

OUR THIRD YEAR!

405 ALIVE

THE VINTAGE TELEVISION MAGAZINE THAT KEEPS 405 ALIVE

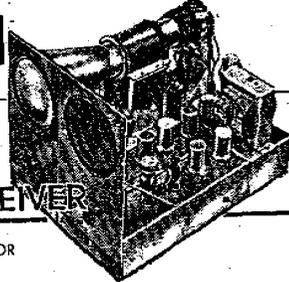
ISSUE 9, January 1991.

Editor Andrew Emmerson, G8PTH

FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE

The "ARGUS"

BUILDING OUR
Free Blueprint
TELEVISION RECEIVER



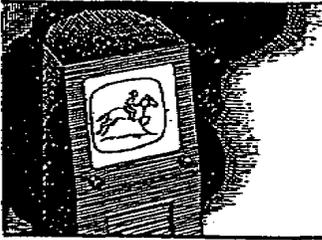
A 21-VALVE 6IN. C.R. TUBE UNIT-BUILT TELEVISOR
FOR THE AMATEUR

IN THIS ISSUE:

Your Letters	3
Television Newsreel.....	8
Picture Page	10
Book reviews	12
The End of the Line	15
BBC Television Symbol	19
Conservation & Restoration	20
The really live TV show ..	23
Fond memories	24

Black Hill	27
441 Alive: E1 leaflet	31
The Station Logo	35
The Argus Story	37
Converter Forum	41
Trade Test Films	42
Teletalk	48
Collectors & Collections .	51
Market Place	58

"We support the BVWS and the BATC"



FROM THE EDITOR ...

Hallo again and welcome to volume 3 of **405 Alive**. It's all too easy to forget to say thanks for your support, so let me do this now. Your subscription is appreciated. At the same time I'd like to wish you a happy, peaceful and, perhaps even, more prosperous new year. Let's hope so ...

Oh yes, I know this issue is late and I do apologise. What can I say? Only that if you knew my lifestyle and workload you'd marvel that it had appeared at all!

If you are a new subscriber rest assured that even though some issues may be a few weeks late you will always get your four 64-page issues: that's a promise. Of course, those of you have been with us longer will already know this. If only there was a way of getting 36 hours out of a day though!

For some strange reason, the articles in this issue have taken up more space than I expected. As a result some have had to be held over to the next issue, but in many ways that is no bad thing, as it will mean that part of issue 10 is already written! Hopefully I shall be able to make sure it is published on schedule in April ... and that means you won't have to wait long for the next **405 Alive**! Goodies in store include early days at the Sutton Coldfield transmitter, the models of TV outside broadcast vehicles made by Meccano Ltd., pirate TV in the 1960s and much more ... Apologies to all those who sent in material: it will in the next issue!

Incidentally, once I knew this issue was going to be a bit late I held it back a bit longer, so as to include the very first review of a new book. Wow! A **405 Alive** exclusive! You should find a coloured leaflet included with this magazine to make it even easier to order this fascinating new book.

By now I have a pretty clear idea of how many people are with us: from a peak of 166 last year we have fallen to 140. On past performance, those who have fallen by the wayside will be replaced by new blood, and I expect a few of the stragglers will eventually remember to pay up! I believe we have a fair pass-on readership, too, so the total number of readers may be around 200 or so.

As **405 Alive** is a not-for-profit publication, it doesn't really matter whether we print 100 copies, 150 or 200 - the big price breaks don't come until you hit a circulation of 1000. The big juggling act is to print just enough copies to cater for people signing up during the year and for the renegades who insist on renewing at the end of February! We try not to run out of copies, but there's no point in carrying over-stocks which never get sold - that's money wasted doing nothing.

Finally, thanks again to Dicky Howett for the continuing supply of funnies.

Andy Emmerson

LETTERS, WE GET LETTERS ...

From Michael Coxon, Derby:

I was very impressed by your magazine - so impressed, in fact, that I'm enclosing another cheque, to cover my subscription for the next year. It's worth every penny.

My own special interests which I've already outlined were well covered, with intelligent, professional features from the pens of Keith Hamer (whom I know), Paul Sawtell, Alan Keeling etc. I was delighted to read about the Test Card Music Convention at Leominster, and hope to go to the next, all being well. At this point I would like to reiterate the comments made by Keith and Paul about the sale of trade test music. I, too, am against this, for to breach copyright laws so blatantly would surely jeopardise the enjoyment of many harmless collectors. As a member of Radio Link, the hospital radio station here in Derby, I've been able to obtain many records from publishers such as Mozart Edition, KPM and De Wolfe, and I am naturally anxious that such records should not fall into the wrong hands. We, being a charity, were granted certain concessions.

Anyway, thanks again for your magazine. Keep up the good work!

Some people think I write the readers' letters as well as my own bits - it's not true, honest! With appreciative letters like this I don't have to invent them. Anyway, thanks for the kind words Michael.

From Rod Allen, London:

I find it quite extraordinary how many resonances of my own interests and obsessions **405 Alive** touches in one way or another, not to mention childhood recollections of watching the BBC's Demonstration Film morning

after morning in the early fifties...! I am enclosing my cheque for £10 and look forward to a year's subscription.

One or two points raised in the current issue are of particular interest. On page 11 there's a note about the use of the phrase "Brompton Towers" for the offices: I think I might have been the person who invented this phrase, and I was certainly the first to use it in print - we used it irreverently all the time in **Television Mail** when I was its editor during the mid and late sixties.

Television Mail, which catered mainly for the advertising trade before it metamorphosed under my direction into **Broadcast** in 1973, used to list and review Monday's Newcomers each week, giving all the available agency and production company credits, and giving us who had to ring up and find out who had perpetrated each commercial a lot of experience and contacts in the advertising business of the time. (We also ran the TV Mail Awards for the best commercials of the year, which are still running under the name of the British Television Advertising Awards and now run by an industry committee).

There is no article of any interest to be written about MNs, as we called them - the transmission fell into disuse in the seventies because the agencies finally realised that by showing their spots each Monday morning they were giving away their campaign strategy to their rivals! There is, of course, lots to be written about the content of the commercials and the social and business structure of the TV advertising business in the "swinging London" of the 60s.

I enjoyed reading Steve James' piece about early pop programmes on TV. **READY STEADY GO** really was a seminal programme, and Elkan Allan, its executive producer, is too little

credited with the innovations involved. I used to go down to the studio in Kingsway occasionally for the show. (One year, RSG hosted A-R's New Year's Eve transmission, and I will never forget dancing with Dusty Springfield during the show...)

I also enjoyed Malcolm Burrell's column, though he makes one classic and forgivable mistake - the VTR pioneer to whom he makes reference was Ray Dolby, not Thomas (the pop musician); Ray, who went on to start Dolby Labs and to invent the noise reduction system that bears his name, was part of the Ampex team led by Charles Ginsberg that invented quad VTR. Sadly, Ginsberg died quite recently.

Do you remember that for years we used the verb to "Ampex", meaning to make a video recording, in the same way that people still say to "Hoover" instead of to vacuum? The last VR-1000 I saw in operational use was at the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation in Accra in about 1974; a year earlier, I had seen six or seven of them in use in CBS Television City in Hollywood in duplex with VR-2000s recording the network feed from the East Coast for delayed rebroadcast.

One other point: the company with the frantically high-speed 1/4 inch home VTR system was called Telcan, not Telcan; I went to a demo of the kit in Hanover Square when it was launched and concluded there and then that it would never catch on - the picture quality was appalling.

Malcolm mentions the continued use of telerecording: my partner in Television Entertainment, Noel Copley, was sales director of TVi Ltd, the London facilities house, when it pioneered the installation of the CBS-developed laser tape-to-film transfer system which wrote modulated laser light straight to negative 16mm or 35mm film. I don't think anyone believes telerecording is the answer to

preservation, and there is even a theory that laserdiscs might crumble over time.

The answer to the question about Teledu Cymru (page 42) is Bangor. [see issue 10: there's more to it than that! - AE]

From Tony Clayden, London:

The article on Cannonball stirred some memories. Did anyone else notice that the business name on the side of the truck originally read CanAm and later changed to C & A? I suspect they invented this name CanAm, then found out there was a real firm using it and had to change the name.

From Jeffrey Borin, Harrow:

Malcolm Burrell (issue 8, p. 21) suggested that 405 lines plus 1990 technology could be used to provide a high-definition picture (800-plus lines). This is undoubtedly true - and the line whistle on an enhanced display would be at least 20.25kHz and so inaudible (except to dogs).

Has he read my article "405 MAC, A new Approach to TV" (*Television*, April 1988), which although an April Fool spoof, is actually based on respectable theory?

819 is almost exactly twice 405 - HDTV before its time. Vive huit cents dix-neuf! Suggested name for French counterpart to 405 Alive.

From Alan Keeling, Birmingham:

Regarding Frank Mitchell's interesting short article (p.17, issue 8), in the late fifties and early sixties between 16.44 and 16.59 ATV would show their familiar double-eyed symbol with the word INFORMATION underneath it.

In the late sixties, before the

advent of colour on ITV, ATV also showed rural picture slides on a Sunday afternoon from 13.30 to 13.45, when a marvellous ITC re-run entitled "Whiplash" appeared. Superimposed on the half-dozen slides was the word INTERVAL.

During the mid-sixties ATV used to screen a series of short five minute films at night before the Epilogue, entitled "Golf Tip of the Day". I can't remember how many were made, but they were produced by ITC in Canada and introduced by a professional, Dow Finsterwald, who would show a weekly guest celebrity how to drive, pitch, putt, chip, etc.. Does anyone else remember them?

On another subject, for identifying old programmes, here is a list of recommended reference books. Some may be out of print now.

COMPLETE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF TV PROGRAMS 1947-1979 by Vincent Terrace. Published by Barnes (USA).

HALLIWELL'S TV COMPANION. Published by Granada.

THE ULTIMATE TV BOOK. Edited by Judy Fireman. Published by WP.

THE GREAT TV SERIES by Jeff Rovin. Published by Barnes (USA).

TO BE CONTINUED ... (FILM SERIALS 1929-1956) by Weiss and Goodgold. Published by Bonanza (USA).

THE AMERICAN VEIN (DIRECTORS AND DIRECTIONS IN TELEVISION) by Chris Wicking and Tise Vahimagi. Published by Talisman.

From Mike King, Crowfield Cottage, Stone Street, Crowfield, IPSWICH, Suffolk, IP6 9TA:

I would be interested to see what response there would be if I were to set up an "OLD TVs" register, to assist with interchange of service info, parts, etc.. It would be interesting to know if there are any surviving examples of some models, and the resulting collected data may provide some interesting copy for a

future 405 Alive.

Perhaps information of this type could be forwarded to my address (above), with a SAE if a reply is required. The information I have in mind is: Name, Address, Details of any complete sets (make, model, serial no. and condition) and any details of paperwork, parts or complete sets for sale/swop or sought.

Sounds like a good idea to me! [AE]

From Barry Fox, 5 Denning Road, Hampstead, London, NW3 1ST:

I wonder if anyone can help me with facts for an article I am researching at the moment. It's about the "ghost" TV station KLEE-TV which was allegedly picked up by a TV viewer in London in 1953 - *three years after the station had changed its call letters to KPRC-TV!*

Assuming this is not a hoax, there are several theories which have appeared in the pseudo-scientific press over the years. I have done a lot of digging and think I have pieced together the whole story. But ... it would be very interesting to know if any readers know about this and have any press clippings or views.

Please write to Barry direct if you can help him. We have already tipped him off about Roger Bunney's piece in Teletvstion. We expect to see the final story in 405 Alive in about a year's time.

From John Chittock, 37 Gower Street, London, WC1E 6HH:

I am helping compile the Royal Television Society's archives and one of the topics of interest is early British video recorders such as the Telcan and the one made by Wesgrove. I am not aware of any in museum collections but if anybody has one, or knows where there is one, we would be delighted to record its existence.

video recorders such as the Telcan and the one made by Wesgrove. I am not aware of any in museum collections but if anybody has one, or knows where there is one, we would be delighted to record its existence.

From Andrew Redding, Rotherham

Due to the inclement weather we had over the Christmas holiday, I decided to spend some time photographing the 405 line pictures I have been watching on my old sets which enjoy a new lease of life due to my "Ultra Simple Video Modulator" (See issue 8 of 405 Alive).

Please find enclosed a photograph, taken off the nine-inch screen of my Ekco TMB272 late fifties TV, which was fed 405 line signals via the modulator from my "Saisho" video recorder (which handles 405 line material well, albeit with a ghost!)

The picture was taken with a Pentax P30n SLR camera, a one second exposure at F3.5, using 100 ASA film.

As is well known, the test card is a stringent test of the TV transmitter/receiver chain and as can be seen from the photograph, the linearity my TMB272 needs a bit of tweaking!

However, the TMB272 isn't the most reliable of sets, despite its flexibility. For example the sound doesn't work on my set, the EHT smoothing capacitor has an intermittent short, and the line linearity choke has a tendency to smoke!

In fact, it's the second example of this set that I've had, the first one I owned (in the mid-seventies) had been rescued from a Council tip, but as I knew little of TV repairs at that time my brother made me scrap it!

Further to your editorial in issue 8 concerning a swapmeet or Open Day, I hate to seem a downer but I doubt

that I'd attend as it would inevitably be miles away, somewhere "south of Watford" (like Harpenden), and would attract all sorts of rip-off merchants who would double their prices, if they knew they'd got a captive audience.

However, it would be a big boost for 405 Alive and if it gave us media attention then it would be all to the good!

From Bill Journeaux, Poole:

Can I draw attention to the Vintage Wireless Circle? This is a group of enthusiasts who hold approximately four meetings a year in the Swindon, Wiltshire area. These are mainly for vintage radio but 405 line television is always represented with a number of working sets on display and a 405 line source for anyone wishing to run their own television equipment. Details of further meetings are available from Mr Geoff Williams on 0285-885725.

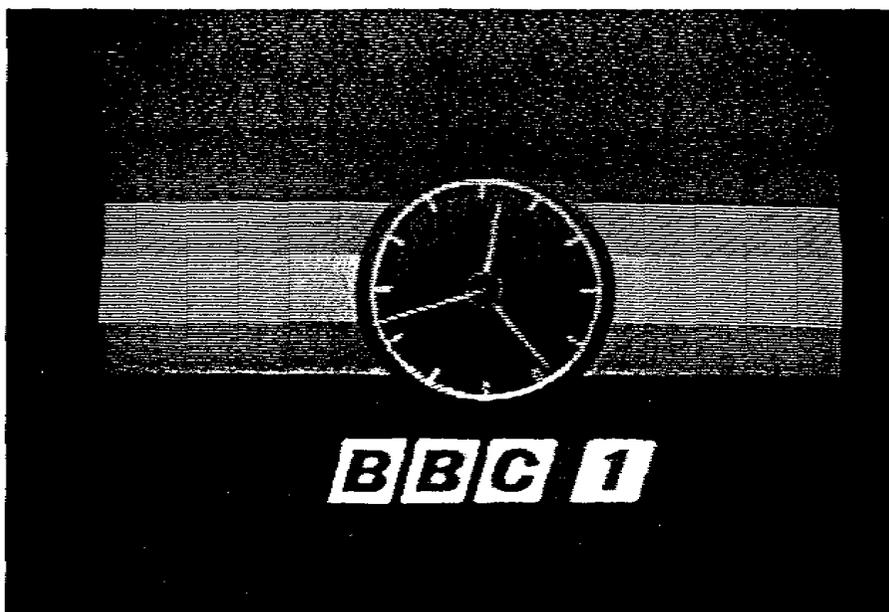
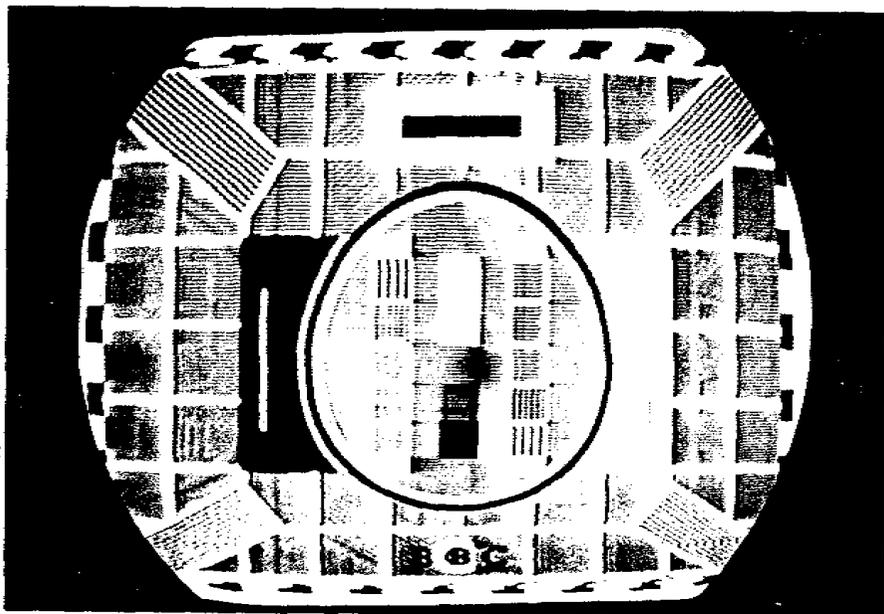
Bill also sent some cuttings, which have just had to be held over, together with letters from John Bray and others. Sorry! Normal service will be resumed in the next issue ...

LATE SMALL ADS.

WANTED: Mc Michael Voyager 17" transportable with radio. Also English Electric TV or any set with metal cone CRT. Chris Field, 0203-326832. [Article by Chris in next issue.]

GOOD HOME WANTED: Prototype (make unknown) valve colour TV, less cabinet but fitted with circular colour tube. Free but must be collected from Dorset. Bill Journeaux, 0202-748072.

A new view of Test Card "C" by Andrew Redding.



An old BBC clock discovered by Martin Loach on the end of an old reel of tape. Does anyone know when this was used?

TELEVISION NEWSREEL

TELEVISORS

Two readers have asked me recently what a Baird televisor is worth, so I guess the topic must be of some interest. Unfortunately I don't know what they are *worth* but I do know that they have sold for about £2,500 in the past year or so. The feeling is that the price may be falling now, so perhaps you could buy one for less, especially if it was in less than perfect condition. I am not sure **405 Alive** is really the place to discuss this kind of thing (also my knowledge of the subject is next to zero), but any feedback from readers is always welcome.

BAIRD TELEVISIONS

In other words, set with CRTs. Ray Herbert, who himself work for Baird, points out that the T5 set was the only one actually made by Bairds. The other pre-war sets, the T12, T14, T18 and so on were made for Baird by Bush. Tudor Rees of the Vintage Wireless Company (Bristol) has a set of sales brochures for all these and is prepared to make photocopies on a commercial basis.

A very readable article on Baird's high definition colour TV experiments of the 1940s, by Bill O'Neill, appeared in the December 15th 1990 issue of *New Scientist*.

SWAPMEETS

Elsewhere in this issue you will find a full-page advertisement for a Vintage Communications Fair, down in Bampton in the Wess Vinglun. It's on Bank Holiday Monday 27th May and sounds like a whole lot of fun. Why not go along and send us a report on it?

