

# 405 ALIVE

*Recalling the Golden Years of Black & White Television*



**Technostalgia for the joy of it!**

*Issue 44 - Fourth Quarter, 1999*

ISSN 0969-8884

No cover price, because it's priceless (oh all right, £4 then)

## **In this issue:**

TV FORESEEN by Hollywood    READERS' RESTORATIONS

WEMBLEY'S MAMMOTH TV STUDIO

BUFFING UP THE BAKELITE    AERIAL VIEWS

YOUR LETTERS    LOADS OF SMALL ADS    BOOK REVIEWS

**... and much more**

# 405 ALIVE

Founded 1989 by Andrew Emerson, with title and inspiration by Bill Journeaux.

**Issue 44, Fourth Quarter 1999** (date again?)

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**Web page** <http://www.kaleidoscope.org.uk/405alive.htm>

(our own website will follow in due course at <http://www.strowger.net/405>)

ISSN: 0969-8884.

## LEGAL WARNING, particularly for New Readers

By reading this magazine you are entering a Temporary Autonomous Zone (TAZ), where normal values, logic and timescales do not apply. At the least you may feel unable to put the magazine down until you have read it through to the very end. While you read it, you may also feel strangely mellow and entirely unable to face doing anything else useful for 24 hours. Alternatively you may sense a sudden urge to have money extracted painlessly by one of our advertisers. Anything may happen and at the very worst you may enter a Permanent Autonomous Zone (PAZ) of your own creation.



## FROM THE EDITOR ...

### **From your outgoing editor:**

For me this is a special issue of our magazine, even though on the face of it there's nothing much different about it. It's late (nothing new there, then) and the same size as normal, with the same madcap mixture of contents as usual. The issue number is 44, not even a nice round number, and in truth the only thing that makes this issue memorable is that this is the last one edited by me. From now on I shall take something of a backseat, although I shall continue to contribute items to *405 Alive* and indeed my name will remain as consulting editor (a delightfully grand title!).

Taking over from me is Andy Henderson, who really needs no introduction because you will have read his thoughtful articles and letters in previous editions. I'm sure he'll tell you more about himself and his particular interests in the next issue, so all I need add is that I'm delighted he is taking over and I know he will do an excellent job. From now on please send articles, letters and advertisements to him (not me!), at the address shown in the panel opposite. He's already preparing issue 45 at this very moment but obviously he has no readers' letters yet and he needs a big bunch of them for the next issue. So please support him in the same way as you have done me—and keep our magazine going from strength to strength.

I thought I'd end with a horror story, one that will turn any true collector's hair on end. It's not exactly tragic but it's not amusing either. If you're a collector too, see what you think.

At last autumn's National Vintage Communications Fair a well-known collector (no names, no pack drill) spotted an absolute rarity in a pile of junk items (actually it was a particularly rare type of telephone but it could equally have been a television because that's not really relevant to this tale). He asked the price and was told £10. His jaw dropped as the item was worth at least £1,500 on the open market. In the instant that he took to ponder whether to offer something closer to the true price, another guy chimed in: "I'll take it, mate."

And pop, there it was gone—before his very eyes! About 15 of these phones (made of clear Perspex) are known to exist, mainly in museums.

He has learned his lesson and in future that particular collector will *pick up* and *hang onto* items he has spotted and intends to buy.

But what about telling a vendor he has under-priced an object? Is honesty the best policy?!? You tell me. Or rather, tell my collector pal. Alternatively, if both vendor and purchaser are satisfied with a transaction, is it anyone else's job to chip in and point out the item could have fetched far more? Answers on a postcard please to the new editor, not me!

Lastly and on a personal note, I shall be dropping the 07000-405625 telephone number when the contract runs out. It's somewhat expensive for me and for callers!

Andy Emmerson

## LETTERS, WE GET LETTERS...

*Many thanks to all our letter writers, including those few who didn't make it to this page. We try and fit in as many letters as possible, occasionally editing for space or clarity.*

### **From Mike Hogg, Edinburgh:**

In issue 42 p.17 the question was posed, "How can I find out if a film or TV programme has been released on home video?"

Another way to find if a tape has been released in the UK is to try the BBFC website at [www.bbfc.co.uk](http://www.bbfc.co.uk). They have a fairly good search engine that will also tell you if any cuts have been made to the tape in order to gain a certificate. If tapes are deleted from a distributor's catalogue then try Blackstar Video at [www.blackstar.co.uk](http://www.blackstar.co.uk). They run a video search facility and are usually very good at locating deleted tapes. They also list a fair amount of older titles from the early to mid

1980s on their regular pages and don't charge postage on regular items.

**From John Chenery, by e-mail:**

I buy *405 Alive* as a nostalgia magazine, but what is this phenomenon? The snippets of information about 1960s continuity announcers ranging to the modern day demise of Test Card F are equally compelling and I see no reason that the publication should limit itself solely to the 405-line era. If there are enough articles for black and white tv only, that's fine, but the appeal extends beyond this and is better defined as the "Golden Age of Television" giving the publisher a wider remit and making for a better mix of articles.

I think that a change to A4 format would certainly give more flexibility in layouts; lead to better, larger photos and of course would allow for circuit diagrams for the more practical among us and I'm sure that in partnership with the Radiophile this will be possible. I think it sensible to hand over the editorship before it becomes a burden to produce because as the front cover quotes "Technostalgia for the joy of it" and if you want to pursue other projects then the 21st century is the right time to make the change. Not that your style of writing won't be missed, but then your work is very prolific and I'm sure we'll see more articles penned by Andrew Emmerson, and more of you in cyberspace! Budding editors, queue here...

**From Tony Duell, by e-mail:**

I would like to make some comments on the possible changes to *405 Alive* mentioned in the editorial in issue 43 (which arrived yesterday). Firstly, let me state that I would be very unhappy if it were to cease publication. It's a great magazine, and I enjoy every issue. But there's little chance of it ceasing.

My interest in old television (and video recording) is almost entirely technical. I am interested in how the machines worked, how to repair them, how to make parts, etc. I have little interest in old programmes. For this reason, if the magazine were to split into two ones (not that this has been suggested), one technical the other not, then I would subscribe only to the former. In much the same way I subscribe to *The Radiophile* (and *Radio Bygones*), but I am not going to subscribe to *Radio Days*. We can't all be interested in everything.

Therefore, I think I would be interested in some more technical articles in *405 Alive*. The possible change to A4 format with a 'receiver profile' type article (as mentioned in the Editorial) would be something that I would welcome.

However, perhaps overall you've got the balance about right. There are technical articles at the moment. And I've learnt a lot from them. There are also articles that I am less interested in. But that's not to be taken as a complaint—I read just about everything in the magazine and may well learn something from an unexpected source. I think that if you made the magazine entirely technical you'd lose a lot of current readers.

Finally, there have been some readers letters about the coverage of subjects that are not strictly 405-line B/W TV in the magazine. I personally don't mind this at all—I am interested in just about all 'ancient' electronics, and articles on repairing old video recorders (even if 625 line colour), dual-standard TVs (again, even if colour) and like subjects are interesting to me. I'd rather you didn't cover VHS video and modern IC-based colour TVs just yet, though... Thanks for a great magazine.

**From Jim Beacon, by e-mail:**

In your reply to Paul Thorpe's letter in issue 43, you say that the value of electrolytics is not that critical, and say that a 47 $\mu$ F can be safely used in place of a 33 $\mu$ F. This is not always true in the case of HT smoothing and reservoir capacitors, where the use of a larger value can have detrimental effects on the rectifier valve. Valve data books normally give the maximum value that can be used in various filter configurations without causing damage to the rectifier. An example of these rules being by-passed is in the Bush TV22 / TV24 where the input capacitor is significantly above the maximum rated value, leading to a hard life for the rectifier; you often find PZ33 with the rectifier section low emission, and the boost section like new!

❖ Thanks, good point!

**From Roger Bunney, Romsey:**

Regarding hot receivers, on a trip round the Fareham Road, Gosport factory of BRC (Thorns) just before closure years back I commented on why they fitted a 330-ohm 1W carbon in the cathode of a frame output valve. I and you know it will go high and take out the 100 $\mu$ F decoupler with it, so surely it's better to put a 3-watt wirewound and maintain reliability. The response was that a 1W carbon was much cheaper than a wirewound—it all made work for the working man to do! That and green mains droppers looking like conker trees in the autumn!

### **From Bernard King, Hampton:**

I have an odd feeling that I am the 'Bernard' mentioned in the punchline of Harold Peters' letter (*405 Alive*, no. 43, page 7). The reason this Bernard could not tell Pete what he wanted to know is because I could not, in a month of Sundays, relate all those fancy figures with the facts of 'real world' sound reproduction; I have never been a theorist.

Came the talkies in the late 20s when sound quality was like you've never heard, or would ever wish to hear again, the public soon grew bored with the new and novel invention. But it was not the poor quality sound that bothered them but the inane content of the 'All Talking, All Singing, All Dancing' productions (I could write pages on this!). Let it suffice to say that it is no good getting upset about 'point-something' of a Hz when the audiences of today wouldn't know the difference as long as they have their 'soaps, game shows, cookery shows, sport and Charlie Dimmock's glorious attributes.

In the 80s and early 90s I owned ancient, early sound, 35mm projector—an old KALEE 8. The path of the sound drive between the motor and the sound head (a BTP) was unbelievable! And don't forget those domestic tape recorders of the 50s and 60s. I got through nearly a dozen and they all ran at very different versions of the supposed standard 3 3/4ips!

So don't lose any sleep over it, Pete. With the material offered on TV these days those odd "point-somethings" of a Hz just don't matter. Perhaps I shouldn't be buying a technical TV journal. After all, I know nothing about TV, especially the latest trick of expanding the standard 4 x 3 Academy frame to spread it across the ghastly, illegitimate wide TV screen—now there's distortion for you to ponder over Pete! Just imagine the beautiful Ingrid Bergman with a face wider than the height! Ugh! The wide screen was only re-introduced (from the 20s) in desperation by the U.S. film producers, led by 20th Century-Fox, in the 1950s to try to fight back against television! I think I need to review my choice of reading matter. I could be in the wrong game!



**From Jim Pople, Olney:**

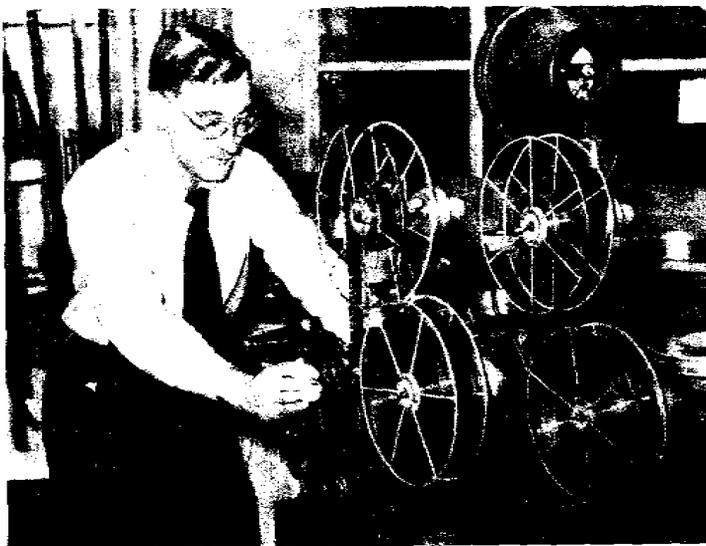
**WAR IN THE AIR**

Yes, I admit it—I was one of four film editors and cut five of the 15 films, being first to start (Film 1) and last to finish (Film 15). The "James" was when I was being serious!

We started work at the end of 1952 viewing and logging material. I went to Canada to look for RCAF and National Film Board material. I spent hours at the Imperial War Museum viewing hundreds of German newsreels including the, then never before seen, 6,000 feet of Belsen. I actually had nightmares afterwards. In all, over six million feet of film was viewed.

Transmission began in November 1954 and the press coverage was sensational. I have most of the yellowing cuttings including a weekly summary of the script published in the *Evening News* by Gerald Bowman.

The music was composed by Sir Arthur Bliss, Malcolm Arnold, Roberto Gerhard, William Alwyn, Antony Hopkins, Clifton Parker and John Veale. It was played by the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Muir Mathieson and recorded at Farringdon Road, London.



**Jim Pople edits the first film of *War in the Air* on a Moviola in a basement cutting room at Alexandra Palace**

I had a copy of Film 1, which was transferred to VHS for me before I retired and I think that Andrew Henderson has, perhaps been a little kind in his criticism. The cutting is probably a little bit slow by today's standards. However, I shall certainly purchase the complete set. The enclosed photo is of yours truly editing the first film in a basement cutting room at Alexandra Palace. We finished the series at Lime Grove (the other photo is for fun and was recently seen alive and well on a chimney in Stony Stratford).



**An H for Band I plus double-five toastrack for Band III mean this home in Stony Stratford is ready for any reintroduction of 405-line television!**

Sorry to read that you are to give up the editorship. Please don't change the format or make it more technical please. Personally I don't know the difference between LOPTs and flywheel sync but I was part of 405 from 1951 to 625 and after.

### **From Arthur Dugate, Hounslow:**

Following the closure earlier this year of the Museum of the Moving Image (MOMI) exhibition in London, due to the site going to be redeveloped, I was concerned by a rumour that shortly the National Film Theatre (NFT) was to close for the same reason. In the spring of 1957 I was present at the very last show in the original NFT (the former Telekinema of the 1951 Festival of Britain), and later, in the autumn of that year, at the very first show in the (then) new NFT under Waterloo Bridge. As I would like to be present at the very last show in the current NFT I wrote to the British Film Institute and a few days ago got this reply which I hope some might find of interest.

"To bring you up-to-date, there is no date on the horizon for the closure of the current NFT building. At some point in the future, if the appropriate funds are raised, a new NFT building will be incorporated into a new Film Centre building which will also house the National Library, MOMI and BFI headquarters.

"As you may expect, because plans are at such an early stage, we have not even begun to think about the closure of the current building, nor the event(s) which might be organised to mark the closure."



### **Obituaries**

Those of you who saw Señor Wences in a variety show at Missing Believed Wiped on 30<sup>th</sup> October will share my disappointment to read in the Winter 1999 issue of *Memory Lane* that Señor Wences, born Wenceslas Moreno, died recently aged 103 and retired only last year. he has a remarkable 85 years as a ventriloquist, occasionally popping up in Betty Grable films. What an amazing career.

Arthur Dugate passes on the sad news that Ray Bradley, who worked at Alexandra Palace in the 1950s and led a varied career in commercial television afterwards, passed away on 21st November 1999 at the age of 71.

## **The Black Brigand**

This follows up Eric Hadley's enquiry on p.15, issue 43. According to the latest edition of the Kaleidoscope **Children's Programmes Research Guide**, *The Black Brigand* was transmitted by the BBC between 10th June and 29th July 1956. There were eight episodes, none of which have survived.

Mike Preston

## **Another archive horror tale**

Ray Herbert sends in a cutting, dated Thursday, December 23, 1999 and probably from the *Daily Telegraph*, by Barry Fox. The title is *Indignity and damage for transferred newsreels*. Barry writes:

The newsreel companies, such as Gaumont, Universal and Paramount, captured history on film, from 1896. In 1957 their footage was bought by Visnews, owned by the BBC, Rank, Australian and Canadian Broadcasting Corporations. At least 20 million feet was on nitrate stock.

In 1975 Visnews moved to new offices in Park Royal, with no nitrate vaults. The British Film Institute took the nitrate, after Visnews had copied some of the most obviously valuable material on to 16mm acetate and the rest on to Quad 2-inch video. All the material was transferred at the sound film speed of 25fps, even when the original footage had been shot silent at 16-20fps. So the transfer made funeral marches look funny. The telecine machine was designed for sound film, with a small picture gate. This cropped hats, heads and captions. There was no agreement on phasing, the order in which the interlaced fields of each video frame scan a single frame of the movie sequence. When the tape was later transferred back to film there was a 50:50 chance that motion would smear because each film frame contained parts of two video frames. The awful effect came to light when Jonathan Lewis made *Before Hindsight*, a BFI-backed history of newsreels.

Some footage from the period 1944-52 was never transferred to Quad video. In the early Nineties, Reuters bought Visnews. A Reuter's spokesman now "hasn't a clue" what happened to the old Quad tape. ITN holds the archive and "thinks" the BFI still has the old nitrate film. Quad is now an obsolete format. ITN has no 2-inch tape; some Visnews material is on 16mm film, some on 1-inch video and some on Beta. No one can say what material has been lost for ever as a result of the Quad transfer.

## **Blumlein book**

Dicky Howett has discovered a number of inaccuracies in the book we reviewed in our last issue, particularly to do with the opening of the BBC's high-definition television service (p. 194). The author has invented a cameraman called 'Truck' and asserted that Baird used the electron camera for this occasion, whereas other records state that the intermediate film process was used. There appear to be other minor mistakes elsewhere in the book, although this should not detract from the author's main achievement.

Jeffrey Borinsky declares on the same subject: "Robert Alexander is to be congratulated on producing a long awaited and much overdue biography of Alan Blumlein. The story is compelling and generally well told.

"It might be construed as carping that so much space is given to the background of radar development with which Blumlein had no connection. There is also a certain amount of repetition of detail. My main criticism is the apparent lack of editorial input and the book has suffered badly here.

"Many writers are guilty of saying "*Institute of Electrical Engineers*" though the correct "*Institution of Electrical Engineers*" [italicise Institution please] is also to be found in the book. To make Emitron tubes from "Perspex glass" sounds like a difficult endeavour and the explanation of the long tail pair amplifier is strange indeed.

"These are a just a few examples of items that need attention if there is a second edition.

"Rather like buses, biographies of Blumlein seem to come in twos. It will be interesting to see Professor Burns' volume which should be available by the time you read this. Alas the £60 price tag of Burns's book will be a deterrent to most."

### **New books**

Ray Herbert advises that the second part of Albert Abramson's book is due for publication this coming autumn. Entitled **The History of Television, Part Two: 1942 to the Present**, it promises to take a global view of technical development right down to the year 2000. If it's as good as volume one it should be well worth waiting for.

**Collector's Guide to Vintage Televisions** by Bryan Durbal and Glenn Bubenheimer is a new identification and price guide published in the USA. In 176 pages it surveys 1,400 different vintage sets from 1945 to 1960 and transistor sets down to 1980. There are 200 colour photos and the price is \$15.95 plus postage. You can get it from ARC, Box 2, Carlisle, MA 01741, USA (phone 00 1 978 371 0512, fax 371 7129, e-mail [ARC@antiqueradio.com](mailto:ARC@antiqueradio.com), web [www.antiqueradio.com](http://www.antiqueradio.com)); credit cards are welcome.

### **New CDs**

Two new albums of test card music have been released by Apollo Sound. *Test Card Music Volume 4* and *Happy Hour—Classic Cocktail Music!* are both made up of 'library music' tracks of which some were chosen for BBC test card transmissions in the 1960s and 70s. Each CD costs £12.75 post-paid, from Apollo Sound, 32 Ellerdale Road, London, NW3 6BB. Cheques payable to Apollo Sound.

### **New websites**

Arthur Dungate has a superb tribute to BBC TV in the 1950s at <http://www.bbctv-ap.freereserve.co.uk>.

Dave Grant has an embryonic test card gallery at <http://freespace.virgin.net/test.card/gallery.html> (NB: no www in this address).

Steve Ostler has a fascinating website at [www.users.globalnet.co.uk/~vytek/](http://www.users.globalnet.co.uk/~vytek/) with a fair bit on it that will be of interest to 405 Alivers.

Steve Pendlebury writes:

No doubt many of you will know of my website, THE OLD TELLYS SITE. This can be reached through... <http://welcome.to/oldtellys> We now have the addition of The Old Tellys Forum, a message board for the use of all Vintage TV collectors and enthusiasts.

### **Another website for your delectation**

*Soundscapes* is an online journal on the history and social significance of media culture. "Our essays will inform you about radio programs, television series, popular music, styles of presentation and all that's related to the sounds and images of media culture," says the rubric. It's different from the usual run of the mill and you might well like it. Find out by looking at [www.icce.rug.nl/~soundscapes/](http://www.icce.rug.nl/~soundscapes/).

### **Museum quest**

Richard Davies, Curator of Modern and Contemporary Industry at the National Museum of Wales is looking to acquire television sets made in Wales.

