

The 1988 Eastercon

April 1st - 4th 1988 at the Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool

Guests (so far)

Gordon R. Dickson
Gwyneth Jones
Len Wein
Greg Pickersgill

American Guest Author
British Guest Author
Comics Guest
Fan Guest

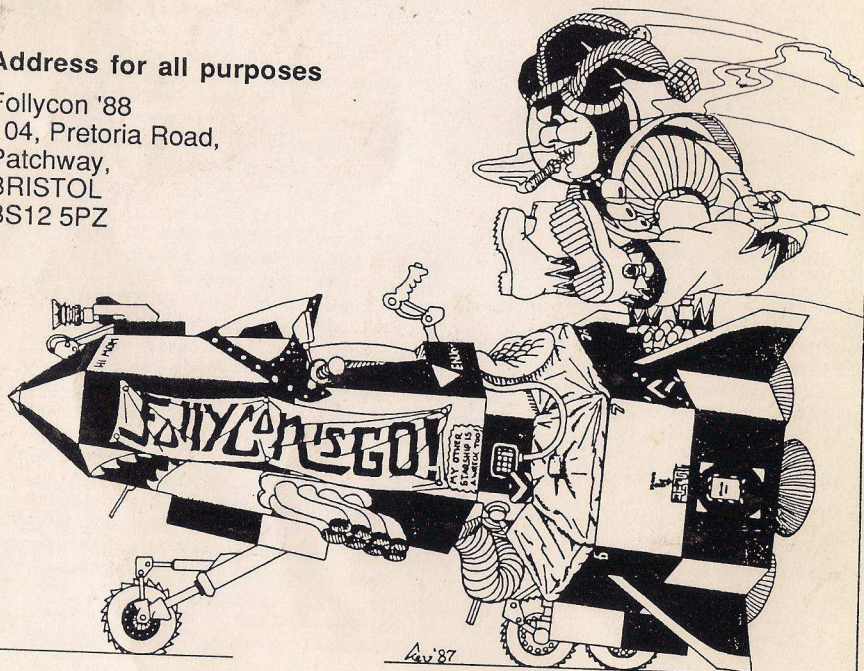
Membership rates
until 30th September.

Attending £12
Supporting £6

(Cheques payable to "Follycon")

Address for all purposes

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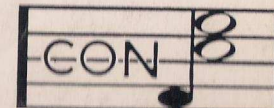


Connote8 UNICON8

3rd to 5th July 1987



GUEST OF HONOUR - GERALDINE HARRIS



The Royal Logician – A Threetelling

Early one cold spring morning, the King of one of the smaller Germanic kingdoms had his eldest son sent to him, and took him up to the highest tower in his castle. It was the prince's fifteenth birthday, and the King decided that he had been too long among the Jómsvikings, and was old enough to learn some of the duties that would be his in future years. They climbed to the top of the tower, and from its pinnacle, in the fresh morning light, they could see the kingdom spread small but perfectly formed far below them.

The King spoke. "I wanted to show you this view, my son, because you should know that one day this land will all be yours. Of course," he added reflectively, "you will not know when until the day it happens."

The Crown Prince frowned thoughtfully, as if considering the days and years ahead, and then spoke. "It will be within, oh, a century, though, wouldn't you say?"

"I suppose it will be," said the King, not really wanting to think about this sort of thing too hard.

The Prince smiled at this. "Well, in that case, one day less than a century from tomorrow, if this land were not yet mine, I should know that it would belong to me the next day, would I not? From the limit you yourself just admitted to?"

"Yes, that is true, should it take that long."

"So it cannot be all mine on the last day of the century, or I should know in advance, which would make your majesty a liar, would it not? Such a thing being an abomination and an impossibility," he added hastily.

"Go on."

"So having crossed off the last day as a possibility, what of the day before? It is now the last day on which all this can become mine, so does not the same argument apply to it as well?"

"Erm... Yes, I suppose so," said the King, and laughed very heartily. "I see thou hast learnt many things from the Jómsvikings!"

His son continued inexorably. "So that day cannot be the one on which all this becomes mine, and the same applies for all days before in succession, each being crossed off as they become the last remaining."

The King watched him.

"Which leaves today. So if your majesty is not to be proved a liar, which is an abomination and an impossibility, it must be today that all this becomes mine!" concluded the Prince triumphantly with a bright smile.

"Um," said the King.

"I'm sure this isn't quite right," he added a few seconds later, as he plummeted from the topmost tower in what was, for a few moments longer, his castle, to the impatient ground beneath. "Perhaps if I abdicated?"

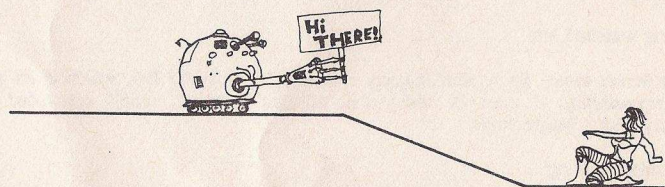
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Thanks

The following is a list of people and organisations who have helped us, by providing goods and services (often unknowingly), to make Connote8 happen: Ye Gerbish and the real ale bar staff, Peter Wareham, Gwen Funnell, Roger Robinson, John Dallman, Roger Perkins, David Brin, Phil Allcock, Mrs B. Dowdy and the New Hall staff, Cambridge University Departments of Pure Maths, Materials Science and Chemistry, all contributors to the programme book, and others too numerous to mention.

Special thanks also to our two guests, Geraldine Harris and Diana Wynne Jones, for making it an interesting and (I hope) fun convention.



This PR was produced by Steve Bull and Printed by S-Print. Thanks to all contributors. Cover and all illustrations SJB 1987.

Chairman's Introduction

Apparently at this point it is traditional for me to have no idea of what to say at all.

Well tough luck.

I can, as usual, think of plenty to say (having only once been reduced to silence in public), but some of it may just go unsaid. The full story of Connote8 is too boring to go into here; suffice to say that it has lasted two years and three names, and I'll admit that it was my idea. I suppose I could have subtitled this introduction as "So you fancy yourself as a convention Chairman," but it would be a lie. I still remember the shock and instinctive guilt that went with the eight hands pointing accusingly at me when the subject of chairman came up. I'll admit it, it's a fair cop: I'm the guilty party if anyone is.

Connote8 is one of the last conventions before the Worldcon, and in view of this we have gone for a fairly laid-back attitude to programming, with a main programme backed up by an alternative programme concentrating on workshops (definition of a workshop; where it doesn't matter if there are more people on the stage than in the audience). There's a wide range of interests covered, including our musical theme, and lots of chances to join in: but the main idea is that it should be fun. Dive in and enjoy it.

As is traditional at this point, I'll thank the committee for their hard work, but as may not be traditional (though tough luck again) I'm going to single out one person: Steve Bull, who, as far as I can tell from my distant perspective, has had an awful lot of the heavy work of the convention dropped on him and who has coped admirably with it all.

Anyway, the upshot of all this work is that Connote8 is here and now. Welcome aboard, and we hope you enjoy yourselves.

Connote8 is guaranteed free of all artificial ideologies, but contains E26 (alcohol) and E41 (fun).



The Influence of Chocolate Cake on Modern Fantasy

A profile of Geraldine Harris by Paddy Leahy

In the first minutes-book of Jónsborg, she appears as 'Geraldine Harris, Queen of Chalcedon, Keeper of the Mead of Inspiration,' and (in another hand) 'Receiver of Herrings in Shoes'. In my day, Geraldine and her husband Richard Pinch would occasionally arrive from Oxford like visiting Royalty. They effortlessly dominated Pings, dazzling us with their erudition and intelligence. Geraldine has the curious ability to transform a small gathering into an event at which, afterwards, one is slightly awestruck to have been present. Actually, we were in awe of her anyway, because we had heard of the huge seven-volume epic she was in the midst of creating.

And now here she is, Egyptologist, breeder of fine cats, and author of the wonderful Seven Citadels, your Guest of Honour at Connote8! You are truly privileged. It's her first ever convention, and you wouldn't believe the lengths to which the committee went to get her here. Suffice to say that this must be the first ever con held within five minutes walk of the Guest of Honour's front door.

Talking to Geraldine one is struck by the seriousness with which she takes her work, both the Egyptology and the writing. "They're obsessions" she admits. Both stem from a life-long interest in mythology. She cites the Odyssey as the most influential book she read as a child – not the Tales from the Odyssey that you and I ran into, either: by the time she was eight she had got hold of a copy of the real thing, and was utterly engrossed.

