RUSSELL in Oxford
KATY in Aldbourne
SOPHIE time travels

THE TIDES OF TIME
SPECIAL EDITION Summer 2019

Jon’s last jaunt
“Ah Doctor!”
“Am I early for something?”
—The Doctor to the Valeyard, had The Trial of a Time Lord Part One been transmitted in September 1985

This edition of The Tides of Time exists outside its usual space-time continuum. It arises as a consequence of a decision made during the preparation of number 43 in April. As often, while laying the issue out it became clear that we had overshot a practical page count for printing and were some distance short of the next benchmark. James had written a review of the Time Flight convention at Banbury, and this seemed the feature which it was most practical to exclude, but it would be a waste not to publish it, especially as the pages had already been designed.

The idea arose of combining the Time Flight reports with those from Bedford Charity Who Con Five, not yet then written up, and having a convention and events supplement as a download. Perhaps it could also include a look back at a past Oxford Doctor Who Society speaker event, specifically a very remote one, Sophie Aldred’s visit in 1991 from which several pictures existed. Matthew Kilburn was due to be involved in DePaul University’s visit to Aldbourne again, this time on a day when an event featuring the cast was going to be held there; and then Mark Learey got in touch with a piece about the April 1996 Aldbourne reunion, the last fan event which Jon Pertwee attended. At the same time it made sense to write up Russell T Davies’ discussion of his career in the Provost’s Conversations series at Worcester College; then there was Big Finish Day and the Livestream… Suddenly, what had

Cover detail: Jon Pertwee at Aldbourne, 1996. Image by Stephen Broome

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Special Edition Summer 2019
CONVENTIONS AND OTHER EVENTS
begun as a small supplement had snowballed into something much larger. A digital native, but formatted as 64 A5 pages.

In this parallel universe time travels backwards with the occasional loop. Matthew Kemp materialises the Tides TARDIS (usually disguised as a pile of box files purportedly containing old issues of DWM and ancient fanzines in one of the editorial residences) at Big Finish Day held in Derby in June (pages 4-7) before Dahria Kuyser seizes the keys and runs up and down the Doctor’s timeline for the Big Finish Weekend Livestream which ran in July (8-12). In Sympathy for the Devil, Mark Learey, Matthew Kilburn and Ian Bayley then examine the appeal of the village of Aldbourne and what it and The Daemons represent in Doctor Who fandom (13-14) before Ian and Matthew report from the 23 June Afternoon at Devil’s End (15-22) featuring Katy Manning, Richard Franklin, John Levene and Damaris Hayman. Mark Learey then takes the controls and remains in Aldbourne for the April 1996 reunion, featuring not only Richard, John and Damaris, but also Terrance Dicks and much-missed people such as Barry Letts, Nicholas Courtney and of course Jon Pertwee himself, for Pertwee’s Last Daemons (23-31).

Lurching forward to May 2019, Russell T Davies returned to his Oxford college to explore his career with its provost, Sir Jonathan Bate; James Ashworth reports (pages 32-41). Adam Kendrick, with Ian and James, attended the Bedford Charity Who Convention in April and we have a report on that too (42-51). Then come the articles which started this off, James writes from Time Flight in February (52-53), hearing from television producer, archive explorer and restorer Paul Vanezis (54-55), and meeting sometime Voord, Martin Cort (56-57). Finally, back to the days when lecture rooms were full of chalk dust, and Sophie Aldred talked to seventy-odd students, as recollected by Paul Dumont (58-62).

Thanks as usual to everyone who has contributed, including those who have allowed us to use their photographs, especially Stephen Broome, Anne Russell and Paul Booth. We are also aware that this edition is appearing about six weeks later than originally planned and that several people wrote very efficiently to early deadlines. We can only mumble excuses about jobs, finals and graduation.

Conventions, panel discussions and autograph sessions are an increasingly large part of the Doctor Who fan industry. There will be more reflection on changes over the years next issue, when we report on findings from the Oxford Doctor Who Society’s thirtieth anniversary party last April, and also celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of Tides of Time itself.

Until then, happy times and places,
A Celebration of Doctor Who Audios

Matthew Kemp reports from Big Finish Day 2019 for the commemoration of two decades of Doctor Who audio adventures

Big Finish—We Love Stories. The perfect tagline for a company with a great story of its own. Evolving from a group of fans who made unofficial audio plays during the Who-less dark times of the 90s, they obtained the license to make Bernice Summerfield audio adaptations, and on the strength of these productions nabbed the rights to Doctor Who in 1999. Now they produce hundreds of audio plays a year, with such stellar actors as David Tennant, Catherine Tate, John Hurt, and many more, expanding the worlds of Doctor Who in bold new directions. They’ve come a long way over the past twenty years, so are celebrating in style with many special adventures (such as the six-part The Legacy of Time) and with a convention, Big Finish Day, which landed in the Quad creative centre in Derby on 22 June 2019.

I boarded the Big Finish train quite late, but over the past few years I have devoured many of their beautifully crafted and expertly produced stories. Be it Paul McGann’s ongoing series to all of the spin-offs featuring “new” series characters, such as River Song, UNIT and the Paternoster Gang, there’s always a different world of Who waiting for me. Listening to these full-cast audio dramas is a very solitary pursuit—they accompany me on many a commute,
laundry run or cooking sesh—but it’s conventions like these where you really feel that you’re part of a bigger community of enthusiastic audiophiles. It’s also a great opportunity to meet the creatives behind the company’s success, so I made a particular point of saying thank you to all the writers, producers and directors for making stories that I love.

The day started with an introduction from head honcho and Dalek dramatist Nick Briggs, who, in his usual witty way, struck up a rapport with the assembled masses while giving some hints of stories to come. As River Song would say, “Spoilers!” Next up was Peter Davison and his son Joel (one of the ever-growing Davison dynasty), who discussed the merits of working with your family. His son took particular glee in getting to

A recently uncovered photograph from the Paternoster archives, featuring an unidentified male with the three as part of a trip to a future time
torture his cousin in a Survivors episode, while Peter discussed acting opposite his daughter in the aptly named Relative Time, part of The Legacy of Time. Though Doctor Who obviously means a lot to him, Davison often seemed a tad bemused by the hordes of fans, but after I mentioned that I was enjoying his recent turn in Gentleman Jack when we were getting a photo taken, he seemed to relax a bit.

The Paternoster Gang were next to take to the stage. Neve McIntosh, Dan Starkey and Caitlin Stewart were together at a convention for the first time. They all obviously get on so well, and seem overjoyed to finally get the chance to tell more stories with these beloved characters. Intriguingly, they revealed that the producers set up a meeting with the gang before scriptwriting was underway in order to ask them what directions they thought the series should go in, as they’ve been playing these characters for so long. It’s just another example of Big Finish’s drive to create the best possible stories in the most collaborative and thoughtful way.

Alongside the photographs, autographs and cosplay, one of the most exciting parts of the day was a communal listening of the first part of The Legacy of Time, featuring the first lady of Big Finish, Bernice Summerfield, alongside River Song and the Eighth Doctor. It was a strange and beautiful experience, sitting together in a cinema theatre just listening to the audio. The plot went in all kinds of directions (no spoilers here: #DavrosDemandsYourSilence) and all the while, the creatives behind it watched our faces with delight to see our reactions. I think they often wonder about the response of their productions, as the interaction between the creators and the audience is not perhaps as strong as that of the theatre or television, so I believe this very visceral view of our feelings was very much appreciated.

There were some other panels featuring a plethora of writers
and actors, and the day ended with a gloriously moving panel dedicated to the Third Doctor Adventures. Jon Pertwee’s Doctor, the Brigadier and Liz Shaw have all been lovingly recreated by Tim Treloar, Jon Culshaw and Daisy Ashford (Caroline John’s daughter), who all spoke about how much it meant to them to pay tribute to this era of Doctor Who. Katy Manning, the inimitable Jo Grant herself, stole the show as usual, reeling off story after story of her many escapades, including supergluing her phone to the table and getting locked in various toilets!

My personal highlight of the day was talking to Jon Culshaw, the impressionist and fan who so perfectly evokes the spirit of the Brigadier in the latest audio series. I told him that he was the one that first got me into Doctor Who, due to his presentation of Doctor Who Night on BBC Two in 2005. Released just before the “new” series began, his description of the idea of Doctor Who completely hooked me as a ten-year-old. He found this very moving, saying that it meant a lot to him that he spread his love of Who to a new generation.

There were so many guests at this convention, perhaps too many, but I think it shows just how lucky we are that such high quality audio dramas are being made by people who love the show so much! Here’s to another twenty years of audio adventures in space and time, and I can’t wait to see where all these characters go next, because as Doctor Who fans, “We Love Stories.”
Legacy of the Time War

Dahria Kuyser follows threads through Big Finish’s anniversary livestream

There are spoilers for *The Night of the Doctor*, *The War Doctor: The Innocent*, *The Diary of River Song: The Boundless Sea*, and *The Legacy of Time: Lies in Ruins* in this article!

When I heard about the Big Finish livestream, I was determined that, for once, this wouldn’t be a livestream I would miss, especially since it was for the much sought-after audio adventures. Of the many being streamed, I was particularly excited to hear some of the Eighth Doctor and River Song stories, based in and around the Time War. While listening, I was thinking about whether or not I would finally write an article for *Tides*, and it wasn’t until I listened to the last story, *Lies in Ruins*, that I realised I actually had something I wanted to write about. As I was listening, I was drawn back to thinking about two other stories I had heard earlier that day: *The War Doctor: The Innocent*; and, to a lesser extent, *The Diary of River Song: The Boundless Sea*. These three stories inform each other in some rather interesting ways, and come together to weave a fascinating narrative, focusing on the Doctor’s character arc through the Time War. It also takes a look into how relationship between the Doctor and River develops when their views on fighting are switched. As perhaps the two things that fascinate me the most in *Doctor Who*, I was very interested to see how Big Finish portrayed it, especially as they also lead almost perfectly into the first Eighth Doctor story I saw, *The Night of the Doctor*. So, in the spirit of the Time War, things are about to get wibbly-wobbly...
Travelling chronologically for the Doctor, yet backwards in the livestream, we begin with Lies in Ruins. In this story we get the brilliant combo of the lovely River Song, Bernice Summerfield and a world-weary Eighth Doctor, who find themselves in an ancient tomb on a planetoid which is later revealed to be Gallifrey itself. The story has something of a funereal air about it, particularly appropriate given it was the last story of the livestream. As the final story, Lies in Ruins was a very fitting choice, with multiple startling twists, an obviously excellent cast and an interesting exploration of the Doctor’s character leading into the Time War. While the Doctor is morose, with his mood darkening throughout the story, his new companion, Ria, provides a fine counterpoint by being bubbly and enthusiastic. Bernice and River also excel, with James Goss, the author, building on their time together at Luna University, with the latter the inattentive, annoying pupil of the former.

Once the tomb is revealed to be Gallifrey, however, the story changes tone somewhat. When Bernice and River get trapped by what appears to be the Matrix, the Doctor remains hopeful, believing he can restore Gallifrey and so put the universe to rights. After scavengers attack, looking to earn some quick money, he reacts peacefully by throwing up a barrier. However, the cracks in his persona are beginning to show, and so when they aren’t deterred, he reflects back their attacks and destroys them. The Doctor is already beginning his transformation into his next incarnation, blaming the scavengers as they are too ‘stupid’ to stop firing. Clearly, the increasingly pervasive Time War dominates his mind, as he mutters “I won’t let this fall again” (which is an interesting echo of The Day of the Doctor’s epiphenoma “Gallifrey falls no more”).

