

NOVATION

PROGRAMME BOOK

13



DAVE HADEN © 1983

NOVACON 13

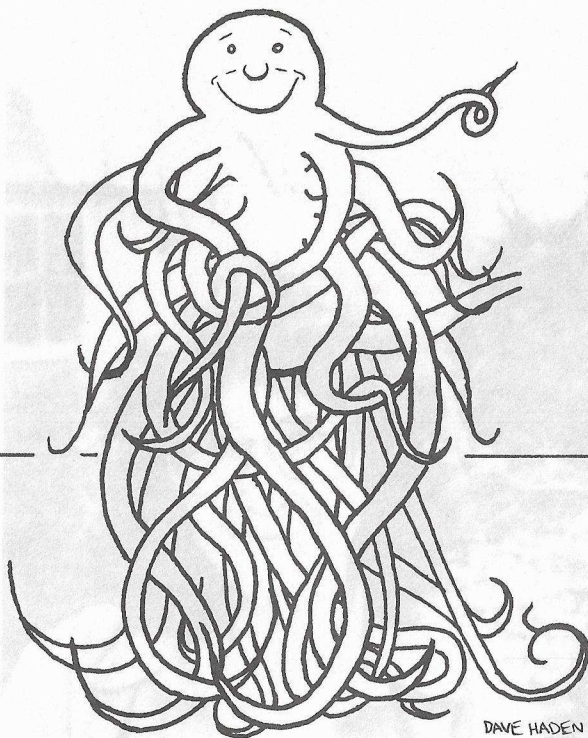
GUEST OF HONOUR



LISA TUTTLE

NOVACON

is run annually by the
Birmingham Science Fiction Group



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NOVACON 13

4th 6th November 1983

Royal Angus Hotel Birmingham

CHAIRMAN'S LAST HOT WAFFLES.....	Phill Probert.....	4
THE COMMITTEE.....		5
THE THINGS I'VE DONE FOR LISA TUTTLE....	George R.R. Martin.....	10
THINGS THAT GO BUMP IN THE DAYLIGHT....	Chris Evans.....	12
"REDCAP" -- SHORT STORY.....	Lisa Tuttle.....	15
BIBLIOGRAPHY OF LISA TUTTLE.....		27
NOVA AWARDS.....		28
20 QUESTIONS LISA TUTTLE.....		31
NOVACONS I HAVE KNOWN.....	Paul Vincent.....	35
HISTORY OF NOVACONS.....		37
CONVENTION MEMBERS.....		39
COVER, CARTOON ON PAGE 40.....	Dave Haden.....	
REDCAP ILLUSTRATIONS.....	Matt Brooker.....	
PHOTOGRAPHS OF LISA, P.1+9.....	Chris Priest.....	

INDEX TO ADVERTISERS

ANDROMEDA BOOK CO LTD.....	30
ANSIBLE.....	13
ARROW BOOKS.....	33
BRITISH FANTASY SOCIETY.....	26
GOLLANCZ BOOKS.....	14
GUFF.....	6
NOSTALGIA & COMICS.....	29
OMNI.....	8
PAN BOOKS.....	34
SIDGWICK & JACKSON.....	7
TAFF.....	25
ATLANTA IN '86.....	38

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Chairman's Last Hot Waffles

In that alternate universe that serves as my memory, I remember the Novacons I have attended, and wonder how and why I became Chairman of this particular Novacon. I could say that I was the right man for the job, or that Pete Weston came to me and said "I want you to do a good Novacon". I could say that through hard work and dedication, I served as an apprentice on Novacons 11 and 12, or even that I had wanted to run a Novacon to satiate a need for my ego. However, none of those would be Life just isn't like that.

For an answer, I would have to remember back to my first convention -- Novacon 7. On a cold, autumn night, I gatecrashed the Royal Angus. Many authors write about first contact with aliens; yet there is no contact more alien than when a young lad, fresh out of Arthur C. Clarke and sci fi, not knowing any better, meets science fiction fans. The exotic sounds, strange sights and wonderful people who inhabit that world just outside real time. In the dark corridors of the Royal Angus there lies warmfelt memories for me of times past and my first contact.

My first contact with Eunice Pearson came three years later at Novacon 10. Instantly we recognised each other as if we had known each other all our lives and had not seen each other for some time. Clearly we had to stay together. I suppose that there must be another love within me. Not as strong as my love for Eunice, but a love for Novacon.

Novacon is unlike any other convention, as it's critics are quick to point out. Held close to the bosom of it's mother; the Birmingham Science Fiction Group. It is no wonder that people outside see this state of affairs as archaic. This year, I have tried to make Novacon grow up. To realise it's potential and aims, yet to remain within the confines of what it knows from childhood. Not that I am saying that Novacon should move away from the BSFG or that the BSFG should take more direct control, only to reassess those aims at this critical age. Being 13 is a difficult time for a person or a convention. It is this that has made my task more difficult this year. To have a committee keen on injecting new blood into Novacon and yet to retain 13 years of history and experience. Knowing only too well that Novacon will never please all it's critics.

For me, I guess it all goes back to that first contact. The fear and excitement of the unknown that makes me Chairman. Despite the history of Novacon and whatever it's faults, each one is a new and exciting experience for me. I only hope that as Chairman I have passed on these feelings.

All that can now be said is thanks to Lisa Tuttle for being our Guest of Honour. Go and buy her a drink or buy her books and find out that she is a really superb author. Thanks to Chris, Paul, Steve, John, Paul, Jan and Dave for coping with a very young and different kind of chairman. And thanks to Eunice, who in times of stress and crisis, helped far beyond the call.....

The Committee

Chris Donaldson.....Is a member of the womens apa. She works as a teacher of computers up ther in darkest Leeds. She will no doubt be seen at Novacon 13 sporting this years designer fashion..
..a fannish baby.

Steve Green....was born on 25-4-83 in Solihull ! He entered comics fandom circa 1974 and SF fandom shortly afterwards, co-editing his first fanzine in 1977. He was a founder member of BAPA and now a member of the Brum Group apa. Originator of the Solihull SF group. Steve was a council member of the British SF association and is a member of the BSPG committee. Steve works on a weekly Solihull newspaper and some of his selected reviews are as follows :-
"Solihull's cuddly sex symbol."(J.Wilkes.) "Obnoxious."(B Stableford.)
"Owes me a pint." R A Heinlien.

DAVE HADEN....was born a number of years ago in some long-forgotten Birmingham suburb. He now lives near Stratford-upon-Avon; a town as lively as an energetic slug ! Dave graduated into SF fandom some three years ago, where his artistic talents were soon put to go use. He can be found in the art rooms, where he would be overjoyed to sell you a piece, or seven , of his artwork.

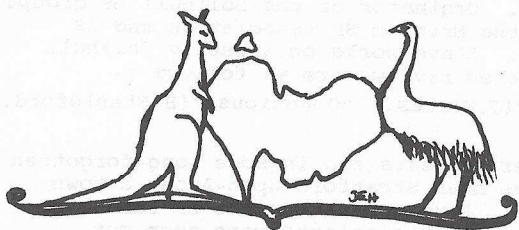
Jan Huxley....is, as Phill Probert said, a tall, slinky, Servelan type of woman. (And them he got a 'box round the ears !) She is another refugee from the Keele Unicons. Jan was too shy to say any anymore about herself, so you will have to ask her.

Paul Oldroyd.....first became involved with fandom when he attended the 1977 Eastercon. He was then persuaded to attend Novacon 8 served on the committee of Novacons 9 and 10. He wss chairman of number, 11 and is clearly addicted to Novacons. Paul has a half share with Chris Donaldson in the raising of two cats, one dog and one little girl.

Eunice Pearson....is devoted to the noble art of chocolate consumption. She produces two fanzines, (Calaban and Brigante.) and is a member of the womens apa and the Brum Group apa. Eunice is also known as 'Squirrel' by the 1st Kingshurst Brownie pack, 'Pookie' by Phill Probert, and 'Bad Mamma Lill' by the Birmingham Metropolitan Police. She still wants to breed Korat cats and to be rich and/or famous.

