

# *The Avengers/Patrick Macnee Fan Network Newsletter*

*Special  
Feature  
Issue!*





# Fan Network Newsletter

Issue 14  
March \* April 1980

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## Ramblings

Six months and three issues past our historic Newsletter Number 10... and here we are with another Special Feature Issue! This time around, Network members have a chance to meet part of the "Avengers" team which they might not be quite so familiar with, and a very important part of that team he is! Mr. Brian Clemens, "Avengers"/"New Avengers" writer and producer, has taken time to answer some of our questions concerning the show and about himself. Having been a part of the program since its beginning in 1961, Mr. Clemens has had a hand in most everything concerning "The Avengers" and I'm sure that readers will enjoy and be informed by his answers.

The next item of interest involves my request (last issue) for reactions to the idea of having an "Avengers" reference source printed at some future date.

All who wrote me about the idea were in favor of such a publication. However, I did not receive input from enough people to make feasible printing of a separate issue containing this information. Keeping in mind the financial insecurity of such a venture as well as the fact that Newsletter production alone takes up most of my free time, I've decided to try a compromise which I'm hoping will please everyone.

I shall print the "Avengers Reference Guide" in the same format as our Newsletter and, in fact, consider it as issue #15. Thus, all those who have subscribed to the Newsletter through issue #15 will receive the "Reference Guide" as part of their subscription in lieu of one regular issue.

If you do not wish to receive the "Guide" under this arrangement, please contact me before April 15, 1980 and I will gladly extend your subscription an extra issue to leave out the "Guide".

Tentative contents for the "Avengers Reference Guide" include an episode listing, information about dealers and sales items, complete Pen-Pal listings, biographies of the stars, photos and more!



# Network News

I am often asked by Network members about the possibility of obtaining scripts from the "New Avengers" series. Occasionally scripts from various television shows and/or movies will show up at conventions or collectors' meets, but no one had yet come across copies of "The New Avengers" for sale.

Since these precious jewels are highly prized by fans of the show, I have been keeping an ear to the ground in hopes of coming up with something... a small lead or clue to follow. And then, quite suddenly, I've had the possibility of a feast plopped into my lap!

The printer who holds the original slats to all 26 "New Avengers" episodes was about to toss them into the round file recently when, by some miracle of fate, we were given the opportunity to have some copies run off before their destruction. I quickly shot off a letter to let them know that we are indeed very interested (!) and to ask for specific details about obtaining said scripts for Network members.

Now, I have not yet received a reply with specifics explained, but I'm asking for some input from those interested so that I'll know if this plan is worth pursuing. In order to make printing of the scripts economically feasible, we would need to order them in lots of around 25 per title. Hence, I need at least 25 people who wish to order copies of one episode script before I can talk seriously with the printer.

If enough members are interested and if the printer turns out to be particularly willing to work with us and our limited funds, I'm considering the idea of having something like a 'Script of the Month Club' where we could feature one, or perhaps two scripts per month making the 25 per title possible.

However, this is only an idea and I'm not at all certain that the printer will want to put up with us for such a length of time to make this a reality. I will need reactions from both the members and the

printer before I can solidify any ideas or actual arrangements. So please let me know if you'd be interested in participating or if, perhaps, you might have another plan.

In issue #12 I reported about the feature article on Diana Rigg which was printed in the European edition of "Time" magazine. The article is very detailed and contains some beautiful photos of Diana, including a color portrait on the front cover.

Although this edition of the magazine is not readily available to American readers, one member reports that he wrote to "Time" asking about the possibility of ordering a copy and was sent, free of charge, a copy of the clipping (an original, that is) along with the front cover.

I have not tried obtaining a copy in this manner myself so do not know if anyone writing will get one. However, it's definitely worth a try since this is one of the very best articles I've seen on Diana Rigg... and well worth the trouble of one letter!

The edition which this article appeared in was May 28, 1979 (European Edition), cover story, "Britain's Best Actress". The address to write is: Time Magazine, Time & Life Building, Rockefeller Center, New York, NY 10020.

I have decided to try organizing a Fan Network Picnic to be held here in Kansas City this summer. Reactions to this idea, put forth in an earlier Newsletter, have been mixed with many people expressing a desire to have such a gathering although doubting its success unless there were several events scheduled which would draw attendees.

