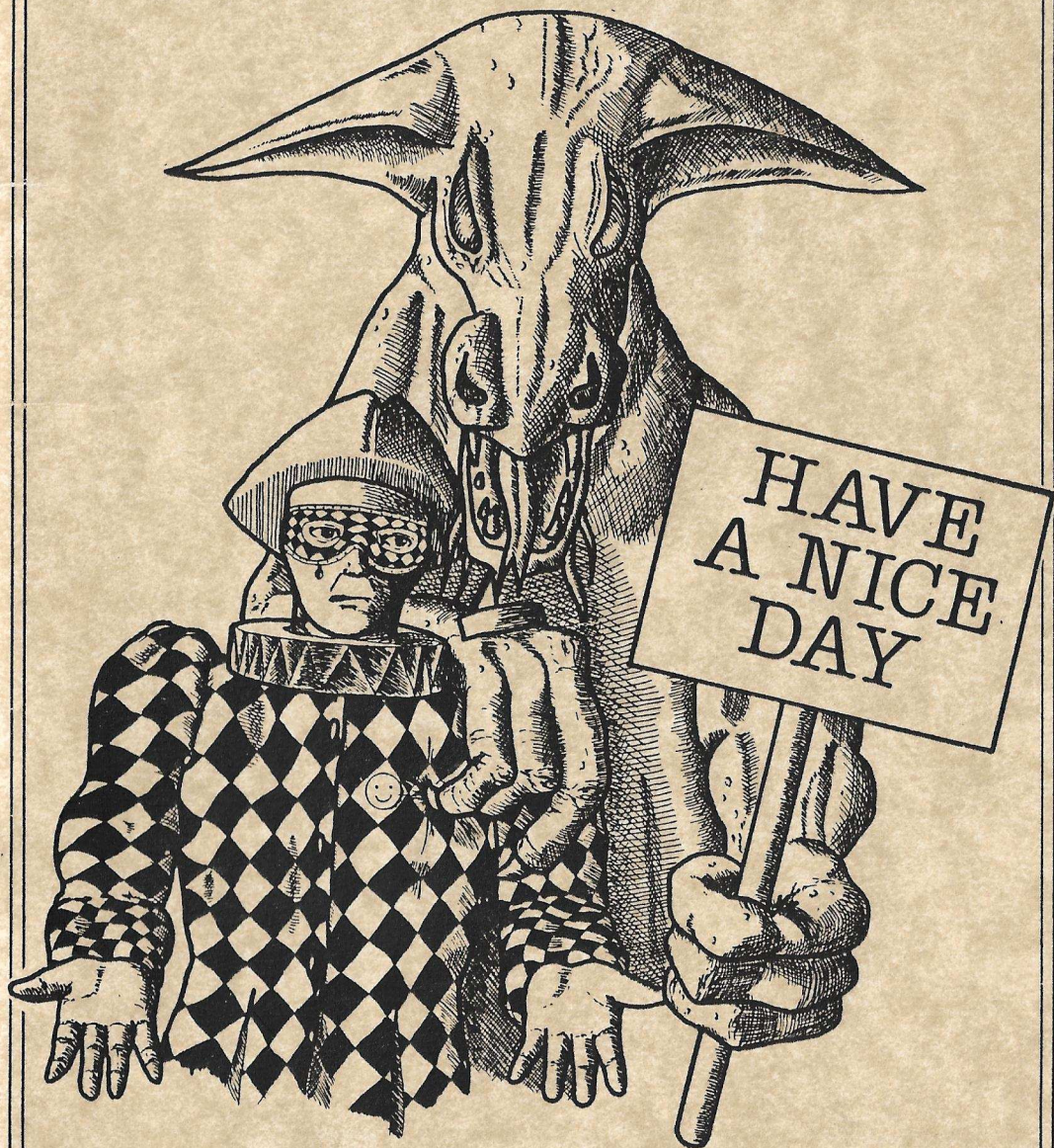


Albacon



Albacon 85 Programme Book



Glasgow's 10th Science Fiction Convention - Central Hotel Glasgow

Albacon 85

Guests Of Honour

Harlan Ellison
Anne McCaffrey

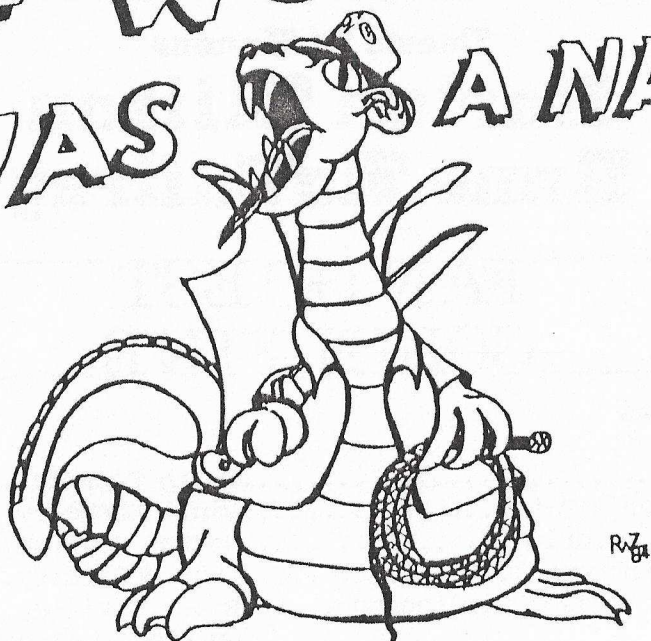
FAN GUEST
COLIN FINE

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July 19th-22nd 1985

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CHAIRMAN'S INTRO

To begin with, I realise I am addressing two different groups of people; those of you who are familiar with SF conventions and 'Fandom' and those who are completely or relatively new to cons.

To the former: since you are probably reading this on the train or bus home, all I can say is that I hope you enjoyed Albacon, (assuming that you are capable of recalling it by now!), and that we will see you next Easter at Albacon III and/or at XIICON in September '86.

To the latter; (and I am happy to see that there are a lot of newcomers this year), welcome to Albacon '85. Although the Committee's Welcome on Friday night is intended to introduce you to conventions and 'Fandom' I thought I would mention a few things that are worth repeating:

The first and most important thing to remember about Albacon is that you are here to enjoy yourself. The Programme over the weekend is designed to give you as much exposure to SF in all its forms as the most ardent fan could want. I hope you will take the opportunity to attend some items you may not think at first sight are interesting - you never know - a panel on con-running might lead to a committee member's position next year!

The next thing to remember about Albacon is that it is an informal event - conventions were originally organised so that fans could meet and discuss SF - programme events came years after. So if someone approaches you, don't be afraid to offer them a drink and have a chat. There are also many events over the weekend which require audience involvement, so do go along to these in addition to the films and talks.

With this book you will find the Programme Notes. These contain the details of programme items which take place over the weekend, a plan of the various rooms in which events take place plus comments on various programme items. Much work has gone into the production of 'his years' programme book and you will find some very entertaining and original articles therein. Note especially Harlan Ellison's fine teleplay script for one of the new Twilight Zone TV episodes. This is an exclusive publication for your enjoyment and we are most grateful to Harlan for this item. If you were wondering why it is written in the first person - that is the preferred mode for teleplay submissions.

We are honoured to have as a special guest Anne McCaffrey, who we are sure you will find a most pleasant and entertaining lady. Don't be shy; have a chat with her and attend her talks, we guarantee you won't be disappointed.

We are also greatly indebted to our Fan Guest Colin Fine who has attended the convention at very short notice and under difficult circumstances.

Make sure you study your programme booklet carefully, there's a lot to see and hear and we do realise that it is difficult to take it all in, so plan out your weekend as much as possible. Don't forget the items which take place away from the main programme like the Treasure Hunt, the Signing Sessions etc. If you have any queries regarding the programme please don't hesitate to ask anyone on the committee for further information. You can't miss them, they have very bright red badges, (to match their eyes), and they are there to help you, so ask and you shall receive.

Well, I hope I haven't taken up too much of your convention time. I will sign off by saying, enjoy yourself and I hope you come away from Albacon happier, better informed and looking forward to coming back again at Easter.

GUEST OF HONOUR
HARLAN ELLISON

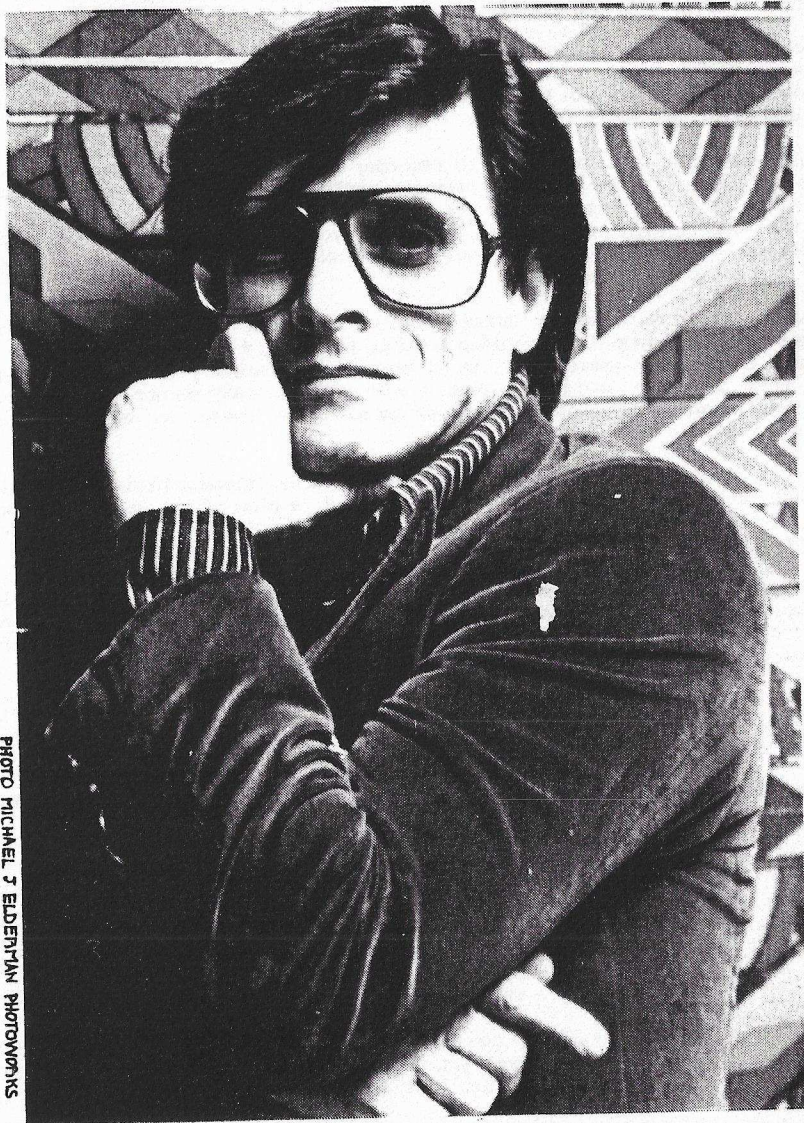


PHOTO MICHAEL J. ELDERTMAN PHOTOWORKS

NORMAN SPINRAD

HARLAN'S WORLD

I first met Harlan Ellison at the Milford Writers' Conference in Milford, PA. in 1965. I had packed all my worldly belongings in an old Rambler, converted all the money I had, about \$3000, into traveller's checks and was on my way to San Francisco, or so I thought.

But Harlan was fresh from a tour with the Rolling Stones, we hit it off immediately, he was full of mouth-watering stories about the money to be made in Hollywood, I had never seen any part of California before, so I decided to go to San Francisco by way of Los Angeles and visit him en passant. One week later, I had an apartment in Culver City.

Two weeks later, the notion that was to become Dangerous Visions began to evolve in a conversation between us. Two months later, I sold the very first story to DV, "Carcinoma Angels".

Harlan always has been open and generous to budding new writers, with advice,

with door-opening, with crash space at his house, with energy. I considered him a good friend even on such short acquaintance.

However, when this new friend of some 2 months later asked to borrow \$2000, I was somewhat taken aback. \$2000 represented two-thirds of my net worth, and Harlan was making \$1000 a week!

"Cash flow problems, kid, pay you back in two weeks."

Well, after all Harlan had done for me, after all the tabs he had picked up, how could I be ingrate enough to refuse? So I swallowed my trepidations, and lent him the money, and sweated for a couple of weeks, and sure enough, he paid me back. Down through the years this has happened more times than I can count. Harlan has borrowed what to me were huge sums at the time for such desperate purposes as to pay for a new sculpture, cover rubber written to a Vegas Casino,

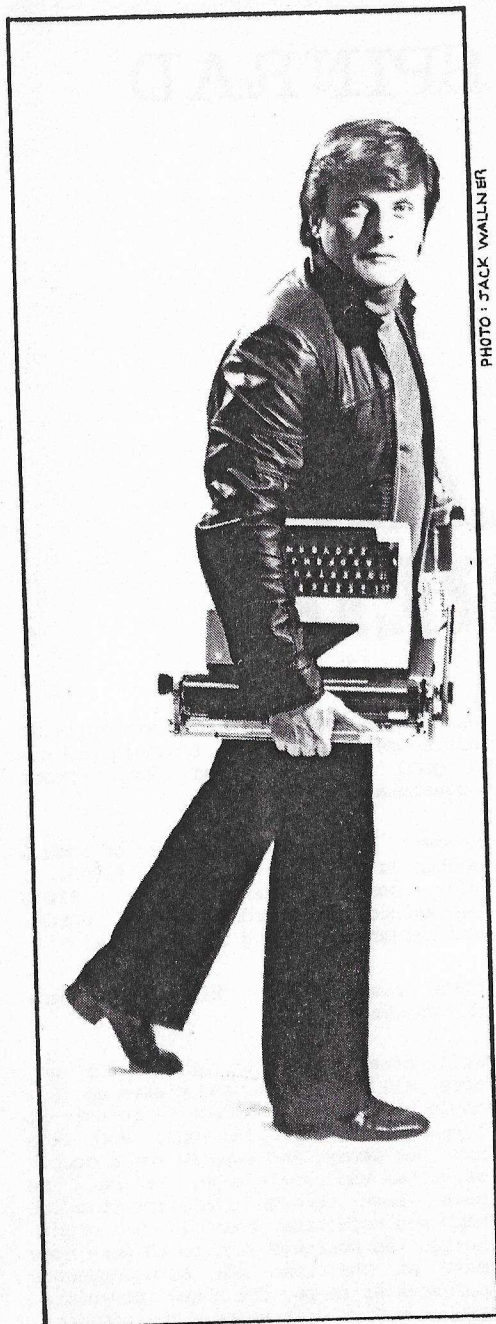


PHOTO: JACK WALLNER

or buy yet one more story for the Dangerous Visions series. He borrows the money for a week or a month and then pays it back.

