

No.123 Autumn 2017

ARTS QUARTERLY

Since 1985

Association of Reunited Thames Staff
www.arts-tv.org.uk

Rhône River cruise
The Future of the AQ Quarterly
Proposed future events
Ecstasy update
The ARTS archive

Meltdown
Inside
Life
In memoriam
Post bag



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ARTS Quarterly is published four times a year.

ARTS welcomes articles, letters and photos for publication in *ARTS Quarterly*. Material sent by email (editor@arts-tv.org.uk) is preferred, but written items and photographs can be sent to the Editor at the address shown. Photos will be credited where their authors' names are advised to us.

Normal deadlines for submission of contributions are:

For the Winter edition: 10 November

For the Spring edition: 10 February

For the Summer edition: 10 May

For the Autumn edition: 10 August

Views expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the Editor or the Association.

We need to reserve the right to edit all contributions for the sake of clarity or brevity.

Logo design: the ARTS script device was created by the late John Stamp. Alan Cross created the triangular design behind the script.



The ARTS website (arts-tv.org.uk) provides additional information about the Association, as well as publishing many more photos than is possible in *ARTS Quarterly*. Members should also check the web site for late breaking news about forthcoming ARTS events.



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Membership Fees/Donations



Thank you to all our members who have renewed their membership and to the many who have made generous donations. There are however several members who, to date, have not renewed. We would be very grateful if payment could be made ASAP. Unfortunately, we can only continue to send out the ARTS Quarterly magazine to our paid-up members. There are three methods by which payment can be made:
by cheque made payable to ARTS and sent to me
Bob Taylor, ARTS Membership

by Bank Transfer to

Barclays Bank,

Account name: **ARTS** - Association of Reunited Thames Staff

Please include your name in the reference, so that we can identify your payment

by standing order to the ARTS account above.

Should you have any membership queries I can be contacted at the address above or by email.

membership@arts-tv.org.uk

Bob Taylor: membership secretary

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WHAT'S WHEN?

Saturday 14 October 2017

Next Northern Noggin, Natter 'n' Nibble Night

These social events, held every 6 months at The Green Man, 383, Euston Road, London, NW1 3AU from 18.00 only require an Attendance Fee of £4 per person (to go towards the Room Hire and buffet food supplied)
Organiser: Sheila Hawksworth.

See Proposed Future ARTS Events on page 12!

XTCC (eX Thames Computer Club) Meetings

These are normally held every 2-3 months at the homes of various XTCC members living in the Twickenham, Redhill, Shepperton, Fleet, or Sunbury areas.

Attendees pay a £5 Attendance Fee which goes towards the normally extensive food, soft drinks/beverages provided, however, one can take along wine, beer, etc. if you prefer. The evenings (19.30 onwards) are extremely socially based, but any computer problems can be discussed and, hopefully, sorted! Any ARTS member is welcome to attend and the next meetings are:

Thursday 3 Oct 2017

At John Rosewornes's,

Friday 24 November 2017

At Bill Rawcliffe's,

Further details about all XTCC meetings can be obtained from Bill Rawcliffe (See separate article on page 13).

Thames TV Big Band

The next 'performance night' is at:

Constitutional Club,
5, Stanley Road,
Teddington,
Greater London,
TW11 8TP.

Monday 25 September 2017

As usual it commences at 20.15

(But arrive around 19.45 for best seats!)

Drinks at Club Bar prices and a Raffle.

Entry cost for Club Guests is just £2.

Cover picture: Emerging from an 11m deep lock on the River Rhône © Alan Cross
(See article and more pictures on pages 6-10 Ed.)

ED-LINE NEWS!



I am sure that it will be a very hard act to follow the example of Bill Rawcliffe's editorial skills for the ARTS magazine. Bill was editor for the last 6 or so years and has a wealth of experience in drawing together articles and applying DTP techniques to produce the high-quality product that we have all become accustomed to.

As your new ARTS Magazine Editor, I will try to make life easy for myself by keeping the format and style of the magazine as close to the "legacy" that Bill has established. If anything, it is a case of "if it is not broken then don't try to fix it".

I am personally indebted to Bill for providing me with some invaluable training and advice in the use of Serif PagePlus X9 program which is used to produce the magazine for publication. Bill has also very helpfully documented the template used in the page layout and design. I have always liked Serif software products and use PhotoPlus for photo editing however I have never

had the need to get to grips with the DTP program PagePlus until now.

We were all extremely fortunate to work for Thames Television. I personally worked in the engineering department and had a fabulous career installing new equipment in the studios and post production facilities. We were very lucky to work for such a successful company that believed in investing in talented people, the finest equipment to make magnificent programmes. The Programme content that Thames was responsible for producing was arguably second to none. Looking back, it is a case that "Content is King".

That is of course the case with the ARTS magazine too, as we look to the future. In short, we need to have articles and features as these are the life blood of the publication. The ARTS archive (see article on Page 14) of In-house broadsheets will provide an opportunity to look back at what was happening at certain points in time in the past. Hopefully this will encourage contributions from members on the topics mentioned. Personal news is also of interest as many people in their retirement embark on new adventures and life style changes. It is always interesting to find out what one's former colleagues are doing now. I would like to thank John Oliver for his interesting life story. Let's hear more like this as well as Thames related reminiscences. If you have any ideas for articles then please feel free to submit them to editor@arts-tv.org.uk

Thank you.

Brian Croney

WEB WATCH



Magazines

For the password-protected magazine archive on our web site you will need to enter a username of _____ and also a password of _____ in the panel that comes up on the screen.



This QR (Quick Response) code will take your 'smartphone' and most 'tablet computers', direct to the ARTS website if you use its camera to 'see' it.

Video/Audio

For the password-protected video material on our web site you will need to enter a username of _____ and a password _____ in the panel that comes up on the screen.

Acting Chairman's Report

I am not sure how long I have been a member of ARTS, and did not get particularly involved, but enjoyed getting AQ and keeping in touch. Two years ago, I heard that there was some doubt about it continuing, so I attended the AGM. I was very pleased that the committee decided to continue for another year and then attended the following AGM and the next committee meeting where I agreed to be acting chair. I worked at our Euston studios, initially for the building services contractor whilst it was being built. I was there when Thames went on the air on the 30th July 1968 and was present in Master Control for our last broadcasts on December 31st 1992. I joined Thames in a contract position in 1973 and worked in Engineering based at Teddington but alternating between both sites. Later I was mostly based at Euston finally getting a permanent job in 1984. I moved over to Pearson Television when I managed the refurbishment of our Stephen Street building including the outline design of the mechanical and electrical services, then moving seamlessly to Fremantle Media when RTL took over and finally to Ascent Media until I retired with my Thames pension. I am very pleased that I am now acting chairman and thank the committee for their support.

