

avengers

APPRECIATION
SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER ✱

No1 FEBRUARY 1982

AVENGERS FOR CHANNEL 4!

HOPE at last for a re-screening of some early AVENGERS episodes: Channel Four, due to open this autumn, has bought some later episodes of the series, and, although no definite date has yet been announced, it looks certain that some old AVENGERS will be coming your way over the airwaves in the not-too-distant future.

We assume that the episodes in question are colour Di Rigg/Linda Thorson series. Negotiations concerning the earlier black & white Diana Rigg series are apparently under way.

It seems likely that Stephen Curry's petition of over a thousand signatures which was sent to Channel Four bosses has been a major factor in deciding the issue. Our thanks to all those of you who signed. Better get ready to tune in your TV sets this autumn!

THE LOST SHEPHERD

Several people have spotted a glaring mistake in edition two of our magazine...indeed our attention was drawn to it by Patrick Macnee himself. It concerns the identity of the actress illustrated in the "Un-appealing Mrs.



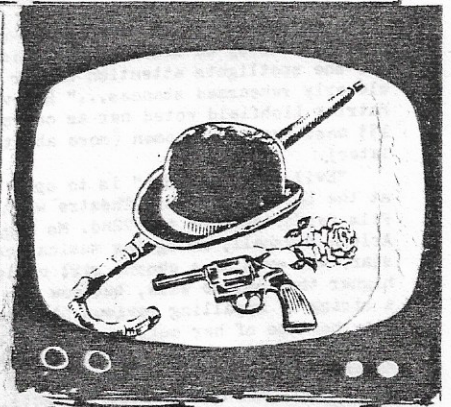
Peel" article by Dave Rogers. We wrongly assumed that the photographs were of Elizabeth Shepherd, the original Emma Peel and subject of the article. In fact, as it turned out, they weren't. This left us with a problem...who was the actress illustrated? Brian Clemens provided the answer...the two portraits were in fact of Canadian actress Sue Lloyd (not to be confused with the British Sue Lloyd) who appeared in the episode "The Murder Market".

Problem solved, it seems. Our apologies to Elizabeth Shepherd...a photograph of her will be published in the next issue of the magazine. This time, we hope, the face will fit!

**AVENGERS
IN NORWICH** see back page!

Subscription Rates 1981/2

We are sorry to announce an increase in our subscription rates, which took effect as of December last year. This has been brought about mainly by increased production costs. The new rate is £4 per annum plus four SAEs. We sincerely hope that this will not deter members from renewing their subscriptions. Had we remained at the old rate, it is likely that we would not have survived much longer. However, by upping subscriptions, we hope to be able to provide even better value for our members in the form of badges, T-shirts and episode screenings. We're sure you all appreciate that a society such as this can't be kept going without the financial support necessary for the realisation of the many projects and future events that we hope to be able to offer you quite soon.



EDITORIAL

Welcome to the first AVENGERS appreciation society newsletter. Exclusive to members, it is intended to keep you up to date on the latest news from the society, forthcoming attractions, and up-to-the minute news on the series and its stars.

We feel that, in order to maintain the high standards of presentation and content which we like to live up to, the magazine should appear only twice a year, in the new bigger format which commenced as of issue two. In order to bridge the gap between magazines, we have therefore introduced this Newsletter on a quarterly basis. We hope you will find it a useful and informative supplement to the magazine. Whatever your thoughts, let's hear them. Write to us at the address on page 3.

Looking for
AVENGERS
BOOKS?

LOOK NO FURTHER

see page 3 for details
of a limited special
offer!

**INSIDE: CAREER UPDATES, EVENTS
AND MORE!**

PEOPLE

DIANA RIGG

If you haven't already seen it, Ms. Rigg can be seen in "The Great Muppet Caper" which is now available on video from Precision Video.

Apparently, Diana did the film for the benefit of her four year old daughter Rachel who is a Muppet-maniac.

Diana's bottom was voted runner-up in a national survey on beautiful backsides since "...she spotlights attention on her rear by cleverly rehearsed stances..." However Patrick Lichfield voted her as one of his 133 most beautiful women (more about this later).

