

SPECIALISTS IN SCIENCE FICTION, FANTASY & HORROR

ANDROMEDA

BOOKSHOP

84 SUFFOLK STREET · BIRMINGHAM B1 1TA · ENGLAND · Tel: 021-643 1999

If you are one of the 1000-plus people already on our mailing list, you need read no further. However, if you are not on our mailing list, maybe it's time for you to discover what you are missing.

ANDROMEDA has now been operating for 13 years, during which time it has grown into one of the largest and best specialist shops in the UK (many of our customers will insist that **we are** the best). Our stocks include virtually every SF, fantasy and horror paperback in print in the UK together with most of the hardcovers, all the regular fiction magazines, film magazines and even a few fan magazines. We also import from the USA - you'll find all the new titles in stock within 4-6 weeks of publication. That's the ground floor. Our first floor carries all our media stocks including comprehensive back issue stock on most of the magazines. You'll also find our second-hand department together with posters, cards, etc.

Our mail-order service is second to none. Every two months we issue a new catalogue listing all new books and magazines newly arrived into stock, together with important restocks and reminders of earlier titles in series, reprints, etc. Each catalogue is usually 20 pages, and each book listed provides a brief plot summary or description. That goes to over 2 dozen countries.

In addition we issue a special catalogue once a year devoted to TV SF (STAR TREK, DR WHO, etc.) and two 12 page catalogues per year devoted to second-hand items including many rare and difficult-to-find books. We are currently looking forward to publishing catalogue 100 which will probably be a **complete** listing of paperback stocks - somewhere in the region of 3000 titles. It will probably also include some hardcovers, magazines, etc. It will definitely include details of our standing order service whereby you can receive magazines like WHISPERS regularly without you having to hunt around and order each time it appears. We'll send every new issue to you automatically on publication.

You can also save yourself time by just phoning in your order - we take ACCESS and VISA credit cards.

Why not try us ? Send for a catalogue **now** !

Oops . . . forgot our video stocks. Oh well, nobody's perfect . . .

CHRIS PRIEST
SIGNING :

SEE PAGE FOUR

N 14 - Update

Kids

Since enough parents responded to Steve's appeal in the last progress report, we are definately having a creche this year. Would anyone who has not yet done so, please contact Ann Green as soon as possible (address at bottom of page) with details of the child's age and any special needs. If parents could bring a few toys along this would be appreciated.

We will be holding a fancy dress parade on Saturday afternoon for the children, with prizes. Now's your chance to find out if you've a budding Kate Davis in the family!

There will also be an informal fancy dress for adults on Friday evening before the screening of ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW. See page four.

James

A UNIVERSITY CHALLENGE will be held this year -- a serious alternative to the soon-to-be-infamous "Krapton Factor" being run by Kev Clarke. Would teams, of three, please contact Steve as soon as possible.

VERY IMPORTANT: Blackmail and similar photographs are needed for Kev Clarke's fan lounge. All material will be wrapped in plastic and credited. It will be returned after the convention. Please send all photo's to Key at 438 Station Road, Dorridge, Solihull, as soon as possible please.

Membership: £6.00. At the Door: £7.50.

Registrations, Creche-----Ann Green, 11, Fox Green Crescent,
Acocks Green, Birmingham B27 7SD.

Fast developing into a Novacon tradition, this year's beer tasting will once again be administered by the redoubtable Katie and Martin Hoare.

The major difference this year is that admission to the event will be restricted to those fans who actually bother to turn up with alcohol in their possession (and no, we do not mean the final half-inch at the bottom of a beer glass).

The tasting is scheduled for the Saturday evening at Novacon, and considering the large number of off-licences and supermarkets within walking distance of the Grand Hotel, there's no excuse for trying to gatecrash the superb array of beers, homebrewed and imported, we expect to have on display.

One quick point; please be discrete when sneaking your contribution into the hotel. Walking past the porter with a barrel casually balanced on one shoulder and a bottle of Old Peculiar rammed in your back pocket is not recommended.

Rooms will be available for any meetings (apart etc) on Saturday and Sunday. Anyone intending to use videos will need to supply both recorder and a monitor as the hotel TVs are on cable input. Please contact Steve as soon as possible to book your venue.

MYTHAGO WOOD by Rob Holdstock, Gollancz £8.95.

"A very good (novel)....opening with his award-winning short of the same name. The mythagos -- elemental myth-images born from the race mind in ancient woodlands -- are earthy and real, refreshingly new to fantasy. No standard props of dragons and unicorns: Holdstock is working with fresh, red-hot archetypes of British/Celtic myth, as his hero follows a dream into the entire legendary universe hidden in three square miles of primary woodland, and finds his own personal story becoming the stuff of legend. Powerful, impressive and magical, it deserves all manner of awards."