As an Egyptologist she has a part in the slow uncovering of the mythology of a civilisation which never produced a coherent account of their beliefs. Instead, the stories must be reconstructed from passing references in the heaps of recipes, legal documents, magic spells, and temple inscriptions they left behind, much of it still unread. In this part of her work, everything must be fact, all evidence solid. Her writing allows her to develop a more intuitive and creative side. "I have a schizophrenic attitude to the myth-writers" she says. "As an author I feel a sense of kinship with them, I don't think that what I'm doing is all that different. But the academic can't admit that modern fiction and ancient myth have anything in common." The scholar can trace a story back in time to unravel the way it grew and changed in the telling, but it's virtually impossible to identify a moment when someone sat down and told a story off the top of their heads. "To listen to some of my colleagues you'd think they believed it all started with the gods coming down and walking around on earth."

This is in fact exactly the premise of Geraldine Harris' major work to date. Seven Citadels achieves the almost impossible by being a truly original genre fantasy. Although its author dislikes the genre label, this series has the works: swords, sorcery, monsters, pirates, no sex, golden cities, barbarian invasions, plot coupons, a mad emperor, a mysterious vanished civilisation, and a simple quest structure. It also has something curiously lacking in most 'epic fantasy': a real feeling for religion and the effect it has on people's lives. In the world of Zindar there is no over-riding evil power; conflicts are driven by social forces, as in the real world, and there is a gradual realisation that the gods are working through this to aims quite different from any of the competing powers. One of the great attractions of Seven Citadels is the reader's growing understanding of the religion and mythology of Zeldin the Gentle, the god of the central characters. Although Geraldine Harris is quite serious about her own Christianity, her invented religion is not Christian in any meaningful way: it is as suspicious of blind faith as of blind obedience, it celebrates the natural world, and its central mystery is human love rather than divine suffering. "I didn't want to write a book to convert people," she says "I wanted to interest people in religion." Don't think that Seven Citadels is some kind of philosophical treatise though: one is captivated by the unfurling of the story, the characters, and the moments of sheer inventive genius with which the narrative is seasoned. My favourite comes when the travellers reach the Dead Kingdom of Shubeyash, its inhabitants' corpses still animated by the soul of their sorcerer-king, and revealing in their every action his mono-maniacal obsession with the human hand.

How did this epic come to be written? What can the aspiring young author learn from Geraldine Harris' experience? I suspect that others might find her example hard to follow. Geraldine was eating chocolate cake in Salzburg ("My father had taken me to the Opera") when she was struck by an idea for a variant on a fairy-tale: a prince rescues the sorcerer Saroc's beautiful daughter from her father's citadel, where she has been kept by Saroc's warning that only his magic keeps her young. But the warning is true: when she reaches the edge of his kingdom, she ages and dies before the prince's eyes. "I wasn't satisfied with the story. I wanted to know where the sorcerer came from, who the girl's mother was." Soon she knew the story of the eight sorcerers (one vanished in a later revision). "But I wanted to know about the world they lived in." So she drew a map of Zindar (this was a few days later, on a train to Italy) and began to fill in the names of peoples and places, inventing the landscape and cultures as she did. "I began with Saroc's citadel in the far west. When I got to the eastern edge, I found this huge empire of Galkis. When I thought about it I realised the story had to start there, so I began writing down the names of the Godborn (the rulers of Galkis) from Mikeld-lo-taan, the first emperor. When I reached Kerish and his generation I knew the story would be about them."

That was the end of the easy part. Actually writing the book took another ten years. A year or so after the chocolate cake, Geraldine sent the first of her projected seven parts to Lady Hodgkin, then editor of Macmillan's children's books. She had already built up a relationship with Lady

Hodgkin over Geraldine's two previous novels, both politely rejected. Seven Citadels was received with enthusiasm and over the next few years Lady Hodgkin provided much valuable encouragement and criticism. "It's very important for a writer to have a support network of people who know and believe in what you're doing. Otherwise it can be an impossibly lonely business." Soon Geraldine had created a new support group – the Jónsborg writers' workshop, which she started soon after arriving at Cambridge. "In many ways they were an ideal audience" she says "their criticism could be quite tough, but since they were all writers themselves, I felt they were on my side. They knew how demanding they were being." Geraldine's relations with Macmillan were equally happy – despite several swings in policy on children's fiction and five changes in children's editor, their reaction to each new instalment was always positive. The final form, minus one soccer and packaged as a tetralogy, was essentially Geraldine's decision: the only editorial change forced on her was the removal of an epilogue which made the upbeat nature of the ending more apparent.

Publication seems to have gone smoothly with paperbacks from Unicorn and translations into five languages; she is still living on the proceeds. The latest translation, into Japanese, is a particular pleasure because of her interest in medieval Japanese culture, reflected in her delightful children's novel, White Crane's Castle. Has she ever been to Japan? "No, and I don't want to – not for a while anyway. Modern Japanese society is so different from the traditional, and I don't want to have my ideas about Japan confused because there's another novel I want to set there." There seems to be a whole stack of novels waiting to be written. "I find I can put ideas into mental deep-freeze and bring them out months or years later – just as fresh and a bit clearer than they were at first".

Doesn't she ever write short stories? "I wish I got ideas for short stories. Actually I have written one, but it's part of a cycle, and I think I ought to write most of the rest when I'm about fifty, so you'll have to wait a bit."

What does she think of the fantasy wargaming craze? "People write to me to say what a wonderful background Zindar is for a role-playing game. It appalls me – fantasy gaming turns everything into cliché, and it becomes virtually impossible to involve the reader if he associates everything that's going on with a game. I started writing Seven Citadels before D&D was invented; I'm not sure that I could have written it knowing how close parts of it are to the gaming stereotypes. Perhaps that's one reason why my next novel is sf rather than fantasy."

The 'next novel', Dancing Days will be published next year. "I suppose people will call it science fiction because it's got spaceships and computers in it, and it's set in another planetary system." She doesn't like being pigeon-holed "though I don't mind being labelled a 'popular' author. 'Serious' fiction has a deservedly terrible reputation for story-telling, which I think is very important." She thought about re-writing Dancing Days to remove the sf elements, but they were

too important to the plot.

Her current project is the script for 'Ra', an hour-long animated documentary on Egyptian mythology for Channel 4. The animation is being done by Lesley Keen. "I'm enjoying it a lot. My job is a bit like the scribes in Egypt who provided the captions for the temple carvings." For once her writing is benefiting her academic career: "People are beginning to come to me when they want an Egyptologist who can write."

"I hope you don't mind spiders" she says as we enter the kitchen. There she keeps a reasonably large example in a jar, to help with the spider-phobia group she has been running since her own cure last year. She was worried that fiddling around with her subconscious in this way would do affect her creativity but, with a new novel written since then reports no obvious change. Arachnophobia does make its way into Seven Citadels, transmuted into the killer insects of the marshes of Lan-pin-Fria.

Bibliography

Fiction

White Crane's Castle (Macmillan 1979) – illustrated by Lisa Jensen

The Seven Citadels series:-

Prince of the Godborn (Macmillan 1982, Unicorn 1983)

The Children of the Wind (Macmillan 1982, Unicorn 1984)

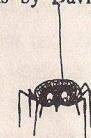
The Dead Kingdom (Macmillan 1983, Unicorn 1984)

The Seventh Gate (Macmillan 1983, Unicorn 1985)

Non-Fiction

Gods and Pharaohs from Ancient Egypt (Peter Love, 1982)

(Text by Geraldine Harris, Colour illustrations by David O'Connor, Line illustrations by John Sibbick)



Diana Wynne Jones – An Appreciation

by Ruth Le Sueur

I first encountered the books of Diana Wynne Jones about eighteen months ago: I found one in the local library and read it avidly. Since then I've collected all I can find in paperback, and read all that the library has.

She is best known for her children's books though she has written two for slightly older readers: Time of the ghost and Fire and Hemlock. Both of these have a powerful feel of the supernatural – I found the first very frightening when I read it! The children's books are much less frightening, but dealings with unknown powers are still a common theme through many of them.

The books Charmed Life, The Magicians of Caprona, and Witch Week are all connected through the character Chrestomanci. In Charmed Life the characters live in a world where because magic is freely available, technology has developed more slowly. However we find that several worlds are connected together, some of which are much less magical. Witch Week is set in one of these. The Ogre Downstairs also has a strong magical theme, though on a slightly more hysterical note. The image of toffee bars which eat jumpers, growing to an unmanageable size and giving birth to small penny bars, is delightful. It would make a splendid film! Diana Wynne Jones also gives a realistic portrayal in this book of the difficulties that result when two adults with their own children marry and try to make one family out of the whole. In general Diana Wynne Jones creates believable families, with real problems which they have to sort out. The depth of characterisation is good, but it never gets in the way of the plot, and this is certainly an added advantage for the adult reader.

All of the books mentioned so far deal with a world peopled with humans that is recognisably our own. Diana Wynne Jones has also written two books about a world that is very different: Cart and Cwiddler, and Drowned Ammet; and some about non-humans on this world: Power of Three; and The Spellcoats. Of these my personal favourite is Power of Three which is about the attempts of three children Ayna, Gair and Ceri to lift the curse which the Dorig put on their people, the mound people. It has a fairytale quality without being sentimental, and is tremendously gripping when you start to read it.

