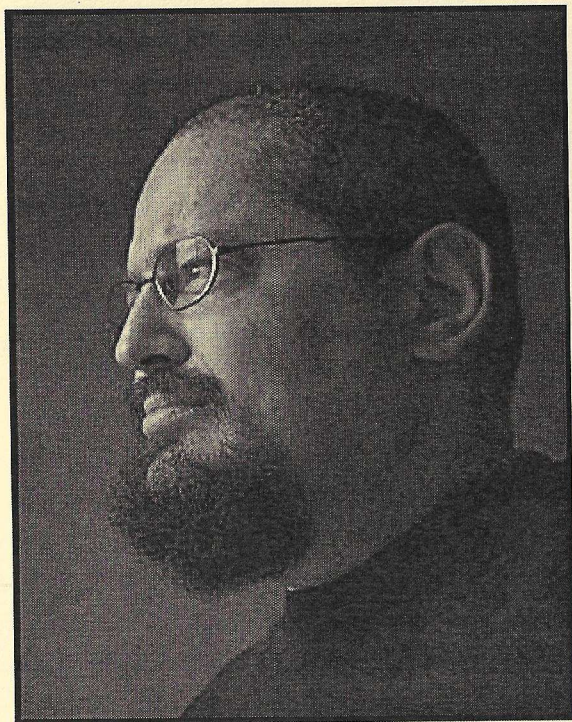


# **Novacon 37**



**Guest of Honour**

**Charles Stross**

## *A few words from our honorary co-presidents...*

### **Brian W Aldiss**

"I don't know. The older I get, the busier I get. The busier I get, the poorer I get. It's doing things like writing Intros or blurbs for books, or signing my signature two hundred times for Peter Crowther. I would like to get to Brum more often. I enjoy visiting Brum - I have friends there (Yes, *you!*). But so many events seem to take place in towns foreign to me - well, like Bradford - and my sense of adventure has faded with age.

"As Steve reminds me, I have long-established links with Novacon and the good old BSFG. I recently sent Pete Weston a piece about how, as one con was closing, Mike Moorcock sang to save us all. Great days! And I don't forget how you supported me when I used to strut the boards with Ken Campbell and Petronilla Whitfield, when we were doing "SF Blues" in order to spread the word to the masses. Sometimes as many of them as twenty showed up...

"Have fun, guys! Sorry not to join you."

### **Harry Harrison**

"I address this to newcomers -- old hands know what to expect.

"Well -- drink, for one. American fen think Brit fen drink too much. This is a filthy lie and I can only answer that in a most civilized way..

"Sod them.

"At this con, you will meet dedicated readers. Lovely women. Pros by the hundreds. A programme that will make you laugh, cry, shudder, go out for more drink.

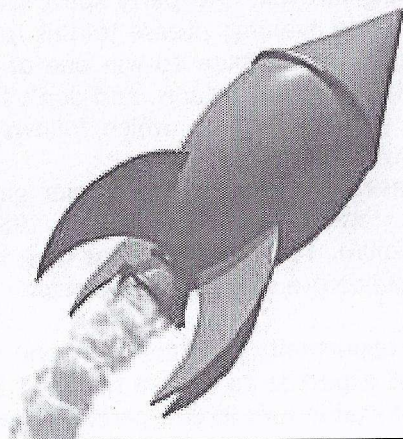
"You can say a lot about Brummies. I won't. I can simply say that if you want a con that is fun, is steeped in SF, that will give you fine memories to pass on to your children. Why.. *Come to Novacon.*

"It is the thrill of a lifetime."



# Novacon 37

## *Programme*



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Cover photograph by *Charlie Hopkinson*

# The Neverending Party

*Steve Green*

There's a commonly-held belief that there is only one Novacon, each instalment effectively adding another three days to UK fandom's longest-running party. On that basis, we're already more than three months in, so it's little wonder a few of us are looking slightly the worse for wear (and I wasn't even around for the first fortnight).

We're certainly aiming to evoke the party spirit straight after our opening ceremony on Friday evening; please join us for free drinks in the Oliver Cromwell, plus your chance to win one of twenty sets of books donated by specialist imprint Solaris. And don't forget to organise your team for this year's pub quiz, which follows our film show and magical extravaganza on Saturday.

It's particularly pleasing to see so many former guests of honour back with us: Dave Langford (1985), Geoff Ryman (1989), Ian Watson (2004), Ken MacLeod (2006). You can even chat with Ian R MacLeod, who's just agreed to take centre stage at Novacon 38.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who's given so freely of their time and expertise to ensure Novacon 37 doesn't end up one of those uncomfortable lulls in the party where the conversation drifts and people start wondering whether they should call a cab.

Top of the list, of course, is Charlie Stross, who's proven a hugely supportive and enthusiastic guest of honour. And all this whilst condemning vast swathes of forest to oblivion with his prodigious output. Do take the time to pick up one (or better, several) of Charlie's novels in the dealers' room and buy him a drink this weekend; it's the very least he deserves for agreeing to take part in so many programme items.

Finally, my thanks to the misguided fools who volunteered to serve on my committee, two of whom worked on Novacon 14 and should therefore have known better. I couldn't have imagined taking this on without you all.

Enough introduction: the party awaits. Go forth and have fun!



## Sentenced to Singularity

Ken MacLeod

I first encountered Charles Stross when I worked in IT myself. It was 1996 or thereabouts, when you more or less had to work in IT to have heard about the Internet. (Yes, there was a time not long ago when news about the existence of the Internet spread \*by word of mouth\*.) It dawned on me that the guy who was writing sensible-but-radical posts to various newsgroups I hung out in was the same Charles Stross who'd written two or three short stories I'd enjoyed in the British sf magazine *Interzone*: "Yellow Snow", "Ship of Fools", and "Dechlorin-ating the Moderator" (all available in his collection *TOAST and Other Rusted Futures*).

"Dechlorinating the Moderator" is a science fiction story about a convention that has all the trappings of a science fiction convention, but is (because this is the future) a science \*fact\* convention, of desktop and basement high-energy fundamental physics geeks and geekettes. Apart from its intrinsic fun, the story conveys the peculiar melancholy of looking back on a con and realising that no matter how much of a good time you had, there was even more that you missed. (All right: as subtle shadings of emotion go this one is a bit low on universality, but it was becoming familiar to me, having just started going to cons.) "Ship of Fools" was about the Y2K problem (which as we all know turned out not to be a problem, but BEGIN\_RANT that was entirely thanks to programmers who did their jobs properly in the first place back when only geeks and astronomers believed the 21st century would actually arrive END\_RANT) and it was also full of the funniest and most authentic-sounding insider yarns about IT I'd ever read. This Stross guy sounded like someone I wanted to meet, maybe at a con. It turned out he lived in Edinburgh. We were practically neighbours. I think I emailed him, and before too long he materialised out of cyberspace and we had a beer and began an intermittent conversation that hasn't stopped.

He had this great idea for a novel: "It's a technothriller! The premise is that Turing cracked the NP-Completeness theorem back in the forties! The whole Cold War was really about preventing the Singularity! The ICBMs were there in case godlike AIs ran amok!" (He doesn't really talk like this. But that's how I remember it.) He had it all in his head. Lots of people do, but he (and here's a tip for aspiring

authors out there) actually wrote it. That one, *Burn Time*, the first of his novels I read, remains unpublished - great concept, shaky execution - but the raw talent was there and so was the energy and application and the astonishing range of reference. Since then he has written a lot more novels and short stories. The short stories kept getting better and kept getting published. He had another great idea: "A family saga about living through the Singularity! From the point of view of the cat!" That mutated into the astonishing series that began with "Lobsters", published in *Asimov's SF Magazine*, June 2001. That story was shortlisted for three major sf awards: the Hugo, the Nebula, and the Sturgeon. Another, "Router", was shortlisted for the British Science Fiction Association (BSFA) Award. The fourth, "Halo", has been shortlisted for the Hugo.

