

Duple Time $\frac{2}{4}$

(a Well-Tempered Convention)

UK Filk Convention #24

Progress Report 1

3rd to 5th February 2012

at the

Grantham Ramada Hotel

with guests

Mary Crowell (US)

and Lissa Allcock (UK)

Introduction

An advantage of the first Progress Report being late (OK, very late, due to Real Life(tm) and other distractions) is that we have more to tell you. Like room rates, and lots of forms for you to fill in, and other good stuff.

Anyway, for those who don't know, Duple Time is the name finally chosen for the 24th UK annual filk convention. UK filkcons have, almost from the beginning, had names which are a play on the number of the convention; sometime we're probably going to run out, but not yet. Initially I struggled for one name (the result of which is now the subtitle of this one), then it was pointed out that the numbers could represent a time signature (Doctor Who fans queue here), that being a form of "march time". I thought that calling the convention "March Con" when it's in February could be a little confusing, so here we are.

Welcome to **Duple Time**...

Where we're going to be, or, The Hotel

The Grantham Ramada Hotel (formerly the Grantham Marriott Hotel) is situated just off the A1, near Grantham in Lincolnshire. It has good access by road, rail and air.

Many of you will have been there before, this will be our sixth filkcon at this hotel, if I haven't forgotten some. It has a good selection of function space and enough bedrooms, a bar, a restaurant, and a large area for socialising. I am promised that the bar will have both Real Ale and Real Cider this year.

Room rates are staying the same from last year:

£55 per room per night for single occupancy

£70 per room per night for double/family occupancy

'Family' in this case means either a standard room (kingsize bed) with an additional Z-bed for a child up to 14 years old, or a limited number of rooms with two double (not kingsize) beds. At least one adult must be present. Children in a family room will be charged for breakfast.

Guests of Honour

Mary Crowell: The Marvelous Mistress of Magnus Retail by Brenda Sutton

Most of us filkers struggle along with our instruments, hacking and faking our way through three-chord songs. Not so Mary Crowell. She's actually Dr. Mary Crowell, a former college professor of music and adept piano teacher. Mary knows music the way a *sommelier* knows wine, and she uses her knowledge to the benefit of the rest of us, underpinning our three-chord songs with arpeggios full of sevenths flatted, diminished, and mobiused -- and she makes us all sound so much better.

I first met Mary in 2001 when some good gaming buddies of hers dragged her off to *GAFilk*. She'd been making up a few songs about their D&D characters' antics, and they knew that the folks at *GAFilk* we're going to love Mary's music. We watched this beautiful young woman lug her keyboard (not the most portable of filk instruments, mind you) into the filk room with a slight amount of dread and a large measure of anticipation. And then she played her opening measures -- all Gershwin, bluesy, and fine -- we all relaxed. This was going to be an expertly arranged piece of music. And then she sang. Oh my stars and little purple comets, she sang! -- with a sultry, southern voice that made most of the men in the room melt into puddles on the ballroom floor. And *what* she sang -- challenging lyrics with internal structure, plot, and daring wit. Mary's first foray into filk was an unmitigated success. We fell in love with her and her charming Dungeon Master/pediatrician/masterchef husband, Dr. Wesley Crowell. (We met their precocious, creative son, Simon, later in the year, and fell in love with him, too. Simon has been the inspiration for many of Mary's songs, and shares a co-writing credit for *Get Down Mama*.)

The next year, we asked Mary to entertain at *GAFilk*'s banquet. The setting was just too perfect to waste -- grand piano, lovely lady in a slinky dress, brandy snifter tip jar. Everyone loved it, so we hammed it up even bigger the next year with a lounge-act-glitter-and-feather-boaglossy poster. Each following year something new was added to the

act -- a bass player, a drummer, a guitarist or two, a sax or three, a trumpet, more singers -- and *voila!* *GAFilk* soon had one of the most amazing house bands ever, *Play it with Moxie*.

A few years later, when Gwen Knighton married a crazy Irishman and moved to England, *Three Weird Sisters* found ourselves one Sister short. Teresa Powell and I loved the TWS music and didn't want it to end, so I suggested that Mary might fill our gaping hole in the band. I mean, come on -- pretty, talented, charming, fun-loving, keyboard singer/songwriter living not too far away in Alabamaland -- Mary was the perfect choice. "Would you like to be our sister?" we asked. She squeeed a little, accepted, and we were oh so grateful to have her.

