



# November - Journey Planet 17 - 2013

James Bacon, Chris Garcia, & Colin Harris - Editors

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Cover by Delphyne Woods - 1945 - 2013

# Greetings

Hello gang! Welcome to the *World Science Fiction Convention*. If you do not have a wonderful time here, it will be your own fault. To you readers, we have tried to give this great opportunity to meet the men and women who create the most fascinating literature of all, science fiction. Authors and artists, here is your chance to get acquainted with a representative slice of your reading public. And you editors, here is the chance of a lifetime to watch author and reader get together and battle it out, with your own two cents far from unwelcome. So, come on and get together, science fiction fans — readers, artists, authors, editors — and make this the best bang-up convention ever held.

And we want to take this opportunity, too, to give our heartfelt thanks to the publishers, editors, authors, artists, and readers of science fiction, without whose advertising and contributions this program and this convention could not have been made a reality.

We want everyone to have an enjoyable three days, and when the time comes to say "Farewell," we hope you will all look forward to a bigger and better convention in times to come.

Welcome to this latest edition of Journey Planet, a celebration of Worldcon's 75th Anniversary.

There is something special about long-lived institutions. Seen up close, history and memory are not continuous things; each are formed of an accretion of individual moments, orbiting around an event, a place, or a person just as a cloud of whirling ice particles create the rings of Saturn. The aura that surrounds the Oscars or the Olympics is not a result of money spent or viewers gained (although the shared experience of a large audience certainly adds another dimension); history gives these events a patina that cannot be created artificially. The same is true of the World Science Fiction Convention.

At a time when Worldcon is competing with bigger and splashier events, challenged to meet increasing expectations, and seeking to find a new generation of fans, it is therefore doubly important to remember and reflect on where Worldcon has come from and what makes it unique. For me at least, this starts with the unbroken thread of continuity that runs all the way back to New York in 1939. This may seem obvious, but it is often overlooked in the debates about what Worldcon should be in the future. Today's three-ringed circus with its thousands of attendees, multi-track programming, plethora of publications, and globally streamed Hugo Awards may at first glance seem unrecognizable alongside that first gathering, and yet the greetings offered to the 1939 attendees - reproduced on the previous page - are timeless. Indeed, the sentiments expressed in those few paragraphs seem as relevant as ever. While we cannot escape the logistical complexities that come with putting on a modern Worldcon, we should not lose sight of this simpler truth of why we do it and what makes it work.

In the first half of this issue, we therefore invite you to retrace the journey from 1939 in New York to 2014 in London. We start at the World's Fair, stopping off in London in 1957 and Brighton in 1979, take a look at the Hugos with Robert Silverberg (the only man to have attended every ceremony since the very first in 1953), and explore the role of whimsy with Deb Geisler. Chris writes about

# WORLD SCIENCE FICTION SOCIETY

# PHOTOGRAPHS

## 2001 WorldCon

- Exhibits
- Dealers
- Art Show
- Selection

### Down Escalator to

- Camp Franklin
- First Floor Program
- Gaming & Meeting Rooms

### Up Escalator to

- Kaffee Klatsches
- Overlook Bar
- Green Room
- Media Room
- Administration

encounters with first fandom - another thing which makes this era special, while our community still has living memory right back to its very origins. If you have never spoken to Dave Kyle, Erle Korshak, or Bob Madle, take the chance while you still can.

The focus on first person accounts is something that was very important to me in editing this zine. The patina of history is always that much richer when seen through the eyes of those who were there, and so we have also taken the chance to reprint a selection of the Worldcon Memories collected for Renovation in 2011. With our historical journey completed by a visual panorama of every Worldcon Program Book, it's then time to turn our attention to the present - and the future. We ask a number of younger conrunners about their view of Worldcon, hear from Meg Frank on marketing Worldcon to new fans and invite bidders to tell us why they want the Worldcon for their city. (For those who doubt the health of the event, the existence of enthusiastic bids going out into the next decade is surely a good sign). And claiming editor's privilege, I've added my own thoughts to close the issue.

It remains only to thank Chris and James for inviting me to edit this issue, and all of those who contributed their time and memories to make it real.

See you in London!



## James Bacon

As one reads about the first Worldcon outside North America, in London in 1957, one realises that there is such a shared experience, such a sense of spirit, and fun, that it is hard to imagine these events took place more than half a century ago.

I can hear James White's voice as I read. Although sadly I never heard or met Walt Willis, I hear a very proper, soft, slightly posh, Belfast accent. The words are golden, the writing so smooth, and capturing the sense of place so well, that it feels like a place I could be. Albeit in different clothes; no short trousers I suspect. And 'sneering' is just so awesome. It makes me smile, a bunch of fans enjoying some ludicrously incomprehensible joke, and it appeals to me. Such malarkey, such a bunch of ejits. I wish I was there.

Worldcon is not objectively the "best" science fiction convention. How can it be? Everyone has different tastes. But Worldcon does have many strengths; its longevity for instance, or that it is entirely fan-run, or that it is truly democratic, where one person really has one vote, or that the Hugo Awards have managed to capture people's imagination like no other science fictional award.

The Hugo Awards. A lot of hard work goes in there, along with a bit of luck and the generosity of fans. The Hugos cost a lot of money to host (hiring a 3,000 seat auditorium is no mean feat), and it is the members who give their hard earned cash to the current Worldcon that pay for this, and it is truly an amazing co-operative effort that makes them come to pass.

This does not lessen other awards, not at all. Awards allow people to recognise what they want to recognise, and they are hard work, and are appreciated no matter what.

In my view, there is no one convention better than another, no one award better than another, but there is perception and generalisations and those I am tired of. It is indeed preposterous to suggest the fruits of one hobby are better or more worthwhile than another. Do we not admire model railways, or tall ships, or wonder at cross-stitching, and appreciate them all? So it is with conventions.

This issue is a celebration of Worldcon, a unique convention in that it travels. Like the Tardis, it appears suddenly in a faraway place, occurs and then disappears. Some places like Chicago are lucky to have many visits, other places have tried and not yet profited from their efforts to entice the beast to their shores. That is still amazing. That is a brilliant thing.

I am grateful to Colin for coming on board for this issue, he has been a very welcome co-editor and I have enjoyed working with him, as he brought elements to this fanzine that Chris and I might not have thought of. That is what co-editing is about: empowerment, loosening the reins for a better jaunt, new ideas, a fresh perspective and an enjoyable read. I am also grateful to all our contributors - writers and artists alike - and also to Rob Hansen, Pat Larkin and all the people who run conventions.

Here in this Fanzine we look at a history, read about other times and also new thoughts of the future. It is just nice to talk and meet and celebrate science fiction, or comics or whatever campfire we are gathered around, and one of those gatherings for me (us) is Worldcon. It's a great time.

I hope you enjoy this issue as much as I have.



# My Perfect WorldCon

## by Christopher J Garcia

My Perfect WorldCon will take place in a city with an international airport with direct flights to every major city in the world. Mass transit systems will go directly to and from the airport to all parts of town, and free airport shuttles will run to and from every hotel in the city at least every half-hour.

My Perfect WorldCon will be in a city which is a major tourist destination with many attractions within a twenty minute drive. There will be amusement parks and museums, aquariums, pleasure piers, architectural wonders, and public art. The city will be near many natural wonders, and the convention will arrange for hikes and nature walks before, during, and after the convention.

My Perfect WorldCon will take place in a convention center that is new, but not Brand New, with three large, full-service hotels directly attached. Each will have a variety of services and room sizes. The hotels will offer free shuttles to all major attractions, and they will be fully staffed. All hotel restaurants will create an affordable menu for the convention and there will be service-free Room Service for all who booked at the convention rate. Spa treatments will be available at discounted rates, and the pool and hot tubs will be operating 24 hours a day for the run of the con.

My Perfect WorldCon will be co-chaired by two people who have ten-plus years each of working at high levels on WorldCons around the globe. There will be three Vice Chairs who will be several years younger, but will each have at least five years of significant con-running experience. Every Division Head will be chosen from an international pool who have decades of experience working on conventions and are considered to be the best in their areas. They will each have at least one Deputy Division Head under the age of 30 who they will mentor and teach the ropes of working a WorldCon at such a high level. The committee will be made up of a combination of locals and others from around the world. They will spend the period between being seated and the following WorldCon looking at the successes and failures of previous conventions, and will investigate the peculiarities of the space they will be using. At the WorldCon the year prior, every member of the committee will attend and observe what works and what does not. There will be a giant, all-hands-type meeting to discuss plans at the WorldCon, and another six months out. It will be easy to attend that one because of all the direct, and inexpensive, flights to that awesome airport.

My Perfect WorldCon would be a seven day affair running from Tuesday to Monday. Tuesday would be un-programmed, but the ConSuite, a Filking space, Fanzine Lounge, Gaming area, and other spaces will be available for fans to gather. Move-In to the official space will take place in the convention centre area on Tuesday for a Wednesday at noon opening. After the convention, the Convention Centre tear-down and move-out will be allotted all-day on Monday, though the soft spaces will still be available.

My Perfect WorldCon will have a 100 dollar attending rate, from the first day they win the bid to at-the-door. A Supporting membership will be 40 dollars, while a Hugo Voting Membership will be 25 dollars. A Site Selection Voting Membership will be 25 dollars (save yourself ten bucks and buy the Supporting!) and Young Adult Attending Memberships will be 50 (but still 40 for Supporting). Kids 12 and under will go free.

Programming at My Perfect WorldCon will be extensive. There will be panels on Literature, Film, Television, History, Fan Culture, Science, Costuming, Technology, and Art. There will be many panels on YA literature with YA authors discussing their works and the market as it stands. There will be hands-on panels and demonstrations, as well as academic presentations. There will be programming in English, as well as readings and panels in several other languages.

My Perfect WorldCon will have each programming room ready to provide access to all attendees, regardless of their ability to climb risers. Each dais will have a ramp, or in big rooms, chair elevators. A sign language interpreter will be available in every room, as well as a stenographer who will produce a full transcript in real time that will appear on an over-head ticker. Every panel room will have an A/V person, and they will make sure every panel is streamed on-line and recorded for future viewing. All panels will be available on DVD at the con, and streaming forever.

All programming will happen exactly as scheduled, with no changes, and run exactly to time. There will be no cancellations and no pink sheets.

My Perfect WorldCon will have a Film Festival held at a Movie theatre right across the street. The Film Festival will run 24 hours a day showing fan-produced works and classic SF&F films from around the world. It will bring in filmmakers to talk about their films, and there will be panels on the process of film-making and on film history.

My perfect World Con will take place in a Convention Centre which we will have all to ourselves. It will be on three levels. The first floor (Ground Floor, to you Europeans) will be a grand lobby, with two ramps: one going up and one going down, and a bank of a dozen freight-sized elevators and a half a dozen escalators. Behind the escalators and elevators will be a World-Class theatre, seating five thousand with state of the art acoustics and sight lines.



This will be used for the Hugos and the Masquerade and special events. There will be impressive levels of WiFi in the theatre allowing for live-streaming.

The ramp up will lead to the programming rooms, dozens of them at various size configurations, all comfortable and well appointed. All rooms will have free, bottomless water fountains.

The ramp down will lead to the Exhibition Hall. The ramp will end in the center of the Dealers Room, with dealers from around the world selling books, collectables, clothing, comics, videos, games, and more. Every attendee will be given a large, well made, cloth bag for carrying purchases. Additional bags will be available for a dollar.

Around the Dealers' Room will be a Fan Lounge where fans can sit, enjoy a beverage, and talk to friends. It will also feature the Fanzine area, the Fan Tables, and voting for the upcoming WorldCons. Beyond that will be the Exhibits: one for each Guest of Honor, major historical displays, costuming displays, and large exhibits from many fan groups. Beyond the Exhibits will be the Art Show. This will be HUGE, with displays from every major artist, both pro and fan. Space will be free, and there will be exhibits of Hugo-winning artists, Rotsler winners, Chesley winners, and major publisher book covers. There will be an Art Auction.

My Perfect WorldCon will break with tradition and have Works of Honor represented by individuals. Novel of Honor - Neuromancer (represented by William Gibson), Comic Book of Honor - Transmetropolitan (repre-

ented by Warren Ellis and Darick Robertson), Film of Honor - Blade Runner (Represented by Ridley Scott), Manga of Honor - Fullmetal Alchemist (represented by Hiromu Arakawa), Video Game of Honor - Plants vs. Zombies (represented by George Fan), Lecture Series of Honor - My Favorite Universe (represented by Neil deGrasse Tyson), Album of Honor - Funkentelechy vs. The Placebo Effect (represented by George Clinton) and finally, Toastmaster - Mick Foley.

My Perfect WorldCon will feature all the big names in Science Fiction writing. John Scalzi, Seanan McGuire, Jim Butcher, Gail Carriger, George RR Martin, Charlaine Harris, JK Rowling, and more. Major Hollywood SF&F directors, performers, and writers will be there. Joss Whedon, Felicia Day, David Peoples, John Milius, John Lasseter, Andrew Stanton, James Cameron, Duncan Jones, Stephan Moffatt, and Bruce Campbell. Every prominent SF&F artist will be there. World-wide academics and commentators will be in attendance and on panels.

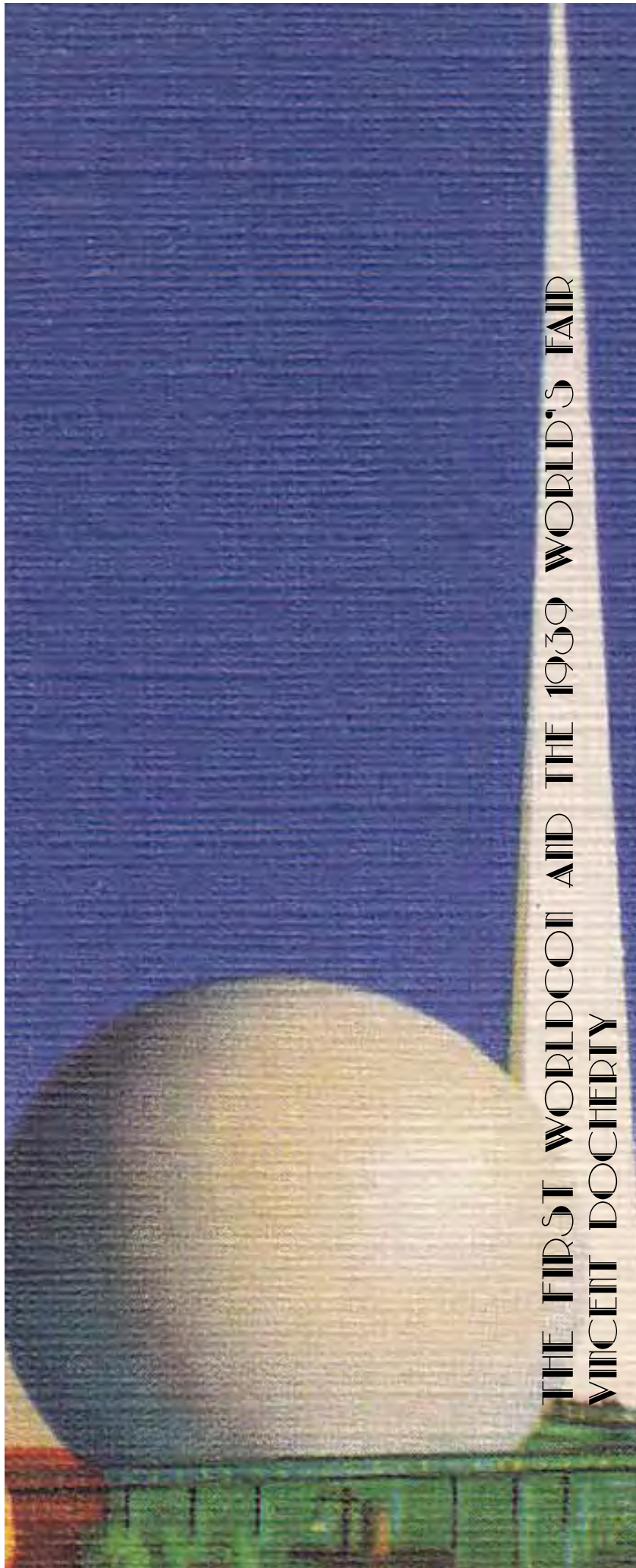
My Perfect WorldCon will have a single Business Meeting, and they will consider exactly six matters, and each will receive serious debate and an up-or-down vote. The Business Meeting will start at 11 a.m. and run until 2 p.m. There will be no other programming against it, and admittedly, a lot of folks will use it as a lunch break.

My Perfect WorldCon will produce an anthology of original short fiction from prominent writers in SF, Fantasy, and Horror given for free to each attendee. It will produce a hard cover program book, and a pocket program. There will be e-Editions of all con materials, and a specialized App.

My Perfect WorldCon will have musical acts every night. A Filk Room will be available all the time. There will be a recording studio as well. Podcasters and journalists will have a room where they can do podcasts, interviews and other features.

And, of course, My Perfect WorldCon will write it 'W-o-r-l-d-C-o-n', just like that!





THE FIRST WORLDCON AND THE 1939 WORLD'S FAIR  
VINCENT DOCHERTY

Looking back on 1939, the year of the first World Science Fiction Convention in New York, is both illuminating and a little humbling.

From the perspective of the upcoming Worldcon in London, *Loncon 3*, and the 75th Anniversary of that first event, one can see the long process of evolution: of steps forward and mistakes made and learned from; of incubation of other genre activities and events which have now far exceeded Worldcon in size and public visibility, though arguably not in terms of active participation and co-creation, or as possibly the largest purely-volunteer genre event; of an enduring culture based on a few key principles including all-volunteer/everyone-contributes and the balancing of the professional and the non-professional input (in some ways like Astronomy, which remains one of the few sciences where amateurs play a key role); but overall, of a story of continued success, as the pre-eminent event in the annual calendar of the SF genre, and still including a very few voices who were active in 1939.

This evolution is also paralleled in, and sometimes influenced by, another and even longer-running series of events. London and New York share size and positions at the very top of the tree of 'World Cities', as centres of commerce, the arts, and general influence and significance in the conversation of our world civilization. But they also share a hosting of world expositions: most significantly for this article, the 1851 Great Exhibition in London and the 1939-1940 World's Fair in New York.

The links between such events and the SF genre would provide material for several academic treatises, and this brief article only highlights a few points by way of introduction. A key feature of that is the intent and ambition behind all of the world expositions, much of which has been paralleled in the development of the SF genre, including highlighting and demonstrating new ideas and technologies and how they might impact us all. A strong element of utopianism and a focus on building a better future have also been common features, particularly in the mid-20th Century, as also seen in the creation of the UN after WWII, and in that other travelling event, the Olympic Games.



### From 1851 to the World's Fair

The 1851 Great Exhibition was inspired by French Industrial Expositions and held in The Crystal Palace in Hyde Park, London. Formally titled “Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations”, it was an idea of Prince Albert, the forward-looking husband of Queen Victoria. In large part an opportunity to showcase the industrial and manufacturing power and wealth of the British Empire, it was a huge success – its profits funding London’s Victoria & Albert, Natural History and Science Museums - and extremely influential on the art, design and engineering of the period. It became a model for subsequent expositions and Jules Verne, who visited the 1867 Paris Exposition, was very impressed by what he saw. For instance the writing of *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* is believed to have been inspired in part by the uses of electricity as demonstrated at the exposition.



The parallels between the expositions and the development of SF continued during the late 19th and early 20th Centuries, with a strong focus on science, technology and industrialisation, and with many of the events being hosted by the rapidly developing cities of the US. Popular culture of the time included writers such as H.G.Wells and Edgar Rice Burroughs, radio and early movies, and periodicals such as *Popular Mechanics*, which, coupled with the rapid pace of development and

their visible expression at the expositions, inspired generations with ‘Scientific Romance’ in both the generic and genre-specific senses.

The shocks of the early 20th Century, such as World War I and the Great Depression, influenced international affairs, including the world expositions. The key focus of the 1939 World’s Fair in New York marked this shift as the emphasis changed from industrialisation towards culture, the development of humanity and with a strong orientation to the future and utopianism. The technology was still very much present but it was now a platform for an inspirational vision, as expressed in the Fair’s slogan, “Dawn of a New Day” and motto “The World of Tomorrow”.



The 1939 World’s Fair was huge in all respects. Built on a reclaimed industrial site, it was opened by the US President Franklin D. Roosevelt and featured speaker Albert Einstein on 30th April. Its themes and zones (containing much of interest to SF fans) and many national pavilions, were visited by over 40 million people, including a then 5-year-old Carl Sagan who later spoke about how greatly it had affected him, and who credited the time capsule at the Fair as the seed of the idea to include conceptually similar messages on the Pioneer and Voyager space probes. Visually the Fair comprised Modernist and Futurist buildings around the ‘theme center’ of the Trylon and Perisphere – a striking combination of spire and sphere, much reminiscent of the artwork on the covers of the contemporary pulp magazines.

The wider context of the conflict in Europe also affected the Fair: there was no German pavilion for instance; the theme was changed to “For Peace and Freedom” during the 1940 season; many of the European staff could not return home when the Fair closed and remained in the US; some of the Fair buildings became the first home of the UN following the war. The Fair’s 1939 season ran until the end of October that year, and so overlapped with the start of the war in Europe, with

the invasion of Poland on 1st September marking the official commencement of WWII by most historians outside the US. It's less clear what all this felt like both to regular Fair visitors and to those who were involved in the first Worldcon.

### The First Worldcon

The convention itself is well documented in this fanzine and elsewhere. (A list of links to useful references can be found at the end of this article). The trigger for its creation and the origin of its name were recently well-summarised by the late Fred Pohl (Amazing Stories magazine, September 2013):

*“Conventions were basically Don Wollheim’s idea, like many other fan innovations. (Someone should write a biography of Donald just to show in how many ways that is so.) In 1936 there was much emphasis on political conventions, probably because there was unusual interest in politics as a result of the Depression and the New Deal; that’s what gave Donald the idea to call the visit of half a dozen New York fans to Philadelphia fandom “the first sf convention.” Then he got the idea of taking advantage of New York’s upcoming World’s Fair for bigger game. The Fair would bring millions of visitors to NYC; some small fraction of them would be fans; why not tack on an sf world con with all that raw material floating by? All of New York’s fans got behind that idea, but then fan feuding messed things up.”*

The convention ended up attracting about 200 fans and professionals. A list of pre-con attendees names from the program book is included in this fanzine. These included a number of pseudonyms and nom-de-plumes, several of which were created by Forrest J. Ackerman.

The fan feuding referred to by Fred concerned the exclusion from the con of a subset of the Futurians fan group, by con chair Sam Moskowitz. This affected a very small number of people, though all were significant figures in the genre. An amusing anecdote relates to the description of the exclusion in Moskowitz’s book *The Immortal Storm* (1954), which was so strongly worded that Harry Warner, Jr. commented “If read directly after a history of World War II, it does not seem like an anticlimax.”

With hindsight, it seems to me that fandom of the day was in robust good health, for good and for bad, just as it remains now. There was a lot of discussion along right/left political perspectives about the war and other issues. There were arguments about which event in the 1930’s had actually been the first true SF con, and the beginnings of the ‘retro-active continuity’ to justify whichever preference is held, (personally, I’m happy to consider 1939 as the first ‘true’ convention, as we would recognize it today). The near-cliché, that the genre is/

## Afterword - Vincent Docherty

In my introduction to the *Souvenir Book* of the 2005 Worldcon in Glasgow, Interaction, which Colin Harris and I co-chaired, I wrote:

*“Writing this introduction is also one of the few perks that (co-)chairing a Worldcon offers. By a quirk of timing, I missed contributing to the ‘Alternate Worldcons’ books edited by Mike Resnick back in the mid-nineties, so here is my chance!*

*In my parallel universe, the first Worldcon wasn’t actually held in 1939 in New York in conjunction with the New York World’s Fair, but a year earlier in Glasgow, in conjunction with the 1938 Empire Exhibition which was famous for its Art Deco architecture (of which sadly, only a little survives). Since the name ‘Worldcon’ was partly inspired by the World’s Fair, this suggests that we might have run an ‘Empirecon’ first. We would have reverted to ‘Worldcon’ in 1939 and thereafter (in the now traditional fashion of time-travel ‘reset’ buttons), since the Empire effectively came to an end (becoming the Commonwealth) before the first (next) UK Worldcon in London in 1957.*

*Taking this line of thought further, perhaps fannish historians would still debate whether the 1938 Glasgow Empirecon was really a ‘canon’ Worldcon, (like the argument over whether the first ‘real’ SF con was in 1936 or 1937). Maybe the later UK Worldcons would have considered calling themselves Empirecons, or more likely, the more politically correct, Commonwealthcons. There could be a story in there for me to write, but it will have to wait for ‘Last Alternate Worldcons’ – that’s a hint, Mike.”*

Clearly that was intended as a bit of fun, but having done the research for this article, I really wonder now if I should write that story!

Ref: <http://fanac.org/worldcon/Interaction/x05-sb1.pdf>

was in terminal decline and not like 'the good old days', was much in evidence, which is ironic, for a supposedly forward-looking genre, and doubly so given the youth of many of those running the 1939 event.

A brief look at the 1939 programme reveals a few links to the World's Fair, but in general the sessions are about the things one would expect a group of fans to discuss, without too strong a unifying theme. There was a lot of focus on the genre itself, the guest and the magazines and books of the day, which in 1939 was a very rich and significant selection indeed. There was a film show, and there were also costumes. Write-ups of the con, supported by photographs, tell of great energy and enthusiasm, and of course a lot of socializing outside of the official programming, including the alternative event run by the group who had been excluded.

The convention concluded with a visit to the World's Fair itself, and a determination that there should be future such events. There were two subsequent Worldcons, in 1940 in Chicago and 1941 in Denver, before the impact of WWII became too heavy, and they restarted in 1946 in Los Angeles and have run annually ever since. (Interestingly, the 1951 *Festival of Britain* – held on the 100th anniversary of the Great Exhibition, as part of the war recovery – featured a suspended

spire called the 'Skylon', which perhaps was inspired by the 1939 'Trylon'.) The 'World' in the convention name 'Worldcon' was originally in reference to the World's Fair, but has since become universally accepted to mean that it is an event for all SF fans around the World and that it can in principle take place anywhere.

As we move into a period where the fandom of the 1930's passes out of memory and into history, it is important to record what happened and the decisions made, often for the first time, that have left their mark in the nature and form of the genre and the conventions we still run. I also feel that the remains of the World's Fair venues – demolished, or replaced by parks, or repurposed or sadly left to decay or, rarely, like the Eiffel tower, becoming iconic in their own right – echo the way the genre itself explores new trends and themes, some of which become part of the ongoing conversation of 'what if' and others which we look back on fondly as clearly of their era. I'm sure that will continue as we move through the 21st Century and all its wonders and challenges, much of which would have been Science Fiction to the attendees of both the First Worldcon and the 1939 World's Fair.

