

= Last of the Summer Wine =

Last of the Summer Wine is a British sitcom created and written by Roy Clarke that was originally broadcast on the BBC . Last of the Summer Wine premiered as an episode of Comedy Playhouse on 4 January 1973 , and the first series of episodes followed on 12 November 1973 . From 1983 to 2010 , Alan J. W. Bell produced and directed all episodes of the show . The BBC confirmed on 2 June 2010 that Last of the Summer Wine would no longer be produced and the 31st series would be its last . Subsequently , the final episode was broadcast on 29 August 2010 . Tom Owen criticised the BBC for not permitting a special final episode . Roy Clarke , however , stated that he was fully aware this was the last series , and preferred the show to have a quiet ending . The final line was said by Peter Sallis , the longest serving actor . Repeats of the show are broadcast in the UK on Gold , Yesterday , and Drama . It is also seen in more than twenty @-@ five countries , including various PBS stations in the United States and on VisionTV in Canada . Last of the Summer Wine is the longest @-@ running comedy programme in Britain and the longest @-@ running sitcom in the world .

Last of the Summer Wine was set and filmed in and around Holmfirth , West Yorkshire , England , and centred on a trio of old men and their youthful antics ; the membership of the trio changed several times over the years . The original trio consisted of Bill Owen as the scruffy and childlike Compo Simmonite , Peter Sallis as deep @-@ thinking and meek Norman Clegg , and Michael Bates as authoritarian and snobbish Cyril Blamire . When Bates dropped out due to illness in 1976 after two series , the role of the third man of the trio was filled in various years up to the 30th series by the quirky war veteran Walter " Foggy " Dewhurst (Brian Wilde) , who had two lengthy stints in the series , the eccentric inventor Seymour Utterthwaite (Michael Aldridge) , and former police officer Herbert " Truly of The Yard " Truelove (Frank Thornton) . The men never seem to grow up , and they develop a unique perspective on their equally eccentric fellow townspeople through their stunts . Although in its early years the series generally revolved around the exploits of the main trio , with occasional interaction with a few recurring characters , over time the cast grew to include a variety of supporting characters and by later years the series was very much an ensemble piece . Each of these recurring characters contributed their own running jokes and subplots to the show and often becoming unwillingly involved in the schemes of the trio , or on occasion having their own , separate storylines .

After the death of Owen in 1999 , Compo was replaced at various times by his real @-@ life son , Tom Owen , as equally unkempt Tom Simmonite , Keith Clifford as Billy Hardcastle , a man who fancied himself as a descendant of Robin Hood , and Brian Murphy as the childish Alvin Smedley . Due to the age of the main cast , a new trio was formed during the 30th series featuring somewhat younger actors , and this format was used for the final two instalments of the show . This group consisted of Russ Abbot as a former milkman who fancied himself a secret agent , Luther " Hobbo " Hobdyke , Burt Kwouk as the electrical repairman , " Electrical " Entwistle , and Murphy as Alvin Smedley . Sallis and Thornton , both past members of the trio , continued in supporting roles alongside the new actors .

Although many feel the show 's quality declined over the years , Last of the Summer Wine continued to receive large audiences for the BBC and was praised for its positive portrayal of older people and family @-@ friendly humour . Many members of the Royal Family enjoyed the show . The programme was nominated for numerous awards and won the National Television Award for Most Popular Comedy Programme in 1999 . There were twenty @-@ one Christmas specials , three television films and a documentary film about the series . Last of the Summer Wine inspired other adaptations , including a television prequel , several novelisations , and stage adaptations .

= = Production = =

= = = History and development = = =

In 1972 , Duncan Wood , the BBC 's Head of Comedy , watched a comedy on television called The Misfit . Impressed by writer Roy Clarke 's ability to inject both comedy and drama into the sitcom , Wood offered Clarke the opportunity to write a sitcom . Clarke nearly turned the job down as he felt that the BBC 's idea for a programme about three old men was a dull concept for a half @-@ hour sitcom . Instead , Clarke proposed that the men should all be unmarried , widowed , or divorced and either unemployed or retired , leaving them free to roam around like adolescents in the prime of their lives , unfettered and uninhibited .

