

THE GENESIS

MATRIX

(ReBooted)



The Magazine Of Genesis Sci-Fi
January 2014





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January 2014

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KEEP CALM

THERE'S ALWAYS AN 'OFF'
SWITCH

GOLD CHANNEL

NOW IT'S TIME FOR ME TO WRITE A GOLD CHANNEL - WELL, SO I HAVE BEEN TOLD! AS I AM SAT IN THE LONGBRIDGE MILL WAITING FOR MY GENESIS CHRISTMAS MEAL TO ARRIVE I THOUGHT I WOULD WRITE SOMETHING IN PINK HIGHLIGHTER (WE DIDN'T HAVE A BIG PURPLE CRAYON - ED.

(SORRY, WAS INTERRUPTED BY ARRIVAL OF NEW PEOPLE. BUT NOT BY MY FOOD, OTHERWISE ALL YOU WOULD BE GETTING FROM ME THIS MONTH WOULD BE THE FIRST PARAGRAPH!)

SO HOW WAS CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR? I HAVE TO ASK IN CASE I HAD NOT SEEN YOU BEFORE THIS. MINE WAS GOOD, THANK YOU FOR ASKING.

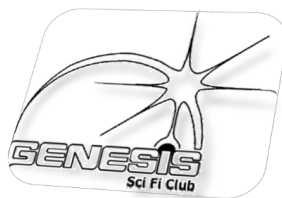
NOW A TIMELY REMINDER. IT IS TIME TO START THINKING ABOUT JOINING THE COMMITTEE, AS IT IS AGM TIME AGAIN NEXT MONTH.

(We interrupt this Gold Channel to bring you....FOOD!! As a result you're stuck with me for the rest of this page - Ed). Yes...right, the AGM. To Obi-Wan you listen. Actually don't worry about him, he's not the Chair Perkin you're looking for. There will be vacancies on the Committee as Paul is standing down, as is David. And on a similar but related note, I'm also looking to hand the magazine on to someone, in some way, shape or form. I'm sure you're all sick to death of me by now and would love to have a go at the magazine (please....anyone??) So please give some serious thought to the standing for the Committee.

Thank you to Rob for his timetable and quiz last month, which had us all hanging around for *seconds* (so to speak).

This month's timetable is courtesy of Louise (and Tony), and has a loosely political theme to it. Being the best VHS purchase I ever made at a science fiction convention was not deemed a sufficient reason for showing *House of Cards* when I suggested it (you might also say that. I on the other hand, could not *possibly* comment), and instead we have, among other things, the opening episode of *Blake's 7* which I recall watching in the Bass House many years ago, and which got me hooked on the series and wanting to see more. It is 50 minutes of compelling drama, some of Terry Nation's very best writing, and works on it's own as a stand-alone story.

Anyway, on with the meeting. *CHAIR PERKIN* (and The Ed)



Club Events For Your Diary

MEETING DATES UP TO END OF 2014

	Pub Meeting	Book Club	Main meeting	Program/ Quiz
January/ February	30th January	1st February	9th February (AGM)	Paul Russell
February/ March	27th February	1st March	9th March	Robert Green
March/ April	27th March	29th March	6th April	David & Susan Offen-James
April/ May	24th April	26th April	4th May	Paul Belsey
May/ June	22nd May	24th May	1st June	Steve Brice
June	19th June	21st June	29th June	Matthew Greet
July	17th July	19th July	27th July	Paul Russell
August	14th August	16th August	24th August	Cari Thomas
September	11th September	13th September	21st September	Peter Taylor
October	9th October	11th October	19th October	Rob Green
October/ November	30th October	8th November	9th November	Antony Walls
December	4th December	6th December	14th December	The Committee



The 72nd World Science Fiction Convention Thursday 14 to Monday 18 August 2014

There are tentative plans to visit WorldCon when it lands in London next summer. This renowned Worldwide event doesn't come to these shores very often, and as the venue (ExCeL, in London's Docklands) is reasonably commutable in a day, it would be a shame to let the event pass without attending at least for a day.

Pub meetings are at The Swan in Sherbourne St John.

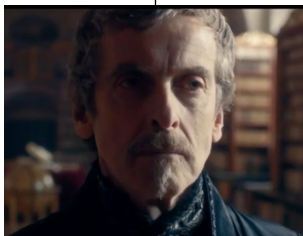
The Genesis Book Club is at South Ham Library, Basingstoke, from 10.00 am to mid-day.

DOCTOR WHO SERIES 8—THE LONG WAIT

As the dust starts to settle on the Eleventh Doctor's Christmas exit, indications are still that Peter Capaldi's debut series will air in late August.

Read-throughs of a couple of scripts had taken place prior to Christmas, but filming was due to begin on Monday 6th January.

