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**BBC** Worldwide

# MONARCH

SERIES THREE

# OF THE GLEN

The laird of Glenbogle is back, facing new challenges and romantic obstacles

**WEBWATCH**

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**Drama**

11 x 50 minutes

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# MONARCH

## SERIES THREE OF THE GLEN

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**Drama**

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## SERIES THREE OF THE GLEN

### Introduction

The driveway seems endless; its edges crowded with a riot of rhododendrons and scented pine trees, set against a backdrop of misty mountains. One final bend and then there it is: an impossibly romantic pile with fairytale turrets – Glenbogle. Just one glimpse of this Victorian, gothic indulgence is enough to convince anyone who still needs convincing that Archie MacDonald, Laird of Glenbogle, is right to move heaven and earth to battle for his birthright. But, in the third series of *Monarch of the Glen*, the new, young clan chief is far from being master of all he surveys – the bank is about to take over, in the stern and steely shape of Stella Moon.

Producer Jeremy Gwilt is unrepentant at turning Archie's world upside down. "We always have to create a challenge for Archie, new and fresh obstacles," he explains. "Stella – played marvellously by Alexandra Gilbreath – comes in to administer the estate until it turns a profit. "It is a major blow for Archie, but there is no alternative; he is staring down the barrel of a gun. She is the least worst option. It is like a meteorite hitting planet Earth and the ripple effect engulfs each and every one at Glenbogle, including Golly the ghillie and Duncan, Molly, Hector and Lexie. It is definitely a new challenge for all of them."

The challenge for the production team was to ensure the new series would consolidate and build on this BBC drama's huge success. The beauty of the *Monarch* setting has captured the imagination of viewers across the world. Countries as diverse as Australia (where it is the number one imported show), America, Dubai, Sweden, Israel and Hong Kong have bought into the Highland idyll of Glenbogle. To date, more than 50million people worldwide have tuned in.

Douglas Rae, executive producer at Ecosse Films explains why. "There is a universal appeal to the series because it is set in stunning countryside, it's about an interesting, dysfunctional family and it mixes strong emotions with comedy – a very potent brew.

"Also on a Sunday evening, people are feeling melancholic and not looking forward to Monday. We provide an antidote, a bit of light and colour, happiness and old-fashioned family values."

Victoria Evans, executive producer for BBC Scotland, hints that Archie's happiness may be hard won. "The pressure is on in Archie's complicated love life as well as his finances," she reveals. "But he is beginning to mature emotionally and he has to learn that he needs to make an alliance – albeit an uneasy one – with Stella. There is no easy way out.

"These estate homes are big black holes as far as money is concerned and Archie has so many people depending on him. He does finally realise he can't do it on his own."

Adds Douglas Rae, "We have to keep coming up with great stories, without resorting to Highland whimsy. That is made easier because the characters are so strong and so popular. There is a lot of potential to develop each of them individually.

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## SERIES THREE OF THE GLEN

### Introduction continued.../2

"At the end of the last series, Archie was handed the keys of the house and had become the Laird, with Hector as the elder statesman. Series Three is about how this man decides what sort of estate he is going to try and create for future generations.

"Now he has to confront the hard, commercial realities of the world. It brings out some of his cunning as he begins to assert himself in the role of Laird, he is much more pro-active and uses his initiative to inspire other people. He is a driven man with the bit between his teeth."

For Michael Chaplin, writer and creator of *Monarch of the Glen*, the new series is a chance to delve deeper into the background of characters viewers have come to love. "Most of the stories come from the relationships between this 'family' of characters – not just Archie and his parents, but the community who live in and around the house. We have only just begun to scratch the surface of some of them.

"The cast are all tremendously good, not a weak link anywhere, and that means we can switch the focus away from Archie, or Hector, and it can still be as strong. We learn more about Molly and Hector's early life and about Golly's past – even Duncan's love life. We also see their different ways in fighting Stella. Lexie is the tremendously feisty character, full of Glaswegian put-downs and Golly comes out with gnomish utterances to try and confuse Stella."

Barbara McKissack, Head of Drama for BBC Scotland, agrees that the calibre of the cast has allowed a greater flexibility of storylines throughout the three series. "Good storytelling is a vital ingredient in any drama and the challenge is always to maintain a high standard. With *Monarch* we have a cast that turn in consistently strong performances which provides us with real opportunities to develop the characters and their stories. This helps keep the series interesting and fresh for the viewer."

After three summers of descending on the area around the Ardverikie estate (the real life Glenbogle), the locals have got used to seeing both cast, crew and fans of the show. "The community is really behind *Monarch*," says Victoria Evans. "We co-operate with the tourist authority to make it work for both sides. The estate is pretty much self-contained so we don't disrupt the locals' lives too much, while the series does show people how spectacular the scenery is and that encourages more visitors."

Adds Jeremy Gwilt, "This year we have been less lucky with the weather. But I am always finding new things to appreciate in the landscape, even in its darkest and most brooding state."

Michael Chaplin agrees, "The scenery can really influence the tone or mood of a particular scene and a lot of effort is put into matching them up. I urge the other writers to go up and spend time there, to experience the area.

"It is only then that you can really understand the characters and why they are there – that landscape really does seep into you."

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## SERIES THREE OF THE GLEN

### Regular Cast

Archie .....	Alastair Mackenzie
Hector .....	Richard Briers
Molly .....	Susan Hampshire
Duncan .....	Hamish Clark
Lexie .....	Dawn Steele
Golly .....	Alexander Morton
Katrina .....	Lorraine Pilkington
Stella .....	Alexandra Gilbreath
Kilwillie .....	Julian Fellowes

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## SERIES THREE OF THE GLEN

### Production Credits

Series Created by  
**Michael Chaplin**

Written by  
**Michael Chaplin** (Episodes 1  
**Niall Leonard** (Episodes 2, 6  
**Mark Holloway** (Episodes 3  
**Andrew Taft** (Episodes 4  
**Harriet O'Carroll** (Episodes 5

Directors  
**Rick Stroud** (Episodes 1, 2, 3, 9, 10, 11)  
**Richard Signy** (Episodes 4, 5, 6)  
**Marcus DF White** (Episodes 7, 8)

Producer  
**Jeremy Gwilt**

Executive Producers  
**Victoria Evans** (BBC Scotland)  
**Douglas Rae** (Ecosse Films)



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## SERIES THREE OF THE GLEN

### Cast Interviews

#### Alastair Mackenzie (Archie)

Fate can be very cruel. Just as Archie MacDonald finally seems to have fought his way to success in heart and home, things go spectacularly wrong – and the future looks bleaker than ever before.

“Poor Archie,” laments Alastair Mackenzie in sympathy. “He is constantly embattled and confounded at every turn. Just as he seems to be out of the woods, someone else comes along and tells him it’s not good enough and they are taking over.”

This time the new Laird of Glenbogle has to face the indignity of having his powers curtailed – by the bank. “To begin with, Archie is insulted that they have sent this woman to take over.

“Stella is in total financial control. He whinges at one point, ‘I can’t even buy a bag of nails without asking her.’ She becomes the common enemy – which means that everyone else becomes the Resistance,” grins Alastair. “But after a while it takes a load off his shoulders. It frees him up to fix everyone else’s problems – but he still can’t solve any of his own!”

One effect of steely Stella’s uncompromising regime is that Archie is drawn closer to Lexie. “Lexie is very well loved by viewers and they have been tantalised by Archie’s indecision in his love affairs. They just want to slap him round the face and tell him to get on with it, but life – especially Archie’s life – just isn’t that simple.”

Life isn’t simple for Alastair either. His partner is *Trainspotting* actress Susan Vidler and they have a 20-month-old daughter, Martha. “Being away from them while I am working on *Monarch* is hard,” he admits, “especially now Martha is so much more ‘interactive’. She now equates hearing the doorbell ring with me going away again and last time she freaked out. My heart just broke as I had to leave, but it’s the bed I made. Actors are travelling players, troubadours. It is something one has to accept.

But home life is so important and getting it right is vital. There has to be a constant because work can be such a roller coaster and being away is very emotionally tough. While I am working away I get back at about seven in the evening, learn lines, go for a run, have some supper and go to bed – then fly home at weekends. In between I try to relax as much as I can by listening to music. I have a laptop and I’m always ordering a steady supply, building up an eclectic collection. I’m currently into Ravi Shankar’s *Chants of India* – which I listen to in a meditative way in the afternoons.”

Alastair has been delighted by the worldwide success of *Monarch of the Glen* and jokes that it has done wonders for his parents’ social life, with calls from long-lost relatives. “I also get letters from people trying to track down the Mackenzie clan,” he grins. “It does seem to have hit a nerve and a lot of that must be to do with this extraordinary location.”

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### Cast Interviews

#### Alastair Mackenzie.../2

Yet this multi-talented actor has taken the romantic backdrop and used it for a drama of a very different kind. He and his film director, older brother David have made the film *The Last Great Wilderness*, due to be released next year.

"We have a production company, Sigma Films," he explains. "I used to live in the Highlands and, although it is very beautiful, when the clouds roll in it can be very foreboding.

"I thought it had horror potential, so I began work on a script. It is about two strangers who arrive at a strange, wilderness retreat in the Highlands."

