



ORBITAL

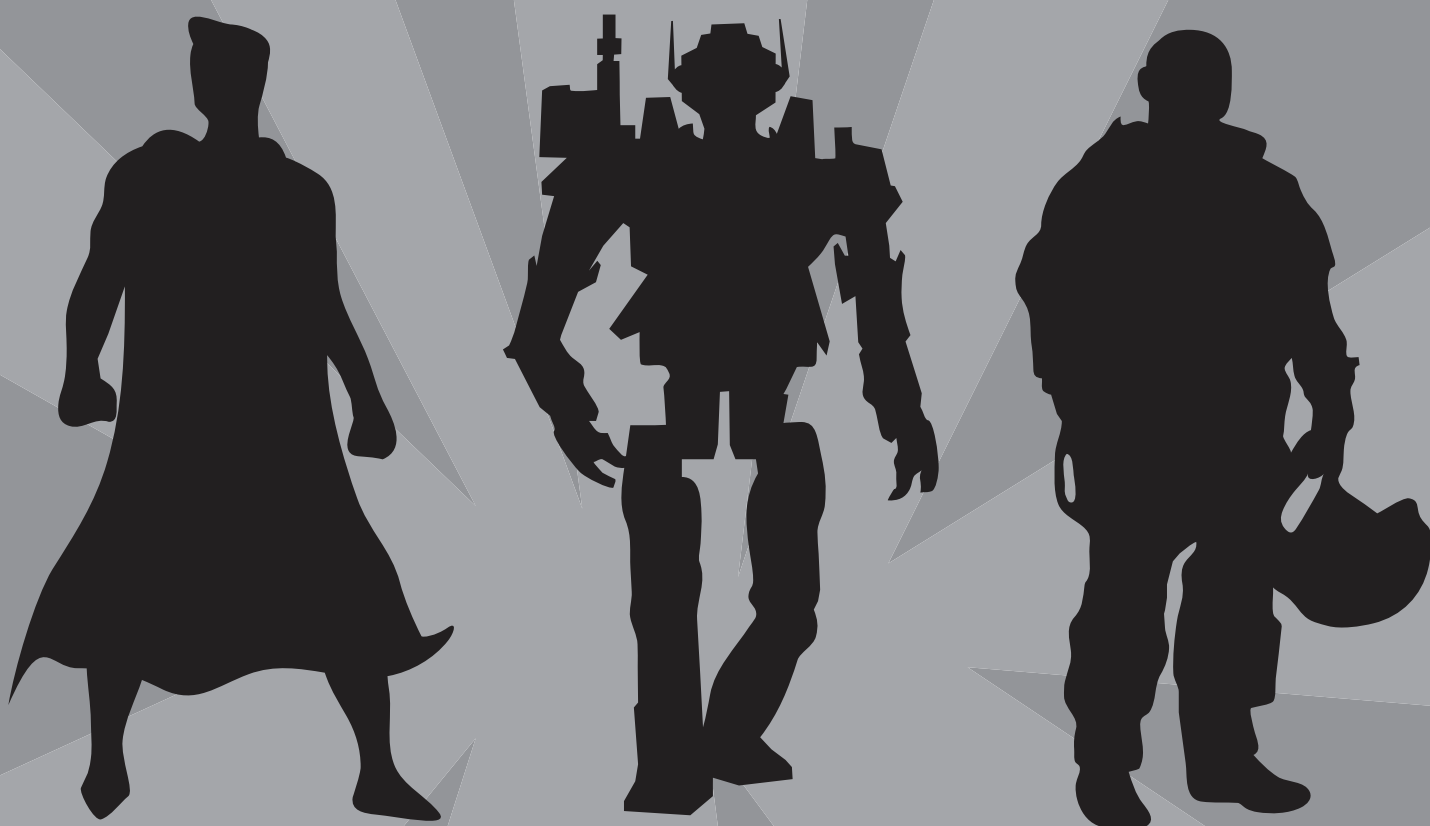
2008

Progress Report 3



SCI-FI-LONDON⁷

THE 7TH ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASTIC FILM



APOLLO WEST END
19 LOWER REGENT STREET
LONDON SW1

TICKETS: 020 7451 9944

www.sci-fi-london.com

30 APRIL - 4 MAY 2008

EASTERCON MARCH 21ST – 24TH 2008

**GUESTS OF HONOUR NEIL GAIMAN, TANITH LEE, CHINA MIÉVILLE,
CHARLES STROSS, AND FAN GUEST OF HONOUR ROG PEYTON**

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CREDITS

Editor: Mark Young. Cover by Pete Young.
With thanks to Dawn Abigail, Simon Bradshaw, Claire Brialey,
Marcia Illingworth, Steve Kilbane, Pádraig Ó Méalóid,
Mike O'Toole, Misha, Barbara Stewart and Mark Slater.

WELCOME

Welcome to the third and final Orbital Progress Report. This PR will give you the details you need to get to the convention, encourage you to volunteer to become an active member of the con, give information on the programme and disabled access in the hotel and to introduce two of our Guests of Honour, China Miéville and Charlie Stross.

We are pleased to announce our second overflow hotel, the Renaissance. The Radisson is now full although the Marriott still has a number of family sized rooms available.

We would like to stress the **FREE BUS** available from Heathrow airport to the hotel. See page 6 for details of the included services. Talking of freebies, we can confirm that, thanks to pass-along funds from *Contemplation*, we will be providing a **FREE CHILDCARE** service at the convention. Places for this will be on a strictly first come, first served basis but can be reserved in advance. Please see PR2 or our website for details of how to reserve a space or contact info@orbital2008.org for more details.

The Orbital 2008 committee looks forward to seeing you all at the convention. 🍀

CONTACT INFORMATION

Membership:	Note change of details: Rita Medany, 4 Evesham Green, Aylesbury, HP19 9RX	membership@orbital2008.org
Programme:		programme@orbital2008.org
Advertising & Publicity:		publicity@orbital2008.org
Publications:	Orbital 2008, 2 Lytham Close, Reading, Berkshire, RG30 3HU	publications@orbital2008.org
Dealers:	Orbital 2008, Bell House, 14 Main St, Coveney, Ely CB6 2DJ	dealers@orbital2008.org
Other email addresses:		artshow@orbital2008.org masquerade@orbital2008.org access@orbital2008.org volunteers@orbital2008.org
General questions:	Judith Proctor, Waveney, 28 Diprose Rd, Corfe Mullen, Wimborne, Dorset BH21 3QY	info@orbital2008.org

We have an extensive online community consisting of:

LiveJournal at community.livejournal.com/orbital_2008/

YahooGroup at groups.yahoo.com/group/orbital_2008/

Facebook at www.facebook.com/event.php?eid=6152464198

HOTEL UPDATE

There are still rooms available at our overflow hotel, The Marriott. However we have just signed a contract with the Renaissance Hotel for additional rooms.

