



Miniature Battlefield at Battlecry 2010.... (see page 6).

Issue Quattordici - Mar 2011

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Musings from Under the Mountain

You have to wonder what on Earth, or more accurately, what *under* the Earth is going on. First, Christchurch is shaken by what you might consider a nasty aftershock resulting from the more powerful earthquake six months ago. Nasty because the focus was unusually shallow, and the peak ground acceleration was remarkably high—peaking at over 2.2g, it was enough to “totally flatten” most world cities. The earthquake waves reflected off the Port Hills, bouncing around, turning the softer ground under some of the city to slush, and toppling buildings.

Second, only two weeks later, off the coast of Japan, the biggest earthquake ever to hit Japan struck, sending tsunamis clear across the Pacific. You have to wonder where and the next big one will come—the smart money’s on Alaska, by the way. However, the geologists are affirming that there is no connection between the Christchurch earthquake and the Japanese one—although it is possible that both may have been brought forward by that massive 2004 Boxing Day earthquake.

For some days I thought that nobody I personally knew had been hurt in the Christchurch earthquake. Keith had been on Facebook with the Christchurch fans, and they were okay (only someone’s cousin had been injured). Then we learned that Robert the Roman had lost a colleague in the collapse of one of the centre city office buildings. Most recently we heard that sadly Malcolm and Judy had lost Malcolm’s mum in the earthquake. Our sincere sympathies, guys, we know you’ll miss her.

There are still many questions, and it take a whole lot longer for the metaphorical dust to settle than it did for the literal. It seems likely that fingers will be pointed at the people who constructed certain buildings... which seems a bit pointless, since most of those buildings went up decades ago. Waste of money, if you ask me, which could be better put to helping fix the mess. The fact is that New Zealand has stringent building codes which are generally enforced—the damage really was a whole lot less than it might have been.

The reason for those building codes goes all the way back to New Zealand’s worst earthquakes since European settlement—and I’m not talking about the 1933 Napier earthquake here, although that had the greatest loss of life (and still has, to put things into perspective). No, I’m referring to the 1855 Wairarapa earthquake. That was in the range 8.1-8.3, and caused an 18m shift along a strike-slip fault, the largest ever recorded, anywhere in the world. You know that road by the sea you drive on to get into Wellington? That was *under* the sea before it was uplifted by the earthquake. And before that was the 7.5 Marlborough earthquake in 1848, which taught us that stone buildings were a bad idea. These are the shaky islands, folks, and we shouldn’t ever forget it.

Jacqui Smith

From the Cramped Office

This is somewhat late and for that I’m truly apologetic. The good intentions and best laid plans have been rendered completely useless by sloth, indolence and too much surfing the net. And allowing Broderick Wells to visit more than is healthful for my mind.

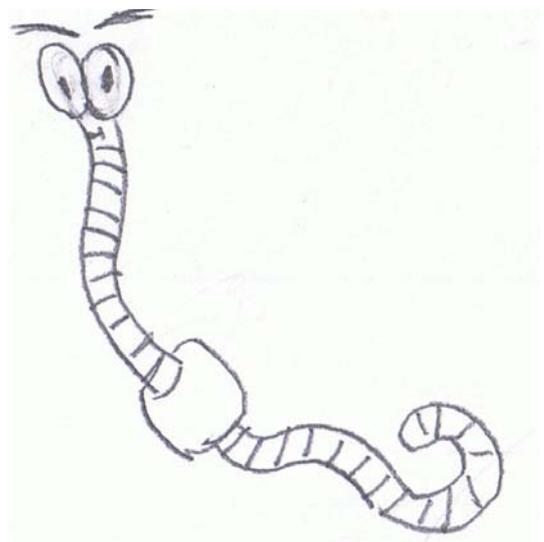
Anyhow, the elections for the various crew positions have been held and I decided to stand down. Two terms in a row is enough for any man, and if Vladimir Putin can do it so can I (this may or may not mean that Keith Smith is Dmitri Medvedev – well, he is shorter than me, just as Dima is shorter than Vlad; read into this what you will). I wish Keith all the best, and hopefully Jacqui will be able to extort a column from him quicker than she can from me. To all the others on the crew, and to the rest of the club, good luck over the next year.

Onwards to the stars.

