ALBACON '88

PROGRESS REPORT I

THERE NOW FOLLOWS A STANDARD PR INTRO COMPLETE WITH PIOUS PROMISES AND MEANINGLESS WAFFLE ON BEHALF OF THE ALBACON PARTY

We can make a good start at this point by telling you that we will not be having any games, panels, quizes, talks, films, videos or speeches. Also, we will not be having C.J.Cherryh as our guest of honour, nor will the convention take place as advertised at the Central Hotel on the 29th July to lst. August.

Now...Do we have your attention? Yes! I thought so. You see the problem with every convention progress report's standard intro is it promises you everything but tells you nothing. So, we think it would be a good idea if we tell you THE TRUTH.

As far as we know C.J. Cherryh is coming and will be giving the customary speech, taking part in some panels and speaking in this years controversial debate, more of which you can read on page

We are also proud to announce that we do not yet know who is going to be our second special guest, but we have already asked three proposed guests and unfortunately they have turned us down. We hope to have resolved the problem by Eastercon.

We are over the Moon about the idea of tying in a Mars theme to the programme (did you know that this summer sees the closest approach to Earth in 17 years of the Red Planet?) So if the Martains are coming they better book their hotel rooms now as we will be in the midst of the over-grown Glasgow Garden Festival. I can just see the red weed engulfing the banks of the River Clyde now. This

idea will feature a number of rare items which, as far as we know, have never been seen at an SF convention before.

As well as celebrating our tenth aniversary (yes, that's right folks, it's been ten years since the first Glasgow convention) we will also be celebrating Easter, Hallow'een, Christmas and New Year all in one weekend. Sounds strange you say? Well, we will be keeping it under wraps till the next PR but it's sure going to be different.

And to keep you happy, yes! we will be having games, talks, talks, more talks and talks etc. We can assure you that your faithful committee has been working day and night around the world gathering information and scrathces of info that we assure you will lead to a possible programme. In the mortal words of our ees steamed chairman Mike Molloy "...we are at an advanced state of conceptualization, but the programme is coming along nicely too".

Don't worry folks, it's all comming together, the biggest problem we have at the moment is keeping an ample supply of tea, coffee and biscuits for the committee meetings. Having or not having a packet of Ginger Nuts can mean the difference between a successful programe item and a disaster. So, thanks folks! and keep those memberships coming in.

See you all in the bar.

GOH CJ Cherryh



I could tell you about the time C.J. and climbed the highest mountain Oklahoma together, in fifteen minutes; or about the time we fished for sharks in the Gulf of Mexico, armed only with snorkels and our teeth; or the time we were marooned in an elevator in Phoenix Hyatt and for two hours fought off hotblooded groupies of both sexes, and all three of those stories would be very interesting, but they aren't exactly true. Instead I will haul out the story I usually haul out on these occasions, about how Carolyn and I spent the night together, and the earth moved -- and that story is literally true, though it may not be what you think.

April, 1981: the first launch of the Space Shuttle. A few days before the flight, a central Florida space group asked Carolyn to come down and speak informally. Fine and dandy, she was going to come down anyhow. But the group installed her in a Motel 6 just off the interstate and disappeared. See Cardboard food and no you tomorrow. Carolyn knew I lived somewhere near the Cape; she got my number out of the SFWA address book and dialed it, hoping it wasn't long distance. fact, I lived only about five minutes So I galloped out on my charger (actually, it was a Dodge, but not a Charger) and rescued her from culinary purgatory.

I installed her at my dining room table with a vodka at her elbow and we talked while I conjured a home-cooked meal. Cooking is my main form of relaxation; I usually spend an hour or more fiddling with dinner, and Carolyn and I carried on a sporadic conversation about space and politics and archeology and Latin

law and whatnot while I sliced and diced, sort of hollering at each other through the serving window while Yo-yo Ma sawed away Mozarting in the background. And she was writing all the time.

