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Last Of The Summer Wine - From The Director's Chair



Synopsis

Roy Clarke's *Last of the Summer Wine* was the longest running TV comedy series in the world, largely due to the passion, dedication and creativity of its producer/director – ALAN J W BELL. It has been broadcast in the United States on PBS for years and has become one of PBS' most successful British programs. In this book, Alan takes us on the set and into the studio to get up close and personal with the series and its actors. You will laugh out loud, cry in places and also guffaw as your jaw drops at reading these astonishing anecdotes, all told as only Alan can – from the inside! *Last of the Summer Wine – From the Director's Chair* provides a powerful critique of BBC management style from the man who was the very last in the long line of traditional comedy producer/directors who made programs with little or no executive interference. The series is finished, but in this memoir we can still relive that little bit of Yorkshire held so dear to the viewing public.

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Customer Reviews

What a perfect book for a fan of *Last of the Summer Wine*, and there are a lot of us out there! There are insights as to the actors (Foggy could be quite a pill, Seymour was charming) and loads of

information regarding various episodes and how they were filmed, etc. I can't praise this book too highly. It gave me the most enjoyment I've received from a book all year, and I read a lot! If you're a fan of LOTSW or know someone who is, or even someone who might be interested in the making of a Britcom, this is the one book you'll want to buy!!

The book does a wonderful job of providing the history of the LSW, insight into the actors and the challenges of filming in Yorkshire. Thank you, Alan, for writing this book and giving fans a delightful behind the scenes look at one greatest television shows of all times! American television was never this good. The BBC execs who canceled this show were idiots. I thought that long before reading the book, but even more so afterwards.

As a relatively recent fan of the long-running TV series, I find myself with a lot of questions about its history. I was hoping that this recent book, from the shows long-time Director/Producer, would answer some of those. And it does, but is oddly quiet on just as many topics as it provides insight into. While I appreciate Bell's desire not to write something full of gossip, he was uniquely positioned to know about most of the show's history as its Director and Producer from the early 1980s until its final end in 2010. We do get some insight in the book to casting choices and other decisions, though I did find it odd that the book is nearly over by the time we reach the death of Bill Owen in 1999, some 10 series before the show was cancelled. Fans looking for much about later decisions and casting will mostly be disappointed. Perhaps what is frustrating the most is the inconsistent follow-thru in the book regarding potentially notable things that almost happened. For example, I was surprised to learn that Brian Wilde's Foggy character was set at one point to return in 1988s "Crums" Christmas special in a one-off appearance. The book details why that didn't happen. But then Bell makes a casual comment that he (Bell) decided to make a cameo in 1996s Christmas special, "Extra Extra", because he thought it might be the shows final episode but never explains why. His comments about the second departure of Brian Wilde are very limited and seem contrary to other accounts I've read. Nor does he go into any detail about why the show continued after Bill Owen's death, even after he admits that the final episodes of the series where that was portrayed did not go over very well. Fans of the series will certainly get some enjoyment out of the book but the search for a definitive history of the show goes on.

I have read other books about this show, including bios of some of the actors, which I enjoyed more; but it was good to get the director's view on the same topic. I was interested in his dealings with the

actors, but not so much in the problems he had with BBC, etc. All in all, I'm glad I bought it.

Mr Bell gives a behind the scenes look at a much loved badly axed programme. While real fans will have read most of the info elsewhere it does give a slightly different and authoritative point of view. In the light of the last chapter one is left wondering about the "brains" at the BBC, and if they are trying for a childish payback in stopping the regular release of LOTSW DVD releases.

If you are looking for a behind-the-scenes look into the Britcom classic "Last of the Summer Wine," this is the book for you. Alan Bell gives insights into the characters and the people who played them. The funny, the unscripted and sometimes absurd are all featured here in this gem. A true must-have for fans of the show!

IT WAS REFRESHING TO READ AN HONEST ACCOUNT OF A PART OF HISTORY. WHEN SUMMER WINE ENDED, SO DID QUALITY, INTEGRITY, AND FAMILY VALUE. DO WE REALLY NEED MORE CRIME, VIOLENCE, AND FOUL LANGUAGE? WHO DECIDED THAT IS WHAT THE PEOPLE WANT?

This book is a terrific reveal of what was going on behind the scenes during the making of Summer Wine. It helps a lot if you are a devoted fan of the Summer Wine series. Mr. Bell explains how the filming was done, how the cast got along with each other, and how the sets were developed. Good times and bad times, Mr. Bell lays it on the line.

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