If you haven't read any of Diana Wynne Jones' books, and you like children's fiction, then you're missing something! Go out and read them!

The Committee

Michael Abbott

Responsible for this entire concept (oh no, that was last year's), but particularly for the programme bits. I tried to resign, but they wouldn't let me, so I had to run it all using the easy access routes between Cambridge and Bournemouth. Shame there aren't any. Brutus has said, "Ambition is a greivous sin, and greivously hath I answered it." (That's more words than I'm allowed, but I do get some privileges. Pity I can't think of another one.)

Steve Bull

Destroyer of publications, ops and too much else for comfort. Described as tame materials scientist with an interest in bending, breaking and scratching things. Is under oath not to do any of these to convention equipment, or members. He is currently involved in non-destructive analysis of academic ivory towers and will be escaping to Lyons before the convention is done to avoid clearing up!

Jonathan Coxhead

I landed on this planet twenty five years ago and decided that the best place to be was inside a completely unremarkable soft pink object about 350mm long. I have since upgraded this form until it is now 1.65m tall and has long brown hair. I think I'll hang around a bit longer, as it's all pretty exciting.

Colin Fine

Colin Fine has nurtured more convention bids than some people have had hot dinners. With his immense knowledge we were hoping to have this programme book translated into twenty seven different languages by the time of the convention, but so far have been unable to decide which twenty seven.

Vicki King

I'm a Jamaican by upbringing though a Londoner by birth. I came to read History at Cambridge, decided it was a great place to be, and settled here working in a tiny computer firm after teaching foreign students English. My interest include playing backgammon and mah-jongg, cooking, eating, and studying demographic crises!

Steve Linton

The One True Mathematical Steve, who cuts a dashing figure juggling flaming brands, sharp knives and convention accounts. Threatened to emigrate to Bermuda with the proceeds of Camcon but only managed to make it as far as the other side of Trinity Street. Perhaps Connote8 will pave the way for his triumphant return.

Ruth Le Sueur

Ruth Le Sueur is the token undergraduate on the convention committee. She hasn't grown physically in the last ten years (and some would say mentally too), but likes her height anyway. She is exceedingly fond of small furry things and has too much hair for her own good.

Phil Nanson

Created by an insane god, these socks have stalked the streets of Cambridge for five long years. Their unnameable tower looms under the floors of Trinity, its forbidding portals barred by an elite guard of kamikaze wookies, silent save for the rattling echo of rolling dice. Seek not the aaarghhhh.

Karen Naylor

Karen Naylor has a height, a weight and a shoe size. She has spent her early years and now lives. Her hobbies include doing things, and she has a position on the committee. She rises daily and eats. She is normally dressed.



The City of Cambridge

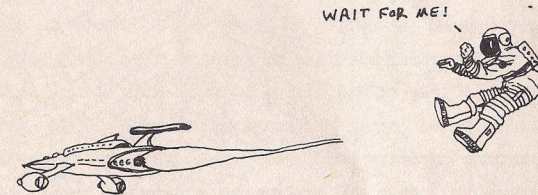
It is believed that Cambridge was once the site of a Roman settlement, later occupied by Saxons and Normans. In the 11th century the town was an important bridgehead on the only trade route between East Anglia and Central Britain, but it was not until the 13th century that Cambridge was to become a centre of learning. The oldest college, Peterhouse, dates from this time and was founded by scholars migrating from Oxford. Since then the University has expanded (there are 26 colleges and many thousands of students), and so too has the city. Cambridge is now the commercial and cultural centre of the (predominantly) agricultural region surrounding it.

If you wander around the city for more than a few seconds at any time of the day (or night!) you will certainly see one or two of those mythical beasts, known to the cognoscenti as tourists. They are easy to identify – the first thing you notice about them is their necks, as they are always looking upwards, gawping at the architecture. Second thing you notice is the typical tourist uniform – bright fashion clothes, equally bright and gaudy 'Cambridge University' fashion accessories (bags, sweatshirts, track suits etc.) bought with glee from stalls on the market. No self respecting student or townie would be seen dead in these. In general such tourists are only a nuisance if you are in a hurry to get anywhere, as they tend to amble from place to place as if they are visitors from another planet, and have never seen a stone building before.

There is a lot to see in Cambridge, particularly the older colleges such as Trinity and St. John's that back onto the river. This area, affectionately known as 'the backs', proves to be a focus for all sorts of people from students to tourists. People come to laze on the grass by the river and watched the inexperienced punters try to propel the punt in the direction they want to go; to listen to the popping of champagne corks, and the loud splashing of yet another victim of the Cam.

Another group of people that it is not possible to avoid are the Foreign Language Students. They are unmistakeable, riding their hire bikes the wrong way down one way streets and only taking any notice of the rudest road signs. They are becoming increasingly common, as the colleges identify them as a source of ready income in the summer, when the students are on holiday. The odd coach load of French schoolkids is usually all right, but you get the impression that English is a minority language in the centre of town in summer. There certainly seems little sign that it is actually being learned!

Having said all this, Cambridge is a pleasant city to wander around if you haven't seen it before, there is plenty to see. Most of the colleges are contained in a very small area around the market square, together with the majority of Cambridge's most interesting shops. This is about a 5-10 minute walk from New Hall, so should produce no problem if you want to go out during the convention.



A Brief Guide to Some of The Restaurants in Cambridge

PRICE RATING * cheap
 ** OK
 *** affordable
 **** extortionate

QUALITY R poor
 RR OK
 RRR good
 RRRR excellent.

UPSTAIRS *** RRRR Middle Eastern
 WAFFLES * RRRR what you might expect!!
 THE CURRY CENTRE *** RRR Indian (slow service)
 CRUITS *** RR ribs, pies, salads hamburgers
 JEAN LUIS *** RRRR French
 OASIS * RR steak/pizzas student snackhouse
 THE GARDENIA * RR Greek (Rebus etc)
 HEAVENLY TAVERN * RR STEAKHOUSE (bland)
 AUNTIES TEA SHOP * RR The place to pass
 KING'S PANTRY * RR vegetarian
 THE PENTAGON * RR English
 NETTLES * RR vegetarian
 COPPER KETTLE * R English (day tripper food)
 SWEENEY TODD'S * RRR Pizzas, burgers + style
 OLD OLEANS * RRRR barbecue ribs
 BROWN'S * (N) RR just opened
 DANNY BOON'S *** RRR Singapore
 SMALL FRY * R Unreliable chip shop.
 FLAMES ** RR Fondue
 THE BOMBAY ** RR Indian
 XANADU *** RR English (exotic decor + food)
 ANGELINE'S *** RRRR French
 THE PEKING *** RRRR Chinese (best in Cambridge)
 DON PASQUALE *** RRRR Italian
 ITALIAN KITCHEN ** (R) Italian eurostyle
 PIZZA HUT *** RR pizzas.
 PIZZALAND ** RR guess!
 PIZZA EXPRESS ** RR guess!
 CHARLIE CHAWS *** RR Chinese
 PIZZA HUT ** RR guess!
 TATTIES * RR potatoes
 RABBLASH *** RRRR Italian
 SHAO TAO *** RRRR Chinese

We Like To Do What We Ain't Supposed Ter

In which Vicki King takes a new look at an old friend...

Consider the conversations people have about books – at the (Welling)ton, at Joms things in exile and at home, in the wee hours of the morning when they are too drunk to know better. How many of them explore the trivia of the make-believe worlds the books describe in intricate detail, rationalising every printer's error, every author's goof? Is there any logic to the magic system in Earthsea? Are the dragonriders of Pern really gay? Do the timescales and distances in The Lord of the Rings really tie in with each other, much less with those in The Hobbit? (Quote paragraph references in your answers, please).

Ronald Knox clarified the reasons why readers indulge in such obviously time-wasting and brain-draining activities when he wrote† (in 1928): "If there is anything pleasant in life, it is doing what we aren't meant to do. If there is anything pleasant in criticism, it is finding out what we aren't meant to find out. It is the method by which we treat as significant what the author regarded as insignificant." A comment with many sympathisers in the audience, I think!

Yet, oddly enough, Mr. Knox was not discussing science fiction, or even fantasy, as the field worthy of such concentrated endeavour. No, indeed, he was singling out the Sherlock Holmes stories as particularly suited to this form of analysis. "There is ... a special fascination in applying this method to Sherlock Holmes, because it is, in a sense, Holmes' own method. 'It has long been an axiom of mine,' he says, 'that the little things are infinitely the most important.'"

This little gem comes from an article reprinted in The Baker Street Irregulars‡, a collection of 'Sherlockania' published as recently as 1984. The little things which are so important in these reviews include evidence that Watson was really Sherlock's nagging wife, that Moriarty was doomed to evil from an early age since he came from a family of three sons all called James, and that Holmes was actually a Yankee.

