

HOBBY NEWS

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HOBBY SERVICES GROUP

A lot of people have said that they find the hobby discussions at Midcon and Manorcon to be useful. But not everyone is able to get to the major conventions, and the continuing vitality of the hobby depends upon involving as many people as possible in the core services that hold it together.

To try to improve accessibility, the hobby discussion at Midcon agreed to set up a "hobby services group". This would be open to everyone and its aims would be to ensure that the essential hobby services are well run, to provide a forum for agreeing any changes, and a mechanism for an orderly handover if the existing organiser(s) have had enough (or disappear without trace).

Initially, what will happen is that the Midcon and Manorcon meetings will be supplemented by a newsletter which will report on what the custodians of the hobby services are doing, and raise any important issues for discussion.

The newsletter will appear about six weeks before Manorcon and Midcon to allow time for issues to be aired and views to be canvassed before the conventions, and on other occasions as necessary. It will be sent automatically to all editors and custodians of hobby services (along with *Hobby News*), and anyone else who is interested can get it for a year by sending 4x25p stamps to John Dodds, 55 Leigham Vale, London SW16. Alternatively you can join the *Hobby News* mailing list for 12 first class stamps (or £3.00) per year.

We hope that people who are interested in putting something back into the hobby through helping with its organisation but aren't able, or don't want, to edit a zine will dip a toe in the water by subscribing to the Hobby Services Group newsletter. They would then be in touch with the important hobby issues and would be able to make suggestions or to offer to play an even more active role.

THE HOBBY DEVELOPMENT FUND

Richard Walkerdine has published some accounts to show how the Hobby Development Fund has been spent. The short answer is that it hasn't! There is over £400 in the fund, of which £100 is reserved for reprinting the Diplomacy box flyer.

Richard is keen to find worthwhile ventures that need funds to get started, and if he doesn't find some soon he will close down the HDF and stop collecting funds for it at Manorcon.

If you have a project that needs funds, write to Richard Walkerdine outlining the scheme and telling him how much money you need. His address is 6 Honeybourne Way, Wickwar, Wootton-under-Edge, Glos GL12 8PF.

THE GLADYS AWARDS

John Miller (259 Leek Road, Shelton, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST4 2BU) has announced the nomination stage for the Gladys Awards. Please send John your nominations for the following categories

Best Zine
Best New Zine
Best for Dip and variants
Best for other games
Best for Hobby News
Best Lettercolumn
Best Looking Zine
Most Regretted Fold
Best GM

The deadline is 31 January. We hope to have a list of nominations in the February *Hobby News*.

MISSION FROM GOD

The latest issue of *Mission from God*, the zine listings publication, is now available for £1 from Pete Sullivan, 55 Brunton Street, Darlington, County Durham, DL1 4EN.

The future of *MfG* has not been totally resolved, though discussions are continuing between the various interested parties.

BAYCON

We have (finally) received details of this year's Baycon from the organizers:

Baycon has established a reputation as a friendly convention where games players can meet in a relaxed environment. The 9th Baycon is at the Exeter Court Hotel, Kennford, Devon (5 miles south of Exeter on the A38) over the weekend of 20-23 April. Prices are £22 per person per night in a shared room, or £35 in a single room. Registrations or more information from Glen Bird, 115 Greenpark Road, Plymstock, Plymouth PL9 9LL.

HOBBYMEET NEWS

The February North Yorkshire Hobbymeet at the Tap & Spile, Monk Bar, York, on Sunday 12 February at noon will feature the announcement of the Zine Poll results. Contact Iain Bowen (0904 640095) or Pete Sullivan (0325 364153) for more details. After this the North Yorkshire Hobbymeet will cease to exist.

STABCON 95

Stabcon 95 will be at Woolton Hall, Manchester on 6-8 January 1995. A mixture of board games, wargames and role playing games. University accommodation is available at £16 a night (£21 a night if breakfast required). Registration £5 in advance, £7.50 on the door. Contact: Stabcon, 17 Davenport Park Road, Stockport, Cheshire, SK2 6JU.

MASTERCON 2/EURODIPCON 3

The second Mastercon will also play host to EuroDipCon, an event that has previously taken place in Paris in October 1993 and Sweden in May 1994. The location is the Kings Head Hotel in Cirencester, Gloucestershire, and the dates are Friday 24 to Sunday February 1995. Registration is £10 per person, with a special concessionary rate of £5 for non-UK residents, and hotel rooms are £23 per person per night sharing or £25 single.

Features the European Diplomacy Championship, an 18xx tournament, a skittles tournament, and a banquet on Friday night.

To register, send £10 (or £5) to Shaun Derrick, 313 Woodway Lane, Walsgrave, Coventry CV2 2AP.

