

# MYTHOPRINT

The Monthly Bulletin of The Mythopoeic Society

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## – ARTISTS –

DENIS GORDEYEV: Cover, “In the House of Tom Bombadil”  
PATRICK WYNNE: Page 4, “Taliesin”  
DAVID BRATMAN: Photo, Page 13  
LISA COWAN: Incidental Artwork

## – STAFF –

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SUBSCRIPTION ADDRESS: Mythopoeic Society Orders Dept., [REDACTED]  
See inside back cover for subscription rates and information about the Society.

# Mythcon XXIV

The Twenty-fourth Annual Mythopoeic Conference  
July 30-August 2, 1993, The University of Minnesota at Minneapolis

## Theme

Down the Hobbit-hole and Through the  
Wardrobe: Fantasy in Children's Literature

*Scholar Guest of Honor*

### Jane Yolen

As well as an author and editor of novels, stories, and fairy tales for both adults and children, Jane Yolen is a distinguished storyteller, writing teacher, and author of the essay collection *Touch Magic: Fantasy, Faerie and Folklore in the Literature of Childhood*.

*Author Guest of Honor*

### Carol Kendall

Author of the three linked young adult novels *The Gamage Cup*, *The Whisper of Glocken*, and *The Firelings*, and one of the first writers to emerge "in the tradition of Tolkien".

*Keynote Speaker*

### Jack Zipes

Probably today's leading scholar on fairy tales, and the author and editor of numerous books, including *Fairy Tales and the Art of Subversion* and *Don't Bet on the Prince*.

## Membership

\$40 if postmarked before January 1, 1993; \$45 if postmarked before June 1, 1993; \$50 afterwards and at the door. Single day rate \$25. Checks payable to Mythopoeic Conference XXIV.

## Room and Board

**H**ousing in Comstock Dormitory, including meals from Friday dinner through Monday lunch (except the banquet), is \$96 for double occupancy, \$105 for single occupancy. Single-night rates (also including 3 meals) are \$32/night for single occupancy, \$35/night for double occupancy. The Sunday evening banquet is \$15. (These rates

are subject to increase after January 1, 1993.) Dorm meal tickets without residency, or additional dormitory nights before or after the conference may also be available. For those who prefer hotel accommodations, there is a Radisson Hotel on campus and other hotels nearby. Write for information. Checks payable to Mythopoeic Conference XXIV.

## Contact

The Mythcon XXIV Committee, Attn: Joan Verba, Corresponding Secretary, [REDACTED]

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GEIE: D.LENANDER

## The Program

**P**rogramming will begin about 1 pm on Friday with concurrent sessions of papers, panel discussions (including one on Jane Yolen as editor, featuring authors of the Jane Yolen Books imprint), slide presentations and other program events. Highlights will include the keynote address on Friday evening, Saturday morning opening ceremonies (featuring one Guest of Honor address), the Sunday evening banquet (featuring the other Guest of Honor address), and closing ceremonies on Monday at mid-day.

Other activities will include an art show, masquerade, dealers' room, bardic circle, costumed procession, filksinging, and possibly dramatic presentations or other entertainments. Write for further information on any of these.

Besides the guests, we expect Eleanor Arnason, P.C. Hodgell, Sherwood Smith, and other fiction

Continued on Next Page

## MYTHCON XXIV—Cont. from Last Page

writers to be present, as well as a number of authors of scholarly and critical monographs.

Our Conference site affords easy access to the Children's Literature Research Collections of the U of M Libraries (including the Kerlan and Hess Collections), one of the principal collections in the area of children's literature in North America. It is particularly strong in its holdings of original manuscripts and illustrations. The University of Minnesota Children's Literature Research Collections may be addressed at

Attn: Prof. Karen Nelson Hoyle, curator.

### Papers

Papers dealing with literary fantasy, particularly for children, are invited for presentation at the Conference. Papers focusing on any aspect of the work of our guests of honor will receive priority consideration, and those combining the Mythopoeic Society's interest with the conference theme will be especially welcome.

Papers should be suitable for oral presentation within a period of time ranging from twenty to forty-five minutes, with ten to fifteen minutes for questions. Papers should generally conform to the MLA Style Manual. Deadline for submissions is Feb. 15, 1993. Please send inquiries or proposals to the conference address. The University of Minnesota Mythopoeic Society is especially interested in Victorian Fantasy, the use of Celtic mythology in contemporary fantasy and such writers as Ursula K. Le Guin, Peter Dickinson, Jack Zipes, Marion Zimmer Bradley and Patricia A. McKillip. We will also be programming a sub-theme of Fantasy and the American Midwest, for which papers on authors of Minnesota or nearby states and provinces, or on fantasy/SF set in the midwest (including Canada) will be needed. Such non-children's books as Bull's *War for the Oaks*, Sullivan's *Mrs. Demming and the Mythical Beast*, or the work of writers like Eleanor Arnason, Clifford Simak, Gordon Dickson, P.C. Hodgell, Steve Brust, or August Derleth might be appropriate.