The little slips made by Conan Doyle as he churned out his money-spinners, like Watson's floating bullet wound which skips from his leg to his arm between stories, or the way his wife is wont to call him 'James' when his name is John, are all grist to the mill of this literary nit-picking. Yet they can only stand scrutiny because the rest of the milieu in which they occur is so painstakingly drawn. In any Holmes story you will find stunningly accurate pictures of your great-great-grandparents, were they peers or governesses. The clothes, the speech, the mannerisms, the London scene in which they lived, are all there, encapsulated in the time bubble of Watson's descriptions.

Since Doyle gave him up, Holmes has not rested easy. Apparently some dedicated fan has taken every reference to an unwritten case in The Sacred Writings and completed the story behind it – a mammoth task! And other more well-known writers (Saberhagen springs to mind) have not resisted the temptation either. Why should Holmes' appeal have lasted so long? and why is he so popular amongst SF fans? Partly it must be the cleverness of the stories, and partly the determined modernity in Holmes' character – a nineteenth century version of Mr. Spock in his dedication to logical thought and eschewal of emotional attachments. Partly it is the superb storytelling, eminently quotable and original, and partly it is the lack of originality, the 'serial' effect in which the same structure is used for each story so you know almost exactly what you're going to get.

But mainly, I suspect, it is the detail and accuracy used in building up the picture of Holmes' world. This allows us to accept Holmes, Watson et al as real persons, and their adventures as real events. From such an acceptance comes criticism on the level at which the author's intents – nay, even existence – cannot be said to have any influence on the stories we read. They are history, not narrative alone.

Some of the best SF and fantasy is marked by the same careful building of an idea into a separate reality, replete in fiddly details. It takes a sturdy structure to allow such nose-poking as readers like Knox (and most of fandom) delight in.

† 'Studies in the Literature of Sherlock Holmes' by Ronald A Knox, reprinted in:

‡ 'The Baker Street Irregulars' edited by Philip A Shreffler, Greenwood press, a division of Congressional Information Service Inc., 1984.

Some Travels in Foreign Regions

In which David Elworthy comments on a particular piece of Cambridge architecture, and what people get up to in it.

One of the places in Cambridge that has afforded me a great deal of pleasure is the University library. It not really surprising that this place has had a big effect on CUSFS members in general. At times some of them seem to be doing their best to emulate it, although given that its books are measured in millions and its shelves in miles, most of them have got a long way to go. It has

found its own place in literature as well. C. S. Lewis commemorated the central spire of the library (built, with the petty perversity which is characteristic of Cambridge, to be ten feet taller than King's College chapel) in a story called *The Dark Tower*, where it forms the opening to a dark and sordid fantasy world, no doubt inspired by some of the more decayed dons one finds cowering in there on any sunny afternoon.

A game that has proved popular with several generations of CUSFS members is 'The Paperchase'. This is a chain of references, in the form of small slips of paper inserted into little-used books around the library. Each directs the player to a further book, or occasionally more than one. At first following the references is easy – they are all just entries in one of the main catalogues, but as the chase proceeds they become progressively harder, in several ways. There are those references which can only be tracked down by finding catalogues that you did not know existed. Indeed, at times, it seems as if the library is like Borges' library of Babel – extending indefinitely in all directions, so as to constitute the universe. Sometimes, in arriving at these previously unsuspected catalogues, you encounter paperchasers who have become lost or distracted, wandering through the sunlit corridors making little "wib-wib-wib" noises, and sucking on empty bios as if trying to find a surrogate nipple. Then, there are the clues that require a little research – tracking down quotations, or the books in which certain characters occur. And finally, there are the ones that are just plain perverse – the spurious entries inserted into the catalogues, or clues stuck to obscure bits of the fabric of the library, or an intensely annoying sequence in which the chaser is directed back and forth between different volumes of the journals Ferroc-concrete and Trivium, made even more frustrating by the existence of more than one publication of each title. The chase is probably a little easier these days than it used to be, with the introduction of a computer catalogue (I wonder how long it will be before someone manages to get a spurious entry onto that!), but there is still enough in the chase to keep most people out of harm's way for some time.

Unfortunately, I can't really quote many titles from the chase, since it might give an unfair advantage to future paperchasers. But, to give you an idea of the flavour of it, some typical authors who appear are Looney, Moron, Cretin and James T. Kirk, and some typical titles are Marriage of Gor and Management of Constipation. In fact, the themes of mental degeneration and scatology seem to appear rather a lot in the chase, which is probably not surprising.

And the result if you complete it? Well, the final slips give details of a bizarre ritual which, if performed at the local branch of Moss Bros, will allow you to purchase the fabled paperchase scarf. It is in six colours – orange, violet, yellow, green, blue and indigo, which represents the books of the UL: all the colours of the rainbow, but never read.

Sadly, Connote8 has not able to gain permission to give guided tours of the UL for would-be paperchasers. But next time you find yourself next to a chaser, buy them a drink and listen to the tales of the Dark Tower.

A Question of Propulsion

In which Lawrence Barker explains an alternative method of relaxation for con-goers in Cambridge (or Oxford, except that they do it wrong).

It seems to me, in my somewhat limited experience, that there are two types of people at cons. Neither type actually exists, but most people fall somewhere between the two. Firstly there are the headless chickens, who spend their whole convention running from place to place looking frightfully busy. Though some have excuses like they are running the convention, there are still others who spend the weekend in a state of hyperactivity that makes the rest of us feel glad we are taking it easy. Three cheers for the headless chickens! Secondly, there is the lie-down-and-gaze-at-the-ceiling-preferably-with-a-drink-in-each-hand variety who spend hours stopping the bar carpet from getting up and leaving. If you are of this latter persuasion, then I can recommend an excellent alternative to the bar, namely the bottom of a punt.

However, as a rule, at least one person in an occupied punt must make some pretence at activity instead of lying on his or her back. This is essentially a variation on the theme of pretending to make a token effort at making the punt move, using a long pole and whatever technique seems appropriate at the time. It is important to bear in mind that there is a subtle difference between moving (that state induced by wind and current) and moving from one place to another in a deliberate fashion (usually against both of these, whatever direction you decide to set off in). Depending on the token nature of the effort, the experience and style of the punter, and the devil-may-care attitude of the passengers, a happy medium must be struck between the two in order to stop the punt moving too far from its starting position.

Let me clear up a number of popular misconceptions about punting:-

- (1) Punting is a means of locomotion. In a word, no.
- (2) Punting is not dangerous. A more interesting misconception since the dangers are not immediately apparent to the novice punter who is liable to encounter most of the serious ones in his first outings. However falling off may be excluded from these. It is a well

known fact that it is physically impossible to fall off, or out of, so stable a boat as a punt. It must be noted that the more enthusiastic 'headless chicken' punters have a penchant for throwing themselves off the punt in a fit of exertion, however, but this should not bother the well-prepared novice.

Much has been written about the technicalities of punting, but much of the available literature is overcomplicated and often in error. Thus there is room in this article for a fairly simple guide to basic technique. Hold the pole in your right hand (If you are left handed then in what follows read left for right. If you are ambidextrous, then go away and toss a coin to decide which hand you are going to use. Be sure to keep a note of what you eventually decide as this may cause problems in the future). To go left or correct a right-hand veer, throw the pole under the punt, and push with the pole leaning away from you. It is important that you let go when throwing the pole into the water, otherwise you lose marks for grace and style. To go right, throw the pole away from the punt and push with it towards you. To go up, throw the pole backwards and push with it in front of you. To go down, throw the pole in in front of you and watch your passengers complain that the punt has shipped rather a lot of water. To go left and right simultaneously, throw the pole in an anticlockwise spiral and twist clockwise as you push. If you follow these few simple guidelines then punting is obviously very easy.

Some of the manoeuvres, with gravitational potential gain, and multiple translativity, involve quick calculations using the Conservation Law. The trick is to convert the rotational energy of the universe into kinetic energy for your punt. Alcohol is the only known psychic stimulant that enables you to do this.

The most difficult punting move of all is to go in all directions at once. This is a natural talent, possessed by only the most diehard punters. There can be no instructions for this, only instinctive following of whim and a total disregard for anything else on the river. Though more can be said about advanced punting, little of this is comprehensible to the novice without at least an elementary grounding in Non-Newtonian dynamics.

If you choose to go punting, then lie down and gaze at the sky and watch the other idiots make fools of themselves on the water. Unless, of course, you are a headless chicken, when I can only hope you packed a towel.

Contrivance, 63 Drake Road, Chessington, Surrey



CONTRIVANCE

Jersey in '89

March 24 - 27
1989

£12 Attending
£6 Supporting
Membership

ANNE
McCAFFREY

M. JOHN
HARRISON

The 1989 British Science
Fiction Convention

Hotel de France, St Helier, Jersey,

Channel Islands

Programme Notes

Friday 3rd July

Short Films: A selection of short films by Peter Greenaway, including *Water Wrackets*, *A Walk Through H*, *H is for House*, *Windows* and *Intervals*.