Becoming a Sister wasn't easy, and Mary worried that she wouldn't be able to match Gwen's sound. At that first rehearsal, T and I were amazed at Mary's ability to not only nearly recreate the harp on her keyboard, but the exact vocal harmonies as well. Eventually we all relaxed into the music and the arrangements moved into new and different and Mary-influenced sounds. We found that we enjoyed this new sound just as much as the old sound. Alabamaland turned out to be farther away than any of us thought, so we rotated practices and shared the driving. Music weekends at Mary's house are always made even better by the magnificent cooking of Wesley Crowell, who delights in filling our tummies with delicious food. Then we really lucked out when Mary's songwriting kicked into overdrive. Other than the handful of D&D-inspired songs, she'd never let herself explore the wide possibilities filk offers. Music with crows and goddesses, myths and heroes, sex and puzzles started pouring out of Mary's mind and hands. Her music students were treated to very unusual songs, by collegiate music class standards, and we even played a concert at the college where many of them sang along.

Mary has this magical power, you see, but she only uses it for good. Don't let that pretty, flirty exterior fool you. Mary is a very strong, complex, passionate, and compassionate person who owns a creative mind and an overwhelming ability to improve everything she touches. Before you know it, you'll find yourself on the floor in Downward Facing Dog position. I consider myself fortunate in the extreme that Mary touched my life. Now she gets to touch yours.
Mwaaahahahahahahaheehheehheee. Squeee.

From the UK: Lissa Allcock

written by Teddy

Those of you who don't already know Lissa probably know of her. Just in case there are people in UK Filkdom who haven't encountered Lissa, however, here's a bit about her.

In addition to being fun, friendly, and helpful, she's very organized.

I've referred to her as Organized Bunny To Filk Fandom for years, and have heard others doing likewise. She's been administering the Filk Fund (you know - that thing that helps conventions afford to bring all those neat overseas Filk Guests over to the UK for the FilkCon each year) for quite some time. She's a victim of her own efficiency there, I'm afraid, as she's likely stuck with the job until she actually resigns the post (triggering a mad scramble to find someone else willing to take it on).

She's been a driving force behind committees running Filk Cons, and is an absolute demon when it comes to selling memberships. Believe me, I've seen people going for their wallets just at her approach with a cash box in hand and a big smile on her face. They know that resistance is futile.

She's the drummer in Phoenix (that's the loud rock-band that made a comeback at this year's FilkCon in February...hmmm... do I need to use "loud" to describe a rock-band, especially Phoenix, or is it a bit redundant?...) and also provides backing vocals and - on sadly rare occasions, so far - lead vocals. I remember one time when the tech-crew were taken completely by surprise by the volume and power of Lissa's voice when she stepped up to take lead on a song.

Fortunately for us all, her confidence in her own voice has taken a justified upswing of late - anyone present for her duet of "Persuasion" with Tom Nanson at this year's FilkCon can bear witness to that - so we'll hopefully be hearing more from her in the future.

Starting with her Guest set at **Duple Time**.

Those who should be committed

Chairbeing, Hotel Liaison, Guest Liaison, Membership, Publications, Programming (both con and website), and chief cook and bottlewasher:

Keris (or Kit to his friends and members of the Galactic Patrol) is a renowned figure (54) on the British Filk scene. Less well known is that he is in fact 6'5" in height, but wears special shoes to make him seem shorter. Even less well known is that Keris was cursed as a baby by an evil fairy, and as a result no matter what clothing he puts on it turns into black jeans and t-shirt. He is a firm follower of the maxim that any technical problem can be fixed by using a bigger hammer; he has yet to discover the screwdriver.

You may remember him from such conventions as the Quinze Filk Festival and Van der Filk (appearing as a committee member), Dixseption, Cre2c3ndo, and FilkCONtinental (as tech head), and many as a member of the nMC and general tech bod.

Nagger to Concom:

The one who v..... - Hilary Croughton who prefers to be called Hilary Ann, grew up with music all around her and developed early a talent for organisation. As a teenager she learnt piano and flute, increased her collection of recorders and spent much of her free time organising fictional school cruises, clubs and other information intensive projects. It was no surprise when she became a Librarian.

Tales of filk conventions as told by Keris, Vera Emlyn and Teddy enticed her to attend Decadence. She enjoys the fellowship of others, meeting new instruments, and playing with babies. She has now fulfilled her ambition of becoming a techie.