It's very seldom that I have a chance to meet any of the Network members and visit other than by letter or phone. But every time I've had the opportunity it has been great fun (for me, at least... I'm not sure how much everyone else enjoys my over-enthusiasm). And with this in mind, I've decided to schedule a Fan Network picnic-con with small expectations and enjoy the company of anyone who can make it.



This first ever 'Bowler Con' is planned to be held the weekend of July 26/27, 1980 in the Kansas City area. Anyone wishing to stay in town a day or two after is welcome to since that is the week of my vacation. However, actual activities will most likely take place on Saturday (allowing travel to and from if you live any distance and wish to attend) and will include a picnic in the afternoon after which we'll retire to Fan Network Headquarters for viewing of a few "Avengers" videotapes and, if you're interested, to check out the club's collection of books, magazines, article clippings, photos, audio tapes and so forth. No doubt partying, conversation and episode viewing will extend into the wee hours of Sunday morning.

Acomodations are available at a couple of nearby hotels and I'll be happy to obtain information and rates from them if anyone is interested. Also, if you are hardy and have a sleeping bag, you're welcome to grab some floor space here at my apartment if you can handle hardwood floors and a cat with midnight madness.

Costs for this get-together will be determined by the price of food and beverage for the picnic and I'll be working on such details later. It shouldn't be much. All Network members are welcome... and feel free to bring a friend!

If you think that you might be attending, get in touch with me and I'll update you as more information becomes available and prices are set. 'Bowler Con' progress reports will be in future Newsletters and anyone with questions can drop me a line.

If there is anyone planning to attend who has suggestions on additional activities, please feel free to bring it up. Also, if you have VHS videotapes of any "New Avengers" or old series episodes which I don't, bring them along! I'll be waiting to hear from you.

#### PEN-PAIS

Martin Zeitschik, 1255 Pennsylvania Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11239. Age 29. I have been an avid fan of "The Avengers" since 1966. Interests: softball, bowling, needlepoint, rock music. Friends call me 'Avenger - 7'.  
Barbara Moyer, 74 River St., Cressona, PA 17929. Hobbies: reading, painting, gardening, sewing, traveling. Especially interested in writing to fans from England.

# Joker

by Brian Clemens

In which Steed trumps an ace --  
And Emma plays a lone hand!

When Emma publishes a successful book on bridge, she is invited to spend a weekend in Devonshire with a fellow-player, Sir Cavalier Rousicana. Steed stays at home, nursing a severely bruised leg from a fall. He does not want to ruin Emma's weekend by being an invalid - or by telling her that Prendergast, a vicious criminal who was jailed on Emma's evidence, has broken out and is in London.

When Emma arrives at Sir Cavalier's house, she is welcomed by his ward, Ola, a fey young woman with strange ways, who tells her that Sir Cavalier has been delayed in London and will return later. The house, an old rambling place, contains antiques - and decorations showing many playing cards, including a huge card serving as a door to the upper storey.

After Emma has dined in a huge room, lit by candles, at a table, surrounded by life-size playing cards, Ola is suddenly called away to a friend who has been taken ill in the village. She borrows Emma's car and drives off, leaving Emma alone... or so she thinks.

A search of her room reveals little but a pile of old gramophone records, all in German, all the same tune - "My Love, My Tender, Beautiful Rose." As she begins idly wandering through the rest of the house, she hears the doorbell ring and answers it.

The caller is a young man who attempts to scare Emma, and who will not reveal the purpose of his call. He does, though, point out to her that for some reason, the telephone wires have been cut...





Meanwhile Steed has discovered that his fall was caused by a trip device hidden on the staircase; and that Sir Cavalier has been out of the country for some time. When a friend of Steed's picks up a playing card from the floor and is killed by a poisoned blade attached to it, Steed is certain that someone - Prendergast? - is out to kill The Avengers. He sets off for Devon at once.

Emma, once again alone in the house, begins to have the

feeling that there is someone else there. She finds her room full of roses, the 'phone rings although the wires are cut - and then there is a blood-curdling scream. Outside Emma finds a dummy, dressed as a man, inside the young man's car. When she returns, someone has turned off the gas under the kettle. Suddenly, she hears voices calling her in a whisper, then the gramophone record begins playing upstairs.

She begins searching the house, and in a rocking chair, finds the young



caller. He is dead - and she is locked in the house with his murderer, who continues to call her in a soft, coaxing voice. She finds him in the dining room, seated beneath the huge reproduction of the Joker; when he reaches for the candles she recognises him as Prendergast.