A few rumours have emerged about who or what may or may not be appearing in the opening episode, and there are indications that a two-parter may be on the cards for later in the series. In the interests of avoiding spoilers, I won't be any more specific than that. Some writers have been confirmed for the new run – as well as Steven Moffat, Mark Gatiss, Neil Cross and Gareth Roberts are returning. Neil Gaiman and Chris Chibnall have also reportedly been approached but due to other work and time commitments they are not yet confirmed.



Ben Wheatley, Paul Murphy and Douglas Mackinnon have all been confirmed as directing two episodes each, while rumours are that discussions with Peter Jackson over him directing an episode are 'getting serious'.

The length of the series is still not entirely clear, with the possibility still that the run would be twelve episodes, followed by a Christmas Special.

Peter Capaldi, meanwhile, can be seen in the upcoming BBC drama *The Musketeers*, as Cardinal Richelieu (pictured left). Capaldi was filming the series in Prague last year when he learned he had landed the part of The Doctor.

Sadly, rumours that *The Time of the Doctor* is to be retrospectively renamed *Silent Night* have no substance whatsoever (mainly because they don't actually exist)

Jeremy Ogden Source: Doctorwhotv.com

WINTER IS COMING TO HERTFORDSHIRE

An English village is planning to change its name to mark the release of *Game of Thrones* season 3 on DVD.

Kings Langley in Hertfordshire will be known as Kings Landing - the name of the main city in the fantasy drama - for a week in February.

GAME OF THRONES

According to *The Watford Observer*, an executive producer from the HBO show happened to hear the village listed as a stop while waiting for a train at London's

Euston station.

Susan Lea from Dacorum Borough Council said that she hopes businesses and restaurants will get involved and hold their own *Game of Thrones*-themed promotions.

Season 3 of *Game of Thrones* will be available on DVD on 17 February. The fourth season returns on HBO in the US and Sky Atlantic in the UK later this year.

Source: *Digital Spy*

BOBA FETT: THE MOVIE

Boba Fett will reportedly be the focus of one of the upcoming *Star Wars* spinoff movies.

A standalone film centred on the bounty hunter is being written by Lawrence Kasdan, according to *Metalocalypse* director Jon Schnepp.

Speaking about the *Star Wars* spinoff projects in an interview with *AMC Movie Talk*, Schnepp said: "One of them is Boba Fett. It is. I know. I know for a fact.

"I will never reveal my source, but it is

the one written by Lawrence Kasdan."

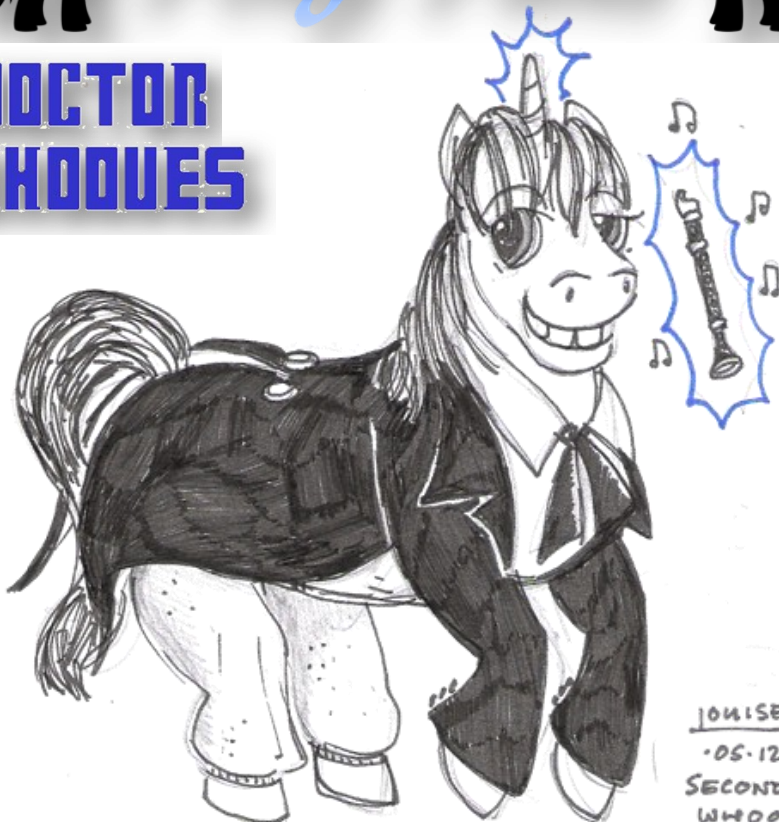
Last February, Disney confirmed that it was working on stand-alone *Star Wars* movies alongside JJ Abrams's *Episode VII*.

