

Novacon 40



Progress Report 3

Novacon 40

12-14 November 2010

The Park Inn, Nottingham

Guest of Honour: **Iain M Banks**

Special Guest: **Brian W Aldiss**

Membership rates:

Adults £40, 13-16 yrs £10; 12 and under free (age at 12/11/10). Day rates will be available.

Hotel Rooms:

Double or twin rooms will cost £41 pppn, while singles will be £57 pppn. Children: under 5 years free. 5-14 years £5. Over 14 years adult rate.

Availability of singles, we have now booked most of our allocation of single rooms, but still have twins and doubles available. Deposits are not required when booking. A booking form is enclosed if you have not yet booked a room.

Birthday Bash:

As well as Novacon turning 40 this year, a number of our members also turn 40. We thought it would be nice to celebrate all this. So on Saturday evening we will be having a birthday party. There will be fun and drinks to be had. It would be nice to use this as an excuse to dress up. Before you panic, I mean dress smart not dress up in a costume ... There will also be a cake competition details of which are elsewhere in this publication. We look forward to seeing you there.

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Chairman's Bit the Third

Vernon Brown

As this is the last Progress Report before the convention I had thought of all sorts of witty/informative/interesting things to say in order to whet your collective appetites and raise you all to a peak of anticipation for The Event. Then I discovered that the rest of the committee had done the same and, as there are more of them than of me, I thought it best to retire gracefully from that front and just do my usual overview.

The programme items have been finalized although I have no doubt that our old friend Sod's (aka Finagle's, Murphy's) Law will be ready to go into operation. One advantage of a single stream programme from both an organiser's and an audience's position is that there is no possibility of programme items clashing. I remember one multi programme con where all the items on my favourite type of SF were run simultaneously, which was a bit frustrating, to say the least.

The hotel was still standing the last time that I looked – you will find details of how to get there elsewhere in this PR – and the staff is ready to do the same excellent job that they did last year. We have expanded a little more into the lower floor but otherwise the layout is much the same as before.

Now a few general reminders! If you haven't booked your hotel room yet do it PDQ, details elsewhere in this PR. If you have any ideas for programme items let us know ASAP, we could probably still find space for them. And, of course, don't forget to think of some "Forty Defining Events or Items in SF and Fandom" and to get in touch soon if you have any old photographs or mementos of Novacons past we could share with the convention.

Finally, if you intent to contribute bottles to the Sunday evening Beer Tasting it would be a good idea to bring them with you to the con rather than buy them on the weekend when you would probably have to go back into Nottingham to get a good selection.

Eulogy for Aldiss

Harry Harrison:

With tear in eye I read the rag-tag recollections of Brian; a peek into a world long gone. 1957. London. The first-ever truly international convention. The charter flight from New York City disgorged weary fen who were greeted with cries of joy by the waiting British fen.

Among them the tall, thin figure of Brian; soon to become the closest of close friends. But that was things to come. In the present was the con hotel which was a dump. But all con hotels were dumps in those penurious days. Most of the Americans whined nasally and wanted to leave. I had been living for a year in Mexico and the J. Caesar was like unto a palace. I supported Dave Kyle and we beat them into line. The con swept on. The food was impossibly bad; the Brits didn't seem to notice. We had a banquet; slightly better. Arthur Clarke had us rise to drink the loyal toast. Six republicans stayed seated; would there be red revolution?

No. Just more Fanac. The dawn of close friendships with Brian, Ted Carnell, Brian Lewis, Ken Bulmer. Still warmer climes called and Joan, Todd and I moved to Italy. But the siren call of meat pies and warm beer drew me back. Often. We traditionally drank all the hotel's beer on the Friday night; the dray topped up the cellar on Saturday morning.