He is completely insane; he intends to kill Emma, for he once loved her and she handed him over to the police. Prendergast has an ally - Ola, who looks forward to seeing Emma killed. Finding her gun is loaded with blanks, Emma throws it at the girl, they fight, and Ola is knocked out. But Prendergast has enormous strength and Emma is powerless against him. Suddenly, though, they hear the German song ring out again and Prendergast is horrified to see the huge Joker card move menacingly towards them; terrified, he collapses on the ground. Steed appears from behind the card; he has come to offer Emma a lift home!

#### CAST

John Steed .... Patrick Macnee  
Emma Peel ..... Diana Rigg  
Prendergast .... Peter Jeffrey  
Ola ..... Sally Nesbitt  
Young Man ..... Ronald Lacey  
Major George Fancy. John Stone

Music by Laurie Johnson

Directed by Sidney Hayers

Produced by Albert Fennell and Brian Clemens  
Executive Producer Julian Wintle



# Forward Base

By Dennis Spooner

John Steed, Purdey and Gambit had joined forces with Canadian agent Bailey to stake out some woodlands near Lake Ontario. Bailey had received a tip off - someone was being dropped at dawn... a young Russian agent, Czibor, had parachuted in on schedule with a package which he managed to bury before dying from gunshot wounds.

Bailey had found the package which contained a Mark VI printed circuit control unit for a missile guidance system... it proved the Russians had moved ahead on missile guidance. Steed puzzled over the words Czibor had muttered before he died - 'Forward Base'.

When Bailey examined a rocky peninsula on the edge of Lake Ontario, something had caught his eye. Suddenly he'd been shot and his body had later been recovered from the lake.

Steed buried the printed circuit and left Purdey and Gambit on stake-out to see who collected it. A known Russian agent, Ivan Halfhide, had retrieved the circuit, made his way to the edge of the lake and then thrown it into the water. While Purdey attempted to recover the circuit, Gambit had followed Halfhide.

Something odd had been happening at the edge of the lake. A local fisherman had found himself on dry land one moment and up to his neck in water the next. At that point the lake seemed to have developed a rapid tide.

Purdey dived and retrieved the circuit, but it had been a different one... the Mark V. Steed poked around on the shore and learnt of the strange behaviour of the tide which had never been the same since Typhoon Agatha had struck in 1969. Steed had raced to a local Trading Post to find old postcards of the shoreline. He'd arrived too late... the owner had been knocked unconscious and a man had been tearing up and burning the postcards. There had been a fight which the suave



Steed had won with ease.

The shoreline had moved again while Gambit and Purdey were in Toronto working on the strained nerves of Ivan Halfhide. Eventually, Halfhide had made a run for it leaving Gambit to face a Russian who'd been sent to kill Ivan. Purdey pursued Halfhide to the lake where he had jumped in fully clothed. His body reappeared shortly wearing a dressing gown.

Steed had gone fishing with a magnet while Purdey found a tree with a bird's nest full of fish. Purdey found the Forward Base... a large sub aquatic community manned by the Russians which had moved into place during the chaos of the 1969 Typhoon. She had been captured by Russian frogmen and taken aboard. They planned to let her body be found - the victim of a diving accident. Could Steed and Gambit find the secret of the moving shoreline? Would the Russians launch a missile attack from the Forward Base?

#### CAST

John Steed	Patrick Macnee
Purdey	Joanna Lumley
Mike Gambit	Gareth Hunt
Hosking	Jack Creley
Bailey	August Schellenberg
Ranoff	Marilyn Lightstone
Malachev	Nich Nichols
Halfhide	David Calderisi
Milroy	Maurice Good
Doctor	John Bethune
Glover	Antony Parr
Harper	Les Rubie
Clive	Toivo Pyyko
Czibor	Ara Hovanessiaan
Radio Operator	Richard Moffatt

Produced by Albert Fennell and Brian Clemens  
Music by Laurie Johnson  
Directed by Don Thompson

Filmed on location in Canada





# Garage Sale

Martin Zeitschik, 1255 Pennsylvania Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11239 has for sale copies of article clippings from his very large collection on "The Avengers". There are many items within his files which the Fan Network does not yet have and members who are interested in clippings might wish to contact him for details. (Be sure to send a SASE!) Martin also has various "Avengers" needlepoint projects going and would be willing to sell some of the completed works if you're interested. (If anyone has copies of Fan Network Newsletters #1, 2 or 7 which they are interested in selling, trading, etc... Martin is wanting to obtain them.)