The entrance to the Renaissance Hotel is approximately three hundred metres from the main entrance to the Radisson on the other side of Bath Road. There are two light controlled pedestrian crossings across Bath Road with dropped curbs to allow easy transit for anyone with mobility problems. To reach the Radisson you also have to cross a side road but again there are dropped curbs and a small central island.

Price per room per night (inc. breakfast) and VAT	
Double	£85
Single	£75
Car Park	£10 per 24 hour period

The rooms are compact and well appointed. Some rooms overlook Heathrow's nearest runway, the hotel is very well sound insulated and so aircraft noise should not be a problem.

We have reserved some rooms in the Renaissance over the convention period (Thursday 20th March to Monday 24th March). Depending upon various factors it may be possible to book a room as late as ten days before the convention. However, the number of rooms reserved is limited and demand is likely to be high. If you want a room, book it sooner rather than later.

Booking Rooms in the Renaissance Hotel

Orbital is **not** handling the hotel bookings for the Renaissance; please contact the hotel directly. Please quote the correct rate code when you make your booking:

Booking via phone: Use rate code FDC. 0208 897 6363 and ask for in house reservations

Booking on-line: Code FDCFDCA. This link is complicated, so please follow the link at www.orbital2008.org/overflow. 🌐

THE MAIN HOTEL IS FULL!

Please note that the Radisson Edwardian is effectively full. We have a waiting list for people who wish to get into the main hotel. See the PR envelope label to check your current room booking in the **main** hotel. If you are booked into the Radisson and do not intend to use your booking, **please cancel your hotel reservation** so that the room can be freed up for someone else. To change or cancel your registration, you need to follow the link in the email you received when you first registered. If you no longer have this email, you may request a new one at www.orbital2008.org/memserv. If you are not on email or the internet, please contact our membership secretary (see page 4 for contact details).

Reservations may be changed up to the 22nd February 2008. 🌐

GETTING TO THE HOTEL

Radisson Edwardian Heathrow Hotel
140 Bath Road, Hayes, Middlesex, UB3 5AW

Simple version: the hotel is on the north side of the A4 right by Heathrow Airport.

BY ROAD:

Coming west on the A4, you'll pass the following hotels on your right, Hotel Ibis, Holiday Inn Heathrow Ariel (white circular hotel), then three in a row: Sheraton Skyline, Marriott and then the Radisson Edwardian. Continue to the next traffic lights with a right turn and turn right into Boltons Lane (at the McDonalds). Turn right at the mini roundabout into Mondial Way. The hotel is straight ahead and there's an entrance to the car park off the next mini roundabout (the gates will open when you take a ticket). If you want the front of the hotel, turn right at the second roundabout and back up to the A4. Turn left and very shortly after turn left into the entrance of the hotel.

Coming east on the A4 from Slough and the M25, wait until you see the Renaissance Hotel ahead on your right (at Heathrow Airport) and a McDonalds on your left. The Radisson is the next big white building on your left (and clearly marked!)

BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT:

Tube (Piccadilly) or **Heathrow Express** train (Paddington) to Heathrow Airport (Terminals 1,2,3) and then get a (**FREE**) bus (105, 111, 140 or 285 and the 555, 556 and 557) from the Heathrow Central bus station to the hotel (it is within the free travel zone, so just tell the driver you're getting off at the Radisson and there will be no charge). When you see the McDonalds ahead on your left, ring the bell to get the bus to stop. Or you can take a taxi from the airport (expensive). Finally the Hotel Hoppa bus service (H3) runs from the airport to the hotel (and to the Marriott and Sheraton) for £4 per person.

From London Waterloo or from Reading, you take the train to Feltham Station and then get the 285 (towards Heathrow Airport) to the Radisson (not free). The 285 bus runs 24 hours a day, but the trains to/from Feltham end around midnight. Tubes may run a little later.

BY AIR:

Fly to Heathrow, follow Public Transport directions above. Or fly to Gatwick, Luton or Stansted and use the Heathrow transfer buses/trains and follow Public Transport directions above. Alternatively from Gatwick, take the train to Feltham, changing at Clapham Junction, then follow public transport directions as above.

NOTE: There is no pedestrian access into or out of Heathrow Airport. However, the buses are free from the centre of the airport to the immediate surrounding hotels. There *is* a bicycle route if you have brought a bicycle with you on your flight, or a folding bicycle on the tube/train. 🚲

RECRUITING NOW!

It's tough, out there on the streets of Convention City. Fans everywhere, alcohol consumed by the tankful, Random Acts of Filking... It takes a special kind of person to step up to the challenge of helping making sure it all runs smoothly.

You (yes, YOU!) could be one of those people.

Join our team, and we'll teach you everything you need to know to become a valued member of The Department. For any of you first-time Conventioneers, this is a great way to really get yourself immersed in the Orbital Experience. And for all you veterans, you know how much fun it is! You can invest as much, or as little, time as you want, but we guarantee your efforts will be rewarding (both in Reward Tokens and Satisfaction).

Opportunities include:

Stewarding: On sentry, on patrol. No badge, no entry, no arguments.

Tech: Sound and Vision. Learn how to run a sound desk and the secrets of lighting etc.

Newsletter: Ministry of Information. Tell the people what they Need To Know.

Photographers and Reporters: the budding paparazzi out there can get clicking and writing and telling them how it really is.

...And more!

It's going to be a one-of-a-kind experience. Don't miss out: join up now! Please send an email to volunteers@orbital2008.org expressing your preferred area(s). 🌟

DISABLED ACCESS



Plans are underway to make Orbital as disabled friendly as we can. There are a few areas that are going to be tricky for the mobility impaired. Please be aware that the corridors of the hotel are very narrow, and there are some areas that are only accessible by steps. We are attempting to compensate for these issues wherever practical.