Then there were the Continental Cons. Rashniki in Jugland. Smoked boar's leg in Trieste. Pickled eggs in Britain. Joy unrelieved. Then heady days in Denmark. Brian taught us how to enter the arctic waters of the Baltic; jump in off the dock—there is no going back in midair. Herring and torskeronj in Tivoli. On to Jugland for the black olives. Back to Britain for more Novacons. Midnight swims in Great Yarmouth with Mike Moorcock; Brian Burgess flogging meat pies at midnight.

Then the thousands of anthologies we edited together; or was it hundreds? Our taste was catholic; our scope immense. We introduced Borges to SF readers. And Anthony Burgess—we knew no fear. And poetry; the Year's Best loved poetry. And the exotic; like the year we published the best story written by a computer.

Here's to you Old Chum—long may you write!

TAFF 2011

Steve Green:

The Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund was created in 1953 for the purpose of providing funds to bring well-known and popular fans across the Atlantic. Since then, TAFF has regularly brought North American fans to European conventions and European fans to North American conventions. Further information is available at *taff.org.uk*.

The 2011 race is intended to send a European fan westward to attend the sixty-ninth Worldcon, Renovation, in Reno, Nevada. The nominations stage will be officially launched at Novacon 40 and runs until 18 December.

Prospective candidates need to provide the following: five nominations from known fans, three of whom must be resident in Europe and two resident in North America; a written platform, not exceeding 101 words; a £10 bond; a pledge to make the trip should he or she win. At least two valid candidates are needed for any race to proceed.

Fitting 1,136.5 millilitres into a 568.3 millilitre pot

Dave Hicks:

I lost count after the first dozen. Every few days an e-mail arrives telling me yet *another* past Guest of Honour will be at Novacon 40. I cannot recall a convention outside of Easter that has had this much talent attending. I think I'm currently in correspondence with more SF writers than the head of Gollancz. At last count *fourteen* past GoHs are attending, *plus* our star for the weekend, Iain Banks and special guest Brian Aldiss.

Are these shy, retiring people, who'd just as soon sit in a corner of the bar all weekend? No. One of them wrote to say he didn't like doing more than "three panels a day and none back-to-back, please". We don't do that; at another convention I've seen the thousand yard stare of the author who's just done three panels in four hours (and only got a drink on one of them!) as a once-fine mind dribbles slowly out of his ears. Indeed volume of talent presses hard on the available time for the programme.

So our problem is how am we going to *fit them all in*. My plan to just put the lot on stage for the whole weekend with a never ending supply of food, beer and a chemical toilet was rejected by hidebound traditionalists on the committee who insist on a proper programme. So be it.

We will, of course, feature Iain M Banks heavily (pace my comment about not killing authors with Death By Panel).

Scheduling is a little 'uncertain' as I write, but we expect to have Geoff Ryman discussing – and showing – some unusual early silent SF and fantasy films' Ian Stewart talking about alien life forms and consider both science fiction for younger readers and the practicalities of coping with the End Of The World.

An opportunity to get involved and share your opinions:

We'd also like to discuss what are the 'best' science fiction books written since Novacon began in 1971. A very unscientific survey will be conducted and on Sunday afternoon a panel will examine the memberships' conclusions. Once, of course, we have beaten into silence all those pedants demanding we define 'best' 'science fiction' and, probably, 'book'.

After forty Novacons we'll also we'll also be asking those fans who have survived, I'm sorry, *enjoyed* four decades of the convention to reflect on what it has meant for them.

Of course, you're coming to Novacon to have fun, too. In the evenings we will drift towards something a little more fannish. We hope to have James Bacon reprising one of Bob Shaw's serious scientific talks, not just because he's good at it and it's fun but also because we can have one more past Guest of Honour – and one who helped shape the character of Novacon - with us in spirit.

Speaking of which, Harry Harrison sadly won't be joining us. We hope, however, to involve him in proceedings too.

Given their popularity in recent years we'll have some kaffeeklatsches for you, too.

Friday night:

As you arrive on Friday evening after your rapid, stress-free journey on the motorway or our modern public transport network, here's what you can expect:

This is all, as if I need to remind you, subject to change.

