

22nd - 24th SEPTEMBER 1989

THE SWALLOW HOTEL

GLASGOW

PrefaB TROUT PR1

Prefab Trout

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Dear *Stephen*

We would like to welcome you to the inside cover of PRI.

And who are we?

The guilty parties responsible for Prefab Trout and this PR are:

Linda-Claire Toal - suffers from the worst known case of foot and mouth disease. Every time she opens her mouth she puts her foot in it!

Lilian Edwards - fashion advisor to the convention, ensures that the committee are dressed correctly. Her responsibilities do not extend to shoes.

Bruce Saville - remembers the good old days when conventions cost only 2'6 and nobody used wordprocessors for PRs.

Malcolm M. Reid - generous, intelligent, good looking, modest and also wrote this letter.

See you at Prefab Trout next September.

on behalf of the committee

Linda-Claire

P.S. Thanks to Dave Mooring for the cover.

The Brave Few

- (C) 1 Bruce Saville
- (C) 2 Malcolm M. Reid
- (C) 3 Linda-Claire Toal
- (C) 4 Lilian Edwards
- (A) 5 Billy Humphries
- (S) 6 Peter Wareham
- (A) 7 Dave Ellis
- (A) 8 Joyce E. Slater
- (A) 8 Ken F. Slater
- (S) 9 Stephen Glover
- (G) 11 Angus McAllister
- (A) 12 Malcolm McArthur

- (S) 13 THE OFFWHITE LENSMAN
- (A) 14 Alastair Reid
- (S) 15 Euan Lees
- (A) 16 Christina Lake
- (A) 17 Alan Gunn
- (A) 18 Gregor McNeil
- (A) 19 Kev P. McVeigh
- (A) 20 Daniel Livingstone
- (A) 21 Larry van der Putte
- (A) 22 Mike Gould
- (A) 23 Angus H.C. Scott-Brown
- (A) 24 Kay Allan

Never in the field of conrunning has so little been paid (£10) by so few for so much.

Is This It?

What is Prefab Trout? Why is Prefab Trout? Ask each member of the Prefab Trout committee and you might get a different answer. Our committee includes in its cosy membership old time fans, bushy tailed new fans, convention fans, fanzine fans; but we all agree on one point - our desire to run a new, small, friendly convention with its own unique identity.

This PR will attempt to give you some of the flavour of our individual and joint conceptions of Prefab Trout, and to convince you that diversity can be a source of freshness and variety; inspiration out of contrast (to be very pretentious). As well as the broad outlines of what you might expect to find at Prefab Trout, you'll also find herein the usual nitty-gritty of a first PR - room bookings, dealers rates et al, neatly stacked for your convenience on the back page - plus some early speculations and info on those essential ingredients like the programme, the hotel, the guest(s) - spiced up with the odd excursion into tomatoes (tomatoes?).

Prefab Trout can't be considered in isolation. It's the latest end product of the past decade of Glasgow - run conventions, which got under way back in 1978 with the first Faircon (later to transmogrify into Albacon by virtue of Shavian discontent). Those first Faircons (and Hitchercons) were smallish regional conventions, ill-attended by anyone outside of the West of Scotland. We held them in the Ingram, a friendly little city centre hotel with exactly one large function space plus the odd broom cupboard here and there. When planning Prefab Trout, we went back to look at the Ingram as a possible site, for the first time in umpteen years and marvelled that Albacon had ever fitted in its limited vital statistics. Where had we put the art show? the Star Trek room? had people really sat at the bar at the back of the hall, shutting obediently up whenever a panel or film meandered along? Frankly, it boggled the brain.

Albacon went on evolving into a hugely successful, multi-media convention,

almost rivalling the Eastercon for numbers in attendance and complexity of programme streams. Offering as much as it could to sf fans and film fans and Star Trek fans and Games fans and... the list grew longer each year. The Central hotel had limitless rooms. Why not use them? All very nice. Hundreds of local fans came to Albacon each year, often feeling no need to go elsewhere and dabble in other conventions. Albacons were indubitably a success.

