The new State Pension: what the changes mean for you

The new State Pension has been introduced for people who reach State Pension age on or after 6 April 2016. This applies to:
- men born on or after 6 April 1951, and
- women born on or after 6 April 1953.

If you were born before those dates you’ll be able to claim your State Pension under the old system instead.

You can check when you’ll reach State Pension age at www.gov.uk/state-pension-age

How much will you get?
The amount of new State Pension you get will mainly depend on your own National Insurance record. You’ll usually need at least 10 qualifying years on your National Insurance record to get any new State Pension.

As the new State Pension is normally based on your own National Insurance record, you could get more or less than the full rate in certain situations.

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) will calculate the minimum amount of new State Pension you could get when you reach State Pension age. To do this, the DWP carries out two calculations to work out your Starting Amount, which will be the higher of either:
- the amount you would get under the old State Pension rules (which includes basic State Pension and additional State Pension)
- the amount you would have got under new State Pension rules.

Starting Amounts will include some adjustment for time contracted-out of the additional State Pension.

Unless you are already at the full new State Pension amount of £155.65 per week (2016/17 rate) or have reached State Pension age, you will add to your new State Pension by 1/35th of the full amount (about £4.45 for 2016/17) for each qualifying year on your National Insurance record from 6 April 2016.

Contracting-out
Most people reaching State Pension age after the introduction of the new State Pension will have been ‘contracted-out’ of the additional State Pension at some time – something they may be unaware of.

The old State Pension has two parts:
- basic State Pension
- additional State Pension (sometimes called State Second Pension, S2P or SERPS).

Anyone who has been contracted-out of either paid National Insurance at a lower rate or some of their National Insurance contributions were used to contribute to a private pension instead of the additional State Pension. This will be taken into account when the DWP works out your Starting Amount in the new system.

This means that although many people with more than 35 qualifying years will get a Starting Amount lower than the full rate of the new State Pension, many will have more than the new full rate if they add their State and contracted-out pension together.

You could only be contracted-out of the additional State Pension if you were building a private pension instead. So you’re not missing out, just getting the amount in a different way.

In April 2016, contracting-out – and the reduction in National Insurance that contracted-out employers and employees got – ended.

For more information on these changes and what they mean for you, visit www.gov.uk/yourstatepension

An animation explaining contracting-out and the impact on the new State Pension can be found on the DWP’s YouTube channel, PensionTube. You can watch this video and others like it at: https://www.youtube.com/PensionTube

Benefits in brief
- The guarantee part of Pension Credit increased in April to £155.60 (single person) and £237.55 (couples). Government figures show that every year millions of pensioners miss out on as much as £3.7 billion in money benefits, with many also forgoing benefits designed to help with the increased cost of having an illness and disability. Charities like Age UK are encouraging pensioners to check if they are eligible for Pension Credit. Pension Credit works by topping up your household income to a guaranteed minimum level. People can still be eligible for Pension Credit even if they have some savings. To find out if you qualify, simply call freephone 0800 99 1234.
- Her Majesty’s Revenue & Customs (HMRC) has published a tax consultation on the framework to be adopted for the proposed secondary annuity market. This is a further step towards the launch of this market on 6 April 2017, from which date pension investors who have previously bought an annuity will be allowed to sell their guaranteed income in exchange for a lump sum. The government has estimated that 300,000 people will choose to take up this option. The consultation closed in June.
- It is now possible to contact HMRC by telephone to discuss difficulties in claiming Tax Allowance online. Many people have experienced problems with claiming the new allowance online, particularly in trying to identify themselves securely. If you haven’t been able to claim online and you are eligible for the allowance, call HMRC on 0300 200 3300.
- National fraud and crime reporting centre Action Fraud has reported an increase in scam telephone calls purporting to be from HMRC. One of the reported scams involves an automated telephone message which informs the person receiving the call that they are the subject of a law suit raised by HMRC — the automated call then gives them a series of options to press on their telephone, including to speak to a ‘case officer’. In many cases, the fraud also involves the request of payment by iTunes vouchers. Additionally, some victims are targeted by text message, asking them to call back urgently regarding payment of an overdue debt. Visit the Action Fraud website at www.actionfraud.police.uk

Please send your editorial contributions, or comments/ feedback, to: Prospero, BBC Pension and Benefits Centre, Broadcasting House, Cardiff OF5 2YQ.
Email: prospero@bbc.co.uk

Please make sure that any digital pictures you send are scanned at 300 dpi.

The next issue of Prospero will appear in October 2016. The copy deadline is Friday, 26 August 2016.
**A daughter’s quest to find ‘first cameraman’ Geoffrey Stuart Nicholls**

My father, Geoffrey Stuart Nicholls, worked for the BBC as a cameraman from 1957 to 1978. At some point he was given a statue of a camera with ‘BBC’ on the side. My dad told me he was given it because he was the ‘first cameraman’ at the BBC.

I always assumed that meant he was the first one employed by the BBC, but my mum said that she thinks he was given it as the Cameraman of the Year and these were called ‘Firsts’. My dad used to let me play with it as a child, under strict instructions to be careful, as it was meant so much to him. He was so proud of it.

My dad was a cameraman for over 20 years. He died in 1979 when I was 10. He committed suicide after having to give up his dream job and leave the BBC due to a back injury. There were so many memories of him sharing this with me, with visits to Play School, Play Away, Cr Dolphins, Nationwide, Blue Peter, Rentaghost, watching the weather report, Doctor Who and many, many more incredible memories. He also worked on Top of the Pops and MoreMeme and Wist. We weren’t even allowed to watch ITV at home – he was that loyal!

Sadly, my mum threw the award out. This award/medal meant so much to me and I had hoped that I might get details of it from the BBC, to try and recreate it, but the BBC were not able to help, as their records do not go back to 1961. I realise that finding out about it is unlikely now, but what I am hoping is that I might be able to find out what the award was for, if someone else has one and maybe has a photo of it, or maybe even if there is anyone who worked with my father and may have photos of him, or a story to tell.

I have since found out that in 1967 he was in crew 111 no 2 cameraman under senior cameraman, Stanley Appel. If you do feel that there is any way that you could perhaps help, I would be so grateful and I really do thank you for your time.

Helen Oliver

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**The Day I…**

It was interesting to see that The Sext Diary of a BBC Secretary had reached such a wide readership.

In writing my own story of life as a television documentary maker (called On The Horizon, because that’s where I made 42 of them) I was motivated originally by the desire to pass to my family stories of ‘what I was doing when not at home’ – which was, of course, much of the time in my other, also highly enjoyable, working life.

As a child I had heard all too little of the varied stories that my own father would occasionally tell – of running away to sea; of being chased by German submarines in the First World War; of all his wildly different kinds of jobs while working in America.

He never did tell me how we came to possess that useless box in the corner, supposedly a television set, but one that never got switched on. It was the wrong sort – Baird – I later realised. Were we early adopters, or was it something to do with Baird – I later realised. Were we early adopters, or was it something to do with that problem a year or two later.

In such stories the writer is, of course, the hero. That’s what autobiography usually is for, isn’t it? On the other hand, given that interest in the history of science broadcasting (even in the form of such a life story) might be of interest to a wider readership, what would be the best way to interest a publisher? I have never before written a book without getting it commissioned in advance. And I have found that the lack of a commission does not work well for films, either. Any suggestions, other than expensive self-publication options?

Alf Nisbett

Can any successful BBC authors share their tips for getting published?

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**Upside-down Alan Richardson**

Firstly, congratulations Alan Richardson on receiving the ‘Legion d’Honneur’. You don’t receive that sort of award for sitting at a desk.

When I was a film despatch clerk at Ealing, I knew Alan and discovered he had a rare talent – if he arrived in the despatch while I was still logging his rushes, to save time he would sign his name on the log sheet UPSIDE DOWN from right to left but from my point of view the right way up. Clever or what?

