

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

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Forthcoming Conventions

OxCon 2016 The Mitre, High Street, Oxford 30 – 31 January 2016 For more details email ouboardgames(at)gmail.com	Great Derby Boardgame Bash IV Derby Silk Mill Museum of Industry DE1 3AF Saturday 6 February 2016 Find "Derby on Board Games" on Facebook	SoRCon 9 Holiday Inn Basildon Essex 26 - 28 Feb 2016 www.sorcon.co.uk
Swan Con 2016 The Swan Hotel, Bucklow Hill, Knutsford, Cheshire, WA16 6RD 10-13 March 2016. Chris Geggus - geggus (at) sky.com	Raiders of the Game Cupboard XXXIV Waterside Community Centre Heath Road Burton-upon-Trent DE15 9LF 26 March 2016 10am-8pm www.raidersofthegamecupboard.co.uk	StabCon South Jury's Inn, Charlotte Place Southampton, SO14 0TB 1-3 April 2016 https://www.facebook.com/events/401405350069084/
BayCon 2016 Exeter Court Hotel Kennford 30 Mar - 3 Apr 2016 https://www.facebook.com/groups/baycon/	TringCon XXXII Marsworth Village Hall Marsworth, Nr. Tring, Bucks Saturday 2 April 2016 tringcon(at)fwtwr.com www.fwtwr.com/tringcon	CastleCon Flanesford Priory Ross-on-Wye 30 April-7 May 2016 https://www.boardgamegeek.com/guild/2397
Beer & Pretzels The Town Hall, Burton upon Trent 21-22 May 2016 www.spiritgames.co.uk/articles.php?menu=11	UK Games Expo NEC Hilton Metropole Birmingham 3 - 5 June 2016 richard(at)ukgamesexpo.co.uk www.UKGamesExpo.co.uk	Raiders of the Game Cupboard XXXV Waterside Community Centre Heath Road Burton-upon-Trent DE15 9LF 25 June 2016 10am-8pm www.raidersofthegamecupboard.co.uk
Summer StabCon Britannia Hotel Stockport 1-3 July 2016 bookings (at) stabcon.org.uk ManorCon	ManorCon XXXIV Stamford Court, University of Leicester 15-18 July 2016 info(at)manorcon.org.uk www.manorcon.org.uk	Boardgame Week Le Pas Opton, France 12-19 September 2016 Springharvestholidays.com/boardgame-week

CastleCon Flanesford Priory Ross-on-Wye 18 September-2 October 2016 https://www.boardgamegeek.com/guild/2397	Raiders of the Game Cupboard XXXVI Waterside Community Centre Heath Road Burton-upon-Trent DE15 9LF 24 September 2016 10am-8pm www.raidsofthegamecupboard.co.uk	TringCon XXXIII Marsworth Village Hall Marsworth, Nr. Tring, Bucks 1 October 2016 tringcon(at)fwtwr.com www.fwtwr.com/tringcon
MidCon The Hallmark Hotel Derby DE1 2SQ 11-13 November 2016 MidCon.org.uk	Boardgames at the Manor Otford Manor TN15 6XF 9-11 December 2016 www.oakhall.co.uk/manor office(at)oakhall.co.uk	Derby on Board Games The Bookcafe, Cornmarket, Derby Last Wednesday of every month, except December. 4pm- 10pm

Editorial (Jeremy Tullett)

As we ran up to the Christmas holidays, people wishing me a relaxing Christmas generally got growled at, as relaxing was perhaps not quite what I was anticipating with non-trivial amounts of driving in prospect in both fetching and then returning my parents before and after Christmas, and also zooming up to Co. Durham, however chilled the events themselves at Christmas and New Year might have been promising to be.

However, my management skills cut in, and I contrived to arrange for other bodies to provide the entertainment for me and my guests, those bodies being Derby Theatre, the Birmingham Symphony Hall, the Bowes Museum, Standard Fireworks Ltd., and Seaham Hall.

Derby Theatre had a production of Cinderella, as told from the point of view of the kitchen rats. Neither a pantomime nor a play, but something in-between, this family entertainment provided some fluffy amusement on Christmas Eve, and, given that it was aimed at families with older children, there were actually very few children of any age present.