This is protean guestmanship. Here she was absorbing cello by the decadecibel, following a disjointed and complex conversation, drinking a certain amount of icy vodka, and at the same time, on a large unlined artist's pad, writing down line after line of her next novel.

As you must know, that novel might have wound up being hard sf -- the grommet-and-spanner school of Campbellian fiction -- or sociopolitical extrapolation, or high fantasy. She succeeds in them all. I was so amazed to find that she'd been writing in that blaze of sensory input, that I forgot to ask her the name of the book.

So what about the Earth moving? What about spending the night, huh? Oh fandom, thy name is Puerility. What happened was, a couple of days later we loaded my van up with beer and took our more or less legitimate press passes down to the Cape and joined a couple of thousand other media people who were supposed to witness and chronicle the New Era of American Space Filght. I'd written an article about how the thing would probably blow up on the pad—solid boosters, y'know—but they let me in anyhow, maybe because Carolyn was along and they were afraid to make her mad

The launch was postponed a day, so we drank all the beer and dined on Machine Sandwiches and crashed sometime before midnight. Actually, Carolyn slept in her own rental car, but we were parked together. All night long helicopters rattled overhead, bringing in VIPs for the morning launch. It was Florida's dry season, so they kicked up literally tons of dust, which by morning was an eighth of an inch deep on everything. Dust, get it? We slept together and the earth moved. Anyhow, here's Carolyn Cherryh, one of the best people I know.

Programme

YEAR OF THE RED PLANET

If you look up to the sky to the East at the time of Albacon 88, you will not fail to notice what seems to be an overly bright star. It will appear brighter than anything else in the sky, apart from the Moon, and will have an orange coloured tinge to it. You will be looking at the source of many an SF writer's imaginative stories through many generations, for you will be looking at the planet Mars on it's closest approach to the Earth in 17 years.

To celebrate this momentous occasion Albacon 88 will be introducing you to a number of programme items related to the history of this famous celestial object in fact and fiction. We will be displaying a very comprehensive Mars exhibition with up to date results of the most recent exploration. We will also have a number of talks on Martian SF, with reflection on classic Mars stories from the likes of Heinlein, Bradbury, Wells, Clarke and other

THE ARTSHOW AND AUCTION

Albacon artshows seem to be getting bigger and better as the years roll on, and this year we expect the trend to continue. Last year we tried to give the artshow a different style from the norm and held it in a larger hall. This experiment was reasonably successful but could have recieved better coverage as a programme item in the standard form. It is in retrospect then, that this year we return to a more familiar display.

We have acquired a large room to display a fair quantity of art work and will be making sure that the show is open for viewing as often as possible. One extra item to be associated with the artshow this year will be a Mars theme and exhibition. We are asking all artshow exhibitors to present at least one special piece to include in this particular display, whether it be Martian landscape, war machines or

noteworthy authors.

If it is possible we may be able to set up a telescope at the hotel so that we can can actually show you the planet. We're sure there are many fans who have read the marvellous science fiction of the Red Planet, but few may have actually seen it for real through a telescope, or even with the naked eye. The experience of seeing Mars for the first time is, we assure you, quite a memorable one.

We shall also be hosting an exclusive event. The re-enactment of the transmission of the infamous Orson Welles radio play of "The War of the Worlds" from 1938. This will take place in the fan room with an active bar and we request that fans come dressed in the style of the period. The broadcast will be reproduced as though it were coming from a 30s' radio and is totally unabridged. The event is designed to coincide with the 50th. anniversary of the broadcast.

whatever. A special prize will be presented for the best of show in this category as well as the usual overall prize.

We are quite happy to accept paintings, drawings, models and any other medium for display. Any established or budding artists who are interested in displaying their work should contact:

Bill Morris, 62 White St., Glasgow. Gll 5EB.

Any artwork for auction will be put up for auction in the usual manner on the Sunday late afternoon. The convention will take the standard 10% auction fee. Be sure to contact Bill Morris well in advance of the auction if you wish to put any artwork in for the auction.