It is hoped to have a **405 Alive** swapmeet as well, sometime this spring/summer, somewhere in the Home Counties. More information as soon as we can fix up the arrangements.

TIME SCREEN et al.

Last time we mentioned a number of magazines devoted to old TV programmes: here are two more which you can find in specialist shops. *Fantastic Television* is published by Videosonic Arts of North Hollywood at \$4.95 and I picked up a copy of issue no. 2 (not dated) at Forbidden Planet for £2.95. In 52 pages it contains ten feature articles illustrated in black and white and a few advertisements for tapes. Sample titles of the articles include *Dick Tracy on TV*, *Bela Lugosi on TV* and *A Little Travelling Music* (Jackie Gleason). Competently written but probably a little obscure for British tastes.

Epi-log can be found at Mega-City (Inverness Street, Camden Town) and costs £3.55, again for an original \$4.95 cover price. This is also episode no. 2, same format but 74 pages, a colour cover and black and white illustrations inside. This magazine is devoted to detailed episode and cast listings from past American TV series (and British ones, in issues to come). Episodes in this *Epi-Log* (get it?) cover *Beauty and the Beast*,

Battlestar Galactica, Galactica:1980, Land of the Giants, Lost in Space, Return of Captain Nemo, Swiss Family Robinson, The Time Tunnel and Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea. The publishing schedule is projected as far as issue 12 in September 1992 and indicates there could be some useful reading ahead. Mega-City is on 071-485 9320 if you want to place an order.

If TV shows like *Danger Man* and *The Prisoner* are your meat, you will be pleased to know that a book called *The Patrick McGoohan Screenography* is available at a bargain price (about £2). This contains synopses and cast lists for all episodes of those programmes as well as the other productions in which Mr McGoohan has starred. Other items are available: for free list and colour poster send a large (A4) size SAE to Roger Goodman, P.O. Box 61, Cirencester, Glos.. And tell him 405 Alive sent you!

Number 16 (Winter 1990) of *Time Screen* is now out and covers *inter alia* British telefantasy in France, episode guide of *Hammer House of Horror* and an interview with Cyril Frankel who directed many classic adventure series of the 1960s and 70s. Good value at £2.50 + 70p postage: order from 574 Manchester Road, Stocksbridge, Sheffield, S30 5DX.

IBA ENGINEERING INFORMATION SERVICE

As you will doubtless be aware, the 1990 Broadcasting Act has brought about the separation of the transmitter network function of the IBA from the programming side. The latter is now the Independent Television Commission (ITC), while National Transcommunications Ltd (NTL) is in charge of the transmitter network for ITV, Channel 4 and S4C. The old IBA engineering information office at Crawley Court has been closed but a limited information service will be provided to respond to enquiries on 0962-822401. Those of you with teletext-capable TVs will find NTL transmitter information on page 697 of Channel Four's Oracle service.



PICTURE PAGE

All the latest video reviews

NOTE: ALL TAPES ARE VHS AND COST £9.99 UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.

TV's BEST ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN - Volume 1. WARNER HOME VIDEO.

I'll bet that most kids of the fifties will never forget these immortal opening lines: "Faster than a speeding bullet, more powerful than a locomotive, able to leap tall buildings in a single bound. Look up in the sky ... it's a bird ... it's a plane ... it's Superman!"

And so starts the rarely-seen pilot episode of "The Adventures of Superman" (in monochrome first two seasons; third, fourth, fifth and sixth season episodes were filmed in colour). In this first episode Superman's origins are explained in detail, from the character as an infant being rocketed to Earth by his scientist father prior to the destruction of the planet Krypton, then being found and reared by the Kent family and named Clark, right up to Clark as an adult working for the *Daily Planet* and becoming "Superman" whenever duty called.

As an interesting "intermission" there is also the first of seventeen colour Superman cartoons, made in 1941 and animated superbly by Dave Fleischer of "Popeye" fame. In this particular cartoon Superman saves Metropolis from being destroyed by a mad scientist, and all in the space of six minutes.

The last item on this tape is the final colour television episode entitled "All that Glitters" where ace *Daily Planet* reporter Jimmy Olsen is accidentally knocked unconscious and has a dream that he and Lois Lane have the powers of Superman.

REGULAR CAST:

Superman/Clark Kent

Lois Lane

" "

Jimmy Olsen

Perry White

Inspector Henderson

George Reeves

Phyllis Coates (first season)

Noel Neill (from second season)

Jack Carson

John Hamilton

Robert Shayne

As an overall verdict I must say that all four volumes are worth buying, even though some of you vintage TV buffs may have already taped the colour episodes shown on BBC-1 in the summer mornings of 1989. It's also worth knowing that MGM/UA have just released three volumes of the early sixties science-fiction anthology series "The Outer Limits" and also recently released two volumes of "Tarzan" (starring Ron Ely) and not forgetting everyone's favourite dolphin "Flipper". Mind you, I wish someone would release two volumes of "Sir Lancelot". [Alan Keeling]

PINKY AND PERKY & CO.. CHANNEL 5 VIDEO, CFV10682.

Hooray for this tape! It is a welcome re-encounter with Jan and Vlasta Dalibor's porcine creatures. For me it is 45 minutes of sheer delight and unexpected as well, since I had forgotten how much fun these characters were.

In case you don't remember the puppets Pinky and Perky from the first time round, these were children's characters who were pleasantly unsophisticated and were not ashamed to have their strings showing! What's more, you get four authentic programmes just as they were transmitted in 1964 and 1966 (as far as I can see). The opening and closing captions are original and you even have the animated logos after each programme. Picture and sound quality are excellent and the whole tape is in black and white - no superfluous colour captions.

Interestingly, these programmes show some early electronic special effects: split screens and diamond dissolves. Old TV cameras and monitors, even a Bush TV53, are peppered about as props for Pinky & Perky's Pirate TV Service. The humour is of course lame but fun. As a bonus, the tape comes in a high-gloss pink sleeve with a vacuum-formed bas-relief of Pinky & Perky on the front. You even get a magic button to make Pinky & Perky's eyes flash and play a little tune. Pure magic for children and not bad for adults either. [AE].

THE BEST CHILDREN'S TV OF THE DECADE: 60s. Watershed, WSP1012.

This 50 minute tape, introduced by Philip Schofield, can be described as a selection of short extracts with a thankfully bland commentary. The compilers have not resisted the temptation to overlay colour captions on the black and white material and seems to display their inability to accept monochrome material as a valid medium in its own right but some kind of inferior format which can be legitimised by adding colour. Sad.

Sad, too, that Schofield's researchers have let him down. Crackerjack pencils were special propelling pencils, not ordinary wooden ones. In short a rather dissatisfactory outing which seems to have little appeal for any viewership. [AE]

BRIEF NOTES:

* THUNDERBIRDS VOLUME 14 (CHANNEL 5, CFV05442, £7.99) contains two episodes plus "The Making of Thunderbirds". The latter is not a TV programme as you might have thought but a slightly roughly cut clip from a Central Office of Information newsreel called "Parade". Interesting. [AE]

* CORONATION STREET ON VIDEO (ten volumes, WINDSONG VIDEO) will appeal to the many "Street" enthusiasts. Shame that the "from the North ... Granada" animations have been chopped, especially when they were left on at the time when some of these early episodes were re-shown on TV.

* AMERICAN COMEDY TELEVISION CLASSICS (Castle Vision, £7.99) is a new series of eight tapes, each containing three original TV episodes. Titles include two volumes each of *Flipper*, *My Favourite Martian*, *Tarzan* and *Kung Fu*. Alan Keeling spotted these and has promised us a review.

And finally, come back Steve James! We need you! [AE]

BOOK REVIEWS

THE SETMAKERS by Keith Geddes and Gordon Bussey. Hardback, 464 pages. Published by BREMA at £12.45 (plus \$2.50 postage and packing).

*To celebrate one of the century's most remarkable and far-reaching inventions, radio and television, a major new book called **The Setmakers** has been published by the British Radio and Electronic Equipment Manufacturers' Association.*

Launched on January 30th, the book charts the British story of companies and people who powered one of the greatest engines for social change the world has seen since the invention of the printing press.

In less than three generations a "wireless trade" making primitive radios from a few simple components has grown into a multi-billion pound industry bringing mass information and entertainment to all corners of the globe.

***The Setmakers** (commissioned by BREMA two years ago) was written by Keith Geddes in collaboration with Gordon Bussey. It has 464 pages and includes nearly 500 photographs (over 100 in colour).*

Comments Keith Geddes "The industry's story has many of the ingredients of a Hollywood epic power struggle, with personality clashes, and the rise and fall of great names. And all this was against a background of massive cash stakes".

The book recalls some of the great brand names of the past (Ekco, Vidor, HMV to name but a few) and contains a mass of intriguing archival material much of which has never previously been made public. It charts the fascinating development of technology that has led to the modern marvels of television, VCR and compact disc, which we now take for granted.

Authoritative yet eminently readable, it concludes by looking at the current state-of-the-art as the industry faces new challenges. These include changing conditions as a result of the Broadcasting de-regulation, the introduction of satellite and the prospects for high definition television.

BREMA is selling the book on a non-profit making basis. "This reflects its importance as part of our social history and will ensure we reach a wide audience" says BREMA director Oliver Sutton.

***The Setmakers** is priced at £12.45 + £2.50 p&p, and is available from BREMA, 19 Charing Cross Road, London, WC2H 0ES.*

Well, that's what BREMA had to say about this book. At its launch, Lord Thoneycroft said "Books speak for themselves" and this one certainly does. It's priced to sell and it's an absolute must for your bookshelf. Unlike individual company histories, this book covers the whole industry, a difficult task, with great success. Considerable research has gone into this book, as well as interviews with many of the old stagers of the industry (one unfortunately died within days of being interviewed, so the authors were

just in time). "Tricky" subjects such as 405-line colour and the Hunts capacitors which rapidly changed value are not left out. The illustrations (nearly 500 of them) are treasures as well.

So I repeat: buy this book! [Andy Emmerson]

TV's GREATEST HITS by Anthony Davis. Hardback, 141 pages. Published by Boxtree, 36 Tavistock Street, London, WC2E 7PB at £10.95. ISBN 1-85283-237-1.

Most TV programmes of the late 40s to the 80s are listed, from all channels. A good selection of black and white and coloured photographs, and dates when the programmes started. An interesting book to read, perhaps good value to TV addicts. [Barrie Portas]

NEW BOOK

SELLING THE SIXTIES: The Pirates and Pop Music Radio by ROBERT CHAPMAN.

Selling the Sixties: The Pirates and Pop Music Radio is concerned with the development of offshore radio between the years 1964-68. It places radio stations in their true social and cultural context and dispels some of the myths surrounding the pirate radio phenomenon and the 1960s in general.

Robert Chapman's book, which promises to be the definitive work on pirate radio, examines the ways in which the BBC's initial reluctance to respond to trends exploited by advertisers, unwittingly encouraged the proliferation of offshore radio stations in the early sixties. Particular emphasis is given to a comparative analysis of Radios Caroline and London as two contrasting models of pop radio, and in conclusion, the work explores the extent to which the BBC selectively adopted aspects of the pirates' legacy in order to establish its own pop service.

The author makes extensive use of interviews with those involved with pop radio at the time and also draws upon rare, hitherto unseen archive material, resulting in a lively, thorough and detailed analysis of the period.

To be published by Unwin Hyman. Hardback, ISBN 0 04 4458819.

PROGRAMME REVIEW:

1001 Nights (shown January 1st on Channel Four)

Like many of you, I suspect, I watched *1001 Nights* and needless to say, I found it fascinating. Having recorder it, I must watch it again, "more slowly", so that I can take it all in. As a compilation or condensation of old television it was most successful and it succeeded in capturing the "feel" of the television programmes I remember with some affection. I would query the need for such tight cuts and for coloured captions merged

over the start of some of the extracts, but I realise that for a general audience this is the way it has to be shown.

Inevitably though, the programme left me wanting more and I think there is plenty of scope for more programmes made up of archive material. For instance I can envisage three themes for possible spin-off programmes. One could make excellent programmes on (1) sixties pop music [the piece in *1001 Nights* showed how much good stuff still exists]; (2) commercials [without the absurd pomposity of BBC-2's *Washes Whiter*] and (3) a resume or requiem on great programmes which have been partly or totally wiped [e.g. *A for Andromeda*, one of my all time favourites!].

Let's see if the powers that be agree. I personally believe the market for nostalgia TV is larger than generally imagined, but it must **not** be trivialised. Some recent compilations released on sell-through video only serve to alienate the serious buyer! [AE]

OBITUARY:

BEN CLAPP, television pioneer

Ben Clapp, one of the few who could claim to be a pioneer of both wireless and television, died on November 12th 1990, a month before his 96th birthday. He obtained his first transmitting licence in 1912, the era of spark apparatus, and after serving in the RFC during the war, he resumed activities with the call sign 2KZ. As a partner in a wireless shop in the Strand, he had access to the best equipment and could receive USA short-wave programmes most effectively. The Wanamaker Corporation in New York, anxious to gain publicity for their special Radio Festival Concert asked him to set up a receiving station at their Pall Mall offices. On April 2nd 1924, the successful reception in London of this concert received considerable acclaim in the press.

The Wanamaker organisation had heard about television and asked Ben Clapp to investigate by visiting the inventor at Motograph House. John Baird soon realised that he was talking to someone with considerable practical experience in the design of transmitters and receivers, just the person he wanted to put his ideas into practice. Taken on as Baird's first technical assistant and becoming Chief Engineer of the company in 1927, he went to the USA that year to supervise preparations for the historic reception of transatlantic television pictures. These were shown to the press on February 8th 1928. Another overseas trip followed later the same year to demonstrate television in Australia, taking Tony Bridgewater as his assistant.

Remaining with the company until retirement in 1963, Ben Clapp became much sought after by those producing television documentaries and books. Always responding to those seeking authentic information on the early days of television, he never lost the opportunity of expressing his dismay that Baird received so little recognition and no public honours.

[Contributed by Ray Herbert and first printed in *Televiston*, the journal of the Royal Television Society.]

The following article first appeared in IBA Newslink.

THE END OF THE LINE

The story of ITV's 405-line service in Wales

by *David Jones (Broadcast Engineer at Moel-y-Parc)*

The ITV story in Wales starts with the opening of the St Hilary Channel 10 transmitter on 14 January 1958, three years after Croydon. St Hilary served South-East Wales and the West of England, the programme franchise for this area being awarded to TWW (Television West and Wales). In late 1962 a chain of three transmitters was built, Preseli, Arfon and Moel-y-Parc, to serve the then mainly Welsh-speaking areas of West and North Wales. The programme contractor for this area, Teledu Cymru, survived for less than a year and eventually became a subsidiary of TWW.

In 1964 a second transmitter was allocated to St Hilary on Channel 7 to carry TWW's Welsh service. Wales now had its first national TV service, six months before the BBC completed their network.

By 1968 repeaters at Ffestiniog, Bala, Llandridnod Wells, Llandovery, Brecon and Abergavenny were completed bringing both the ITV and BBC service to most of the population of Wales. The evolution of the ITA's network in Wales, whilst part of the UK system, had to take into account the national and linguistic questions. This, together with the topography of the county, required unique engineering answers, which resulted in the so-called "tied operation" of transmitters.

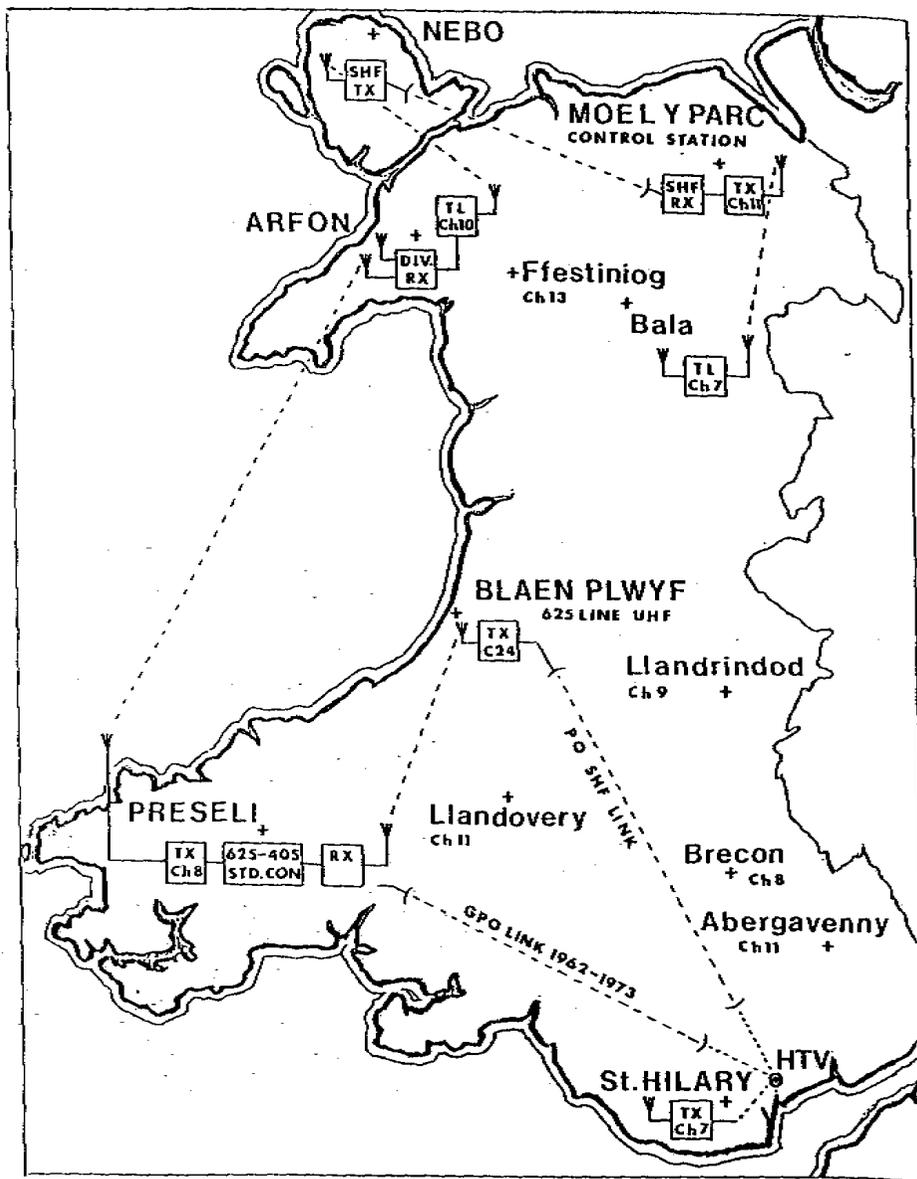
TWW programmes were routed via St Hilary and a GPO microwave link to Preseli, which until the completion of Moel-y-Parc, acted as a monitoring station for Arfon. Preseli's radiation pattern included a narrow beam across Cardigan Bay, equivalent to 80kW. This, together with a dual diversity reception system, ensured a reliable signal for re-broadcasting by Arfon's Marconi translators on Channel 10. At Nebo on Anglesey (not to be confused with Nebo where Moses viewed the promised land, or Nebo, Caernarfonshire, where in fact Arfon is situated!), Arfon's signal was picked up on a BBC-designed receiver and then beamed to Moel-y-Parc over the ITA-owned PYE M710 link. Whilst Moel-y-Parc, on Channel 11, was the last transmitter in the chain, there was one more link. The people of Bala had to wait that extra millionth of a microsecond for their programmes from the STC FTU5A translator, one of the first solid state transposers used by the ITA.