The spinoff films will be released within the same timeframe as the three main *Star Wars* movies planned by Disney. *Star Wars Episode VII* is scheduled for cinema release on 18 December 2015. No castings have yet been announced.

Source: *Digital Spy*

Pony Puns

DOCTOR
WHOOVES



JONISE STANLEY
·05.12.13.
SECOND DOCTOR
WHOOVES



**GENESIS AT THE
MOVIES:
THE HOBBIT—PART 2:
THE DESOLATION OF
SMAUG**

***NORMALITY RESUMES
aka: AN UNEXPECTED JOURNEY
(AROUND FESTIVAL PLACE CAR PARK)***

So the festive season has once again come and gone, the forced cheer and eating to excess just about concluded. All that remains is to break all those new years resolutions (most don't last beyond January second anyway!) and sort out the bomb site that used to be the kitchen, before we have to do it all again.

However there is one regular event on the Christmas calendar that demands somewhat more of our attention. Yes, every year (it's happened more than once, ergo it's an ancient tradition steeped in the mists of time) a certain master P Jackson puts out a little fan film for our personal amusement, and it is to this, that this article relates. This years offering is of course *The Hobbit Part 2 The Desolation of Smaug*.

Now, those of you with any form of long term memory left after the over indulgences of new year celebrations, will remember that I was slightly less than impressed with the first offering in this series (cough, never three films in that tiny book, cough, cough). So it was with some hesitation that I joined the usual band of unmentionables (names have been removed to protect the guilty!) for the opening weekend of this films run. This was the weekend just a week before Christmas, and for some reason that escapes me now, the conclusion was reached that it would be best to see the film in the town centre cinema rather than at the Leisure Park (my usual haunt). The reasoning for this was totally sound, and made sense to all at the time,

but once faced with the ultimate calamity that was to be Festival Place's car park on that dreary, sodden, Saturday afternoon, all rhyme and reason as to how this decision was reached, left me, and I found myself in the gauntlet of the ultimate challenge, to seek the Holy Grail, that Golden Challis that is A PARKING SPACE!!!!

So you can picture the scene, I'm not the most beloved follower of Tolkien's franchise, or of the first instalment (my opinions of which are on record and I won't bore you with them again here. I'll merely bore you with other things instead). (Did that help to get the word count up enough?) (Yup. -Ed)

So what did I make of the film then, after all, that's what I'm supposed to be writing about (although having got this far, a tiny little piece of my tiny little brain, is wondering if I could actually complete this inane ramble without mentioning the film at all).

First of all let me say that there is hope for Peter Jackson yet. All the things that I disliked about the first film are still here in abundance, however there are two striking differences. Firstly, whilst there can be no denying the fact that this film contains both silly parts and EPIC, hello everyone I'm doing EPIC, in the way that only Peter Jackson can. The two are meshed together quite smoothly. In the first film the two elements grated and just didn't fit together (a totally personal opinion, and I would strongly suggest

that people make their own judgments on this), but here the two join almost seamlessly and work together to draw you into the film (before I found that they had the absolutely reverse effect). Then there is the second difference between this offering and its predecessor. The Dwarves! Yes, I know that the dwarves were all there in the first film, but this time they've brought some characterisation with them. Each individual is well defined, just as in the original text, and whilst once again, there are lots of goings on that aren't in the book, there is nothing that doesn't add to the story. In fact Jackson has now changed the whole direction of the tale. He's made it all about the origins of *Lord of the Rings* rather than the quest. I'm half hoping that he'll actually end it with the rise of Sauron and his power in Mordor, and maybe even the turning of Saruman.

Still, I digress (again). The film itself is beautifully put together; the only criticisms that I can give it are the opening half hour and the confrontation between the dwarves and Smaug. The first of these issues is simply that things feel a little rushed. When the first film ended (and I sighed with relief) the eagle carried our want-to-be-heroes to a distant peak, far from their pursuing orks, and not far from the lush green embrace of Mirkwood. Now we jump to the very opening of the second film, and we are now told that they were actually dropped off about half a mile away and if they don't get their skates on then they'll be Orc spit roast by sun down. This then requires a load of running about excitedly which eats into time on screen. Then everything felt squashed down a bit more than I'd have liked before they can get into the story proper. Honestly, just five minute of character interaction and 'calm-after-the-storm' type feel



would have been enough. Hey but that's small beer, and it's ironic (after my comments on the first film) that my biggest gripe should be that the film needed more added to it! The second point I obviously won't expand on as it's well into the story and for anyone that hasn't seen the film yet, or doesn't know the story (not that you'll find it in the book), but all I will say is that things do get very, very silly. However I must stress that this is silly in a good way and as long as you can suspend your disbelief (and you shouldn't watch this type of film if you can't) then it merely enhances your viewing pleasure, and shows a heroic aspect to the dwarves that really doesn't show itself in the book.

