

Science Fiction/San Francisco

Issue #64

April 23, 2008

email: SFinSF@gmail.com

Editors: Jean Martin, Chris Garcia

Copy Editor: David Moyce

TOC

News and Notes	Chris Garcia and Caitlin M.	2
Letters of Comment	Jean Martin	3
Editorial.....	Chris Garcia	5
Dreams of the City	Column by España Sheriff	6
Making the Rounds of the Meetups	Jean Martin	7
This Old Fanzine: <i>Groggy</i>	Chris Garcia	9
Piracy for a Good Cause	Jean Martin	10
Journey of a TAFF Traveler: On to Wales	Chris Garcia	14
BASFA Minutes		22
Bay Area Fannish Calendar	España Sheriff	24

Art credits:

Page 4 - España Sheriff

Page 5 - Lynne H. Goodwin

Page 23 - Adrian Bourne

Science Fiction/San Francisco is the twice monthly news zine for the San Francisco Bay Area. All issues can be found at www.efanzines.com
Except as noted, all articles and photos are copyright 2008 by the original creators. Used with permission.

News and Notes

By Christopher J. Garcia
Editor

Sonoma Valley Film Festival came and went and it was a blast. There wasn't as much SF as usual, but they did debut the animated version of *Flatland* starring the voices of Martin Sheen and Kristen Bell. It's really fun. There was another short called *Driftwood* that was also very good. Genevieve Collonge will be writing a full review for the next issue.

Baycon's coming up faster than you know. Usually it's the last weekend in May, but this year it's the second to last. I'll be running the fanzine lounge so if you wanna help out, lemme know!

Costume-Con will be here so soon I can taste the Coffee Garden food! Expect a lot of fun and come on down! Saturday is the Science Fiction and Fantasy Masquerade and I'll be the MC. You're gonna want to be there for that, trust me.

The Babbage Engine has arrived at the Computer History Museum. It came and was installed. There was some trouble in shipping, so it's been a few days longer getting ready than we expected, but the big event all day on May 10th will be huge. At least one half of the SF/SF staff will be there and some of us will even be in costume! I'm going to be one of the operators that day, so I hope that you can join us in Mountain View and see it all. I'm working on getting a semi-official Steampunk afternoon set

up for sometime in early fall.

The Hugo nominations are out and I'm working on the Handicapping the Hugos issue of *The Drink Tank*. If you've got serious thoughts about what will or should win in any category, lemme know and I'll incorporate them in!

There are places where you can read some of the nominees for the awards. Go to www.denvention.org/hugos/08hugonomlist.php and you can click on various nominees to read, though some are only for members of the Worldcon in Denver.

Free Comic Book Day Celebration on May 3rd

On May 3, 2008, Illusive Comics & Games will be hosting a celebration for Free Comic Book Day (FCBD).

This is the first FCBD under the auspices of new owner Anna Warren and she intends to make it the best ever!

FCBD is an annual event when participating comic book shops give away free comic books to anyone who visits their stores. FCBD has been held for the past seven years on the first Saturday in May.

Born on June 1, 2007, Illusive Comics & Games is the current incarnation of Brian's Books (and Fanboy Planet Comics). Brian's is a mainstay of Santa Clara, having been around since the early 80s. The store is located at 2725 El Camino Real, Suite 105, Santa Clara.

For more information, visit www.illusivecomics.com

- Caitlin M.



Letters Of Comment

Lloyd Penney writes:

Seeing Chris is in seclusion catching up with his TAFF trip report, and doing a couple of *Drink Tanks*, and probably a few other zines, too, I thought I get back in the swing with responding to *SF/SF* 62.

Chris, I would have thought that with most kinds of scan, slightly tilted text can be righted. I have a scanner (not flatbed) function in my old HP all-in-one, and with the OCR function resident in it, I can straighten text blocks. I don't do it often, and I wouldn't mind getting a new printer, especially an all-in-one with a flatbed scanner in it.

Jean Martin replies: Ah, technology is wonderful isn't it? So many functions, so little time! I suppose it's a matter of taking the time to set things to right. I wish the machines could figure out these things themselves, but it still takes a human brain and human eyes to fix things. I take hundreds and hundreds of photos a month (thousands on trips) and it would be nice to just have a computer program to edit them. I mostly just delete shots that will need heavy editing and rely on taking lots of photos so I can be sure to have good ones. I basically compose shots as I take them and don't do edits unless absolutely necessary.

As far as scanning, same thing. Editing takes time and if a scan is acceptable, so be it. I'm waiting for the 12x12 Epson scanner to go down from its current price of \$2,500

to something more reasonable. I have a lot of scrapbooks from my hard-copy scrapbooking days that I would like to digitize for safekeeping and duplicating purposes.

How was the flying part of your trip, Chris? I hope you've been able to overcome your flying fears. You certainly had to do enough of it going across the continent and the Atlantic Ocean, and back. If you're banging away on the computer writing things up, you must be fully recovered. Is British fandom fully recovered? I haven't heard much in the way of convention reports.

I'm so impressed that Chris was writing on his laptop wherever he went! The story of him propping up his laptop on a museum piece and getting caught by a security guard is just so classic. I'm a paper and pen, old-style journalist myself. Laptops are just way too heavy and fragile for me to carry around. I did take my laptop with me to New Zealand but I still took notes and then transcribed them to my laptop every evening.

The last time I was in the U.K. was in 1969, visiting my grandparents in Ayr, Scotland. I've never been to London, but Yvonne and I are talking about perhaps going for a tour in 2010 or so. We'll have to see what the wallet says about that. I haven't had a good trifle in a long time, mmm...

London is my favorite city in the whole entire world! There's so much to see and do. I

love it there. I've promised myself to go every three to five years for the rest of my life. I hope you do get to go and experience it. There's so many fannish things to do there as well. I'm going to Portugal for a wedding in June and I have a layover in Heathrow. I don't know how I'm going to contain myself and not run out of the airport and see London! I suppose I'll be too busy changing planes to even think about it. And I even like Heathrow so I'll enjoy that part at least.

As for the wedding in Portugal, I'm so excited about it. Portugal really isn't on my "bucket list," so it took something like a wedding to entice me to go. I am looking forward to seeing the Magellan Monument in Lisbon. I hope the Portuguese have forgiven us Filipinos for killing Magellan when he was almost done circumnavigating the world. By the way, the couple getting married met on the Lord of the Rings New Zealand tour I was part of two years ago. We all seem to get together every year now. In 2006, I went to a wedding in Portland. In 2007, we all met for the Lord of the Rings musical in London. I wonder what will bring us together next year!

Last weekend was our own local SF convention, Ad Astra 2008, and we had a great time there, but of course, it was a little different for us because of the sudden passing of Sir Arthur C. Clarke. Yvonne, with the assistance of Apogee Books publisher Rob Godwin, got some quick

programming together to mark Clarke's passing, and to celebrate his work, especially the most recent projects he was involved with. Yvonne took the book from Ad Astra to our regular First Thursday pubnight, and from there, it will go to Eeriecon in Niagara Falls, NY and Corflu Silver in Las Vegas, and afterwards, Yvonne will give it to Rob Godwin, to take it to the International Space Development Conference coming up in Washington, DC before he ships it to the Clarke family.

That's a wonderful commemorative effort for one of science fiction's greatest writers. I myself have not read much of his work but I recognize his contributions and how influential he was to several generations of science and science fiction fans.

Ah, a filk con...as I type, FilKONtario 18 is wrapping up at a hotel about a 15-minute drive away. We have never been filkers, but we ran the con suite for the FKO committee for ten years. Guests at FKO 18 this year were vixy and Tony, Bill Roper, Heather Bruton, Marilyn Miller and the Bedlam Bards. FKO also holds the annual inductions into the Filk Hall of Fame.

Filk sounds like a lot of fun. I love to sing and perform but I don't think I have the improvisational skill and sense of humor required to be a filker. I'd like to check out more of it at conventions, but there's always so many things going on that I never wind up at filk programming.

I asked Yvonne about the Martian simulation area in southern Utah...it is modeled on a similar simulation area on Devon Island in Canada's far north. Both areas have the desolation of Mars, but with Devon Island



comes the added bonus of a simulation of Mars' cold temperatures. I met Dr. Robert Zubrin at a televised discussion forum last year in Toronto; he doesn't always come across as entirely sane, and he doesn't do well in discussion groups. It is possible that the Devon Island facility was already in use, which is why Crew 66 came down to Utah.

I would love to do something like this but I don't know if I'm not into roughing it and I'm also claustrophobic. And cold temperatures? Brrr... no thanks. I'm so glad my friend Mike did

it, though, so we could feature his experience in our zine.

How much was in the FFAT jar to bring Chris back home? What do you mean, a buck and a quarter?

Well, it was enough to bring him home. Welcome home, Chris!

All done for now...I am waiting for the Garcian onslaught of zines via eFanzines.com, so I will work on other zines to catch up, and then I'll brace myself. Take care, folks, and see you again soon.

Editorial

By Christopher J. Garcia
Editor

Let's take a moment to consider the weight of the situation. We're in a time where there are cons aplenty, you can almost always find a Ren Faire within a couple of hundred miles, there are re-enactments and so much more going on at any given moment that you can't hardly keep up. (That's why *SF/SF* was founded, to cover all of those areas like a fuzzy blanket of fannish love. It's what we do.)

Which is why Costume-Con is going to be the biggest event in the BArea this year, if not in numbers, at least in effect. You see, sometimes it's the little things that make the impact on the greater field.

I can think of one story, that of F-UNCon. The 1968 Westercon got dissolved into the 1968 Worldcon (which was held in Oakland at the Claremont), so there was no con on the books for the Fourth of July weekend. Chuck Crayne, Bruce and Diane Pelz and various others then went about setting one up. The F-UN stood for Futures Unbound, a group founded in LA at about the same time. The basic concept of the con was to test if large conventions were possible to run. The Worldcons of the 1960s were in the 1-2k range, a far cry from what they would be just a couple of years into the 1970s. In the program book, Crayne said, "Every F-UNcon attendee is participating in a unique experiment which

may help determine the future of science fiction fandom in general and fannish conventions in particular. The F-UNcon is an attempt to show that — when properly planned — the larger a convention, the better the convention."



This con went on and there were a lot of people there. It was larger than most Worldcons up to that point, and there was a lot of programming. They had several exhibits, including a photography exhibit put together by Walt Daugherty and an exhibit of *Star Trek* props and such. The entire thing turned out to be a big success and the Worldcon that LA got in the early 1970s was highly influenced by the way that F-UNCon was run. It was a financial success as well as a critical success. The Worldcons of today probably owe more to F-UNCon than to the Worldcons of the early years.

