



# NOVACON TWENTY ONE

**GUEST OF HONOUR                      COLIN GREENLAND**

**FRIDAY 1st NOVEMBER TO SUNDAY 3rd NOVEMBER**

**FORTE POST HOUSE at BIRMINGHAM AIRPORT**

## **Progress Report Three**

### **CHAIRMAN**

*Nick Mills*

### **COMMITTEE**

*David T Cooper  
Bernie Evans  
Al Johnston  
Alice & Steve Lawson  
Chris Murphy*

### **STAFF**

**Creche  
Artshow  
Bookroom  
Snooker Tournament**

*Vicky Evans  
John Harrold  
Mick Evans  
Stephen Tudor*

### **Membership Rates**

**£15 per person by post  
£20 per person on the door**

### **Room Rates**

**£24.75 per night twin/double  
£30.00 per night single**

### **Bookroom Rates**

**£15.00 per table for the weekend.      Dealers must be members of the convention.**

### **Convention Enquiries.**

**Bernie Evans, 121 Cape Hill, Smethwick, Warley, West Midlands, B66 4SH  
Telephone 021 558 0997**

## chairmans bit

Preparations are now well under way for Novacon. In this PR you will find instructions on how to get to the hotel, instructions on how to get to the hotel, instructions on how to book if you haven't done so, and an exposition of some of the programme items you can expect to see.

On Friday night we will be celebrating with our birthday party sponsored by the publishers Harper Collins. You are encouraged to wear fancy dress for this event and there will be spot prizes for those costumes that most entertain our judges. Like all good parties there will be silly games. These will be of both fannish and non-fannish varieties. Fannish activities will include the return of synchronised beer drinking, formation timewarping and the astral pole relay race. So get into training now - you have been warned!!

If you would like to enter a team for the formation timewarp, please get in touch with the party MC on the evening, teams of up to five people are welcome.

Since last year the hotel have added a number of syndicate rooms to their function space. At least one of these rooms will be available during the con for small privately organised gatherings, for example filking. If you would like to use this facility please contact the convention address.

As part of our anniversary celebrations we are organising an exhibition of memorabilia of past Novacons. If you have any photographs or other interesting items that you are willing to lend for display please contact the chairman.

Nick Mills

## nova awards

The Nova Awards voting form is enclosed in this PR. Please use this to vote either at the convention in the box provided, or if not attending the convention then post to:

Harry Bond  
Nova Awards Administrator  
13 Merrivale Road  
Stafford  
ST17 9EB

Full voting details are given on the voting form. Please use your vote, the broader the electorate the more representative the result.

## from: a nearly middle aged fan

I think that I first met Colin Greenland in 1979, but I can't guarantee it; Colin is one of those people who edge their way into one's life as an essential item like Greek yoghurt or Red Dwarf. There were, I remember, rumors of his coming. David Pringle described an up and coming SF critic who had been known to paint his toenails green. Somebody mentioned that he might have been a student of Tom Shippey's. (I never did find out if this was true.) I remember Colin's several visits to Leeds with the kind of pleasure one associates with a good time whilst having lost the specifics... (probably just as well)

I get older and wearier but Colin keeps on branching out. From critic to author, from Caroline's parties to participating in the Edinburgh fringe, he always seems to be active. He is the only author who has ever felt it his duty to dissuade me from buying his new novel. And he was really serious about it! The only thing that puzzles me is why he tried to dissuade me. The "Hour of the Thin Ox" was good.

One thing more. I count my crows' feet and my incipient bunions - how come he doesn't seem to have aged in a decade? (Where has he put that portrait, and what does the other half look like?) I'm very glad that he now has a chance to shed some of that infectious enthusiasm over Novacon. I look forward to great things... Oh by the way Colin what was that Mexican beer you persuaded me to try at that restaurant in August, and where the hell was the restaurant?

