

Read Me

Checking In

Since you're reading this, you've probably checked in and received your membership pack, including your *badge*. If not, the nice people at the convention desk in the lobby will sort this out. Please wear that badge, visibly, at all times; it shows that you're a member, entitled to wander round the parts of the college that we've hired for the con. For maps, please see the back of this booklet. The college is open until 23:00. After that, residents can get in with their key card, while non-residents will have to go to the front entrance and ring for the porters.

If you're staying in the college

Please collect your room key from the Porters' Lodge, opposite the convention desk in the lobby. You need to vacate the room by 10:00 on your last morning. To get breakfast each morning, you will need the breakfast tickets from your membership pack. Please do not lose them, as they will not be replaced.

Food and Drink

The college dining room (under the dome, up the stairs) will be open for cafeteria service at mealtimes throughout the convention. It offers a good choice of food at decent prices. Meal times are:

Breakfast:	08:00-09:30, Saturday-Monday: present your breakfast ticket.
Lunch:	12:30-13:45, Saturday & Sunday
Dinner:	18:00-19:15 Friday, 18:30-19:30 Saturday.

The college bar, under the dome, downstairs, will be open 18:00 to 23:00 Friday, 12:00 to 23:00 Saturday and 12:00 to 17:00 Sunday with real ale and cider, a full range of other drinks, and filled baguettes as an alternative to the cafeteria. The bar also contains vending machines with soft drinks, chocolate, etc., and a tea and coffee machine on the upper level.

The Dealers' Room

This is in the Vivien Stewart Room, on your right as you head down the big walkway from the lobby. It will be open 16:00-19:00 on Friday, 9:30-18:00 on Saturday, and 9:30-c.16:00 on Sunday.

Please do not take food or drink into the Dealers' Room. Aside from the dealers' stock, this room is carpeted, and getting the carpet cleaned would be *seriously* expensive; we will have to charge the person responsible.

The Auction

The auction of games and ... related material is an important tradition of this series of gaming conventions. If you have material for the auction, please bring it to the convention desk, who have forms for recording everything. To buy at the auction, please bring cash or your cheque book: we can't handle credit cards for this.

Gaming

The main gaming area is the walkway, which has plenty of tables and chairs. Steve Jackson Games will be running *Ogre* demonstrations at the end nearest the college lobby. The Froud Room, downstairs, can be booked for large games that need some privacy.

We have a small library of board and card games available to borrow, at or near the reception desk. If you borrow a game from the library, you must sign it out (identify the game and yourself) on the sign-out sheet also present.

Remember that these games are the personal property of other members, who have kindly agreed to lend them out. Please treat them *at least* as respectfully as you would your own property and when you've finished, pack the components away neatly and return everything to the library.

Weapons Policy

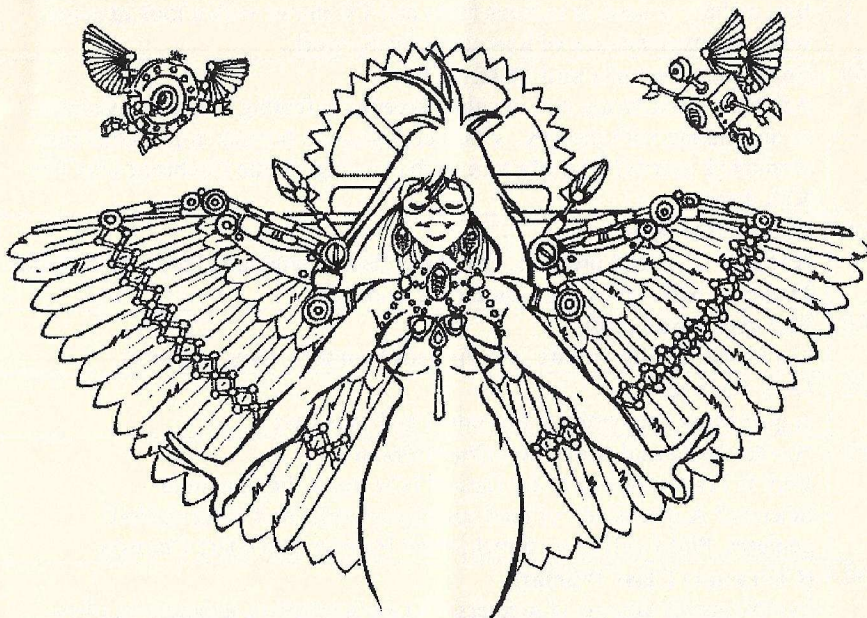
We're entirely happy for people to wear costumes, and hope that some people will. Our weapon policy is that weapons are only allowed if 'part of a costume'. Nothing that looks like a real weapon, and all mock weapons must be securely attached to the bearer (e.g. swords peace bonded into scabbards are fine, anything that can be waved around or fired at someone isn't).

