

ConVergence: The Possibilities are Infinite

ConVergence 2002 is the Australian National Science Fiction Convention to be held in Melbourne in 2002. Planning has been underway since October 1999, incorporating both fannish and professional methods to ensure that ConVergence 2002 will be a Con fondly remembered for years to come.

ConVergence 2002 will provide an environment where the diverse elements of Australian fandom can meet and explore mutual interests, exchange ideas and develop commonalities.

All streams of fandom can introduce provocative ideas to each other, while at the same time have

For more information contact the ConV team at:
<http://www.vicnet.net.au/~converge/>
contact-convergence@egroups.com
 or snail mail via...

some fun. Experienced people from within fandom and the wider community will run the convention to ensure that all attendees are catered for.

The convention will be held over four days, from 7 - 10th June, 2002. This is a traditional holiday weekend in almost all Australian states.

(Convergence 2002 is convened under the auspices of the Victorian Science Fiction Conventions Inc and as such, is governed by its rules and regulations. Victorian Science Fiction Conventions Inc. is a not for profit association incorporated under the Victorian Associations Act, 1994.)

ConVergence 2002
 GPO Box 1212k
 Melbourne VIC 3001
 Australia

Full Memberships		Student (13-16 years at time of purchase)	\$80
1st July 2000 - 30th June 2001	\$130	Child (5-12 years at time of purchase)	\$25
1st July 2001 - 30th April 2002	\$165	Day Membership	\$65
From 1st May 2002	\$220	Supporting	\$25

Cato and Hotel Y
 The rates for the rooms are as follows:
 Double/Twins are \$121.00 per night per room
 Triples are \$131.00 per night per room.

A double consists of one queen and one single and a triple consists of three single beds. At the moment members should contact us by email to book a room as booking details have not been totally sorted out

yet. The same goes for the offsite venue The Ibis. Approximate rates are as follows:

Standard Twin:	\$114
1 Bedroom Apartment:	\$145
2 Bedroom Apartment:	\$198

These rates are not confirmed but we will soon have a number that delegates can quote when they book.

Message from the Chair

It has been several years, too many some fans would say, since a major generalist science fiction convention (commonly referred to as a 'SF Con' by fans) was held on the east coast of Australia. That's what makes ConVergence 2002, the 41st Australian National Science Fiction Convention, or the Natcon in the fannish vernacular, such an exciting event.

The Australian Natcon in 2002 will also be the 50th Anniversary of the inaugural Australian Natcon. First held in Sydney in 1952, the Australian national science fiction convention has been held annually since, except for a nine year hiatus in the early sixties.

Race Mathews, Australian Fan Guest of Honour, attended that first truly national SF Con in 1952 and returns in 2002 to reminisce and reflect on the past 50 years of science fiction and Australian SF fandom, as will Gay Haldeman, International Fan Guest of Honour, who will also reflect on international fannish history from the last quartile of the 20th Century. Joe Haldeman, one of our Guests of Honour, has been described by his peers as THE

most important SF writer in the last 30 years and Sean Williams is considered to be at the cutting edge of Australian speculative fiction while Lucy Sussex who crosses many genres not necessarily all SF related, is regarded by her peers and critics as one of the most talented writers in Australia. Joining our guests of Honour as Toastmaster will be Jack Dann, not only a thoroughly entertaining fellow but also one of the leading writers and editors in SF&F in the world today.