Opening ceremony at 7 pm: As usual your committee will welcome the Guest of Honour, your good selves plus late announcements and changes to the programme.

7.30 Panel: Genre Pile Up: When Novacon started there was ‘science fiction’ and that was that. Now we have Dark this, Cyber that and Steam the other. Is there anything that’s simply ‘science fiction’ any more? Do the ever expanding number of labels reflect real differences in artistic approach by the writers and the values of the readers or is it more a matter of marketing? Are we differentiating ourselves out of existence?

9.00 Book Launch Party: Catch up with your friends while we celebrate our Guest of Honour’s new book, *Surface Detail*.

10.30 Friday Night with Steve Green: Our Guest of Honour and selected (*not* press-ganged) personalities from science fiction and fandom join Steve for a relaxed hour of impertinent questions. It’s amazing what dignified and respectable people will say (and do) at that time of night.

THE BEST SCIENCE FICTION BOOKS OF THE LAST FORTY YEARS

From Hugo winners such as *Ringworld* in 1971 to *The City and The City* in 2010 via *Consider Phlebas* and *The Hand Reared Boy*, some formidable SF has been published. Sit down with a nice glass of something fortifying and consider what *you* think are the ‘best’ books published in the time Novacon has been going.

We’re not going to pin down ‘best’; it’s whatever the word means to you. That could be the books that inspired you to become a science fiction fan; the most literary or original; the most ‘authentic’ in the tradition or the most groundbreaking.

Brian Aldiss: a Potpourri of Enigmas

Chris Morgan

1. The childhood of the imagination:

In the late 1950s there was this twelve-year-old boy who began reading SF because his father began buying new SF paperbacks from John's Bookshop in St Michael Street, Oxford. At the same time there was a young man, early thirties, wearing ugly narrow-framed glasses, appointed as Literary Editor of the *Oxford Mail*, the same young man who was contributing SF stories to British magazines like *Nebula* and *New Worlds*.

2. A literary diversion:

Just like goalposts, SF tropes must first be used in their accustomed positions before one dares to move them around and employ them as metaphors.

3. The erection of the learning curve:

In 1961 that boy, now fifteen, read *The Primal Urge* as a Ballantine import and realised that adults were at least as interested in sex as fifteen-year-old boys.

4. Oxford Books:

It doesn't take a polymath who's been to college, just a bookaholic, to realise that Brightfount was a pun on Blackwell, and that, in any case, Brian worked for a while not at Blackwell's but at Sander's Bookshop in The High, a dingy old-fashioned place, where I once bought a Victorian illustrated book on butterflies for 10/6.

5. A meeting of minds:

Isn't it odd that when you've known somebody most of your life, you can't remember the first face-to-face? It may have been at an Oxford University Speculative Fiction Group meeting which he addressed in about 1970. It may have been at Novacon.

6. In order to ask the right question you have to know, well, something or other:

At Novacon 2 Brian was holding forth in his usual articulate manner, probably on a panel. From the comparative safety of the second row, I asked a question. It was a long and involved question that might have had some relevance. Brian (to whom it clearly made no sense) asked me to repeat it and I found that (despite all I'd picked up from reading *Report on Probability A* and *Barefoot in the Head*) it made no sense to me, either.

7. The road home:

By about 1973, Brian and I knew each other reasonably well. I was living and working in Oxford, driving to Brum each month to attend the Brum Group. Brian was the speaker one time; he'd travelled to Brum by train and I offered him a lift back. I remember him carefully untangling the passenger seatbelt (not compulsory then) in my old Mini. Did I resemble a boy-racer? It was a slow journey because I was trying to think and talk at the same time as driving. Speaking fluently is something I've always tried to cultivate, using Brian as a model.

8. An Age:

So we go back a long time, Brian and I, almost to the Cryptozoic. Now he's in his eighties and I'm in my sixties. I could mention invitations to his swish parties, exchanges of cards at Christmas, even a cover blurb line he wrote to help publicise one of my books. I want to thank him for putting up with me—just a fan—over the years.

