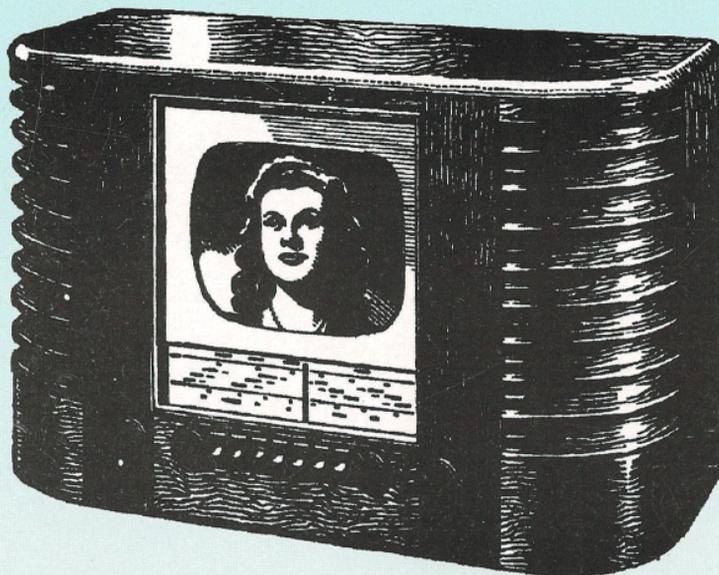


405 ALIVE

Recalling the Golden Years of Black & White Television



Issue 30 - Summer 1996

ISSN 0969-8884

**IN THE MAGAZINE WITH ABSOLUTELY
NOTHING NEW IN IT...**

Admags recalled

The Intermediate Film System

History of Independent Television

Raiders 95 Convention Report

Amos 'n' Andy

... and much more

405 ALIVE

Issue 30, Second Quarter 1996 (slightly delayed)

Editor: Andrew Emmerson

71 Falcutt Way, Northampton, NN2 8PH.

Tel: 01604-844130 Fax: 01604-821647.

Publisher: The Radiophile,

Larkhill, Newport Road, Woodseaves, Stafford, ST20 0NP.

Tel: 01785-284696 office hours only.

Subscriptions: £16 inland and BFPO, £20 all other territories.

Copyright 1996 by Andrew Emmerson and contributors. All rights reserved.
Opinions of contributors are not necessarily shared by the editor or publisher (and a good job too!). Contributors are responsible for the statements they make.

ISSN: 0969-8884.

TECHNICAL NOTE: This magazine is produced on the 405-line system. Please make allowances for occasional reduced definition in illustrations.

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. As you read it, you may also feel strangely mellow and entirely unable to consider doing anything else useful for 24 hours. Alternatively you may feel 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.

We describe 405 Alive as *Your Escape from Ordinary Literature*, but be warned that unwary neophytes have been known to degenerate into hopeless wrecks gibbering meaningless phrases such as 'modulator', 'open reel', 'image orthicon', 'telerecording' and '10 kilocycle line whistle'. Sadly there is no cure, only deeper addiction.

DO NOT PROCEED FURTHER if you are unsure of your ability to handle hard-core old technology. You have been warned. This magazine should not be left out where children or people of an unsympathetic disposition may find it.



FROM THE EDITOR ...

Just a few quick words as we catch up gradually... it may even be possible to publish the third and fourth issues on schedule this year. Whatever next?!!

You will notice a number of contributions that could be termed 'missing, believed lost'. They came to light when the contents of four box files were condensed into one filing cabinet. My apologies to these writers who have had to wait so long before their work came to be published.

Andy Emmerson

IT MAKES YOU THINK

History is not predictive but it is a framework that helps one understand new things. Theories done in historical perspective are just richer, stronger, more robust. *— Benoit Mandelbrot.*

If we had to tolerate in others all that we permit in ourselves, life would be completely unbearable. *— Georges Courtelline.*

No one can be as calculatedly rude as the British, which amazes Americans, who do not understand studied insult and can only offer abuse as a substitute. *— Paul Gallico, U.S. novelist (1897-1976).*

Outside of a dog, a book is man's best friend. Inside a dog, it's too dark to read. *— Groucho Marx.*

Almost everything people believe in as grown-ups consists of lies they were told as children. Culture is nothing more than agreed-upon lies. *— C. S. Hyatt.*

Eccentrics tend to live longer. I assume this is because they are much happier people who do not fall prey to stress. *— Dr David Weeks, clinical psychologist at the Royal Edinburgh Hospital.*

LETTERS, WE GET LETTERS

From Bernard King, Hampton :

Glad to have the latest editions of *405 ALIVE* (27 & 28).

Until my association with this group I had not realised how seemingly insignificant items of television history could, in fact, be of interest to other people. I was reminded of this when reading the interesting piece by Bernard Wilkie on page 56 of issue 27. It was the mention of the 'small brown cuttings from the *Radio Times*' which brought to mind the slim scrapbook discreetly hiding on my bookshelf between Kevin Brownlow's *The Parade's Gone By* and Newnes' *Sound Film Projection*. Similarly endowed with small brown cuttings from the *Radio Times*, the scrapbook lists the first live plays from soon after we first bought one of those little Pye sets in February 1950; I think it cost £48.17.3.

Listed are the plays produced between 11th March 1950 to 29th March 1952. Keeping up the collection of cuttings after that date became rather too time-consuming with the increase in television drama output. There are about 157 productions listed, including series such as the 1952 production of *Pride and Prejudice*, *The Inch Man* (two series), the Sunday/Thursday repeats and, of course, the notorious Lance Sieveking production *A Tomb with a View* (!). So, if anyone has a query about the players, set designers, producer/directors within the above dates, we would be glad to try to sort it out.

May I at this time of writing also mention the article on Group 9.5 (page 46, issue 27)? I do agree with Malcolm Cutmore on one thing; the 9' Pye set – mentioned above and by Mr Cutmore – 'gave nothing but trouble'!

But I was surprised to read that the stalwarts of 9.5 were still 'flying their flag'! When I bought my first movie camera in 1941, a 9.5 Pathé B, I had already become familiar with 35mm, having spent many hours over six years hand-cranking a nice little Ernemann with a small collection of old silent films which, by coincidence, came to us via a Baird Television staff member. After the cinematic pleasure of those few years, and at an impressionable young age, meeting 9.5mm for the first time came as something of a shock! The design of the film seemed to me completely lacking in any logic!

The cassettes were very short run; the edges of the picture area took all the gate-plate friction and the middle sprocket claw rendered the middle of the picture vulnerable to severe scratching if a loop should go above or below the gate. But worst of all was what was known in the old *ACW* magazine during the 40s and 50s as 'sprocket hole disease' caused by the effect of air, contained within the hole, on the adjacent layer of emulsion! I had a reel ruined by this problem.

I noted the mention of converting equipment from 16mm to 9.5mm (II). I did the reverse in 1956 by converting an old Pathé B camera mech to 16mm and placing it successfully into a home-made, hardboard camera body. It worked perfectly with Government surplus film for years until I moved to Standard 8mm. A long time ago I tried to buy a 9.5 projector to show my own small collection of films shot on the Pathé and a Dekko. The prices asked were extortionate!

The next two letters were first published in JOURNAL INTO MELODY, the magazine of the Robert Farnon Society but they are bound to interest some 405 Alivers as well and deserve a wider audience. Details of the RFS can be found, as always, at the back of this magazine.

From Tony Clayden, 64 Exeter Road, Southgate, London, N14 5JS:

I was most interested to read John Leon's comments about the King Palmer composition *The Film Opens* (letters, JIM 126). I came across this wonderful piece in a quite different way. During the late 1940s and throughout the 1950s, the BBC Television Service (as it was then officially titled) broadcast each weekday morning a Test Card interspersed at 15-minute intervals with several segments of what was known as the 'Television Demonstration Film'. It commenced with a potted history of pre- and immediate post-war television, and went on to showcase current developments. These included new transmitters being brought into operation across the UK, the first cross-channel broadcasts, etc. and this section was updated from time to time to take account of the latest advances.

Much of the latter material was accompanied by library music, but its identity stubbornly remained a mystery. Some years ago, however, I was able to view (at the BBC Written Archive Centre at Caversham) a 'Programmes As Broadcast' schedule for 19th August 1952, which gives details of all the musical items featured. Here are just some examples: *Photo Finish* (Wilfred Burns); *Albamarle Stomp* (George Melachrino); *The Film Opens* (King Palmer); *Dance Of The Ghosts* (Montague Ewing); *Paris Interlude* (Edward White); *Clockwork Clown* (Edward White); *Sport Shots* (Dolf van der Linden) and *Brabazon* (Charles Williams).

By about 1955 or 1956, the programme had expanded to include two compositions which I soon got to know and enjoy, although I had to wait for nearly thirty years to discover their titles: *Poodle Parade* and *En Route*, both of course by Robert Farnon. More recently, I have been fortunate to obtain recordings of most of these pieces, together with many others which were regularly used in BBC Television News-reel and BBC Children's Newsreel, and they certainly cause a wonderful tingle of excitement when listened to again after four

decades! I would be very pleased to hear from other readers who have a similar interest in the library music used on early television.

From Gareth Bramley, 3 Newland Close, Toton, Beeston, Nottingham, NG9 6EO:

I am starting to compile an 'Encyclopaedia of Recorded British TV Themes (1955-1995)'. The intention is to give details of *all* possible British television programme themes which made it onto vinyl or CD between the above dates (approx.) although the closing date will depend on when the work is ready for publication. I will concentrate on *original* versions of the themes, rather than cover versions, giving full details of programme, composer, orchestra or group, record label, catalogue number and year of issue.

This reference work will take a long time to compile and check, so I would be grateful to hear from anyone who would enjoy assisting me in this labour of love. Please drop me a line, and I'll send you further details or telephone 0115-973 2431.

From Jeremy Jago, Nottingham:

Reading the autobiography of Britain's first Technicolor cameraman, Jack Cardiff, I noticed on the final page he recalls doing telecine colour effects at the BBC for his film *Girl on a Motorcycle* (released, I think, in 1968). I wonder if any BBC people remember this unusual special effects collaboration between the film company, BBC and Technicolor Labs.

Nothing could have been more of a contrast to the savage mercenaries than *Girl on a Motorcycle*. The book by André de Mandiargues had won a Prix de Goncourt and showed a girl obsessed with her ex-lover while married to another.

Originally, I cast a German girl to play the lead. She was perfect for the role. A few days after engaging her she was rushed to hospital with a drug overdose and I never saw her again. Marianne Faithfull was suggested to me and, after meeting her, I agreed to her playing the lead.

To show a girl on a motorbike for almost the entire film was a stimulating challenge. I used many techniques, one of which was solarization – half-negative, half-positive; it had been used before in small doses, but I was able to use it thanks to a computer system devised by a brilliant backroom boy from Technicolor, Laurie Atkin. I shot the scenes straight, then they were taken to the BBC's telecine department late at night when BBC work had finished. There I had Atkin's magic box with dials on it and I could adjust the solarization to any part of the scene I desired on a tape which would then be transferred to film at Technicolor. It was thrillingly successful and allowed me to solarize sex scenes, for instance, that no British censor would ordinarily allow.

From John Chenery, Southend on Sea:

Congratulations for creating the Temporary Anomalous (Autonomous) Zones (TAZs) in *Telecom Heritage Journal* and *405 Alive*. This allows a mix of old and modern and the irregular period between issues ensures that:

- There is ample time to read and fully assimilate the information and appreciate the more subtle peculiarities of the various articles.
- If an issue is on time, that might also be an anomaly so would equally not be out of place!

I've noticed a few TAZs that perhaps someone could explain:

Why do the subtitles (teletext 888) e.g. for soaps and other pre-recorded programmes on BBC and ITV sometimes not start until 5 or 10 minutes into the programme? Why are they sometimes out of sync. (approx. 10 seconds) with the spoken words and why is it seemingly so difficult for them to get back into sync.? For one episode of *Neighbours*, the subtitles were for a cartoon programme, but no one seemed to notice!

For pre-recorded sell-through videos (particularly the BBC ones) why does the sound often jump between hi-fi (stereo) and normal (mono)? Is there an inherent problem with the recording process?

More likely, it's due to poor maintenance of the video recorders used for duplication but let's hope someone with inside knowledge can answer. John also coined for us the slogan 'Time travel without the Tardis' which I'm rather fond of! [Editor].

From Janos (John) Koreny, Hungarian Television Museum, Budapest:

Thank you so much for the plenty of your magazine in two parcels. I have learnt much of the history of the British TV engineering and enjoyed well reading it. For me I compile a book of our TV history with the photos of vintage TV sets and died announcers and contemporary programmes on its screens. Searching the archive photos is a really thrilling task.

From Rudi Sillen, Limber 31, B-2230 Herselt, Belgium (tel/fax 00 32-14 54 68 69):

Issues 27 and 28 arrived yesterday... good work, nice summer holiday's reading. I adore the stuff by the Dinosaur team about restoring a Pye B18T; more, more, more please!

Some news about pre-war TV receivers that are for sale. I received a few months ago a letter, for sale a Baird Televisor mirror-in-lid TV for £5,000 (yes, five thousand pounds sterling). And another letter from a London dealer for another pre-war set (forget the type) for £3,500.

Early this month (June 1996) there was an auction in Cologne, Germany. For sale five American just post-war sets selling for around £200. There were four pre-war TV sets: a Marconi model 703 from 1937, an HMV model 904 from 1938 and a Cossor model 1210 from 1939. The reserve price (minimum asking price) on each was £2,000 and none was sold as there were no bids by post nor in the auction room.

The only pre-war TV that was sold was the Marconi model 705 from 1937. There was not a bid by post. I was the only bidder in the auction room and I bought the set for the minimum price of £400. The set is missing the picture tube (Emiscope 6/6) and the associated components (deflection coils, timebase assembly and driver stages). Please, I need help to complete this set. I also need help to complete my Pye vision-only set (Hivac picture tube type T5M or another 5-inch tube and also a Hivac AC/TZ triode/tetrode).

As you can see, it's not hard to find a pre-war set – certainly an incomplete set – at a reasonable price. I think the asking price will go down after a few non-sales. Keep on rocking the 405 Alive scene!

*Thanks for your letter Rudi. It's certainly worth reminding readers that several of the British dealers now take their unsold treasures to the **Auktion Team Köln** auctions in the hope of gaining a better price there. I subscribe to their catalogue service and I find the beautifully illustrated catalogue and the list of prices realised (sent out afterwards) a valuable source of information. Their UK agent (for catalogues and information) is Robin Kahan, The Mill, Rimpton Road, Marston Magna, Som., BA22 8DH (tel/fax 01935-851203). [Editor]*

From Dicky Howett, Chelmsford:

In Steve James's otherwise excellent article 'Yes It's Number One' (issue 27) he slightly misrepresents BBC Manchester. Again, it's a case of a good journalistic line obscuring the facts.

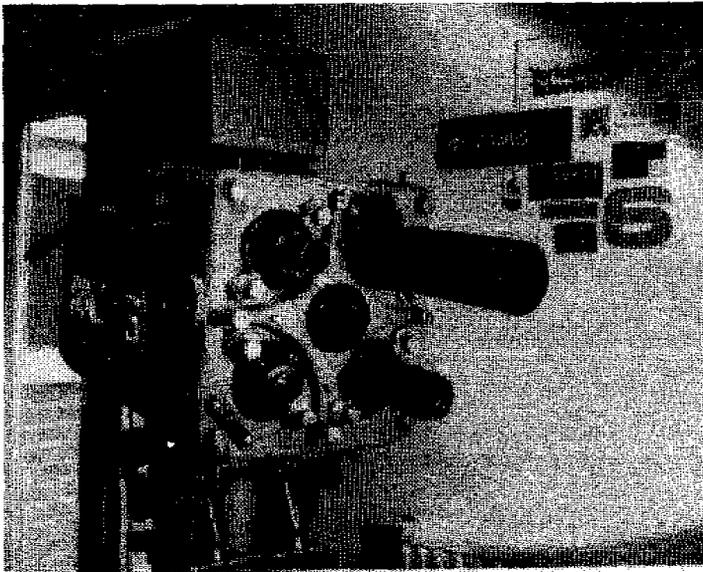
For a start, the BBC's regional Manchester studios were not, as Steve claims, 'under-used'. Shows produced at the Manchester Dickenson Road Studio (now demolished) included *Here's Harry*, *Pinky and Perky*, *Sooty*, many drama productions and quiz shows plus regional news. Plenty of programmes there and not much studio space to produce them in.

Also, the BBC didn't, as Steve says, directly inherit a church in which to stage a sinful pop show. This sounds racy and makes a good story but the tale is not true. To be historically accurate it was in 1947 that a company called Mancunian Films bought the church/chapel in Dickens on Road which had housed previously the Rushholme Wesleyan Sunday School. It was **Mancunian Films** who converted the church into a film studio with its related infrastructure (dressing rooms etc.). During the 1940's and 50's Mancunian Films produced at Dickens on Road many regional films with Frank Randle, Sandy Powell,

Jimmy James and Diana Dors to name a few. The BBC acquired the studio (as studio and not as a church) in 1954 and used it on a drive-in studio basis for its Northern OB unit. In 1957, the studio was refurbished to television studio standards and equipped permanently with four new Marconi Mk III image orthicon cameras. The first show produced at BBC Dickenson Road (23rd September 1957) was *Top Town*.

Continuing the 'church' theme, it's unlikely that, as Steve James asserts, anyone needed to 'pray from the production gallery' in case the 'rather old' studio gear broke down. In 1964 the four studio cameras were by then only a little over half-way through their planned life span (typically 10 to 12 years). The Marconi Mk III camera as a type was extremely robust and produced consistently first rate pictures (look at those AR-TV *Ready Steady Go!* recordings). It's also worth pointing out that regional television engineers generally took great care of their apparatus, knowing full well that they were unlikely to get easy replacements.

Those same four trusty Dickenson Road Marconi cameras continued operating until approximately 1970. The cameras were disposed of to staff in 1976. One of those *Top of The Pops* cameras (no. 2) has now become a treasured part of the Howett Historic Camera Collection.



It's number one! It's number three (actually it's number two). This Marconi Mk III camera – restored and preserved by Dicky Howett – was used by BBC Manchester in its Dickenson Road studio from 1957 to 1970. Apart from *Top Of The Pops*, this camera (with three others) recorded many giants of the small screen, including *Sooty*

and *Pinky and Perky*, all on 625 lines! The side badging and positioning is typical of BBC Manchester.

From Kevin Bygrave, Cogenhoe:

I must say I have found it difficult to put down the two magazines you sent, with such a cross-section of interesting articles to read! Having taken – and still do – certain magazines relating to collecting vintage wireless sets etc., your magazine is brilliant compared to some of these. So well presented and I wish these other groups and societies would adopt the same size format for their journals, magazines, etc.. I look forward to learning a great deal more about the whole subject in the coming months.

I bet some people think I make up letters such as this one ...but I don't, really! And yes, many people say they find our A5 format fits very conveniently in the pocket and on bookshelves. [Editor]

From Dave Hooper, Dublin:

Glad you were able to use the old photograph of my home-made camera and monitor; I am surprised how well it came out, considering the poor quality of the original. The 9-inch monitor was made from a Ferguson 941 which Bernard Mothersill is now renovating, although we don't have the cabinet.

From Brian Renforth, Sandyford:

Recently I picked up a JVC HR-7200 VCR, the original version of the 3V29 of course. After some effort I got it working and it gives the usual excellent results. However... this is a *late* model with the combined servo/MDA board and modified presetter panel – the space where the MDA panel went in early models is left vacant. The point is, this version gives ghosting on 405-line playback, though this is not as bad as on other VCRs. My guess is the stereo HR-7350 (DER-Baird 8940) will give the same fault on playback. Very unfortunate! So it seems only the earlier HR-7200/3V29s are totally suitable for 405-line use.

The Hitachi VT17/19 series (Granada VHS AH3) from 1984 with Dolby stereo gives excellent ghost-free 405 though, although it doesn't like performing cue/review on 405.

From Paul King, Durham:

I was interested in the material in issues 27 and 28 on early Sony portables but I am still in the dark as to the intended market for the earliest one resident here, a micro TV model 5-202V. I've always assumed it is for UK distribution but with appearance indistinguishable from Enrico Tedeschi's 5-303 photography, it clearly predates the 9-306 by a few years. Carrying case, cleaning cloth and earphone are

present and correct but unfortunately no literature; power supply required is 12V DC or 240V 50c/s, which I don't recall being popular in foreign parts... The Chester-le-Street market trader from whom this little wonder was purchased assured me he had been watching it that very morning, no great surprise as the Blank Raster Guild seems strongly represented among local dealers. Still, it does appear to be working, with brightness to spare and moderate breakthrough of FM radio channels.

From Des Griffey, Luton:

Further to Steve James' excellent article on dual-standard televisions in the Green Shoots 1993 issue of *405 Alive*, readers may be interested to know that in 1968 Murphy displayed at a show two 23' sets to retail at 100 guineas. One set's cabinet was painted a leafy pattern of red, brown, orange and yellow on a white background. The other had names of television programmes painted in red and blue letters on its cabinet.

In a 1970s sales book I have, ITT KB show their 'Harlequins' range of single-standard black-and-white sets. These were available in black, tola, clover green and deep gold. At first glance the clover green set has one thinking 'Who would buy one of these?' but further observation of the picture shows a partly green background (even some green apples!) and one can see the set's appeal. A television to match your living room decor.

It seems unfortunate that the aforementioned sets and many other sixties sets (excluding the Philips T-Vette, Perdio Portarama Mk 2 and the little Sonys) don't seem to have survived, yet televisions from the fifties seem so common. I think quite a few collectors consider sixties televisions as junk, which is wrong as they represent an important part of television history and personally, many are visually very appealing.