I am very grateful to the members of the previous committee continuing to support ARTS during the year and for their help in handing over to the new committee. For Alan Herbert for organising the Provence Cruise and of course Hazel Earle, Judi

McCormack, Peter Turl and David London for their continuing support. I also thank Alan Cross for offering to continue maintaining the ARTS website as a helper. With this the committee is almost up to full strength.

I would like to thank Bill Rawcliffe for producing the last AQ and for his help to Brian Croney in taking on the role of editor. It is a difficult task to fill the pages with a tight deadline and I wish him well.

Committee member and events organiser, Mike Westlake has been unwell recently and has not been able to attend our meetings. We all wish him a speedy recovery.

We have some exciting events planned for the rest of this year and beyond. The first is a lunch at Cole Court on the 21st September, the flyer is with this issue. This is quite short notice, due to the committee change, so you will need to book quickly.

Following that we have a visit to Mail Rail, formerly the Post Office railway and now to be called the Postal museum. It was opened in 1927 and ceased operations in 2003. I can highly recommend this trip as I visited it whilst it was still operational.

We then have a trip to Fuller's brewery, in Chiswick, planned for November.

We delayed Membership renewals, due to the committee change. At the time of writing this, there are 78 Members who have not renewed and are reminded that events are only available to paid up Members.



Acting Chair
Peter Horton



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AQ Editor
Brian Croney



Treasurer
Mick Davidson



Membership
Secretary
Bob Taylor



Events Organiser
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Webmaster
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Mike Westlake



Natter'n
Nibble
Organiser
Sheila Hawksworth



Events
Assistant
David London



Events
Assistant
Judi McCormack



Web Assistant
Alan Cross



AQ Assistant
Bill Rawcliffe

ARTS Rhône River Cruise Reports

Allez France.

An all inclusive river trip, that's just what the doctor ordered for us, Kathy & Mike. From Premier Inn to rest and recuperation and relaxation. On the stroll to the airport we found a trolley and Kathy spied a walking stick protruding from a hedge (she who just never picks up things by the wayside). We arrive at the airport and got quite a shock to see our plane had propellers, as the last time I flew with them was 1958 all since then have been jet. We did locate the owner of the walking stick so then it was up, up, and away to Lyon and it was hot.



The ARTS group flying from Southampton to Lyon featuring Ruth and Bob Taylor

The half marathon to the coach was testing, but when we arrived and looked at the boat wow! What a boat - longer than a football pitch, this was something else.



13 June: Boarding MS Camargue in Lyon

The crew took our luggage and showed us to our resting place, so comfortable. Then the dining room, lounge, dance floor, library, and the haven, namely the bar.



13 June: On board - Let the fun begin!

The engine starts and off we go down the Rhône. We settle down, meet the captain, have a drink and dinner, which set the tone for the week. Very good food for every meal, plenty of liquid refreshment on tap, life is good. I stayed awake most of the night looking at the floodlit bridges. The crew multitasked, porters, cleaners, waiters, and entertainers and ARTS were good entertainers as well. We are familiar with the locks at Teddington going up and down, but the ones on the Rhone were akin to going down a coal mine. As we had opted out the trips, that's for someone else to tell. We did get off at Avignon - remember at school 'Sur le Pont d'Avignon', not just a song but a real place. Wait a minute. It does not cross the river as the first one only lasted 40 years before it burned down. The replacement had several arches which had the habit of collapsing when the river flooded so they gave up and considered it a landmark of the city in 1995. Now posers stand on the river bank and stretch out their arms and if they get it right they fill the gap - a human link between bridge and river bank.

ARTS were not the only people aboard. Others were retired employees at Perrier who certainly did not come to drink the water. They played cards for hours although they did not indulge in Pétanque or Boules - they seemed to have left these at home. Although we were foreigners and voted Brexit there was very good camaraderie. Some of our party could speak French - one lady was exceptionally good. Well she would be because she was French. Other activities were keep fit (pass) and quizzes (pass) as I am hopeless at them all. 3 were very good 1/ Caricatures, 2/ Baby Stars and 3/ Cine. Ruth Taylor won this but there was some rumour

ARTS Rhône River Cruise Reports - continued

she had help - but don't believe rumours. We celebrated the victory on The Gala Night, the DJ played 'We are the champions' while we paraded our champion around the dance floor to our changed the lyrics 'She is the champion'. Well done Ruth. I had the opportunity to randomly ask folks *What do think of the trip?* and this is the feedback: *so different from a sea cruise I was on, lots to see, so relaxing, fantastic, very enjoyable, fabulous and my wife ditto. Finally, really brilliant - crew very friendly and it shows through - and the bar particularly good.*

To sum up: 4 day bonanza, superb food, wine and spirits, rest and recuperation. It was as if we were part of the idle rich cruising down the river, soaking up the ambiance with friends and colleagues eating, drinking, chatting, laughing, and reminiscing that we were part of the golden age of commercial television, and still are the golden age of ARTS warts and all, who continue to share and cherish these times together. And to Alan Herbert 'you done good'. A big thank you from all of us fellow sailors. The alcohol tasting was a huge success.

Mike Davidson

Tour of the Camargue by Landrover

The plan had been to disembark at Arles for a tour of the Camargue by Landrover. Slow progress through the locks of the Rhône, however, meant a change of plan. We disembarked further upstream, at Avignon, and started our tour from there.

Eileen and I were the only ARTS people on this excursion - indeed we were the only English-speaking people too - so our young guide/driver had to explain everything in two languages!

On the way to the Camargue area, he explained how the cowboys used the horses of the Camargue to control the black long-horned bulls. I say cow-boys, but the



ones we saw on horseback were mostly cow-girls! The Camargue bulls are bred for bull-fighting, an ancient tradition in this area. But in the Camargue the bulls are not killed - the goal of the matador is to 'simply' pluck a ribbon from between the bull's horns!

The Camargue is a delightfully unspoilt area, and we were able to go well-and-truly 'off road', down virtually impassable country tracks and into fields. There we saw the white horses and the black bulls happily grazing together. Dashing across the front of



the Landrover we caught sight of a coypu, while in the trees around the field the storks were flying in and out of their nests in the high branches.

While there, we are able to enjoy a delightful stop at a vineyard (Mas du Notaire). Several different wines were offered, and, as they were all quite different, we had to try them all, especially to help wash down the



'bull and pork' sausage and a very sweet sponge cake! All in all, a delightful excursion into a rather special part of France. On the way back we were able to make a brief visit to Aigues-Mortes - an impressive medieval walled town - before rejoining the MS Camargue in Arles for the remainder of our cruise.

Alan Cross

ARTS Rhône River Cruise Reports - continued

Excursion into the Ardèche

This was a scenic coach tour that started when we disembarked from MS Camargue at Châteauneuf-du-Pape. After an hour's drive (with a brief stop en-route to admire fields of lavender), we arrived at the village of Vallon-Pont-d-Arc and then continued to the nearby Pont d'Arc itself - the natural 30-metre high rock arch that spans the Ardèche river. At low water, small sandy 'beaches' are revealed, an absolute magnet for families



on holiday in the summer (in the winter, we were told, the river can be an absolute torrent, and beaches quite submerged!).