In order to accomplish this effectively, we need to know who has special needs, and what these needs are, as soon as possible. Mobility aids will only be available by prior arrangement. We especially need to know early, if you have any special room requirements, mobility assistance or printing requirements. These things can't be done at the last minute.

Please contact us at access@orbital2008.org. We are here to help you enjoy the con. 🌟

The 60th British National Science Fiction Convention
EASTERCON



10th - 13th April 2009

Venue: The Cedar Court hotel, Bradford

GUESTS OF HONOUR



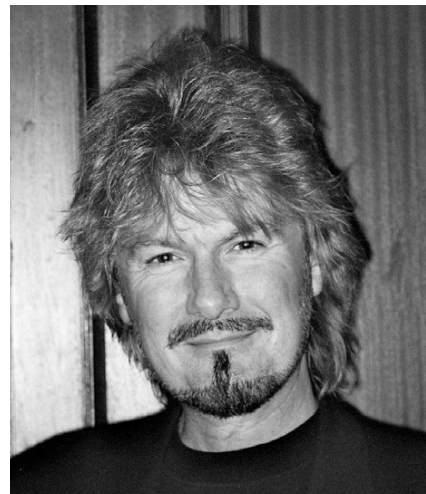
**Jon Courtenay
Grimwood**

Author of *End Of The World Blues*, *9Tail Fox* and *The Arabesk Trilogy*



**Tim
Powers**

Author of *Three Days to Never*, *On Stranger Tides* and *A Soul in a Bottle*



**Dirk
Maggs**

Radio productions: *Hitchhikers Tertiary phase*, *Voyager*, *2001: A Space Odyssey*

Plus Fan Guests of Honour

Mary and Bill Burns

Check out eFanzines.com

**The Cedar Court
Hotel, Bradford**

10TH - 13TH APRIL 2009



CONTACT: LX2009 c/o STEVE LAWSON, 379 MYRTLE ROAD, SHEFFIELD, S2 3HQ

WWW.LX2009.COM

BSFA AWARDS AT ORBITAL

CLAIRE BRIALEY, BSFA AWARDS ADMINISTRATOR

The British Science Fiction Association's awards are traditionally presented at the Eastercon, and members of the Eastercon, as well as members of the BSFA itself are entitled to vote for the awards. Usually, Eastercon members only have the opportunity to vote at the convention itself, but this year we're enabling ballots to be cast in advance as well – although we're still sticking to the principle of one fan, one vote!

You should have received a copy of the ballot form with this PR. Full details about how to vote are on the form; you can return it by post or send your voting preferences by email. All ballots received by Tuesday 18 March will be counted, provided that you include your name (not badge name) and Orbital membership number. If you miss the pre-con deadline, attending members of Orbital can still vote at the con; the awards ceremony will be early on Saturday evening so at-con voting will close on Saturday afternoon. So you've got a few weeks to catch up with any of the short listed works you haven't read yet... Do get in touch with me if you have any queries; my contact information is also on the form.

The BSFA will be presenting awards for the best novel, short fiction and artwork of 2007 and also for the best novel of 1958, the year in which the BSFA was founded. As usual, the shortlists have been formed from nominations made by BSFA members. You should be able to access some of the short fiction and artwork via the BSFA website (www.bsfa.co.uk) if you don't have copies of the original publications.

The BSFA once again offers its congratulations to all those short listed for the awards. 🌟

SOUVENIR BOOK

Recently, a number of Eastercons have been opting for an after-con Souvenir Book. Orbital has decided to go this way. To this end we will be looking for photographers to take pictures around the con, and budding reporters to report on programme items. All photos submitted to the publications address or downloaded onto a computer at the convention will be reviewed and considered for inclusion. For details, and to volunteer, please contact publications@orbital2008.org, or ask in the Ops Room at the convention or the Newsletter Office.

Advertising space will be available in the Souvenir Book for professional and fan organisations. All enquiries should be directed to publicity@orbital2008.org. 🌟

GUEST INTRODUCTION

CHINA MIÉVILLE

BY MIKE O'TOOLE

There's something wonderfully subversive about Orbital Guest of Honour, China Miéville – actually, as I've never met the man, I should make that 'there's something subversive about his work', and really, it's some *things*. Because, try as you might, it's difficult to pin down exactly wherein lies the art, and perhaps that's as it should be. But I'll try...

It's almost ten years since the world sat up and took notice with *King Rat*, a first book from a young author possessed of a unique, New Weirdian voice. The critics agreed with nominations for the Bram Stoker and International Horror Guild awards.

But it was his follow up *Perdido Street Station*, set in Miéville's greatest creation, the seemingly endless city of New Crobuzon, that really announced the presence of a major new writer. Crobuzon is for Miéville what Majipoor is for Bob Silverberg, Gormenghast for Peake, or Urth to Gene Wolfe – a chaotic, vibrant, corrupt, violent place, where the unwary can quickly become the terminally unwell. There's a feeling of new technology piled on old, piled on new; of different cultures and species with unique, unknowable rules mixing until what results is less manicured multi-culturalism and more market bazaar. It's rich and strange. It's a little like the noodle bar scene in *Blade Runner*.

Take a random stroll down any of Crobuzon's darkened alleys, the implication is, and knock on a door and inside people will be leading lives of almost unutterable strangeness. To take one example, *Perdido* opens with a fairly familiar scene: lovers waking to begin their working day, but stopping for a moment of romance. Breakfast is enjoyed. A tiff is narrowly avoided. It's quite deliberately mundane. Only in the afterglow does Miéville describe the woman's insect carapace, atop her all too human body. Her fully human lover goes off to work.

Perhaps he was warning us not to bring our own expectations to the party. The elephant in that room, as perhaps it is for all fantasy writing, is of course heroic fantasy – less a genre, more a comfort blanket in which everything we expect to happen, does. It has its place, but not in New Crobuzon. He keeps our expectations on the hop in his follow up novels in the same world, *The Scar* and *Iron Council*.

In life, Miéville is equally on the periphery. I'd speculate and say that his personal politics (avowed member of the Socialist Party, stood for the House of Commons in 2001) come closest to the surface in *Iron Council*, with its hints of revolution and war. It's never bludgeoning politics – he loves his Lovecraftian monsters, his cactus men, etc, not as metaphor for capitalism gone wrong but for their own sake – it's more like it provides a vehicle for his own furious inventiveness.