He writes: "I am currently researching into companies that made televisions in Wales after World War Two. A number of well-known firms were based here, and I am hoping to acquire some examples of their products as part of the Department of Industry's efforts to collect a representative sample of material made in Wales after 1945. Do you know of any British dealers that sell televisions of this kind? I am enclosing a list of the manufacturers I am interested in, so that you have some idea of the material for which I am searching. Thank you very much for your help."

If you have material for sale, please write to him c/o Department of Industry, 126 Bute Street, Cardiff, CF1 6AE or ring 01222-454051 (e-mail: [industry@nmgw.ac.uk](mailto:industry@nmgw.ac.uk)).

Here is the list he mentions:

- E.M.I. Factories Limited c. 1952 - c. 1956. Based at Treorchy. Many trade names, but the television ones were probably "EMI" and possibly "Marconiphone" (televisions ceased to be made here by 1956).
- Masteradio Limited. Based at the Treforest Industrial Estate near Pontypridd. Operated from at least 1952 to c. 1961. Their brand name was "Masteradio". See also Radio and Allied entry.
- Murphy Radio Limited. Based at the Hirwaun Trading Estate near Aberdare. Operated from c. 1952 to c. 1961.
- Philips Electrical Limited. Operated c.1952 - c.1968. Based in Cardiff.

- Sobell. Again based at Hirwaun. Operated independently from at least 1952 to c. 1956. Their brand name was "Sobell". See also Radio and Allied entry.
- Radio and Allied (R & A). Took over Sobell by 1956 and continued to produce televisions with that brand name on the Hirwaun Estate up until at least 1961. By 1968 they also seem to have bought out Masteradio (and closed that company's Treforest plant), because they were producing items with the brand names "McMichael-Masteradio" and "GEC". Although it is not clear whether these were actually televisions or radios, the former may have been a television brand name. They had closed by 1975.

### **NVCF**

This spring's National Vintage Communications Fair will be held on Sunday April 30th 2000 at Hall 11, NEC, Birmingham, UK, from 10.30am to 4pm. Admission £5 (under-14s FREE). Early Entry (from c.8.30am) £15. Car parking charges apply. As seasoned visitors will know, this is an antique-type collectors fair specialising in early technology and featuring thousands of rare and collectable items such as early radios, television receivers, gramophones, telephones, classic valve hi-fi and all manner of electrical and mechanical antiques and collectables. Exhibiting and selling at the National Vintage Communications Fair is not just confined to full time professional dealers or societies. Ordinary collectors with surplus items to sell are just as welcome. Stalls (trestle tables) are provided at a cost of £40, or if you want to bring your own display stands, floor spaces are from £80. Details from Sunrise Press Spice House, 13 Belmont Road, Exeter, Devon EX1 2HF, UK.

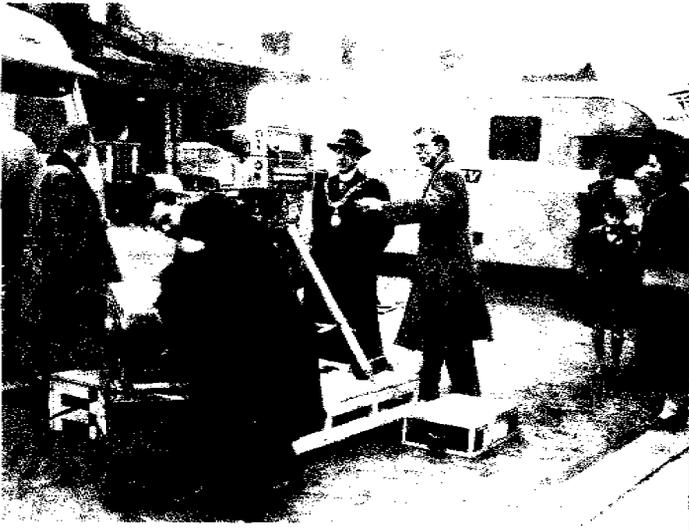
### **Blackpool show**

Vintage Technology 2000 is a new venture offering a fair for dealers, enthusiasts and collectors and devoted to old radios, TVs, gramophones, music machines telephones and scientific instruments. The date is Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> March and the venue the De Vere Hotel in Blackpool, located on the A587 road a few minutes from the sea front and not far from the M55 motorway via the A583. Further details from the organisers on 01253-300020, fax 01253-300100, e-mail [brian@blackpool.net](mailto:brian@blackpool.net). Doors open at 09.00.

### **Your last chance—the very, very last test card generators...**

Richard Russell writes: "The details of the last few Test Card Generators are on my website. The URL that takes you directly to the relevant page is <http://www.rtrussell.co.uk/products/tccgen/tccgen.html>. To recap, this unit produces an accurate replica of the famous Test Card C as it was broadcast by the BBC. The output is 625-line baseband video, although the image itself is based on the original 405-line version. A teletext page is included. The video output can connect to a TV with a SCART or phono video input, or can be fed via the video input of a standard VCR. The generator is contained within a black plastic case and comes complete with a 240 Volt AC mains adaptor, integrated into a '13 amp' plug with 2 metres of flex. The unit costs £100.00 plus VAT (£117.50 including VAT) but availability is strictly limited. Only a few of these units remain unsold, and it is unlikely that any more will be produced."

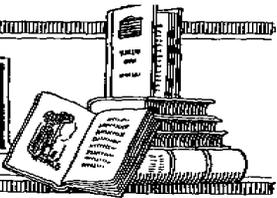
Note: you can order this product only over the Internet (there are literally just a handful left and they will go rapidly now this announcement has been made). Richard's product is the predecessor of Dave Grant's design and every bit as good.



**Mr. Mayor faces the newfangled television in Huddersfield 1956.**

***Dicky Howett writes:*** "The picture of a Granada Travelling Eye on location is from a charming picture book entitled 'Here We Were' written by Gordon Winter for the Granada Group on the occasion of their Golden Jubilee 1934-1984. This book was a chance secondhand find, and is, unfortunately no longer in print. The pictures in the book, including many tv shots I'd never seen before, cover the theatre, cinema, tv rental, motorway restaurant and television interests of Granada up to the year 1984. Fully half of the book is devoted to Granada television with many interesting shots of studios, cameras and OB units, plus stars of the period. It certainly pays to keep your travelling eyes open!"

# Books to Read



**VISIONS: THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF JOHN LOGIE BAIRD**, by Adrian Hills, University of Strathclyde.

CD-ROM disc for PC and Mac computers. Scottish Cultural Resources Network, 1999.

To say this disc had me spellbound would be an understatement: the presentation is masterly, the factual material superb and the amount of new material I have never seen "in print" before is stunning. We have the full story of Baird's association with television, his other technical activities and his personal life story. Each section is enriched with archive photos or short video clips, whilst for many names and subjects there are hyperlinks to more detailed explanations. The shadowy world of Baird's wartime activities and the fate of the Crystal Palace towers under Government requisition are covered in fascinating detail, as is airborne television experiments before and during World War II—and virtually all this material is previously unpublished.

The author, Adrian Hills (a student at the University of Strathclyde who is currently researching for a PhD on the "Military activities of John Logie Baird and his companies") has done a huge amount of primary research using original documents and interviews, which has of course uncovered this fascinating new material. His text is authoritative and objective, and by carefully avoided unnecessary point scoring he has given his work far more value than those who portray Baird as an underestimated genius and decry the work of all others.

In short this is a *tour de force* and I have no hesitation in awarding it eleven out of ten. No doubt some might argue this should have been written as a book but this is a good example of how multimedia presentation scores over printed paper for convenience of following a particular thread through a network of interwoven stories.

There is no commercial distribution arrangement for this masterly production but it has been agreed that 405 *Alive* readers can obtain a copy for personal use for a nominal sum. Readers can contact either Malcolm Lindsay of the Abacus unit at the University of Strathclyde (75 Montrose Street, Glasgow, G1 1XL) or from the Scottish Cultural Resources Access Network (SCRAN), who can be found on the web at [www.scran.ac.uk](http://www.scran.ac.uk)

**AUG. 30, 51**  
**Chance for  
British  
Television**

**SHOW MAY PROVE  
OUR SETS BEST**

**By J. STUBBS WALKER**

**B**BRITAIN'S biggest radio show, opened yesterday by Lord Mountbatten, is likely to be the least interesting of all shows since the war to foreign buyers.

The major interest is on television, and so far British manufacturers have had little opportunity to produce equipment for overseas sales.

While European countries experiment with television, few have so far decided to use the British system of 405 lines, although demonstrations prove the British system to give as good a commercial picture as is required.

Buyers from 70 countries arrived yesterday to place orders worth many hundreds of pounds. Almost all orders, however, were for the new high-grade radio receivers.

The reason foreign organisations are not yet buying British television in a big way is that there has been an international campaign to prove that the British transmission system of 405 lines is inferior to the American and Continental systems.

**THE PROOF**

But in "Television-avenue" at the exhibition, where every known British make of television set is demonstrated, visitors saw yesterday the proof of the British television argument—that our system can present a picture as good as is called for from a commercial point of view.

British television manufacturers have produced this year much improved receivers giving a quality which can easily be compared with the 819 lines of the French, or the 625 lines generally used in America.

"Foreign visitors who have watched television at the show today agree with us."



Cutting dated 30<sup>th</sup> August 1951 kindly submitted by Steve Harris of *On The Air*. Newspaper unknown.

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# DOWN AT STUDIO FIVE

*Dicky Howett discovers big is beautiful*

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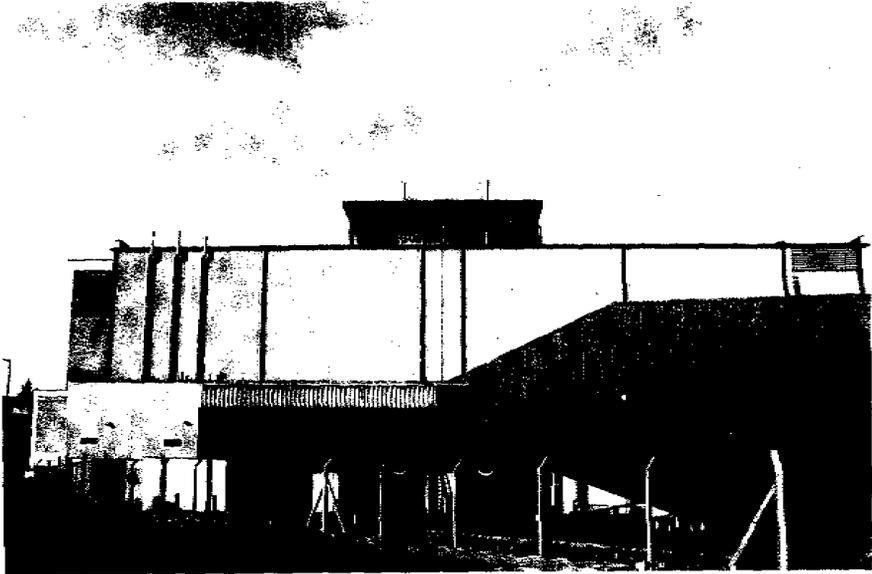
In the beginning there was Associated-Rediffusion. Then London Weekend Television, then Lee International, then Limehouse. Today it's Fountain Television. They are Britain's largest independent facilities operator, who now own the UK's largest television studio, known previously as 'Studio 5'

Fountain's Managing Director Julian Kossick explains, "In 1993, we at Fountain decided to expand. By acquiring the old Studio 5 site at Wembley we can now offer the largest and most modern tv studio facility anywhere in Britain."

That precisely was the thinking back in 1959 when the former London weekday ITV contractor Associated-Rediffusion (part-owned by The Daily Mail and Associated Newspapers, hence 'Associated') planned to expand its production base at Wembley Park. Previously, in 1934 Wembley Park was the home of the (20th Century) Fox film studio.



**Studio 5 today: what passers-by see...**



**...and a view of the Scene Dock.**

The most obvious problem for any proposed development was that the Fox lot was of an awkward triangular shape, wedged between Wembley Park Drive and Empire Way. Also the site was situated in a built-up area near Wembley Stadium. These factors severely constrained the Associated-Rediffusion architects. They had to devise a means of squeezing a brand-new studio facility into the existing lop-sided site.

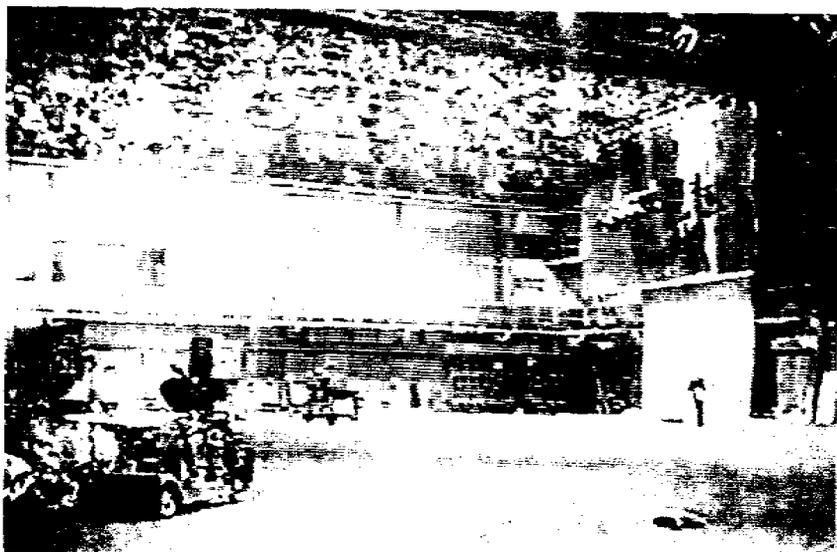
Historically, during the period from 1955, AR-TV had three studios at Wembley Park, all originally converted (in some haste) from film use. These were designated as studios 1, 2 and 4 (studio 3 became a telerecording suite). Dimensionally, Studio 1 was 80' x 55', working height 16'. Studio 2 was 80' x 41', working height 16' and Studio 4's dimensions were 74' x 42', working height 11'. Even by the standards of the day, the studio proportions were quite modest.

To add to the congestion, the Wembley site housed also all the ancillary apparatus of a busy studio; fuel stores, carpenter's and paint shops, scenery stores, workshops, a boiler house plus A-R's four Pye and Marconi o.b. units. Even trying to fully utilise their other three small studios at Television House in Kingsway, A-R was struggling constantly to feed a five day-a-week live programme schedule.

Undaunted, the A-R planners drew up an impressive scheme. They decided to go for broke and build the biggest tv studio ever constructed. Space was found on the Wembley site next to the three other studios. This was achieved by demolishing some old film vaults and adjacent redundant areas. When complete, the new studio was named (logically because it was the fifth studio on the lot), 'Studio 5'.

For a mere television studio, Studio 5 was truly enormous. It had a floor area of 14,000 sq ft, (100' x 140') big enough, as the gleeful A-R publicity put it, to simultaneously "contain a complete circus ring, a dance floor, a full-scale orchestra and an audience of 500"... That wasn't journalist hyperbole. In 1959 that could actually have happened. The period of the nineteen-fifties was still the time of mostly 'live' tv when actors and crew had to perambulate from scene to scene in scripted sequence and shoot the whole show in real-time with only a couple of short breaks for commercials. It wasn't uncommon to leave a visibly sweaty actor at the 'end of part one', and return to him in 'part two' freshly made-up and mysteriously sweat-free.

During the nineteen fifties as technical equipment became more sophisticated and reliable, productions were all the time becoming more elaborate and complicated. Old creaky film studios with wooden floors and tin roofs were frankly inadequate. The BBC was building at White City and Granada had its own new studios in Manchester. Other ITV companies weren't faring so well, relying mostly on converted theatres or cinemas. What was required urgently were modern television studios with proper ventilation, lighting rigs, good acoustics, convenient technical areas and lots of floor space. By conceiving 'Studio 5', the tv studio designers attempted here more than just producing a



**Off-screen shot from an AR-TV promotional film, 1960**

spacious box, they also incorporated a special design feature that was unique.

Prior to the opening of 'Studio 5', Associated-Rediffusion aired a short film purporting to show a live scene from the popular police series *No Hiding Place*. The film showed Inspector Lockhart sitting in his office. As the 'programme' ends, the camera pulls back to reveal a scene of utter clutter. Cameras, dollies, cables, mics, lights, scenery, all artfully bunched so that the actors have to climb over things in order to escape the set. As he leaves, 'Inspector Lockhart' expresses to a fellow actor his delight at the prospect of working in the more salubrious and spacious surroundings of the new 'Studio 5' We, the viewer heartily agree.

Concurrent press advertisements showed a photograph of a darkened Studio 5 with a long line of cameras, lights, and mic booms, complete with a Guardsmen in the foreground. This publicity picture was shot cleverly from a low angle giving the impression of a tv studio with good height and almost infinite technical length. As indeed it had.

When Studio 5 was opened in 1960 the real ingenuity of the place was at last revealed. It transpired that Studio 5 was not one but *two* studios. A double studio that, by simply lowering a central acoustic wall, could be converted quickly into two separate production areas. With the wall in place, Studio 5 then became Studio 5a and 5b, each of 6,700 sq ft. with a height of 40ft. Both studios had also their own cameras plus full production, vision, sound and lighting control galleries.

Studio 5 was described in June of 1960 thus by *The Wireless and Electrical Trader*. Headlined,

### 'A-R OPENS WORLD'S LARGEST TV STUDIO'

the magazine continued, "One of the most important features of the studio is the dual partition wall, which is of lattice girder construction with external bracing on the cavity side. The acoustic slabs consist of two mild steel sheets 4in. apart with 3in. rock wool filling, one sheet is suspended free and connected to the main frame at the edges only. The two partitions, when lowered are designed to provide an acoustic separation of 60db over the range of 50c/s to 4.5kc/s. The lifting and lowering of the doors, which weigh 25 tons each, is done by four specially designed units consisting of an electric motor coupled through a reduction gear to a wire rope drum from which the door is suspended. The doors take about 30 minutes to raise or lower. The control rooms which are big enough to carry any extra apparatus required for colour transmissions are built along the northern side of the studio with the vision, sound and lighting control rooms at 12ft level and the camera control rooms, make-up and service rooms at ground floor level. The entire studio is being equipped with eight new EMI 203 4½in. image orthicon cameras and the vision system can be operated on 405, 525 and 625-line frequency. Each vision control room will have fourteen 21in. picture monitors to allow the monitoring of ten sources, in addition to transmission, off-air and two previews....."

On the evening of 9<sup>th</sup> June 1960 Studio 5's inaugural live programme was a lumbering and dated concoction entitled *An Arabian Night* and narrated by Orson Welles. The programme was designed to exploit fully the entire studio space with lots of Arab 'extras' and camels wandering between tents, market squares and bits of reproduction Sahara Desert. There was lots of high sweeping camera movements and tracking shots, plus 'Arab' dancing girls and snazzy 'Kismet' recreations. With music welling and lights flickering, the programme slogged on. The only thing that night to click was the sound of the viewer switching off.

Of course the *real* value of Studio 5 was not in attempting to reproduce sub-Hollywood epics—which never amounted to much on the small monochrome home screen anyway—but rather the sheer flexibility which the studio offered. For example, on one day a modest discussion programme could be mounted, the next, a big variety production like *Hippodrome*, which was a circus-style popular audience show utilising the entire double studio floor area. *Hippodrome*, a mid-1960s show, was shot in black and white on 405 lines and simultaneously in colour on 525 lines for the American network CBS. This production meant double the amount of studio technical kit, some of it enormous. For example the Marconi three-tube image orthicon colour 'coffin' cameras hired from Intertel for the occasion were twice the size of the monochrome EMI 203 cameras, and the lighting—typically 120 foot-candles—had to be raised for colour to at least 700 foot-candles. But all that posed little problem for Studio 5. The studio was designed for it, although it was touch and go on some shows where the air conditioning temperature and power requirements were near the limit.

In 1968, Rediffusion (as it was then named), lost its franchise. Subsequently, the company merged with ABCtv (the leading partner) to form a new London weekday channel called Thames Television. Production moved to the three former ABCtv studios at Teddington. Studio Five itself was leased for a few years to newcomer London Weekend Television. LWT used the studio successfully until their own South Bank Upper Ground site was complete. Some of the early LWT series such as *Upstairs, Downstairs* and *On the Buses* were produced at Studio 5.

