



23-26 April 2004 Rydges Lakeside Canberra Australia

Progress Report #1

conflux (n) = a confluence

confluence (n) = a flowing together of two or more streams / the point of juncture of such streams / the combined stream formed by this juncture / a gathering, flowing, or meeting together at one juncture or point

For over 50 years, the Australian National SF Convention has been the most important event on the Australian SF&F calendar. It attracts hundreds of people: fans, writers, booksellers, publishers, movie-makers and other enthusiasts from around the country - and even overseas. In 2004, Conflux, the 43rd Australian Natcon will be held in Canberra. The Natcon was last held in Canberra in 1987, so this is indeed a momentous occasion.

Conflux is organised by the same group of fans who have been running the highly successful CSFcons. Having started out as a small, local event the enthusiasm and energy of the organisers have made the annual CSFcon into an important Australian SF event. The Locals, lead by Vanessa Jacobsen, have even managed to recruit volunteers from outside of Canberra, making Conflux into a truly 'national' event.

Guests of Honour at Conflux will be Greg Benford, Hugo Award winning author and prominent long time SF fan in his own right, and Sean McMullen, Ditmar Award and Aurealis Award winning Australian author. The Fan Guest of Honour will be Karen Herkes, long-time Canberra fan and convention organiser. Together the Guests will head up a multi-streamed program featuring a wide range of SF activities. The program will also feature some real science topics and an ANZAC Day Dawn Service.

AND an innovative extra will be the premier presentation of new Australian SF or F short plays. At least two will be shown each evening. Playwrights wishing to participate in this unique opportunity should check the SF Plays pages for submission details.

While ostensibly a general science fiction convention, Fans of all genres within SF are sure to find something to suit their interests, while at the same time have a great deal of fun - and perhaps even discover some new aspect of science fiction, fantasy or horror that will pique their interests.

Canberra, Australia's capital, is convenient to both Melbourne and Sydney on the east coast, and boasts a busy airport and a wide range of public transport connections. The convention site, Rydges Lakeside, is situated in downtown Canberra City, and is convenient to restaurants, entertainment venues, tourist attractions, other hotels, and the central retail district. What more could you ask for? A real coming together!

Our Guests:

Greg Benford

Gregory Benford is a professor of physics at the University of California, Irvine. His research encompasses both theory and experiments in the fields of astrophysics and plasma physics. Formerly a co-editor of the fanzine *Void*, and an SF writer since 1965, he is the author of the Nebula winning *Timescape* and the Galactic Center novels. Benford's fiction explores the human side of hard science, and extrapolates humanity moving into a realistic far future. He has won the Nebula Award twice, the John W. Campbell award and the Australian Ditmar award for international novel. In 1989 he won the United Nations Medal in Literature. He is a frequent and eloquent attendee at many conventions.

Karen Herkes

Karen Herkes grew up in Queensland, where she and a friend edited a "crudzine" of stunning mediocrity, *Hyperspace*. Moving to Canberra in 1981 she became involved in local SF fan clubs. She wrote a lot, edited a few local fanzines, helped with a few conventions, including *Conspire*, the 1989 Media Natcon, served on some Club committees, and generally enjoyed good company! Currently, she collects local ghost stories and is involved with the group responsible for the website act-sf.8m.com, a comprehensive guide and historical record of Canberra Fandom. She also writes murder mysteries for parties.

Sean McMullen

Sean McMullen is one Australia's leading SF and fantasy authors. He is the winner of eleven awards for SF and fantasy. His international sales cover the USA, Britain, France, Poland and Japan. He works in scientific computing, and is currently doing a PhD in Medieval Fantasy Literature at Melbourne University. Sean has been awarded the Ditmar Award three times, won the Aurealis Award twice and the William J Atheling Award for Criticism five times, and is the author of over 20 scientific papers, most of which are far too technical to be mentioned here. He has also prepared literally dozens of articles about speculative fiction in Australia and made numerous presentations on the genre to various forums, not all of which are SF related. Oh, and was the Editor, MUSFA's fiction Magazine *Yggdrasil*: March 1983 - March 1984.

