



The Veteran

ISSUE 187
APRIL 2026

The Magazine of
The British Cinema and
Television Veterans

Shooting Documentary

see page 7

Colin Clarke filming at the top of Angel Falls,
Venezuela, for Channel 4/Discovery, 1984.





British Cinema and Television Veterans

An association for those who have given more than 25 years to the cinema, film or television industries

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STAN FISHMAN CBE
(1930 - 2026)
BCTV President
2000 - 2004
Longstanding
Executive Committee
member



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

The Veteran

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SUMMER EVENT

VETERANS RALLY AT BRIGHTON

Wednesday 17 June 2026

Join fellow BCTV members for a day out at the seaside viewing a vintage film in the oldest operating cinema in the UK plus optional fish and chips.

We are delighted to be guests of the Duke of York's Picturehouse, Preston Circus, Brighton BN1 4NA for a screening of *GENEVIEVE* (1953), the classic comedy about the London to Brighton vintage automobile race – courtesy of Park Circus Films.

Either make your own way to the cinema or be guided on foot from Brighton Station. There are frequent trains from London. Less able members may find it easier to alight at Preston Park Station and board a 5 or 5A bus to Preston Circus or take a taxi from Brighton Station.

- 11.15 am Guided walk to cinema from Brighton railway station
- 11.30 am Gather outside the cinema for historical talk about the cinema and brief introduction to the film
- Noon Screening of *Genevieve*
- 1.45pm Depart cinema for optional fish and chips lunch at Bardsley's of Baker Street with its Max Miller posters on display

After lunch, we suggest you take a bus to the sea front to enjoy the regular tourist attractions of Brighton.

There is a charge of £5 per person (members' guests welcome) for the cinema visit which includes light refreshments.

To book your place, please email office@bctv.uk or phone 020 7287 2976 (Tuesday to Thursday). We will provide information on how to pay and book lunch as well as more visit details.

Booking closes Thursday 4 June lunchtime - limited to 50 places.



1910



2026



From the President

Firstly, I would like to acknowledge Stan Fishman, who served as our President from 2000 to 2004 and sadly passed away recently at the age of 96. His leadership was nothing short of transformative. As later President Jim Whittell aptly stated, "Stan brought BCTV back to life. Under his guidance, we became financially viable, ensuring the longevity of our beloved organisation". Stan's commitment did not end with his presidency though: he became President of the Cinema and Television Benevolent Fund and continued to serve on our Executive Committee. In 1997, he was awarded a CBE for services to the film industry. We are deeply grateful for his contributions.

I would also like to extend our heartfelt congratulations to the cinema operator and longtime Veteran Charles Morris on being awarded an MBE. This achievement is a testament to his unwavering commitment to the industry and the impact he has made. Equally important, his efforts have not only provided entertainment but have also fostered a sense of community and cultural enrichment. Charles, your dedication inspires us all.

As we look towards Spring, I am proud

to announce that BCTV has completed its renewal process. A special thanks goes to our Company Secretary and the dedicated volunteers who have worked tirelessly to ensure the membership cards are returned to each of you.

Additionally, we have recently received legacies from a couple of our members, which have significantly helped us rebalance the books. However, we still face challenges. The association does not yet have sufficient membership income to cover its outgoings! Therefore, we will continue to explore new avenues to increase membership and raise funds.

As awards season unfolds, with the BAFTAs and Oscars behind us and the Cannes Film Festival fast approaching, I want to take a moment to acknowledge the true driving force behind the magic we see on screen. Whilst the public eye is often drawn to the celebrated actors and directors, it is the dedicated workforce, past and present, who are the unsung heroes of our industry.

The films and television shows that captivated audiences worldwide are not simply conjured into existence. They are meticulously built, expertly shot, carefully edited, distributed and skilfully exhibited, all thanks to the expertise and

dedication of individuals like yourself. You are the backbone of this industry, the engine that kept it running, and the foundation upon which its success is built.

Without your tireless efforts, your unwavering commitment and your profound expertise, we simply would not have the thriving and successful film and television sector that we do today. From the seasoned Veterans who have shaped the industry for many decades to those who are new to the BCTV, each and every one of you has played a vital role in bringing stories to life.

You should all take immense pride in the part you played in entertaining the world. Knowing that your contributions are valued, your skills are respected, and your dedication is deeply appreciated. You are the megastars of the film and TV industry and your work makes all the difference. You may not have won an award but the BCTV recognises your hard work as an integral part of our collective success.

Spencer MacDonald



AGM 2026

Advance Notice is hereby given of this year's Annual General Meeting of British Cinema & Television Veterans Ltd.

It will take place in the Boardroom at the Film & TV Charity Building, 22 Golden Square, London. WC1F 9AD. Thursday 10 September 2026 at 12 noon

Further details and formal notice will be on the website and in the next issue of THE VETERAN.

RENEWALS

You should have received your new card if you have renewed – if not, please contact the office by email or phone.

We apologise for any issues you may have experienced in the early days of the renewal period using the website. The issue with payments was caused by an AI module which has since been turned off.

If you have not yet renewed for 2026/7, please do so as soon as you can. Those who haven't renewed will receive a reminder by email or by post.

From the Editor

It doesn't seem like more than twenty years since I took over editing THE VETERAN instead of contemplating retirement.

It has been an almost harmonious ride and I have enjoyed good support when I have asked for it, particularly from our Secretaries.

I have experienced the greatest satisfaction in recording something of the careers of those essential professionals whose work is taken for granted, overlooked and rarely appreciated by other than their colleagues. Likewise, I have enjoyed bringing back bits of entertainment history that would not have found daylight in any other magazine. It has been more of a challenge to revive television work, perhaps because Veterans from that area represent a minority (although substantial) of our membership and may not have kept records of their careers.

As I slow down in my eighties, particularly put out by the seemingly unnecessary (certainly unwanted) endless fiddling by Microsoft with Windows on my laptop, I wonder if there is among our membership someone younger (relatively speaking) who would be interested in collaborating on the task of producing the magazine with a view to taking it over further down the line. If so, then please contact me on allen@aeyles.plus.com or 01444 455763.

Allen Eyles

For Service to Cinemas: Charles Morris MBE

GILES WOODFORDE interviews the Veteran on his award of an MBE



Charles Morris with his late wife Judy.

The dawn of 2026 brought the extremely welcome news that Charles Morris has been awarded an MBE in this year's New Year's Honours list for "services to cinema in the North of England". As always in such cases, this concise citation does not detail the story behind the granting of the award. Getting in touch with Charles by email, I first ask if the MBE nomination came as a surprise.

"Yes, it did. There have been others associated with cinemas who have received one (Gerald Parkes, of the Parkway, Cleethorpes, on his deathbed, David Williams of WTW cinemas in the South West and Steve Reynolds who once had cinemas of his own and now books for several others; and at least one other person whose name escapes me) but if it was ever going to be me I might have expected it at times when I was more high profile; for instance when I saved Cottage Road Leeds from closure or when several of my cinemas reached their centenaries. On the other hand there are probably very few, if any, who have been involved in cinemas as long as I have; presently over 65 years, counting my childhood involvement."

That childhood involvement started when, at the age of 10, Charles decided he must try and save his local Winter Gardens in Hoyle from closure by displaying hand-painted posters publicising the cinema's programming outside his house. This resulted in the granting of an unofficial free pass to the cinema, and – crucially – the chance to visit the projection room. From there, Charles moved on to creating his own first cinema, as he described in a delightful 1988 article published in *Films at Home*:

"As a child I had exclusive use of a room which was soon converted from



*Picture House Keighley.
(Courtesy of Charles Morris.)*

model railway to cinema use. Twice a year friends, relations and neighbours were pressganged into attending slide shows in aid of charity, but primarily organised for the sake of giving a show. The room must surely have become a permanent cinema that day in 1966 when, without my father's knowledge, I knocked a porthole through to the adjacent toilet to accommodate a recently bought noisy 16mm projector. Later, the installation of 14 seats from my local cinema consolidated the conversion.

"Space suitable for a cinema was a prerequisite in the search for a home of my own when I married, and the final selection had a 20 feet long by 14 feet wide attic space. For the first three years films were shown occasionally, using a 16mm machine supported by boxes projecting on to the wall. The closure of the Pavilion at Ormskirk provided 20 seats and a number of these were soon assembled semi-permanently on wooden battens. Later still the screen curtains from the Olympia, Darwin, purloined during demolition, were cleaned, cut and trimmed to serve as drapes down each side to cover shelves of film and other cinema junk."

It is perhaps not surprising that Charles's



*Closed by subsidised competition and declining tourism: Royalty Bowness.
(Photographs by Harry Rigby.)*



Roxy Ulverston.
(Courtesy of Charles Morris.)



Plaza Sipton.
(Courtesy of Charles Morris.)



Cottage Road Leeds. (Photographs by Harry Rigby.)

parents were not keen on their son going into cinema operation, especially after the ad hoc toilet alteration. But his wife played a pivotal role in his future career.

"My late wife Judy was equally deserving of the MBE award and it is so sad that she did not live to see it. She was the one who encouraged me to run cinemas and actively participated in the building up and running of the circuit. My father was an important and respected solicitor and would, I am sure, have preferred that I joined that profession. My mother's brothers were out of work during the Depression and her attitude was that work was to be got through, not enjoyed, and you should be



Rex Elland. (Photographs by Harry Rigby.)

lucky if you had a secure job. They tried to discourage my interest in cinemas."

Charles's Northern Morris circuit currently consists of five cinemas, following the decision to withdraw from a sixth, the Royalty Bowness, in 2024: "a very sad parting", Charles tells me.

"I gave up my engineering career in 1992 in order to take it on, and my wife and I bought a house and moved to the area in order to operate it. I had a 25 year lease which actually expired in 2017 and with hindsight I should have given it up then; or certainly when lockdown occurred. But I just kept bashing on hoping that things would improve or that I could make them improve. The problems began back in 2000 when the Brewery Arts Centre in Kendal received a £3.5m lottery grant to build a twin screen cinema, and they still receive ongoing grants from various bodies including the Royalty's landlord, the local council. They showed mainstream films from the very start and took half my business away. And the tourist pattern has changed too, which affected things. It was very depressing clearing out 30+ years of accumulated equipment and other paraphernalia once it had closed. But we had some fantastic times there in the early days."

Charles has always enjoyed the hands-on mixing and matching of projection and sound equipment, and the whole business of getting a show on the screen. But entering a projection box nowadays, it has always struck me that digital projectors lack charisma and character – it's a bit like comparing a suburban multiple unit train with a steam locomotive.

"The whole digital thing is nowhere near as much fun as 35mm," Charles confirms. "The projectors are just boxes and no longer are there the interesting and unusual combinations of projector mechanism, soundhead and arc lamp which there once were. And in the 35mm days I could always get a show on the screen no matter what went wrong; and things seldom went wrong. Digital

equipment can fail without warning and you can't always put it right yourself. Quite often you can get repair or replacement bills well into four figures. In fact we had a problem at Ulverston only yesterday when the matinee film 'disappeared' from the projector's server. We had to show a good old reliable 35mm film to those who were prepared to remain! The whole digital changeover cost me about £250,000 just for the privilege of being able to remain in business; though I will admit that it's a lot easier to train people to operate it."

But what of the future? How does Charles see it developing?

"I think we all originally thought that at the end of lockdown there would be a massive influx of people back to the cinema. Alas, this did not happen, and five years later it is difficult to envisage that attendances will ever return to pre-lockdown levels, for anybody. Nevertheless, I still get tempted and am going to look at a potential opportunity very shortly. But I doubt if I could be persuaded to shell out huge sums of money on a new venture at this stage - plus I decided after taking on Cottage Road Leeds that I wouldn't wish to take on anywhere which is further away than that." 

This article first appeared in the Cinema Theatre Association Bulletin for April-June 2026 and is reproduced with permission.

Charles Morris recalled his career in The Veteran, issues 120 (Autumn 2008), 122 (Spring 2009), 126 (Spring 2010) and 128 (Autumn 2010), reprinted in Picture House no. 38, 2013.

Shooting Documentary

Documentary cameraman and Veteran **COLIN CLARKE** looks back on an adventurous career in extracts from his new book *The Cameraman's Cut*

Colin Clarke's new memoir *The Cameraman's Cut* recounts tales of braving Arctic extremes at the North Pole and filming cave-dwelling crocodiles in Madagascar, documenting the British homeless in cardboard shelters and living alongside tree-dwelling cannibals in New Guinea. He has walked among the enigmatic statues of Easter Island, filmed Royals in Buckingham Palace and rock'n'roll royalty at the inception of MTV. He also shot TV series on ancient civilisations, stories of pre-and post-perestroika Russia, arts, science and current affairs.

His story begins in Swinging Sixties London as a teenage photographer's assistant, before studying at the fledgling National Film and Television School. From there, he built a freelance career as a documentary cinematographer.

More than a travelogue of exotic encounters, it chronicles fifty years of factual television's evolution — stylistically and technically — from 16mm and Super16 film, through analogue video, to the digital revolution, reshaping not just the workflow but also the grammar of documentary cinematography.

This selection of excerpts offers a taste of the story.

Ankarana, Madagascar, 1987 (excerpt)

The next day, we came to the precipitous edge of a massive sinkhole. One hundred and ten metres below, we could see a forest-surrounded lake that disappeared into a cave. The abseiling gear was broken out, and [caving expert] Sheila was now in her element. This was good action value for the film. For me, it was a challenge to get enough angles to capture the drama. Great as it would be to be spontaneous with such things, the reality was very different. I filmed handheld up close for preparations and point-of-view over the edge, and then we scrambled to the far side of the abyss, from where I could capture a wide-angle vista showing the scale of the situation. Communicating with Sheila via walkie-

talkies, we coordinated a variety of long lens shots—an over-cranked slo-mo shot following the 'static' rope uncoiling as it plunged down the sheer face, along with close-ups of [director and expedition leader] Phil's descent. As the whole team had to go down individually, there were opportunities for other shots where faces and outfits were unrecognisable. For our own descents, in the middle of the process, we were happy to concentrate on abseiling technique and safety rather than carrying any kit or trying to film.

Once at the bottom, we carried on shooting from there. This was real *Lost World* territory. Canoes were inflated, and we paddled into the unknown, swallowed up by another of Ankarana's networks of darkness. It was no environment for a claustrophobe; the stream narrowed, and

the ceiling lowered. I soon discovered the importance of our helmets. Once again, our only source of light was head torches. It made for some atmospheric POV shots and a good dialogue sequence, with the beams of the team's torches illuminating one another.

We could hear fast-running water ahead — this would be exciting. We disembarked onto the rocks when we neared the white-water rapids and surveyed the situation. Being the designated canoe master, I sussed the options and advised that it was feasible to canoe them and film the action. The nature of inflatables is such that you can feel through your bottom or feet as you slide over submerged boulders; the flexibility of the hull wraps itself around the undulations of the water-smoothed rocks. It was exhilarating paddling, but trickier was trying to keep a foothold on the slippery stones while setting our battery lights and scrambling to a shooting position. I did fall and nearly dunked the camera but instinctively protected it instead of myself. Tim [assistant camera] calls it my 'Excalibur' moment, with an outstretched arm holding the cherished symbol of my professional purpose, rising defiantly from the water. He dutifully relieved me of the camera as I was helped to my feet. Nursing a bloodied knee and, inspecting the gash to my helmet, I stood upright and bashed my head on the jagged cave roof! No lasting damage was done, and in due course, the river delivered us to another opening, with more forest to be explored and data to be gathered.

Three weeks into our stay, we were down to eating tinned sardines and dried bananas. Tim and [local guide] Blaid offered to drive the seven-hour round trip to the nearest village to buy provisions. Tim volunteered to give our support guys a break and cook dinner. We had no refrigeration in camp, so the anticipation of a freshly cooked meal was a real treat and a one-off. [Sound recordist] Paul and I eagerly helped out washing, peeling



Filming the subterranean rapids in the Ankarana Massif, Madagascar, for *National Geographic*, 1987.

and chopping as Tim's culinary creativity flourished over the kerosene burners. We were each served a large plate of chicken and vegetables in an enticing-looking sauce. We enthusiastically dug in and simultaneously spat out. Our bush kitchen store had two identical five-litre plastic bottles — one contained cooking oil and the other, washing-up liquid!

[Nature cameraman] Jim had been hard at work gathering shots of a multitude of wildlife. On the rare occasions we were moving and working together, I was amused to see him grab insects and lizards and pop them into plastic containers for future stardom (sometimes as prey). He told us of his footage of blind cave fish, shrimps, and amphibians, but wisely, he had not ventured alone into the below-ground waters known to be home to the world's only cave-dwelling crocodiles. These are of the same ancient lineage as the Nile Crocodile; they grow up to six metres and periodically come to the open to hunt, often feeding on domestic cattle. There had been many incidents of local people being dragged into the river and devoured, and myths of spirits inhabiting these caves. This was to be our next foray.

Michael was the team's local naturalist and the expert on crocs. Unfortunately, on the morning of the trip, a scorpion stung him on the bum through the groundsheet of his tent; the poor guy had a high fever and had to stay behind.