In 1978, after many years empty, Lee International bought Studio Five plus the other three Wembley studios. During Lee's time, several feature films emanated including Terry Gilliam's *Brazil* and John Lynch's *The Elephant Man*. After Lees vacated, in 1989 Limehouse Productions (on the move from Canary Wharf) bought Studio Five and decided to demolish the remaining original 3-studio block. The plan was to develop the site as a new production area along side Studio 5. The old studios were duly razed but the scheme foundered and nothing further was built. Trillion, owners of Limehouse crashed and once again Studio Five became empty, left standing next to an historically uninteresting 'Wembley Events' overspill car park.

Fortunately in 1993 Fountain Television came to the rescue and the Company instigated some long-overdue studio refurbishment. Fountain found the main structure of the studio sound. Internally, it was a different matter.



the restaurant facilities and general access."

These days Studio 5 (now referred to as the Fountain Television Wembley Studios) is host to such shows as *Rory Bremner*, plus others. Recently a corporate video was made for American phone company AT&T. The single large studio can still be converted using the original central acoustic wall and lifting equipment, but these days the two studios are called simply 'A' and 'B'. Julian Kossick adds, "We're not a 'four-wall' outfit or film studio with a big shed calling itself a tv studio. We can offer our clients on-site expertise, full facilities with state of the art pictures and sound, fed live if needs be via our fibre link to the BT Tower. Picture and sound quality is rigidly maintained by our in-house technical staff. We consider our nearest competitors are The London Studios (LWT) on the South Bank".

Back in 1972 the empty Studio 5 was in real danger of demolition. The story goes that a supermarket was planned to occupy the site. If that had happened it's conceivable that by now the supermarket might itself have been demolished leaving a suspicious hole in Wembley. Luckily, Studio 5 survives. Whatever it's name in the future, its past is secure. Studio 5 was originally the largest and most modern tv studio in the world. Technologically, the 38 year-old studio is still in the forefront. Indisputably it remains the largest single television studio anywhere in Britain.

## **"MOST UP-TO -DATE" TV STUDIOS FOR A-R Wembley Film Studios Converted**

WORK on what is described as the most up-to-date television studio centre in the world is now nearing completion at Wembley, where Associated-Rediffusion, Ltd., the London week-day programme contractors, are setting up their permanent studios on a site of nearly 24 acres. The centre will consist of five studios, with a master control system designed specifically for commercial television and unique in this country. Among the highlights of the new centre are, for the first time: full remote control of all telecine facilities, comprehensive lighting control panels that can be operated single-handed, permanent viewing galleries overlooking the studios for visitors, and special equipment for achieving artistic effects of the "inlay" and "overlay" type and for the quick display of captions and slides.

### **Eight Input Channels**

Marconi Mark III cameras using 4½in. pick-up tubes are being used for studio operation and similar cameras with 3in. pick-up tubes will be used for O.B. work. This type of camera, which has recently been supplied in large quantities to the B.B.C., has proved eminently successful and Associated-Rediffusion have about twenty-one cameras in use. The master control equipment provides for the simultaneous switching of sound and vision from eight input channels to two transmission channels, with adequate previewing facilities.

Plans for the conversion of the Wembley film studios into the new television centre were begun in the early part of December, 1954. Central Rediffusion Services, Ltd., who are the engineering consultants to Associated-Rediffusion, are responsible for the

new television centre as a whole, while the design of the technical areas and the supply and installation of the vision and sound equipment has been carried out by Marconi's Wireless Telegraph Co., Ltd. The architects are Messrs. Kenchington & Farms, who were also responsible for the original film studios.



*This is a general view of one of the studios in the Associated-Rediffusion television centre at Wembley. Some of the banks of fluorescent tubes can be seen that are used in order to reduce the load on the air conditioning plant.*

The work, which includes the installation of close on twenty miles of sound, vision and control cables, has been completed in record time, quicker by half than any other comparable scheme in the world. In January of this year the studios were in use by the film industry and shooting was still in progress on the film "The Ship that Died of Shame."

*Wireless & Electrical Trader, 24<sup>th</sup> September 1955*



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# THE MULTILINGUAL DUTCH

## Or, how Pye fared under Philips

*Harold Peters*

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Because Philips took control of Pye shares in a roundabout way, the City made them undertake to allow Pye to continue to ply its own product for a decade. On the tenth year, predictably, our own design lab was run down and we, and Philips Croydon together, made the very successful Croydon-designed G11 chassis. It soon became clear that future designs would come from Europe, and beginning with the KT3 chassis an increasing number of Dutch engineers and production administrators were seen around our committee tables.

Normally this would not affect Production Engineers such as me but since I could type and had holidayed in the Netherlands I got the job of librarian to sort out the influx of multilingual bumph which began to arrive by the bundle.

The official language of Philips was English, no doubt stemming from the way that the whole concern took refuge in Mitcham Works during the war. It was a curious English with a limited vocabulary. You can make yourself understood with a vocabulary of only 5,000 words (Simenon did it with his *Maigret* novels, which is why they are so easy to read in French).

The main effect was to describe anything involved or misshapen as a 'Block', and tempted us to use as involved an English structure in our correspondence as we could. My own favourite, the ablative absolute 'this having been done...' foxed them no end over the other side. It also meant that at meetings here the business would be conducted in English, but to our annoyance the Dutch present would iron out any complexities in their own language until, that is, coffee came round. The secretary would take the other side of the table and I would pass the cups round on the side containing our visitors, asking them 'Met of zonder suiker?' (with or without sugar?). Without thinking, they would say 'Twee graag' (two please) and you could feel the double-take as you passed two chairs further down the table but from then on everyone spoke English all the time.



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# GOLDEN BLOOMERS

*Dicky Howett dips into his memory*

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In issue 43 of the inestimable *405 Alive*, Andy Henderson recalls some grumpy tv presenters. Continuing the theme of broadcasting *faux pas*, cast your minds back to a 1960s BBC2 programme called *News Day*. Robin Day presented it from Television Centre and, as was usual during the programme, handed over at 7.30pm to the BBC2 newsroom at Alexandra Palace for a short bulletin. On this occasion, the late newsreader Peter Woods was presiding. Unfortunately, as I witnessed at home, having just switched on, Peter Woods gave every indication of being drunk. He stumbled through the bulletin, missing film cues and slurring facts, names and details. The bulletin was faded out after a minute. Robin Day announced that there was a 'technical problem' at Alexandra Palace. The following day, press reports stated that the BBC affirmed that Peter Woods was suffering from 'an allergic reaction to antibiotics' due to illness which caused his apparent speech impediment. Drunkenness was pooh-poohed.

However four significant points were missing from the various news-spins. Point one was that immediately Peter Woods was faded, the AP News library which routinely records all BBC TV News programmes was instructed to erase the recording. It was obvious that something was amiss with poor old Peter, and a quick-thinking BBC manager had thoughtfully considered that the less evidence the better. Unfortunately, a few years later an audio copy surfaced and was broadcast during one of his radio shows by a scurrilous Kenny Everett.

Point two; The BBC provides some very nice on-premises staff drinking Clubs. The Alexandra Palace News Club was extremely convivial and well-frequented. As I can attest, most members of staff imbibed. It was, therefore, not unusual to see news reporters and readers down a pint and rush up to the first-floor news studio, sometimes with seconds to spare.

So point three explains why nobody in the control gallery noticed any unusual behaviour from Peter Woods. News readers of his calibre would not need rehearsals, especially for a mere two minute bulletin. They habitually rolled into the studio at the last minute, glanced at the script, and with years of practice behind them, could sight-read faultlessly the autocue.

Point four was that Peter Woods had, at the time met with a catastrophe. Members of his immediate family had recently been killed in a road accident, and although this wouldn't necessarily excuse unprofessional behaviour, it would have been understandable for a man so stricken, to fall foul of melancholia.

On a slightly brighter note, the BBC *World At One* presenter Nick Clarke, a man demonstrably intimate with the sayings of Dr Spooner, once announced a news item about a sinking passenger ship as being 'another tragedy involving a cross flannel cherry'.

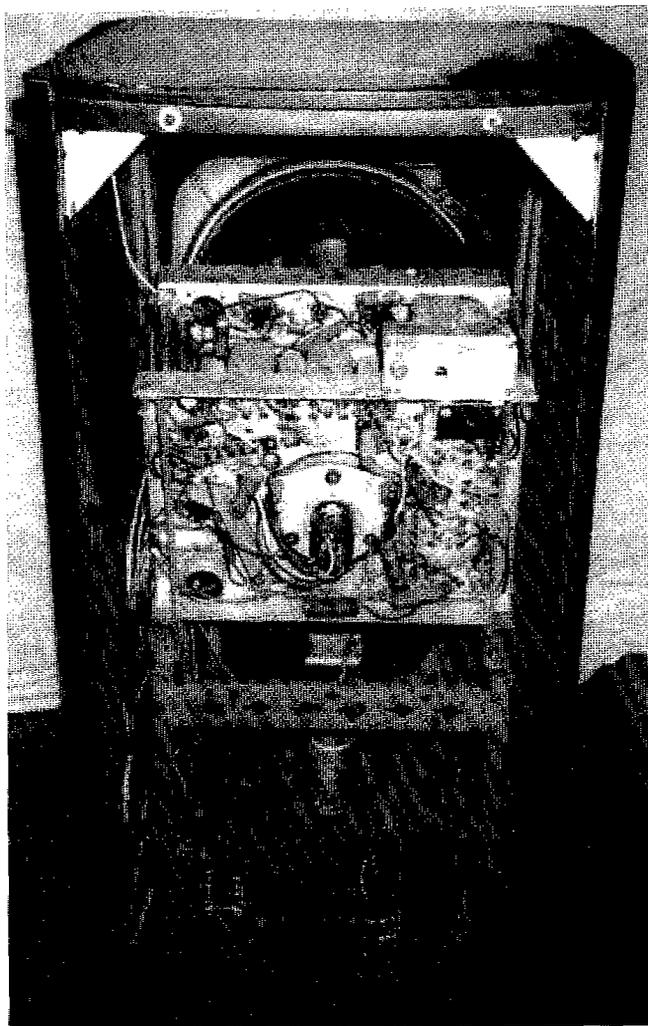
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## Readers' Telly Gallery

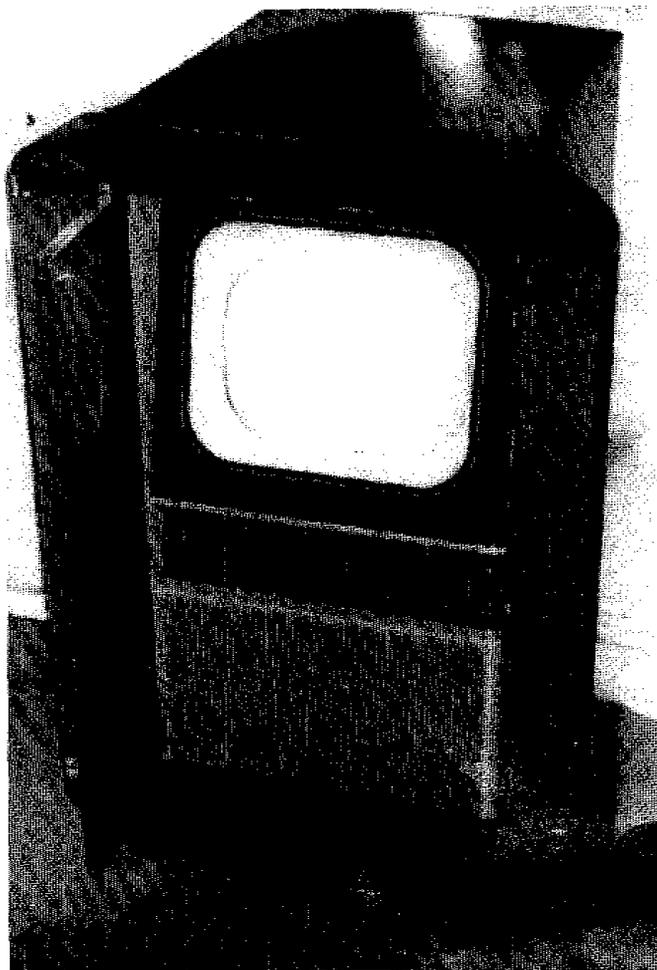
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### Murphy 178c

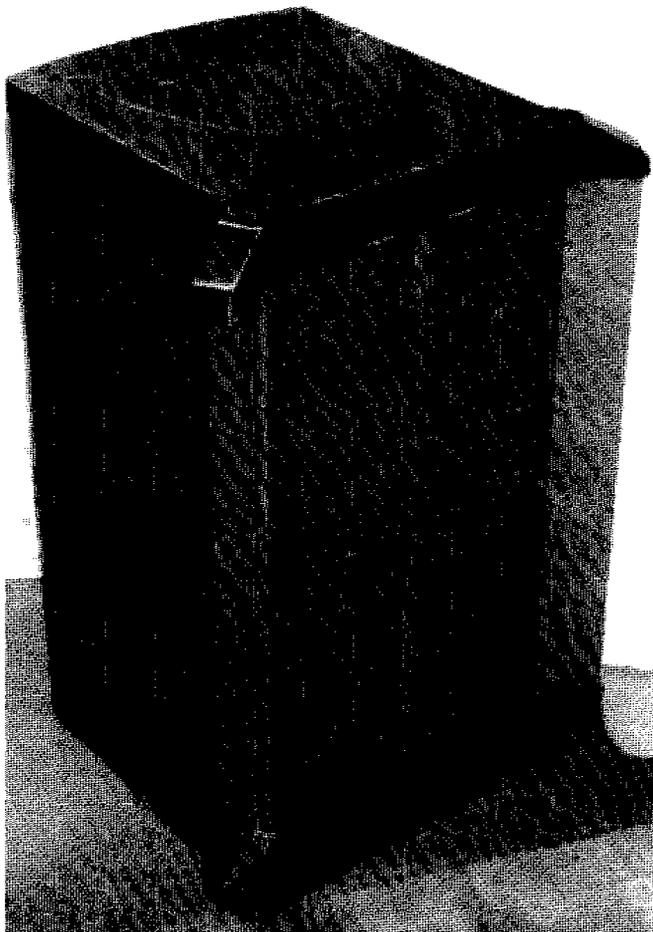
George Windsor writes: I have re-scanned my Murphy 178c and included some pictures. Maybe you could feature it in *405 Alive*?



Rear 'no holds barred' view. Shame about the rust but it can be cured.

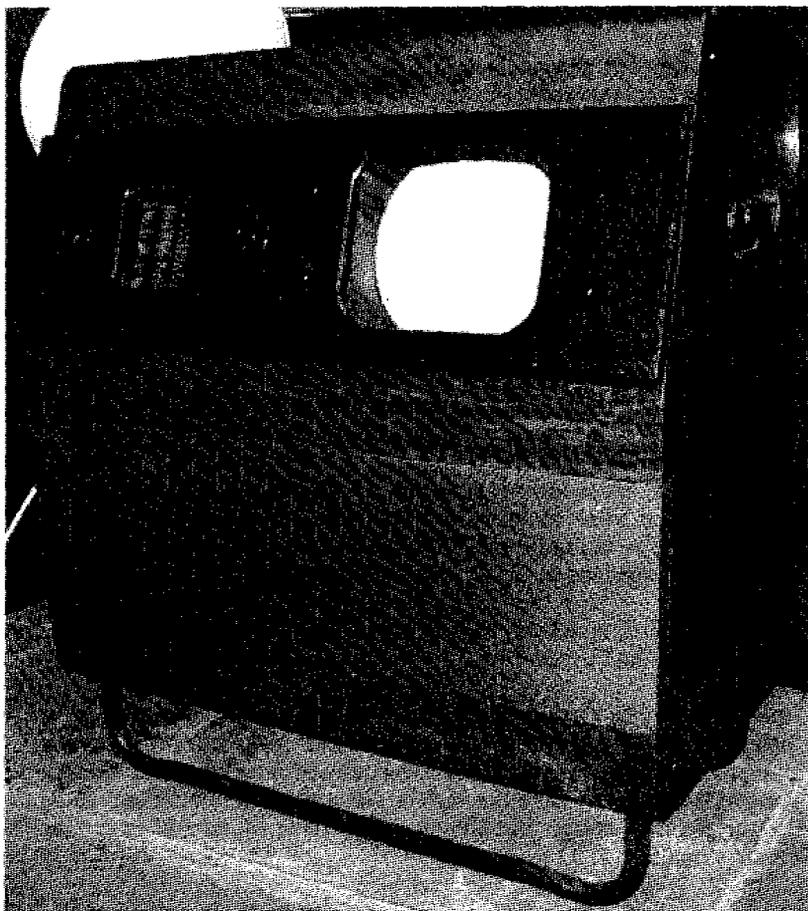


Now that looks better—and just look at the user-friendly control set... three big knobs, that's all, not a hand-held zapper with more buttons than a calculator! The inlaid wood and contrasting coloured veneers look magnificent and Topps' scratch polish will make those tiny scratches disappear rapidly.



Many people 'have it in' for console sets, claiming they 'take up too much room'. It's a fallacy, as this photo shows; a console telly doesn't have a large 'footprint', neither does it need a table for displaying it. Think about it! Incidentally, this all-too-candid photo shows a large number of scratches on the cabinet. You can either 'lose' these with Topps' Scratch Cover polish or have the cabinet refinished. I chose the latter solution for one of my sets and took it to a cabinet restorer that I found in the local Yellow Pages directory. He did a marvellous job, skimming down the old surface and laying down a new one, for under £50. In my view it really was well worth the cost. Alternatively you could try doing the job yourself, as described in my book **Electronic Classics**, but I wouldn't recommend using a prize telly as your first practice piece!

## Murphy A58V



Here is Ian Watson's 'new' 1938 Murphy A58V; every home should have one! An article telling us a bit more about it would be welcome. What about sending us *your* photos? Tell us about your treasure—how you discovered it, what you had to do to obtain it and how you restored it.

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# Buffing up the Bakelite

*Andy Emmerson*

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Yours truly recently paid a visit to an antique centre, where a trader I know has a superb array of glossy black Bakelite telephones. Keeping the shine on Bakelite is a subject that exercises the minds of many collectors and we started to discuss the best way of keeping Bakelite objects shiny without colour fading.

It transpires that Bakelite deteriorates easily, especially in sunlight so the best ways of keeping the gloss are (a) keep the object out of sunlight and (b) protect the surface layer (the resin that gives the gloss) by applying a coat of hard beeswax polish. Beeswax responds well to polishing with a duster. Silicone polishes leave a very slippery surface, so slippery in fact that you might drop your treasure when picking it up!

Afterwards I asked a friend who's an expert in chemistry what he could add and he told me the following:

Bakelite is a cross-linked polymer of phenol and formaldehyde. Neglecting the filler material for the moment, a Bakelite object is actually just one big molecule. There are no polymer chain ends to be attacked so the material is quite resistant to all solvents. But unfortunately, getting the exact proportions of the materials right is difficult. The formaldehyde boils off at lower temperatures and can be absorbed into the filler easily.

Once Bakelite has started to deteriorate you will notice a roughness of the surface, where the top layer of phenolic resin has been rubbed away, exposing the coarser filler material (wood flour or asbestos dust). These waxes tend to fill in the surface pits and micro-cracks and make the surface look better. But they can only slow the breakdown; they cannot stop it.

You can try and flatten this rough surface to make it smooth again; sometimes you'll be lucky. The recommended product is automobile rubbing compound, which you can buy at car accessory shops (retail) or motor factors (trade). It's a paste the consistency of warm butter, smelling of ammonia and tan or ochre in colour. Rub heavily with a hard cloth, then remove the residue with a clean cloth and buff with a duster. It's certainly effective, although you'll have to rub long and hard to disguise badly pitted surfaces.

Buffing with an extremely fine abrasive can sometimes help bring back a shine. I like to use what is called "automobile rubbing compound". This is diatomaceous earth or fumed silica in a solvent and wax base. It is similar to jeweller's rouge in that it is extremely fine and not exceptionally hard [the diatomaceous earth is similar to the White Cliffs of Dover, a calcium carbonate material, harder than talc. The

fumed silica, however, is quite hard. Go for the softer abrasive with Bakelite.] A buffing wheel will speed things up but watch out for the polishing to go too deep.

You may find the Bakelite has faded badly; your options are to dye or paint. Shoe polish of the appropriate colour can be quite effective to fill the minute pits; let it harden for ten minutes, then wipe off the remainder with a kitchen paper towel and buff with a duster.