## Review

*Mairelon the Magician*, by Patricia C. Wrede. Tor paperback, 280 pages, \$3.99. Reviewed by Berni Phillips.

Stressed out at work? Looking for a pleasant diversion? *Mairelon the Magician* is sheer entertainment. Patricia Wrede plops us back into the Regency England she and Caroline Stevermer introduced in *Sorcery and Cecilia*. In Wrede's Britain, magic is real and the Royal College of Wizards wields power other than political.

Teenaged Kim is an orphan living by her wits and somewhat dubious set of skills. She poses as a boy to avoid a life of prostitution, but obviously this is not a charade she can keep up forever. How fortunate for her, then, that after being caught illegally snooping around she is not turned over to the police but is given a chance to follow and assist the traveling Mairelon.

Kim becomes caught up in the mystery of searching for the still-missing pieces of a stolen magical silver serving set. As Mairelon was the theft's prime suspect, this search can not be done openly. What unfolds is a delightful drawing room farce, as Mairelon and Kim find they are not the only ones searching for the sorcerous silver. Wrede pays homage to the scene in Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* in which numerous people enter a room, only to hide from others heard approaching. It's a common trick in farce, but Wrede writes it so that it is fresh and funny. She even reprises it, in a way, at the climax of the book, and it is just as witty.

*Mairelon the Magician* is a pleasant light fantasy, the perfect sort of book to take into the bubble bath or the dentist's office. You'll find no heavy message or hidden agenda — just good old-fashioned fun.



# Calendar Review

*Celtic Calendar 1993*, illustrated by Patrick Wynne and Bryan Perrin. Available for \$7 (in Canada, \$8.50 in U.S.\$) from Celtic League Calendar, [REDACTED]. Reviewed by Simon Shoedecker.

The Celtic Calendar's year runs from November to October, so order this one now if you want to have its monthly illustrations from Celtic mythology hanging on your wall. This year's calendar includes 7 illustrations (including the cover) by Patrick Wynne and 6 by Bryan Perrin. Wynne's illustrations are meticulously detailed creations of pen and ink. The finest picture in this year's calendar, "The Tower of Íth" (March), shows his very attractive, slightly stylized neo-medieval manner at its best. The tower itself is drawn in a rich mixture of styles: as it is located in Spain, Wynne has allowed himself to be influenced by Arabic design in such touches as the bottle in one window and some of the roofing. There might be distant echoes of even more distant cultures in the fey Oriental cat design on the castle gate and the almost goofily Polynesian gargoyles on the highest tower. The expected northern European medieval style is not absent, either, and the whole is drawn in that culture's style. The human figures inside may seem comically large for the castle, but Wynne is merely reflecting a genuine artistic convention of the period.

One cannot stare too long at the castle, however, for the viewer's eye, like Íth's, is irresistibly drawn towards the left, where Wynne has drawn the glow emanating from distant Ireland in a pontillism so awesomely precise that it resembles a stained-glass window in black and white. (Compare it with last year's "The Enlightenment of Fionn", which uses the same effect in an otherwise naturalistic illustration.)

In Wynne's other illustrations this year, human figures, mostly drawn in a more naturalistic style, predominate. "Cúchulainn and the Women of

Fand" (July) places naturally-posed figures in a satisfyingly symmetrical design. "Taliesin" (September [shown below]) is a handsome bearded man playing his harp in a simple pose with spiral designs lurking throughout the background.

The artwork of Bryan Perrin does not stand up well mixed in with Patrick Wynne's. Perrin uses Celtic lacework design more diligently than Wynne, but he has little control over his brush. Imagine Patrick Wynne gone punk, drawing under the influence of a hangover, with pens that should have been thrown away. "The Moddey Dhoo" (October) is a giant black dog that could have done dhooty as one of Andrew Mockett's unintentionally funny illustrations in the *Tolkien Encyclopedia*.

The mythological captions, by Alexei Kondratiev, are informative but suffer in their condensation from a slightly goofy specificity. At one point the writer and artist seem to disagree: the mortal suitor of the fairy lady of Llyn y Fan Fach distinguishes her from her identical sister "by the peculiarity of her shoe-tie", says the caption, but the shoes in Wynne's illustration are tieless.

Besides the illustrations and captions, the calendar as usual contains month and day names in a variety of Celtic languages, proverbs, and at least one Celtic history event for every day of the year.



# Tolkien Art Review

*Pictures by J.R.R. Tolkien*, revised edition. Houghton Mifflin hardcover, 48 plates, \$40. *The Tolkien Diary*. Houghton Mifflin hardcover, \$16.95. *The Hobbit Birthday Book*, Houghton Mifflin hardcover, \$9.95. Reviewed by David Bratman.