Over the years he's collected a swag of awards, including the Clarke award (twice) and the British World Fantasy, and nominated for all the rest of the majors. Clearly, there are a lot of other people who believe the somewhat subversive idea that fantasy writing can be more than wish-fulfilment-in-fur-trousers. Miéville reminds us that good writing is relevant to who we are, and what we are doing, and in the worlds he depicts I believe he's showing us a little of where we are now. And though I haven't read his latest, *Un Lun Dun*, I expect from the title alone that it will be about us. 🌀

DOC WEIR AWARD

WITH THANKS TO BILL BURNS

The Doc Weir Award was set up in 1963 in memory of fan Doc Weir. Weir was a relative newcomer to fandom, he discovered it late in life - but in the short time of his involvement he was active in a number of fannish areas, including being secretary of the recently formed BSFA, and working on conventions. In recognition of this, the Award is sometimes seen as the "Good Guy" Award; something for "The Unsung Heroes"

Charity Book Stall

I have run a charity SF/Fantasy book stall for most *Redemption* conventions and one previous Eastercon, and I will be running one at *Orbital*.

Why not free up some shelf space? Bring along your books (primarily SF/Fantasy, but other genres also welcome) and give them to me in the dealers room at any time. They will be sensibly priced and sold in aid of *The Wildlife Trusts*.

Thank you, *Richard Proctor*

Fandom needs volunteers. Conventions, clubs, fanzines - they all require an extensive workforce, people who do "stuff" for no financial reward. Some people have a high-profile role, but there are many who don't, whose involvement goes almost unnoticed and may even be taken for granted. In some respects, the ideal Doc Weir Award candidate is the sort of person who doesn't immediately spring to mind but makes perfect sense if somebody else suggests them.

Vote for somebody who you believe has made some form of contribution to fandom that deserves a little public recognition. The winner receives a certificate, and a silver cup, which they get to keep for a year. They get their name engraved on it (although, with typical fannish efficiency, the winner has to pay to get this done).

You can't win it twice, once you've been recognised, *that's it!*

A full list of past winners will be printed in the Orbital Souvenir Book. *Sue Edwards*, the 2007 Doc Weir winner will administer this year's award. 🌀

GUEST INTRODUCTION

CHARLIE STROSS

BY STEVE KILBANE

I first encountered Charles Stross back in '91, but I didn't know it then. This happened again in '98, but I still didn't realise. A growing awareness of encroaching Stross, slowly impinged on my senses during the following decade, but it wasn't until *Interaction*, the 2005 Worldcon, that everything came together.

Perhaps I should explain. I knew of Charlie as his name sometimes cropped up on the Milford SF Writer's Workshop attendees lists, so when *Singularity Sky* and *Iron Sunrise* were getting rave reviews, I was thinking, "Good for you, Charlie." But I didn't know who Charlie was. I found out at the Worldcon. Charlie was on a panel and I discovered two things. Firstly, his face was familiar, from various Eastercons, and occasional about-town sightings (we share Edinburgh as an adopted city), and secondly, Charles Stross was smart, funny, and a very entertaining panellist. "I like this guy!" I thought. "I'm going to try one of his books." I picked *Iron Sunrise* and adored it, with its temporally insistent AI and its strong female characters. I devoured the book's predecessor, *Singularity Sky*, his occult spy thriller *The Atrocity Archives*, moved onto *Accelerando* and *Glasshouse*, and am midway through *The Jennifer Morgue*; short-story collection *Toast* and fantasy novel *The Family Trade* are at the top of the read-me-next pile.

How best to describe Charlie's writing? Well, if you want a sound bite, he's like a British Neal Stephenson, but you can lift his books with one hand.

In some ways, Charlie's an explainer. His writing is woven with complex ideas, but Charlie makes them seem intuitive. This is most obvious in his blog (www.antipope.org), such as in his tear-down of the current eBook market (Charlie's a big fan of eBooks, so it's up-close and personal), but it comes out well in his writing, too. Not in a hold-everything-while-we-figure-this-out way, but so that it unfolds naturally. There's a lovely sequence at the start of *Iron Sunrise*, where a supernova is followed in detail, as Charlie explains just what happens to everything in the path of the wave front - including the space station where our heroine lives. Mixed in with this gift for transferring concepts is a mass of ideas, nowhere more so than in *Accelerando*, which effectively reboots every few chapters as the previous setting collapses under the rate of change... He also seems to be far too well informed: where pulp sf would have techno-babble, Charlie's throwing in maths, physics, military and geek technology and other concepts, provoking vague recollections from long-ago lectures. Then I'll come across something I *do* know about, and find Charlie's using it in *exactly* the right way.

Charlie is nothing if not passionate. A long-time fan of open-source concepts, he released *Accelerando* under a Creative Commons licence (you can download it from one of his sites),

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which is appropriate, given that the novel's protagonist lives for donating Intellectual Property to the Greater Good. After inappropriately falling victim to the ill-judged DMCA take-down notice issued against Scribd by SFWA president Andrew Burt, Charlie worked on the SFWA's copyright exploratory committee in an attempt to fix that organisation's view towards "pixel-stained techno-peasants."

What of the books themselves? *Singularity Sky* and *Iron Sunrise* (both nominated for Hugos) are Charlie's way of dealing with the Vingean Singularity. They're light space opera, with an emphasis on clashing cultures. While military and political leaders try any means to defeat an enemy they can't understand, the protagonists work to prevent them violating causality, because otherwise something really nasty will happen...

A recipe for *The Atrocity Archives* and *The Jennifer Morgue*: Take James Bond, the Cthulhu Mythos and a Linux geek. Blend well. Season liberally with humour. Add a Hugo Novella award. Serve at five hundred words per minute. *Accelerando*, nominated for the Hugo, Arthur C. Clarke and BSFA awards, recursively extrapolates the future, with tomorrow as its first iteration. It follows Manny and his remarkably dysfunctional family (and their cat) over a discontinuous sequence of episodes, reaching further and further into a future that gets increasingly bizarre, but is still recognisable given the steps taken to get there.

In the Prometheus-winning and Hugo-nominated *Glasshouse*, Charlie turns to the hypocrisy of polite society. Ex-military operative Robin knows someone is trying to kill him, but not who or why. He takes refuge in a sealed Stepford-esque enclave, a social experiment, only to discover that it's even less safe inside. What about the *Merchant Princes* series? I don't know, yet. But since they've already won the Sidewise awards, I'm looking forward to finding out .