While the scavengers may live, Ria does not, dying in the Doctor’s arms. Once she does go, the Doctor tells Bernice and River the truth—Ria was an android created by the Doctor when the loss of so many of his companions and the looming Time War became too much for him. If further confirmation was needed, we again see the Doctor losing a hold on his character and, by extension, his name. He requires a cheerleader, telling him how intelligent, kind and suchlike he is, whether or not he is actually demonstrating these qualities. Yet, despite Ria’s efforts, it is becoming less and less true, with
River and Bernice needing to step in to curb his ruthlessness. River tells the Doctor that he was “on the verge of committing himself to chaos” and that only by having loyal companions at his side was he prevented from making that ‘commitment’. It is River, primarily, who prevents this commitment. Here, it is worth giving a brief mention to *The Boundless Sea*, which gives us some additional insight into River’s mindset at the time. While its premise may seem initially absurd, with ‘tear-drinking zombies, featuring sexist men who never listen’, the story is particularly poignant, especially in the way River empathises with the female antagonist. Across this story, it becomes clear that River spends a lot of her time suppressing her emotions and compartmentalising, saying that she “never cries” as she has “wept a sea of tears already.” Back in *Lies in Ruins*, we see how River is being torn apart, unable to comfort her husband because of the ‘spoilers’ that she would reveal. It must be terrible for her, yet she must remain strong and cannot cry because he needs her to be tough. Indeed, in order to stop him she must take a hard stance, forcing him to face up to exactly what he’s doing. The cruellest and most effective line she says, though it must kill her to do so, is “run and hide children, because the Doctor is coming”. This is exactly what the Eighth Doctor fears becoming; a monster that children are taught to fear and dread. Cass will treat him as a monster in *The Night of the Doctor*. While he is able to stop this time with help from his friends, we know that these are some of the “darkest nights” that River speaks of; a parallel for her own actions while controlled by the Silence.

Of course, this pacification of the Doctor can’t last forever. The day it ends is, of course, the one shown in *The Night of the Doctor*. In this short story he tries to save and recruit Cass, but she refuses to be saved, choosing to perish on Karn. It is almost certain that it is Cass (perhaps in combination with River’s earlier “run and hide” line) who instils in the Doctor the idea that he is a monster and therefore, by his own stance, unable to be the Doctor anymore. With the universe having lost its opinion of him as a good man, and having lost that opinion of himself some time ago, he comes crashing down to Earth, or rather, Karn. Here, he chooses to become a warrior, committing himself to chaos and stripping himself fully of his old treasured title of “Doctor”.

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Now, he must be the one to make the hard sacrifices and ruthless decisions in order to protect reality itself and prevent Gallifrey from falling—after all, it’s his own fault that the Daleks continue to exist. As first words for the War Doctor, “Doctor no more” are particularly apt, as in order to save reality itself, he must sacrifice his mercy.

_The Innocent_, therefore, takes us to a future point where the War Doctor has been in service for some time. Despite the events of _Night_, there are still hints of the Doctor, demonstrating his usual reckless self-sacrifice, tinged with a hint of arrogance, as he (correctly) believes he is the most likely person to be able to destroy the Dalek fleet and survive. While he succeeds, buying the Time Lords some time, he crash lands on the planet Keska, where the peaceful locals take him in. While the Time Lords mourn the Doctor, a sweet companion-type called Rejoice cares for him as he drifts in and out of consciousness. Rejoice, a cheerful optimist, is increasingly curious about his recurring nightmares, which we catch glimpses of until it is eventually revealed that he is troubled by his decision to sacrifice over ten thousand innocents just to destroy some Daleks. When he is conscious, Rejoice keeps asking him his name and what his nightmares are about, but the Doctor insists that he is “no one”, refusing to tell her anything. Clearly, this is a Doctor haunted by what he has had to do, yet feels that he has “no choice” but to return to the Time War and keep making those decisions.

When the Keskans are threatened by a violent people from their past, the Doctor offers to help them as soon as he realises they won’t force him to do so. For just a moment, he has a chance to be the Doctor again, saving lives not because he has been ordered to, or is obliged to, but because he has chosen to do so. Naturally, the Doctor soon finds a way to keep the peace though, in a move that echoes incarnations past and future, he makes them choose whether or not to go ahead with his plan; they must be the ones to push the button. The Keskans offer him a reward—anything he wants—and in a move very telling of this Doctor’s haunted soul, he elects to just have “peace and quiet”. That is all this Doctor wants—he doesn’t want to kill anymore; he doesn’t want to have to be the one to make the hard decisions in order to protect his fellow Gallifreyans (and reality); he wants to be the Doctor. Yet,
even in this relative peace and solitude, he knows he will soon be forced to return, and the memory of what he has had to do in the name of the war never strays far from the forefront of his mind. Rejoice visits the Doctor often, and tries her best to comfort him. However, he still cannot stand her calling him by his old name, and continues to insist that he is “a monster”, all while she repeatedly says that “there’s goodness in [him]”. The anger he feels at what he has had to become is very apparent, even screaming at Rejoice at one point. Despite her being exactly the kind of girl any other Doctor would love to take on as a companion—earnest, curious, and fiercely moral—he cannot overcome the feeling that he’s “a lost cause.” With time, he seems to be recovering some of what the Doctor is, but just as it seems like he might run away once again from the war with Rejoice at his side, the Time Lords drag him back to Gallifrey. The seeds of The Day of the Doctor have been planted, and will soon come to fruition.

Weaved throughout these stories is a narrative thread which gives us a greater insight into the transformation of the kindly, peaceable Doctor into the ruthless and uncompromising War Doctor. Yet, it is made painfully clear from these stories that beneath the harsh exterior of the War Doctor is the very same Doctor we all know and love. For this is the reason he struggles so profoundly with the choices he has had to make to win the war, and which make him lose his identity. This action draws not just him into the war, but also his friends like Bernice and River. The latter must cope with the repercussions of the Doctor’s decisions, along with the difficult choices she herself has had to make throughout her life. This is the beauty of Big Finish, of course—being able to delve deeper into the complexities of our most beloved onscreen characters and also into some of the in-universe events most shrouded in mystery. Having the chance to listen to these stories, along with the others played during the livestream, has further reinforced for me the value of Big Finish stories. With the move to a more digital world, this livestream made me all the more disappointed that Big Finish don’t have a streaming subscription—I’d be first in line.

They love stories, you know. The Legacy of Time: Lies in Ruins was released in July 2019. The Diary of River Song: The Boundless Sea and The War Doctor: The Innocent both in December 2015. All are available from bigfinish.com
THE DAEMONS POSSESSES THAT RARE STATUS OF A STORY ABLE TO COMMAND ITS OWN CONVENTION, AND IT’S WORTH CONSIDERING JUST WHY THIS SHOULD BE. Certainly, the extensive use of location shooting in and around Aldbourne, Wiltshire, lends the production an air of immediacy, realism and expense distinct from contemporary studio-heavy stories. If the original location footage still existed we could today be enjoying a stunning high definition Blu-ray release. Rather ironically, however, the cult appreciation of this story owes much to its turbulent archival history.

VIDEO ARCHAEOLOGY

Though difficult to imagine now that all surviving stories are commercially available, The Daemons was one of the many victims of BBC videotape wipings during the 1970s. Only episode four was retained on its original colour videotape but copies of all the episodes had fortunately been made for overseas sales, albeit on black and white film. These received a new appreciation after two decades of languishing in the archives, courtesy of satellite broadcaster UK Gold, and episode five (in its black and white form) was made available in March 1992 as part of the home video release The Pertwee Years. Then, within months, an amazing thing happened. The fledgling Doctor Who Restoration Team, a group of technical wizards and fans of the show, took a colour Betamax off-air recording of an old US broadcast and cleverly married its colour signal with the surviving black and white films. The Daemons soon blazed its way back to prominence, thanks to a BBC2 repeat in late 1992, and subsequent VHS release in March 1993. With the benefit of hindsight, the 1990s burst of
nostalgia must also owe something to the lack of new Doctor Who on television at the time. The ‘resurrection’ of The Dæmons quickly (re)established it in the hearts and minds of millions.

**Top of the polls**
The colour restoration of The Dæmons transformed the already high reputation the serial had earned in Doctor Who fandom even before most fans had access to video copies. This must in part be a consequence of the remarkable novelization of the story. Published in October 1974, it is Barry Letts’s only contribution to the Target range, and illuminates his understanding of the characters he guided across television screens for between three and five years as producer of the series, as well as those he devised for The Dæmons alone. There are asides about the Master’s wish that the Doctor would join him in ruling the cosmos and stop being abominably good, and another which surprised one ten-year-old reader at least with just how young Miss Hawthorne was—thirty-eight!—as well as observations on how the UNIT team cope stranded in village life.

The cast’s fond memories of the two weeks they spent on location at Aldbourne were among the first which they recalled at Doctor Who conventions as these began to be held in the late 1970s and early 1980s. It was little surprise that it emerged as the overall winner in the Doctor Who Appreciation Society’s favourite story poll in 1983. Doctor Who Magazine readers have consistently ranked The Dæmons highly, placing it second only to Inferno among Third Doctor stories in 2009’s The Mighty 200 Poll, and fourth after Inferno, Spearhead from Space and The Green Death in 2014’s The First Fifty Years.

Fans were making group visits to Aldbourne by the 1980s and in the 1990s the growing professionalized cottage industry which had emerged in fandom began to organize conventions there. The following articles reflect on the Aldbourne experience of 2019, fourteen years into the series’ revival, and that of 1996, on the eve of the transmission of the TV Movie and a few weeks before the death of Jon Pertwee.
Location filming was commonplace in early 1970s Doctor Who. With the exception of the Peladon stories, every Pertwee story had some, and yet there’s nothing else quite like Aldbourne for fans of twentieth-century Doctor Who. Crucial to this was the way in which The Dæmons fully embraced its location, with the whole cast, including Jon Pertwee (the Doctor), Katy Manning (Jo), Roger Delgado (the Master) and all three UNIT regulars coming down to Aldbourne. As a result, the village of Devil’s End feels that much more real than other settings of the era, and pleasingly the outdoor stage on which much of the drama unfolded looks much the same now as it did in 1971. The combination of the village green, flanked by a large church on its northern side, along with the pub and houses on the others, ensures it appeals to a cultural memory of the English village shaped by cinema and television across genres.

Matthew Kilburn and I were in Aldbourne to meet Paul Booth, professor of media and cinema studies at DePaul University in Chicago, and his class of 16 study-abroad students who, like many of Oxford’s WhoSoc freshers, had just watched some older Doctor Who episodes for the first time. Unlike them, they had all written essays on the subject (Essays for Tides are always appreciated! - Eds.). Having met them, we took a two-kilometre hike to the Four Barrows,
one of which played the Devil’s Hump. Unfortunately, we were unable to visit the inside, given that the entrance on screen led, in reality, to a wall of grass; the interior seen on camera was taped in the studio. Having worked up an appetite, we broke for lunch at the Cloven Hoof itself, or as it is in reality, the Blue Boar. Unlike the ill-fated customer Jim in Episode One of the serial, we left the pub on a sunny June afternoon, rather than a dark and stormy night, an effect created by the combination of fire engine hoses and wind machines.

After lunch we made our way to Aldbourne Memorial Hall for An Afternoon at Devil’s End, organized by Who’s at the Playhouse, who in recent years have been running Doctor Who events from the Playhouse at Epsom in Surrey. The guests were Damaris Hayman (Olive Hawthorne), John Levene (Sergeant Benton), Katy Manning (Jo Grant) and Richard Franklin (Captain Yates), who were returning to the village at which they had spent an unprecedented two-week shoot in the second half of April 1971. The event began with an introductory panel before the four actors departed for different village locations.

Matthew writes: 23 June 2019 was the second occasion on which I’d shown a DePaul University group led by Paul Booth around Aldbourne. In 2018 I’d taken one around the village as well as up to the Four Barrows, in wetter weather! This time, Paul had seen that An Afternoon at Devil’s End was scheduled for the middle of the trip and thought it would be educational to take his students to a small British Doctor Who convention. I still had the opportunity to talk a bit about Aldbourne’s history and Wiltshire generally as well as production conditions on 1970s Doctor Who, as well as the county’s ritual landscape, of which the Four Barrows are a part.

