

NOVACON

Eighteen



Progress
Report 2

A SCENE FROM "WITCHWATER COUNTRY"

FANCY

Chairman's Bit

Hello, good evening and this is PR2, containing all the essential ingredients (with added vitamins and minerals) to get you to Novacon. Along with this PR you will find the cheap rail travel form and the Nova Award ballot. Membership is coming along nicely, and the hotel is filling up. If you know of anyone who is intending to come to the convention tell them to join NOW. Remember it is £15 on the door. If you have any problems contact Bernie at the address given.

- TONY BERRY

Novacon 18

Friday 4th - Sunday 6th November 1988.

The Royal Angus Hotel, Queensway, Birmingham, B4. Tel. 021-236-4211.

Overflow: The Grand Hotel, Colmore Row.

For all convention enquiries contact:

Bernie Evans, 7 Grove Avenue, Acocks Green, Birmingham, B27 7UY.

Tel. (evenings) 021-707-6606.

Getting There

BY ROAD.

On the M6, leave at junction 6 (spaghetti junction) sign to "Birmingham Central". This takes you onto the A38(M), the Aston Expressway. Continue until you see a sign "End of Motorway", then move to the right hand lane, which will take you over the Lancaster Circus flyover. At the end of the flyover move to the left hand lane and exit left. The Angus is about 100 yards on the left.

On the M5, you can either stay on the motorway until you reach Junction 6 as above, or leave at junction 3, about 5 miles out of the city centre. Follow the city centre signs, which will take you along Broad Street, leading to the Paradise Circus roundabout. Take the second major exit from this, roughly straight on, onto St. Charles Queensway. Don't go down the underpass but stay in the left hand lane leading to St. Chads Circus roundabout. Turn right, 4th exit, up Snow Hill Queensway to Colmore Circus roundabout. Take 1st exit left off Colmore Circus, Weaman Street. This leads to a back entrance to the Angus car park.

On the A34, A41, A45, you will pass Digbeth and the Bull Ring. Turn right at the St. Martins Circus roundabout on to Moor Street Queensway. Go down the first underpass, but keep left at the 2nd onto Lancaster Circus roundabout. Keep left here onto St. Chads Queensway and continue until you see the Angus on the left.

BY RAIL.

You will arrive at New Street station. If you want to get a taxi, turn left after you go through the ticket barriers and out through the doors at the end. The taxi ranks are there. Cost about £1 - £1.50. If you want to take the bus, go out of the station up the escalators into the shopping centre. Turn left and walk straight ahead until you leave the centre via the ramp down into New Street. Turn right at the bottom and the first bus stop you see is the 101 centrebus. This will take you to the Angus but stops running about 6.00pm. If you want to walk, go straight on at the bottom of the ramp up Corporation Street. Turn left at Old Square into Colmore Circus, down Snow Hill Queensway and the Angus is round the corner on the right.

BY COACH.

You will arrive at Digbeth coach station. You can get a taxi here, cost about £1 - £1.50. For the bus, walk towards the city centre, crossing the road, and turn right to Moor Street station and catch the 101 centrebus as above. After 6.00pm, you walk the same way (or you can limp a little) ignoring the station, under St. Martins Circus, up High Street, bear slightly left up Bull Street which brings you to Colmore Circus. Then go down Snow Hill Queensway, and the Angus is round the corner on the right.

((A word of advice: the pedestrian underpasses in Birmingham are not the safest places in the world, especially after dark. The best way to get to the hotel is undoubtedly by bus or taxi.))

Food and Drink

Breakfast vouchers will again be available for all you late risers/crashers, which can be exchanged in the snack bar for a main course and dessert or sandwiches. Food will be served from 5.00pm Friday until midnight, on Saturday from 11.00am until midnight, and on Sunday from 11.00am until 9.00pm. The restaurant will be open as normal.

If you wish to eat outside the hotel, there are numerous places in Birmingham, and we hope to have a guide to some of them included with the Programme Book.

