

THE PORK AUTHORITY

-PLUS-

Thanks to
Andy Trembley
For catching this great
Review of the 83rd World
Science Fiction Convention For us
here at the Pork Authority. This one came
across the aether and is FANTASTIC!

Interdiction, the 83rd World Science Fiction Convention or Lansing's Sojourn up the Clyde by Lansing Onderdonk

Just when you think Vincent Docherty can't worm his way deeper into the fannish recordbooks... no, I had better not continue in that vein, or he may just decide 4 isn't enough to be safe, and that he wants to be the only **5-time** WorldCon chair.

But I get ahead of myself. It's a year that ends in a 5 and a WorldCon that ends in a 3, so I must be returning from Glasgow. Glorious, foggy Glasgow, home of the immortal Armadillo.

Glasgow hasn't changed much since Interdiction.

Yes, I was there, and I remember it fondly, even if nearly nobody else was. Well, except for the money difficulties, but the Scots parliament was shown to be right in adopting the Euro, even if it was only because the English told them they couldn't continue to print their own bank notes. I must say, I kind of missed the games I had to play when I changed my money last time. They were a pain in the ass, but it definitely made things more exciting. The closest anything else came to that was smuggling Cuban cigars into the states back when I was in college.

But beyond the resurgence of international tourism, Glasgow really hasn't changed much since Interdiction. Not that most of you would know that. Quite a bit hasn't changed since Interaction. There's still an Armadillo at the SEC (I'm with the locals, I don't care how many letters they add, it's still the SEC). The Glasgow Science Centre's

business incubator is still birthing engineering and technology firms regularly, and the tower, while no longer the tallest building in Glasgow still is the only one that spins.

Let's try to get things moving in a more linear fashion, though.

I hate time-zone shifts, and this trip was no different. "Just take the damned drugs" you say. Yeah, and lose two days instead of just one. So on Tuesday I checked in at the Marriott, feeling out-of-sync, and caught the train over to the SEC. "MIMO in 2011" was already open (thank you, Mark Olson, for a joke with staying power), staffed this year by a crew of Finns heady from last year's success at FinnCon/World. Don't ever tell FinnFen that they can't do something; they broke even with the cheapest membership rate in history. After all, they do it for free. It's the only WorldCon I have ever attended where voting didn't get anybody a discount.

I'm not sure how I stayed up through the afternoon, particularly having spent it taking surreptitious nips of Finn vodka (and they were pouring doubles). I'm even less sure how I found myself finally taking a 2:00am train back to the hotel. I love Strathclyde Passenger Transport; 24-hour trains are a wonderful thing. 7-day tickets are a wonderful thing.

Wednesday morning came too early. I hate time-zone shifts.

After a really cheap breakfast at the Scottish Restaurant (McHaggis, anyone?) I caught a train back to the SEC. No, I'm just kidding. I hopped the train right off, and walked a block and a half to a nice little crepe shop that I found near the Science Centre and had breakfast there. It was really nice seeing so many of the little restaurants and shops I remember still open and thriving. Since it was early, and I was on the right side of the bank, I walked along past the Scottish Broadcasting building over to the Science Centre for a ride up the Tower.

The epoxy-based coating they put on the tower between Interaction and Interdiction has done wonders to protect it from the elements, even if some of the designs over the last few years have been, well, garish (the paint job during Interdiction was a giant finger, with another inflatable finger pointing up beside it, directed at England). The current design, though, is a repeat of the tower's second paint-job, making it once again the world's largest biro. Subtle, no. Funny, yes. One of these years I'm going to have to come while the tower is being painted; I want to see the hanging scaffolds in person; they're an engineering marvel.

The view of City Centre was great, and the new Royal Bank of Scotland tower (a modern reflection of the 700-year-old University tower across town) is incredible. The tower is perhaps the only place in the city proper where you can get a good view of the RBS building; it's huge.

It was nothing, though, compared to the view of the shipyards below.