Here we are at the Devil’s Hump. Image by Paul Booth
We started our tour at a duck pond away from the green, where we greeted Damaris Hayman. Sitting in a wheelchair wearing a purple fleece and a light brown tartan rug on her lap, she was just a week past her ninetieth birthday, a fact we had recognised earlier by singing happy birthday to her at the village hall. Although Damaris was frail, she spoke clearly and fluently, with her main memory of recording being the initial confrontation with the Master, where she suggested to the director, Christopher Barry, that she should have a talisman to hold as a reflection of a white witch’s power, that could help her defeat her pseudo-satantic counterpart. Though she may have been fighting the Master on screen, she recalls that off screen Roger Delgado was a “sweet, charming and good person” who invited her to his London home to watch the transmission, because she didn’t have a colour television at the time. She was utterly distraught when he died. That hasn’t tainted her memory of Aldbourne however, and she returned many times to read the lesson at the church on Sundays, and even attended a wedding there.

In Mawdryn Undead (1983), the Brigadier reveals that Sergeant Benton is now a secondhand car dealer. John Levene, the actor who played him, seemed to reflect that profession by dressing snappily in a dazzlingly bright royal blue blazer, stating that “clothes maketh the man”. We met him on the south side of the green, where the maypole had been.

John focused on the uplifting story of his personal journey from a harrowing childhood in Salisbury to acceptance within the Doctor Who family. He had a terrible relationship with his father, who came back from the war having missed the first four years of his life, so they never really connected. Worse was to come, with the waterborne polio virus infecting the main supply, and slowly working its way up the street in Salisbury towards his house. His daily life was consumed by the horrifying thought that the next drink could be the one that would kill him, and though he escaped infection, he saw the...
devastating effect the virus had on a neighbour who was crippled by it. The only pleasant memory he shared from that time was a face-to-face encounter with the lead actor of the film *The Dam Busters* (1955), Richard Todd. Neither knew they would one day have *Doctor Who* in common, as after John’s time on the series Todd played Sanders in *Kinda* (1982). Looking back on his childhood now, he has nothing but admiration for his mother, which has consequently made him an ardent feminist horrified at how badly a male-dominated society treats women. He is clearly passionate about this, having expressed those same sentiments to a handful of the students who had run into him earlier that day.

The climax of his journey came when he joined the cast of *Doctor Who* as the “main” Yeti in *The Web of Fear* (1968), arriving first and leaving last each day, because he had finally found himself working alongside people he loved and who loved him. He clearly impressed because his work ethic inspired director Douglas Camfield to cast him as Benton in *The Invasion* (1968) as a last minute replacement for an actor who failed to turn up four times. But why was the character such a success, recurring across Doctors and eras? He attributes Benton’s success to the fact that he was that he was “deep down an innocent” with a lot of integrity. Indeed, *The Dæmons* was a story he particularly loved because it gave him the most lines, allowing him to show this side of his character more
fully.

On the north side of the green next to the church, we found **Katy Manning**, the leading lady of **Doctor Who** in 1971. She claimed that she was probably going to “babble on”. It was good that this instantly made me think of her character because that was the main topic she wished to talk about. She loved the fact that Jo was “a girl of her time”, “not a screamer”, “definitely non-UNIT”, “clumsy”, “determined” and “quite brave”; the last of these shown most memorably in her “gone to get you a maggot” note in *The Green Death* (1973). Her famed short-sightedness was the main reason why Katy Manning the actress was able to act as fearlessly as Jo the character, because she could not see the danger she was putting herself in.

Katy recalled the unusual weather encountered when filming *The Dæmons*. One day it was hot enough to tan director Christopher Barry “the colour of a horse chestnut”. On another day, they woke up to snow, something she couldn’t believe when Jon Pertwee reported it to her. She also enjoyed her character moments within the episode, and especially the climax, with Jo telling Azal “Kill me, not him!” Although on most viewings I find it hard not to see this as a “saved by the power of love” cliché, Katy herself loved the fact that she explicitly offered her life for the Doctor as she was the first companion to do so.

Katy spoke also about her admiration of the technicians, who with such a constrained budget and before the age

“Lots of my rellos went to Oxford,” drawled Katy Manning with smoky authority from beneath her sunglasses when Ian and I explained where we came from. Facing people wielding a variety of hand-held screens, Katy emphasized face-to-face communication and the importance of touch, reminding us that when *The Dæmons* was made no-one had personal computers or mobile phones. She had no idea that her arrival in Aldbourne with Jon Pertwee in 1971 would be met by onlookers. “I think they’re fans,” said Jon. And so the world changed. A couple of the DePaul party remarked that Katy was “hip”. One could believe the term was invented for her.—*Matthew*
Given that Jon Pertwee’s centenary was two weeks away, he loomed large in the guests’ thoughts. Pertwee was Damaris’ favourite Doctor, and the key to his success for her was that he was “absolutely serious” about the job. Even in rehearsals where it was suggested he may want to “get the laughs out of the way,” he was always committed, and so unsurprisingly, more comic Doctors such as Tom Baker were not to her taste. However, humour was important in Katy’s relationship with Jon. On their drives to locations, they would turn passing English village names into characters they would role play. Richard remembered an escapade in which Pertwee asked him for a lift on his motorbike, only to discover that it had no brakes. As for the other John (Levene), he recalled that despite the fun he was having, Pertwee often expressed to him his sense of responsibility at being the show’s lead actor, and living up to the part. It’s clear that twenty-three years on from his passing, Jon Pertwee is still fondly remembered.

Discussion turned to the modern era, which Damaris finds too fast-paced for her, preferring the classic series’ more theatrical style of production. The casting of Jodie Whittaker also came up, as it inevitably does, and she rationalised the casting of a female Doctor with the words “if they must, they must,” perhaps causing a little fan discomfort in the gathering. Katy’s thoughts, meanwhile, were very different, and she proclaimed that Jodie was “the right actor at the right time,” which is “what you need for success.” —Ian

Jon Pertwee, advertising New Zealand Telecom, Archives New Zealand, via Flickr (CC BY-2.0)
of computer editing “made a huge meal just out of scraps.” They would stay up all night to get their complex effects to work, and Katy was proud of the fact that she was the guinea pig for Colour Separation Overlay. Certainly, anybody who jokes to her about “wobbly walls” is swiftly reminded that what she and others did in 1971 is still being talked about today, adding that “we didn’t know then what we know now”.

Building on John Levene’s comments, she said that Doctor Who has not only helped people through terrible times, but inspired people who have gone on to be actors and directors who later worked on the show. She described this as a chain of love, stretching down the years to the modern day, and she encapsulated this metaphor by hugging each one of us as we left.

Finally, we came to Richard Franklin, whom we found standing round the back of the churchyard amid the tombstones. He was dressed in a smart tweed jacket with a green hankie daintily inserted in his top pocket and, in recognition of the heat, a dark blue Spurs baseball cap and a water bottle. He began with The Daemons, declaring that Yates’ “finest hour” was the scene when he almost landed three punches on Girton to stop him stealing the UNIT helicopter. Only the Dæmonic power harnessed by the Master saved his henchman, at least in Richard’s interpretation of the scene. He enjoyed being a man of action, sharing an anecdote from The Mind of Evil (1971), where he overestimated his biking skill, leading to his fall from a powerful Triumph which then continued without him. He also revealed that, as in Aldbourne, unusual weather was also present for The Claws of Axos, with his friend Fernanda Marlowe getting an extra line about “freak weather conditions” when snow interrupted filming unexpectedly.
After the tour of Aldbourne came the photo session on the green, as Richard, John and Katy piled into a clone of Bessie and Damaris joined them in her wheelchair. The official photographs—of which this is not one—were taken by Robin Prichard. Robin has been running photo opportunities at Doctor Who events for many years now and is an expert in marshalling stars and fans. He also has a knack for beating the weather, finishing this session under the threat of rain. At the end of the day he was running two photo printers to make sure everyone had their advance orders before they went home—including extras... —Matthew

Once Richard started taking questions, I was interested to hear his answer to Paul Booth’s question about Yates’ darkest hour: his betrayal of the Doctor in Invasion of the Dinosaurs (1974). Richard remarked to the student members of his audience, for whom such character arc climaxes are commonplace, that he was lucky to have such a three-dimensional character. He asserted that any companion of the Doctor, caring about the world in which we lived, would jump at the chance to establish a “golden age” with Professor Whitaker. Yates withdrew his support, however, as soon as he saw that the Doctor was in danger and in any case, Richard added, his mind had been affected by the crystal from Metebelis Three that the Doctor had used to cure him of BOSS’s mental conditioning in The Green Death.

Eventually, the day came to an end, and everyone went their separate ways. I had an excellent time, and it is tremendous that it is so easy to explore the village where the cast and crew of The Daemons once worked.
Mark Learey was present in April 1996 when Aldbourne, the location for Jon Pertwee’s favourite Doctor Who story, became the setting for his final public appearance. Photographs by Stephen Broome and Mark Learey.

The popularity of Jon Pertwee’s era during its original broadcast was in no small part due to its fresh take on an ageing format, grounding the Doctor in exile on contemporary earth. The addition of Katy Manning (as Jo Grant) and Roger Delgado (the first and arguably definitive incarnation of the Master) to the successful UNIT team cemented its popularity. The Dæmons represents the pinnacle of this reinvention, an ensemble piece which was celebrated in the spirit of the 1996 Aldbourne reunion marking the story’s twenty-fifth anniversary.

Meeting the elementals

On a glorious morning of 27 April 1996, hundreds of Whovians cascaded into the village to enjoy a day of geeking-out in this picturesque location. The event began with a group panel, featuring Jon Pertwee, Nicholas Courtney, John Levene, Richard Franklin, Damaris Hayman and David Simeon (who played BBC3 reporter Alastair Fergus), alongside producer Barry Letts and script editor Terrance Dicks.

Pertwee had firmly reconnected with the world of Doctor Who, not only having his episodes revived on television, but also reprising the role for a
Children in Need sketch, the 1989 stage play *The Ultimate Adventure*, and even two BBC radio adventures (written by Barry Letts). Recounting his casting, he had very definite views about how the part should be played and recalled how he put his name forward only to discover he’d been on the internal short-list (behind Ron Moody) for (he claimed) eighteen months! After several lunches and dinner with head of drama Shaun Sutton, he was convinced to take on the role. Pertwee also revealed the fate of Bok, the gargoyle in *The Dæmons*, which he’d taken home and put on display in his garden, terrifying his gardener until it melted from exposure to the elements; Bok was, after all, made from expanded polystyrene! Pertwee was also enthusiastic about the Third Doctor radio adventures, and described the frustratingly slow process of getting them made by the BBC. He was particularly happy with their commercial success, noting that they’d gone straight to the top of the audiobook charts, alongside old episodes of *The Navy Lark* (in which he also starred).

**Remembering Roger**

Absent from the event were two actors many consider the lynchpins of the show: Katy Manning and Roger Delgado. Manning was then living and working in Australia. Levene said she was marvellous, bubbly, and full of laughs, and fondly remembered the close bond they enjoyed. He remembered picking up Jon and Katy for rehearsals and arriving to find Roger sat filing his nails meticulously into points! Delgado tragically died in a car accident.
in 1973 but Letts knew him well, describing him as a charming, kind, sweet, gentle, quiet, fearful man essentially all the things the Master wasn’t. Dicks added that actors who play villains are always terribly sweet and nice, his theory being that they perform all the bad stuff out of their systems!