What this says about Harlan is quite a lot.

First, he is generous to a fault, and expects the same, not a quid pro quo, but because he can conceive of no less total commitment to friendship, or even solidarity with colleagues one barely knows. Which is also why, as anyone who has crossed him knows, he is a ruthless and unforgiving enemy when he feels he has been betrayed.

Because Harlan is a man of Honour. If he wasn't, would a kid with hardly a pot to piss in have lent the same couple of grand over and over to a big time Hollywood writer making more in a month than he did in a year? Such a man of honour makes the best of friends and also the worst of enemies, for if you should convince him that you are not a man of honour, he will feel honour bound to assure that your ass is grass.

Second, Harlan lives on the edge. In all the years that I have known him, he has never had any real capital, nor has he ever been in real debt, I mean he pays off his credit card balances religiously every month. It's quite remarkable that Harlan, who doesn't drink, doesn't snort coke, drives crummy old cars, and has no big mortgage on his house, still is able to spend or give away just about all the money he makes.

Until I learned better, I thought that, like many people, he is simply incapable of handling money. But no one who goes through such vast amounts of cash flow without going into debt, who skates right on the fine edge of solvency eternally, can really be such a fiscal naif.

No, Harlan has the financial wizardry to assure that no matter how much money he makes he never has a cushion, and for the same reason that he's always way over deadline or writing a story in a store window or a plastic tent.

Harlan has to live on the edge. On the

edge of insolvency, on the edge of the publishers' and producers' impatience, on the edge of collapse, on the edge of his chair, and I think on some level he knows and accepts this as the price he must pay to do his best work.

Harlan has to live on the edge because the edge is where his inspiration and motivation comes from and the edge is where the best of his work balances.

Most of his memorable characters and all of the heroic ones are people on the edge; never will you see an Ellison story celebrate stoic acceptance of the inevitable, the virtue of patience or the Golden Mean. On those occasions when, like all of us, he turns out flawed work, the flaws are always those of excess, never of understatement, always a matter of ambition exceeding execution, never a matter of skilled diffidence towards the content.

Passion is what informs all of Harlan's work. He really can't write without it. He is either jumping up and down at the typewriter and belting out first draft that hardly ever needs or gets major revisions or he is blocked. Because Harlan is the sort of writer who does not and cannot intellectually pony together a story on demand like a reliable professional. He is the sort of writer who cannot crank it out unless the muse possesses him and can scarcely stop to go to the toilet when it does.

This is also why Harlan is primarily a short-story writer and not a novelist. One simply cannot maintain that level of intensity for months on end without ending up in a rubber room. Harlan has written many fine novellas which are structured as short novels, but I've never known him to take much more than a month to write a piece of fiction. Each story seems to be a dybbuk moving through him at its own pace, forcing him to type like a son of a bitch to keep up, and indeed he can bat out clean copy on a manual typewriter as fast as most people can with computers when one of these spirits moves through him. He has to.

Is this a bad or a good thing?

I can't really say, since I am the sort of writer who does not at all like to sweat deadlines or solvency, when I need money badly, the last thing I can do is write, and I go into a wheeler-dealer frenzy. I have written many more novels than Harlan has and Harlan has written more stories than I have by an order of magnitude, so I can't conceive of working the way Harlan works any more than he can conceive working like me.

What I can say objectively is that whatever the personal cost to Harlan, whether he in his heart of hearts believes the price he must pay is worth it to him, it certainly has been worth it to the readers.

Aside from the screenplays and the film criticism and the columns of commentary and the endless editing of the Dangerous Visions series which would be careers enough for several less driven writers, there is the true core of Harlan's lifework, several hundred short stories and novellas, a dozen volumes worth and more published in book form, perhaps an oeuvre unique in English literature.

For while much of Harlan's early stuff was pulp traditional hackwork creamed out to stay afloat at a penny a word, and while there were pulp hacks who may have churned out more wordage over their careers, once past this apprenticeship, Harlan Ellison's last 20 years worth of stories, scores or hundreds of them, have all been seriously intended work, have all been informed by that maniacally dedicated passion, and dozens of them have become enduring classics.

I don't know of any other writer in English who has done that. Not Sturgeon or Bradbury or Fitzgerald or Katherine Anne Porter or Poe or Hawthorne. Whatever Harlan Ellison's place in literary history, of what he is, he is the one and only.

Has it all been worth it to Harlan?

Don't ask me.

This year you folks have a whole convention's worth of time to ask him.

CLOSE ENCOUNTER

Without doubt, the ebullient, effervescent, irrepressible Harlan Ellison has had more effect on science fiction in all media forms than any other author, including the inimitable

Dr. Isaac Asimov. He provokes reaction, even when he doesn't want to, and his stories scream vividly out of his typewriter which can be perched in the most unlikely places, and still perform.

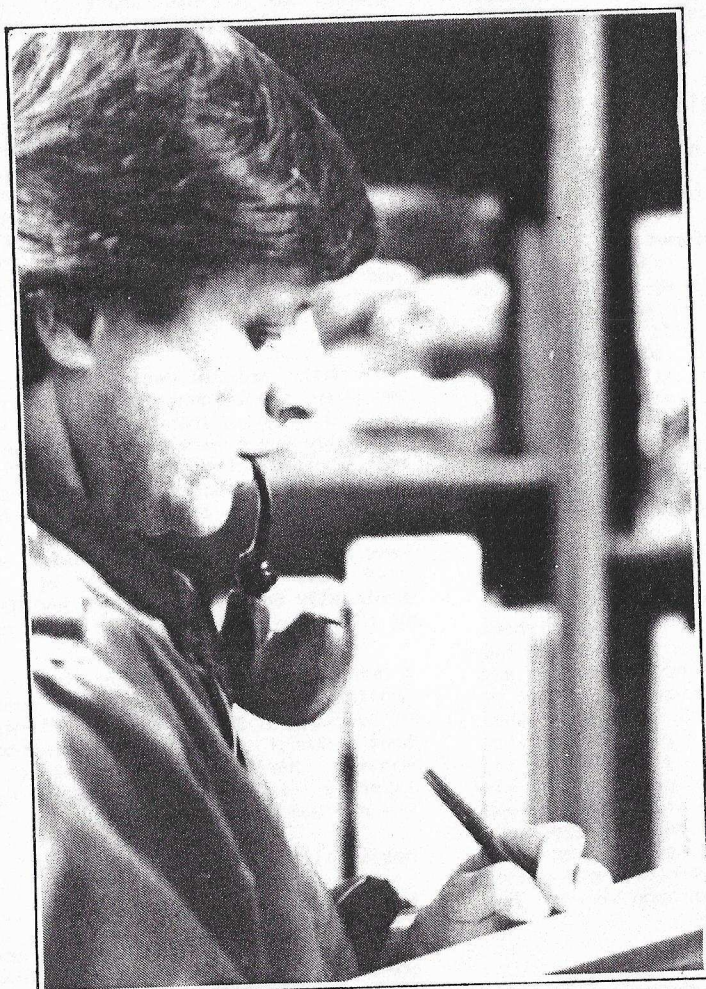


PHOTO MARK SHEPARD

Unlikely place No.357 is the window of Sherry Gottlieb's "A Change of Hobbit Book Shop" in Los Angeles. Reasonably likely place No.45 was Damon Knight's dining room table in the Anchorage, Milford, Pennsylvania.

Oddly enough, that is where I met Harlan's Olympia typewriter and had my first, and close, encounter with the gentleman under discussion.

I do so clearly remember the day, my first at a Milford S-F Writers' Conference. I had come, relative newcomer to the field that I was in 1966, honored to be invited by Damon Knight and Judy Merrill, hoping to learn more of the craft, and meet some of the people I so admired. Mind you, it can be very daunting to sit in a circle of 28 practising professionals and hear YOUR story torn to shreds, and then reassembled in more acceptable form. Daunting but salutary, and Harlan did his share of the daunting and the salutarying.

There I was, dutifully reading manuscripts of the other writers, not at all sure I had any "right" to comment, much less criticize, when I heard Damon's cheerful greeting. We knew, you see, of the imminent arrival of Norman Spinrad and Harlan Ellison who had journeyed from the West Coast. I had never seen a photo of Harlan, had heard no description of the man, but when the jaunty figure strode in, filling his pipe, his attire modestly proclaiming its West Coast origin, I knew instinctively that this was Harlan Ellison, a force to be reckoned with in my first close encounter with the then-styled "enfant terrible" of science fiction.

Some of my better yarns, "A Womanly Talent", published by Analog, and part of the novel "To Ride Pegasus" being a classic example, were "Milforded" by Harlan, and improved vastly by his stringent and pointed comments. As a story surgeon, he is ruthless, effective and, damn it all, right!

Then, too, I was right there in 1970, gasping, when Harlan Ellison defused an explosive black-white "situation" on a New York State college campus to which science fiction writers had been invited for a week-long conference. Gordie Dickson, Poul Anderson and I were already there when Harlan arrived. He sensed the bad vibes as easily as a hound the scent of a hare. In his usual no-nonsense manner, he wanted to know what the ***k was going on. Before everything could be explained, it was time for him to give his lecture to a very tense and apprehensive audience. It was my role to introduce him and, as I did, I saw a contingent of our black brethren filing into the back of the auditorium. Harlan did, too, and nudged me to emphasize his army background and the time he spent on the tough East Side of New York gathering material for a novel. I don't remember what I said, I was too aware of the palpable menace that pervaded the auditorium. Some of the audience were already making for the far exits.

Harlan strides into stage-centre and regards his audience with an aggressive stare. Then turns and points to the silent minority at the back of the hall.

You guys come in here to listen or make trouble? Get your mother****ing faces down here where I can watch you. I want to have a long talk with you when this is over!"

The charisma of the man was such that they did as he told them. It took me most of his speech to stop reacting to the tenseness of the situation he had averted. And later when he had sat with both blacks and whites and "talked it over", he proved to be an extremely successful mediator. Man, he "cooled" the situation!

Harlan has many detractors, those who have difficulty listening to plain fact and truth. He has probably more devoted fans and dedicated friends. Be sure that any contact with this unusual genius will result in a close encounter!

[ANNE McCAFFREY]

With this we present a departure from the norm. Usually we publish a full bibliography of our Guests' work in the programme book. But it seems to us that the people who were most interested in it were those who collected the works of that author and already had bibliographies in their possession. As for the ones you'd think would get the most benefit from it, the casual reader, they just did not seem to be bothered - they just kept searching the dealers shops. So when it came time to think about a bibliography of Harlan Ellison, with all the work involved in tracking down the many stories of this prolific author in magazines (many of the non-SF) we decided to list only the book titles and collections he has published. Some are currently available in print, but most will be reprinted at some point.

HARLAN ELLISON BIBLIOGRAPHY

Web of the City (1958)
The Deadly Streets (1958)
The Sound of a Scythe (1960)
A Touch of Infinity (1960)
Children of the Streets (1961)
Gentleman Junkie (1961)
Memos from Purgatory (1961)
Spider Kiss (1961)
Ellison Wonderland (1962)
Paingod and other Delusions (1965)
I Have No Mouth & I Must Scream (1967)
Doomsman (1967)
Dangerous Visions (Editor) (1967)
From the Land of Fear (1967)
Nightshade & Damnations (Editor) (1968)
Love Ain't Nothing but Sex Misspelled (1968)
The Beast that Shouted Love at the Heart of the World (1969)
The Glass Teat (Essays) (1970)
Over the Edge (1970)
Partners in Wonder (anthology) (1971)
Alone Against Tomorrow (1971)
Again, Dangerous Visions (Editor) (1972)
All the Sounds of Fear (UK only) (1973)
The Time of the Eye (UK only) (1974)
Approaching Oblivion (1974)

The Starlost 1: Phoenix Without Ashes (With Edward Bryant) (1975)
Deathbird Stories (1975)
The Other Glass Teat (1975)
No Doors, No Windows (1975)
Strange Wine (1978)
The Book of Ellison (ED: Andrew Porter) (1978)
The Illustrated Harlan Ellison (ED: Byron Preiss) (1978)
The Fantasies of Harlan Ellison (1979)
All the Lies that are my Life (1980)
Blood's a Rover (1980)
Shatterday (1980)
Stalking the Nightmare (Phantasia - Hardback)

FORTHCOMING:

Sleepless Nights in the Procrustean Bed. (Collection of essays) (Borgo Press)
Medea: Harlan's World (Phantasia Press & Phantom Books co-production)
An Edge in my Voice (Collection of essays) (Donning)

Bruce Saville, Gordon Johnson & Vince Docherty

AKA

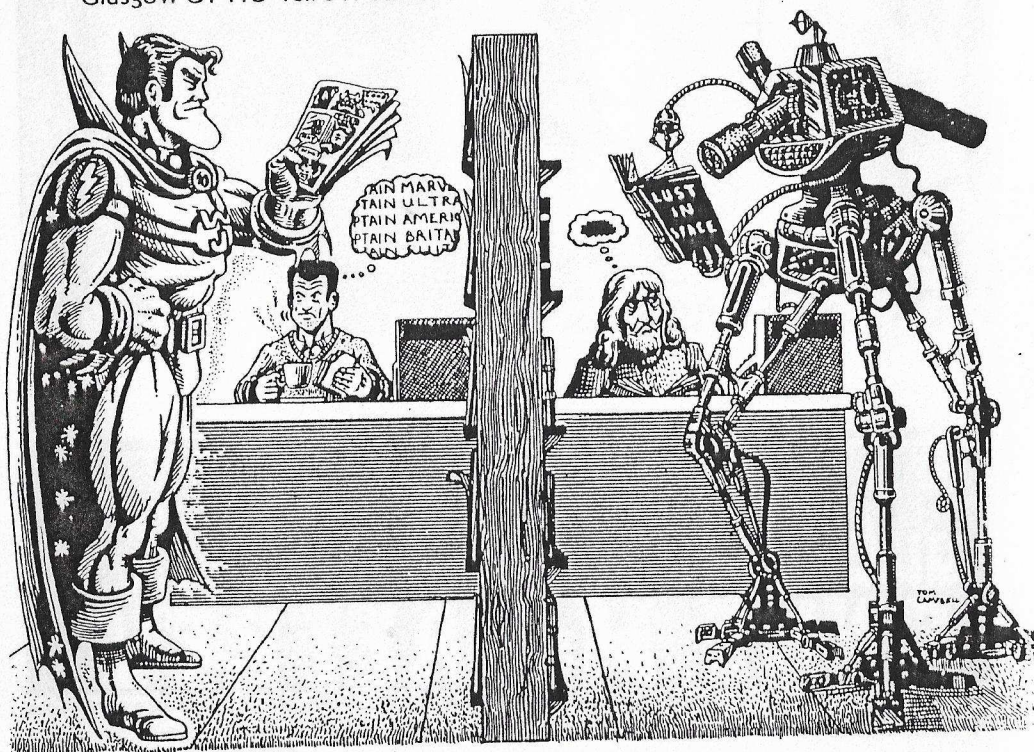
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ALBACON 1985



**GUEST OF HONOUR
ANNE McCAFFREY**

ANNE McCAFFREY THE NAKED TRUTH

AN APPRECIATION ALBEIT AN EXPOSE

HARLAN ELLISON

She murdered her first husband to gain control of his steamship line. For three and a half years she ran the most infamous brothel in Calcutta; a charnel house in which a British MP met his demise at the hands of a pair of Eurasian houis notorious as the only living practitioners of the dreaded "wolf trap" position. What no one knows till now is that she taught it to them! She ran guns to Havana before the revolution, and there is substantial evidence in Castro's secret files that Che was her lover. Her real name has been alleged to be Lopinski; to be Rosenwasser; to be Stathopolous; to be Bart-Leydon; to be Roosevelt. None of these are in fact, anything more than noms-des-plumes employed by her for brief periods during illicit activities in Bratislava, Haifa, Piraieus, Twickenham and Hot Springs, Arkansas. (As regards the last of these pseudonyms, there is absolutely no truth to the claim that she is the illegitimate daughter of Franklin Delano Roosevelt and the film actress Sylvia Sydney. She never even met FDR.)