Late breaking news:

The ConFlux committee is currently in negotiations for another O/S, high profile guest author who just happens to be in the right place at the right time. Stay tuned for further news.

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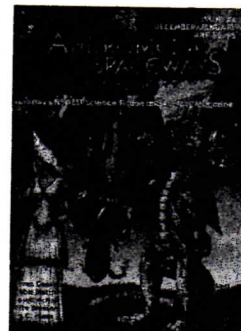
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Theatre Stream

Theatre Stream Progress as at November 2002

Interest in this innovative initiative is hotting up. A few early scripts have been received, and a lot more enquiries for details. All the details that are sent to enquiring playwrights are also available on our web site (follow the link from SF Plays in the left margin), so other authors are probably working away in secret.

It is an exciting concept, to bring a simple SF or Fantasy idea to the stage and enthral your fellow fans with the sort of entertainment that is very rare but fulfilling. Believe me, this is much better than listening to an author reading an excerpt from his latest, half finished work. This is a live representation of the impossible !

The deadline for submissions is next May, so there is still plenty of time to sharpen your pencils (or dust off your PC) and create, create, create.

Richard Womack

Filk Stream

Way back at the very first CSFCon, I approached Vanessa (our esteemed Convenor) and said: "You know, you really ought to have a *filk* stream."
She looked at me and gave this memorable reply: "What the heck is *filk*?"

Which pretty much leads me to my current predicament of running the ConFlux Filk Stream. Just in case readers still think I'm talking about some perverse medical procedure, here is a quick definition:

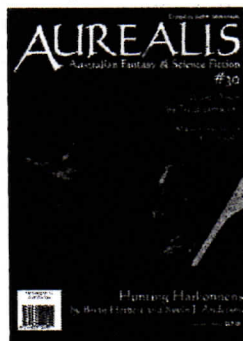
No, that's not a typographical error (although the word started as one, long ago). Filksongs and filksinging are the folk music of a time and a community, just as, say, Celtic ballads, or new England sea chanteys are -- except the time is today (or tomorrow) and the community is science fiction fandom.

Jordin Kare

My personal definition is more along the lines of "*Filk is what I point to when I say this is filk*".

If all goes according to plan, we will be having an actual Filk Concert on one evening of the con to show newcomers something of what we are all talking about, followed by a general round-robin sing-a-long. People interested in performing should contact me at robbie@camrin.org

Robbie Matthews



Issue #30 featuring Wind Down by Trent Jamieson and Hunting Harkonnens by Brian Herbert and Kevin J. Anderson

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Conflux Earlybird Membership Form
43rd Australian National SF Convention
23-26 April 2004
Rydges Lakeside, Canberra

*Conflux will accept payment by credit card, cheque or money order.
Please make cheques/money orders payable to 'Conflux - 43rd Natcon'.*

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PO Box 903
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Memberships charged to credit cards will appear on your statement as 'Victorian SF Conventions'.

Name on Badge _____

I would like to receive my convention publications by: email post

I expect to stay at the Rydges Lakeside (the convention hotel): yes no

Do **NOT** include my name in any public membership lists

(Only your name will be including on the list, and it will not be used for any other purpose)

I certify that the information I've provided is correct:

_____ (signature)

Membership	Cost
Full Membership (Attendance, Voting Rights, Publications)	\$110.00
Student / Concession (Attendance, Voting Rights, Publications)	\$77.00
Secondary School Student (Attendance, Publications)	\$55.00
Supporting (Voting Rights, Publications)	\$44.00
Voting Only (Ditmars)	\$5.00

*These early bird membership rates apply until **30 April 2003**.*

Conflux members are eligible for substantial discounts on the regular room rates at the Rydges Lakeside Canberra during the convention. Call toll-free on 1800 026 169, and remember to quote "Conflux" to receive your discounted convention rate.

Dealer Rates:

Professional Dealers Price includes a full membership	\$220 + \$100 per additional table
Fan Dealers Dealer MUST be a full member to be eligible.	\$55 per table, limit 1 table.
Deposit	\$20/table