For black Bakelite there are two other automotive products you can try, with confusingly similar names—Back-to-Black and Black Bright. The former comes in an aerosol spray can and is a clear silicone varnish intended for rejuvenating black vinyl trim on cars, although being clear, it will work on other coloured surfaces as well. Black Bright is an intensely deep black (mauve-blue-black in fact) dye or liquid pigment that you 'paint' on with a felt applicator. Because Bakelite is non-porous, it takes a while to dry (leave it for an couple of hours, then dry off the surplus with a paper towel); for a consistent finish you really do need to cover all surfaces of the object in order to make all the parts match. This finish benefits from a coat of polish afterwards and do take great care not to get any of the dye on your skin or clothes; it's extremely permanent!

Shoe polish, mentioned earlier, is not a perfect solution; it's basically wax and pigment. The dyes do not work on Bakelite, as their solvent cannot swell the Bakelite for them to penetrate. Even though the surface may now be roughened, the Bakelite is still chemically resistant.

I have sometimes found that repainting was a last resort. Unfortunately paint does not stick well to the Bakelite. You will have to roughen up the surface first to get mechanical adhesion. This is also where you do not want any silicones present so if you use silicone waxes, forget about painting. If you use a slow-drying paint like epoxy, you can often get a good finish over fairly deep scratches. This is good, as the deeper scratches will make the paint adhere more. Lacquer coatings tend to be thinner and dry fast, so the Bakelite cannot be roughened up as much. They have the advantage that a soak in solvent will remove them and allow you to repaint easily. Like everything we do in restoration, some experimentation is necessary to get things like we want.

Since Bakelite is pretty inert, silicone wax can be cleaned off by soaking in dilute sodium hydroxide (lye) for a few hours (note that the hydroxide will attack metals such as aluminium). This will roughen the surface somewhat, but normally cleaning off silicone is preparation for painting anyway. A silicone wax on phenolic will last longer than any other wax and give the best protection. I hesitate to suggest this to too many people since if you do get it on other surfaces (such as a painted panel) it is very difficult to remove. One additional thing about repainting is that if the Bakelite has a fabric or cellulose filler, the paint will seal this, keeping moisture out and allowing you to retain the finish

longer. I hope this helped a little. Unfortunately there are no easy fixes (and few not-so-easy ones either).

Another helpful comment I got was:

I just want to add one little bit about surface preparation before painting. As the surface of even reasonably well preserved Bakelite contains deteriorated phenol, washing with a strong cleaner will wash away the deteriorated phenol leaving a roughened surface. That is the first step to getting the mechanical adhesion you need. Depending on how rough the surface is before painting, one or more coats of paint or clear coating (like polyurethane) will fill the opened pores and some rubbing down between coats will restore a smooth finish. If using a rubbing compound before applying a clear coat be aware that all of the rubbing compound may not wash out of the pores leaving a speckled appearance. It's better to varnish first and then polish the varnish. A swirled pattern Bakelite cabinet will thank you.

Fired with enthusiasm, I bought some rubbing compound to see what it could do on my own treasures. In a nutshell, it's rather like T-Cut, with the same ammonia smell, but with a much thicker consistency. You rub on this paste with a damp cloth, then remove the residue with a dry cloth. It's certainly effective, although you'll have to rub long and hard to disguise badly pitted surfaces.

There must be other secret remedies for putting the gloss back into Bakelite, so if you have one, please share it with us!

**And now a serious word from our sponsor!**

## **Before you lift the phone...**

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Your kind co-operation will make it much easier for us to produce your favourite magazine on time with remarkably slender resources. **Many, many thanks!**

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# Comedy Greats

## TONY HANCOCK

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### Hancock's Half Hour

Cat. number: BBCV 6797

Price: £12.99

Running time: 126 mins. approx.

Released: 7<sup>th</sup> June 1999

Regarded by many as the King of Comedy, BBC Worldwide celebrates the life and work of one of the true greats with over 126 minutes of classic Hancock from BBC's *Hancock's Half Hour*.

Born on 12th May 1924 in Bournemouth, TONY HANCOCK reached his legendary status when he began his association with the writing partnership of RAY GALTON and ALAN SIMPSON with the first radio series of *Hancock's Half Hour* in 1954. Hugely popular, the radio series ran until 1959 by which time Hancock had perfected his character of the doleful Anthony Aloysius St John Hancock, the veritable loser.

In 1956, the original radio series was transferred to the small screen running for three classic series until 1961. An immediate success, the series became the definitive in classic situation comedy of which all subsequent British sitcoms were measured.

This 126-minute video presentation features some of the best loved episodes taken from the 1961 season, including *The Blood Donor*, *The Radio Ham*, *The Lift*, *The Bedsitter* and *The Bowmans*—their final collaboration for the BBC. Still hugely enjoyable, the programmes have subsequently entered in the annals of television history as some of the greatest moments in our cultural life.



## TONY HANCOCK FACT SHEET

1. Tony Hancock was born in Birmingham on May 12th 1924. At the age of three, Tony and his family moved to Bournemouth. Here he grew up. Tony's father Jack, who was an entertainer, managed a hotel and many music-hall stars stayed there. This introduced Tony to the atmosphere of Variety.

2. At the age of 17, he secured an engagement at a Catholic Church hall where he regaled the audience with a series of blue jokes. The audience walked out. The vicar voiced his disgust and Tony vowed never to tell another dirty joke.

3. In the 1940s he toured with Ralph Reader's Gang Show working with Graham Stark and Peter Sellers.

4. In 1948, Tony did a stint at the famous Windmill with pianist Derek Scott. On the same bill was Harry Worth and a young Morecambe and Wise. He also played at other London and provincial theatres in the fifties, including successful shows with Jimmy Edwards.

5. *Hancock's Half-Hour* started on radio in 1954 and went on until December 1959. There were six series scripted by Ray Galton and Alan Simpson. In all they did 103 episodes of high-class radio comedy. In 1998 as part of the Radio Times 75th anniversary, *Hancock's Half-Hour* was voted by the readers as Best Radio Comedy of all time. Despite it being 39 years since it finished, the series is well remembered for many classic shows like 'Sunday Afternoon at Home' and 'Wild Man of the Woods'.

6. The only member of the radio team to appear in every episode of *Hancock's Half-Hour* was Sid James. This was because Hancock went missing for three episodes of his own show at the start of Series 2. Harry Secombe replaced him.

7. In 1956, Ray Galton and Alan Simpson commenced writing for TV as well as radio and for three years *Hancock's Half-Hour* appeared on both. They wrote 63 television shows culminating in 1961 with the last six shows entitled just *Hancock*. It was these that included *The Lift*, *The Radio Ham*, *The Blood Donor* and *The Bowmans*—a pastiche of *The Archers*. These are probably the best remembered television episodes.

8. Before filming the *Blood Donor*, Tony Hancock was involved in a car accident. He was unable to rehearse for the show or learn his lines. The producer Duncan Wood put up large prompt boards from which Tony read his lines. Although regarded as probably his most famous show, due to the accident and the use of teleprompts meant that Tony did not put in one of his better performances!

9. At the peak of his television career, in 1961, Tony Hancock attracted twenty million viewers to his shows, and when broadcast they made the streets empty for half an hour. Publicans and the fish and chip trade complained of a loss of business when Hancock was on TV.

10. From 1952 to 1962 Tony Hancock became one of the highest paid stars in the country. He was voted Best Comedian of the Year in 1957 and 1959.
11. Tony Hancock appeared as a star in two films, *The Rebel* (1960) and *The Punch and Judy Man* (1962). He also appeared in three other films, including playing Harry Popperwell in *Those Magnificent Men in Their Flying Machines* in 1965.
12. Tony's decline is well documented. From 1962 until his death in Australia in 1968, he spiralled downwards from the heights of the previous ten years. Use of teleprompts did not help his television appearances, nor choice of comedy vehicles. He drank heavily to the extent he became an alcoholic. This resulted in the disintegration of his two marriages.
13. Tony's great wish was to break into America, but like many other British comedians before him he failed. However, he was extremely popular in Canada, New Zealand and Australia, where continual re-runs of *Hancock's Half-Hour*, both radio and TV shows kept him in public esteem.
14. The final trip to Australia in 1968 was to re-launch himself in a new colour TV series aimed at the international market. However his alcoholism and the break-up of his second marriage led to his death on June 25<sup>th</sup> at the home of his producer. His suicide note read, 'Things seem to go wrong too many times'. World newspapers announced his death on the front pages as 'Hancock Dead!'
15. Despite Hancock's lack of fame in America he became a household name round the globe. He remains one of the few international comedians who is recognised purely by his surname. Others include Chaplin, Hope and Laurel and Hardy
16. In 1976 the Tony Hancock Appreciation Society was formed to commemorate his life and works. It became a large Society of over 1000 members with extensive libraries of his recorded shows. The BBC has had to borrow some of these from the Society because it had lost it's own copies of them.
17. The Tony Hancock Appreciation Society includes as honorary members many of the scriptwriters and stars who wrote for or played with Tony. It has regular conventions with guests appearing to reminisce about their experiences of working with 'The Lad' from East Cheam.
18. There have been many documentaries and plays about the life of Tony Hancock and he still captures the public imagination. His classic comedy gets both young and old laughing. Many of the new comedians of today quote Hancock as one of their influences.

19. The BBC has issued several volumes of *Hancock's Half-Hour* in their Radio Collection and many of the classic TV shows are available on video. Even more are available from the Society archives.

20. For further information about Tony Hancock or the Society. Contact Bernard Holland, 46, Queens Road, Hazel Grove, Stockport SK7 4 HZ (0161-612-7476).



**Canned television from the good old days when ITV *was* ITV. 'Tree planting in Kent' is the title. Unfortunately the precious historic newsfilm is missing, presumed felled. Dicky Howett however has saved the snazzy label for posterity and the delectation of *405 Alive* readers.**

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# WHERE THERE'S SMOKE—Part I

*Bernard Wilkie*

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In the days before smoke guns could be bought or hired Jack Kine and Bernard Wilkie, the BBC's first visual effects designers, decided to make their own. This is part of the story and tells of the day they tested it.

However, it hadn't yet been tested and this morning we were going to give it its trial run. Opinion has it that 'the better the day, the better the deed' and this day was perfect: a cloudless blue sky and a wind that was no more than a gentle zephyr.

Smoke generators and guns all work on a common principle—oil is heated to a temperature at which it turns into smoke (just like a chip pan before it bursts into flames!). This is achieved by forcing it through a heated coiled tube from which it emerges as a dense white cloud.

If this sounds simple, it isn't. A design for a smoke gun must be far more sophisticated than that. Get it wrong and the pressurised oil does not become smoke at all but is squirted out at a searing temperature well above that of boiling water. Actors have been seen to leap into the air screaming as a malfunctioning smoke gun catches their ankles. Worse still is the other condition where the smoke gets too hot and ignites spontaneously on leaving the nozzle turning the gun into a lethal flame thrower.

There is another factor to be considered when using a smoke gun in a studio, which is the fact that everyone involved will have to breathe. It might be feasible to record the opening scene of *Macbeth* with the witches wearing respirators but the nuances of the storyline might be lost.

To heat the metal coil in a smoke gun it is possible to adapt parts of a small camping gas cooker or, alternatively, to use an electric element. We chose the latter although this meant that the gun could only be used while attached to a mains cable. We took our heater from a heavy duty soldering iron. The oil container pressurised from a little hand pump was a brand new brass insecticide sprayer bought from the 'oil shop' in Shepherd's Bush ('oil shops' were the forerunners of 'hardware stores'). For some reason we decided to fix a thermostat to the heater—probably because we saw it as a talisman to ward off conflagration.

We stubbed out our cigarettes, gathered up the box of tools, oil, funnel, rag, extension lead and the smoke gun ...and climbed the iron staircase to the flat roof above. Our polishing and buffing had paid off and the smoke gun, gleaming in the bright sunshine, looked magnificent. Why we were so intent on making it look good I really don't know; there is a North Country saying

which refers to someone having 'everything in the front window and no food in the larder' that could have applied to us.

What would happen when we pressed the lever? Would we have a flame thrower or would we produce a jet of boiling oil? Seeing the blue haze that hung over the nozzle Jack picked up the gun, pointed it well away from the pair of us and pressed the lever.

It was incredible! No scorching flame, no boiling oil—just a great cloud of white smoke. We could scarcely believe our eyes. I yelled to Jack to keep it going—this was a momentous occasion and I wanted the whole world to see it.

As the smoke grew in volume it drifted gently away from us and collected in the corner of the right-angled block of offices on the top-floor. It was fantastic—one of the greatest sights we had ever seen.

The sounds of windows being slammed shut told us that not everyone shared our enthusiasm for smoke. Fair enough, you can't please everybody, but what we didn't know was that behind those windows a meeting was in progress and that the heads of all sections (including our own) had assembled in the conference room to discuss a most important matter. They had dined well and were now lolling back in their chairs listening to the third speaker of the afternoon. It was warm in that room and the windows had been fully opened—which allowed our smoke to enter unmolested. At first no-one seemed to know what was happening. The sky had darkened and a grey mist was coming indoors...

The speaker, who considered he had a firm grasp of his subject paused, wavered and stopped; everyone looked at everyone else. Two young men anxious to show they were capable of decisive action leapt to their feet, one going to the windows and the other to one of the doors. It was regrettable that they chose the wrong sequence. The eight windows should have been closed first. As soon as the door was opened, the smoke, now smelling pungently of burnt oil surged across the room, turning what had been a slight mist into a thick fog.

This was too much for the departmental heads, who, intent on removing their expensive suits from the smoke moved rapidly to the other door, an even more unfortunate decision because at that moment the lady bringing the tea trolley was about to enter. She never made it; the tide of managers swept her and her trolley backwards down the corridor. She told us later that some of the cakes were OK and that the tea urn was virtually undamaged, but the milk jug had tipped its contents onto the carpet and the Black Forest gateau was smeared all over the wall.

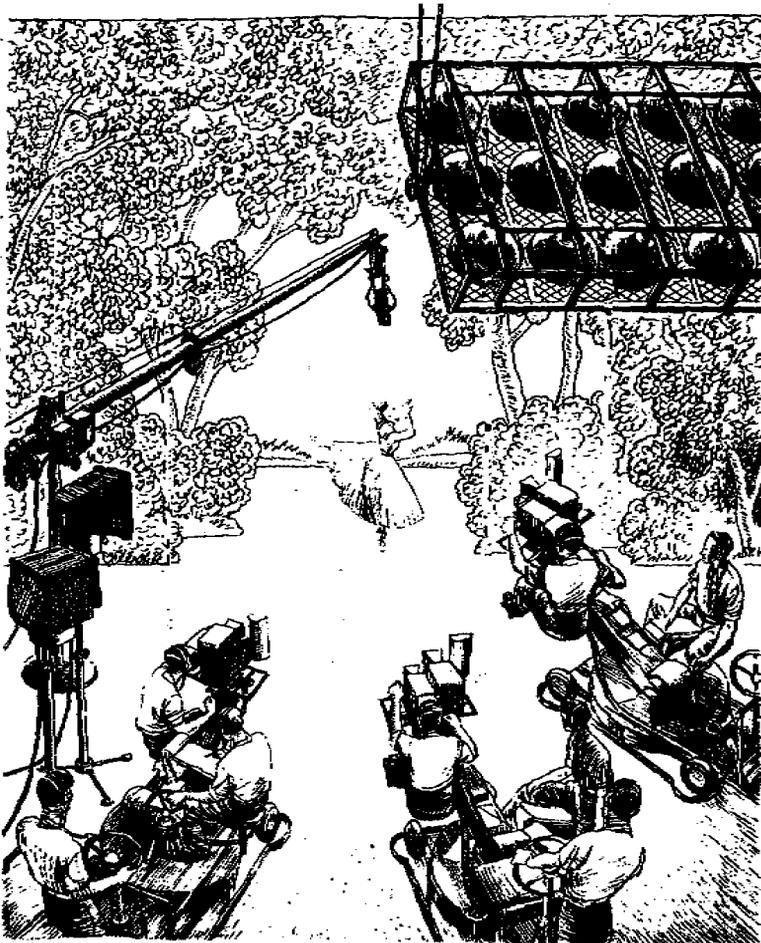
Once again we were summoned to the office of Ian Beynon-Lewis. Once again we were threatened with dismissal, but this time we had a trump card. We had, we pointed out, developed a successful smoke maker—something

demanded by directors, designers and even the Fire Chief and whilst we were sorry for what had happened he should weigh the pros and cons.

Ian sensed the logic of this, but he had to give us a wiggling and he did so. It was short, to the point, but lacked conviction. He finished with a wink and took a bottle of gin, three glasses and some tonic water from his cupboard and we settled down to discuss the potential of our smoke gun. In fact I recall that the latter part of our discussion was mainly about gin and the sheer beauty of a certain brand when served with a slice of lime and a slice of cucumber.

On the whole we reckoned that it had not been a bad day as days go, but our smoke gun was not always to perform so well. In fact it proved a right b\*\*\*\*\*d and was, I seem to remember, eventually consigned to our useful junk box.

❖ *To be concluded*



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# TELEVISION ON THE SILVER SCREEN

## REVISITED

*Andrew Emmerson*

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So you thought we had exhausted the repertoire of ancient flicks with a televisual connection. Not at all and this time we'll examine how Hollywood discovered television in the 1930s and early 40s. Before we cross the Atlantic (by airline, with just one stop for refuelling on Floating Platform 1), we must take on the appropriate mind set.

That's because to appreciate this article, you'll have to re-live the 1930s and that's going to take some imagination if you weren't there at the time. But let's try... let's take a journey back through time and experience the remarkable sights and sounds of sixty-plus years ago. Everything was new then... surrealism and *art déco*... trendy architecture, design and typefaces... the glamour of Hollywood and the home-grown film studios, the *palais de danse*... new household miracles such as refrigerators, vacuum cleaners and push-button wireless sets... the miracles of transatlantic flight, streamlined tube trains, robot traffic signals (traffic lights to you and me) and silent trolleybuses. Add a *frisson* of fascism and political turmoil and you have an extremely stimulating time in which to live. Television was part of this age of miracles too... but not as the flickering box in the corner of the living room, not as a mass entertainment, not as something that every household can afford. Television was a *future* technology, almost science fiction... as thrilling but out-of-reach as flat panel, hang-the-screen-on-the-wall, 3-D television still is today.

Welcome back to the 1930s!

But what was the status of television at the beginning of the 1930s? It certainly wasn't new, not least to the public. Conceptually it had been discussed by scientists since before the first world war and from the late 1920s onwards, Baird and experimenters in other countries had secured significant publicity when they demonstrated live television of sorts. The BBC had even transmitted regular television programmes but with low definition (the pictures were made up of just 30 lines, allowing relatively restricted images to be made out) and only to a handful of experimenters and other viewers. It was television, even if not as we know it today.

Wise brains even wondered if television would ever be more than a novelty. In Britain many observers found Baird's antics and showmanship a tinge distasteful, whilst the fourteenth edition of *Encyclopaedia Britannica* – published in 1929 – asserted that

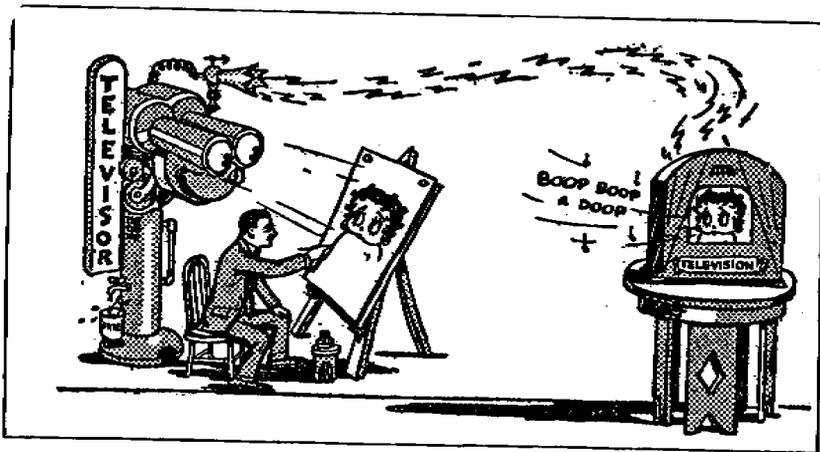
“many technical problems have yet to be solved before television can claim to be more than an interesting novelty”

In fact television worked best in people's imagination – on the cinema screen. The videophone had already made its debut in the 1929 German film *Metropolis* and indeed shortly after, real-life video telephone services were put into commercial use in Germany and France. But it was in the early 1930s that television really caught on at the pictures, by which time it had become an accomplished fact, at least as far as cinemagoers might think.