Looking back over some of these short stories, what strikes me is the emergence of what might be called the Stross sentence. Every writer who contributes to, or defines, a stage in the development of sf has sentences that only they could write, or at least only they could write *\*first\**. Heinlein's door that dilated opened up a new way to bypass explication by showing what is taken for granted; Zelazny's dune buggies beneath the racing moons of Mars introduced an abrupt gear-change in the degrees of freedom allowed in handling the classic material; Gibson's television sky and Ono-Sendai decks displayed the mapping of virtual on to real spaces that has become the default metaphor of much of our daily lives. The signature Stross sentence (and you'll come to recognise them as you read) represents just such an upward jump in compression and comprehension, and one that we need to make sense not only of the stories, but of the world we inhabit: a world sentenced to Singularity.

The novels kept getting better too, but not getting published, until quite recently and quite suddenly three or four got accepted more or less at once. The only effect this has had on Charlie is that he has written another two or three while these were in press. He just keeps getting faster and better, like computers.

We'll be hearing, and reading, a lot more from him.

*[Extracted with permission from Ken MacLeod's introduction to The Atrocity Archive, published by Golden Gryphon Press, 2004.]*



## Committee Profiles

**Kevin Clarke (internet):** "Excellent cartoonist - see glasses from Solihull CAMRA's beer festivals. Skilled webdesigner - see Novacon website. Amateur astronomer - see [www.inconstantmoon.com](http://www.inconstantmoon.com). Talented drinker of real ale - hic! Able to tolerate Steve Green for surprisingly long periods - see 'Lives Of The Saints Online' Top bloke." [Ann]

**Vicky Cook (programme):** "Vicky is the young and enthusiastic member of the team. She has been secretary, publicity and programme coordinator. She has run the dealers room and art show. She has also co-organised Fantasycons. (See, enthusiastic!) In her spare time, she likes to read and enjoys anything film related - and, of course, drinking." [Steve L]

**Ann Green (secretary):** "Ann is always happy chat, gives sound advice and is great company. What more can you ask from a friend An active fanzine fan she has had her own fanzine, and has written for others. Runs a great art show, *and* controls Steve Green, which in itself is no mean feat." [Alice]

**Steve Green (programme, publications):** "It is my suspicion that there is more than one Steve Green. How else could he sustain such a relentless level of activity? Columnist for *The Drink Tank*, administrator of the Nova Awards and the Delta Film Award, chair of Novacon... he is never happy unless he has at least three projects on the go at any time, and he manages to do a good job of them all! I must ask Ann whether she has spotted any subtle changes in his personality, or whether the lights sometimes go dim when he's up in the loft..." [Kevin]

**Alice Lawson (treasurer):** "Alice has been knocking around fandom for a fair bit, and Novacons for even longer. She has also done various Eastercons and Worldcons, so is a font of knowledge about cons and con-running. She claims to enjoy it because she likes bossing people about, and recommends it to anyone, as it's a great way to meet people. Thoroughly agree with her there: it's certainly useful for learning names and faces, and keeps you out of the bar all weekend... You'll recognise Alice: she's small but lively and may be

found in front of a laptop, forehead creased, fretting about the money adding up..." [Vicky]

**Steve Lawson (registrations):** "I first met Steve back in the early 1980s, an era so distant that he had yet to formulate his scheme to control the membership records of every convention in Britain. Today, he holds more databases than MI6 and only slightly less tech than NASA. He's also one of the most energetic and enthusiastic fans you could wish to have on your team." [Steve G]

In addition, **Noel Collyer** will be running our tech, **John Harvey** is providing PA, **Dave Holmes** has taken care of our artboards, **Al Johnston** is handling their transport, **Steve Jones** is our chief gopher, **Dave Lally** is providing video, **Pat McMurray** and **Julie Rigby** are looking after the artrooms, **Chris Murphy** will run Operations (in the Bescot Room) and **Mark Plummer** is looking after the dealers' room.

### *A few words from Novacon 36's guest of honour...*

#### **Ken MacLeod**

"Novacon 36 was a blast, so much so that I remember very little of it. There was the Room 101 panel, during which I sent down the chute Richard Dawkins, Greenpeace and George Orwell. Then there was a memorable moment when Storm Constantine said that quantum physics and magic were converging, and she glanced over at me and said: 'I see Ken doesn't agree.' I hadn't said a word. She must have magically read my mind.

"Anyway, this led to some long and enjoyable conversations in the bar with her and Ian Watson. Ian was right about never getting rid of books, by the way: I'm already missing some I recklessly sold or took to charity shops last year. There were many more conversations, and even more drinks, so the memories are warm, but fuzzy, rather like having your brain eaten by Feorag's plush Cthulhu.

"Sf fandom is endlessly welcoming, or so I've found it, and especially Novacon. Long may it continue."



## Programme Notes

All details are accurate at the time this programme book went to press, but it's worth checking the *Read Me* in case there are any last-minute amendments.

Unless indicated otherwise, all programme items take place in the Oliver Cromwell Suite.

### Friday, 2 November

- 17:00 - 18:30 A selection of short films for early arrivals.
- 19:00 - 19:30 **Opening ceremony**, followed immediately by...
- 19:30 - 20:30 **Friday Night With(out) Jonathan Ross**  
Our traditional chatshow slot, light and lively.  
*Steve Green and special guests*
- 21:00 - 22:00 **Thank Cthulhu It's Friday**  
Party time: free booze, free drinks, book signings and launches.
- 22:30 - 00:30 **The Friday Night Fright**  
The UK convention premiere of William Winckler's homage to 1950s monster movies, *Frankenstein Vs The Creature From Blood Cove*, heads up our late-night bill of thrills and chills. Oh, and gills.

### Saturday, 3 November

- 10:00 - 11:00 **Bug's TAFF Slideshow**  
Bridget Bradshaw launches our morning programme with the latest instalment of her adventures in the United States, representing the TransAtlantic Fan Fund. (And don't forget to pick up a form so you can vote in the 2007 race!)
- Bridget Bradshaw*

- 11:30 - 13:00**      **Book Auction**  
 Your annual opportunity to rid your shelves of all that really dodgy sf and fantasy you bought in an unguarded moment, then fill all those ugly gaps with more of the same - plus all those really rare items you've been hunting down for years.  
*Chris Morgan, Roger Peyton*
- 12:30 - 13:30**      **Interzone Presentation**  
 Award-winning author Geoff Ryman joins *Interzone's* Roy Grey to outline the history and current plans of Britain's leading science fiction magazine.  
 [This "fringe" item will be held in the meeting room adjacent to the Novacon artshow.]  
*Roy Grey, Geoff Ryman*
- 13:30 - 14:30**      **Portrait of the Artist**  
 Where do sf artists seek their inspiration? Where are the best markets for their work? How is digital technology affecting the role of the artist? Discuss.  
*David Hardy, Sue Jones, Colin Langeveld,*  
*[moderator to be confirmed]*
- 15:00 - 16:00**      **Guest of Honour Speech**  
 Charlie Stross discusses his literary roots, his current works-in-progress and then answers your questions.  
*Charles Stross*
- 16:30 - 17:30**      **Science Fiction Magazines: On the Rack?**  
 Before the explosion in sf and fantasy publishing, magazines provided a vital link and common ground between members of our community. Indeed, would there have even been one without them? But do they have any role left to play in the 21st Century?  
*Roy Grey, Mark Plummer, Geoff Ryman,*  
*Andy Sawyer, Peter Weston [moderator]*
- 18:00 - 19:00**      **Big Brother's Binoculars**  
 Britain has more CCTV cameras per capita than any other nation on Earth, but recent research casts



doubt on whether they actually work. Gordon Brown is pressing ahead with a colossally expensive identity card scheme - compulsory in all but name - which many independent experts suspect will prove to be yet another IT catastrophe. What are the ramifications of the UK becoming a surveillance society?  
*Peter Harrow, Tony Keen [moderator], Ken MacLeod, Harry Payne, Charles Stross*

19:30 - 21:00

### **Saturday Night at the Movies**

Our annual parade of the weird and wonderful in independent will this year feature a truly global line-up, including movies from Singapore, Belgium, Britain and the United States.

*[Please note some of the material screened is not suitable for young children.]*

21:30 - 23:00

### **The Transported Fan**

Roll up, roll up, for Novacon's magical mystery tour into the world of illusion and prestidigitation, led by a team of professional smoke and mirror manipulators. And sorry, Mr Berry, this year's chair is not prepared to have his head sawn off again.