Congratulations again Alan.

Neville Withers

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**Recovering worthwhile transmitted BBC material**

Reading the article in Prospers June 2016, by Victoria Cowan (‘Bringing back some sunshine’), I was reminded of a fruitless attempt by myself about four years ago.

In 1968 I was the VT Editor on the television programme of Elgar’s ‘Dream of Gerontius’, recorded in Canterbury Cathedral and transmitted on 18 December 1968. The programme (recorded over three days and directed by Brian Long) was an excellent performance, featuring The London Philharmonic Orchestra and Choir, conductor Sir Adrian Boult, choir master Frederic Jackson and soloists Janet Baker, Peter Pears and John Shirley-Quirk.

Having all the ¾ sound back-up tapes, I edited together a complete performance using all the best musical takes because I didn’t need to consider that some takes were done for vision reasons. I compiled this to two CDs for my own enjoyment but of course, being aware of all the rights and copyrights involved, did nothing further.

When a letter appeared in Prospers, from a company called ICA, requesting help with finding old recordings, and specifically mentioning Sir Adrian Boult, I emailed them, thinking they would be interested and know how to deal with recording and performance rights.

I never even got the courtesy of a reply.

I would say that if Archives have a recording of the transmission VT soundtrack, then it will be not as good as the sound tape edited copy.

Two reasons are:

- it will be second generation 2”VT audio track (which was not very good even by standards then)
- it doesn’t necessarily contain all the best takes, where only the audio needs to be considered.

The performance sound quality is very good, with excellent balance and controlled dynamic range.

Of course it is monophonic and has the analogue tape sound characteristic but the performance is a classic.

Boult knew Elgar’s music (and Elgar himself) and it shows. Janet Baker has never been surpassed in her interpretation of The Angel and Peter Pears was in his prime. John Shirley-Quirk – as the Priest and Angel of the Agony is very powerful but also very musical.

All the above may be of no interest to you but it does seem a pity that what is an historically important recording should be lost to the musical world.

Goff Higgs

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**Dave King**

I was saddened to read in the June issue of Prospers of the passing of film editor, Dave King (pictured below).

I first met Dave when he was a photographer with the Birmingham Evening Mail and I was a volunteer with Birmingham Hospitals Broadcasting Association.

He came to our studios and took a photograph of me at the mixing desk.

In conversation, he told me how determined he was to work for the BBC as a film editor. He achieved that aim, and the next contact I had from Dave was in 1964 when he wrote a very nice letter congratulating me on my performance on the record judging panel on Radio 2’s Easy Beat.

I later became ‘legit’ and started working for the BBC in Birmingham, but our paths never crossed again.

The photograph Dave took and his letter are filed away in my scrapbook, now accompanied by his obituary.

I am so glad that such a kind and talented man like Dave was able to follow his dream and achieve so much.

Keith Ackrill

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**Diabolical Audio Broadcasting**

Almost every time I turn my radio to my two favourite BBC stations my ears are assaulted by adverts imploring me to ‘Go Digital’.

As a radio-only listener, this leaves me with one choice – to buy a DAB radio.

If I did, what then?

In an urban area I would have the choice of several dozen commercial stations all churning out the same bland pop music, plus a few bizarre spec stations, a jazz station that plays hardly any real jazz and a classical music station playing only the most popular classics, (plus of course) the BBC.

In my rural area I might be ‘blessed’ only with the BBC suite with its five pop music stations, three current affairs stations, a somewhat neglected classical music station, and the worthy Radios 4 and 5 Sport Extras.

But, the worst aspect of all this ‘choice’ is not the proliferation of pop music, but the extremely poor technical quality using the MP2 coding technology that was obsolescent before DAB started, fit only for a tinny little portable.

Several years ago Alison Graham hit the DAB nail squarely on the head by calling it ‘the new mediumwave’ – how right she was and still is!

So, come on BBC and OFCOM, I’ll ‘Go Digital’ when I can listen to R4 Extra and the crickets in high quality stereo.

Meanwhile, I will stick firmly to my beloved FM.

Richard Crowley
The decision by Massey University to offer me an honorary doctorate in literature for ‘services to journalism’ came as a bolt from the blue. It’s 46 years since I attended what was then the Wellington Polytechnic School of Journalism. And while I returned to New Zealand for family reasons after retiring from the BBC, Britain was my home base for 30 years – the greater part of my adult life. Fortunately, Massey University did not regard that as a deterrent.

The graduation ceremony in Wellington charmed me with its willingness to accommodate New Zealand’s resurgent biculturalism. The graduates and faculty wore traditional academic dress and Gaudeamus Igitur was sung lustily. But the national anthem was sung first in Maori, then English, and when Maori or Pacific Island graduates crossed the stage, family members rose from the audience to deliver a ‘waiata’, traditionally sung at important events. This would not have happened when I was growing up here.

‘I was the only woman in a pool of 26 men. The reception I received was cool, to say the least’

I left New Zealand at the age of 23, determined to forge a career in broadcasting in Britain. After working at local radio stations in the north of England I joined the network reporters’ pool in London in 1981. When I arrived, I was the only woman in a pool of 26 men. The reception I received was cool, to say the least. Julia Somerville had preceded me as a general reporter before becoming Industrial Affairs Correspondent. Even so, old attitudes held fast. My male colleagues made it clear that in their view, women were likely to cry at the first hurdle and were not physically or emotionally strong enough to handle the job.

When I did a stint in Beirut in 1984 at the height of the civil war, the BBC received letters from listeners complaining about a female reporter being sent to a war zone. One listener suggested that I was putting my male colleagues in danger, because in the midst of a battle they would feel obliged to protect a woman.

In 1986, I was posted to Bonn as the BBC’s first female foreign correspondent. When my appointment was announced I received letters from other women in News and Current Affairs, thanking me for helping to crack the glass ceiling. In the years that followed, trying to live up to that vote of confidence was quite a responsibility.

A highlight was covering the revolution in Romania in December 1989. In Timisoara, where the uprising began, I, like my colleagues, came under fire from snipers loyal to the old regime. A couple of years ago I stopped to pick up a hitchhiker while travelling in the South Island of New Zealand. She was Romanian and when I told her I’d been in Timisoara during the revolution reporting for the BBC, she burst into tears. She said: ‘It was the foreign media who saved us; you gave us freedom by telling the world.’ It’s moments like those that make all the hard work worthwhile.

Fall of communism

As Eastern Europe and then Moscow Correspondent, I covered the political ramifications of the fall of communism, but the largest response I ever received followed a report for FOOC on the plight of handicapped children in a bleak Russian orphanage. By then a mother myself, I was perhaps especially affected by seeing them kept in cold, inhumane conditions with little treatment or stimulation. Some, unable to feed themselves, starved to death. Donations poured into the BBC from all over the world.

I returned home to New Zealand with my son in 2005 to find a country that had changed markedly in my years away. It used to pride itself on being a land of opportunity and modest prosperity for all. Now, as in Britain, inequality is growing and spending on public services has been cut. But, as I hoped, it has been the ideal place to raise a child. I stepped away from news and worked for three years at wine-searcher.com – the world’s leading wine website despite being Auckland-based. More recently I turned my attention to a WW1 project, transcribing hundreds of letters from my six great-uncles who were killed and my grandfather, who survived.

When addressing the Massey University graduates, I observed that loving your job unquestionably makes life easier. I am thankful to the BBC for affording me that privilege.
How sports coverage has changed

As Charles Runcie leaves his position as Head of Sport for BBC English Regions, he reflects on how our sporting coverage across the UK has changed during his 34 years with the Corporation.

Tuesday 30 November 1982, St Andrews Day. A letter bomb explodes inside 10 Downing Street, Michael Jackson releases ‘Thriller’, and Liverpool lead the First Division. Meanwhile at BBC Scotland’s HQ in Glasgow’s Queen Margaret Drive, I was nervously presenting myself at reception on the first day of my BBC career. I had accepted a job as Station Assistant at ‘BBC Radio Tweed’, a borders opt-out from Radio Scotland launching in April 1981 with two hours of news and information a day.

