

Season 75

Twenty Sixth
British Easter Science Fiction
Convention

Progress Report

NUMBER FOUR / MARCH 1975

Quiet, isn't it?

Yes, everyone's
gone to Coventry

SEACON 75

The 26th Annual British Science Fiction Convention

(De Vere Hotel, Coventry - March 28th-31st, 1975)

Guest of Honour: Harry Harrison

Committee: *Chairman: Malcolm Edwards (S Arklow)*
Secretary: Bob Holdstock (S Aulton)
Treasurer: Peter Roberts

John Brennan (Films)

Graham Charnock

Fat Charnock (Finney Press)

Christine Edwards

Ray Kettle

John Piggott (Don Photos/Slides)

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Suddenly it's Seacon! After the best part of a year during which the whole thing seemed impossibly remote and not quite real, the last couple of months have sped by in a matter of hours, and here we are with Easter less than four weeks away (as this is typed). Is this the time to reveal that it was all a joke -- that there is no such hotel as the De Vere, that Harry Harrison is still living in California, and that the entire committee is going to Clacton for Easter? No, perhaps we had better maintain the pretence right up to the end. Just remember that the Tuesday after the convention is April 1st... (As well as being Peter Roberts' birthday -- which, one feels, is taking April Fool jokes a little too far.)

This Progress Report is mostly about how to get to Coventry, and what to do when you get there.

GETTING TO COVENTRY

Coventry is nothing if not central (although, of course, it is central in a south-easterly sort of way, if you tilt the map a bit). Motorways and railways converge on it from all directions. There is even an airport, where natives have sometimes seen the Great White Birds coming in to land. Public transport is easy and relatively quick from almost any part of Britain. As a guide to what you must expect to pay, here are a few sample fares from different parts of the country.

	<u>RAIL</u>			<u>COACH</u>
	<u>day</u> <u>return</u>	<u>weekend</u> <u>return</u>	<u>17 day</u> <u>return</u>	<u>standard</u> <u>return</u>
<u>Bristol</u>	£3.19	£4.00	£4.50	£2.15
<u>Liverpool</u>	£3.44	£4.33	£4.90	none
<u>London</u>	£3.12	£4.68	£5.27	£2.20
<u>Manchester</u>	£3.44	£4.33	£4.90	£2.05
<u>Newcastle</u>	£6.47	£8.11	£8.85	£5.65

This table makes interesting reading for lovers of consistency. Discounting Newcastle, it is intriguing to see that though the day return from London is the cheapest available, the weekend and 17-day returns are the most expensive of the four.

Incidentally, the coach fares may have increased by Easter. When we obtained these figures a request for a fare increase was in the process of being made. Add 20% and you should be safe.

The rail weekend return should be valid if you are coming to Coventry no earlier than the Friday, and leaving no later than the Monday. If you are arriving earlier or leaving later, you should be able to get a 17 day return (but these should be booked in advance).

Now, let us assume that you have managed to get to Coventry by whatever means. What now? Well, there is a map on the centre pages of this report, and detailed instructions for finding the hotel from the station are to be found there. (It isn't far, but the centre of Coventry can be baffling to the newcomer — though it must be added that the committee managed to find it without trouble on their first visit. But then, we are unusually talented.)

If you come by coach, you will arrive at the Pool Meadow Bus Station. Disembark from the coach, collect your luggage, stretch your legs, and look over the road. You should see a large, modern building with a sign saying 'De Vere Hotel'. If there's nothing like that to be seen, chances are you got on the wrong coach and you are in Glasgow.

If you come by car, the simplest thing to do is to head into Coventry and get on the Ringway. You can then zoom round and round the city centre until you see a sign for the Swanswell interchange (it will doubtless also direct you to the cathedral). That brings you off the motorway right by the hotel. In case of any difficulty, just remember that when you have found the cathedral, you have also found the hotel (the cathedral is the one with the stained glass).

Parking should present no problem. We are assured that the 600-car multi-story park adjoining the hotel will be open all over the Easter weekend. It is a cheap, long-stay car-park, costing about 15p per day (5p on Sundays). If your vehicle is over 6'9" in height, it will not be able to use this car park, but there should still be no problem. The map shows 21 different car parks in the central area. They are numbered on the map. Nos. 1 and 2 are expensive; the rest are at the same rate as the Fairfax Street park. No. 7, also in Fairfax Street, is the nearest.

