern, paperback shop opposite Emmanuel College. Open Monday to Saturday, 9.00-5.30.

HEFFERS BOOKSELLERS

Cambridge

Films

As a modest departure from normal convention procedure, all the Fencon films will get a brief spoken introduction from a buff on the committee. But the blurbs below are intended to complement the live intro with a little more background information, together with some preliminary warning of what you're in for. For those who enjoy gabbing about films with a pint in their hand immediately after, there'll be an opportunity to discuss each programme directly afterwards in the convention bar on the third floor. It'll be purely informal - we're not going to try and lead the discussion or anything like that - but we hope will at least establish a rendezvous for the interested. Enjoy the show.



A programme of
delicious French
shorts.

The Merry Frolics of Satan - a programme of classic short films by Georges Méliès.

The head of Georges Méliès (1861-1938) is perhaps the most remarkable organ in the history of cephalology. Not only did it effectively invent the science fiction film, pioneer the basic techniques of special effects, and devise more than five hundred films in seventeen years, but (if the visual records are to be trusted) it could vanish, reappear, multiply in size or number, metamorphose, fly, and frequently explode.

Of course, you can't trust what you see, and Georges Méliès' astonishing films exploited this new truth to outrageous effect. He began his career as a stage conjuror in the golden age of that art, and his expansion into cinema was a natural, if inspired, progression from the extravagant stage illusions he presented in the Théâtre Robert-Houdin in Paris from 1888 onwards. Like his best-remembered films, these were short, fast-moving sketches with farcical plots, special effects of amazing technical ingenuity, and a lunatic cavalcade of bizarre invention that took delight in spoofing the po-faced fantasies of contemporary science, spiritualism, and speculative romance. For example, Méliès' own plot summary of Le Charlatan fin de siècle describes the

incredible adventures of Sir John Patt de Cok coming to rest his spleen at the sanatorium of the illustrioussimo Giuseppe Barbenmacaroni, well supplied with banknotes and undergoing the excruciating treatments of this raving fin-de-siècle mountebank, until the final trick explosion of the phlegmatic son of Albion who, having swallowed a dynamite pill, explodes into a thousand bits, and whose head, still alive, is encased in the dial of a clock where it chants the final tirade in this astounding fairy story.

Méliès began experimenting with film in 1896, as a novelty addition to his Robert-Houdin shows, and most of his early fantasy work depended on imaginative applications of simple stop-motion substitution tricks. But within a few years he was making fluent, hilarious use of multiple exposures, model effects, mechanical illusions, and perspective sleights, and the films were getting longer (in some cases approaching half-an-hour) and more fantastic. Nevertheless, Méliès retained a level of directorial control scarcely equalled by later cinematic auteurs, as producer, director, scenarist, designer, painter (Méliès was a phenomenally gifted draughtsman and caricaturist from an early age, and at one stage moonlighted as a political cartoonist), and of course star. Despite the colossal workload this imposed, he worked rapidly and prolifically during his manic film-making years - in his annus mirabilis of 1908 he produced a staggering 68 films totalling around ten hours, or twice the length of Napoleon. In the end, he was bankrupted by the fickle swing of public taste combined with the escalating problem of international film pirating, and when his studio was commandeered during WWI the army melted down 400 films for the sake of a chemical used in the manufacture of boot-heels. Méliès himself

spent the latter part of his long life running a sweet-shop, and though he was never forgotten by his younger successors in film-making he ended his days in relative poverty.

About 80 of Méliès' films survive, many in a sadly dilapidated state, although the Méliès family has recently embarked on an elaborate rescue operation that has restored to audiences some of the exquisitely hand-tinted colour prints produced in Méliès' workshops by teams of little girls with paintbrushes. Some of Méliès' sf productions, not surprisingly, haven't made it, including the earliest film version of Haggard's She. But we do have, besides some of the most delightful of his magical features, the three great parodies of Verne and his Voyages extraordinaires: A Trip to the Moon (1902), Voyage across the Impossible (1904), and Conquest of the Pole (1912). We'll be screening the latter pair this morning, together with a sample of the more spectacular of Méliès' shorter films.

If you're wondering how films of this antiquity could ever be of anything more than archaeological interest, just watch. You'll be astounded at the freshness, the vitality, and the irresistible sense of preposterous humour in these timeless, priceless celluloid jewels. Genius is genius. Méliès is magic.

Death Watch (France/West Germany, 1979; 128 minutes. With Romy Schneider, Harvey Keitel, Harry Dean Stanton, Max von Sydow.)

Death Watch marked the English-language début of renowned French director Bertrand Tavernier (The Watchmaker of St Paul, Une Semaine de Vacances), in a respectful adaptation of little-sung British writer D.G. Compton's admired novel The Continuous Katherine Mortenhoe. Like most of Compton's novels, Mortenhoe is a sensitive character drama about human values in scientific ethics: a death-tabooed near-future society develops a morbid media fixation with the pornography of dying, and an undercover TV employee with a camera implanted in his eye is assigned to cover the last days of a young woman with a terminal illness. But his vocation and his personal sympathies tug in contradictory directions...

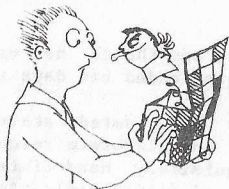
Little seen in this country, Death Watch is one of the very finest sf films of recent years. The voyeuristic theme is a natural for cinematic treatment, and the subtlety of its human drama, with immaculate performances from the leading players, makes its genre rivals look crass and superficial. Stunning location photography in Glasgow and the Trossachs sets off the extraordinary beauty of this haunting film.