The Magnificent Six

Concluding the series of reminiscences from the six people who have been to all Novacons, we have contributions this time from Pauline and Tim.

Novacon Memories

Pauline E. Dungate:

Once upon a time, a fan called Bob Rickard came to one of the Aston SF Group meetings enthusing about this “Convention” that he had been to over the Easter weekend. On the strength of that, a group of us headed for Oxford the following year. I was warned that very few women went and most of those were wives and girlfriends, not SF fans. I went anyway: a student tasting the high life of a stay in a hotel. It was a trifle daunting but I went to London the next year and Worcester the year after in 1971. There was quite a contingent from the Aston group that year, especially as our esteemed leader Vernon Brown, was on the committee. He had got a taste for con-running and suggested that as a group we should run our own, in November, six months away from (at the time) the only con in town. We were on a high after Worcester so we went along with the idea. Novacon was born. We were all neos in the con-running game so there were plenty of ups and downs, but we did it.

Afterwards, we all sat around in our committee room in the Imperial Hotel amidst the debris of the convention congratulating ourselves on how well we thought it had gone. Someone said we ought to do it again. We looked at each other. Who was going to chair it? All of us were well aware of the old adage, “never volunteer”. Then I remembered what Peter Weston had said when he was organising the Easter convention in Worcester. He didn’t want women on his committee because women were no good at organising things. Now when anyone tells me that I can’t do something, my response is likely to be “don’t bet on it”. So I said I’d better run it. And Novacon 2 was born.

Tim Stannard:

Memories of Novacons Past:

It all began in the Imperial Centre, though I remember it as the Imperial Hotel. The hotel was drab, decrepit and full of corridors but ideal for fandom with all its nooks and crannies. Particularly good were the lift parties and room parties all approached with an overwhelming enthusiasm.

SF cons were then in their infancy and Novacon was only my second con, Eastercon in 1971 at the Gifford Hotel in Worcester being my first. The most interesting part for me was to meet the authors who I had only read up to that point, and who appeared to be mostly human and prepared to discuss any speculative concept with authority and open-mindedness.

I had already met some at Aston University SF Group though my only abiding memory was of a bow tie and a maroon velvet jacket inhabited by John Brunner. It was an interesting and unforgettable introduction to SF authors and a memory which has stood the test of time.

However looking back makes me realise just how much I have forgotten and that only a few snapshot memories remain. In those early days I do recall attending more programme items, in particular Jack Cohen's talks on reproduction, full of amusing cartoons and always worth attending. These were later followed by his talks on how to create a realistic and potentially viable alien based on his professorial knowledge of biology.

After four years at the Imperial we moved to the Royal Angus, the venue for more than a dozen subsequent cons. This was more modern and upmarket and well enough laid out including a reasonable sized balcony overlooking a certain underpass. Already keen on fireworks etc, I first encountered "mad bomber fandom" at the Angus, November being appropriate for such activities.

A small group set up an interesting display in a certain subway/underpass with an adequate time delay, returning to the hotel and the said balcony to enjoy the fruits of their labours. The result was spectacular and thoroughly appreciated by the assembled company of fans. Those involved and some like minded fans went on to create Armageddon Enterprises and greater things.

A variety of venues were tried from 1977 when Anne McCaffrey was GoH at the Holiday Inn (not a great place and shared with many mundanes).

After another five years at the Angus we had one at the Grand, two at the De-Vere, two at the Excelsior, and one at Forte Post House Solihull before returning to the Angus. Memory gets dim and I don't remember the Post House (or was it the Excelsior re-named?).

Novacon 25, a significant milestone, was at the Chamberlain Hotel and we had great pleasure welcoming Brian, Harry, Bob Shaw and Iain Banks as guests. I seem to recall small square rooms – or was that the Ibis that followed it?