Clarke chose the original title , The Last of the Summer Wine , to convey the idea that the characters are not in the autumn of their lives but the summer , even though it may be " the last of the summer " . BBC producers hated this at first and insisted that it remain a temporary working title , while the cast worried that viewers would forget the name of the show . The working title was changed later to The Library Mob , a reference to one of the trio 's regular haunts early in the show . Clarke switched back to his original preference shortly before production began , a title that was shortened to Last of the Summer Wine after the pilot show .

The Last of the Summer Wine premiered as an episode of BBC 's Comedy Playhouse on 4 January 1973 . The pilot , " Of Funerals and Fish " , received enough positive response that a full series was commissioned to be broadcast before the end of the year . Although the initial series did not do well in the ratings , the BBC ordered a second series in 1975 .

= = = Filming = = =

Barry Took , who had produced a series of ultimately unsuccessful documentaries for the BBC about working men 's clubs , was partially responsible for the choice of location for the exterior shots . The programme which drew the highest ratings of the series focused on Burnlee Working Men 's Club , a club in the small West Yorkshire town of Holmfirth and Took saw Holmfirth 's potential as the backdrop of a television show . Took 's idea was passed to James Gilbert and Roy Clarke via Duncan Wood , who was at that time filming Comedy Playhouse . Gilbert and Clarke then travelled to Holmfirth and decided to use it as the setting for the pilot of Last of the Summer Wine .

Though the exterior shots were always filmed on location in Holmfirth and the surrounding countryside , the interior shots were , until the early 1990s , filmed in front of a live studio audience at BBC Television Centre in London . The amount of location work increased , however , as studio work became a drain on time and money . Under Alan J. W. Bell , Last of the Summer Wine became the first comedy series to do away with the live studio audience , moving all of the filming to Holmfirth . The episodes were filmed and then shown to preview audiences , whose laughter was recorded and then mixed into each episode 's soundtrack to provide a laugh track and avoid the use of canned laughter .

The show used actual businesses and homes in and around Holmfirth , and Nora Batty 's house , which is actually a Summer Wine themed holiday cottage where members of the public can stay in a replica of Nora Batty 's home . Although this has helped the Holmfirth economy and made it a tourist destination , tensions have occasionally surfaced between Holmfirth residents and the crew . One such incident , regarding compensation to local residents , prompted producer Alan J. W. Bell to consider not filming in Holmfirth any more . The situation escalated to the point that Bell filmed a scene in which Nora Batty put her house up for sale .

= = = Cast and crew = = =

Every episode of Last of the Summer Wine was written by Roy Clarke and every episode featured Peter Sallis as Clegg . The Comedy Playhouse pilot and all episodes of the first series were produced and directed by James Gilbert . Bernard Thompson produced and directed the second series of episodes in 1975 . In 1976 , Sydney Lotterby took over as producer and director . He directed all but two episodes of the third series ? Ray Butt directed " The Great Boarding House Bathroom Caper " and " Cheering up Gordon " . Lotterby directed two further series before departing the show in 1979 . In 1981 , Alan J. W. Bell took over as producer and director . Bell , in an effort to

get each scene exactly right , was known for his use of more film and more takes than his predecessors and for using wider angles that feature more of the local Holmfirth landscape .

In 1983 , Lotterby returned to the show at the insistence of Brian Wilde , who preferred Lotterby 's use of tight shots focused on the trio as they talked rather than Bell 's wide @-@ angle scenes . Lotterby produced and directed one additional series before departing again the same year . Bell then returned to the show beginning with the 1983 Christmas special and produced and directed all episodes of the show to the end of the 31st series .

In 2008 , Bell announced that he had quit as producer of Last of the Summer Wine . Citing differences with the BBC and his dislike of their indifference towards the series , Bell said , " I have now decided I will not do it again . I have had enough of the BBC 's attitude . " The announcement came following rumours initiated by Bell that the network would not commission another series of episodes following the 30th series and their indecision regarding a possible one @-@ off special . However , on 26 June 2009 , the BBC announced that it had recommissioned the show for a 31st series with Bell continuing as producer and director .

= = = Music = = =

Composer and conductor Ronnie Hazlehurst , who has also produced themes for such series as Are You Being Served ? , Yes Minister , and Only Fools and Horses , created the theme for the show . The BBC initially disliked Hazlehurst 's theme , feeling it was not proper for a comedy programme to have such mellow music . He was asked to play the music faster for more comedic effect but eventually his original slower version was accepted .

