

The Queen's Lane Advertiser

(Incorporating Convention News)

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Edited by Jeremy Tullett

A magazine containing news about various games conventions taking place in the UK

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| Mindsports Olympiad JW3, Finchley Road, London 23-31 August 2014 http://www.msoworld.com | Board Game Week Le Pas Opton, France 14-21 September 2015 Springharvestholidays.com/board-game-week | DragonDaze Newport Centre Newport, Wales, NP20 1UH Saturday 19 September 2015 http://allis020.wix.com/dragonDaze |
| Raiders of the Game Cupboard 33 Waterside Community Centre Heath Road, Burton upon Trent DE15 9LF Saturday 26 September 2015 10am-8pm www.raidersofthegamecupboard.co.uk | TringCon XXXI Marsworth Village Hall Marsworth, Nr. Tring, Bucks Saturday 26 September 2015 tringcon(at)fwtwr.com www.fwtwr.com/tringcon | Travel Con 2015 Traveller's Rest, Kenton Road, Kenton, Middlesex, HA3 8At 16-18 October 2015 Chris Geggus - geggus (at) sky.com |
| MidCon 2015 The Hallmark Hotel Derby DE1 2SQ 13-15 November 2015 MidCon.org.uk | Pasteboard and Plastic Saltdean Scout Hut, Brighton Saturday 21 November 2015 Details: http://tinyurl.com/3ex38k Map: http://tinyurl.com/ybq7ng | Board Games at the Manor Otford Manor TN15 6XF 4-6 December 2015 www.oakhall.co.uk/manor office(at)oakhall.co.uk |
| Winter StabCon Britannia Hotel Stockport 8-10 January 2016 bookings (at) stabcon.org.uk | Swan Con 2016 The Swan Hotel, Bucklow Hill, Knutsford, Cheshire, WA16 6RD 10-13 March 2016. Chris Geggus - geggus (at) sky.com | TringCon XXXII Marsworth Village Hall Marsworth, Nr. Tring, Bucks Saturday 2 April 2016 tringcon(at)fwtwr.com www.fwtwr.com/tringcon |
| ManorCon XXXIV John Foster Hall, University of Leicester 15-18 July 2016 info(at)manorcon.org.uk www.manorcon.org.uk | | Derby on Board Games The Bookcafe, Cornmarket, Derby Last Wednesday of every month, except December. 4pm- 10pm |

Editorial (Jeremy Tullett)

There's just enough space to enable me to say "hello", hot-footed back from YorkeyDipCon, having suffered a completely unnecessary stab from the new World Diplomacy champion, Mr. Toby Harris.

Attendance was up on last year (11 instead of eight), which at least enabled people skipping a round to play something else. It's a nice location, and Graeme tries hard to organise the events team at the University, who made several bloopers this year, but you'd have to say that the event hovers on the limits of viability. I shall be at ManorCon, but nowhere near the Diplomacy, on that occasion.

Booking for MidCon 2015 is now open, but there's some bizarre problem that is preventing the online booking system working, so best to use email or send a paper booking form, like the one below.

MidCon November 2015 Booking Details (Jeremy Tullett)

Payment for the Registration Fee and for Accommodation

For the **registration fee** we accept payment by PayPal (visit www.midcon.org.uk for details), sterling cheques (made out to "MidCon Convention"), cash, or transfer to "MidCon Convention", Lloyds TSB Colmore Row 30-00-03 03033129. Please provide your name and postcode as a reference with direct transfers. We *cannot* collect convention fees from credit cards.

Bed and breakfast prices per room per night

| | Thu | Fri / Sat | Twins / doubles are available for single occupancy, at the full room rate. |
|------------------------------|--------|-----------|--|
| Hallmark Hotel Single | £69.00 | £64.00 | The convention closes 6pm Sunday, but anyone wishing to stay on Sunday night will get the Friday / Saturday room rate. <i>Charges to your room are your responsibility, and are to be paid on departure.</i> |
| Hallmark Hotel Twin / Double | £82.00 | £77.00 | |
| Hallmark Inn Single | £59.00 | £54.00 | |
| Hallmark Inn Twin / Double | £72.00 | £67.00 | |

Accommodation deposits may be made when booking through the **MidCon** website, by supplying us with a credit card number and expiry date, or with a sterling cheque made out to the 'Hallmark Hotel', accompanied by this form.