The Ardèche canyon is a visually stunning area, with steep rock faces descending to the winding Ardèche river below. On the way back to the 'mother ship' (MS Camargue!) we stopped for a while at La Grotte de la Madeleine, an historic cave high above the river, with amazing views in all directions.

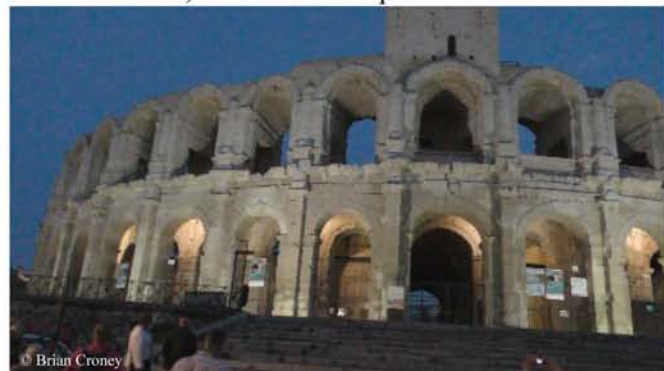


Alan Cross

Afternoon visit to the Roman Amphitheatre in Arles (Arène d'Arles)

Having heard how beautiful Arles is and how much there is to see, we decided to spend the afternoon walking round the centre and visiting the two-tiered Roman amphitheatre as well as going on the evening guided tour.

Built in 90 AD, the Roman Amphitheatre in the middle



of Arles is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and held up to 20,000 spectators who came to see chariot races and hand-to-hand battles between slaves as well as humans against animals. It has undergone substantial restoration work and is in amazingly good condition and is still in use to the present day for bullfighting during the local fetes as well as plays and concerts in summer.

The structure feels and is enormous - it took us ages just to walk around the perimeter as we looked for the main entrance (which we later discovered was just behind where we started our walk!). To give you an idea of its size, it is 446 ft long and 358 ft wide and has 120 arches around the outside and was clearly built to a similar design to the Colosseum in Rome.

When the Roman Empire fell in the 5th century AD, the amphitheatre became a shelter for the local residents and was transformed into a fortress with four towers which encircled more than 200 houses, thereby becoming a real town, with a public square built in the centre of the arena, churches and shops. However, all evidence of the town was cleared away in the late 18th century so that the amphitheatre could return to its original form and use.

After walking round the rest of the town centre, we felt that we needed to cool down as it was so hot (about 36 degrees C) and so we decided to take advantage of one of the local bars overlooking the amphitheatre, mainly because it offered the advantage of a refreshing fine mist descending from above our heads which was most welcome after all the walking and climbing up stairs to get views from the top of the amphitheatre. Along with Inès White and her friend Mollie, we spent a good hour in the shade enjoying the view (well, actually having a long chat and a cold lager too!).

ARTS Rhône River Cruise Reports - continued

Guided evening walking tour of Arles – following in the steps of Vincent Van Gogh

On the recommendation of friends who had spent 5 days in Arles (compared to our few hours), we decided to go on the guided evening walking tour of Arles in order to learn more about the history and past inhabitants of Arles, the most famous of whom is probably Vincent Van Gogh who spent a considerable length of time in Arles with his friend and fellow artist, Paul Gauguin.

Setting off after supper, the walking tour took us around the centre of Arles, with the guide pointing out local buildings of interest (including the amphitheatre again of course – but this time we learnt so much more about it) as well as boards which showed reproductions of some of Van Gogh's paintings of actual places as they were then.

The first painting we saw was just in front of where the boat was moored and was 'Starry Night Over the Rhône', probably one of his most famous works which was immortalised in song in Don McLean's haunting 70's hit, 'Vincent' – 'Starry starry night, paint your palette blue and grey.....' As there was a clear sky with lots of stars that night, it was quite magical to look at a copy of Van Gogh's masterpiece in situ – and see a similar view that night over the Rhône.

We also saw other paintings which made a similar impression including 'Terrace de café le soir'



It was amazing how little the square and café had changed over the years. Our guide was really knowledgeable and also entertaining, giving us tidbits of 'gossip' as well as historical information. For example, he explained that the main reason Van Gogh and Gauguin used so much yellow in their paintings was that a local paint merchant at the time had ordered too much yellow paint and so had been obliged to reduce its price greatly to reduce his stocks – as Van Gogh and Gauguin were impoverished artists, they took advantage of the bargain price and bought quantities of the yellow paint which they then had to use in their paintings! However, he also pointed out that the gas

light used in the evening at the time also gave out a very yellow light. It did make me wonder if red had been the cheapest paint at the time, would we have had all of Van Gogh's paintings of sunflowers!!!

Whilst most of the main town has not changed much over the centuries with beautiful buildings wherever you looked, some quarters near to the river were damaged due to Allied bombing in 1944 (they were targeting the bridges) and so the hotel where Van Gogh stayed has gone. However, this does not affect the overall beauty of the town which is well worth a further visit.

Excursion to the Pont du Gard



Having heard about the 'Pont du Gard' from French friends, we took the morning trip to this ancient Roman aqueduct and were not disappointed. It definitely has the WOW factor. A UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Pont du Gard is the highest Roman aqueduct in the world and one of the best preserved. It was added to UNESCO's list of World Heritage Sites in 1985 because of its historical importance.

The aqueduct bridge is 31 miles long and was built in the first century AD to carry water from a spring at Uzès to the Roman colony of Nîmes. The bridge has three tiers of arches, stands 160 ft high, and descends a mere 1 inch over its length – a gradient of only 1 in 18,241! Surely modern day civil engineers would be proud of such accuracy. After the collapse of the Roman Empire, the aqueduct fell into disuse but the Pont du Gard remained largely intact, due to its secondary function as a toll bridge. It is now purely a tourist attraction which attests to the skills of Roman engineers and their construction teams (who were mainly soldiers, not slaves).

A very enjoyable excursion although we would have liked to spend more time in the Visitors' Centre where there were excellent audio-visual presentations and models explaining how the aqueduct had been built (which unfortunately we had to rush through to get back to the boat on time).

Jan Cronney

ARTS Rhône River Cruise Reports - continued

Excursion to the Vercors region

On our route back to Lyon, we passed near to the Vercors region and so left the boat and went by coach from La Voulte towards Die. Our first stop was at the cellars of Die Jalliance where we sampled a variety of Provençal rosé wines. Whilst pleasing to the palate as a pre-meal drink in hot weather, they were pretty light-weight in our opinion considering the price (some as much as 60 euros a bottle in their shop).