The theme , an instrumental work , featured lyrics three times . The 1981 Christmas special , " Whoops " , had two verses of lyrics written by Roy Clarke that were performed over the closing credits . The 1983 film , " Getting Sam Home " , used those two verses , with an additional two and played them over the opening credits . Another altered version was sung during Compo 's funeral in the 2000 episode " Just a Small Funeral " . Bill Owen also wrote a different version of the lyrics but this version was never used during an episode of the show .

Composing the score for each episode until his death in 2007 , Hazlehurst spent an average of ten hours per episode watching scenes and making notes for music synchronisation . Hazlehurst then recorded the music using an orchestra consisting of a guitar , harmonica , two violins , a viola , cello , accordion , horn , bass , flute , and percussion . The distinctive harmonica was played by Harry Pitch , who had featured in the 1970 one @-@ hit @-@ wonder " Groovin With Mr Bloe " .

= = = Cancellation = = =

Despite numerous cast and production changes over the years , Last of the Summer Wine continued to be popular with viewers and was renewed year after year despite reports to the contrary . Rumours circulated as early as the 1980s that the BBC wanted to end the show and replace it with a new programme aimed at a younger audience . Its popularity made this decision hard to justify , however , since even repeats sometimes received ratings of as many as five million viewers per episode .

In December 2008 , Alan J. W. Bell stated in an interview with The Daily Telegraph that the BBC had not yet commissioned a new series and that bosses at the network told him one would not be produced . Bell criticised this decision , stating that " millions still enjoy the series and the actors love being involved " and that it would be a terrible blow to the shops and businesses in Holmfirth who have come to depend on tourist revenue . The BBC denied these claims , saying that a decision had not yet been reached whether to commission another series or not .

It was confirmed on 26 June 2009 that a 31st series of 6 episodes had been commissioned for transmission in 2010 . However , on 2 June 2010 , the BBC announced that it would not renew Last of the Summer Wine after its thirty @-@ first series was broadcast during the summer of 2010 . The final episode of the show , " How Not to Cry at Weddings " , was subsequently broadcast on 29 August 2010 .

= = Characters and casting = =

Initially , the only certain cast member for the show was Peter Sallis . Clarke had already collaborated on a few scripts with him and the character of Norman Clegg was created especially for Sallis , who liked the character and agreed to play him . He was soon joined by an actor he had previously worked with , comedy actor Michael Bates as Cyril Blamire .

James Gilbert had seen film actor Bill Owen playing northern characters in the Royal Court Theatre and proposed to cast him as Compo Simmonite . Clarke , who initially saw Owen as an archetypal cockney who could not play as solid a northern character as Compo was meant to be , recognised Owen 's potential only after going to London for a read @-@ through with him .

On @-@ screen chemistry with existing players determined the later changes to the cast . Brian Wilde , Michael Aldridge and Frank Thornton each brought a sense of completion to the trio after the departure of the preceding third man . Tom Owen provided a direct link between his father and himself after the death of Bill Owen . Keith Clifford was added following three popular guest appearances on the show . Brian Murphy was chosen as Nora Batty 's neighbour because of his work on *George and Mildred* , where he played the hen @-@ pecked husband to a strong @-@ willed woman .

In 2008 , the BBC announced that Russ Abbot would join the cast as a relatively more youthful actor in series 30 . Abbot was cast to allow Sallis and Thornton to reduce their role on the show to only indoor scenes . Abbot portrayed Luther " Hobbo " Hobdyke , who formed a new trio with Entwistle and Alvin . Entwistle , played by Burt Kwouk , was formerly a supporting character brought in to replace Wesley Pegden after the death of actor Gordon Wharmby , but whose role on the show steadily increased in the previous two series .

The original cast of *Last of the Summer Wine* also included a handful of characters with whom the trio regularly interacted . Kathy Staff was chosen to play Compo 's neighbour , Nora Batty . Gilbert was initially sceptical about casting Staff but changed his mind after she padded herself to look bigger and read from a scene between her character and Owen 's . This group was rounded out by characters at two locations frequented by the trio : John Comer and Jane Freeman as Sid and Ivy , the quarrelling husband @-@ and @-@ wife owners of the local café ; and Blake Butler and Rosemary Martin as Mr. Wainwright and Mrs. Partridge , the librarians having a not @-@ so @-@ secret affair . Butler and Martin , however , were dropped as major characters after the first series . According to Peter Sallis , Roy Clarke felt there was little more he could do with them .