The cancellation policy of the hotel is complicated; please seek advice from a member of the **MidCon** committee if you have to cancel to minimise your financial exposure.

Please select one of the following options by ticking the appropriate box.

I hereby give permission for **MidCon** to pass my credit card details to the hotel to reserve my room. My credit card details are given *here*:

| Name on Card | 16 Digit Card Number | Expiry date |
|--------------|----------------------|-------------|
| | | |

I enclose a sterling cheque for 50% of the total cost of my room booking, payable to "Hallmark Hotel".

| HOTEL NAME? (Hotel / Inn) | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
|--------------------------------|----------|--------|----------|--------|
| N ^o of single rooms | | | | |
| N ^o of twin rooms | | | | |
| N ^o of double rooms | | | | |
| Sharing with ... | | | | |

ManorCon XXXIII – Progress Report Number 2 – June 2015 (Nick Harrison)

www.manorcon.org.uk

Friday 17th to Monday 20th July 2015
John Foster Hall, University of Leicester

Welcome to Progress Report Number 2. ManorCon is fast approaching, so here are the final details you will need before you get there.

Don't forget your chit!

As in previous years, we are issuing chits to everyone who booked accommodation in advance and paid in full. If you've done both of these, you should find a chit enclosed with this Progress Report. **As was the case last year, the University is handing out the keys for us, so you must take this chit with you to ManorCon and hand it in at the University's reception desk in John Foster Hall to receive your room key.** As long as you have your chit with you and do not need to change your booking, you only need to visit the ManorCon Registration Desk for your badge and a Programme Booklet. If you forget to take your chit with you, then you will have to queue at the Registration Desk for a new one. **Please note: your receipt CANNOT be exchanged for a room key, only your chit can.**

If there is no chit included with this mailing, this is probably for one of the following reasons: a) we think you owe us money; b) you are non-resident; c) we may have made a mistake; or d) you haven't booked... In any case, don't worry about it - just come to the ManorCon Registration Desk when you arrive. We will not be sending out any further chits before the convention.

NEWS

Same Venue

For the third consecutive year, ManorCon is taking place in John Foster Hall in the University of Leicester. It continues to offer us lots of gaming space (and room to expand), with the food and the bar all under one roof, and en-suite accommodation for all delegates in adjacent buildings.

Gaming rooms

There are a number of gaming rooms. The main gaming hall is where the ad-hoc gaming will mostly take place. It's also where all the food will be served. There are also rooms for the Diplomacy tournament, Pop Quiz, Treasure Hunt, Second Hand Games Stall, a quiet gaming room, and a couple of other general gaming rooms.

The gaming rooms will all be open from Breakfast until the last person leaves the room.

Food and Drink

Tea and Coffee is available continuously from breakfast until 30 minutes after the evening meal stops serving, but you'll have to pay. The bar will be open 2pm to 1am Friday, noon to 1am Saturday, noon to 1am Sunday and noon to 2pm Monday, but may close early if not doing much business. Note that due to the licensing laws you are not allowed to bring your own alcohol onto the site.

Other facilities

The convention is 15-20 minutes walk from Oadby centre. Oadby is a suburban centre on the outskirts of Leicester, which has a collection of shops, restaurants, etc. There is also a large Asda between the convention and Oadby. If Oadby does not provide all the facilities you are looking for, then it is about 3 miles from the convention to Leicester City Centre.

Games Stall

Milestone Games have the sole right to sell first-hand games at ManorCon, and anybody else wanting to do so must speak to the committee first. If you wish to pre-order any games for collection at ManorCon, then please contact them on 01455 636 286 or email sales@milestonegames.co.uk

Second Hand Games Sale

This is Sara Merritt's third year in charge of running the SHGS. Volunteers are always welcome to help out in the running of the SHGS. If you would like to help, please contact Sara at saraljpx@gmail.com. Sellers can book games in between 5pm and 7pm Friday and 11am and 1pm Saturday along with a

completed Second Hand Games Sale Form; this form can be printed off from the link on the ManorCon website: www.manorcon.org.uk. Selling sessions will be Friday 7.30pm to 9pm and Saturday 2pm to 3pm with pack up by sellers by 4pm Saturday. All games must be collected by 6pm Saturday.