Her poppy fields in the Golden Triangle of Southeast Asia continue to produce the highest-grade opium in the world despite all efforts by Interpol to close them down. All books credited to her have, in fact, been written by one of her love-slaves, an ex-Nazi named Stoffel who was an assistant anesthesiologist to Mengele in Dachau, who fled in 1943 and who has been kept hidden, in her thrall, in a heavily-guarded chalet in the Pyrenees since 1950. Her left leg is a cunningly fashioned aluminum false limb. She is color-blind in the purple through

crimson range. The filling in her third molar on the left side brings in country and western radio stations from Nashville. She is proficient with sten, bren, Uzzi and Leach's rocket launcher. It is untrue that Harry Harrison is her illegitimate son.

She currently goes by the name of Anne McCaffrey. I have known her forever; and now I tell the truth of her past, as well as intimate revelations of her private nature, though I know her minions will soon make it impossible for me to continue my life under this name. As soon as I write these words, as soon as I manage to get them into the hands of responsible journalists, I shall disappear. Now begins for me, for what remains of my life, a desperate flight under other names, an attempt to stay in front of the killers she will certainly send to snuff me.

But I have contained this dreadful knowledge too long. Yes, we assisted her in the Brinks, Great Train and Hermitage robberies; yes, I set up Idi Amin for her; yes, like Stoffel I was her willing love-slave for more than a decade. But what little is left of my conscience can no longer permit me to enter my twilight years bearing these secrets. A single act of responsible humanity is what I do here, in hopes that when the black book of infamy is written, there will be some tiny footnote of amelioration when my entry is marked down with hers.

It was she who instigated the terrible soccer riots of 1985. It was she who drew up the plans for the emplacements leading to the Cuban Missile Crisis. It was she who gave Jacqueline Susann, Barbara Cartland, Erich Segal and Lin Carter their start. It was she who taught Margaret Thatcher how to boogie.

There is no low too debased to which she will not sink. You think she loves horses, rides horses, raises horses, races horses? Remember Catherine the Great?

Brian Aldiss, a little-known advertising copywriter specializing in television commercials for products intended to rid us of noxious body odors, when pressed by drink and camaraderie, will tell of a night in Manchester in 1967 when he and McCaffrey skinned and ate a raw vole at a formal banquet honoring those who died at Dunkirk. When he speaks of it, the poor man lapses into glossalalia. His shame is so great at the memory, he has led an honorable life, free of the smallest sin, since that time.

Moorcock knows her, has spent time with her at her Bahamian compound. He will not talk of those times; but his heroic countenance grows soft and wan at the memories. His gout, it is said, can be connected to those days.

According to Sports Illustrated she has played with, but never for, the Montreal Canadians hockey team. Her American publisher, Judy-Lynn del Rey of Ballantine Books, attests to the fact that McCaffrey has not changed her underwear since 1976. She puts ketchup on cottage cheese.

She has every Tommy Steele recording ever pressed, transcribed on an infinite-loop cassette and - through the device in her left ear everyone has assumed was a hearing aid - listens to him singing twenty-four hours a day. When close-pressed by admirers or police, she switches to exterior loudspeaker and effects her escape.

She is the only human being with whom I have ever dined, who eats mashed potatoes with his/her hands.

Once, late in the night, besotted with drink and drugs, she bemoaned the missed chances of her life - sinking the Titanic, invading Poland, cashing in on the Irish Potato Famine, losing her share of the take from the kidnapping of the Lindbergh baby, honoring Dr. Crippen, homesteading the Falklands, marrying Jack the Ripper. But during that conversation, I was made privy to

facts heretofore unknown.

She was born to a poor American mountain family named Kallikak. After setting fire to their two-room shack in Appalachia, thereby causing the incineration of her parents and twenty-three siblings, she was taken in by an unmarried couple she will refer to only as "Mommy and Clyde." She attended such notable institutions of higher learning as the Kansas City Juvenile Detention Hall, Ohio State Penitentiary, the Our Lady of Unutterable Anguish Home for Unwed Mothers, Dannemorra and the SMERSH School for Terrorists.

(On that evening, woolgathering and tossing out ideas, I idly mentioned a series of books I planned to write using a fantasy version of medieval history, with the addition of fire-breathing dragons, to be set on a mythical planet named Darn, a bastardisation of the word damn. McCaffrey - then known to me as Diana Dors - suggested I use the name Dern, a bastardisation of darn familiar to mountain folk in America. You can imagine my dismay when her first publication - written, of course, by Stoffel - a novella titled "Weyr Search" printed in Analog, featured just such a background and world, altered only minimally by the Nazi's difficulty with English so the planet was called Pern.)

She came between Bogart and Bacall, turned John Wayne homosexual, cut the brake lining on James Dean's sport car, fed such massive doses of corrupted narcotics to an unknown playwright named Pinter that he has never since written an intelligible drama, and founded the African leopardman assassin's group known as the Tonton Maku.

She is, in fact, the cool evil intelligence behind every societally disruptive cabal since the turn of the century.

Nonetheless, she possesses a strange appeal. If one lives with bats and blind fish.

All this I attest is true and without embroidery.

And now: goodbye.

ANNE McCaffrey



ANNE McCAFFREY
BY BRUCE MacDONALD

There I was sitting gently in the bar, appreciating the first drink of the night after (yet) another committee meeting. A grin appeared:

"How would you like to write an appreciation of Anne McCaffrey?" it asked.

"OK, I'll try" I responded, not listening too closely.

"Great" the grin said, "Seven hundred words by next Thursday. See you at the meeting."

"Say, what!? Who? Me! Hang on!", but the grin vanished in the crowd with an alacrity worthy of Mr Dodgson's cat.

So here I go. Say "Anne McCaffrey". What

did it do for you? What sprang to mind? Smart rocks; Doona; psionics; ship; Hold; Pern; dragons (God, I'm a sucker for dragons!); speeches; Albacon; guests; appreciation; get on with it stupid!

My Anne McCaffrey is a writer of wide scope who passed from the hallowed halls of Radcliffe College, Massachusetts with a degree in Slavonic languages and Literature and took to the stage, working with American Opera. She performed and studied voice for nine years, culminating in her stage direction and appearance (as a witch) in Carl Orff's "Ludus De Nate Infante

Mirificus" at its American premiere. Fortunately for us, and to the future horror of all St George fans, Anne McCaffrey became a published authoress in October of 1954 with the short story "Freedom of Race" which appeared in Science Fiction Plus. This was followed by "The Lady in the Town" in Fantasy & S.F., and the first in the personally important ship stories, "The Ship Who Sang" in F&SF of April 1961. Two further ship stories preceded the first dragon tale: "Weyr Search", which appeared in Analog in 1967 and won the Hugo Award at the 1968 World Convention. Her first novel, "Restoree" was published by Ballantine in the same year.



Then the floodgates opened, with the short stories:

Dragon Rider (Analog 68, Nebula 69)
A Meeting of Minds (F&SF Jan 69)
A Womanly Talent (Analog Feb 69)
The Ship Who Disappeared (If Mar 69)
The Weather on Welliday (Galaxy Mar 69)
Dramatic Mission (Analog Jun 69)
Apple (Crime prevention in the thirtieth century 69)
Sittik (Galaxy Jul 70)
The Thorns of Barevi (The Disappearing Future 70)
The Great Canine Chorus (Infinity 70)
Daughter (The Many Worlds of SF 71)

Horse from a Different Sea (Zean 71)
A Proper Santa Claus (Demonkind Mar 73)
A Bridle for Pegasus (Analog Jul 73)
Finders Keepers (Haunt of Horror Aug 73)
Dulldrums (Future Quest 73)
The Rescued Girls of Refugee (Ten Tomorrows Sep 73)
The Smallest Dragon Boy (SF Tales Oct 73)
Velvet Fields (If Dec 73)
Rabble Dowser (Omega Jan 74)
Prelude to a Crystal Song (Continuum 1 Apr 74)
Milekey Mountain (Continuum 2 Aug 74)
Killashandra - Crystal Singer (Continuum 3 Dec 74)
Coda and Finale (Continuum 4 Feb 75)
The Greatest Love (Future Love Apr 77)
Honeymoon (Ballantine Jun 77)
Changeling (Ballantine Jun 77)
Lady in Waiting (Cassandra Rising Mar 78)
The Bones Do Lie (Last Dangerous Visions)

and the books:

Dragonflight (Ballantine 68)
Decision at Doona (Ballantine 69)
The Ship Who Sang (Ballantine 70)
Alchemy and Academe (Doubleday 70)
Dragonquest (Ballantine 71)
Mark of Merlin (Dell 71)
Ring of Fear (Ace 77)
To Ride Pegasus (Ballantine 73)
Cooking Out of this World (Ballantine 73)
A Time When (Nespa Press 75)
The Kilternan Legacy (Dell 75)
Dragonsong (Bantam 77)
Dragon Singer (Bantam 78)
Get Off the Unicorn (Ballantine 77)
Dinosaur Planet 1 (Futura 77)
White Dragon (Ballantine 78)
Moreta, Dragon Lady of Pern (Severn House 83)
Survivors: Dinosaur Planet 2 (Futura 84)

(My apologies for any errors or omissions.)

Anne McCaffrey lives at Dragonhold in Ireland with her children, four cats, a dog and various horses. She visits conventions worldwide, and is an impressively nice person to meet. I have done so once and intend to make sure I do so again at Albacon. If I can get through the crowd.

ANNE McCAFFREY

Anne McCaffrey an Appreciation by Duncan Lunan.

I've been trying to remember where I first read "The Ship Who Sang", by Anne McCaffrey. It wasn't until I got to University in 1963 that I had access to the magazines, so it must have been in book form; I don't remember what anthology it was and that probably means there was more than one. It was considered to be an important story and it was being talked about.

There were those who thought that it showed the true direction of the future, especially the future in space, when human beings would be wired directly into machines and their organic bodies would only be unwanted remnants. It was the theme which was to be addressed afterwards by Larry Niven in "Becalmed in Hell", Arthur C. Clarke in "Meeting with Medusa", and by Terry Nation - making the warnings explicit - in a succession of encounters between Dr. Who and the Daleks.

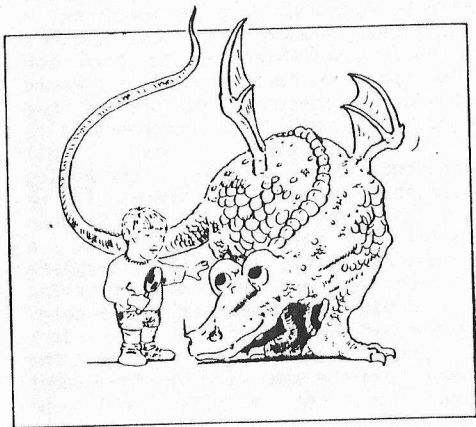
As the sixties wore on, the "shell-people" stories grew in number and eventually were collected into the book with the title of the first story. I don't know to what extent Anne was aware of the philosophical and moral debate, as "Dr. Who" spelled out in even larger letters the conviction that the shell-people would act and talk like machines, except for their unreasoning hatred of organic beings; but while Anne continued to portray them as spiritually beautiful, pouring into their music the whole range of human feelings which undoubtedly they still had, she didn't give them weapons. It's not a trivial issue. The technology to wire people irrevocably into machines is liable to be with us, specifically to be available to the military, well ahead of the more sophisticated mind-machine links which Chris Boyce and others see as a major expansion of human consciousness. That may mean that it can also be done () people who are badly deformed at birth, as in the "Ship Who Sang" stories; but there would be a lot of moral issues to consider before deciding whether the

word inside those brackets should be "for" or "to".

It was unquestionably the magazines which brought Anne into the spotlight - specifically Analog with "Weyr Search", the short novel which was to form the first part of "Dragonrider". I suppose everyone has their own picture of the planet Pern and its occupants: I've been disappointed with all representations since the Analog publication because the images in my mind are unalterably those of John Schoenherr's artwork. This was a biological Battle of Britain, complete with its Few and its dawn patrols, with forgotten scientists in the roles of Camm and Mitchell and the same lack of preparation before conflict. The dragons had the same kind of functional beauty as the Spitfire and the Hurricane: they were thoroughbreds, but they were designed for flight.