If all you want for Christmas this year is Tolkien, there are plenty of choices in the book and stationery stores.

Houghton Mifflin has performed a public service to lovers of fantasy art by reissuing *Pictures by J.R.R. Tolkien*. This collection of scenes from Middle-earth originated as a compilation of artwork by Tolkien that appeared in the first few Tolkien calendars. The book appeared in 1979 and quickly went out of print.

Tolkien was not one to praise his own artistic talent. "The pictures seem to me mostly only to prove that the author cannot draw," he once wrote. True, his human figures are poor, but he had the sense to realize this, and rarely put them in the foreground. His artistic talent lay in landscapes and abstract designs, and at those he was splendid.

If you haven't looked at this book, you may be amazed at the stunning quality of these drawings and paintings (most of them in color), particularly some that do not often appear in print. All (I believe) of Tolkien's published illustrations for *The Hobbit* appear here: both the colored plates and the black-and-white illustrations, the latter also in colored versions made by H.E. Riddett. Most of these pictures are well-known, but they are much larger here, and in any case many editions of *The Hobbit* lack illustrations altogether. *Pictures* contains a number of illustrations from *The Lord of the Rings* as well. The overviews of Helm's Deep, Dunharrow, and other sites around Rohan, Gondor, and Mordor are useful visual supplements to the occasionally confusing story, even

when the illustrations were made before the final draft and thus occasionally conflict with it. The three pages of the Book of Mazarbul are perhaps the most interesting item. They were originally intended to appear in the book, and were carefully constructed by the author to be burnt and in places illegible, just as Gandalf found them. Several illustrations for the legends of *The Silmarillion*, mostly drawn in the 1920s in bright, stylized colors, follow. The last section of the book contains designs from the last period of his life, including Númenorian tiles, a complete collection of Elven coats of arms, several trees, and many random patterns of considerable beauty, some of them doodled on newspapers.

The new edition is essentially a reprint of the old. There are a few minor differences. The earlier edition was boxed in a slipcase; this one has a dustjacket instead. Several of the notes have been rewritten to incorporate corrections, refer to the "History of Middle-earth" series, and to delete references to calendar publication when that was not the first publication. A picture of Moria's west gate having been misidentified in the first edition as the east gate, it has been moved in the ordering of the pictures, resulting in it and another plate exchanging serial numbers.

As for the pictures themselves, there is one change: the original ink drawing of Hobbiton has replaced a pencil sketch that appeared in error in the first edition. The printing, at least in my copy, has deeper and richer colors than the first edition, especially in the reds. This has made a significant improvement in some of the pictures, particularly Rivendell (no. 6) and Lorien (no. 25), which had been a bit washed-out earlier. The frontispiece photo of Tolkien in his study has acquired a distinct reddish cast, in place of the cool blue tone of the earlier edition; I don't know which is more accurate, but certainly none of the colored drawings have been adversely affected.

Continued on Page 10

# Book Review

*Aunt Maria* by Diana Wynne Jones. Greenwillow hardcover, \$13.95, 214 pages. Reviewed by Joyce Odell.

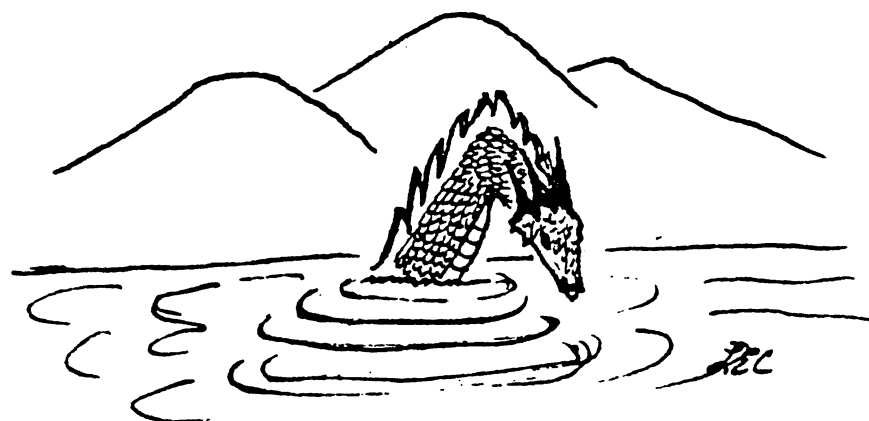
I guess everyone is entitled to an off day. In *Castle in the Air*, the story seemed deceptively simple, but was still entertaining, and when you eventually cruised into the conclusion, you found yourself up to the neck in a characteristically Jonesian (spelled B-y-z-a-n-t-i-n-e) knot of complexity to unravel before everybody's lives could be put back on track. In *Howl's Moving Castle*, the heroine has a vicious spell cast upon her at the beginning of the action, and while we follow her around and use her as a viewpoint character throughout, we do see her from outside.