Steve Eramo, 5 Kimball Drive, Stoneham, MA 02180 has for sale one copy of the 1978 "New Avengers" Annual. Price is \$6.50 - and it's first come, first served! Send a check or money order along with a SASE. If the Annual is gone, your money will be returned via the SASE.

Mary Kucera, 4007 Magnolia Street, New Orleans, LA 70115 has available one British edition of "The New Avengers - To Catch a Rat" and one copy of "The Avengers - Heil Harris". If possible, she would like to trade these for copies of the old Emma/Tara paperbacks (other than #5). If not, they are for sale at \$1.25 for "To Catch a Rat" and \$1.00 for "Heil Harris". SASE with orders.

Brian Kinchy, 57 Varieties Productions, 6609 Biddulph Road, Cleveland, OH 44144 (216) 351-2420 has a variety of "Avengers" material for sale including:  
3 different posters of Diana Rigg from "Hospital", one is portrait of Diana alone. B&W. As set for \$6.00.  
Rigg theater program from "Jumpers" with 2 photos of Diana. \$2.00

Theater program from "The Misanthrope" with many photos of Diana Rigg. \$3.50

16 Rigg/"Avengers" episode synopses (original publicity sheets) 2-4 pgs. each. As set for \$9.50

"TV Guide" Oct.'73. Rigg on cover with color picture inside and article. Entire issue \$1.50

"Today's Filmmaker" July '72. Color Rigg cover with article and pictures. \$1.50

"Welcome Aboard BOAC" magazine with article and two rare color Rigg pictures. \$1.00

Collection of 85 Rigg clippings. \$8.50 for all.  
"Avengers" paperbacks #1, 2 and 3. \$2.75 each.

3 reels (color) of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" with Diana Rigg. 16 mm print missing 5 minutes at beginning. VG condition. \$75.00.

Fan Network Headquarters, PO Box 1190, Belton, MO 64012 has the following Newsletter back issues:  
#3, 4 and 5 for \$1.40 each or 3 for \$4.00 (\$2.60/\$7.50 overseas). Issues #9, 11, 12 and 13 are \$1.60 each or 3/\$8.50 and may be included in the price of a subscription.

The following paperbacks are also available:  
"The New Avengers - Eagle's Nest" used U.S. ed. \$1.25.  
"New Avengers - House of Cards" used U.S. ed. \$1.25  
"Avengers #1 - Floating Game" 2 copies. \$1.00 each  
"Avengers #2 - Laugh Was on Lazarus" 3 copies. \$1 ea.  
"Avengers #3 - Passing of Gloria Munday" 2 c. \$1 ea.  
"Avengers #4 - Heil Harris" 2 copies. \$1.00 each  
"Avengers #5 - The Afrit Affair" \$1.00.  
"Avengers #6 - The Drowned Queen" \$1.00.  
"Avengers #8 - Magnetic Man" 3 copies. \$1.00 each.

Paperbacks are first-come, first-served. Please enclose a SASE with your order and if the book you want is gone (indicate an alternate choice, if possible) I'll return your money in the SASE. Payment should be by check or money order made out in U.S. dollars to 'Heather Firth' or 'The Avengers Fan Network' (overseas orders please add an additional \$2.00 per book for airmail postage). Postage is included in the price for U.S./Canadian members.

## SPECIAL NOTICE

I have one extra copy each of the "New Avengers" 1979 Annual - and - "John Steed - An Authorized Biography" by Tim Heald. These items are up for bid with proceeds going to benefit the Fan Network's printing fund. To place your bid, send the amount bid (items are separate) and a SASE by APRIL 1, 1980.



At this time, first round bidding will be closed and you will be notified of the high bid at that point. If you wish to make a second bid over that amount, notify me of your second round bid no later than APRIL 15, 1980 at which time the auction will be closed. After bidding, you may phone me to find out the high bid to that point and, if your bid is lower, send a Revised Bid via mail (no revisions will be accepted over the phone, sorry). All bids sent MUST be postmarked by the dates indicated!

If you wish further details or bidding instructions, feel free to SASE me. Remember that all money collected from this auction will go to benefit the Fan Network... so bid high! Thank you!

## Report From England

by Bill Bradshaw

Interesting about how much say the American networks might have in any possible future "New Avengers" shows. Steed in Cincinnati is OK, but if it's watered down to the level of "Starsky & Hutch", that'll be worse than no show at all!

