

Ansible



Ansible® 401 December 2020

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: Harry Bell, 'Wisp'. Available for SAE or the precise whereabouts of the surplus population.

The Five Staves

Wendy Aldiss's Kickstarter fundraiser for *My Father's Things*, a lavish photobook of Brian Aldiss memorabilia, reached and passed its £6,800 target on 2 November. She thanks the *Ansible* readers who helped.

Anthony Burgess, in a verse first published in the huge *Collected Poems* (out this month), warned his audience: 'Advice: don't read / A Clockwork Orange – it's a foul farrago [two lines nervously omitted here] Read Hamlet, Shelley, Keats, Doctor Zhivago.' (*Guardian*, 8 November)

Adam-Troy and Judi Castro lost their home in November owing to identity thieves who drained their savings and hijacked mortgage payments. A Gofundme campaign to keep them afloat has raised more than \$35,000, but they're still having to live expensively in hotels.

Nigella Lawson, famous tv cook, embraced her inner fan by comparing a dish in preparation to *gagh* – 'That's a Klingon delicacy.' Which is made from serpent worms, preferably served live. Er um. [LW]

Robert Macfarlane, UK author and academic, was asked what book he couldn't finish: 'Frank Herbert's *Dune*. Wild landscapes, weird nature, science fiction – this really should be my jam. But no; the violence came to sicken me by halfway through, as did aspects of the politics. So I junked it.' (Interview, *New York Times*, 19 November) [AIP]

Sheree Renée Thomas will replace C.C. Finlay as editor of *The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction* as of the March/April 2021 issue. Gordon Van Gelder continues as publisher. (3 November) [GVG]

Bud Webster (1952-2016) has a new memorial: the SFWA Legacy Kit, helping authors – not only SFWA members – organize their literary estates. See www.sfwaweb.org/member-links/projects/estate/legacy-kit/.

Coniopterygidae

ONLINE. 3 Dec • **Virtual First Thursday**, 6-10pm, replacing the usual London pub meeting. See tinyurl.com/uow6hqn.

ONLINE. 5 Dec • **Dragonmeet** (gaming), normally held in London. 9am-midnight. Further details at www.dragonmeet.co.uk.

ONLINE. 8-13 Dec • **Sci-Fi London** film festival. See sci-fi-london.com; details of added talks and panels at sci-fi-london.com/events/.

9 Dec - Aug 2021 • **Fantastic Beasts: The Wonder of Nature** (exhibition), Natural History Museum, London. £22. See www.nhm.ac.uk/visit/exhibitions/fantastic-beasts-the-wonder-of-nature.html.

ONLINE. 11-12 Dec • **Grimmfest Xmas Horror Nights** (film); see xmahorror nights.eventive.org/welcome for details.

ONLINE. 17 Dec • **Virtual Christmas Meeting**, 6-10pm, replacing the usual extra London pub meeting. See tinyurl.com/uow6hqn.

ONLINE. 13 Feb 2021 • **Tolkien Society Seminar**. See www.tolkiensociety.org/events/tolkien-society-seminar-2021-no-1/

POSTPONED AGAIN. 19-21 Feb 2021 • **Satellite 7**, Glasgow. *New dates 21-23 May 2021*. GoH Alette de Bodard and Margaret Walty. £70 reg (£80 at the door); under-25s £60; under-18s £20; under-12s £5; under-5s £2. Day: £20 Fri, £35 Sat or Sun. See seven.satellitex.org.uk.

POSTPONED. 18-21 Mar 2021 • **Eurocon 2021**, Fiuggi, Italy. *New dates 15-18 July 2021*. €50 reg; see eurocon2021.it.

POSTPONED. 26-28 Mar 2021 • **Corflu 38**, Mercure Holland Hotel, Bristol. *New dates 5-7 November 2021*. £50/\$60 reg. FAAn Awards ceremony and business meeting still on 28 March, via Zoom. See corflu.org.