Off to the Symphony Hall on the 28th to hear the Four Seasons¹ by candlelight, in period dress². I think most people are aware of certain elements of programming in the named movements, but the conductor explained how the score is actually marked in some detail indicating what certain phrases refer to (barking dogs, rain on the roof, country dances, etc.). This was quite fun, and a number of other pieces of Baroque music were performed also, all in the magnificent Symphony Hall.

Standard Fireworks provided the entertainment at midnight on New Year's Eve, and I found a slightly impish streak as I let off the rockets and Roman Candles. Everyone was very impressed, apart from a local owl that flew past, irritation emanating from the very flapping of his wings.

Seaham Hall was converted into a very expensive hotel and restaurant around 2000, and we went there a few times, but have not returned for a while. As there is now a new owner and a new chef, we thought we go back again for dinner on New Year's Day and see what has changed. The main bar is now the dining room, and the dining room has been converted into a bar, a lounge, and, of all things a sports bar. Yes, a sports bar, in a five star hotel. Standards are slipping.

The menu has been simplified somewhat, but was perfectly good. However, we had to share an ice bucket with the adjacent table because the restaurant had 'lost' some. One of the waiters solved the problem by pouring the remainder of the wine without asking us, therefore obviating our need for the bucket. Hmmm.

The Bowes Museum (at Barnard Castle) is a collection of art and crafts that was created by, and housed in

¹ The work by Vivaldi, not the soul group.

² The orchestra, not me.

a building commissioned by, John and Josephine Bowes in the late 19th century. It also houses modern, temporary exhibitions, currently comprising: quilts, some Mapplethorpe photographs, and a display of entries to the New Light art competition.

Its centre piece, which used stand in the hallway, but has now been moved, is a large articulated silver swan that moves under the power of three clock mechanisms. It is 240 years old, and is shown in action daily. After the demonstration, during which the curator explained very clearly how it operated, one witless teenager asked if it was computer controlled. Do we actually educate *anyone* these days?

So it turned out to be quite an interesting and relaxing break after all, despite my grumpy prognostications.

MidCon 2015 Report (Jeremy Tullett)

I think I can now safely say that this was the biggest ever MidCon. I have never known how big MidCon was at its previous peak, but it certainly used to support a conference room full of Diplomacy boards, and then some. In 2015 we had just under 240 registrations.

We made a decision quite close to the event to hire the meeting room at the Hallmark Inn for the Bring 'n' Buy, thus releasing the Milldale Suite for general gaming throughout the weekend, and what a good decision that turned out to be!

There were spells when there were people wandering around looking for tables, and some frayed tempers at attempts to beach-towel gaming space, but there was in fact a table that was never used for gaming on any day, in plain sight, in one of the gaming rooms. However it remains clear that we shall indisputably need to find yet more space for 2016.

We are exploring options, but the view from the Chair is that the simplest and least risky solution will be to claim more space at the Hallmark Inn (we have been offered use of the dining room there, after breakfast is finished). Other ideas being kicked about are (1) hiring a heated marquee for the hotel garden (probably way too expensive) or (2) block-booking the entire hotel (which exposes MidCon to a significant financial risk).

There's no contract in place yet, but the dates are confirmed as **11–13 November 2016**.

Aside from the issue of space, we are not aware of any problems of note. A mix-up in the kitchen meant that Friday lunch (and access to the real ale) were delayed by nearly an hour, but hardly anyone seems to have noticed, and the committee subsequently overestimated demand for further polypins of ale, leaving Dave Simpson having to take one home in his car, and me to take about a half of a polypin home on foot.

Mr. Harrington has reviewed the comments left on BoardGameGeek, and we conclude that we need more (or even some) rubbish bags, and that we need some way of bringing together players looking for games – a particular difficulty for people who have never been to a convention before. We may assign a duty committee member specifically to this task.

The portable table lamps were a partial success for illuminating table with less light than people may have wished for – we just need more tables!

There were also some grumbles about the timing of the Bring 'n' Buy mid-morning causing interruptions to games in progress, so we may move the time to be close to the end of breakfast.

An innovation that was surprisingly (to me, at any rate) successful was the Kniziathon, masterminded by Ben Bateson, to whom many thanks. His report follows, and I look forward to seeing him do it again next year.