From our base camp, it was an off-road drive around the massif's periphery to a different entry point. Here we made camp. The plan was to go in light-handed and recce the situation. We inflated the canoes and dragged them to the river. They floated fine with the kit, but they went aground as soon as we boarded. The water level was too low, so we had to walk the canoes into the black chasm — was this wise? We were working on the assumption that crocodiles are 'solar powered' and would be apathetic in the dark — is that true? For a while, all we could see were areas of the stream at our feet, black rock picked out by our helmet lamps and the occasional bat briefly caught in the beam. All we could hear was the bats and our footsteps splashing through the water. It was eerie. The river deepened, and we boarded the canoes. Now, I felt a little less vulnerable. Then, I caught a glimpse of two fiery red points of light picked out by my beam. It was at water level and about eight metres away — our first crocodile encounter. It watched us for a few seconds and silently submerged without creating a ripple. We paddled on gently until we came to a large chamber. Scanning the water's surface, we could now see several individuals. Some were in the water, others lazing on rocks — all eyes on us. We were the intruders in their dark, silent world. It was unsettling in the extreme, though tempered with a sense of awe. Then came the thought of what to do if attacked. Oh, that's easy — poke out its eyes with your thumbs or jam its jaws open with a tripod. I think I'll just give in to the inevitable.

They seemed docile, so we carried on with the business of getting some shots. It was surprisingly straightforward. Roy was Sheila's caving number two, and he was extraordinarily blasé and reckless. He volunteered to be a human lamp stand for the SunGun and moved across the rocks to the various positions that I requested for the required angles of light. We set up the tripod on a convenient rocky ledge. I captured a selection of shots of somewhat bewildered crocs slithering into the water, eyes submerging, and some extreme close-ups. That was much easier than I had anticipated, and we returned to our temporary camp, satisfied. We now needed to tie in a sequence with the exploration team canoeing through the caves.

Early in the morning, we took all our lights and generators deep into the cave. As the water level was low, there was a saturated sand river bank along which we could carry our stuff. On returning for a second load, I noticed a slither mark and giant croc footprints, suggesting a much more substantial animal than the two-metre specimens we had filmed. It must have crossed my path in the previous few minutes. A shiver ran down my spine; it was a sharp reminder not to become complacent while we were preoccupied with filming. Roy, however, was undaunted as he waded chest-deep through the water, carrying lamps with stands above his head and running 16-amp power cables with connectors through the river. They are considered waterproof, but I don't think they are designed to be submersible [we had petrol generators and tungsten lamps]. What the crocodiles made of all the commotion, bright lights and shouting, I can't imagine. Still, they kept it to themselves and looked on as we spent the day recreating the intrepid and chilling expeditionary components of the adventure.

Upon returning to base camp, we told Michael the details. Still nursing an inflamed backside, his reaction was one of utter disbelief. Had he been there, he would have forbidden us to take such risks.

Korowai – The Price for Sorcery, Papua New Guinea 1995 (excerpt)

We follow Yowo [Nandup family clan principal Korowai protagonist, along with his brother Bulawao] back to his bachelor tree house. As we film him, silhouetted against the daylight of the clearing, he engages in a shouted two-way conversation with Bulawao in his home about 40 metres away. This is a magical scenario, and when they finish, I ask if he would be happy to have a further such exchange in about thirty minutes (Fenelun was the timekeeper). Tim [sound recordist] gaffer-tapes a radio mic to a roof support and plants another in Bulawao's platform. We climb to our treetop eyrie, from where I can pan back and forth between the two houses. It has the makings of a powerful and poignant sequence.

The festival hut has now become the centre of all activity. As the days pass, more helpers gather. They socialise in the hut and sleep on any available floor space. The time for the festival approaches. Women arrive laden with newly processed sago starch, jungle greens, fruit and vegetables, both gathered and cultivated. Yowo, as the party host, collects and distributes food from the centre of the hut, an honorary position he'll occupy throughout the festival.

As in the tree house, the women and men establish their own separate spaces. This is not strictly enforced, and during the festival, there is ample opportunity for flirtation. Although the main event is still a couple of days away, there is a buzz of excitement in the air. Yonale is already in a party mood. He is wearing his sexy cockatoo feather in his hair and entertaining his friends with innuendo jokes. There's a delightful moment where he has everyone's attention. I'm on a big closeup. His eyes are sparkling, his mouth neatly framed in a circular quill attached through his nose piercing. Grinning from ear to ear, he says, *"The girls came to my house only to look at my cockatoo feather."* A chorus of laughter. *"Heys"* and *"Whoops"* follow. He pauses and, with a self-satisfied smile and the timing of a pro comedian, he looks straight down the lens and exclaims, *"Good, eh?"* (sourced from later translation).

Bones from birds' and bats' wings are popular as nose ornaments. Both women and men adorn themselves with anything attractive that their surroundings have to offer. Girls make new grass skirts out of young sago leaves so as to look their best. Although the light levels are very low inside, the shape of the light and the large amount of smoke from fires and tobacco make for a very moody look and with careful camera positioning and choice



Korowai Girl. New Guinea, for Discovery Channel, 1995.



Family lunch on Bulowal's treehouse verandah, New Guinea, for Discovery Channel, 1995.



The crew on a Korowai-built shooting platform. From left: Colin, John Beecroft (assistant), Tim White (sound), New Guinea, for Discovery Channel, 1995.

of exposure, it is possible to evoke the atmosphere that we are experiencing.

The moment of truth is nigh. The Nandups, their friends and helpers apprehensively head out to the felled palm trees that had been prepared three months ago, hoping that the grub harvest will be fruitful. Yowo and his team unwrap the first tree. It is stripped and pulled apart with disappointing results. Many cocoons are empty. The larvae have morphed into beetles and flown away, and he's worried they have left it too late. I feel awful. After all, the delay has been our fault. However, others are having more luck, and many of the hundred or so rotting trees are heaving, and the squirming grubs are quickly separated from their cocoons. The healthiest are about two inches long — plump with black heads. There are beetles, too, and many other creepy crawlies that the kids grab and put straight into their mouths. The overall yield is disappointing, but hopefully, there will be sufficient food for the guests to feast on. Thousands are collected and encased in large packages woven from leaves and taken to the festival hut for overnight storage. These will be cooked and served to the guests on the following day.

Yowo is anxious. For him, a great deal rests on the success of this festival. This is the climax of months of preparation and material outlay. Will there be enough guests? Will there be sufficient food? Will the rain hold off? Will people enjoy themselves? I am anxious. For me, a great deal rests on the success of the festival filming. This is the climax of the core story of the film. Will the rain hold off? Will the guests accept our intrusion? Will I get the variety of footage I need? Will the minimal amount of artificial light at my disposal see us through the night?

Party day is upon us. Once again, my biggest technical and creative challenge is the lighting for when it gets dark. The viewer needs to see what's going on, but I have to create the illusion that it is unlit, all the while causing minimum disruption for the revellers. The small fires in the hut can only contribute a touch of flicker in the

shadows on those closest. We clamp my three 100w Dedolights in the roof supports to give pools of side and backlight. They are each powered by a fully charged car battery and connected via a long lead concealed among the leaves. We rig the 800w Redhead lamp in a tree with a light blue colour correction gel to give some 'moonlight' on the area in front of the hut. In order to keep the noise level from the generator to a minimum, we run a long power cable into the bush. There's much guesswork as everything has to be rigged in advance. I'll be using my fastest lenses and fastest film and working at the lowest limits of the technology and chemistry.

We have sent scouts, from Maria's helpers, into the bush to warn us when the visiting tribesfolk are approaching. We climb up into the Wendy house [a treehouse built by/for the kids], which I hope will give us a good bird's eye view of the arrival. It does not disappoint. We hear the chants long before we see anyone. In due course, the guests emerge from the forest, singing and performing. There must be close to one hundred. Adorned with their finest body accessories and dressed as if for combat, the visitors and hosts perform a mock war dance, moving around the hut's exterior in opposing directions. The men and boys punch the air with their bows and arrows. Some have large, colourfully decorated shields. Mothers, with babies in string slings or infants on their shoulders, bounce up and down in time with the music. With a selection of lens lengths, the top shots I am getting are magic.

I just hope I have left enough time for us to get down and shoot observational footage among the action before they tire out. My adrenaline is pumping, as is theirs. They have no intention of slowing down. To use well-established filmmakers' jargon, we 'shoot the shit out of it'. I have what I need outside and move into the hut where Yowo is already cooking the first course of grubs in sago flour pancakes. I grab an extra angle of the dancing and bow play framed from the inside, looking out and, as if on cue,

they 'conga' in through the rear opening, through a convenient shaft of smoke-laden sunlight from a ventilation gap in the roof, and out the other end. They have quite a repertoire of different dance steps and chants. A curious mixture of harmony and cacophony, as well as whistling from the women. They are in a rapturous trance. It is also a heady experience for John, Tim and me. The revelry continues through the night. Their energy seems endless, only pausing to feast on the fare, banter, and flirt. To complete nature's cycle, the men return the now redundant food leaf wrappings to the forest with a special ceremonial dance.

Eventually, the exhausted and sated revellers succumb to slumber, huddled in small groups on the party hut floor. Yowo can sleep well in the knowledge that his sago grub festival has been a great success.

Presenter-Led

Presenter-led documentary series come in many forms, as do presenters. Dr. David Bellamy was a botanist, environmentalist, broadcaster and writer with instantly recognisable facial features surrounded by wiry white hair, a matching beard and an endearing speech defect; many a standup comic affectionately mimicked him. A true eccentric, beloved by the British viewing public, he would invariably appear in shot in the most unlikely way to deliver his 'piece to camera' (PTC) in his signature enthusiastic and energetic style. For *Blooming Bellamy*, one chilly spring morning in the Kew Royal Botanic Gardens, David, fully dressed, clambered into a pond, drew a deep breath, submerged himself long enough for the ripples to disburse and, on a cue from me, popped his weed-covered head from below the water to deliver his ebullient PTC.

Taking a comic approach to a serious subject can be an effective means to get a point across. *Sex, Drugs and Dinner* is about starving labourers in developing countries slaving to produce profitable cash crops for the West. Alexei Sayle, the prominent satirical comedian and

actor, fronted the film with a style that was a Pythonesque, sarcastic comedy performance befitting his on-screen persona.

I shot a short travelogue film, *Jackie Chan's Hong Kong*. Jackie, an icon of Hollywood action cinema and a legendary figure in the world of martial arts, is a megastar on his home territory and was mobbed by adoring fans wherever we went. He had an enchanting manner and a cheeky smile. He didn't only talk to the camera, but he would faux-attack it with strikes, punches and kicks to within a centimetre of the lens — seriously freaky when looking through the viewfinder and trying not to flinch! He took us to his favourite restaurant for an authentic Chinese meal. I'm a sucker for dim sum or crispy Peking duck, but duck's tongues, chicken's feet, and pigs' ears are only one step up my culinary experience ladder from the Korowai's Sago Grubs!

Tim Copestake was pursuing a niche in producing presenter-led documentaries about ancient civilisations. There were many wonderful, photogenic locations, but the subject matter often felt static. Tim and I were keen to inject some dynamic 'cinematic' production values. The trouble is we didn't have cinematic budgets or schedules to play with. Today's lightweight electronic stabilising gimbals were not around, and there was rarely the chance to hire grip crews with dollies, cranes and mounts, or Steadicam equipment and operators. I had invested in a lightweight dolly and plastic tracks. Out of doors, a conventional dolly would have steel tracks on top of plywood boards laid by grips with the aid of blocks, wedges and a spirit level. Though I did carry a bag of wooden wedges, the plastic tracks were usually laid directly on the rough ground in all sorts of uneven environments, including caves, mines and forest floors. They were not designed for this, but if the shots were carefully chosen, the tracks would yield to absorb any bumps.

I also had a first-generation ABC Top Shot crane assembled from interlocking aluminium tubes and mounted on a tripod. It was a Heath Robinson affair with adjustable cords and pulleys to control the camera angle as I lowered or lifted the jib arm. A degree in higher mathematics would have helped with calculating the geometry so the camera would tilt down to the right degree as the jib arm rose — we made do with trial and error. The rise had an excellent lens/height range from ground level to nearly five metres. We improvised counterweights from sand, rocks, or water because the barbell weights I used in the UK were not excess baggage-friendly. To monitor the shots, we connected a new-fangled monochrome video 'tap' that relayed a low-resolution image from the film camera viewfinder to an LCD monitor.

Professor Bettany Hughes is a highly respected classicist, historian, author and broadcaster—another consummate



Bettany Hughes in position for a PTC (*Piece To Camera*) in *Anda Lucia*, for Channel 4, 2004.



Jackie Chan delivers a PTC (*Punch To Camera*) in *Hong Kong*, 2001.

professional. As we set up a shot, she would wander around, apparently talking to herself, formulating her lines. Bettany can bring history to life through storytelling, weaving historical facts, anecdotes, and narratives together. She would address the camera and enchant the audience with a hint of a smile, often in a closeup.

Tim directed two series with her. Shot mainly in Granada, Cordoba and the Moroccan city of Fes, *When the Moors Ruled in Europe* was about the changes Islam made to Europe during the Moors' 700-year reign in Spain and Portugal, ending in the 15th century. The second was *Athens: The Dawn of Democracy*, which was about the 'Golden Age' of Ancient Athens and how it became the first democracy 2,500 years ago. A privilege of this style of documentary-making is the special access to some extraordinary sites at times when they are closed to the public. To feel the history and express the atmosphere of the Alhambra in Granada or the Parthenon in Athens without the distraction of tourists wandering around adds authenticity to the stories we tell.

Graham Hancock is a master of talking to the camera. His easy-going, engaging manner, balancing speculation with hard evidence, captivates the audience. If he believes it himself, he could convince you that a square wheel is more effective than a round one — usually in a single take.

He had, and still has, a massive international following. At the time, it was through selling books and appearing on television; today, it is also online with regular appearances on the *Joe Rogan Experience* podcast. He is a best-selling

author with his thoroughly researched alternative theories on prehistory. Graham does not see himself as a professional historian but as an investigator and journalist, and he ruffles many feathers along the way.

I am all for challenging the establishment in all areas of life. Regarding his theories, it is not my place to give an opinion. However, it was my place to squeeze out the best-looking images from many wondrous locations. I worked with Tim on two series based on two of Graham's books.

In *Quest for the Lost Civilisation*, Graham presents his hypothesis that the orthodox theory of human prehistory is flawed. By examining myths and legends from various cultures and reinterpreting clues from ancient sites that are continents apart, he uncovers hidden evidence of a shared human heritage. He builds a compelling case for the existence of a lost, culturally advanced maritime civilisation that thrived on a global scale, only to be nearly wiped out by a cataclysmic sea level rise caused by a comet colliding with Earth. Such an impact would have melted the ice sheets and caused tidal waves, unleashing flooding on a devastating scale and bringing an end to the last Ice Age over 10,000 years ago — was this the work of the gods? The survivors travelled the world passing on their knowledge — a legacy of wisdom and a warning to the future.

His theory includes the idea that these ancients understood the concept and significance of precession (the Earth's wobble on its axis). He proposes that their architects aligned significant monuments with specific celestial constellations during defined times in its twenty-six thousand years cycle. This knowledge was passed down the ages and is reflected in the construction of monuments such as the Egyptian, Mayan and Aztec pyramids.

The first of four trips started near the village of Callanish on The Isle of Lewis in Scotland's Outer Hebrides archipelago. We were there to film an impressive five-thousand-year-old stone circle overlooking the Atlantic Ocean. Within an hour of our chartered plane landing on the Stornaway airstrip, we were filming Graham by the stones telling us about astronomical alignments, and we worked through sunset and then shot a mid-summer moon alignment. This happened after 11:30pm as it was mid-June and far North. We were up again at 3:30am to position a shot where two megaliths with kinks carved into them aligned to target sunrise on the summer solstice.

They were long days and short nights, but it didn't stop there. The nature of the story demanded solstices and equinoxes in scattered locations, and we had to be seven hundred miles south at Stonehenge for the next sunrise (it was cloudy anyhow, so we could have shot at any time). The following day was the solstice sunrise in Carnac, the world's biggest megalith site, in Brittany, France. Along with aeriels at each location and filming modern-day Druids, we, the



Graham Hancock speaks to camera after a dive in Micronesia, on his Quest for the Lost Civilisation, Channel 4, 1997.



Jibbing with the ABC Crane at Angkor Wat, Cambodia, Quest for the Lost Civilisation, 1997.

crew, could have retired on the overtime payments and penalties had it been a few years earlier when the ACTT union was all-powerful!

Though there was a degree of public awareness of humanity's abuse of the planet, the term 'carbon footprint' wasn't coined in 1997. I would not like to calculate the number of miles we would fly over the coming three trips. On trip two alone, we flew eighteen commercial flights and three aerial filming flights in thirty-two days.

Travelling with forty cases of equipment, filmstock, and personals is a chore. There are usually airport porters with large carts who are glad for the business. Then you have to haul everything to customs, where the wad of preprepared paperwork, in the form of a British customs 'Carnet de Passage', is scrutinised. Randomly selected items and their serial numbers are checked against the detailed list. Invariably, a lens with a £12,000 value tag from page one and, from page five, a disposable battery for an exposure meter buried at the bottom of the bottom case in the pile. Once the local customs officer is satisfied (or, in certain countries, bribed), they will gleefully ink their stamp and thump it on each page. This procedure happens again in the country of arrival. The next step is to check in to the flight. At this juncture, it is smiles and well-rehearsed charm (or, in certain countries, bribes) to acquire the best possible deal for excess baggage. We have to maximise hand baggage; most vitally, it is the film stock, often including the extremely valuable unprocessed exposed film.

First, you must convince security that their beloved X-ray machines are not film-safe. If they insist on checking inside a can, the assistant would get out a film-changing bag. Then, having removed the tape that seals the can, put it inside, direct the officer to slip his hands into the light traps, open the can, feel inside the inner bag and then close it up again. It is stressful, and it's a palaver.

