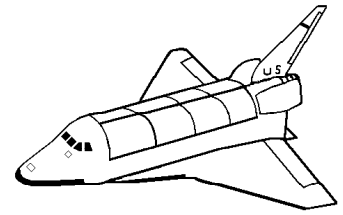


The



SHUTTLE February 2001

*The Next NASFA Meeting is 17 February 2001
at the Regular Time and New Regular Location*

RIP: Rick Shelley and Gordon Dickson

by Mike Kennedy

The last week of January brought the sad news of two deaths among noted sf writers. Richard Michael (Rick) Shelley died Saturday 27 January 2001 of liver and kidney complications following a heart attack two weeks earlier while attending Chattacon. Gordon R. Dickson died Wednesday 31 January 2001 at his home of complications from asthma.

Rick Shelley had undergone emergency bypass surgery at Erlanger Hospital near downtown Chattanooga following the heart attack. Shortly after that he was moved to Vanderbilt University Hospital in Nashville, where he was waiting for an opportunity for a heart transplant. He died before that could happen. Cards may be sent to his mother, Hazel Shelley, at 153 Old Clover Hill Road, Marysville TN 37803.

Gordon Dickson had suffered from asthma for many years, the effects of which had gradually reduced his travel schedule until he was almost housebound for the past several years. His family has asked that those wishing to make contributions in his memory send them to the SFWA Emergency Medical Fund, 1436 Altamont Avenue, PMB 292, Schenectady NY 12303-2977.

Oyez, Oyez

The next NASFA meeting will be **17 February 2001** at the **regular time** (6P) and the **new regular location** — BookMark on South Memorial Parkway. Call the store at 256-881-3910 if you need directions.

The editorial email address for the *Shuttle* has changed again — this time to **<nasfa.shuttle@con-stellation.org>**. In theory this will be the permanent email address for the *Shuttle*, surviving changes in personal email addresses and editors.

The **program** at the **February meeting** will be “Hobbies.” Come prepared to talk about your favorite hobby — you can even bring items for show and tell. The **After-The-Meeting Meeting** will be at Nancy Cucci and Ray Pietruszka’s house. We need ATMM volunteers for future months.

The loss of two such lights in our field within less than a week is tragedy enough to touch each of us. We here in Huntsville are additionally affected in that both of these fine gentlemen had been Guests of Honor at Con†Stellation — Dickson at Con†Stellation III in 1984 and Shelley at Con†Stellation XIV in 1995. Both of them will be greatly missed. Additional information can be found via the news page of the SFWA web site < www.sfw.org/news/news.htm >.

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Deadline for the March 2001 issue of *The NASFA Shuttle* is Friday, 2 March 2001.

NASFA Calendar

FEBRUARY

- 02 Groundhog Day.
 08 BD: Lin Cochran.
 09 BD: Jack Lundy.
 10 BD: Marcia Illingworth.
 11 BD: Jeanna Woosley.
 12 BD: Abraham Lincoln.
 14 St. Valentine's Day.
 17* NASFA Meeting — 6P Business, 7P Program, at BookMark. ATMM at Ray Pietruszka and Nancy Cucci's house.
 17 BD: Nancy A. Cucci.
 19 Presidents' Day.
 21 BD: Susan Stockell.
 22 BD: George Washington.
 25 BD: Nicholas Mitchell.
 28 Ash Wednesday.

MARCH

- 02 BD: Ronnie Lajoie.
 08 BD: Bill Payne.
 09 BD: Tracey Kennedy.
 10 BD: Kerry Gilley.
 13 BD: Anita Eisenberg.
 15 BD: Carlo DeShouten.
 17 St. Patrick's Day.
 17* NASFA Meeting — 6P Business, 7P Program, at BookMark. ATMM TBD.
 22 BD: Jayson Woosley.
 21–25 22nd International Conference on the Fantastic in the Arts — Ft. Lauderdale FL.
 22–25 AggieCon 32 — College Station TX.
 23–25 GalactiCon 2001 — Chattanooga TN.
 23–25 MidSouthCon 19 — Memphis TN.
 30 BD: Maurine Dorris.