David Norman did a splendid bit of crowd control in running the quiz, and his report also follows.

All in all, our 2015 event seems to have been something of a triumph, and rising numbers suggest that we are doing something right. I look forward to seeing you all again in November, by which time I shall once again have forgotten who most of you are!

MidCon 2015 Quiz Results (David Norman)

Results Table

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
Carcassones of Anarchy	50	13	5.5	9	16	3	12	10	118.5
Terrible Mystica	50	16	5	10	13	1	13	8	116
3 Blues and a Blade	50	10	7.5	8	11	1	13	8	108.5
Vorbis	50	14	5.5	8	10	0	10	10	107.5
3 J's and a K	50	12	6	7	9	1	10	9	104
Critical Ferret	50	8	3	7	14	6	5	8	101
A demonstration of superiority	50	8	3.5	4	16	1	6	7	95.5
Plumpkins	50	8	4.5	5	6	1	6	9	89.5
3 Musketless Ears	20	13	8	8	16	1	11	10	87

Description of the Rounds

Round 1	Team Size	Teams score 50 points for 4 or less or fewer members, 40 for 5 members, or 20 for 6 members
Round 2	Asia	20 pictures, flags, country outlines and facts about Asian countries – name the countries
Round 3	Sequences	Lists of five things to put in chronological/numerical/etc order
Round 4	Numbers	Ten questions, each of which has a different answer between 20 and 29
Round 5	Film Quotes	20 film quotes to name the film.
Round 6	Heads & Tails	Everybody stands up. Sit down when you get a question wrong. 5 points for last man standing, 2 for going out on the final question, 1 for lasting longer than last year's heads&tails winner
Round 7	54321	5 questions, which require 5, 4, 3, 2 then 1 answer
Round 8	Connections	Question 10 is, what connects answers 1 to 9.

MidCon 2015 Kniziathon (Ben Bateson)

Many thanks to everyone who turned out for the Kniziathon. We had 36 unique games over the course of the day and about 20 regulars, almost - but not quite - enough to fill the Milldale suite.

All weights of game were played, from the heavy (Stephenson's Rocket, Tigris & Euphrates) to the ultra-light (FITS, Botswana), and we rounded off the day with the huge Decathlon, which brought all manner of gamers out of the woodwork for the opportunity to win a free game.

Is Reiner Knizia my favourite designer? No. Is he the best designer in the world? Possibly not. But who else's oeuvre could provide enough to keep a whole room entertained for a day? And how many people picked through the games table with a surprised: "Oh, I didn't realise that was one of HIS!" Therein lies

the real beauty of the Kniziathon.

The decathlon even was such a success that you can expect to see it back next year, assuming I can secure a suitable prize.

Kniziathon Results: 1st - Luke H (61 points) 2nd - Ruth J (59 points)	3rd - Chris T (52 points) 4th - Simon B (42 points)
Decathlon Results: Highest Score = 256 (Luke H) Lowest Score = 160 (Doug N) Median Score = 207 (Adam L) Best 100m = 36 (Martin S) Best Long Jump = 25 (Bill M) Best Shot Put = 37 (Robb G)	Best High Jump = 24 (Clive F/Sarah T) Best 400m = 40 (Robb G) Best 110m Hurdles = 25 (Robin W/Chris T/Sarah T/Hannah T) Best Discus = 28 (Ruth J) Best Pole Vault = 34 (Lee S/Allan T) Best Javelin = 30 (Doug N) Best 1500m = 33 (Sarah T)

Yorkshire DipCon (Graeme Murphy)

**The Lawns Centre, The University of Hull, Northgate, Cottingham, HU16 5SQ
Friday 17th June 2016 to Sunday 19th June 2016**

Yorkshire DipCon is now back for its third year as part of the Tour of Britain and will take place once again at The University of Hull's Lawns Centre in the village of Cottingham, which is located on the outskirts of Hull.

The Diplomacy tournament will consist of 4 rounds and these will take place on the Friday evening, Saturday morning/early afternoon, Saturday evening and Sunday morning/early afternoon.

