

# MYTHOPRINT

The Monthly Bulletin of The Mythopoeic Society

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## -- ARTIST --

BONNIE GOODKNIGHT CALLAHAN: Cover photos  
Judith Kollmann and Charles de Lint  
giving their Guest of Honor speeches  
at Mythcon XVII

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# MYTHCON XVII

Three Reports on the Long Beach Mythcon, Aug. 8-11, 1986

by Eleanor Farrell

How delightful to have a Mythcon with the theme "Women in Fantasy" and featuring Charles de Lint, slightly bemused to be singled out for populating his books with real female characters! Charles' participation -- as panelist, musician, and speaker -- characterized Mythcon XVII as an energy-filled weekend (except for Friday night, when I know for a fact that there were only three people awake at 2:30 a.m.!)

Highlights of the con included a provocative paper by Gene Hargrove on the true identity of Tom Bombadil and one by Melanie Rawls comparing Lewis' Out of the Silent Planet with an early feminist utopia called Herland, several lively panels, a top-quality art show (I finally ran up against something I couldn't live without -- one of Pat Wynne's pen and inks -- and Dante will never read the same for me after I viewed Kelson's portrayal of "Beatrice as a Puppy"), and Judith Kollmann's beautifully organized opening address on Williams' use of the Beatrician figure. The crowning points of the weekend, however, had to be the four (!) excellent dramatic presentations offered as evening entertainment. The enthusiastic response to this year's original productions should encourage this trend to continue, especially since, as I found, it is even more fun to participate than to be in the audience.

Mythcons for me have become a family reunion, with each year the family getting bigger, and I appreciated a schedule relaxed enough to allow long talks with old and new friends. Kudos to the co-chairs: to Sarah Beach for hosting a two-day pajama party as a pre-Mythcon event, and to Peter Lowentrout for managing to be everywhere at the con at once: I hope both of you got to enjoy some of Mythcon itself. Finally, as sad as it is to have a Mythcon weekend end, the anticipation of meeting Christopher Tolkien and Ursula Le Guin at our next two conferences should help us all preserve some of the energy generated this year (now maybe I'll have time to read the de Lint story in the back of the program book ...) Until next year, Namarie!

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

by David Bratman

To me as well, this was the Mythcon of the dramatic production. Feature stage shows were a distinctive feature of the earliest Mythcons, but they went out of fashion after a few years, and it was not until Diana Paxson wrote a masque for Mythcon XII in 1981 that they became a regular thing again. This year we had four of them, varying in style and color.

Perhaps the most elaborate was Diana's play (her fourth Mythcon production), "The Harp Quest", which was staged on the balcony overlooking the student union courtyard as we sat at our tables immediately after the banquet and award ceremonies Sunday evening. It starred Leigh Ann Hussey as a mortal woman searching for her lost love, an Elven prince (played by Kelson), with Christine Lowentrout as a particularly malevolent elvenqueen. Diana herself played the harp and sang the story's ballad. It was a fine show for twilight; my only regret is that the sun sank a little too fast for a full appreciation of the visuals.

I didn't get to see "The Masque of the Silmarils", performed after the costume show on Saturday, because I was in it myself, along with Ellie and a lot of other strange people. This was a full-scale production, directed by Margaret Purdy, of Sarah Beach's verse play which received a scratch reading at last year's Mythcon. The Valar all carried masks, all of which were designed and created by Sarah herself during the last weeks before the con, and which I am told glittered marvelously in the stagelights. The Valar mostly stood majestically in a semicircle up stage, while the various Children of Illuvatar seeking their aid or defying them played out their dramas in front. Paul Nolan Hyde both opened and closed the show (and stole the show, too) as Feanor and his son Maglor, while Margaret and I were Luthien and Beren, and Pat Wynne and Ellie played Earendil and Elwing. Paul Edwin Zimmer led the Valar as Manwe, which alone gave the production a different tone from last year's reading, when Glen GoodKnight read the role in his own, let-us-say more restrained, style. Sarah played Varda, and Alexei Kondratiev, Lynn Maudlin, and Melanie Rawls completed the Valar in the cast.