APRIL

- 01 April Fool's Day.
 01 Daylight Savings Time begins.
 03 BD: Kevin Ward.
 08 Palm Sunday.
 12–15 Fantasm 2001 — Atlanta GA. Adults only.
 13 Good Friday.
 14* NASFA Meeting — 6P Business, 7P Program, at BookMark. ATMM TBD. **NOTE that this meeting was moved a week earlier to accommodate Kubla Khan.**
 15 Easter.
 15 BD: "Uncle Timmy" Bolgeo.
 16 Income Taxes due.
 20–22 Kubla Khan 30 — Nashville TN.
 21 BD: Randy B. Cleary.
 22 Earth Day.
 26 BD: Chloe Airoldi.
 27–29 Nebula Awards Banquet Weekend — Westwood CA.
 30 BD: Mark Maxwell.

MAY

- 03 BD: Martha Knowles.
 13 Mothers' Day.
 14 BD: Debbie Hughes.

- 16 BD: Linda Bolgeo.
 18–20 Roc*Kon 2001 — Little Rock AR.
 19 BD: David O. Miller.
 19 Armed Forces Day.
 19* NASFA Meeting — 6P Business, 7P Program, at BookMark. ATMM TBD.
 20 BD: Mike Glicksohn.
 24–27 SFRA 2001 — Schenectady NY.
 25–27 LibertyCon 15 — East Ridge (Chattanooga) TN.
 25–27 Oasis 14 — Orlando FL.
 25–28 World Horror Convention — Seattle WA.
 27 BD: Kathy Paulk.
 28 Memorial Day.

OoOoOoOoOoOoOoOoOoOoOoOoOoOoOoOoOoOoOo

The North Alabama Science Fiction Association meets on the third Saturday of each month. (Unless there is a large nearby convention being held that weekend — in which case we usually hold the meeting on the second or fourth weekend.) As of January 2001 the regular meeting location is the upstairs meeting room at BookMark on South Memorial Parkway. The Executive Committee meeting (if scheduled) is held at 5P. The business meeting is held at 6P. The program begins at 7P. Anyone is welcome to attend any of the meetings. There is usually an after-the-meeting meeting with directions available at the program.

January Minutes

by Samuel A. Smith, Back Again

The January meeting of the North Alabama Science Fiction Association was called to order on Saturday, January 20, 2001 in the upstairs meeting room at BookMark at 6:15P by President Mary Ortwerth. The incoming president came equipped with both gavel and crickets.

ANY BUSINESS

Randy Cleary is still soliciting programming ideas for future meetings.

Mike Kennedy has photos of the New Millennium's Eve party.

Digression: Smoking vs. non-smoking tables in the meeting room?

NEW BUSINESS

Randy Cleary is organizing a regular Fourth Saturday Dinner and a Movie. Give Randy your name and contact information if you're interested!

Randy has flyers for upcoming cons and a Bob Eggleton art book.

Robin Ray noted that, with our new meeting room, we are no longer handicapped accessible. (Digression: Elevators and vacuum cleaners.)

Is Pat McAdams bringing pizza each month?

There was no Rick Shelley update as of meeting time. (We have since learned that he died while awaiting a heart transplant.)

Dues are due!

There was a nice review of Con†Stellation by Julie Wall in the latest *SFC Bulletin*.