FANCY DRESS

To make this event as big as possible we'd like you ALL to take part in the fancy dress competition. This year we intend to offer fewer instead recognising the best entries with several major prizes. In addition

to the awards for costumes we are also inviting entries in the catagory of "best pun".

If you are interested in taking part, or wish advice, please contact Malcolm at the convention address.

Some fans have asked "What guidelines do you use to book a film prog?" Well, we can now reveal that we select our programmes by sticking a pin in the most up to date film library catalogue we can find. So now you know!

This year we have employed a very considered and scientific method of choosing films. Everyone on the committee picks their favourite films and then shouts as loud and as quickly as they can. The chairman will only accept the first twelve titles, so it's first come first served and it's not unusual to see blood and violence on these occasions.

It is with great sorrow that we announce the ommission of our usual Clint Eastwood Westerns, Cliff Richard musicals, highlights of last years' Grand National and the mandatory blood and guts gun-nut movie. This is due to the new Micky Gorbachev "Perestroika" enforcement. So we just gonna have to stick to SF this year. I hope it don't scare to many of yooz regular folks away.

Last year everyone seemed to enjoy "Star Trek IV" so we booked that one for our "serious SF film". The vegetarians on the committee pressured us for "Little Shop of Horrors" so we decided that would do for our musical. Mike Molloy said it had been a long time since he had seen the 1980 "Flash Gordon", so we booked it to stop the violence. The frustrated ones among us voted for "Flesh Gordon" and will give the excuse that it is an excellent parody of the Thirties serials.

To celebrate the closest approach to Earth in 17 years of the planet Mars we booked that gid ol skiffy classic "War of the Worlds" (available for the first time in a glorious Technicolor print). Since everyone is raving about the talent of Steve Martin we booked an off asked for "Man With Two Brains". A little bit of Victorian adventure and humour can be enjoyed in "The First Men in the Moon", of which Ray Harryhausen said "...it has a lot of charm".

After many broken windows, slashed tyres, broken bones and violent threats we have finally yeilded to the mob and booked (yet again by popular request) "Blade Runner". For those of a bad taste disposition (are you listening Bill Morris) we have a long overdue turkey in form of "JESSE JAMES MEETS FRANKENSTEINS DAUGHTER". Eeeyuch!

After the success of last years silent classic film with live piano accompaniement, this year we will be choosing another silent classic to be presented with live piano music and at a peak programme time. This is pure nostalgia — we will be showing the film the way it was intended by its director, but we hasten to add we will not be turning the heating down so you will all die of hypothermia.

There may be a few more additions nearer the con but for now that's what weez booked, so you better gonna' like it choom. Oh yes! We will also be having the "Wizard of Speed and Time" and we may also be showing "Star Wars".

THE 2000 A.D. QUIZ

Yes folks! due to massive popular acclaim the contest to find the 'King of Triv' is back. We will once again have the teams of three contest and hopefully enough people will volunteer for the single entrys.

The contest will feature (once again) nasty questions, bad tempers, flying beer and of course, that old favourite, crowd heckling. Be warned however that the 88 contest will see some new features, like the "Punishment Cube"!! Sounds too good to be true doesn't it? There will be approx 6000 questions arranged in order of difficulty and

subject e.g. Judge Dredd or Ace Trucking, etc. Preliminaries will be held on Saturday and the finals on Sunday, although this arrangement is at the moment only provisional.

As always the rise or fall of this event will depend on the response from you, the members. I am sure you can appreciate that my job as organiser will be made much simpler if I could get a rough idea of how many people were going to enter, so please send your name, address and phone number to me or Mark Meenan, stating whether team or single entry.

Debate

"This house believes that `Star Wars'(the movie) is detrimental to science fiction."

Once again, the Albacon programme will be featuring a debate, prompted by the successes of previous years. The motion is on a subject much discussed by S-F fans, because of the fear some have that "Star Wars" heralded an era of juvenalia, which has threaten the more serious areas of S-F.