Steve Litten
President

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Art by Paul Smith

**Ruthless Game:
Ghostwalker Book 7**

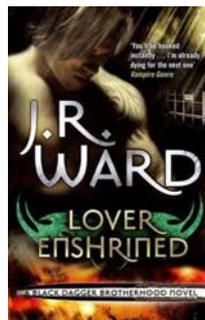
by Christine Feehan
Published by Piatkus
Supplied by Hatchette
Reviewed by Jan Butterworth



Ghostwalkers are soldiers, who volunteered for psychic enhancements. But they all got more than they bargained for when Dr Whitney (the mastermind behind the project) also altered their genes. To make matters more complicated, Whitney has started breeding programs, where he pairs his Ghostwalkers with enhanced women, in the hopes of creating super-babies. This ninth book in the GhostWalker series and focuses on members of GhostWalker Team Three. The team is deployed to Mexico to rescue two hostages from a drug cartel after a tip-off from an informant. The team discovers the informant is Rose, one of the women who escaped from Dr. Whitney's breeding program with the help of the GhostWalkers. The two hostages turn into three and Kane and Rose are left to find their way back to safety.... Kane has been searching for Rose for months, ever since Dr. Whitney paired them as part of the breeding program. He helped her to escape but then lost touch with her. Rose is eight months pregnant with Kane's child and desperately afraid to trust anyone with the safety of her unborn child - anyone except Kane. They are both strong, likeable members of the team. Because they were paired and mated before the book starts, the story lacks the courtship phase of the relationship. The expressions of their feelings can be a bit over the top at times, but I like how Rose refuses to let Kane go too alpha male on her. This is the first Ghostwalker book I read and I'm hunting down the first eight so I can read more of this series. I look forward to learning more about this Ghostwalker team and seeing more of the other teams and how they interact as well. This book was fast paced, enjoyable and kept me turning pages until the very end.

**Lover Enshrined: Black
Dagger Brotherhood Bk 6**

JR Ward
Published by Piatkus
Supplied by Hatchette
Reviewed by Jan Butterworth



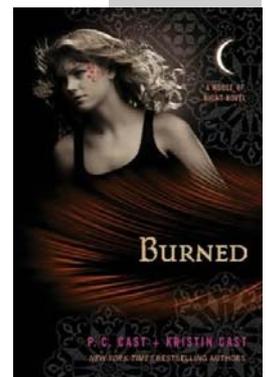
Phury, a warrior of the Black Dagger Brotherhood, is also the Primale – expected to have a harem of 40 Chosen Ones and repopulate the warriors. He doesn't want this destiny, as he's struggling with his feelings for Bella, his brother's mate, and Cormia, his first in the harem. He also has a serious drug addiction and a self destructive part of his mind whispering negative thoughts to him. He's hiding at the Brotherhood compound and is not only killing lessers, but torturing them first. Cormia has been chosen to be the First Mate, not something she wants. She has come to live at the compound to get to know Phury. She comes from 'The Other Side' – where all dress alike, there is no colour, no emotions and they are submissive and quiet. She gets a huge culture shock, but eventually settles in.

Their story was disappointing. Cormia came across as a gentle, soothing friend to Phury, rather than one of the strong, passionate mates of the previous books. Phury was also disappointing. The wizard in his mind thing was annoying and it was hard to see why he'd suddenly gone from smoking non addictive red smoke to spiralling down to be a hard core drug addict. There was no resolution with Bella either. I was waiting for him to realize that he never really loved Bella, I wanted him to explain this to Cormia and allow her to feel secure. Instead she was left wondering if he still wanted Bella. And what happened to the rest of the Brotherhood? Why did they let Phury go downhill without attempting to save him? The subplots in the book were awesome though. The Omega has a long-term plan to destroy the Brotherhood that is unfolding nicely. The Brotherhood trainees John Matthew, Qhuinn and Blaylock have a serious drama with another trainee, Lash. Their stories have major advancements with lots of surprises. Rvenge's and Xhex's characters also play a big part, setting the scene for the next book. For anyone new to the series - don't start here! You'll miss out on a lot of the back story.

Burned: House of Night Book 7

P.C. and Kristin Cast
Published by Atom
Supplied by Hatchette
Reviewed by Jan Butterworth