Seven of us travelled on this series: Tim, Stef Wickham, the co-producer; Catherine Brandish, my assistant; Danny Hambrook on sound; Graham and his wife and photographer, Santha Faiia, and myself.

After thirty-three hours of travelling from a grey, overcast London, we finally arrived at Cambodia's colourful, overcast Siem Reap. It was the rainy season and lived up to the description, with extended downpours and electric storms. Bicycle rickshaws weaved through the motor traffic, and massively laden trailers towed by 75cc motorbikes transported their wares. The inviting smells of street food mingled with exhaust fumes, market stalls filled every spare space, and a sea of umbrellas was on the move.

As we drove through town, I commented to our fixer/driver how beautiful and well-postured the young women were. He immediately offered me his sixteen-year-old niece, who was "looking for a European

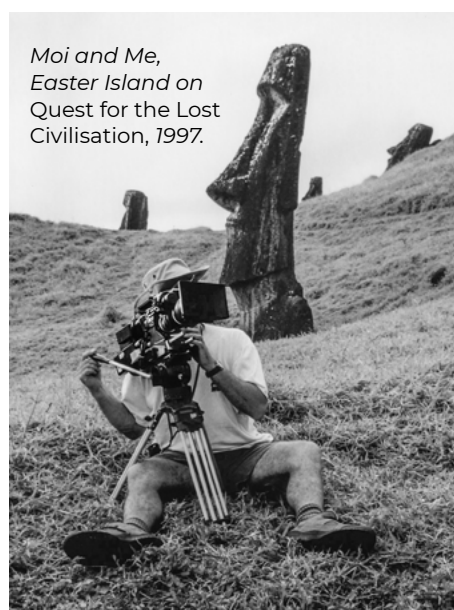
husband." I explained that I was taken but would see what I could do.

We were here for the main reason that most outsiders go to Siem Reap — to visit the magnificent masterpiece of ancient Khmer architecture, Angkor Wat. It was built in the eleventh century as a Hindu temple dedicated to the god Vishnu. Later, the country converted to Buddhism, and now monks wander in contemplation, their orange robes a delightful contrast to the grey sandstone walls.

We filmed Graham and Santha walking through the grounds, passageways, and intricate galleries, pointing out the bas-reliefs, carvings, and inscriptions as Graham expressed his interpretation of their meanings. The weather-worn walls had very little contrast, so we side-lit the details with battery lamps or collapsible silvered reflectors to make them stand out.

We featured the rainy conditions — after all, we will have plenty of sunshine and blue skies in our later locations. But a crucial part of the narrative is the sunrise on the spring equinox, and that required some clear sky. Also, we needed dry weather for aerial filming, which offered a vital plan view of the area's seventy-two major temples laid out mirroring constellations as they were orientated 10,500 years ago. In line with Graham's premise, seventy-two is a precessional number as the world's axis shifts one degree every seventy-two years. Also, various precessional numbers feature in the dimensions and alignments of the temples. I will not attempt to go deeper into the mathematical aspects as my head may explode. Suffice it to say, Graham suggests that these builders were masters of maths and astronomy and had built an interface between ground and sky. Angkor was built just 800 years ago, but recent satellite photos reveal very much older structures beneath.

We had three and a half days in Siem Reap, and the gods of the ancients smiled



Moi and Me, Easter Island on Quest for the Lost Civilisation, 1997.

upon us on day four. We were positioned dead centre, lined up in front of the main temple before dawn. The sun rose, silhouetting the stunning towers. The sky slowly transitioned from darkness to a beautiful array of colours, with orange, pink and purple hues mirrored in the reflecting pools in the foreground. It was a couple of days after the actual equinox, and I could see the sun appearing a little off-centre, so I quickly shifted the tripod a few feet to the left — there'd be no take-twos! The orange sun perched momentarily on the top of the central tower. The sight was magnificent, but there was no time to relish the moment; every second was precious as we built a sequence featuring Graham and Santha's reactions.

All too soon, the sunrise was over, but the morning light was gorgeous, and we had to milk it for all it was worth. We took various craning and tracking shots around the site and squeezed in the aerials before flying on to Phnom Penh.

That evening, Stef took Danny and me to a bar he had found on the recce a few months earlier. It was named 'The Heart of Darkness' after the Joseph Conrad book on which Frances Ford Capola's Vietnam War film *Apocalypse Now* was based. We got there by the local taxi transport called 'xi om' — pillion on small 75cc motorbikes. It was a buzzing place, with a mixture of ex-pats and locals. We sat down and ordered a drink, and the waiter placed a complimentary snack dish on the table. Was it peanuts? Maybe olives? No, it was a generous portion of marijuana leaves (fortuitously, Stef had some skins with him!). From what little I remember of that evening, we had a wonderful time with delicious food, beer like nectar and a colour-infused environment that swirled. Danny only stayed a short while, the party-loving Stef remained till the early hours, and I left at a much too sensible time in anticipation of our early start the next morning. As I floated out of the door, I was mobbed by 100 eager 'xi om' drivers (it was probably ten), all fighting for my custom. Dazed and confused, I jumped onto the nearest bike and yelled my hotel name, and we blasted off with a jerk, accelerating to 80mph (it was probably thirty). I held on for dear life as we snaked through the chaotic traffic. Of all the supposedly hazardous activities I had undertaken in the pursuit of documentary filming, this was the closest to potential death I had ever felt.

We lost a day to bad weather and frustrating flight cancellations, but a few days (and a few flights) later, we found ourselves on the beautiful island of Yonaguni, Japan's westernmost — though it is 1,200 miles from the mainland and only 67 miles from Taiwan. Graham and Santha were guests of Japanese industrialist Yasuo Watanabe, who owned a substantial chunk of the island and an exotic mansion on a cliff top. He was also hosting John Anthony West and Robert Schoch, expert contributors and friends of Graham, who would appear on screen every so often

during the programmes, and a few of Watanabe's business colleagues. We stayed in a hotel but still enjoyed his luxurious hospitality in the form of the most delicious BBQ feast — possibly the finest meal I have experienced before or since. His Cordon Bleu chef and team served a non-stop stream of every imaginable seafood, meat, vegetable and confection, all exquisitely seasoned and presented — my mouth is watering as I write.

Tech Moves On

As a cameraman/owner, you develop a relationship with your camera and lenses. Your fingers instinctively know where to go for all the settings. You can feel the focus and adjust it with the subject as it or you move. With film, everything was mechanical. You could hear if there was a problem with the film transport mechanism. On my first Aaton camera (7a), there were no electronics at all; the second (XTR) had through-the-lens metering and a timecode option, an early scheme for encoding a signal in the frame margins that offered post-production synchronisation with audio and with other cameras when required. The image was directed to the viewfinder via a prism from the mirrored revolving shutter onto a ground-glass screen with markings that showed the picture edges. You could usefully see outside of the picture area to accurately anticipate when a character was about to step into the shot, to gauge if the boom mic is in danger of entering the shot, or if a lamp or other unwanted artefact or person is at risk of appearing in the shot.

Portable single camera, broadcast quality, analogue video arrived on the scene in the early 1980s. Although it was great for news gathering and fast-turnaround programming, the image quality was a step backwards. The cameras were cumbersome and unergonomic; the viewfinders displayed a low-resolution monochrome image, and the sound recordist, who had been freed from a physical hookup to the camera since the '70s, once again required a cable connection. Film was still the capture format of choice for quality documentary and drama productions, but you can't halt the march of progress or the influence of production budgets. The cost of video and film cameras were similar, but a 40-minute videotape cassette cost £14 and needed no processing, and an 11-minute roll of 16mm film stock plus processing cost £160.

I reluctantly worked on video when required, and it was invariably on the day-to-day jobs that paid the bills between the more substantial shoots. I learned to adapt my lighting and choice of shots to minimise its limitations. Often a director would say, "I want to go for a film look," to which I would reply, "Then let's shoot it on fucking film!" Well, maybe not out loud — I'd stick on a Promist diffusion filter to reduce the electronic 'edge' and flash a smile.

However, in the mid-'90s, the game-changer came: a digital video camera, the Sony Digibeta DVW-700WS. It was superior



With my new Digibeta DVW-790WSP, 2000.

to analogue video in every way — the colour rendition, sharpness, resolution, and dynamic range (the ratio between pure black and the brightest white). It still did not match film on any of the above criteria, but it was a big step forward, and more productions requested it.

For the first few years, I would rent a camera kit to my specifications, as and when required. In the year 2000, the improved second-generation model came out (DVW-790WSP), and I celebrated the new millennium by investing £65,000 in a camera, lenses, and accessories and an eight-inch colour field monitor. It was a small fortune, but it paid for itself in the first couple of years and was a trusty workhorse for ten, by which time High-Definition TV was the new kid on the block.

Film was still top for picture quality, and in my opinion, it would remain so until 4K UltraHD came to our TV screens twenty years later. It had an organic quality with a random grain structure that differed in each frame as opposed to video's consistent lines of pixels. It could capture more detail in shadow areas and offer more subtle colour variations. Even today, many arthouse and Hollywood blockbuster movies are originated on film as an aesthetic choice (mainly 35mm or 65mm).

From an operational point of view, I could list a hundred pros and cons for both formats, but fear not — I'll keep it brief. Film cameras and lenses were more robust. You could happily take one camera kit to almost any environment and feel confident that it would not let you down. Film cameras had no sensitive electronics that could fail due to dampness or condensation. They only consumed power when they were actually running, whereas video sucked it up for all its operations, even when in standby mode, meaning you needed a lot of bulky rechargeable batteries to hand and nearby facilities to charge them. The 16mm Aaton was smaller and lighter, with a sleek profile and a low centre of gravity — much better suited for smooth handheld shooting. It was ergonomically designed and engineered with a great deal of input from camera operators. In contrast, Digibeta, though superior to earlier video cameras, was seemingly designed by a committee made up of Sony's electronic engineers. On film, the sound recordists were independent. Working with a mono or stereo Nagra quarter-inch reel-to-reel recorder and, later, a Digital Audio Tape (DAT) recorder, they

were free to position themselves optimally. With video, they had a mixer connected by cables to two camera audio inputs and a return output — a hindrance to them, the cameraperson and anyone or anything in between. Later, this could be worked around by Velcroing radio audio receivers and senders with protruding aerials to the camera body. As if that was not encumbrance enough, someone invented a video-send transmitter so the director could wirelessly watch a monitor. All these had cables to various sockets, and the camera appeared like a laden Christmas tree.

The clapperboard was now redundant as video-generated timecode, and audio was recorded directly onto the tape. It did have a renaissance some years later when it was realised that separate sound was more flexible and visual idents, rather than electronic codes, were often more useful for the editor.

A lightbulb moment for the production money-men, whose hands-on filmmaking experience was limited to VHS home movies of their kids, was the realisation that no one had to load magazines or put on clapperboards; therefore, camera assistants were surplus to requirements on documentaries. This change was a blow to everyone. The equipment was more bulky, and the setup more fiddly. There were monitors, cables and batteries to deal with, cassettes to be labelled, and we still had to erect and set lights and dollies, etc. Local fixers would arrange for helpers, but they didn't know how to handle or pack kit and weren't around to help with paperwork, airport transfers and customs.

Most importantly, there was no on-location training for the next generation of DoPs. I'll stop whingeing for a moment and introduce some positivity. The 790 was a marvel of late 20th-century precision electronic engineering. It had dozens of menu pages you could access in the electronic viewfinder or on a monitor, only a few of which I dared to touch — the rest I left to engineers. You could also create alternative 'looks' and save them to programmable data cards.

Curiosity kindled by this writing, I have just retrieved my obsolescent twenty-four-year-old camera from its retirement home of fifteen years — my under-stairs cupboard. I lift it from the case. The handle is sticky and deposits black gunge on my fingers from the now-perishing rubber cushioning. The camera body displays a decade's worth of battle scars and three large patches of superglued male Velcro that once supported the aforementioned receivers and senders.

Cosmetically, it is a mess, but I have little doubt that it could run and record as sweetly as ever. I counted the controls; in handheld ready-to-shoot mode, weighing in at 10.7 kilos, it has 14 inputs and outputs and 69 switches, knobs and buttons, each of which has a genuinely useful purpose. It is a very different animal from a film camera, and it has inevitably changed the dynamics of the filming process. To start,



With my new Digibeta DVW-790WSP and Biddy Hodson, playing the Duchess of Devonshire, Georgiana Cavendish, on docudrama The People's Duchess, 2000.

you could connect to a CRT monitor. This was like a high-spec tube TV. The director, along with continuity, production and a passing astronaut or traffic warden, could add their two penn'orths to the choice of composition and lighting — even before I had put my eye to the viewfinder. As well as watching the shot in real-time, it could be played back afterwards to check that everyone was happy, an aspect that continues to the present.

It does relieve the DoP of some responsibility — if the director is satisfied with the shot, there is no comeback. Frankly, I prefer the responsibility and control to be with me — that is my role. Fortunately, many directors I worked with came from a similar professional background and were happy not to have a monitor. Nevertheless, it does come in useful for controlled situations involving complex lighting. The pre-LCD viewfinder was in black and white, as a colour one would have been very bulky and had too low resolution for accurate eye-focusing. Lighting was different for standard definition video; it was less forgiving in terms of contrast, so a monitor could be handy, especially when trying to match with a second camera. Whichever way you look at it, it does slow down the process.

The physical dimensions of a lens are determined by the size of the image sensor (or 'gate' for film). The image sensor on the 790 was smaller than the Super16mm film gate, so the same size lens was a lot more powerful. My standard optical zoom had a massive ratio of 21x. Beyond that, it had a built-in doubler. I could be set up for a wide-angle shot of a presenter doing his thing, see a backlit donkey pulling a hay cart in the far distance and whack in on the zoom to capture the magic.

The camera had two behind-the-lens filter wheels with neutral density and colour-correction filters. This meant less heavy glass went in front of the lens, leaving space for diffusion, polarising, or graduated filters.

You could not see outside the picture area in the monochrome viewfinder, but you could use the other eye to see what was going on beyond the frame. I had

done that previously, but now, with the monochrome image to the right eye, the real world in colour to the left and the brain doing its clever stuff, I had more awareness of what was happening around me — especially beneficial for vérité filming. Other handy optional features were 'peaking', a focusing aid that offered a white highlight on edges within the image, and 'zebras', an exposure aid, offering striped markings in bright areas.

The most significant difference was the low cost of recording the image. It was a double-edged sword. On Digibeta, you could run continuously for 40 minutes, swap cassettes and carry on within seconds. This was very handy for long runs on sensitive interviews and other unpredictable situations. But the low cost inevitably led to overshooting. Directors, especially the younger generation who had only worked with video, asked for extra angles to give them more options in the cutting room, and there was a tendency to shoot superfluous sequences "just in case." It removed much of the discipline from the process, making the shooting days longer and creating extra work for the poor editor. The knock-on effect was that, in many cases, the preproduction phase became shorter, the postproduction longer, and the shoot more intense. Oh dear, I'm whingeing again.

However, the amazing thing was that, at the end of the day, you would hand over tapes with high-quality, colour-balanced, edit-ready images with a synchronised, professionally mixed soundtrack. ■

The Cameraman's Cut is available in paperback (384 pages, ISBN: 9781836284161) and ebook (eISBN: 9781836289425) from all regular outlets, or as a signed print edition with a £2.00 BCTV discount (£14.99 down to £12.99) available on the website: cameramanscut.com



A Hundred Years – A Thousand Laughs

BRAD ASHTON – journalist, scriptwriter, after dinner speaker and Veteran in his mere nineties – pays tribute to a centenarian comedian

American comedian, singer, dancer and actor Dick Van Dyke has been enjoying one of the longest show business careers, winning dozens of awards. The tall, handsome funny man joined a local radio show when they offered to feature his wedding live and pay for the honeymoon. He left soon after to tour as a solo comedy miming act. One mime, Dick's version a car's reaction to being physically examined by a rough prospective buyer, was so brilliant Bob Monkhouse bought the British TV rights. The Van Dyke physical comedy led to a starring role in the Broadway stage musical *Bye Bye Birdie* for which he later did the film version.

But Dick's real and lasting fame came when Carl Reiner created a new tv sitcom about his own experiences as a writer for four years on the Sid Caesar 90-minute TV series. Caesar, though fantastically talented, had a drink/drugs problem and a violent temper. He even famously suspended claustrophobic Mel Brooks out of a 28th floor skyscraper window after a minor disagreement.

Reiner's clever gimmick for what was originally titled *Head of the Family* was to show how a comedy writer's domestic home life provided fodder for the routines and sketches he and his two colleagues wrote in their weekly output for their nemesis, a villainous star comedian called Alan Brady. Reiner had created the character Rob Petrie to be played by himself, but CBS preferred Dick Van Dyke and gave Reiner the role of Brady. Rob Petrie (Van Dyke) was given two co-writers to bounce off. One was short Jewish comedian Morey Amsterdam modelled on the previously mentioned Mel Brooks.

Singer/dancer Mary Tyler Moore was originally cast in the minor part as Petrie's wife, but her onstage chemistry with Dick proved so strong she became the show's co-star. And, as we know, she later got her very own series.

After five seasons and 158 half hour episodes Dick felt the storylines were becoming repetitious and quit while still topping the ratings. The shows had been shot in black and white, were translated into seven different languages and are still shown around the world.



Interviewer and interviewee. (Courtesy of Brad Ashton.)