Supporting cast members were added throughout the run of the show . The only addition with no professional acting experience was the Holmfirth resident Gordon Wharmby , who performed so well during his audition as mechanic Wesley Pegden that Alan J. W. Bell cast him in one episode . Pegden became a regular character after a positive audience reception .

When Alan J. W. Bell took over as producer , the plots of *Last of the Summer Wine* moved away from the original dialogue @-@ packed scenes in the pub and the library ; guest actors were brought in to interact with the trio in new situations . Although many of these guest appearances would last for only one episode , some led to a permanent role on the show , as in the cases of Gordon Wharmby , Thora Hird , Jean Alexander , Stephen Lewis , Dora Bryan , Keith Clifford , Brian Murphy , Josephine Tewson , June Whitfield , Barbara Young , and Trevor Bannister . Other noted guests on the programme included John Cleese , Ron Moody , Sir Norman Wisdom , Eric Sykes , Liz Fraser , Stanley Lebor , and Philip Jackson .

= = Scenario = =

Last of the Summer Wine focused on a trio of older men and their youthful antics . The original trio consisted of Compo Simmonite , Norman Clegg , and Cyril Blamire . Blamire left in 1976 , when Michael Bates fell ill shortly before filming of the third series , requiring Clarke to hastily rewrite the series with a new third man . The third member of the trio would be recast four times over the next three decades : Foggy Dewhurst in 1976 , Seymour Utterthwaite in 1986 , Foggy again in 1990 ,

and Truly Truelove in 1997 . After Compo died in 2000 , Compo 's son , Tom Simmonite , filled the gap for the rest of that series , and Billy Hardcastle joined the cast as the third lead character in 2001 . The trio became a quartet between 2003 and 2006 when Alvin Smedley moved in next @-@ door to Nora Batty , but returned to the usual threesome in 2006 when Billy Hardcastle left the show . The role of supporting character Entwistle steadily grew on the show until the beginning of the 30th series , when he and Alvin were recruited by Hobbo Hobdyke , a former milkman with ties to MI5 , to form a new trio of volunteers who respond to any emergency .

The trio explored the world around them , experiencing a second childhood with no wives , jobs , or responsibilities . They passed the time by speculating about their fellow townspeople and testing inventions . Regular subplots in the first decade of the show included : Sid and Ivy bickering over the management of the café , Mr Wainwright and Mrs Partridge having a secret love affair that everyone knows about , Wally trying to get away from Nora 's watchful eye , Foggy 's exaggerated war stories , and Compo 's schemes to win the affections of Nora Batty .

The number of subplots on the show grew as more cast members were added . Regular subplots since the 1980s included : Howard and Marina trying to have an affair without Howard 's wife finding out (a variation of the Wainwright @-@ Partridge subplot of the 1970s) , the older women meeting for tea and discussing their theories about men and life , Auntie Wainwright trying to sell unwanted merchandise to unsuspecting customers , Smiler trying to find a woman , Barry trying to better himself (at the insistence of Glenda) , and Tom trying to stay one step ahead of the repo man .

= = Episodes = =

Last of the Summer Wine was the longest @-@ running comedy programme in Britain , and the longest running situation comedy in the world . Each series has between six and twelve episodes ; most were thirty minutes in length , with some specials running longer . There were 295 episodes and 31 series between 1973 and 2010 , counting the pilot , all episodes of the series , specials , and two films .

The episodes are listed here .

= = = Specials = = =

In 1978 , the BBC commissioned a Last of the Summer Wine Christmas special instead of a new series . Titled " Small Tune on a Penny Wassail " , it was broadcast on 26 December 1978 . Other Christmas programmes followed in 1979 and 1981 . The 1981 special , " Whoops " , gained 17 million viewers and was beaten only by Coronation Street for the number one spot . Christmas shows were produced infrequently thereafter and sometimes were the only new episodes in years without an order for a new series . This happened often during the 1980s when Roy Clarke 's commitment to Open All Hours prevented the production of a full series every year . The specials often included well @-@ known guest stars such as John Cleese and June Whitfield .

The first New Year special , " The Man who Nearly Knew Pavarotti " , was commissioned in 1994 . The hour @-@ long show was broadcast on 1 January 1995 and featured Norman Wisdom as a piano player who had lost the confidence to play . A second New Year programme was produced and broadcast in 2000 to celebrate the new millennium . It featured the second guest appearance by Keith Clifford and a guest appearance by Dora Bryan . Titled " Last Post and Pigeon " , the show ran for sixty minutes and dealt with the trio 's pilgrimage to visit World War II graves in France . Part of this special was shot on location in France . A third New Year show , titled " I Was a Hitman for Primrose Dairies " , was broadcast on 31 December 2008 and introduced Hobbo and the new trio he formed with Entwistle and Alvin .