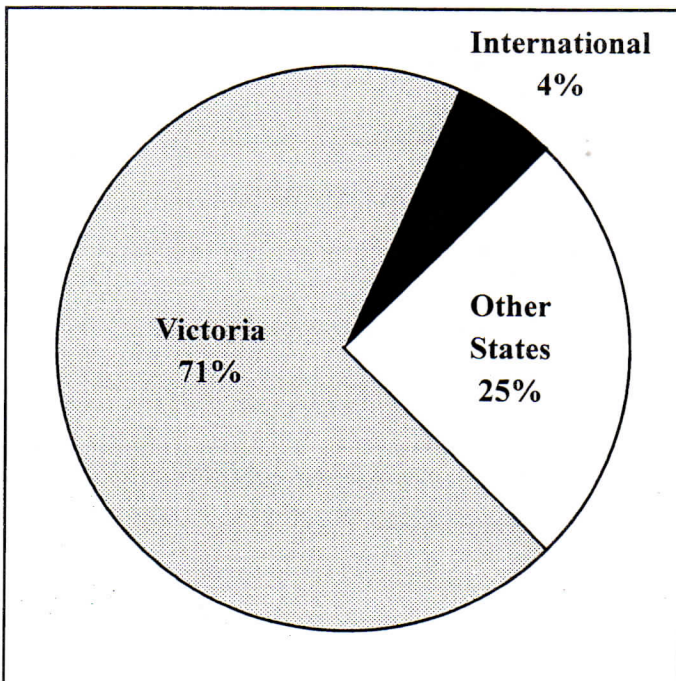
All of our Guests will guarantee an interesting and stimulating Con experience. Of course, attending a the Natcon is not merely about sitting on your bum listening or watching events unfold before you. It's about meeting new and interesting people from around Australia and possibly further afield, making new friends who have a common interest with you and most importantly, having a load of fun to boot.

The ConVergence Concom is working hard to ensure that this con will live up your expectations. See ya there.

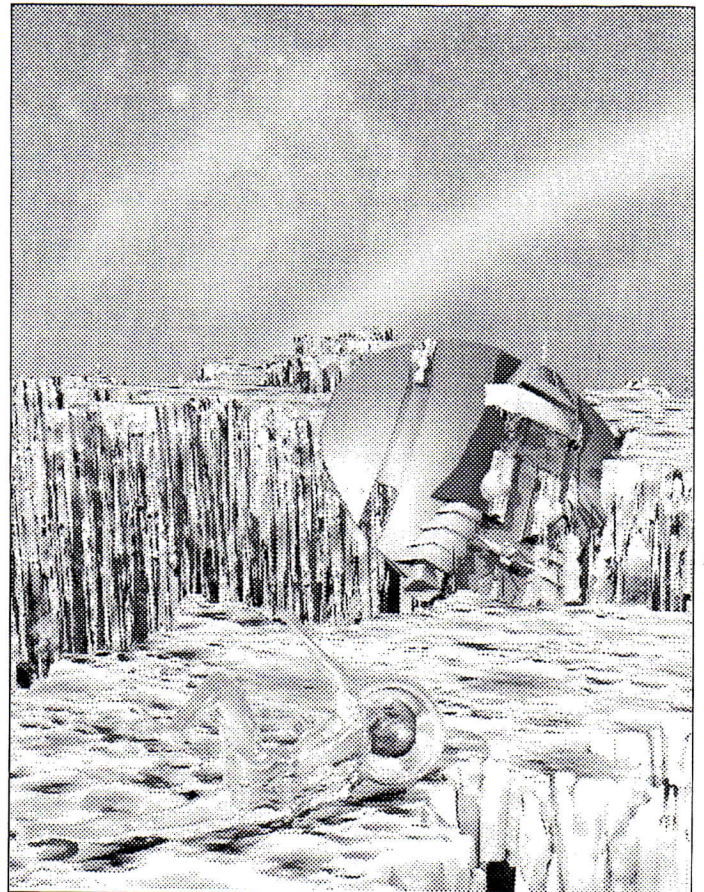
Rose Mitchell

Membership Stuff

The following pie graph breaks the total Convergence 2002 membership to a representative list state-by-state versus international members.



Membership Breakdown: October 2000



Graphic by Dick 'Ditmar' Jenssen

Guests of Honour

Convergence 2002 has obtained firm commitments from Guests of Honour: Joe and Gay Haldeman, Lucy Sussex and Sean Williams. These overseas and Australian guests are at the forefront of their particular genres and you certainly will not want to miss their presentations.

