



Ansible® 419 June 2022

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 or sightings of isons, nisons, null-nisons, isotrons or phlogistons.

The Discovery of the Nullitron

Neil Clarke of *ClarksWorld* had what one might call a senior moment on hearing from ‘someone who believes I’m “too old to be editing one of the leading science fiction magazines” and that I should “get out of the way” so someone younger can do it.’ (Facebook, 27 May) Neil Clarke is about 13 years younger than the suddenly worried editor of *Ansible*.

Jo Fletcher is leaving Jo Fletcher Books, the Quercus sf/fantasy/horror imprint that she founded in 2011, but will continue to edit some of her long-standing JFB authors. (*The Bookseller*, 27 May) [AIP]

Ncuti Gatwa, Rwandan-Scots actor in *Sex Education*, is to follow Jodie Whittaker as *Doctor Who*’s Fourteenth Doctor. (News from all media outlets everywhere, including pirate websites that subtly change their plagiarized stories: ‘14th Physician of “Physician Who”’ – Twitter, 8 May)

Susie Haynes told *Fantast Three* customers that she has sold off her stock of genre books and will close down the no longer financially viable US magazine import service (*Analog*, *Asimov’s*, *F&SF*) after sending the July/August issues to subscribers. This ends a long family tradition: her father Ken Slater set up *Operation Fantast* in 1947 and traded as *Fantast (Medway) Ltd* from 1955 until his death in 2008. [MA]

Mercedes Lackey, SFWA’s latest Grand Master, was ‘removed’ from the Nebula Conference after a panel in which she described Samuel R. Delany as coloured rather than Black. (SFWA, 22 May) Two days later she posted an apology for this ‘mental/verbal stumble’. (Tumblr, 24 May).

Alan Pattillo, a director of *Thunderbirds* (1965-1966), explained: ‘I don’t count *Thunderbirds* as science-fiction. It’s too nice, its values are too human... science-fiction is a cold description for such warm-hearted stuff.’ (Quoted in Marcus Hearn’s *Thunderbirds: The Vault*, 2015) [CM]

Conatus

3-5 Jun • **Cymera SF Festival 2022**, Edinburgh and online. £80 in person; £50 digital. See www.cymerafestival.co.uk.

ONLINE. 6-10 Jun • **Anthropology, AI and the Future of Human Society** (conference). £150; BSFA members £90; £45 concessions. See tinyurl.com/ys5xxuy3. Account setup required to get registration form.

14 Jun - 2 Oct • **Bryan Talbot’s Luther Arkwright** (exhibition), Cartoon Museum, 55 Wells St, London. See www.cartoonmuseum.org.

25 Jun • **British Fantasy Society Jubilee** online Zoom event. 10am-6pm. Tickets £5; members free. See tinyurl.com/ycy5tpzx.

CANCELLED. 25 Jun • **Orion@40**, Southend. See www.orionat40.com.

25-26 Jun • **Steampunk Weekend**, Belvoir Castle, Grantham. £22; under-17s £10; family £55. See belvoircastle.com/steampunk-weekend/.

3 Jul • **Tolkien Society Seminar**, Leeds Hilton and online. Free. See www.tolkienociety.org/events/tolkien-society-seminar-2022/.

SOLD OUT. 10 Jul • **Forever Avon (Blake’s 7)**, Steventon Village Hall, Steventon, Oxon. See www.facebook.com/TeamBlakeForeverAvon.

13-17 Jul • **Once and Future Fantasies** (conference), Centre for Fantasy, University of Glasgow. £225 reg; £98 concessions. See fantasy.glasgow.ac.uk/index.php/onceandfuturecon/.

15-17 Jul • **Lavecon** (gaming), Kents Hill Park, Milton Keynes. Many ticket options from £21 per day at www.hwsevents.co.uk/shop-1.

CANCELLED. 5-7 Aug • **TitanCon**, Belfast. Cancellation first announced on Facebook (27 May); memberships to be refunded. See titancon.com.

SOLD OUT. 19-22 Aug • **Discworld Convention**, Hilton Metropole, Birmingham NEC. £85 reg, £60 concessions. Waiting list at dwcon.org.

23-28 Aug • **Outdoor Cinema**, Barbican, London. Includes sf and fantasy. See barbican.org.uk/whats-on/2022/series/outdoor-cinema-0.

26-29 Aug • **The Asylum** (steampunk), Lincoln. Weekend tickets now on sale at £48; under-17s £24; day rates at asylumsteampunk.co.uk.