In conclusion, this is a humdinger of a film that really does take you on a journey in every sense. And, knowing as I do, the story yet to be told, I am of the distinct opinion that the reason that the first film fell flat for me is that the excess of story that Jackson is attempting to portray, doesn't quite fill three films, but wasn't able to be squeezed into two. (A little like *Harry Potter and The Deathly Hallows*, not enough to fill two films, but too much to fit into one.)

The result is that we have a spectacle to come next Christmas, and let me tell you that this is scheduled to be the most epic and exciting *Lord of the Rings* film yet to be seen! For that is what you have here, this is not *The Hobbit Part 2*. This is *The Lord of the Rings Part 0.5*, and make no mistake.

I'm even prepared to endure the car park at Yule tide!

Vice ChairGerkin

Ho Ho Bloody Ho



GENESIS AT THE MOVIES: THE HUNGER GAMES : CATCHING FIRE

“Love is weird” – Johanna Mason

This film is almost three hours long and they didn't waste a single minute. Following on from the original movie – which came out nearly two years ago now – one could be forgiven for thinking *Catching Fire* is a rehash of the same plot. Although the film follows the same format and still omits a lot of the plot outside the Games themselves, there's a few subtle changes to the original premise which keeps it from being a total copy of the first film. (Then again, the films are staying ultra-faithful to the books, right down to the last scene being eerily identical to how I imagined it when I got stuck into the books last year at Armadacon 24.) Jennifer Lawrence plays Katniss Everdeen, who survived the first *Hunger Games* movie alongside Peeta Mellark (Josh Hutcherson). In revenge for Katniss and Peeta's defiance of the official script for their tour through the beleaguered Districts of Panem, President Snow (given the first name Coriolanus in the books and played by the magnificent Donald Sutherland) orders the Reaping to take place from among the original victors of the various Games.

The Games this time are more a battle between the participants and the environment than each other. It's still a fight to the death – last person standing – but the arena is designed to haunt the characters with jabberjays mimicking their imperilled loved ones, drench them

in blood rain, boil them in poisonous fog, rip them to shreds with murderous baboons. The solution for Katniss and a band of allies including the mute Mags, truculent Johanna Mason, athletic fisherman Finnick, the deranged Wiress, and technological wizard Beetee is to strike back against the weakness of the Arena itself rather than against the opposing Careers.

To give the film its due, the world-building which was absent in the first movie is expanded slightly in the second film. The problem with the series is that a lot of explanation that a book can provide – Katniss explaining how Panem is organised and why it's designed that way – is glossed over in the film. Generally speaking, we see the 'Victors' Village', where Katniss and Peeta now live along with Katniss' family (we never see Peeta's parents). Despite being nicer than a miner's cottage, it's a desolate place. But we don't know what it is. In the

books, it's explained that the Victors of the Hunger Games from each District live in gated communities within the Districts in relative comfort to the oppressed and exploited workers. District 12 has only one other Victor, Haymitch Abernathy, because its inhabitants are given no special favours by the Capitol compared to other more prosperous divisions of Panem. So that is why the place looks nice but deserted. In the books, we find



out that some Districts are more pleasant to live in than others (because some workers make luxury goods, or electronics, and therefore have to have a higher standard of living and education than the factory workers, farmers, lumberjacks, or coal miners). Career participants in the Games are handpicked from the Districts given over to luxury production and trained specifically to volunteer during the Reaping from their districts. A little bit of explanation, even just a throwaway line, would have been a bit easier for people who haven't read the books.

To the film's credit, however, there's not a single minute of wasted footage, which means that they were obviously trying to tighten up the action at the expense of exposition and managed to get an extra half hour from somewhere. It's worth it, because the film reached number one in the UK charts, with number two being *Gravity* and number three being the *Doctor Who* Anniversary Episode special simulcast screening.



The action of the first half includes the savage repression of District 12 as President Snow retaliates after Katniss and Peeta deliberately decide to capitalise on the growing disaffection in the poorer Districts of Panem. Here, action is condensed from the first book for reasons of time but still makes sense. Gale, Katniss' best friend and part of the series love triangle, attacks a peacekeeper tearing apart the black market in District 12 and is flogged on-screen. This is the bit in the books that the bloodthirsty crowd in me enjoyed the most – because it didn't flinch from depicting violent brutality in a book aimed at school-age children (albeit

teenagers). I'm glad it was included in the film, because it introduced the dilemma for President Snow – what to do with a national celebrity who was openly rebelling against his authority?

