

Brit-Com Tea Party – April 18, 2010

Thank you to the more than 50 Club members who attended the latest Brit-Com Club Tea Party on April 18, 2010. We had a great time!

As everyone entered the room, the newest episode of *Last of the Summer Wine* was playing. There are 11 episodes in Season 31, and it will begin on Monday, May 4th:

Comedy star, Russ Abbot, joins the cast as Hobbo, while Alvin, Entwistle, Clegg, and Truly bring us more attacks on the routine of life in the 31st series of Britain's longest-running comedy. As Hobbo begins to fit in with rest of the community, in particular with Alvin and Entwistle, he begins to unearth the truth behind his own personal mystery. Adopted at birth, his desire to find his natural mother results in a startling revelation.

We hope you will tune in!

Membership Director Jodi Mesoella welcomed the group and announced that this was the last event to be held at the Renaissance Hotel. She handed out a survey to solicit feedback on what we should do next. We are still processing the information and will report back at a later date.

After a rousing session of trivia during which a wide assortment of prizes was awarded, Program Director Kathryn Larsen gave a general update on the financial situation of the station and specifically the health of the acquisition budget.

- Fiscal situation still difficult. We lost \$135,000 from supplemental this year, and allocation for next year will be down at least \$65,000.
- No vote this time because we're still trying to purchase the programming already voted on. *Pie in the Sky* started March 27th. Still waiting for all the episodes of *The Old Guys* to arrive from the UK. The series should be available to start in the late summer.

The first clip shown at the Tea Party was from *Executive Stress*, a comedy produced in the 1980s, starring Penelope Keith and Geoffrey Palmer:

Can a husband and wife work together successfully in high-powered jobs? The question is answered hilariously in this comedy series starring the ever popular Penelope Keith and the distinguished Geoffrey Palmer. As Caroline and Donald Fairchild, the pair become reluctant partners in the same publishing company. Donald is delighted when he's made Sales and Marketing Director. He's less thrilled when he meets the new Editorial Director -- his wife! It's the first of many stressful situations, as the couple discovers that the complications of working together can make living together difficult, too.

Currently, the series does not have closed captioning, so it is not a series we can license. (The FCC now requires all programming to have closed captioning.) The supplier is trying to assess whether it is worth the expense (approximately \$500 per episode), so he asked if we would test it with our Brit-Com Club Members. The response was extremely positive from those who previewed it at the Tea Party. We will report back to the supplier and maybe one day it will be up for a "real" vote!

Next, followed a great Q&A session where guests could ask any question about the station, Brit-Coms – old and new – and what might be coming to the Rhode Island PBS schedule.

A number of series were suggested for possible license:

Barbara

My Family

May to December

Nine Tailors

No Place Like Home

William & Mary

Kathryn announced the remake of *Upstairs, Downstairs*, which will be premiering next winter.

Guests previewed clips of upcoming series and programs:

3rd series of *Lark Rise to Candleford* will air this summer – probably July.

As the residents of Lark Rise and Candleford return in this warm-hearted series, could the fortunes of the Timmins family be about to change? A

journalist named Daniel arrives to deliver the news that Emma has been left some money. There's a substantial sum to be claimed if Emma can prove her right to the money and there's a rags to riches story in it for Daniel's newspaper. As Robert and Emma contemplate their change in fortunes, Laura, who is fascinated to meet a real writer, shows Daniel around Lark Rise. Elsewhere, the Pratt sisters are keeping secrets from one another; Margaret confides in Dorcas that she and Thomas are trying for a baby, and Minnie - in her attempt to live by Dorcas's advice of always telling the truth - ends up offending almost everyone who comes to the post office. Set at the end of the 19th century, this gentle, tender and visually stunning drama series has already sold to more than 15 territories and remains a critics' favourite.

4th series of *Doc Martin* will also air this summer. Here is the description of the first episode. The 4th series promise a lot of twists and turns in the life of Doc Martin.

- The Doc is taking steps to cure his Haemophobia as part of a plan to leave Portwenn. Whilst accompanying a patient to Truro, he bumps into an ex-girlfriend of his, who he soon knocks heads with. Meanwhile, with Louisa out of the way, Mrs Tishell is hoping to win the Doc's affections - but her husband's announcement of early retirement from his job on an oil rig is spoiling her plans.

The afternoon ended with a clip from the upcoming new series of *Foyle's War*. We distributed a listing of the summer and fall schedules for *Masterpiece Mystery!*

We want to make sure that Brit-Com Club Members continue to have a say about the programming that is scheduled on Rhode Island PBS. If you have a comment or a question, please send Kathryn an e-mail at programming@ripbs.org

THE RETURN OF
FOYLE'S WAR



MASTERPIECE MYSTERY!
SUSPECTS CASE FILE

WALLANDER



MASTERPIECE MYSTERY! 2010

One of the most-watched series on PBS returns in May with an outstanding lineup of all-new episodes featuring six of our favorite detectives. Highlights include the eagerly anticipated return of Michael Kitchen as Detective Chief Superintendent Foyle, David Suchet as Hercule Poirot in a new *Murder on the Orient Express*, Kenneth Branagh in a second season of the Emmy nominated *Wallander*, and Benedict Cumberbatch and Martin Freeman in a 21st Century spin on Sherlock Holmes.

SUMMER 2010 starts May 21

Foyle's War
Michael Kitchen and Honeysuckle Weeks in three new episodes of the World War II series that the *Wall Street Journal* called "a triumph from start to finish."

SIX BY AGATHA

Miss Marple
Guest stars Joanna Lumley, Stephen Dillane, and Lindsay Duncan join Julia McKenzie in three new mysteries based on the Agatha Christie novels.

Hercule Poirot

A brand new *Murder on the Orient Express* kicks off three new Hercule Poirot mysteries.

FALL 2010

Inspector Lewis
Kevin Whatley and Laurence Fox in five new installments of the hit series set in Oxford.

Wallander

Henning Mankell's first *Wallander* novel "Faceless Killers" premieres the new season of the acclaimed Swedish mystery series starring Kenneth Branagh.

Sherlock A brand new series from the creators of *Coupling*

Sherlock is a witty, fast-paced, modern-day take on Arthur Conan Doyle's legendary crime drama.