

Hello again happy readers. Welcome to another fanzine edition... lots of programmes are now no more ... and it seems to be the very serial-oriented, 'confusing season-arc-ing plots' kind of shows. Thankfully not *Doctor Who*. (*Doctor Who* is not getting axed that is – not 'exempt from season-long story arcs.') Thus SPOILERS may well occur in this publication. 24 is the only one of note I don't talk about here.

Fortunately nothing earth-shattering has happened to me this month, unlike last month's Ash Cloud Insanity. (Aside from the Con-Dem Nation we now are, but this doesn't apply to me in a fashion because I cannot vote in this country.) It's nice to have a couple of bank holidays in May, isn't it? The UK Bank Holiday Monday (31 May) is the same as the USA Memorial Day, remembering our fallen heroes and honouring our veterans. My maternal grandmother, my late sister, and my mother were/are all members of the American Legion Ladies Auxiliary (my late maternal granddad and dad are both veterans), and we sold/sell our memorial poppies on Memorial Day in May. This is, of course, much like the Royal British Legion selling their poppies in November. Our poppies look a little different; they are red crepe paper with a little green wire for a stem. We would often wrap them around our rear-view mirrors in our cars. I don't recall people wearing them as I was growing up. We only get Memorial Day off from work in May in the USA.

In any case ... now it's time for Moons and Junes and Ferris Wheels. Let's all go on the London Eye!

Law & Order: Sport-Utility Vehicle

I had to make mention that *Law & Order*, the original, you might say, has been cancelled. This is a bit sad as it was very close to beating *Gunsmoke* as the longest-running ever network TV drama in the USA – pretty uncanny considering the advent of the multichannel age. *Gunsmoke* ran on network TV from 1955-1975, and was on radio long before that. As it stands, *Law and Order* has tied it.

Nobody seems to be able to come up with an accepted name for the unique 'cl-clunk' sound that the show uses when setting the time and place in white letters on black, which is so instantly recognisable. The best I can find uses the creator's name, which seems appropriate as it is used all across the *Law & Order* spinoffs and brands. The term is 'The Dick Wolf Cash Register' sound.

For years my mother has called one of its many spinoff shows, '*Law & Order: SUV*,' which of course is 'Sport-Utility Vehicle,' because she just can't seem to get the 'SVU' of 'Special Victims Unit.' This isn't nearly as hilariously funny as roughly late 2008

when I saw an anti-war editorial in a tiny local Iowa newspaper print the wrong acronym for 'IED' – 'Improvised Explosive Device' as used in Afghanistan. Obviously some idiot didn't copy-edit the thing and relied on the spellchecker. Instead, it suddenly became 'IUD' ... and if you don't know what that is, I'm certainly not going to tell you.

We Can't Be *Heroes* ... Even for One Day

I can't say I called it, because I thought it had at least one more season left in it, as stated in the last issue. But as you may know, *Heroes* has been cancelled. I wonder if NBC Universal deliberately waited until after MIPTV to make this announcement, so showrunner Tim Kring wouldn't look a lame duck, being the Lord President of the High Council of Time Lords Guest of Honour, 'n' all. And there doesn't appear to be any guarantee of a wrap-up TV movie or the like. As NBC Universal owns the property I doubt they'd be willing to let anybody else make or broadcast a one-off. Though it's a no-brainer one-off for Syfy (STUPIDEST. REBRAND. EVER, rivalling 'New Coke.').

NBC's woes continue, as I notice their autumn Saturday night line-up consists entirely of ... wait for it ... 'encore programming.' This is absolutely shocking to me, considering the way NBC used to clean up with Witt-Thomas-Reo-Harris Saturday night sitcom line-ups of my youth (*The Golden Girls*, *Empty Nest*, *Nurses*, etc.) But, to be fair, they were cleaning up in the ratings for most of my younger years, not just on Saturday nights.

If You Build It ... Cash Will Come

Yes, it's that infamous *Blue Remembered Hills* of the 1960s, ageing-American-hippie all grown up with children in the 1980s film, *Field of Dreams*. The farm, complete with baseball diamond, is for sale, and ESPN has listed the sale price as an absolutely whopping **\$5.4 million**. <http://tinyurl.com/espnstory> .