The love triangle also maintains genuine suspense. It is very hard for films and books to balance the need for a romantic plot with making it relevant to the main story and retaining the suspense as to whether the leading lady and leading man will get together. Gale and Peeta are both competing for Katniss' hand, and she's still undecided at the end of the film – and although I know the answer, I'm not going to be the one to spoil it. There is some criticism flying about the blogosphere that the general message of the film – the entertainment of the rich coming at the expense of the poor – is getting lost in amidst the romance between Katniss, Peeta and Gale, thereby proving Suzanne Collins' worst fears about our society's attitude towards sex as a distraction from politics.

I don't think that's true. There are very few films which portray real romantic conflict this well, and the triangle is what adds depth to the film. Katniss is in love with Peeta for the cameras, even pretending to marry him in order to convince President Snow that they are still in love, but away from them she still apparently belongs to Gale. So it's legitimate to cover the romantic plot in the film because, like in the book, it's never quite obvious who is in love with whom. Plus romance is a legitimate human interest. The emotions of human beings are such that without a love story a film like this would be very bleak, possibly too bleak for an audience to stomach. People get flogged, burned



by flame-throwers, shot during riots, and it's implied that there are executions. Then individuals die from poisonous fog, a billion-volt electrical coil, or simply drowned by a tidal wave. At the end of the book District 12 *and most if not all its inhabitants* have been completely *obliterated*. It needs something to lighten it up. However, they maintain the romantic suspense incredibly well. When the film ends, I think it's safe to say that Katniss is in love with both young men, and is having to choose between them. The third book is as much about that choice as it is about what is happening to Panem, and while her choice is largely irrelevant to the national fate, it makes the story about loving sacrifice as well as cold, bloodthirsty murder and screeching baboons. Even before the Games begin, she is begging Haymitch to keep *Peeta* alive. Her original sacrifice in the first film was for the love of her family; now she is making

sacrifices for the love of someone else. The film is about politics, but also about love and hope.

To give away much more about the ending would be a spoiler both for this film and for the direction in which the next two films, based on the third book in Collins' series *Mockingjay*, will go. It's a shame I can't tell you, but it's much too soon to give away the ending. Nevertheless, I'm going to give this nine out of ten – I think they could have better explained some concepts that weren't obvious in context, and that's enough to knock a whole mark off.

Louise Stanley

We interrupt this page to bring you.... **THE CAPTION COMPETITION**



*A handy white space
for you to write one,
more or fewer
amusing captions....*

The Golden Doughnut Awards

2013

It's January, which can only mean it's time for the annual festival of celebration of the benchmark of achievement in the last twelve months, some, more or fewer of which may be puzzling, bizarre and face-palm inducing. Some of it may even be sci-fi related.

Person With Best Job Title

Doctor Who Special Effects wiz Danny Hargreaves wins this award with the memorable job title of 'Provider of Chaos & Mayhem', the description given

to him on a *Doctor Who: Behind The Lens* program (That's *Doctor Who Confidential* in all but name) after the Christmas Special



to bat, and trying to prevent my legs turning to jelly. At 49 for 9, I trudged out to the non-strikers end desperately trying to remember how many balls were left in the

The Most Insane, Maddest Cricket Match I've Ever Played In

This occurred at Aldermaston on the final Sunday in June and featured 19 wickets, 99 runs and a large amount of tension. Aldermaston were playing Theale and when we bowled the visitors out for 49 a long while before tea, the only speculation was how many overs it would take for us to win, not even how many wickets we would win by. When we went to tea at 28 for 6, things were getting stupid. At 41 for 8 I was trying desperately to get myself psyched up for having to go in

over. So everyone was fairly startled when the on-strike batsman casually drove the next ball back over the bowler's head, allowing us to canter through for the winning run. Startled because the batsman, Jerry, has over a longish period of time, earned the nickname 'Test Match', due to his occasional Geoff Boycott-like adhesive qualities – when he was told to play in 'Twenty20 Mode' on one occasion, he

interpreted this as an instruction to score 20 runs in 20 overs! I don't think I've ever been so relieved to register a '0 not out', without facing a ball.

There were a number of close finished involving Aldermaston Cricket Club in



2013, but none were as completely, utterly and entirely.....nuts as the one that took place that day.

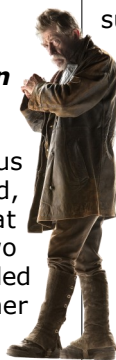
The 'It could Only Happen In Cricket' Moment

The moment when a glorious realisation occurred (on a cold, damp afternoon in August at Woodland St Mary) – that the two batsmen out in the middle are called Tom....and Jerry! Amazingly, neither of them ended up getting run out, and even more remarkably, neither of them ended up lying unconscious after running headlong into a frying pan.