Around 1966 Dick first announced his retirement and said he then did it so often it almost became a habit. Instead, having conquered TV, Dick moved on to the bigger screen to star in such classics as *Mary Poppins* and *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*. Cubby Broccoli, who produced the latter film, proposed Dick as a replacement for Sean Connery who had just stepped down as James Bond. Dick rejected the offer. He said, "You've heard how bad my Cockney accent is. My posh English accent would be even worse."

Despite his unquestionable success as a film actor, Dick grew restless and started a completely new TV career in a non-comedy TV series called *Diagnosis Murder* in which he played Doctor Mark Sloan, a crime-solving hospital physician. Repeats are still being shown in the UK.

Dick Van Dyke is a remarkable and an exceedingly nice fellow as I found out when, as a young journalist, I interviewed

him at the CBS studios during the run of *The Dick Van Dyke Show*. I posed the question, "In the series you play a writer terrified of the star you're writing for. How do you think your own writers feel about you?" He was genuinely surprised and said, "Gosh, I never thought about that. I must buy them presents to show my appreciation." At the end of that week his three main writers found an expensive wristwatch in with their pay packets.

Dick can perhaps best be summed up with this compliment from his pal and mentor Carl Reiner who said, "Dick Van Dyke is not only a Jack of all trades. He's the master of them all."

Dick Van Dyke has been cast in a new comedy, Raising the Flag, described as featuring "a group of elderly Vets who engage in a spirited game of 'capture the flag' for the privilege of raising Old Glory every morning in their community". **V**

2026: All The Veterans



Every few years we publish a list – name only – of the current members of the British Cinema and Television Veterans, including widows/widowers and honorary members. Lists were previously published in issue 175 – Winter 2022, issue 164 – Autumn 2019, and issue 152 – Autumn 2016.

The purpose of this list is to provide a printed record of our membership for posterity as well as to let you know who your fellow Veterans are, to ask you to encourage others who are not on the list but could be one of us to join up, and to enable you to renew contact with other Veterans through our office – we will forward emails or letters to the address we have on file (but cannot guarantee a response).

This list is believed to be correct as of 31 March 2026. Please advise the Office of any omissions, misspellings or other errors.

ROBERTA AARONS
SYED ABBAS
BASSEM ABDALLAH
GEORGE ACHILLEAS
MARK ADAMS
JASON ADAMS
CHARMIAN ADAMS
JOHN ADDERLEY
REMI ADEFARASIN
MICHAEL ADELMAN
RAY ADNETT
BARRY AGAR
JOE AHEARNE
BETTY AINSLIE
GEORGE AKERS
MURIEL ALCOCK
DENYSE ALEXANDER
WILMA ALGAR
JOHN ALLAKER
DAVID ALLAN
PAMELA ALLEN
RUSSELL ALLEN
ANGELA ALLEN
CHRIS ALLIES
JAMES ALLOWAY
CHRISTOPHER ANDERSON
GEOFF ANDREW
RAYMOND ANDREW
RHIANNON ANDREWS
DAVID ANDREWS
JACK ANDREWS
RONALD ANSCOMBE
DAVID APPLEBY
CATE ARBEID
NEIL ARKSEY
VICTOR ARMSTRONG
TIM ARNOLD
NICK ARTHURS
DOMINIC ASBRIDGE
CAROLA ASH
BRIAN ASH
DAVID ASHBY
BRAD ASTON
FRANK ASTON
CHRISTOPHER ATKINSON
DAVID ATKINSON
MICK AUDSLEY
TONY AUGUSTE
SUZANNE AUSTIN
BARRY AUSTIN
PEARL AYTON
LINDA AYTON
MICHAEL BAILEY
ALBERT BAILEY
CLIFFORD BAILLIE
SHEILA BAIN
DEREK BAIN
BRENDA BAIRD
SIMON BAKER
JOHN BAKER
KEVIN BALDWIN
THALIASINGHAM
BALENDRA
RAYMOND BALL
KARIN BAMBOROUGH
SHELLY BANCROFT

JUDITH BANTOCK
GILLIAN BARBER
TREVOR BARBER
ALBERT BARBER
KENNETH BARLEY
TERENCE BARLOW
MICHAELA BARNES
NEIL BARNES
MARGARET BARON
LIBBIE BARR
RAYMOND BARRETT
DAVID BARRETT
DANIEL BARRETT
HELEN BARRETT
WILLIAM BARRINGER
DORIS BARTHOLOMEW
CAROLYN BARTLETT
CHRISTOPHER BARTON
SEAN BARTON
BRENDA BARTON
MICHAEL BASS
NIGEL BATE
SHIRLEY BATEMAN
WILLIAM BATES
MARILYN BATT
SIMON BAXTER
DAVID BAYNHAM
ASHLEY BEALE
ROGER BECK
ROY BECK
JOANNA BECKETT
JAMES BEEBY
WILLIAM BEENHAM
DAVID BEESLEY
DAVID BEEVERS
MICHELE DAVIDSON BELL
PETER BELL
PENELOPE BELL
NICHOLA BELLAMY
JANET BENGE
ROY BENSON
BEE BENTON
CAROL BERNARD
PAUL BERRIFF
JEANNETTE BERRY
DARREN BEVAN
JOHN BEVAN
TIMOTHY BIELBY
ROBERT BIERMAN
GEORGE BIGGS
GEORGE BIJUM
WILLIAM BILLET
TREVOR BILLING
ALAN BILYARD
NEIL BINNEY
ANGELA BIRD
CHRISTOPHER BIRD
COLIN BIRNIE-CAMPBELL
EDMUND BISHOP
GLENDA BLACKALLER
DARROL BLAKE
MICHAEL BLAKEMORE
PAT BLANCHARD
NORMAN BLIGHT
CAROL BLOCKLEY
DAVID BOARDMAN

JOHN BOLTON
PAMELA BONICOS-
SMITHERS
ROGER BONNICI
PHIL BOOTH
MARC BOOTH
EUNICE BORNASTY
DENNIS BOSHER
JOAN BOULTBEE
JILL BOWE
LINDA BOWEN
IAN BOWERMAN
ALAN BOYLE
BOB BOYTON
CASSANDRA BRABAN
BRIAN BRACKLEY
RICHARD BRADFORD
JASON BRADLEY
HILARY BRAND
ALEXANDRA BRANSON
ROBERT BREMNER
DAN BRENNAN
TINA BRENNAN
SARA BRENNAN
JIM BRENNAN
CHRISTOPHER BRETT
GRAHAM BRIAULT
STEPHEN BRIERLEY
KEN BRINSLEY
ROLAND BRINTON
LUCY BRISTOW
BEVERLY BRITTAN
JUDY BRITTEN
MARTIN BROMFIELD
ALAN BROOKS
JEFFREY BROOM
LORNA BROWN
DARNELL BROWN
GEOFF BROWN
JULIE BROWN
MICHAEL BROWN
HUGH BROWN
LEONARD BROWN
MAX BROWNE
ROBERT BROWNHILL
KEVIN BROWNLOW
JOHN BRUCE
ANNE BRUNKER
RICHARD BRUNSKILL
ELAINE BRUNTON
LOUISE BRYANT
KEITH BRYANT
MALCOLM BUBB
ANN BUCHANAN
JEFFREY BUCKERIDGE
GEOFFREY BUCKLAND
JOHN BUCKLEY
DIDIE BUCKNALL
JULIAN BUCKNALL
DANIEL BUDD
BRIAN BULL
MIKE BULLEY
GEOFFREY BULLOCK
RHODA BUNCLARK
LIZ BUNTON
CLARE BURGESS

MYRNA BURKE
MARK BURKETT
MILLY BURNS
MARY BURRELL-DAVIS
TIMOTHY BURRILL
ELAINE BURROWS
BRIAN BURTON
ROBIN BUSBY
ANDREW BUSH
SIMON BUTLER
MARIA BUTLER
TERENCE BUTT
DOMINIC BYLES
PETER BYLETT
KEITH BYRNE
JUNE BYRNE
SALLY CAIRNEY
RALPH CALDER
BRIDGET CALDWELL
ANNA CALLAGHAN
CHRISTOPHER CAMERON
DAVID CAMERON
ALISON CAMPBELL
CIRO CANDIA
CAIRO CANNON
DI CARLING
TRISTAN CARLISLE-KITZ
PAUL CARRIGAN
ELINOR CARRUTHERS
DAVID CARTER
ALAN CASSIE
MARIE CASTLE
GRAHAM CAULFIELD
PETER CAVACIUTI
GARY CHAISTY
NICOLA CHAISTY
PAT CHAMBERS
VICTOR CHANDLER
ROGER CHANDLER
ROSEMARY CHAPMAN
ROGER CHARLESWORTH
TOBY CHARLWOOD
JUDITH CHESELDINE
ARTHUR CHESTERMAN
CARL CHESWORTH
EDWARD CHILDS
DIANE CHITTELL
SUSAN CHRISTOU
MICKY CHUBBOCK
PATRICK CHURCH
DOREY CILIA
ANGELA CLAMPITT
JANET CLARK
IAN CLARK
WENDY CLARKE
COLIN CLARKE
PETER CLARKE
KEITH CLAXTON
LORNA CLAYTON
TERENCE CLEGG
KEITH CLEMENT
DAVID CLEMENTS
DAVID CLINGBINE
STEVEN CLODE
IVAN CLULEY
SHAUN COBLEY

COLIN CODNER
JEFFREY COHEN
TERENCE COLE
ADAM COLES
KENNETH COLES
DEREK COLLINS
EDDIE COLLINS
MATT COLLIS
STEPHEN COLWELL
MAUREEN COMFORT
MICHAEL CONNELL
SEAN CONNOR
DAVID CONROY
JUDITH CONWAY
TONY COOK
NIK COOKSON
ANDREW COOPER
DEREK COOPER
KENNETH COOPER
EILEEN COOPER
MIRIAM COOPER
LINDA CORDORAY
BRIAN CORLESS
JOHN CORNWELL
JAMES CORRANCE
HUGH CORRANCE
RICHARD CORY
JON COSTELLOE
PAUL COTGROVE
SEAN COTTER
DAVID COTTRELL
MICHAEL COULTER
JUDY ANNE COUNIHAN
STEPHEN COURT
SARAH COURTIN
DEREK COWNTY
PAULINE COX
BRENDA COXON
RICHARD CRANE
CHRISTOPHER CRANE
PENNY CRAWFORD
ANTHONY CRIDLIN
ROGER CRITTENDEN
DIANA CRONK
MICHAEL CROSS
MICHAEL CROSS
JOHN CROSSLAND
TONY CROUCH
KENNETH CROUCH
FRANCESCA CROWDER
PATRICK CROWLEY
KEITH DAGLEY
PETER DALE
JOHN DALY
JERRY DALY
KATHY DARBY
SOPHIE DARLINGTON
JOHN DAVEY
LESLEY DAVIES
MARY DAVIES
GRAHAM DAVIES
JOHN DAVIES
HILARY DAVIS
NIGEL DAVIS
DAMIAN DAVISON
GEOFFREY DAWE

2026: All The Veterans

SAM DAWKING
RAYMOND DAY
SUE DE BEAUVOIR
ARTHUR DE BORMAN
ANDY DE EMMONY
ALEXANDER DE GRUNWALD
PATSY DE LORD
THEODORE DE ROSE
ANUREE DE SILVA
KEZIAH DE WINNE
BARRIE DEAN
PAULINE DEARING
CATRIONA DELBRIDGE
WALTER DENNING
BRYAN DENNING
PAUL DENNY
BOB DENT
JOHN DI PETRILLO
JULIA DICKINSON
MARY DICKINSON
DIANA DILL
JOSEPH DIPPLE
PETER DITCH
HUMPHREY DIXON
PETER DOBSON
HENRY DOBSON
JOHN DODDS
MICHAEL DODDS
MISHA DONAT
JOHNNY DONNE
SAM DONOVAN
CATHY DOUBLEDAY
CHRISTOPHER DOWLING
RONALD DOWLING
CYNTHIA DOWLING
SIMON DOWNES
VERA DOWNES
CLARE DOWNS
RICHARD DREW
JEAN DREW-BEAR
WILLIAM DUDMAN
ROSSLYN DUFFELL
ANNE DUFFEY
MARGOT GAVAN DUFFY
ROBERT DUNGATE
JOHN DUNSTAN
JOHN DURIE
JOHN DYER
GILBERT EDGELEY
TERRY EDLAND
BARBARA EDMONDSON
PETER EDMUNDS
JOY WONG EDSON
ANNE EDWARDS
DAVID EDWARDS
BENJAMIN EDWARDS
MITCHELL EDWARDS
TRISHA EDWARDS
SUSAN EDYVEAN
ANNETTE EGGETT
DAVID EGGLETON
EDWARD EGGS
LEE ELDRED
ANDREW ELLARD
BRIAN ELLIOTT
PETER ELLIOTT
PHILLIP ELLIS
PETER ELLIS
RICHARD ELLIS
MICHAEL ELLIS
LUCY ENFIELD
RUSSELL ENGLAND
ELIZABETH ENGLAND
JOHN ENSBY
LAURA ERGIS
PETER ERNSTER
DANIEL ESSEX
PERRY EVANS
ROBERT EVANS
RAYMOND EVANS
MARTIN EVANS
CHRIS EVANS
DAVID EVE
TIMOTHY EVERETT
LEZLI EVERITT

KATHLEEN EWINGS
ALLEN EYLES
PENNY EYLES
RICKY EYRES
PAUL FABRICIUS
LORELY FARLEY
JOHN FARR
DAN FARRELL
NEIL FARRELL
KEITH FAWCETT
PHILIP FAWKE
POLLY FEHILY
LORRAINE FENNELL
FRAZER FENNELL-BALL
PAUL FENNELLY
JOHN FERGUSON
PETER FERRARI
JULIA FETTERMAN
DICK FIDDY
STANLEY FIFERMAN
SIMON FINNEY
JANE FISH
LOUISE FISHER
MICHAEL FISHER
RICHARD FITZGERALD
MAURICE FLEISHER
ANN FLEMMING
DAN FONTAINE
MICHAEL FORD
LEONARD FORD
ROSEMARY FORGAN
JUNE FORSYTH
DOREEN FOSTER
SUSAN FOSTER
DOMINIC FOSTER
HENRY FOSTER
RICHARD FOSTER
ROWLAND FOWLES
DAMIAN FOX
LOIS FRANCIS
KEVIN FRANCIS
DAVID FRANCIS
DENNIS FRASER
JULIA FRATER
PETER FREEMAN
PAUL FREEMAN
EDWARD FRENCH
PETER FRENCH
RICHARD FROST
ARTHUR FROST
MARK FRUIN
JOHN FRY
MARTIN FUHRER
FRANCES FULLER
CHARMAINE FULLER
FRED FULLERTON
JEREMY FUSCO
SUSANNA FYSON
MUKESH GADHVI
RONALD GAISFORD
GEORGE GALLACCIO
NICOLA GALLANI
DAVID GAMBLE
DAVID GAMBLE
JOHN GAMBLE
MARK GARDINER
MICHAEL GARDINER
KIM GASTER
NICOLAS GASTER
VALERIE GEMMELL
ROBERT GEOGHEGAN
ANTHONY GEORGE
PETER GEORGE
KOSTAS GEORGIADIS
EDWARD GERALD
MOYA GIBBON
MARTHA GIBBS
ROMA GIBSON
TONY GIDDINGS
BARRIE GILBERT
JANE GILES
GEOFFREY GILL
DOLLY GILL
KATE GILLIAT
DAVID GLADWELL
RICHARD GLEESON
THOMAS GLENNON

PETER GLOSSOP
GEOFFREY GLOVER
VINCENT GODDARD
JINX GODFREY
PETER GODFREY
LEIGH GOLD
DONALD GOLDBERG
SARAH GOLDING
JOHN GOLDING
JOHN GOLDSCHMIDT
MARILYN GOLDSWORTHY
DAVID GOOD
RAY GOODE
ANDREA GOODMAN
BRIAN GORDON
MICHAEL GORE
CLIVE GOSS
COLIN GOUDIE
STEVE GOUGH
SUE GOWER
LALIT GOYAL
MARJORIE GRAHAM
JOHN GRAHAM
JOSE GRANELL
JEFF GRANT
RONALD GRANT
FREDERICK GRAY
PETER GRAY
PETER GRAY
ALAN GRAYLEY
TONY GRAYSMARK
GUY GREEN
LEONARD GREEN
CHRISTOPHER GREEN
KEVIN GREENE
SUE GREENLEAVES
LYNNE GREENSHIELDS
JULES GREENWAY
JACQUI GREER
PAUL GREGORY
PHILIP GREY
LESLEY GRIEVE
PHILIP GRIFFIN
MARIANNE GRIGG
JONAS GRIMAS
PETER GRIMES
TIMOTHY GRIMES
SARAH GRISPO
ALAN GROSCH
SUSAN GROSSMAN
JOHN GROVER
RODRIGO GUTIERREZ
MARTIN GUTTERIDGE
ANNA BENSON GYLES
ROBERT HABERMANN
SHEILA HABICHT
IRENE HAHN
NICK HALE
STUART HALL
CAROLYN HALL
ANDY HALL
PAUL HALPIN
BRYAN HAMBLETON
FREDA HAMMOND
KEITH HAMSHIRE
ROY HANDFORD
SAM HANN
ALAN HANN
CHRISTY HANNA
PAUL HANNING
TONY HANNINGTON
DION HANSON
MICKY HARDING
CORDELIA HARDY
ELIZABETH HARE
FRANK HARE
HUGH HARKNESS
BARBARA HARLEY
KATIE HARLOW
HUGH HARLOW
SARAH HARMAN
GILES HARPER
ELAINE HARRIES
MARGARET HARRIS
PETER HARRIS
RONALD HARRIS