*Ray Bradbury and special guests*

23:30 - 00:30

### **Novacon 37 Pub Quiz**

Discover if any of your brain cells have survived the past 36 hours with our traditional challenge. Dealer room vouchers are on offer for the winning team.

*Dave Hicks [emcee]*

## **Sunday, 3 November**

10:30 - 11:30

### **The One With the Rocket on the Cover**

Blow out the mental cobwebs with an engrossing visual voyage into the fascinating history of science fiction illustration. Warning: may contain rockets.

*Julian Headlong, Peter Weston*

- 12:00 - 13:30      Art & Crafts Auction**  
All weekend, you've been eyeing that really spectacular painting or sculpture in the artshow. Now's your chance to snap it up! How else are the artists here this weekend going to cover their bar bill?  
*Chris Morgan, Roger Peyton*
- 14:00 - 15:00      The New Optimism in British Science Fiction**  
Once stereotyped as a breeding ground for post-apocalyptic dystopias and twisted visions of the inner landscape, British sf may even be outpacing its American cousins in its embrace of space opera and society's interface with cutting-edge technology. But is anything uniquely British surviving our invasion of the international stage?  
*Eric Brown, Andy Remic, Charlie Stross, Ian Watson, [moderator to be confirmed]*
- 15:30 - 16:30      Seventy Years and Counting...**  
It's seven decades since a small group of science fiction fans met in a hall in Leeds, and it's doubtful any of them could have predicted how the form they helped create would mutate in the intervening years. How will conventions adapt to the demands of the 21st Century? What traditions - if any - do we need to protect? Will there even be a Novacon 47?  
*James Bacon, Steve Green [moderator], Hayley Niuserre, Greg Pickersgill, Judith Proctor*
- 17:00 - 18:00      Awards Ceremony**  
As Novacon 37 enters its final hour, we announce this year's Nova Awards, hand out our raffle prizes, thank all those who helped out this year and then bid farewell for another twelve-month. Just in time for Helena Bowles to remind everyone to grab a discounted Novacon 38 membership on the way out.
- 19:00 - late      Post-Convention Meal & Beer Tasting**  
The horror, the horror...



## 70 Years of British Conventions

1987-2007

Mark Plummer

The paper aeroplanes had barely settled on the floor of the Conspiracy '87 fan room when the first tentative explorations were made into a 1990s return fixture. As most of you will be aware, those hesitant overtures lead to Intersection, the 1995 worldcon in Glasgow, and no sooner was *that* over than planning began for yet another, which ultimately manifested as 2005's Interaction. And now reports from this year's worldcon say that a marker has been put down for a European worldcon in 2014 or 2015. It's easy to conclude that British fandom has spent most of the last two decades building up to worldcons with brief cushioning intervals during which it actually staged them.

But even if that's so, there has still been plenty of time for other conventions, as a quick glance at the *Ansible* schedules reveals. A check for one year in the early 1990s turned up over twenty conventions of some kind - and that's still excluding the primarily media-based events, whether fan-run or, as became increasingly common later in the decade, commercial. Part three of this series covered only eight years but often degenerated into a list of names, dates, venues and guests, and that's an even greater risk with this final instalment, where we've got to look at twenty years. I'll therefore eschew the straight chronology and focus primarily on the Eastercons - with a bit more attention to those at the beginning of the period - before looking at some of the notable one-off and series conventions. However, this doesn't aspire to being a comprehensive view.

The first post-Conspiracy Eastercon was Follycon in Liverpool with guests Gordon Dickson, Gwyneth Jones, Greg Pickersgill and Len Wein. The period between Seacon '79 and Conspiracy had seen the Eastercon shunting around amongst Glasgow, Leeds and Brighton, but only the first would play host to an Eastercon after 1986. Liverpool - and specifically its Adelphi Hotel - would become the most frequently visited venue in this period, and gave us a home five times from 1988 to 1999, whilst generally polarising fannish opinions. Valerie Housden

praised Follycon in *Matrix* #76, especially noting that it was "the convention at which [filking] ceased to be a minority interest and became a mainstream fannish activity" and that, among the guests, "Greg Pickersgill [...] dispensed far less venom than expected". Iain Banks (*Critical Wave* #5) thought it "a great wee convention (actually a great *big* convention [...])", while Paul Kincaid (in the same publication) wondered whether "after [fourteen] consecutive Eastercons [Follycon] may be my last", not through any failing in Follycon *per se* but rather the changing expectations of the majority of Eastercon attendees. Finally, a small point which I've made before and may make again: Follycon produced a particularly fine souvenir book.

In 1989, Eastercon left the mainland for the first time. Contrivance was held in St Helier on the Channel Island of Jersey with guests Avedon Carol, Rob Hansen, M John Harrison, Don Lawrence and Anne McCaffrey. The choice of venue had been contentious, because of a perception that the island was expensive to get to, and some regulars stayed away; despite this, membership numbers passed 1000. The BSFA Awards, traditionally presented at Eastercon and with convention members being able to vote alongside BSFA members, were deferred to Mexicon for administrative reasons and so the Contrivance committee introduced the short-lived Eastercon Awards, which were to continue until 1994. Jersey resident K V Bailey praised "the 'Green' element [...] a succession of topics and sessions exploring the relationships between city and landscape; between aliens [...] and humans; and between humans and environment" (*Matrix* #83), while Lesley Ward reported "Panel items were well-attended, possibly because a lot of them had something to do with sex" (*Critical Wave* #10). Personally, I remember a strong fan stream featuring the fan guests and visiting TAFFman Robert Lichtman.

The bidding for 1990 had been the last engagement in what Mike Scott has characterised as 'the Eastercon Wars' (see part three), with victory going to the new-style Eastcon at a bidding session that I recall - probably inaccurately - as being dominated by a debate about how easy it was (or wasn't) to cross the Hagley Road in Birmingham. This proved academic when the convention was forced, at a few months' notice, to relocate from Birmingham to the Liverpool Adelphi, with its guest list of Iain Banks, Ken Campbell, Nigel Kneale, Anne Page and SMS. There were several committee changes and many



people joined late in the day, but memberships still topped 850. Despite this, "Eastcon felt much, much too quiet, more like a small regional con than anything else" (Ivan Towelson, *Matrix* #89). Lesley Ward noted the hotel, anticipating cancellations, "double-booked some of the rooms where bookings had already been confirmed to fans", but also found it "a fairly quiet con" (*Critical Wave* #17). Sadly, the convention had far more than its share of petty thievery.

The 1991 Eastercon had also been selected at a lively bidding session, despite the fact that there was only one serious bid. Popular legend sometimes has Speculation losing to the spoof, but in fact the initial show-of-hand vote at the 1989 Eastercon saw a comfortable majority in favour of deferring a decision, with only a subsequent lobby vote giving a narrow win to the Glasgow bid, which announced one guest, Robert Holdstock. *Matrix* #94 reports that the convention received a favourable notice in *The Independent*, but Mike Scott regarded it as "the least successful Eastercon since Seacon '84" (*Zorn* #1) while Bernie Evans, in *Critical Wave* #22, felt it had "all the ingredients for an outstandingly good Eastercon [*but*] unfortunately it just didn't work", something she put down to lack of communications. She was also indignant about bar prices: "£2 a pint for Murphy's stout!" Personally, I've never shared the generally negative view of Speculation, and that may be the way it seemed to others who like me were relatively remote from the organisation. My enduring memory is of failing to summarise the plot of "Surface Tension" with sufficient brevity to satisfy Peter Weston.

1992 saw the Eastercon in Blackpool for the first time, for Illumination with guests Geoff Ryman, Paul J McAuley and Pam Wells, although the extensive publicity for the *Chung Kuo* series - free books, free T-shirts, free fortune cookies - might have led an outside observer to conclude that the true star was David Wingrove. The Norbreck Castle was a long, spread-out hotel such that it could easily take ten minutes to walk from one programme room to another. Bernie Evans (*Critical Wave* #26) thought it "the most enjoyable [*Eastercon*] for several years [...]. The atmosphere was good [...]. The staff were great", although she did manage to detail an awful lot of things that she felt were wrong with it, too.