Paul Vincent.... loves sleeping, drinking, dogs, (especially the one called Zoltan.), drinking, Indian food, any woman willing to tolerate his rather strange habits, drinking, very loud reggae music, and lots of real ale. He detests describing himself, (and so is only a part time flasher.) banana custard and heavy metal music. By the time Novacon 13 passes by he will have been to 14 conventions altogethoer. Paul produces a fanzine called 'Abdump' large parts of which tend to be devoted to the subject of alchocol imbiking. This 'zine has often sneaked in as Paul's contribution to the Brum Group apa.

John Wilkes.....says that there is not very much to say about him. But he did win the Logan's Run game at Unicon 4 for his quick thinking in the presence of the Sandmen. John was de-bagged by Eve Harvey and others at RaCon. (Eve possesses the pertinent photographs in case you are interested.) He was one of the leading lights of the Keele Unicons.



GUFF

At long last -- a northbound race! Not since Seacon 79 has GUFF brought an Australian fan to Britain for our delectation and wonderment, but now (after a couple of false starts) we have a race to bring someone over for next year's Eastercon-cum-Eurocon. Four candidates are standing: Justin Ackroyd, chairman of the 1982 Australian National Convention; Shayne McCormack, manager of Galaxy SF bookshop in Sydney; Jean Weber, publisher of the fanzine Weber Woman's Wrevenge; and Roger Weddall, editor of the Australian newszine Thyme. Ballots will be circulating at this convention; vote as though your life depended on it!

But what's GUFF, you're wondering? Well, it's a fan charity like TAFF; the Get Up-and-over Fan Fund, which exists to promote fannish contacts between Britain and Australia by sending prominent fans from each country to the other's national conventions. It raises the money to pay for such trips entirely from the generosity of fans in each country, sometimes in the form of donations from convention profits but more usually via the sales of special items and convention auctions. So be sure to attend Novacon's auction, and bid generously for that rare unsigned Dave Langford novel...

And to be kept in touch with future GUFF developments, write to the current UK administrator, Joseph Nicholas, at 22 Denbigh Street, Pimlico, London SW1V 2ER.



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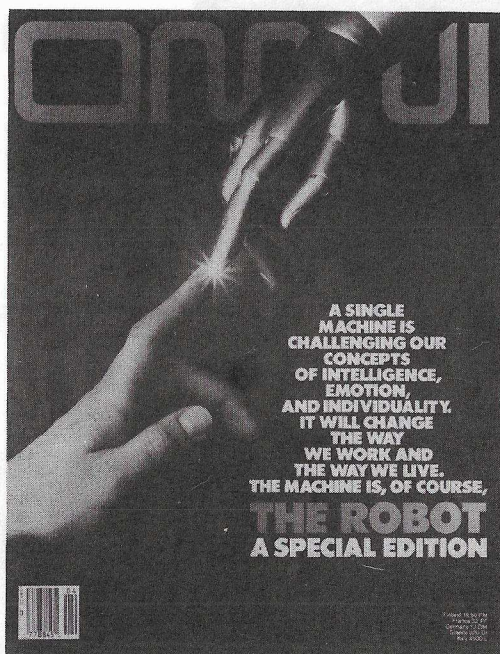
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THE MAGAZINE OF TOMORROW



ON SALE TODAY

LISA TUTTLE



An Appreciation.

The Things I've Done for *Lisa Tuttle* GEORGE R.R.MARTIN

The first time I met Lisa Tuttle, at a Texas convention in 1973, I tried to strangle her. There's even a famous photograph commemorating the event. It was no more than she deserved, really. I mean, I had just been nominated for the first John W. Campbell Award for Best New SF Writer, and I had all these friends in Texas who would undoubtedly have voted for me, except that this brazen Tuttle Hussy -- who was from Texas -- had managed to sneak on the ballot as well, and all my friends were voting for her.

Well, I never got her properly strangled, and as result we split the all-important Texas vote and Jerry Pournelle won that first Campbell Award (without her interference, I would have won, and Pournelle would no doubt have gotten so discouraged that he'd have left the field). As if that weren't enough, Lisa went on to win the second Campbell Award the following year, when I was no longer eligible. She even forced me to accept it for her, by dint of threats too terrible even to mention. Since I was simultaneously losing my first Hugo that night, it occurred to me that I might do better by combining forces with this Tuttle woman rather than by strangling her (besides, she was real cute).

That was easily done: I just put Lisa's name on this novella I'd written, "The Storms of Windhaven", and we both pretended that she'd helped me write it. It fooled everybody. My talent got us the Analog cover and Lisa's smile got us the Hugo and Nebula nominations. I figured we were even (especially since we lost). But Lisa greedily insisted that I give her half the Windhaven money ever since. Half, mind you! Even if she had written some of it, I figure I ought to get at least 75%, on account of I'm the man, but Lisa has perversely refused to admit the logic of my position, and so, year after year, I have to keep sending her checks fully as large as those I cash myself. The only good thing ever to come out of this mess was when Joseph Nicholas reviewed us, and Lisa got half the blame.

She has written a few things on her own. And she's not half bad, for a girl. Back when we were both starting out, in the early 70's, she authored some really nifty science fiction stories (long overdue for collection), including "The Hollow Man" and "The Family Monkey" and a thing called "Wives" that had a nasty kick. She has a splendid piece coming up real soon now in The Last Dangerous Visions. Then after a few years of doing all this triff SF, suddenly she began to write triff contemporary horror instead, undoubtedly for obscure hormonal reasons. While in this Scary Phase she wrote "The Other Room" and "The Other Mother" and "Bug House" (one of my favourites) and even a novel, Familiar Spirit. I read a number of these horror stories in manuscript one time when I was down in Texas, pretending to let Lisa help me with Windhaven, and they impressed me so much that I decided to write some horror stories myself, to show her how it should be done. Did I get any thanks for shuffling around my whole career for her literary education? Not a bit. Instead, what did she do but run off to live in England.

It's Lisa's own business where she lives, of course, but still, she didn't even consult me on this England business, which was quite rude. I do have to visit her from time to time, after all, to maintain this fiction that we're working on additional Windhaven books together, and it's damned expensive flying all the way over there. I did visit her back in 1981, and I must say that I was treated in a beastly manner. First she made me go to some place called Milford-on-Sea where a group of British writers forced me to drink large quantities of beer (whilst explaining that it is customary for the visiting American to buy all the rounds, a custom that made my trip rather more expensive than I'd anticipated), addicted me to a video game called Meteorids, and sat around in a circle saying critical things about my work. As if this weren't enough, Lisa then shoved me into an automobile and drove me to Scotland, where I was compelled to eat haggis. Finally she took me to something called Novacon, where large crowds of British fans told me it was true about visiting Americans getting to buy all the rounds. Lisa just smiled and looked cute and hung around with this scruffy Chris Priest fellow.

Oh, well. I suppose there are worse places than England. Texas, for example. And then there's the place Lisa lived before Texas: Harlan Ellison's blue bedroom. Besides, some things never change. In Texas, Lisa would never turn on the air-conditioning. In England, she won't turn up the heat. And wherever she goes, she insists on telling that damned Big Mouth Frog joke.

Nonetheless, do treat her tenderly as you Guest of Honor. And Lisa, please remember -- it's traditional for emigre American GOHs to buy all the rounds.

Things That Go Bump in the Daylight

CHRIS EVANS

Some mornings when I'm brooding over a cup of coffee and trying to persuade myself that I should start work, I'm stirred from my mindless reveries by a distant but insistent thumping which rises through the floorboards like some message from the netherworld. Could it be a long-departed soul, contacting me from the spirit realm, I used to ask myself, or even a subterranean creature stirring in the bowels of the house?

Then I realized that it was Lisa Tuttle typing in the flat downstairs.