In fact to judge by films such as *Radio Parade of 1935*, live colour television was already a reality in Britain and even if not, the public were convinced it was not far around the corner. Another film which confidently proclaimed the use of television in a totally matter-of-fact way was *The Tunnel*, a somewhat forgotten Anglo-German science fiction epic also from 1935, which saw the successful completion not of the Channel Tunnel but of the transatlantic tunnel linking Britain to the USA. And a British advertising film of 1934 entitled *Plenty of Time for Play*, showing a vision of life in 20 years time, includes a credible simulation of large-screen television.

It was also clear that a section of the public still had some pretty strange ideas... and only a hazy comprehension of the capabilities of television. The USA film *Death By Television*—again from 1935, it was all happening then – was a, well, the only word for it is shlock horror, showing a business man assassinated by television death rays, although this was in America where filmgoers knew that anything could happen. But even the British Postmaster General had to reassure listeners to BBC radio that same year that television was not a two-way process and the set in the living room could not peer into their homes! [sound bite]. In fact this idea that television could somehow *watch you* whilst *you watched it* took a long time to die out.





**This self-portrait cartoon by Max Fleischer sums up the slightly dotty notions people held of television in the early thirties. American author Alice Brannigan notes the book *Gateway to Radio* by Major Ivan Firth (The Macaulay Company, New York, 1934) states that the first animated cartoon ever televised was also the first cartoon specifically made for TV use, although it starred an old favourite. This took place in 1933 at the World's Radio Fair, held in New York City's Madison Square Garden.**

**In describing the event, Firth wrote, "The most successful of all our programs was that in which Max Fleischer, creator of Betty Boop, Popeye the Sailor, Koko the Clown, and a host of other pen and ink stars, appeared in person in a presentation of the first animated cartoon to be televised.**

**"Standing in front of the brilliant light, Fleischer, while carrying on a running commentary, drew with rapid, sure strokes, the character known to millions as Betty Boop. Suddenly, Betty came to life, rolled her eyes, blinked her famous lashes, and then opened her pouting mouth and sang her Boop-a-doop song. So successful was this feature, that it was selected as the only program to be televised on the ten-foot screen at Madison Square Garden. Although scheduled for only one performance, the program was repeated nearly thirty times."**

But now—lights out. It's time to watch the films...

1933: **International House**, directed by Edward A. Sutherland.  
Professor Wong has invented a television machine and invites everyone to see it at China's International House Hotel. Agents turn up from everywhere to buy the rights to the device. Every time Tommy Nash attempts to wed his fiancée Carol Fortescue he comes down with an illness, and when he breaks out in a rash the hotel is quarantined. Into this hotel flies Professor Quail (played by W.C. Fields) in his auto-gyro...  
*VHS NTSC.*

1933: **Men Must Fight**, directed by Elgar Selwyn.  
Laura is a nurse at the front in World War I. She meets and falls for a young flyer named Geoffrey. On his first mission, Geoffrey is shot down and taken to the hospital where Laura works. Within days he succumbs to his injuries. Faced with the fact that she is with Geoffrey's child, she accepts the proposal of Ed Seward who still wants to marry her. Laura vows that her new son will never fight in a war again. Jumping ahead, it is 1940 and Robert, who is Geoffrey's son, meets Peggy Chase on a Ship steaming across the Atlantic. Ed Seward, who is now the Secretary of State, has averted war by drafting a peace treaty with a belligerent country called Eurasia, which broadcasts a message of peace by television. However, before the treaty can be signed, Eurasia has the envoy assassinated and both sides escalate. At home, Laura campaigns for Peace, Ed stands with the country and will fight and Robert declares that he will not fight. In doing so, Robert loses Peggy and sees his family break apart.  
*Not on tape as far as we know.*

1934: **Mystery Liner**, directed by William Knight.  
Spy story surrounding an electronic gadget allowing ships to be inspected without anyone's knowledge. A personality aboard is killed in the attempt to send a message by television.  
*Not on tape as far as we know.*



1935: **The Phantom Empire** (serial by O. Brower and B. Reeves Eason).

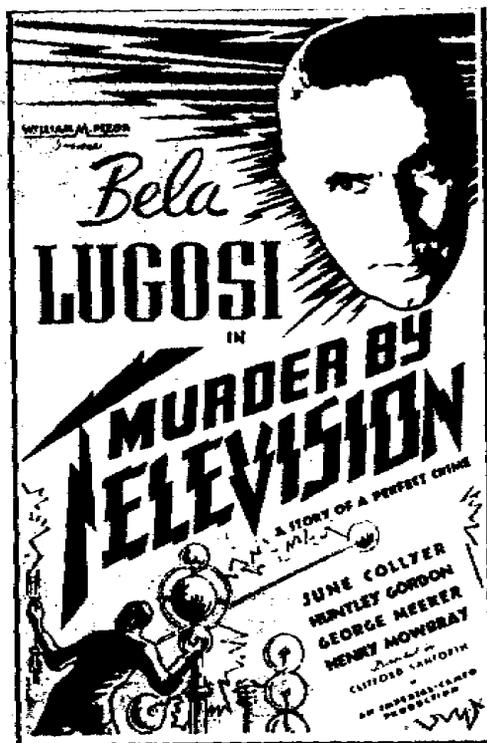
When the ancient continent of Mu sank beneath the ocean, some of its inhabitants survived in caverns beneath the sea. Cowboy singer Gene Autry stumbles upon the civilization, now buried beneath his own Radio Ranch. The Muranians have developed technology and weaponry such as television and ray guns. Their rich supply of radium draws unscrupulous speculators from the surface. The peaceful civilization of the Muranians is corrupted by the greed from above, and it becomes Autry's task to prevent all-out war, ideally without disrupting his regular radio show.

*VHS NTSC.*

1935: **Murder by Television**, directed by Clifford Sanforth, with Bela Lugosi.

James Houghland, inventor of a new method by which television signals can be instantaneously sent anywhere in the world, refuses to sell the process to television companies, who then send agents to acquire the invention any way they can. On the night of his initial broadcast Houghland is mysteriously murdered in the middle of his demonstration and it falls to Police Chief Nelson to determine who the murderer is from the many suspects present. This film has some elaborate and quite convincing-looking television apparatus.

*Available on VHS video, details from the author.*

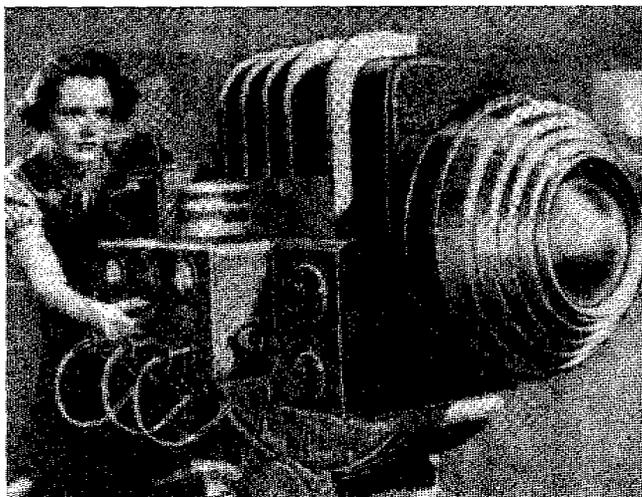


1935: **The Big Broadcast of 1936**, directed by Norman Taurog.  
Musical comedy with a strong radio connection. A broadcaster purchases the 'Radio Eye' system in order to transmit video images world-wide. Cast includes George Burns, Gracie Allen, Bing Crosby, Ethel Merman and Richard Tauber.

*Not on tape as far as we know.*

1936: **Trapped by Television**, directed by Del Lord.  
An inventor looking for backing for his television invention gets involved with a crooked businessman and gangsters who try to steal his invention and use it for blackmail purposes. Mary Astor, Lyle Talbot and Nat Pendleton star.  
63 min.

*Not on tape as far as we know.*



**One of Hollywood's first conceptions of how a television camera might appear. Actress Mary Astor is the operator in the 1936 movie *Trapped by Television*.**

**1936: *Undersea Kingdom*.**

Crash Corrigan, a recent graduate of Annapolis, and Diana, a go-getting reporter, join Professor Norton for a search for the source of a string of earthquakes, Atlantis. They ride Prof. Norton's rocket submarine searching the sea and little Billy Norton, the professor's son stows away, of course. When they find Atlantis they are caught in a war between peaceful Atlanteans, note their white capes, and war-mongering Atlanteans, note their black capes. After many harrowing moments for Crash, Diana, Prof. Norton and Billy, they barely get away with their lives when they escape a tower of Atlantis raised to the surface for the sole purpose of dominating or destroying the Earth (which one depends on the compliance of the upper world dwellers.)  
*VHS NTSC.*

**1936: *The Amazing Exploits of the Clutching Hand*, directed by Albert Herman.**

Crime thriller in which a scientist discovers a formula for making synthetic gold. A kidnapper, "The Clutching Hand" communicates with his gang via a television system.  
*VHS NTSC.*

1937: **Exiled to Shanghai**, directed by Nick Grinde and Armand Shaefer.

A group of newsreel cameramen invent a means of televising current events in order to keep pace with the radio news broadcasts.

*Not on tape as far as we know.*

1938: **Five of a Kind**, directed by Herbert I. Leeds.

Third and last film of these once-famous quintuplets, now aged four-and-a-half and singing, dancing, playing with puppies and being charming. A television broadcast is organised for their fourth birthday.

*Not on tape as far as we know.*

1939: **Television Spy**, directed by Edward Dmytryk.

Spy story involving an inventor who has developed a television system with world-wide coverage. Some of the equipment looks authentic, especially in the titles. Director Dmytryk died last year aged 91 and this film marked his directorial debut and completed his long training period with a series of B movies. The film also features an early appearance of Anthony Quinn.

*Available on VHS video, details from the author.*

1940: **A Plumbing We Will Go**, directed by Del Lord.

Slapstick comedy with the Three Stooges. To escape the police, the Stooges pose as plumbers and are hired to fix a leak in a fancy mansion. They wind up crossing the electrical system with the plumbing and generally ruin the place. One memorable scene has the lady of the house tuning into a television broadcast from Niagara Falls as a torrent of water pours from the set. To escape the wrath of the homeowners the Stooges escape through a magician's trap door.

*VHS NTSC.*

1940: **Raffles.**

Man-about-town and first class cricketer A.J. Raffles keeps himself solvent with daring robberies. Meeting Gwen from his schooldays and falling in love all over again, he spends the weekend with her parents, Lord and Lady Melrose. A necklace presents an irresistible temptation, but also in attendance is Scotland Yard's finest, finally on the trail. According to American writer Alice Brannigan, this film incorporates a television element.

*Not on tape as far as we know.*

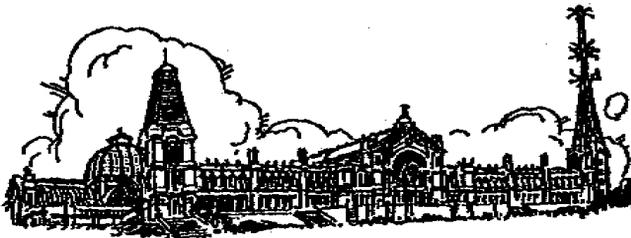
1940: **Hit Parade of 1941**, directed by John H. Auer, produced by Republic Pictures Corporation.

Musical comedy. A small radio station is saved from bankruptcy by a backer who invests money for a TV equipment, on condition that the owner allows his dancing daughter Annabelle to dance and sing on the screen. Her awful voice means that her singing has to be dubbed by the owner's girl friend. Pat Abbott. Problems start here, when the owner starts dating Annabelle.

*Not on tape as far as we know.*

*VHS tapes listed as available commercially can be found on the Amazon.com website. These are in the NTSC format and most of them are priced well under \$20.*

Certain information adapted with acknowledgement from the Internet Movie Data Base (IMdB) [website <http://us.imdb.com/>] and André Lange's website *Histoire de la télévision* [<http://histv2.free.fr/cadrehistv.htm>] and the Amazon.com website.





We found this in one of the books in Dilys's *Girl Annual* collection from about 1960 (we think, its volume 8 and no date on it!)

Steve Pendlebury

## MURDER BY TELEVISION AERIAL

Daniel Raven

The murder of Mr Goodman, 1949

*This rather gruesome tale comes from an old paperback discovered without a cover or title page "at the tip" by John Wakely. He passes it on in the hope that it gives some pleasure...*

Among the murderers who kill without apparent motive are a number of sons who for some reason or other cannot exist without extinguishing members of their families, frequently their mother or father or both. Such inimical offspring tend to plead guilty or to be found insane, and so no explanation or motive is ever officially put forward for their fatal deeds.

In this case the deadly sibling was a son-in-law. No motive for his extraordinary actions was ever aired before or during his trial. But on Monday, 10 October 1949, after visiting his young wife, Marie, in a maternity home in Muswell Hill (where on 6th October she had given birth to their first child), a dapper Jewish advertising agent called Daniel Raven, aged twenty-three, drove to the home of his parents-in-law and battered them both to death.

The fact that Mr Leopold Goodman, aged forty-nine and Mrs Esther Goodman, aged forty-seven, were Russian Jews and possessively proud of their daughter, Mr Raven, and of their new grandson, is probably not a relevant as the fact that they were also at the maternity home that evening, sitting beside their daughter and watched by their son-in-law.

Something surely must have been said, some opinion, prejudice or attitude expressed by the middle-aged couple that provoked the nervy Mr Raven to eliminate them. They left the nursing home at 9.05pm, followed soon after by their son-in-law. He drove to the Goodman home in Ashcombe Gardens, Edgware, where at about 9.30 pm he went berserk, battering Mrs Goodman seven times on the head and Mr Goodman at least fourteen times. In both cases the weapon was the base of a television aerial.

The presence of a television set in the house gives some indication of the Goodmans' affluence, for television was then in its infancy and sets showing the few black and white programmes the BBC broadcast on one channel were expensive. (The BBC's transmissions from Alexandra Palace, begun in November 1936, had been discontinued during the war, only being resumed on 7th June 1946.) Danny Raven was not rich enough to own a TV set, earning about £20 a week.

After the attack Danny drove around the corner to Edgwarebury Lane, where he lived with his wife in a house bought for them by Mr Goodman. Here he tried to remove the bloodstains on his dark blue suit, and having failed to do so satisfactorily he stuffed the shirt into a coke-boiler in the kitchen, hastening the burning process by leaving a lit gas poker in the boiler.

About 10.30 pm he received an unexpected telephone call from the police — possibly while he was still trying to clean his suit. The police requested him to come round to his in-laws' house straight away — they had some bad news for him. If the telephone call interrupted him in his efforts to clean the suit he must have set about burning it in some haste, before dressing himself in a new shirt and tie and suit.

Unfortunately for Danny, what had happened about twenty minutes after he left Ashcombe Gardens was that Mrs Goodman's brother-in-law, Mr Frederick Fraiman, called at the house with his wife and eldest daughter. At about 9.55pm they had driven over from Marlborough Avenue to enquire about Marie Raven and the baby. Mr Fraiman was a business partner of the Goodmans in L. Goodman Radio Ltd. When the three Fraimans received no response to their knocking and ringing

at the front, side and back doors, Mr Fraiman climbed into the house through an open window and came across the savaged bodies of the Goodmans in their blood-soaked dining room. He dialled 999 at 10.02pm. The police and a doctor were soon at the scene, the police investigations being led by D.I. Diller. The aluminium aerial was found in a sink in the scullery.

Robbery as an associated motive for the murders was discounted when bundles of notes were found untouched in the house, including one cache of notes under a mattress. There was over £2,500 in a safe.

When Danny Raven arrived he was overcome with emotion and sat sobbing on the stairs, crying: 'Why did they tell me to go? Why didn't they let me stop?' He had wanted to stay, he said, as his in-laws were apprehensive about being burgled. But they had insisted, he said, that he left. I don't get on with Mr Goodman too badly,' he confessed. 'Although we do quarrel at times. But Mrs Goodman and me didn't get on at all well.'

D.I. Diller was doubtful about the young man's explanations and sorrow, and had cause to be so when one of his policemen, who had questioned other relatives of the Goodmans, passed on the information that the young Jew had been wearing a dark blue suit earlier that evening—not the light grey suit he now wore. Diller also noted that Raven's shirt seemed very crisp and fresh.

The lamenting son-in-law was asked to accompany the police to Edware police station for further questioning. But before this happened Diller asked Raven for the keys to his house. Danny handed them over reluctantly, adding: But you won't find anything there — I only had a bath.'

It was not until 11.45pm that Diller entered the Ravens' nest. As soon as he did so he noticed a smell of burning, It came from the kitchen. He saw the gas poker projecting from the blazing boiler. He removed it, closed the vent and flue, and was able to retrieve part of a suit. Later it was found to be stained with blood (from the Goodmans' rare blood group AB) as were a pair of shoes had been washed and hidden in the garage. The driver's seat in Raven's car had also been scrubbed.

When asked to account for the burning, bloody suit in the boiler — he admitted the suit was his — Danny replied: 'How the blood got on it I don't know.' He had left it, he said, in the bathroom — where the police found no evidence of a bath having been recently taken.

Daniel Raven was charged by D.C.I. Albert Tansill at Edgware police station on the night of Tuesday, 11th October with the murder of Mr Leopold Goodman. Proclaiming his innocence, Raven said that his father-in-law had made several enemies as a result of crooked business deals. This was elaborated in court by counsel for the defence, who suggested that Mr Goodman had been a police informer, assisting the police with information about persons suspected of currency offences, and that the elderly couple had been murdered in revenge by a person or persons unknown.

Raven's story by now had also been elaborated. When he gave evidence he said that after leaving the Goodmans alive and well he had called on his cousins nearby (who were out) and then decided to return to Ashcombe Gardens, as he knew the Fraimans would probably call that night. Receiving no reply, he said, to his knocking at the door, he entered the house through a window and found Mrs Goodman in the dining-room, her skull cracked open. He felt sick at the sight, he said — and in the witness box he swayed and appeared on the point of collapse. He continued by saying that blood got on his clothes and shoes when he knelt by her body. Overwhelmed by fear, he said, he fled from the house and drove to his own home where he burned his suit and washed his shoes.

No defence involving the accused's mental instability or even insanity was broached. He was tried at the Old Bailey on Tuesday, 22<sup>nd</sup> November 1949 before Mr Justice Cassels, with Mr Anthony Hawke appearing for the Crown and Mr John Maude, KC, for the defence. Found guilty on 24<sup>th</sup> November, Daniel Raven was sentenced to death.

In support of an appeal, a solicitor, Mr Rutter, then produced evidence that Raven was insane, that on account of his 'severe anxiety neurosis' he had been discharged from the RAF (which he had joined when he was sixteen) after a plane-crash that he alone survived. A doctor who had treated Raven in the past stated that he used to suffer from 'blackouts and brainstorms'. Another said he had a kind of epilepsy. The appeal was heard on 20th December and dismissed.

All other appeals for clemency as well as a petition failed. Raven was hanged in Pentonville prison on Friday, 6<sup>th</sup> January 1950.

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# IN THE WORKSHOP

## Replacement electrolytics and ESR

*From Boatanchors on the Internet—*

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Ben Hall asked, "Do today's modern, smallish caps (non-Computer Grade) have ESR values in the ballpark of the old metal can caps?"

Barry Ornitz replied:

Modern electrolytic capacitors have lower ESR (equivalent series resistance) than capacitors of old. Modern computer-grade, low ESR capacitors have much lower ESR than the old capacitors.

There are two main contributors to ESR in an electrolytic capacitor: the foil and its winding, and the electrolyte solution. Modern foils are thinner making their resistance go up, but the better control of the anodic film means the total length of the foil is less tending to cancel this out. Internal inductance of the foil winding also contributes to ESR and this is less with modern capacitors.

Finally modern capacitors use thinner separators between the foils. This means there is less resistance in the electrolyte solution. [Remember the anode is the foil coated with oxide; the cathode is the electrolyte solution. The other foil serves only as a contact to the solution.]

