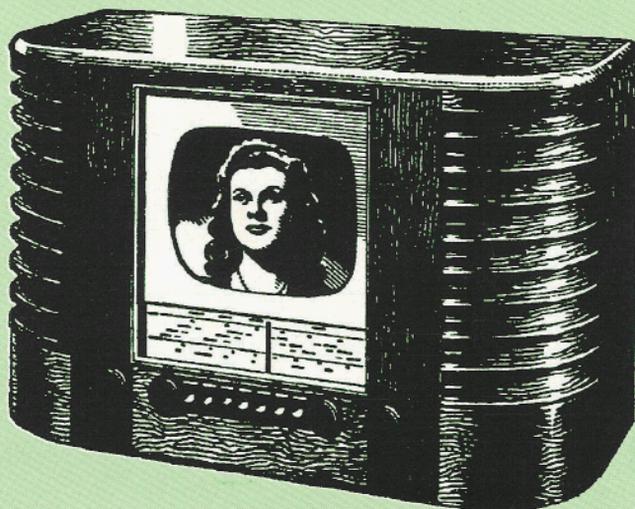


# 405 ALIVE

*Recalling the Golden Years of Black & White Television*



**Technostalgia for the joy of it!**

*Issue 43 - Third Quarter 1999*

ISSN 0969-8884

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

**In this issue:**

BACK ROOM GOON   BAIRD PAPERS SOLD   SECRET TV IN 1945

YOUR LETTERS   LOADS OF CHEAP AND FREE TELLIES IN SMALL ADS

SONY'S AMAZING CV-2000 VTR   BOOK REVIEWS

**... and much more**

# 405 ALIVE

Founded 1989 by Andrew Emmerson, with life and inspiration by Bill Journeaux.

## Issue 43, Third Quarter 1999

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## LEGAL WARNING, particularly for New Readers

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

# A Message from the Publisher.

As publisher of *405 Alive* I have been seriously disturbed by hearing rumours that this magazine is about to close down. **This is completely untrue.**

Normally my role in the production of *405 Alive* is to check through the final MS, to add a few pictures or cartoons here and there, to arrange for the printing to be done and then to mail the completed magazines to the readers. However, Andy has asked me to pen an introduction to this issue for reasons that will soon be apparent.

For some time now I have been aware that Andy has been over-working himself to produce three regular magazines plus some excellent books on vintage radio and TV, and so I was not at all surprised when he told me that he needed to slow down before he was completely overwhelmed by the pressures on him. Something has had to go and after a great deal of heart-searching he has come to the conclusion that he must give up the editorship of *405 Alive*. Because of this, we are seeking a new incumbent for the post and to this end we invite enquiries from interested persons. Obviously the successful candidate must have good grammatical English and preferably some previous experience of journalism, professional or otherwise, and sufficient available time for the work. As to exactly how much is involved in the latter, Andy will be pleased to explain this to candidates.

At this time it is opportune to consider how the magazine should develop under a new editor. From the readers' letters printed in this issue it would appear that Andy has been getting things pretty well right for the last ten years and it may be preferable to stick to the "mixture as before". On the other hand, would readers like to see more articles dealing with the practical aspects of restoring 405-line television receivers and perhaps detailed descriptions of well-known models on the lines of *Receiver Profile in The Radiophile?* I mention this because to facilitate the reproduction of circuit diagrams, etc., a change to an A4 format would be advantageous.

Have you any thoughts on these matters? If so, please do let Andy or me know as soon as possible, so that we can arrange a smooth transition from our present highly respected editor to his successor.

Chas. E. Miller,  
Radiophile Publications, "Larkhill", Newport Road,  
Woodseaves, Stafford, ST20 0NP.

# Who Are They?

Another of our nostalgic quizzes using pictures of well-known television (and film) personalities taken in the late 1950s.



*The gentleman on the left will probably be familiar, but what about the distinguished fellow on the right with the insignia of a senior diplomat? Here's a clue: he didn't always appear so immaculately dressed.*

*Another handsome fellow who has given audiences much pleasure for something approaching half a century both as script-writer and player.*



*We'll tell you that the glamorous young lady was Belinda Lee, but who was her dashing escort? He too enlivened the occasional film as well as appearing on television for forty-odd years.*

(Answers on Page 45).

# LETTERS, WE GET LETTERS...

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

## **From Arthur Dungate, by e-mail:**

Has anyone anywhere any details of a spoof television programme about a week-end visit Hitler made to London in the 1930s.....? Memory can deceive, but what I remember is that it was probably in the mid-1970s, on BBC2 (?), was 30 minutes long and shown at 7.30pm in the middle of the week. It was done excellently, with the "researcher" finding an obscure newspaper photo of Hitler peering out of an upstairs window above a shop; locating the actual place; interviewing the 'nanny' of the children at the time, etc. etc. It was billed as the first of an occasional series, but I never saw a second.... nor was this programme ever repeated. Does it still exist? Does anyone else remember it even?

## **And again:**

I went in to London today (July) and to MOMI. I was told it was closing at the end of August, for about three years. The site is being redeveloped I was told when I asked.

The National Film Theatre is now 42 years old. I remember going to the very last film show in the old NFT (originally the Festival of Britain's "Telekinema", now the Shell tower is on that site) and then, a few months later in 1957, to the very first show in the new NFT.

MOMI is a very comprehensive exhibition, but is in need of maintenance. In the display about cinema sound, one could hardly hear the sound, except at the end when it switched to the stereo *Star Wars* excerpt. One of the exhibits, an old mirror televisior was so dusty and fingermarked. Don't they ever clean anything there? However, watching the video display on it (again, the sound was so quiet as to be just about inaudible.....), reminded me of the 1953 *London To Brighton* film. It was fascinating to see an old Pye TV set—they were used in the studio as monitors at Alexandra Palace. All in all, a reasonable £4.50 (with my bus pass, a concession rate).

## **From Colin Guy, by e-mail:**

Just got my copy of issue 42 and reading the letters. I hope you take Andrew Redding's letter as a "humorous windup" as I wouldn't like to see the format of the magazine changed at all. And I regard the 2000 as a piece of history, just

as much as any other "old" TV It can, after all, receive on 405 lines. Looking forward to *Radio Days*. Please keep up all your good work.

**From Bill Journeaux, Poole:**

I am surprised your correspondent did not like the article on the restoration of the 2000 chassis in issue 41. Having spent over two years in the late 1960s servicing this chassis, I enjoyed a wonderfully nostalgic trip back down memory lane and was very pleased to find somebody prepared to restore an early colour television which was quite revolutionary in its day.

**From Jeffrey Borinsky, by e-mail:**

There has been a fair bit in *405 Alive* recently about the Thorn 2000. I definitely support this. My very first colour TV was an ex-rental Thorn 2000. After many trials I got it all to work and was rewarded with a respectable picture. I discovered a few tricks for getting good results.

- Clean all the PCB edge connectors and squeeze up the prongs of the mating sockets. Do this at least once a year.
- Disconnect the Tint control. This stopped the colour balance wandering.
- Replace the sync separator coupling capacitor with a much smaller one to stop field roll caused by aircraft flutter.
- Leave the back off the set to keep it reasonably cool. The reliability was then excellent.
- I also put pincushion correction in as an experiment. The geometry improved enormously but the buzz from the transductor was irritating, especially with the back off the set.

Visitors always used to comment on the nice pictures.

The end came when I had reached 11V on the heaters and the red gun was still unhappy. I still have fond memories of those sets (I acquired a second one later on).

**TELETEXT**

Harold Peters' article in *405 Alive* issue 42 re-awakens old memories. I built the Wireless World teletext decoder in 1976 without using PCBs. I strung the whole thing together on veroboard or something similar. Incredibly I got it to work though looking at the clock run-in to establish clock lock was difficult on the dim old scope that I then owned. Black out the room, cloth over head and scope, allow eyes to adapt to the dark and I could see the clock run-in. I used to run the decoder from my Thorn 2000 set. I had fitted a simple video output but I had to tune the poor old set to within an inch of its life to get a reasonable text error rate. The text was then OK but the picture had patterning and it drifted off the "sweet spot" if you breathed on it.

Harold Peters wonders how 6.9MHz ever got through a 5.2MHz channel. The teletext bit rate was 6.9 megabits per second (strictly speaking

not 6.9MHz) but our old friend Nyquist says that this means an analogue bandwidth of 3.45MHz. Perfectly feasible in a 5MHz TV system. Here is a simplified explanation. If you want to digitise a signal of xMHz bandwidth you need a sampling rate of 2x megasamples per second. The same goes in reverse if you are transmitting bits in an analogue channel.

**From Harold Peters, Oulton Broad:**

A reader took me to task on my assertion that "theoretically 6.9 megabits should not get through a 5.2MHz video channel". He pointed out that for example the worst possible case—a transition of 0101010—has a *frequency* of 3.45MHz—half the bit rate. He is right of course, not only showing how wide awake your readers are, but bringing home to me the words of my schoolmaster: 'Read this piece carefully, you will be asked questions about it later.'

In the centre of George Cushing's collection of organs at Thursford, Norfolk, is a superlatively restored Wurlitzer organ from, I think, the Plaza Leeds. Upon it Robert Wolfe gives dazzling performances throughout the summer. In one of them, a tribute to the Movies, he played *Lullaby of Broadway* and Jolson's *Mammy*, accompanying the film clips projected on a huge video screen.

What puzzles me is that he was in tune with the film sound. Films are shot at 24 frames a second, but television scans at 25 frames (fields) a second. This accounts for the *Titanic* film being several minutes shorter on video than in the cinema and makes the sound, both music and speech, about a semitone higher (sharp). So how did Thursford do it?

*My Owl's Book of Knowledge* tells me that musical 'A' is 440Hz, and 'A sharp' 466.16Hz; thus note 'A' on film projected to video will be  $25/24 \times 440 = 458.33\text{Hz}$ , producing an audible dissonance even if transcribed up a semitone. Even Bernard couldn't tell me!

**From Chris Worrow, Suffolk:**

I spent last night in the local reading issue 42, which has just arrived; the rain was pouring down outside but the beer was OK and with *405 Alive* to read does Life get any better? I'm serious and am a little concerned at the remarks made by Andrew Redding and even more concerned by your reply.

The line I always took is that if the set/equipment was designed to originally work at 405, it's OK for inclusion and the BRC 2000 chassis was. Most of my collection is from the 1960s, an age that seems to have been forgotten with all the TV22s and the like. Having said that, your point about vintage equipment has made me think and I agree with you, for the younger readers 30 years ago is a long time and sets of that era are not out of place in *405 Alive*.

Please do not even think of calling it a day as here is one reader who would be very unhappy. You can't please all the people all the time. as the saying goes, but those that are unhappy with *405 Alive* must be countable on one hand, if that. Cheers Andy, *405 Alive* opened up a "valve" in me many years ago and its not one that is showing signs of low emission.

**From David East, Birmingham:**

It's the lot of anybody who takes the trouble to edit a magazine, start a society or get involved in any similar activity benefiting the human race to be taken to task at regular intervals by disaffected punters claiming to represent the membership. Do not be downhearted—you have many admirers who look forward to receiving *405 Alive* including this one, who has a penchant for collecting 405/625 TVs. If anybody wants a good home for a dual-standard mono or colour set, they can call me on 0121-354 2189.

Could I take the opportunity through your magazine to ask if anyone recorded *Gangsters*, featuring the late, much lamented Maurice Colbourn? It ran through about three series in the early 1970s on BBC, was based in Birmingham, and, surprisingly therefore, was extremely stylish. I didn't miss an episode until the last one, where John Kline gets his comeuppance from Red Stick (you had to watch the earlier episodes to understand why and how!). It's never been repeated. Phone number above or by e-mail to [DMEast@aol.com](mailto:DMEast@aol.com)

Keep up the good work; the effort you put into *405 Alive* is much appreciated.

**From Chris Garnett, Kingsclere:**

I'm sure my letter will not be the only one you get in response to Mr Redding's letter published in issue 42 of *405 Alive* concerning the article on the BRC 2000 chassis. Sure the article concerned could be construed as "tangential" to the main topic of 405 television but it is not necessarily any less interesting for that. If the magazine was restricted wholly to 405 television, it presumably would consist entirely of technical articles on 405-line receivers, 405-line transmitters, 405-line cameras and the 405-line television waveform!

I would have thought that the magazine would only make one issue a year (if that) if it were restricted to solely to those topics; it would also read like a very "heavy" technical manual. What we have got is a lively magazine containing material on the above topics but also articles on programme making, anecdotes of lives of those working in the industry and stuff ranging from before the 405 era and towards the end of the era (the discussed article). It makes it very varied and "readable" publication.

I think the formula that we have works very well; I would be very sad to see *405 Alive* fold or restrict itself to very specific "core" subjects. I suspect that if the latter happened it would in fact lose many subscribers and possibly the "critical mass" required to sustain even a specialist publication like *405 Alive*.

Secondly, what you do with your own time is entirely your concern. I for one consider it fortunate that you choose to donate some of it to a non-profit making activity (i.e. *405 Alive*). However, if you choose to spend less time on the magazine that is entirely your business. Please carry on the good work and ignore the "goons".

**From Dave Higginson, by e-mail:**

There is no other magazine like this, 405 or any other number of lines, and if everyone felt like A. Redding, we wouldn't have this excellent magazine now. For ten years-plus you have done a good job, Andy, and I feel a lot of others are very grateful for what we would not otherwise receive.

**From John Wakely, Colliers Wood:**

I just had to write in defence of the article on the BRC 2000 chassis. To start with, it is a 405 six two five DUAL-STANDARD SET! Released in 1967, eighteen years before the close of 405-line transmissions, it was used for over two and a half years on the 405 standard to receive BBC1 and ITV. As you state, the magazine is for its readers, most of which enjoy the whole era of real television from the test card music to the transmitters. Come on Mr Redding, lets have a nice detailed article on the restoration of a rain soaked Murphy V200A to keep us amused.

Oh, by the way, no Steve, you are not the owner of the only Philips 799 projection receiver. I have the other one.... As you say, Philips both in the UK and Holland state that it didn't exist. Mine has the serial number 1116 prefixed by the letter M for Mitcham. I hope that we are the only owners of this monster as I feel it may be mentioned as grounds for divorce if any more of these are delivered by mobile crane to readers' addresses.

I rescued only two receivers from the rubbish tip last month. First one was a Pye VT4 complete with pink screen and restorable. The second from another tip was yet another VT4, this time with the more usual grey screen filter. This one powers up and produces a raster of sorts so hope here by the look of it. Come to think of it the Pye V4 was produced only twelve years before the B.R.C. 2000...

I think I have a colour tube for Ian Watson's Pye NTSC receiver. I have spoken to him and it looks promising.

Actually, the sage of this BRC 2000 chassis has stimulated a few thoughts about the pace of technology during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. We worked out that the Pye V4 was produced only 12 years before the BRC colour 405/625 model! In 1953 vision AGC was unknown and the Pye V4 was a revolution with its high-gain chassis, full vision AGC and flywheel sync. It was also the first true 'fringe' model.

Now think of this one... If you take the start of electronic television in the UK (1936), deduct the age of the BRC 2000 and you find yourself walking behind Queen Victoria's coffin in 1901!

Finally—oh yes, the Murphy oil. As a young lad I was steeped in the stuff, working on the Murphy V310 series sets. At the age of 51 it has produced only one side-effect: the hatred of anything with transistors in it!

**MENTAL HEALTH ACT, 1999.**

This is to record that J.C. Wakely was certified on 18<sup>th</sup> July 1999, no. 405625. He is no danger to the public.

**From Mike Arnfield, Knutsford:**

Following the letter published in issue 42 of *405 Alive* I am writing to offer my support of the article on the BRC 2000 chassis in issue 41. Although I do not really have a preferred period in TV history, the 1st generation dual-standard colour sets certainly bring back memories as they appeared at around the time I was trying to start a career in the TV repair business, (though I have made several changes since then). Of all the models I encountered the BRC 2000 is probably the one I admired the most just as the Phillips G6 is the one that I

most feared! I must also admit that I do not at present have any examples of 405 line technology, in a house increasingly dominated by Eddystone receivers it is difficult to justify the presence of yet another 'big useless box'. However the 2000 chassis is probably acceptable, so, fired by Steve Pendlebury's article, I would like to like to get involved with one (*Mike has a Want ad at the back of the magazine*).

**From Dave Grant, Bromley:**

I must admit to a wry smile when I read Andrew Redding's letter in *405 Alive*. The truth is we can not get too precious about this hobby of ours. How long will it be before you have to rename the magazine to 'Analogue Alive'?

A few years ago radio collectors would have turned their noses up at the thought of collecting transistor sets (many still do!) but, these are the up and coming collectibles and just as worthy of our attention. To put it into a personal context maybe Mr.Redding would like to consider how many fewer of my 'Testcard-U-Like' I would have sold if I had said '405-Line Only'?

**Andrew has the last word on the subject; correspondence on this matter is now closed...**

Thanks for printing my letter in issue 42. I'm sorry if it comes across as a bit negative but I think that *405 Alive* is not living up to its terms of reference. On the front of the magazine it says "Recalling the Golden Years of Black and White Television", yet on page 54 we see an article on the Thorn 3500 colour television and on page 60 we read about *teletext*! To top it all on page 70, we have an article on a 625-line camera! What's going on?!?

❖ Easy answer—plain editorial incompetence. Another reason to pack it all in! I quit...

**From Steve James, Netherfield:**

Just thought I'd drop you a line to say thanks for including my adverts in *405 Alive*. I received several calls about the sets I had for disposal and have found good homes for them. Now I have a good deal more space and can also appreciate more the few sets I've decided to keep.

Old sets are still turning up. Only last Saturday there was a late fifties Murphy 'Sound Mirror' table set amongst the junk at the Nottingham Cattle Market (and that's not bull—sorry!). The stall holder had momentarily vanished and none of his assistants was willing to venture a price, so I have a feeling it may have been the wrong side of twenty pounds. Being of iron resolve, I let it pass. There's usually something of interest at the market each week.

Another market stall housed in an outbuilding on the site is the setting for a rather sorry saga involving a pretty rare Dynatron colour set with a valved chassis and wired remote control. The woman in charge wanted forty pounds for the set based on the fact that it had an "antique" Queen Anne style cabinet. She didn't seem to grasp that it was just ordinary chipboard tarted up with veneers and gold hinges. After a few weeks the set vanished and I thought no more of it until it suddenly re-appeared. Opening the console door I was horrified to see that the innards had been gutted, leaving only the cabinet, still

with a screen-shaped aperture. Ouch! I didn't ask, but I bet the price was still forty pounds!

**From George Windsor, by e-mail:**

I thought you might be interested in knowing about my recent 'dual-standard' find. Thanks to my completing the restoration of my 60 year old livestock trailer, Angela and I made a visit to the local Aldershot recycling centre to rid ourselves of copious garden refuse. Once the trailer was emptied we took a look at the 'salvage barn', a tin shed affair, to rummage through the spoils. It was full of the usual 'modern' TV stuff and video recorders looking very much worse for wear. The most interesting item was a 1950s Alba radiogram with a rather nice bow front and pillared sides. The top was rather scratched and the knobs broken, although still there. The top dropped with a nice controlled damping due to the use of a big oil damper system. I was very tempted but decided to pass up on it.

Anyhow, about 90 minutes later I went back with another load of tree branch cuttings. Once emptied I thought, "Shall I bother looking again?" I thought, oh well, might as have a quick look. Two big Nordmende TVs were in the entrance. These were off white with a 26" colour tube on top and three monochrome tubes beneath, and yes they had 4 tuners so you could watch four channels at once! They were both rather tatty with bits missing or damaged plus bad scratches on the colour tubes so passed them over but they had to be a rarity and rather interesting if a little OTT for the average living room. I would guess they were from the early 1980s.

Then I saw it, a little Sony portable. Ah that looks interesting I thought, went closer and GREAT!!! It turned out to be a TV9-90UB dual standard 405/625 set! It was complete apart from a strip of trim down one side and a piece of plastic above the on/off switch. The face was OK without scratches and all the knobs were there. The mains lead was cut short and only about 6" was left. The very end of the telescopic aerial was broken off. I took it to the man in charge and said how much for this old portable, sir?

"£4 mate for that one" he said. I quickly handed over the money and departed. This had to be a bargain and it was a set I had been looking for for years! Once evening arrived I thought I had better see if it was any good. I fitted a mains lead with a connector block (three wires including earth) and with great trepidation pulled the mains switch, line whistle, (great I thought!), turned the volume and sound was there without pot noise, and hey presto— a raster came up and the tube emission looked good! I pushed in the 405 button and the familiar whistle and raster noise was there! I switched on my old Ekco 405-line pattern generator, tuned it and a nice strong VHF signal swamped the little Sony and a good solid raster pattern was there. What luck I thought. I tried it on 625 UHF and it worked fine, a nice picture was obtained.

Well all this goes to show you can get lucky sometimes and can say I am really pleased with it. I am glad I went and had a second look! Bye to all for now.

- Great spot of luck with the Sony TV9-90; they are great little sets. The trim is often missing; the glue was not very strong. Tandy shops have (had?) a replacement telescopic aerial that would substitute for the missing bit. Maplins may have these as well.

### **From George again:**

My wife Angela found whilst scanning the *Thames Valley Free Ads* newspaper an ad in the Antiques section for someone selling a Bush TV12a for £90 in Bramley near Basingstoke. I bought it on behalf of Ian Watson in Scotland and he now has it (shipped up there for £18) to complete his collection of Bush bakelites (TV12, 22, 32, 62). He will be restoring it electrically in the near future.