Reviewed by DAVE LANGFORD. This review will also appear in the october issue of 'White Dwarf'.

films

BRAINSTORM:

As its major saturday evening feature, Novacon 14 has secured Douglas Trumbull's latest and arguably most thought-provoking science fiction drama, starring Chris Walken as the scientific genius whose pioneering research into the human mind pitches him into a metaphysical maelstrom. Similarly silhouetted against some truly dazzling special effects are the underrated Cliff Robinson as Walken's two-faced superior, Ellen Burstyn as his ill-fated partner and Natalie Wood in her final screen role as Walken's wife. Trumbull's closing scenes may strike some members of the audience as overly religious, but the movie rises above these more 'suspect moments' and there was no excuse for its pitiful poor distribution earlier this year.

SILENT RUNNING:

In contrast, Trumbull's directorial debut takes twenty-first century gardener Bruce Dern on an ecological crusade through the rings of Saturn to preserve earth's last forests from extinction. Again, Trumbull's special effects wizardry is much in evidence; especially notable are the trio of droids, which predate STAR WARS' Artoo Detoo by six years. Dubbed "ingenious and occasionally beautiful" by the Sunday Times, the film was commended by the Observer for its "claustrophobic urgency".

SECONDS:

John Frankenheimer's superior thriller takes the Frankenstein legend one chilling step further, transforming ageing businessman John Randolph into artist Rock Hudson via dubious spare-part surgery. Frankenheimer explores at length the moral dilemma facing the recipient of this ingenious metamorphosis and builds to a disturbing climax. Made in 1966, the film features exemplary monochrome photography by James Wong Howe.

DR STRANGELOVE, OR HOW I LEARNED TO STOP WORRYING AND LOVE THE BOMB:

Classic nuclear black comedy from Stanley Kubrick, offering an intriguing contrast to sunday's closing movie, FAILSAFE, which was released a year later in 1964. Peter Sellers is in top form in the title role, as well as those of the American president and English pilot (indeed, only a broken leg prevented him filling the Texan part eventually taken by Slim Pickens); the cast also includes George C.

about (including Kubrick's curious levitator motif), starring Hayden and Keenan Wynn. The New York Times it a "shattering sick joke", but Films And Filming more wisely described it as a "tragi-comedy masterpiece" and concluded: "it would be too easy to lucky-dip into the box of stock labels and pull out the one marked Sick Humour. It would be dishonest and an insult to Kubrick to suggest that here was merely an opportunist film-maker climbing on the CND band-wagon. It would be a tragedy if this serious joke was not taken seriously."

* * * *

The convention's extensive film programme is completed by the following five movies, reviewed last issue:

CATCH-22:

Joseph Heller's bestselling anti-war novel, transferred to the screen by Mike Nichols.

FAILSAFE:

Sidney Lumet's nuclear thriller, starring Henry Fonda as the American president forced to choose between the destruction of New York and armageddon.

PHANTASM:

Superb tongue-in-cheek horror yarn from BEASTMASTER director Don Coscarelli.

THEM:

Giant ants overrun California, James Whitmore stiffens his upper lip and reaches for the insecticide.

ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW:

Cult smash musical starring Tim Curry in French undies. Novacon will be running an informal fancy dress parade before its screening, so don't forget to bring your slinkiest tights and suspender belt. That applies to the girls, too.

* * * *

The full film schedule, including the all-night programme on saturday/sunday, will be distributed with your programme book at Novacon.

STOPPRESSSTOPPRESSSTOPPRESSSTOPPRESSSTOPPRESSSTOP

Please note, the new date for the CHRIS PRIEST signing session advertised on the back cover of PR3 is now

SATURDAY OCTOBER 13

THE INCISOR AND OTHERS

by MAL
ASHWORTH

EPISODE TWO: AFTER MY FIRST FALSE TEETH -- MY FIRST REAL CONVENTION!

THE STORY SO FAR: Our debonair young fannish Hero, having survived a perilous encounter with Teeny Sodd, the Diminutive Demon Dentist, and chomped his way to freedom through forests of voracious lettuce leaves, finally gains control of his twinkling new Devil-May-Care dentures. Emboldened by his success he goes on to attend his first s-f convention, a one-day affair in Manchester in 1952. Alarmed by the failure of his plot to fill our dashing Hero's face with plastic, thus rendering him completely incomprehensible instead of just dumb, the false fannish ghod Ghu now hatches an evil, transcen-dental plot to distract him from his quest for the Tower of Trufandom. This takes the form of 7½ stones of brunette girl-friend arranged in a fiendishly irresistible set of caressable curves and pettable parabolas. But Roscoe, the Trufan Beaver Ghod, thwarts Ghu's fakefan designs by allowing our Hero, even through the haze of such superhuman distractions, to actually notice the convention. From this it is only a short leap for him to decide that it is a Good Thing.. Thus it is, that swinging instantly into his true s-f hero faster-than-light mode of Instant Action, he heads once again -- only two years later! -- for that same northern metropolis. His goal -- the 1954 Supermancon, a true, stop-over, national s-f con, a real convention! Now read on (or else.....):

Supermancon '54 -- an event that has gone down in the annals of fannish history; or, at least, if it hasn't, it deserves to. Which other national science-fiction convention has ever been moved en masse out of a hall and into a billiards-room because the hotel manager objected to posters being put up on the walls? You don't get exciting things like that happening at today's Eastercons.