Kid's Stuff: A panel discussion on the subject of writing for children. The panel will attempt to determine what makes children's fiction so easily identifiable, and why it appeals to older people as well.

Designing Adventure Puzzles: A Talk by Dr Jonathon Partington of the Department of Pure Mathematics, who is known locally for his interest in computing and recreational mathematics, covering everything from writing Adventure games to producing computer generated poetry!

The Call My, Face My Many A Minute Comics Challenge Team Mind Factor™: The ultimate trivia quiz for late on a Friday night. Watch two teams battle it out to show who has the most detailed knowledge of all aspects of comics, old and new.

Conrunner - the Workshop: a workshop discussion on all aspects of running conventions. If you want to know what it takes to put on a convention, or have experience and advice to pass on, this is the workshop for you.

Saturday 4th July

University Challenge: A version of the popular TV quiz game with an SF bias. Two teams battle it out for the honour (?) of their respective universities.

Fit for Fandom: a less than serious game in which a group of aspiring fans are put through their paces to see if they are indeed 'Fit For Fandom'.

Food tasting: now becoming a Unicon tradition, this is the culinary competition of the convention. After the entries have been judged, the food tasting will be thrown open to the convention, and the food will be sold at 5p per portion, proceeds to charity.

Reading Between the Lines: a panel in which three panellists review a book that they have chosen, as well as the books chosen by the other panellists, in order to look at them from several different viewpoints.

My Enemy the Reader: the Guest of Honour Speech by Geraldine Harris.

Swords and Dice Magic: another popular panel on all aspects of role playing games, continuing in the tradition of previous Unicons. A chance to discuss new and old games with people who will have tried them.

SETI – the Search for Extra-Terrestrial intelligence: a talk by David Brin and Thomas Kuiper, joint authors of a new book on the subject.

Revelation: a serious quiz in which two teams try to identify a number of well-known authors from samples of their writing.

So you Fancy Yourself as a Writer: a very lighthearted quiz with a number of rounds based on the problems that a hack writer has to face. The scoring is somewhat informal. The object is to cope with the tasks set with the maximum of backchat to the quizmaster, and the minimum of actual writing...

Costume Workshop: a chance to put together last minute entries for the fancy dress competition, or for the experts to pass on tips to the newcomers.

New Myths for Old: a panel examining mythology (in the sense of gods and magic) as dealt with by modern authors. The panel will focus on the divisions between use and misuse of mythic material, and why invented mythologies usually fail.

Masquerade: the fancy dress competition in which participants vie for the best costume award, or to be the most interesting entrant!

Storytelling: a chance to sit in a candle-lit room and listen to, or even tell stories of deeds great and small. The item will start with a round-robin story which you can join in if you want. After this beginning, who knows where it will end?

Filksinging: tuneless or tuneless, this farago of song and, well, filk is always great fun, continuing long into the night.

Sunday 5th July

Musical Truth: A panel in which several fans with different tastes in music talk about what they see in music, and what particular types of music appeal to them.

Antigravity: a talk by Paul Brazier on one of Science Fiction's most well-known 'inventions', leading into a general discussion on invention in SF. A chance to compare the achievements of Science Fiction, with those of science.

The Angela Carter Ping: an open discussion on the works of Angela Carter, run in the style of Jónsborg Pingar, by the X-Reeve of Jónsborg. If you want to know what all this means go along and everything will be explained.

Why Don't You Write Real Books? The Special Guest Speech by Diana Wynne Jones.

Pathfinder: a quiz for three teams that combines a knowledge of SF trivia with forward planning as contestants try to navigate their way around a maze, scoring points for correct answers, and having their path blocked for wrong guesses.

The Creature From the Celluloid Balloon: a debate in which four people will defend the films so far shown at the convention. There will then be some general discussion and a vote to determine which of the films is shown again.

Films

Deathrace 2000 (1975, Paul Bartel, 79 mins)

Adapted from a short story by Ib Melchior, this film was rushed into production by Roger Corman to cash in on the success of Rollerball. Set against the background of a 1984ish society, the film features a loner (David Carradine) and a wandering manic hoodlum (Sylvester Stallone) as the major contenders in a Transcontinental Death Race, entertainment for the year 2000. The film is pure pulp, but dotted with enough comic and satirical incidents to make it hugely enjoyable.

Alien (1979, Ridley Scott, 117 min)

Constructed as craftily as the commercials Scott first made his name with, the film is no more than a nightmare from the moment when the crew of the *Nostramo* wake up until lone survivor Sigourney Weaver returns to sleep. At the heart of the film lies H. R. Giger's alien (or rather aliens) and its ferocious will to live and procreate at whatever cost to those around it. The film is a stunningly mounted series of shocks, living up to its advertising slogan "In space, no-one can hear you scream." With the successful follow-up *Aliens* recently doing the rounds, here is a chance to see the film that started all the fuss.

The Company of Wolves (1984, Neil Jordan, 95 mins)

Adapted from some of Angela Carter's earlier stories (with help from Director Jordan) this film presents an alternative view of a familiar fairy story. A young girl's dreams of wolves and werewolves are treated in a manner that puts emphasis on both setting and sexual allusions to create an excellent adult fantasy film. This is one of the films sponsored by Channel 4 who's funding of the British Film Industry has resulted in an upsurge in the quality (and quantity) of films produced in this country.

Allegro Non Troppo (1976, Bruno Bozetto, 78 mins)

Why an Italian should feel driven to make a feature-length animated satire of 'Fantasia', heaven only knows, but he did it with such biting wit and style that eight years later I can still remember in graphic detail the wonderful scene where during 'The Rite of Spring' life evolves out of a Coca Cola bottle. The animation looked stunning even on television, and you don't have to have seen 'Fantasia' to enjoy this critique of western society.

CONINE

Guest of Honour

Terry Pratchett

5-7 August 1988, Oxford Polytechnic

£4 supporting, £9 attending

Single room with complete self-catering facilities £11.50/night

From the land of Tolkien and Lewis it came... A convention unlike any other: sex and drugs and rock'n'roll (er, well... a massage workshop, a discussion group on the influence of hallucinogens on New Wave authors and Pink Floyd singalong, anyway), serious sf (more of the same), silly sf (still more of the same) and strange and self-indulgent fannishness (enough said). Ideas beyond counting for inspirational programming, devious plots for luring innocent sf readers into fandom-at-large and HOURS OF FUN - guaranteed. Especially after the cocktail workshop...

Cheap, cheerful and challenging



A student-run convention
in Oxford

Conine, %Ivan Towlson, New College, Oxford, OX1 3BN

Programme

Friday 3rd July 1987

	Main Programme	Alternative Programme
5:00pm	Short Films	
6:00pm		
7:00pm	Opening Ceremony	
8:00pm	Kid's Stuff	Conrunner - the workshop
9:00pm	Designing Adventure Puzzles A talk by Dr J R Partington	
10:00pm	The Face My, call My Many a Minute Comics Challenge Team Mind Factor™	
11:00pm	Film: Alien	Musical Truth

Saturday 4th July 1987

	Main Programme	Alternative Programme
10:00am	Film: Allegro Non Troppo	
11:00am		University Challenge
12:00am	Fit For Fandom	Food Tasting (judging) Padded Weapons Display (outside)
1:00pm		Food Tasting (public)
2:00pm		Role Playing 87
3:00pm	Reading Between the Lines	
4:00pm	My Enemy the Reader Guest of Honour Speech	
5:00pm	SETI - the Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence	So you Fancy Yourself as a writer?

6:00pm	Revelation	Costume Workshop
7:00pm	New Myths for Old	
8:00pm	Masquerade	
9:00pm	Masquerade +Presentations	
10:00pm	Film: The Company of Wolves	Storytelling
11:00pm		
12:00pm		Filksinging

Sunday 5th July 1987

	Main Programme	Alternative Programme
10:00am	Film: Deathrace 2000	Conrunner, the workshop
11:00am		
12:00am	Antigravity	The Angela Carter Ping
1:00pm		
2:00pm	Why Don't You Write Real Books? – Special Guest Speech	
3:00pm	Business Meeting	
4:00pm	Pathfinder – a quiz	The Creature From the Celluloid Balloon
5:00pm	Closing Ceremony Auction Overflow	Computer Games workshop
6:00pm		
7:00pm	Film: decided at the balloon debate	

Consept One Year On

Last years Unicon, Consept was much enjoyed by everyone who attended, despite the perils of navigating around a rather tortuous University campus. The committee was made up of a selection of experienced conrunners and newcomers, and the following sections recall the convention as seen from each point of view.

Looking Backwards from the Year 1987

In which Steve Davies looks back at Consept and what he learned from it.