The Last Wave (Australia, 1977; 106 minutes. With Richard Chamberlain, Gulpilil, Olivia Hamnett.)

The second sf feature from the golden boy of the new Australian cinema, Peter Weir (best known for the The Cars that Ate Paris, Picnic at Hanging Rock, and Gallipoli), The Last Wave is an excellent, surprisingly little-known fantasy thriller about the renaissance of ancient myths in a contemporary Australia that suppresses the aboriginal culture from which they spring. Chamberlain plays a lawyer hired to defend a group of urban aborigines accused of murder, who comes to recognise an astonishing connection between them, a spate of odd meteorological disturbances, a bizarre recurrent nightmare of his own, and an apocalyptic native legend slouching towards Sydney to be born.

Despite its international aspirations (reflected in the casting), The Last Wave is an engagingly parochial work, with a taut, suspenseful storyline and some quite unforgettable moments. If it doesn't quite reach the creepy heights of Picnic at Hanging Rock, it's recognisably a close cousin, and as a science-fiction chiller far outclasses the wobbly eccentricity of Cars that Ate Paris. Well worth catching.





Quizzes & Games

The Quiz

Most science fiction conventions have a quiz. Generally, this means a bunch of smartarse knowitalls sitting up in front of an audience while a question-master runs through a threadbare television-game format, with questions like "In what year was the Rev. Jekyll O. Coomaswaramy, Ph.D.'s Synthetic Androgynes of X first serialised in Scintillating S-capades of Scientifiction?"

Fencon, on the other hand, has The Quiz. Two unsuspecting teams of clever-clogs are enticed into an innocent-seeming panel game under a genial, smiling Master. Though they notice a strange abundance of tubes of Smarties, they feel no disquiet; and their hearts are light as they sit down to the first round of questions. Gradually, however, The Quiz - which starts off so harmlessly, so easily - comes to appear curiously perverted: darker, more sinister, its beaming Quiz Master the mere mask of an all-powerful demonic tormentor. Panic rising, they glance around; but there is no escape!

See: the helpless squirming victims of a crazed madman's lust!

See: mixed-sex mud wrestling, armchair hurdles, and the 12-parsec dash!

See: pornographic intimations by telepathy!

- And much, much more, and much, much, much worse...

Ultimate Questions

Ever woken up in the morning wondering if you really have free will, or why the speed of light is constant, or what the Universe is doing here anyway? Despite previous failures to completely solve these problems (Adams 1979, 1980, 1982), the Fencon committee have gathered a team of scientists and a team of philosophers to tackle some of the great imponderables. They will be competing to satisfy you the audience (as judged by our completely unbiassed clapometer) as to their Ultimate Knowledge and their mental dexterity.



So You Fancy Yourself as a Writer?

Science fiction writing is an art apart, requiring special skills over and above those appropriate to more mundane forms of creation. So You Fancy Yourself as a Writer? is a game about those skills. Four only-just-unpublished authors compete to show off their facility of invention, bluffing, padding... while questionmaster Steve Knight, another of their kin, watches them wriggle. Don't miss this uniquely instructive, hilarious, and embarrassment-provoking cavalcade of talent misspent!

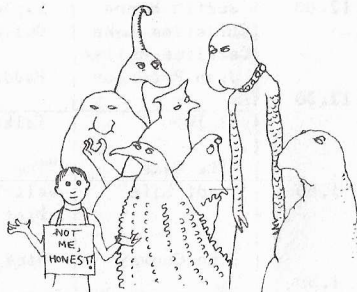
Spot the Wandering Alien

The problem of how you go about contacting an extraterrestrial intelligence is not a new theme, but we feel that too much of the emphasis in the past has been on the theoretical side of the discussion, and too little time spent on practical work. We're very privileged, therefore, to have attending this convention two authentic, if somewhat inscrutable, extraterrestrial beings for you to have a go at communicating with. One of these, the elusive Spacetime

Masquerade Fenc, is described elsewhere. Spot the Wandering Alien, however, is a little more outgoing, and will be mingling incognito with the throng for much of the day. Spot's native world has been monitoring our British media for generations, and his people have erected an entire civilisation around the inspiration of our tabloid press. For example, each experience-segment a young female ripe for impregnation is selected to bare her fngorglewurps on Phase-Level Three of the current edition of the Primary concept-package; the worldwide pastime of Probability-Matrix Bingo has extended the frontiers of mathematics beyond the limits of intelligibility (a major breakthrough that has revolutionised monetarist theory); and fashionable entrepreneurs have lately taken to a fad of launching hosts of Sunday Polychrome Supplements that all carry profiles of Sting and Pamela Stephenson and sink like a ruthenium balloon.

All of which is quite irrelevant, except to explain why Spot has made it a condition of his appearance at Fencon that he be allowed to wander secretly around the convention, and only admit his identity when challenged by a member carrying a copy of this booklet and saying, "You are Spot the Wandering Alien and I claim my five pound book-token". Consolation prizes may be available for those who spot Spot after the book token has already gone.

We're not giving any clues as to what Spot looks like. He may assume the form of a person, and object, a strange noise, a word, or even an idea; or, or course, none of these. All we're letting on is that he will respond when challenged, he will not deny his identity, and he can be detected by one consistent quirk of behaviour which is likely to grow more pronounced during the day if nobody's got it yet. He might, for example, confuse the colour green with the number three, or stick his finger in his ear when thirsty, or crack imaginary squop-nuts between his fingers when he thinks nobody's looking. Or, again, it might be more subtle. Your task is to spot Spot amongst all the other freak cases wandering about the place. Good hunting.