Kate Jeary

## please help us

As you are all probably aware Roger Robinson has been advising the RNIB on their list of SF books available as Talking Books for the Blind, and thanks to fund raising by fans there have been many new additions to that list. What we would now like to do is rectify any glaring omissions from the list and we'd like your help. Would you think carefully over the next week or two, and decide on the three most important SF books that you feel really should be on anyone's list of SF books and at the convention would you fill in the titles, authors and publishers (if you can) of your chosen three books on the voting forms. We will compare your choices with the RNIB list and see if there are any omissions which we can request for our next additions. We cannot pin up or publish a definitive list of the ones already on cassette since the RNIB's cataloguing system is not always accurate (Ballard, for example, has non of his books classified as SF) and there are vast volumes of catalogue to search. So it's easier to check a short list of ours against their's. If you will all spare a minute to help we should ensure a good "library" for the blind SF lovers of the future.

Anne Page

# gcse information

Once again, the GCSE (General Certificate of Science Fiction Education) will be held during the Friday and Saturday of the Novacon weekend. In the Programme Book there will be a number of questions, each with several answers of which you must select the correct one. The questions are of varying difficulty and, within limits, you can select the ones you answer and submit for marking on Saturday evening.

Although most questions will range across the SF spectrum there will be a number based on a "set book" which this year is "Ringworld" by Larry Niven. So find and read a copy for a flying start to the test.

Certificates will be awarded and all entries will be put into a draw for prizes so it will be worth your while to expend a few minutes thought sometime during the Con.

Full details of what to do will be in the Programme Book - all you need to do is bring a pen or ball point (not a pencil) to fill in the answers.

See you there

V Brown

## the astral pole

As part of the birthday celebrations there will be general messing about with broom sticks in the form of the Astral Pole. This article is to instruct you in the secret contortions of this ancient fannish practice.

- a) Obtain a broom stick, preferably without the head, or any straightish pole 5 feet long. This is the Astral Pole
- b) With your hands palms uppermost, hold the pole horizontally in front of you, gripping the pole about six inches from each end. You are now ready to start, at no time from now on should you let go of the pole, if you do you will have to begin again.
- c) Step over the pole. The pole should now be resting below your backside.
- d) Bring the pole up over your head from back to front. You should now be in a similar position to (b) but with your hands rotated about 270 degrees.
- e) Now the hard part. You have to place your foot ( right foot is usually easiest ) around the outside of your arm and through the gap between the pole and your body.
- f) Next pull the pole over your knee, stand up and step back through. You should now be back in the start position.

David T Cooper

# programme/creche

The programme hasn't been fully organised at the time of writing, but we can give you a good indication of what to expect.

On Friday evening we shall hold the opening ceremony. Later there will be a splendidly silly fancy dress party, which is described elsewhere in this PR.

Saturday will start with Ian Stewart speaking on "The Pattern of Tiny Feet". The book auction will be held during the day. In the afternoon there will be a panel on the history of Novacon, with former chairpersons reminiscing about the good (or bad?) old days. This will be followed by an interview with our Guest of Honour, Colin Greenland, who will also read from his work. The evening will be rounded off with a disco.

On Sunday we will have the art auction, and Danish writer Ellen M. Pedersen will give a talk with the intriguing title "A Rabbi Dropped an Android on the Road to Science Fiction". Pam Wells will be telling us about her TAFF trip, and we shall run a panel on "How to get published".

During Saturday and Sunday Dave Cox will be running "Galactic University Challenge". There will also be a film programme, but we haven't quite finished arguing about what to show yet. On Sunday afternoon the Novas will be presented at the awards ceremony, and the convention will start to wind down.

Naturally everything mentioned above is subject to revision, A timetable of events will be printed in the programme book. Some people have complained that Novacon is running out of ideas, but we hope to give you a satisfying mixture of novelty and tradition. Enjoy yourselves!

Chris Murphy

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This will be the fifth year running that Vicky Evans has agreed to run the Creche, with her help the Convention should be a much less stressful environment for all.

The Creche will be open as follows:

Saturday	10:00	to	12:30
	13:30	to	17:00
Sunday	10:00	to	12:30
	13:30	to	17:30

PLEASE remember to bring items such as aprons, favourite toys, (CLEARLY LABELLED,) nappies (DISPOSABLE PLEASE,) lists of anything your child may be allergic to, or not allowed to have. Anything else YOU can think of, or any little extras you may feel disposed to provide to boost the Creche facilities will be appreciated.

Please feel free to pop in and visit Vicky from time to time, if you wish to help out, it's not necessary for you to be a parent to do this, all you have to do is like children.

