



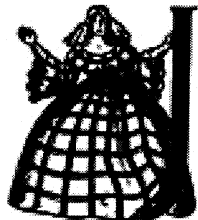
# THE ICG NEWSLETTER

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## Volume 7, Issue 1 - January 2008

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



I'm just running through a quick summary of what has been accomplished within the International Costumer's Guild this year. (Keep in mind this was written on the last day of 2007, at least a month before any of you will ever see it.)

Hopefully you already know most of what I'm about to recount either through reportage

from your chapter reps to your chapters or through the newlists, archives, meeting minutes, etc. In the past some have felt left out of the workings of the ICG, which I feel may have been more a result of poor communication rather than intentional subterfuge. I believe that your chapter reps are doing a better job in keeping the membership informed than they have in the past. If you don't agree, then let someone know – your chapter rep, your chapter president, me; but let us know.

So what has happened this year? Big news, lots of plans set in motion, progress!

First, during the calendar year of 2007 the ICG gained five new chapters. That's right – five! Starting with the SouthEastern Costumers' Society right at the start of the year. They represent the SouthEastern United States and are based around Atlanta, Georgia. The Armed Costumers Guild was added at Costume-Con 25, based in Wisconsin. At the beginning of the summer we were joined by the Middle Tennessee Costumers' Guild from around Nashville. This fall the Denver Costume & Cosplay Society joined us as a chapter, and in December we added the Kansas City Costumers' Guild. These groups have each started small in their areas but I'm sure we'll see a lot of growth through them. They are in largely under-represented areas, thereby widening our network to include some places we've never had chapters before or were in previously but the chapters declined.

Their representatives have joined us on the Board and are already jumping in to contribute to the mix of ideas. So now that we have lots of new folks, what do we have to offer them that's new? A little thing called the International Costumer's Gallery, found at <http://www.costume.org/gallery2/main.php>. Have you checked it out? Since its summer launch we've been gradually adding more content from the Pat & Peggy Kennedy Memorial Library (AKA – ICG Archives) as well as encouraging individuals to add their own costume photo albums

to the site. There are currently over 3,600 photos available for viewing and much more will be added. So go and look, and maybe create some albums of your own shots.

Even if you don't want to add your own photos, please consider sending copies to the Archives. It is our hope to accumulate a vast variety of images and costuming related books or videos, particularly from areas or conventions that we haven't gotten much from before. And if you don't contact them, don't be surprised if you hear from one of our Archivists or Archive representatives inquiring about events from your area. Maybe you'd rather beat them to the punch? They'd love to hear from you.

Those are the big things. There are other items still in the works which should come to fruition in the next few months; stay tuned for announcements from the ICG Board of Directors (your representatives).

So the Board has been hard at work to better the ICG as well as have regular lives, family stuff and jobs, not to mention some random costuming. I'm sure many of them are hard at work on things for Costume-Con 26 as you read this. Cause it's only... how many months/weeks/days away?

Nora Mai, ICG President



### ICG NEWSLETTER DEADLINES

March 1, 2008 ... May 1, 2008 ... July 1, 2008 ... September 1, 2008 ... December 1, 2008

**ICG Officers for 2007-2008**

President: ..... Nora Mai (SLCG)  
 Vice President: ..... Jan Price (SiW, GCFCG)  
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 ..... and Ann Catelli  
 Archivist: ..... Pierre Pettinger, Jr.,  
 ..... and Bruce Mai  
 Parliamentarian: ..... Pierre Pettinger, Jr.  
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**ICG Editorial Board 2007-2008**

Chair: ..... Denisen Hartlove (SiW)  
 Member: ..... Nora Mai (SLCG)  
 Member: ..... Dora Buck (Sick Pups)  
 Member: ..... Carole Parker (SiW)  
 Member: ..... Bruce MacDermott (SiW)  
 Member: ..... Kathleen David (BRCG)

ICG Web Site: ..... [www.costume.org](http://www.costume.org)

**Membership Report as of 12/31/07 (Non Primary in Paren)**

Chapter Name	Chapter Members	Last Updated
Armed C.G.	27 (18)	July
Beyond Reality	40	December
Chicagoland	18 (1)	December
CG Western Pennsylvania	10	March
Dallas/Fort Worth	17	December
Denver Costume and Cosplay	15 (1)	December
Fiber Fantasy Artists	6	December
Greater Columbia Fantasy	21	July
Greater Delaware Valley	7	July
Middle Tennessee	11	May
New Jersey/New York	27 (3)	December
Northern Lights	36	December
SiliconWeb	47 (2)	December
SouthEastern Costume Society	15	December
SouthWest	22	November
St. Louis	41 (4)	December
Utah	10	July
<b>TOTAL MEMBERSHIP</b>	<b>341</b>	

**ICG Membership Benefits**

Your ICG membership benefits include voting rights and a subscription to this newsletter. Chapters that fail to report their members and submit their dues run the risk of being deactivated. Members of deactivated Chapters who wish to participate in activities as ICG members must join an active Chapter of the ICG.

