

# Armadillo Dreams



The newsletter of **INTERACTION**

## Number One

The 63<sup>rd</sup> World Science Fiction Convention

Spring 2003

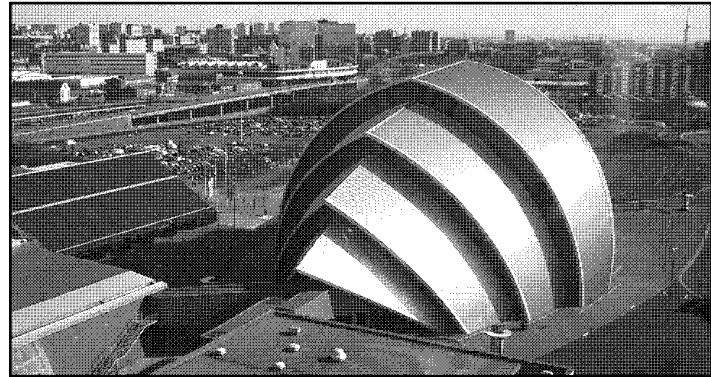
## Glasgow Team Ready for Action

Paul Treadaway

More than six months have passed now since ConJosé, and there's been a lot of work to do in the aftermath of the site selection vote. But now that we're fully up and running we can update you on our progress.

This is the first full convention publication

for Interaction (the 63rd World Science Fiction Convention). Whilst our Progress Reports will have a traditional feel, our newsletters will provide more information and news from behind the scenes, giving a flavour of the effort and activities that go to make up a Worldcon.

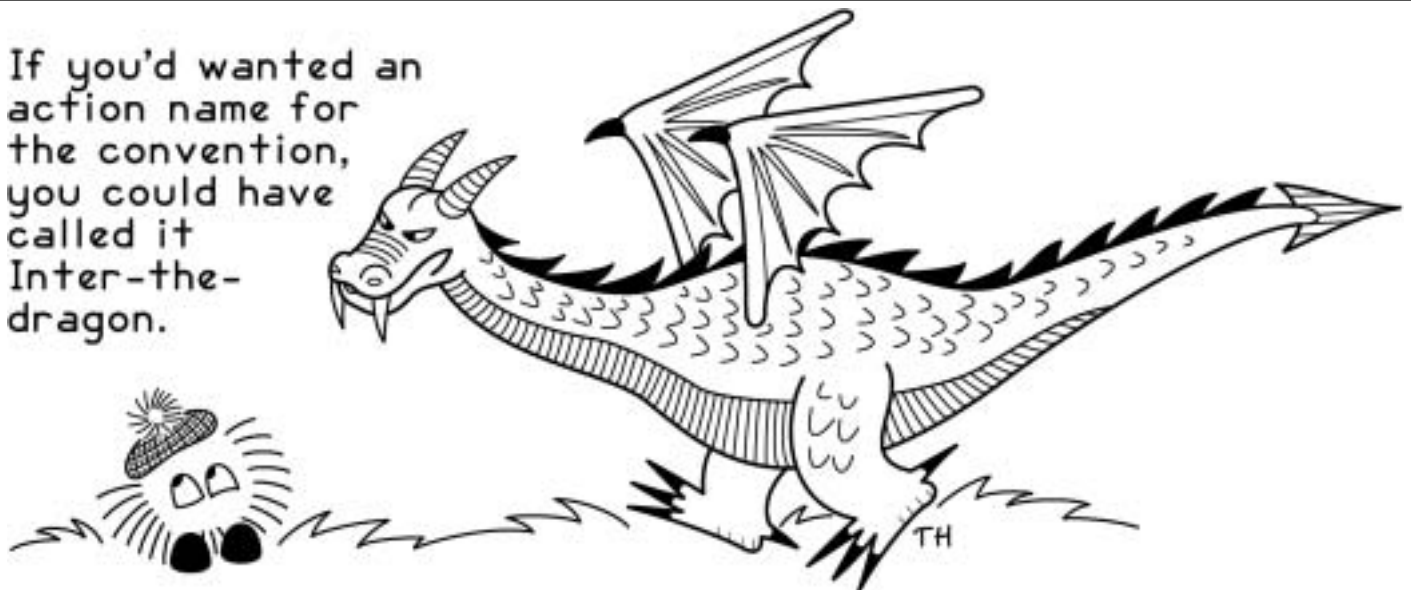


The Armadillo - Scotland's answer to Sydney Opera House?

In this first newsletter, we have also taken time out to reflect on the history of our bid, and some of the milestones that we have passed in

reaching this point, and as a regular feature, we will be showcasing some fine examples of British and European fanwriting since 1995. Enjoy!

If you'd wanted an action name for the convention, you could have called it Inter-the-dragon.



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Edited, Designed and typeset by: Paul Treadaway

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# Convenor's Comments

## Kim Campbell, Interaction Board Convenor

We won the bid! My thanks to all of you who voted, supported us through the consultation by asking questions and posing problems and came along to enjoy our parties. People like you are what make Worldcons fun for me!

So now we face 28 months of planning and preparation. [To let you in on an open secret, most of the first year is on 'backroom' stuff. Things like sorting out the finances, letting people know we have won (and that they can convert to Attending), learning to work as a group (not always easy when you don't meet regularly outside the convention organising

meetings) and looking at potential structures to support the event (and the people working therein). Of course, until you get the people into the equation, you can only theorise because different people have different likes and dislikes, wants and needs. Vince will be announcing his appointments for Heads later in the year.]

I couldn't be happier with our choice of Guests to Honour. As many of you know, we took an unusual step of consulting you on who we should choose. To come away with Pickersgill, Priest, Sheckley, Strandberg and Yolen all in one year is just

too wonderful. I feel this gives us such a wide range of talent and achievement to showcase that anything is possible.

Worldcon for me is having fun in the Science Fiction world of literature and all things that derive therefrom. It's about people who read, people who write, people who perform, people who participate, people who produce and people who socialise. In short, it is a celebration of our shared culture. One that does cross the waters and speaks many languages. I look forward to greeting you all in August 2005 in Glasgow for 5 days of Interaction.

# Once More With Feeling

## Vincent Docherty, Interaction Chair

Dear Interaction and UK2005 Bid members:

Like many who find themselves having won the responsibility to run a Worldcon, I have been reflecting on the words of my predecessors. In particular I was struck by the comments made by Deb Geisler last year (in Noreascon 4's equivalent first publication), where she compared work and play in terms of why we run conventions and concluded that the hard work done by fans is viewed as play. Similarly I think that it has been the enjoyment and enthusiasm of everyone involved in running the bid which resulted in our success, despite the hard work involved. As the French novelist Flaubert said: 'Success is a consequence and must not be a goal', in other words, it is about the journey and not the destination. You will read elsewhere in this newsletter about the journey we took over the years of bidding for the 2005 Worldcon.

Still I have to say that it's great that we won the bid, (for some of us the second time in a decade), and many thanks are due to all involved.

I'd like to thank the Friends and Presupporters of the bid, (what, you thought I was going to mention the Academy, my mother and my agent?) the Voters for the 2005 Site Selection and the fans who subsequently joined Interaction, the great Guests of Honour who are indeed honouring us with their presence, and the many others who offered help and support over the years. Specific thanks also need to go to the co-chairs of ConJosé, Tom Whitmore and

Kevin Standlee, to Jim Briggs' Site Selection team and to Blars, our 'official opposition' for 2005, with his great '15 in 05' bid. I especially need to thank all the bid committee and staff, who shared the journey and contributed most to the fun and energy of bidding. Indeed I should also thank in advance the many people who will share the journey to the convention and beyond!

In this newsletter you will find some basic information about the convention and some final statistics from the bid for those interested. In addition it is our intention to use our publications to highlight the best of fan writing from Europe since the last European Worldcon in 1995, and you will find some articles which we hope will entertain and stimulate the mind.

Finally, if it is madness to chair a Worldcon once, then what is it to do it twice? I can't really use 'once is happenstance, twice coincidence and three times enemy action', since I was conscious and sober (or so I've been told) all the way along, and in any case if I mention the three times again there are many people who have threatened to do unpleasant things. All I can mention is the original quote (which we affectionately abused during the bid) 'Once More With Feeling', which for me means that running the Worldcon gives a strong sense of connection with people from the world of SF, both in terms of what they contribute and where they come from. It is that rich mixture which to me makes Worldcons unique and I hope that by helping to run it, others can feel the same. Enjoy the journey.



# INTERACTION

The 63<sup>rd</sup> World Science Fiction Convention  
4-8 August 2005  
Glasgow, United Kingdom

## Guests

Greg Pickersgill  
Christopher Priest  
Robert Sheckley  
Lars-Olov Strandberg  
Jane Yolen

The Scottish Exhibition and Conference Centre (SECC)  
Moat House Hotel City Inn

## Membership rates

valid until 30 November 2003

<b>Attending adult</b>	<b>\$135/£85 from 1 June 2003</b> <b>\$115/£75 to 31 May 2003</b>
<b>Child (7-15 in August 2005)</b>	<b>\$50/£32</b>
<b>Infant (0-6 in August 2005)</b>	<b>Free</b>
<b>Supporting</b>	<b>\$45/£30</b>
<b>Voter Discount</b>	<b>\$45/£30</b>
<b>Presupporter Discount *</b>	<b>\$20/£13</b>

\* Conversion rate for non-Voting Friends is \$45/£30

All rates are quoted in US dollars/UK pounds - rates are available in other currencies see our website for details.