"I also loved working with my brother – even though our mother was terrified we would fall out," he laughs. "We were both rather nervous initially, but it was very successful as a working relationship" Alastair adds with a wry grin "He only hit me once during filming."

\* \* \* \* \*

Alastair has recently starred in and co-written his first feature film *The Last Great Wilderness*. His previous film roles include *Misadventures of Margaret*, *Down in the City* and *California Sunshines*. His television credits include *Psychos*, *Hamish Macbeth*, *Soldier Soldier*, *Lovejoy*, *Game On* and *Chef!*

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### Cast Interviews

#### Richard Briers (Hector)

Much loved star Richard Briers is the first to admit that he has never been a sex symbol, but he is relishing the attention he is getting from *Monarch of the Glen*.

"I get lovely fan mail," he reveals. "But it isn't just about me, it is about the series. Not one of us could be called the star. The whole show is the star and it is popular all round the world. People have really taken it to their hearts because it looks so lovely, it is funny and clean and a real family show."

"As for Hector, he may be a cantankerous old reactionary, but there is something about him that people do still find endearing. Probably because, with his moods and his model railway, he is really just a big kid at heart!"

The role marked the return of 67-year-old Richard to popular prime-time television since his career took a turn towards the classics, with a string of Shakespearean character roles for Kenneth Branagh on both stage and screen.

"After *The Good Life* and the voiceover for *Roobarb and Custard*, I did 103 performances of *King Lear*," he says with pride. "I had a very satisfying 10 years doing those classic parts because I'd become known for comedy on television – even though I played Hamlet on stage at 22. But when you stop making people laugh, your income drops. I got a lot of respect and not very much money – dignity and poverty."

Richard returns to the big screen soon in the film *Who Shot Victor Fox?* a comedy drama co-starring Julie Andrews, Dan Ackroyd and Rupert Everett. But there is still one classic part he hankers after: "I would really like to play Prospero in *The Tempest*," he admits. "It would complete the Shakespeare parts I'm suitable for at this age. It would be marvellous to play it, directed by Ken Branagh of course, at one of the posh fringe theatres in London – just to say I'd done it."

But, while he is waiting for the call, Richard is happy spending time with his two grandchildren whenever he gets the chance. "Harry is seven and already loves dressing up, as pirates or currently as Harry Potter," he grins. "He may well become an actor, like my daughter Lucy. As for Rachel, who is five, she is quite a leader and a strong personality – I think she could become anything she puts her mind to. They haven't yet seen *Monarch*, or *The Good Life*, but they know I'm an actor and think it's quite ordinary really. Just like my daughters, they got used to what I did for a living although I did panto a couple of times – playing Dame Nelly Goodlife can you believe? I did wonder what they must think about Daddy going into the wardrobe, taking out his dresses and leaving home!"

Now the family is more than used to seeing Richard striking a lordly pose in a kilt, looking every inch the Highland laird, even though Hector has now passed the title – and the troubles – to his son Archie.

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### Cast Interviews

#### Richard Briers.../2

"Hector is still trying to help ward off financial disaster," explains Richard. "But he really doesn't like having to deal with modern life. He's got darling Molly – who is a sweetheart, but from the planet Zog – and the pair of them are in this Disney castle, in cloud cuckoo land, surrounded by midges, trying to survive."

"In the new series we learn a bit more about his past and about his love affair with Molly, which is really touching. Hector was in the Korean war and has tremendous courage as a person. He may be terribly old-fashioned, but he believes in real values and in his country, as well as dressing and speaking properly. He reminds me of many of the officers I had when I was an oik doing National Service – quite posh, but quite narrow. I was a filing clerk for 18 months and bored to hell, that's when I started doing amateur dramatics at Elephant and Castle Polytechnic. I went along with Brian Murphy who was in the same office – and we both ended up going to RADA."

Spending months away from his Chiswick home in West London has given Richard a chance to polish up his golf, but he admits that country living doesn't come easily to him. "I am a true suburbanite," laughs the Surrey-born star. "I catch the sleeper back home whenever I can, even though the location is so spectacular."

"I don't fish and I don't shoot – in fact I hate the thought of being responsible for stopping something moving. It's a coward's way out because I really am also a bit of a hypocrite," he admits sheepishly. "I do like my steak sandwich you see!"

\* \* \* \* \*

One of the United Kingdom's most famous and beloved actors, Richard Briers has enjoyed a long and varied career. In the 1970s/early 80s, he was probably best known for his starring roles in the hit BBC comedies *The Good Life* and *Ever Decreasing Circles*, which made him a household name. In the late 1980s, however, he began a professional association with Kenneth Branagh and the Renaissance Theatre Company, which established Briers' reputation in more serious roles. He won enthusiastic acclaim for his appearances in *Twelfth Night* (Malvolio), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Bottom) and the eponymous role in *King Lear*. On film he played Bardolph in *Henry V*, Leonato in *Much Ado About Nothing*, Polonius in *Hamlet* and, most recently, Nathaniel in *Love's Labours Lost*. Richard's recent TV credits include *A Respectable Trade*, *The Student Prince* and *Victoria & Albert*. He also played the Bishop in *Spice World – The Movie*. He has been awarded the Order of the British Empire for his services to the acting profession.

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### Cast Interviews

#### Susan Hampshire (Molly)

Ask Susan Hampshire what is special about the imposing and romantic setting for *Monarch of the Glen* and her eyes are likely to become as misty as a Glenbogle morning. The place has obviously cast its own spell on the actress who plays Molly.

"It really is very, very special," she insists, "like nowhere else I have ever been. Do you know that, when I first set eyes on that amazing house, there was a rainbow – and it ended in the loch?"

"I was actually dancing in the water where the rainbow ended – it was extraordinary. I have never seen anything like it before in my life. Since then I have been convinced that there is something unique and magical about this place; everyone feels it."

Returning to this stunning location to film the third series, Susan feels even more at home as she resumes her role as Molly. "I have even learned to love the midges," she laughs. "I have come to realise that without those millions of midges that can make life so difficult for us, this landscape would be spoiled."

"They have kept development at bay, otherwise these lovely hills and glens would be covered with bungalows. The midges are keeping this part of Scotland beautiful – it's Nature's way of protecting it!"

Since playing the marvellous Molly, Susan has been amazed at the reaction of viewers. "A lot of women have come up and hugged me," she explains. "They say they understand just what Molly has to put up with in Hector, because their husbands are just the same."

"They think Molly is wonderful for being so patient and dealing with him so well. They come from all walks of life and I find it really lovely that they can identify so strongly with a laird and his wife, living in a castle."

But, this time Molly has to face up to the harsh reality that living at Glenbogle may not be an option as the debts pile up. "She long ago accepted that part of her life's work is to support Hector and Archie in trying to keep the castle going – and she does try her best."

Susan says she has based Molly on 'a handful of eccentric people all married together' that she has known through the years. "But I think all of our characters have evolved as the series have gone on."

"Molly can't cook, she can't sew, she can't do the garden – she's pretty hopeless really. But she is good with people, understands them, listens to them and doesn't care whether they are rich, or poor, grand, or not grand."

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### Cast Interviews

#### Susan Hampshire.../2

"She is a true people person and sometimes, just when push comes to shove, she can pull something out of the hat to save the day!"

Susan tries to get back home during filming as much as the tough schedule will allow. "Often it means dashing back just for a quick day and a half and then getting the sleeper back up," she says.

"But I like to just go into my own garden, collect my beans, water my plants and have a cuddle and a chat with my husband over a nice meal before coming back. It re-charges the batteries."

Not that this busy actress needs much of an energy boost. At 64, she still has enough vim and vigour to return to the stage between series. Later this year she will be touring the country in the Noel Coward classic *Relative Values*.

"Last year I finished *Monarch of the Glen* on the Friday, flew to New York on the Saturday to see Eddie getting a medal from his old school, for his philanthropic contribution to young people.

"Next day I flew back to start rehearsals for Alan Ayckbourn's *Relatively Speaking* and did a tour with that. It's hard work – but I love it."

\* \* \* \* \*

Susan Hampshire originally trained as a classical ballet dancer at a ballet school founded and run by her mother June. At 15, when she became too tall for ballet, she turned to acting – and an extensive and award winning career in television, theatre and film followed. Her first stage appearance was as Dora in *Night Must Fall* in repertory; a few years later, she was to play the leading part opposite Albert Finney in the film version. Her theatrical career has ranged from musicals to Shakespeare and Ibsen. Susan won a Best Actress Emmy Award for her role as Fleur in the highly acclaimed television series *The Forsyte Saga*, and won the same award in 1971 as Sarah Churchill in *The First Churchills* and again in 1973 for *Vanity Fair* (playing Becky Sharp). Susan is also well-known to audiences for her roles in *My Secret Garden*, *Trainer*, *The Grand* and the mini-series *Coming Home*. Her many film credits include *Wonderful Life*, *Monte Carlo or Bust* and *David Copperfield*, as well as a Best Actress award for her role in *Malpertuis*. In addition to acting Susan has written several books including the highly acclaimed *Susan's Story*, an autobiographical account of her struggle against dyslexia, which she also focused upon for *Every Letter Counts* – both were best sellers. She was made Honorary Doctor of Letters at the City University, London in 1984, an Honorary Doctor of Literature at St Andrews, Scotland in 1986, Hon D Ed at Kingston University, Surrey and Hon D Arts in Boston, USA in 1994. She was awarded an OBE in 1995.