**ICG Email Mailing Lists**

[ICG-D@yahoogroups.com](mailto:ICG-D@yahoogroups.com) (General Discussion)  
[ICG-BOD@yahoogroups.com](mailto:ICG-BOD@yahoogroups.com) (Board & Officers)

ICG-D is open to everyone, including non-members. Instructions for subscribing to any of the ICG email mailing lists can be found at this URL:

[help.yahoo.com/help/us/groups/groups-19.html](http://help.yahoo.com/help/us/groups/groups-19.html)

**Publication Specifications/Advertising**

Deadline to receive materials or advertising for print: The 1<sup>st</sup> of the month prior to publication. Further, updated information will be included in the next issue. Please get us your submissions and advertisements for the next issue by no later than March 1, 2008.

**Electronic Submissions**

Electronic submissions must be at least 300 dpi resolution. Material may be formatted as follows: text, RTF, MS Word or Corel WordPerfect. Sorry, we can't accept .txt format. Graphics at 300 dpi resolution in GIF, JPG or TIF. Email to [icg-newsletter@costume.org](mailto:icg-newsletter@costume.org). Please contact us first before sending attachments in email - we're sensitive to viruses!

**Hard Copy Submissions (if absolutely necessary)**

Send by snail mail to *The ICG Newsletter* address listed on page three of this issue. We reserve the right to retain all hard copy unless accompanied by a SASE.

**Advertising Rates**

Ad rates for *The ICG Newsletter* are per issue. Please make payment to The ICG, Inc. and send with advertising copy to *The ICG Newsletter* (email address above). Ads received without payment will not be published. Advertising revenues are used to defray the cost of mailing the newsletter. Additional proceeds benefit the International Costumers' Guild, Inc.

Ad Size	Member Rates	Non-Member Rates
Full Page	\$60	\$120
Half-Page	\$30	\$60
Quarter Page	\$15	\$30
Eighth Page (Business Card)	\$7.50	\$15
Classified Ads	Free	50 cents/word

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# Steampunk: The Next Costuming Wave?

## Part 2: An Outsider's Observations

by Bruce Mai

Tacking the word "punk" onto the end of a word has become a way to describe an attitude in much the same way "gate" (a la "Watergate") has been used as a shorthand association with scandal. Steampunk appears to be getting a lot more notice lately, possibly due in part to the increasing availability of Japanese anime with that thematic element to them. An online organized fandom has sprung just in the past two years and has rapidly blossomed. In an article by Alexander Kraft titled "Authority, Legitimacy and Voice: Defining Steampunk," said "...its themes of Victoriana, anachronism and technology seem to have struck a chord with an unusual number of people. As this fledgling community becomes a bona fide subculture, its participants have begun to struggle to define a subcultural ideology in an attempt to gain the status and legitimacy they seek in subcultural identification." Whatever that may entail, costumes and prop-making are the main ways this fandom expresses itself.

As more people with different backgrounds discover the genre, the term "Steampunk" is evolving into a catch-all for anything that looks anachronistic in design. Some devotees in the community make further distinctions with sub-categories including the following:

"Clockpunk" (anywhere from the Renaissance to somewhere into the 17th century). Tim Burton's "Sleepy Hollow" and Terry Gilliam's "Baron Munchausen." The devices used prominently display clockwork springs and gears.

"Dieselpunk" (post WWI to the 1950s or so). "Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow" and "Dark City."

"Post-Apocalyptic Steampunk" Somewhat similar to "Rivethead," in that society has broken down and reverted to simpler, reliable steam power. Everything else is scavenged from the wreckage of the previous modern age. The French "City of Lost Children," or Anime "Lautu, Castle In the Sky." "Rivethead" - As quoted from Wikipedia, "The prime dress style of Rivetheads is inspired by military aesthetics, complemented by Modern Primitive body-modification (tattoos, piercings and scarification) or borrowed visual cues

from Goths (mainly androgyny, fetishism and black hair dye), as well as oldschool Punk themes (such as the fanned Mohawk hairstyle, worn by Sascha Konietzko of KMFDM)."

A casual visitor to the community will notice a couple of things. First of all, the average age of Steampunk community members appears to be late 20s to early 30s. Second, they're noticeably more polite to one another than in some venues. The

subject matter encourages this as much as anything. Because they're still a relatively small costuming sub-group, Steampunkers welcome outsiders. (It will be interesting to see whether civility survives as the community grows.) The two main venues where Steampunk community members gather are:  
\* The Steampunk Forum (<http://www.brassgoggles.co.uk/bg-forum/index.php>)  
The site's tone is clearly slanted toward Victoriana, with the main topics organized into Tactile,



Aural-Ocular, Geographical, categories, among others. Their threads go beyond just discussing costumes, into lifestyle, live steam machinery, the politics of the 19th century, just to name a few. If you're not prepared to spend a lot of time digging through the threads, it may be frustrating to find the information you want. With a little patience, though, there's a lot of worthy resources. About every 2 pages or so, you'll find pictures posted of people's costumes and props. The forum has more costumer photos posted in comparison to the Steam Fashion LiveJournal. Forum members' costume designs pretty much fall along the line of the site's Victoriana theme.

