

AvCon 2004

JULY 24-25; TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA

OFFICIAL BROCHURE

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About the Avonlea Convention (AvCon)

The Avonlea Convention—also known as AvCon—was conceived in the early months of 2003. A group of people decided that if TV series like *Star Trek* could have fan conventions, then so could fans of *Road to Avonlea*. Initial planning commenced; a committee was formed. It would be held in Toronto that summer—“by the fans, for the fans.”

Then, in March 2003, SARS hit the city of Toronto. At first, the committee members were not sure of what they should do. After careful consideration, it was decided that the conference be postponed until the summer of 2004. Potential attendees would feel safer attending; and the committee members would have more time to plan such an event properly.

After many long months of hard work, you are about to see the results of it. We hope you will enjoy yourself as you participate in this inaugural event.

Kindredly,

The AvCon Committee

About “Road to Avonlea”

Road to Avonlea debuted on January 8, 1990, on CBC-TV in Canada, during its “Family Hour” time slot of 7 pm local time; and in March of that same year on the Disney Channel in the United States, under the title *Avonlea*. Since its debut, it has aired in over 140 ; and the series chronicling the life and times of “story girl” Sara Stanley, her Island relatives, and their acquaintances continues to thrive in re-runs, video, and on DVD. Over its seven-season run, it received seventeen Gemini Awards, three Emmy Awards, and four Cable Ace Awards. It also has the distinction of being the highest-rated Canadian drama of all time, as well as being one of Disney’s highest-rated series of all time. After seven seasons and ninety-one episodes, the series came to an end on March 31, 1996 in Canada; and in December of that same year in the United States. However, that was not the last we would see of the fictional town millions of people came to know and love. On December 13, 1998, fans of the series got to visit Avonlea one more time, with the premiere of the TV reunion movie, *Happy Christmas, Miss King* (also known as *An Avonlea Christmas*). A year later, it debuted in the United States, this time on the Odyssey Channel (now known as the Hallmark Channel).

Schedule of Events

July 24, 2004

8:30 am: Registration/Meet and Greet

9:30 am: Panel discussion with Kevin Sullivan

10:45 am: Panel discussion with R. H. Thomson or Molly Atkinson (to be announced)

12:00 pm: Lunch (Available through Village restaurant or BBQ stand)

1:15 pm: Magic Lantern Show, presented by Professor M. Lindsay Lambert of the Magic Lantern Society of Toronto

3:00 pm: Episode screenings and discussion - To Be Announced

4:00 pm: Informal discussion/meet and greet with Harmony Cramp

5:00 pm: End of day one

July 25, 2004

8:30 am: Registration/Meet and Greet

9:30 am: “Undressing History”, a presentation on 19th century dress and customs, presented by Black Creek Pioneer Village

10:30 am: Panel discussion with R. H. Thomson or Molly Atkinson (to be announced)

11:45 am: Lunch (Available through Village restaurant or BBQ stand)

12:45 pm: Episode screenings and discussion - To Be Announced

2:00 pm: Auction of Anne/Avonlea goods and memorabilia.

3:15 pm: Panel discussion with Michael Mahonen

4:30 pm: Closing remarks, thank-yous

5:00 pm: End of Avonlea Convention 2004

A hat-decorating table (“Hepworth’s Millinery”) and a general crafts table (“Turkish Bazaar Crafts”) will be available throughout both days. A donation of three to five dollars in any currency will be required to participate at each table. Various parlour games will also be available. Please note that the schedule is subject to change; and that any modifications will be announced in advance.

Charities Supported

The Avonlea Convention is proud to support two fine charities this year—the American Cancer Society and the Canadian Make-a-Wish Foundation.

American Cancer Society

Founded in 1913, the American Cancer Society (ACS)—then known as the American Society for the Control of Cancer (ASCC)—was designed to bring awareness of cancer to the American public, and educate them on how to prevent it. Since then, it has grown enormously. ACS now has a branch in each of the states, as well as over 3400 local offices with two million volunteers. ACS put \$2.5 billion (US) into cancer research last year; and provides patient services, fights for the rights of cancer patients and survivors, and continues to educate the public about the types of cancer out there and how to prevent it.

