

ansible



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From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE, barbitide, or that bright moment where you learned your doom.

The Star Pit

Oghenechovwe Donald Ekpeki, following heroic efforts by himself and fandom at large, was all set to attend Chicon 8 as a multiple Hugo finalist – only for the US Embassy in Nigeria, on the basis of an interview lasting less than one minute, to refuse him a visa. Outrage ensued; many fans sent pleas to US politicians. A surprise repeat interview on 29 August was successful, with a last-minute visa issued. Then, thanks to the incompetence of the travel agency TravelStart Nigeria, he missed his flight and as *Ansible* goes to press is waiting for another.... (Twitter, *passim*)

Eric Flint's widow Lucille Robbins is closing down 1632 Inc., the holding company for the shared world he created, which has an unsustainable load of debt. 'We have not issued any new contracts for either Ring of Fire Press or the Grantville Gazette since the day Eric died, and we cannot do so at this time. If you have written a 1632 novel and published it through Ring of Fire Press, you will likely be a creditor in the proposed bankruptcy of 1632, Inc. Reversion letters for rights to non-1632 works are being prepared.' (Baen's Bar forum, 14 October) [MJL]

James Joyce is rarely credited as a science fiction prophet, but it seems that he either predicted a major subfandom decades in advance or was translating from the original Klingon: 'All the time he kept on treasuring with condign satisfaction each and every crumb of trektalk, covetous of his neighbour's word ...' (*Finnegans Wake*, 1939) [JH]

Vonda McIntyre (1948-2019) made a surprise appearance as an Alternate History Novel finalist in the US Dragon Con's 2021-2022 Dragon Awards, with *The King's Daughter* – a 2021 film-tie reissue of her 1997 fantasy *The Moon and the Sun*, which won a Nebula as best novel in 1998.

Philip Pullman decreed: 'I don't care how many people enjoy it, fiction in the present tense is an ABDICATION OF NARRATIVE RESPONSIBILITY. I resent having to re-calibrate my entire attitude to time whenever I open a novel in the present tense. Away with them!' (Twitter, 18 August)

Salman Rushdie was attacked and repeatedly stabbed when about to address an audience in New York State on 12 August. He was flown to hospital and two days later reported as out of danger, though with 'life-changing' injuries. The would-be murderer Hadi Matar pleaded not guilty and admitted to having read only two pages of Rushdie's offending (to some) novel *The Satanic Verses*. (BBC, various reports from 12 August)

Harry Turtledove was banned from Twitter in August for responding forcefully and of course rudely to a Nazi troll who called this Jewish sf author an antisemite. After many protests his account was restored.

Contemnor

1-5 Sep • **Chicon 8** (80th Worldcon), Chicago, IL, USA. Online registration for physical attendance has closed. See chicon.org for day rates.

1-4 Sep • **Oxonmoot** (Tolkien Society), St Anne's, Oxford. £100 reg (members £90); child £50 (members £45); online £50 (members £40). See www.tolkienociety.org/events/oxonmoot-2022.

3 Sep • **Whooverville 13** (*Doctor Who*), QUAD Centre, Derby, DE1 3AS. Tickets £55; concessions £38; under-12s £10; online booking at www.derbyquad.co.uk/Whooverville13.

6-7 Sep • **The Past as Nightmare** (conference), U of Reading. See research.reading.ac.uk/health-humanities/event/the-past-as-nightmare/.

CANCELLED. 10 Sep • **International Comic Expo (ICE)**, Edgbaston Stadium, Birmingham. See internationalcomicexpo.wordpress.com.

10 Sep • **Popcorn** (media), Magna, Sheffield. Tickets £10; under 17s £8; family (2 adult, 2 children) £30. See popcorncon.com.

17-18 Sep • **Fantasycon 2022**, Radisson Red, Heathrow. Smaller replacement for former 16-19 September event. £65 reg (BFS members £55). See www.britishfantasysociety.org/fantasycon/fantasycon-2022.

24-25 Sep • **Nor-Con** (media), Norfolk Showground Arena. £39 reg; under-14s £19; other rates at www.nor-con.co.uk. No tickets at the door.

