



PROGRESS REPORT 3

Guest of Honour Gareth L Powell



11 – 13th November 2022

Palace Hotel Buxton

COMMITTEE

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Cover Images: Books 1 – 3 of The Embers of War series

A WORD FROM OUR CHAIR



Welcome to PR3 – and time seems to speed up the nearer we get. The committee have been working hard and we hope you'll find plenty to enjoy at Novacon 51. We're looking forward to seeing and hearing people – especially from our great Guest of Honour, **Gareth L Powell**.

The Programme is nearly finalised and will be full of serious and fun

panels, of which there is more information below.

We will also have the usual Art and Dealers' Rooms, back again on the ground floor, (with plenty of natural light). Please pop along and see what is on offer. I'm always deeply impressed with the talents on display.

There will also be the Real Ale Bar which this year has been relocated to the Robert Rippon Bar. As this is much nearer to the Programme room, it should save a lot of walking. Sunday night will feature the usual Beer Tasting and Banquet (more details below). The food (chosen by our Guest of Honour) this year will be Mexican and the hotel will also offer a vegetarian option.

There will also be raffle tickets for charity available across the weekend, so please contribute to this good cause. The Novacon charity is the RNIB Talking Books service, who have been providing this valuable service for people with sight and other reading difficulties eg stroke, dementia etc since 1935. we look forward to seeing you in November.

Carol

HOTEL & CONVENTION INFORMATION



Palace Hotel Buxton
Palace Road
Buxton
SK17 6AG

Firstly, time is marching on rapidly, so if you haven't booked your hotel room you don't have long left. To book, please fill in the hotel booking form and send it to the address on the form. The form can be downloaded from the website (www.novacon.uk/n51/). Once complete, send it to Steve Lawson at the address on the form as soon as possible for processing. Please note on the form if you have any special requirements. In particular, although the hotel has a lift, as it is an old hotel some of the rooms still involve a few steps, so if this will cause you difficulties, please let us know and we'll pass it onto the hotel, who will do their best to accommodate you.

Room rates include breakfast.

Convention room rates

Rooms are: £45 per person per night for a double/twin room
£60 per person for a single room.

Room rates include breakfast. There are also a limited number of family rooms (2 adults and 2 children) and a few accessible rooms.

There is ramp access at the rear of the hotel for those with difficulty with steps. This is on the left-hand side of the hotel as you face it, near the Leisure Centre. If arriving by car, there are car parking spaces near to the entrance.

Please note if you have specific requirements, don't hesitate to contact the hotel directly at 01298 22001 option 6.

There will be the usual Sunday evening Banquet and Beer Tasting. The hot buffet meal is chosen by our Guest of Honour and you **MUST** buy a ticket for it by 12 noon on



Sunday. If you just want to drink the beer, you can either bring 3 bottles/cans of interesting beer to registration to get your beer badge or just buy one for £6. A selection of soft drinks will be available to everyone free of charge.

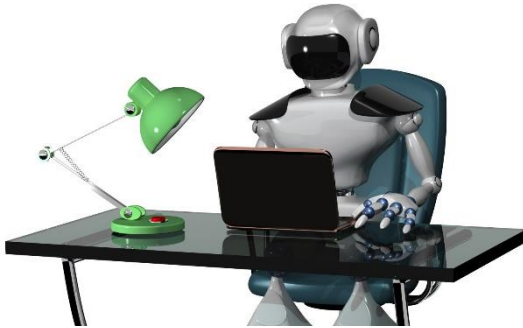


Important, if anyone has any particular **dietary requirements**, they must

tell us before the convention.

For those who didn't attend last year, the town centre is only a short walk away. There are plenty of cafes, restaurants and pubs to choose from. There are also banking facilities, pharmacies and supermarkets nearby (Waitrose, Aldi & Sainsburys Local). More information can be found at www.visitbuxton.co.uk.

WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT



There's often a lot of work behind the scenes for a convention which isn't obvious but is very necessary. The

website especially has been reliant on **John Harvey's** excellent

technical skills for a number of years. Unfortunately, he has had to stand down this year for personal reasons. The committee are very grateful and want to thank him for all the indispensable advice and work he has done for Novacon. He will be missed.

Without John's unique skillset, we have had to rethink the structure of the website. In particular, there has been a lot of effort undertaken to update the website to a more modern appearance and one which works better on mobiles and tablets as well as the more traditional PC's. This is now complete and can be seen at the usual address of www.novacon.uk. The new format will also make it easier for the website to be maintained and updated going forward.