MYTHCON XVII REPORT - CONTINUED FROM LAST PAGE

The third dramatic production was a one-woman portrayal by Amy Nyman of Sybil Coningsby from Williams' The Greater Trumps, giving a short talk during intermission at the costume show on how glad she was to be at Mythcon, and describing the experience of love as she had learned it in the story.

The fourth, the only show not by Society members, was called "Trial by Fire", and was essentially a virtuoso weapon-play and fire-swallowing event performed by three women in full-fledged sword-and-sorcery cover art costumes. It took place Sunday evening.

I'll second Ellie's opinion of the most interesting papers (and add that I'm sorry I missed Paul Nolan Hyde's on the dialog genius of J.R.R. Tolkien), and I should say a word on some of the panels, too. The Charles Williams centennial panel consisted of four extremely high-powered people (Judith Kollmann, Richard Purtill, Bernadette Bosky, and David Samuelson) who quickly led their auditors into abstruse but fascinating territory on the question of why (and how) we read Williams, particularly his novels. For the Tolkien linguistics panel, moderator Paul Nolan Hyde brought the whole room into a discussion of the aesthetics of invented language, a matter which rarely receives the thought it deserves. It was a real pleasure for me to find all these varied people in essential agreement on some of the important bases of fantasy literature.

Charles de Lint gave his Guest of Honor speech at the banquet before Diana's play. The talk was hastily read but we could see that it was deeply felt. Charles spoke of the fantasy writers, male and female, who have inspired him throughout his reading life, and of the characters whom he has taken to heart. The previous evening, Saturday, in place of the customary reading from his works, Charles gave a concert of Celtic folk music, accompanying himself on harp and guitar (not both at once, though!) He has made his living at this, and no wonder; this hour's treat was as good as anything I've heard in the folk clubs in San Francisco. Just another great reason to go to Long Beach!

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

## MYTHCON XVII REPORT - CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

by Lisa Deutsch Harrigan

It had been several years since I had been to a MythCon, what with vacations not working out right or budget problems. Thus I was excited that I was going to have time and money to make it to this year's conference. It did not let me down.

First, for those of you who don't know, I am an old timer with memories that predate MythCon I. So, when I go to a con, I do want to spend time with old friends. And it is also a chance to meet new people who had just been names that have contributed or been on our mailing list for years. I have lovely faces and memories to go with more of you now. It was easy to do this time because of the way the facilities concentrated our people (although the walks were long), and the fact that so many of us stayed at the dorms which let us stay up till all hours and talk.

This MythCon was also everything else a MythCon should be. The Art Show, though small, had many wonderful pieces. (Bonnie, I still say you underprice your work, and Jennie loves the Rainbow Castle.) The three stage productions that I saw were all well done and all promoted conversations that went long afterwards.

Most important there were the wonderful fantasy panels and papers that best exist at a fantasy conference like MythCon. I remembered two with great fondness. Paul Nolan Hyde's paper "Gandalf, please, should not sputter" (the title is a quote from Tolkien) went into a very detailed accounting of the speech-patterns of the different characters and races in Middle-earth. He even brought his thesis in (all three books of it) which we were informed was even more detailed, including the actual word counts for all characters and races. What would we do without computers? There was also Melanie Rawls' paper comparing Lewis' Out of the Silent Planet with Herland, and considering the ways writers deal with utopias. We hated to break up the discussions that Melanie started.

## MYTHCON XVII REPORT - CONTINUED FROM LAST PAGE

The last day included the sometimes serious, usually silly, Mythopoeic Society Auction of books, art, and other stuff. Glen GoodKnight sure has figured out how to get money out of us turnips. But it is a very pleasant way to make money for the Society and for the members to get some pretty art or useful books in return.