### Useful links and references:

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[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Great\\_Exhibition](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Great_Exhibition)

#### First Worldcon:

Summary and material:  
<http://fanac.org/worldcon/NYcon/w39-p00.html>  
David Kyle reflections:  
<http://www.jophan.org/mimosa/m29/kyle.htm>  
Fred Pohl remarks:  
<http://amazingstoriesmag.com/2013/09/memory-interview-sfwa-grand-master-frederik-pohl/>  
The 'Long List' of Worldcons:  
<http://www.smofinfo.com/LL/TheLongList.html>  
  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1st\\_World\\_Science\\_Fiction\\_Convention](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1st_World_Science_Fiction_Convention)  
  
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Futurians>



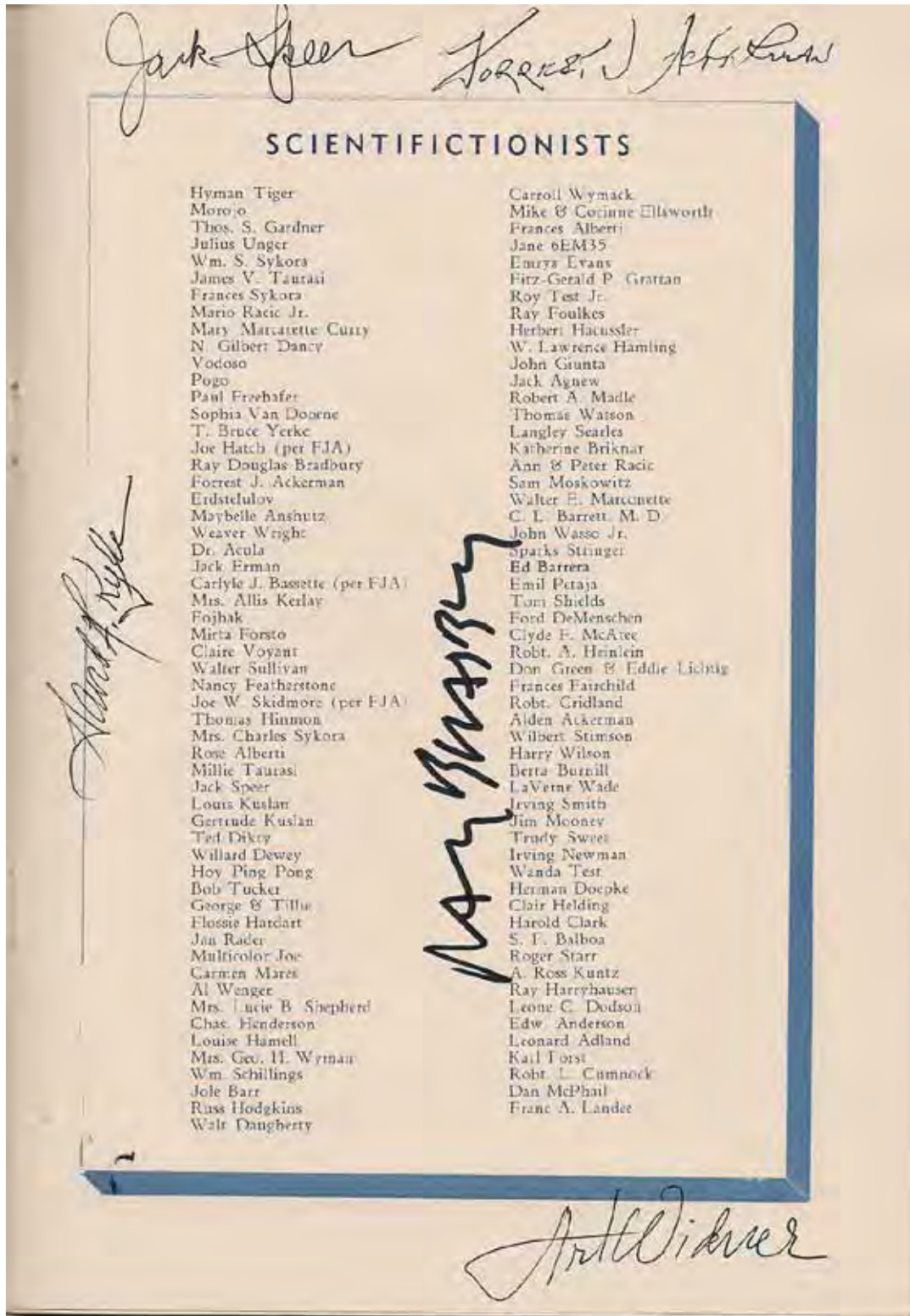
# NEW YORK WORLD'S FAIR

# 1939



# WHERE'S FORRY?

Forrest J. Ackerman is of course one of the most recognisable names on the membership list of the first Worldcon in 1939, alongside other legendary attendees such as Jack Speer, Bob Tucker, Ray Bradbury, and Ray Harryhausen. Indeed, observant readers will quickly spot that he appears twice: as himself, and under his regular pseudonym of Dr. Acula. The truth is much stranger, however, as Forry took out multiple memberships to support the event (at a dollar each, of course!). Seventy-five years later, separating truth from fiction isn't so easy... so play our game of "Where's Forry" and see if you can spot all the Ackermembers hiding amongst the real people. (Answers at the bottom of the page).



Forry appears 17 times in all: Forrest J. Ackerman, Erdstelulov, Weaver Wright, Dr. Acula, Jack Erman, Mrs. Allis Kerlay, Fojhak, Mira Forsto, Claire Voyant, Nancy Featherstone, Joe W. Skidmore (per FJA), Thomas Hinmon, Mrs. Charles Sykora, Rose Alberti, Millie Taurasi, Jack Speer, Louis Kuslan, Gertrude Kuslan, Ted Dicky, Willard Dewey, Hoy Ping Pong, Bob Tucker, George & Tillu, Flossie Hardart, Jan Raier, Multicolor Joe, Carmen Mares, Al Wenger, Mrs. Lucie B. Shepherd, Chae. Henderson, Louise Hamell, Mrs. Geo. H. Wyrman, Wm. Schillings, Jole Barr, Russ Hodgkins, Walr Daugherty, Ford DeMenschen, Robt. Cridland, Alden Ackerman, Trudy Sweet, Clair Holding, and S. F. Balboa



## ON THE LONG LINE - CONVERSATIONS WITH FIRST FANDOM BY CHRIS GARCIA

LoneStarCon 3, August 2013. 74 years after the first Worldcon. I was sitting in the Con Suite playing around with Linda, Hillary Pearlman and a shark hand puppet. It was silly fun, the kind I'm always trying to have. At that moment, Joel Zakem came over and asked "have you ever met Bob Madle?"

I had not. I knew of him, certainly, one of the true legends of First Fandom, but for some reason I had never spoken to him. I abandoned Linda and Hillary to go and interview Bob.

I started off the interview as I do so many others - "What was your first science fiction convention?"

"Funny enough, it was the first science fiction convention. It was held in 1936 and it really wasn't planned to be a convention, but after a group of us went to lunch in downtown Philadelphia, we went back to Milt Rothman's home and discussed science fiction, and except for a brief formality from Don Wollheim saying 'This is the first science fiction convention' England would have had the first convention next February. They'd advertised it as such and had twenty-five, thirty people there."

I'd known that story, of course, and there are still people who believe Leeds was first. Not so! America wins and I now have recorded proof! U-S-A! U-S-A! U-S-A!

"So, after that, people were planning the first big convention, the first Worldcon in New York. And as Sam Moskowitz points out in *The Immortal Storm*, at that first Worldcon, Wollheim had made it so that Philadelphia was the first science fiction convention,

and then he was barred from the first Worldcon."

I knew that story well, and had been talking with Dave Kyle the night before at one of the parties. I had acquired a copy of the Yellow Pamphlet that Dave had put together for the first Worldcon. When the folks running the show found copies of it, they banned the members of the Futurians on the basis that they were obviously Communists. Well, all the Futurians other than Dave Kyle, who was already inside. Years, ago, when I asked Dave about being the one who was inside already and the only one not banned, he said "Well, someone had to try and talk sense to SaM!"

"Sam Moskowitz swore until his dying day that Don Wollheim and the rest of 'em were trying to wreck his convention, and that if he had let 'em in, they would have done so." Madle said in our little interview.

I asked Bob an interesting question, and one that even I felt was a little rude.

There aren't a lot of folks left from that first Worldcon. How's it feel?

Bob wasn't even taken aback, but somehow he understood what I was really asking and answered that question.

"Well, from the first convention, the Philadelphia convention, there's three of us: me, Dave Kyle, and Fred Pohl," he said, though this would only remain true for less than 24 hours as Fred Pohl would pass away, "and there are a few of us from the first Worldcon left. In fact, me and Dave Kyle, along with Erle Korshak, who wasn't at the first, will be on a

panel talking about the first Worldcon.”

And there my mind reeled. I'm 39, already starting to creak and moan a bit at the joints during conventions, and here are three men, all in their late 80s or 90s, still coming to Worldcons, still communicating with young punks like me, still enjoying the parties, still sitting on panels, still willing to talk about the good old days. I'm a historian, I talk to a lot of folks who were there when IT happened, for whatever value of IT you want to assign, and at a Worldcon, you can still go back to those early days, those first conventions, those days I only know as a series of black and white photographs.

When I talked with Dave, I asked him what he thought the big differences between the first cons and this one were. “Well, there are a lot more people, and most importantly, a lot more young women.”

That, to me, is the ultimate Dave Kyle quote.

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“Science fiction -- it stimulates the imagination. It makes one think. And for me, there's a sort of fraternity, a social group of special people, but no, there's no special, official name.”- Dave Kyle

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I asked Bob, when I ran into him later (and worst of all not on camera!), what he thought the biggest change was. “There's a lot more people and they all know a lot more than we ever did. Things are faster, and there's so much more going on. It's a different world and it's still fun.”

That's the part that fascinated me. I think of myself as a babe in the woods, no idea about what the

world is really like and that it's the Ghods of the Past who really had it figured out, who understand what the world was, and by extension, really is. Here is one of those people saying that my class of human knows more than they did. When I thought back on this, I realized that it's saying something about fandom that I had never considered. It wasn't ‘we did it right and everyone after has been doing it wrong’ no, Bob was saying ‘you know more than we did and you tailored to your world’.

The world knows that Forry Ackerman was my hero, still is by the way, and inevitably his name comes up whenever I talk about Worldcon with folks who knew him, even if I don't bring him up. “Forry'd have loved this Worldcon.” Bob said. “So many friends, and all the costumes. He wore the first costume to a science fiction convention, you know?”

Dave Kyle was much more direct when I asked him about Forry years ago.

“Forry'd have a good time no matter where he was at. To him, the more the merrier.”

Sitting with Dave is always a pleasure, and I try to do that at least once every Worldcon. He always kinda remembers me, but he's always happy to talk. When I mentioned that I had been SFContario's Fan Guest of Honor and how excited they were to have him as this year's Fan GoH, he came back with “I imagine they were very excited to have you too, in their own way.”

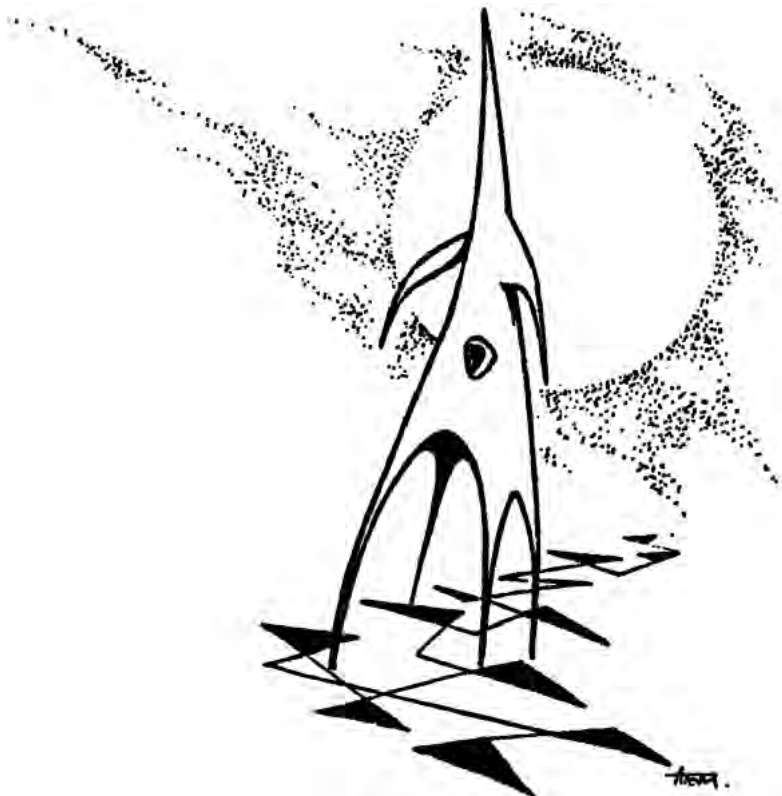
No better possible answer.

Bob and I talked about all sorts of things when we talked, half on video, half not. I mostly got him to

tell me stories. That's what I do, I listen to stories. I do the same thing with Dave Kyle every time I see him. I asked Dave a question once, long ago, about whether or not, back at the time of the first Worldcon, we'd still be doing them all these many years later.

“Of course we did,” Dave said, “only we thought we'd be holding ‘em on the moon by now.”

That was good for a laugh, but it also had me thinking. That version of Fan-





dom, that first generation, they thought on that level. They saw the world as open, were just on the edge of an explosion of technological advance that would completely change the world. There was a world of possibilities that the first fans saw rising and knew were coming down the path. That's something that has changed, I think. Yeah, we've still got a lot of folks who have that feeling, but there's that crew that feels we've lost control and that the advances we've made have turned us around and have opened us up to great pains. You wouldn't have found that at the first Worldcon.

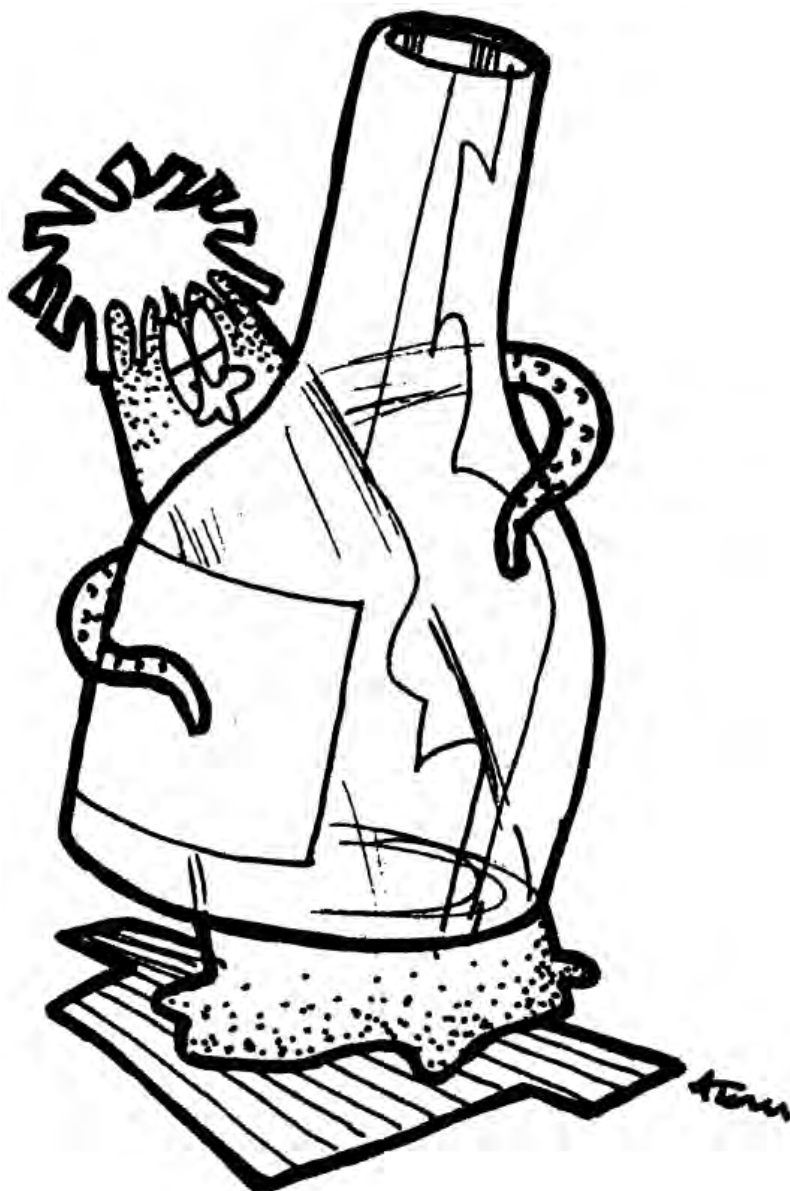
I asked Bob the same question, and he might have summed up my entire thoughts about fandom.

"Why wouldn't we? There's still science fiction, so there's always reason to get together to talk about it. There's still people who only get to see each other once a year, so we need a Worldcon, just like

we did back then. That'll never change." and later Bob added "We wouldn't have recognized the world of today, and that's because we only went so far down one road before we found another."

I get that, I understand that, I FEEL that. It's the reason for a Worldcon to exist. We put faces to names, whether the names appear in Fanzines or on SMOFlist or on Facebook. The key being that it's all science fiction is why really makes me a happy guy. We still gather 'round the stories, and though we're living in the future from those days of the first Worldcon and it's NOTHING like they imagined, we're also far further along than they'd have expected.

And we still have the ties from those first Worldcons, those folks who were there when things in the distance looked a lot different than when we finally got there!





# Memories of Loncon I

Loncon I was the first Worldcon to be held outside North America, and has a pivotal role in Worldcon's evolution. Without it, the Worldcon might now be about as global as the World Series.... and the event was unusual in other ways, including the fact that both the president of the convention committee, John Wyndham, and the chairman of the committee, John Carnell, were full-time professional writers and editors.

Fan historian Rob Hansen has gathered an extensive set of contemporary articles and reports on his website at <http://www.fiawol.org.uk/FanStuff/THEN%20Archive/1957Worldcon/LonWorld.htm>. For this article, we've published just a small selection of that material, mainly from James White and Walt Willis. If you enjoy it, we recommend you take a look at the full archive when you have the time.

## **Thursday 5th September WALT WILLIS (in 'Oops!'):**

Imagine a quiet old part of London just outside the heart of the city. Bayswater. Stately old stone-faced terrace houses with balconies, rusty iron railings and desultory trees. Nobody can afford to live here any more, and the main streets are all small shops, offices and restaurants. But in the quieter streets, like Leinster Gardens, the old houses linger on almost unchanged as hotels, like the Kings Court.

We approached it from the tube station by a curiously circuitous route and the first thing we noticed about it were two tattered doormats wedged against the stone pillars on each side of the door, like hair growing out of nostrils. Directly inside the door was the reception desk with two pretty girls behind it talking to someone with an American accent whom I didn't recognize, an island of order in a sea of chaos. The lounge opposite them was strewn with unassembled electronic equipment, paint-pots, junk, shavings, paper and rubbish. Overalled workmen were everywhere; there was a smell of turpentine and a sound

of hammering. The carpets were up, of course, but it looked as if they might come down again by Christmas. No such glowing hopes could be held out for the stairs, where work had hardly yet started. Probably the decorators had had a look at the bedroom floors and decided there was no point in encouraging anyone to go up there. The corridors had a definite air of being reconciled to demolition, being neither straight nor level, so that you found yourself brushing the walls or now and again running downhill...very disturbing in the early hours of the morning. This was because the hotel had been made by knocking three or four houses together and of course they didn't quite fit. Every now and then a flight of steep stone steps led down to a dirty lavatory or bathroom. There was not much the management could have done with the antiquated plumbing at short notice but they might, in deference to the susceptibilities of our refined American friends, have segregated them into male and female.

Downstairs again I found Bobbie Wild and Dave Newman, Convention Secretary and Pro-

gramme Committee stalwart respectively, both talking at once to a dark, plump, disgruntled man of about 35. They introduced him as the manager who had, they enthusiastically affirmed, been "very cooperative." I formed the impression that they were trying to butter him up and tried to do my bit. "Ah, M. Maurigny!" I exclaimed joyfully with my best mixture of French accent and Irish charm. So this was the wonderful M. Maurigny, proud representative of the best of French cuisine and continental gaiety and blood brother of the Convention Committee. Bobbie and Dave looked slightly taken aback and hastily explained that M. Maurigny had just sold out, leaving the sinking ship to this new manager, Mr. Wilson, who had had a Raw Deal but was being Very Cooperative. Very Cooperative, they repeated fervently. Apparently the villainous Maurigny had handed over the place in dilapidation and chaos, leaving the cooperative Mr. Wilson to cope with redecoration and a convention simultaneously. But convention or no convention, the redecoration must go on.

*The Willises had flown* from Belfast to Liverpool in a war-surplus DC3 'Dakota' fitted out for passengers then taken the train, whereas James White was booked on a direct flight to London in a modern Viscount. Needless to say, his was the flight that was delayed by mechanical problems. Eventually, the plane did take off....



## JAMES WHITE:

Four hours later I was scanning the biggest lounge of the King's Court Hotel for sensitive fannish and/or voracious pro-type faces. I spotted Ackerman at once, talking to a small group in circle of armchairs ---the armchairs were tight, not the occupants; it was only 3.30 in the afternoon - so I went over and said: "You probably don't remember me..."

But he did; he said, "Why, Bob Shaw...!" and shook hands warmly.

After disillusioning him tactfully I told him he was looking much better than last time I had seen him in 1951 when he had been somewhat under the weather due to a double-barrelled ailment comprising travel sickness and non-Asiatic flu. I also noticed there was a considerable speeding-up in the well-remembered Ackerman drawl; now he jabbered along almost as fast as Gary Cooper. The musical "Hm-mmmmmmm-mmm-mm?" was gone too, but it was nice seeing even this stream-lined, healthy and vigorous Ackerman again.

He introduced me to a young German fan called Rainer Eisfeld, and to Bob & Barbara Silverberg. I said excitedly, "Not the Robert Silverberg whose story was printed upside down behind mine in the latest Ace pocketbook (D-237: Master of Life & Death / The Secret Visitors)?" just before he got in a similar question. Barbara Silverberg I found to be a very nice girl with a lively sense of humour who possessed the good taste to laugh at most of my jokes. She does not look like one of the three specialists in an abstruse section of electronics. Bob Silverberg is young, intelligent, black-haired and good looking in a vaguely Neanderthal sort of way, and his face seems to fall naturally into a scowl. This, he explained carefully, is because his face muscles are constructed that way and it is painful for him to lift the corners of his mouth. He was destined to go through the Convention in constant agony. When someone - usually me - made a pun, the scowl became a sneer and the Silverberg Sneer is a devastating thing. Humbly, I asked if maybe he could teach me to sneer like that and he said he'd try.

We did not guess then at the awful consequences this simple request was to have, the mind-shattering weapon it was to unloose. We said goodbye, having still not decided who was upside down with regard to which, promising to meet about 7.30 in the Globe...it being Thursday night. I left to search Gamages for accessories for my train set.

The Globe that night remains for me a noisy, smoky blur. I can remember Ted Carnell and I plying each other with drinks, one each. I met Bobbie Wild,

the Convention Secretary, an efficient, overworked and slightly harassed girl who said she had insured herself so that she could wrap a certain person's blank guitar round his blank-blank neck with impunity. I wished her luck. Then there were Joy Clarke and Ken & Pamela Bulmer, all looking as pretty and vivacious as ever, except Ken. But Vince Clarke was a shock. Gone was the distinguished toffee-apple of yesteryear; in its place was this soft-spoken young patriarch with sane straightened-out kid written all over him.

It was about 2.30 when I went up to my room, to find a still, emaciated figure occupying one of the three beds. I went through its luggage quickly; it consisted of four snazzy suits, twenty-three ties, a camera and one hundred and fifty two- colour printed cards bearing the GDA (Goon Defective Agency) legend and stating that the holder was one Stephen F. Schultheis. After a few moments deep cogitation I decided that the figure on the bed was Steve Schultheis. It bothered me somewhat that it did not appear to breathe, but I went to bed reassuring myself with the well-known fact that Arch-Goon John Berry is dead from the neck up, and it was therefore conceivable that the Cleveland Op was extinct from the cervical vertebrae on down.



### **Friday 6th September JAMES WHITE:**

Next morning the figure did not move or breathe during the time I dressed, washed or shaved. It did, however, make a slight snurkling sound when I inadvertently spilled some of my shaving water on its head. Greatly relieved at this sign of life I went down to breakfast.

After breakfast, the Silverbergs and I went to Les Flood's shop. He hadn't got a copy of the latest Ace Double, but insisted on taking our pictures in a semi-stiff, back-to-back pose. It took him a long time to get us arranged just right, but finally we got away just before the crowd began throwing pennies. We headed for the British Museum.

I spent two hours wading through ancient pottery, mummies and postage stamps before discovering the awful fact that this was not the museum which contained a whole floor devoted to Aeronautics. But I concealed my disappointment well, I thought, being content merely to make sneering remarks about completist pebble-collectors in the Geology Section and trying to decide, in the Egyptology Room, which of the occupants most resembled George Charters. It was hard to tell with those bandages.

Bob Silverberg, in an attempt to instill in me the rudiments of archaeology and stuff like that, began giving me the history of a collection of sculpture which he was keen to examine called the Elgin Marbles. These, it seemed, had been purloined while the Greeks were away fighting some war or other. "Ah," I observed, "so the Greeks are missing some of their marbles." They did not speak to me after that except for suggesting that surely I had presents to buy for my family, and that they could recommend some good shops at the other end of London.

### **WILLIS (in 'Oops!'):**

By Friday evening things were looking up. There were nice new carpets everywhere downstairs and even some bits on the walls. At least they were covered with an odd, hairy wallpaper, all little patches of short, red fur. I remember asking Moskowitz if it was science fiction plush. I'm sorry to be talking so much about the hotel, but believe me it was important, It set the whole mood of the convention. The lounges were the key, There were five of them altogether, all quite small, and furnished with comfortable armchairs and coffee tables. Waiters with trays and girls with trollies patrolled them until dawn plying the fans with food and drink. The drinks actually had ice in them. Yes, ICE! (Only those of us who have been to Europe will be properly impressed by this.) It seemed to me it would take an awful lot of dirty bathrooms to outweigh all this. The most important result was that we had lounge parties instead of bedroom parties, a quite different thing, smaller, more intimate, more fluid, little congenial groups constantly forming and reforming.

**WILLIS (in 'SF Parade'):**

The 15th World Science Fiction Convention opened at the Kings Court Hotel this evening at 9:07, P.M., seven minutes late, Chairman Ted Carnell explained that they could have opened on time, but feared to flout providence by defying what appeared to be a law of nature as regards science fiction conventions. He also said that when making the bid for London at the New York Convention last year he had promised only one thing: that whatever it would be like, it would be different from N.Y.

Ted Carnell introduced John Wyndham Harris, who introduced John W. Campbell, the Guest of Honour, who received a prolonged and enthusiastic welcome. He made a short speech about the work of an sf editor ("Whatever was good yesterday, we don't want tomorrow ... We have to live in the future, now... The editor has to be a prophet; if he's no prophet, there's no profit.") With this desperate attempt to wrest George Charters' laurels as the Convention's most depraved punster, JWC introduced Dave Kyle

with some sympathetic remarks about the troubles of Convention Committees. Dave introduced the TAFF delegate Bob Madle, who was warmly welcomed despite widespread disagreement which had been expressed earlier in British fandom with the method of voting - the objections were solely towards the possible future abuses of the system itself, not to the present representative.

**Saturday 7th September  
JAMES WHITE:**

In the lobby I was introduced to Wally Weber again. I had had this particular person introduced to me several times before, but had not yet seen what he looked like - in fact I never expected to see Weber. The first few times we had met I had tried, how I had tried, but the introducer had only got as far as "This is Wally Web--" when the Seattle fan's flash camera would explode in a blaze of searing radiation which immediately bleached the visual purple in the eyeballs of everyone within fifty yards. Everybody had



*Joy Clarke, Walt Willis, Rainer Eisfeld, Steve Schultheis, James White, Vince Clarke.*

met Weber but nobody had actually seen him, so this time I automatically closed my eyes when we met and noted with grim amusement the way my eyelids turned bright pink as his flash tried vainly to blind me again. I had decided that the only defence against Weber was a white stick and black spectacles. I blundered on into the lounge.

