

The Queen's Lane Advertiser

(Incorporating Convention News)

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Edited by Jeremy Tullett

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

Inside this issue:

- Report from MidCon 2014
- OxCon 2015, ManorCon 2015, and much, much more!

Forthcoming Conventions

OxCon The Mitre High Street Oxford OX1 4AG 31 Jan – 1 Feb 2015, from 10:00am Thomas.wallace(at)wadh.ox.ac.uk or ouboardgame(at)gmail.com Tinyurl.com/oxcon2015	SoRCon 8 Holiday Inn Basildon Essex 27 Feb – 1 Mar 2015 www.sorcon.co.uk	ConSummation 3 (Bake for Heroes, Boardgames, Bring & Buy and Ceilidh) Showroom Workstation, Sheffield S1 2BX 28 February 2015 Facebook.com/groups/ConSummation3 www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/consummation3-tickets/13693775451
Swan Con 2015. The Swan Hotel, Bucklow Hill, Knutsford, Cheshire WA16 6RD Noon 19 - Noon 22 March 2015 geggus(at)sky.com	Raiders of the Game Cupboard 30 Waterside Community Centre Heath Road, Burton upon Trent DE15 9LF 28 March 2015 10am-8pm www.raidersofthegamecupboard.co.uk	TringCon XXX Marsworth Village Hall Marsworth, Nr. Tring, Bucks March 28th 2015 tringcon(at)fwtwr.com www.fwtwr.com/tringcon
BayCon Exeter Court Hotel, Kennford Devon 9-12 April 2015 sites.google.com/site/baycon2007/	26th Beer and Pretzels The Town Hall, Burton upon Trent 16-17 May 2015 www.spiritgames.co.uk/articles.php?menu=11	UK Games Expo NEC Hilton Metropole, Birmingham 29 - 31 May 2015 richard(at)ukgamesexpo.co.uk www.UKGamesExpo.co.uk
Yorkshire DipCon 2015 The Lawns Centre, The University of Hull, Northgate, Cottingham, HU16 5SQ 19 - 21 June 2015 www.ukf2fdip.org	Raiders of the Game Cupboard 31 Waterside Community Centre Heath Road, Burton upon Trent DE15 9LF 27 June 2015 10am-8pm www.raidersofthegamecupboard.co.uk	ManorCon XXXIII John Foster Hall, University of Leicester 17-20 July 2015 Info(at)manorcon.org.uk www.manorcon.org.uk
Board Game Week Le Pas Opton, France 14 - 21 September 2015 Springharvestholidays.com/board-game-week	Raiders of the Game Cupboard 33 Waterside Community Centre Heath Road, Burton upon Trent DE15 9LF 26 September 2015 10am-8pm www.raidersofthegamecupboard.co.uk	TringCon XXXI Marsworth Village Hall Marsworth, Nr. Tring, Bucks 26 September 2015 tringcon(at)fwtwr.com www.fwtwr.com/tringcon
MidCon 2015 The Hallmark Hotel Derby DE1 2SQ 13-15 November 2015 MidCon.org.uk	Board Games at the Manor Otford Manor TN15 6XF 4-6 December 2015 www.oakhall.co.uk/manor office(at)oakhall.co.uk	Derby on Board Games The Bookcafe, Cornmarket, Derby Last Wednesday of October and November 4pm- 10pm

Editorial (Jeremy Tullett)

I am putting this issue together on Twelfth Night ... *or am I?*

It turns out that it is not at all clear when Twelfth Night actually is. I was brought up in the tradition that Christmas decorations had to be down by the end of 6th January, but it seems that many people regard Twelfth Night as being the 5th January. The problem is, it depends on where you start counting, and some number Christmas Day as the first day of Christmas, and some start counting on 26th.

There is (*pace* Mrs Colledge) a lively debate about all of this on Wikipedia¹, which generates a good deal more heat than light, and concludes with the view that there is no objectively correct answer to the question. According to some sources, Twelfth Night is marked by the Christian festival of Epiphany, and there's no doubt when that is, as the Church has defined it - but that seems to be a *post hoc* attachment of Twelfth Night.

In recent years, some 'politically correct' councils have studiously avoided referring to 'Christmas Lights' in their town centres for fear of offending other religions, and we now face the Americanism of 'Happy Holidays', something that has not been that well received over there either, where some have seen it as actively anti-Christian. It must be said, though, that the equally secular "Season's Greetings" has been in popular use since around the 1920s.