The 'Filling Unfillable Shoes' Award

There are two candidates for this award in 2013. Actually, no, there are three. No. Four. Firstly, from the film *Man of Steel*, the man of steel himself, Kal-El / Clark Kent / Superman actor Henry Cavill, who has stepped in the boots and donned the cape previously worn by the great Christopher Reeve. Well, actually they were previously donned by Brandon Routh in 2006's *Superman Returns*, and as much as Routh did a respectable job in that film, I can't give this award to Cavill. The next candidate is also from *Man of Steel* – Russell Crowe as Jor-El, Superman's father, sworn enemy of a desperate criminal, native of a doomed planet, father to an exiled son (etc etc). Previously Jor-El had been played by Marlon Brando in the Christopher Reeve films and in *Superman Returns* thanks to clever use of existing footage and clever CGI wizardry. And as clever and as wizzy as that was, it is that reason, plus the fact that Brando's appearances were little more than cameos in the first place, I can't give the award to Crowe either.

That leaves us with John Hurt and Benedict Cumberbatch. John Hurt this year became the Doctor that no-one previously knew about, the 'War Doctor',



although it seemed that originally he did not adopt the name 'Doctor'. However, subsequent revelations now mean that John Hurt was, in fact, the Ninth Doctor, (Eccleston thereby becoming Tenth, Tennant Eleventh and, due to his 'vanity issues', Twelfth, and Matt Smith the Thirteenth, although in reality the 'numbering' stays the same as it always has been for the purposes of discussion and polite conversation – not to mention marketing and advertising. Hurt is therefore filling the not inconsiderable shoes of Eccleston, who no matter what you think of him and his attitude to *Doctor Who*, did undeniably make a memorable mark as the Ninth Doctor, and suddenly becoming the Ninth Doctor (even if he had been all along, if you see what I mean) and making such an acclaimed, 'one night only' appearance must count as filling shoes which were previously thought unfillable.

On top of that, this year Paul McGann's Eighth Doctor also got his long-awaited regeneration scene, at the end of which it was John Hurt's War Doctor who emerged. So as well as essentially stepping into Eccleston's shoes, he also effectively stepped into Paul McGann's!

Now, Benedict Cumberbatch, filling the shoes of the legendary Ricardo Montalban, as Khan Noonian Singh. Although he wasn't supposed to be Khan, was he? That's the line we were fed. For months. And months. And although Cumberbatch's performace was widely lauded, his casting as Khan, a character previously of Indian descent, caused more than a few grumblings that the character had been 'white-washed', the producers justifying the casting as necessary to avoid demonising any particular race of ethnicity. But I have to admit, although I thought Cumberbatch was brilliant, it did grate slightly with me.

So, this year, the award goes to John

Hurt, for stepping into the shoes of TWO previous Doctor Who lead actors.

The Completely Unjustified 'Getting Your Hopes Up' Award

Goes to anyone, including myself, for the deluded notion that England would return from Australia having retained The Ashes, which they had managed to do at home in the summer by the slightly flattering score-line of three-nil. More specifically, anyone who was under the deluded notion that England would actually manage to turn a first innings lead into a victory in the Fourth Test in Melbourne.

The Award For Taking A Wicket With The Worst Ball In Recorded History, Part 3

A tie between Paul 'The Pie' Strong (see last year's awards for an explanation of his nick-name) and Graeme 'This Is Me Swaning Off Mid-Series' (more of that later) Swann.

The "Whiskey-Tango-Foxtrot?!" Award

It's tempting to give this award to my employer, who have surpassed themselves this year with the depths of ineptitude and mediocrity to which it is capable of descending.

Also, to the Museum of Medieval Torture Instruments in Prague, because I can't imagine any circumstances under which most people would *actually* want to visit such a place – to quote a well-known fictional physician, "sounds like the God-damned Spanish inquisition to me!"

Instead, this award will be given to the Doctor Who story *The Time Monster*, which was six episodes of utter...

madness. I talked about this in *The Oracle* a couple of months ago, but as a reminder:

"The Time Monster is absolutely, 100%, utterly and completely insane. Mad as a box of frogs.



It has UNIT, it has The Master, it has a bizarre scene

where a couple of scientists celebrate a great achievement by dancing around a lab, it has Sergeant Benton, regressing to an infant, it has Atlantis – the city, not the space shuttle – it has Swallowfield Park and House (that's just up the road from here, by the way), and it has Darth Vader as a Minotaur. No, really, David Prowse, pre-Star Wars, as the great beast from Greek mythology. Completely, utterly, barking, raving mad."



Best Cameo Award

Goes to Tom Baker in *The Day of the Doctor*, although Samuel L Jackson in *Marvel's Agents of Shield* is a close second.

Best Comeback

No other candidate for this – Paul McGann, for reprising the Eighth Doctor in *The Night of the Doctor*, some seventeen and a half years on from his only other on-screen appearance as the Doctor.

