

CONFLUX 4

HEROES FROM NEAR AND AFAR

Friday September 28 to Monday October 1, 2007

CANBERRA, AUSTRALIA
Rydges Lakeside

PROGRESS REPORT 2

sf horror



fantasy

A speculative
experience

INSIDE

- Guests
- Chair's Report
- Virtual mini-con
- Workshops
- Food History
- Review: We Can Be Heroes
- Beau Brummell & the Dandies
- Regency Gothic Clothes and Links
 - Profile: Garth Nix
 - Profile: Simon Brown
 - Membership List
 - Membership Form

Featuring: *Bluey the Dropbear*



SECOND CHAIR'S REPORT

Since the first progress report, our guest list has changed. As we previously mentioned, world-renowned Australian editor Jonathan Strahan is coming to Conflux, and he'll bring a lot of knowledge of the scene and what's happening with him.

Unfortunately we've lost our other editor, Sharyn November. Work means Sharyn can't get over to Canberra this year, but we're hoping to get her over later.

Things are moving along well. Rydges Lakeside has been confirmed as the venue for the convention. Testing of recipes for the Regency Gothic ball has reached the second phase. The Conflux Art Display has been announced and artists who displayed work at Conflux 3 have been contacted.

The information is available on the website, www.conflux.org.au. We're developing the first draft of the program and we've got a great list of workshops. In short, the con is coming along nicely.

Further on in this progress report, you'll find some information about the Conflux virtual mini-con. It's going to be a fun, totally free way to get a taste of what Conflux will be about (except the real con will be much more fun ☺).

If there's anything you'd like to see at Conflux, please just let me know. Email chair@conflux.org.au

Look forward to seeing you there!

Nicole R Murphy - Chair, Conflux 4

GUESTS

- KEVIN J ANDERSON
- SIMON BROWN
- DONNA MAREE HANSON
- GRAHAM JOYCE
- REBECCA MOESTA
- GARTH NIX
- JONATHAN STRAHAN
- KAARON WARREN

VIRTUAL MINI-COM



Thank God we're
hot chicks with
superpowers.

*Faith
(End of Days)
Buffy the Vampire
Slayer*

On the first weekend of August,

Conflux will be hosting a virtual mini-con. For a 24 hour period, from 12 noon on Saturday 4 August, to 12 noon on Sunday 5 August, people from Conflux (guests, committee and members) will be taking up an hour long slot in the Conflux forums, where you'll be able to chat to them.

Access to the Conflux virtual mini-con will be free and open to anyone who wants to take part.

We're looking forward to it, it will be lots of fun. Keep an eye on the website to find out the program about who will be available to talk to when. And if you want to take part, let the chair, Nicole R Murphy, know by emailing chair@conflux.org.au

WORKSHOPS

Conflux will be offering a stream of workshops, some of which will be free for attending members, some of which will cost extra. There will be a maximum of 15 people at a workshop. Bookings will open on August 1 and it will be first in, first served. Note that a lot will be held during the day on Friday – we'll have a timetable ready for it by June 1.

Here are the workshops Conflux has organised so far. For more information, or for updates, keep checking the website regularly.

Gillian Polack - Writing magic
Cost: \$25 per person

Maxine McArthur - What do Horses Smell Like? and other horsey questions
Cost: \$30 per person

Kaaren Sutcliff – Captivating Characters
Cost: Free to Conflux members

Chris Barnes - The Noble and Knightly Art of the Long Sword
Cost: Free to Conflux members

Richard Harland - Writing an action episode and doing a public reading of it
Cost: Free to Conflux members

Margi Curtis –
Magic for Our Changing Time
Cost: Free for Conflux members

Valerie Toh – Schizophrenia and Hallucinations: Fact and Fiction
Cost: Free to members

Kevin J Anderson and Rebecca Moesta – Things I wish some pro had told me when I was just starting out.
Cost: \$30 per person

Kevin J Anderson and Rebecca Moesta – How to increase your writing productivity
Cost: \$30 per person

Fiona McLellan - eMarketing for authors
Cost: Free for Conflux members

Karen Miller - Fantasy Novel Writing 101
Cost: Free to Conflux members

FOOD HISTORY IN TOP 100 AUSSIE BLOGS

Guess whose foodblog made the top 100?

Our Intrepid historian and fiction writer **GILLIAN POLACK** has been busy gathering recipes for our **REGENCY GOTHIC BANQUET** from cookbooks published in 1800 and 1830. And we have had the pleasure of helping her test them. Yum!