The listing is for a 2-bedroom house, 6 outbuildings, and 193 acres of land. That's **\$27,979.28 per acre**. To give us all a bit of perspective, I went and checked out land prices in that area. They **decreased by 10.2%** in the first quarter of 2010 ... **\$4,444 - \$3,990** is the average price for that area.... Well, gee, then, it's only 6.5 times what the neighbour's 193 acres of land is worth. <http://www.iowalandsalesreport.com/PDF/Page9.pdf>

This is going to seriously muck up the next quarter or two's land selling values and surrounding property taxes...

Whoever buys it, I really do hope they keep the baseball diamond. I think the local Dyersville toy and model tractor company, Ertl, should buy it and turn it into a theme park. <http://www.ertl.com>. Wouldn't that be fab? – toy tractors and baseball all in one spot. Certainly more 'little boy-oriented' than 'little girl-oriented' but I think it would be fun, of course. There are even cornfields abounding. This movie was filmed in the summer of 1988, and that is the driest, worst summer of drought I can remember in Iowa in my entire life. I've often marvelled at the ridiculously green corn in that film, which they must have spent thousands of dollars irrigating. Then again, it is also harvested (in and for the film) well before harvest-time to make way for a baseball diamond... and the neighbours in the film watch with wide-eyed curiosity, calling Kevin Costner a 'damn fool' for doing so.

'My friend, I thought you died, a long, long time ago...'
'Er ... Well, I Did, Actually'

Talking a little more of now-defunct programmes, *Ashes to Ashes* has ended. All I can say is, I'll bet Messrs Pharaoh and Graham were both quite glad that their show-ender was broadcast before the *Lost* show-ender, hm? It's almost as bad as the 'dream ending' cliché that *St Elsewhere* was so rightly criticised for, many years ago. Basically, both of these shows (or 3 shows, if you count *Life on Mars*) turned out to be within a limbo netherworld between life and death, which was basically the key to the whole thing making any sense. I gave up on *Lost* years ago because I knew they were introducing too many questions that would never be answered, and I eventually decided I couldn't be bothered to figure out which ones they may or may not answer. So I didn't watch the finale and everything I've just said about it is hearsay. *Ashes to Ashes*, though, hubby and I pretty much nailed in advance. We were quite proud of ourselves. Hubby knew Gene Hunt was dead, figuring out the shadowy figure was his younger self; we knew this was probably his fantasy world of sorts; and I figured out Jim Keats was the devil, planting suspicion and fears. I thought Daniel Mays played a blinder of a disturbing crazy demon at the end. I really liked the ending; and I was surprisingly moved by it, in a, 'boy I should be far too postmodern to get all choked up at this' kind of way. But I was glad that I did.

Friday Night Lights

We watched the *Ashes to Ashes* finale very, very late on the iPlayer, on the selfsame Friday night it was broadcast because we weren't able to watch it together on first airing, and it was very much like the very late Friday nights of my youth, watching *Doctor Who* until 12:30 or 1:30 AM Saturday morning. Thus it was always outer space outside, with outer space inside. When I came to *Doctor Who* it was in omnibus format, late on Friday nights on Iowa Public Television. I was roughly 8 or

10 years old. Had not a clue what I was watching, and this was in the days of 4 or 5 channels. Thus I kept with it for awhile... so *looks at watch* ... that'd be roughly 20 years and counting. Omnibus, or 'movie format' as we called it, left you knowing what time it started, but not knowing what time the show would end. It also left me and the rest of Iowa and the surrounding states with a 'Genesis of the Daleks' print in which Sarah Jane climbs the scaffolding twice, as the cliffhanger was not properly edited out. Give 'em a break, I know - there was no Avid or Final Cut Pro in dem days. I personally never got a Howard da Silva continuity narration but plenty of American viewers did. As the years went by, my younger brother and I evolved a weekly ritual of pizza, popcorn, Coke, and *Doctor Who*.*

Omnibus, I know, is not how *Doctor Who* was originally meant to be viewed. But I do remain firm that as an American child, I do not believe I would have held any interest in this confusing, British, old show, if I would have had to watch it as a serial. There was just too much to take in – 26 series, multiple Doctors, endless companions, black and white and colour, aliens, other planets, continuity, time-travelling, etc. - and I would never have had the patience. On a related note: whilst in the olden days of yore the complaint was that the serial format forced a lot of padding, my main beef with RTD *Doctor Who* was the near-total absence of good characterisation *alongside* good, adventure plot. Such may be the pitfall of the 45-minute format, or likely more so, the writer.