For more information, please visit their website at www.cancer.org

Make-a-Wish Foundation of Canada

The Canadian division of the Make-a-Wish Foundation was created in 1983, in British Columbia. For over twenty years, it has been devoted to making the wishes of terminally ill children within the country come true; so far, 1,500 of them have been granted—300 of them in 2003. There are eight chapters across Canada; and its home office is located in Vancouver.

For more information, please visit their website at www.make-a-wish.ca

Guest Speakers



Molly Atkinson (Cecily King, older years)

Like many of *Avonlea*'s cast, Molly Atkinson is rooted in the theatre. She is a graduate of Interlochen Arts Academy in Michigan, was part of the Stratford Festival's inaugural Conservatory program, and has performed in plays like *Annie*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Our Country's Good*, and *She Stoops To Conquer*, as well as portraying Anne in a production of *Anne of Green Gables* for the Sunshine Festival in Orillia, Ontario.

Before taking on the role of Cecily, Molly was a regular on the TV series *The Mighty Jungle*, playing Allison Winfred. Other TV credits include guest spots on *Ready or Not* and *Owl Television's Frog Show*. In 2002, she played the leading role in the short film *Sam's Lake*.

Molly Atkinson's time is still to be determined at the time of publication.



Harmony Cramp (Cecily King, younger years)

Harmony Cramp's sole claim to fame is her role as Cecily on *Road to Avonlea*. Before that, she had a very small role as a girl in a fire in *The January Man* with Kevin Kline; and she guest starred in an episode of CTV's *The Campbells*.

Since leaving *Avonlea*, Harmony has been living the quiet life in Toronto.

Harmony Cramp will be speaking on Saturday at 4:00 pm. This will be an informal discussion/meet-and-greet.



Michael Mahonen (Gus Pike)

Born in Kirkland Lake, Ontario, Michael has been acting since graduating from George Brown College in 1989, where he was part of the theatre program. After university, he worked with a theatre troupe in Edmonton, and in *Road to Avonlea's* second season, he became the embodiment of the fans' most beloved character: Gus Pike. The character was only supposed to be around for a couple of episodes, but due to the overwhelming fan response, Gus--and subsequently Michael--stayed around for a while longer. The role of Gus Pike earned Michael three Gemini nominations in 1993, 1996, and 1997.

In 1991, he played Lee Colgan in the miniseries *Conspiracy of Silence*, the story of the murder of a Cree woman by four young men (including Lee) in Manitoba in the early 1970s. The difficult role earned Michael his first and only Gemini win to date; the movie won seven Geminis altogether, including Outstanding Miniseries. The year later, he appeared in the movies *Giant Steps* and *Personal Effects*. In 1993 he appeared in Sullivan's miniseries *By Way of the Stars* (which co-starred fellow Avonlea cast-mates Gema Zamprogna and Zachary Bennett) and the movie *Collateral Damage*. The following year, he did the TV-play *The Facts Behind the Helsinki Roccamatios* and decided to try his luck in Los Angeles. He continued to do theatre work, and eventually guest starred on series like *Viper*, *Star Trek: Voyager*, and *Strong Medicine*, as well as the film *Captured*.

In 2000, Michael decided to return to Toronto. He then lent his talents to the first episode of the CBC documentary series *Canada: A People's History*, and a year later participated in a dramatic reading of *The Red Badge of Courage* for both CBC and BBC Radio. Michael has also continued working in the theatre, appearing in several plays. In 2004, Michael guest starred in an episode of the CBC-TV series *This Is Wonderland*. In 2003, he made his directorial debut with the film *Sandstorm*, which hit the film festival circuit earlier this year to much praise and acclaim.

Michael Mahonen will be speaking on Sunday afternoon at 3:15 pm.



no photo
available

Kevin Sullivan (Creator/Executive Producer)

For the last two decades, Kevin Sullivan, along with wife and partner Trudy Grant, have been the driving force behind Sullivan Entertainment.

Sullivan first came into his own with the miniseries *Anne of Green Gables* in 1985, as well as its sequel two years later. He had written, produced, and directed both efforts; and took home a slew of awards for each project. In 1989, he produced the TV movie *Looking for Miracles*. Yet, fans were eager for more stories regarding *Avonlea*; in 1990, *Road to Avonlea* was born. It became Disney's highest-rated series ever, as well as Canada's highest-rated drama of all time.