Helicon in Jersey in 1993 was the second - and, to date, last - Eastercon / Eurocon pairing and assembled guests John Brunner, George R R Martin, Karel Thole and Larry van der Putte and a membership of 830. This included extensive mainland European representation, most visibly "an influx of 52 Romanians, who all arrived in suits and strange tall pointy hats, like a delegation of heavily politicized garden gnomes" (Dave Langford, *Mimosa* #28), and all this despite bad weather which saw some attendees delayed for over a day and others rerouted via Guernsey and, in some cases, France.

Sou' Wester was to have been in the Bristol area, but - in an echo of 1990 - was forced to change sites to the decidedly un-south-westerly Liverpool Adelphi. Guests were Diane Duane, Neil Gaiman, Barbara Hambly and Peter Morwood; and Mike Siddall (*Critical Wave* #35) described the convention as "a solidly constructed, broadly-based affair, with most of the items appealing to a reasonable number of people, but nothing that was of a 'must see' nature". Attendance was around 800, and "The Astral Leauge [*sic*], most eldritch of élites, had one of its periodic revivals at the ichor-spattered hands of Peter Weston (Occult Master of Tunelessness), who led a revivalist chorus of Astral Hymns that efficiently cleared half the main hotel lounge" (Dave Langford, *Ansible* #81).

1995 was, of course, a worldcon year, and also saw the first London Eastercon since 1978 in the form of Confabulation - run by what came to be known as the Plokta Cabal - with guests Lois McMaster Bujold, Roger Robinson and Bob Shaw. Mike Scott argued (*Zorn* #1) "Much of Confabulation's agenda was similar to the old-style bids that experienced such difficulty in the eighties [...] However, these were not presented in ideological terms, in order to save the Eastercon from the influx of non-fannish fans, but rather as practical solutions to the presence of Intersection later in the year, the near-universality of home VCRs and a relatively small site." *Matrix* #114 ran long reviews from Jim Trash (who liked the convention) and John Ollis (who didn't).

I'll avoid the usual cliché about London buses, but simply note that the 1996 Eastercon, Evolution, was also in London - despite initial aspirations to take the convention back to Brighton - with a long



guest list of Jack Cohen, Colin Greenland, Paul Kincaid, Maureen Kincaid Speller, Bryan Talbot and Vernor Vinge. It was also the first Eastercon to have all its committee online, and Dave Langford noted "Uninhibited fun at Eastercons may be coming to an end owing to Big Sister technology [*Alison Scott and her digital camera*] allowing scandalous pictures to be immediately incorporated into an 'alternative' con newsletter" (*Ansible* #106).

There had actually been a contested bid for 1997 - the first time since 1988 (for 1990) - with the winners being Intervention at the good old Liverpool Adelphi with Brian Aldiss, Jon Bing, Octavia Butler and Dave Langford. Robert Silverberg had been originally announced, and Butler was a later - and incredibly popular - substitute "with an autograph line of almost Pratchettian dimensions" (*Ansible* #117). The Adelphi was particularly badly plagued with security problems, though.

Manchester seemingly gets an Eastercon every twenty-two years, although I don't think the Intuition committee were aware of this when choosing a site for the 1998 convention with guests Ian McDonald, Martin Tudor, and Connie Willis. The lack of one sufficiently large hotel saw events and exhibits divided between two and John Harvey reported (*Ansible* #130): "Good programme items [...] GoHs were excellent [...] Once again the split site concept proved to be crap - everybody and everything you wanted to see was in the other hotel."

In 1999, we were back in the Adelphi again for Reconvene, 'the fiftieth Eastercon' (a claim about which we can probably argue if you really want to), featuring Peter S Beagle, John Clute, Tom Holt, Jeff Noon and Ron Tiner. It was, I believe, Holt's suggestion that led to every member receiving a name-badge with a personalised slogan or saying. To date, this was the last Eastercon to use the Adelphi.

2Kon - with guests Guy Gavriel Kay, Katherine Kurtz and Deborah Turner-Harris - brought the Eastercon back to Glasgow's Central Hotel. About 900 fans crowded the place, but the event itself was lightly programmed and even lighter when it came to actual sf content, although this was claimed to be a "deliberate reaction to recent Eastercons' programming 'overdose'". Another one for

convention trivia wonks: 2Kon was the first Eastercon to use laminated rectangular badges rather than the traditional (at least since 1980) circular metal badges. The laminates have been the standard since 2003.

I don't think I'd previously registered just how often Eastercons end up being somewhere other than was originally planned. 2001's Paragon started out shooting for the Norbreck Castle Hotel in Blackpool, but ended up in the Hanover International Hotel in Hinckley, a venue which was to become for the first decade of the twenty-first century what the Adelphi had been for the last decade of the twentieth. Guests were Stephen Baxter, Claire Brialey, Lisanne Norman, Michael Scott Rohan and, er, me, so I am thus a little biased about this one.

As we move into the more recent years, which are thus presumably still fairly well established in many of your memories, I will summarise. 2002 was in Jersey again; Helicon 2 featured guests Brian Stableford, Harry Turtledove and Peter Weston. 2003 used the Hinckley hotel again and resurrected an old convention name, Seacon '03, with guests Chris ('Fangorn') Baker, Christopher Evans and Mary Gentle (who cancelled at the last minute). 2004's Concourse in Blackpool- guests: Mitchell Burnside Clapp, Danny Flynn, Sue Mason, Christopher Priest and Philip Pullman - used a conference centre site with attendees staying in a variety of hotels and guest-houses, an arrangement which was generally regarded as less than entirely successful. The third Hinckley Eastercon was Paragon 2 in 2005, with Eve and John Harvey, Ben Jeapes, Ken MacLeod, Richard Morgan and Robert Rankin; rather than the usual at-con publication, the convention issued an after-the-event souvenir book to all members. 2006 used a Glasgow site, in an echo of the previous year's Worldcon: Concussion featured Brian Froud, Elizabeth Hand, M John Harrison, Justina Robson and Ian Sorensen.

Finally we reach this year, which does deserve some more detail. There had been no bid for 2007 at the 2005 convention - the first time this had ever happened - but a proposal for a 2007 to be called Convoy emerged shortly afterwards and was ratified at the 2006 Eastercon, with a guest list of Judith Clute, Peter Dickinson, Robin McKinley and Sharyn November and the Liverpool Adelphi Hotel as its



venue. However, membership take-up was slow and this, combined with concerns about security upgrades at the Adelphi, forced its cancellation in November 2006. Faced with the prospect of no national convention for the first time since 1948, Contemplation was created at the 2006 Novacon as a scratch alternative to run at Easter 2007 in Chester. Sharyn November was originally announced as a guest, but she was unable to attend; instead, the convention ran with no guests and a slightly reduced turnout, but was nevertheless generally rated a success. Thus the Eastercon continued its run and we currently have ahead of us Orbital in 2008 (the first London Eastercon since 1996, with Neil Gaiman, Tanith Lee, China Miéville, Rog Peyton and Charles Stross) whilst in 2009 LX will celebrate the Eastercon hitting sixty in Bradford, in company with Bill and Mary Burns, Jon Courtenay Grimwood, Dirk Maggs and Tim Powers.

So, twenty years of Eastercons, but what about the rest? Well, firstly there's the other annual or near-annual conventions that have run throughout the period and top of the list must be Britain's second convention, Novacon. This has been held in various Midlands venues - with one excursion to Great Malvern in 1997 - and for the last seven years has been in the Quality Hotel in Bentley. Attendance was around the 330 mark in 1988, but has dropped during the following two decades to stabilise at a little over 200.

I quoted a remark from Valerie Housden about the way filking seemed to enter the fannish mainstream at the 1988 Eastercon, and from its first appearance in 1989, the British filk convention has run annually under a variety of punning names and hits its twentieth birthday in early 2008. The one-day Picocons at Imperial College in London are slightly ahead of the filk cons in terms of numbers - this year saw their twenty-fourth - but aren't quite annuals, as they skipped 1994. The Unicons have a similar longevity - the twenty-first took place this year - although of late they've been more erratic (the twentieth was held in 2002) and recent iterations have sometimes been combined with filk and/or gaming conventions. And Fantasycon has been a semi-regular event since the mid-1970s, although I'm a little unclear exactly how many there have been, as their numbering seems to have gone awry over the millennium (there were Fantasycon 23s in both 1999 and 2002).

Next, there's the regular international conventions which are occasional visitors to the UK and here we should start with the worldcons. Both Intersection (1995) and Interaction (2005) used the Glasgow Scottish Exhibition and Conference Centre for their main events.