Let's give one final cry of thanks to Christine and Peter Lowentrout, Sarah Beach, and all the others who brought us this wonderful MythCon! And let's start saving our pennies and vacation minutes so that we can go meet Christopher Tolkien and Ursula K. LeGuin at MythCons XVIII and XIX respectively. I already have found two buttons, "Ring wraiths are fly-by-nights" in pseudo-elvish lettering, and "Meddle not in the affairs of Wizards, for you are crunchy and good with ketchup", for next year. See you then.



The panel on "Contemporary Urban Fantasy" -- from left, Charles de Lint, Barbara Hambly, Leigh Ann Hussey, Diana L. Paxson, and Marion Zimmer Bradley (photo by Bonnie Goodknight Callahan). An extremely lively event, with MZB as "devil's advocate" and the others defending the genre, drawing a much-needed distinction between contemporary fantasy and horror fiction.

# ACTIVITY

Deadline for the Activity Calendar is the first of the month preceeding the month of publication, i.e. November issue information will be due the 1st of October. December information will be due the 1st of November. Thank you.

NEW SECRETARY FOR DISCUSSION GROUPS  
(Please write to him about forming groups, or if you have any questions):

David Lenander  
[REDACTED]

## Discussion Group Meetings

### CALIFORNIA: North

#### [REDACTED] STORISENDE

Daniel Oakes, [REDACTED]

PH: [REDACTED]

#### [REDACTED] AVALON

Laurine White, [REDACTED]

PH: [REDACTED]

\*Oct. 18, 1986 (Saturday) 7 PM.

Topic to be determined. At the home of Mike & Judy Morman, [REDACTED]

PH: [REDACTED]

#### [REDACTED] KHAZAD-DUM

Pat Witham, [REDACTED]

PH: [REDACTED]

\*October 5, 1986 (Sunday) 1 PM

Fire & Hemlock by Diana Wynne Jones & Perilous Gard by Elizabeth Pope. At Jo Wilcox (call secretary for address)

\*November 2, 1986 (Sunday) 1 PM

The Waste Land by T.S. Eliot. At Pat Witham's house (see secretary).

### CALIFORNIA: South

[REDACTED]  
Dolores Speth, [REDACTED]

\*October 18, 1986  
Senlin by Conrad  
apartment (see above)

#### [REDACTED] DESOLA

Bill Mosher, [REDACTED]

#### [REDACTED] CAIR PARAV

John Mulvey, [REDACTED]

Anne Wilson, [REDACTED]

### DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

[REDACTED]  
Bill Hussar, [REDACTED]

PH: [REDACTED]

### HAWAII

#### [REDACTED] SAMMATH NAU

Stephen L. Brown

\*Oct. 4, 1986 (Saturday)  
Hitchhiker's Guide  
Adams.

\*Nov. 1, 1986 (Saturday)  
Rhinoceros by Eugen

\*Dec. 6, 1986 (Saturday)

Ancient Evenings by

\*Jan. 3, 1987 (Saturday)

Counter Clock World

All meetings start

located at: Ken [REDACTED]



# CALENDAR

MYDGARD

[REDACTED]  
PH: [REDACTED]  
(Saturday) 7:30 PM  
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ATION OF SMAUG

EL

PH: [REDACTED]  
LOTHLORIEN

PH: [REDACTED]

MARYLAND

[REDACTED] KNOSSOS

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PH: [REDACTED]  
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Series by Douglas

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rday)  
y Norman Mailer.  
rday)  
l by Philip K. Dick.  
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Burtness,  
PH: [REDACTED]

## LOUISIANA

[REDACTED] ROKE  
Deborah Wilson, [REDACTED]  
PH: [REDACTED]

## MICHIGAN

[REDACTED] GALADHREMMIN ENNORATH  
Dave & Grace Lovelace, [REDACTED]  
PH: [REDACTED]

## MINNESOTA

[REDACTED] RIVENDELL  
David Lenander, [REDACTED]  
PH: [REDACTED]

## NEW YORK/NEW JERSEY

[REDACTED] Romenna  
Margaret Purdy, [REDACTED]  
PH: [REDACTED]  
Currently discussing The Lord of the Rings.