Honor Blackman popped up in a lovely commercial for some brand of beer looking absolutely fantastic, considering she's about 53!!

Gareth Hunt also showed up in another commercial for Nescafe coffee.

Pat Macnee turned up in "Matt Helm" last night, with Tony Franciosa. I've waited 4 years for that to get a screening over here! Quite good, too.

Patrick Newell is on TV twice this week - as an MP with a fetish for (wearing!) gymslips, in the comedy "Man About the House" (a 1974 movie from which span off the "Robin's Nest" series in which Honor Blackman makes occasional appearances as Mrs. Nicholls) ... and as Bailey in an episode I haven't seen of the 1977 comedy-thriller series "The Wilde Alliance".

Patrick Newell has been on TV in yet another commercial... this time in a very funny one for Mr. Sheen furniture polish, as a maid-chasing-type country earl who chases a middle-aged daily woman around the country mansion as she polishes away all the woodwork - all in fast motion! Sounds all a bit ho-hum, but it's one of the funniest on TV at present.

Michael Caine did an interview on National Service recently and mentioned having had Pat Newell as his commanding officer years ago, "Great guy, my commanding officer in Korea. He was doing his N.S. too, and he'd never nick you for dirty boots and that."

Joanna Lumley guest starred on an afternoon cookery show with Cordon Bleu, Robert Carrier called "Food, Wine & Friends".

Joanna was on TV last night ((December 5th)) in the "Parkinson" chat show along with naturalist and broadcaster David Bellamy. Parky talked to Jo





about "The Avengers", "Sapphire and Steel", her modelling career, her young son Jamie (naturally) and her recent involvement with an untrue rumor that she was intending to have a plastic surgery 'rear-end uplift'. At that point in the conversation, the now spiky headed (and red hair at that!) Joanna displayed a perfectly proportioned rear to the audience. ...Oh, she was wearing a dress, incidentally!

Joanna turned up on TV ((December 16th)) in the long-ago (May) filmed Eric Sykes short movie "The Plank"... as a sexy hitch-hiker who hitches a lift with lorry drivers Harry H. Corbett and Charles Hawtrey, and gets bumped on the back of the head with Syke's plank as it flies through the back of the lorry - throwing her into Corbett's waiting arms. Funny sequence in a patchy little film, which somehow just wasn't as funny as the 1966 original.



## LOCs of Gold

Leni Sommer, Ohama, NE:

I can't tell you how thrilled I was to learn that Pat is going to be in "Masada". That makes three of my favorite people in it (Peter Strauss graduated from Northwestern just a year or two before I got there!) and it is one of my favorite topics. As a matter of fact, I climbed the Masada when I was 17. Somehow, I thought the Zealots had held out for longer than 6 months, but I may be mistaken. In any case, it is quite a remarkable and inspiring story and I will refrain from saying too much as I tend to get carried away on the subject.

You may be interested to know, however, that pilots in the Israeli air force receive their wings there and their motto is 'Masada Shall Not Fall Again'. They have to climb the difficult snake path in the back (it's actually a national past-time, and only climbs up the snake path count. Tourists either climb the Roman ramp or take the cable cars which have been put in since I was last there). I have a feeling that Pat is going to be one of the Romans... he has the look of a toga-wearer and, therefore, a bad guy. But, of course, I'll forgive him!

It's very interesting to watch the old Emma episodes. They're mixing them from several seasons, I assume, since they don't all start with "Mrs. Peel, we're needed." I was hoping that they would be shown in order so that we could learn how Steed and Emma met. No such luck, though there is a clue in "Death's Door", I believe... Steed catching a glimpse of Emma in his rear-view mirror and presumably breaking so hard that she ran into him (and dented our Bentley? Heaven forbid!).

Anyway, now that I'm a little more mature, I'm really enjoying picking up the nuances of their relationship. And "The Winged Avenger" was especially enjoyable. In fact, I spent a good 15 minutes the next morning riding the Beastie and crying "Ee-urp!" at regular intervals!



Much as I'm enjoying seeing Emma again, I do miss Gambit and Purdey. I'm just never satisfied, I guess. Either I miss Emma and the Bentley or I miss Gambit and Purdey. And I imagine the Tara fans feel the same way. Wouldn't it be great if CBS would alternate the three?