Now we're seeing a group of highly enthusiastic and capable people putting on a con in San Jose. The leadership that's pushing Costume-Con has really gone out of their way to make the best stuff possible. They've been steering towards a Costume-Con that'll focus on being a blast while still maintaining the bits that make a Costume-Con a Costume-Con. When it's all over, we could see folks who wouldn't normally be thinking of going to a Costume-Con thinking seriously about making the trip. That's what a big deal special con can do.

And I'll be there, MCing the SF&F Masq and generally being very Chris Garcia. It's at the DoubleTree, and that's like home to me. Always has been, always will be. We're in for a treat and I can't wait!

Dreams of the City

A Column by España Sheriff

I'm a bit of a culture vulture.

When traveling I naturally gravitate towards museums and landmarks, and am loath to pass a monument or historical marker without stopping to read the plaque. San Francisco is riddled with these sorts of things, of course, but in general when I think of them, I think of the Presidio and the Golden Gate Park area, with Civic Center running a fairly distant second, since the Main Library was a bit of a disappointment and I have so far not made it to the Ballet or the Opera or the new Asian Art Museum.

It wasn't until I began temping, first in the Financial District and then mostly South of Market, that I came to appreciate just how many interesting artistic and cultural hot spots are located in the few square blocks that form downtown SOMA.

In the first years I lived out here I rarely ventured much further West than the Virgin Megastore and the Ross on Fourth Street. During ConFrancisco I discovered the Moscone Center, of course, but in those days Yerba Buena Gardens and the Metreon didn't even exist, so there was not much to go back for. Sure, Jeffrey's Toys is cute, but it's also a little pricey and there are toy and comic stores closer to me. The Hobart Building was unknown to me until Borderlands and Tachyon began sponsoring their charity movie screenings and SFinSF

readings at about the same time I began working nearby. Even what is arguably the most famous landmark and most obvious destination for locals in the area, the gorgeous Ferry Building, was only recently reopened in 2003 after its extensive renovation was finally completed. So unless I happened to doze off on the MUNI train and wake up at Embarcadero it was rare to find myself down there, unless I had a job interview

The Museum of Craft and Folk Art — How can you not love a place that had a ukulele exhibit?

or a Greyhound bus to catch.

Then, a couple of years ago I started temping downtown and found myself exploring the surrounding area out of hunger, boredom and curiosity, and ever since then I have been fascinated with how much is packed in down there, especially South of Market at the Museum District.

I've already profiled the genre-friendly Cartoon Art Museum in one of my columns,

and it's still going strong with recent exhibits featuring Golden Age artist Creig Fessel, who created covers for *Detective Comics* during the 1930s, the art of Disney legend Mary Blair, as well as a book signing for David Hajdu's *The Ten Cent Plague*, a book about the infamous 1950's anti-comics crusades.

On just on that one block of Mission that houses the CAM you can also find the Museum of the African Diaspora which is currently hosting the exhibit Africa.Dot.Com about the changing face of communications on the African continent, the California Historical Society, and the GLBT Historical Society.

The largest and most recognizable museum in the area, SFMOMA, is right around the corner and the next block has the Contemporary Jewish Museum, which is set to reopen in June at its shiny new Daniel Libeskind-designed digs, looking like nothing so much as a freshly landed Borg cube, except unaccountably friendlier.

The dominant features in the surrounding landscape are the various buildings of Moscone Center, which surround the Yerba Buena Gardens, home of the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, and the Metreon building which sometimes hosts its own exhibits such as the recent Da Vinci and Titanic shows. But somehow there's still room and interest enough to sustain the Zeum, aimed at kids and often featuring science- and

technology-focused exhibits and events, the Museum of Craft and Folk Art (how can you not love a place that had a ukelele exhibit?) and the Society of California Pioneers.

The Academy of Art is seemingly located all over the place and aside from various gallery spaces which exhibit student paintings you can also catch a glimpse of the work of graduate illustrators on the 500 block of Mission, where the Academy showcases a rotating exhibit in its windows. The surrounding area is filled with all sorts of galleries as well, including the genre-friendly 111 Minna which many years ago hosted the exhibit I most regret missing, titled “Sci-Fi Western,” the nearby Catharine Clarke Gallery which has some interesting upcoming artists like Julie Heffeman and Timothy Cummings, and Varnish Fine Art which used to show episodes of *Firefly* and featured in my very first event write up of its Nemo Gould exhibit. Varnish is currently holding an multi-artist exhibit celebrating its five year anniversary, which will include Gould as well as other pieces with science fiction, fantastic and surreal overtones by artists like Jennybird Alcantara, Chris Anthony and Dylan Sisson.

Summertime is always the best time to experience everything the city has to offer. The cafes and restaurants start putting tables out on the sidewalk, the event listings are suddenly full of open studios, art walks, author events like Writers With Drinks and LitQuake, and outdoor movie screenings begin popping up all over the place. But even if all you have is your weekday lunch hour, there are still a thousand wonders within walking distance.

Making the Rounds of the Meetups

By Jean Martin
Editor

March 28, Friday
Legion of Rassilon
Carls Jr., San Jose

Friday nights I usually have three or four events competing for my attention. There are dances, meetups, scrapbooking sessions and seminars. I’m usually tired by the end of the work week so sometimes I’m not even up for doing anything. But I do love doing all these events and so I try to juggle them around so I get to go to one or the other every now and then. On March 28, I decided to go to the monthly Legion of Rassilon meeting at Carls Jr. in San Jose. I always enjoy going even though it takes forever to get there from Foster City and Friday night traffic on 101 South is always an exercise in patience.

I hadn’t been in a few months and so I was looking forward to seeing familiar faces, watching some episodes, and winning some prizes during the raffle. The agenda for the evening included an episode of *Shaun the Sheep* (which I missed) and two episodes from the second season of the *Doctor Who* spinoff, *Torchwood*. I have to say I’m enjoying Season Two of *Torchwood* a lot. Compared to Season One it’s less violent and sexy just for the sake of being violent and sexy. I liked that about Season

One but Season Two seems to have managed to have more interesting and even more original storylines. They’ve taken the show in directions I’ve never seen and don’t expect.

I had already seen the episodes that were slated to be shown on a big projection screen that night, “Adam” and “Reset,” but I like watching these shows with fellow fans. In the latter episode, The Doctor’s companion Martha Jones shows up in *Torchwood* for the first time.

Attendance has grown since I started going to these meetups in 2005, I believe. I guess with *Doctor Who*, *Torchwood* and now the *Sarah Jane Adventures* all being shown on BBC America, more people have been able to see and become fans of these TV shows. Which is just fantastic as I think these shows are among my all-time favorites.

In between episodes, there’s always a raffle and I always win something. This time, I won a *Doctor Who* glow-in-the-dark sticker book. I love stickers! Something to add to my meager collection of *Doctor Who* memorabilia. I do have the most important things, though: A sonic screwdriver and a Tardis.

For the next meeting on April 25, they will be showing the first two episodes of the fourth season of *Doctor Who*. *Torchwood* has just ended, quite magnificently I might add, and now *Doctor Who* has begun. I’ve already seen

both episodes but I might show up just because the Carls Jr. is just across the freeway from the Doubletree Hotel where Costume-Con will be held that weekend.

I have to say that somewhere around Season Three, which I actually didn't like as much as the first two seasons, David Tennant finally became the Doctor to me. Christopher Eccleston did such a great job in Season One that I was hooked on his persona as the Doctor, so much so that I thought of David Tennant as just a replacement. But now, he's actually my favorite Doctor. He's quirky and strange but can be brilliant and fearsome. He seems more approachable than Christopher Eccleston. I did enjoy Season Three but I'm just not raving about it like the first two seasons. I suppose it's because I found Martha Jones boring and her unrequited crush on the Doctor quite tiresome. Martha was really smart and capable, beautiful and stylish, but they really didn't do her character justice. Even with the U.K. DVD, they put the Master with the Doctor on the cover instead of Martha.

Anyway, the fourth season promises to be quite a treat. The first two episodes were fabulous! I really like Donna Noble, who was the Runaway Bride for the Christmas episode in 2006. She brings a new dynamic with the Doctor. She's not into him as a romantic partner and she's funny. She stands on her own as a strong character even though she's ditzy. And Rose, whom I love, will be back — but we don't know how, when or why yet. I can't wait to see the episodes she's going to be in, by myself or, more entertainingly, with the Legion of Rassilon.

For more info, visit:

www.legionofrassilon.org

April 4, Friday
Bay Area Actual
Private Home, San Jose

The next weekend, I was back in San Jose for another TV show viewing with a fan group. While it was not officially a meetup of Bay Area Actual, a local *Battlestar Galactica* (*BSG*) fan club, I found out about it through the Bay Area Actual Yahoo Group.

Bay Area Actual concentrates on the new incarnation of the series. I grew up with the old *BSG* and I was heavily inspired and influenced by that series. I love the beautiful costumes, the colorful characters, the adventurous and even mythical storylines. I have a hard time watching the new series with its dark and gritty look and dramatic and conflicted stories. I enjoy it as much as I can. It's sci fi after all. And I love Starbuck. Well, I loved the original Starbuck so it's no surprise that I like the new one as well — even though she's female! I think her devil-may-care and non-conformist attitude is appealing. She's also very passionate and thrives on danger and excitement. She lights up the screen in every scene she's in.

The last episode of Season Three ends with Starbuck reappearing in her Viper and saying she's been to Earth. Previously, her ship seemed to have blown up during a Cylon raid. So there's a lot of anticipation going into Season Four about how she's come back.

I was looking forward to the season premiere for this reason and also because the home where the meetup was going to be boasts a dedicated entertainment room. I had seen

photos of this room from previous viewings. There's a 120" screen, surround sound speakers, and two rows of theater-style seating. They're actually better than theater seats: two rows of four recliners connected to each other with cup holders. I was so spoiled lying back with my feet propped up watching the episode!

But before we actually watched the show, we gathered for pizza and drinks in the living room. I knew most of the people there, having seen them at other meetups and conventions. We all like the same things after all! We watched an episode of *Coupling* while we were all talking and eating. I've never seen *Coupling* before. I'm not really into sitcoms, but wow, it's a hilarious and highly entertaining TV show! Apparently, the show's writer, Steven Moffat, also wrote some of my favorite *Doctor Who* episodes: "The Girl in the Fireplace," "The Empty Child" and "The Doctor Dances."