For some reason the BBC decided to hire me five months early (can you imagine that now?) and I was asked to shadow the radio sports department. Shadow? By Saturday I’d produced their Celtic-Rangers League Cup final coverage, and a feature on a man who made ships in bottles made from matchsticks. Looking back, that week sums up a lot that’s changed in sport, broadcasting and indeed the BBC.

In those days, cup finals happened at 3pm on a Saturday and our BBC output was a happy mix of a number of sports in each programme. Nowadays, fans demand hours of news and information a day. In spite of the pressure the BBC has come under on rights over these 34 years, and I’ve heard reports of our demise more than once, we’ve remained a leading player in sports broadcasting. A peerless interactive offering, world beating on website and mobile, comprehensive national, regional and local sports news coverage adding to our TV and radio rights portfolio. I think the next 34 years will be a fascinating journey. I’ll be watching, listening and logging on, but sometimes wonder whatever did happen to that matchstick ship in a bottle?

There’s commentary on many football and rugby union games online and, thanks to a partnership with BBC Sport and cricket’s governing body, the ECB, we’re into a fourth season of commentary on every ball of every county cricket match. It’s popular enough in the UK, with well over a million daily unique browsers to our live radio and online page, but followed avidly too around the world by cricket fans who email and tweet from dozens of countries. It’s a service described in a magazine article as ‘unglamorous, odd, accented, addictive… imperfectly brilliant’.

Our television output has reflected the regions we live in as well. The Super League Show is essential viewing for rugby league fans every Monday, a slate of fine documentaries on everything from the financial plight of Portsmouth FC to the legendary Sir Stanley Matthews have been produced and, with BBC Sport now at Salford, it all feels very joined up.

Terrific talent

One thing that has not changed is the people I’ve worked with on sport at the BBC. They’re people with terrific talent who would shine in any era, from Peter Jones to Dan Walker, Bill McLaren to Eleanor Oldroyd. At Radio Scotland I listened to commentary on a cassette from someone who’d originally been in touch as a 17-year-old Aberdeen schoolboy. A combination of luck and illness meant I decided to give him a chance on air, which he took with both hands. Derek Rae has since become an outstanding commentator, a Sony Radio award winner at 19, working at the BBC and in the USA, and now at BT Sport.

I’m proud how our regional sports coverage has expanded. In the 1980s at Radio Scotland, we were restricted to second half football commentary plus – curiously – the last five minutes of the first half. Oh how we lived for those few extra minutes! Now BBC Local Radio has a massive commitment to sport, following their football, cricket and rugby teams with passion and professionalism. Our online world has expanded hugely too.

The digital revolution

The digital revolution from the internet to the red button has accelerated this change. In 1982 we were dependent on a morass of lines, circuits, BT engineers, control rooms and regional switching centres. One wrong piece of jiggery-pokery and your best-laid OB plans would go astray. I remember a crackly circuit called a ‘4-wire’ that carried many a European football match commentary. There were simply no proper lines unless you paid a fortune.

Nowadays, booking an ISDN or pointing a satellite in the right direction and you can broadcast anything from anywhere in the world, probably on a smartphone smaller than one of those jackfields of old. Back then we broadcast and edited on tape, using waxy ‘chromaigraph’ pencils and razor blades to cut and splice the tapes. Mind you, we bore tete et tete with a producer who attempted to do their own editing. A stiff rebuke ensued from some severe nylon-sharpened technician in an editing channel.

Live TV football in 1982 was restricted to just the FA Cup Final. No live football was shown in Scotland, as the Scottish FA said it affected attendances at junior games. And BBC TV's sport was restricted to the venerable Saturday night. Managing to cram in Milk Cup football, Ashes cricket from Australia, UK snooker championship and even figure skating from Solhiull (sponsored by a pub chain, incidentally!) into less than two hours, each of those events would now sprawl over many hours on satellite sports channels.

Attendance a showjumping event abroad in 1996 I was rung by my boss, and asked to keep an eye on a rookie reporting from her first radio OB. She learned the ropes in no time, was more than ok, and I don’t think Clare Balding has done that badly since then.

In spite of the pressure the BBC has come under on rights over these 34 years, and I’ve heard reports of our demise more than once, we’ve remained a leading player in sports broadcasting. A peerless interactive offering, world beating on website and mobile, comprehensive national, regional and local sports news coverage adding to our TV and radio rights portfolio. I think the next 34 years will be a fascinating journey. I’ll be watching, listening and logging on, but sometimes wonder whatever did happen to that matchstick ship in a bottle!
Veteran BBC crew crank up a 1960s OB truck to create a piece of TV history

by ADAPT TV digital producer Amanda Murphy

Just a few short months ago I attended a Telobians reunion lunch in London to embark upon an ambitious mission: to reunite a veteran OB crew with a 1960s Type 2 OB truck for our ADAPT (TV History) Project.

Many thought us mad as hatters! And perhaps we were but in May this year, believe it or not, the OB truck known as North 3 OB hummed and buzzed into operation for the first time in 30 years and recorded a fabulous and funny 1972-style darts tournament. It was a true piece of television magic and a great moment in TV history!

The months that led up to this moment were both utterly inspiring and nail biting to say the least, as perhaps none of us quite realised the enormity of the task to get an OB truck as old as this, back operational. We met with owner Steve Harris, who had rescued the abandoned North 3 OB truck and, over the years, successfully restored much of it in order to take it around the country for demonstrations.

However, he had never managed to get it fully operational, or attempted to get the original 1960s tube cameras working (Pye PC 80s, or the equivalent used by London OBs in the day – EMI 2001s). Nor had he had reason to get the vision and sound desks fully working or the talkback and comms etc.

So began a mammoth engineering challenge, with Steve Harris and Steve Jones (the truck’s engineer) working around the clock, welding kits in hand, armed with a load of old spare bits from a range of old OB trucks, their eternal optimism and a fair load of old spare bits from a range of old OBs, their eternal optimism and a fair bit of sticky tape and black coffee to keep them going!

The email trail from both Steves fluctuated between being glum and alarming, as it quickly became clear that this was an engineering challenge and a half!

There was talk of: non failure… irregular bursts of twitching, sighs, a jumbled zoom… the iris… lumpy and sticky.

With just one week to go before we were due to start filming, the emails became more urgent: comments not decoding… talkback and comms not yet worked on… this VT machine needed pacing together.

It was a small miracle that – just as they did in the days when there was a looming deadline – the lads pulled it off!

Ian Rutter and Brian Collinson came to the rescue and got the VT machine working; the two Steves got not one but two old cameras working again (a PC 80 and an EMI 2001), and Brian Summers in just 24 hours worked some magic with the talkback and comms.

Once the rest of the veteran crew arrived on location (all cast for their talent and reputation for being top of their game), the engineering skills and ‘can do’ enthusiasm to make this all work was electrifying.

These guys (and they were mostly guys, apart from the wonderful PA Jane Whitmore) were used to working under pressure. They produced live show after live show from the Sixties through to the Eighties, using kit that was temperamental and cumbersome.

They were in their element and there was no shadow of a doubt that they were going to record a show that day.

As sport was the bread and butter of the Type 2 OB, we organised a simple darts tournament. With the age of both the kit and the crew, we knew that an indoor venue and event would be more manageable and controllable, so we were filming at Northop Hall not far from Steve Harris’ Flintshire base.

Sports commentator John Gwynne agreed to take part too and added a touch of his great humour to it all.

We now have a wonderful and most memorable recording of a 1972 darts match, filmed on an EMI 2001, a PC 80 and supplemented with an Ikegami HL79 complete with captions and lettraset graphics like back in the day.