Our international guests are Joe and Gay Haldeman from the United States. Joe is a renowned SF writer who has been writing since 1970. He has degrees in physics and astronomy and an MFA in writing. He has written three books of short stories, a stage play, a screen play, as well as poetry and non-fiction. However, he is best known for his book *The Forever War*.

Among the many awards he has received for his works in science fiction, are four Hugos, three Nebulas, two Rhyslings, a Ditmar, the World Fantasy Award and the Italian "Futuro Remoto" Award. Joe's latest book is *Forever Free*. If you would like to know more about his works please refer to his website.

Joe's wife, Gay Haldeman, is a long time fan of science fiction who has been attending SF conventions since 1963. She has degrees in Spanish Literature and two MAs (one in Spanish Lit and the other in Linguistics) and she is the American correspondent of the Spanish SF news magazine, *BEM*, out of Barcelona.

Lucy Sussex is an Australian author well known for her work as both the author of a number of novels for teenagers and as the editor of several recent anthologies. She has appeared on panels at many Australian SF Cons. She is a freelance researcher, editor and a writer who has published widely, writing anything from literary criticism to horror and detective stories. She is a Ditmar and Aurealis Award winner and one of her anthologies was shortlisted for the World Fantasy Award.



Joe Haldeman



Gay Haldeman



Lucy Sussex

Although Australian author Sean Williams is best known for his work in SF, his body of work demonstrates a keen interest in the horror genre. His work has appeared in a variety of places in Australia and around the world (including translations into French and Polish). He has won three Aurealis, one Ditmar award, and was also nominated for the SA Great Literature Award. He is currently diversifying into young adult fantasy.



Sean Williams

Fan Guest of Honour

Our Fan Guest of Honour is long time fan, Race Mathews. Race is a fanzine editor and timebinder, as well as an author (of non-SF). He was a co-founder of the Melbourne Science Fiction Group in the early 1950s and he attended the first Australian science fiction Convention held in 1952. He is a former federal and state member of parliament, State Government minister, and is also the author of several books and articles on Australian socio-political issues.



Race Mathews

Toastmaster

Our toastmaster will be the infamous Jack Dann. He is of course, a multiple award winning author who has written/edited 53 books. His short fiction has appeared in *Omni*, *Playboy*, *Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine*, *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*, as well as other major magazines and anthologies. He has received numerous awards for his work in SF, including the Nebula, the Aurealis (twice), the Ditmar (twice), the World Fantasy Award and the "Premios Gilgames de Narrativa Fantastica". He has also been a finalist for the British Science Fiction Award. He also has great taste in ties!



Jack Dann



Cato Conference Centre

The con site is the Cato Conference Centre, at 489 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne. It is a first-class venue, offering an ambience suitable for fannish events. It is centrally located, convenient to other facilities and amenities in Melbourne, such as public transport, restaurants, other hotels, entertainment venues, tourist attractions and the central business and retail district.

A complete facility for up to 300 people, the Cato comprises flexible meeting rooms, display areas and a function hall. It is supported by excellent in-house catering, experienced event coordinators and comprehensive services.

The Hotel Y

The Hotel Y offers high standards for a budget price and the convenience of staying on site at ConVergence 2002. Bright, spacious and informal, the Hotel Y offers a range of accommodation from budget rooms through to three star family apartments.

Convention Program

Convergence 2002 will be a fan run, multi-streamed general Science Fiction convention. As it will be the 50th anniversary of the very first Australian national science fiction convention, known as 'the Natcon', the program will have a strong fan historical theme, while at the same time cater to the many aspects of fannish activities such as:

❖ **Costume Parade:** Ever wanted to be someone else for the evening? Come as your favourite SF&F character or create your own individual design to be in the running for a major prize.

❖ **Welcome Meet and Greet cocktail party:** A fun, informal event that gives everyone the opportunity to meet other fans and the guests.

❖ **Guests' speeches, readings and autograph sessions:** The formal part of the program. Includes presentations from both major and minor guests.