The Clyde shipyards are a marvel to behold. They were a decade ago, and they still are. Glasgow maintains the glow of its industrial renaissance in a way no other city can. It helps, of course, that the shipyards, engineering firms, University and the Science Centre have such a tight relationship. Just upriver the Alm & Campbell yard was putting the finishing touches on a factory ship destined for Cayman City. Another dock held a floating resort being built for Royal Caribbean Lines.

Enough of the present, though, we've got the future (in its many possible forms) to think of.

Back across the river, **Dr. Who** and **Perry Rhodan** exhibits were being set up, along with a Jo Rowling retrospective (the largest panel was a collage of letters and postcards from fans who had come to fandom through **Harry Potter**). Dealers room and art show still weren't open (and I couldn't sneak in like I did in the exhibit hall), so I hopped over to visit folks in the Operations office.

There was a sign on the door with Robbie Bourget's face on it and the international "NO" symbol over it. Underneath, in tiny letters, it said "You're FanGoH. Have fun, we'll fix things." There

was, surprisingly, no Robbie in the operations room, but that was only because everybody, John included, was making sure she didn't have to work. I found her across the concourse at the coffee shop. "Nobody will know where I am! Everybody always comes to see me at ops!" Yeah, right. Obligatory tirade out of the way, she continued. "They all think this is driving me crazy. I know how well trained they are."

We watched as a crew mounted "engines" on the side of the Armadillo. Yes, there was still some mileage in the "Spaceport Glasgow" conceit from Interaction. I don't know who did the effects design, but when they "preheated" the engines they were visible in daylight. As things moved into evening, they proved to look absolutely glorious, but were overshadowed by the lighting job added to the SEC arena to make it look like a flying saucer. All in front of the skeleton of the floating resort being assembled around the clock.

Back in the Exhibit hall, the costume exhibit was going up, and featured a lot of work by Miki Dennis and Nicole Kipar (past Best-in-Show winners at Glasgow WorldCons). Someone pulled industry strings and had an impressive collection original studio costumes. Newsletter was getting started, but it was just their editorial office; it turns out that the printing office was being shared with the fanzine lounge. The Fanac Fanhistory Archive had just finished assembling its "Identify this Fan!" kiosks, and of course displayed a great deal of European fannish ephemera.

Fanzine lounge was at the Goat House... er... Moat House, one of the few properties on the Clyde that hadn't really improved since my first visit. They did, though, have a Real Ale pub in the lounge lobby, featuring two breweries (Interaction drank a brewery dry, and Interdiction, even without the international membership, seriously dented the city's supply of ale). They also had the printing office, and it was **IMPRESSIVE**. How Interjection got Gestetner to donate a half-dozen Digital CopyPrinters I'll never know, but I hear members of the Plotka Cabal were involved. I love the smell of mimeo ink in the morning.

Not satisfied to just run major

production on delightfully baroque technology, the fanzine lounge also sported the “Museum of Duplication Recreation” where you could pub your ish on laser printer, inkjet, impact printer, mimeo (thermofax, hand-cut and typewriter stencils), hectograph (ditto machine and gelatin), offset press (photographic paper “plates”), Xerox (yes, a restored 40-year-old Xerox machine) and a few other technologies that were even before my time.

I wish I could have spent more time over there (mostly for the Real Ale), but with more people attending than at Interdiction (there were more people on site already, and the convention didn’t really start for another 24 hours) I found myself pulled away regularly.

It’s not a convention if I don’t forget to eat, so I caught up with some other people who also forgot to eat. Kevin Standlee and Lisa Hayes were looking overdue for dinner, so I reminded them about a little sandwich place on Ederslie. Yes, they were at Interdiction too; Kevin presided over the shortest WSFS business meeting in history there (someone immediately submitted a motion to adjourn, strongly suggesting that we all go to said sandwich shop, and it carried).

There were, fortunately, no parties on Wednesday night, and I could catch up on sleep.