As North 3, Steve Harris and the crew did everyone proud, we caught all of this and their incredible work on our 12 rigged cameras. We needed many cameras so we could see all the players at work, as the aim of the project is to attempt to provide a greater understanding of how and why OB live television was made the way it was.

It might have given me 11 Terrabytes of footage to both watch and edit now, but for me as a TV producer of the last 25 years, it was honestly one of the best films of my life.

And for all of us at ADAPT, it offers incredible insight and new archive of how a 1970s OB worked!

This footage will be available for free online via our website and YouTube channel soon. https://www.youtube.com/c/adaptvhistoryorguk

The OB veteran crew

Director: Geoff Wilson

Engineering Manager: Ron Clare

Vision Supervisors: Roger Neal and John Coupe

Vision Engineers: Bill Baldock and Peter Foster

Cameramen: Rex Palmer, Robin Sutherland and Dave Taylor

Chief Rigger: Bob Parry

Sound Supervisor: Dick Whatcher

Sound Engineers: Ken Osborne and Dave Howard

PA: Jane Whitmore

VT Engineer and Supervisor: Ian Rutter

Lighting Supervisor and North 3 truck owner and engineer: Steve Harris

Camera and Chief Engineer North 3: Steve Jones

Camera and engineering help from: Brian Summers, Tom Goodwin and Brian Collinson

Darts Commentator: John Gwynne

Darts Players and Scorer: Glyn, Shuan and Mark Griffiths

About ADAPT

ADAPT is a research project funded by the European Research Council (ERC) based at Royal Holloway University of London. The project’s aim is to film veteran television crews from the 1960s and onwards as they are reunited with old, often obsolete kit they once worked with. Through these reunions, the project attempts to demonstrate how and why TV was made the way it was in the past.

Find it online

North 3 (www.vintageradio.co.uk)

ADAPT TV (www.adaptvhistory.org.uk)
Graham Hare tells the story of his Army days in North Africa, acting Italian in a British war movie.

In 1957, Warwick Film Productions (executive producer Albert R. Broccoli) intended to make the war film, No Time to Die, featuring tank battles in the Western Desert. The film was to star Victor Mature, Leo Genn, Anthony Newley and Bonar Colleano. The War Office agreed to supply tanks and crews from the only tank regiment in North Africa: The Queen’s Bays (2nd Dragoon Guards), stationed at Sabratha, a village 40 miles west of Tripoli. I was the Troop Sergeant of 3 Troop, B Squadron, with four tanks. I was also the regiment’s wireless instructor.

Filming the battle scenes in the desert started in September. Since our tanks were all identical centurions, those that were to be ‘German’ had a Balkenkreuz and swastika painted on the sideplates and turret, whereas those that were to be ‘British’ had the sideplates removed.

Filming was hot, tiring and frustrating – the waiting seemed interminable. The regiment was due to return home at the end of the year. The Libyan government had added soot, so that when the guns were fired, a great black cloud of smoke issued from the muzzle. Visually effective no doubt, but a lot of cleaning for us at the end of the month. We were required to move ‘closed down’, restricting the driver’s and commander’s vision. This made it difficult to move forward together as the director wanted, and several tanks damaged trackguards when they came upon a ‘wadi’ deeper than expected.

For our guns, the film company had obtained blank ammunition to which they were fired, a great black cloud of smoke issued. ‘Help! I’m stuck, I can’t get out!’ All very unrealistic but we did as we were asked and they seemed satisfied.

That ended my connection with Warwick Films but not my connection with film or filming. After 10 years’ service, I left the Army on 4 April, my 26th birthday. I joined the BBC on 5 May as a technical operator at Broadcasting House in London and worked in radio for four years before joining the Film Department.

In 1971, we were filming War and Peace in Yugoslavia; the cameraman was the late Peter Hall, I was the sound recordist. One evening, sitting around after dinner, Peter was talking about his time in the film industry and I heard him say, ‘We were in the desert and there were all these tanks.’ I then recognised him as the fair-haired young man who had so impressed me years before. One of life’s happier coincidences.

No time for shai

We were dressed in Italian army uniforms to act as camp guards.

‘We were dressed in Italian army uniforms to act as camp guards’
Learn a language with BBC Club
The language courses timetable will be available on the BBC Club website from the middle of August. Retired members benefit from member rates, so why not learn a language with BBC Club?

For further details and to book, visit www.bbcclub.com/connect/languages

Lottery jackpot!
BBC Club Extra would like to heartily congratulate retired members Michael H, Rod S, John B, Derek H, Michael B, John T and John C for being winners in the £10,000 June Jackpot draw. Our June draw had cash prizes for seven lucky retired members, from a total allocation of £4. Will the next draw repeat this trend? To be in with a chance of winning, join via the website: bbc.club@bbc.co.uk or call Michelle on 020 8752 6666. Minimum entry is £5 per month.

Stay in touch!
BBC Club has many active and engaged retired members. Although some of the Club buildings are no longer the focus for some, our website with its offers, competitions and articles and the monthly BBC Club newsletter have been of tremendous benefit for those older members who are not able to get about as easily as they once did but like to stay informed. To take full advantage of BBC Club you will need a new style BBC Club card. This starts with the number 100. To request your card please email bbc.club@bbc.co.uk or call Michelle on 020 8752 6666. This is also the way to get in touch if you are not receiving our newsletter. Please let us have your email address so we can add you to our mailing list.

Club Life Members
As a result of a membership data protection audit, Club Life members who have not requested a new style membership card, are not members of Prospect or the lottery and who haven’t given us an email address will receive a letter asking them to contact the Club if they wish to continue with membership. All those who don’t respond will be archived. This is to ensure BBC Club is not keeping members details unnecessarily. This does not affect retired members. Please note you only need to respond if you receive a letter!

Prosero and retired members’ events

Prosero membership is £15 per year and membership is growing as the advantages of an extended range of activities and subsidised prices are realised. The Society is a great way to meet up with friends old and new! For details of coming events, join the Club, BBC Club Broadcast Centre, BC2 B3, 201 Wood Lane, London W12 7TP 020 8752 6666 BBC.CLUB@BBC.CO.UK

If you’re a comedy fan, then don’t miss the new ‘Faces of BBC Comedy’ exhibition, which filts the amazingly rich and diverse BBC photo archive to select one hundred great images of some of our best-known comedians and sitcom stars.

They are all there – from Tony Hancock’s lugubrious stare to Miranda Hart’s trademark look-to-camera, from the pugnacious glare of Alf Garnett to the colourful flamboyancy of Brendan O’Carroll.

In addition, the photos capture the great chemistry of some of our most loved sitcom actors: The Good Life, Are You Being Served?, Dad’s Army, Only Fools and Horses, The Officer, Citizen Khan and Absolutely Fabulous, to name but a few, tying this display into this autumn’s BBC Sitcom season running across BBC One, BBC Two and BBC Four.

Interestingly, many of these photos have never been seen by the public before (only a small proportion of the archive’s vast four million or so images are available), and they reveal their famous subjects afresh.

Here they are on set among the paraphernalia of cameras and microphones, in make up or in avid script discussion, larking around with fellow performers, or simply taking a few moments’ break to enjoy a well-deserved cuppa.

There’s a classic photo of Frankie Howard asleep with a script on his lap – I doubt if many vigilant publicists today would let their talent be observed quite so directly! Take a look at some highlight images here…

Comedy heroes
The current show is being guest curated by some of the BBC’s best-loved contemporary sitcom actors and comics. We’re beginning with Paul Merton and Adil Ray who chose their favourite photos from the exhibition to reflect the comedy greats who inspired and informed their own work. You can catch short films of them both talking through their choices on our BBC History site: bbc.co.uk/historyofthebbc

The Story of Children’s Television, from 1946 to the present day
Muffin the Mule, Andy Pandy, Teletubbies, Crackerjack, Newsround, Blue Peter… our childhoods have been defined by the broadcasts we first encountered as children. They shaped our imaginations, from the very intimate environments of our family sitting room or kitchen, and then took us out into the wider world.