In 1997 we went to the Abbey Hotel in Great Malvern, more memorable for me as I created an SF based music quiz which I think went down well, the results of which amazed me. The knowledge of those attending was immense. I thought it would be quite difficult – but I was wrong!

Further, on the Saturday night I let loose my full mobile Disco, the participants soon cuing me in to a different type of music to which they also wanted to dance, under the Dragonfly label. I recall it was noisy but nobody sleeps when I'm on!

The next three years were at the Britannia on the top floor and whilst I didn't run them, the Discos there were memorable. 2000 saw our 30th with Chris Priest as GoH, known to us for over 20 years then – doesn't time fly?

The noughties were all (except last year) at the Quality Hotel at Walsall and a suitable venue it proved to be. I have fond memories of Ray Bradbury particularly at that venue always supplying brand new conjuring tricks cleverly created in his studio. I have always enjoyed a pint of Black Sheep bitter the con brew for the noughties and have consumed many of them with long standing friends over the years.

Fandom is very special and Novacon to me particularly. The old days with great fancy dress creations, Brian Burgess in a thong selling milk and pork pies, and Gerry Webb with a herd of little Pekinese on each arm, are just a few snapshots of days past. At the end of the day it is the reunion with the many friends made over the years, that keeps me coming back each year and the book room and the art show, still going after thirty-nine years, continue to be attractions. May it all carry on into the future without end.

Finally from Steve Green:

Perhaps the toll upon my memory of attending all those Novacons has finally reached breaking point, but Arthur Cruttenden's assertion in PR2 that I pronounced the 1982 installment "the worst con ever" not only rings no bells here, but seems highly unlikely (I'd already attended far less successful events by then, and - unfortunately - even worse since). I have a vague recollection of feeling Novacon 12 was wilfully under-programmed, but I transmuted those complaints into action by joining the committee of Novacon 13 and chairing Novacon 14. We should never lose sight of the fact that our enjoyment of these conventions is largely down to the efforts behind the scenes; if you aren't happy with the end result, you should either put up or shut up.

Steve Green

The Nova Awards

Steve Green:

In 1973, Novacon instituted the annual Nova Awards to celebrate achievement in British science fiction fanzines. Originally handed down by a panel of judges, these accolades are now decided by Novacon members who can demonstrate a basic knowledge of current fanzines. Following Novacon 32, the three categories - best fanzine, best fanzine writer, best fanzine artist - were extended to cover both fanzines produced in Eire and electronic fanzines.

The following fanzines have been received by or brought to the notice of the Nova Awards administrator since 30 September 2009 and are considered eligible for the 2010 awards, presented at Novacon 40: *An Fleghes Hager-Na Yu Canjeo* #1-2, Doug Bell; *Ansible* #267-278, Dave Langford; *Banana Wings* #40-42, Claire Brialey & Mark Plummer; *The Banksoniain* #15-16, David Haddock; *Brum Group News* #458-459, Rog Peyton for the Birmingham Science Fiction Group; *Concaternation* v.20 #5, Jonathan Cowie; *Data Dump* #144-145, Steve Sneyd; *The Doppelganger Broadsheet* #3, Colin Langeveld; *The Fortnightly Fix* #1-15, Steve Green; *Griff* #1-2, Ian Milstead; *Inca* #5, Rob Jackson; *iShoes* #3, Yvonne Rowse; *Journey Planet* #5, James Bacon & Claire Brialey; *Motorway Dreamer* #7, John Nielsen Hall; *Relapse* #16, Peter Weston. (Full details are available at the Novacon website, including links for those issues available online.)

Voting forms will be included in your membership packs. Completed forms should be placed in the ballot box or handed to the Nova administrator no later than midnight on the Saturday.

ART and More....

Serena Culfeather:

If you didn't come to the Art Show last year then you can't have had a good time! Where were you? Did you even leave the bar?

