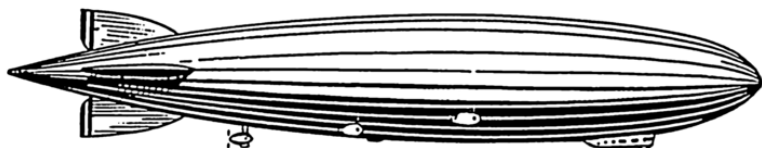




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To be held October 1-3, 2010
In Greater Vancouver, British Columbia
At a Location to Be Announced

Our Theme This Year. STEAMPUNK
"From Alchemy to Zeppelins"



With Guests of Honour:

Author Cherie Priest • Artist James Beveridge • Musician Heather Dale

A First Progress Report

Containing the Following Exciting Features!

- ☞ *Illustrated Profiles of Our Guests of Honour*
- ☞ *A short list of our program panellists, and Developing Panels*
- ☞ *How to "Do" VCON, with a Guide to Befitting Etiquette*
- ☞ *Art Show, Artists' Alley, and Dealers Room News*
- ☞ *Whom You may Contact on Our Committee*
- RND ☞ *Membership Information*

Cherie Priest



Born in 1975 in Tampa, Florida, Ms. Priest has lived all over the United States. As well as gaining a B.A. in English from Southern Adventist University, and an M.A. in Rhetoric from the University of Tennessee, she has written novels available through the Goodreads site (*Boneshaker*, *Four and Twenty Blackbirds*, *Wings to the Kingdom*, *Not Flesh Not Feathers*, and *Fathom*). She is also an associate editor of Subterranean Press.

Bibliography

[*Boneshaker*](#), Tor, 2009

(Winner of the [PNBA award](#); nominated for a [Nebula award](#))

[*Fathom*](#), Tor 2008

[*Those Who Went Remain There Still*](#), Subterranean Press 2009

[*Dreadful Skin*](#), Subterranean Press 2007

[*Four and Twenty Blackbirds*](#), Tor Books 2005

[*Wings to the Kingdom*](#), Tor Books 2006

[*Not Flesh Nor Feathers*](#), Tor Books 2007

Coming Soon

The Clockwork Century:

[*Clementine*](#) (steampunk; May 30, 2010, Subterranean Press)

Dreadnought (steampunk: Fall 2010, Tor)

In the Wild Cards series:

Fort Freak, with the Wild Cards Consortium. Edited by George R. R. Martin. (fantasy: 2010, Tor)



[*Jim Beveridge*](#), born in Windsor, Ontario, has been drawing for most of his life. He moved to Edmonton, Alberta and began freelancing on band posters and album covers as well as airbrushed award-winning vehicles or anything that needed a slightly off-centre left-handed aesthetic.

In 1991, in his spare time, he started illustrating for *On Spec* Magazine. His interest now is in the computer as an art tool which has led to working in game art and online design. After several nominations he won an Aurora Award in 2002. Jim is a member of both A.S.F.A. and SF Canada.

His first cover for a full length novel, for Lisa Smedman's steampunk mysticism thriller *The Apparition Trail* (Edge Pub.), was published in June 2004. He is also one of the featured artists in *Visions From the Edge*, a sci-fi art documentary from Roadhouse Films. Jim's art is also featured as the CD cover and intro for the documentary as well as Wheel of Time websites such as Dragonmount.com. He was also the designer of the new logos for the Nebula Award and Andre Norton Award for S.F.W.A.

His website is <http://www.jamesbeveridge.com>.