Hayman had immediately bonded with Delgado because she took his character seriously: “The Master has a very definite significance [...] It means he has very, very high occult powers. Miss Hawthorne, nice, sweet and amiable as she is, is just a white witch in an English village and couldn’t be expected to have [comparable] power.” Levene remembered having dinner with Roger and his wife Kismet (voice of the Queen Spider in 1974’s Planet of the Spiders). He recalled Delgado’s comfortable home-life, his beloved armchair and the cigarillos he used to smoke. Dicks cited the scene in The Sea Devils (1972) where the Master watches Clangers: “Only Roger could pull off things like that and yet at the same time be a villain of the deepest dye.”

The Dæmon Rides Out

The Dæmons is unusual in the world of Doctor Who for tackling the almost taboo subject of the occult. Co-writer and producer Barry Letts explained that the story began life as a short audition sketch for new companion Jo Grant and Captain Yates. It was basically the scene in the church where Yates comes to rescue Jo and they encounter the Devil. Dicks added that he and Letts had grown up enjoying the works of Dennis Wheatley “partly because they were so sexy; many a schoolboy was steamed up by them!” Letts remembered saying it was a shame they
couldn’t do the devil sketch for real and Dicks had replied: “Well, why don’t we?” and so a legend was born. Hayman noted: “I think we all knew that we were onto a winner. I don’t think we quite realised what a winner it was going to be!” Dicks countered that it was flattering that the story and the Pertwee era as a whole were regarded as classics, but that they didn’t know it at the time; everyone was just desperately trying to get the show out!

The writing wasn’t straightforward. Worried about underrunning, Letts wrote an extra sequence where the Doctor gets captured in the woods by a hermit and ultimately escapes by using sleight of hand to prove he is a powerful magician. Whilst this nicely echoes the “Science, not sorcery” scene, the addition was greeted with consternation by director Christopher Barry and was quickly dropped. Dicks noted that most programmes suffer from ‘studio spread’, where recorded sequences turn out longer than expected, but Doctor Who tends to have the opposite problem. Directors often requested ‘filler’ scenes and so Dicks would concoct a short row between two characters, ending with them saying “oh, alright then” and returning to the story! Hayman added that cuts could be traumatic for actors who’d fallen in love with a particular scene. A cut to the line where Hawthorne explains she is a white witch had to be defended by Hayman: “the audience will wonder what the hell this stupid old woman’s doing capering about in a cloak!” The Brigadier’s famous “Chap with wings” line was also nearly removed, but Letts asked for it to be retained: “That was one of Robert Sloman’s lines and I laughed out loud when I read it.” He also described how his boss Ronnie Marsh, head
of drama serials, had read the script the day before the church shoot and had forbade the representation of occult masses on hallowed ground. The script had to be rapidly altered to accommodate.

**End of the Third Age**

The reunion was a unique experience, giving Whovians the chance to closely interact with their favourite *Doctor Who* personnel and this led to some surprises. As I stood in a long ‘meet and greet’ line, I heard a young voice behind me. “Guess what?”, asked a small, slightly disturbed-looking boy pointing to the adjacent marquee, “Doctor Who’s in this tent and you’d never guess what? I think he’s smoking!” Soon, Pertwee emerged to do an interview and then made his way along the patient crowd, talking with children and signing autographs. Grant Hibbard, my companion for the day, recalls: “I’m pretty sure I was the last fan to meet and have a photo with Jon Pertwee, always my favourite Doctor (along with Sylvester!) He was wonderful and every inch the Doctor in his ruffled velvet jacket. He said ‘nice to meet you, but look, I’ve got to go, I’m off on holiday to America tomorrow’, and that, of course, is where he passed away.” Whovian Stephen Broome remembers: “I saw Jon wandering around and he was looking his age. Imagine my shock when Radio Kent phoned me about four weeks later telling me that Jon had died.” Whilst queuing, I asked a small girl who her favourite Doctor was. Without hesitation, she replied “Jon Pertwee.”

Feeling somewhat rebellious, I cheekily hopped over the cordon and into the marquee to say hello to Dicks, Letts, Hayman and Simeon. In hindsight, they were extremely
accommodating, chatting with me and signing autographs. Dicks revealed that his favourite Doctor Who novelisations were The Talons of Weng-Chiang and Image of the Fendahl, the latter he and Letts agreeing was similar to The Daemons in its handling of the occult. The legend of the day was Richard Franklin who, having to leave, made an apologetic and gracious circuit of the lengthy queue, greeting fans, signing autographs, and ensuring that everyone felt suitably special. Feeling hungry, Grant and I headed for the pub, which was pleasantly empty because most people were exploring the churchyard or queuing in the main arena. Even more pleasant was discovering Nicholas Courtney sat enjoying a quiet pint... which we promptly interrupted! The day was turning out rather perfectly. How could any Whovian top a pint with the Brigadier in the Cloven Hoof?

No thank you, Captain Yates

Courtney duly signed autographs whilst lamenting the sorry state of British politics. Earlier in the day, he’d remembered impossible lines he was given; his favourite, which he claims to have delivered without cracking up, was: "Jimmy, I want you to get on my chopper and tell Benton to lay on a jeep!" He also talked about his sense of loyalty to fans and the Doctor Who production team, describing how he’d infuriated his manager, the casting director and the director of a major stage production by turning down a very lucrative part in order to do Battlefield. Courtney also told us how he was apt to modify his scripts, such as by adding the Cromer line in The Three Doctors, to show the character was human and flawed, as real army officers have been
throughout history. The Brigadier could not believe he was on another planet; he was closed to the idea. Courtney said his aim was to find the humour and humanity in the character.

The afternoon brought another surprise in the form of elderly local villager Marian Deuchar, who played the woman dragging a child safely indoors in episode four. She shared her memories of filming, noting how the heads of over-enthusiastic locals kept popping into shot over garden walls! She also recalled how the children of the village would not stay in school. Pertwee instead took to giving them rides around the green in Bessie. Dicks described the filming of the Master’s capture. As he was driven away in a UNIT jeep, the crowds were encouraged to hiss and boo, but instead all cheered and clapped, to the consternation of the director. Dicks attributed this to Delgado’s lovable quality, saying: “it is extraordinary that he could do the most diabolical things as the Master and yet remain rather lovable and charming”.

Asked what else had been filmed in the village, Deuchar recalled a John Betjeman programme about the church and several Doctor Who sketches, including one where she was required to pull a glamorous man to safety rather than a child. “I liked that better,” she grinned! She also remembered problems caused at the aerodrome by the sudden snowstorm, and described how telegraph poles were removed from the green in order for the helicopter sequence to be filmed.

**Star quest**

After a charity auction, in which I proudly bought a Doctor Who Magazine signed by the Doctor Who TV movie executive
producer Philip Segal, John Levene entertained everyone with his corny stand-up comedy and personal stories. He described his early career and how Douglas Camfield had given him his big acting break, suggesting him to Barry Letts despite Levene having no training or experience. “I can’t thank Douglas enough. I’d never have seen the world the way I’ve seen it. He was a marvellous man.” He also recalled various jobs as a hospital radio presenter, the making of Wartime for BBV, his wedding at the home of Time Tunnel star Robert Colbert, and his time as a cruise-ship entertainer around South America and the Caribbean. Asked if he’d return to Doctor Who, Levene pointed out that the new, American-based production team were in need of stars: “We’re not stars. Yes, we were in Doctor Who in England, but only you know me!” I imagine he is rather better-known since the 2005 revival.

In April 1996, Whovians were in a state of excitement over the Paul McGann TV movie, still several weeks away from UK video release and broadcast. Levene was highly enthusiastic. He hoped we liked it but warned us to be prepared for something different, with no cheap effects or wobbly sets: “The hardest job Nick and I ever had was holding the door still so that the next actor wouldn’t have the wall shaking!” Courtney said the premiere
was to be held in Cannes! He was delighted about the casting of McGann and hoped the film would reinvigorate interest in Doctor Who. The scale and ambition of the film was a major talking point; Whovians speculated as to what a series might look like, how many episodes it would have, and when the Daleks would appear. Asked if he would return, Pertwee replied that he could no longer fall off motorcycles and that his Venusian karate wasn’t up to scratch, but that he would enjoy playing a supporting role. Courtney felt that the Brigadier would need to have less action and a more cerebral role if he were to reappear. Levene was certain the film was going to be bigger than Superman: “It’s going to be quite stunning, frightening in places. I think the children are going to be more scared of this one than they certainly were of ours.” In hindsight, most Whovians would probably be relieved this version didn’t go to a series; at the time, many of us were hugely disappointed.

As the day came to a close, the remaining crowds awaited the firework finale, drinking and chatting in the glorious April evening and mostly agreeing that a fiftieth anniversary reunion was highly improbable—but twenty-three years on, it’s now surely inevitable.
On Thursday 23 May 2019, many minds were preoccupied by European Union elections taking place that day in the United Kingdom. The Oxford Doctor Who Society includes several politically-engaged people of many colours, but many of us had the distraction of the return of Russell T Davies to Worcester College, where he read English between 1981 and 1984. Russell was to be interviewed on stage in the last of the series of Conversations which Sir Jonathan Bate has run during his tenure as provost of the college. The series is aimed at Worcester College members, but on this occasion the provost had kindly invited the society along.

The event began, as triumphant ones often do, with technology failing to cooperate. Russell’s manic energy shone through from the off as the provost attempted to get computer and projector working, with a few jokes thrown in for good measure. Before the main event began, there was a compilation of some highlights from Russell’s work. Jonathan’s children had recommended the inclusion of the Tenth Doctor’s pre-irradiation monologue in The End of Time Part Two. This was followed (somewhat abruptly) by trailers for A Very English Scandal and Years and Years.

Jonathan Bate’s discussion with Russell was broadly chronological. Russell went to Olchfa Comprehensive School in Swansea...
School in Swansea, where he was identified as a potential Oxbridge candidate by the then-deputy head, Iris Williams. With the good track record they’d established by that point, Russell ended up at interviews, and then gained a place at Worcester College, without “any great thought.” During his first year, Peter Davison’s first series aired, and he recalled the tribulations of trying to watch. There being only one TV in college at the time, and no streaming to speak of, there was only one opportunity to see these episodes live; a strange thought in our multi-screen age. He recalls this was especially common when the ‘rugby lads’ wanted to watch sport, and so many episodes were lost to time. Fortunately for Russell, his mother was able to record them back in Swansea, as he had convinced his mother of the merits of the VCR, rare in households at the time. He also recalls enjoying his student pastimes, such as his cartoons for Cherwell (explored in ‘The Adventures of Jessica Chrome’ in Tides 36 and ‘Rusling the Isis’ in Tides 37), or playing Guildenstern in Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead in front of the play’s author Tom Stoppard and his then wife Miriam (a higher profile celebrity at the time) at the Oxford Playhouse. He didn’t mention his degree very much as it wasn’t relevant to where he is now. While many feel their university years to be their formative period, Russell was to instead find himself later, in the world of the media.

English degree in hand, what was a young, talented Oxford graduate to do but stroll into the BBC and immediately be offered a cushy job? That was Russell’s plan, but the reality was much more tortuous. He applied twice for the BBC trainee scheme, and was turned down both times without the hint of an interview. Characteristically, he wrote a complaint to the recruiters, and managed to get a meeting with a BBC official, who advised him on his reapplication. With renewed passion, he applied again... and it was still a no. While he admits that the trainee scheme was aimed more at those with news in mind, it still led to him changing tack, and working for the
Sherman Theatre in Cardiff. He did their publicity, and at £50 a day, young Russell thought he was living the high life. However, the spectre of TV still lurked in the background, and so when an actor in the theatre’s production of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* mentioned they had a contact, he ended up swinging a job in *Why Don’t You...?* (1973-1995), the long running children’s TV series. Having got in the BBC through the back door, Russell began to work his way up the ranks. It may not have been the welcome he would’ve wanted, but now he was in the door, he wasn’t leaving any time soon. As he puts it, getting into TV was like “coming home,” and so he began moving in his furniture.