BBC History has been telling this story out and about in the UK through a sequence of major exhibitions, beginning at the Lowry in Salford (2014), and followed by museums in Coventry, Portsmouth, Middlesborough, and now this summer in Bristol.

They have been breaking box office records wherever they opened – 60,000 visitors in Salford followed by a stunning 84,000 in Coventry (they expected 24,000)! Before the touring show finishes, do beat a path to MShed Museum in the transformed quayside area of Bristol city, where Muffin and friends will be stunning their stuff from 2 July to 25 September.

Undeniably, what visitors have loved about this exhibition has been the nostalgia factor – grown men and women have turned dewy-eyed at the sight of the original Hunydi (from Play School), Basil Brush, Gordon the Golfer, The Wombles, Teletubies, Sooty and Blue Peter’s original Tracy Island (the most requested ‘make’ ever)! But it’s not just about the past: Bristol-based Aardman Animations have supplied models of the new Morph and contemporary children’s favourite, Shaun the sheep, plus there’s lots of fun creative activities for today’s kids to have a go at, from a theme tune challenge to puppet play and TV character dressing up.

What was your favourite children’s TV show?
BBC History also teamed up with film making students from the University of Western England, who quizzed the Bristol public on their favourite children’s TV shows and characters… see video link on museum page https://www.bristolmuseums.org.uk/m-shed/whats-on/childrens-television/

‘The Story of Children’s Television’ exhibition is the centrepiece of a Summer of Childhood festival, with things to make and do and see in Bristol city running right through to the end of September 2016. Do give it a go: a guaranteed hit for children of all ages!

Find out more about BBC History at: bbc.co.uk/historyofthebbc

Robert Seaton, Head of BBC History

WIN TICKETS & GET DISCOUNTS
We have three pairs of tickets to win for The Story of Children’s Television. Simply enter our caption competition on page 12, which shows Annette Mills and Muffin the Mule. Send in your entry by Friday 26 August and we will send a pair of tickets to the original three best entries received.

Plus, if you’re interested in going to the Faces of BBC Comedy exhibition, you can get a 50% discount on the entry fee. Simply show proof that you are a BBC pensioner (perhaps take a copy of your latest pensions increase letter, as ID cards have been phased out).
Rio 2016 on the BBC

The BBC will bring audiences comprehensive coverage of this year’s Summer Olympics with more than 3,000 hours of live sporting action from Rio 2016.

F
ollowing its award-winning coverage of London 2012, which saw over 90 per cent of the UK population watch its output, the BBC will once again be right at the heart of the world’s biggest sporting spectacle, delivering blanket coverage from the 17 days of action across TV, radio, online and digital.

BBC One and BBC Four will broadcast 550 hours of action alongside extensive coverage on BBC Radio 5 live and the BBC Sport website. In a repeat of the 2012 digital offering, up to 24 HD streams will also deliver every moment to fans whenever they want, wherever they are across mobile, tablet, desktop, connected TV and gaming devices.

‘Fans will be able to personalise their Rio 2016 experience’

Providing a backdrop of expert opinion and insight into each of the 28 sports that make up Rio 2016 are some of Britain’s most decorated athletes and Olympic legends.

The stellar line-up across radio and TV also includes Sir Steve Redgrave, Sir Chris Hoy, Michael Johnson, Denise Lewis, Sir Clive Woodward, Victoria Pendleton, Beth Tweddle, Rebecca Adlington and Darren Campbell. Fresh from his IBF world heavyweight title win, boxing champion Anthony Joshua will also join the BBC team out in Rio this year.

Hazel Irvine, Mark Chapman, Gabby Logan, Clare Balding and Jason Mohammad will be at the helm of BBC One’s coverage, which kicks off with the much-anticipated Opening Ceremony on 5 August. They will steer audiences through the live action each day from 13.00 to 04.00 until the Closing Ceremony on 21 August. Over on BBC Four, Dan Walker and Ore Oduba will present the live action daily from 13.00 to 04.00. On Radio 5 live, presenters Eleanor Oldroyd, Mark Chapman, Mark Pougatch, Russell Fuller, Caroline Barker and former Olympic Champion Jonathan Edwards will lead listeners through all the drama from Rio. Starting at noon every day, the station will bring live action, latest news and all the magical moments of the 2016 Games.

Beginning 7 September, Radio 5 live and Radio 5 live sports extra will also have over 80 hours of live coverage of the 2016 Paralympics with a team including Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson, Gigi Salmon, Jonathan Overend, London 2012 gold, medal-winning cyclist Mark Colbourne, and swimmer Graham Edmunds.

BBC Sport’s digital service in 2016 will bring every moment of the Olympics to audiences, with over 2,500 hours of live action across 24 live HD video streams available on the BBC Sport website, app and on Red Button+. Up to eight live streams will also be available via the ever-popular Red Button too – meaning fans will be able to watch their favourite sports wherever they are, on whatever device they like.

Alongside the latest news and live pages, the BBC Sport website will also have highlights and replays of those not-to-be-missed moments. The Olympics Playlist, a downloadable catch-up programme will also be available to view every morning on BBC iPlayer. On the iPlayer radio app, fans will be able to listen again to 5 live’s Olympic Breakfast 30-minute round-up, which will be available as a DRM download.

Fans will also be able to personalise their Rio 2016 experience within the BBC Sport website and app. ‘My Sport’ will enable audiences to follow the sports they like most, signing up for the latest news alerts, setting event reminders and sharing their favourite moments across social media.

Across its range of social media accounts BBC Sport will give fans a chance to get even closer to the BBC’s coverage, presenters and special guests, with exclusive behind-the-scenes access.

Director of BBC Sport, Barbara Slater, says: ‘The BBC’s coverage of London 2012 was the most watched TV event in UK broadcasting history and we are committed to bringing the same high quality, in-depth coverage to Rio 2016. The incredible offering across all our platforms will deliver every moment of the Games through a truly interactive, personalised experience, while at the same time fully immersing audiences in this iconic sporting event just as we were so proud to do four years ago.’

The BBC will also be producing a myriad of additional programmes and content to coincide with Rio 2016, including M6, a one-hour BBC One special on Mo Farah giving a personal insight into the double Olympic champion. This is as well as One Night In 2012 – an Imagine special in which Danny Boyle explains the thinking, ambition and challenges that went into creating the London 2012 Opening Ceremony; and a series of BBC Sport specials on the 2016 Team GB hopefuls.

Throughout the duration of the Games the BBC Breakfast sofa will be moved into the home of BBC Sport to ensure that early morning audiences don’t have to miss any of Rio. This special partnership between BBC Sport and BBC News will celebrate the occasion of the Games and offer extended highlights of the action from Rio each day from 6am.

Encouraging participation is an important part of what BBC Sport does. Through its Get Inspired initiative, BBC Sport will be helping encourage audiences to get involved via its handy guides to sports and activities throughout the Games. It will be promoted on the BBC Get Inspired website, through the Get Inspired Facebook and Twitter accounts, and in our broadcast output.

The build up to Rio 2016 kicks off with the much-anticipated Olympic Games marketing campaign. This year, the trail and title sequence will be part of an animated campaign which will transpose the human world of sport to the animal world. The animation will show a world of stunning forest stadia, inspired by Rio’s Tijuca Forest, while the skills and strength of the athletes will be brought to life by Brazilian animals. The trail made its TV debut on 10 July during the Euro 2016 final on BBC One.

Jack Hollinshead celebrates his 101st birthday

Of the one hundred and one things which all of us who worked with Jack Hollinshead (senior audio supervisor, Manchester) now have to do, is not only thank him for the privilege of working with him in BBC North, but also to thank him in particular for never having an unkind word for any of us – but rather to cheer us in our working day and to make us laugh when any stress and strain appeared.

