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Adventures on Kythera

Australian TV serial : pre-1991 : dir. : 7 x 30 min
prod: : scr: : dir.ph.:
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Cast unknown

Ref:	Pages	Sources	Stills	Words	Ω	□	€	Z	⊗	Copy on VHS	Last Viewed
2035a	1½	1	2	635	3	-	-	-	-	No	August 91



Stills left and above from *What's On TV* – (with apologies for the poor quality, but these are the only images available). Spike is pictured above left – hence “spiking the cannon” – and Johnny centre.

What's On TV notes:

“Young people’s adventures on a Greek island.”¹

- The gang meet a famous journalist.
- Spike plans to run away with a mysterious American.²
- The children all get back together again and recruit a new member to their gang.
- The gang try to save an old man's house.
- Johnny's grandmother takes a turn for the worse.

¹ Or “children” as we call them in English...

² Bad, *naughty* Spike!

- Quite by chance the gang help arrest a terrorist.

Seven-part adventure series set on a Greek island.

1 : "Five is a Magic Number"

First in a seven-part drama series set on the remote Greek island of Kythera. Five children, from England, Australia and Greece meet on holiday and form a secret gang. During their quest to save the local museum they stumble across treasure.

2 : "Stool Pigeon"

When the children find an injured homing pigeon they manage to foil a plot to steal a valuable icon.

3 : "Things Go Off With a Bang"

The children make a discovery during a snorkelling expedition but Spike is nearly injured by a bomb explosion.

4 : "Old Bones"

The children explore a labyrinth of caves but soon get lost.

5 : "Pieces of Eight"

The children search for a thief on the Greek islands.

6 : "Safe Harbour"

The children find a kidnapped marine archaeologist.

7 : "Not Really the End"

Final episode of the Australian adventure series sees the children leaving the island to return home. "

[no listing in "The Golden Age of Children's Television", "Halliwell's Television Companion", "History of Television", "How Sweet It Was", "Into the Box of Delights - a History of Children's Television", "Television's Greatest Hits" or "25 Years of ITV - 1955-1980"]

One glance at these plot threads is sufficient - this is pure Enid Blyton "Famous Five" stuff, but without the royalty payments. When will children's film-makers catch on that hackneyed adventures of this sort are as patronising as they are passé? Insistent bazouki music and holiday brochure settings notwithstanding, this serial is interchangeable with a hundred others made over the last 30 years, and if the children do not approach the storyline with a shred of conviction, that is hardly surprising. They're merely going through the motions, just as the scriptwriter was.

That said, these Australian children's productions from the 70s and 80s do have a winsome charm all their own, and were less preoccupied with shaping kid's attitudes on a checklist of social "issues" than children's TV output today. This was before waves of adult paranoia emanating from the States would permeate western culture in the form of street angst, shapeless "designer" kidswear and soaps obsessed either with dating, divorce, or the latest variety of "abuse". If there was any social propaganda going on in these earlier ripping yarns, it was more of the good scout variety, and hence less objectionable, although it scarcely seems likely the intended audience would be able to stomach them now. Children have been conditioned, have they not, to expect more abrasive, loud and "on message" entertainment.

See "**MYSTERY ISLAND**" and "**MYSTERY OF CASTLE HOUSE**", both spiffing examples from Australia of how to sort out a few beastly crooks during the hols, and subject index under **BOATING, FOLLOW THE LEADER (children's gangs), GRANDPARENTS, SEASIDE HOLIDAYS, SERIALISATIONS, SWIMMING** and the ubiquitous **KIDS OUTWIT THE CROOKS**.