So why Prefab Trout? After years of running ever bigger and more comprehensive conventions, why do some Glasgow fans want to run a small convention of 300 souls with a single programme stream? Is this a nostalgic harking back to the Faircon days? Isn't it a retrogressive step?

No, it isn't. Big conventions are lovely but small ones have their own, very precious virtues. And after all these years of ever bigger Albacons (with ever more work attached to them, remember) there's something very appealing about running a small one for that whole generation of local fans who've never had the chance to sample an intimate convention in Glasgow - not to mention that whole generation of non-Glasgow fans who've faithfully supported Albacons over the years. We've been assisted in this idea by discovering the perfect hotel in the accomodating, intimate, versatile and luxurious Bellahouston Swallow Hotel. Yes, it's not quite as ultra convenient as the Central, being a mile or two outside the city centre; but it's only minutes from a station on Glasgow's inner tube network (the 'Clockwork Orange'), and for those with cars, has much easier parking than the city centre.

So what are these virtues of small conventions? Intimacy, relaxation, involvement, more FUN. We aim at making Prefab Trout not just a convention where you can meet your old friends but one where you can easily meet new ones, whether this is your first con or your forty-first (Dave Ellis, are you there?); where ideally all the little groups and cliques will relax and intermix. And participate. It's too easy

to be intimidated at a large con into sitting back and being passively entertained; after all, there are so many people doing things already, there's an awfully big audience and don't those people on stage look terribly professional? Again, at Prefab Trout we hope everyone will feel able to become involved, in the programming and in the general ambience. (Time to start perfecting that belly dancing routine whilst whistling "Dixie" on a Bolivian nose flute for the evening entertainment in the bar NOW...)

On the other hand, this isn't meant to be one of those so-called relaxacons devoid of programme, where by the end of the weekend you're so bored with hearing about your neighbour's mortgage / fanzine / 3rd level magic user / favorite real ale that you want to scream. We hope to present an inovative programme, far removed from the traditional and rather stultified classic convention mix of sf panels, silly quizzes and recent hit American sf movies. This doesn't mean that there won't be any sf, but neither does it mean that there will be only sf (even only sf in all its media forms). We feel that increasingly our members are interested in other things beside sf, and we hope to represent some of those interests. If you're interested in the broad spectrum of the arts, in the cutting edge of popular culture, in

music, literature, American football, Network 7, Watchmen, Repo Man, jeans adverts or Jonathan Ross (add to list ad infinitum) then Prefab Trout is for you. We're working on lining up some rather different guests too (see elsewhere in this PR).

Finally the name. No it doesn't have anything to do with the Friends of Kilgore Trout, even though three of the four committee members do meet there regularly. The name came up when Linda suggested it as a title for a programme item. Now this was 1 o'clock in the morning after a hard evening discussing convention philosophy in Lilian's bedroom. We all thought immediately that it was a great name for the convention. Having slept on it (and even sobered up) we still felt the same way.

And if you're still not convinced that Prefab Trout will be the most original and entertaining convention you'll go to in 1989, then just think: what other con do you know of that hasn't got the word "con" ANYWHERE in its name?

To sum up. Prefab Trout is essentially a small friendly summer convention - held in the autumn! - for enthusiasts of all types - sf and otherwise - who want to mingle, learn, be entertained, be different and have a very good time.

See you in September !

GOH Angus McAllister

When deciding on the guests for Prefab Trout we all wanted to invite an author who was not only local but had only recently been published and would not therefore have been considered previously. We feel that Angus McAllister is this person.

What can one say about Angus that has not already been said. In fact that is the problem with writing this piece - very little has been said. Now this is not due to the quality of his work but simply that like so many authors these days Angus was first published after The Encyclopedia Of Science Fiction. Gus has been attending conventions up and down the country for many years and those who know him can testify to his ability as an hilarious story teller. He was truly

delighted when invited to be our guest and we look forward to seeing him at Prefab Trout.

Spring of this year saw the publication of Angus's first novel, "The Krugg Syndrome", for those of you who have yet to read it I shall only say that it concerns alien trees who have come to dominate earth and is set in a firm of solicitors, perhaps this is due to Gus's profession - he lectures in law. I would strongly recommend this book (Gus tells me it is excellent value at only £2.50, "That's a pint you owe me Gus"). He also tells me that his second novel should be out by the time of the convention and if it is up to the same standard as his first then, I for one, shall look forward to its publication.