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### Cast Interviews

#### Dawn Steele (Lexie)

Professional to her fingertips, Dawn Steele even managed to have her appendix out so that it fitted in as much as possible with the shooting schedule for *Monarch of the Glen*. "If it was going to happen, it happened at a good time," she laughs. "It was in June and I was due to have a five-day break when I suddenly got these awful pains. I was rushed into hospital and had the operation the same day. Usually, this job is the most difficult in the world to get unwell in, but I recovered quite quickly and was soon back at work carrying Lexie's trays."

Fans of the series may notice some changes in Lexie this time round; Dawn insists that the Glenbogle maid-of-all-work has done some growing up. "She knows more what she wants and realises a lot more about herself. She is still very much her own person though," laughs Dawn. "If she wears a denim jacket it will have beads and sparkly bits and, even though she may be seen occasionally in a little black dress, she is just as likely to wear it with flip-flops. Lexie loves to customise whatever she's wearing, to make it her very own look."

Her heart is still in the same place though – and that is firmly in thrall to Archie. "I think she has come through having that schoolgirl crush on him," Dawn muses. "Now she would still do anything for him and never wants to see him unhappy, but she's beginning to realise the responsibilities he's got. Lexie does try and help, but she doesn't quite know how to go about it – she's lost none of her fiery, Glaswegian spirit! She is still capable of cutting her nose off to spite her face, threatening to strike, or storming off in a bad mood. When there are cutbacks in the kitchen for instance, she is none too chuffed. So her relationship with Stella is not good from the outset; there is rivalry between them in all sorts of ways."

Dawn has barely stopped working since she gained a first class honours degree from the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama in July 1998. She has appeared in *Split Second*, *Gregory's Two Girls* and starred in the acclaimed BBC drama *Tinsel Town* between series of *Monarch*.

"I've also recently done two films, *Club le Monde* which is set in 1990, all whistles and smiley face badges," grins the 25-year-old. "Then *Tabloid TV*, which stars John Hurt, David Soul and Stephen Tompkinson. "I play a television floor manager who's having an affair with the character played by Matthew Rhys. I only have about eight lines, but it was great to do – my first real feature film. Then I did more *Tinsel Town* and finally had four weeks off, my first since leaving drama school. I used the time to buy a city centre flat in Glasgow. But my Mum and Dad had to move my stuff in for me because I was back at work again on this."

Since then Dawn has had little time to do much more than simply unpack. "It doesn't feel like a real home yet," she admits. "I can count on one hand the number of nights I've spent there. But at least it doesn't need anything doing to it, everything is perfect. I just wouldn't have time for DIY!"

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### Cast Interviews

#### Hamish Clark (Duncan)

Resplendent in a dashing glen-green suit emblazoned with bark-brown checks, Hamish Clark could easily melt into the stunning landscape that is the backdrop to *Monarch of the Glen*. "The suit is actually mine," he reveals. "But I thought Duncan would look good in it." It is just one example of how much Hamish has gone out of his way to become part of the warp and weft of the extraordinary relationship this series has with its surroundings. After so many months filming, Hamish decided he wanted to become involved in the local community, which so warmly plays host to the cast and crew each year. He has devoted much of his free time to everything from Highland games, village fetes and charity balls to school talks and children's plays. "I was even invited to come and perform the 'opening ceremony' to someone's new fireplace," he laughs. "They had a ribbon across it which I had to cut, with all due seriousness. I've also given talks to schools about being an actor and had the pleasure of being asked to a rehearsal of a school play, to give some notes. Then I went to the performance and there were these super-duper, eager children – all of them better actors than they know. It was just tremendous."

Playing Duncan, amiable, hapless and as eager as any of those schoolchildren, has had a big impact on Hamish's life, though he is quick to point out that he is very different from Glenbogle's own action hero. "There are bits of me that are in him," he concedes. "I do like doing the action scenes: rolling down hills and sand dunes and carrying people across rivers. All the physical stuff is very dramatic, but it can also be very funny and it fits in with who I am." Hamish is also delighted that this time Duncan will be seen in a different light, showing how vulnerable he is to the power of love. "He does have a relationship," he hints. "You see more of what makes him tick. The estate is in real trouble too, so he works hard, tries hard and is well-intentioned, even if sometimes what he does is a comic disaster. His friendship with Golly is as strong as ever and Molly is very much on his side – it's been lovely doing quite touching scenes with Sandy and Susan."

Away from the Highlands, Hamish is equally famous for a series of mobile phone ads which have taken him to exotic locations including Namibia and South Africa – as well as London's East End. "They also enabled me to have my very first real holiday," he says happily. "I flew out on Christmas Day to Cape Town and spent hogmanay in the Hout Bay township with some South African friends. We had bought a lamb and sent it ahead as our contribution to the party. They spit-roasted it and we were treated wonderfully. They were so chuffed to see us and we sang and danced and had fireworks. Afterwards, it was such a sharp contrast to go back to our hotels, but a fantastic experience."

Contrast is already a big part of Hamish's life, swapping the peace and quiet of *Monarch* country for the hustle and bustle of life in his city bachelor pad. "I do like getting back to London so that I can get a balance," he explains. "Otherwise I'd get cabin fever. I'm used to the Highlands – my parents live just a short distance from our location – but the silence can be deafening sometimes."

\* \* \* \* \*

Hamish trained at the Welsh College of Music and Drama. He will be familiar to television audiences for his role as Roger in *My Wonderful Life*. His film credits include *Bring me the Head of Mavis Davis* and *Martha Meets*. Hamish is also the face of the Vodafone advertising campaigns. In addition, Hamish has a variety of theatre and comedy credits, including his own comedy production *Hamish Whips It Out* for the Edinburgh Fringe festival.

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### Cast Interviews

#### Alexander Morton (Golly)

As strong and silent as a distant mountain peak, the ghillie of Glenbogle has long seemed to be the ultimate keeper of confidences. But could this taciturn tower of strength be about to reveal a secret of his own? "There has to be more to Golly than meets the eye," laughs Alexander Morton who plays him. "He is a man who keeps himself to himself as far as we know, but there have been hints in the past about the kind of life he may be leading. In fact, in the very first series, there were some references to Golly being the guy who kept the women in the village happy; that was never really explored," he says with mock wistfulness. "In fact I think I should bring it up with the writers – whatever happened to Golly's bed-hopping sex life? I should have had it written into the contract." Joking aside, Alexander does hint that viewers may be in for a few surprises about Golly's past and the way it catches up with him as the estate continues to fight for its survival against the odds. "Golly definitely has a history," says Alexander teasingly. "It puts him in a new light."

This self-effacing actor is the first to acknowledge that he has a lot in common with his screen alter ego. "I'm not a great socialiser," he admits. "But my family is important and so is my work. I've been really pleased that *Monarch of the Glen* has been so popular and that it seems to be having a good effect on the area where we film. The foot and mouth outbreak has had its affect throughout the country so anything that can encourage people to return to visiting rural areas must be good. When we first came, you'd never see a soul on the long driveway up to the Ardverikie house. Now there is a continuous stream of all kinds of people, Australians, Dutch, all wanting to see the 'real Glenbogle'."

A self-proclaimed 'city boy', Alexander admits that, although he loves the countryside, his knowledge of trees, plants and animals wouldn't cover one of Golly's shotgun cartridge shells. "I wish I did have Golly's awareness and simpatico," he says. "But I do appreciate what an extraordinary country Scotland is. For such a tiny country it has the illusion of going on for ever when you get up to the mountains; more people should come and see it." Another shattered illusion is that Alexander's bagpipe playing is non-existent. "I can convince any non-pipe player that I'm an expert," he says proudly. "But I know that any piper would be hooting with laughter at my efforts. I did really work hard at making myself familiar with the feel of the pipes though. I even took them home and almost slept with them, so that picking them up and holding them would feel like second nature. I wish I could play them though. They are very stirring and to hear them being played properly brings tears to my eyes and makes the hairs on the back of my neck stand up."

Alexander has two grown-up children, Kerry and Jamie, neither of whom followed in their father's footsteps. "I did explain just how tough it can be financially and that may have put them off," he grins. "But I knew that if they really wanted to do it, nothing I said would stop them. My own father was a rep and really worried about what I was getting into with acting – he thought I would be led astray! He didn't understand the first thing about this world, to him it was another planet. But it certainly didn't put me off."

\* \* \* \* \*

Alexander's recent film work includes BBC Scotland's highly acclaimed film, *Ratcatcher*, by Lynne Ramsay and Bill Forsythe's *Gregory's Two Girls*. For television Alexander's credits include the BBC drama series *Life Support* and *Looking After Jo Jo*, and the detective drama *Second Sight*.