This series follows Zoey Redbird as he is 'marked' by a vampire tracker and begins to change into a vampire. She leaves her family to move into the House of Night – a boarding school for fledgling vampyres. I really wished I had read the first six books first in order to pick up character relationships easier. Zoey Redbird's soul has shattered. As her friends watch over her mortal body (which is now devoid of all tattoos), Zoey's soul drifts in the Otherworld, alone except for Heath. Unless Zoey can face what has happened, pull her shattered pieces back together, and return to her body within seven days, it will be forever too late. James Stark is Zoey's Guardian, and the only living person who can reach her. The only way for that to happen is for his body to die so his shaman can travel to the Underworld. Neferet sends Kalona's soul into the underworld to permanently eliminate the threat Zoey poses. She binds his body with darkness to keep his soul out. Unless Kalona kills Zoey or keeps her soul from returning to her body in time, his immortal soul becomes Neferet's to control. Meanwhile, Stevie Rae is dealing with her Imprint on Rephaim and her fledglings, both good and evil. Unknown to her followers, Stevie Rae has saved the life of Rephaim, the son of Kalona. He has vowed to stay with Stevie Rae until she tells him to leave. If her fledglings learn of Stevie Rae's friendship with the Raven Mocker or that they share an Imprint, it could spell disaster. The story kept jumping from one character's point-of-view to the next, which was hard to follow at first. The style of talking was a little cringe making – do teens really talk like that? I really liked the unique mythology. I thought the Celtic elements blended in well with the Wiccan and Native American mythology. This is definitely a YA book though, not for adults, as the slang and phrasing will drive them nuts.



Sir Julius Vogel Nominations are Open

The Sir Julius Vogel Awards opened for nominations on 1st January and will close on 31st March, 2011.

The Awards are made annually by the Science Fiction & Fantasy Association of New Zealand (SFFANZ) and recognize achievement in Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror by New Zealanders. Initial nominations are open to everyone - and anyone - but the final vote for shortlisted works is restricted to members of SFFANZ and those attending the national convention, Context, which is to be this year over Queen's Birthday weekend, 3-6 June.



To make a nomination, here's what you do:

If you wish to make a nomination - and remember that anyone may nominate - here's what you do:

Go to the Sir Julius Vogel Award site and check out "the rules" http://sffanz.sf.org.nz/sjv/sjvAwardsRules_2011.shtml

But my take on "what to do" is basically this:

If you like a work of fiction or SFF tv series or film (that has been created by a NZ-er and released in 2010) then make a nomination—it costs you nothing and helps support and recognise SFF in NZ;

You can **nominate as many works as you like but only once in each category**—in other words, you can nominate all the NZ-created works that you loved this year; no need to pick and choose at this stage!

Remember to **include your name and contact details** when you make a nomination;

Also **include the contact details for the creator of the nominated work**, where you know them, as the nomination must be accepted by them;

Email your nominations to: sjv_awards@sffanz.sf.org.nz

A separate email for each nominated work is very much appreciated but not absolutely required.

And **do nominate** - the works that make the final ballot are based entirely on the number of nominations received, so if you loved a work this year and want to see it recognised, then **your nomination counts!**

Novels eligible for nomination this year can be found under the 'Interesting Lists' link on the SFFANZ homepage or <http://sffanz.sf.org.nz/lists/WritersByInverseDate.shtml>

Helen Lowe

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For the full blog post visit: <http://helenlowe.info/>

Version 43

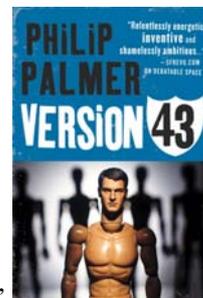
by Phillip Palmer

Published by Orbit, 495pp

Supplied by Hatchette

Reviewed by Jacqui Smith

I have to say that this is a very strange book, and it certainly would not be to everyone's taste. It begins as a criminal investigation by a cyborg cop, sent to what amounts to a penal colony, investigates a murder. It ends in interstellar war, via hive rats, gladiatorial combats, gang warfare, and weird sexual perversions. I was quite convinced that Palmer had to be an Australian - but he's apparently British. I had come to the conclusion that anyone who could invent the world of *Belladonna* - and the fifty-fifty - had to be an Aussie. The fifty-fifty is Schrödinger's cat meets deportation - a criminal is given the choice of brain-wipe or quantum teleportation to the Exodus Universe - which has a fifty percent chance of survival. Now, as it happens your chances of surviving as a prisoner on Australia's First Fleet was actually quite high, and a lot better than fifty-fifty, but I'm sure that was the inspiration. Anyhow, we find *Version 43* investigating a very messy multiple murder beginning with the scrambled body parts. He comes to certain conclusions and gets killed - and so it continues, several times. Once, even, he impossibly has to kill himself. We're at least up to *Version 56* by the end of the book, by which point the real perpetrators have been identified, interstellar war committed, destruction visited on villains, and the human race preserved. And we have been bamboozled by quantum physics yet again - and suffered through a lot of violence and bad language. Sadly, I'd have to label this another R18 novel - sadly because it's really rather clever, and certainly original.