After a variety of roles on *Why Don’t You...?*, including a foray into professional screenwriting and producing, with even a brief attempt at presenting on *Play School*, Russell’s career began in earnest, writing series such as *Dark Season* (1991) and *Century Falls* (1993) for Children’s BBC. He then moved away from the formative embrace of the BBC, and so Jonathan Bate took this opportunity to focus on Russell’s involvement in *Springhill* (Granada for ITV 1996-97), initially suggesting he had created it. Russell corrected him, though acknowledged that he put a lot of input into the show. The show’s tone was brought up, as though it began as a soap opera, the show became more supernatural with time. While he acknowledges that some don’t like the tonal jumps in his work, he retorts that life is never simple—you can be “going about life, then a plane lands on you.” He sees life as being without genre, a melting pot of themes, and so tonal jumps simply reflect the
inconsistency of how he sees the world.

This formative experience helped in one of his next projects, _The Grand_ (1997-98). He recalled enjoying it at first but, as time passed, he realised that there was something that wasn’t quite right. Indeed, he says that by the time series two rolled around, he was bored with the project, and knew that there was unlikely to be a third series. As such, he threw everything at it, telling a range of stories that, as in _Springhill_, were removed from the original premise. He was particularly proud of his work on an episode based around the bartender, Clive, in which it was revealed he was gay. Russell found it a very personal writing process, and, as the majority of the cast were put to one side to allow for this exploration of a minor character, he had to fight bosses—not literally, he stressed, as he’s not a fan of violence—to make it happen, refusing to redraft the script until there was no time left, forcing it to be put into production.

His willingness to push the boat out and focus on people underserved by TV was also crucial to _Queer as Folk_ (1999-2000), commissioned by Channel 4 when they were on the lookout for new, radical drama. Russell noted how there was a lack of meaningful gay roles at the time, with shows focusing on gay characters either as the stereotypical ‘gay best friend’ or taking a more political angle. Again, he wrote from what he knew, with the Manchester setting arising from his own experiences. It allowed him a better insight into the characters’ daily lives, and show to the world that at the end of the day, we’re all human. While he notes this has improved, Russell is still waiting for greater gay representation in the media, where being gay can be a standard character trait rather than a plot beat. Following on from _Queer as Folk_, the ideas that would become _Cucumber_ were already forming. He was planning
to make this soon after, but a certain something called *Doctor Who* got in the way. With hindsight, he thinks that the age gap allowed him to tell a different story than otherwise, providing a new way to look at the lives of older characters.

So what of that roadblock in the life of Russell, *Doctor Who*? After he worked references to *Pyramids of Mars* into *Queer as Folk*, BBC Television drama commissioner Jane Tranter identified him as a possible candidate to bring *Doctor Who* back. It was a matter of being in the right place at the right time, with Nicola Shindler, producer and friend, having introduced Russell to Jane at a showbiz party that Russell had been thinking of avoiding. After this chance encounter, various balls started rolling, and eventually he was offered the opportunity to regenerate *Doctor Who*. He was firm in the belief that had his revival flopped, he would have killed the property forever. Meanwhile, he also had doubts over what *Doctor Who* would do to his career, having had to cancel many offers of work from other people, of which several told him that bringing back *Doctor Who* wasn’t a good idea. It also felt something of a step backwards, a freelancer returning in house to the BBC, a “dinosaur with red tape.” Fortunately, when all the departments are working together, it’s the “most powerful broadcaster in the world,” and this clout helped ensure that *Doctor Who* was back—bigger than ever.

The provost dug further into the early production of the show, asking about the changes from the twentieth-century series. Partly, this was purely practical. Casting a great Doctor, and one who could carry off a darker feel to ground the series, was crucial, so Christopher Eccleston was a perfect choice. The removal of some associations from the past (he mentioned frock coats in particular) was necessary to get a new audience, unfamiliar with the earlier incarnation, into the show. The biggest impact came from changes behind the screen, and the movement from a studio-based, multicamera, theatrical style to single-camera shooting. This ensured that the series could be much more dynamic—as Donna says in *The Doctor’s Daughter*, there’s an outrageous amount of running involved. The other impact of the single camera was to produce a much more character-based drama, as the camera is always on actor, with close-ups meaning there’s nowhere to hide. As such, New *Who* was always going to be much more about the characters of the Doctor and his companions, rather than the monsters and schemes of old. As he puts it, it’s “not better, just a different way of writing.”

The family aspect arose from his writing style. Some people at the time were unhappy with this perceived incursion of soap opera into *Doctor Who* (look at *Aliens of London*/*World War Three* on *The Doctor Who Ratings Guide* for some particularly... interesting examples), but this was not an intentional
choice. As he put it, there was no production bible that he gave to the BBC, with the commandment “I will have mothers!” Indeed, were he to write Jesus (which he sort of has, via *The Second Coming*), he’d bring Mary into it. Furthermore, he clearly enjoys spending time with the characters he created (“Good old Jackie!”), and so with the family around, elements of soap naturally come to the fore. He maintains that New *Who* is not soap opera proper, as the characters become embroiled within the lives of Rose and the Doctor, rather than the other way around. He also sees this, and Rose in particular, as something of a reaction against, rather than a homage to, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. While violence can produce a strong female character, Russell doesn’t see violence as “an admirable side of TV.” Family can make a character strong, and so Jackie, Mickey and Pete came along to shape Rose’s journey through the show, without a lot of violence onscreen—though death was another matter. This style of creating a character also means that Rose is harder edged than she might otherwise be, had she been produced in the perfectly-manicured *Buffy* mould.

This sense of continuity through his work, returning to familiar styles and cast, was also true elsewhere in *Doctor Who*. The casting of David Tennant as Eccleston’s successor was assured after showing him a rough cut of Rose’s Auton attack in the edit suite while making *Casanova*, and seeing his excited reaction. Russell was clearly relieved to pass *Doctor Who* on, not least as he was exhausted, but with such an energy as his, there were new ideas for new shows, so it made sense to hand over to Steven Moffat alongside the regeneration from Tennant to Matt Smith. Discussion turned to the

Russell (holding ODWS artefact the Scroll of Rassilon) with this article’s author and magazine’s joint editor James Ashworth
scene from *The End of Time* Part Two shown at the start of the event. It was a bit contrived, (“What’s a nuclear bolt?” he asked jokingly) but also showcased the talents of all involved. Murray Gold’s beautiful score, Euros Lyn’s unrelenting camera work, and David Tennant going through the five stages of grief in just a few minutes. He was keen to see a selfish Doctor, looking at how it would play out, and asserted that the scene could be performed just as well by Jon Pertwee or Tom Baker or other twentieth-century Doctors.

*Doctor Who* questions were unsurprisingly prominent in the Q+A. Inevitably, there was a focus on the latest series, with the prospect of three companions being raised. Would he have considered it, or was it too difficult? “Piece of piss,” he replied, as it’s not necessarily harder to write for, just requiring a different writing style to accommodate the various relationships.

The recently revealed presence of the Judoon in Series Twelve also reared its head, with Russell disclosing that he’d known for six months after they’d requested to use the rights, and received £500 in royalties. He’s happy to see them make a comeback, and wished Series Twelve all the best. As a fan of *Doctor Who* novels, I also asked him, as an author of a couple himself, whether he’d considered adapting any more of the back catalogue in addition to *Human Nature*? He hadn’t, as Paul Cornell’s masterpiece had always stood out to him as it did something completely different to what had gone before, and in an incredible way. Of course, one could argue that more than a bit of Russell’s own New Adventure *Damaged Goods* has bled into the new series, but that once again is a matter of convergent writing, rather than intentional crossover.
that concerning favourite/least favourite episodes, was also present, but quickly dismissed, as Russell says that he loves all his episodes equally, as someone will always be pleased by each one. *Torchwood* also made a brief cameo via a question about *Children of Earth* (2009), with his tendency to develop family naturally bringing Ianto’s sister into the scene, and was pleased that episode five all came off as well as it did, especially as it was written in something of a rush after another writer’s script fell through.

With the hurdle of *Doctor Who* cleared, the conversation resumed its chronological progress. While *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* may have been Russell’s lucky break to get into TV, it certainly wasn’t when he was trying to adapt it for BBC One. Provost Jonathan Bate was able to contribute more here, being a Shakespeare scholar himself. Around the time of production he had awarded Russell an honorary fellowship of the college. Russell was thankful for the support he had received from the provost, who convinced him to fight on in the face of budget cuts when he was feeling low, and so it eventually was made for broadcast in 2016. Jonathan Bate mentioned that it was his preferred adaptation for getting teenagers into Shakespeare, and mentioned that the *Daily Mail* wasn’t best pleased with a lesbian kiss in the production. You could almost see the twinkle in Russell’s eye as he responded, “my work here is done!”

While Shakespeare may have liked to write about political intrigue and farce, even he was unlikely to have created such an improbable set of circumstances as were found in the Jeremy Thorpe trial, the subject of *A Very English Scandal* (2018). Russell noted that despite the attention paid to it by the press, and the efforts some of the people involved went to, that the stakes were never high. Thorpe would never have become prime minister, no-one went to prison or died, with the exception of a dog. Russell really dislikes dogs, it seems—“I only agreed to write it because of that,” he joked.
The frontloading of drama and farce in equal measure undermines the trial, as it wasn’t that dramatic in reality. As such, he wasn’t averse to use all his tricks to build it up, annoying a few factcheckers in the process. For example, Norman Scott needed a triumphant moment, even if he didn’t have one in real life. He was also very thankful to the cast, especially Hugh Grant and Ben Whishaw, firmly believing, as with Doctor Who, that only the right cast can make something work.

It didn’t seem like Russell had been talking for that long at all, but the hour was nearly up and Years and Years was upon us. Emma Thompson was another casting coup, joking that he only works “with people who were famous thirty years ago!” The initial concept was based on certain EastEnders episodes of the 1980s, where current politics might be worked into the script around election night, as generally, drama is often divorced from the real world due to its production time. He wanted to get reality into TV, rather than other way around. Years and Years arrived as a metaphor for the current state of the world, with Britain being put through the trials that other countries face every day, along with some futuristic ones. “We’re safe in this country, generally all right, but what happens if the world’s problems come home to roost?” He mentioned the death of Alan Kurdi, a three-year-old boy who drowned crossing from Syria, as an example of something that led to widespread calls for change, which was followed up with hollow promises. Indeed, he argues the situation has arguably grown worse, despite our increased awareness. Years and Years stretches this to its natural conclusion, seeing how our “paper thin” society would react to the traumas that others endure daily. He doesn’t mind about being wrong in how it plays out, as he sees an impermanence to all of his writing, inspired by the Greek and Roman myths he’d heard from his parents, both Classics teachers. There was also mention of Doris Day’s death, which helped to identify the news as current, separating it from the interminable mundanity of Brexit. As he put it, jokingly, “she died for us!” There were also a few spoilers ahead of episode three and beyond, in response to a question about representation from the audience, giving us some small foreknowledge of the character arcs of Lincoln and Bethany, among others.

There was also just enough time for a bit about the future. Russell’s next project is perhaps the natural successor to Queer as Folk and Cucumber; this time heading back to the 1981 to explore the lives of three boys moving to London for the first time (though still filmed in Manchester—none of his productions have been based in London, he noted), as HIV/AIDS becomes known. He wants to explore how their lives play out, see the resistance they face and the joy they experience. He mentions that through productions like
Tony Kushner’s two-part play *Angels in America*, we know the US perspective on the period, but not that of the UK—yet. It’s currently in pre-production, and they hope to film in the autumn.

After the talk, Russell was happy to stick around for over forty minutes, talking to attendees, posing for photographs, and signing books. Though Jonathan Bate attempted to extricate him many times (a plot to distract the provost with questions about Shakespearean authorship was not needed, in the end), he met everyone individually and was only too happy to discuss various points. It was a wonderful event, celebrating a lovely person and passionate *Doctor Who* fan, at the college he attended all those years ago.