In 1993, he produced the German-Canadian miniseries *By Way of the Stars*, as well as the 1995 TV movie *Under the Piano*. Shortly after, he decided it was time to put *Avonlea* to rest. As it was ending its run, work began on a new television series, *Wind at My Back*, which debuted in Canada in 1996. In 1998, *Avonlea* had a brief resurrection with *Happy Christmas, Miss King* (also known as *An Avonlea Christmas*); and, a year later, work began on a long-awaited third *Anne* movie—*Anne of Green Gables: The Continuing Story* (which he also co-wrote).

Other projects produced by Sullivan include *Rupert Patterson Wants To Be a Super-Hero*, *Anne: The Animated Series*, *Love on the Land* (which originally aired as *Seasons of Love*), *P. R.*, and *The Piano-Man's Daughter*.

Kevin Sullivan will be speaking Saturday morning at 9:30 am. He has requested that his discussion not be filmed or photographed; but he will be available for photos after the discussion has ended.



R. H. Thomson (Jasper Dale)

Born in Richmond Hill, Ontario, R. H. Thomson is one of Canada's brightest talents. He has been nominated for four Genie Awards (winning one in 1983 for *If You Could See What I Hear*), eight Gemini Awards (winning one in 1989 for *Glory Enough for All* and a second in 2003 for a presentation of his play *The Lost Boys* on *CBC News Sunday*), and won a Dora Award for *Hand to Hand* in 1983.

One of his first on-screen roles was in 1977's *The Newcomers*. From there, he went on to do many plays, movies, and series—including *Stranger in My Bed*, *The Lotus Eaters*, *Murder at My Door*, *Trudeau*, *Copenhagen*, and *Human Cargo*. He is also a director, directing projects for many of Canada's well-known theatre venues and companies—from Can-Stage to the National Arts Centre, to Theatre New Brunswick and Ship's Company Theatre in Nova Scotia.

R. H. is also a founding member of Shakespeare Works, a Toronto-based organization devoted to bringing the works of William Shakespeare to Canadian students. This year, he is directing a production of *Romeo and Juliet*. He has also lectured at the Stratford Festival.

R. H. Thomson's time is still to be determined at the time of publication.

Magic Lantern Show

The Avonlea Convention is pleased to have a Magic Lantern Show at this year's convention, presented by Professor M. Lindsay Lambert of the Magic Lantern Society of Toronto.

The Ottawa-based Professor Lambert has been presenting Magic Lantern shows for many years, all with an authentic magic lantern. He uses various types of slides—animated ones, photographs, and coloured slides. All slides will take you back to that feeling of yesteryear, along with appropriate background music. The show is suitable for all ages.

For more information, please visit www.phsc.ca/lambert.html

The Magic Lantern Show will take place on Saturday at 1:00 pm. We will be taking donations to help with the Professor's traveling expenses.



Auction Information

We will be having an auction of Avonlea and Anne-related memorabilia, as well as some crafts, on Sunday afternoon. It will be a combination of items donated by the fans and items donated by Sullivan Boutique. Please note the instructions below each list of items.

Items Donated By Fans*

- ◆ *The Avonlea Album* - Published for the United States and Canada in 1991, this contains color photographs depicting the first two seasons of *Road to Avonlea*, as well as quotes from *The Story Girl* and *The Golden Road*. Hard cover.
- ◆ *Avonlea Album (Japanese)* - Published in Japan in 1999, this contains a mixture of black and white and color photographs depicting all seven seasons of *Road to Avonlea*. Soft cover, with a dust jacket.
- ◆ A lot of five *Road to Avonlea* videos - Five *Road to Avonlea* videos featuring Michael Mahonen as Gus Pike. All videos are unused, still shrink-wrapped.
- ◆ *By Way of the Stars* on VHS - This movie features various *Road to Avonlea* alumni, including Zachary Bennett, Gema Zamprogna, and Michael Mahonen; and depicts the journey of a young boy from 19th Century Prussia to the untamed Canadian wilderness in search of his father.
- ◆ *Road to Avonlea: The Official Soundtrack* - This contains various snippets of music used throughout the series, composed by Don Gillis. Unwrapped, yet still in excellent condition.
- ◆ *Celtic* - A collection of music from various Sullivan Entertainment productions with a Celtic theme, composed by Don Gillis. Unwrapped, yet still in excellent condition.
- ◆ A customized *Avonlea*-themed mouse pad.