❖ **Panels and Presentations** from the academic to the laid-back and not-so serious: The bulk of the program where you may have the opportunity to discuss some of your favourite aspects of SF&F and fan activity with others. Some will be serious, some will be fun and some will be beyond description!

❖ **Kaffeeklatches:** Workshop sessions that enable you to hone your skills with various SF&F professionals, including writers, academics and artists.

❖ **Auctions:** Bid for that rare SF&F toy or first edition book. An excellent place to find a bargain or sell your unwanted SF&F items.

❖ **Art Show and exhibition:** A section of the venue will be put aside to display and sell the art creations of both professional and fan artists.

❖ **Video program:** Running throughout the entire weekend, the video program will contain the weird, are and unusual visual productions of the past.

❖ **Gaming section:** Space will be provided for those who wish to partake of the occasional role-playing, board or card game. A great place to meet new friends, conquer worlds and blow up space stations.

❖ **Book launches:** Hear authors read passages from their new released works or their works in progress and be the first on your block to own a signed copy.

❖ **Room parties:** A time honoured tradition. Spend the evening relaxing with friends and having a great time. Party packs will be available to help kick off your gathering.

Program Director - Sue Ann Barber



Melbourne Writers' Festival

Convergence Guests of Honour and The Age Melbourne Writers' Festival.

Three of the Convergence 2002 Guests of Honour Lucy Sussex, Sean Williams and Jack Dann participated in the Festival this year which took place at the CUB Malthouse Theatre from 25 August to 3 September 2000.

Brief History of the Festival: The first Melbourne Writer's Festival was held in 1986 over a weekend of "sporadic activities" which featured some local writers and two international guests. Since then, its evolution has shared some similarities (on a smaller scale) with the growth of the NatCons. Today, the Festival is a ten-day event brought to life through numerous discussions, panels and readings that involve a host of local, interstate and overseas guests which this year totalled 212.

The themes and topics explored have also broadened to include other areas of writing, such as song, comedy, politics, film and television. In 1992, a regular session on science-fiction was also included and this year, for the first time, a number of the sessions went live on the internet. Foremost for science fiction fans was a special video presentation produced exclusively for the Festival by Sir Arthur C. Clarke. This was followed by a live Q&A session with him via the internet from his home in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

The Guests' Participation: The Festival also incorporates the Youth Literature Days which is aimed at secondary students aged 7 to 12. Convergence guest, Lucy Sussex, took part in this youth festival, chairing a session titled "Blade Runner, the Director's Cut." This was a segment from a series

of events that give students the opportunity to hear panel discussions by writers on VCE set texts and films. Lucy was also a guest panellist on another segment called "Futurama: Imagining the Future" and she was involved in two "meet the authors" sessions.

Sean Williams was a guest panellist on a session titled "The X-Factor". This session dealt with various aspects of Science Fiction and its related genres. Also on the panel were Damien Broderick and Matthew Reilly, with Ken Gelder as chair.

