

Van der Filk UK Filk Convention

Progress Report One

5th to 7th February 2010

at the
Grantham Ramada Hotel

Featuring
Gwen Knighton Raftery
and
Vixy and Tony

and a cast of thousands (well, a hundred or so anyway)

Introduction

Welcome to the first Progress Report of the Van der Filk convention. Only a couple more of these things to write after this one, and that means only a couple more for you to read and then there will be het boek van programmering (or in English the Programme Book) which you will be able to ignore as usual and enjoy the con.

Why “Van der Filk”? We had originally intended to exploit French numbers to contrive a suitable pun for the name, and mount the whole convention in the back of a Ford Transit van which would spend the whole convention weekend driving along the French autoroutes, thus saving hotel function space and campsite costs, and guaranteeing there'd always be something new and interesting to look at out of the windows if you got bored with the music... But then we added up the hire cost of the string of 97 caravans for accomodation, plus fuel for 100 vehicles (that's including the flatbed carrying the two portaloos, and the hot dog van), plus the cost of carbon credits to offset our footprint, plus the sheer damn fiddliness of setting up rope bridges between all those moving vehicles so people could get about... and it all started to look a little bit impractical. So we ended up keeping the name (but with an extra "r"), and justifying its use by hiring a retired Dutch detective to investigate the suitability of various British hotels instead. And that's how we came to be right back here at Grantham... and why the con's called "Van der Filk".

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 fourth filkcon at this hotel. It has a good selection of function space and enough bedrooms, a bar, a restaurant, and a large area for socialising.

Room rates and booking information will be published when they have been finalised with the hotel, but we don't expect them to be much different from last year.

Guests of Hono(u)r

From the UK: Gwen Knighton Raftery written by Brenda Sutton

Gwen Knighton Raftery discovered filk at DragonCon 2000 when a pal dragged her to the filk room saying, "You're really gonna love this stuff." There she was invited to a pagan gathering by the Suttons where they instantly assimilated her and her harps into the the band, *Year and a Day*. Weekly lyric rehearsals attended only by the women of the group evolved into the trio *Three Weird Sisters*. In addition to two CDs with TWS (*Rite the First Time* and *Hair of the Frog*), Gwen has a solo CD (*Box of Fairies* -- so named as an explanation to a clueless person who wanted to know where all the pretty music comes from.)

Gwen met Joe Raftery at the Sutton annual New Year's party. It sounds clichè, but it was love at first sight. Gwen packed up harps and household and, with young son Gavin, moved to London, and then almost immediately to Singapore for a year. Upon returning to the UK with an extensive acquired knowledge of oriental cooking, Joe and Gwen married in a Renaissance wedding at the British filk con in 2006. The happy couple set up household in London. Gwen is a caring, creative, determined person who, when she puts her will to it, can do just about anything. Just to show you how determined she is, in the last year Gwen has lost nearly a whole person's worth of weight -- and she looks FANTASTIC! She's a prolific knitter, songwriter, poet, writer writer writer. You rarely see her without either a pen or a pair of knitting needles in her hands. Modern Renaissance woman that she is, Gwen has won awards, GoHed, run conventions, lectured, taught, directed, laughed, hugged, sung, storied... Ghods, I miss her.

From the US of A: Vixy and Tony written by Seanan McGuire

Having been performing together since 2005--only a few short years; only the better part of forever--Michelle "Vixy" Dockrey and Tony Fabris are two halves of a perfect musical whole. Creative, charming, sweet,

endearing office mouse meets debonair, precise, practiced, methodical code monkey, and a beautiful thing is born. Life is a constant zoo day with Vixy and Tony around, and we mean that in the very best of ways. Between the two of them, they dabble in almost every artistic endeavour you can name, and master more than a few.

Vixy first came to filk as part of the trio Escape Key, and one of her very first well-known songs, "The Girl That's Never Been," went on to win a Pegasus Award. Tony, meanwhile, was entertaining audiences all over the West Coast, often hand-in-parody with Jeff and Maya Bohnhoff. It was inevitable that Tony and Vixy would meet, and that they would make magic together. We just had no idea how much. (An album. A Pegasus Award for Best Performers. Another for their song, "Emerald Green," which sings Seattle's praises in a way any city would envy. A world.) Now, they're coming to England. All the world should be so lucky.

