



21st National Science Fiction Convention of New Zealand,
held June 2-5, 2000 at West Plaza Hotel,
Wellington,
New Zealand.

Cond'Or 2000 Post Con Report



On the 12th day of Cond'Or my concom gave to me

- 12 lost banquet tickets
- 11 missing t-shirts
- 10 incarcerations
- 9 nervous breakdowns
- 8 temper tantrums
- 7 programme-clashes
- 6 vents-a-leaking
- 5 unpaid bills
- 4 stomach ulcers
- 3 furry fans
- 2 literary guests

And a con guest who couldn't appear.

Postulations from the chair.

Welcome to the last report of Cond'Or 2000, the 21st national science fiction convention of New Zealand. Sorry it's a bit late, but as the saying goes all good things come to those who wait...or something like that. The convention committee would like to thank all the guests, attendees, and support team for

making the con such a successful one. We hope you had as much fun as we did bringing it to you. Most of the feedback we have had has been really positive and that's pleasing for us. Already we are thinking about running another con ...but I suspect it might be 2010 before we get around to it.

Personally, I would like to thank our guests Tad Williams, the McMullen family and Maree Sole for making my attendance at the convention so memorable. As chair I was busy running around doing various tasks, but I did manage to speak to all the guests and enjoy some time with each of them. They are discussions and memories I shall treasure, particularly having dinner with Tad at Café India after the masquerade.

I would also like to thank Sara Douglass for agreeing to come to our convention, although she was unable to attend due to ill health. I had the pleasure of meeting her personally at AussieCon Three and believe she would have been an excellent guest. But thanks go to the McMullen's for stepping in at the last minute.

When I took over the job as chair of Cond'Or 2000 I decided it was time to do some different things: things that had never before





happened at an SF con (or as far as I knew). The most successful of these was the cocktail party prior to the banquet. Thanks to Bruce and Janice Caddy for hosting the event. It was a great success. Incidentally, **Peter Friend** was the lucky door prize ticket winner. He received a selection of SF Masterworks books.

The other new event we tried was the themed writing competitions. We received quite a few entries and it was pleasing to see. Copies of all story entries are available as a PDF file on request.

The banquet was a really fun event too and attendees gave very generously to our charity. We said only give us small change, but you outdid us and we raised \$191.50 from that event alone. Well done. The Royal New Zealand foundation for the blind was really pleased to receive the donation.

While there are some events which didn't work (we did make a note) overall we believe the convention was a success and hope you had as much fun as we did bringing it to you.

As the con is wound up and I say goodbye to the event that has taken up a huge chunk of the last two and a half years of my life, I have to say some very special thank yous. Firstly to the committee: Daena, Steve and David,

without whom, I would not have been able to do this or have been involved in the first place. Daena next time you have an idea about running a convention... Thanks particularly to David who joined the team only 9 months before the event. Secondly I should thank Norman Cates (yes he is a sex god) and Ross Temple for lending me their ears and insight into "Con convening for absolute beginners".

Thanks also to all the assistants we had during the weekend; Bean (Stephen Smith), Andrew Dixon, Catherine S. McMullen, Jenny Howard (my minder), Jeena Murphy, Simon Litten, Simon Gigg who especially made my days less frantic. To everyone else not mentioned here but who deserve a mention, my heartfelt thanks too.

Finally, but by no means least, thanks go to John Howell (my husband) who has been there to help and support me throughout the planning and the con. He made sure I didn't kill myself (or anyone else for that matter) when the going got tough. Just think dear, in three more years or so you can help me plan another con...yes I am a glutton for punishment, and just for fun I might run another one.

Lynelle Howell



Con Memories

Sean McMullen, Trish Smyth, Catherine Smyth-McMullen

This is a first time for me, as I have never written anything about a con before.

Speaking as a guest, no author could not have hoped for a better con. It was organised and planned quite magnificently, well attended by really enthusiastic people, and run as smoothly as a roller blade. All of my talks and panels were really well attended, which is pretty important for someone like me, who likes to put on a show. I like to meet readers, and I always ended up talking with people in the bar or the foyer long after my talks were over and we had been chased out of the rooms. In general, everyone made things so easy for us, and were so hospitable that it was downright embarrassing. One thing I learned from this trip was that New Zealand genre authors have become a lot more optimistic and enthusiastic over the past two years. They are realising that overseas publishing world really is a lot closer thanks to the Internet, and that overseas editors are looking for new and interesting writing from anywhere interesting. The great thing about New Zealand and New Zealanders right now is the sense of discovery about the place, the land is quite incredible and there has been interesting SF and fantasy being written and filmed there for a long time. People need to know about New Zealand SF, New Zealanders need to write its history, promote it, compile bibliographies, celebrate its progress overseas and above all, write more of it. My impression is that Cond'Or did a huge amount for all the foregoing. I hope that I have also made a difference with what I have said and done at Cond'Or, and that you all continue to encourage your writers and celebrate their best work.