The down-side of this is that while modern electrolytic capacitors have lower ESR, with less electrolyte they are more likely to suffer with electrolyte evaporation. Many of the capacitors of the 1930s had far, far more electrolyte than needed, which is why many survive to this day. To keep the modern capacitors from "drying out", keep their temperature down and do *not* store them in a very dry environment. They are likely the only electronic component that fares best in a humid environment. [Various hygroscopic materials are added to today's electrolytes to maintain the internal moisture - but they work only if the surrounding air is humid enough.] When rebuilding a can-type electrolytic capacitor, do not seal the new devices inside completely. You need the small air vent like the original had.

### **Ripple current**

Pete Ferrand, WB2QLL, wrote: "According to a guy I was talking to who was selling new electrolytics at an antique radio flea market, the new smaller electrolytics he was offering do not have the ripple current rating of the old larger caps. His argument was that the little caps would be fine in a broadcast radio but would fail if used in a high current application like a transmitter."

Pete also suggested the fact that a physically larger capacitor would be able to dissipate more heat than a small one, which is quite true. But a lower ESR would mean that less heat is generated. Pete then mentioned "energy storage" and "photoflash" capacitors. And this is where I feel the problem lies. Modern power-supply electrolytics are smaller than similar capacitors of the past, but not *significantly* smaller like photoflash capacitors.

With the decline in production of conventional high voltage electrolytic capacitors, many people are turning to these photoflash capacitors because they are inexpensive, physically small, and readily available as surplus. But they are not designed for regular power supply applications unless used with very low ripple currents. This may sound contradictory—photoflash capacitors are designed to dump their energy quickly into a flash lamp which is electrically almost a short circuit. Thus they must be rated for high peak currents. But the key is to understand that a photoflash capacitor has a limited lifetime based on the number of charge/discharge cycles. They can discharge high currents, but only intermittently, allowing long times in between for them to cool.

Use them in a typical power supply application and the ripple current will rapidly overheat them. The first minute or so of power supply operation will "use up" the photoflash capacitors' available charge/discharge cycles. Some manufacturers of photoflash capacitors will give de-rating information based on ripple current, but most do not, and how do you get information on some unknown capacitor from a surplus dealer or a hamfest?

Photoflash capacitors are not useless for our applications, however. They work quite well in many bias and screen applications where little ripple current is seen. In audio applications, where a multi-section filter is used with the final section providing the low-level preamplifier stages, photoflash capacitors work well. Just don't ask them to be the input capacitor immediately after the rectifier (or the output capacitor of a supply feeding a high-power class-B stage).

Pete concludes: "I have never had a smaller newer cap fail in service." I have not either, but I try to use the proper capacitors for the application.

## **Feedback on Ian Watson's 405-line colour set by Pye, mentioned in several recent issues**

Andrew Emmerson has sent me a copy of your very interesting article on the Pye 405 line NTSC colour receiver of 1956. Although I was not concerned with this work, I well remember this receiver being tested in the Lab. To those of us who were only used to field sequential colour, the results that this receiver gave seemed very impressive.

I think you are right in saying only one prototype was made and work was abandoned when it was decided not to introduce HTSC colour into the BBC television service. This seemed a disappointment at the time, but it was a right decision as the long-term quality would not have been adequate.

At that time I visited Ally Pally to watch the NTSC studio in operation and I also made an NTSC-to-field sequential converter and watched the BBC pictures off-air using a revolving colour filter.

Ian Waters, ex-Pye engineer

## FACT SHEET on Television commercials

Many (but not all by any means) old TV commercials survive, well back to the 1950s and 60s in fact, but this does not mean they are 'accessible'. One of two advertisers (such as Brooke Bond) have released videotapes of classic commercials, and programmes on television such as *Carrot's Commercial Breakdown* and *Washes Whiter* have examined the subject.

Copyright still subsists in these commercials as well as other rights of the actors, music and musicians employed, which is why it is sometimes very difficult to get clearance to show them again on television. For obvious reasons, copies of old commercials are released only on a controlled basis and to organisations who can satisfy the copyright owners of their good intentions (and who can solve the rights issues without incurring the wrath of one of the parties involved). This applies to some extent for all old television and film material. In addition, some of the organisations mentioned do not have the means to provide copies and are not prepared to delve into their holdings without serious money and a letter of commission from a TV programme maker up-front. This makes it difficult for the serious but non-professional researcher.

Commercials made since, say, the mid-1970s were formerly archived by the ITV Association, formerly the ITV Companies Association, and this collection has now been moved to the Museum of Film, Photography and Television in Bradford. Many are still kept by the original advertisers or, more commonly, their advertising agencies. Yet more are in vaults at Pinewood studios, abandoned or forgotten by their owners (but Pinewood are not empowered to destroy them or release them to anyone else). Finally, some are in the care of the History of Advertising Trust (an underfunded organisation) whilst others have been catalogued and copied by an organisation called The Advertising Register (they who supplied the ads for the BBC-2 programme *Washes Whiter* a few years ago).

The best book on the subject, richly illustrated, is **The Tuppenny Punch and Judy Show** by Jo Gable (published by Michael Joseph, 1980). It is now out of print but can be found in second-hand book shops or ordered through a library.



**Radiolympia 1938, with David Hoffman announcing**



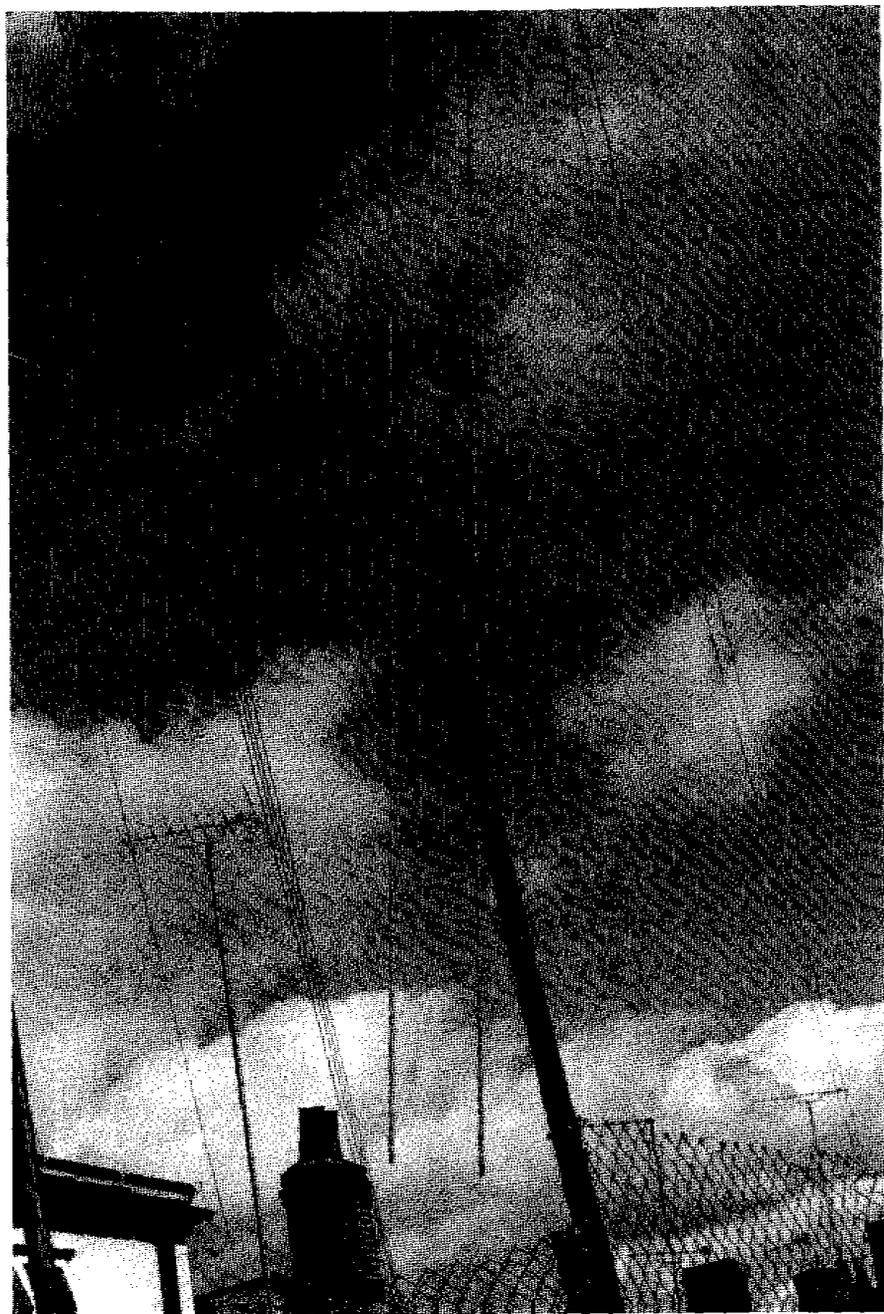
**Vera Lynn performing at Radiolympia 1938 (cruise ship set in the background)**



**Come and Be Televised (Radiolympia 1939). These three photos were taken by D.R. Campbell and kindly supplied by Simon Vaughan of the Alexandra Palace Television Society.**



**Aerial view, taken in Dartford by Sid Gray**



**Another shot: Sid notes that there is no telly on the end of the cable!**

# WHERE TO FIND...

- **OLD COPIES OF *RADIO TIME*, *TV TIMES*, ETC.**

CHEVET BOOKS, 157 Dickson Road, Blackpool, Lancs., FY1 2EU. Check stocks before visiting: 01253-751858.

Len KELLY BOOKS, 6 Redlands, Blundell's Road, Tiverton, EX16 6BU (01884-256170, fax 01884-242550). Huge stocks of pre- and post-war copies of the *Radio Times* (but dwindling fast as they are sold). This is the stock previously owned by Skymag of Strood, Kent.

KEN'S (Joyce and Ken Graham). 29 High Street, Newport Pagnell, Milton Keynes, Bucks., MK16 8AR (01908-610003 evenings). Ephemera specialist, with piles of TV/film magazines and books. Closed Thursdays.

VINTAGE MAGAZINE COMPANY, 39/43 Brewer Street, London, W1R 3FD (0171-439 8525, fax 0171-439 8527). Some radio and TV weekly magazines and ephemera.

Copies of the *Radio Times* are available for inspection in the central reference (not lending) libraries of Westminster, Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool (Picton Library) and some other large cities. Some of these libraries also have the *TV Times*; the newspaper library (outpost of the British Library) in Colindale, north London has all regions' *TV Times* (ever) in its archive and available to view.

- **TRADE TEST FILMS once shown on BBC2**

One method is to buy copies on video from the film library that produced the film originally (*Ride the Wild Horses* is a BP film, for example, so in this case you would need to approach the BP film library).

There are also plenty of copies of (most of) these films scudding around collectors' circles and if you put a small ad in the right places you will probably get a reply from someone prepared to trade a copy with you. Obviously these copies cannot be sold for cash and most sensible people swap them without any money changing hands (or just charge the minimum for providing blank tape, postage, wear and tear on their tape machines, etc.).

Both *405 Alive* and the Test Card Circle's magazine cover the subject of trade test films and both magazines carry small ads.

*405 Alive*, Larkhill, Newport Road, Woodseaves, STAFFORD, ST20 0NP.

• **TELEVISION THEME MUSIC**

FAMOUS THEMES, MORE FAMOUS THEMES and LONDON CALLING (Famous Themes Volume 3). Grasmere Records. Price £8 (including postage) on cassette.

"With the rapid expansion of radio and television networks throughout the world, many leading music publishers formed their own recorded music libraries to satisfy the increasing demand. For various reasons these mood music records were only made available for professional users. Many of these original performances are now being made available to the general public for the first time on commercial recordings." So says Bob Barrett of Grasmere Records, who has done us an inestimable favour by putting these treasured themes on tape (and record and CD). All your radio and TV favourites are on these three albums, a total of 65 (yes, 65) melodies in all. Composers include Robert Farnon, Richard Adinsell, Eric Coates et al. And what a selection! Picture Parade, Down Your Way, Music While You Work, the TV interlude themes, old BBC news intros, Pathé News... Sorry, I'm getting carried away.

SOUNDS VISUAL. RSY603. 16 vintage TV themes, highly recommended. Cassette, current price unknown. By mail and only from Radio Six Scotland, PO Box 600, Glasgow, G41 5SH. 0141- 427 0531.

SCREENTHEMES, 3 Newland Close, Toton, Nottingham, NG9 6EQ (tel/fax 0115-973 2431). Mail order business supplying thousands of current and deleted items by the world's top composers of television and film music.

Other production and library music CDs by publishers such as CHAPPEL and KPM are not sold to the public (but can be bought through the Robert Farnon Society, Stone Gables, Upton Lane, Seavington St. Michael, Ilminster, Somerset, TA19 0PZ).

• **THE OLD ANIMATED IDENTS ON ITV AND THE START-OF-DAY FILMS SHOWN IN SOME REGIONS**

As for ITV idents and music, there is no official archive collection. We understand some enthusiasts have compiled their own tapes, so the only hope is wants ads in the two magazines mentioned above.

Not many ITV companies made start-of-day films and the only one you can obtain officially is that shown by Westward Television, available on a compilation tape for around £25 from the TSW Film & TV Archive for the South West, Foot & Bowden Building, Derry's Cross, Plymouth, PL1 2SP (01752-202650, fax 01752-205025).

- **THE ADDRESSES OF ALL TELEVISION (AND OTHER) COMPANIES IN THE UK WHICH HOLD ARCHIVE FILM & VIDEO LIBRARIES**

Call the British Universities Film & Video Council on 0171-393 1500 and ask about their Researcher's Guide books. They also have similar books on all newsreel archives in the UK. The books are comprehensive and meticulously compiled; they are therefore not cheap. Also knowing that material exists does mean you can buy a viewing copy but for genuine researchers these books are a must. The BUFVC publications list (free of charge) lists all the valuable reference books they publish.

- **RELIABLE EPISODE GUIDES AND ARCHIVE LISTINGS OF BRITISH TV DRAMA, ENTERTAINMENT AND CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMES**

Kaleidoscope produces a series of very detailed books, which are thicker than the average telephone directory! For further information send SAE to Kaleidoscope Publishing, 47 Ashton Road, Ashton Gate, Bristol, BS3 2EQ (0117-983 0934) or e-mail: [richarddown@cablenet.co.uk](mailto:richarddown@cablenet.co.uk)

A catalogue of pre-war programmes has been compiled by Denis Gifford and is due for publication by the BFI in conjunction with Cassells on a date to be set.

- **PHOTOGRAPHS OF TELEVISION OUTSIDE BROADCAST VEHICLES**

The following suppliers offer postcard-size prints at modest prices. They attend most vintage commercial vehicle rallies and will also sell by mail order (ask for a set on approval).

Arthur INGRAM, 11a Pound Road, Chatteris, PE16 6RL.

J.F. LONGBOTTOM, 45 South Drive, Harwood, Bolton, BL2 3NL.

PM PHOTOGRAPHY, Box 157, Camberley, Surrey, GU15 3GJ.



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# RESOLUTION FOR THE NEW YEAR—AND LONGER

*by a fifty-year veteran*

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With the arrival of digital camcorders, high-resolution television, electronically processed special effects in cinema films etc., I cannot help noticing that many highly questionable statements about resolving power have been appearing in print. A typical example is the following from a 1993 magazine, so let us look at it critically:

**DID YOU KNOW? Video tape resolution is around 250 lines per inch. Super 8mm film has between 1500 to 2000 lines resolution.**

The first paragraph is meaningless as it does not state what the “per inch” refers to. Tape width? Tape movement? Track length? Picture width? Picture height? The second paragraph is also questionable in that it could refer to height or width and does not specify the type of film, but if we assume Kodachrome and the USA convention of lines per picture height, then Kodak’s published resolution curve shows the figures to be pure fantasy~

I have therefore felt it might be useful to have the relevant facts and definitions summarised. The following does not pretend to be a comprehensive study of the subject and will almost certainly be open to criticism in places, but it shows the situation as I see it. I therefore hope that other readers will amplify, correct and refine.

## RESOLUTION IN PHOTOGRAPHY

The data sheet I have is for Kodachrome 25 and is dated 1988, but as Kodak supplied it to me only two years ago I assume that there have not been any substantial changes. Under the heading “Image-Structure Characteristics” it gives Resolving Power as 63 lines/mm and 100 lines/mm, but these figures must be treated with caution. Such figures are obtained under closely—specified conditions (ISO 632B is quoted) and are intended for direct comparison of different film emulsions—but they are not appropriate for comparison with electronic pictures. (As is the labelling convention on many television Test Charts, any one “line” can be lighter or darker than its neighbours, so at least two lines are needed to reproduce one cycle of information.)

For comparison with television one must use Kodak's curve labelled "Modulation-transfer", which is precisely equivalent to the gain/frequency response of an electronic unit or system. Using logarithmic axes, it plots relative response (i.e. mm/max transmission ratio) for blocks of test-chart lines against "Spatial Frequency" in cycles per millimetre. Starting from 100% (0 dB) at a frequency of 1 (i.e. 1 cycle per millimetre) it rises to a peak of about 120% (1.6 dB) at frequency 10 (probably due to the 'edge-enhancement' effect which occurs with some reversal-processing formulae) then falls steadily, being -3 dB at frequency 30, -6 dB at 40 and -20 dB at about 70. As this is approaching extinction level, the curve ceases at this point.

Taking the frame height of Super-B film as 4.8 mm, this final near-extinction value gives 672 lines, which justifies my dismissal of the figures quoted earlier as "pure fantasy"!

### RESOLUTION IN TELEVISION

Whereas photographic film is a uniform medium, television images are subject to a number of constraints which have no photographic equivalent, so it is essential to define parameters and figures clearly and unambiguously otherwise they become meaningless.

### RESOLUTION

I shall treat this an objective measurable quantity, being the number of cycles that can be reproduced at 100% modulation or some lesser specified value. It is not subjective and is not a matter of judgement, so it gives a reliable indication of what an item of equipment is capable of doing.

### SHARPNESS

This I shall regard as the subjective equivalent of resolution, being dependent not only on equipment performance but also on personal judgement and experience, conditions of viewing, subject matter etc. so that no provable figures can be quoted.

### VERTICAL RESOLUTION

The number of lines (or cycles) that can be resolved in a narrow vertical strip of picture. It will be maximum when the raster lines are alternately black and white giving .575 lph (lines per picture height) in the UK and about 485 lph in the USA.

### HORIZONTAL RESOLUTION

The number of lines (or cycles) that can be resolved along a single line of picture, and is dependent on the specified bandwidth of the system concerned or on the number of picture elements available in digital

devices such as CCD arrays. (In the past, the ultimate constraint here has been the spectrum space available in analogue terrestrial broadcasting.) Thus in the UK with a picture line duration of 52  $\mu$ s and a bandwidth of 5.5 MHz the figure becomes 572 lpw (286 cycles), while for the USA it is roughly 428 lpw (214 cycles). For a camcorder array with 200,000 pixels the horizontal resolution will be roughly 350 lpw or 175 cycles.

### KELL FACTOR

I wish I could claim closer familiarity with his work but life is too short to look up everything in the archives! His experiments were done a very long time ago and must have been carried out with comparatively primitive equipment, so that any concrete figures he may have quoted must be suspect in relation to present-day systems. However, his basic suggestion has been amply confirmed, namely that there can be quite large differences between vertical and horizontal resolutions without any imbalance being noticeable when viewing normal pictorial matter (as opposed to Test Charts). The success of widescreen cinema films produced on standard 35mm film by optical compression/expansion horizontally illustrate the validity of Kell's observation, although the first Cinemascope films in the early fifties did in fact look 'smeary' in the horizontal direction due to the limitations of emulsions and/or optics.

The 'Kell factor' can be defined in several ways leading to the same result, so if we take it as the ratio of the actual horizontal resolution to that theoretically required, assuming no visual imbalance, then the bandwidth of 4.2 MHz specified for the USA system gives an actual figure of 428 lpw as opposed to a theoretical value of 647 lpw, implying a Kell factor of 0.66. Similarly the UK figure of 5.5 MHz or 572 lpw, as against 767 lpw, implies a factor of 0.75. However, the acceptability of pictures on that vast majority of UK domestic receivers which separate luminance by a simple 3.5 MHz low-pass filter instead of the superior (but more expensive) comb filter, shows that an even lower factor of 0.64 can be tolerated.