1 Oct • **CovCon** (media), Sports Connexion, Ryton. Tickets £11; under-16s £6; under-5s free. Details at covcon.uk.

6-9 Oct • **Grimmfest** (film), Odeon Great Northern, Manchester. Tickets £110 plus booking fee. See grimmfest.com.

14-16 Oct • **Lakes International Comic Art Festival**, Kendal,

Cumbria. Tickets £25 (£15 concessions) at www.comicartfestival.com.

15-16 Oct • **Octocon**, Croke Park, Dublin. €60 reg; concessions €40; YA or supp €20. Registration open at octocon.com.

22-23 Oct • **Surrey Steampunk Convivial**, Stoneleigh, Epsom. See bumpandthumper.wixsite.com/steampunkconvivials.

4-6 Nov • **Armadacon 2022**, Future Inns, Plymouth. First GoH James BURGESS. £35 reg; £30 concessions. More at www.armadacon.org.

27 Nov • **Stars of Time** (media), Tropicana, Weston-super-Mare. 10am-4:30pm. £9; under-12s, OAP and disabled £5; under-4s free. Family of 2+2 children £22; 2+3 £24. See www.starsovertime.co.uk.

3-6 Feb 2023 • **Scotiacon** (furry), Crowne Plaza Hotel, Glasgow. £100 reg. Registration opens on 4 September at www.scotiacon.org.uk.

CANCELLED. 24-26 Feb 2023 • **Redemption** (multimedia), was Royal Victoria Hotel, Sheffield. See redemptioncon.org.uk for future plans.

25 Mar 2023 • **East of England Comic Con and Gaming Festival**, East of England Arena, Peterborough. 10am-4:30pm. Tickets from £13.75 (inc fee). See www.facebook.com/events/732634787956163/.

28-31 Jul 2023 • **Continuum** (RPG), John Foster Hall, Manor Road, Leicester University, Oadby. See continuumconvention.co.uk.

Rumblings. In August, NI fans inspected The Hilton Lanyon Place in Belfast and International Conference Centre next door as the likely venue for a future Eastercon with 800-900 attendees. Updates to follow. [TF] • **Worldcon 2023**, Chengdu: still only a bare minimum of information, and no detectable way to buy a membership, at www.worldconinchina.com. • **Worldcon 2028**: Kamcon 2028 is a bid to hold Worldcon in Kampala, Uganda, with dates 23-27 August – see kamcon.org for details.

Infinitely Improbable

AI Research News. A CEO explains: 'There are a lot of people in our industry who struggle to tell the difference between science fiction and real life.' (*NY Times*, 5 August) [MMW] Can *Ansible* readers do better?

Awards. *J.F. Gonzalez Lifetime Achievement* (splatterpunk): Clive Barker. [TM] • *Munsey* (pulp): Rick Lai. • *Seiun* (Japan) for translated novel: *Project Hail Mary* by Andy Weir, translated by Kazuko Onoda.

There Can Be Only One. Agatha Christie still stalks the earth, with the rapacious estate now issuing legal threats against Val McDermid's publisher for book jackets describing McDermid as the Queen of Crime: 'We have trademarked this expression.' (*The Scotsman*, 29 August) 'It's just astonishingly pitiful,' grumbled She Who Must Not Be Described.

The Weakest Link. *Steve Wright*: 'Johnny Weissmuller died on this day. Which jungle-swinging character clad only in a loincloth did he play?' *Contestant*: 'Jesus.' (Radio 2, *Steve Wright in the Afternoon*) [JBU] • *Ulrika Jonsson*: 'Who wrote *Lord of the Rings*?' *Contestant*: 'Enid Blyton.' (BBC1, *Dog Eat Dog*) [JBU] • Earlier in the year it had been revealed that the 1955-1956 radio version of *LOTR* – duly erased by the BBC – caused one listener to complain, 'If we must occupy the Third Programme with fairytales then let us have Enid Blyton.' (*Guardian*, 12 March) [AR]