Alex Storer, with assistance from **Doug Spencer** and **Steve Lawson**, have put in a considerable amount of time and energy as this has not proved an easy or quick task. They should be applauded for their efforts.

MEMBERSHIPS AND DAY MEMBERSHIPS

Due to Covid etc, we will not be selling memberships at the door. If you wish to attend, you need to purchase a membership in advance (see www.novacon.uk)

In advance of the convention, we will also be offering Day Rate Memberships. These will be:

Friday: £15, Saturday: £25, Sunday: £20

If you wish to purchase these, they can be found on the Payment Tab (www.novacon.uk/payment). Please also remember to fill in the Membership form (www.novacon.uk/membership) and indicate that you wish to purchase a Day membership. Thanks.

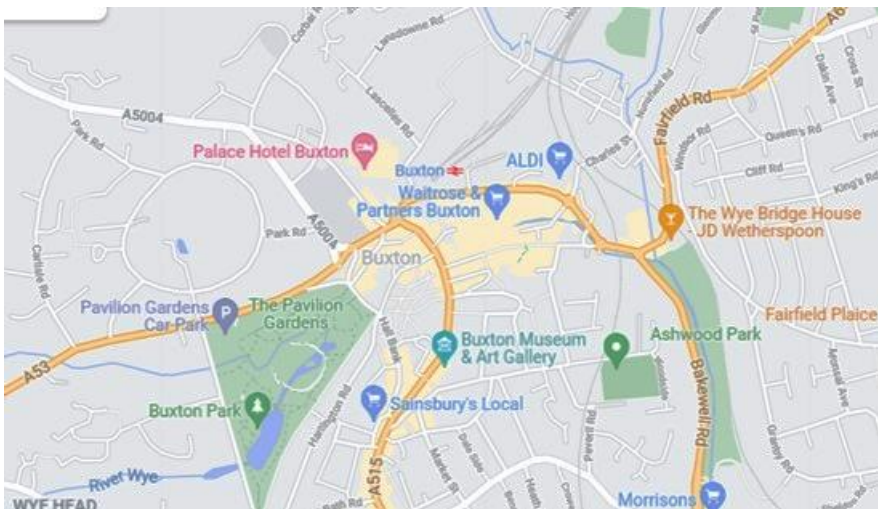
HOW TO GET THERE

The Palace Hotel Buxton is in the centre of Buxton, just off the A53. For those travelling by car, the hotel address is Palace Road, Buxton, **SK17 9AG**.

From Birmingham it is about a 2-hour drive by car, about 1 hour 15 minutes from central Manchester, and around 1 hour from Sheffield, Stoke or Derby.

If you are travelling by car the hotel has an on-site car park, which is normally chargeable but we have negotiated free parking. There are 180 parking spaces and 10 disabled.

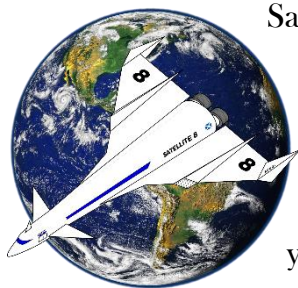
If you are travelling by public transport, the hotel was the original railway hotel, so it is a short 3-minute walk from Buxton Train Station to the hotel.



From Birmingham, rail travel usually involves two changes, Cross Country line to Stockport then Northern Line to Buxton. Alternatively, you can change at Macclesfield, then catch the 58

bus to Buxton. There are bus stops located on the A53. There is a direct trainline (Northern Line) from Manchester to Buxton. From Sheffield, it appears that a bus service may be the quickest public transport option but please check for your individual circumstances, as the best options/route will vary depending on time of day and delays between connections.

SATURDAY NIGHT IS SATELLITE!



Satellite Conventions will be running one of their (in)famous pub-style quizzes on Saturday evening, featuring the usual mixture of Science Fiction, Science Fact and Science Fun. Form a team in advance, or just come along and we'll sort you into teams on the night.

And of course, remember to join:

Satellite 8, May 26 - 28th 2023, Glasgow, UK.

(Info etc at <https://eight.satellitex.org.uk/>)

PROGRAMME BIT

As I write it's only a few weeks until Novacon 51, and the programme is coming together well. It's traditional, here in Progress Report Three, for us to give you a foretaste of the heavenly banquet which is the Novacon Programme, by describing how Friday evening is going to play out with a few teasers for the remainder of the weekend.