It was a time for rehabilitation for dragons. Avram Davidson's "Rogue Dragon" and Jack Vance's "The Dragon Masters" had also portrayed them not as supernatural monsters but as creatures bred for human purposes, tied into human societies in powerful and dangerous relationships. The dragonriders might be the elite of Pernes society but they get burned in battle with the threads and there isn't a McIndoe to rebuild them; they may even be closer to the dragons than the fighter ace to his personalised "kite", but they go insane if they lose them; and while any youngster with the talent may get the chance for glory, some at least of those who go out on the hot sand of the hatchery are maimed as dragons struggle out of their eggs. Pern is a tough place and "Dragonquest" hammered the point home. It's a place where children should be seen and not heard - especially musical children, in my opinion with pet fire lizards, whose idea of rebellion is to make a major discovery without the adults permission. Artists nowadays draw the dragons by the

conventions of fantasy. Popular though they have been, the later Dragon novels haven't fitted into my mental picture of Pern at all - but I have to admit that I haven't read "Moreta, Dragon Lady of Pern" yet, so I don't know whether the trend continues.



Book publication of "Dragonrider" made it known that there were two previous McCaffrey novels, "Restoree" and "Decision at Doona", and I soon sought them out. "Restoree" deserves more attention than it gets, because again it was breaking new ground among the conventions of SF. There were lots of stories in which aliens preyed on the human race for food, published on both sides of the Atlantic, but what they had in common was the lack of resistance: all the authors seemed out to make the same point about our cosmic inferiority, upon discovering which the human race would meekly submit. I made a study of it because I was working on a story in which we put up a fight, with help from outside: but Anne portrayed a culture which hauled itself out of the cooking pot by its bootstraps, while Earth was overlooked and had it easy. "Decision at Doona" is a first contact novel, with two races trying to colonise the same planet simultaneously; the extraterrestrials are cats, and since I'm allergic to those my feelings are that they turn up in SF rather too often. Anne has returned to the theme of contest for a world more recently in

"Dinosaur Planet", but as that's very much the first part of a series not too much can be said about it at this stage.

The story series, eventually revised for book publication, is one of Anne's most used formats. One of the most interesting discoveries of the "Get off the Unicorn" collection was that there were quite a number of other series besides the Dragons and telepaths of "To Ride Pegasus" (although both of them are included.) One of the most powerful was the four-part series in Roger Elwood's "Continuum" anthologies, published afterwards as "The Crystal Singer". Of all the musicians, mostly heroines, in Anne's fiction, these are the ones whose lives have the most intensity - drawn by their perfect pitch to the crystals on which interstellar civilisation depends, paid for them in vast wealth, but ultimately burned out by them and destroyed.

I first met Anne McCaffrey at the British Milford Writers' Workshop. At the party on the final night, after an intensive week of critical sessions and professional discussions, she announced a singaround and with Jeff Hecht accompanying on the piano, led off with a slightly blue folk-song called "The Shape of Things". Unfortunately at that point the guests arrived for the party, and the singing folded. At the formative meeting of World SF in Dublin, she was working hard behind the scenes to make the event a success, and as I remember we hardly said more than "Hello!" We've hardly ever been at the same conventions, so I don't have any stories to tell in that area. But there was one year, at the Fancy Dress Parade, when the M.C. caused a stir by announcing "Two Dragonriders of Pern, with real Dragon." A side door opened, and in came two men in leather, trailing a rope by which they were suddenly brought up short. A tug of war had ensued, ending with a violent jerk on the rope which sent both of them flying back out into the night; so the rest of us never found out what the Dragons of Pern Really look like. This convention, however, with Anne herself as a Guest, May Be Different....

COLIN FINE

A FINE FELLOW

The face has a strong, manly quality; the finely chiselled chin, straight nose and high cheek-bones combine to give an overall impression of strength. The eyes betray a great depth of intelligence, coupled with humanity. But why am I wasting time looking in a mirror when I should be telling you about Colin Fine, Albacon 85's Fan Guest of Honour?

Colin is nothing much to look at. He wanders around at conventions in tatty jeans and a T-shirt, sandals flapping as he ambles to and from the bar. Most times he's behind a desk flogging memberships for some up-coming con.

So why is he Fan GoH and I'm not?

Because he can play the piano better than I can. Because he can talk more entertainingly than I can. Because he has supported, and championed, Glasgow conventions since they began. Because he is always willing to muck-in and help the committee of any convention get the work done. Because we like him.

At every Glasgow convention I can remember Colin has given at least one talk (usually on some aspect of languages, his private vice), appeared as a team member for Cambridge University SF society (CUSFS) or its offspring, as well as taking part in a variety of discussions. In every one of these activities he brings to bear his mighty intellect, keen wit and (where needed) truly awful punning ability. This in addition to helping the smooth running of the convention by Gophering where and when needed.

In case this seems a bit too much of a eulogium, I'd better tell you a few of his bad points. The main ones are listed above as good points. I don't like him being able to play piano better than I can, but he compounds the slight by knowing the works of Tom Lehrer inside out, and he performs them at the drop of a Steinway to the delight of all around. Except me, sitting greenly in the corner. His ability to talk entertainingly is best exemplified by the occasion when we had to abruptly

curtail his item on the Alternative programme because there weren't enough people in the audience for the Guest of Honour speech on the Main programme.

Colin has only produced three fanzines that I know of: "A Fine Mess", "Another Fine Mess", and "Yet Another Fine Mess". In them he writes mostly about conventions he has been to but also talks a bit about himself; revealing that he got into Fandom by going to a lecture given by Isaac Asimov, at which the time of the next meeting of the London SF group was announced. While at Cambridge in 1975 he attended his first convention, which he enjoyed thanks to meeting up with a friendly bunch from Oxford. It was because of this that Colin is always at such pains to be outgoing and friendly to anyone new to conventions.

His facility with languages (from Japanese through to Loglan, an artificial language) has led him to become an indispensable contact in Britain for fans all over the world. As Secretary for Seacon 84 he had to write letters in all the major European languages. As agent for SEFF (the Scandanavian Fan Fund) he has an easier job - their publications are in English. However, he's on the Britain in 87 Worldcon committee, so I expect he's polishing up his Serbo-Croat and Polynesian. As far as I know he doesn't speak Gaelic, but give him a book this weekend and

In a letter he sent to my fanzine "Conrunner" recently he explained that he had gained so much pleasure from conventions he always felt compelled to try and put something back in by way of repayment. I suspect that, in this respect, conventions are in debt to him for a considerable amount: it is this debt that the Albacon committee feel we can best repay by having Colin Fine as our Fan Guest of Honour.

You'll spot him easily: he's the insignificant guy surrounded by people being thoroughly entertained. I'll be at my piano lesson.

Ian Sorensen

MEFISTO IN ONYX

A TREATMENT FOR TELEPLAY.

HARLAN ELLISON

It's, oh figure sixteen years from now. Cybernetics has come a long way. Automation in factories. Every citizen's second largest purchase (after a home, but before a gyro-car) is the humble but ever-so-efficient HOMER. That's the popular acronym for Home Robot, the basic household implement that can clean out the garage, polish the floors, de-lime the toilet bowl, shine the windows. Everything we despise doing around the old homestead...give it to Homer.

The phrase no longer heard: "It's so hard getting good help nowadays." Now everyone can afford a loyal, placid, efficient and tireless slavey. The Robotic Age is upon us.

Open with a group of people standing on an average nice neighborhood street of small houses. They are shocked. They look at the house before them and their comments are as follows: "That's disgusting!" "What filth, what obscenity!" "Disgraceful!" and a little boy of five, finger in nose, says, "Ka-Ka!"

Now the angle shifts so we are looking at the house from a shallow perspective. We can see that something has been written on the front wall, graffiti obviously, but because this is television we can't decipher the scrawls from this perspective.

Standing on the front of the lawn is a Homer, with its extensible hose arm still dripping paint on the grass. What has happened is clear: the Homer was assigned the task of painting the house. The Homer has seemingly gone berserk and has instead defaced the home and outraged the neighborhood with vile slogans. And as the resident of the house, GEORGIA LANFIELD, comes out to see what's causing the commotion, the Homer turns and, cackling metallicly - something definitely not programmed into the machine - sprays the neighbors a charming crimson.

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Homer goes a little crazier every day. In rapid succession it spoon-feeds Georgia's invalid mother so furiously that it damned near asphyxiates her; it rewires the house so that turning on the automatic produces a force-field that prevents Georgia from getting to the rack of lamb till it's been reduced to a cinder, so that hitting the light switch sets off fireballs in the living room, so that the electronic doors keep opening and slamming all night; it frightens the neighborhood kids; and in the dead of night Georgia can hear it chanting in a guttural tongue.

She'd get rid of it, trade it in on a new model, but the warranty has run out; it's a three-year-old model and who'd buy an early edition Homer when they can have the new design with full plasma/chip sensory-feedback telepresence? Oh, you know what I mean: have you tried to sell last year's VCR?

Very quickly Georgia comes to know that the impossible has happened. The robot has been possessed by a demon. How does she learn this? Homer tells her this as it dangles her by one arm from a second-storey window.

Managing to sweet-talk the Homer out of dropping her - it seems the poor creature does have moments when the demon's control isn't total - moments when there is an almost pathetic pleading from the robot to save it from the hideous thing that has taken it over - she tries to extricate herself from a steadily-worsening situation. The repair service comes, and the Homer tosses the guy through a window with a powerblast not built into the system. She calls the cops and they say sure, they can solve her problem: they'll just waste the looney robot. Forget it, Georgia says, this thing cost me a fortune. And besides, look at how Homer is eyeing that S.W.A.T. team. They might wind up charcoal broiled if they assaulted him.

Georgia and her invalid mother are stuck with a malevolent resident in the house.

Finally, Georgia arrives at the

conclusion that what she needs is an exorcism.

The Archdiocese, to which she makes appeal, is horrified. Not only won't they even admit that the modern Church occasionally performs the high mass rite of Exorcism, they refuse to accept the idea of demonic possession in this modern day, and even if there were such a thing, Madame, no construct of microchip and plastic possesses life, therefore it cannot be possessed by a representative of You Know Who. So beat it, blasphemer.

On her way out, however, a wizened and crepuscular old man pruning the hedges whispers to her, "The one you need is Father Bonnar. He'll do anything." So she asks where she can find Father Bonnar, and the gardener tells her.

Cut to the State Penitentiary where Father Bonnar is about to be released on parole after serving eighteen months of a five-to-seven for Grand Larceny. It seems Father Bonnar (who says of himself, "Perhaps taking the cloth wasn't the smartest career choice I might have made.") was the Comptroller for the Archdiocese and, being a computer whiz of rather staggering ability, used his position to mulct the Church out of fifty-seven thousand dollars, which found it's way into a numbered Swiss bank account.

He is now, how they say, at liberty. And if God hasn't turned his back on Bonnar, the Church certainly has.

He rather fancies Georgia's deranged problem, and says he would like to come and take a look.

When Homer makes the vial of holy water boil while Father Bonnar is holding it, when Homer makes a rather unsightly green fungus grow all over Father Bonnar's left arm, when Homer produces a lizard monster from the kitchen sink...the ex-prelate knows he's onto something really fascinating here.

After mulling it for a while, he decides what must be done is something new and bizarre. He must translate the high rite mass of Exorcism into modern terms, to fit this technological demonic possession. The pentagram must be

mathematically codified to the most infinitesimal measurement, every angle micrometer-exact. The ritual must be translated into a proper computertalk: Kobal, Fortran, Pascal, Turbo Pascal. The trace elements in the eye of newt and toe of frog must be centrifuged, separated and reduced, spectroscopically analyzed and the modern chemical equivalents fractionated for the braziers. Like that.

And when it is done, and the poor little Homer has had its heartrending scene in which (as best it can, being just a "dumb machine") it is trapped within the pentagram as Bonnar uses the proper equipment to translate the incantations into sound analogs, as it spins and rolls about, beating futilely at the invisible walls that hem it in...the demon emerges. Horrible but powerful, malign but self-assured, detestable but somehow charming, Bonnar will not let it fly free, to return to the abyss, until it answers the ex-prelate's questions. That's the rule of demonology.

Bonnar demands to know why this sulphurous diabolous has taken possession of a machine? Why this base thing? Why this soulless piece of equipment?

To which the demon - CARNIVEAN, Prince of Powers of the Second Hierarchy - responds: Without soul? Art thou certain? My Master is ever current in the marketplace of souls. These creatures ...they are the meek... and they shall inherit.

And Carnivean, sets up such a howl, such a shriek, that Bonnar sets him free to return to the Pit, and the demon turns to smoke and vanishes into its own Black Hole; and is gone.

Bonnar and Georgia stand in the smoking living room, the now-released Homer with them, looking small and meek. They stare at each other for a moment, and then...

From the kitchen comes the sound of the Hallelujah Chorus.

They rush into the kitchen.

The toaster is singing.

FADE TO BLACK.

MEMOIRS OF A GOPHER

by Iain Dickson

Just over seven years ago I was a "normal" SF reader. I bought my books in brown paper bags from the local corner shop. On smuggling them into the house I read them in a locked room with the curtains drawn.

Then I discovered SF conventions.

My life changed over several days, (I still hadn't discovered hotel rooms, and went home in the evening). No longer the life of a deprived reader. I could buy books that Woolies and Menzies had never even heard of, see films that the ABC had forgotten, meet famous authors, fellow fans and generally have a great time.

In recent years I have changed from a fry into a fully fledged trout and those furtive days have passed away into a blissful haze of forgetfulness.

By my second convention I knew roughly what to expect and had started to help the committee re-arrange the room when required, then, only two months after my first tentative steps, I became an official "Gopher" (Genus -

runaroundalot) - at last, recognition! No longer "could you this?" and "could you that?" From now on it was "Go for this!" and "Go for that!" I was a true "Gopher"

In the last three and a half years I have gophered at two Worldcons, three Eastercons and at least seven other assorted cons in an "official" capacity and "unofficially" helped elsewhere. Having built up some experience in this field I can honestly say that gophering can be the happiest daze of your life. How else could you see a con at the run, help sort and project films, take registrations, help in fancy dress and evict "Vogons" (poetry readers).

After all that you collapse in the arms of the prettiest party around, but all in all generally having a good time.