**Drama**

**11 x 50 minutes**



# MONARCH

## SERIES THREE OF THE GLEN

### Cast Interviews

#### Julian Fellowes (Kilwillie)

Actor Julian Fellowes plays the popular comic character, Kilwillie, Lord of Glenbogle's neighbouring estate, childhood friend and bantering partner of Hector. "There's a kind of double rivalry between the two characters" Julian laughs, "When they are alone Hector tends to bully Kilwillie; however they will also be very protective of each other when push comes to shove." Despite the numerous displays of comradeship, however, Hector still sees Kilwillie as 'the new boy'. Julian smiles, "Yes, despite the fact that the Kilwillies have been in Glenbogle for over 500 years. He knows that this is nothing compared to the MacDonalds and Hector likes nothing more than to remind Kilwillie of this – he's always got one over on him there."

The comedy moments between these two characters have delighted audiences throughout the first two series, and the third series promises even more. "Both Richard and I have developed a good on-screen relationship. We both enjoy comedy, we both have strong comic backgrounds and therefore these scenes are a delight to perform. Like all comic duos you need to feel your way to get the right balance, and I think both Richard and I have established this in our relationship – it has definitely evolved since series one."

It's not surprising that both Julian and Richard have had difficulty filming some scenes; the effort it takes to keep a straight face for the cameras has proved quite a challenge on occasions. When asked to recall a Kilwillie/Hector scene in Series 3 that stands out from the rest he laughs: "The episode when I'm trying to get Hector to join the Highland Hundred, a secret dining club. It required us to greet fellow members in the most ridiculous of ways and the two of us just couldn't keep from laughing – you see, we know what makes each other laugh now – so you just have to catch the other's eye and that can trigger us off."

Like the rest of the cast Julian experiences a stark contrast in the pace of life between his home in the centre of London, and the peace and tranquility of the area where the series is filmed. "I live in the heart of the city with my wife Emma and son Periegan and so the contrast is huge, but one that I do enjoy. I'm half Scottish – my mother was Scottish – and working on *Monarch* has really given me the opportunity to explore this country and also meet up with family that I would probably have never had the chance to visit had I not been so near. On days off there's nothing I like more than jumping in the car and exploring the area; there are so many lovely spots." If there is a particular favourite spot for Julian, it's the Ruthven Barracks in Kingussie: "They really are incredible and the views you get from up there are simply breathtaking. I keep trying to persuade the production to write them in to an episode."

An observation that Julian has made about his work on the series concerns the way of life. "I've found that people here are living life at a different pace to those of us in the South. They have a contentment that isn't influenced by others. There is a more gentle philosophy on life that exists up here, I admire that, it's a quality I try and take back with me to London."

**Drama**

**11 x 50 minutes**



# MONARCH

## SERIES THREE OF THE GLEN

### Cast Interviews

#### Julian Fellowes.../2

When he's not filming *Monarch*, Julian has been busy writing. His most recent project is a major feature film for Robert Altman called *Gosford Park* starring Maggie Smith, Helen Mirren and Alan Bates, amongst others. The film opens in New York in December 2001 and launches the London Film Festival in November. "It's been an interesting project to work on as the makers wanted me on the set practically every day – which is most unusual – the writer doesn't usually get that involved with the mechanics of filming. So I'm lucky that my writing and acting projects can co-exist; it makes the juggling a lot easier."

\* \* \* \* \*

An experienced actor, Julian Fellowes has enjoyed a varied career which includes television, film and theatre. In addition to *Monarch of the Glen*, his television credits include *Pie in the Sky*, *Covington Cross*, *The Rita Hayworth Story* and *The Scarlet Pimpernel*. On film, he can be seen in *Place Vendôme*, *Jane Eyre*, *Shadowlands*, *Damage* and *Gare Au Male*. In addition to his acting portfolio, Julian is an accomplished scriptwriter.

**Drama**

11 x 50 minutes



# MONARCH

## SERIES THREE OF THE GLEN

### Cast Interviews

#### Alexandra Gilbreath (Stella)

The latest interloper to be subjected to the special magic woven into the (albeit crumbling) brickwork of Glenbogle is determined to bring cold common sense to the estate's problems, against all odds. But Alexandra Gilbreath, who plays financial dominatrix Stella Moon, is worried that fans of the series will boo and hiss when she makes an appearance.

"I don't think Stella is going to be very popular to start with," she admits. "She is quite tough and she is there to tell the family to pull their fingers out and face facts. They are in debt to the tune of £600,000 and, if they don't do as they are told, then the bank will foreclose. Stella is the sensible one, she is there to take over and I can justify everything she does," insists Alexandra with a laugh. "I just hope viewers won't hate her too much when she takes Archie's position away from him."

But, without giving too much away, Alexandra does hint that even steely Stella cannot wholly resist the special spell cast by this debt-ridden Highland white elephant. "Her boss at the bank describes her as a 'fire-fighter'; she goes in and gets the job done. But Glenbogle does make her change. She is very ambitious and stern and can be a bit heavy-handed," she concedes. "She has always got a raised eyebrow at the family's goings-on. But she isn't perfect and she does make mistakes – and even learns to soften up."

Alexandra had great fun deciding on a look for Stella, a way of demonstrating the changes being wrought in her by the special atmosphere of the estate. "At first she is just a powerful businesswoman, so her exterior has to be inviolable. She is all conservative suits with no time for frills or frivolity. But, as time goes on, her clothes begin to change too, with much softer styles and fabrics – it really helped with the characterisation."

Alexandra grew up wanting to be an actress, influenced by her father Bob Gilbreath, who was the BBC's Light Entertainment manager during the time when Richard Briers was starring in *The Good Life* and *Ever Decreasing Circles*. "Occasionally, if I was very good, I was taken off filming with him," she remembers. "So acting was what I knew I wanted, from the age of four. Also I have two older sisters and I've discovered that a lot of my actor friends are also younger children. So I wonder if it is something to do with trying to get attention. I know I was always doing pratt falls – à la Dick Emery – when I was little and doing impressions of people on television. When I was very little I even had a stutter; until my sisters went off to school – probably from trying to get a word in, when they were around I never got to finish a sentence."

Alexandra trained at LAMDA and has since played major roles with the Royal Shakespeare Company. She received the 1996 Ian Charleson Award and was nominated for the *Manchester Evening News* Best Actress Award and the TMA Best Actress Award for the title role in the theatre production of *Hedda Gabler*. Alexandra's other television work includes *Out of Hours*, *A Wing and a Prayer*, *A Touch of Frost*, *Next of Kin*, *The Brittans Empire* and *The Real McCoy*. Film credits include *Dead Babies*. "But *Monarch of the Glen* is my first major television role and it has been wonderful," she says.

**Drama**

**11 x 50 minutes**



# MONARCH

## SERIES THREE OF THE GLEN

### Production Biographies

#### Jeremy Gwilt (Producer)

Jeremy Gwilt has produced and developed many successful TV dramas throughout his career. As Executive Producer, his credits include *Ballykissangel* and *The Ambassador* for BBC Northern Ireland. As Producer, his credits include *Lovejoy*, *Bergerac*, *Ivanhoe* and *The House of Elliot* (nominated for Best Drama Series, Best Actress, and Best Writer at the Cable Ace Awards).

#### Rick Stroud (Director)

Rick directed two episodes of *Monarch of the Glen* Series 2. Other television work includes *Massive Landmarks of the 20th Century* for C4, *The Good Guys* starring Nigel Havers and Keith Barron for LWT, *Queen Victoria* for Thames (nominated for the Prix Italia), and for the BBC: *Vanishing Man*, *Preston Front*, *Dr Bodkin Adams* (for which Rick received a BAFTA nomination for Best Director) and *Nancy Astor* (nominated for an EMMY).

#### Richard Signy (Director)

This is Richard's second series' filming *Monarch of the Glen*. Other television work credits include *Where There's Smoke* starring Zara Turner, and for the BBC *Silent Witness* with Amanda Burton, *Undercover Heart* and *Berkeley Square*. Richard was a director at Granada Television for 10 years, during which time his television productions included *Goodbye My Love*, *In Suspicious Circumstances*, *Medics*, *Coronation Street* and *Children's Ward*.

#### Marcus DF White (Director)

Marcus' television credits include *Harbour Lights* for BBC, *Peak Practice* for Carlton and many episodes of *Taggart* for Scottish Television. *Taggart: Angel Eyes*, which Marcus directed in 1996, won a BAFTA Scotland for Best Drama Serial. Marcus also directed *Junk*, a children's film for the BBC which won a BAFTA for Best Schools Drama in 1999 and was also shortlisted for Best Children's Programme at the Broadcast Awards 2000.

#### BBC Scotland Drama

Headed by Barbara McKissack, BBC Scotland's television drama output has been prolific over recent years, receiving acclaim from critics and audiences alike, much of it international. Portfolio titles include the series *Life Support*, *2000 Acres of Sky* and *Tinsel Town*, and quality films such as *Split Second* (starring Clive Owen) and the award winning *Donovan Quick* with Colin Firth in the title role.

**Drama**

11 x 50 minutes



# MONARCH

## SERIES THREE OF THE GLEN

### Production Biographies

#### Ecosse Films

Ecosse Films is one of Britain's leading film and television production companies. Its productions have won several international awards including two Oscar nominations, a Golden Globe, The Golden Rose of Montreux (two nominations), four BAFTAs, The Indies Award and The Evening Standard Award.