Gillian has been reporting on progress in her foodblog at **FOOD HISTORY** <http://www.foodpast.com/>

Meg at [Dipping into the Blogpond](#) has listed Gillian's **Food History** in the current Top 100 Aussie blogs as rated by readers.

Gillian is thrilled. She says the only reason she can think for it being there is people must be reading it. So, thank you, Readers!

Regency Gothic Banquet

Conflux is hosting an **AUTHENTIC REGENCY GOTHIC BANQUET**.

So what's Regency?

England's Regency period covers the years between 1795 and 1820. Think change and conflict—order vs passion, war vs romance. Think:

- ◆ Revolution—American, French, Industrial, Social—Steam power rules!
- ◆ Napoleon and the Duke of Wellington
- ◆ Empire dresses and tight breeches, ringlets and top hats
- ◆ Mozart and Beethoven, Romance: poetry by Byron, Shelley, Keats & Coleridge. Mary Shelley's Frankenstein, Bram Stoker's Dracula,
- ◆ Novels by Jane Austen and Sir Walter Scott, and the visionary art of William Blake

REVIEW: WE CAN BE HEROES

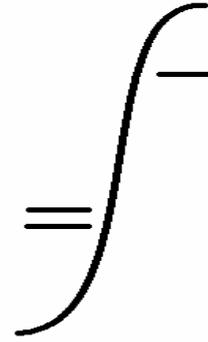
For speculative fiction fans, there isn't a lot of good viewing on TV. There's a lot of fluff--shows that may be fun, but lack depth and even running storylines. The occasional Buffy or Firefly comes all too infrequently. Star Trek straddles the line, but it's been a while since the last series ended. There is a gap for us, somewhere among all those reality shows like Survivor, Big Brother, or The 6 O'clock News.

NBC is filling that gap. The show is Heroes (in Australia it shows on Prime 8:30pm Wednesdays. For now.) Heroes is the current Big Thing among geeks and freaks. I think it deserves it. The online presence is incredible; using <http://www.nbc.com/Heroes/> as a portal, fans can access web comics, games, even characters' blogs.

Series creator Tim Kring has been favourably compared to Joss Whedon. While I don't think he's working on the same the level as The Master, it's good to hear.

Jeph Loeb provides the comics background this show needs; you may know him from such graphic novels as Batman: The Long Halloween (the stated inspiration for Batman Begins) and such series as Smallville. Tim Kring has thanked him for taking Heroes away from existing comic books. I don't know how successful that's been--most of the super powers we see have been done before (but what powers haven't?), and an upcoming storyline is very close to one of the seminal works of comic book lore. (No, I'm not going to spoil the storyline. Watch the show, then ask me.)

On its most basic level, Heroes is a superhero team show. However, it owes more to Unbreakable or LOST, or John Byrne's Alpha Flight than to The X-Men or The Justice League. Instead of a team of heroes, we get individuals, each dealing with their own stories on their own time. We see how people would react to having superpowers. Not how heroes would react, but people. That's a big part of the charm.



It's strange to me that the things I love about this show are opposite to the things I love about comics. It isn't, as Jim Carey put it in The Mask, 'With these powers, I can be a superhero! Fight crime! Uphold justice! Work for world peace!' then put on a costume.

That said, I need my heroes to be heroic, to achieve something good. These people do that. The first season is about them trying to stave off a coming cataclysm--but first they use their powers to deal with their own lives.

They don't team up immediately, though their lives are interconnected. The rooftop and the symbol (you'll know what I mean when you watch it) tie everybody together. This, again, invites comparisons to LOST, without the rambling that's put some people off.

The most commonly cited favourite characters are Claire Bennet and Hiro, the suicidal cheerleader and the Japanese guy. I can see why, though personally I like Peter Petrelli.

David Bowie sings the song "Heroes" ironically. When the Heroes use the line 'we can be heroes' in the show they aren't being ironic. We can be heroes.

Mik Bennett

BEAU BRUMMELL & THE DANDIES

DANDY, n. In modern usage, a male of the human species, who dresses himself like a doll and who carries his character on his back.—Webster's 1828 Dictionary

Beau Brummell was an eighteenth century Dandy, a metrosexual trendsetter who displayed a discerning eye for a well cut suit of clothes and a sense of personal hygiene that many blokes of the period found downright disturbing. You can probably blame him for the modern suit, and the neck tie, too.

Mind you, a nicely cut dark coat, worn over white linen and a starched neckcloth has to be an improvement on all that eighteenth century lace and brocade. Not to mention red high heels, powdered wigs and glittery jewellery (yes, ducky, we are talking about the boys, here).