Rin Tin Tin—37 North Road, Brighton, Sussex, BN1 1YB (01273-672424)—do have some limited TV advertisement cuttings from old magazines for both UK and American sets. They charge £2.50 for B/W and £3.00 for colour so you have to be careful to not run up a silly amount! I bought the following—

Murphy V176 of 1950, HMV 1815 from 1952, Decca 131 of 1950 without radio 189 gns (with radio £220/9/0, note the change from £ to gns to make the set without look a lot cheaper!), Baird Townsman of 1950 at 77gns or 88 gns with 3-station radio. The last one shows exhibits at Radiolympia of 1949 with Corner console made by R. N. Fritton Ltd at £105, Ekco Mirror lid £40/15/7, Mullard Console £102/18/0, Bush TV 12, KB console.

### **And again...**

Many thanks for the latest 405, it arrived this morning and I have taken a quick peek and it looks very interesting. A quick note about my weekend trial!

I decided to unwrap my 11 year stored GEC 2028 dual standard colour set from 1968 and fire it up again. I cut off the plastic bags taped shut and took off the back cover. Oh dear, what was that mass of bright bare wire at the back of the chassis, what was that pile of coloured plastic 100s and 1000s? Yes, you guessed it, a mouse had stripped the wiring loom! Aaaargh! My previously working antique colour set was wrecked by a pesky mouse!

I have stripped the set out, cleaned it all up and assessed the damage as 15 x 2mm coloured stranded wires needing replacing plus a couple in the LOP section. Some urine damage is in evidence but thankfully is fairly small and in a part that will not affect the electrics. No nest either so it's not as bad as it could have been. The plastic bag covering was chewed open and a wide slot in the back cover was enough to gain access. Why do they like plastic-covered wire? Long term storage of sets is a nightmare if not kept in the house. I am resigned to restoration now and will let you know how I get on.

### **And yet again!**

After seeing your note about the telegraph pole in the opening sequence of *Robin Hood* I very carefully went through frame by frame on my S-VHS machine and I'll be blown if I can see a pole. You are right in thinking there is a wire, one frame does seem to show a wire but I would say that it is a guide wire for the arrow rather than a telephone! If you study the opening sequence of *William Tell* the guide wire for the crossbow bolt is quite clearly visible above the boy's head. I don't recall seeing this when I first saw the series on our Pye VT4. I guess it's not as visible on 405 lines or our set was clapped out!

### **From Chris Roberts, Compstall:**

Thank you for putting my advert in *405 Alive* for the E.H.T. transformer for the Bush TV22a that I have been restoring. I tried Scot Transformers they

were not prepared to attempt it but suggested I try Hereford Rewinds Ltd (01432-275002). They said they would try to rewind the transformer at a cost of about £80.00 but did not know that they had the correct wire until they had stripped the old transformer down.

I had contacted Dave Higginson about the faulty transformer and he made the obvious suggestion of trying to find the missing wire on the faulty part. The transformer was so dirty that there was no sign of the wire but as a last resort I sprayed it with WD40 this softened the coating and cleaned it so the wire could be found. With the careful use of a hair dryer and my finger nail (I did not want to use metal tool as this could have damaged the windings) I removed enough of the wax like coating and recovered the missing wire. The television now produces a very good sound and picture.

Restoring the TV22a has given me a feeling of achievement that would not have been possible without your work producing *405 Alive*.

### **From Andrew Rogers, Worcester:**

I enclose a cheque for £16 as my first subscription to *405 Alive*. I have been borrowing the magazine from a colleague at work since we started talking about such wonderful old things on the internet as TV ident slides and theme tunes. It has always been an excellent read, even though I have no old equipment and enjoy having modern things installed such as Sky Digital.

I grew up in South Wales where we had the largest choice by design of 'different' 405-line programmes. We had an old Bush single-standard 405-line TV, and I remember BBC-1 being on Channel 5, HTV-Wales on 7, HTV "General Service" on 10 and BBC-Wales on 13. We were not allowed to have an external aerial because it was a council estate, and so we had just a dipole for Channel 5 in the loft which, when suitably twiddled, brought in all the other signals perfectly. My grandmother, living in the depths of the valleys, was not so lucky, and had a monster in her garden, with an enormous X for Channel 5, and two yagis mounted parallel for HTV on Channel 10. Even with this, Channel 10's picture was very "flat", with little contrast, although Channel 5 was fine. Channels 7 and 13 were rather worse than Channel 10, and barely watchable.

In 1972 we rented our first colour set from Rediffusion and started a long battle to get a decent-enough signal from the Mendip transmitter with a variety of aerials in the garden. Wenvoe came in perfectly but the Welsh-language evening news programme prevented me from watching *Star Trek!* The Bush set went into my parents' bedroom and our cousins gave us a Philips dual-standard set which I put in my bedroom. Fiddling around with the old dipole from the loft produced not only the four standard VHF signals, but also Westward TV from Stockland Hill on Channel 9. The picture was quite watchable and I was fascinated. Later I found that this out-of-area reception could also be achieved on UHF and later, when living in Dorset, arranged aerials to receive TVS, TSW, HTV West and HTV Wales, which easily penetrated to Poole from Wenvoe.

Looking around Worcester now, there are still plenty of old VHF TV aerials about, including a magnificent array close to the centre of town which has a double 3-element array for Sutton Coldfield Channel 4, and a double 8-element array for Lichfield Channel 8. This must be on an old TV showroom: I can see it from a footbridge, but it is rather difficult to trace the exact location.

**From Philip Howard, Bournemouth:**

MIDLAND ITV REGION—Lived in Swindon at one time, once famous for trains, now famous for cars. Lived in a small village on top of a hill. Blunsdon, a few battles were fought in olden times and a few in mine (scars to prove it). We all got different progs. ONE BUT NOT BOTH! We took ATV, the other side of the hill took HTV West (25 yards away). The arguments at school over what film was on view the night before caused many a problem, friends tended to visit if their set did not have it on. Oh the good old days when every region showed a different set of films. I think the far end of the village were able even to pick up something different. Yes I'm totally mad. I can now be addressed as Lord Philip John Howard.

- ❖ It was just the same where we lived, near Brackley, Northants.. People on one side of the street received London ITV, whereas the other got rotten old ATV (at least that's how I perceived it in those days). Now I really that being forced to watch clunky old ATV was part of life's education! *Editor*, also mad.

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

You may remember that I've been trying to get a video head for a Sony EIAJ machine. Said machine has been in bits on my bench for a couple of months... I've tried several different VHS head tips and come to a conclusion. They're all the same. Almost identical inductance and physical size, no matter what machine they were designed for. The metal head drums are different, of course, but I wasn't trying to use those.

Well, if VHS heads don't work, what's the next easiest to get? Betamax, of course. Grandata still list a number of Betamax head disks in the catalogue. I started with a Sony SLC7-series one (well, I am trying to fix a Sony machine, right :-)). Took off the head tips (one security (why???) screw each), fitted them onto the modified head beam. Soldered down the slip-ring wires, put the machine together and gave it a go.

The results are reasonable. Not perfect, but after tweaking the recording level (almost as high as it'll go), the demodulator and the head resonance adjustments (note, the latter peaked without any extra capacitors, so the Betamax heads are similar in inductance to the 'right' ones), the playback picture is useable.

In particular:

Grey scale (from pattern generator). A little noisy, but recognisable;

Crosshatch. Ouch, pulls like mad at the top of the screen, but resolution OK. This is a particularly nasty test, of course.

Normal camera image. Watchable—very.

So I've put the whole thing back together. If I ever see the right heads anywhere, I can trivially put them in. As it is, I can at least use the machine if I want to.

**From Geoffrey Phillips (author of *Memories of Tyne Tees TV*):**

Thank you for publishing the very encouraging reviews of my book—it makes it all worthwhile to know that readers get the same kick that I did when writing it.

The station had two celebrations of their birthday on 15th January this year—the 'official' party in studio 5 at Tyne Tees and the 'unofficial' one in the Egypt Cottage pub next door. Over 100 ex-Tyne Tees people turned up to the Egypt gig and it was a night to remember. Some of the original stars came—one actually sang. Some of the original producers were there who went on to become noted in their profession e.g. Chris Palmer (*Wish You Were Here*), Dennis Kirkland (*Benny Hill Show*) and Malcolm Morris (*This is Your Life*). As a goodwill gesture Tyne Tees MD put £1,000 in the till of the bar and the drinks started to flow. By the end of the night the bar bill was well over £2,000 but Tyne Tees paid the lot. Thank you again for a terrific review of the book.

**From: Eric Hadley , by e-mail:**

I'm one of your silent but ardent and enthusiastic subscribers and like several of your letter writers it seems, I first became hooked by acquiring a TV22 followed by a determination to see it working. As a non tv-engineer with no substantial junk box or tv experience the magazine is invaluable in providing contact for obtaining parts but far more importantly for advice and help from yourself and other expert 405 contributors.

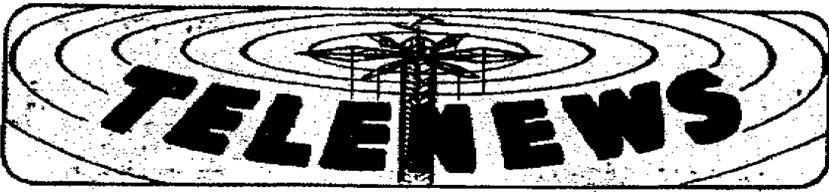
Now I cannot offer any great technical insights but re the article on Freddy Frinton in last issue. I'm sure I've seen this sketch performed by dear old Dick Emery possibly with Beryl Reid.

A query: Does anyone remember the year a children's program of the 50s on BBC called the *Black Brigand* was shown. It must have been shown on a Sunday about teatime as I can associate it with tinned mandarin oranges and bread and butter sandwiches! Finally before I 'close down' could I mention that it's worth looking in 'for sale' ads in local evening newspapers. I recently answered an ad in the 'Antiques' section for a '1950s Pye TV'. This turned out to be a Pye B18 of 1948 vintage in vgc and now working. £40 was gratefully accepted by the seller. For former Midlands viewers, the closing words of Evadne Price, the ATV 'mystic' of early 60's: "Think lucky and you'll be lucky" (in a Birmingham accent). Looking forward to next edition.

- ❖ *Black Brigand* has me stumped. It's not in the Kaleidoscope guide nor in any of the BFI books. It may have been a bought-in film series. Does anyone recall it?

**From Howard Webster, Cambs.:**

As someone whose dad went to the local (south London) department store to buy a new radio and instead ordered one of the first TV22 sets I was very glad to hear of your organisation. We were the first in our road to have TV and can recount many memories of Humphrey Lestocq, Mcdonald Hobley, and Jennifer Gay, not to mention Sylvia Peters and Mary Malcolm. I also remember hordes of local kids grouped around the 9-inch screen for the cowboy series on a Monday night and the ensuing mayhem when it was frequently interrupted by a power cut. Later I came to appreciate the superb technology of the TV22 and actually added a 13-channel turret tuner to one to get ITV.



**AP news (thanks to Dave Laine for sending this in)**

Palace mast plan 'absurd', say historians.

The idea to remove part of the Alexandra Palace television mast and make it into a sculpture has been branded absurd by the Hornsey Historical Society. Castle Transmissions International applied for planning permission to remove the top of the mast and replace it with a lightweight structure for permanent digital audio broadcasts.

The council's conservation officer has no objections to the proposal providing the original piece of mast is displayed in the park as a sculpture. But the plan has horrified the Hornsey Historical Society who believe the mast should stay as it is.

Jacob O'Callaghan said: "To want to chop part of it off is symbolic of the attitude to the importance of the mast. The historic importance of the building is to do with the mast and the whole point of the charity is to preserve the historic building and the park."

The historical society would like to see the mast listed but also think it could be made to work if a new one was put on top. Mr O'Callaghan said: "The studios and mast are absolutely paramount to us and we would like to see the mast being used. It would be the oldest working television mast in the country." He was due to meet English Heritage to discuss the mast this week.

*Muswell Hill Journal, 28th October 1999.*

**Audiovisual Media Matters**

This is a moderated discussion list about Audio Visual Media (i.e. Audio Tape, Video Tape, DVD...). From new trends in media types, to how to care for your older media, to specific problems you may be having. There are over 500 subscribers that have expertise in a wide variety of fields, from Media Archivists, Media Manufacturers, Restoration Specialists and more. To subscribe I recommend the Topica Web Interface at: [www.topica.com](http://www.topica.com) ; take the easy subscriber tutorial and enrol—you can then enrol in AV Media Matters as well as control a series of lists using a very nice interface. Or for those of you who prefer the "Majordomo" approach to life you can subscribe to this list by sending a message directly to the address: [AV-Media-Matters-subscribe@topica.com](mailto:AV-Media-Matters-subscribe@topica.com) . No subject or body is necessary; you will get an email back with subscription directions.

### **'Missing, Absolutely and Completely thought Wiped.....'**

A treasure of sixties television has returned after a 35 year absence. For a change, a sixties TV programme of great merit has turned up (at the BBC) in its original form. *Hamlet At Elsinore* was the first BBC production which credited a videotape editor. The master videotape was destroyed and until very recently, the programme existed as a 35mm telerecording. Part of the point of the original recording was to exercise a demonstration of the advance of outside broadcast videotape recording and the telerecording can't convey the 'live' effect of videotape. It is very welcome news that a 2" 625-line low-band videotape recording of the complete broadcast (tx: 19.04.64) has been found.

The reason the tape had survived is that it was a practice edit made before the actual master tape was cut. No programme up to that time had used so many physical edits and it was thought wise to copy the complete recording to low band to practice editing the whole programme. The master could then be cut to match. As a result, this recording is the earliest 625-line BBC videotape in existence and perhaps one day we can hope to see something of it. Incidentally, the production featured Christopher Plummer in an early BBC-TV appearance.

Andy Henderson

### **Archive tape bonanza**

Kingfisher Cassettes, an Australian company, has collaborated with the Australian Institute of Recorded Sound to make available to the public more than 80 radio programmes of the 1940s-60s. Australian shows include serials (*Biggles*, *The Grey Shadow* and *Mutiny of the Bounty*) plus British stage and music hall stars performing down under in Australia (Billy Russell, Beatles, Gracie Fields, Spike Milligan et al.) There are also some 30 BBC shows from the 1930s onwards, with big bands, comedy, variety and many 1960s pop and jazz broadcasts from the Royal Albert Hall. Tapes cost £10 each, not unreasonable considering this includes air mail postage from Australia, cassette and the cost of transferring this priceless material. For list send **two first-class stamps** to KINGFISHER LIST, 71 Falcutt Way, Northampton, NN2 8PH.

### **New radio and television museum in FINLAND**

RADIO & TV MUSEUM, The old radio station of Lahti Radiomäki, P.O.Box 113, FIN-15111 Lahti (00 358 18-818 4512). Open daily 11.00-17.00. Valve radio, ham shack and TV studio displays. Thanks to Hans Knot for passing on information of this—who's going to pay a visit and report back?!?

### **Another tape from Politico's**

The 'eagerly awaited' follow-up to last year's cult classic, *Party Political Broadcasts: The Greatest Hits*, has been released by Politico's Publishing. Entitled *American Political Commercials*, it features nearly two hours of notorious American campaign commercials from the last forty years. This video shows American political adverts far more hard-hitting, muck-raking and blatantly manipulative than their gentle British cousins. Included are excerpts from Nixon's infamous Checkers broadcast, Reagan's Morning in

America, Bush on Willie Horton and Lyndon Johnson's famous ad showing a small girl picking a flower as a countdown to nuclear holocaust.

The price is £16.99 plus £1.50 p&p, from Politico's Bookstore, 8 Artillery Row, London SW1P 1RZ (0171-828 0010, fax: 0171-828 8111, [politicos@artillery-row.demon.co.uk](mailto:politicos@artillery-row.demon.co.uk)).

### **Do you collect valves?**

The Tube Collectors Association is established to support and encourage the collection of electron tubes of all types and historical periods. The association provides a forum for sharing information on the development, manufacturing, trends in design, specifications, and historical relevance of electron tubes. The membership of TCA is dedicated to the non-commercial collection of electron tubes and the preservation of electron tube history.

Website at <http://www.tubecollectors.org/>

### **Re-silvering mirror-lids**

For this service Tony Statham recommends a firm called VACUUM COATINGS, 66 Barrett Road, Walthamstow, London, E17 9ET (020-8520 5353).

### **Jack Mullin dies**

CAMARILLO, Calif. (AP)—John T. "Jack" Mullin, an electrical engineer who introduced audio magnetic tape recording to Hollywood and was responsible for the first regular use of radio laugh tracks, died Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> June. He was 85.

It was Mullin who galvanized Hollywood, first with Bing Crosby, into adopting magnetic tape recording and who deserves credit for the post-World War II start of commercial audio, data and videotape in America. Once he got Crosby to use magnetic tape in the late 1940s, other entertainers adopted the technology. Through the use of scissors and tape, Mullin was able to splice in laugh and applause tracks.

### **Joan Kemp-Welch, 1906-1999**

Jeremy Jago kindly sent in an obituary from *The Guardian* of 7<sup>th</sup> July, in which the life is celebrated of Joan Kemp-Welch—"a pioneering woman in the world of television, who directed everything from Pinter to pop".

Jeremy points out that she appeared in a number of British films before the war, moving on to theatrical directing in the 1940s. When opportunities in this field became less plentiful "television providentially offered an alternative. Set up at short notice in 1955, the founding ITV companies had to compete for whatever talent was available. If enough wasn't forthcoming, they had to home grow it, and as well as her own productions for Associated-Rediffusion, Kemp-Welch was kept busy training new directors."

Her first success at AR was *Cool For Cats*, the pop music programme, and after this she concentrated on drama. Philip Purser writes: "Pinter's *The Birthday Party* was his stage play adapted for television, but *The Lover* (1963)

was written for TV an erotic charade in which Alan Badel and Vivien Merchant seemed to be afternoon lovers but were eventually revealed to be husband and wife keeping their sex life charged up by playing games. It carried off all sorts of awards (although not the one I suggested, from the Marriage Guidance Council). The *Electra* in Greek (1962) was a brave gesture; the *Midsummer Night's Dream* (1964) had Benny Hill as Bottom; and *Laudes Evangelii* (1962) was a television version of Leonid Massine's dance-and-mime story of the Crucifixion."

After the 1968 contract reshuffle, continues Purser, she produce and directed for Thames Television and also for Yorkshire Television and the BBC. Among her last credits was a season of half-hour plays for Thames in 1973, *Armchair 30*.

### **Lord Orr-Ewing, Brian Connell, Dallas Bower**

Lord Orr-Ewing, a former Conservative MP, died in late August. He had worked with the pre-war BBC Television Service and it was on his initiative that an OB truck went to Heston Airport to broadcast live Chamberlain's return from Munich.

In his obituary in *The Times* around the same time, Brian Connell was described as ITN's first bearded newscaster [adapted from MHP-Chat].

We hear also that Dallas Bower, another stalwart of pre-war BBC television, is no longer with us.

### **MOMI—an official statement**

As part of the South Bank redevelopment, the Museum of the Moving Image building must be redeveloped. Dismantling an entire museum is a complex procedure which can only be undertaken with the utmost care for the preservation of all the exhibits. To allow this to happen, the existing Museum building will close to the public on 31 August 1999, after the late summer bank holiday. From 1 September 1999 the Museum will be sealed off. The 'take-down' process will begin and continue for several months into the year 2000.

At the same time the BFI will finalise plans for presenting exhibits and displays to the public in the period before the new Museum—which is to be nearly half as big again as the current one—opens around 2003.

Starting next year, there will be a UK-wide touring exhibition with interactive displays and educational packs for teachers and school groups, visiting locations throughout the UK. In addition, the BFI is planning to join forces with the Science Museum in Kensington and the National Museum of Photography, Film and Television in Bradford to show collections from the Museum of the Moving Image in both these venues. During the redevelopment work, you will also be able to see some foyer exhibits in the BFI London IMAX Cinema.

Altogether these arrangements will make the BFI's museum and general film and television collections more widely available than ever before. Further

details will be announced shortly. The BFI looks forward to welcoming you on the South Bank, now and in the future.

### **Whatever next?**

At least two American companies I know of will custom build a new set, using the guts from a present-day TV, that looks almost exactly like the legendary Philco Predicta sold here from 1958-1960. Check out <http://www.cbelec.com/> and <http://www.predicta.com/>

Ed Ellers, in MHP-Chat

### **National Film Theatre**

Throughout the process of the redevelopment on the South Bank, the National Film Theatre will provide a continuous, uninterrupted service of films and special events to its members and the general public. It is anticipated that in 2001, ahead of any construction work, the NFT will relocate temporarily to another cinema, probably in London's West End. Subsequently, a brand new NFT with four screens will open in the new BFI Film Centre on the South Bank. Further information on the temporary relocation of the NFT will be announced as detailed plans are confirmed.

### **Test cards on the Beeb (from our secret correspondent)**

The decision was taken back in January that Test Card F should no longer be shown between the end of the weekend Learning Zone and the Open University programmes. Because the digital Presentation area is not staffed overnight (they simply cut to the output of the analogue area), it was decided that a 4:3 Test Card was a silly thing to show on the 16:9 networks. (Before you ask why the digital area can't be automated to show the widescreen test card, they don't automate an unstaffed area in case of major overnight news...)

We can't show Black and Silence because that sets off all sorts of alarms and so on all over the country—so in their wisdom they decided to show Ceefax. However, the department can't afford to pay for all those hours of music (despite the fact that the hour-long MiniDisc sequences are still in the Continuity suites) so apart from the last 15 minutes, Ceefax is broadcast with tone. Sorry to break the bad news!