From Alan Hitchen, Runcorn:

The mention of interludes in issue 28 prompts me to mention that there was another way to plug that awkward gap in the schedule – the Public Information Film.

One that I remember well began with a mother doing some sewing. 'I'll just be a minute,' she says, and a 60-second countdown begins. The child strays out onto the street. She sees a friend on the other side and dashes across to meet her, heedless of the approaching car. The mother says: 'I've finished', just as the countdown ends and we hear the screech of brakes and a dull thud.

This was strong stuff compared to Tufty and his friends, demonstrating the dangers posed by ice cream vans and other road safety matters.

On the lighter side I particularly liked two cartoons featuring a Dame Edna-like woman and her ineffectual husband. One had them

causing chaos in a field, the farmer going red in the face and doing a little dance (of rage). The other had them on a cliff pondering whether they knew the sailor who was waving at them from his sinking boat. Dial 999 and ask for the Coastguard is what they should have done.

More recently, apart from specific campaigns, I have seen two new public information films. Spotted late at night on ITV were *Alcohol and Water Don't Mix* and *Fit a Smoke Alarm*, both featuring actresses from *The Bill*.

Also seen lately was the oft-repeated clip of Mary Whitehouse addressing the inaugural meeting of her 'Clean Up TV' campaign at Birmingham Town Hall. Can anyone tell me what was the dirtiest programme she had ever seen, apparently shown at 6.35pm on Thursday 30th April 1964.

I found some records at a flea market that I thought might be worth mentioning. Firstly some theme tunes.

Capitol 45 CL15274 (1962), Nelson Riddle.

Naked City theme (Billy May) + *The Defenders* theme (Leonard Rosenman).

Decca 45 F11439 (1962), Frank Chacksfield and his Orchestra.

Face to Face (from the overture *Les Francs-Juges* by Berlioz) + *The Sky at Night* (*A The Castle Gate* by Sibelius).

Second, a novelty item.

Pye 7N15464 (1962), The John Warren Orchestra.

Z-Cars Cha Cha (the original theme is the traditional tune *Johnny Todd* arranged by Bridget Fry; this version is arranged by Bob Leaper and very nice it is too!) + *Cha Cha Through the Rye* (Trad., arr. Leaper, Warren).

And finally, I don't know if our magazine needs a theme tune, but I've found one anyway.

DimDisc DIN23 (1980), The Monochrome Set.

405 Lines (Lester Square) + *Goodbye Joe* (Bid).

PS: Regarding my letter in issue 26, I did mean Mark Hall of Cosgrove-Hall Productions.

From Dave Probert, Wednesbury:

I thought I'd mention a little oddity I've come across on 16mm film. It's called *The Latin Touch*, a Latin American music show with the band leader Xavier Cugat. B/W telerecording made around 1965 by Radio-Television of Portugal and Video Productions International. The show is incomplete, perhaps 10 minutes or so short at the start, but the show is in English as are the end-credits (running time 20 minutes).

Quite an entertaining show with ad break captions intact, shot possibly with turret lenses and rather static camerawork more like the 1950s. It's amazing what turns up and cheap, which makes a change.

From Philip Wedge, Toronto:

I've just sent a renewal cheque to cover two years of *405 Alive*. Glad you've got some editorial support at last - and thanks for keeping it going this far.

Re the piece on the *Mickey Mouse Club* in the October issue, I was Manager, Children's Programmes in 1958/59 at Associated-Rediffusion when we bought the UK rights. After heavy negotiations with Cyril Edgar, head of the Disney distribution company in London, I persuaded Cyril to sell us rights to use segments from the U.S. shows in a weekly children's magazine show we were doing, the name of which I'm afraid escapes me (though no doubt John P Hamilton or Daphne Shadwell will come to the rescue with the title! *Yes, DISNEY WONDERLAND... John P.*).

The Disney people tried very hard to get us to run the complete programmes, but took our segment deal rather than nothing, although I suspect Uncle Walt was very miffed at his lovely programme not being broadcast *intacta*. Our show was hosted by Howard Williams, and we did once get him to wear the dreaded EARS. I think he was well compensated, though, by getting to play every week with the massive train layout we set up in the studio as the centrepiece of the set.

And we too ran the Hardy Boys series in our programme in weekly segments.

As a former programmer. I was pleased to see a more even balance between programming and technical material in the most recent issues. Hope this can be maintained.

Finally, I don't know whether you've received any other letters on the subject, but I'd like to express publicly my thanks to John P. Hamilton for organising the terrific ITV 40th Anniversary Party on 21st September 1995. My wife (Lis Kingdon, the former hostess on *Take Your Pick*) and I had a great time and met literally hundreds of old friends.

*Thanks for this letter, Pip! At last you have put my mind to rest over the Mickey Mouse Club all those years ago. I had forgotten about the train set but yes, I really did envy this outfit - and the super layout of **The Story of San Marco** segment in **Blue Peter**.*

As for a better balance between programming and technical material, I do take your point and do endeavour to please everyone. In the final analysis, it all boils down to what our valiant contributors send in! [Editor]

From the late Gordon Sharpley, Flixton (oh dear... several letters have only just reached the surface):

I notice you are selling an RCA 'snail' slide projector. I can remember installing a pair on the old EMI vidicons at Granada; they went in place of two Teloprojectors(also American).

In answer to your correspondent Paul Murton. The ITV companies mainly did their own telerecording, although there were a couple of facilities companies like Visnews who would do recordings for the smaller companies. Granada started with a standard Marconi fast pulldown 16mm system. This was a bit unreliable so a unique system using a modified Palmer camera was invented [see elsewhere in this issue for an obituary of William Palmer]. This gave a full interlace picture for two thirds of the frame and single field for the top third. No one ever seemed to notice this and took it for a full- information picture. Hundreds of episodes of *Coronation Street* were done on this system (which was patented).

In issue 19 Laurence Piper was asking about the early colour test slides. I do have some of these, some originals and some off-air shots. Some of these were the SMPTE set and some invented by the BBC. The girl with fancy gloves holding skis was SMPTE, as was the old clockmender and lady at the foot of the stairs. The original SMPTE set are interesting as they are all originals. About 50 frames were shot of each subject, using a high-quality cine camera (35mm). They were all processed and printed at the same time on the same roll of film; they were then split into separate frames and a set sent to the various labs and broadcasters doing colour TV development work. Thus everyone had identical slides as far as possible! Hope this helps.

From Wilton B. Smith, Upper Norwood:

When I attended the lecture recently by Dr Malcolm Baird about his father John Logie Baird, I met an interesting man, John. W. Grimstone, who had worked for Baird Television Ltd at 133 Long Acre and subsequently at the Crystal Palace in 1934.

He showed me a cartoon which he had drawn depicting 'steam television' leading from 'steam radio', which he said had never been published. He sent me a copy (which incidentally has been autographed by Dr Malcolm Baird) and said he would be happy for you to print it in *405 Alive* if you so wish.

Editor's apologetic note: This is the cartoon we published recently and I would have printed this explanation alongside the cartoon had the two items not become separated!

A very rewarding assignment which I had was on Coronation Day in 1953. EMI had installed a couple of television sets in the Veeraswamy

Restaurant in Regent Street. The owner had modified his first floor room by removing the entire window space facing Regent Street, and installing tiers of benches inside to accommodate large numbers of people so that all could see the procession as it passed by.

The television sets were located so that everyone could see the whole ceremonial all the time. The people there were mainly American and paid a sum of money for the whole day which included all the food and drink they wanted! I persuaded the owner to let me bring my wife along and we both enjoyed not only a prime view of the procession but also plenty to eat and drink free!

We had to be there very early in the morning, coming in by tube, and fortunately the television sets worked perfectly all the time. I remember finding a wallet filled with dollar bills which someone had dropped on the floor; needless to say I soon found the owner who was very relieved. I don't remember getting any reward, however!

From Paul Murton, Manchester:

Thanks for issue 21. Another winner. Also, thanks to Dicky for the details about kinescopes (issue 21, page 9). I was genuinely surprised to discover that they were recorded at 24 f.p.s. This explains why kinescopes don't always look too wonderful when screened on British television these days – too many conversions, too many frames added and taken away all over the darn place!

Incidentally, Brian Summers (issue 21, page 44) can certainly put my name down for a copy when he publishes his superb catalogue of camera types.

From (name missing):

How many times do you pick up a programme listings magazine these days and find there are **no credits** worth speaking of for some classic TV show? A little while ago *The Mail on Sunday* reported that some of the best-known names in television and radio were being urged to boycott interviews with **Radio Times** and **TV Times** because the magazines do not print full cast and credit lists. The Personal Managers Association, which looks after some of the biggest names in films and broadcasting, claimed the policy was killing the careers of budding writers and actors.

FEEDBACK

From Paul Murton, Manchester:

Some additional information about *Sixpenny Corner*. The programme was unique in many ways. It was **ITV's first soap-opera**, and Britain's first five-day-a-week 'soap'. It began on Friday 23rd September 1955 and ran for fifteen minutes every morning, Monday-Friday, 10.45-11.00. From 10th October 1955 it was moved to 11.00-11.15. From 6th January 1956 it was moved again, this time to 19.06-19.20. This second change of slot followed Associated-Rediffusion's decision to scrap its morning programmes. Created by Jonquil Antony and Hazel Adair, the series starred Howard Pays and Patricia Dainton as newlyweds Bill and Sally Norton, who ran a garage in a town called Springwood. The programme was only ever seen in the London area – the stations in the Midlands and North didn't take it. There were 180 episodes and the final edition went out on Friday 1st June 1956.

Les Rowarth's piece about *Sixpenny Corner* (issue 21, page 36) was extremely interesting. Not least because he seemed to imply that all the episodes were telerecorded. This contradicts other sources I've seen, which claim that only the first six episodes were telerecorded and that subsequent editions were broadcast live. However, it certainly seems far more sensible, in terms of studio efficiency, to telerecord all the week's episodes on a Monday. Do any episodes still survive?

Returning to the (never ending) subject of **camera** types. I can now answer my own question from issue 21 (page 16) about the cameras used at Southern TV's original studio centre in Southampton. An old photo I've recently discovered of Southern's opening night in 1958 reveals the camera to be an EMI CPS 10764. This is the first indication I've had that the 10764 was ever used by any ITV companies. Most period shots from the 1950s indicate that the Marconi Mk III and various Pye models were ubiquitous in ITV. But the 10764 appears to have been mostly confined to the BBC. Did any other ITV companies ever use the 10764? Another photo I've found from the mid-1960s reveals the Southern O.B. unit to have been equipped with EMI 203 cameras.

Just to follow up on the item about **TV masts collapsing** (issue 21, page 62). In the same week that Emley Moor toppled over (March 1969) the mast at Belmont nearly fell down. About the Emley Moor collapse. The mast fell on a local church, causing severe damage. Newspaper reports at the time also claim that the mast fell on, and

destroyed, the portakabin that housed the BBC-2 UHF colour transmitter. At least it's nice to know that in a bad week the ITA engineers had something to smile about. You may have seen the documentary short *Emley Moor* on BBC-2 (25th March 1994). This showed news footage of the aftermath of the 1969 collapse and the building of the new concrete mast.

Some additional **continuity announcers** for Tony Currie:

TYNE TEES

David Hamilton (in a TV interview many years ago claimed he was at Tyne Tees during the 1960s; however, I must admit, I don't remember seeing him).

The regular team from circa 1975 was:
Neville Wanliss, Pat Doody, Lyn Spencer.

WESTWARD

By 1973 the regular team was:
Stuart Hutchinson, Roger Shaw, Colleen Gray.

GRANADA

Colin Weston has been at Granada since c. 1985.

The new

Max. 1952

Masteradio

Console television model T854
sells on sight

Model T854 with a beautiful walnut veneered Console Cabinet and a well designed chassis incorporating a mains transformer for greater reliability, and an aluminized 12" tube giving a brilliant picture of extremely sharp focus. A superhet circuit designed to receive all 5 channels has sound and vision interference suppressors fitted, and new time base and synchronising circuits for ease of initial adjustment and freedom from picture distortion.

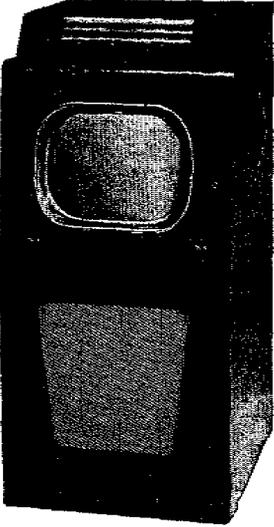
Price 93 gns including P.T.



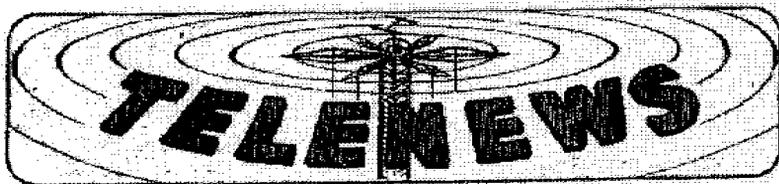
Model T853
Television and Radio combined.

Specification as model T854 but with a 4 valve radio operating on long and medium wave bands, and Radio T/V Change-over switch.

Price 104 gns. including P.T.



MASTERADIO LTD., Showrooms and Sales Dept. 319/321 Euston Road, London, N.W.1.
Head Office: FITZROY PLACE, LONDON, N.W.1. Midland Depot: EDMUND ST., BIRMINGHAM, 3.
Northern Depot: 41 SHUDEHILL, MANCHESTER, 4. Scottish Depot: Engine Lane, BATHGATE.



Enrico Tedeschi reports that his **SINCLAIR ARCHEOLOGY** exhibition held for two weeks in February at Hove Library attracted a lot of media interest and many journalists and photographers were at the opening ceremony to meet Sir Clive who came down especially for the day (and to see his daughter who apparently lives in Brighton!).

It turned out a great success and the Library was bombarded with telephone calls from all over the region. One American visitor (who arrived a few days after the closure) told Enrico that he came straight from Gatwick Airport just to see the exhibition (but he had to be content with a limited exhibition at Enrico's home)

The book which accompanies the exhibition, **Sinclair Archeology**, has been received very well and Sir Clive wrote saying he found it 'astonishing'. The first printing is now sold out and Enrico is now preparing a second edition containing feedback from readers.

MORE EXHIBITIONS

The **Sony** company is apparently planning a historical exhibition of its products for this autumn and they even bought from Enrico a spare example of the first model TPS-L2 Walkman of 1969.

An exhibition of **Marconi Books and Ephemera** will be held at Hove Library, Church Road, Hove, Sussex (tel. 01273-770473) commencing Tuesday 8th October and will run for two weeks.

* For disposal: Pye FV1 TV, complete but c.r.t. broken; Corsor 945T, c1957. Both free to good home. Please ring Colin on 01202 352664.

SOUND OFF - VISION OFF

Jim Palm describes an informal visit to BBC Television's Riverside Studios – back in January 1957!

It was 4.30 on a bright, crisp January afternoon. A small notice on the wall in front of us made it clear that we had arrived at our destination: the BBC's recently acquired Television Studios at Riverside, Hammersmith, in West London. The studios themselves are not new but were originally used for film-making by Gainsborough Pictures.

Once inside the warm entrance hall, we spoke to a commissionaire who duly led along a maze of corridors and into the studio itself, where the strains of a stirring melody met our ears – Robert Farnon's *Derby Day*. We had dropped in to watch rehearsals for one of Bob's regular Sunday night *Music At Ten* shows.

Having pushed our way past hordes of people – make-up girls, production staff, dancers and onlookers, we eventually found a clear space from which we could see the entire studio floor. And what a sight it was. The orchestra was situated on our far right, Bob conducting with his back to us.

Scenery was being shifted energetically about by a group of perspiring a group of dancers pirouetted spasmodically in a corner; gleaming Marconi cameras tracked to and fro with silent grace, and microphones suspended from movable booms at irregular intervals. And everywhere lights – hundreds of them hanging from booms, on floor stands, even on the floor itself.

Bob had been informed of our arrival, and when the next pause in rehearsal occurred he came over and chatted to us for several minutes. The rehearsal was resumed, to the strains of a George Gershwin selection, for which a solo pianist been engaged. A grand piano, minus its lid, had been coaxed into the centre of the floor, firmly secured to a movable wooden platform which prevented the piano castors from digging into the studio floor and creating pot holes – a condition that could cause havoc to a tracking camera.

The Gershwin selection being the final item in the show, singers Doreen Hume (deputising for Vanessa Lee, who was ill) and Edmund Hockridge joined Denys Palmer's dancers and the Orchestra in a delightful selection of the late composer's melodies. Having completed this item, the artistes broke off for tea. We broke off with them, and



**Producer Charles Rogers, with Edmund
Hockridge and Robert Farnon.**

adjourned to the refreshingly ultra-modern canteen, which in itself resembles the vaguely futuristic setting for a television play.

Rehearsals recommenced at about 5.45 and we returned, feeling considerably refreshed, to the studio. At Bob's suggestion we ascended to the gallery outside the producer's booth, and were favoured with a complete run-through of the 30-minute programme.

Following the familiar introduction *Melody Fair* came an interesting Farnon arrangement of George Melachrino's *Winter Sunshine*. Then Doreen Hume sang *Time On My Hands*, the Vincent Youmans classic, followed by Bob's own *Derby Day*, which London members will recall caused something of a sensation at the Society concert last April. A length of film was shown while *Derby Day* was being played, and this could be seen on a closed circuit monitor set suspended from a boom a little way in front of us.

After *Derby Day* came an 'oldie' – Bob's catchy arrangement of *Yes We Have No Bananas*, in which the dancers, in particular, all seemed to be enjoying themselves. Next on the programme came Edmund Hockridge singing a calypso, *Cindy oh Cindy* while apparently sitting in a rolling boat on a somewhat turbulent sea! After this came the selection of George Gershwin numbers, all of which, of course, added to a most enjoyable preview of what BBC televiewers would be seeing at 10.00pm that evening.

A few items were repeated again, just to satisfy Bob and producer Charles Rogers, then soon after 7.00 the rehearsal broke off again and dinner was the order of the day. The artistes would normally have an hour or so for this, then re-assemble for a further hour of rehearsal before dispersing to their dressing rooms to prepare for the live transmission itself.

We set off for home, where I watched the whole show all over again, in company with several million other viewers, from the comfort of my own fireside.

Among the benefits of membership of the Robert Farnon Society are a regular 72-page bulletin similar in format and style to *405 Alive* as well as exclusive access to buying production and mood music CDs not available to the public. Many other CDs can be bought at discounted prices – but only by RFS members! See inside rear cover of this magazine for the address of the RFS.

Following our feature in the last issue on discovery of Baird's intermediate film process camera, a discussion of that process seems appropriate. So it is with great pleasure that we reprint this article by Ray Herbert. It appeared first in **Television**, the Journal of the Royal Television Society for May/June 1987.

The Baird intermediate film process

During the early 1930s the intermediate film system enabled high-definition television transmissions of large studio scenes to be made at a time when electronic cameras were still in the development stage. Ray Herbert, who worked for the Baird Television Company, traces the development of the system and describes its operation.

In September, 1927, R. V. Hartley and H. E. Ives of Electrical Research Products in the USA, described a method of using an interposed film technique for television purposes involving the use of a cine camera and a means of rapidly developing and fixing the film in order that it could be scanned by a disc within a short period. At the receiving end a similar arrangement enabled the television image to be focused on to film emulsion, followed by instant processing and subsequent projection to a screen. This scheme was covered by British Patent No. 297,078 applied for in March, 1928.

During the next few years only brief descriptions appeared in the technical press, one of these being an account in a paper read by J.H. Owen Harries to the Television Society on 8 October, 1930. Fernseh AG, a consortium comprising Baird Television, Zeiss-Ikon, Loewe and Bosch, were the first to carry out serious development work on the intermediate film system. Dr Schubert commenced his pioneering work at the Zeiss factory in 1931 and the following year Fernseh exhibited a prototype at the Berlin Radio Exhibition. It consisted of three separate units – a cine camera mounted on a tripod, the processing tanks and a scanning cubicle, all connected by flexible, light-tight trunking. The film costs were considerable and in 1933 Fernseh had produced a means of re-using the film by passing it through an emulsion coating chamber. This refinement added considerably to the bulk of the apparatus and it was not used in this country.

Practical considerations

In 1932 the BBC had assumed responsibility for the 30-line programmes and both Marconi-EMI and Baird Television had moved on to the problem relating to the provision of high-definition transmissions. Marconi-EMI worked on their Emitron in considerable secrecy, giving very few demonstrations and staking everything on their ability to produce a viable electronic camera by the time that the Television Advisory Committee commenced their review of current techniques. The Baird Company favoured the practical approach and decided to transmit high-definition pictures at the earliest opportunity for demonstration to the GPO, Members of Parliament, the Press and the public. They obtained a lease on 60,000 sq ft of space at the base of the Crystal

Palace South Tower, fully equipped four studios and constructed both vision and sound transmitters. At the end of 1933 these studios were in operation and experimental transmissions were made using a definition of 30, 60 and 120 lines on a frequency of 48MHz. Early in 1934 a decision had been reached to concentrate on a 180-line standard for demonstration purposes. It was considered to be essential that the programmes should have good entertainment value, involving groups of performers in a large studio.

With electronic cameras still in the development stage, the choice lay between the spotlight system using a disc scanner and the intermediate film arrangement. The disc scanner however could only cope with head-and-shoulder shots. Even with a 3ft diameter disc and a 125-amp arc lamp, the very small holes resulted in so much loss of light that only scenes up to 3ft x 4ft could be contemplated.

The only practical solution appeared to be the intermediate film process but there were some inherent disadvantages. Due to the processing time, typically 30-50 seconds, the sound had to be recorded as well and this produced a significant deterioration in the quality. The equipment could only be used from a fixed position and the programme length depended upon the size of the film magazine. A soundproof booth proved necessary to contain the noise generated by the drive motors. Running costs were considerable largely due to the high price of film.