"Evil Under the Sun" is to open in March at the Leicester Square Theatre with a Royal Film Performance on the 22nd. Ms Rigg plays Arlena Marshall, an ageing musical comedy star, who even as a chorus girl could kick higher than anyone else, but now has suffered a string of appalling reviews plus bad publicity because of her outrageous behaviour. The film is set in a luxury hotel (actually in Majorca) where Hercule Poirot (Peter Ustinov) has to sort out nine murder suspects.

Her next major project is a Broadway musical. She flew out from England with daughter Rachel on New Year's Eve. She is to star in "Colette", about the scandalous French novelist. She told reporters:

"My singing voice is improving all the time and I'm keeping my fingers crossed that the show will be a success when it opens in June..." If you have any doubts about her vocal abilities, see if you can trace a copy of the rare "Little Night Music" film soundtrack LP in which Diana stars with Elizabeth Taylor.

While on Broadway, Diana may find time for more work on her book of bad reviews. She told an interviewer: "I think I first became fascinated by reviews when John Simon in New York said that I was 'built like a brick mausoleum with insufficient flying buttresses'...Everyone keeps their really bad notices and as soon as people knew I was compiling the book, they started flowing in."

Her own show "Diana" for instance, aroused a real horror: "as light and frothy as a large glass of prune juice". It should be a delightful book!

About "The Avengers", said in a recent interview: "I get very passionate letters from small Japanese gentlemen...it's rather horrendous to be a cult in your own lifetime. And to see yourself in black and white. I look like an early Joan Crawford with lipstick up to here."



PATRICK MACNEE

Mr. Macnee has been much in demand since the success of "The Howling" which opened here in May '81.

The 1980-made "Dick Turpin's Greatest Adventure" began transmission on ITV on May 16th '81. Apparently this was filmed both as a tea-time TV series and as a more adult film for US cinema release. Evidently the distributors decided they wouldn't miss Mary Crosby's bare chest - can't say I agree. Mr. Macnee kept his clothes on as Lord Melford. He did however have to fall off his horse - which is a bit of an insult considering his equestrian background. If you missed it you can see it all in 3-D on a View-Master set called "Dick Turpin" at £1.99

In June, "The Antagonists" with Peter O'Toole and Anthony Quayle opened in London. This proved to be a two-hour film reduction of the mammoth ABC TV epic "Masada", costing £10 million and lasting about eight hours, made in 1980. The TV version drew an estimated 75 million viewers when it was shown in April 1981 in the USA. In the full-length version, Patrick plays, I believe, a Roman centurion. Hopefully we may eventually see this on British TV.

Roger Vadim is now putting the finishing touches on a new film which he directed in Canada in late 1980. Starring Wayne Rogers and Marie France Pisier, with Patrick Macnee Samantha Eggar and Melvyn Douglas, the film was to be called "A Stroke of Luck", was then changed to "French Kiss" (!) but now seems to be called "The Hot Touch". It is described as an adult comedy, an action-packed tale of suspense, romance and intrigue, set in the high-flying art world of connoisseurs and con-artists. Mr. Macnee plays a middle-aged homosexual art dealer!

In early 1981, Macnee made a guest appearance in that US hospital comedy series "House Calls", with Wayne Rogers and Lynn Redgrave. The episode, not yet shown here, is called "Uncle Digby" in which Patrick plays Digby Todd, Lynn Redgrave's "English uncle" who appears on the scene and disrupts her private and professional life. Uncle Digby turns out to be "a womaniser, a compulsive liar and one of the biggest bigamists outside San Quentin..." (MCA TV) Look out for the episode on ITV who have now bought the series.

Much publicized in "Starlog" (Nos 52, 53 and 54), we have still to see "The Creature Wasn't Nice", produced and directed by Bruce Kimmel from his own screenplay. In this way-out comedy spoof of "Alien",

Patrick Macnee plays the mad scientist Dr. Stark and gets eaten by his own creation, but even as it's eating him, he's still extolling its virtues. The Creature is a jelly-like thing that sings and dances like Gene Kelly. The film also stars Cindy Williams, Bruce Kimmel and Leslie Nielsen.

