

CONZ ZEALAND

78TH WORLD SCIENCE FICTION CONVENTION, WELLINGTON, NEW ZEALAND

BIOGRAPHIES

Norman Cates, Co-Chair: Experience

Norman's enthusiasm is contagious, and the fact that there is a New Zealand bid for 2020 at all is down to him. His experience in local conventions, theatre and design make him the right person to guide the vision of what this convention will be.



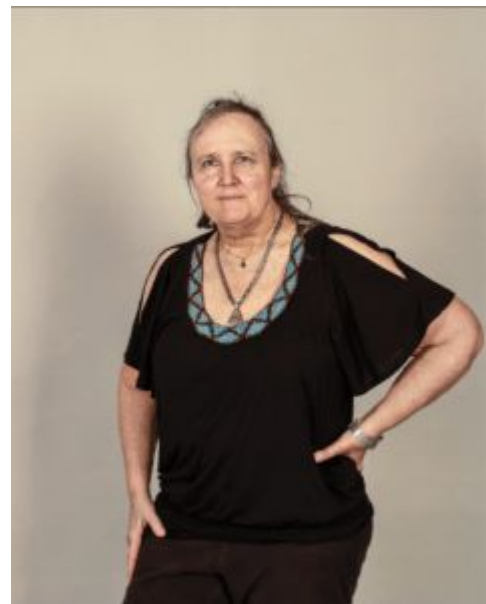
Kelly Buehler, Co-Chair: Business

Kelly worked on her first convention in 1978 and hasn't ever stopped. Her MBA and extensive experience in Management, Governance and Startup strategy make her the right person to guide the business of the convention.

Mercedes Lackey, Author Guest of Honour

Mercedes entered this world on June 24, 1950, in Chicago, had a normal childhood and graduated from Purdue University in 1972. During the late 70's she worked as an artist's model and then went into the computer programming field, ending up with American Airlines in Tulsa, Oklahoma. In addition to her fantasy writing, she has written lyrics for and recorded nearly fifty songs for Firebird Arts & Music, a small recording company specializing in science fiction folk music.

"I'm a storyteller; that's what I see as 'my job.' My stories come out of my characters; how those characters would react to the given situation.



Maybe that's why I get letters from readers as young as thirteen and as old as sixty-odd. One of the reasons I write song lyrics is because I see songs as a kind of 'story pill' — they reduce a story to the barest essentials or encapsulate a particular crucial moment in time. I frequently will write a lyric when I am attempting to get to the heart of a crucial scene; I find that when I have done so, the scene has become absolutely clear in my mind, and I can write exactly what I wanted to say. Another reason is because of the kind of novels I am writing: that is, fantasy, set in an other-world semi-medieval atmosphere. Music is very important to medieval peoples; bards are the chief news bringers. When I write the 'folk music' of these peoples, I am enriching my whole world, whether I actually use the song in the text or not.

"I began writing out of boredom; I continue out of addiction. I can't 'not' write, and as a result I have no social life! I began writing fantasy because I love it, but I try to construct my fantasy worlds with all the care of a 'high-tech' science fiction writer. I apply the principle of TANSTAAFL ['There ain't no such thing as free lunch', credited to Robert Heinlein) to magic, for instance; in my worlds, magic is paid for, and the cost to the magician is frequently a high one. I try to keep my world as solid and real as possible; people deal with stubborn pumps, bugs in the porridge, and love-lives that refuse to become untangled, right along with invading armies and evil magicians. And I try to make all of my characters, even the 'evil magicians,' something more than flat stereotypes. Even evil magicians get up in the night and look for cookies, sometimes.

"I suppose that in everything I write I try to expound the creed I gave my character Diana Tregarde in *Burning Water*:

"There's no such thing as 'one, true way'; the only answers worth having are the ones you find for yourself; leave the world better than you found it. Love, freedom, and the chance to do some good — they're the things worth living and dying for, and if you aren't willing to die for the things worth living for, you might as well turn in your membership in the human race."

<http://www.mercedeslackey.com/>



Larry Dixon, Author Guest of Honour

Larry Dixon is a respected, funny, friendly and completely approachable guy with a diverse and adventurous history. He is a "Player Character," as he puts it, whose life seems like fiction—but he is completely for real.

Son of a Delta Force career commando and an Oklahoman farmgirl, Larry grew up in many American and European settings, usually haunting the local art museums and hobby stores. At age 9 he saved up his babysitting money and bought his first typewriter, intent upon writing and illustrating his own novels. Northern Italy is where his passions for painting, sculpting and storytelling took root, as

well as his interests in state-level diplomacy, early computers and rocketry.