Those who should be committed

Chairbeing: Paul Bristow arrived late, flustered and complaining loudly on 26th May 1965. Not much has changed since, except the filking, which he rather enjoys. (Thanks Miki. =:o}) Since Vibraphone he's averaged about 2-and-a-half songs a year, some of which aren't too bad (and a few of which have even been finished!) In order to compensate for this guilty pleasure, he has once again forced himself to endure being on a convention committee (having previously served time on both the Decadence and Quinze concoms).

A man with absolutely no innate organisational ability, he is, we feel, ideally suited to ~~being stampeded by~~ herding his fellow ~~eats~~ concom members, as Van der Filk's ~~hiding under the~~ chair-person.

Hotel Liaison, Guest Liaison, Membership: Mike Whitaker ran his first filkcon (Contabile) in... um... yeah.. a while ago. Mostly because he didn't run fast enough. Since then, he's helped run Transept, Xllophone and Contabile Fortean. This time, he actually volunteered, citing a handy recent US tour of conventions as qualification to be GoH Liaison, and proximity to the hotel for Hotel Liaison.

Outside of conrunning, he also has Big Ideas in filk and manages to persuade other people to help make them happen - see Phoenix for one, and the 'no, we couldn't possibly ever stage this like that' Before The Dawn musical at aXXIdental for another.

Publican – er, Publications: Keris (or Kit to his friends and members of the Galactic Patrol) is a renowned figure 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. 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 (appearing as a committee member), Dixseption and FilkCONTinental (as tech head), and many as a member of the nMC and general tech bod.

Money person (a.k.a. Treasurer): Not a lot is known about our Treasurer. Some say that he was on the Decadence concom, and that he currently occupies a Heisenberg-type locus somewhere in the south of England. All we know is, he's called Colin...

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, and a lot of that is for you to tell us what you want to do. We do know that there will be concerts from our guests, workshops, and maybe a game or two. 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.

Contact details

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

vanderfilk@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:

- Adult and waged: £32 / US\$46 / €36
- Child or unwaged: £16 / US\$23 / €18
- Infant (under 6) or soft toy: £1 / US\$1 / €1

These rates will increase at the con to £35 / £17 / £1.

Day rates at the con will be: Friday: £10; Saturday: £20; Sunday: £15.

UK Residents

Cheques payable to **Van der Filk**

Post to:

Van der Filk
c/o The Mill House
1379 Lincoln Road
Werrington
Peterborough
PE4 6LT

US Residents

Checks payable to **Colin Tuckley**

Mail to:

Van der Filk
c/o 9838 W Fond Du Lac Ave Apt 5
Milwaukee, WI 53224-5239
USA

We are still sorting out a European representative for payments, please contact us at the UK address or by email for details.

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You could draw your own pictures, or write a song.

Or not, as you like.

Membership List

Committee and guests are first, everyone else is sorted by badge name if any, otherwise surname and forename. 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 M for everyone else.

C Paul Bristow	M Kate
C Colin	M Janet Maughan
C Keris	M Robert Maughan
C Mike Whitaker	M Melusine
G Gwen Knighton Raftery	M Miki
G Tony	M Minnow
G Vixy	M Tom Nanson
M Lissa Allcock	M Nat
M Philip Allcock	M Alison Richards
M Aunty Marion	M Mike Richards
M Azakir Devaris	M Rick H
M Barbara	M Rika
M Andrew Barton	M Roger Robinson
M Michael Bernardi	M Tony Rogers
M Bill	M Songbird
M Brenda	M Tarkara Kamaris
M Abigail Crook	M Teddy
M Alistair Crook	M The Magician
M Deborah Crook	M Peter Tyers
M Liz Crook	M Valerie
M Rachel Crook	M Vera Emlyn
M Rafe Culpin	M Vera's Zimmerframe
M Dave S	M Peter Wareham
M Lawrence Dean	M Karen Westhead
M DJ Bass	M Kathy Westhead
M Footloose Filker	M Mike Westhead
M Gwen Funnell	M Peter Westhead
M Rhodri James	M Tricia Williams
M Jessica	M Zelandeth
M John	M Ωmega
M Ju	