The Spirit Eater

by Rachel Aaron

Published by Orbit, 422pp

Supplied by Hatchette

Reviewed by Jacqui Smith

There is definitely a more serious tone in this third book of the Eli Monpress series. It opens with the bloody scene of the aftermath of a recent battle between the League and a demonseed - who survives to become Eli Monpress's sidekick Josef's girlfriend Nico. We learn a whole lot more about demons and demonseeds in this book along with more about our friend Eli. He's trying to find an old friend, a Shaper named Slorn - who is trying to find a swordsman named Sted, who is obsessively hunting Josef. And Miranda is, as usual, looking for Eli. Eli has to make some tough decisions this time, and has to visit some interesting places. We learn far more about the real powers behind the scenes of his world. There's still a thread of humour, but this is far more intense, fantasy on a whole other level. Oh, and something I haven't mentioned is the covers - they seem to me to be trying to convince readers of urban fantasy or supernatural romance into to reading a more classic style of fantasy, and I wonder if that's a good idea. Not that they'd be disappointed, this is an excellent series.



Gears of War: Anvil Gate

by Karen Traviss

Published by Orbit, 447pp

Supplied by Hatchette

Reviewed by Jacqui Smith

This is the third in the “Gears of War” series of novels, which are based on the popular computer game. In this case, the novelisation has crept ahead of the game franchise, since this book fills in the gap between “Gears of War II” and “Gears of War III” (which won’t be released until late 2011 and then only for the Xbox 360). Advance publicity for the game tells us that one of the characters created by Traviss, a female Gear called Bernadette Mataka, will be a playable character. Which is nice, because it’s good to see strong well-crafted female characters in games like this. But I should get on to the book. It took me a while to get into, but the storylines (there are two) soon became strong enough to get my attention. The main plot is about the activities of the Gears and their (sometimes difficult) allies on the island of Vectes. The Locust may be destroyed and you might think there’s enough to contend with the simple business of survival, and dealing with the scattered remnants of humanity, some of whom still aren’t that keen on joining the COG. But we have a new and even more alien enemy, the Lambent, who have a nasty habit of blowing up when hit. Now, the Lambent aren’t entirely new, and apparently the Locust had been fighting them for years, but they’ve found our boys and girls, and the fight is on. The subplot focuses on Victor Hoffman, then a Lieutenant, and the siege of Anvil Gate some 32 years earlier. Traviss does a pretty good job with her material, and the flaws aren’t hers, but inherent to the source – unanswered questions like how long have humans been on Sera? How did they get there? Where did the Locust come from? Where did the Lambent come from? And if either of those were native to Sera, why didn’t they kill the people long ago, before they had big guns? Nevertheless, I’d definitely recommend the book to any adult planning to purchase and play “Gears of War III” (and yes, I mean adult, this very much an R18 novel).



Battlecry: Sten Omnibus 1

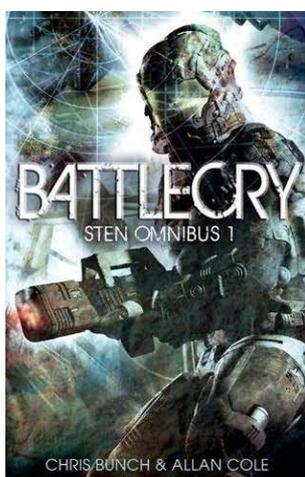
Chris Bunch and Allan Cole

Published by Orbit, pp785

Supplied by Hatchette

Reviewed by Jacqui Smith

Yes, that is a very high page count, but this is an omnibus edition, comprising *Sten*, *Sten 2: The Wolf Worlds* and *Sten Adventures Book 3: The Court of a Thousand Suns*. So, it’s three books in one, and if you like military SF, it’ll be a rare treat. The *Sten* books were originally written back in the 1980’s, and this omnibus edition is a fine opportunity to get hold of this classic series (at a reasonable price), since they’re otherwise out of print and hard to find. There’s plenty of action to be had, although



some may be offended by Alex’s atrocious Scottish accent (which sometimes makes him hard to follow). On the other hand, there are Gurkhas, still defending the Empire in this distant future! Those details, and others, give the books a rather British feel, and I was surprised to learn that the authors are, in fact, Americans.