With the advent of the 625-line UHF services, changes to the 405 network were inevitable. In 1973 the GPO link to Preseli was replaced by an off-air pick-up from Blaen Plwyf which necessitated the installation of a Pye Line Store standards convertor at Preseli to convert the received 625 line signal to 405 lines. At the same time, Preseli's control room function was taken over by Moel-y-Parc.

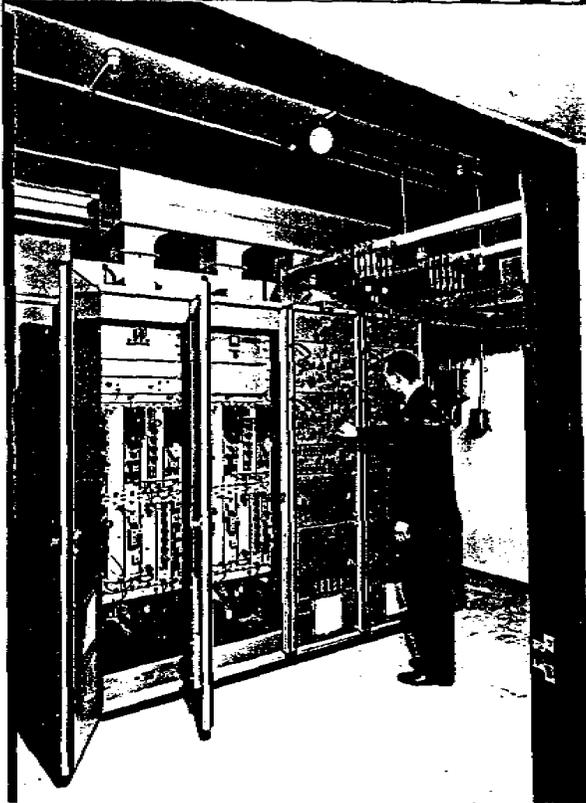
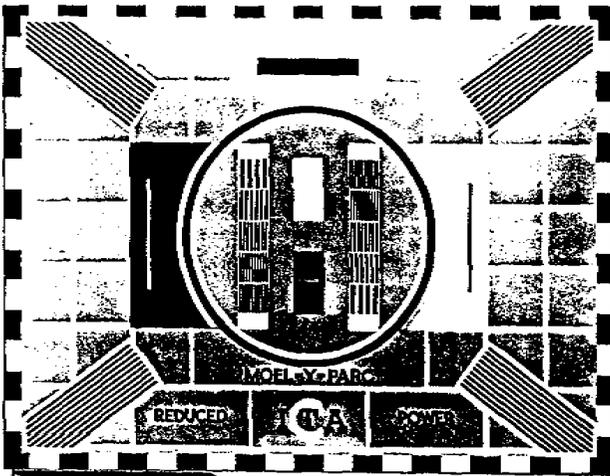
In 1978 a standards convertor at Moel-y-Parc, working off the UHF transmitter feed, replaced one half of the Nebo SHF link. The Arfon - Preseli link, in effect, becoming the VHF stand-by feed. A year later this was replaced by a second standards convertor. The old Nebo link continued in use until 1981 as a means of monitoring Arfon. From then until January 1984, Arfon soldiered on unmonitored, when it was finally closed down.

On 3 January, 22 years later, Mr Pat Evans, a Broadcast Engineer at Moel-y-Parc, was given the sad task of switching off the supplies to the Marconi kW VHF transmitter for the last time. RIP.

ITA transmitters and links in Wales

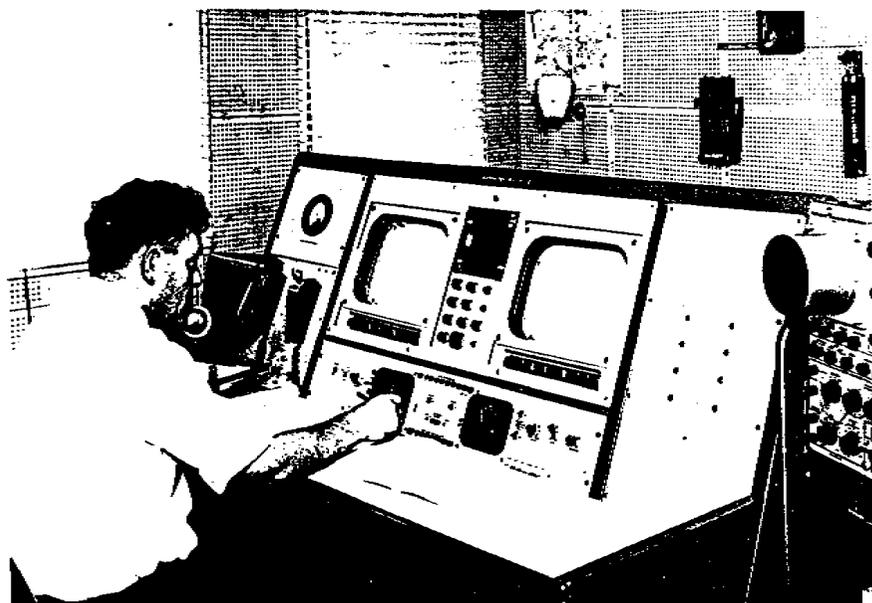
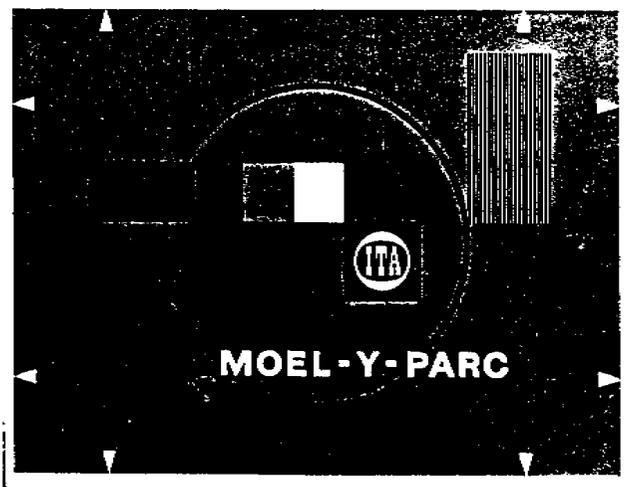


Moel-y-Parc's own slide of Test Card "C"



The Channel Room at Arfon

The tuning signal in use at Moel-y-Parc. Known as the "new" ITA design, it is also called the "Picasso" tuning signal by aesthetes who appreciate its off-centre, yet balanced appearance!"



The VHF control desk used at Moel-y-Parc from 1963 to 1973.

THE BBC TELEVISION SYMBOL

By *Andrew Emmerson*

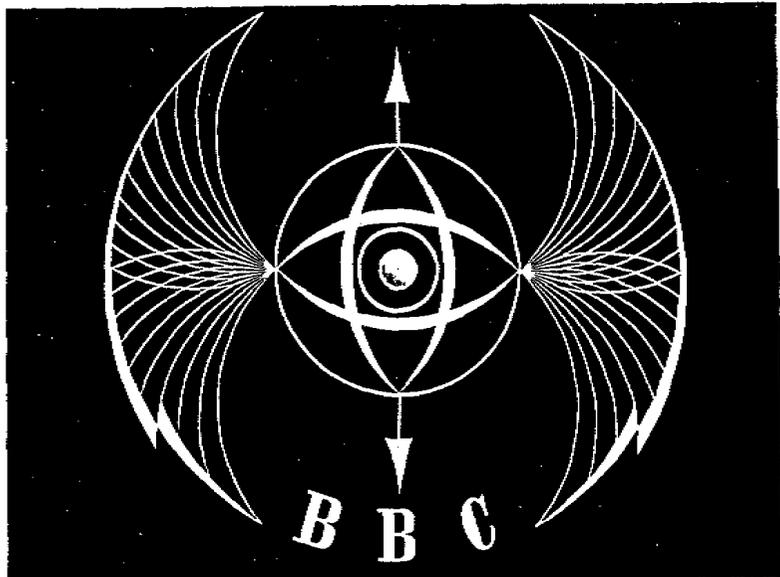
The new Television Symbol was introduced by the BBC with great pride at the end of 1953. It was designed primarily for on-screen use but also found its way into such diverse applications as ornamental ironwork atop the subsequent Television Centre in Wood Lane and onto the crockery in the staff restaurant. Indeed I believe enthusiasts can still spot (and filch?) it in that establishment.

The official description of the symbol stated that it was an abstract pattern consisting of two intersecting eyes which scan the globe from north to south and from east to west, symbolising vision and the power of vision. Flashes of lightning on either side represent electrical forces, and the whole form takes the shape of wings which suggest the creative possibilities of television broadcasting.

The symbol was designed by Abraham Games, FSIA. It was not the first use of the eye motif in television broadcasting: a simpler and hence more impressive design was used designed for CBS in the USA in 1951 by William Golden. Twin eyes overlapping were also used for the new ABC-TV company in 1955 which very soon changed its initials to ATV, when Associated British Cinemas started their TV company. The IBA also had a winged eye symbol in this period which looked like nothing on earth and was soon dropped.

Originally the BBC Television Symbol was a still caption, produced by monoscope cameras, and was shown during continuity announcements. An animated version was later developed on telecine and used in between programmes (my memory is a little vague now!). Variations were drawn up for regional purposes as the two other illustrations show, for instance as an ident for BBC West of England and for the North of England News.

[This article will also appear in *Television Graphics Review*, a new specialist magazine from HS Publications. Further details against SAE to: HS Publications, 7 Epping Close, Derby, DE3 4HR.]



*This next article is reprinted from **Telecom Heritage**, the telephone collectors' magazine. Much of it is appropriate to people who restore old radio and television equipment, too. It may even assist people who are in a quandary whether to restore to working order items such as, say, Marconi Mk I cameras! [AE]*

A CODE OF PRACTICE for The Conservation and Restoration of man-made Antiques, Bygones and Works of Art (with special reference to mechanical Bygones)

The Law of the Conservation of Antiquities says: "Antiques cannot be created but are readily damaged or destroyed"

It is also said that an owner is only the temporary custodian of an antique or work of art. Properly cared for, such things will outlast many owners.

All having the care of such articles should follow the general principles of conservation as outlined below.

All Owners and Users

The articles should be properly stored out of harm's way and, wherever possible, in an atmosphere considered suitable by prevailing expert opinion, taking special precautions as necessary (e.g. use of fungicides, insecticides, corrosion inhibitors, away from direct sunlight, conditions of controlled humidity etc.)

Keep your antiques clean and regularly maintained but know your limitations in this respect, leave well alone and if need be, take them to a specialist expert from time to time for examination and overhaul every one to five years, depending upon the article.

Do not ask or expect a restorer to permanently "improve" an original beyond its original appearance or performance or imitate a maker's mark upon an alien article.

Remember that restoration is very time-consuming and although there are certain limitations to the accomplishments of the most skilled restorer he can, nevertheless increase the visual appreciation, performance and value of an article.

Mechanical Devices should be used in accordance with the maker's instructions, where available, and operated from time to time but never left for long periods under full mechanical tension, connected to any source of energy or run down part way through a mechanical cycle or musical piece.

All loose, separate, spare (or even broken) parts, keys, cylinders, discs, records, instructions, storage cases etc. should be kept within the article itself or, where this is not possible, labelled and positively identified with the parent article, which itself should contain a reference to the location of its parts. Such parts and any relevant information should accompany any article sent for restoration.

Repairers, Restorers

Take every care of articles entrusted to you and remainder of owner/user code applies as if you owned them yourself.

Your aim is to restore the original style, pattern, size, substance, standard of finish and performance of the whole article, or part, as far as possible within the limitations of present day knowledge and the materials available. Over-restoration should be carefully avoided and where appropriate, the patination time has bestowed should not be destroyed in re-finishing, neither should any original makers' markings be removed.

Thus, original parts should always be re-worked in preference to replacement whenever possible. There is a responsibility to return or offer original defective parts to the owner after-replacement.

Any temptation to improve upon an original or imitate a maker's mark should be resisted.

Mechanical Devices

Modifications to "improve" performance or modernise motive power should be so carried out as to be readily removable leaving article as originally made whenever practicable.

Application of Repair or Modification Marks

Aim at perfection, take pride in your work and, except for very small parts and expendable items (e.g. small springs, glass), mark any modifications or replaced parts with an approved mark, clearly, but neither hidden nor necessarily obtrusive. As the purpose of the mark is to avoid subsequent errors of authentication then where a replaced part bears an alien maker's mark, the replacement mark is made over or adjacent to it.

Recommended Marks

Any approved mark should be in keeping with the article, not likely to be confused with a maker's mark, permanent and as universal as possible in its application. The restorer may scribe his own reference near the approved mark, if he wishes.

A punch mark is suggested by this code in the form of a Roman "R" not smaller than 1/16" or 1.5 mm. The punch to be suitable for marking steel, brass and softer materials. Marks such as "re-cased 17.6.71" may be pencilled on wood. The letter "R" is chosen because it stands for "Repaired", "Restored", "Replaced" etc., and this property of pre-fixing words of suitable meaning is common to many languages, and the

possibility of confusion with known marker's marks is remote indeed.

Researchers and Craftsmen

Record your findings and special methods. By all means profit from your innovations. Legally protect them, when applicable, if you so wish but in the interests of the articles themselves publicise your knowledge at some appropriate time for the benefit of all.

[J.L. Hammond, Birmingham]

LATE SMALL ADVERTISEMENTS

FOR SALE: Decca TV with bow-fronted cabinet and exquisite tambour doors, stands on little legs. Has about three preset FM stations on tuner as well as TV channels. Also boasts a device that turns the brightness down a bit when you turn the lights out. Good emission on 19" tube when last used. Peter Brunning, 91 Kenley Road, Merton Park, London, SW19 3DR.

FOR SALE: Bush TV22, in good condition and working order. Keith Norton, 64 Glenbuck Court, Glenbuck Road, Surbiton, Surrey, KT6 6BZ. Tel: 081-390 0799.

FOR DISPOSAL: (mostly either free to good homes or £5 each). RGD Deep 17, 1958ish, working. Ekco T344 (1959), wkg. Baird type 434 with legs (1958), wkg. Baird model P2114 (1955ish). Philips TVette (1967), wkg. Murphy V240 (1954), wkg. Ferguson Personal 3269 11" dual standard. Ekco TMB272 (1957), wkg. Bush TV80, TV92, TV95. Ekco TS88 (1949). Rigonda 625-line portables (1970s), two different styles. Marconi VT68 (1955), wkg. *Electronic Engineering* televisor kit (1949), complete but needs attention, with construction book. Also, at £20: Ekco TC185 (1952) console, good cabinet. And ... a small outside broadcast van. 1966 Morris FG, about the size of a small baker's van. Will run, although needs some restoration. Complete, still fitted out, originally by Peto-Scott, and some original equipment survives. Any good home appreciated, probably free! Destined to go to scrappys soon, so time is of the essence (written 4.2.91).

WANTED: Nice early 1950s 9" or 12" console set with doors. Ferguson 988T with good case. Sobell 1005DST with good case. BBC "white unit" PLUGE generator and 625 SPG. 19" rack-mounted dual-standard monitor. 19" rack-mounted waveform monitor. 10" tubes for early 50s/late 40s Marconi sets (originals are Emiscope 3/16, etc.) but any suitable replacements "to fill gap" will do. Frame output transformer for Bush TV12/22/24 series sets. Bakelite rim for Pye B16T.

Enquiries to Pat Hildred 0810458 4426 (home), 0442- 872736 (work).

THE REALLY LIVE TV SHOW

Dicky Howett remembers how it was

There really is no substitute for live TV. Coverage of last year's Tory leadership fanfaronade had all the hall-marks of the jolly old rough and ready productions of yesteryear. Out of focus cameras, misplaced mics and rubberneckerers mouthing "Hello Mum" behind street corner interviewees. Magic stuff.

Of course, "Live" is not necessarily "better". Just more fun. We all remember the cock-ups. I remember that during *The Appleyards* the camera pulled back to reveal two people creeping down a flight of stairs. But the camera pulled back too far showing the staircase to be only HALF a flight and the actors continuing downwards onto the studio floor, crouching like a couple of demented Quasimodos. For no explained reason the camera then panned off and photographed a script girl, who aghast at sudden national fame, leapt out of shot as if stuck by a pin.

During a Fred Emney show a dreaded "technical breakdown" occurred. Fred had just finished what passed for a joke and then the screen went dead. After the usual apologies from Presentation, up popped Fred a few minutes later as if nothing had happened and told the same rotten joke all over again. Mysteriously, the studio audience, laughed even more hysterically the second time around, doubtless having been threatened by the studio manager that if they didn't perform, they'd have to sit through the WHOLE show again.

As a kid, I applied for tickets to some of these shows. I attended *The Ted Ray Show* and *The Billy Cotton Band Show*. (I was too young - under 16 - to get into any ITV shows). I recall my first visit to the BBC Television Theatre just after its refit with Marconi Mk 3 equipment (1957). The thing that initially struck me was how small the stage area was. On the screen, with jugglers and dancers flitting around, the view seemed 100 foot wide. In reality, with all the technical junk surrounding the stage, this reduced the available space to little more than the dimensions of a double-width garage. Another surprise was seeing, for the first time, TV stars in COLOUR. The sets too, although the colour schemes were rather basic. But all those blues and reds and greens! It was interesting to compare the colours as reproduced in monochrome, displayed on the studio monitors. Some colours looked lighter than they actually were and some disappeared altogether. And all the telly stars looked OLDER than they appeared on the screen (and taller).

A little later, I found myself in the audience of *Juke Box Jury*. I had a front row seat and was briefly flashed on air (along with all the other nodding nobodies). Actually this particular show was recorded (they used to transmit one live, shuffle the audience and then record for the following week.) My moment of fame was on the recording and so the following week I set up my camera and snapped myself. As the photo proves, and for some unaccountable reason, I looked OLDER on TV.

*An anecdotal audio column by Dicky Howett called **Back Tracks** can be read in each issue of **COMPLETE CD AND HI FI BUYER**. Other media pieces by Dicky are published in **WHAT VIDEO**.*

FOND MEMORIES ...

OF

"Lichfield Channel 8: Membury Channel 12"

By Nigel Morgan

"Not another article on ITV trade test transmissions!", I hear you say? 'Fraid so, but then, they were so irresistible!

Firstly, for the benefit of those of you who lived outside the area, the above caption was written on the bottom of test card "D" used during the mid sixties, and was replaced by ITA ATV when Ridge Hill came on the air, there being insufficient room to squeeze in "Ridge Hill" as well. And for your further information, the Membury 405 line transmitter mast can still be seen standing next to the east-bound services on the M4 motorway.