We then continued our journey for a panoramic view of the stunning Rousset Pass, situated in the heart of Vercors, and stopped at the best viewing points before going towards Vassieux-en-Vercors. This dramatically beautiful upland plateau was the scene of an incredibly brave, but tragically failed, attempt by the French Resistance in WW2 to establish a centre from which they could organise their activities. The Resistance built a grass runway so that the Allies could drop supplies to help them fight the Germans but before they could land, the Germans took advantage of the runway and arrived by glider (see photo) and occupied the village. We spent some time in the museum which was fascinating although pretty gruesome at times, sparing no details of the brutal way in which the locals as well as the Resistance were treated. Many of the villagers were tortured before being killed even though they were non-combatants as a warning to others not to resist.



The coach then continued onto Pont-en-Royans where we saw the famous suspended houses clinging to the sides of the valley.

Due to a substantial traffic jam just before we re-joined the boat at Tournon, we took a detour via the next river bridge south and so passed many world famous vineyards like Paul Jaboulet where one of my favourite red wines, Crozes-Hermitage, is produced. As it is pretty expensive and so probably only for special occasions, we took advantage of Jan's birthday the following week when we were back in France to try a bottle – and it was amazing!

Brian Cronney

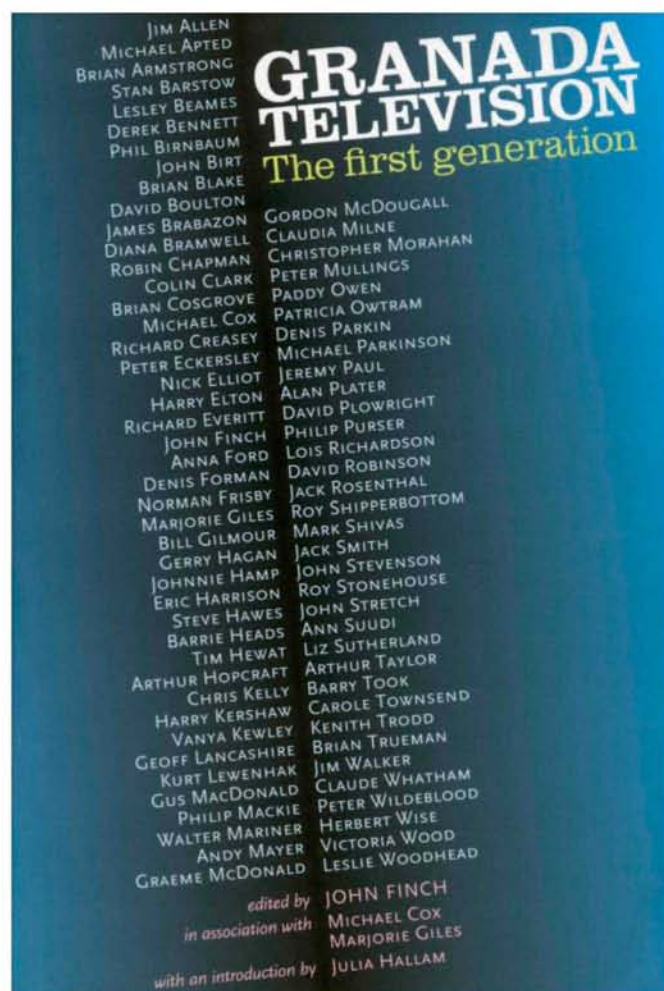


© MS Camargue Photographer

The Future of the ARTS Magazine - It Needs You - Will You Help?

In discussions with various members of ARTS the most important part of the organisation is seen as the magazine that brings us all together wherever we may be in the world. It is the camaraderie that we all had at ABC/Redifusion/Thames that still binds us together and hearing about what experiences we had when we were working together. So I would like to propose an idea to keep us together and the magazine interesting.

In 2003, the book *Granada Television, The First Generation* was published.



I was given a copy by Keith Fowler, Controller of Engineering of Granada Television and found that once I started reading it I could not put it down! (The experience was rather like reading the book *Armchair Theatre: The Lost Years* by Leonard White!) Why? Because the book was the reminiscences of a 100 people who had worked for Granada, from Production Trainees to Captains of Industry and one could sense the great spirit that came from working for one of the 15 ITV Programme Companies. People's contributions were from a paragraph to several pages!

So under the banner of ARTS, retired ABC/Redifusion/Thames staff are invited to put their pens to paper and write about their working life or an event that happened during their time at the Companies. They can be funny, serious or humdrum reminiscences. ARTS will then publish them in the magazine and then as the stories come in they will be collated, like the Granada book, and then hopefully published in book form.

Now, I know that many of you contributed to the MOLA (Museum of London Archaeology) study where people recorded their reminiscences of working for ABC/Redifusion/Thames and which would have made this idea very easy to carry out. However, I have tried to obtain access to the transcripts of these recordings but this seems to be an uphill struggle, I may get the names of those who contributed but not the transcripts! In addition, I know of people who were contacted and agreed to contribute but in the end were not interviewed. If you happened to contribute to the MOLA project and kept a copy of your contribution would you please consider allowing the magazine to have access to it for publication? It would certainly help get the project *off the ground!*

So if any of you would like to write a piece for the magazine which hopefully, will end up in a book, please get in touch with me. It does not matter where you worked, Scenery Construction, Film Department, Outside Broadcasts, Production Assistants, Maintenance, etc, in fact, in any post at ABC/Redifusion/Thames you must have some interesting reminiscences of your time working there.

To start the project off, two friends have agreed to write pieces for the magazine. Paul Kafno, who was a Senior Producer in the Thames Music and Theatre Department, will write one. His productions included Kenneth Branagh's *Twelfth Night* and the first all-digital production *Stravaganza dei Medici* that won the Prix Italia. He was asked by Richard Dunn to produce and direct *Night Music*, the first real HDTV programme made in the UK (up to its production all HDTV material had been clips of *Steam Engines* and *Changing of The Guard at Buckingham Palace*). Then Paul's company HD Thames later pioneered HDTV at the *Lillehammer Winter Olympics* and *World Ice Skating Championships* as well as shows like *The Les Misérables Anniversary Concert* and *The Reduced Shakespeare* and pioneered the electronic cinema that today brings live theatre shows to cinemas.