In *Aunt Maria*, the story suffers horribly due to a massive spell of dullness cast upon the narrator at the beginning of the action. It is a very effective spell. It masks what is going on under the hood beautifully. And, since the person under the spell is the one telling the story, we can't get out to see what is going on for ourselves. After what feels like half of forever, the story finally starts picking up — just before you give up on it altogether. But it's still a bit humdrum. And finally you follow it around another one of its blind, so-far rather aimless, corners and the real situation hits you in the face with all of the bland comfort of a bucket of ice water. Once you stop gasping, you — and the narrator — have to put yourselves back together and try to figure out *what* you've been gotten into,

without help, because the person whose leadership you've been following is running through the woods on all fours.

But it's too late. You never had a chance to build any momentum, and now you're stranded, on an empty road, miles from a call box. The narrator does manage. But you end up tagging along at a distance, and I, at least, could never quite work up the necessary enthusiasm to get more fully into the tale.

There are echoes of some of Jones's earlier work. I would say that *The Four Grannies* hit the largest number of the same notes. But *Wilkins' Tooth* chimed in a little. There's also a replay of nasty grown-ups. Although the kids' father is no better at the job than Polly's in *Fire and Hemlock*, he's a bad parent in a quite different way. But, where Reg and Ivy's marriage is as plausible as their divorce, I can't see Mig and Chris's parents getting together in the first place. I picked up few echoes of Jones's later work, although the opening was at least as sluggish as *The Time of the Ghost*. But I may well have been so fogged in dullness as to have missed a good deal. What is more, I'd hate to have to say just how long it's going to be before I feel like giving it a second reading to find out. I may have too low a boredom threshold to ever be properly able to appreciate this story. All in all, this particular book was a disappointment. But, still, a well-crafted disappointment.



# Activity Calendar

Deadline for the Activity Calendar is the tenth of the month preceeding the month of publication: i.e. December information is due the tenth of November; January information is due the tenth of December. All calendar information should be sent directly to *Mythprint*. Thank you.

## Secretary for Discussion Groups

(Please write to him about forming groups, or if you have any questions):

David Lenander  
[REDACTED]

Send meeting information directly to *Mythprint*.

## Chartered Groups

### CALIFORNIA: North

#### AVALON

Laurine White, [REDACTED]

PH: [REDACTED]

#### : KHAZAD-DÛM

Ellie Farrell, [REDACTED]

PH: [REDACTED]

\* November 1, 1992 (Sunday) 1 PM

*Dracula* by Bram Stoker. At David Bratman & Berni Phillips, [REDACTED]

PH: [REDACTED]

\* December 5, 1992 (Saturday) 6 PM

The annual Reading and Eating Meeting. At Edith Crowe & Amy Wisniewski, [REDACTED]

PH: [REDACTED]

Bring food to share and a short story or poem to read by the fire.

\* January 3, 1992 (Sunday) 1 PM

The Arthurian Poetry of Charles Williams. At Eric Rauscher's, [REDACTED]. PH: [REDACTED]

### CALIFORNIA: South

#### THE GREEN DRAGON

Sarah Beach, [REDACTED]

PH: [REDACTED]

#### : MYDGARD

Dolores Speth, [REDACTED]

PH: [REDACTED]

\* November 15, 1992 (Saturday) 2:30 PM

*Christine* by Stephen King.

#### LOTHLORIEN

Linda Sundstrom, [REDACTED]

PH: [REDACTED]

### DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

#### KNOSSOS

John M. Epperson, [REDACTED]

PH: [REDACTED]

\* November 20, 1992 (Friday)

*The Lord of the Rings* by J.R.R. Tolkien. At Mike Marinelli, [REDACTED]

PH: [REDACTED]

### FLORIDA

#### HOBBITON

Paul S. Ritz, [REDACTED]

PH: [REDACTED]

All meetings held at Clearwater East Library, 2251 Drew St., Clearwater.

### GEORGIA

#### SHEEP, INDEED

Beau Farr, [REDACTED]

PH: [REDACTED]

Meetings are usually held at Eden. Contact Secretary for specific dates and locations.

### HAWAII

#### SAMMATH NAUR

Ken Burtness, [REDACTED]

PH: [REDACTED]

or Steve Brown, [REDACTED]

PH: [REDACTED]

\* November 7, 1992 (Saturday)

*Soldiers of Paradise* by Paul Park. At Melisa's.

\* December 5, 1992 (Saturday)

*Little, Big* by John Crowley. At Cari & Ken's.