Although the ITA radiated trade tests during virtually the whole of its history, I feel that their "finest hour", as it were, was from early 1968 to - well, to the last such transmission I remember seeing, in 1977 (I was in the ATV region then).

Now before you throw up your hands in horror and tell me I must be off my trolley, let me agree that, towards the end, ITV did allow the quality of their trade test transmissions to deteriorate alarmingly. I can still remember the fly droppings on test card F and the low fidelity of sound, emanating from a tape so badly worn that I'll bet you could see through it in places! That apart, the reason I say "this was their finest hour" is that the music they used was, in my view, some of the best I've heard. Not only were there some truly enchanting compositions, the actual performances used were some of the finest recorded up to that time. Ask any serious music collector and he'll surely agree.

However, I think it's beyond dispute that although, in the early days, ITV trade tests were radiated to a higher standard, they were never in the same league as the BBC. For example, I was always disappointed with the abrupt "chop" from the music to the 400Hz tone - why on earth couldn't they use a smooth, professional fade as was the BBC practice?

Another difference between the two was in the trade test distribution and transmission methods. From mid-1972 onwards, BBC1 and 2 music emanated from some six or so half-hour tapes and, later that year, about four 1-hour tapes, played out from Room NC2 at Shepherd's Bush; from there it went to the transmitters up and down the country by land-lines. It comprised mainly "library" music, not commercially available and featuring well-known artists like Roger Roger, Oscar Brandenburg and other excellent names, but with a rich variety - almost from pop to classical and Baroque - in the blend. Most of it was recorded abroad, and avoided the multiple performance restrictions imposed by the Musicians' Union.

By contrast, ITV used commercial recordings (12" LPs and even 78s in the early days), played and radiated locally from each transmitter. Yes, there was a record

player - manual of course - at each station and someone had to change the disc at regular intervals. Identical sets of discs were issued to each 405 location, together with the current PAB (programme as broadcast). This was good news for us music enthusiasts; it meant that, with the aid of a 'phone call to ITV, we could easily - and *legally* - obtain the same recordings from a local shop.

Naturally, because the music emanated locally, "disc"-repancies (sorry!) between transmitters, in both the music and the running order, did creep in. If, say, side A of an LP got badly scratched, side B was used instead. Incidentally, those were the days when you could guarantee getting a good half-hour on each side; remember...? I'm sure the "batting order" varied; the March 1968 schedule has *Capriccio Italien* (Tchaikovsky) on air at 1436-1500 hrs, but I distinctly remember hearing it at 1036-1100 hrs.

Or am I getting old...?

Now from differences in mode of transmission to those in Schedule Update policy. The BBC used a system of continuous rotational update, which I can best illustrate by taking a typical example - BBC1, November 1965. According to Written Archives at Caversham, tapes 6-11 were then in use. In January/February 1966, tapes 6 & 9 were replaced by tapes 12 & 13. There was no further change until 1967, when tapes 8 & 10 were replaced by tapes 14 & 15. And so it went on, one or two tapes being replaced at intervals of anything from three to twelve months, normally on an age basis. Thus each tape had a "life" of 1-2 years.

The ITV system was totally different; each schedule was played for anything from six months to two years without any changes, and then the whole schedule was replaced *en bloc*.

Any more differences? Yes, an important one for music-lovers. BBC music was played at random times, whereas ITV put out the same discs at the same strict daily times, some 14 LPs being radiated from 0936 to 1630, with 5 minutes of 400Hz tone and a minute of silence on the hours and half-hours.

In 1969, in preparation for colour, ITV began replacing their fourteen LP schedules with 2-hour tapes, the first such transmission (from Croydon only) beginning in July. By October these new schedules had reached several transmitters, including what was then my local station - Lichfield. Concurrently with this change, new tape equipment was installed at the site, automating the process so that it could be left unattended for long periods. The advantages were obvious; have you ever seen a 12" record player that could automatically flip the disc over, or take it off and put on another? The only machine that could ever do this was the juke-box - and it was never marketed in a 12" format.

For trade test music fans this change-over period was messy and complicated, with at least three different schedules in use concurrently throughout the UK. Take October 1969, for example. In Birmingham you heard the Grieg piano concerto, followed by *Sylvia*/*Faust*/*Coppelia* ballet music, the *Polovtsian Dances* and some Lumbye waltzes, this repertoire being repeated every two hours. In North Wales you were regaled with the Grieg - but a different performance (*Solomon*/*Menges* as opposed to *Cziffra*/*Vandernoot*) and *Dvorak's New World Symphony* instead of the Lumbye waltzes, and Southampton/Bournemouth area test card musicologists enjoyed the fourteen LP schedule introduced there in March of that year.

Thankfully, all ITV transmitters were radiating the same music schedules by the

end of 1972!

Incidentally, it was the Station Operations Maintenance Department of the ITA which was responsible for all aspects of their trade tests. Regarding the actual music selection, you may be interested to know whom to thank - or blame! - for this as time went by. In the fifties it was the secretary to the Chief Engineer at Croydon, in the early sixties the Chief Engineer himself and in the period covered by this article - I call it the Classical Period - the choice was that of one of the engineers at Brompton Road, London. I believe this gentleman now works at the IBA's engineering offices near Winchester.

So much for technicalities; now to the music content. As I've already said, a bold move was made in March 1968, to depart from the "middle-of-the-road" which had long been featured (Frank Chacksfield, The Shadows, Oscar Petersen *et al*, plus the odd Classical LP) and change to an all-classical schedule. In my book, the Brompton Road engineer really knew his classics; some of the performances he chose are among the best ever recorded. I have yet to hear a rendering of the Grieg concerto to match the Cziffra/Vandernoot which was used from July 1969 to April 1970. Come to think of it, I reckon the whole of that particular 2-hour tape was the best schedule I've ever heard on test cards.

Other highlights of the "Classical Period" are the Capriccio Italien, of course (March '68 onwards), and Mozart Marches & Dances Vol 10 (September '68), Rossini overtures (1969) and a truly memorable Cziffra recital from April to December 1970. 1973 saw yet another change, from 2-hour to 1-hour schedules, the first of which, in use from January '73 to October '74, including Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 27 and the ubiquitous Dvorak New World. The tape which replaced this in October '74 turned out to be the final ITV trade test music tape, containing Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 3 (my favourite) and the first two movements only of Tchaikovsky's No 1.

Sadly, it was during the last three years of the Classical Period that standards were allowed to slip badly, bringing an ignominious end, I feel, to twenty years of ITV trade tests. The final 1-hour tape did have one further airing, by the way; it was heard very briefly, early in the ITV strike in Autumn 1979, before being replaced by a specially-prepared schedule put out for the rest of the twelve weeks.

Finally, may I offer my sincere appreciation to the IBA (then ITA) Engineering Department for the friendly and very helpful manner which they have always shown to nuisances like myself who have taken up a considerable amount of their time over the years.

And special thanks to the ex-Brompton Road engineer for his excellent musical taste and discrimination, all of which gave me - and many more like me, I'm certain - an appreciation for and love of classical music which was enhanced, if not awakened, by enjoying so many hours of ITV trade test transmissions.

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INDEPENDENT TELEVISION AUTHORITY

CENTRAL SCOTLAND : BLACK HILL, CH. 10

by Frank Mitchell

Each ITV region put out its own Trade Test Transmissions (TTTs) which often had a strong "regional" flavour in the records or the slides. They also lasted longer!

Black Hill, on occasions, put out TTTs from 10.00 to 11.30 - that's 10am till 1130pm! Yes!

This was when the STV company went on strike as it frequently did in the early 1960s. Trade Test Transmissions are a striking social history of the times! Sometimes when the excitement occurred the ITA would switch "into" another region's programmes. On such occasions the tuning signal would be shown during advert breaks or when a suitable programme (such as local news) was not available. On other occasions Test Card "C" would be shown all evening until late at night, when a caption would read that there would be "No further programmes" that day. The only thing missing from a perfect day's programming was the lack of the national anthem at closedown.

I remember visiting Black Hill on an open day around 1962 when the staff there showed hundreds of people round and served tea and cakes later! Most of the public expected to see a TV studio, but the only studio equipment was a turntable and slide scanner. The slides included the Test Card "C", tuning signal, apology captions, "An announcement in Sound is now being made" and the scenic slides. These scenic slides were - as far as I know - individual to each region. I remember Black Hill having a stone entrance gateway, a loch scene and a picture of Kelvingrove art gallery. Caldbeck and Selkirk had a picture of a car on a small bridge. These were transmitted during the first 15 minutes of each half-hour and two slides were used - one each alternate day. The quality of photography of the Black Hill slides was superb.

The music used was from commercial records - changed every 6 months - and each region put out its own music which (in most cases) used the same music and records. I can remember the sequence described by Alan Keeling - however, since each region started the record at a slightly different time, by switching channels one could hear different sections of the same record at the same time! Sometimes though, different regions used different records - Black Hill used a record of Scottish dance music at about 2.30pm around 1963.

Announcements of transmitter maintenance etc., were - at first - made by the ITA staff but around 1964, Black Hill used Elaine Wells - at that time a duty announcer for STV - for transmitter information, accompanied by the "An Announcement in Sound" caption.

I have included some pictures to illustrate further this article and these will be found on the next page ...

Fig. 1: The original version (without white spots) of Testcard "D". ITA stations used to insert the title of each station in the ident box along with the channel number.

Fig. 2: ITA BLACK HILL Test Card "C" (final version).An earlier version had the linearity grid complete with "Black Hill" separated by one of the white grid lines.

It is very fortunate that such good quality has been achieved from this copy of Test Card "C".

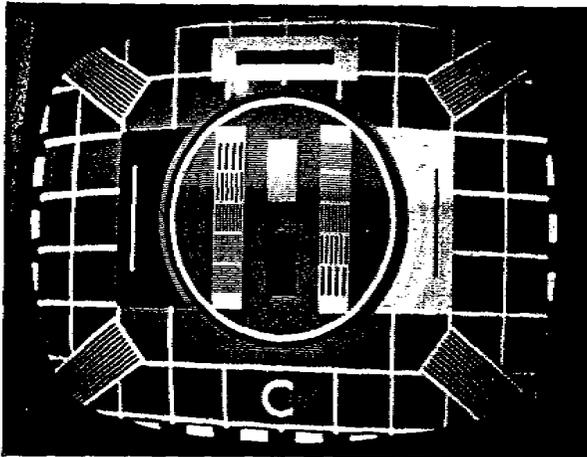
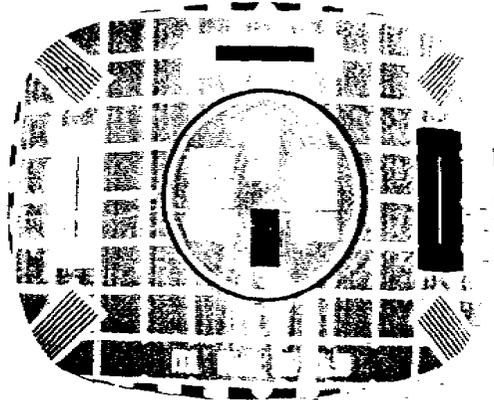
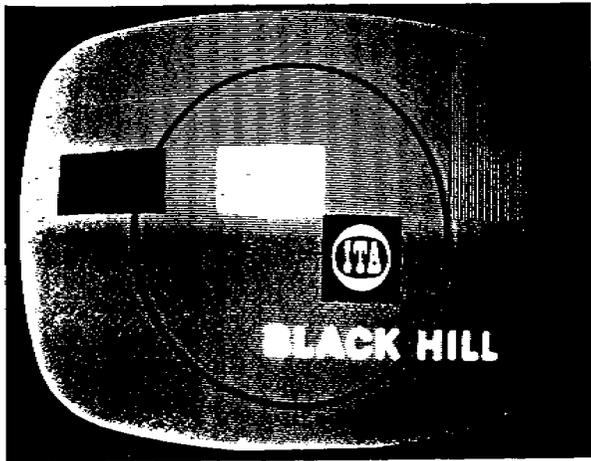
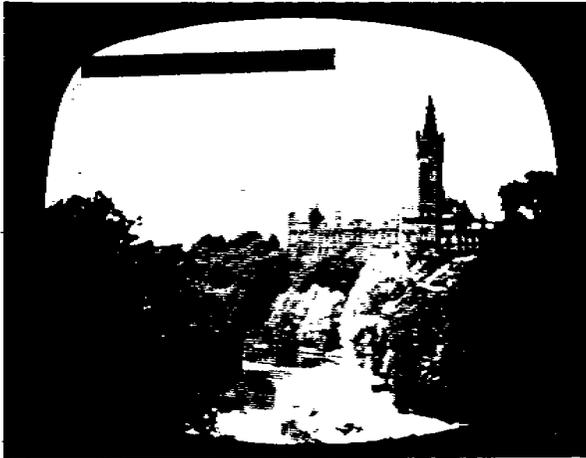


Fig. 3: GLASGOW UNIVERSITY. This was one of four scenic slides used by the ITA. The BBC seemed to use the same slides for the whole of the UK, whereas ITA used different ones for each region.

Fig. 4: BLACK HILL TUNING SIGNAL (2nd version). The first version was quite different, while the third version had "Black Hill" replaced by "Central Scotland".



If you found this article interesting you will be delighted to know that Frank has also written another piece called Scottish Television - The Pioneering Years for us. It's a cracker and will be in the next issue.

The BBC Television symbol as modified for use in the West and North of England regions (see page 19).



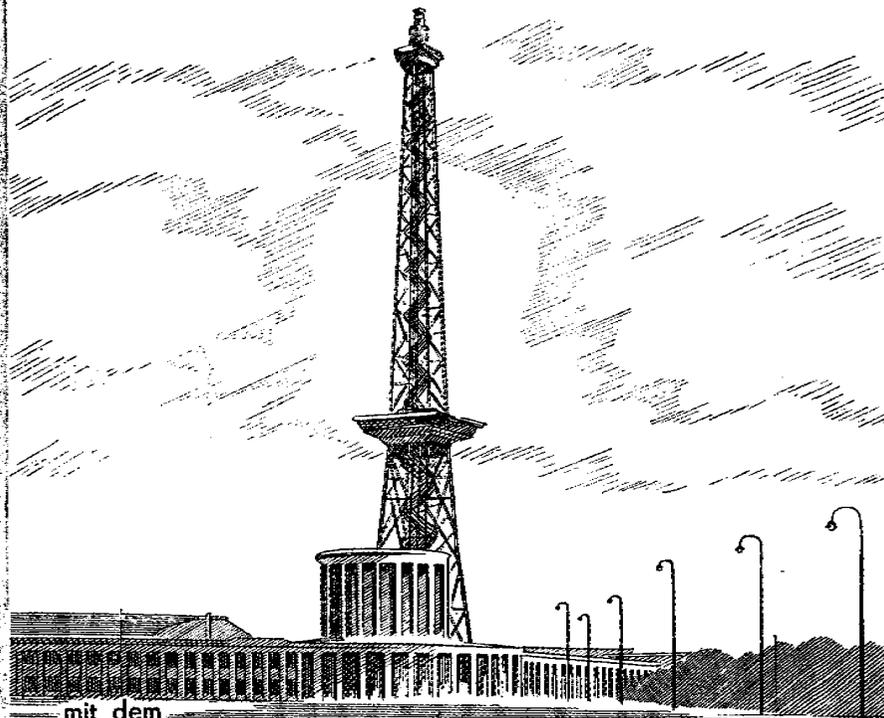
Fernsehen im Heim (Television in the home) is the slogan of the leaflet reproduced on the following pages. It shows the EI standard television receiver which was intended to be a mass-market "people's receiver" for the new 441-line transmissions. Unfortunately the war got in the way and put paid to this noble ideal.

Setting aside the technical innovations and the flat, square tube, note the clean lines of the wooden case. Neat little details include the sliding cover (see illustration on last page) which concealed the picture tube when the TV station was broadcasting in sound only, relaying regular radio programmes (or if the vision circuits developed a fault). The first page also shows the Funkturm (radio tower) in Berlin, which was as much an icon of the era as was Alexandra Palace for British "lookers-in".

Few of these receivers have survived: anyone spotting one should get in touch with the editor immediately!

The reproduction of the original leaflet was made by the German GfGF.

Fernsehen im Heim



mit dem

Einheits-Fernsehempfänger E 1

Der Einheits-Fernsehempfänger E 1

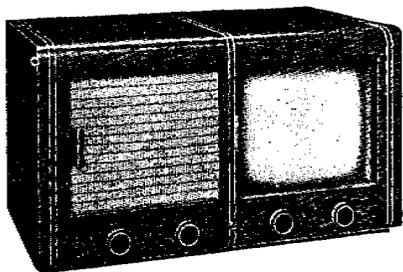


Abb. 1

ist durch zielbewußte und schöpferische Zusammenarbeit der fünf deutschen Fernsehfirmen unter dem Vorsitz der Forschungsanstalt der Deutschen Reichspost geschaffen worden und ist dazu berufen, möglichst weite Kreise auch am Deutschen **Fernsehrundfunk** (drahtlose Übertragung von Ton und Bild) teilnehmen zu lassen.

Nicht größer als ein normaler Rundfunkempfänger ist der **Einheits-Fernsehempfänger E 1** und außerdem denkbar einfach zu bedienen.

Sein Gehäuse ist gefällig in der Form, symmetrisch in der Aufteilung, aus edlem Holz, wie es dem heutigen Geschmack entspricht und für den praktischen Gebrauch zweckmäßig ist.

Von seinen vier Bedienungsknöpfen brauchen höchstens drei beim Fernsehempfang betätigt zu werden. Zwei davon dienen zur Einstellung der Bildhelligkeit und des Bildkontrastes, mit dem dritten wird die Bildschärfe eingestellt. Dies wird nur einmalig nötig sein. Der vierte Drehknopf dient zur Lautstärkeregelung des Tones. Wie bei normalen Rundfunkempfängern ist natürlich auch die Tonfärbung durch einen hierfür bestimmten Drehknopf an der Rückseite des Gerätes möglich.

Der günstigste Betrachtungsstand des sehr hellen, etwa 20×23 cm großen Fernseh-Bildes beträgt etwa 1,5—2 m.

Die Bildwiedergabe ist in bezug auf **Schärfe, Tönung und Helligkeit das Beste**, was mit den heutigen technischen Mitteln überhaupt erreicht werden kann. Es muß besonders hervorgehoben werden, daß die Verbesserung des Bildes im Vergleich zu den Leistungen der Fernsehempfänger aus dem Vorjahr, durch die Anwendung eines **flachen Leuchtschirmes** erreicht wird, der die früher bei gewölbten Bildschirmen beobachteten Verzerrungen vermeidet.

Der Einheits-Fernsehempfänger E 1

ist nicht an die gleichzeitige Ton- und Bildsendung gebunden. Er kann auch für den Tonempfang allein benutzt werden.

Dadurch ist es möglich, während der Fernseh-Programmpausen das normale Rundfunk-Programm des Orts- oder Deutschlandsenders zu hören, weil dieses in Zukunft auch über den Ultrakurzwellen-Tonbegleitsender geleitet wird.