Anita Eisenberg made a motion to remove Mike Stone from the NASFA board of directors (since he has moved out of town and rarely comes to any club functions any more). The motion was seconded by Doug Lampert. After some discus-

sion, the motion was put to the vote and passed 8–1 with 2 abstentions. It was noted that we said nice things about him as we were booting him out. Due to restrictions in the By-Laws, any new director cannot be elected until the February 17, 2001 NASFA meeting at the earliest.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:42P. The program was on by Randy Cleary on *Zines*. The After-The-Meeting-Meeting was held at Mike Kennedy's place, to help finish off the remains of the New Millennium's Eve party. [And even *then* we didn't finish it all. -ED]

Huntsvillians Win DUFF Vote

The vote totals for the 2001 Down Under Fan Fun have been announced with Huntsvillians Naomi Fisher and Patrick Molloy being the winners. Pat and Naomi will travel to Swancon, which will be held 13–15 April 2001 in Perth, Australia. They will also serve as North American administrators of the fund until a new North American delegate is elected two years hence. The vote totals announced are:

	Australia	US	Total
Naomi Fisher and Patrick Molloy	3	89	92
Steven Silver	9	28	37
No preference	3	17	20
Hold Over Funds	1	6	7
Write-Ins	2	5	7
	----	----	----
Total	18	145	163

Award News

2000 Sapphire Award Winners

The Fifth annual Sapphire Award for the Best Science Fiction Romance of the Year (December 1999–November 2000) was announced in the January 2001 *Science Fiction Romance* newsletter. This award is voted on by readers of the newsletter.

Novel Length

First place — *Heir to Govandhara* by Saira Ramasastry
 Second place — *The Veiled Webby* by Catherine Asaro
 Third place — *Star-Crossed* by Marilyn Byerly

Short Fiction

First Place — *“Love’s Prisoner”* by Mary Janice Davidson
 Second Place (3-way tie) — *“A Roll of the Dice”* by Catherine Asaro, *“Gambit”* by Linnea Sinclair, and *“Ghost of Love”* by Jane Toombs

For more information, visit the Science Fiction Romance website < <http://members.aol.com/sfreditor/> >.

BSFA Awards Shortlist Announced

The short list for the 2000 British Science Fiction Association Awards has been announced. The BSFA Awards are voted on by the membership of the British Science Fiction Association and the membership of the annual British National Science Fiction Convention (Eastercon). Results will be announced Sunday 15 April 2001 at Paragon, the 2001 Eastercon in Leicestershire England.

Best Novel

Perdido Street Station by China Mieville
redRobe by Jon Courtenay Grimwood
Paradox by John Meaney
Revelation Space by Alistair Reynolds
Ash: A Secret History by Mary Gentle

Best Short Fiction

“Destiny on Tartarus” by Eric Brown
“La Vampresse” by Tanith Lee
“Adventures in the Ghost Trade” by Liz Williams

*“Sing
 Each to Each”* by Paul di Filippo

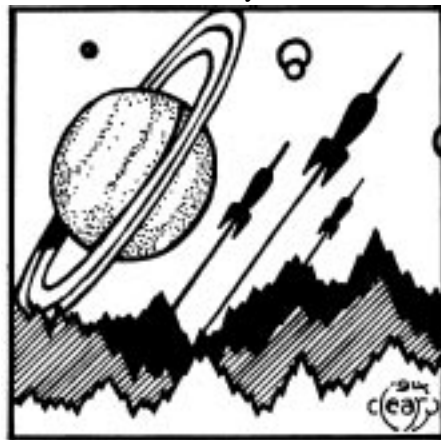
“The Suspect Genome” by Peter F. Hamilton

Best Artwork

Physiognomies of Flight by China Mieville

Hideaway by Dominic Harman

Afeteres Eyes by Gerald Gaubert



art by Randy B. Cleary

Planetary Society Announces Mars Art Contest

The Planetary Society is sponsoring a contest for artists. They are looking for depictions of “what you think an interesting Mars landing site might look like from the ground — both now and in 100 years.” This contest is in conjunction with the Planetary Society’s “Red Rover Goes To Mars Training Mission” project for students.

Entries in the art contest will be divided by age group — 10 and under, 11 to 18, and over 18. The deadline for entries is 2 April 2001 with winners to be announced by August 2001. Further information can be found on the Planetary Society web site at < http://planetary.org/rrgtm/Training_Mission/art_competition/artcontest.htm >.