RICHARD HARRIS
RICHARD HARRIS
TREVOR HARRIS
SHAUNNA HARRISON
JOHN HARRISON
HARVEY HARRISON
ROY HARRISS
RICHARD HARTLEY
DARREN HARVEY
JOHN HARWOOD
STEVE HASKETT
DAVID HATTER
JANE HATTON
SUSAN HAUSNER
REBECCA HAVERS
JOHN HAWES
VERONICA HAYES
EMMA HAYTER
VALERIE HAYWARD
JANICE HEALEY
LESLIE HEALEY
COLIN HEATLEY
KEITH HEEKS
PETER HEELAS
ANTHONY HEEREN
JOY HELMAN
GEORGE HELYER
JOHN HEMBROUGH
PHILIP HENSHALL
BARBARA HENSON
JON HENSON
PAUL HERBERT
KRISTINA HETHERINGTON
MAUREEN
HETHERINGTON
JEAN HEWISON
MARGARET HEWITSON
DEBORAH HEWLETT
ANNE HEYS
PAULINE HEYS
DERMOT HICKEY
COLIN HIDE
PETER HIDER
MICHAEL HIGGINS
CERI HIGGINS
SUSAN HILDREY
JAMES HILL
CHRISTINE HILL
DAVID HILLIER
JOHN HILLS
CHRIS HILTON
RICHARD HISCOTT
LIDIA HITCHCOCK
MARK HOAD
PETER HOARE
LORRAINE HODGES
PETER HODGES
OLLY HOEBEN
THOMAS HOGG
CHARLOTTE HOLDICH
JUNE HOLE
ARTHUR HOLLAND
DAVID HOLLINGWORTH
PETER HOLLYWOOD
GILLIAN HOLTON
ROBERT HOLYOMES
PHILIP HOOLEY
JOHN HOOPER
RICHARD HOPE
BRIAN HOPKINS
ASHLEY HOPKINS
PETER HORE
JOHN HORGAN
RUPERT HORNSTEIN
LYNN HORSFORD
MICHAEL HOULIHAN
PAUL HOULSTON
MELANIE HOWARD
TERRY HOWARD
BABS HOWE
PAUL HOY
DEH-TA HSIUNG
ROBERT HUDGELL
STEVEN HUDSON
MIKE HUDSON

HUGHIE HUGHES
GARRY HUGHES
PAMELA HUGHES
ADRIAN HUGHES
RICHARD HUHNDOF
JEREMY HUME
SIMON HUME
DEAN HUMPHREYS
DEWI HUMPHREYS
SARAH HUNT
TERENCE HUNT
MAGGI HURT
GAY HUSE
MARK HUTCHINGS
GARY HUTCHINGS
DAVID HUTCHINS
TIMOTHY HUTCHINSON
PATRICIA HUXTABLE
GARY HYMNS
PETER HYNES
TERRY ILAND
ROGER INMAN
JOHN IRELAND
JAQUIE ISAAC
ANN JACKSON
TONY JACKSON
PETER JACKSON
SHIRLEY JACKSON
JANE JACKSON
CLIVE JACKSON
LIZZIE JACKSON
MIKE JACKSON
STEVE JAGGS
AHMED JAMAL
CEDRIC JAMES
HEDLEY JAMES
GLORIA JARVIS
CLYDE JEAVONS
POLLY JEFFERIES
VALERIE JENKINS
BERNARD JOBLING
PETER JOHN
ALLAN JOHN
JENNY JOHN CHUAN
ANNE JOHNSON
KEITH JOHNSON
ROBERT JOHNSON
VANESSA JOHNSON
MAUREEN JOHNSON
MICHAEL JOINER
MIRANDA JONES
GERARD JONES
CYNTHIA JONES
SUSAN JONES
MARK JONES
RICHARD JONES
EURWYN JONES
ALAN JONES
COLIN JONES
PETER JONES
JAMES JORDAN
KEITH JORDAN
NAOMI JOSEPH
CHRISTIAN JOYCE
MARY JUDGE
MAXINE JULIUS
CAIUS JULYAN
MAUREEN JYMPSON
KEREEN KARIM
ANWAR KAWADRI
BERNARD KAY
TREVOR KAYE
SIMON KAYE
IAN KEILL
ANNIE KELLETT
DAVID (NED) KELLY
CHRISTOPHER KELLY
LINDA KEMP
JASON KEMP
ANDREW KEMP
PAUL KEMP
VALERIE KENNEALY
JANET KENNY
CLAIRE KENNY
JAMES KENT
CAROL KENYON

DAVID KERNEY	MURRAY MACAULAY	LESLEY MILES	CAROL O'BRIEN	STEPHEN PLESNIAK
JOE KERR	MICHAEL MacCORMACK	FREDERICK MILLER	EAMONN O'KEEFE	CAROL POCHETTY
JUNED KHAN	SPENCER MacDONALD	ANTHONY MILLER	MICHAEL O'SULLIVAN	NICK POCOCK
BARBARA KIDD	IAN MACKAY	COLIN MILLER	THOMAS O'SULLIVAN	NEIL POOLE
MARK KING	DONALD MacKENZIE	MICHAEL MILLER	BRYAN OATES	ANDREW POOLE
NEIL KINGSBURY	ALEXANDRA MACKIE	JULIAN MILLER	DESMOND O'BRIEN	PAT POPE
MARTIN KINGSLEY	GEOFFREY MACKRILL	SUZY MILLS	GRAHAM O'CONNOR	DAVID POPE
JENNIFER KIRBY	HELEN MacLEAN	SIMON MILLS	FIZ OLIVER	EMMA PORTEOUS
MAJ-BRITT KIRCHNER	ALISTAIR MacLEAN-	RICHARD MILNES	JEVON O'NEILL	VIVIEN POTTERSMAN
KEITH KIRKUM	CLARK	JOHN MINOPRIO	DANIEL O'REGAN	ANTHONY POUND
TONY KLINGER	SHIRA MacLEOD	EDWARD MIRZOEFF	CAROLINE O'REILLY	PAMELA POWER
DAPHNE KLOS	FRANCIS MacNEIL	MAUREEN MITCHELL	CHRISTINE ORTON	CHARLES PREECE
SIMON KOSOFOFF	RICHARD MacRORY	ANTHONY MITCHELL	HEATHER OSBORN	FRANCES PRENTICE
JANE KROOK	TERRY MADDEN	CHRISTINE MITCHELL	KENNETH OSBOURN	ELVIN PRENTICE
KISHOR LADWA	VINCE MADDEN	ALASTAIR MITCHELL	PAUL OTTER	BERNIE PRENTICE JNR
PATRICK LAHO	KAREN MAFFEY	RITA MITSON	JULIA OUSTON	ADAM PRESCOD
MAUREEN LAING	PATRICK MAGUIRE	NEIL MOCKLER	JOAN DIGBY OVENS	VICTOR PRIGGS
DANIEL LAKE	SEAN MAHIBIR	RAMON MODIANO	GARETH OWEN	SARAH PRINCE
IRENE LAMB	BOB MAHONEY	DENISE MONK	GLYN OWEN	LARRY PRINZ
PATRICIA LAMBOURNE	HELEN MAISEY	MICHAEL MONKS	KARIN PADGHAM	SUSAN PRITCHARD
BARRY LANCHESTER	JACQUI MALLET	RAYMOND MOORE	ROYSTON PAGE	LUIZ PROVIN
DANIEL LANDIN	ROBERT MALTBY	GRAHAM MOORE	FELIX PAGES	TREVOR PUCKLE
DAVID LANE	JOHN MANN	ELLIOT MOORE	DIANE PALER	MICKEY PUGH
KELLY LANGLEY	ROSEMARY MANNING	CHRISTOPHER MOORE	JAY PALES	ANTHONY PUZAS
PAUL LANGRIDGE	SUSAN MANNING	JONATHAN MOOREY	ALAN PALEY	DAVID PYGRAM
CARMEL LANGSDALE	KENNETH MANNING	TREVOR MORGAN	ERIC PALMER	JOHN PYM
TONY LANGSDALE	BARRY MARCUS	MARILYSE MORGAN	CHARLES PALMER	ROBERT RABSON
CLIFF LANNING	JAKE MARCUSON	BOYLE	LUKE PALMER	NIKITA RAE
HOWARD LANNING	STEPHEN MARIANS	MARK MORIARTY	KEITH PALMER	DARREN RAE
TERRY LANSBURY	PENELOPE MARKS	ANN MORLEY	GUY PANNELL	SARA RAEBURN
STEPHEN LARCOMBE	GILLIAN MARSH	SHEILA MORRIS	TERRY PANTLING	DAVID RAGGATT
TONY LARVEA	ERNEST MARSH	JONATHAN MORRIS	WENDY PARKER	HUGH RAGGETT
DAVID LASCELLES	SCOTT MARSHALL	CHARLES MORRIS	CLAUDIA PARKER	EMILA RAHMANOVA
STEFFAN LAUGHARNE	PETER MARSHALL	ANTHONY MORRIS	MARGARET PARKER	NATHAN RAIKES
MARION LAURIE	FRY MARTIN	DEAN MORRISH	OSBERT PARKER	IAN RAKOFF
PETER LAWES	GILLIAN MARTIN	SAM MORRISON	AUSTIN PARKINSON	STEPHEN RANCE
MARGARET LAW-	JOE MARTIN	GEORGE MORSE	BELINDA PARRISH	NIGEL RANDALL
HOMWOOD	TERRY MASKELL	RICHARD MORSE	JACQUELINE PARRY	GARANACE RAWINSKY
WILLIAM LAWRENCE	ANITA MASON	JULIAN MORSON	ROSEMARY PARSONS	CHRISTINE RAWLINS
DAVID LAWTON	SUSAN MATHER	ROB MORTON	TIMOTHY PARTNER	BARRY READ
JOHN LAYFIELD	WILLIAM MATHER	RICHARD MOSEY	MARGRIT PASCOE	LAWRIE READ
GARY LEACH	PETER MAVROMANTIS	RICHARD MOTT	RAY PASCOE	MICHAEL REDFERN
STEPHEN LEE	BRIAN MAY	RICHARD MOXON	STACEY PAUL	CAROL REGAN
BEVERLEY LEE	BRENDA MAY	RACHAEL MOYER	LANCE PAUL	MARY RENOUF
GRAHAM LEE	JOHN MAYNARD	JAMES MUIR	RALPH PAYNE	BEN RENTON
JOHN LEE	NORMA MAZZURCO	FREDERICK MULLER	TERRY PEARCE	SAM RENTON
CHARLIE LEECH	JOHN McADAM	PETER MULLINS	DAVID PEARCE	VALERIE REVITT
MARIAN LEESE	VERONICA McAULIFFE	ULRIKE MUNCH	ROGER PEARCE	BRIAN REYNOLDS
MARY LEE-WOOLF	JANET McBAIN	DAVID MUNNS	STEPHEN PECKOVER	MARK REYNOLDS
RITA LEIGH	DAVID McCALL	CHRIS MUNRO	BRIDGET PEDGRIFT	MATT RHODES
CHERYL LEIGH	ALAN McCANN	FREDERICK MURDOCH	CHRIS PEGG	JULIAN RICHARDS
MIKE LEIGH	ADRIAN McCARTHY	ALAN MURPHY	JEREMY PELZER	FRANCES RICHARDSON
TONY LENMAN	BARRY McCORMICK	SPENCER MURRAY	SHEILA PENN	LAWRENCE RICHARDSON
HELENE LENSZNER	ALEXANDER McDUGALL	TERENCE MURRELL	ALF PENN	JOHN RICHARDSON
SUSANNA LENTON	PETER McFADDEN	DAVID MURRELL	SAMANTHA PERAHIA	IAN RICHES
LIZ LEVELLE	DAVID McGILLIVRAY	RONALD MUSSON	DAVID PEREGRINE	EDITH RICHTER
NEIL LEVY	JOHN McGUIGAN	JUNE NACEY	ANITA PERRETT	JOHN RIDGE
ANNIE LEVY	JACQUELINE McILMAIL	ROBERTO NANNICINI	STEPHEN PERRIN	GARRY RIDGWELL
JOHN LEWIS	JULIET McKOEN	BEN NARAYAN	DARREN PERRY	ANTHONY RIGGS
IAN LEWIS	HELEN McLEAN	JULIE NARTEY	RAYMOND PERRY	VIVIEN RILEY
SANDY LIEBERSON	WILLIAM McPHAIL	OLIVE NASH-SELLING	HELEN PETERS	ALISON RIVA
RICHARD LLOYD	DIANA MEAD	HENRY NAYLOR	MAGGIE PHELAN	PETER ROBB-KING
CHRISTOPHER LLOYD	KEITH MEAD	NURIA NBOMIO-MBA	NICHOLAS PHILLIPS	SELWYN ROBERTS
KEVIN LOADER	BARRY MEASURE	MARK NEALE	HUW BOWEN PHILLIPS	ADAM ROBERTS
PETER LOCKE	TONY MECHELE	JOHN NEW	GARY PHILLIPS	STEPHEN ROBERTS
ROY LOCKETT	DAVID MEDDICK	ROGER NEWCOMBE	NIGEL PHILLIPS	PETER ROBERTSON
JOHN LOCKWOOD	CAROLE MEDLEY	ROBERT NEWMAN	PETER PHILLIPS	JANE GEORGINA
BRIAN LOFTHOUSE	LAURENCE MEEHAN	JOHN NEWMAN	PETER PHILLIPS	ROBERTSON
WALTRAUD LOGES	RAYMOND MEEHAN	STEPHEN NEWNHAM	RICHARD PHILPOTT	BRIAN ROBERTSON
PAUL LOMAS	DAVID MEEKING	ROBERT NEWTON	CHARLES PICKEN	MICHAEL ROBINS
VICTOR LONG	RAY MEERE	MARGARET NICE	RICHARD PICKWOOD	KENNETH ROBINS
ANDREW LONG	ANTONY MEERING	RON NICHOLSON	ANTONY PIERCE-	JONATHAN ROBINSON
MATTHEW LONGFELLOW	JULIAN MEERS	KENNETH NIGHTINGALL	ROBERTS	PAUL ROBINSON
RODERICK LONGHURST	GEORGES MEISNER	JEAN NISBET	RICHARD PILCHER	ALISON ROBINSON
GLENYS LOUGH	MARGARET MELLERSH	SANDRA NIXON	JANE PINCHAM	BRIAN ROBINSON
AGIS LOUKA	SAM MENDELSSOHN	HAZEL NOLAN	CHRISTOPHER PINNOCK	DAVID ROBINSON
RYDAL LOVE	EMMA MENDELSSOHN	TIM NORMINGTON	ALAN PIPER	SALLY RODD
TERENCE LOVELL	NEIL MEREDITH	BEN NORRINGTON	CAROLINE PITCHER	KEITH RODGERSON
HELEN LOVERIDGE	DEIRDRE MERRITT	DAVID NORRIS	JUSTIN PITKETHLY	RITA RODHOUSE
VERONICA LOWES	PETER MEUNIER	NICKY NORTH	LESLIE PITT	STEPHEN ROE
TERENCE LOWN	ELIZABETH MICHIE	ALAN NORTH	ALAN PLANT	JOHN ROEBUCK
GEZ LOWRY	MALCOLM MIDDLETON	OLI NOVADNIEKS	LOUISE PLASCHKES	STEPHEN ROGERS
PETER LUCAS	DAVE MIDSON	MICHAEL NUNN	TOBY PLASKITT	DAVID ROGERS
IAN LUCK	FREDERICK MIDSON	ANTHONY NUTTALL	NANCY PLATT	KEITH ROGERS
JOHN LUTON	ANN MILES	JONATHAN NUTTON	DOREEN PLATTS	PATRICK ROLFE

2026: All The Veterans

CHRISTOPHER ROOTS
TONY ROPER
GRACE ROQUES
MORAG ROSS
ERIC ROWAN
ROB ROWE
TONY ROWLAND
KENNETH ROWLES
TERRY ROYCE
HARRY ROYLE
LEWIS RUDD
LEONTINE RUETTE
ANN RUNECKLES
LEONARD RUNKEL
DENIS RUSSO
PAUL RUSSO
MARTIN RUTHERFORD
NICKY RYDE
PETER ANDREW SALMON
PETER SAMENGO-
TURNER
STEPHEN SAMPSON
BRENDA SAMPSON
RITA SANDERS
ANDREW SANDERS
JEREMY SANDLER
JAMES SANDYS
ERICH SARGEANT
PAUL SARGENT
PETER SASDY
DANIEL JASON SASSEN
JEREMY SASSEN
DAPHNE CROKER
SAUNDERS
STEPHEN SAUNDERS
MICHAEL SAXTON
KEITH SAYER
RONALD SCALPELLO
CHRISTINA SCHOFIELD
DAVID SCHWARTZ
WENDY SCOTT
DEREK SCOTT
HENRY SCOTT-IRVINE
RICHARD SEAL
MARGARET SEALE
AILEEN SEATON
RICK SENAT
MILLIE SETTLES
BETTY SEWELL
LOUISE SEYMOUR
KEN SHANE
KEITH SHANKSTER
BILL SHAPTER
MICHAEL SHARLAND-
CROFT
ALYSON SHARMA
ROY SHARMAN
JOHN SHARP
IVAN SHARROCK
JEFFREY SHAW
MARTIN SHEFFIELD
DANNY SHELMERDINE
CHARLES SHELTON
WILLIAM SHEPHARD
WENDY SHEPHERD
MICHAEL SHEPHERD
JOHN SHEPHERD
OLGA SHEPPARD
STEPHEN SHERIDAN
PRAVIN SHETTY
LEE SHEWARD
DAVID SHILLINGFORD
PETER SHILLINGFORD
ROBERT SHIPSEY
RAYMOND SIEMAN
JULIE SIGNY
JUNE SILVER
INGRID SIMMONDS
NICK SIMMONDS
BRIAN SIMMONS
REGINA SIMONETTI
JACKY SIMONS
RICHARD SIMPSON
GARY SIMPSON