In Junior High, Larry became one of the “Boy Wonder” strategists at the Ft. Bragg Battle Simulations Center, spending his weekends facing off against Army officers on armor-and-battalion sand tables. During this time, he learned Chainmail and D&D from some of the original mimeographed and handwritten manuscripts of the games. He has been a roleplaying games buff since the 1970’s, and has illustrated or helped design many RPGs.

Educated at the North Carolina School of the Arts during High School, and then at the Savannah College of Art and Design, his story work became as popular as his artwork. He has been an uncredited co-plotter or co-writer for many popular properties, bringing jovial and energetic approaches to collaborative work. Many cover-credited novels have followed, too, including the ever-popular Gryphon series, the Winds, Storms, SERRATED Edge, and Owl books with the mighty Mercedes (Misty) Lackey. BORN TO RUN has been hailed as a “romp with a conscience,” and THE BLACK GRYPHON has been critically referred to as “A modern classic,” and is in its nineteenth printing.

As a birds-of-prey rehabilitation specialist, he and his wife Misty have gotten over four hundred hawks, owls, falcons and corbies back into the wild from their home-based facilities in Oklahoma. Additionally, Larry is an accomplished race car driver, storm-spotter, volunteer firefighter, world traveler, aviculturist, show host, occasional movie consultant/special effects man, model maker and internet veteran. His biggest movie contribution thus far—though still very minor, he says—is as the Great Eagles advisor for Peter Jackson’s Lord Of the Rings films.

Larry loves standup comedy; genre movies; subcultures; aikido; storms; design; SF TV; odd cars (he owns many, and a few even run); his hawks, cockatoos and owls; history; comic books; architecture; costume; road trips; woodworking; studio scale and hobby scale modelmaking; International Rally and American LeMans Series racing; dirty jokes; club/trance/electronica, synth, experimental, and ambient music; and just plain making people feel good about themselves.

Additionally, Larry sponsors substance abuse rehab patients and he seems to be the “go to guy” for emotional, relationship, and life-direction advice. He is a survivor of many serious illnesses and refuses to be stopped by his health circumstances. Over the years, his rescue work has led to all sorts of injuries (when a paramedic calls a man “hard to kill,” you know a guy’s been around). He’s licensed as a bodyguard and trained in executive protection & extraction and combat driving. As of this writing, he is also just a few months short of his private investigator license.

Larry’s work is in a dozen languages and millions of copies in print, and he’s been a Guest at over 200 conventions worldwide over the last 25 years. BUT—he’s available for work, don’t be bashful about asking. He isn’t ALWAYS off on some adventure. Be bold! Reach him at gryphonking@gmail.com anytime.

His ongoing, everchanging decades-long romance with Mercedes Lackey is legendary. Larry feels equally comfortable around generals, rock stars, fans, firefighters, victims, cops, media and movie makers because, hey, he’s an Okie. Definitely chat with him or ask questions at

panels about approaches to your work—nothing makes him happier than helping someone with their avocations, and bringing more beauty into the world.

<http://gryphonking.aelfhame.net/>

Greg Broadmore, Artist Guest of Honour

We feel the need to share at least something about this enigmatic and mercurial creative and, in lieu of an actual biography, we have gathered the following facts and insights:

Broadmore was born in Whakatane, a beautiful but remote dolphin-farming village on the southern Kaimanuatangibrotuwhenua peninsula of New Zealand. The word Whakatane is Māori and pronounced Way-koo-tanny, meaning 'The man who makes wind in the forest'.

He was born into a large family of fourteen brothers and sisters. The youngest, he was the only one to survive the village cull of 1978.

A deeply religious man, all his illustrations are said to contain hidden metaphors from scripture. For a fun evening, study these images and see if you can figure out the biblical passages referred to.

He currently lives in Wellington, New Zealand.

An avid fan of the TV series 'Coronation Street', he has collected all the action figures, which he displays proudly in his home. The various characters are posed fighting each other in iconic action scenes from the show.

He has publicly self-identified as a friend to robots and is rumoured to have signed a secret pact with them regarding our eventual subjugation and enslavement.

His favourite word is 'cloaca' and he is said to sometimes yell it at the top of his lungs and run out of meetings.

His favourite colour is bleach.

A hirsute man, he needs to be shaved bodily at least once a month by a small team of sheep-shearers.

During a school outing to the local zoo during his childhood, he punched a rare and endangered Ruffed Lemur right in the schnozz. The altercation was likely instigated by the Lemur's outrageously racist comments. The Lemur in question was a terrible bigot and everyone knows this.



He speaks three languages fluently: English, English-in-a-French-Accent and Pidgin English, but is currently learning Binary for obvious reasons.

He is watching you right now, through the window behind you, silently judging. (You looked right? You totally did, admit it.)