After we watched the *BSG* episode "He That Believeth in Me," which left the viewer with more questions than answers, we talked about upcoming cons, and I went around the room admiring an impressive collection of sci fi memorabilia. There was a light saber, a *Firefly* ship replica, an *Enterprise* model, a Dalek, K-9, sonic screwdriver, autographed posters, and the like. Then we went downstairs and played pool. It was quite a fun evening.

I suppose I'll have to watch upcoming episodes of *BSG*, since the identity of the final five Cylons still hasn't been revealed. I hope they answer that question before the end of the season!

For more info, visit:

www.bayareaactual.com

This Old Fanzine

Groggy
by Eric Mayer

By Christopher J. Garcia

Editor

Most people go to England and bring back strange candy, maybe snow-globes from the Tower of London, or some sort of Changing of the Guard memorabilia so that folks will believe that they were, in fact, in England. Me? I bring back fanzines. Not only fanzines, but American fanzines.

Eric Mayer is a guy I've never met. I know him because he writes some damn fine articles, is a class act who LoCs my zines, and a guy who can be counted on to say something and stick by it. Gotta love that in a fellow human. The dude frequently mentions his former zine, *Groggy*, when writing to me. I had never seen a *Groggy* in the pulp, as it were, and I always felt kind of a lesser man for that fact. I actually found a couple up for sale on eBay, but the prices were out of my league. I figured some would come my way someday.

At Eastercon, there were hundreds of zines scattered across several tables.; some noted as American. These were from Mr. Greg Pickersgill, my father's all-time favorite fan. His collection is well-known and he was doing some

clearing out of stuff he didn't think he needed. I applaud his decision because it meant that I could get my hands on some of the stuff I'd never seen.

First, I went through the English zines. There were some nice things in there, but nothing that made me go Woohoo! OK, that's not true. There were a couple of *Hyphens*, a few *Vectors* from the 1960s and a zine or two from the 50s. I went through the first table of American stuff and found several that tickled my fancy. There were many *Sticky Quarters*, a small zine which was delightful reading on the train up to Solihull. There were a few things from the 1950s, including one that was published from the house where I lived when I was born...only 20 years before anyone in my family lived there! That was weird. I can't believe I remember the old Collingwood Road house. I think the only reason I do is because of the Australian Football team, the Collingwood Magpies. There were issues of *Trap Door*, *YHOS*, *Rune* and a dozen other titles that will someday be featured in This Old Fanzine.

And among the zines on the table were several issues of *Groggy*.

I was in Heaven. I picked them up, put them in my bag and walked back to my hotel room where the Lovely and Talented Linda waited for me to return.

"What'd you get?" she asked.

"Gold," I said as I laid the haul out on the table, grabbed one of the *Groggys* and sat down on the couch to read.

The issue has a simple cover, what appears to be a newspaper clipping about the results of a Rochester Orienteering Club meet where Eric Mayer took second place. The zine turns out to be from the far gone year of 1991. On the second page, there's an immistakabled illustration from Mr. Terry Jeeves, the legendary fan artist and writer who was awarded the Rotsler this year. I was glad to see it, because the guy is great and one of the few connections to the start of British fandom that's still around. The piece is a wonderful little robot. The editorial beneath it is pretty good, though it's kinda sad. It talks about Eric's first marriage fall-out and how he was putting together his new life. It's an article I've seen from other folks as well. It's the "What The Hell Just Happened" article that talks about the rebuilding process and apologizes for the important stuff taking up so much time from the little things like zines and writing letters.

There are two other articles on running, including one about the Green Mountain Road Race that was a big deal for some friends of mine back in college. The other article about running gets more in-depth about Eric's running philosophy, which is actually very moving.

This Old Fanzine, Page 23

Piracy for a Good Cause

By Jean Martin
Editor

Pirates are not known for their charitable natures — quite the opposite in fact. But as always, Bay Area pirates don't follow the norm. The first annual Pirate Ball and Silent Auction was held last March 21 at the Verdi Club in San Francisco to benefit the Children's Hospital and Research Center Oakland.

My friend Thad told me about this event. He's a serious pirate costumer and I've admired his pirate costume in the past. He's even going to be on the cover of an upcoming issue of the graphic novel *She Buccaneer*. So I figured if he thought the ball would be good, it would be. The promotional web site touted the event as "an evening of music, raffles and piratical fun for all." Sounded like my cup of tea!

In addition, I was excited about going to a club I'd never been to. The Verdi Club has a 400 square foot lounge with a full bar and a 2,500 square foot dance floor. Did someone mention dancing? Of course, I'm so there! I also wanted to try out a new pirate costume I've put together that I will probably bring to Baycon with me, since the theme of this year's Baycon is pirates.

I suppose the recent revival of the mainstream's interest in all things pirate can be attributed to Disney's *Pirates of the Caribbean (POTC)* trilogy. Honestly, I didn't like them much, as the stories seemed too disjointed and



Actor Isaac C. Singleton Jr. and pirate gals.

Photo by Jean Martin

meaningless...mindless entertainment for the lowest common denominator. I do enjoy the occasional mainstream blockbuster, but not in this case. I did like the characters, costumes, scenery and action sequences. Johnny Depp

is unforgettable, if somewhat disturbing, as Captain Jack Sparrow. Keira Knightley and Orlando Bloom are always a treat for the eyes. Geoffrey Rush, who's always marvelous in any role, is the only actor that stood out to me as realistic.

In any case, it seems there has always been a core group of people who take pirate costuming, and even pirate living, seriously. I usually see them at Renaissance Faires, and their costumes are quite elaborate and impressive. They also have an aura of danger and excitement to them. I've also seen a few at Dickens Fair.

I didn't quite know what to expect at the ball — I didn't know if anyone I knew other than Thad was going. I was half afraid it would be regular San Francisco club goers dressed in store-bought pirate costumes. "A (store-bought costume) pirate! Horror!" (That's from the Gilbert and Sullivan operetta *Pirates of Penzance*, by the way, which I saw on Broadway when I was a kid. It starred the then-unknown Kevin Kline and the teen heartthrob Rex Smith. On a side note, I actually now have a friend in Penzance!) I'm not really a costume nazi but I have found, based on my experience, that I have more in common with people who costume and like to party, rather than people who like to party (and drink) and just happen to costume.

I was reassured by the fact that the promotional web site encouraged guests to

come “dressed in their best pirate gear, so they can enter the best dressed pirate and sexy rum wench contests. The contests will be judged by our *POTC* actors.” Oh yes, three of the pirates from the movies would be in attendance. That lent a bit of Hollywood glamour and prestige to the proceedings.

Thad and I got there a little after 8:00 p.m. when the doors opened. We were offered a nice dinner of Greek food. I’m not sure why that type of cuisine was appropriate for a pirate gathering, but it was delicious! The Verdi Club was small but had a nice, old San Francisco atmosphere to it — quite cozy and somewhat elegant. And well, shiver me timbers: most of the 300 attendees were dressed in amazing pirate gear!

Right away I put aside notions of even entering the costume contest. I was blown away at how decorative and extraordinary some of the costumes were. There was a table next to mine where each person was dressed to the nines in pirate splendor. It also seemed to me that most of the people knew each other. That’s when I surmised that the pirate organization that put this on must be a big one and they get together for more than just events like these. The event was actually put on by “Pirates 4 CHOC,” a group who previously staged pirate-themed fundraisers in Southern California. (“CHOC” stands for Children’s Hospital of Orange County.) The Pirate Ball was their first foray into Northern California.

Sure enough, these were some of the same people I’d seen at Renaissance Faires. I complimented one of these women on her costume and she smiled at me and said,

“What costume?” Some of the people are also professional pirate entertainers such as the emcee Captain Jack Spareribs. His real name is Ace Miles and he runs the Pirates of Harbor Bay, a group of “Fantastic Piratical Entertainers.”

After dinner, Skip Henderson and The Starboard Watch, a group of sailors who sing nautical songs, took to the stage and played a lot of fun tunes. I’ve seen them perform at Dickens Fair where they’re part of the regular entertainment, I believe. Several people started to dance and they knew how to dance in the manner of sailors and pirates as well. I was

**Well, shiver me timbers:
most of the attendees
were dressed in
amazing pirate gear!**

itching to dance but I had just had dinner and I was still taking in all the sights and sounds, as well as taking lots of photos.

At the other table next to mine sat Isaac C. Singleton Jr., an actor who played Bo’sun in *POTC*. He’s the tall, imposing pirate in Captain Barbossa’s crew. I went over to say hello and take a photo. Then I met the second *POTC* actor, Vince Lozano, who played the grenade-hurling Jacoby. He was very nice and friendly. I didn’t get to meet Treva Etienne who was the pirate Koehler in the movie, but I did get to see him give out the prizes for the silent auction.

The items being auctioned were on several tables next to the stage. There was *POTC*

memorabilia by Master Replicas as well as a few signed, autographed and framed photos of Johnny Depp. There were also various other Bay Area memorabilia from sport teams and the like. The starting prices were pretty steep but I suppose it’s for a charity. There were also several vendor tables, which made it seem like an indoor Renaissance Faire. There was one by Sea Wolf Clothing, owned by one of the founding members of Pirates for CHOC, Matt Stone. There was Barbossa Leather as well as Seawolf Trading Company who donated the Master Replica items for the auction.

Seawolf Trading is an actual pirate store in Fremont. I’d never heard of it till then and I had no idea that there was such a demand for pirate goods, but that’s just awesome! I hope to visit the store someday. They have everything from costumes to toys, memorabilia and even décor. There were other clothing and even artwork tables. And one for Puzzle Pirates, one of the sponsors of the evening, which was publicizing its online game.

After the silent auction, local indie rock group Plasterkatz began their set. They were wearing pirate costumes as well. I liked their music a lot. They were very original, lively and their songs were danceable. They had a table to sign up for their mailing list and they were also selling their CDs. The lady at the table after their set was someone I recognized. I’d seen her perform at Dickens Fair. Her name is Nicole and she dances with the Siamsa Scottish Dancers at Fezziwig’s, which is where I spend most of my time dancing at Dickens. My friend Christina is friends with another Siamsa dancer and that’s how I know of Nicole. I’ve admired



Plasterkatz performing Pirate-style.

her performing outfit at Dickens and she wore it that evening, albeit more pirated up. I also ran into another friend of a friend, Elena, whom I'd met through Al "Rackstraw" Megas. You often see Al at events portraying Captain Jack Sparrow with a very authentic look and manner. Al is also a very good writer and contributes to *SF/SF* occasionally.

Other than Nicole and Elena, I didn't know anyone else. It's surprising to find a costuming group that isn't connected with all the other groups I'm with. Perhaps this one will be included in my sphere of fandom in the near future. Apparently this pirate crowd will be at the Vallejo Pirate Festival June 14-15, which I will definitely attend this year since I missed the first one last year. Several of my friends and acquaintances have remarked how great that one was. I am a pirate too, after all, even though I'm more of a space pirate.

