

# The Queen's Lane Advertiser

*(Incorporating Convention News)*

Issue Number 42

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Edited by Jeremy Tullett

*A magazine containing news about various games conventions taking place in the UK*

Inside this issue:

- **MidCon** 2012 Committee Report
- Manorcon XXXI booking form
- Details for OxCon (Oxford) and BBBCon (Southend)

## Forthcoming Conventions

<b>OxCon 2013</b> The Mitre 17 High Street Oxford OX1 4AG 19-20 January 2013 simon.penney(at)wadh.ox.ac.uk	<b>Liverpool Lions 1-day Event</b> Scythe & Teacup Games Café 61a Kempston Street Liverpool L3 8HE 24 February 2013 www.boardgamegeek.com/thread/888848	<b>SoRCon</b> Ramada Hotel Colchester 1-3 March 2013 info(at)sorcon.co.uk www.sorcon.co.uk
<b>Raiders of the Game Cupboard</b> The Salvation Army Citadel Mosley Street Burton upon Trent DE14 1DR 23 March 2013 www.raidersofthegamecupboard.co.uk	<b>TringCon XXVI</b> Marsworth Village Hall Marsworth, Nr. Tring Buckinghamshire 6 April 2013 Keith Thomasson: tringcon(at)fwtwr.com www.fwtwr.com/tringcon	<b>BayCon</b> Exeter Court Hotel Kennford Devon 4-7 April 2013 www.baycon.co.uk
<b>Beer and Pretzels</b> The Town Hall Burton upon Trent 18-19 May 2013 www.spiritgames.co.uk/bnpdetails.php	<b>UK Games Expo</b> NEC Hilton Metropole Birmingham 24-26 May 2013 richard(at)ukgamesexpo.co.uk www.UKGamesExpo.co.uk	<b>BBBCon</b> Skylark Hotel, Aviation Way Southend-On-Sea Essex SS2 6UN 21-23 June 2013 gamingfun(at)bbbcon.org.uk http://www.bbbcon.org.uk/
<b>Raiders of the Game Cupboard</b> The Salvation Army Citadel Mosley Street Burton upon Trent DE14 1DR 22 June 2013 www.raidersofthegamecupboard.co.uk	<b>Manorcon XXXI</b> John Foster Hall, University of Leicester 2pm 19th July–2pm 22nd July 2013 info@manorcon.org.uk www.manorcon.org.uk	<b>Raiders of the Game Cupboard</b> The Salvation Army Citadel Mosley Street Burton upon Trent DE14 1DR 28 September 2013 www.raidersofthegamecupboard.co.uk
<b>TringCon XXVI</b> Marsworth Village Hall Marsworth, Nr. Tring Buckinghamshire 28 September 2013 Keith Thomasson: tringcon(at)fwtwr.com www.fwtwr.com/tringcon	<b>MidCon 2013</b> The Hallmark Hotel Derby DE1 2SQ 8-10 November 2013 midcon.org.uk	<b>Derby on Board Games</b> Bean Caffè, Friar Gate Studios, Derby Last Wednesday of the month 17:30-22:30

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## Editorial (Jeremy Tullett)

Come Christmas, come the board game.

I have been playing board games since I was about 12, much to the amusement of my family, who never really could see the point. Indeed, even now, now mother has a hard time taking any of my games seriously when I try to introduce them to her, and being goaded simultaneously by both her and my not-mother-in-law is a bit more than I can take, even at Christmas.

Hence this Christmas's purchase – **Miskatonic School for Girls** – had to wait for its first outing until a New Year visit to Edinburgh, and the warm hospitality of John and Denny Colledge.

MSfG gets some decidedly mixed reviews on *boardgamegeek* but still scores a rating of 5.59/10, which hardly puts it in the rubbish category. It is in the Dominion class of games where the cards in your hand have, according to the phase, purchasing power, or combat power. The idea is to buy 'good' cards (schoolgirls) to protect the sanity of your school house, while purchasing horrors loosely from the Cthulu mythos to place in the staff room of the player to your left, and drive their school house mad.