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FURRYCON

Furrycon takes place over the late May Bank Holiday weekend from 6 pm Friday 26 May to 5 pm Monday 29 May, at the Old Ship hotel on the seafront in Brighton. Con fee is £15 for gamers (£12 before 31 March) for the weekend (or £5 per day); Non-gamers £1. Accommodation costs £29.75 per person per night (in a twin or double room). Single rooms cost £41.50 per night. The cost of accommodation includes a full English breakfast and children up to the age of 16 years can stay in their parents room free of charge - though their breakfast will be charged.

The major event will be InterGame UK. There will be other events plus a large library of games to borrow and play and lots of people to play with. The organizers expect to have a number of games designers/inventors along.

MANORCON 13

Will take place at Lake Hall, Birmingham University from Friday 21 to Monday 24 July. More details from Peter Sullivan, 55 Brunton Street, Darlington, County Durham DL1 4EN (email: peter@manorcon.demon.co.uk)

MidCon

Provisionally booked for Friday November 12 - Sunday November 14 at Birmingham's Royal Angus Thistle Hotel, a modern city centre hotel with an adjoining NCP car park. Features the National Diplomacy Championship finals. Prices to be confirmed.

HOBBYMEETS

BRISTOL: The Knowle (Back Bar), Leighton Road, off Priory Road, off Wells Road. 1st Friday of the month. Paul Norris (0272 427061) Richard Egan (0272 774460)

EXETER: Thatchmeet at the Mount Radford on Magdalen Road on the 1st Wednesday of each month. Rob Mulholland (0392 494072).

FAREHAM: Richard Williams (0329 236125) organizes a get-together at his house, on the 2nd Sunday of even-numbered months from 10 am.

HERTFORDSHIRE: Semi-regular meetings on Monday and Friday evenings in St Albans (Steve Kingsbury 0727 844475) and Sawbridgeworth (Mike Taylor 0279 724687).

LONDON (1): The Royal George, Eversholt Street, near Euston station, 3rd Wednesday of the month. Contact Vic Hall (071 326 0125) or Mike Allaway (081 863 6413) for details.

LONDON (2): The Small Furry Swiggers meet at the Royal Oak in Regency Street, Westminster every Wednesday from 6.30. Costs £2.

The **NOTTINGHAM & DERBY** Board Games Club meets every Thursday from 7-10.30 pm. Contact Mick Haytack on 0332 511898.

NORTH YORKSHIRE: Tap & Spile, Monk Bar, York, on the Sunday 8 January and Sunday 12 February (Zine Poll Results Special), both at noon. Contact Iain Bowen (0904 640095) or Pete Sullivan (0325 364153).

OXFORD: Every Wednesday during term-time at 7.30 in the nuclear physics building off Keble Road. All welcome. Details from Mark Stretch Flat 23, Stevens Close, Woodstock Road, Oxford OX2 6JW (term) or 2, Over Mill Drive, Selly Park, Birmingham B29 7JL.

RIPLEY, near Woking: Usually 2nd Tuesday of the month, but can vary depending on availability of regulars. Starts with a curry and moves to a pub. Contact Dane Maslen (0483 721856) in advance to check on dates.

The **SHREWSBURY** Games Club meets every Sunday from 2.00 pm to 10.00 pm at The Lodge, Monkmoor, Shrewsbury. More information from Mark Kennett (0743 361417).

HOBBY SERVICES

Springboard is run by Danny Collman, 14 Westover Road, Handsworth Wood, Birmingham, B20 1JG mainly to deal with people who respond to the Diplomacy box flyers. Players are limited to one gamestart.

The Finishing Touch is produced by Richard Sharp, Norton House, Whieldon Street, Amersham, Bucks, HP7 0HU. The results of all Diplomacy games played in the UK: an invaluable source of reference for statisticians, or to find out something about your opponents.

The **Novice Package** provides a large amount of useful information for those who are new, and not so new, to the hobby. Includes a 56 page booklet with articles on playing Diplomacy and other games by post, a glossary of hobby jargon and pen pictures of hobby personalities, plus a number of sample zines and addresses for hobby services and zine editors. £2 from John Dodds, 55 Leigham Vale, Streatham, London, SW16 2JQ.

Zine Bank: Send a large (A4) SAE stamped for 200g to John Dodds, (address above) and he will send you about half a dozen different zines.

Mission from God lists all the zines in the hobby, with information about prices, sizes, frequency, etc., together one or more brief reviews to give a flavour of what the zine offers. £1 from Peter Sullivan, address opposite. New issue out now.

Hobby Advertising Campaign and Quick Gamestart Service: organized by Stephen Agar (79 Florence Road, Brighton BN1 6DL). The Hobby Advertising Campaign places adverts in various magazines, and the Quick Gamestart Service aims to match players and suitable waiting lists.

The **Variant Bank** is run by Mark Nelson, 1st Floor Flat, 3 Kelso Road, Leeds LS2 9PR (his email address is amt5man@amsta.leeds.ac.uk). It holds copies of all the well-known Diplomacy variants and more besides. The full catalogue is available for £1.