In the first book we meet Sten as a young teenager on the grim industrial world of Vulcan. His parents are killed in an “accident”, and he becomes determined to escape, and exact revenge on the Company and its evil boss, Baron Thoresen. He rescues an off-worlder who proves to be the head of Mantis – one branch of Imperial Intelligence, who gets Sten away from Vulcan and into the military. Ultimately Sten ends up in Mantis, and succeeds in getting his own back on Thoresen with interest. The second book follows Sten’s adventures as he is assigned to deal with an uprising of religious fanatics in the Lupus Cluster, and we learn that sometimes the people you choose to replace one set of maniacs can be easily as mad.

The third book has a more investigative tone as Sten is given the task of figuring who blew up the Covenant, a bar on Prime World, with secret Imperial connections. In the process he uncovers a plot to kill the Emperor, and ultimately foils the villainous scheme, saves the Emperor, and averts an interstellar war.

As you may guess, it’s all rollicking good stuff, and fun to read, although not especially innovative. This is science fiction the way it used to be, and if you’re a fan of old-fashioned military SF in the style of Heinlein or Doc Smith you should enjoy this collection.

WRITER’S WORKSHOP

with

Catherine Asaro

Limited to 10 participants

When:	3 days, Wednesday – Friday, 1 – 3 June, 9.00 am – 5.00 pm
Where:	Barrycourt Quality Motel, 10 – 20 Gladstone Road, Parnell 1052
Cost:	\$150.00 pp for the course (free parking onsite)
Bring:	Pen & paper or laptop Lunch not included

About the tutor

Catherine Asaro is the author of more than 20 Science Fiction and Fantasy novels and many novella and short stories. When not writing and making appearances at conventions and signings, Catherine teaches math, physics, and chemistry. She is a member of SIGMA, a think tank of speculative writers that advises the US government as to future trends affecting national security. A former ballerina, Catherine Asaro has performed with ballets and in musicals on both coasts and in Ohio. She founded and served as artistic director and a principal dancer for two dance groups at Harvard.

For more information about Catherine go to:
<http://www.catherineasaro.net/>
Please contact enquiries@context.sf.org.nz
for a registration form.

BATTLECRY 2011

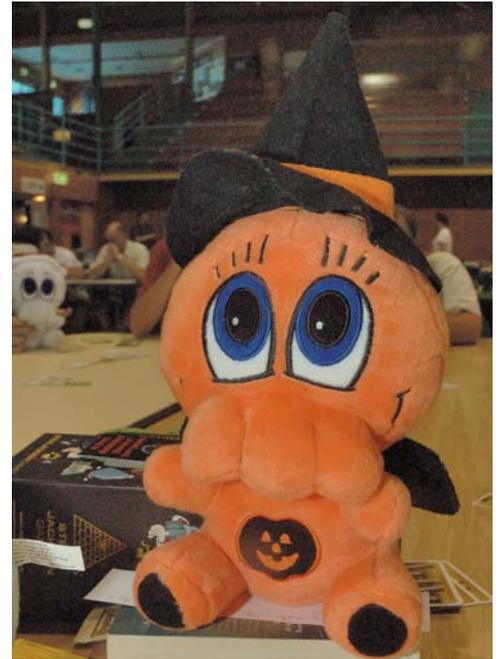


It's rather difficult to write a report about an event like Battlecry, since one inevitably tends to be involved in one particular activity, and not see much of the rest. It was role-playing for Keith and I; and I have to say I was impressed. Good solid scenarios, and introductions to both the FATE system, and Savage Worlds. That said, one had to be impressed by the vast cavern which is the ASB stadium full of geeks like us—intent on their battles, whether mediated by miniature armies and dice, cards, boards and counters; or entirely in the imagination, as role-playing tends to be. There were a great many prizes—the Smiths came home with a new board game as a spot prize, and a cute little rubber duck acquired by Paul in the Munchkin tournament!



There was a LARP
(Live Action Role Play),

There was much Munchkin,



There were
role-players,



And there were
many miniature
armies on the
march!

Text
by Jacqui
Smith
Photos
by Keith
Smith

ConText

Short Story and Artwork Contests

SHORT STORY

All SF, fantasy, or horror stories of up to 5,000 words in length will be eligible.



To enter, please e-mail your story, as an attachment in .rtf (Rich Text Format), to the convention e-mail address: enquiries@context.sf.org.nz.

Include a cover sheet with:

- your name
- contact details
- story title
- number of pages

Pages must be numbered.

DO NOT include your name or other identifying information on the manuscript itself.

Final judging by Catherine Asaro

ARTWORK

All SF, fantasy or horror themed art - 2D, 3D, painting, sculpture, modelling or other forms - is eligible.



Please bring your artwork along to the convention, and present it in person to the registration desk to enter.