Space Time Masquerade

With your membership package you will be given a copy of the Space Time Masquerade booklet, which will contain all the pictures and the accompanying text which you require to solve the puzzle(s) and winkle our elusive Fenc out of his cranny in space-time.

The original pictures will be on display in the First Floor South lounge.

Design a Space City

Most conventions have an art-show, which is entirely passive: you come and look, and perhaps buy, but that is all. Fencon has no art-show in the normal sense: instead it has Design a Space City. The heart of this is a concoction by Anne Warren, which will be on show on the third floor throughout the day: but this is not a complete work. During the evening you will have a chance to come and build part of your dream town, from the materials provided.

FENCON

	Third Floor South	First Floor South 3	Pembroke College Old Library	Bar/Lounge 1st South 1-2
11.00	Official Opening	////// ////// ////// //////	////// ////// ////// //////	
11.30	Panel: "Introduction to Fandom"	Slide Show: "Life in an Exploding Universe"	////// ////// ////// //////	BAR
12.00	Judith Hanna Christina Lake Caroline Mullan Joan Paterson	Paddy Leahy		OPEN
12.30	Talk: "The Game of Life"	Talk: "The Well-Tempered Plot Device"	Film: "The Last Wave"	(Here be Sprodzoom)
1.00	John Conway	Nick Lowe		
1.30	////// Lunch //////	////// Break //////		
2.00	The Total SF Quiz	Talk: "The Languages of SF"	////// ////// ////// //////	Bar Closes
2.30		Colin Fine	////// ////// ////// //////	
3.00	Celebrity: Panel:	////// ////// ////// //////	////// ////// ////// //////	Lounge
3.30	Brian Aldiss Charles Platt Frederik Pohl	////// ////// ////// //////	////// ////// ////// //////	
4.00	////// ////// ////// //////	////// ////// ////// //////	Short Films:	BOOK ROOM
4.30	Talk: Tim Souster	Panel: "The Year in SF"	Georges Méliès introduced by Nick Lowe	OPEN
5.00		David Langford Joseph Nicholas		
5.30				

TIMETABLE

	Third Floor South	First Floor South 3	Pembroke College Old Library	Bar/Lounge 1st South 1-2
5.30	"Ultimate Questions" Steve Gull	Talk: "The Growth of Gaming"	//////	
6.00	Richard Jennings Peter Kennedy Hugh Mellor	Don Turnbull	//////	Book Room Closes
6.30	////// Dinner	////// Break	//////	////// Bar Opens
7.00	//////	//////	//////	//////
7.30	Talk: "The Anthropic Principle" Bernard Carr	"So You Fancy Yourself As A Writer?"	//////	
8.00				
8.30		"Design a Space City"	Film: DEATH WATCH	BAR
9.00				OPEN
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10.30				Convention Ends
11.00				

UNIVERSITY CENTRE CLOSES

Video Programme

Details of this will be posted on the membership desk in the foyer and in the First Floor South lounge.

Disco

Fencon members will be able to get a discount on the Graduate Union Disco, which will be in the main dining hall from 8.30.

Late programme changes will be posted in both first and third floor rooms and at the membership desk.

The Venue

The parts of the University Centre that Fencon has the use of are shown opposite, on the Floor Plan; please keep to these areas. Also remember to wear your badge at all times, so that both we, and the staff of the centre, know that you're not gate-crashing.

Note that the dining hall, second floor coffee lounge, and Riverside Restaurant are open to other users of the centre (see the section on food). As a result you can expect to see ordinary people here, who have not been inducted in the ways of Science Fiction fandom (and lunacy).

The remaining rooms on the plan are for the exclusive use of Fencon.

The Film Programme will run in Pembroke College Old Library. To get there from the University Centre, go down Mill Lane, through the archway on the other side of the road, and take the first door on the left (see map on p. 17, and signposts).

The Video Programme will run in the Peterhouse Music Room. To get there from the Centre, turn left at the door and walk along the tiny street that runs away from the river. After negotiating the bollards that block your way, turn right through the iron gates, then take the first left through the double doors and the Music Room is the door on your left. Alternatively, just follow the signs.

Thanks

Fencon would like to thank the following for making the convention possible:

- o Robert McDowell and the Graduate Union
- o Mr Stewart and the Staff of the University Centre
- o Peterhouse and Pembroke College
- o CCAT
- o Duncan Booth and the Gophers
- o Ye Gerbish

— AVALON —

AVALON is the Cambridge Blakes' Seven Society. If you're a fan - come and join us.

DISCUSSION MEETINGS are held fortnightly on B7 and SF in general.