Best Kept Secret

Despite it's aforementioned star saying that it was very difficult to keep secret, the existence of the mini-sode *The Night of the Doctor* was actually very well concealed for four months. A pity someone leaked it's imminent arrival shortly before it was due to become available online, about 10 before the

fiftieth anniversary of Doctor Who, but I think keeping this mini-episode concealed for four months was actually a great achievement. (And yes, there were multiple rumours regarding what exactly this might be, but even so it still surprised a lot of people when it appeared.

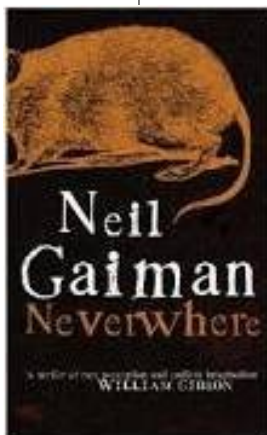


'Spoilers' Award

The aforementioned mini-episode *The Night of the Doctor* was a brilliant treat for anyone who cares about *Doctor Who*. Seeing Paul McGann's Doctor on screen again was frankly marvellous, but if you are one of the people I spoke to after I'd seen it on BBC iPlayer but before you had watched it, I would have advised to watch it on YouTube. Simple reason for this – the appearance of McGann was revealed by the preview picture on iPlayer, so the actual surprise of seeing the Eighth Doctor would have been removed as a result. Doh!

The 'Is That It??' Award

Goes to the novel *Neverwhere* by Neil Gaiman, and I don't mean this in an entirely bad way. I loved this book, very much enjoyed reading it and by the time I got to the end.....well, I was just mildly miffed that it ended and that there have never been any further published tales of the adventures of Richard Mayhew in 'London Below'. So Mr Gaiman, if you ever get round to writing a sequel, you are guaranteed at



least one sale.

TV Series I Have (Re)Discovered This Year

I would say *Babylon 5*, the first season of which I re-watched in December, but actually, it's *The West Wing*. I'm

ashamed to say that it is several years since I saw the last episode of the final season of this wonderful series, in which former President Josiah Bartlett (Martin Sheen) flies away into the sunset, leaving the White House to the care of 'The Next Guy'. So my memory of the brilliance of the series had started to erode. Until December when on starting a repeat viewing of the first season on DVD, and I became hooked all over again. With Jed Bartlet in the Oval Office, all seems right with the World.

The Most Bizarre Piece of TV Scheduling

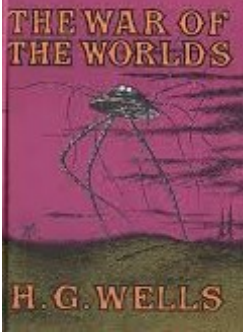
Star Trek turning up on The Horror Channel. I mean, I could understand this if the only episode they ever showed was *Spock's Brain*....

The 'Beating Chris Eccleston At His Own Game Award

Goes to a now former England off-spinner, for 'Swanning Off *in the middle* of a series, never mind at the end!

Jeremy Ogden

The guy's one lab accident away from being a super villain."



BOOK REVIEW

THE WAR OF THE WORLDS BY H G WELLS

THE WAR OF THE TEXT

So the latest offering bestowed unto the members of our Book Club, is the classic sci-fi tale of death and destruction that is *The War of the Worlds*, by H G Wells.

This was originally intended to be a title read much earlier in the year; however events conspired against us, and in a strange mix up we found ourselves reading *The Time Machine* instead. No complaints about that of course, but it did mean that we pledged to get to *The War of the Worlds* again at some point. And so it transpired that this was to be the title which we took away to ingest during the Christmas break. This has turned out to be most fortunate, as with life being so ridiculously busy during this time of year, I am pleased to have been given such a slim volume.

Now despite the small size of the book, the ideas contained therein are of truly epic proportions. The book doesn't fall into the trap of getting bogged down in these ideas, but instead seamlessly sows them into the readers mind without giving them a second thought. The book itself is quite dark. It's written almost totally in the first person and, as such reads very much as if one was reading a journal. This is Wells' intent, and the

style is reminiscent of the time at which it was written. However the style does throw up some annoyances that irritate after a time. The reader is never given names, or any real insight into the character of any of the main protagonists. The only characters that seem to warrant a name are those that don't last to long. It's almost like Wells is writing his own personal account, and is afraid to let anyone see anything of himself between the pages of text for fear that it might get trapped there.

The story is well know to all, and there are times, when reading the original text (which was the purpose of the book club requesting it) that parts of sentences (the ones cherry picked by Jeff Wayne) cried out in Richard Burton's voice. The story itself barrels along quite quickly, and that, along with very short chapters results in a quick read that is very hard to put down. (Although one of the copies that we were given had the most ridiculously small text, that had me thinking that I should book an eye exam. And which proved to be an unnecessary hurdle that Susan could have done without. (We ended up swapping copies).