DAVID SIMPSON
RODNEY SIMS
IAN SIMS
PHILIP SINDALL
LOIS SINGER
STEPHEN SINGLETON
ROBERT SKINNER
ANN SKINNER
ANTHONY SLOMAN
JAMES SLOSS
ROB SMALL
BRIAN SMEDLEY-ASTON
BOB SMITH
JENEFER SMITH
GABRIELLE SMITH
GRAHAM SMITH
LARRY SMITH
GARY SMITH
DAVID SMITH
VICTOR SMITH
ROBERT SMITH
MARILYN SMITH
STEVEN SMITH
FRANK SMITH
CHRISTOPHER SMITH
DIMITRI SMITH
DAVID SMITH
GARY SMITH
THOMAS SMITH
ALAN SMITH
JULIET SMITH
STEPHEN SMITH
JUSTIN SMITH
WENDY SMITH
WILLIAM SMITH
CAROLE SMITH
MORLEY SMITH
MICHAEL SMITH
FRANK SMITH
BERNARD SNOWBALL
ANNE SOPEL
ADRIAN SOUTH
LORETTA SOUTHON
MICHAEL SOUTHWORTH
CATHERINE SPEIGHT
WILLIAM SPEIGHT
ANDREW SPELLER
MARTIN SPENCE
ALAN SPENCER
KEITH SPERRY
DAVID SPIERS
EDWARD SPOONER
CHRISTOPHER SPRAGUE
ROBIN SQUIRE
STUART ST PAUL
EDDIE STACEY
MAUREEN STAMP
JOHN STANBOROUGH
BOB STANESBY
TOM STANIER
RAYMOND STAPLES
THOMAS STAPLES
BRENDA STEAD
BARRIE STEAD
DAVID STEADMAN
MARIJANA STEFANOV
CHRISTIAN STEVENS
RUPERT STEVENS
GARY STEVENS
SYLVIA STEVENS
JOHN STEVENSON
JOHN STEWART
LESLEY STEWART
RAYMOND STILES
COLIN STILL
JAY STINTON
SUZANNE STOKES-
MUNTON
MATTHEW STONE
LYNDA STONE
ALEXANDRA STONE
HEATHER STORR
GRAEME STOTEN
JOHN STOTHART

JEAN STRAIN
GRAHAM STRINGER
SYLVIA STRUTHERS
IAIN STRUTHERS
JOHN STURDY
DEREK STURT
ANDY SUBRATIE
STEVE SUMMERSBY
KARIN SUMPTION
CATHERINE SUROWIEC
TONY SUTCLIFFE
DEREK SUTER
MERCEDES SUTHERLAND
MARISE SUTTON
PAUL SWANN
BETTY SWINBURNE
PETER SWINSON
FRASER TAGGART
KARL TAGGART
ROSS TAGGART
LEE TAILOR
ARCHIE TAIT
MOIRA TAIT
PETER TALBOT
COLIN TAPP
ALLEGRA TAYLOR
PAUL TAYLOR
CRAIG TAYLOR
KEITH TAYLOR
JEFF TAYLOR
DAVID TAYLOR
ROCKY TAYLOR
MICHAEL TAYLOR
OLIVER TELLETT
HAZEL TERRETT
PHYLLIS TERRY
MARTIN TESTAR
PAUL TEVERINI
PARESH THAKRAR
PETER THEAKSTON-
THOMAS
EMMA THOMAS
CLIFFORD THOMAS
JEREMY THOMAS
DAVID THOMAS
ALEX THOMAS
BRUCE THOMPSON
DAVID THOMPSON
DEAN THOMPSON
DIANA THOMSON
ROSEMARY THORNTON
MAURICE THOROGOOD
STEPHEN THORPE
DEREK THREADGALL
CLIVE THREADGOLD
S THURSTON
DAVID THURSTON
CLIVE TICKNER
PAUL TIVERS
JENNY TOBIN
DERRICK TODD
ROBERT TOFT
BARRY TOMBLIN
DAVID TONDEUR
PATRICIA TONKS
JANE TOOK
LEIGH TOOK
MALCOLM TOOK
JASON TORBETT
SOPHIE TOUMAZIS
ANN TOWNSEND
RONALD TRAINER
MALCOM TREEN
FELICITY TREW
MARK TROMPETELER
JANE TROWER
KEITH TUFANO
NEIL TUOHY
KEN TUOHY
JILL TURK
PETER TURL
MARGARET TURNBULL
ANDREW TURNER
MICHAEL TURNER

DIANNE TWIDDY
PAMELA TWINE
WILL TYLER
DANIEL UNGER
DAVID UNWIN
STEPHEN UTTLEY
MICHAEL UWINS
JOHN VENABLES
PAUL VENNER
PETER VERSEY
MICHAEL VICKERS
SANDRA VICKERS
RICHARD VILLENEUVE
DENA VINCENT
LYN VINCZE
LAURA VINE
VICTORIA VOLLER
KEITH VOWLES
TIMOTHY WADDELL
AMANDA WADE
TREVOR WAITE
JANET WAKELY
FIONA WALKER
SHEILA WALKER
RICHARD WALKER
JOHN WALKER
SANDY WALLACE
ROBERT WALLACE
ERIC WALMSLEY
AISLING WALSH
FRANK WALSH
ANDREW WALTER
SIBYLLE WALTER
GAVIN WALTERS
MARTIN WANSBOROUGH
VALERIE WARD
JONATHAN WARD
KENNETH WARD
ANDREW WARREN
KIM WARWICK
JEANNIE WATERMAN
ANDREW WATERS
KATRINA WATSON
PETER WATSON
PETER WATSON
FRANCIS WATSON
WILF WATTERS
CHARLES WATTS
MIANDA WATTS
ANTHONY WAYE
WILLIAM WEBB
JEAN WEBSTER
COLIN WEIR
JOHN WELLS
ALAN WESTLAKE
ANGELA WHARTON
JOHN WHATTON
SEBASTIAN WHEEN
JOHN WHITBY
LEONARD WHITCHER
INES WHITE
VANESSA WHITE
SHAWN WHITE
TIMOTHY WHITE
JEANNE WHITE
BRUCE WHITE
CHRISTINE WHITEHOUSE
MICHAEL WHITEHOUSE
HUGH WHITTAKER
JAMES WHITTELL
DAVID WHITTINGTON
STEPHEN WHITWORTH
LIZ WIDGERY
MICHAEL WILES
JOHN WILKINSON
JOHN WILKINSON
GILLIAN WILKINSON
ANTHONY WILKINSON
PETER WILKINSON
BARRY WILKINSON
PETER WILLCOCKS
MARYSE WILLETT
MARGARET WILLIAMS
BETTY WILLIAMS

LYNDON WILLIAMS
SUSIE WILLIAMS
CHARLES WILLIAMS
ANTHONY WILLIAMS
DEREK WILLIAMS
PETER WILLIAMS
MICHAEL WILLIAMS-
JONES
BARRY WILLIS
BRUCE WILLS
JUDI WILSON
BERYL WILSON
JULIETTE WILSON
WILLIAM WILSON
RAY WILSON
ANN WINGATE
JANE WINKLES
TOMASZ WITKOWSKI
RICHARD WOLFF
NIGEL WOLLAND
PAUL WOLSTENCROFT
MARGARET WOOD
PHILIPPA WOOD
TERENCE WOOD
ANDREW WOOD
KEITH WOODLEY
JOHN WOODS
MATTHEW WOODWARD
SYBIL WOOFINDIN
MICHAEL WOOLFSON
NIGEL WOOLL
NICK WOOLLARD
DAVID WORLEY
JAMES WREN
ELIZABETH WRENN
WARWICK WRIDE
BERNARD WRIGHT
STEVE WRIGHT
REBECCA WRIGHT
JUNE WRIGHT
DAVID WRIGHT
CHRISTOPHER WYATT
ANN WYNN-SMITH
TERRENCE YASON
MICHIO YOSHIKAZI
HAYDON YOUNG
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ROB YOUNGER
DAVID YOUNGS



THE BRITISH ENTERTAINMENT HISTORY PROJECT

MIKE HODGES

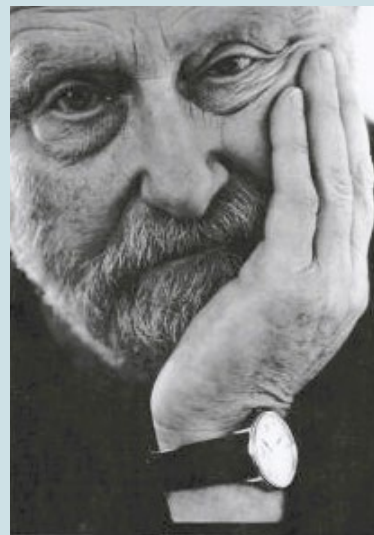
29 July 1932 – 17 December 2022

Interviewer: **Rodney Giesler**

Date: **3 March 1998, 6 April 1998, 2 June 1998**

Production media: **audio**

Length: **461 minutes.**



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Mike Hodges was an English screenwriter, film and television director, playwright and novelist.

He worked in television in the 1960s, producing and directing hard-hitting TV documentaries for *World in Action* (Granada TV), then making profiles of European directors for the arts series *Tempo* on ITV.

He wrote and directed two TV thrillers, *Suspect* (ITV, tx 17/11/1969) and *Rumour* (ITV, 2/3/1970). His films as writer/director include *Get Carter* (1971), *Pulp* (1972), *The Terminal Man* (1974) and *Black Rainbow* (1989); as director, his films include *Flash Gordon* (1980), *A Prayer for the Dying* (1987), *Croupier* (1998) and *I'll Sleep When I'm Dead* (2003).

His theatre plays include *Soft Shoe Shuffle* (1985) and *Shooting Stars and Other Heavenly Pursuit* (2000), which was adapted for BBC radio. Other radio plays include *King Trash* (2004). His first novel, *Watching The Wheels Come Off*, was published first in French (*Quand Tout Se Fait La Malle*) in 2009, then in English in 2010. In 2018 his trio of novellas ('Bait', 'Grist' and 'Security') was published by Unbound.

The full interview can be heard and read on the Internet by searching BEHP and entering the name Mike Hodges in the box at top right of the opening website page.

Edited extracts from the interview

I'd been working now in television for something like fifteen years or so and whilst I'd moved from documentary to drama – I was now seriously involved in drama – I'd never really dreamt that I would ever get to do feature films. MGM were about to close their studios and things weren't terribly good but it was modestly healthy by what happened later. *Rumour* undoubtedly attracted a lot of attention and one of the people who had seen it was Michael Klinger, who was born in Soho. He'd started the Gargoyle Club, which was the first cinema club where they showed dubious films. I think probably he also made some fairly dubious films. And then, at some point in his career, he decided that he wanted to make serious feature films and he was the first person to produce [Roman] Polanski in English. They made two films together, one was *Cul de Sac* and one was *Repulsion*. So Klinger had now established himself as a feature producer.

And the other person who'd noticed my work was an agent called Barry Cross – digressing for a moment, [he] actually played the young Toulouse-Lautrec, so he'd been an actor and then he gravitated to being an agent and he eventually became Cat Stevens' manager and was very responsible for his career. And he moved ultimately to Hollywood and was a very rich man. Barry had noticed my work. I didn't have an agent. So Barry

came out of the woodwork, so to speak – he said, "Do you need an agent?" And I said yes.

Then, within a week of this, I got a letter from Michael Klinger saying, "Would you read the enclosed book – you might be interested in it." It was a book called *Jack's Return Home* and it's written by Ted Lewis. I'd never heard of Ted Lewis at the time and I liked the novel – I thought it was very well written, actually. It had a kind of quality which rang all sorts of bells with me basically.

In the novel, Jack Carter goes up to the North to investigate the dubious death of his brother. So he goes by train in the novel and he changes at Doncaster and you're never quite sure where he goes to. But we all do know that it's a steel town. There were scenes in pubs and clubs and all sorts of strange places that I recognise from my days in the Navy. So I knew instinctively the kind of milieu that he was moving in because I was on the lower deck and when you went ashore at all these ports like Hull and Grimsby and North Shields and wherever this is, these are the kinds of places you ended up in and there's nowhere else would accept you. So I knew what the man was writing about, or the milieu in which this character was about to enter.

Bringing out a CD of the music of *Get Carter*, which was done by Roy Budd, they asked me to write the sleeve notes and when

I got my file out, I was absolutely astonished. The letter from Michael Klinger was dated January 20th, 1970 – I think that’s the right date. And the next letter that I came across was from a man called Robert Littman, who was the MGM European vice president or president or whatever, like Americans like to call themselves, and that was dated October 30th, saying how fantastic he thought the film was. So, from getting the novel, doing a deal, writing the script, casting it, finding the locations, shooting it, was 32 weeks. That would be inconceivable now – you wouldn’t even get the script read in 32 weeks, they wouldn’t get the green light on sending you the novel probably in 32. Having worked in television, I thought this is the way things were because television was a much faster process. But I was stunned by the speed with which it had got made. I just went straight from television into a feature film, I had a feature film being released and a hit, a big success, from ten months after completing *Rumour*. I assumed wrongly it was gonna be like this all the time.

Michael Caine was not aboard until I’d done the first draft. His name is never mentioned initially. He was then shown obviously *Rumour* and *Suspect*, the other film Klinger also had seen. So Caine quickly came on board although I frankly at the time was surprised because Carter was such a shit. I mean, he’s such an unpleasant man that I couldn’t conceive of a star taking the role, right? And I’d only worked with actors. I hadn’t worked with stars at all. *Rumour* and *Suspect* had no names as such in them at all. It’s extraordinary looking back that, in television in particular, you could actually make films that didn’t have big name actors.

I got £8,000 for writing and directing – and no percentage. MGM were going through a bad time in America so they whacked it straight out to the drive ins as a sort of B picture, because I think they had two films in those days. And they made a black version of it a year later.

Going back to the beginning, I’d never adapted anything before, because all the previous scripts had been originals. So I had this curious business of adapting, which is strange because you feel an obligation patently to the person’s work that you’re adapting. You have a duty, it seems to me, to pay due respect, so I was very cautious to begin with and kept very closely to the book. And there was a lot of the book in the film –and actually still [is] – but I think I was over cautious. I had to reach a point where I clearly had to make it into a film, which a novel is not, and I had to think

differently. So, the first draft, I respected the novel much more than I began to, when I did the second draft, say, and then it was that Caine came on board, which of course transformed everything since I was now writing and knowing who the lead was going to be, which also changed the second draft.

And now the extra character that was going to come into it was basically where it was going to be shot. I was smart enough to know that I wanted the place that he goes to in the North to have an identity that is basically one where the geography is going to play another role in that for an audience that they’re settled. They know where they are, they know what’s going on. And the geography is going to help that. I talked to Klinger and recounted all my naval experiences and various things like that – I was in the Navy – and this is now sort of six years later, something like that.

With *Rumours*, [and] *Suspect*, I’d found all my own locations and part of the joy of making films for me was certainly driving around finding those places. No location manager can do that for you, because you find the places that will make that work better filmically than a location manager can ever find. So I said to



Michael Caine and Ian Hendry in *Get Carter*.



Michael Caine as Carter in *Get Carter*.



John Osborne in Get Carter.



Britt Ekland in Get Carter.

The setting as a character in Get Carter.

Klinger I'm going to go up to go to all the ports that I have been to in the Navy – because there was a major pub, for example, in Hull called the Albert Hall, about as big as the Albert Hall. They had sawdust on the floor. It was an incredible pub. All of those fishing ports were visually extraordinary and hardly touched really in terms of film.

To my horror, [Klinger] said, "Well, I'll come with you." Because I wanted to just go off on my own and dream. Anyway, the Cadillac came out and Reg Nivett, his driver, and off we set. It was the most extraordinary three or four days I've ever had in my life because I found it deeply embarrassing sitting in the back of his Cadillac going into all these incredibly sort of poor areas, rough areas too. I'd never been in my car like a Cadillac in my life and it's so quiet inside and you'd look through these dark windows. So we went to Grimsby and we went to Hull and they'd been devastated – the developers have been in and the Albert Hall had gone in Hull and all the places that I remembered. They'd all been rebuilt and not attractive and there was nothing there for us at all.

We were about to turn back and I suddenly remembered going to North Shields again in the Navy. There was this extraordinary place with the jetty and whilst I had not really gone any further than immediately close to the ship, the area was still extraordinary. The houses were terraced and they came down to the jetty and I still remembered it vividly. I said, "Well, let's just go on one more, we'll go up to Newcastle." So the Cadillac just carried on and we arrived in Newcastle and I just knew that this was the place that I wanted to shoot – I can remember clearly how excited I was by visually by Newcastle, which I'd never seen. And then, of course, I went down to North Shields and you had the whole of that stretch of the river and it had to be the place that the story would unfold in. So Klinger left me there, because I said that's where I wanted to shoot it and I then started exploring the area, looking for locations that I wanted to shoot the scenes of in.