C.J.Cherryh will be speaking in the debate for the opposition and will be joined by five other speakers. These contributions will be supplemented by comments made during an open period in the middle of the debate. Discourse by the official speakers will be of five minutes duration and those from the floor can be up to two minutes long, the whole open period being about twenty minutes.

At the end of the debate, a vote will be taken by a show of cards. These cards will be issued during the first twenty minutes of the debate and nobody coming after this time will be eligible to vote. So, in order to make your opinion known, be sure to come along early.

In P.R.2. we will be publishing two articles stating the cases for and against the motion, in order to help clarify your views and allow you to participate in a more enlightened frame of mind!

Speaking for the motion will be G.O.H. C.J.Cherryh, cinema director Ken Inglis and telescope manufacturer John Braithwaite.

THE COMMITTEE'S VIEW

This year sees the continuation of the successful Albacon debates in which a highly topical and often contentious subject is critically analyzed by well qualified persons.

Over the past few years the Albacon committee has noticed that at the conventions there has been an increasing rise in the number of newcomers to the con. We have noticed that most of these newcomers tend to be under 20 years of age and are most often seen in the

Dr. Who, media, Star Trek and film programme.

It now seems that we have a large section of our membership which is increasing, that we do not seem to be able to relate to in normal convention terms. Apart from offering more videos, computer games and films there is nothing we think we can do to interest them in the more serious items of our programme.

We have thought carefully about this changing situation in the membership and we have some evidence to suggest that we are now trying to cater for a totally new generation of SF fan, the "Star Wars" generation. Ten years ago Star Wars hit the cinema and kids of all ages from 5 to 75 queued for hours to see the highly publicised blockbuster. Now, today it might be that we are meeting the kids who were influenced by Star Wars at our conventions. And they are a totally different type of fan.

We personally put it that these newcomers are not so much SF fans as the victims of the SF orientated consumerism that was the resultant spin-off of Star Wars. If you think about it, SF cons in Britain have not changed in structure greatly from the days of the first modern cons of the late 60s' and early 70s'. As a result perhaps we are trundling out an old machine which worked well in the past but now does not cater for the tastes of all members.

So this year we earnestly mean to discover if our suspicions are correct or totally unfounded. The motion of the debate is "This house believes that Star Wars (the movie) has been detrimental to SF", and we ask all members to attend so that as many considerations as possible can be noted, and hope that a very considered vote for or against may clarify the situation.

We urge all new members and all regulars to attend as the outcome of the debate may shape the future of conventions. To show the committee's serious intent we are booking a copy of Star Wars to the cost of £75.00 and this may or may not be screened depending on the audience decision and vote.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

MEMBERSHIPS

Our membership rates are:

	Attending	Supporting
to 4th April	£10	£5
to 15th July	£12	£6
On the door	£14	

Presupporting members receive a £1 reduction.

PLEASE NOTE THAT NO MEMBERSHIPS WILL BE ACCEPTED BY POST AFTER 15TH JULY.

DEALERS ROOM

All dealers requiring tables should book early as demand is high. The rate is £12 per table — to be paid before the convention.

ADVERTISING

Adverts should be supplied A4 or A5, camera ready and allow l0mm margins. Photos and half tones should be dot-screened and payment should accompany adverts. The rates are:

	Full page	Half page	Quarter page
PR2	£15	£8	£5
Programme notes	£20	£10	£7
Souvenir book	£30	£15	£8

There is a 20% discount for fans.

Deadlines a	are	PR2	31st	May
		Programme notes	30th	June
		Souvenir book	31st	Aug

HOTEL

Albacon has negotiated the following room rates for the duration of the convention:

TRIPLE room without bath	£14.00
TWIN/DOUBLE without bath	£15.50
TWIN/DOUBLE with bath	£19.00
SINGLE without bath	£18.00
SINGLE with bath	£19.50

All rates are per person per night and include VAT and full Scottish breakfast.