Treasure Hunt

This year's treasure hunt will be run by last year's winners "Team Traitor" – Gordon Aickin, Dan Lester, Chris Martin, and Phil Williams. It will be held on Sunday afternoon in the bar area.

Closing time....

The convention finishes at 2pm on Monday.

Full directions and a map appear at the end of this progress report, but meanwhile...

Address and Phone Number

The full address is John Foster Hall, Manor Road, Oadby, Leicester LE2 2LG. Telephone (0116) 223 1493. If you need to contact one of the committee, the ManorCon mobile number is 07340 048313 (or +44 7340 048313 from outside the UK). This can also be used if you want to contact someone who isn't on the committee, but only in an emergency, and only if we can find them... PLEASE do not use this number before the Thursday morning of ManorCon! If you need to contact us beforehand, please phone Steve Jones (01234 405878), or drop us a letter, or email info@manorcon.org.uk

Parking

On arrival at John Foster Hall, if you have a large volume of games to unload, we will have a few spaces outside the main entrance reserved for unloading only. You are welcome to use these while you unload, but please then move your car elsewhere.

John Foster has a deceptively large amount of parking available – around 65 spaces in total – but these are all in bays that take a few cars each. You are welcome to park in any marked bay on the site, but it may take a little driving around to find an empty space. There should be car-parking attendants on duty to help you.

If the spaces are all full, then you can also park in any other Leicester University Car Park, including Bowder Court (where the en-suites were in previous years) and Gilbert Murray (which is also just across the road). Please do not park on the road, as while it does not have parking restrictions, the University is required to keep their delegates from parking on the road.

When you arrive....

The ManorCon Registration Desk will be located near the entrance to the dining hall. If you are not staying in the University and do not owe us any money, simply collect your badge and programme booklet from the table near the ManorCon Registration Desk. If you have booked accommodation in advance, do not need to make any changes to your booking, and have your chit with you, simply report to John Foster reception to pick up your room key, and then collect your badge and programme booklet from the ManorCon Reception Desk. ALL room keys are to be collected from John Foster reception.

If you want to make changes to your booked accommodation, or if you still owe us money, or if you have forgotten your chit, you will need to report to the ManorCon Registration Desk first.

Anyone who has not pre-booked will also need to go to the ManorCon Registration Desk. We will have plenty of rooms available on the door, although they may not all be as close to the main hall as the pre-booked rooms. Once you have registered with us, we will issue you with a chit to be exchanged for your room key. We will also sort out your name badge, any money owing, etc.

Please try to arrange your transport so as not to arrive before ManorCon opens at 2pm on Friday.

If you are on public transport and you will be arriving early because that is what the timetable says, or the drive is quicker than you think and you do end up arriving early, you will be able to drop your bags off, but you will not be able to get into the gaming hall. You are welcome to arrive at any time after 2pm on Friday, although if it is after 11pm, the ManorCon Registration Desk may be closed.

Late Arrivals and Changes of Plan

If you plan to arrive on the Friday evening after 11pm, or have transport difficulties and end up arriving late, please let us know. Ring the ManorCon mobile on 07340 048313. If you haven't pre-booked accommodation but subsequently decide that you do want to stay over, please let us know (either via the ManorCon Registration Desk if open, otherwise track down the committee member on duty) before 11pm

on the night in question, as we will have difficulties finding extra rooms after this point.

And when you leave.....

PLEASE NOTE: you **must** vacate your room and return your key by 9:30am on the day of your departure. All room keys should be returned to John Foster reception.

Tournaments

Some of the tournaments at ManorCon are ad hoc. Just play a game when you want, and put the results in the envelope. We anticipate ad-hoc tournaments for 18XX only. The non-Ad-hoc tournaments are as follows:

Diplomacy: ManorCon has been selected to host the 2015 European Diplomacy Convention (EDC), so we will be expecting a lot more Diplomacy players than normal, including many from around Europe, all vying to be crowned European Diplomacy Champion. The Diplomacy Tournament will therefore be moving into the expansion space that we have not used in the last two years.