### **Something for internauts**

Thanks to Mike Bennett a new e-mail chatlist has been set up on the Internet, for anything related to 405-line TV. To subscribe, send a blank message to [405chat@g7tgr.demon.co.uk](mailto:405chat@g7tgr.demon.co.uk) with the subject *subscribe*. To un-subscribe, send a blank message to [405chat@g7tgr.demon.co.uk](mailto:405chat@g7tgr.demon.co.uk) with the subject *unsubscribe*. You might also like to sign up for—

[625chat@g7tgr.demon.co.uk](mailto:625chat@g7tgr.demon.co.uk)

[vrchat@g7tgr.demon.co.uk](mailto:vrchat@g7tgr.demon.co.uk)

To subscribe, send a blank message with the subject of "SUBSCRIBE" to the relevant mailing list. To unsubscribe, simply replace the subject with the word "UNSUBSCRIBE".

## **Forever Ealing News Update**

Earlier this year, we alerted people to the potential danger of losing Ealing Studios to property redevelopment and we thank everyone who has supported the campaign to save them. We have now co-ordinated a project to secure their future, meeting the needs of the National Film and Television School, the Film and Television Industry and the people of Ealing.

Ealing Studios is part of our national heritage and remains at the forefront of British film production. We want to see that fact made indelible through creating a museum commemorating its history and a 21st Century production centre on a site that has been in continuous production for nearly 100 years.

Forever Ealing intends to form a charitable trust to administer the freehold then lease the studios to an operator, with the safeguard that should it fail the site will be protected. As well as refurbishing the present studios for increased production we want to acquire adjacent properties for a production village designated for digital post production, a visitor centre and cinematheque. West London will then have an entirely modern film production centre and attractive new arts centre and arthouse cinema within easy reach of central London and Heathrow Airport. Both the industry and the public will benefit from an exciting interrelated venture.

The project will also be funded by a public share issue in which companies and individuals can participate. A share prospectus will shortly be available and we invite expressions of interest from anyone wishing to be involved. This is your chance to buy a stake in Britain's first fully publicly owned film studio. Information on the share issue and membership of Forever Ealing is available from PO Box 24443, Ealing Green, London W5 5WU England, TEL: (0181) 567 4550 FAX: (0181) 567 9184. Thank you again for your support. Christopher Ager - Chairman. Patrons include: Steve Abbott, Patti Boulaye, Dulcie Gray, Ron Halpern, Martin Herdman, Terry Jones, Duncan Kenworthy, Herbert Lom, Sir John Mills CBE, Brian Murphy, Michael Palin, George Perry, Tim Marriott, Mike Read, Mike Southon BSC, Clive Swift, Jeremy Thomas, Charles Vance, Robin Vidgeon BSC, Barbara Windsor, Michael Winner, Peter Yates. The British Society of Cinematographers, The Guild of British Camera Technicians, Kodak Limited, Noel Gay Motion Picture Company, VFG PLC, Panavision, The Guild of British Film Editors, Association of Motion Picture Sound, Cable & Broadcast Research Alliance, The Marconi Foundation, Ealing Arts Council, The Comic Heritage Charitable Trust, The British Comedy Appreciation Society.

## **Bad news for Thixendale—or is it good?**

Way back in issue 38 we reported—

Thixendale is a rather dour looking hamlet in the East Riding which had the distinction of being unable to receive terrestrial television, because it's set in a valley that prevents line of sight to any transmitter.

Until only a couple or so Christmases ago, no-one there had any television equipment; then some idiot off-comer

decided to tell Murdoch and Sky presented the local pub with a satellite system. Now all the poor so-and-sos are becoming hooked on the idiot's lantern.

Brian Hamilton Kelly, on the Internet

Now the *Daily Telegraph* (13<sup>th</sup> May 1999) informs us—

A freak thunderbolt wrecked most of the television sets in Thixendale, east Yorkshire, which claimed to be the last village in Britain to receive a picture when a service was introduced 18 months ago.



**THE INVENTOR OF STEREO: THE LIFE AND WORKS OF ALAN DOWER BLUMLEIN**, by Robert Charles Alexander.

Focal Press, 1999: ISBN 0-240-51577-3. 640 pages, 80 b/w photos, hardback, £29.99.

For many, many years the world has waited for a proper biography of Blumlein and at last it has appeared. It is not, however, the book that many people may recall was announced some years back by a charlatan who succeeded in 'borrowing' valuable materials from the Blumlein family and others—and then never published anything. These materials he took to the grave, depriving other biographers of making use of them.

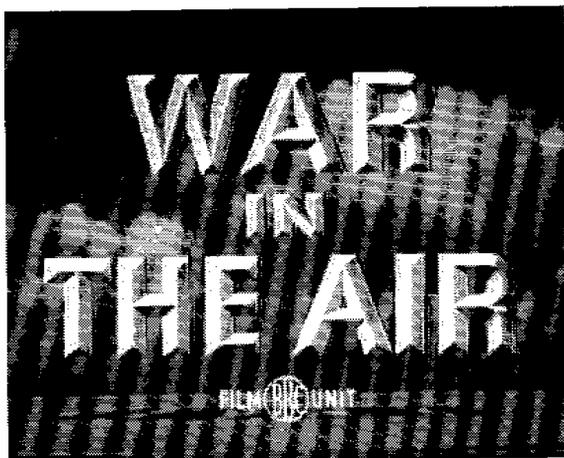
Never mind. This all-new book by Robert Alexander is an admirable substitute and almost certainly a far superior product. In these 640 pages I can see nothing that has been omitted and we have the full story of Blumlein's employment on telephony at STC and his work on audio, television and radar matters. His work at EMI on high-definition television is particularly well documented, with details of all the patents he secured.

The book is superbly illustrated with diagrams and photographs and I was delighted to discover many little gems of information such as this paragraph:

The Telecommunications Department of the General Post Office informed Marconi-EMI on 24<sup>th</sup> July 1935 that the frequencies of 45 megacycles and 41.5 megacycles for vision and sound respectively, which were proposed for use at the projected London Television Station at Alexandra Palace, could be used for the experimental station at Hayes which had, until that time, had been working at 44 megacycles and 40 megacycles respectively. It was pointed out that such an arrangement was

for experimentation up to the time when public transmissions from Alexandra Palace commenced, at which time it would be necessary to arrange a time schedule for the different transmissions from Hayes.

I had always wondered what their frequencies were—and at last we know! That is mere fascinating trivia, however, and the book contains far, far more. I sincerely doubt if anyone will ever better this book on the subject of Blumlein.



#### *Video tape review*

## **WAR IN THE AIR**

DD Video: numbers 3358 & 3359

For the past twenty years, we have seen the lasting effect of the Thames produced 1973 series *The World At War*. This series is the benchmark by which war documentaries are now judged.

It is with part shock and then surprise to find that after nearly 40 years the long forgotten BBC film series *War In The Air* could be regarded an equal to *The World At War*. *War In The Air* was a BBC production originally shown (and shown once only) in 1954. Produced by John Elliot, directed by Philip Dorte, narration by Robert Harris and film editing by James Pople [could that be 'our' Jim Pople? I guess it must be... *Editor*]. This 15-part series tells the story of air power with the accent on Britain.

Seeing for the first time the majestic 'jet streaked' opening titles, you know that you are about to watch a programme of great quality (the picture elements are sourced from 35mm and are in pristine condition, no doubt because of under-use). Each episode is presented with the original

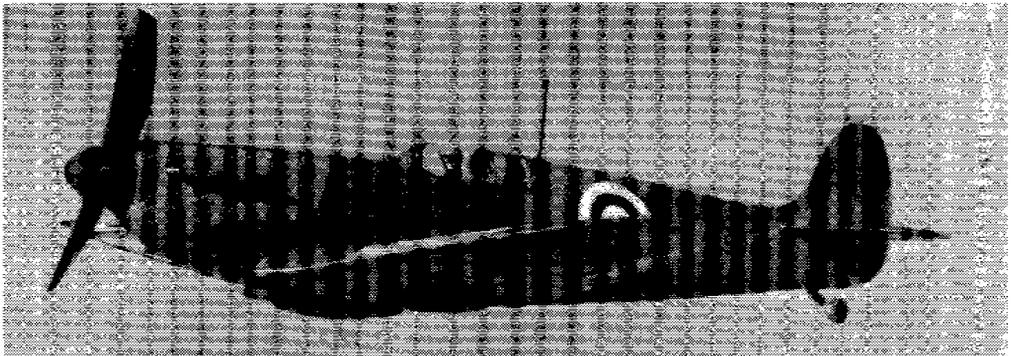
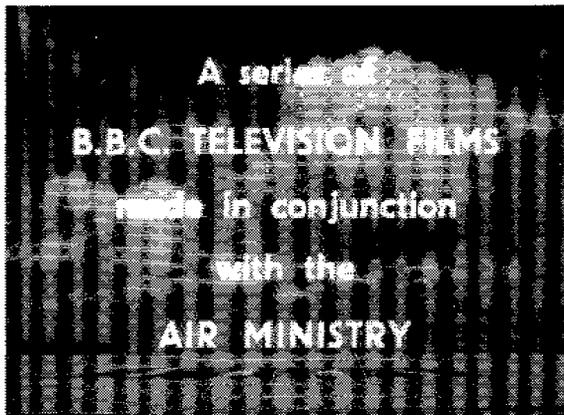
opening and closing titles. There have been no attempts to cut or interfere with the episodes, which is commendable.

We are now all too familiar with much of the stock footage from this era, however little of this seen in the 15 half hours which make up the series. Some of the montage sequences equal anything produced in the cinema. The strident opening title music by Sir Arthur Bliss (with typical bravado) is the perfect compliment to the incidental music by Sir Malcolm Arnold. The complete score was recorded by the London Symphony Orchestra.

Much rubbish is written today on the quaint aspects of BBC Television in the early 50s. Here is a rare chance to watch and enjoy again a series which combines power of the war machine with the sensitivity of the human story behind it.

*War In The Air* is a visual and aural triumph. British Television histories will now ignore this ground breaking series at its peril.

Andrew Henderson



*A Vickers-Supermarine Spitfire Mk.I. Designed by Reginald Mitchell and powered by a Rolls-Royce Merlin engine of 1,030h.p., it was capable of about 365 m.p.h. in level flight.*

## DOCTOR WHO: THE CRUSADE/THE SPACE MUSEUM

Cat. Number: BBCV 6805  
Price: £19.99  
Running Time: 128 mins approx  
Released: 7th June 1999

A 'must-have' for all *Doctor Who* collectors is available from BBC Worldwide with the release of a special limited edition boxed set: *Doctor Who: The Crusade / The Space Museum*. Starring WILLIAM HARTNELL as the First Doctor, it contains six of his early black and white episodes on video—the entire story of *The Space Museum* and the two existing episodes of *The Crusade*—plus a special CD soundtrack of the two missing episodes, postcards and a commemorative key ring.

Earlier this year, amidst an unprecedented flurry of newspaper reports, a film collector in New Zealand discovered an old film print of an episode of *Doctor Who* for sale in a car boot sale. That episode was subtitled *The Lion*, the first episode of the 1965 four-part adventure *The Crusade*. What was so special about this was that this particular episode was one of the 110 missing episodes of *Doctor Who* from the 1960s.

The third episode of *The Crusade*, *The Wheel of Fortune* still existed and both these episodes have been carefully repaired and digitally restored for this release. They are introduced and linked by WILLIAM RUSSELL who recreates his role as the Doctor's companion, Ian Chesterton. The box set also includes a CD of the audio soundtrack to the second and fourth episodes of *The Crusade* as well as the video of the complete four-part story, *The Space Museum* which was next in chronological sequence.

In *The Crusade*, the Doctor (WILLIAM HARTNELL) and his travelling companions Ian (WILLIAM RUSSELL), Barbara (JACQUELINE HILL) and Vicki (MAUREEN O'BRIEN) arrive in twelfth century Palestine and become embroiled in Richard the Lionheart's campaign to defeat Saladin. Linking the first and third episodes and filling in details of what happened in the last episode is WILLIAM RUSSELL's specially recorded material.

Amongst the guest stars for this historical adventure are JULIAN GLOVER (*For Your Eyes Only*, *Indiana Jones and The Last Crusade*) as Richard the Lionheart and JEAN MARSH (*Willow*, *Return to Oz*, *Upstairs Downstairs*) as his sister, Joanna. Eagle-eyed viewers will spot a cameo appearance in the

opening episode by current *EastEnders* star TONY CAUNTER, playing a corrupt soldier.

*The Space Museum* is set in the far future, on a distant planet overrun by the warlike Moroks who have all-but wiped out the peaceful Xerons and turned their captured planet into a vast trophy room. The Doctor sets out to help the Xerons overthrow the Moroks who come perilously close to turning the TARDIS and its occupants into their newest museum exhibits.

*The Crusade* episodes were written by DAVID WHITAKER and directed by DOUGLAS CAMFIELD. *The Space Museum* was written by GLYN JONES and directed by MERVYN PINFIELD and both were produced by VERITY LAMBERT. They were transmitted on BBC-1 between March and May 1965.

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## More new releases

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### Thunderbirds and Other Top 60s TV Themes, Volume Two (Sequel Records)

Cat. Number:	NEBCD 425
Price:	£7.99
Format:	CD
Released:	1999

I suppose the best way of describing this new CD is that some of the track choices give the distinct impression that the bottom of a barrel is being heavily scraped. All right chaps, take a deep breath and I'll take you through 30 tracks of unremitting banality:

Track one is a highly individual interpretation of the *Thunderbirds* music. It adds nothing to the original and is inferior. By contrast Track two is fascinating, largely because it is the music adapted by Laurie Johnson for *The Avengers*. Called *The Shake*; the track is virtually identical to the definitive music used on the show's opening titles. This is the first time I've heard an arrangement which actually sounds identical (almost!) to the TV version. Track 3 is a heady (for that read 'on speed') version of the *Steptoe* theme. It almost sounds like some zany ska track from years gone by. The Eagles should have been ashamed.

If the 'Eagles' were ashamed, the John Warren (Strictempo) Orchestra should have been publicly shot for producing *The Z-Cars Cha-Cha*. Hard to believe it was even contemplated. This is followed by something equally bizarre—Bruce Forsyth "plays" *Coronation Street* and *Peyton Place*. It's nice to know that 'Britain's Sammy Davis Junior' aspired to Liberace heights. Tragic.

Then I move on to Jackie Trent's title theme for the '64 series *It's Dark Outside*. It's a typical 60s pap track and rather unsurprising. The lyrics are

derivative and the title *Where are you now?* tends to make me wonder what happened to dear Jackie afterwards.

ATV made a series called *Front Page Story* in 1965 and the next track is Eric Delaney's Big Six interpretation. Highly unmemorable. Terry Young provides the vocal virtuosity and sonic sensations (Leonard Sachs etc. etc.) of the end title for *Maverick*. Followed by the glum *Wagon Train* (second version of course!).

The Eagles prove they were on mescaline with their version of the *Comedy Playhouse*—nothing like the original! The *Dick Powell Show* is all Mantovani mush. It sounds as if the BBC had got Eric Robinson to rearrange this; however, sadly Pye have done worse with Tony Hatch.

*Eurofashion 68* (thankfully a one-off) has the distinctive and descriptive title—*Birds*. That says it all really. Did you know that the *At Last The 1948 Show* team had a 'hit' comedy record released (perhaps escaped) in 1967, called—*The Ferret Song*? How I laughed.

This is followed by track 14, which is the *Aqua Marina* end-title for *Stingray* and good fun it is too! That can't be applied to track 15, the *Mysterion* theme from *Captain Scarlet*. Likewise, track 16, which contains some incidental music from *Joe 90*.

Track 17 is what the Americans term a 'lulu', being the Lady Penelope single *Parker, Well Done*. I don't know what Parker did do well, but the masters for this piece of rubbish should have been cremated years ago.

Anton Karas wrote the memorable theme for the 1949 film *The Third Man*. Sadly we have to endure the Big Ben Banjo Band version for that BBC co-production series of the 60s—enough to make Michael Rennie reach for the tablets inspired by his surname.

*The Desperate People* was a cracking thriller from 1963 (which still exists intact!)—the theme less memorable! Then we have track 20, *Stranger On The Shore*. Not an Acker Bilk in sight, as this version is covered by (groan) The Eagles. I'll bet you can all see those lovely opening titles with the waves crashing in over a distant shot of the beach. You can't? Well it was 38 years ago!

Best to skip track 21 which is another version of *When Will You Be?*; this time by Sue Nichols.

Now you all remember *Lunch Box*. Last time I saw a clip from this, Noele Gordon was explaining that she was being 'Telerecorded for posterity'. Nice word posterity, shame neither the BBC or ITV took a blind bit of notice of its real meaning. Here we have a tiny snippet of the opening of a show.

Next we have Long John Baldry's rather groovy *Mexico* from the 1968 Olympics. Cue lots of early fuzzy colour shots (on my dual-standard Baird, of

course!) of people being sporty. Except for the BBC studio, which remained cheap and in b/w.

Then we have *Hancock*, an incidental track to the ATV series. You would have thought the Main Title music was bad enough, but this is worse.

*Andorra* is a nice catchy and well orchestrated piece by Ron Grainer, which is head and shoulders above many of the other tracks on this disc. It sounds and feels like 60s TV. Yet the music was only ever used for Southern TV's version of *Citizen Kane*, otherwise known as *Danger Island*.

Exactly why Harry H. (for 'Hanything') Corbett was required to record *Junk Shop* is a mystery. The single sadly deserves a place in one. A cover version of *The Saint*—track 27 (yes and still counting) is unmemorable. Even if it is by Les Reed (who?). Then we have the mono version of *The Adventures Of Robin Hood*; this being the more sprightly Gary Miller version. I have a copy of this in that modern StereoPhonic lark, so goodness knows why it's mono here.

*The Dark Island* is a simply terrible theme by Scotland's Sonny and Cher—The Alexander Brothers'. Groan. Groan. And finally The Kinks kink it off with their version of *Batman* theme (track 30).

Now you can all ask Mummy for 5s 0d to go out and buy it from your local record dealer. Alternatively you might want to send me £20 and I'll send you an autographed copy. No cheating. Honest!

Charlie Reith

- ❖ Les Reed was the man who wrote (and performed) *Man Of Action*, the old Radio Northsea International theme. He was also responsible for writing the music (lyrics usually by Barry Mason) for many pop songs in the late sixties/early seventies, including a lot of Engelbert Humperdinck's hits. Whatever the case though, Edwin Astley he was not!

Tez Burke

### **The Queen's Hall Light Orchestra** (Vocalion label)

Cat. Number:	CDEA 6021
Price:	£4.99
Format:	CD
Released:	1999

Here's a marvellous CD for all of us who enjoy hearing old tunes again—and the price is a bargain too! Compiled by the legendary David Ades, this superb selection of 29 tracks encapsulates oh so many tunes that were familiar on radio, television and cinema newsreels back in the 1950s. For this is an album of library music—short, bright tunes that were composed especially for use as signature tunes, incidental music and so on. These are all classics: there's *The Glass Slipper* (BBC children's television), *Holiday Spirit* (Children's Newsreel) and dozens more that you'll remember from the Demonstration Film and countless radio programmes of the era. Marvellous stuff! The price, by the way, is what I paid at HMV. I suspect the normal price is a little higher, possibly £6.99.

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# NEVER MIND THE QUALITY...

## *Dicky Howett looks at a few tv technological marvels*

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Andy Howlett in issue 41 of *405 Alive* bemoans the clod-hopping use of 'film flicker' in the re-mastering of early episodes of *Red Dwarf*. Well, I don't myself watch the show, but I believe it came originally from BBC Manchester where they used LDK25 Plumbicon cameras and a lot of low light to create 'atmosphere' which actually meant noisy pictures with tube lag.

Say no more. Even the best 'digitiser' is going to come unglued with such unpromising raw material. And of course my friend video 'flicker' only adds to the debasement, missing out lines and such. Clever stuff. But it gets worse.

Now don't get me wrong. I'm all in favour of tv technical innovations. I don't especially hanker for the misty days of 405 black and white lines or the crushed and haloed whites of three inch image orthicons beloved of US tv. I'm all for seeing the full chromatic picture and hearing the totally clear surrounding sound.

But am I getting the full picture? Afraid not, chum. My telly (like most in this country) is aspect-ratioed at 4:3. Nowadays, during a typical analogue evening's viewing I'm losing constantly, tops and sides of images. The tv 'wide-screen' revolution is here. Oh dear.

Historically, tv aspect ratios mirrored the standard cinema size of 4:3, (1.33:1). In fact, early pre-war tv screens were shaped at 5:4 to provide the maximum rectangle obtainable from the circular picture tubes then available. The term 'wide screen' refers to anything with a relative width greater than 1.33:1, thus the term can be recklessly bandied about, and unfortunately is. During the 1950s Cinemascope and its derivatives initiated a vogue for tedious 'Roman Spectacles', leaving poor old tv having to invent 'pan and scan', an interesting but problematic method of tv movie presentation. Thus was born the apparent need for wide screen tv sets! It took about fifty years, but now we have them, on sale at Currys, Dixons, even Tescos, who are offering down my street, a Bush 16:9, 66cms of 'visible' screen all for the dirt cheap price of £399.99! Can't go wrong.

So what does 'wide-screen' tv offer us? Well, for starters we get restricted height and less screen for the money. Ah, but we see right to the edges of movies, don't we? Not so. Some movies can project up to 2.55:1, however, Made-For-TV tv movies are more comfortable, scaled down at 14:9. The big problem lies with classic footage, (i.e. all the really interesting stuff), which now comes to us either stretched wide across the screen at a non-standard squashed aspect ratio or alternatively, with the tops and bottoms missing!