Der Stromverbrauch ist bei reinem Tonempfang geringer als beim Bild- und Tonempfang zusammen. Er beträgt beim Tonempfang etwa 65 Watt und beim Bild- und Tonempfang zusammen etwa 190 Watt. Diese Werte gelten für Anschluß an das Wechselstromnetz bei 220 Volt.

Die Einstellung des E 1 auf den Fernsehsender ist einmalig im Herstellungswerk vorgenommen und bleibt dann unverändert, so daß eine Senderabstimmung, wie sie beim Rundfunkempfänger allgemein üblich ist, fortfällt. Wird der Tonempfang nur allein betrieben oder ist das Gerät außer Betrieb, so kann der schiebetürähnliche Stoffrahmen vor das Bildfenster geschoben werden, wie Abb. 3 zeigt.

Da Fernsehsender mit Ultrakurzwellen arbeiten, mit denen Ton- und Bildsendung ausgestrahlt werden, ist für den Fernsehempfang eine hierfür besonders geeignete Antenne erforderlich. Eine Einheitsausführung solcher Antenne, die sich gleichzeitig besonders gut für normalen Rundfunkempfang eignet, ist im Handel erhältlich.

Preis: 650.— RM des kompletten Geräts

Über Teilzahlungsbedingungen geben zugelassene Radio-Händler oder die Herstellerfirmen des E 1 nähere Auskunft

Bildfläche:

19,5 x 22,5 cm

Gehäuse-
abmessungen:

Höhe: 37 cm

Breite: 65 cm

Tiefe: 38 cm

Gewicht:

etwa 33 kg

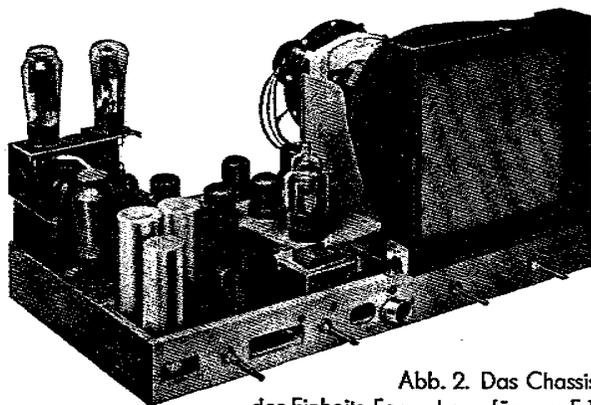


Abb. 2. Das Chassis
des Einheits-Fernsehempfängers E 1

Technische Einzelheiten

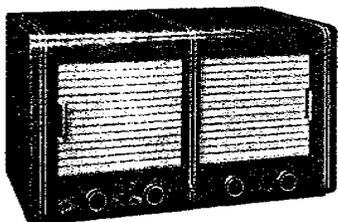


Abb. 3

Um den **Einheits-Fernsehempfänger E 1** auch für verschiedene Senderbezirke ohne große Umstände verwendbar zu machen, ist der Empfänger so aufgebaut, daß seine **Vorstufe**, die auf einen bestimmten Fernseh-Sender abgestimmt ist, ohne Schwierigkeit und großen Aufwand **ausgewechselt** werden kann.

Bei besonders ungünstigen Empfangsverhältnissen kann auch noch ein Vorverstärker mit zwei UKW-Stufen in den Empfänger eingebaut werden. Infolge der **großen Tonbandbreite** von etwa 100 kHz, die von 3 abgestimmten Zwischenfrequenzkreisen durchgelassen wird und durch die **reichliche Bemessung der Endröhre und des Lautsprechers** ist die Tongüte des E 1 ausgezeichnet.

Besondere Sorgfalt ist auf den elektrischen Aufbau des E 1 gelegt worden, so daß eine **völlig gleichmäßig scharfe Auszeichnung des Fernsehbildes** erreicht worden ist. Bemerkenswert ist auch die Verbesserung des Bildes im Vergleich zu den im Vorjahr gezeigten Empfängern durch die Anwendung einer **eigens für den E 1 neu entwickelten Fernsehröhre** (Kathodenstrahl- oder Braun'sche Röhre) mit einem **flachen Leuchtschirm**, der die Verzerrungen durch die Bildwölbung vermeidet.

Der E 1 ist **nur für Anschluß an Wechselstrom** von 50 Hz eingerichtet und kann auf die normalen Netzspannungen: 110/125/150/220/240 Volt ohne weiteres umgeschaltet werden. Er enthält insgesamt 15 Röhren, von denen die meisten **Stahlröhren der E-Serie** sind.

FERNSEHA.-G.
BERLIN-ZEHLENDORF, GOERZALLEE
Vertrieb durch die **Blaupunktwerke G. m. b H.,**
Berlin-Wilmersdorf

THE STATION LOGO

as art form and collector's item

by *Tony Currie*

In this glorious age of techno-colour - I refer of course to the unfettered proliferation of the other television publications - there are a number of journals that are heavy on style and light when it comes to content. They often contain several pages of glossy, glitzy colour pictures of new logos, together with the inevitable inches of puff for certain well-known television design houses in whose hands are placed the corporate images of many competing broadcasters.

The news that BBC1 and BBC2 are now going down this road causes me to consider the function (if any?) of the station identity.

Now when I was a lad the first time I became aware of the logo was when we finally got ITV. The bright day dawned when a thoroughly modern 21 inch Philips (complete with those spindly little metal legs that sat at an angle and tripped you up in passing) was installed, and once we had added the dreaded Band III aerial ("Awful looking thing. A blight on the roof tops"), we were in business. And after a few nights you came to realise that ITV (which, curiously didn't appear to actually exist as such) was full of odd-looking symbols "fore and aft the programmes".

I think the Granada one was hardest to beat for clutter, but STV came a close second with the letters in boxes and a tiny little Scottish lion rampant hidden in a fourth box to balance the square. (If you're too young to remember it, you couldn't possibly dream up anything like it in your imagination, I promise you.)

A few of these logos moved in various ways, and the appearance of most was heralded by some sort of music, often using as few musicians as possible. Associated-Rediffusion played theirs on a cinema organ. They left permanent images on my mind, but my local ITV station - Scottish, or STV as it used to be known - had no clear visual identity in those days.

Nasty little black and white captions with legends like "An STV presentation" usually implied that the folk in Cowcaddens could be held responsible for hacking the preceding feature film to meaningless bits. Once I started working in STV's presentation department I discovered that the "presentation slide" was often attached to films and film series emanating from other stations on the network, and was there purely to cover up similar horrid little slides that were tagged on by other companies.

Oddly, as a youngster I had a passion for collecting stills of the ITV logos (you must realise by now that I was a strange child) but now I think back with a cooler passion that they did more harm to their owners than good. Each seemed an expression of egotism on the part of the offending company, and you could tell a lot about a contractor's management from its on-screen identity.

By contrast, BBC Television (latterly BBC1) has kept its spinning globe symbol since it was adopted in the early 1960s. An awesomely simple device that cunningly provides endlessly changing visuals to plug gaps of any length, whilst being instantly recognisable. Although the surrounds and style changed from time to time, the basis remained probably the finest example of a TV logo until Channel 4 emerged.

The introduction of colour made things even worse back on the commercial

channel, with Low Grade going utterly over the top producing not so much a logo but more a short feature in the grotesque ATV colour animation. But as more eccentric symbols of ITV's corporate weakness appeared, the companies collectively called a halt, first deleting the pre-programme opening logos and replacing them with consistent local IDs (spurred on by Channel 4 who simply refused to allow opening logos on any of its programmes) and then adopting a corporate ITV house-style which, with a few rebellious exceptions, now presents a common face to the world.

Why did we need the diverse logos? In the early days of ITV I suspect it had a lot to do with proving that programmes came from a number of different locations within the UK, pushing the strength of ITV's regionalism against the Corporation's fondness for the English capital. But as the years rolled on, the logos occasionally identified success on the part of the smaller companies in breaking onto the network, but more often subconsciously confirmed to the viewer that his local ITV station made news, weather and farming programmes and the rest came from the Big Four or Five, as and when they decreed.

Now as we move into an age of rapidly expanding competition, the logo achieves a new importance. When our 21 inch Philips was delivered, you rattled the turret tuner to a "3" for BBC or a "10" for ITV. You knew which was which and needed little reminding. Currently I am faced with 26 channels at home, and frequently lose track of which I'm viewing. That's why many of the cable/satellite channels leave a tiny representation of their logo on screen all the time. Thus the Lifestyle "butterfly" in the bottom right hand corner, or the MTV "M" top right, or the Sat-1 colour ball top left, help with an instant identification not just of the channel, but of what to expect from it.

I notice ITV now puts a small logo into the corner of the screen for trails. Maybe they ought to adopt such a device as a permanent presence, along with the other terrestrials?

On the other hand there are still a number of new channels who dislike the permanent on-screen ID; BSB and Sky amongst them. [*This was written before the merger*] Nevertheless, both competing satellite operators have spent much time and money on ensuring a recognisable and consistent approach to corporate identity, and both seem to work well, although I do find the Galaxy ident a trifle pretentious - not to say confusing for those of us who thought it was a brand of chocolate.

In the US there is a surprising absence of coherent local symbols, with most city stations relying on the use of different typefaces for their call-letters. The end result is a depressing sameness that makes you long to see the Granada symbol appear. But, American cable channels have a far better understanding of what it's all about when it comes to graphic representations of identity than their terrestrial brethren.

The best-designed logos are often the simplest. They can enhance the public perception of a television channel, and at best can give it a dignity that belies the poor quality of its programmes. At worst, the logo can become a bad joke - when Scottish TV adopted its hugely expensive thistle symbol, it was instantly nicknamed "Bertie Bassett" by the station's employees; and the current Westminster Cable logo seems like a cheap joke at the expense of Channel 4. Isn't one set of exploding Lego bricks enough?

But it all makes work for the graphic designers, paintbox and Harry operators, musicians and, most of all, accountants. Do the logos work? Try a simple test - grab a pen and paper and see if you can draw the logos for Border, Ulster, TWW, ABC Television or Westward. That should keep you occupied until the next issue!

BUILDING YOUR OWN VINTAGE TELEVISION - THE "ARGUS" STORY.

By Steve Ostler.

It is a day in late February 1952. The weather is cold and misty, with the kind of damp that gnaws at the bones, as a young clerk cycles to the office. On the way, he stops by at the local newsagent and picks up a copy of the *News Chronicle*. Before leaving the shop he glances quickly through its pages. The world seems to be in a right pickle. In Korea war rages. Both the United States and the Soviet Union now have atom bombs and it seems inevitable that they will eventually be used. By the window a baby gurgles in a pram as its mother buys cigarettes. He wonders what sort of world, if any, that child will grow up to know ... But of course the big news in Britain and the Empire at the moment is the death of the King; how Princess Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh had to rush back from Kenya to get back in time for the funeral, and how the country now has a new Queen. Ah well ...

But then the man's eyes light up, for there on the shelf is the latest edition of *Practical Television*. Last month's issue had promised a "free gift blueprint" for the construction of the "P.T. Argus" - "an efficient television receiver which was to bring television within reach of those people who could not afford to buy one of the excellent commercial sets". What a thrill! Nobody in his road of terraced houses as yet owned a television set. The impressive "H" and "X" aerials were still only to be seen on the occasional detached house in the wealthier parts of town, you know - the type with the new Rover 75 parked proudly on the drive. However, now a Coronation was expected for next year - and it would be televised. With the "Argus" he could be the first with Television in the street ...

~~~~~

The scene changes ... half a lifetime has elapsed. It is the year 1990. The Cold War no longer threatens but the Soviet Union is dissolving into chaos. Concern has shifted to the Middle East, where war looms - and Britain is involved. Television now is worldwide, even in poor countries, and is in colour. Japanese equipment and American programme material dominate everywhere. Television is today even radiated by orbiting satellite. The world has indeed moved on, if only in technology. Now in this far off future time there lives another enthusiast who also decides to build the "Argus", but for different reasons. For he wants to recapture something of the peep-show sense of wonder and discovery by now seemingly lost from Television. And so the "Argus" is re-born - thirty-eight years on...

~~~~~

The scene was now set for an absorbing project. How this enthusiast fared, working in a future time far from that envisaged by the designers is the subject of this article. One thing that became immediately apparent was that building one's own receiver, even of a valve type, was no longer an attractive option in 1990. The total cost in pounds was perhaps fifteen times that of the £20 quoted in 1952. But of course the value of money had dropped by a similar factor during the period. What had really happened that the true cost of the commercial product had dropped dramatically as it had become part of a mass market. In my case, working in the "vintage wireless" business, I was fortunate to have in stock certain parts, such as the cathode ray tube

and its holder, the e.h.t. mains transformer and certain of the valves which might otherwise have been difficult. Nevertheless, most of the components were still readily available. So cost was no longer an incentive to build this receiver - it was the desire to see the tiny picture conjured up by twenty glowing valves that was the real spur.

Certainly the circuit was free with valves and was pleasantly "classical" in design using the straight forward principles common in single channel receivers back to the pre-war days. Two separate t.r.f receivers were used for sound and vision, with liberal quantities of EF50s and the e.h.t. (at 2.5 kilovolts) was mains-derived. The cathode ray tube specified was a VCR97 which gives a 5" x 4" picture in green and is scanned electrostatically. SP61s were used in the timebases; fortunately I had the necessary Mazda Octal valve holders in stock!

I followed the original instructions, set out over the March to June 1952 issues of the magazine as far as possible. The chassis was fabricated first and consisted of five sub-units. The idea was to build one at a time, separately testing each before bolting them all together to make the receiver. The Vision Unit was first. For stability this was divided into screened compartments. Each EF50 stage was anode tuned. After four of these stages, there followed a detector and a video amplifier of very basic design.

Sound traps were specified but were held to be unnecessary for operation on Channel 1, presumably because the double sideband signal from A.P. facilitated upper sideband tuning. This unit was tested on the bench and worked first time, although it turned out later to have shortcomings which were only apparent when driving the tube. The Sound Unit followed. This was designed on similar lines but only employed two EF50s, this time following them with an EB34 detector, EF39 first A.F., and 6V6 output valve. The signal was tapped off after the first vision unit stage and passed through what was effectively a fixed tuned narrow band t.r.f. radio receiver. This I had trouble getting enough gain out of. The cause turned out to be the fitting of too low a value of first A.F. anode load resistor - I had misread the coloured bands!

Passing on to the April issue of *Practical Television*, the Timebase and E.H.T units were described. This month's editorial claimed that by now there was a great demand for the "Argus" and that many thousands were in the course of construction. I wonder where they all are today!

The Timebase unit used the Miller Integrator configuration, popular with electrostatic designs of the time. Six SP61s were employed; these were cheap to obtain in 1952 and very versatile if a trifle greedy on heater current. Two were used in each timebase with one acting as paraphase amplifier to give push-pull drive to the tube. One of the remaining two was pressed into service as a sync separator and the last one as a phase splitter and cathode follower to drive the tube. To ensure correct operation of the phase splitter a midget diode - an EA50 - was also present as DC restorer. On the e.h.t. unit another one of these was to be found restoring the D.C. component at the tube's grid. This had been lost by the video coupling capacitor from the cathode follower. This was of a high voltage type since the cathode/grid end of the tube operated at negative e.h.t. In turn, this arrangement allowed standard coupling capacitors (of which more were required) to be used between the timebases and the deflector plates. These had to work at a mean potential similar to that of the final anode. With the cathode at e.h.t., this was at a low potential.

By the May edition of the magazine, it seemed all was meant to be finished, since a photograph of the set contained in a handsome cabinet appeared accompanied by a fault-finding guide to the completed receiver. However, it was not until the following month that the vital circuit of the H.T. and L.T. power supply appeared. This was straight-forward, although in my case the fitting of an incorrectly-

labelled transformer meant that I had to change to half wave rectification in order to obtain the necessary 425 volts.

Then there came the question of the tube. The ex-W.D. tubes had gained a bad name for variable characteristics, inter-electrode leaks, and "cut-off" where the deflector plates would often cast a shadow when the tube was used for television. I tried various VCR97s and VCR517s. However the most suitable turned out to be a good CV2810. This was physically identical to the green-screened VCR97 but used two phosphors - one light green and one violet, one behind the other. These were found to mix to produce a white raster.

The whole project took about 100 hours of time. But at last the great day dawned and, plugging in an aerial feed from my 405-line "ring main", I switched on. This did not turn out to be a triumphant moment. Numerous faults immediately became apparent. The most obvious was the inaction of the Field Timebase, which would give an occasional "twitch" but nothing more. This was caused by the frequency-determining capacitor which had been specified as 100 times too large! Once this was changed, an almost total lack of vision bandwidth now became apparent. This was so bad the timebase wouldn't lock either. Playing around with the stagger of the vision coils didn't help and the fault was eventually traced to capacitive loss in the screened leads specified to couple the vision signal between the units. This was changed to plain wire.

Now I had a picture of sorts but the sync separator was revealed as being very poor. A fine line-jitter gave an effect similar to the earlier smearing. This circuit was extensively modified, in line with suggestions from the November 1953 issue. The lock was now rock hard but the timebases were not really giving sufficient deflection for my tube. The X and Y plates were transposed, the tube rotated by 90 degrees, and the screen and anode load resistors reduced. By now I was beginning to get good results. Increased contrast was obtained by raising the Vision Unit's H.T. and increasing the video amplifier's anode load resistor. A Mu-metal shield was found essential for the tube. This had not originally even been mentioned. Numerous other refinements followed - to optimise linearity, interlace, hum suppression and sound quality. And so at last I achieved the tiny, perfectly formed picture I had desired.