Oh, and that first encounter in 1991? Charlie's short story in *The Weerde*. 🌟

DEALERS' ROOM NEWS

The Orbital Dealers' Room is shaping up to be a very nice one indeed. We do have some tables left, as we have a wonderful space. There will also be a coffee house type of arrangement in the corner of the main room, so it should be easy for you to get refreshments as necessary. As usual, only dealers will be able to take refreshments into the actual selling area of the room. Tables are £35.00 per two metre table. You can register online at www.orbital2008.org/dealers.html. You must be registered as a member of the convention in order to book tables. The link from the Dealers' Room page will take you to a form that will allow you to register for membership as well as for tables. We do need to hear from you at least two weeks before the convention, which will be by 7th March. If you have any queries, please feel free to contact us at dealers@orbital2008.org. 🌟

CHAOS COSTUMING

A PEEK BEHIND THE CURTAIN

BY BARBARA STEWART

What is chaos costuming? A place where you can make from scratch, continue to work on or just put finishing touches to what ever glorious creation you have brought to use at the Con/Masquerade/Cabaret, or just re-sew a button on.

How does it work? Well, those nice people from Orbital give us access to a room and we fill it full of a lot of stuff: material, sewing machines, old clothes, glue-guns, old curtains (hence the title, they can be very useful), staple-guns, the odd skeleton, some foam pipe-lagging (also very useful), hammer and nails, even needles and thread. Add a few ~~mad people~~ enthusiastic little helpers who can ~~ensure you don't glue yourself to the table~~ assist you.

What doesn't it do? It is **not** a crèche. We do actively encourage children but ask for a responsible adult to accompany them; the room is full of sharp pointy things that can hurt.

We don't do all your thinking for you so we ask for your input. Although there are people there to help it's your thing and participation is paramount, think "Blue Peter with attitude".

Just because it's chaos doesn't means it's tat, there are helpers who can help you do a proper job (although this can take time and if it's just for a 30 second joke, there are other ways). Remember "Even chaos has a pattern". We will operate Friday and Saturday, but the little helpers are let out of their cage in the evenings. 🌟

FORBIDDEN --- **PLANET**

Forbidden Planet are BACK!

We'll be in the dealers' room with loads of signed first editions and other great stuff.

Drop by and see us!



www.forbiddenplanet.com

BOOK AUCTION

Orbital wishes to revive the Book Auction. This is a chance for you to get rid of some of your duplicate or surplus books. Please bring your books for sale along to the Ops Room, preferably in a box, clearly marked with where you want the proceeds to go (be it yourself or a nominated charity). This book auction is in addition to the David Stewart Charity Auction (see page 20). 🌟

THE GEORGE HAY LECTURE

PROF DAVID SOUTHWOOD

BY SIMON BRADSHAW

As one of the founders of the Science Fiction Foundation, George Hay (1922-1997) was a passionate advocate of the role of science fiction in encouraging and promoting interest in science and its effects on society. To commemorate his vision, the Science Fiction Foundation established the **George Hay Memorial Lecture** to be presented at the Eastercon by a speaker connected with novel and thought-provoking areas of scientific research, be it as a practitioner or a commentator. Since Dr Helen Priddle gave the inaugural lecture at 2Kon in 2000 on the subject of cloning, we have been honoured by a distinguished list of visiting speakers on topics ranging from human mutation to the depiction of science in Victorian literature.

This year, we are delighted to welcome Professor David Southwood as our ninth Hay Lecturer. As Head of Science for the European Space Agency, a position he has held since 2001, he is responsible for oversight of a research programme that includes probes orbiting Venus, Mars and Saturn, space-borne observatories, and satellites monitoring and exploring our own climate. His tenure has seen such highlights as the Huygens probe, the first mission to land on Titan, and it is with good reason he describes his position as "probably the most interesting job a space scientist could aspire to and possibly the most challenging."

Professor Southwood studied for his PhD at Imperial College, London, an institution he has been strongly associated with ever since, becoming head of the Blackett Laboratory in 1994. He also researched and taught at the University of California, Los Angeles, whilst his long-running work with ESA began when he became head of Earth Observation Strategy in 1977. As principal investigator for the magnetometer on the Cassini Saturn probe, he was responsible for the design and construction of a key instrument, currently exploring the complex space environment around the ringed planet.

As many Orbital 2008 members will be aware, this is not Professor Southwood's first encounter with science fiction fandom. As one of the organisers of the programme for Interaction, the 2005 Worldcon in Glasgow, I was delighted to have the opportunity to welcome him as the conventions Special Science Guest, in which capacity he gave a fascinating and very well-attended talk on Saturn in fact and fiction, showing not only his scientific credentials but also his familiarity with the genre we all enjoy.

The Science Fiction Foundation and Orbital 2008 are delighted to welcome him back to a British convention as the George Hay Lecturer for 2008, and look forward to hearing him speak on how real life matches up to science fiction when it comes to running space exploration for a living. 🪐

PROGRAMME UPDATE

The programme is really taking shape now with panels, games and workshops to keep you entertained and out of the bar (actually, some of them will take you into the bar). It will also be an interactive programme with the aim of getting as many people involved as we can. This means as well as more programme items than normal, the programme items themselves will be more interactive. Even the traditional panels will be encouraging contributions and debates within the audience a lot earlier than you would normally see.

The programme will start quite lightly at about 10am on Friday morning, though the official opening ceremony will not be until Friday evening. The closing ceremony will be Monday afternoon, but there will still some light programming going on into Monday evening.

At most times, there will be multi-streams running, so you will have a choice of what to do.

Everyone's a Martian: Every member's badge will have a colour on it, of either blue, green or red, to show whether you are a Blue, Green or Red Martian. During the convention, most games and some other activities will earn you 'Martian Points' for your team. Each team will have a team leader, and the three leaders will be chosen randomly (sort of), and will be announced at the opening ceremony. Just give your Martian Points to your team leader for them to count. There are no team prizes, just the satisfaction of knowing that you are one of the best Martians.

Writers Workshops: The T-Party (www.t-party.org.uk), a London-based writers group specialising in SF/F/H, will run a half-day writers workshop at Eastercon. The T-Party will provide experienced critiquers to operate in pairs with small groups of three or four writers. These critiquers will include two agented writers, a BFS Award winning editor and, subject to other commitments, double World Fantasy Award winner Bruce Holland Rogers.

