

ALBACON II

Albacon II the 34th Annual British Science Fiction Convention
April 1st-4th, 1983. Central Hotel, Glasgow.

POST CON. REPORT



The Chairman's Bit

I hate writing. Furthermore I firmly believe that what people like they are good at and what they are good at they like and what they don't like they... oh, work the rest out for yourselves. I hate writing.

This is my last piece of writing for Albacon II. The convention is over (long over, a post-con report has a lot of inertia to overcome) and I hope you enjoyed it. The post-con report gives me a chance to thank all the people who helped in one way or another to make the convention work. I feel I made rather a mess of the committee thank you at the convention, for which I can only plead total exhaustion; this time I'll try to do it properly.

First I want to thank our guests: our Guest of Honour James White - and, of course, his charming wife, Peggy; our American Guest Marion Zimmer Bradley (with special thanks to Don and Elsie Wollheim for making it possible for Marion to be our guest); and our Fan Guest Avedon Carol, the TAFP winner. I hope you had a chance to meet and talk to them all.

I would also like to express, on behalf of the committee and all of Glasgow fandom, the delight we all feel at having Jim White's book 'Sector General' dedicated to us. The dedication reads: 'To the Friends of Kilgour Trout, who treat the impossible with the contempt it deserves.'

Next as chairman I suppose I really should thank the rest of the committee, even the publication team who still refuse to write my 'bits' for me. Then I want to thank the people who really do all the work - the gophers. I think that last, but by no means least to be thanked are you, the people who came and so made it all a success. Thank you everyone.

I hope you enjoy this post-con report. I'll see you at the next con, Albacon 84 (20-23 July, 1984, G.O.H. Harlan Ellison). And who knows? Maybe this time the committee will heed my pleas for a personal ghost writer!

BOB JEWETT

ALBACON II INCOME and EXPENDITURE

ACCOUNT AS AT 1/10/83

<u>INCOME</u>		<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	
	£		£
Memberships - Pre-con	4152.00 - 1	Publications	1624.01 - 3
Memberships - At door	2400.96 - 1	Hotel Function Rooms	1067.00
From Metrocon	47.00	Guests' Expenses	721.48
Bookroom Tables	325.00	Films	644.78
Advertising	212.29	Postage and Phone	417.82
From Channelcon	300.00 - 2	Badge Machine	450.39 - 2
Auctions	47.10	Materials	292.75 - 4
T-Shirts	58.56	Damage to Hotel	296.17 - 5
Miscellaneous	1.05	Equipment Hire	256.62 - 6
Interest	74.36	Stationery	106.20
	<u>7618.32</u>	Transport	98.86
		Prizes	74.10
		Insurance	55.00
		Advertising	15.00
		Miscellaneous	68.40 - 7
		Art Auction Donation to TAFF	10.00
			<u>6198.58</u>
		Surplus Cash	1491.74
			<u>7618.32</u>

NOTES

- 1 There were 218 walk-ins, 12 day members and 28 conversions from supporting to attending at the door. The odd 96p arises from dollar conversion.
- 2 Channelcon provided £300 for the purchase of a badge making machine. The machine cost £273.70 and 5000 badge parts were purchased for use by future conventions.
- 3 This figure includes photo-typesetting and printing; 2 bid reports, fliers, posters, 3 PR's and the Programme Book, which cost £858.70. It does not include the cost of this report.
- 4 Includes Art Show materials, Letraset, projector parts and bulbs and computer materials.
- 5 The committee decided to pay £221.17 toward the bill for lift repairs to avoid the hotel attempting to reclaim it from those responsible for the ill-fated lift party. Damage to a glass panelled door cost £75.
- 6 Includes video projector, video recorders, TV's and microphones.

- 7 Includes repairs to equipment, drinks for panels and doctor's call out charge.
- 8 There is £49 still outstanding owed by Games Gallery who are in liquidation.

IAN SORENSEN (TREASURER)

Membership

	ATTENDING	SUPPORTING
Before 1.4.83	554	61
At the door	218	
Day members	12	
Conversions	28	
TOTAL ATTENDING	812	

DISPOSAL OF SURPLUS FUNDS

As Channelcon discovered: it's the walk-ins that produce the surplus funds. When the doors opened on the Friday we were a little worried as our pre-con membership was considerably lower than the previous Eastercon's. However, the walk-ins (who were mostly locals) turned up in sufficient numbers to save the committee arranging second mortgages, flights to Brazil and grey hairs!