There are 3 bars in the hotel: the main convention bar, Wimsey's, will open at 3.00pm Friday, 10.00am Saturday and 10.30am Sunday and close when we stop buying. The Wroston bar in the main programme hall will only be open for the Friday night party and the Saturday night disco. The third bar is portable and will open if demand is sufficient. We hope to have draught Guinness and real ale available, which will certainly keep the committee happy if nobody else.

Bookroom and Artshow

There will be a book auction on Saturday. If you have any books/comics/magazines you wish to donate, please bring them along.

If you wish to display material in the Art Show, please contact Bernie. The art auction will take place on Sunday.

Gophers

A convention cannot run smoothly without the help of willing fans. If you want to lend a hand on the day, please tell the person on the registration desk when you arrive. Why sit in the bar talking and drinking when you could be lugging half a ton of equipment around?

Birdseed

Last year Mike Llewellyn organised a Guess how many cornflakes there are in a box competition which was very successful, raising a tidy sum towards the Talking Books. This year he is willing to do the same type of thing, but, using what must be the most tenuous link to Garry Kilworth's books (read "In Solitary"), you will be trying to guess how many seeds there are in a box of Trill. Yes folks, for a mere 20p per go, you have a chance to win a valuable prize. In order to prevent cheating, the size of the box will be announced at the con.

Programme and Films

We've approached this year's programme with two ideas in mind: the first is to put all items into 90-minute slots rather than the usual 60. This is to allow for any panel items that may overspill the normal hour run to carry on to a more natural end, as well as to allow ample time for set-up and trips to the bar between items. The second idea is to "shift" the entire convention to start a little later than the usual Novacon on the Friday evening and to finish a little later than usual on the Sunday evening. This is because we've noticed that the majority of people arrive and check in sometime after their work day on Friday and we'd hate for them to miss our opening ceremony and first panel item. It's also because we want to encourage more people to stay on the Sunday night by programming into the evening followed by a People's Disco. We hope you plan on being there for the entire weekend.

This year's programme itself should provide something entertaining and thought-provoking for everyone. Our guest, Garry Kilworth, will be featured in more than the expected GoH item. He will take part, along with others, in more items: one explores the idea that much of what is being sold and marketed as "Science Fiction" is really fantasy; another panel will take a look at the growing number of anthologies and outlets for short stories in the UK.

On the fannish side of things we have a group to look at the "Stupid Myths and Traditions of Fandom", like "Why does every convention name have to have 'con' in it somewhere?"

Those of you wishing to challenge your skiffy knowledge will have a chance to do so with a repeat of the popular Follycon quiz "Greg Pickersgill and Mike Christie Versus the Rest of the World" in which the unbeatable duo will take on allcomers.

The weekend will conclude with the Sunday Evening Chat Show which will feature, amongst other things, "TAFF Talk" in which Lillian Edwards and Christina Lake talk about their recent trip to the US, and "The Brum Group Remembers" when various Brummies past and present tell us about the deep dark secrets of the long-standing SF group. This is an informal item designed to get an audience/panellist discussion going.

FILMS. This year we have four films to show at Novacon: "THE FLY", "IT'S ALIVE", "IT LIVES AGAIN" and "TERMINATOR". Before anyone dares say the word "horror" I'd like to point out that we have a good science fiction film programme lined up. All too often "science fiction", especially in films, is defined as technological science: space, computers, warfare, artificial intelligence. Medicine, genetics and biology are all sciences too. Just because a film describes a biological possibility rather than a technical one does not make it any less SF.

- GREG AND LINDA PICKERSGILL



The Nova Awards

The NOVA is an award for fanzines produced by *Science Fiction Fandom* in the British Isles. Created in 1973 by the late Gillon Field and presented annually at the Birmingham Science Fiction Group's Novacon, the NOVA was, until 1981, awarded to the editor of the fanzine voted "Best of the Year." Since then there have been two additional NOVAS awarded each year to the fanwriter and fanartist voted "Best of the Year."