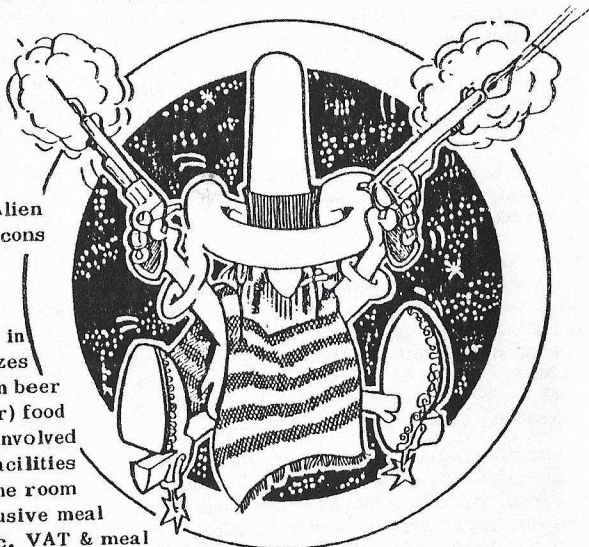
To conclude: gophering is fun and does have many compensations like (censored by committee) ...buying them a round. The happiest sound at a con is the scamper of gophering feet. While the committee like it, the gopher could grow to love it - it can become a way of life.

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WHY EUROCON? WHY GLASGOW?

To answer these questions it is perhaps advisable to first ask, "What is a Eurocon?". Started in 1972, its main purposes are to bring members of European fandom together, and to allow people a taste of conventions run in different ways around Europe.

In addition to the reasons stated there are others - some specific to Britain, for obvious linguistic reasons, there is an understandable bias to the mid-Atlantic, with the effect that we tend to forget that there is SF outside the English-speaking world. Any event that, however temporarily, redresses this balance is, I believe worthy of encouragement. When we consider the universalist approach of much SF, it is sad to think how parochial some fans can be on occasion.

But why Glasgow?

Glasgow has held conventions every year since 1978, and as the only annual convention in Scotland, we can claim to be, de facto, Scotland's national convention. In 1984 (the year of the British Eurocon), Albacon, with 600 members, was the second largest convention in Europe. Given this size running the Eurocon and the Eastercon in

tandem is unnecessary - and would involve a great deal of extra complexity in planning. Therefore, we propose to present the Eurocon on our traditional summer dates; the last weekend in July 1988, to be precise. Our convention venue has not yet been finalised, but obviously the Central Hotel is figuring largely in our plans.

We do have an overall view of the shape the convention shall take. We see it primarily as a normal Albacon with a strong flavour of continental material. This would mean a heavily programmed con with three streams of programming - and a large number of films. The continental material would be integrated into the main, alternative and fan programmes on a basis of merit.

The concept of a separate "European" stream of programming is one we wholeheartedly reject. It seems to a) produce a ghetto and b) conspires to fill this ghetto with poor quality material that has no justification for its inclusion, other than its non-British origins.

A final note; 1988 will be our tenth anniversary of running conventions, and it would be a marvellous grace note to commemorate the event with a Eurocon.

BOB JEWETT

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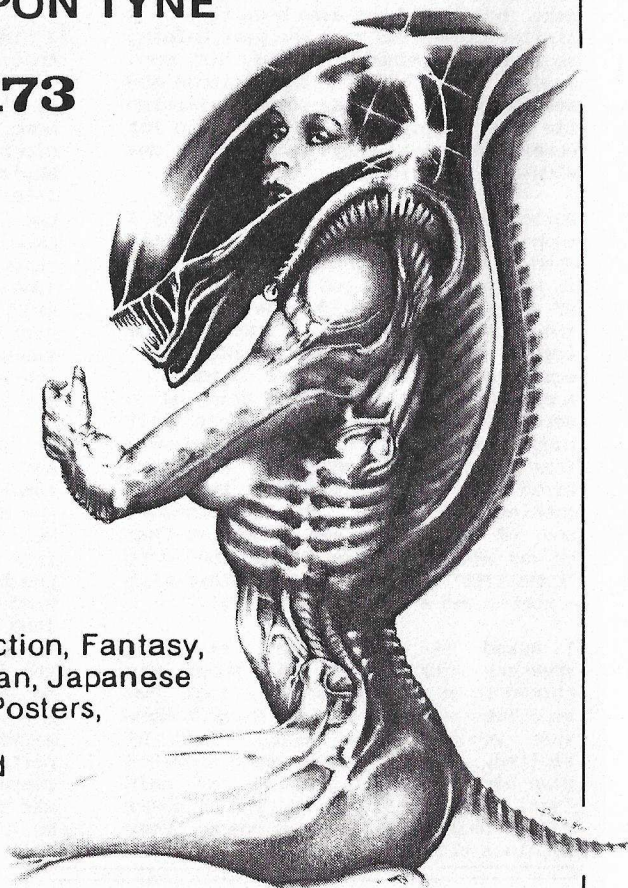
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IN THE BEGINNING

It was summer again, it always seemed to come round each year with regular monotony. And what did one do during this particular local holiday period in mid July called "The Glasgow Fair" if one did not actually go off on a summer holiday? Well, this particular guy stayed on at work for the extra cash.

On one particular Thursday during this time I noticed an article in the evening paper, it informed me that a science fiction convention called "Faircon 79" was about to hit town. I had heard the name before and had also been told of a similar convention held the year before, so I was determined to attend this one. I decided to check out this Faircon and see for myself what a science fiction fan was supposed to be, and to let others know that they were not alone with their affliction.

During my lunch hour on the Friday I took a trip down to the Ingram Hotel. When I arrived at the registration desk it was very crowded and there was a lot of activity. I couldn't help noticing two young men unloading equipment in the foyer, and I reasoned that this equipment was for use at the convention. Among the gear they were bringing in were two 16mm. projectors, they only caught my attention because they were from my place of work, and had been hired for the weekend. Some technical queries came to mind, so I approached one of these young men. I noticed that he was wearing a badge, it had the word "COMMITTEE" printed on it together with a number and a name "John Mooney".

I asked "Did you bring extension speakers with those?" The young man turned to me and gave me that look you sometimes see when someone doesn't know what you're talking about, "No!" he replied, "Do we really need them?" I gave him a reassuring smile and said "yes, I'm afraid you do, you'll never fill a hall with sound from one of those machines alone".

Chris O'Kane

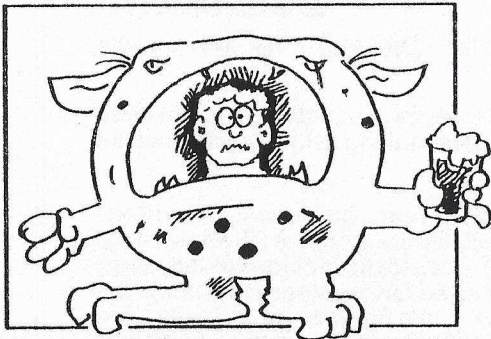
At that point he turned to his colleague with a concerned look on his face, "Hey Bruce, this guy says we need speakers with these things", his colleague also wore a badge with "COMMITTEE", a number and a name "Bruce Saville". The one called "Saville" shrugged and grunted something, they both looked concerned and under pressure, then hurried about their tasks.

I didn't see them again. (Until later that night).

At the end of the working day I returned home for some dinner and a change of clothes. (Yes! I was civilised then). Whilst eating my dinner I saw an interview on the local news show with the convention's Guest of Honour: Bob Shaw, he was a very popular author I thought, I liked his books, I was looking forward to meeting him, by now a kind of euphoria was building up. I arrived at the hotel around 7 p.m. and immediately went down to the main hall where the crowd seemed to be assembled for some opening event.

My first impression was of excitement and bustle, the place was packed, something was happening at the front of the hall, I couldn't hear or see what but it was raising hysterical laughter from those who could. Everybody towards the back of the hall was engaged in some kind of social activity or talking in loud and enthusiastic voices. A man lay on the floor frantically trying to load the latest Voyager probe pictures into an antiquated slide machine, I took note. There was drink a plenty being served at the bar. I joined in with this particular event and tried to make contact with someone who might know what was going on, but as they all seemed to be oblivious to my queries, I wandered off through the hotel.

I found such things as the Bookroom, the Art Show, the Star Trek Room, the Alternative Programme room - it all took a bit of sorting out in one's mind. Around 8 p.m. a film was shown in the main hall "Death Race 2000". Good! I thought I would sit down and enjoy this one with a nice cool pint of beer. No chance!



The lights went down and the picture hit the screen, ah!, cringe, I went, it was far too small, the throw from the lens to the screen was much too short for the lens they were using, the sound came out as mush, the dialogue was almost incomprehensible, words could not be discerned, (this was partly due to the fact that most of the audience were still involved in some sort of debate with one another and paid no heed to the fact that some people wanted to watch the film). There were some fans at the back of the hall playing a board game on the floor, others were raving to their friends about the latest book they had read, others were cracking jokes in loud voices and some even seemed to be engaged in some kind of mini-quiz, all this in an area no larger than a classroom, it was CHAOS.

As a budding projectionist I couldn't bear it. I had to approach the operator and suggest some tips that would help improve the presentation. I fought my way through the crowd towards the projectors. In the dim light I could discern the silhouette of a short bulky man by the machines. As I got nearer, the beam from the machine threw a light across his figure, he wore a badge with, yes, you've guessed it, "COMMITTEE", number and name "Ed Buckley".

I aired my complaints to the man, he gave me a sympathetic look and responded "I Know". I asked him if he knew whether there were any extension speakers for use with the projector. His reply was just as despairing "I don't know, I've just been left to get on with it". It then became obvious to me that whoever were running this event were total beginners - they were selling "Panic" in wholesale lots. It was a shambles, and I pitied them.

Then, with a flash of understanding and compassion, I made a dramatic decision there and then to help out. I would bring some relief and order to this bleak chaos. I went home and collected together all my own film equipment, returning to take control of the programme the next morning.

From that day since I have been the Albacon Mobile Cinema and have been behind the machines at every Glasgow con (and also some down south) since.

Conventions now, however, are far better run and organised than in those heady days. But, somehow it seemed more fun in those days, everybody was a beginner then, we were all in at the deep end together; it was the panic and the excitement of being at an event like it for the first time, where a very religious crowd of worshipers congregated in a small hall in mid-summer temperatures to observe their duties and preach to the non believers, that sort of grabbed something inside of you.

It was a very memorable experience, one I shall always want to remember. It's all so professional now though, I reckon it won't be long before we have to sit a C & G course for con-running before election onto a committee.

Ah yes! it's not the same is it? They don't run 'em like that anymore, thank God, but even now, after six years, it's difficult to believe that this is the way it was. How things have changed, too civilized, too civilized. The only thing that hasn't changed is the people, we are still here, to quote from a famous SF novel:

"Conventions come and go but fans abide"

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I've always wanted to own a bookshop and.....

"I've Always Wanted to Own a Bookshop,
and Sit There All Day Reading the Stock"
by Richard and Marion van der Voort

If you've ever thought of saying this to a dealer, beware, for one day one of us will run amok on hearing it for the umpteenth time, and batter you to death with "Books in Print". If we're sitting down when you come in, it's because we're too exhausted to do anything else. Our miner son-in-law worked for us for a week last year, and went home exhausted, declaring that he would rather have a double shift at the pit any time. We probably have more customers than any other of the normal run of dealers because we also sell general books, but judging by the tales told round the bar at conventions, the following description of a day in a dealer's life applies to all of us.

We do at least live over the shop, which saves a journey to work, but on the other hand trouble starts early. At six a.m. the telephone rings. An Australian customer wants a book sent by air mail for his wife's birthday. Richard slips on a dressing-gown and dashes down to the shop. Yes we do have the book, and we promise to send it off today and charge his credit card. We're drinking our tea when the postman rings the bell with three packets that won't go through the letter box. What a change from the chap we had before, who would force them through somehow or other, often destroying the insides. Apart from the packets we've not much mail. Three publishers are threatening us for money that we paid at least twenty days ago, but as they are merely computer letters they are filed in the wastepaper basket. Ten mail orders, one of which is asking for a book in a catalogue that we issued three years ago and which has been out of print for a year. Chuck the cheque and letter into the correspondence basket to send back. Another customer complains that he hasn't received the

books he ordered six weeks ago. Investigation shows that we never received his order, and this is also chucked in the correspondence basket.

We don't open the shop itself until ten, but there is always something to do, shelves to dust and tidy, or the window display to change. Today is Hoover day, so Richard goes round with the cleaner while Marion enters the cash received in the till and cashbook. It's ten by now, so we open the doors, and two small boys rush in. As it's term time they're probably off with something infectious, but they show no sign of a rash, so we watch them carefully while they look at a dozen books, and finally take a Fighting Fantasy between them and depart. Richard settles down to packing parcels while Marion takes charge of the till while she marks up the new books and prices from the publishers' catalogues in preparation for our new catalogue.

At eleven o'clock three boxes come in from the States. We open them, check the books against the invoice, then Richard dashes round to the bank to pay for the goods while Marion sorts them out into piles of the same price. The rate of exchange is worked out on what we have paid, and the books priced, then re-sorted into author and title and shelved, hindered by customers who are convinced that somewhere in those piles is just the book they want.

A new customer comes in, sent round by the girl at Menzies, who wants the fourth book of a fantasy trilogy. By elimination we find that he wants Donaldson's first book of the second trilogy, so he buys it and goes happily away, to be succeeded by two very

elderly ladies who seem to want a Bible, pocket-sized with large print and coloured pictures, for half-a-crown. We eventually send them down to the Christian Bookshop in Richmond, after spending half an hour showing them every Bible we have in stock.

It's two in the afternoon, and we take it in turns to nip upstairs and have lunch. It is now raining heavily, and we have few customers, so we have a tactical discussion, interrupted by the occasional wet customer, on the conventions three months ahead. Have we registered? Yes. Have we booked hotel room and tables? Yes. Who is Guest of Honour? Good, he actually has books in print. Have we enough? No, so we add his books to the British and American order sheets. Have we anyone to do the shop while we're away? Yes, it's all arranged. We heave a sigh of relief and then go through the details of the next two conventions in the same month, with our usual moan about people who hold conventions in a bunch, and always different, so we normally get back Monday, unpack two thirds of the boxes and repack with different stock by the following Thursday.

It's stopped raining, and a young mother comes in with a toddler, who immediately starts pulling the books off the shelf. We restrain the brat, re-assure the mother and put the books back simultaneously. After all, it happens about twice a week. A child with a Book Token who doesn't like reading is escorted in by his mother, and finally settles on a Fighting Fantasy book, after our assurances that they don't really encourage devil-worship, despite Lord Longford's strictures. We haven't actually read this one ourselves, but it is about a starship, so it seems unlikely.

