

The Veteran

ISSUE 171
AUTUMN 2021

The Magazine of
The British Cinema and
Television Veterans



The Majestic Leeds

See page 4

CHANNEL FOUR TELEVISION

PLUS: The Newsletter of the Film & Television Charity





British Cinema and Television Veterans

Founded 1924

An association of men and women
who have given more than 30 years
to the cinema, film or television industries

Officers

President – Nigel Wolland MBE

Vice President – Ted Childs

Honorary Treasurer – Bob Stanesby FCCA

Honorary Independent Examiner – Peter Samengo-Turner

Executive Committee

Linda Ayton

Allen Eyles

Victor Gallucci

Stuart Hall

Richard Huhndorf

Howard Lanning

Spencer MacDonald

Barry Quinton KPES

Sir Sydney Samuelson CBE

Rick Senat

Jacky Simons

Felicity Trew

Mike Vickers

Jim Whittell

Anthony Williams

ex-officio:

Andy Leyshon (*Film Distributors' Association*)

Phil Clapp (*UK Cinema Association*)

Alex Pumfrey (*Film & Television Charity*)

President's Council

Sir Peter Bazalgette

Barbara Broccoli OBE

Stan Fishman CBE

Sir Paul Fox CBE

Lord Grade CBE

David McCall CBE, DL

Lord Puttnam CBE

Dame Esther Rantzen

Sir Sydney Samuelson CBE

Jeremy Thomas CBE

Enquiries concerning all matters of membership including
membership cards, changes of address and notices of
bereavements, and all general enquiries:

Company Secretary

Kathy Darby

British Cinema and Television Veterans

22 Golden Square

London W1F 9AD

Tel: 020 7287 2976

Email: bctv.veterans@btopenworld.com

Website

BCTV.website

www.britishcinemaandtelevisionveterans.org.uk

Issue 171 | AUTUMN 2021 | Contents

- 3 FROM THE PRESIDENT / FROM THE OFFICE / FROM THE EDITOR**
- 4 FROM CINEMA TO TELEVISION: THE MAJESTIC LEEDS**
By Allen Eyles
- 11 CURTAIN UP!** *By Bob Harvey*
- 15 CUTTING IT FINE** *By Alan Jones*
- 18 THE TIRELESS TRAVELLER** *By Allegra Taylor*
- 20 THE STAND IN** *By David Edwards*
- 26 NEWS FROM BRITISH ENTERTAINMENT HISTORY PROJECT** *By Mike Dick*
- 27 THAT WAS THEN** October 1971 and October 1996
- 28 THE PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT**
- 28 LETTERS** *By Brad Ashton, Mike Fox, Sir Sydney Samuelson CBE, Derek Threadgall, Neville Withers, Colin Goudie and Margaret O'Brien*
- 30 NEW MEMBERS**
- 30 IN MEMORIAM**
- 31 THE FILM AND TELEVISION CHARITY NEWSLETTER**

The Film & Television Charity is a separate organisation from The British Cinema and Television Veterans – for contact details, see page 31

The Veteran

Editor: Allen Eyles

13 Tennyson Court, Paddockhall Road,
Haywards Heath, West Sussex RH16 1EZ
Tel: 01444 455 763

Email: bctv.veterans@btopenworld.com

Published quarterly by the British Cinema
and Television Veterans and sent to current
members as a benefit of membership.

Non-members may subscribe to this magazine by sending £20
for four issues (£30 overseas) to The Secretary at the address
shown to the left, remittance payable to 'British Cinema and
Television Veterans'.

Production and Design by Angela Lyons

www.angelalions.com

Printed by Pensord

Tram Road, Pontllanfraith, Blackwood, Gwent NP12 2YA
www.pensord.co.uk



Magazine © 2021 British Cinema and Television Veterans Limited – a company limited by guarantee. Registered in England and Wales under number 7393345. Registered office: 22 Golden Square, London W1F 9AD. The texts of all the articles remain the copyright of their authors and the copyright and other rights in all illustrations are retained by their photographers and sources. Reproduction in whole or part of text or pictorial matter without written permission from the rights holder is strictly prohibited. Opinions expressed in articles are not necessarily shared by the British Cinema and Television Veterans nor by the editor of THE VETERAN magazine. All unsolicited content is submitted at owner's risk and no responsibility can be accepted for any damage or loss.

From the President

TONY PEARCE



Dear Members

Well, the good news is: after its Royal World Premiere at the Royal Albert Hall, **BOND IS BACK** with the release after 18 long months of *No Time To Die*, the 25th of the series, showing at a cinema near you, all 2 hours 43 minutes of it, the longest ever. This will certainly be a much-needed shot

in the arm for our cinemas. If you have not seen it yet, and you get a chance, watch *Spectre* again, as there are some major points that relate to the story in *No Time To Die*.

With restrictions easing in July, I am so pleased we were able to hold the BCTV Annual General Meeting back home in the completely refurbished meeting room at 22 Golden Square. A good turnout enabled us to bring members up to date with our current situation, including my annual President's Report, which appears on page 28.

I really hope that we will soon be able to continue with arranging the much enjoyed visits for our members, and hopefully a further President's lunch to meet many of you in the regions, before I finish my term as President next year (which has certainly been one to remember).

You may have seen on our website and in the press the Reel Stories project, and I was happy to meet some London members and old friends recently on the South Bank who have signed up to take part in the project, which covers an oral history of cinema projectionists in the London area, talking about their time and experiences in the industry over the years – a project that is supported by the BFI and the Heritage Lottery Fund. The interviews will be starting shortly, and I will keep you up to date on how it goes.

Another gentle reminder to any members who have received this copy of the magazine but have not renewed their BCTV membership: please do not leave it any longer, as we need your support. It is very easy, and details are on this page.

In the meantime, take care!

Nigel Wolland
President

From the Office

2021/22 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

In case you have not yet renewed your membership for 2021, the renewal details are as follows:

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual Membership fee = £40.00

For members who are over 80, and for honorary members, **no subscription is required, although donations are welcome**

PAYMENT DETAILS

Cheques / Postal Orders only (no Cash) should be made payable to 'British Cinema and Television Veterans Ltd' and crossed

Online Payments to:

ACCOUNT: British Cinema and Television Veterans Ltd

BARCLAYS BANK - Sort Code 20-70-93, Account No. 13917959

REFERENCE - your membership number, initial and surname please

Whether paying by cheque or online, can you please send a stamped addressed envelope to **22 Golden Square London W1F 9AD** in order to receive your membership card.

IF YOU HAVE PAID BUT NOT RECEIVED YOUR MEMBERSHIP CARD

Due to delays beyond our control, getting membership cards out to members this year has proved even more problematic than last year. If you have paid but not yet received your membership card, please contact us by email or else leave a message on the office telephone number and we will get back to you as soon as we can:

Email: bctv.veterans@btopenworld.com
Tel: 020 7287 2976

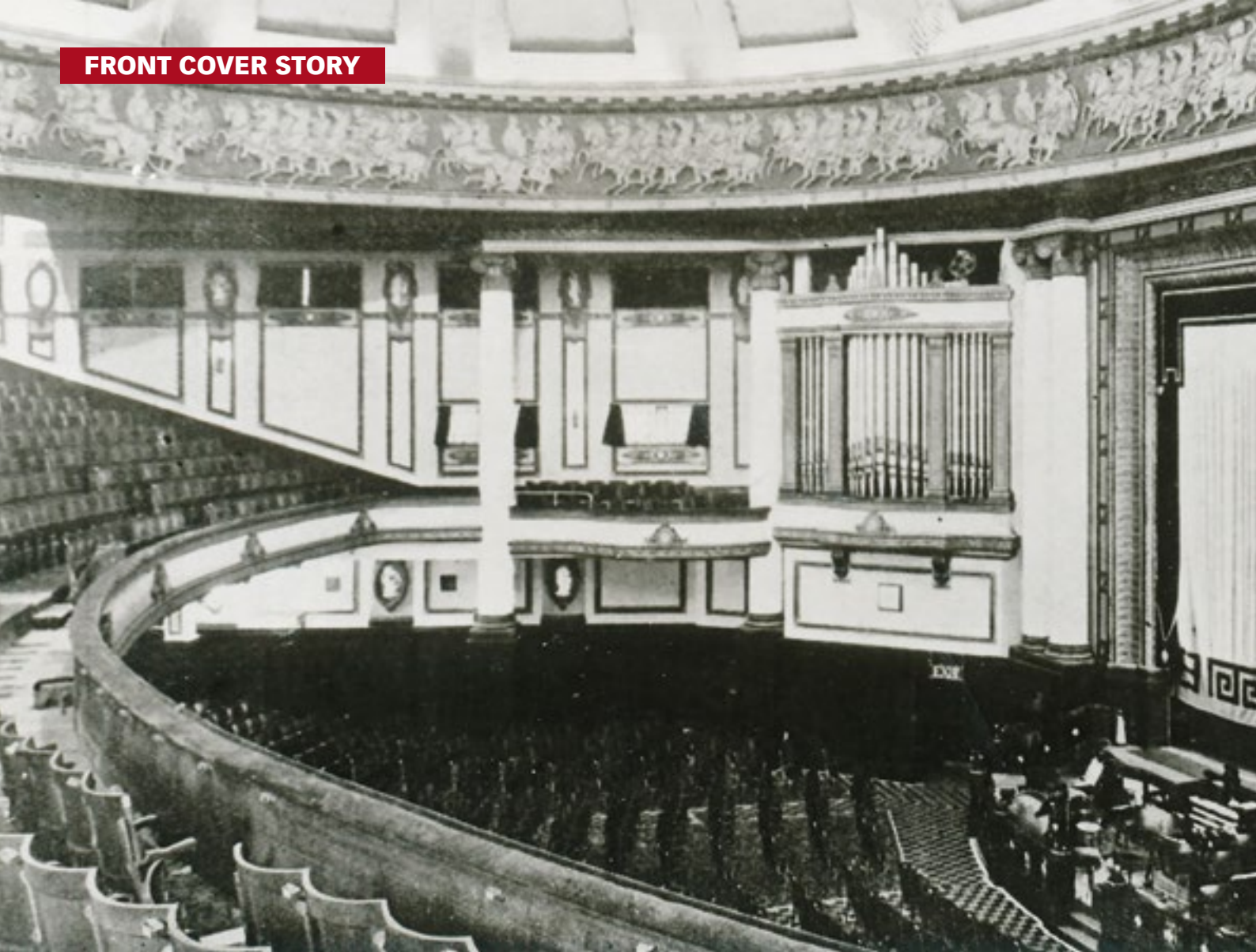
From the Editor

Ever since I learned that Channel Four was establishing a new regional headquarters in the former Majestic Leeds, a landmark building, I logged this mentally as an ideal subject for an article in *THE VETERAN*, having some relevance to both cinema and television members and being outside London for a change. After Covid-caused delays, Channel Four has finally opened there and the article appears, benefitting from direct input from a long standing member of our Executive Committee – Stuart Hall, who managed it early in his career. If you also worked in Leeds' cinemas, or played bingo or watched films at the Majestic, let us know how you remember the place.

I also logged for future attention the opening of the first full-scale

movie museum in Los Angeles – a dream that dates back at least to the 1940s. Even though we don't normally cover foreign happenings, this is significant to all of us attached to the moving image. Delayed considerably from opening by the pandemic, the Academy Museum of Motion Pictures made its debut at the end of September and does look spectacular from publicity photographs. I hope to feature it in the next edition, for the benefit of those Veterans who can't get there and for those who might then want to see it for real. Any Hollywood-based Veterans or other early bird visitors, let us know what you think.

That leaves room for further reminiscences from you, the Veterans – the In box is only half full, if that, and needs more variety (especially from the television side). **Allen Eyles**

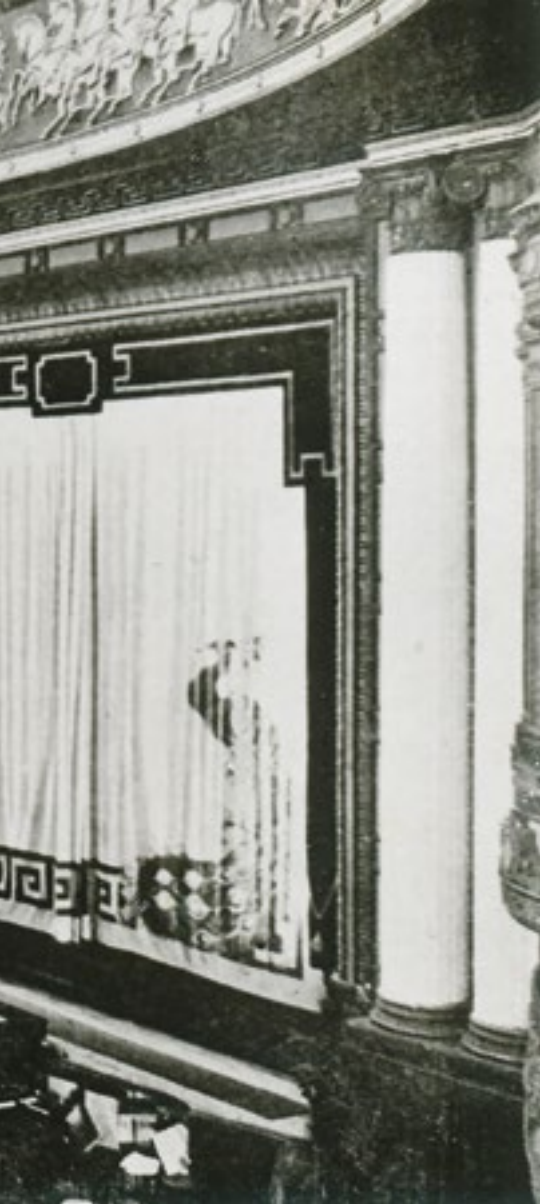


From Cinema to Television The Majestic Leeds

Allen Eyles recalls the fluctuating fortunes of a landmark building

The Majestic circa 1929. Note illuminated sign TALKIES above DANCE HALL in centre of frontage and name sign and flagpole on the roof.