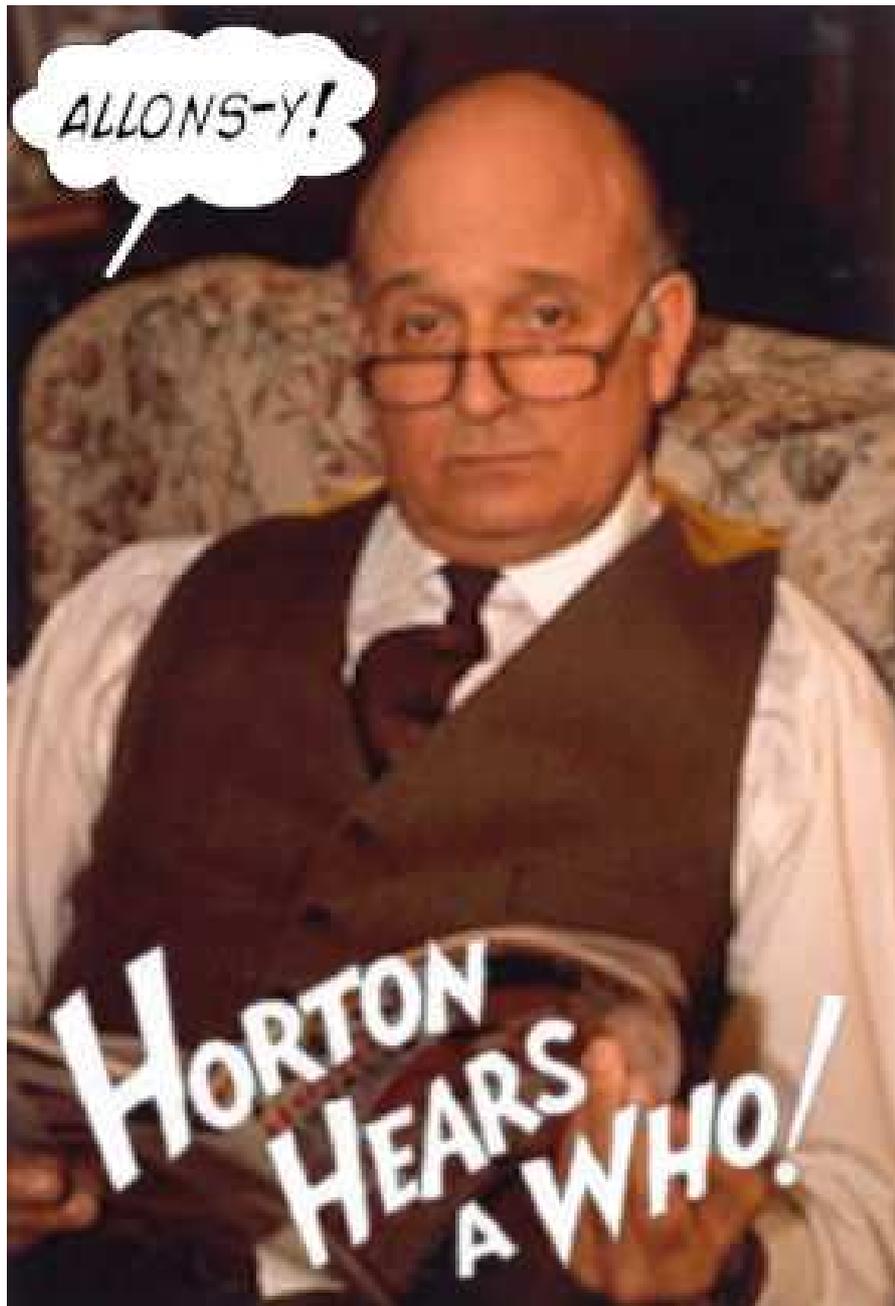
And if we're going to be *true* purists here, *Doctor Who* should be viewed in the dead of a cold and wet British winter Saturday teatime, not the lovely springtime, natch.