Now there's a good chance that these thumpings might actually represent the activities of a poltergeist or beastie, albeit indirectly, for such manifestations are as likely as not to be the subjects of Lisa Tuttle's fiction. Of course they're only a small part of it, her output so far having ranged from science fiction set on other planets, (Windhaven, co-authored with George R.R. Martin) through stories with a strong supernatural element (such as her novel Familiar Spirit) to others in which the sense of horror or threat is never quite specified and might not even exist outside the mind of the protagonist. I'm a sucker for this last kind of story in particular, being a firm believer that some of the greatest terrors are the ones which you create yourself.

From what I've read of Lisa's work, (by no means all of it) I would say that she's very much a "What if...?" person who frequently finds the inspiration for a story in the most ordinary human activities. These are then given a twist, a dash of the bizarre, and the resultant blend is often a very effective means of making us re-examine our most routine assumptions. The best terror or strangeness always lurks in the familiar, something which Lisa knows well; her stories are rooted firmly in the real world.

I first met Lisa at the Worldcon in Brighton in 1979 and was more than pleased when she moved permanently to this country a few years later. Lisa is a native of Texas, but I remember visiting her and Chris Priest when they were living in Devon and thinking that she was perfectly at home in their isolated house on the edge of Dartmoor. She has a genuine fondness for this country, and her writing seems to me to embody some of the best strains of both the American and European traditions. It has the clarity and economy which I've often admired in other American writers, but at the same time it contains a feeling for mood and landscape which is more commonly found in British writers. Perhaps this reflects Lisa's feeling for the natural world; I know, for example, that she's fascinated by the weather in this country; she enjoys all our seasons but still hasn't quite got used to the fact that sometimes they all occur in a single day.

Most writers dislike being categorized, and the body of work which Lisa has produced so far certainly resists easy classification. But I know that when younger she was much influenced by the ghost stories of Walter de la Mere and others, and I would say that she writes in a tradition of fantasy which has more in common with folk tales and myths than anything else; and yet her writing has also been fertilized by the best kind of science fiction in that it is responsive to the fears and insecurities which face us in the modern world.

Why is it that some of the most effective writers of unnerving stories are often those who seem most normal and balanced in real life? Lisa, for example, is generally a cheerful and friendly person, yet some of her stories give me the creeps. Does she, I suddenly wonder, actually turn into a poltergeist or beastie when she sits down at her typewriter? And will she one day crawl up the stairs as some fearsome creature, burst in upon me and cut me off in mid-----



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REDCAP

Off the main road, Carter walked into silence. Wonderful, he thought, to find such solitude in crowded, civilized Britain. It was like travelling back in time. The peaceful border country was especially appealing after two hot weeks of sight-seeing in London.

According to his guide book, the castle should be less than a mile away, but he could see nothing but dark green conifer forest on both sides of the road.

"A haunted, uncanny, wicked place," the girl in the pub last night had called it. Carter wasn't superstitious, but he liked hearing her talk. To provoke her, he said he intended to camp out in the castle ruins.

"You'll never!" she cried in alarm. "Oh, no, once you see it for your own self you'd never want to pass the night there. It's a wicked place, even now. The stones are soaked with blood."

The old Lord who built the castle had been a sorcerer, she told him, who kidnapped and murdered babies. He used his magic to terrorize the local people and pile up treasure. Finally, for his sins, he was boiled in oil.

"So he's dead," said Carter. "His ghost can't hurt me."

"It's not the old Lord you need be afraid of -- but Redcap. Redcap still guards the treasure, as his master bid him. And Redcap will never die."

Carter rounded a bend and saw the castle, the top of it projecting through the trees: jagged black stone, sharp-edged as the teeth in a monster's gaping mouth.

The silence suddenly seemed unnatural. There were no birds singing, and no breeze stirred. The only sound was the low mutter of rushing water from somewhere out of sight.

Carter shifted the weight of his bedroll, trying to ignore the tension in the pit of his stomach, the sudden reluctance he felt to continue. In his mind's eye he could see the goblin the girl had described to him, see it as clearly as he saw the ragged stone jaws of the castle: a stocky, powerful little man with long yellow teeth and glowing red eyes. The girl's voice rang in his ears, a voice straight out of the bloody, fearful past: "His cap is red because he dyes it in the blood of his victims."

A car passed, a sudden flash of color, noise and dust, heading towards the main road. Five minutes earlier Carter would have resented it, but now, even though it made him jump, he was glad to be reminded so forcibly of the twentieth century.



He looked at the cloudless sky, remembering his plan to sleep out, to save money, unless the weather turned. Still, there were probably laws against camping on government property. He didn't have to keep a drunken boast made to a girl he would never see again. He walked on and the castle was hidden by the forest.

A narrow, fast-flowing river churned and bubbled over rocks to his right, rushing down the hillside to follow the course of the road. The trees thinned, and there, on the other side of the river, stood the castle.

It was not the ruin he had imagined, although it was roofless. The walls -- dark, weather-streaked stone -- looked as solid as the day they were built. It was a high, square, sturdy fortress, not very large. The "teeth" were jagged crenelations rising to a point at the top of each side.

As he approached, Carter saw an elderly couple standing beside a white car parked on the grassy verge. He nodded at them as he passed, going through the wooden gate and up the path. Behind him he heard the sound of a car being started and driven away, and he felt the silence descend upon him once more.

A wooden shed with a Department of the Environment sign on it marked the end of the path. On a camp-stool in front of the door sat a grey-haired, heavy-set man in khaki.

"Hello!" Carter called. "Not too late, am I?"

The guard looked him carefully up and down, then shook his head. "Not too late. We're open until sunset, by law, but no one ever comes that late. No one wants to be caught here after dark."

Carter grinned. "You mean ghosts?"

"No, I don't mean ghosts."

"I met a girl last night," Carter said. "She seemed to think this place was haunted. She said a lot of people had been murdered here."

"That's true enough."

"She said that at night their screams and cries could still be heard."

The man shrugged. "I've never seen any ghosts. Or heard them."

"You've been here at night?"

"Of course. It's my duty to look after the place. I've nothing to fear."

Carter fumbled in his pocket for change. "I'll take a ticket and...is there a book about the castle? A history?"

"No, and there should be. I could write one myself, if I had the gift for writing. I know more about this castle than anyone else alive, and that includes all your book-writing history professors! I could tell you some stories..."

"Maybe when I come out," said Carter. "I'm interested in history."

The guard looked at him again, a little too searchingly

for Carter's taste. "What've you got in that rucksack?"

"Just -- things," he said defensively.

"Must be heavy, carrying it around all day. Why don't you take it off and leave it here while you look around the castle? You needn't worry. I'll look after it for you. It will be safe with me."

It would have seemed ungracious to refuse, Carter thought, almost an insult. Besides his few valuables -- passport, money, camera -- were in his pockets or slung around his neck. And as he shrugged off the backpack and handed it over, he realized it had become a burden. It was a relief to move unencumbered. "Hey, thanks a lot. I won't be long."

"Take your time," said the guard. "I'll wait for you."

Carter walked up towards the castle, feeling uneasy. No doubt about it, the place had an evil atmosphere. He couldn't put his finger on a reason -- it just seemed to be in the air. Probably some places were naturally like that, due to negative ions or underground water, he thought, or maybe there was something in the idea that violent deeds left a trace behind. He wondered if the guard felt it, working here every day as he did. Was he immune to it, or had he learned to ignore it?

The heavy wooden door on one side was locked, but on the other an identical door had been wedged open with a lump of stone. Entering, Carter saw that the interior was less well-preserved than he had expected. Walls had crumbled away in places, and chunks of rock littered the earth floor. Wooden beams and floor-boards had long since deteriorated, like the roof, so stone stairways rose into emptiness. Carter liked the look of the steps climbing to nothing, and took several photographs from different angles. He investigated odd corners and climbed up and down, taking more pictures and enjoying himself, forgetting that odd prickling sensation in the interest of the moment. Outside, he took shots of the ruin from all sides and finally, reluctantly, went back to the guard's hut.