Rumblings. *Worldcon 2021*: DisCon III is exercising its option to add an extra, temporary category to the Hugo awards: Best Video Game.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others Avoid Us. Fareed Zakaria on genre preferences: 'I read everything, except for fantasy and horror. The latter I find particularly pointless. Why pay money to be scared? There is one exception, Stephen King, who writes so well that I will on rare occasions overcome my resistance.' ('By the Book' interview, *New York Times*, 6 November) [JB]

Awards. *Goldsmiths Prize* of £10,000 for mould-breaking fiction written and published in the UK or Eire: *The Sunken Land Begins to Rise Again* by M. John Harrison. [L] 'Harrison [...] has described the novel as not "science fiction or folk horror or psychogeography, but it contains

parodic elements of all three, and more".' (*Guardian*, 11 November) • *Mystery Writers of America Grand Masters* now include Charlene Harris.

• *Rotsler Award* for life achievement as fan artist: Alan White.

Publishers and Sinners. Harlan Ellison's literary executor J. Michael Straczynski promised that the long-stagnant anthology *The Last Dangerous Visions* – announced in Ellison's introduction to *Again, Dangerous Visions* (1972) as coming in six months – would be completed and ready for submission to publishers in Spring 2021. (Twitter, 13 November) The many stories cited in past contents lists but withdrawn and often published elsewhere will not be included; others unspecified are to be dropped; new fiction never seen by Ellison will be added; as to whether any Ellison story introductions (regarded as highlights of *DV* and *A, DV*) were actually written for *TLDV*, there is a great silence. • Of course Chris Priest was asked to comment.... (*Guardian*, 16 November)

As Others See Us. John Wain noted that C.S. Lewis 'developed in later years a telltale interest in science fiction, which is usually a reliable sign of imaginative bankruptcy.' ('A Great Clerke' in *C.S. Lewis at the Breakfast Table* ed. James T Como, 1979) [VS] • *Pauline Kael on 2001*: 'It's fun to think about Kubrick really doing every dumb thing he wanted to do, building enormous science-fiction sets and equipment, never even bothering to figure out what to do with them... maybe some people love 2001 just because Kubrick did all that stupid stuff, acted out a kind of super sci-fi nut's fantasy.' (*Harper's Magazine*, February 1969) [MMW]

R.I.P. *Joseph Altairac* (1957-2020), French sf scholar who published books on Wells and van Vogt, the fanzine *Lovecraftian Studies*, and (with Guy Costes) *Rétrofiction* (2018), a two-volume encyclopedia of Franco-phone genre fiction, died on 9 November aged 63. [SJ] • *Carol Arthur* (1935-2020), US actress whose Mel Brooks films include *Dracula: Dead and Loving It* (1995), died on 1 November aged 85. [SHS] • *Charles (Chuck) Bail* (1935-2020), US actor, director, stuntman and stunt arranger whose credits include *The House of Seven Corpses* (1974) and *Knight Rider* (1985-1986), died on 25 November aged 85. [SJ] • *Ben Bova* (1932-2020), US editor and prolific author who began publishing sf with *The Star Conquerors* (1959) and won the Campbell Memorial Award for *Titan* (2006), died on 29 November aged 88. He edited *Analog* 1971-1978 – winning six Hugos as best pro editor – and *Omni* 1978-1982. • *Vittorio Catani* (1940-2020), Italian author whose sf career began in 1962 and whose novel *Gli universi di Moras (The Universes of Moras)* won the first Urania Prize in 1990, died on 23 November aged 80. [PDF] • *Mila del Sol* (1923-2020), Filipino actress whose genre credits include *Prinsipe Teñoso* (1942) and *Rosalca* (2010), died on 10 November aged 97. [AW] • *Tony Eastman* (1942-2020), US artist and animator whose credits include *Courage the Cowardly Dog* (1999-2002) and *Harvey Birdman, Attorney at Law* (2002-2003), died in early November. [PDF] • *Sean Ellis* (1966-2020), UK fan and con-goer long active in the Reading SF Group and Hampshire Sceptics, died on 21 November. [MY] • *Janet Ann Gallow* (1937-2020), former US child actress best known as the little girl abducted by the monster (Lon Chaney Jr) in Universal's *The Ghost of Frankenstein* (1942), died on 13 November aged 83. [SJ] • *Eddie Hassell* (1990-2020), US actor in *Surface* (2005-2006) and *2012* (2009), died on 1 November aged 30. [MMW] • *David Hemblen* (1941-2020), UK actor in *Brainscan* (1994), *X-Men: The Animated Series* (1992-1997, voicing Magneto), *Earth: Final Conflict* (1997-2002), *Rollerball* (2002) and others, died on 16 November aged 79. [SHS] • *Jery Hewitt* (1949-2020), stuntman and stunt arranger with many genre credits from *Wolfen* (1981), *C.H.U.D.* (1984) and *Ghostbusters II* (1989) to *The Tomorrow People* (2013-2014) and *Forever* (2014-2015), died on 21 November aged 71. [LP] • *Michael Z. Hobson* (1936-2020), US comics publisher who had been executive vice president of Marvel, died on 12 November aged 83. [PDF] • *Kenneth V. Jones*, US actor in *Phantasm* (1979) and – via recycled footage – its 2016 and 2017 sequels, died on 6 November aged 90. [SJ] • *Johnny Kevorkian* (1972-2020), Cyprus-born director of *Await Further Instructions* (2018) and *The Disappeared* (2018) died on 4 November aged 48. [SHS] • *Yasumi Kobayashi* (1962-2020), Japanese author of sf, mystery and horror active since 1995, died on 23 November aged 58. [PDF] • *Akira Kubodera* (1977-2020), Japanese actor