<http://gregbroadmore.blogspot.com/>

<http://drgrordborts.com/>

<http://conceptartworld.com/artists/greg-broadmore/>



Rose Mitchell, Fan Guest of Honour

Rose has been an avid fan of science fiction since young girl (just as everybody else claims to have been), but only discovered fandom and cons and such stuff in the early nineties. Her involvement with science fiction fandom has concentrated on club activities, convention running and supporting the fan funds associated with Australia.

She commenced her fanac as the editor of Austrek's (Melbourne-based Star Trek fan club) clubzine The Captain's Log. Many a good fan has risen from the media-centric fan clubs. Over the years she has held positions within Austrek, the Melbourne Science Fiction Club, the Australian Science Fiction Foundation and Victorian Science Fiction Conventions – the legal entity for both Aussiecon 3 and 4 as well as working on at least 2 Confluxes, the annual Canberra based convention.

She chaired the Australian Natcon in 2002 and 2007 and headed up the Finance Division for Aussiecon 3, the 1999 Worldcon, culminating in Co-chairing Aussiecon 4, the Worldcon held in Melbourne in 2010.

She was the FFANZ Delegate for 2003 when she forged strong and long lasting links to New Zealand fandom. Rose continues to work for all the fan funds associated with Australia – FFANZ, NAFF, DUFF and GUFF.

Currently Rose is the President of the Australian Science Fiction Foundation, a body formed out of Aussiecon, the first worldcon to be held in Australia. She continues with its 50 year mission of furthering science fiction in Australia.

In 2017 Rose was awarded the Peter McNamara Lifetime Achievement & Contribution to Science Fiction Award and made possibly the worst acceptance speech EVA!

Oh yeah, she likes SF – in all its forms but mainly contemporary, groovy writers, particularly those from the UK. Sue Batho once described her as a “cuddly party animal”; she is known

for using four-letter words as punctuation marks. The word “moderation” is not in her vocabulary, Mark Loney once describing her with great diplomacy as “driven”.

Rose lives in Melbourne with no cats – dreadfully unfannish but she has raised two teenagers to mid-life crisis.

George R.R. Martin, Toastmaster

GRRM sold his first story in 1976 and never looked back. If you have a Fevre Dream of playing Wild Cards with a dragon while discussing Songs of Ice and Fire you are dealing with someone who routinely handles a cast of over a thousand characters, dealing with major problems in tough, gritty worlds and doing it with style. Fortunately, this author, screenwriter, and television producer is a science fiction fan himself and will be lending his erudition and mad microphone skills to CoNZealand as Toastmaster.



George R.R. Martin was born September 20, 1948 in Bayonne, New Jersey. His father was Raymond Collins Martin, a longshoreman, and his mother was Margaret Brady Martin. He has two sisters, Darleen Martin Lapinski and Janet Martin Patten.

Martin attended Mary Jane Donohoe School and Marist High School. He began writing very young, selling monster stories to other neighborhood children for pennies, dramatic readings included. Later he became a comic book fan and collector in high school, and began to write fiction for comic fanzines (amateur fan magazines). Martin’s first professional sale was made in 1970 at age 21: “The Hero,” sold to Galaxy, published in February, 1971 issue. Other sales followed.

In 1970 Martin received a B.S. in Journalism from Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois, graduating summa cum laude. He went on to complete a M.S. in Journalism in 1971, also from Northwestern.

As a conscientious objector, Martin did alternative service 1972-1974 with VISTA, attached to Cook County Legal Assistance Foundation. He also directed chess tournaments for the Continental Chess Association from 1973-1976, and was a Journalism instructor at Clarke College, Dubuque, Iowa, from 1976-1978. He wrote part-time throughout the 1970s while working as a VISTA Volunteer, chess director, and teacher.

In 1975 he married Gale Burnick. They divorced in 1979, with no children. Martin became a full-time writer in 1979. He was writer-in-residence at Clarke College from 1978-79.

Moving on to Hollywood, Martin signed on as a story editor for Twilight Zone at CBS Television in 1986. In 1987 Martin became an Executive Story Consultant for Beauty and the

Beast at CBS. In 1988 he became a Producer for Beauty and the Beast, then in 1989 moved up to Co-Supervising Producer. He was Executive Producer for Doorways, a pilot which he wrote for Columbia Pictures Television, which was filmed during 1992-93.

Martin's present home is Santa Fe, New Mexico. He is a member of Science Fiction & Fantasy Writers of America (he was South-Central Regional Director 1977-1979, and Vice President 1996-1998), and of Writers' Guild of America, West.

(Biography retrieved from: <http://www.georgermartin.com/about-george/life-and-times/>)