The tournament will consist of three rounds on Friday night (7pm), Saturday and Sunday (10am). You need to sign up by 6.30pm on Friday to play in round 1. For the Saturday round, please sign up by 9.30am on Saturday. Prize giving should be completed by 7pm on Sunday.

All games will be played to 1909, and the traditional ManorCon scoring system will be used. After an absence of 10 years, the Saturday round will see the return of the world-famous ManorCon team tournament, with teams of seven players competing for the title of European Diplomacy Team Champions.

For full details, please see the programme booklet. Up to date information will be posted on the Diplomacy notice board.

Croquet is a four round knockout tournament. Entries can be made up until breakfast on the Saturday morning, at which point the draw will be done. Advance entries are welcomed for those who will not be arriving at ManorCon before Saturday morning; contact Steve Jones via the ManorCon email address, info@manorcon.org.uk. The draw will be posted on the general notice board. The knockout tournament is open to everyone except last year's champion, and is for the Croquet Challenge trophy; the winner will then play Mick Haystack for the Croquet Champion trophy.

Tzolk'in is a fixed round tournament, with at least two rounds. It will take place on Saturday starting at 10 am. Those who wish to play should sign up on the sign-up sheet on the Noticeboard; it is also possible to sign up on CGE's Facebook page prior to the convention. **Could we also appeal for owners of the game to bring their copies along and loan them for the tournament.**

Midnight Party will as usual be run at midnight each night.

Pop Quiz: The pop quiz will as usual be run in the bar area on Saturday night.

Programme Booklet

When you arrive at ManorCon, don't forget to pick up your programme booklet and look through it. It will contain all sorts of useful information such as maps of the building and surrounding area plus directions to the nearest shops, ATMs and restaurants, instructions for finding a committee member, what to do if you have a problem, opening hours of the bar and the canteen, details of the tournaments, and lots more. Be warned that committee members sometimes get exasperated with people who ask them questions for which the answers are in the programme booklet! The Programme Booklet should be available on the website in advance. – www.manorcon.org.uk

Directions.... or how to make sure you find us

Public transport directions first:

By air

The nearest airport is Nottingham East Midlands (www.eastmidlandsairport.com), which has flights to various European destinations and other parts of the UK (see for details).

Other relatively convenient airports served by low-cost airlines are London Stansted (www.stansted-airport-guide.co.uk/) and Luton (<http://www.luton-airport-guide.co.uk/>).

Intercontinental travellers are likely to have to use Birmingham International, London Gatwick or London

Heathrow.

The following sections describe how to get to Leicester (either to the main railway station or to the bus station). Once there follow the instructions below for getting from the city centre to John Foster Hall.

By air, from Birmingham International Airport

Take the free Air-Rail Link to the Birmingham International station - it only takes a couple of minutes. Buy a ticket to Leicester. Take any train to Birmingham New Street (frequent). Change there and take a CrossCountry train to Leicester (approximately every 30 minutes). The total journey time is about 1h 20m. Alternatively take the scheduled bus service to Coleshill Parkway and change there onto the CrossCountry train to Leicester. The total journey time is about 1h 10m.

By air, from Nottingham East Midlands Airport

Take the Leicester Skylink bus from the airport to Leicester City Centre (hourly during the day, every other hour in the evening; for timetable see www.skylink.co.uk). The journey time is under an hour. Alternatively take the Loughborough Skylink bus from the airport to Loughborough station (half-hourly during the day, hourly in the evening; for timetable see www.skylink.co.uk) and then any train from there to Leicester (at least two per hour). The bus journey time from the airport to Loughborough station is about 30 minutes, the train journey time from there to Leicester about 15 minutes.

By air, from London Gatwick

Follow the signs in the airport to the station (if you have arrived at the North Terminal, this will involve using the transit to the South Terminal).