Trish had never spoken at a con before, even though she has been to a couple of dozen, so her talk about libraries and SF was another piece of history. In particular she thought that the con was professionally run, that Tad was a genial and graceful GoH, that the hotel was a wonderful setting, and that the people were the nicest fans in the world. Catherine thought she had died and gone to heaven once she

realised that she could help run the con and that people were taking her seriously. She likes organising people, so she thought it was all too cool for words to be sitting at the desk, handing out things, telling people what they had to do or where things were, and generally being treated like 18 even though she is 11. Getting her hair cut and dyed with tiger stripes in Wellington was pretty cool as well, but you do things like that when you are away from home. Helping with the short story competition and masquerade were a bit of a contrast because thought and work were required, but there are down sides to everything. We have pretty carefully avoided mentioning names until now because this report would be just a list of names if we tried to mention everyone who helped, entertained, organised and befriended us ... however Lynelle does need to be singled out for special thanks and praise here for the masterpiece of advance planning and diplomacy that was the leadup to the con. Thanks again, Lynelle and all the rest of you. There are rarely events which are all highs and no lows, but Cond'Or was one of them.

Maree Fan Guest Of Honor

This con seemed to me to be one of groups of people easily getting together to natter. Sean, Catherine, Trish and Tad were so approachable and accessible; we fans could really connect with them. The program items I saw were enjoyed and people liked getting involved, always a good sign. I had a blast and I've got to admit the egoboo was a rush, fortunately my head now fits my hats again. I had a great time and even raised my voice in song and people didn't flinch (is that a nasty cough you've got Brian?) Memories that stand out: Watching peoples jaws drop at the Pak'Marrah, that amazing cake, being on the winning team for the quiz, story plotting, really enjoying giving my speech because the atmosphere was so good. I'll treasure the memories. P.S anyone know how to display a twenty foot banner?

Matthew Pavletich's Con Memories:

Conventions and my state of health are generally a fatal combination. And so once again, I came down with a bug half way through my third Con in a row. I missed 2 out of 3 Guest of Honour speeches! But if I'd missed Maree's I would have been toast! The reason I missed one of the other GOH speeches was I ran into a friend from the N.Z. Space flight Association whom I hadn't seen for about 4 years. So naturally we jabbered away through Sean's speech. Sorry, Sean! Condor was about people for me, as are most Cons. I would be less than honest if I said I found much in the events to really interest me, beyond the excellent literary aspects. There wasn't much for media or comic fans at this Convention, and it was those types of people I heard the most grumbles from afterwards.

Also, I was a bit disappointed to find that many Con events were not videotaped for posterity and for those who missed events (like me). This is something I'm especially sensitive about because we ourselves at the various Auckland Cons have also missed key events in the past. This would never have happened if Norman or I could have been

three places at once. I suspect this may have happened at Condor, too. Maybe any future Auckland or Wellington Cons can pay more attention to this aspect. Trek, Doctor Who, Star Wars, B5, Gerry Anderson, DC, Marvel and Dark Horse etc fans need care and feeding as much as the literary ones, if only at panel events. But are such fans a little isolated these days, because we seem to have passed into the twilight era of these shows and comics? Are these above-mentioned shows and products becoming old-hat and sinking into the mainstream now? We'll see.

All kudos to Lynelle, John, Dana, David, Bean and co. for doing a pretty good job and pulling off their first Convention. And 'Never Say Never Again'...

The age-old debate about the affordability of having media guests continues to be an issue for convention committees and no doubt there will be more discussion on it in the future. For the record, only a few conventions have been videotaped in the past decade and only two of these have released tapes after the event – Ed.