After a lengthy programme of development work, Bairds successfully produced a sophisticated piece of equipment capable of providing pictures superior to those obtainable with the experimental electronic cameras of that period. Interchangeable lenses enabled close-up shots to be obtained, fast film kept the lighting requirements to a reasonable level and the exposed film could be washed and dried for future use.

The Baird intermediate film system

The basic arrangement consisted of a cine camera, developing and fixing tanks, and a telecine scanner, all forming a single unit. The first laboratory model used 9.5mm Pathescope film having centre sprocket holes and this operated at a definition of 180 lines. As the processing time amounted to 11 seconds with the early models, a similar delay had to be introduced for the sound channel and this was achieved by recording the sound magnetically on an endless steel tape. This set-up worked quite well but had several deficiencies. The light shining through the centre sprocket holes overloaded the photocell in the telecine unit and the endless sound recording loop prevented a re-run of the film with accompanying sound. These problems were eliminated by choosing a wider film thus enabling a variable density sound track to be accommodated between the line of sprocket holes and one edge.

The first installation for studio use came into operation late in 1934 just before 180-line demonstrations were given to the Television Advisory Committee. Mounted on castors and situated in a booth with plate glass sides, scenes could be filmed in three separate studios. At this stage the film size had been changed to 17.5mm (split 35mm stock for reasons of economy).

Most of the problems encountered related to the processing side rather than the electronic equipment. Turbulence caused by the sprocket holes resulted in localised development changes, heat from the 80amp arc lamp generated tiny air bubbles in the

scanning gate and particles of emulsion became detached due to the scuffing action of the nip rollers in the sound reproducing head.

Between February and June 1935, over 40 high-definition programmes were radiated from the Crystal Palace to various demonstration locations in the London area. Professional artists provided full-scale stage presentations and these were transmitted by the intermediate film process. The Television Advisory Committee had recommended a minimum definition of 240 lines and in preparations for the forthcoming service from Alexandra Palace, the Baird Company redesigned the equipment for this standard. The new version embodied a number of refinements but the twin disadvantages of bulk and immobility remained.

The 240-line intermediate film installation is shown in the accompanying photographs. A Vinten camera with four lenses in a turret was mounted in a position which allowed full use to be made of pan and tilt operations. The magazine contained 1000ft of film, sufficient for a 20-minute run. Pneumatic jacks either side of the processing tank enabled the film transport mechanism to be withdrawn for threading and cleaning purposes.

With the tank temperature maintained at a constant 28 degrees centigrade, the time taken to process, wash and scan the film was about 50 seconds. For development the solution comprised pyrocatechin, hydroquinone, sodium sulphite, potassium metabisulphite, sodium hydroxide and formalin. The only fixer capable of providing satisfactory results with standard film in the short time allowable was sodium cyanide and its use entailed special handling and disposal precautions.

A 60-amp arc illuminated the film gate, scanning being carried out by a disc driven by a half-horsepower, 3-phase, 100Hz motor at 6000rpm. This disc contained 60 small holes spaced around the periphery and equidistant from the centre as opposed to the usual single spiral formation. By using 60 holes instead of 240, the disc could be kept down to a reasonable size but this arrangement required a fourfold increase in rotational speed. The horizontal scanning component was provided by the rotating holes, whereas the vertical displacement came from the continuously moving film. To avoid weaving due to air resistance and as a means of preventing dust from clogging the minute holes the disc ran in a vacuum.

Synchronising pulses were produced from the scanning disc by an additional series of slots which interrupted an independent light source and photocell combination. The main photocell and preamplifier were contained within a box mounted on top of the motor casing.

The intermediate film era lasted for only a few years and credit is due to the Baird design engineers who carried out some unique research work during this period. The arrival of a viable electronic camera led to the abandonment of this equipment for studio use but it is interesting to note that further development resulted in a miniaturised version which operated from an aircraft in 1939 (*see RTS Journal Television, 1987, Vol. 24/2*).

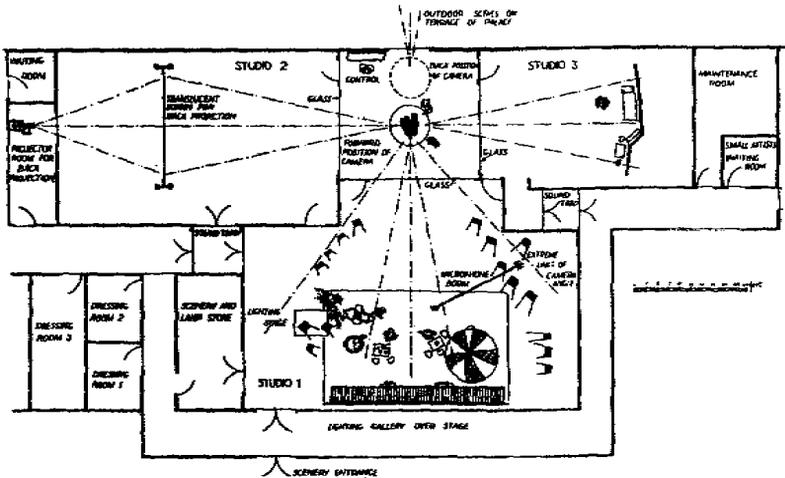
The author wishes to thank G.J. Craig, a member of the Baird design team at that time, for his assistance in the preparation.

Tail Piece

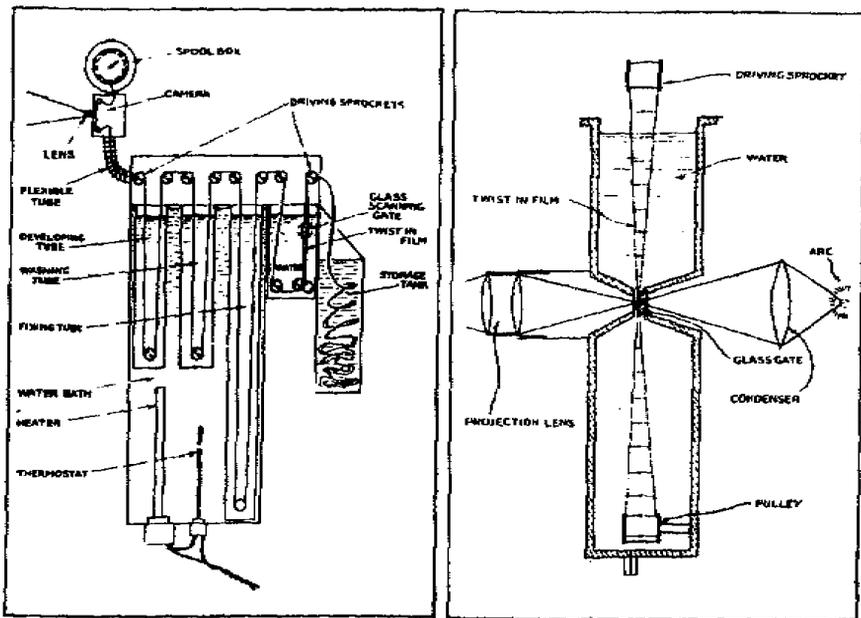
Concerning more recent discussion, Ray adds:

The story about cyanide fixer sloshing about on the floor of A.P. is completely untrue. As you can see from the sketch any leaking from the fixer container would go into the water bath.

Both Alan Lawson, the Baird camera man and Gordon Craig, who built the equipment, are still around. They feel it is highly unlikely that the camera was retrieved due to an unpaid bill.



Intermediate film process studios of Baird Television Ltd. The camera is arranged so that it can be swung round to cover action in three studios.



Left: The mechanical arrangement of the intermediate-film gear used for experimental purposes by Baird Television Ltd.

Right: The scanning gate and optical system of the intermediate-film transmitter.



Apply for details of valves and cathode ray tubes

STOCK & USE EMITRON REPLACEMENT TUBES

No viewer will want to miss the pomp and pageantry of Coronation year for want of a valve or tube.

12XP4	12"	Round
14EP4A	14"	Rectangular
15EP4	15"	Round
17ASP4	17"	Rectangular
65K	15"	Round
109K	10"	Round



EMITRON
REG. TRADE MARK

ELECTRONIC TUBES LTD.

Kingwood Works,
 High Wycombe (Phone 2028).
 Bucks, England

ETV

Valves and Cathode Ray Tubes

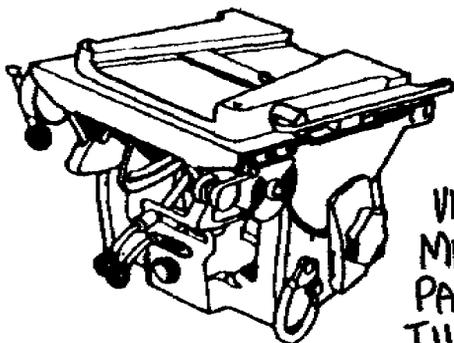
Here's a reminder of Coronation year but the question is this: did Emitron Electronic Tubes Ltd have anything to do with EMI or the *Emitron* camera tube? Presumably not – CRTs made by EMI Ltd were sold under the Emiscope name, so did EMI Ltd fail to register the name *Emitron*? If so, they must have been might aggrieved to see it used by this firm, who were presumably not exactly first-division material. Or what?

A VISIT TO THE PAN AND TILT MAN: Pictorial Reprise

These pictures from Dicky Howett complement his article about Bill Vinten in issue 29...



Bill Vinten with a pristine example of a model 'J' pan and tilt head, inertia flywheel drag.



VINTEN
MK III (A)
PAN AND
TILT HEAD



VINTEN
HP 419
PEDESTAL

*Continuing our focus on allied groups and societies, we turn our spotlight on Kaleidoscope. This article originally appeared in a two-part form, in Kaleidoscope's **Vision On!** and **Raiders of the Lost Archives 2** convention brochures in 1993 and 1994 respectively, both now out of print. It's a comprehensive history of how the system of British television broadcasting came into being, and is now used as learning material for new employees in at least one ITV company.*

For the story of the birth of British television, the first such service in the world, to the gradual construction of the ITV network up to 1964, read on. Further chapters, to bring the story up to date, are promised.

SHUFFLING THE PACK

by Simon Coward

Over the years, the vast majority of the programmes screened by Kaleidoscope were made by companies which no longer themselves broadcast. In recent years we have screened programmes made by both Thames Television and TVS both of which failed to regain their broadcasting contracts in 1992. These two companies will obviously still be familiar, but what about ABC, ATV and Associated-Rediffusion? What about the other ABC? This article will hopefully fill in some background on the formation of these early broadcasting barons.

The British Broadcasting Company commenced sound radio broadcasting in 1922. The following year, the Sykes committee recommended that 'control of such a potential power over public opinion ... ought to remain with the state' but their report did not inspire immediate governmental action. A later committee of enquiry, the Crawford committee of 1926, was primarily responsible for the government's decision to buy up the privately held shares in the BBC and soon after created the British Broadcasting Corporation incorporated under Royal charter. In 1928, television pioneer John Logie Baird was granted a five-year licence to make some test television broadcasts from the BBC's transmitters. Baird's technology was soon overtaken by that provided by a joint venture between EMI and Marconi and when the BBC's television service was officially inaugurated on 2nd November 1936 (it was the world's first public high-definition service) it used the EMI-Marconi system. The Selsdon committee of 1934, and the Ullswater committee after it, also pontificated on the merits and demerits of allowing the BBC to broadcast advertisements but neither came down in favour of the idea. The new television service was short-lived when it was stopped on 1st September 1939 as Neville Chamberlain declared war on Germany.

After the war, the Labour Government of 1946 renewed the BBC's charter for five years, and it was during this time that the London-only television service resumed. The BBC announced a five-year plan in 1949 to build eight new transmitters, beginning in the Midlands, with the aim of covering 80% of the population by the end of that time-span. The Beveridge committee was formed in 1949 to examine the future of broadcasting in Britain. The report, published in 1951, supported the continuing

monopoly of the BBC and, once again, did not favour advertising. That same year, a general election took place and the incumbent Labour party was ousted by the Conservatives. The new government had two months to decide the future of the BBC before its charter expired on 31st December that year - their first act was to put their deadline back by extending the charter for an extra six months. Even this did not give them a great deal of time. The party re-formed their committee on broadcasting policy and a hastily produced White Paper appeared in early 1952. Although it left much still undecided, it did contain the following phrase: 'The present government have come to the conclusion that in the expanding field of television provision should be made to permit some element of competition'.

One of the biggest influences over the course this 'competition' would take was Norman Collins. Collins had been Controller of BBC Television from the late 1940s until the early 1950s, but had resigned when the then Controller of the BBC's Third (radio) programme was promoted over his head when the new position of Director of Television was created. Collins was a fervent supporter of the new medium and believed that the appointment of a man whose roots were in radio to this new important position would slow down the development of the BBC's television service. Shortly after his departure from the BBC, Collins formed an alliance with industrialist Robert Renwick and C. O. Stanley of the Pye company to promote the cause of commercial television. In June 1953, a Labour politician, Christopher Mayhew, formed the National Television Council with Lady Violet Bonham Carter, Lords Brand, Halifax and Waverley and many others - their purpose being, as a letter to The Times stated, 'to resist the introduction of commercial television into this country'. Not to be outdone, Collins, Renwick, Stanley, Lords Bessborough and Derby and others formed the Popular Television Association. They also wrote to The Times pointing out the dangers inherent in a monopoly situation such as existed in the UK at that time, and pressing for competitive television for the British public as soon as possible. As you will undoubtedly realise, the days of the BBC's monopoly were coming to an end. The Television Bill was published on 4th March 1954, and it reached the statute book on 30th July that year. Just five days later the newly formed Independent Television Authority held their first meeting. The first public announcement by the new authority appeared on 25th August 1954.

At this time Lew Grade, together with his brother Leslie, ran one of the foremost artists' agencies in Europe. He was not initially interested in being a prospective contractor feeling he, or his organisation, did not have sufficient funds. One of Grade's business associates was able to assist Grade in coming to an agreement with the bankers Warburgs who would provide the necessary finances. This enabled Grade to start contacting friends and colleagues he hoped could join him in this new venture. He contacted Val Parnell of the Stoll & Moss and General Theatres Group, Stuart Cruickshank of Howard and Wyndham Theatres, Binkie Beaumont of H. M. Tennents and others. Parnell contacted him soon afterwards to inform him that he could not join Grade as his contract was exclusively with Stoll Moss and that the group's owner Mr. Prince Littler was against television, fearing, quite correctly, that it would have an adverse effect on the attendances at the theatres in his group, and would not let him take part. Grade persuaded Littler that television would come about with or without Littler's involvement and on the basis that 'if you can't beat them, join them', he not only persuaded Littler to allow Parnell to join the group but also persuaded Littler

himself. Grade and Littler met Warburgs who appointed Commander James Drummond to the board of the new company. Grade proposed Littler as chairman and with himself as managing director. They named the company the Independent Television Programme Corporation.

ITC, as it soon became known (the 'P' was dropped from the acronym fairly early on even though it remained in the name for slightly longer), was one of twenty-five applications resulting from the advertisement. These twenty-five were quickly whittled down to five serious applicants of which ITC was one. The twenty non-runners are not our concern here, but I shall pause here to give a brief run-through of the remaining dramatis personae in this tale.

Norman Collins, Sir Robert Renwick and C. O. Stanley of the Popular Television Association headed a consortium known as the Associated Broadcasting Development Co. Ltd. (ABDC).

An unlikely participant for the contracts was the British Electric Traction Company (BET). BET had been foresighted enough to acquire an interest in the Broadcast Relay Service as far back as 1947, and had been operating various broadcasting services in Canada for a number of years. BRS/BET's bid for one of the contracts was made in partnership with Lord Rothermere's Associated Newspapers (owners of the Daily Mail).

It was a similar motive to Grade's that persuaded Sidney Bernstein to enter the fray. Bernstein was then a leading theatrical and cinema impresario. Having already witnessed the impact that BBC television had made on his audiences, he realised that he stood to lose more custom once another television network started broadcasting. Unlike Grade, who was not personally disadvantaged by the advent of television (quite the contrary, it was another outlet for his agency's clients), Bernstein had been paying more attention to the new Independent Television Authority and when the request for applications came, Bernstein was waiting. He had no trouble in finding the necessary capital to finance the operation - their initial application assured the ITA that they only had to pick up the phone and speak to Barclays Bank to satisfy themselves that they had access to the necessary £3 million. Bernstein's group took their name from one of his newest cinemas - the Granada in Dover.

The final group within the big five was that formed by Lord Kemsley, owner of The Times amongst other newspapers, and television producer Maurice Winnick. The group were mainly financed by Kemsley's companies and by Isaac Wolfson, the head of Great Universal Stores with Kemsley almost certain to be the leader of the group.

The first contracts to be awarded were for the three main areas, London, Midlands and North, which would not only provide the programme material for their own regions but would also provide the majority of the programmes screened throughout the ITA network once it had come into place. The contracts for each of the three network regions were split in two - one contract covered Monday to Friday, the other Saturday and Sunday. The applicants had been interviewed between 28th September and 20th October that year. On 26th October, the ITA announced the allocation of the contracts.

Of the five front-runners, only ITC was left out in the cold. Paradoxically, the main reason for this appears to be the formidable array of talent Grade had assembled. Afraid that the group would be just too powerful with interests in television on top of all their wide range of theatrical interests, their bid for a contract was rejected by the ITA. It appears that the ITA still envisaged a role for the company, but as an independent programme maker, selling programmes to the other network companies.

The Kemsley-Winnick group began to disintegrate almost as soon as the contract was offered and accepted. Kemsley himself pulled out very early in 1955 with Wolfson following soon, after a disagreement with Winnick. This meant that the vast majority of those earmarked for the board of the new company were no longer part of the group. The ITA decided that the company that remained was now significantly different from the one to whom the contract was awarded and they re-advertised for new applicants.

The Kemsley-Winnick Group were not the only ones to have problems. It appears that ABDC had secured a good proportion of their financial backing on the understanding that they would be allocated the main London contract. When this failed to occur, their backers withdrew and they found themselves without sufficient funds to mount their operation. This problem was certainly exacerbated by the ITA themselves who would not allow extra funding to come from the Daily Express group. Their argument was that two right-of-centre newspapers were already represented within the four companies and it would be ill-advised to include another. At this point no other newspapers had expressed an interest, so there was no question of any paper with centre or left-of-centre views such as the Daily Mirror or The Guardian having been rejected or ignored. By March of 1955, the ITA was getting desperate and so a merger between ITC and ABDC was suggested and eventually agreed. A new company, the Associated Broadcasting Company, was formed with Littler as Chairman, Collins as Deputy Chairman and Parnell as Managing Director.

While this was happening, the ITA was still trying to find a replacement for the defunct Kemsley-Winnick group. No part of the original group re-applied when the contract was re-advertised and likely replacement candidates were thin on the ground. The Associated British Picture Corporation made a bid for the contract but forces within the company were against Independent Television and this probably explains why the application, described as 'half-hearted' by the ITA, was unsuccessful. Nevertheless, it appears as though the ITA viewed ABPC as their main hope and eventually applied pressure at board level to persuade them to submit a more convincing application. When this occurred, they were awarded the contract and immediately the company set up a subsidiary named ABC Television after ABPC's cinema chain Associated British Cinemas.

For a few weeks there was a fracas as both ABCs fought to retain their name. ABPC took the ABDC/ITC company to court but the latter capitulated during a preliminary hearing and agreed to change their name to avoid further conflict. The new name they took was ATV or Associated TeleVision. The four companies still standing, Associated-Rediffusion, Associated TeleVision, ABC and Granada formed the

backbone of the Independent Television Network until the first proper re-allocation of contracts in 1967/68.

The contracts awarded thus far (which initially only ran until 1964) covered England only. Scotland, Ireland and all but the few in North Wales who could receive Granada's output were still tuning into the BBC alone. The first regional contracts to be awarded were unsurprisingly for Scotland and Wales and the West of England. From as early as January 1956 it was assumed that Roy Thomson would be offered the franchise for the Scottish region and this was indeed what transpired although the Independent Television Authority (hereafter referred to as the ITA or 'the authority') did interview representatives from two other groups. Thomson, then chairman of Scotsman Publications, had declared an interest as early as July 1954 before the ITA had even been constituted. Born in Toronto, he had, among many other careers, been involved in broadcasting in Canada, though on nowhere near as profitable a footing as he would be in Britain. The Scottish service (Scottish Television) opened on 31st August 1957 covering Central Scotland. Due to transmitter difficulties, areas as far away as Dundee which were intended to be within the STV area had poor reception until the installation of a new aerial on the Black Hill transmitter in 1959. Despite this setback, it did not unduly affect STV's success which had far-reaching consequences outside the television field. The huge financial rewards gave Thomson (and it was he who coined the famous phrase that an ITA contract was 'just like having a licence to print your own money') the opportunity to acquire the entire Kelmsley group of newspapers including The Times and so create the basis of the Thomson press empire in the 1960s. How different things would have been had the Kelmsley-Winnick application for one of the major contracts succeeded.

The group which won the contract for Wales and the West of England was a consortium headed by the eighteenth Earl of Derby. An unlikely stablemate of Lord Derby was Jack Hylton, a leading theatrical impresario. Their connection resulted from Derby, as Lord Lieutenant of Lancashire receiving the Queen in the north-west during her post-coronation tour of the country. He had invited Jack Hylton to provide the entertainment. The company was named TWW (Television Wales and West) and commenced broadcasting in January 1958. Although not specified in their application nor in any terms and conditions of the authority's acceptance, by mid-1957 the problem of Welsh language programming reared its head. To cut a long story short, it was agreed that a minimum of one hour per week would be in the form of a Welsh language programme and that to count towards this quota, any such programme must be exclusively Welsh in language as well as Welsh in performance. Half of this hour was to be screened in normal programming time. This proved to be easily accomplished and, perhaps partly due to their willingness to co-operate in this matter, they became very much the favourite sons of the ITA.