A rep comes in, and we tell him firmly that we want a credit. He cheers up when we show him the four wrong titles and six damaged copies from the last consignment, and he gives us a permission slip on which he writes in large letters "Warehouse Errors". We give him a cup of tea and look at the new titles. Most of them we reject out

of hand, but we do order some back stock. We also point out that one of next month's titles is already in print by another publisher, and the author isn't even dead yet. As copyright exists for fifty years after a writer's death, someone has goofed.

The postmen appear, and we get a signature for the three large parcels Richard packed this morning, then Richard flings the sacks of letter-packets and foreign parcels into the van and takes them down to the post office. They can't be collected by the parcel men, as they all go to different offices to be sorted. This is more efficient, the Post Office tell us.

Four schoolchildren come in, spend half an hour discussing the latest Dr Who and depart with a comic each. It's getting dark, so the flow of customers is ebbing. Richard packs more parcels while Marion tries to enter up the invoices for goods packed today while manning the till. The third customer today asks if we have a book which is featured in the middle of the window display. Marion finds it for them and they decide they don't like the cover, so they have another book instead. Marion tries to phone three customers again to tell them that their books are in, but none of them are home yet. At last it is six o'clock, so we write notes for the two urgent ones and put them in our pocket to deliver when we take the dog for a walk.

Richard is just shutting up when Marion answers the phone. An indignant girl complains that her club was not mentioned among the others in our last catalogue. We explain that we have to have the information before we can print it, not having a crystal ball in the back of the shop. She goes on to complain about the price of a book in the new catalogue that has gone up by a pound. We explain that there is still retail price maintenance on books in this country, and that the publisher sets the price. She announces her intention of buying it cheaper elsewhere and slams the phone down. Richard thinks this very funny. The book has actually been out of print for a year, but the

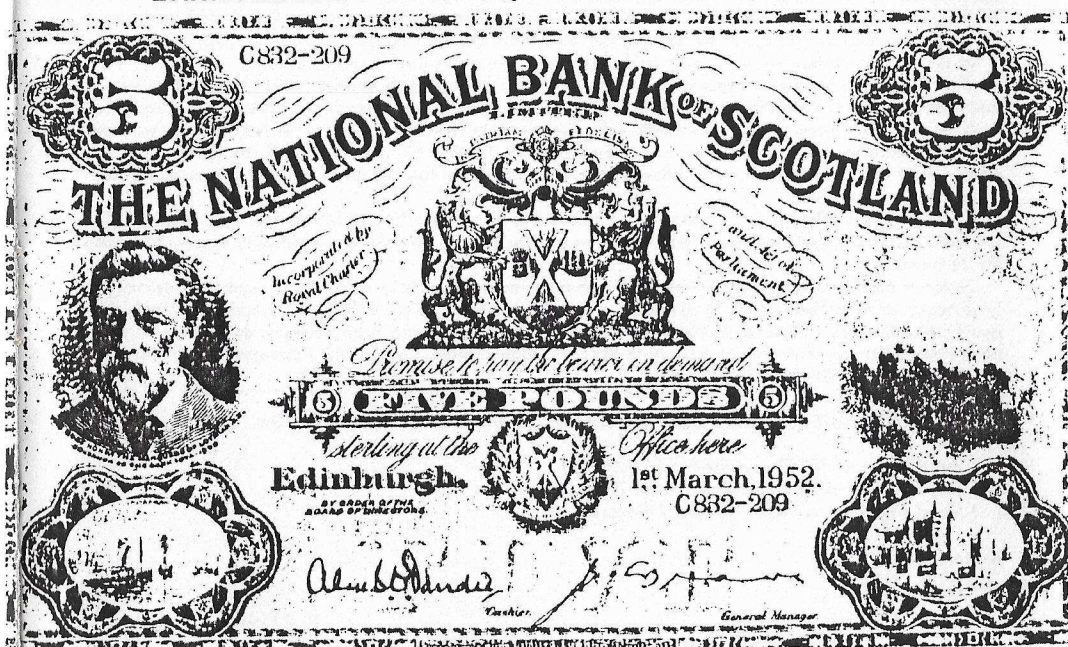
rep brought us the last lot in from some Smith's returns, so no one else is likely to have it cheaper.

The shutter is down at last, so we cash up and put the money in the safe, when the telephone rings again. Can he have a copy of such and such a book? Sorry, we've sold out of the American edition, and we won't be importing any more as the British rights have been sold. He only collects American books, as he doesn't like the English covers. Richard represses the urge to say "Hard Luck" and points out that this book was in the catalogue we sent out three months ago. Why didn't he order it then, with the rest of his books? He didn't notice it then. We sigh, give him the telephone number of another shop that might have it. Then he wants to know if we have "The Search For Spock" fotonovel. There isn't one we tell him. Dealer Blank is advertising it at £2.95. "That is not a fotonovel, it's the Storybook, and you've already had that" we tell him. He isn't convinced, so we let him go.

We crawl upstairs and put on the kettle for a cup of tea, at least there is a casserole already in the oven, which gives us time to reply to the half-a-dozen queries in the correspondence basket tonight. The telephone rings again, and Richard answers it, giving our home number instead of saying "At the Sign of the Dragon" as we do during the day. It's a friend. "I won't keep you, we just wanted to know if you will run the bookroom and do the auction for this convention we're thinking of having in 1988." The answer is yes, provided that it doesn't clash with a date already promised to someone else. "Will we ask so and so if they would come as a guest?" This we refuse, but promise that if they send a letter to us we will send it on to the writer concerned. They ring off after thanking us and we settle into our chairs. Another average day is over.

Reading this, we can hear you asking why we do it? Because we're crazy, that's why, and what's more we enjoy it.

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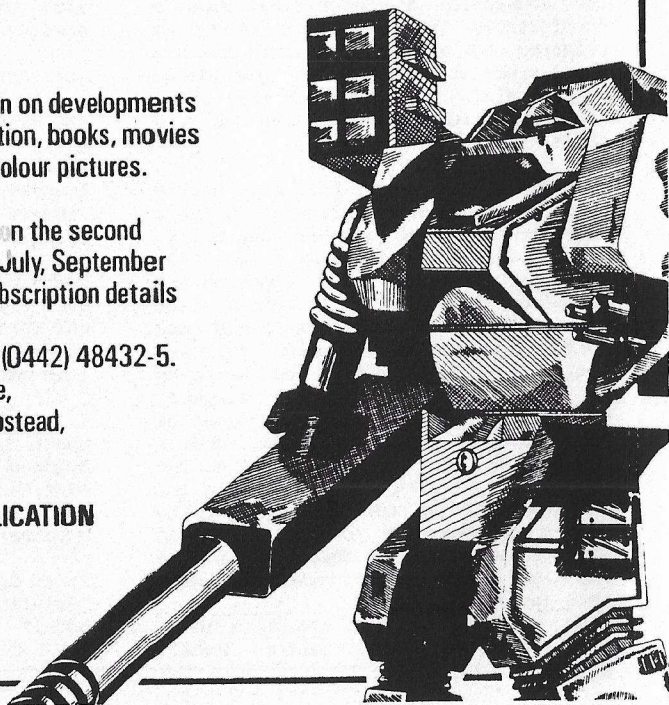


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AS OTHERS SEE US

Ian Sorensen

I thought I'd spare you my usual fiscal funnies in this year's programme book (sighs of relief create cyclones across the nation) and, instead, highlight one of the other parts of the convention organisation that usually falls on my manly shoulders: press coverage.

Over the years Glasgow conventions have become enough of a fixture for the press to be able to recognise the name Albacon. However, despite ten convention's worth of practise, they still get the same things wrong every time: the members become "delegates" and the convention transmogrifies into a "conference". The chairman of the con is referred to as "The President" and the hotel staff are perpetually "bewildered by it all". They also wait till after the convention before giving us the plug!

It's not as if we don't tell them what's happening; they simply prefer to write a headline then tag a story, any story, under it. I'll show you what I mean. In the Glasgow Herald which appeared the day after Albacon 84 the headline read "Beam me up Scotty, it's a mad, mad world". Now, the article which followed was, by and large, a very good write-up of the convention; written slightly tongue in cheek, but covering most of the activities of the weekend. What's more it took up a third of a page 4. The journalist, Steve Leather, spent a lot of time wandering round the con getting the atmosphere. But you can't write up atmosphere, so, having come up with the headline, he then had to justify it with this intro:
"The madness starts at the check-in on the ground floor of the Central Hotel.

"Weapons must not be worn in public" says a sign. It's to keep out the lunatic fringe says Albacon committee member Vince Docherty. He's got to be kidding; you can't tell where the fringe starts and finishes."

Not too flattering is it? It gets better as it goes on, but I wonder how many readers stopped at that first paragraph. Later on he describes Guest of Honour Norman Spinrad as "a nice guy and he looks normal. Sticks out like a sore thumb and goes down a treat." Things like that could get us all a bad name.....

The article above was, as I said, a pretty favourable one. Not that anyone has ever done our conventions down, it's just that... Well, what do you think about this story The Sunday Standard printed just before Albacon II
"Sci-fi buffs lock in on Space Station Glasgow"

"Travellers in space still require down-to-earth timetables, which is why both the Monster from Piedros Blanca and the Thing from Another World will be checking in at Glasgow's Central Hotel this weekend."

"..... The aliens come not from Outer Space but most parts of Scotland and England. Their mission: to boldly go over the top in a festival that reflects all that is best - and worst - in science fiction."

It is suspiciously close to the classic, "Sci-fi loonies beam in to city centre hotel" (which I don't have on file so can't be sure whether repetition has

distorted recollection over the years). I do have an article from 1983 which begins "SF means science fiction. What that means remained in free orbit when around 1000 readers, or fans, beamed into Glasgow at the weekend ..."

It later states "There were some greenish men about their gathering before the end of the weekend. In-flight, all-night fuelling of amber liquids here and there was conceded adequate for a trip to Jupiter."

In his keynote speech, James White declared: "I am completely against the consumption of alcohol in moderation."

(Pity the writer killed Jim's joke, all it needed was a comma or some dots between "alcohol" and "in". Still, you can't have everything.)

My favourite piece is, believe it or not, in The Times Educational Supplement which devoted half a page to Ian MacFadden's report on Faircon 81 entitled "May the Con be with you". There's little in it with which I can quibble; it's just a pity it was published in a place where few would ever find it. It does describe fan behaviour at conventions as "pre-ordained hedonism". I'm not sure what he meant, but I'm all for it!

I hope that this year's crop of newspaper stories can improve our image a bit: I for one am getting a bit fuzzy round the edges from all this beaming-in to hotels. Then again, how many papers would you sell with headlines like: "Normal book readers travel by train to interesting convention in Glasgow"?

STAR TREK: A PHENOMENON

Michelle Drayton

On the 2nd of December 1964, filming began for a new TV science fiction series called Star Trek. The first script was a story idea, one of many, by the series' creator Gene Roddenberry.

All the stories are based on the starship Enterprise and follows the adventures of Captain Kirk and his crew in our Galaxy. Elaborate sets and costumes, as well as very convincing special effects all added to the appeal of the show. NBC TV rejected the first pilot, titled "The Cage" and opted for "Where No Man Has Gone Before". The original pilot went on to become "The Menagerie", the only two part episode in the whole series, and it won an International Hugo Award. Star Trek came to British screens in 1969, and has recently enjoyed re-runs of the first season episodes (with the exception of "Miri", which they banned).

Many science fiction writers have also submitted stories that went on to become episodes of the show:

Harlan Ellison - The City on the Edge of Forever.

Norman Spinrad - The Domsday Machine.
Theodore Sturgeon - Shore Leave.

Star Trek was, and still is, a very good show, when you consider some of the TV SF that was being churned out at that time. It also enjoys a huge following of fans worldwide, old and new, as well as frequent reruns and revivals at conventions.

Nowadays, it has progressed onto the big screen and despite getting off to such a poor start with the terrible "Motion Picture", the movies are improving. Many would argue that Robert Wise, known to fans for "The Day the Earth Stood Still" did a very good job of tackling such a popular subject, which I do not question. The movie suffered from competitive license from big films like "Star Wars" and "Close Encounters of the Third Kind" in its wake, but we are getting there.

As we all enjoy the convention weekend, filming will be about to start for "Star Trek 4" (or is it IV) - Captain Kirk the Pirate King, perhaps?

Twenty Years of SF Conventions;
by Duncan Lunan. (Now it can be told).

My first convention was the Worldcon in London in 1965. I went with no idea of what to expect: what had registered with me, reading the announcement in Analog, was that it was a chance to meet SF authors. My published work at that stage consisted of one very abridged story in Glasgow University Magazine but I had written several others and was well into a novel, had my first four rejection slips on file, and I wanted to talk to people who had made it across the threshold. I knew five other people who read science fiction, but I'd learned everything from them that I could and it didn't include how to break into the market.

his responsibilities seriously, was making a point of meeting everybody. He introduced me to Mrs John W. Campbell and her daughter, and that led to the career-changing line, an hour or so later - "If you can spare a moment, my husband would like to meet you." Campbell was holding court, throughout the weekend, to a circle of people summoned out of the con hall as I had been. He wanted to meet me because I was in the kilt, having cut my knee in a road accident, and Campbell wanted a jacket like mine! Nevertheless, it was to lead to professional publication as I hoped.

One writer who gave me valuable advice, then and at later conventions, was John Brunner. The most memorable programme

TWENTY YEARS OF SF CONVENTIONS

The first words spoken to me at an SF convention, by a harassed Worldcon organiser, were, "You're not Fritz Leiber, are you?" No fewer than 400 people were attending and the organisation was under severe stress; it was generally agreed that conventions had become too large. Almost immediately I met Donald Malcolm and Jim Inglis, two Scottish writers with whom I had exchanged letters, and they introduced me to Karen Anderson, who was kind enough to explain to me exactly what was going on. My first impression of these people who talked a private language of fandom, fanzines, locs and gafiating, while throwing pork pies about, might otherwise have been unfavourable. The first fan I met was an RAF type who was into put-downs: his first question was, "How far back do your Astoundings go?" and when I told him I had two, he lost interest. But he was to get his come-uppance before the weekend was out.