During Platerkatz's set, Thad told me that there was a photo studio set up in the bar area for people who wanted their photos taken. I went and was not prepared for the professional setup that was there. The photographer, Tiger Lee, brought all of his professional gear up from Southern California for this event. He had a proper backdrop with a scene of the sea and a pirate ship. He had lights, props, a photo printer

and everything! He even had some of his work set up to show people, just like what you would see at a street fair. His photos were incredible! They're not just pictures, they're art! Everyone looked good in the photos. Some of them were huge and looked like paintings. Those were several hundred dollars.

I settled for a 5x7 photo of me in my pirate getup. He gave me a sword and a pistol to hold and told me how to pose. I felt comfortable taking direction from him and all the photos turned out good. It was a tough choice just picking one. I had fun posing and having my photo taken. Thad did so a little later too.

Tiger Lee had a photo of himself in pirate garb, with a story next to it saying he's a pirate from the South China Sea. He was also selling Molly Roger pirate stuff for women and various other piratey things. I bought a calendar of his sexy wenches. I'm not into sexy wenches, I just loved the artistry of the poses and scenery. And I got a lot of inspiration for future pirate costumes from the calendar as well.

The costume contest in the main hall began, and I went to take photos. My costume was good but it wouldn't pass muster. The contest



Treva Etienne and Vince Lozano present auction prizes.

was quite a hilarious affair. It was very disorganized but in a very entertaining manner. Treva and Vince were two of the judges for the women in costume, and Elena was one of the judges rounded up at the last minute to judge the male costumes. Then it just descended into chaos, with contestants bribing judges with alcohol and certain favors, all in good-natured pirate fun. There were a lot of cleavages and legs exposed on the female side, and lots of booty shown on the men's side.

The winners were an interesting pair. They weren't the ones with the most beautiful costumes but they were the most entertaining. The woman who won was at my table at dinner and was very outgoing and friendly. She had on a "dirty girl" pirate costume. Literally. She wore a rag-like ensemble complete with ashes and lots of paraphernalia hanging on her belt. The man who won looked similar with a fake eye that looked like it had been slashed with a sword and pants with holes.

Afterwards, the group of nicely attired pirates invited Thad and myself to join them in a photo with Treva. We were a huge group and we all had to squish in to accommodate everyone in front of Tiger Lee's backdrop. I was right next to Treva in the photo and it was so much fun being with a group of



Pirate Sassy with Vince Lozano.

cool and friendly costuming folk.

We then went back for the raffle. There were some great prizes but Thad and I didn't win those. They did raffle off all the décor in the hall including *POTC* place settings and the flags off the walls. Thad and I won a flag each and I gave mine to Thad as I didn't think I needed

a pirate flag to decorate my place. Although come to think of it, Foster City has such a nautical look and feel to it, and I live right next to several bodies of water (a pool, a pond and the Belmont Slough), that a pirate flag would probably fit right in. I don't know what my neighbors and landlord would say about that, though!

Skip Henderson and Plasterkatz both did second sets. It was during Platerkatz's second set that I was finally able to dance but it wound up being their last number for the evening. The ball ended earlier than I expected and much too soon. But it was great that I was even able to go, considering that most people I know didn't even know about it.

The entertainers and special guests, I found out later, donated their time to raise money for the event. Pirates with hearts of gold instead of gold in their pockets. What a nice and refreshing thought!

For more information, visit: pirates4choc.org (charity organization)

www.pirateswag.com (Sea Wolf Trading Company)

www.pirate-portraits.com (Tiger Lee Pirate photography)

www.norcalpiratefestival.com (Vallejo Pirate Festival)

www.shebuccaneer.com (graphic novel)

Journey of a TAFF Traveler: On to Wales

By Christopher J. Garcia
Editor

Editor's Note: SF/SF is pleased to present another excerpt from Chris Garcia's forthcoming report about his recent visit to the UK, courtesy of the Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund (TAFF). Please feel free to email Chris (SFinSF@gmail.com) about getting access to the full TAFF Report.

Chapter 17: Sunday - Every Day is Like Sunday. Every Day is Silent and Grey

There's a fascinating book waiting to be written about the different kind of men's room stall locking mechanisms in use in the UK. I'm sure I'm the only one who would find it fascinating, but I would. There was this one that was a post with a slot in it and you had to turn the hidden key-thing in the door to lock it. It was weird. I'm just thinking about that since I've just used that one at Paddington Station while waiting for my train to Cardiff to leave.

I woke up at 3:31, which is when my room told me I was supposed to wake up. I had put in a wake-up call for 6 a.m., but it didn't happen. It went off at 3:31 instead. No bother, since it was already 4:31 according to the official time. I sorta dozed for another half-hour, then got up, took my shower, checked my mail, and then it was off to Paddington.

Since I was supposed to be flying on Sunday on British Airways (I had to get back

early and that meant that a BA ticket was bought for me for Sunday), I kept an eye open. It just so happens that this was the weekend of the opening of Terminal 5 at Heathrow, which meant that BA moved all their services there. That was not a great move because they weren't fully trained on the stuff yet and that meant that there were



delays and flight cancellations. Right up until Sunday, which was when I was flying. My flight for the afternoon was canceled on Saturday morning, with me getting a standby ticket for a flight to LA. That never happened as that flight was also filled. Luckily, I still had my ticket to SFO for Monday morning. When I hadn't heard from the airline by Sunday morning, I canceled my ticket, wrote to work telling them what had happened and that I would be in on Tuesday, and then went into town to catch the 8:03 train from Paddington to Cardiff.

Cardiff is the setting for *Torchwood*. I love that I get to wrap up my unofficial, accidental *Torchwood* tribute trip with a trip to Cardiff. I just want to be able to say that I went to Wales since I had the extra time now. (And sadly, if I had known that this all would be happening, I'd have headed off to Peter Sullivan's place yesterday and would be enjoying being licked by his new puppy. I hate the way things work sometimes...like when life kicks you in the crotch and forces you to miss Roller Derby!!!)

I got on the train and saw that they had a First Class area. I had bought a First Class BritRail pass just in case, and now I got to use it on my first (and likely only) trip to Wales! The space was comfortable, a big table with power outlets, and the chairs were comfy leather. I felt like this made it worthwhile getting the First Class pass since I'd be on here for more than six hours while I toddled back and forth. The train was late, which sucked, but it was also a good thing as it gave me a chance to type in peace before heading off, with the first stop being at Reading. We were half an hour late, but it was OK, I was really just going there to be ready to come right back. I just had to set foot in the city, maybe get a couple of photos, and then run back to London, to Heathrow, to the Radisson, where sleep and a flight home waited for me.

I spent a fair deal of time thinking about the TAFF trip overall. There's a lot to think about, and now with me on a train, delayed to Cardiff, I've got the time to do it. The rest of the

trip, I was far too busy having fun and running around. St. Linda was around and when she's around, I can't think because she's too wonderful to take my mind off of. It's this time, this trip to Bountiful as it were, that's leading me to give it serious thought.

I love life. That should be obvious. I've always known that I've had it easy, had a special and fairly charmed life. Even when terrible things happen...like not getting to see Roller Derby, I know that I'm blessed to have the options to worry about stupid things like that. I know that fandom has treated me like something magnificent and I've tried to live up to the hype, but I seldom have, I know. I am, at best, a strangely interesting curiosity who lives his life with the hope that I might make a few other folks smile. I guess I'm an entertainer in the end. The guy who lives for the applause. Only I don't live for the applause. I live to set up the applause. I guess I'm a character actor in fandom. Only I'm far too wacky to be that guy either. I sometimes get the feeling that no matter what I do, I'll be filled with self-doubt. Wait, I KNOW that no matter what I do I'll be filled with self-doubt, but too often it's come out that what I most fear will happen happens, even when I'm not looking for it to happen. It's weird that I can pull off minor miracles, but it's the little stuff that I never seem to get right. Go figure.

Wow, this might be why Kevin Standlee loves trains so much. It's a great place to take out your emotional baggage and really give it a serious inspection.

The trip was gorgeous once we got out of Reading. There was green and gold and orange and brown. There were manor houses, some

obviously older than the idea of the Modern City. There was water, rivers and a couple of lakes. One had a pair of rowers about to start a friendly race, I think. An old church passed by. Really old. The whole thing looked more like a Roman fort than an Anglican church. More farms and horses. No sheep though. I imagine that entering into Wales is like descending from cruising altitude through the clouds...only with sheep playing the part of the clouds.

We stopped and I made sure to take



photos to prove that I had been to Cardiff. I mean, who would believe that a fool would do all that in one day when he's leaving in less than 24 hours? No one in their right mind, I can tell you that. I hardly took any pictures this trip. I managed to get a few of the British museum and some of the *Dr. Who* exhibit, but not much of anything else. Linda got more of the Science Museum and the V and the A, but I didn't take many of those. I did get a few good ones of stuff that really caught my eyes.

We passed a series of power-generating windmills. These were the kind we have in Palmdale or the Altamont Pass. No, Altamont isn't just for Hells Angels and the Rolling Stones. They were far off, but when there are windmills, you know that's a place that gets fast winds often. I might have to look into where we were at the time we passed them. It was about 9:40 in the a.m. after we left at 8:32. I'm betting I can nail it with GoogleMaps or Earthview. Modern Life wins again!

The train ride was very fast. We went through Didcot Parkway, Swindon, Kemble, Stroud, and Stonehouse before we got to Gloucester. That was a city I had heard of. I got photos of every station. That was my goal. I had to think of the future and nothing is more permanent than a digital photo taken with your girlfriend's camera! That, like the pieces in the British Museum, will far outlive anyone looking on them today...unless life extension gets really good. Man, that'd be sweet! Watching our possessions decay and fade away before we do. Never in the history of man has that happened.

We stopped at Swindon for a while. There was some sort of problem. This trip was getting terribly long. Longer by the minute. I was determined, though. I was going to Wales and I didn't care what it took to make it happen. The stopping and delays were getting me down though. I was looking at a noon arrival at this point and that's not too late. I figured an hour in Cardiff would give me time to get photos, but I would have liked to have lunch there and maybe walk around and get a little lost. I'd end up doing that anyway, even if I just stayed in the station.