The place was fairly crowded and I caught sight of the Silverbergs talking to someone whose broad back was towards me. I sneered a greeting and suddenly found myself confronted by the equally broad-shouldered front of no less a personage than John W. Campbell himself. I got the sneer wiped off just in time, shook hands and fought an overwhelming urge to bump my forehead three times against the floor. But our Guest of Honour turned out to be a pleasant and quite uncondescending type of person, a great amiable bear of a man whose conversation and mind processes were either stimulating or overstimulating, but never dull.

At 1.15 the luncheon was supposed to start, but it was considerably later than this before everyone had found his seat - so much so that there was a suggestion going round our table about the advisability of sending out for something to eat. I discovered on taking my seat that the empty space next to me was reserved for no less a person (?) than Wally Flash Weber. I shut my eyes out of sheer reflex, then thought that at last I might get to set this Weber because it was fairly likely that he could not use his flash camera while wielding a knife and fork. Then somebody nudged me and said "Weber's coming!"

Through the door of the dining hall came Weber's camera, Weber's adam's apple and Weber himself in that order. In the flesh, what there was of it, he looked out to be a boney, blond-haired drawling thing with a devastating but economical sense of humour, tall enough to qualify for Irish Fandom. On the other side of Wally were H. Beam Piper and his wife. I asked him if he was H.B. Fyfe.... Or maybe on second thoughts it I asked him if he was H. Beam Piper. Anyway, he said no.

### **WILLIS (in 'SF Parade'):**

After the toast to the Queen (another Worldcon first) drunk in Burgundy (imported), Arthur Clarke introduced John W. Campbell with a brilliant little speech in the serious part of which he referred to Campbell as a scientist rather than a technologist, this being, he suggested, the difference between Gernsback and him. Campbell, in his response, took him up on this, and said he thought of himself rather as a philosopher, physical science and sociology be-

ing mere facets of this field. He went on to more abstruse realms of thought where, after four hours sleep and fortified only by one cup of coffee, I am unable to follow him. However, his speech was, of course, interesting and well received.

Bob Madle followed as TAFF delegate with a few well-chosen words, in the course of which he pointed out that this was really the first Worldcon. Later, Sam Moskowitz was to revive memories of the first titular World Convention in 1939, pointing out the remarkable fact that there were no less than 8 of those original attendees present, 18 years later and 3000 miles away. One difference, he pointed out to the general amusement, was that they had tried to throw out Dave Kyle, and here he was in a seat of honour.

About 20 minutes later, Ted Carnell got up to make a grave announcement. The remainder of the programme had been delayed by a serious calamity; the Convention gavel had been stolen! Fortunately the affair had immediately been put in the capable hands of a famous detective agency, not the FBI, but an organisation of similar scope - The Goon Defective Agency. At this moment James White arose in the body of the hall, drawing a gun. At the other side Arthur Thomson plunged into the hall, shouting "Vile agent of Antigoon!" and a running gun battle ensued, after which White collapsed on the floor (after having dusted it with his handkerchief), and was carried out attended by Sister Ethel Lindsay, as Stephen Schultheis made a triumphant entry with the missing gavel. The whole thing took a mere two minutes but it certainly started off the Programme with a bang... or 13 of them to be exact ...and is to my knowledge the first time such a purely fannish affair has figured in a Worldcon.

### **JAMES WHITE:**

Ethel Lindsay, a nurse and a very nice person who has unfortunately been led astray by John Berry, was supposed to appear, then take my pulse and temperature, and help me stagger off the scene. Instead, Unethical Lindsay was standing on a chair with a GDA badge stating that she was Stephen F. Schultheis pinned to her chest, hooting and screaming "Down with Antigoon!" And Shel Deretchin, who had no part to play whatever except lending pistols, became overcome with excitement and dashed out and began dragging me off by the feet. At this point Arthur Thomson, out of respect for my suit if not for me, grabbed my other end and lifted me clear off the ground. I didn't think it was possible for the relatively diminutive Arthur Thomson to carry the heavy end

of a fourteen stone weakling like myself, but he did it. For half an hour afterwards, however, he looked as if he had been shot 13 times instead of me.

The GDA-Antigoon gun battle was supposed to be a surprise item and it was. So much so that quite a lot of people in the lounge missed it. These, I found out later, had put it down to Sam Moskowitz having an attack of hiccups.

*later that evening ...*

I can't remember much after that except that I was enjoying myself. I do remember however one point where I tried to talk Bob Silverberg into strapping ourselves back-to-back and entering the masquerade part as our Ace Double. But Bob said he wanted to think it over, and as I left I saw him talking earnestly to Barbara and some members of the Committee. Later he told me it grieved him terribly, but he couldn't do it because his wife had been picked as one of the judges and it would be unethical. I hinted that maybe the real trouble was that he had never been taught at school to walk backwards on his hands, sneered politely, and withdrew.



*Walt Willis at the Typewriter*

### **JAMES WHITE:**

A couple of hours later, the Silverbergs, after nearly falling on their faces a couple of times, dragged themselves off to their room. I was beginning to feel tired, so was Mal, but nothing could have got us away from that convention or those people. Weber was not technically a member of this group, because he insisted on sitting three yards away from the rest of us so that he could pretend not to be with us when the level of punning got too low. He also kept Mal and me of how nice it would feel to lie down in a lovely soft bed, the fiend. To counteract this, I suggested to Mal that we go up to our room and dunk our heads in the wash-basin. This we did, and as we were leaving

we paused at the door and looked back at our beds lying there so seductively and smugly. We snapped our fingers at them and sneered. They wilted, visibly. It was at this moment that we felt history was being made, that what we had done was no empty gesture but an actual weapon of war. After a sneer like that, why going to bed would be like fraternizing with the enemy. It had been at that moment that the art and science of Psneeronics came into being, the foundation of an entire new field of knowledge. But just then we were too tired to foresee this: proudly and kind of humbly we returned to the lounge.

### **Sunday 8th September JAMES WHITE:**

At 6.45am, the card game broke up. Peter Phillips staggered off to bed and George Charters, with gentle olde worlde charm, stated his intention of walking back to his hotel, adding that as he had paid for bed and breakfast he considered it his bounden duty to go back and muss up the bread. George does not usually get his words mixed up; this was the latest he had been up since he gave his mother trouble with his teeth. Somebody found a trumpet and let go a couple of hideous blasts on it. The sleepers on chairs, table, and floor jerked feebly at the call of this pseudo-Gabriel, woke and went to bed. Then the manager appeared with a polite and reasonable request for the trumpet-playing to cease on account of the earliness of the hour, the people sleeping in the next hotel, and the obvious lack of ability of the player. I asked if it would be possible to obtain sandwiches and the manager said no, but that breakfast would be served in an hour. There was an immediate movement towards the dining room, but the door was locked and through its glass panels we could see the rows of tables laid for breakfast. The cornflakes seemed to mock us.

The sun was shining brightly through the big windows on the wan, bristly and red-eyed faces of the dozen or so diehards who had not gone to bed. I saw Arthur and Mal staring at me and I found myself staring back at them, and we came to identical conclusions simultaneously - we must look as horrible and haggard-looking as the others! We decided to have a wash and shave before breakfast despite it meaning the loss of our places in the queue.

We went to Arthur and Chuck's room. Arthur, who had a devil in him since about 3 am, immediately shook Chuck awake and told him the time. Chuck misunderstood, bounced out of bed and began dressing madly, shouting "Eleven o'clock! Eleven o'clock! I've missed breakfast again...!" When Arthur

explained that it was only seven we had to rescue him and take him to our room. While Mal and I freshened up. Arthur, who had never seen a Schultheis asleep before, was completely fascinated. He disappeared suddenly to his own room and returned with Chuck and a lemonade bottle full of vodka and lime juice. Apparently he wanted to hold a wake.

### **JAMES WHITE:**

It had been a very successful party until things had got out of hand and we all assured Ellis of that. The main thing I remember from it was Mal and I and Silverberg demonstrating the art of the duello using the Psneer weapon: we made the momentous discovery that (a) the only defence against the psneer was to cross one's eyes and (b) the only person present who could psneer with his eyes crossed was Silverberg. Also at that party an intelligent discerning young American called Whyte - with a 'y' - asked for my autograph and called me Sir. I became suddenly aware of my three brownish-grey hairs, but it was nice egoboo even so.

Later in the lounge we found ourselves in a group composed of Ethel Lindsay, Walter, Madeleine, Ellis Mills and a few hazy other people. We were carrying ourselves with the conscious superiority of persons who have shunned sleep for some 40 hours or more. We psneered a little, practising our technique. At this point Wally Weber arrived complete with camera and asked what we were doing. We told him it was a new and subtle weapon we were developing for beds and things, and he said he would like to photograph it. We psneered at full strength, in unison, into his flash

Wally collapsed in a heap on the floor. Struggling weakly to his feet he held the camera to his ear and shook it gently. "Subtle?" Rattle, rattle. "Subtle. Hah hah." It was about this time that the others took an interest in the sneer as a weapon and began



*Mal Ashworth & James White*

to suggest developments; the long-range sneer, the shot-gun sneer, the delayed-action sneer, the Intercontinental Ballistic Sneer, the International Standard Sneer, preserved in perspex at the Smithsonian Institute and so on. The lowly sneer became the Psneer and the science of Psneerotics came into being. We explained it all to Bob Silverberg later and he solemnly avowed his intention of selling it to Campbell.

### **Monday 9th September JAMES WHITE:**

Round about 4am on Monday morning I began to feel definitely tired. I could tell because of the way I kept missing words - whole sentences sometimes - out of the conversation. By increasing the frequency with which my eyelids thudded shut, and by the greater feats of physical strength necessary to get them open again.

Except for Arthur Thomson it was the same group who had talked through the previous night and morning, though I think Mal said I were the only ones who had not been to sleep since Friday night, it was Wally Weber and Ellis Mills who, with 45 minutes and 2 hours sleep under their belts respectively and thus bright-eyed and alert, were making with the sparkling conversation, Mal and I being content merely to nod now and then. Fortunately we managed to stiffen up again before our faces hit the table. I tried everything to stay awake, even going as far as mixing a double Tonic and Disprin. A couple of times Mal and I dragged ourselves up to our room to sneer at the beds, but we stopped doing it about 4.30 because the beds were beginning to sneer back. Schultheis was snugly dead in bed again.

Round about 5 o'clock, so the bleary-eyed witnesses tell us, Messrs Ashworth & White were really having it tough. Apparently Mal would collapse forward and. I would nudge him awake, then I would succumb and he would do the same for me...rather like those little Swiss figures that bow in and out of fancy barometers, Mal just couldn't go to bed because he had to catch a bus at 8am and he knew that if he once went to bed nothing or nobody would shift him out of it. I merely wanted to see another dawn breaking, which proves what a poetic soul I've got. At a quarter to six, they say, I was walking up and down the lounge, obviously with the idea that it was easier to pretend to be awake while moving. At ten to six I was observed to pull aside the window drapes to reveal a sky which was still dark - but a decided grey. I went upstairs.

I'm told that a few minutes later Mal rolled out of his chair into a heap on the floor. Somebody



pinned a notice to him reading “FAKEFAN” and left word at the desk to wake him up for his bus. I awoke four hours later with a note from Mal pinned to my chest denouncing me for having taken the room key to bed with me so that he had had to go to all sorts of trouble to break in. He added some stuff about how nice it was meeting me and the other members of Irish Fandom, and maybe at Kettering next year....

### **WILLIS (in HYPHEN):**

To really sum up the mood of the convention, which was unique in so many complex ways, you want something to evoke not only its casual, relaxed, friendly atmosphere but its climactic, historic quality. And it should contain references to the fantastic environment, like the unreconstructed hotel and staff and that corridor-like convention hall so obviously made by knocking several small rooms together. (I don't know what the one at the end had been, but my seat had a hole in the middle. But the most important impression was how wonderfully the European and American fans blended together. Towards the end I asked Vince Clarke what had struck him most strongly and his answer was “how wonderful it is to talk to people I've never seen, and have them understand because they have the same background.” That was just the way I remember feeling at the Chicon. After a few minutes it was hard to believe these people were nominally foreigners. We felt we'd known them all our lives...or at least, we wanted to. Some day, we must all meet again. The best thing is that we can say that not from the usual post-con frustration of having failed to talk to the people you wanted to meet, but because those people are now friends whom you want to meet again. Partly thanks to the Programme Committee and partly thanks to that much-maligned hotel (bless you, Bobbie Wild) the affair was a stupendous social success.

### **Acknowledgements from Rob Hansen:**

My thanks to Bill Burns and Greg Pickersgill for their aid in piecing together the story of the IFA luncheon, and in particular to Doug Anderson who put the results of his own researches on this at my disposal, greatly helping in completing the story. Thanks also to Rainer Eisfeld for supplying a copy of the Aldiss article, and to Pete Weston for the loan of various convention materials. Further thanks to Roger Robinson for scans of hotel and pre-convention material, and to Ian Covell for being the first to identify the issue of TARZAN ADVENTURES where Mike Moorcock's report appeared.

The main sources for this composite report were those of James White in HYPHEN #19 (Jan '58), and those by Walt Willis scattered through HYPHEN #19, SCIENCE FICTION PARADE #6 (Fall '57, ed. Len Moffatt), and OOPSLA #23 & 24 (Dec '57 & Feb '58, ed. Gregg Calkins, as reprinted in WARHOON #28, ed. Richard Bergeron). Secondary sources were the Chuck Harris one-shot LONCONFIDENTIAL, and Forry Ackerman's 'Wings Over The Worldcon' from March 1958 issue of IMAGINATIVE TALES (Vol 5 #2), as found and supplied by Mark Plummer. A few paragraphs by Sid Birchby, Pete Daniels, and others were lifted from PLOY #11 (March '58, ed. Ron Bennett) and all details of their pre-convention trip to the Continent by Terry Jeeves and Eric Bentcliffe was taken from their fanzine TRIODE #12 (Winter '57/58). The full text of James White's report (titled “The Quinze-y Report”) is available in the NESFA Press collection of his writings.

For links and scans (where available), see: <http://www.fiawol.org.uk/FanStuff/THEN%20Archive/1957Worldcon/LonWorld.htm>

Bob Madle's TAFF report can be found at [http://www.fanac.org/fan\\_funds/fake/fcover.html](http://www.fanac.org/fan_funds/fake/fcover.html)



SEASON '79  
37th World Science Fiction  
Convention

BRIGHTON, ENGLAND  
23rd - 27th AUGUST 1979



## *Britain was Fine in 79!* *By Peter Weston*

*We're delighted to present this selection of unpublished photographs of the 1979 Brighton Worldcon taken by Portland fan John C. Andrews (sadly now passed away). And who better to provide the commentary than Season '79 Chair, Peter Weston...*

### *Opening Ceremonies, Caledonian Pipe Band*



Lots of things could have gone wrong with the opening ceremony – something I'd particularly wanted to arrange, even though such a thing was pretty much unheard-of at UK cons at the time. As it turned out, everything organised by the fans went as planned, and only the so-called 'professionals' – the Pipe Band – let us down. With a roomful of people – something like 2000+, I estimated – we were all set to go but the band hadn't turned up. This despite the fact that we were paying them several hundred pounds for their appearance. Somehow they got a message to me (no mobiles then, remember) to say that they were stuck in traffic, halfway back to London. This despite them having had months of notice that our opening blast was due to start at 2 p.m. on

the Thursday afternoon.

We fiddled and faddled, chewed our fingernails, and meanwhile the natives were getting restless. Eventually Kev Williams and I made the decision to start the ball rolling and sod the band. As it was, they arrived with about five minutes to spare and ended the show with a fine performance. The Royal Marines would have been better, but we couldn't afford them (we asked).

The reason I was so keen on having a band went back to my trip to Discon in 1974, where Dick Eney arranged for the Alexandria Pipe Band to march into the convention hall. It made a big impression on me and I was determined to do something similar, though the rest of the committee weren't too keen. However this was one of the only three occasions where I put my foot down and did it my way!



This was the second point on which I made myself unpopular. At a committee meeting a couple of years before the con, Malcolm mentioned that he'd asked Brian Aldiss to be Guest of Honour. I think I probably exploded over this casual assumption of authority – this should have been a full committee decision, one we agonised over. As it was, though Brian was a most loveable and worthy chap, he'd already been GoH at the last British Worldcon. To appoint him again was a slap in the face to every other British author. We could have had Bob Shaw (as a consolation-prize we made him Toastmaster) or Jim White. But as someone said, now Brian had been asked we couldn't very well un-invite him.

Actually, in retrospect I think that's exactly what we should have done. I ought to have written to Brian and explained that Malcolm had been out of order, and I think we should have then asked John Brunner. I didn't like John but he had done an awful lot for British fandom and he was riding high in the seventies with *Stand on Zanzibar*; as it was, he must have been bitterly upset, and (although I'm not quite sure about this) I don't think he even came to the Worldcon, perhaps in protest at our decision.

As it was we stuck with Brian and he was, of course, an excellent GoH. But I insisted on having my own choice, Fritz Leiber, as our 'Overseas' GoH. This dual-guest policy was also new to Britain in 1979, and unfortunately it did leave us with a lot of additional expense in bringing Fritz from California and paying two lots of hotel bills.

## *Fred Pohl, SF around the World*

Good old Fred Pohl was the first proper item on the main programme, and I didn't see it. In fact, as soon as the opening ceremony was over I couldn't wait to get up to our 'con suite' (a single room where we entertained VIPs and occasional committee members feeling stressed-out) where I collapsed onto a settee and imbibed strong drink, together, I suspect, with the other members of the Opening Ceremony team. It had drained us completely, and as Kev said, "everyone involved was left trembling and covered in a fine film of sweat".



## *Meet The Authors - Larry Niven*



I'd known Larry for years, of course – I was an early admirer of his 'Known Space' stories, had corresponded with him, had published his articles in *Speculation* and met him at US conventions. He was one of a small group of Georgette Heyer fans who'd enthusiastically supported Brighton because of its connections with King George IV and the Regency period (or rather, Larry's wife Marilyn was a Heyer fan - I think Larry wisely went along with it). So on the Friday afternoon I was privileged to get an invitation to the 'Georgette Heyer Regency tea-party' in the hall of The Old Ship Hotel, scene of some of George IV's trysts with various paramours.

It was all very sweet, with Larry and various other pros & fans in velvet knee-breeches and hose and their ladies in 'A'-line muslin dresses, dancing in a stately minuets to the music provided by a string quartet. But the image that sticks in my mind is that of poor old Bruce Pelz who like all fans had two left feet. He had been sucked into all this by his then-wife Diane and there he was, a portly Mr Darcy, standing helplessly on the dance-floor while his lady-love, a petite little vision in peach, kicked his shins and swore at him for being a big useless lump!

## *Seacon 79 Banner*

That backdrop was on canvas and measured something like 20ft by 30ft. It was painted by Sue Williams and I never did find out how they managed to get it to Brighton, nor what happened to it after the convention was over!



## *Fritz Lieber GotH Speech*

Poor old Fritz, he was such a disappointment to me. For over ten years he'd sent me occasional letters, which were always full of wit and interest (I wish I'd kept them, they'd be worth a fortune now). I'd admired his stories since I'd first discovered them and one of his novels (which I won't mention in deference to the tender sensibilities of Mark Plummer) can claim to be the greatest broad-spectrum SF story of all time. But when I met him just before we went onto the stage at Brighton, he seemed an old, old man. He could hardly get the words out, and I'm afraid that I, impatient youth, didn't realise that the poor old boy was probably hopelessly jet-lagged after his long flight from the West Coast. I'm told he perked-up a bit, later on, but our paths somehow didn't cross again. What a pity!





*Panel: The Fermi Paradox, with Arthur C Clarke, Poul Anderson, Gerry Webb, Greg Benford, Hal Clement*

No, I didn't see this panel either; in fact I saw very little of the programme. But this one looked good – with this line-up, you can't get much more 'hard'-SF than that! Arthur Clarke was a model of co-operation, no 'side' at all despite his huge reputation, and I'm pleased that I was able to have a one-on-one chat with him earlier during the con. I don't think I even saw Greg Benford, though we'd been long-time correspondents. Gerry, of course, was having the time of his life and this picture illustrates that in the seventies he wore snappy suits and weighed about eleven stone!



*Brian Burgess as Barbarian*

I don't know what our overseas visitors thought of this entry in the Fancy Dress (or as we were just starting to call it, 'The Masquerade'), but British fans had been treated to a preview of Brian's costume, or lack of same, at the 1977 Coventry Eastercon where he ran around the upstairs landings at the DeVere late in the evenings. Brian was something of an 'institution' at Eastercons, normally to be seen conservatively-dressed and retailing a suitcase full of pork pies and bottles of milk in the wee small hours. But it turned out that he was also something of a naturalist, and word had it that he holidayed in St Tropez with only his cache-sex to keep the world at bay.

## *Drew & Kathy Sanders, King & Queen of Pentacles (Best in Show and Contestants Award)*

When it came to showing a bit of bare skin then Kathy was a much more attractive proposition than Brian. I first met her at the 1977 Suncon where she wore a similarly-splendid outfit, and I discovered she was one of a small group of American fans that between conventions spent every waking minute in designing, sewing and creating the most incredible costumes. She was a very attractive girl though I was surprised that she seemed very



quiet, almost shy, despite her frequent ventures into the front-line of Masquerade action. Her husband Drew was a slightly strange character and seemed very uncertain of himself. After the parade he told me that he felt depressed because no-one knew who he was. "Of course they do," I said cheerfully, "you're Kathy Sanders' husband." It was meant to be funny at the time but looking back I realise I perhaps was a little unkind! On the Monday night Kathy came along to our Gophers' Party in the basement of the Metropole, and performed a vigorous belly-dance which was much appreciated by all present.



*Avluela from Nightwings*

Kate Solomon was a real show-stopper in this outfit, what there was of it, and not just because she was probably the first to go topless at a British convention. The problem was those wings of hers were just so enormously big and clumsy – probably something like fifteen-foot long, green translucent film wrapped around shaped plastic tubes. Space was at a premium back-stage, Rob Jackson was in charge and trying to assembly contestants in some sort of order,

and these great things just kept getting in the way. We senior and mature members of the committee tried not to leer too openly but Katie bore it all with great patience, taking absolutely no notice of the admiring glances she was attracting – a real trouper!



*Peter Weston at the  
Closing Ceremonies*

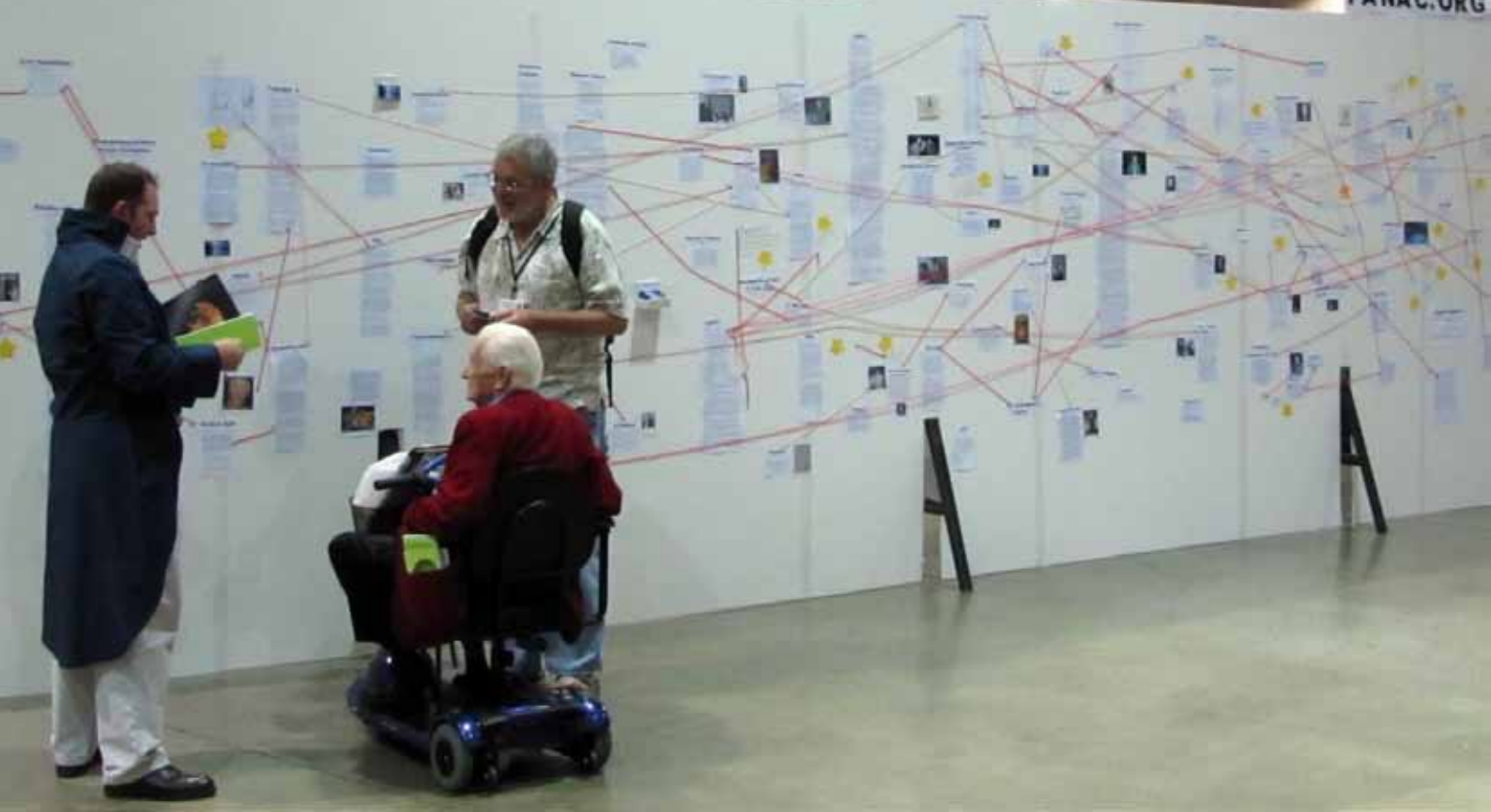
Despite the Adolf-Hitler appearance of this picture I was in fact enjoying myself immensely by whipping up the gathered multitude (again, at least 2000) into a clamour for another British Worldcon, there at Brighton, and as soon as possible. I knew by then that Seacon '79 had been a great success (though still didn't know if we were solvent, and believe me the margin between profit and loss was less than £1000), and just at this moment I was seriously considering putting in a bid, there and then, for a repeat performance. We could have done it, probably could have signed-up a thousand pre-supporters right there, but at the last minute sanity intervened; did I really want another five years of hassle? Did any of the committee? Well, as it turned out Malcolm did, but that's another story.

One final note; I mentioned just three instances where I insisted on having my own way. I've mentioned two; the third concerns the one left-over Hugo trophy, which on the Tuesday morning rather strangely seemed to have attached itself to another committee member. Well, I thought, if anyone is going to have that trophy it's going to be me, and since it wasn't going to be handed-over voluntarily, there was nothing for it but to engage in an unseemly scuffle on the floor to take said Hugo by *force majeure*. Good job I did – it became the pattern from which all subsequent Hugo rockets have been made ever since.