LOUISIANA

██████████ ROKE  
Douglas A. Rossman, ██████████  
██████████. PH: ██████████

MICHIGAN

██████████ GALADHREMMIN ENNORATH  
Dave & Grace Lovelace, ██████████  
██████████. PH: ██████████

MINNESOTA

██████████ RIVENDELL  
David Lenander, ██████████  
██████████. PH: ██████████  
\* November 14, 1992 (Saturday) 1:30 PM  
*A Woman of the Iron People* by Eleanor  
Arnason, with the author. At ██████████  
██████████  
\* December 5, 1992 (Saturday) 1:30 PM  
Readings from Rivendell: our annual reading of  
short stories and poetry by members and  
friends.  
\* January 23, 1993 (Saturday) 1:30 PM  
*Possession* by A.S. Byatt.  
*Unless otherwise mentioned, meetings are tenta-*  
*tively scheduled at* ██████████  
██████████.

PENNSYLVANIA

██████████ C.S. LEWIS AND FRIENDS  
Neil Gussman, ██████████  
██████████. PH: ██████████

WISCONSIN

██████████ THE BURRAHOBBITS  
Jeffrey and Jan Long, ██████████  
██████████. PH: ██████████  
\* November 18, 1992 (Wednesday) 7 PM  
Shared worlds.  
\* December 5, 1992 (Saturday)  
Annual Christmas Party. Topic: *Hobberdy Dick*  
by Katherine Briggs.  
*All meetings held the 3rd Wednesday of the month,*  
*at the Secretaries' house, unless otherwise*  
*mentioned. Contact Secretaries for times.*

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

THE ELVISH LINGUISTIC FELLOWSHIP

Carl F. Hostetter, ██████████  
██████████. PH: ██████████  
*Publishes newsletter, Vinyar Tengwar, bimonthly.*  
\* February 12-15, 1993 (Friday-Monday) (tent.)  
The Third Annual Colloquium on the  
Languages of Middle-earth. At Carl and  
Marilyn Hostetter's.  
\* Second Sunday of each month, 1 PM  
Meeting of Northern California E.L.F. For  
further information contact Arden Smith, ██████████  
██████████. PH: ██████████  
██████████ No meeting in August.  
\* Second Sunday of each month, 2 PM  
Meeting of Washington Area E.L.F. Contact  
Carl Hostetter (above) for further information.  
No meeting in August.

CORRESPONDENCE GROUPS

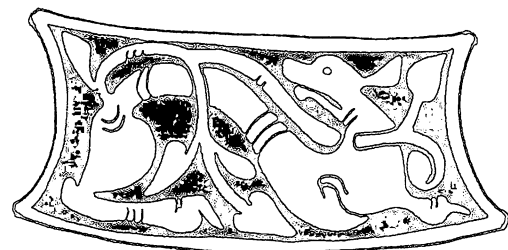
BUTTERBUR'S WOODSHED (general fantasy)

Jo Alida Wilcox, ██████████  
██████████. PH: ██████████  
*Publishes an amateur press association (cor-*  
*respondence circular), deadlines the first of odd-*  
*numbered months. Discusses regular topics:*  
*ONCE UPON A TIME (children's fantasy)*  
Berni Phillips, ██████████  
██████████. PH: ██████████  
*Publishes an amateur press association (cor-*  
*respondence circular), deadlines the first of even-*  
*numbered months.*

ONLINE DISCUSSION GROUPS

CATEGORY 32 (GENie)

David Bratman, *Mythprint*, ██████████  
██████████. PH: ██████████  
*Meets on the GENie online bulletin board service.*  
*See the July 1992 Mythprint or contact the topic*  
*leader (above) for information on participating.*



# News Notes

Several Tolkien-related books are being published in the wake of the centenary. Besides the three art books reviewed in this issue, and *Sauron Defeated* (to be reviewed next month), several other books were announced at the Tolkien Centenary Conference.

Jane Chance, author (as Jane C. Nitzsche) of *Tolkien's Art*, has written *The Lord of the Rings: The Mythology of Power* for Twayne Publishers' Masterwork Studies, a critical appraisal of Tolkien's masterwork, discussing its synthesis of medieval and modern and its reflections of Tolkien's beliefs on morality and power. The book can be ordered from [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] by check or credit card. Hardcover is \$22.95; paperback is \$7.95. No additional charge for mail orders.

Wayne G. Hammond, with the assistance of Douglas A. Anderson, has compiled *J.R.R. Tolkien: A Descriptive Bibliography*. As well as offering a complete list of Tolkien's works, this is a detailed description of the editions and states of his books, with details on their publishing history. It is a 320-page hardcover from St Paul's Bibliographies, to be published in December. Price in Britain is £40, from [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]; American publication information will come when we get it.

*A Tribute to J.R.R. Tolkien*, edited by Rosemary Gray, is being published by the Unisa Medieval Association of South Africa. It contains eight articles and a panel discussion on Tolkien as part of a tradition, his use of alliterative prose, the Ring, the Mirror of Galadriel, the symbolism of the voyage, and on *Smith of Wootton Major* and "Leaf by Niggle". The book is available to overseas customers for \$11.46 plus \$8.53 airmail or \$1.63 surface mail, from Business Section, Dept. of Publishing Services, Unisa, [REDACTED] by credit card.