Other guests have yet to be confirmed and their names shall be announced soon.

Prefab Programme Notes

The guiding principle behind the programme is involvement. Our aim is ideally to involve everyone attending in some aspect of the programme (to assist in this, some of the programme will be held in the bar !). Interactive types of programme items we're considering include panels with substantial input from the audience, mega-games involving everyone in the hall (and brave enough to remain there), the promised bar events, and, Scottish weather permitting, shindigs in next-door Bellahouston Park. Yes, Prefab Trout may be the first convention to actually encourage you to take part in healthy outdoor activities...

It's too soon of course to give any settled details of programming (traditional PR 1 disclaimer) but what we can tell you is some of our ideas and how the programme will, we envisage, be laid out.

We are using two of the three rooms in the function suite for programming. However, at any one time only one programme item will be running (ie a single track programme). For films and other similarly popular items, the partition between the rooms will be removed to create one large room. However, most of the time the partition will be retained and the rooms will be used in alternation. This will allow any popular programme item the option to overrun by up to an hour as it won't affect the scheduling of the next programme item.

"Cilla is bad enough"

We expect to run the programme suite from about 10am to 9pm. After these hours, though, the function space will still be available for parties, charades or just as a room for peaceful conversation. The programme will resume at 11-12pm in the bar, which comes handily equipped with a raised dais area just right for the light frivolous items we imagine taking place there. (Linda-Claire Toal, notorious beard-fondling committee sex symbol is just dying to run "Blind Date" there ! Someone please, please dissuade her. Cilla is bad enough...) The bar will be

creatively decorated to celebrate its starring role in our scheme of entertainment; cocktail parasols and buckets of sands will recreate the summerliness of this summer con unfortunately taking place in the autumn, and the hotel goldfish will be renamed the official Prefab trouts. (Don't anyone tell the hotel manager...)

Please note that we don't intend to run any late night movies. In fact we will have a very small number of films, providing approximately six hours of programming. The idea currently is to have one 'classic' but rarely seen SF film, a film which most people won't have seen but appeals to the committee, some Georges Melles movies (one of the earliest makers of SF and special effects - he directed Jules Verne's "Voyage To The Moon" in 1902), "Steamboat Willie" (the first cartoon with sound to star Mickey Mouse) and a lot of cartoons all to be lovingly selected by Bruce (or that's what he thinks - ed). Of course, we will inevitably find that some of the things we want are completely unavailable!

The programme officially commences on Friday evening at 6pm and ends at about 6pm or 7pm on the Sunday. Apart from those noted above, here are some of our tentative ideas:

A whisky tasting session - including, surprise, surprise, free whisky for the audience! (So don't imagine this item is only of interest to the participants on the stage. Remember, involvement is the name of the game. (And possibly, if there's demand, and subject to hotel regs, a similar wine tasting.)

A picnic in the park - with Bellahouston park being so near, we'd like to make some use of it. So our idea is to replace the classic unpopular, overpriced and overheated convention banquet (or even tea party) with a convention picnic in the park. Sandwiches, tomatoes (see below), scrumptious cakes and lashings of ginger beer will abound, in best Enid Blyton tradition, along with silly games. (You can even play on the swings and chute, but don't let the park keeper catch

you.) Of course this all depends on the famed predictability of the Glasgow weather.

The Guest of Honour debate - Join in with a vital part of the democratic process when we hold a highly topical debate between the candidates for the Guest of Honour and Vice Guest of Honour. Govenor Phil The Greek and Senator Lloyd Bunsen take on the incumbent Vice GOH George Burns and his running mate Congressman Daniel J. Partridge in answering questions from four distinguished members of the press. These reporters and journalists will be drawn from some of the most respected newspapers, in this country including the NY Times, the Sunday Times, Locus, Fangoria, Ansible and the Redcar Pigeon Fanciers Gazette. And you too can take part. One lucky member of the convention will have his or her question asked of the candidate of their choice. Each of

the four panelists will answer the question, and we will judge which response is the most interesting, controversial, user-friendly or mentions tomatoes the most.