Funning apart, it was an exciting time -- for me, anyway. What better period could one choose in which to be a dewy-eyed neofan than those years of Bradbury's MARTIAN CHRONICLES and ILLUSTRATED MAN, of Sturgeon's exquisite short stories and magnificent MORE THAN HUMAN, of Simak's CITY, not to mention the early issues of Walt Willis' epoch-marking fanzine Hyphen? Stricken with a bout of chronic Goshwowboyohboyism (and remember this was all long before the invention of such modern antidotes to this infection as the KTF Sneer-and-Spit serum), I had gotten together with another Bradford fan, Tom White, and published the

first issue of a fanzine entitled Ham. (Someone wrote of it that it 'looked like a crudzine but read like an uninhibited Hyphen', a judgement probably more kinder than it deserved.) It was with Tom and his wife, Betty, that I caught the train for Manchester that morning of June 5th 1954, our ultimate destination the Grosvenor hotel, where we were soon to learn that the Grosvenor's ultimate detestation seemed to be s-f fans. But we were not unprepared; this was the heyday of the zap-gun, and a prolonged and continuous bombardment of water-blasts and bad puns finally broke through the hostility, if not the incredulity of the staff and forced them to let us into our rooms.

The account I later wrote of the weekend was entitled 'My First Real Convention' (which led Walt Willis to inquire what I intended to call the following year's con report -- 'My First Unreal Convention?'). This was distributed through OMPA (Off-Trail Magazine Publisher's Association, the British apa) in the form of a 14-page smudged, spiderishly-lettered oneshot, looking like a junior school essay (thus cleverly disguising the fact that my normal style of publication actually looked like a smudged, spiderishly-lettered junior school essay). (Ving Clarke was kind enough to say, quite recently, that he still finds this a gigglish thing to read, despite which, and out of consideration for the wishes of the milling hordes of Conreport haters, I have decided not to proceed with an immediate reprint in an edition of 20,000 copies with a foreword by Kingsley Amis.) The childlike style I adopted for this write-up had me referring to Tom White as 'Uncle Tom' and this led pretty quickly to an inevitable escalation. Harry Turner and Ken Bulmer soon fell victims to fannish avuncularity with hardly a squawk of apprehension. ("Aaaarrh", I sighed sadly, sneaking sneakily up on Ken, whom I hadn't seen in more than 20 years, at the 1981 Fantasy Con, "You don't acknowledge your poor old nephew any more". "Good God", he gasped, more like a startled midnight fridge-raider than a dour uncle, "I'd never have recognised you!")

As the convention gradually got into its swing my Crifanac Meter must have been registering 'Overload', for it was at this con that I met, for the very first time, Walt Willis, Bob Shaw, James White, Ving Clarke, Chuck Harris, Archie Mercer -- even Brian Burgess! Beat that for fannish memorability if you can! ("I'd make you an uncle of mine", I told Walt, "But you look too young" -- "No doubt if I was an uncle of yours I'd age rapidly", he replied. Convinced by his unassailable logic, I appointed him.) In fact the con just couldn't be faulted for fannishness; whether one's preference was, like us neos, for Manager-mazing zap-gun duels (Did I hear a 'Tut', or was it a 'Harrumph', out there in the sercon suburbs?) or, like the uncles, for standing around supplying bacover quotes for the next Hyphen, the official programme made little attempt to distract us; "the only programme there was", I noted, "was piled up on a table just inside the door". And even when officialdom did get its act together it didn't interfere too seriously with the momentous event taking place elsewhere -- the birth of the Quotecard: "Things were still going on on the platform without any regard for the real Convention on the back line..." Maybe this wasn't too surprising since what we were getting at the time was a talk on 'Radioactivity', followed by an audience-participation session in which Vargo Statten Magazine editor,

Alistair Paterson asked the assembled fans what they would like to see on the magazine's covers! If Ken Potter's bellow of "Something mind-shattering in its Cosmic Significance" was the worst he got it seems to me he got off rather lightly.