HOTEL ARRANGEMENTS

Registrations continue to roll in steadily. As this is written, the De Vere is still not quite filled — but it is a matter of 9 rooms out of 205. Around 320 people have booked into the hotel. So far we have not had to book anyone into an overflow hotel. Anyone deciding to come at the last minute is highly unlikely to find a room at the De Vere — but don't worry, we'll find you somewhere to stay.

The main convention lounge is in the Cavondish Suite, which is virtually adjacent to the convention hall. The bar here will open at 10:30 am each morning, and will remain open as long as there is still a demand. On Sunday night an additional bar will open in the main hall during the dance, at about 10 pm; both bars will then remain open for the duration. These bars are for convention members only. There is also the Taverna Bar, on the ground floor, which is open to the public and which will keep normal hours.

Breakfast will be served in the downstairs Terrace Room restaurant, from 8:30 to 10:00 am each morning. The main course will be a standard mixed grill, unless you specifically request

otherwise. Alternatively, continental breakfast is available by room service.

The hotel has two restaurants. The Terrace Room offers a good range of fairly inexpensive snacks and meals, and should be ideal for many convention members. Otherwise, there is the Three Spires restaurant, which is a good deal more plush, but not unreasonable, given that all its prices are fully inclusive. Anyway, what the hell, you can add it to your bill so it isn't real money. Filet de Boeuf Wellington, anyone?

CONVENTION ARRANGEMENTS

Registration The Registration Desk will be open from 8:00 pm to 10:00 pm on Thursday evening, and from 10:00 am to 6:00 pm on Friday and Saturday. When you register you will be given your Convention Booklet, a copy of the programme, various pieces of paper of great importance, your banquet ticket (where applicable) and, who knows?, maybe something else as well. We know you've heard this before but: please wear your convention badge at all times. If not, you are liable to accosted by a suspicious committee member. We would rather not bother, but with conventions the size they now are, this is unfortunately necessary.

(continued on page 8)

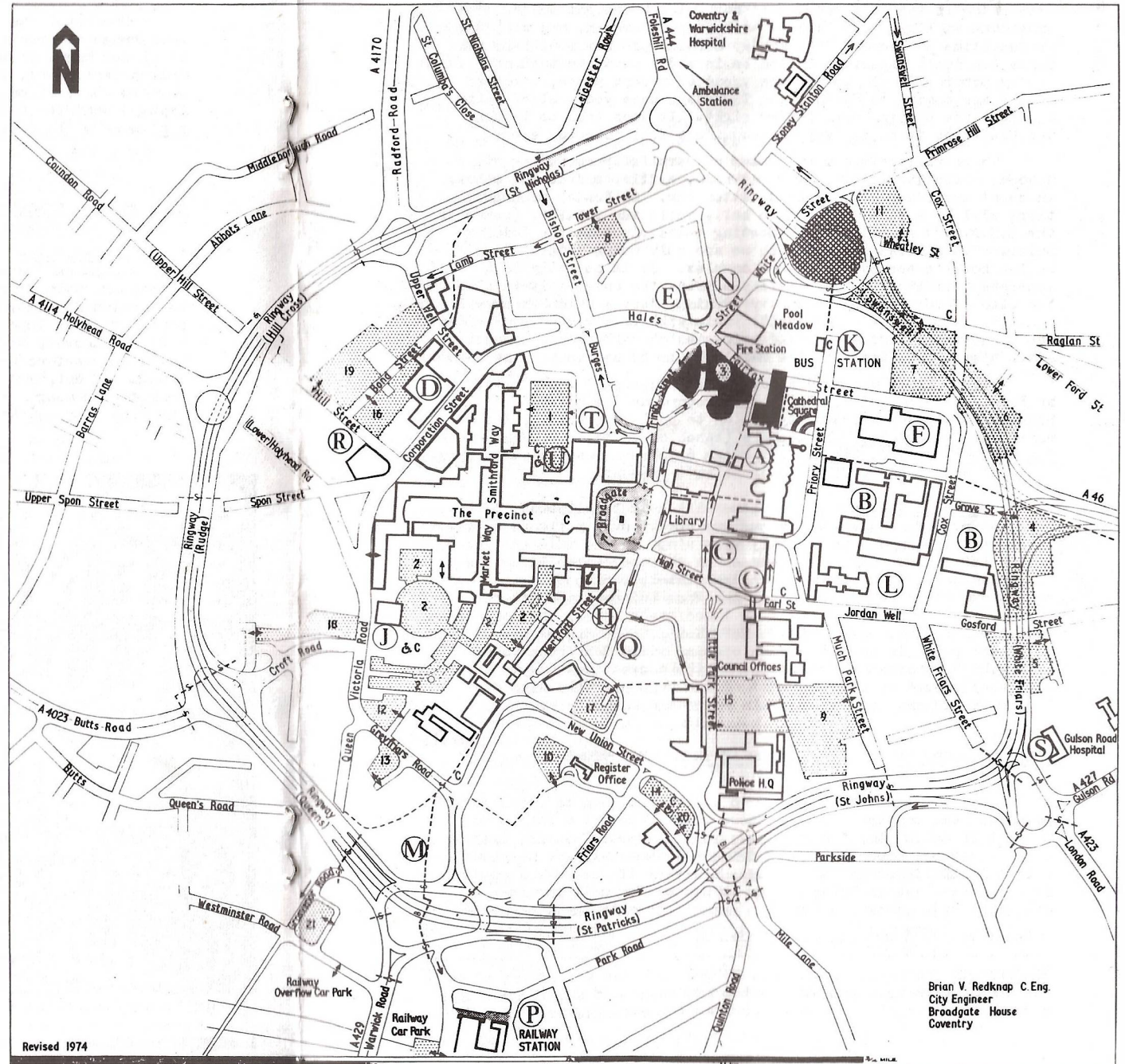
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COVENTRY