best known for *Pretty Guardian Sailor Moon* (2003-2004), died on 13 November aged 43; suicide was suspected. [PDF] ● *Tom La Farge* (1947-2020), US author whose first novel was the animal fantasy *The Crimson Bears* (1993), died on 22 October. [GF/HW] ● *Miriam Dyches Carr Knight Lloyd*, US fan active in the 1950s and 1960s with fanzines including various 'Goojje Publications' titles as Dyches or Carr, *Klein Bottle* and later issues of *Fanac* with her first husband Terry Carr, and *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to Poughkeepsie* with her second husband Jerry Knight, died on 23 October. [RL] ● *Kay McCauley*, US literary agent at Aurous (founded by her late brother as Kirby McCauley Ltd) whose authors included Ramsey Campbell, Gardner Dozois, George R.R. Martin and Melinda Snodgrass, died on 1 November. [MS] ● *Anita Mason* (1942-2020), UK author of the historical fantasy *The Illusionist* (1983) and the dystopian sf *The War Against Chaos* (1988), died on 8 September aged 78. [DP] ● *Jan Morris* (1926-2020), acclaimed UK travel writer and historian whose genre or genre-adjacent book was *Last Letters from Hav* (1985; expanded 2006 as *Hav*), died on 20 November aged 94. [PDF] ● *Kirby Morrow* (1973-2020), Canadian actor whose very many credits include *Mobile Suit Gundam Wing* (English versions 1995-1997), *Ninja Turtles: The Next Mutation* (1997-1998), *Stargate: Atlantis* (2005-2008) and *Transformers: Cybertron* (2006-2006), died on 18 November aged 47. [SJ] ● *Daria Nicolodi* (1950-2020), Italian actress and writer seen in many horror films from *Deep Red* (1975) and *Suspiria* (1977), which she co-scripted to *Mother of Tears* (2007), died on 26 November aged 70. [SG] ● *John O'Brien*, US founder of the Dalkey Archive Press which published many fantastic works (often in translation) including the collected short fiction of Flann O'Brien – from whose *The Dalkey Archive* the press took its name – died on 21 November aged 75. [PDF] ● Late report: *Dennis O'Neil* (1939-2020), US author whose first novel was *The Bite of Monsters* (1971) and who wrote various Batman novelizations and scripted such Marvel titles as *Spider-Man*, *Iron Man* and *Daredevil*, died on 11 June aged 81. [RHo] ● *Geoffrey Palmer* (1927-2020), UK actor in *Doctor Who* and *the Silurians* (1970) and *Stig of the Dump* (2002), died on 6 November aged 93. [AW] ● *Hayford Peirce* (1942-2020), US author active since 1974, whose first novel was *Napoleon Disintegrated* (1987), shot himself on 19 November; he was 78. His wife Wanda Zhang Peirce was found dead – also shot – at the same address. [SHS] ● *David Prowse* (1935-2020), UK actor whose films include *The Horror of Frankenstein* (1970), *A Clockwork Orange* (1971), *Vampire Circus* (1972), *Frankenstein and the Monster from Hell* (1974), *Jabberwocky* (1977), *The People That Time Forgot* (1977) and the first *Star Wars* trilogy (1977-1983), died on 29 November aged 85. [SG] ● *Elsa Raven* (1929-2020), US actress in *The Amityville Horror* (1979) and *Back to the Future* (1985), died on 3 November aged 91. [LP] ● *Luke Rhinehart* (George Powers Cockcroft, 1932-2020), US author best known for *The Dice Man* (1971), who also wrote several sf novels, died on 6 November aged 87. [JL] ● Late report: *Suzanne Roquette* (1942-2020), German actress in *Space: 1999* (1975-1976) and *Iliana Jones and the Last Crusade* (1989), died on 28 May aged 77. [S] ● *José Montalbán Saiz*, Spanish movie-poster artist whose best known poster was for *Pánico En El Transiberiano/Horror Express* (1972), died on 25 October aged 94. [SJ] ● *John Sessions* (1953-2020), Scots actor and comedian whose genre credits include *The Sender* (1982), *Whoops Apocalypse* (1986), *Gormenghast* (2000), *Doctor Who: 'Death Comes to Time'* (2001-2002), *Five Children and It* (2004) and *Jonathan Strange & Mr Norrell* (2015), died on 2 November aged 67. [SG/PE] ● *Herbert F. Solow* (1930-2020), US tv executive who while at Desilu Studios sold the original *Star Trek* series (which credited him as 'executive in charge of production') to NBC and *Mission Impossible* to CBS, died on 19 November aged 89. He co-wrote *Inside Star Trek: The Real Story* (1996). [F770] ● *Ken Spears* (1938-2020), US producer and screenwriter who with Joe Ruby (1933-2020; see A398) co-created *Scooby-Doo* and *Electra Woman and Dyna Girl* (1976) and whose credits include *Planet of the Apes* (1974 tv) and *Bigfoot and Wildboy* (1977-1979), died on 6 November aged 82. [PDF] ● *Philip Voss* (1936-2020), UK actor whose credits include *Doctor Who* (1964; 1968), *Frankenstein and the Monster from Hell* (1974), *Octopussy* (1983), *The Lord of the Rings* (1981 radio) and *About Time* (2013), died on 13 November aged 84. [AIP] ● *Richard C. West* (1944-2020), Tolkien scholar who published *Orcrist 1966-1977* and edited *Tolkien Criticism: An Annotated Checklist* (1970), died on 29 November aged 76. [AIP] ● *Sven Wolter* (1934-2020), Swedish actor in *The Sacrifice* (1986) and the Michael Crichton-based *The 13th Warrior* (1999), died on 10 November aged 86. [AW]