Not many of us deserve to still be preserved from that year of 1915!

It was Ian Reed and his wife Joyce who kindly arranged for Jack’s 101st birthday lunch – AND Ian who took the photograph of what surely must now be Jack lowering the pick-up on the one millionth of his 101st birthday

to our BBC staff.

Trevor Hill

PROSPERO AUGUST 2016
Head of Radio Training: John Turtle

In 1968 the appointment of a BBC Radio producer from the ranks of factory inspectors was not to be expected. John Turtle was the exception but you would never have doubted his creativity and his practical skills if you’d known him from university days at UCL, where he wrote and produced many sparkling revues and built amazing sets.

He began his BBC career in FE but soon moved on to General Current Affairs with spells at Radio Training. By 1975 he had become Editor, Consumer Programmes responsible for that staple of the Radio 4 output, ‘If and Ifun’, to which he added the Shopping Basket feature and in so doing furthered the broadcasting career of Sue Cook. Also within his care was Checkpoint, the flagship investigative programme. John’s wiry and waspish sense of humour proved a valuable tool in encouraging but occasionally reining in the boundary-pushing Checkpoint duo of John Edwards, producer, and Roger Cook, reporter and presenter.

In 1979 John became Head of Radio Training, a post he would fill for a decade until he left the BBC in 1988. A generation of BBC producers and studio managers benefited from the courses devised by John and his team. The unit and its studios were based in the Langham, also the home of the BBC Club and its bars in the days when the best ideas were generated over a lunchtime pint. John was regularly to be seen there in creative conversation with other radio heads. With his shock of hair, craggy looks, tweedy jacket, tie and the ever present pipe, he cut a somewhat retro figure, well suited to the big outdoors and his passion for sailing.

He left the BBC in 1988 but freelanced as a producer, trainer and consultant for the next 20 years, his work ranging from training courses in Nepal to the long running training programme on WS.

Gregarious and as opinionated as ever John joined the Bushmen and was a regular presence at the twice yearly lunches of the Chairman of Epping Forest District Council. He became Mayor in 2009 and friends and colleagues by standing as an a councillor.

When young, he had built his first sailing dinghy and in the 1960s he designed and built a second one. He then built a yacht which he kept at the Royal Naval Sailing Club at Gosport. Unfortunately, the 1986 hurricane damaged her and his regular sailing days ended.

Soon after retiring, he and his wife Marjorie moved from Russlip to Beaconsfield where he was able to enjoy his favourite hobbies of gardening. His garden at Beaconsfield was his pride and joy – he designed it mixing ornamental and natural surroundings including ponds. He grew and specialised in alpines in his greenhouse. Other hobbies included oil and watercolour painting, listening to classical music, watching cricket and rugby, reading and doing crosswords – most days he was able to finish the cryptic puzzle in the Daily Telegraph. And Marjorie enjoyed holidays in Switzerland and visiting National Trust gardens and properties.

After Marjorie died in 2005 Tom was able to carry on living at home supported by his children Hilary, Michael and Judith. Hilary Ransom-Rose

Television Training & Manager, Resources SE Region

Kenneth Angold-Stephens joined the BBC as a Direct Entry graduate engineer in September 1963 after graduating with an honours degree in Electrical Engineering from the University of Southampton.

He started his BBC career in the Television Studios at Lime Grove and Television Centre, his engineering potential was soon spotted and he worked on the early colour television experiments in Studio H. In 1966 he became studio engineer at the Television Training Studio at Woodstock Grove. This was an enormous challenge, training overseas production staff in direction and production techniques in a ‘hands on’ environment. The training operation at Woodstock expanded to embrace BBC staff and Ken was at the heart of the expansion to cope with this increased workload.

In the mid-Eighties, Television Training moved to Elstree and Ken masteredmind this move, a major logistical operation at Woodstock expanded to embrace BBC staff and Ken was at the heart of the expansion to cope with this increased workload. In the mid-Eighties, Television Training moved to Elstree and Ken masteredmind this move, a major logistical operation, displaying his professional and engineering skills.

After 22 years of unbroken input he left training but stayed at Elstree to become deputy to John Sterling, Manager, Resource Operations. Ken took over this post in 1996 until 2002, when he retired from the BBC after 39 years of remarkable service to the Corporation.

New horizons beckoned as General Manager, Ikegami followed by a return to television training as a consultant to the Thomson Foundation. This role took him far and wide and he visited over 30 countries across his professional life.

In 2004 he finally retired but amazed friends and colleagues by standing as an independent councillor for Loughton, Essex. He became Mayor in 2009 and Chairman of Epping Forest District Council in 2011. Ken was widely respected across the whole political spectrum and the local community for his uniting work as a councillor.

Ken Stephens was a talented engineer, an authority on all aspects of television engineering and operations and a first-class administrator. He was unostentatious in his efforts to help others and he defended the highest standards of himself and those with whom he worked.

He died in April 2016 after a short illness. Ken will be greatly missed by his wife Jill, his children Craig and Juliet, and his six grandchildren.

John Symons

Pioneering OB producer

Raymond Lakeland, who died in Wilmslow on 30 April at the age of 95, was a pioneer of television outside broadcasting.

Among many ‘firsts’ that he produced, and perhaps his most notable, was the 1960s televising of The Grand National from Aintree, coverage of which was to be under his control for 16 years.

He was also responsible for many other live broadcast sporting events that we now take for granted, including the Open Golf, cricket, football and rugby league.

As a young man, Ray attended Preston Catholic College where he became head boy and captain of his school. From there he went to University to read history, but in 1941, aged 20, he volunteered to join up to serve his country. He was commissioned and very proud to pass out from Sandhurst as an Officer, from where he joined the 44th Royal Tank Regiment and encountered fighting through North Africa, Sicily and then into Northern Europe after landing in Normandy on D-Day+3.

Following demobilisation, Ray joined the British Forces Network (BNF) and produced many radio programmes. He was one of several BFN staff based in Hamburg at the end of the war, who were recruited by the BBC. He was invited to join BBC Radio in Newcastle and from there he joined the fledgling BBC North Television Unit based in Manchester, which was equipped with a brand new TV OB Unit.

Ray is immortalised in the 1959 classic documentary film, This is the BBC, in which he is seen directing coverage of the Lincolnsire Handicap at Carholme.

With his calm countenance and good humour, he was a popular and much respected colleague and retired in 1976. After his retirement, Ray married Muriel (nee Schofield) who had also enjoyed a career in the BBC and they spent many happy years together. Muriel died in March last year and his obituary was in the October Press. Ray is now reunited with Muriel, to whom he was devoted.

Jerry Clegg

Harry Henderson

The former lecturer at Wood Norton and latterly Head of Engineering Training there (1952 – 1980) has died peacefully at home after a short illness. He lived in Wye, Kent and played a very active part in the community life until towards the end. Harry’s wife, Irisa, died in 1999 and he is survived by his two daughters.

Helen Henderson

Shaping the identity of the BBC World Service

Anthony Rendell was one of the finest minds and strategic thinkers of the World Service in modern times. He was also a shrewd, creative editor and shaper of networks and programmes.

Few played a role in programming, management and strategy as well as Anthony did. The World Service was fortunate to snap him up after his six years in Radio 4 Current Affairs.

His first major task was to re-shape the sound, the content, the entire identity of World Service English in 1986-87. It had to remain fundamentally recognisable as the greatest world source of news. Renewal was needed, not revolution. Despite considerable resistance in the aftermath of a reorganization, Anthony managed and persuaded essential change to appear and to be heard. It was a singular achievement.

With negotiations over the next three-year funding agreement with the FCO looming, Anthony’s next task was to produce a case for increased funding so comprehensive, so persuasive that the Thatcher Government could not reject it. They didn’t. Anthony’s fabled qualities of ‘attentiveness and winning confidence without resort to confrontation’ were vital ingredients in the achievement.