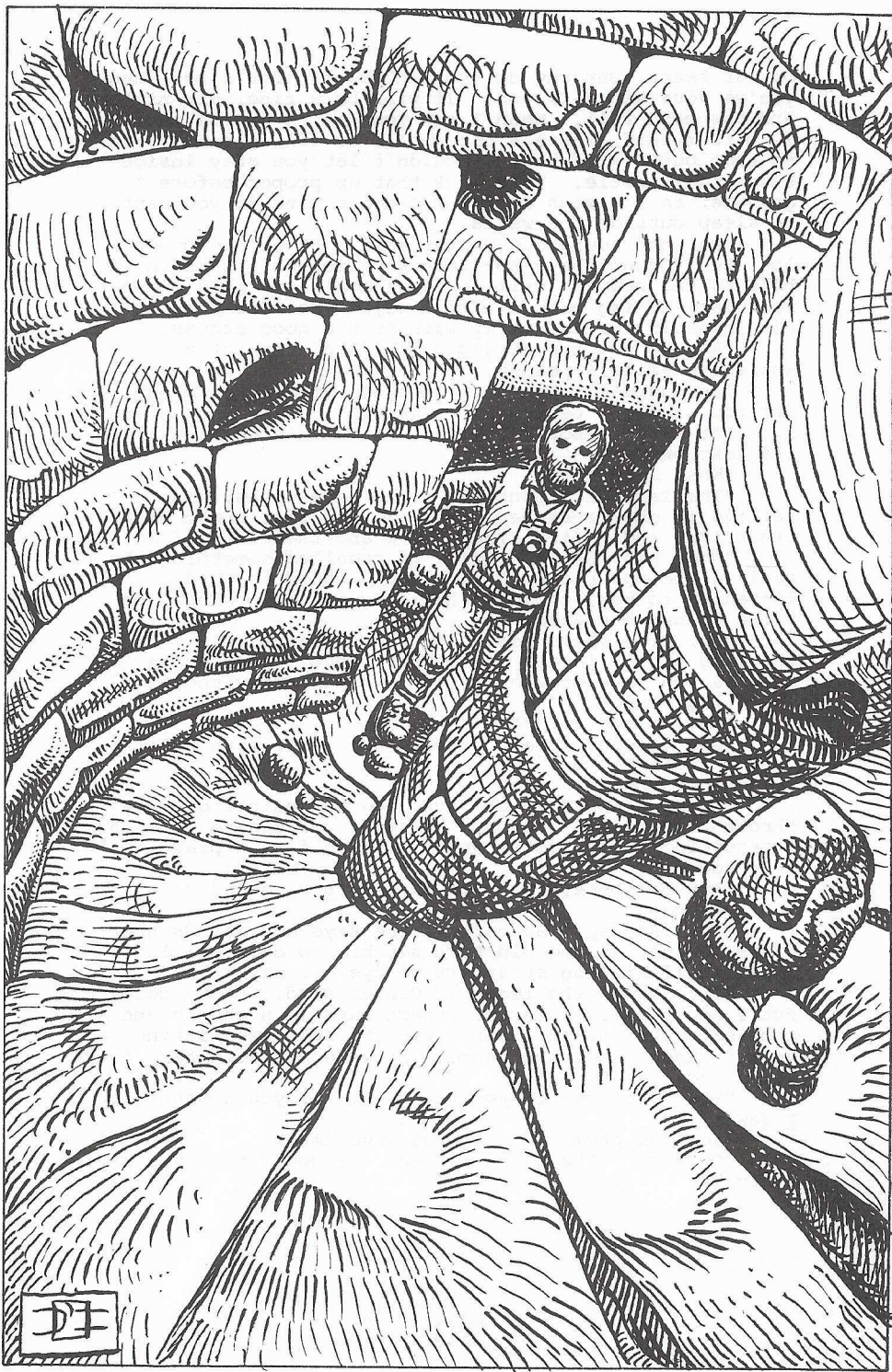
"Like it?"

"You bet! That old well, especially. I only wish could have seen it when it was being used, you know, how people lived in it. How long was it occupied?"

The guard rattled off names and dates, giving a potted history which Carter barely took in. He was noticing the length of the shadows on the grass, and wondering how soon it would be dark.

"Uh, sorry to interrupt," Carter said. "But I need to find a place to stay the night. You wouldn't happen to know of anybody around here who does bed and breakfast?"

The man stared at him. "Nobody lives around here. Did you see anyone on your way? No, they wouldn't build their houses too close to the castle -- not this castle."



Out of fear. But why do you want to pay for a bed when you've your kit with you? It will be a fine, dry night, and the moon full. When I saw you coming up the path I said to myself, there's one who'll be asking permission to camp out. Mind you, I couldn't let you stay inside the actual castle. I'll lock that up proper before I go home, as I always do. But I don't mind if you want to sleep outside the walls."

"No, not tonight," Carter said. "I do sleep out a lot, but I don't have any food with me, so I'll have to hike to the nearest village for a meal, and then I won't feel like coming back all this way." He felt pleased with himself for coming up with such a good excuse.

"Ah, so you are afraid." The beginning of a satisfied smile appeared.

The guard's expression annoyed Carter. "I'm not afraid. I don't believe in ghosts."

"It wasn't ghosts I meant. It wasn't ghosts killed the last ones."

"What last ones?"

"The last who spent the night here. They didn't believe in ghosts either, that man and that woman with their tent and their primus stove and their --"

"When was that?" Dimly, he recalled something the girl in the pub had told him. He'd found it hard, listening to her, to judge how long ago the things she spoke of had happened.

"Oh, five years ago. You hadn't heard of it? A shocking thing, in all the papers...but I suppose in America you have enough of your own murders without importing ours."

"Who killed them?"

"Who indeed? Their throats were slit with a knife."

"A robber?"

"No robber."

Carter glanced at the sun, low and glinting redly through the trees. "Look," he said. "I'm sure it's an interesting story, but I would like to find a place to stay tonight --"

"But not here, eh? Not on Redcap's ground."

"Redcap!"

"Aye, Redcap. He carries the keys and guards the treasure just as the old Lord set him to do. Still here, still killing strangers to dye his cap."

"I've heard the legend," Carter said. "Very colorful. But I don't believe in the supernatural, in ghosts and goblins. The reason I don't want to stay has nothing to do with Redcap, or the people who were murdered here five years ago."

"You'd believe if you saw them. If you'd seen what I saw."

"You saw them. After they were dead?"

"Oh yes." The guard nodded. "I could tell you a story..."

"I need to get started walking. I don't want to miss dinner," Carter said, ignoring the tickle of interest the man's words had stirred in him.

"Don't worry about it," the guard said. "There's a farmhouse not too far from here where they know me. If I take you to them they'll give you a bed for the night and even cook you supper. Mrs. B's a fair cook, too. Just wait for me." He touched the keys hanging at his belt. "The sun's setting and I must lock up. No one else will come now. Wait here for me."

Carter watched the man walk away, feeling the urge to run for it. But where would he run? He remembered that long stretch of forest road behind him. He didn't know what lay ahead, but the guard had offered to take him to a farmhouse. How silly to run away from a good offer, to pay attention to that irrational prickling down his back.

He stepped into the wooden hut and looked around. It was tiny, but the walls had been fitted with built-in shelves, and it was well-equipped for a man who must wait here all day. There was an electric kettle, mugs, a teapot, a box of tea-bags, a bottle half-full of milk, a small sack of sugar, a roll of digestive biscuits, a radio, some magazines and books, a deck of cards, boxed jig-saw puzzles, extra clothes -- all the comforts of home. His own gear was on the floor against the wall, and as he knelt down beside it, something caught his eye, glinting on a shelf, out of place among a pile of clothing. Without thinking, Carter reached out.