Nine different groups applied for the next available franchise, that of the south-east of England. Unlike the Scottish and Welsh contracts, the authority found themselves seriously considering how 'local' the applicants for a contract need be. Four of the applicants for this contract were nationally-based and the contract was awarded to one of these groups – an amalgamation of the Rank Organisation, Associated Newspapers and the Amalgamated Press. As would often be the case, the name of the company became a topic for much discussion. The company itself favoured the words 'South of

England' or 'Southern England' in the title while equally wanting to avoid made-up titles like 'Wessex Television'. Finally the name Southern Television was preferred over another suggestion, 'English Channel Television'. Associated Newspapers, the part-owners of Associated-Rediffusion, had already reduced their shares in A-R to ten per cent and a condition of the awarding of the southern area contract was that this remaining shareholding was sold. The company began transmitting in August 1958 to part of their area from the Chillerton Down transmitter. It was not until January 1960 that they were able to broadcast across the region when the Dover transmitter became operational.

On October 1st 1957 the ITA advertised for applications for the contract for North East England. The new company would have to abide by a number of conditions: namely that it would provide or build a central studio and outside broadcast unit and that it would house its management and sales teams within the area. In addition, fifteen percent of programming output would have to be produced locally. As well as the four major contractors, a number of well-known names were involved with groups who applied for the franchise including Isaac Wolfson (who had been part of the failed Kelmsley-Winnick application) and the Manchester Guardian. It was the second of these together with a local group headed by industrialist and JP Sir Richard Pease which made the final short-list with the local consortium finally winning through. The offer was made to this group in mid-December. The company's initial intention was to name themselves 'Three Rivers Television' but this was ruled out by some in the authority as being too obscure. Eventually the name 'Tyne Tees Television' was agreed upon with the two named rivers geographically bracketing the third river, the Wear.

The authority's insistence that all companies retain independent finance and control meant that two of the directors of the new company had to dispose of shares in Associated-Rediffusion and a third, Peter Cadbury, would have to relinquish his directorship of Keith Prowse Music Publishers in which A-R had 55% equity. Cadbury had also made no secret of his intentions to apply for the contract for the West of England and it was made clear that should his application succeed he would be expected to resign his position on the Tyne Tees board. As you will see below, his group were awarded the West of England contract and his resignation came on 20th January 1959, just five days after Tyne Tees began broadcasting.

The East Anglian contract was the next to be made available and four groups forwarded applications in addition to those, once again, from the four major companies. One of the groups, headed by the Marquess Townshend of Raynham included a representative of the Manchester Guardian along with John Woolf of Romulus & Remus Films who had also been party to the Guardian's application for the North West contract. This time they were successful. Once the contract was awarded, the only cloud on the horizon with no obvious silver lining was that of the new transmitter at Dover which would increase Southern Television's catchment area and encroach into the places which Anglia (as the new company was named) hoped to provide programmes. The ITA decided to offer a Kent station as a satellite to one of the existing contractors. Both Anglia and Southern applied as did at least three of the major companies. The majors were rejected, primarily it appears, to avoid increasing their already impressive profits even further. Of the two remaining runners, Southern

pipped Anglia at the post largely due to their commitment to open a local Kent studio and appoint extra staff to handle local news and local advertising.

The most populated area still without an ITV station was that of Northern Ireland. Enquiries had been made of the ITA by interested parties since 1956, but it took two further years before the authority was able to set a target opening date for such a service, which was then possibly as much as another two years hence. Although there were fewer households had television sets than in the other regions, the money-spinning aspect to all the contracts awarded so far brought five applicants. The contract was awarded to a group led by the Earl of Antrim and including Sir Laurence Olivier and film-makers Betty Box and William MacQuitty. The first transmitter, on the picturesquely-named Black Mountain was operational from October 1959 but this left a third of the franchise area uncovered and it would not be until much later (1963) that a second transmitter, in Strabane, would be operation. This did not cheer the new company, Ulster Television, although the fact that a larger percentage of households had multi-channel TV sets did. Nevertheless worries about finance resulted in the company still having only tentative programme-making plans by July of 1959, just three months before they were due on air. Those plans they did have were often at odds with the resources they had available at the time, namely one small studio and no O. B. unit. With the assistance of representatives of ABC, who were brought in to give UTV advice, a workable production schedule was put into place. In fact the company scored a number of local successes in its early days including *Midnight Oil*, a series of forty-two broadcasts by the teaching staff of Queen's University Belfast covering subjects as diverse as medicine, music, history and physics. By 1962 the company was on a sufficiently sound financial base to open a new studio which tripled the amount of studio space they had available.

As mentioned above, Peter Cadbury was intent on winning the contract to provide programming for the South West of England. Despite opposition from eleven other groups, Cadbury's was clearly the most impressive featuring the support of the Lords Lieutenant of all four counties covered by the contract together with local representatives from the TUC, St. John Ambulance Brigade, Mothers' Union, a host of other local groups and the personal support of Daphne du Maurier and Ted Willis. Over 208 shareholders were named in their proposal and all but fourteen of them were resident in the area. The company thus formed, Westward Television, began broadcasting on 29th April 1961. An early problem related to the overlap of the Westward area by its neighbours Southern and TWW. Nothing could be done to prevent this and in any case, some early worries were based on a misprinted coverage map provided by TWW to potential advertisers. The autumn and winter of the first year also saw the Equity strike take effect. Although this was country-wide, the potential damage to a new company as yet without any large profits was great. As the year progressed, Westward's losses grew resulting in the need to cut back. The operational cost of Westward was much larger than that of any comparably-sized ITV company with expenditure on both operations and assets on a much more grandiose scale than was prudent. The ITA were reluctant to assist and while Westward's directors agreed to waive their fees for the year this amounted to only about £6000 a year. Despite the disbanding of their press and public relations departments there was no choice but to make a cutback in the number of production staff. A proposal for 18 (25%) redundancies was made by the board but this was greeted with hostility by the

union, the ACTT. The dispute between the union and the board looked as though it would widen into a national dispute at one point, but eventually an unusual peace formula was agreed whereby the other network companies agreed to take on fourteen of the eighteen if Westward would retain the other four. This was indeed what transpired.

In comparison to the problems faced by Westward, the next three contracts to be awarded - those for the Channel Islands, the England/Scotland border region and the Highlands of Scotland were uneventful. The contracts being won by Channel Television, Border Television and Grampian Television respectively.

The last card in the pack was that of the West and North Wales area. The area housed just over one million potential viewers but over a much larger geographical area than any of the smaller companies had hitherto been expected to cover. The size of the area coupled with the mountainous nature of much of the region meant that at least three transmitters would be needed to provide near full coverage. The advertisement for applications appeared on April 7th 1961; the interviews of those short-listed would take place the following month. In these days the overall responsibility for broadcasting (both BBC and the ITA) fell within the purview of the Postmaster General. Four days before the interviews, the ITA were contacted by the Post Office who insisted that the Welsh contractor provide a distinctly Welsh service containing at least fifty percent locally produced material the majority of which should be in peak time (compare this with the fifteen percent which companies like Westward and Scottish were providing). Despite this, the Wales Television Association (*Teledu Cymru*) headed by Dr. Haydn Williams and the Lord Lieutenant of Glamorgan beat three other contenders to the contract. The ITA contacted the Post Office pointing out that asking a new company to provide what would amount to 30 or more hours a week (compared with, for example, 12.5 hours by A-R or 7.5 by Anglia). The ITA suggested that the company would be hard-pushed to provide any more than one hour per day. The reply was that the PMG could not agree to anything less than ten hours per week, although this total could include bought-in Welsh programmes made by TWW or Granada (although the latter put another spanner in the already overloaded works when they decided to stop production of Welsh language programmes in early 1962). The result of this was that the newly-named Wales West and North (WWN) were attempting to produce five hours a week from the start of their operation - the cost of this provision meant that the company were effectively being subsidised by the ITA and the rest of the network. Nevertheless, by May 1963, the board of WWN concluded that the only possibility for continued operation would be a merger with TWW. Despite further efforts, the company's overdraft increased as advertising revenue came in at a rate much slower than had been hoped for. The ITA deferred the need for payment of rentals from WWN eventually reducing it to a nominal £100 in any case; the other network companies charged WWN nothing for the programmes they provided. Even the PMG agreed to drop the ten hour commitment but eventually the ITA agreed that the proposed merger was the only way out. WWN continued in operation as a subsidiary of TWW until the expiry of the initial contracts in 1964.

When the contracts came up for renewal in 1964 the only change in the make-up of the network was in the awarding of TWW the dual region of the West of England and all

of Wales. The next changes to the make-up of the network would be in 1968, but that's another story.

Reproduced by permission of the copyright holders, Simon Coward/Kaleidoscope 1993, 1994. All Rights Reserved.

Further information about Kaleidoscope and its regular screenings of archive television programmes can be had by sending an SAE to Kaleidoscope, 93 Old Park Road, Dudley, West Midlands, DY1 3NE, UK

And now our square-eyed reporters Dave and Jill Probert give their special review of...

RAIDERS 95

... the Kaleidoscope convention held 5th August 1995.

As usual with the annual Kaleidoscope television event at Stourbridge Town Hall, you have a dilemma – what to miss!

With screenings of around 30 hours of vintage programmes in two rooms and a bar area, you have to choose carefully.

The main feature of 1995's event was *Public Eye* and 'Frank Marker', possibly the most believable private eye in British TV history. With Alfred Burke himself in attendance and telling stories, along with co-creator Roger Marshall, we also enjoyed a return visit from Jonathan Alwyn, who directed some of the episodes. This segment of the proceedings was introduced by Mike Haslett, who probed into the show's history; a question and answer session was included, also an opportunity for autographs and photos afterwards – very nice.

Also guesting this year was Ken Parry. He was introduced by Dave Rogers, writer and TV oracle, with a warning that Mr Parry had been known to utter the occasional 'colourful' word! Cue Ken Parry, commenting it was the first time he'd warranted a health warning; he then continued with some fascinating tales of his life in the business from his start in rep. in his home town of Wigan, to the London stage and his start in films and his early television roles. He discussed some fondly remembered roles in *The Avengers*, *The Sweeney*, *Z Cars* and recently on *Children's Ward*, also stage and TV productions of



Alfred Burke, alias Frank Marker, (right) was in considerable demand for signing autographs.



Upper picture: **Dave and Jill Probert meet Ken Parry.**

Lower picture: **Joint organiser Chris Perry (on the right) looks on with slightly harassed satisfaction as other Kaleidoscope helpers are doing a roaring trade selling tapes, books and other television memorabilia.**

Shakespeare. Also the story of how he nearly landed the role of 'Mother' in *The Avengers*. Being a man who speaks his mind – "I tell it as it is" – he gives his opinions on the lack of proper chances for new starters to learn their way up the business in rep. as used to be the case. Also of some of the 'dreadful' writing in TV drama these days, especially in 'soaps'. He concluded: "My brother thinks I'm mad being in this business, but I love it." Indeed a very likeable and approachable man, even if his honesty could offend some in the business.

Technical problems prevented the intended '405' panel and demonstrations. So Steve Bryant of the BFI/NFTVA, who was already in attendance, showed some clips of the forthcoming *Missing, Believed Wiped* event to be staged in London later in the year... the recently discovered complete evening's ATV transmission from a night in 1964, with some fascinating trails of programmes on that night, with in-vision announcer, advertisement breaks and so on.

Among my own favourites of this particular year's viewing were a hilarious *Captain Pugwash* episode (not for children!); *The Golden Shot* with a star prize of a holiday in Yugoslavia; Yorkshire Television's *Origami* with Robert Harbin, directed by Jess Yates; *Another Audience With Jasper Carrott* complete with during the VT clock countdown a hand just itching to switch it off; and finally the untransmitted pilot of *Love Thy Neighbour* with a different actress as Eddie's wife, Gwendolyn Watts. Very funny.

So with interviews, long-lost plays, unedited studio master versions complete with out-takes and longer versions of programmes even the TV companies didn't know they had, it was a very nice day out. If you felt guilty for enjoying yourself there was plenty of opportunity, via the event programme and buckets for voluntary donations to support the year's good cause, the Royal National Lifeboat Institution. "Good viewing all!"

WHO REMEMBERS ADMAGS?

Andy Emmerson takes a trip down memory lane

If you're younger than 35 or so, it's unlikely that you remember the advertising magazine on independent television, since their brief period of popularity (if that is the word) came to an end when they disappeared from our screens in 1963, following a recommendation for their abolition in the Pilkington Report of the previous year.

Yet in the early days of ITV the advertising magazine or 'admag' was an integral part of commercial programming. So what were admags and how did they come about?

Advertising magazines, or 'shoppers' guides' as they were first termed, were in many ways a follow-on from the advertising documentary seen on cinema screens. They were offered as part of the independent television programming formula as an alternative to 'spot' advertising in commercial breaks and offered advertisers a more relaxed, less blatant means of putting over a commercial message. Most admags lasted about 15 minutes or so and were uniquely British.

Even though they were mind-numbingly banal, they were different from the output of the BBC and many viewers quite liked them. To quote Jo Gable:

'The admag was unique to Britain and there was a kind of backdoor bravado about them in the way every admag transmission cheekily bumped up the amount of advertising per clock hour. But the viewers never complained. They loved the quaint little programmes, which provided the same fascination as flipping through a mail-order catalogue. There was no telling what came next.'

In her book *The Tuppenny Punch and Judy Show* she lists and describes a whole range of now forgotten admag programmes and it would be a waste of space to repeat all those details here. What can be mentioned is that the programmes changed significantly in character over the years.

The first programmes were entirely filmic; they were recorded on film, used film stars and their style was borrowed from cinema convention. Presentation was formal and stylish – which flattered the target audience but hardly accorded with their own lifestyles. Later admags were staged live in the studio and were much more down to earth.

Slater's Bazaar starred actor John Slater openly plugging products, whilst *Send for Saunders* had as its star a concierge in a block of flats, whose residents were constantly running out of household products and borrowing these from Saunders, with free advice on them thrown in. Most popular by a long shot was *Jim's Inn*, a homely pub run by Jimmy Hanley. Regular characters were always dropping in and discussing the latest whizzo bargain they had found, and such was the programme's popularity that an LP album, *Singalong at Jim's Inn*, was cut for fans, featuring the cast singing old-time favourites.

If admags represented such harmless and popular entertainment, why were they taken off? Simply because they blurred the distinction between advertisements and programmes and amounted to sponsored programming, at that time banned by the ITA.

Disdained by the authorities, admags were soon forgotten. Most went out live and were thus not recorded. Not a single complete admag survives in the National Film and Television Archive and of the two they have, *Going Shopping with Elizabeth Allan - Harrods* is the most complete item remaining. It was shown in the London area only and was made for what was then called the Associated Broadcasting Company or ABC-TV, later known as ATV.

FURTHER READING

British Television Advertising: The First 30 Years, by Brian Henry (Century Benham Ltd, 1986).

The Tuppenny Punch and Judy Show: 25 Years of TV Commercials, by Jo Gable (Michael Joseph Ltd, 1980).

LOOKING IN ON LONDON

Jerry Pulice (located in Skillman, New Jersey, USA)

Since I was old enough to reach the controls on a TV set, I have been interested in long-distance television or TV-DX for short. By the time my family had moved to Staten Island from Manhattan (both part of NYC), I had logged at least 20 DX stations, this at the age of 10 (1962). Perhaps this was because I watched TV from Philadelphia (90 miles south), which had a tradition of the Mummers parade, where grown men marched in bizarre costumes on New Years. I was convinced this magic TV Box was showing me that the other side of the Hudson was inhabited with crazy people!!!

Reception was limited to the neighbouring states of Connecticut, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. I had bought, traded, and jealously saved back copies of *Radio-Electronics* magazine, which featured a monthly TV-DX column. I discovered Sporadic-E skip by 1963, logging Cuba, but this was not uncommon during the summer, every year.

The big sunspot peak of 1958 had passed before I was old enough to profit by the big Kahuna-F2 propagation. Every 11 years or so, the sunspot count would rise to the point where the lowest TV frequencies *may* propagate, some 1 per cent or less of the time, with solar noon at the midpoint of the path, during November, being the most probable. Regardless of the slim chances, world-wide TV DX was reported in the fall of 1957-8. *RE* had an article 'Looking in On London', giving the best times to try for a picture, and the required receiver modifications from system M to A (polarity, line and field freq., RF channels). Older 26MHz IF receivers with the last incarnation of US channel one (44-50MHz, deleted in 1947) were favoured for obvious reasons. I NEVER FORGOT THAT ARTICLE.

In 1978, I was working as an electrical engineer for ITT, and had just heard on the local radio that the current sunspot count was going to be much higher than had been predicted, and a possible hazard to astronauts. It was October, about 10AM local, so I turned on an old Hammarlund SW rx that they kept in the lab to 41.5MHz. Lo and behold BBC TV audio – LOUD AND CLEAR!!! Ditto for France on 41.25. Plus video buzz on 45MHz. I had to work fast. I took an old US-standard 19' TV, with 45.25MHz IF, and based my receiver on it. I got the Horz. oscillator to run at 10, 125Hz, but the filament on the HV rectifier got dim, and the picture bloomed, and went out.

So I installed a battery holder!!! Floating at first. anode potential! Before I turned it on, I inserted a fresh battery to light the filament

regardless of the Horz output stage status. The video detector diode was reversed. And I built a six-section Comblines tunable preselector that had about a 2MHz bandpass (6 tuning knobs set the passband center from 40 to 55 MHz). The NY area is densely populated with RF in this band, used for police and pagers.

My regular TV antenna served, pointed east. I first locked 405-line video the day the US embassy in Iran was seized. A mass of multipath, with 10 or more images fading at different rates; sync was not stable. But I saw ENGLAND!! The cycle had not yet peaked, so I planned next fall's attack carefully.

The display had to go. I took a Conrac CM-17A monitor (a b/w studio monitor with regulated high voltage) and got its Horz oscillator to cover an octave, from 405 to 819. It was necessary to use a relay to switch in additional width coil inductance to get to 405 mode. I built a crystal-controlled sync generator for 405, 525/60, 625 and 819. Based on the Hughes HCTR-0320 frequency synthesiser chip, it had 4 VCXOs for the four standards, and a tuning pot was used to hold the image centred on the screen (off-air sync was abandoned due to ghosting). An RF receiver was built from scratch: 36MHz IF, the comblines preselector, and tuned from 40 to 55MHz, mean level AGC. And a 2-element yagi aimed at Europe. It tuned up to WCBS, channel A2, NYC, and worked fine.

Images were recorded on an NTSC VCR, with an off-screen camera. This had an unexpected benefit: noise reduction due to averaging. With the monitor running off a crystal-controlled H timebase, and the vertical counted down from the H, only phasing had to be set once a picture appeared. Therefore the 525/60 camera could be set for high lag, effectively producing a running average of perhaps 50-100 fields. The converted picture had much better perceived signal-to-noise ratio, than the 625/50 display. So now I was ready.

The big day was 9th November 1979. The day before, WWV had announced the solar flux was at 320, the A index at 1 (*extremely* favourable conditions for F2 TV-DX.) I told my boss I'd be out the next day!!! The 10-metre amateur radio liaison frequency for six-metre DX was in by forward (reverse? a lot of echo...) scatter at 05.15, and direct F2 by 06.10. The buzz was building on 45MHz by 06.20. The 625 display actually showed only snow and QRM (man-made interference), while recognisable frame bars and sign of an image were apparent on the scan-converted averaged display.

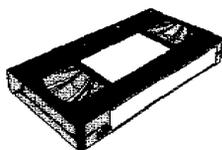
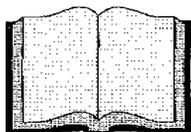
By 08.00, so many paths (the BBC show 'Over the Moon' was becoming familiar) were propagating, the 405-line video was a mass of ghost

images, but with the crystal timebase, at least the sync was rock solid. There was 625/50 on 48.25 and 49.75 by now, too. Immediately identified (the multipath was much less nearer the MUF) were SWF, Germany, ORF, Austria, and CST Czechoslovakia. Then the band began to close. 49.75MHz was like a whispering gallery of a dozen or more stations. Primarily using SECAM, these stations had much wider H timebase variations, up to a ½ screen slide per second. But I did get an off-screen photo of Cyrillic lettering, that is sort of unreadable but defiantly foreign!!!

I saw 405-line video something like 33 times over a three-year period. Some surprises too. While locking French 52.4MHz 819 lines, I ran into a 625-line test pattern. This happened several mornings. I marked the tuning position on my receiver with a question mark. After some checking (and noting the station once signed-on with the same soccer BBC was showing), I was getting Ireland on 53.75MHz. I was not aware of this standard in use.

Now the big question for the 405 group. Many times, when the band was closing, (10.20-10.30 local), an interferer would suddenly appear over the BBC picture. Two out of horizontal sync bars, slanting over the picture would appear, stationary. Measured on an oscilloscope, the mystery video was 819-line rate, almost exactly double the 405 rate. Listened to on a receiver, this 819-line video was broad, not at all like AM with a carrier and pronounced sidebands. I believed I was receiving the subcarrier from 819-line SECAM colour, even though such transmissions are said to have been experimental and long abandoned. Just recently, a German informed me over the Usenet SCI.ENGR.ADVANCED.TV newsgroup that as of 1957, SECAM 819/50 had a 8.37 MHz subcarrier. 52.4-8.37 is 44 MHz, or right in the middle of system A channel one. If you guys can't confirm this, probably no-one can. Perhaps a subcarrier was left on, but unmodulated.

Any ideas, anyone? We'll be happy to pass them on to Jerry.