## OHIO

Dayton-Kettering: THE PRANCING PONY  
Eileen Ribbler, [REDACTED]  
PH: [REDACTED]

## VIRGINIA

[REDACTED] SPARE OOM  
Veida & Steve Wissler, [REDACTED]  
PH: [REDACTED]



# REVIEWS

Commander Toad and the Dis-Asteroid, written by Jane Yolen, illustrated by Bruce Degan. Coward-McCann hc and pb, 64 p., no price listed. Reviewed by Branton G. Lachman.

Commander Toad captains the Star Warts which goes where no space ship has gone before. His crew includes Mr. Hop, old Doc Peeper, Lieutenant Lily, and young Jake Skyjumper. By now, you've probably got the drift. This is a children's story based on take-offs of some very well-known film and tv characters. Dispensing puns right and left, Commander Toad and crew save the pigeon inhabitants of an asteroid from overflowing drains, caused by swollen beans, which have immersed the entire asteroid in water. The drawings and puns are both witty and clever.

But I didn't like the book, for several reasons. The main one is that the tone was off: it was not easy to suspend my disbelief. In the course of their travels the Star Warts crew encounter "shooting stars" dressed as cowboys, and a cow jumping over the moon. Both episodes provide opportunity for puns and both would probably delight young readers. However, that fact forms the basis of my other objection: children should also be dignified with literature that is internally consistent. I can't justify the purely fantasy idea of a cow jumping over the moon in a hi-tech world of spaceships, even if their crew are toads.

There is one glaring lapse of sense: the beans that plugged the drains did so because they swelled from rain. However, Commander Toad saves the day by diving down to the beans and letting all the air out of them.

This book did not work as a bedtime story for my 2-year-old daughter. I suspect it will be most enjoyed by young readers who are just discovering the masochistic delights of puns, and by Trekkie addicts in desperate need of a fix.

Jane Yolen is one of the most wonderful myth-makers around. Let's hope that some of that numinous quality appears in her next children's story.

The Isle of Glass, by Judith Tarr. Bluejay hc, \$14.95; Tor pb, \$2.95. Reviewed by Jim DeMarco.

The Isle of Glass is the first book of a trilogy about St. Alfred, an elven monk who is forced to leave the abbey where he had hidden from the world. The novel blends aspects of fantasy with actual history as Alfred becomes involved with King Richard the Lionheart and the history of old England.

Judith Tarr has created an interesting character in Brother Alfred. Found as a babe in the middle of a snowstorm, Brother Alfred grows up to learn he is unlike the people he lives with. He is elven, immortal, and unacceptable to the outside world. So he hides himself away in a monastery until fate forces him out to face the world he fears. Other characters in the novel are less interesting. Jehan is the typical young man who follows the hero and loves him no matter what. King Richard is merely boring and brutal. These people only become important as they relate to Alfred.

Unfortunately, a good main character is not enough to save this book. The real problem with The Isle of Glass is that it is, quite bluntly, poorly written and very poorly edited. For one thing, the book contains many vague uses of pronouns. For example, a passage might read: "Brother Alf and Jehan woke early. He dressed quietly and went to the lake ..." Who dressed quietly? Alf? Or Jehan? The pronoun usage only leaves the reader confused. For another thing, some passages of dialogue are written without any indication of who is speaking (not a "he said" or "she said" to be found), which makes it difficult at times to tell who is saying what. The story was interesting, but these things make the act of reading so frustrating that I couldn't enjoy the book. There's just no excuse for such poor writing, and no reason for readers to put up with it.

I wanted to like this novel because of the main character and the religious themes, but I couldn't. I have never read a fantasy book with a poorer quality of writing than The Isle of Glass. The editors at Tor Books should give the other two books of this trilogy some serious re-editing and even re-writing before they also receive paperback editions. As it is, I don't recommend this series to anyone.