**Online registration is now available at our web site**

### Publication Schedule

We plan to issue members' publications roughly every six months over the first two years (spring and autumn), with three publications in the final year (New Year, spring and a month out from the con). There will be two styles of publication: 16-20 page newsletters and 24-32 page progress reports. We will print 6,000 copies of the latter, with the aim that all members should receive a complete set of the progress reports. The schedule is:

Pub.	Style	Copy Deadline	Publication Date
#2	Progress Report	8 July 2003	September 2003
#3	Newsletter	17 Feb 2004	April 2004
#4	Progress Report	13 July 2004	September 2004
#5	Progress Report	15 Nov 2004	January 2005
#6	Progress Report	24 Jan 2005	April 2005
#7	Newsletter	17 May 2005	July 2005

### Advertising Rates & Copy

Our advertising rates are based upon our printing and mailing costs: our planned average rates are somewhat higher than those of the average N. American Worldcon, due to our higher mailing costs because of a much higher proportion of non-US members. The full page rates for our second publication (PR1) are:

Pub.	Fan Rate	Semi-Pro Rate	Pro Rate	Inside Cover	Back Cover
#2	\$120/£80	\$300/£200	\$405/£270	\$615/£410	£690/£460

All publications will be 8½" by 11" in size and the standard size advertisements for these publications will be:

Ad Type	Rate (% Full Pg)	Imperial (inches)	Metric (mm)
<b>Full Page</b>	100%	10½" x 8"	267 x 203
<b>1/2 Page Horizontal</b>	60%	5" x 8"	127 x 203
<b>1/2 Page Vertical</b>	60%	10½" x 3¾"	267 x 95
<b>1/3 Page Horizontal</b>	50%	3¾" x 8"	83 x 203
<b>1/4 Page Horizontal</b>	40%	2¼" x 8"	57 x 203
<b>1/4 Page Island</b>	40%	5" x 3¾"	127 x 95

Advertisements can be accepted in hardcopy or electronic format (TIFF or EPS files), but electronic files are preferable. We request that payment accompany ad copy, or if it is sent separately that it is received by us no later than the PR1 copy deadline. Space in PR1 must be booked at least 2 weeks prior to the copy deadline.

For more information, requests for special processing, or to receive a copy of the full publication advertising rates card please contact: [publications@interaction.worldcon.org.uk](mailto:publications@interaction.worldcon.org.uk)

For further information contact:

<b>Interaction</b> PO Box 58009 Louisville KY 40268-0009 USA	<b>Interaction</b> 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S2 3HQ UK
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Or, on the internet:

General Enquiries	<a href="mailto:info@interaction.worldcon.org.uk">info@interaction.worldcon.org.uk</a>
Membership Enquiries	<a href="mailto:memberships@interaction.worldcon.org.uk">memberships@interaction.worldcon.org.uk</a>
Further Information	<a href="http://www.interaction.worldcon.org.uk">http://www.interaction.worldcon.org.uk</a>

## Installment Plans

Interaction runs an Installment Plan scheme enabling fans to spread the cost of an Attending membership over up to 12 months. Under the scheme, you initially buy a Supporting membership (\$45 or £30) and then pay the additional fee for conversion to Attending membership in quarterly installments of \$30 or £20 (the last payment will be adjusted as appropriate to ensure the correct total charge). The total cost you pay for your Attending membership is set at the price which applies at the time you join the scheme, protecting you from any increases in our rates for new members.

Installment Plan members can pay their outstanding balance at any point in time to become full Attending members. You cannot transfer the membership to someone else until it is paid in full, however you can pay the remaining balance on a membership and then immediately transfer it.

If you decide to drop out of the Plan, we will refund all pay-

ments apart from the initial supporting membership fee and a £5 administration charge, and you will be a supporting member.

Installment Payments can be made by credit card or by cheque/money order/giro transfer, and fall due at the start of each calendar quarter, starting at least one clear month after you join the plan. So if you join in May 2003, you would pay £30 straight away, then £20 on 1 July 2003, £20 on 1 October 2003, and £5 on 1 January 2004 for a total of £75.

The Installment Plan is open to all new members, plus people who already hold either a Supporting membership or who Pre-Supported Interaction. It will not initially be open to Friends or to Supporters who also Pre-Supported, as the conversion fees for people in these situations are low enough that the Installment Plan is unnecessary.

Full information on the Installment Plan is available from the Interaction website.

# View from the Bridge

by Colin Harris

In each of our Newsletters, we'll be providing articles and information on what we're doing behind the scenes to make Interaction a success. For those of you who want to hear more about this, we also publish a bi-monthly electronic newsletter, "Sailing the Clyde" (see <http://www.interaction.worldcon.org.uk/backroom.htm> for an archive of all issues and information on how to join the circulation list).

Running a Worldcon with three years from Bid to Con is always a delicate balance; do too much too early and plans and enthusiasm can become stale; leave things too late and you risk being overwhelmed. As with most Worldcons, our approach in the first year is therefore to concentrate on selected key areas, building infrastructure and a solid platform for the later activities.

## A Note for Our Friends

Interaction achieved by far the highest level of Friends ever known for a Worldcon Bid - 340 in all (plus 12 original Bid Subscribers). To all of you we say a great thank you. To those of you who have not yet converted to Attending membership, we are pleased to say that we are extending the special Friends Conversion rate of \$45 or £30 until 30 November 2003.

One area where we have unfortunately faced difficulties is with Friends' Gifts. Our intention has been that all Friends should receive a free or subsidised item of Bid merchandise (T-Shirt, Sweatshirt, Tote Bag or Apron). Unfortunately we have encountered several problems in achieving this goal - not least having 150 pieces impounded

in US Customs on the way to ConJosé! (We did get them back - but too late for the Convention.) As a result, quite a few Friends have unfortunately not yet received their Gift. If you are one of them, please get in touch with us, preferably by emailing us at [info@interaction.worldcon.org.uk](mailto:info@interaction.worldcon.org.uk) and we will try to put things right as quickly as possible.

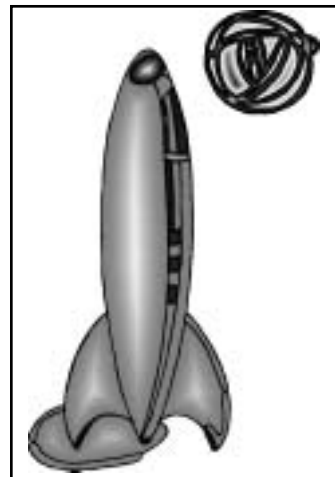
## No More Tartan Tat

As Vince has commented in his earlier article, the 2005 Bid was keen to get away from the Scottish clichés associated with Intersection, indeed the slogan "No More Tartan Tat" became something of a mantra within the team. There are many reasons for this; but two stand out. Firstly, Interaction is very much a European Worldcon that is being run in Glasgow - not a Scottish or UK Worldcon. Secondly, Interaction is definitely not "Intersection II", (despite the involvement of some familiar faces), and we wanted a visibly fresh image to emphasise this.

Having decided against Clans and Tartans, we were of course still keen to find unifying motifs that would reflect our aspirations and our European nature whilst still having strong links to Glasgow. Two threads quickly emerged.

Firstly, Glasgow's rich traditions as a city, ship building centre, and port - which in turn form part of Scotland's wider scientific and engineering heritage. These traditions are particularly appropriate given the SECC's location by the Clyde; the engineering elegance of the "Armadillo"; and the presence of the Glasgow Science Centre on the same site.

The second thread focused on artistic themes, and quickly converged on Art Nouveau and especially Charles Rennie Mackintosh (see <http://www.interaction.worldcon.org.uk/crmac.htm>). At a practical level, Art Nouveau was a pan-European movement which featured Scottish practitioners in leading roles; and Mackintosh himself offered an instantly identifiable graphic style with which to present ourselves. But Art Nouveau



also captures some of the feel that we wanted to bring to the Convention - elegant; organic; artistic; building on the past but looking to the future; international but with local flavour. Looking back - how could we have chosen anything else?

*"Reason informed by emotion ... expressed in beauty ... elevated by earnestness ... lightened by humour ... that is the ideal that should guide all artists."*  
- Charles Rennie Mackintosh

For further information, see:

<http://www.interaction.worldcon.org.uk/crmac.htm>

# Site

Glasgow has changed substantially since 1995 and is now one of the fastest-growing and most successful conference destinations in Europe. 12 new hotels have been built since 2000 and we can choose from around twice the number of bedrooms that were available to Intersection. As a result our negotiating position is far better than was the case last time around. The major chains are also more substantially represented, and the SECC area itself has been developed with a new Science Centre and two new hotels.

Notwithstanding these changes, Interaction will still be very different to a typical US Worldcon, primarily because European Convention Centres simply do not feature the very large attached hotel complexes which are common in America. With the largest Glasgow hotels typically featuring around 300 bedrooms, we need to work with a range of providers to secure enough space to satisfy all our requirements. We are therefore trying to select clusters of hotels which are located close to each other in just one or two areas, but which can provide a range of prices and facilities to meet all our members' needs.