Using the Eastercon surplus to buy equipment for future conventions seemed to us to be a sensible idea - Channelcon had payed for a badge machine for the use of future conventions and will probably buy art boards or some other useful items. We looked at various ideas for buying things every convention needs, and discovered that Chris O'Kane was about to dispose of his projection equipment. We bought it at a knock down price (we know it was a bargain because we had to check its market value in order to get our treasurer, Ian Sorensen, to part with the cash!) The equipment consists of: three 16mm projectors, three cinemascope lenses, one slide projector, one 8mm projector, one overhead projector, two loudspeaker columns, an 8ft and a 16ft screen, along with all the leads, plugs and fittings for same. There is also a changeover unit for use with the 16mm projectors. The total cost was £700.

All the equipment is available for use by any convention or S.F. group for the cost of insurance and transportation to their locale. For further information contact either:

Bob Jewett, 34 Peninver Dr. Glasgow. (041 440 1819) or
Ian Sorensen, 142 Busby Rd. Glasgow. (041 644 3795).

After much discussion we decided that the rest of the money would be best used to benefit convention goers generally than lie in a bank account gathering interest. To this end we have decided to use it to help pay the cost of bringing Harlan Ellison across to Britain from Los Angeles as the Guest of Honour at Albacon '84. The favourable reaction we have had to the announcement that he was to be our guest leads us to believe that many other people want to meet Harlan as much as we do.

The final accounts of Albacon II will be published in the Season Programme Book.

The Juggling Act

Bruce Saville

Organising the programme falls into two parts. The first part is the easy part where you schedule the events against the various times trying to keep a balance between the various programmes so that two popular items aren't on at the same time too often. Once the convention starts, however, the difficult job of organisation comes into play.

At times you feel as if you are juggling balls while standing on a rolling log as people throw more balls at you. And all you are trying to do is to make sure that each item plays on the programme at its appointed time!

No matter how much equipment one gathers for the convention a law seems to operate to cut your back-ups out and make you run on the minimum of equipment. A case in point was with our film projectors. We had five of them, so we thought we were adequately covered. So we were, until Saturday night. Two projectors were running in the main hall, one had broken down and the remaining two had been moved into the alternative hall. The reels were threaded, the screen set up and the film focused when we ran it to check the sound volume. No sound out of the first projector. Tried the second projector and found that it had the same problem. Thus we could show the musical but without the sound. And the person who had the expertise and equipment to repair them was out of the building.

Another case was slide projectors which failed, leaving only one. This resulted in the spectacle of one item finishing, someone rushing in to take it to another programme, and the spectacle repeating itself when that item finished. For three hours, on the hour, you could watch the slide projector being disconnected, whisked off and connected up somewhere else.

On hindsight we didn't have enough breaks and slippage points allowed for in the timings; although the major error, for me, was putting a film in scheduled at 7am. People actually went to bed early and woke up or stayed up for it. Unfortunately none of the projectionists were fit enough to show it. We had started the night with the intention of being awake, but tiredness eventually set in.

You may be enjoying yourself at the time at some room party but one part of your mind is always on the alert, thus stopping you from devoting yourself totally to enjoyment. You can be rushing away every twenty minutes to change a reel or having to get more equipment out or doing the rounds of each programme. Whatever you are doing this conflict can bring tiredness on very quickly. I've seen people pack away the projector and fall asleep instantly. And this is what happened that morning, or night depending on how you count the time. The three of us capable of projecting were suddenly tired and the thought of staying awake for another hour and a half tired us even more.

The best idea, which we did for a couple of the other nights, is not to programme any item past 3 o'clock and then show whatever people fancy if the projectionist or committee members still upstanding feel up to it. One morning this resulted in us showing at 6am the hotel's

training films showing how the staff should treat the guests. At this point we were quite relaxed. There were no other items running anyway so the only people awake were down in the hall with us.

In short: after a certain time there should not be any programmed items.