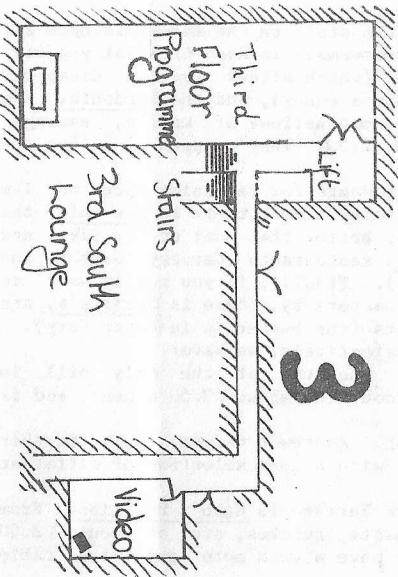
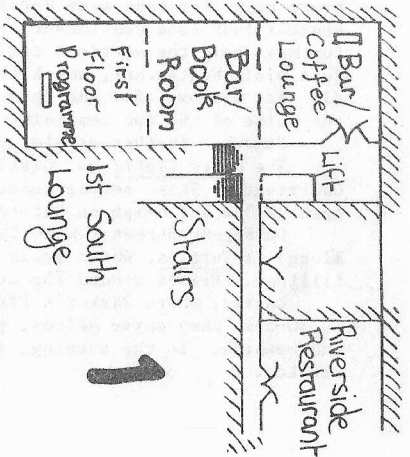
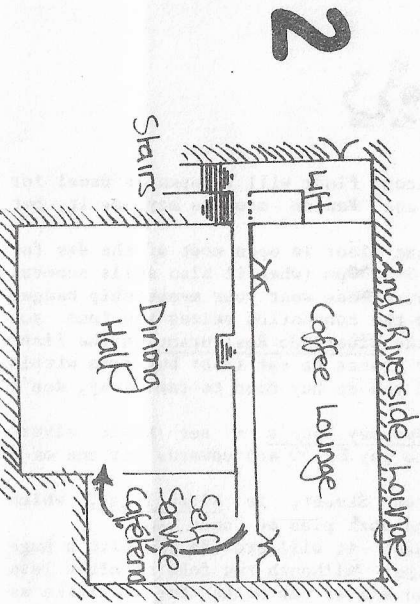
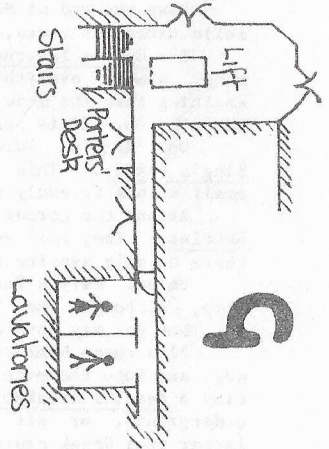
Occasionally we have GUEST SPEAKERS - last year Paul Darrow and Peter Tuddenham visited us. Look out for news this year! We produce a funny NEWSLETTER/FANZINE, and have an extensive LIBRARY of B7 fanzines, plus a TAPE LIBRARY and contacts with national B7 clubs.

MEMBERSHIP £2.00
CONTACT ALISON TREVOR, NEWNHAM

Floor Plan

Members of the convention are requested to keep to the areas shown on this plan

Thank you!



North

MJH

Food & Drink

The University Centre canteen on the second floor will be open as usual for lunch (12noon-2pm) and dinner (6-8pm), and Fencon members may use it, but remember to wear your membership badge.

In addition the coffee lounge on the same floor is open most of the day for coffee and tea - 11am-12noon, 12.30-2.45pm, 3-5.30pm (when it also sells scones, if you're quick enough) and 6-8.15pm. Again, please wear your membership badge.

However, if the urge to venture outside the convention seizes you (and you aren't tempted by the extravagance of the Riverside Restaurant on the first floor), then there is a wide choice of other places to eat in or buy from within a five minute walk. Please, though, if you do buy food to take away, don't bring it back into the University Centre.

Across the river and over Coe Fen is Sweeney Todd's - see their advert elsewhere in this programme book. Expect to pay £2.50 and upwards for one of a large variety of pizzas.

Down the end of Mill Lane on Trumpington Street, is Fitzbillies, which sells excellent cakes, as well as pasties and pork pies at lunch time.

The Eraina Taverna is in Free School Lane; it will provide you with a huge menu, almost everything with rice and chips. Although the food is often less exciting than the menu, it is quite good, and a meal can be had for as little as £2.00-£3.00. It is open 12noon-11.30pm on Saturday.

On King's Parade, are Shade's Wine Bar, the Copper Kettle and King's Pantry. This is an underground vegetarian and wholefood cafe, fairly small with a friendly atmosphere (but probably crowded).

Around the corner in St. Edward's Passage, and certain to be crowded, is Nettles. They sell vegetarian food, and are deservedly very popular, but since there is only seating room for about six this is definitely take away only.

On St. Mary's Passage is Auntie's, a somewhat commercial appearing tea shop, although the Varsity Handbook seems to like it. It sells tea at 40p a pot, but you may have difficulty getting in.

If a cheap hamburger is your wish, then the stall on the market is open all day, and into the evening. It also sells ice-creams. In Rose Crescent you will find a Berni's Steakhouse, Flambard's Wine Bar (which allows you to disappear underground, or sit in the Crescent if it's sunny), and the Gardenia. The latter is a Greek restaurant, serving various combinations of kebabs, sausages and shevtalia in pitta bread for about £2.50. They're open 12-2.45pm and 5.30-11.45pm.

On Green Street is the Oasis, known to students for remaining open to lam every night for take away kebabs, while on Trinity Street there is The Whim, the nearest fast-food restaurant (and, they claim, better than most of its ilk) and further along the vertical trilogy of Wilson's restaurants (Carvery, Granary and just plain Restaurant, but I've never been in). Finally, if you really want to sit in windows for the delectation of the passers-by, there is Belinda's, and the worse of the two remaining Eros restaurants (the better is in Petty Cury).