This year's fortieth will be even bigger and better and with use of the whole basement we will be more in the thick of things than just “down in the dungeon” although it's a great space and very bright.

You don't have to bid (can you resist?) on a piece to look round the exhibits, it's free entry and we're very friendly. Last year there were two pieces of art in a section for our young attendees and I would like MORE this year!! This isn't art for sale, just an opportunity to showcase what our younger Novaconlings can come up with. *

There is a surprising amount of space in the art room so don't worry if you are late to join up, there might be still be room for you to exhibit. I shall arrive with copies of the forms and bid sheets as well as some bits and pieces to help you display your wares but if there is anything particular you need, please let me know and I'll try to obtain it beforehand. Team Konrad's hammer proved very useful last year as did Sue's special pincers (she'll show you them if you ask nicely) so these are on my list of must-haves.

I shall aim to have the art room open for hanging and arranging as early as possible but if you are likely to be arriving late Friday or not until Saturday, it would be helpful to know.

And finally ... GOPHERS. It's fun to be an art show gopher!! We always need some help or other and especially before, after and during the auction. A sign-up sheet will be unmissable somewhere also very unmissable :)

Basically, just let me know and keep in touch!

Home: 01606 43957 Mobile: 0779 209 3534
Twitter: @pinkraven Email: serena@ravensquill.org

* Defining young: under sixteen!!

Hotel Update

Tony Berry:

Last year was our first time at this hotel and so they had no sales figures from the previous year to go on. Well, they were more than happy with the volume of drink shifted! Last year the real ale was very reasonably priced and so everybody drank it and we ran out on Sunday morning. This year we will be ordering more, but more importantly, the hotel has dropped the price of other drinks on sale at the bar – some of them by a significant amount. There should also be a couple of “house” wines on sale for a less wallet-imploding price. I trust this will make more people happy!

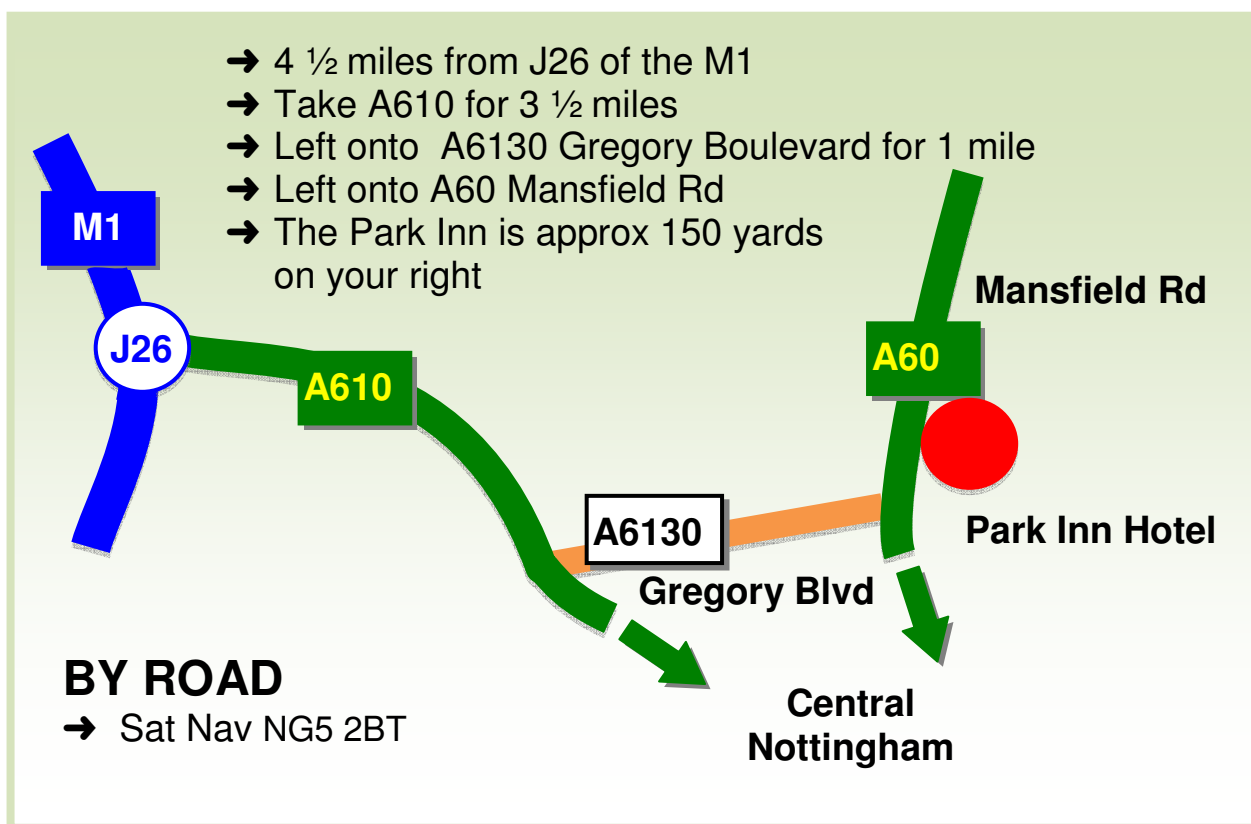
At the time of writing I’m still trying to get the downstairs bar opened as a bar, even if it’s only for a limited selection of drink, but if not, we can still use it as a lounge. We’ve got more members this year so we will need more space, so don’t forget it’s there. Comfy chairs too.