= = = Films = = =

In 1983 , Bill Owen suggested to returning producer Alan J. W. Bell that Roy Clarke 's novelisation of the show should be made into a feature @-@ length special . Other British sitcoms such as

Steptoe and Son and Dad 's Army had previously produced films made for the cinema , but the BBC were initially sceptical as they had never before commissioned a film based on a comedy programme for original broadcast on television . They nevertheless commissioned a ninety @-@ minute film named " Getting Sam Home " , which was broadcast on 27 December 1983 , and started a trend which would continue with other British sitcoms , including Only Fools and Horses .

After the success of " Getting Sam Home " , a second film was made in 1986 . Titled " Uncle of the Bride " , the film featured the introduction of Michael Aldridge as Seymour , the new third man of the trio . The plot centred on the marriage of Seymour 's niece , Glenda (Sarah Thomas) , to Barry (Mike Grady) . Also making her first appearance in the film was Thora Hird as Seymour 's sister and Glenda 's mother , Edie , as well as re @-@ introducing Gordon Wharmby as Edie 's husband Wesley , previously seen in a popular one @-@ off appearance . The second film proved a success and all four new characters were carried over to the show beginning with the ninth series in 1986 .

= = = Documentaries = = =

A documentary film was commissioned to celebrate the 25th anniversary of Last of the Summer Wine . Produced and directed by Alan J. W. Bell , it featured interviews with the majority of cast and crew members , outtakes from the show , and a behind @-@ the @-@ scenes look at production . Segments with Duncan Wood and Barry Took explained the origins of the show and how it came to be filmed in Holmfirth . The documentary was broadcast on 30 March 1997 .

An updated version of the documentary was commissioned for the 30th anniversary of the series . Broadcast on 13 April 2003 , this version featured an expanded interview with Brian Wilde and new interviews with Brian Murphy and Burt Kwouk .

= = = DVD releases = = =

In September 2002 , Universal Playback (licensed by the BBC) began releasing boxed sets of episodes on DVD for region two . Each set contains two consecutive full series of episodes . Three " best of " collections as well as four sets devoted to individual series have been released for region one . The first , simply titled Last of the Summer Wine , was released in 2003 and includes early episodes from the 1970s and 1980s . The second collection , titled Last of the Summer Wine : Vintage 1995 , followed in 2004 and includes episodes from series seventeen and the 30th anniversary documentary . A 2008 release named Last of the Summer Wine : Vintage 1976 focuses on the third series of the show and includes bonus interviews with Peter Sallis , Brian Wilde , and Frank Thornton . A fourth title , Last of the Summer Wine : Vintage 1977 , was released in September 2008 . It focuses on the fourth series and feature a rare 1977 interview with Roy Clarke . Last of the Summer Wine : Vintage 1979 was released in June 2009 . This fifth collection included episodes from series five and includes bonus interviews . A set of Christmas specials that was originally broadcast between 1978 and 1982 followed in October 2009 . Last of the Summer Wine : Vintage 1982 ? 1983 was released on 27 April 2010 . The new collection features all episodes from the sixth and seventh series , but does not include the 1982 Christmas special " All Mod Conned " .

= = Other adaptations = =

= = = First of the Summer Wine = = =

A spin @-@ off prequel show , First of the Summer Wine , premiered on BBC1 in 1988 . The new programme was written by Roy Clarke and used different actors to follow the activities of the principal characters from Last of the Summer Wine in the months leading up to World War II . Unlike its mother show , First of the Summer Wine was not filmed in Holmfirth . Period music was used instead of Ronnie Hazlehurst 's score to create a more World War II era atmosphere . New supporting characters were added to those from Last of the Summer Wine . Peter Sallis and

Jonathan Linsley were the only actors from the original series to appear in the spin @-@ off : Sallis played the father of his own character from the original show and Linsley appeared during the second series as a different character .

The spin @-@ off show could not build on its early success and was cancelled after two series of thirteen episodes in 1989 . Although the BBC has never rerun the show , it has been broadcast on Gold and internationally .