Final judging by Frank Victoria

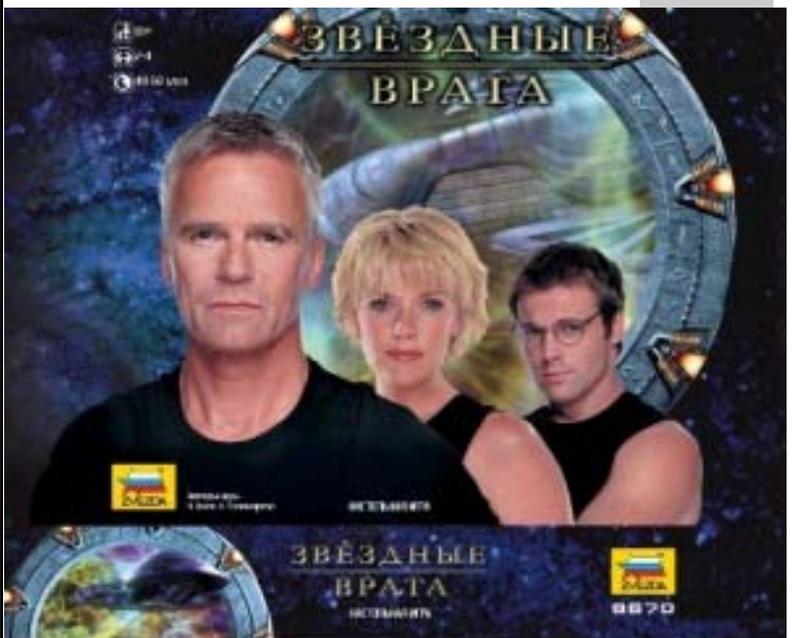
Uncorked by Broderick Wells

I think I've mentioned that I've been involved on a small internet forum, hight *Armchair General* - a cheeky little number, not too presumptuous but with a satisfying after burn. Why *ACG*? Well, they have two areas that pique my interest: Alternate Timelines and Alternate Timelines Wargaming. Now, the second is not just devoted to re-running great historical battles, such as Gettysburg or Waterloo or the Chinese Warring States. No, no, no. Attached are a few Sci-Fi games, as the guys and gals on *ACG* are an eclectic lot. Right now I'm engaged in several interesting games, one of which has had a little hiccup, but the other s are going strongly.

A clutter of us a playing *Firefly RPG* and it seems to be going well. We've just rescued some new players from a ship being attacked by Reavers and are about to deal death to the Reavers, or make a truly heroic escape, depending on what the captain decides. My character is, hopefully, facing only a miniscule chance of dismemberment as I'm manning the ship's main cannon (as engineer I reserve the right not to get wet fighting). The WW1 wargame is going well and my Imperial Russian Pacific Fleet, such as it is, is dealing death and destruction to the treacherous Americans, who have allied with Germany in this timeline.

Another amusing forum thread is entitled *Zulu: the Hollywood Remake*. As you can guess, this is reinventing good films with alternate actors, directors and plot elements. My particular favourite is the new version of *Dances with Wolves*. Full Monty is currently in Essex rounding up some hot hatches for some of the scenes.

And to finish - just when you thought it was safe to play boardgames, I came across this:



That's right; *Stargate* is now available as a Russian boardgame.

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The Sky at Night – April 2011

Autumn is coming and the nights are getting longer. Orion is more to the west now. Leo starts to dominate in the east.

Planetary wise, there is not much to see. The only planet in the evening sky is Saturn which is located in Virgo, near the bright star Spica. It rises earlier and earlier as the month goes on, getting into opposition on the 4th. The only other planet visible is Venus in the morning sky.

Saturn makes a rather spectacular sight in a small telescope with its ring system. Its large moon, Titan, can be clearly seen in a small telescope, depending on where it is in its orbit.

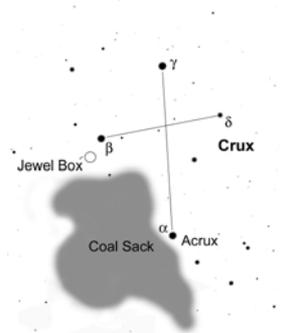


Larger telescopes will reveal more moons. When I looked through the Zeiss telescope at Stardome the other night, I was able to see four moons: Titan, Rhea, Dione and Tethys. The last two were very faint.