One of the most important decisions in the Site area has been the selection of a professional partner who will work with us to manage our accommodation booking requirements. We have put a great deal of effort into this selection process, running a formal competition between potential partners before making a final decision, but we believe the effort has been well worth it. For Interaction we are pleased to welcome Infotel (<http://www.infotel.co.uk/>) on board as part of our team. Working with Infotel will enable us to offer our members a quality of service that we cannot achieve on our own, as well as improving our negotiating position with hotels and other accommodation providers. More details of the Infotel service will be announced during 2004, but in summary we

*contd next page*

# eti2 Memberships

plan to support bookings on-line and off-line (phone, fax and letter) and to provide a one-stop-shop for all of our accommodation including the cheaper university rooms as well as the core hotels. A particular feature will be real-time processing for on-line users, enabling you to browse through hotels, check room availability and obtain real-time confirmation on your selection.

We will of course be telling you a lot more about our accommodation arrangements and about Glasgow in our future publications, but if you can't wait that long, a good starting point is the Tourist Board website at <http://www.seeglasgow.com>. In addition, more information on some of the hotels we are likely to use can be found on our own website at <http://www.interaction.worldcon.org.uk/accomm.htm>.

As with all Worldcons, our memberships and finance functions have been particularly busy since Conjose. In fact, we felt well prepared for these activities prior to the vote, but even the best laid plans, as they say ...

Our main challenge has related to credit card processing, where it has become apparent that the world has changed in these days of Enron and Worldcom. Several card providers turned us down before we secured the service we wanted, and in fact it was the last week of December before we could start processing the bulk of the credit card authorisations taken at Conjose. Thankfully we have now processed essentially all of the backlog of payments due, but if you are one of the few outstanding, please help us by clearing your debt as soon as possible!

Apart from the payment issues, membership processing itself has progressed well, thanks to the hard work of our UK and US office teams and our agents around the World. On 21 March 2003, we registered our 1000th Attending Member ... and our online registration facilities are proving particularly popular with over 40 people joining this way in the first month alone.

We have also recently announced our first

rate increase, to take effect from 1 June 2003. The full rate for new Attending Members will increase from £75 to £85, and from \$115 to \$135 from this date onwards. However we are taking two specific measures to thank those who supported our bid and to encourage families and younger fans to attend. Firstly, we have extended our discounts for Bid Presupporters and Friends until at least 30 November 2003. Secondly, we are leaving our Child rates unchanged – something that we will if possible continue right through to the Convention.

Being family-friendly is very important to us, and in fact the fixing of the Child rates is only part of our approach in this area. We have also set the membership age thresholds higher than many conventions, so our low Child Rate of £32/\$50 will apply up to age 15, whilst children under 7 will be free. And of course we have chosen an early date for our Convention to fall in summer vacations, as mentioned by Vince elsewhere in this newsletter. The final pieces of the jigsaw puzzle – our Childcare and KidCon plans – are still in the future, but we'll be putting a lot of effort into those too.

## Finding the 5000

A European Worldcon faces obvious problems in getting up to the normal attendance levels of a Worldcon in North America, where they are a regular occurrence. However, we believe that there is an enormous pool of potential Worldcon attendees, particularly in Europe, and we will try to reach as many as possible to ensure that they all have the

opportunity of experiencing their first Worldcon. We aim to make Interaction the most cosmopolitan Worldcon yet.

Earlier in the year a meeting was held with the agents for the Scandinavian countries, a particularly fertile region for recruiting new members, to formulate a strategy for making the convention more widely known. A lot of good ideas

were produced in a very short time, and the level of enthusiasm was high. We'll be repeating the exercise with our north-western European agents in a few weeks time, in the hopes of attracting many more Europeans from those countries as well. Other western European countries such as Italy and Spain have also tended to be less well represented, some-

thing we intend to change.

But we don't want to stop with western Europe – we would like to make Interaction a truly worldwide event, attracting many more fans from eastern Europe, Asia, Africa and South America. If you think fans in your country would be interested in coming to a Worldcon, please get in touch!

## Volunteering

Volunteers are the life blood of any Worldcon – and Interaction is no different. However as a UK-based Worldcon we have to achieve some delicate balancing acts. For instance, we seek to have a strong local flavour to our staffing – but still to benefit from the greater experience of US fans (in particular) in running events of this type. Similarly, we want to build up a strong and enthusiastic staff base – but not to “peak too early”. With three years from Vote to Convention, this is a marathon, not a sprint.

We're approaching these challenges with a two-pronged response. Firstly, we

are operating many activities as self-contained “projects” with a distinct start and finish. This enables volunteers to take on a specific task and see it through without having to commit to holding a role through to the convention. Projects to date include the production of publications, running of parties and organisation of our UK Open Meetings, and we hope to continue this approach in the future.

Our second aim is to create a friendly and welcoming community of volunteers who can feel part of the team without having to commit to specific tasks. In time, this

community will provide the bed-rock of our at-con staffing, but in the meantime we need to start building common understanding and an effective network. This is doubly so because, as in 1995, our team is not built around a local group which can physically meet on a regular basis. To address this, we operate a staff web site and a staff discussion list, and we will be extending both of these initiatives in the next few months.

Working on a Worldcon is a unique experience – even for those people who do it every year – why not come and join us? [volunteers@interaction.worldcon.org.uk](mailto:volunteers@interaction.worldcon.org.uk)

# UK2005 - A brief History

by Vincent Docherty

It's difficult to pinpoint a precise start to the UK2005 bid, in part because it evolved from two parallel strands. On the one hand I can recall discussing the potential of the upgraded Glasgow site even at the end of Intersection back in 1995, but that was only intended to highlight the opportunities afforded by the much superior facilities. In parallel, KIM Campbell and others were actively raising the idea of the next UK Worldcon. KIM recalls: "Looking at the Highlights, I remember Tim Illingworth, Pat McMurray and Arwel Parry coming to York in the autumn of 1996. The one thing that came up from this meeting was that we wanted to give everyone a chance to 'have a go' at things that might be beyond him or her." Sometime during 1996 the two strands came together into a proto-bid group.

It might seem from the above that the reason why we wanted to run another Worldcon was because of the availability of the site, or because we wanted to increase the number of active conrunners. While you do need to have a viable site, and I'm all in favour of increasing the number of people active in all aspects of fandom, the main reason for wanting to have another Worldcon in the UK was, for me, simply that it increases the richness of the SF experience for fans, it stimulates other fannish activities in Europe and that it is a good way for me to give something back to fandom at large.

I have to mention at this stage an amusing coincidence that becomes apparent when

looking at the history of European Worldcons. (You can see this clearly if you look at the UK Worldcon memory site that Colin Harris has created on our behalf at <http://www.worldcon.co.uk/>.)

The two London Worldcons of 1957 and 1965, were followed by Heidelberg in 1970.

The two Brighton Worldcons of 1979 and 1987 were followed by The Hague in 1990.

Therefore, the two Glasgow Worldcons of 1995 and 2005 will presumably be followed in 2010 by another continental European city.

This permits lots of fun speculation such as the possibility (assuming the Japan 2007 bid wins) of a Europe v Australia 2010 Worldcon race, with site selection in Japan!

Looking back over the UK2005 bid, I think there were three broad periods:

\* In the early period, covering 1995-1997, we weren't officially bidding but were focussed on sounding-out opinions on the idea in general, as well as quietly looking at possibilities for site and year. We used an email discussion bounce (Internext) to help with this and had a simple website.

\* In 1998-2000 we were officially bidding, but with several options as to location and year. We adopted the Art Nouveau / Charles Rennie Mackintosh style for our parties, publications and merchandise, to offer a different image from the Scottishness of the 1995 bid.

\* From our official launch at <plokta.con> in May 2000, we were bidding the new



The Usual Suspects? The Board in York, 2001

facilities in Glasgow in 2005, using the motto 'Once More With Ceiling'. We continued the style and themes from before, but introduced selected Scottish elements, especially the popular 'bugs' which inspired Teddy Harvia to create the cartoon character 'McSpot' in our publications. We also built a new, much more comprehensive website at <http://www.uk2005.org.uk/>.

At the start of the bid, I think the most active areas were the website and email discussion bounce. Neyir Cenk Gökçe put together our first Web site, even in the midst of his move from Turkey to Canada and it can still be seen at <http://www.panix.com/~gokce/nextuk/> The email discussion bounce, Internext, was very lively in the early years of the bid, and covered subjects including the level of appetite for another UK Worldcon (which varied from strongly against to strongly for), as well as the various options for year and location.

Apart from the meeting mentioned by KIM above, and Internext, I don't recall that we did much in 1996 other than discuss the general idea of the bid with

fans at Eastercon and Novacon. The Worldcon that year was in Anaheim (LA Con III) and although we held an Intersection Thank You party, the only other thing I remember is being eaten by Audrey III (from Little Shop of Horrors) as I walked off-stage (in my kilt) after passing the gavel to the 1996 Worldcon Chair Mike Glycer - here's gratitude for you! You can still see pictures of that at <http://lacon3.worldcon.org/lacon3/Photos/opening/opening.htm> and note that tartan in Audrey's mouth!

During 1997 we got a bit more organised, with more people coming onto the nascent bid committee. At the Worldcon in San Antonio, apart from enjoying the pleasures of the Riverwalk and the Alamo, many of the bid team got actively involved by working at-con. This visibility was to continue at later Worldcons. We also held our first official bid party, "We are not bidding, honestly!", in a suite borrowed from the Conucopia team. Another feature which was to be repeated later was the strong support by the Norwegian fans, especially Johannes Berg and Bjørn Tore Sund (who went on to lead our agents net-





# Noreascon 4

The 62<sup>nd</sup> World Science Fiction Convention

September 2-6, 2004  
 Boston, Massachusetts, USA



*We're charging forward...and looking back*  
 Noreascon 4 will feature Retro Hugo Awards for 1953  
 and a retrospective exhibit of classic SF/F art.

