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“The Whole Nine Yards”

by
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Well, July is almost a thing of the past as we print this article... it is truly Summer at its best and with the hot weather comes Hollywood's best, according to them, to the theatres to take advantage of the longer days and vacationing pocketbooks. The super hit thus far has been *Pirates of the Caribbean/Dead Man's Chest*, chronicling the antics of pirate extraordinaire Captain Jack Sparrow. Obviously, the public wants to see if *Pirates deux* is as good as the prequel and has thus far shelled out more than \$132 Million, making it the best opening weekend for a movie ever... Yes, it even beat *Star Wars, III: Revenge of the Sith*, and previous king *Spider Man* that only generated \$115 Million on its opening. The first showing of *Pirates* at The Villages Old Mill Playhouse sold out as well.

Haven't seen the movie yet but I have seen most of the trailers put out by the publicists and it appears Capt. Jack is having a go at defrauding the infamous Davy Jones of Davy Jones Locker fame. Those who have seen it say the story line is a little wanting but the special effects will have you ooohing and aaahhhing. Avast ye landlulbbers, see it at your own risk. Speaking of the evil Davy Jones and his locker, have you ever wondered who in the world Davy Jones was... and don't tell me he sang with the Monkees a few decades ago. I'm talking about the really bad dude from nautical land... the one from whom all sea disasters flow.

Well, being the curious sort that I am I sought an answer from all over the world and could only come up with supposes and not sures. A couple of thoughts, however, from my very closest British friend Michael Quinion who has heard that there was, possibly, a real David Jones who ran a pub in England back in the days of yore and was paid a handsome price to slip a mickey to unsuspecting patrons and store them in his ale locker in the back until the press gangs could come and fetch them.

Then there are those who say Davy is a convoluted, colloquial West African version of a word meaning “ghost” and that Jones is supposed to have the prophet Jonah of biblical fame in its gene pool. You know... the one who spent three days and nights in the belly of a whale. Absolutely, for sure, no one alive today knows the exact origin of Davy Jones and when you get right down to it... who really cares? It makes a great story and a super dastardly villain with whom to cross swords.

Since we're on this kick of “Where did that phrase come from...” let's look at one that many, if not all, of us have used one time or another in our everyday conversation... “Give me the whole

nine yards!” Who hasn’t used this one? Anyone care to tell me what it means? I thought not, but I bet a lot of you out there have a suggested clue to its meaning.

Again, my exhaustive research has failed to come up with an exact origin or meaning of this phrase but I will give you a few of the MANY that I found in my digging.

My man, Mike the Brit has said it is not an old phrase, only coming to light sometime in the 1960s, and it is not a phrase common in Britain. When it is used the meaning attributed to it, of course, is “the whole thing; give me all of it; I’ll take the works, etc.” Some of the ideas thrown out by the common folk, according to Mike have been: The size of a nun’s habit; the amount of material needed to make a man’s three-piece suit; the length of a maharajah’s ceremonial sash; the capacity of a West Virginia ore wagon; the volume of rubbish that would fill a standard garbage truck; the length of a hangman’s noose; how far you would have to sprint during a jail break to get from the cellblock to the outer wall; the length of a standard bolt of cloth; the volume of a rich man’s grave or just possibly the length of his shroud; the length of cloth needed for a Scottish “great kilt”; or some distance associated with sports or athletics, especially the game of American football.

We all can knock holes in many of these, especially the one having anything to do with football. Although, there have been some not so good running backs on some of my favorite teams that seemed to think that nine yards was all that was needed for a first down. I for one have always favored the one pertaining to the amount of cloth needed to finish a man’s three piece suit.

Well, pick the one you like best and if anyone out there knows the answer, or has a better suggestion than the ones above drop me an e-mail and let me know. I’ll pass it on to our readers.

Have a great week until the next time and, by the way, if you’d like to read a passel more articles that I’ve written about various subjects check out my website at www.SeniorPerspective.org. See ya’ next week.

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