# NEWS NOTES

BOOKS BOOKS BOOKS BOOKS BOOKS BOOKS BOOKS BOOKS BOOKS BOOKS

The fourth volume of J.R.R. Tolkien's "History of Middle-earth", The Shaping of Middle-Earth, has reportedly already appeared from Allen & Unwin in England; the American edition from Houghton Mifflin will be out in November.

Gene Wolfe, author of "The Book of the New Sun", has written a historical fantasy taken place in ancient Greece, Soldier of the Mist. Where Severian, hero of the earlier series, had a photographic memory, this new book's main character suffers from memory loss and tells his story for the purpose of recalling it to himself. Sequels are probably in the works. It's a Tor hardcover, \$15.95.

Stephen R. Donaldson has written a duology (a trilogy with only two books), with the title "Mordant's Need". The first volume, The Mirror of Her Dreams, will be published by Del Rey Books in hardcover in November for \$19.95; the second volume, A Man Rides Through, is scheduled for next fall.

M. Coleman Easton's next book (from Questar/Popular Library) will be called Swimmers Beneath the Bright; Barbara Hambly's next (from Del Rey) will be The Witches of Wenshar. Clare Bell's Tomorrow's Sphinx is appearing from Atheneum. Katherine Kurtz's next is titled The Legacy of Lehr. Peter S. Beagle's The Folk of the Air (his first new novel in 18 years) is now scheduled for January 1987, from Del Rey.

Judith Tarr's new series, "Avaryan Rising", begins with The Hall of the Mountain King, which (unusually for a volume in a series) is a self-contained story. Bluejay hc, \$15.95. Bluejay is also issuing In the Ice King's Palace by A. Orr, sequel to The World in Amber.

Nonfiction books: Paul Ford's A Companion to Narnia is being re-released by Collier in trade paperback format. Clive Staples Lewis: A Dramatic Life by William Griffin is appearing in hardcover from Harper & Row. Madeleine L'Engle has written an "autobiographical miscellany" titled A Circle of Quiet, being published by Farrar Straus Giroux as a hardcover and trade paperback.

NEWS NOTES - CONTINUED FROM LAST PAGE

The Eyes of the Killer Robot is the newest juvenile fantasy by John Bellairs, Guest of Honor at next year's Mythcon, and is being published by Dial Books.

A book of previously uncollected stories and fables by G.K. Chesterton is being published by Dodd Mead under the title Daylight and Nightmare.

Make way for another contemporary urban fantasy: New York by Knight, by Esther Friesner (Signet pb, \$2.95), a classic knight vs. dragon story in a most unusual setting. Signet paperback original, \$2.95.

Ramsay Campbell, Britain's leading horror writer, has produced a novel titled The Hungry Moon, in which, according to the blurbs, "On the bleak moors of northern England ... a band of Druids enact their ancient pagan rites", and it goes on from there. Macmillan hardcover, \$18.95.

Ace Books, one of the leading publishers of fantasy paperbacks, is joining Del Rey and Tor in inaugurating a line of hardcovers. Among their first offerings will be two novels by Michael Moorcock, The Dragon in the Sword and City in the Autumn Stars. Back in the paperback department, we find Christopher Stasheff's The Warlock is Missing (\$2.95), the seventh book in a long-running series.