Given that the period around December encompasses a variety of other religious festivals (Thanksgiving, Kwanzaa, Hanukkah, the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, the Winter solstice, Christmas Day (The Nativity of the Lord), Boxing Day (St. Stephen's Day), the New Year and Epiphany²), the less religiously minded amongst us do wonder whether we shouldn't just remember that they all very likely directly or indirectly mark the passing of the winter solstice, and just celebrate that instead, like the so-called druids do at Stonehenge.

I note, in passing, that the Christian festival of re-birth (Easter) happens to fall around the spring equinox, and Hallowe'en around the autumn equinox.

There's no obvious Christian hijack of the summer equinox, unless you count rather obscure St. John's Eve³. (The Church fixed this at six months before the birth of Christ, so the alignment necessarily follows from Christmas.)

Anyway, my Christmas decorations are all down now, so the holiday season is officially over in this house, unless you're a mouse.

About three/four years ago, I discovered that the little beggars had formed an almost cartoon-like opening in the frame of my kitchen door, and were busy raiding the house at night, a fact proven when one ran across the floor in front of me when I was eating my breakfast – I am not sure which of us was the most surprised to see the other. The problem went away when I blocked the hole and the local pest controller put some poison down.

Today, I have found some evidence that I am again getting nighttime visitors. I still have the boxes, so it is off to Wilkinsons to find something to bait them with on Saturday. I am not greatly keen on killing the things, but I am not a charity for homeless rodents. They can live in my garden if they must, but they're not sharing my living space!

¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Talk:Twelfth_Night_%28holiday%29#.23

² http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christmas_and_holiday_season#Happy_Holidays

³ See <http://www.naic.edu/~gibson/cal/> for some other potentially amusing alignments.

MidCon 2014 (Jeremy Tullett)

The Chairman Speaks

This year, we recorded 210 registrations, which is only ten fewer than Manorcon. When the current management team took over from Small Furry Creatures, attendance was under 100 and declining, so we must be doing something right. Somehow, despite numbers being up, there were fewer overt space problems than in 2013, and it was chairs that seemed to be in short supply, rather than tables.

The Hallmark has now offered us the use of the Hallmark Inn dining room and the large, dividable, meeting room there as well, which gives us plenty of potential for growth if we need that much space. For 2015, we certainly shall be booking a half of the dividable conference room there, although the committee is split on whether it should be an overflow gaming room, or be used for the second-hand games sale. Readers are invited to comment.

The major change for 2015 will be the introduction of MidCon snacks for Friday lunchtime. In the run up to November, the hotel and I agreed that, historically, the number of players present had not really warranted this provision, but they approached me during the course of the event, and are now very keen to do this. The kitchen was apparently overwhelmed with bar orders. Certainly, there were well over fifty gamers in attendance by midday, and the food delivered to me had clearly been thrown together in a hurry, so it would be wise to take their advice on this.

I got there well before 09:00 this year, enabling me for the first time to beat the first Friday arrivals into the Garden Room. However, a number of people had actually arrived during Thursday, and spent much of that day in a local hostelry playing games and sending me flippant text messages. I am loathe to declare that MidCon officially starts on the Thursday (I think you can see where that might eventually go), but there are clearly pre-convention related activities going on, and indeed I was presented with an idea for one, which, if not meant entirely seriously, is something that I shall pursue. Those who know to what I refer have been warned.

Apart from the chairs, there were no serious practical difficulties, barring the long breakfast queue and unsatisfactory service at the Inn on Sunday morning. An Alton Towers coach party appears to have been the ultimate cause. There was a minor altercation, to which the police were summoned, but the hotel manager was quite unfazed. We have some way to go before we reach the sorts of rowdy behaviour often seen at office parties and weddings.

MidCon Bring & Wait (J Harrington, Esq.)

You'd think by now the Bring & Buy would be a streamlined affair, but, if anything, the running of the sale in 2014 was subject to more delays than previous years.

Initially, I thought this was down to there being greater demand but upon checking my records, we actually had fewer games registered this year and sold fewer, albeit for more money in aggregate.

So, apologies to those of you kept waiting to register your games and to those of you kept waiting to buy the games while I attempted to get all the data on to the spreadsheet on my netbook.