Take, for example, the recent BBC2 Fred Dibnah's Industrial Age history series. A nice little production with the irrepressible Fred showing, with the aid of additional vintage monochrome footage, a lot of impossibly fat, squat, mill workers waddling down unfeasible wide Northern streets, catching double-decked trams the shape of shoe brushes, all heading for factories with chimneys as broad as flower pots. Interestingly, (or so it would appear from the evidence of our eyes), back in the 1930s cog wheels/water wheels/steam train wheels all were oval in shape. An engineering art to be marvelled at, all cleverly and artistically "adjusted" to fit wide screen.

So why do it? Why present normal images in this stupid stretched fashion? Take my word Mr TV Documentary Producer, it looks daft. By all means use old film as an illustration, but please retain the original aspect ratio! I'm sure that all those hundreds of "wide screen" tv owners will allow a little technical licence until the rest of us ten million catch up. I mean to say, are a few black boarders down the sides of wide tv screens too much to bear?

Finally, let us jump ahead twenty years. Future "period" TV dramas set in 1999 will have got it wrong if they show high street scenes of TV showrooms without all those compressed "Idris Lemon" wide screen faces currently on display. Saturday morning stretched views of Live and Kicking with an unappetising rotund Zoe Ball. Perhaps she should be re-named for widescreen TV, Zoe Butterball ?

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## DINNER FOR ONE—A POSTSCRIPT

*Bill Journeaux*

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I was very interested in the article in issue 42, since in December 1994 I was asked by Meridian Television to provide 50 old television sets to be used in the recording of the Chris Tarrant Christmas show. During the recording, mention was made of what programmes other countries were having over Christmas, including in Germany Freddie Frinton's famous *Dinner For One* sketch (transmitted in English)—and a short video clip was shown.

In the early 1950s Freddie Frinton often spent the summer season on the South Coast and I met him on a number of occasions, finding him to be a very charming person. He told me he had twice performed the *Dinner For One* sketch on BBC television in the early 1950s.

Knowing of my interest in Freddie Frinton, last Christmas some friends of mine in Germany made a video recording of his sketch for me.

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# JACK KINE AND THE NIGHT OF THE SCREWS

*Bernard Wilkie*

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Jack Kine started work in at Alexandra Palace in 1937, but when it ceased transmitting in 1939 he was told to go home and await events. His weekly salary of 2 pounds 10 shillings was sent to him by post, but his father, morally offended by such extravagance made him go to Broadcasting House to enquire how long this would go on.

Jack was interviewed and passed to Mr Tugsbury the BBC's chief architect who suggested that he could be of use. Passed on to a third interviewer he was assigned to the stores in the carpenters' workshop housed in an 18th century building (with private coach house) in a narrow mews at the back of Broadcasting House. Valued today, Jack reckons it would be worth 'a few million quid'. The carpenters formed the maintenance unit which serviced Broadcasting House and The Langham.

His immediate gaffer was a chap not much older than himself, one Charlie Denman, also awaiting his call up. Jack and Charlie became great mates and they divided the task of clearing and re-organising the stores with Jack doing the sorting and Charlie looking after the paper work.

Jack says he found the task quite pleasant and the locks, hinges and knobs were soon sorted, but the smaller items took days. There were screws, roundhead brass, countersunk ditto, cheese head and mushroom head—long, medium and short. There were nails oval, nails wire and nails small panel. To his satisfaction he eventually had everything in the right trays and in good order.

Bombs had started to fall on London and the two lads were detailed to take regular night duties on fire watch. They were given a stirrup pump two water buckets and a third containing sand.

One night when they heard bombs falling closer and closer they dived under one of the benches. It was a wise move because the final terrific bang demolished their building and brought everything down around them.

Uninjured, but covered in plaster dust and severely shaken they managed to free themselves and to make their way over the debris outside to B.H. reception where they were given hot drinks and made to lie on camp beds.

Jack returned to work two days later and although much of the heavy rubble had been pushed back from the roads he saw the evidence of his labours. Spread amongst the shards of glass in Portland Place and Regents Street were screws roundhead brass, countersunk ditto, cheese head and mushroom head, long medium and short. There were nails oval, nails wire and nails small

panel—and there was Jack, vowing that if ever he got his hands on Adolf Hitler he would make him sort screws and nails (red hot of course) for the rest of his life.

- ❖ Biographical note: In 1954 Jack Kine and Bernard Wilkie became the first television special effects men. Now in their eightieth years they are still invited to appear on TV and radio.

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## Baird's lost letters

*Ray Herbert*

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In September 1996, at a small provincial town, 74 letters exchanged between J.L.Baird and Will Day, his financial backer, were put up for auction. The estimate of £50—£100 was exceeded by a large margin and the letters were purchased by a dealer in rare documents for £9,000. He asked Ray Herbert, a former member of the Baird Company, to make an in-depth assessment of the correspondence and to provide a report drawing attention to items of particular significance.

These letters cover the period from April 1924 to December 1926, and provide a new and factual slant upon television progress at that time. Baird wrote 26 letters to Day, many in pencil on scraps of paper. The problems and frustrations facing a man who is convinced that he is engaged upon a major discovery, are clearly revealed. Day, a hard-headed businessman with a radio shop in Lisle Street, Soho, wanted rapid results, while Baird, the struggling inventor, was constantly under fire for requiring additional funds.

It is clear from this correspondence that Baird was further advanced in his quest for true television than previous accounts had indicated. By June, 1924 he had obtained photocells and could produce images using reflected light. This represented a major step forward from the silhouettes which he and other experimenters had employed up to that time.

The owner of these letters acquired at a later date the 32-hole scanning disc which almost certainly produced the first true television images on 2nd October, 1925, which were demonstrated to members of the Royal Institution in January, 1926. This disc and the letters were put up for auction at Christie's in October.

The bids rose briskly from a start of £40,000 until finally Lot 82 was knocked down to the Hastings Museum for £70,000.

A feature of these letters is the complete absence of extravagant claims. John Baird sets out the problems and modestly hopes that they can be overcome. Contrary to the impression occasionally given in some quarters, he was essentially a modest person; approachable, courteous and entirely dedicated to the progress of television.

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## More Baird news

*—old news this time!*

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### BRITISH TELEVISION SYSTEM DEMONSTRATED IN PARIS

The first demonstration of television in France was made on May 19<sup>th</sup>, when a favoured few, sitting in a small dark room in the offices of *Matin*, lifted a telephone receiver and talked to someone a mile away in the Galeries Lafayette building.

The system used was the Baird television process, and worked so well that the French Minister of Posts and Telegraphs, and other French experts present, pronounced the discovery to be "epoch making". Every movement of the faces of those speaking was clearly visible on a small screen.

The French propose to develop television on a commercial scale in the near future, and as a start the Galeries Lafayette are opening up a service between their offices in Paris and Lyons.

*Electrical Industries*, 25th May 1932.

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## February 1945 and Alexandra Palace

### comes to life!

*Simon Vaughan*

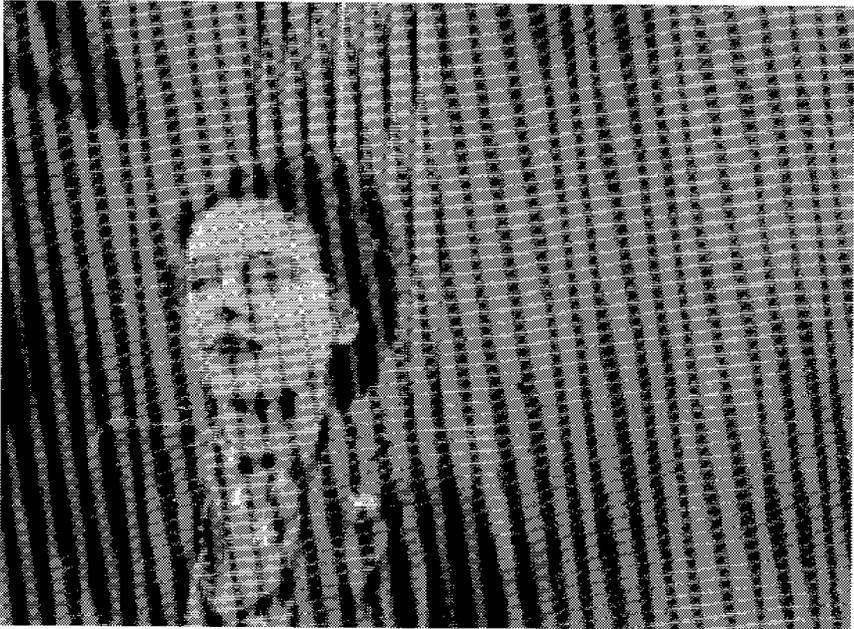
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In Issue 35 of *405 Alive* Dicky Howett discussed the television demonstration given to the Commonwealth Broadcasting Conference in February 1945. Little was known with regard to this demonstration until recently and only one photograph has ever been published (as far as I am aware) depicting the demonstration (BBC Year Book 1946, facing page 17). That was until recently.

Firstly, the diaries of D H Munro were donated to the Alexandra Palace Television Society in 1996. Donald Hunter Munro was the producer for this television demonstration and so his diary for 1945 contains many references leading up to 22<sup>nd</sup> February—the date of the demonstration.

Secondly, the television memorabilia of Desmond R Campbell was donated to APTS during September 1998. It is this television memorabilia that is most significant, for it offers us the most fascinating insight into this television demonstration. Contained within the 700 negatives are previously unseen photographs of television productions, mostly dating from pre-war era. One packet in particular proved to contain the photographs of the February 1945 Commonwealth Broadcasting Conference television demonstration. Even more tantalising are photographs from an even earlier wartime television

demonstration—given in August 1943 (more of this in the next issue of *405 Alive*).



**Phyllis Calvert performing before the television camera, the edge of which can be seen in the bottom left-hand corner.**

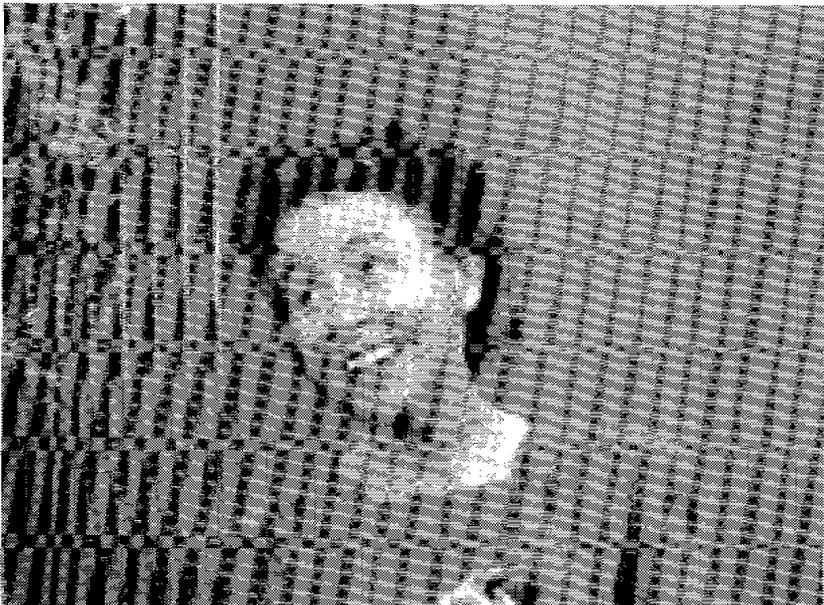
The D H Munro diaries, although not providing a 'blow-by-blow' account of events leading up to the television demonstration, certainly provide a guide to researchers in the progress that D H Munro was making with regard to the preparation for the Commonwealth Broadcasting television demonstration and for events thereafter.

The first reference to television within his diary for 1945 appears on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> January 1945, which saw D H Munro at the Churchill Club in Westminster Yard giving a talk on television. Michael Barry, (Drama Producer, later Head of Drama) provided assistance, Michael MacGowan and E J King Bull. No further mention is made of television for the next couple of weeks until Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> February when an entry appears for 9.30pm stating "S/C re Television Show". (*Who or what S/C stands for I have little idea.*) [staff conference? *Editor*]

Two days later on 8<sup>th</sup> February D H Munro was working at home as his diary entry reveals "Working on television show at home".



**Popular American star Evelyn Dall smiles for the photographer**



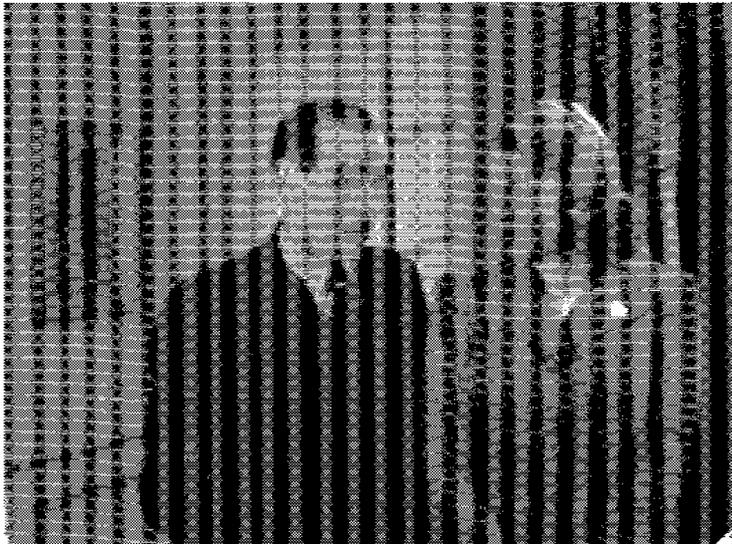
At 3.30pm the following day D H had a meeting with Peter Bax (Head of Design), Douglas Birkinshaw (Chief Engineer), Mary Adams (Talks Producer) and ? Rendall. ("*?*" is written in the diary entry). The diary also informs us that the meeting was held in Mary Adams' office at 17, 32 Great Castle Street. Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> February saw D H having a meeting with Douglas Birkinshaw at 10am. While at 9.30 the same evening he was to be found "working late on television programme arrangements".

The Sabbath was obviously a day of rest as no entries are recorded for Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> February.

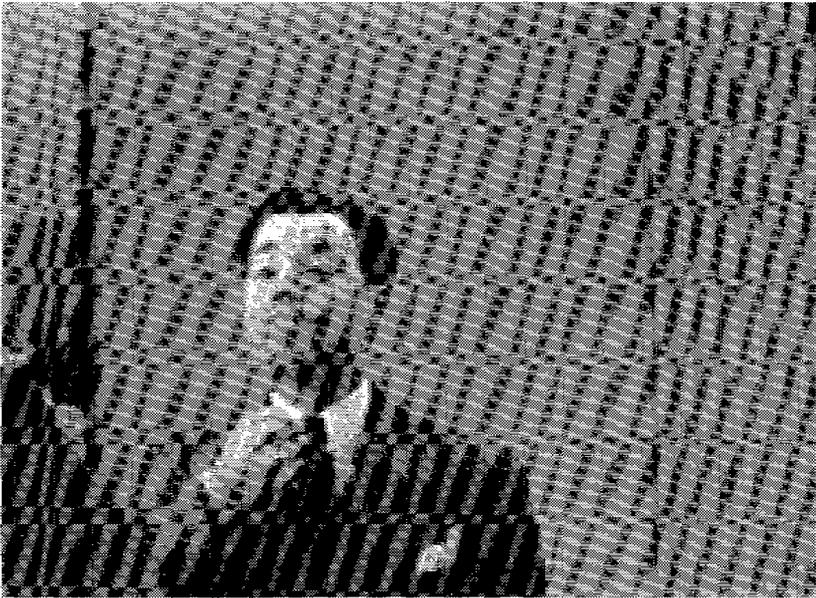
Monday 12<sup>th</sup> February holds the first entry of D H at Alexandra Palace, who spent the morning there. At 4.30pm he had a meeting with "Streeton 5<sup>th</sup> Floor 55 PP". (*Presumably this was William Streeton who dealt with artists' contracts, and held at his office on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor of 55 Portland Place*)?

The entry for Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> February begins with "Miss Bligh Filming", and is followed with an entry for "A.M. Studio Film Lab, 84 Wardour Street". (*Miss Bligh filming what? Are we to suppose that telecine inserts formed part of the demonstration*).

D H Munro had a lunch appointment at 1pm with "Miller". (*Do we assume this to be Joan Miller, well known for her pre-war appearances as the switchboard girl in "Picture Page"*)?



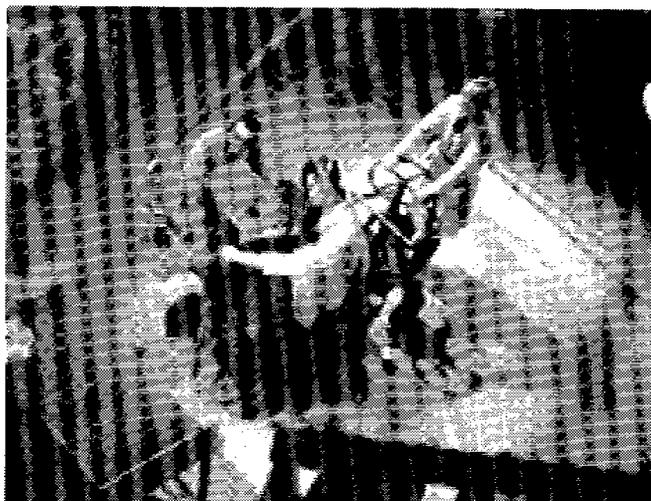
**Freddie Grisewood and Jasmine Bligh, the announcers for the television demonstration.**



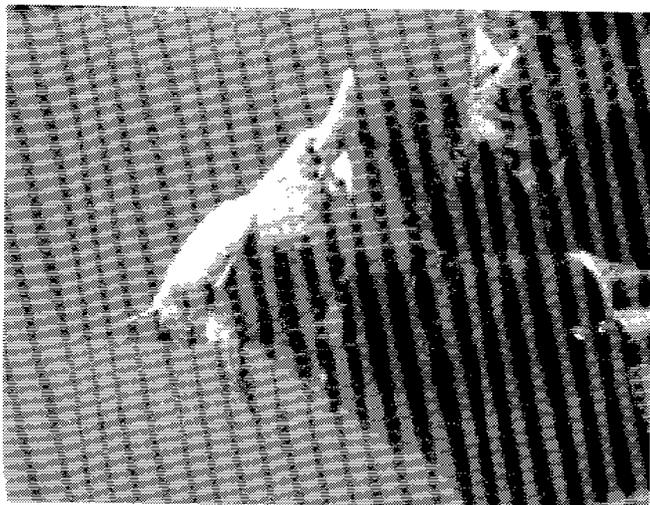
**Can anyone identify this performer before the Emitron camera, which can be seen in the bottom left-hand corner of the photograph?**

With only nine days to the television demonstration at Alexandra Palace the pace begins to increase. Valentine's Day saw D H having a succession of meetings; firstly with Jasmine Bligh at 3pm. This was followed with a meeting at 423 Langham Hotel with Cecil Madden. Finally at 8pm D H has a meeting with Miss "Johnny" Bradnock, (*Make-up and Wardrobe*).

Peter Bax had a meeting with D H Munro at 2.30pm in his office on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> February. The remainder of the week was taken up with other matters, none of which were connected with the impending television demonstration. The beginning of a new week saw D H, on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> February, having a meeting with "Johnny" Bradnock at 11am, with a note stating "to PB at 11.30". (*Presumably PB stands for Peter Bax. This would make sense, as a demonstration of television would require a set designing and make-up for the artists*). At 2.30pm Jasmine Bligh's name appears again, presumably for a meeting regarding the television demonstration. (*Next to Jasmine's name is "Cowell", which has been crossed through. Although it is dangerous to speculate we could tentatively assume that both Jasmine Bligh and Elizabeth Cowell were going to take part in the demonstration*). Whether Jasmine stayed and went with D H to Alexandra Palace is unknown, but he had a car booked to take him there at 3.45pm.