REVIEWED FOR YOU

40 YEARS OF BBC TV THEMES with Norrie Paramour.

Emporio CD, EMPRCD 633, £3.99.

Music Collection International Ltd, also available on compact cassette EMPRMC 633.

Anyone with more than a passing interest in the music scene will be aware that the CD revolution and with it, the public's insatiable desire to augment their collection of silver discs, has brought a new lease of life to what is called 'back catalogue' material. These recordings are rather like repeats on TV; according to your viewpoint you may either see them as dated and boring or else you may welcome the opportunity to enjoy them a second time round.

This album has certainly been out before but this time around it has an attractive cover featuring a Pye image orthicon camera and an equally attractive price. The recordings are competent but not the original versions, with a bias towards older themes. Titles include the *Television March* (subtitled BBC TV network theme 1946-58), *Dixon of Dock Green*, *Doctor Finlay's Casebook*, *Maigret*, *The Watermill* (Secret Garden), *Marching Strings* (Top of the Form), *Calypso* (Jacques Cousteau), *Come Dancing* and even *Music From The Movies* (the Baird Television and Gaumont British News theme). The only question mark hangs over a tune called *Today's Tonight* (composer: Scott), which is claimed to be the Tonight theme but it's certainly not the familiar tune I remember. No matter - you can hardly complain at the price of this pleasant if harmless disc. [AE]

The following article first appeared in summer of 1996 in the North American Bulletin of the Royal Television Society. We are grateful to the editor of that publication and to the author for permission to reprint it here.

BAIRD IN AMERICA

Malcolm Baird (Hon. Member, R. T. S.)

John Logie Baird is recognised as Britain's television pioneer; he was born and raised in Scotland, and most of his television work was done in the London area. Yet if events had turned out differently, he might have become a naturalised American like another Scottish inventor, Alexander Graham Bell.

Baird's one and only visit to the USA took place in late 1931. The company that had been formed around Baird, Television Limited, had been pushing hard to get television broadcasting started in Britain, but the BBC was hesitant about the new medium. There was a strong case for developing television in the more open regime of the USA where many experimental television stations were already broadcasting in different cities.

So Baird, and the company secretary Walter Knight, sailed into New York on the *Aquitania* in September 1931. By a strange coincidence, Baird had served as an engineering apprentice twenty years earlier at the Clydeside yard where the *Aquitania* was being built.

Baird was well known in the USA. His first public demonstration of television in January 1926, and his historic transmission of television across the Atlantic in February 1928, had captured the public imagination. As late as 1931, television techniques were still largely mechanical and Baird's most recent success was the transmission of the Derby from Epsom to a cinema in central London, where it was seen on a large screen.

Much to Baird's embarrassment, he and Mr. Knight were greeted at the pier in New York by a pipe band in full Highland regalia. They evaded this V.I.P. reception and quietly went off for a meeting with Mayor Jimmy Walker, before continuing to the Waldorf Astoria Hotel. But even here, Baird's troubles were not over because he was besieged by shouting and partially inebriated businessmen trying to make 'deals'. His autobiography *Sermons, Soap and Television* described the scene vividly and amusingly.

Donald Flamm (neither shouting nor inebriated) was the only person with whom Baird was able to conclude a firm 'deal'. Flamm was the owner of radio station WMCA in New York City; he and Baird drew up a proposal for a jointly operated television station employing the latest technology. This was subject to obtaining a license from the Federal Radio Commission in Washington. During the interval while the paperwork was processed, Flamm

arranged a radio broadcast by Baird on Sunday October 18. The broadcast took place from what was then the WMCA building; that building is used today for the production of David Letterman's national nightly TV talk show! The script of Baird's 1931 broadcast is still in existence and part of it is quoted below.

'... the whole atmosphere of New York is very different from that of Europe. It is an atmosphere of 'go ahead' vigour, welcoming of novelty and enterprise. The people here are, to use a New York expression, 'all out for progress', whereas in Europe we are inclined to look with distrust and suspicion on anything new. ... As an example of this, the plans of this well known station from which I am speaking, to go ahead immediately with an up-to-date broadcasting program, and to use all means in their power to further the science, and bring its benefits as quickly as possible to the public at large, are extremely encouraging.

'Our company is installing the necessary television transmitting apparatus and we hope in a very short time to be sending out from this station television programmes similar to those we are now sending out in London, but with this difference, that through WMCA we will have a much longer time available. You are aware that this station has a sole concession for broadcasting the Madison Square boxing matches and it is hoped in a very short time to add to the word descriptions of the fights by transmitting scenes and the actual fight itself. In addition, arrangements have been made for broadcasting outstanding theatrical events such as the opening nights of Broadway productions. It is proposed to do this with apparatus similar to that being used by us abroad, for broadcasting daylight scenes such as the British Derby classic made in June last.

'Throughout the world the highest scientific thought is being devoted to television. Vast strides have been made and will be made in this new art. I myself look forward to seeing at no distant day, television theatres supersede the talkies, and the home television become as common as the home radio is today.'

For several months before his trip to the U.S., Baird had been seeing an attractive young lady called Margaret Albu. She was an up-and-coming concert pianist from South Africa, and she had been among the stream of performers who had passed through the Baird television studios. The attraction was an unlikely one, given the 19-year difference in ages, and the cultural gap between a dedicated inventor and a dedicated musician. Shortly after the WMCA broadcast, Baird contracted the flu and became rather sorry for himself. Donald Flamm said to him, 'Why not ask your girlfriend to come over to the States?' Baird did more than that, he proposed marriage over the phone and was accepted!

So Margaret came over to New York and they were married before judge Murray Hearn on November 13 1931. The marriage and the reception took place at the Half Moon Hotel in Coney Island, a well-known resort area just a few miles from Manhattan. A group photograph of the occasion shows John and Margaret Baird among a large party of business people – but not a single relative from either side of the family! Nevertheless it was a happy marriage and it lasted until Baird's death 15 years later.

Soon after the wedding, Baird and his new wife and Donald Flamm travelled to Washington to attend the Federal Radio Commission hearings. These lasted two days and produced 148 pages of transcript, including Baird's detailed answers to questioning on how he came to develop television. Baird gave a commitment that if the agreement with WMCA was approved, he would spend six months of each year in the USA Privately in conversation with Donald Flamm, Baird said that if things went well he would spend considerably more than six months per year in the USA

The examiner was a young man called Ralph L. Walker. He wrote a glowing report to the Commission and recommended that a construction permit should be granted. All seemed well, and John and Margaret Baird sailed back to England. Three months later, the Commission decided against the application. Objections had been filed by Radio Pictures Inc. (station W2XR) of Long Island City that they could do the research just as well. A strong point in the commission's report was that Baird's company was a foreign organisation and as such it should not be allowed to play any part in U.S. broadcasting! Donald Flamm has observed the irony of this decision, compared to the situation today; communications are global and for example the Australian Rupert Murdoch can hold a dominant position in the U.S. media, and nobody gives it a second thought.

The news of the F.R.C. rejection arrived soon after Baird's return to England. Back in London, he was faced with more challenges because during his absence Television Ltd. had changed hands. The new owner and the board of directors were critical of the fruitless expense of the U.S. trip and particularly the fact that Baird had got married 'on company time'. Baird agreed to pay half the travel expenses out of his own pocket, but the bad feeling remained.

So ended John Logie Baird's visit to the USA. It is interesting to speculate on how Baird's fortunes might have been different if the Federal Radio Commission had not vetoed the joint venture with WMCA. He might then have made the move to the USA and his career might have paralleled that of Alexander Graham Bell, who migrated from Scotland and became one of the icons of American technical history. Certainly, Baird's health problems with the cold damp British climate would have disappeared quickly in the warm air of California or Florida.

But as it was, he stayed on in Britain. When war broke out in 1939, Donald Flamm and Sydney Moseley tried to persuade Baird to move, with his family, to the USA. Baird said it would be 'too much of an upheaval'. Through the war years he continued to work on electronic colour television, despite shortages of money and staff. I can remember seeing high-definition colour TV in 1944. But during World War II there were more important things for the public interest, and Baird's work went largely unnoticed. Nevertheless the Baird patents of the 1940s were at the leading edge of the colour television technology. Baird's health was gradually weakened by the difficult wartime conditions and he died in 1946 at the early age of 57. But for the arbitrary and chauvinistic decision of the Federal Radio Commission in 1931, Baird's life and the history of television could have been very different!

***Acknowledgement:** I am very grateful to Mr. Donald Flamm (Overseas Fellow, R.T.S.) for his encouragement and help in the writing of this article.*

The MZTV MUSEUM OF TELEVISION

The MZTV MUSEUM OF TELEVISION

The MZTV Museum of Television exists in several dimensions – as a physical museum open by appointment and located in the CHUMCity complex right in the heart of Toronto, as an exhibition 'Watching TV: Historic Televisions and Memorabilia from the MZTV Museum' co-produced by the MZTV Museum and the Royal Ontario Museum's Institute of Contemporary Culture; and as an e-museum on the World Wide Web (<http://wwwcitytv.com>)

Part of the MZTV Museum's mission is to reach audiences by means of electronic technologies, including the World Wide Web. Our first e-gallery a display of vintage Predictas, opened 15th November 1995. Our second e-gallery, The Mechanical TV Era, opened in January 1996.

We'll now take a tour of the e-gallery displaying the Philco Predicta sets, probably the most stylish television receiver to come from the USA. If you have a computer hooked up to the World Wide Web, you can see these images in vibrant colour and in much better detail. The rest of us can still enjoy them on paper and in black and white!

Just before we do that we'll touch our caps to:

Producer/editor Liss Jeffrey, **Assistant producer/writer** Iain Baird, **Museum assistant** Susan Casey, *MZTV Museum*, **Design** Davin Risk, **Supervisor** Misha Glouberman, *CityInteractive*.

THE PHILCO PREDICTA



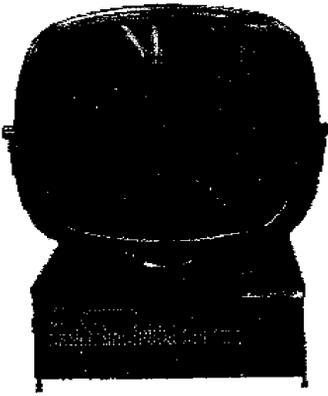
We are beginning our website with a gallery of those classic 50's televisions, the *Philco Predictas*. For those of you who haven't seen one before, Philco's line of *Predicta* televisions are quite possibly the most distinctive sets ever designed in North America.

Philco was formed in 1892 as the *Helios Electric Co.* It mostly manufactured batteries and power supplies, becoming the *Philadelphia Battery Storage Co.* in 1906. It successfully branched out into radio manufacturing in 1927, quickly becoming one of the "big three" radio manufacturers along with *The Radio Corporation of America (RCA)* in New Jersey, and *Zenith Corporation*, which was based in Chicago. Philco's popular *Baby Grand* line of radios were among the ornate "cathedral" or "bee-hive" wooden radios that the reader may have admired in old or nostalgic movies. Despite the depression that followed the twenties, radio sales actually improved as people sought an escape from their surroundings.

Philco began researching electronic television along with RCA in the early thirties. For a few years they financed the experiments of *Philo T. Farnsworth*, the first person to develop a working electronic television apparatus (back in 1927). By 1937, Philco was demonstrating an experimental 441-line television system which utilized a 12" mirror-in-lid television receiver. This ornate but bulky receiver was designed to rival RCA's best effort, the 12" RR-359B.

Philco became a popular television manufacturer during the post-War television boom, which lasted from about 1948 to 1955. Beginning with attractive televisions like the 48-1000 designed by *Emil Harman*, Philco marketed a wide selection of sizes and shapes of televisions. These sets incorporated many technical advances in picture tubes, transistors, set portability, and cabinet design.

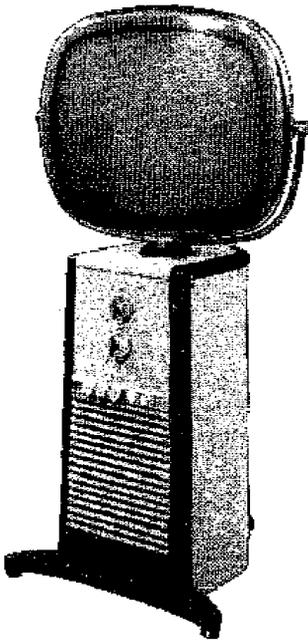
The Philco company began suffering from the declining market for TVs by the late 1950's. Something very innovative was needed to renew the demand for Philco televisions. With Russia's *Sputnik*, the first satellite launched in 1957, the space age dawned. This had a futuristic influence on the design of everything from cars to vacuum cleaners. Philco's design department, already widely known for its innovative radio and phonograph designs, decided to try and stimulate its TV sales by revolutionizing the styling of the Philco televisions away from the traditional square or rectangular shapes that had become the norm by the mid-fifties. The engineering department contributed by making the wide-deflection picture tubes and printed circuits that helped to turn the designers' dreams into reality, by making it feasible to separate the viewing screen from the bulky receiver chassis. The space-age theme was promoted in ads promising "TV today from the world of tomorrow".



MODEL 4243

THE PHILCO "HOLIDAY", 1958

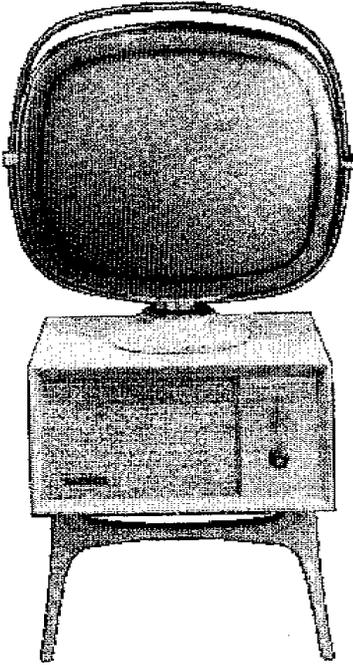
This classic 21" "Holiday" Predicta was designed by Philco designers Richard Whipple and Severin Jonassen. The swivel picture tube meant that viewers could adjust the screen to face them, no matter where they sat in the room. It was heavily advertised and initially sold well at a price of \$269.95 U.S. in 1958. This was the first Predicta offered to the public, and came in a blonde or mahogany finish.



MODEL 4654

THE PHILCO "PEDESTAL", 1958

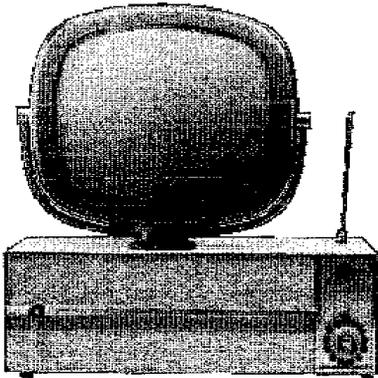
Like the other Predictas the "Pedestal", as it was originally called, was quick to attract nicknames such as "gas pump", "barber-pole" and "the cyclops". This Predicta was designed by Severin Jonassen and Italian-American designer, Catherine Winkler, one of a few women who worked in Philco's design department during the 1950's. She is also believed to have designed the "Old Spice" sailing ship logo. This blonde set originally sold for \$459.95, U.S. and is equipped to receive UHF stations, a rarity at the time. This set was chosen as the trademark television of the MZTV Museum.



MODEL 4710

THE PHILCO "PENTHOUSE", 1958

This **Predicta** was an early attempt at "remote control". The separate 21" picture tube could be placed anywhere, being connected to the main chassis by a 25 foot long flexible extension cable. The cabinet could be positioned for easy tuning and access. It originally cost \$339.95 in a blonde oak finish. A stereophonic version, called the "**Tandem**" was also available. This set was popular in taverns, possibly because the cabinet could be placed behind the bar, preventing arguments (or brawls) over what channel to watch!



MODEL 3410

THE PHILCO "PRINCESS", 1959

This 17" **Predicta** in a perforated and finned metal cabinet is particularly compact and light in weight. A similar model called the "**Siesta**" was available with a clock above the tuner that could turn the set on and then off automatically for the duration of that favourite program. The 17" "**Princess**", "**Siesta**" and "**Debutante**" **Predictas** came in a variety of "dramatic" colours. 17" **Predictas** like this one were originally priced at about \$280 U.S.



MODEL 4730

THE PHILCO "CONTINENTAL", 1960

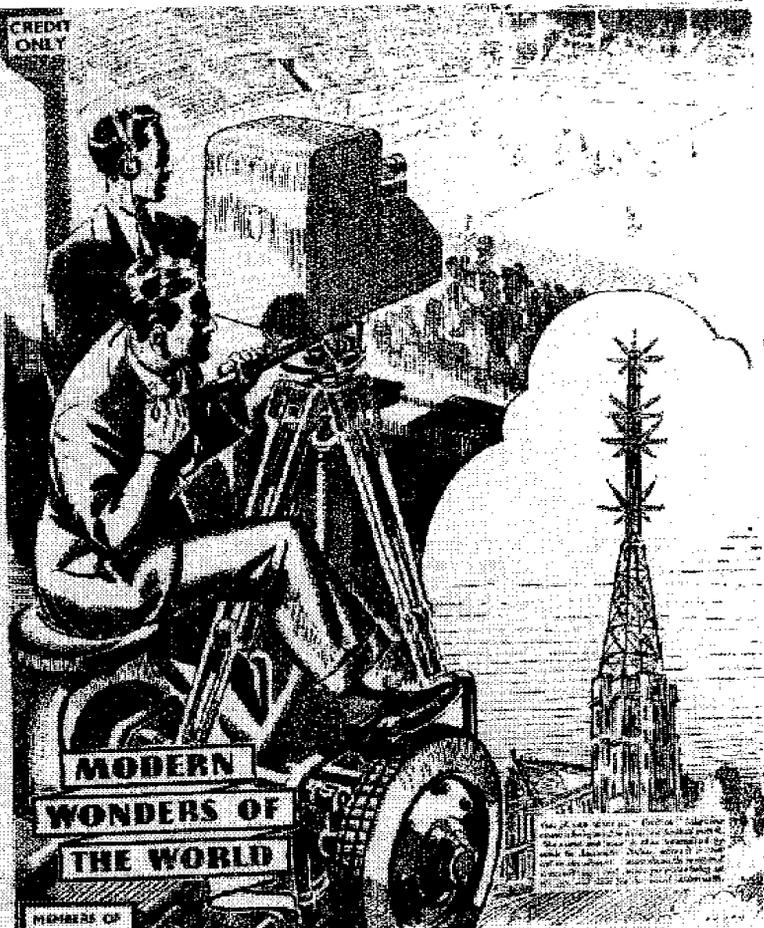
This 21" Danish-Modern style set was the last Predicta television that Philco manufactured. Its square mahogany cabinet was complemented by 4 wooden legs or fins, allowing it to fit in with the current trends towards Scandinavian-modern furniture design.

WHAT HAPPENED TO PHILCO?



As *Predictas* were black and white, the combination of colour television becoming more popular (and less expensive) and internal/external problems with the sets, led to their demise. The worst problem that had plagued the 21" *Predictas* was poor picture tube performance, and this significantly damaged Philco's reputation for reliability. Some remaining sets were sold in bulk to hotel chains. Sadly, in 1962, the Philco company, which had been a significant force in North American communications for over 40 years, went bankrupt. Its remaining assets were purchased by the Ford motor company.

CREDIT ONLY



**MODERN
WONDERS OF
THE WORLD**



There can be no doubt that television is one of the greatest wonders of the age. In time, it will bring a new form of home entertainment to everyone. But still by far the most popular home entertainment is Littlewood's—the Largest and Best Football Pool in the World giving enjoyment to all through efficient personal service.

LITTLEWOOD'S
THE WORLD'S LARGEST FOOTBALL POOL
 H. LITTLEWOOD LTD., LIVERPOOL

A remarkable survivor from the 1938/39 football season, turned by recently by Dalkeith Auctions.

WRIGHT'S REPLAY

Jeff Wright tests your memory again

Emergency Ward Ten

For the spring of 1957, ATV script writer Tessa Diamond came up with the idea for a twice-weekly drama to fill a hole in the schedules: *Calling Nurse Roberts*. But with the racier title of *Emergency Ward Ten*, the continuing drama of life in Oxbridge hospital was an instant hit.

Within weeks the Tuesday and Friday night medical soap was a ratings success and stayed in the top twenty for over ten years. For its first five years it was live, rehearsals took place in a room above a London pub complete with beds and patients.

Nurse Roberts left after a year and fellow student nurse Carol Young played by Jill Browne became the soap's leading star.

Two resident medical experts, a doctor and a retired SRN, were there to make sure they never cut off the wrong bit and the medical profession loved it. One London hospital's operating theatres arranged its lists so that they would end before 7.30. It did wonders for nursing recruitment.

A Minister of Health called it 'vivid and realistic' and said that viewers had learnt that hospital is a warm and human place and not a place to be afraid of.

And what did the viewers think? Mrs Solomons of Leeds wrote: 'I have never missed an episode. Even when I was ill, I crept out of bed. I didn't want to miss it.'

'A week with out Oxbridge seems unthinkable; I should probably sell my TV set,' said one Kent viewer.

In 1961 Ward Ten wasn't off the screen for a week, it was off for five months - due to an actors' strike. Mrs Hamilton was bereft: 'Oh what a loss. I feel I have lost some real friends.'

But Mrs E Hopkins SRN (ex-hospital sister) wrote: 'I am grateful to the strike. The recent episodes have been nauseating.'

Such was Ward Ten's pulling power that on the evening of 22nd November 1963, when news from Dallas of President Kennedy's

assassination broke into the programme, TV company switchboards were flooded with complaints.

Then in 1964 came a plea from James Royle-Stewart: 'Could we have less romance... could we have more realism and away with too much hearts and flowers. And that Dr Large stops drooling over every nurse and that Dr Farmer either marries Miss Mullen or gives *himself* a psychotherapy session.'