Now, it seems to me that *boardgamegeek* reviewers play games to death very quickly (well ... they are geeks), and I can see where their criticisms come from. There is not a great deal of strategic choice to play, and there are certain design features which either don't feature at all in play, or are of limited value. The apparently superfluous features have been explained by the designers as being possibly of use for future expansions, although there don't appear to be any expansions planned.

However, it is a bit harsh criticising a game for what it surely is not intended to be. Would you buy a game with this title, illustrated with comic-strip schoolgirls, and expect a serious game of strategy and tactics? No! It lasts about 45 minutes, and is ideal for bringing out as a time-filler at a convention or at your local games club. Anyone who tells me that it is too silly for serious gamers probably doesn't remember the mania for Pass the Pigs that swept through the gaming community a while back.

My birthday is approaching rapidly, and I am looking with interest at **1812: The Invasion of Canada**, which, we can safely assume, will be a little more serious.

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## MidCon 2012 Review and Future Plans (Paul Oakes)

Our second *MidCon* at The Hallmark Hotel in Derby was an even bigger success than the first, with 169 registering (142 for the whole 3 days) comparing to the 2011 figure of 129 - a 10% increase, meaning once again we're the fastest-growing board games convention in Britain. The 2011 figure was also boosted by EuroDipCon giving us a one-off gain of over 20 Diplomacy players who came specifically for the event. It's fair to say we are happy with this level of support, with numbers not seen at the event since the mid-90s.

This rate of growth surprised us and has led to a problem of our size causing a shortage of gaming space. On Saturday the hotel kindly added extra games tables in the lounge (a room we don't pay for) while several card games were being played in the bar. This is preferable to the half-empty feeling at The Angus as recently as 6 years ago, but we aim to provide suitable playing space for everyone, so we will have more rooms next MidCon, and will hire additional space on Saturday if it is similarly overcrowded.

Other than that we are unaware of any problems with the event, but if there is something you want to raise please reply to the editor and let us know. We no longer hand out feedback forms as the

information they provide is difficult to act on (an overall rating of 7.2/10 hardly gives us a plan of action after all), but we are very keen to know about specific problems and what we can do to address them. We do spend hours agonising over the booklet, T-shirts, food, drink and the weather forecast for the weekend, so be assured anything you want that is within our capabilities will be looked at.

Side effects of the size of the event were a quiz so popular it barely fitted into the room (5 years ago there were 4 teams) and 10 polypins (360 pints) of proper beer being put to good use in addition to the consumption of other, inferior bar products. We had no negative reports of the food quality/quantity at the buffet.

Almost as important, the hotel seem to love us. As long-term inmates of *MidCon* will remember The Angus (arch.) sometimes had managers who regarded us as a hostile invading army and applied different standards to us than other guests present at the time (pre-paying for rooms, no drinks on room tabs etc.). With a competent management and staff on our side the entire experience from an attending and organising viewpoint is immeasurably better, and this approach combined with the superior hotel in a mostly more convenient location has led to the gratifying explosion in attendance you don't expect from such an established con.

We have booked the hotel for the 2013 event, you'll be surprised to hear, with the dates of 8th - 10th November.

Also, in a moment of madness, we are considering adding a second *MidCon* each year in the spring. The earliest we can do this is 2014, but we need to know what level of support there is for an extra *MidCon*, as a badly attended event will be a financial disaster. We set the convention fee to break-even in the long run by raising the price when we lose money, then leaving it there as our costs go up until we suffer losses again. As a result we do not have huge cash reserves to fund a large deficit, so need to have some idea of the level of support we would get from you.

Therefore, with *MidCon* in the March – May period and assuming the date didn't clash with something else you do, would you:

- Only attend the “classic” November event.
- Switch to the shiny new Spring *MidCon*
- Find time to go to both.

We emphasise this is still just an idea, but if there isn't support from you then we can save ourselves the trouble of further arrangements. We do not expect New *MidCon* to be as large as the current event (initially, anyway) so will scale things down somewhat, but otherwise it should be a similar experience with warmer weather.

