

Con2bil8 PR1



INTRODUCTION

Yes. It's us again. I know, I know, we hadn't planned on it either. "Go on!" said I, "It's been ages since we've run a con!" said I. "It'll be fun!" said I. "Someone else will do it next year!" said I. "Where are those bids?" said Lissa, as Con27ilkin' approached. "Errr..." said I. "YOU CAN DO IT AGAIN!" said the whole bloomin' convention.

Ah. Hmmm.

So, you are stuck with us lot. Again. It took us a little while and a long lie down in a darkened room with a damp cloth on our foreheads, but we have hopefully sufficiently recovered our ~~insanity levels,~~ energy levels, and so this PR1 finds it's way into your hot, sweaty hands (or on your hot, whirring computing-device-of-choice, anyway). Hurrah!!!

Mind you, we take a moment out of our scheduling to point out that WE ARE NOT DOING THIS AGAIN! We are waiting for news of 2017 bids with bated breath. Go on. You know you want to!

CONVENTION ETHOS

Last year we hoped to push the concept of COMMUNITY and DOING THINGS TOGETHER (like most things in life, music is better when done with the joyous co-operation of other people), and were very happy with that. This year we are still sticking by those concepts, but also suggesting that a side order of TRYING NEW THINGS and RECYCLING would be nice.

This does not mean that you should bring your empty wine bottles and margarine tubs to the convention (*ed. note – unless those margarine tubs contain cookies for the auction*), but rather that we may look at trying old things in new ways, and perhaps entirely new ideas altogether. Maybe you have been thinking about making music in a new way? With new people? New words to an old tune? (Anyone? Anyone? ~~Bueller?~~ Allcock?). Try something new! We will be...

As some of the "new" concepts will be new people, we would love to take the opportunity to welcome you to our filkcon and say that we're thrilled you are coming. Everyone will make you very welcome.

YOUR CONCOM

You know the routine by now :

Lissa Allcock: She Who Must Be Obeyed

Annie Walker: She Who Generally Does The Obeying

Phil Allcock: He Who Ensures Solvency

Tim Walker: He Who Has Overcommitted

So that's kind of boring. So we've decided to come out of the closet and let you know about our alter-egos. Just don't tell anyone, OK?

BLACK WID-COW: By day a milk-mannered tax-librarian, Lissa Allcocknikov moonlights as a SHIELD agent. Government treatments have slowed her aging, augmented her immune system and enhanced her physical durability and ability to cook terrifyingly delicious cakes. Black Wid(c)ow gracefully (and not at all threateningly) adorns our front cover.

- CAPTAIN MOO-VEL: Recently daringly re-invented as a cow in the Moovel Universe, Annie's current powers include flight, enhanced strength and the ability to shoot concussive energy bursts from her ~~hands~~ hooves whilst conducting large numbers of people in song. She gets through rather a lot of tenors, sadly.
- CAPTAIN AMOORICA: Due to the top-secret Super-Filker Serum, Phil performs his musical and committee functions at a superhuman level. There are rumours that his guitar is made of adamantium, and we have to be very careful not to take him anywhere too cold, as we're a bit scared of accidentally cryogenically freezing him until the next century, because we'd never balance the books on our own...
- IRON COW: Tim possesses a genius-level intellect which is mostly directed towards multi-tasking musical abilities and inventing his super-tech musical armour suits, which, given the new remote control function installed in his operating system means that he hopes to shortly be able to play a ceilidh, plaster a ceiling and completely devastate New York simultaneously.

OUR MASCOT

We have new attendees, so perhaps now is a good time to indulge in a little explanation about our obsession with cows, and particularly Brooce, our mascot.

Brooce was a concrete cow from Milton Keynes, inspired by the real life concrete cows near the hotel for the 8th UK Filkcon – Obliter-8. As we became increasingly sleep deprived over the course of that and following conventions, we made up more background for Brooce. He left Milton Keynes, inspired by the filking he heard there. He went to Australia where he learned to play didgeridoo and wore loud shirts. He opened a themed Chip Shop, which he operated, dressed as Elvis, he was kidnapped by aliens... So on and so forth. He's had some cracking adventures, but that's OK, because we've got some Polyfilla...

This year, he is supporting the ConCom as they assume their superhero personas, and will probably be found in the bar, drinking Pina Colada and getting caught in the rain.

OUR GUESTS

Stone Dragons

Many of us have met Tom and Sue Jeffers before, and as a committee we are delighted to welcome them back to the UK for an Overseas GoH spot as the duo, "Stone Dragons". Their music will delight and entrance you, make you smile, laugh, be thoughtful and sad.

They've brought out a CD, featuring many of the songs for which they have become known and loved throughout the worldwide Filk Community.

And really, you've not lived until you've seen them play "Gypsy Sock"...

Piers Cawley

If you haven't heard Piers sing, it's probably only because you've never been in the same building as him. Because he sings everywhere. He staunchly maintains he is Not A Filker, whilst attending every filkcon for... a very long time... A very talented musician, and someone who will make you believe that Instrumental Accompaniment Is For Wimps, we look forward to him turning off the microphones, and raising his voice in song, along with everyone else joining him!