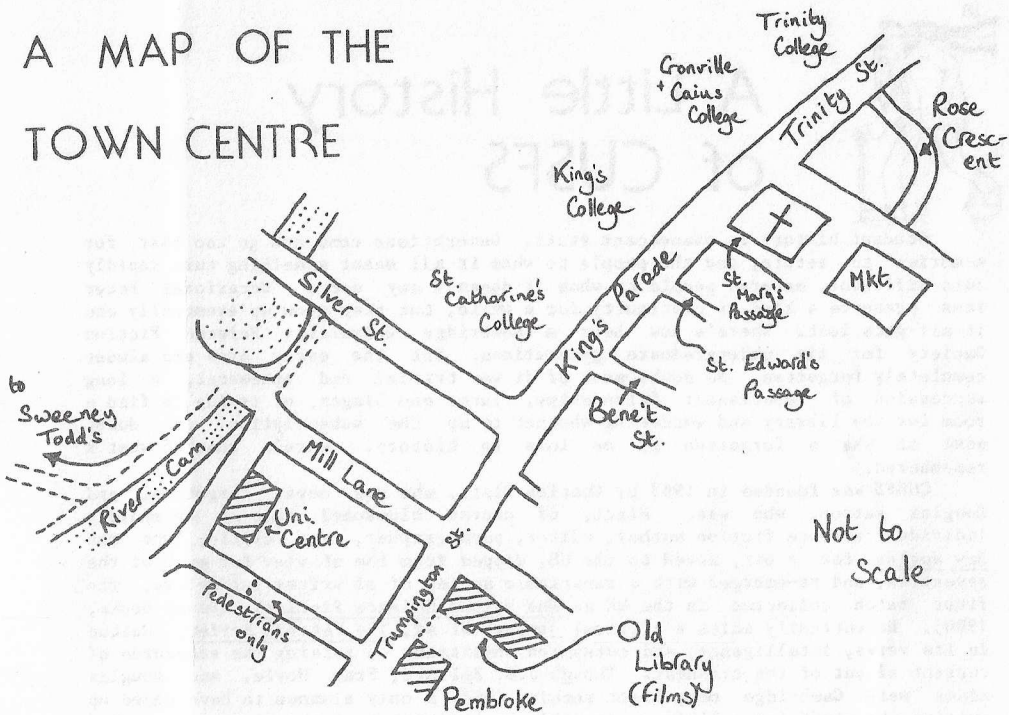
Somewhat further afield, and even more selectively, we have:

The Curry Centre on Castle Street, at the top of the only hill in Cambridge. This serves reasonable Indian food from about £3.50 a head, and is open 12-3pm and 6-1pm on Saturday.

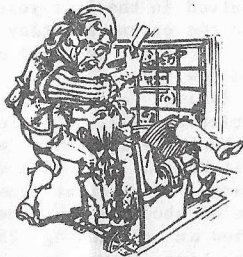
On Regent Street (which is the same as St. Andrew's Street, only further along) is Tatties, which sells baked potatoes with a good selection of different fillings. Prices around 75p and up.

Lastly, where Parker's Piece borders Park Terrace is Hobb's Pavilion. From 10.30-5pm they serve salads, pates, smoked meats, quiches, etc, at around £2.00 and upwards. In the evening, 6.30-10pm, they have a much more expensive table service.

A MAP OF THE TOWN CENTRE



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A Little History of CUSFS

Student history is evanescent stuff. Generations come and go too fast for memories to settle, and the people to whom it all meant something turn rapidly into different, matured people to whom it doesn't any more. Occasional Peter Pans preserve a kind of continuity for a while, but they grow up eventually and it all gets lost. There's now been a Cambridge University Science Fiction Society for six undergraduate generations, but the early ones are almost completely forgotten. No doubt most of it was trivial and ephemeral, a long succession of impermanent friendships, larks and binges, of trying to find a room for the library and wondering whether to up the subscription. No doubt most of what's forgotten is no loss to history. Here's some of what's remembered.

CUSFS was founded in 1963 by Charles Platt, who was never forgotten, and Douglas Watson, who was. Platt, of course blossomed into a splendidly individual science fiction author, editor, pornographer, and critic, who ran New Worlds for a bit, moved to the US, dipped from the sf view for much of the seventies, and re-emerged with a remarkable series of sf writer interviews, the first batch collected in the UK as Who Writes Science Fiction? (Savoy Books, 1980). He currently edits a critical journal of sf, The Patchin Review, unique in its verve, intelligence, and outspoken commitment to raising the standards of current sf out of the trashcan. Though J.G. Ballard, Fred Hoyle, and Douglas Adams were Cambridge men, Platt remains CUSFS's only alumnus to have ended up writing the stuff for a living - possibly an indictment of the generally rather low creative level among members for much of its history.

Watson, on the other hand, I had never heard of before Charles Platt mentioned him in a letter a few weeks ago, although in the event he stayed the course longer (his co-founder having dropped out after a couple of terms). His later history is an enigma: although a muscular dystrophy victim, he completed his degree and was still alive in 1980, but apart from Platt's cryptic reminiscences of black-market stamp collecting nobody seems to remember anything of him. At any rate, CUSFS survived under Ian Kinnes, and in 1964 boasted a library of 450 volumes, mostly left behind by Platt. "Let us bring Fantasy into your life for only 15/- a year," they wheedled. The subscription was hoicked to £1 in 1969, £1.30 in 1976, and being effectively tied to the price of books has skyrocketed ever since. The library, more remarkably, hit "5,000 Novels, Magazines, etc." by 1966, if the publicity is to be believed - a peak it has never regained, though in 1973, when they hadn't been counted for some years, a preposterous 6,000 total was claimed and then quietly halved in the next year's publicity. No doubt a lot of the early influx was due to the enormous outlay on magazine subscriptions - at the time, the society received every sf mag published, though rising costs put an end to this after a few years.