*Tolkien: A Critical Assessment* by Brian Rosebury has been published by St. Martin's Press in hardcover.

Colin Duriez's Tolkien handbook, an encyclopedia of names and concepts from his work and life, already available in Britain, is being published in the U.S. by Baker Books under the title of *The J.R.R. Tolkien Handbook*. (The title of the original British edition, from Monarch Publications, is *The Tolkien and Middle-earth Handbook*.)

New and upcoming books: *Briar Rose* by Jane Yolen (Tor hardcover, \$17.95, September) is a mixture of *Sleeping Beauty* and the Nazi Holocaust. A review is pending. Matched sets of *Kipling's Fantasy* and *Kipling's Science Fiction*, with introductions and notes by John Brunner, have been issued by Tor (hardcovers, \$17.95 each, November and October, respectively). Reviews of those are also pending. *Castle of Days* is a collection of rare Gene Wolfe: *Castle of the Otter*, the nonfiction supplement to *The Book of the New Sun*; the short-story collection *Gene Wolfe's Book of Days*; and some additional essays (Tor hardcover, December). Lisa Goldstein has written *Strange Devices of the Sun and Moon*, an Elizabethan fantasy (Tor hardcover, \$19.95, February). *The Spiral Dance* by R. Garcia y Robertson will have a paperback reissue from Avon in February.

Steve and Maureen Deyo have adopted a baby through the Families for Children open adoption agency. Christian Mark Deyo was born August 20, 1992, in St. Paul, Minnesota and is doing fine.

CONS CONS CONS CONS CONS CONS

ELFCON 3, February 12-15, 1993. Third Annual Colloquium on the Languages of Middle-earth. At the home of Carl and Marilyn Hostetter, [REDACTED]

NEWS NOTES – Continued from Last Page

POTLATCH 2, February 26-28, 1993. A literary SF conference. At the [REDACTED] Membership: \$30. Write: c/o Spike Parsons, [REDACTED]

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE FANTASTIC 14, March 17-21, 1993. Write: [REDACTED]

CONJURATION (DeepSouthCon 31), June 4-6, 1993. At the [REDACTED] Guests: Emma Bull and Will Shetterly. Membership: \$25. Write: [REDACTED]

DIVERSICON, June 18-20, 1993. In the [REDACTED] area. Guest: Eleanor Arnason. Memberships: \$15 until December 31, 1992, \$20 until May 1, 1993; \$25 at the door. Write: [REDACTED]

WESTERCON 46, July 2-5, 1993. At the [REDACTED] GOH: Greg Bear. Write: [REDACTED]

MYTHCON XXIV, July 30-August 2, 1993. The 24th annual Mythopoeic Conference. See Page 2.

MYTHCON 25, August 5-8, 1994. The 25th annual Mythopoeic Conference. At [REDACTED] Theme: The Language of Myth. Guests of Honor: Verlyn Flieger (Tolkien scholar) and Judith Mitchell (fantasy artist). Memberships: \$45/£26; \$55/£32 at the door. Write: Irv Koch, [REDACTED] Make U.S.\$ checks payable to "Mythcon"; U.K.f cheques payable to "Wendell Wagner".

TOLKIEN ART – Continued from Page 5

For those who do not wish to invest in the complete *Pictures*, or who are just looking for a suitably Tolkienian Christmas gift, Houghton Mifflin has also published two calendar books with Tolkien illustrations. *The Tolkien Diary* is slightly more than 8 by 7 inches in size. It has 371 squares to write the events of the day in for any year, running from December 30 through a full year (including Leap Day) to January 3, plus many blank squares. There are a variety of Tolkien quotes and anniversaries, both from his life and his books, with small drawings (many in color) of trees, emblems, dragons, etc., scattered throughout, plus 12 full-page color plates: 9 from *The Hobbit* and 3 from *The Silmarillion*. As preface, a 300-word potted biography of Tolkien is provided which oddly manages not to mention the words *The Hobbit*. The book is very cleverly designed: the spider web stuck in the corner of one blank square was a particularly nice touch.

*The Hobbit Birthday Book* is 5 by 7 inches, and its only illustrations are 12 color plates from *The Hobbit*, plus the map of Wilderland on the end papers. Americans unfamiliar with the purpose of a Birthday Book will want to know that it's to enable you to keep track of the birthdays of your friends and relations. (So that you can give them presents, if you're a hobbit.) To this end, *The Hobbit Birthday Book* provides three lines for each day of the year.

The U.S. edition of *Sauron Defeated* was also published this month by Houghton Mifflin. It contains the first drafts of Book VI of *The Lord of the Rings*, plus *The Notion Club Papers* and a lot of information on Númenor and Adunaic. We'll have a full review in the next issue of *Mythprint*.