AUCITONS

Albacon will take 10% commission on all bids.

PROGRAMME BOOK

Albacon 88 has decided not to produce a Programme book at the time of convention. Instead we plan to issue a souvenir Programme Book after convention containing photos of the convention, extracts from speeches and much more. We have taken this decision as we feel that a true record of the convention would be more appreciated than the usual book which tells you nothing you didn't already know.

At the convention members will receive Programme notes containing details of all programme events together with other usefull information such as local restaurants and two months later a copy of the souvenir Programme Book will be sent to them.

TRAVEL

The next PR will contain directions to help you find the hotel and details of the deal we are presently arranging with The Scottish Bus Group for reduced fares for members.

SMOKING POLICY

Albacon will again be operating a No-Smoking policy in the programme areas, dealers room and art show. Smoking will be permitted in bars and corridors. We hope that smokers will abide by this out of consideration for non-smokers.

HUNTING, SHOOTING AND FISHING

During the last few months there has been extensive refurbishment of the hotel thus no longer making it necessary for members to prepare their own meals or provide their own beds at the convention. Those found tresspassing without a licience will be prosecuted, or even sent home with a letter for their mother.

ROOMS

Following last years success in making the suites on the first floor available to fannish groups we will again offer thes rooms for let. If you are interested in taking a room for all or part of the convention, for a reasonable purpose eg. R.P.G., parties, filk etc., please contact us.

As some groups have already requested rooms you are advised to book your room as soon as possible.

Each day a rota will be displayed outside each room showing what has been booked and at what times. We would stress that rooms are only available for reasonable purposes and it will be your responsibility to "police" the room.

To book a room write to us at the convention address and giving details of: Name and description of event, times and dates required, any equipment we might be able to help you with, and your name and address.

WEAPONS POLICY

At this years convention the following will NOT be allowed:

Bladed weapons larger than Swiss army pocket knives; guns - real, replica, water pistols or laser-tag; any other object which the committee consider dangerous

The only exception to this policy will be for the Fancy Dress competition, with prior approval of the committee.

DIRECTORY OF SCOTTISH SCIENCE FICTION AUTHORS

In the course of planning conventions talk continues of American and British authors as guests or even of American authors living in Ireland, but strangely, little mention of Scottish SF authors.

Last year, when Angus MacVicar was being proposed as our guest, the idea of exploiting local SF literary talent came to the fore and started to assume greater importance in my mind. Some obvious authors came immediately to mind — J.T. McIntosh, Chris Boyce, Duncan

Lunan, prof. Archie Roy and, more recently, Angus McAllister.

In order to examine fully the possibilities I wish to start a directory of published science fiction authors in Scotland, and I would ask any who would qualify to contact me at the address below.

The only criterion for entry to the list is that science fiction works by each of the various authors have been published. Whether novels or only one short story, they would still belong in this directory

I believe that, in the interest of SF fandom, such a directory could help in planning future conventions. Secondly such a directory should exist.

It may take years before it could reach any degree of completeness, and will require regular updating for each entry, but, all considered, should be useful even in the short term. (Needless to say, if you know anyone who would qualify for entry to the directory please pass my address onto them.)

Bill Morris, 62 White Street, Glasgow Gll 5EB.

BOOK AUCTION

This year we are proposing to have a formal auction. The idea is to enable people to sell any valuable books and things in a better environment than the usual dealers room. We shall require details of all proposed auction material by 19th. June so that a pamphlet can be produced prior to the event. Details required are as follows:

Description of item, condition and minimum price you are prepared to accept (bearing in mind the 10% commission). Items will be required by the Saturday of the con so that a viewing can take place immediately preceding the quoted but the item will not be quoted but the item will not be sold unless it is met. Send all details to:

Albacon Auction, c/o Mark Meenan, Burnawn, Stirling Rd, Dumbarton, G82 2PJ

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