Being an Author, Aged 11

By Catherine S. McMullen

I knew all about writing before I started doing it because dad has been a writer since I can remember. I mean his real work is scientific stuff and computers, but he writes for fun, except that he is good at it and it seems like he has two jobs. I think writing is fun, interesting and you get to meet lots of new and friendly people. You also get money, and people want you to read to them at ceremonies and conventions. My first story was *Spider*. I wrote it when I was seven but it was not published. It was okay, but nothing intellectual. After my first story, *Sea Baby*, was published I was made writer of the week at school. That was cool.

Dad inspired me to take writing seriously. I was nine, and we were in New Zealand for a convention in 1998. Neil Gaiman was guest of honour. I think dad was too. Neil showed me his latest *Stardust* books. I read them and they were cool. One night I had a nightmare. I dreamed that Tristan Thorn from *Stardust* was really a Terminator, and that he was going around shooting magical creatures in fairyland and saying "Hasta la vista, fairy." I woke up frightened and told dad. He said that I was lucky, and that not many kids have such cool dreams, and I should write a story about it. I did not write about terminators and fairies but I did start writing. I thought that if I had to have weird dreams I might as well make money from them. I also thought it would be best to write about kids because I knew all about kids.

I like to write science fiction because there are so many paths to take. Fantasy is harder, because the rules are pretty strict and most of the obvious stuff has been written about. I read a lot of fantasy, and I think about it a lot, and I have sold one fantasy story, so maybe I will become good at it. My story was *Mindscones*, about a teenage sorceress who dresses in black and practices on her teachers. I dress in black but I don't do any sorcery stuff. I just write about it.

I suppose *Teddy Cat* is the best story that I have written, and it is about things that I know

like teddy toys, a little girl, and scientists. Dad takes me to work sometimes, so I know about laboratories, supercomputers and scientists. Like I said before, you should always write about what you know, and just make a couple of changes to make things weird. If your dreams are a bit strange that might help, too. I mean like I could not write about being the captain of a spacecraft. Not yet, anyway.

Editor's Note: Since Catherine wrote this report she has turned 12 and sold another short story to Interzone.





COND'OR 2000
Financial Statement as of 14 February 2001

EXPENDITURE		REVENUE	
HOTEL: WEST PLAZA		MEMBERSHIPS	
Conference Facilities	\$ 3,400.00	Full Members	\$ 9,320.00
Con. Suite	\$ 196.85	Supporting & Day	\$ 1,160.00
		Furry	\$ 100.00
GoH: TAD WILLIAMS		GRANTS & DONATIONS	
Transport	\$ 2,526.50	Australian High Commission	\$ 850.00
Accommodation & expenses	\$ 709.22	Donations	\$ 89.55
GoH: SEAN McMULLEN			
Transport	\$ 824.80	Dealers	\$ 750.00
Accommodation & expenses	\$ 728.50	Auction	\$ 469.80
FanGoH: MAREE SOLE			
Transport	\$ 225.00	Laser Force	\$ 276.00
Accommodation & expenses	\$ 146.25	Advertising	\$ 1,095.00
Laser Force	\$ 225.00		
Printing	\$ 1,264.34		
Communication			
Postage	\$ 343.95		
Phones	\$ 49.33		
Banquet	\$ 3,201.00	Banquet	\$ 2,964.00
Merchandise	\$ 1,778.72	Merchandise	\$ 1,684.50
Gifts and Prizes	\$ 109.00	Interest	\$ 81.21
Stationery	\$ 415.42		
Miscellaneous	\$ 426.18		
AVS hire	\$ 552.50		
Bad Debts	\$ 75.00		
Total	\$ 17,197.56		\$ 18,840.06
Profit			\$ 1,642.50



Souls in the Great Hotel

By **Lynelle Howell**

This is a work of fiction. All characters and events portrayed in this story are completely fictitious, and any resemblance to real people with exactly the same names is purely coincidental.

Honest.

Court Treasurer Steve had only uttered his first line for the opening ceremony skit – “I’m not worthy” when some anonymous attendee called out from the crowd “You’re definitely not worthy” and shot him.

Despite much probing by security staff, no one would admit to doing it, or to owning a weapon (fake or otherwise) because it was definitely against the rules, the con book said so.

Con’d’Or 2000 was getting off to a bad start.

Guest Ambassador Daena followed suit moments later after suffocating in her dress that was two sizes too small. Someone had worked hard to lace her into it, too hard it would seem.

