

FRIDAY 9TH OCTOBER

Happy
Birthday

Happy 90th Birthday to the legendary British actor with the ALL CAPS voice, Brian Blessed. At school, Brian was Boxing champion and captain of the football and cricket teams. But when he was 14 his father was seriously injured in a coal-mining accident underground and spent months in hospital, his mother had a breakdown and Brian had to leave school to get a job and support the family. He described leaving school as “the worst day of his life”.

He worked as a plasterer and undertaker’s assistant and eventually went to night school to finish his education. He did amateur theatre and encouraged by a local director applied to the Bristol Old Vic Theatre School when he was 20. A successful career in Z-Cars and Shakespeare followed, including his infamous performance as Prince Vultan in *Flash Gordon*. More recently his distinctive voice has in demand as Boss Nass in *Star Wars* and Grampy Rabbit in *Peppa Pig*.

Blessed has also been an explorer; he attempted to climb Everest without **supplemental** oxygen three times. Stopping just 249 m short of the summit in 1993 he tried again two more times. He has climbed Kilimanjaro and Aconcagua, survived a plane crash in the Venezuelan Jungle and is still the oldest person to trek to the north pole at 62 in 1999.



- How would you feel if you had to leave school to go to work today?
- What do you think of Brian’s voice? Do you know someone with a distinctive voice?
- Why do you think Brian sought adventure when he was already successful as an actor?

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He went to night-school and then theatre school at 20. He quickly gained roles on TV, stage and in film. Including famously in Flash Gordon. Recently his voice has been in demand.

He has also been an explorer; attempting Mount Everest without **supplemental** Oxygen three times, and at 62 was the oldest person to ever trek to the North Pole in 1999.



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- Why do you think Brian sought adventure when he was already successful as an actor?