R.I.P. *Aleksandr Bachilo* (1959-2022), award-winning Russian sf and fantasy novelist who also co-scripted three sf tv series, died on July 2. [AM] • *Raymond Briggs* (1934-2022), much-loved UK illustrator and graphic novelist whose books include *Father Christmas* (1973, a Kate Greenaway Medal winner), *Fungus the Bogeyman* (1977), *The Snowman* (1978), *When the Wind Blows* (1982, filmed 1986) and *Ug: Boy Genius of the Stone Age* (2001), died on 9 August aged 88. He was honoured as CBE in 2017. [PS-PJ] • *Jack Calvert* (1941-2022), US Bay Area fan, long-time LASFAPA member and Corflu regular, died on 14 August. [PC] • *Peter Davison* OBE (1926-2022), UK academic who was an authority on Orwell – publishing a biography and editing the 1998 *Complete Works* and others – died on 16 August aged 95. • *Charlbi Dean* (1990-2022), South African actress in *Death Race: Inferno* (2013), *Don't Sleep* (2017) and *Black Lightning* (2018), died on 29 August aged 32. [SJ] • *Rosa de Castilla* (1932-2022), Mexican singer and actress who co-starred in *The Hell of Frankenstein* (1960), died on 1 August aged 90. [SJ] • *Joseph Delaney* (1945-2022), UK author best known for the 'Wardstone Chronicles' YA horror/fantasy series opening with *The Spook's Apprentice* (2004), died on 16 August aged 77. [SF²C] • *Corrine De Winter*, US short-story author and

