



## The Newsletter of Concourse, the 55th British National Science Fiction Convention (Eastercon)

If you aren't a member then this isn't going to make much sense.

### Marriages

Vice Chair Jonjo and power behind the throne, Sharon, got married this week. It apparently went without a hitch.

Jonjo & Sharon invite you to the exchange of their wedding vows, tonight at 7pm in the Baronial, officiated by Lionel Fanthorpe. To celebrate, join them in the Arena from 8pm for a DISCO and a slice of wedding cake. There is a buffet too.



### Births

Birthday Greetings go to Julie Rigby, today; Michael Bernadi tomorrow; Dave Ulicsak, yesterday; Jaap Boekestein the day before.

### Book Auction

There is a display in the Art Show of books, entered into the Book Auction 3pm on Sunday in the Baronial. Please see Brian Ameringen on the Porcupine Books table in the dealers' room for further details.

### Review: NHS Walk-In Centre

My cold turned into a chest infection on Friday morning, so I decided to get something done about it. I was told to go to the NHS walk-in centre mentioned yesterday. Once in, I talked to the receptionist, who told me to wait to talk to the triage nurse, who passed me onto the Nurse Practitioner. She then put me through a battery of tests, pronounced me exceptionally fit, apart from a chest infection and a nice collection of gallstones, and then sent me on to the doctor at the emergency centre further into town. The doctor saw me fast, and I picked up my prescription there and then.

The NHS walk-in centre was slow, although thorough, and they then got me an express appointment at the emergency centre. So it is well worth using. Which I hope you don't!

[Bridget Wilkinson]

### Redemption Brainstorming

Steve Royerson tells us there will be a brainstorming session for Redemption 2005 at 1600 on Sunday in the Spanish Hall. Bring brains.

### Real Ale Ramblings

Blackpool isn't just Euro Fizz and John Smith's Smooth – there are number of fine pubs within a few minutes walk of the Winter Gardens. This ramble covers the Talbot Road area. Leave the Winter Gardens and walk towards Blackpool North Station. On the corner opposite Wilkinsons is the Flying Handbag – one of Blackpool's gay pubs which also has real ale. Just down Talbot Road is The Wheatsheaf. A classic unspoilt pub which is frequented by local CAMRA members. Their selection includes beers from the Hart Brewery at the Cartford Hotel in Little Eccleston. There is also a lunch time and early evening menu of good value pub grub. Almost next door is the Ramsden Arms: another classic pub with the house brew 'Ramsden Ale' at only £1.29 a pint. Filled rolls (barms in the local lingo) are available here. A little further down Talbot Road is the New Road Inn where you can find Jennings Cumberland Ale, Cocker Hoop and guest ales. For the less active, The Stanley in Church Street has Taylors Landlord and Black Sheep.

Tomorrow I am going to Fleetwood on the tram for a lunchtime real ale ramble – anybody who is interested please get in touch via the newsletter room. [Martin Hoare]



### Wishing Well

Frequent Eastercon visitor Johannes Berg from Norway alas couldn't make it here this year, due to continued treatment for cancer. During the many years of organizing Norwegian cons to the coordination of the famous Norwegian room parties, he gathered many friends at Eastercons, who undoubtedly would like to wish him all the best. For that purpose Wilf James is going around with a large get well card, so please contact him to add your wishes to our absent Norwegian friend.

### On The Trains

Our nation's great railway network is being upgraded in various exciting ways this weekend: there is track work on the West Coast Main Line, which means there are no direct trains from Manchester to London, and Euston and St Pancras are more or less closed. Rail journeys south will thus be slightly more challenging than usual; the best indirect routes to London are Preston/Manchester – Birmingham – London (Marylebone) or Preston/Manchester – Reading – London (Paddington). In any doubt, call National Rail Enquiries on 08457 484950.

### Objects Trouvés

If you've lost or found anything, get in touch with the Information Desk (now where you got your badge) in the Empress Suite. Items collected so far include a cap and gloves and a con bag with a book and scarf (both found in the Spanish Hall on Friday night).

More items have been lost so please look after bags.