I would be at the airport 24 hours from

the moment the train left Swindon Station. I'd be getting ready to get on that plane and come back home to my little apartment and the World's Most Uncomfortable Couch and Linda and picking up Evelyn and watching DVDs and playing Nintendo 64 while listening to MP3s on my iBook and my little kitchen and the fuses that keep blowing when I try to make toast. I miss all of that, you know. Two weeks away from what I call my life is the longest I've ever gone without it. I really think I will enjoy getting back to the grind. It's something that I never thought I'd miss, but I do. I really do. This trip was wonderful and it might just turn out to be the same thing as Billy Crystal's trip to the cattle drive in *City Slickers*. I guess you can just call me Chrissy the Kid.

I wonder what will happen with this report? Am I typing it merely for the sake of my typing it? Am I simply putting words on the screen in a form of masturbation hitherto unknown? TAFFsturbation, perhaps? I'm not sure. I know it's overly long and too detailed and not even funny, but it's the best document I could think of to make mark of my trip. I think that performing the report while I was on the trip was the best idea. The laptop allowed me to write in situations where it wasn't possible even just a few TAFF trips ago. It also allowed me to record everything without having to rely on notes. It reeks of freshness, I imagine. That's a bad thing in a way. It has no depth of field of memory. It's hard to know what's really important until there's been time for folks to let it stew, but on the other hand, this report isn't the last I'll ever write about this trip. This isn't the final word. This is the authoritative word. This is the

starting point, the piece that all others will hang off of. While I might have forgotten a number of things great and small, this is the record of my movements with the most clarity. I plan on filling the pages of many zines with stories that either happened on the trip or have a significant part of their origin in it. This may become a lifelong hobby, writing about this one two-week trip. Who knows? I do know that y'all gonna be sick of it.

Funny thing. That delay turned into a cancellation. I had to detrain and change to



another train since all trains heading to Swansea were canceled. That was well and truly suck, but it was OK since I was only going for a short visit anyhow. I got off and sadly the first class cabin on this train was overrun with passengers. There must have been a dozen or so. I'd had a cabin all to myself last time and now here I was sharing with chumps who had either woken up later than I did or decided that First Class was their reward for having to wait for this train to come to get them to wherever they were going. We waited a

bit and then headed out to parts Welsh.

I was getting tired of Transport. Back home, I had a car waiting for me, waiting to take me wherever it was I wanted to go. I could get behind the wheel and drive. I was still an hour and forty-five minutes from Cardiff and about an hour and a half from entering Wales. I had a mission and I wasn't going to let anything stop me. Slow me down, sure, but not stop me. I was going to set foot in Wales.

The train moved through towns and such built into the side of hills. These looked old old old and the buildings showed ages of change. One of them was right before Stroud and it was amazing. I also passed by a genuine bog. I'd always wanted to see a real bog. It looks a lot like a swamp. I love swamps. I've been to a few of those, especially the ones in and around Dunwoody, Georgia. These were particularly English swamps, and thus, bogs. Go figure.

We passed through Gloucester and I saw several old churches. They were nice. Then Gloucester Cathedral came into sight. It was magnificent. It was huge, sprawling, and even with churches that looked a century older, it was the piece that took the eye. I only got to stare at it for a minute or so, and there were ruins that looked like they were either once a part of the cathedral grounds or Roman in nature, but it was impossible to tell. Another reason I wish I'd had more time. I wish I could come back. Still, I dipped my toe into waters I thought I'd never get a chance to play in.

The countryside was beautiful again. There were sheep. We must be getting closer and closer to Wales. There were big sheep and baby sheep and all sorts of sizes in-between happily

munching and crunching on grasses and such. We ran alongside a wide river, or maybe it was an inlet or a bay. I have no idea. I'll consult a map of England when I get back home. Then a big ass suspension bridge came into sight. No idea which one it was, but it was cool looking. Sadly, photos from the train look like hell and the bridge didn't look right. We entered a tunnel, no clue where, and I was hungry, so I went and got a delightful roast chicken and stuffing sandwich, a Coke and a Kit Kat. The sandwich was great. Good food has followed me from place to place and I am so glad of that.

I knew we entered Wales because I saw a sign that was in English and then there were all these consonants that only vaguely differed from what a kid would spell with letter blocks. That was obviously Welsh and I knew that all signs in Wales had to have both on them. Sweet. I'd entered a new principality. That's important to remember because for all the talk of Wales being its own country, it is, in fact, merely a principality. We had a battle over that fact for ages at The Britannia Arms Trivia night in 2000 or so. I really should start going back someday. I'm sure they've forgotten me by now.

I guess I expected the farms that swung by my view to be different from the ones we have back on the roads between San Jose and Yosemite. but they all look the same. I guess I was expecting dignity or something. Instead, there were the same rusting cars, twig-looking children's playsets, and standing puddles of water that seemed browner than dirt. The small towns and the beautiful churches and such were so different, so much more interesting than the gas station towns you drive past in the hills, but

the farms weren't like I had expected. I guess it was my problem.

The trip was slowly coming to an end. I was looking forward to seeing a bit of Cardiff and then jumping right back on the train and heading back to the hotel. First we stopped at Newport in South Wales. It was a city like many others I've seen, only they had ruins right as you pulled into the train station. How cool is that? I wanted to get out, but I never know how long these trains are gonna stop, so I stay near my seat, only making sure that I get the photo to



prove that I had been there. That's the important part (and you can tell from the way I put together the photos for this one, can't you?).

I was again on my own in the coach after Newport and I put on some quiet music (I didn't have any headphones) and watched the train yards and the thick trees and shrubs roll by. I was in Wales, dammit! This is freakin' awesome, no matter what the view happened to be. After a bit, it opened up and there were cows and horses in sweaters and sheep. Always sheep. I got the

feeling that the countryside wouldn't be with me much longer. That was OK, I didn't need it. I was in Wales and that was enough. That and there were more bogs. I'm getting to like bogs. The swans I passed on the way were huge. They sure grow 'em big out here. I saw my first pigs on this whole trip, eating comfortably by the side of the water, a rusting Ford Anglia sitting door handles deep in the drink. I could have been in Alabama for that view!

The bathrooms on this train had one of my favorite long-gone pieces of technology: the roller towel. I love those things. There used to be a bathroom at Ken's Family Restaurant that had one in the 1997 period, but that ended by the Millennium. I was made sad by that fact. The bathrooms on trains are usually pretty grotsky, but these were quite nice. It might have been the First Class thing working in my favor. I hope so, because putting up the money for the First Class upgrade (after the Fund paid for the basic portion) was a risky proposition. I'm so recommending BritRail First Class to anyone traveling to Wales from London. It's not ultra-plush, but it's comfy and right.

I got off at Cardiff Central and walked out of the building. It turns out that Cardiff Central isn't in the center of everything, but it's in a good enough location to make an hour and a half visit worth it. It's right next to Millennium Stadium, which is on the river. Which river, you might ask?

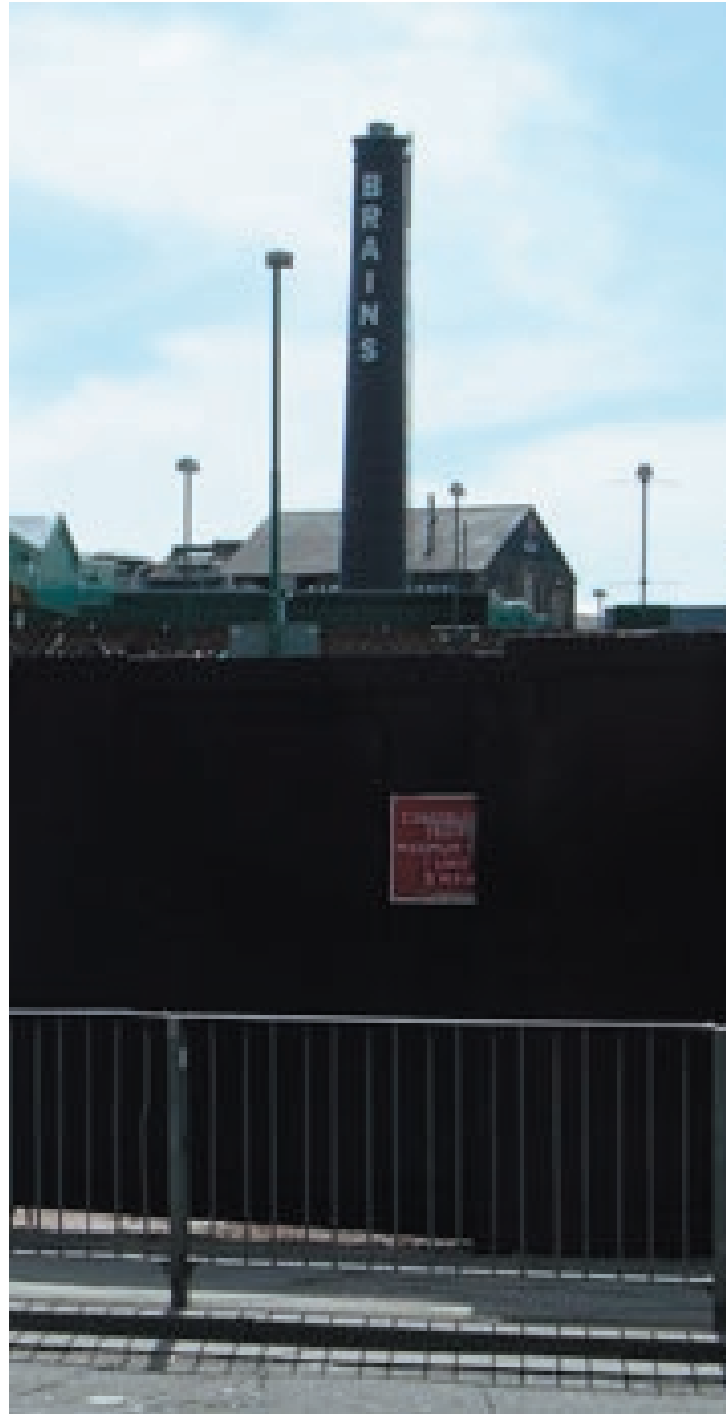
The River Taff.

That's right. The River Taff. I have been guaranteed that the river was named before the fund was founded. I'm not so sure. I headed to the river and walked along the banks for a while

before turning and coming upon an industrial area. Then it got kinda iffy. I stuck with it and then came to a part that was moderately OK. It was obviously a former Rave district that was prior to that a warehousing area. There were signs for parties and former nightclubs that covered over signs for old foundries and breweries that were from at least fifty years ago. After that it was new gated communities which were trying to attract new buyers with promises of Waterfront Living and Wide Views. It was the same thing you'd see in any number of California cities...only the signs were copied right after in Cymru. It was kinda cool. Once I found those apartments, I knew I was on the right track and headed towards the water, eventually getting back to the path and walking back around to the Millennium Stadium again.