In 1965 a bright-eyed fresher called Roger Gilbert failed to be sold a membership by "a hairy gent" (Terry Bull?) at the Societies Fair, but joined anyway later in the year. Rog complained so eloquently about the shambolic way the society was being managed that he got lumbered with it himself, and with Vic Hallett effectively ran the society for the next six years. The first guest speaker was John Brunner in January 1966, to an audience of about half-a-dozen; Ken Bulmer, the first under the Gilbert-Hallett reign, drew an astounding 250% of this figure. As nobody had heard of Ken Bulmer at the time, it was probably the talk's title (Sex in SF - the committee's suggestion) that drew the crowds; though there were murmurings when Ken launched into an instructive discourse on the role of religious movements in science fiction stories. "Oh," he beamed, "I thought you said Sects in SF..." (Rog Gilbert, incidentally, was the man who cornered Jack Vance at a European convention and insisted on explaining to him in graphic detail why he should have changed the British title of

Servants of the Wankh.)

CUSFS (one syllable in those days; nobody quite knows the date of the sound-shift) flourished in the late sixties under Gilbert, Hallett, and later Malcolm Edwards. Membership went from 30 to 70 to 110 in successive years, and the library was enriched by Vic Hallett's trade discounts from Heffers, where he worked. For a period, CUSFS bought every sf book published, and there were even plans to launch a fanzine and a convention, though neither ever got off the ground. Edwards, however, did edit Vector while still at King's, and published transcriptions of CUSFS talks by James Blish and Thomas M. Disch. (For the curious, both were anthologised in Cy Chauvin's A Multitude of Visions, T-K Graphics 1975.)

1971 saw the end of the ancien regime. Gilbert completed his Ph.D. in genetics, Hallett hung on a year or so before leaving Cambridge to take over a business of his own, and Edwards graduated into five years of librarianship and reading for publishers before working as an editor with Gollancz, last Administrator of the Science Fiction Foundation before the cuts abolished the post, and a freelance writer and editor. His fanzine Tappen is currently very chic.

CUSFS in the early seventies was mainly run by John Piggott and John Lowe. Pub meetings at the Maypole continued (where they'd moved from the much more sordid Fountain in 1968), and the library and speakers were maintained, but membership took a bad dive in 72 and 73, and took years to recover. The 1973 Varsity Handbook entry is a verbatim crib of the 1966 version: "Heinlein a Fascist? William Burroughs a writer? Discuss these themes (and much more esoteric ones) over coffee", except that in 1973 the last word is significantly amended to "alcohol".

The modern CUSFS really begins with the 1972 intake that included Peter Wareham (who first catalogued the library and put the membership on computer file, thus lifting the society's organisation out of its immemorial shambles) and the daunting enfants terribles Hugh Walker and Richard Pinch. Walker was the man once greeted by the landlord of the Maypole, as he swaggered up to the bar in Afghan coat, T-shirt, sawn-off jeans, sandals sans socks, and bright orange Liberal bonnet: "I don't care if you have got an IQ of 180, you're not coming in here dressed like that."

Hugh it was who first dragged CUSFS into the hysterically funny (to all but the hacks) round of petty student politics. A rabid Liberal, he would badger all regular CUSFS members into joining the Liberal Club, including a young and impressionable Phil Palmer. When Hugh's Radicals (a sort of wet student Liberal version of Militant) failed to take over the party and abolish the examination system, 0 levels etc., he dedicated himself, and an only-too-willing CUSFS, to the bugging-up of the Cambridge Students Union and its absurd bureaucracy. The opportunity came in the summer of 1974, when the CSU President resigned mere weeks still to serve of her term. At a CUSFS speaker meeting with Bob Shaw (memorable for the great man's unique state of sozzlement, hijinks with the beerpumps in the upstairs room of the Maypole, and Andy Conway's first encounter with Phil Palmer - mysteriously chronicled in his diary as "met Costa libeller"), Hugh announced a daring scheme: CUSFS would field eight candidates for the post, and force a wholly pointless election! A stormy Open Meeting ("Look, all you lot who want to be President stand over there and shut up") fudged the CSU constitution and embarrassment was averted; but Hugh was not to be thwarted. For the 1975 CSU elections he mobilised a heavy-drinking CUSFS to loiter round the College bars gathering shakily-written Presidential nominations from the extremely pissed, and presented the returning officer with an appalling 180 nominations for eight posts. The election was held, CUSFS were denounced in the radical press as "petit bourgeois individualists", and we lost the poll.

Richard Pinch, on the other hand, was always too interested in world domination to be much attracted by politics. In 1976 he stood as a joke candidate for President of the Graduate Society - a post at least as powerful as CSU President, but much less contested - and got elected. As it happened, he did a pretty conscientious job, ploughing his Diploma in Computing Science in the process; but he came close to realising an incredible scheme that would have uprooted the entire structure of University politics and awarded Richard

supreme authority over the entire student body. The Borgian dexterity with which he slowly replaced key members of the Gradsoc Council with CUSFS stooges to command a voting majority was a marvel for his co-conspirators to behold; alas, the bizarre motion he planned to bulldoze though to achieve his design was thwarted at the last minute by a tiny technicality.

Not to be defeated, Richard embarked on his final, most grandiose plot: to mount a CUSFS candidate at the 1976 Cambridge by-election. After an initial scramble to find a volunteer old enough, the rest was history: merry bantamweight frogman Philip Sargent was nominated, after the CSU President put up the last 10 of the deposit, as The Lorimer Brizbeep Science Fiction Looney. One of the Beeb's most prized bits of footage is Phil canvassing the fish in the

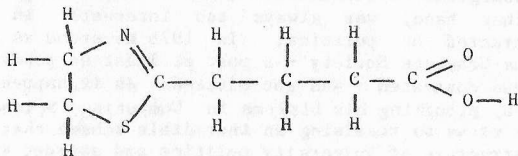


CANVASSING IN CAMBRIDGE: An Artist's Impression

in Old Norse". Phil is now back in Cambridge, and will probably be visible, in low profile, at Fencon. Take the opportunity to shake this great man's hand and push a drink into the other.