NASFA Receivables

by Randy B. Cleary

Here are some zines received by me and/or NASFA lately.

De Profundis 336, Marty Cantor, c/o The Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society, 11513 Burbank Boulevard, North Hollywood CA 91601 — This issue had eight blues pages of club happenings with Rotsler illos.

FOSFAX 201, December 2000, Timothy Lane and Elizabeth Garrett, The Falls of the Ohio Science Fiction and Fantasy Association, P. O. Box 37281, Louisville KY 40233-7281 — 84 packed pages of articles, features, con reports, lots of book reviews, and lots of letters of comment with lots of spot illustrations (some by me).

Pulp Fandom, Issue 9, Volume 4, Number 3, December 2000, Beacon Publications, P. O. Box 383, Cookeville TN 38503 — 20 digest-size pages of cartoon strips by D. K. Upshaw. Nice to see pictures outweigh words in a zine for once!

Southern Fandom Confederation Bulletin, Volume 7, Number 8, December 2000, Julie Wall, 470 Ridge Road, Birmingham AL 35206; <jlwall@usit.net>; 205-833-8635 — 32 pages of Southern Fandom Confederation doings, illos (cover by me), con reports, fanzine listings, convention listings, club listings, and letters of comment.

Trash Barrel, November 2000, Editor: Donald Franson, 6543 Babcock Avenue, North Hollywood CA 91606-2308 — Four pages of fanzine reviews.

Going to Pot

Book Reviews by Jim Woosley
with help from Jayson Woosley and Jeanna Woosley

Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone, by J. K. Rowling, Scholastic, 1998. Hardcover, \$19.95, ISBN 0-590-35340-3; Trade Paperback, \$ 6.99, ISBN 0-590-35342-X.

Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets, by J. K. Rowling, Scholastic, 1999. Hardcover, \$19.95, ISBN 0-439-06486-4; Trade Paperback, \$ 6.99, ISBN 0-439-06487-2.

Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban, by J. K. Rowling, Scholastic, 1999. Hardcover, \$19.95, ISBN 0-439-13635-0.

Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire, by J. K. Rowling, Scholastic, 2000, Hardcover, \$25.95, ISBN 0-439-13959-7.

Trying to cram four years at Hogwarts into 11 days is difficult. (Particularly when your daughter is still hogging the fourth book when you finish the third :-)

But worthwhile, as you might guess just from the bare statement that I did it.

It's very likely, from the buzz surrounding this series (which has converted Ms Rowling from an unemployed British schoolteacher to a multimillionaire with over 40 million books¹ in print in three years), that you know the basics. But it is in the nature of reviews that they start at the beginning, and so...

Harry Potter's world is a Britain where magic and the

mundane are very carefully kept from mixing and mingling. Persons with magical talents — witches and wizards — are identified and swept into special training at Hogwarts School for Witchcraft and Wizardry, starting in their 11th year. Persons without such talents — called Muggles by most wizards — are kept in the dark, with memory charms if necessary, by the Ministry of Magic, though enough information leaks out to fertilize folklore and fable.

That changes, occasionally, if circumstances warrant, and about 10 years before the start of the first novel, circumstances demanded it. Lord Voldemort, the most powerful evil magician in the past century, and his followers, called the Death Eaters, are moving to take over both magical and Muggle worlds and sadistically destroying everyone who stands in their way. Among his most vocal opponents are James Potter, a powerful young wizard, and Potter's wife Lily, who is a Muggle-born witch (disparagingly called "mudbloods" by bigoted wizards). One evening, Voldemort undertakes to remove their opposition by going to their house to kill them and their young son Harry. He succeeds in the case of James and Lily — but young Harry is protected by some unknown but powerful spell Lily casts as her dying act. Voldemort's death curse backfires on him, destroying his powers and nearly killing him, forcing him into exile, and scattering his followers.² Harry is left with a souvenir of the attack, a scar in the shape of a lightning bolt on his forehead. Albus Dumbledore, the headmaster at Hogwarts and the most powerful wizard who had taken a stand against Voldemort, rescues the young Harry and puts him in hiding with Lily's Muggle sister and her family, the Dursleys, under powerful protective spells.