= = = Cooper and Walsh = = =

In 2014 , it was announced that long @-@ time supporting actors Ken Kitson and Louis Emerick had returned to Holmfirth to reprise their roles as Police Constables Cooper and Walsh in the pilot for a new proposed spin @-@ off , Cooper and Walsh . Alan J.W. Bell as well as crew from Last of the Summer Wine were involved in the creation of two short films while Kitson and Emerick appealed for funding through crowd @-@ sourcing sites in the hopes of gaining enough support to produce a feature film featuring the duo or even a television series . Associate Producer Terry Bartlam believed there was enough of a cope with Cooper and Walsh that they could carry their own series and that this spin @-@ off could be the answer to those who believed Last of the Summer Wine should have been given a proper ending .

= = = Stage adaptations = = =

A live production of Last of the Summer Wine , known informally as the " summer season " , was produced in Bournemouth in 1984 . While Bill Owen and Peter Sallis reprised their roles as Compo and Clegg , Brian Wilde chose not to take part because of personal differences with Owen . The show focused on the men 's interaction with Clegg 's new neighbour , Howard (Kenneth Waller) , and his wife , Pearl , played by a local actress . The first act built up to the appearance of Marina (Jean Fergusson) , who was in correspondence with Howard . At the end of the first act , Marina was revealed to be a blonde sexpot . Howard and Marina 's story line was partly based on an early subplot of the television show . In the first series , the librarian , Mr. Wainwright , was having a love affair with his married assistant , Mrs. Partridge . Despite their efforts to keep the plot a secret , especially from Mrs. Partridge 's husband , the trio of old men were well aware of the affair . The summer season reversed the roles : Howard became the married partner , and the challenge was to keep the affair secret from his wife .

The summer season proved to be a success and frequently played to packed houses . In 1985 , the show was once again produced , first as a two @-@ week tour of Britain , and then as another summer season in Bournemouth . Fergusson returned for the second summer season , once again playing Marina . Robert Fyfe replaced Waller in the role of Howard , and Juliette Kaplan took the role of Pearl for this season . Although the new characters were not originally intended to be carried over to the television programme , Roy Clarke included them in four of the following six episodes of the 1985 series , beginning with the episode " Catching Digby 's Donkey " . All three characters remained until the end of the sitcom .

An amended version of the show toured across Britain in 1987 . Sallis was reluctant to appear in the new production , and his role in the show was rewritten and played by Derek Fowlds . Because Owen was the only member of the television show 's trio to appear in the production , it was retitled Compo Plays Cupid . Once again , the summer season was a success .

A new stage adaptation of the show debuted in 2003 . Based on Clarke 's novel The Moonbather , the play was first performed by the Scunthorpe Little Theatre Club from 7 to 11 October 2003 . Using new actors to perform the roles of Compo , Clegg , and Foggy , the play featured the trio as they attempted to get to the bottom of the disturbance created by a near @-@ naked man in the town . The play was later performed in Eastbourne by Eastbourne Theatres from 15 July 2009 to 8 August 2009 before touring the country through November 2009 .

In 2010 , it was announced that long @-@ time supporting cast members Ken Kitson and Louis Emerick would spin their characters off into their own stage adaptation , titled An Arresting Night .

Kitson and Emerick , who appeared together on Last of the Summer Wine as Police Constables Cooper and Walsh from 2003 to 2010 , reprised their roles in an improvised stage play . While some elements of the series will be used , the majority of the play was improvised , with Kitson and Emerick each deriving their cues of what to do from the audience . The play was successfully performed in Holmfirth , after which dates were announced in Emerick 's hometown on the Wirral Peninsula .

= = = Other media = = =

Coronet Books released a novelisation of Last of the Summer Wine in 1974 . Written by Roy Clarke as an unbroadcast original story , the novel featured Compo , Clegg and Blamire helping their friend , Sam , enjoy one last night with a glam girl . The book became the basis for the Last of the Summer Wine film , " Getting Sam Home " , with Blamire being replaced by Foggy . In the late 1980s , Roy Clarke wrote novels featuring Compo , Clegg and Seymour . The books were published by Penguin Books under the series heading Summer Wine Chronicles , and included such titles as Gala Week and The Moonbather . Clarke later adapted The Moonbather into a stage play .

In the early 1980s , a daily comic strip based on the show was drawn by Roger Mahoney and appeared in the Daily Star . A compilation of these strips , published by Express Books , was released in 1983 .