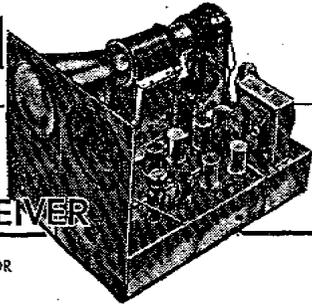
Since signal level on Channel 1 at my location was no problem, I had aligned the set for quality rather than sensitivity. Even at maximum sensitivity though, this set must have benefited greatly from the pre-amp subsequently described in the August '52 issue. When employing a roof aerial, in standard trim, I estimated it was only good for use in the primary service area. Those of you who came to the October '90 "Harpندن show" will have been able to judge results for yourselves. The tiny picture was unsurprisingly swallowed up by the large display room but even in the home it must have been a set more often peered at than watched. However, it does lend itself to a future project - to display a 64-line triple interlaced signal from a mechanical camera which I intend to squeeze down a telephone line!

~~~~~

Did it succeed in recapturing that sense of wonder and discovery? Yes, undoubtedly - if only to share in the experience of what people were prepared to accept all those years ago in their fascination with Television. I expect it was the source of much torn hair and frustration for our friend back in 1952 but I'm sure he nevertheless had it ready - in time for the Coronation and the whole street crowded in to peer at that tiny picture in the corner of the living room. And what would that eighteen month old baby by the shop window grow up to do? ... You guessed it!

# The "ARGUS"

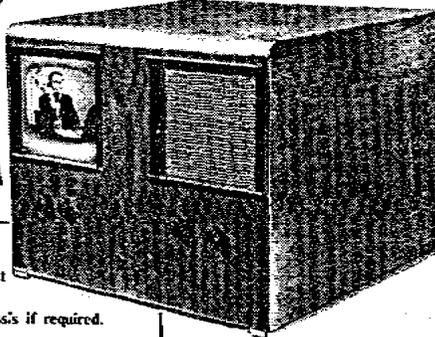
BUILDING OUR  
*Free Blueprint*  
TELEVISION RECEIVER



A 21-VALVE 6IN. C.R. TUBE UNIT-BUILT TELEVISOR  
FOR THE AMATEUR

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*Hired for Only £7*  
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Everything supplied, total cost  
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*Send your application to-day as only 250 Hire Purchase transactions can be accepted and to delay may mean disappointment. All parts available separately, send for list.*



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# CONVERTER FORUM

## *News from David Boynes ...*

Good news on the input processing PCB: if all goes well an etched-out example should be ready in about ten days time. The new board will incorporate all the recent developments such as the sync pulse clipper, an additional two-stage pre-amp plus many PCB artwork revisions. The 405 output processing will be assembled on a separate card; this design has proven reliable but will be a little larger than the old design, possibly 100 mm square.

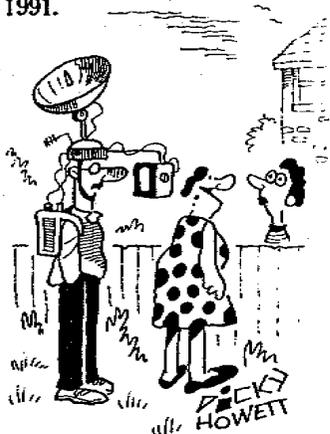
I can spend about one hour each evening on this project, and as much of the artwork exists already the job is not as difficult as some I have attempted.

## *... and from Stephen Niechial*

Thanks for all the work on 405 Alive - an excellent magazine. I'm sorry I'm not contributing very much. The EPROM sync pulse generator has still not been de-bugged: it works well on flywheel sets but has some jitter on direct sync. I'm still working on a standards converter using FIFOs. I've now got to the stage where the ADC, 625 line storage and DAC digital clamping are working well.

The next stage is to read the information out at 405 rate and add some digital interpolation using a "look-up table" stored in high-speed ROMs. I may well get into glitching problems at this point and have to use a colander ground plane board instead of the plain matrix board I use at present. The basic format will finish up as 6-bit resolution with an ADC clock of about 10MHz, which should give very good results. I know that David Boynes feels extra bits are worth it, but generally I'm doubtful - particularly if good clamping is employed. I've compared direct off-air black and white 625 pictures with those that have been through my embryonic standards converter, and the loss of grey-scale definition on a receiver with good DC restoration is minimal.

My main problem is time. I don't touch this project for months on end, and the basic construction of wire-wrap is extremely tedious and time-consuming. I'd love to hear from anybody working on similar problems and am very willing to share my "secrets". Please write to me at 2 Hyndewood, Inglemere Road, London, SE23 2BH or ring 081-699 6382. All the best for 1991.



HE'S A BIT OF A TELLY ADDICT...

# IT'S THE TUBE THAT MAKES THE COLOUR - with a bit of help from SHELL, BP, THE NATIONAL FILM BOARD OF CANADA ... )

by Paul Sawtell

I have noticed in recent issues of 405 ALIVE there have been a few scant references to some of the dearly-beloved BBC2 Trade Test Colour Films; as I have actually tracked down nearly 70 of these films I thought a line or two on the subject could maybe be justified although I readily concede that the topic is not strictly a 405 one. [*But it is - some of the films were also used on the 405 line colour tests! See next article. AE*]

To define terms I regard a Trade Test Colour Film as one supplied by organisations outside the BBC, used during scheduled trade test periods. Interlude films, Colour Receiver Installation Film (despite the charm of Mr. Aspell!) etc. WILL NOT DO! In their heyday there would be at least eight such films per day (except Sundays) and they provided an invaluable demonstration to viewers of the new colour TV service.

So, exactly who made these films? Well, some of the organisations are listed above but to that short list we can add the Swedish Institute; the New Zealand National Film Unit (only recently taken over by TVNZ); the B.T.A.; the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority; the Gas Council - the list goes on. Most of these films were at one time available to *bona fide* organisations through film libraries such as VisCom, and yes, (someone mentioned them recently) Guild Sound and Vision, together with (in the case of the larger producers such as Shell and BP) companies' own film libraries which still exist although you will be lucky to find many (if any) Trade films still in the catalogues, most having been withdrawn yonks ago.

My own research into the whereabouts of these films has been time-consuming (and VERY expensive) but most interesting; I have enjoyed telephonic tours of the Swedish Institute, the New Zealand NFU, as well as an obscure film library in Cyprus. Most of the people I have spoken to have bent over backwards to help, many finding it quite unbelievable that anyone could have a remote interest in material they had long ago forgotten about. There was one dear lady at the Swedish Institute who on being asked for a particular title said she'd have to ring me back - well, she did and told me they only had one copy left in existence. I obviously expected a refusal to follow under the circumstances, but no - "Would you like me to send it to you?", she asked. How trusting as we all hear about how things can go astray from time to time.

I often found that the scheduling of these films was quite expertly done too - for instance a day's films could contain a selection of subjects such as the breeding of rainbow trout, the mechanisation of the GPO sorting offices, paleontology, the history and manufacture of paint, land reclamation and the manufacture of colour TV picture tubes. Not that one should get the idea that they were all on serious subjects - we cherish the memories of such classics as *We've Come a Long Way* (a cartoon impression of the history of oil tankers), *Cantagallo* (who can forget that well-built gentleman in the kiddies' playground?) and of course *THE HOME MADE CAR* is probably the best-loved of the lot (hence the capital letters).

The schedule of Trade films seemed to be similar to that of the music tapes in so much as a film would be used for a period then discontinued, generally not to be shown again although this tradition was broken with the very last Trade film shown - *Coupe des Alpes*, which had last been shown in 1967. Films were supplied to the BBC on 35mm format for technical reasons although they were generally available through the film libraries on 16mm. As time went on, however, the number of Trade films being shown throughout the day decreased until we were informed in August 1973 that due to requests from the TV trade the films were finally coming to an end, having been transmitted regularly by BBC-tv since 1954. The official reason went that as there were by this time regular colour programmes on one channel or the other throughout the day, the need for high quality colour films during trade tests had reduced, and in fact the films were getting in the way of the test card! (Compare that to today's philosophy!).

I am convinced many who had no real interest in Trade Test Transmissions watched the films with great interest. In fact I remember several of my classmates at school confessing that if they had time off because of illness they would often tune in to the Trade films; I also confess that I skipped many a games lesson (yes Tony, football I'm afraid) to pop round to a friend's house to watch the films (and the test card of course).

So for those who pine for the halcyon days of " ... and now a run-down of the day's Trade Test Colour films" on the Service Information bulletins, cheer up! The good news is that despite, as I said, most of these films having been withdrawn from the libraries it is still possible to track most of them down if you're resourceful and more that just a little dedicated. The British Film Institute has information on many of these films and if anyone has a particular favourite they would like to track down I will be pleased to help if I can ... using a bit of "L" for Logic!!

## EARLY TRADE TEST MEMORIES

by *Malcolm O'Neill*

I first became hooked on the test card and music and trade test transmissions in general when I was about four years old in the late 1950s. My earliest recollections are of seeing Test Card "C" on BBC-TV usually in the middle of the afternoon as I had not yet started school. The TV set my parents had was a 14" KB and I shall always remember the very high standard of reception we enjoyed on that particular model. I soon became an avid viewer of trade test transmissions (TTTs) and it was the music that made it all the more enjoyable. I remember with great affection such gems as *Gay Paris by Night*, *New York City*, *Bugle Call Rag* and *Binokel*. In addition to all this great music, quite often there would be a trade test film in the afternoon as well to make the whole thing even more interesting.

Prior to these films on the BBC, the colour bars would be shown, followed then by pictorial slides of various subjects. These would include a telephone box, a pair of beach sandals, a girl with a bonnet on, BBC Experimental Colour Transmission caption (artist's palette) and of course the famous *Eskimo Nell*. Many other slides were used but those mentioned are the ones readers will be most familiar with. The films included such classics as *The Power to Fly*, *Beauty In Trust* and *Journey Into The Weald of Kent*. These last two films were part of a series entitled *National Heritage* and made for National Benzole. Both these films (which were narrated by the late Sir

John Betjeman) and the pictorial slides were to be used again throughout the 1960s over on the new BBC-2 for colour TTTs. Incidentally I remember seeing the S.M.P.T.E. test pattern during these tests and rather suspect that this was all part of the BBC 405 Line colour transmissions as this was in the early 1960s and a few years before BBC-2. I stand to be corrected on this though. Anyway, the day was of course rounded off by Test Card "C".

### "The Other Side" arrives

In 1960 we were able to receive ITV programmes for the first time from the ITA transmitter on Channel 9 from Croydon and I was very surprised to see that they used the same Test Card C as the BBC. I had never seen "the other side" before and was expecting to find something completely different. However, the fact that the BBC and ITA used the same test card was about the only thing that was common to both stations. Whereas the BBC used their own music for the test card (which in later years I was to discover was "library music" specially recorded on tape), on the ITA TTT's long-playing records of commercially available music were used and included such artists as Mantovani, Percy Faith, Herb Alpert, Acker Bilk, The Shadows, Frank Chacksfield, George Shearing, plus plenty of classical works too numerous to mention here.

My favourites from this period include: *Latin Affair* - George Shearing; *Lara's Theme* - Percy Faith and *Stranger On The Shore* - Acker Bilk (1962); *Music of Brazil* - Percy Faith (1963); *Greatest Hits* - The Shadows (1964); *Cast Your Fate To The Wind* - Sounds Orchestral; *Going Places* - Herb Alpert (1966) to name just a few. TTTs on the BBC would start at 09.00, but on ITA the day would not start until 10.00, although from about March 1966 this was changed to 09.30. There would be five minutes of tone on the hour and half hour followed by one minute's silence and then twenty four minutes of one side of an LP (and possibly part of side two if time allowed). The whole procedure was very regimented and repeated throughout the day until about fifteen minutes before the start of scheduled programmes. Until March 1964 pictorial slides were used, but unlike the BBC's which were generated nationally, these slides were of a regional nature, supplied by Marconi and distributed to each ITA transmitter.

As I was living in the London area at the time (and still do so today) the slides I remember seeing when we were first able to receive ITV, were of Tower Bridge and another of houseboats on the River Thames. This was in the very early 1960s, but those were later changed (probably around 1962/63) to slides of the Sphinx with Waterloo Bridge and Windsor Castle. These slides would alternate with Test Card "C" and would be on screen for about fifteen minutes. A different picture would be shown each day so that the two slides would not be shown together on the same day. For example the Sphinx/Waterloo Bridge slide would be shown on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, with the Windsor Castle slide being used on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. There was an interesting choice of viewing in those far off "405 Days" even though there were only the two channels.

### Superior Quality

The BBC TTTs were of a much superior quality and far more interesting with plenty of surprises, whereas over on the ITA life did tend to be much more predictable. The exception to this was when they would show previews of the new TV commercials on a Monday morning. This programme was entitled *Mondays's Newcomers* and even though this was of course aimed at the advertising industry, in

my opinion it was the nearest the ITA ever got to a trade test colour film, this being mainly due to the style of presentation. I suppose the early ITA TTS were rather crude, but nevertheless they did have a charm of their own - those regional Marconi slides were of a very high standard indeed.

There were no trade tests on either the BBC or ITA on Sundays, just a line sawtooth pattern or pulse and bar on both channels before Morning Worship on BBC-TV or Sunday Session on ITV, although I seem to remember Test Card "C" being shown for an hour on BBC-TV, between 18.00 and 19.00 on Sundays. This was in the late 1950s and I believe this was because both channels had to close down for an hour on a Sunday evening as the broadcasting hours were then controlled directly by the Government. Also on a Sunday morning in about early 1963, a full weekday TTT was being radiated on Ch. 9. Interestingly this started before 10.00 and both pictorial slides were used (The Sphinx/Waterloo Bridge and Windsor Castle) alternated with each other so that there was fifteen minutes of each and thirty minutes of Test Card "C", which was a departure from normal weekday practices. This went on for about an hour and a half, and I seem to remember the tone lasting for thirty minutes as well which was very unusual at the time. That was the only time I can remember seeing a trade test on the ITA on a Sunday, although no doubt this may have happened on several occasions for all I know.

### Announcement in Sound

Another interesting ITA practice in those days was to display "AN ANNOUNCEMENT IN SOUND" caption during TTTs and I also seem to remember various announcements superimposed in black letters across the screen. This would make the whole picture look very messy and untidy, especially if shown across one of the pictorial slides. There is a school of thought that suggests that a deal existed between the BBC and ITA whereby if one was showing Test Card "C" the other would display a slide/still picture to assist dealers and viewers. This was no doubt the theory but on several occasions I can remember seeing the test card on both channels. This may have happened when programme schedules interfered with the normal day's trade tests. However, for about two weeks in March/April 1964 just prior to the start of BBC-2, the practice of using pictorial slides on the two existing channels ceased and it was then possible to see Test Card "C" on both BBC and ITA.

It is worth mentioning some of the test cards and tuning signals that were used during the 1960s. Of course the well known "C" was used by both the BBC and ITA, and I believe that a joint test card committee existed until the 1970s. I am sure that most people are familiar with most types that have been generated through the years, especially those that have been used by BBC. Therefore, I shall briefly deal with some of the ITA versions. Until April 1964 (the day BBC-2 came on air) Test Card "C" was radiated by the BBC and ITA. On the later channel the station ident would appear in black block capitals letters above the C and below the circle. Depending on the length of the of the transmitter's name, those letters would determine whether the linearity grids were broken or not. For example, on Ch. 11 "C" would appear with "Chillerton Down" ident with the two outside grids missing to accommodate the full transmitter name, whilst on Ch. 9, "Croydon" would be displayed and because this was much shorter in length this would fit neatly between the two outside grids. However, the shorter middle grid was omitted from the ITA version of this card although I understand that earlier versions did have all the grids and that these were separated by the black letters. I also remember seeing "C" on Ch. 9 when I was quite young without any station ident.

## Enter Test card "D"

From 19th April 1964, "C" was replaced on 405 lines by test card "D". This included many of the features of "C" but as far as station idents were concerned "D" was much more informative. In the case of Ch. 9 (and the rest of the ITA network) white lower case letters were used instead, displaying "ITA Croydon Ch. 9". This arrangement also applied to the tuning signals as well, but as more transmitters were opened just the region served appeared (i.e.. SOUTH/SOUTH EAST ENGLAND, LONDON, etc).

In the case of the test cards, as there were so many transmitters being brought into operation throughout that period, eventually around about 1968 (July 30th to be precise, when the new ITV franchises started) the company name was used instead. For example Ch. 11 was replaced by "ITA Southern Television" or "ITA Anglia Television". Of course this was repeated throughout each region, but I remember that because there were two (and still are) contractors for the London franchise ITA Thames Television-London Weekend Television" was displayed and this would fill up the whole of the station ident panel. This was continued into the Test Card "F" period from 15th November 1969 and I would imagine until the ITA/IBA TTTs came to an end some time in the mid 1970s. Sometimes Test Card "D" would appear as a reduced power version and would display "ITA Reduced Power." If this was the state of play over on BBC-1 or BBC-2, then a modified version of "C" would be used.

## Tuning Signals

Initially, the first version of the ITA tuning signal has been best described as a sort of simplified Test Card "C" and I tend to agree with that. It was very basic and is shown in fig. 1. This was then replaced by the more familiar "Picasso" signal which again was very simple (fig. 2). The transmitter name, region served and eventually the ITV company name were in white letters and ran through the bottom half of the circle. This type of tuning signal was used by the ITA until the end of monochrome transmissions in November 1969.

At the end of the day's TTTs on the "other side" either Test Card "C" or in later days "D" would change to black screen, the line sawtooth pattern and back to black screen again before the tuning signal appeared and the start of scheduled programmes. However, on one occasion in October 1963 something very different happened. It was about 16.30 just as Test Card "C" went off. I was waiting for *Small Time* to start on Rediffusion at 16.45. Instead of the usual line sawtooth a very unusual test card appeared for about ten seconds. It resembled the Marconi Resolution Chart No. 1 or the Rediffusion test card that was used in Malta and Hong Kong. As it appeared so quickly it was difficult to ascertain which type of test pattern it was. I have never seen it since and it is one of those mysteries that has been baffling me for years - can anyone out there shed some light on this? (*Fascinating! Both of the patterns you mention were used "internally" at Rediffusion but my money is on the version of Marconi No. 1 which Rediffusion had made specially with the name REDIFFUSION across the centre of the pattern. - AE*)

## Favourites

With the introduction of Test Card "D" on the new BBC-1 and ITA, visually the trade