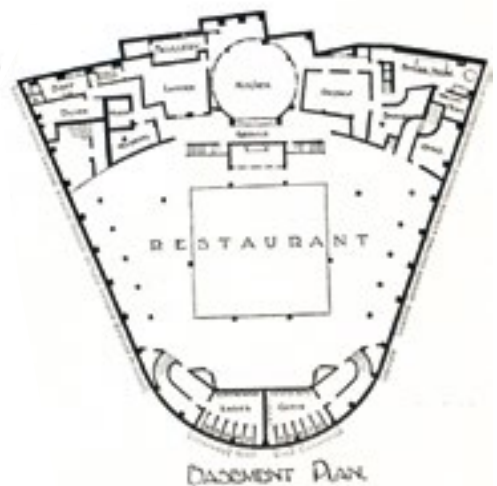
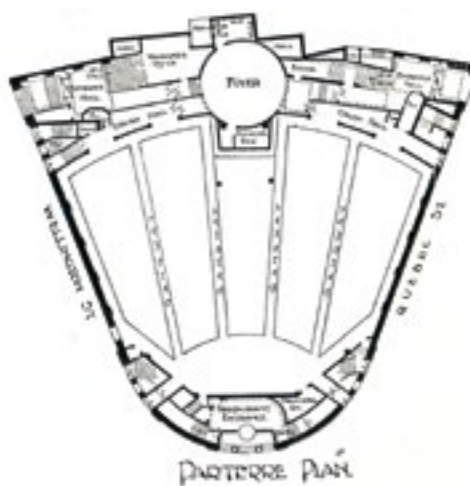


The auditorium in the 1920s. Note the large orchestra pit and frieze of horsemen. The three-manual Vincent straight pipe organ became a 15-unit instrument in the 1930s, removed in 1954 when CinemaScope was installed. (Author's collection.)



The Majestic building facing City Square in Leeds, close to the main railway station, demonstrates the national changes in leisure pursuits over the past one hundred years. Designed by Pascal J. Stienlet and Joseph C. Maxwell, it opened on 6 June 1922 as a cinema, dining and ballroom complex. It went over to bingo and then nightclub use. It offers none of these activities today.

The 1921-22 period was when new cinemas suddenly started re-appearing after the setback of World War One and the building restrictions that followed. Other huge cinemas to open then include the



The Majestic in 1922 as a cinema and a restaurant with dance floor.

Regent Brighton (also with restaurants and – later – ballroom) and the Capitol Cardiff (with ballroom, restaurants, banqueting suite and snooker room) – but both of these have long been demolished.

Having a massive 2,392 seats under a lofty dome edged by a frieze of charging horsemen, the Majestic cinema took up most of the interior of the building, although its two connected entrances were far less conspicuous than that of the ballroom, being on either side of the building at the far end, at the back of the auditorium. This reversed the usual layout of a cinema and was rarely seen on such sites (although the demolished Odeon Camberwell, south London, was another brilliant example which managed a more dramatic entrance on each side than those of the Majestic).

The side walls of the Majestic auditorium curved in towards the screen at the apex of the site, providing an ideal fan shape that gave all the audience a good view of the picture from stalls and balcony. A church-style organ had its pipes on view on the left wall while an orchestra accompanied the silent films. The projection room (then called the “bioscope box”) was, unusually, located on the stalls floor, entered from a rotunda known as the Palm Court that extended the height of the building from basement to a glass dome. Although the restaurant and ballroom had the more prominent entrance, they were reached by steps down to the basement of the building and were lofty enough to accommodate a minstrels’ gallery for an orchestra. However, the front of the building usually carried some advertising for the cinema.

The Majestic became the principal outlet for the national Gaumont chain (supplemented by the more central, smaller Scala). With the Paramount (opened in 1932, later Odeon) and the Ritz (opened in 1934, later ABC, Cannon and MGM), the Majestic was one of the big three in Leeds.

Before the war, a newscaster was installed on the exterior, a long moving sign that gave the latest news and was ideally suited to the curving frontage. Consideration was given to reinstating it after the war but it never happened.

The Majestic circa 1965 with large posters for The Sound of Music to either side of the dance hall entrance. (Author's collection.)



The cinema entrance on Wellington Street circa 1965. (Author's collection.)



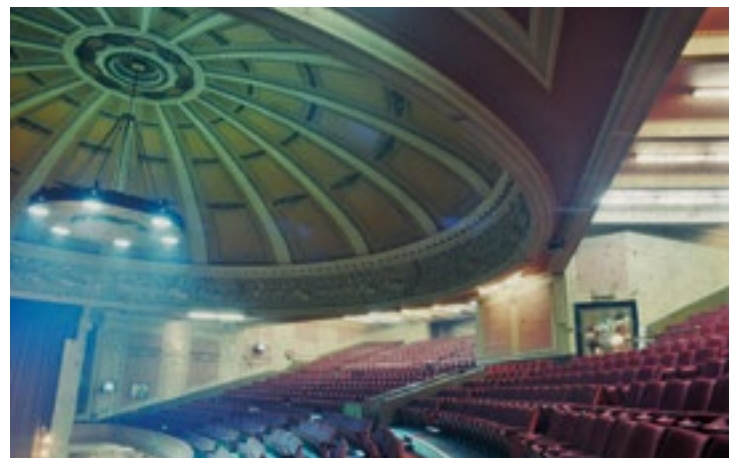
The auditorium during the run of The Sound of Music. Note old-fashioned GB (Gaumont British) seat standards. (Author's collection.)





The exterior as the Top Rank bingo hall in 1984. (Author's photograph.)

The Majestic well preserved as a bingo hall with strong downlighting for the players on the stalls floor. (Author's photographs, taken 16 March 1984.)



When the era of road show or hard ticket attractions arrived in the 1950s, the Majestic Leeds was selected to show *South Pacific* in 70mm on an extended run. The projection box on the stalls floor provided an almost direct throw onto a new 70mm screen just under 50ft. wide, erected in front of the old proscenium opening. The Majestic's current seating capacity of 1,900 came down to 1,545 for 70mm showings as the sides of the balcony were not used.

South Pacific opened in September 1958 and ran for a then exceptional thirty-eight weeks, clocking up half a million admissions.

The Majestic became the home of 70mm extended run presentations in Leeds. When *The Sound of Music* became available from 20th Century-Fox, Rank wanted to put it into the new Odeon Merrion Centre (opened August 1964, with only 892 seats) and close the

Majestic but Fox's managing director, Percy Livingstone, who hailed from Leeds, insisted on the new musical playing at the Majestic, based on the cinema's track record (and greater seating capacity) – otherwise he threatened to place it at the ABC which also had 70mm installed (but rarely used).

The Sound of Music opened at the Majestic in April 1965. There were two separate performances daily with those

Banner on display in October 2019 when Channel 4 expected to open in 2020. The same slogan was used in promotional advertising when the new National HQ launched this year. (Channel 4 Television.)



on Saturday, Sunday and Wednesday bookable in advance. Stuart Hall, the young house manager of the Odeon Leeds, was transferred to take over the box office at the Majestic after serious discrepancies were discovered in the advance booking takings. The shortages corresponded to coach capacities, suggesting a conspiracy with coach operators over group bookings. The existing manager was off sick and never returned. Stuart replaced him.

The Sound of Music ran for a total of two and a half years. Stuart Hall enjoyed standing in the foyer in evening dress to watch audiences departing at 10.20pm after the evening show in such a happy mood.

Stuart hired grammar school girls to work as usherettes and ice cream sales girls during school holidays, providing them with nylons as an incentive. Seating the audience was unnecessarily complicated for the usherettes – because the auditorium was oval in shape, the

number of seats varied from row to row but started with the number one in each case, so that seats with the same number were not directly behind each other.

After Stuart loaded twelve of the ice cream girls' trays with a more expensive fruit parfait and only two with the standard Lyons ice cream, his sales figures shot so high that they won him a trip to Portugal.

The most challenging moment during the film's run came one evening when Stuart learned shortly before the performance was due to start that all the toilets were blocked. Neighbouring businesses – pubs, restaurants, a rival cinema – were contacted and agreed to allow Majestic customers to use their facilities. The blockage was attributed to a build up of a solid paste called Leeds Soap.

The Sound of Music opened here a week after Bournemouth, Brighton and Manchester, and concurrently with

Birmingham, Blackpool, Bristol, Cardiff, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Newcastle and Southampton. On 4 December 1965, it was in its 33rd week with a total of 497,863 admissions – beaten only by London, Manchester and Cardiff. On 16 November 1966, it had racked up 1,103,589 admissions, bettered outside London only by Birmingham and Manchester. The final Majestic tally was stated to be one and a half million admissions and takings of over half a million pounds. (Seats were priced 5/-, 7s.6d., 8s.6d., 10s.6d. and 12s.6d.)

The Majestic then closed for about five weeks to be re-seated, re-carpeted and generally refurbished before opening the next big Fox musical, *Doctor Dolittle*. High expectations were quickly dashed.

The Majestic ended its run as a cinema on 10 July 1969. Top Rank Bingo had taken over the Ballroom in 1967 and now extended to occupy the cinema as well. The town's Odeon on The Headrow had

The external reconstruction nearing completion on 26 June 2020. (Channel 4 Television.)





Inside the new HQ of Channel 4 in July 2021. In bottom picture, note the dome through the window at right and reflected in mirror glass at left. (Channel 4 Television.)



re-opened as a twin two months earlier. The five-year-old Odeon Merriion Centre was upgraded to play Cinerama. The Majestic was no longer needed for films but the City Council insisted it must remain a cinema and Rank only won approval for bingo on appeal in June 1969. Top Rank Bingo had also been established eight years earlier at the former Gaumont in Cookridge Street and its members were transferred to the Majestic after that was closed in December 1969.

The Majestic's significance as a building was belatedly recognised when it became a Grade II listed building from 14 June 1993. Bingo continued until 1996. It reputedly failed because the Majestic had become too remote for players living in the suburbs who found other clubs more convenient.

The building was then occupied by two nightclubs: the Majestyk in the former cinema area and Jumpin' Jacks in the basement. It closed after permission to turn it into a casino was refused.

The auditorium had been converted into retail space while preserving the decorative detail when a fire in September 2014 destroyed most of the interior – a state sadly confirmed when I took advantage of a temporary art installation to enter the blackened space.

Plans were then approved to convert the building to office use, restoring the exterior except for raising and totally redesigning the roof to gain more space (seven storeys) and light. Work to the designs of DLA Architects started in February 2018, ending fourteen years of disuse. The rotunda or Palm Court at the back of the building has been restored, although with walkways across it.

Channel 4 Television was required by the state to diversify outside London and, three years ago, agreed to take over three of the upper floors (27,000 sq. ft. from a total of 66,000) as a regional headquarters. Covid inevitably delayed completion. The official opening was on Monday 6 September 2021. Some 200 staff out of 900 will be based in Leeds, along with the heads of drama and sport.

Besides offices, the three floors also include the 4Studio digital content production team of fifty and will have a studio to co-host Channel 4 News, featuring local presenters. This is a far cry from the Majestic of old but it keeps the building in the entertainment business and makes it a landmark once again. [v](#)

With thanks to Stuart Hall for providing his memories of the Majestic, and Channel Four Television Corporation for current images.