As Others Appreciate Us. A good word from Shaun Bythell's enjoyably grumpy *Seven Kinds of People You Find in Bookshops* (2020): 'A postscript brings the tally up to nine with a description of *Clieus perfectus* (Perfect Customer). Among the subtypes in this vanishingly

small contingent are the ingenuously passionate readers whom Bythell prizes above the misers, time wasters and poseurs. He has nothing but love for the collectors of books about steam locomotives, rare editions of modern fiction, and – in their uniform of black T-shirt and white trainers – science-fiction fans.' (*Guardian* review, 11 November) [SL] How did I survive all those decades in sf fandom while shockingly out of uniform?

Court Circular. SFWA and Alan Dean Foster launched their campaign #DisneyMustPay on 18 November. Since Disney took over publishing rights to ADF's multiple *Alien* and *Star Wars* novelizations in 2015, the books continue to be sold but the royalties specified in the contracts are no longer paid. As SFWA grimly puts it, 'Disney's argument is that they have purchased the rights but not the obligations of the contract. In other words, they believe they have the right to publish work, but are not obligated to pay the writer no matter what the contract says. If we let this stand, it could set precedent to fundamentally alter the way copyright and contracts operate in the United States. All a publisher would have to do to break a contract would be to sell it to a sibling company.' See www.sfwaworld.com/2020/11/18/disney-must-pay/.