tests became rather predictable. However, the music used more than made up for this and many people believe that from 1964 to about 1973 was the "golden age" of trade tests. I would certainly agree with that.

Earlier I mentioned my musical favourites and I suppose that other people also have their favourite test card as well. Mine was and always will be "C" and this is probably because it was the first test card I remember and got me addicted in the first place all those years ago. From 1964 onwards a version of it was used for 625 lines was used on BBC-2 until it was replaced by "F" when colour arrived in 1967. I could write about the interesting TTTs during those years on that channel too, but as we are only mainly concerned with 405 lines that is really another story. I hope that you have enjoyed this trip down memory lane and now that I have a VCR and various other items of technology, I really wish I could return to one of the most fascinating periods in television.

*\* This has been a most detailed article: thank you Malcolm. Can anyone say what form the early RTE (Irish) TTTs took? The caption AN ANNOUNCEMENT IN SOUND IS NOW BEING MADE was to alert technicians who normally had the sound turned off - the philistines obviously did not appreciate the carefully selected music - or tone!*

## VIDEO RECORDING NOTES

### OBSELETE FORMATS

Martin Loach has written with some satisfaction that he has acquired yet another tape format, namely Rank-Nivico half-inch 800 series dating from the mid-1960s. The name Nivico (Nippon Victor Company) was gradually giving way to JVC (Japan Victor Company) during this period.

He has solved a problem which seemed to afflict all surviving Sony CV-2000 VTRs. This is significant because the Sony CV-2000 was the first "consumer" video recorder and some valuable 405 line recordings survive only in this format.

Martin and another of our readers possess video tape machines covering the recording formats listed below. If anyone comes upon a recording in a "strange" format, we may be able to have it converted within the Group to a format they can use. We also have occasional access to broadcast-quality telecine facilities, so if you have any telerecordings or old commercials (but not holiday movies!) on 16mm or 35mm film we can have them transferred to video tape for you. There is generally no charge but you must pay recorded delivery postage costs.

Video tape formats we know we can handle on reel-to-reel include on 1" Ampex VR7003; Philips/Peto Scott EL3400. On 1/2" we have EIAJ-1 (many Hitachi, National, Sony, Sanyo models); Philips LDL1000; Philips N1500, N1700 and V2000; Rank-Nivico; Shibaden SV700; Sony CV-2000, CV-2100, 3420/3470. On 1/4" Akai colour. Also the following cassette formats: Betamax; Technicolor CVC 1/4"; VHS and S-VHS; and also U-Matic. And by the end of the year an RCA TR70 2" Quad should be restored!

If you can offer - or need - help please drop your editor a line (71 Falcutt Way, Northampton, NN2 8PH) or ring 0604-844130. Thanks to ML and EP!

## AUDIO TRANSCRIPTION

On the subject of audio recordings, Paul Sawtell is extremely well equipped to convert reel-to-reel recordings to compact cassette and has offered to help out readers. He can handle full, half or quarter track material at any speed from 1 7/8 to 15 inches per second. Charges by negotiation: write to him (with SAE) at 20 Seymour Road, Wollescote, Stourbridge, West Midlands, DY9 8TB.

## TELETALK

*by Malcolm Burrell*

### TUNERS

Since the early fifties with the advent of "alternative" programmes on VHF Band III, a proliferation of tuning systems have been employed. Early set-top "converters" were intended to permit TRF or aging superhet receivers to receive the transmissions. Basically the principle was to convert the incoming ITV signal to the same Band I channel as used by the BBC service then feed the signal into the aerial socket of the receiver. This was often successful although in areas of high Band I signal strength some patterning and even breakthrough occurred.

The promise of great things - as far as programme choice was concerned seemed on the horizon by 1955 as most sets were fitted with rotary "twelve" or "thirteen-channel" tuners. The most common valves employed were the PCF80 a triode-pentode (the Mazda equivalent was a 30CI) - as oscillator/mixer with a PCC84 double triode (the equivalent was a 30LI) as RF amplifier. Later tuners used a PCF86 and PCC89 whilst the ultimate used PCF801 with a PCC189.

Tuners took several forms:

- o the "incremental" tuner.
- o the "turret" tuner.
- o permeability tuners.

### INCREMENTAL TUNERS

In most early incremental tuners, channel switching was accomplished by a wafer-switch upon which the inductors for various channels were accommodated. As a higher channel was selected, less turns on the inductors were used whilst corrective tuning capacitors were switched into circuit. Basically the tuners were reliable although "noisy" contact operation could occur. Usually the range of the "fine" tuner control extended from the higher extremes of the preceding channel to the lower section of the succeeding one. Masteradio used a variant of a type best known for its extensive use in Pye receivers from the VT4 onwards.

Usually affecting the Band III channels, "noisy" tuner contacts was probably one of the most common complaints and resulted in the inability to tune or retain a selected channel. It was very common to enter the home of a customer and perceive part of a cigarette carton wedged behind the channel selector knob!

## TURRET TUNERS

Perhaps the most well known VHF tuners were manufactured by concerns like Cyldon or Brayhead. Most had twelve or thirteen positions with each channel represented by a pair of coil "biscuits". One biscuit (usually the "oscillator" biscuit) was mounted at the front of a rotatable drum with the "RF" biscuit at the rear. As with most other types of unit a concentric fine tuner was employed but in this case it often took the form of a cam-shaped piece of ceramic (dielectric), the rotation of which varied the value of a semi-air spaced capacitor of which the tuner body formed part.

It was often necessary to equalise the oscillator adjustment - especially following the replacement of the oscillator/frequency changer valve - on each channel to minimise the degree of "fine tuning" necessary when changing channels. The normal procedure was to select the required channel, centre the "fine tuning" control then adjust the core of the oscillator coil (usually via an aperture in the front of the set) using an insulated trimming tool, such as a sharpened knitting needle, for optimum picture without "sound-on-vision" or "vision-on-sound". The alternative channel was then selected and the procedure repeated.

Strangely, TV manufacturers often left most of the channel positions vacant and simply fitted "biscuits" for the channels available in the area to which the set was despatched.

Noisy tuner contacts were usually superficially "cleaned" with aerosol lubricants but a more permanent cure was partial dismantling, removal of biscuits and manual attention to the contact surfaces, finishing with a smear of silicon grease. In most cases it was wise to avoid the temptation to re-tension the sprung contacts!

A-B Metals manufactured the turret tuners used in many Thorn and later Plessey chassis. These tuners had a rotor of small dimensions and a single, green-coloured coil biscuit for each channel. The sprung contacts could be re-tensioned by unsoldering one end of the contact-bank and gently levering against one of the coil biscuits. Some later Thorn sets (e.g. the 850 series) used a version of the tuner which had a metal fine-tuning drum-mounted on the channel selector shaft. The drum was secured by allen screws whilst fine tuning was achieved by engaging a toothed, plastic peg for each channel. A common cause of inconsistent "fine tuning" after channel change was the loosening of the allen screws to allow movement of the drum.

## FIREBALL TUNER

Made by A-B Metals, the Fireball tuner appeared in many compact sets from the late fifties onwards. Initially using a PCF80 with PCC84 it used a PCC89 RF amplifier valve in its final form. It consisted of a set of coils glued to a single ceramic drum on which a series of studs on the underside contacted sprung contacts in the tuner. Rotating the drum selected the required channel with a sprung bearing ensuring accurate location. On sets with motorised tuners the bearing was omitted.

One novel receiver using an early predecessor of the Ferguson "800" chassis (the

one before the famous "850") utilised a Fireball tuner operated by a wire drive ("Glide-drive" tuning). A key on top of the receiver was pressed down then moved horizontally to the desired channel position. The trouble usually began when the wire broke!

Fireball tuners were moderately reliable although the contact springs were difficult to re-tension. Contact cleaning was best accomplished by removing the drum - a relatively simple (subject to the constraints imposed by compact chassis layout) procedure of removing the securing nut. Common problems were cracking of the drum assembly or the locating slot becoming sufficiently worn to allow poor relocation when the drum was rotated.

## MOTORISED TUNERS

The first motorised tuners appeared in 1957 on 17" and 21" Philco sets. The control knobs for manual operation were particularly large and seemed to have more than a little trans-Atlantic influence. Remote operation was by a wired remote control causing the turret to monotonously "clunk" around to an alternative position. By the late fifties/early sixties Pye had a similar arrangement on selected receivers using a tuner which was basically a cross between an incremental and fireball tuner.

## PUSH-BUTTON TUNERS

The ONLY successful mechanically operated press-button VHF tuner I can remember appeared on Bush receivers from the late fifties and continued with slightly less reliable variants, well into the "dual-standard" era with sets like the TV125. These relied upon permeability tuning with a movable core movable the coil former. Later tuners used a plastic "wand" which was prone to fracture and tricky to replace. Most problems with poor resetting were caused by wear of the splines in the actual plastic buttons.

There were several rather nasty designs which defied repair, however. Ultra (Pre-Thorn days), Regentone and some Peto-Scott (Pre-Philips days) sets used a tuner which seemed to operate on the incremental principle but with the coils mounted on a flat PCB comprising a number of printed tracks over which the contacts of a number of tuner "bars" moved. These bars required to be positioned initially to select the required channel whilst operation of the relevant push-button, of which there were four, caused movement of the bar and (hopefully) contact with the relevant tracks. In my own bitter experience this arrangement was very unreliable! Another variant used "mini" plastic channel selector button behind each push button.

## IN MY WORKSHOP

*David Boynes has been at it again but has he bitten off more than he can chew this time? Read on and find out!*

I have started restoration work on my Marconiphone model 702 mirror-view TV receiver. The 702 and its HMV equivalent were television-only receivers: unlike some

other sets of the time, they had no radio facilities.

The receiver consists of five units: they are the Power Supply unit, the Timebase unit, the CRT assembly, the TRF Vision unit and the superhet Sound receiver. All the units have been removed from the cabinet and to date I have serviced the sound receiver and the power supply unit.

The sound receiver is a superhet employing four valves: an X41 triode-hexode as the frequency changer, a VMP4G pentode IF amplifier, a MHD4 double diode-triode as detector, AGC and amplifier, while the output valve is an N41 pentode. Before supplying any heater volts and HT to the sound receiver it was thought prudent to check the condition of the components. I soon found that every paper capacitor had serious leaks, so these have now been replaced. There is only one electrolytic capacitor in the sound receiver circuit and this was also found to be useless. The mica capacitors test OK, however, and the resistors are still within tolerance.

Turning to the power supply unit, there are three valves employed here, two U12 full-wave rectifiers connected in parallel and a U16 EHT rectifier. All the electrolytic smoothing capacitors have been replaced with top quality components - the originals were useless and incapable of being re-formed. The EHT transformer has an open-circuit secondary and will be rewound by a local firm.

Next I will test the sound receiver; there should be no problems here. It requires a 41.5 Mc/s input, this is normally fed from the vision TRF unit after the second TRF amplifier, however, I think the sound signals from the channel 1 modulator will be strong enough. The power supply unit will supply HT at 280 volts and 4 volts heater supplies to the sound receiver. Meanwhile the Marconi 707 seven-inch TV continues to work reliably.

On Monday I connected the power supply unit to the sound unit, only four wires (two heater leads, the HT power lead and earth). I also hooked up the test signal. Everything worked first time! A good hiss could be heard and all that was required was a tweak of the local oscillator trimmer. There was only one hiccup, a screened A.F. lead became short-circuit but that fault was easy to locate. Later this week I will turn my attention to the timebase unit. Likely as not most of the paper capacitors will be leaky and the electrolytics will be dried up. More to come ...

## COLLECTORS AND THEIR COLLECTIONS

### Hans-Joachim Liesenfeld, Heiligenstadt (Germany)

I live in the former GDR, now east Germany. I too am a collector of old radio and TV technology. Sadly for many years it was not possible to make contacts in the Federal Republic or even in England. Now I am particularly pleased to make contact with other collectors.

For ten years I have been collecting old technology. As I am a radio engineer this hobby has grown more interesting for me. I am particularly keen on old TVs. From

before the war I have two sets from 1935/36, one by Lorenz and Loewe plus two sets of English manufacture around 1938/39. These last two are functional but I cannot demonstrate them as I am missing a modulator between video recorder and TV.

I also have around forty sets from 1949 to 1970: these are all operable and permanently ready for use. The first TV set produced here in what was the GDR comes from 1949/50, and I would now like to get a couple more pre-war British sets.

On the beginnings of 625 line television technology in the GDR after 1948 I have presented a lecture with slides in several towns. These slides show the complete palette of televisions right from the very beginning to the first colour set.

I look forward to close co-operation and for the last five years I have been in a society for broadcasting technology organised by the Technical Museum in Dresden. Perhaps we can together create the basis for a European television history forum.

*Hans-Joachim has a number of East German sets from the period 1949-55 spare and would be interested in exchanging them for old British sets. Please pass enquiries via 405 Alive.*

## Jacques Poinsignon, Asnieres (France)

To my knowledge there are very few people in France collection televisions. There are a few speculators who are hoarding what they have found to make prices rise, also dealers in 1950s and 60s style who seldom have any interest in the technical features of their sets.

I think I am the only person with sets from before 1940 plus cameras, telecine apparatus and a news-gathering car complete with three Thomson 1575 colour cameras. Encouraged by M. Guy Biraud, we have reconstructed two 30 line cameras by CDC (Rene Barthelemy) and the receivers, equipment which was used by the French PTT (post office) in 1932. One of these equipments will be installed in M. Biraud's museum at Angers.

## Wilfried Meier, Kevelaer (Germany)

I collect and restore radio and TV sets, including the following radios: Philips 836A, 834AS, 841AS, 2531, 209U; Loewe 638GW; Mende 216W; AEG DKE38; Saba VE301W; Lumophone 30A; Siemens 25WLK; Minerva 405; Blaupunkt 5W77 and several sets after 1945.

The following are my TVs: Bush TV12A, TV22; Philips TD1422, TX500, TX390A. The most interesting sets for me are the TV12A and the Philips TX390A. The Philips is complete with rimlock tube and works on the French 441 line system. According to Philips only 300 examples were produced of this design. The picture tube is the same as that fitted to the Bush TV12.

# NOTES AND QUERIES

## Answers to 405 Alive please.

### ITA still picture slides

A correspondent of Alan Keeling recalls the following used from Emley Moor.

1. Selby Abbey seen from a distance, with the bell tower on the left.
2. Yachts and sailing boats on the open seas.
3. A tall half-timbered manor house.
4. York Minster seen in the distance above the city walls.
5. A country cottage (left) with a lane leading off into the distance (right).

He adds "Test Card C was shown sometimes with the transmitter name EMLEY MOOR above the letter C, and on other days no station name was shown. There is a reason for this. In the pre-YTV days when Granada operated Winter Hill and Emley Moor there was a facility to feed programme output between the two main stations of the same company. Although both stations put out their own trade tests normally they could also switch in and out of their own transmissions into the other.

"This is borne out by two recollections: Firstly seeing Test Card C with WINTER HILL on Emley Moor (channel 10) due to the engineer's error and secondly that after "Monday's Newcomers" and for the rest of Monday's trade tests it was usually Test Card C with no ident. Tuesday to Saturday had normally Test Card C with EMLEY MOOR ident. The tuning caption shown before programmes always showed EMLEY MOOR only. [John Fox]

### The Rediffusion Star

Gerry Dolby-Gray obviously paid a lot of attention in his younger days, for he asserts that the spinning star that introduced each commercial ...

- exploded for paid advertisements,
- shrunk for public service announcements, and
- rotated on a vertical axis between short 5-second spots.

This last star had a background of curtains instead of the customary black matte background.

## "Gracie" At Holme Moss Opening



Photo: D. Worrall

Miss Gracie Fields was televised at the official opening of the Holme Moss transmitter at the Manchester Town Hall on Friday evening. The above photograph shows her as she appeared on a Rochdale T.V. screen.

### Current Topics

#### Holme Moss Opens

ROCHDALE had a full share of prominence in the opening night of television from Holme Moss last Friday. Before Miss Gracie Fields was introduced as "Mrs. Banks of Rochdale" — a typical slice of unrehearsed burlesque—viewers caught just a fleeting glimpse of Councillor W. Crossley, the Mayor of Rochdale, as he, with other chief citizens from towns throughout Lancashire and Yorkshire, left the Lord Mayor's suite in the Manchester Town Hall after the formal opening ceremony by Lord Simon of Wythenshawe.

## Gracie was the hit as Holme Moss opened

Y.E. News TV Reporter

**H**IT of the Holme Moss opening celebration programme was "Mrs. Banks, of Rochdale, a Northern lady," interviewed by Richard Dimbleby, B.B.C. commentator, after the ceremony in Manchester Town Hall.

The famous laugh heralded the famous face — Mrs. Banks was Gracie Fields, and her impromptu performance was the hit of the evening.

White-haired—" does it televise well, folks? — Gracie has lost none of her pep. When she declared "I'm not bad for 39, eh?" with a wink that added a few years to the statement, she nearly knocked solid Dimbleby out of the picture with a playful push.

## Mrs. Banks

(THAT'S GRACIE)

## launches

## TV in North

**T**ELEVISION came officially to the North last night in a half-hour ceremony before the cameras at Manchester Town Hall.

The B.B.C. chairman, Lord Simon of Wythenshawe, made a speech.

Then the formalities were forgotten as Richard Dimbleby introduced a woman in a Lancashire shawl, with a giant chrysanthemum on her head, as "Mrs. Banks from Rochdale." It was Gracie Fields.

She poked Dimbleby in the ribs and said: "I'm never going to be more than 39, even if I have got white hair."

# South West Vintage Communications Fair

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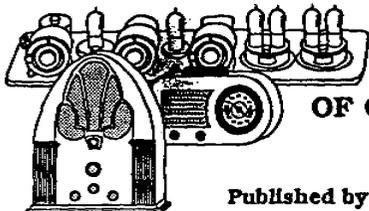
Also in town will be a Craft Fair, Traction Engines, Vintage Cars, Country Pubs, Cream Teas etc. A great day out for all the family!

\*STALLS in advance only - visitors pay at door

. . . . .

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# RADIO BYGONES

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■ Covering developments from the days of Hertz, Maxwell and Marconi to the recent past, RADIO BYGONES is edited by Geoff Arnold G3GSR, Editor of *Morsum Magnificat* and previously Editor of *Practical Wireless*.

■ RADIO BYGONES, which was launched in August 1989, is published six times a year. A subscription costs £13.50 for one year by post to UK addresses, or £14.50 to overseas addresses by surface mail. Airmail rates can be quoted on request.

■ If you would like to see a sample copy, send £2.40 (£2.60 overseas) to the publishers at the address below. RADIO BYGONES is not available at newsagents.

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# MARKET PLACE

This is the area for buying and selling all kinds of things to do with television, new or old.