*Russell T Davies can be seen in conversation with Jonathan Bate on YouTube: https://youtu.be/Jh7yYP9zcHM*
The fifth annual Bedford Who Charity Convention took place on Saturday 13 April at Bedfordshire University Theatre, in aid of Bedford Food Bank. Compared with other Doctor Who conventions, this event is relatively low-key and takes place at a small venue with only a few hundred visitors - enough to fill a theatre, but not so much to feel overwhelmingly crowded. This year’s line-up of guests consisted of Sylvester McCoy (the Seventh Doctor), Sophie Aldred (Ace), Janet Fielding (Tegan), Carole Ann Ford (Susan), Louise Jameson (Leela), Michael Jayston (the Valeyard) and Mike Tucker (special effects expert and writer). The guests were split into pairs for separate question and answer sessions held throughout the day, while there was plenty of time in-between to walk around and investigate the merchandise stalls selling a wide range of figurines, novelizations, and handcrafted knitted Doctors. In the afternoon, everyone was able to meet all the guests personally, request their autographs, and have photographs taken with them.

The day began with the organiser, Simon Danes, welcoming everyone to the convention, before he was interrupted by a small person wearing a duffle coat and scarf, who was pushing a Dalek onto the stage and spoke with a strong working-class accent. After completing their delivery, they revealed themselves to be none other than Sophie Aldred in disguise! Further sketches were interspersed throughout the day, with Michael and Carole reading an extract from Doctor Who in an Exciting Adventure with the Daleks by David Whitaker, a hilarious phone call between the Seventh Doctor and his mother (played by Louise, who reminded Sylvester to “eat five Vervoids a day” and asked him for help with the Matrix router), and a meeting between Ace, Leela, Tegan and Susan at a reunion party for companions (with references to Adric eating up the buffet and the presence of a mysterious yet oddly familiar woman wearing a rainbow top...)

Project Dalek

Alongside the humour, there were also the usual mix of panels, with a highlight this year seeing James and Mike Burgess discuss the remake
of Mission to the Unknown, which students of the University of Central Lancashire filmed last February. Although we were unable to watch the finished production itself due to plans for an official release, we were still treated to some exclusive behind-the-scenes photos and a news report on BBC North West Tonight.

After a call for 1960s Daleks was sent out on Dalek-owners forums, James and Mike found themselves in a van travelling to Preston in utmost secrecy. They were repeatedly told to keep “Project Dalek” a secret—only for Peter Purves to let the cat out the bag by posting about it on Twitter! They started by recording scenes with the evil plotting delegates, with James playing Beaus while wearing a fancy aircraft helmet. When one of the Dalek operators went into town for lunch and didn’t return in time for recording, Mike climbed inside the Dalek and had his name added to the credits as a result. The best thing about being a Dalek operator, they added, is being able to sit down, wiggle the weapon about and take in your surroundings, from the set to the rest of the cast. They even had a black and white TV monitor screen on which they could see themselves and the production as a whole. As Nicholas Briggs told them, “we’ve all got a Dalek inside of us”, and they look forward to releasing the final product soon.
With the manic enthusiasm of Sylvester McCoy, the calming influence of Sophie Aldred, and the all-knowing Mike Tucker, the Seventh Doctor panel went in all sorts of unexpected directions. Sylvester belied his age by being surprisingly lively and sharp-witted, constantly thinking of wisecracks and bringing chaotic energy to proceedings, and with only Sophie seemingly capable of keeping him in check. At one point, there was even a singalong where the whole theatre sang the smash-hit single *Doctorin’ the Tardis*, while Sylvester gleefully played his spoons on everything within sight. This spirit extended to his answers, such as how when Sophie’s famous baseball bat moment was brought up, Sylvester insisted that his Doctor was “a kind Doctor who would never smash up a Dalek”, before acknowledging that, okay, maybe he DID trick the Daleks into blowing up their own planet that one time! His astounding endurance and hijinks continued into the audience Q&A session, where upon Sylvester immediately swiped the microphone and went right up into the audience, later followed by Sophie, as they shuffled through the aisles so that fans could ask their questions clearly.

One such question concerned how Sylvester, as a 44-year-old Scotsman from Dunoon, got into the skin of a centuries-year old Time Lord? He described how he remembered Patrick Troughton’s comedic performance in the 1960s, and hence spent his first series playing the Seventh Doctor as an absent-minded professor. After further discussions with Andrew Cartmel, they decided to bring back the mystery of the Time Lord, taking the show on a darker turn. “And then just when things were getting interesting, they cancelled it… Bastards!”

In the brief moments of respite, with Sylvester sitting comfortably, the three discussed the serials they made. They began with *Remembrance of the Daleks*, recalling how the emergency services turned up on set after they had set off a huge explosion in the arches by Waterloo Station and on arrival, they were confronted with Daleks. It wasn’t any easier away from major transport hubs, with the Dalek ship being full-size, and so having to be lowered into the school playground by crane. There was also more drama for the scene in which the Doctor uses his umbrella to travel down a zipwire from the school’s roof onto the spaceship. While the main shot, you’ll be unsurprised to read, required a stunt double, Sylvester was still needed for a pick-up shot of the landing. This required him to be up on some scaffolding, with a small slide into camera. However, it wasn’t quite big enough, and so the cameraman kept telling him to
move back, closer to the edge, with no harness! Fortunately, no one was hurt. Sylvester’s umbrella, however, was used normally while filming Survival in Dorset to protect him from the heat.

Explosions and freak weather conditions

Later in Season Twenty-Five, *The Greatest Show in the Galaxy* saw the Doctor walk dramatically away from the collapsing psychic circus. Regarding this famous shot, Mike revealed that they were originally going to use a gust of wind, but the production team had ordered the wrong wind machine and couldn’t plug it in. Instead, they decided to use explosives, but forgot to tell Sylvester that the plan had been changed. To his credit, he still walked away from the explosion without flinching, despite his coat being singed by the flames. This was fortunate, as only one take was possible, and so the result looks fantastic, especially as the explosion ended up being larger than expected! Less fortunate, however, was the beautiful model of the psychic circus which had been built and rigged to implode. Frustratingly, someone pressed the wrong button on the camera and ended up recording everything that happened before and after the implosion, but not the implosion itself!

As for their final series, *The Curse of Fenric* was one of the hardest serials for Mike, Sylvester and Sophie to work on due to the changeable weather in Lulworth Cove. One moment there was bright sunshine, and they would need to arrange artificial rainfall. Then it would start snowing, which had to be hosed away, and then suddenly they would be soaked through from torrential rain. Sophie ended up wearing wellies, which were then painted out in post-production, while Sylvester incorporated a coat into his costume in order to deal with the cold. Despite the dreadful weather, Sophie remembers *The Curse of Fenric* as her favourite story, because it gave Ace plenty to do.

While the Seventh Doctor would return for the TV movie, this wasn’t the case for Ace. Although Sophie was considered, Philip James, Ian and Adam meet everyone’s favourite PE teacher
Segal was unable to think of a way to make her character work with the overall story. There was, of course, another appearance in Dimensions in Time, which Sylvester promptly dismissed as “appalling,” a mishmash of ideas which simply didn’t work.

Ace also had another potential opportunity for a television reappearance in The Sarah Jane Adventures, where there were plans to reintroduce her on Sarah Jane’s doorstep as a successful businesswoman, having founded A Charitable Earth. Sadly, Elisabeth Sladen’s untimely death prevented this, but Sophie has fond memories of her as “the mother of Doctor Who conventions,” who offered advice to other actors on all manner of topics, such as how much to charge for autographs.

Off-screen, the three talked about how they dealt with the recognition from appearing in the country’s most beloved science-fiction television show. Sylvester was already used to fame from appearing in twelve years of children’s television beforehand, but nevertheless suffered from people shouting, “where’s yer TARDIS?” whenever he went cycling. More recently, he was confronted by fans with a life-sized Dalek at a train station while travelling across eastern Europe, after his assistant posted about his travels online. In fact, the only people who didn’t seem to care that he was Doctor Who were his own two sons, who had become hooked on The A Team during the 1985 hiatus and wouldn’t appreciate the significance of their father’s work until the relaunch twenty years later.

Sophie talked about how fellow shoppers would peer into her shopping basket in Tesco. She remembers one occasion where she was approached by a small kid who excitedly announced, “I know who you are—you’re my PE teacher!”
Two guests who were particularly fascinating were Louise Jameson and Janet Fielding, both of whom played companions of the Fourth Doctor. Their panel was a rollercoaster, switching back and forth between darker and lighter topics, but it always engaging throughout.

Louise and Janet started acting from a young age, both playing fairy-tale characters in school plays. For Louise, she was Little Miss Muffet, while Janet played Rapunzel. Despite these early beginnings, neither expected to become actors when they grew up. Louise originally wanted to join the Tiller Girl dance troupe but eventually abandoned her dream at age four. Given plans for a potential relaunch of the troupe, she may yet get her wish! Even after settling on acting, she kept her options open and became an adept touch-typist, in case her acting career didn’t work out. Janet, on the other hand, went to university to become a journalist, but as with many students, she discovered a love of acting during her studies, after appearing in a production of *The Miller’s Tale* with Geoffrey Rush.

Before moving onto their time in *Doctor Who*, they talked about how the show had influenced their lives beforehand. Both Louise and Janet were already fans before entering the TARDIS. The Fielding household always watched the show while having tea in the living room, and there would be discussions in the playground about the latest episode. They also discussed the public fascination with the Daleks—huge in the ‘60s but still significant today. Because these squishy creatures are vulnerable inside of their metal shell, they strike out and hate those who are different—this is what makes them monsters, and Robert Shearman’s *Dalek* received high praise for highlighting this critical aspect. More widely, they pointed out how *Doctor Who* is a great way to bring up social issues, and the inclusion of dyspraxic characters such as Ryan Sinclair demonstrates that the show is about acceptance and tolerance, no matter what.

There were plenty of anecdotes from filming, with Louise recalling how she nearly killed a cameraman when she had to throw a real knife in *The Robots of Death*. Subsequent takes were performed in an empty studio with a rubber prop. She also loved receiving sack-loads of fan...
mail, except the once she accidentally received a batch for Elisabeth Sladen, which was full of letters asking for Sarah Jane to come back! She discussed how there was friction with Tom Baker during the production of seasons Fourteen and Fifteen, but she emphasised that there was no disrespect between the two and it actually paid off in some ways, as their energy transferred well to the screen. This anecdote has a happy ending as decades later, while recording a DVD commentary together, Tom spontaneously and deeply apologised for his difficult behaviour at the time, which she found very touching.

Janet described how *Mawdryn Undead* was filmed the day before her wedding, and how it required her to wear make-up which made her look older; she suggested the fact she became prune-like while washing it off might have been an omen of things to come! She also talked about some of her favourite stories, those featuring the Mara (*Kinda, Snakedance*), which she described as “very empowering” and well-written. She hadn’t been taught how to be possessed by a giant snake in her acting classes, but it was a lot of fun nonetheless! She also discussed leaving *Doctor Who*, which happened sooner than she would have preferred because the strike-bound BBC wanted to introduce a new companion before Peter Davison left. Hence, *Resurrection of the Daleks* ends with Tegan suddenly announcing that she had witnessed too much killing and no longer enjoyed travelling with the Doctor. On the other hand, she was pleased that she got to meet the Daleks, saying that makes her a proper companion, but envies that she wasn’t allowed to beat them up with a baseball bat like Ace! She was also critical of the number of companions during her era, immediately responding with “Two” when we asked her, because one is too few and three’s a crowd. She also has a minor gripe against Peter Davison for saying that his favourite serial is *The Caves of Androzani*, because she didn’t appear in it, hallucinations excluded!