Brummell was the first *celebrity*. He led the Dandies, and like all true Dandies, he spent a long time getting ready in the morning. Dandies were witty, elegant gentlemen—at their best gambling in London clubs. And a gentleman always paid his gambling debts. For more information on this charming man, visit Wikipedia and the Regency Collection at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beau_Brummell and <http://homepages.ihug.co.nz/~awoodley/regency/dandy.html>

Jane Virgo



Dighton's caricature print of Brummell, from 1805.

Regency Gothic Clothes

Conflux is hosting an **AUTHENTIC REGENCY GOTHIC BANQUET** and a **MASQUERADE DISCO**. Of course, you don't have to dress up for either function, but why not go as a Modern Goth, or in elegant Regency costume—let your imagination be your guide.

Regency women wore thin, gauzy Empire line dresses with high waists and loose graceful skirts, often made of lawn or muslin. This classical line was embellished according to the latest fashion trends—classical Greek, Egyptian, Gothic or otherwise. By 1811 a **Gothic** (Middle Ages) influence resulted in looser cut bodices, with more shaping and broader shoulder lines.

Regularly wearing white showed social status as white soiled easily. Young women wore white or pastels. Older, or married women could wear richer, darker colors.

"Morning dress" was worn at home, in the afternoons as well as mornings. Women also wore afternoon dresses, walking dresses, dinner dresses and evening dresses.

Evening dresses were low cut with short sleeves, trimmed with lace, ribbons, and netting, and worn with long white gloves (see illustration on page 7).

Hairstyles and hats—Bandeaux or fillets made of muslin or of strips of embroidery were fashionable. Women wore curls or ringlets over their forehead and ears, with longer back hair drawn up. Adventurous women even wore short hairstyles. Conservative married women continued to cover their hair with linen mob caps. Antique head-dress, Chinese hats, turbans, and Highland helmets were popular. Bonnets were trimmed with feathers (including enormous ostrich plumes) and ribbons.

Accessories—For **warmth**, women wore fur muffs, wraps, cashmere shawls or Spencers (short cardigans). When worn indoors in the evening, Spencers were made of silk or fine woolen material. Empire line dresses lacked pockets, so women carried small draw string **bags** called reticules and scrumptious beaded purses. Women wore coloured **slippers**, made of satin for evening wear and of Morocco leather for day-time.

Jewellery—Semi-precious stones and corals were popular, worn as brooches, pins, cross necklaces, pendants and cameos.

LINKS Regency Regalia

- ◆ The Regency Page -links to everything <http://locutus.ucr.edu/~cathy/reg.html>
- ◆ The Regency Collection is a superb place to browse <http://homepages.ihug.co.nz/~awoodley/Regency.html>
- ◆ The Georgian Index is loaded with information <http://www.georgianindex.net/>
- ◆ The Republic of Pemberley is a must for Jane Austen lovers <http://www.pemberley.com/index.html>
- ◆ Historical romance writer Galen Foley's website has nice wardrobe links, for men and women's clothes. <http://www.gaelenfoley.com/index-06history.html>
- ◆ Check out a beautiful site with scads of information at Fashion Era http://www.fashion-era.com/1800_1845.htm
- ◆ Regency webring has lots of members - <http://www.mimanet.com/cgi-bin/rings/regency/sitelist.html>
- ◆ Jessamyn's Regency costume companion – Love this site , there's so much here <http://www.songsmyth.com/costumerscompanion.html>
- ◆ We Make History's Regency Era Primer- Circa 1795-1825 - Great information and pretty pictures <http://www.wemakehistory.com/Fashion/Regency/Regency.htm>
- ◆ Wikipedia - Regency Gothic Costuming 1795 – 1820 – Great article http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1795-1820_in_fashion

Goth Gear

- ◆ There's a treasure trove at Gallery Serpentine <http://www.galleryserpentine.com.au/>
- ◆ Check out some Gothic Lolita style at Japanese Lifestyle http://www.japaneselifestyle.com.au/fashion/gothic_lolita.html
- ◆ Try some risqué outfits at Mame Clothing Dark and Gothic Online Store <http://www.mame.com.au/>
- ◆ Links to pretty Goth sites <http://old.gothic.net.au/links/showcategory.php?cat=5>
- ◆ DIY Goth at Antimony and Lace <http://gothfashion.info/>

REGENCY GOTHIC UNDERWEAR



Factories had just begun to mass produce cotton underwear so people could buy them in stores instead of making them at home.