FRIDAY

Opening ceremony – 7pm

In which the committee hold forth and introduce the GoH

Desert Island Books – 7:30 pm

Our Guest of Honour, Gareth L Powell introduces us to six of his favourite books that he would take with him to a desert island and tell us why.



Friday party/Novacon Book Launch – 9pm

Following on from Desert Island books - Come and hear a short reading, ask some questions, hear some answers, buy some books and enjoy our modest supply of wine and nibbles.

ZZ9 Party – following on from Book Launch

2022 is the 42nd anniversary of ZZ9 Plural Z Alpha which is obviously a significant number. As the official Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy fan group, they would like to join with friends old and new to celebrate this event.

SATURDAY AND SUNDAY

There will be the customary science talks, discussion panels and of course a Guest of Honour interview with **Gareth L Powell**. There will also be some extra contributions in the Off Piste programme. NB This year, the Sunday Science talk will be starting in a later time slot than the usual 10am slot (although there will still be a panel item at 10am)/

The Saturday night quiz is being kindly hosted by the experienced and popular team from **Satellite Convention** (see above). Saturday evening will also have the now traditional poetry reading session which is open to all. All those members who would like to participate are encouraged to bring poems, written by themselves, preferably paper copies rather than depending on memory or iphones. All poets will be very welcome.

Following on from last year, the Art Auction will again have an option for instant sales, and a Silent Auction. Instead we are very pleased that space artist, **Jackie Burns** will be talking about her artwork, Outreach and Science Communications work, liberally sprinkled with experiences such as the exploding car park and the scorpion!

ART SHOW

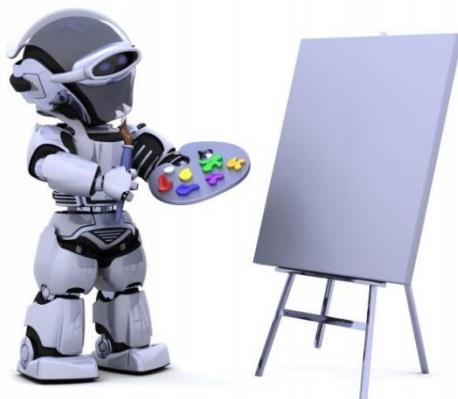
If you want to show your art it is free to convention members, but you will need to reserve space. So, contact us to discuss what you need and so that we can do a little planning. If you have any questions related to the art show, please contact Serena or Tony.

NOVACON ART SHOW

The Novacon Art Show will be returning and once again we are in the lovely light-filled room on the Ground Floor, not hidden away in the basement.

As a reminder, we now have direct access from the car park to the room which will make things much easier. As last year, the Art Show will be located in the Chatsworth Room which is beside the Dealers' room.

We will be offering our usual mixture of originals, limited editions and prints and other interesting items. As we did last year, we will not be an auction in the Main Programme. Instead, there will be an option for instant sales and a Silent Auction for artists who prefer an auction.



We hope that this will allow attendees who are not around all weekend the opportunity to purchase a piece and take it away. In addition, this frees up programme space on Sunday afternoon and gives more time for the art show to be open.

COVID POLICY AT NOVACON



While there are no official government coronavirus restrictions at the moment, numbers of Covid cases do appear to be rising. The committee have decided that to keep everyone (including those who are, or live with someone, vulnerable) as safe as we can, that we need to have some safeguards in place. A detailed Covid policy will be printed in the Programme, but it will include the following requests.

- We ask that all members are fully vaccinated where possible.
- We ask all members where possible to take a lateral flow test prior to attending convention.
- If you have symptoms or feel unwell before the convention, please consider others and don't attend.

- Masks will be required while moving around the hotel but not whilst sitting in bar areas. There will be a number of masks on the desk if you forget to bring one.
- Masks will be required in the main programme unless you are on the panel.
- Please note that Face visors are not accepted as a substitute for masks because they offer insufficient protection against virus transmission.

CONVENTION TABLES

These are free to anyone who is running a convention.
Contact Tony for reservations.

DEALERS' TABLES

Dealers' tables (6 ft) are available at £20. Dealers normally have to be a member of the convention but we are happy to talk about this. Also, we are open to discussion if you wish to only come for one day. Contact Tony at the email address on Page 2