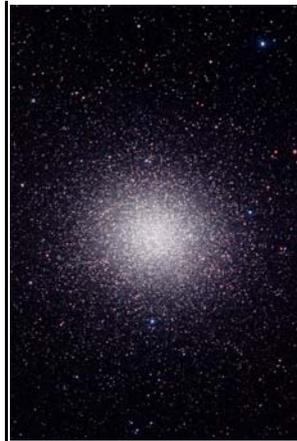


We also used the Zeiss to look at the Trapezium Cluster in Orion. This grouping of stars lights up the Orion Nebular. There are four bright stars clearly visible in the center of the nebula and with the Zeiss, we could see two fainter ones.

I mentioned in a previous column about Alpha Crucis and Alpha Centaurus being binary stars that could be able to be split in a small telescope. Through the Zeiss, Alpha Crucis looked like a pair of bright car headlamps in the distance.

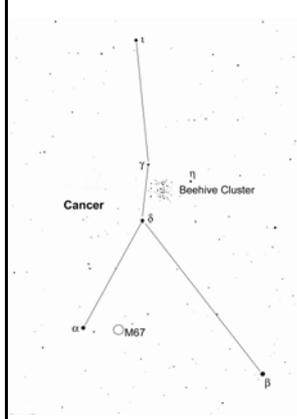


Globular clusters are also well worth a look at and two prime candidates in the Southern sky are Omega Centarus and 47 Tucana. Omega Centarus is easy to find. Take a line from Beta Centaurus (the closest pointer star to the Southern Cross), extend it upwards



(sort of roughly parallel to the long axis of the Cross and away from south) until you reach a medium bright star. That is Gamma Centaurus. Extend the line the same distance and you should find a faint fuzzy blob. That's Omega Centaurus. Through a telescope you will see a densely packed globe of stars and it looked very spectacular though the Zeiss. 47 Tucana is close to the Small Magellenic Cloud.

Another cluster is also located in the Southern Cross. Just to the side of the left most star in the Cross (assuming it's upright), which is Beta Crucis, is what appears to be a faint star. However, in binoculars, it is revealed to be a cluster of stars called the Jewel Box. One of these stars, Kappa Crucis, is a deep red in colour and contrasts well with the bright blue of Beta Crucis.



Another open cluster worth finding in binoculars in the Beehive. It's in Cancer and you'll need a map as it just looks like a faint star to the naked eye.

To the east of the Gemini twins, and past the faint Cancer, Leo the Lion looks upside down from our vantage point and it is marked by the bright star Regulus. Further overhead from Leo, and a third of a way to the False Cross, is another fairly bright star. This is Alpha Hydrae.

Events:

- 4th April – New Moon
- 11th April– First Quarter Moon
- 18th April– Full Moon
- 25th April – Last Quarter Moon

There will be a close conjunction of Mars and Mercury very low in the morning sky on the 20th.

More information can be found at:

- <http://www.astronomy.co.nz/pub/home.asp>
- <http://www.astronomy.org.nz/>
- <http://www.skyandtelescope.com/index.html>

Obits

February 10

Bill Justice, (aged 97)
American animator, worked on such features as 1940's *Fantasia*, 1944's *The Three Caballeros*, 1951's *Alice in Wonderland*, and 1953's *Peter Pan*. He is arguably best known as the animator of the rabbit Thumper from 1942's *Bambi* and the chipmunks Chip 'n Dale..



February 21

Dwayne McDuffie, (aged 49),
American comic book writer, editor and animator, responsible for the characters Static, Icon, Hardware, and Xombi. He developed the animated series *Static Shock*, and also wrote for *Teen Titans*, *What's New, Scooby-Doo?*, *Justice League*, and *Ben 10: Alien Force*.

February 22

Nicholas Courtney, (aged 81),
British actor, best known to us all as Brigadier Lethbridge-Stewart in *Doctor Who*. He was actually born in Cairo, Egypt and did military service in the British Army, before becoming an actor. His first appearance in *Doctor Who* was in the 1965 serial *The Daleks' Master Plan*, where he played Space Security Agent Bret Vygon opposite William Hartnell as the Doctor. He was given the role he became famous for in the 1968 serial *The Web of Fear* with Patrick Troughton. His last appearance as the Brigadier was in *The Sarah Jane Adventures* story *Enemy of the Bane*.



March 1

Mike Lounge, (aged 64),
American NASA astronaut (1981–1991). He was a mission specialist on STS-51-I (1985) and STS-26 (1988) and was the flight engineer on STS-35 (1990) and logged over 482 hours in space.

March 11

Hugh Martin, (aged 96),
American songwriter, best known for his score for the classic 1944 MGM musical *Meet Me In St. Louis*, including *The Trolley Song*, and *Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas*.