In June, Mr. Macnee went on to make a horror film in Los Angeles called "Sweet Sixteen". The cast includes Bob Hopkins, Susan Strasberg and Sharon Farrell. Patrick plays Susan Strasberg's archaeologist husband. Variety announced this piece of casting, but in an incredible mix-up, they wrote that the role had gone to John Steed (8/6/81). When they realised their mistake they corrected it (15/6/81) to Patrick Macnee (sic) twice! Finally, with egg all over their faces, they got it right (16/6/81)

Then in Canada Patrick appeared in "Sleuth" at Stage West Winnipeg between July 21st and August 16th. He played Andrew Wyke opposite Jordan Christopher (as Milo) who also directed. Macnee has played the part almost a thousand times both on Broadway (1972) and on US tours. It is a part that needs tremendous concentration;

"...You have to focus right in because it's wall to wall dialogue and one false move can throw off your entire performance..." he told the Winnipeg Free Press.

In late September he began work in Adelaide on a TV mini-saga entitled "For the Term of his Natural Life" for the South Australian Film Co. It is about the transportation of convicts to Australia. Macnee plays Major Vickers and has to age twenty years in the course of the story. He returns to Adelaide in February having had to age twenty years over Christmas!

In March Patrick begins a ten-week Australian tour, beginning in Perth, in Francis Durbridge's thriller "House Guest" directed by Val May. The play is currently running at the Savoy Theatre, London. Macnee will be playing Robert Drury, a successful film star whose young son has been kidnapped.

In the course of last year, two US TV shows featured Patrick. BBC1 included "The Man Who Murdered Himself" in their short season of "Alias Smith and Jones" (Sat. July 25th). ITV showed the "Vegas" episode "Murder by Mirrors" on various dates.

Finally, for Macnee fans with video recorders, he can be seen in the following video releases;

Mr. Jerico- (Precision Video)
Bloodsuckers- (Intervision)
King Solomon's Treasure- (Intervision)
Sea Wolves- (Rank)

- and on audio tape he plays Demetrius in the 1954 Old Vic production of "A Midsummer Night's Dream", available from Listen for Pleasure (Cassette No. 7062) at £4.99

(Our thanks to Mr. Macnee for his help in compiling this news sheet)

BITS & PIECES

● THE Avengers Appreciation Society has been set up for fans of the 60's TV series which has developed a cult following. The Society's President is the series' creator Brian Clemens, and there are hopes for the future of holding conventions with episodes featuring Diana Rigg and Linda Thorson. The annual subscription is £4.00 plus 6 SAEs (no smaller than 10" x 7"), for which members receive magazines and newsletters. Write to Tim Beedows, c/o 110 Tower Road, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands B75 5JT.

The advertisement above appeared in the March edition of PHOTOPLAY MOVIES & VIDEO, on sale now. Also in it, by a strange coincidence, is an article on Diana Rigg. Two good reasons to go out and buy a copy!

IT PAYS TO ADVERTISE...

...or so they say. Find out by inserting your ad (merchandise wanted/for sale: Pen Pals etc) into our AVENGERS CLASSIFIED column beginning in issue three of the magazine. Initial rates 50p per insertion (max 30 wds) but this may be reduced if demand is high enough.

TAKE A LETTER:

Also beginning in issue 3; our regular readers' letters columns. Any letters recieved will be considered for publication. Let's have your opinions on the series and the magazine. What features etc would you like to see included in future issues. Write and let us know. (Address on page 3)

— JOANNA LUMLEY —

After the 30s "Agatha Christie" spoof story in "Sapphire and Steel", there is apparently a four-parter still not broadcast, though an undenied rumour has it that this may be the last series.

Patrick Lichfield has included Joanna in that book; LICHFIELD, Patrick

"The Most Beautiful Women"

Elm Tree Books 17th Sept 1981 £10

Joanna Lumley was apparently one of the first models he ever worked with. The poor girl had to model swimwear in the Serpentine - in mid winter! They have worked together often since. The colour photo was originally commissioned by Cartier in 1978 for a Vogue promotion. (If you can't afford the book that the picture was printed in, it also appeared in Amateur Photographer W/E 26 Sept 1981 p 135!)

The same night as the formal publication of the book, Joanna Lumley was one of about fifty of the most beautiful women from the book who presided over a charity dinner in aid of Lord Snowdon's Award Scheme for the Disabled. The dinner was for 450 people with tickets at £150 per head. Each "B.W." was to preside over a table of ten. The whole event took place at the Grosvenor House Hotel.