In 1993 , the Summer Wine Appreciation Society asked their members for their favourite musical themes from Last of the Summer Wine . Ronnie Hazlehurst used the resulting list for an independently released CD collection , which was released under the name Last of the Summer Wine : Music from the TV Show . BBC Radio released audio @-@ only versions of episodes starting in 1995 . Peter Sallis provided narration to compensate for the loss of the televised visual elements . All twelve audio episodes were released in CD format .

In 1976 , a selection of early scripts from the series was published as Last of the Summer Wine Scripts . A companion guide to the show , Last of the Summer Wine : The Finest Vintage , was released in 2000 . The book was written by Morris Bright and Robert Ross and chronicled the show from its inception through the end of the 2000 series . Included were interviews with cast and crew , a character guide , and an episode guide . Both the companion guide and its updated 30th anniversary version are now out of print . A release by journalist Andrew Vine titled Last of the Summer Wine : The Inside Story of the World 's Longest @-@ running Comedy Programme covered the entire series , including the story of the final words of the series . It was released on 16 August 2010 . On 5 November 2012 , a new book entitled " Last Of the Summer Wine : From The Directors Chair " was released and was written by producer and director Alan J.W. Bell .

= = Reception = =

During its first series , Last of the Summer Wine did not receive a high ratings share . The second series proved to be a success , however , and two episodes made it to the top ten programmes of the week . The programme has since consistently been a favourite in the ratings , peaking at 18 @.@ 8 million viewers for an episode shown on 10 February 1985 . The premiere of the 28th series in 2007 brought in an 18 @.@ 6 percent share of viewers in the 6 : 20 time slot with an average of 3 @.@ 2 million viewers . Last of the Summer Wine 's audience grew from 2 @.@ 7 million to 3 @.@ 4 million over the 30 minutes . The show was beaten for the night only by Channel 4 's Big Brother with 3 @.@ 6 million viewers at 9 : 00 p.m. , although the reality show had a smaller share of viewers for its time slot . The 29th series finale , which was broadcast on 31 August 2008 , was watched by 4 @.@ 2 million people , giving the network a 22 @.@ 5 % share for the night . The 31st series continued to bring in over four million viewers , with the series opener pulling in 4 @.@ 77 million viewers for an overall 21 @.@ 6 % share of the ratings for the night .

Several members of the royal family are viewers of Last of the Summer Wine . While presenting an OBE to Roy Clarke in 2002 , Prince Charles said that his grandmother , the Queen Mother , had introduced him to the show . The Queen told Dame Thora Hird during a 2001 meeting that Last of

the Summer Wine was her favourite television programme .

A 2003 survey by Radio Times found that Last of the Summer Wine was the programme readers most wanted to see cancelled . With nearly 12 @, @ 000 votes in the survey , the show received one @-@ third of the total vote , and twice as many votes as the runner up in the poll , Heartbeat . Alan J. W. Bell responded that Radio Times has always been anti @-@ Last of the Summer Wine , and Roy Clarke remarked that people who dislike the show " shouldn 't switch it on " unless they are " too idle to turn it off " . A 2008 survey by County Life magazine , which named the show the worst thing about Yorkshire , was disputed by members of the Holme Valley Business Association , who said the show was good for business . However , many members of the Holme Valley Business Association are proprietors of tea rooms that cater primarily to coach parties of elderly fans of the show . The BBC wanted to cancel Last of the Summer Wine for years in favour of a new programme aimed at a younger audience , but the show remained too popular for cancellation ; even repeats received ratings of as much as five million viewers per episode . The show came 14th in a high @-@ profile 2004 BBC poll to find Britain 's Best Sitcom , and was praised for portraying older people in a non @-@ stereotypical , positive , and active manner . It was also praised for its clever and at times philosophical writing , and for being a family @-@ friendly show .

Last of the Summer Wine was nominated numerous times for two British television industry awards . The show was proposed five times between 1973 and 1985 for the British Academy Film Awards , twice for the Best Situation Comedy Series award (in 1973 and 1979) and three times for the Best Comedy Series award (in 1982 , 1983 , and 1985) . The show was also been considered for the National Television Awards four times since 1999 (in 1999 , 2000 , 2003 , and 2004) , each time in the Most Popular Comedy Programme category . In 1999 the show won the National Television Award for Most Popular Comedy Programme .