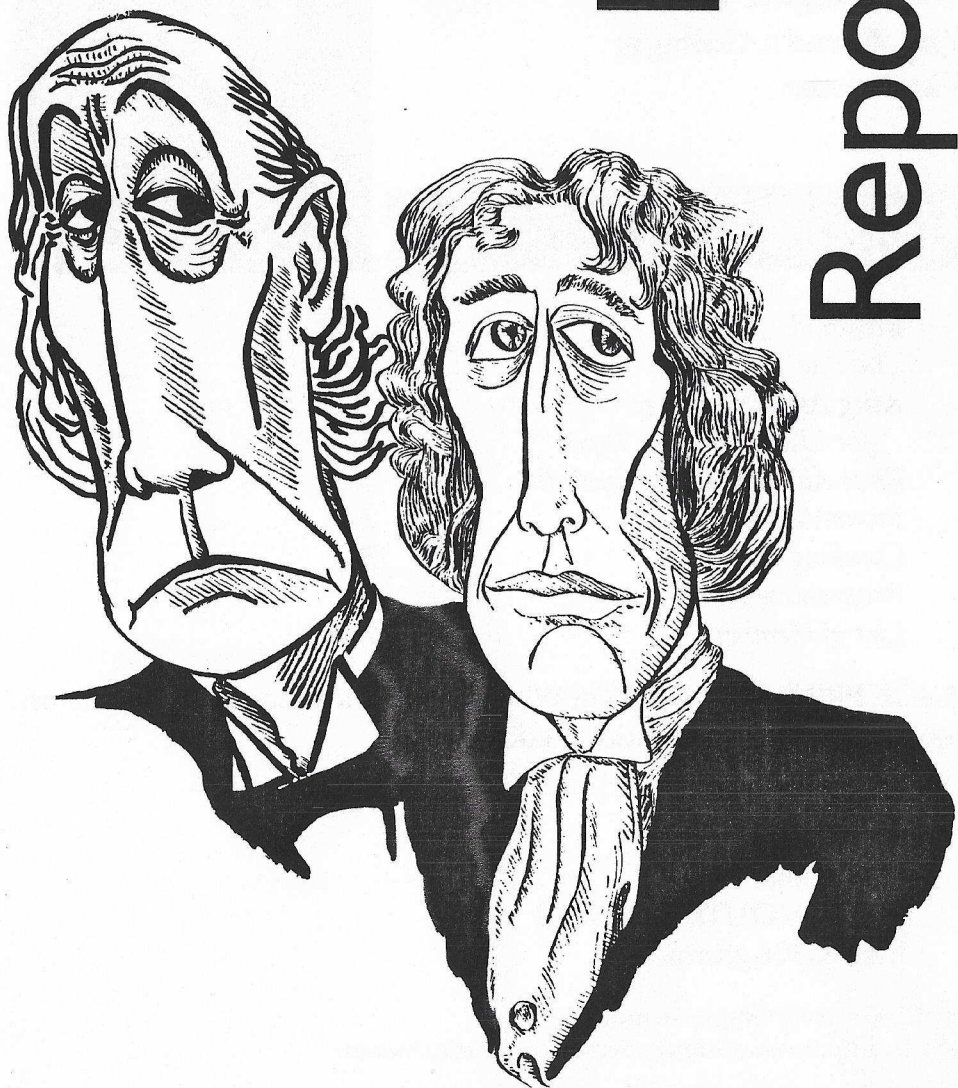


WINCON V

Unicon 1999

Report 2



13–15 August 1999

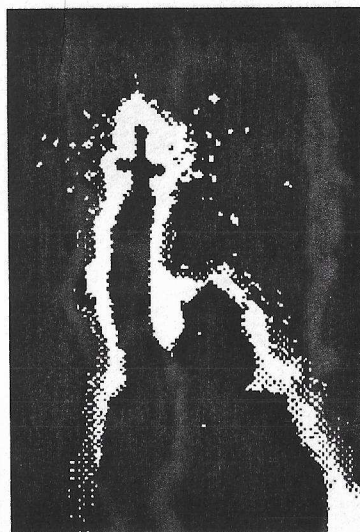
King Alfred's College, Winchester

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Winchester

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LARGE PRINT VERSIONS of Wincon V publications are available on request from the convention's address:

Wincon V
53 Havant Road
North End
PORTSMOUTH PO2 7HH
United Kingdom

E-mail: wincon@pompey.demon.co.uk

Website: <http://www.pompey.demon.co.uk/wincon.htm>

Special thanks go to Jasper Smithers again for the cover artwork.

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Editorial

At last you have Report 2 in your grasp. This time we've broken with tradition and didn't publish at Novacon as we have done in previous years. Similarly, Report 3 will be published at the end of June instead of at Reconvene.