### RESOLUTION IN TV TEST CHARTS

Resolution blocks on BBC charts are designed to yield specific frequencies and provide a visual and measurable check on equipment response, but the calibrations will obviously be valid only for 625 line/50Hz systems.

On the other hand, charts such as the American RETMA and the British Marconi No.1 are designed to be system independent, but their calibrations must be treated with care. The resolution blocks and wedges, both vertical and horizontal, carry figures which refer to LINES

PER PICTURE HEIGHT, so aspect ratio must be taken into account when deducing the corresponding frequency values.

#### APERTURE DISTORTION/CORRECTION

Nothing to do with lens apertures, as has been asserted in at least one book, but the well-known effect of reading information through an aperture of finite width e.g. the slit thickness in reproducing photographic or magnetic sound tracks, the diameter of the electronic beam in camera tubes, the separating distance of pixels in a CCD array. The output signal will be at full amplitude when the thickness is a tiny fraction of information wavelength, but as the latter gets shorter the output will fall and reach a null when the slit or beam covers one cycle exactly.

Correction is by a circuit having complementary response i.e. whose gain rises with frequency, and my aged memory suggests that about 6dB of 'lift' at 5MHz was required for 3" IO tubes, 3 dB for 4.5" IOs and about 8dB for CPS Emitrons, vidicons and plumbicons (due to the 25kV used on the scanning CRT and resultant tiny light-spot, no such correction is necessary on 35mm flying-spot telecine channels, and that used on 16mm channels compensates for film limitations rather than equipment). It is essential for the corrector to have constant delay for all frequency components so the circuitry has to be considerably more complicated than for similar audio compensation, a common technique being to produce an 'error' signal which can be added to the uncorrected signal in controllable amount. Other than for CCD signals, such correction can be and is applied in both horizontal and vertical directions.

It is found in practice that slight over-correction enhances the visual sharpness of pictures by a very useful amount, but if excessive correction is used then pre-shoots and overshoots become visible, giving a highly artificial 'cardboard cut-out' effect.

For reasons which will become apparent under the next heading, it must be stressed that aperture correction is a strictly linear process which involves no distortion and no increase in bandwidth.

#### EDGE ENHANCEMENT

This technique was devised by CBS in the late '40s to improve pictures which had passed over long-distance links (and they were very long indeed in the USA, with a bandwidth quoted as 2MHz) and also for the field-sequential colour (color?) system, which again is quoted as having horizontal resolution little more than half that of monochrome. The CBS

technique used circuitry similar to that for aperture correction to produced a signal corresponding to subject matter 'outlines', and then introduced level-dependent clipper circuits to remove pre/over-shoots, so that a much larger amount of the 'improvement' signal could be added without causing obvious 'cut-out' effects.

This gave a quite startling increase in visual sharpness, but the added information must not be treated as an accurate reconstruction of what has been lost; rather, it is a 'knowledgeable guess' at the missing information, anti the success of the process shows that the guess is a very good one. The success of the domestic VCR, with bandwidth little more than 2MHz, in producing pictures which the average viewer finds indistinguishable from direct broadcasts, must surely be due to the use of this technique.

Some writers have claimed that the system increases the bandwidth of the signal. This is literally true in the sense that the clipping process introduces frequency components well beyond the bandwidth of the unprocessed signal, and I have even seen a figure put on the visually equivalent bandwidth! However, I personally feel that it is very sloppy to write about bandwidth increase in this undefined manner, and if the equivalent value for an improved picture is to be quoted, then subject matter and viewing conditions must be very tightly specified (I don't think any VCR manufacturer would be daring enough to quote such a figure for fear of being challenged to prove it, although I am sure some would do so if they thought they could get away with it!).

VHS recordings can and do look superb, but all those horizontal-resolution blocks above 2.4MHz have gone, they have gone for good, and all the analogue or digital computer strength on earth is not going to put them back! Thus as mentioned earlier, resolution blocks are of great value in showing exactly what a system is actually doing, but pictures may look far better than the blocks might suggest!

#### COMPARISON OF RESULTS FROM TV AND FILM

This is where the sparks really begin to fly as experience, prejudice, personal judgement and vested interest all play a part. The old hand who has been filming for sixty years and has several thousand pounds worth of equipment will find it difficult to concede that the idiot-proof (and probably idiot-operated) digital camcorder from Dixons might be giving pictures which are technically better than those precious 16mm Kodachromes which he has produced and preserved with such loving care. Similarly, the computer-educated young enthusiast who has just taken up serious video-making will see an ill-advised comparison such as that quoted earlier, recognise it instantly for the nonsense it is, and

dismiss the old hand as a Luddite, while failing to recognise that those old Kodachromes might well have a subtlety and delicacy not yet achieved by electronic means.

It is also very difficult to make a fair comparison of like with like. We know that the bandwidth and hence horizontal resolution of a television system cuts off sharply whereas that of photographic film falls off gradually, so what do we take as the equivalent bandwidth? The response of film may be well down at the band-limit of the television system, but the photographic information beyond this limit may be substantial and may well improve visual sharpness. How do we allow for this? How do we allow for the 'edge-enhancement' effect of reversal-processing and for electronic edge enhancement?

The result of any such comparison must inevitably be subjective, and I shall limit my own opinions to a suggestion that VHS recordings are comparable with Standard-8 film while Super-VHS is similarly comparable with Super-8. Figures substantiate this. The S-VHS bandwidth of 4.2MHz yields 218 cycles per picture width which in turn gives 44 cycles per mm for the 6.4mm width of a S8 picture, which appears on the Kodachrome curve at about -3 dB. This seems to me a very reasonable match, both visually and technically, so as I have stuck my neck out quite sufficiently for one article, I shall reach for the CTRL/SAVE keys.

*And Finally...*

**a chuckle or two**

### **Grime pays**

Lest you think we are the only "nuts" around, I came across an interesting article in today's *Wall Street Journal* (11<sup>th</sup> December 1999).

Under the heading of "Collecting," the title is "Today's Art Lesson: Grime Pays." Referring to antique furniture, (but could equally apply to our stuff,) "For today's antiques buffs, the ultimate status symbol is filth." "But rising almost as fast as prices," (sound familiar?) "is an obsession among American buyers with keeping certain pieces in a pristine-read grungy-state."

Describing a chest of drawers... "with dirt and age darkening the

finish in the molding and crevices of the piece, could fetch as much as \$125,000; zealously cleaned, it might command only about \$70,000."

Another item, a 100 year old, table was bought for \$1,000,000 in 1986. It was submitted to a "light cleaning" by "professionals." When the piece came up for auction, "potential buyers" were allowed to "inspect the nine year old cotton balls used in the cleaning, to show just how little had been done." "With much of it's grime intact, it sold for \$2,400,000.

Another buyer bought a card table "that he paid professional restorers to clean. At his direction, he says, "they did practically nothing."

Perhaps we need to reconsider our obsession with cleaning up our old treasures. Just think how much my 75A-4 might be worth if it was *really* dirty!

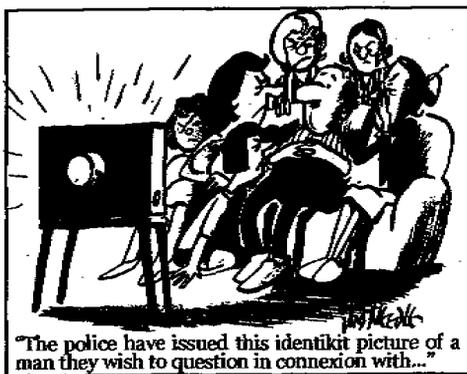
73, Garey K40AH, Atlanta

### Dead boring telly

Wolfgang Dircks sat in front of his television set for five years, the lights on his Christmas tree flashing beside him, and none of his Hamburg neighbours noticed he was dead. "Someone said once he had gone off to a home," said a neighbour. He was eventually discovered as a skeleton with a television listings magazine open on his lap at 5<sup>th</sup> December 1993 and a half-finished bottle of beer beside him. He was 43 years old at the time. The television had blown a fuse but the Christmas tree lights were still flickering.

Mr Dircks, a former toolsmith, was divorced and crippled after a hip operation, and he apparently discouraged people from getting to know him by threatening to whip them. According to the *Bild* newspaper, an unknown person emptied his letterbox periodically, which might otherwise have been a clue., and his two immediate neighbours in the 18-flat block moved in only two years ago, so they had never seen him. Bills were paid by direct debit from the account of his mother, who still lives at an old people's home. Only when the account ran dry did his landlord come to see what had happened.

*Daily Mail*, 19<sup>th</sup> November 1998,  
*Independent*, *Times* and *Telegraph*, 20<sup>th</sup> November 1998.



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## **VIDEO RECORDING for 405 lines**

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### **Will any VHS recorder play and record 405-line tapes?**

No but most will. Basically nearly all UK-standard PAL machines will play and make 405-line recordings, although many of the more modern machines display a ghost image of the main picture displaced to the right of the screen and some of the really new machines will not handle 405 lines at all (you'll have to experiment). The machines which handle 405 lines best are the first-generation 'electronic' ones (these came after the 'piano key' models and were made around 1980-1982). They produce good pictures on 405 lines, without the ghost effect, and are cheap and plentiful in second-hand shops and at car boot sales. Now is the time to buy them, possibly even a second example for spares, as they will not last for ever.

Models to look out for include:

<b>JVC</b>	<b>equivalent Ferguson model</b>
HR 7200	3V29
HR 7300	3V30
HR 7650	3V31
HR 7700	3V23 ('Starship Enterprise')

<b>Hitachi</b>	<b>equivalent GEC model</b>
VT-11	4001

(with care, the video bandwidth can be opened up on this model to 3.5MHz or more, giving better than standard VHS performance)

Bear in mind that to play back 405-line recordings on a standard old-type 405-line VHF television set you will need a modulator (available from Radiocraft Ltd, 56 Main Street, Sedgeberrow, Evesham, WR11 6UF, tel: 01386-882280, or do-it-yourself).

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Covering domestic radio and TV, amateur radio, military, aviation and marine communications, broadcasting, commercial radio systems both fixed and mobile, radar and radionavigation, audio and recording.

## **the Vintage Radio Magazine**

*Articles on restoration and repair, history, circuit techniques, personalities, reminiscences and nostalgia. News, traders' and readers' adverts, letters, book reviews, and a mail-order book service for specialist titles on vintage radio topics. Features on museums and private collections, and a full-colour photo-feature in every issue.*

Radio Bygones is published six times a year, and is available only by postal subscription. It is not available at newsagents. Send £3.25 for a sample copy.

**SUBSCRIPTION RATES:** UK addresses, £18.50 (1 year) or £35 (2 years).

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Rest of the world by airmail £23.75 (1 year) or £44.25 (2 years)

Radio Bygones, Allen House, East Borough, Wimborne, Dorset BH21 1PF

Telephone 01202 881749 Fax 01202 841692



*Cheques, etc., must be in Sterling, and payable to Wimborne Publishing Limited*

**VISIT OUR STAND G/H 1/2 AT THE FAIR and MEET THE NEW EDITOR**

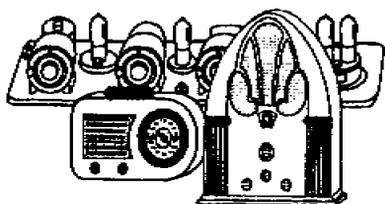
## **NATIONAL VINTAGE COMMUNICATIONS FAIR**

**The next event takes place on  
Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2000,  
in Hall 11 of the  
National Exhibition Centre.**

**Mark your diary now!**

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**NOTE: contact details have changed!**

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e-mail [ARC@antiqueradio.com](mailto:ARC@antiqueradio.com), web [www.antiqueradio.com](http://www.antiqueradio.com)).**

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# THE TEST CARD CIRCLE

This society was founded in 1989 with fewer than twenty members. Since then it has grown in membership to well over one hundred, and has certainly grown in stature. The various broadcasting authorities acknowledge the wealth of information and expertise possessed by the membership, and regularly refer inquiries direct to the society.

All aspects of television trade test transmissions are included within the interests of The Circle: Test Cards and patterns, accompanying music, slides and still pictures, Service Information bulletins, Trade Test Colour Films, and, of course, the dear old BBC Demonstration Film.

A quarterly 48-page magazine is issued which contains lively and interesting articles on all of these topics. Each spring, a convention is held in the little market town of Leominster, where members can meet for a delightful weekend of wonderful music and pictures, good companionship, and pure nostalgia. It is also a great deal of fun.

If you are interested in this fascinating subject, write to the Secretary, 20 Seymour Road, Wollescote, Stourbridge, DY9 8TB, and if you send a 12.5" x 9" self addressed envelope with a 50 pence stamp, we will be pleased to send you a sample copy of the Circle's magazine.

## ASK YOURSELF THREE QUESTIONS...

1. Bored with the same old dreary, overpriced merchandise at collectors' fairs and antique marts?

2. Do you collect any of these?

Stamps and Postal History  
Picture Postcards  
Cigarette and Phone Cards  
Cameras and Photography items  
Coins and Banknotes  
Military, Naval and Aviation items  
Pop, Stage and Screen memorabilia  
Autographs  
Things to do with Sport and Transport  
Old Toys  
Ephemera, Documents and Prints  
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The weirdest kind of Collector's Items

3. Would you like to be offered a selection regularly, often at less than dealers' prices?

Yes? Then it's time you got in on the secret and discovered **DALKEITH AUCTIONS**, an established company in Bournemouth who hold auctions of all these items every month and issue detailed 56-page catalogues in advance. Can't get down to Bournemouth? No problem! Just fill in the bid form and send an open cheque or give us your credit card number. You set an upper limit for your bid and we don't abuse your trust (proprietor is a 405 Aliver!). The system does work! Contact us too if you wish to sell items to a broad range of interested and motivated people.

Enquiries to Philip Howard on 01202-292905. The catalogue of the next auction costs £2 (annual subscription by post £22) but you can phone or write for your first copy FREE.

**DALKEITH AUCTIONS, Dalkeith Hall,  
81 Old Christchurch Road, BOURNEMOUTH, BH1 1YL**

# RECOMMENDED VINTAGE



## CONTRACTORS

**REPAIRS to 405-line televisions and radios.** For details or advice phone Camber TV & Video Centre, 01797-225457 (daytime). East Sussex (T).

**TV & RADIO REPAIRS:** Bruce Adams, 53 Red Leasowes Road, Hasbury, Halesowen, West Midlands, B63 4SE (0121-550 0019). Painstaking repairs and overhauls of old sets, which have won awards for technical excellence and attention to safety details. Collect/deliver throughout West Midlands. (T)

**REPAIRS: 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 (01427-890768) (T).

**REPAIRS:** London Sound (Michael Solomons), 389b Alexandra Avenue, Harrow, HA2 9EF (0181-868 9222). Repair of vintage radio, television and audio equipment. (T)

**REPAIRS & SALES:** Vintage Radio Times (01376-583363). A company based in central Essex, UK, specialising in full radio restorations and sales of restored and non-restored items from the 1930s to the 1950s. We can also locate hard to find sets for specialist collectors. A full list of current stock can be provided by our e-mail address [chris@vintageradio.freemove.co.uk](mailto:chris@vintageradio.freemove.co.uk) (T).

### REPAIRS

"We do three kinds of job—quick, cheap and good. You can have any two of the three. You can have a good, quick job but it won't be cheap. You can have a good, cheap job but it won't be quick. And you could ask us to do a quick, cheap job but it wouldn't be any good."

*Adapted from a repair shop sign in Canada,  
reported in The Guardian and submitted by Mark Brailsford.*

**SERVICE DATA.** The **Radiophile**, publisher of *405 Alive*, has a huge library of service information which is available to readers at very reasonable prices. Please address your requirements to *Graham* at the Admin, Office, *The Radiophile*, Larkhill, Newport Road, Woodseaves, STAFFORD, ST20 0NP or fax them to 01785-284696.

The following firms are also noted, and don't forget the annual volumes of **TV & Radio Servicing** at most public libraries.

**Mr Bentley**, 27 De Vere Gardens, Ilford, Essex, IG1 3EB (0181-554 6631). Thousands of technical manuals and service sheets.

**Alton Bowman**, 4172 East Avenue, Canadaville, NY 14424-9564, USA. Schematics for all USA radio, TV, organ, etc. equipment 1920-1970.

**Mauritron Technical Services**, 47a High Street, Chinnor, Oxon., OX9 4DJ (01844-351694, fax 01844-352554). Photocopies of old service sheets, other technical data.

**Savoy Hill Publications**, 50 Meddon Street, Bideford, Devon, EX39 2EQ (01237-424280). Large library of service data for photocopying.

**Technical Information Services**, 76 Church Street, Larkhall, Lanarks., ML9 1HF (01698-883344/888343, fax 01698-884825), 'World's largest selection of manuals, 1930s to current date, British and foreign'.

In addition, *405 Alive* **Bernard Mothersill** has offered to photocopy (at cost) items from his own extensive collection of service sheets for 1950s and 60s TV sets. There are dozens and dozens, mainly Alba, Ekco, Bush, Ferguson/Thorn, GEC, Murphy, Perdio, Pilot, also a few Decca, Defiant, HMV, KB, McMichael, Peto Scott, Philco, Regentone and Ultra. Write with international reply coupon plus unstamped self-addressed envelope to him at 3 Cherrywood Close, Clonsilla, Dublin 15, Eire.

**COMPONENTS.** Here is a brief list of suppliers; you can have a much extended two-page list by asking for FAQ SHEET 3 and sending one first-class stamp loose plus a SAE to the editorial address. Most valves and other components are not hard to find: we can mention **Billington Export** (01403-784961, £50 minimum order), **Colomor Ltd** (01403-786559), **Kenzen** (0121-446 4346), **Wilson Valves** (01484-654650, 420774), **Sound Systems of Suffolk** (01473-721493) and **PM Components** (01474-560521). A good non-commercial supplier of hard-to-find types is Phil Taylor, 3 Silver Lane, Billingshurst, Sussex, RH14 0RP. For hard-to-find transistors we have heard of - but phone numbers may have changed - **AQL Technology** (01252-341711), **Mushroom Components**, Unit 3 Bradfield Road, Finedon Road Industrial Estate, Wellingborough, NN8 4HB (01933 -275345, fax 01933-275245),

**The Semiconductor Archives** (0181-691 7908), **Vectis Components Ltd.** (01705-669885) and **Universal Semiconductor Devices Ltd.** (01494- 791289). NB: Several of these firms have minimum order levels of between £10 and £20. For American books on old radio and TV, also all manner of spares, try **Antique Radio Supply**, (phone 00 1-602-820 5411 , fax 00 1-602 820 4643). Their mail order service is first-class and they have a beautiful free colour catalogue (or is it color catalog?). Would you like to recommend other firms? If you think a firm gives good service please tell us all!

**STANDARDS CONVERTERS.** Building your own is **not** a realistic proposition unless you already have seriously advanced design and construction facilities. It's not a task for amateurs, not even for gifted ones. Many of the parts needed are available only from professional sources and not in one-off quantities, whilst some previous designs for converters can no longer be copied because the custom chips are no longer made. Unfortunately the production of these marvellous devices has now ceased. Note also our two advertisements in this section for a conversion service.

**MODULATORS.** Two designs for modulators have been published in Television magazine but we don't recommend either today. One uses hard-to-find components, whilst the other one is good but requires you to make your own printed circuit board and wind your own coils very accurately. An excellent ready-built modulator is available from Radiocraft Ltd (telephone 01386-882280). The Dinosaur Designs modulator has ceased production until further notice.

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## *The Spend Zone*

**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.**

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### **WHAT'S IN AND WHAT'S OUT**

These advertisements are primarily for private sales but traders are also welcome. The Business Advertisements (Disclosure) Order of 1977 requires people who are commercial dealers to make this fact clear in their advertisements. The letter (T) at the end of an advertisement indicates that the advertisement is trade' and (NS) that the advertisement has been placed by a non-subscriber.

Test card music and old TV programmes are subject to the same rules of copyright as other recorded works and it is unlawful to sell amateur or professional recordings of same. Swapping same for no gain is possibly not illegal but 405 Alive does not want to test the law on this subject so we will only accept advertisements from people who will indemnify us in this respect.

### **ELECTRICAL SAFETY**

Rules intended to protect public safety now place heavy responsibilities on those who sell electrical appliances. We suggest that any untested items are labelled "Collector's item, not to be connected to the mains without examination by a competent electrician" or something similar.