Intersection (guests: Gerry Anderson, Vincent Clarke, Samuel Delany and Les Edwards) had over a thousand more members than the 1987 Worldcon, but only a hundred or so more attendees (4,173), still enough to make it the biggest sf convention in Britain to date and indeed the biggest non-US worldcon so far. The convention was, however, marred by the sudden death of John Brunner.

2005 reinstated a 1987 'tradition' when one of its guests (Robert Sheckley) was unable to attend due to ill-health. Other guests were Greg Pickersgill, Christopher Priest and Jane Yolen, and Lars-Olov Strandberg, the first Scandinavian worldcon guest of honour.

Both conventions involved far more staff and planning than 1987 and earlier British Worldcons, such that, as noted at the beginning of this article, the whole process of bidding and preparing to run these events sometimes seems like the dominant fannish activity of the last two decades - and indeed entirely disproportionate when you bear in mind that the conventions themselves only last five days.

Britain has also twice played host to the smaller World Fantasy Convention. The series began in 1975, the fourteenth convention was in London in 1988 (theme: Gaslight and Ghosts) and the twenty-third returned there in 1997 (theme: The Centenary of *Dracula* and the Hidden Realms of London). Attendance at both was more comparable in numbers to an Eastercon, with a high proportion of writers and other industry professionals.

SMOFcon is a mostly American-based convention for convention runners; it started in 1984 and has crossed the Atlantic - and, indeed, left North America - only twice: in 1993 when it arrived in Jersey the weekend following the Eastercon; and 2001, when it came to York. Corflu is similarly a mostly American-based convention for fanzine fans; it's only been held outside North America once, in 1998 in Leeds, although it may be returning to the UK again in 2010.

And now we come to the one-offs and shorter-run convention series, but where to start? The first two Mexicons were covered in the previous article, and there were three subsequent events (1989, 1991



and 1993), plus a tenth anniversary party and wind-up in 1994. All had featured strong, heavyweight programming and interesting guest choices, but the convention was considered to be a product of a time that had passed. There were four Wincons proper - in 1989, 1991, 1994 and 1999 - with the 1997 Eastercon arguably counting as Wincon IV. These used a collage site in Winchester and, like Mexican, brought in an impressive array of guests, and it is a little unfair that the conventions are so often remembered for the fact that every time at least one of those guests cancelled at the last minute or, in one memorable case, ran away after the first day.

Plokta.con was born out of the Hugo-winning British fanzine; there have been three full conventions in 2000, 2002 and 2004, and there may be more. While probably having some spiritual kinship with the earlier Silicons and Rubicons, they still feature a guest and a full programme, much like Seccon (1999) and its successor Second (2001). The MisCons (Misdemeanour, 1994; Misconstrued, 1995; Mis-Saigon, 1996) were more Siliconesque - and boasted a hotel in Burnham-on-Sea which brewed its own beer - while Attitude (1997) was another convention tied to a fanzine.

"Funcons" is a term coined by latter-day fanhistorian Chris Tregenza to describe a certain kind of convention which may be light on specifically science-fictional programming but trades this for a focus on more general interest interactive and participative items and games; personally, I think I have a truly marvellous disproof of Chris's proposition which this programme book is too narrow to contain. Still, Chris dates funcons back to the *Hitchhiker's* convention Lazlar Lyricon in 1985. Many of these events have behind somewhat outré names: the Incons (1992, 1994, and 1996 - with the last one being Incon V: Inconsistent); Year of the Wombat (1997); Lazlar Lyricon (1998); Aliens Stole My Handbag (2000); Damn Fine Con (2002); ConVivial (2004); Confounding Tales and Year of the Teledu (both 2007).

And even then that's not all. There were two more Rubicons in 1987 and 1988. Conscription was a conrunners' convention in 1988, Reconnaissance a one-off convention in Cardiff in 1991 and Soupçon a relaxacon in Jersey the same year. Glasgow had Albacons in 1988, 1994, 1996 and 1998, as well as Prefab Trout in 1989 and Satellite 1 this year. Clonespiracy was a post-Worldcon wind-down in 1988, whilst Precursor was a pre-Worldcon wind-up in 1995. And then there

were the '-asms': Iconoclasm, Chronoclasm, Protoplasm... were there more? Even the dread name 'Mancon' threatened to reappear in 1991, although that one - I'm fairly sure - fell by the wayside. I have undoubtedly forgotten many, many more.

And here we are at Novacon 37 and the British sf convention is seventy years old. Its boom years have passed - those were probably the Eighties and early Nineties, when numbers of both events and attendees expanded rapidly and peaked - but it's still in good shape, for all that it wobbles a bit now and then, and the fannish calendar remains reasonably full of both generalist and specialist events. I wonder if the twenty fans who gathered in the Theosophical Hall in Leeds on Sunday, 3 January 1937 ever thought the future would look like this?

[Sources: While I was attending conventions throughout this period, and went to a quite alarming number of the events detailed here, I've tried to supplement my memory with some degree of research. The BSFA's *Matrix* covers this entire period, although its fannish coverage has declined in recent years. The second series of Dave Langford's *Ansible* covers the period from 1991. *Critical Wave* - edited by Martin Tudor and the other one - ran from 1987 to 1996, and looking at it again for the first time in a few years has made me all nostalgic. <http://www.nesfa.org/data/LL/TheLongList.html> provided most of the data on worldcons, and Bill Burns has a collection of scans of convention badges at <http://efanzines.com/ECBadges/index.htm>. Peter Weston did an admirable job of covering the first forty-two years of this history, although I can't help noting that he got the easy bit, as there was a lot less going on and indeed there are fewer people around who can challenge what he said from a first-hand perspective. Roger Robinson provided me with his list of conventions attended, and Claire Brialey has checked what I've said for obvious idiocies.]

*Many thanks to both Mark and Peter for all their hard work on this series of essays.*



## The Nova Awards

Steve Green, Administrator

In 1973, Novacon instituted the annual Nova Awards to celebrate achievement in British science fiction fanzines. Originally handed down by a panel of judges, these accolades are now decided by all Novacon attendee who can demonstrate a basic knowledge of current fanzines (see the ballot form in your membership pack).

Following Novacon 32, the three existing categories - best fanzine, best fanzine writer, best fanzine artist - were extended to cover fanzines produced in Eire. In addition, electronic fanzines are now eligible, provided a file hardcopy is lodged at 33 Scott Road, Olton, Solihull, B92 7LQ, UK.

Last year's winners were *Banana Wings*, Claire Brialey and Sue Mason (see below for the full breakdown). The Novacon 36 also announced its own "best fan" Nova, presented to Ray Bradbury (who joked he'd have worked harder on the statuettes had he known).

Copies of the Nova rules are available at the Registrations Desk.

### 2006 Nova Awards

Best Fanzine: 1, *Banana Wings* (66 pts); 2, *Zoo Nation* (35); 3, *Plokta* (23); 4, *Shiny* (18); 5, *Ansible* (13); 6, *Gerald* (12); 7=, *A Cry for Help*, *Outlaw Mutation Boogie* (5 each); 9=, *Procrastinations*, *Snapshot*, *Tortoise* (4 each); 12, *Bug for TAFF* (3); 13=, *Necronomigone*, *Puny Earthling* (1 each). A single third-place vote for *iShoes* was disallowed, as were single first-place and second-place votes for *Fanzine of the Teledu*; both were published at Novacon 36 and are therefore eligible for the 2007 Nova Awards.

Best Fan Writer: 1, Claire Brialey (45 points); 2, Mark Plummer (36); 3, James Bacon (27); 4, Tony Keen (11); 5, Pete Young (10); 6=, John Coxon, Jim de Liscard (9 each); 8, Niall Harrison (7); 9, David Langford (6); 10=, Flick, Julian Headlong (5 each); 12=, D S Ketelby, Ian Sorensen (4 each); 14=, Tim Phipps, Peter Weston (3 each); 16=, Bug (Bridget Bradshaw), Sue Jones, Kari, Max, Abigail Nussbaum, Alison Scott (2 each); 22=, Tanya Brown, Marianne Cain, Doug Spencer, John Toon (1 each). A single first-place vote for "Dildoboy" was disallowed, as people are not allowed to vote for themselves.