# Tolkien Conference Report

Part Two

by David Bratman

from his letters home to Berni Phillips.

## Thursday, August 20 (continued)

**T**he banquet. Huge hall, of course; place cards, and little envelopes with Christopher Tolkien's autograph; multiple course meal; lots and lots of silverware. I remembered Miss Manners' rule and had no trouble. I was in the front reserved section of one of the long tables close to the head table. This had its advantage over the head table in that I had people across from me as well as next to me, increasing the conversational opportunities. I sat across from Verlyn Flieger, Mythcon 25's Scholar Guest of Honor and the author of a study of Tolkien and Barfield titled *Splintered Light*. When she reached over to move the table lamp, which didn't work as they're bolted, I said, "I didn't expect you to take splintered light so literally." Verlyn riposted, "But Barfield teaches us there's no difference between the literal and metaphorical," which is true.

After the banquet came the speeches. The Tolkien Society chair gave a very short speech. Glen GoodKnight gave a speech that would have been short following anything else, but seemed long in this context. Then I came up, and between us Glen and I announced all the Mythopoeic Society awards the same way we did last year.

Paul Nolan Hyde and his merry crew went up The Dark Tower again, making strange hooting sounds until all hours. Diana Pavlac, Sarah Beach, and I played apostate and snuck off to chat in Diana's room till after 2 a.m.

## Friday, August 21

**T**his morning I devoted to walking about Oxford: plenty of bookshops got my attention, as did the 98 (I counted) narrow steps to the scenic top of Carfax Tower downtown, and I bought a box to mail books home in. I walked around some areas I hadn't seen on my previous visit to the city, like the Christ Church meadow south of town, and took some photos.

In the afternoon I was a paper moderator: the track manager who ensures that the room and all the equipment are ready, introduces the paper presenters, decides whether there's time for questions, and sets the breaks (in consultation with the schedule). I was awfully tired from last night and would have been better off taking a nap, a portent which had greater impact later.

The papers were good, and were mostly read very fast (to fit them in their allotted times). A paper on early 19th-century British science fiction and fantasy, arguing that until our own times they were considered mainstream; a staggeringly detailed analysis by Steve Yandell of Tolkien's use of symbolism based on the number four; a paper by the Tolkien Society's ingenious Alex Lewis on "*The Silmarillion* as History", arguing that it shows signs of bias towards and against particular characters, just as a real history would, and speculating that on the primary-world level Tolkien did this deliberately; a short talk by author Colin Duriez on Tolkien and the Inklings; and a clever and amusing paper by Angela Surtees and Steve Gardner on "The Mechanics of Dragons", illustrated by comic slides (e.g. the section on dragons and magic had a slide showing a tuxedoed dragon pulling a rabbit from a hat).

After dinner, the masquerade, in a hot tent in the college's back garden. Lots of nice costumes, mostly seen very briefly, depicting highly obscure Tolkien characters. Lynn Maudlin and Ellie Farrell had the best funny entry. The MC, Brin Dunsire, read brief accounts of Galadriel and Arwen, and then said, "But it could have been different!" Enter Lynn as a warrior Galadriel, saying, "Frodo, baby, I changed my mind: give me the Ring," and Ellie as a dissheveled Arwen, saying something about being tired of knitting. I got photos of them, and also ones of Mike and Maggie Percival as a beautiful Eärendil and Elwing.

Afterwards, amidst general milling and background music, there were a few other entertainments. Lynn and Ellie did a Siskel and Ebert style review of several imaginary *LotR* films under the

moniker “Sizzling Egrets”. I was scheduled to read “The Condensed *Silmarillion*” later on. I was feeling cranky and irritable, but resolved to do my best, not realizing that the reason I was feeling out of sorts was that I was so tired I didn’t even know it. At 10:30, half an hour before I was scheduled to go on, I sat down in a quiet corner and went out like a light. I was looked for, but not found. When I awoke two hours later, I quietly snuck off to bed and made my apologies in the morning.

### Saturday, August 22

Today was an important day. Today we were – Not Ready! The “Tolkien Purists need not apply” entertainments were tonight, so all the Not Ready For Mythcon Players wore our “Are You Not Ready?” T-shirts, designed by Kevin Farrell especially for the occasion, today.