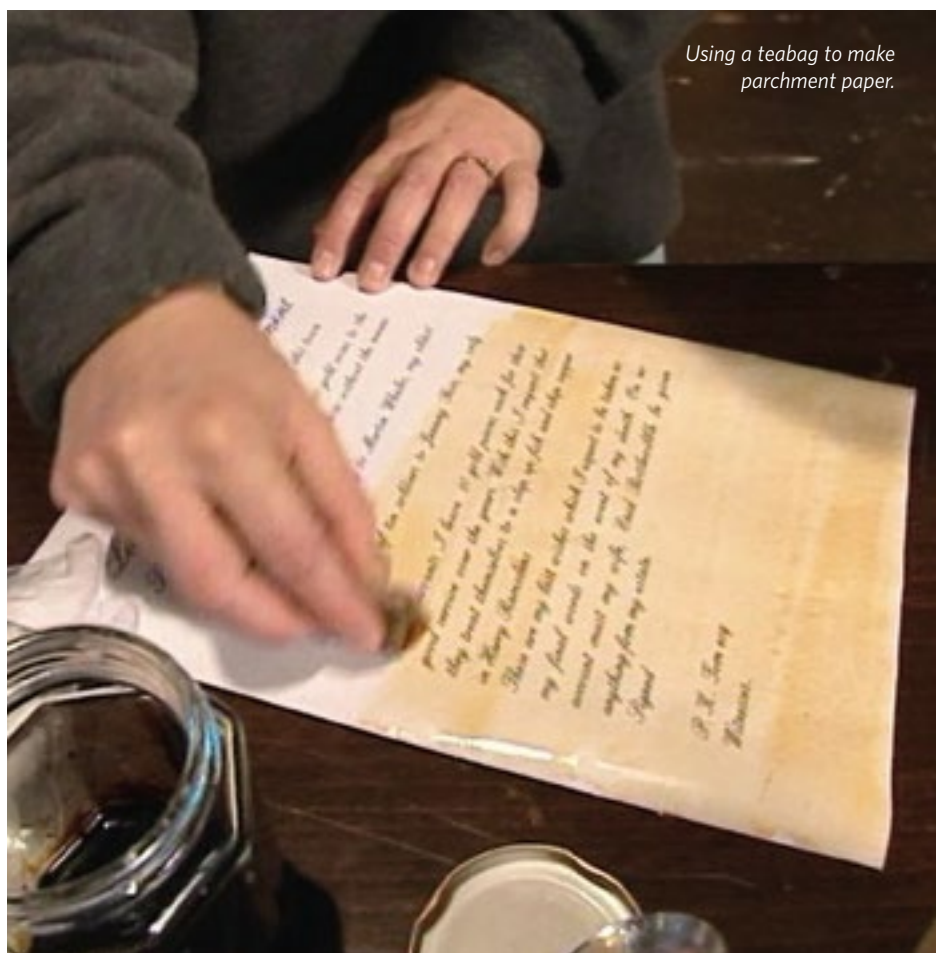


Curtain Up!

Bob Harvey found another use for teabags and mashed potatoes

In the summer of 1996, I was working through various concepts for a television series that could be made regionally yet tailored for a network audience. I set about bombarding the broadcasters with a raft of programme formats. I knew the satellite stations were hungry for well made low-cost product and, after several months of blitzing producers and executives, I received a letter in early August from Liz Barron at Discovery's Learning Channel saying she was interested in some of my proposals. I had intended to pitch half a dozen outlines to her at our initial meeting but decided to throw all my eggs into one basket and outline my idea for a series targeted at the theatre world.

I had discovered there were scores of books written about the art and craft of theatre but virtually no videos available that offered on-screen advice about acting, make-up, set design, stage managing and prop-making. Liz could see the potential in utilising a combination of amateur dramatics groups and professionals to illustrate, without blowing the budget, the relevant areas of theatrical production and I had decided to write my own drama sequences to avoid the complications of using copyrighted scripts. I was also aware of numerous amdrams who performed plays from their own



Using a teabag to make parchment paper.



Prop-making.



Mashed potato becomes non-drip ice cream.

scripts, designed their own props and even composed their own music, and as long they gave me blanket permission to transmit their work, a thirteen-part series could be brought in well below the normal cost for six and a half hours of screen time – and, if I could concentrate my search for talent in a single region rather than scour the whole of the UK, travel costs and overnights could also be eliminated from what was a relatively low-end budget.

Liz virtually commissioned *Stagestruck* on the spot, but first I had to devise thirteen programme formats, with themes and links, and make contact with professional actors, directors and designers who would be prepared to take part in instructional

workshops for fees that would be cost effective. It took five weeks of planning, during which I made umpteen telephone calls to any contacts I felt I might have a chance of persuading to come on board. Then, having drawn up thirteen programme outlines, I was ready to offer contracts to acclaimed television and theatre director Richard Martin, eminent theatre designer Ian Westbrook, stage manager Andrew Killian, make-up artist Derry Haws, costume designer Diane Martin, and experienced TV and stage actress Christina Barryk. I had worked with Christina on several projects and felt she would be perfect as the series presenter, having a warm and friendly persona as well as a strong track record in both television and theatre work.

After agreeing with the contract department at Discovery that *Stagestruck* would be made under my own company name of Spellcaster (which effectively landed me with both the risk and responsibility as producer/director for the budget - and an alarmingly tight schedule), I visited scores of amateur dramatics groups throughout East Anglia on a mission to find a rich and varied mix of practitioners, as well as some interesting characters to interview and tell anecdotes on camera. The first filming date was agreed, individual performance contracts sent out to over a hundred participants, and I was poised to go into pre-production.

I was tasked with filming enough material over eleven days to make thirteen half-hour shows – which meant recording thirty minutes of usable content each day. I was confident the series had been planned with enough precision to afford me a fighting chance of meeting the target dates. It is only in retrospect that I realise how close it could have come to disaster. That is not to say *Stagestruck* was plagued by unforeseen hitches, because it panned out more or less the way I had hoped.

I had made agreements with professional venues such as the Theatre Royal at Bury St. Edmunds, the sole surviving example of a Regency playhouse in the UK, and the Theatre Royal in Norwich, where a complex staging of *Peter Pan* was in pre-production, to film sequences backstage as well as on the stage area itself, and signed a deal with Anglia TV to use its technicians and edit facilities. This cut down my costs considerably and gave me a reasonable margin for error, but the post-production schedule was still incredibly tight and I could not afford to over-run. And there was another potential problem.

Apart from the handful of contracted theatre professionals I had signed up, every other participant in the shows was an amateur. There were no hard and fast contracts stipulating that they had to attend the filming sessions - just an agreement that we would pay them a small performance fee and an opportunity to show off their skills as actors, lighting directors, musicians and set designers to a wider audience than would normally see them.

I had worked out a format for each show, which was topped and tailed with introductions and end summaries from Christina, with in-vision links, either at an amdram location or on a professional theatre stage. The main body of the shows incorporated workshops, instructional sections, performance and anecdotes and I had attributed rough timings to my running orders.

There were two filming methods. The workshops I had little control over because



DoP Richard Crafter (right) lights a set.

they involved improvised interaction between the professionals and the theatre volunteers. The plan was to film them for about twenty minutes, then shoot bridging cutaways so that each item could be edited down later to roughly three or four minutes. With limited time in the edit suite at Anglia, however, the second method had to be more straightforward and involved a professional designer illustrating how props are made and set designs created, a lighting director illustrating lighting techniques, and a stage manager discussing the importance of stage-managing performers, all three talking through the various techniques with Christina. I elected to run one rehearsal prior to filming, and then ask the participants to make it longer or shorter as appropriate, before committing it to tape. In most instances, three takes were enough to knock the section on the head so we could move on to the next.



Creating the set for Peter Pan.

Two essential elements ensured *Stagestruck* stayed on course with budget and schedule. Firstly, the amateur dramatics enthusiasts themselves - every one of them turned up at the required location at the stipulated time, fully prepared for the filming sessions. As over a hundred and fifty amdrams eventually appeared on camera throughout the series, that was pretty remarkable. I was bowled over by their enthusiasm for the project. Few, if any, had aspirations to tread the boards on the West End stage or to be famous - most just relished the diverse range of contributions they could make, whether painting the scenery, operating the lights or supervising the music and sound effects. The amdram circuit didn't just cater for those who liked the idea of 'putting on a show'. Many had joined local groups because they were keen to be involved with the community or wanted to boost their confidence and I was amazed at



Costume design.



Circus panto.



Christina Barry and clown.



Actor workshop – timing.

the lengths to which some of these societies went. The Hamlet Theatre Company, for example, transported lightweight props and scenery to village halls all over the country, erecting makeshift stages complete with lighting rigs and putting on sell-out shows. Sue Heaser of the Wortham Pantomime Group had been creating all her shows from scratch for fifteen years, writing the music and lyrics for original presentations such as *Land of the Flying Moon*, *The Rainbow's End* and *Bumtrinkle's Circus*, all of which have now been published and performed worldwide.

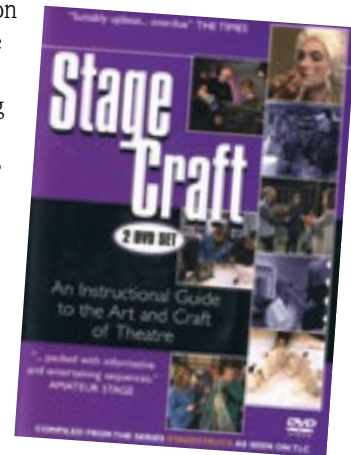
Secondly, we had on board professional technicians who knew their stuff and could work at speed without compromise. Richard Crafter, a lighting cameraman who had worked on countless quality network dramas, lit the scenes for dramatic effect whilst operating hand-held with smooth precision and timing, and Keith Judge edited the shows with his usual selective integrity. But for them and our incredible army of volunteers, the series would not have been received with such enthusiasm by both the viewing public

and the commissioners at TLC.

Following the post-production phase, and encouraged by endorsements from Alan Ayckbourn and *The Times*, the series was made available for sale on VHS in its original *Stagestruck* format, with a non-linear DVD version of the series launching a year later because it was a more suitable format for practitioners, whether amateur or semi-professional, to learn from the numerous workshops. Renamed *Stagecraft*, it provided a more robust and versatile viewing platform, effectively repositioning the series from an entertainment vehicle to an educational guide, including a complete revamp of the video presentation pack. This method allowed the users to access the various workshops and instruction sequences directly by clicking on areas of interest, such as Design or Lighting, so that the relative sequence could be viewed in a separate session.

In retrospect, if I had seriously considered the implications of working to such a manic schedule, reliant on so many amdrums turning up on time to participate in a medium in which they had no experience, I would

never have pitched it to Liz Barron. It is a reminder that, if you plan a production on a wing and a prayer but allow for every possible mishap and utilise a talented presenter and a crew of highly experienced technicians, you will have a better than average chance of success. It was with enormous relief that during the making of *Stagestruck* there were no accidents, no catastrophes, no sudden changes of direction or rethinks, no Plan Bs. The pieces of the jigsaw fell into place in a relatively trouble-free, enjoyable and smooth-running production which, after more than twenty-five years, is still being employed in its revised non-linear format in schools and colleges to help those who are keen to develop their theatre skills. [v](#)



Mirror, mirror on the wall ... who is the scariest





Moviola jockey.

Cutting It Fine

Alan Jones recalls a white knuckle ride with Blake Edwards

I left school in the summer of 1964 with a job offer in the Civil Service. But that was the Swinging Sixties and no time to be wearing suits, so I abandoned government to follow my brother Colin into the Film Industry. Everybody could find a job somewhere then, but the film industry was a union closed shop – you could only work in it if you had a union card and you could only have a union card if you had a job, ‘Catch 22’. Most people had family connections which helped them slide in ‘under the wire’.

After a gruelling hour in Soho knocking on small film company doors, I was offered a job in Berwick Street as a cutting room runner/assistant on commercials (it was easier then), and eventually was accepted into the union. I spent a couple of years on industrial and documentary films as well as Children’s Saturday Morning

Cinema films before in ’67 finding my way into regular features and TV drama.

For those years I worked as either picture or sound assistant on many productions including the original TV *Randall and Hopkirk* series and the films *If...*, *Deliverance*, *Sunday Bloody Sunday*, *Zardoz*, *Where’s Jack* and *The Great Gatsby*.

Then, on 5 June 1974 I started at Twickenham Studios as first assistant to Tom Priestly (son of J.B.) on *The Return of the Pink Panther* which filmed for thirteen weeks in the studios and on location. A week after shooting, at the end of September, we ran the first cut for its renowned director, Blake Edwards, who gave a few notes. Blake returned for a second viewing a week later when he gave Tom a few more notes saying, “OK, make a print.” That meant a final married or combined print with final picture and sound together.

Directors *never* do that! Directors love to spend months in the cutting room trying every possible editing permutation. But Blake loved to write and produce. Directing was a chore, and he just wasn’t interested in the cutting rooms or post filming process.

Making a print meant getting Henry Mancini booked into The Inn on the Park with a VHS of the film where, unusually, he wrote the music with little reference to Blake...or anybody. Re-recording poor dialogue (looping), recording sync effects (footies) and music, track laying, final sound mixing (dubbing), negative cutting and grading – this was all done with a combined print being sent out to Blake in Los Angeles and everybody off the film by Christmas.

New Year’s Day 1975 brought a phone call to say Blake wanted to come back with more ideas and



On set with Blake Edwards.

could I start again? I was to have started on another film with Tom, but it was agreed that Tom would carry on and I would look after 'minor changes' on the *Panther* with Bob Gavin assisting me.

It turned out Blake actually wanted to shoot additional scenes and did so for seven days in early February. Everything was dropped in my lap which was a bit daunting...I had watched editors working many times but only when you actually do it yourself do you realise the infinite possibilities of the giant 3D Rubic's jigsaw puzzle...not as easy as it looks. Nowadays, film school students practise on digital material to their hearts' content, but back then every sellotaped join in the cutting copy clattered through the projector and assistants were rarely encouraged to 'play'.

Now in charge of everything, I made all the structural changes, cut the new shooting, oversaw all the sound work, supervised the mix and on 7 April sent another combined print out to Blake in L.A.