One or more of the committee are at virtually every board games convention in England throughout the year, and we also welcome face-to-face feedback at appropriate times at these events we attend merely to criticise their distance from the train station etc. As stated above, if there's something you can suggest to improve the event we'll try to do it!

## MANORCON XXXI

*John Foster Hall, University of Leicester.*

2pm Friday 19th July – 2pm Monday 22nd July 2013

Following on from last year's successful convention, ManorCon will once again be held at the University of Leicester in 2013 – but at John Foster Hall, just across the road from our previous location at Stamford Hall. John Foster Hall was built only a few years ago; all the main meeting rooms are in one building, and the main dining hall, where the core of the convention will be, is much bigger than it was at Stamford. No more crowding in Stamford House late at night, or dashing through the rain (if the weather is poor) between the bar and the serverly!

As ever, single accommodation is available at the convention. As it is more modern than Stamford Hall, John Foster Hall only has en-suites, but these will not cost much more than the standard singles did last year: £34 per night, and £3 per night extra if you don't book in advance. As always, you are therefore recommended to book early to guarantee a room.

For those people who want twin accommodation, we recommend The Regency Hotel, which is just under a mile from the convention. The contact details are: The Regency Hotel, 360 London Road, Stonygate, LE2 2PL 0116 270 9634. It offers double rooms (currently £70 per night). If you want to take this option, we recommend booking early, as it has been known to fill up on ManorCon weekend. Their website is [www.the-regency-hotel.com](http://www.the-regency-hotel.com).

ManorCon will be pretty much the same as the successful formula we had in 2012. Running from Friday lunchtime to Monday lunchtime, it will have all the regular tournaments, plus one or two possible new ones – depending on the success (or otherwise) of the latest new game releases. It will once again feature the Second Hand Game Sale on Friday and Saturday, the Pop Quiz on Saturday evening, and the Treasure Hunt on Sunday afternoon, as well as more games than you can shake a stick at.

Tournaments will include: Diplomacy, 18XX, Dominion, Puerto Rico, St Petersburg, 7 Wonders, Midnight Party, and Croquet. If there is a tournament that you would like us to run, please contact a member of the committee and we'll try to fit it in. There will also be plenty of non-tournament games on offer – far too numerous to mention!

There is of course a bar, and we are working to make sure that the Real Ale is up to standard.

Included with this issue of QLA, you should find a booking form. You can also download the booking form (and find lots of other ManorCon information) on the ManorCon website, [www.manorcon.org.uk](http://www.manorcon.org.uk). Please note the booking deadline - 15th June 2013. If you need any further information, please feel free to contact us:

Steve Jones, 59 Sudeley Walk, Putnoe, Bedford, MK41 8JH, UK (+44 (0)1234 405878)

email us at [info@manorcon.org.uk](mailto:info@manorcon.org.uk)

or check out our website at [www.manorcon.org.uk](http://www.manorcon.org.uk)

# MANORCON XXXI

**John Foster Hall, University of Leicester. 2pm Friday 19<sup>th</sup> July – 2pm Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2013**

Name				Male/Female
Address				
Telephone no.		email:		
If this will be your first time at ManorCon, please tick here: <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>If you are willing to help out on the registration desk, please tick here:</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	If you are a qualified first-aider, please tick here: <input type="checkbox"/>		
<i>If non-resident, please tick to indicate which days you will be attending:</i>				
		Friday <input type="checkbox"/>	Saturday <input type="checkbox"/>	Sunday <input type="checkbox"/>
Registration fee: £6 for one day, £10 for the weekend. <i>(NB. If paying on the door, prices rise to £8 and £12)</i>				
Accommodation :	£34 per night for an en-suite single (only en-suite singles are available)			
		Friday	Enter £34	
		Saturday	Enter £34	
		Sunday	Enter £34	
<i>(NB. If paying on the door, prices will be £3 extra per person per night)</i>				Total enclosed:

<http://www.manorcon.org.uk/>

**To book, please either visit <http://www.manorcon.org.uk/book.htm> or complete BOTH SIDES OF the form and return by 15<sup>th</sup> June to: Gary Duke, MANORCON, 2 Sturmeay Drive, Fleet, Hants, GU51 1GP, UK. Please make cheques payable to: ManorCon. If you wish to pay using credit card, this can only be done using the online booking system and not via post or on the door.**

**This form should be returned to Gary before 15<sup>th</sup> June 2012. PRE-BOOKINGS CANNOT BE ACCEPTED AFTER THIS DATE. However, there will **probably** be some rooms available if you arrive and pay on the door. Please note that room prices are higher if not booked in advance.**

**PLEASE DO NOT USE RECORDED DELIVERY.** Bookings sent by recorded delivery may be significantly delayed until Gary can get to the sorting office to collect them. If you send your booking by recorded delivery, and this causes your booking to not be received until after the deadline, then your booking will not be accepted.

The prices are subject to variation in the event of VAT changes. Cancellations may be made up to June 15<sup>th</sup> 2012 for a full refund. It is the responsibility of delegates to look after their valuables. ManorCon cannot accept responsibility for loss or damage to items.

Data Protection Act: Details of your booking are stored on computers. We do not sell our mailing lists to any other individuals or organisations, but we may share them with other games conventions.

Please tick here if you would like information about other UK Conventions to be sent to you via email

**Please sign here**.....

# **TRIPLE-B CON**

**SKYLARK HOTEL, Southend On Sea Essex**

**21-23<sup>rd</sup> June 2013**

Southend Board Game club is proud to announce a new gaming convention in the calendar on June 21<sup>st</sup> 2013 at the Skylark Hotel in Southend on Sea.

We will be hosting a three day board gaming convention + standard bring and buy table, game trader plus Saturday night quiz.

The Skylark Hotel has kindly offered to reduce their rates to £80 for a double room and £90 for a single for two nights stay per person.

Along with their restaurant menu we will also have available a breakfast, lunch and dinner buffet.

We have 3 convention rooms including a quiet room and some unique tables for various games.

We are just 2 miles from Southend Airport Station and just a 15 minute drive from Southend's seafront, which has the longest pier in Europe, and Adventure Island amusement park - so bring the family too!

Prices for the convention will be £20 for the entire weekend or £10 per day - children under 10 are free.

When booking at the Skylark please quote Triple B for the reduced rate.

For further details and booking please go to [WWW.BBBCON.ORG.UK](http://WWW.BBBCON.ORG.UK)

Or contact me at [alex.anastasiou4\(at\)googlemail.com](mailto:alex.anastasiou4(at)googlemail.com)

My number is 07557116249.

## OxCon 2013

Once more, OxCon shall return to Oxford this January the 19th-20th, organised as usual by the Oxford University Board Game Society.

The venue will be the Mitre pub on the High Street, for the whole of both days until the pub's closing time.

Throughout the weekend there will be plenty of casual games going on as well as much sought-after prizes available in 2 tournaments:

Puerto Rico on Saturday

Settlers of Catan on Sunday

We do have a few copies of these games, but any additional copies for use in the tournaments would be much appreciated.

Tournaments will begin at 11:00am on their respective days, so please arrive at least 10 minutes before any in which you wish to compete.

On Friday the 18th there will be a pre-OxCon meal out at a restaurant (tba) followed by a few warm-up games at our headquarters.

If interested in coming along please email me at the address below

Entrance will cost £4 for the whole weekend and an additional £3 for each tournament you wish to enter.

Any queries, please contact me at [simon.penney\(at\)wadh.ox.ac.uk](mailto:simon.penney@wadh.ox.ac.uk)

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## The Queen's Lane Advertiser (incorporating Convention News)

Editor: Jeremy Tullett

Coordinator: David Norman

Please contact the coordinator if:

- You run a convention and would like to be a part of the 'zine.
- You run a convention and would like to be included in the upcoming conventions list.
- You would like to offer to help out in some way.
- You are not on the mailing list for this 'zine, but would like to be.
- You would like to advertise in QLA.

The coordinator can be contacted at [david\(at\)ellought.demon.co.uk](mailto:david@ellought.demon.co.uk)

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