After breakfast I thought I might skip the few morning papers (for the conference has segued from the Mythcon-academic phase to the Oxonmoot-party phase) in favor of the Inklings walking tour of Oxford being conducted by a local cabdriver several times during the con. As the author of the “Fantasy Readers’ Guide to Britain” I’m pretty well informed on Inklings Oxford myself, and I hoped to learn more, but I never did, because today for some reason the guide never showed up. I was going to go off and do something else, and was giving my bereft fellow-travelers instructions on a map, when Eric Rauscher came by and mentioned that he’d found Charles Williams’s grave. I’d known what cemetery he was in, but hadn’t located the grave on my previous visit (the place is very unkempt), so when Eric offered to walk us over there, I went along. Kenneth Grahame is buried in the same cemetery, and so, it turned out, is James Blish. By that point we were halfway to most of the other Inklings sites, so I just led the tour on. We saw lots of stuff, though we didn’t get into any colleges (most are only open to visitors after 2 pm). Apparently my tour was a success and word got around, for after lunch I was asked by a group of people to lead a second tour. This time we did get into several colleges, and went around the entire

mile’s worth of Addison’s Walk through the Magdalen deer park, site of the conversation with Tolkien which led to Lewis’s conversion. We also, unlike the earlier tour, got rather wet, so we popped into the Lamb and Flag pub to warm up.

The evening entertainments were splendid. We all bussed to a nearby school auditorium to hear Rob Inglis’s two-hour one-man *LotR* show: intelligently abridged, absorbing, mostly monologue with some narration, and splendidly acted. As soon as we returned, everyone rushed to the Pusey Room, the second-floor lecture room where I moderated yesterday, for the entertainments. These went very well. As Ellie and the gang gathered their sheets and “rehearsed” in another room, I began the program by reading “The Condensed *Silmarillion*” (finally), and explaining the Players’ history and the meaning of our shirts. The skit itself, reenactments of famous Middle-earth battles a la Monty Python, went well, and much other frolic ensued in the remainder of the program. We sang *Spamalot*, of course; Jeremy Morgan and I led the audience in “Woad”; Brin Dunsire, the Masquerade MC, read a strange funny little dialect piece called “King Harold was a ventriloquist”; and a guy did a hilarious pantomime of Bilbo sewing a button on his shirt. There were also several more silly songs, including some from a trio of hideously made up troll-maidens.

Afterwards I spent a very little time at a party hosted by the Finns, who got drunk and sang Tolkien songs in loud, cheerful voices.

### Sunday, August 23

Today, the last of the convention, was spent largely on buses. At 10 am a large contingent set off on the *Farmer Giles of Ham* tour. I sat with Manfred Zimmerman, a German *Mythprint* subscriber currently teaching in Ohio. After a stop at Tolkien’s grave, we visited three sites mentioned in the book, but the trip functioned less as a pilgrimage than as an excuse to see some unspectacular but interesting historic sites. Small

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## TCC REPORT – Continued from Last Page

megalithic monuments and medieval parish churches are common in England. It's worth visiting one or two, and if you do, why not pick the ones mentioned in a book you read? Both the megaliths (the Rollright Stones) and the churches (at Oakley and Thame) were interesting, and between them we got to see a lot of English countryside pass by: rolling land divided by hedges or stone walls into irregularly-shaped fields of several acres each. Manfred and I both carefully followed maps. We ate excellent bag lunches while the bus curved around winding country roads.

As soon as we returned, we had to bus straight off again to Priscilla Tolkien's small, memorabilia-filled house, where she greeted each of us individually, thanking me for my review of her *Family Album* book. The guests chatted and watched Priscilla's two-year-old grand-nephew play with his toy car. Priscilla is a small, very polite woman (to have so many people over for tea is astonishing generosity, even though we came in shifts and only first-time Oxonmoot attendees had the honor), a little younger than and looking rather like the Queen.

The the bus rushed back again (transportation at this conference was a disaster waiting to happen but which never did, so full credit to the committee for that) to pick up more people and meet with the other buses to get to the school auditorium where this time we saw Rob Inglis's one-man *Hobbit*, all in Bilbo's character and most amusingly done (as in his initial uncertainty of the species he's addressing: "May I look at your feet, please? Can you take that thing off or is it permanent?"). I thought it even better than his *LotR*: as with it, most scenes were passed over with a sentence or two to leave time to explore a few highlights at length.

As we waited for dinner outside the dining hall in a resonant echoing foyer, Denis Bridoux sang beautiful acapella Dowland songs for us. A few presents and many thanks were offered at dinner. In the evening I had a most interesting and congenial discussion of morality and politics with a

Norwegian woman, a German man, and a Canadian man. One step towards international understanding. About midnight, I wandered about with Eric and Ned for a while looking in vain for anything to do, so we all retired for our last night in Keble.

### Monday, August 24

Closing ceremonies were as poignant as usual. Pat Wynne announced next year's Mythcon in Minneapolis, and Wendell Wagner the following year's in Washington. Christina and Wayne's engagement was revealed to great applause. We sang "Chorea Magna" and "Drunken Hobbit", the latter more subdued than usual. Diana Paxson had organized a singing of "The Baby and the Bird" in the Bird and Baby, and I hope it went well, but by then I was long gone on my way to Edinburgh by train.



Anders Stenström and Bonnie Callahan in the church at Thame. Photo by David Bratman.

*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. To promote these interests, the Society publishes three magazines, and sponsors local discussion groups and the annual Mythopoeic Conferences.

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