1964 saw the sad departure of the soap's star Jill Browne – now Sister Young. After seven and a half years she was written out. Not sad news for ATV though; the show leapt to number two in August's ratings.

Big changes were made in 1966. Probably too late for Mr Royle-Stewart, flirting was out when the twice-weekly serial was changed to a one-hour Thursday night drama series of single plays.

Ward Ten passed its tenth birthday in 1967 but closed for good in June that year with an episode called 'The Last Dance'.

Daily Mail, Thursday, November 17, 1994

QUESTION: When did colour televisions become more popular than black and white sets in this country?

ON February 29, 1976, figures showed that 48.16 per cent of the 17,721,369 TV licences in the UK were for colour sets. A colour majority was reached later in 1976 and by March 31 the following year, 55.14 per cent of licences were for colour TVs.

T. E. Watkins, Luton, Beds.

Studio C – Fact or Fiction?

Simon Vaughan

Following on from Paul Murton's query in *405 Alive* issue 20, page 37, and the articles that ensued, I hope to finally lay this debate to rest.

Recently the Alexandra Palace Television Society Archive was fortunate to receive the television memorabilia of the late Donald Hunter Munro. D. H. Munro was Productions Manager at Alexandra Palace from 1936 to 1939. The memorabilia is a welcome addition to the archive holdings of the Society and contain files on all the programmes D. H. Munro produced between 1936-39, some of his diaries, and numerous files documenting life within the television service before the Second World War.

To return to the subject in hand, the existence of Studio C. After the Baird system was dropped in February 1937, Studio B was immediately put to good use as extra rehearsal space. Plans were drawn up for alterations and M-EMI equipment to be installed in Studio B.

It soon became apparent that the two studios were vastly inadequate for the fledging service, and additional studio space was required. Detailed plans were drawn up for the conversion of the old Victorian theatre at Alexandra Palace into a television studio, (Studio C), able to stage full West-End theatre productions.

Minutes from a meeting held on 13th October 1937, marked 'Private and Confidential', list the following points with regard to the Theatre studio:

The Theatre should be operated as one unit which would include telecine and epidiascope equipment and local O.B. facilities.

- ❖ The maximum number of cameras in use in the Theatre unit at any one time should be six.
- ❖ One main picture channel and two previewing channels should be available in Studio C Control Room
- ❖ Five monitors, excluding spares, should be available in Studio C Control Room:

- Main picture channel monitor showing the Theatre Studio transmission.
 - Two Preview monitors showing Studio C preview
 - Two monitors for all other programme sources other than Studio C.
- ❖ A maximum of twelve camera channels should be available, and that these must include all camera sources whether studio, film, epidiascope, or local O.B.
 - ❖ Theatre sound equipment was to include:
 - Twelve microphones
 - One four-channel turntable gramophone unit independently faded and mixed at source.
 - Two film sound heads.
 - One local O.B. sound channel with independent fading and mixing.

A meeting of the Control Board which met on 19th January 1938 decided to proceed with the conversion of the theatre, much to the annoyance of D. H. Munro, who on the 20th January, sent a memo to the D. Tel. (Director of Television), stating that in his opinion 'this scheme was already out of date'

But the decision to create a third studio, Studio C, still went ahead. By 1938 meetings had taken place with Marconi-EMI, who had improved their equipment greatly. Minutes of a meeting held on 2nd February, again marked 'Private & Confidential' report the following:

- ❖ By alterations in design and by use of remote control, much less apparatus and fewer technical staff need to be housed in the control room.
- ❖ A monitor would be provided in the control room for each camera on the floor.

- ❖ The control room should be in the middle of the north side of the auditorium.
- ❖ Ability to see the studio was an advantage to Producers but not essential to them.
- ❖ The height of the controlling staff above the floor could be much reduced from the present position in Studio A.
- ❖ Tilt-and-bend operators should work to scripts, so as to ensure that the number of preview monitors showing a picture at any given time is confined to those associated with the camera likely to be in use in the near future.
- ❖ The transmission monitor should have a distinctive position, to avoid confusion.
- ❖ Monitor numbers should be permanently associated with cameras.
- ❖ No light-dimming apparatus was necessary.

Debate after debate continued until the outbreak of the Second World War, when as we know the service was closed-down. As can be seen from the attached memo, yet again marked 'Private & Confidential', by June 1939 the opinion had changed, 'We are, however, very doubtful whether Studio C will meet the requirements of 1942. In our opinion the only way to ensure that suitable facilities exist for expansion by 1942 is to abandon the Theatre scheme and to concentrate immediately on the selection of a site with a view to building next year.

So, there we have it, Studio C was a grandiose scheme devised to alleviate the growing problem of studio space at Alexandra Palace. It did exist although only on paper, between the years 1937 and 1939.

TALES OF EARLY (NTSC) COLOUR TELEVISION

John Anastasio, Trenton, NJ (via the Internet)

This is a true story, about the blue banana. It was told to me by the guy who painted the banana. The colour tests were done from the NBC transmitter in Manhattan after sign-off at night. The engineers were in a lab out in Long Island trying to evaluate the system. The studio always kept a young lady in makeup around to test the flesh tones and a bowl of fruit for the other colours. Every now and then the engineers would call up and ask for one or the other to be placed in front of the camera (there weren't any standardised NTSC colour bars yet, I'll assume).

The fellows in Manhattan got a little tired of the routine and decided to play a little joke. The call came in hours later that everyone in the lab had given up for the night out of frustration and gone home. Every time they got the fruit bowl looking good, the model looked like hell!

As an interesting aside to all this: I worked for a number of years in Princeton with a woman whose father worked at the Sarnoff Labs back in the late forties and fifties and she once told me of seeing her first colour TV demonstration there. The first shadow mask kinescopes were so inefficient that they had to run them at extremely high voltages and crank the filaments up to supernova heat to make them give a 'decent' picture. They would only last about four hours before total burnout. Still... the system was NTSC compatible.

An RCA engineer once told me that NTSC really stands for 'Never The Same Colour'. I can remember trying to align my first colour set, a 21" RCA with a round tube. Every time I vacuumed the rug, I had to make a wide berth around it to avoid upsetting the convergence with the motor. Lord help you if you moved the set! I kept the test generator on the floor behind it for convenience.

GATHERED HERE AND THERE...

QUESTION: How did Michael Bentine produce his special effects on TV in the days before computer graphics?

I joined the BBC visual effects department in 1965 and worked on his *Square World* series. Most of the effects were pretty simple: footprints made by 'invisible men' involved cutting holes in a cardboard base, sticking a paper strip underneath and covering it with sand. At the right moment, the strip was peeled off and the sand fell through (usually into the operator's eyes) and footprints appeared.

Other models were animated by tiny electric motors, nylon lines, magnets, small explosive charges and bits of old clocks.

There were usually two of us jammed uncomfortably under the model with an array of switches, buttons, cords and wires. We rehearsed twice but Michael was prone to change everything as inspiration came. As the countdown started, panic and perspiration prevailed. When chaos descended, the result was often funnier than intended and Michael was a brilliant ad-libber. I once prematurely erupted a small volcano by releasing a balloon full of mauve porridge up the crater. His comment was too rude to transmit and had to be edited out.

Computers can do wonderful things at trifling cost but elastic bands and string were more fun.

Tony Oxley, London W13 (*Daily Mail*, 28th June 1966).

WILLIAM A. PALMER: AUDIO & FILM INVENTOR AND FILMMAKER, 1911-1996

This obituary, contributed to the Old Time Radio Digest on the Internet by Roy Trumbull, holds quite a bit of interest for those interested in television technology. Palmer was a remarkable person and quite a bit of broadcasting and film history has been lost with his passing. He was the major force behind the acceptance of 16mm for television film work, for instance, and the fact that he lived not in Britain but in the USA does not alter this.

Veteran San Francisco filmmaker, inventor, and audio recording pioneer Bill Palmer died of a stroke on Thursday, 6 June 1996, at his home in Menlo Park, California, at the age of 85. Palmer founded W.A. Palmer & Co. in San Francisco in 1936, later renamed W.A. Palmer Films, Inc., a business over which he actively presided until his death.

Working with Bing Crosby, ABC, and Ampex just after World War II, Palmer was the essential catalyst that began the era of high-quality audio magnetic tape recording in America. Palmer and his colleague, John T. (Jack) Mullin of San Francisco, perfected an American version of the German *Magnetophon* high-fidelity audio tape recorder in 1946. A memorable Palmer-Mullin demonstration of their magnetic recorders at the MGM studios in Hollywood in October, 1946, grabbed the town's attention with a stunningly clear recording of a studio performance by Jose Iturbi, George E. Stoll and the MGM Symphony Orchestra. The new medium was

demonstrably superior to the then-new method of optical film recording for the production of film sound tracks, the MGM 200-mil push-pull system. In just one year, Palmer and Mullin took audio recording from 'poor' by today's standards to contemporary analogue quality. A critical listening test of the early MGM and Bing Crosby recordings made on the modified Magnetophons reveals sonic quality perfectly acceptable for any network or local FM broadcast today.

Using the Mullin-Palmer tape machines in 1946, Merv Griffin in San Francisco was the first U.S. performer to master a commercial disc on tape, *Songs by Merv Griffin*, with Lyle Bardo and his Orchestra. The next year, crooner Bing Crosby became the first to go on the air coast to coast with magnetic tape, using the Mullin-Palmer tape decks to record and edit his *Philco Radio Time* show on the ABC Radio Network for the 1947-48 season, a revolution in an era of 'live', unedited broadcasts. By the summer of 1948, using the new Ampex version of the Mullin-Palmer machines, all of the radio networks were producing shows on tape, as well as using the new medium to time-shift programs for daylight savings broadcasts. Burl Ives, Les Paul, and other performers quickly adopted tape to produce their shows and record albums. The work of Palmer and Mullin led to an almost immediate acceptance of tape as the standard American recording method for radio, film sound tracks, and records, a sweeping technical revolution.

Meanwhile, the two engineers provided Ampex Corporation in Redwood City, California, with essential help in perfecting that company's Model 200, the first U.S. commercial professional audio tape recorder, introduced in 1948. The Palmer-Mullin and Ampex machines also spawned magnetic data recording for computers and instrumentation (1949), and later, videotape recording (1956).

Without the incredible headstart that the two engineers gave to Ampex and the rest of the industry, we probably would not have had high-quality magnetic audio recording until the Germans came back into the world market in 1950. Mullin would not have gone to work for Bing Crosby and built for Crosby Enterprises the world's first working videotape recorder prototype (1950), and Ampex (which might not even have existed by that time) would not have built their successful videotape recorder (VTR) in 1956, the VR-1000. With all of his wartime Hollywood connections, Palmer was the catalyst that made it all happen and set in motion a new industry. Jack Mullin says, 'I was just an unknown engineer in San Francisco. Without Bill Palmer, I never would have been able to get my tape recorders known among broadcasters and film producers.'

In the early 1950s, before the successful introduction of the VTR, Palmer invented a unique system for recording the TV image on 16mm film, a modified 'kinescope' process, the Palmer Television Film Recorder, which eliminated the 'kine' shutter bar problem was used around the world even after video tape. The 3-2 pull-down system used a 'blending' shutter device that eliminated the characteristic 'shutter bar' that plagued kine recordings.

During the pre-videtape era, Palmer also recorded television shows on film (kinescopes) for San Francisco Bay Area TV stations, including the award-winning series, *The Standard Hour*, broadcast on ABC's KGO-TV in 1951.

The accepted standard for professional motion picture production in the 1930s and 40s was 35mm film. 16mm was considered an amateur format. Palmer was among the first in the country to use 16mm film for commercial productions. During World War II, his compact 16mm technology enabled him to produce colour sound films made aboard aircraft carriers at sea that greatly reduced the training time required for U.S. Navy pilots and their crews.

Palmer was one of the first filmmakers in the United States to use optical sound on film for commercial and educational productions, developing in 1933 his own design for a 16mm sound-on-film camera. Since the 16mm black-and-white film would need synchronised sound, Palmer built his own light valve, as well as the necessary amplifiers with the help of Jack Mullin. In 1934, he received an exclusive contract from the Columbia Steel Company to document on film the construction of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge, an industrial film classic. Over the next 60 years, Palmer and his company produced hundreds of 16mm industrial and made-for-television films, as well as provided film production and laboratory services.

Bill Palmer was born in Oakland in 1911, and was descended from a family of early California settlers who came from Maine to enter the foundry, farming, and dredging businesses during the Gold Rush of the 1850s. Shortly after his birth, his family moved to Palo Alto, where he was raised and educated. He graduated from Stanford University in 1932 with a B.A. degree in engineering. He held numerous film, audio, and video patents. He was a Fellow of both the Audio Engineering Society and the Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers, and was an active member of the San Francisco Bohemian Club.

He is survived by nieces Nancy D. Palmer of Palo Alto and Nancy Phelps of Felton, nephews Hall Palmer of Palo Alto, Bruce Palmer of Los Altos, and Barton P. Phelps of Sunnyvale, and several grandnephews.

-Pete Hammar.

BBC TV PRESENTATION BEFORE THE WAR

Andy Emmerson

Many of us find day-to-day subjects such as television continuity and presentation matters fascinating; trivial they may well be but trivia acquires some dignity with age! In many ways it is the method of presentation – captions used, whether presenters are shown in vision or not, and so on – which gives television stations their individual character and charm. From an archival or historical viewpoint too, old programmes without presentation are like a meal without salt and pepper; a little seasoning goes a long way to bringing out the flavour of a meal. But before I get carried away with this analogy, I should return to the subject in hand.

When it comes to visualising pre-war television continuity and presentation we are at a severe loss – there are no video recordings of course, not even any film recordings. We do have the 1937 BBC Demonstration Film to guide us, whilst the film *Band Waggon*, whilst a parody of course, does give an impression of BBC presentation.

But can we do any detective work? Of course we can!

For a start, there are photographs of BBC clocks, tuning signals and caption cards, chiefly in the pre-war magazine **Television and Short Wave World**. Most of them are rather poor pictures because they were chosen to illustrate picture faults but there you are. Keith Hamer's publication **TV Graphics Review** has also covered the subject. Pre-war captions were either hand-drawn on cards or, if needed regularly, were transmitted from 35mm film. Fortunately a number of frames have survived.

What about the music which accompanied these captions and tuning signals? Just before the BBC started charging a daily fee to visit their Written Archives Centre at Caversham, your editor went there to examine the pre-war P as B (programme as broadcast) records. These records are extremely valuable since they give information on each programme broadcast in great detail.

A number of tuning signals were used over the pre-war period and are not identified individually in P as B records, so we would have to use some intelligent guesswork. For the Big Ben chimes they used an HMV library recording, whilst the tuning signal music varied day by day but was mainly 20th century light classical, all from commercial recordings.

Every weekday (Saturdays included) saw a test transmission intended expressly for dealers to demonstrate set to potential customers (and to set

up these sets once they had been sold). Let's look at the situation in August 1939, taking a typical weekday. Programmes started at 10am sharp with what were described as 'Sound and Vision Tuning Signals'. The visual tuning signal (you can see it on page 214 of **Television & Short-Wave World** for April 1939 and also on a videotape I supply) was a caption with geometric patterns of lines providing a rough and ready gauge of resolution (there were in fact two, fairly similar tuning signals). The sound must have been a continuous tone (probably 400 c/s) for at other times of the day the records clearly note the music used to accompany the tuning signal.

At 10.55 there appeared a caption saying

**BBC TEST
TRANSMISSION
FOR THE
RADIO INDUSTRY
11 A.M. TO
12 NOON.**

This is illustrated on page 213 of the April 1939 issue of **Television & Short-Wave World**. At 10.59 and 40 seconds we had the Big Ben chimes followed by the time signal. From then until 11.23 we had the first two parts of the Television Demonstration Film, which incidentally was already completely out of date and considered by many to be a poor advertisement for current television programmes. The two minutes of sound and vision tuning signals and at 11.30 the rest of the film was shown. At 11.52 we had the 'Radio Industry' caption once more and from then until 12.03 one of the ACE Cinemagazines was shown. These were a variety of cinema newsreel filler, akin to Pathé Pictorials, and some of these survive fortunately. From 12.04 until 1pm it was back to sound and vision tuning signals.

Continuity items were limited. When the day's programmes opened at 3pm we had 'Big Ben Film - from the Film Library', accompanied by Big Ben chimes. At other times of the day the records state that the visual tuning signal was shown, accompanied by a record, although other moments (even on the same day) indicate that the discs were played to accompany the 'Interval signal', so the latter must have been a different caption. So far I have been unable to trace what this looked like.

For a graphic description of the Big Ben opening sequence we must thank an American writer, Richard Hubbell, who provides a detailed account of BBC television before the war in his 1945 book **Television Programming and Production**. Here's what he says.

QUESTIONER: How is the studio organised? What kind of scenery is best for television? What about models? These questions will be answered by D. H. Munro, who was television's production manager, and Peter Bax, designer manager.

MUNRO: Just imagine for a moment that I am sitting at the control desk two minutes before we are due on the air. I see the studio through a window. The studio manager has everything ready – his lights, sound, cameras, artists. Now I am looking at two screens in front of me. The one on the right is the picture actually being transmitted to the public, while the one on the left insures that the producer may have the picture from any other camera in use, because you usually have four cameras in studio production.

QUESTIONER: You were really checking the picture before the viewer saw it?

MUNRO: Yes. Now to continue – the chimes of Big Ben at three o' clock in the afternoon or nine in the evening introduced our daily programs in sound, while in vision a short, specially photographed film showed pictures of the Houses of Parliament and Westminster Bridge, and finally as Big Ben boomed the hour, the clock face of Big Ben itself. Usually the announcer is waiting for his cue light to begin. The chimes of Big Ben fade. I give the cue, "sound mix, vision following," and the audience sees the picture of the announcer speaking his lines. While the announcer's face was being transmitted, the producer was having a look at the opening shot on his preview monitor. And then, as he had a complete cue script in front of him, he would be ready to give the O. K. to his studio manager, on headphones, to start the show. As soon as we gave the cue over the talk-back microphone-and, by the way, we always gave simultaneous light cues – the show was on.

A special arrangement was made for the late evening news. Here is a quote from **Television & Short-Wave World** for April 1938.

By this time most viewers will have heard the News Bulletin broadcast at the completion of each evening's programme. This News Bulletin is actually a recorded version of the nine-o'clock bulletin broadcast on the National wavelength [i.e. on radio; the National service was a forerunner of today's Radio Four]. No vision accompanies this transmission, although for the period an announcement is left on the screen and in the corner of the announcement board is shown an electric clock. This gives the correct time very accurately for the large second hand can clearly be seen.

So the clock in the corner of the screen predates breakfast television by several decades! No photograph of this arrangement has been seen, although pictures of a plain caption TONIGHT'S NEWS (without the clock) exist (**Television & Short-Wave World**, January 1939, pp 14-16, February 1939, p 87).

It is worth noting that virtually all captions were drawn by hand before the war; they were not printed onto card as was the case, say in the 1950s when the Maseely foil printing machine was used. Several issues of the magazine

mentioned, **Television and Short-Wave World**, as well as the textbook **Television Reception Technique** by Paul Tyers (Pitman, 1937) have screen shots illustrating reception faults and many of these show captions for programmes and test transmissions.



An early tuning signal used on BBC Television from 1936 onwards. This illustration comes from a fragment of 35mm film; the film is mute and Tony Bridgewater cannot recall that any sound accompaniment was provided.

This caption was hand-drawn by an artist and the same lettering is found on several other captions of the period, also in the titles to the film *Television Comes To London*.

A number of these pre-war captions have been digitised and are available in both 405- and 625-line versions as plug-in chips for expanding the 'Dinosaur' test card generator (see *Dinosaur's display advertisement towards the back of this magazine for their address*).

Remembering...

AMOS and ANDY

Those of us with long memories will recall the antics of *Amos 'n' Andy* on ITV in the 1950s. I found it hilariously funny, although the politically correct thought-police are now telling us that it degraded black people. The funny thing is that many black people enjoyed the programme just as much and considered that it gave black people a higher profile.

Amos 'n' Andy was a very popular television comedy in its own right but the programme's origins go back much further, to 1920 in fact, when the two programme's two leading characters first broadcast on the radio in the USA. The late Leslie Halliwell, in his invaluable book **Halliwell's Television Companion**, identifies the programme's weak spot and dilemma: it was 'a famous radio comedy series in which caricatured black men were impersonated by whites. Its translation to television in 1951 was a brave attempt but within two years it had been withdrawn because of protests from various organisations. The bewildered actors, who had been on radio since 1925 [since earlier, actually, it appears] were Charles Correll and Freeman F. Gosden; they produced the TV version, but had taken care to cast black actors for TV, namely Alvin Childers [or Childress] and Spencer Williams.'

In the USA this situation comedy was broadcast by CBS from June 1951 to June 1953. Over here it came much later; in their book **Box of Delights** authors Kingsley and Tibballs say it reached our screens in 1954, which would make it a BBC presentation. I thought it was shown later, with the advent of ITV, but I have not found any transmission dates. Perhaps someone can confirm dates.

AMOS 'N' ANDY

Situation Comedy

FIRST TELECAST: June 28, 1951
LAST TELECAST: June 11, 1953
BROADCAST HISTORY: June 1951-June 1953, CBS Thurs 8:30-9:00

CAST:

<i>Amos Jones</i>	Alvin Childress
<i>Andrew Hagg Brown ('Andy')</i>	Spencer Williams, Jr.
<i>George 'The Kingfish' Stevens.</i>	Tim Moore
<i>Lawyer Algonquin J Calhoun</i>	Johnny Lee
<i>Sapphire Stevens</i>	Ernestine Wade
<i>Lightnin'</i>	Horace Stewart (a.k.a. Nick O'Demus)

Amos 'n' Andy, one of the most popular and long-running radio programs of all time, was brought to television in the summer of 1951. The series was produced by Freeman Gosden and Charles Correll, the two actors who had created and starred in the radio version. Since they were white, and the entire cast of the show on television had to be black, a much ballyhooed search was held, over a period of four years, to find the right actors to play the parts. Only Ernestine Wade and Amanda Randolph were brought over from the radio cast.