The Dursleys and their son Dudley are the sort of family that gives Mugg... er, Mundanes... a bad name among SF fans. And sometimes Fans a bad name among Mundanes. Vernon Dursley is a corporate salesman who wants no imperfections to mar his "keeping up with the Jones's" lifestyle. Petunia Dursley is the neighborhood gossip. Dudley is a spoiled brat who is being trained from the cradle as a poster child for Dolly Madison (or, since I'm sure the English don't sell snack cakes branded under the name of the First Lady driven from the White House when their soldiers sacked it during the War of 1812, whatever the equivalent is in Britain). Their knowledge that James and Lily lived different lifestyles was a source of major embarrassment to them and they did everything they could to pretend the difference was on the level of being beatniks or hippies, not even acknowledging to themselves that James and Lily were members of a secret fraternity of wizards. Needless to say, they did not take this addition to their household kindly. Not at all, to the point where most people (both in the novel and among readers) question Dumbledore's decision to place Harry there, and to require him to go back for most of each summer vacation. His stated logic — that Harry needed to grow up without the stigma of being the best-known of wizards from birth (because of the spell that backfired and broke Voldemort's power) — seems less than adequate. Still, Rowling does nothing without a reason (as is evidenced from her statements during interviews) and I'm sure this point will be resolved more satisfactorily in one of the later novels in the series. About which more anon.

In any event, Harry spends the next ten years being "cared for" by the Dursleys. Most neglectfully. While they stop short

1 Citations above are to the American editions. The British editions are separately published, and the series has been translated into French, German, Spanish, Chinese, and a number of other languages.

2 Some were arrested and sent to prison; others had gone into hiding, genuinely reformed, claimed to have reformed, or claimed to have been working under a control spell.

of feeding him table scraps, the best he obtains is second-class consideration relative to Dudley. He does all of the chores for both of them, is forced to sleep in a cupboard, and is denied treats and all but the most cursory of Christmas presents. (While Dudley is showered with presents to the point of throwing televisions out of his bedroom window to break them if he doesn't like the color). Vernon Dursley does everything he can to prevent Harry from learning anything about his parents and what they did, and most particularly does everything he can to suppress any speculation on Harry's part that he might have special abilities — though strange occurrences began around the house as Harry gets older, particularly when he becomes frustrated over the blatantly inequitable treatment.

All of this changes on Harry's 11th birthday, when he gets a letter through the mail, addressed to himself. Like all young wizards he is being invited to start the First Class at Hogwarts (which is a seven-year institution roughly corresponding to junior high and high school). Vernon destroys the letter without letting Harry read it. The next day the letter arrives by Owl Post, carried by a school owl in the way wizards exchange messages. Vernon also intercepts and destroys that, but finally gives in as each successive day a larger and larger barrage of mail arrives from the school by Owl Post, regular Mail, and any method of transportation available to get the message directly to Harry. Even then, Vernon resists giving in until at last the school dispatches their groundskeeper, Hagrid,³ to pick Harry up and take him to the Wizard's shopping district in London to pick up his supplies. Hagrid finally tells Harry the full story of his birth and the circumstances surrounding his parents death and his own scar. He then sees him to the Hogwarts express, the train which takes students from London to the school at the start of each school year leaving from Platform 9³/₄ at King's Cross Station, which is reached by walking through a wizard portal in the wall between Platforms 9 and 10. (By rumor, several children — and probably a few adults — have banged their heads trying to duplicate this feat.)

At this point, I've taken you about a quarter of the way through the first of the four novels currently published, and in quite a bit of detail. So let's try to step up the pace a bit.