The World Service then decided to look much further ahead – almost a decade, to ‘World Service 2000’. Anthony was the obvious person to lead this process too. He engaged the attention, the time, the thoughts of World Service middle managers to scan the ten-year horizon. There was no hierarchy in good ideas. He was also insistently that good management was an essential partner of good broadcasting. Editorial values and priorities were not translated into practice by efficiency walked through the door Anthony’s persuasive powers were crucial in prompting the National Audit Office’s recommendation that World Service should gain more control over its hours of broadcasting This was a landmark.

Anthony was confident but never dogmatic, persuasive but not insistent. His easy, intelligent charm was a characteristic, never a tactic. He was wise, not a quality in huge supply. This wisdom led him to forgo chemotherapy when diagnosed with cancer and to live for a further 12 years. What he did in and for the BBC World Service should never be forgotten.

Sir John Tiso

Local radio pioneer at Radio Leeds

You can’t think of Rory O’Dowd without feeling better for it. He oozed charm, warmth and engagement. He was a professional giant among the rookies at Radio Leeds in 1968.

It was the ‘Swinging Sixties’ of the Beatles, Stones and Tamla Motown. Hardy any of us had been behind a microphone before.

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Auntie BBC was staid and conservative until we came along.
Rory was my mentor. He was not prescriptive. He led by example, and we followed, or tried to.
His voice was magic – that’s why he was hired. The ethos of the station was Yorkshire people broadcasting to Yorkshire people.
Quite rightly, Phil Sidey bent the rules and put Rory on the prime-time breakfast show.
I’m a proud Yorkshireman but I never heard a hint of a complaint about his New Zealand twang, only praise. He was the voice of the station.
As a listener you always felt he was talking just to you. What a talent! He was our Terry Wogan before we’d ever heard of the Irishman.
As a person he was a delight to know. Always thoughtful and considerate. Always laughing. He rarely cracked jokes but he was quick to see the funny side of everything.
In his later years we visited him in his retirement homes – a delightful cottage in a village in Dorset, and later a stylish townhouse in Prince Charles’ model village of Poundbury.
With Denise, his beloved ‘Nezzy’, he was so happy for so long. And to see him as the soul of the party on his 90th birthday was a treat.
Even in his care homes I never saw him lose his zest for life. Life was for living and having fun. The mainly female staff adored him. He flirted with them relentlessly and in return they fussed over him. That made him very happy.
He might have gone but he’ll always be with us – putting a twinkle in our memories as we affectionately remember him.
Rory, thank you.

Philip Hayton

Head of Radio Training: Tim Neale

Tim Neale, former Head of Radio Training who died in May, was influential in the careers of many broadcasters.

Tim started with the BBC in 1956 as a ‘Booshman’, a studio manager at Bush House.

Many a long night shift passed with the Hausa Service perfecting the skill of jump-cut editing on a gramophone disc.

It was an exciting time to be working for the African Service, as the ‘winds of change’ brought independence to former British protectorates.

In 1964, he was seconded as Head of Programmes at the newly formed Malawi Broadcasting Corporation. Here, Tim honed his renowned diplomatic skills dealing with Malawi’s President, Dr Hastings Banda.

On one occasion, the notoriously prickly dictator demanded an outside broadcast from the National Stadium to cover the public execution of rebels. Dr Banda was not a man you said ‘no’ to, but Tim did.

In 1967 he helped set up Radio Sheffield, moving to Radio Solent in 1978. ‘Listener involvement’ was key to early local radio and Tim trumped them all by hiring a cross-channel ferry to take 500 Solent listeners to Cherbourg along with the Band of the Royal Marines and Patrick Moore.

He was famous for his skill at giving friendly feedback. One colleague remembers he picked you up and put you on the right path again and did it with wonderful wit and patience. So in 1987, he was a natural candidate for Head of Radio Training.

His brief was to innovate; he fulfilled it with aplomb, making courses shorter and more relevant, involving everyone in the enterprise.

In 1994 Tim took early retirement from the BBC – with no intention of giving up work. For 20 years he trained journalists in emerging democracies including South Africa, Ukraine, Siberia and Bosnia.

He also became renowned for setting up media monitoring units during elections, persuading press and broadcasters in Pakistan, Kenya, Malawi, Guyana and Palestine to write themselves ‘Codes of Conduct’ which helped bring a measure of fairness and balance and encouraged peacefull elections.

His CV also included the line: ‘and I grow the best raspberries in Wiltshire!’

Lyn Hermen

TV producer’s assistant and BBC visitor

Sybil Jenaizian died in Ealing Hospital on 15 May after a short illness.

Following a full BBC career as a TV producer’s assistant in Manchester, London and Birmingham, she spent a further 20 years as a visitor in the BBC Volunteer Visiting Scheme.

She was assistant to John Ammonds in TV Light Entertainment in the Sixties and later to John McGonagle at Match of the Day in the Seventies and Eighties.

Whether it was getting all the football team details for MOTD, or arranging an OB table seating plan for the visitor conference dinner, everything had to be ‘cut and dried’ because Sybil was a great organiser.

The Ariel Wine and Beer Society benefitted from her enthusiasm and attention to detail for many years.

When in London, she almost always provided the bread and cheese and could be seen carrying large shopping bags to the trains, where she also looked after the finances.

Each year she would attend the International Wine Fair and chat up many a wine expert to come and provide a tasting at the BBC Club.

Sybil joined the BBC Volunteer Visiting Scheme as one of the Cheshire visitors in February 1995. She lived in Wilmslow and also kept a flat in Ealing and frequently travelled up and down on the Pendolinos, attending all the Scheme meetings and keeping her pensioners in touch with events in London.

She was an exemplary visitor and gave one hundred per cent. The get-together lunches she organised twice a year at the Bird in Hand at Mobberley were always well attended.

Sybil was a regular at St George’s Chapel, Windsor on Sundays and attended most meetings of the Friends of St George’s, for which she helped to raise funds.

Her sudden death after a brief illness was a great shock to all her friends and relations and she will be sorely missed.

Jerry Clegg

Electrical engineer

Len Wilson sadly passed away on 8 April 2016 after a short illness. He was 89 years old when he passed, just short of his 90th birthday in June.

Len was born on 15 June 1926 in Kilburn. He met Joan, his wife-to-be, on VE Day at Paddington Rec, also the home of Essendine Cricket Club, a team founded his father and supported by his family.

Len married Joan in 1947 and shortly after started working for the BBC, first as a stoker and later becoming an electrician until his retirement.

Len had a huge love for sport, particularly cricket and golf; he enjoyed playing both during his retirement, in the UK and abroad.

Len was also a member of the freemasons and joined his masonic lodge in 1974, an important part of his life.

Len had a daughter, Julie, two grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

He was a true family man and loved them all deeply. Len will be sorely missed by all of his family and friends.

Gemma Seckel-Tripp

Magnificent contribution to British musical life

I was most sad to read of the death of Harry Rabinowitz, for he was someone I had known for a great many years.

We first met during 1946 in a Variety Bandbox’ show at Camberwell Palace Theatre. I was doing some sound effects for a comedian and he was a piano soloist making his debut broadcast for the BBC.

Seven years later he became staff conductor of the BBC Revue Orchestra and I was the programme engineer who controlled his debut broadcast with the orchestra on the Light Programme.

Harry was born in Johannesburg on 26 March 1916, studied at Witwatersrand University and came to England in 1946 as a concert pianist, wishing to study conducting at the Guildhall.

He and his family initially settled in Barnes and he frequently worked for the BBC African Service.

In 1950 he conducted 140 performances of a musical play ‘The Golden City’ at the Adelphi Theatre, followed by four ice shows at Earls Court, and in 1953 by ‘Penny Arcade’ at Her Majesty’s Theatre.

He was appointed conductor of the BBC Revue Orchestra in 1953, later moving on to BBC TV in 1969 and then London Weekend TV from 1968 to 1977, at which time he was awarded the MBE.