Money person (a.k.a. Treasurer):

Matt (or Soir, or "Hey you") is not a good writer of bios. But he is a fuzzy ball of feathers and fur, and since his first con appearance was 2t0nic he's still quite new to this here filk thing. He's Duple Time's treasurer, with the advantage of a few years of concom treasury experience outside filk. So all will be fine, right...?

When not running around being convention-y, he plays piano and guitar, and sings, and writes music. Also, he's a night owl, and you can find him in circles until the right wee hours of the morning.

Master of Ceremonies:

We haven't had one of these before! But other cons have similar things. US ones have a 'toastmaster' (and they don't even serve toast!), and FilkCONtinental has – Franklin! So when we decided that we didn't want to do all the introducing and being amusing, we asked Franklin to do it. Many of you know him already, those who don't have a treat in store.

What you're going to do: Programming

You'll be glad to hear that yes, we will be having programming. At this point we don't know what exactly, because we're waiting to see who wants to Do Stuff. Things planned so far include the usual:

- Guest of Honour sets and workshops
- Concert sets
- Main Concert / 2x10 / OneShots
- Auction

Please contact us if you wish to have a set at the con, timings are not yet decided but we will have at least long and short sets. Sign up forms are included with this PR, please note that the cutoff date is **the end of November** so get your requests in early.

What you're going to do: Volunteering!

You want to volunteer, right? Your Con Needs You!

Areas for volunteering include things like generic tech crew, (coiling cables, shifting stuff, putting up mic stands, etc., no specific tech knowledge needed), arranging chairs and other furniture, helping at the registration desk. If you have specific skills (like knowing how to run a tech desk) then please feel free to add to the list, the form has fields for 'other' activities.

Contact details

Please use the UK address in the next section for general contacts with the committee, or you can email the committee at

c24@contabile.org.uk

Our website is at:

<http://www.contabile.org.uk>

How you join

If you haven't joined already, this PR contains a membership form which you should fill in and send with the appropriate amount of money to the address on the form (and below). If you have joined already, please give the membership form to someone else so that they can join.

Current rates are:

Full	£35 (€42)
Unwaged	£25 (€30)
Infant (under 6)	£1 (€1)
Child (6 to 17)	£1 per year of age (£6 to £17) age 6-12: €7-13, 13-16: €15-19

(The Euro range for children has been split to avoid fractions. If you really want to do the calculation yourself, feel free...)

The rates may rise closer to the convention.

Day rates at the con will be higher (the cost for two days will be roughly the same as for a full membership at the prevailing rate)..

Membership List

Just for a change, this is in membership number order (names are as they would appear on a badge). Hopefully you will be able to find your name somewhere, if you have joined. Type of membership is C for committee, G for guest, and A for adult, K for 6-17, I for under 6. (And yes, there are gaps where some people have had to pull out.)

C 1 Keris	A 33 Alison Richards
C 2 Soir	A 34 Mike Richards
C 3 Hilary Ann	A 35 Roger Robinson
G 4 Mary Crowell	A 36 Tony Rogers
G 5 Lissa Allcock	A 37 Songbird
A 6 Mad Logician	A 38 Brenda
A 7 Kate	A 39 Bill
A 8 Diana Joan Bass	A 40 Nat
A 9 Aunty Marion	A 41 Melusine
A 10 Michael Bernardi	A 42 Colin
A 11 Liz	A 43 Peter Tyers
A 12 Deborah	A 44 Zander Nyron
K 13 Alistair	A 45 Countess Axylides
K 14 Abi	A 46 Peter Wareham
K 15 Rachel	A 47 Gwen Funnell
A 16 Rafe Culpin	A 51 Kathy Westhead
A 17 Miki	A 52 Mike Westhead
A 18 Sue Edwards	A 53 Peter Westhead
A 19 Andy GK	A 54 Karen Westhead
A 20 Martin GK	A 55 Katie Draibach
A 21 Franklin	A 56 Dale Williamson
A 22 Rick	A 57 tiggy
A 23 Ju	X 58 +1
A 24 Valerie	A 59 Silke
A 25 Rika	A 60 Phil Allcock
A 26 Jackie	K 61 Alex Allcock
A 27 Minnow	I 62 Amy Allcock
A 28 Tom	A 63 Jenny Blackburn
A 29 Teddy	A 64 Smurf
A 30 Omega	A 65 Bine
A 31 Emily Raftery	A 66 Anna
A 32 Andrew January	