Heather Dale offers a new type of Celtic music for the 21st century: a playful, passionate blend of tradition and innovation. "Her music is powerful stuff, reminiscent of Loreena McKennitt and Sarah McLachlan but with a depth and resonance rooted in its mythic sources." (*Vancouver Sun*)



Heather fuses traditional stories with a healthy mix of Celtic folk, blues, jazz and world music influences. Particularly known for her interpretations of ancient legends, she excels at finding modern themes within old and often overlooked material. Heather Dale released her eleventh CD "The Green Knight" in 2009. Exploring to Heather's passion for history and legend, "The Green Knight" features 14 new songs inspired by the Middle Ages and Renaissance. For this lively and affectionate look at medieval life, Heather was joined by her touring bandmates Ben Deschamps and Jason Sonier... together they play twenty instruments on the album including harp, bodhran drum, mandolin, world percussion and Irish flutes. "Heather's songs express something that honors tradition, but in keeping with the best of traditions they break new ground." (*WDVR FM, New Jersey*)

Heather tours full-time (100+ concerts per year) across North America and Europe, with multi-instrumentalist Ben Deschamps. Their live shows usually feature a dozen folk instruments, from tin whistle to double bass, along with Heather's rich and evocative voice. "Quite apart from being brilliant musicians/songwriters Heather and Ben are very comfortable people to be with -- a joy to listen to and a pleasure to remember... One of the most fun-loving and innovative acts we've seen for years." (*Stortfolk Folk Club, UK*)

Further details and sound clips are available at www.HeatherDale.com

Special guests: Being a Short List of other Attending Panellists

Devon Boorman of Academie Duello

Palle Hoffstein: Game designer and former VCON Chair

Karl Johanson: Publisher (*Neo-Opis Magazine*)

Paula Johanson: Author

Stephanie Johanson: Publisher (*Neo-Opis Magazine*)
Jim Kling: Science Writer
Gareth Von Kallenbach
Lynda Williams: Author
Casey June Wolf: Author

VCON Theme: STEAMPUNK

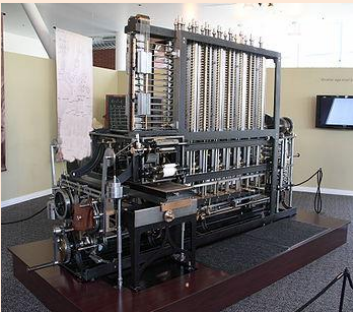
by R. Graeme Cameron

(As previously published in *WCSFazine* #20, March 2010)

This is an excellent choice which offers all kinds of exciting possibilities. Possibly a few questions arise in your mind. I will attempt to answer them here.

What Is Steampunk?

A literary/media/gaming/role-playing genre that's a heck of a lot of fun, and perhaps more accessible to people than most science fiction or fantasy. Imagine the world of Dickens and Sherlock Holmes. Right away you know we're talking about wonderfully vivid and eccentric characters. Now imagine this Victorian/Edwardian era never developed into the modern petrol engine/silicon chip electronic age, but instead evolved toward an era of more powerful and increasingly efficient steam-powered mechanical devices, up to and including spaceships and computers!



And if you think that's unlikely, consider that Charles Babbage invented a mechanical computer (not a calculator, rather an actual computer which could be programmed) circa 1855; but alas, he never had the money to construct it. Recently, however, British engineers built the thing, or a significant portion of it, and proved the concept actually works! For a study of the implications for history if the British

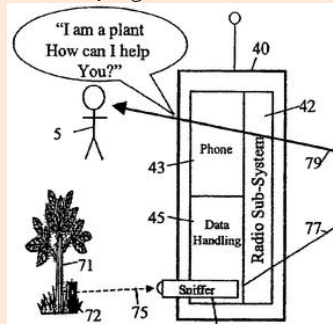
Government had made use of the thing back in the day, read *The Difference Engine* by William Gibson and Bruce Sterling, which many consider the definitive Steampunk novel.

Steampunk fans love costuming, and the hands-on feel of Steampunk technology (basic tools are a hammer and a monkey wrench) lends itself to gritty, easily understandable role-playing at conventions. It's a throwback (albeit treated futuristically) to a simpler age where the human character is more easily inserted into (and remains master of) the technology in question. Sort of the difference between fixing a model T automobile yourself, contrasted with being forced to drag your modern mobile box to a repair shop for computers to interpret your car's programming. The latter distances you as a helpless, nearly irrelevant human, whereas the former places the fate of your steel beast in your hands, literally. Far more satisfying.