poet active in small press genre magazines since 1992, whose verse collection *The Women at the Funeral* (2004) won a Bram Stoker award, died in late August. [SJ] ● **Denise Dowse** (1958-2022), US actress in *Starship Troopers* (1997), *Dr. Dolittle 2* (2002), *Killer Rats* (2003) and various genre tv series, died on 13 August aged 64. [SJ] ● **Lamont Dozier** (1941-2022), US composer and songwriter whose many film soundtrack credits include *X-Men: Days of Future Past* (2014), *The Witches* (2020) and *Last Night in Soho* (2021), died on 8 August aged 81. [LP] ● **Ralph Eggleston** (1965-2022), Oscar-winning US animator and designer at Pixar, whose films include *Monsters, Inc.* (2001), *Finding Nemo* (2003), *WALL-E* (2008) and *Inside Out* (2015), died on 28 August aged 56. [SJ] ● **Oliver Frey** (1948-2022), Swiss-born UK artist whose genre work included *The Trigan Empire in Look and Learn*, book and *Fear* magazine covers, and *Dan Dare* in the 1980s *Eagle* revival, died on 21 August aged 74. [PDF] ● **Graziella Galvani** (1931-2022), Italian actress in *Ghosts of Rome* (1961), died on 25 August aged 91. ● **Cherie Gil** (1963-2022), Filipino actress in *Bruka: Queen of Evil* (1973), *Immortal* (1989), *Darna: The Return* (1994), *The 13th Chapter* (2000), *Lastikman* (2004), *Mana* (2014) and *Magikland* (2020), died on 5 August aged 59. [SJ] ● **Vincent Gil** (1939-2022), Australian actor in *Mad Max* (1979), died on 21 August aged 83. [PDF] ● **Robyn Griggs** (1973-2022), US actress in *Zombiegeddon* (2003), *2020: An American Nightmare* (2005) and other low-budget horror films, died on 13 August aged 49. [SJ] ● **Clu Gulager** (1928-2022), US actor in *Return of the Living Dead* (1985), *Nightmare on Elm Street 2* (1985) and *Feast* (2005 plus sequels), died on 5 August aged 93. [LP] ● **Anne Heche** (1969-2022), US director, screenwriter and actress in *Superman: Doomsday* (2007), *Toxic Skies* (2008), *The Legend of Korra* (2014) and *Aftermath* (2016), died on 12 August aged 53. [LP] ● **Eric L. Hoffman** (1944-2022), US fan and scholar of sf/horror/monster films who wrote the 'Professor Gruebeard' column in *Famous Monsters of Filmland*, died on 27 August after injuries in a house fire. [SS/F770] ● **James G. Hickenpöhler** aka 'Professor Archimedes Q. Porter', US fan and scholar of Edgar Rice Burroughs who appeared frequently in *ERBzine* and compiled a Barsoom glossary, died in late August. [PDF] ● **Alun Tegai Hughes** (1960-2022), UK fan who was active in the Cambridge University SF Society 1979-1981 as librarian and then chair, and later involved in assembling the (Jack) Vance Integral Edition, died on 19 July. [DH] ● **Gene LeBell** (1932-2022), US wrestler and judo expert who did stunt work for many productions including three *Planet of the Apes* films (1968-1972) and *Spider-Man 2* (2004), died on 9 August aged 89. [SJ] ● **Sombat Metanee** (1937-2022), once hugely prolific Thai actor/director seen in *Krasue Sao* aka *Ghost of Guts Eater* (1973), *Bionic Heroes* (1977), *Kraithong* (1980) and others, died on 18 August aged 85. [SS] ● **Bruce Montague** (1939-2022), UK actor in *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* (1970), *The Thief of Baghdad* (1978) *Whoops Apocalypse* (1982) and *Olympus Force: The Key* (1988), died on 16 August aged 83. [SJ] ● **Roger E. Mosley** (1938-2022), US actor whose films include *Terminal Island* (1973) and *Cruise into Terror* (1978), died on 7 August aged 83. [LP] ● **Marshall Napier**, New Zealand-born actor in *The Girl from Tomorrow* (1991-1992), *Babe* (1995), *Griff the Invisible* (2010), *Little Monsters* (2019) and others, died on 14 August aged 70. [SJ] ● **Olivia Newton-John** (1948-2022), UK-born Australian singer and actress in *Toomorrow* (1977), *Xanadu* (1980) and *Sharknado 5* (2017), died on 8 August aged 73. [LP] ● **Tom Palmer** (1941-2022), US illustrator who was a long-time inker for Marvel Comics (beginning with *Doctor Strange* in 1968 and including *Avengers*, *Star Wars* and *X-Men*) and others, died on 18 August aged 81. [PDF] ● **Alexei Panshin** (1940-2022), US author who won the fan writer Hugo in 1967 and the Nebula for his first novel *Rite of Passage* (1968), died on 21 August aged 82. [GF] He was one of the pioneers of thoughtful sf criticism with *Heinlein in Dimension* (1968), the magnum opus here being the Hugo-winning *The World Beyond the Hill* (1989) with his wife Cory Panshin, who survives him. The 'Anthony Villiers' sf comedies beginning with *Star Well* (1968) have many admirers – including your editor – who wish the projected seven-book series hadn't stopped at three. ● **Virginia Patton** (1925-2022), US actress in *It's a Wonderful Life* (1946), died on 18 August aged 97. [LP] ● **Wolfgang Petersen** (1941-2022), German director whose films include *The Neverending Story* (1984), *Enemy Mine* (1985), *Outbreak* (1995) and *Bicentennial Man* (1999, as producer), died on 12 August aged 81. [AIP] ● **Gerald Potterton** (1931-2022), UK/Canadian director and animator with credits for *Yellow Submarine* (1968), *Heavy Metal* (1981), *George and the Christmas Star* (1985) and *Ghost Ship* (1988), died on 24 August aged 91. [LP] ● **Lily Renée** (1921-2022), Austrian-born US Golden Age comics artist whose titles included the supernatural series 'The Werewolf Hunter', died on 24 August aged 101. [PDF] ● **William Reynolds** (1931-2022), US actor in *Cult of the Cobra* (1955), *The Land Unknown* (1957), *The Thing That Couldn't Die* (1958) and others, died on 24 August aged 90. [SJ] ● **Richard**

Roat (1933-2022), US actor in *Westworld* (1973), *Almost Heaven* (1978), *Heart and Souls* (1993) and many genre tv series, died on 5 August aged 89. [MMW] ● **Jeanne Steig**, US artist and author of retold myths and fairy tales for children – often illustrated by her husband William Steig (1907-2003) of *Shrek* fame – died on 26 July aged 92. [PDF] ● **John Steiner** (1941-2022), UK actor whose films include *Dracula in the Provinces* (1975), *Yor: The Hunter from the Future* (1983) and *Sinbad of the Seven Seas* (1989), died on 31 July aged 81. [AIP] ● **Joe E. Tata** (1936-2022), US actor in *Terror out of the Sky* (1978) and various genre tv series including *Batman* (1966-1968), died on 24 August aged 85. [LP] ● **Josephine Tewson** (1931-2022), UK actress in *The Troublesome Double* (1972), *The Strange Case of the End of Civilization as We Know It* (1977) and *Gabrielle and the Doodlemans* (1984), died on 18 August aged 91. [JBA] ● **Dave Tompkins** (1951-2022), UK fan who worked on many conventions since Seacon '79 – usually art show setup, teardown and storage of display panels between events – died on 8 August aged 71. He won the 2002 Doc Weir award. [JHar/CM] ● **Leon Vitali** (1948-2022), UK actor in *Terror of Frankenstein* (1977) who was personal assistant to Stanley Kubrick for *The Shining* (1980) and others, died on 20 August aged 74. [PDF]