Sunday 13 April and Blake phoned. Could I make a couple of alterations and bring the cutting copy to show him, now in New York! Wednesday 16th had me up front in a Jumbo to N.Y., then having breakfast next morning with Blake and his wife Julie Andrews in their suite overlooking

Central Park, wow! We ran the film and Blake said, "Sure, that's all great, but I've got some other ideas. Do you mind going to L.A.?" That evening I was back up front, westbound on a 727. A limo plucked me up at LAX and eased me into the Beverly Hills Hotel (aka the Heavenly Bills).

18 April: the production supervisor Derek Kavanagh had arrived, I've got a car and I'm in the Goldwyn Studios on Santa Monica Boulevard finding my feet with the cutting copy and a mono sound dubb. My assistant Bob Gavin, in Twickenham, had the master cut negative with a copy of the three strip master dubb and music masters couriered out. Thank God I had everything edge numbered before I touched anything so I could keep it all in sync. The problem was American numbering machines used a kind of chalk which one light sneeze removed! Ours were better. I made the changes agreed with Blake and we viewed it together at Goldwyn on the 20th... "OK, make a print."

On the 21st I re-mixed the dubb to cover alterations, mostly fixing music transitions between scenes where the order had changed, then took the sections of altered cutting copy to the neg cutter Marge Sokolow, who I got to know and value over the next couple of weeks. On Tuesday the 22nd I viewed a new combined

print at Deluxe Film Labs, had dinner with Blake and Derek K. followed by Blake giving us a tour around the Beverly Hills and Bel Air 'wonderlands'.

On Wednesday 23rd we previewed in the Cinerama Dome on Sunset Boulevard. No audience response cards as they weren't common then, but just by sitting in the audience you knew what was and wasn't working. Making a comedy is a tightrope walk – too much comedy and you wonder where the film is taking you, too much plot and you become restless for laughs. A problem for directors and editors is: since you know the film 'inside out', it's hard to see it through the eyes of a first-time audience, but sitting among them tells a lot. We decided to 'fiddle' again.

Time was getting tight as film journalists from around the world had been invited to a huge junket in San Diego on 9 May, just two weeks away. Back re-structuring and editing on the 24th with Bob sending out yet more out-takes and negative. I rang the L.A. union for a local assistant. It was a lengthy phone call, as under their rules they had to give me the name of every person on their books – which was hundreds! I gave up and somebody suggested Kathy Ball, who had been John Boorman's children's nanny on *Deliverance*.

Kathy knew nothing of the cutting room but what I needed was a neat dubbing charter and re-winder and she soon became that. Two other vital helpers were Bill Varney, the ever patient and inventive sound mixer at Goldwyn, who kept unnecessary sound generations to a minimum in those pre-digital days, and the bartender in the legendary Formosa Cafe next door.

The complication with making changes to a cut negative is a frame has to be lost each side of an existing cement join and careful notes made. When scenes were removed and later reinstated, they were getting shorter all the time! By Friday 2 May I had a rather green combined print of version four which we previewed with a private invited audience in a dubbing theatre at Goldwyn. That show didn't go well. There was a large sound mixing desk in the middle of the room so everybody was spread out and laughter, being infectious, doesn't need 'social distancing'. The room was hot and airless as the air con wasn't working, the print was off colour and the film felt leaden. Peter Sellers was there, having arrived for the San Diego premiere, and came to me afterwards in a gibbering panic saying, "Please burn the film and let's just forget it. I will pay for it."

That was the crisis point. Blake actually came into the cutting room on Sunday 4th and again we made major structural changes. Back to the wonderful Marge with the neg on the 5th, fixed the sound on the 7th and at 2pm on the 8th viewed a combined print of version five at DeLuxe which was rushed straight to San Diego for the next day's premiere — phew!

The 'button was pressed' and over four days DeLuxe labs made eight prints off the original neg for major showcase releases and around five hundred from duplicate negs for the rest of the U.S. release the following week.

Saturday the 10th I drove down the Pacific Coast Highway to the La Costa Golf Resort to catch up with the press weekend. The journalists, who were mostly concerned with free 'refreshments', had loved the film and when I caught up with Blake he was jubilant... "You're on the next."

At 4pm the following day I was heading home to sort out the foreign version M&Es (music and effects tracks) for the European release...it's not a glamour industry!

Looking back forty-five years later, it was an amazing time. I had been in the cutting rooms for ten years and knew the mechanics of film and



Blake explaining the shot to Peter Sellers ... and the shot itself.

editing but I was certainly dropped in the deep end. To make a final version of a movie the day before the world press premiere was a 'white knuckle ride' and a tribute to Blake Edwards's nerve. The film is fondly remembered and made a fortune.

Blake — courteous, funny, and very 'cool' — liked to edit with the script. He would look at assembled scenes after unit rushes, might give some notes and rarely tampered with them internally again. He only went to dubbing sessions if really needed and was mystified by the rest of the process. Looking back at the *Panthers* through

the lens of today's quick fire cutting they seem slow and measured, but it was a different world and that was his style.

It was a lucky break for me...being in the right place at the right time. I edited three more of the now *Panthers* franchise before Sellers' sad and early death, and continued editing feature films and TV dramas until I retired in 2011. Brother Colin became a BBC editor and we both had great years in what was an extremely 'social' cutting room community. But, looking back in my diary at those four weeks long ago, it was certainly 'cutting it fine'. ■

The Tireless Traveller

Allegra Taylor recalls her late husband's career in documentary films



Richard knew from the age of seven that he wanted to be a film maker – specifically, a documentary film maker. In 1954, aged 21, following National Service in Korea, he joined the British Antarctic Survey and spent a year on an expedition to Horseshoe Island single-handedly shooting a documentary, *67 Degrees South*, on a borrowed 8mm wind-up camera and subsequently selling it to commercial television.

This launched both his career and a lifelong interest in travel and exploration. He was later to make films with Arctic explorer Sir Wally Herbert, *Across The Top of the World*, and another retracing Wilfred Thesiger's epic journey in the Rub'al Khali: *The Empty Quarter*.

While working with British Transport Films, he met me – then a sixteen-year-old music student. We were married in 1958 and went on to raise a large family of six children – three of them adopted in Africa.

We lived for three years in Nigeria immediately after its independence with Richard working initially as film unit manager for Western Nigeria Television ('First in Africa'), then as director/cameraman for the Lagos-based Film Centre.

Richard joined the BBC in 1963 as a director for Television Features and for the next 25 years

– the 'golden age' of television – worked for the Corporation on documentaries and current affairs programmes. Always a passionate advocate for social justice, his controversial film *Equal Before the Law* was the first to address the question of the relationship between the police and the black community in Britain. It was initially banned, which led to picketing at the BBC, questions in Parliament and its eventual screening.

His other great passion was the environment and his programmes for the long-running *The World About Us* series included films about overpopulation; the deforestation of the Himalayas; the desert encroachment in the Sahara; the impact of the Trans-Amazonica Highway in Brazil; and the dislocations of mega tourism on small Caribbean Islands.

His film *Assignment in Vietnam* during the Vietnam war was described by Stanley Reynolds in *The Guardian* as "the most exquisite colour film I've ever seen". He went to Korea, where he had been a soldier. With veteran reporter Rene Cutforth, he made *A Reporter Returns*, telling the story of the war and exploring its aftermath twenty years on. His 1984 documentary on the Bhopal Gas Disaster in India revealed the full extent of that tragedy to the world when tens

of thousands of people were poisoned. When an earthquake hit Italy, Richard persuaded the BBC to let him catch a plane and tell the story of destruction and the process of recovery. When Al Qaida blew up hundreds of people in Nairobi, Richard was there again.

He was tireless on location. A friend, Geoff Dunlop, remembers: "I was twenty-five and Richard was forty when I first met him and became his assistant on *The Price of Paradise*. I was the one who couldn't keep up. I'd never experienced days with the range and intensity of these. When the light for filming mercifully faded and I could stagger for a power nap in my fan-cooled room, Richard would call out: 'I'll look for somewhere good for dinner.' We'd have the dinner and several rum punches, then Richard would ask around the restaurant, 'Where can we go to dance?' 'Dance? What about sleep?' Life was for living and not a moment to waste.

"He could be extremely intense even at home when he was fired up about some injustice or abuse of human rights. Itching to get out there and document the story. He once said to me, in one of his endearing mixed metaphors, 'If you just sit on the fence and don't stand up to be counted, you won't have a leg to stand on!' His

In the Antarctic.



On location in Syria.





Up the Amazon.



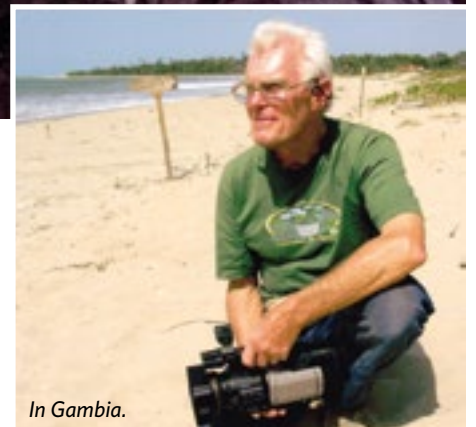
In Vietnam.



In the Arctic, 1968.



In Kenya.



In Gambia.



In the Arctic.



In the Sahara.



Up the Amazon.



At Kilimanjaro

final film as a staff producer for the BBC was *The Unleashing of Evil*, which examined the complicity of Western democracies in the use of government-instigated torture around the world."

In 1989 he formed his own company, Orpheus Productions. Working sometimes as a producer, sometimes as director-cameraman, his films won many international awards including first prize at the Geneva International Television Festival for *Nigeria: A Squandering*

of Riches, the Silver Screen Award at the U.S. International Film Festival for a film about Syria; the Italia Prize for *True Terror*; and the Silver Screen Award at the Chicago International Film Festival for *To Feel at Home* – a film about refugees for UNHCR.

His passions never waned and right at the end of his life he was working on a book – *The Ethical Parameters of Interrogation* – alas, never completed. Richard died in February 2015, age 81. [v](#)

The Stand In

David Edwards recalls some of the artistes who stood in for the stars

Film production has long required stand ins for not only the main stars but also for key supporting actors. Stand ins were needed when the camera department was lighting not only the set but also, of course, the leading actors and actresses. This could often be a very lengthy and complex procedure and stand ins were employed to allow the main actors to remain in their dressing room or trailer.

When I was working for Central Casting as a casting official (crowd artiste booker), I spent many hours on film sets observing this work and I was initially surprised just how long it could take. Later, having observed extended discussions between the director and the lighting cameraman, I could appreciate just how vital the task was. A stand in would have to carefully watch the scene rehearsal and then replace the performer on the set and follow his or her exact and precise movements.

Central Casting was the agency for members of the Film Artiste Association (FAA) which was the trade union for supporting artistes. Many members of the FAA would have liked to become a stand in purely because of the amount of work that could be involved. But the job did not suit everyone and

for some it could be tedious and boring, although it actually required a lot of skill. Most stand ins also worked as crowd artistes and in smaller supporting roles so their film careers were not completely invisible.

Many people might think a stand in needs to look similar to the actor. While similarity in height, hair colour and build were prime objectives, it often did not apply. Sometimes assistant directors (ADs) would have spoken to the camera department and nominate a certain member that they had previously used and were most comfortable with. From Central Casting's viewpoint, the main aim was to keep the ADs and camera department happy, but this could upset and annoy the FAA who always felt that Central Casting should allocate stand ins on a rotation basis, thus spreading the work more evenly throughout the union's membership. While this might sound fair and equitable, it certainly was not favoured or accepted by production companies bringing big feature films into the UK. Central Casting's feelings were that it should give producers what they want and not antagonise the ADs. Therefore, some nominated stand ins might not exactly fit the description of the main artiste. I am reliably informed that the biggest qualities a stand in needed were: punctuality at all times, NOT to annoy the star, pay attention to everything – and, of course, apply common sense.

During 1973, Paramount Pictures came to Pinewood Studios with a big budget Robert Redford film – *The Great Gatsby*. The production had already shot scenes in America and Redford brought his own stand in over with him. This was not a happy situation for the FAA as General Secretary Sean Brannigan wanted an FAA member to substitute for Mr. Redford. Eventually Mr. Brannigan gave permission, providing a full day's pay/chit was sent to the FAA every day that Mr. Redford's stand in worked. Central Casting, like many others, assumed the daily chit would be either paid into the FAA Benevolent Fund or given to needing or struggling members. Rumours at the time suggested the money was not used for that purpose. Paramount could easily absorb that sum of money within the film's large budget, but one could argue that they should not have had to pay. Trade unions were of course much stronger then, Mr. Brannigan could shout louder than most people, and the producers wanted a quiet life with no added problems.

In some cases, a major star would make a strong connection with a stand in. FAA member Eric Wetherall was a very experienced crowd artiste. I am not aware of when he first stood in for Gregory Peck but Eric once proudly showed me a silver cigarette case that the great star gave him. Inside the lid was engraved the titles of the last six or seven films they had worked on

The dates of films mentioned in this article refer to the year of release which was often later than the year of production.