I think next year I will adopt Pete Card's suggestion which is to keep it all paper-based and to hell with the spreadsheet. We'll also be pricing all games in Roman numerals.

I think the delays were mainly caused by people registering the games they had for sale in advance.

This worked well for those who registered the games well in advance, but the problem was that a number of people asked about the pre-registration option about five minutes before registration officially started, which confused a bear of little brain such as me.

For next year I have some ideas to streamline the process, involving colour coded sheets (e.g. yellow sheets for games with ID numbers from 1 to 50; blue sheets for 51 to 100 and so on), but if that fails I shall call in the far more organised Mrs Harrington and get her to run the thing while I go off and play games.

Anyway, here are the stats and what have you from 2014's Bring & Buy.

We had 252 games registered for sale, of which 120 got sold, for a grand sum of £1,405.

A game called The Phantom sold for the biggest amount: £45.

In 2013, we had 294 games registered for sale, and 130 got sold for a grand sum of £1,165.

I'd like to thank Pete Card and David Franklyne for offering invaluable assistance and everyone in general for being patient while we wrestled with the admin problems.

Feedback from the Attendees

Some people thought that the coffee served in the Garden Room was horrid. I tried it, and thought it was OK, although I dare say that it was only Nescafe. There is a coffee-making machine at the main bar, which ought to be better, if more expensive.

Much as I respect the attractions of the Costa Coffee outlet in the railway station, it would probably be best if people did not blatantly bring the merchandise past the reception desk. It isn't quite as bad as bringing in pizzas or fish and chips, but it isn't really approved of.

We received a number of positive comments about the convention, the hotel, and the Bring & Buy sale:

"I had a great weekend."

"Particular thanks to Dave for the Quiz, John for the Bring & Buy (I eventually sold Lord of the Rings for a pint of beer - I can send you your 5% commission if I find a pipette at work...) and Jeremy for organising the whole bunch of reprobates."

"Fantastic weekend. The con gets better every year. Big thanks to everyone involved. I also have done a geeklist of what I was playing over the weekend here."

"Firstly, thanks for a great couple of days gaming. As ever, the community was very welcoming to a new comer."

Things that people were less happy about included comments on food:

I had a "bar meal" sandwich at the Hotel bar, which was disappointing. Given the price for the sandwich, I had assumed that the kettle chips mentioned as an accompaniment were "chips" – but they were half a small bag of "Kettle Chips", which are crisps.

I ordered a pot of tea at the Hotel bar. At £2.95 for a "Pot for One", this seemed expensive, but as it translated into three good-sized cups of tea – and I was parched – I was on balance very content.

I went to the Mount Everest Nepalese curryhouse on the Sunday night. Only two other tables in use. I ordered a Special mixed Biryani. This was a CONSIDERABLE disappointment. I quite often eat Biryani and cannot recall a poorer one in some years. Definitely NOT "above average" quality.

Lighting issues:

The lighting wasn't good, in the evenings, near the windows in the main gaming room. Can I also add my thanks to the organisers; I had a great three days.

I absolutely echo Simon's thanks - I had a great weekend. But, yes, Chris's comments about lighting near the window in the Garden Room are justified. We did struggle in that corner.

I question the lighting in the other rooms. When someone has to get a light out to work out if the card says purple brown or gray in Bruges it's probably pushing it

The lighting issue has been raised before. The hotel doesn't have any spare standard lamps, so we, the committee, need to find another solution.

MidCon 2015 has been reserved for 13-15 November, and 2016 is in the diary for 11-13 November. Note that no contract has been signed yet, so no booking form is available yet, either.



Saturday 28th February 2015

Bake for Heroes, Boardgames, Bring & Buy & Ceilidh

www.facebook.com/groups/ConSummation3

www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/consummation3-tickets-13693775451



Come and play boardgames, make space for games by selling on the Bring and Buy, fill up the space by buying from Trade Stands and the Bring & Buy. Bake for Heroes, eat cake and drink tea. Stay on for Beer and the Ceilidh.

Access from 08:00 for set up.