Ecosse's first feature film, *Mrs Brown*, has been acclaimed throughout the world and has won 12 major awards. Starring Judi Dench, Billy Connolly and Antony Sher, *Mrs Brown* was written by Jeremy Brock, directed by John Madden, produced by Sarah Curtis and executive produced by Douglas Rae.

In 1997 and 1998, Ecosse produced two series of highly successful dramas, *The Ambassador* starring Pauline Collins and Denis Lawson for BBC1, and *An Unsuitable Job for a Woman* starring Helen Baxendale and Annette Crosbie for ITV. More recently, it produced the popular detective series *McCready and Daughter* starring Lorcan Cranitch and former *EastEnders* Patsy Palmer for BBC1.

Recently completed is *Charlotte Gray*, a feature film for Film Four, written by Sebastian Faulks (*Birdsong*), adapted by Jeremy Brock (*Mrs Brown*), directed by Gillian Armstrong (*Oscar and Lucinda*, *Little Women*), and starring Cate Blanchett and Billy Crudup.

Ecosse Films is also developing a number of high-profile movies:

*The Water Horse* a feature film for Miramax based on the book by Dick King-Smith (*Babe*) and written by Simon Beaufoy (*The Full Monty*)

*Henry and Anne* (written by Allan Scott) – based on the relationship between Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn

*Helen's Boy* (written by Michael Chaplin) – a story about an unusual friendship set in New York, starring Matt Damon and Judi Dench

*Loving the Goddess* (written by Adrian Hodges) – the ménage à trois between Robert Graves, his wife Nancy and the American writer, Laura Riding

*Devil in the Flesh* (written by Kevin Hood) – the extraordinary love story between a 17-year-old boy and a 22-year-old married woman during the First World War

*Stick Shaker* (written by Philip Kerr) – a thriller set in America

*Dizzie* (written by Allan Cubitt) – the story of the young Disraeli, Britain's only Jewish Prime Minister.

**Drama**

**11 x 50 minutes**



# MONARCH

## SERIES THREE OF THE GLEN

### Episode Synopses

**1.** The collapse of the access bridge at the end of Series II has resulted in the estate again being plunged into financial insecurity. To keep an eye on their investment, Lascelles Bank have sent Stella Moon to take over the day-to-day management of Glenbogle. Stella is a city girl and has no feeling for the small highland community. To her it is just another business, which means that she rides roughshod over the traditional way of doing things. She is there to save the estate, not make friends. She does have one admirer, though. Duncan is instantly smitten and follows her around wherever she goes.

Archie soon discovers that Stella is no pushover and realises he only has two options. He can co-operate, which means he would lose control of the estate as she would be in charge, or he can fight her. The danger about fighting her is that if it came down to it, because of the size of the debt, Stella could forcibly sell the estate to recover the bank's money. He is in an impossible situation and really needs his girlfriend Katrina's support, but she announces that she's been offered a job in London. Archie knows only too well that long-distance relationships don't work so they reluctantly agree to part. Lexie is secretly pleased as she now has Archie all to herself, but she and Archie soon fall out because, when she tries to help him in his fight against Stella, she inadvertently makes things worse. Archie's only comfort is that Stella is essentially after the same thing as him – the survival of the estate – and so they fall into an uneasy alliance.

Meanwhile the chairman of the local golf club has died, and Hector and Kilwillie both decide to stand. Because of Hector's old-fashioned views about lady members Molly is supporting Kilwillie, which Hector sees as a huge act of betrayal. After a series of bribes and banter Kilwillie wins the election, but soon discovers he has been set up when Molly blackmails him over his underhand electoral practices and forces him to give in to her radical demands for the lady members.

**2.** While doing an inventory of the house, Stella is shocked to discover how much Glenbogle wastes. From six-course breakfasts to separate bedrooms for the dogs, everything is over the top. She implements a series of money-saving cutbacks, and forces Archie into laying off Golly, Duncan and Lexie until the estate reopens to the public. She even gives Hector's dogs to Kilwillie. Inevitably the place starts to fall apart. The ancient boiler and the hydro-electric generator both break down, which means no hot water and no electricity. The staff start to picket the estate and Lexie even goes so far as getting a job with Kilwillie. Hector and Molly are faring no better as they are now forced to share a room: Molly needs peace and quiet for her painting, while Hector likes to listen to military bands and practice his golf. Because of the cutbacks Stella runs out of petrol and has to spend the night at Glenbogle, where she witnesses for herself the miserable living conditions. To cap it all, a pipe bursts during the night.

Archie, meanwhile, has decided to support his friends. He goes on strike, forcing Stella to accept her position is untenable. He also sets up a workers' co-operative and persuades Stella to rehire all the staff through their newly formed company. Lexie is enjoying the mod cons that Kilwillie's kitchen has to offer, but her soft spot for Archie soon has her agreeing to go back, as the strike was never about money – something she points out to Stella in no uncertain terms. Things eventually start to return to normal and Stella even shows a human side when she negotiates the return of Hector's dogs.

**Drama**

**11 x 50 minutes**



# MONARCH

## SERIES THREE OF THE GLEN

### Episode Synopses

**3.** Golly is worried about the amount of fish in the river, so when Archie organises a fishing weekend for some paying guests, he consults Golly about how many people can come. Stella doubles the number as she refuses to believe Golly's assessment, especially when she sees him fishing whenever he wants. She also bans anyone fishing the river who doesn't pay, so when she sees Golly handing over two salmon to someone in the village, she accuses him of poaching and has him arrested. As a result Archie is without his ghillie for the weekend guests, the local shops refuse to sell the estate any food in protest over Golly, and Stella is forced to move out of her B&B [bed and breakfast] which is run by Duncan's Auntie Liz (**Jenny Lee**). In an act of solidarity and defiance, Hector and Kilwillie go fishing and are promptly arrested as they each catch a salmon.

Archie tries – with limited success – to teach Duncan how to be a ghillie, and as it's Lexie's day off Stella has to prepare the house for the 12 guests on her own. Molly, inspired by her *Ironside* novel, starts digging around for the word on the Glenbogle streets to try to find out what is really going on. With Golly in jail, the poachers have a free rein on the river and, on top of everything else, Stella is asked to move out of her bed and breakfast.

Molly defends the Glenbogle Three in court and, with Duncan as a surprise witness, uncovers the truth – the salmon actually belonged to Kilwillie. Golly was covering for Badger, Kilwillie's ghillie, who had given the fish to Duncan's Auntie Liz as a token of his affection. She had then asked Golly to sell them for her as she needed the money. It also comes out in court that neither Hector nor Kilwillie have actually caught a salmon in years, but had bought them from the fishmonger. A 'not guilty' verdict is reached, so Archie's weekend can go ahead as planned. Golly lets Duncan be the ghillie as he has worked so hard. However, to Hector's complete horror, Archie invites the now-homeless Stella to come and live with them at the house.

**4.** Always one with an eye for a pretty girl, Duncan takes a shine to a newcomer to the village. Jessica (**Rae Hendrie**) explains she is in Glenbogle with her mother, Alison (**Lindy Whiteford**), to attend her grandfather's funeral. However, Duncan's romantic ideas are soon dashed when Golly reveals Jessica is in fact his daughter – a fact not known to the girl herself – leaving Alison and Golly with no alternative but to explain the whole story to her.

Stuart McIntosh (**Simon Weir**) arrives to repair the access bridge and immediately starts flirting with Lexie. He invites her to dinner and she accepts, but as much to annoy Archie as anything else. A building supplier with big ideas, Stuart tries to buy some of the deserted cottages on the estate, hoping to make a huge profit from salvage. Archie is willing to accept his offer, but pulls out when he realises that Stuart has been lying to him about how much the cottages are worth. Stuart can't go to Stella as she has her own plans for the cottages.

Meanwhile, Hector is desperate for cash. Kilwillie has asked him to join the Highland Hundred, a secret luncheon club, which promises to be the best bunfight of the year. The only problem is that it costs £2000 and is to be held in the cellar at Glenbogle. Unable to raise the money, he does a deal with Stuart, who dismantles some of the cottages. However, Hector is rumbled as soon as the missing cottages are discovered. Stella and Archie demand the money back and threaten Kilwillie with exposure in the press. Reluctantly he hands over the money, effectively paying for Hector to go the lunch.

**Drama**

**11 x 50 minutes**



# MONARCH

## SERIES THREE OF THE GLEN

### Episode Synopses

**5.** The bridge has been repaired and it is time to reopen the estate to the public. Archie has been planning the ceremony meticulously and has invited all the local dignitaries. Even Hector has been making himself useful, albeit reluctantly. At Molly's suggestion they have converted the dungeon into a paying attraction, Hector restoring the manacles so he can chain up the 'great unwashed', while Molly researches the gruesome history. She hits a snag: the only person ever to escape was their sworn enemy Iain McIntosh in 1493, but no one knows how he did it.