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The Future of the ARTS Magazine - Continued

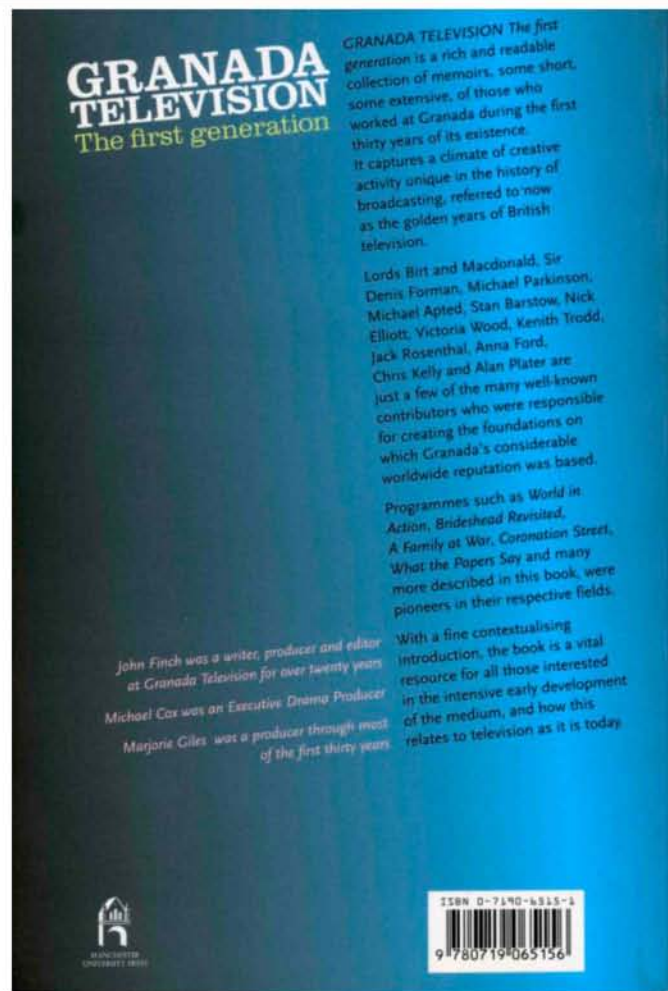
Ted Childs, who was a trainee director at ABC in 1962, will write the other. Ted then went on to produce and direct factual programmes and documentary films including *This Week*. He directed two episodes of *The World at War*, produced *Special Branch*, *The Sweeney* and the *Quatermass* series for Euston Films (owned by Thames TV). Then, in 1984, he was appointed Controller of Drama at Central Television and Managing Director of Central Films. In this dual role he was executive producer of a whole range of films and series for ITV. These included *Inspector Morse*, *Soldier Soldier*, *Peak Practice*, *Sharpe*, *Brother Cadfael*, *Kavanagh QC* and *Lewis* amongst many other dramas!

These first two articles will hopefully get you all interested in the idea and ready to contribute to recording those wonderful years for your colleagues!

If you wish to discuss contributing please contact me, Norman Green - ngreen4093@aol.com or 0208 892 8151. If you wish to make an audio recording for transcription just let me know.

If you would like to read the Granada book, you can get it from the public library or buy it from your local bookshop or on Amazon. It is published by Manchester University Press and its ISBN Nos. are: 0-7190-6514-3 (Hardback) or 0-7190-6515-1 (Paperback).

Norman Green



Proposed Future ARTS Events

At the very first ARTS Committee Meeting, containing all of its new members, it became apparent that our Club will be carrying on pretty much as usual during the coming year, so here is a list the events that various members of the Committee are organising and investigating at this time.

Lunch at Cole Court, Twickenham scheduled for 21st September, the last of which was highly acclaimed by attendees (Organiser: Hazel Earle).

The Postal Museum (16th October TBC) - Opened in July 2017, Mail Rail is 15 minutes of immersive underground exploration, and a theatrical surprise or two. Are you ready for the ride? Journey back in time on a specially made train through the original tunnels and station platforms under Mount Pleasant (Organiser: Peter Turl). See vintage photo to the right.

Fullers Brewery Tour - at Chiswick in November, followed by a Pub Lunch (Organiser: Peter Turl).

River trip from Embankment to O2 and then Emirates High wire for lunch in Docklands in Spring 2018 (Organiser: Brian Croney)

Possible Yorkshire holiday in 2018 (Organiser: Alan Herbert).

Following the success of the River Cruise in 2017, ARTS may venture into Portugal for a River Cruise on the Douro in 2018/9 (Organiser: Alan Herbert).



Ecstasy Update

Readers of ARTS Quarterly cannot help but to have seen that regular meetings of XTCC (or Ecstasy as it is known) have continued since the formation of the eX Thames Computer Club around the late 60's - before even the famous BBC 'B' computer was released!

In those early days, its members all helped each other to get to grips with the, then, new technology. However, things have moved on apace since then, and being 'a teckie' is no longer a prerequisite to owning and operating a computer, tablet or smart-phone.

So, nowadays, these gatherings are more social than technical, although anyone with a computer problem can air it, and usually discover its cure - whilst discussing those halcyon days when we worked in TV and its inevitable characters! You don't have to be 'a member' of XTCC to attend any of its meetings as anyone and everyone is welcome, but it is essential to inform the relevant host reasonably well beforehand so that enough food will be available.

The evenings start at 19.30 and the host normally supplies tea, coffee and soft drinks, although most attendees take along a bottle of wine or beer to 'help down' the food, which can vary from a significant cold finger buffet to a fully fledged gourmet 3 course meal, depending on the whim or ability of the host. The attendance fee of £5 goes towards the cost of all that, of course.



© Bill Rawcliffe

Left to right (minus photographer - Bill Rawcliffe): Peter Turl, John Rosewarne, Jamie Acton-Bond (BBQ Chef), Ray Ball, Elsa Acton-Bond (Gourmet Chef - bringing the appetisers, etc.), John Boham-Cook, Jim Sloss, Jean Rawcliffe.

The meeting on May the 25th was at the home of Jamie and Elsa Acton-Bond in South Twickenham, and Elsa is the most amazing cook. At their home, if an XTCC meeting is in the Winter, one experiences the most amazing 3 course meal there, but, on this balmy evening in May, Jamie put on his chef's hat and apron and cooked a highly varied BBQ of rump steak, lamb chops, two types of sausages and sweet corn! Together with an exquisite salad there was enough to feed an army there. Mind you, that was only after having been presented with a colossal array of appetisers, entrées, hors d'oeuvres, etc. (See picture on left below).

Because XTCC meetings occur at the houses of its members who have enough room to accommodate the 8 to 14 people who normally attend them, there is every chance that one of them might be near where you live. For instance the July meeting was at Brian Moray's home at Redhill at which his wife, Prue, supplied her absolutely marvellous Coronation Chicken, Quiches, and salad as well as Fresh Fruit Salad (Strawberries, Raspberries and Bluberries (all home grown) with cream! The twelve attendees there had a great evening - initially out on the patio overlooking the North Downs near Leith Hill, but later eating the spread of food around the magnificent ancient carved oak table in the Dining Room, which was large enough to accommodate us all around it. (See picture on right below).



© Bill Rawcliffe

Left to right (minus photographer - Bill Rawcliffe): John & Carol O'Brien, Jamie Acton-Bond, John Boham-Cook, Jean Rawcliffe, Jim Fergus-Smith, John McAdam, Prue Moray (Chef Extraordinaire), Carole Bernard, Dave McAdam, Brian Moray.