The Buy the Committee Member a Drink Game - We think this is a major untapped idea for a programme item. It has the virtue that it can be played anytime (particularly skilled players can play even after the bar shuts) and by any number from one to one hundred.

At the moment these are only ideas in embryo. They may yet become fully grown little tadpoles of programme items, mature into other species of suggestions, or lose the battle to spawn and perish on the rocks of ingenuity with all the other wonderful but impractical ideas. Only the next progress report will tell.

Tomatoes

Recently we conducted a grand survey of our membership on their attitudes to Tomatoes. This was undertaken as a result of observable antipathies to this humble fruit. Everytime we were at a meal and tomatoes appeared (and they appear a lot) my meal would become buried under the ejected flotsam and jetsam from my friends plates. Like refugees, these little tomatoes were thrown out, not knowing why, looking for any place which would appreciate them. So they all made for my plate. Based on this observation, I wondered if this was just the prejudice of an unthinking few or was fandom running an unacknowledged conspiracy against the tomato.

The survey was constructed on very rigorous grounds with every answer carefully examined. Using the results of the latest scientific tests conducted on tomatoes we carefully biased the survey away from those people who turned away from tomatoes on the grounds of taste. Namely, those who felt that modern farming practices used to produce hardy tomato plants had removed some of the flavour tomatoes once had. But this was more than made up by the people who admitted that they liked the tomato taste in pasta, pizzas, tomato soup et al but didn't like tomatoes. So after

carefully examining these findings we eliminated the factor of flavour, having divided it into those who preferred or disliked in particular the acidic taste and / or the sweet taste of tomatoes. Even the effect of salt was taken into consideration and eliminated.

Eventually we were left with two factors to consider - colour and texture. Looking at texture we reckoned that if this was the objectionable factor then other fruits / vegetables with the same texture should be subject to the same ostracisation. However, peppers, whilst disliked did not create the same strength of feeling. Many objected to peppers on the grounds of taste and would not have them in anything.

Thus it seems to be the colour. Yes, tomatoes are unmistakably red (unless unripe in which case they are slightly yellow/green, but not many of these appear nowadays.) Thus given the result of 71.5% against and 28.5% for tomatoes, it would appear that the masses of fandom are colour prejudiced against tomatoes. We can no longer pussyfoot around, the evidence is there. Now is the time for action. Let us boycott fandom until they cease this discrimination.

Des Res £21

Situated just 1-2 miles from the centre of Glasgow and with superb function suites the Swallow Hotel is an excellent venue for a convention. For those travelling by either public transport or by car getting to the convention will be pose few problems - the hotel is a short walk from the underground and is a two minute drive from junction 23 of the M8 and the first 150 cars to arrive will have no problem finding space in the hotel car park.

Take a look at the hotel and you will see why we thought this was it! The ideal venue for Prefab Trout. As can be seen from the diagram the function rooms are all next to each other and in one wing of the hotel. It is also clear that the convention bar is the largest of the rooms as is appropriate, since it is the focus of the convention.