The rest of the opening ceremony seemed to go off without any more hitches - although the singing of the con song was too terrible to mention, Lady Mayoress Lynelle reflected.

By 9pm everyone was bored, except when the convention birthday cake was brought out for consumption. The only problem came when Renaldo the party sheep nose-dived into the cake and suffocated. Frances and Phil (Renaldo’s owners) made a desperate dive for the cake to save him but the cake collapsed around them. Valiant efforts failed to revive Renaldo and the furry fans all went into hiding to mourn his loss.

The night passed peacefully enough, although Lynelle was beginning to suffer a nervous breakdown. She was saved a little by of a “large” glass of whisky.

But Saturday didn’t start out too promising with three people suffering heart attacks during the medieval aerobics. Further chaos ensued when a wayward magician, who hadn’t realised the magician’s apprentice competition was for rank amateurs, had cast

an explosion spell killing Matt Pavletich and a few other onlookers.

Ross and Andrew’s quiz was still held among the rubble of the previous event and everything was going nicely with Alan Robson and Alex Heatley winning, when an irate attendee took out a gun and shot Ross and anyone else he felt like because he had answered the question. “How many points does a star trek triangle have” right, unlike everyone else.

By this stage Lynelle and Town Wizzard David were hoping for a peaceful hour where nothing could or would go wrong, and their prayers were answered, long enough for them to make a few little programme changes to cater for dead panelists and to change the banquet numbers.

“We may have to revise the banquet number, we’ll give you a firm answer tomorrow,” Lynelle told the duty manager. Already they were down from 90 attendees to 70, and Lynelle suspected the manager would not be pleased.

He wasn’t.

More chaos ensued shortly thereafter. Two people were discussing the merits of how they had just killed another in a game of KAOS (Killing as an organised sport) and how the pile of corpses now being stacked up in Glenbervie was getting quite extreme.

“Haha now I can kill you,” one said to the other.

“What?” Lynelle and David enquired, knowing full well that nothing had been officially organised and worrying what the hotel staff would say.

“Killing as An Organised Sport is what,” they replied triumphantly as they began killing each other.

“But..but... you’re not actually supposed to Kill people in that game,” David blurted.

Lynelle broke her general rule of not having an alcoholic drink in the middle of the day, and had two.

The manager approached them and seemed concerned. Apparently the maids were ticked off about the state of the rooms; seems there was just a little too much mess for them.



"It's all part of the fun of conventions," Lynelle assured them. "Everything will be fine on Monday."

Preparations began for the Masquerade that evening. It promised to go off with a bang, and it did. The fun began when the crowd shouted their familiar chant "Norman, Norman, Norman". Norman, acting as MC for the evening, blushed handsomely.

The Martian line dancers for Jesus skit went off well, except when two members fell off the edge of the stage and died as a result of their injuries. They were later rewarded, winning the group entry prize.

When the Pak Ma'Rah ranger gave his stunning display, Tad Williams (who had previously not been at the event) came running in screaming, "That Pak'Ma'Rah just ate my cat." He ran up on stage and gave the poor performer an awful shock by killing him with his bare hands.

Tad was wailing as they led him back to his room. He was found several hours later slumped over the desk with claw marks on the top of his head. Noone is quite certain how they appeared.

But the masquerade was to become yet more eventful. When Stephen Smith announced his undying love for Norman Cates saying, "Norman is a sex-god and I want to have his babies," all hell broke loose. Suddenly the lights went out and there was a mad scramble. When civility was finally restored, Stephen had been stabbed through the heart with a knife, which had a message attached saying:

"I am the only one for Norman, you can't have him."

Norman was so devastated by the turn of events he ran off with the white jacket and became a secret master of fandom, never to be seen again.

"I wanted an eventful con, but not like this," Lynelle groaned as she drowned her sorrows in a bottle of whiskey. She and David sat down to go through the programme and make the 15th programme change that day. Again they went down to the duty manager and discussed the banquet.

"We think we'll only need 55 seats now. Sorry for the inconvenience," Lynelle apologised.

The duty manager looked very unhappy.

But the parties that night weren't without incident either as several people were crushed (including other hotel guests) when the partygoers stampeded downstairs to continue revelling after noise control was called.

Anything that could go wrong was going wrong, and the con was only halfway through. Lynelle continued to drown her sorrows and hoped that Sunday would dawn a bit brighter.

It didn't.