**A view looking down to the studio floor. In the bottom left-hand corner can be seen the table on which the cockatiel can be seen. Standing behind the table is the cockatiel's handler (whose peaked cap is just visible on the left-hand edge).**



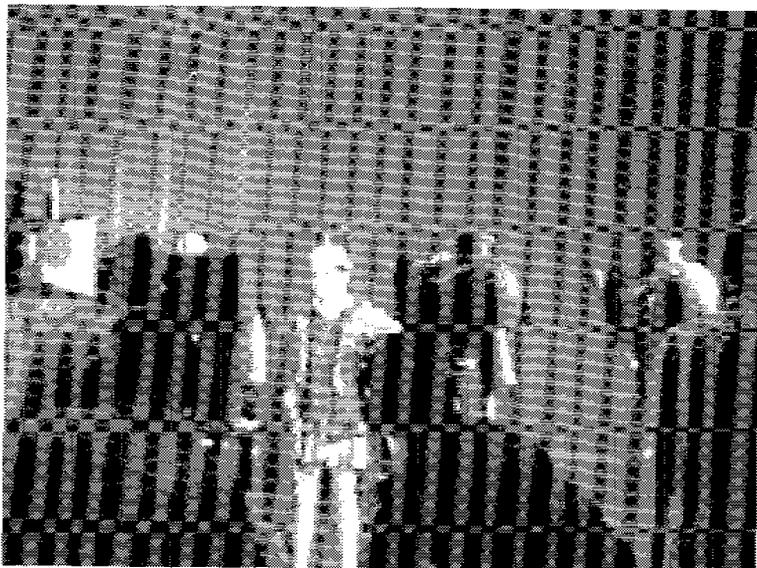
**The cockatiel and his handler. Is this the same bird and keeper as appears in the 1937 Television Demonstration film?**

Jasmine Blight along with [Freddy] Grisewood (*was he the emergency replacement for Elizabeth Cowell?*), are mentioned again on 20<sup>th</sup> February, when they have a meeting with D H Munro from 11am – 1pm. At 1pm "Blight and [Phyllis] Calvert" have lunch with or without D H. (*Along with this entry is written "Photomac and lunch"?*)

The following day, on 21<sup>st</sup> February, rehearsals were still continuing with Jasmine Blight at Alexandra Palace from 2 – 5pm. (*Again "Cowell" is referred to, but crossed out.*)

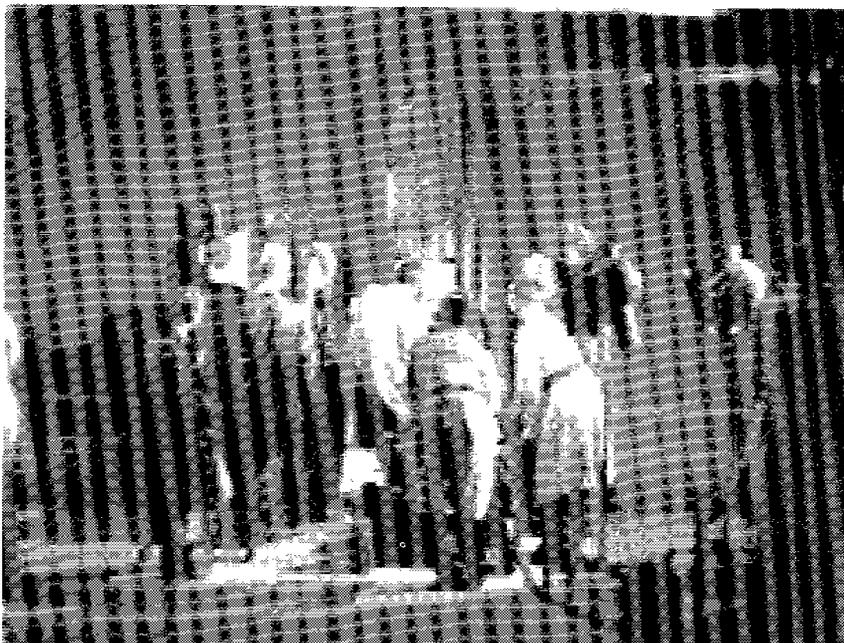
Rehearsals were the order of the day on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> February and again on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup>, but presumably only until lunch time, as at 3.30pm the demonstration of television was given to the Commonwealth Broadcasting Conference delegates at Alexandra Palace.

From the photographs by D R Campbell a performing cockatiel and scenes from *Julius Caesar* were the only items during this demonstration to the delegates of the conference. One question sprang to mind "What of the Windmill Girls?" They were supposed to have taken part in this demonstration, but surely Campbell would have included them in his photographs, rather than a cockatiel and scenes from *Julius Caesar*. Surely the Windmill Girls would have been aesthetically more pleasing! Could the Windmill Girls have taken part in test programmes for the re-opening in June 1946, rather than the demonstration of television 18 months earlier?



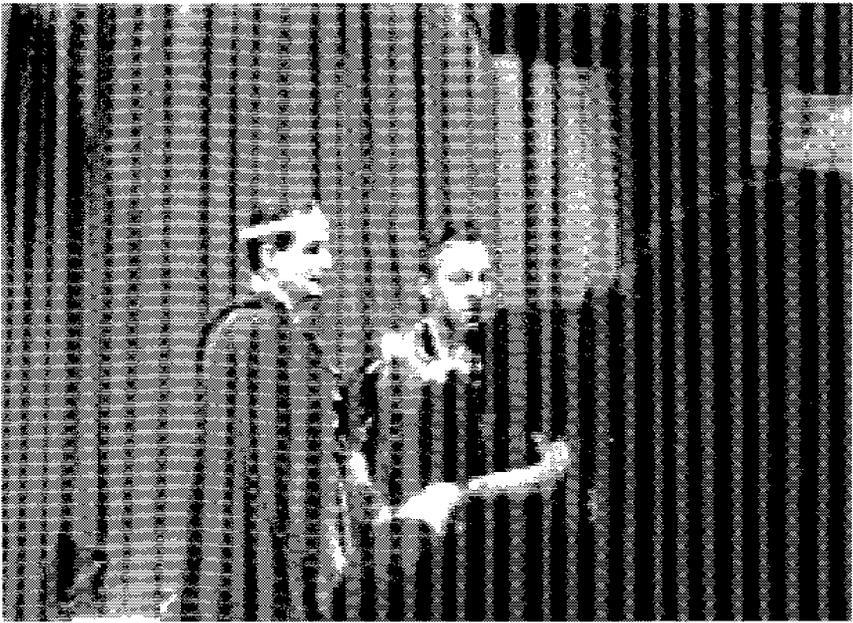
**Scenes from *Julius Caesar*. In this photograph can be seen the lights and technicians, along with the single Emitron camera.**

The Pathé News film depicting the Windmill Girls shows three Emitron cameras in use; one on a tripod and two on dollies, whereas only one appears to have been used during the February demonstration. The cameramen of the 1945 demonstration are wearing the obligatory white coats, whereas these are absent from the backs of the cameramen seen in the Pathé News film. Also the setting for the Windmill Girls routine appears totally different to that of the 1945 demonstration.



**A variation on the previous picture, this time showing the microphone boom along with the lights and the Emitron camera in centre shot.**

There is one photograph taken by D R Campbell which shows the picture as it appeared on the studio monitor, unlike the Pathé News film which totally avoids any shots of monitor screens. But this single photograph proves that the studio equipment was in fact 'live', and in working condition for this television demonstration, casting doubt on the supposedly 'official' histories such as **BBC Engineering 1922-1972**.



**Cameraman's view of *Julius Caesar***

Gordon Ross in his book (**Television Jubilee: 25 Years of BBC Television**) makes reference to this demonstration, when he states:

Television did, in fact, come to life very briefly in February 1945, when a private demonstration was given at Alexandra Palace for members of the Commonwealth Broadcasting Conference; the delegates forecast that television would be in 10,000,000 homes by 1955. The announcer for this closed circuit demonstration was Jasmine Bligh. [1961:66]

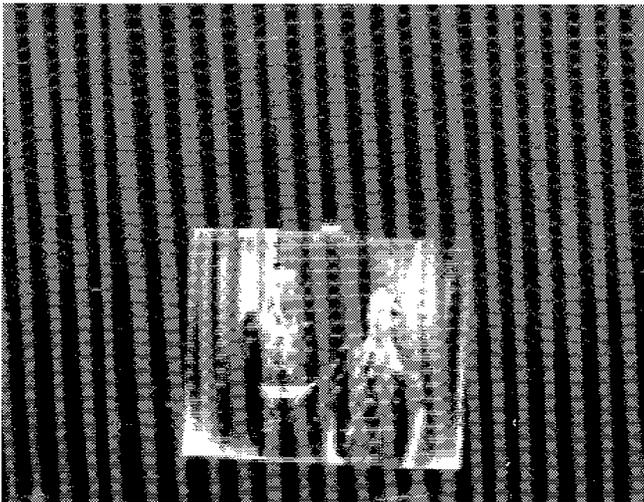
Finally, the Pathé News item depicts Cecil Madden producing the Windmill Girls routine, whereas it is was D H Munro who produced the television demonstration for the delegates of the Commonwealth Broadcasting Conference.

A visit to the BBC Written Archive Centre at Caversham would enable some of the gaps to be filled in surrounding this anomaly in television history, but that's another story (or future article for *405 Alive*).



**Televising *Julius Caesar***

There are many reference to television, or names associated with the pre-war (and post-war) era of television, in the remaining pages of D H Munro's 1945 diary, enough information for an article in their own right. Combined with the diary for 1946 we are given an insight into the 18-month period prior to the re-opening of the BBC Television Service at Alexandra Palace. However, some of the entries prove annoyingly elusive to unravel, at which point guesswork overtakes knowledge of television history, in trying to decipher the cryptic notes and abbreviations D H Munro often used.



**Studio monitor**

- ❖ Editor's note: although the printer has made the best reproductions possible from these prints, they may not reach modern standards.

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## The MZTV Collection

*Moses Znaimer*

*Chairman and Executive Producer, MZTV Museum*

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Many answers have been given to the question "why do people collect?". Too many for comfort suggest neuroses of various kinds: collectors do it because they feel alienated from the real world and must create one of their own. They do it out of sadistic jealousy, to keep objects away from others. They do it to be godlike and controlling.

Ever the optimist, I prefer a more positive interpretation. A society starts turning into a culture when it first shows an interest in preserving its past. The impulse to make sense of the world by creating categories is the beginning of scholarship, libraries, museums. In the personality of an individual collector this impulse to understand and to pass along, this desire to teach, can be highly developed.

In my own case it had to do with a "love at first sight" response to the beauty of a Philco *Predicta*. I was in Peter Goldmark's office at the time. Goldmark, who had invented the 33 1/3 record, was now head of CBS labs. I was there to marvel at a new technology, the EVR 8mm half-frame film cartridge system, which promised to do for consumer home video what the LP had done for audio. I found, however, that I couldn't keep my eyes off an "old" television set that stood like a sentinel, a commanding piece of sculpture, in the corner. Alas, the EVR arrived at the same time as re-recordable tape and CBS had to take one of the largest write-downs in its history. On the other hand, I did take that most beautiful television ever made as a symbol of my conviction that TV could be *art*, and would be *my art*.

Once caught in this way, I set out to acquire one, then two, then a few better, older pieces, and experienced difficulty in finding them. Then it struck me why: precisely because, perversely because the very ubiquity of the television had led to a certain kind of neglect. Because TV was seen as banal, its hallowed instruments were being devalued and lost. So it happened that I began conserving the most important of these totems, milestones in technology, marketing or design, these living pieces of furniture, not just in the casual sense of keeping, but in the more urgent sense of rescuing from extinction. There are fewer pre-war TVs left in the world than Stradivarius violins.

Today, a mere 70 years after its introduction, television has become the touchstone of personal, national, and world memory. There are TVs in more places than have telephones or indoor toilets; well over a billion, or roughly one set for every four or five people on the planet. And yet, perhaps the most remarkable thing about television is that this amazing machine is treated as if it were just another appliance. The paradox then is that while television has had an unparalleled effect on our lives, the history of the design and construction of the receivers themselves has been almost totally neglected.

Our pioneering exhibition of TVs redresses this oversight with 60 sets charting the history of the small screen from its inception in the 1920s to the advent of solid state electronics in the '70s. The MZTV Museum's first public showing is about understanding that television is at once an object, an artifact of design; and a miracle relationship, one that has for too long been taken for granted. We expect, we hope, the TVs will evoke nostalgia from people of all ages. A handful will recall the first broadcast experiments of the 1930s. Early memories of children's programmes, major sporting or showbiz or political events will be stimulated by the veneered and bakelite sets of the late 1940s. As they evolve from being symbols of 1950 affluence to a 60s and 70s household necessity, they also mirrored the evolution of North American domestic design and said something about attitudes towards technology over the same period.

Several of the pieces, especially the 1939 World's Fair *Phantom Teleceiver*, and the original star of television, Felix The Cat, are believed to be unique. Other pre-war models like the Baird *Televisor* and Alexanderson's *Octagon* are extremely rare.

I believe that all over the planet there is a sudden awakening to television's epic significance; and very soon, no collection of hardware or software, no collection of fashion or manners or machines will be thought complete without a presentation of the boxes that brought us the world, in perpetual flow.

❖ Taken from the Catalogue *Watching TV: Historic Televisions and Memorabilia* from the MZTV Museum.

The MZTV Museum's mission to secure the technological history of the TV receiver; and to contribute to the understanding of the impact of television by collecting, displaying, documenting and interpreting television sets and related ephemera. The museum will present educational programmes, and make its library and resources available to scholars and students. The museum also intends to tell the story of television by involving the public in the MZTV oral history project and by using electronic kiosks and computer websites ([www.mztv.com](http://www.mztv.com)).

The museum is located in the heart of the media action at the CHUMCitytv Building in downtown Toronto, where visitors can tour the world's premier collection of North American sets, spanning the entire evolution of television, from the mechanical scanning discs of the 1920s to the solid-state electronics of the 1970s. The MZTV Museum has evolved from a

personal holding of late 1950s designer TVs, mainly Philco Predictas, to a collection of some 250 sets of outstanding historical significance. Founded by broadcaster and media innovator Moses Znaimer, the museum is a non-profit organization open in its first year by appointment only. Thereafter it will open to the public year round.

*"With TV, the viewer is the screen"*  
**Marshall McLuhan.**

*"Television is not a problem to be managed,  
but an instrument to be played."*  
**Moses Znaimer.**

## *Who Were They?*

The answers to our quiz on Page 4.

Top: the interviewer on the left was MacDonalld Hobley and the interviewee was none other than Norman Wisdom, made up for his 1955 film *Man of the Moment*. Middle: Bob Monkhouse, also in 1955. Bottom: A very young Benny Hill, spruced up for his part in the 1955 Ealing comedy *Who done it?*  
How many did you guess correctly?

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## Comedy Greats

### RONNIE BARKER

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Cat. Number:	BBCV 6588
Price:	£12.99
Running Time:	87 mins. approx.
Released:	7th June 1999

BBC Worldwide acknowledges the genius of one of Britain's brightest comedy performers and writers, RONNIE BARKER. This video presentation contains sketches from all his classic television programmes as chosen by the man himself -including *The Two Ronnies*, *Porridge* (his acknowledged favourite), *Open All Hours*, *Magnificent Evans* and *Clarence*.

As a rare gesture, RONNIE BARKER has penned these few lines on this exceptional release:

"Good evening, it's nice to be with you again. In a packed programme tonight, we will be talking to a man who..."

"That was the way it went. The opening lines in *The Two Ronnies* became almost as well-known as the final lines '...and it's goodnight from him.' In the course of almost one hundred shows, those words were there to round off proceedings.

"During each of the shows, six or seven sketches were performed. Most of those characters are lost to me through the years, but some have remained favourites, and it is from among these favourites that we have made our choice for this video.

"The most important factor in making an item work is who you perform it with, and I have been tremendously lucky in working with brilliant and talented actors throughout my successful years. My friend for twenty-five years, RONNIE CORBETT, is naturally first and foremost in this category.

"During its long run on BBC One, we had countless laughs together as we met each year, series after series. His characters never failed to amaze and amuse me. We were a team.

"Close behind him comes the irrepressible DAVID JASON, my companion during four series of *Open All Hours*, together with bouncy (in more ways than one) LYNDA BARON.

"In *Porridge* the charming and funny RICHARD BECKINSALE who sadly left us at an early age of thirty-one, and Messrs MACKAY and WILDE, the Bad Guy/Good Guy duo of Slade prison.

"As to the individual items on this video, I hope they all speak for themselves. I always especially enjoyed the songs and musical items as I love to write lyrics and these items were all mine (under my *nom de plume*, Gerald Wiley).

"Then there's the *Magnificent Evans*, because I enjoy attempting the Welsh accent. I've always considered myself to be a "voice man" so felt perfectly at home with Evans as indeed, I did with the laconic Fletcher, the stuttering Arkwright and myopic Clarence.

"There's a bit of everything included in this tribute video and infinite variety so please enjoy it."

## FORTHCOMING AUCTION OF VINTAGE RADIO & TELEVISION RECEIVERS, ETC.

The Radiophile will present a special auction of vintage domestic radio and television receivers military radio equipment, components, valves, etc., at Sambrook (Shropshire) Village Hall on Sunday, 23rd. January, 2000. Viewing will be from 9.00a.m. and the sale will commence at 10.30a.m. Catalogues will be available from The Radiophile about one week prior to the sale.

## Sony's CV-2000 Video Recorder

*Andrew Emmerson*

Interest is increasing in this fascinating piece of technology, the first 'serious' home video recorder offered to the British public. It is pretty certain that the CV in the model number stands for Consumer Video

and the product was certainly aimed at the consumer market (the B suffix stands for British 405-line standard).

When Sony launched their CV-2000B recorder in 1966, noted hi-fi writer Gordon J. King named it 'a Japanese miracle'. Sold complete with a dinky little 9"-screen portable television, it was an instant hit with the press and other opinion formers.

Its price didn't exactly translate into huge sales, though; the recorder and TV cost £365, whilst the camera, lens and tripod cost an additional £131. A portable recorder and lightweight camera together with sound and vision mixers were also available, but this was in an age when you pick up a brand new car for £600. As a consumer product it was a failure, although a fair number of outfits were sold into industrial and educational use. Today these equipments are highly collectable and tapes recorded at the time have yielded several lost television programme treasures.

The product was, not surprisingly, designed for the British 405-line system and was based on the 525-line products (also called CV-2000) sold in the USA and Japan. Photos have been seen of a combined model the almost like a coffin that contained both a recorder and a TV monitor. The similar two-in-one product made by Shibaden is quite common but the Sony one is not, and I'm not sure whether it was ever sold in this country.

### **Cameras**

Two designs of camera were made by Sony for the system, the CVC-2000B and the DVK-2400B, both using 1" vidicon tubes. The former was a straightforward studio-type camera and as supplied had only an optical frame for a viewfinder. An electronic viewfinder CVF-4A was made for the Japanese 525 line variant of this camera but I have never seen it in the flesh, so it may not have travelled to Britain. Being a bolt-on extra and an afterthought, it looked a little clumsy and required re-routing of the electrical connections.

The second camera was a little sportier, being designed for the DVK-2400B portable videocorder (a lightweight go-anywhere counterpart of the CV-2000B). The camera had a built-in electronic viewfinder and was provided with a 20-80mm zoom lens. I have seen only one, battered example of the 405 line (B suffix) version of this camera and I guess not many were imported. Performance of these cameras was not outstanding.

## **Lenses**

The CVC-2000 came equipped with a standard 25mm lens. Realising the limitations of this, Sony also supplied a strange adapter for taking photographic lenses. The manual listed 12.5mm (wide angle) and 75mm (telephoto) lenses as optional extras, which widened the possibilities of use. Other companies exploited this gap and Canon made a 20-100mm f2.5 zoom specifically for this camera. VLC-20 was the designation of the zoom lens supplied with the portable camera.

## **Accessories**

A number of accessories were made for this outfit, notably a telecine adapter for the CVC-2000B camera and a special effects generator with vertical, horizontal and corner wipes (this last looked like the later 625-line models; it was a genuine 405-line product but is extremely rare). The CVC-2000B camera was normally supplied in a plywood carry case covered in grey rexine; this also contained a tripod and compartments for lenses and cables.

## **Recordings**

Picture quality was (and is!) quite acceptable, considering the limitations of the skip-field recording system. Most machines that turn up come with a few recordings although only a few, largely because the tape was so fiendishly expensive in those days. Martin Loach has discovered that you often find bits of old recordings on the end of tapes which people re-used on later machines for 625 lines. If the newer programme was shorter than the original recording, you find some tantalising snatches of old material! A few owners economised by using computer tape with these machines but this was a false economy. The very rough surface of the tape accelerated head wear and worn heads on a CV-2000 are very bad news!

## **Trouble shooting**

The chief sources of trouble are (1) stretched and sloppy belts plus (2) defective coupling capacitors in the motor servo amplifiers. Both can cause poor performance.

**Tape problems.** Because of hydrolysis, some tapes squeal and bind instead of running smoothly past the heads and through the tape guides. The tape with the matt charcoal-colour backing was the worst.

**Hooking at top of picture on video tape replay.** The hooking can indicate one of three potential problems.

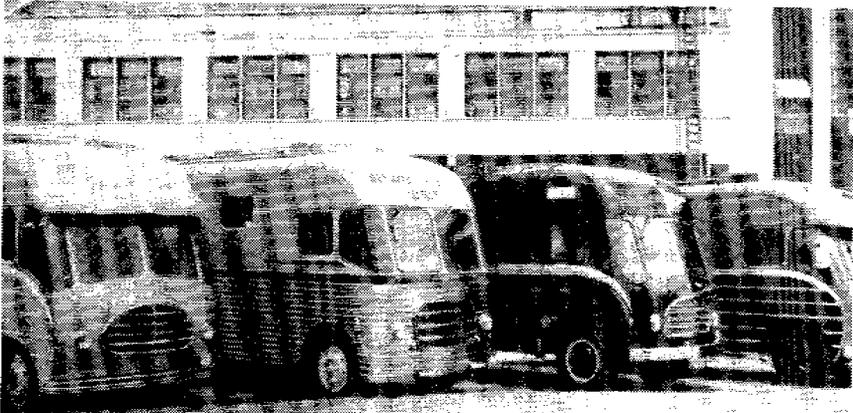
1. It can indicate a time-constant problem on the receiver and certainly the CV-2000 needs a non-standard one, with a very fast flywheel circuit.

2. Dihedral adjustment required on the heads, i.e. the angle of the heads relative to each other on the disc. Very tricky, needs a special tool. Looking down on the disc, each head is not hitting the tape at the same time relative to each other.
3. Replay machine is not running at same speed as record machine. Back tension needs adjusting, try tightening the feed spool.

Curing hooking is a matter of matching tape tension on the record and replay machines. Try tightening tension by putting your hand on the spool. A TV with the right time constant helps.

*Thanks to Steve Wilkins (ex-Sony) and Trevor Brown for these tips.*

## OB LINE UP



**Spotted recently by Dicky Howett in a September 1955 issue of the Marconi house journal *The Marconi Companies and their People*, a line-up of gleaming tv broadcast kit, pictured at the Chelmsford works. Destination of these vans are, from left to right, Cinema Television Ltd, Associated Rediffusion Ltd, the BBC and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. Oh, the good old days!**



**What looks like a Marconi Mk 3 camera on humanoid legs is in fact a rare shot thro' the glass, by reader Clive Berridge of the Thames Tv 'Today' display at Television House, Kingsway circa 1968. Dicky Howett, who computer-enhanced the image for *405 Alive* comments: "I used to work at Bush House and many's the time I thought of photographing the 'Thames camera in the window'. Reflections were the obvious problem, hence the odd looking image. Still, it's tv history none the less, and full marks to Clive for at least attempting the shot!**

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# TV COWBOY SAYS 'I QUIT THE RANGE'

*Reg Scott*

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Ross Salmon, the BBC Television cowboy, is to quit riding the range. "Posing as a super-fit cowboy to children has been rather a fraud," He told me yesterday.