Stuart McIntosh (**Simon Weir**) has come up with a proposal to buy the mountain, Ben Bogle, and build Boglecroft there, a holiday village of log cabins. Seduced by the amount of money he is offering, Stella gets approval from the bank. Archie is horrified and tries his best to scupper the plans but finds the council are all in favour. Stuart even has Lexie's backing. In an attempt to rally local support, Archie calls a public meeting but his plans go awry thanks to his father. Hector decides it would be a good idea to imprison Stuart in the dungeon to prevent him attending. With Lexie's help Stuart escapes, arrives at the meeting full of righteous indignation and wins the day.

Meanwhile, Molly has been investigating Iain McIntosh and has discovered that he was defeated by Long Jaw MacDonald – exactly where Stuart intends to build Boglecroft. The council could never give permission for the destruction of an historical site, but what she needs is physical proof. She enlists Duncan's help.

The estate opening day arrives and it seems that time has run out for the MacDonalds. Stuart has even hijacked Archie's ceremony and taken the dignitaries off to the proposed building site to declare it officially open. However, Duncan has uncovered a secret passage leading from the battle site to the dungeon. He makes a grand entrance with Hector and various McIntosh artifacts that prove the battle site is genuine. Boglecroft is now doomed, as is Stuart when Lexie finds out that he made a pass at Stella.

**6.** Stella is making sure that everyone is doing their bit to make Glenbogle a success, but things haven't really got going yet. Duncan hasn't attracted any visitors to his nature trail and Molly hasn't sold any of her watercolours. Only Hector refuses to lower himself to trade. Stella receives a phone call from a friend at the bank telling her to watch her back – something is up but she's not sure what. Archie has invited a journalist to Glenbogle to write a review on the activities the estate has to offer. The journalist, Graham (**Simon Lenagan**), turns out to be Stella's ex-husband.

Though Graham says he is having a wonderful time, there is something about him that Lexie distrusts. She and Archie hack into his computer and discover he is panning Glenbogle to discredit Stella. Archie doctors the article and emails it to Graham's editor, who calls to congratulate Graham on the best article he's ever written. Realising he has been set up, but unable to do anything about it, Graham leaves – but not before Golly exacts revenge by taking him on a nightmare cross-country trek.

To drum up more visitors, Duncan adopts a business plan from *The Art of War*. He kidnaps a coachload of tourists from a pub and takes them round his nature trail. They have a wonderful time so instead of being angry, the tour leader makes Glenbogle a regular stop. Molly also manages to sell some of her paintings to them, and Hector finds his perfect role in the world of trade – teaching classes about malt whisky.

**Drama**

**11 x 50 minutes**



# MONARCH

## SERIES THREE OF THE GLEN

### Episode Synopses

**7.** Duncan has been corresponding with the delectable Marie-Helene (**Olga Sosnovska**) for years. Now that she is coming for a visit, Duncan is in a quandary. She thinks that *he* is the laird and owner of Glenbogle. Humiliation is on the cards, until Molly intervenes. The answer is simple: Duncan can be king for a day, while Archie will be Head Ranger (*Trading Places* in a Highland setting). All is well until the officious Mr Barr (**Ken Drury**), an inspector from the Health & Safety directorate, arrives. As Head Ranger, it is now up to Archie to ensure that the estate gets a clean bill of health. Lexie makes the most of Archie's demotion to get close to him. Stella, newly divorced, is anxious to maintain a professional distance from Archie and has given her new friend the green light but, as Lexie zeroes in, Stella begins to regret her generosity.

As Duncan becomes accustomed to his life as the laird, Archie is having difficulty with Mr Barr and, before long, the estate is marked down for closure. However, Molly uncovers the real story behind Mr Barr's visit to Glenbogle and begins to work her magic. Meanwhile, Marie-Helene reveals the reason for her surprise visit. She and her fiancé, Alan, had a row in Edinburgh and she had nowhere to go but Glenbogle. Although heartbroken that Marie-Helene is in love with someone else, Duncan decides to help them get back together.

**8.** To commemorate Hector's regimental reunion, Stella has borrowed a valuable regimental painting. Disaster strikes when Lexie accidentally puts a hole in it. The owner of the painting, McCullen (**Sandy Welsh**) is furious and is demanding full compensation. With no insurance and facing a £20,000 bill, things are not looking good for the cash-strapped estate.

Hector's old army pal Toad (**Benjamin Whitrow** – *Pride and Prejudice*, *Tom Jones*) saves the day, spotting that the painting is a fake. But he has problems of his own. A former safe-breaker, Toad escaped from Parkhurst Prison after being framed for a crime he didn't commit, and has been living in Marbella ever since. He has come back to Britain for one last time to set the record straight with Hector. Unfortunately he has also brought a police tail with him. Hector is determined to help his old friend dodge the law but Archie is not so sure – it could endanger everything he has worked for. With undercover cops watching their every move, Archie needs all his wit and cunning to throw them off the scent and galvanise the household to help Toad. Like something from *The Great Escape* and happily reliving their army days, the veterans help Archie execute an elaborate diversion which culminates in Toad flying off in a sea-plane, leaving Archie with a cheque to pay off McCullen.

Meanwhile, Stella's short-lived friendship with Lexie comes to an end when Stella finally admits that she is in love with Archie. They are now rivals for his love.

**Drama**

**11 x 50 minutes**



# MONARCH

## SERIES THREE OF THE GLEN

### Episode Synopses

9. With the estate finances back on track, Stella faces up to her imminent departure from Glenbogle. A lavish Midsummer Ball has been planned to celebrate her achievements, but also to act as a final test before Stella officially hands back the keys to Archie. But, having lost her heart to the penniless laird, Stella can't bear to leave and soon realises that the best way to extend her stay is to ensure that the ball is a fiasco. As Stella fixes her sights ever more firmly on Archie, a disconsolate Lexie watches from the sidelines – convinced that she will always be the bridesmaid and never the bride.

With the bank's top management attending the ball, Archie is determined to make the Ball a seamless success – no easy task with an errant chef, a geriatric ceilidh band and Hector as well as Stella conspiring to undo his best-laid plans. With the preparations in tatters, Archie seems set to fall at the final hurdle ... until Lexie intervenes. Having sussed Stella's little game, she sets in motion a counter-offensive and, against all the odds, the Ball is a success. The bank is delighted and, shamefaced, Stella departs, leaving Archie alone with Lexie.

Finally realising what has been under his nose all along – loyal, kind and beautiful Lexie – Archie seizes the moment and admits his feelings for her...

10. Archie and Lexie get a mixed reaction when they announce their engagement. Molly is delighted, but not so Hector who predicts that the marriage will be short-lived. Molly is shocked at Hector's words, Archie is livid and, though Lexie counsels caution, he refuses to play peacemaker. Father and son exchange harsh words but Archie is unrepentant, little knowing that tragedy lies just around the corner...

In all the upset, an unexpected visitor arrives at Glenbogle. Molly's younger brother, Jo (**John Quayle**), returns from Africa. He was always wild and, within minutes of arriving, attracts the attention of the local police. A series of bad investments have left him broke and he has no choice but to throw himself on Molly's mercy. However, he has an ulterior motive for returning to Glenbogle. The last time he was there, as a young man, he fell in love with someone way below his social standing and, not being brave enough to stand up to his family, he ran off to Africa. Having lived a lonely bachelor existence he has come back to try to find the only love of his life.

Meanwhile, an unpopular Hector decamps for a spot of fishing. Relaxation turns into frustration when he discovers that his beloved brown trout have been decimated by a killer pike. Determined not to be outdone by this slippery adversary, Hector resolves to rid his loch of this pest by any means necessary. However, things go catastrophically awry...

**Drama**

11 x 50 minutes



# MONARCH

## SERIES THREE OF THE GLEN

### Episode Synopses

**11.** As the dust settles after the shocking events of the Episode 10, Lexie fears that her wedding may be jinxed. Has Hector's prediction of dire calamity come true? Her mother's dramatic arrival at Glenbogle doesn't help. Intent on getting her daughter hitched regardless of her jitters, Pamela (**Aline Mowatt**) immediately treads on Molly's toes by assuming control of the wedding. With Archie also determined to get married, Lexie feels trapped.

Everyone muddles through Hector's funeral as best they can, but his father's death has stunned Archie, who deeply regrets the bitter words they exchanged before the accident. Only when his father appears to him in a dream to bless the forthcoming union with Lexie does Archie finally feel that everything will be alright.

But is it too late? On the morning of the wedding, Lexie is nowhere to be found. Her fears have got the better of her and she has set off on the bus to Glasgow. Archie sets off in hot pursuit, along with as many assorted relations as possible who could fit into the car. After a dramatic chase, eventually he manages to overtake the bus and flag it down. Will he be able to persuade Lexie to return to Glenbogle to begin their life together?