Amid all this, science fiction wasn't forgotten, though it occasionally took something of a back seat. The additional exposure probably did as much as anything to boost CUSFS membership: the pub meetings, averaging half-a-dozen souls in 1974, swelled in a few years to peaks of sixty or more. In spring of 74 a newsletter was finally started up by new boy Andrew Conway; the first issue was called Title to be Announced because nobody could think of a title, and when nothing had been devised in time for the second issue Hugh Walker suggested that the non-title stay.

TTBA remains today, as it was then, a dire production by any standards. About a dozen editors have picked it up, many vowing to raise it once-and-for-all from the gutter and turn it into "something decent", but disillusion rapidly strikes in with the grim reality of the potential contributors' general apathy and the actual contributors' general crassness. The only editor of genius ever to touch the thing was Nigel Goldenfeld in 1977-8, who redeemed the mainly dreary contents and grungy production by outrageous editorial irresponsibility and an incredible sense of surrealistic humour. Though he never went to the extremes of Nick Lowe (editor 1974-6), who had been given to wild rewriting of the endless crud fiction submitted (to interpolate in-jokes and abuse directed at the authors), Nigel carried the war with the University Library Cataloguing Department to new heights of absurdity. Nick had begun the practice of changing the title of every issue to a new expansion of the TTBA acronym (nobody used the full title after the first issue); Nigel's imagination spanned issues called (among others) Thousand Trojans Buggered Agamemnon, Trepanning Takes your Breath Away, Telepathic Torment from a Bog in Aldershot, and finally



Only the last defeated Cataloguing, who entered it under its spelt-out name of Thiazole-2 Butanoic Acid.

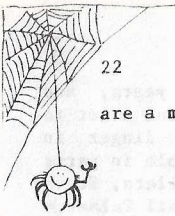
TTBA has gradually, if unsteadily, improved its look over the years, and the artwork of Margaret Welbank and more recently Anne Warren has done a lot to compensate for the mediocre contents. But though a few golden pages linger in the imagination - Peter Lawrence's cryptography (almost illegible in parts because the typist was crippled with laughter), Nigel's editorial fillets, Steve Knight's De Bono spoof Lateral Mindlessness, and anything by Phil Palmer - student writing, in Cambridge as anywhere, is rarely capable of rising above the dismal. "Dear Mr Goldenfeld," reads a note in the files that came with a particularly atrocious story (which was published) by a leading poet-aspirate of the day: "Enclosed is a contribution to TTBA, a science fiction story. It is a preview of the unwritten epic Terrapin Station, and the story was written over quite a long period of time. I have scrutinised the manuscript with a high degree of perfectionism, and I therefore hope nothing needs clarifying..."

In 1974 the Maypole, by way of a heavy hint, launched a disco on CUSFS night, and meetings moved to the Horse & Groom, where they stayed till early 1982. The Horse was a lovely pub before it changed hands: terrible beer, marvellous landlord, and no customers at all except the bikers on Monday nights. Wild Sprozoom orgies ensured that this condition persisted every Thursday, until the present landlord Bill Williams decided we weren't drinking enough and he'd rather have the place empty. We got the chuck within minutes of secretly determining a move to New Hall bar anyway, where we're currently settled with terrible beer, marvellous barman, and no customers. No regrets, though the jukebox is missed - particularly by Hugh Tonks, who was married to it in 1980. (The jukebox is still one of our forty-two Honorary Vice-Presidents; six are elected each year by voting systems of escalating ridiculousness. Last year the nominations were written on paper boats and raced down the Cam.)

The other development in 1974-5 was the establishment of a sister society Jónsborg, initially to stop the fantasy buffs from taking over CUSFS meetings (where actual discussion of sf is an event of proverbial rarity), but as it developed to complement the range of CUSFS activities with discussion evenings, writers' workshops, and a weekly lunch. For reasons nobody's ever understood, CUSFS has never managed to drum up support for either of the first two, yet with a fantasy focus they thrive almost embarrassingly - eighty people at a Jóns thing is not unknown. Other splinter activities have emerged and dissolved: a short-lived Tolkien Society smial turned into a Monday evening CUSFS clique and faded; Sunday breakfasts at Waffles started in 75 or 76 with Nick Lowe, Phil Palmer, and a bottle of mead, and burgeoned into vast social weeklies that were only suspended when the restaurant was demolished last year. New site opens in the New Year.

If CUSFS has been coasting in recent years, the service to members has improved steadily; and while the first decade of its existence is largely beyond recovery, a few changes have been evident over the course of the second. In 1975, any woman who showed up at a CUSFS meeting was either never seen again or married within the year. On one extraordinary evening around 1975, two very drunk members got the name and address of a female member from the records, and decided to visit her after closing time. They found her in her nightie, and the ensuing scene is lost to history because everyone claims it was someone else. Nowadays you might get the odd bit of routine sexual aggro from the inevitable machos and jerks, but these are despised dinosaurs, and most interesting CUSFS heavies are women. Again, CUSFS is no longer a hard-drinking fraternity of pissos, and with this tradition has gone some of the zip and spontaneity of which legends were once made. To be fair, the current generation of students works harder and frets more about the future than its predecessors, for obvious external reasons. But recent years have seen in CUSFS the growth of a large graduate membership that's perniciously tended to establish itself as a core clique to which undergraduate members painfully aspire: the interesting members hang on as research students, and the boring ones in the innumerable software houses that have sprung up in Cambridge in the past few years.