# **Novacon**

is run annually by the  
**BIRMINGHAM**  
**SF GROUP.**

Honorary Presidents:

**Brian W Aldiss**

and

**Harry Harrison**

Talks, Authors' signing sessions.  
Newsletter and Special events.

The BSFG meets on the third Friday of  
every month (unless otherwise notified)  
at

The Australian Bar  
Hurst Street, Birmingham.

For details contact Bernie Evans,  
121 Cape Hill, Smethwick, Warley,  
West Midlands, B66 4SH  
Telephone 021 558 0997

# what! - more forms?

You've got it, or, to be more accurate, them, your very last set of Bernie's Famous Forms for Novacon 21.

**MEMBERSHIP FORM...**This is just in case you've remembered something you meant to tell us earlier, you only need send it back if you want to.

**SNOOKER FOR.....**Changed your mind about playing? Then send this of to Steve at the address on the form NOW, but don't send your money, he'll ask you for that at the Con.

**HOTEL FORM.....**If you haven't booked yet, DO IT NOW. If you want to change your booking, DO IT NOW. If you want to increase your chances of being in the main hotel by sharing a twin, DO IT NOW. If you want to check anything, PHONE ME TONIGHT. Confirmations will either be with this PR, OR will arrive in a few days. If you've got a confirmation and another form don't worry, time is short and it's quicker to stuff the lot than sort them.

**NOVA VOTING FORM..**This is the one you haven't had before. Your vote matters, so don't waste it, USE IT. Trees died to provide the paper for these forms, so don't waste them, USE THEM.

One final word, to those obliging people who have agreed to share a twin room already THANKS, I can't tell you how helpful that is. To those who've refused, I HOPE I can get you into the Con hotel, but.....

Bernie Evans

## travel instructions

The Forte Post House Hotel (no we haven't moved this is just the Excelsior Hotel by any other name) is situated at the entrance to the OLD passenger airport, now the cargo airport, and may still be known locally as the Airport Hotel, please bear this in mind if you get a blank stare when asking directions.

The year before last there was a missing junction on the map, last year the instructions mentioned the wrong junction which wasn't even on the map, this year, (I hope,) we've sorted it all out. So, these instructions are still based mostly on Tony's directions with updates by Bernie and me. Good Luck....( Steve )

**By Rail:**

Get off at Birmingham International Station (not New Street.) Get a taxi to the Hotel, (about a five minute ride,) OR catch the 900 bus TO Birmingham from outside the station and ask for the Hotel, OR if you're feeling very fit turn left out of the station, walk up to the A45 island turn right and keep going for about a mile.

**By Bus from Birmingham:**

Catch the 900 bus from New Street near the Odeon cinema. The bus stops outside the hotel, just past the entrance, and runs every 20 minutes during the day, every 30 minutes evenings and Sundays.

By coach:

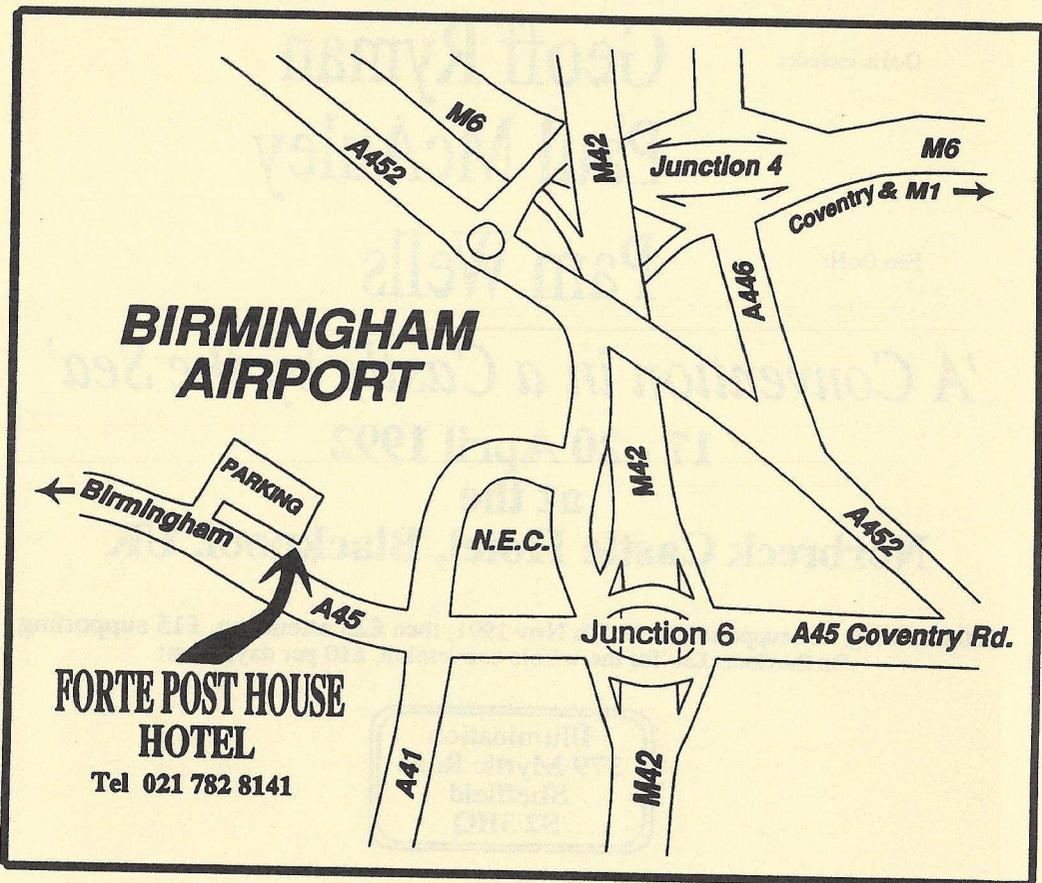
National coaches will go to Digbeth Coach Station. The 900 bus stops roughly opposite the coach station, travelling towards Coventry, see previous paragraph for details.

By Car:

From the M6, leave at junction 4 or 4A, depending on your direction of travel, and head South on the M42. Leave at junction 6 and take the A45 towards the NEC and the station, carry on a short distance, (be prepared to turn RIGHT) until you get to a set of traffic lights. You will see the hotel on your right, the turning is signposted Freeport and Hotel.

Parking:

The hotel has parking space for about 200 cars, or there is a large NCP car park nearby, on the way to the Freeport.



*From their dark enclaves, the Ten Invisible Masters sent forth their emissaries across the globe,  
to spread the word,  
to gather power,  
to summon forth a mighty Eastercon!*

# Illumination

UK National SF Convention 1992

GoHs include:

Geoff Ryman  
Paul McAuley

Fan GoH:

Pam Wells

*'A Convention in a Castle by the Sea'*

17 - 20 April 1992

at the

**Norbreck Castle Hotel, Blackpool, UK**

£20 attending, £12 supporting until 5th Nov 1991, then £25 attending, £15 supporting  
On the door: £30 for the whole convention, £10 per day; from:

Illumination  
379 Myrtle Road  
Sheffield  
S2 3HQ

# still more members

153	Mrs S A Melia-Powell	177	Richard Standage
154	Linda Krawecke	178	Richard the Rampant
155	Ben Brown	179	Mick Evans
156	Sue Edwards	180	Geoff Cowie
157	Brian Stovold	181	Tony Rogers
158	Jean Maudsley	182	Doreen Rogers
159	Elaine Coates	183	Chris Baker
160	Mark Slater	184	Rachel Baker
161	Norman Shorroch	185	Margaret Austin
162	Catherine McAulay	186	Martin Easterbrook
163	Marcus Cooper	187	Joseph Nicholas
164	LiYi Tan	188	Mark Meenan
165	Jean Porter	189	Oliver Gruter
166	Jim Porter	190	Sue Jones
167	Chris Malme	191	Vikki Lee France
168	Lisanne Norman	192	Brian Davies
169	Joan Mahony	193	Lesley Ward
170	Chris Stocks	194	Neil Summerfield
171	Christine Jennings	195	Avedon Carol
172	John Perry	196	Rob Hanson
173	Ivan Towlsen	197	Keith Brooke
174	Julia Smith	198	Bridget Hardcastle
175	Mark Smith	199	John Dowd
176	Helena Bowles	200	Fran Dowd

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Information page, Nova award and Creche information  
by Steve and Alice Lawson.

All articles by those named.

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Thank-you to all contributors.



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