All proceeds from donated items will go to our supported charities. You may pay for them with either cash or a personal check made out to either the American Cancer Society or the Canadian Make-a-Wish Foundation of Southwestern Ontario. American or Canadian currency will be accepted.

Items Donated by Sullivan Boutique*

- ◆ Script of “Return to Me”, autographed
- ◆ Photograph - Gus and Felicity kissing, from “The Return of Gus Pike”
- ◆ A brown velvet hat worn by Hetty
- ◆ Photograph - Olivia and Jasper’s wedding, from “The Ties That Bind” (a.k.a. “Sister of the Bride”)
- ◆ Advertisement - A Canadian print ad for *Road to Avonlea*, featuring an image of Sara from season two
- ◆ Photograph - Felix, Felicity, Cecily, Sara, and Gus dressed in medieval crowns with medieval props, circa season three
- ◆ Photograph - Gus smokes his pipe, season two
- ◆ Photograph - Gus poses in his suit, in front of the Kings’ bookcase, circa season three/four
- ◆ Gold brooch
- ◆ Ready-to-frame art - A picture of Green Gables, as depicted in *Anne: The Animated Series*

Items from the Boutique are to be paid with cash only (they cannot accept personal checks or credit cards), in either American or Canadian currency. If you win one of these items, the Boutique will receive the opening bid for the item; all the overage will go to either of our supported charities (this may be paid with either cash or a check made out to either charity).

The auction will begin at 2:00 pm on Sunday afternoon. Our auctioneer will be professional auctioneer Mike Matthews. He has also portrayed an auctioneer on two *Road to Avonlea* episodes—“Aunt Abigail’s Beau” and “Friends and Relations”—as well as the premiere episode of *Wind at My Back*, “Four Walls and a Roof.”

* Please note that items are subject to be dropped from the above lists at any time. Both lists were not finalized at the time of this publication.

Rules of Conduct

As with many events, there are various rules you, as attendees, must adhere to at all times.

1. During formal discussions with the actors or Kevin Sullivan, please remain as quiet as possible so that other attendees will be able to hear what's being said. If you have a cell phone or a pager on you, please turn them off or set them to "vibrate." During Harmony's time, please make sure you are respectful of others who are talking to her, and to wait your turn to speak with her. Also remember to remain quiet during episode screenings, so others can hear what is going on.
2. Kevin Sullivan has asked that his discussion not be filmed or photographed. However, he will be available briefly for photographs after his discussion has finished.
3. If you have a question for a panelist, please raise your hand and wait to be called upon. Please state your name and your question in a clear, concise, and respectful manner. Please also make sure your questions stick to the person's work or to common knowledge subjects; keep their private lives just that—private. Actors and film makers are people, too.
4. A barbecue stand and restaurant will be open at 11:00 am each day, should you need refreshments. Snacks will be made available on Saturday morning. **Please note that lunch is not covered in your registration fee.**
5. If a child wishes to participate at the Hepworth's Millinery table or the Turkish Bazaar Crafts table, they must be supervised by a parent or trusted adult guardian.
6. HAVE FUN!

Acknowledgments

The AvCon Committee would like to acknowledge the following people or organizations for their assistance regarding this event...

- ◆ American Red Cross (www.cancer.org)
- ◆ Make-a-Wish Foundation Canada, Southwest Ontario chapter (www.make-a-wish.ca)
- ◆ Molly Atkinson, Harmony Cramp, Michael Mahonen, and R. H. Thomson for dropping by and sharing their *Avonlea* memories with us
- ◆ Amanda, Amy, Dorothy, and Shannon—our various contacts at Sullivan Entertainment
- ◆ Kevin Sullivan for his co-operation and taking time to share his *Avonlea* memories with us
- ◆ John Gallaro, our contact from the Magic Lantern Society
- ◆ Professor M. Lindsay Lambert, Magic Lantern Society
- ◆ John Richardson, Black Creek Pioneer Village
- ◆ Travelodge Yorkdale, for accommodation assistance
- ◆ York University, for accommodation assistance
- ◆ Tourism Toronto
- ◆ Mike Matthews, for being our auctioneer
- ◆ Our friends and family, for encouragement and advice
- ◆ The fans—this was, and is, for YOU, after all!

We hope we can meet again in 2005.