In a sense Steampunk is a form of alternate history, be it how the 19th century would have been had certain advances been made, or what the 20th century would have been like, or any time in the future for that matter, depending on what all the consequences and ramifications of highly advanced steam-powered mechanical technology turned out to be.

Steampunk doesn't necessarily have to do with Victorian England. One author (whose name escapes me as I write but I hope to discuss his works in a future article) wrote a series of alternate history novels about the Roman Empire successfully mastering steam-power and going on to conquer the world. Cool concept.

Steampunk can be almost anything as long as the underlying core concept is the possibilities inherent in highly advanced steam-mechanical technology, and there be the source of the fun.



Who Invented the Term 'Steampunk'?

According to the Wikipedia, writer K.W. Jeter, author of *Morlock Night* (1979) and *Infernal Devices* (1987), came up with the term in a letter published in the April 1987 issue of Locus magazine:

"... Personally, I think Victorian fantasies are going to be the next big thing, as long as we can come up with a fitting collective term for Powers, Blaylock and myself. Something based on the appropriate technology of the era; like "steampunks", perhaps..."

This was a play, of course, on the term 'Cyberpunk' coined by Bruce Bethke in his story of the same name published in 1983. A Cyber punk is a self-reliant hero/thug/criminal living in a world dictated by the science of Cybernetics wherein man/machine cyborgs are controlled by information

networks, where humans, corporate entities and technology intermesh in a very literal manner.



Whereas Steampunks exist in a world dominated by steam-powered mechanical technology and National Empires rather than Corporations. The Steampunk Genre tends to be less dystopian, in that it appears to offer individuals greater hope as the master of technology rather than its slave.

Who Were the First Steampunk Writers?

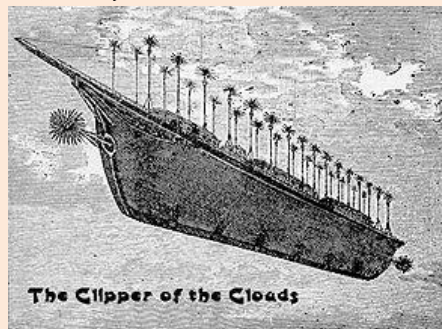
Oddly enough, the first Steampunk writers weren't Steampunk at all! Rather, they were 19th century authors writing 'Ripping Good Yarns' taking contemporary trends in science and society and examining the implications for the future depending on how said trends developed. In effect, they wrote Science Fiction, but because they predicted further development of contemporary steam-mechanical technology, their works strike a decidedly 'steampunk' note to modern readers.

This lot includes H.G. Wells and Jules Verne to be sure, and even Rudyard Kipling, but also more obscure authors like the cadre of Science Fiction writers in 19th century San Francisco editor Sam Moskowitz collected for an anthology, and the American author Luis Phillip Senarens who wrote 1,500 stories for 'dime novel' publications detailing the adventures of Frank Reade Jr. (a proto-Tom Swift sort of character) filled with tales with steam-powered armoured vehicles, aircraft, submersibles and even robots. In fact, Moskowitz credited him with creating "the single greatest mass of robot literature ever written by one man." Senarens wrote forty million words between 1879 and 1897. 'Prolific' hardly describes his output. 'Explosive' would be more like it.

I intend to explore the 'Steampunk' aspects of some of these 19th century authors in future issues of *WCSFAzine*.

Who Were the First Steampunk Authors, Really?