I walked through a small outdoor farmer's market which smelled like heaven. Fresh fish and beef and grilled onions and cooking burgers and fennel and cumin and the ever present twinge of pepper-covered steaks filling the air. I could hardly resist buying everything in sight, but I didn't. I simply just walked along the path right to Cardiff Castle. The castle is huge, but I didn't really feel like going on a tour of it. I took some photos and then headed into the Holiday Inn to use the restroom (the stall used a simple bar and bracket design for its lock) and then I grabbed as many pamphlets as I thought I might need to prove that I had, in fact, gone to Cardiff.

I walked out and got some more photos of the castle. It had cleared up a great



deal and the sky was lovely. There was a factory that had a giant smokestack. I thought I had read it wrong, but indeed my fears were confirmed. There must be millions of zombies descending on Cardiff because they have a Brains factory right on the water. They practically call to them across the Taff. Come here, get Brains. I took photos of that stack, wondering how long it would be before Cardiff fell to the shambling horde and then how long it would take before anyone else noticed.

I walked towards the train station again. Now, I know what you're thinking. *Why the hell go nearly four hours out just to walk around the city a little and then head home?* Your point is well taken, but here's the thing: I love trains. I'm not a nut about them, but there's not much better than to travel via a train. That, and I don't think I could have fit it in and still kept my budget for the trip. I would have liked to have seen that shot from the opening of *Torchwood* of those three cool buildings right on the water, but it was not meant to be. I did get to see enough to know that it's an awesome city and that Welsh is spoken as a part of the everyday speech, but there was no one I heard talking who spoke only in Welsh. Mostly it was Welsh, that strange combination of Welsh and English where you might use regular verbs in English and pepper it with Welsh idiom and the like. It was fun to hear. I'd only heard snips of Welsh spoken before, but I got an earful when

the announcements at the station were done first in Welsh and then in English. That was sweet.

I made my way back to the station and found that I had 15 minutes until the train. I bought the traditional quick meal of Wales: a corned beef pastry. OK, maybe it's not authentic, but it's what I got. Along with a bottle of water. I ran into the restroom at the station and the stall locks were twist-and-catch hooks. I expected more.

I got back onto the train and started my trip back into London. The ticket guy came through and hassled a bunch of folks. He looked at my pass for about 1/10 of a second and moved on. Membership has its privileges. The trip was even more beautiful going this direction. There were people out in the fields doin' stuff like walking the dogs or hunting. There were people out on the water boating or fishing. That felt right. It was a lazy Sunday out in Wales.

I read the in-train magazine, *Go To...*, and it was ultra-fluffy. Almost nothing worth reading, but still impossible to put down. It was like reading a newscast full of human interest stories. There was a piece about a band called Goldfrapp that I liked. I have to look into what they do. Comparisons to Madonna and Scissors Sisters are relevant to my interests.

I sat and thought some more as I watched the countryside roll away. I was waiting for Gloucester Cathedral again. I knew we would come to it right before we pulled into the station. I wanted to get the best look possible from the train. I was sitting and thinking about what I'd do when I got home. I figured I'd go to BASFA and review England and Wales. I could open it up with the line "So, I was in Cardiff yesterday,"

and work from there. Or I could just give a quick review of Eastercon. I guess it doesn't really matter how I review it because I'm probably going to give tons of reports over the next few months that'll make the whole thing shine!

I got my glimpse of Gloucester Cathedral and it was just as magnificent. I really should come back someday and see the entire city. There were so many little peeks of things that looked as if they'd make for a good day visit. Perhaps it's like those great for an hour, OK for a day cities that I've seen around the US. Like Dover. Or



Hartford. Or Providence. Or Sacramento. Or Fresno.

OK, not Fresno. That's not even OK for an hour.

The train got more crowded at Gloucester. There were at least 20 new people in the first class section. They announced that you had to be in certain sections of the train to get off at certain stations. No matter what station it was, First Class could use any door to get out. Once again, smart move for the upgrade. More scenery, which I'm sure you're getting tired of, but if you put up with this much, I'm sure you

can deal with a little more. I'm bringing this in at 50k words, not a nickel over if I can help it, and the current count is closer to 46 and I've got a day and a flight into California to cover. I could just give up here, but why waste good material that's just waiting to be created?

I took some time to work on the final version of *Journey Planet*, the Eastercon Fanzine in an Hour. James and I thought that it would be nice to do a special polished version, which is a good idea. I worked on it a bit and then went back to typing up my time in Cardiff. I never thought I'd get to write words like that and not have it be some fantasy hoax piece. The train was slow out of Stroud station because there were reports of sheep on the tracks. That's a wild one. Sheep holding up a train. It's simply 19th century! We did go slow through some very old, very posh hillside village. We must have gone through it on the way to Cardiff, but to get a good look at it was very nice. It was another place that I'm sure I wouldn't ever want to stay at, but I do give it high marks for enticement with the drive-through look. We passed the sheep (I saw one of them standing in a ditch on the other side of the tracks) and we stayed slow for awhile. It might have been the grade of the hill that was keeping us slow, but it caused a rocking motion that made me sleepy. I was glad to be getting back early enough to get a nap and then watch a little TV before it was right off to bed and then the flight.

I was really looking forward to taking that flight. It wasn't the getting home, though that was a draw as well, but the in-flight entertainment. *Torchwood*, *The Sarah Jane Adventures*, *The Simpsons*, *Family Guy*, *Enchanted*, *Stardust*, and who knows, maybe they even updated their

selections a day early and I'd get all new stuff to watch on my way back. I'm sure I'll fall asleep on the flight, but I'm also sure that no matter how tired or out of it I am, I will be watching a fair deal of the entertainment available to me. I hear that they do the same kind of entertainment on Virgin America. I wonder if they fly to Montreal? Or even Denver, though you wouldn't get that much time for it.

There were some places that were like hiccups in the trip between Cardiff and London. A thick wood that gave just one momentary blip of an old stone house with a crumbling wall and a long drive up to it. A cemetery that seems to have been a part of a church where only a small set of steps survived. A large house with a slack roof that popped from between the weeds on the side of the tracks. These were almost ghosts, nearly impossible to try and see. I wonder how many of these I missed. How many more run-down abbeys and highway inns were buried behind thickets and trees? What was just on the other side of the rise that seemed to turn the tracks into an open-topped tunnel? Were there old baths? Maybe a whorehouse that dated back to the times of Edward the Confessor. There could be anything beyond this and I would have no idea. I'm only passing through.

That's the perfect metaphor for the entire trip, actually. It's just poignant enough to work on the whole while still making it seem like I had wasted the entire trip on nothing more than simple foolishness. I think I did pretty well. I could have done more, but almost every trip has that factor. I met the masses, played the fool and then hit out on my own enough to not feel trapped. I don't think I played the tourist too

much. Like the delegate to America who can only make the Worldcon and the East Coast, I did what I could and made every moment count. I'm shocked I can say that and actually mean it.

What will this all look like when it's all done? I've gotta admit, I've got no idea. I sometimes wonder about the transition from idea to event to record. This is the record part of the experience. I really can only say that it'll be designed for viewing on the screen, will have photos and some drawings, and it will be longer than I would have ever thought. I'll try and print



out five copies to get the bounties and then have one each to auction at Worldcon and at CorFlu. That's going to be it, unless you print your own paper copy. It's not that I don't like paper, I kinda do, but this is meant for the web and nothing else will do.

We stopped at Swindon for a bit, not sure why, and then it was off to Reading and then Paddington. I was almost sad to see the trip come to an end. The pulling into Paddington was the literal end to my one day adventure, and the symbolic end to my total trip. Symbols always

piss me off. Always there to ruin your good time and make things seem all gloomy or shiny. Why can't signs just let the signified do the talking? And guess what? The clouds started returning, right on cue. Well done, Universe. Make it harder. Class act, pal!

I started to recognize houses, farms, places that we sped through on the way to the other stations on my up, so I knew things were starting to wind down. Once we got to Reading, it was straight through to Paddington. One thing I missed on my way out were the three giant cooling towers that were obviously a part of a nuclear (properly pronounced New-Queue-Ler) power station. I'm not sure how I missed that. It was right beyond Didcot Parkway, which is a station I remember well from my trip up. I guess it's never the tree you hit that you noticed the first time around.

I sat at the platform of the station waiting to move and just kept writing and writing. It's what Chris Garcia does. I thought about getting a sandwich, but I was gonna wait for the stuff they had at Paddington. It all looked really, really good. I was gonna take it back to the room and eat and watch TV and listen to my iBook's MP3 collection and maybe even use my CPAP just to have everything going at once. I wanted information overload of every sort for my last few hours. I wanted to be experiencing the entire range of human senses being poked and prodded the entire evening. It was going to be my going-away present to myself. I was going to throw it all at the wall that is my human interface and then turn it all off and fall asleep in utter still silence.

One of the more interesting things we

passed was the Moog Components factory. I had no idea it was in Reading, but in fact it was. I should have stopped, if I had known it was there. Too many things like that skip my view until it's too late.

I sat in my seat and thought about the writers that I most hope will end up giving their views of my trip. I know John the Rock Coxon, Steve Green, Liz Batty, James Bacon, Abi Brown, The Lovely and Talented Linda and Niall. I'd love to get some stuff from Ian Snell, Michael Abbot and Tony Keen about Eastercon. Add Giulia De Cesare and Tania Brown to that list. If I can get half those names to give me something, I'll consider this trip worth it. They'd make *The Drink Tank* sing if they showed up in there.

We got to Paddington and I trudged off towards the Circle Line. It was time to call it a trip and sleep (and the joys of technology were to follow).

I got back from the Tube with a little energy and a bag with chocolate, bottled water, a smoothie and a pasty. I wasn't going back home without one last overindulgence. I turned on the TV and fired up iTunes to listen to some good old fashioned music. I started a new playlist figuring that, one, it was better than listening in order, and two, the next time I get into the mood where everything was better when, I'll have something to bring me back a bit. Mostly, life is about expectation management. I've come up with my little idea

of how to deal with that probable piece of disappointment.

Man, that was deep. I mean really deep. I'm not supposed to come up with stuff like that. I'm the shallow fun guy, not the deep thinker. You don't read Chris Garcia for life theories. You read him for the fannish version of fart jokes!