It was the first time that I'd ever been on a convention committee, and some of it, especially the preparation that has to be done in the months before the con, I'd never even considered before and was slightly lost. Certainly I did a lot less than the more experienced members of the committee. Of the things that I did, some are only applicable to Guildford but some are applicable to other Unicons.

"Stay away from Tim Illingworth or else you'll end up on a committee," is a maxim that has been proved by experiment. I'm not the first (nor probably the last – Ed) to learn that. But there are other things. Some were general conrunning things, like agreeing beforehand on where you can take the glasses from the bar. We nearly ended up with a situation in which the glasses were restricted to the Students' Union. Since the main programme was a hundred yards away, this would have been a calamity. This separation was unavoidable for us as universities tend to put the bars a reasonable distance from the lecture theatres so that students don't get drunk between lectures. Fortunately, the bar agreed to use plastic 'glasses' and there was no problem, except that we had to pay for the ones that went missing.

We were operating the DCM (Duty Committee Member) method of running conventions. This is quite effective except that someone has to do the late night, 10pm to 8am slot. From personal experience, I can now say that it is a mistake to try and do this two days running.

We had what I believe was an innovation, there was a wordprocessor available in the committee room (which was large – the committee need a large room for storing things or else everything gets stuffed into cupboards and lost). This got used a lot and was important as a facility. Our main lack, especially in the run-up to the con, was artwork for badges, progress reports etc. In the end, I did quite a lot of abstract stuff on the Apple macintoshes at work. All convention committees ought to have an artist.

Breakfast was the chaos it generally is at Unicons. This is unavoidable as a rule, as conventions just don't behave like the conferences that universities (and hotels!) are used to. It all comes down to gritting your teeth and trying not to shout too loud at the staff. When we first started talking to the university, they wanted to have three meals a day, all sit-down and paid for in advance. We had to sweet-talk them into letting us run a cafeteria system.

As a rule, Unicons are run by local students. The good side of this is that the committee are on home ground and know who to talk to. We had the flip side of this, which is that the university are more likely to be impressed by people from outside who turn up in business suits. We still got non-fans slotted in among us, though. That's the reason why we used the 'Party Room' (actually the students' coffee bar) in an effort to discourage room parties. Room parties are the life blood of conventions. They are continual nightmares for the committee since they frequently involve illegal alcohol, certain substances and excessive noise. On the whole I think we did quite well.

What about publicity? I sent out lots of letters to newspapers, radio, television etc. As far as I know almost all of these were ignored. The one exception was Beacon Radio who interviewed me on the evening before the con for five minutes. It was quite fun, but had I had more than half an hour's warning I might have been a bit better prepared. Nobody heard it, anyhow, and we got no members from it. So the media can probably be ignored – anyway, apart from radio/TV it's too late to get you any members if the report comes out at or after the convention.

I learned not to try and eat out in Guildford on a Saturday evening. We were far enough from the town that we had to go in Andy Robertson's van, there was nowhere to park and since we were all in costume it was quite cold. On the other hand, there is nothing quite so much fun as walking through the streets of an ordinary English county town, dressed as something totally weird (on the subject of costume, don't go to bed wearing eye make-up – after the masquerade I woke up in the morning with a black/brown pillow).

Afterwards, we received a totally unexpected letter from the conference manager which congratulated us on the little damage done and the good behaviour of the 'delegates'. I seem to recall they even waived some of the expenses we'd budgeted for. If anything that's the biggest hurdle, convincing people that a convention can be well-behaved and still eat/drink in large enough quantities to be economic.

Concept:Un7con – One Year On

In which Caroline Mullan remembers last year and introduces the Concept accounts.

What is there to say about Concept, one year after the event? We seem, with a lot of help from our friends and from the glorious weather, to have run a convention that people enjoyed. Some people were at their first convention, and I've seen a good few of them at other conventions since. I don't think we put anybody off cons for good. The committee seemed to have enjoyed doing it: we must have done, because every single one of us went straight on to organise other conventions. Between us, we have since run, or are running, three Eastercons, a Worldcon, and a bid for Unicon 9.

(To digress slightly: with hindsight, I think that running Concept was much more fun than running an Eastercon. Very few of the joys of conrunning scale up in proportion to the increase in responsibility, but all the sorrows multiply.)

In the Concept Programme Book, John Dallman wrote a post-mortem of Camcon, Unicon 6. I reread that article today, and discovered that though committees and venues change, Unicons remain the same. Concept had a splendid Guest of Honour in Tanith Lee, who charmed everybody, and partied late into the small hours every night of the convention. We had our share of original ideas for programming, including *Alien Encounter*. The workshop programme was extremely successful; among other items it included a discussion about bookshelves (entitled *Up the Walls of the World*), a costume workshop whose participants carried off all the prizes in the fancy dress, and a brand new Unicon traditional item – a food tasting. The bookroom was excellent, and, unlike most Unicons, the dealers actually made some profit.

Needless to say, we made some mistakes too. One was not to check the duration of *Time Bandits*: this threw out the whole of Friday evening's programme when we showed it in a 90 minute slot and discovered that it was 120 minutes long. Like Camcon we had some problems communicating with the University: details agreed with the Conference Manager turned out to be under the control of the Students' Union Manager, who had different ideas. Again like Camcon we had problems with the site, although in our case it was having to rely on maps provided by the University to navigate around a three-dimensional maze that formed the site.

And that only leaves the money. Concept made an embarrassingly large profit of £800. So where did it come from?

Some of it was a result of prudence, because income was higher than we originally estimated, and because we built £200 Charter money for Unicon 8 into our budgets from the beginning. We based our estimates of income on an expected membership of 150, and got nearly 200. We made almost no allowance for income from the Auction, or from selling dealers tables, but in the end we made almost £100 from these. And the rest? Well, another grand old Unicon tradition is being undercharged by the University for the conference and banqueting (sic!) facilities used by the convention... Yes, we were no exception: almost half our profit came from this source.

Lastly, what did we do with the money? Under the Unicon Charter Concept was bound to hand on half of any profit (or £200, whichever was the greater) to Connote8, and this was the first thing we did. Then we stuck for a long time. It is *very difficult* to spend convention profits sensibly. In the end we gave £200 to *Fans Across the World*, and because the money came from Unicon we made a special request that it be used to help students if possible. Fans Across the World is a fannish charity, which is helping fans from all over the world, who would not otherwise be able to afford to travel to the U.K., to attend the Worldcon in August.

The remaining £216.49 has not been spent at the time of writing. We (the Concept Committee) intend to throw a party at Connote8 with some of the money, so look out for us. You contributed part of the profit so you are entitled to some share in its disposal. For the remainder, suggestions are always welcome, and we won't make the final decision until after Connote8 is over.

We owe thanks to a great many people for Concept, but most especially to Tim Broadribb for film projection, and all the people who arranged programme items and/or equipment for us. Thank you everyone.

Notes

- (1) Auction – The profit of approximately £70 comprised 10% commission on a turnover of £442.50, and the rest was from auctioning a lot donated entirely to the convention.
- (2) Food Tasting – We donated slightly more than we took for the food tasting to Oxfam.
- (3) Bank Interest – There will be a further small amount of income from this source when we close the deposit account.
- (4) Miscellaneous Items and Expenses – This covers miscellaneous stationary, postage, telephone calls, photocopying, and other committee expenses. Also various equipment and materials for the food tasting, costume workshop and other programme items.

Concept:Un7con Statement of Income and Expenditure 1/6/87

INCOME

<u>Accommodation</u>	(256 bed nights)		2854.40
Attending	163 @ £8	1304.00	
Supporting	16 @ £4	64.00	
Full Weekend	13 @ £10	130.00	
Day	6 @ £5	30.00	
<u>Memberships</u>			1528.00
<u>Auction</u>			442.50 ¹
Advertisements	3 @ £5	15.00	
Tables in book room	13 @ £2	26.00	
<u>Advertising/Tables</u>			41.00
Charter Money from Camcon		350.00	
Food Tasting		18.65 ²	
Miscellaneous (Badges, Soft Toys, etc.)		8.55	
Bank Interest		2.49 ³	
<u>Miscellaneous</u>			379.69

TOTAL INCOME

5245.59

EXPENDITURE

Accommodation	2752.11	
Conference facilities	220.00	
Students' union facilities	103.50	
<u>University</u>		3075.61
Guests – Expenses and Gifts	132.65	
Films	279.22	
Programme/Equipment	98.88	
Cash/Drinks at Con	129.72	
Auction	371.80 ¹	
<u>Programme</u>		1012.27
3 Progress Reports	33.00	
Programme Book	93.02	
Fliers/Posters	16.50	
Advertisements	12.00	
Envelopes	15.76	
Postage	41.30	
<u>Publications and Publicity</u>		211.58
Charter Money to Connote8	400.00	
Charity – Food tasting	25.00 ²	
Charity – Fans Across the World		200.00
Insurance	30.00	
Badges	15.00	
Miscellaneous items and expenses		59.64 ⁴
<u>Miscellaneous</u>		729.64

TOTAL EXPENDITURE

5209.10

Difference between income and expenditure to be disposed of £216.49

Unicons – Past, Present and Future?