It wasn't all like that - far from it. Many of the fans I met that weekend became lasting friends, many helped me make the contacts I had needed. The Trans Atlantic Fan Fund delegate, taking

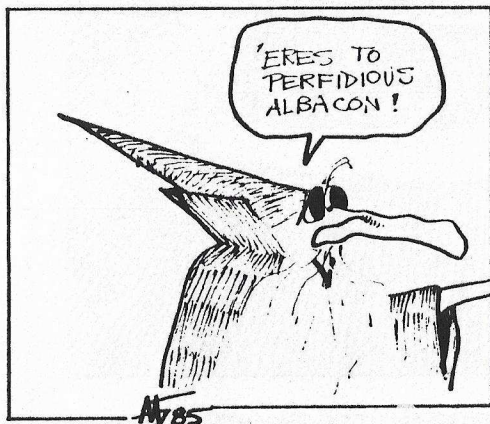
item, for me, was a talk by John entitled "How to Get High without Getting into Orbit". Dismissing the title, which had been wished on him, he made an educated and impressive appeal for higher literary standards in SF. In his own convention reminiscences, John says that he remembers nothing about the talk except for one incident - which as it happens I can explain, because it wasn't quite the coincidence it appeared to be.

Just before the talk I had introduced myself to Arthur C. Clarke, who was convalescing after the polio attack he had suffered while diving on the wreck of a treasure ship off Sri Lanka. I had been following that story with interest, and apparently nobody else was, because Arthur was in the middle of an enthusiastic update when we were interrupted by the Astounding RAF Man, who changed the subject on us. Arthur then announced that he wanted to hear John's talk, so the three of us went in together. During the questions afterwards, the RAF Man got up and said, "All this talk of literary values is

quite beside the point, it's technical accuracy that counts. I've just read a story with an utterly ridiculous scene where people cross from ship to ship another without suits!" "Well," said John, "since the man who wrote that novel is sitting next to you, I think he should answer..." and Clarke got up to cite research that verified the conjecture, which he used in Earthlight and The Other Side of the Sky and went on to use again in 2001.

Arthur remembers the incident too. Recently an American friend of mine met him and asked him if he knew me. "Ah, yes," was the reply. "He's the Scotsman, he wears kilts". We've actually met on a number of occasions, but it's that first impression that sticks.

Because the 60's conventions were so small, with Eastercon figures below 100, the range of locales was much wider than it is now. The 1966 Eastercon was held in Great Yarmouth, and having hit car trouble on Good Friday morning, I wasn't able to go - there wasn't any public transport moving south of Carlisle. 1967 was Bristol, and memorable chiefly for the advent of the New Wave. Micheal Moorcock read an editorial manifesto for



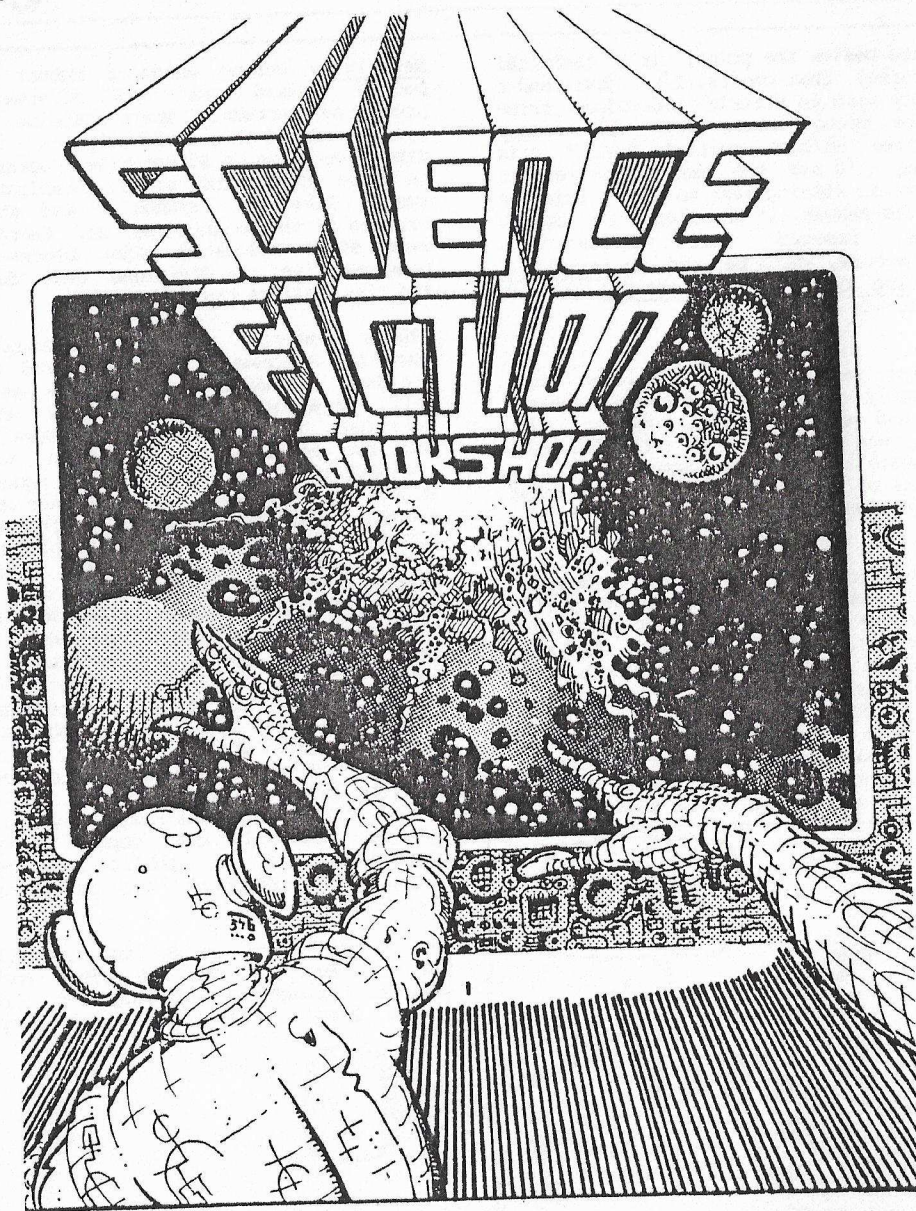
the new, experimental New Worlds, while demolishing a bottle of whiskey and hoping that we could understand what he was saying; the film programme included La Jetee and Enshwiller's

Relativity, during which a number of people walked out and afterwards protested vigorously. There would be no sex in SF if they could help it! - and since there was no alternative programme in those days, and since established events like the ceremonies and mock battles of the Knights of St. Fantony were still allocated major blocks of programme time, the divisions went deep and the feelings ran high.

1968's Eastercon was held in Buxton, south of Manchester, and involved an incident of which you may have heard half. Apparently the hotel was two buildings joined together, because it had two lobbies, one of which was unmanned and opened on to a small square which was used as a car park. Late one evening I was fetching something from my car when the night was suddenly split by what sounded exactly like the machine-gun fire I had once heard on a NATO range near Versailles - except that the swishing of bullets at the end of each burst was absent. But who would be firing machine - gun blanks in Buxton at the Easter weekend? Somewhat perturbed, I re-entered the hotel and met Bob Shaw and James White, who insisted they heard nothing. "I think you might have been too long in the bar" said Jim. "I'd advise taking a break now." They went outside, where in due course they discovered that a public firework display was in progress, out of sight several streets away.

That's the story as Bob and Jim will tell you. But now read on...They had gone out through the revolving door, and I was leaving the lobby, when very

faintly I heard "rat-a-tat-tat! tat-a-tat-tat!" Although the sound was bouncing around the square outside, it had indeed hardly penetrated the lobby. I sprang to the window, and was just in time to see Bob and Jim diving for the cover of a parked car.



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GRAHAM.P.MANLEY '77.

I had to miss the next five Eastercons, for a different reason each time, and in the meantime the numbers grew, and programming expanded so that the conflicting interests could be catered for, without the earlier animosity. I enjoyed the 1974 Tymecon a great deal more than the 60's Eastercons; one reason among many was that I was no longer alone. I was one of the very few people who knew that Chris Boyce was joint winner of the Gollancz/Sunday Times SF Novel Competition, and from the Glasgow SF circle and ASTRA I had organised a supporters' busload of people who didn't know the real reason why I had talked them into going. What I hadn't realised was that the room Jim Campbell and I had jointly booked would be shared by 13 people sleeping on the floor, plus one (Gavin Roberts) who laid claim to the bath!

My major memory of the 1975 Eastercon in Coventry is of the Fancy Dress Parade, which proved that the no-sex-in-science-fiction attitude had definitely gone. The 1976 Mancon was held in a University hall of residence, in an attempt to keep down the costs - successfully, I thought, but I was in a very small minority. Bob Shaw's "Serious and Scientific Talk" that year began, "No doubt you're all wondering why I've brought you here..." Fans who you would think had barely two pints to rub together complained bitterly about the lack of first-class hotel facilities, and there were horror stories of harassment by security staff. I didn't see any of that - unlike the otherwise excellent Unicon 80, at the University of Keele, where the guests found themselves up against staff who insisted that even married couples must sleep in separate rooms! Supposedly, delegates to the business conferences they normally hosted accepted that without demur.

It seemed ironic, then, that in 1978 the Eastercon found itself in a top-class hotel at Heathrow which was extremely expensive and whose staff weren't friendly to the convention at all. For years one of the traditions had been that Vera Johnson from Canada would

organise a singaround - a forerunner of today's filk sessions - for those who didn't want to go to the Banquet. Not at Skycon - no way. Banquets, too, have pretty well disappeared as costs rose: I don't think anyone misses the rubber chickens, but it's a shame about the quote cards. My all-time favourite was from Skycon, showing Darth Vader with a firm grip on the Princess while facing Luke with light-sabre and the faithful Artoo Deetoo. Gerry Webb's caption: "Touch my fanny once more and the guy with the Ever-Ready torch will cut the other leg off the tumbledrier!"

Ed Buckley drew a cheer at the Fancy Dress by appearing in epaulettes, dark glasses, peaked cap, while carrying a machine-gun and sporting a badge saying "Hotel Security". This was the start of a chain of events which continued at the 1979 Worldcon in Brighton, where the Science Fiction Writers of America suite seemed to be dominated by ladies complaining about hotel security. On the one hand, the hotel wouldn't issue duplicate keys to people sharing rooms "for security reasons" (a long-standing complaint about British conventions); on the other, "Why aren't there armed guards in the lifts/ Everyone knows that people get raped and mugged in the lifts at conventions..."

Ed hadn't had time to work up a new fancy dress, but decided to wear the old one as a floor costume. As he entered the hall, however, he was set on by (presumably) the same ladies crying, "Thank God you got here! Where have you been?" Having talked his way out of that one, Ed found himself assigned to guard a girl wearing 18ft wings and virtually nothing else. Unfortunately, as he was wearing shades instead of his regular glasses, while protecting the far end of the wings he was the only one who couldn't enjoy the view.

Even now the story wasn't over. There seems to be a file at Analog of photos of the crowds at the Brighton Worldcon: I've turned up two or three times since in Analog's interior artwork as a

character. But when it came to a story about the police in America going into politics, who was in the interior artwork and on the cover - epaulettes, dark glasses, peaked hat and all....?

There were 3000 people at the 79 Worldcon, and people were still saying conventions were becoming too large. For comparison, however, here is the report from the 1984 Anaheim Worldcon, at which the attendance was over 8000. (For anyone who hasn't heard how I got there, I was keynote speaker at a spaceflight symposium in California, and the organisers went broke without paying for my return ticket. I raised the fare home by selling copies of "Man and the Planets" at the Worldcon!) Certainly the event was enormous: there were people I went to see, even people with whom I had made appointments, whom I never managed to find. But I made lots of new contacts, lots of friends. With so many people there the multi-track programme was catering for an enormous range of interests: at 2 p.m. on the Thursday, for example, there were nine programme events running simultaneously, as well as the art show, dealers room, exhibition, children's programme and two all day workshops on art and costuming. What's more, out of so large a convention attendance all the events were pulling in large enough numbers to make them swing. The only overloaded event was the fancy dress, or as they call it "The Masquerade": as you might gather from the fact that the costuming workshops ran all day for five days, it's taken very seriously over there. I missed the first hour of the event, and when I left five hours later, the judges were still working their way through the special categories. That was heavy going, however beautiful or imaginative the entries.

It's hard to see how British conventions could ever grow to that scale: we just don't have those kind of facilities, with conference centres surrounded by huge hotels (and the Anaheim Hilton was charging over \$60 a night.) If the growth continues, and the signs are that

it will in spite of the recession, then the answer may have to be smaller regional conventions like UNICON, RA CON, INVENTION, CONQUEST and ALBACON, which I haven't covered because they're so recent that many of you will remember them. But if you haven't been to conventions before - if all this has been as strange to you as it was to me when I first met with it in 1965 - let me emphasise that it's getting better all the time. This isn't the sometimes hostile little world it was twenty years ago, and as it grows, the personal conflicts cease to dominate. Although I gather it had organisational problems, last year's Eastercon with its international participation (World SF and Burocon) was the most enjoyable one I've ever been to. Don't expect perfection this time: conventions are organised by human beings, who don't work at it professionally like the conference and exhibition organisers of industry or large business corporations, but do try very hard to put together what they think you will enjoy. If you don't understand what's going on, don't hesitate to ask.

And as regards the contrast with those professional conventions and their organisers - there are hotels which host one convention, break up room parties, complain about singing, shut the bars because the workload is too heavy...and there are others like the Metropole in Brighton, the Royal Angus in Birmingham and the Central Hotel in Glasgow, who host conventions again and again. I've often wondered about that; and at last year's Eastercon, as I was having the lobby porter open up his locked room at 4 a.m. for a box of books that I needed, I said to him, "I bet you'll be glad when we've gone."

"Oh no," he said. "You're a nice crowd; you have a good time, but you're always polite, you're always good-natured. Whereas last week we had a sales convention that did £10,000's-worth of damage, and next week we're getting a rugby team with their supporters..."