For a fanzine to qualify at Novacon 18 *ONE* or more issues must have appeared between 1st October 1987 and 30th September 1988. For fanwriters and fanartists to qualify, a piece of writing or artwork by the person concerned must have been published in a fanzine for the first time between 1st October 1987 and 30th September 1988. For the purposes of this award a "fanzine" is defined as an amateur publication which is concerned with science fiction, fantasy, science fiction and fantasy fans and/or related subjects, copies of which may be generally obtained in exchange for other amateur publications or in response to letters of comment.

The fundamental idea of the NOVA awards is that they should be awarded by informed vote. Informed votes come from informed voters, which for the purposes of these awards are defined as any member of Novacon 18, provided he or she has been active in fanzines in the British Isles in the year terminating on 30th September 1988. "Active in fanzines" is a bit harder to define, but the NOVA committee has decided that "to be active in fanzines" means to have received *SIX* or more fanzines during the relevant year. *Fanzines* in this instance means *different publications* and *NOT* different issues of the same fanzine. The various official organs of a group or society will not be treated as different fanzines for the purposes of this rule.

As of Novacon 18 Pam Wells will be taking over the chores of NOVA administrator, I can only hope that she is more successful than I in persuading the aforementioned "informed voters" to vote. Over the period that I have been administrator (Novacons 15,16,17) although the number of voters has never dropped below 35 (which has been known in previous years) it has never risen above 45. The NOVAS only value is in the fact that they are a reflection of *YOUR* opinions. So make *YOUR* opinions known, use the ballot included with this PR and VOTE!

- MARTIN TUDOR, outgoing NOVA Award Administrator

Any queries about the NOVA Awards should be directed to the new Administrator - PAM WELLS, 24a Beech Rd., Bowes Park, London, N11 2DA.

((Footnote: in a recent fanzine a letter was published which again stated the oft-quoted view that the NOVA award ballot "is stuffed" in order to ensure that "the right person" wins. The rumour is that a group of fans get together and decide who should win and all vote accordingly. So, what's the problem. *THIS IS THE IDEA OF THE BLOODY AWARD*. The ballot is only secret in that a full list of who voted for what is not published. If people vote singly or as a group makes no difference - they are still voting for who they consider to be most deserving, for whatever reason. How else do you stuff a ballot box? Fill in several forms all voting for the same thing. Except that you have to put your name and address on the form. Think this wouldn't be spotted in a ballot where the total number of voters

is about 50? So you use other people's names or fictitious names. Think you'd get this past an administrator who knows virtually every active fan in Britain? As for the suggestion that "those whom the committee thought should win would win", I'm not on the committee, but I can imagine the reply if I was to try and tell a fellow fan who to vote for: it would be short, about seven letters in all. So come on - I have witnessed close-up the running of the NOVA awards for several years and I KNOW that it is run fairly.

- TONY BERRY, CHAIRMAN))

THE NOVA ELIGIBLE FANZINES.

This is as complete a listing as I've been able to produce of the NOVA eligible fanzines over the period 1st Oct.1987 to 30th Sep.1988. The approximate date received is in square brackets on the last line of the entry. This is not meant to be a review column, nor do I pretend that it is a complete or exhaustive listing. It is merely a brief guide to the eligible fanzines which I have received. All fanzines listed are available for "the usual" - which means initially a polite letter and a SAE, and thereafter for trade, contribution or letter of comment.

A FREE LUNCH # 2 & 3 - genzine from Mike Christie and Sherry Coldsmith, Ty Llyn, Llangorse, Powys, Wales, LD3 7UD. [2/88;8/88]

ATU XVIII # 19 - perzine with occasional gaming bias from Trevor Mendham, 30 Urquhart Court, 109 Park Rd., Beckenham, Kent, BR3 1QL. [12/87]

BOGUS # 1 - "a fake fanzine for all you fake fans" from Harry Bond, 6 Elizabeth Way, Bagshot, Surrey, GU19 5NX. [8/88]