It was a knife, he thought at first, but then he had it in his hand and could see that it was only the hilt. It was a heavy, ornate, iron hilt without a blade. It looked very old, the sort of thing Carter could imagine seeing in a museum, behind glass, the blade reconstructed in plaster, with a typed card giving its history.

Suddenly nervous, Carter thrust it to the back of the shelf, hiding it, and stood up. Through the open door he saw the guard approaching.

"Sit there," the man said, nudging his camp stool further onto the path. "I'll make us a cup of tea before we go. I never set out for home without a cup of tea inside me."

"Maybe you could give me directions," Carter said, edging past. "Just tell me where --"

"I said I'd take you, and I will. Now, sit. I've got another stool for me."

Carter looked at the looming dark mass of the castle and wished himself elsewhere, but he sat down.

"I was telling you about the murders," the guard said some minutes later, handing Carter a steaming cup and settling down beside him. "It was a married couple, as I said, and a child. The boy wasn't their own. They'd taken him on out of charity. It came out later that his real father had been done for murder. Of course, I

didn't know that at the time, but afterward it made sense of something she said, about not believing in heredity. She believed in the socializing process, and she was going to socialize that boy good and proper, make him into a weedy little vegetarian pacifist.

"That's what they were, you see. Or at least, she was. She did all the talking. Did she talk! When I gave them permission to stay the night, of course I told them about Redcap. I had to ask them if they knew -- it wouldn't have been right to let them stay, unknowing.

"She as much as called me simple to my face. Went on about reason and logic, didn't want the boy to hear such nonsense.

"I felt sorry for the kid, I can tell you, having to put up with all that from her. While those two were setting up camp I had a chat with the boy. I gave him a biscuit -- not like these, I had chocolate-covered ones that day -- and would you believe it? Poor little tyke had never tasted chocolate! He scoffed half the roll. And he ate up my stories, too. He'd never heard the like, all about magic and murder. He thought history was dull dry dates. In his house they didn't believe in fairy stories, which meant no comics, no television, no fun. He took it all very serious. He didn't know how to laugh, I don't think.

"After I told him about Redcap, he didn't want to stay. He had more sense than his people, but of course they wouldn't listen to him. No matter what he said, they would stay. That woman was furious with me for putting nonsense into his head, as she put it. She said no one had ever lied to him before; she believed in telling children the truth and only the truth. The last thing I heard as I left was her telling him to stop crying and forget the silly stories the bad man had told him, and to put on his pijamas, and not to forget that it was damp out, so he must wear his socks and his nightcap as well. His nightcap! I ask you...

"I was the one who found them, of course, in the morning." He stared into the shadows, as if seeing it all again.

Carter looked into his untasted tea, feeling his heart pounding with a kind of sick excitement. The silence stretch on, lengthening like the shadows, and he finally had to ask.

"How...how exactly did you find them?"

"I saw the woman first -- the man was in the tent. I saw her lying on the ground, all bloody, and the kid crouching over her. I thought he was trying to help her, at first. Then I saw what it was. He had his little nightcap in his hands, and he was dipping it into the wound in her throat.

"He looked up at me, holding it up. 'I'm making it like his,' he said. 'Red, just like his.'"

Carter could almost feel the darkness thickening the air around them, wrapping them in silence. He had to

clench his teeth to keep from shivering. "What...what about the police?"

"I had to call them, of course. The boy was their only witness, but also their only suspect. They didn't believe his story about a little man with glowing red eyes and long yellow teeth, with a red cap pulled down over his long, straggly hair. If this person had cut two throats, why had he left the boy untouched?"

"He had the answer. He held out his nightcap, stiff with his mother's blood. 'I was wearing this' he said. 'It was just like his. He grinned at me, and he touched his cap and pointed to mine. Then he disappeared. He left me because he thought we were the same. Because of the cap. He thought I was like him.'

"But police don't go for stories about people who disappear. And he was their only suspect, even though he wasn't really strong enough to have cut a throat like that -- the woman had struggled, and she was a big, strong woman too. But they ignored that because it was simpler to keep it in the family. There was just one problem."

The tenor of the man's voice changed, and Carter looked at him. In the last, late rays of the setting sun, the guard's eyes glowed a deep, dangerous red. Carter stared and could not look away.

"The murder weapon. They never found it. They never found my knife." He grinned, showing long, yellow teeth.

And then it was really dark.

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T.A.F.F.

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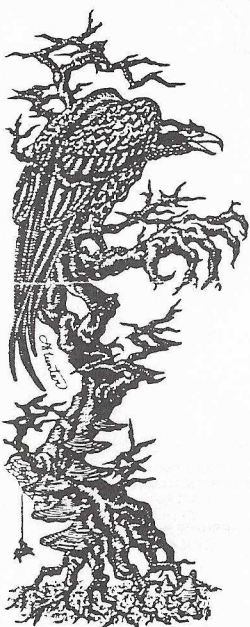
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THE NEST: (F&SF, April 1983.)

NOVA AWARDS

The NOVA Award was started in 1973 by the late Gillon Field. Presented annually by the Birmingham Science Fiction Group, the Award was, until 1981, given to the editor of the best fanzine voted 'Best of the Year'. In 1981 the Award was extended to three Awards - Best Editor, Best Writer and Best Fan Artist.

The rules and method of the award have changed over the years. However the current system enables YOU to vote for your favourite in each category. Voting forms are available at the registration desk. If you are eligible to vote, please use your vote -don't waste it !

As for the Award itself, every year has seen a different design. The first year it was created by Gillon Field. Since then it has been designed and built by the Brum Group's very own Ray Bradbury.

Past winners have been:-

1973 Peter Weston for SPECULATION

1974 Lisa Conesa for ZIMRI (Tie)
John Brosnan for BIG SCAB

1975 Rob Jackson for MAYA

1976 Rob Jackson for MAYA

1977 Dave Langford for TWLL-DDU

1978 Alan Dorey for GROSS ENCOUNTERS

1979 Simone Walsh for SEAMONSTERS

1980 Dave Bridges for ONE-OFF

1981 Fanzine - Malcolm Edwards for TAPPEN

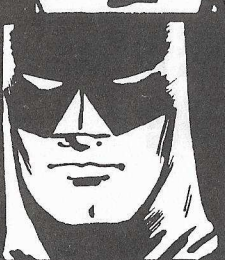
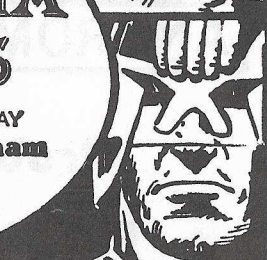
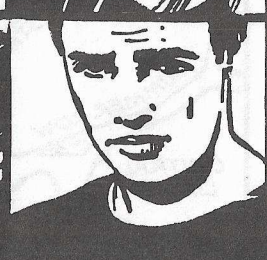
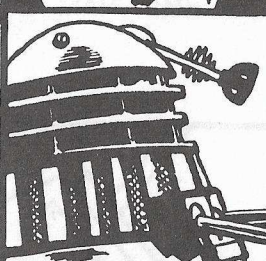
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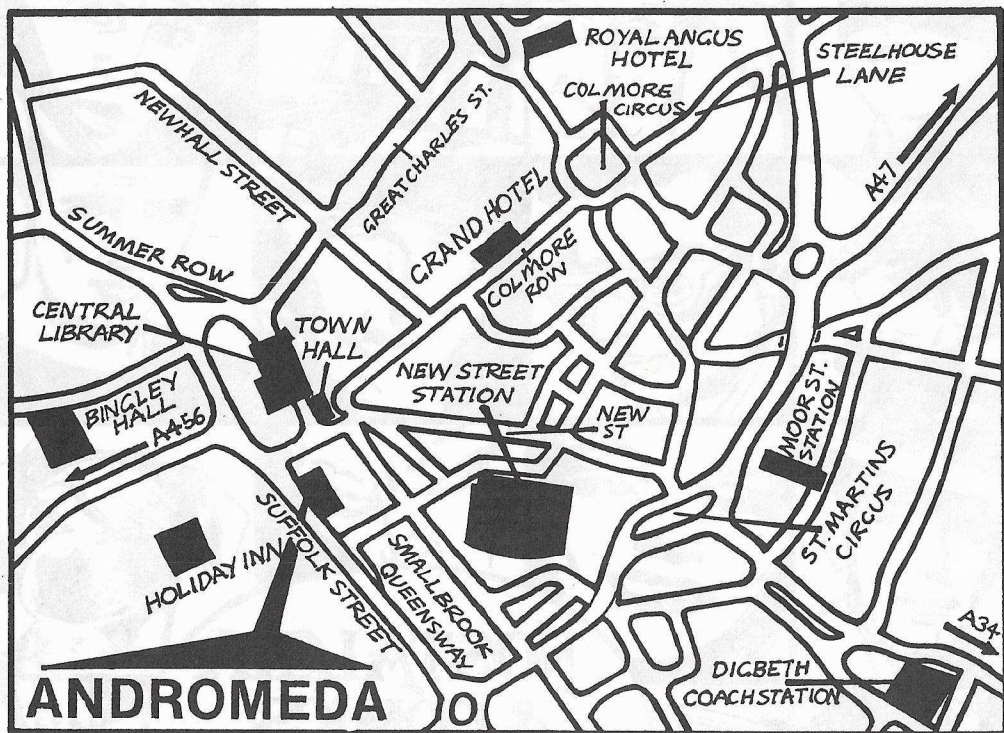
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20 Questions Lisa Tuttle