Buy a ticket to Leicester, specifying that you will NOT be travelling on the Gatwick Express service. Take a First Capital Connect train to London St Pancras (every 30 minutes). From there take an East Midlands Trains train to Leicester (every 30 minutes). The total journey time is about 2h 20m. Alternatively continue on the First Capital Connect train to Luton or Luton Airport Parkway and change onto the East Midlands Trains train there. This avoids the short walk between the subsurface and over ground parts of London St Pancras station, but there is only one train to Leicester per hour from each of Luton and Luton Airport Parkway, so you must find out which station it is correct to change at.

By air, from London Heathrow

Follow the signs in the airport to the station. There are three stations - one for Terminal 4, one for Terminal 5 and one for Terminals 1, 2 and 3. The following instructions are valid for all the stations.

Buy an Underground ticket to Zone 1, take the Piccadilly Line from Heathrow to St Pancras (frequent), and then buy a rail ticket to Leicester and take an East Midlands Trains train from London St Pancras to Leicester (approximately every 30 minutes). The total journey time is about 2h 30m.

Alternatively - this is a more expensive option - buy a ticket to Leicester valid for use on Heathrow Express services (this will cover both parts of the train journey and also the cross-London transfer on the Circle Line). Take the Heathrow Express train to London Paddington (every 15 minutes). Then take the Circle Line to Kings Cross St Pancras (frequent), and then an East Midlands Trains train from London St Pancras to Leicester (approximately every 30 minutes). The total journey time is about 2h 20m.

By air, via London Stansted Airport

Buy a ticket to Leicester. Take a direct Central Trains train to Leicester (hourly). The journey time is about 2h 30m.

By air, via Luton Airport

Take the free shuttle bus to Luton Airport Parkway station - it's only just over a mile. Buy a ticket to Leicester. Take a direct East Midlands Trains train to Leicester (hourly). The journey time is about an hour.

By coach

Though not always as fast as trains, coaches provide direct and cheap links between Leicester (St Margaret's Bus Station) and many other cities. Find out more information on bus routes operated by National Express. www.nationalexpress.com Booking line on: 08717 818181. Disabled Persons Travel Helpline: 08717 818179. Text phone: 0121 455 0086.

By train

Details of train times can be found on www.nationalrail.co.uk.

The following paragraphs describe how to get to Leicester from various parts of the UK. Once there follow the instructions below for getting from the city centre to John Foster Hall.

There are direct East Midlands Trains services from Derby, London St Pancras (Eurostar services from Paris and Brussels arrive here), Nottingham and Sheffield.

There are direct CrossCountry services from Birmingham New Street, Cambridge, Nuneaton and Peterborough.

From much of the South and South East it will be quickest to travel via London, using the Underground to cross London from the relevant rail terminus to St Pancras (though walking between Euston and St Pancras is also an option if you are lightly loaded). If, however, you have a direct service to Cambridge or Peterborough, it might be quicker to go that route.

From stations such as Brighton and East Croydon that are served by First Capital Direct services, the cross-London journey on the Underground can be avoided by taking one of their trains to St Pancras.

From the South West a CrossCountry service to Birmingham New Street and then a CrossCountry service from there to Leicester is likely to be the best route. Travelling via Birmingham New Street will probably also be the best route from South and mid Wales.

From North Wales, the North West and parts of Scotland travelling via Birmingham New Street might be the best option, but if you have a direct service to Nuneaton, it's likely to be quicker to change there.

From the North East and parts of Scotland the best options are likely to be either a CrossCountry service to Sheffield and then an East Midlands Trains service from there to Leicester, or an NXC service to Peterborough and then a CrossCountry service from there to Leicester.

From the city centre

The easiest way to get to John Foster Hall is by taxi or by bus. There are taxi ranks at both the bus station and the railway station.

The 31/31A bus service stops immediately in front of the railway station and there are 8/6/4 buses per hour during the day on weekdays/Saturday/Sunday. Ask for the racecourse. The buses have screens that show what the next stop is: the best stop is called Victoria Court, and is just past the road on the left that leads to the Oadby campus (Stoughton Drive South), so after getting off, you need to walk back a little and turn right. It's next after a big three-way roundabout where the outer ring road joins the A6 from the right. If you see the Asda supermarket, you've gone past the stop and will need get off as soon as possible and walk back further! It's a 10-15 minute walk up Stoughton Drive South and then right along Manor Road to John Foster Hall.