*Pro Guests of Honor:*  
**Terry Pratchett William Tenn**

*Fan Guests of Honor:*  
**Jack Speer Peter Weston**

## Noreascon 4

### FACILITIES

- Hynes Convention Center
- Sheraton Boston Hotel
- Boston Marriott Copley Place

### MEMBERSHIP RATES (Through Sept. 30, 2003)

Attending membership: \$ 160  
 Supporting membership: \$ 35

Upgrade existing supporting membership to attending: \$ 125

Child's admission: \$ 105  
 (12 & under as of Sept. 6, 2004;  
 Child's admission does not include publications or voting rights.)

Installment plan available; write [installments@noreascon.org](mailto:installments@noreascon.org)

### QUESTIONS

To volunteer, write to [volunteers@noreascon.org](mailto:volunteers@noreascon.org)

For information about registration, contact [prereg@noreascon.org](mailto:prereg@noreascon.org)

To advertise in progress reports, email [progress@noreascon.org](mailto:progress@noreascon.org)

For general questions, ask [info@noreascon.org](mailto:info@noreascon.org)

### ADDRESSES

Noreascon Four/MCFI  
 P.O. Box 1010  
 Framingham, MA 01701-1010  
 United States of America

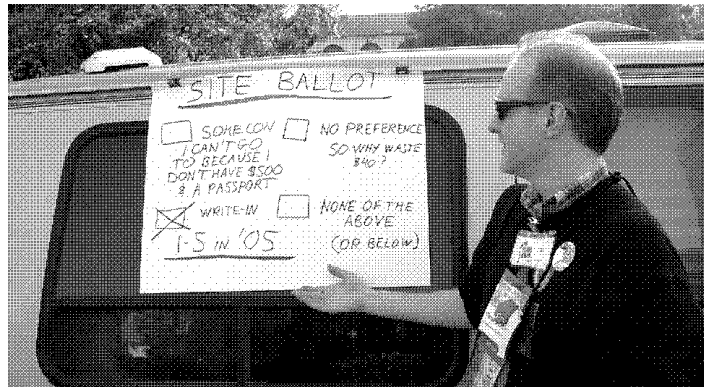
Fax: +1 617.776.3243

Web page:  
<http://www.noreascon.org>

Online registration available

"World Science Fiction Convention" is a service mark of the World Science Fiction Society, an unincorporated literary society.

"Noreascon" is a service mark of Massachusetts Convention Fandom, Inc. The Noreascon 4 logo uses a picture taken by the Hubble Space Telescope, made available by NASA and STScI.



Vincent checks out the I5 05 opposition

work) with their great enjoyment of the 'World as their neighbour' parties at Worldcons and at Eastercons, aided by generous quantities of aquavit.

By 1998 we were officially bidding, but with a number of options for a site and a range of possible dates between 2003-2006. However it was by now becoming clear that the strongest support in the UK was for a longer break after Intersection than the eight year gap between Intersection and Conspiracy. In the UK we set up our main office, with the team of Alice and Steve Lawson and David Cooper handling our membership and financial admin, building on their strong experience from 1995.

The Baltimore Worldcon that year was to prove significant in several ways. Its early date (the first weekend in August) was such a success, especially in attracting younger fans, that we were later to adopt the same approach. We formalised and extended our network of agents, including John Mansfield in Canada, and set up a permanent US office and bank account. The style of our bid parties was established and we adopted a different approach from 1995, which had been heavily dependent on the more clichéd symbols of Scotland, (although they were a lot of fun, and in any case we had not yet decided

on Glasgow as a site). We went for tea - in large quantities - and a more elegant presentation, with Art Nouveau as a visual theme and formal attire for the bid staff, despite the heat in the bid parties. We had strong positive feedback and took many presupports.

The discussion around our choice of site was also becoming more intense. At that stage we still had five possible locations - Birmingham, Brighton, Cardiff, Glasgow and Harrogate, with the informal feedback from fans at the Worldcon strongly supportive of Glasgow. At Novacon that year, we held a Balloon Debate, just to see which of our favoured venues would be popular. Regrettably, Cardiff was the first out of the balloon, as the number of hotel beds available was just too small to be viable, although it will no doubt return as a possibility for future UK Worldcons. In addition we gained Jonathan Jones (Jonjo) as a significant member of the bid, and he and Ben Yalow have become the leadership of our site (facilities) team. Harrogate was also dropped, leaving Birmingham, Brighton and Glasgow as possibilities.

The bid continued to evolve during 1999 along with our thinking about potential sites and we formalised the Bid committee, creating a dedicated email bounce for the subscribing committee. As

KIM was recovering from cancer for most of the year, I became bid Co-Convenor as well as head of Finance and began handling many of the operational aspects. The Worldcon was held in Melbourne, Australia and we had many staff working there. The previous weekend we had also held a successful bid party at Conucopia, the NASFiC in Anaheim.

The year 2000 was even more eventful as we made our final decision on both venue and year. Some of the bid committee members (notably Andrew Adams, KIM and Sparks) were involved in running the UK Eastercon, 2Kon in Glasgow. From there we organised a visit to the Glasgow SECC site for about 50 interested fans, using the low level train services, which were now working following their submergence for most of 1995! We were able to highlight the many improvements and additions to the SECC since 1995, especially the suite of small and medium sized function rooms, now with ceilings, a point we emphasised heavily later. In addition the SECC had followed our request to add water fountains.

At a committee meeting later that year we reviewed the options for site and year. The Birmingham ICC, although ideal as a Worldcon facility with attached hotels, was unable to offer us a viable

financial package. We also learned that the Brighton centre was to be rebuilt 'some time after 2002' and was therefore too risky an option, despite its proximity to the largest population centres in the UK. We strongly supported the choice of Glasgow as our site, since the city was very keen to have us back, the facilities had been much improved since 1995, Intersection had been a success there and Scotland continued to be an attractive destination for fans outside the UK. The picture around other bidders had also become clearer and 2005 emerged as our target year, with the site selection to be held in 2002 in San José. We also settled on the first weekend in August rather than the traditional English bank holiday for the timing of the con as it is more likely to be school friendly for the most people and coincided with the local Scottish bank holiday.

We were therefore able to announce our choice of site at <plokta.con> in May in England and thereafter planned for a large push at the Worldcon in Chicago. The Glasgow Tourist Board were also mobilised at that stage and were able to supply us with a lot of very nice promotional material, including little fuzzy bugs, which were customised later with our 'Once more with Ceiling' motto. Our first Bid PR came out at



Sadly our fine collection of malt whisky didn't survive ConJosé



Chicon, produced by Andrew Adams. We ran one major party at Chicon, using a suite sub-let from Minneapolis, with the able support of Geri Sullivan. We also extended our US Agents network, by asking Mark Olson to be agent in the North East, John Lorentz for the North West, Christian McGuire in the South West, Guy Lillian in the 'South' and Sue and Steve Francis for the Middle bit. In time Steve and Sue also became our US coordinators, controlling the US mailbox and bank account. The fanish year ended with Smofcon in Cocoa Beach, Florida, where we presented the bid to the assembled SMOFS and also explored the space coast. By good fortune we were able to see a night launch of the space shuttle Atlantis – a first for me and many others!

It should be borne in mind that from the time we announced the site and date in 2000 we were operating in full bidding mode with some representation at all the major cons in the US, UK, Canada, Australia and continental Europe. In particular, wherever possible, we tried to ensure that we had a 'funny accent' at the cons where large numbers of voters attended. The advice from Steve and Sue, and our other US Board members Ben and Joyce was invaluable there, as we did have to make choices. Still we managed to cover most of

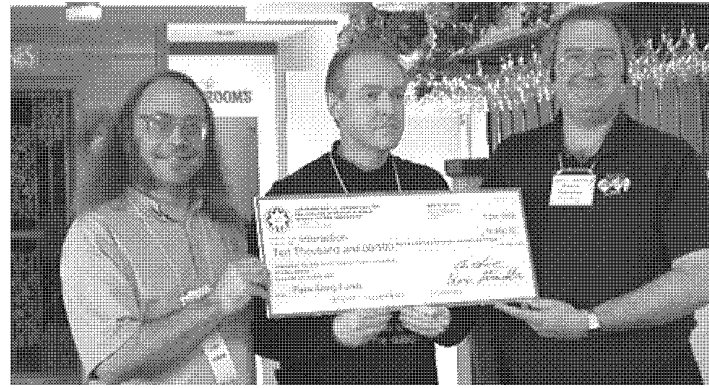
these events, even if it meant some red eyes and jetlag for some of the committee!

2001 kicked off in Glasgow at the Central Hotel. This was the first in a regular series of Open Meetings for all interested in the bid, with a site visit for those who wanted it. We have held these every six months or so, and plan to continue with them during the life of the con. Our next meeting was in Newcastle, where the Committee got together. There we discussed an Official Constitution, forming a Board with an oversight function and a Bid Committee. We also looked at what we wanted to do if we won the bid and therefore became an operational Committee in September the following year. Worldcon that year was in Philadelphia and we had two successful parties, with one evening being a UK night and the second being a Norwegian Friendly Party run by Johannes and friends. In addition we were able to present our filing papers to ConJosé ahead of schedule, to ensure we would be on the site selection ballot.