1. DO YOU HAVE A NICKNAME?

"Some people obsessed with the idea of pet names, have tried abridging my first name to "Li" or "Leese" but this is clearly hopeless. When I was seven years old, a boy I had a crush on called me "Turtle". I took this nickname as a sign of reciprocated passion. An old school friend used to call me "Tut", a Yankee reporter I once knew dubbed me "Texas", and a previous Novacon Guest of Honor (who shall be nameless here) calls me all sorts of things I'd never admit to in public."

2. WHAT IS YOUR GREATEST EXTRAVAGANCE?

"Books. If I had all the money I've ever spent on books returned to me, I'd be fabulously wealthy. I'd immediately spend it all on books."

3. WHAT DO YOUR SLIPPERS LOOK LIKE?

"Steel-blue, quilted, and huge."

4. DO YOU BELIEVE IN LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT?

"I believe in some sort of precognition, or empathic jolt, at first sight -- it's not love itself, but a recognition of the possibility of love. There's a non-sexual variety, too, when friendships are formed after the exchange of just a few words."

5. DO YOU BELIEVE THERE IS LIFE AFTER DEATH?

"Not life as we know it, but something. I hope."

6. WHAT DO YOU FEEL ABOUT DYING?

"I don't."

7. DO YOU THINK THERE IS LIFE ON OTHER WORLDS?

"Probably."

8. IF THERE IS SUCH A PLACE AS HEAVEN, WHAT DO YOU THINK IT IS LIKE?

"It's an internal feeling, not a place."

9. WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAVE BEEN BORN MALE?

"No!"

10. WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE PIECE OF MUSIC OR SONG?

"Just one? I can't; it's so much to do with mood. The Gayne Ballet Suite by Kachaturian; "Hasten Down The Wind" by Warren Zevon; "Trouble Again" by Karla Bonoff; "Diamonds And Rust" by Joan Baez; The Four Seasons by Vivaldi."

11. WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE PIECE OF ART?

"Anything by Vermeer."

12. WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE BOOK OR STORY?

"Either The Five Children And It by E. Nesbitt, or 1984 by George Orwell, or A Traveller In Time by Alison Utley, or The Magus by John Fowles, or Little Women by Louisa May Alcott."

13. DO YOU PREFER CATS OR DOGS?

"Dogs."

14. IF YOU COULD GO BACK IN TIME, WHICH ERA WOULD YOU CHOOSE?

"I probably wouldn't unless I could insulate myself from the more sordid realities by having lots of money and/or power. With an independent income and freedom from family, I would love to have been around in the twenty years or so before the First World War...especially with a team from the future to help me figure out a way to keep that war from ever starting."

15. IF YOU COULD CHANGE ONE ASPECT OF YOURSELF, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

"My eyes."

16. IF YOU COULD CHANGE PLACES WITH ONE PERSON, WHO WOULD YOU CHOOSE?

"If it was a permanent change, no one. If just for a little while, then I might choose the Khomeini -- to find out if he's human, and what it's like to be such a powerful maniac, and also to screw things up for him as thoroughly as possible in a brief time."

17. WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE SOAP OPERA?

"Soap operas are so much more boring than real life, I don't know why anyone watches them."

18. WHAT DO YOU THINK OF CHRISTMAS?

"I never get enough toys."

19. DO YOU REMEMBER THE FIRST TOY YOU EVER HAD?

"I don't know what the first one was, but I remember all my stuffed animals and their individual personalities. Including one which had no personality -- I couldn't figure out what it was meant to be, even -- and which I never liked enough to maul as I did my favourites."

20. HAVE YOU EVER WANTED TO COMMIT AN ILLEGAL ACT?

"Certainly. And often do. It's shocking what some places have laws against."

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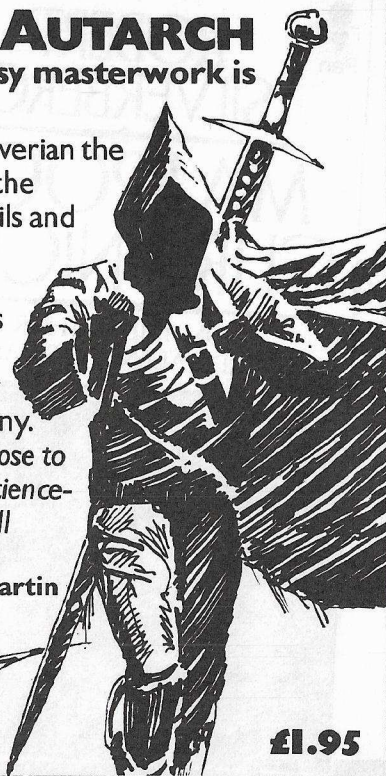
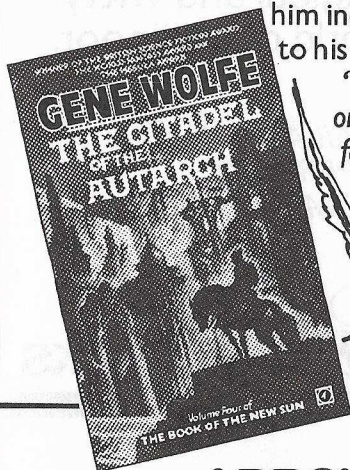
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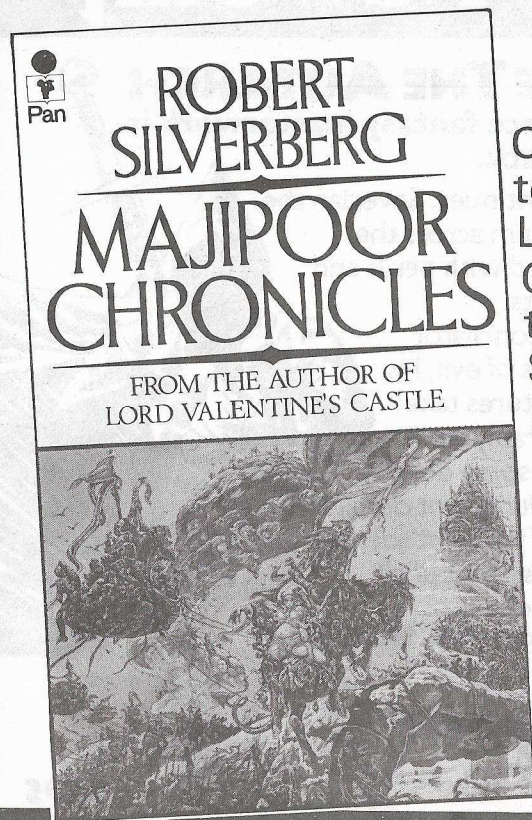
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NOVACON'S I HAVE KNOWN

Paul Vincent

There exists a small universe, just a quick twist of the space-time co-ordinates away from ours, at the nexus of several spaghetti-like roadways, where a party is constantly in progress. The inhabitants of this continuum, some five hundred of them, belong to the ephemeral race of the Fenni. Every three days or so there is a brief flickering of the ether during which several Fenni wink out of existence as scores of newly-hatched Fenni (or Neofenni) pop simultaneously into being and join the ongoing party. The inhabitants refer to these continuous cycles as Novacons, and have recently entered their thirteenth such cycle, a number of great arcane significance.