There are a couple of things to deal with in this report, for instance, you should have received an accommodation booking form and a volunteer form—if you didn't, please let us know—if you need another copy of the volunteer form and have Web access, you can complete our on-line version at <http://www.pompey.demon.co.uk/winvolun.htm>. If you don't have Web access or require another accommodation form, please let us know at the convention address. Please note that accommodation forms are only available to *attending* members of Wincon V. Please read the booking form carefully before filling it in and returning it to us. There's a membership form on the back of this report in case you are reading a friend's copy and would like to join.

Previous Wincon members will be aware that the site is a college and therefore offers single rooms—if you need a double room, or would like something more up-market than this, then your best bet is to contact the tourist office in Winchester to arrange suitable rooms. There are a number of guest houses within a few minutes' walk of King Alfred's College. The Winchester tourist office's address is:

Tourist Information Centre
Guildhall
Broadway
Winchester
SO23 9LJ

Tel: (01962) 840500
Fax: (01962) 841365

There are a few announcements scattered throughout this report. Please read them—you might find something you'd like to join in with, or at least need to know about.

Pete Wright

The Site

Accommodation

The accommodation has greatly improved since last time we were at the site. The rooms have been redecorated and new carpets laid. All the rooms are single occupancy—each room has a hand basin, but a shower and a kitchen is shared between six rooms. Nothing else is provided with the room except a small towel. All members staying overnight should bring their own soap and toiletries.

If you have problems using stairs, please indicate this on the booking form and we will try to provide you with a room on the ground floor

Each kitchen has a fridge. If you are diabetic and require a fridge for insulin, one can be provided in the room. Again, please indicate this on the room booking form.

Pay phones are clearly marked near the entrances of the block. All the rooms are non-smoking, although it is possible to smoke in the kitchens, if you are in a smoking area. Please note on the booking form which area you would prefer.

Facilities

The both site bars have been redecorated. The main bar will be for the convention's exclusive use. The smaller bar is for other people staying at the College.

The College is installing a ramp to allow wheelchairs into the John Stripe Theatre. A lift has been installed so people can go between the main building and the bars.

Parking

Parking is available for members, down at The Dytche. Tickets for parking are required, and these can be obtained at registration. Disabled people will be able to park their car nearer the accommodation if necessary.

The car park immediately outside the John Stripe Theatre will be reserved for the use of the committee and exhibitors only.

Anne-Marie Wright

King Alfred's College for Electrical Eggs Types

After having had our site visit I'm happy to report that we will have a limited number of rooms that will be partially accessible and that most of the site will be accessible, albeit with some awkwardness.

The accommodation block we are using has five rooms that can be accessed relatively easily, although there is a 100mm (4in) step into the building. This is the biggest step you would have to deal with. The biggest problem would be the lack of accessible toilets and showers in the accommodation block which means that anyone who normally uses wheels to get around needs to be able to walk about 6–12 m (18–36 ft) to use the block sensibly. This is the biggest constraint on access for members without a doubt as the main building are accessible (one with an "interesting" route to get in) with a fully accessible loo in one place.

A lift is available to all levels of the site, which is large enough for normal electric wheelchairs etc. The access from the accommodation block to the lift is interesting since it is over the roof of the bar! Note that this lift is for the sole use of people with movement difficulties.

The Winchester Shopmobility people seem quite happy with the idea of hiring scooters, or powered or manual wheelchairs for those who may need to use them to enjoy the convention fully. The details will be available closer to the time but look to be quite cheap at the moment. If you consider that you may want to hire one, please let us know sooner rather than later as it improves our chances of arranging hire.

If you have any questions or would like clarification on any of the above, please get in touch and Andt Croft will be happy to help

Andy Croft

First Aid Volunteers Needed!

Are you a qualified First-aider? Would you be prepared to help out at Wincon? If so, please get in touch with us—contact details are given inside the front cover. Thanks!

StormWatch

StormWatch was one of those titles that really didn't have too much to distinguish it. The idea of an international group of super-heroes operating under the auspices of the United Nations to fight world challenges was hardly a new one. The characters were not particularly inspired. The imagery not overly original. It ambled along without setting the industry on fire. Then came Warren Ellis.

Ellis took over the writing of *StormWatch* after "Fire From Heaven", one of those mammoth crossover stories which have bedevilled the industry since DC published "Crisis On Infinite Earths" in an effort to sort out the problems raised in continuity by nearly 50 years of publication. The events of "Fire From Heaven" provided an opportunity to re-examine the basic relationships within *StormWatch*. The organization had failed in the task for which it had been set up. The world had been saved but this had been despite, rather than because of, *StormWatch*'s efforts. In the old days this would have been enough however Ellis is one of those writers who believe that actions have consequences.