In addition to that, an actual story that had happened there began filtering through: there had been a murder at a club called



Carter tips Brumby to his death: Bryan Mosley and Michael Caine in Get Carter.

La Dolce Vita and it had involved two brothers who had been providers of fruit machines for working men's clubs. There'd been a racket going on where they were taking something like 10 – 20% of the money from the machines each week and one of the collectors got greedy and he'd been murdered and put away. The more I started investigating the story, the more I wanted to incorporate it into *Carter* because, coming from *World In Action* even with *Rumour* and *Suspect*, the research of reality of real things that happens I find wonderfully useful to hang onto in terms of talking to actors and into your own sense of what the story is about. So I began to adapt even more of the novel to fit Newcastle. The novel didn't have, for example, the restaurant where Brumby's at the top of the car park and it didn't have the betting shop. The racetrack was in the book, there are certain elements that that stayed the same and the scenes stayed very largely the same within themselves, but they often relocated them. The house, for example, where the main villain (John Osborne) is meant to have lived in was actually the house that the villain had vanished from two years before. I had noticed that it was up for sale and the estate agent said it'd never been sold. I'm not surprised. It was the most evil place I've ever been to. The real villain had just done a bunk and cleared off with his money, with his wife, with his children, to Ibiza. And they'd left the house, it's been put on the market but nobody wanted to buy it. I found 35mm film in there and his wife had been a Catholic so there were statues of the Virgin Mary at one end of the house and it was absolutely untouched. The place just had been abandoned – the children's drawing books, there were a whole range of different things that had been left over. The crew actually hated shooting there and it was an unpleasant house. It was perfect for the film but very unpleasant, nevertheless. So I sort of interweaved all of these the elements of the real story into the script.

Now you're confronted with the situation where you couldn't use cameramen that I'd used in television because there wasn't quite the same switch from television for the technicians as there was for directors. Although for directors, it was quite tough. I didn't realise that, of course, it was really quite tough to make that switch from television to feature films.

Carter had the distinction, I think, of being the first sort of honest kind of British gangster film because it was brutal. The Kray brothers had happened, the Richardsons had happened, and I decided that if I was going to make the film, it was going to have that kind of ruthless quality – there was going to be very little sentiment in this. I couldn't think of any other gangster films that really had that ruthless edge that *Carter* had – you have to be honest and do it the way that it would be. There was one other film which was called *The Small World of Sammy Lee*, which is a black and white film which Anthony Newley had done, set in Soho [1962, written and directed by Ken Hughes]. I remember thinking it was a terrific film actually and had the same quality that I wanted, so I checked who the cameraman was – and it was Wolfgang [Suschitsky]. He was a great black-and-white photographer.

Wolfgang, I suppose, was already kind of sixty/sixty-five, something like that – it was difficult to say. He was a very gentle man. He wrote me a card saying he thought the script was terribly violent and I sent him a card back saying, "Don't judge me too quickly" and he changed his mind, actually. The violence was correct. It didn't dwell upon it. The man was sadistic. He was psychotic. The redeeming factor of *Carter* is the fact that he knows he's sick. The moments that I appreciate most of all are the moments when he's on the ferry coming back and he looks at children, he looks at the mother, and there are moments where you know that he knows that he's really sick and that he would like to be more acceptable in society but he isn't. You see the nature of the beast from where he actually came from as well. He wasn't going to go back there. You can see how somebody like that could possibly be created. So it was a surprise that [Wolfgang] did it, but he was very proud of it.

Newcastle turned out to be an incredibly corrupt city, as we know from *Our Friends from the North* and Dan Smith and



the whole rest of it, so not only was the choice of city visually correct, it was absolutely the right place to do it, because all of the elements fit it. You could feel the corruption in Newcastle. That milieu is basically they do damage to themselves. And everyone sort of accepts that, as long as it doesn't spill over. So the point where he kills Brumby, for example – he tips him off the tower and he lands on these innocent people, the car below – is an important moment for me in the film. When ITV showed it on television the first time, they cut it out which made me extremely angry, because then the story cascades out of this nasty little sordid, sad story within, you know, interlocking with all the people within it. And indeed it doesn't involve anybody else, although in the betting shop there's a blind man and he stands for a lot more than just being a blind man: he's saying that nobody wants to know, you know, and when he knifes him out in the backyard – he's going to the toilet – and he comes back and the blind man is laying a bet is basically saying nobody wants to know what's happening. And the police didn't want to know. Nobody wants to know.

They tried to talk me out of having *Carter* killed at the end, which I would not have – I mean, the condition under which I made the film was that he had to be killed. At the end, he had to be put down like an animal and I did it in the most dismissive way – exactly the same way as he killed people so he would be killed. By this time, they'd seen the rushes and they were excited by the whole adventure and they really wanted *Carter* to live. I wouldn't have that. And there are other idiotic things that happened. It was extraordinary, looking back, how brave I was because within this 32 weeks I was learning the whole process, one of dealing with a star. I have to say, I was very lucky with Michael Caine because he was wonderful to work with.



Michael Caine with Mickey Rooney in publicity pose for *Pulp*.



Lionel Stander in the trailer for *Pulp*.



Mickey Rooney in *Pulp*.

And I really mean wonderful. He's totally disciplined; he came prepared. So I had an ally. And he let me direct it. He didn't try and take over and he was extremely generous with all the other unknown actors at the time surrounding him. I had assumed that having a star, that was it. But the Americans wanted all sorts of idiotic people to play all these characters in Newcastle and I just said, "If you want that person, then I'll leave, I can't do the film." I let them have Britt Ekland in the film and that was the only other person that was a name actor really – Ian Hendry had been a film star but his career had gone into decline, he was still working on television, he's a wonderful actor.

I recognised quite quickly that making films for the cinema was totally different to making them for television. There's a certain element of unreality that comes in when you've got a star because the star comes with that bubble of celebrity around them so I knew that I wanted to ground that star with real actors around him that were unknown so you're not saying, "Oh, there's old so and so" and it gave his performance much more of a truth. I had to fight really hard not to succumb to having other stars. They wanted a lot of Americans. There was one major actress in *Peyton Place* they wanted to play a hooker in Newcastle.

So it was a fight and, in addition to that, I would never start until I knew what the scene was about, what I wanted to do. And that maybe two or three hours before I would decide that this was the way that I wanted to do it. It's not that I'm slow to make decisions. The process can be complicated in terms of getting the actors and seeing what happens and then shaping the scene and not starting it too quickly until you are ready. And when you start, it goes like the clappers if it's all prepared and all worked out. There were all sorts of situations where I'd be put under pressure by the first assistant or the production manager to say you must get started and I would never do it. And we finished it on schedule and under budget, I think, and it was a terribly smooth experience.

The other smart thing I did actually was stay at a different hotel from the crew and the cast. I stayed away because I realised I was liable to be eaten alive. Richard Lester had told me they will eat you alive. And he was right. This time I got into the hotel with a crew when I got snapped by Klinger and Caine. We just done a scene where there was the use of a car and they decided wouldn't it be a good idea if we had a car chase in it. I remember saying hang on a second, you're crazy. *Bullitt* had just come out – absolutely unbelievable car chase which must have taken two, three weeks to shoot in San Francisco, and with Steve McQueen in. I said, it's totally inappropriate for *Carter*. People have these mad ideas when you're making films. They suddenly on a whim think you just put in a car chase. I was learning the whole time. It was an extraordinary process. I must have been incredibly clear about what I wanted to do to resist all of this. I am full of admiration for myself looking back.

I had lots and lots of offers [after *Get Carter*] but I was determined to keep my writing and directing together. I mean, I have done three films, all of which I've written and directed. And I also wanted to go back to original stories, you know, not an adaptation of a book ideally. So we'd obviously got on very well, Klinger and Caine and myself. And I went away and I wrote a script called *Memoirs of a Ghost Writer*. It was an incredibly difficult script to write, actually: it was a comedy called *Pulp* eventually but it was originally called *Memoirs of a Ghost Writer*. I also wanted to get back to writing about politics, actually.

How this one came about, a sort of curious mixture of many things. There had been a scandal in the '50s, called the Montesi scandal, in Italy, about a young girl who'd been found dead on a beach. And the trial went on for ages – I think it was something like ten years. I don't think anyone was ever found guilty. All trails seem to lead back to the abuse of this young girl by a group of men who are meant to have been politicians, and meant to have been a shooting syndicate. Nobody was ever able to prove this, but all sorts of famous names got dragged in. This case always sort of intrigued me, actually. And I'd always been interested in bad ghost writers. So I came up with this idea of a character for Caine who was just a hack writer, basically, and



Lizabeth Scott in *Pulp*.



Michael Caine and Amerigo Tot in *Pulp*.



Lionel Stander and Michael Caine in *Pulp*.

he writes under numerous pseudonyms for all sorts of terrible publishing companies.

I set it in Italy because you had a lot of very odd characters living in Italy – a lot of actors, for example, who just did voiceovers because all the Italian films were dubbed into English. And you’d find these odd writers who could live cheaply there and they would write all this crap – love stories or semi-porn, or – so I took this character and I started putting the two stories together. I didn’t really recognise until recently this actually had all the ingredients of *Get Carter* but in a completely different way – not violent.

Just to get back to *Carter*, when you’re making a film it doesn’t appear to be violent, because it’s a technical business and you break and you cut and the tension is just disposed of straightaway and everyone laughs. When it’s all joined together, you’re used to it – it doesn’t seem to be as violent and as unpleasant as you thought it was. When I saw it with an audience, I was completely shocked. I was quite shaken by the success of the film, I suppose. I somehow thought that people were going to be shocked by it, but they liked it, they liked *Carter*. It was hard. I hadn’t anticipated that at all and it scared me, actually. It was the first experience I’d ever had of manipulating an audience. I never wanted to do it again.

So *Pulp*, in a sense was the antidote. But it was also a codicil. It was taking the same story of corruption of the young girl, the difficulty of trying to bring people at the top to account for their actions, and yet it was a comedy. And it was linking up with violence and fascism. It was a whole concoction of elements but the elements, curiously, and I didn’t really recognise this at the time, were exactly the same as *Carter* but presented in a completely different way. Completely different way. And I shot it in a completely different way. I didn’t use the zoom. I hardly used any long lenses like I had done with *Carter*, which is a kind of voyeuristic film in a sense. It’s much more cinematic, much more in the style of Sergio Leone, the wide shots and the close up, that kind of contrast and sharp cutting between the two. For me it was an incredibly happy experience, I must say. I loved it, because it’s such a quirky film, it was funny and witty, wonderful sort of visual jokes. The whole thing was a much more pleasing experience for me,

I was going to shoot in Italy, which is where it was meant to take place. Part of it’s going to be shot in Naples and another part in Rome and I went all over Italy – on my own this time, by the way. I went there to write part of it so that the locations were all split up all over the place. And the Mafia were leaning on us. We had a production manager who said that we need to pay this quite large sums of money to the Mafia to shoot in each city and I began to realise that we were just going to be taken to the cleaners. So

I rang Klinger and I said, “Look, I really think we’re crazy. We’re gonna just get stitched up there. I can feel it, Michael.”

I had a house in Malta. Malta is a very acquired taste. A lot of people absolutely loathe Malta. I’ve always found it wonderful. Pop art is absolutely natural to the Maltese. It’s not contrived as pop art was, say, in the ’60s with Peter Blake. All the lorries have names and they have names that go back, names like Tommy Farr, a pre-war boxer. Then you would have the Virgin Mary, you know, so each truck has his wonderfully painted name on the side. And you’ll find it’s just filled with all sorts of extraordinary little details, which I loved. The food wasn’t great and it’s a dusty, strange island with very little vegetation.

So I rang Klinger and I said, “I would like to pull the whole thing out of Italy and go to Malta.” Which was four weeks before we started shooting. Thank goodness he went with it but I do think it was jolly brave with him as producer. The advantage was that it’s only nine miles wide and twelve miles long, so getting to the locations was just unbelievably easy. I just found all these incredible locations, so again I was adapting my script to the locations.

And this I took for the beginning. The first thing takes place in a typing pool and typing up on the screen I took from those wartime films which say “This film takes place somewhere in the Mediterranean”, yeah, [or] “somewhere in England.”

So we went to Malta. We started shooting before Christmas, which again was extraordinary, looking back – nobody’d do that now – and we had Christmas there and we continued shooting after Christmas. I had this unbelievable galaxy of wonderful stars, all these people that I dreamt of working with when I used to go to the cinema as a kid. You never thought you’d ever get to work with Mickey Rooney or Lionel Stander, Dennis Price – that was Dennis Price’s last film. It was just a joy for me to spend time with all these people. Lizabeth Scott was absolutely extraordinary. Scott hadn’t made a film for, like, fifteen years. It was her voice that I thought was just wonderful. So we all ended up in the Hilton Malta making this film. Caine absolutely loathed Malta, he hated making *Pulp*.

And we made this really strange, offbeat film. I wouldn’t get away with it now, not in a million years get it made. It had wonderful reviews. George Martin did the music, the man who did the Beatles. I had a terrible time editing it and I fired the editor which was sad. But it’s one of my films I’m most proud of, I have to say. [V](#)

Veteran Tony Klinger, son of Michael Klinger, recalled the making of *Get Carter* in *Michael Caine at 90* in issue 177, Summer 2023, pages 23 and 24.

NEWS FROM BRITISH ENTERTAINMENT HISTORY PROJECT

(Formerly BECTU History Project)

WWW.HISTORYPROJECT.ORG.UK



The British Entertainment History Project has reached an important milestone in its forty year history. As I write this article, I've just completed the digitisation of the final tape in our vast collection of 820 interviews. We embarked on this important mission ten years ago. Our archive consists of thousands of audio cassettes and tapes. In the process we've uncovered a vast treasure trove of interviews with the men and women who made major contributions to the British film, television, stage and radio industries over the past one hundred years.

I've been listening to a number of recordings in our collection relating to the end of the silent movie era and the arrival of the talkies to Britain in the late 1920s.

The man who made it possible was Stanley Watkins who was born in London in 1888. He travelled to America and worked for Bell Telephone and Western Electric, the companies whose research laboratories were at the forefront of sound recording technology. He became the chief engineer and was responsible for developing the Vitaphone system which synchronised motion pictures with phonograph discs. The first major picture released featuring the Vitaphone sound system, was the 1926 production *Don Juan* which had sound effects, a musical score recorded by the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, but no dialogue.

All the following quotes are from our archive.

Stanley Watkins

"When we first came out with *Don Juan* and Vitaphone, it was on August 6th 1926. All the producers said, 'Oh, it's just a flash in the pan.' They, of course, had a lot of money tied up in silent films. They used the excuse that the public didn't want it."

The arrival of *The Jazz Singer* with Al Jolson in 1928 made clear that synchronised dialogue and song were not a passing novelty but a watershed moment.

Vitaphone lay at the heart of *The Jazz Singer*. But by the time the film was in preparation, Western Electric's sound experts and Warner Bros. had "quarrelled" and Stanley found himself "persona non grata" in the theatre where rehearsals were underway. However, when Sam Warner suddenly died, the New York office relented: "For heaven's sake, come and run these rehearsals for us." Stanley sat in the



Al Jolson (with Josephine Dunn) in
The Singing Fool (Warner Bros.).

screening "with Jolson on one side of me and [songwriter Louis] Silvers on the other," controlling the Vitaphone sound by telephone to the projection booth. He later singled out Jolson's spontaneous line, "Wait a minute, wait a minute, you ain't heard nothing yet," as the moment that "revolutionised the picture industry", turning Vitaphone from a bold experiment into the vehicle for the first truly modern talking picture.

"When *The Jazz Singer* was released, that little bit of dialogue made the rest of the film seem so out of date that the movie industry had to give up the cold war. The other film producers recognised that it was a case of sound or sink."

"When that happened, it was obvious... the other producers knew the game was up. There was nothing they could do about it, the people wanted it. They were going to get it."

The impact

Fred Tomlin, born in 1908 in Hoxton, London, talks about going to see the film when it first came to Britain in April 1928: "At every opportunity I used to go to the West End, to the cinema. So when they fetched over *The Jazz Singer*, I thought, 'Well I've got to see that.' And it was at the Rialto Cinema in Coventry Street. It was a silent film supposed to be with sound bits. I was sitting there, and there's this silent film going on and then they're in a café. And suddenly you're in the cafe, with the sound of the glasses and the cups. It was the most marvellous thing to hear all this. And then Jolson sang a song. I thought, 'Cor, bless my soul.' Well, you couldn't keep me away from the cinema after that."

Fred went on to have a successful career in the film industry as a boom operator.

Installing the first talkies

A pioneering figure in the installing of the talkies in British cinemas was **Charles Green** from Western Electric.

"The first talkie installations in this country was in the year 1928. The first cinema that I went to install the talkies was the Foresters at Bethnal Green in London - the film that we called *The Singing Fool* had Al Jolson in it. That was the first film that I ever saw in a cinema at the East End of London, and it had a tremendous effect on the local population there and it ran for several weeks"

The transition was anything but smooth. Early systems relied on gramophone discs locked in step with the projector before optical sound on film became reliable. Charles Green wrestled with tinny loudspeakers, unreliable synchronisation and the brutal fact that British cinemas were never designed for sound at all. Walls were knocked down, new screens and loudspeaker housings built, and projection boxes rewired in a matter of weeks.

"It was quite a tremendous thing to get all the equipment over from America and install in these cinemas. They were either new ones going up or old ones being changed so that they could show the sound films."