After the by-election, CUSFS's political activities faded. At first they just grew less political and more zany, like Richard Hughes' amazing ventriloquial act at the Union hustings, or the increasingly preposterous manifestos under which we stood at student elections. The 1979 campaign pledges



are a magnificent sample of Goldenfeld surrealism:

Within seconds of being elected, we will endow all paid-up members of CSU with UNLIMITED SUPER POWERS!!! You will be able to run faster than a speeding Tesco trolley, fall off tall buildings at a single plummet, see the back of your head, grow watercress in cavities of your body, play the trumpet in a vat of boiling treacle, bulletproof your cat, project adult films from your eyeballs, and increase bust measurements with your bare hands! This is an absolutely genuine offer!!! There is No catch whatsoever!!
No drugs, no surgery, no embarrassing haemorrhages...

Ultimately, it's the moments of pure silliness that linger in the memory. Andy Haslett, the CUSFS Svengali, trying to hypnotise nurses (unsuccessfully) and Peter Wareham (repeatedly and spectacularly; it took six strong men to drag him off after the command "Peter, kill Hugh", and some of the party-trick burns were quite severe). The 1979 CUSFS Guide to Cambridge (distributed to all 3,000 first-years), which recommended under Work: "Surprise your supervisor by embalming him. Entertain your supervision partner with an impromptu demonstration of your performing lizards. How he will chuckle as they scamper over his person and lay eggs in his coffee!" The 1 a.m. punt trip to Grantchester with 11 drunks and a bottle of vodka (the punt sank after 100 yards). Jeff Tate getting his teeth stuck in a coffee table; Conway and the giant inflatable whisky bottle on King's Lawns the night of his engagement; Peter Wareham (hypnotised again) and the invisible bicycle; Nick Lowe with more than forty pens in his beard; Hugh Walker refusing to attend Liberal Club meetings at 5.45 on Saturday because "CUSFS has mandated me to watch Dr Who". Ephemera, all of it, but glorious years all the same.

Lorimer P. Brizbeep

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MEMBERSHIPS



1 Charles Platt	49 Geoff Ryman	93 Morag Kerr
2 Frederik Pohl	50 Pete Hutchison	94 David Langford
3 John Conway	51 Richard Hilditch	95 Michael Scott
4 Don Turnbull	52 Mark Strong	96 Joan Paterson
5 Tim Souster	53 Chris Stocks	97 Hugh Mascetti
6 Bernard Carr	54 Aristarchus Jones	98 Stephen Bowden
10 Nick Lowe	55 Andrew Grant Mcdowell	99 Joseph Nicholas
11 Tibs	56 Steve Knight	100 Judith Hanna
12 Colin Fine	57 Philip Chee	101 Caroline Mullan
13 Paddy Leahy	58 Mark Raisbeck	103 Margaret Welbank
14 Scott Goodfellow	59 Eddy Williams	104 Kari Maund
15 Jonathan Coxhead	60 Alex Stewart	105 David Clayworth
16 Mike Hardy	61 Jonathan McDowell	106 Fred
17 Vicki King	62 Roger Robinson	107 Jonathan Monck
18 Duncan Booth	63 Tim Mayo	108 Brian Aldiss
19 Anne Warren	64 J.P. Smith	109 Richard Pinch
20 Howard Chalkley	65 Phil Palmer	110 Geraldine Pinch
21 Andy Robertson	66 Peter Headland	111 Martin Barlow
22 Peter Mabey	67 Susan Edwards	112 Mike Stone
23 Kathy Westhead	68 Richard Hughes	113 Dave Fisher
24 Graham Head	69 Andrew Kelly	114 Mike Westhead
25 John Wilkes	70 Arvan Pritchard	115 Honoria Cornelius
26 Mike Damesick	71 Nick Eades	116 Wandering Alien (The)
27 Owen Whiteoak	72 Tony Adams	117 Geraldine Short
28 Tim Illingworth	73 Michael Abbott	118 Richard Edwards
29 Christina Lake	74 Jenny Fox	119 Brian Ameringen
30 Joy Hibbert	75 Stuart Wray	120 Peter Woolford
31 Dave Rowley	76 Chris Harbach	121 Penny Woolford
32 Ye Gerbish	77 Chris Southern	122 Kevin Prior
33 Peter Wareham	78 Jenny Southern	123 Mick Lynch
34 Roger Perkins	79 Andrew Butchers	124 Chris Leeding
35 Joan Fine	80 Neil A. Harris	125 Geoff Leeding
36 Diana Lee	81 Denise Atkinson	126 Simon Buck
37 Martyn Horner	82 Roger Campbell	127 Colin Greenland
38 Neil Taylor	83 Alan Wylie	128 Pete Windsor
39 Jane Tatchell	84 Gwen Funnell	129 Stephen Webb
40 Bernard Leak	85 Paul Dormer	131 Maureen Porter
41 Beowulf Shaeffer	86 Lilian Edwards	132 Ken Slater
42 Aardvark House	87 Steve Turnbull	133 Helen McNabb
43 Will Gulland	88 Phil Masters	134 Mike McNabb
44 Steve Sheard	89 Hug	135 Caroline Richards
45 Paul Warren	90 Kez	
46 David Elworthy	91 Angela Masters	3 October 1982
48 David Peak	92 Mark Haslett	129 Members

Fencon members may join CUSFS at a reduction of 50p during Fencon. Ask at the registration desk.

Current Membership Rates for CUSFS are:

£ 2.80	for	One Year
£ 4.60		Two Years
£ 6.00		Three Years