Best Artist: 1, Sue Mason (41 points); 2, Alison Scott (38); 3, Pete Young (27); 4, ATom (13); 5, Dave Hicks (11); 6, Anne Stokes (6); 7=, Steve Jeffrey, Sue Jones (4 each); 9, Steve Green (2); 10=, Graham Higgins, Feorag NicBhríde, D West (1 each).

A total of 35 ballots were received.

## 2007 Nova Awards

The following fanzines were received by the Nova Awards administrator between 1 October 2006 and 30 September 2007, and are eligible under the current Nova Award rules: *A Cry For Help* #2 [16p, A5], John Toon, 118 Great Meadow Road, Bristol, BS32 8DA; *Ansible* #231 [10/06], #232 [11/06], #233 [12/06], #234 [1/07], #235 [2/07], #236 [3/07], #237 [4/07], #238 [5/07], #239 [6/07], #240 [7/07], #241 [8/07], #242 [9/07; all 2pp, all A4], Dave Langford, 94 London Road, Reading, RG1 5AU; *Banana Wings* #28 [32pp], #29, #30, #31 [all 36pp, all A4], Claire Brialey & Mark Plummer, 59 Shirley Road, Croydon, CR0 7ES; *The Banksoniain* #11, #12 [both 12pp, both A5], David Haddock, 84 Foxhollow, Bar Hill, Cambridge, CB3 8ES; *Brum Group News* #421 [10/06], #422 [11/06, both 12pp], #423 [12/06], #424 [1/07; both 8pp], #425 [2/07], #426 [3/07], #427 [4/07], #428 [5/07, all 12pp], #429 [6/07], #430 [7/07, both 8pp; all A5], Rog Peyton (for the Birmingham SF Group); #431 [8/07, 8pp], #432 [9/07, 12pp, both A5], William McCabe (for the Birmingham SF Group); *Clues and Gropes* [12pp, A5; subtitled "An Obscene Filk Collection for Eastercon 2007"], Douglas Spencer & Judith Proctor, 51 Fountains Garth, Bracknell, RG12 7RH; *Fanzine Fantastique* Spring 2007 [4pp, A4], Keith & Rosemary Walker, 6 Vine Street, Lancaster, LA1 4UF; *Fanzine of the Teledu* #1: What is Teledu?, #2: The Big Issues [8pp, A7; subtitled "A collaborative fanzine by the members of Year of the Teledu"], 14 Endsleigh Gardens, Beeston, NG9 2HJ; *Gotterdammerung Redux* [36pp, A5; selected material from issues #4 - #11], Tommy Ferguson, 30 Ava Park, Nelfast, BT7 3BX; *Head* #7 [27pp, A4], Doug Bell & Christina Lake, 35 Gyllyng Street, Falmouth, TN11 3EL; *The League of Fan Funds Newsletter* [11/06], Claire Brialey, Alison Scott, Flick; *I Knew the Porridge Was Trying to Tell Me Something* [16pp, A4; subtitled "Some collected writings of Ang Rosin (for GUFF)"], Claire Brialey & Mark Plummer, 59 Shirley Road, Croydon, CR0 7ES; *iShoes* #1 [20pp, A5], Yvonne Rowse, Evergreen,



Halls Farm Lane, Trimpey, DY12 1NP; *Outlaw Mutation Boogie* #64 [16pp, A5], Mark Plummer, as above; *Phlizz* #1, #2 [both CDs], Chuck Connor, 64 Chelwood Avenue, Hatfield, AL10 0RE; *Plokta* #36 [16pp], #37 [12pp, both A4], Steve Davies, Alison Scott & Mike Scott, 3 Sandgate Avenue, Reading, RG30 6XD; *Procrastinations* #2 [16pp], #3 [32pp], #4 [36pp, all A5], John Coxon, 14 Chapel Lane, Peterborough, PE4 6RS; *Prolapse* #3 [21pp], #4 [26pp], #5 [28pp], #6 [36pp], #7, #8 [both 40pp, all A4], Peter Weston, 53 Wyvern Road, Sutton Coldfield, B74 2PS; *Snapshot* #8 [6pp, A4], Ian Sorensen, 3 Portia Place, Motherwell, ML1 1EL; *Tortoise* #23, #24 [both 22pp, both A4], Sue Jones, Flat 5, 32-33 Castle Street, Shrewsbury, SY1 2BQ.

In addition, Claire Brialey and Mark Plummer have kindly advised me of the existence of several fanzines which they assure me are also eligible: *Demeter's Daughter* #1, #2, #3, Abi Brown; *Fans Across the World Newsletter* #127, Bridget Wilkinson; *Foundation and Empire*, Flick; *Inca* #2, Rob Jackson; *Motorway Dreamer* #3, #4, John Nielsen Hall; *Pips* #3, Jim Trash; *Sailing North*, Liam Proven.

The following were received during the same period, but are ineligible under the current rules: *Data Dump* #101 [8pp, A5; index to #1-#100], #102, #105, #112 [all 4pp, A5], Steve Sneyd; *Finland* [12pp, A4], Juliette Woods, Damien Warman (the first instalment in their GUFF report); *Illuminated* [61pp, half-quarto], Leena Bepalko; *It Takes All Kinds* #4 [20pp], #5 [28pp, both half-quarto], Misty O'Brien; *Jophan's Guide to the Seven Fannish Sins* [8pp, half-quarto], Tracy Benton, Bill Bodden; *Novacon 36 Programme Book* [47pp, A5], Helena Bowles for Novacon 36; *Science-Fiction Five-Yearly* #12 [58pp, quarto], Geri Sullivan, Randy Byers; *Trapdoor* #24 [60pp, half-quarto], Robert Lichtman; *Vanamonde* #653-657, #663-702 [all 2pp, all quarto], John Hertz; *Visionary Tongue Magazine: Novacon 36 Limited Edition* [15pp, A5; promotional item], Jamie Spraken, Donna Scott; *Visionary Tongue* #22 [35pp, A5], Jamie Spracklen, Donna Scott.

## Past Nova Award Winners

1973: *Speculation* #32, ed. Peter Weston <sup>1</sup>

1974: *Zimri* #6, ed. Lisa Conesa; *Big Scab* #2, ed. John Brosnan <sup>2</sup>

1975: *Maya* #8, ed. Rob Jackson

1976: *Maya*, ed. Rob Jackson

1977: *Twll-Ddu*, ed. Dave Langford

1978: *Gross Encounters*, ed. Alan Dorey  
 1979: *Seamonsters*, ed. Simone Walsh  
 1980: *One-Off*, ed. Dave Bridges  
 1981: *Tappen*, ed. Malcolm Edwards (best fanzine); Chris Atkinson (best fanzine writer); Pete Lyon (best fanzine artist) <sup>3</sup>  
 1982: *Epsilon*, ed. Rob Hansen; Chris Atkinson; Rob Hansen  
 1983: *A Cool Head*, ed. Dave Bridges; Dave Bridges; Margaret Welbank  
 1984: *Xyster*, ed. Dave Wood; Anne Hammill; D West  
 1985: *Prevert*, ed. John Jarrold; Abi Frost; Ros Calverly  
 1986: *Pink Fluffy Bedsocks*, ed. Owen Whiteoak; Owen Whiteoak; Arthur Thomson ("ATom")  
 1987: *Lip*, ed. Hazel Ashworth; D West; D West  
 1988: *Lip*, ed. Hazel Ashworth; Michael Ashley; D West  
 1989: *VSOP*, ed. Jan Orys; Simon Polley; Dave Mooring  
 1990: *Fuck the Tories*, ed. Joseph Nicholas, Judith Hanna; Dave Langford; Dave Mooring  
 1991: *Saliromania*, ed. Michael Ashley; Michael Ashley; D West  
 1992: *Bob?*, ed. Ian Sorensen; Michael Ashley, Dave Mooring  
 1993: *Lagoon*, ed. Simon Ounsley; Simon Ounsley; Dave Mooring  
 1994: *Rastus Johnson's Cakewalk*, ed. Greg Pickersgill; Greg Pickersgill; D West  
 1995: *Attitude*, ed. Michael Abbott, John Dallman, Pam Wells; Simon Ounsley; D West  
 1996: *Banana Wings*, ed. Claire Brialey, Mark Plummer; Alison Freebairn; D West  
 1997: *Banana Wings*, ed. Claire Brialey, Mark Plummer; Mark Plummer; Sue Mason  
 1998: *Banana Wings*, ed. Claire Brialey, Mark Plummer; Maureen Kincaid Speller; D West  
 1999: *Barmaid*, ed. Yvonne Rowse; Yvonne Rowse; Sue Mason  
 2000: *Plokta*, ed. Alison Scott, Steve Davies, Mike Scott; Yvonne Rowse; Sue Mason  
 2001: *Head*, ed. Doug Bell, Christina Lake; Alison Freebairn; Dave Hicks  
 2002: *Plokta*, ed. Alison Scott, Steve Davies, Mike Scott; Claire Brialey; Dave Hicks  
 2003: *Zoo Nation*, ed. Pete Young; Claire Brialey; Sue Mason  
 2004: *Zoo Nation*, ed. Pete Young; Claire Brialey; Sue Mason  
 2005: *Banana Wings*, ed. Claire Brialey, Mark Plummer; Claire Brialey; Alison Scott