THE CAPRICIAN # 1, 2, & 3 - fannish gossipzine/genzine from Lilian Edwards & Christina Lake (addresses as for THIS NEVER HAPPENS below). [1/88;3/88;8/88]

CONCATEINATION #2 - "news and reviews from the year to Easter 1988". Flash-looking annual "newszine" from 44 Brook St., Erith, Kent, DA8 1JQ. [4/88]

CONRUNNER #7 & 8 - the fanzine for fans interested in conventions. From Ian Sorenson, 304a Main St., High Blantyre, Glasgow, G72 0DH. [11/87 & 4/88]

CRYSTAL SHIP # 14 - genzine from John D. Owen, 4 Highfield Close, Newport Pagnell, Bucks., MK16 9AZ. [2/88]

DREAMBERRY WINE - Catalogue/review/newszine from Mike Don, 233 Maine Rd., Manchester, M14 7WG. [1/88;6/88;8/88]

EMPTYIES # 7,8,9 & 10 - genzine available from Martin Tudor, 121 Cape Hill, Smethwick, Warley, W. Midlands, B66 4SH. [11/87;4/88;9/88]

EXPERIMENT # 4½ - small perzine from Mike Gould, 10 Braybrook, Orton Goldhay, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE2 0SH. [4/88]

FANZINE FANATIQUE - fanzine listing and reviewzine from Keith Walker, 6 Vine St., Lancaster, LA1 4UF. [4/88]

GOOD TASTE IS TIMELESS (OR GOOD TIMES ARE TASTELESS) II - a perzine from Owen Whiteoak, Top Flat, 11 Horsell Rd., Highbury, London, N5 1XL. [6/88]

GONZO volume 2 - genzine from Steve Green, 33 Scott Rd., Olton, Solihull, W. Midlands, B92 7LQ. [4/88]

LIP # 3 - genzine from Hazel Ashworth, 16 Rockville Drive, Emsay, Skipton, North Yorks., BD23 6NX. [4/88]

LOGOS # 1 - genzine from Mike Abbott, "Linden", Alhampton, Shepton Mallet, Somerset, BA4 6PY. [4/88]

KAMERA OBSKURA # 1 & 2 - perzine from Owen Whiteoak, (address as for Good Taste is Timeless) [6/88;8/88]

MAVERICK # V, VI & VII - genzine from Jenny Glover, 16 Aviary place, Leeds, LS12 2NP. [1/88;3/88;8/88]

MOMENT'S WAVE # 1, 2 & 3 - letter substitute from John D. Owen (address as for Crystal ship) [1/88;2/88;3/88]

NEW AGE TRUE STORIES - genzine with a perzine atmosphere from Terry Broome, 101 Malham Drive, Lakeside Park, Lincoln, LN6 OXD. [11/87]

NOWHERE FAST # 3 - genzine from Harry Bond (address as for Bogus) [4/88]

PSYCHO APE # 5 - a "fanzine", basically ads for a con and a few gags from P.S.I.F.A. Try PSIFA, c/o Students' Union, Hatfield Poly, Hatfield, Herts. [4/88]

PULP # 6, 7, 8 & 9 - a bi-monthly genzine produced alternately by Vinc Clarke, John Harvey and Avadon Carol/Rob Hansen. Available from Vinc Clarke, 16 Wendover Way, Welling, Kent, DA16 2BN. [11/87;2/88;5/88;7/88]

SCREWED-UP LETTERS III - genzine from Alan Sullivan, Room H3, 53 Eccleston Square, London, SW1V 1PG. [4/88]

SONGS QUARTERLY # 13 - genzine/poetryzine from Pete Presford, "Rose Cottage", 3 Tram Ln., Buckley, Clwyd, N. Wales, CH7 3JB. [3/88]

TASH # 3 - genzine from Tommy Ferguson, 60 Melrose St., Belfast, N. Ireland, BT9 7DN. [2/88]

THE ORGANISM PAPERS and TOES, a litany of pain - bad-taste perzines from Bob 'Fake' Shaw, 3/2 226 Woodlands Rd., Glasgow, G3 6LN. [4/88;11/87]

THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF WOOD - small one-off published in support of Dave Wood's TAFF campaign. From Ron Gemmell, 79 Mansfield Close, Birchwood, Warrington, Cheshire, WA3 6RN. [3/88]

THEN # 1 - fanzine supplement to Rob Hansen's history of British fandom. From Rob at 144 Plashet Grove, East Ham, London, E6 1DX. [4/88]

THIS NEVER HAPPENS # 11 - genzine from Christina Lake, 47 Wessex Ave., Horfield, Bristol, BS7 0DH and Lillian Edwards, 1 Braehead Rd., Thorntonhall, Glasgow, G74 5AQ. [4/88]

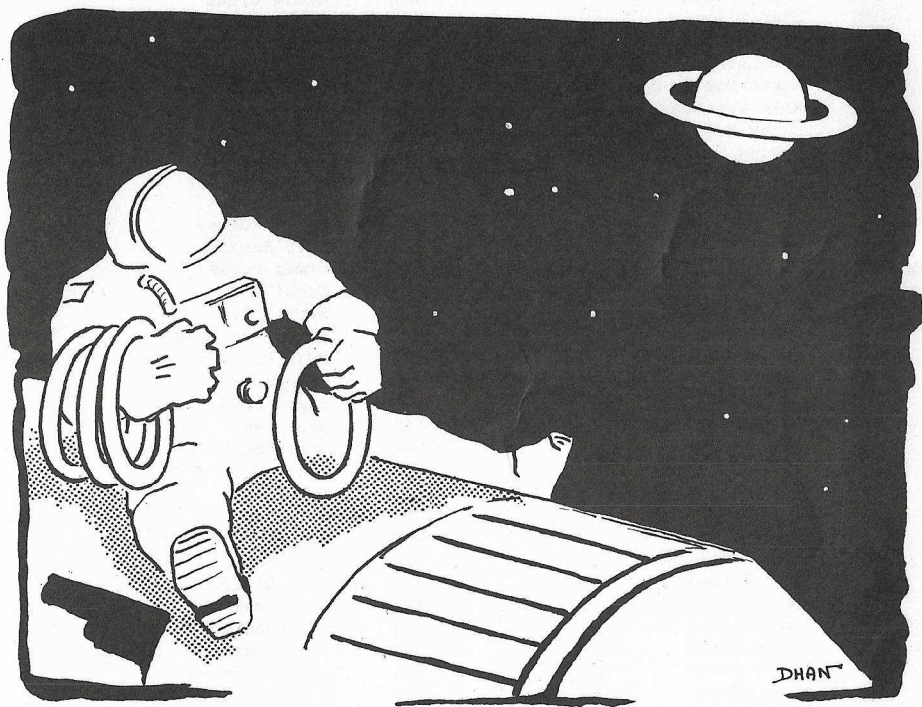
THOUGHTS # 4 - perzine from Mike Lewis, 19 Rusholme Rd., Putney, London, SW15 3JX. [2/88]

TRIPTYCH # 3 - published by John D. Owen (address as for Crystal Ship) on behalf of fans who can't produce their own fanzines due to unemployment or disablement. 3 perzines in one. [5/88]

VILE ANCHORS II, III & IV - perzine from Simon Polley, 152 Woodsley Rd., Leeds, LS2 9LZ. [11/87;2/88;5/88]

V.S.O.P. # 1 & 2 - genzine from Jan Dawes, 18 Buchett Place, Leeds, LS6 2LN. [6/88;7/88]

XYSTER # 13 & 14 - genzine from Dave Wood, 1 Friary Close, Marine Hill, Clevedon, Avon, BS21 7QA. [11/87;4/88]



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.

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Nova Award piece and listing by Martin Tudor.

Programme and film notes by Greg and Linda Pickersgill.

Cartoon on p.5 by Steve Green.

Cartoon on p.9 by "DHAN".

The remainder was written and the whole thing typed and assembled by Tony Berry and his still trusty Amstrad PCW8256.

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