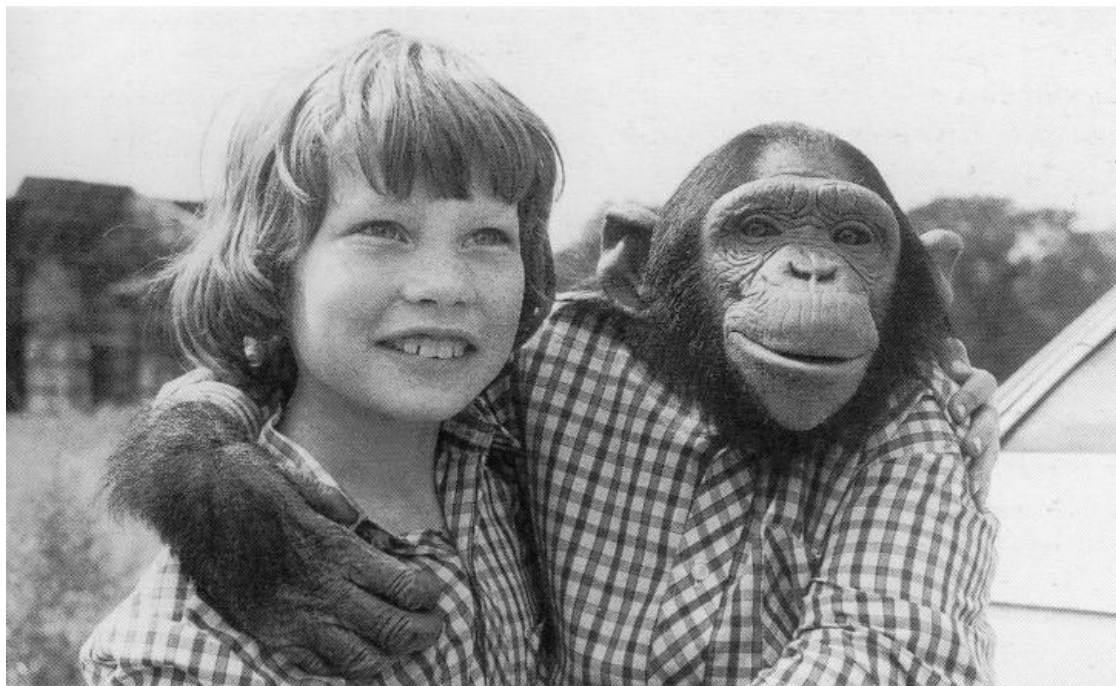


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Chimpmates

UK serial : 1976-78 : dir. Harold Orton : Eyeline / Children's Film Foundation 19x c15 min
 prod: Harold Orton : scr: Patricia Latham, Frank Godwin & Harold Orton : dir.ph.: Ray Orton
Lynne Morgan; Dexter Fletcher; Marcus Evans
 Philip da Costa; Godfrey James; Veronica Lang; George A Cooper; William Mervyn; Norman Bird; Lucy Griffiths;
 Roy Kinnear; Leslie Dwyer; Graham Stark; Hilda Fenemore; Sam Kydd; Graham Chinn; Brian Godfrey;
 Peter Duncan; Andrew Burleigh; Alice the chimp

Ref:	Pages	Sources	Stills	Words	Ω 8 ∅ M ☼	Copy on VHS	Last Viewed
6141	2.5	3	1	1,123	3 - - - -	No	unseen



*That's Dexter Fletcher – on the left – with an early cloning experiment (the technique as yet unperfected)
 Source: The Moving Picture Boy*

The British Film Catalogue 1895-1985 listings:

"Children. [First series – 1976] Children's pet chimpanzee causes trouble.

- 1) "Double Trouble" (16 min)
- 2) "Wedding Bells" (15 min)
- 3) "Baby Sitters" (16 min)
- 4) "Monkey Tricks" (14 min)
- 5) "On the Tiles" (15 min)
- 6) "The Big Nick" (17 min)"

"Children. [Second series – 1977] Further trouble caused by pet chimpanzee.

- 1) "Alice Goes Pop" (17 min)
- 2) "Treasure Hunt" (19 min)
- 3) "Holiday Spirit" (16 min)
- 4) "Waxworks" (14 min)
- 5) "Airborne" (18 min)
- 6) "The Go-Karters" (18 min)
- 7) "Zoo Time" (17 min)"

"Children. [Third series – 1978] Misadventures of pet chimpanzee.

- 1) "Tit for Tat" (16 min)

- 2) "Gran's Moving Day" (16 min)
- 3) "Alice at School" (16 min)
- 4) "Alice at Sea" (17 min)
- 5) "Chimp Champ" (15 min)
- 6) "Alice Goes Magic" (16 min)"

Film Review 1976-77 entry:

"A series of short stories, each complete in itself, but with [the] same characters and all concerning the adventures of three children and the chimpanzee who has been "wished" on the family by their ne'er-do-well uncle. The films:

"**MONKEY TRICKS**" is all about the chaos the Chimp causes in the house even when it tries to help domestically!