February 12

Joanne Siegel, (aged 93)
American widow of Superman co-creator Jerry Siegel. She was the original model for Lois Lane.

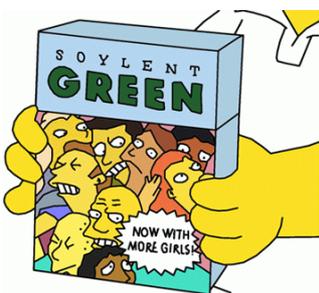


February 17

Ron Hickman, (aged 78)
South African-born British inventor and car designer. He came up with the Black & Decker Workmate after damaging a chair he was using to support the timber he was sawing. He the director of Lotus Engineering in the 1960s, designing the first Lotus Europa and Lotus Elan.

Perry Moore (aged 39)

American author and film producer. He was executive producer of all three Narnia movies and had reportedly just secured funding for *The Magician's Nephew*.



February 18

Walter Seltzer, (aged 96)
American film producer of movies including *Soylent Green*, and *The Omega Man*.

February 20

Barbara Harmer, (aged 57),
British aviator, first woman to pilot the Concorde. She left school at 15 to become a hairdresser, then became an air traffic controller at London Gatwick Airport. She studied for her "A" levels, and gained piloting qualifications, culminating becoming the first qualified female Concorde pilot in 1993. Shows what a woman can do if she tries....

Maureen Fletcher



Beloved Mother of Club Member
Malcolm Fletcher

On 22nd February, she was taken from us suddenly, struck down in the Christchurch Earthquake.

ConText 2011

New Zealand National SF Convention

ConText will be held over Queen's Birthday weekend in Auckland, Friday 3rd to Monday 6th June. The venue has been changed to the Quality Hotel Barrycourt, 10-20 Gladstone Road, Parnell.

Catherine Asaro, an American author of both science fiction and fantasy novels, will be the GoH. The fan GoH will be Lynelle Howell, editor of Phoenixine and an active Wellington fan. Also attending will be Helen Lowe, the Christchurch based author of the Heir series, of which the first 'The Wall of Night' was released earlier this month. The crew are also in negotiations with other potential guests.

This is a marvellous opportunity for anyone who enjoys science fiction to participate in 4 days of sharing their hobby with other fans. There will be discussion panels, organised gaming, costuming events, the Quiz, a video stream and a chance to buy science fiction related items. The winners of the 2011 Sir Julius Vogel Awards for Excellence in New Zealand Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror will be announced on the Sunday night at the Conjunction Banquet.

Full and day memberships will be available if you wish to attend for one or two days only. Organised events will be going into the early evening. The bar will be open all day until late.

The Barrycourt Hotel is holding a block of rooms for convention attendees. Book directly and quote the reference number 64913 to ensure you receive the rates.

Phone: +64 9 303 3789
Facsimile: +64 9 377 3309
<http://www.barrycourt.co.nz/reservations@barrycourt.co.nz>

Standard King Room

King bed, ensuite bathroom, coffee & tea facilities. LCD TV, DVD, writing desk. Some rooms with amazing city & harbour views. Rate includes car parking & daily newspaper (on request). \$109.00 per night including GST (maximum 2 pax)

Double Room

1 Queen & 1 Single bed, ensuite bathroom, coffee & tea facilities, private balcony, LCD TV, DVD, writing desk. Some rooms with amazing city & harbour views. Rate includes car parking & daily newspaper (on request). \$129.00 per night including GST (maximum 2 pax)

Stella Nova Wiki:

http://stella-nova.sf.org.nz/wiki/index.php/Main_Page

Nova Zine Back Issues:

<http://stella-nova.sf.org.nz/wiki/index.php/StellaNova:Novazine-new>

Postal Address:

Stella Nova
PO Box 74-013, Greenlane
Auckland 1543

President:

Stephen Litten
president@stella-nova.sf.org.nz

Editor:

Jacqui Smith
editor@stella-nova.sf.org.nz

This Month:

- BOG Saturday 19 March, 7:30pm
 at Teri's Place in New Winsor
 (email for details).
- BOOK Monday 28 March, 7:30pm
 at the former Presidential Palace
 in Papakura
 (email for details).
- SPACE Friday 1st April, 7:30pm
 at Maree's in Papakura
 (email for details).

Next Meeting:

Wednesday 20 April, 2011 at 7:30pm
Auckland Horticultural Centre,
990 Great North Road, Western Springs



Upcoming Events:

June 3-6th 2011 ConText
2011 New Zealand NatCon in Auckland
http://context.sf.org.nz/wiki/index.php/Main_Page