1-5 Sep • **Chicon 8** (80th Worldcon), Chicago, IL, USA. \$240 reg; first Worldcon \$145; under-25s \$110; other rates unchanged. *Hugo voting opened in late May, and the voter packet is available*. See chicon.org.

6 Oct - 4 May • **Science Fiction** (exhibition), Science Museum, London. £20; over-60s £19; concessions £18. See www.sciencemuseum.org.uk/see-and-do/science-fiction. *With associated £4,000 sf debut prize*: see www.sciencemuseum.org.uk/science-fiction-debuts-writing-prize.

28-30 Oct • **Festival of Fantastic Films**, Pendulum Hotel, Manchester. £105 reg. Day rates at the new website: fantastic-films.uk.

17-19 Feb 2023 • **Sci-Fi Ball** (media), Southampton. Tickets from £145 (£35 child) plus various more expensive options at scifiball.com.

31 Mar to 2 Apr 2023 • **Corflu Craic**, Malone Hotel, Belfast. £50/\$60 reg; £15/\$20 supp. See corflu.org/Corflu40/C40-PR1.pdf.

7-10 Apr 2023 • **Star Wars Celebration** (media), ExCel, London. Further details are awaited at starwarscelebration.com.

20-23 Oct 2023 • **Irish Discworld Convention**, Cork International Hotel, Cork. €75 reg; €55 concessions; under-17s €20. See idwcon.org.

29 Mar - 1 Apr 2024 • **Levitation** (Eastercon), Telford International Centre. *Now £115 reg; £50 concessions; £35 supporting; all memberships include virtual access*. See eastercon2024.co.uk.

31 May - 2 Jun 2024 • **FunCon One**, Palace Hotel, Buxton. £55 early-bird membership, perhaps rising very soon. See funcon.lol.

Rumblings. *London First Thursday*: pub closed 2 June for the Jubilee bank holiday. Virtual Zoom meeting only, as on third Thursdays.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others Provoke Us. ‘... suggesting that A-level physics is more difficult than A-level maths, which girls are much more likely to study than they are physics, is a good way to provoke a fight at a science fiction convention ...’ (Stephen Bush, *Financial Times*, 3 May) [MMW]

Awards. *Bram Stoker*, selected categories: NOVEL *My Heart Is a Chainsaw* by Stephen Graham Jones. DEBUT *Queen of Teeth* by Hailey Piper. YA *The River Has Teeth* by Erica Waters. GRAPHIC *The Inhabitant of the Lake* by Alessandro Manzetti and Stefano Cardoselli. COLLECTION *In That Endlessness, Our End* by Gemma Files. ANTHOLOGY *When Things Get Dark* ed. Ellen Datlow. [F770] See file770.com/2021-bram-stoker-awards/ for the full list. • *First Fandom Hall of Fame*: George W. Price. [CP] • *Kate Wilhelm Solstice Awards* (SFWA): Arley Sorg, Troy L. Wiggins and Petra Mayer. • *Nebulas*: NOVEL *A Master of Djinn* by P. Djèli Clark. NOVELLA *And What Can We Offer You Tonight* by Premea Mohamed. NOVELETTE ‘O2 Arena’ by Oghenechovwe Donald Ekpeki (*Galaxy’s Edge* 11/21). SHORT ‘Where Oaken Hearts Do Gather’ by Sarah Pinsker (*Uncanny* 3/21). ANDRE NORTON (YA etc) *A Snake Falls to Earth* by Darcie Little Badger. DRAMATIC *WandaVision* Season 1. GAME WRITING *Thirsty Sword Lesbians*. [SFWA]

Publishers and Sinners. Borderlands Press recently reprinted three Arthur Machen stories as *A Little Brown Book of Unnatural Narratives* by – embossed in gold on the front cover – Robert W. Chambers. [BA]

As Others Classify Us. Olga Ravn’s *The Employees* is reportedly different from other skiffy works: ‘Gnommic and elliptical where most science fiction is expository ...’ (*New York Review of Books*, 5 May) [JB]