You can see where the next two XTCC gatherings are occurring in the What's When column on page 3, although some of them can be as far West as Fleet in Hampshire. New faces are always welcome, so why not come and join us for the banter, jokes, camaraderie, etc. not forgetting the food!

Bill Rawcliffe

The ARTS archive

For a number of years Alan Cross has been the guardian of the ARTS archive and he inherited the bulk of this from Rob Croser in about 2009. Since then it has no doubt been augmented by other gifts, loans or donations from ARTS members and the wider public. (More about this later.) Alan was keen to relinquish the task of looking after it (perhaps he needed the space) and so I decided that I would take care of it in the interim and try and 'reduce it down' and generally rationalise it.

So, recently, Alan delivered a number of boxes and bags. It was also rather unfortunate that in preparing the items for shipment Alan had a flood in his garage so the cardboard boxes were really no longer fit for purpose!

Now that I have had a chance to look at what is there I have discovered roughly what it consists of:

About a dozen books

Assorted TV industry magazines

Approximately 40 VHS tapes (*I still have a VHS machine but whether it or me are up to the task of viewing this lot is questionable*)

A more or less complete set of Thames 'Inside' broadsheets and Thames Newsletters 1971-1977
'Studio' magazines April 1977 to Winter 1987

A box of memorabilia including pens, badges, matches, booklets and a Telethon Tee shirt

Various Thames TV Review, Annual Reports and financial brochures relating to floatation.

Various 'Fusion' magazines (Associated Redifusion House Magazine)

Various 'ABC TV News' magazines.

Various folders of ARTS committee minutes.

So that's it. It takes time to go through it in detail and it is a case of the deeper one delves the more interesting it gets. The Thames Inside and Studio magazines are undoubtedly a valuable resource for 'spawning' future articles for AQ magazine and an example of this is reproduced alongside this page and below.

There were a couple of stand-out items that caught my eye including a copy of the Thames Management 'Little Black Book' which contains the names, addresses and phone numbers of all the mission critical staff. There is also a copy of the March 1995 RSA Journal in which the text of Richard Dunn's speech 'The 1990 Broadcasting Act: a benefit or disaster?' is set out. That was a fascinating insight to the political situation around the demise of Thames TV (and in fact all ITV companies starting with T in their name but also the IBA itself!)

There can be no guarantees that this archive will be preserved indefinitely and as memories dim and storage space diminish there is a chance it will be lost. It is therefore important that if anyone has loaned items to the ARTS archive that they contact me to identify what is theirs and arrange for their return if required. You have been respectfully warned.

Brian Croney AQ Editor



Meltdown, the new late music show which has brought quite a buzz to Teddington, aims to give bands ideal performance conditions. One priority has been to provide a comprehensive sound system in the studio. To achieve this, an extensive Turbosound rig has been employed with a thirty two channel stage monitor mixer and a further thirty two channels for the "front of house system".

Accomplishing the broadcast mix is the first major task for studio two's Calrec "assignable" console.

Most of its facilities have been deployed including memory recall of all desk settings for each band.

So far the vibes are good. Several bands have said that recording the show felt like doing a normal gig, which is exactly what was intended.

There have been innovations in the camera department also. A camera capable of surviving high sound levels and shooting directly into lamps was required for use on stage. Special dispensation was obtained from the IBA to use ultra light Sony CCD cameras which have produced stunning results.

High spot of the series so far has been a spectacular 65 minute set by Meatloaf. Don't miss it.

Picture show: (L-R) Alan Lester, Peter Ball and Keith Nixon at the Calrec console, Studio 2.



Picture shows: Cameraman Peter Middleton (left) using the Sony CCD lightweight camera.

Did you work on this show?

If so we would love to hear from you. Was it true that the people worked on it for virtually nothing because the studios were so under utilised at the time?

Tell us your story.

INSIDE

• INSIDE • 84 •

INSIDE IS PART OF THE STAFF INFORMATION SERVICE FROM THE PRESS OFFICE

NUMBER 91

WEDNESDAY 25 APRIL 1984

THAMES

QUEEN'S AWARD COMES TO THAMES



Minder — 5th series is currently in production for screening in the Autumn.



George and Mildred — the situation comedy spin-off from *Man About The House* starred Brian Murphy and Yootha Joyce. There were five series.



Rumpole of the Bailey starred Leo McKern as Rumpole. There have been 3 series and a one-off special called *Rumpole's Return*.

Thames Television International has won the Queen's Award for Export Achievement, 1984, it was announced on Easter Saturday.

The Awards, which are announced annually on the Queen's Birthday, reflect particular success in selling overseas, and major television companies, including the BBC, have not hitherto been selected for the honour.

Bryan Cowgill, as Chairman of TTI, acknowledged the pride and pleasure Thames should feel at the news:

"I am delighted at this splendid recognition of our company's success in selling programmes made by Thames for the independent television audience in Britain to 127 countries around the world. In the past ten years of Thames International's existence, a staff of 30 people and the judicious selection of effective agents abroad, have taken our turnover on programme sales from £500,000 to £18 million — a highly satisfactory increase of more than 3,000 per cent over that period.

"This award also carried, in my opinion, a very important tribute to the quality of that British creative talent which is embodied in Thames' pro-grammes, and which has been made welcome through the sales and marketing success of Thames International on television screens around the world. What we have done is help sell Britain through television to many hundreds of millions of people for whom the famous Thames logo is a familiar symbol in living rooms all over the globe.

"The range of those programmes has also proved consistently attractive to a wide variety of audiences in many different languages, stretching as they do from *Rumpole of the Bailey* to *Dangermouse*, from *The World at War* to *Minder*, and from *Benny Hill* to *Botanic Man*. The enterprise of Thames International has also led to the successful and profitable development of what we call format sales — the licensing of shows we have made at Thames to overseas producers who are thus able to make their own idiomatic adaptations through new productions which rely on Thames' original characters and stories. Examples of this include *Man About the House*, recreated in the USA as "Three's Company" and *Keep it in the Family*, recreated as "Too Close for Comfort".

"Everyone concerned with this success story deserves great credit, and in particular I would say that a large portion of that credit is due to Muir Sutherland, who started and developed Thames International; to Mike Phillips, its present Managing Director; and to Philip Jones, our Director of Light Entertainment, whose Thames comedies translated so successfully into the top ratings of American television and became a very significant dollar-earner for Thames International."

**More
News
On page
Two...**



Dangermouse — Cosgrove Hall's cartoon has the 6th and 7th series in production for screening next year. It has recently been sold to the USA.



Benny Hill — Thames has transmitted 48 shows, 14 compilation shows and a feature film called 'Eddie in August'. For America, the shows were re-edited and shown in half-hour segments.



Robin's Nest — another situation comedy spin-off from *Man About The House*, starred Tessa Wyatt, Tony Britton and Richard O'Sullivan.



Reilly — Ace of Spies — this 12 part drama serial starring Sam Neill, is being seen now in the USA.