Harry gets to Hogwarts and learns that the school is apportioned with four dormitories named for the four founders of the school — Gryffindor, Hufflepuff, Ravenclaw, and Slytherin. Just the name undoubtedly gives away that House Slytherin is associated with the Snake — and that most of the Death Eaters had come from this house. Harry has also acquired an enemy, Draco Malfoy, who is assigned to Slytherin. Harry, a Gryffindor, begins to make friends among his dorm mates, including Hermione Granger (a bookish girl of Muggle parents, and before anyone comments, the dorm sleeping rooms are segregated), his room mate and year mate Ron Weasley and Ron's older brothers, the prankish twins George and Fred, then third year, and the officious House Prefect, Percy, then a sixth year. Ron's family numbers 9, including

3 Pictures of Hagrid look so much like Phil Foglio's depiction of Chumley the friendly troll from Robert Lynn Aspiron's *Myth-Adventures* series that I would almost accuse Ms Rowling — or at least series illustrator Mary Grandpré — of being a fan. However, while Ms Rowling clearly has an excellent grounding in classical legend, mythology, and folklore, she maintains that she has not read much modern fantasy at all. Only the *Lord of the Rings* in college, like the rest of the English-speaking world; not even reading *The Hobbit* until after the first Potter book was published.

two older brothers Bill and Charles, who've already graduated from Hogwarts, and a younger sister, Ginny. Ron's father Arthur works in the Ministry of Magic in the Misuse of Muggle Artifacts division (most wizards do not need and thus don't know how to use the products of technology) and his mother Molly is a housewitch who has a great deal of difficulty making ends meet for so many children, which fact causes Ron considerable embarrassment through the years.

Harry acclimates very quickly and soon demonstrates that he has some normal magical skills and some exceptional ones. The first of the latter to be demonstrated is broom riding, which very quickly gets Harry enlisted as the youngest Quidditch player in over a century. Quidditch is the Wizard's sport; think of it as a cross between rugby, field hockey, and polo, played by teams of seven mounted on broomsticks. There are three magical balls and a non-magical ball. Two bludgers, which may be by magic or physical interception aimed to hit other players, which are defended against by two players called beaters. The non-magical quaffle, which three players, named Chasers, for each team try to put through a goal of three hoops against the opposition of a player named the Keeper, scoring 10 points for each successful goal. And the Golden Snitch, which is a badminton-birdie sized golden ball with wings that magically flies across the field; the game cannot end until the Golden Snitch is captured by one of the two teams Seekers, and some games have been reputed to go on for months, around the clock, because bad weather or other factors have made tracking the Golden Snitch difficult. Capturing the Golden Snitch is also worth 150 points, almost assuring the team which captures it of the victory in the game. Harry becomes the Gryffindor team Seeker, and revels in attention not related to his survival of "You Know Who's" attack, that phrase (also "He Who Must Not Be Named") being as close as most wizards can come to discussing Voldemort.

Of course, Hogwarts is a school, and most of Harry's time is spent in class and homework.⁴ Potions, with Professor Snape, the head of Slytherin house and very evidently prejudiced against Harry and Ron. Defense against the Dark Arts, which burns out teachers of variable qualifications at a rapid rate. Divination, instructed by a ditzzy lady who seems no more capable than your average Muggle village fortune teller — most of the time. Care of Magical Creatures, taught in the beginning of their third year by Hagrid. And other classes as well.

Equally of course, a book (or series of books) "would not be interesting if it showed only good students sitting in class and doing their homework."⁵ The explorations of Hogwarts, an ancient castle of both mundane and magical secret passages; of portraits inhabited by wizards and witches (a portrait or photograph of a wizard is itself magical, and the image can move, wave, hide — in one case, so that a zit wouldn't show — or walk from one portrait or photograph to an adjacent one); of classrooms and teacher offices; of kitchens and communal dining rooms. Of pranks created afresh by Fred, George, and their contemporaries, and of pranks committed decades ago by Harry's father and his friends and contemporaries.