I watched the results show for *I'd Do Anything*, that show where they're choosing the Nancy for *Oliver!* My choices were the Irish girl with the curly brown hair and the Scottish redhead and the black girl whom Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber said was a young Shirley Bassey. There's no doubting that she's got the chops and is absolutely gorgeous to boot. Still, I want the Scottish girl to win. They had a lovely segment where the girls went to a market at Walthamstow,

right near where Alison and Steve put me up! It was a typical segment, but the best part was that the Irish girl (Jessie) was easily the best of them! The group song they did was from *Girls Aloud*, which was weird. It was so very not Nancy. Now, the group was pretty good. I could easily see myself getting hooked on this. Good thing I'm not sticking around this country. The Olivers

are pretty good, but the first of their semifinalists was a Welsh kid who had a name I couldn't pronounce. Damn Welsh!

OK, I was watching the TV with mute on so I could have my music and there was a shot of the Titanic Drawing Room. I must find out where that is and get someone out there for photos or mayhaps I'll find a way to con a large group into pooling their money and sending me over under the pretense of visiting other members of that group. Anyone know what the Mystery Fandom version of TAFF is called? I've read some Mickey Spillane! I also wish I had time to see the Uffington White Horse,

Chillingham Castle (and the White Cattle), Gloucester Cathedral, Bath, all of Scotland and the birthplace of Elvis Costello. I don't even have a clue where that is, but I wanna see it and I want to worship there.

That's all stuff that'll have to wait. Someday? Not likely, but I'll hope and pray and play the lottery more often. You can't win if you don't play...

BASFA Minutes: Meeting 924

Meeting 924

April 14, 2008

Trey Haddad, President
Chris Garcia, Vice-President
Dave Gallaher, Treasurer
Galen Tripp, Sergeant at Arms
Barbara Johnson-Haddad, Secretary

Began 8:00 - [as I read elf porn]

23 people attended

No jar was established

Secretary's report: the minutes of meeting 923 were accepted as 'alright'

Treasurer's report was that last week we took in \$15.50 in the regular jar and \$12.75 in the party jar

There was no VP [week 2]

The President had nothing fannish to report

A motion passed to rename Glenn as 'the late Glenn Glazier' for the duration of the meeting

Announcements

Cheryl announced that the next SFin SF reading will be April 20, 6pm, outside the Montgomery

Tubes check for details at SFinSF.org & she announced that she is paying \$5.00 for a BASFA membership for John Scalzi [as long as he agrees]

Mike announced that Peppino D'Agostino will be playing at the Mission City Coffee Roasting Company, Friday, April 25, 8pm

Lisa announced that CostumeCon 26 will be in 11 days & [evil] Kevin is counting the days, plus pre-reg for CC26 closes April 15 and she can take money here

Dave C announced that Reyn Spooner has discontinued his Disney line of shirts

Julie announced that she went to the ERPS meeting and she is now an ERPS board member

[tall] Kevin announced that on April 15 the voting closes for the Locus poll

'The late Glenn Glazier' announced that KFOX is putting all the covers for their contest posted on kfox.com

[evil] Kevin announced that he is part of a publicity blitz for IBM that has been on NPR and the BBC

Ed announced that the SJAA holds a star party every moonless night at Camden & Bascom, SJ

and they'll have an auction on Sunday

Carole announced her elbow is now healed

Andy announced that 'Was not Was' was released earlier this month

Reviews:

Julie reviewed Contact as really good, with lots of good speakers & dealers. She reviewed 'Torchwood' as she hopes it continues & commented that the new 'Dr Who' companion will take some getting used to [there were follow-ons]

Fred reviewed Yuri's Night as he had a wonderful time and it was worth full price

Dave C reviewed driving a Jeep 4x4 as it was like driving a tank, a bouncing ponderous tank & reviewed BBC America's 'Ramsey Kitchen Nightmares' as his new addiction and worth full price

'The late Glenn Glazier' reviewed taking a nice drive to Napa and buying cheese and then buying various meats ['a bowl of heart attack' = from Andy] & reviewed Chili's steak dinner as very good - then there were follow-ins about how good Raphael is

Dave G reviewed a creation con - 'the SciFi Summit' in Southern CA as there were lots of

Spocks there but sales were slow, but they made money so it was worth full price

Joe wandered off-topic [‘we have topics’] and waxed rhapsodic about the fun of driving really fast

Andy reviewed the Beard Papa coffee flavored cream pastry as it tastes like coffee & reviewed this year’s Eurovision music videos as the worst lineup ever; the videos are up on the eurovision.tv website

Cheryl reviewed a Southampton alumni event held in SF at the house of the consul general as she had a good time

Fred reviewed ‘Lysistrata’ at City Lights [somewhat modernized] as worth full price and recommended

We then did auctions: books for \$0.50, \$0.25 & \$2.00

We adjourned at = 9:42

And the rumor of the week was: ‘0 dollars for Chris’



This Old Fanzine

From Page 9

There’s a great line: “A few people have the courage to take their whole lives back. Until I do I can at least run.” Read that again. That’s the type of stuff that I love to read and that so seldom gets dropped in zines.

There’s a long lettercol with names like Robert Lichtman, Buck Coulson and Harry Warner. In the middle, there is a great cartoon

piece from Ben Bost. It’s actually an LoC. You can’t go wrong with a fully drawn and lovely LoC in gorgeous cartoon style. I think someone needs to start doing that again

It’s a very good zine that I’ve revisited several times since I came back. I might be forced to send Eric an LoC about 17 years after the fact. Hey, if someone can draw an LoC in the 1990s, the least I can do is expend a few electrons on giving my admiration.

Bay Area Fannish Calendar

Life is complicated; putting on an event is even more so. Please check before attending, as events are sometimes cancelled or times and locations changed.

New listings are in red.

Ongoing events are toward the back.

Friday April 25

Second Skin: Imaginative Designs in Digital & Analog Clothing

The Exploratorium

3601 Lyon Street

San Francisco

www.exploratorium.edu/2ndskin/

Fashion show of wearable art that also offers demonstrations of the latest trends in electroluminescent wire, soft circuitry, and green innovations. Wear or bring your own full-body wearable art (non-Members doing so will receive a 50% admission discount).

Admission to the event is included in the price of admission to the Exploratorium.

7:00-11:00 p.m.

Friday-Monday, April 25-28

CostumeCon 26

Doubletree Hotel

2050 Gateway Place

San Jose

www.cc26.info

\$95 in advance (through April 15, 2008)

CostumeCon will be coming to Silicon Valley

in 2008.

Saturday, April 26

Author: John Stanley

Clayton Books

5433 Clayton Road

Clayton

www.claytonbookshop.com

2 p.m.

Bay Area host of Creature Features and author of *I Was a TV Horror Host*.

Monday, April 28

Author: Jack O'Connell

Dark Carnival Bookstore

3086 Claremont Avenue

Berkeley

www.darkcarnival.com

Book signing by the author of *The Resurrectionist*.

5:30 p.m.

Saturday, May 3

Free Comic Book Day

Illusive Comics and Games

2725 El Camino, Suite 105

Santa Clara

www.illusivcomics.com

Free comic books and costuming event to help promote literacy. Local schools will be participating to have their kids come in and increase comic book appreciation, literacy and

all things good about sci fi.

Saturday, May 3

Chicago Speakeasy Ball

PEERS Event

Masonic Lodge

100 North Ellsworth

San Mateo

www.peers.org

\$15 in advance (until April 26), \$20 at the door.

Join us at the hottest speakeasy in Chicago for All That Jazz! PEERS is proud (and truly amazed) to announce that the evening's band will be the one, the only, the incomparable Lee Presson and the Nails!

Dance lesson at 7 p.m., dancing begins at 8.

Saturday May 10

Charles Babbage's Difference Engine No. 2

Exhibit Launch & Open House

Computer History Museum

1401 N. Shoreline Boulevard

Mountain View

www.computerhistory.org

12-5 p.m.

Free

Babbage's Engine demonstrations throughout the afternoon. 1:00 & 3:30 p.m. screening of "To Dream Tomorrow" film about Ada Lovelace. Victorian themed event, period costume encouraged.

Monday-Tuesday, May 12-13

Author: Brandon Mull

Clayton Books
5433 Clayton Road
Clayton
www.claytonbookshop.com
3-5 p.m.

Wednesday, May 14

Author: Michael Chabon

Diesel Books
5433 College Avenue
Oakland
7:30 p.m.
Signing for *The Yiddish Policemen's Union*.

Saturday, May 17

Anime Street Pavilion

Japantown
San Francisco
www.eigomanga.com/ahsc/
Free
11-6 p.m.
eigoMANGA proudly produces the Anime Street Pavillion, featuring jrock bands and cosplay, at the Fourth Annual Asian Heritage Street Celebration.

Friday-Monday, May 23-26

BayCon

Hyatt Regency Santa Clara
5101 Great America Parkway
Santa Clara
www.baycon.org/2008
\$65 in advance (through March 15)
Northern California's largest annual general SF convention is on the move again. Diverse

panels, dealer's room, art show, masquerade, anime room, hall costumes, gaming, much more.

Friday-Monday, May 23-26

FanimeCon

San Jose Convention Center
435 South Market Street
San Jose
www.fanime.com
\$50 in advance (through March 31)
The Bay Area's largest annual anime convention returns. Dealer's room, panels, costume contest, J-pop concert, more.

Saturday, June 7

Gone with the Wind Ball

PEERS Event
Masonic Lodge
100 North Ellsworth
San Mateo
www.peers.org
\$15 in advance (until May 31), \$20 at the door.
Inspired by the Charity Ball In Atlanta from the first part of *Gone with the Wind*. Dance lesson at 7 p.m., dancing begins at 8 p.m.

Thursday-Sunday, June 12-15

RoboGames

Fort Mason Festival Pavillion
San Francisco
www.robogames.com
\$55

Saturday-Sunday, June 14-15

Northern California Pirate Festival
Vallejo Waterfront

Vallejo
www.norcalpiratefestival.com
Details to follow

Saturday, June 21

The Great Regency Shipwreck Ball

Arlington Community Church
52 Arlington Avenue
Kensington
www.baers.org
8 p.m.
\$15 advance, \$20 at the door

Saturday, July 5

The Emerald City Ball

PEERS Event
Masonic Lodge
100 North Ellsworth
San Mateo
www.peers.org
\$15 in advance (until June 28), \$20 at the door.
Come join us in honoring the singular courage of Dorothy Gale and her intrepid companions. Dance lesson at 7 p.m., dancing begins at 8.

Saturday, August 2

The Impressionists Picnic

PEERS Event
Lincoln Park
1450 High Street
Alameda
www.peers.org
Free
Le Salon des Refusés invites painters, models, artistic subjects and interested members of the public to join us for an outdoor picnic, fete and dance. Picnic begins at 11:30 a.m. Formal

dancing 1 p.m. until 4:30 p.m.

