

Acton's David Giammarco draws a weekly newspaper comic strip

Clousseau fan finds an audience

The late Peter Sellers' antics as Inspector Jacques Clousseau of the Pink Panther films was a major inspiration to a young Acton cartoonist who publishes a comic strip based on moviedom's bumbling criminologist.

Every week, David Giammarco, 13, parks himself in front of the drawing board and in the relatively short space of four cartoon panels, leads Clousseau further into calamity. This summer, Clousseau's misadventures have been followed avidly by readers of the Erin Advocate; but the fact that David can now proclaim himself a published cartoonist is really only the tip of his artistic talents which favor the light-hearted and humorous side of life.

"I like movement with painting and drawing," David told The Herald during a recent interview, adding that he hopes to go to California soon where he plans to join the great animators who make Hollywood and Walt Disney Productions famous for animated feature films.

ON TV
A couple of years ago, with the help of Ospringle Public School principal Ian Sanders, David began experimenting with animated films, one of which wound up on TV Ontario, much to his surprise.



David Giammarco, 13, has been cartooning since he was, well, knee-high to Inspector Clousseau, a favorite character whose misadventures he has developed into a comic strip feature. The RR2 Acton resident hopes to become an animator, following in the footsteps of Disney, and has already made a number of animated feature film shorts, one of which wound up on TV Ontario last year.

His first effort, not so surprisingly, featured Inspector Clousseau. David made the figure with moveable joints and, with Mr. Sanders' camera expertise, produced his first film.

"Robot Invasion" followed, an epic science fiction piece with characters made of Lego. This was followed by another

production based on the film "The Empire Strikes Back", but he went "provincial" with "The Blob" - a three minute, 30-second, animated feature based on a monster made of plasticine.

"I find plasticine easy for animation," he explained, "and I had made 'The Blob' for school. We were really

surprised when one night we were sitting in front of the TV and all of a sudden my film popped up.

INSPIRED
"Mr. Sanders had worked in a movie studio before and he helped with the camera and showed us what to do."

David's mother Vera added that Mr. Sanders "really inspired David and

was very co-operative".

Mrs. Giammarco recalled that David's bout with allergies at an early age forced him to find more passive recreation. He decided to hone his artistic skills, which have cropped up elsewhere in the family.

At a very young age he started copying Disney characters from a book and was soon able to draw them from memory, his mother said. Whenever they headed off to the doctor's office, David would cart along his note pad, sketching furiously while waiting for his appointment.

One doctor informed him that there is a demand for good cartoonists. This bit of information seems to have at least partially fueled David's career plans.

LOVE AFFAIR
Along came the flurry of Pink Panther movies and his love affair for animation began.

"Ever since he saw his first movie, he's been

fascinated by the Pink Panther," Mrs. Giammarco said, "and he was always playing the Pink Panther record."

"I've seen (the newer) Pink Panther movies about five times each," David said. "You know how they have the cartoons at the beginning along with the credits? I started copying down what Clousseau looked like from that and then I made up my own character."

Portfolio of Clousseau cartoons under one arm. David marched into the Advocate's office in June and soon started work as the paper's only comic strip artist.

About to begin his second year at Erin High School, his career goal haven't changed with the new academic scenery. Plans are in the wind for yet another animated feature and there appears to be no end to the trouble Clousseau can get into.

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