The Dead Past. 20 Years Ago: 'Terry Pratchett's old PC keyboard, on which he was practically certain he'd written a novel or three, aroused interest at the Discworld Convention charity auction: "It's probably got my DNA on it," Terry pointed out, and the bidding ran up to £125.' ● From a heavily researched *Independent* article about giant squid taking over the world: 'Most people are familiar with the opening lines of Tennyson's *The Kraken Wakes*, either through the original or via John Wyndham's 1953 thriller, *The Day of the Triffids*.' (*Ansible* 182, September 2002) ● **100 Years Ago**, Gerrard Hickson published *Kings Dethroned* (1922), showing all astronomy to be 'an amazing series of blunders founded upon an error made in the second century B.C.' and proving to the author's great satisfaction that the distance to the Sun is at most 13,000 miles and that to the Moon 'no more known today than it was at the time of the flood'. Moreover, 'no star is at any time further than twenty thousand miles away.'

Publishers and Sinners. Tom Doherty Associates, the US publisher best known for Tor and such related imprints as Tordotcom and Tor Teen, has been rebranded as the Tor Publishing Group. (Tor.com, 8 August)

Random Fandom. **Rob Hansen** was bemused to find two of the four issues of his 1988-1993 fanhistorical fanzine *Then* (long superseded by a revised and expanded book version) offered on AbeBooks for \$99.75. ● **Andy Porter** fell and broke his arm on 11 August: he's recovering and posting online but had to cancel his Worldcon plans. [AIP] All sympathy.

Fanfunder. **TAFF:** to the stupefaction of some and the crogglement of others, Kevin Smith has made a bold strike for the Guinness Book of Records by publishing his 1982 TAFF report online – a 40-year delay that beats the late Steve Stiles's 39 years from trip to publication. There is *Nothing* to read – that's the title – at: kevsmith.co.uk/taff-trip/.

Magazine Scene. *Daily Science Fiction* (dailysciencefiction.com) is closed to submissions and will go into stasis at the end of 2022. [F770]

Editorial. The massive *SF Encyclopedia* benefit volume *Genre Fiction: The Roaring Years* by *SFE* founding editor Peter Nicholls was released in August – see ae.ansible.uk/?t=roaring for paperback/ebook purchase details. ● **TAFF Library:** our latest ebook is *The Compact Ella Parker*, Rob Hansen's compilation of this UK fan's best writing other than *The Harpy Stateside* (2021 ebook). See taff.org.uk/ebooks.php?x=Compact. *Temple at the Bar* by Bill Temple is another of our occasional paperback reissues of TAFF ebooks, with all proceeds to TAFF: see ae.ansible.uk/?id=taff.

Thog's Masterclass. *Dept of Deceptive Appearances.* 'He did not look middle-aged, he did not feel middle-aged and in fact he was not middle-aged.' (Peter Saxon, *The Guardians #2 – Dark Ways to Death*, 1968) [BT] ● **Pop Art Dept.** 'The colors of the buildings struck him between the eyes.' (F. Paul Wilson, *Gateways*, 2003) [BA] ● **Eyeball Power.** 'He putted away, propelled by the weight of dozens of eyes on his back.' (*Ibid*) [BA] ● **Jacketed, Not Stirred.** 'Horace was ordering two dry martinis, handsome and composed in a white dinner jacket.' (Helen Reilly, *Lament for the Bride*, 1951) [BT] ● **Neat Tricks.** 'He pulled a forelock that wasn't there subserviently.' (*Ibid*) [BT] 'His ears shadowed George out the door far below.' 'Mr. Josef oozed across the hall.' 'Mr. Josef poured himself around the edge of the door and inside.' (all from Charlotte Armstrong, 'Three-Day Magic', *F&SF*, September 1952) [CG]

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