The pool table has been brought upstairs into the lobby area so this should encourage more people to use it. Also the main programme hall has been repainted in a lighter colour and looks good.

The hotel may decide to repeat what it did last year with the con food, which was to take orders over the bar rather than set up a buffet. This did work surprisingly well; you had to wait a while longer, but believe me, it was worth it. The Sunday evening food with the beer-tasting will be Indian, as chosen by Mr. Banks. Entry by ticket only.

REMEMBER if you are going to arrive later than 4pm on the day you arrive, then you need to ring the hotel and tell them, otherwise the friendly computer may flog your room to someone else. Hotel phone number 0115 935 9933

How to Get There



(Even if coming from the South, it's easier to use J26)

Hotel address

296 Mansfield Road, Nottingham, NG5 2BT

By Public Transport

NOTE: This is all offered in good faith but none of us has used public transport in Nottingham recently so do check latest info at <http://www.nctx.co.uk/>.

You'll arrive at Nottingham Railway Station or the next door Broadmarsh Bus Station.

If there's two or more of you arriving at the same time, a taxi costs about £6 or so.

The cheapest option from the Railway station or Broadmarsh Bus depot is to walk up through the town (see below) until you get to the bus stops on Lower Parliament Street. The walk is 15-20 minutes and up hill most of way, so if this is a problem, consider a taxi.

For walking through the town, turn left out of the main railway station into Carrington Street. Go over the canal – walk past the entrance to Broadmarsh Bus Station (travellers from Broadmarsh should pick up directions at this point) walk up to Collin street and cross at pelican and go into the entrance of the Broadmarsh Shopping Centre to the left. Walk straight through the Shopping Centre and emerge into a shopping precinct, Lister Gate. Keep walking up the hill and you should emerge into the huge Old Market Square characterised by fountains, Town hall etc. Keep walking up, go up either Market Street or Queen Street and you will find yourself on Upper Parliament Street. Turn left for Lower Parliament Street.

Watch out for trams!

Once at Lower Parliament Street you can catch a bus from a number of stops. There's six buses going up the Mansfield Road and the journey takes about 7 minutes. The bus stands are the purple routes: numbers **87**, **88** and **89** and the lime green routes: **56**, **58** and **59**, found outside Burger King, Britannia Building Society and William Brown Estate agents. Buses are frequent.