And then there's the world outside Hogwarts — Hogsmeade, the nearby town inhabited exclusively by wizards and witches; Diagon Alley, the wizard's mall in the middle of

4 The summary that follows encompasses elements of all four novels.

5 I think that Misty Lackey said that. If I misremember, please correct me.

London. There's Azkaban Prison, where wizards and witches who run afoul of wizard law (including the captured and convicted Death Eaters) are placed under the watch of truly horrible dark monsters called dementors. The Scottish moor is magically turned into a 100,000 seat stadium for the Quidditch World Cup championship. And there's Beauxbatons and Durmstrang, the French and Eastern European Wizard's schools.

Harry — protected from wizardry all of his life — has a native curiosity which draws the audience along with him as he explores this world and the mysteries within it, and a courage to match it. The world of wizards is not a safe one for the unwary. Particularly for Harry, whose fame as “the only person in human history to survive the death curse,”⁶ leads him into situations which test his ability to survive. In the first novel, it is discovered that Voldemort is back, alive but reduced to something far from human by the backlash of the spell and with the desire to recover his power and take revenge on Harry. Harry succeeds in defeating him (I don't think I'm giving too much away by saying that, since otherwise the series would have ended at it's first book). In the second novel, Harry and his friends Hermione and Ron encounter a plot laid by Voldemort while he was still a student at Hogwarts. In the third year, attention focuses on Sirius Black, an alleged follower of Voldemort and murderer of wizards and Muggles who has escaped from Azkaban.

The fourth year turns into Harry's greatest challenge yet, and marks a change in the overall tone of the series. Voldemort returns fully to himself (by use of a spell which clearly delineates the difference between white and dark wizardry), aided by surviving Death Eaters who seek Harry's immediate destruction. One of Harry's schoolmates is killed by magic, and the overall structure of magical society and allegiance begins a massive shift. The book about the fourth year, *Goblet of Fire*, is noticeably darker in tone than the rest of the series because of Voldemort's resurgence — and has other changes as well. Harry, Hermione, and Ron are now fourteen-year-olds and are developing new interests, enthusiasms, and abilities. They're growing up — and watching characters actually grow, and not remain static, is one of the hallmarks of the “children's book” which can equally be read by adults.

In terms of enjoyment, I've found the books intermediate between recent Miles Vorkosigan and Honor Harrington — I'm not driven to reread the books in every spare moment for a year,⁷ but favorite scenes keep pulling my attention, drawing me back for a second or third or fourth look. The climactic scene of *Goblet of Fire* and the aftermath — of a wizard world divided between the resurgent Death Eaters, those wizards coming together to assure their defeat under Dumbledore's leadership, and the wizard bureaucrats who refuse to believe that their comfortable world has been disrupted by the return of You-Know-Who, sets the stage for a powerful conclusion to the series over the next three novels.

Author J. K. Rowling, a divorced, out-of-work French teacher who famously scribbled the first novel in coffee shops while living on welfare and caring for her young daughter, has taken her transformation into a multimillionaire, international celebrity, and *Time Magazine* Author of the Year with unsurpassed grace. She intends to complete the story of Harry's

6 To paraphrase his fourth-year *Defense Against the Dark Arts Curses* teacher.

7 Since the first draft of that comment, things have slid somewhat back toward Miles on the scale.

seven years at Hogwarts (and a few Harry's Universe pastiches, such as a *History of Hogwarts* and the tie-ins to the Harry Potter movie due in theaters this Christmas from Warner Brothers) before turning her attention to other works, which may or may not be tied into Harry's Universe and which, it is strongly hinted, will likely not feature Harry as an adult. This is undoubtedly a wise decision⁸ — once Harry is fully grown, if he has grown truly, his future adventures will not be wholly appropriate for children, and a lot of the true magic of the series will be lost.

For now, though, I believe that we're all anticipating the next novel with equal intensity.

The official web site for the US editions of the Harry Potter novels is < <http://www.scholastic.com/harrypotter> >. Several excellent on-line interviews of Ms Rowling, as well as Harry Potter tie-ins and resources for instructional use, are posted there.