FAN HISTORY

FANCYCLOPEDIA 3

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## Worldcon Memories - A Renovation Project Introduction by Patty Wells (Chair, Renovation)

For all the years I've attended Worldcon, and all the years before that, people have asked how your con was, and cherished the memories of Worldcon. When we were working on the Reno in 2011 bid, we wanted ways to draw people to return to our website and to remember us. I like things that are a bit of puzzle. I liked the idea of a very fannish Worldcon and finding out the favorite memories of some of our group's favorite people. Somewhere out of all these stray thoughts, I suggested collecting favorite Worldcon memories and having people guess whose memories they were. It was one of those things you try on a lark and wonder why everyone hasn't done it for years. It was the most popular feature on the website.

As a former Worldcon chair, I have to throw in a great favorite of my own. I am a fool for a good ice sculpture. I didn't consider one was a possibility for Renovation until I was sitting at the Peppermill Coffee Shop with some of our facilities people before a meeting. And there, waiting to be taken to a recep-

tion, was a very detailed undersea plant ice sculpture. I said I wanted one of those please. When asked of what, a Hugo rocket was the only possible choice for the Pre-Hugo reception. Originally it was to be fairly small, but as the budget got better, I told them to make it bigger, and finally as big as the hotel could make it, with no real thought about actual size. I had no clue that I would walk into the reception room that night to a gleaming six foot ice Hugo. It was glorious.

Can someone collect favorite Worldcon memories some more? I know it's 'been done', but we waited for each new memory and read them all with such enjoyment. Oh, and more ice sculptures please. I wonder how a hotel catering department would react to being asked to sculpt a full sized Iron Throne...

*We have reprinted just five of the memories collected by Renovation below. For the full set, see <http://renovationsf.org/wc-memories.php>.*





### **Ginjer Buchanan**

Worldcon memories -- wow! I've got 40-plus years of them (although there are some hazy parts here and there -- particularly in my younger days, I was not unfamiliar with the all-night room party!)

The first time is maybe always the best. But Baycon in 1968 probably should have a memory page all to itself. If you've read my often-republished con report, "I HAVE HAD NO SLEEP AND I MUST GIGGLE", it sorta does have one.

And the first out-of-country Worldcon (Heicon, for me) is also bound to be one that will leave an impact.

Beyond that -- well, it's a jumble of people, places, images and even odors -- Lester Del Rey inveighing against the elevators in St Louis; the moldy smell of the Fontainebleau Hotel in Miami (Not a good thing, since this was a con I worked on!); watching Heinlein really, really appreciate the burlesque show in Kansas City; getting up one morning at Brighton to find both Chip Delany and a transsexual fan asleep on separate couches in the living room of the suite; Joe Haldeman doing terrible things with his Hugo and a balloon at a Hugo Losers party in Chicago; hosting a champagne reception for Anne McCaffrey in Winnipeg; going to dinner with Charlie Stross and Cory Doctorow in Toronto and almost being able to follow the conversation; introducing my newbie author Sharon Shinn to the world of sf cons and fandom in Boston (Next thing I knew, she was attending the Regency Dance!); the Big Blue Bear in Denver, the single funniest piece of city-art I've ever encountered... the list could go on -- and on -- and on.

### **Joe Haldeman**

Our first Worldcon was Discon in 1963, when I was a lad of twenty and Gay was a mere 17. It seemed huge, and the first day I was walking around stunned -- the first thing we'd seen when we walked into the hotel lobby had been Isaac Asimov fencing with L. Sprague de Camp.

What really impressed me, for whatever reason, was the fanzine room. There was a table with a big pile of miscellaneous freebies on it, and we both carried off a handful of oldies like Yandro and Double: Bill Symposium. Amateur magazines about science fiction! It totally croggled my mind.

Then in the evening we party-hopped from room to room, overwhelmed by fellowship and free booze. People talked more about SF in those days, before fandom was balkanized. I saw a 75-year-old woman and a teenager arguing about SF movies, treating each other as equals. I had halavah and ouzo for the first time, and a dizzying mixture of creme de menthe and Scotch over ice.

I remember talking with Robert Silverberg about the Galápagos, which I pronounced gal-la-PAY-goes, and he politely corrected me. Forty years later, we would visit those islands together.

What an interesting world to enter.



**“Those were the days of campus riots, and what we got from them was the faint and inescapable aroma of tear gas.”**  
**Fred Pohl on Baycon, 1968**

## David D. Levine

When you're really nervous your heart doesn't beat faster, just deeper.

In 2006, I'd lost the Hugo Award once before and the Campbell Award twice, so I knew that I shouldn't get my hopes up too high and I was trying not to get too excited. But when Harlan Ellison -- HARLAN ELLISON! -- took the stage to present the award, I realized that the Short Story Hugo really is a very big deal, and then he called out my name and said "Getcher ass up here."

It was like my heart exploded. I was moving so fast when I hit the stairs that they broke into two sections, the lower section sliding sideways by about six inches. I got up on stage and Harlan was standing there with his arms outstretched and I gave him an enormous hug. In fact, I climbed him like a spider monkey.

You have to understand that I have been in fandom since I was sixteen years old. Winning a Hugo Award has always been the pinnacle of possible

achievements that I could reasonably aspire to. And here I had won it -- I had won a Hugo of my very own. My little story about a guy and some bugs was going to be listed with *Soldier, Ask Not* and *I Have No Mouth, and I Must Scream* and *Neutron Star* and *The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas* and *Time Considered as a Helix of Semi-Precious Stones*. Written in the Book of Life forever.

I read my prepared speech, including the top line: "2006 Hugo acceptance speech, which will never be used," which got a laugh, and although I was trembling all over I managed to hold it together and not start sobbing until I got off stage, where Janice Gelb held me up and offered me water, which I was silly enough to refuse. I have never before or since sobbed from sheer joy.

Edward Morris posted on the Asimov's website's message board later: "David Levine was on cloud 9 from outer space the whole night. I have never seen a human being so transported with joy. Good for him."

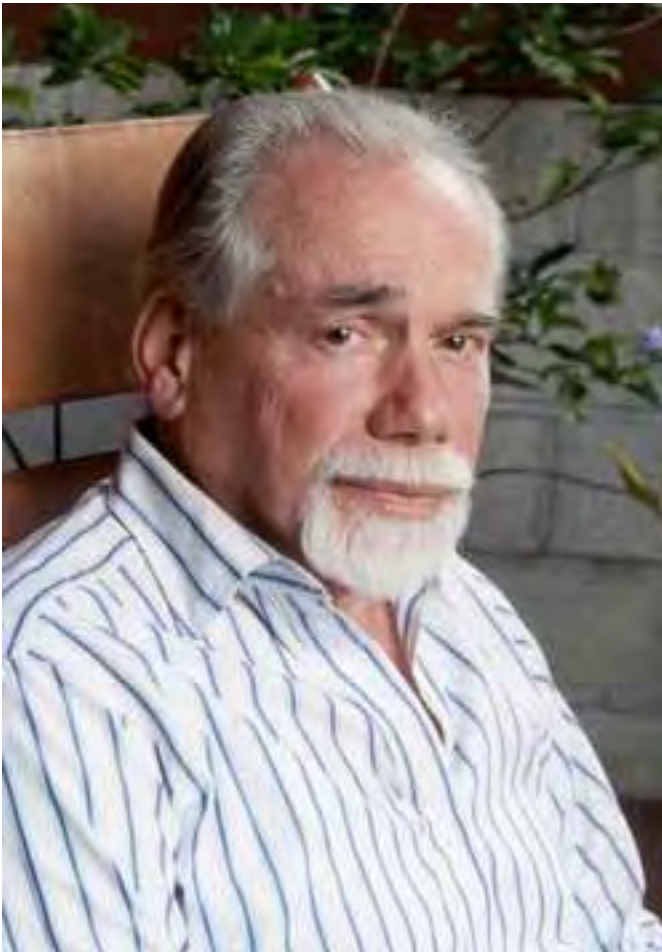


## Robert Silverberg

Picking a favorite Worldcon memory when you've been to 56 Worldcons is no easy assignment, but one thing does come to mind from my very first Worldcon, Philadelphia in 1953.

Harlan Ellison and I were teenage fans and had arranged to room together at the con. When we arrived, Harlan startled me with the suggestion that we rent a suite at the hotel -- the Bellevue-Stratford, at that time one of Philadelphia's finest hotels. Suites at the con cost something like \$12 or \$15 a night, a fantastic amount in those days, when Worldcon membership itself was \$1, but Harlan's idea was that we would run the place as a fan dormitory, renting out couch and floor space to our friends at \$5 (I think) a night. Harlan and I would keep the beds for ourselves.

It sounded like a good idea to me, but I had no idea how good an idea it was or what kind of salesman Harlan was. He proceeded to find us a dozen or more roommates each night; the place was packed, we had a kind of running party going all night long every night, and at the end of the con he and I split a huge wad of cash. I went home as rich as I had ever been in my life. (And I had never been more tired, either, because I figured that I got about eight hours of sleep during the entire weekend.)



## Connie Willis

I love Worldcon. I've been going regularly since the Worldcon in Denver and have only missed a few over the years, including, unfortunately, this year's in Australia. (I was having gall bladder surgery.)

All the Worldcons I've been to were great, and it's hard to pick out one favorite moment from among so many:

- almost getting my arm taken off at Gatorland at the Orlando Worldcon

- almost getting thrown out of the Tupperware Museum at ditto (for not taking it seriously enough)

- almost getting thrown out of the Alamo at the San Antonio Worldcon (for not taking it seriously enough)

- waiting out a tornado warning in the kitchen of a restaurant with Nancy Kress and Jack Skillingstead at the Denver Worldcon and trying to explain that we never have tornadoes in Denver

- running the miles and miles of the convention centers in assorted cities

- being forced to be on the Dating Game at the Denver Worldcon in 1980 and then losing to Howard Waldrop in a zoot suit.

Seriously, though, I love Worldcon. I've met hundreds of terrific writers, starting with Hal Clement at the Boston 1981 Worldcon; made wonderful friends -- I met John Kessel while waiting for a panel at Denver and James Patrick Kelly while sitting on the floor in the hall outside a party at Boston; been lucky enough to win Hugo Awards and be both a toastmaster and Guest of Honor at Worldcons; and had dozens of fascinating conversations on panels and with fans.

It's the talking I love best about Worldcons. The people who go to them are the smartest, funniest, most interesting people on this planet or any other, and collectively, they represent the entire sun of human knowledge. Forget Wikipedia.

My proof that Worldcon people know everything? Well, I saw this great movie on Academy Matisnee when I was a kid. It was about these people on an ocean liner, and they were supposed to be going to America, but really they were all dead, and...

Well, anyway, I'd been trying to find out the name of this movie for years -- this was before Internet Movie Database -- but I couldn't remember who was in it, and no one I talked to had ever heard of it.

"You should ask at Worldcon," Ed Bryant suggested. "Somebody will know." So at the next one, on my first panel, I did just that, though without much hope of its working.

“Okay, there’s this movie about people on an ocean liner,” I said, and had barely started into my description when not one but a dozen hands shot up.

It’s *Between Two Worlds*,” the first person said.

“It stars Edmund Gwenn and Sidney Greenstreet,” another piped up.

“It’s a remake of the movie *Outward Bound*.”

“Which was a play on Broadway starring Leslie Howard.”

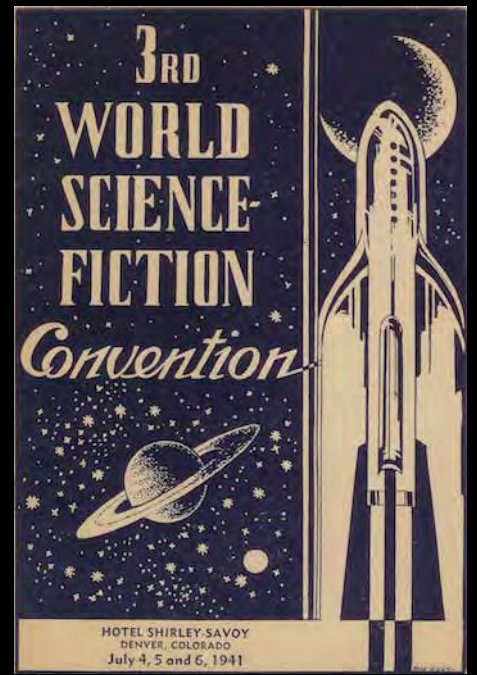
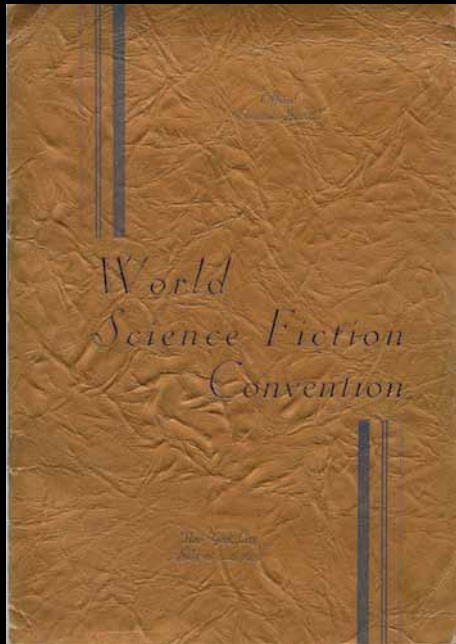
“It was made from the book *Outward Bound* by Sutton Vane.”

That may well be my favorite Worldcon moment of all time. Well, that, or getting thrown out of the Tupperware Museum.

Hope to see you all in Reno. Can’t wait to hear what everybody has to say -- have you seen the British series *Primeval*? What about *Syfy’s Alice*? Is Andrew Lee Potts not the cutest thing you’ve ever seen? -- and can’t wait to see what we get thrown out of this time. See you there!

P.S. Thanks to all those brilliant science fiction fans who helped me find my long-lost movie (<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0036641/>). (When I watched it again, it was just as terrific as I remembered it.)





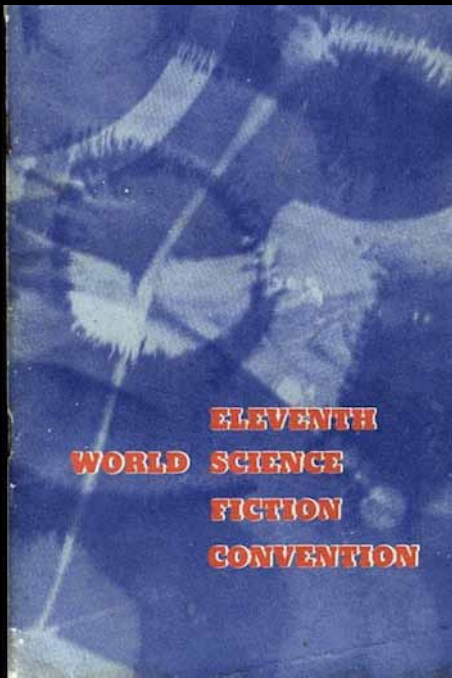
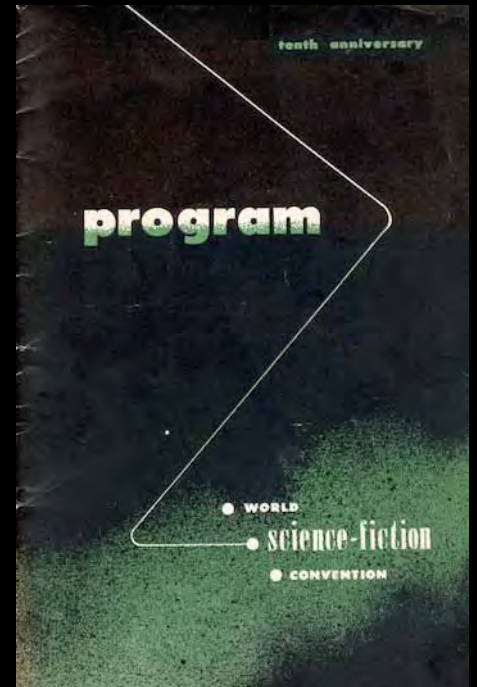
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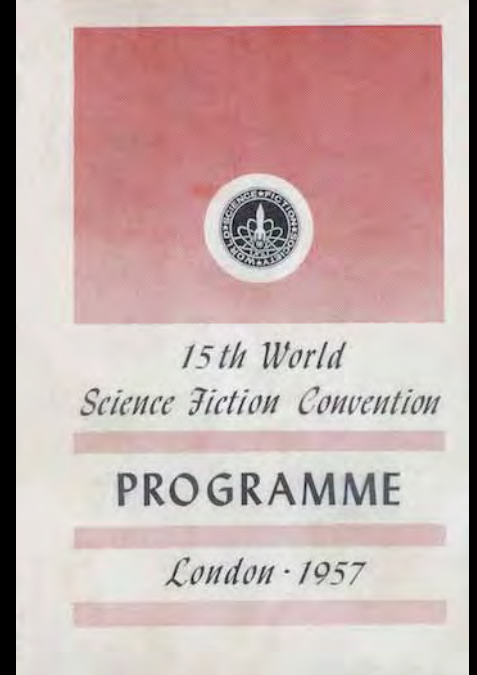
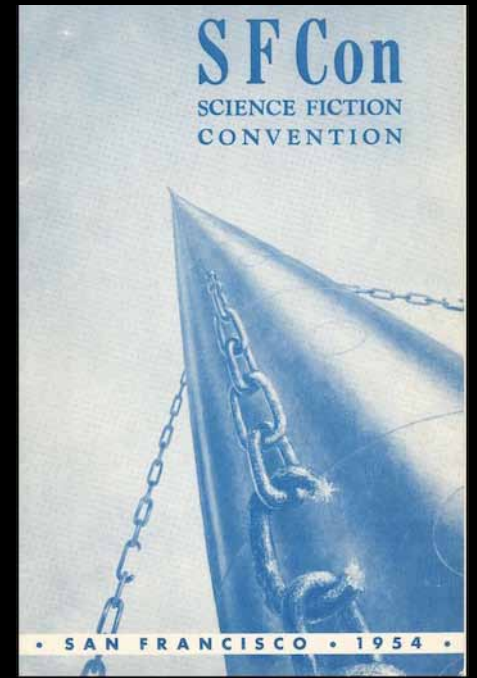
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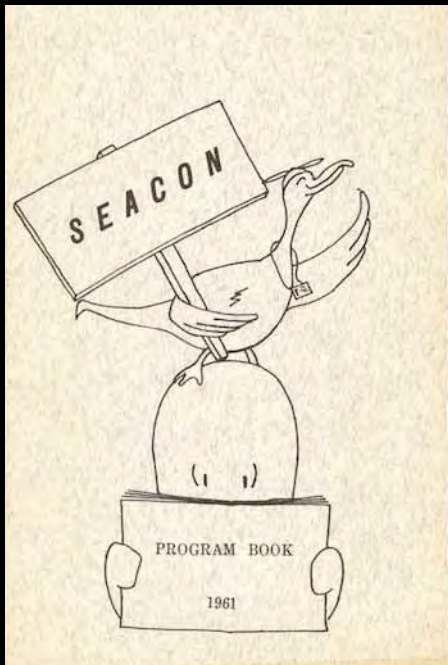
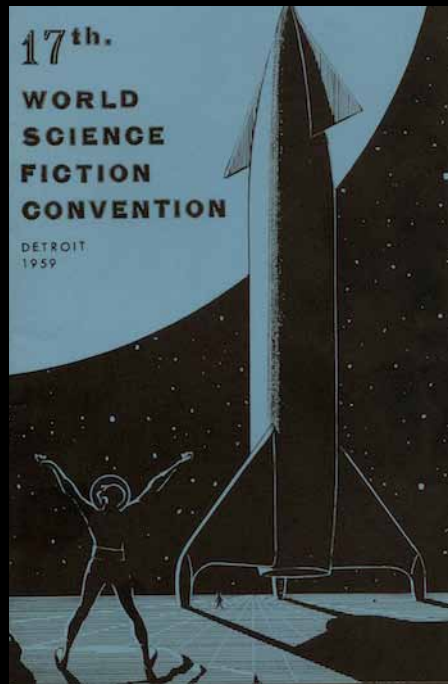
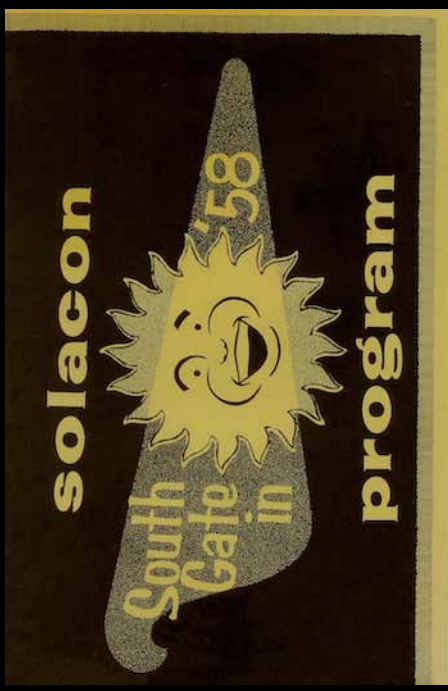
- 1939 - NyCon
- 1940 - Chicon
- 1941 - Denvention
- 1946 - Pacificon
- 1947 - Philcon
- 1948 - Torcon
- 1949 - C invention



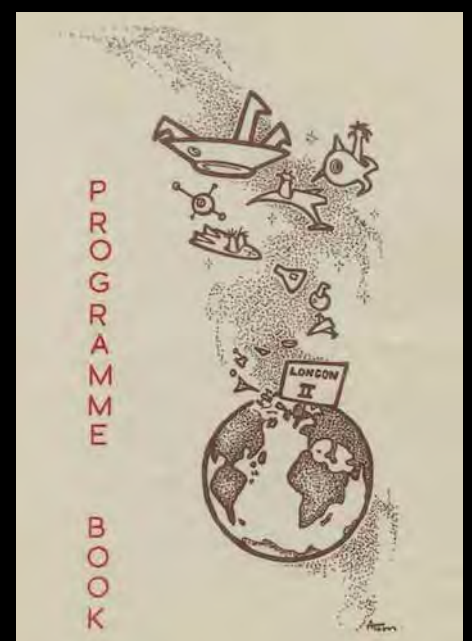
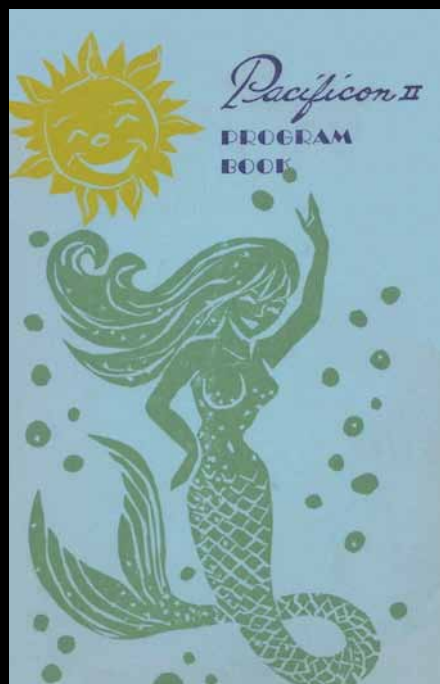
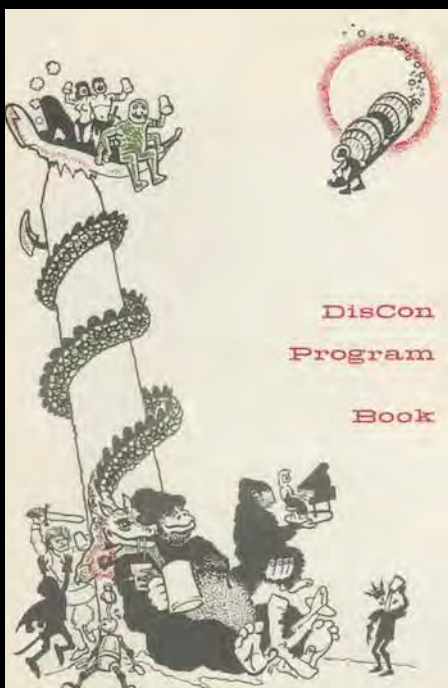
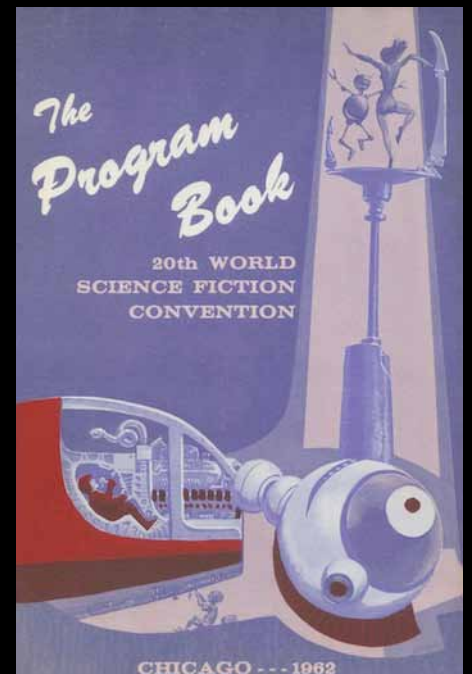


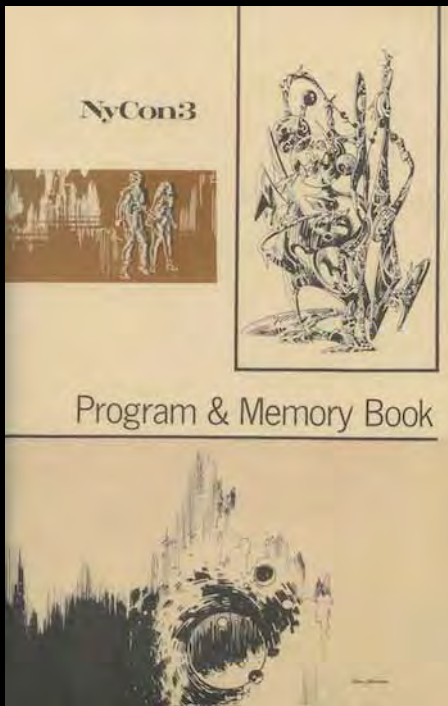
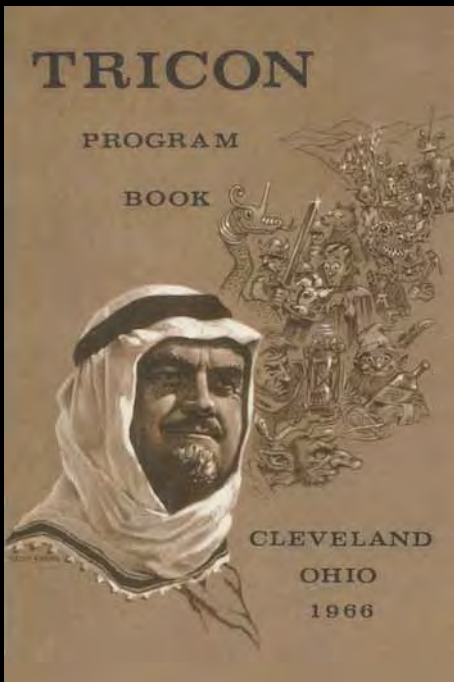
- 1950 - NorWesCon
- 1951 - Nolacon
- 1952 - TASFiC
- 1953 - Philcon II
- 1954 - SFCon
- 1955 - Clevention
- 1956 - NewYorCon
- 1957 - Loncon