2006: *Banana Wings*, ed. Claire Brialey, Mark Plummer; Claire Brialey; Sue Mason

<sup>1</sup> Initially, a single Nova Award was presented for “best fanzine”, as decided by a panel of “worthy fans”.

<sup>2</sup> This was the only occasion the panel opted for a tie. The current rules allow for a tie only if the voting patterns are identical.

<sup>3</sup> Two new categories were introduced in 1981. In addition, each Novacon committee has the opportunity to present a “best fan” Nova Award, though not all do so; recipients include Ina Shorrock, Vernon Brown, Ken Slater, Bob Shaw and Ray Bradbury.

## **Novacon 37 Members**

1	Charles Stross	25	Sally Sinclair
2	Karen Hetherington	26	Douglas Spencer
3	Ken MacLeod	27	Chris Bell
4	Alastair Reynolds	28	½r
5	Ian Watson	29	Brian Ameringen
6	Steve Green	30	Meriol Ameringen
7	Kevin Clarke	31	Caroline Mullan
8	Vicky Cook	32	Dave Hicks
9	Alice Lawson	33	Penny Hicks
10	Steve Lawson	34	Cat Coast
11	Ann Green	35	Dave Tompkins
12	Neil Summerfield	36	Andrew A Adams
13	Jennifer Swift	37	Roger Robinson
14	Tara Dowling-Hussey	38	Niall Gordon
15	Claire Brialey	39	Pat McMurray
16	Mark Plummer	40	Julie Rigby
17	Tim Stannard	41	Vernon Brown
18	Stephen Dunn	42	Pat Brown
19	Erhard Leder	43	Adrian Snowdon
20	Caroline Loveridge	44	George Ternent
21	Gavin Long	45	Linda Ternent
22	Peter Mabey	46	Calvin Ternent
23	Chris O'Shea	47	James Odell
24	Mark Sinclair	48	Thomas Recktenwald

49	Al Johnston	89	Yvonne Rowse
50	Neil Tomkinson	90	Judith Proctor
51	Alison Tomkinson	91	Steve Davies
52	Rachel Tomkinson	92	Giulia De Cesare
53	Stephanie Tomkinson	93	Fatima Ahad
54	Deborah Tomkinson	94	Bridget Bradshaw
55	Tony Rogers	95	Simon Bradshaw
56	John Harvey	96	Rog Peyton
57	Eve Harvey	97	Harry Harrison
58	Ina Shorrock	98	Brian Aldiss
59	Gavin Shorrock	99	Martin Tudor
60	Peter Wareham	100	Alexander Clarke
61	Gwen Funnell	101	Kevan Grayson
62	Tony Berry	102	Ian Warner
63	Laura Wheatly	103	Eddie Stachelski
64	Anne Woodford	104	Greg Pickersgill
65	Alan Woodford	105	Catherine Pickersgill
66	Steve Cooper	106	Tobes Valois
67	Sue Edwards	107	John Dowd
68	Pauline Morgan	108	Fran Dowd
69	Chris Morgan	109	Heather Turnbull
70	Dave Hardy	110	David Kirby
71	David Thomas	111	Christine Gould
72	Margaret Croad	112	Dave Lally
73	Nicholas Jackson	113	Chris Stocks
74	Vincent Docherty	114	Mark Slater
75	Paul Dormer	115	Christopher Brooks
76	Barbara-Jane	116	Steve Jeffery
77	Markus Thierstein	117	Vikki Lee France
78	Ian Sorensen	118	John Ross Wilson
79	Helen Hall	119	Serena Culfeather
80	Steve Jones	120	Phillip Collins
81	Sue Jones	121	Tommy Ferguson
82	Austin Benson	122	Malcolm Furnass
83	Caro Wilson	123	Jane-Louise Cracknell
84	Julian Headlong	124	Chris Murphy
85	Farah Mendlesohn	125	Michael Abbott
86	Dave Holmes	126	Anne Wilson
87	Anna Feruglio Daldan	127	Alison Scott
88	Jim Walker	128	Steve Cain



129	Marianne Cain	169	Kate Solomon
130	Jonathan Cain	170	Duncan MacGregor
131	Gary Starr	171	Dave Hutchinson
132	Robert Day	172	Bogna Hutchinson
133	David C Holmes	173	Mark Young
134	Helen Holmes	174	Eddie Cochrane
135	Peter Weston	175	Harry Payne
136	Eileen Weston	176	Omega
137	Krystyna Oborn	177	Hal Payne
138	Max	178	Jodie Payne
139	Greg Elkin	179	Benjamas Chuachai
140	Alex Holden	180	Wendy Graham
141	Ian Sales	181	Dave Cox
142	Colin P Langeveld	182	Ian Allwyn
143	Ian Whates	183	Dave Langford
144	Jane Killick	184	Liam Proven
145	Pete Young	185	Ped Badlan
146	Ian Maughan	186	Richard Standage
147	Jules Howlett	187	Helena Bowles
148	Kevin Dixon	188	Danesh Standage-Bowles
149	Doug Bell	189	Magdalen Standage-Bowles
150	Christina Lake	190	Michael Slater
151	Noel Collyer	191	Marcia Slater
152	Peter Harrow	192	Phil Greenaway
153	Tessa Harrington	193	Shana Worthen
154	Sue Mason	194	Peter Wilkinson
155	Peter Wright	195	Bridget Wilkinson
156	Anne-Marie Wright	196	Hayley Niuserre
157	Tony Keen	197	James Bacon
158	Kate Bodley	198	Simon Dearn
159	Andy Sawyer	199	Anders Holmström
160	Julia Daly	200	Peter Sherwood
161	Nick Mills	201	Ian R MacLeod
162	June Strachan	202	Ray Bradbury
163	Ken Slater	203	Carol Bradbury
164	Susie Haynes	204	Roy Grey
165	Marcus Rowland	205	Eric Brown
166	Margaret Austin	206	Andy Remic
167	Martin Easterbrook	207	Gerry Webb
168	Malcolm Davies	208	Mali Perera