Or that's how it seems sometimes! One of the most commented-on features of Novacons is their tendency to blur around the edges into a single, pleasantly inter-minable, Meta-Novacon to which the latest installment will add three more days. Days thirty-seven to thirty-nine, to be precise. Placing all these days end to end gives a prospect as frightening as it is fascinating -- the five-and-a-half week convention! It'd be an interesting experience (to say the least) undergoing the standard convention sleep-deprivation for such a timespan, but not one which the resulting basket-cases would be likely to repeat. The room parties alone would take a dreadful toll. Perhaps it's just as well there are short breaks, between each visit to the depths of Birmingham's one-way traffic system, for convalescence. The whole 'non-stop Novacon' effect is probably due to the unshifting venue of the Royal Angus Hotel, which has accomodated eight of the last nine Novacons, a one-off switch to the Holiday Inn for Novacon 8 being the only interruption in an otherwise unbroken run. As you walk up those steps on the second floor to the sinisterly octagonal registration area, it's difficult not to feel the shivers of deja-vu: is it really a who e year since Novacon 12, or have you merely timewarped back to the start of the same con? You'll never know! Only the inevitable rise in beer prices can give the game away.

Not everything has remained static in the world of Novacons. Looking back at Novacon 6, for instance, provides some instant nostalgia. You remember, back in the good ol' days before the blinding white light of hi-tech produced that miracle of modern science called 'The Badge Machine'. No glossy metal badges in 1976, oh no. Instead we had the amazing fannish cardboard badge (components: cardboard, selotape, safety pin -- no artificial preservatives) which was guaranteed to be a crumpled, beer-stained ruin by sunday. No way would anyone be tasteless enough to keep that as a souvenir of their first con (so why have I still got mine?). Let's keep flipping through this pile of Novacon 6 progress reports and see what turns up. Ah, here's my hotel bill: two nights at £5.75 per night. WHAT?? Suddenly the effects of inflation become horribly visible. The same sum will probably just about pay for a round of drinks at this year's con. The bill also states 'continental breakfast included'. I remember it so well -- that was the year we all got served breakfast in bed by the chambermaids. Picture the scene as some poor unsuspecting chambermaid -- fresh out of school -- innocently enters a single room, tray balanced precariously, only to encounter the fannish tradition of 'sharing floorspace'. The miasma of a dozen sweaty fan-bodies rises up as a dozen hungry mouths chant in unison "FOOD, FOOD!" from a nest of sleeping bags. Exit one chambermaid. No more breakfast-in-bed deals. Shame.

Other changes are abundant. For a start the progress reports were more like letters, on loose sheets of paper rather than the spiffy booklets we see nowadays. They went out to fewer people, too. The first Novacon had a mere 144 attendees: a gross (no reflection on the punters concerned, I hope). Then there were the banquets. What-ever happened to the Novacon Banquet? Died of food poisoning, I guess.

It would be futile trying to catalogue all the memorable incidents from the last seven Novacons, but one or two spring to mind. Such as the dubious venue of the saturday night disco at Novacon 8. Most discos have a dance floor, but not this one! Oh no, it had a swimming pool in lieu of a dance floor, with a few brave fans bopping gingerly not too close to the pool edge. Incongruously, there were also a brace of exercise cycles near the DJ console, on which a new and highly energetic dance was developed. This consisted of trying to clock up as many 'miles' as possible before the record ended. No coronaries ensued, fortunately. The highest coronary risk that evening was reserved for the salivating lechers who crowded the poolside when a certain female fan, wearing only a gold-foil bikini, plunged into the pool. The water promptly disintegrated the flimsy costume, leaving only the distorting effect of the water to cover her as the more photographically-orientated voyeurs clicked away.

Then there were the impromptu 'messes' -- Novacon 10 saw a paper-aeroplane war in the bar which rapidly escalated from A5-sized darts to massive two-seater gliders constructed from whole copies of The Sunday Times, much to the ire of the Angus manager who was faced with whole piles of newsprint to clear away. Not to be outdone, Novacon 12 found a group of fans playing football in the main bar with a large cabbage, which proceeded to shrink smaller.....and smaller.....until the floor was covered in shredded cabbage. Only the lack of suitable quantities of mayonnaise prevented an instant coleslaw supper.

Novacons are very close to my heart. Novacon 6 was my first-ever glimpse of fandom, and I kept going back for another fix. This year brings a few organizational changes -- no more hiding the art show in the cellar like a guilty secret for one thing -- but what counts is that the party is still in full swing, and likely to continue for years to come. Anyone for Novacon 30 in the year 2000?

The History of Novacon

NOVACON	HOTEL	GUEST OF HONOUR	CHAIRMAN	ATTENDENCE
1 (Committee: Ray Bradbury, Alan Denham, Alan Donnelly, Pauline Dungate)	Imperial Centre	James White	Vernon Brown	144
2 (Committee: Stan Eling, Jeffrey Hacker, Richard Newham, Meg Palmer, Hazel Feynolds)	Imperial Centre	Doreen Rodgers	Pauline Dungate	144
3 (Committee: Stan Eling, Gillon Field, Meg Palmer, Geoff Winterman)	Imperial Centre	Ken Bulmer	Hazel Reynolds	146
4 (Committee: Pauline Dungate, Stan Eling, Gillon Field, Robert Hoffman, Arline Peyton, Rog Peyton, Hazel Reynolds)	Imperial Centre	Ken Slater	Dr Jack Cohen	211
5 (Committee: Ray Bradbury, Pauline Dungate, Robert Hoffman Laurence Miller, Arline Peyton)	Royal Angus	Dan Morgan	Rog Peyton	272
6 (Committee: Helen Eling, Laurence Miller, Arline Peyton, Rog Peyton)	Royal Angus	Dave Kyle	Stan Eling	317
7 (Committee: Liese Hoare, Martin Hoare, Ian Maule, Janice Maule, Dave Langford)	Royal Angus	John Brunner	Stan Eling	278

- 8 Holiday Inn Anne McCaffrey Laurence Miller 309
(Committee: Dave Holmes, Kathy Holmes, Chris Watson, Jackie Wright)
- 9 Royal Angus Chris Priest Rog Peyton 290
(Committee: Helen Eling, Stan Eling, Chris Morgan, Pauline Morgan, Paul Oldroyd)
- 10 Royal Angus Brian Aldiss Rog Peyton 495
(Committee: Joseph Nicholas, Keith Oborn, Krystyna Oborn, Paul Oldroyd, Chris Walton)
- 11 Royal Angus Bob Shaw Paul Oldroyd 362
(Committee: Helen Eling, Stan Eling, Joseph Nicholas, Phill Probert)
- 12 Royal Angus Harry Harrison Rog Peyton 373
(Committee: Chris Baker, Dave Hardy, Eunice Pearson, Phill Probert)
- 13 Royal Angus Lisa Tuttle Phill Probert
(Committee: Chris Donaldson, Steve Green, Dave Haden, Jan Huxley, Paul Oldroyd, Eunice Pearson, Paul Vincent, John Wilkes)