"I haven't been fit for years. Now that I'm packing up my ranch and all that it means to me. I shall never ride again."

## THEIR HERO

Ross, owner of the Lazy 'S' ranch at Longdown, Devon, and hero to thousands of children who have heard his cowboy adventures on TV, was lying in bed at the Royal Devon and Exeter hospital, Exeter.

Thrown from his horse Faithful on Monday in Rattlebrook Valley on Dartmoor, he had crawled around for nineteen hours in five degrees of frost until he was rescued.

Thirty-four-year-old Ross said: "I'm the victim of an old man's disease—osteothritis—following a plane crash in the South American jungle and have to wear a spinal jacket. "I've been warned that in a few years I may be crippled."

Ross added, bitterly; "Some people seem to have suggested that my ordeal on Dartmoor was a hoax, but it was no stunt, I assure you."

Miss J. Lieper, the hospital matron, said: "although no bones were broken, Mr Salmon was shaken and shocked by his experience"

A private doctor who has attended Ross said: "He did the sensible thing in crawling rather than trying to walk"

From the *Daily Mirror* - 1957, contributed by Andy Henderson

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## Calling Carlton Communications

*A clarion call from Cy Young*

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Earlier this year Carlton Communications acquired the ITC catalogue from PolyGram, no doubt looking forward to healthy audiences for repeats of series like *The Champions* and *The Persuaders*. Shot in colour, and readily

available on 35mm film, these are obvious assets to a television broadcaster; and more income can result from the franchising of characters and formats, as with the remakes of *Randall And Hopkirk (Deceased)* adapted for Vic Reeves and Bob Mortimer, or the rumoured live action Hollywood feature version of *Thunderbirds*. ATV's black and white productions can also secure decent ratings if astutely presented, witness the BBC's season of Morecambe and Wise shows from the 1960s; this might be thought a special case because of the unique popularity of Eric and Em, but in fact Coral Benjamin and her colleagues have acquired a collection of infinite potential.

Like any gold strike, the ATV/ITC bonanza needs prospectors to locate the richest seams, and these hands could be recruited from within Carlton or from outside; this may need financial investment, but the long-term benefits would be considerable. One cannot reproach PolyGram for not exploiting the old ATV library more, because the company never had direct access to a broadcast outlet. Carlton has that advantage. I am not recommending that Carlton should just blitz the ITV schedules with loads of ITC adventure series and count the takings; the vaults inherited from Lord Grade's empire represents a virtual Aladdin's cave of British commercial television, where some magical transformations are possible.

Supposing you owned a library which included variety spectaculars made in colour for the American market but never seen on British television in anything other than monochrome? Would you not consider it worthwhile re-mastering the 2-inch videotape, making residual payments to artistes, writers and musicians, and then broadcasting these shows with the appropriate fanfare in a 'Colour Premiere' season? If Carlton were to invest in a spot of proactive research, they could do exactly this. Treasures waiting to be unearthed include a series which features Jack Benny and Phil Silvers amongst the guest stars, some hilarious encounters between Liberace and Terry-Thomas, and Norman Wisdom in top form. Of course, not all the material in the ITC warehouse is suitable for "off the peg" broadcasting.

Some of it would need alterations here and there, cutting what is basically very good cloth in a style tailor-made for a new audience.

For several years I worked on the programme *Heroes of Comedy*. A favourite episode celebrated Arthur Haynes, whose long-running ATV series written by Johnny Speight made him the top ITV comedy star of the 1960s. Granted access to vault ledgers and the 16mm Steenbeck viewing facilities then maintained at ITC's Poland Street premises, I was able to log many, many hours of *The Arthur Haynes Show* that had survived as overseas telerecordings. To meet the requirements of live production, the sketches involving Arthur and company were usually relieved by musical interludes, whilst the "natural" commercial break was another opportunity for scene and costume changes. The comedy sequences varied in length from "quickies" and black-out gags to an epic 15 minutes on some occasions; here Johnny was effectively writing one-act plays for the Pinteresque tramps impersonated by Arthur and Dermot Kelly, or working class domestic scenes that anticipated *Till Death Us Do Part*.

For all these reasons, a fresh presentation would need to be devised before Arthur Haynes' genius could be introduced to the Comedy Store generation. The answer—to cut out the musical interludes and jigsaw the sketches into compilations, with a narrative framework—would be an "Open Sesame" to literally hundreds of self-contained extracts from Arthur's programmes, and the opportunity for Carlton to earn useful extra revenue. Allowing for laboratory work and subsequent videotape editing costs, some financial outlay would be inevitable, but the audience is out there. I say this because when transferring extracts from *The Arthur Haynes Show* at the Machine Room, I was surrounded by operators—too young ever to have seen Arthur Haynes on television—crowded enthusiastically around the monitors, wanting to know more about the man. On this evidence Arthur's truculent, unsentimental brand of humour seems not to have dated one iota; and it is not surprising that Paul Merton is a big fan.

In discussing the potential of a library bequeathed to us by Lew Grade, who entered the Book of Heroic Failures with *Raise The Titanic*, I am reluctant to use the phrase "tip of the iceberg", but that is exactly what ATV's Morecambe and Wise series *Two of a Kind* (re-launched on BBC1 last January) represents. Spike Milligan, Marty Feldman, Benny Hill and Tony Hancock all made series for the company. And that's only Light Entertainment.

Drama serials like *The Plane Makers*, and its successor *The Power Game*, told stories of boardroom conflict and political intrigue that would gain new topicality from current obsessions with "fat cat" businessmen and parliamentary sleaze. Strong characters, literate scripts and fine acting—good enough ingredients to overcome the senseless prejudice against black and white transmissions—also informed the weekly exploration of Fleet Street ethics in *Front Page Story*. A colourful portrayal of London street traders *Market in Honey Lane* was made on the outdoor set at ATV's Elstree studios (now BBC property and the site of Walford market for *Eastenders*). Revivals of the original hospital "soap" *Emergency Ward Ten* would make a fascinating comparison with *Casualty* and *ER*, and may even cause us to wonder if the working conditions of nurses have improved since the 1950s. Indeed a social history of this country over some 30 years between 1954 and 1984 could be produced, with some unique archive footage extracted from the countless dramas, filmed documentaries, and situation comedies on the ATV/ITC shelves.

So there are real creative opportunities for Carlton to fashion brand new programmes from the raw material of the Grade legacy.

One trusts Carlton, if they are unable to commit to such programme-making themselves, will at least allow (or even commission?) enterprising independent producers to explore the possibilities described above. It would be a genuine tragedy if Carlton's executives decided that it was not worth the candle maintaining the miles of negative, print and videotape which

constitute an "uncut" history of public events, social attitudes and popular culture over three decades, and let the ITC collection go by default to the National Film and Television Archive—where telerecordings of Associated Rediffusion programmes still await examination 30 years after being deposited.

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## FIFTH TIME LUCKY

### *Bernard Wilkie reveals what really happens on TV*

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Following our appearance on the Danny Baker show Jack Kine and I were asked to appear with Gaby Roslin in an episode of *TV's Greatest Hits* (recorded in July 1999 for later showing). We were asked for our early memories of Orwell's *1984* and, naturally, recounted the story of the lost winding handle described in sweat-making suspension in my history of the early days of television (still in preparation).

But the real hilarity came when we attempted to demonstrate a few typical special effects. I had asked the designer to provide us with a cobweb gun and a 'bullet-in-the-mirror' effect, thinking that these would interest the audience and give us something to do.

It being a chat show the rehearsal was for the cameras and not the participants; we therefore went in without any real clue as to what we were doing. But I did grab a moment beforehand to try out our props and found to my dismay that we were in deep manure. The cobweb gun was designed to be spun in an electric drill had been supplied with a portable battery powered job—top speed 500rpm when it really needed the mains variety—2500rpm.

Seeing that no filaments were emerging, I made the mistake of thinning the rubber solution—with the result that it came out in gooey globs, endangering everything within a ten foot radius. Worse was to come

because shortly before transmission a property chap, noticing that the gun was dripping, tightened the regulator *with a pair of pliers*. My abortive attempts to nonchalantly adjust it on air resulted in the show being suspended while four people struggled to loosen the nut. When it eventually came free it again produced globs, but this time bigger and messier than before.

The bullet effect in the mirror can't fail because it requires only for the hidden rat-trap with its little hammer head to spring up and smash the glass from behind. But to work properly the mirror must have a layer of self-adhesive Fablon on the back, without which it will merely break in two. This backing dampens the resonance and the familiar circular bullet hole pattern results. There being no Fablon, I asked for someone to apply a backing of Sellotape.

Having ruined the cobweb demonstration I went through the gun routine with Gaby and on my count of three she fired.

**Bang!**

A close-up on the mirror showed that it remained intact. We went through it again—more nothing. The audience applauded; this was the sort of fun they were hoping for. After Take five we stopped to check the mirror and found that my prop lady had followed my instructions to back it with tape, but as I hadn't specified how much had left nothing to chance and had created something like the sole of an army boot.

But she wasn't just a pretty face. Producing a Stanley knife she deftly removed an area of tape in the region of the hammer head and on the next take it worked without a hitch.

The audience responded magnificently and Jack and I bowed out to one of the biggest ovations we have ever had. Incidentally the title of my book is **Why didn't it work?**



Your roving reporter Dicky Howett spotted recently this Marconi Mk 9 portable tv camera used as a prop gathering 'news' out on 'location' for the upcoming George Best movie biopic. The year is 1976 although precisely what year the alarming 'BBCTV' logo belongs to is anyone's guess....

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## BACKROOM GOON—Part 2

*John P. Hamilton retells tall tales of Goonery and much more to Chris Smith*

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But before I got involved with the Goons I had honed the daft spot effects on another programme that had a Goony element in it. This was a programme called *Home at Eight* (so called because it went out on the Home Service at 8

p.m. on Sunday nights). It was produced by a charming chap called Ronnie Hill and starred Alfred Marks and the incredible Hermione Gingold along with an up and coming lad called Dickie Attenborough (sorry m'Lord). We also had Peter Yorke and his Concert Orchestra with the wonderful alto-saxophonist Freddy Gardner, the Ipswich Girls Choir—bags of crumpet, I was single then! We had quite an innovation for a variety show, a special spot with a script for RADA students who had never broadcast before. This was a sort of live 'on air' audition. Very nerve wracking for them. I can't recall any names that came out of it, but I hope that it did some of them some good.

The highlight of the show was the closing sketch each week in which the three stars played the *Doom Family*—a specially written piece by Sid Collin. Hermione and Alfred were the Mother and Father and Dickie was the idiot son. The fourth star was my right foot, which played Trog, the butler with huge and thunderous footsteps and great clatterings of silver trays, key chains and such nonsense. It was all a cross between the *Addams Family* and the *Munsters*. Before the series started Cyril Drake, (who was the Studio Manager and knob twiddler on that show), Sid, Ronnie and I had to work out how to contrive Trog. After a lot of head clutching and unscheduled studio time we cracked it.

The show came out of Aeolian One, which had a large stage area, one side of which was fairly hollow sounding underneath. We added a small, foot-high, drum-like wooden rostrum in this corner with some space for my other effects bits and pieces -the usual effects door and so on, and then by adding echo very selectively I stamped with my right foot wearing an especially heavy shoe that I had bought and there was Trog!

I had to get the timing right, of course, to make it sound like one huge step after another, but it worked. The odd thing was that it didn't work using **both** feet. This was an early example of putting the Spot operator in vision, so to speak. There I was almost part of the Peter Yorke Orchestra, and they loved it—all corpsing when I was doing my thing. Now Sid Collin was a great advocate of this routine because he realised the value of getting extra laughs from the studio audience, leaving the listening audience sometimes wondering what the hell was happening. And, of course, Spike was of a similar mind when it came to *The Goons*.

This kind of stage set-up wasn't possible in all the various studios. The Playhouse, for example, at Charing Cross was a conventional theatre and the two nearest-to-the-stage side boxes were stripped of their seats and one or the other used for doing the effects. The Paris—now sadly closed—had drapes down either side and we were hidden behind those leaving the stage to the performers. I believe that changed after my day. The Camden, where I did most of my Goonery, lent itself to an open effects position and that's the way we worked. If any of you have read the Denis Gifford book **The Golden Age of Radio**, there's a good picture on page 99, in the article about the show that shows it perfectly.

I had a very busy time in 1952 and 1953. I went back on grams for the first *Journey into Space* written and produced by dear old Charlie Chilton. Incidentally, the panel man on that was Brian Willey who did the same job on the Goons later on. I stayed on grams for the first series of 'Ancock's 'alf 'our for Dennis Main Wilson. He and I go back a long way because he was an RPA at Bush House with the German section—he spoke the language fluently—before he went into the Army and I went into the RAF. He soon became a producer after he came back to the Beeb. And what he hasn't done for comedy in radio and television! The man is brilliant.

It was the custom in those days for producers to ask for the team they wanted to work with rather than have someone scheduled to them by the admin. lot. And very sensible, too. Dennis asked for me for *Forces All Star Bill*, a new Sunday evening show coming out of the Garrick Theatre, Hammersmith—long gone I fear. The cast included Tony Hancock and the writers were Galton and Simpson, the two tall lads, and the start of that partnership. Some of the early shows were hosted by Ted Ray with guests and the Stanley Black Orchestra. Graham Stark was also involved and the lovely Joan Heal. The mobile grams equipment that we carried around for these shows was forever breaking down (and I've got a picture taken in the Garrick sound area to prove it!). They were good shows and fun to work on.

When Hancock got his own show, Dennis asked me to stay with them and my boss, a lovely chap called Jim Macahearty agreed. But that was a couple of years after the start of *The Goon Show* and my involvement with it.

What I have pointed out is that we Sound Managers didn't just spend out time doing effects or playing records. We also did our share of balance and control, and we all had out routine bands to deal with. I had more or less cornered the market in jazz and did many home and overseas jazz clubs with all the greats of the day with big bands and small groups. Fortunately, the transmission times fitted in neatly to leave me free to do my Sunday chores. For some strange reason we never did jazz programmes on Sundays—the shade of Lord Reith still hung over us in those days. Pity it doesn't now!

There were lots of jolly things like *Music While You Work* to be done twice a day. The morning sessions required a 7.30 a.m. rehearsal (lots of bleary eyed musicians) with transmission 10.30–11.00 and, of course non-stop music. And then the afternoon session from 3.30 to 4.00 p.m. In its early days the second bash used to be late night, but I'm glad I missed those.

Amongst 'my' big bands I'm very glad John Dankworth's—all the way from the seven to the big sixteen-piece band, with Cleo Laine, Tony Mansell and Frank Holder as the vocalists. And the Jack Parnell big band that Jack did with the late, great Phil Seaman were hell to balance but wonderful to behold through the window of the sound booth. Much later on, doing the Fred shows for A-RTV, Phil was on drums with the Reg Owen Band I'm delighted to remember. More of that later.

So, we worked our little socks for the dear old Beeb, but we got our entertainment out of work so we didn't have to pay for it. Just as well on the pittance we were all paid in those days.

But, back to those Sunday chores I mentioned earlier. Just before Peter Eton took over from Dennis Main Wilson on *The Goon Show*, I had started doing grams on the Sunday lunch time *Billy Cotton Band Show* produced by a lovely little man, Glyn Jones. There wasn't a great deal to do as the show was obviously mainly band numbers, and vocals from the wonderful Alan Breeze and the Johnny Johnson singers. But there were a fair percentage of novelty items and Bill used to leave it to me to throw something appropriate in on rehearsal. If he and Glyn liked it we kept it in. Needless to say I started taking a few liberties, and Johnny Kingdon—then the panel man and later a producer—and I used to plot a few things and not to tell Bill. Then we threw them in, usually during his closing announcement, if we were not over-running, or during the end signature tune. We got away with murder with some of the noises, and Bill and the Band always fell about. Great days.

That passed Sunday mornings away nicely, and the afternoons and evenings became occupied with the Goonery from November 1952. That was the start of Series Three.

**Chris Smith:** *We have never found any copies of the 3rd series...*

Oh, probably my fault! No, I'm kidding. That was when the title dropped any reference to 'those crazy people' (wasn't it?) and just became *The Goon Show*. The Wilmot research shows that the first of that series was 'Fred of the Islands'. I have to confess I don't remember.

These were the three part shows with the meaty story in the middle section. The orchestra had settled into being Wally Stott's lot, with Ray Ellington and Max Geldray doing their spots either end of the middle section. Spike and Larry Stephens did most of the scripting for this series but Spike was unwell just after we started and was missing for some weeks. Graham Stark and Dick Emery filled in for some of the voices with Sellers doing wonders with others. Jimmy Grafton flogged himself to death writing some of them.

Larry Stephens was a great ideas man. He had contributed to some of the *All Star Bills* with Ray Galton and Alan Simpson for Dennis Main Wilson.

The great thing about Peter Eton—apart from being a first rates producer—was that he was a strong disciplinarian. He needed to be to keep that bunch under control. The fact that Bentine had gone probably helped a bit, because I gathered that *The Crazy People* shows were a bit hairy because Spike and Mike both thought they were the greatest suggesters of ideas in history, and it didn't always gel.

Somehow I don't think the show would have become what it did—and you lot wouldn't be here now—if Bentine had stayed. I admire him enormously, lovely man, and I worked with him later at Associated Rediffusion on some of

the *Cathode Ray Tube* shows. But to me he is a solo performer, and wouldn't have fitted the ensemble routines that the show settled into at its most successful. That's only my opinion, for what it's worth.

So, for the series that I did, the team was John Browell on the panel (as you know he became the final producer of the show), with Barry Wilson on grams, sometimes Charlie Warrenner and, very infrequently, Ian Cook who Roger Wilmut partners with me in the Companion. That's one of his minor errors as most of mine were with Barry Wilson.

Let me digress and tell you a sad story about Ian Cook. He eventually left the Beeb to join Tyne Tees TV when they came on-stream. He had family in Geordie land. He started in sounds and then became a Programme Director. Sadly, he was killed whilst cycling home from the studios by a hit-and-run driver, who I don't think was ever caught. We were all very shocked when we heard the news. Ian was a nice, gentle soul, and a very good operator.

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## Grumpy television presenters

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Sometimes we all loose our cool, however I was thinking recently (as you do) about those TV (and Radio) presenters and 'personalities' who couldn't hide their anger (or worse). Witness these examples—

Cheery Mike Barratt, who used to 'present' *Nationwide* as if he would rather be somewhere else. He had a bad habit of making the worst of any 'autocue' material fed to him. Bad manners at interviews 'If you don't mind me saying so Mr .....'. They usually did.

Robin Day who had a coughing fit introducing *The World At One*. I now wish I had this on tape. It ran a bit like: 'This is (coughhh coughhh) the World at (Cough Cough Couaaaagh) One (sniff) your topical (cough, cough, cough, cooooooaaarrgggh, sniff, sniff)....' etc etc. I never found out what he took to make him so throaty. Perhaps the answer lay in his hip flask.

Sandie Shaw, who obviously hated Cilla Black with venom and did little to disguise her un-enthusiasm on Cilla's show...

Michael Parkinson who is now preserved on videotape (of the Christmas ilk) telling the AFM not to 'tell me how to be —— professional'. A few years later a certain Les Dawson came on Parkinson's show as a guest and started his intro with 'may I saw how nice it is to be working with a true professional'. Audience didn't understand, but Parky did !

Kenneth Kendall who took a severe dislike to his 'assistant' in the early *Treasure Hunt* programmes. He used withering tones to great effect. The leggy blonde (I forget her name) would reply in equally bitchy tones. Much more interesting than the actual *Treasure Hunt* and once you had spotted they hated each other, compulsive viewing.

Robert Robinson who had a letter sent in an early *Points Of View* which basically stated that the whole show was pointless, easy for him to present and he was wasting his time and the viewers. With perfect timing Robinson drew a breath, smiled and said 'and getting paid for it into the bargain' (with added venom).

I'm sure you can think of more examples (but I've deliberately left out the well known Keith Allen/Oliver Reed/Bill Grundy/Bernard Levin situations as they are now far too well known.

Andy Henderson

Yet there is always another side. For example, when I worked with Kenneth Kendall in the BBC in the early 1960s and before, and later on location for a commercial, he was always very charming. Mind you, there have been times when I myself have not suffered fools gladly!

Arthur Dungate

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## In the Workshop

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### Line Output Transformers: the American experience

James Reid writes:

*I am in the process of restoring a '53 RCA television that I picked up at an antique mall a number of years ago. I finally located a parts set that contained the missing goodies to fix my set. Apparently the original flyback died a horrible death by the look of the charred remains in the HV cage. While I am not a TV expert, it seems a lot of the older sets that I have examined, the flybacks are always gooey and drippy with wax all over the place. The RCA will be a show piece and not a set that's gonna see a lot of regular usage, but I am concerned about flyback life. Would it be to my benefit to hide a small fan inside the cage to help keep the temps down? Is excess heat the common failure mode for these devices? Any advice is greatly appreciated.*

I supported myself thru college partly by repairing 1950s era TVs. The bread and butter of the shop was replacement of tuners, flybacks, sweep tubes and the CRTs themselves. Some of the 50s sets were very well made—although not even close to mil std! But this was the age of the great cheapening down, and little attention was given, it seemed, to design aspects that led to rapid failure. People wanted "portable" sets, "modern" cabinets and lower cost. This led to a lot of cramped cabinets that resulted in high operating temperatures. In my opinion, the combination of extreme internal heat—and sometimes marginal design—led to the failure high failure rate of some components. This was also the time when screens were getting larger, and I expect existing designs were being pushed to provide the

accelerating and sweep voltages. Some of what were then the most common sweep tubes were really not up to what was done to them.