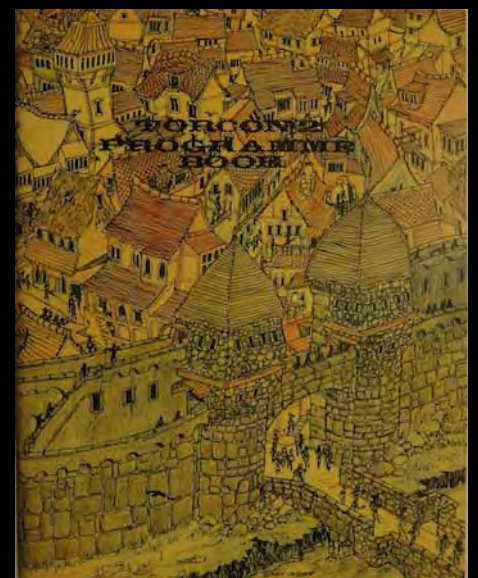
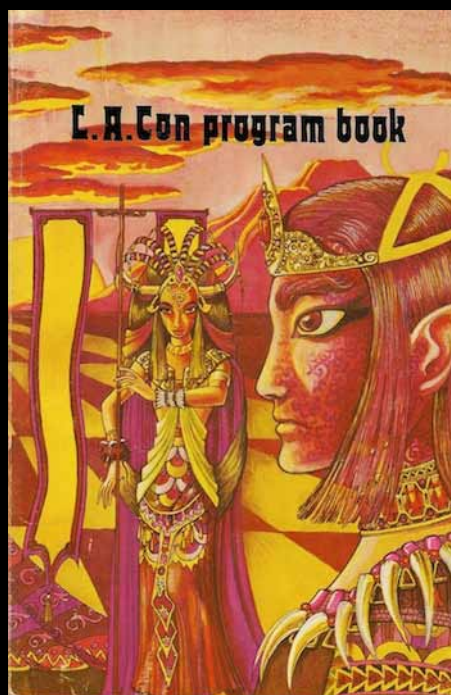
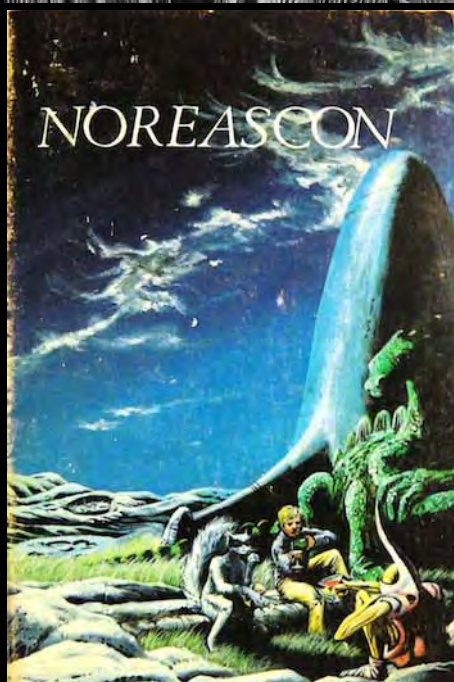
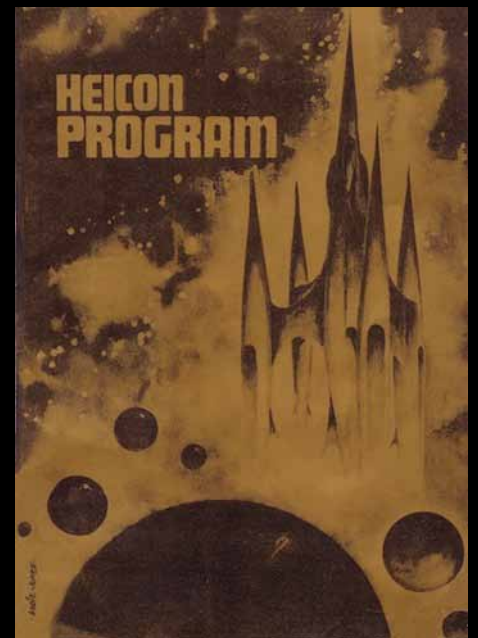


- 1958 - Solacon
- 1959 - Detention
- 1960 - Pittcon
- 1961 - Seacon
- 1962 - Chicon III
- 1963 - DisCon
- 1964 - Pacificon II
- 1965 - Loncon II

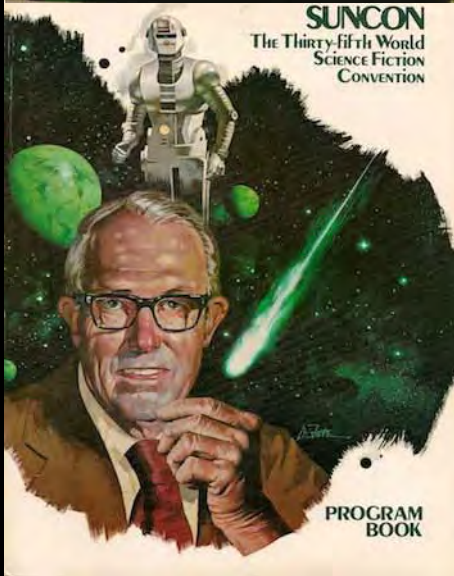




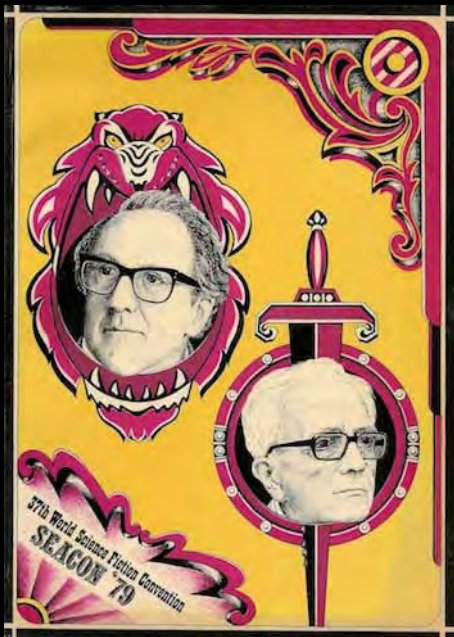
- 1966 - Tricon
- 1967 - NyCon3
- 1968 - Baycon
- 1969 - St. Louiscon
- 1970 - Heicon
- 1971 - Noreascon
- 1972 - L.A. Con
- 1973 - Torcon II

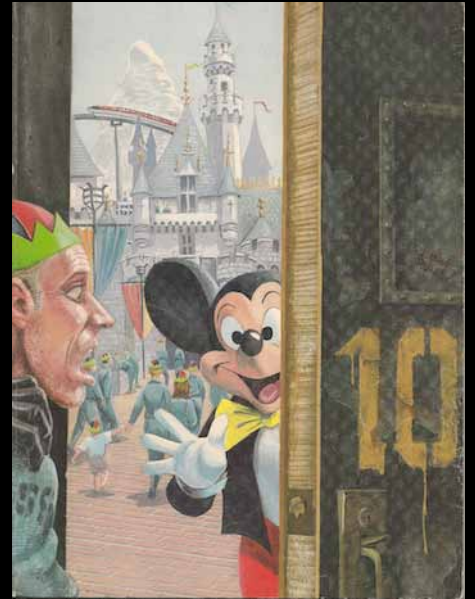
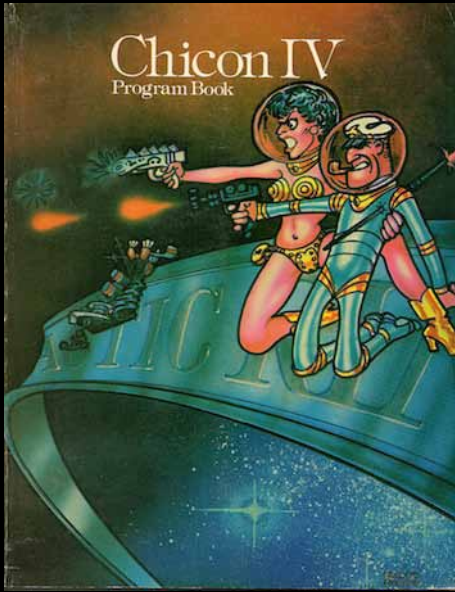




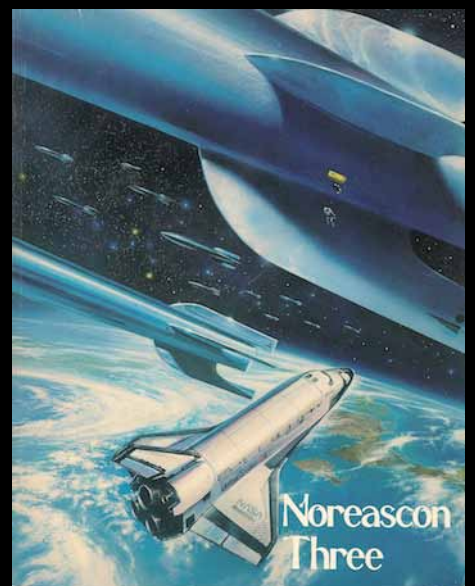
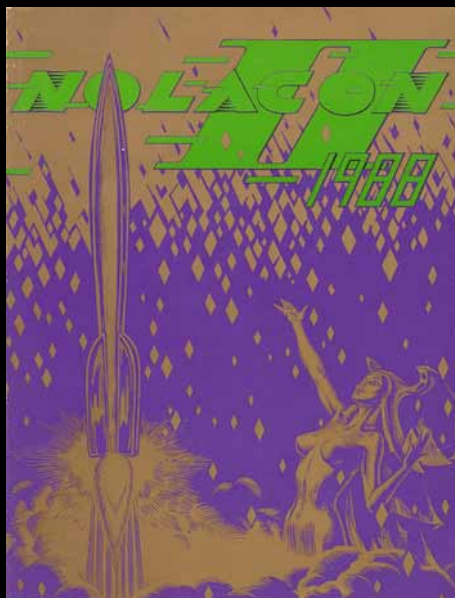
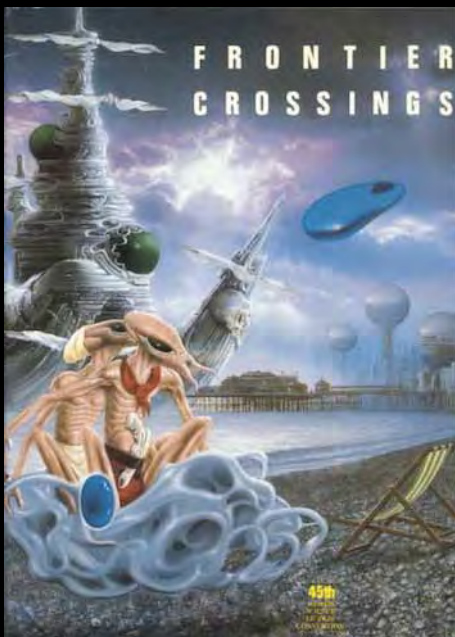


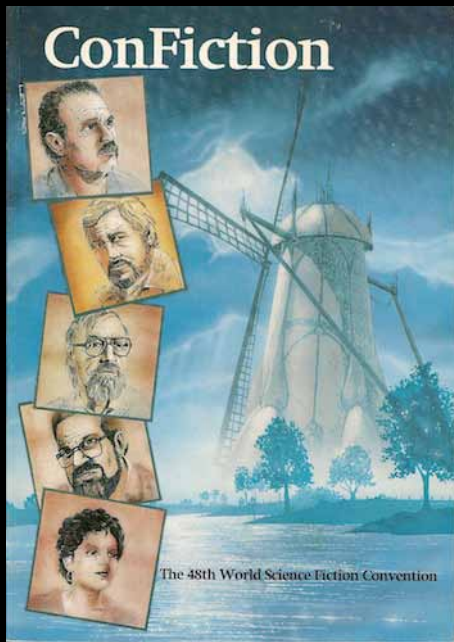
- 1974 - Discon II
- 1975 - Aussiecon
- 1976 - MidAmeriCon
- 1977 - Suncon
- 1978 - Iguanacon
- 1979 - Seacon
- 1980 - NorEasCon Two
- 1981 - Denvention Two



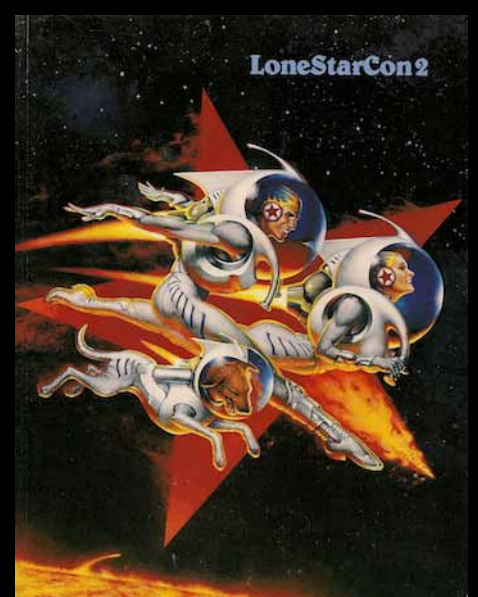
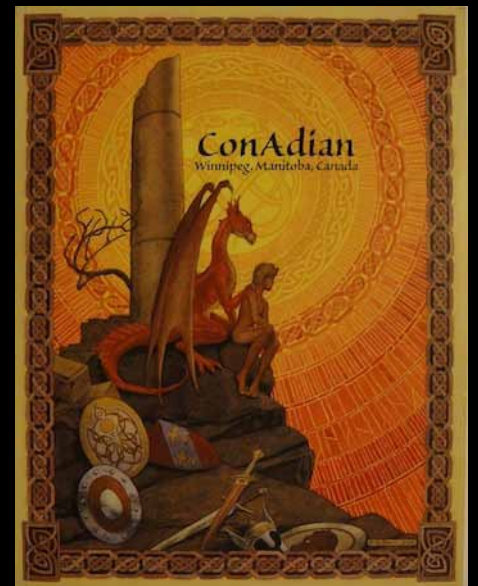


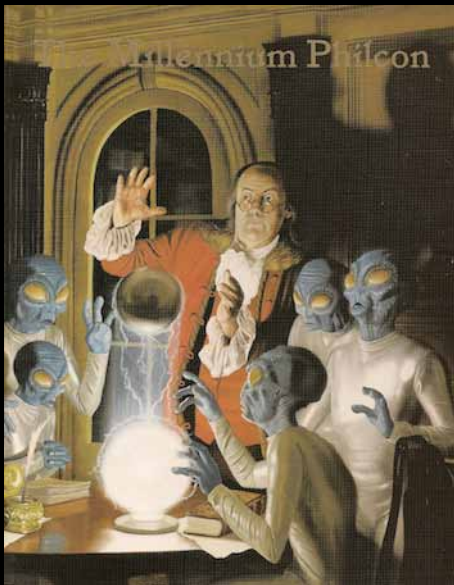
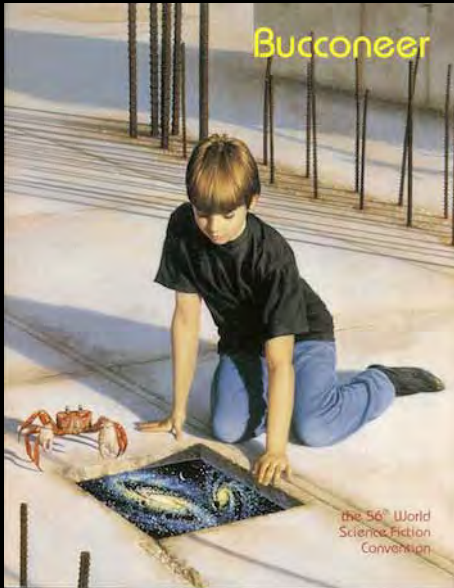
- 1982 - Chicon IV
- 1983 - Constellation
- 1984 - LACon III
- 1985 - Aussiecon Two
- 1986 - Confederation
- 1987 - Conspiracy
- 1988 - Nolacon 2
- 1989 - NorEasCon Three



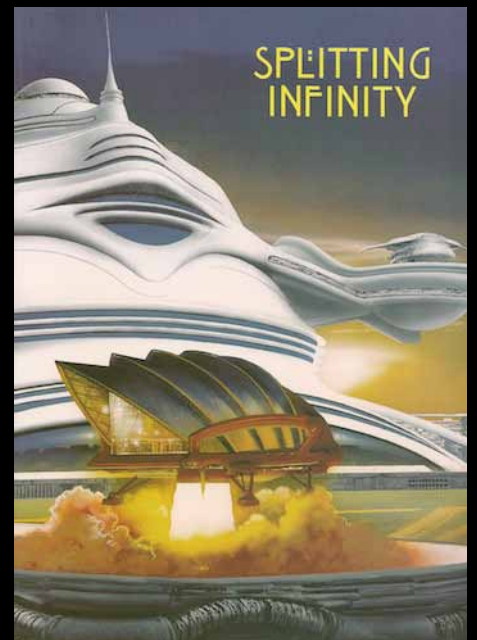
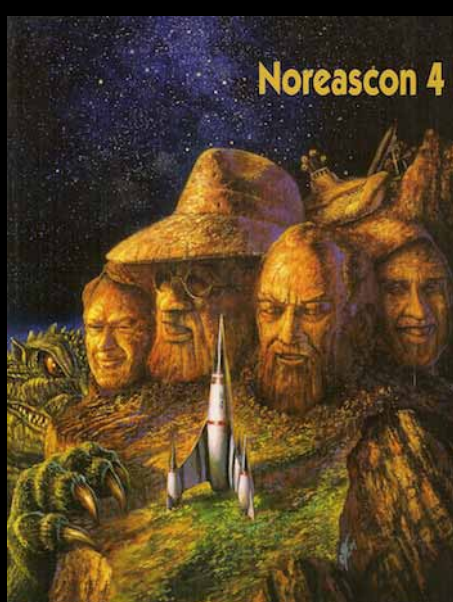


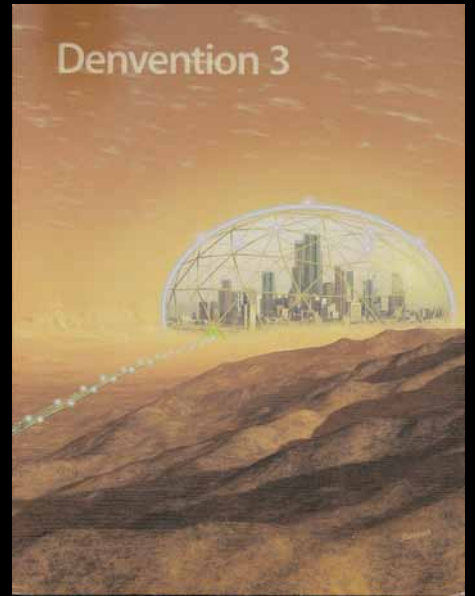
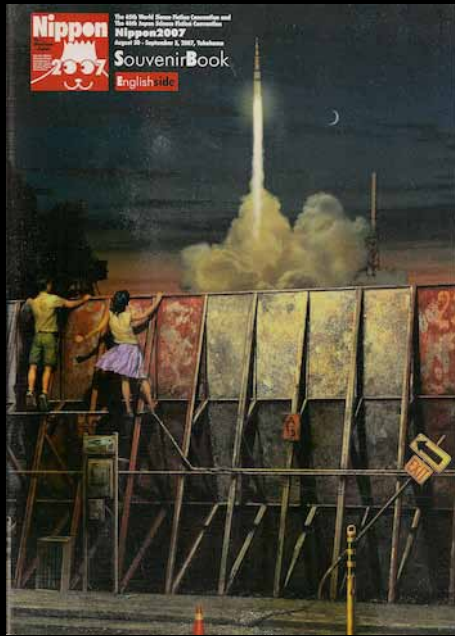
- 1990 - ConFiction
- 1991 - Chicon V
- 1992 - MagiCon
- 1993 - ConFrancisco
- 1994 - ConAdian
- 1995 - Intersection
- 1996 - LACon III
- 1997 - LoneStarCon



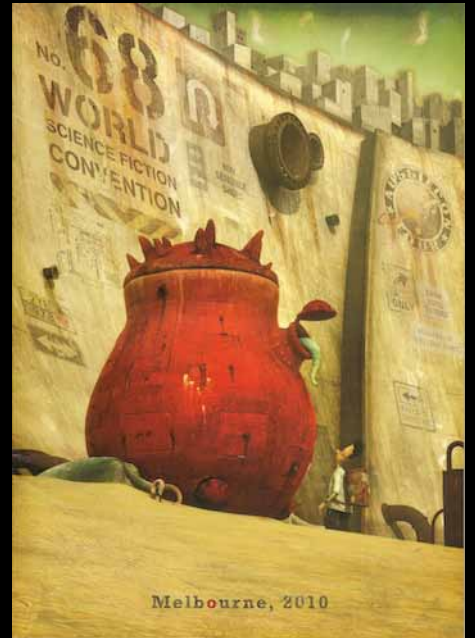


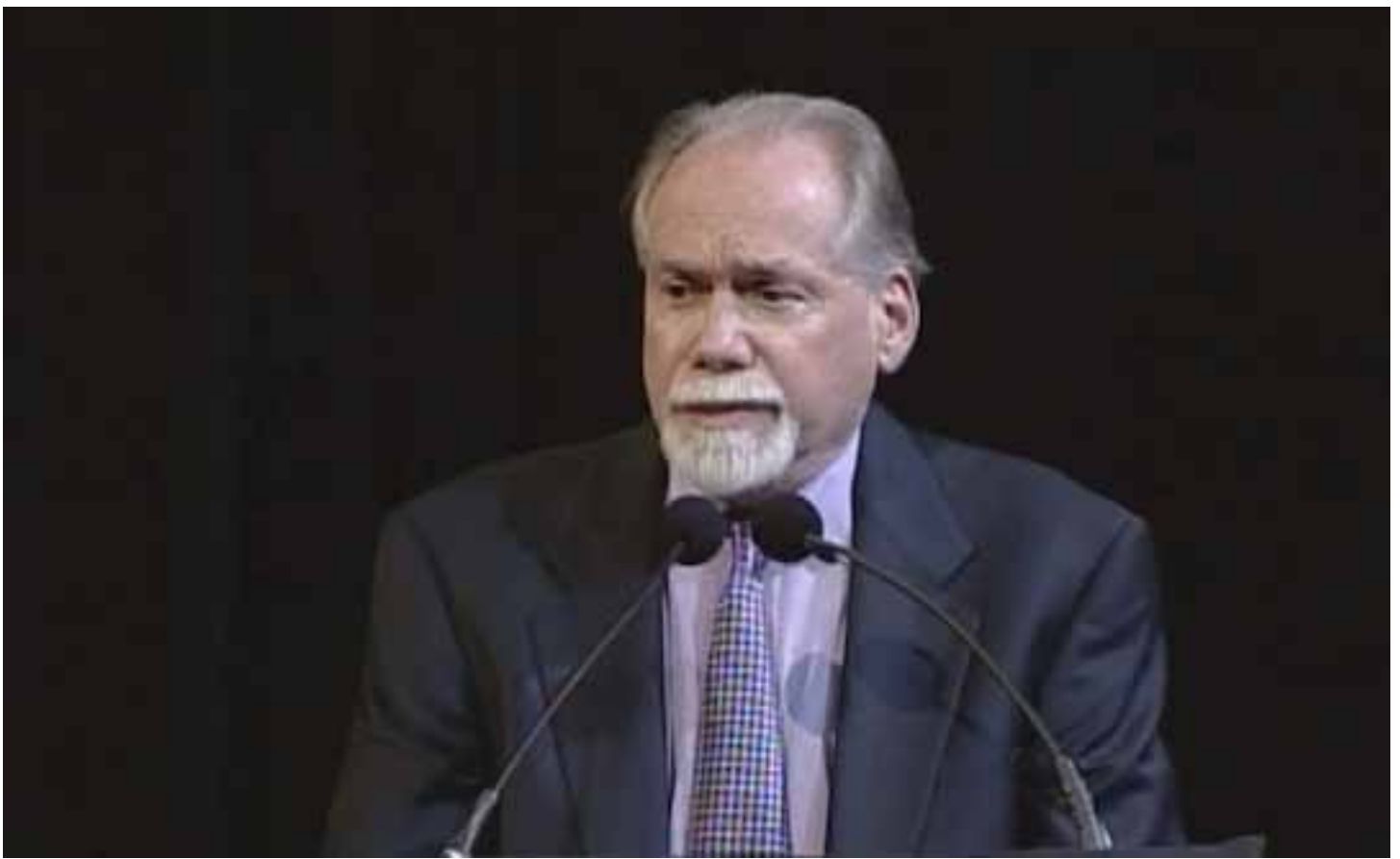
- 1998 - Bucconeer
- 1999 - Aussiecon III
- 2000 - Chicon VI
- 2001 - Millennium Philcon
- 2002 - Con Jose
- 2003 - Torcon 3
- 2004 - Norascon 4
- 2005 - Interaction





- 2006 - LACon IV
- 2007 - Nippon 2007
- 2008 - Denvention 3
- 2009 - Anticipation
- 2010 - Aussicon IV
- 2011 - Renovation
- 2012 - Chicon 7
- 2013 - LoneStarCon 3





## *Fifty Years of Hugo Ceremonies: A Retrospective*

*On Sunday, September 4, 2004, Robert Silverberg, the only person to have attended every Hugo Ceremony since 1953, was invited to give a retrospective on the first 50 years of the event, as part of Noreascon 4's own Ceremony. He was introduced by Noreascon 4 Master of Ceremonies, Neil Gaiman. Here is the transcript of what followed.*

### **Neil Gaiman:**

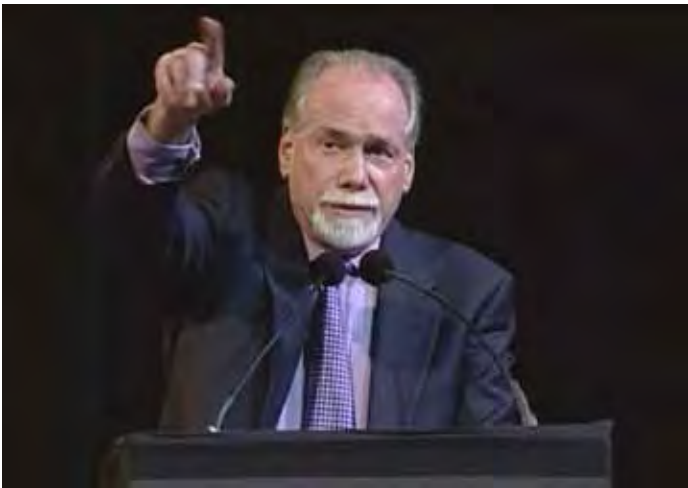
Often the Master of Ceremonies gets to talk about the history of the Hugo Awards. And I got to not do that this time, because it's going to be done personally by someone who can talk about it with a great deal more authority than I can. When I asked him how he would like to be introduced, he said that really, he'd like 90 seconds of abject praise. Although I was not entirely clear whether he wanted it for being an award-winning author who has been producing magnificent works of fiction, of science fiction, of fantasy, for a very, very long time, or whether he wanted the abject praise because, when I started as a journalist, a long, long, long time ago, he was the very first person I interviewed, and the first interview I ever sold, and it gives me enormous pleasure to introduce you to Robert Silverberg.