Up to 16 writers can be accommodated. Writers should send as rich text files up to 5000 words of a novel opening or complete short story (generally falling within the SF/F/H genre) for review to the coordinator Martin Owton. Send this material (subject line: Eastercon Workshop) to Martin.Owton@virgin.net.

Writers will be taken on a first come, first served basis and we will attempt to match them with experienced writers in their genre. Writers need to be aware that the material will be shared with other attending writers, and that it will be critiqued with an eye to improving it, so no 'golden words' syndrome.

Calling Poets: Chris Morgan will be running a Poetry Reading at Orbital. This will be a selection of poets reading their own work. This means we are calling for any attending poets to bring some of their more performable work along to the convention. Please be prepared to book in for the item when you arrive at the con registration desk or see Chris Morgan around the convention to discuss and estimate the time it will take to perform.

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London: This will be the first Eastercon in London since 1996, so it is only fitting we have a panel looking at how writers have interpreted London. From Dickens to Iain Sinclair, London is one of the most imagined cities in the world. Why is that, and what does a fantastic imagination add?

Doctor Who: How can we forget Doctor Who? There are at least three panels on our favourite timelord plus we hope there will be a new episode on the Beeb that weekend, so we will try to make sure we can all watch it.

Battlestar Galactica: This was probably one of the most controversial genre shows of recent years among new fans and fans of the original classic. And we are not ones to shun a debate, so come along to the BSG panel and have your say.

Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy: To mark the 30th anniversary of *Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy*, a panel and the audience will discuss the lasting appeal, and their favourite incarnation, of the guide: radio, play, LP, book, TV, computer game or film.

Seen any good films? What was your favourite film in the past year? *Harry Potter*? *Fantastic Four*? Or maybe *Stardust* or Danny Boyle's *Sunshine*. The panel will give their views with plenty of opportunities for you to argue the case for your best trip to the cinema.

Eclectic 21 Twisted Tales: Late night horror and sci-fi readings. Bring along your own work or published fiction for reading aloud. See if you can terrify your fellow attendees!

Hall Costume Day: The formal masquerade will be on Saturday evening, but if you don't fancy standing up on stage, do not let that stop you wearing a costume at any time during the weekend. However, Saturday will be the official Hall Costume Day when your fancy dress can earn you points, and points make prizes. They also earn you Martian Points.

Kimono Workshop: Do you have a Kimono hiding in the dark recesses of your wardrobe? We plan to have a programme item on how to put on a kimono, partially inspired by last year's Worldcon in Japan. It's not as simple as putting on a dressing-gown, there are rituals, tricks and hopefully ideas on how you can do it by yourself when your faithful dresser isn't to hand. If you have a kimono and/or accompanying Obi, ties and cords, please bring them with you to Orbital. Contact Barbara Stewart in the Chaos Workshop for details.

Disco themes: There will be a disco on Saturday and Sunday nights. The theme for Saturday night will be Virgins and Pros. Regular con goers can show off their old convention T-shirts and memorabilia while first-timers can dress to display their innocence. It has been suggested that this theme could have an unintended alternative meaning. This is not true but, then again, who are we to stifle artistic creativity? Sunday night's theme will be "Dark Fantasy", just because we know you like to wear **black**. There will be a Ceilidh on Friday.

Get in touch: This is only a small selection of what is planned, but there is still room for more. If you would like to volunteer to be on any programme items, run any games or even suggest your own items, then please get in touch at programme@orbital2008.org. 🌟

THE ORBITAL PLAY

THE TERMINAL ZONE

BY MARK SLATER

Something that's beginning to look increasingly like an Eastercon tradition is the mounting of a play for the entertainment and edification of the convention membership. Many different things have been tried over the years, from simple readings up to full on shows with casts of, what felt like, thousands. Funny usually works well with a convention audience, whether it's Wakeian full cast panto, or Sorensenian song and dance silliness. We even defied expectations and went serious last year which also seemed to work well. Fandom even has it's own little theatre companies - *Reductio Ad Absurdum*, *The Reconvene Rubber Tree Company*, *He's Spartacus*. The danger though is that the same people tend to get involved each time, and we really don't want to end up as a clique. Keep going along that track and we'll end up exiled to our own little conventions in a few years' time – which is why there is some effort going into programming designed to get more of fandom on stage (and behind it) over the next couple of years. If things go to plan, this will be very much in evidence at LX2009.

But what to do at Orbital in 2008? Well, something a little different again, just to keep the momentum going. This time we'll be staging a new production of 'The Terminal Zone' – a biographical work about Rod Serling by Andrew J Wilson, last performed at the Edinburgh Fringe in 1994, and described at the time by no less a figure than Iain Banks as "Excellent". It's a fairly intense and minimal piece, with only two bodies on stage (and this time I get to direct Dave Wake for a change – along with the always watchable James Steel). But having the author in the audience keen to see someone else's spin on his words should help to keep us focused. But there's a lot still to do before then, many lines to learn, and it's always later than you think. 🌌

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DRAMA WORKSHOP

WHY I HATE NOEL COWARD

BY DAWN ABIGAIL

Why do I hate Noel Coward? Well, actually, I don't – some of his stuff is really quite good. I just thought it would make a nice headline, and I do actually have a serious point to make.

When asked for the secrets of his acting success, Noel Coward reputedly replied, “Oh it's easy, dear boy. Just say your lines and don't trip over the furniture.” Unfortunately, this is the approach that amateur companies up and down the land have been taking ever since. Go on stage. Say your lines, more or less (and, hopefully, in the right order). Move where the director tells you to move. Get off the stage. Now, these instructions will, I admit, produce a performance - a watchable performance and possibly even quite a good performance - but never a great performance. To do that, you have to go beyond just saying your lines and avoiding the three piece suite.

And this is where Orbital's Drama Workshops come in. They are only a taster, so I can't promise miracles, but what I want to do is to introduce anyone with an interest in performance, of whatever kind, to the world beyond lines and moves.

Obviously, scripts are a good thing, as I'm sure David Wake will be only too happy to tell, at great length (you just try stopping him), but a good performance doesn't start and end there. How does a villain move? How does he sound? Is that any different to how a child moves and sounds? If required, how would you portray these two characters? What would you do differently to make this a subtle or an over-the-top performance? These are some of the things I'd like to explore during these workshops.