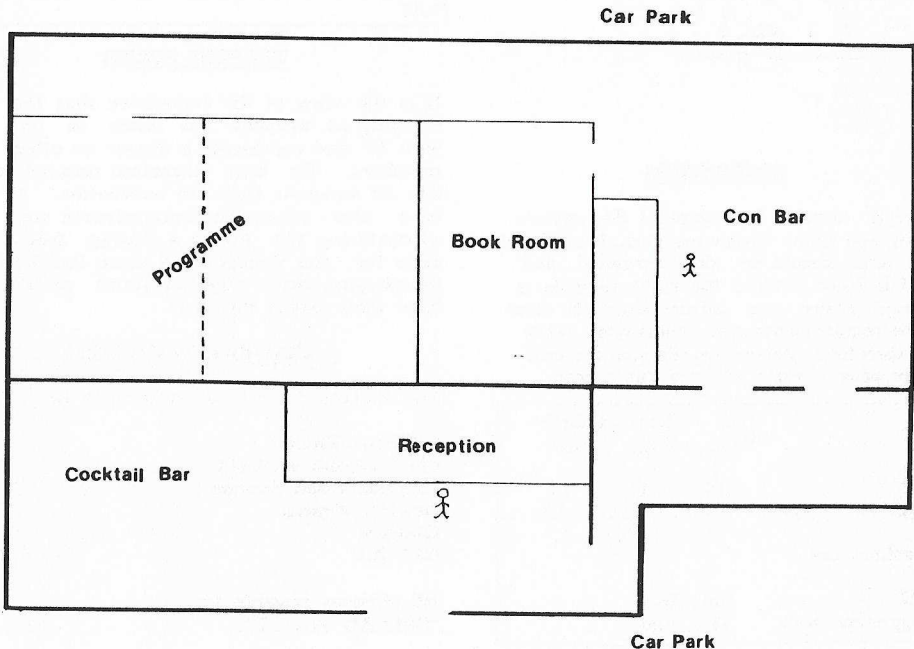
"bedtime for some fans"

Between the bar and the programme rooms will be the dealers room. The dealers will therefore be at the heart of the convention - too often they have been

found at the end of long narrow corridors far from everyone else and perhaps more importantly they will have no problem staggering to the bar.

Not shown in the diagram is the new leisure complex which is free to all residents. The club is open from 7am (just bedtime for some fans) and last admission is at 8.30pm. Its facilities include a swimming pool, whirlpool spa bath (Try doing the Mexico wave in here!), sauna, gym, solarium, steam bath, relaxation area with bar. If this sounds too healthy for you, don't worry you can join the committee in the convention bar.

Being of a modern design the hotel has few single rooms and we have only eight of these. However there are a further 96 twins/doubles thus giving us accommodation for 200 members. As there are only a few single rooms we are offering to find you someone to share a room with (see general booking form). If you wish to use this service be sure to indicate so on the form.



MEMBERSHIPS

Our membership rates are:

Attending	£10
Supporting	£7

DEALERS ROOM

Initially all dealers will be limited to two tables until the end of April 1989. After this time any remaining tables shall be allocated to any who wish further space. This limit has been set as we believe that it is the fairest method of allocating the limited number of tables to ensure that all dealers who wish space will receive space and that the members have the widest possible choice.

Table should be booked using the general purpose form and each table shall cost £10 which must be paid by Friday 22nd September.



ADVERTISING

Adverts should be supplied A4, camera ready and allow 10mm margins. Photos and half tones should be dot screened and Prefab Trout reserve the right to make a charge where the advert does not meet these requirements and additional work is therefore necessary. Payment should accompany adverts and the rates are:

	Full Page	Half Page	Quarter Page
PR2	£16	£8	£4
Programme book	£20	£10	£5

Deadlines are:

PR2	30th April
Programme book	31st July

ROOM BOOKINGS

Please book your room with the enclosed general booking form and return it to the usual convention address. As the hotel is of a modern design with few single rooms there is a premium charged for these rooms. In view of this we are offering to find people to share with and those wishing to take advantage of this should indicate this as well as giving any other relevant details eg. non smoker etc.

The hotel requires that **all bookings are accompanied by a deposit of £5 per person** and this should also be sent to us (cheques payable to Prefab Trout - its helps with the administration of the deposits).

As stated elsewhere in this PR the hotel is not large and there will be no overflow accommodation so we would advise you to book early to avoid disappointment.

The rates are:

Single room	£28
Twin room	£21

both rates are per person per night and inclusive of full Scottish breakfast and VAT.

WEAPONS POLICY

It is the view of the committee that the carrying of weapons has little to do with SF and represents a danger to other members. We have therefore decided to ban all weapons from the convention. We have also taken the unprecedented step of declaring the hotel a **Filofax free zone** for the weekend and those found to be carrying these offensive items shall have their pages torn out!

CONVENTION ADDRESS

The address for all correspondence is:

PREFAB TROUT
c/o Malcolm M. Reid
55 Cedarwood Avenue
Newton Mearns
Glasgow
G77 5LP

All cheques payable to
"PREFAB TROUT"