## Robert Silverberg:

Thank You. Thank You. The Hugos have been going on for more than half a century now. Can you imagine how much perspiration has been expended by the various Hugo nominees while people like me extend the suspense?

But I have been asked to speak about the history of the Hugo Awards over the centuries because I am apparently one of only two people who have attended all of the Hugo Ceremonies to date. The other one is Connie Willis. Connie, of course, was just a babe in arms at the first Hugo Ceremony in 1953, but she was nominated, and insisted on being taken to the Ceremony and for once did not win and waved her teething ring around in fury. No, actually, none of that is true. Connie wasn't there. And as far as we can figure, I am the only one who has been to every one of these, which is a statistic that boggles my mind.



*1953: I was admitted to the balcony above...*

The first Ceremony was in Philadelphia in 1953. At that time the Hugos were part of a Ceremony that included a banquet. I did not attend the banquet because in 1953 I was 18 years old, and the cost of the banquet was five dollars and seventy-five cents, which in 1953 dollars had the purchasing power of about seventy-five of ours. So like many of the young fans of that time I waited until the feeding part was over, and then I was admitted to the balcony up above, where I watched the Ceremony from a considerable distance. My room-mate at that convention, a young man named Ellison, had somehow found the \$5.75, and he sat down below and was very smug about it. Now you may have seen the very first Hugo out in the hall. There is one. It was home-made, by two Philadelphia fans, Jack McKnight, who was an expert machinist, and Manny Staub, a jeweller, and they somehow put together... it's about six inches high, with wings, or fins, and it's very cute. When they

were given out that night... there are about a dozen people at this convention who were present other than me; they haven't been at all the others since, most of them are in this room now. Fred Pohl, Phil Klass, Harry Harrison, Frank Robinson, Roger Sims, Fred Prophet, David A. Kyle,... let's see, who else... Bob Shekley, Frank Dietz. That's about all that I've seen around the place, but there are about a dozen survivors from that first event, of which the most extraordinary is Forry Ackerman because he won a Hugo that night, and is the only surviving winner of that first batch. The excitement actually was focused around Best Magazine, because we had two magazines that were having a furious rivalry of the sort that the Yankees and the Red Sox, or Macy's and Gimbels, or Hatfields and McCoys. They were stealing each other's authors and stealing each other's cover formats and we couldn't imagine how we could face a choice between them. What would happen? *Astounding* and *Galaxy*, and lo and behold there was a tie. A very diplomatic committee picked the winners that year - there was no popular vote.

But that was matched by the 1954 convention where there were no Hugos. They just didn't give them out, and when the custom was revived in '55 the Hugos were made that year by Ben Jason, a Cleveland fan who used the hood ornament of the Olds 88. It was a rocket, that was Oldsmobile's logo at that time - a rocketship, and Ben somehow got hold of five or six hood ornaments. I'm not making this up... after my Connie Willis anecdote, all the rest of this is gospel. And those were the '55 Hugos.

Now you remember I said I was an 18-year-old fan sitting in the cheap seats in 1953. By 1956 I was a Hugo nominee, for Most Promising New Writer, and that transition in only three years had me stunned. That year, the convention was in New York, and though by now the awards were given by vote of the members, it turned out that in many categories



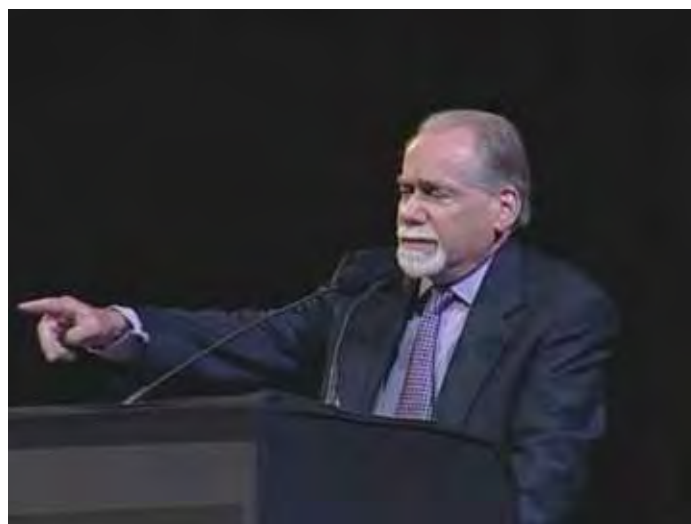
*1956: Heinlein descends from the ceiling of the auditorium on a pillar of fire...*

the vote was so close as to be indecisive. So on the afternoon of the Ceremony, a run-off vote was held, right in the auditorium, in many of the categories. And as I filed in, I sat down next to one of the most famous science fiction writers of the time. I won't name him, but he was a great name. And he turned to me, and said, "Bob, if I vote for you, will you vote for me?" I was shocked... I wanted the Hugo of course, I was 21 years old, and what a wonderful thing to win a Hugo et cetera, et cetera, but he was famous, he was a great writer, how could he care that much? But I agreed to do it. Then we got the ballots. Well behold, neither of us was on the run-off ballot, so I didn't have to compromise my moral integrity. And that night, we found out what had happened. I had in fact won - quite a thrill for a 21-year-old, just barely jumped up from fandom - but he had not, because his category was in Best Novel, and Robert A. Heinlein had also been in that category, and when Heinlein was up for a Hugo, Heinlein won the Hugo. That was all there was to it... and when they called off the Best Novel, Heinlein descended from the ceiling of the auditorium, on a pillar of fire. He was wearing a resplendent white dinner jacket. Nobody knew he was at the convention, and suddenly out of the sky comes Heinlein! Well, he was nominated for Best Novel three more times in the following years. Indeed, won all four of those Best Novel nominations, and each time appeared suddenly and without warning in a white dinner jacket. We got used to it after a while...

1962. Another memorable event at the Hugo Ceremony. Ted Sturgeon was the Guest of Honor that year, and we had the Guest of Honor speeches just before the Hugos. Ted said "I want ...," Ted was in many ways a flamboyant man, he said "I want to introduce a custom which I hope will be repeated at every single Hugo Ceremony for all time to come." And he produced a phonograph record. The various nominees began to squirm, et cetera. The record was a scratchy, unintelligible, vocal, spoken document. We strained to hear what was being said. Gradually, it appeared to us that what this was, was a very badly done transcription of Orson Welles' "H. G. Wells' War of the Worlds" programme of 1938. And we sat there solemnly in agony for about ten minutes, until somebody had the good sense to take the record off, and it never was heard again.

The following year, Isaac Asimov was the Master of Ceremonies, and Isaac at that time had never won a Hugo, which was a source of great distress... to Isaac. And he let us know about it. Whenever someone came up to accept a Hugo, Isaac would shower imprecations on his head. Jim Blish came forward, and

Isaac said "stick out your leg, and trip him." A little while later, Don Wollheim came up, and once again, Isaac said "trip and fall, oh friend of my childhood." And he went on like this, in what actually became not terribly charming. And then came the last envelope to open. And Isaac looked at it, and turned very red, and shouted "you killed the whole bit." Isaac had received an honorary Hugo for adding the science to science fiction. And of course after that he won a few more, but it left him speechless... he slunk off the stage.



1963: "Isaac said 'stick out your leg'..."

I'll skip very quickly through the five hour long 1968 Ceremony, where I, for my sins, was Master of Ceremony. 1968 we were in Berkeley, and the People's Park riots were going on down below, and whiffs of tear gas were rising through the auditorium. Berkeley was having one of its rare heatwaves. We were sweltering. The audio PR system failed and had to be repaired for 20 minutes. Phil Farmer, the Guest of Honor, had a speech about how to save the world. And he went on saving the world for 45 minutes or so. Then we got to the Hugos, and that year I was a nominee. And I'm thrilled to say I set a still unequalled record for losses by a Toastmaster at the Hugo Ceremony that he was presiding over. I lost two that night. But in 1970, when I was not Toastmaster, but Guest of Honour, I lost three... that is also still unequalled. There have been some three-time losers since then, but never a Guest of Honour.

1983 was a memorable one. It was in Baltimore. Baltimore is famous for its crabs. And, for some bizarre reason, there was a crab feast preceding the Hugos. We sat at long wooden tables, covered with butcher paper, and were given plates with hideous crustaceans on them. And ketchup... lots of ketchup. And hammers. And... do you see that lovely screen on which my resplendent white beard is glittering at





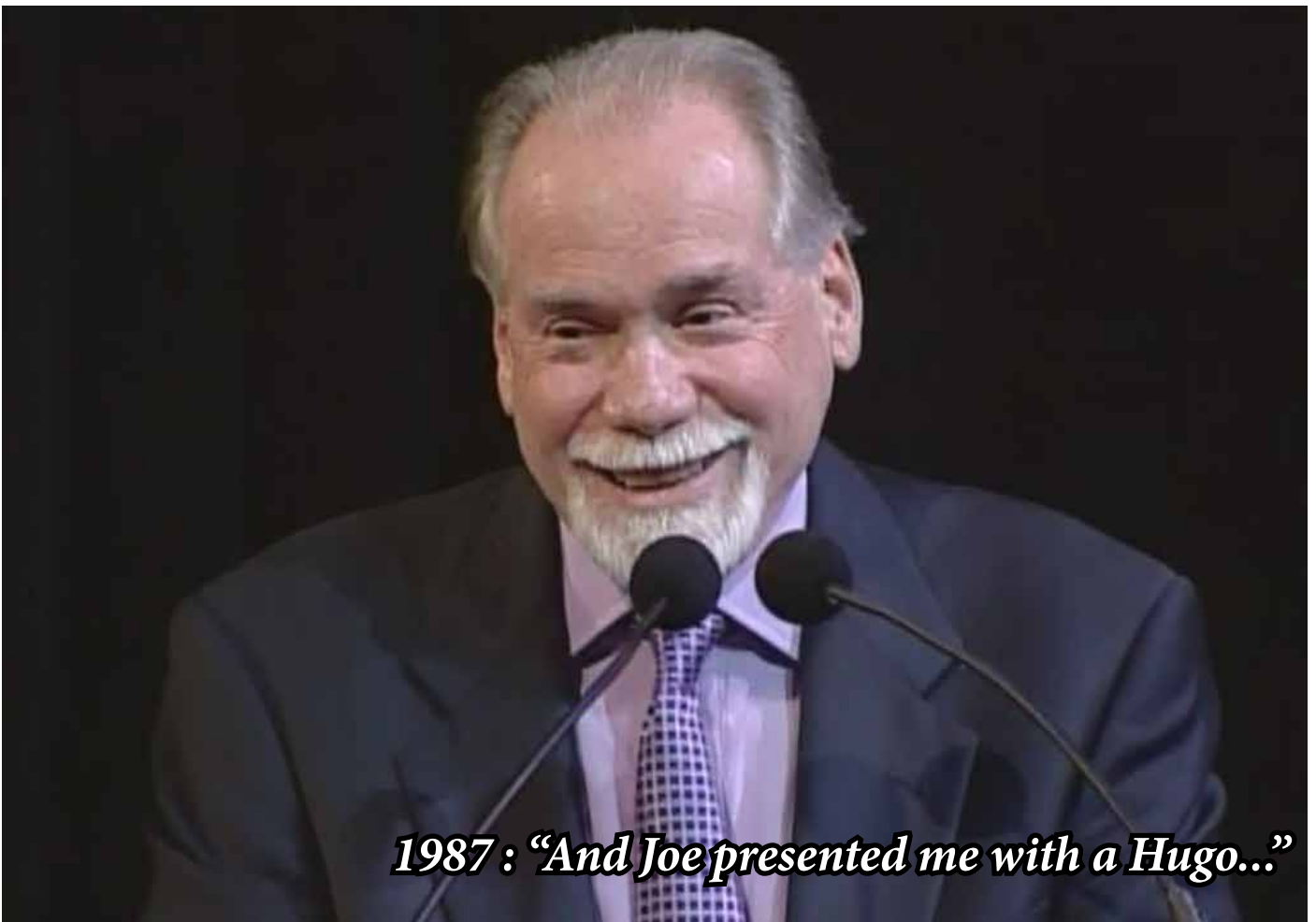
*1983: "And began to use the hammers..."*

you? There was one of those at the Baltimore crab feast. But it wouldn't work. And so 20 more minutes or so went by, as they attempted to get the screen in order, while Jack Chalker, who was the Master of Ceremonies, did song and dance routines. Gradually, the assembled multitudes grew unruly. And began to use the hammers...

Well... I'll go one more. 1987, in Brighton, England. That was the one Ceremony I nearly missed, out of the whole 51 of them. I was tired of losing Hugos. I had won a few along the way but I lost those two in '68, I lost those three in 1970, I'd lost a couple

later... I was having dinner with my wife Karen, and Joe and Gay Haldeman, just before the Ceremonies, and I was up for a Hugo that night too. And I said "I'm not going to go, you guys go; I'll go back to the room, and I'll just wait until I find out who won in my category," and Joe said "Oh, come along Bob, I'm presenting in one of the categories tonight, and you might as well sit there, cheer me on, bring me a beer when I'm off stage." So I let them talk me into it, and we went to the Ceremony... and Joe presented me with a Hugo. He didn't know that it was the category I was in, I didn't know that, you know, it was one of those strange things. And even nicer than the Hugo, when I finally got off stage under the sweltering lights, Joe was standing right down there, somehow he'd had time to leave the stage and get me a beer.

Well, those are just some of the more memorable ones out of the fifty-one. A lot of them blur, but here we are, in God help us all, the twenty-first century, and another batch of Hugos is waiting backstage, and very shortly... very ... shortly... the happy winners will find out. In another fifty years, some one of you, who is now 16 or 17 years old, will be standing up here reminiscing about the 2004 Hugos. I don't expect to be there. But, whoever you are, say a good word for me. Thank you.



***1987 : "And Joe presented me with a Hugo..."***



## WHIMSY IN FANAC: WITH YOUR SHIELD (OF UMOR) – OR ON IT! BY DEB GEISLER

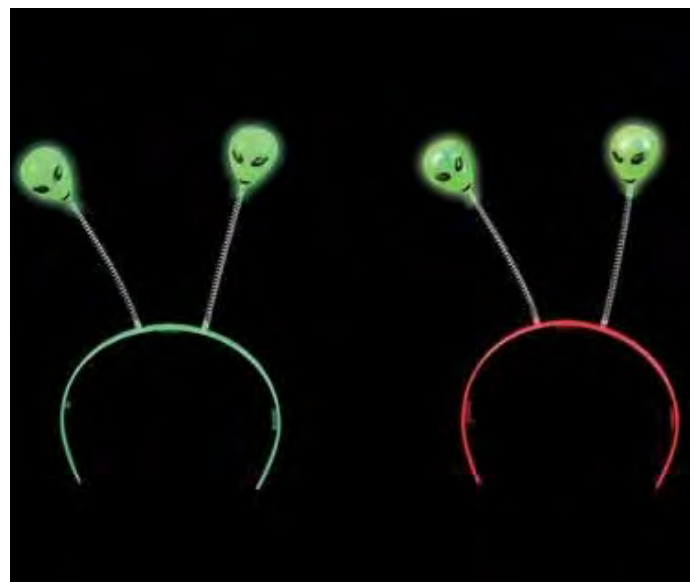
“SHIELD OF UMOR – AS A FAN, A SENSE OF HUMOUR IS YOUR BEST DEFENCE AGAINST THE SLINGS AND ARROWS OF THE CRITICS OF YOUR FANZINE. FANS WITHOUT THIS SOON GET HURT AS THEY BEGIN TO TAKE THEIR FANAC TOO SERIOUSLY. IT IS AN INVALUABLE INGREDIENT OF THE PERFECT FANZINE.”

- EVE HARVEY, NOTES ON THE SEACON '79 (WORLDCON IN BRIGHTON) FAN ROOM EDITION OF THE ENCHANTED DUPLICATOR, BY WALT WILLIS AND BOB SHAW

There are things this article won't tell you about, because the rest of the fannish world still doesn't know about my part in them (and at least one or two could get me in trouble even now – is there a fannish statute of limitations?).

But there are the things you might know about (or find funny): like the glow-in-the-dark alien-headed deely-boppers that I talked all of the former Worldcon chairs (excluding only one)(who I knew would say no)(and, of course, including me) into wearing for the formal “Old Pharts” portrait at Renovation in 2011.

It was funny. And it was whimsical. And it was definitely in the finest tradition of the Most Noble and Illustrious Order of St. Fantasy.



The Order of St. Fantony had its beginnings in post-WWII England. As David Kyle wrote in *Mimosa 11*, “the original goal of The Order was ‘Good Fellowship.’ The ‘Ceremonie’ was, more or less, a sort of prelude to a ‘Merrie Party of Trufen.’” The Order was the brain child of two British fans (Eric Jones and Bob Richardson) from Cheltenham, England, and their first official “ceremonie” was held in conjunction with a Liverpool fan group in 1957. Since the Worldcon that year was in London, the various knights made their first appearance on the global stage – two weeks before I was born – at Loncon I.



It would be another 32 years until my first Worldcon, Noreascon 3, and the Order of St. Fantony, in all of its charmingly goofy glory, recreated its “ceremonie” to open the Hugo Awards Event. As an introduction to the history of the fun involved in Worldcon, it was a fine start. An Order to ensure good fellowship and silliness? Where did I sign up? I figured that Saint Fantony was the patron saint of Worldcon Whimsy – and dedicated myself to helping keep up the American side.

Take, for instance, MagiCon.

The 1992 Worldcon in Orlando was marked by a committee mad for miniature golf. Every time there was a pre-con committee meeting, there was mini-golf. We hoped the lack of our mini-golf tournaments after Worldcon did not crush the local economy. Is there any wonder, then, that MagiCon developed the very clever solution for too much space in their exhibits hall...and had fannish groups from all over

creating their own “hole” for the fannish mini-golf course? It was brilliant!

(For my own bit of whimsy, my husband Mike Benveniste and I put together a display of unreal artifacts for the exhibits area of MagiCon, including things like an electric slide rule – complete with cord and plug – and a machete once used to chop down the bamboo fields of Mars.)

Mike and I were recruited by our friends Mark and Priscilla Olson to help run the newsletter for the 1996 Worldcon in Los Angeles, L.A.con III. The newsletter was really wonderfully put together, and we were part of a great team. Besides the actual convention newsletter, there would be, we knew, the inevitable hoax newsletters: put together by anonymous hacks to poke fun at the convention and its publications. But in this case, the best of the hoaxes was put together by the actual editors of the newsletter (and this might have been the first time that was the case) (although, given fans’ quirky senses of humor, perhaps not).

Since I’m by way of confessing here, about those flamingos: I’m really not sorry. Yes, it was partly (at least) my fault that fandom was inundated with thousands and thousands of pink flamingos in 1997 and 1998. (Yes, my friends are still occasionally “accidentally leaving behind” a flamingo at my house.) We lost that Worldcon bid at BucConeer in 1998, but can anyone say there’s been a more cheerful bid mascot? So it’s probably (okay, totally) my fault that a group of pretty intoxicated Baltimore fans carried a 7-foot, bright pink, papier-mâché flamingo through the streets of the city late one night. (Well, **we** didn’t need it any more...)



For the next few years, I was busy bidding for and helping to run the 2004 Boston Worldcon, Noreascon Four, but we still managed to be silly. I have a large ceramic piggy bank that is labeled the “CDPJF”

– the Chairman’s Discretionary Practical Joke Fund. (We actually used the money for a staff reception at the convention, but the threat was always there.) We laughed and giggled and cackled and chuckled our way through that amazing experience, in fact.

When my jobs for Denvention 3 in 2008 were a bit taxing, I recharged my sensawunda by ordering two sets of “gnome bowling” games from England and having them hand-carried to Denver by a generous friend (hi Brad!) who was temporarily working in England. Then certain co-conspirators ordered artificial grass to make the bowling experience first-rate, and I bought many tacky trinkets for prizes (because why not? Got a good deal.). And still other co-conspirators talked the exhibits folks into setting up the gnome bowling in the main exhibit hall (right at the main door, in fact). It was a thing of beauty, and I got a hard charge out of watching little (and big) kids cackle with glee while making Worldcon just a bit happier.



Worldcons are about getting together for our fannish family reunion, thinking about the future and the fantastic, hoisting a few in common good feeling, and having a laugh or 800. Look at the historic bits we have from Worldcons, and there’s a happy tradition of pranks and horrible puns and silliness. But in many cases, people are working so hard that they can’t really plan for a good bit of goofiness.

That’s where my friends and I come in.

We feel it is important to keep fighting tedium and sourpussery. (I’m pretty sure there’s no such word as “sourpussery,” but I’m equally sure just reading that made at least one person besides me snicker, so it stays.)

We invite you to join.

You can do it formally (last year, we introduced a motion to the WSFS Business Meeting, asking that the meeting declare that “Yngvi is not a louse” – we had ribbons, buttons, our own web site ( <http://yngviisnotalouse.com> ) – and there was a lot of fan-

nish history to that one), or with small, guerilla efforts (companies like Café Press make it possible to craft very realistic looking merchandise for all manner of hoaxes – and web sites can be pretty doggone cheap).

Get 100 miniature rubber duckies (\$42, with free shipping – I just looked)(of course I know where to find these things) and subtly plant them all over the convention – in exhibits, program rooms, parties, the art show. (Make it interactive by adding a note, taped to each one, saying “I’m lost! Please email duckies@mylegionsofdarkness.com and tell me where I was found!” Only you’ll need your own domain – that’s one of mine.)

Order ribbons you can attach to badges that say “AAOF” – and let people wrack their brains trying to figure out what it means. (Acronyms Are Our Friends.)

Start up a hoax Worldcon bid for the silliest locale you can imagine. (Do be careful with this. We thought about a hoax for Jupiter...until we found out that Jupiter, Florida had hotel and conference facilities that could just about work. Don’t run a hoax that is so good you actually win a Worldcon bid.) Run a fake Worldcon bid party, just to run a party. (Thank you, Xerps!)

All of it is fun. All of it is whimsical. All of it is very, very fannish.

Whatever you do, may you always find something to giggle about. Working on or going to Worldcons should lighten your heart and make you happy. Saint Fantony is counting on us.





# *Instant Fanzine* *The Worldcon Issue*

## **What is Your First Worldcon Memory?**

### **Gail Carriger**

My first Worldcon was in Boston for Noreascon Four in 2004. I went with my best friend and it was a magical experience. For one thing, it was in a city I loved, that happened to be peopled by some dear friends I hadn't seen in years. For another, many aspects of the convention seemed designed perfectly. I'm afraid Noreascon Four has rather spoiled me for Worldcons ever since. Time and distance have made my memories more snippets than anything, but here are some of my favorite moments:

\* Convention center and hotel in the same building!

\* Living two meals a day out of the best con-suite provisions ever. Full hot meals for lunch and dinner, with vegetables and protein as well as starches! We were very poor graduate students, so please forgive us our mooching. Our third meal each day was (once we discovered it) taken at the tiny pub across the street from the convention center, wherein we discovered the best clam chowder I have ever eaten

in my life, complete with crusty bread and side salad for \$5!

\* Wandering down the massive staircase and being greeted by my friend Bob, my first convention-made friend to reappear at another event unexpectedly. Familiar face!

\* Milling about before the Hugos in the empty halls only to see Terry Pratchett himself looking a little forlorn. I could barely speak from awe, luckily my best friend Phrannish has no such compunctions. She hailed him from across the vacant room and dragged me over to meet him.

\* Terry Pratchett remembering me and my name the next day before we left, when I was wearing a completely different outfit!

With those kinds of memories, is it any wonder I make every effort to attend Worldcon each year?

Jared Dashoff, born into fandom and son of Todd and Joni Brill Dashoff, has been attending Worldcons and regional conventions for over 25 years. His first Worldcon experience was at ConFederation in Atlanta in 1986.

I remember Atlanta as a dark place. Warm, but dark. There was a lot of noise, but none of it terribly discernible. People—one who was basically tied to me—but no faces I could pull out of a crowd. They tell me that Ray Bradbury was there, but I never saw the man. All I remember doing was eating and sleeping—the exact opposite of what many do at any con, especially a Worldcon.

Every other Worldcon I have stayed up late, partying into the dawn, never mind the photos that may or may not be out there on the Internet of me passed out in a Ben Franklin costume at a Philadelphia in 2001 bid party. Not this one. It was like I was literally in my bed the entire time.

I have been known to attend the Hugos, and participate in or attend the Masquerade and Business Meeting. At the latter, I have a propensity to open my mouth and insert my foot, but in 1986, I did not say a word. I doubt I even made a sound.

The best part of my attendance at ConFederation, I actually applied the rule from *Treasure of the Sierra Madre*, “Badges? We don’t need no stinkin’ badges!” and went around the entire con without a badge; I am not even sure I ever technically registered. (On a side note, I probably owe somebody about \$40 for that.) I didn’t get a single ribbon, though at other Worldcons, my badge would touch the floor due to the many colored rainbow of fabric strips, one glued to the other, that protruded from its base.

I am 26 now, 27 soon enough, but I will always remember my first Worldcon 27 years ago. Being born into fandom does have its privileges.

Robert Silverberg looking for books in the Dealer’s Room is my first substantial Worldcon memory. It was at my first Worldcon, Conspiracy 87 in Brighton. I was 16 years old. A friend went to ConFederation (1986) and told me how much fun he had. When I got to the convention, I was blown away.

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I vaguely remember that there were parties at night and headaches in the morning... Chris Garcia

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### **Crystal Huff**

My first real memory of Worldcon is running the staff den for Anticipation in 2009. We stayed up until past midnight, the day prior to opening the staff den, in order to cook homemade Indian food for the first real meal. It smelled like heaven, and we went into the con with incredible sleep deprivation, to such an extent that we lost a tray of homemade shahi paneer korma for several days inside one of the fridges.

The evening was marred a little by being yelled at for not having ham accessible in the staff den yet. We weren’t officially open, but we wanted to feed whoever was already on site. Most of my staff running the den was fairly new to Worldcon, so it was

particularly astonishing to us that established SMOFs would point fingers and issue dire warnings about a lack of pig products. They seemed to have assumed that since some of us kept kosher, pork would be barred from the staff den for the weekend. Even today, the memory both makes me smile and irritates me. Sometimes, the inaccuracy of people’s assumptions is astonishing. We bought hundreds of dollars in ham for that convention, ordered weeks in advance.



## James Bacon

I think what strikes me the most about my first Worldcon, is that at the end, it also felt like my last.

There was no thought, let alone any discussion, about Los Angeles the following year. That was not even a pipe dream - it was worse, some nasty suggestion to upset you, to ensure unhappiness - better to cherish what you had just had, than to think about a future that was not going to be there for you.

Worldcon was such a big thing. It was so vast and so far away. Even as Irish fans jetted off, and there were indeed a few, nothing much was heard except wondrousness.

Many years later I remember saying to Helen Montgomery, that there had better be pizza in the Con Suite at Chicon 7, and she looked worried, and I said earnestly, 'COME ON there had better be pizza, don't ruin the legendary elements...' You see all I had heard about Chicon some twelve years before, was about this magical 'Suite' where you got free food, and there was lots and lots of Chicago Pizza. And so my eyes had glazed over, and I dreamed of such a place: science fiction, pizza and, as Brian Jones would say, Mid-Western farmers' daughters.

I cannot imagine it now. The naïve excitement.

Intersection. The 1995 Worldcon. 4 - 8 August 1995. Scottish Exhibition Centre, Glasgow.

I had thought I might be able to write some sort of professional and coherent report about Intersection, but now I realise it was just one huge non-stop continuous socialising and drinking and cavorting monster of boisterousness. I was 21. It is eighteen years ago.