Useful information

Up to date travel information can be found in a number of places. As most of you will know, road information is available online at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/travelnews/> Useful websites for public transport information are www.arriva.co.uk, <http://www.kinchbus.co.uk/>, and <http://www.firstgroup.com/ukbus/eastmidlands/leicester/home/index.php>. Finally there is a link from our website to a maps webpage showing the exact location of John Foster Hall. Click the link on www.manorcon.org.uk.

By car

From almost anywhere in the country, the best driving route to the convention is via the M1 Junction 21 - the junction with the M69.

From the M1 J21, take the A5460 towards Leicester for about 1/4 of a mile.

As you go under the A563, immediately turn off to the left, looping back on yourself, and going over the bridge you have just gone under, on the A563 (Leicester ring road) heading around the South of the city.

Follow the A563 for about 4 miles, until you get to the roundabout with the A6.

Take the second exit off the roundabout, turning right. Then immediately turn into the first road on the left - Stoughton Drive South.

After about 600 yds. you come to a crossroads where you turn right onto Manor Road. The entrance to John Foster Hall is 300 yds on the left.

EuroDipCon 2015 (Dave Simpson)

EuroDipCon XXIII at ManorCon XXXIII

ManorCon is one of the oldest and most prestigious tournaments in world Diplomacy, as most of its attendees will know. ManorCon has hosted three World DipCons (including the inaugural event) and has been an ever-present step on the European Grand Prix Circuit. However, the jewel in the crown of the European Hobby, EuroDipCon, has been absent from ManorCon to this point, so we will rectify that omission this summer.

The Diplomacy tournament will be the usual ManorCon format, with three rounds of Diplomacy taking place over three days. Saturday will host the team round, for which ManorCon is arguably most famous. All games will run to 1909. We will be using the traditional ManorCon scoring system and traditionally, each player counts their best two scores plus half of their third score. This will all be run by David Norman, your Tournament Director.

Round start times. 19:00 Friday (register by 18:30), 10:00 Saturday, 10:00 Sunday - be there to register beforehand!

Note that the Friday night round will end about midnight. Saturday's round will end about 17:00. Sunday's round is followed by the prize giving, which will end around 18:00. Saturday night will see a "quiet social event" taking place after the team round finishes, hosted by Toby Harris, your Entertainment Director.

For the team round, we are signing up teams of seven. Each team has one player playing each power (the team chooses who plays which). The highest total score of all seven players in the team wins. There will be several teams formed on either Friday night or on Saturday before the round starts. Knowing Diplomacy players, this can take a while. If experience is anything to go by, there will also be at least one team of eight and at least one person who is registered for two different teams, before we get people properly organised on Saturday morning. So if you don't have a team in advance, don't panic!

For the prize giving, there will be trophies for the top seven individuals and trophies for members of the winning team. Also recognition for the following: Best Country awards, traditional ManorCon awards (Player most like a native of a country he is not from, TD's award etc.)

The target attendance for this event is 49 players, so we can have seven teams of seven on Saturday. To this end, your correspondent travelled to Milan last month to sign up those EuroDip players at WorldDipCon, at no additional cost to you, dear reader! You will see French, German, Italian, Dutch, American and Australian (yes, really) players joining us for this shindig.

Now, here is some additional advice of a Euro-friendly nature for those intending to visit from overseas. Full details of how to find the event are on pages 6-7 of this magazine, if you're driving from mainland Europe and entering the UK from France, then be warned that it will take much longer than you think to get around London on the M25 and up the M1 to Leicester on a Friday evening. If you have a journey plan that claims to have you arriving at ManorCon at 17:00, then you're cutting it fine for making the Friday evening round. Any later and you'll be missing Round 1!

Advanced registration for ManorCon is now closed.

Rooms may be available "on the door" on the day, but you will have to arrive with some proper currency already in hand – as in coins of the realm, Pounds Sterling. We don't accept anything that's accepted in Greece (nor Monopoly money).

The Final Word

This issue of The Queen's Lane Advertiser was brought to you by:

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