**Drama**

**11 x 50 minutes**



# MONARCH

## SERIES THREE OF THE GLEN

### Ratings

Episode	UK Txn	Channel	Time On	Viewers	Audience Share
1	28.10.01	BBC1	20.00	7.4 million	27%
2	04.11.01	BBC1	20.00	6.7 million	24%
3	11.11.01	BBC1	20.00	7.1 million	25%
4	18.11.01	BBC1	19.55	6.9 million	25%
5	25.11.01	BBC1	19.55	6.3 million	23%
6	02.12.01	BBC1	19.55	7.3 million	27%
7	16.12.01	BBC1	20.10	6.7 million	25%
8	23.12.01	BBC1	20.00	6.0 million	24%
9	30.12.01	BBC1	20.00	6.9 million	26%
10	13.01.02	BBC1	20.00	6.9 million*	28%*
11	20.01.02	BBC1	20.00	7.4 million*	29%*

\* overnight figures (to be confirmed)

### TOP 10 UK Drama (week ending 28.10.01 excluding soaps)

- 1 Heartbeat
- 2 My Uncle Silas
- 3 Peak Practice
- 4 Casualty
- 5 Holby City
- 6 **Monarch of the Glen**
- 7 Silent Witness
- 8 Waking the Dead
- 9 Randall and Hopkirk
- 10 Without Motive

**Drama**

11 x 50 minutes



# MONARCH

## SERIES THREE OF THE GLEN

### What The Papers Say

"One of the most enjoyable and relaxing Sunday night dramas in recent years." **News Letter**

"For chilled out Sunday night viewing, you can't beat *Monarch of The Glen*. Entertaining, amusing and generally pleasant, this is what Sunday night TV should always be like." **News Letter**

"...guaranteed to send you to bed with a smile on your face." **Mirror**

"...my excitement at the imminent return of *Monarch Of The Glen* – and that's not irony, I am genuinely excited by this..." **Screen Burn, Guardian Guide**

"...whimsical Scottish fantasy ... very much in the spirit of *Brigadoon*, all Highland mists, kilts and wonderful scenery." **Daily Mail**

"...this family saga set in the Scottish Highlands gets the comfort vs credibility factor about right. It is notable for its excellent cast and the location, which inspires the engaging plotlines." **The Times**

"Perfect for a Sunday evening with a cup of Horlicks in front of the television." **News Letter**

"...nice, gentle drama guaranteed not to offend anyone." **Northern Echo**

"*Monarch of the Glen* still has more majesty than most shows on the box." **Daily Record**

"Once again Richard Briers ... stole every scene he was in." **Daily Record**

"His [Archie's] chiselled features, sensitive deep-brown eyes and Michael Owen-style sticky up fringe and intense devotion to the family home and all its thousands of acres make it compulsive viewing on a Sunday night."

**Liverpool Echo**

**Drama**

11 x 50 minutes



# MONARCH

## SERIES THREE OF THE GLEN

### What The Papers Say (Feature)

**Radio Times**  
**October 27, 2001**

The Glenbogle glow: Fabulous scenery and a carefully manufactured feelgood factor have proved to be a winning blend for *Monarch of the Glen*

Rain streams like an endless muttering curse from the granite battlements and ancient guttering of Ardverikie House. It is the kind of rain you only get in the late Scottish summer; a solid grey safety curtain rung down on the spectacular natural stage set of Loch Laggan. It seeps through the duckboards laid across the entrance to the familiar panelled hall, where mouldering portraits and ceremonial shields claim past greatness for the Clan Macdonald. Yet the deeper you go, the brighter it becomes. Up the oak staircase and along a creaking corridor, where Susan Hampshire is rehearsing a scene for *Monarch of the Glen*, arc lights positioned outside the window deliver a flood of morning sun. This is what cast and crew call the "Glenbogle glow".

"Glenbogle isn't the real world," says Hampshire, who plays Molly Macdonald, the laird's wife. "It's not nitty-gritty Scotland. It's a dream, somewhere warm where people can escape to on a Sunday night." Since 1999, when Molly and Hector Macdonald first opened their crumbling ancestral pile – and their hearts – to the nation, viewers have been escaping in their millions to Glenbogle. By the end of the second series, *Monarch of the Glen* was being shown in 15 countries outside the UK, with fans from Finland to Dubai. The series is shot entirely on location in the heart of the Cairngorms, and when the sky switches on its own arc lighting, revealing the purple mountains and a pine-fringed loch, you can see why the series has taken such a grip on the public imagination. As Alastair Mackenzie, who plays Archie the returning heir, points out, "The landscape is the real star of the show."

Long before Glenbogle was dreamt of, Queen Victoria spent her first long Highland holiday at Ardverikie, the privately owned Victorian pile that serves as the permanent set for the series. Though enchanted by the mountain scenery, Victoria was allegedly driven to distraction by Scotland's famous biting midges. Today, despite the best advances in insecticides and protective clothing – each cast member is issued with an attractive mesh helmet – the midge remains the terror of Loch Laggan. "It's a kind of battle you could never describe to someone who hasn't experienced it, trying to act happy or sad or emotional when there is a midge actually in your ear or up your nose, biting you. They'll even fly into your eyelashes and bite you in the eyes," warns Hampshire.

With shooting schedules routinely upset by the weather and the sheer remoteness of the location, commuting to the set is impossible, so the regular cast live together in a hunting lodge in the nearest village, Newtonmore, bunking off to London on the sleeper whenever they can snatch a weekend. "The first year I was in shock because it was like living in student accommodation again. And that isn't quite so easy at my age, and Richard's," says Hampshire. "By the second year, once they had put in a kitchen where we could cook our own food, I was really enjoying it." A devotee of organic food, she will often cook for the cast. Today, she has plans for a rabbit shot by a ghillie on the Ardverikie estate.

**Drama**

**11 x 50 minutes**



# MONARCH

## SERIES THREE OF THE GLEN

### What The Papers Say (Feature)

#### Radio Times continued.../2

As the cast spend so much time on a set that is a real working estate, Glenbogle life and real life tend to merge.

The interiors of Ardverikie were specially "distressed" to suit the Macdonalds' straitened circumstances, but there is an authentic country-house whiff of dry-rot and mouse pee that no props department could deliver.

The silver-framed mother-and-baby shots of Molly on bookshelves and bedside tables around the house are Hampshire's own pictures, taken with her son when he was young. "I thought they would be like a good charm on the set," she says. "But I have to keep telling myself, for superstition's sake, that these are pictures of Archie and not Jamie, Hector and Molly's other boy [who was killed in an accident]. I couldn't bear my own son to be associated with such a sad storyline."

Much as she loves the location, Hampshire has no longing to be mistress, like Molly, of all she surveys. "If someone gave me this house tomorrow, I wouldn't want it for all the tea in China," she says. "I couldn't envisage having the responsibility for that kind of house, not just the fantastic costs involved – they rewired the house here recently and it cost something like £250,000 – but the genuine responsibility that you have for all the people who work on the estate. Because if you just up sticks and go, people lose their livelihoods."

In the new series, Glenbogle is shaken up by the arrival of Stella Moon, a hard-headed banker who threatens to foreclose on the Macdonalds unless they can make the estate financially viable. "It's quite intimidating," says Royal Shakespeare Company actress Alexandra Gilbreath. "Will I get hate mail? Will people think I'm the one spoiling the magic of Glenbogle? And on top of that there is the constant stress of trying not to laugh when working with Richard Briers. That man has funny bones. He just walks into a room and makes everything funny."

It is perhaps surprising that a storyline based on the travails of an effete and impoverished aristocracy should have such mammoth appeal, but Alastair Mackenzie, who was raised in neighbouring Perthshire, believes that the sheer warmth of the characters and the easy social mix portrayed on the fictional feudal estate ensures audience empathy. "When I first came on to the show, I thought, how on earth are we going to make people sympathise with this family's financial troubles, because at the end of the day viewers are just going to say, 'Well, you've got 35,000 acres. Relax. Shut up. Buy a bungalow in Southend and get on with the rest of your life.' But obviously that hasn't happened. I think it helps that my character, Archie, isn't just a tweedwearing toff, he's someone who has had a modern, metropolitan life and is rather irritated by the old-fashioned eccentricity of life at Glenbogle."

"But it's a warm eccentricity. The emotions that spring up in these characters are good emotions. And what's personally gratifying to me doing the show up here is that local people don't feel misrepresented by it. I get people coming up to me in the street and telling me how much the show means to them. Just yesterday I met a woman who told me that her husband, who used to work on the Ardverikie estate, had died recently and how her family watches the show as a way of dealing with their grief. That meant a great deal to me."

**Drama**

**11 x 50 minutes**



# MONARCH

## SERIES THREE OF THE GLEN

### What The Papers Say (Feature)

#### Radio Times continued.../3

This season's plotline sees Archie come to a deeper understanding of his family and what it actually means to be laird of Glenbogle. "In the first series, Archie had been away from Glenbogle for ten years and there was a lot of stuff that he and Hector hadn't really reconciled," says Mackenzie. "Now it's as if the roles have been reversed. Archie has taken on the role of father figure and Hector has taken on the role of the child. There's a lot of room for comedy there, but there are serious issues, too. My own daughter, Martha, is 15 months old, and I'm just beginning to realise the impact that having a child has; it has made me think a lot about the changing relationships between parents and children. Now that I've got my own baby, I can see how biology and psychology go hand in hand to bring us to maturity. Otherwise our relationships with our parents would never change, which effectively would mean that we wouldn't grow up. In this series, I think Archie grows up a lot." The birth of Martha, however, makes Ardverikie seem to Mackenzie even more remote from his 'real' life in London. "We all have this bucolic idea of what it's like to live 'away from it all' in the middle of nowhere. But it's not actually that romantic to have to drive 15 miles for a pint of milk."