PLAN OF CENTRAL AREA WITH CAR PARKS

On your right is a map of the city centre, which we hope will print clearly. The De Vere Hotel is the black reverse 'L' shape immediately to the left of Cathedral Square. The multi-storey car park is the complex black area to the left of the De Vere.

The railway station is at the bottom of the map (don't worry -- the whole thing is only 1 mile square). To get by foot from the station to the hotel, it is quickest to follow the footpath indicated by a dotted line on the map. This crosses the motorway interchange by a system of subways and bridges, and goes up just to the right of the large letter 'M' on the map. Another subway takes you under Greyfriars Road, then you proceed straight ahead and up Hertford Street, which is part of the central pedestrian precinct. You will emerge into a small pedestrian plaza, with the Post Office (letter 'H') on your right, a cinema on your left, and the National Westminster Bank straight ahead. Bear to the right of the Nat. West. and you will emerge into Broadgate. Walk up the right side of Broadgate, past the excavations, and turn right along another footpath (the dotted line just above the library). This will take you between the old and new cathedrals and into Priory Street. Turn left, walk down to Cathedral Square, and voilà!



Programme Events With one or two exceptions, these all take place in the main convention hall, the Connaught Suite. The programme will begin at 2:15 pm on Friday afternoon, and will end at lunchtime on Monday. The Monday morning programme will be all films (we don't expect anyone to be in a fit state to talk on Monday morning!). Following the trend of recent years, a lot of people are coming to Coventry on Thursday; this year, also, quite a number are staying over Monday night. It does look as though the Eastercon is on its way to becoming a full four-day event.

There will be two main pieces of parallel programming at Seacon. Each involves, on the one hand, a film, and on the other, an event involving a minority of attendees. On Sunday morning there will be a film in the main hall, while the B.S.F.A. (remember the B.S.F.A.?) annual general meeting takes place in the Fairfax Suite. The Fairfax Suite, which we are only using intermittently, is the hotel's second conference complex. It is actually in a separate building, but immediately adjoins the hotel. It is also the site of the banquet on Sunday evening, during which there will again be a film in the main hall. This will be timed to end before the presentation of awards and prizes which follows the banquet. (This also allows time for the main hall to be set up for the dance.)