At the end of the year, KIM was delighted to act as the host for Smofcon in York. The temptations of the historic city were strong of course but we did manage to get some work done, including appointing me as Operational Bid Chair, for my



We're not ones to wrap ourselves in the flag...



Vincent receives the passalong from ConJosé

sins, despite strong competition from Sparks and Neil Simpson.

Entering 2002, our minds were very much focused on the final stretch to the vote at ConJosé. We had a lot to do, starting with the choice of a name.

The name "Interaction" had in fact already been proposed by Colin Harris way back at Wincon V in 1999 and was soon ratified by the Board. Similarly, although several artists were inspired by our art nouveau motifs, Gizmo's logo designs soon emerged as a clear favourite with staff and supporters, and have been appearing on website, publications and merchandise ever since. We had also introduced a project-based approach to con working, based on the feedback from 1995. Many fans prefer to have a defined piece of work, with fixed goals and end points rather than an open-ended responsibility. One such project was the selection of the Guests of Honour and Claire Brialey and Mark Plummer carried out the work with great efficiency and creativity. Once we received their report the Board was able to discuss and agree a shortlist of Guests and we were delighted when all five GoHs accepted our invitation. In parallel a number of other pieces of work were ongoing, including finalising the subvention agreement

with the city, preparing the incorporation, tax and credit card facilities of the convention and tendering and agreeing the accommodation partner for the con.

The 2002 UK Eastercon was in Jersey and proved to be a nice sunny weekend. Thanks to the cooperation of Jim Briggs who was head of ConJosé's site selection team, the ballots were available at Eastercon. Pat McMurray was the first to complete a ballot, narrowly beating me to it. We worked hard to engage with fans from the UK there and at a subsequent Open Meeting in London, where we introduced some more fun elements of the bid, including balloons with our logo.

The summer was dominated by our preparations for the site selection itself, since at ConJosé we were faced with having to handle multiple parallel activities. I suspect that handling the needs of the administering convention is the hardest thing that bidders have to do apart from run the Worldcon itself. We had to run a bid desk, a con desk (if we won), supply staff for the site selection desk and run four parties, as well as attend various presentations and the WSFS Business Meeting. In fact our parties proved to be among the best attended of the con, as we were located opposite the con suite and we had a wonderful array of single malt scotches, ably dis-

# CONCOURSE

E A S T E R C O N 2 0 0 4

55th British National Science Fiction Convention  
Winter Gardens Blackpool  
9th - 12th April 2004

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## Guests

Mitchell Burnside Clapp  
Scientist and Filker

Danny Flynn  
Artist

Sue Mason  
Fan

Christopher Priest  
Writer

Philip Pullman  
Writer

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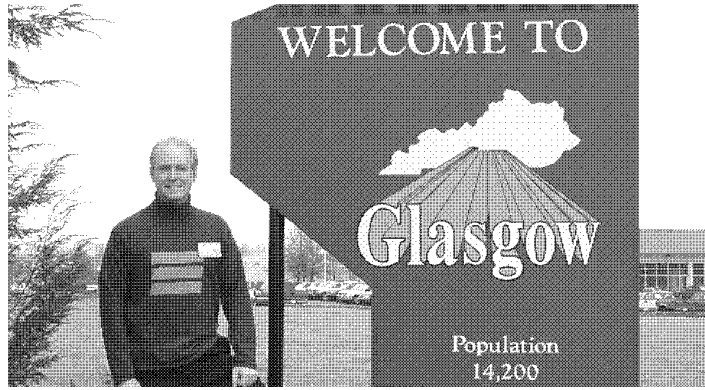
### **Membership rates:**

Full weekend adult rate is £35, for 7-17 year old £18 and under 7s are free. These rates will go up after Easter 2003 to £40 and £20.

The adult rate will rise again in November to £45 and to £50 on the door. Students and those receiving state benefit pay £27 at all times.

tributed by our staff who included Molly from the Glasgow Tourist Board and Robin from our convention centre. These parties took a lot of energy and by the end of ConJosé we were very tired, although happy with our success. Despite being effectively unopposed, we had bid as if we were. Andrew and Pat attended the count on our behalf and were able to informally announce the results later on Saturday night. Overnight Larry van der Putte, Jan van't ent and Steve Francis laboured to get our database ready to handle the expected flood of upgrades. They were heroes of the hour since that proved to be very important. On Sunday morning we all gathered at the WSFS Business Meeting for the official announcement and I was delighted to be able to announce the details of the con underneath our shiny new con banner.

Although the bid officially ended on the Saturday night of ConJosé it is worth mentioning what has happened since. Apart from the admin of processing



We told you Glasgow would be easy for Americans to get to...

thousands of bid and con memberships including a record number of Friends of the Bid), we were delighted when ConJosé was able to present us with \$10,000 in pass-along-funds at the 2002 Smofcon in San Diego.

Our promotional activities have continued since then at various conventions and we recently ran a very successful Open Meeting in Glasgow, our first as a seated Worldcon. In July this year we will also run our first full Staff Weekend - a concept we tried successfully for 1995. We have sent out our PR0, a Burns Night Card and of course this Newsletter. I also recently had the fun of being GoH at

Concave in Kentucky and since the nearest big town is also called Glasgow, we couldn't resist taking the above photo.

The UK2005 bid was different from Glasgow in 1995 in several ways, the largest of which was I think the absence of a strong opposing bid. Blars' I5 in 05 bid was always fun and enthusiastic, but didn't have the visibility of Atlanta in 1995 - which would surely have won in any other year. (All credit to Blars though as he ran a great and highly creative bid!) The other major difference was that UK2005 was always identified as a European bid, albeit one that would result in a UK

based Worldcon. UK2005 was never intended to lead to a direct sequel to the 1995 Worldcon in Glasgow, although one of our stated goals was to learn from 1995 (and from 1987 and 1990 of course). There are many similarities with 1995, and in fact I have heard fans describing Interaction as Intersection 2, but from the point of view of the bid team, the return to Glasgow is the result of a long careful process of selection, rather than a deliberate plan for a sequel.

It has been both great fun and a lot of hard work for everyone involved in the bid, but having succeeded we look forward to running the convention itself. We expect to have fans from dozens of countries and who knows, perhaps this will be a platform for a future continental European Worldcon in the near future! There is much that is uncertain in the World but we will certainly try as hard as we can to ensure that the 2005 Worldcon is a fun and memorable event for you all to participate in.

## Electrical Eggs UK



Electrical Eggs UK is a fan-run organisation offering advice, information and support on disabilities rights to help make SF conventions more accessible to fans with special needs. Contact: Michelle Drayton-Harrod, F1/2, 10 Atlas Road, Glasgow G21 4TE. Email: [electrical.eggsuk@ntlworld.com](mailto:electrical.eggsuk@ntlworld.com)



## Tolkien 2005: The Ring Goes Ever On

Celebrating 50 Years of *The Lord of the Rings*  
Aston University, Birmingham, England

11 - 15 August 2005

[www.tolkiensociety.org/2005](http://www.tolkiensociety.org/2005)

Much will have happened in fandom in the ten years between Intersection and Interaction. To celebrate this, we will be re-publishing some of our favourite British and European fan writing of the period in our Newsletters, hopefully capturing a flavour of this millennium-spanning decade along the way. For our first piece, it seems particularly appropriate to start with a 1999 Dave Langford essay which itself begins with a comment on reprints ...



First published in Trap Door 19, May 1999, ed. Robert Lichtman

When John Clute visited Reading and surveyed my book collection with a polysyllabically critical eye, I was quickly crushed by remarks like: 'Ugh! You permit reprint editions on your shelves?' At the end of it all, he allowed as how there were two books in that 25,000-odd which he wouldn't mind owning. One was the first edition of Terry Pratchett's *The Colour of Magic*. The other was a 1931 collection of bits by newspaper columnist J.B. Morton or 'Beachcomber' (1893-1979). That Beachcomber column ran for over fifty years and spawned at least twenty such volumes of selected extracts, leading me to the erroneous belief that I could attain riches and book publication by writing a long-running column for *Interzone* ... but I digress.

Speaking of Beachcomber — yes, experienced fans will have recognized the tell-tale signs of a highly contrived Langford opening link — one of my rare contributions to fan history is a tentative theory of his influence on fannish terminology. At one of the early British Eastercons, Cytricon in 1955, the Liverpool SF Group convulsed the audience with their 'tapera' (tape opera) *The March of Slime*, which included ad jingles for a product fated to enrich our microcosm's language:

Blog's the stuff for work, Blog's the stuff for play,  
Blog's the stuff, when you feel rough, to chase the  
blues away ...

Now among the hotchpotch of weird fragments that made up his columns ('SIXTY HORSES WEDGED IN CHIMNEY / The story to fit this sensational headline has not turned up yet.'), Beachcomber had a similar habit of inserting joke ads. One collection, *Captain Foulenough and Company* (1944), contains the following sensitive, aristocratic dialogue:

'Why is Sir Arthur looking so gloomy, Sir Harry?'

'Poor devil! It's like this, Sir George. [Lowers voice.] His capillaries, set end to end, wouldn't circle the earth more than once.'

'Phugh! That's dreadful, Sir Harry. Poor blighter! Is

there no hope?'

'Oh yes, Sir George: BLOGGO. A year ago my capillaries, set end to end, would barely have reached China. Today they would circle the earth three times. But where are you dashing off to, Sir George?'

'I'm going to buy some BLOGGO for Sir Arthur ...'