8 This of course is spoken by someone who has, regretfully but frankly, grown tired of Mercedes Lackey's continued efforts to find ways to refresh this basic story line which was the strongest attraction of the early Valdemar novels.

Letters of Comment

LOC-LOC-LOC-LOC-LOC-LOC-LOC-LOC-LOC-LOC

Sheryl Birkhead
25509 Jonnie Court
Gaithersburg MD 20882

24 January 2001

One step at a time. My new Mac is here (as are the monitor/printer/scanner/floppy drive) — I just haven't figured out how to make it work! No joke — the LC came with a foot-tall stack of manuals and the G4 has a 20-page booklet. I called Apple for help and was told they no longer offer support for the LC — it's too old. So, there's no way to make any direct exchange of info and my software is so old I can't upgrade directly. When I manage to get all the peripherals plugged in I *still* won't have any functional software. But, hey, things didn't work before — I just now have a much *more* expensive computer that doesn't work. I need to go buy a book — the Mac guy said to expect a depressed (yeah!) learning curve since I not only have to learn all the new stuff, I need to unlearn a *lot* of stuff that will get in my way. Thanks.

Congrats to Pat and Naomi on their Fund win. Congrats/condolences (?) to you on retaining (ha!) the reins of the *Shuttle*.

I have some sketches waiting for me to do the lettering but this new computer is, obviously, going to take more time than I expected.

I still (sorry) haven't tracked down the Bear bibliography — at least that gives me one more excuse *not* to have done anything.

I'm just now starting to watch movies such as *Iron Giant* (enjoyed it!), *Antz*... so I doubt I'll get anywhere *near* up to date in my cinema experiences.

PS: I called Macromedia (who bought out Aldus Freehand) to see about upgrades and they informed me that version 3 to version 9 was *too* big a jump — but they could, ahem, loan

me an archival copy — and *then* I can purchase an upgrade from *there* to current.

[Strangely enough, even though they live here in Huntsville your letter was the first news I had that Patrick and Naomi won the DUFF race. Those interested can see the vote totals on page 3 of this issue. Though I hesitate to offer technical advice by long distance, if the LC is in good operating order you could look into adding Ethernet. You should be able to get an Ethernet card for the LC's PDS slot and appropriate cabling to hook up to the built-in Ethernet on the G4 for around \$100, maybe a shade less if you shop around. Then you should be able to do file sharing between the computers. If you wanted to set up a more flexible network that could add other devices, you'd also have to get an Ethernet hub (typically \$30 to \$100) plus more cables. -ED]

LOC-LOC-LOC-LOC-LOC-LOC-LOC-LOC-LOC

Harry Warner, Jr.
423 Summit Avenue
Hagerstown MD 21740

24 January 2001

The January *Shuttle* bears out your statement that it's sort of word-deprived. I suspect that there are a half-dozen or more potential first-rate fanzine writers in your club who need only

to be coaxed and coaxed into producing prose for you.

As far as I can remember, the only time I visited a video room in my con-going years I watched an episode of *The Avengers* which was shown from film rather than video tape. I dearly wished I could somehow see on my television set such sharp images and fine detail. I imagine most of the video room screenings nowadays are from tape and the sharpness should improve now that high definition television is finally beginning to spread around.

I'm sorry I can't supply Randy Cleary with old calendars. It's a good thing I never began to save them because by now I would have a hopelessly bulky accumulation. (I'm superstitious enough that I don't throw away an unsolicited calendar that comes in the mail with a request for a donation until the year it covers has ended.)

I trust that so far your office of vice-president hasn't involved you in as many problems as your equivalent at the national level has suffered.

[We'll have a few more words in this issue, thanks both to a great contribution from Jim Woosley and to more news from the world of sf/fandom. HDTV hasn't made any inroads that I know of into convention video rooms — it's still both too expensive and too fussy to set up for a short-duration event like a convention. If, in fact, some con were to advertise wide-screen HDTV movies it might stir up a little interest. I still doubt it would be a major draw to attend the con, though. -ED]



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