I have specified that these two workshops should be for adults and participants only (i.e. no spectators). This is mainly because, to get the most out of it, you need to be fully focused on what you're doing and not worrying about either where Fan Junior is or whether that man sitting at the side is looking at you in a funny way. Budding actors may attend either or both workshops. Most of the activities we will be doing have been taught to me by professionals – they are the sort of thing that “real” actors do to both warm up before a rehearsal and as part of the process of preparing for a particular role. “Warming up”, in a theatrical context, means getting physically (remember, your body is your tool...) and creatively warmed up – trying to go beyond your pre-conceived ideas of what you can do, and the range of characters you can portray. And if it all comes together, you have the foundations of a great performance... 🌟

DAVID STEWART CHARITY AUCTION

BY PÁDRAIG Ó MÉALÓID

There is an charity auction at Orbital of books that belonged to David Stewart, so I've been asked to say a few words about David, and about the auction.

I've often said of my relationship with David that it's not that we were close friends, but that we were good friends. Life being as it was, months could go by without our seeing one another, but once we met up the intervening time evaporated, and we seemed to simply pick up wherever we left off. Some of my fondest memories of time spent with him were the times the three of us, David, my wife Deirdre and I, drove to MeCon in Belfast in his monstrous Volvo, with the boot full of my boxes of second-hand books, David telling jokes in his laconic style, and all well with the world. On one occasion I managed to sell my entire stock to a dealer in Belfast after the con, and we all went and ate steak dinners on the proceeds. Good times fondly remembered.

David died of Esophageal Cancer in October 2006, at the foolishly young age of 46, after a long illness. He was, in all sorts of important ways, a larger than life figure, and had been active in SF fandom, not just in his native Ireland but also internationally, for quite a number of years. I found myself on a convention committee with him for Ireland's national convention, Octocon, on a number of occasions, and at the time he was originally taken ill, he had been planning to try to run a Eurocon in Ireland. He had also been involved with Interaction, the 2005 Worldcon, where he was a section head, as well as running a very successful Press Office. And, while it might seem trite and clichéd to say so, it's still true that everybody who met him liked him, and no-one ever had a bad word to say against him.

David's passing, on Thursday the 12th of October 2006, happened to coincide with the weekend of Octocon, which meant a lot of people were able to attend the funeral on the following Monday who would not have been able to make it otherwise. His father spoke about various aspects of David's life, and explained what happened on one occasion when, having gathered that his son was a science fiction fan, he said, "Does this mean you're a Trekkie, son?" Three rows of the church laughed out loud. Afterwards, people came up to us and asked, "Is it a bad thing to be a Trekkie?" Complicated explanations followed...

After the funeral, David's family asked me if I could help them to dispose of his books, as I've been involved in selling second-hand books in Ireland for nearly twenty years now, although these days I'm largely retired from that particular aspect of my life. I was honoured to be asked, and we have so far raised over €7000 for an Esophageal Cancer research project in David's name. More than a year later, we're getting towards the end of the books. We've kept the best 'til last, though, and there are about fifty hardback science fiction books with insanely high list prices on the Internet to be auctioned. A list will be provided at the con, and I hope you will try to find the time to come along and bid on a few. 🍀



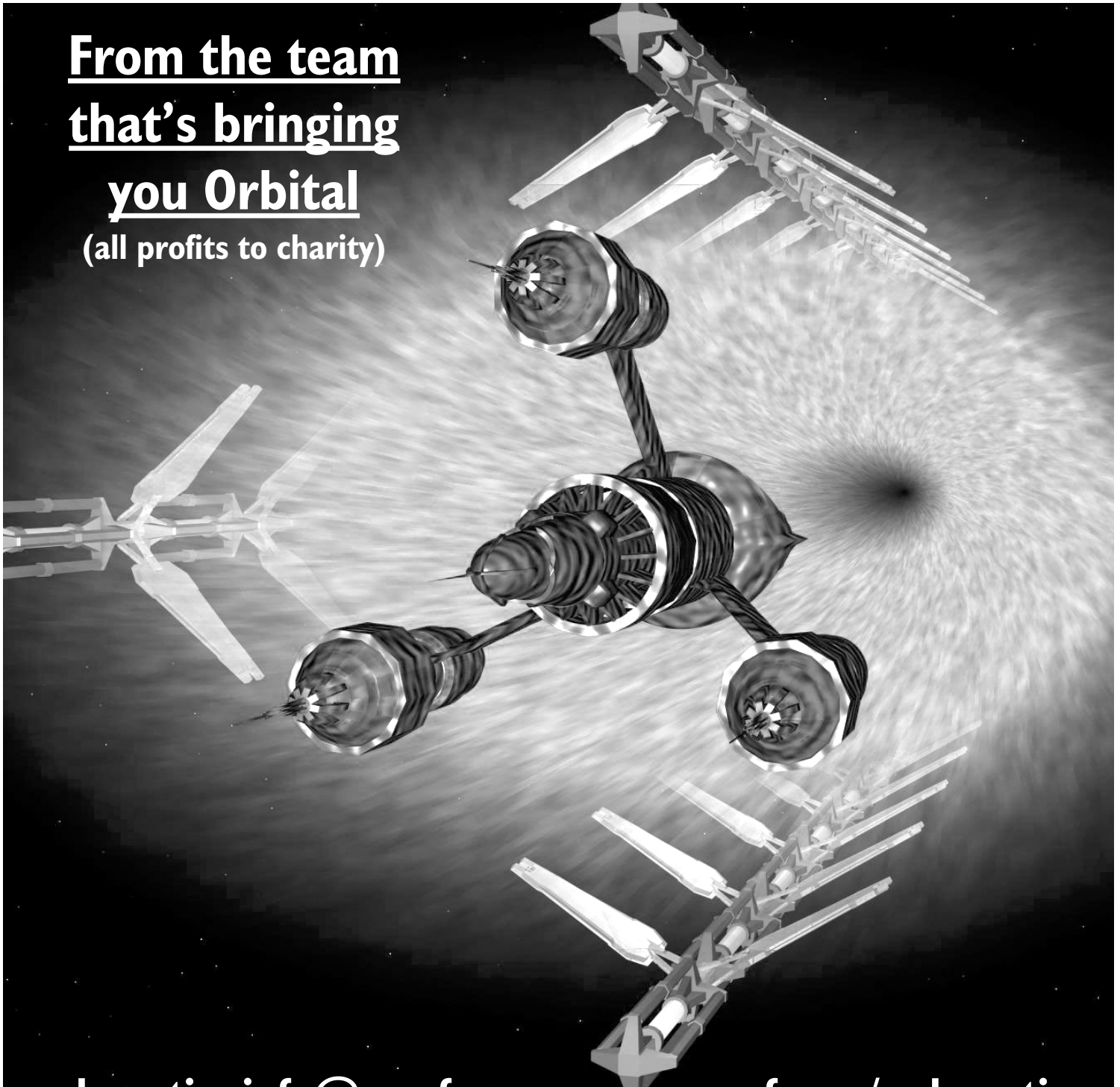
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MEMBERSHIP LIST UPDATE