Saturday, August 9

Kin-Yoobi Con
Chabot College
25555 Esperian Blvd
Hayward
www.gzronline.com
9 a.m. to 9 p.m.
\$15

Saturday-Sunday, August 16-17

Golden Gate Renaissance Festival
Speedway Meadow
Golden Gate Park
San Francisco
www.sffaire.com
10 a.m.-6 p.m. Saturday/10am-5pm Sunday
\$15

Friday-Sunday, August 29-31

Sac-Anime
Scottish Rite Center
6151 H Street
Sacramento
www.sacanime.com
Details to follow

Saturday, September 6

Northern California Renaissance Faire
Casa de Fruta
10031 Pacheco Pass Hwy
Hollister
<http://www.norcalrenfaire.org/>
10 a.m.-6 p.m. Sat-Sun
\$25 (starting May)

Saturday, September 6

Space 1889: The Adventure of Le Cirque de Venus
PEERS Event
Masonic Lodge
100 North Ellsworth
San Mateo
www.peers.org
\$15 in advance (until August 30), \$20 at the door.
Steampunk event: Space 1899 - a Victorian Ball in Space. Dance lesson at 7 p.m., dancing begins at 8.

Friday-Sunday, September 26-28

Yaoi-Con
San Mateo Marriott
1770 South Amphlett Blvd
San Mateo
www.yaoicon.com
\$40 until May 31st
18+

Friday-Sunday, October 3-5

Silicon 2008: A Salute to FanAc
DoubleTree Hotel
2050 Gateway Place
San Jose
www.siliconconventions.com
Details to follow.

Saturday, October 4th

Swingin in the Rain
PEERS Event
Masonic Lodge
100 North Ellsworth
San Mateo

www.peers.org
\$15 in advance (until September 27), \$20 at the door.
An evening in 1929 Hollywood at a ball inspired by that most joyous of musicals! Dance lesson at 7 p.m., dancing begins at 8.

Friday-Sunday, October 10-12

Con-x-Treme
San Mateo Marriott
1770 S. Amphlett Blvd
San Mateo
www.con-x-treme.org
Con-x-Treme returns for a second year. (No, really.)
Details to follow

Saturday, October 11

The War and Peace Ball
Arlington Community Church
52 Arlington Avenue
Kensington
www.baers.org
\$15 advance, \$20 door
Natasha and Prince Andrei dance at the 1812 ball from Tolstoy's classic. Russian nobility, Russian military, and civilians and military from friendly countries (English welcome; Frenchmen at their own risk.) Set dances and waltzes led by Alan Winston. 8 p.m.

Saturday, November 1

Le Bal des Vampires
PEERS Event
Alameda Elks Lodge
2255 Santa Clara Ave
Alameda

www.peers.org.

\$17.50 in advance (until October 25), \$25 at the door.

Waltz the night away in a beautiful candlelit ballroom with SF Bay Area's most glamorous Undead at the 15th Annual Le Bal des Vampires. Dancing on two separate floors; Bangers and Mash performing live in the upstairs ballroom 7:45-Midnight and free-style dancing downstairs in the Dracula's Daughters Discotheque 6:30-Midnight.

Saturday-Sunday, November 1-2

Alternative Press Expo

The Concourse
620 7th Street
San Francisco
Details to follow.

Ongoing:

Daily

San Francisco Ghost Hunt Walking Tour
Begins: Queen Anne Hotel
1590 Sutter at Octavia
San Francisco
www.sfgghosthunt.com
7 p.m. – 10 p.m.
\$20

Sundays

Sakramento Anime Society
Rancho Cordova Library
9845 Folsom Boulevard
Rancho Cordova
3-7 p.m.
Meets every Sunday to watch old and new

anime and anime music videos, play collectible card games, practice artwork and make AMVs.

Mondays

Bay Area Science Fiction Association
Coco's
1206 Oakmead Parkway
Sunnyvale
www.basfa.org
8 p.m.
Free

Mondays

Dukefish
Jake's of Sunnyvale
174 E. Fremont Avenue
Sunnyvale
8 p.m.
Dukefish is a bunch of people who get together to play board games and, sometimes, bridge every week.

Mondays and Wednesdays

Silicon Valley Boardgamers
Mountain View Community Center
201 S. Rengstorff Avenue
Mountain View
www.davekohr.users.sonic.net/svb/
6:30 p.m.
\$2
Group meets regularly to play mostly German-style strategy boardgames such as Settlers of Catan; also multiplayer Avalon Hill-style, historical wargames, and others.

Wednesdays

Bay Area Role-Playing Society

Go-Getter's Pizza
1489 Beach Park Boulevard
Foster City
www.BayRPS.com
6 p.m-10 p.m.
Hosts a weekly game night. For club and game night details email GM@BayRPS.com.

Wednesdays

East Bay Strategy Games Club
EndGame
921 Washington
Oakland
www.michaeldashow.com/eastbaystrategy/home.html
7:30 p.m.-11 p.m.
Free

Wednesdays and Saturdays

Hayward Collectibles Show
22300 Hathaway Ave (rear bldg)
Hayward
www.toysandbaseballcards.com
Wednesdays 3 p.m.-8 p.m. and Saturdays 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
Free

Fridays

SF Games
Muddy's Coffeehouse
1304 Valencia Street
San Francisco
vax.hanford.org/dk/games
7 p.m. to midnight
Free
SF Games is a collective name for a bunch of people who get together and play board games

and card games every week. Also has a regular cards night at Atlas Café, 20th and Alabama Streets, Tuesday nights from 6:30-10:00.

Fridays-Mondays

Haunted Haight Walking Tour
Meets at Coffee To The People
1206 Masonic Avenue
San Francisco
www.hauntedhaight.com
7 p.m.-9 p.m.
\$20
Reservations required.

Fridays and Saturdays

Vampire Walking Tour
Meets corner of California and Taylor
San Francisco
www.sfvampiretour.com
8 p.m.
\$20
Led by Mina Harker. Tour is cancelled if there is heavy rain.

Saturdays

Rocky Horror Picture Show
Parkway Speakeasy Theater
1834 Park Blvd.
Oakland
www.parkway-speakeasy.com
Midnight
\$7
Barely Legal Productions presents the classic midnight movie every Saturday night. No one under 17 admitted.

Biweekly

PenSFA Party

The Peninsula Science Fantasy Association meets every two weeks for a party at the home of one of their members. They also host parties at local conventions. Email commander@pensfa.org for information on attending.
PenSFA standard party rules: bring something edible or drinkable to share, or pay the host \$2. Don't smoke in the house without checking with the host first. Normal start time is 8 p.m. but may vary depending on the host.

Science Fiction & Fantasy Writers' Group

Borderlands Books
866 Valencia Street
San Francisco
Meets the second and fourth Thursdays of each month at 6 pm. Contact Jade Livingston at sfscifi@yahoo.com for more information.

Monthly

Dorkbot-SF
Free, donations welcome
www.dorkbot.org/dorkbotsf/
Dorkbot hosts regular forums for artists, designers, engineers, students, and other people doing strange things with electricity.

East Bay Star Wars Club

Central Perk
10086 San Pablo Ave.
El Cerrito
510-558-7375
www.ebstarwars.com
Meets the second Friday of every month at 7:30 p.m.

Fantastic Frontiers

www.freewebs.com/fantasticfrontiers/
Social club for Sacramento County sci fi/fantasy fans usually meets the second Saturday of the month. Check website for meeting times and locations.

Foothill Anime

Building 5015, Foothill College
Los Altos Hills
Free
Monthly event where people can get together to watch anime and meet like minded others. Usually meets the first Sunday of every month at noon.

The Gay Men's Book Club

Borderlands Books
866 Valencia
San Francisco
Free
5:00 p.m.
The Book for April 13th is Grey by John Armstrong. Please contact the group leader, Christopher Rodriguez, at cobalt555@earthlink.net, for more information.

Legion of Rassilon

Carl's Junior
2551 N. First Street
San Jose
www.legionofrassilon.org
7:30 p.m.
Free
Doctor Who fan group usually meets the fourth Friday of the month: Episodes of Doctor Who,

news, discussion of recent movies, and a raffle.

No-Name Anime
Saratoga Library
13650 Saratoga Avenue
Saratoga
www.nnanime.com

Free
Anime screenings usually take place on the second Saturday of the month.

Other Realms Book Club
Books, Inc.
1375 Burlingame Ave.

Burlingame
Free

www.booksinc.net

Meets the 4th Wednesday of the Month. The book for March 26th is Sharp Teeth by Toby Barlow, the book for April 23rd will be Matter by Ian Banks.

Science Fiction and Fantasy Book Club
Borderlands Books
866 Valencia
San Francisco
6:00 p.m.

Free
The book for April 27th is Harrowing the Dragon by Patricia McKillip. Please contact Jude at jfeldman@borderlands-books.com for more information.

SF Browncoats
Cafe Murano
1777 Steiner Street
San Francisco

www.sfbrowncoats.com

Noon

Free

SF Firefly/Serenity fans usually meet up on the second Saturday of the month.

SF/SF Meetup

Mysterious Future Bookstore

531 Fifth Street

Santa Rosa

groups.yahoo.com/group/scifisantarosa/

Regular meetup for North Bay fans on the second Sunday of the month.

Silicon Gulch Browncoats

Various locations (see website for details)

www.silicongulchbrowncoats.org

Noon - 2 p.m.

Free

Silicon Valley fans of Firefly/Serenity meet up on the first Saturday of the month.

Tangential Conjectures: The Science Fiction
Book Club
Books Inc.

301 Castro Street

Mountain View

650-428-1234

7:30 p.m.

Free

Generally meets the third Thursday of the month.

USS Augusta Ada
Round Table Pizza
3567 Geary Blvd.
San Francisco

trek.starshine.org

1 p.m.

Free

Augusta Ada is both a chapter of Starfleet International and a Linux and *BSD user group. Usually meets the fourth Saturday of every month.

USS Defiance

Round Table Pizza

1566 Howe Ave.

Sacramento

www.usdefiance.org

7 p.m.

Free

Star Trek fan group meets the third Friday of the month.

USS Northern Lights

The Claim Jumper

43330 Pacific Commons Blvd.

Fremont

firstjedi2000@yahoo.com

7 p.m.

Free

The 'Lights is a chapter of Starfleet International and a swell group of science fiction fans. We do more than Trek. Usually meets the second Friday of the month, with social event TBD. Next meeting is May 9th.

Veritech Fighter Command ONE-THREE

Round Table Pizza

4403 Elkhorn Blvd

Sacramento

916-338-2300

Anime/cosplay group usually meets the last Saturday of the month at 1800 hours.