I recall pulling many a chassis and finding puddles of melted wax from flybacks that were wax impregnated, and from wax paper caps. Very little thought seemed to have been given to heat dissipation. Add to that the dust attracted by the high accelerating voltages, and what dissipation there was disappeared.

In retrospect, we probably could have made a lot of money by selling quiet muffin fans (except I don't think they existed at this point) and providing an expensive guarantee to the buyer! I sometimes see one of the most infamous of the high-heat sets—the otherwise innovative Philco "space age" TV—the one with the pix tube mounted on top in a pod. The metal cabinet was flat and had little air circulation. It operated so hot you could fry eggs. They now sell for thousands as collectors items. I sure do hope people find a way to put a little fan in somewhere to protect their investment!

Jan Skirrow, VE7DJX

Flybacks are subject to the normal stresses transformers endure and in addition must be resistant to the corrosive effects of ozone created by corona discharge. From what I've seen there is usually an insulation breakdown between windings which causes the horizontal sweep tube to be overloaded and things go from bad to worse. Some still operating flybacks show lots on wax melting and some are covered in what appears to be soot as a result of electrostatic precipitation. In other words they get pretty ugly looking before they ever fail. Flybacks have a limited life because the economics of manufacturing are particularly cruel to these types of devices. How long a particular flyback will last is more a matter of the luck of the draw. Of all the things you can do to help prolong the life of a flyback keeping them cool is about the only thing available. Be careful when ventilating the high voltage section of a TV that you don't cause a build-up of dust which would defeat the cooling and also could contribute to arcing. Cleaning the flyback, thoroughly drying it out and coating it with high voltage insulating lacquer or high voltage silicone could help protect it from further corona damage. I wouldn't attempt to impregnate the winding as dielectric loss would probably create more harm, transformer varnishes tend to be too lossy for high frequency operation.

Arden Allen KB6NAX

Well, if it was wax-impregnated, I suppose that water could get in the wax, lower the Q, and increase the dissipation in the flyback, making it get hot and melt. (The energy lost by a low Q coil goes into heat in the coil.) I suspect that there's a good reason that modern flybacks are silicone-rubber impregnated.

Perhaps also as the CRT cathode aged, people cranked the rightness, putting more load on the HV supply. Or, the ion trap could be on wrong, requiring higher brightness settings for normal screen brightness. (Not to mention ion poisoning the screen, or burning up the gun.) I suppose that lots

of corona (filthy CRT) could draw additional power, again loading the HV supply. If this set is old enough to have more filtering capacitance in the HV supply than the CRT, that capacitor could be leaky. I don't know if any of the failure modes of the HV rectifier can torture the flyback? Or failure modes of the horizontal sweep circuit?

John Shriver

One item I noticed about tube TVs was made most clear when I was working in Alabama (I live near San Francisco) for a couple of weeks and visited the local electronics store for some parts. They had a *whole wall* of doorknob caps, flybacks, ultor leads, and HV rectifier sockets. I noticed this, and, after a moment's thought, said to the counterman, "The humidity isn't very good for high voltage stuff, is it?"

He allowed as how I sure was right. Possibly moisture-induced leakage currents contribute to the overheating begin commented upon.

Scott Robinson

## Sending CRTs by carrier

Bobbi Barmore writes:

At work, we got a new CRT-using device from Tek (it monitors the DTV signal but the user interface is an all-too-familiar GUI, hello Mr. Gates). They didn't use foam of any type, nor even crumpled newspapers—the device was suspended between two sheets of heavy, thick, clear plastic (one above, one below) in corrugated-cardboard frames that were spaced aya from the top and bottom of the shipping box by smaller boxes! Looked like some sort of cheap science-fiction movie prop but it worked well. Making a "home version" would be tricky, the plastic has to be just strong enough; but it's something to remember.

On the other hand, good old (and still mostly analog where it counts) "service monitors" as used by two-way radio techs run to really small CRTs. These gadgets, a clever combination of signal generator, tuneable & metered demodulator, spectrum analyzer et useful cetera, spend a lot of time being hauled from one job to another in the usual radio service truck-with-crummy-suspension, and hold up well; I suspect the tiny CRT is not there just to save front-panel space. The glass and internal structure of small CRTs make them proportionately stronger than large CRTs, as there's a limit to just how thin the glass can be (small ones are also less massive and less prone to be acted upon nonuniformly by abrupt acceleration/deceleration).

Most scopes are built with the assumption that they will get bashed around a little at least. When shipping, the main points are to ensure the original CRT mounting scheme is intact and secure, and then to pack it based on the notion that the thing will be treated as though it were a bag of potatoes; surrounding the device to be shipped with dense foam in a box that is then packed in foam or "peanuts" in another box is very effective. Two layers of shock-dampening materials, especially if they're dissimilar and separated by a rigid enclosure, do a pretty good job of smoothing out most of the bumps shippers inflict.

## Health warnings (from the Internet)

Chuck Swiger, KB4NEW, mentioned replacing a selenium rectifier with a silicon diode in an entertainment receiver, and then suggested playing with the old selenium plates as photocells. Let me add two important warnings here.

**Electrical**—Selenium rectifiers have a much higher internal resistance than silicon diodes. Thus the output voltage after the replacement may be excessive unless some series resistance is added. In bias supplies, where an adjustable pot sets the grid bias on output tubes, the extra voltage just means resetting the control slightly. In a B+ (plate supply), the higher voltage can often overstress the electrolytic capacitors in the power supply filter.

**Hazardous Material**—I am familiar with the photocell trick. The magazines would not be allowed to print it today. Selenium compounds are **EXTREMELY** toxic. This is why I always recommend replacing selenium rectifiers with modern diodes. You can leave the disconnected stack in place for looks but wire a much smaller diode below the chassis if you want an authentic look.

Allow me to put in a promotional message here. The Boatanchor Archives (\*) contain many useful files that can answer many of the questions that keep being brought up. Please check these files. And to be specific, please read the file on Selenium (selenium.txt). This goes into far greater detail on the electrical characteristics of selenium rectifiers and into the chemical hazards associated with it. Until the reader is quite familiar with its hazards, I suggest they not experiment with selenium.

(\*)

<http://www.theporch.com:8000/reguser/archives/BOATANCHORS/library/>

Barry L. Ornitz

Bob Duckworth wrote: "For cleaning the tracks of volume controls I like starting fluid."

In the interest of newcomers to the group who may not realize the sick humor in this, please do not suggest such things. Automobile starting fluid is a mixture of ethyl ether and light hydrocarbons and is **EXTREMELY** flammable. The flash point is below room temperature, the boiling point is only slightly above room temperature, and the lower explosive limit can be as low as 1 percent.

While the old timers to the list know better (I hope), you have to remember that new subscribers come along often. Arden is quite correct about virtually all modern contact cleaners being flammable, and I appreciate his warnings. Use them with caution, with the radio unplugged. If you can smell any residual solvent odor in a radio after using them, do not plug the radio in until the odor dissipates. You might be easily replaced, but the old radio may be one of a kind.

Barry L. Ornitz

### Replacement electrolytics

Paul Thorpe writes: *When choosing capacitors to use in valve equipment rebuilds, the only type I am happy to purchase are the 450-volt type made by Elna and sold through Maplin Electronics stores. They are only available in values of 10 $\mu$ F and 47 $\mu$ F.*

Your comments about the two values stocked are noted but I would not worry about it much. 10 $\mu$ F and 47 $\mu$ F are values that commonly occur in valve equipment and if you needed, say, 22 $\mu$ F you could always wire two tens in parallel. More important, the precise value of capacitor is seldom significant. Quality control was not brilliant for the capacitors made in the 'golden age' of valve equipment, with values often quoted as plus or minus 50 per cent. Designers recognised this and made sure the value of capacitor they chose was not desperately critical. So if you did happen to find a circuit that called for a 33 $\mu$ F electrolytic, you could safely use a 47 $\mu$ F.

AE



### Which television programme did the announcement of President John F. Kennedy's assassination interrupt?

The only live TV programme being broadcast on the early evening of Friday, 22<sup>nd</sup> November 1963, when the news came through from Dallas that President Kennedy had been shot, was Granada TV's *Scene At 6.30* news programme. I was one of only two people in the newsroom when editor Terry Dobson took a phone call from the Press Association and immediately dialled the control room and spoke to producer Barry Heads.

Presenter Mike Scott, in the studio, answered the phone and repeated word for word the information the editor was passing from America via the Press Association. Terry Dobson and I were among the first people in Britain to hear the news of the assassination and Granada TV achieved a notable scoop in being the first TV station to get the news on the air.

Joan Riley, Manchester (adapted from *Daily Mail*, 13<sup>th</sup> July 1999)



Far seeing: Punch Almanack's 1879 vision of 'Edison's Telephonoscope' which 'transmits light'

**How come Stella Gibbon's *Cold Comfort Farm*, published in 1932, includes mention of a television linked to the telephone, so callers could see each other?**

Both Stella Gibbons and Greyfriars author Frank Richards (mentioned in an earlier answer) were a long way behind *Punch* magazine in predicting telephone-television. The **Punch Almanack** for 1879 includes a cartoon by Du Maurier showing an old couple talking to their daughter in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) on something called an Edison Telephonoscope, which also allowed them to see what was going on, apparently in wide-screen format. Considering it was drawn about two years after the telephone was invented, it was remarkably prescient.

The caption tells us that, every evening, before going to bed Pater and Mater-familias set up an electric camera-obscura over their bedroom mantelpiece and gladden their eyes with the sight of their children playing badminton on the other side of the world.

W. K Violen, Holland-on-Sea, Essex.

As a teenager, before the war, I saw a film called *The Tunnel* featuring Leslie Banks and Jimmy Hanley. The story concerned the building of a tunnel under the Atlantic, but the project was doomed to failure. In this film, whenever two people conversed by telephone they could see each other's face on a screen near the instrument. I recall thinking: how convenient but how improbable.

Mrs B. Rotenberg, London.

I have a gramophone record, made in February 1930, of the song *T'ain't No Sin To Take Off Your Skin And Dance Around In Your Bones*, which includes the words:

"No more singing in the bathtub with those television phones."

Obviously this 'new' technology was more widely anticipated than we suspected.

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## **JUST WHAT YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO KNOW...**

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**Which programme has had the most repeats?**

It used to be *Andy Pandey*; which ran for some 20 odd years with constant repeats, including colour remakes in the 70s. The longest running programme is still *Come Dancing*; which has been on the air for some 41 years.

Andy Henderson

### **Why do rectifier valves have 5-volt heaters?**

The first mass produced consumer tubes, '00 and '01, had 5-volt filaments to allow reasonable service from a 6-volt wet-cell battery via a rheostat. Then, early AC tubes went to multiples or sub-multiples of 5: 1.25, 2.5, 5, 7.5, 10 etc. The 2.5 and 1.25 volt units were designed that way to help control AC hum. The later development of the car radio precipitated the more familiar 6.3 volt standard which is more appropriate for a 3-cell battery being float-charged by the vehicle's generator (actually more like 7 volts).

Al Klase - N3FRQ

### **What are the true derivations of connector names?**

**BNC** = Baby (or Bayonet) Neill Concelman. A baby-size combination of the designs of Neill and Concelman.

**C** = Concelman. Developed by Carl Concelman of Amphenol.

**DIN** = Deutsche Industrienormen Ausschuss (German standards-making authority, similar to our British Standards Institution).

**EIAJ** = Electronics Industry Association of Japan.

**MUSA** = Multiple Unit Steerable Array. Developed in the 1930s by the British Post Office. It is very similar to the American Western Electric video jack.

**N** = Neill or Navy type. Originated in 1942 by Paul Neill of Bell Labs and standardised on a Navy Bureau of Ships drawing.

**RCA** = Radio Corporation of America.

**UHF** = Ultra High Frequency. Developed in 1940 by E.C. Quackenbush of the American Phenolic Corporation (later Amphenol). At the time this connector was designed, UHF meant what we call VHF today.

AE

### **TELEVISION LINE STANDARDS**

#### **Why 405 lines—and not 404 or 403 or even 400?**

Stephen Hawking's book **A Brief History of Time** is a weighty tome; heaven knows how large a complete history of time would be. Producing a brief history of television line standards is also a near impossibility, simply because the subject is far more complex than might appear.

So where do we start? The best place is with the product, the television picture. Setting aside newfangled wide-screen experiments, most TV pictures have had a 4:3 aspect ratio (width to height), the same as most motion pictures. Psychologically this represents a convenient prospect to view without too much head swivelling and ensures that all visual action is contained within a reasonable field of view.

The next task is to choose a horizontal scanning rate which will produce the degree of picture detail required and at the time 405-line television was developed, the maximum bandwidth that vision amplifiers could handle was around 2.5 to 3MHz. This in turn determined the number of lines in the picture, somewhere in the region of 400 to 450.

The timebase circuits in television receivers had to be locked to synchronising pulses sent with the picture signal and generated at the studio; these are a kind of master 'clock' that sets the timing of the whole system. For

sound technical reasons, there had to be a straightforward mathematical relationship between the line and field frequencies, the latter being derived by dividing down from the former. Technology constraints of the time meant that this division process could only be made using odd numbers—they had to be integers and ideally 3, 5 or 7 to achieve maximum stability.

Let's take an example. The world's first regular all-electronic television service was British and used a vertical frequency of 50Hz (naturally) and a horizontal one of 10,125Hz (actually cycles per second in those days). How does 10,125 relate to 50? Easy!  $50 \times 3 \times 3 \times 3 \times 3 \times 3 \times 5 = 20,250$  which divided by 2 gives 10,125. To keep things simple you'll have to take my word that the integers need to be odd ones.

What if we want higher definition? Then we increase one of the multipliers: we know that  $3 \times 3 \times 3 \times 3 \times 5$  gives us 405 and by changing the multipliers we find  $3 \times 3 \times 7 \times 7$  gives 441 (a line standard used in several countries),  $3 \times 3 \times 3 \times 3 \times 7$  produces 567 (used for a while after the war in the Netherlands) and  $5 \times 5 \times 5 \times 5$  gives us 625. You can ring the changes yourself and see what you get! If this all sounds completely over the top of your head, it doesn't really matter—rest assured your television will still work!

Our original 405-line standard was capable of producing extremely good pictures: in terms of black and white definition it produced more detailed pictures than are seen on most 625 line sets today, simply because the latter are manufactured with such coarse picture element grids that they throw away much of the detail in the PAL picture and disguise this loss of detail with colour. The 405-line standard was used in the UK, the republic of Ireland, Hong Kong and experimentally in several other countries. Most other countries before the second world war used 441 lines (Germany, the USSR and the USA) although France was out on a limb with 455 lines (most of the time). In 1940 the USA established its 525-line standard.

### **How did the vertical frequency come about?**

The picture repetition frequency is also an important factor in the equation. It is generally termed the field rate or frame rate according to your own leanings or the refresh rate if you are a computer person. Since the mid-1930s this frequency has been the same as the mains frequency, either 50 or 60Hz according to the frequency used in each country. This is for two very good reasons. Studio lighting generally uses alternating current lamps and if these were not synchronised with the field frequency, an unwelcome strobe effect could appear on TV pictures. Secondly, in days gone by, the smoothing of power supply circuits in TV receivers was not as good as it is today and ripple superimposed on the DC could cause visual interference. If the picture was locked to the mains frequency, this interference would at least be static on the screen and thus less obtrusive.

### **When were higher numbers of lines chosen?**

During the second world war both the French and the Germans made successful experiments with systems using more than 1,000 lines and there was a general feeling after the war in most European countries that it was time for a fresh start with higher definition (Great Britain and the USA decided to stick with what they had, however).

France opted for an 819-line system which was a bold move to capitalise on war-time research, to re-establish French pride and to protect French manufacturers from foreign competition (the pre-war Paris transmitter, now adjusted to 441 lines, struggled on until 1956 for those with older sets).

The rest of Europe opted for 625 lines, a system devised in 1946 by two German engineers, Möller and Urtel (it appears that the Russians came up independently with a very similar system and if you had set anyone else the problem—to Europeanise the American 525-line standard—they would have come up with something pretty similar). In Geneva a Mr W. Gerber proposed this as a European system and it has remained in use until the present day.

Only the American 525-line system has had a longer continuous 'innings', beating the original British 405-line system, which finally faded from our screens in 1985 (except with the hardy enthusiasts who still keep 405 alive!). The French 819-line system, also used in Belgium, Luxembourg, Monte Carlo and Morocco, finally died out during the 1980s, and the only other notable major change to note was the coming of NTSC colour (or is it color?) which necessitated that system to change the vertical frequency in America from 60Hz to 59.94Hz and the horizontal frequency from 15,750Hz to 15,734Hz

#### **Why did some European countries opt for 441 or 455 lines?**

Freedom of thought probably. Although the 405-line system was well established in Britain, there was no serious thought of international programme exchange before the war, so the need for total conformity was not a major factor. We have not yet achieved standardisation of computer operating systems or of driving on one side of the road, and there are always arguments in favour of whichever standard you favour. In theory 441 and 455 lines would give marginally better picture definition than 405 lines—marginally.

#### **Why did France choose 819 lines after the war?**

International standardisation of television systems was a low priority after the war. Britain was determined to stick to 405 lines, so as not to betray viewers who had already invested in a receiver, and France—as already mentioned—was determined to show the world that the French system was superior to everything else. Perhaps it was but that decision (taken by M. Mitterand, incidentally) was to cost France dear in the end—as did the British decision to stick with 405.

*And Finally...*

**a chuckle or two**

A man held up a bank as a TV actor was preparing to portray a robber in a reconstruction of a previous raid. Jyllands Posten said that when the robbery started in Copenhagen he thought it was a prank, but having

understood it was the real thing he paid close attention for some tips. The robber, whose description matched that of the earlier raider, escaped with £15,000.

*Halifax Evening Courier, 5th March 1999*

I work in a video store. One day a man called up and asked me, "What videos do you have?" This seemed a bit strange, but I thought I would give it a try. I replied, "We have lots. What kind did you have in mind?" He simply said, "Well, I don't really know. Could you just tell me what you have?"

Just for the sake of it here's a little music number played on BBC-TV on 26th August 1936 (at 12.22pm exactly!) Some of you may have heard it before somewhere...

Here's Looking at You,  
From out of the blue,  
Don't make a fuss,  
But settle down and look at us.

This wonderful age goes to  
show,  
That all the world's a stage.  
First you heard, now you see  
As you wonder what the next  
thing  
On the list will be.

What hullabaloo -  
We're just peeping through,  
To say "how do",  
Here's Looking at You!

© *Ronnie Hill (from Variety,  
BBC-TV, 1936, submitted by  
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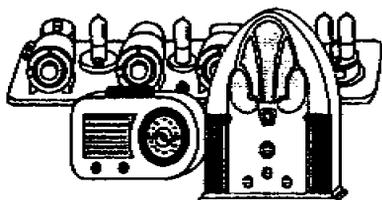
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# THE TEST CARD CIRCLE

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

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

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

If you are interested in this fascinating subject, write to the Secretary, Curtons House, School Lane, Walpole St Peter, WISBECH, PE14 7PA, and if you send a 12.5" x 9" self addressed envelope with a 50 pence stamp, we will be pleased to send you a sample copy of the Circle's magazine.

## ASK YOURSELF THREE QUESTIONS...

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

2. Do you collect any of these?

Stamps and Postal History

Picture Postcards

Cigarette and Phone Cards

Cameras and Photography items

Coins and Banknotes

Military, Naval and Aviation items

Pop, Stage and Screen memorabilia

Autographs

Things to do with Sport and Transport

Old Toys

Ephemera, Documents and Prints

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, BN1 1YL**



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

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

**REPAIRS: vintage TVs, radios and testgear repaired and restored.** Personal attention to every job and moderate prices. Estimates without obligation – deal with an enthusiast! (BVWS and BATC member) Please include SAE with all enquiries – thanks. Dave Higginson, 28 High Street, Misterton, Doncaster, Yorks., DN10 4BU (01427-890768) (T).

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

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

## **REPAIRS**

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

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

**SERVICE DATA.** The **Radiophile**, publisher of *405 Alive*, has a huge library of service information which is available to readers at very reasonable prices. Please

address your requirements to *Graham* at the Admin. Office, *The Radiophile*, Larkhill, Newport Road, Woodseaves, STAFFORD, ST20 0NP or fax them to 01785-284696.

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

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

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

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

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

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

In addition, 405 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.

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

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

**STANDARDS CONVERTERS.** Building your own is **not** a realistic proposition unless you already have seriously advanced design and construction facilities. It's not a task for amateurs, not even for gifted ones. Many of the parts needed are available only from professional sources and not in one-off quantities, whilst some previous designs for converters can no longer be copied because the custom chips are no

longer made. Unfortunately the production of these marvellous devices has now ceased. Note also our two advertisements in this section for a conversion service.

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

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## *The Spend Zone*

**This is the area for buying and selling all kinds of things to do with television, new or old. Want to join in? Then send us your advertisement: there is no charge, although if space is short we may have to 'prune' out the least relevant adverts or hold them over until next time.**

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

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

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

### **ELECTRICAL SAFETY**

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

### **IMPORTANT DISCLAIMERS**

1. Whilst care is taken to establish the *bona fides* of advertisers, readers are strongly recommended to take their own precaution before parting with money in response to an advertisement. We do not accept any responsibility for dealings resulting from these advertisements, which are published in good faith. That said, we will endeavour to deal sympathetically and effectively with any difficulties but at our discretion. Fortunately we have had no problems yet. In related collecting fields, replicas and reproductions have proven to be difficult to identify, so beware of any items 'of doubtful origin' and assure yourself of the authenticity of anything you propose buying. And try to have fun; after all, it's only a hobby!