R.I.P. *Neal Adams* (1941-2022), noted US comics artist who drew such DC characters as Batman, Deadman, Green Arrow, Green Lantern and The Spectre – and also worked for Marvel – died on 28 April aged 80. [JC] He entered the Will Eisner and Jack Kirby Halls of Fame in 1998 and 1999 respectively. • *Marshall Arisman* (1938-2022), US artist who illustrated *Omni* 1978-1990 and created cover art for several genre books, died on 22 April aged 83. [SJ] • *John Aylward* (1946-2022), US actor whose genre credits include *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles III* (1993), *Armageddon* (1998) and *The Crazies* (2010), died on 16 May aged 75. [AIP] • *Joanna Barnes* (1934-2022), US actress who co-starred in *Tarzan*, *The Ape Man* (1959), died on 29 April aged 87. [LP] • *David Birney* (1939-2022), US actor in *Oh, God! Book II* (1980), *Nightfall* (1988) and many genre tv series, died on 29 April aged 83. [SJ] • *Colin Cantwell* (1932-2022) US visual effects and concept artist whose credits include *2001* (1968), *Star Wars* (1977, ship and Death Star designs) and *WarGames* (1983), died on 21 May aged 90. [SF²C] • *John Cherry* (1948-2022), US director of the often fantastical ‘Ernest’ comedies – including *Dr. Otto* and *The Riddle of the Gloom Beam* (1985) – died on 8 May aged 73. [PDF] • *Pamela Chillemi-Yeager*, author of short fiction since 1989 and co-editor of *Fantasque* 1999-2004, reportedly died in early May. [PDF] • *Robert C. Cornett* (1952-2022), US author whose sf includes the ‘Time Mercenaries’ and ‘Seeds of War’ series – both with Kevin D. Randle – died on 1 April aged 69. [L] • *Dan Deckert* (1952-2022), former Los Angeles fan who was

active in LASFS (as president, director and chair of Loscon 1982), APA-L (with hundreds of issues of *Entropy*) and SCIFI, died on 8 May. [F770] ● *Sergey Dyachenko* (1945-2022), Ukrainian author – in the US since 2013 – who with his wife Marina published 33 sf/fantasy novels in Russian, died on 5 May aged 77. [AM] ● *Milton Gonçalves* (1933-2022), Brazilian actor whose genre credits include *Xuxinha and Guto Against the Space Monsters* (2005) and *Crashing Into the Future* (2018), died on 30 May aged 88. ● *Mike Hagerty* (1954-2022), US actor in *Space Truckers* (1996), *Inspector Gadget* (1999), *The Spy Who Shagged Me* (1999) and various tv series, died on 29 April aged 67. [SJ] ● *Ronnie Hawkins* (1935-2022), US actor in *Meatballs III* (1986) and *Prom Night II* (1987), died on 29 May aged 87. [LP] ● *Bo Hopkins* (1942-2022), US actor in *Mutant* (1984), *Phantoms* (1998) and *From Dusk Till Dawn 2* (1999), died on 28 May aged 80. [LP] ● *Jossara Jinaro* (1973-2022), Brazilian actress in *GB: 2525* (2009) and *Cucuy: The Boogeyman* (2018), died on 27 April aged 48. [SJ] ● *Jack Kehler* (1946-2022), US actor whose films include *Serpent's Lair* (1995), *Waterworld* (1995), *The Spy Who Shagged Me* (1999), *Men in Black II* (2002) and *Book of Days* (2003), died on 7 May aged 75. [SJ] ● *Andrzej Korzyński* (1940-2022), Polish composer whose sf music credits include *Mr. Blob in the Universe* (1988) and *On the Silver Globe* (1988), died on 18 April aged 82. [SJ] ● *Maja Lidia Kossakowska* (1972-2022), Polish fantasy author who published five novels and many short stories, died on 23 May aged 50. [PDF] ● *Carlos Emilio Corrêa Lima* (1956-2022), Brazilian magic realist author whose work often included SF themes, died on 2 April aged 65. [L] ● *Ray Liotta* (1954-2022), US actor in *Field of Dreams* (1989), *Muppets from Space* (1999), *Muppets Most Wanted* (2014), died on 27 May aged 67. [JB] ● *Patricia A. McKillip* (1948-2022), highly regarded US fantasy author who won her first World Fantasy Award for *The Forgotten Beasts of Eld* (1974) and received the World Fantasy life achievement award in 2008, died on 6 May aged 74. Her Riddle-Master trilogy, opening with *The Riddle-Master of Hed* (1976), is an acknowledged genre classic. [L] ● *Bruce MacVittie* (1956-2022), US actor in *The Stand* (1994 tv) and *Vibes* (1988), died on 7 May aged 65. [LP] ● *Gavin Millar* (1938-2022), Scots producer and director whose credits include the Carroll/Alice *Dreamchild* (1985) and the Iain Banks adaptations *The Crow Road* (1996) and *Complicity* (2000), died on 20 April aged 84. [AIP] ● *James Olson* (1930-2022), US actor in *Moon Zero Two* (1969), *The Andromeda Strain* (1971), *Strange New World* (1975) and genre tv series, died on 17 April aged 91. [LP] ● *Robin Parkinson* (1929-2022), UK actor who narrated the children's sf series *Button Moon* (1980-1988), died on 7 May aged 92. ● *George Pérez* (1954-2022), noted US comics artist who worked for DC (*Crisis on Infinite Earths*, *New Teen Titans*, *Wonder Woman*) and Marvel (two runs of *Avengers*, *Infinity Gauntlet*, others), died on 6 May aged 67. [GVG] He entered the Eisner Hall of Fame in 2017. ● *Kailia Posey* (2006-2022), US actress in *Eli* (2019), committed suicide on 3 May; she was 16. [LP] ● *Alexander Rybalka* (1966-2002), Israeli fantasy (three novels) and mystery author, died on 5 May. [AM] ● *Atanas Slavov* (1947-2022) Bulgarian fan and novelist who won three Eurocon awards for fan activity, died on 6 May. [AM] ● *Vangelis* (1943-2022), Greek composer and musician whose soundtrack credits include *Blade Runner* (1982) and *Vampire in Venice* (1988), died on 17 May aged 79. [LP] ● *Fred Ward* (1942-2022), US actor in *Timerider* (1982), *Tremors* (1990), *Cast a Deadly Spell* (1991), *Chain Reaction* (1996) and *The Crow: Salvation* (2000), died on 8 May aged 79. [LP] ● *Dennis Waterman* (1948-2022), UK actor in *Scars of Dracula* (1970) and *Tube Mice* (voice, 1988), died on 8 May aged 74. [PDF] ● *Kenneth Welsh* (1942-2022), Canadian actor in *Twin Peaks* (1990-1991), *The Day After Tomorrow* (2004), *The Fog* (2005) and *Survival of the Dead* (2009), died on 5 May aged 80. [LP] ● *Alan White* (1949-2022), long-time drummer with the prog-rock band Yes – known for songs with sf/fantasy/mystical themes – died on 26 May aged 72. [LP]