**No, I was not out on dates on Friday nights as a lassie, but trust me, there was nothing to do in rural Iowa except get drunk anyway. Not only was I underage, but I also preferred sobriety and sci-fi Anglophilia. There are worse things.*

Neil's Heavy Concept Album

Recently hubby has been listening to this, as you may well know, Nigel Planer as Neil in *The Young Ones*, doing the 'Hole in My Shoe' song amongst others. (Forgive me if this is pretty obvious to you - I do need to be careful about assuming how much my audience knows, if you haven't already noticed this by now.) As we were listening to this one day recently, hubby found this: <http://www.tinyurl.com/mtvneilad> . Someone has uploaded a video to YouTube of an ad on MTV – yes, USA MTV – for *Neil's Heavy Concept Album*. I cannot overstate how hilariously stereotypically American this ad and this voiceover guy in the ad really is. I watched it with my jaw almost on the floor with shock. (I don't know why I continue to be shocked at these things!) Have a look and see if you don't agree.

Mildly Amusing Pic Time



Someone at Marvel/Panini Needs a Jolly Good Smacked Bottom

I recently obtained an issue of *Marvel Legends*, 5th May 2010, Issue 44, in fact. There was a story about Iron Man in it, and on roughly the 8th page of this story, the inset at the upper left identified the setting. 'Council Bluffs Airport, Nebraska.' Needless to say, if you don't have the slightest inkling why that would make me so angry, either you haven't been reading this fanzine for very long, or you haven't been reading very closely when you get it.

As I wrote in a huffy email to them:

By no stretch of the imagination is Council Bluffs in Nebraska, it is in Iowa, and the airport referred to is in fact EAST of the city, which is FURTHER into Iowa, the opposite direction of Nebraska. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Council_Bluffs_Municipal_Airport Now, the writer obviously knew how close Omaha is to Council Bluffs, which is why it's in the story, so which person mucked it up, the letterer?

Please don't think I have a completely unfounded martyr complex about being a Midwesterner and an Iowegian. This just wouldn't happen with airports JFK or Laganardia, or even O'Hare. And if you think I'm overreacting: I would never stoop to write or publish real settings incorrectly, even with some imaginary super-powered heroes and magickal happenings in the content of my story. So now, be honest, would you want to make a similar mistake in the writing/publishing? Would you be offended if they got your hometown and county/province/state wrong? 'Wales ... in England!' perhaps?

Can't Be Bothered to Use Yet Another David Bowie Reference

From March 2004: then-new ideas for how fandom could differentiate between what we now call 'classic Who' and 'modern Who' (as though there's a consensus on these things, hahaha, I kill me!)

Classic

Doctor Who: The Initial Series

Doctor Who (1963-89): Alas We Hardly Knew Ye

Doctor Who: 26 Years Across the Universe

Doctor Who: The Primordial Serial

Doctor Who: It Had The Cybermen First, You Bloody Trekkie

Doctor Who: Verity Lambert-JNT

Doctor Who: Wobbly Sets and Bubble Wrap Monsters

Modern

Doctor Who 2005

Doctor Who: IN YOUR FACE Michael Grade!!!

Doctor Who: Regeneration (courtesy Timebase fan videos)

Doctor Who: Still Chooglin'

Doctor Who: RTD and an Eccles Cake

Doctor Who: About Bloody Frickin' Time

Doctor Who: He Is Not the Man He Was, Thank Goodness

SPLINK

I'll bet many of you will remember good ol' SPLINK, the totally incomprehensible public service ads Jon Pertwee did in the 70s. If you're a bit young for that (or a bit the wrong nationality for that, like me), Good Ol' YouTube: <http://tinyurl.com/splink> . Maybe it was all a big sneaky ploy to get children into spelunking? It can't be the safest sport in the universe. And then it was cleverly corrupted into SPLINK. Try conjugating it: 'splink, am splinking, splank, have splunk.' It's a lot easier than 'spelunk, spelunking, spelank, have spelunked.' (Call me crazy but that won't be news.)