2. Much of the equipment offered for sale or exchange does not conform to present-day safety and electric standards. Some items may even be lethal in the hands of the

inexperienced. This magazine takes no responsibility for these aspects and asks readers to take their own precautions.

## HOW TO WRITE CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS THAT WORK

1. Start by mentioning the product or service you are selling or want. By doing so, you make it easier for the reader.
2. Always include the price. Research has shown that 52 per cent of people who read classified ads will not respond to ads that fail to mention a price.
3. Keep abbreviations to a minimum. Will the reader know what a NB207 is? If it's a 12-inch table model TV from 1956, say so!
4. Put yourself in the position of the reader. Is all the information included?

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

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

## IS IT VALUE FOR MONEY?

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

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

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

*Attributed to John Ruskin, 1819-1900.*

**FOR SALE: TELEVISION. 1938-1941. RCA REVIEW 1947.** Compendium volume III. 486 pages. Loads of pictures and information about RCA's tv kit including 'The Orthicon' 'RCA Portable Cameras' 'The Image Iconoscope', plus transmitters, reception etc, written by Zworykin, Rose, Iams, Kell, the guys who invented the stuff! £15

**TELEVISION ENGINEERING.** Amos/Birkenshaw. Vol Two. Video Frequency Amplification. Near new copy with d/w. £5

**THE BBC: 70 YEARS OF BROADCASTING.** John Cain. BBC Books 1992. Fascinating illustrated trawl through 70 BBC years. £6. Mint copy

**UNDERSTANDING TELEVISION.** John Howkins. Sundial Books 1976. Large format, well illustrated sections including 'Upstairs-Downstairs' ITN, history of tv etc. £4

**INDEPENDENT TELEVISION IN BRITAIN.** Bernard Sendall. 1982. Vol 1. Origin & Foundation 1946-1962. How ITV began. Invaluable history for the TV buff. £8

GIRL FILM & TELEVISION ANNUAL No1 1957. No d/w. £5. 1st of this attractive series.

THE GOONS-THE STORY. Norma Farnes. Virgin Books 1997. Big picture history of Charlies' favourite crazy people. £5

All VGC. Postage minimum on all items £1.50

Contact Dicky Howett, 01371-820155, e-mail: [dicky.howett@btinternet.com](mailto:dicky.howett@btinternet.com)

**FOR SALE:** Sony KV1320 UK 13" colour TV from 1972. Immaculate physical order, works well but tube is soft. Have a classic PAL to NTSC hue control TV for only £15 (Langrex tubes have new tubes in stock). Call 01252-679577. Ask for George.

**FOR SALE:** I wonder if anyone would be interested in the following...

- Motion Electronics TV sound tuner for hi-fi systems in teak cabinet. The nice thing about this is that the 405-line tuner covers channels 1-14 (not the usual 1-13). Good condition, £25.
- Two early solid-state 405-line cameras. First is a Link 101 broadcast caption camera. Uses 1" vidicon tube and C-mount lenses (may be able to find some of these). Works prototype, working, with all paperwork. Handy sync input for optional genlocking, 1V video out, £75. Second, a Nottingham Electronic Valve Co. Nevicon camera, also using 1" vidicon and C-mount lens but with Band I RF output and more basic circuitry. Untested and has all paperwork *plus* original sales literature (extremely rare colour cut-outs of the camera!), £75.
- Lab-Craft TV signal strength meter (channels 1-13). Big rotary tuner knob, solid metal cabinet and black bakelite signal strength meter of circa 1960. Sort of thing every TV repairer had. £20.
- Belling-Lee early solid-state VHF signal distribution amp. One input, six outputs. £10.
- Selection of three valve-era TV pre-amps plus a King Tele-Booster—£20 the lot.
- Two Dinosaur 405-line test card generators, each equipped with eight different images, fitted with power supply in smart cabinets—£150 each (probably your last chance to acquire examples of these marvellous devices).
- Dinosaur FM to AM radio tuner/converter for keeping valve radios fed with Radio 2, 3 and 4 etc. Last one to come off the Dinosaur production line, fitted in cabinet with power supply and ready to please—£100.
- Antiference 'Vantenna' set-top V-aerial (rabbit's ears) for VHF television, late 1960s. In box, £2.50.
- 'Sputnik' set-top TV aerial of the late 1950s. Cream plastic and aluminium rods. Stylish and rare, £10.
- VHF Channel 4 (Birmingham) sound and vision modulator (quality German product), new and unused, just add 9V DC and a case, £50.

The last three items could go in the post, the others would have to be collected. Andy Emmerson, Northampton 01604-844130.

**FOR SALE:** user instruction booklets for the following sets—Ferguson 308T 21" set (with original guarantee cards), Bush TV24 (rough), Cossor 930T, Cossor 934. Booklets are in good condition except those marked 'rough'. Price

£1 each post-paid but first come, first served so **ring me first** before sending money. Andy Emmerson, 01604-844130.

*Please remember that NS means 'non subscriber' and these people are normally not in a position to answer technical questions about their sets.*

**FOR SALE:** Bush TV24C console TV from the mid-1950s, complete but non-functional. Cabinet has suffered from sun exposure otherwise good. Chassis has corrosion but is complete. D.J. Rowlands, Sunbury on Thames (close to M3), 01932-784824 (NS).

**FOR SALE:** Ekco TS 1105 table model TV circa 1949, very clean condition, £50. Alexander von Tutschek, Bath 01225-465532 (NS).

**FOR SALE:** Unusual wooden console television, probably circa 1950. Nothing known about it except that it has a superb walnut (?) case, 12" or 14" screen, cupboard doors over the screen, lift up lid on top, revealing very fancy radio in cream plastic trim that appears to have buttons for half a dozen pre-set stations and several wavebands. If you'd like to inspect or make an offer, ring Lisa Kehat on 0181-386 9727 [near Watford, Herts.] (NS)

**FOR SALE:** HMV portable TV of the mid-1950s, leatherette wrap-round cabinet with carrying handle, channel selector and all controls on top. No model number visible but screen is approx. 12" across. Stored in the dry for many years, was working when last tried. R.A. Westcott, Wheelgate, Wyre Piddle, Pershore, WR10 2JF (NS).

**FOR SALE:** Bush 12" TV of 1950 (model TUG48) in very good condition, one careful owner from new! Trevor Nuttall, Torquay 01803-298466 (NS).

**FOR SALE:** Marconi VC53A 10-inch table-top set of 1950, clean not working, rare set, £50. Televet test set, made 1957, with original manual, £40. Ekco TC-164 1-inch round-tube table set of 1951, nice cabinet, cream speaker grille, excellent CRT, needs new caps, £25. Ferguson slimline set of 1960, wraparound plywoodd cabinet, plastic bubble over CRT, controls at side, excellent CRT, AGC fault, free to good home. Sobell 14-inch transportable of 1957, works but has frame slip, pink and yellow rexine case, for restoration, any offer at all (cheap)! Philips T-Vette dual-standard portable of 1966 for restoration, £5 including proper mains lead. Ekco TMB272 portable TV. Working, good CRT, but needs further attention. Fabric covering is reasonable, supplied with mains cable, £40. National (i.e. Panasonic) cartridge VTR. Was working fine but has now developed a lace-up fault, probably minor, so free to good home. Loads of unused Sony V-31 low-density half-inch video tape, 50p a reel. Pat Hildred, Walthamstow, east London 020-8988 0310 (NS).

**FOR DISPOSAL, FREE:** an 'instant collection' of early video recorders and cameras (reel to reel) 625 CCIR standard: Sony AV3420 in leather case and camera AVC3450CE, Sony 'Sony-Matic videorecorder' AV-3670ACE, Sony 'Videocorder' in substantial steel case with leads, psu AVC3420CE,

Hitachi 'video tape recorder' SV-610DE, Sanyo 'high density video recorder' model VTR-1100SL, all in little used condition. Some original operating system booklets and various leads. Free to any one to collect from central London. Eric Hadley, phone 0171-612 6329 day or 01273-739947 evening or e-mail [e.hadley@ioe.ac.uk](mailto:e.hadley@ioe.ac.uk)

**FOR DISPOSAL:** Two old TVs. Murphy V.410, fitted with two channels. Complete, not working, not investigated. Murphy CV.1917 (Mk I) fitted with Mk III panels and electronic tuner instead of the mechanical one. TP.1741 service manual for the above. Complete A.823 chassis plus box of assorted A.823 panels. Swap for WW2 military and covert radios or small cash payment. John Stacey G8BXO, 3 West Park, South Molton, Devon, EX36 4HJ (01769-573382, 0468-961544).

**FOR DISPOSAL:** Around 170 *Electronic & Radio Trading* service sheets for the period 1957-1965. About 60 of these are for TVs, the rest for radios, tape recorders, etc. Any offers at all to Brian Hemingway, 9 Hitherwood, Cranleigh, GU6 8BN (01483-272331) (NS).

**FREE TO GOOD HOME:**

"You will recall that a year ago I was able to pass on my old 405-line televisions via your magazine and I have now sorted out all of my old cuttings from *Practical Television* (as it used to be) and before dumping them wonder if you maintain any sort of library of servicing notes for them.

"They comprise all of the 'interesting' items—service notes, answers to reader's queries etc.—as well as a number of copies of service manuals. Many items are articles by dear old Les Lawry-Johns either under his own name or as 'S. Simon'. The whole lot weighs about 14 kilos and if they are of any use to you I shall be glad to pass them on but we will have to arrange transportation."

Bill Knight, 532 Rochester Way, Eltham, London SE9 1SQ (0181-850-4147).

**FREE TO GOOD HOME:** Murphy TV in a wooden case with two control knobs. Miss I.D. Turner, 4 Essex Avenue, Studd Hill, Herne Bay, Kent, CT6 8AA.

**FREE TO GOOD HOME:** HMV dual-standard TV, 1967ish, 1400 chassis, Philips 210 chassis TV, factory wired for 625 only Ferguson 9000 colour TV. All sort of work, but need some TLC. Shame to dump them. E-mail [c@cguy.freereserve.co.uk](mailto:c@cguy.freereserve.co.uk) or ring 01205-480985 daytime Mon-Fri only.

**WANTED:** Any literature on the EMI L2A battery reporter's tape recorder circa 1955. Ikegami 79D top-mounted viewfinder. Contact Dicky Howett, 01371-820155, e-mail: [dicky.howett@btinternet.com](mailto:dicky.howett@btinternet.com)

**WANTED:** Head for a Philips N1502 video recorder and a technician who can repair a Grundig Video 2000 VCR, model number 800. Please telephone David Goodsell on 01473-413223.

**HELP! WANTED! ANYONE!** frame scan output transformer for a Pye model BV30 or a substitute to couple ECL80 to frame coils on 9-inch tube. Eric Hadley, phone 0171-612 6329 day or 01273-739947 evening or e-mail [e.hadley@ioe.ac.uk](mailto:e.hadley@ioe.ac.uk)

**WANTED:** Philips N1460, N1500, N1501, N1502, N1512, N1520, N1700, N1702, Grundig SVR and Toshiba/Sanyo VCORD video machines. Any condition considered. Also wanted: Literature, tapes and spares for any machines listed above. Phone Mike on 01395-274227, or e-mail to [mdb@permanent.co.uk](mailto:mdb@permanent.co.uk)

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

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

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

**WANTED:** On-off knob, that goes on the switch for Sony KV-1330 television (25 years old and still working!). Same knob was used on all Sony 13 and 18-inch sets of the same period (1973/74). Keith Rann, 22 Greensted Road, Loughton, IG10 3DL.

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

**WANTED:** Dead or alive, Pye FV1 console telly (it's the set I watched the Coronation on!). Phone me, Mick Kay, on 01777-700051 or write to me at Glen Rosa, Welham, Retford, DN22 0SJ.

**WANTED:** CRT for Bush TV22 (type MW22/16) or complete chassis for same including CRT. Michael Ray, 67a Manor Road, North Lancing, BN15 0HG, tel: 01903-753102.

**WANTED:** Dead or alive, any set using the BRC 2000 chassis. Incomplete sets and Boxes of parts also wanted. Your price paid. Collection possible from much of UK. Mike Arnfield 01565-722262 (Cheshire) or e-mail [mikarnf@ibm.net](mailto:mikarnf@ibm.net)

**WANTED:** U-Matic portable tapes 30 minute length only. Must be VGC or better new. Contact Dicky Howett. 01371-820155, e-mail: [dicky.howett@btinternet.com](mailto:dicky.howett@btinternet.com)

**PROGRAMME WANTED:** Programme shown on BBC2 a couple of years back called *The Telephone Exchange* (?). This included interviews with ex-operators, repairmen, etc. as well as vintage footage. All expenses covered. Peter Carlton, 44 Morwenna Park Road, Northam, Bideford, EX39 1EQ.

### **SERVICES:**

- ❑ **Chappel Engineering Workshop.** Chappel Station, Colchester, Essex, undertakes most turning/optical threading and fabrications in steel or brass. Most types of soldering work and welding. No job too small. Very cost effective, recommended by our Dicky Howett. Contact workshop manager Roger Stewart-Hindley weekdays only on 01787-223057.
- ❑ Your vintage audio recordings digitally restored and transferred to CD or cassette, from all formats, including 78's. Prices from £4. Telephone David Lane on 01302-321066, or write to 33 Beckett Road, Doncaster, South Yorkshire, DN2 4AD, for further details.
- ❑ Obsolete format video tapes copied free of charge. I can convert any tapes from the following formats to VHS or S-VHS. Philips VCR (N1500 etc.); Philips VCR-LP (N1700 etc.); Philips V2000; IVC 1-Inch (IVC700,800,900 etc.) and soon Philips EL3400; Philips EL3402; Philips LDL1200; Sony half-inch; Akai quarter-inch. Please phone Mike Bennett on 01395-274227 for details, e-mail [mdb@permanent.co.uk](mailto:mdb@permanent.co.uk)
- ❑ I will convert your 625-line tapes to broadcast-standard 405 lines on my digital line-store standards converter. Free of charge to subscribers of *405 Alive*. Please send blank tape (VHS only) for output and return postage. Input tapes can be accepted on Philips 1700, EIAJ, Video2000, Beta or VHS. David Looser, Maristow, Holbrook Road, Harkstead, IPSWICH, Suffolk, IP9 1BP. Phone 01473-328649.

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

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

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

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

Letters are always welcome and nearly all of them (unless marked *Not For Publication*) get published. Lengthy screeds may be edited for clarity. Electronic mail is also welcome. Address this to [midshires@cix.co.uk](mailto:midshires@cix.co.uk)

**Advertising rates.** Classified: free. Display ads, using your artwork: £5 per half page, £10 full page. Charges must be pre-paid.

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

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

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

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

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

**How to submit material.** If at all possible, please TYPE your contributions using a dark, black ribbon. This enables them to be read straight into the word-processor by a document scanner. Magic! Contributions on 3.5" PC computer disk are also welcome and your disk will be returned. Please process your words in some popular word-processing format, ideally as an ASCII or Word file. If in doubt please ring first on 07000-405625—thanks. You can also fax your letters, ads and articles on 01604-821647.

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

## **BACK NUMBERS**

Some recent back issues are available from the Staffordshire address; send SAE with enquiries. In a few cases the editor can lend originals for photocopying.

## **FAQ FILES**

FAQs are frequently asked questions, so we are keeping three files of FAQs and their answers ready for printing out on request for readers. These files will be updated as new information comes in. The files are already quite lengthy and contain material already published, so it would not be fair on established subscribers to reprint them in the magazine. FAQfile 1 runs to 57 pages and covers general points about old TV and how to get old television sets working again. FAQfile 2 is a reprint on all the articles on test card music and ITV station ident themes; it covers 15 pages. FAQ file 1 costs £3.00 and file 2 costs £1.00 (both post paid). These prices cover just the cost of copying and postage plus the horrendous cost of banking your cheque (68 pence!). FAQfile 3 covers suppliers of hard-to-find electronic components and service data; for

this one send one first class stamp and a SAE. (Available from 71 Falcutt Way, Northampton, NN2 8PH; cheques payable to Andrew Emmerson.)

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### **ENQUIRIES REGARDING SUBSCRIPTIONS**

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

### **EXCHANGE PUBLICATIONS**

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

**BRITISH VINTAGE WIRELESS SOCIETY:** Mike Barker, 28 Cheney Manor Road, Swindon, Wilts., SN2 2NS.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**LAUGH Magazine**, 52 Pembury Avenue, Worcester Park, KT4 8BT. In-depth information for people who enjoy old and new TV and radio humour.

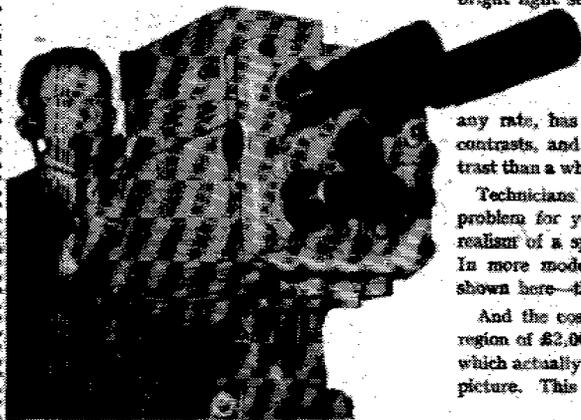
**GROUP 9.5** (for the 9.5mm cine enthusiast), Ken Valentine, 29 Highfield Road, Bushey, Herts, WD2 2HD (e-mail to pathescope@freeserve.co.uk)

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

**VINTAGE FILM CIRCLE** (for collectors and all lovers of old films): Alex Woolliams, 11 Norton Road, Kowle, Bristol, BS4 2EZ.

**A Reader Wants to Know—**

## **How Much Does a TV Camera Cost?**



IN FACT, MR. JOHN WALTON of Leeds asked two questions. The first was: "Why is it that a bright light seen on TV—like a street lamp in a night scene—always has a black halo around it?"

The answer is that the picture tube in a camera, up till now at any rate, has been unable to cope with extreme contrasts, and you could not have a greater contrast than a white light against a black background.

Technicians have been struggling with this problem for years, for undoubtedly it spoils the realism of a spectacle such as a fireworks display. In more modern cameras—like the Masconi one shown here—the difficulty has been overcome.

And the cost? The price of this one is in the region of £2,000. Most expensive part is the tube which actually builds up the image of the television picture. This alone costs £800.

*From Television Mirror, October 29th., 1955*



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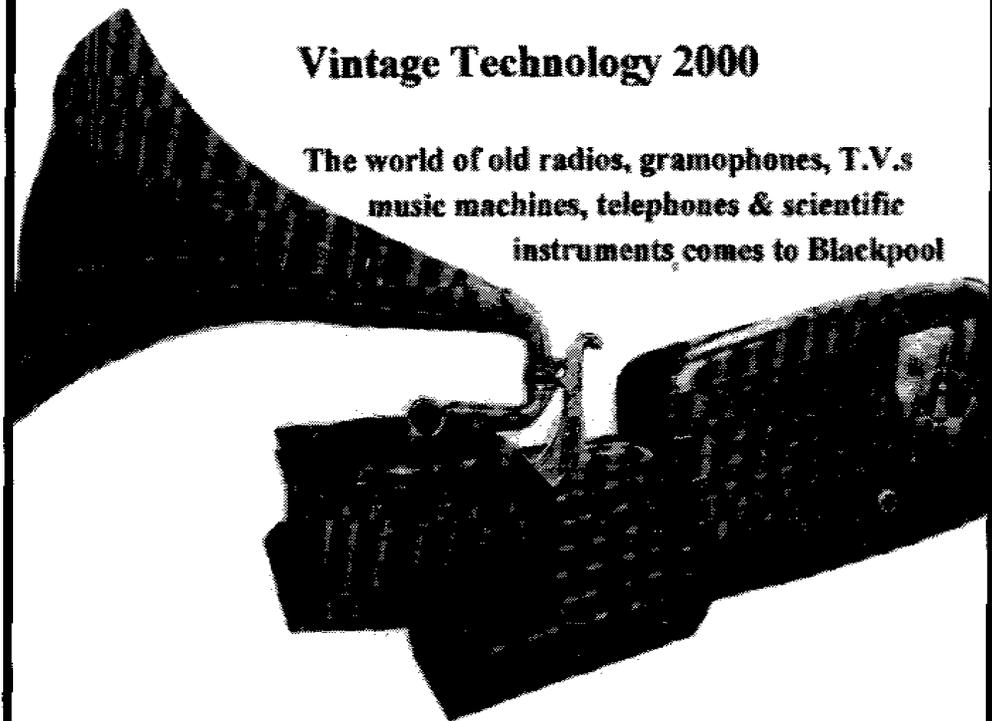
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**Editorial policy.** This magazine acts not only as a forum for research, the republication of archive material and as a monitor for new developments, but also as a means for all interested in this field to keep in touch. Readers are encouraged to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

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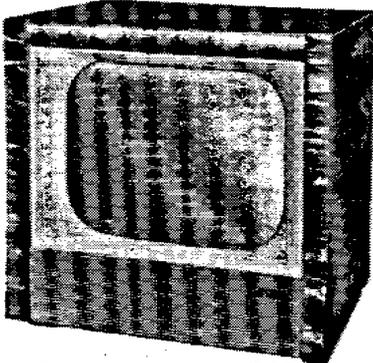
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