"**BABY SITTERS**" is about more chaos when the Chimp and a baby get mixed up!

"**DOUBLE TROUBLE**" is about the Chimp on holiday with the Family.

In "**ON THE TILES**", the Chimp makes good with some fire-fighting exploits.

"**THE BIG KICK**" is about the Chimp's joining in a football match.

"**WEDDING BELLS**" again makes up for initial chaos by bringing about a happy-ever-after ending.

"Alice" comes from Southham Zoo, Warwicks! Dir, Pro & Screenplay: Harold Orton. (Eyeline Films-C.F.F.) Each small film runs just over the quarter-hour. Colour. Cert. U."

Excerpt from **The Moving Picture Boy** entry on Dexter Fletcher:

"Dexter - one of the few remarkable child actors who are clearly going to be remarkable adult actors - followed two talented elder brothers into the profession... His 1972 film debut was in a short Road Safety film, and his role in the "Steptoe" spinoff was marginal to say the least. He had a genuine lead in the first "CHIMP MATES" series for the Children's Film Foundation, but sprang to worldwide notice in the small part of "Babyface" in "BUGSY MALONE", giving a sublime bit of method acting before yelling "Geronimo!" and hurtling off to rout the forces of evil with a baseball bat.

After "BUGSY", Dexter was retained on option for two films that failed to materialise, one for Alan Parker and one for David Puttnam. The latter was to have been a Charlie Chaplin biopic, with Dexter playing the great man as a child, but Chaplin himself vetoed the project.

During 1977 Dexter played Puck in the Royal Shakespeare Company production of "A Midsummer Night's Dream", and a year later repeated the role (non-singing) in Benjamin Britten's operatic version at Glyndebourne. Also in 1978 he played - quite magnificently - the classic role of Gavroche in an Anglo-French TV film of "LES MISERABLES", confirming not only his intelligence and passion but an enviable command of physical acting: his death-fall when struck by a bullet in mid-stride, the instantly lifeless body flopping into the gutter like a rag doll, was amazing.

With searching, sometimes baleful eyes and an upper lip so long and curling that it made Gordon Gebert look positively under-developed, Dexter's face was always watchable, but his talent came across almost as strongly on radio. A further spell with the RSC in 1982 gave him added stage experience. None of this was to be wasted.

At 17, still looking a mere kid, he played a sort of modern-dress Puck in a whimsical documentary on Covent Garden, and had a good secondary role in the crew of "THE BOUNTY" (84). Then he played Al Pacino's long-suffering son Ned in his older phase in the churlishly under-valued "REVOLUTION" (85)..."

[no listing in "Halliwell's Film Guide", "Leonard Maltin's Movie and Video Guide 2001", "Speelfilm Encyclopedie", "The Critics' Film Guide", "The Good Film and Video Guide", "Movies on TV and Videocassette 1988-89", "Radio Times Guide to Films", "Rating the Movies (1990)", "The Sunday Times Guide to Movies on Television", "The Time Out Film Guide", "TV Times Film & Video Guide 1995", "Variety Movie Guide 1993", "Video Movie Guide 1993" or "The Virgin Film Guide"]

No further information currently available. These serials postdate my "*Children's Film Foundation Catalogue and Index of Films 1972*". It's perhaps indicative of the C.F.F. mindset that they thought the idea of a chimp in the family hilarious enough to run for three years. Pretty much the same joke had been the subject of a series of early British silents way back in 1899, with titles such as "**TEASING THE MONKEY**" and "**THE MONKEY'S REVENGE**", so it was already looking distinctly worn by 1948, when "**WILLIAM COMES TO TOWN**" paired William Graham with a frolicsome primate. By 1976 even the traditional "chimpanzees' tea-party" at zoos had become a thing of the past, and the joke had pretty much resolved down to a long-running series of PG Tlps tea commercials. But that was no impediment to the C.F.F.

[Dexter Fletcher](#), 9, dropped out (clever boy) after the first series of six episodes in 1976, and seems to have been replaced by Marcus Evans. He returned to the C.F.F. for "**4D SPECIAL AGENTS**" (81) which sounds really quite too exciting. New versions of "**LES MISERABLES**" are made roughly every ten minutes, so your best chance now to appreciate him as a boy – aside from his brief role in "**BUGSY MALONE**" – is as the haunted sidekick of freakshow proprietor Freddie Jones in "**THE ELEPHANT MAN**" (80). The boy has such a sensual mouth that his mere presence in the film raises wholly different misgivings about the sadistic showman. Nothing else is currently known of Lynne Morgan or Marcus Evans.

See subject index under (deep breath) [ANIMALS & BIRDS](#), [BABIES & INFANTS](#), [CHILDREN'S FILM \(& TV\) FOUNDATION](#), [COMEDY](#), [FOOTBALL](#), [GRANDPARENTS](#), [SERIALISATIONS](#), [SCHOOL](#), [SPORT](#) (go-karting) and [TREASURE HUNTS](#).