Sadistic Glee

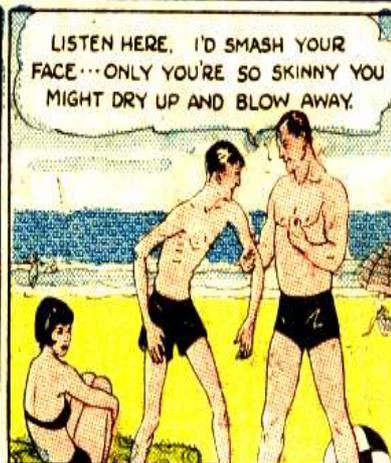
I've continued to watch *Glee* as you can imagine, and it's staying pretty much just as amusing as ever. Molly Shannon has joined the cast; as a lot of the characters, she doesn't show up every week. I was amazed to discover she was still playing a host of a recurring parody National Public Radio show called *The Delicious Dish* on *Saturday Night Live*, when 88-year-old Betty White hosted the show recently.

It manages to be a complete fantasy world and still entertaining; Very Camp Gay Boy decides to fix up his dad and the mother of the boy he's hopelessly smitten with. Next thing you know they are totally falling for each other and the two sons suddenly may be living not only in the same house, but the same room! Like all good sitcom conceits, you start to think, how long is this going to go on before Straight Football Jock says 'your son is in love with me AND I'm not gay!'

When Idina Menzel showed up earlier on in the season, without her 'Uncle Tewwy alien gween skin' as Elphaba from *Wicked*, it was pretty smegging obvious she was going to be 'Rachel Berry's' birth mother. Naturally she wants to get back in touch with her daughter but signed an agreement saying she wouldn't do this until Rachel was 18 years old. She plants a tape on Rachel through one of her own vocal students, and what does she sing? 'I Dreamed a Dream,' of course. Earlier on, the local theatre troupe is doing an amateur production of *Les Miserables* and Mr Shoe and former high school rival played by Neil Patrick Harris (now also a workplace administrative rival) both try out for the part of 'Jean Valjean.' They are both far too young for the part but hey ho, this is Panto Land, remember. Reading a bit about Lea Michele, who plays Rachel, it turns out she debuted on Broadway as 'Young Cosette' in *Les Miserables*. So there you go – three examples of how my hubby who works on *Les Mis* can't even get away from it at home!

Extremely Amusing Fake Ad Time

THE INSULT THAT MADE A MAN OUT OF "MAC"



John Lumic says 

Let Me PROVE I Can Make YOU A NEW MAN!

JOHN LUMIC, DEPT. 325B
SECRET CYBER-CONVERSION FACTORY,
BATTERSEA POWER STATION, LONDON, SW8 5BP

Dear John Lumic, Here's the kind of body I want...

(Check as many as you like)

- Steelhard Stomach Muscles
- Solid Steel-like Chest
- Legs of Steel
- Arms Like Steel Bars
- More Magnetic Personality

I enclose 5p. Please send me a copy of your famous book showing how you can make me a new man. I understand that representatives of International Electromatics may kick down my door and drag me screaming into the night.

PRINT NAME

ADDRESS

That pic is courtesy masked contributor Sham Mountebank. See <http://shoutingintoawell.blogspot.com/> for more of the same.

On that fine fan-oriented blog, you can find things like 'Doctor Who Monsters Slam Heartless BBC Recasting Policy' and 'Space Cap'n Birdseye's Latest Dishes,' and find out how to get just the right kind of Polyfilla for those pesky space-time cracks in the universe! It's pretty amusing ... I laughed out loud quite a few times.

In Memoriam

Chris Haney – co-creator of *Trivial Pursuit*. Many a drink lost and won on that game.

Gary Coleman – I could say something about the so-called *Diff'rent Strokes* Curse, but Coleman had dialysis every day for many years, doing without kidneys, which had nothing to do with addictions or his own making. I think he's more of a morality tale for the major pitfalls of having so much success so young.

Dennis Hopper – my esteemed colleague who does the *Loveably Bad Films* surely must have seen a fantastic flick called *My Science Project* in which Hopper features, but I wonder if he has done an edition of *Loveably Bad Films* reviewing it? And I think I have Hopper to thank, due to *Easy Rider*, for the wonderful Morgan Freeman as the 'Easy Reader' on *Electric Company* (see numerous examples on YouTube).

For the Regal Beagles and Legal Eagles

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