Women wore mid-calf long shift or chemises, petticoats, and long, straight, bust-supporting corsets that allowed them to breathe. Underpants (drawers)—if worn at all—were crotchless.

Stockings were worn up to the thigh and tied with garters just above the knee or sometimes just below.

Men wore loose-fitting drawers, tied in front with a ribbon, then pulled in at the back by tapes to make them fit.

Short drawers were about knee-length and resembled boxers; **long drawers** were basically long-johns with a strap under the foot to keep them from bunching up or feet attached to them. There were no undershirts.

Socks (called stockings) were held up by garters just below the knee.

Regency clothes showed off muscular frames and fashionable men exercised to get the look. Others resorted to padding and corsets for undercover help.



Garth Nix

Garth Nix was born in Melbourne, grew up in Canberra and lives in Sydney. He has worked as a part-time soldier in the Australian Army Reserve, a bookseller, book sales representative, publicist, editor, marketing consultant and literary agent. More than 3.5 million copies of his books have been sold around the world and his work has been translated into more than 28 languages. Garth's books include the award-winning fantasy novels *Sabriel*, *Lirael* and *Abhorsen* and the young adult science fiction novel *Shade's Children*. His fantasy novels for children include *The Ragwitch*; the six books of *The Seventh Tower* sequence, and *The Keys To The Kingdom* series that begins with the CBC Honour Book *Mister Monday*. Garth's books have appeared on the bestseller lists of *The New York Times*, *Publishers Weekly (US)*, *The Bookseller(UK)*, *The Australian*, *The Sydney Morning Herald* and *The Sunday Times (UK)*. He lives in a Sydney beach suburb with his wife and two children.



Who are your real-life heroes?

People who help others at great personal and physical cost to themselves. Sometimes these people do this all the time, like doctors who treat epidemics in Third World countries. Sometimes they are ordinary people who rise to the occasion, like a passerby rescuing children from a burning house. I don't think of successful people in the arts or sport or media as heroes.

Who is more fun to write?

- villains or heroes?

They're both fun, in their different ways. The trick is in trying to make them real people, so they are not just "Hero Grade 1" or "Type B Villain".

-heroes or heroines?

Again, trying to make them people, regardless of their gender or their heroism, is the real challenge.

Do you have a favorite fictional hero?

No. In a sense the protagonist of every one of my thousands of favourite books is a hero (and I use the term to include heroine). I always resist choosing a single favourite book or character or author -- there are too many great examples of all of these to say "this one is the best".

What makes a hero come alive on the page?

It all comes back to them needing to be a person, first. Also, heroes are made, I think, not born and it is all about what they do and why they do it, when the circumstances for possible heroism arise.

Simon Brown

Simon Brown has been writing for over thirty-five years. In that time he has had stories published in Australia, the US, the UK, Japan, Poland and Japan. He has written ten books, including two science fiction novels, six fantasy novels and two collections of short stories. His latest books have been the collection *Troy*, published by Ticonderoga in Australia, and the novel *Daughter of Independence*, published by PanMacmillian in Australia and to be published by DAW in the US and Toymania in Russia. Simon has won the Aurealis Award twice, and been published in international year's best collections four times. Simon lives in Mollymook, New South Wales, with his wife and two children.

Heroic Questions

Who are your real-life heroes?

Mostly family and friends who struggle on through life, often against seemingly insuperable odds. The people in countries torn by disaster, man-made or otherwise, who never give up. Richard Dawkins. The father of David Hicks. Michael Mori. Both Queen Elizabeths. Hypatia of Alexandria. Richard III. Noel Pearson. Barry Humphries. Anyone who is a slice of meat in a sandwich of someone else's making.

Who is more fun to write

- villains or heroes?

Just people. I have very few villains in my stories, at least out-and-out villains. And my heroes tend to be ordinary people put in extraordinary situations who manage to do the right thing.

- heroes or heroines?

No preference one way or the other; the story determines the gender of the characters, dark or light.

Do you have a favorite fictional hero?

Hero as in protagonist? So many! Mole, from *Wind in the Willows*, Sam, from *Lord of the Rings*, Bilbo, from *The Hobbit*, Bob Arctor, from *Scanner Darkly*. Scout, from *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Lots of others.

What makes a hero come alive on the page?

Actually, not being a "hero" is what makes a character come alive. I think heroic actions, on the other hand, are perfectly acceptable, but "villains" are equally capable of this.