Jesus it was mental! It was definitely an experience. Fecking Hell.

Irish Science Fiction fans, from Dublin to Glasgow on rail and ferry.

The trip was lively, we played games of Magic. Drink, Mana, Feck.

The Convention Read Me, which was so beautifully presented

Andy, emptying cartons of condoms onto the table and he explained it was the safer sex table and he was in some sort of Gay and Lesbian SF group. Feck.

I noted with a sense of aplomb and I discreetly pocketed some. Girls.

Drink, G-men. Feck. Drink.

We decided to walk to the con, Iain Banks' fabled Espedair Street unfinished walkways, looked at it.

Book launch. Editorial and marketing types, all ladies.

Irish accent a winner. Feck, Girls, and Free Drink.

Boston party table, handing out beer. Mick said, 'are you only serving beer', no, we have these, and Mick said, 'can I have a Southern Comfort and Ice please', and they gave him one, and he said, 'can I have one for the wife please', and he pointed at Phil(omena) and they gave him a second, and I said 'Can I have the same please', and they gave me two too.

Baltimore Pirates with Rum and Coke, in a pint glass. Thanks Ginner.

Cabin Bar was halfway along the concourse.

Billy Stirling, and the 'Republic of Texas' man, Randy Shepherd.

New concept, corkage paid = bid party with free booze allowed in bar.

Pitchers of Rum. Girls, Drink, Feck.

Staggering back at 7 a.m.

'Then we went back to the con, he had about 10 minutes of sleep.'

Vodkas. Smiley Soviet Army parachuting across Europe with booze. Where is that Moscow Worldcon? Feck.

Girls. Drink. Fecking Hell.

I went to a programme item. Holy Feck, was OK, had a drink.

Baltimore won the bid for the Worldcon, Rum and Coke. Drink.

Girls, Drink, Fecking Hell.

Last night. Having a fight with the floor, but that's OK, perhaps I was drunk.

Bundles of business cards, many books, free stuff, zines something different that stuck their fingers up at the wispy beards. (Is that me now?) Home on the train and ferry and it was a grand trip home.

Slept for about 2 days when I got home.

It was terrific. It was over. I missed it.

# What is Your Favorite Worldcon Moment?

**Warren Buff**

My favorite Worldcon experience hit me almost immediately upon arrival at Renovation. I was walking into the convention center, having walked there from the Peppermill (at least a kilometer in desert heat), and was on my way to get my badge (and in sight of registration) when I spotted Patty Wells, the chair of the convention. I waved, since we would be working together on Exhibits for LoneStarCon 3 (which was unopposed at the time and pretty much a lock), and we'd agreed we ought to have a preliminary discussion about staffing. I thought we might talk about when I could steal some of her time (a real challenge when you're trying to meet with an active Worldcon chair).

When Patty walked over, she was suddenly visible in the middle of the hallway, and someone looking for help with an issue on the con came up to grab her attention. At about this time, I also spotted Paul Cornell approaching, and having met him a couple years before in Dallas, waved. He came to join us, Patty ran off to solve problems, and then we were spotted by René Walling (who was not yet infamous), who was escorting Marina Gélineau, the designer of that year's Hugo Award base. The conversation went rapid-fire, and I began to loudly opine that I hadn't been impressed with that year's nominee from *Fables*, in spite of a general love for the series. Paul's eyes went wide, and he began shaking his head in a quick, telling manner – so of course Bill Willingham was walking up from behind me, and seemingly hadn't heard. After more arguments about the merits of the Graphic Story category, we realized Marina wasn't saying much, and Paul stopped us to get her input – whereupon we realized that she spoke only a little bit of English, and that René was serving as her translator. We slowed down to make sure we could include her.

The circle suddenly expanded again, as Mary Robynette Kowal arrived, along with two puppeteers who would be performing with her at the convention. We were now dangerously close to collapsing into separate conversations, and the arrival of an editor (I believe David Hartwell, but he wound up in a different circle than I did when the conversation split) prompted that. After another five or ten minutes, someone finally left the conversational vortex, and suddenly, the roadblock cleared. Everyone remembered what they were going to do before they stopped to chat, and left smiling. I had spent thirty minutes in a really great conversation about science fiction with a number of really cool folks, and I hadn't even picked up my badge yet. It was the perfect start to a great convention.

**Crystal Huff**

There are so many!

One of my favorite Worldcon moments was meeting Dave Kyle for the first time. He's always so friendly and engaging, and he told such excellent stories of fandom. I was one of three people assigned to Dave for the Hugos one year, and we did our best to make him feel special and have a great Worldcon. This included taking many silly "Charlie's Angels" photos with Dave. It was such a night filled with laughter and friendships. I treasure it.

I also really enjoyed the heck out of running the Worldcon Photo Booth this year at LoneStarCon 3. Seeing so many people making silly memories to be caught on film, like hunting down a stuffed polar bear or a nest with alien-penguin hybrids or playing with Moomins... that was great. It also showed me a far wider range of Worldcon attendees than I'd previously been conscious of; we had a lot more diversity at our convention than I'd expected, which was welcome news to me.

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"Worldcon means a lot to me, but mostly it means The World. That's key. The World of Worldcon" - Chris Garcia

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**Juan Sanmiguel**

My favorite Worldcon memory is a hard question. There are so many it is hard to choose one. It is fun volunteering at setup/teardown, information desk, volunteer desk, door guard, the Internet staff, and Masquerade. It is an honor to be a panel participant. It is great to see old friends, meet new ones, and introduce fans from home to the Worldcon.

The best memories are helping people at Worldcon: giving directions to events or con facilities, getting costumers where they needed to be at the Masquerade, standing in line for a friend so she can go to a Kaffeeklatsch with her favorite writer, finding a writer who was late for his Kaffeeklatsch, getting someone to connect to their email remotely, or loaning out my headphones to a reporter to hear an interview in a loud room.





# What Makes Worldcon Special?

## Grant Kruger

There's no comparing Worldcon to giant media, anime and comic cons, but through the years I've regularly been asked if Worldcon was different enough from local literary cons to be worth attending. My answer is always an emphatic, "Hell yeah!"

Then I get into the specifics.

**Gathering of the Tribes:** I'm regularly known as 'THE South African' on the US con circuit. There aren't many of us foreigners about, but at Worldcon I've joined up to twelve other South Africans to host a party. I know of no other con where you'll find so many nationalities in attendance, folks from Ireland, Japan, Holland, Germany, Canada, Russia, Norway, Israel, etc. Why come so far? Because Worldcon is worth it. Plus those who run local cons also run Worldcon so you have a gathering of ideas and conrunning knowhow too.

**The Hufrippingos:** Only the most prestigious literary award in all of fandom. The Hugos are a real treasure and any Worldcon member (if you're attending then you're a member) can make nominations and then vote for winners. As a bonus you also find other awards, like the Campbell and the Big Heart.

**Travelling:** Each year Worldcon gets a new host city around the world, meaning fresh ideas, flavors and tourist opportunities. Many attendees regularly combine Worldcon with a vacation.

**Programming:** Hundreds of guests (writers, scientists, editors, agents, etc.) with a plethora of big names, on many hundreds of panels. The quality is well beyond what you'll see at even the best local con. My ex-wife wasn't a big SFF fan, but still loved Worldcon program because the topics are so broad. You also find movies, videos, anime, gaming and more. There's also programming for children, some of it amongst the best on offer.

**Parties:** The best social party scene I've ever seen. Sure, many have more rocking dance parties, but if you want to meet people and have a great social time then Worldcon evenings are for you.

**Non-Corporate:** It's an all-volunteer-run event. Nobody makes any money and any profits are handed off to future Worldcons and other worthwhile endeavors. When I compare Worldcon's five days of wonderful entertainment at cost (\$150-\$300) with up to a thou-

sand program items, to the average pricey tech con I go to (\$800-\$1,800) for two or three days of hit-and-miss programming laden with sales pitches and droning waffle, then I'm doubly amazed that the best con I know of is also a gift community. So volunteer! It's not just doing your bit; it's a brilliant way to make friends.

**And So Much More:** There's a large astonishing Masquerade with costumes of outstanding quality alongside the creative and the fun, many worked on all year long. The dealers' room is an adventure of its own and you'll find treasures you didn't even know you desperately needed. Kaffeeklatsches and Beerklatsches where you can chat directly with your favorite writers. A sensational art show with exceptional quality artwork. An exhibit hall where you can see anything from the throne from Game of Thrones to the ambulance from Firefly, alongside displays from international fandom and fannish history. Exhibits of past Hugo statues and fanzines sit alongside convention bid tables for future cons and Worldcons. There's usually a splendid consuite with complimentary drinks and snacks and plenty of space for relaxing and socializing. And so much more.

**Summary:** If you've never been, for heaven's sake go to a Worldcon. You will not be sorry. It's astounding! You'll love it. And come because we want you there and we'd love to meet you.

## Crystal Huff

Worldcon is so complex that there are positive and negative ways in which it's special. It's an annual gathering of a community, and the community has continuity, but also constant turnover. Worldcon includes people who've never attended, but become supporting members because they care and want to be included in the community. Worldcon includes people who've walked in the door for the first time and decided to see what the international science fiction community might have in store for them. Worldcon includes people who attend nigh-annually (and some have for decades) because they've found a fannish home here. Worldcon includes, theoretically, anyone who wants to be included.

Worldcon has a wide range of science fiction and fantasy attractions -- panels, professionals in the field, the Hugo awards (both participation and the cer-

emony), the Masquerade, Guest of Honor events, other individual events, many parties of serious and silly natures, exhibits to look at, field trips on location, vendors to sell all sorts of items and books, various media entertainments ... there are people who attend only in order to work the convention, even, because that's what makes them happy at Worldcon.

Worldcon is a science fiction and fantasy convention with a tradition of relocation, which is a fascinating endeavor that causes some wheels to be frequently reinvented, but also a bit of a problem. I know it's a bit of a political hot button, but Worldcon has been in North America 58 times, and outside North America only 13. That seems unfair to me, although I know some others feel it's not a problem.

## Juan Sanmiguel

The Worldcon has a sense of history. The convention honors those who have given substantial contributions to the field by awarding the Hugos and by making them Guests of Honor. It also gives the opportunity to honor those who have left us by memorial panels or the In Memoriam part of the Hugos. The exhibits give us information on the history of the field and fandom worldwide. The Worldcon tells us where we have been.

The fact it is a traveling convention is also very important. It gives one a chance to see and meet talented fans and pros from other countries. This aspect of the convention is at times problematic from a planning perspective, but done well it broadens everyone's horizons.

# What Would You Change If You Could?

## Genese Davis

Worldcon is a celebration of art and demonstrates a fantastic tribute to the arduous journey of writing. This international convention has grown into far more than a literary event that hosts the Hugo awards. It has blossomed into a rich environment where people from all over the world can discover new interests or develop their long lost passions.

With the goal to grow Worldcon, there are a few things that come to mind. Visibility and marketability is extremely important for any convention, and something that Worldcon is lacking. For example, it is extremely difficult to pinpoint official emblems or logos for Worldcon. If someone were to Google 'Worldcon', he/she would be unable to locate any official insignia. This year at the convention in San Antonio, TX, there were no banners or runners where photographers could photograph the authors and attendees standing in front of Worldcon images. There were no Worldcon banners hanging from hallways or in front of session rooms. This may seem like a small addition to the convention but it has huge potential for marketability and for bringing visibility to the convention itself. If people were to compare internet images between other conventions like Comic-Con to Worldcon, they'd find a plethora of photos of Comic-Con banners, logos, insignia, and hundreds of images of special guests and fans of that convention, but none for the latter.

Having a bigger online presence will help appeal to all sorts of writers with all types of backgrounds. Also, adding more pop culture sessions to Worldcon will help grow the convention as well!

## Juan Sanmiguel

One change I would make is to have the Guest of Honor presentations be a prime time event. Some past Worldcons have done this. These should be done on Thursday or Friday night. This could make the Guest of Honor speeches as important as the Masquerade or Hugos.

I am open to any changes that will help the Worldcon stay in business, whether that is adding or changing Hugo categories, modifying the programming track, or bringing in other activities. The only thing I am not eager about is the bringing in actors as Guests of Honor. I think the Worldcon should focus on creators. We have already honored media creators like Joe Michael Straczynski and Gerry Anderson. Hopefully in the future we may see Joss Whedon, Ron Moore, Chris Carter, Russell T. Davies and Steven Moffat as future GOHs. All recommended changes should receive a fair review.

# What Does The Future Hold?

## James Shields

Worldcon is changing.

This is probably a good thing, as most people I speak to agree change is needed. The only problem is, no one can actually agree on what form that change should take. Conversations on the subject have a habit of getting dominated by egos and often descend into name calling.

So in anticipation of stirring up the wrath of fannish hatred, here are some thoughts on changes that might be on the way.

The first one is that I think we can expect Worldcon to travel a lot further, and a lot more often. We often forget that the “World” part of Worldcon came about because of the 1939 World’s Fair in New York. I don’t believe that there was any intent that it would be a world-wide event, or that it would still be running over 70 years later, but the name stuck. However, a lot of people are looking at Worldcon from around the world, and are thinking “how can we get some of this”. This is evidenced by the fact that including next year’s seated Worldcon in London, there are six conventions or bids for locations outside the US for the next seven years.

This situation is partly enabled by experienced US con-runners who like the idea of conventions in exotic foreign parts and are willing to volunteer to assist with bidding and running a convention. Developments in communications have made bringing together a large and disparate group of organisers together relatively easy, and the organisers can be much more widely geographically dispersed than they were previously.

I think there are numerous fan groups around Europe that regularly run conventions with several thousand attendees, but they don’t really get noticed because they are in languages we don’t speak. However, as these countries get more affluent, and more of their fans start traveling to Worldcons, they are bound to be thinking, “this isn’t that much bigger than the event we run”.

But that’s only the beginning. I don’t have figures, but I’m willing to bet that science fiction in Asia is huge. Countries like India, China, Thailand and Korea have vast populations of well educated people who are becoming increasingly wealthy. When they

take an interest in Worldcon, they will be incredibly well organised and will arrive in numbers that will shock and awe us. Eventually, South America is bound to also look for a Worldcon of its own.

So where does this leave the US? If it was left with only 3-4 “home” conventions per decade, will US attendees lose interest and stop going to Worldcon altogether? Or will they perhaps appreciate it more in the years they do have it and attend in greater numbers?

One possibility I think we should consider is using new technology to make Worldcon more accessible. What if we could have two or more Worldcons happening simultaneously in different parts of the world? How about panels with half the participants in Europe, and half in the US? The technology to do this is still not mature enough, but it’s getting there, and in the next few years should be rock solid. Of course the more difficult barrier to overcome is the one of time zones.

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“Worldcon wisely uses a dissociated system, allowing the sins of the Father to be ignored by the Son.”

Steve Russell

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Maybe we could also allow supporting members to take part, watching panels that interest them over the web, though I can’t see any way for them to experience the social interaction (but that could just be because I’m not clever enough to think of a way it could work).

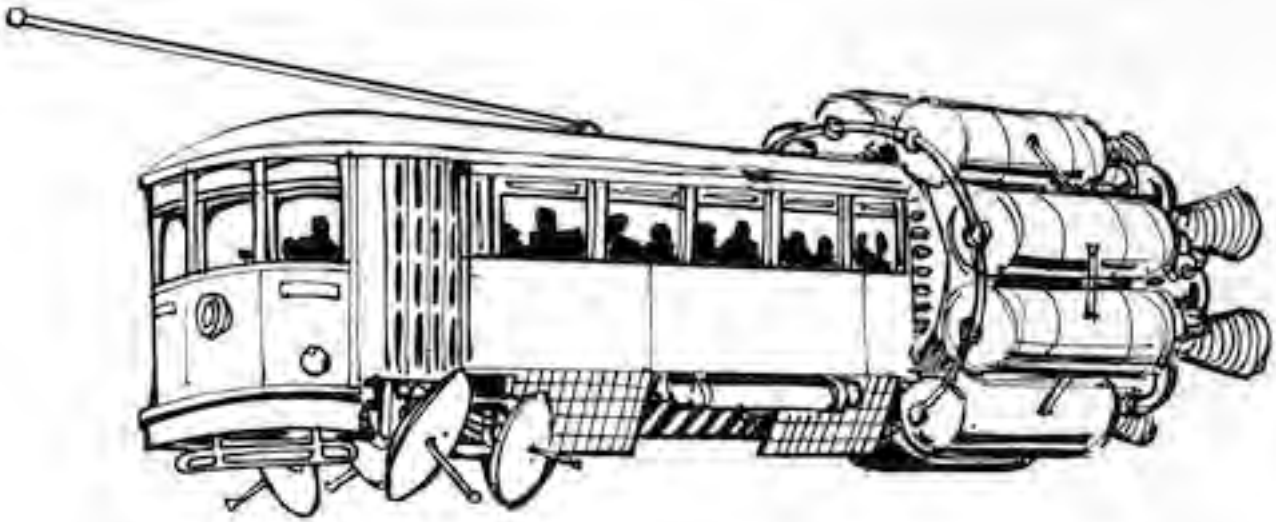
But the big thing Worldcon needs to learn is how to attract young fans again. Come to European cons and the average age of attendees is a lot lower. They are going to conventions in their home countries because those conventions are giving them what they want. I believe that young fans in the US are still going to conventions, but Worldcon is no longer their convention of choice.

It’s time for Worldcon to start listening to what people actually want.

This is the sort of question that tends to get me in trouble with a certain demographic, 'cause I'm a hippie. I look for future Worldcons to be a place and time where people are focused on the goals we have in common rather than tearing each other down based on our differences. I want to see staff who are excited and happy and organized when working on Worldcon. I want to see the community members treat each other well, with respect and appreciation.

I do hope we keep the Worldcon going in the future. It is not the same convention it was in 1939. Parts of it will adapt to the times. Hopefully it will bring fans and pros together and continue the great Science Fiction conversation.





## PREACHING TO THE UNCONVERTED BY MEG FRANK

The easiest way I know to convince someone to do something with you is to tell them how much you love said activity and then explain why exactly they'll love it, too. I've been in fandom every day of my life and I've spent the last few years marketing Worldcons so you'd think that I'd have this speech down by now. But it wasn't until this last weekend when I took a rather last minute trip to visit some fannish family that I was really struck with the inspiration for what to say.

It's no secret that all things sci-fi have gone mainstream. The Comic Cons have grown beyond huge and *The Big Bang Theory* was given how many Emmy nods? Reboots of awesome sci-fi and fantasy series from our youth are all the rage and it's cool to be a geek now.

Unfortunately, while this expansion of geeky glory is wide-spread, it doesn't seem to have the depth that I have found in old-school fandom in terms of community and celebration of geeky content. (Don't get me wrong, I'm still thrilled that I don't have to swing by my little brother's school and help him out because he's being bullied about his comic books.)

There are a number of levels of conventions out there, but for the purposes of this article, I'm only going to discuss three because you don't want to be reading this forever. If you do, you are stranger than I imagine you to be.

The first level of conventions is your standard Comic Con. I have long held that these events are not actually conventions, but Expos. Anytime you are cramming that many people into a convention hall, you lose the sense of comfort and relaxation that I

have always experienced at conventions. When you can't sit down and have a casual conversation on a bench because you'd be in the way of a line snaking down the hall and out the door, you lose something. Will you meet people and get to know them? We'll I'd hope so since you'll be standing in line with them for hours on end. But this kind of situation doesn't allow for connection on more than a superficial, casual level. You might comment on each other's costumes, but frankly it can be too hard to discuss the origins of the character and their fatal flaws if you are surrounded by a hundred thousand other people, all of whom are trying to get into Hall H. Comic Cons are great for press conferences that make for great videos and Tumblr gifs, but unless you have a microphone, don't expect to be heard. I'd never recommend that a new fan attend (or an old, unless they have a posse) for fear of scaring them away from what can be a great community.

Next up, we have DragonCon. DragonCon can be overwhelming for a different reason. DragonCon often feels not like one con, but a dozen. Each track can feel like its own con, sharing space out of necessity, surrounding one enormous dealers' room. As a result, it can be equally difficult to connect with people, because it can be intimidating to wander out of the track you are in when there is no middle ground to gather in. For instance, a traditional con suite simply isn't going to work for a convention of fifty thousand members. It's no longer a place that the majority of the members can go for relaxation and good, mostly uninterrupted conversation - but either another vast hall with no intimacy, or somewhere too

crowded to hang out in. DragonCon is one heck of an experience, but once again, not something that I would recommend to a new fan for fear of overwhelming them.

Before I go into why I think Worldcon is better, I'd first like to say that I don't think there is anything wrong with only having brief conversations about anything inside the geeky world or out. Not everyone wants to write their dissertation about the physics of X-Men. I get that. I don't want to write about that either. Whatever level of geek is desired by a person is the right level of geek for that person. And if anyone ever tells you different, they are an idiot.

In contrast to Conic Con or DragonCon, Worldcon's smaller size allows members to either surround themselves with other fans, distance themselves completely, or find their ideal middle ground. In many ways it's more comfortable, letting a fan experience the con without being overwhelmed, and interact with people without feeling rushed. Members can walk to the Art Show, and meet twenty new people, without having to spend the next seven hours waiting in line forced to be with those same people. Worldcon

has the size and it has the space to be the best of both worlds. Conversations end up ranging in depth from quips about Thor's abs to detailed descriptions of Alcubierre bubble warp drive theory because they aren't constrained or forced. There are so many opportunities that Worldcon members have, so much to do in that weekend, that you just can't get at any other convention. Too many conventions that get compared to Worldcon are simply too big to be enjoyed fully.

Additionally, and to some extent more importantly, I find that the larger conventions have a much looser knit community supporting it because of the limitations on interactions that I touched on before. Worldcon members have the luxury of deciding what level of social interaction they want. Though they may need to get in line for the more popular signings or the best seats at the Hugo Awards Ceremony, being stuck in line next to Hugo nominees is vastly less sucky. People at Worldcon can be someone you talk to for a few minutes, a best friend waiting to happen, or even turn out to be fannish family. Granted, these people exist everywhere, but I haven't found a gathering that leads to as many rich connections with others. Once again, skimming the surface of connections like this isn't a bad thing if that

is what you are looking for, but isn't the opportunity for more if you want it better? The people I met at DragonCon aren't going to be the people I call to help me move house in a pinch, because there is no foundation there for deeper connection. But the people from Worldcon? Those are the people that I call when my world is falling down and I need someone to help me pick it back up. I travel to see them, just as often as I travel to other conventions. This isn't because the people that are attending Worldcon are better, though I have no doubt that some of them love to think they are – we're all a little vain sometimes – it's because the convention itself sets members up to succeed in reaching out to others and knitting them into each other's lives.

Worldcon, in my opinion, is better than any other convention out there. It isn't just a bigger version of a regional con, it is a better one. It gives its members the opportunity to make it what they desire and bring people together. It is a unique celebration of community and I feel lucky to be a part of it. I hope you give us a try.





# BIDS FOR FUTURE WORLDCONS

*While some may claim that Worldcon is on its last legs, the truth is that there are as many cities bidding for the next few years as we have seen for a very long time. There are bids for most years out to 2022, including no less than four for 2017 alone. We invited current bidders to tell us a little more about why they want to bid, and what they would do with the event if they win.*

## **Kansas City in 2016 - Ruth Lichtwardt, Jeff Orth, and Diane Lacey (aka Team LOL)**

### **What would be your motivations for bidding to run a Worldcon?**

Besides certifiable insanity? That's what the previous Worldcon chairs keep mentioning.

Since there are three of us co-chairing this bid, we each have our own motivations to a certain extent. At the same time, we three have worked together long enough and are good enough friends that the overriding motivation is shared by all of us, and it's evolved.

When we started, it was sort of "Downtown Kansas City is ready to host a Worldcon - let's do it!" As we've traveled and talked with so many people over the past several years, we've come to realize just how epic Big Mac - the last KC Worldcon, almost 40 years ago - was to a lot of fans. Now our motivation is closer to "Kansas City can do that again - let's do

it!" We absolutely believe that, should we win™, we will offer fans a Really Good Time.

Oh, and we want to introduce everyone to the Food of the Ghods: Kansas City barbecue.

### **What would your city bring to Worldcon?**

Kansas City (Missouri) has invested over \$5 billion into renovating its downtown to be a great place to play, shop, live, and work. The convention center has been expanded and is state-of-the-art, and many of the nearby historic hotels have been restored to their original glory. There is plenty to do within easy range, and excellent restaurants abound. And internet? KC MO is the first city getting Google Fiber.

And, did we mention barbecue?

## What would Worldcon do for your city?

Kansas City MO and Lawrence KS (40 minutes west) have robust SF communities that are little known outside their participants. Kansas City has thriving comic cons and anime cons that are largely unaware of the older SF traditions. We believe that a well-publicized Worldcon will draw people from these fandoms, and bring in other regional SF fans who aren't aware of fandom yet. It will also introduce fandom to a great mid-sized city which isn't usually thought of as a "destination," yet has a lot to offer.

Added bonus, it will also help spread the gospel of the Food of the Ghods.

## What does your Worldcon want to do for science fiction?

While it's way too early to talk about programming or specific events, some of our overall goals (should we win™) include actively recruiting and bringing in younger conrunners to be mentored by more experienced Worldcon staff; partnering with regional organizations and businesses for promotion and events; and reaching out to communities where fans exist who aren't aware of Worldcons or other fandoms outside of what they see in the media. We're looking for innovation and ideas and new ways to blend with the old, and to help show both how important and how much fun SF can be.

## Nippon in 2017 - Andrew A. Adams

The Nippon in 2017 committee believe that the Worldcon should be a world convention in location as well as attendee citizenship. We think Nippon 2007 was a generally successful convention enjoyed by its attendees, both Japanese and visitors. Japanese culture is steeped in the fantastic and the science fictional, and Japanese written science fiction is too little known outside Japan. We'd like to showcase more Japanese SF to overseas fans. In addition, we want to bring the world of fandom and of English language science fiction into Japan and to make it more accessible. In particular we want to encourage greater social interaction between Japanese and Western fans than we managed in 2007.

While we'd love to hold a Worldcon in Tokyo itself that's pretty much financially impossible (the sites are WAY too expensive unless we could get a major arts grant from the government or some foundation - pretty unlikely). Since our committee are mostly based in/near Tokyo, we are therefore looking at bidding sites primarily within "Greater Tokyo" such as Yokohama (the known and highly attractive site of Nippon 2007) or Chiba with its SF connotations (with a sky the colour of a TV tuned to a dead channel) and its nearness to Narita airport.

I don't think Worldcon does anything "for the city" of Greater Tokyo. It has other fish to fry such as an Olympics in 2020. What Worldcon here would do,





I think, is give a boost to fandom for written SF (somewhat dwarfed by comics and anime in Japan) and give a first Worldcon experience to many Japanese who do not have the holiday time to spare on trying a Worldcon out overseas. The willingness of overseas fans to come to Japan and open up dialogues would, we hope, expand our local fandom as well as contribute to more Japanese coming to Worldcon overseas.



### **Northeast in 2017 - Warren Buff**

The Northeast Corridor of the United States has long been a hotbed of science fiction and fandom. The region hosts the world's oldest science fiction convention, multiple clubs - two with permanent clubhouses - and serves as the epicenter of science fiction publishing. Fans routinely travel from one end of the region to the other along its convention circuit, maintaining an intricate regional community. Worldcons on the East Coast have routinely been large and vibrant, but the area is currently in its longest spell without one since they began. This spring, some of us started thinking it might be a good time to organize regionally and change that. We created a mailing list called SPRAWL in homage to William Gibson's vision of the Boston-Atlanta Metropolitan Axis and started our search. When we discovered that BWAWA (organizers of the 1998 Baltimore Worldcon, BucCo-ner) were also exploring a possible bid, we agreed to join forces.