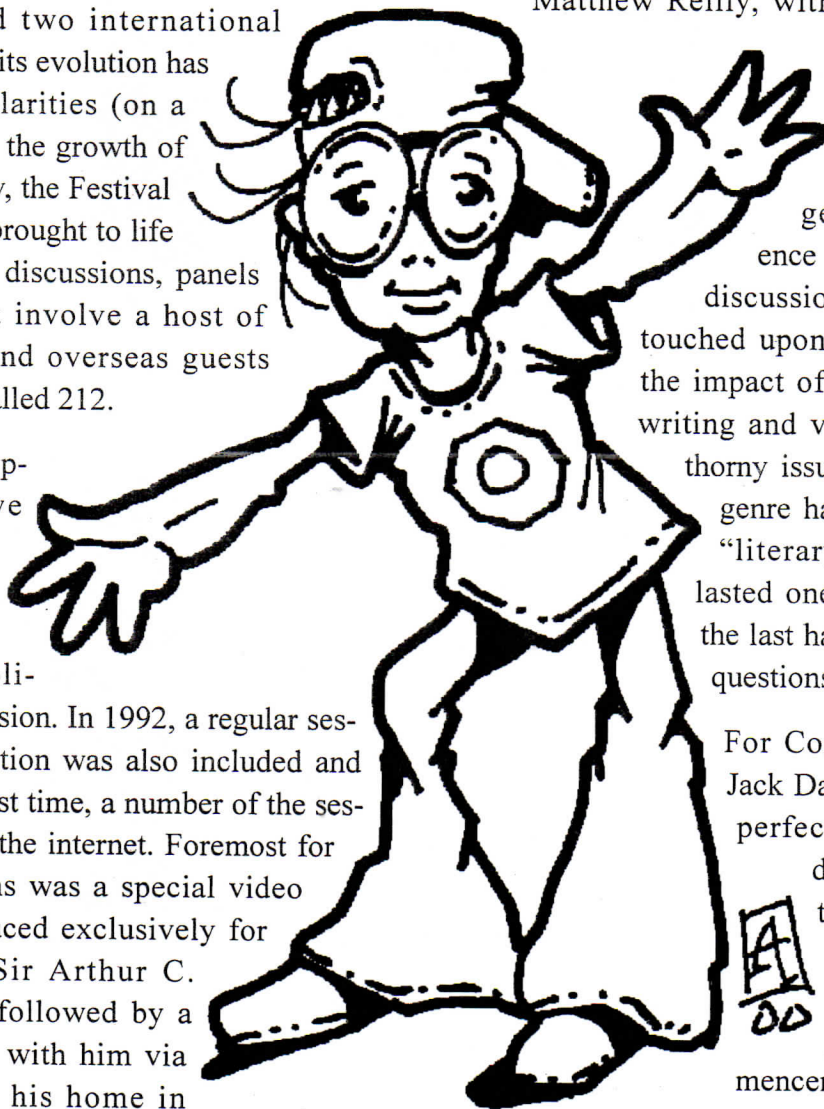
After the guests had been introduced, each gave their view on the current state of the genre, some with reference to their works. A lively discussion then followed which touched upon many areas, including the impact of sci-fi movies on sci-fi writing and vice versa, and also the thorny issue of whether or not the genre had been accepted by the "literary circle". The session lasted one and a half hours with the last half hour or so devoted to questions from the audience.

For Convergence toastmaster, Jack Dann, the Festival was the perfect opportunity to introduce Melbourne readers to his new book, "Bad Medicine" which was launched in Sydney, just prior to the commencement of the Festival. He was a guest panellist on a session titled

"On the Road Again".

Over the ten days of the Festival, all three guests took the opportunity to read from their works through special reading sessions called "The Writer's Voice".

Danik Bancilhon



*Internal Graphics
by Alan White*

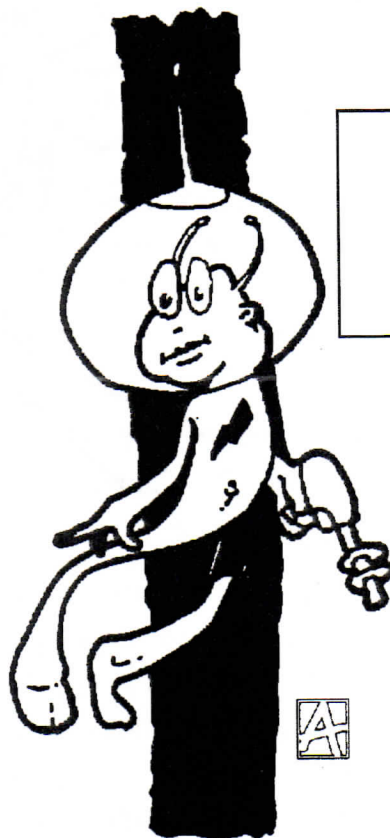


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CONVERGENCE 2002

FROM:

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