Connote8 is the eighth Unicon, a series that was started by the Science Fiction society at Keele University in 1980 and has run yearly ever since. Though initially student run, later Unicons have been run by committees drawn from both students and fans from elsewhere. What all Unicons have in common is the use of universities rather than the hotels used by larger conventions as a site for the convention.

Previous Unicons

- (1) Unicon 80 – held at Keele University, 5th to 7th September 1980. Guest of Honour Harry Harrison.
- (2) Unicon 2 – held at Keele University, 11th to 13th September 1981. Guest of Honour John Sladek.
- (3) Unicon 3 – held at Keele University, 10th to 12th September 1982. Guest of Honour Richard Cowper.
- (4) Unicon 4 – held at Essex University, 2nd to 4th September 1983. Guest of Honour Ian Watson.
- (5) Oxcon (Unicon 5) – held at St. Catherine's College, Oxford, 24th to 27th August 1984. Guest of Honour Brian Aldiss.
- (6) Camcon (Unicon 6) – held at New Hall, Cambridge, 13th to 15th September 1985. Guest of Honour John Christopher.
- (7) Consept (Un7con) – held at the University of Surrey, Guildford, 8th to 10th August 1986. Guest of Honour Tanith Lee.
- (8) Connote8 (Unicon 8) – held at New Hall, Cambridge. Guest of Honour Geraldine Harris. Special Guest Diana Wynne Jones.

There is a publicised bid for Unicon 9, Wincon, to be held in a teacher training college in Winchester. We wish them, and any other bids that emerge at the convention, luck in the bidding session and hope that whoever wins puts on a good convention.

Unicon Charter

Insofar as it has been deemed necessary to perpetuate the Unicon series of science fiction conventions the following regulations are presented to distinguish these conventions from similar events:

- (1) They shall bear the name Unicon and have a consecutive numbering or year suffix as all or part of their title.
- (2) They shall be held in residential establishments of higher education, and shall use the accommodation and facilities there provided.
- (3) The site of the convention shall be decided at the previous Unicon in a properly conducted bidding session or, failing this, by the Unicon Steering Committee:

(a) Bidding Session

(i) All potential bidding committees who have made their presence known shall be invited to present their bid at the session for a period not exceeding one half hour, except where only one valid bid exists in which the time limit shall be set by the current Unicon committee.

(ii) There shall always be a null option of 'no convention' given as a voting choice.

(iii) Voting will be carried out by a show of hands.

(b) Steering Committee

(i) This shall be responsible for maintenance and amendment of this charter, the administration of excess funds should no convention win the bidding ceremony, and shall act as arbitrator should disputes concerning Unicon arise.

(ii) Each past and present Unicon committee shall nominate one member to be a member of the steering committee.

(iii) The acting chairperson of the steering committee shall be the member nominated by the current Unicon and his functions will include: notifying steering committee members of transfer of excess funds from his convention, notifying all potential convention bids of these regulations, and providing for each member of the steering committee and for both the treasurer and chairman of the next Unicon an accurate statement of accounts for his convention.

(iv) The voting membership of the steering committee shall be the nominees of the last seven Unicons. A quorum shall consist of four voting members, and decisions shall be taken by a majority of the voting members, whether or not present at the voting meeting. Meetings of the steering committee shall be notified at least one month in advance to all members of

the steering committee, whether or not they are voting members. A meeting shall be held at Unicon, and a written undertaking required by clause 8 shall be the notice of this meeting.

(4) The surplus funds from a Unicon convention shall be disposed of as follows:

(a) Where the sum does not exceed £200 the surplus shall be passed within a reasonable time to the convention that wins the bidding ceremony.

(b) Where the sum total exceeds £200, 50% or £200 (whichever is greater) shall be passed on as in 5(a) and the remainder shall be disposed of as the convention committee sees fit in a manner designed to benefit fandom, subject to the approval of the steering committee.

(c) Where no convention bid has been successfully made for the coming year the surplus funds shall be passed to the steering committee within a reasonable time.

(5) The convention shall be insured:

(a) Against loss of, or damage to, its property and that for which it is legally responsible, including building, machinery, plant, fixtures and fittings provided to it by the property owners or management of the venue for the purpose of the convention.

(b) Against loss resulting from the cancellation, curtailment, postponement or abandonment in whole or part of the convention, the non-appearance of a principal speaker, or failure of the convention to vacate the premises at the termination of its tenancy.

(c) So as to be indemnified for all sums which the committee shall be legally liable for arising from bodily injury and property damage to employees and the general public arising out of an occurrence in connection with the convention.

(6) The convention committee undertake:

(a) To be liable for any deficit arising from their own convention.

(b) To cover any debts occurring in connection with any past Unicon which no longer holds funds, providing such debts do not exceed the value of funds passed to them by the previous Unicon or by the steering committee.

(7) The convention committee shall agree to abide by the regulations presented in this document, and shall send a written undertaking to this effect (signed at minimum by the chairperson, secretary and treasurer of the convention, or the equivalent posts) to each

member of the steering committee. Ambiguities and disputes arising from these regulations shall be settled by the steering committee in the light of common sense and with a view to the continuity of the Unicon series.

Membership of the steering committee as at 4th July 1987:

John Fairey
Chrissie Pearson
Jan Huxley
Alex Stewart
Hugh Mascetti
Tim Illingworth
Caroline Mullan
Mike Abbott (Chair)



IN

PETERBOROUGH

June 10th - 12th 1988

G.O.H -

TERRY PRATCHETT

venue: Moat House Hotel

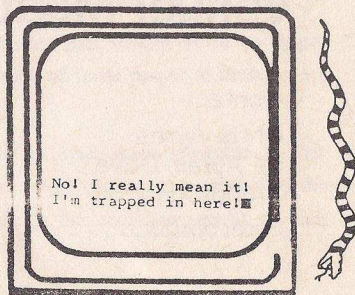
Contact
Chris Ayres
67 Ayres Drive
Stanground
Peterborough

Supporting £5-00
Attending £11-00

Membership List (as of 18-6-87)

S - Supporting A - Attending

1A	Mike	Abbott	108A	Jon	Fairbairn	88A	Joan	Paterson
38A	Phil	Allcock	74A	Matthew	Faupel	33A	Bernie	Peek
27A	Brian	Ameringen	45S	Mike	Figg	70A	Roger	Perkins
118S	Keith	Armstrong-Bridges	4A	Colin	Fine	78A	Philip	Plumbly
102A	John	Bark	146A	Joan	Fine	26A	Chris	Potter
62A	Trevor	Barker	147A	Philip	Fine	154A	S.	Redburn
75A	Lawrence	Barker	71A	Susan	Francis	127A	John	Richards
142A	Norman	Baxter	65A	Gwen	Funnell	58S	Andy	Robertson
41S	Stephanie	Bell	95A	Brian	Garrod	53A	Roger	Robinson
131A	J. Simon	Beresford	119A	Ye	Gerbish	149A	Ian	Robinson
29A	John	Botham	121A	Mike	Gould	69A	Steve	Rothman
47A	Alan	Braggins	116A	Maria	Hamilton	104A	Marcus L.	Rowland
123A	Jennifer	Bray	83A	Jackie	Hawkins	21A	Dave	Rowley
151A	Paul	Brazier	24A	Julian	Headlong	20S	Graham	Ruston
137A	Mark	Brennan	22A	Joy	Hibbert	64A	Michael	Sandy
139A	David	Brin	94S	Marina	Holroyd	39A	Alison	Scott
66A	Ben	Brown	54A	Dianna	Hutchison	40A	Mike	Scott
2A	Steve	Bull	55A	Pete	Hutchison	36A	Ken	Slater
110A	Di	Bull	92A	Tim	Illingworth	37A	Joyce	Slater
134A	Jane	Butterworth	44A	Rhodri	James	67A	Peter	Smith
108A	Ruth	Bygrave	143A	Kishor	Kale	145A	Robert	Sneddon
135A	Vanessa	Chan	52S	Andrew	Kelly	56A	Phil	Spencer
103A	Mike	Cheater	5A	Vicki	King	107A	James	Steel
30S	Mike	Christie	148A	Alice	Kohler	42A	Alex	Stewart
152A	Harvey	Clarke	140A	Thomas	Kuiper	86A	John	Stewart
23A	Peter	Cohen	49S	Ken	Lake	112A	Mike	Stone
136A	Dave	Collins	50S	Jan	Lake	46A	Marcus	Streets
77A	Chuck	Connor	156A	Colin	Langley	48S	Neil	Taylor
59S	Barbara	Conway	6A	Ruth	Le Sueur	99A	Graham	Taylor
113A	Keith	Cosslett	124A	Paddy	Leahy	43S	Peter F	Thompson
93A	Peter	Cox	138A	Shelagh	Lewins	130A	Paul	Thorley
109A	John	Cox	7A	Steve	Linton	141A	Susan	Thurston
3A	Jonathan	Coxhead	155A	Ken	Longford	87A	Julian	Tibs
132A	Paul M.	Cray	89A	Peter	Mabey	76A	Julian	Todd
100A	Rafe	Culpin	144A	Paul	Marrow	117A	Ivan	Towlson
68A	John	Dallman	114A	Phil	Masters	105A	Paul	Treadaway
31A	Mike	Damesick	115A	Angela	Masters	73A	Dave	Turtle
32A	Steve	Davies	80A	Kari	Maund	91A	Larry	van der Putte
84A	Tim	Day	133A	WA	McCabe	61A	Peter	Wareham
72S	Simon	De Wolff	106A	Rob	Meades	150A	Robert	Welbourne
81A	Roger	Dearnaley	28A	Richard	Meehan	120A	Eddy	Welbourne
63A	Zoe	Deterding	25A	Simon	Middleton	34A	Kathy	Westhead
128S	Iain	Dickson	79A	Andy	Morris	35A	Mike	Westhead
60A	Paul	Dorner	85A	Rupert	Moss-Eccardt	111A	Mike	Whitaker
126A	Tim	Duckworth	57A	Caroline	Mullan	129A	Geoff	Williams
51A	Dave	Ellis	8A	PPL	Nanson	96A	Paul	Winship
101A	David	Elworthy	9A	Karen	Naylor	97A	Sarah	Woodall
90S	Bernie	Evans	125A	Gytha	North	98S	Stuart	Wray
122A	Juliet	Eyeions	82A	Nigel	Parsons	153A	Dave	Wright