Tina Simmons recalls: "This photo of me with Gregory Peck on The Omen was taken outside Guildford Cathedral. Peck was a charming man, one of the nicest that I ever worked with. He looked after his elderly stand in so well, arranging for a private car to collect him in the morning and take him home at night. His stand in also visited Gregory Peck in the South of France." Tina stood in for Lee Remick on the film. (Courtesy of Tina Simmons.)

together – I recall seeing *The Million Pound Note* (1954), *Moby Dick* (1956) and *The Guns of Navarone* (1961). It was a beautiful item that meant so much to Eric.

After Joan Field first stood in for Pauline Collins, Pauline would always say to ADs that Joan was her stand in and insist she was the one on set if she was available. Joan and Pauline are close today as Pauline's husband, actor John Alderton, has picked Joan up and driven her back to Highgate for lunch with Pauline. I hasten to add that Joan and Pauline are the exception as, naturally, not every star develops that closeness with their stand in, but Pauline is a most genuine and loyal friend of Joan.

Joan also stood in for Jane Horrocks and Helena Bonham Carter. There was a scene in one of the early *Inspector Morse* episodes that I was handling in which Lewis (Kevin Whately) had to go to a church hall to pick his wife up after a concert. I was asked to cast the wife and I put Joan Field in. Even though the scene was shot at night and we only really saw Joan in the shadows, Kevin Whately made a point of remarking how well cast Joan was for the role. Joan's husband, David Field, an FAA member who also did crowd work, had been a stand in for Kevin himself, although Ken Coombs eventually gained that role and kept it right through the shooting of *Lewis*.

Another stand in connected to Pauline Collins

was Eileen Bellson (Roberts). Eileen married BAFTA-winning camera operator Mike Roberts in 1974. Highly regarded in the business, Mike had worked with Spielberg, Zinneman, Attenborough, Neil Jordan and Roland Joffe when, in 2000 whilst filming *Chocolat* on location, he was found dead in his bed. It was a true tragedy for all on the film, even more so for Eileen and their daughters. There was a screen tribute to Mike on the *Chocolat* credits. Eileen had previously stood in for Pauline Collins when Joan Field was not available and, sometime after Mike's passing, Eileen was standing in for another actress on a film that Pauline was on. When Pauline saw Eileen, she came straight over and gave Eileen a massive hug and said to say nothing. Eileen has stood in for many other actresses, including Jane Seymour on *Live and Let Die* (1973), which involved going to New Orleans, and *Sinbad and the Eye of the Tiger* (1977); Leslie Caron on *Valentino* (1977) and other films; and Lesley Dunlop and Mia Sara on *Legend* (1985).

Sometimes, stand ins on UK-based productions are taken all over Europe as well as the USA. Fran Hunter stood in for Diane Keaton on *Reds* (1981) and Shirley MacLaine on TV's *Shirley's World* (1971), Liv Ullman on *The Abdication* (1974), Faye Dunaway on *The Wicked Lady* (1983) and *Supergirl* (1984), Catherine Deneuve on *The Hunger* (1983) as well as Geraldine Page, Maggie



*Joan Field. Height: 5'2".
Hair: Brown. Eyes: Green.*



Fran Hunter. She looked like Diane Keaton.

Smith, Diana Rigg and Angela Lansbury at other times. Working on *Reds* is the experience Fran rates most highly from her great volume of work. *Reds* was a tough six-month shoot during which Fran travelled to Spain, Sweden and Finland to stand in for Diane Keaton, who commented on how closely Fran resembled her. At the end of filming, Diane bought her a beautiful gift – a wonderful star to work for. The director and star of *Reds*, Warren Beatty, would enjoy joking with Fran as the stand in for his older sister on that "big flop at Pinewood" – *Shirley's World*, a series that was quickly dropped.

Yet another in demand stand in was Sue Heimer who took on a very long stint for Barbara Bain on the *Space 1999* TV series at Pinewood from 1975 to 1977. Sue had also stood in for Farah Fawcett on *Saturn 3* (1980), where she tells me she was told by production staff not to look at or speak to

Tina Simmons (left) and Ellen Greene attended a cast reunion screening of *Director's Cut: Little Shop of Horrors* (1986) at the Prince Charles Cinema, 28 May 2019. (Courtesy of Tina Simmons.)



the star. Once shooting was underway, Sue found Farah to be very friendly, warm and down to earth. But standing in for Cybill Shepherd on *The Lady Vanishes* (1979) was not so pleasant... Sue also worked with Lynn Redgrave on *Smashing Time* (1967) and Valerie Perrine on *Superman* (1978).

Sue's mother was the very beautiful Rene Heimer, who had been a Rank starlet in the 1940s. Rene continued to act in small parts and made friends with Elizabeth Taylor, Audrey Hepburn and Sophia Loren after standing in for all three. Rene also stood in for Claire Bloom and Jean Simmons, among others. Her acting experience was helpful to ADs and directors and she could be placed close to camera and be natural. Rene did make a move into wardrobe but passed away in 1994.

A final word on *Space 1999* is that Barbara Bain's husband Martin Landau was her co-star and both Alan (Butch) Meacham and John Clifford were his stand ins while Ron Watkins stood in for Nick Tate.

Meacham had a long run for Tony Curtis on *The Persuaders!* (1971) where he got on very well with the star and kept everyone laughing. Alan also spent a lot of time in the Sixties on *The Saint* at Elstree where he played small parts as croupiers, waiters, hotel and restaurant visitors as well as standing in for various guest stars. He

also stood in for Peter Wyngarde on *Department S* (1969) and *Jason King* (1971/72).

Another FAA member who obtained a large amount of stand in work was Vic Gallucci: for Peter Sellers on two *Pink Panthers*, Dominic Guard on *Absolution* (1978), Tom Skerritt on *Alien* (1979), Gabriel Byrne on *The Keep* (1983), John Hurt on *Champions* (1984), Robert De Niro on *Brazil* (1985), Tom Cruise on *Legend* (1985), Fulton Mackay on *Porridge*, and his friend Graham Stark several times. Vic stood in for Marcel Marceau on the big advertising campaign for Polaroid and recalls that the mime artist never said a word to him throughout the entire shoot. Vic also worked for fourteen years on *The Bill* as DC Tom Baker, earning a listing in the *Guinness Book of Records* as the world's longest serving extra. (He still presents his annual Classic Charity Car Show on the Isle of Wight, now in its 19th year.)

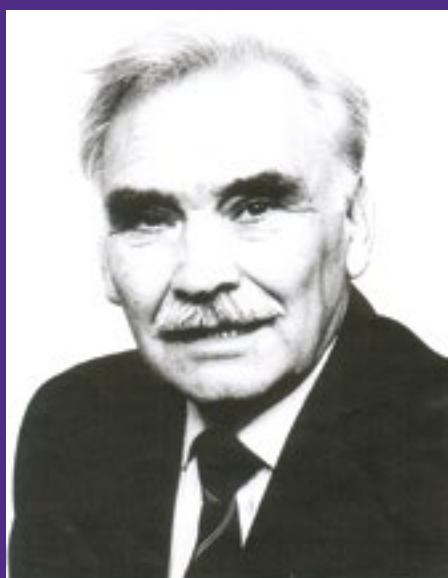
I could not overlook Tina Simmons, with (currently) 179 uncredited acting appearances on the Internet Movie Data Base including Spectre Member in *No Time to Die* (2021). Her further CV of stand in work covers Lee Remick on many films including *Hennessy* (1975), *The Omen* (1976) and *The Medusa Touch* (1978) as well as Olivia Newton John, Helen Mirren and Ellen Greene on *Little Shop of Horrors* (1986).

Another very highly rated stand in was Aidan

Harrington who had played several small parts early in his career after being "discovered" by David Lean in 1952 and named the UK's "Most Promising Star of Tomorrow". However, he later worked as a crowd artiste and stand in as well as a model. To name just a few of his film assignments – standing in for Peter Finch on *A Bequest to the Nation* (1973) and others, Gene Barry on *The Adventurer* (1972/3 TV series), Burt Reynolds on *Rough Cut* (1980), and also George C. Scott and Albert Finney. It was said that Aidan had kept every single call sheet from films he had worked on but their present whereabouts are unknown.

Eileen Bellson tells me that Aidan Harrington stood in for Peter Lawford on the 1968 film *Salt and Pepper* and at the completion of shooting Mr. Lawford asked Aidan up to his suite at the Dorchester for a farewell drink. Lawford took Aidan to a large wardrobe that contained at least forty suits of the highest quality. Aidan was told to take what suits he wanted as they would not be shipped back to the USA. Aidan could only carry a few, but before Peter Lawford departed he had the remainder of the suits shipped to Aidan's home.

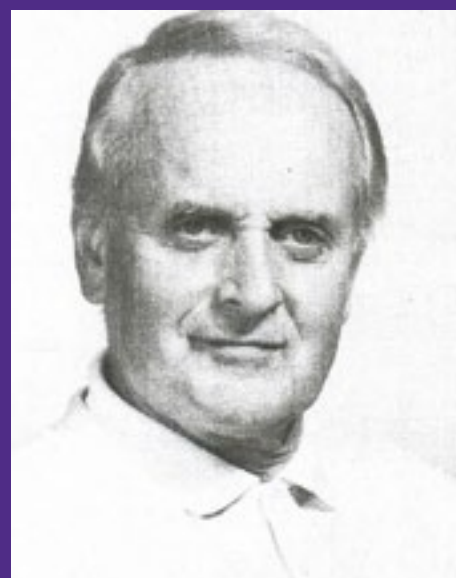
Jack Dearlove was another very capable actor who had several small parts but, as he got a bit older, acquired a lot of stand in work for major stars. Jack's nickname was 'Chalkie' as he always carried chalk behind his ear to mark the floor where he had to stop. He was employed for about



Alan (Butch) Meacham. (1929-98).



Aidan Harrington (1928-2017).



John Triplett. Height: 5'7".
Hair: Grey. Eyes: Blue.

one year as Jack Nicholson's stand in on *The Shining* (1980). He also stood in for Harrison Ford on the first three *Star Wars* and *Indiana Jones* films as well as on *Hanover Street* (all made at Elstree). Standing in for Richard Gere on *King David* (1985) was another big assignment, along with representing George Lazenby in *On Her Majesty's Secret Service* (1969).

One very quickly arranged assignment took place on the John Landis film *Spies Like Us* (1985). The unit had moved to Morocco for about a six-week shoot. I don't think they took stand ins with them but expected to recruit them locally. After a few days in Morocco, I received a call at home on a Saturday morning. The request was most urgent: they needed a stand in for Dan Aykroyd. I said I'd get onto it immediately. I couldn't reach any of our regular 6ft. 1in. dark-haired stand ins and eventually telephoned George Avory who lived in central London and would be available to take the first flight Monday morning. Through someone at Pinewood I was able to get the flight booked for then. I know the film ran over schedule and budget. George was in Morocco for well over six weeks and he received the same per diem as the crew, so it became a very well paid assignment – one of the most remunerative of the year for both George and Central Casting. (In those days Central Casting did not take any commission from artistes – its

income came from invoicing the production company 8% of the total weekly gross they paid to crowd during that week.)

John Triplett mixed being a waiter at the Grosvenor House Hotel with crowd and stand in work. His longest run as a stand in was for George Cole on the TV's *Minder* (1979-). John adored his time on that series and found Cole a charming and wonderful man. The only downside was returning home smelling of cigar smoke. Another actor John stood in for was Ned Beatty, whom he found funny and delightful.

The massive CV of John Kettringham included standing in for Kirk Douglas on *Saturn 3* (1980), David Bowie on *The Hunger* (1983) and Mel Gibson on *The Bounty* (1984). The Gibson job was a struggle as Sean Brannigan at the FAA was against regular stand ins getting the top jobs and told me to book someone other than John Kettringham. The production company was livid and the AD wrote a strong letter to Mr. Brannigan giving their reasons for wanting this particular stand in. The FAA eventually gave in. I am sure that the production company would have booked him direct if necessary.

One of the younger females to become well established was Beverley Keys who auditioned successfully in 1976 to stand in for Barbara Bach on *The Spy Who Loved Me* (1977). Then in 1981 she was selected to be Meryl Streep's stand in

on *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, which had a very tough and difficult shoot in Devon and Dorset. Beverley succeeded with flying colours in 1983 when she stood in for Pamela Salem on *Never Say Never Again* (1983). Then in 1985, when they needed a top stand in for Julie Andrews on *Victor Victoria*, Beverley again did a great job despite being so young. She married John Simpkin, an FAA member who worked on the first *Star Wars* films and attended signing conventions prior to Covid.

The oddest choice of a stand in occurred on *Octopussy* (1983) when Mike Reynell, who was 6ft. 1in. with white/silvery hair and pale-coloured skin, stood in for Kabir Bedi, an Asian actor wearing a turban. Central Casting did not make the choice and one assumes that the director and camera operator were happy, which was all that mattered. Mike can be seen in *Octopussy* (1983) as a Sotheby's employee displaying the Fabergé egg at the auction.

Sometimes a new stand in would get a chance because of the limited number of suitable candidates for the job. This was the case on *Aliens* (1986) at Pinewood with Sigourney Weaver, who was around 5ft. 10/11ins. in height. Janet Aspinall, at around the same height, did a good job despite her lack of experience.