A large number of the characters really were unsalvageable. Ellis had them fired. Now this was interesting. People had been thrown off before, they had stormed out swearing revenge, resigned for personal or medical reasons or had just been written out between episodes. Very few had been made redundant with a full package of benefits.

The military aspects of *StormWatch* were brought to the fore. These people were soldiers not vigilantes. Off duty they hang out in bars, go cruising for fights and work out the best way to get laid. Occasionally this last results in setting their quarters on fire and orders to report immediately to the commander's office. ("Notice that I said nothing about getting dressed first.")

At the same time the political and diplomatic implications of a United Nations independent Task Force were examined. Hostilities between the UN and the US escalate. One of the redundant *StormWatch* officer is murdered by US intelligence agents. In revenge a major US covert operation is blown. A terrorist nation blows up a plane over the UK releasing a biological weapon. In response a punishment team is sent in to destroy property and to kill precisely the same number of people as died in the original incident.

This was most definitely not *The Avengers*.

Warren Ellis spent around two years on *StormWatch*. The first year culminated in the team uncovering the agenda of their commanding officer to create the New World Order in his own image. The second ended with the deaths of just about everyone and the destruction of their satellite head quarters. In his closing remarks at the end of the series Ellis explained that he had run out of stories to tell about the present team and so he had decided to stop telling them. He does, however, have more stories to tell about some of the surviving characters. He'll start doing that next year in a new series called *The Authority*.

I'm looking forward to *The Authority* in which the *StormWatch* covert intelligence operation will go even further underground and face the question of what one does with the great responsibility that comes with great power. I don't know whether we shall have any more revelations like the discovery that one of the post human gaseous entities in the team was having an orgasm every seven minutes ("Please don't tell my mother"). Or scenes when a detective who, in a series of alien abductions, has been transformed into an entity designed for living in cities hangs a serial killer who is the syphilitic son of an assassinated president and a dead movie star on afternoon television. However given Ellis's track record I have definite hopes.

John Richards

Quaffing Contest

In a recent novel Kara Dalkey describes her hero as quaffing his mug of sour ale in a single gulp. So, when we heard that she was to be joining us at Wincon we could not resist the opportunity to demonstrate this ancient English art and to prove absolutely that when there is any quaffing to be done it cannot possibly be done in a single gulp.

We are on the look out for expert quaffers either individually or in teams and if at the end of this synchronized quaffing is not to be an Olympic sport then it will not be our fault. Remember that quaffing is more a matter of theatrics than engineering and points will be given for style rather than brute speed. It should also be noted that alcohol is not utterly essential—although the rubberising effects that alcohol has on the limbs is a difficult trick to be duplicated by the sober.

Right, that should be all the standard objections dealt with. You have no excuses left. Come to Wincon and quaff for England's Glory, and God Save The Queen!

Programme News

The problem about writing a piece for a Wincon PR about the programme is not what to put in but what to leave out. Some conventions go through agonies trying to decide what fans want. We take the position that we are fans and if we want to see it then if we can manage it, it goes in—at least until something better comes along. This is how Unicons started. A bunch of students had heard about conventions but hadn't really much experience with how they should be done...

This also the jumping off point of the programme for Wincon V. For me SF is a genre where the wheel needs to be reinvented every so often. In fact the joy of the thing is seeing what the transport advisory committee will come up with this time when freed from as many constraints as possible.

The fact that society as a whole is inclined to regard innovation with suspicion is fairly standard, and arguably this caution is what society is for. However it seems to me that for some time now SF has been infected and the new and imaginative is being overrun by the familiar and comfortable. I want to know if this perception is accurate and if so what are the causes and what, if anything can and should be done.

Some of the elements of the argument are obvious. The movement of SF from a genre in which cheap production methods predominated, cheap magazines on poor quality paper and fixed length disposable paper backs, to high production cost media such as TV naturally impose a degree of conservatism as art stays on the cutting room floor in favour of populism. Before the artist can reach the fans the sponsors have to be convinced.

We must also remember that we are dealing with a genre which even the most conservative reckoning would put at somewhere between 75 and 100 years old. Perhaps the enthusiasm of youth has gone and there is nothing new left under any of the suns. Gosh, I hope not.

One thing to remember about Unicon programmes in general, and Wincons in particular is that we expect the membership to take part. This means you. If you have something to say then get in touch. Recruiting takes place all the way up to the Closing Ceremony and even after that there's always next year's Unicon. Maybe you'd like to put that on. Then you get to decide what gets left out of pieces like this. Good luck.