For die-hard *Monarch of the Glen* fans, distance is no object. Such is the pull of Glenbogle that the Scottish Tourist Board has recently erected road signs designating Badenoch and Strathspey "Monarch of the Glen Country", while a leaflet issued by the Cairngorm Chamber of Commerce points out places of interest to Glenbogle pilgrims, such as Laggan (Glenbogle village), Broomhill railway station (where Archie alighted on his return from London at the start of the first series), Cille Choirille Church (Glenbogle Parish, where Archie may one day lead one of his loves up the aisle), and Newtonmore Shinty Ground (the scene of Golly the ghillie's sporting triumphs – viewers keen to know more of the granitehewn Golly's past life will not be disappointed in this series).

Last year, the Highland games in Newtonmore were opened by Hamish Clark, who plays the hapless assistant gamekeeper Duncan in the series. "Macpherson is the big clan around here," explains Clark. "And the Clarks are part of the Macpherson clan, so it was quite something for me to see the Macpherson men walk across the Spey in full fig – bearded Highlanders from Toronto and young guys with green hair and nose studs all together. And it was important to them. They didn't see it as some archaic fun ritual; all those *Monarch of the Glen* things about responsibility and birthright still matter up here."

For Dawn Alexander, who plays Lexy, the Macdonalds' straighttalking housekeeper, Ardverikie has become a home from home. "This was my first job when I came out of drama school three years ago, and it has become a way of life. I go down to Glasgow to see my family and friends and run around doing the big-city bit and then come back here and think, 'Great. I can sit down and rest.' Which is bizarre, because here I am on a private island with a loch and a sandy beach, but this is work."

"The ethos of the programme – the way all the characters muck in together – is reflected in the way the cast and crew get on. And I think that, in turn, is reflected back on to the screen. Even though you don't see who's holding the sound boom or the lady who's trying to make a rain-soaked dress look dry enough for the camera, the general feeling comes across that *Monarch* is a family thing."

**Drama**

**11 x 50 minutes**



# MONARCH

## SERIES THREE OF THE GLEN

### What The Papers Say (Feature)

**Sunday Times**  
**October 28, 2001**

Scene fit for a drama: The grounds of Ardverikie castle, where *Monarch of the Glen* is shot, charms actress Susan Hampshire

When Queen Victoria was looking for a Highland holiday home she considered buying Ardverikie estate on the shores of Loch Laggan in Inverness-shire before plumping for Balmoral on Deeside. Ardverikie is a wildly turreted and romantic baronial castle that will be familiar to viewers of the BBC1 drama series *Monarch of the Glen*. In the story it is called Glenbogle and is home to the eccentric Molly and Hector MacDonald, their son Archie and a wacky cast of estate workers and locals who aid and abet the conspiracies, disasters and love affairs of the family.

The front drive to Ardverikie is about three miles long and affords tantalising glimpses of the loch through the huge trees that were planted in the 19th century. At this time of the year, the shimmering, golden leaves of silver birches light up spaces in between dark pines and wellingtonias silhouetted against a deep blue autumn sky. For seven months each year the cast and about 70 crew work out of a Portakabin city near the castle.

The house was built by Sir John Ramsden in 1883, reputedly one of the richest commercial property developers of his day. Three years ago, beset by leaking roofs and an urgent need to modernise the unheated pile, Ramsden's descendants let the property to Ecosse Films who use the house and surrounding estate to film the popular spoof on Highland life.

I have come to talk to actress Susan Hampshire, who plays Molly, about the grounds at Ardverikie and her gardening interests. In the series, Molly is often seen wearing her specially designed gardening apron, armed with a trug and a trowel. She potters away in the flower borders blissfully unfazed by the dramas raging around her. "I love gardening," Hampshire tells me. She has a small patch in London and a larger garden in the country at the home she shares with her husband, the retired shipping executive and theatre impresario, Sir Eddie Kulukundis. Here she grows organic vegetables, old-fashioned roses, agapanthus, and "thousands and thousands of daffodils and bluebells". I ask her if she doesn't miss her gardens, spending as much time as she does up in Scotland, but she says that she loves Ardverikie.

"It is the most beautiful place on earth, inspiring and good for the soul," she says. In particular, she adores the peace and deserted spaces that would be overrun with people if it was not for a particularly off-putting creature. "I have learned to love the midge," says Hampshire. To combat their unwelcome attentions, she eats lots of garlic, puts lavender oil in her bath and rubs herself with neem oil. There are days when the entire film crew and cast retreat inside because the clouds of the "scourge of the Highlands" are so bad.

**Drama**

**11 x 50 minutes**



# MONARCH

## SERIES THREE OF THE GLEN

### What The Papers Say (Feature)

#### Sunday Times: Ardverikie castle continued.../2

Walking around the pretty walled garden I can see why she loves it. Although somewhat neglected today, in its heyday it was obviously very loved by whoever laid it out and planted, in particular, the range of ornamental maples that at this time of the year are in full autumn fig. Hampshire tells me that when they are filming, the dappled light coming through these trees adds a luminosity. "I am at my happiest in the garden dressed in my apron – you can tell by my beatific smile -there is a kind of magic here." The walled garden covers less than an acre and is quite small when compared to the size of the castle. It has handsome high walls of dressed, grey stone with large, square, coping stones running around the top.

The arched entrance gates are made in delicate, scrolled, wrought iron and above them is a coat of arms and the date 1939. Inside, the layout is formal with symmetrically placed mature maples, some like *Acer griseum* have ornamental bark. Traditional borders are filled at this time of the year with *mombretia*, *rogersias* and *Hydrangea paniculata*, *sedums*, *Anemone japonica*, *astilbes* and *rudbeckia*.

Other shrubs and small trees suggest the family must have come here in late summer or autumn when the plants perform best. *Parrotias*, *spindles* and *dogwoods* are highlighted by the dark yews, junipers and purple beech hedge planted around a carved stone pond in the middle of one square. Another square has a rockery where dwarf *azaleas*, *heather*, *golden marjoram*, *polygonum* and herbaceous *geraniums* are somewhat overtaken by *potentillas* competing with the ever creeping invasion of *bracken*, *foxgloves* and *cotoneasters*.

In a way, the neglect gives the garden a slightly enchanted air: Hampshire says that it is this sense of unreality and romanticism that is captured in the series.

The place has an atmosphere of being lost in time. One day, she recalls, they had just finished filming when a perfect rainbow rose from the lawn in front of the house. Hampshire and Hamish Clark, who plays the kilted Duncan, danced in their Wellington boots at the foot of the lawn.

**Drama**

11 x 50 minutes



# MONARCH

SERIES THREE

# OF THE GLEN

## Stop Press

**Herald**  
**November 21, 2001**

Freedom award for Highland TV show

The cast of BBC hit show *Monarch of the Glen* have won the freedom of their fictional home, Glenbogle. The offbeat award is a gesture of thanks to the programme-makers, cast and crew for promoting the Highlands to global audiences at a troubling time for the UK tourism industry. David Stewart MP, who organised the presentation ceremony in London today, said: '*Monarch of the Glen* has been a superb ambassador for Highland tourism.'

**Drama**

**11 x 50 minutes**



# MONARCH

## SERIES THREE OF THE GLEN

### Coda

#### Farewell to the Glen

**It's the end of an era, as the cantankerous patriarch of Glenbogle bows out in style**

Much-loved actor Richard Briers, who plays the eccentric and potty Hector, is leaving the series in a way that only Hector could – changing life at Glenbogle forever.

Richard explains why, after three years, he is calling it a day: "One of the main reasons I'm leaving is my age. I'm 68 this year and I don't see my family enough. I'm a home-bird at heart and being away for up to six months at a time filming *Monarch* is difficult, so that's why I've decided to call a halt. Of course, it wasn't an easy decision to make but I had to follow my heart."

As expected, filming his final scenes was difficult. "I've made such good friends with the cast and crew. The read-through was bad enough, getting through the final scripts and the last filming day was pretty tough. But I had a great send-off that evening with a marvellous cast and crew party. It was really lovely," says the actor.

He may have bowed out of the series but Richard admits that Glenbogle will never leave him.

"I'll miss everyone involved with it – no doubt about that. I know every actor probably says this but the crew up there were definitely the best I have ever worked with," he says. "The scenery is spectacular and the people are just terrific. The locals have welcomed the cast and crew into their community which means a lot when you're so far away from home. There will always be a place in my heart for that part of the country and I definitely won't be a stranger – I plan to make frequent visits to the area with my wife, Ann."

*Monarch Of The Glen* has been a hit not just in the UK but all over the world. Talking about how audiences have taken the world of Glenbogle to their hearts, Richard admits: "It's an old-fashioned series with a quirkiness that makes people laugh. There's just not enough of that on television nowadays – it's all so depressing. All life should have a little humour. *Monarch* isn't cutting-edge; it doesn't pretend to be anything but Sunday-night family viewing – unpretentious and charming – and I think that's what people love about it."

So any hints as to how Hector leaves Glenbogle behind? "Absolutely not. You'll just have to tune in and find out. Hector is a colourful character so there are many wild and wonderful ways in which he could go – there's no way I'm going to spoil it by giving it away!"

**Drama**

**11 x 50 minutes**