The Forum seems to attract a larger percentage of people who are willing roll up their sleeves and have a go at creating something challenging. According to the Kraft article, "tinkering, building, and modifying the artifacts and surroundings one interacts with to reflect a more 'steampunk' aesthetic are common, visible activities in the current steampunk scene." Completing a cool D.I.Y. (Do It Yourself) project and posting a picture of it to the Forum is a typical way to establish one's "street creds."

(Steampunk, Continued on page 4)

(Steampunk, Continued from page 3)

\* The Steam Fashion LiveJournal

(<http://community.livejournal.com/steamfashion/>)

The Steam Fashion Live Journal is easier for the casual reader. Daily entries usually number less than 10 per day, and you don't have to read all the comments if the subject doesn't interest you. Because the blog has no FAQ as of yet, there's a noticeable percentage of enthusiastic new people who post links to well-known resources without thorough investigation of the archives first.

The members are very supportive of first-time costumers who may not have a clear understanding of the historical roots of the genre that the name implies. "Steampunk" is interpreted more loosely here. Sample photos often appear to have Goth, Rivethead, visible corsetry, and Lolita fashions mixed with contemporary clothes made of modern materials (i.e. polyvinyl, etc.).

As any good costumer knows, playing a character makes an outfit more convincing. From researching the two venues, there appear to be three distinct approaches Steampunkers take that will be familiar to a general costuming community:

1. The Clothing Maker: Makes the clothes first, then comes up with the character. Steampunk is heavily gadget-oriented, so figuring out appropriate accessories is their challenge – otherwise, they're just wearing historical (and possibly mis-matched) clothing.

2. The Actor: Creates their character first. The task here is for them to research their social status, circumstances, family, etc. This guides the costumer to their clothing and accessories choices.

3. The Gadgeteer: This is the category most of the men fall into – they may even make up the majority of the Steampunk forum. Some make props and stop there. The rest accumulate their clothing to accommodate their devices – frequently buying their clothing, or having their significant other make them for them.

Speaking of buying costume pieces, there appears to be a very noticeable percentage of people in the Steampunk community who do so. This is probably attributable to the fact that historical clothing requires a higher level of sewing experience than many of them currently have. (This might be an opportunity for an enterprising costumer to do some commission work.)



One community member named Dimentox suggested there are four general Steampunk categories that can serve as a springboard for creating one's costume:

\* The Street Urchin/Chimney Sweep: "Cheaply done, dressed in the most punk styles of Steampunk. We're talking tatters, filth, safety pins, old leather, bashed-in derbies, and the like. This style of dress is functional, can be mucked about in, costs little to cobble together, and is the lowest class."

\* The Tinkerer/Inventor: "These are the mad scientist types. I picture slightly more well-designed garments with straps, pockets, et cetera, some sort of protective eyewear (the ubiquitous goggle goodness or other such spectacles)...perhaps lab coats or clothing that is impervious to spills and grease? I picture the tinkerer in more utilitarian garb, and the inventor in

an eccentric amalgamation of cast-off lab wear and well-worn Victorian pieces. Clock gears and wires strewn about, perhaps? Don't forget the wild hair!"

\* The Explorer: "Think tailored garments, but more military-influenced and less I-bought-this-at-the-suit-shop. Leather, silk, cotton, tall boots, pith helmets, flying goggles, mid-length skirts with the hems tucked up to reveal breeches. Well-slicked hair for the gents and perhaps sleek updos and ponytails for the ladies."

\* The Dandy/Aesthete: "These are the fellows in nicely rendered Victorian and Edwardian suits, brainstorming infernal machines over cigars and brandy, and these are the ladies in high-button boots who dabble as terrorists when they aren't knitting mittens. Goggles or pince-nez are a must, as well as simple corsets, top

hats and derbies, handkerchiefs, cigarette cases, gloves, et cetera. Finely waxed moustaches and lace gloves are encouraged. Pocketwatches and heavy rings of ancient keys make fine accessories."

In closing, it can be said that there is much that appeals about Steampunk costuming. The people in the community are very welcoming. The demographics of the forums and much of the subject matter allow more outsiders to participate in the forums without feeling like a fish out of water. If 19th to early 20th century costuming is your forte, then all you need is to properly accessorize with gadgets and you will stand out as a Steampunk costumer.

*Ed Note: Thanks very much to the folks at the Neverwas Haul for such a great picture, and to Jay Hartlove (aka, Editor's Husband), for posing for a lovely photo with the fabulous mechanical bird at the San Francisco Edwardian Ball.*