A big 'Thank You' to Charles Bradley for remembering the advertisement so faithfully. I've been wracking my brain to remember it, and now I have it in print. In my mind's ear, I hear it a little differently than Charles, but I won't quibble about minor details.

As you write up the interview for Brian Clemens, I wish you'd ask him why Steed has never been knighted. I really do feel he's overdue after all he's done 'For King & Country'. Perhaps you could suggest that if another year of "New Avengers" is in the works, it could open with some sort of mention that Steed is now Sir John...

Speaking of Brian Clemens, I am, at this very moment, watching a movie called "Come Out, Come Out, Wherever You Are" which, as my mother says, is a real chiller right from the beginning. Written by Brian, with magnificent background music by Laurie Johnson. I'd never heard anything of his besides the "Avengers" theme, and I'm quite impressed.

At first I thought it would be another Little Stopping, someone murdered and everyone else denying that person had ever been there. But there the similarity ended. It actually was a very well done murder mystery. Even mother couldn't find a spot when she could bear to leave it to do something else for awhile. Lynda Day George is the only one in it that I knew. But if it ever runs in your part of town, do try to see it. My compliments to Mr. Clemens!

Elizabeth Waagen, Allston, MA:

I don't think I've mentioned a "New Avengers" ritual that my fellow aficionados and I practiced every week while "The New Avengers" was on. We all gathered in my dorm to watch the show and have 'Purdcas'. Yes! The drink lives, and is just wonderful. Lethal, but wonderful.

I don't know but that perhaps you have a recipe for this pause that refreshes, but my own is as follows: into a regular water (highball?) glass place  $\frac{1}{2}$  shot gin,

$\frac{1}{2}$  shot vodka, healthy dash (more to taste) bitters. Mix. Add lots of ice. Fill glass with fizzy lemonade (concentrate made with champagne, not water). Stir well. SIP. This drink is guaranteed to taste delightful, go down too easily and pack quite a punch if not handled with great care.

If you know of other variations, I'd be interested (I'm not a drinker, but as a scientist I appreciate the importance of first-hand field experience).

((Do all of you remember Purdey's concoction from "Dead Men Are Dangerous"... dubbed by Gambit as a 'Purdca'?))

Christine Mak, Kitchener, Ontario, Canada:

I finally got to see it! Now that I have seen "The Avengers" I know why some people thought "The New Avengers" was too serious. It's original! It's hard to say things about it since so many people have already summed it up in the past issues. The old series was so ridiculous in some spots that it was hard not to laugh! I still enjoy "The New Avengers", though.

I was waiting for "Star Trek" one Saturday morning and reading the credits for a CTV series called "Untamed World". There was a name in the credits that sounded quite familiar. A man with the name of Rupert Macnee was listed as Production Assistant. Is he any relation to Patrick Macnee? ((Yes... his son!))

Marie Buren, Deer Park, TX:

I really enjoyed the interview of Diana Rigg on the Dick Cavett show. I wish, though, that she had mentioned what she had been doing recently and what she intended to do in the future. Is the Dick Cavett show American? I noticed her comment about her fans who admired her as an Avenger. She said something to the effect that they are limited. I wonder if she realizes that many Americans have seen her in little else. I myself have only seen her in one other movie... in which she played a nun ("In This House Of Brede")).

I don't think you've ever mentioned the following



book in the Newsletter: "The Assassination Bureau, Ltd." by Jack London and Robert L. Fish. It was reprinted in 1969 by Berkley Publishing Corporation (the same ones that published the "Avengers" series in the 60's). It has a painting of Diana Rigg on the front and photos of the movie on the back.

Marshall Ellenstein, Chicago, IL:

It seems as though there is a disagreement on having a small "Avengers" picnic/convention by ourselves or hooking up with one of the biggies like "Star Trek", Mystery Con, etc.

May I suggest that we start out small. Twenty or thirty of us, video cassettes in hand, sitting around watching "The Avengers" or "The New Avengers", arguing who is the best of John Steed's partners till the sun comes up. Just have hot dogs on the grill and champagne on ice (what is the legal age in Missouri?). And with that food - and food for thought - it's all I need for an excellent time. I'd definitely put up with sleeping on a couch or in a sleeping bag if after three days (Friday, Saturday, Sunday?) I not only have a sore back, but warm memories and new friendships.

I live in Chicago and go to many cons a year where there are sometimes thousands in attendance. Through these experiences, I have found a lot of commercialism (so un-Avengerlike). Money is the name of the game. Buy and sell and don't have too many freebies or the dealers will complain they take up buying time.