### Stop Press

Today only there is a collectors' fair / flea market in the Winter Gardens – entrance on the S.E. corner

## Hugo Awards

We have received the Hugo Award nominations a day earlier than expected. We really can't fit it all in here, but please see the posters situated outside the newsletter room, the Spanish Hall bar and everywhere. Pictured is Charlie Stross who is nominated for both Best Novel and Best Novelette. taken one year ago and this weekend: struggling author becomes "rising young star of British SF".



## Food

Your editors have had two separate and positive reports – both written on paper bags – about Huttons of Windermere, a "confectioners of distinction" opposite the post office, three minutes down the road from the Winter Gardens.

Also, there will be a Dalek giving away chocolate eggs at the Bank Hey Streetshop (across from Woolworths) from 1200-1300 on Easter Monday.

Reports on restaurants are also trickling in:

At Terry's Balti House (48 Clifton St) "all the vegan dishes were excellent", with "no surplus grease", and La Piazza (Cedar Sq) has "good seafood and very friendly service".

Also, the directions to Badshah were a bit out: it's on Central Drive, but just past Palatine Rd, on the west side.

## Correction

McDonalds does not have working WiFi facilities.

## Things What I Learned At The Slash Panel

1. Japan is the place to buy porn
  2. When it comes to slash, you can't please all of the people all of the time
  3. Slash is different to gay porn
  4. The difference is that women write slash for women and men write gay porn for men
  5. Some people are not squicked by anything
  6. An extension of Sturgeon's Law applies to Harry Potter slash: 99.99% of it is crap
  7. Teenage girls who can't spell and who don't do grammar properly are extremely annoying (and this is true not merely in relation to slash)
  8. Slash is corrupting and naughty
- The panel closed on Jar-Jar's tongue.

[A Slash Virgin, Aged 22 5/6]

## The Wandering Fan by Colm McMurray

(brother of GUFF delegate Pat McMurray)

For those of you who've wondered where my twin is this weekend, here's the short version.

Pat is en route to New Zealand and Australia on his GUFF trip, but transport is being a challenge. He left three days ago, and I thought he was at ConText in New Zealand by now, until I got this email from him.

"Hey you, having some fun here. Left LHR on Wens, plane got diverted into Napoli with engine troubles – they hired a replacement 320 from somewhere but the captain must have been off his head, we strayed into Libyan airspace and got forced down into Tripoli. Good thing we're allies now, though they arrested the crew on general principle. The airline hired a couple of buses to take us to Cairo. It was nice to see the pyramids and the Nile and what have you, but they didn't offload the luggage in Tripoli – had no idea where my bag had gone.

"Then, another plane – a 737 in what I think are Nigerian colours. I was a bit worried we were going to end up in Nigeria, but I needn't have worried – apparently they thought we were supposed to go to the Maldives. Sounds good doesn't it, a couple of days of sea and sunshine? No such luck, they burst a tire on landing (hear you had something similar?) so we can't take off, but off course the Maldivians (sp) won't let us in the country. This is not so bad, since in the Maldives the airport is an island! There's a halfway decent hotel they've put us up in – but after days without luggage we're all a bit... The good news is that the guy running the fuel farm is someone I know from Mumbai, so I had a really interesting tour of the airport – that's always been an ambition of mine, to tour Male airport.

"And finally, I know where my luggage is – it's arrived at the convention in NZ. They've been using it to substitute for me – it's been in their opening ceremony, and a panel on "International fandom" – I've been emailed that my luggage is gaining quite a reputation for wit and bonhomie, and went to its' first room party last night.

"Anyway, there's a plane going back to Dubai this evening they've managed to get us places on, so hopefully we'll be on our way at last."

And me? I'm really enjoying my first convention – to quote Mark Plummer "Brain the size of a door, and they've got me guarding the planet..."

Colm

*Editor's Note: GUFF is the Going Under Fan Fund which sends a deserving SF fan to Australia for a convention and fannish tour (or vice versa). Pat McMurray won the GUFF award this year but has to fit his plans around a busy BA course. There is also TAFF which sends a fan to the US every two years. Both candidates are at the con.*

"LieJournal" has been brought to you by Alex McLintock with help from Jan van't Ent and folks who dropped by (thanks!)