NEW MEMBERS SINCE PR2 AS OF 23RD JANUARY 2008

This list shows your badge name only. It is ordered on surname or, if your badge name is different to your full name, in badge name order. If you elected not to show your name on the website, it is not listed here as this PR is available to download and view on the Orbital website at www.orbital2008.org/publications.

The Orbital website only shows your badge name unless you have selected the option to have your full name shown as well. Recent members who joined online will have been asked which option they preferred.

Some members have badge names of a single first name, and this might be confused with another fan. We would encourage you to visit the website and remove the first name from the badge name field. Your full name will then be printed on your badge.

Membership details, including your website/PR listing options can be changed online. Please see the main hotel section on page 5 for information on how to change your booking details. Alternatively, changes may be made by post to the membership secretary. The contact address is listed on page 4. 📧

924	A Joe Abercrombie	954	A Chaz Brenchley	804	A Debbie
910	A Alex	874	A Brianna SpaceKat	941	A Del
847	A Alison	928	A Matt Browne SFW	824	A Zoe Deterding-Barker
893	A ALLISON	916	A Cheresse Burke	839	A Diana
934	A Martin Andersson	862	A Campbell	891	A Les Edwards
834	A David Angus	913	A Captain Lucy	890	A Val Edwards
892	A Astronut	945	D Carolanne	783	A Elanor Isolda
828	A Sandy Auden	845	A Carrie	882	A Ernst
935	A BabylonLurker Jan	886	A Cassandra Clare	871	A Johan Frick
805	A Amanda Baker	840	A Chris	811	A Girlofprey
802	A Henry Balen	923	A Chris (Pendragon Press)	831	A Claire Gordon
870	A George Barbanis	782	A Chrissie	830	A Damian Gordon
826	J Michael Barker	940	A Thomas Clegg	821	A Roelof Goudriaan
827	C Piers Barker	861	A Iain Coleman	833	A Graham (Affordable)
825	A Trevor Barker	944	A Sophie "Sophelia" Cormack	897	A Tessa Harrington
927	D Alex Bell	907	A Paul Cornell	879	A Zandy Hemsley
810	A Benji	947	A Crazy Dave	866	A Inge Heyer
912	A George Berger	908	A Danacea	835	A Chris Hill
791	A Suzanne Beynon	815	A Davina Dallion	836	A Penny Hill
931	A Blazingskies	848	A Melanie Davis	880	A Judi Hodgkin

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790 A Hoggy	801 A Penny O'Shaughnessy	798 A Sten Thaning
889 A Cathy Holroyd	952 A Philip Palmer	850 A The Archivist
888 A Paul Holroyd	869 A Sissy Pantelis	860 A The Lovely Joanna
894 A Janet	915 A Pearlescence	878 A Tony
895 S Sue Jones	922 A Pepper	885 T Turquoise Cat
877 A Trevor Jones	933 A Persephone Hazard	784 A Steve Vander Ark
904 A Jonny Nexus	799 A Dessy Petkova	796 A Vicky
795 A Jonny5	859 A Phil Chee	787 A Vin
905 A Julie Nexus	852 A Phsthpok18143	806 A Paul Wady
813 A Michele Kahn Landan	919 A Michael Pins	883 A Huw Walters
863 A Kat	842 A Pop Princess	925 A Freda Warrington
939 A Krysia	872 A Beata Quentzer	881 A Gail Weiss
942 A Kim Lakin-Smith	875 A Rosanne Rabinowitz	853 A Andrew Wells
812 A Stephen Landan	780 A Anna Raftery	854 A Sarah Wells
788 J Leah that's "LAY AH"	781 A Emily Raftery	786 A Wendrie
909 A Leesa	932 A Ortwin Rave	816 A Laura Wheatly
818 A Liz Martin	929 A Sarah Rees Brennan	876 A Liz Williams
926 A Mike Llewellyn	917 A rentawitch	873 A Frank Wu
901 A Mariel	896 A Mandy Reynolds	
817 A Terry Martin	814 A rhea	
832 A Jürgen G. Marzi	949 A Keith Richardson	
789 J Matt	792 A Robert N Park	
921 A Lin McAllister	837 A Al Robertson	
920 A Rich McAllister	948 A Doreen Rogers	
943 A Una McCormack	800 A Ian Sales	
911 A Juliet E McKenna	903 A Sanate	
843 A David McWilliam	846 A Sandra	
856 A Bridget Meenan	865 A John T. Sapienza	
858 C Kathryn Meenan	864 A Peggy Rae Sapienza	
857 C Kieran Meenan	951 D Sarah B	
855 A Mark Meenan	900 A Carrie Seal	
785 A John Merry	906 A Shana	
807 A Mili	914 T Shroomthebadger	
918 A Ming	803 A Renee Sieber	
822 A Lynne Ann Morse	841 A Martin Sketchley	
844 A Jim Mowatt	838 A Jane Smithers	
793 A Nat	946 I Matthew Smithers	
797 A Nicolai	955 T Softly	
898 A Nik	937 D SOLARIS	
794 A Nuttyxander	938 D SOLARIS	
930 A Jostein Nygård	829 A Spike	
809 A Thomas Olde Heuvelt	899 A Billy Stirling	
950 A Jonathan Oliver	936 A Peter Sullivan	
851 A Oreyolith	902 A Tatharina	

Key:

Apocryphal (Toy)	T
Attending	A
Beeblebear	B
Child	C
Day Member	D
Guest	G
Infant	I
Junior	J
Pre-Supporting	P
Supporting	S

If you elected **not** to be listed on our website, you will not be listed in this PR either.