Want to join in? Then send us your advertisement: there is no charge, although if space is short we may have to "prune" out the least relevant adverts or hold them over until next time.

Advertisements are normally inserted for two issues: please indicate if you wish your ad. to run longer. There's no extra charge but we try to avoid repeating "stale" material.

Traders are also welcome here but we do require people who are commercial dealers to state this in their advertisements. The letter (T) at the end of an advertisement indicates that the advertisement is "trade".

Test card music is subject to the same rules of copyright as other recorded works and it is unlawful to sell amateur or professional recordings of same. *405 Alive* will not accept any advertisements from persons engaged in this activity.

Also please note that we do not accept any responsibility for dealings resulting from these advertisements, which are published in good faith. Replicas and reproductions may be difficult to identify, so beware of any items "of doubtful origin" and assure yourself of the authenticity of anything you propose buying. And try to have fun, after all it's only a hobby!

We have had a number of ads requesting 405 line recordings and circuit diagrams for standards converters and Band I modulators - why haven't we printed them? Well, the ads for videotape recordings were getting out of hand and there was no response to our idea of a clearing house. Building a standards converter is a major undertaking (parts are likely to cost £300 minimum) but one of our members who has built one is now working on a set of printed circuit boards and parts lists. Watch this space! And two designs for modulators have been published in *Television* magazine - see issue 1 of *405 Alive*, pages 10/11. We can supply photocopies at 10p a page.

Please note that we are not in a position to supply circuit diagrams, service sheets or other information on equipment. For this you need to read the small advertisements below and those published each month in *Television* magazine. But we will also print requests for help in this section of the newsletter. Most valves and other components are not hard to find: we recommend **Billington Valves** (0403-210729), **Kenzen** (021-446 4346), **Wilson Valves** (04575-6114) and **PM Components** (0474-560521). For hard-to-find transistors we have heard of **The Semiconductor Archives** (081-691 7908) and **Vectis Components Ltd.** (0705-669885). Would you like to recommend other firms? If you think a firm gives good service please tell us all!

**VINTAGE TVs, radios and testgear repaired and restored.** Personal attention to every job and moderate prices. Estimates without obligation - deal with an enthusiast! (BVWS and BATC member) Please include SAE with all enquiries - thanks. Dave Higginson, 28 High Street, Misterton, Doncaster, Yorks., DN10 4BU. (T). Tel:

0427 - 890768.

**TEST CARD VIDEOS FOR SALE:** 55 minute video presentation made for the BATC "The Development of the TV Test Card". Your editor interviews George Hersee, designer of Test Card F. Lots of old test cards included. 625 lines, VHS only. Recorded on E-180, so you can put

other material on the tape. £5 including postage. And now ... "TV Test Cards of Eastern Europe" but that is an understatement. For this tape covers not only the East bloc (East Germany, USSR, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Estonia and Romania) but other exotic locations such as Mongolia, Libya, Algeria, New York, "BBC London" and many west European countries, as well as satellite channels. In all there are over 80 test cards, station idents, news programmes and start-of-day recordings, lasting 49 minutes in all. Explanatory captions describe each segment and the recordings were made on broadcast equipment in a TV studio "somewhere in Eastern Europe". Wages there are a tenth of what we earn and the recordist desperately wants a dual-standard colour TV, so all profits on this remarkable tape will go to him. Recorded in PAL on a quality E-180 VHS tape, the price is £10. If DX-TV is your hobby here are the rare test cards in living colour, like you've never seen them before!

Please allow 14 days for delivery. Andy Emmerson, 71 Falcutt Way, Northampton, NN2 8PH.

**FOR SALE:** Pye FVIC console model (early 50s) £35. Etronic 12" console, v.g.c. (turret tuner added) £40. H.M.V. 12" table model, 5 ch., very clean condition. £40. Bush TV85 17" 13 ch. exceptionally clean. £35 Philips 14" projection console 1949. £40. Pye VT4 (later turret tuner) clean. £40. Ekco T164 early 50s (later T.T. added) very clean. £35. Unknown 9" table model, scruffy but complete £15. VCR97 tube with TV mask £15, R1355 untouched £50. Exchanges possible for pre-war radios or wind-up gramophones. Steve Harris, "ON THE AIR", Melody's Antique Galleries, 32 City Road, Chester. 0244-328968 or 661062. Sorry no pre-war TVs yet!

**FOR SALE:** Valves for your 405 line TV (and other equipment) can be obtained from Kenzen, Unit 9, 16-20 George Street, Balsall Heath, BIRMINGHAM

**B12 9RG.** Send SAE for quotation by return or telephone 021-446 4346 or fax (new number - please note) 021-446 4245. Many thousands of new, boxed valves at unbeatable prices. We can also supply components, e.g. "spot-tip-body" colour coded resistors, wirewound resistors, droppers, EHT capacitors, etc. etc. Send for our latest 26 page catalogue of goodies - only £1 plus A4 size SAE with 32p stamp please. Interesting items available now include: ex-IBA UHF television transmitter (parts of), about 1/2 tonne of ex-BBC video and audio equipment (mostly 19" rack mounting) and lots of 19" video monitors. Callers welcome but please telephone the warehouse first.(T)

**FOR SALE:** Printed circuit board for David Looser's design of Band 1 modulator. Size 160 x 100 mm, undrilled. £5 including post and packing. Dave Boynes, 12 The Garth, Winlaton, Blaydon, NE21 6DD. Tel: 091-414 4751.

**FOR SALE:** Ekco valve portable radio. Grey plastic case, MW/LW, model V159. Des Griffey, Luton. 0582-582144.

**FOR SALE:** 17" CRTs, new old stock, boxed and unopened. Ideal for all popular 17" sets, get them now while you have the opportunity! Price? Make me a offer! Dave Higginson, 28 High Street, Misterton, Doncaster, Yorks., DN10 4BU. (T). Tel: 0427 - 890768.

**FOR SALE:** Bush DAC10 radio, good case, reception poor £40 or exchange for JVC Sputnik TV. Barrie Portas, 4 Summerfield Avenue, Waltham, Grimsby, Lincs., DN37 0NH. Tel: 0472-824839.

**FOR SALE:** "Television and Short Wave World" magazine, 1934-1939, 53 copies out of the total 60 published. Good condition. Offers please. Mark Allinson, Linden House, King Street, Aspatria, Cumbria, CA5 3AH. Tel: 0900-827666 daytime.

**FOR SALE:** A nice compact Sony video and audio distribution amplifier, one input (term/unterm), three outputs. £10. Post and packing £3. Andy Emmerson, Northampton: ring first on 0604-844130.

**FOR SALE:** Approx. 500 early TV service sheets. Very good selection, mainly 1950s and 1960s. £30. Also approx. 300 wireless service sheets, 1930s to 1960s. £25. The whole lot £45. HMV TV set, model 2806. Circa 1950 but pre-war circuit. Large console with doors. GEC BT1093 9" "bookcase" style TV, floor standing. Late 1940s. Steve Ostler, 0386-881988.

**FOR SALE:** Illuminated diascope for I.O. camera, new condition, with power supply for lamp. Slides onto lens, takes two 2" x 2" slides (latter not supplied but may be available at cost). £50 or swap. Andy Emmerson G8PTH, 71 Falcutt Way, Northampton, NN2 8PH.

**FOR SALE:** Pye video receivers (take 600 ohm balanced or 75 ohm input and provide adjustable LF, MF and HF gain). £15 each. Michael Bond, 0733-53998.

**FOR SALE:** Scotch VCR 1500/1700-type 30/65 minute tapes. Five cartons of five tapes each, sealed as new. Offers? Simon Ellis, ring (home) 0538-387513 or (work) 081-977 3252 ext 2234.

**FOR SALE:** Pye FVC1 five-channel console TV (12" screen?), in pretty good condition (a few scratches and minor stains on cabinet, but gives raster and sound). With original instructions. Price around £50. A brown bakelite GEC Band III converter may also be available if not already sold. Miss Smith, 5 Courtwood, Stanwick, Wellingborough, Northants., NN9 6PN. Tel: 0933-625213.

**FOR SALE:** Magnifying lens, Cossor 1320 TV alignment aid and pattern generator, Marconi TF923 TV sweep generator. Swap for old radios, military items or radio accessories. Andrew Humphriss 0926-400876 (Warwick).

**FOR SALE:** Mullard 17" picture tube

AW43-88, unused still in sealed carton. Must be collected from Croydon. Offers to Ray Herbert 081-657 1126.

**FOR SALE:** Original 1960s tuner/converter with IF board and valves, 405 to 625. Unused in original box. Cost £28 in the 1960s, for sale at £25. Postage at cost. Barrie Portas on Grimsby 0472-824839.

**FOR SALE:** Standard 8mm sound film. 1954 Sherlock Holmes TV episode "The Case of the Christmas Pudding" starring Ronald Howard. Offers to Alan Keeling, 28 Walters Road, Oldbury, Warley, West Midlands, B68 0QA.

**FOR SALE:** Ekco 17" TC267 TV. Good condition cabinet, sound/line whistle OK. Have a look and make an offer. Phone Christine Gray on Letchworth 0462-683551.

**BOOKS FOR SALE:** New titles this time: *Colourvision Principles*, a series of six colour booklets on how colour TV works issued by Rank-Bush-Murphy in 1965. In original ring binder, £5 (including postage). *Mullard make the Great Leap Forward*, a 36-page colour booklet detailing the 20AX picture tube. £3 including postage. The following duplicate copies of (mainly old TV) books also still available; all are in average condition unless otherwise noted. At £2 each: *PAL COLOUR TV - The PAL system and Mullard circuits described*, A4 paperback circa 1969, about 100pp., *TV RECEIVER SERVICING, pt 1 Time base Circuits* (Spreadbury), 1961, 364pp. *Ditto*, another copy of pt 1, 1956. *Ditto, pt 2 Receiver and Power Supply Circuits*. 308pp, 1955. *MODERN PRACTICAL RADIO & TV vol 2* (Quarrington), early post-war, covers TV theory, 196pp. *TV FAULT FINDING*, paperback, 1958 printing, 104pp, many off-screen pix. *TV RECEIVER THEORY, vol 1* (Hutson), 1966, 232pp, lots of 405.

At £1.25 each: *RADIO HANDBOOK SUPPLEMENT*, RSGB, 160pp paperback, 2nd world war, a bit rough. *CLOSED CIRCUIT TV SINGLE-*

**HANDED** (Gibson), 1972. **TELEVISION BEHIND THE SCENES** (Fairley), ITV, 1976, paperback 160pp. **RADIO LABORATORY HANDBOOK** (Scroggie), wartime, 400pp. **TELEVISION SERVICING MANUAL** (Bradley), paperback, 126pp, 1950 (scruffy). **HOW TELEVISION WORKS**, (Holm), Philips, 318pp, ex-library copy. **TELEVISION EXPLAINED** (Miller & Spreadbury), 192pp, 1960.

Add £2 postage and packing for each book - sorry but it costs a fortune these days. Any large overpayment will be refunded. Only one copy of each, so ring first to check availability and don't hesitate! Andy Emmerson, 71 Falcutt Way, Northampton, NN2 8PH.

**FREE - YOUR AD COULD BE HERE**

There's no charge at all if you're a subscriber ...

**INTERESTED** in telephones and telegraphs? The Telecom Heritage Group is for you then, with four magazines and a swapmeet a year. Send SAE to THG, P.O. Box 499, Bishopbriggs, Glasgow, G64 3JR.

**WANTED:** Video recorders as follows. Akai 1/4" VTR of any model. Ikegami 5/8" VTR any model (originally marketed by Dixons Technical). IVC 1" VTR any model. Sony 1" VTR with odd (non-NAB) spools. Martin Loach, Oxford 735821.

**WANTED:** Manuals for the following VTRs: Sony 3620, Rank Nivico, Akai 1/4". Also used video tapes, any format, any condition considered if cheap! Martin Loach, Oxford 735821.

**WANTED:** I am looking for examples of early colour TVs, especially dual-standard Bush, Murphy, Thorn, Pye or Decca models. Anything unusual would be of particular interest. I am also seeking examples of two early post-war GEC models, BT7092 and BT2147, and of course anything pre-war (isn't everyone!?). My telephone number is Coddenham 0449 79-366. Mike King,

Crowfield Cottage, Stone Street, Crowfield, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP6 9TA.

**WANTED:** a pre-war TV. Yes I know I'm hopeful but I'll be happy to consider any offers. Also: Odhams Television Annuals for the 1960s. *Basic Television* part 2 (Technical Press). Most kinds of closed circuit and industrial TV cameras and sales literature. Sony 405 line modulator, camera switcher and other accessories. Diode-matrix call sign generator. Old C-mount lenses for TV camera, also 2" x 2" slides of test cards and captions to borrow and copy or buy. Andy Emmerson, 71 Falcutt Way, Northampton, NN2 8PH (tel: 0604 - 844130).

**WANTED:** Still hoping to find a pre-war TV set, but also wanting any TV with a round image tube, maximum 9". I pay a good price and can collect the sets. Rudi Sillen, Limberg 31, B-2230 HERSELT, Belgium. Tel: 010 32 14-546889.

**WANTED:** Pre-war TV, any make, any condition. Pye B16T. Pre-war books on TV. Data on Ekco TX275. Please help me with standards conversion (625->405 and/or 625->819). If you have a Philips 663A or know of it, please exchange findings with me. Jac Janssen, Hoge Ham 117d, 5104JD DONGEN, The Netherlands. Tel. (evenings) from UK: 010 31 1623-18158. Thanks!

**WANTED:** Pye V4 or VT4 TV, Pye broadcast equipment, the mauve and light blue valve type. What have you? Information on the Pye Broadcast Staticon camera, type 2130 D6Y. Need manual, lenses, any info. Michael Bond, 0733-53998.

**WANTED:** old ATV Television Show Books, number 2 and up. Also wanted 16mm opt. sound ATV logo, starts. Mr D.W. Probert, 16 Woden Road East, Wednesbury, West Midlands, WS10 0RG.

**WANTED:** OLD CAMERA TUBES and

similar imaging devices of various types and age (and related data, etc.) sought for historic (!) collection. Particularly welcome would be an Orthicon, EMI 9831 vidicons, an Ebitron, an Image Isocon or a 1.5" vidicon. Tubes that are not operable *are* suitable, so if you replace tubes in cameras please don't throw the old ones away but contact Peter Delaney, 6 East View Close, Wargrave, Berks., RG10 8BJ (tel: Wargrave 0734-403121).

**CALLING ALL DXers!** Keep up to date with *Teleradio News*, the only magazine for dedicated enthusiasts. Six issues a year cost you just £7.50 post paid, so send your name and address with a cheque made out to HS PUBLICATIONS, 7 Epping Close, Derby, DE3 4HR.

**AND IF YOU'RE AFTER THE VERY LATEST INFO ON SATELLITE TELEVISION ...** you should be reading *Transponder*, the definitive subscription newsletter. For details ring 0270-580099 or send SAE to Transponder, P.O. Box 112, Crewe, Cheshire, CW2 7DS.

**HELP OFFERED:** I know of places where very old televisions do turn up in various conditions. If other members are seeking a set give me a ring. Paul Thorpe, 0922-645683.

**RECOMMENDED SHOP:** J. & N. Bull Electrical, 250 Portland Road, Hove, Sussex has old TV servicing equipment from time to time, also obsolete and spare parts at reasonable prices - Albert Pritchard.

**MOMI - THE WORLD'S MOST EXCITING CINEMA AND TELEVISION MUSEUM.** South Bank, London SE1. Tel 071-928 3535 (switchboard) or 071-401 2636 (recorded information line).

**NOTHING to do with vintage TV** but if you are interested in the "alternative" video and independent TV production scene, you may care to read

*Independent Media*, a thick monthly magazine costing £1.25. Full details from Independent Media, 7 Campbell Court, Bramley, Basingstoke, Hants., RG26 5EG. Telephone 0256 - 882032.

**ON THE AIR** Vintage Sound and Vision is a new venue for vintage broadcasting enthusiasts. Situated in Chester's major antiques centre, ON THE AIR has a constantly changing stock of vintage wireless, television and related items. Please write (enclosing SAE) or phone for further details and to ensure personal attention before calling. Open Monday to Saturday 10.00 - 5.30. ON THE AIR, Melody's Antique Galleries, 32 City Road, Chester. Tel: 0244 - 328968 or 661062.

**SWAP:** I've some more surplus copies of *Practical Television* - would swap for other copies not here. August 1950 vol 1 no. 5 (poor); April 1952 (fair); April, May 1955 (fair to good); June 1956; Jan, Jul, Sept, Oct, Nov. 1957; June, Sept, Dec. 1958. Roger Bunney, 33 Cherville Street, Romsey, Hants., SO5 8FB.

**TELECINE (standard 8, super 8, 9.5 and 16mm) and 525/625 PAL/SECAM/NTSC standards conversion work.** Personal service using professional equipment, by a 405 enthusiast at competitive prices. Send large SAE for full details or describe your specific requirements. We regret we cannot handle 405/625 conversions! Lionel Fynn, Plato Video, 70 Richmond Hill, Bournemouth, BH2 6JA. Tel: 0202-24382.

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#### BBC ON COLOUR TV TESTS

The Crystal Palace (Channel 1) TV transmitter is now being modulated with test transmissions in colour, taking place after normal programme hours on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, and during Tuesday, Thursday and Friday *afternoons*, 3.30 to 4.15 p.m. This is a full-week programme, after which there is a no-colour week, then transmissions during the third week on the Tuesday-Friday schedule only, followed by another no-colour week. The tests will continue for about six months, and the next full-programme week after publication is that commencing on Monday, December 2.

November, 1957

# GOOD HOMES WANTED!

The following items have been offered free of charge or almost free by their generous owners, though they will doubtless accept small donations if you are pleased with what you get! This latter kind of gesture goes down well since in many instances the advertisers are not members of our group and are pensioners, widows, etc.. Where no phone number is given please enclose SAE with your letter, it's only fair.

In each case the advertiser has agreed to hold the items for one month from publication - after then it's probably the corporation rubbish dump or an antique shop. You have been warned!

\* I have an old Viewmaster chassis that I was considering scrapping. All valves and ancillaries are intact and rust only covers the top of the power stage. There is a full set of instructions and plans along with the original folder. I am happy to throw this in with a 12" picture tube if the recipient is not planning to make money out of it. I would be prepared to offer any help or advice to anyone who would contemplate rebuilding the set. Alan Inckle, Yew Tree Cottage, Longway Bank, Whatstandwell, Derby, DE4 5HU.

\* Would you be interested in a 40-70 MHz signal generator, type 940226, s/no. 14929, made by Pye? Switch covers Frame, Line, Sound and CW, with outputs into a balun 75 ohms. Appears to be made about 1950 and in good condition externally (not tested). Contact R. Brown, 8 Beach Green, Shoreham, Sussex, BN43 5YG by letter (not on phone).

## HOW TO CONTACT 405 ALIVE

We want to hear from YOU! This is your magazine, so please send in your letters, notes and articles; don't be bashful, other people will be interested in what you're doing! As we do this for fun, not profit, we regret that we cannot pay for contributions but authors are encouraged to retain their copyright and are free to publish their articles in other publications as well. Send us your advertisements too.

If at all possible, please TYPE your contributions using a dark, black ribbon. This enables them to be read straight into the word-processor by a document scanner. Magic!

Contributions on computer disk are particularly welcome and your disk will be returned. I can handle most variations of IBM PC and CP/M disks in 3.5" and 5.25" size but please process your words as an ASCII or WordStar file. I cannot handle Amstrad PCW, BBC or Macintosh disks, and if in doubt please ring first on 0604-844130. Thanks. You can now also fax your letters, ads and articles on 0604-821647.

# THE BACK PAGE

**405 Alive** is an independent, not-for-profit magazine devoted to the study and preservation of old television technology and programming. It is sold by subscription only and thus has no cover price: it is not subsidised by any other organisation. Publication is at approximately three month intervals, normally in January, April, July and October.

Correspondence is welcomed: write to Andrew Emmerson, 71 Falcutt Way, Northampton, NN2 8PH. If your letter is not intended for publication please indicate this clearly. All letters are gratefully received and will be acknowledged in the next Newsletter if not sooner. If you are expecting a reply you must include a stamped addressed envelope and preferably also your telephone number (in case it is quicker to telephone a reply) - thanks.

**Editorial policy.** We print readers' addresses only in small advertisements or when asked to. We will always be happy to forward letters to contributors if postage is sent.

**Advertising rates.** Classified: free to subscribers, £1 per advertisement for others. Display ads, using your artwork: \$5 per half page.

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**Exchange publications.** You may wish to contact the following allied interest groups (please send SAE with all enquiries).

**BRITISH VINTAGE WIRELESS SOCIETY:** Gerald Wells, Vintage Wireless Museum, 23 Rosendale Road, London, SE21.

**BRITISH AMATEUR TELEVISION CLUB:** Dave Lawton G0ANO, Grenehurst, Pinewood Road, High Wycombe, Bucks., HP12 4DD.

**NARROW BANDWIDTH TV ASSOCIATION:** Mr N Reynolds, 6a Collingbourne Road, London, W12 0JQ.

**TEST CARD CIRCLE:** 2 Henderson Row, Edinburgh, EH3 5DS.

**IRISH VINTAGE RADIO & SOUND SOCIETY:** Vincent Farrell, 39A Lower Drumcondra Road, Dublin 9.

**PROJECTED PICTURE TRUST:** Rev. Keith Stokes, All Saints Pastoral Centre, Shenley Lane, London Colney, Herts., AL2 1AF.

We also read and recommend these other specialist publications of interest:

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