Life - John Oliver

Having written several articles for ARTS Quarterly, I was pleasantly surprised at the response I received. I do enjoy writing; it has helped me several times in my life to achieve my ambitions. I wrote my first article for our ARTS Mag when Bill Rawcliffe said he was disappointed with the lack of articles for the AQ Mag, so I obliged him with my very first article, 'A Day out in London'.

I've written my memoirs, *'The World of a Latchkey Kid'*, published by Woodfield Publishing Ltd. It's on Amazon, (or through me). I was triggered to write my life story after reluctantly selling my racing yacht in 2010 following a brain haemorrhage in January of that year. It happened in the early hours of a Saturday morning, I don't remember a thing. Beryl got the Para's and ambulance to me in minutes, I'm very pleased to say, otherwise I wouldn't be writing this article. I woke up in hospital on the Monday wondering where I was. I'd been sedated. 'You're in hospital', Beryl informed me, I was looked after very well, (on the NHS), by three consultants. I spent two weeks on one ward undergoing every test under the Sun, then another two weeks on a convalescence ward before they allowed me home. I was impressed how well the consultants and nurses cared for me. I made a complete recovery. The consultants discovered the reason for the Brain haemorrhage; previously I'd gone into hospital for an operation and in my pre-med they said my blood count was so low it was too dangerous to operate, resulting in prescribing me treatment for over two years of high doses of Steroids to restore my Red cell blood levels. The haematologist told me that the side effects of Steroids were considerable, one of which I would put on weight. My weight rocketed from thirteen stone to eighteen stone, dangerously raising my blood pressure which was the factor in creating my brain haemorrhage.



Back home I was in no condition to handle my yacht. It was out of the water for its winter maintenance, I'd just spent £3,000 on improvements.

Coming out of hospital, coping with the maintenance that I had to do was a daunting task. I was at a low ebb; I was offered a reasonable price for my lovely yacht, so I sold it: I now know, never make decisions when you're feeling low. Oh how I bitterly regret selling it. My yacht was my life. I had it for twenty seven years. I was now at a loss what to do. The irony of it is, I'm OK now, wishing I had my yacht.

I was tempted to buy another yacht, but at the ripe old age of eighty six, would it be a white elephant in the room or should I just put my feet up, and make it a pipe dream of the past: My youngest son, Chris, who is a brilliant yachtsman with many successes under his belt, a first class helmsman and skipper, said he would



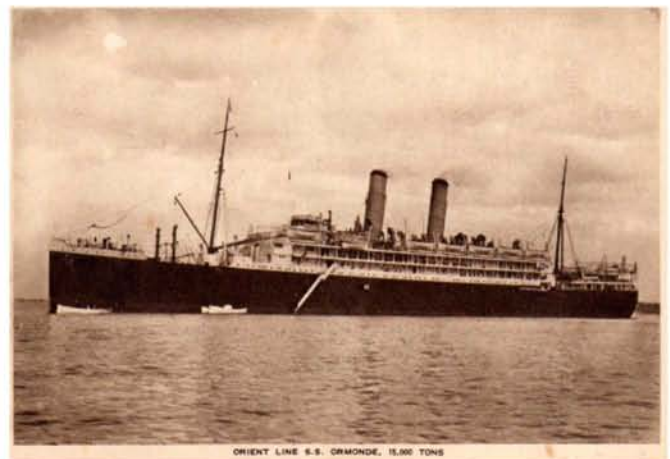
be willing to pull me through the difficulties in owning an offshore/Ocean going yacht. So there's hope for the old-dog yet. I would have no problems with navigation and tactics but helming and skippering a competitive yacht race for several hours requires considerable concentration and not a little stamina, just a bit too much for an old codger. I'm OK for cruising but my days of helming a competitive race are over. I can remember how I used to fight for three punishing rounds in the boxing ring; I can just about do three

Life (continued)

rounds of toast now. I calculated I performed in about fifty fights in my five years of boxing, winning every one, mostly in knock-outs. Also, I always played my trumpet entertaining in the passenger's concerts. I used to be five feet ten inches in height in my bare feet and fighting at ten stones six pounds. (welterweight). I lost over two inches in a lumber spinal operation and two inches in shrinkage, making me four inches shorter. I sat down and wrote my memoirs. I've had a fantastic life. I restricted myself on the type of stories for our ARTS Mag, they had to be written in a book, which I've done. It contains over a hundred photographs. I found writing my life story very therapeutic: In a conversation with my Church of England vicar, when I lived in Ashford Middlesex, he was telling me how he obtained his Master's degree; he looked astonished when I told him that I too had a degree. He asked me, 'What in?' I told him I went to the 'University of Life' and obtained a first with honours. (He got the message). I then gave him another glass of cognac and a cigar. I got on very well with the vicar. He wanted me to be the Church Warden but I declined because it would have interfered with my yacht racing schedules, absolutely true.

It's no secret that I hail from the East End of London. It can be a considerable disadvantage if you have any decent career aspirations. You're behind the proverbial eight ball from the word go. It can appear, to some, like a working class prison, very evident when I had a confrontation with an RAF officer: I'd been called up to do my National Service: Merchant Navy personnel were exempt from National Service but I'd taken a job ashore for only a short while to enable me to spend just a bit more time at home with my girlfriend, I was a twenty year old; I managed to avoid the army by volunteering for the RAF, (it created a suitable delay), which involved three years instead of the National Service two. They sent me down to Cardington Camp in Bedfordshire. I was in charge of eleven young lads. At our interviews the eleven lads were all designated to be Firemen, except me. I was to be sent up North to Yorkshire to the Catterick Army Camp to be a skilled gunner in the RAF Regiment. (I'd volunteered to be a radio mechanic). I stood my ground and refused with a determined argument, which upset him. His explanation was, I had no qualifications; I turned the officer down flat, feeling angry by him labelling me. 'You're dismissed', he said, 'come back at six o'clock for your second interview'. At which, he said, 'You will be an Aerial Rigger in the RAF'. I argued angrily, 'Why should I join the RAF to be an Aerial Rigger for twenty one shillings a week when I'm already earning seven pounds a week doing a similar job'. (I'd been working as a Steel Erector). Without any further

discussion he haughtily dismissed me saying, 'You're dismissed come back at six o'clock tomorrow morning'. Instead I went home and returned to the camp at eleven o'clock the following morning. The officer made no comment that I was late. 'We have decided to honour your request to train to be a Radio Mechanic but you must do five years instead of three'. 'Sorry, I'm not accepting those terms, you've reneged on your promise so I've decided not to join the RAF'. (A few years later in a Radio college to study to be a Radio Electronics Officer in the Merchant Navy, I was top pupil of the college). I thought his head was going to blow off. 'You're dismissed, you'll be in the army within the week'. Thankfully, now being fore warned, I immediately ambled down to Tilbury to the Merchant Navy Pool to get a ship. 'You'll have to sign on for two years on the pool if you want a ship'. I wasn't a member of the Merchant Navy Pool, but never-the-less it was music to my ears and far more preferable to the army. There were two ships in port, the Port Adelaide and the SS Ormonde



ORIENT LINE S.S. ORMONDE, 15,000 TONS

The Ormonde was the oldest ship in the Orient Line fleet and was an emigrant ship which I wanted to avoid like the plague, I requested the 'Port Adelaide'. 'You're going on the Ormonde', he replied with a knowing smile.