I would think one joins fan clubs because of a deep love of that subject - what or whom ever it is. This love will not come out in a large convention atmosphere. I'm not knocking large conventions. They are all right for comics, "Star Trek" or magic; they are not all right for "The Avengers".

Let's start out small while we can. I predict that these small cons will be so heart-warming that they will grow and grow until they will soon be selling "Avengers" calendars, "The Avengers" puzzle maze books, "The Avengers" bed sheets and pillow cases with matching wallpaper, "The Avengers" coloring books, "The Avengers" playing cards (poker or bridge size; red or blue back), "The Avengers" kitchen clock, authentic John Steed hats and umbrellas, Emma Peel dolls, Purdey's scarf used in

episode number 4, Brian Clemens' toothbrush, the chastity belt worn by Mrs. Peel, a pencil holder in the shape of Steed's hat and the one and only "Avengers" comic book. Heather will autograph her best seller, "The Making of Avengers Conventions" and be pushing her new book, "The Making of the Book on The Making of the Avengers Conventions". As we will be selected to sneak-preview "The Avengers - The Movie", I'll be in the back row reminiscing on how great the good ol' days were back in '80, '81 & '82 when we had those small cons in Heather's backyard.

Tony Kluck, Westlake Village, CA:

It's reassuring to see "The Avengers" again. With all hope, they'll keep the series going and run the new "New Avengers" afterward. We will just have to coach them, wait and see.

Honor Blackman did a book in 1965 called "Honor Blackman's Book of Self-Defense". It's terribly interesting; she relates how she got into judo (as Cathy Gale of "The Avengers") and explains how it has affected her as both an actress and a woman. Then she shows off, with the help of her teachers, numerous holds, throws, kicks, locks, etc. It's great fun to watch and the photos through which they demonstrate are humorous as well.

Diane Lind, President; The Patrick Macnee Fan Club, Omaha, NE:

I recently saw Pat quite by accident on a very old "Alfred Hitchcock Presents". Our local station shows reruns of his 30-minute mysteries every night at 10:30. They are all at least 20-25 years old.

In this particular episode, entitled "Arthur", a very young Pat Macnee plays a Scotland Yard inspector investigating the disappearance of the fiancé (Hazel Court) of a close friend and chicken farmer, Arthur (Laurence Harvey). Pat and his police force suspect that Arthur has murdered her and hidden the body somewhere, but because they can't find it they can't prove his guilt. Pat and his colleagues search in vain for months, ala "Columbo", but they finally have to give up and close the case.



As it turns out, the reason they could not find a trace of the girl's body was because Arthur had ground it up and mixed the remains with seeds, grain, etc. to make a special feed for his chickens. However, Arthur's freedom is very short-lived as the police soon discover his secret when he carelessly gives some of his special mixture to the Chief Inspector as part of a Christmas present.

It was certainly a rare treat to see Pat in such a vintage production. And, although Pat had a very important role in the program, it was so strange to see him listed several names down in the cast. I'm so used to seeing him billed as the 'star' or, at least, 'special guest appearance'!

Larry Charet, Chicago, IL:

Regarding videotapes... feel free to refer anybody who wants them to me. However, I have only Beta format so I can't copy to VHS. I have all the B&W (("Avengers")) episodes except "Silent Dust", 20 Tara shows and all "New Avengers" except "Eagle's Nest" and "House of Cards". No need to tell you what I have on the Rigg color since CBS is running them. I also have 23 "Professionals" from the first two seasons.

((Larry can be reached at: Larry's Bookstore, 1219-A Devon Avenue, Chicago, IL 60660. Be sure to enclose a SASE!))

Don Van Duuren writes about "The New Avengers" on CTV. Those episodes are cut by about two minutes because there are more commercials on Canadian prime time than American prime time. So, while he sees them in an hour slot, CBS shows the entire episode in their 70 minute slot, except for the opening credits.

((From an earlier letter...)) The 1980 Annual is out, but I am currently having problems with my British supplier so I don't know when I'll get them. I will let you know, of course.

Picked up an interesting record album at a record show... "Johnny Gregory plays TV Thriller Themes" from 1962 (Phillips PHM 200-027) has the original "Avengers" theme among other shows of that time. Liner notes say: "Johhy Dankworth applied a touch of cool school modern jazz in his theme for

"The Avengers", the series starring Ian Hendry as the crime-conscious Doctor Keel and Patrick Macnee as the enigmatic Special Agent Steed."