John Richards

List of Members: 7 January 1999

54	A	Abbott, Michael	82	A	Harvey, David A.
86	A	Alexander, Iain	38	A	Hayton, Andrew
76	A	Allcock, Lissa	15	A	Headlong, Julian
75	A	Allcock, Philip	97	A	Hicks, David
60	A	Allum, Mike	21	A	Hill, Geoff
43	A	Ameringen, Brian	90	A	Hill, Stephen
74	A	Amies, Chris	56	A	Housden, Valerie
89	A	Baker, Dr A.	105	A	Hunt, Terry
14	C	Bark, John	28	A	Illingworth, Marcia
4	G	Barnes, John	27	A	Illingworth, Tim
61	A	Bell, Chris	37	A	James, Rhodri
52	A	Bisson, Simon	72	A	Jeapes, Ben
55	A	Blackwell, Paul	58	A	Kiessling, Matthew G.
94	A	Bradshaw, Simon	57	A	Kiessling, Michelle A.
53	A	Branscombe, Mary	95	A	Leder, Erhard
68	A	Brialey, Claire	77	A	Mackie, Gary
78	A	Brice, Martin	31	A	Marwitz, Eckh D.
87	A	Brignal, G.W.	79	A	McGrave, Maurice
29	A	Brown, Denzil T.	41	A	McLean, Rory
85	A	Brown, John	93	A	McLintock, Alex
99	S	Brown, Tanya	13	C	McMurray, Pat
91	A	Bugshaw	81	S	Moyles, Jim
33	A	Burton-West, Roger	42	A	Mullan, Caroline
51	<8	Cain, Marianne	62	A	Nonnemacher, Frauke
50	A	Cain, Steven	24	A	O'Shea, Chris
102	A	Campbell, Val	106	S	Perkins, Roger
64	A	Challis, Richard	11	C	Phillips, Val
88	A	Clements, Dr D.L.	1	C	Plumbly, Phil
98	A	Coast, Catriona	67	A	Plummer, Mark
59	A	Cochrane, David	63	A	Pompino the Kregoyne
46	A	Cohen, Peter	80	A	Pover, Sheila
69	A	Cooper, Ric	100	S	Proven, Liam
84	A	Cooper, Stephen R.	23	A	Campbell Rees, John
10	C	Cosslett, Keith	12	C	Richards, John
7	C	Croft, Andy	40	A	Robinson, Roger
32	A	Culpin, Rafe	39	A	Rothman, Steve
5	G	Dalkey, Kara	22	A	Rowland, Marcus I.
70	A	Dallman, John	49	A	Scott, Alison
83	A	Day, R.M.	34	A	Scott, Mike
19	A	Dormer, Paul	48	A	Slater, Kenneth
103	A	Earnshaw, Roger	44	A	Smith, Frank R.
45	A	Edwards, Sue	16	A	Square Bear
3	G	Ellis, Warren	30	A	Stone, M.W.
66	A	Etherington, R.P.	101	A	Tegen, Nadja
25	S	Figg, Janet	73	S	Telka, Clive
26	S	Figg, Mike	92	A	Tompkins, Dave
35	A	Francis, Susan	20	A	Tyrrell, Gerry
18	A	Funnell, Gwen	17	A	Wareham, Peter
107	S	Furniss, T.J.	36	A	Westhead, Kathy
71	A	Green, Ann	47	A	Wilkins, Janet
8	C	Green, Steve	9	C	Wright, Anne-Marie
65	T	Gromit The Dog	6	C	Wright, Pete
104	A	Hardie, Andrew	2	G	Wynne Jones, Diana
96	A	Harris, Colin			

Wincon V Membership Form

Membership Rates

Wincon V's membership rates are very affordable, as are the room rates at King Alfred's College.

Attending membership—costs £25 per person and entitles you to attend the convention, receive all convention literature, and have us book accommodation for you at the College at the special rate of £25 per person per night (the accommodation booking form is included with this report).

Supporting membership—costs £15 per person and entitles you to a set of convention literature. Supporting membership is intended for those people who don't yet know whether or not they will be able to attend, but who would like to show their support. Conversion from supporting to attending membership is £10 regardless of any increase in the price of attending membership.

Soft toy membership—bring along your teddy, or whatever, for £1, which gets it a convention badge. If your soft toy can read, we may even throw in a set of convention literature before roping it on to a program item.

Please send the completed form to:

Wincon V, 53 Havant Road, North End, PORTSMOUTH PO2 7HH, UK

I enclose £..... for [☐] supporting and/or [☐] attending memberships of Wincon V. Cheques should be made payable to 'Wincon'. I agree to my details being held on computer for Wincon use only [☐] *Please tick—it helps us a lot.*

My name is.....

My badge name should be

I live at

Postcode Country

Telephone Email