The Daily Mirror (Monday 11/5/81 pp16-17) asked if its readers agreed with Lord Lichfield's choice. The response confirmed that top of this poll was Joanna Lumley... "brainy" was well as beautiful... a point underlined by the fact that when a group of celebrities including notable academics were invited by the Sunday Times to take the Public Schools

Entrance Examination, Ms Lumley passed brilliantly. It obviously runs in the family because her 13-year old son also passed and is now at Harrow, at £4000 per annum fees.

Joanna and Patrick Lichfield popped up again on 21st September when they were photographed modelling hand-made suits to launch a new Master Tailor's Advisory Service to show that hand-made clothes aren't beyond ordinary peoples' pockets.

Her TV appearances have included the Morecambe and Wise show (13/10/81) in which she played Elizabeth Barrett to Eric Morecambe's Robert Prowling and Ernie Wise's Mr. Barrett. At the end the three went into a Twenties song and dance routine. To crown it Gareth Hunt made a surprise appearance.

On the 11th November she was one of Michael Parkinson's guests along with Lord Caernarvon and archaeologist John Romer... a most entertaining programme.

For fans of Joanna Lumley and Rupert Bear Pickwick Talking Books have got Joanna to read "Four Tales of Rupert Bear" on cassette (PTB 616) at £2-25. So now you know what to do with that unused record token.

Finally, Joanna's first taste of Panto came on Sunday January 31st at London's Prince Edward Theatre, when she appeared in a charity production of Cinderella... as Prince Charming! Another newcomer to the world of Pantomime... Lynsey de Paul, appeared in the title role. The event is expected to raise £50,000 for handicapped children.

GARETH HUNT

In recent months Gareth Hunt's TV appearances have been mostly limited to game shows. In September he appeared in an edition of "Punchlines" where he was expected to be funny but since everyone seemed to be mad anyway, he remarked, he didn't find it too difficult! On New Year's Eve he came up again on "Give us a Clue" where Michael Aspel introduced him as "The Avenger who makes a great cup of coffee" - Groan! In fact that ad is still popping up on hoardings and in magazines.

He is scheduled to appear in an episode of Thames TV's "Minder".

On the film front, in September Gareth was sweating it out under a sun lamp trying to get a tan for his part as a crooked financier in a forthcoming film. The film, (details as yet unknown) was to be made in Cyprus so Mr. Hunt suggested that he went out there and lay on the beach getting his tan. However the producers decided that a London Health Clinic would be cheaper. Hard luck, Gareth!



MAGAZINES

Aside from ourselves, there are several other magazines you'd be recommended to consult for AVENGERS information.

WTVA produce a quarterly magazine (@£1 per issue) called PRIME TIME, which includes a complete listing of episodes for THE AVENGERS in issues 1 and 2, covering all series from Ian Hendry to Linda Thorson.

In issue 2 of our magazine we referred to the U.S. based publication, "Huntress"

Published quarterly, the second issue is due out around March of this year. It's a large format glossy 36-page magazine with B/W photo illustrations. Cost is 3 Dollars per issue, plus an additional 2 Dollars for airmailing. Send your bankers orders (Dollars only, please), to:

RICHARD DAVIS,
Box 1327,
Harlan, Kentucky 40831,
U.S.A.

The title? Diana was the Huntress and Moon Goddess of Ancient Rome.

Look out also for STARLOG No.55, which includes a free vinyl recording of "Favourite SF Themes", and the soon-to-be-released Starlog Avengers soundtrack album...which is as per the Laurie Johnson LP issued here in 1980

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If you hear, read or see anything on the series and its stars, contact

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All other enquiries (subscriptions, letters, etc) should be sent to THE AVENGERS APPRECIATION SOCIETY,
22, Holte Drive, Sutton Coldfield,
West Midlands B75 6PR

AVENGERS BOOKS ...for sale!...

TITLES AVAILABLE (Only ONE copy of each)

Annals:

THE AVENGERS ANNUAL (1969)
Second Linda Thorson Edition, in near-mint condition. Includes some excellent colour photographs. PRICE £3.00

THE NEW AVENGERS ANNUAL (1976)
First edition. Extensively illustrated with colour & B/W stills PRICE 75p

Paperbacks:

DIANA RIGG series:

THE LAUGH WAS ON LAZARUSPRICE 40p

THE FLOATING GAME.....PRICE 40p

HEIL HARRIS! (Mint).....PRICE 65p

SEND NO MONEY: Use the order form on the reverse in order to reserve a copy. First reservation gets the book.