I always felt that new stand ins needed to start somewhere – and how do they get their



Eddie Dillon, John Morris, Ricky Dawson and Derek Baker as The Beatles on *A Hard Day's Night* (1964).
(From the FAA magazine *Film Artists*.)

first break if no one will take a chance on them. When we had a good-looking young model who stood 6ft. 3ins. and was a strong visual double for Christopher Reeve, we submitted his photograph as a possible stand in and double for the star to the *Superman IV* (1987) production company preparing the film at Elstree. The company said yes but it did not fully work out. The man completed the shoot but the feeling was that they should have used someone with more experience, like Roy Everson who had stood in for Reeve on the three previous *Superman* films (1978/80/83).

Everson also stood in for Warren Beatty on *Reds* (1981) and for Anthony Perkins (as did the Canadian Norton Clarke).

Gerry Addison was Glenda Jackson's stand in on many films. Both ladies got on very well and Glenda would insist that Gerry was on her films until she gave up acting to pursue a political career. Gerry had been a top stand in for many other actresses including Sylvia Syms on *Ice Cold In Alex* (1958) and *Victim* (1961).

For many films, Dirk Bogarde's stand in was

Arnold Schulkes. Mr. Bogarde made great efforts to get Arnie on worldwide locations. Certain artistes need to feel safe and secure and a regular stand in contributes to that feeling. Arnie was softly spoken and had a calm and peaceful nature about him. Bogarde recalls him most fondly in one of his books.

At the time of *The Dirty Dozen* (1965), Donald Sutherland's regular stand in was Mo Dunster. When the actor went off to Hollywood, he made Dunster his PA. Upon Sutherland's return to the UK, Lew Morgan was asked to be his stand in on several of his films. When this and other work eased off, Lew formed his own company to provide extra security for films, especially on locations. Shooting on location was getting more dangerous and Lew had seen an opportunity. Lew's company became invaluable and other followed the pattern.

Another who found life after stand in work was Bobby Wright. He had been a photographic model in the early Sixties and came into the FAA where he stood in for Robert Wagner on *The*

Pink Panther (1963), *The War Lover* (1962) and *Madame Sin* (1972). Bobby found times hard and decided to get an ACTT ticket. He became a 3rd AD and also did a couple of films as a 2nd AD, but then passed away.

Lew Hooper stood in for Richard Widmark on *Murder On The Orient Express* (1974) and *Who Dares Wins* (1982), Binky Morrice for Ian Holm on several films including *Alien* (1979), Ann Preston for Susan Sarandon and also for Michelle Phillips on *Valentino* (1977).

The Beatles had stand ins on *A Hard Day's Night* (1964). Eddie Dillon became Ringo while John Morris, Ricky Dawson and Derek Baker made up the rest of the Fab Four. Eddie died very young, after a car crash leaving the wrap party of *Soft Beds and Hard Battles* (1974) at Shepperton.

During my time in the business, Michael Caine used two stand ins. Jack Carter was doing the job throughout the Sixties and into the Seventies – I recall seeing Jack on location on *The Eagle Has Landed* (1976). Coincidentally, Caine's character in *Get Carter* (1971) was named Jack Carter.



Alf Mangan (right)(1916-88) with Tony Hancock on *The Punch and Judy Man* (1963). Knowing Alf as a comedian, he might well have added the speech bubbles before sending the photo to the FAA magazine *Film Artiste* where it originally appeared.



Rosemary Taylor (1934-2019) was an FAA member doing crowd work & stand ins from 1968.



Esmee Smythe. Height: 5'5". Hair: Golden Blonde. Eyes: Blue.

When Jack retired, Reg Turner took over.

James Linton had stood in for Roger Moore, but this role fell to John Wood on *Live and Let Die* (1973) and *The Spy Who Loved Me* (1977) – John was also an extremely good double for Roger and did quite a lot of doubling on the latter film. Following *The Spy Who Loved Me*, John sold an article to one of the Sunday newspapers that was unkind to the Bond franchise or Roger Moore and I am certain they dropped him following that.

Esmee Smythe was an experienced crowd artiste who stood in for Deborah Kerr. Esmee did somewhat resemble Deborah and was extremely proud of her work with the actress over many years.

Eddie (Chick) Fowles was a crowd artiste booker when I started at Central Casting. He was suddenly let go when the agency was downsizing during the early Seventies film industry recession. Chick had originally worked in the crowd and had stood in for David Niven and Ian Bannen, so he used his FAA ticket once again to bring in some cash. (Chick's son Rowland was also in the business as a highly rated boom operator.)

Some others that I knew well come to mind. Charlie Price had done a lot of standing in during the Fifties and Sixties and was Curt Jurgens' stand in on *The Spy Who Loved Me* (1977). Charlie also functioned for Sean Connery on *The Offence* (1973) and Anthony Quinn on *The Greek Tycoon* (1978). I was not aware of Terry French doing a lot of stand in work but he did for John Wayne on *Brannigan* (1975). Annette Vellender's work included a long assignment for Julia Foster on *Half a Sixpence* (1967). Eileen Harvey was also very experienced and associated with Billie Whitelaw. Alf Mangan was a very capable crowd artiste who also stood in for Ronnie Barker on the feature film *Porridge* (1979) as well as for Tony Hancock in his feature films. John Clifford did so many stand ins and I recall him taking the place of Patrick Macnee on *The New Avengers* (1976-). Mickey Clarke stood in on several *Carry Ons* for Kenneth Williams. Jack Ross was very friendly with John Hurt and not only stood in for him but would very often

drive the actor home. Tony Allen stood in for John Thaw on *Inspector Morse* (1987-), and *The Sweeney* (1975-8) where he also played George, Regan's driver – and it is his feet on the car pedals in the opening credits. After Tony switched from crowd work to wardrobe, Barry Summerford took over as John Thaw's stand in on *Kavanagh QC* (1995-). Previously, Barry had stood in for Dennis Waterman on *The Sweeney* and *Minder*. Redman Bailey was a drinking chum of Ian Hendry and I was never aware of him standing in for any other actor.

Lastly, Rosemary Taylor (Hazelidine) had been in the crowd starting with *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* in 1968. Rosemary also did stand in work for Prunella Gee and then spent six long months filming in the Thames Valley on *Paradise Postponed* (1986). As a utility stand in on that series, Rosemary would have taken the place of Annette Crosbie, Zoë Wanamaker and Jill Bennett. It was a lucrative job and a tough physical one, but Rosemary still loved it. I first met her in 1969 and we formed our own Excasing Agency in 1992 which closed in 2001. [v](#)

NEWS FROM



BRITISH ENTERTAINMENT HISTORY PROJECT

(Formerly BECTU History Project)

WWW.HISTORYPROJECT.ORG.UK

Our History Project members have been utilising their free time this summer to catch up with digitising and transcribing the remaining interviews in our archive of 800 interviews. We've been going through our collection and pinpointing the gaps where an interview appears to have gone missing since the project started 34 years ago. Thanks to our longstanding relationship with the British Film Institute, we have been able to discover some missing recordings in their vaults at Berkhamsted. We are grateful to the BFI staff for providing us with these valuable copies of our original interviews. The recordings are now restored to our collection and have been uploaded to our website where they can be enjoyed by people from all over the world. The previously missing tapes include these important interviews.



Betsy Blair

An American actress of film and stage, long based in London, Blair pursued a

career in entertainment from the age of eight, and as a child worked as an amateur dancer, performed on radio, and worked as a model, before joining the chorus of Billy Rose's Diamond Horseshoe in 1940. There she met Gene Kelly: they were married the following year, when she was age 17, and divorced sixteen years later in 1957.

After working in the theatre, Betsy began her film career playing supporting roles in films such as *A Double Life* (1947) and *Another Part of the Forest* (1948). Her interest in Marxism led to an investigation by the House Un-

American Activities Committee. She was blacklisted for some time, but resumed her career with a critically acclaimed performance in *Marty* (1955) for which she was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Supporting Actress. In 1963, she married film director Karel Reisz (BEHP interview number 193). You can hear her interview in 2000 at: <https://historyproject.org.uk/interview/betsy-blair>

Rose Tobias Shaw

A Polish theatre, film and television casting director, she moved to the U.S. with her family in 1933. In Britain, her film credits include *Madhouse* (1974), *The Seven-Per-Cent Solution* (1976), *Equus* (1977), *The Wild Geese* (1978), Otto Preminger's last film *The Human Factor* (1979), *Escape To Victory* (1981), *Lassiter* 1984), *The Jewel In The Nile* (1985) and Martin Scorsese's *The Last Temptation Of Christ* (1988). Her television credits include the shows *Danger Man* (1967-68), *The Prisoner* (1964-67) and *The Man In A Suitcase* (1967-68). Shaw was affectionately known as the 'Queen of the Mini-series' for her casting of multi-episodic projects including *The Bourne Identity* (1988), *Till We Meet Again* (1989) and *Around the World in 80 Days* (1989). She was credited with discovering George C. Scott, Elliot Gould, Kim Novak, and Pierce Brosnan. <https://historyproject.org.uk/interview/rose-tobias-shaw>



Jan Zilliacus

Born in New York on 18 September 1912 she was the daughter of an opera singer,

Louise Trenton, and the American film director Laurence Trimble who made 100 silent films between 1908 and 1926. He was the first to introduce trained animals into the silent movies. His break occurred when the family collie became Jean, the Vitagraph Dog. He decided that his little daughter Jan was an obvious choice as a long-shot stand in being set upon by a pack of ravenous wolves. "I grew up with sixty wolves and if anybody had to be chased by wolves, it would be me in the heroine's costume."

Film stars were frequent visitors to the Trimble ranch in Hollywood. As a child, Jan sat on Charlie Chaplin's knee and she first met Rudolph Valentino when he came to her father's ranch to learn horse-riding for *The Sheik* (1921). "Valentino was my very special friend, and was so nice to me. I was only a child - I mean, young, nine, ten. I got to know him, riding with him when he was learning. He used to take me to concerts. I had a lovely time."

In 1989, Jan was the subject of Radio 4 programme *The Cashier and the Reluctant Lions*, about her days in Hollywood. In her last months she was collaborating with American authors on a book about Hollywood's early days. Jan died on 2 May 1999. <https://historyproject.org.uk/interview/jan-zilliacus>

Peter Newbrook

The English cinematographer, director, producer and writer began his career as a 14-year-old messenger boy at Warner Bros.' Teddington Studio. By 1937, he had worked his way up to focus puller. After World War II, Peter was the focus puller on *It Always Rains on Sunday* (1947). In 1948 he went freelance and

worked on *Against the Wind* (1948) and *Scott of the Antarctic* (1948). Joining Alexander Korda's Shepperton Studios, his first film was *The Sound Barrier* (1952), followed by *Hobson's Choice* (1954), *Summertime* (1954), and *The Bridge on the River Kwai* (1957). He worked as second unit photographer with Freddie Young on the classic long shot of Omar Sharif emerging on a camel from a mirage in David Lean's *Lawrence of Arabia* (1962). Later in the 1960s his work as cinematographer included *Gonks Go Beat* (1964), *The Sandwich Man* (1966) and *The Smashing Bird I Used To Know* (1969).

In the 1970s, due to the decline of the British film industry, he turned to television as a freelance lighting director on shows such as *Coronation Street*, *Emmerdale Farm* and the popular drama series *Tales of the Unexpected*. You can find Peter's 1995 interview at: <https://historyproject.org.uk/interview/peter-newbrook>

For further information on how to become involved in the History Project, contact Sue Malden BEHP Secretary sue.malden@btinternet.com



Mike Dick
History Project Chair

OCTOBER 1971

Disney's *Bedknobs and Broomsticks* has its world premiere in aid of the Variety Club and CTBF at the Odeon Leicester Square with a half-hour stage show and appearance by Angela Lansbury. The film moves to the Odeon Marble Arch after two weeks.

The Odeon Glasgow hosts the European premiere of *The Anderson Tapes* with star Sean Connery in attendance.

Glasgow magistrates ban *The Devils* two days before this major release is due to open.

Ingmar Bergman's first English language feature *The Touch* opens at the Prince Charles off Leicester Square.

The National Film Theatre holds a season of Hammer films.

The *Kinematograph Weekly* is absorbed by *Today's Cinema*.

London Screen Distributors is taken over by Hemdale and renamed. John Hogarth continues as managing director and Brian Sammes as sales director.

EMI's *The Raging Moon* is launched in New York as *Long Ago Tomorrow* with a new theme song by Burt Bacharach, performed by B. J. Thomas.

The Go Between runs six weeks at the ABC Fulham Road and earns a second week at many ABCs on London suburban release. Other strong performers



Dyan Cannon and Sean Connery in *The Anderson Tapes*.

are *Puppet on a Chain*, *Twins of Evil*/*Hands of the Ripper* and (on a wave release) *Anne of the Thousand Days*.

EMI opens a second screen at the ABC Reading but sells its Hastings ABC cinema for site redevelopment into a supermarket.

The Thameside Theatre opens at Grays as part of the BFI Regional Theatres chain.

Cinemas in Coventry are now permitted to stay open an hour longer on Sundays, until 10pm.