CONS CONS CONS CONS CONS CONS CONS CONS CONS CONS CONS

\* Denotes a new or significantly updated listing

OCTOCON V, Oct. 11-12, 1986. At the [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] GOH: Frederik Pohl. Membership: \$20  
by mail; \$25 at the door. Write: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

\*12TH WORLD FANTASY CONVENTION, Oct. 30-Nov. 2, 1986. At  
the [REDACTED] GOH: Ramsey Campbell.  
Memberships: Attending - \$45; No at the doors. Supporting -  
\$20. Write: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

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NEWS NOTES - CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

FANTASY FAIRE, Oct. 31-Nov 2, 1986. At the [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] GOH: Kathleen Sky. Other guests include: Jon  
De Cles, Octavia Butler. Memberships: \$20 until Oct. 15;  
\$25 thereafter. Write: Fantasy Publishing Company, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

ORYCON '86, Nov. 7-9, 1986. At the [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] GOHs: Edward Bryant, & Jessica Amanda  
Salmonson. Other guests include Ursula K. Le Guin. Member-  
ships: \$17 until Oct. 31; \$20 at the door. Write: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

\*CONTEX 4, Nov. 28-30, 1986. [REDACTED] GOH: L. Sprague  
& Catherine de Camp. Memberships: \$10; \$20 at the door.  
Write: c/o Friends of Fandom, [REDACTED]

\*LOSCON 13, Nov. 28-30, 1986. At the [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] GOH: John Brunner. Memberships: \$17.50 until Oct. 31,  
1986; \$20 at the door. Write: c/o LASFS, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

\*SERCON, Jan. 30-Feb. 1, 1987. At the [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] "A serious, constructive conference on science  
fiction." Memberships: \$30 until Jan. 10, 1987; \$40 at the  
door. Write: [REDACTED]

MYTECON XVIII, July 24-27, 1987. At [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] GOH: Christopher Tolkien & John Bellairs.  
Registration only: \$30 until June 1, 1987; \$40 at the door.  
Total Package (room, meals, registration): \$130 until Dec.  
31, 1986; \$145 until June 1, 1987; \$160 at the door. Write:  
[REDACTED]

\*13TH WORLD FANTASY CONVENTION, Oct. 30-Nov. 1, 1987.  
[REDACTED] GOH: Piers Anthony. Artist GOH: Kelly Freas.  
Write: [REDACTED]

MYTECON XIX, July 29-Aug 1, 1988. At the [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] GOH: Ursula K. Le Guin.  
Memberships: \$20 until further notice. Write: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Mythprint is the monthly bulletin of the Mythopoeic Society, a nonprofit educational organization devoted to the study, discussion, and enjoyment of myth and fantasy literature, especially the works of J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis and Charles Williams.

### SUBSCRIPTIONS

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c/o Lee Speth, [REDACTED]

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The Mythopoeic Society also publishes Mythlore, a quarterly journal of Tolkien, Lewis, Williams, General Fantasy and Mythic Studies (subscription is \$12 per year and should also be sent to Lee Speth); and Mythellany, an annual of fiction, poetry, & whatnot (write Lee Speth for availability & price)

### SUBMISSIONS

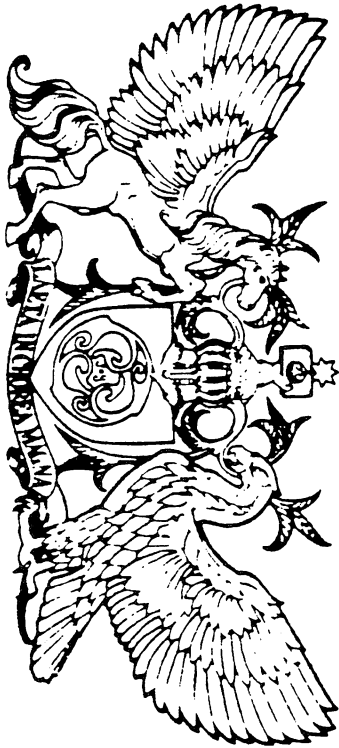
Reviews, discussion reports, news items, letters, and other submissions are always welcome. We're glad to retype material into our computer, so any readable form is accepted.

Artwork is also always wanted, especially cover art! The maximum cover art size is 6 inches high by 6 1/2 wide, but we can reduce or enlarge.

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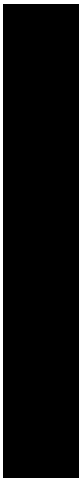
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