The book follows the fortunes of a learned and socially well placed yet unknown individual, as he struggles

to survive through the horrors of a Martian invasion. During this time he has to come to terms with his own actions as well as those of others, and as the story unfolds, he turns into more of an anti hero. Whilst the content of the book is compelling in the extreme, the reader is left wanting more. This might well not have been possible at the time of writing, as social acceptance demanded a different approach to writing novels in the 1890s. The fact is however, that whilst the book transfers just as well to a modern audience, the reader is now left slightly unsatisfied. Just a scrap of characterisation, a touch of emotion or empathy. But all we have is a dry narrative fixed grimly in the past tense. On the plus side however, this book will one day make an absolutely brilliant film.

I know what you're thinking, but this tale really never has been told on the big screen. Also, as Wells goes out of his way to never describe the main characters in the story, this opens up a lot of possibilities! Sherlock Holmes anyone.....

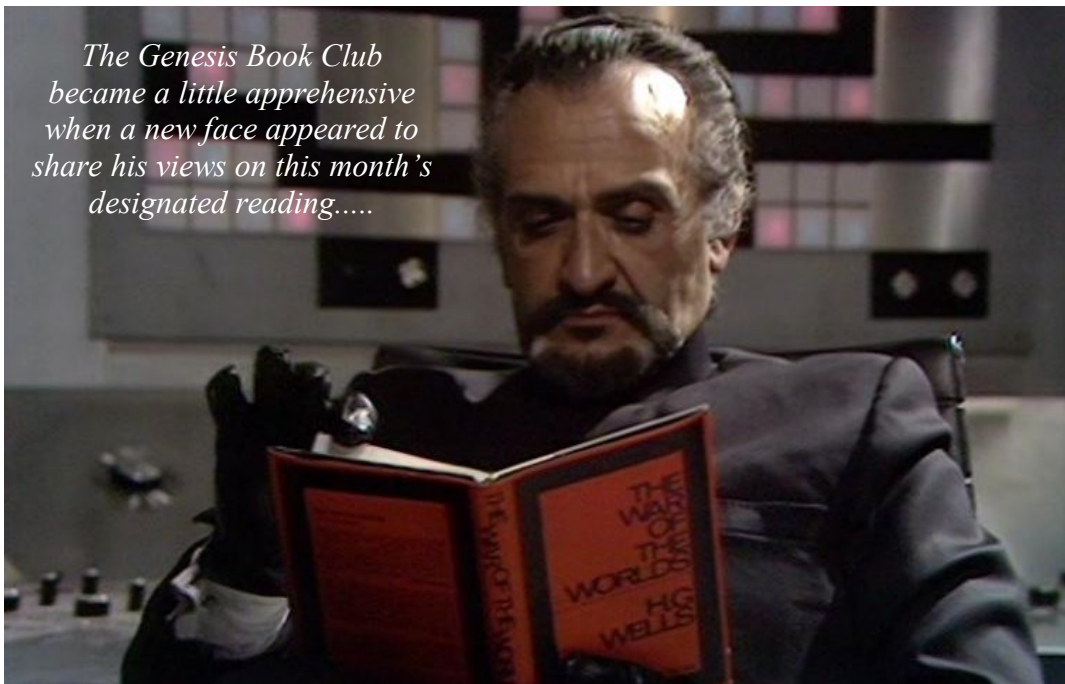
In conclusion, this is a brilliant read that I would recommend to anyone. Yes there are shortcomings, as I have described.

However all I can say is that my world is better for having read it, than if I'd remained ignorant (or at least any more ignorant than I already am).

Vice ChairGerkin

"The chances of anything coming from Mars are a million to one..... Oh Bugger!!!!"

*The Genesis Book Club
became a little apprehensive
when a new face appeared to
share his views on this month's
designated reading.....*





The obligatory embarrassing Christmas sweater (See 'Noel Edmonds').



Ever wondered what happened to the retired Grandfather Dalek from the song I'm Gonna Spend my Christmas With A Dalek? No, neither had I, until I saw this picture.....



(Post) Christmas Crackers

(Stuff I've spotted on 'T'Internet').

Well, truth is, it didn't happen. Maybe next Christmas.....

IS HE REALLY KICKING
ME OUT BECAUSE I INTERFERED?

NO, HE'S RIGHT. YOU'RE WELL.
YOU HAVE NO MORE FEVER.

I TRIED TO SPEAK TO LYUBOV
NIKOLAYEVNA, BUT SHE WON'
LISTEN TO ME...

GO AHEAD,
TALK TO ME NOW ...
SINCE YOU SEEM
SO INSISTENT.

YOUR HUSBAND HAS
BLOOD ON HIS
HANDS FROM THE
LAST WAR!

WELL, SO DO
YOUR PEOPLE...