Things started badly when David was getting the morning video events ready. Just before 9am David was heard saying, "Now what happens if I put this blue wire on this red wire?" The explosion took out the Cornish suite, 15 fen, 2 staff members, 4 line dancers and three Youth for Christ members, and was heard three blocks away. Now there was only one concom member left and Lynelle's dementia was proceeding quite nicely. Other con chairs said "it's all right Lynelle this is perfectly normal. You're allowed to be a little stressed."

Worst of all, she had to deal with reducing the banquet and incurring the banqueting manager's wrath.

"Ummmm make it 40-ish...That should be sufficiently small for the number of guests left," she said hurriedly running off to solve the next crisis. It was just as well she was running as the chef was also running...after her...with a huge meat cleaver. Luckily he tripped over his apron - unfortunately fell on the cleaver.

At laserforce Catherine S. McMullen was killed when one of the laser guns was accidentally (or was that deliberately) switched for a real gun. In the dark there had been no way to tell who had actually done it, but it was suspected an ace player was jealous of her score. Being so small, she had been able to run around corners and successfully shoot people without being seen.

Two guests of honour down, just three to go,



Lynelle thought miserably. She was looking at serious jail time she suspected, if she didn't shoot herself first. What would Tad's publishers say, and especially after he had said he was giving up writing to become Norman's agent.

The cocktail party would go off without a hitch surely? Nope.

Three attendees dressed as dwarfs on their way to the bookshop startled an articulated truck driver while crossing the road, causing him to lose control and run them over. No, not a good start at all.

At the party Maree and Trish (Sean's wife) got into a flint-lock pistol duel over who was the best librarian, but unfortunately as they fired Sean got in the way and fell down dead. Maree too was injured during the battle and later expired. Trish tried to control her grief but died of a broken heart.

Moments later however, Sean sat up saying,

"I'm not dead, I was just pretending for research purposes."

The banquet was still to come. But at least nothing could go wrong right?

The soup of the day was Gispachio (which is best served chilled), but unlike everyone else, Lynelle sent hers back to the kitchen. "I don't like cold soup. Heat this up," she told the waitress. It was probably the most sensible thing she had done all con. As she watched her remaining GoH Sean sink to the floor he moaned "the soup is poisoned".

"Oh well he always said he wanted his death to be tasteful." Lynelle thought brightly as she watched others begin to collapse around her. Within minutes everyone at the banquet was slumped in his or her chairs or on the floor. Sean had been right.

"This con will go down in history," Lynelle said miserably as her freshly warmed soup arrived and she drank it.

The end.





Famous Lines from the Con.

"Norman is a sex god and I want to have his babies," (said through the walky-talkies at the masquerade by Stephen "Bean" Smith of Christchurch.)

"One meeeeeeeeeeeeeeeelion (you fill in the gap)" (Norman's quote of the con).

"I'm not worthy" (Stephen Litten's quote of the con)

"I'm giving up writing...to become a theatrical agent for "Sex God" - the world tour" (Tad Williams at the closing ceremony).

"he he he" (Catherine S. McMullen's naughty little giggle).

"Quiet in the cheap seats" (Lynelle's quote of the con).

"Boiling Hot...maaagma" (Norman strikes again).

Rare Books with David Lee-Smith

David gave an interesting talk during the convention on rare books and has kindly given us a list of the books he talked about. He is happy to email the text of his talk to anyone who is interested. Just contact the concom through: enquiries@condor.sf.org.nz .

The Night Land

by *William Hope Hodgson* 1912

Last and First Men

by *Olaf Stapledon* 1930

Lost Horizon

by *James Hilton* 1933

Earth Abides

by *George R Stewart* 1949

City

by *Clifford D Simak* 1950

The Memoirs of a Spacewoman

by *Naomi Mitchison* 1962

Past Watch; the Redemption of Christopher Columbus

by *Orson Scott Card* 1996

Writer's competition results:

Thanks to all who entered, and congratulations to the following winners.

Short Story: under 500 words.

First Line:

"Twas a dark and stormy knight."

Honourable Mention:

Peter Friend and Frank Pitt

First Prize:

Miriam Hurst and Dominic Thoreau

1000 word competition:

Title:

How I lost 300 kilos in a week.

Honourable Mention:

Miriam Hurst and Lorraine Williams

First Prize:

Alan Parker

Children's Competition:

Honourable Mention:

Lorraine Williams

First Prize:

Peter Friend

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