

Watching the Radcliffes come to life

Most Monday mornings, we hear of recent film releases, and how those films grossed millions of dollars. I'm sure the producer, director and all others involved experience relief and euphoria when that film finally makes it to the silver screen.

A couple weeks ago, a film was released that was a lot closer to my heart.

My nephew, Greg Denny, a fourth-year film student at Ryerson, has been making movies since his days at Georgetown High School.

As a final project, he and a team of other Ryerson students were required to create a 26-minute film, the runtime to allow the movie to be aired on television in a 30-minute time slot.

Last fall, Greg dropped by to bounce an idea off me. "Hey Uncle Ted," he said, "Could I use your place to film a movie I'm producing?"

He had a prospectus, a script and a zillion ideas about how his movie, *Raymond Radcliffe*, could be shot. As I listened, I thought it sounded like lots of work and inconvenience, but I was intrigued. I agreed in principal. He left the script behind, to see if I had any editing ideas.

Greg had enlisted three Canadian actors—Cedric Smith, known for his part as Uncle Alex on *Road to Avonlea*, Deborah Grover, most recently from *The Shipping News*, and a cameo with Jayne Eastwood. Georgetown Little Theatre actor Ron Hunt was also featured.

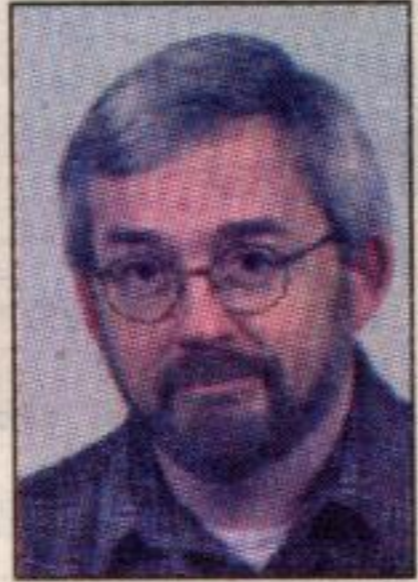
The plot centers around a century family farm which grandfather Frederick Radcliffe plans to leave to his middle-age son, Albert. When Albert dies suddenly, Frederick decides to leave it to grandson Raymond, only son of his daughter Ada, bypassing her in the process.

Raymond, a bit of a prodigal son who has been working off the farm, isn't receptive, feeling his mother is being cheated out of the estate.

His girlfriend Grace is even less impressed.

Frederick is adamant. "You don't give a farm to a 50-year-old woman," he says, "It needs a

A
TED
BIT



Ted Brown

strong lad to run it."

It's no coincidence that many characters have direct ties to Greg's life, developed as he was growing up around our own family farm.

As I watched the film, familiar props showed up in the background, like my mom's eyeglass case, one of my dad's Lang's Feed Mill hats, and other items so tiny, but still noticeable to me.

The movie was filmed in the fields, the barn, the hay loft, the stable, as well as a large shoot in the big kitchen of the farmhouse.

And my little Ford Ranger pickup, as well as my two farm tractors, also star in the film.

It's an emotional process to see it all unfold, from a concept discussed in my den, to an all-day shooting in the kitchen, numerous shoots in the fields, the roads around home, right to the final product, complete with stunning cinematography of the farm, compliments of Greg's longtime friend Ryan Carter, also a local kid.

As the credits rolled, I was so proud of Greg.

Not because he had fine-tuned the editing to razor-sharp perfection or the musical background was so perfect. Nor because he had created a poignant story based on a rural family's values of succession of a family farm—many of which were picked up from my own parents.

It was the final credit acknowledging "Fred and Doris Brown—Posthumously."

The kid has class.

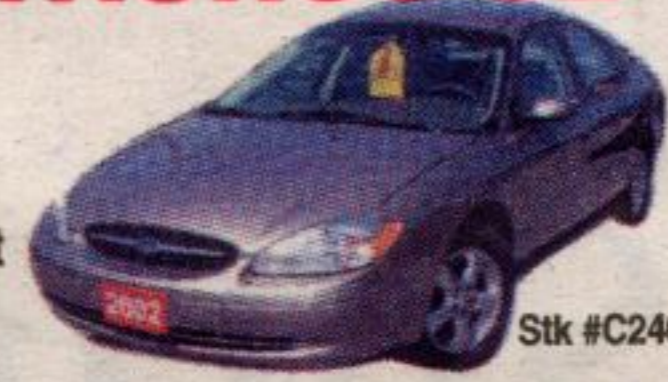
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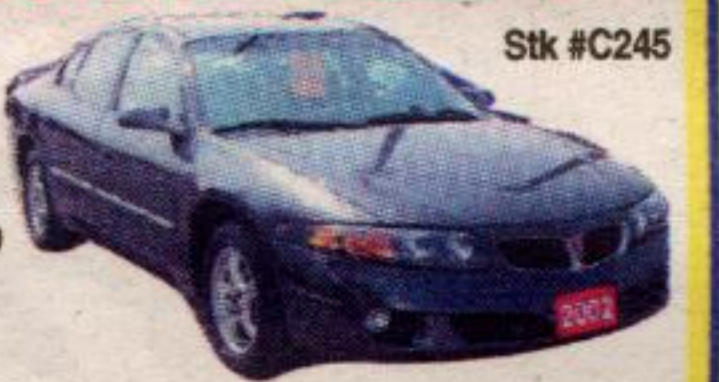
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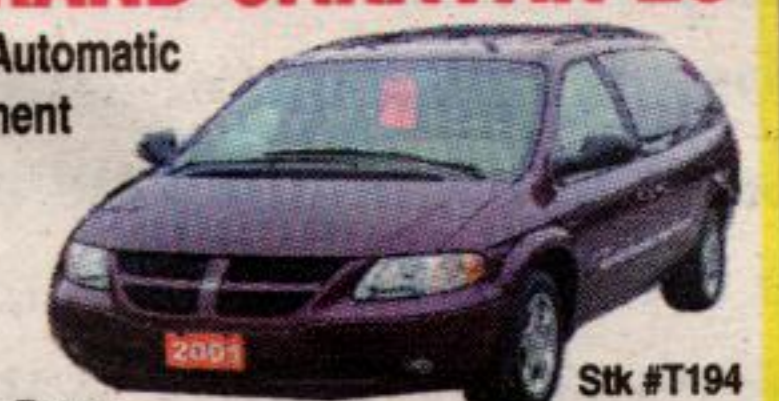
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