EMI plans to let 20 ABC cinemas plus its Leytonstone bowl to Star for bingo use only. They are at Barrow, Blackheath, Cambridge (Central), Canterbury, Chatham, Forest Hill, Lancaster, Lincoln, Luton, Nottingham (Metropole Sherwood), Old Kent Road, Oxford, Purley (Regal), Scunthorpe, Stourbridge and

Wallasey as well as recently acquired Shipman and King properties at Braintree, Havant, Hoddesdon, Leighton Buzzard and Maldon. Nine more cinemas at Barkingside, Carlisle, Dumfries, Enfield, Harrow, Kidderminster, Lincoln, Woking and Wythenshawe are to be reduced in size to include Star bingo.

The twin Rio and Rex at Newcastle Under Lyme close after plaster falls from the ceiling in both screens.

Walt Disney revives its 1952 British *The Story of Robin Hood and His Merrie Men* in support of its new *Scandalous John* for general release.

EMI acquires all rights outside North America for *Lamb* (later *Lady Caroline Lamb*), shooting at Pinewood, and UK distribution of *The Assassination of Trotsky*, filming in Mexico.

Other films in production include: *The Garnett Saga*, *Henry VIII and His Six Wives*, *Dracula - Today* (later *Dracula A.D. 1972*) at Elstree; *Carry On Matron*, *Frenzy* and *Madame Sin* at Pinewood; *Egghead's Robot* (CFF production) at Guild Sound & Vision; *Steptoe and Son* at Lee International; *Young Winston*, *The Public Eye*, *Tower of Evil*, *Tales from the Crypt* and *The Living Dead* at Shepperton; *Sitting Target* at Twickenham; plus *Made, England Made Me* and *The Ragman's Daughter* on location.

Passing on: Alfred Dorney, Classic executive; B. Marcus Priteca, Scottish-born American movie theatre architect.

OCTOBER 1996



Kate Winslet and Christopher Eccleston in *Jude*.

The best box office performers by average takings per screen are *Flipper*, *Il Postino*, *Courage Under Fire*, *Antonia's Line*, *A Time to Kill*, *Lone Star*, *Last Man Standing*, *Jude*, *Multiplicity* and the reissue of *Touch of Evil* - a list that mixes limited and mass releases. The box-office champion is *The Nutty Professor*.

Nothing Personal, a film about the troubles in Northern Ireland is released after a five-month delay occasioned by either the IRA ceasefire or because suitable screens were not available.

The Arts Council of England (ACE) draws up guidelines for applicants for its film franchises, four in the first year, to make pictures with part National Lottery funding that are, confusingly, to be commercial but that would not otherwise be made.

ACE gives £15 million of National Lottery cash to the BFI towards the cost of building an IMAX theatre at Waterloo. The only existing UK one is at Bradford though another is planned for the Trocadero near Piccadilly Circus.

The government is split over plans to privatise Channel Four with its chief executive Michael Grade arguing that this would threaten its remit to cater for minorities.

Producer Sarah Radclyffe, banker Rodney Payne and the Independent Film Commission's Jean Young are appointed governors of the BFI.

The epic-length, never released silent *The Life Story of David Lloyd George* is premiered to acclaim at the National Film Theatre after a print was discovered in Wales.

The BFI seeks to move the National Film Theatre to London's West End and commissions architect Stefanie Fischer to investigate sites, with the best possibility to be determined by next month. The Department of National Heritage is planning a West End showcase for British films and its plans could be merged with those of the BFI.

City Screen opens the two-screen Picture House Exeter, part funded by a National Lottery grant, nearly five years after planning permission was granted. It is the circuit's sixth site.

The Waterfront Greenock opens two additional screens for a total of four.

The Screen at Long Eaton has closed following the death of its proprietor.

The Bridge, the Sony/Studio Canal Plus venture to make European films, is to open a London office headed by Jonathan Darby to back films in English for distribution by Columbia/TriStar.

Daniel Elstein is the new chairman of the board of governors at the National Film and Television School.

The first Granada/Rank co-production under a new deal will be *Up on the Roof*.

Mark Cousins, director of the Edinburgh Film Festival since 1994, is to step down for a return to film making.

Estate agents Strutt and Parker set up a film location department in response to the demand for country houses and estates.

Studio space is in such demand that the big budget fantasy *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe* is put on hold while two other productions look at converting old warehouses into studios and Eon considers adapting a distribution depot near St. Albans for the next James Bond film as its previous base at Leavesden is fully booked. Elstree has yet to fully re-open under Council ownership.

New films in production include *Watch That Man* (later *The Man Who Knew Too Little*), *My Son The Fanatic*, *The Scarlet Tunic*, *Monarch*, *Miss Monday*, *The Winter Guest*, *B. Monkey*, *Mrs. Dalloway*, *Photographing Fairies*, *Preaching to the Converted*, *The Revengers' Comedies* (*Sweet Revenge*), *Under the Skin* and *Wildest*.

Films on location in UK and abroad include *Bring Me the Head of Mavis Davis*, *An American Werewolf in Paris*, *Shooting Fish*, *The Missing Postman*, *Oscar and Lucinda* and *Cameleon*.

Passing on: Beryl Reid, actress; L. P. Williams, art director.

The President's Annual Report 2021

Presented at the AGM on 28 July 2021

What a year it has been for everyone! So I hope you have all been able to stay safe and reduce the risks as far as possible. Since our last AGM at the end of October last year and through the pandemic, our Company Secretary Kathy continued to work from home - during this time, dealing with our busy membership renewal period and managing to prepare and send out all of our renewals for this year, the returns being collected weekly from Golden Square and taken to Bethnal Green for processing. This was managed by a small team of volunteers - namely, Jacky Simons, Richard Huhndorf, Vic Gallucci, Tim Potter and Tony Williams (for the banking) and a bit of help from myself. The Executive Committee also kept up to date via Zoom meetings, with the Membership Committee dealing with applications as they came in.

Sadly, we seem to have lost a few members who have not renewed, possibly due to cinemas not being open and members not being able to use their cinema passes. But the good news is, our cinemas are now open and you are able to use your passes again - and a big thank you must go to all our friends in the exhibition industry for continuing to let us use this concession, especially in these difficult times. I know I have said this before, but a small purchase from the kiosk or a coffee on the way out would not go amiss.

Could I just ask members who have not renewed yet: please do not forget us, we really need your support to continue running our organisation, paying the bills and getting back to normal by arranging visits and meeting our members around the country, which we have not been able to do for some time now.

I did actually get out on 17th June, as I was invited to the opening night of the Barnes Film Festival. This was due to the opening film, *Limbo*, directed by Ben Sharrock, being a fund-raising event in aid of the Film and Television Charity. Ben was a former recipient of a John Brabourne Award in 2017, which the BCTV supported with the charity.

You may have seen in your last VETERAN magazine the article regarding the founding of the Cinema Veterans. It was assumed that it was 1921, as a result of the tragic circumstances which surrounded the death of William Friese-Green, and this is the date shown on our BCTV lapel badge and on the front of our magazine. But articles do suggest it could have been later - in fact, 1924 - when Robert Paul was elected the first President at the first Veterans' Reunion in December. So that gives us time to arrange something appropriate to celebrate our Centenary in 2024. Which I think would make this the 97th AGM.

As usual in my Annual Report I do have a lot of people to thank. Firstly, our Honorary Treasurer Bob Stanesby for managing our finances throughout the year - which have been challenging, to say the least, but hopefully will improve given time. Our Honorary Independent Examiner Peter Samengo-Turner for reviewing our accounts for the year. Allen Eyles, our magazine editor who once again has done wonders getting out our last two magazines, and even managed to include the popular *That Was Then* 25 and 50 years ago in the last edition, which I know members enjoy - not forgetting our magazine designer, Angela Lyons. Jim Whittell, for keeping members up to date on our website with any BCTV/Cinema news helpful to members during the pandemic. Jacky Simons for the "Over Eighty" birthday cards she sends out each month for our members, which I know mean a lot, with the response we get back. Our BCTV Executive Committee for their support, and our President's Council who have given so much to our industry.

Lastly, I could not forget our amazing Company Secretary Kathy Darby, who the Executive Committee have agreed will be in future known also as our BCTV Executive Officer. Thank you, Kathy, for all your hard work you have done for us in these difficult times which is very much appreciated.

Finally, thank you all for coming today. It is so nice to welcome you back to our home on Golden Square.

Nigel Wolland MBE
President

Letters



Letters can be sent by post to **Editor - The Veteran**, 13 Tennyson Court, Paddockhall Road, Haywards Heath RH16 1EZ or by email to bctv.veterans@btopenworld.com

THE BRAD ASHTON RESPONSE

In the last issue's Letters, Bob Harvey wrote: "I came across Valerie Ashton's excellent article [*issue 168, page 26-7*] on her life with comedy scriptwriter Brad Ashton which made it abundantly clear that it was she who has been writing his one-liners all this time" etc. Brad Ashton's reply was too lengthy to fit into the last issue. Here it is. - *Editor*.

It's true, my wife's a great comedy writer, for which I take the credit. I ran a Comedy Writing School in the 1970s. Valerie was my most promising pupil. She lived up to that promise. Unfortunately, not also the promise to love, honour and obey. When I asked for her hand I didn't realise it would lead to being under her thumb. The Bible says women came out of a rib. Mine came out of a funny bone. She has a waspish wit, mostly directed at me. During our sixty years of married blitz, Valerie's barbaric barbs have been aimed at me. I guess it's my own fault. I put her on a pedestal and she's been looking down on me ever since.

Valerie's had at least one gag a week in the Peterborough Page of the *Daily Mail* for fifteen years. It's a weapon she uses to deflate my ego. Here are some of her savage salvos:

"Brad always puts up a big front. He can't help it. He eats too much."

"Once a week Brad cleans out the fridge...by eating all that's in it."

"When Brad goes on a diet all he loses is his sense of humour."

"As a lover I'd rate Brad as an 007...out of a hundred."

"Brad's a great saver. He saves every job for later on."

"Since I married Brad, my troubles have been over...many things."

"Brad never makes the same mistake twice. He keeps coming up with new ones."

"Brad's so tone deaf, when he sings deaf people refuse to watch his lips."

"I never know what's going on in Brad's mind. I don't think he does either."

"Brad refused to attend the birth of any of our three babies. He's always dodged issues."

"For a whole month Brad kept me in the dark. He forgot to pay the electric bill."

"My husband never profits from his mistakes. Especially when he bets on horses."

"Brad's terrified of elevators. He's always taking steps to avoid them."

"I made the biggest mistake on our wedding day. I should have kept the bouquet and thrown away the groom."

Do I ever dispute any of those claims? What's the use? It's just my word against hundreds of hers. When Valerie's around, I never speak out of turn. Mainly because I never get a turn. She seldom laughs when I say anything funny, so I'm cutting her out of my will. I figure if she doesn't get my jokes, she's not getting my money. In an effort to level the slaying



The unveiling of the Friese Greene sculpture in 1999 at Shepperton. Diana Thomson is seen with Freddie Francis. Alex Thomson took the photograph.

field I'd like to present the male side in this battle of the sexes. Here are a few outpours about her indoors.

"Valerie's never one to repeat gossip. You have to listen the first time."

"Valerie's excessively neat. She even cleans the windows on envelopes."

"These days nothing pleases Valerie more than housework. So that's what she does. Nothing."

"Valerie never admits her age, but at her last birthday party there were sixty candles...on the slice that I had."

"Valerie's a keen gardener. She doesn't just talk to her flowers, she argues with them."

"Valerie used to be a raving beauty. She's no longer a beauty, but she still raves."

"Marks & Spencer call Valerie The Bad Penny, because everything she buys she always returns."

"Valerie snores a lot. Especially when we're making love."

"Valerie's dyed her hair so many colours she has plaid dandruff."

"Valerie's easy to manipulate. I can make her do anything she wants to."

"Valerie's gags might be witty, but they're never as funny as her cooking. Eating her steak yesterday I broke three of my teeth. And that was just on the gravy."

"Valerie's insanely jealous. She banned me from the jogging club because she didn't like me running around with other women."

"Valerie's got into the habit of spending more money than she has. She says she's just copying the government."

"Since she took up driving, Valerie's doing a lot more reading than she used to. Mostly parking tickets."

"Yesterday Valerie picked up a hitchhiker, which is only fair. She's the one that knocked him down."

Despite all we've said, Valerie and I do have a lot in common. It's at the cemetery in Edmonton.

As the minister intoned at our wedding, "Till Death Do Us Part." It's either that or divorce, which other comes quicker.

BRAD ASHTON

LAST ISSUE'S FRONT COVER

Regarding William Friese Greene, I was surprised you were not able to name the sculptor of the featured bust of the great man. The bust was commissioned by the British Society of Cinematographers, which appointed Diana Thomson, BA FRBS FRSS, Fellow of the Royal Society of Sculptors, to produce her splendid work honouring the great man. Diana, of course, was the treasured wife on the one-time President of the BSC, the distinguished cinematographer Alex Thomson.

MIKE FOX (Camera Operator)
By email

(When I paused to photograph the bust of William Friese Greene at Pinewood in 2013, I did not envisage using it on the front cover of THE VETERAN and any note I took of the sculptor's name has been mislaid. A blow up of the full image proved too fuzzy to read the details on the plaque, the camera having been handheld.