As Others Research Us. ‘See Aldiss’s history of sci-fi, *Trillion Year Spree* (2001), and his novel, *Prometheus Unbound* (1973).’ (Professor John Sutherland, *Frankenstein’s Brain*, 2018)

Whitby Horror. The mass gathering of vampire impersonators at Whitby Abbey on 26 May set a new Guinness world record with 1,369 participants, beating the previous maximum of 1,039. (BBC, 27 May) A UK government spokesman complained that in view of our promised return to imperial measurements, the figure should be written MCCCLXIX.

Yo-Ho-Ho. SFWA warned its members in late May that someone with access to the ‘private’ insiders-only online directory had scraped all available information – addresses, phone numbers, social media accounts, etc. etc. – and released it on an undisclosed public site. [F770] What fun!

As Others See Us. On a survey which found that in terms of children’s library checkouts sf (though in short supply) is far more popular than ‘realistic fiction’, with fantasy somewhere in between: ‘In my survey, librarians and teachers said that they recommend science fiction to

individual readers but rarely use it in group storytimes or lessons. They feel that the genre is too hard and polarizing; it’s either very popular or very unpopular among children. Several even avoid the term “science fiction” when recommending the books, for fear that it might deter a potential reader!’ (*Publishers Weekly Children’s Bookshelf*, 29 April) [PL]