### **IMPORTANT DISCLAIMERS**

1. Whilst care is taken to establish the *bona fides* of advertisers, readers are strongly recommended to take their own precaution before parting with money in response to an advertisement. We do not accept any responsibility for dealings resulting from these advertisements, which are published in good faith. That said, we will endeavour to deal sympathetically and effectively with any difficulties but at our discretion. Fortunately we have had no problems yet. In related collecting fields, replicas and reproductions have proven to 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!

2. Much of the equipment offered for sale or exchange does not conform to present-day safety and electric standards. Some items may even be lethal in the hands of the inexperienced. This magazine takes no responsibility for these aspects and asks readers to take their own precautions.

### HOW TO WRITE CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS THAT WORK

1. Start by mentioning the product or service you are selling or want. By doing so, you make it easier for the reader.

2. Always include the price. Research has shown that 52 per cent of people who read classified ads will not respond to ads that fail to mention a price.

3. Keep abbreviations to a minimum. Will the reader know what a NB207 is? If it's a 12-inch table model TV from 1956, say so!

4. Put yourself in the position of the reader. Is all the information included?

NOTE: Thanks to referrals and mentions in the press we are now receiving a fair proportion of advertisements of sets for sale from members of the public. We print their descriptions in good faith but their descriptions may not be as accurate or as well-informed as those made by, say, a keen and knowledgeable enthusiast.

**A PLEA!** When sending in your advertisement please do put a date on it. We don't normally type in your advertisement on the day received and instead all small ads go into a file ready for typing later. But what happens then if I come across three undated ads all from the same person and one of them says 'This is my new ad, please cancel previous ones'? It **does** happen, so please be kind enough to date your ad.

### IS IT VALUE FOR MONEY?

It's unwise to pay too much but it's also unwise to pay too little.

When you pay too much, you lose a little money, that is all. When you pay too little, you sometimes lose everything because the thing you bought was incapable of doing the thing you bought it to do.

The common law of business balance prohibits paying a little and getting a lot. It can't be done. If you deal with the lowest bidder, it's well to set aside something for the risk you run. And if you do that, you will have enough to pay for something better.

*Attributed to John Ruskin, 1819-1900.*

**FOR SALE: Mirror Lid TVs**— very rare pre-war RGD TV/Radio/gram. RG382, 1938/9. Fabulous luxury piece, only 3 known. 11-valve motor-tuned radio, 22-valve TV. Some minor parts still missing from radio section, but TV section all original. Complete with original sales leaflet and documents. Sensible offers considered. 1948 Ekco TSC48 Mirror-lid TV/Radio, 100% original and complete, bad woodworm. £250. Steve Harris, On The Air, 42 Bridge Street Row Chester CH1 1NN, Tel. 01244-348468.

**FOR SALE:** Stella ST8917 14-inch 405-line TV, Pye 95/4 24" TV of the 1970s, CRT type A61-120WR (new), TV service information 1950s-70s, chassis of Pye 95/4 TV. Contact Gerald Hardwick in North Yorkshire on 01423-569801 (NS).

**FOR SALE:** HAMLET, THE VIDEO. This is a 30-minute tape sold four or five years ago, with all the humorous Hamlet cigar commercials. It runs 30 minutes and I'm selling it for £5.00 plus £1.00 post. Please ring first to check unsold. Andy Emmerson 01604-844130.

**FOR SALE** (at least it appears that the owner wishes to sell these sets): Grundig Super Electronic P1421GB (white plastic 14" portable); Pye Rambler (gunmetal bronze 14"); Philips 21" set of 1968 in teak cabinet. Mrs Y. Burgess, Rotherham (01709-375237) (NS).

**FOR SALE:** Two Philips T-Vette black and white sets (mains/12VDC, 405/625 switchable). Pye-Ekco chassis, cabinet, 25" tube and many parts including decoder boards, timebases, Ledco colour board, etc. This is an early example of a 405/625 dual-standard receiver. Several EMI Type 8 security cameras, which can be made to work on either 405 or 625 lines as originally designed by simply changing components on Line Scan board. Would make good signal sources. Several vidicons for above, also a 1.25" tube (plumbicon?). Numerous scanning coils, 55 degrees etc., and one or two line transformers. Open to offers on the above. John Tournier G3INZ, 13 Greenlands, Flackwell Heath, High Wycombe, Bucks., HP10 9PL.

**WANTED:** TOP DOLLAR PAID for WWII or older U.S. Navy Gear, THE BIGGER & HEAVIER THE BETTER!

- U.S. NAVY TRANSMITTERS (400+LB) TA > TDY
- SMALL U.S. NAVY TRANSMITTERS TB & TAV
- U.S. NAVY RADIOS MODELS RA > RZ, RAG & RAH
- U.S. NAVY RADIOS MODELS GA > GN, GP & GO
- U.S. NAVY RADIO SE OR C SERIES
- U.S. NAVY TEST EQUIPMENT LA > LN
- ANY SIGNAL CORPS EQUIPMENT WITH A "BC" NUMBER BELOW 200.

Will trade RCA 1850A Iconoscope for Image Iconoscope or Farnsworth Image Dissector. Trade RCA Image Orthicons for Orthicon. Maurice Schechter, 590 Willis Avenue, Williston Park, NY 11596, USA. Phone/fax 00 1 516-294 4416.

**WANTED:** Wanted old British televisions from the 1940s-1950s any condition, working or non working is OK. I will buy them or trade American televisions from 1940s for them. I currently have 60+ sets and looking for more. Send pictures or e-mail with a description. I will pay the shipping naturally. Thanks, Ed. Ed Dessau, 40 Verna Road, Monroe, CT 06468, USA. E-mail [ekdessau@aol.com](mailto:ekdessau@aol.com) or phone 00 1 203-452-1981.

## PAT HILDRED

It is with deep regret that we report the death of Pat Hildred in an accident on 12th. February, 2000. A full obituary will appear in the next issue of this magazine; meanwhile we send our condolences to his wife. A.E.

**WANTED:** Sony TV9-306 9" dual-standard portable TV, must be complete with no parts broken or missing. Contact Alan Moore on 020-8648 6657.

**WANTED** by ex-Ferguson engineer: circuits for VHF modulators and standards converters (405 to 625), also early TV receivers (pre 1951) or radios (pre 1941). Will collect. Please phone Jim 020-9500 4531 (evenings and weekends) or 0780-174 1695 (days).

*NB: we published a modulator circuit in issue 42. The idea of a 405 to 625 converter is intriguing; do any readers have any ideas on this?*

**WANTED:** any video footage of Dusty Springfield or The Springfields. If anyone can help I'll obviously cover all costs. Please write to me, Peter Carlton, 44 Morwenna Park Road, Northam, Bideford, EX39 1EQ.

**WANTED:** If anyone has the track *Fuzzy Duck* by the Jerry Allen Trio, please get in touch with me. Thanks! Andy Emmerson, 01604-844130.

### **SERVICES:**

- **Chappel Engineering Workshop.** Chappel Station, Colchester, Essex, undertakes most turning/optical threading and fabrications in steel or brass. Most types of soldering work and welding. No job too small. Very cost effective, recommended by our Dicky Howett. Contact workshop manager Roger Stewart-Hindley weekdays only on 01787-223057.
- Your vintage audio recordings digitally restored and transferred to CD or cassette, from all formats, including 78's. Prices from £4. Telephone David Laine on 020-8883 3660, e-mail pc4music@dircon.co.uk or write to 16 Barnard Hill, London, N10 2HB, for further details.
- Obsolete format video tapes copied free of charge. I can convert any tapes from the following formats to VHS or S-VHS. Philips VCR (N1500 etc.); Philips VCR-LP (N1700 etc.); Philips V2000; IVC 1-Inch (IVC700,800,900 etc.) and soon Philips EL3400; Philips EL3402; Philips LDL1200; Sony half-inch; Akai quarter-inch. Please phone Mike Bennett on 01395-274227 for details, e-mail mdb@permanent.co.uk
- I will convert your 625-line tapes to broadcast-standard 405 lines on my digital line-store standards converter. Free of charge to subscribers of *405 Alive*. Please send blank tape (VHS only) for output and return postage. Input tapes can be accepted on Philips 1700, EIAJ, Video2000, Beta or VHS. David Looser, Maristow, Holbrook Road, Harkstead, IPSWICH, Suffolk, IP9 1BP. Phone 01473-328649.

*(Publisher's note: These last two offers are most generous and users may care to send a free-will donation towards costs as well. There may be a delay in handling conversions if many people take up these offers.)*

## HOW TO GET YOUR NAME IN *405 ALIVE*

*The chief glory of every people arises from its authors.*

### **WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!**

**Letters** are always welcome and nearly all of them (unless marked *Not For Publication*) get published. Lengthy screeds may be edited for clarity. Electronic mail is also welcome. Address this to [andy@emitron.demon.co.uk](mailto:andy@emitron.demon.co.uk)  
**Advertising rates.** Classified: free. Display ads, using your artwork: £5 per half page, £10 full page. Charges must be pre-paid.

**Notes & Queries** (for publication in the magazine). Keep them coming... and your answers to them.

**Enquiries requiring an individual reply.** These are answered when time permits. You **must** include a stamped addressed envelope **and** preferably also your telephone number (in case it is quicker to telephone a reply). Please be patient—thanks.

**Articles** are also most welcome. We get so many good ones that publication can take sometimes up to a year or so, but don't let that deter you. They can sometimes be held back when we group two or three together when they support a common 'theme'.

**Payment.** We're not a commercial magazine so sadly we cannot pay for material. On the other hand, full-length feature articles do earn the author a place in immortality so that's an incentive. You retain copyright of your article so you are free to offer it—probably in a revised version—to other, mainstream periodicals to earn some money. At least one of our contributors does this very successfully.

**But I can't write like the big names do!** Don't worry. We can sort out your grammar and spelling. It's the facts and your ideas that count.

**How to submit material.** 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 3.5" PC computer disk are also welcome and your disk will be returned. Please process your words in some popular word-processing format, ideally as an ASCII or Word file.

**What else?** We cannot guarantee the safety of materials submitted through the post, so please keep copies of your work, which should be accompanied by return postage if you would like your materials returned. Be sure you have written permission for any copyright photos or words used.

### **BACK NUMBERS**

Some recent back issues are available from the Staffordshire address; send SAE with enquiries.

### **FAQ FILES**

FAQs are frequently asked questions, so we are keeping three files of FAQs and their answers ready for printing out on request for readers. These files will be updated as new information comes in. The files are already quite lengthy and contain material already published, so it would not be fair on established subscribers to reprint them in the magazine. FAQfile 1 runs to 57 pages and covers general points about old TV and how to get old television sets working

again. FAQfile 2 is a reprint on all the articles on test card music and ITV station ident themes; it covers 15 pages. FAQ file 1 costs £3.00 and file 2 costs £1.00 (both post paid). These prices cover just the cost of copying and postage plus the horrendous cost of banking your cheque (68 pence!). FAQfile 3 covers suppliers of hard-to-find electronic components and service data; for this one send one first class stamp and a SAE. (Available from 71 Falcutt Way, Northampton, NN2 8PH; cheques payable to Andrew Emmerson.) In due course (not sure when!) this information will also be available on the Internet for free downloading and printing at [www.strowger.net/405](http://www.strowger.net/405)

### **WOULD YOU LIKE YOUR OWN COPY OF 405 ALIVE?**

Perhaps you are reading a friend's copy— now you can't wait to receive your own copy four times a year. Send a cheque for £16 (inland and BFPO) or a Eurocheque or sterling banker's draft for £20 (all other territories) **made out to The Radiophile**, which will pay for a year's subscription (four issues). We regret credit card transactions can no longer be handled. Send money to 'Larkhill', Newport Road, Woodseaves, Stafford, ST20 0NP, not to Northampton.

### **ENQUIRIES REGARDING SUBSCRIPTIONS**

Please write, marking your letter for the attention of the Admin. Office, The Radiophile, 'Larkhill', Newport Road, Woodseaves, Stafford, ST20 0NP. We regret we can no longer handle telephone calls. Please *do not* ring the Northampton (01604) number either regarding subscriptions since all business details are now handled from Staffordshire.

## **EXCHANGE PUBLICATIONS**

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

**BRITISH VINTAGE WIRELESS SOCIETY:** (for collectors of old radio sets) Mike Barker, 59 Dunsford Close, Swindon, Wilts., SN1 4PW.

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

**NARROW BANDWIDTH TV ASSOCIATION:** Doug Pitt, 1 Burnwood Drive, Wollaton, Nottingham, NG8 2DJ.

**TEST CARD CIRCLE** (TV trade test transmissions and test card music): 20 Seymour Road, Wolfescote, Stourbridge, DY9 8TB.

**BBC TEST CARD CLUB,** Keith Hamer, 7 Epping Close, Derby, DE3 4HR.

**PROGRAMME PRESERVATION SOCIETY:** (aims to help members lend each other copies of old television and radio programmes) Richard Berry, 230 Selsdon Road, Croydon, Surrey CR2 6PL.

**SAVERS OF TELEVISION AND RADIO SHOWS (S.T.A.R.S.):** now incorporated in PPS (above).

**ANTIQUÉ RADIO,** Mose' Edizioni, Via Bosco 4, 31010 Maser (TV) Italy - Tel. 00 39 423-950385; Fax 00 39 423-529049; e-mail: [mose@tv.shinoline.it](mailto:mose@tv.shinoline.it)

**ANTIQUÉ RADIO CLASSIFIED,** P.O. Box 802-A12, Carlisle, MA 01741, USA.

**IRISH VINTAGE RADIO & SOUND SOCIETY:** Henry Moore, 9 Anbara Close, Killybegs, Co. Dublin.

**RADIO BYGONES** (vintage radio technology): Allen House, East Borough, Wimborne, BH21 1PF (01202-881749, fax 01202-881692).

**THE RADPHILE** (vintage radio): Chas. E. Miller, 'Larkhill', Newport Road, Woodseaves, Stafford, ST20 0NP.

**TELERADIO NEWS** (current radio and TV transmitter news, long-distance reception): Keith Hamer, 7 Epping Close, Derby, DE3 4HR.

**TUNE INTO YESTERDAY** (Old-Time Radio Show Collectors Association): Membership secretary: John Wolstenholme, 56 Melbourne Avenue, Dronfield Woodhouse, Sheffield, S18 5YW.

**VINTAGE RADIO PROGRAMME COLLECTORS CIRCLE**, Roger Bickerton, 3 Park Edge, Harrogate, Yorks., HG2 8JU (01423-887452). Caters for collectors of spoken word and other radio broadcasts.

**VINTAGE LIGHT MUSIC SOCIETY:** now wound up following the secretary's unfortunate death.

**ROBERT FARNON SOCIETY** (light music by all composers): David Ades, Stone Gables, Upton Lane, Seavington St. Michael, Ilminster, Somerset, TA19 0PZ.

**MEMORY LANE** (78rpm-era popular music): Ray Pallett, P.O. Box 1939, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex, SS9 3UH.

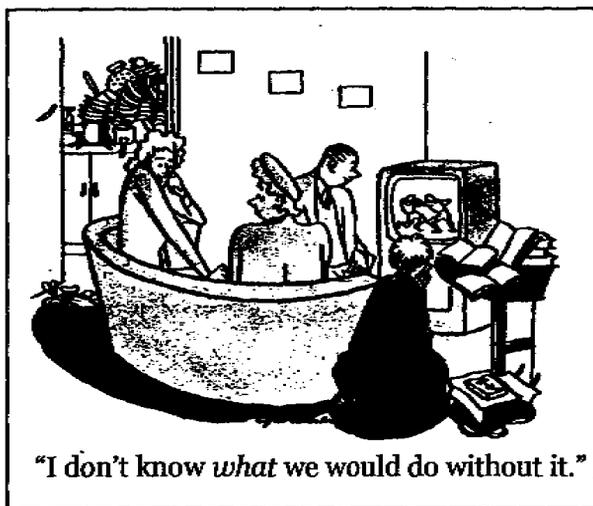
**IN TUNE INTERNATIONAL** (music of the years 1935-1960): 10 Collingwood Drive Mundesley, Norfolk, NR11 8JB.

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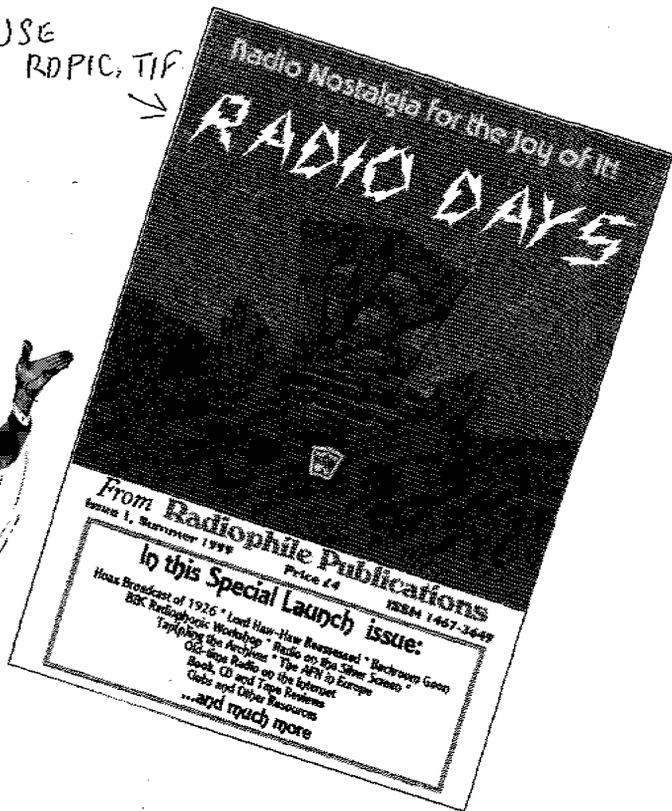
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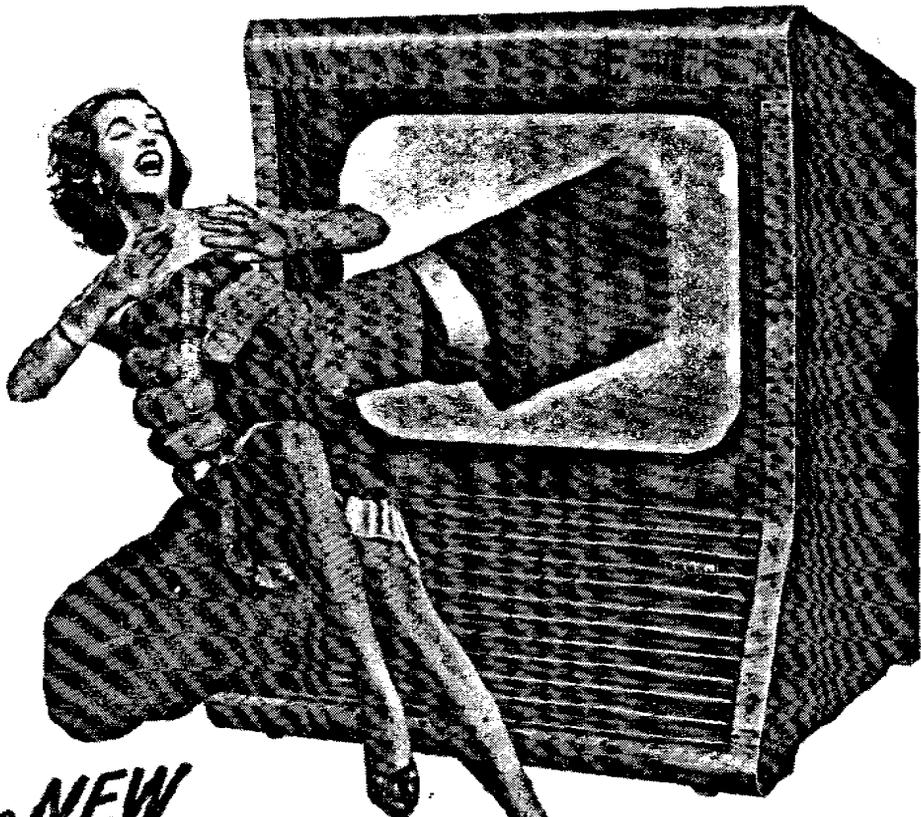
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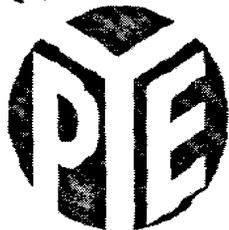
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