I'd estimate that the programme was on schedule at least 70% of the time with only 5-10% of the items being grossly late. Note that my idea of gross lateness may differ from yours, but I'm also influenced by knowing the reasons for the lateness, non-appearance of items etc and that influences my estimate. Certainly I didn't receive any major complaints about the programme, except from some people saying that an item was on too late, because it was after their last bus. At least we didn't have that disaster dreaded by those running the programmes - the hotel's entire electrical system suddenly shorting out. Well, maybe next time... ■

The Fan Room

After doing the Fan Room at Channelcon I swore I'd never do another one. The Albacon Fan Room was it.

The layout of the room was ideal: comfortable seats in the main section and an adjoining bar. After a start like that it couldn't fail, and I don't think it did. However, it didn't turn out the way I'd planned it, mainly because I was too ill to cope. Barkers Law: if it can run adequately with you flat on your back, you weren't needed in the first place. Corollary to Barker's Law: I'm never going to do another fan room as long as I live! This time I really mean it. Honest. ■

Jim Barker

p.s. Sorry about writing in crayon, but they don't let us have anything sharp in here.

THE BUSINESS MEETING

The business meeting was chaired by Bob Jewett. Although it was put on the main programme at a reasonable time, 11am on the Monday, it was poorly attended. Those who did attend it voiced few complaints about Albacon II. Whether this was due to apathy or the convention being generally well run we can only guess.

Most of the comments made were of a positive nature, designed to indicate preferences rather than dislikes. Most were in favour of multiple programmes to help cater for different tastes, though some arguments were put forward for cutting down the media content. These were countered by others claiming that it was the media items which attracted new people into fandom.

The lift party that went wrong when the lift passed its stop at the ground floor was condemned by all those present, but nobody could suggest ways of stopping idiots behaving idiotically. It was felt that

such accidents could spoil the image of conventions with hotels. Albacon II eventually made a goodwill payment towards the cost of repairs to the lift.

The number of people who were sick in public areas was also, dare we say it, brought up. No single cause could be found but some suggested it was the hamburgers, others that it was the real ale or even sudden exposure to fresh air! The Convention had to pay for six such messes to be cleaned up. (The receipt for this is amongst the most prized possessions of our treasurer!)

Bob Jewett confirmed that Albacon II would be publishing its accounts in a post-con report and in the Seacon Programme book. The business meeting lasted just over 30 minutes. ■

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Although each of the committee spent the period of the con running around convinced they were the only one doing any work, and that without them the whole affair would end in disaster, it is now time to say thank you to all the others without whom it really could have been a disaster.

Bob Jewett has already thanked our Guests: Jim White and Marion Zimmer Bradley but it will do no harm to thank them again. TAFF winner, Avedon Carol, and our Toastmaster, Dave Langford, each contributed to the Fan Room their own particular brand of humour and insight. Lang may their lums reek.

Thanks are also due to Bob Shaw whose stained glass picture made an excellent Art Show 'Best of Show' award.

The people who gophered, whether official gophers or just helpful souls, have the most sincere thanks of the committee. A convention simply cannot be run without the help of such people. Special mention must be made of Steve Lawson, Joan Paterson and Tibs who made up all the badges the day before the convention.

To the many people who appeared on panels, gave talks, judged competitions and took part in events: many thanks.

The Staff of the Central Hotel, under the guidance of Chris Rush, did an excellent job, and have been justly praised in many conreports we have read. Thank you Ewan, Helen, Hughie, John D and all the rest.

Thanks to David Anderson of Strathalbyn Brewers for all his help in the Pint of Beer Fun Run.

Many people commented on the high quality of our publications. The typesetting credit goes to Art Type Ltd. and the printing was by Reproprint, Kall Kwik and John Bull Printing Outfit.

Thanks to Channelcon for the badge machine and to all our advertisers.

Lastly, thank you all for turning up and making Albacon II a fun convention to run.

This was the Albacon II Post-con Report, brought to you from beautiful downtown Glasgow courtesy of the Happyvale Rest Home for the Criminally Conventional. Our motto: -'Albacon Gratia Albacon'. ■

ALBACON 84



ALBACON 84 GUEST OF HONOUR **HARLAN ELLISON**

Albacon 84 — the convention with everything from life size blow football to international tag team fanzine reviewing. This is your big chance to meet Harlan Ellison and see if he comes up to your expectations. Don't miss the only convention to give you all this plus 20% extra free! Attending membership £8. Supporting membership £3. 20th to 23rd July 1984, Glasgow. You'll laugh, you'll cry. You'll kiss £8 goodbye!

contact

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