Session	Registration Opens	Session Starts
Friday Evening	From 14:00	19:00
Saturday Morning	From 09:00	10:00
Saturday Afternoon	From 09:00	19:00
Sunday	From 09:00	11:00

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 meeting rooms within the Lawns Centre that will be available for our sole use 24 hours per day throughout the whole weekend. This will provide lots of chance to play some other games once the Diplomacy has finished for the day. This will include the Sunday night for those players leaving on the Monday. Outside areas and tables will be available for Dip Discussions and gaming should the weather be summery enough.

Please note that rooms will also be available within the Ferens Hall accommodation blocks if players want to game nearer to their bedrooms.

Full details and booking information are on the UK Face to Face Diplomacy website whilst the UK Face to Face Diplomacy and Diplomacy in Europe Facebook pages will also carry more information and discussion about the event.

MANORCON XXXIV

Stamford Court, University of Leicester. 2pm Friday 15th July – 2pm Monday 18th July 2016

Following on from last year's successful convention, ManorCon will once again be held at the University of Leicester. Whilst the accommodation is the same as in 2015 at John Foster Hall, **the gaming halls have moved over the road into Stamford Court** due to renovations taking place in other parts of the Oadby campus.

Please note, ManorCon does not start until 2pm on Friday. In recent years, people have been arriving earlier and earlier, to the extent that it has started to interfere with the convention preparation on Friday morning. In 2016, we also have a new venue to contend with, so we will not be allowing entry to the convention before noon on Friday.

As ever, single accommodation is available at the convention. All John Foster Hall rooms are en-suite rooms. These will cost £36 per night, and £7 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!

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 - 11th June 2016. 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\(at\)manorcon.org.uk](mailto:info(at)manorcon.org.uk)
- or check out our website at www.manorcon.org.uk

Spring Harvest Holidays Board Game Week September 2015 (Matt Young)



The fun began even before the official start of the week, as friends old and new gathered in Portsmouth to take the ferry over to France. Games in the pub, followed by more on the boat, and then seven days' worth in the spacious bar area and entertainments hall at the 4* camp site Le Pas Opton, at the end of the Spring Harvest Holidays summer season. With over 200 games brought between us, we were spoilt for choice! There was more than enough for everyone's tastes, from the newest 'convert' to the gaming hobby to the most experienced 'experts'.

As with the first two years' events, the free gaming was complemented by well-contested tournaments. Andrew Collier retained his Carcassonne title from the previous year, and added to it with a win in the Catan tournament, which featured 20 competitors, the highest number so far. The 7 Wonders tournament was once again won by Matt Young. The Hexathlon, in which participants play as many games as possible in the last 3 days of the week and have their best six results counted towards an overall result, was once again won by a newcomer, this time Harry Naylor.

Still, the week wasn't just about gaming, and some attendees visited a nearby castle, the local town of St Gilles Croix-de-Vie, and of course the beach. The pool was in frequent use, and the morning bible studies and evening celebrations (these are part of the normal Christian programme at the site) were well attended and well received. Next year the speaker will be Chris Sinkinson of Moorlands College – as an avid gamer himself, he is keen to tie his talks in with the gaming theme.

For more details on the 4th Board Games Holiday, taking place 12-19th September 2016, please see www.springharvestholidays.com/board-game-week.

Oak Hall Board Games Weekend 2015 (Matt Young)



The inaugural Board Games Weekend at Oak Hall's Otford Manor, set in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty with breath-taking views across the Weald of Kent, was enjoyed by over 40 people. Many attendees were seasoned gamers, pitting their skills against each other in heavyweight games including Caverna and Puerto Rico. A good number were exploring the hobby for the first time, and they enjoyed rescuing people (and a cat – sadly the dog died) from burning houses in Flashpoint and honing communication skills in Codenames, among many other achievements. Most notable was one RoboRally beginner who managed to reach the first checkpoint after an hour's game time, including three power-downs!

Alongside the gaming was a programme that included four bible talks from different speakers, all well attended and highly encouraging. Meals, all included in the cost of the weekend, were of abundant quantity and quality, and set meal times ensured we all got to know each other much better than we might otherwise have done! Many are already looking forward to next year's event, on the 9-11th December, but with capacity set to almost double, there will be plenty of room for more to come!

The Final Word

This issue of The Queen's Lane Advertiser was brought to you by:

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Who put it all together, and ...

... David Norman ...

...who arranged for the printing and distribution.