"Many of them simply showed the film onto a blank wall painted white, and these had to be knocked down and an extension built in order to accommodate the loudspeakers. There was quite a lot of work involved in installing that. Conduits had to be laid from the projection rooms down to the stage. The amplifiers had to be installed. All in all, it took about one month to complete the installation."

There are many more interviews on our website from those in the silent era who worked on the first talkies. They include film editor Edward Drysdale, cameraman Freddie Young and sound recordist Dallas Bower. Check them out.

Mike Dick
Chairman

mikedick@blueyonder.co.uk



11 February 2026 – Were You There?

Our heavily over-subscribed screening of *The Third Man* at the Odeon Leicester Square was enhanced by a last minute opportunity to use the huge main auditorium in which the classic drama played out in a splendid digital restoration after a brief appearance by the theatre's organist and our Secretary Donald MacKenzie on *The Duchess*, the *Compton*.

The film was followed by tea and light refreshments dispensed from Oscar's Bar in the circle foyer with its great view of the centre of the square. Our special guest of honour was longstanding Veteran Angela Allen on her birthday. She was part of *The Third Man*'s continuity team at the start of her career.

Very many thanks to Odeon for hosting the event so well and to Park Circus and Studio Canal for the 4k restoration of the film. Also to Ramon Modiano for taking group photographs of Veterans at the event.



Our Secretary Donald MacKenzie with his predecessor Kathy Darby and (centre) Peter Meunier.



Vice President Alan McCann (centre) with Executive Committee members (left) Allen Eyles and (right) Nigel Wolland.



Angela Allen with her birthday cake. (Photograph by Donald MacKenzie.)



Outside, there was a new addition to the Sculpture Trail in the Square: Bridget Jones. (Photograph by Allen Eyles.)

50 YEARS AGO - APRIL 1976

London West End's top ten draws are headed by *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, boosted by major Oscar wins, until *Shout at the Devil* arrives with a big charity premiere at the Odeon Leicester Square at the end of the month. Other long running big draws are *The Slipper and the Rose*, *Mahogany*, *The Man Who Fell to Earth*, *Jaws*, *Return of the Pink Panther* and *Emmanuelle*. Newcomers *The Duchess and the Dirtwater Fox* and *It Shouldn't Happen to a Vet* don't overtake them.

The ABC Newcastle hosts the world premiere of *The Likely Lads* while the Odeon Merriam Centre Leeds launches *The Diamond Mercenaries*.

The Children's Film Foundation celebrates its 25th year with morning premieres of *The Battle of Billy's Pond* and *The Man from Nowhere* at the Odeon Leicester Square.

Odeons at Bromley, Chester, Kensington and Uxbridge re-open as triple screen cinemas while the ABC Brighton now has four screens (viewed by over 5,000 on an open day). La Scala Glasgow opens a second screen in disused restaurant space. Rex Berkhamsted is reduced to two small screens in the balcony as bingo takes over the stalls.

Fifty Veterans descend on the Brighton Film Theatre for a special film programme followed by lunch at the Kingswest Suite, a visit supported by the BFT, Rank, EMI, Star and Lyons Maid.



Roger Moore and Lee Marvin in *Shout at the Devil*.

London's National Film Theatre celebrates the 25th anniversary of Charles and Kitty Cooper's Contemporary Films with a season of its releases.

The Eros Piccadilly Circus switches to feature films, partly due to a lack of new material to continue as a cartoon theatre.

The run of *Emmanuelle* at the Classic Keighley is abruptly terminated after four days by a ban from the Bradford Metropolitan Council.

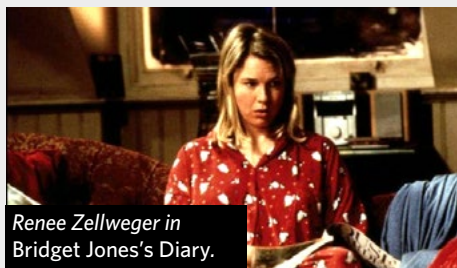
Classic Sheffield re-opens after a month's closure caused by a fire. Empire Bedford re-opens as Granada 3 after being closed for nine months. Odeon Clacton re-opens, circle only, for the holiday season.

Inverness Film Theatre is reduced to three or less days a week at the Eden Court. Welfare Hall Fforestfach, near Swansea, closes. Regal Biggleswade goes over to bingo.

Films in production include: *The Pink Panther Strikes Again*, *Sweeney!*, *The Abbess* (later *Nasty Habits*) and *Watership Down*. Shooting abroad are *Star Wars*, *A Bridge Too Far*, *Cross of Iron* and *The Cassandra Crossing*.

Passing on: Sir Carol Reed; Bert Bates, editor; Beatrice Dawson, costume designer; Leslie McClure, publicist; Jackie Breckenridge, Scottish (Milngarvie) exhibitor; Neil McCallum, actor/producer; performers Sid James, Ronald Radd and British-born Rex O'Malley.

25 YEARS AGO - APRIL 2001



Renee Zellweger in *Bridget Jones's Diary*.

Bridget Jones's Diary opens mid-month on 417 screens and takes a colossal £5.7 million in its first three days for a screen average of £13,669.

Multiplex openings: UGC Didsbury (Parrs Wood) (11 screens - 2,848 seats); Cineworld Falkirk (12 - 2,098); The FilmWorks Greenwich (14 - 2,514); Ster Century Romford (16 - 3,874); Cineworld Llandudno Junction (9 - 1,615); Lighthouse Aberdeen (7 - 1,532).

The Central Barnstaple opens two more screens with another to follow. Odeon Streatham is due to re-open the old circle as three screens before increasing the former stalls to five screens from the existing four. Twin-screen ABC Shaftesbury Avenue is being split into four. ABC Magdalen Street Oxford is about to gain an additional screen and re-open as an Odeon. Central Torquay is being converted to four screens.

Listed building consent for renovations of the Odeon Sutton Coldfield requires the original name signage to be stored on the premises in Perspex cases.

J. D. Wetherspoon is due to re-open the Capitol Forest Hill as a pub and contemplates the closed Hippodrome Bo'ness for the same use.

The Regal Cranleigh is up for sale as owners Bernard and Pat Tonks want to retire.

The listed 3-screen ABC Muirend, Glasgow, has been sold.

City Screen is to cease film shows at the St. Vincent Gosport for lack of support while the town's former Ritz is to be demolished for a superstore.

Films in production include: *Gosford Park*; *Mike Bassett: England Manager*; *The Seagull's Laughter* (co-Norway); *My Little Eye*; *Miranda*; *Below*; *Iris*; *About A Boy*; *The Importance of Being Earnest*; *The Rocket Post* (released 2004); and *Thunderpants*.

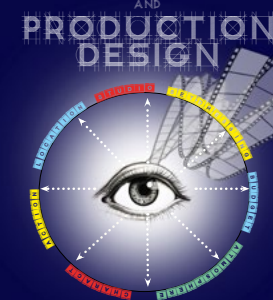
Passing on: director Ken Hughes; sound engineer Ken Weston; performers Sir Harry Secombe, Nyree Dawn Porter and Jean Anderson.



1. I was taught to pick a pocket or two (1968)
2. Where did we meet Officer Krupke? (1961)
3. What? A legal limit to the snow? (1967)
4. Doris is rootin' and tootin' (1953)
5. That's quite a traffic jam on the freeway (2017)
6. Meryl made a nasty witch (2014)
7. Bargain prices up against the wall (2013)
8. A big red bus cliff hanger (1962)
9. Mega budget musical directed by Gene Kelly (1969)
10. What kind of Cockney accent is that? (1964)
11. He had it coming (2003)
12. Audrey beat Julie to the part (1965)
13. Give some sweets to the poor, Shirley (1969)
14. She's just a girl who can't say no (1956)
15. Auditions for Mr. Attenborough (1985)
16. Wow, It's Sandy in leather (1978)
17. This will keep your head warm, Fred (1935)
18. Barbra is not so good on roller skates (1969)
19. Go Karts and custard pies (1976)

Noticeboard

TERENCE MARSH AND PRODUCTION DESIGN



A new exhibition celebrating the most "invisible" of the Cinema Arts at
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Letters can be sent by post to Editor – The Veteran, 13 Tennyson Court, Paddockhall Road, Haywards Heath RH16 1EZ or by email to office@bctv.uk headed Letter for The Veteran

MORE JAWING

Regarding *Jaws*' opening release [letters, last issue]: In the '70s I worked for Cinema International Corporation (CIC). They distributed films from three big American production companies: Universal, Paramount and MGM. I was the projectionist running the small Preview Theatre at Paramount.

In June 1975 we received our first 35mm print of *Jaws* and I ran that film more than forty times between June and the opening date, Boxing Day, to numerous publications to guarantee maximum publicity coverage.

I too was guilty of increasing the sound level on the underwater shot of the face in the porthole! Great audience reaction!

I agree that blockbuster films like *Jaws* made a huge impact on the cinemagoing public back then. Happy days.

RAY PASCOE

Editor's note: The following vivid reminiscence comes from the Cinema Theatre Association Bulletin for November/December 2005 (slightly abbreviated).

I was working as a full-time projectionist at the Classic Tunbridge Wells. It had been twinned by Essoldo in 1969-70 and a third screen added by Classic in 1972. It was one of their best locations, being the only cinema in town and had a massive catchment area. The line-up for Christmas 1975 was *Earthquake* in 70mm in screen 1 (old stalls, 450 seats), booked in for four weeks. *Jaws* was in screen 2 (old circle, 366 seats) and *All Creatures Great and Small* in the modest 120-seat screen 3.

Jaws came in, in good time, an American print that was one of the 400 used prints. I made it up and, just before Christmas Eve, was asked to find a suitable spot for an intermission. Running the print through, I found a couple of useful places but settled for the three of them leaving the harbour and going out to sea in their tiny boat. It worked very well! With all our films with intermissions, we always left the auditorium in silence so as not to break the spell. I don't know what CIC would have made of it because if they thought it needed an intermission, they would have added one.

So, we were all set up for Boxing Day. You would find people would go to the cinema at Christmas but not venture out at any other time of year, a bit like old seaside holiday cinema. Boxing Day dawned. It was my day on the rota to work – two of us running three shows. I was a bit miffed that I had to leave the family behind and said to my wife, "Who wants to go to the cinema today when they can go another day?" When I arrived at the cinema the place was heaving with people. The queues went right around the building.

Business was phenomenal from that day forward. *Earthquake* was dragging its heels; I think a lot of people went to see it when they couldn't get into *Jaws*. You used to get that sort of business all the time with a triple unit, rather than go home they would see whatever else was on offer. After two weeks we had a 35mm print of *Earthquake* to replace the 70mm one and it did one more week in the small screen. *Jaws* moved into screen 1 to cope with the masses.

Classic made a silly move. Prices at that time were Adults £1, Child 60p. They made one price at £1 for everyone. That did not go down well with the public. It killed the goodwill stone dead and it took over a year to win it back when prices returned to normal. The reason given for the increase was that CIC-Universal were taking 90% of the box office – the highest percentage ever for a film – leaving Classic with 10%, hence the intermission for sales. It did drop back to 70-75% after a month or so, which was still high. One Saturday in the first few weeks I put on five shows of *Jaws*, one at 11am, normal afternoon, teatime and evening and one late night. I was shattered, not physical but mental – but I enjoyed every minute of the work.

My wife and a friend came to see *Jaws* after a few weeks of the run. I had to warn her of the scene where the head comes through the bottom of the boat as she was pregnant with our daughter, who arrived in early March. Can you imagine her arriving in the cinema? We ran *Jaws* for 13 weeks, finishing in March, then some re-runs later. It was brilliant cinema and is one of my all-time film favourites. It was a joy to be working in the cinema business at that time and the bonus was I getting paid for doing it!

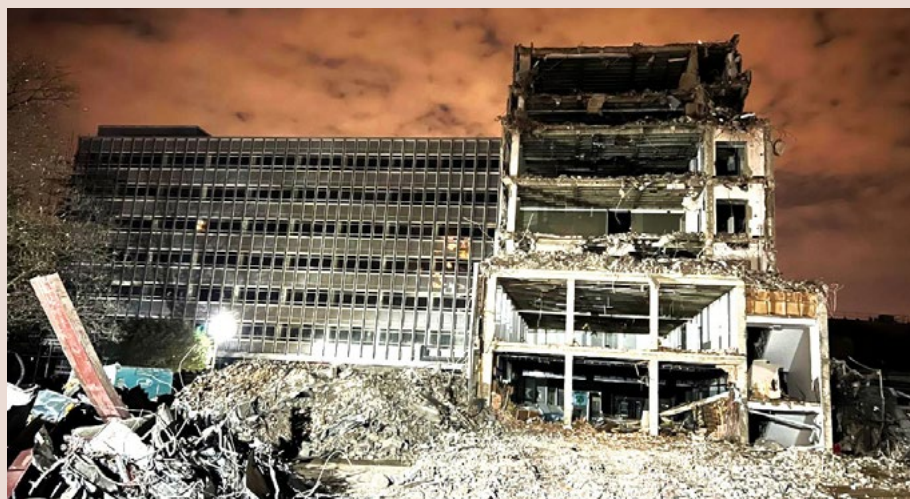
ALAN SCOTT

GOODBYE ELSTREE STUDIOS

Please find attached a photo of the end of Neptune House. BBC Studios, Elstree. This was the home of Gerry Anderson's *Space Series*, *Holby City* (23 years), *Muppets*, plus many more.

Sad day in the history of Elstree!

BARRY READ
Key Grip



COPENHAGEN CALLING

One of the pioneering gentlemen of Danish cinema was Mr. Alfred James Gee, who came from Manchester to Copenhagen as a projectionist in 1898 to run his Wargraph projector as the popular "moving pictures" closing act at the Cirkus Variété in Copenhagen. Wargraph was the name of the projector device and taken from the company name: Warwick Trading Company and the show "The American Biograph".

The first year (1898), Gee was travelling to Denmark with another UK gentleman called Mr. Swanborough. We have been unable to find anything about him, short of him being some sort of con man, who went to Stockholm and left Gee in Copenhagen. Mr. Gee came back for the 1899 season and stayed in Denmark for the rest of his life. He married a Danish girl, had kids and became a very successful cinema man. Gee passed away in 1970. Mr. Gee is noted here: <https://www.victorian-cinema.net/gee.php> – although the research on the page is not entirely correct.

In a Danish interview with Mr. Gee from 1951, he mentions he is a member of Cinema Veterans 1903, and that it is VERY exclusive club. My question is, do you in BCTV have ANY historical information available about Mr. Gee and/or Mr. Swanborough in your files? Gee had experience from working with Robert Paul's Theatrograph if that can be a clue.

THOMAS HAUERSLEV MBKS
www.in70mm.com

Editor's note: As Mr. Hauerslev discovered: "Cinema Veterans 1903 was a highly exclusive club. It had a very small number of members, and no one could be admitted without fulfilling a specific condition: having worked in the film industry as early as 1903 or even earlier. The whole joy of being a member consisted in the honor of being recognised as a pioneer!" Plus, for many, attending an annual dinner reunion. From this evolved the BCTV of today.

Unfortunately, no records have survived of early membership and so we turn the matter of Mr. Gee over to our present members for any elucidation they can provide.

Charity Reveals Landmark Set of Principles for Mentally Healthy Productions



The Film and TV Charity has unveiled a landmark set of **Principles for Mentally Healthy Productions** to help address the systemic pressures and poor working practices that continue to drive burnout, stress, and poor mental health across the UK screen sector, and which aim to improve culture and conditions on productions.

The Principles have been developed over 12 months with a cross-sector working group of more than 45 organisations - including Public Service Broadcasters, major studios, global streamers, screen agencies and industry bodies. The Principles offer the most comprehensive, practical framework to date for embedding mentally healthy working practices into UK film and television. Crucially, they have also been developed with health and safety and legal experts and are

designed to help productions meet their legal duty of care around mental health, and to foster safer, fairer and more psychologically supportive working environments.

Principles for Mentally Healthy Productions:

- 1. Leadership and Culture** – creating a culture that supports wellbeing
- 2. Relationships on Productions** – fostering respectful, inclusive relationships across teams
- 3. Mental Health Support** – making support visible and accessible
- 4. Sensitive Production Content and Themes** – managing the impact of difficult subject matter
- 5. Relationships With Contributors, Cast, and Presenters** – managing the impact of contributors, cast, and presenters on the team
- 6. Production Context** –

creating supportive and safe working environments for all

7. Workload – managing workload to protect wellbeing and performance

8. Working Patterns – small adjustments can have a big impact on mental health

9. Team Structure and Role Clarity – clear roles mean less stress

Each of the nine principles is underpinned by clear, evidence-based and actionable guidance. The guidance offers producers, heads of department, and those in leadership roles simple steps that can be taken on productions regardless of their size, genre, or budget, to address and prevent risks to worker wellbeing.

Visit the Charity's website to find out more: <https://filmtvcharity.org.uk/principles-for-mentally-healthy-productions/>

New Report: Money Matters 2

Based on insights from over 2,000 people across film, TV and cinema, the Film and TV Charity's Money Matters 2 report reveals growing financial strain in the workforce. Nearly half of freelancers (46%) are struggling financially, and 74% are considering leaving the industry due to money worries – with 43% already taking steps to do so. The message is clear: shortterm fixes aren't enough. The longterm health of the screen industries requires coordinated, industrywide action.

To download the report in full visit: <https://filmtvcharity.org.uk/research-impact/reports/money-matters-2-report/>



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