Other events arranged since Progress Report 3 include talks by Peter Nicholls and Tom Shippey, a report on the progress of the British Interplanetary Society's plan to build a starship, and two more films -- Night of the Leapers (based on Russell Bradton's novel Year of the Angry Rabbit) and, barring unforeseen last-minute snags, the 1974 Hugo winning film, Woody Allen's Sleeper.

Book Room and Art Show These will both be situated in the Pine Suite. (The convention rooms are spread over 3 floors of the hotel, but the layout is actually very simple. The main hall is on the 1st floor, with direct access to the convention lounge on the 2nd floor. This, in turn, is immediately adjacent to the stairs and lifts -- as, also, are the Pine Suite on the 3rd floor, and the Fandom Room, which will be immediately across the corridor from the Pine Suite. Got that? No? Well, there are plenty of signs.) It is not possible to fix precise opening times for these rooms, but they will be prominently displayed at the convention. It is intended that they should be open for most of the day, probably with a gap during the afternoon when the main programme is going on.

WILL THERE BE ANY ROOM FOR FANDOM AT THIS CONVENTION?

Well, despite the tendency to give precedence to intellectual pursuits* and science fiction, there will indeed be a fandom room. It will be called the Fandom Room. In it, besides amazing displays of duplicating, stencilling and drinking, there will be numerous rotten little fanzines on display. However, if you have a good fanzine, and wish to bring copies to Seacon for sale (or free distribution), you are welcome to deposit them in the fandom room,

* Peter Presford chasing Gerald Bishop?

VOLUNTEERS We would, of course, be grateful for any offers of help on the registration desk or looking after the art show. Drop us a line or see one of us when you arrive if you'd like to. Thanks.

and we will take care of them for you, leaving you to enjoy the convention to the full (or watch TV). If you want to do so, please let the committee (preferably Mr Kettle or Mr Piggott) know as soon as you can on arrival.

Also, if you have any photographs or slides of past conventions, past fans, or Helen Flitch of the Naughty Paris Club, and you would be willing for the committee's sticky fingers to handle them, please bring them along. Many of you have indicated your willingness to do so on your hotel booking forms -- our apologies for not having contacted you individually, but there were many more offers than we had anticipated.

KEN McINTYRE MEMORIAL AWARD

Ken McIntyre, who died from a heart attack in 1968, was an artist whose work appeared during the 1950s in New Worlds, Nebula and Science Fantasy. Ken was a keen sf fan, a regular convention-goer, and a Knight of St Fantasy. He was always willing to do work for amateur magazines, and his work can be seen in many fanzines of the last 20 years. Three people suggested independently that some form of memorial was needed, and after discussion the Ken McIntyre Memorial Award was formulated. Although there are awards for sf, there is no other award for artwork presented in Britain. It was felt that an award for art would help give encouragement to young artists in the field as well as give some form of reward to established artists. Rules for entry are as follows:

1. The Ken McIntyre Memorial Award will be presented annually to the artist who, in the opinion of the judges, submits the most deserving piece of artwork.
2. The artist must be resident in the United Kingdom.
3. The piece of artwork must have appeared in an amateur publication during the twelve months January to December preceding the Easter at which the award is made.
4. The piece of artwork must be accompanied by a copy of the publication in which it appeared.
5. The subject matter of the piece of artwork must, in the opinion of the judges, be fantasy or science fiction.
6. Each panel of judges may alter these rules for the following year: these rules shall be published and once published may not be altered in that year.
7. The judges shall be: Roger G. Peyton, Jim Marshall, Keith Freeman (or other Knight of St Fantasy), J. Michael Rosenblum (or other B.S.F.A. representative), and the Chairman of the convention committee ((hey, that's me!)).

The piece of artwork may be submitted by the artist himself or by the editor of the publication in which it appeared. The original, together with a copy of the publication, must be handed to one of the judges on the first day of the convention (Friday March 28th). If for any reason it cannot be handed in until the Saturday, Roger Peyton should be notified in writing prior to the convention. The entries will be displayed in the Art Room or Fandom Room and the Award presented on Sunday evening.

The rest is up to you. Remember, the piece must be from a publication appearing between January 1974 and December 1974.