Thursday morning found the Fan and Pro galleries going up, with Chaz and Lynn Boston-Baden in the middle of things. Turns out Chaz was the Gestetner connection (not Plotka), and had a prerelease model of a portable PhotoPrint (if you think the CopyPrint is baroque, wait ‘til you see the inside of a PhotoPrint) to spin off new gallery pictures immediately.

The rest of the morning was mostly milling around until Opening Ceremonies. Opening ceremonies were surreal. They did follow the now-traditional “Spaceport Glasgow” vein, but since only a few hundred people went to Interdiction (did I just hear an official representative of the con refer to it as “Interdiction?” Wonders never do cease.), the “Interjection” was “Shit!” as in “Shit! You’re telling me that I spent an extra 10 years in cold-sleep on a long-haul and it’s 2025?”

Chairman Vincent Docherty, this time dressed in a kilt and lab coat, explained that there were sessions scheduled to help us re-assimilate into society, including a whole track of programme items that were supposed to happen at Interdiction but didn’t since the panelists “were stuck in cold sleep with the rest of you poor passengers.” The Lord Provost of Glasgow welcomed us and commiserated on our “ordeal” and the chairman of Alm & Campbell and his engineering director hinted that there might be jobs for us at the shipyard once we had passed all the psychological tests. Then again, they were all wearing “attending member” badges; we would see more of them throughout the weekend.

A bonus was we got a double-dose of GoHs. The GoHs for Interdiction were all there (yes, all still alive and attending), and were given special Interdiction badges. It turns out that all of us who were present in 2015 could also get Interdiction badges: near-replicas of our original convention badges, only the convention name had been changed. Someone (named Siclari) had the forethought to save the badge design files and the registration database, so it wasn’t difficult.

Thursday night I made myself go to the Real Ale pub, and it was a good thing; that was the last I saw of it for days.

Friday I went to a few programme items. Yeah, there’s a first time for everything. I really wanted to see Ian M. Banks’ Interdiction Author Guest of Honor panel which led into Charlie Stross’ Interjection Author Guest of Honor panel. Banks pretended it was still 2015, and it all went downhill from there. An extremely silly weekend was definitely in the works.

I’m not going to talk about the play on Friday night. I’m just not.

Parties were... odd. Even though there was enough space for all the conference events in the SEC, there were still program items in the Moat House. Parties were in conference facilities at the Marriott. At least with the late train service it was easy for people to get back and forth, but I still like North American WorldCons where everything is closer together.

The MoscoN (2017) thank-you party was hopping. Russian pop music, Russian food and gallons of vodka (they haven't run dry since their first bid party 20 years ago) kept the crowd happy and satisfied. They certainly kept me satisfied. I don't think I made any other parties (what, is somebody bidding for 2027? there's somebody to vote for?).

Saturday I volunteered to help with the Masquerade.

Well, there's more to it than that, but it was the whole day. If you've never been behind the scenes at a Masquerade, it's something slightly better than controlled chaos. Back in the day it was worse, but automated lighting and sound systems make for a much smoother show (assuming everything gets rehearsed and tested). I got to spend the day leading entrants to the stage so they could rehearse with tech, and the MD only had to stomp on two of them to keep up the pace.

Yes, that's a very short summary for about 8 hours.

The show itself went off without a hitch, with a great deal of credit going to Cathy and Paul Holroyd (who ran the show beautifully) and Marquesate (yes, the alter-ego), who was excellent in her first outing as a WorldCon MC. I can't say much of the show itself, I was repeating my earlier task of bringing contestants to the stage.

Half-time was another Interdiction joke; a dramatization of what happened on the bridge "while we were all in cold-sleep" à la *Lost in Space*, complete with *Star Trek* style "starship acting." It was kind of a stinker as a whole, but the good bits were really good.

When it was all over and the awards were given, some angel on the tech crew brought pints back for all of us. Much of the gang absconded to the pub, but I had an assignation at the Marriott.