We have explored Washington and Baltimore, Pittsburgh, Charlotte, and Atlanta. While Atlanta

turned out to be a non-starter we're still considering those first four, and have some great proposals on the table for 2017. We'll be making our choice soon. In December, at SMOFcon, we'll announce which city we're bidding.

We're also carefully building a committee across fannish generations, with committee members who had been working on cons for over a decade before others were even born, drawing input from the whole range. Our committee includes past Worldcon chairs, division heads, and chair's staff, and numerous veteran area heads and regional conrunners. We bring a diverse set of experiences and interests to the project of designing the best Worldcon we can, and would love to have the chance to put our ideas into action.

We're aiming for a centralized convention space with a majority of the hotel rooms within a block and a large assortment of restaurants and tourist sites conveniently nearby. We know that while the con itself is the draw, the city in which it is located can aid in bringing fans in and in running a con that they will remember fondly. We want to reinvigorate fandom both internationally and locally, across ages, and choosing a site with a strong base and that can be a memorable one is important to us -- especially for the momentous occasion that will occur in 2017.

2017 will bring the 75th Worldcon, and for this occasion we want to bring in a new generation of Worldcon fans from our region and revitalize attendance among those who have drifted away. We're planning an August date to minimize conflicts with the ever-earlier school calendar and ease the dilemma of writers, artists, editors, and dealers who might otherwise be tempted to choose Dragon\*Con over Worldcon. We are also looking at sites that really want a Worldcon, from both a fannish and a location perspective. With our experience and our mission, we believe that we can bring this historic Worldcon to a world-class city and make it one for the ages.



## Helsinki in 2017 - Eemeli Aro

As many reading this probably know, Helsinki in 2015 was a bid aimed at getting Finnish fandom on the international map, helping people realize that we have great organizational skills, great fun, and great people – in addition to great science fiction, of course! We succeeded at earning people's attention and respect with the 2015 bid, if we do say so ourselves. We just didn't quite win the 2015 Worldcon in the process.

Bidding for Worldcon in 2017, we want to help bring European fans together more for Worldcon. Europe is full of fannish activity, but European fandom lacks organization as a cohesive entity. We hope that Europeans who go to Loncon 3 will want to go to Worldcon again soon, and be invested in fandom at large. We think having a Helsinki Worldcon is a great way to continue to bring European fans together as a community.

We also think that Finnish fandom has a lot to offer Worldcon, and the Finns have been quietly contributing to the genre for a long time. Finnish language and the Kalevala myth inspired Tolkien to create the Quenya language, after all. More recently, Johanna Sinisalo, Hannu Rajaniemi, Petri Hiltunen, Ninni Aalto and many others have been bringing great literature and art to the field.

Finnish fandom also has a long tradition of silliness and fun. We craft filk songs for our guests of honor at Finncon. We retrofit cigarette-dispensing machines to sell inexpensive sci-fi comic books. Finns gather at the pub weekly (sometimes more often) for "mafia" meetings to discuss science fiction and convention-running (and everything else).

Helsinki's August daytime temperatures are 72F (22C), or thereabouts, which doesn't hurt when planning a Worldcon. The locals speak English in a lilting accent (as well as often speaking Finnish, Swedish, German, Russian, Dutch, and/or Estonian, with the occasional Czech accent to be found). Finns focus on design and efficiency as well as artistry, in work as in play, and that would definitely be reflected in a Helsinki Worldcon.

Helsinki as a city also offers some major practical benefits! The city is offering free public transit to all Worldcon members. The hotel room rates are likely to be the least expensive Worldcon has seen in quite some time; for the 2015 bid our rates started from a little over \$100 USD -- and that includes breakfast and tax, never mind that Finland doesn't have a tipping culture. We are also eligible for a number of cultural grants, which should help keep our membership rates very low. Although we're not sure how much we can help with travel costs for individual fans, we are working on building relationships in the airline industry, and Finnair and Norwegian have both recently opened many new routes through Helsinki. Fans may find that airfare is far less expensive than they had expected, and the visit itself will certainly be worth the trip!

We believe Nordic and Finnish fandom in particular has a lot to show to the rest of the world, and we'd very much like the opportunity to shine. The right place and time for that is Helsinki in 2017, which will also coincide with the 100th anniversary of the Finnish Declaration of Independence. We intend Helsinki in 2017 to be a celebration of international cooperation and friendship.



## New Orleans in 2018

### What would be your motivations for bidding to run a Worldcon?

We love science fiction fandom and the institution of Worldcon and we love our city and region. By bringing the 76th World Science Fiction convention to the city of New Orleans, we believe that both will benefit. Moreover, New Orleans and Worldcon need each other.

By 2018, it will have been 30 years since our city, and by extension the Central Gulf Coast, has hosted a Worldcon. By hosting it here, we hope to introduce an entire generation of fans here to world fandom in a way that only hosting a Worldcon can. This would draw more of our region's fans into participation both in fandom generally, and local fandom in particular.

Further, we believe that we have as much to give to wider fandom as we can receive. Our region's enthusiasm and spirit of fun would give our Worldcon an energy any science fiction convention needs. As much as we might wish it were not so, Worldcon no longer exists unchallenged for the attention of young fans. We want our convention to attract those fans, to show them what a fan-run science fiction convention can be, and to keep them and motivate them to bring science fiction fandom forward.

### What would your city bring to Worldcon?

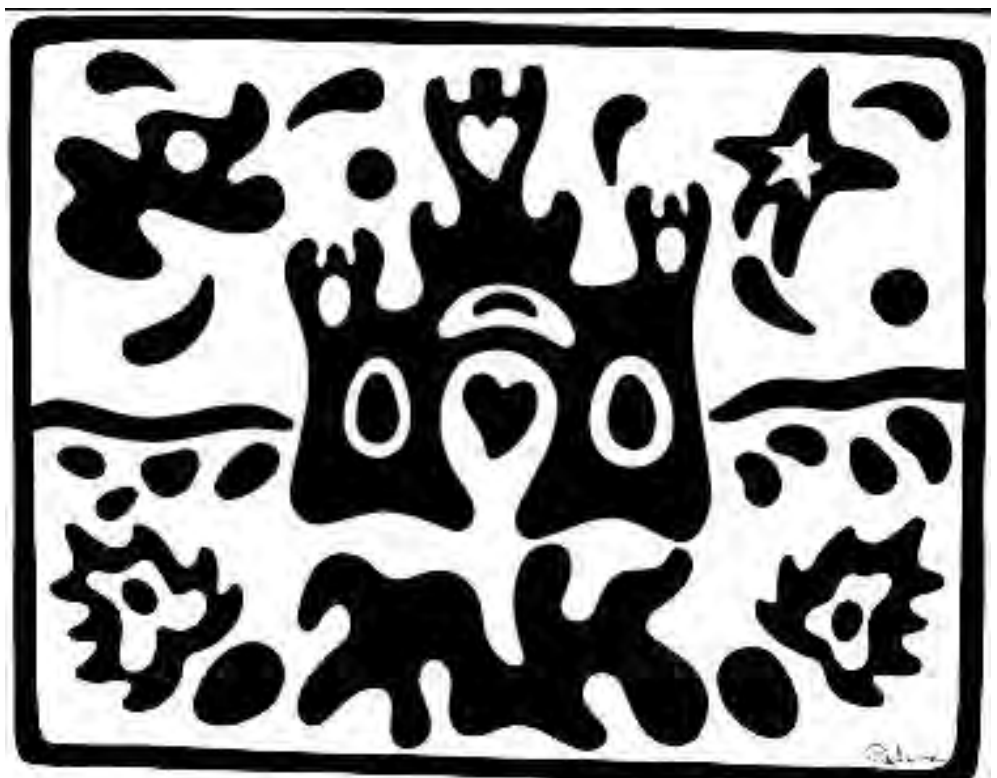
Besides the energy of our fans, our city brings the amenities of a true world-class convention city. Our restaurants are some of the finest in the world, ranging from price from the affordable on a budget to haute cuisine. Our convention will be downtown, within a brief streetcar ride from the world famous French Quarter and many of our dozens of other attractions -- including our renowned music, museums and architecture. Moreover, New Orleans itself can be reached through non-stop flights available from all over the U.S. and Toronto and by train with service from Los Angeles, New York, and Chicago.

### What would Worldcon do for your city?

Worldcon would not only introduce an entire generation of fans here to world fandom, it would be a chance to shine another light on science fiction fandom here as it's been known for years before the arrival of the "comic-cons." The year 2018 will be the three-hundredth anniversary of the founding of the City of New Orleans. By working with our convention bureau, we will be associating Worldcon with the other activities celebrating our city's birthday. As New Orleans becomes a part of Worldcon, Worldcon will be part of New Orleans.

### What does your Worldcon want to do for science fiction?

We hope that, along with our energy and the attractiveness of our city, we can help advance science fiction fandom. Worldcon has always evolved as times have changed. We hope to help move Worldcon and fandom generally forward in a way that allows them to grow without losing our essence as a community. Our city itself is an example of how this is possible. We have a long history of adapting and surviving without losing our traditions which arise from our people themselves. We believe a New Orleans Worldcon in 2018 can help do that for fandom.



## Dublin 2019

### What would be your motivations for bidding to run a Worldcon?

To bring a world-class convention focussed on one's interest to one's country is an incredible motivation. Ireland has never hosted a Worldcon before, despite having a strong tradition and historical involvement in science fictional fandom.

For those who enjoying convening events, the ability to transfer a convention to a whole different place, a different country, is one of the majestic elements of Worldcon. Irish people have supported Worldcon as volunteers, staff and committee, as Area Heads and Division Heads, and the idea of bringing the convention to their home induces a level of pride that is immeasurable until you hear the applause and smiles of fans at small cons encouraging the endeavour. Combined with the presence of a brand new and eminently suitable venue less than a mile from the dead centre of the city, it feels like the time is right.

### What would your city bring to Worldcon?

Dublin is a city full of literary history. Ireland as an island has stretched out far beyond its shores, and the Irish people, through good times and ill, have gone out into the world to work and wander. Our heritage, culture, history and relaxed good times are renowned around the globe. Whether it be a rebellious spirit in Australia and Cuba, the vast Guinness Brewery in Nigeria, or the unending network of bars throughout all continents, a part of Ireland is never far away. Now is the chance for fans to find their own Dublin, the city where Gulliver and Vlad were born into fantastic fiction, where Bikes have a mind of their own, where Faeries fight Criminals. To visit a country full of stories and legends, to stand among stone Castles and in the heart of a burial mound, to wonder what is real and what is imagined.

### What you think Worldcon would do for your city?

Without doubt there would be a serious economic benefit for Dublin and the current government has recognised this by offering €60,000 in financial support, to win the bid and to market the convention. Science fiction fans' hard-earned money will of course be welcomed as the nation travels through a tough economic time. Dublin really needs to look forward, and there is nothing more forward-looking than science fiction; escaping reality may not be a bad thing at all.

### What does your Worldcon want to do for science fiction?

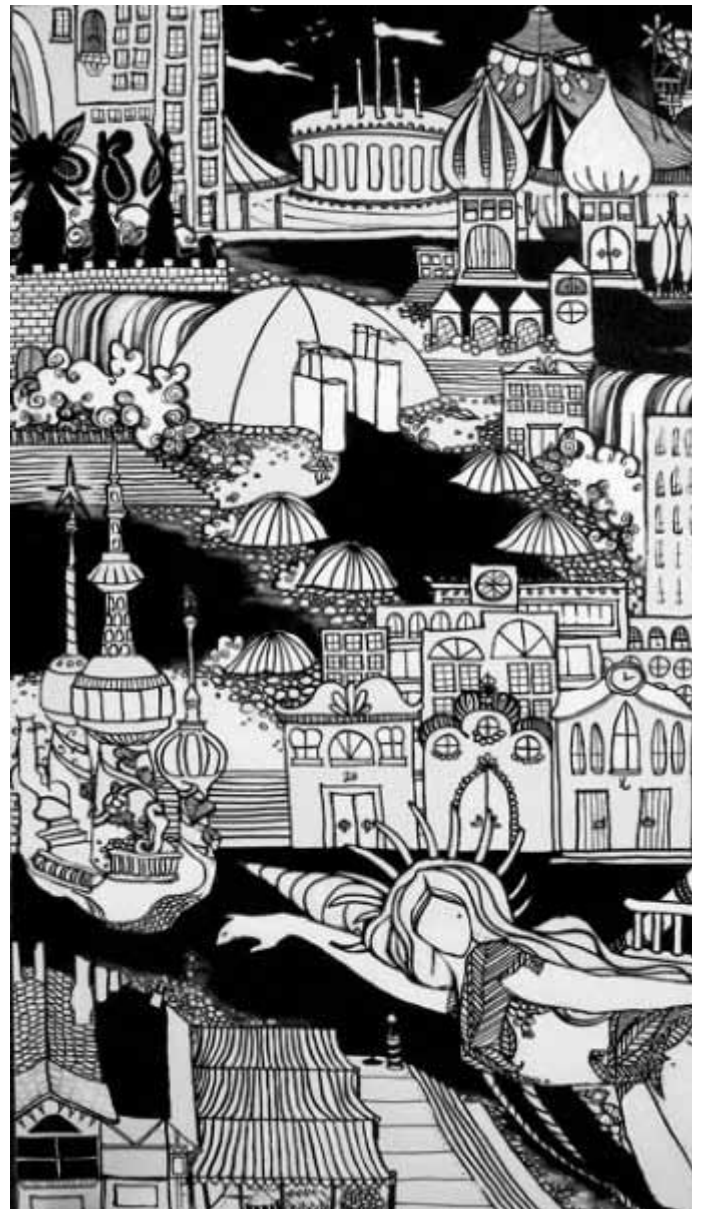
A Dublin Worldcon would celebrate science fiction, but it would do something else. Ireland is a distinct

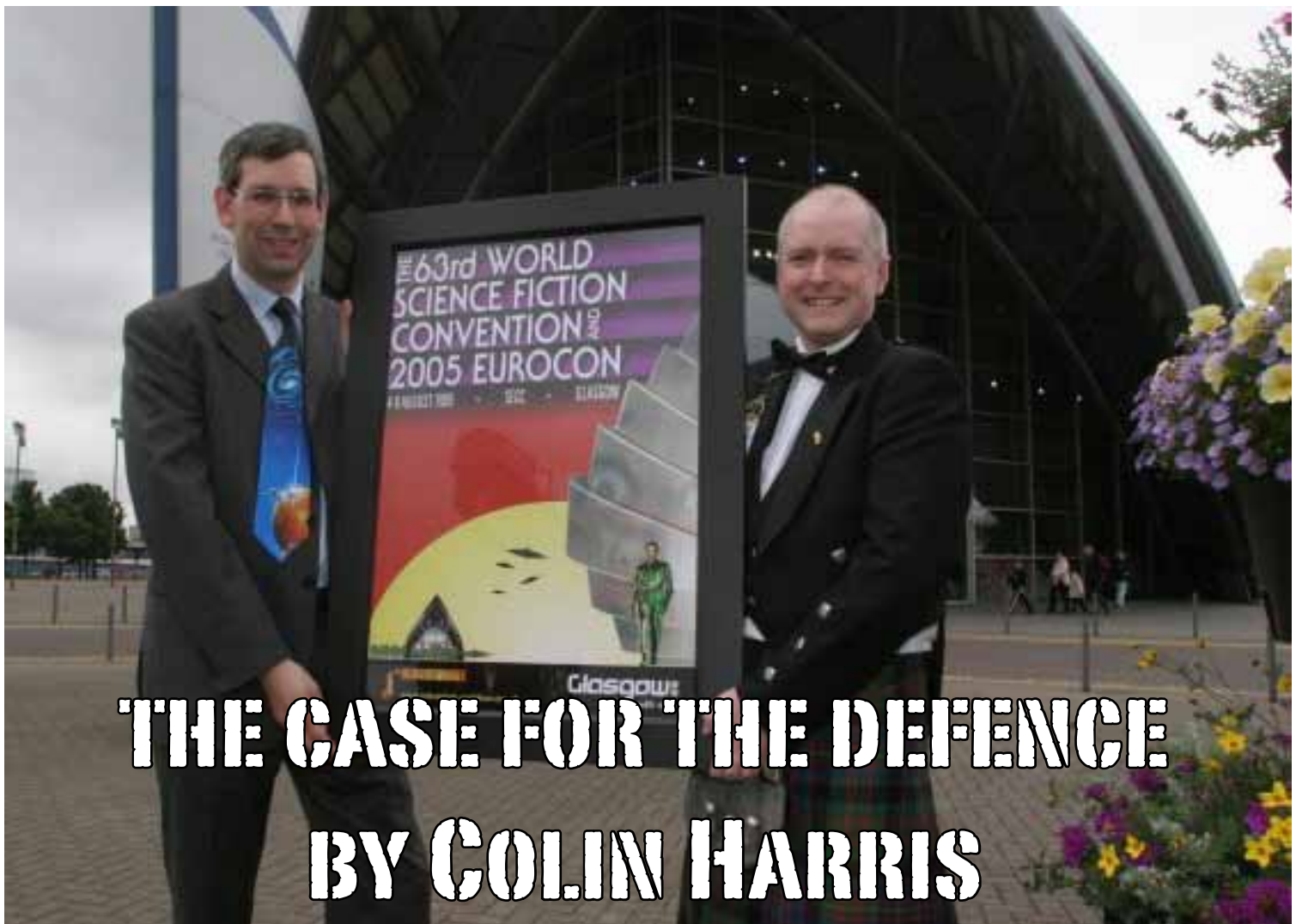
and sovereign land. We are not America, nor Britain. We are a small European state, born from a struggle, a nation of the 20th Century and yet an island divided. An Irish Worldcon would be a broad and welcoming canvas, celebrating all works of the fantastic and the speculative, in all media. Irish fandom has always ignored barriers and borders and we'd extend that open vision to the world.

The level of support from across fandom is already incredible, with a variety of conventions and organisers coming behind the bid in support.

A Dublin Worldcon can do something special for science fiction fandom. It can genuinely reach out, given the geography and demography of the island, to encompass many elements of various fandoms and under one roof celebrate and involve them all, reaching out to all nations, while giving currency to the World part of the World Science Fiction Convention.

*(In the interests of openness, this piece was written by James Bacon, who is an editor in this parish)*





# THE CASE FOR THE DEFENCE

## BY COLIN HARRIS

The debate around Worldcon's role and future has changed a great deal in the last few years. It seems to me that there's a degree of antagonism towards the institution - and the people who run it - that I don't remember even as recently as 2005 when I co-chaired the event in Glasgow. In this closing article, I want to explore a few aspects of this debate, and hopefully encourage some more positive reflection on the role of Worldcon as it enters its fourth quarter-century.

### **The Role of Social Media**

My first observation is that this is an area where social media has changed the nature of the discussion. Indeed, it's a case study of the inherent nature of social media and the way this nature changes the ground rules for collective conversation - something that I suspect will be explored in more detail in the upcoming Social Media issue of this very fanzine.

What is this nature? It's one where the very *interconnectedness of all things* (per Douglas Adams) is both the fascinating virtue and the soul-sucking price of the medium. Worldcon has never been above controversy, starting from the very first event, but the nature of communication meant that debate happened within a directly engaged community - mainly attendees or people directly

connected to attendees. And as a conrunner you'd mostly be hearing from this directly engaged group because those are would be the people you would talk to or read. In contrast, social media produces an explosion of views, including ripples of applause and outrage triggered by popular or opinionated individuals, which has no automatic weighting towards the people who care about or support the event. Cheryl Morgan (#1) sums up one aspect of this phenomenon.

*"Mostly, however, people seem content with the idea that Worldcon is a horrible thing that deserves to die. There are other conventions that they can go to, and that's good. What I don't quite understand is that a lot of these people seem to think that Worldcon needs to die. It isn't enough for them to go elsewhere. Worldcon has to disappear as an option. I'm not quite sure why this is."*

The simple truth in this is that in the past, if you didn't like someone's convention, you didn't go to it. You ignored it, or started your own. Mostly that's still the case; but not for Worldcon. Which brings us to...

### **The Role of History**

Justin Landon of Staffers' Book Review has by his own admission been a "hater" of Worldcon over a num-

ber of years. Then, after attending LoneStarCon 3, he wrote this (#2):

*"I have been one of the Hugo Awards' hugest detractors in recent years with blog post after blog post excoriating the WSFS for their silly rules, the award for its myopic view, and the voters for their borderline idiocy. After attending my first Worldcon I want to tell the entire science fiction and fantasy community that I was wrong."*

I don't agree with everything in Justin's article but it highlights a fundamental question at the heart of today's antagonism. Put simply, why does someone who has never attended the event, feel driven to invest so much time and energy attacking it?

The answer lies in a misunderstanding. Many people recognize that Worldcon was once the premier convention of the genre, spanning the whole spectrum of SFnal interests. And therefore it seems obvious that by failing to grow and expand to accommodate the ever-broadening nature of the field, Worldcon has failed in its obligation to be the ultimate meeting place, welcoming to all fans and brimming with youthful energy. All that is left is for it to fade away, while its place is filled by younger, fitter events. As Madeline Ashby comments (#3):

*"The last time I was at Anime North, a bunch of kids in cosplay brought out an amp, plugged it in, and started to jam in the parking lot. In another lot, more kids put together their own kaiju battle, doing slo-mo fights to J-rock and -rap. It was great. I was with a bunch of very happy people who didn't give a fuck about jetpacks. Worldcon may be about the future, but it doesn't have the future. Remember, Worldcon organizers all over the world: memento mori."*

The point here is that the world has changed, rather than Worldcon. Absolutely right, say the critics, feeling that this validates their criticisms. But my response is that it doesn't follow that Worldcon SHOULD try to keep up. We have not become narrower; the world has become broader.

In fact there was an implicit choice somewhere back in the 1970s and 1980s, as science fiction (and fandom with it) went from being a well-defined niche to a massively diverse element of popular culture. Worldcon could have become Dragon\*Con; settled in a location, incorporated, become more professional, grown in size and turned into a mass media event. Or it could continue as an event primarily focused on... *science... fiction*. I say those two words separately because each carries weight. Science (as opposed to technology or geek) is something which still plays a material role at Worldcon; and fiction - the way we tell stories, particularly in words - is its very heart and soul.

Either of these routes might have been valid, although in practice the culture of the people running Worldcon, and the way it is managed, meant that only the second was ever going to happen. What is unfortunate, even if understandable, is the *appropriation* that is happening. Because Worldcon was once THE ultimate event in the field, everyone feels they have a stake in it, and the right to be angry if the event is no longer fulfilling that role.

## **Where Now?**

I firmly believe that Worldcon is still an amazing event. What is needed is simply to stop assessing it against a yardstick based on a role which is long obsolete. We also need to let go of what Mark Olson calls the "cultural cringe", and become more articulate about what makes the event distinctive - indeed, arguably unique. It does not matter whether Worldcon has the same role it did 30, 50, or 70 years ago (and how could it? today's landscape is unrecognizable compared to the one that existed then). All that matters is that Worldcon has something distinctive and worthwhile to offer today. And if it does, then perhaps the critics should start evaluating it on merit for what it is and for what it does; rather than criticizing it for what it is not, or what it does not do.

First and foremost, Worldcon remains the core convention for what I might call "heritage fandom" - the branch of the cultural tree that goes back in direct ancestry to the 1930s. I do not use heritage here in a disparaging way (remember, I'm a Brit, and my whole country is full of the stuff!) but to emphasize that these deep roots still shape the event today. Editing this fanzine has reminded me of this even more.

Secondly, it's the convention for people whose first and primary interest is in science fiction rather than the broader pop cultural phenomenon. Of course many Worldcon attendees have broader interests too, but Worldcon's offer wraps those interests around the core rather than treating them all equally with it.

Thirdly, as Dave McCarty has noted, its target demographic is not Madeline's cosplaying, Kaiju-battling, J-rocking kids. Worldcon is a much better fit for "second steppers" and the realistic recruitment age for most new members is 25-35, not 18-25.

(As an aside here, people who say "you need to be more like Dragon\*Con so that all those cool young people will come to your event" are missing the point. We're not trying to attract the people who want a Dragon\*Con experience; we're looking for the people who attend Dragon\*Con but would prefer a Worldcon experience if they only knew about it. This is the heart of Mark Olson's cultural cringe comment - a belief that Worldcon has to ape some other kind of event to continue being successful.

ful, rather than having the confidence that Worldcon is quite capable of finding an audience on its own terms. I give huge kudos here to Helen Montgomery, James Bacon and their helpers on the SF Outreach Project (#4) - giving away thousands of free books every year is a perfect example of how to connect with the people who will be attracted to our community once they know it exists).

Fourthly, it's big enough to be an "event", and to attract a significant professional community, but small enough to have intimate interactions with even the biggest names. The intermediate size is a virtue not a failing.

Similarly, the annually changing location and management - leading to continual reinterpretation - is a differentiator and a sign of shared ownership by the world, not a weight dragging us down. This is perhaps better understood outside North America where the chance to bring the circus to town remains something special.

Lastly, the history itself matters. As I said in my opening editorial, it provides a patina which cannot be faked. The Hugo Awards may not be perfect, but 60 years of history has given them weight, and as someone fortunate enough to be backstage most years, I know for a fact that the nominees value them as much as ever.

None of this means we don't have substantial challenges to overcome. Worldcons market themselves badly and there is a demographic challenge (these two things are not unrelated!). And the annual reinventions do make it a complex beast to manage, with the risk that we'll come up short from time to time. Above all, the frictions that I've referred to in this article have led to a very unhealthy tendency to turn away from public engagement and raise the drawbridge behind us. THAT is something we cannot afford. But I take heart from the fact that there are plenty of people and cities out there that want to bid - we already have bids lined up for all but

one year between now and 2022, ranging from Montreal to New Zealand and Helsinki to New Orleans. That does not seem to me to be an event that is dying.

In conclusion, it is easy to feel that the future of the event is challenged, when each year seems to bring another slew of critical articles and forecasts of impending doom. And in the face of these debates, it's easy to forget that every year, several thousand people come together and have a great time, continuing a nearly-unbroken sequence of events that started 75 years ago in New York. It's also easy to forget that the event does evolve, perhaps faster than many people realize. This particularly applies to the Hugos, where in barely a decade we've split the Dramatic Presentation and Editor Hugos, added awards for Fancast and Graphic Story, and now routinely stream the Hugos around the world - and more than doubled voter participation.

What stands out even more, however, is that thread of continuity and that distinctive mindset which binds our fandom together. It has been a pleasure and a privilege to put this issue together, and I cannot help but come back to the truth that the greetings offered to members in 1939 are in essence the invitation and encouragement that we still offer attendees today, or note that the unique craziness that James Bacon brings to fandom today are in the same spirit as the events which Walt Willis and James White wrote about in 1957.

Here's to 75 years well spent, and many more to come!

#1 - <http://www.cheryl-morgan.com/?p=17634>

#2 - <http://www.staffersbookreview.com/2013/09/mission-statement-the-hugos-and-worldcon-arent-what-i-expected-etc.html>

#3 - <http://madelineashby.com/?p=1502>



I DO NOT FEAR DEATH! - WAC 60