Set in Harlem, *Amos 'n' Andy* centred around the activities of George Stevens, a conniving character who was always looking for a way to make a fast buck. As head of the Mystic Knights of the Sea Lodge, where he held the position of 'Kingfish', he got most of the lodge brothers involved in his schemes. That put him at odds not only with them, but with his wife, Sapphire, and her mother, Mama, in particular, didn't trust him at all. Andy Brown was the most gullible of the lodge members, a husky, well-meaning, but rather simple soul. The Kingfish was constantly trying to swindle him in one way or another, but the 'big dummy' (as Kingfish called him) kept coming back for more. More often than not, Kingfish would get them both into trouble, but win Andy's co-operation with an appeal to fraternal Spirit - 'Holy mackerel, Andy! We's all got to stick together in dis heah thing.. remember, we is brothers in that great fraternity, the Mystic Knights of the Sea.'

Amos was actually a rather minor character, the philosophical cabdriver who narrated most of the episodes. Madame Queen was Andy's girlfriend and Lightnin' was the slow-moving janitor at the lodge.

Civil rights groups such as the NAACP had long protested the series as fostering racial stereotypes, to little avail. *Amos 'n' Andy* drew sizeable audiences during its two-year CBS run, and was widely re-run on local stations for the next decade. The turning point came in 1963 when CBS Films, which was still calling *Amos 'n' Andy* one of its most widely circulated shows, announced that the program had been sold to two African countries, Kenya and Western Nigeria. Soon afterward, an official of the Kenya government announced that the program would be banned in his country.

This focused attention anew on the old controversy and in the summer of 1964, when a Chicago station announced that it was resuming re-runs, there were widespread and bitter protests. CBS found its market for the films suddenly disappearing, and in 1966 the program was withdrawn from sale, as quietly as possible.

As to whether the program was in fact racist, there was no agreement on that. The creators certainly didn't think so, and actor Alvin Childress (Amos) was quoted as saying, 'I didn't feel it harmed the Negro at all. . . . Actually the series had many episodes that showed the Negro with professions and businesses like attorneys, store owners, and so on, which they never had in TV or movies before.' Others pointed out that the situations were no different than those found in many comedy programs with white characters. Nevertheless the humour certainly derived from the fact that these were shiftless, conniving, not-too-bright blacks. The very stereotypes that had so long been unfairly applied to an entire race were used throughout. As a result, it is unlikely that *Amos 'n' Andy* will ever be seen on television again.

[Extract from *The Complete Directory to Prime Time Network TV Shows*
by Tim Brooks and Earle Marsh]

Amos 'n' Andy may well not be broadcast again but that doesn't mean the show is not still well-loved. In the USA you can find VHS tapes of the show in all manner of stores, even Woolworths. Being out of copyright (or in the public domain, as they say over there), the programmes are available on a variety of different labels, rather like *Robin Hood*, *The Avengers* and other British shows which are still in copyright over here.

The show's fascinating origin is revealed in these knowledgeable transcripts found on the Internet.

From: EricRhoads@aol.com

While researching my book (**Blast From The Past: Radio's First 75 Years**; Streamline Press: \$39.95: 800-226-7857) someone told me that Bill Cosby had purchased all the rights to Amos and Andy so that the shows could no longer be aired. It was also mentioned that he had purchased rights to their images, etc., so the bigotry would not be perpetuated. Does anybody know anything about this?

FYI: *Amos 'n' Andy* started in 1920 in New Orleans as Sam 'n' Dave. Later went to WGN and then to WMAQ to join the network. Wanted to use the name Sam 'n' Dave but WGN would not release ownership, so they changed name to become *Amos 'n' Andy*. They were so popular that movie theatres scheduled films to start after their program because their theatres were empty if shows competed with the *Amos 'n' Andy* broadcasts.

The original name of the show was *Sam 'n' Henry*. Gosden and Correll were introduced to radio in New Orleans, but I believe the show actually went on the air January 12, 1925 at WGN Chicago. I have a friend who has a 78 record of one of the *Sam 'n' Henry* shows. I am trying to get together with him so I can get it on tape.

From: JRayb71827@aol.com

Eric Rhoads submitted a posting saying that Correll & Gosden began *Sam 'n' Dave* on New Orleans radio in 1920. First of all, their original character names were Sam and Henry, not Dave. Secondly, they had only been together a short time in 1920 and were mainly producing shows for entrepreneur Joe Bren. It's true they did appear on New Orleans radio in 1920 while there directing an amateur production. It was of little note and their characters had not been developed. Their real radio activity began in early 1925. They sang on a station in Joliet, Illinois and then on a midnight program on KYW, Chicago.

They performed as endmen on a weekly WLS show as part of Bren's minstrel company. They took a singing act to WEBH, Chicago in April, 1925 and were there for seven months. In the fall of '25 they got word that WGN was looking for a harmony duo and they took their singing act to that station. Eventually, WGN decided it wanted some kind of on-going series and approached Gosden and Correll about doing *The Gumps*, based on the comic strip carried by the parent company, the Chicago Tribune. Instead, they said they had a blackface act they'd rather do and *Sam*

'n' Henry went on the air on January 12, 1926. As most know, they got a chance to spread their wings via a syndicated arrangement through WMAQ. WGN wouldn't let them have the Sam and Henry names. The first two scripts they wrote for WMAQ had the characters named Jim and Charley. They weren't happy with that and the next two scripts called them Tom and Harry. Still not pleased, they came up with the eventual names.

In 1939, Charles Correll said the name 'Amos' was suggested by a telephone book. They both liked the important sound of Andrew, shortened it to Andy and they were off and running with their new names beginning with the broadcast of March 19, 1928. Their first actual network broadcast (not counting their 'chain' recorded efforts) came on NBC Blue August 19, 1929. They already had such a large audience that they were able to get \$100,000 a year from NBC for a 15-minute show that ran six nights a week. Pretty fair amount for 1929, I'd say.

Freeman Gosden and Charles Correll's early radio characters were Sam and Henry, not Sam 'n' Dave. Also, my research shows that Sam and Henry (those specific names) originated on WGN in 1926, and they became Amos and Andy in 1928 on WMAQ, and went on the Red Network in 1929. Although Gosden and Correll first went on radio on New Orleans, my research shows that the names Sam and Henry were not used on radio nor were they used on phonograph records in 1920.

There are Sam and Henry recordings, but these are from the mid to late 1920s.

From: Rich Samuels <richsam@mcs.net>

Re: SAM 'N' HENRY Original Stories of Amos 'N' Andy By Correll and Gosden, Illustrated by Samuel J. Smith (copyright 1926).

The Tribune reference, I suspect, has to do with the fact that the Chicago Tribune owned WGN where the 'Sam and Henry' characters made their debut. Gosden and Correll also appeared on WGN under their own names as a duo singing patter songs (and recorded for Victor both as Sam and Henry *and* as Gosden and Correll – on at least one occasion, beginning a recording as Gosden and Correll (singing) and then slipping into the Sam and Henry characters (dialogue) before a vocal finish).

The Tribune, in essence, 'sponsored' all WGN broadcasts until the beginning of 1928 when 'GN accepted outside sponsorships for the first time. Though the book mentioned in the previous posting has a 1926 copyright, I believe its actual date of publication was later – surely no earlier than 1928 when Gosden and Correll departed WGN for greener fields at WMAQ (then owned by the Chicago Daily News). The Tribune/WGN held the rights to the Sam and Henry characters. Gosden and Correll were thus obliged to come up with new names.

My best recollection is that, at WMAQ, Gosden and Correll held the rights to the 'Amos and Andy' names (and also, as part of their deal with WMAQ, had the right to syndicate their show via transcription – which they did, prior to NBC picking up the show). If that was the case, then Gosden and Correll could have cut a side deal with the Tribune, allowing the publication of the book referring to both 'Sam and Henry' *and* 'Amos and Andy'. Gosden and Correll were smart businessmen. And such a deal allowed the Tribune to collect a few more bucks, even though their most popular personalities had flown the coop.

Subject: Why Sam 'n' Henry became Amos 'n' Andy

Following up:

> From: welsa@njackn.com

>

> Reading the recent thread about Amos 'N' Andy and Sam 'N' Henry reminded me

> that I have in my library a well-worn paperback book. On the cover it says:

>

> SAM 'N' HENRY Original Stories of Amos 'N' Andy By Correll and Gosden,

> Illustrated by Samuel J. Smith

>

> The book is copyright 1926 by the Chicago Tribune and in the preface

> Correll and Gosden give thanks only to 'the great papa, The Chicago Tribune.'

> Would it be safe to assume the Trib had something to do with the radio show?

> Sponsor, perhaps?

To the best of my recollection, and after referring to Dunning (not much help), here is my understanding of the name change. Sam 'n' Henry originated on station WGN. They owned the name. I think they also owned the Chicago Tribune, which carried a comic strip version of Sam 'n' Henry. It was a spin-off of the radio show (or was it the other way around)? The strip and the show were both successful, and the owners wouldn't give up the name when Gosden and Correll left WGN for WMAQ and the CBS network.

I may be wrong in some of these details. Perhaps someone has a more definitive account? This is what I remember reading somewhere.

From: JRayb71827@aol.com

There were a couple of questions from welsa@njackn.com concerning a 1926 book by Charles Correll and Freeman Gosden concerning their 'Sam 'n' Henry' characters. They gave credit to the Chicago Tribune and he wanted to know what the Trib had to do with the show and whether they might have been a sponsor. The characters began on WGN in 1926 after the station wanted them to do a series about *The Gumps*, a comics page series that ran in the Tribune. Correll and Gosden countered with their thought of doing their blackface show. The connection, of course, was that the Tribune company owned WGN, and still does. WGN call letters are said to stand for World's Greatest Newspaper (Colonel Robert McCormick often had delusions of grandeur.) It was WGN that wouldn't allow the pair to retain the names Sam 'n' Henry when they moved on, saying the names were station property.

From: A. Joseph Ross, J.D.

Yes, it's true. Freeman Gosden and Charles Corell, who created and played Amos 'n' Andy, were both white. They also played most, if not all, of the other characters on the show. The TV show, however, featured all Black actors.

I don't know the reaction of the Black community at the time of the shows being broadcast (though I do remember a Black classmate who once mentioned that he listened to 'Amos 'n' Andy' on radio and liked it.). I do know that by the late 1960s, some Black organisations criticised the show, mainly for what they saw as negative stereotypes, and CBS withdrew the TV show from syndication.

From: Steve Lewis

Someone recently asked about the reaction to the *Amos 'n' Andy* show at the time it was broadcast. There is an excellent book out which covers the history of the program on both radio and TV and the controversy surrounding it both then and now. **THE ADVENTURES OF AMOS 'N' ANDY: A SOCIAL HISTORY OF AN AMERICAN PHENOMENON** by Martin Patrick Ely (The Free Press, 1991). The book looks at reactions to the show from both a white and black perspective, both pro and con. As I recall the arguments are presented in a very even-handed manner and the book itself is very readable and interesting.

From: Bob Jennings

A few issues back someone (can't recall exactly who) made a reference to an issue of the *Journal of Popular Culture* devoted to old time radio and comments they might have made about *Amos 'n' Andy*.

I have that very issue before me right now. The exact issue is Fall 1979, Vol. 12 #2, an entire thick issue devoted to a look at classic radio. If you can get your hands on this publication at a used book store you should snatch it up right away. Many libraries also carry the **Journal of Popular Culture**, which is produced by the Popular Culture division of Bowling Green State University.

The article on *Amos 'n' Andy* is written by Arnold Shankman and covers extensively the reaction of the Negro community in the early days of the *Amos 'n' Andy* program. Interestingly enough, many Negro listeners were quite happy and flattered when A&A initially hit the airwaves, and for many years many people, both black and white, were unaware that the creators and actors were two white men.

Reaction against the program was spearheaded by Robert Vann of Pittsburgh, publishers of the *Pittsburgh Courier*, a prominent black newspaper, and apparently his primary goal was to gain lots of new readers with an emotional issue. He was successful, but not entirely so, since readers (and the writer of this article) pointed out that the *Courier* itself was running many offensive stereotyped cartoons of 'darkies' and 'coons' within their own pages while the editorials hammered at the stereotyping of the *Amos 'n' Andy* program.

Not everybody jumped on the anti-A&A band wagon, and a number of other black papers correctly noted that Vann was using the issue primarily as a publicity/circulation gimmick without seeming to really care about the program or its long term effects.

Many Negro commentators noted that A&A was the *only* program on radio with black primary actors, and some people objected because the stereotyping of Andy as the ignorant business blunderer might affect the changes of other Negro business people to achieve credit with white banks.

All of this was initially a shock to Gosden and Correll who had worked closely with black community leaders in Chicago and gave benefits for the annual picnic. It is also interesting to me, that later in their career when the program began to use other actors and the format changed to half hour shows instead of the fifteen minute comedy-soap opera they had started with, that virtually all the other cast members except Gosden and Correll were black. Over the years they continued to perform fund-raising and charity work for the Negro community.

I'm not going to paraphrase all the article, it's meticulously researched and very interesting, well worth looking up in any library.

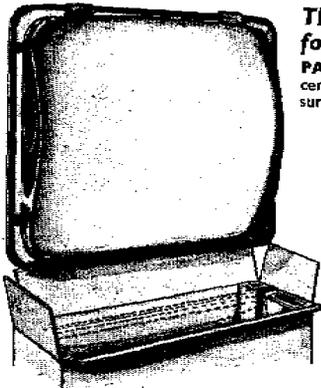
A point that cannot be overstated enough in my opinion is that when A&A came on the air the viewpoint of most white Americans to the Negro community was one of

almost total ignorance and bigotry. Black people were virtually invisible to most whites, segregated, ghettoised and kept away from sight or contact for the overwhelming majority of whites.

Amos 'n' Andy came on the air, and despite the comedy stereotypes used to generate humour, what the program did was show that Negro people were human beings, they had thoughts, dreams, aspirations, fears and worries just like everybody else in the world. This was something of a revelation for the times, and because they continued to show the human side of blacks as well as the humorous, A&A in my opinion was a pioneering ground breaker when it came to breaking down barriers between races which previous to this had had as little to do with each other as possible. It's hard to maintain harsh stereotypes when humorous, likeable people visit your home every day via the radio waves. It was a firm step in the right direction, whatever other comments might be made about it.

This issue also contains a superlative article by J. Fred MacDonald (who wrote a great book on the history and development of old time radio) on the Treasury Star Parade, a propaganda series produced by the US Government. There are many other really good articles in the issue (and to be fair, some bad ones as well). It's worth taking a look at this in your local library.

Introducing the **BELLE VUE** Lens



The only Lens which incorporates the following features at these prices.

PACKING. Each lens is packed in a strong box and is centrally held, giving an air-cushioning effect which ensures safe arrival at your customers free from scratching.

4 RUBBER PROTECTION FEET.

2 Adjustable TWIN LINEN STRAPS complete with two cup hooks.

RUBBER SURROUND giving finish.

CRYSTAL CLEAR OIL guaranteed against any discoloration.

9" Clear or Filter 50/-
12" " " " 70/-

Beautiful Wrought Iron Console
Stand 45/- Lens extra.

Obtainable from your wholesaler. Full Trade Discount.

HYGIENE PLASTICS LTD. 31, RANGE RD., WHALLEY RANGE, MANCHESTER, 16

Tel.: MOSr Side 2819

NEWS OF THE SCREWS!

From: **Jay H. Miller, KK5IM, Dallas, Texas**
Subject: **Phillips screws**

Last night I was reading a book I received for Christmas titled *The Bathroom Trivia Almanac*.....

Of interest, I thought, to those trying to date a radio (or anything mechanical for that matter) is this:

The Phillips screw was invented by Henry F. Phillips in 1936. Therefore if you find a piece of equipment with original Phillips-head screws it must have been manufactured after 1936.

This information is worth exactly what it cost you to read it!!!

From: **Larry Kayser VA3LK / WA3ZIA**
Subject: **Phillips screws**

The introduction of the Phillips type screw was the 'VHS'-equivalent failure of the 1940's and 1950's. The 'Beta' of that day was the Robertson screw with its square head.

I once did an analysis of the general failure of the Phillips screw and I felt I tracked down the failure to the simple lack of standards for the driver. The wrong driver would basically work with a given screw rather easily. Let me digress for a moment.

The Robertson screw, at which we Canadians have a great laugh when we see them used for 'secure' applications in the USA, was based on a tightly controlled set of drivers, Green, Red and Black with the Japanese later extending them to include Yellow and Orange. When one tried to use a Green driver in a Red screw the misfit was obvious and was almost unworkable. A Red driver would not even go near a Green-headed screw.

The Phillips finger skimmers did not have this advantage - I often wonder how much economic damage to American industry was caused by the Phillips screw head design? I would guess well into the billions of US\$ over the last 50 years or so.

Why did the Robertson become the 'Beta' those many years ago? The owners tried to force a 'license' on the users of the Robertson screw; they protected the design very well but totally lost the war to popularise the design.

Introducing The Radiophile

THE LEADING MAGAZINE
FOR VINTAGE RADIO
ENTHUSIASTS

The Radiophile



AC-DC RECEIVER SPECIAL

June No. 66, Summer, 1983. Edited by Chas.E.Miller.

* Receiver Profile - The Marconi-Globe 573 * The Exact Approach *
* Equipment Guide: Receiving Home Radio Receivers * Apparatus We Have Tested *
* Establishing an Elco AD18 - Ray Diodes * The Zenith N5A - Diodes *
* Like Uncle, Like Son - Short Story * Interview With Bruce *
* And Much More in Your Service Radiophile

If you are interested in vintage radio you may already have heard something of our magazine. Now we cordially invite you to sample it for yourself, believing that you will agree with our readers that it is by far the best of the vintage radio publications, with its authoritative yet friendly articles and its devotion to the "feel" of the period with which it deals. *This is not a "coffee table" magazine with merely superficial appeal.*

The Editor, Chas.E.Miller, has been engaged professionally in radio work since 1948 and in technical journalism since the early 1970's. His book *A Practical Handbook of Valve Radio*

Since 1991 every issue of the magazine has featured *Repair* (due to be re-published as a completely new edition) is the an outstanding and evocative full-colour front cover. definitive work on the subject. The various writers who contribute These are now widely regarded as collectors' items are also well qualified in their fields and provide a valuable store in themselves of information for the readers. Nor is this all: The Radiophile also offers its subscribers a service that is unmatched elsewhere, for its

large library of service sheets and manuals covers a vast range of makes and models and these are available as photo-copies at very reasonable prices - typically half or less than those charged by specialist firms. This is augmented by special "workshops" - informal one-day events - at which participants of all level of experience are shown how to improve their radio servicing skills by experts who have learned their trade through many years of practice. As an additional service to readers, they may place small advertisements in the magazine free of charge.

The Radiophile operates Vintage Radio Expositions at Shifnal, Shropshire, every six months (Spring and Autumn) at which readers meet to buy, sell or exchange equipment - and chat - in a friendly, relaxed atmosphere markedly different from other such functions. At the Spring Exposition is held the original *Concours d'Élégance* for Vintage Radio Receivers, with awards for the best entries. This feature and the Workshops have become so popular that they have now been given the ultimate accolade of emulation elsewhere. There is also a "Summer Special", held in July at Sambrook, Shropshire in which the emphasis is on a happy day out for all the family. For instance, at Sambrook the visitors, many of them in period costumes of the 1920s, '30s and '40s, picnic on the green in front of the Village Hall, where there are also numerous stalls selling and displaying a wide variety of items apart from vintage radio equipment. There is a prize for the best period costume and another for the best portable radio brought along by a visitor. An East of England Vintage Radio Exposition takes place in October at Cowbit, near Spalding, Lincolnshire. Full details of all events are given well beforehand in the magazine. The Shifnal and Sambrook events include vintage radio auction sales for readers who wish to dispose of equipment, from single items to complete collections. Special sales for enforced disposals can be arranged at short notice and a sympathetic and confidential service is assured.

At present a six-issue subscription to The Radiophile costs just £18*. Do yourself a favour by sending off your subscription now so that you will miss no more issues! A sample issue will be sent for £3.00*. Simply fill in the form below as appropriate and post to: The Radiophile, "Larkhill", Newport Road, Woodseaves, Stafford, ST20 0NP. (Telephone/fax 01785 284696)

**United Kingdom only; overseas rate £24 for six issues, £4 for sample (sterling please).*

I wish to subscribe to The Radiophile / to receive a sample copy, and enclose a cheque for £18 / £3. (Delete as appropriate)

Name: (Please use block capitals)

Address:

.....Post Code.....

Telephone No. (optional, in case we need to contact you urgently).....

We regret that due to bank charges involved we cannot accept credit cards or non-sterling payments.



'ON THE AIR'

The Broadcasting Museum

See and hear the story of British Broadcasting in this exciting new museum on the historic Chester Rows

- ☞ Hear how British Broadcasting was born and discover how your voice goes 'on the air'.
- ☞ Return to wartime Britain and experience how wireless was a lifeline to those at home and on the battlefield.
- ☞ See what goes on inside a TV studio - with the actual cameras used on those classic programmes.
- ☞ Browse in the world famous Vintage Sound Shop and choose from its unrivalled collection of carefully restored vintage radios and gramophones.

Whether you're eight or eighty you'll find lots to see and do in this fascinating new museum.

It's the cat's whiskers!