He was a prolific composer with over 1,000 works to his credit including many TV themes including I, Claudius and Rally, Ace of Spies.

This remarkable man always kept himself fit and was scrupulous about his diet. I recall him warming me of the dangers of the additive MSG back in the 1950s.

At the age of 99 he appeared as the castaway on Desert Island Discs and it seemed he would go on for ever, but sadly he died at his home in France on 22 June at the age of 100.

RIP Harry, with happy memories of your magnificent contribution to British musical life.

Brian Willey

Secretary who achieved nationwide notoriety

It was typical encouragement from my sister Eva Fullom that persuaded me to try for work in the BBC. ‘You might find it enjoyable,’ she said.

Thanks to her I found a challenging job for the rest of my working life.

In 1952 she herself had joined the BBC, where she enveloped Finance Department with her ready wit. When she moved to the Central Medical Unit, her cheerful disposition, compassion and tact made her ideal for handling the anxieties and a wide range of complex enquiries from patients.

By then I had transferred to the National History Unit in Bristol and I remember she telephoned me to ask ‘Dr Mumhead wants to know why so many people are coming from Bristol to see him.’ An outbreak of depression seemed the most likely cause.

When CMU was restructured Eva transferred to ‘Special Duties,’ a unit which sounded like something out of a John Le Carre novel. One of Eva’s roles was to liaise with government security departments regarding actions to be taken in the event of a war. It also vetted BBC staff and kept secret files on those who posed a possible security risk.

This unit had been in operation since 1933 and was exposed by The Observer in 1985, causing uproar. A cameraman sneaked into BH London and TV News showed his film of the door to the office where Eva worked. On the door the BBC had obligingly listed the names of its staff!

Eva had achieved nationwide notoriety!

Eva was born in 1926, the second eldest of seven children. Through the troubled 1930s and World War 2 she was educated at Ware Grammar School for girls.

She was a rebel and often played truant, despite which Eva had achieved nationwide notoriety!
From cookery to killing

Harry Dunn, who spent part of his BBC working life travelling on promotional tours with the likes of Delia Smith, Keith Floyd and Ken Hom, has published his second crime fiction thriller, Forever Evil.

What made you decide to write a crime thriller?
I'd always wanted to write a novel and crime fiction was my first choice of genre. During my BBC travels I spent a lot of time in hotels and I began writing my first novel, Smile of the Viper, all those years ago.

On retiring I brought out the manuscript, dusted it down and decided to finish it by aiming to write 1,500 words per day. Over the years I usually read thrillers featuring private investigators and as a result of this, Jack Barclay was born. He’s hard on the outside but caring and vulnerable underneath.

Getting published is not for the faint hearted but I got there in the end.

Tell us about your book.
London private investigator Jack Barclay is hired by Phillip Jordan to find his missing son Alex, who has recently been released from prison. Alex has been recruited by Jaymar – an international gang of hit men – and Jack finds himself embroiled in the murky world of vengeance, murder and erotic photography as he trawls the underbelly of London to find him. Alex’s father has his own agenda for wanting his son found quickly and as he puts pressure on Jack to find him, Jaymar attack Jack’s girlfriend. As the mob turn up the heat, Jack realises it is only a matter of time before the brutal trail of murder and violence reaches his own door.

When did you join the BBC and what was your first job with Auntie?
I joined the BBC in 1967 at their Edgebaston offices. This was before Pebble Mill was built. My first position was entitled Publications Assistant and my salary was £1,200 per annum with a Ford Escort (BBC green) thrown in. Radio Times was still king of the UK magazine trade but the book side of the business was beginning to stir.

How did you get into promotional tours with the early TV chefs?
In the early Seventies it became clear there was a huge untapped market for books based on popular BBC programmes, and the TV chefs were becoming hot property, with hardback book sales booming.

I had been moved to Leeds (via Newcastle) by this time and I was always pleased to meet celebrities as they travelled north to promote their books. Keith Floyd used to call me ‘my man in the north’ and Delia was always a delight to travel with.

What was the best thing about your 23 years at the BBC?
It was an exciting time to be involved in the early days of BBC Books and soon we were dominating the UK book sales charts. I also had responsibility for regional sales of Radio Times and it was the biggest seller of any UK weekly magazine in its day. It remained extremely successful almost 80 years after it was launched.

What was the most challenging experience?
Christmas, always Christmas! Meeting the huge demand for the legendary Radio Times Christmas Number plus fulfilling the thousands of orders for BBC Books as Christmas presents was daunting but we usually made it.

As we booked into hotels I got used to being shown to the best table in the house. That never seemed to happen when I was on my own! Our days were spent touring TV studios, local radio stations and bookshops. Long days and but usually great fun.

Post your entry to Prospero by Friday 26 August 2016. Or, you can email your entry to prospero@bbc.co.uk with ‘caption competition 4’ in the subject line. Please include your BBC pension number. Good luck! Picture shows Annette Mills and Muffin the Mule.

CAPTION competition

Albert Barber was the winner of our £10 caption competition voucher, with this entry: ‘Well Percy, I suppose with some sticky back plastic I can make them look like flowers.’

Audrey Page came a close second with: ‘Looks like Bill and Ben must have really upset Little Weed this time!’

Winner will receive an £10 voucher. All entries and vouchers must be claimed by Friday 30 September 2016.

Classifieds

VENICE

Venice, Giudecca.
Beautiful apartment in quiet, private courtyard, sleeps 5, fully equipped. Experience the real Venice.
Tel: 01260 227262
Email: maggieharwood1@btinternet.com

West Dorset.
Comfortably furnished three-bedroom cottage with gardens in quiet village close to Beaminster and Lyme Bay coast.
Tel: 01450 564 264

Monenca.
Detached villa sleeps 2-7. Private pool. Air conditioned. Close amenities. For brochure/prices phone 01621 741810, or visit: www.morencaholidayvilla.co.uk

Brittany.
One-bedroom flat in charming village of Jugon-les-Lacs. Perfect base for exploring Cotes D’Armor. Tel: 01420 564 264

Dordogne.
Farmhouse and converted barn in peaceful hilltop village, private garden, outstanding views. Sleeps 2/4. Fully equipped. From £300 per week.
Email: Clare.c3@btinternet.com

Prospero Classifieds, BBC Pension and Benefits Centre, Broadcasting House, Cardiff CF1 1HQ.
Please enclose a cheque made payable to: BBC Central Directorate.
Rate: £6 for 20 words. In a covering letter please include your pension number.

Ex-BBC monthly gathering

I’d like to remind ex-staff that on the first Tuesday of every month, a group of us meet for lunch at Miller and Carter, Bury Street, Ruislip HA4 7TH. We meet in the bar at the back about 12 noon and order around 12.30-12.40.

The nearest underground is Ruislip (Piccadilly/Metropolitan) and bus H13 from outside the station (TOWARDS RUISLIP LIDO) will drop you near Miller and Carter. Look for Ladygate Lane on your left; unfortunately the nearest stop is about a hundred yards or so past Miller and Carter, which is about a quarter of a mile beyond Ladygate Lane on the opposite side of the road. Contact Neville Bathers on 020 8992 9137 or mobile 07773 970431.

Reunions

Design & Scenic Services Annual Lunch

The annual lunch will take place on Friday 21 October 2016 at 12 noon. The venue is Ealing Golf Club’s Function Room (Periphare). For booking forms and information on hotels and transport, call Matt on 01323 740071 or email matt.m.conway@btinternet.com

This is your second novel. Are there any more in development?
I’m in the process of writing the third Jack Barclay thriller. I know the beginning and I know what happens to Jack in the end. It’s just how best to get there in a way which will engage the reader. I hope the first draft will be finished early in 2017.

Forever Evil is available in paperback from all good bookshops and is available online from Amazon as an ebook including Kindle (£1.99).

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