Bring & Buy 10:00-16:00

Trade Stands (Bill's Books & Games, Outpost, Patriot Games) 10:00-16:00

Bake for Heroes 16:00-18:00

Real Ale Bar 18:00-23:00

Ceilidh 20:00-23:00

MANORCON XXXIII

John Foster Hall, University of Leicester. 2pm Friday 17th July – 2pm Monday 20th July 2015

Following on from last year's successful convention, ManorCon will once again be held at John Foster Hall in the University of Leicester in 2015.

As ever, single accommodation is available at the convention. This will cost £37 per night, and £5 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. 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.

ManorCon will be pretty much the same as the successful formula we've had in previous years. 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, Tzolk'in, 18XX, 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!

ManorCon has been selected to host the 2015 European Diplomacy Convention (EDC), so we will be expecting a lot more Diplomacy players than normal, including many from around Europe, all vying to be crowned European Diplomacy Champion. The Diplomacy Tournament will therefore be moving into the expansion space that we have not used in the last two years.

The tournament will consist of three rounds on Friday night (7pm), Saturday and Sunday (10am). All games will be played to 1909, and the traditional ManorCon scoring system will be used. After an absence of 10 years, the Saturday round will see the return of the world-famous ManorCon team tournament, with teams of seven players competing for the title of European Diplomacy Team Champions.

And for the non-Diplomacy players, we are well aware that there are over 200 of you, so while EDC will require some additional effort on our part, and some changes to be made, they will not be at the expense of making ManorCon as good as ever for all attendees.

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. Please note the booking deadline - 13th June 2015. 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
- or check out our website at www.manorcon.org.uk

Yorkshire DipCon 2015 (Graeme Murphy)

Friday 19th June 2015 to Sunday 21st June 2015

The Lawns Centre, The University of Hull, Northgate, Cottingham, HU16 5SQ

Yorkshire DipCon is a relatively new addition to the UK Face to Face Diplomacy Groups Tour of Britain and will take place at The University of Hull's Lawns Centre in the village of Cottingham, located on the outskirts of Hull.

The event in 2014 was extremely successful, received lots of positive feedback and most attendees indicated that they would be back to play some more Dip in 2015.

The Diplomacy tournament will consist of between 3 and 4 rounds (depending on numbers). These will take place on the Friday evening, Saturday morning/early afternoon, Saturday evening and Sunday morning/early afternoon. Games will use the C-Diplo Scoring System and run until the end of 1907. Trophies and certificates will be available for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place and there will be some especially themed Tournament Director awards made for more, shall we say, 'unusual achievements'.

The games will take place in two, newly refurbished, meeting rooms within the Lawns Centre that will be available for our use 24 hours per day over the weekend so lots of chance to play some other games once the Diplomacy has finished for the day. Please note that this will include the Sunday night for those players leaving on the Monday. (Gaming areas are also available within Ferens Hall, which will be used for the accommodation). All gaming areas will also be available on the Monday too for those hardened players who never know when to stop!

Accommodation can be provided on site at Ferens Hall. Rooms are newly refurbished and en-suite and are only a two minute walk from the Lawns Centre itself. They are available Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights on a B&B (£25 per night) or Self Catering (£20 per night) basis.

Please note that you will be allowed to bring your own food and drinks (including alcoholic beverages) onsite throughout the event although food should be consumed in the Hall of Residence and not in the Lawns Centre, which has its own catering facilities. (Your own alcoholic drinks will be allowed within the Lawns so long as they stay within the gaming rooms where a fridge will be provided).

Advance Bookings for Yorkshire DipCon 2015 are now being accepted at the UK Face to Face Diplomacy Groups website (www.ukf2fdip.org) where you can also find lots more information about the event, the accommodation and the UK Diplomacy hobby as a whole.

OxCon 2015 (Thomas Wallace)

OxCon will take place on Saturday, January 31st to Sunday, February 1st, from 10:00am, being hosted in Oxford's Mitre pub on High Street.

The traditional events will take place: a Puerto Rico tournament on the Saturday, a Settlers of Catan tournament on the Sunday, a game swap and, of course, plenty of board gaming!

Tickets will be £3 for current students, and £5 for everyone else. Please contact Thomas Wallace on either [Thomas.wallace\(at\)wadh.ox.ac.uk](mailto:Thomas.wallace(at)wadh.ox.ac.uk) or [ouboardgame\(at\)gmail.com](mailto:ouboardgame(at)gmail.com) for bookings or more information.

The Final Word

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(at)ellought.demon.co.uk)

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