I dashed home for my waiter's uniforms etc and said goodbye to mum. 'Aren't you staying the night'? She said. The words of the RAF Officer were ringing in my ears. 'No', I said to mum 'I'll write you a letter'. Dad was working down in Somerset. I received a letter from mum at Port Said, Egypt. She said the army had come for me very early the next morning, but I was on my way to Australia. The definitive story is in my book, especially regarding serving on an emigrant ship.

John Oliver.

Star pupils

What is a vibration?

There are good vibrations and bad vibrations. Good vibrations were discovered in the 1960s

Where was Hadrian's Wall built?

Around Hadrian's garden

The race of people known as Malays come from which country?

Malaria

What is the highest frequency noise that a human can register?

Mariah Carey.



What is a fibula?

A little lie

Explain the phrase 'free press'.

When your mum irons trousers for you.

What was Sir Walter Raleigh famous for?

He is a noted figure in history because he invented cigarettes and started a craze for Bicycles.

What did Mahatma Gandhi and Genghis Khan have in common?

Unusual names

In Memoriam



Stefani Davidson

Production Buyer
ABC and Thames TV, Teddington

Emma Chisholm

Catering Department
Thames TV, Teddington

Dick Bayton

Stagehand
Thames TV, Teddington, Hanworth, Merton

John Russell

Programme Director
Thames TV

Eric Parry

Director of Production
Thames TV, Teddington

Valerie Brayden

Researcher Children's Dept
Thames TV Teddington

Our dear friends and colleagues



Committee Mail Box



Rhône River Cruise Thank you notes

Hi Alan

Great time last week in the 'Camargue' - with excellent company, food and wine!

Thanks for organising the trip.

From Barbara & Tony Mitchell

Dear Alan,

We just want to say a big thank you for organising yet another successful holiday. As we get to know everyone better, particularly the regulars, each holiday becomes more enjoyable. We are now looking forward to a Yorkshire trip!

We were lucky to have great weather as well as great company, however, it's a bit of a shock to come home to weather as hot as the South of France!!

Give our love to Sue and we look forward to seeing you both again soon.

Many, many thanks once again.

Love - George & Lynne Taylor

Dear Alan

Just a note to say how much Monica and I enjoyed our trip to Provence and to thank you for organising it all so efficiently - you must have put an enormous amount of work into making it so trouble free for us!

We both look forward to joining you on another trip - The river Douro in Portugal would be good - but hopefully for more than 4 days next time.

With best wishes

Alan & Monica Afriat

Mouse Matters

Dear Bill,

I'm very glad (and relieved) to hear that things are back to normal and you are keeping one jump ahead of the 'naughties' trying to destroy our ARTS communication network!

Would you like to celebrate by circulating one of my wife Sheryl's success stories in solving our mouse problem without bloodshed? She placed a clear plastic bottle (with a fairly wide top and flat-ish sides rather than rounded) balanced on its side over the edge of a log basket (a plastic crate or similar would do) which we use to collect recyclable cartons, bottles etc. The top half of the bottle rests on the recyclables and the bottom half is thus suspended over the edge at tipping point. In the bottom of the bottle she put broken bits of cheese-flavoured biscuits. The mouse would scabble over the recyclables and enter the plastic bottle and once it had crept in to eat the goodies its weight tilted the bottle over the edge so the bottle landed upright and the mouse was trapped. To stop the bottle toppling over when it landed with the mouse in it, she put a small round wicker basket (the type small plants are presented in) at the point where the bottle toppled so the bottle fell into it and was maintained upright. Tally to date - 4 mice, one per night! All taken away and dumped at the end of our garden where there is a corn field. I have also thought of several DFAs if the idea catches on and needs refining...

With best wishes,

Bob Simmons



Committee Mail Box (continued)

Hi there ALAN HERBERT

I do recall having a conversation with you at the ARTS AGM, following your recent visit to DRAPERS HALL. T'was then that you mentioned to me that you would love to know more of the history & original formation of the City of London GUILDS. I was granted the FREEDOM of the CITY of LONDON many moons ago and am currently a LIVERYMAN of THE HONORABLE COMPANY OF AIR PILOTS and in that capacity I was dining at a LIVERYMAN'S dinner at DRAPERS HALL last week where I recalled our conversation. Would you please accept the enclosed as a GIFT from me and should you require further info. I can lend you a small book on this subject.

Yours Aye,
Liveryman Dr JOHN McADAM

(Editor's note: Extract from a total of 110 shields of Livery companies from Alan's gift)



If you are a cinematographer, editor, production designer or costume designer you should register with Screen Craft Rights now to ensure you receive everything due to you.

www.screencraftrights.org



In July Bill Rawcliffe received an Email from Tim Kerr who had spotted an article in ScreenCraft Rights about possible payments that may be due from the subsequent re broadcasting of programming. Extracts from the Email is reproduced below:

Hi Bill

I hope all is well with you and yours.

In this month's BECTU Magazine there is a full page advert from Screen Craft Rights trying to locate various members of the UK TV and film industry to give them money!

Rarely a bad thing!

Here's some background information.

SCREEN CRAFT RIGHTS was jointly established in 2011 by BECTU (Broadcasting Entertainment Cinematograph and Theatre Union), BSC (British Society of Cinematographers), GBCT (Guild of British Camera Technicians) and GBFTE (Guild of British Film & Television Editors) and with the full support of BFDG (British Film Designers Guild) to ensure rights holders of British productions benefit wherever possible.

In some European countries authors (rights holders) of films and television programmes are entitled to payment when their work is copied from broadcast

channels or the internet, rented or used for educational purposes. The authors of a production (or a specific element of a production) are usually recognised as being the writer, director and composer but in some countries it can also include the cinematographer, the editor and designers – the craft rights holders.

<http://www.screencraftrights.org/>

They have lists of Cinematographers, Editors, Production Designers and Costume Designers on whose behalf they are holding payments and also lists of productions for which they are trying to identify the Cinematographers, Editors, Production Designers and Costume Designers so they can pay them money too! On the name list I found some former TTV colleagues that I knew - Chas Watts, Albert Almond, Gillian Miles, David Ferris – and there maybe others that I didn't! There are certainly one or two names I recognise from after TTV.

The production list covers an incredibly wide range of productions.

Could you forward this information via your vast database of former TV friends and colleagues?

Thanks

Tim Kerr