Opening hours 10.00 - 5.00 Mon-Sat
11.00 - 4.30 Sundays

'On The Air'



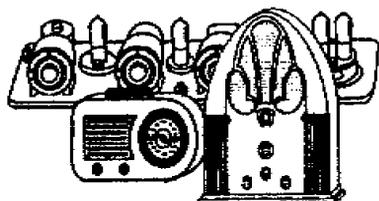
Before travelling check out of season opening hours

42 Bridge Street Row, Chester.

Tel/Fax: 01244 348468

FREE SAMPLE

**IF YOU BUY,
SELL, OR COLLECT
OLD RADIOS, YOU NEED...**



ANTIQUE RADIO CLASSIFIED

Antique Radio's Largest Monthly Magazine

8000+ Subscribers! 100+ Page Issues!

**Classifieds (800+ monthly) - Ads for Parts & Services - Articles
Auction Prices - Meet & Flea Market Info. Also: Early TV, Art Deco,
Audio, Ham Equip., Books, Telegraph, 40's & 50's Radios & More...**

Free 20-word ad each month for subscribers.

Subscriptions: \$17.95 for 6-month trial.

\$34.95 for 1 year (\$51.95 for 1st Class Mail).

Call or write for foreign rates.

Collector's Price Guide books by Bunis:

Antique Radios. 8500 prices, 650 color photos \$18.95

Transistor Radios. 2200 prices, 400 color photos \$15.95

Payment required with order. Add \$3.00 per book order for shipping.



A.R.C., P.O. Box 802-A12, Carlisle, MA 01741

Phone: (508) 371-0512 — Fax: (508) 371-7129

Use Visa or MasterCard for easiest payment!



IF YOUR INTEREST IN COMMUNICATIONS EXTENDS TO
WIRELESS OF DAYS GONE BY, YOU SHOULD BE READING

Radio Bygones

Now with
More Pages!
More
Features!

■ Whether that interest is in domestic radio and TV or in amateur radio, in military, aeronautical or marine communications, in broadcasting, audio or recording, in radionavigation or in commercial radio systems fixed or mobile, **RADIO BYGONES** is the magazine for you.

■ Articles on restoration and repair, history, circuit techniques, valves, personalities, reminiscences and just plain nostalgia – you'll find them all! Plus features on museums and private collections, with colour photographs of some of their most interesting exhibits.

■ Covering developments from the days of Faraday, Maxwell, Hertz, Lodge and Marconi to the recent past, **RADIO BYGONES** is edited by Geoff Arnold G3GSR, who is also Editor of *Morsum Magnificat*, the popular bi-monthly magazine for Morse enthusiasts.

■ **RADIO BYGONES** is published six times a year. A subscription costs £18.50 for one year by post to UK addresses, £19.50 to Europe or £23.75 to the rest of the world, airmail.

■ If you would like to see a sample copy, send £3.00 (£3.20 overseas) to the Publishers at the address below. **RADIO BYGONES** is not available at newsagents.

■ Please make cheques or postal orders payable to G C Arnold Partners. (Overseas remittances must be in Sterling, payable in the UK. Cheques must be drawn on a London clearing bank).

Payment from the UK or overseas by Access/Eurocard/Mastercard or Visa is also welcomed; please quote your card number, card expiry date, and your name and address as registered with the card company.

**G C Arnold Partners, 9 Wetherby Close,
Broadstone, Dorset BH18 8JB, England
Telephone/FAX: 01202 658474**



7/85

CAN YOU HELP WITH A COLOSSAL PROJECT?

You've doubtless heard of Colossus, arguably the world's first programmable computer, installed during World War II at Bletchley Park. Used for decoding German secret messages, it has been described as 'the machine that won the war' and now 50 years on, a dedicated, unpaid and unsponsored team is constructing a complete working replica using authentic components. They are making excellent progress too (you can see the machine on regular open days) but they are running out of...

No, they're **not** asking for **money**, they need **VALVES**, valves and **more valves!** And then some more.

Can **you** donate any of the following? New or used items equally welcome... pick-up arranged if you cannot manage delivery.

EF36, EF37 (CV358), EF37A

6J5 triodes GT1C thyatrons

Special *surface-mount* bakelite valve bases for B5 valves (P.O. type 16, 600 needed of these alone), for Octal valves (P.O. type 21A) and for 807 valves (P.O. type UY5)

Seven 4-volt, 100-amp and ten 6-volt, 100-amp transformers.

These items are needed to re-create a crucial part of Britain's heritage. If you can help by donating (or even selling at discount price) any of these items, please contact TONY SALE on 01234-822788.

Please don't leave it to someone else, they're relying on you!

THE TEST CARD CIRCLE

This society was founded in 1989 with less than twenty members. Since then it has grown in membership to almost 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. There are usually guest presenters at the convention, and in 1994 these were Andrew Emmerson, of 405 Alive, and broadcaster Tony Currie, formerly of Scottish Television and Radio Clyde. We also had the honour of the opening announcement being specially recorded for us on video by Sylvia Peters, Sylvia, and BBC continuity announcer David Allen also recorded in-depth interviews for us on video.

Previous guests have included Steve Ostler, John Ross-Barnard and David Allan. John and David were the two men responsible for compiling all of the BBC trade tests tapes used between 1959 and 1977, and we were delighted when they accepted Honorary Life Membership of The Circle two years ago. We were also highly honoured when Roger Roger, the French musician and composer, whose music has been used during BBC trade tests since the mid fifties, agreed to become Patron of The Test Card Circle in 1992.

If you are interested in this fascinating subject, write to the Secretary, Doug Bond, 98 Great North Road, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 5JP, and if you send a 12.5' x 9' self addressed envelope with a 43 pence stamp, Doug 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
BOOKS
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.**

The Dinosaur Labs present...

The LI'L DINO Band I Modulator

You can buy one now! Due to popular demand (at least three or four people have asked), we have designed a modulator worthy of the Dinosaur name. You might expect this product to have one or two performance enhancing niceties not found on other similar designs and if so, you will not be disappointed.

The Li'l Dino is the only modulator to be equipped with a video feedback clamp. Other designs use a simpler circuit known as a 'DC-restorer', a circuit works well considering its simplicity but it can't cope with rapidly varying picture content. In extreme cases this may result in 'field roll' on picture cuts. The improved circuitry in the Li'l Dino should ensure optimum performance in this respect.

And then there is our output filter; this suppresses harmonics of the carriers that may otherwise cause unwanted patterning on vision or hum on sound. I could go on at length about the crystal-controlled stability and the quality of the components, but I think I can best sum up by saying that I think it works very well and my Murphy V114 television agrees!

All this comes on a PCB 120mm x 80mm. The power requirements are modest, namely 12 volts at 50mA. The price for the completed board and leads is £80. Customers who have bought a standards converter from us may deduct £5. The modulator is designed to be a stand-alone unit but we can build it into new standards converters (details on request)

NB. Sorry we can't fit a modulator inside our original converters (the connectors are in the wrong places). We can however modify them to power an external modulator.

Please include postage & packing; £3 -00 for modulators. Alternatively we can deliver to most vintage wireless swap meets, or the Vintage Wireless Museum (by prior arrangement) free of charge.

WARNING: Owning a Dinosaur product can seriously extend your choice of vintage viewing. And note... we are, like you, enthusiasts. We are not a business. Please confirm price and availability before ordering.

Phone: Dave Grant 01689-857086 or Mike Izycky 01778-344506.
4 Kemble Drive, Bromley, Kent. BR2 8PZ.

TREASURES IN TRANSITION

This is the area for buying and selling all kinds of things to do with television, new or old. Want to join in? Then send us your advertisement: there is no charge, although if space is short we may have to 'prune' out the least relevant adverts or hold them over until next time. Advertisements are normally inserted for two issues: please indicate if you wish your ad. to run longer. There's no extra charge but we try to avoid repeating 'stale' material.

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. Any job advertisements are bound by the Sex Discrimination Act, 1975 and the Age Discrimination Act, 1997.

Test card music and old TV programmes are is 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 probably 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.

PLUGS NEEDED

If you are selling any electrical appliance after 1st February 1995 without a plug on it, you are breaking the law. The Department of Trade and Industry has announced that domestic electrical appliances manufactured in or imported to the UK must be fitted with a correctly fused 13-amp plug.

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 can 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.

STANDARDS CONVERTERS. Building your own is not a realistic proposition unless you already have 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. We recommend the Dinosaur Designs/David Grant product, which was reviewed in issue 19. Pineapple Video have ceased production of their converter. Note also David Looser's advertisement in this section for a conversion service.

MODULATORS. Two designs for modulators have been published in Television magazine but we don't recommend either. One uses hard-to-find components and gives only moderate results, whilst the other one is good but requires you to make your own printed circuit board and wind your own coils very accurately. The good news is that you can buy an excellent ready-built modulators from Dinosaur Designs (see ad in this section).

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 and 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** (0181-743 0899), **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), **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!

SERVICE DATA. The following firms are noted, and don't forget the annual volumes 'TV & Radio Servicing' at the public library.

Mr Bentley, 27 DeVere 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, Seven Ash Cottage, Seven Ash, Combe Martin, Devon, EX34 0PA (01271-882665). Large library of service data for photocopying. Fixed price means you may get a lot – or not a lot – for your money.

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 Aliver **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.

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 1956 12' table model TV, 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.]

STANDARDS CONVERSION: Available soon, the latest version of our professionally designed unit for 405 enthusiasts. Prices start around £250 in kit form up to £800 for a fully-built professional unit. A high-quality **MODULATOR** is available now, also a **TEST CARD GENERATOR** for 405 or 625-line use. For more information send SAE and mention which products you are interested in. Dave Grant, Dinosaur Designs, 4 Kemble Drive, BROMLEY, Kent, BR2 8PZ.

STANDARDS CONVERSION SERVICE: 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: David's offer is a most generous one and users may care to send him a free-will donation towards his not insubstantial construction costs)

as well. There may be a delay in handling conversions if many people take up his offer.)

 <p data-bbox="199 406 468 470">No need to worry about what polish to use for your cherished radio or television cabinet</p>	<p>BAKE-O-BRYTE - <i>The polish for bakelite and other plastics.</i> BAKE-O-BRYTE is the original and the best.</p> <p>Available only from The Radiophile, BAKE-O-BRYTE costs only £2 per tube or £2.50 by post from "Larkhill", Newport Road, Woodseaves, Stafford, ST20 0NP.</p> <p><i>Please make cheques/P.O.s payable to The Radiophile.</i></p>
---	--

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. (T). Tel: 01427-890768.

REPAIRS: vintage TV and radio repair service in the South East by engineer with 23 years in the trade. Contact Camber TV & Video Centre, Lydd Road, Camber, Sussex or telephone Peter on 01797-225457. SAE with enquiries please. I also wish to buy early BBC-only TVs. (T).

SALE: Kenzen is having a sale of valves. Most TV types available at £1 each. Send wants list and SAE for a quotation. Kenzen, Unit 9, 16-20 George Street, Balsall Heath, BIRMINGHAM B12 9RG (0121-446 4346). For our latest free lists please send A4 SAE with 36p stamp. We also supply video monitors, computers, test gear, oscilloscopes, etc. at bargain prices for callers. Please telephone first if you wish to pay us a visit. (T)

VIDEO TAPES: I've just added a TON of new additions to my web site of rare and classic TV shows available on video including *Terry and the Pirates, Whirlybirds, Hey Landlord!, Love on a Rooftop, The Mothers-in-Law, Nanny and the Professor, Room 222, Sergeant Bilko, TV Bloopers, Ugliest Girl in Town, Your Show of Shows, Checkmate, Hawaiian Eye, 77 Sunset Strip, Surfside 6, Ben Casey, Bracken's World, Ivanhoe, Medical Center, Peyton Place, Captain Kangaroo, Shindig, Captain Video, Doctor Who, Red Dwarf, Red Dwarf Bloopers, X Files, Tonight Show, Bat Masterson, Have Gun –Will Travel, Sky King, Sugarfoot* , Classic commercials, TV show promos and MUCH more! Oh, and the Black and White Original *Dragnet* as well!

The address is: <http://www.tvdial.com>

Editor's note: I believe most of these can be ordered in 625 PAL format as well.

This Christmas, the N.V.C.F. comes to London!

announcing a
NEW Christmas Venue for the
**NATIONAL VINTAGE
COMMUNICATIONS FAIR**
WEMBLEY • LONDON
Sunday December 1st 1996
11am - 4pm • Stalls @ £35



(NB: The Spring N.V.C.F. will continue to be held
as usual at the N.E.C. in B'ham every May)

N.V.C.F. • 2-4 Brook Street, Bampton, Devon EX16 9LY. Tel: (01398) 331532

HOW TO CONTACT 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 midshires@cix.compulink.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 up to two years 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 a not-for-profit magazine so sadly we cannot pay for material. On the other hand, full-length feature articles do earn the author a year's free subscription once published 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 computer disk are particularly welcome and your disk will be returned. We can handle most variations of IBM PC and CP/M disks in 3.5' and 5.25' size but please process your words in some popular word-processing format, ideally as an ASCII or WordStar file. Through the good offices of Radio Bygones, we can handle Amstrad PCW and Macintosh disks, but not BBC format. If in doubt please ring first on 01604-844130. Thanks. You can now also fax your letters, ads and articles on 01604-821647.

BACK NUMBERS

All stocks of back issues have been sold now, including combined edition reprint. In a few cases we can lend originals for photocopying.

FAQ FILES

FAQs are frequently asked questions, so we are keeping two files of FAQs and their answers ready for printing out on request for readers. These files will be updated as new information comes in. These two 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. FAQ file 1 runs

to 24 pages and covers general points about old TV and how to get old television sets working again. FAQ file 2 is a reprint on all the articles on test card music and ITV station ident themes; it covers 11 pages. FAQ file 1 costs £3.00 and file 2 costs £2.00 (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 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.)

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.

TELEPHONE ENQUIRIES REGARDING SUBSCRIPTIONS

You can call the Staffordshire office on 01785-284696 between 09.00-13.00 or 14.00-17.00 Mondays to Fridays. At other times you will reach an answering machine. Please *do not* ring the Northampton (01604) number as 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: Gerald Wells, Vintage Wireless Museum, 23 Rosendale Road, London, SE21 8DS.

VINTAGE RADIO CIRCLE: Geoff Williams, 4 Sunnyside Park, St Ives, Ringwood, Hants., BH24 2NW.

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): Stuart Montgomery, 2 Henderson Row, Edinburgh, EH3 5DS.

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

SAVERS OF TELEVISION AND RADIO SHOWS (S.T.A.R.S.), 96 Meadvale Road, Ealing, London, W5 1NR.

IRISH VINTAGE RADIO & SOUND SOCIETY: Henry Moore, 9 Auburn Close, Killiney, Co. Dublin.

RADIO BYGONES (vintage radio technology): Geoff Arnold, 9 Wetherby Close, Broadstone, Dorset, BH18 8JB.

THE RADIOPHILE (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 LIGHT MUSIC SOCIETY: Stuart Upton, 4 Harvest Bank Road, West Wickham, Kent, BR4 9DJ.

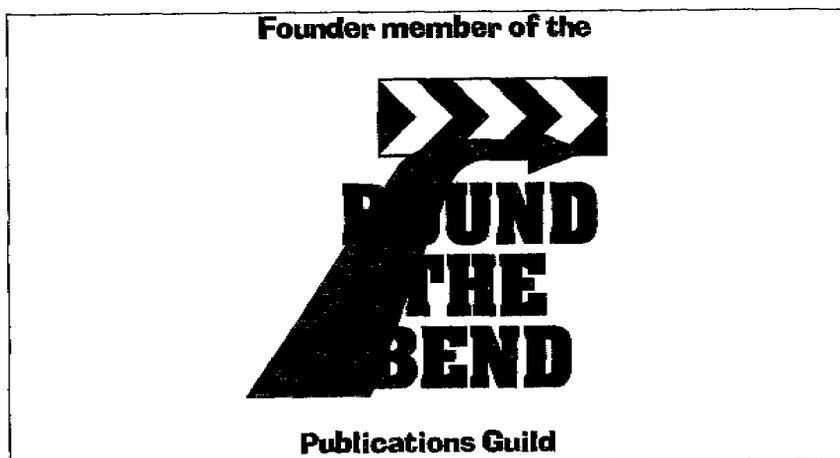
ROBERT FARNON SOCIETY (also light music): David Ades, Stone Gables, Upton Lane, Seavington St. Michael, Ilminster, Somerset, TA19 0PZ.

MEMORY LANE (78rpm-era popular music): Ray Pallett, 226 Station Road, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex, SS9 3BS.

IN TUNE INTERNATIONAL (music of the years 1935-1960): Colin Morgan, 12 Caer Gofaint, Groes, Denbigh, Clwyd, LL15 5YT.

PROJECTED PICTURE TRUST (cinema history): Harold Brown, 2 Eleanor Gardens, Aylesbury, Bucks., HP21 7LT.

VINTAGE FILM CIRCLE: Alex Woolliams, 11 Norton Road, Knowle, Bristol, BS4 2EZ.



Radiophile Events

Multi-purpose Booking Form.

Please use the form below for booking entry tickets and stalls at the Vintage Radio

Expositions to be held on
6th. and 20th. October, 1996.

Please make out cheques to The Radiophile and send to "Larkhill", Newport Road, Woodseaves, Stafford, ST20 0NP, enclosing a stamped addressed envelope for return of tickets. These normally will be sent out to arrive shortly before an event, but in cases of extreme urgency may be collected at the door. Directions of how to get to the events will be included with tickets upon request. Your early application for tickets will greatly assist us.

SHIFNAL VINTAGE RADIO EXPOSITION

6th. October, 1996.

Booking form for Entry Tickets and Stalls
(strike out items not applicable)

Name _____

Address _____

Post _____

Code _____

Telephone No. _____

I require.....entry tickets @£1 each (*£1.50 on the day*)

I wish to book.....stalls @ £10 each, plus £1 for holder and £1 for assistant (only one normally permitted).

I enclose cheque for £.....and s.a.e. for return of tickets.

It is essential to have the assistance of at least six stewards at the event to help set out the stalls, etc., and to comply with legal clauses in the hall booking arrangements. If you are able to volunteer, please tick below as appropriate.

I will be willing to act as a steward.....

I will not be able to act as a steward.....

*** Don't forget to make out cheques to
The Radiophile**

**IF YOU DO NOT WISH TO MUTILATE YOUR
MAGAZINE PLEASE FEEL FREE TO COPY THIS
FORM ON TO PLAIN PAPER**

EAST OF ENGLAND VINTAGE RADIO EXPOSITION

at

Cowbit (pronounced "Cubbit"),
Near Spalding, Lincolnshire,

on

Sunday, 20th. October, 1996.

Booking form for entry tickets and stalls.
(strike out items not applicable)

Name _____

Address _____

Post Code _____

Telephone No. _____

I require.....entry tickets @£1 each.

I wish to book.....stalls @£7 each, including holder.

I enclose payment of £.....and s.a.e. for return of tickets.

We need the assistance of at least six stewards at the event. If you are able to volunteer, please tick below as appropriate.

I will be willing to act as a steward.....

I will not be able to act as a steward.....

Full details of how to get to Cowbit will be sent with your tickets.

ENTRY TIMES FOR BOTH EXPOSITIONS:

STEWARDS 9.00A.M.

STALL HOLDERS 9.30A.M.

VISITORS 10.30A.M.

VINTAGE RADIO AUCTION

Preliminary Notice of Important Sale.

The Radiophile has received instructions to sell by auction the contents of two large collections, to include various veteran, vintage and post-vintage thoroughbred receivers, amplifiers, test equipment, service data, etc., etc. It is expected that the sale will take place late in August or early in September next. The venue will be either Sambrook, Shropshire or Gnosall, Staffs. If you wish to receive a catalogue and other details of this very important sale please send £1 in stamps to the Radiophile office.

THE BACK PAGE

405 Alive (ISSN 0969-8884) is an independent, not-for-profit magazine devoted to the study and preservation of old television technology and programming. It has no connection with, and is not subsidised by, any other organisation. Publication is four times a 12-month subscription period but not at set times.

Editorial policy. This magazine acts not only as a forum for research, the republication of archive material and as a monitor of current developments but also as a means for all interested in this field to keep in touch. Readers are encouraged to submit articles, photographs, notes and letters.

We print readers' addresses only in small advertisements or when otherwise asked to. We are always happy to forward letters to contributors if postage is sent. All work in connection with *405 Alive* is carried out on a voluntary unpaid basis – sorry, it's only a hobby! – but writers retain copyright and are encouraged to republish their articles in commercial publications. In addition, authors of feature articles normally earn a year's free subscription, although this offer is made at the editor's discretion and may be withdrawn.

Legal niceties. E&OE. Whilst every care is taken in the production of this newsletter, the editor accepts no legal responsibility for the advice, data and opinions expressed. *405 Alive* neither endorses nor is it responsible for the content of advertisements or the activities of those advertisers. No guarantee of accuracy is implied or given for the material herein. Authors are alone responsible for the content of their articles, including factual and legal accuracy. From time to time uncredited illustrations appear in this publication; every effort is made to avoid infringing copyright and the editor trusts that any unintended breach will be notified to him so that due acknowledgement can be made. The contents of the newsletter are covered by copyright and must not be reproduced without permission, although an exception is made for other not-for-profit publications (only) wishing to reprint short extracts or single articles and then only if acknowledgement is given to *405 Alive*.

Copyright (c) 1996 by Andrew Emmerson and contributors.

✉ IMPORTANT POSTAL INFORMATION ✉

If undelivered please return to *The Radiophile*, Larkhill, Newport Road, Woodseaves, STAFFORD, ST20 0NP, England.

Page 96

405 ALIVE

Issue 30

Please note that all editorial correspondence should be addressed to 71, Falcutt Way, Northampton, NN2 8PH.