Roger G. Peyton, 131 Gillhurst Road, Warborne, Birmingham, B17 8PG

REGISTRATIONS RECEIVED (16th January - 8th March 1975)

328	Henry Skoglund (Swe)	366	Margaret Roberts	404	Keith Henderson
329	Per Osterman (Swe)	367	Edward Jackson	405	Paul Rogers
330	Janice Wiles	368	T. Paul Williams	406	Douglas Hill
331	Liese Phillips	369	Leslie Flood	407	G.B. Smith
332	Catherine Sherlock	370	John Mottershead	408	Ann Quinn
333	Syd A. Beach	371	Milton A. Strain	409	P.W.H. Seddon
334	David Tate	372	Ewa Sejby (Swe)	410	D.M. Woolfenden
335	Paul Ryan	373	Andrea Boicelli	411	Alex Glondinning
336	Luigi Perinelli	374	Anna Boicelli	412	Michael Thomas
337	Helen McCarthy	375	Eugenio Marchi	413	William Hayos
338	Richard Dowell	376	Romana Marchi	414	Stephen Jones
339	Alan Brown	377	Julian Le Saux	415	Mavis Taylor
340	Andrew May	378	Peggy White	416	Shirley Torrrens
341	Edith May	379	Nick Hardy	417	S. Lovatt
342	Michael Brown	380	George Jones	418	Eric Gernsback
343	Carol Gregory	381	Urban Gunnarsson (S)	419	Eaianne Cooke
344	R.H. Plough	382	Jonathan Rubinstein	420	Paul Dillon
345	D. West	383	Nerf Adamson	421	Anders Reuterswaerd (Swe)
346	A. West	384	Eric Bentcliffe	422	Sverre Schriwer (Swe)
347	Elaine Nash	385	James Lesurf	423	Lena Karlin (Swe)
348	Kevin Williams	386	John Gilbert	424	R.C. Hansen
349	W.F.P. Merriman	387	Duncan A. Lunan	425	Gary Kluepfel (Ger)
350	Mike Thompson	388	Miss L. Donnelly	426	Uschi Kluepfel (Ger)
351	Kelvin Jones	389	Ian Barber	427	Dannie Plachta (US)
352	Deborah Jones	390	Edna Biggles	428	Mary Judge
353	R.O. McLean	391	Sven Ch. Swahn (Swe)	429	Banks Mebane (US)
354	Stephen Wilson	392	Sheryl Lynn	430	Jean Berman (US)
355	Margaret Frost	393	Phill Gundy	431	Philippe Hupp (Fr)
356	D.B. Staves	394	Adrian Mellor	432	Mrs Hupp (Fr)
357	Chris Jordan	395	Tony Peacock	433	Dave Holmes
358	Paul R. Cole	396	Janet Link	434	David Elroi
359	Ian Lambert	397	Tom Shippey	435	Charles Nightingale
360	David Knight	398	Michael Walshe	436	Cheryl Harvey
361	Allen A. Lucas	399	Martin Ricketts	437	Julia Baynes
362	Karel Thole (It)	400	Maureen Ricketts	438	Christopher Pluckrose
363	Mrs Thole (It)	401	Timothy Apps	439	R. Sneddon
364	Francis T. Laney	402	R.L. Stewart	440	Graham Howard
365	Claude Degler	403	Stephen Thomas	441	Roger Bates

LAST THOUGHTS

A quick mention that if you want a banquet ticket you had better write pronto. The number we can accommodate is flexible, but we have to give the hotel a final number a few days before Easter. £3.45, remember.

And Don't Forget: your fancy dress; your artwork, if you're bringing some; photos or slides or fanzines for the Fandom room; auction material -- anything is welcome, so please dig out spare books, fanzines, etc. And we will see you in a couple of weeks.

So ends the Last Seacon Progress Report. Now for Coventry. Im taking a couple of books along and even if I cant read them Ill practise hard and maybe I wont forget every thing I lerned. If I try reel hard maybe Ill be a littel bit smarter than I was before the operashun. I got my rabbits foot and my luky penny and maybe they will help me.

P.S. Please if you get a chansu put some flowrs on Holdstocks kitens grave in the bak yard . . .

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AT

SEACON

Beyond Apollo

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—*Edmund Cooper, The Sunday Times*

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