While Janet has since left the acting profession, Louise continues to act as well as write. She discussed being sought by Matt Berry for *Toast of London* as he is a *Who* fan himself, mentioning the man dressed as the Fourth Doctor who sits at the bar in the background. She also writes her own comedy, advising the audience that you should write down eight minutes of dialogue, then cut all the non-essential lines until it’s down to two minutes of great material.
Another exciting panel saw Carole Ann Ford, arguably the first Time Lord to appear on our screens as Susan, paired alongside Michael Jayston, who played the Valeyard and by extension the Doctor (sort of!). Simon took them back to when they were in *Doctor Who*, asking about their experiences and any changes they would have made to their characters.

Carole’s recollection of William Hartnell was that he was “warm, lovely, and sweet”. She recalls how he was convinced that the show would “go on for ever and ever” and she is certain that he would have loved seeing how many fans had turned up for the day. He was a good friend to her, with his best advice being to put some money aside, since actors can be out of work for long periods of time and “you’ll regret spending your money”.

As for the rest of the original TARDIS team, Carole found Jacqueline Hill to be unapproachable and constantly on edge at first. However, it turned out that she was just shy and nervous about the upcoming press conference. William Russell, meanwhile, was “very beautiful”, but always kind and helping her out, especially with finding the right spot to stand so that she would be lit properly. They also bonded over a love of horses and horseracing, with William having ridden horses in *The Adventures of Sir*
When asked how she would have changed Susan, Carole explained how she wanted to have been “stranger” (more unearthly, perhaps!), much like how she behaved during the unaired pilot, to reinforce the alienness of the character. She therefore much preferred historicals to the futuristic stories, as the latter involved too much screaming. Indeed, such changes might have resulted in Carole staying in the TARDIS for longer, as the lack of variety led to her decision to leave the show. Rather than being an audience surrogate, Carole’s ideal version of Susan would have been enraptured by every alien she met, just like the Tenth Doctor. She would have had a better sense of humour, and a varied wardrobe adorned with trinkets found on all the far-off worlds she visited. Perhaps this was why her favourite serial was *Inside the Spaceship* (aka *The Edge of Destruction*), precisely because it allowed her to play Susan differently.

Michael, in contrast, wouldn’t have changed the Valeyard one bit—after all, evil characters are supposed to get away with everything! He recalled how some of the Big Finish productions in which he appeared were better than the television scripts, and especially enjoys *He Jests at Scars...*, an Unbound audio in which the Valeyard succeeds in becoming the Doctor. He also talked about the three cult TV programmes he had been in: *Doctor Who*, *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy*, and *Only Fools and Horses*, the last of which also has its own conventions. He still harbours some resentment towards Michael Grade and Jonathan Powell for threatening the show—as he stated, Season Twenty-Three was “the trial of the series itself”, not just of the eponymous fictional Time Lord. Nevertheless, his time on the show includes many good memories, with Michael building up a great friendship with Colin Baker, who did the best he could with bad scripts. Finally, Michael talked about his belief about how *Doctor Who* should always have comedy, praising both *Robot of Sherwood* and Patrick Troughton, whom he named as his favourite Doctor for having “the most character”.

*The Doctor anticipates his meeting with the Valeyard*
After all the panels, signings, sketches, and shopping, it was time for a final panel of quickfire questions, which included: what annoys them (while explicitly being told not to mention Brexit!), their favourite place in the world to visit, and whether they collect anything. Janet, who now runs a charity in Ramsgate, said that she was annoyed by cuts to local government; she loves the tropical rainforests of Queensland; and she’s afraid of spiders, mentioning how a new species of trapdoor spider (*Euoplos crenatus*) had been discovered in Australia the week before (“Oh great, like we needed another one!”). Michael is annoyed by politicians who say, “let me be perfectly clear”, while being a fan of cricket, he likes Trent Bridge Cricket Ground and collecting cricket memorabilia. Louise dislikes lorries who drive too closely and enjoys collecting hearts as well as giving them out—her signature even includes a heart motif—Carole claims to never be annoyed by anything and loves the way Jodie says “sorry” in her Yorkshire accent, whom she refers to as “my grandmother”. Finally, Sylvester gets annoyed when people complain about bagpipes and “collects” countries during his travels, while Sophie considers plastic packaging wasteful and prefers the pristine salt marshes of Norfolk.

All the guests were wonderful and it was lovely to meet long-term honorary member Sophie Aldred again after seeing her at last year’s Bedford Who Convention. As representatives of the Oxford Doctor Who Society, we were pleased to offer honorary memberships to all the other guests as well, and I hope to meet them again in the future! I was very pleased to later hear that this year’s event raised a record-breaking total of £8,062 for Bedford Food Bank, and that there are plans to invite stars from the twenty-first century relaunch for 2020! Here’s to Bedford Charity Con Six!
Fantom films have become renowned for their *Doctor Who* convention and publishing exploits, be it their flagship Utopia event or the Valiant convention that flies the flag for *Who* in Sheffield. This year, they launched a new event: Time Flight, which was held in Banbury on 1-3 February 2019. Focusing on the 1960s, the convention invited a range of guests, including companions, supporting cast and even a monster or two. I paid Time Flight a visit to see if, in an increasingly packed field of conventions, it was worth stumping up for.

Guestwise, I was impressed by the line-up. Top of the pack would certainly be William Russell, who at an impressive 94 is still a *Doctor Who* icon, though he is now understandably more fragile than he used to be. Peter Purves was also in attendance, and though I was unable to attend his talk (I only went to the Saturday), his commentary on *The Celestial Toymaker* Part Four gave an revealing glance behind the scenes of this serial, such as his working relationship with Peter Stephens (lovely) and Michael Gough (frosty). Alongside him at the commentary was Donald Tosh, another feather in the cap of the convention. As one of the major contributing factors to his resignation, Tosh focused on the politics of the show’s management of the time, especially the conflict over this very serial. Indeed, it is clear to see the strong emotions he holds about this, and as such, this is the first time he had ever watched it.

Aside from these heavy hitters of *Who*, there were supporting actors from other serials, such as Martin Cort (Voord, Warrior, and Aydan, *The Keys of Marinus*; Locke, *The Seeds of Death*), George Little (Haroun, *The Crusade*), and Wendy Gifford (Jane Garrett, *The Ice Warriors*), among others. The talks were always interesting, spurred on by a knowledgeable moderator who explored their work both in and out of *Who*. Perhaps the most interesting
was that of Paul Vanezis, who described his restoration and recovery work in depth (summarised in this very issue). Even relatively minor players in the pantheon of Doctor Who could be relied upon for an interesting tale. For example, George Little, with some assistance, discussed how his friendship with Douglas Camfield had helped him on to the show, even when he was suffering a fever brought on by Flu, and had to lie down between takes! These little insights are what I believe conventions should be about.

Aside from the guests, Fantom conventions are also noted for their entertainments. Here, unfortunately, I felt Time Flight dropped the ball. The event didn’t quite seem to have the polish associated with some of its siblings, and I overheard one audience member describe it as “not their most successful.” Possibly the main reason for this was that large chunks of the day were effectively empty. A significant amount was filled with Mythmakers interviews played on screen, which though interesting couldn’t really justify the expense of the tickets. It didn’t help that there wasn’t much to do in the centre of Banbury except shop, and this was somewhat tainted by the knowledge that Christopher Barry had died here after a fall doing just that. Partly to honour his memory, and also to fill a gap in the schedule, I popped to the cinema next door for a couple of hours to watch Mary Queen of Scots. Attendance didn’t seem particularly high either, with the room’s thirty chairs never fully occupied. This may not have been helped by the poor weather and last minute guest dropouts, but it still meant that Time Flight had something of a hollow feel to it.

After reading all this, you’ll probably think that I didn’t have that great a time at Time Flight. Certainly, Time Flight could do with a bit of tinkering to make it an event of similar quality to Utopia. But I don’t really care. About a year before Time Flight, I set out on a mission to meet William Russell. I missed out on a signing in London, was thwarted by the weather at Valiant, and so this was my lucky third attempt. The ability to talk to him was all I wanted from the event, and the ability to meet the other guests (including a Voord!) was just icing on this TARDIS-shaped cake. So while Time Flight could be tuned up, if there’s someone you want to meet at an event, then I would wholeheartedly recommend you go for it.
THE DOCTOR WHO RESTORATION TEAM IS A NAME THAT INSPIRES AWE AMONGST MEMBERS OF THE FANDOM. HAVING HELPED BRING TO LIGHT MISSING EPISODES, AND IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF MANY MORE, THERE IS AN IMMENSE DEBT OF GRATITUDE OWED TO THESE DEDICATED FANS. PAUL VANEZIS IS A NOTED MEMBER OF THE TEAM, HAVING HELPED RECOVER MISSING EPISODES SUCH AS PARTS ONE TO THREE OF THE REIGN OF TERROR, WHILE ALSO DIRECTING A NUMBER OF SHORTS. HE DISCUSSED HIS WORK AND THAT OF THE GROUP AT FANTOM EVENTS’ CONVENTION TIME FLIGHT.

PAUL DIDN’T HAVE THE MOST AUSPICIOUS OF ENTRIES INTO DOCTOR WHO. WHILE IT MAY BE A ROBERT HOLMES STORY, THE FIRST MOMENT HE CAN REMEMBER IS THE CLIFFHANGER OF THE KROTONS EPISODE ONE, WHERE THE DOCTOR IS MENACED BY A PROBE EMERGING FROM THE WALL. AFTER THIS START, THINGS LOOKED UP WHEN, NOT OWNING A COLOUR TV, HE AND HIS FAMILY WERE ABLE TO EXPERIENCE WHO IN ITS FULL GLORY AT ANOTHER’S IN KIDDERMINSTER. THE IMPACT THAT THE THIRD DOCTOR HAD ON HIM WAS APPARENT—WHEN TOM BAKER TOOK OVER, PAUL INITIALLY TOOK AGAINST HIM, CITING THE HAIR AS THE MAIN FACTOR IN THIS DECISION. HOWEVER, BY THE END OF ROBOT, HE REALISED THE ERROR OF HIS WAYS.


recovery software was written in a morning, and when used on *Planet of the Daleks*, it gave a reasonable result, something improved when used with other, existing techniques.

The Restoration Team has also been involved in the restoration of missing episodes too, with *The Web of Fear* one of the recent examples. Being found in widescreen, the team found it easier to restore some of the errors in the original film. For example, Episode 6 contains marks on the print, and jumps. Paul believes that, as it was the original broadcast print, what we now have looks better than it did when it was originally shown. One complication that Paul discussed was microphony—the effect of sound on film. While sound may travel much more slowly than light, it still has the ability to disrupt the delicate recording equipment of the time. Loud sounds, such as gunshots and even screams, are able to disrupt the filming process by vibrating the camera, lowering the image quality in the process. Being a UNIT story, these sounds are of course particularly prevalent, and so work was required to counteract it. Having collected these episodes, however, Vanezis remained unaware of *The Enemy of the World’s* recovery until later. The hunt for missing episodes goes on. Paul believes that episodes one and two of *Marco Polo* may exist in Tehran, though until political relations with Iran improve, it seems unlikely that we will find out.

Aside from *Doctor Who*, the Restoration Team have also helped with other missing episodes—recently discovered episodes of *The Morecambe and Wise Show*, for example. One problem with these films was that they were covered in a substance called Perma, which was used to fill any cracks in the film. While this was useful at the time, it makes conservation efforts more difficult as it needs to be removed for restoration, leaving the resulting film brittle. They also had problems with the poor storage conditions leaving the films warped—the episode containing the sketch ‘Old Donegal’ in particular—meaning that attempts to transfer it digitally kept resulting in blurred sections of tape. They discovered that old fashioned techniques were best, with the tape played in an arc so that it would remain flat momentarily at the crest, allowing for it to be effectively transferred. They also discovered that adjusting the aspect ratio corrected for errors in the colour recovery, which may in future allow for a better conversion of episodes such as *Invasion of the Dinosaurs* Part One.