This apartheid between platform and auditorium -- always good-natured -- was far from total, however, and there were plenty of happenings which welded all into one organic whole (as Paleo-fan Sammy Coleridge used to put it): the Liverpool Group's playlet 'The Alien Arrives', a lightly hilarious piece scripted by Walt Willis; Ted Tubb's masterly and highly-enter-taining auctioneering which was a feature of s-f cons for so many years ("He doesn't just run an auction, he jumps it up and down and leads it around the corner as well"); the film -- H.G. Wells' 'The Shape Of Things To Come' (which I enjoyed at the time, have never seen since and would like to; Here Endeth A Small Hint). But the greatest unifying factor of all, maybe you don't need me to tell you, was the ceaseless guerilla warfare between fans and hotel staff -- it any not have been said, but it was universally understood that "we shall fight them on the stairways, we shall fight them in the corridors, we shall fight them in the bedrooms". In the bedrooms? Uh huh -- a porter was even sent to stand hour after hour in one corner of a large bedroom until the all-night party frothing and fermenting there finally evaporated. Perhaps it was more to make certain that no reinforcement arrived to aid The Enemy than to keep out, Seacon-style, anyone small enough to be bullied who was not wearing a badge at the exact required inclination, that Brian Lewis patrolled the hotel foyer sporting a peaked cap with Dan Dare badge and cradling a mighty, thousand-shot water gun.

There was, as always, more, much more. Charged with writing an account of this kaleidoscopic maelstrom (and you've all seen one of those, have'nt you?) for Bem, I took a moment out from fannish intoxication to have the heebie-jesbies. How on Sol Three do you ever manage to remember it all to write it up, I asked Walt desperately. "You just have to make it all up again afterwards", he advised.

That, then, was the Supermancon 1954, my first real convention. Or at least snatches and snippets and droplets and sparklets of it. The years, of course, have come and gone since then. And so, now that I come to think of it, have the teeth. (Though I am inordinately proud of the fact that I have, all told, had more hot dinners that sets of false teeth; and not only that but, as my expertise and life-experience gathered momentum, I actually managed to masticate more of the former with the latter than the other way round -- though there were times when it was touch-and-go.) So, too, have the conventions. Come, that is (which is good). And gone (which is sad). Have they changed much? Well, maybe these articles will help you decide for yourself. My own view, as I hear again the clatter and chatter of countless canines at conventions down the years, is -- only in size. Seems to me that fine old downhome fannish flavour is just the same as it ever was. The final line of 'My First Real Convention' ran: "I think I like conventions because there are fans there".

members

212	Alan Wilson	292	Hazel Langford
242	J. Perry	293	D'West
243	Simon Baresford	294	Elizabeth Sourbut
244	Peter Colley	295	Jean Maudsley
245	Cath Easthope	296	John Brosnan
246	Ann-Droid	297	Eta De Cicco
247	Larry Dart	298	Pauline Morgan
248	Mike Horsfield	299	Chris Morgan
249	Mary Horsfield	300	Jon Wilkes
250	Lil	301	Geoffrey Pitchford
251	Bacchus	302	Steve Higgins
252	Ann Looker	303	Kim Whysall
253	Ian Bambro	304	Tony Hammond
254	Jacqueline Bexon	305	Tom Shippey
255	Paul Schofield	306	Louise Savage
256	Robin Levy	307	Mark Greener
257	Rowena Levy	308	Rosemary Tracey
258	Alan Beles	309	Anne Wilson
259	Val Wood	310	Andy Challis
260	Stuart Hall	311	Rod Milner
261	M. Hall	312	Lisa Tuttle
262	Gary Sharman	313	Mike Meara
263	Richard Osbourne	314	Pat Meara
264	Brian Haunton	(as at 18/9/84)	
265	John McKeown	GOPHERS: thank you very much to the following people who have kindly volunteered to be gophers: Tim Illingworth Allen Boyd-Newton Sue Thomason Elizabeth Sourbut James Steel Michael Gould David Bell D.M. Sherwood Joe Gibbons Kim Whysall Tony Hammond	
266	Ian McKeown		
267	Lilian Edwards		
268	Mark Caldwell		
269	Phil Link		
270	Joan S. Patterson		
271	Dave Langford		
272	Ian Warner		
273	John Ledson		
274	Mark Hansen		
275	Phil Rogers		
276	Doreen Rogers		
277	Susan Sharp		
278	Anne Cumberlin		
279	Colin Smith		
280	Lee Montgomerie		
281	Tim Smith		
282	S. S. Khara		
283	Neil Thompson		
284	Simon J. Bennett		
285	Cardinal P.D. Cox	This PR was put together by Eunice Pearson, with a lot of help from Steve Green and Phill Probert. Thanks guys. September 1984.	
286	Simon Green		
287	Mike White		
288	Boz		
289	Phil Collins		
290	Bob Shaw		
291	Sarah Shaw		

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