Well, it was an assignation with some Slivovitz; Zagreb was bidding for the 85th WorldCon, and they were pouring slivovitz. There actually was a 2027 bid that I cared about. It was even a real bid, with conference facilities and hotel space and everything; nothing like that one in the late 80's. Chicago only had hot dogs (didn't they try that

before?).

I should know better than to hang out with Eastern Europeans and drink their liquor, but for some reason I always forget. Even 2 days in a row. I can't party like I used to and still spring back quickly in the morning.

Sunday was mostly spent on the Hugo awards. Or at least the portion of Sunday I was awake for. Toastmaster Frank Wu joked that the Hugo award was named for mid-20th century composer Hugo Montenegro, possibly one of the longest stretches for a "Hugo" joke ever made. Show ran smoothly, people kvetched about who won and who didn't, and the Hugo Losers Party (ably hosted by the Philadelphia 2026 committee) was a blast. Even better was the Retro-Hugo-Losers Party (yep, not just normal Retro-Hugo, but another Interdiction rerun) hosted by the Memphis 2016 committee. The joke was on them, though, when the third large party, supposedly an AnimeLA party turned out to be a Retro-Retro-Losers party, with Christian McGuire, Glen Glazer and Mike Donohue recreating the 2005 Hugo Losers Party, complete with L.A.con IV decorations and a 2005 Hugo award at the bar.

Oh, the new Hugo base? We did see more of Cameron Alm when he walked up on stage with the first Hugo. An artist-in-residence at Alm & Campbell collaborated with one of their hydraulics engineers to create a steam-era "stardrive" that actually had moving parts.

There's no rest for the wicked, though, or at least not enough, and Monday morning came early (are you seeing a pattern here?). Fortunately, the only thing I really **HAD** to be at was Closing Ceremonies. I did pop in on an "Alien Sex" panel but left pretty quickly. Bleah.

Closing Ceremonies, though, was a blast. The Psych department chair from the University of Glasgow was brought on stage to read the results of our evaluations. The more bookish members of the audience recognized her from her autograph line earlier in the weekend, although not by that name. She said that we were all a bunch of freaks with our heads in the clouds, disconnected from reality, and that extended cold-sleep had obviously left the lot of us

brain-damaged. This was answered by a resounding cheer. As she couldn't come up with an ethically sound reason to have us committed to an institution, or an institution with enough beds to take us, she had to release us on the unsuspecting public.

A dozen people rushed the stage, and began to fight over the microphone, all claiming to be Ben Franklin. A few even bore a passing resemblance to Ben Franklin. The best-dressed Franklin had breasts, though.

Jared Dashoff didn't look much like Ben Franklin in his suit, but he sure sounded like Ben Franklin. While shoving the other Franklins away from the microphone, he gave a resounding speech, exhorting us to come in one year to the colony of Pennsylvania, "where we shall be free from oppression! We are, and of right ought to be, free and independent fen!" Another Franklin finally made it to the mic and called for a "Glasgow Ale Party."

The Franklins all stopped. "That's the first intelligent thing anybody has said all day!" In unison. To the chant of "Moat House!

Moat House!" they marched out, leading everybody to the Real Ale Pub and the dead dog party.

There's something about a dead dog party at a British (well, formerly British) convention. Oh, that's right, it's generally really good. This was no exception. Everybody who wasn't packing to leave was there, relaxing, and tossing back pints. The Franklins did their best to stall the progress of the BASFA meeting-in-exile with arcane parliamentary maneuvering, but with limited success. Pints were had, and then there were none.

All that was left was the packing and the leaving. Oh, and sleep, glorious sleep.

A quick train ride to Glasgow Central, a transfer to the Airport Express line and it was all but over. Glasgow International is a model of efficiency, and I quickly boarded the old but nicely appointed Boeing 787 that did the daily run between Glasgow and San Francisco. I hate time-zone shifts, but at least the westbound jaunt is a bit easier to take, and it's always nice to be home.