So was Bloggo a fabulous fannish influence that led to Blog? (And what indeed of resonances between the rival product Slobbo and Lower Slobbovia?) I have no hesitation in leaving the question undecided, and digressing in the direction of Beachcomber's other — far more frequently mentioned — universal panacea, called Snibbo. Snibbo had a million uses, including art restoration ('For three years I was a martyr to dirty pictures. Then one day a friend told me about Snibbo ...') and treatment of obscure psychological symptoms:

Dear Sir — For many years I thought there was a little Persian milkman in iron trousers riding a zebra round my room. Then I was recommended to take Snibbo, and I have not seen that little Persian milkman since. (Signed) F. Toggleton.

[If you suffer from little Persian milkmen, mice in tartan overcoats, yellow gasworks with bristles all over them, neuralgia, depression or boils, write for the free Snibbo Booklet, recommended by 123,784 doctors.]

Any critic who pursues sources and influences with the enthusiasm of the late Sam Moskowitz would surely detect a link between Snibbo and the fannish enterprise which likewise offers solutions for absolutely everything ... *Widower's Wonderful Products*, the brainchild of Eric Needham.

King Canute defied the tide,  
But couldn't stop it flooding;  
He should have made a barricade  
Of WIDOWER'S XMAS PUDDING.

See Geri Sullivan's Idea 6 for many more, as creatively misremembered by Chuch Harris... There is a compulsive fannish charm about this kind of template verse, although I admit the only Widower's quatrains which I myself have written are the following dubious specimens:

Harlan's shrieking mad this week,  
Regretting wrong decisions:  
He missed our sale of one last bale  
Of WIDOWER'S DANGEROUS VISIONS.

From voodoo gods to Joan-the-Wads,  
And hex-charms drawn in crayon,  
Our magic stall's what John Clute calls  
The WIDOWER'S APOTROPAION.

On Van Vogt Day we think Null-A,  
We drink a slannish dram —  
And true fans send each dearest friend  
A WIDOWER'S SEVAGRAM.

But I did once do a series of fearful sf clerihews....

Theodore Sturgeon  
Allowed his emotions to burgeon:  
On sighting a friendly visage, he  
Always attempted syzygy.

Marion Zimmer Bradley  
's fan club doesn't do badly,  
Since founded and urged to carry on  
By Zimmer Bradley (Marion).

Jerry Pournelle,  
When his Mote in God's Eye wouldn't sell,  
Asked friend Larry to cure its failings  
By putting in some aliens.

Digressing back into mainstream humour while keeping template verses in mind brings me to Paul Dehn's obscure little 1956 collection of essays and squibs, *For Love and Money*. (No sneering, Clute! Mine is a first edition, and — what's more — is printed for no apparent reason on pink paper.) For reasons which will emerge, this had been on my wants list for aeons, and ace book-hunter Brian 'It Will Cost More Than You Can Imagine' Ameringen finally tracked it down. Proudly he pressed the volume into my eager hands at the 1997 Clarke Awards party, only to snatch it back as he realized in embarrassed horror that his original purchase price — probably about 20p — was still pencilled inside. Me: 'I don't mind knowing the mark-up, I just want the book....' Brian, frantically accosting revellers: 'A rubber, a rubber, has anyone got a rubber?!' Fortunately he remembered not to put it this way to US visitors Norman Spinrad and Pat Cadigan.

Where was I? One treasure in the Dehn book was his set of 'Alternative Endings to an Unwritten Ballad', which introduced a new template character to the world of letters. Samples:

I stole through the dungeons, while everyone slept,  
Till I came to the cage where the Monster was kept.  
There, locked in the arms of a Giant Baboon,  
Rigid and smiling, lay ... MRS RAVOON!

I stood by the waters so green and so thick,  
And I stirred at the scum with my old, withered stick;  
When there rose through the ooze, like a monstrous  
balloon,  
The bloated cadaver of MRS RAVOON.

And so on; I think you all get the idea. The interesting point was that, just like *Widower's Wonderful Verses*, Mrs Ravoon rapidly began to acquire imitators. Dehn was vaguely bemused by what he called *Ravoon Sightings* in distant and unexpected parts of the literary jungle. These outbreaks continued long after his death in 1976, and some

later ones were published in John Julius Norwich's *Christmas Cracker* commonplace-book selections (guaranteed fannish, since the 1992 *Cracker* included highlights from Hazel's *Language Lessons*, as featured in *Ansible*) ...

Below the salt Channel they're drinking champagne  
And ministers jostle to board the first train.  
Emergency bells ring in French and Walloon,  
For there on the buffers squats ... MRS RAVOON.

What could I do but send the whole dossier to that connoisseur of high fannishness and low taste in the arts, that martyr to dirty pictures, Chuch Harris? He was, as it were, ravished, and in his erratic letterzine *Charrisma* he put out a call for new Ravoon sightings. The tragedy was that no one wrote any. 'So okay,' Chuch told his readers philosophically, 'keep your measly talent under the bushel, and don't come creeping round me for these very special pies and exquisite pints of Tetley's bitter the very next time you see me ...'

Not wishing to inflict disappointment on this staunchest pillar of the wolf-whistling community, I scratched my head and tried to draft the next best thing — some verses so deservedly rare that even John Clute probably doesn't have a first edition:

#### Who Needs Mrs Ravoon Anyway?

A sculptress who's famous in crafts and in arts  
For moulded impressions of gentlemen's parts [1]  
Invested her fortune in plaster of Paris  
So she could immortalize ... CHARLES RANDOLPH  
HARRIS.

Prince Hamlet retreated in sudden dismay:  
Was this the wrong universe, or the wrong play?  
For a counterblast came as he skewered the arras,  
A flood of invective from ... CHARLES RANDOLPH  
HARRIS.

It wasn't exhaustion, it wasn't the booze,  
But the sight of our Lucy's strategic tattoos [2]  
That weakened the man whom so few could embar-  
rass,  
And brought some rare blushes to ... CHARLES  
RANDOLPH HARRIS.

A New Age believer in mystical bliss  
Suspected the gods might be taking the piss,  
When a whiff of that dope known to Hindus as cha-  
ras  
Gave luminous visions of ... CHARLES RANDOLPH  
HARRIS.

All down the long coastline, North Wales to St Ives,  
They lock up their daughters and shackle their wives,  
For the rumour has run from Land's End to  
Beaumaris [3]:  
'Tis the holiday fortnight of ... CHARLES RAN-  
DOLPH HARRIS.

#### Scholarly Footnotes

[1] One of Cynthia Plastercaster's subjects was my little brother Jon Langford of the Mekons and other rock groups (a True Fact). He is trying to live this down, which is why I feel it my duty to remind the world once in a while — say weekly — of his peculiar heroism in inserting tender parts of himself into a jar of gooey pink dental mould. As Jon proudly puts it, 'For God's sake never tell our Mother.'

[2] Lucy Huntzinger would prefer not to be identified as the subject of a veiled poetic allusion concealed in this line.

[3] Beaumaris is in Anglesey off the North Welsh coast, as any fule kno.

[4] There is no note [4], but here's an even more poignant and politically correct bonus verse:

A Hollywood actor of Charlie Chan fame,  
Mishandled his accent and mangled that Name:

14 Armadillo Dreams, The Newsletter of Interaction, Number one

'Foleign devil who mocks the Impelial Palace!  
It's the Thousand-Cuts Tolment for ... CHALLES  
LANDOLPH HALLIS.'

Never let it be said that I don't try hard to boost our Chuch's fame. Will someone let him know that the invoice from Proxyboo Ltd (Now A Wholly Owned Subsidiary Of Ansible Information) is in the post? Meanwhile, we pause and allow the great Beachcomber himself to have what John Clute might call the post-antepenultimate word:

ERRATUM. In my article on the Price of Milk, 'Horses' should have read 'Cows' throughout.

Finally ... in 1989, Edward Gorey published a tiny, tiny chapbook of illustrated verses entitled Q.R.V. — reissued in merely miniature format as *The Universal Solvent* (1990). And Gorey's mysterious product Q.R.V. is indeed the modern-day Widower's Wonderful Snibbo, capable of almost anything:

She floats around  
above the ground  
Ignoring gravity;  
Although they scoffed,  
she rose aloft  
By taking Q.R.V.

Or, somewhat more along the Harris line of aesthetics ...

If you would know  
your privates grow  
To such immensity  
That all who saw  
Would ooh in awe  
Then write for Q.R.V.

Doctoral fame must surely await the first academic fan to write a lofty thesis called *The Influence of Beachcomber and Widower's Wonderful Verses upon Edward Gorey*. It could even be a collaboration between John Clute and Chuch Harris.

**Afterthought.** Long-time fan Chuch (alias Chuck) Harris was delighted by all the insults and sent an ecstatic letter — one of his last, alas, since he died in July 1999.

I never got around to discussing the Burma Shave Ad template verses which seem to be indelibly impressed on the US fannish consciousness, but when rereading John Sladek's fiction in the wake of his untimely death in March 2000, I came across a mention of signs purportedly seen on the Interstate:

Beards grow faster  
In the grave  
Take it with you —

## When Our Toys Were Taken Away: Science Fiction In The 21<sup>st</sup> Century

by Paul Kincaid

First published in *Steam Engine Time* 1, April 2000, eds. Bruce Gillespie, Paul Kincaid and Maureen Kincaid Speller

*'I think sf today is largely a historical project — that it doesn't, or cannot, exist in its classical form any longer.'* — William Gibson

THIS IS THE FUTURE.