After about 2 miles, look out on the left and you'll see a cemetery while going down a hill: the bus will cross a large roundabout with flowerbeds. This is the junction with Gregory Boulevard. The stop immediately after is Clarendon College and you should get off here.

There's a Pelican crossing 20 yards up, cross here and the Park Inn is 80 yards up the road on the left. If you go past a pub called the Grosvenor, you've gone too far and need to get off bus sharpish and walk back.

Adventurous fans may wish to take the tram to the bus stops. These can be easily accessed via the railway station – simply follow the signs. From Broadmarsh, exit left to Carrington Street, cross the canal bridge and turn left into Station Street. The lifts to the Tram terminus are about 50 yards down on the left. Get on a tram and a conductor will take your fare – you can get a combined tram and bus day ticket and your conductor will give change, but will not accept £20 or £50 notes. Get off at the Royal Centre and cross the road to walk past the Theatre Royal towards Lower Parliament Street.

Announcement

Have you enjoyed Novacons past? Do you feel things could be done better or differently? Do you have thoughts on how to improve things such as programme ideas or how the dealers' room should be run? What guests should be asked in future? Do you want to see Novacon last another 40 years? If the answer to any of these is YES, then Novacon needs you.

We are looking for people to join the committee who are interested in taking Novacon forward. We would like to see it last another 40 years and to do this we need an infusion of new blood. Some of the committee would like to stand down and we need new people to replace them and give Novacon a breath of fresh air. If you are interested there will be forms at the convention to express your interest. Feel free to talk to any of the committee about their roles and experiences. Please consider joining us, you will enjoy it!

Miscellany

Birthday party and cake competition *!!!!*****

Greetings you budding master chefs or whatever the latest cooking thing is, we are running a competition to find the best Novacon or science fiction themed birthday cake to celebrate 40 years of Novacon at the Saturday night party, bake a cake and bring it with you, we will try to think of a suitable prize for the best one. **The party is also a chance to dress up in your best party clothes and strut your stuff.**

Art Show:

Serena Culfeather has agreed to run this again after her excellent work last year. Artists looking to exhibit work (for auction or otherwise) should get in touch soon. See her piece elsewhere in this PR for contact details.

Dealers' Room:

As last year this will be large and right next to the bar! Price £20 per table. Interested dealers should contact Tony Berry at morbius@altair-4.co.uk.

Advertising Rates:

Anyone interested in advertising in the Programme Book should contact Steve Lawson by the 15th October (see Contacts Page). Rates for publishers are £40 per page, £24 per half page and £15 per quarter page (half rates for fans).

Nova awards:

A tradition of Novacon for more than 30 years, the Nova Awards will be presented for outstanding achievement by fan editor, writer and artist, as voted for by the membership of the convention. See Steve Green's piece in this PR for details of eligible fanzines

Parents' co-op:

Novacon will not be operating a crèche but we will look into setting up a parents' co-op, where a room is set aside for smaller children to play under parental supervision if there is sufficient demand. If you're interested let us know as soon as possible.

Food and drink:

As last year we expect to provide real ale and a good cider plus a range of affordable snacks and meals throughout the weekend.

Memorabilia:

Do you have any photos or other memories from the last 40 years of Novacon that we could put on display? Please contact Vernon Brown at vcbrown@btinternet.com if you can help.

Book auction:

George Osbourne has just announced an end to child benefit for some people. Let us help you bear the burden of this reduction in your income. No - we can't auction your children for you. But if you have some desirable books that you're not going to read again the bring them along and we'll try and sell them for you. (Then we'll take it off you again the following day in the art auction.)

Gophers:

We need volunteers to help us keep the convention running during the weekend. If you want to help out please contact us.

Website:

Don't forget to keep an eye on our website for the latest news:

www.novacon.org.uk

Memberships

As at October 2010:

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 Iain M Banks | 33 Harpal Singh |
| 2 Brian Aldiss | 34 Dave Tompkins |
| 3 Harry Harrison | 35 Marcus Rowland |
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