Art credits

Art by Phil Foglio, Susan Foord, and from the college website. Logo by Rhodri James.

Friday Programme, Long Room

18:00	Opening We introduce our guests, and generally start things off.
18:30	Does a background in gaming help or hinder writers? Kari, Juliet Mckenna, Jackie Duckworth, Duncan Macgregor, and Anne Lyle.
19:30	All Fours Join one of four famous teams that are competing to show their knowledge and skills in a quiz that's a little obsessed with numbers. Michael Abbott will run all-comers through rounds including Just a Minute, Pointless and Numberwang. But not Only Connect.
20:30	The Girl Genius Radio Plays Audition for parts and participate in the performance of two radio plays by Phil and Kaja Foglio.



Saturday Programme, Long Room

10:00	What's New? (without Phil and Dixie) What's new in board, card and dice games? How is the state of the art changing? What makes a game a game for now, apart from the usual things of good game-play, and a plausible price? Sebastian Bleasdale, Chris Potter, Roger Burton West and Michael Abbott.
11:00	Oxford's Tradition of Fantasy Literature A talk by Juliet Mckenna.
12:00	Professor Yaffle The professor himself is sadly otherwise engaged on Phobos, but his hench-woman Bridget Wilkinson has a collection of interesting artifacts whose nature and story needs unravelling. Kaja Foglio, Rae Streets, Ian Jackson and Jackie Duckworth unravel the mystery.
13:00	Archery in Fantasy and Reality Mike Shevdon gives a presentation on archery combining illustrations of how archery is used in various films and TV shows with a look at some bows and explanations of how things really work.
14:00	For Queen Victoria and SCIENCE! Aside from practising our cut-glass accents, defeating Martian invasions, or negotiating with the Fey, what's crying out to happen in gaslamp and steampunk games? Phil Masters, Bob Dowling, Eddie Cochrane and Tim Kirk discuss.
15:00	Cities of the Mind Alternate pasts and presents. Other worlds and imagined lands. With Juliet Mckenna, Mike Shevdon, Anne Lyle, and Kari.
16:00	Phil and Kaja Foglio Our Guests of Honour are interviewed about their lives and work.
17:00	Only Connect A quiz about connections, presented by Diana Cox.
18:00	Nicolai Tesla and the McGuffin of Doom Why is Tesla such a popular figure? Is he the archetypal mad Scientist? A discussion of mad scientists, sparks and unrecognised geniuses. Phil Foglio, Ian Souch, Peter Harrow, and Clare Boothby.
19:00	(Character) Class Warfare In most games you get characters who are specialists, generalists, over-specialists, and way-over-generalists. How do you make this fit together, and keep it fitting as the characters grow? John Cox, Owen Smith, Mark Baker (M) and Chris Carrigan discuss.
20:00	The BRS Game Auction From the rare to the ridiculous: Mike Cule and Tim Ellis officiate.

Saturday Programme, Council Room



11:00	So you want to be a Mad Scientist? Two teams of would-be mad scientists compete to prove which are the bright sparks, and which are the missing links. It's not rocket science, it's a silly game brought to you by Peter Wareham and Gwen Funnell.
12:00	How to do Sex and Death Properly Sex and death, or at least relationships and action, lie at the core of many SFF novels, but can be surprisingly tricky to write. Our panel discusses the problems and pitfalls and possible techniques. Juliet Mckenna, Kari, Kate Keen, and Tanya Brown.
13:00	... never survives contact with the players How to cope with this, and work around it, while always remembering the players' inevitable combination of twisted ingenuity and failing to spot the bloody obvious. Phil Nanson, Marcus L Rowland, Owen Dunn (M), and Dr Bob.
14:00	Writers on Reading Our panel will discuss <i>This Is Not A Game</i>, by Walter John Williams, with each other and the audience. Juliet Mckenna, Kari, Phil Nanson and Simon Bradshaw.
15:00	Old Masters Role-playing sees its heritage as coming from the likes of Gary Gygax, Dave Arneson, and MAR Barker (all died fairly recently) and Greg Stafford (retired). How did early RPGs interact with each other, and what were their creator's inspirations? Zyg Lozinski, John Dallman, Tim Ellis and Mike Cule.
16:00	LARP Workshop Writing LARPS is a craft of its own. Carol Tierney, Andy Brown, and Gary Tierney demonstrate, and will run the resulting scenario if it gets far enough.
20:00	Munchausen's syndrome by Beeblebrox Who is the real Zaphod Beeblebrox? Sarah Haddock, Jim Mowatt, and other denizens of the galaxy will each explain why they alone are the ex-president in question, via truthful accounts of their perfectly straightforward, nay, mundane, adventures. Honestly.