# The History of Novacon

1971 - 2008

- 1971 **Novacon** Imperial Centre Hotel, Birmingham [VB, 144]  
Guest of Honour: James White
- 1972 **Novacon 2** Imperial Centre Hotel, Birmingham [PD, 144]  
Guest of Honour: Doreen Rogers
- 1973 **Novacon 3** Imperial Centre Hotel, Birmingham [HR, 146]  
Guest of Honour: Ken Bulmer
- 1974 **Novacon 4** Imperial Centre Hotel, Birmingham [JC, 211]  
Guest of Honour: Ken Slater
- 1975 **Novacon 5** Royal Angus Hotel, Birmingham [RP, 272]  
Guest of Honour: Dan Morgan
- 1976 **Novacon 6** Royal Angus Hotel, Birmingham [SE, 317]  
Guest of Honour: David Kyle
- 1977 **Novacon 7** Royal Angus Hotel, Birmingham [SE, 278]  
Guest of Honour: John Brunner
- 1978 **Novacon 8** Holiday Inn, Birmingham [LM, 309]  
Guest of Honour: Anne McCaffrey
- 1979 **Novacon 9** Royal Angus Hotel, Birmingham [RP, 290]  
Guest of Honour: Christopher Priest
- 1980 **Novacon 10** Royal Angus Hotel, Birmingham [RP, 495]  
Guest of Honour: Brian W Aldiss
- 1981 **Novacon 11** Royal Angus Hotel, Birmingham [PO, 362]  
Guest of Honour: Bob Shaw
- 1982 **Novacon 12** Royal Angus Hotel, Birmingham [RP, 373]  
Guest of Honour: Harry Harrison
- 1983 **Novacon 13** Royal Angus Hotel, Birmingham [PP, 339]  
Guest of Honour: Lisa Tuttle
- 1984 **Novacon 14** Grand Hotel, Birmingham [SG, 333]  
Guest of Honour: Robert Holdstock
- 1985 **Novacon 15** De Vere Hotel, Coventry [PP, 340]  
Guests of Honour: David Langford, James White
- 1986 **Novacon 16** De Vere Hotel, Coventry [TB, 257]  
Guests of Honour: Chris Evans, E C Tubb
- 1987 **Novacon 17** Royal Angus Hotel, Birmingham [BE, 315]  
Guest of Honour: Iain M Banks
- 1988 **Novacon 18** Royal Angus Hotel, Birmingham [TB, 336]  
Guest of Honour: Garry Kilworth



- 1989 **Novacon 19** Excelsior Hotel, Solihull [MT, 303\*]  
Guest of Honour: Geoff Ryman
- 1990 **Novacon 20** Excelsior Hotel, Solihull [BE, 330]  
Guest of Honour: Dr Jack Cohen
- 1991 **Novacon 21** Forte Post House, Solihull <sup>1</sup> [NM, 200]  
Guest of Honour: Colin Greenland
- 1992 **Novacon 22** Royal Angus Hotel, Birmingham [HB, 300]  
Guest of Honour: Storm Constantine
- 1993 **Novacon 23** Royal Angus Hotel, Birmingham [CM, 243\*]  
Guest of Honour: Stephen Baxter
- 1994 **Novacon 24** Royal Angus Hotel, Birmingham [RS, 214]  
Guest of Honour: Graham Joyce
- 1995 **Novacon 25** Chamberlain Hotel, Birmingham [TM, 338]  
Guests of Honour: Brian W Aldiss, Harry Harrison, Bob Shaw <sup>2</sup>
- 1996 **Novacon 26** Ibis Hotel, Birmingham [CM, 281]  
Guest of Honour: David Gemmell
- 1997 **Novacon 27** Abbey Hotel, Malvern [MT, 277]  
Guest of Honour: Peter F Hamilton
- 1998 **Novacon 28** Britannia Hotel, Birmingham [MT, 265]  
Guest of Honour: Paul J McAuley
- 1999 **Novacon 29** Britannia Hotel, Birmingham [CM, 239]  
Guest of Honour: Ian Stewart
- 2000 **Novacon 30** Britannia Hotel, Birmingham [TB, 224]  
Guest of Honour: Christopher Priest <sup>3</sup>
- 2001 **Novacon 31** Quality Hotel, Bentley [TB, 219]  
Guest of Honour: Gwynneth Jones
- 2002 **Novacon 32** Quality Hotel, Bentley [MT, 252]  
Guest of Honour: Ian McDonald
- 2003 **Novacon 33** Quality Hotel, Bentley [MT, 203]  
Guest of Honour: Jon Courtenay Grimwood
- 2004 **Novacon 34** Quality Hotel, Bentley [MT, 217\*]  
Guest of Honour: Ian Watson
- 2005 **Novacon 35** Quality Hotel, Bentley [TB, 216]  
Guest of Honour: Alastair Reynolds
- 2006 **Novacon 36** Quality Hotel, Bentley [TB, 212]  
Guest of Honour: Ken MacLeod
- 2007 **Novacon 37** Quality Hotel, Bentley [SG, 208]  
Guest of Honour: Charles Stross
- 2008 **Novacon 38** Quality Hotel, Bentley [HB]  
Guest of Honour: Ian R MacLeod



## Notes

- \* Errors in earlier editions have been corrected for this listing.
- <sup>1</sup> The Excelsior Hotel was rebranded as the Forte Post House.
- <sup>2</sup> In addition, Iain Banks was a special guest.
- <sup>3</sup> In addition, Rog Peyton was a special guest and David Hardy was guest artist.

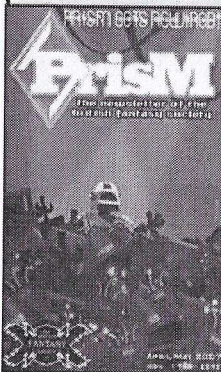
Initials after the venue refer to the convention chairs: Tony Berry, Helena Bowles, Vernon Brown, Dr Jack Cohen, Pauline Dungate, Stan Eling, Bernie Evans, Steve Green, Nick Mills, Laurence Miller, Carol Morton, Tony Morton, Paul Oldroyd, Rog Peyton, Phill Probert, Hazel Reynolds, Richard Standage, Martin Tudor. Messrs Berry and Tudor currently hold the record, with six Novacons apiece.

The accompanying figure refers to the known membership at the time the Programme Book went to press and should be considered no more than a general guide to the final attendance. (For example, Novacon 14's went to the printers several weeks earlier than usual; membership in fact exceeded 500.)

## THE BRITISH FANTASY SOCIETY

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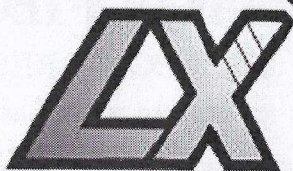


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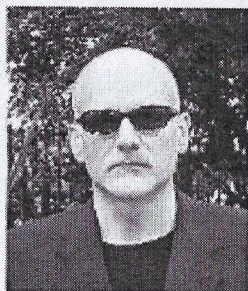
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**Dirk  
Maggs**

Radio productions: *Hitchhikers  
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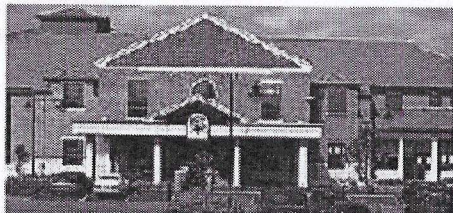
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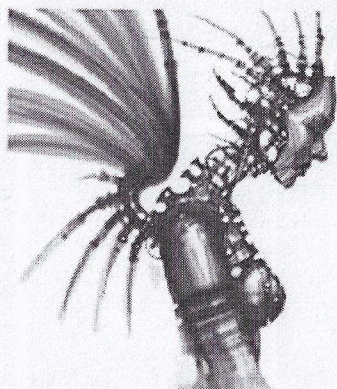
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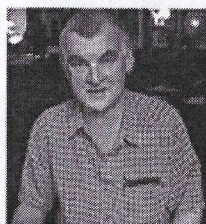
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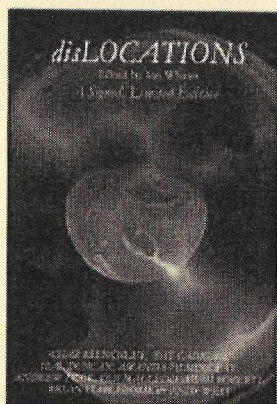
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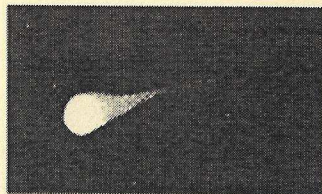
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# Birmingham Science Fiction Group



The Birmingham Science Fiction Group was founded in 1971 to enable local - and not-so-local - fans to get together to discuss sf and related topics. Since 1972, it has also organised Novacon.

We meet on the second Friday of each month at the Britannia Hotel, off New Street, Birmingham, which is ten minutes' walk from mainline railway stations and convenient for city centre bus routes. We usually open at 7:45pm with a guest speaker, often a professional in the field, such as Brian Aldiss or Harry Harrison (our honorary co-presidents), Terry Pratchett or Jim Burns.

If you live in or around the West Midlands, the BSFG is the group for you. For further details and a free copy of our monthly newsletter, just e-mail us at [bhamsfgroup@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:bhamsfgroup@yahoo.co.uk) or visit our website at [www.bsfg.freesevers.com](http://www.bsfg.freesevers.com).

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