HOTEL

We are back at the Best Western Hotel at Marks Tey, Essex for Con2bil8. As it was a new hotel for us, there were a few small niggles at the last con, which have hopefully dealt with.

There were some issues with the timing on meals – this was entirely down to unexpected numbers of people staying within the hotel, rather than using the outside options, which we had listed for people anticipating more take-up than occurred, at least partly because the hotel's food is both nice and well-priced. The hotel accept that this was not how they wished their service to be, and will be working to radically improve it this year. We would urge people to order their meals well in advance via the menu sheets provided each day, doing it as a last minute option will sadly not speed the service at all. Order in the morning for the evening meal!

Beer. We ordered a lot of beer in 2015, as people said they wanted it. Unfortunately, we did not DRINK a lot of beer and there was a large amount left over, at least partially because food was in the downstairs bar and beer was in the upstairs bar. We will be ordering smaller quantities this year, and making it available in both bars. If you want this to continue to be an option at conventions, then we'd urge you to partake. It may be that drinking habits of the convention as a whole have changed, in which case we need to take that on board. 2016 will act as a marker in the sand for beer consumption in the future. We want to be able to provide a full and economic option for everyone, whatever their tipples of choice!

Room costs

We are not taking room bookings yet, but FYI the rates will be

Single Room – £52.00 Room Only
Double / Twin Room £60.00 Room Only
Adjoining room 2 Adults & 2 Children £100.00

Single Room Bed & Breakfast – £57.00
Double / Twin Bed & Breakfast £67.00
Adjoining Rooms Bed & Breakfast 2 Adults & 2 Children £107.00

SET REQUESTS

If you would like a set, please contact us sooner rather than later. We cannot guarantee a set for everyone who requests one, and sets may be of different lengths according to the programme, but we would like to have an idea of who would like to do what as soon as possible, thank you!

MAIN CONCERT

We are in discussion about TRYING NEW THINGS regarding the Main Concert. This may alter format for Con2bil8, and if possible, we are trying to look at finding a way to fit some daytime open filking into our programme as well. We are looking at the change to reflect the fact that some people came to us last year to discuss suggestions and solutions for issues and we have tried to take those on board with our programming this year.

We are also aware that by changing things, people may be unsettled or uncertain about any new formats we try.

If you feel strongly about this, we would urge you to come up with some solutions and ideas and take them to the 2017 committee for inclusion in the next FilkCon. Perhaps look at putting together a convention bid of your own?

WHILST WE'RE ON THE SUBJECT...

Just to make very, very sure that everyone knows this - we are not doing this again in 2017. We have no interest in becoming a permanent FilkCon committee, and as such, we will be definitely standing down at the end of Con2bil8. If you would like there to be a 2017 convention, then YOU need to ensure that will happen.

Because we're really not doing it again.

EQUALITY AND NON-HARASSMENT POLICY

We are proud that our convention has members of all genders and none, many different sexualities and a healthy variety of lifestyle and religious choices. We cherish everyone as individuals and make no judgements.

We will not tolerate discrimination or offensive behaviour towards any of our members, and strive to create an equal and safe environment for everyone.

If anyone makes you feel uncomfortable, discriminates against you, or exhibits behaviour and/or language which you find offensive towards either yourself or anyone else, we, as a committee, would like you to understand that we will not find it acceptable, and will take immediate action, up to, and including, expulsion from Convention areas.

So, in the hallowed words of Bill & Ted: Be excellent to one another, dudes...

MEMBERSHIP LIST AS AT 20TH AUGUST 2015

Piers Cawley	Peter Tyers	Heike
Sue Jeffers	Melusine	Thomas
Tom Jeffers	Teddy	Aileen
Lissa Allcock	FanTom	Emily :-)
Philip Allcock	Roger Robinson	David
Alex Allcock	Marion	Marilisa
Amy Allcock	Rick	Socrates
Annie Walker	The Magician	Janet
Tim Walker	Colin Fine	Robert Maughan
Ellie Walker	Ju	Kathy Westhead
Debbie L	Valerie	Mike Westhead
Steve	Rhodri James	Peter Westhead
Katy	KT	Karen Westhead
Peter Wareham	Fhtagn	Dale Williamson
Gwen Funnell	Chris	Lisa
Rafe Culpin	Susan Booth	Donnacat
Miki	Inamac	Hilary Ann
Alison Richards	Jackie	Jessica Stevenson
Mike Richards	Stacy	Dave Stevenson
Omega	Nat	Naomi Stevenson
Sue Edwards	Michael Bernardi	Bump Stevenson
Tony Rogers	tiggy	Songbird
Barbara Stewart	Lawrence Dean	Mich
John Stewart	Chavalai	Steve
Mad Logician	John	Penny Melnikoff
Kate	Bill	Shadow
Minnow	Brenda	Bine
Liz	Volker	Michael
Alistair	Kirstin	Alex
Abi	Zander Nyron	Billy
Rachel	Countess Axylides	