Doctor Who and the Kipper. A storyline new to fans, was created by BBC house style (no italics or quotes for titles) in their Geoffrey Palmer obit. Next words: 'and the Corpse episode of Fawltly Towers.' [BB]

Magazine Scene. *Starburst* magazine announced that because of pandemic-induced distribution problems the printed issue #476 – expected in November – is on hold until April 2021. Meanwhile, online and video updates should continue at starburstmagazine.com. [SG]

The Dead Past. *20 Years Ago:* 'David Eddings chilled our blood in a Del Rey newsletter interview: "The first thing a fantasist needs to do is to invent a world and draw a map. Do the map first." Silly old Tolkien, starting with languages!' (*Ansible* 161, December 2000) ● 'Recent research into the catchphrase of Discworld's Librarian led to a possible literary source. James Joyce, *Ulysses*, 1922, p424 of Penguin Modern Classics edition: "Ook." Terry Pratchett comments: "Dunno. Never read more than a few pages of Joyce – thought he was a berk.'" (*Ibid*) ● *90 Years Ago*, a UK item that should have run in A399: 'The first meeting of our first fan group was held in Ilford on 27th October 1930.' [RHg]

Publishers and Sinners II. Penguin Random House (i.e. Bertelsmann) plans to buy the Simon & Schuster publishing imprint from ViacomCBS for \$2.18 billion. (*Publishers Weekly*, 25 November)

Fanfundery. TAFF: John Coxon's report on his 2011 TAFF tour – titled *Best. Trip. Ever.* – was published last month as a paperback and ebook, with all proceeds to the fund. See taff.org.uk/#Nov2020. ● Coming soon to the free ebooks library: *The Harpy Stateside* by UK fan Ella Parker, whose unfinished report of a long 1961 US/Canadian trip is here expanded by Rob Hansen with others' published tales of her travels; *Atom Abroad*, Arthur (Atom) Thomson's lively 1964 TAFF trip report; and the immense *Ansible Second Series 2011-2020* (issues 282-401).

Random Fandom. *Greg Ketter* of DreamHaven Books in Minneapolis was assaulted – along with his employee Ryan – and robbed on 9 November; the miscreants escaped pursuit. '2020,' he wrote philosophically, 'is just the gift that keeps on giving.' (Facebook) [MJL] ● *Outworlds 71/Afterworlds*, a 500+ page memorial to *Outworlds* editor Bill Bowers (1943-2005) was published in November by a US collective and sent to his entire mailing list. It's \$20 via Amazon with proceeds to the fan funds. Is this monster huger than the legendary Walt Willis issue of *Warhoon*? Not quite; that's 616pp and weighs nearly a pound more....

Tjog's Plasterclass. *Male Gaze Dept.* 'With each breath she took, her breasts swelled out through the cloth, nodding wisely at me.' (Ledru Baker Jr, *Brute Madness*, 1961) [RWS] ● *Mission Statement.* 'I shall ride the galaxy on wings of flame, my fleet of starships fuelled and powered by my discovery. I shall rule as no man has ever ruled, and you want me to give up that for the empty praises of cowardly fools?' (Volsted Gridban [E.C. Tubbs], *Fugitive of Time*, 1953) [BA] ● *Big Science Dept.* "Is this the great invention?" "Part of it, the rest is a complex mathematical equation impossible to duplicate." ● "... a blast of energy which will literally jerk the electrons and neutrons from their orbits.' (*Ibid*) [BA] ● *Trouser Racing.* 'He pulled on his clothes as she scrambled to do the same.' (Jane Jordan, *The Beekeeper's Daughter*, 2016) [RC] ● *The Last Dangerous Horticulture.* '... her nipples are like man-devouring flowers...' (Frederick Turner, *A Double Shadow*, 1978) [BA]

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