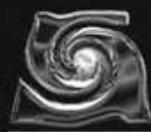
Bravery and decisiveness are not solely the prerogative of the goodies.



Do you know what the definition of a hero is? Someone who gets other people killed. You can look it up later.

Zoe Washburne—Serenity

Each issue of this popular science fiction & fantasy magazine contains over 40,000 words of fiction, articles, interviews, reviews and editorial. Published every 2 months.



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submission guidelines, crew pages and more:
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Conflux Members

This list does not show members who have requested their names be withheld.



Fashionable Evening Dresses for September 1871
J.M. 1871. 1871 by J.M. 1871. 1871. 1871.

Kevin J Anderson
Chris Andrews
Keri Arthur
Chris Barnes
Stuart Barrow
Anita Bell
Mik Bennett
Phill Berrie
Deborah Biancotti
Leigh Blackmore
David Brew
Simon Brown
Trudi Canavan
Em Clarke
Margi Curtis
Edna Dundas
Barbara Edgar
Paul Ewins
Laura Goodin
Donna Maree Hanson
Richard Harland
Stuart Herring
Cassandra Hincks
Patty Jansen
Devin Jeyathurai
Graham Joyce
Karen Mandeville
Maxine McArthur
Kirstyn McDermott
Andrew McKiernan

Fiona McLellan
Katherine McNeil
Luke Mercieca
Karen Miller
Rebecca Moesta
Lewis Morley
John Morris
Wendy Munro
Nicole R Murphy
Sarah Murray-White
Garth Nix
Gillian Polack
Allan Price
Marilyn Pride
Jaimie Ringering
Nathan Russell
John Samuel
Kylie Seluka
Erin Steele
Keith Stevenson
Jonathan Strahan
Kaaren Sutcliffe
Greg Tannahill
Kimberley Thomas
Valerie Toh
Jane Virgo
Susan Warner
Kaaron Warren
Emma Wearmouth



The person books built' *46th Australian National Science Fiction Convention*

Rydges Melbourne Hotel, Australia. 8-11th June 2007

The Australian National SF Convention, or Natcon as it is known, returns to Melbourne in 2007, featuring acclaimed young adult fantasy author Isobelle Carmody, the highly respected Star Trek script writer and fantasy author Melinda Snodgrass, acclaimed manga artist from MegaTokyo, Fred Gallagher, and Fan Guest of Honour, Cath O'Neil.

Special Appearances by Dave Freer, Art Director Jim Baen's Universe
Margaret Mahy will no longer be appearing at Convergence 2 due to ill health.

Contact us at: GPO Box 1212, Melbourne VIC 3001, Australia Email:
convergence@natcon.org.au

Join the Convergence 2 LiveJournal Community and keep up with the news or get in touch with others about Convergence 2. Don't want to do LJ? Subscribe to Natcon Info, a Yahoo group by email or visit via the web.

Disclaimer: Convergence 2 is convened under the auspices of the Victorian Science Fiction Conventions Inc and as such, is governed by its rules and regulations. Victorian Science Fiction Conventions Inc. is a not for profit association incorporated under the Victorian Associations Act, 1981.



MEMBERSHIP PRICE

	1 January - 31 May 2007	1 June - 28 September 2007	At the door
Full (attendance, publications)	\$145	\$190	\$220
Student/Concession (attendance, publications)	\$100	\$130	\$155
Supporting (publications & option to upgrade to attendance)	\$35	\$35	\$35

First Name

Last Name

Name on Badge

Address for Postage (Street or P.O.)

Suburb

State

Postcode

Phone

Email Address

I am interested in volunteering I am interested in participating in programming

I am interested in participating in a mass signing event I am interested in giving a workshop

I want my updates to be posted to me (note they will be emailed as first choice)

I do *not* want to be sent any updates on the convention

I do *not* want my name & state on the website or in the con book member list

Conflux 4 Regency Gothic Banquet

Tickets are **\$50** per person. The Banquet will be held on the Saturday night

No. of Banquet tickets _____ Total cost of Banquet Tickets \$ _____

Total Payment (Membership, & Banquet tickets):

\$ _____

I enclose a cheque/money order payable to "Conflux" for \$ _____

Please charge my Visa Bankcard Mastercard for \$ _____

Card Number

Expiry Date

Name on Card

Signature

Membership applications and payments (cheque/money order or credit card) may be mailed to:
Conflux, PO Box 903, Belconnen ACT 2616 or faxed to 02 6258 9983 (credit card payments only)

www.conflux.org.au - members@conflux.org.au