We're in the world that science fiction has been telling us about for decades. Look in the newspapers: we've got clones and robots, life on other planets, intelligent computers, genetically modified animals, smart drugs, virtual reality. Any sf cliché that isn't here, soon will be; or so scientists confidently predict.

There's one problem with this world: around about — now — it stops being the present and turns into the past. Time still marches on at an implacable one second per second, and there are new futures coming up just as quickly and as certainly as the old futures arrived.

But what are they? Science fiction isn't telling us. Our toys, the things we've decorated our futures with for so long, have been re-appropriated by real science; and now that our toys have been taken away we haven't devised new ones, as we once would have done. Instead, we've just stopped playing. With a few honourable exceptions (there are always exceptions, but they are rare and getting rarer) science fiction has given up on the future. Which prompts the question: has the future given up on science fiction? Did the archetypal literature of the twentieth century have a set course to run, and having completed the

course will it have anything left to say in the twenty-first century?

Just consider what so much of science fiction has been doing of late.

Time travel stories were once a way of examining our past and, by implication, how it turned into our present. But now, novels like *Corrupting Dr Nice* (1997) by John Kessel, *Time On My Hands* (1997) by Peter Delacorte, *Mendoza In Hollywood* (2000) by Kage Baker are less about the shaping of our world than the authors' obsession with movies of the past. But at least they represent an engagement with wider aspects of our culture, which is positively healthy compared to some science fiction.

There are books — such as *The Time Ships* (1995) by Stephen Baxter, *Take Back Plenty* (1990) by Colin Greenland, *A Scientific Romance* (1997) by Ronald Wright, in all other respects very fine examples of the genre — which take as their subject nothing more than science fiction itself. When Kim Stanley Robinson takes a look at the colonisation of Mars and the environmental and political questions it will raise in *Red, Green and Blue Mars* (1992-6), what it generates is *White Mars* (1999) from Brian Aldiss with Roger Penrose, and *Rainbow Mars* (1999) from Larry Niven. This is not science fiction as an ongoing discus-

sion. This is science fiction eating itself.

What alternative are we offered to this inverted, hermetically-sealed little world? That old sf stand-by, a future so distant in time and space that it might as well be fantasy. The limitless wealth, the incredible technological accomplishments of Iain Banks's *Culture* confirms Arthur C. Clarke's dictum that any sufficiently advance science is indistinguishable from magic. And it is all too easy for fantastical trappings to slip in amid the space opera, from the supernatural horror in Peter F. Hamilton's *Night's Dawn Trilogy* (1996-9) to the feudal power structures in so much militaristic SF. Even when writers like Vernor Vinge, in *A Fire Upon The Deep* (1992), struggle to keep space opera (mostly) within science fictional bounds, this could hardly be called engagement with the present.

J.G. Ballard once described science fiction as the best way of writing about the present. But perhaps, for many science fiction writers, they've seen this present coming for so long they've got no interest in it now it's here. No interest in the present, however, means equally no interest in projecting today onto tomorrow. And without that, science fiction could lose its purpose and its way.



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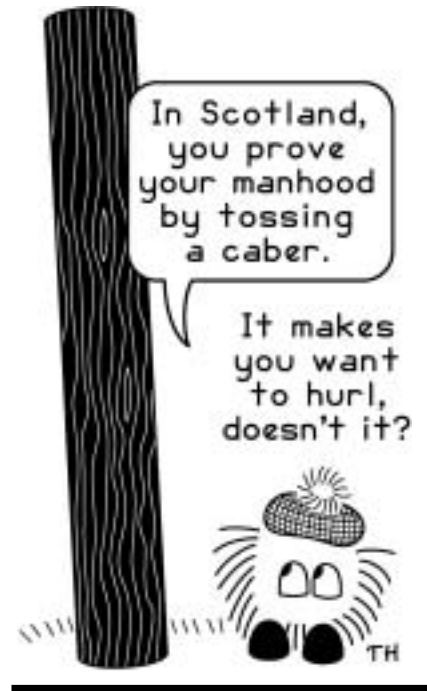
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*We promise to return Vince Docherty to Interaction in one piece. Honest. O.K. so he may be choc full with plum brandy and other things, but he should be fully functional by 2005 (says our resident biomedical expert...)*

## The 2<sup>nd</sup> International Week of Science and Science Fiction

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# A SCIENCE FICTION ADVENTURE

by Mark Plummer

First published in *Banana Wings* 14, August 1999, eds. Claire Brialey and Mark Plummer

The other day I was reading a copy of *Science Fiction Adventures* #29. Yes, I know, hardly at the cutting edge of anything—and yes, I'm sure I've got plenty of better things to do with my time—but I happen to like old sf magazines. And I should also say that I appreciate that I may well be recounting this to a number of people who remember this particular magazine first hand, but for the benefit of those who don't and who don't know their *Analogs* from their *Amazings* I will explain that *SFA* was one—and very much the junior—of the three sf magazines produced by the British outfit Nova Publications in the '50s and '60s, the other two being *New Worlds* and *Science Fantasy*.

Anyway, I noticed that this particular issue had a dollar price on the cover—50¢, not that it's relevant—but no sterling version. Odd, given that it's a British magazine, provoking a few thoughts about creeping Americanisation of British culture. I also noticed that the ads for the contemporaneous issues of *New Worlds* and *Science Fantasy* on the inside- and outside-back covers quoted dollar prices for these publications as well,

and gave the address of the US and Canadian distributor of the magazines rather than of Nova. Curiouser and curiouser. The interior pages did look to be UK-produced—a British printer is cited and everything—but the exterior looked American.

Well, like any right-thinking person confronted by such a dilemma, I fell back on the good old *Encyclopaedia of Science Fiction*. Quoting from the CD-ROM *SFE*'cos, like, it's dead easy:

*Science Fiction Adventures*  
(entry by Brian Stableford)

*Title used on 2 US digest-size magazines during the 1950s, and on 1 UK magazine that began as a reprint and continued, using original material, after its parent—the 2nd US magazine—folded.*

Skipping over the first US *SFA* which isn't relevant as it's unconnected to either of the other two beyond the fact that it shares a title...

*The 2nd US magazine, published by Royal Publications, was ed. Larry T. Shaw and ran for 12 issues in 18 months, Dec 1956-June 1958. #1 was numbered, confusingly, vol 1 #6, continuing the numeration of a defunct magazine (Suspect*

*Detective Stories) from the same publisher; however, #2 was numbered vol 1 #2.*

This is the kind of trivia that makes sf magazine-collecting so utterly fascinating to me. I mean, really, don't you just love this kind of thing? I understand that there is actually a perfectly good reason for starting the run with #6—something to do with a mailing permit, I gather—but... oh, I don't know, it appeals to some sort of fan-nish sense of anarchy. Anyway, carry on, Brian...

*Novelettes from Shaw's magazine were resorted into 5 issues of a UK edition marketed Mar-Nov 1958 by Nova Publications, with both Shaw and John Carnell credited as editors. Carnell alone, no longer using material from the parent magazine, continued SFA for a further 27 issues until May 1963... The UK SFA was numbered consecutively #1-#32, approximately bimonthly to #14, and regularly bimonthly from then on.*

On the face of it the British version seems to offer little by way of fundamental charm: look at that phrase 'numbered consecutively #1-#32'. No

fun at all. Doesn't start its run with Vol 1 #6 or anything; no, all its issues are neatly numbered and appear in order. The best it can run to is that the first fourteen issues were only 'approximately bimonthly'. Good god, even a pillar of the establishment like *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction* managed to come up with the goods occasionally, with its simple 'six-issues-a-volume-two-volumes-per-year' format occasionally breaking down when somebody included either five or seven issues in one volume, necessitating a commensurate adjustment in the next. You'd think it would be easy to number something consecutively, wouldn't you? I kept saying so, especially with regard to those fanzine indexes which came with little notes, pointing out how issue 12 of *Great Cat Stories* was incorrectly numbered 13, or incorrectly dated September 1923 when it should of course have said April 1997. How difficult can it be, I used to say. I stopped saying it when I noticed that my own *APAZINE* had featured two consecutive issue 13s, and the next fifteen issues were all mis-numbered and I had to skip number 29 to restore order again. And so now I say that misnumbering is one of the ineffable charms of sf fanzines and magazines and what we want is to see more examples of the sort of thing managed by the British Reprint Edition *If* in the mid-Seventies. True, they got off to an unpromising start with nine consecutively numbered issues, but the next four issues were numbered 11, 1, 13 and 3.

But the Nova version of *SFA* seemed deficient on the 'ineffable charm' front, until I noticed the apparent Americanisation of the exterior of the copy I'd been reading. It's numbered 29 as I said—by an interesting coincidence, the number of my own 'missing' *APAZINE*—and dated November/December 1962. It's clearly the Nova Publications version, the third incarnation of the title. Yet that started life as a British edition of an American magazine; there's no indication that it ever had its own American edition, even after its parent US version folded.

But, as a clue, here's what the *SFE* says

about *Galaxy* magazine and its British reprint edition of the '50s and '60s (entry by Malcolm Edwards and Peter Nicholls):

*A UK edition, from Strato Publications, began in Jan 1953 (reprinting the Oct 1952 US edition). It was labelled vol 3 #1. ...*

(but why did they start with volume 3?)