Paul Bishop, Senior Editor for "Mystery" magazine:

Thank you for your check for a copy of "Mystery". Our first issue sold out in New York and most southern California stores where it was test marketed. The second issue will be coming off the presses the first week in February. At that time I will send you a copy of both issues.

We hope that "Mystery" will become the leading magazine in our field (we already have a larger run than the current leader, "Armchair Detective") and are working very hard towards that goal. We have many irons in the fire including an hour long mystery radio show that will start on January 19th. The show will include telephone interviews with leading mystery writers, listener call-in participation, mystery quizzes and numerous news items from the mystery world. Once we get the format for the show finalized and get a couple of hours under our belts, there is a good chance that the show will be picked up for syndication across the country. Even if this does not happen we will continue to do the show on station KPFFK here in Los Angeles, just for the fun of it.

We also hope to be hosting the first "Mystery" awards this fall to be televised from New York. This is still tentative at this time, but things are shaping up well.

The article on mystery/suspense fan clubs (and yes, I consider "The Avengers" to be covered in that heading), as well as a plug for the Fan Network, will be in our third issue which will be out in March and have a circulation of between 40,000 & 50,000. I hope it will bring us in some new members.

((For more information on "Mystery" magazine, write to "Mystery", 1659 Mohawk, Suite 12, Los Angeles, CA 90026. Subscription prices are \$10/year in U.S., \$11/year in Canada and \$12/year in other foreign countries.))



Steve Eramo, Stoneham, MA:

It really is a pleasure to see the old Emma Peel episodes back on the air. My favorite is on tonight... "The Joker"!

Just saw an ad for "The Avengers" tomorrow night on CBS. Nice, except for one thing - they're using the "New Avengers" music in the background!

I recently joined the Lewis Collins Fan Club in England (Bodie in "The Professionals"). An excellent club! I highly recommend it to any Canadian/British members who have had the chance to see "The Professionals". Or even the episode of "The New Avengers" - "Obsession" - where Lewis guest starred. That's how I first became a fan of his.

What we have learned from "The New Avengers" as far as Gareth's character of Mike Gambit is concerned... Unfortunately, I feel we didn't learn enough. We saw he is a most efficient agent, excellent athlete and sharp shooter, has a way with the women (he should write a book - I'd buy it!) and, of course, a great sense of humor. That's it, though. We were given a character sketch of sorts. I do understand that with only a 60 minute episode we can't have 'The Mike Gambit Story', but a bit more on his past could have been done. We knew Steed, of course, and we had a flashback episode for Purdey in "Obsession", but not for good old Mike!

However, I feel that Gareth's acting abilities more than made up for our missing his past. He did create a good character and I feel a most important part of the team effort there.

Virginia Bowman, Denver, CO:

I really had a difficult time being fair to "The New Avengers" while comparing it to the Steed/Peel ones since absence definitely makes the heart grow fonder and "The New Avengers" are sinking slowly out of sight within my brain (details, at least, are lost after any length of time which exceeds a month).

My impression of "The New Avengers" is that they were, of course, much better done than any current - and most past - programs on the tube. The characterizations of Purdey and Gambit were admirable.

You really did care about what happened to them. But they could have been more complete within each episode. Storyline/format-wise, "The New Avengers" was, again, notable. Action (car chases, fights, Russians-popping-out-from-behind-every-tree sort of thing) had a more prominent role than it ever did in the old series, which is rather sad. I kept hoping for more bizarre situations. In "The New Avengers" it was 'good vs. bad'... in the old "Avengers" it was nearer to sane vs. insane!

## Etcetera

I find myself wondering what Freud would have to say about typographical errors. I make a great many which, hopefully, all get corrected before I take this to the printer. However, I can not help but notice that two in particular keep popping up... Tara has become 'Tart' in my mind, and Gambit (poor fellow!) continually rolls off my fingertips as 'Bambie'. \*Sigh\*

Let's turn back the pages for a moment to page 12, please. I find that my vacation might not be coming up the week planned, so it's possible that the picnic plans could change. Most likely, it would only be in the area of guest staying to visit for the next few days as I might not be here. As before, I'll have additional details in future Newsletters... or you can keep in touch by mail.

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- Endline -

Happiness is a properly furled umbrella!