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4	Chris Donaldson	63	Jim Darroch	122	Charlotte Bulmer
5	Dave Haden	64	John Dallman	123	Bob Shaw
6	Jan Huxley	65	Jeff Suter	124	Sadie Shaw
7	Paul Oldroyd	66	Pam Wells	125	John Harvey
8	Paul Vincent	67	Bob Whittaker	126	Eve Harvey
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10	Harry Harrison	69	Tricia Gardener	128	James White
11	Brian Aldiss	70	David Bell	129	Peggy White
12	Rog Peyton	71	Allan Green	130	Nick Mills
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15	John Stewart	74	Pete Lyon	133	Roesmary Pardoe
16	Maureen Porter	75	Chris Suslowicz	134	Gidian Rogers
17	Julian Headlong	76	Lawrence Dean	135	John Brunner
18	Tim Headlong	77	Malcolm Edwards	136	Chris Davenport
19	Murray Lynes	78	Tom Tay	137	Ashley Walker
20	Animal	79	George Ternent	138	Paul Kincaide
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28	Mr Cruttendon	87	Rob Jackson	146	Judith Hanna
29	Chris Southern	88	Coral Jackson	147	Joyce Cluett
30	Jenny Southern	89	Vernon Brown	148	Dave Cluett
31	Ian Sorenson	90	Pat Brown	149	Ken Worrall
32	Martin Stallard	91	Mike Ford	150	Su Worrall
33	John Newman	92	John Steward	151	Carlton Collister
34	Joan Newman	93	Richard Van DerVort	152	Nigle Robson
35	Charles Mawdsley	94	Marion Van der Vort	153	Steve Devaney
36	Dave Ragget	95	Edward Ward	154	Eric Bentcliffe
37	Peter Mabey	96	Mike Walshe	155	Kevin Heinwood
38	Dave Ellis	97	Mike Scantlebury	156	Wendy Cruttenden
39	Howard Rosenblum	98	Barbara Rudyk	157	Linda Pickersgill
40	June McGaw	99	Simon Rudyk	158	Greg Pickersgill
41	Fay Symes	100	Chris Bursey	159	Sandy Brown
42	Dave Symes	101	Steve Green	160	Jim Allen
43	Kathy Westhead	102	Ann Thomas	161	Katharine Wright
44	Mike Westhead	103	Martin Tudor	162	Simon Bostock
45	David Holmes	104	Kev Dixon	163	A Oddwove
46	Helen Holmes	105	Val Dixon	164	Mal Ashworth
47	Kay Allen	106	Joy Hibbert	165	Hazel Ashworth
48	Caroline Mullan	107	Dave Rowley	166	Jerry Elsmore (s)
49	Marcus Rowland	108	Mick Gadd	167	Lawrence Lambourne
50	Brian Ameringem	109	Sue Gadd	168	Phil Palmer
51	Harry Bell	110	John Jerrold	169	Colin Langeveld
52	Owen Whiteoak	111	Jackie Bexon	170	Mike Meara
53	Audrey Kellow	112	Alun Harries	171	Pat Meara
54	Tim Illingworth	113	Tim Broadribb	172	Peter Memmott
55	Jonathan Cowie	114	Anderw Stephenson	173	Richard Smith
56	Paul Dormer	115	Tim Stannard	174	Sue Close
57	Margaret Austin	116	Phil Barnard	175	Shelia Cornelius
58	Martin Easterbrook	117	Naill Gordon	176	Brian Flynn

177	Glen Warminger	242	Steve Ayris	307	Sue Williams
178	Robert Stubbs	243	Per Osterman	308	Paul Wilson
179	R C Hewison	244	Urban Gunnarsson	309	Mike Don
180	Peter Kemsley	245	Brian Williams	310	Lisanne Norman
181	Christopher Cheyne	246	Roð Milner	311	Stuart Andrews
182	Victoria Cheyne	247	Bonnie Milner	312	Joe Gibbons
183	Susie Cheyne	248	Rita Oliver	313	Jogn Styles
184	Brian Magorrian	249	David Angus	314	Colin Hand
185	Laura Wheatley	250	Janice Maule	315	Pete Wright
186	Rosalyn Winston	251	Ian Maule	316	Margaret Draper
187	Chris Morgan	252	Jon Wilkes	317	E A Hallam
188	Pauline Morgan	253	Brian Willis	318	M Berry
189	Stuart Mackintosh	254	Roy Macinski	319	Bob Vernon
190	Nicholas Holland	255	Marjorie Brunner	320	Dave Swinden
191	Mary Gray	256	J Perry	321	Mike Llewellyn
192	Mike Gray	257	Jeremy Johnson	322	Rob Hansen
193	Adrian Snowdon	258	Jean Maudsley	323b	Malcolm Davies
194	Tim Smith	259	G Pitchford	324	Amanda Dakin
195	John Meaney	260	J Steel	325	Lesley Ward
196	Yvonne Meaney	261	Matthew Brock	326	D M Sherwood
197	Marina Holroyd	262	Cath Easthope	327	Susan Francis
198	Graham Middleton	263	Andrew Rose	328	Mark Williamson
199	Stan Eling	264	D L Packwood	329	Andie Oppenhimer
200	Helen Eling	265	Tom Shippey	330	R I Gilbert
201	Jean Sheward	266	Rochelle Dorey	331	Alec Lewis
202	Susan Booth	267	Alan Dorey	332	Glenys Lewis
203	Carey Handfield	268	Richard Vine	333	Les Flood
204	Bob Day	269	Stuart Hall	334	Pamela Buckmaster
205	Doreen Rogers	270	M W Stone	335	Alan Summers
206	Phil Rogers	271	John Mottershead	336	Geoff Kemp
207	Pete Gilligan	272	Steve Hanson	337	Sandra Kemp
208	Chrissie Pearson	273	Charles Partington	338	Alex Stewart
209	Martin Smith	274	Patrick Curzon	339	Dave Cox
210	Trisha O'Neill	275	Sue Thomason		
211	Brian Smith	276	Miles Harris		
212	Bruce Macdonald	277	Liz Buiak		
213	Andrew Hall	278	Susan Harrison		
214	Peter Crump	279	Chris Seller		
215	Matt Sillars	280	Gill Harris		
216	Paul Brazier	281	Mary Gentle		
217	Mickey Poland	282	Amaryllis Elphic		
218	Richard Cooper	283	Stu Shiffman		
219	Nigel Wheeler	284	Kevin Green		
220	Nigel Richardson	285	Dave Hicks		
221	Hugh Mascetti	286	Gobi Hemmen		
222	Ron Bennett	287	Mike Moir		
223	Stig Jorgensen	288	Debby Moir		
224	G A Bryant	289	Robin Levy		
225	Michael Bernardi	290	Rowena Levy		
226	Jim Barker	291	Chris Baker		
227	Roeloff Goudriaan	292	Marsha Jones		
228	W A McCabe	293	Andrew O'Donnell		
229	Chris Evans	294	Nigel Dresser		
230	Faith Brooker	295	David Dunn		
231	Berni Evans	296	Nadeen Gul		
232	Ann Looker	297	Jonathan Salmon		
233	Alan Ferguson	298	Tibs		
234	Kevan White	299	Alyson Abramowitz		
235	S M Sharp	300	Grahan Stillie		
236	Dai Price	301	Linda Stillie		
237	Stephen Tudor	302	TonY Berry		
238	Perdy Dobson	303	Richard Brandshaft		
239	Dermot Dobson	304	Patricia Hall		
240	Nev Kent	305	Chris Hall		
241	D French	306	Kev Williams		



"HEY-HOW CAN YOU
TELL I WENT TO
NOVA CON 13?"

DAVE HADEN 1983.

ROYAL ANGUS HOTEL : BRUM
4-6 th NOVEMBER 1983

WELL, WE'RE HERE

WHICH ONE'S THE "ROYAL ANGUS" ?

YOU MEAN THAT PLACE
WHERE I ACCIDENTALLY
FIRED THE BUILDING
DISINTEGRATOR ?

BUS
STOP

ELF

EVERYONE
COMES TO NOBACON!