Award Shortlists. *Mythopoeic:* ADULT. Katherine Addison, *The Witness for the Dead*; Ryka Aoki, *Light from Uncommon Stars*; P. Djèli Clark, *A Master of Djinn*; Susanna Clarke, *Piranesi*; Garth Nix, *Terciel and Elinor*; Jo Walton, *Or What You Will*. CHILDREN’S Sayantani DasGupta, ‘The Kiranmala and the Kingdom Beyond’ trilogy; Regina Hansen, *The Coming Storm*; Lori M. Lee, *Pahua and the Soul Stealer*; Eden Royce, *Root Magic*. SCHOLARSHIP – INKLINGS Paul S. Fiddes, *Charles Williams and C. S. Lewis: Friends in Co-inherence*; John Garth, *The Worlds of J.R.R. Tolkien: The Places that Inspired Middle-earth*; Peter Grybauskas, *A Sense of Tales Untold: Exploring the Edges of Tolkien’s Literary Canvas*; Holly Ordway, *Tolkien’s Modern Reading: Middle-earth Beyond the Middle Ages*. SCHOLARSHIP – OTHER Philip Ball, *The Modern Myths: Adventures in the Machinery of the Popular Imagination*; Hadas Elber-Aviram, *Fairy Tales of London: British Urban Fantasy, 1840 to the Present*; Daniel Ogden, *The Dragon in the West: From Ancient Myth to Modern Legend*; Ebony Elizabeth Thomas, *The Dark Fantastic: Race and the Imagination from Harry Potter to The Hunger Games*; Joseph Rex Young, *George R.R. Martin and the Fantasy Form*. ● *Orwell Prize* (political fiction): genre finalists are *Cwen* by Alice Albinia and *The High House* by Jessie Greengrass. [L]

Random Fandom. *The Eye of Argon* by Jim Theis (1953-2002) could surely hold no more surprises; but part 1 of a sequel was published in a 1972 fanzine whose editor is now selling PDF scans on Etsy. [DS] ● *Ben Yalow* became a co-chair of the 2023 Chengdu Worldcon, which tweeted about this and other overseas staff appointments on 24 April. [F770]

The Dead Past. 80 Years Ago, those who had paid one shilling to join the new British Fantasy Society (no relation to the present one) included Forrest J Ackerman, Ken Bulmer and William F. Temple; E.J. ‘Ted’ Carnell was elected President. (*BFS Bulletin* 1, 18 June 1942) ● 60 Years Ago, Ethel Lindsay was announced as the first female TAFF winner. Also: ‘Big split in Gerfandom at the moment. Franz Rottensteiner wrote a series of articles criticizing the standard of translations from English and American sf stories and was immediately boycotted by many clubs. Many German club-leaders, it appears, write books for lending libraries and have vested interests in the matter.’ (*Skyrack* 43, June 1962). ● 30 Years Ago, Frederik Pohl deplored the official acceptance of backward-looking fantasy authors into SFWA, now renamed Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America: ‘Sf is the very literature of change. In fact, it’s the only such literature we have; and as such it really deserves to have its own, unshared institutions. Pity it doesn’t.’ (*SF Chronicle* quoted in *Ansible* 59, June 1992)

Fanfundery. TAFF: Mike Lowrey’s return from his European trip to the US was delayed by a week after a positive COVID test, happily allowing him to attend the May First Thursday pub meeting in London. ● TAFF *Free Ebooks:* Rob Hansen’s 1957: *The First UK Worldcon* – a stirring saga that includes fan politics, dirty tricks, the controversial ‘Snog in the Fog’ bidding slogan, transatlantic contact, deeply squalid London hotel rooms, psionics, a tea-drinking contest, a mock gunfight and a lawsuit – is now downloadable in the usual formats at taff.org.uk/ebooks.php?x=1957.

Editorial. Apart from *Ansible*, the regular workload here is mostly book/ebook projects (see TAFF just above) and maintenance of the *SF Encyclopedia*, whose Department of Not Very Interesting Statistics reveals that the word count passed 6,500,000 on 30 May. Also in preparation is an ‘Ansible Link’ news digest column requested for the forthcoming *Interzone*, whose previous double issue 290/291 appeared in late June 2021.

Chog’s Masterclass. Yoga Dept. ‘Kayla came back to me at the trail’s edge, where I knelt in the rain with my head between my knees.’ (Jae Steinbacher, ‘The Angel’s Call’, May/June 2022 *F&SF*) [TS] ● *Too Much Information?* ‘They crossed to the docking field just as the planet was coming into view, a veiny gas giant like an infected testicle crawling up the horizon ...’ (Adrian Tchaikovsky, *Eyes of the Void*, 2022) [AC] ● *Mysteries of Anatomy.* ‘Pits parted the sinewy hair.’ (Peter Newman, *The Deathless*, 2018) [AR] ● *Bounded in a Nutshell Dept.* ‘Oktav was groping like a man shut in an infinite closet.’ (Fritz Leiber, *Destiny Times Three*, 1957) [AR] ● *The Pernicious Influence of Picasso.* ‘Kirk turned his head and his eyes moved to the right side of his face.’ (C.J. Boyle, *The Adventures of Kirk Rogers Inside the Moon*, 2017) [SaS]

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