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43

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11th—13th OCTOBER 1985

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FOR CRIMES BEYOND DESCRIPTION

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ALBACON 85

or "The Weekend of Terror"

A CONVENTION of a Science Fictional Nature, BY DEMAND of the POPULACE, in the MONTH of JULY this year of grace: NINETEEN HUNDRED and EIGHTY-FIVE. (GOD SAVE THE QUEEN)

Dramatis Personae

Joshua Goodguy, the heroic, but tragic, chairman.
 Ralph Hardnut, the hotel proprietor.
 Jasper Hammer, demolition contractor.
 Thomas Short, an electrician and pyromaniac.
 Millicent Trueheart, heroine of the hotel fire.
 Herbert Longhair, the crippled impresario.
 Cedric Cumberbund, unfrocked cleric and con-man.
 Capt. Richard Dowser, the chief of the firemen.
 Kingsley Rightbottom, man about town.
 Gladys Angel, an impetuously romantic nurse.
 Dr Quentin Spleen, dedicated physician and voyeur.
 Gaspard de Grize, a seller of books and postcards.
 Benjamin Squint, eccentric scientist and inventor.
 Ebenezer Tightwad, a wicked miser.
 Charlotte Dumpling, a simple shop girl.
 Charles Throgmorton, an elderly dilettente.
 Eliza Stromquist, a Nordic fashion model.
 Henry Squaredeal, a self-made pauper.
 Ezekiel Tonge, a jolly jack tar.
 Algernon Scrivener, a humble clerk.
 Cuthbert Puffmuch, wine waiter and petty criminal.
 A Dead Body.
 Bonzo, the performing poodle.

Mr Vincent J Docherty
 Mr James Campbell
 Mr Michael J Molloy
 Mr Christopher O'Kane
 Miss Madeleine Campbell
 Mr David Ellis
 Mr Bruce Saville
 Mr Iain Dickson
 Mr Henry Balen
 Miss Michelle C Drayton
 Mr Oscar Dalglish
 Mr Neil Craig
 Mr Duncan Lunan
 Mr Ian Sorensen
 Miss Jacqueline Robinson
 Mr Robert Jewett
 Miss Joyce Craig
 Mr Mark Turner
 Mr Colin Speirs
 Mr Mark Meenan
 Mr Bruce MacDonald
 Mr Kevin Henwood
 Mr John Campbell

CENTRAL HOTEL GLASGOW

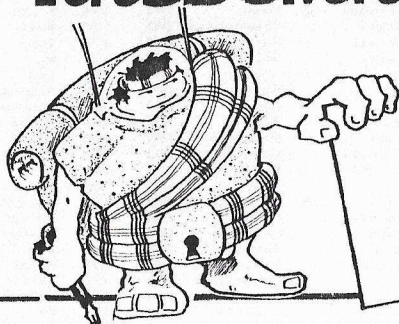
28th-31st MARCH 1986

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A R M A G E D D O N S SURVIVOR'S

the cinema of the apocalypse

46 MEMBERSHIP

Albacon 85 Membership List [12 July 1985]

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238	D.	C. Harbud	[A]	301	Charles	A. Whyte	[A]	364	M.	Kirkwood	[S]
239	Martin	Tudor	[A]	302	Susan	Stepney	[A]	365	Ian	M. Taylor	[A]
240	Paul	Dormer	[A]	303	Billy	Humphries	[S]	366	K.	A. Overend	[A]
241	Elizabeth	Sourbut	[A]	304	Caroline	Day	[A]	367	Kluggers	the Barred	[A]
242	Robert	Sneddon	[A]	305	Mike	Waterman	[A]	368	John	G. Riddell	[A]
243	Marina	J.A. Holroyd	[S]	306	Leah	Car	[A]	369	G.	R. Wilson	[A]
244	J. Kalession	Howe	[S]	307	John	McGrattan	[A]	370	Scott	Dowson	[A]
245	Jacy	Smithers	[S]	308	David	Reid	[S]	371	Jim	Armstrong	[A]
246	Richard	Smithers	[S]	309	Graeme	McBrearty	[S]	372	Euan	R.S. Morton	[A]
247	Sara	Young	[S]	310	Alex	Breadner	[A]	373	Hal	Broome	[A]
248	Kevin	Potter	[S]	311	Allison	J. Ewing	[S]	374	Chris	Anderson	[A]
249	John	Daly	[S]	312	Moir	Henderson	[S]	375	Phil	Falmer	[A]
250	Richard	Thomas	[A]	313	Lesley	Duff	[S]	376	Andy	Flynn	[A]
251	Paul	Cameron	[A]	314	Susan	Coghlan	[S]	377	Andy	Berndt	[A]
252	Greg	Hughes	[A]	315	Theo	Malekin	[A]	378	E.	G. Butland	[A]
253	Carol Ann	Green	[A]	316	W. L.	Yeo	[A]	379	Kathleen	Jordan	[S]
254	Anna	Phillips	[A]	317	M.	Stebiwa	[A]	380	David Ian	Forsyth	[S]
255	Patricia	Morgan Lang	[A]	318	P.	Benton	[A]	381	Dragon's	Friend	[S]
256	Myra	Kerr	[S]	319	Pam	Wells	[A]	382	A.	F. Nimmo	[A]
257	Liz	Donnelly	[S]	320	Dratsab	Trams	[A]	383	Kenneth	Gray	[A]
258	Andrew	Gilmour	[A]	321	Steven	Glover	[A]	384	Austin	S. Hayes	[A]
259	Kirk	Gemmell	[A]	322	Paul	Stevenson	[A]	385	Tom	McArthur	[A]
260	David	Fleming	[A]	323	Helen	M. Spinks	[S]	386	Andrew	Ewan	[A]
261	Roger	Octon	[A]	324	John	Spinks	[S]	387	John	Bark	[A]
262	Arthur	Steward	[A]	325	Linette	Keith	[A]	388	Bryan	Twynne	[S]
263	Mrs Arthur	Steward	[A]	326	Alan	G. Morton	[A]	389	Gordon	Cowdon	[A]
264	Marc	A. Smith	[A]	327	Andrew	Stevenson	[A]	390	Lesley	McLeish	[S]
265	Ian	Mount	[S]	328	Keith	Mitchell	[S]	391	Hugh	Campbell	[A]
266	Ann	Looker	[A]	329	Andrew	O'Donnell	[A]	392	Lynette	Campbell	[A]
267	J. S.	Watson	[A]	330	Robert	D. Gilmour	[S]	393	Chris	Hinchley	[A]
268	M. S.	Tickner	[A]	331	Matthew	Shackle	[A]	394	Claire	Jordan	[A]
269	S. I.	Collins	[A]	332	Robert	J. Gardner	[S]	395	John	Bosnor	[A]
270	Jenni	A. Goss	[S]	333	Jean	Ritchie	[A]	396	Colin	MacCartin	[A]
271	Kevin	P. Goss	[S]	334	Margaret	Edgar	[A]	397	Gerard	F. Fallon	[A]
272	Diane	Knox	[S]	335	J. F. W.	Richards	[A]	398	Jo	Spary	[A]
273	John	G. Feetenby	[A]	336	Mike	Cheater	[A]	399	Niel	Jezeard	[A]
274	Steve	Hatton	[A]	337	Phil	Plumly	[A]	400	Sarah	Jezeard	[A]
275	John	Mariani	[A]	338	Jake	Pillowslayer	[A]	401	Loveday	Jezeard	[A]
276	Dianne	Williams	[S]	339	Lesley	Blundell	[A]	402	Thorarrin	Jezeard	[A]
277	John	Williams	[A]	340	Fudge	Morris	[A]	403	Howard	Singerman	[A]
278	Heather	Ward	[A]	341	Richard the	Rampant	[A]	404	John	Watson	[A]
279	Steve	Mowbray	[S]	342	Malcolm	Edwards	[A]	405	Wendy	Scougall	[A]
280	Jane	Ball	[S]	343	Thomas	W. Worthington	[A]	406	Malcolm	Greenlees	[A]
281	c/o Jane	Ball	[S]	344	Donald	Neil	[A]	407	Nicholas	Procter	[A]
282	Square	Bear	[A]	345	Peter	Arnold	[A]	408	John	MacPhail	[A]
283	Helen the	Mouse	[A]	346	Robin	D. Page	[A]	409	Pete	Lyon	[A]
284	Sylvie	Denis	[A]	347	Keith	A. Mackie	[A]	410	Margaret	Mitchell	[A]
285	Ellen	M. Pedersen	[A]	348	Neil	Drysdale	[S]	411	Elizabeth	Nash	[A]
286	Owen	F.D. Williams	[A]	349	E.	Drysdale	[S]	412	Lorran	Goodison	[S]
287	Morag	L. Gordon	[A]	350	Lynda	Lloyd-Probert	[A]	413	Andrew	Mattewman	[S]
288	Heather	North	[A]	351	G.	Lloyd-Probert	[A]	414	Peter	Morwood	[A]
289	David	A. Kirkpatrick	[A]	352	P.	J. Wilmott	[S]	415	Brian	Gunn	[A]
290	Andrew	Jeff	[A]	353	Stephen	Milroy	[A]	416	Mary	Wardrop	[A]
291	Brian	McMath	[A]	354	Ensign	Kalashnikov	[A]	417	AKA Books & Comics	[A]	
292	Douglas	McCallum	[A]	355	Captain	Splinters Deason	[A]	418	AKA Books & Comics	[A]	
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294	Peter	Crilly	[A]	357	Anders	Holmstrom	[A]	420	Andy	Dougan	[A]
295	D. M.	Sherwood	[A]	358	David	J. Moffat	[A]	421	Mike	Cobley	[S]
296	Rog	Feyton	[A]	359	Lynn	Hester	[A]	422	Paul	Koch	[A]
297	Noreen	Durkin	[A]	360	Sue	Capon	[A]	423	Hooby the	Great	[S]
298	Andrew	Harrison	[A]	361	Allison	Wilson	[A]	424	The Offwhite	Lensman	[S]
299	Karl	Credwson	[A]	362	Ray	Holloway	[A]	425	Hilde	McCabe	[A]
300	Sue	D. Mason	[A]	363	Bruce	Quinney	[A]	426	Frances	Abernethy	[A]



26th - 29th September '86

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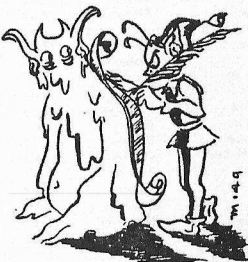
Send to:

S.J. Campbell
"Beachfield"
Calmuir Road
Lenzie
GLASGOW
G66 3JJ

Dear Oberon

I hope you have been getting my communications; understandably I have heard nothing from you or Robin, because I have been travelling all over, and communications have never been the same since Ariel started in with that electronics outfit and joined a union. How long does it take him to circle the earth seven times now....about two and a half years?

You will have understood that I was having a good time at SEACON when last I wrote, but I had not told you that I had met some folk from way up north while in the bar. It appears the old border troubles are quiet at the moment, and one can travel freely back and forth (although mayhap 'twould not be wise for you to try to visit Bordeaux,) and they have invited me to go to a similiar affair they are running, called ALBACON. As it happens it is only a short way over the old border into Albany, so I was able to reach here without real difficulty - further north and I might have met opposition from the A.B.&B.; you know what a grim lot those banshees and bogles are, always looking on the dark side of things.



Probably you'll be pleased to learn that there is increasing interest in the old ways and the old days, and there is probability the belief that is the source of elven power may grow sufficient to let you make a short trip back here.

Herne has, recently, managed it twice in a limited way; once in connection with an advertisement for motor-car tyres, would you believe? In the other he has been appearing as a character in a mixed-up myth involving Robin Hood. Not our Robin... But these are very limited contacts, in no way permitting voluntary action.

Whilst I am in Albany I am seeing quite a lot of a couple of the folk I met at SEACON. One is very grand, and lives in a show place called Culzean Castle, very old, very historical (actually, it is quite new, 18th century, when you recall the old place at Aix, or even Tintagel!). He had some duties to perform and left SEACON early; I gather he is not too keen on the job, says that the family all went to the colonies ages ago, and he finds communication difficult. Fills in his time with more joyful activity when he can - like piping in the haggis at a Faircon (whatever that means!) The other person is, she thinks, distantly related to Robin. Her people on her mother's side are very close to what she calls the Píca, and sometime a while back one of her predecessors was wed to a son of the Píca chief. That, I imagine, is Robin. Her name is Meg Moulach. Possibly Robin will recall the family, although the link will be back quite a few centuries.

Whatever, I've promised her that I will try and find some books (cheapish, she's what her friends call 'canny') which may tell some of the stories of her southern relations, and I see that FANTAST (MEDWAY) LIMITED are also here, and they had quite a few bargains down at SEACON, so I'll go along to see what they can offer.

Yours Aye
Huon

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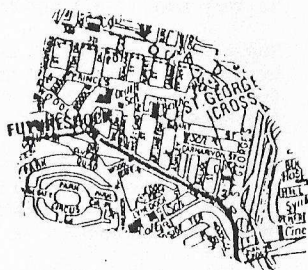
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Acknowledgements

First of all, we must thank our Guests of Honour: Harlan Ellison, Anne McCaffrey and Colin Fine for being so willing to be thrown to the lions repeatedly throughout the weekend.

The next set of thank-yous are for the people who contributed articles to our publications or who took part in programme items at the convention. We do appreciate all of the time and trouble you take in ensuring we on the committee have a convention to put on.

A special mention must be made here of the terrific job ASTRA have done in providing Albacon 85 with a truly comprehensive spaceflight programme.

The programme book and other publications have benefitted immensely from the talents of our pet artists Jim Gallagher and Keith Edmonds. We hope you all paid enormous prices for their stuff at the art auction.

In organising publicity for the event we have had the utmost co-operation from Ken Ingles at the Glasgow Film Theatre for which we are very grateful.

Thanks are also due to all the newspapers, Radio and TV programmes which gave us a mention.

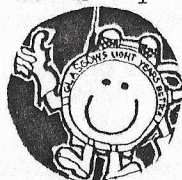
Ta very much to all our advertisers and all the people who carried our adverts.

The staff at Dittoprint are probably thinking that they can relax after their Herculean efforts in getting the Programme Book printed in time. Sorry! We forgot to mention there are TWO conventions next year. Hope you do as good a job for them as for this one. Thanks!

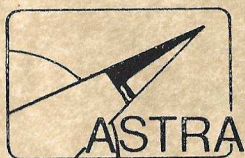
Although Albacon 85 has a very large committee the amount of work required to run the convention would be beyond them without the unstinting efforts of the gophers and hotel staff. So a huge thank you to all of them who helped out during the weekend.

Thanks to Young Artists for their contributions to and help with the Art Show.

Most of all, thank YOU for coming along and supporting us. See you at Albacon III.



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Details: Programme copy & membership details from ASTRA Secretary - Bill Ramsey,
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