Castle Hill Crawl

THE CLERK CAMBS COLUMN.

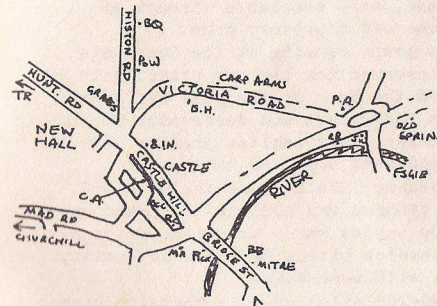
Should you be tasteless enough not to want to spend the entire week-end in the Connote8 Real Ale Bar with the Best Beers in the land, some tasting notes of the pubs of the area, with beers (see later) and weekend food.

THE PUBS.

Most of which are accessed by turning Right outside the College. At the first junction, you can bear sharp left into HISTON ROAD where you will find Maggie's Grapes (GK: IPA; Abbot) a basic boozier with added concert hall and juke box and a lease currently up for sale - Buddy, can you spare 125k. Further along is the Prince of Wales (Tolly: Mild; Bitter) a comfortable locals pub with a fine drop of Mild. Then you come to the British Queen (Whit: FO;CE;Weth) now back on an even keel after a stormy ride as Whitbread's only Cambs "Fun Pub" "Bumpers" - You should have heard what the new Area Manager had to say about that when she took over... Thank heavens she had her way. The BQ does weekend bar snacks.

Back to the junction and down the Ring Road: VICTORIA ROAD. The first boozier is the Blackmoor's Head (Tolly:Bitter;Orig) a straightforward local. Then the Carpenter's Arms (Whit:Weth) another basic pub noted for its plastic Concorde. At the bottom of the hill on MITCHAMS CORNER is the Portland Arms (GK: XX;IPA;Abbot) where the Ryans preside over an impressive nautical bar and a wonderous kil of two of XX. Within sight of this, but ¼m around the gyrotary system is the Jolly Waterman (Tolly: Bitter;Orig;4X) where John has allowed Inigo to persuade him to replace the fine cask Mild with a new-fangled keg... Half way back around the roundabout and up CHESTERTON RD you will find the Old Spring (Grand Met, serving GK: IPA;Abbot) Demodernised with Real sawdust, Real Barrels (firkins actually) dispensing Abbot on gravity and Real meals at the weekend. The Rob Roy and Fort St George in England are both closed for renovation'.

Heading from New Hall straight down CASTLE HILL into the City, the first pub you come across is also closed for renovation. The Sir Isaac Newton (GK) was known for the excellent character of its XX, but not at the moment. Next is the County Arms (Whit: FO;F.IPA;CE) A pleasant watering hole popular with the lads and lasses of CountyHall. Good beer for the range on offer, with a full range of bar snacks and meals, with à la carte and a carvery on Sunday lunch. Across the road is the Castle, no longer in the Gibney empire but an Allied house (Tetley;Burton;ICB;Adnams; Castle Bitter) The Castle Bitter is aslightly modified Burton brew. The bar has pretensions while the Shang Hi Cantonese restaurant above was closed on my visit. At the bottom of the hill is the Pickereel (Grotney;Anglia Hosts: Ruddles County;Wilson's Bitter;Greene King IPA) A half hearted attempt at a Watney Hosts 'Real Ale House' theme pub. The wersh you expect from Websters is on keg, but at least they have GK's IPA.



Across the River in BRIDGE STREET are the Baron of Beef (GK) a top pressure pub - spoiling the beer (as GK are prone to do). This establishment is best known as the sawdust circus ring for jousting home-computer Co bosses... The Mitre (Allied:ICB;Tetley;Burton) student filled.

For the next session, start from New Hall, head towards town but turn right down the Ring Road towards POUND HILL. Here you will find the Cow and Calf a fine local where Les has reinstated his superb Tolly Mild alongside the Bitter and 4X. At the bottom of the Hill you will find the Rose & Crown (Whit:FO;CE;Guest) a smart pub which does good value bar meals at all times. Across the road is the Merton Arms (GK:IPA;Abbot) with a basic back room and cane lounge.

THE STEAK HOUSES

If you come out of New Hall and turn left, the only boozery you come to is the Travellers Rest (Beefeater/Whit:FO;CE;Weth) Typical Beefeater with sultry bar inc fake beams, bar meals and the restaurant. Downhill on MADINGLY ROAD is the Churchill (Berni, serving Tolly:Bitter;Orig) Standard for the chain. The Green Man (Beefeater/Whit:FO;CE;Weth;Brakspear) on Trumpington Rd at the other side of town is the best of the lot.

THE WAY HOME

You're reading this too late to stop for a quick one on the way here, but going back:- Near the Station (at the end of Station Rd, on Hills Rd.) City Limits (Bass: no Real Ale) This was the Great Northern until afflicted by arson during Oxcon. The Crown (Whit:Weth) Eileen is threatening to cite the casks as co-respondent in divorce because Ralph spends so much time looking after his beer. Serves a wide range of bar meals at all time except Sat & Sun eves.

To the North: The White Horse Waterbeach A truly superb example of how pubs should be renovated. A free house with GK IPA & Abbot; Nethergate; Mauldons Special and Batemans Mild. To the East: Carpenters Arms, Great Wilbraham (GK:XX;IPA;Abbot) A wonderful atmosphere and a selection of malt whiskies. To the West: White Swan, Connington (GK:KK;IPA;Abbot), Exhibition, Over. (Tolly:Bitter;Orig;4X;Paines EG) and the Poacher, Elsworth (Whit:Weth;Brakspear). All fine boozers with great beer. To the South: Queens Head, Newton (Free:Adnams Bitter) A wonderful pub with the best bar snacks in the County. The University Arms, Sawston (Free) An ever changing cornucopia of Real Ale. Famous for its Real Indian Food. The beers change, the wonderful level of hospitality and charm do not.

THE BEERS

For those of you not familiar with East Anglian beers, a quick run down. Adnams: Bitter Highly popular in the free trade, only available through an agency here, and it tastes nowt like wot it does off a brewery dray. Batemans: DM: Voted Beer of the Festival two years running at the Cambridge Beer Festival. The DM at the New Hall bar is reserved for the bar staff, join the queue! XB: A fine session bitter. XXXB: Awarded the Beer of the Year by CAMRA at the Great British Beer Festival in Brighton last year, and deservedly so. GK: Greene, King: Abbot: Held up as the classic East Anglian premium beer, but not as good as XXXB. IPA: Session bitter of moderate body and texture. XX: Stronger than most lager and 20p a pint cheaper. The best of the GK beers, but a pale shadow of its former self since GK stopped dry hopping two years ago. Tolly: XXXX: An attempt to rival Abbot at 10p a pint more, it fails. Original: It has something - a few dry hops. Bitter: A session bitter of variable quality. Mild: Again the Mild is the best of the brews with more body. Whitbread: Their beers are trunked in from 60-200 miles away, a practice common to the nationals. Weth: Wethereds If kept correctly a superb pint, but difficult to keep. FO: Flowers Original; F.IPA: Flowers IPA; CE: Castle Eden. Allied: Well, Tetleys is Tetleys but not served here as it should be. The rest of the brews are uniformly bland Burton brews.