Writers like Keith Laumer (*Worlds of the Imperium* 1962), Ronald W. Clarke (*Queen Victoria's Bomb* 1967), Michael Moorcock (*Warlord of the Air* 1971) and Harry Harrison (*A Transatlantic Tunnel, Hurrah!* 1973) are considered among the very first. Then, as Wikipedia states "Because he coined the term, K.W. Jeter's 1979 novel *Morlock Night* is typically considered to have established the genre." Jeter was



followed by such as Tim Powers (*The Anubis Gates* 1983), James Blaylock (*Homunculus* 1986), Bruce Sterling & William Gibson (*The Difference Engine* 1990) and Paul D. Fillipo (*The Steam Punk Trilogy* 1995) in which a human/newt clone replaces Queen Victoria, a nifty concept indeed. I have no doubt many other Steampunk novels were written, most of them probably still in print as the genre is very popular. I hope to write some essays on the ‘modern’ Steampunk novels as well as the 19th century ones in upcoming issues.

And of course there are Steampunk TV, films, and graphic novels, not to mention the Steampunk fan movement, all of which I hope to describe and discuss in the near future. Stay tuned!



Attending VCON

Are you new to VCON, or to fan conventions generally?

VCON is an event run by fans, for fans, and the biggest tell is that we don’t sell tickets, nor admission, but *memberships*. Those who attend are seen not as an audience to be passively entertained but members of a club, people with common or overlapping interests, who attend to meet others. (And even to actively participate, to help out, to work, where needed—to volunteer.)

A fan convention is more than just the formally programmed panels. Don’t overlook the more informal parts of the convention—Hospitality, room parties, fan club meetups, filk circles, or just the meetings and conversations with other fans.

We’re a diverse, wide-interest convention, so while you’re here, take the opportunity to try something new to you and meet fans from different areas of fandom. “Infinite Diversity in Infinite Combinations” (IDIC), as the Vulcans say.

The Four Rules of Con Behaviour

- Do Good
- Avoid Evil
- Throw a room party
- Please don’t damage the hotel

The Four Rules of Con Survival

- Get at least 5 hours of sleep each night
- Eat at least 2 meals a day
- Do not confuse rules 1 & 2
- Shower, brush teeth, and change into clean clothes at least daily

(The above rules, by Ross Pavlac, were originally published in the Windycon XXIV program book.)

Committee Positions as Yet Vacant

Certain positions on our convention committee have not yet been filled! If you are interested and able to serve, we are still in need of:

- Media Liaison
- Publicity Coordinator
- Registration Coordinator

Dealers' Room

The table rates are \$50 for a Dealers' table, and \$35 in the Artists' Alley. (Memberships are not included in the table fees.) Please contact Jeff Currey, our Dealers' Liaison, at vcondealers@gmail.com.

Artshow

The 4x4-foot panel space rates are \$15 each, and the 6x3-foot table space rates are \$20 each (\$10 per half-table). Registration deadline is September 25, 2010; spaces not claimed by October 1st will be released. Contact Rose Wilson at the email below.

Members of the Committee:

Chair – Danielle Stephens – vconchair@gmail.com

Webmaster – Jenni Merrifield – VCONwebmaster@gmail.com

Programming – Pauline Walsh – vconprogram@gmail.com

Dealers' Room and Artists' Alley – Jeff Currey – vcondealers@gmail.com

Artshow – Rose Wilson, rjwdew@telus.net / vconartshow@gmail.com

Our Next Exciting Issue Will Include:

- Our exciting venue!
- More excited program participants!
- Our developing program!
- Unique and absorbing convention attractions!
- And Even More!

Membership Registration Form

For those who cannot register via an electronic communication, we provide the following form to accompany a personal cheque. We must request, however, that you supply an email address, so that we can send you a unique and secure code to verify your registration.

I wish to purchase

_____ membership(s) in VCON 35 at the following rate:

until July 1, 2010 - full membership - \$45 .00 Cdn.

until Sept. 1, 2010 - full membership - \$50.00 Cdn.

Until Oct. 1, 2010 - full membership - \$60.00 Cdn.

Total Enclosed Sum:

\$ _____

To be mailed to:

VCON 35

P.O. Box 78069, Grandview RPO

Vancouver, BC

CANADA V5N 5W1