*... #2 reprinted the preceding US issue (Sep 1952) The UK edition continued to follow the original, erratically at first, and from #7 began to shorten the US edition. It continued to be numbered continuously (dropping the 'vol 3' after #12) until #94 (Feb 1961). From #72 (Feb 1959) it was an exact reprint of the US edition with a different title page. From Dec 1961 only the cover was different, and from Dec 1962 the US edition was imported.*

The entry continues:

*Then, again, the US edition was distributed. In 1972 a third UK edition began, from Universal-Tandem Publishing Co., who overprinted the US edition with price and issue number: the May/June 1972 issue was #1, and a total of 25 numbered issues were published, ending with #25, Jan 1975 ...*

There you go, another boring numbering concept on the face of it. However...

*... the numbering was not continuous; it ran #1-#10, #11, #11, #12, #12, #12, #14, #17-#25. Thereafter the US edition was distributed.*

... which is completely irrelevant to the point I'm making but I couldn't resist mentioning it anyway. Why were there two #11s and three #12s; why were there no numbers #13, 15, 16?

But anyway, back to the plot and that comment that 'From Dec 1961 only the cover was different'. I've got one of these and sure enough it is the interior pages of a US edition—US-printed and everything—which is wrapped in a UK cover with a UK price. Not having anything with which to compare it, I can't say whether it's the same artwork.

So, what we're looking at here with this copy of *SFA* is, I think, the same

thing only in reverse: a US cover wrapping a UK-printed interior. Which is fine, yet it's not noted amongst the otherwise fairly comprehensive details contained in the *SFE*; nor is it noted in Roger Robinson's check-list of sf magazines (Becon Publications, and highly recommended if you have any interest at all in this sort of thing). All of which gives the impression that I have in fact unearthed a previously unknown variant of *Science Fiction Adventures*.

I did indeed promptly dash off a letter to Roger, pointing out this great discovery in the annals of Science Fiction Magazines. Roger has made a few enquiries and, sure enough, nobody else has come across this either.

Of course, in the overall scheme of things I know it's probably not really a great discovery. You know, I feel that at the moment I'm not quite inclined to rank myself alongside Isaac Newton, Christopher Columbus and the guy who invented slip-sheeting. But it is kinda good to unearth something which has seemingly bypassed the collective minds of sf magazine collectors for close on forty years; indeed it's the kind of thing that makes you wonder what else you could go on to discover. Now I guess there's a chance that somebody is going to tell me about how they've known about this for years, and of course *everybody* knows that some issues of *SFA* had US covers added. But for the time being I will bask in the glory of my discovery and ponder where it might lead. Being realistic, I feel that I mustn't be over-ambitious. I will therefore allow myself all of next month to discover anti-gravity, *FTL* and Greg Pickersgill's *TAFF* report.

*AFTERWORD: As was subsequently explained to me, it turns out that it was standard practice to overprint the covers of the British magazines with pricing information for the US market (and for other countries as well) and these 'US editions' are thus fairly common in the US although, predictably, they're less common in the UK. So much for my essay into original research... Mark Plummer, March 2003.*

# Return of the Living Dead Room

by Sue Mason

First published in Plokta 8, August 1997, eds. The Plokta Cabal

They say that fashions come in cycles, and it's true. But you always have that glimmer of hope that *some* things won't come back. I had the vaguely optimistic feeling that the worst excesses of 70's interior design could *never* return to haunt us. Wrong.

With a safe cushion of years we can discuss those decorating foibles in shocking detail. The stone cladding over the fireplace, the bubbly copper sheeting, or, worst of all, razor sharp artex — were they trying to flay us alive? The style seemed to be one wall decorated and three walls plain. And, oh, the decoration. Pink — and I mean bright candy pink — purple, brown, orange and my own bugbear, lime green. What were they on? I don't *recall* my parents dropping tabs or smoking dope but then they did insist on me going to Sunday school (I got kicked out for wanting to be the Morrigan when I grew up, "Susan! Celtic death goddess is *not* a suitable career

choice!") so I don't know for sure what they got up to on a Sunday morning.

My mother was, and still is, immensely fond of her huge tin of lime green gloss. Our living room doors were painted this stunning shade until the paint congealed into a rock-hard little lump only about five years ago. Lime green matched nothing else in the room, or in the house, except possibly the late, lamented budgerigar. A friend recalls with horror his parents' habit of buying three gallons of white and one of a colour. One wall was painted in purple, orange or brown then the remaining colour was mixed with the white paint and applied lovingly to the remaining three walls to give a most tasteful effect.

I shouldn't cast aspersions about my parents' taste — the paper in my bedroom is large orange, pink and yellow floral. It went up when I was eleven, when we got the inside toilet and bathroom. It was the

height of fashion in 1974 and, as my bedroom is too small and far too cold to use for anything other than sleeping in, somehow I've never got round to removing all the books and all the clothes to redecorate it. We found a roll at the back of the shoe cupboard recently. I had forgotten how the colour had... matured and faded somewhat over the years.

There is a TV programme called *Changing Rooms* — a strangely compulsive show. Brave and/or foolhardy friends decorate rooms in each other's houses with the able assistance of an 'expert' interior decorator and a strict budget. Results vary from the wildly eccentric through the weird-but-liveable-with to the truly terrible. The budget is only £500 per room, curbing the designer's worst excesses — one of our favourite games is flicking through *Homes & Gardens* looking for the most expensive egg cup (£35) or curtain tie-backs (£125!) Recently they rede-

corated a playroom-cum-study in delightful shades of orange and lime green. The poor woman who wanted to use the room as a study looked shell shocked when she saw it and whimpered that she would have to wear sunglasses when working in the room. My heart went out to her.

As I was completing this article, I enquired whether the excesses of the 70's were purely a working-class problem? Had the more refined tastes of the middle classes acted as a buffer? Alison informed me forcefully that chocolate brown was the colour of the decade, that Mike's living-room carpet evokes the period perfectly and that burnt orange was also 'in'. I have the warm, cosy feeling that the poor taste of the decade was universal. The lime green doors have gone now but fear not, we still have the black plastic sofa, guaranteed to weld to any exposed flesh. I wonder how long it will be before IKEA has them in stock?

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# Getting in Touch

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## **Interaction**

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You can also reach us at the following email addresses (more will be added as we get closer to the convention).

memberships@interaction.worldcon.org.uk for queries about memberships, member status, payments and publications delivery.

coa@interaction.worldcon.org.uk specifically for Change of Address notifications.

finance@interaction.worldcon.org.uk for financial and payment issues.

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## **Interaction Agents Network**

We want Interaction to be a Worldcon in the true sense of the word and this is reflected in our extensive international Agents network.

This network is divided into two parts. Our activities in the United States are coordinated by **Steve and Sue Francis**, who are contactable at Sjf1138@aol.com

and sfsue@aol.com respectively.

For the Rest of the World, responsibility lies with **Bjørn Tore Sund**, who is contactable at bjonnts@interaction.worldcon.org.uk.

All of our agents are listed alphabetically by country below. We are still adding agents all the time so please don't panic if your country isn't listed yet! In fact, if your country isn't listed, why not consider becoming an agent yourself? At present we are particularly looking for Agents for Denmark, Southern Europe (especially Spain and Italy) and Eastern Europe.

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## The 2002 Worldcon Site Selection results

Voted on at ConJosé - August 31, 2002 in San José, California, USA

These results were ratified at the Business Meeting on Sunday 1 September. Jim Briggs, site selection administrator for ConJosé, presents the following results. 1034 ballots were cast. The time of the count was 44 minutes. The results were as follows:

	Mail in	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Total
Invalid	4				
Glasgow	152	211	266	288	917
No Preference	7	2	16	28	53
None of the Above	1	4	5	8	18
Minneapolis in '73	1	1	3	3	8
I5 in '05			2	3	5
Rottneft Island		1		1	2
Winterfell				2	2
Seattle in '05		2			2
Spuzzum, BC		1		1	2
New Glasgow, NS			2		2
Monkey's Eyebrow, KY	1				1
Monkey's Eyebrow, KY			1		1
Honolulu, HI	1				1
Sunnydale, CA		1			1
Both		1			1
M5 in 05		1			1
No Dams		1			1
Amber		1			1
Altair 6		1			1
Little Cayman		1			1
Vorbarr Sultana		1			1
Sacramento			1		1
Antartica			1		1
Area 51			1		1
Komono				1	1
Discworld Ankh-Morpork, Seamstresses Guild				1	1
Lothlorien				1	1
Blank				1	1
Takoma Park, MD				1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>339</b>	<b>1034</b>
<b>Total with Preference</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>282</b>	<b>311</b>	<b>981</b>

Total needed to win: 491. Glasgow wins on the first ballot.

## Lost Souls

As of 24<sup>th</sup> March, 2003, this is the list of members whose mail has come back to us as undeliverable, or who we have otherwise managed to lose contact with. If you know any of these people and can get us in contact with them, please send a note to us at our UK or US office, or via email (preferred) to memberships@interaction.worldcon.org.uk Thank you very much!

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Sarah Wightman	UK
Markus Wolf	Germany



## UK IN 2005 Bid Accounts

### David Cooper

INCOME		EXPENDITURE	
Committee Subscriptions	£5,372	Parties	£5,961
Merchandise Sales	£1,698	Promotions & Merchandise	£4,978
Donations/Miscellaneous	£2,376	Bid Publications	£7,291
Bank Interest	£273	Travel support	£3,714
Friend Memberships	£21,216	Office Supplies/Software	£1,131
Presupporting	£11,099	Misc Costs	£1,174
		Server	£919
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£42,034</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£25,169</b>
	<b>NETT</b>		<b>£16,865</b>