Sunday Programme, Long Room

10:00	Gaming reboots Suddenly, everyone's going back to the stuff that was fun. D&D is doing a fifth edition early. White Wolf has abandoned the New World of Darkness. Magic: the Gathering has declared a state of "Permanent revolution". Things that were always fun are getting brought back, such as Ogre. Is this comfort for harsh times, or is it just an acknowledgement that the high theorising on tenuous grounds that some games indulged in was nonsense? Dr Bob (M), Rodney Cobb, Paul King, Frank Carver and Daniel Jew.
11:00	1001 Musketeers Sequels to, re-imaginings of and conflicting versions of <i>The Three Musketeers</i>. A talk by Kari. Updated since its last appearance! With illustrations and commentary.
12:00	Religions Driving Stories Animism, Vikings & Valhalla. Active gods were revolutionary in gaming with RuneQuest, and are integral to many fantasy novels, if not SF. Karen Kelly, Liz Williams, Tanya Brown, and Rhodri James discuss.
13:00	Fan-fares and Fan-tasias: Fandom viewed through the academic kaleidoscope Where do fans come from and is fandom really a large fungus connecting geographically disparate points around the globe? When academics turn their parched gaze on fans, what do they see? These and other points will be touched on before the floor is thrown open for discussion. A talk by Paul Mason.
14:00	We discussed that three pages ago Trying to tell the same story in different media ... is tricky. The right ways of doing character focus, show-vs-describe, and genre consistency can be very different. What works, and what doesn't, across different boundaries? With Phil Foglio, Tanya Brown (M), Kate Solomon and Paul Dormer.
15:00	Where has all our optimism gone? Dystopias and Grimdark: why is current SFF so gloomy? Caroline Mullan, Liz Williams, Giulia de Cesare, and Tony Keen.
16:00	Fiction Consequences The audience suggests characters, theme and events and the panellists improvise a story from them. Phil Foglio, Ian Watson and Liz Williams.
17:00	Bid session and closing

Cambridge: food and history

The city of Cambridge contains a wide variety of restaurants, and more history than you can do in a full-time weekend. To reach the town centre, leave the college via the lobby, turn right when you reach the main road, and head down the hill for about five minutes. Parking in central Cambridge is difficult: walking is the best way to get there.

Restaurants

As you head down the hill, you'll pass two decent pubs: the County Arms and the Castle Inn, both of which serve reasonable food and have wi-fi. There are also two Indian restaurants that are good, the Maharajah and the Cocum (a Kerala restaurant). We prefer these to the Curry Centre.

For traditional British food done well, see the St John's Chop House: turn right at the bottom of the hill, cross the road and walk a minute or two. The Cambridge Chop House on King's Parade is similar, but further.

If you stay on the route into town, you'll find a cluster of eating places on the left shortly after you cross the river. These are mostly the more competent chains: Cafe Rouge, Brasserie Gerard, and the like. There's also a decent Japanese place, Teri-Aki, tucked away in the development on the river.

If you want to walk further, there are scores more. Asking locals at the convention should work, provided you know what you're after.

Sights

For colleges, walk a little further into town than the cluster, and turn right onto Trinity Street. This will take you past several of the largest colleges (St John's, Trinity, and Kings). Tourists are allowed to walk around some parts of most colleges, and their signs give clear directions. There's an admission charge for King's College Chapel, and it's well worth it if you have the time.

The Fitzwilliam Museum, further along the road that starts as Trinity Street, has an eclectic mixture of world-class art and antiquities. Sadly, it is closed on Mondays.

A tour down the river will show you the pretty bits of many of the colleges, and is either relaxing or exciting, depending on your previous punting experience; chauffeur-punts are recommended for first-timers.