As for the future, Paul would be happy to see black and white episodes colourised. While this may sound far-fetched, there is the possibility that analysing the greyscale of the clips will allow this. Using skin colour as a baseline, as we have good colour photos of the actors, we can then compare this with other shades in order to see how it would have looked in the studio. Other developments will be dependent on the technology available, of which machine learning, and the ability to correct errors automatically, looks set to play a big role. Aside from *Doctor Who*, he has recently assisted with bringing uncatalogued footage from the NASA film unit during the space race to light, which has been released as the documentary *Apollo 11*.

I was engrossed by Paul’s talk, and so was everyone else. Although scheduled for an hour, it ended up lasting for an hour and a half! It probably would have lasted for longer, had it not been cut off to allow other guests a chance to speak. I hope to hear more about Paul’s exploits soon.

*Right: Paul Vanezis, as profiled on Twitter*
One of the delights of Fantom conventions is to meet less prominent members from the Doctor Who cast from across the years, and when it was announced that David Graham was no longer able to attend, I was initially disappointed. However, when it was announced that Martin Cort would be attending, I was more than excited. In no small part due to Time and Relative Dimensions in Shitposting (see last issue), I was a big fan of The Keys of Marinus, and so the chance to meet one of the cast, a Voord no less, was something that I was very much looking forward to.

The Keys of Marinus, as you’ll be aware, is a story which utilises a number of different settings, an idea that its author Terry Nation would later reuse in The Chase. As such, Martin played a number of roles throughout the story. Beginning as a Voord, he also played the warrior statue in the screaming jungle, as well as the villainous Aydan in Millenius. As may be expected for an alien whose costume design is a wetsuit, flippers and a large helmet, the outfit was not the most comfortable. Indeed, just to fit in the suits in the first place required stripping nude and covering oneself in talcum powder in an effort to slip in. Once the suit was on, the problems kept coming. The helmet, while probably the most alien element of the design, didn’t account for vision, and so left the actors unable to see anything but their flippers. Indeed, Martin recalls that the first take with the Voord was ruined when, unable to see, he entered from the wrong side of the cameras. From then on, the Voord were given a shove in the right direction to help them on their path to world domination. The suits, understandably, were also incredibly hot under the studio lights, requiring multiple filming breaks in order for the actors to recover. Perhaps, instead
of dissolving in the acid seas as Barbara suggests, the unfortunate Voord simply drained away? While we shall never know that, we do know that the early tea breaks took on much more of an abstract meaning, with the webbed gloves making them unable to pick up a mug. While it may have been something of a baptism of fire for him, Martin’s agent seemed particularly enamoured with this performance, sending out pictures of him as a Voord to a range of potential clients.

Once he had extricated himself from the outfit, it was on to the screaming jungle for Martin. And just like the quick turnaround in costumes, the sets themselves had a short shelf life. He recalls walking back onto one set after filming, only to find that due to Lime Grove’s size, it had already been pulled down and replaced! Again, he was to spend most of his time in an uncomfortable outfit, though it was weight, rather than heat, which was now the problem. Having chanced across the costume in The Who Shop more recently, I can confirm that the rings sewn into it would certainly have weighed him down. Coupled with the fact that he was left waiting with his axe for some time, for what is one of the most minor roles in the serial, I can imagine this role does not rank highly in his memory.

Martin was able to put his face onto videotape not just as Aydan in Keys, but later as Locke in The Seeds of Death. While this had all sorts of benefits in terms of comfort, it did bring with it a fierce critic, specifically his mother. Martin enjoyed being able to play the villain, but not, apparently, to the standards that she would have liked. Martin himself was critical of William Hartnell’s manner, especially after working with Patrick Troughton, but has subsequently changed his opinion after finding out about his health issues at the time.

One takeaway that Martin has from Doctor Who, and still uses to this day, is something that Carole Ann Ford taught him to pass time during rehearsals. After drawing a series of abstract symbols, the 6th is used to apparently reveal something about your personality. While this is something he still uses, he saw Ford recently and found that she’d forgotten it completely!

Outside of Doctor Who, Martin has had an eclectic career, including stints with the Royal Ballet company. One particularly unusual moment was when, as an unemployed actor, he found work with the Moscow State Circus during a visit to London, and was tasked with looking after the ‘Wonderhorse’. His job was to keep it in the ring, and despite assurances from its trainer, the horse proceeded to ignore him throughout its run, shoving him out of the way when it pleased. His interest in poetry, meanwhile, has even led to a performance for the Maltese governor-general; something that was threatened when the plane he was on had to make an emergency Parisian landing!

Though his time on Doctor Who may have been brief, and the Voord did not go on to enjoy the same prestige as the Daleks, Martin Cort had many an interesting tale to tell, and the ability to do it well. When Chris Chibnall announces the Voord’s triumphant return for Series Twelve, I’m sure Martin will be on call once more to provide some aquatic expertise.
Sophie Aldred visited the Oxford University Doctor Who Society in February 1991. Paul Dumont recalled the event and the general experience of being in the society for the fanzine Skaro in Autumn 1993 as part of its celebration of the thirtieth anniversary of Doctor Who, and we republish the article here, now joined by Matthew Kilburn’s photographs of Sophie’s visit.

And still they came in. They filled up the chairs, crammed onto the tables lining three of the walls, sat beneath the tables, sat between the chairs. I made the mistake of standing up and leaving my front row seat behind. I spent the rest of the evening sitting on the floor.

Over seventy Oxford students, crammed into a lecture room in Christ Church, designed for a class of twenty at most. Waiting for the president of the Oxford Doctor Who Society to arrive with a mystery guest speaker.
At the time—Monday 4 February 1991—I was the society secretary, a committee post with a heavy burden. Well, to be truthful, a physically heavy burden, namely the 22 inch colour TV we used for video meetings. At 11pm every Monday night, perhaps after the ATV logo had faded at the end of *Sapphire and Steel*, or maybe after the Doctor and Sarah had arrived in the Antarctic snow, the audience vanished. Thirty or so students disappearing as quickly as if abducted by Omega. It then took two people to lift the TV down from its wooden stand, carry it across Tom Quad, with the plug lead and multiblock around the shoulders of one of us, like a mayoral chain of office. Once inside the Archdeaconry (where Adam, our TV guardian, had his room), there was the staircase to consider.

The TV was the focal point for all our meetings. There was *Doctor Who* in every incarnation, and in every possible form of picture quality. 1991’s video meetings kicked off with *Dragonfire* with a ‘supporting feature,’ *The Tomorrow People: A Man for Emily*. I don’t know what lingers in the mind more: ‘the Momma,’ Sandra Dickinson being spanked or the fact that Part Three was in black and white, 525 lines and recorded off a cable station in Oregon (according to the permanent onscreen ident).

For the next six weeks we joined the quest for the Key to Time. Watching old stories—especially
those that you first saw during your formative years, when you first fell in love with the series—is not just a process of comparing memories with realities. Between 1978 and 1991, I had read the novelizations, read the relevant interviews in *Doctor Who Magazine*, discovered how the consensus of opinion in fandom rated those stories of my childhood The images on the TV set in the lecture room came to me through a filter of (perhaps) too much knowledge.

Yet despite this uncomfortable self-awareness—watching the story and waiting to react to it in the way you imagine you will, wondering if your reaction is genuine or contrived—despite this, I won’t hesitate to say that *The Stones of Blood* was the best story I saw in 1991. The dialogue, the acting, the lightning twist of plot (stone circle to hyperspace prison)—*Doctor Who* done with imagination.

But back to Monday 4 February 1991. We started waiting at 7.30 for the meeting to begin at eight. At 8.15, the guessing hadn’t stopped: “It’s William Hartnell—they’re getting a Ouija board.” ... “It’s Sylvester—they’re getting some ferrets.” ... “It’s Nicholas Parsons” (an overwhelming favourite). At half past eight the tall, denim-jacketed figure of the president, Jonathan Bryden, strode into the room “Ladies and gentlemen, it gives me great pleasure to introduce... Sophie Aldred.”

For the next two hours we were amused, enlightened, entertained, but most of all, overwhelmed by Sophie’s sheer enthusiasm for the programme and the time she spent working on it. She told us about getting her Equity
card, her time at Manchester University (she was a contemporary of James’s Tim Booth), Cybercrutch, manic Dalek actors. Above all, she seemed to enjoy herself, and she shared that enjoyment with us.

There was no Doctor Who in 1991—but for seventy of us, there was Sophie Aldred, and memories to treasure.

Sometimes we move so fast

Skaro was initially published between 1980 and 1984, edited from Bath by Simon Lydiard, assisted by several fellow-fans from the city including Julian Chislett. Like most fanzines of the period it was A5 in size. It became known for intelligent and controversial articles and high production values for the day.

In 1990 Julian Chislett revived Skaro as an A4-size fanzine. Prominent contributors included two other Bath-based fans, Vanessa (Ness) Bishop and Brian Hudd. Brian’s poignantly dreamlike artwork covers became hooks for the new Skaro, enclosing contributions from several of the sharpest minds in Doctor Who fandom at the time, as the failure of Season Twenty-Seven to materialize in 1990 or succeeding years as hoped allowed for detailed consideration of the changes made by Andrew Cartmel as script editor, the so-called Cartmel Masterplan, and the progress of the New Adventures books once they launched.

Issue 3 saw a series of reminiscences entitled ‘Remembrance’ begin, which changed the balance of what could be discussed in ‘glossy’ A4 Doctor Who fanzines. While other titles of the era like The Frame concentrated on discovering new facts about the series’ production, Skaro became known for highlighting the fan experience of growing up with the programme and discovering its fandom. Its celebrations of the Thirtieth Anniversary were a development of this theme, with...
short essays solicited to represent each year from 1963 to 1993.

Paul Dumont recalls how he became involved: This was pre-email, so the commission was by phone call and a follow-up letter. I was assigned 1991 because Ness had covered all the years when the programme was being made already. Submission was by fax machine on the first floor of Fareham Public Library to Ness’s legal firm, three pages, so £3 spent. It was written using the much missed Lotus AmiPro package. Round about this time I was creating handouts and flyers for the Director’s Chair seasons at UCI Port Solent, in my bid to make a one off screening of the Amanda Root / Ciaran Hinds _Persuasion_ feel like a trip to the National Film Theatre. Paul Cornell recognised my name on a badge on the strength of this and bought me a drink at either the Bournemouth or Southampton Blue Box convention. “Paul Dumont... from _Skaro_?”

Sophie marries seventy-odd people at once
COMING SOON(ish) TIDES OF TIME 44
Ideas and submissions are welcome at outidesoftime@gmail.com for the next regular issue, which we plan to publish at the end of the year

SO FAR
We look back at thirty years of the Oxford Doctor Who Society with observations from the anniversary party by those who attended (below)
The second part of Philip Holdridge’s story Equilibrium
Like or unlike Doctor Who? Andrew O’Day looks at early 1970s time travel series Timeslip

James Ashworth reviews influential Fifth Doctor comic strip The Tides of Time
Clara Oswald—splintered through time, but hiding in plain sight? Surprising evidence uncovered
More reviews, analysis, fiction and comment. We are waiting by our Inbox...

Edited by James Ashworth and Matthew Kilburn
THE TIDES OF TIME Special Edition Summer 2019 was published in August 2019 by the Oxford Doctor Who Society, a registered student club of the University of Oxford. Distributed online at oxforddoctorwho-tidesoftime.blog

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There have not been any pictures of Jodie Whittaker this special, until now! Here’s one shared online by a set reporter from the location filming in Gloucester on 23 May (left)
The Tides of Time
Special Edition
Summer 2019

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Published by the
Oxford Doctor Who Society

Cover photograph by
STEPHEN BROOME