I expected someone to identify the sculptor in due course but it was embarrassing to be informed by Veterans twice on the day the last issue appeared that the sculptor was actually a Veteran herself - Diana Thomson, widow of Alex Thomson. She has accepted my apology and recalls that the model for the sculpture was dressed in a turn of the century suit and tie supplied by Berman's, and equipped with a vintage roll of film. - Editor.)



I too have been intrigued by the William Friese Greene saga. Some vintage camera engineers dispute whether the Friese Greene camera was workable or not. My late brother David, who wrote handbooks on cinematography, did not believe the viability claim linked to the Friese Greene invention.

I had a special occasion in my life when I was presented with an elegant glass award by a great grandson of Friese Greene ten years ago based on that same statue with the piece of celluloid in the great man's hands. It is quite small, its measurements being 150mm high, 110mm wide and 80 mm deep.

Katy Hartley of www.lasercrystal.co.uk informs me: "Digital images of your award were produced by our in-house studio team prior to production. A 3D CAD design of the bust of William Friese Greene was then turned into hundreds of tiny micro-dots, each of which were engraved inside a large piece of optically pure crystal by a specialist laser. Each dot was positioned and programmed to the required intensity to make up the holographic image. My understanding is that it is the only Friese Greene Award that has been produced."

SIR SYDNEY SAMUELSON CBE
By email

NOW ADD THIS

An addition to the memorials of William Friese Greene: in 1974, The Harwich Society erected one in the front garden of 5 Cliff Road, Dovercourt, in Essex. The inscription on it reads: "William Friese Greene, inventor of Cinema photography and an early pioneer of colour photography, lived here 1897-1904."

DEREK THREADGALL
By email

NO LAUGHING MATTER

You invited anecdotes in the last issue. Michael Bentine asked permission to blow up a model of Television Centre in an episode of his programme *It's A Square World*. The memo refusing permission stated: "Television Centre is not to be used as a source of entertainment".

NEVILLE WITHERS
By email

CUTTING EDGE

I am busy clearing my dad's house and only yesterday came across my first edit suite... pic attached. Now that's old school.

COLIN GOUDIE
By email



CINEMA MEMORIES

I wonder if any Veterans have memories of the Everyman Cinema Hampstead that they would like to share? This small arthouse opened in 1933 in a former drill hall and survived as an independent repertory cinema, serving both the local Hampstead community and a wider audience of Londoners, until the year 2000 when it became the founding cinema of the present day Everyman cinema chain.

The cinema established a reputation for revivals of 'quality' films, whether foreign language, Hollywood or British and became particularly known for its seasons of directors or stars - the Marx Brothers, Orson Welles and Ingmar Bergman, for example. By the 1980s and 1990s, it may have become somewhat down at heel but remained renowned for its double and triple bills at bargain prices.

Please see my new website <https://everymancinema.history.co.uk> which aims to piece together the full story of this special cinema. If you worked there or attended films at the Everyman I would love to include your memories. The email address, also on the website, is research.everymanhistory@gmail.com

MARGARET O'BRIEN
By email

Several letters have been held over for lack of space.

New Members



These are some of the latest members to have been approved by the Executive Committee of the British Cinema and Television Veterans to join our ranks and they are warmly welcomed. The following short profiles have been compiled from details on application forms and supplementary research where necessary.

RICHARD GLEESON, North Harrow

He joined Panavision in September 1990 and is still employed there, as a senior driver in the transport department.

SANDY LIEBERSON, London NW1

Starting as an agent, he then formed Goodtime Enterprises in 1968, producing *Performance* (1970), and Visual Programme Systems with David Puttnam, producing *That'll Be The Day* (1973), *Lisztomania* (1975), *Bugsy Malone* (1976), etc. After producing *Jabberwocky* (1976), he became 20th Century Fox's V.P. International Production (1977-80) and President World Wide Production (1979-80), then V.P. International Production for The Ladd Company (1980-83), Chief of production for Goldcrest (1984-5), an independent producer (*Rita, Sue & Bob Too* [1987], *Stars and Bars* [1988], *The Mighty Quinn* [1989], *P.O.V.* [1990], *Frank & Jessie James* [1995], etc.), and MGM President International (1989-93). He designed the Producers curriculum at the National Film & Television School, has been course tutor at London Film School and is executive producer of *Voices of a Generation* TV series and, currently, *Ipccress File*, first of a TV series from Len Deighton books.

PAUL MITCHELL, Nottingham

He started in 1990 at Central TV/Carlton TV studios in Nottingham as a stage hand on such productions as *Peak Practice* and *Supermarket Sweep*. Since 2002, he has freelanced as standby props/set dresser on *24 Hour People* (2002), *Waterloo Road* (2005), *Casualty* (2004/8), *Marple* (2008), *Goodness Gracious Me* (2011/14), *Star Wars Rogue One* (2016), *The Mummy* (2017), *Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom* (2018), *Vida* (2019), *Grace and Frankie* (2019/20), *Viewpoint* (2021), etc.

JOHN STEVENSON, London NW3

He worked for the Jim Henson Company on *The Muppet Show* (1977-) and *The Great Muppet Caper* (1981). He freelanced in London during the 1980s and moved to the U.S. in 1991, joining Industrial Light & Magic (1996) and DreamWorks (1998-2010). He was art director/character designer of seven episodes of animated series *Back to the Future* (1991), and animation director/character designer/visual effects/motion capture performer/storyboard artist of TV series *The Moxy Pirate Show* (1994- 2000), and story artist on *Shrek* (2001), *Madagascar* (2005), etc. He directed *Kung Fu Panda* (2008, also voice), *The Polar Bears* (2012), *Sherlock Gnomes* (2018, also voice), etc. He is currently working on short film *Middle Watch* and animated features *Into That Silent Sea* and *The House on the Borderland*.

PAUL WELSH MBE, Borehamwood

Since 1984 he has organised special events at Elstree Studios and has acted as its volunteer Historian, for which he was awarded a Hon. MA. In 1988 he became Chair of the Save Elstree Campaign which resulted in victory after eight years. He was then appointed Chairman of Elstree Studios to oversee the rebuilding and relaunch of the semi-derelict studio, which culminated in Prince Charles opening two new giant sound stages in 1999, after which he stepped down. His books celebrating the studios of Borehamwood, *Elstree Confidential* and *MGM British Studios*, based on memories of fifty-plus years, are fund raisers for the local museum and for Elstree Screen Heritage, of which he is Chairman. He also writes a weekly column about the studios, which appears in five local papers and online versions.

JOYCE WHITTINGTON, Bedford

A cashier at the Granada/Cannon Bedford from 1972 to 1990, she was assistant manager at MGM Cinemas Bedford (1990-93), general manager of MGM Cinemas Watford (1993-95), then a company auditor to MGM/Virgin/ABC Cinemas in London (1995-97). She served as a company auditor at Cineworld from 2001 and became senior loss prevention and compliance manager, working in the UK and Europe, before being made redundant in January 2021 due to the closure of cinemas during the pandemic.

In Memoriam

GERALD BRADLEY, Christchurch
14/05/1938 - 08/04/2021

ROBERT CARTWRIGHT, Newbury
03/08/1930 - 26/08/2021

STUART CHANDLER, Horsham
08/06/1950 - 08/06/2021

DOUGIE (JAMES) FAIRBAIRN, Hampton
06/08/1928 - 15/07/2021

FRANK HEENEY, Potters Bar
02/02/1932 - 23/03/2021

JIM HIGGINS MBE, Wokingham
12/01/1923 - 03/10/2021

VERONICA HITCHCOCK, London
30/09/1931 - 27/07/2021

JOYCE KNIGHT, Harwich
18/01/1929 - 2020

BRIAN MCILMAIL, Chalfont St. Peter
14/04/1945 - 26/05/2021

WILLIAM PEARSON, Solihull
09/07/1931 - 2020

NIGEL SEAL, Thames Ditton
19/08/1950 -

JACK SOUTHERN, Manchester
08/11/1936 - 16/07/2021

KEVIN TRIBBECK, Swansea
12/06/1928 - 09/02/2021

TERENCE VAN SANTEN, Wraysbury
19/09/1940 - 21/01/2021

TONY WALTON, London
15/03/1945 - 26/05/2021

DR. CHRISTOPHER WOOLLARD, Sidcup
04/11/1953 - 10/09/2021

BACK COVER STORY

World War One on Film and in the Media: Representation & Remembrance, Art & Authenticity

KENT MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE

Stanhope Road, Deal, Kent CT14 6AD

01304 239515 info@kentmomi.org Concession: £5

Open: Friday, Saturday, Sunday & Bank Holidays, 11am - 5pm

Of all the means by which we remember World War I, none has proven as powerful as movies - "Animated Pictures", as they once were known - that is, still images that seem to move.

This exhibition seeks to understand, firstly, how cinema represented WWI - both during the war, when the medium itself came of age, and after the war, in documentaries and fiction films.

Secondly, how the war impacted the cinema, pushing it to new heights of technical and imaginative achievement, and installing a new world order of national cinemas.

Thirdly, what cinema did and could not do, compared to other media.

The exhibition tells its stories through: cinema and other posters; film clips; film stills, production photographs, fan photos, programmes, pressbooks, and business correspondence; illustrated magazines; photographs, postcards and stereocards; lantern slides; authentic WWI uniforms used in famous films; and original artefacts, like an aviation stuntman's golden helmets and a Moy & Bastie camera used to film battles on the Western Front.

And don't miss the British officers' "dugout", filled with items of entertainment and distraction, or "Comedy Corner", in which Charlie Chaplin figures in surprising ways.



Newsletter

Autumn 2021

Championing Better Mental Health

At the beginning of October The Film & TV Charity launched a new campaign to tackle the mental health challenges facing the industry. 'Let's Reset' is a 12-month campaign designed to tackle the stigma still associated with mental health by challenging common preconceptions, improving attitudes and behaviours across the industry, and by demonstrating the benefits of healthier, more supported, and inclusive working environments, including greater creativity, diversity, and retention of talent.

The Let's Reset campaign launches with the support of the organisations that make up The Film and TV Charity's mental health Task Force, and other leading bodies and organisations from across the industry, who are pledging to support and amplify a frank and open conversation about the meaningful changes needed to support mental health and wellbeing.

In 2020, when the charity announced its response to The Looking Glass Survey, its data showed as many as 9 in 10 people working behind the scenes in film and TV had experienced a mental health problem – well above the UK average – with stark evidence showing that working conditions, industry culture and lack of accessible support create conditions which mean mental health and wellbeing suffer. High incidences of bullying, racism and harassment have intensified the situation, and indicative results from an update to the Looking Glass Survey predict that the number of people feeling that the intensity of work

is having a negative effect on their mental health has risen by almost 20% to four in five in the last 12 months. The update to the survey also indicates that only 10% of those working in the industry believe it is a mentally healthy place to work.

Let's Reset

The Let's Reset campaign seeks to show individuals working in film and TV that the commitment to improving the industry's mental health and wellbeing comes from the top down, with senior leaders showcasing their support for the campaign and pledging to:

- Directly address underlying causes of poor mental health
- Encourage open discussion to challenge unhealthy behaviours
- Put specific support in place, including clear signposting of The Film and TV Charity's growing suite of support services available to anybody working behind the scenes in film, TV, or cinema
- Highlight the work being done internally and build on work being done by other organisations including BECTU, BAFTA, BFI, Coalition for Change, ScreenSkills and beyond

Rooted in behavioural science and co-created in consultation with individuals and organisations from across the industry, the campaign will move from awareness-raising in the initial launch phase to showcasing and amplifying tools and initiatives to improve the support available, while continuing to address the root causes of the mental health and wellbeing emergency in the industry through to September 2022.



Alex Pumfrey, CEO of The Film & TV Charity, said: "People in the film & TV industry are passionate about their craft, but their mental health is too often being strained to breaking point. Unhealthy working hours, bad practices, bullying, racism, harassment, and ableism are too common in an industry we all love, and all of us have a role to play in speaking up to create change. It's time to come together and reset by putting our mental health centre-stage and committing to changing a culture that impacts us all. The Let's Reset campaign is also an opportunity to ensure individuals are made aware of the support that is available. Yes, the charity's own services, including brand new resources to support the wellbeing of freelancers who too often feel unsupported, but also the excellent work from partners across the industry,

such as the guidance to prevent bullying, harassment and racism put in place by BFI and BAFTA, the recent publication of the Freelancer's Charter by the Coalition for Change, essential training from ScreenSkills, and the support available from BECTU, to name just a few. It's also a critical moment for senior leaders to showcase their own meaningful commitments to protect and support their people."

Anyone working in the film and TV industry who needs support can call the 24/7 Support Line on 0800 054 0000 to ask for professional advice and be connected with the best person to help. Let's Reset.

Don't forget to visit us on
Facebook at [facebook.com/FilmTVCharity](https://www.facebook.com/FilmTVCharity),
twitter [@FilmTVCharity](https://twitter.com/FilmTVCharity) or
Instagram at [instagram.com/filmtvcharity/](https://www.instagram.com/filmtvcharity/)

**Art & Authenticity,
Representation & Remembrance:**

WORLD WAR I

ON FILM AND IN THE MEDIA



KENT MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE

Stanhope Road, Deal, CT14 6AD

May-Sept.: 11am-6pm; Oct.-April: 11am-5pm

Friday-Sunday, Bank Holidays & by appointment

Website: www.kentmomi.org

