



# THE LENS

The Staff  
Newspaper for  
Independent  
Television  
News

Mar. 1985 No. 13

## It's a Belfast double for ITN cameraman

# ON TOP OF THE WORLD

ITN's Nigel Thompson has been named 'News Cameraman Of The Year' by the Royal Television Society. His coverage of the plastic bullet shooting in Belfast last August – one of the three stories entered in the RTS portfolio – has also won the Silver Nymph award at the Monte Carlo International Television Festival.

The Silver Nymph is the main award in the news category and, coupled with the RTS accolade, provides both Thompson and ITN with a unique double.

The Belfast incident, which occurred during the Noraid demonstrations last summer, was the main story in Thompson's RTS entry, but the decision was made on an assessment of all three stories. The others included in his portfolio were a Channel Four News story on swan conservation in Norfolk, and his coverage of the immediate aftermath of the Brighton bombing.

He is the first to admit that his coverage of the bombing was a direct result of the newsman's old adage of being in the right place at the right time. He wasn't even covering the Conservative party conference. Instead, he was enjoying some late night relaxation with the duty crew in the Bedford Hotel near his Hove home, when the bomb exploded barely 150 yards away.

### Shattered

The crew broke into the car to get the camera equipment and were the first to reach the shattered Grand Hotel. They gained entry through the staff entrance, and were able to



The smile that says it all – Nigel Thompson with his wife Carol Barnes at the RTS Awards Dinner at the Dorchester Hotel.

capture the full horror of the event before being forcibly removed by police.

### Second

Nigel Thompson is only the second ITN cameraman to win the 'News Cameraman Of The Year' accolade since it was introduced by the Royal Television Society in 1978. Bob Hammond won it in 1979.

For Thompson, the award has come early. His career as an ENG cameraman was barely two years old when he shot the prizewinning footage – although as a sound recordist he had been involved in heavy action in Beirut which almost cost him his life when

he was first bombed by Israeli jets while seeking refuge with the crew in a tiny slit trench, and was later held to ransom (and almost shot) by Kurd extremists.

Thompson, aged 29, first joined ITN's traffic unit before becoming a cutting room assistant. Eighteen months later he joined the outside film crews as a sound recordist, and worked for five years before being appointed an ENG cameraman in October 1982.

He is the son of ITN cameraman Hugh Thompson, and is married to Carol Barnes.

**RTS Award for  
Jane Corbin – p.3**

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# People in the News



**CHRIS SHAW**, aged 27, joins the newsroom as a writer. After reading History at Balliol College, Oxford, he worked for five years with IRN, where he covered a wide range of stories including the Brighton Grand Hotel bombing last October.

During time off Chris likes to play football and he relaxes by compiling quizzes for three popular women's magazines.

VTR-Film Library welcomes back two old friends. **IRENE LONG** first worked for ITN between 1971 and 1976 before leaving to study Italian at Reading University. After gaining her degree she went to live and work in Italy and also studied at Perugia University.

Irene has been a freelance holiday relief Librarian for us for some years and has now rejoined the staff.

**PAUL SHERWIN**, 29, Computer Programmer, has rejoined ITN to further expand our VTR/Film Library Computer system which he first helped to develop during 1983.

After Birmingham University and Nuffield College, Oxford, he first worked for ITN during 1981/83 compiling the joint ITN/BBC Guide to the New Parliamentary Constituencies, a massive computer based project published March 83.

During 1984 Paul was Computer Advisor at South Bank Polytechnic developing a system for research in Social Sciences.

**JILL DENNIS**, 25, has joined the Press Office as an Administrative Assistant. Her duties will include looking after visitors to ITN and dealing with viewers' enquiries and correspondence. Previously she was employed as a Towage and Salvage broker for an old city Shiping Company.



**SARAH LEWIS**, 23, is creating computer graphics on our VT80 machine. After leaving Leicester Polytechnic in mid-1984 she worked as Analyst/Programmer for NCR before joining ITN at the beginning of this year.

Sarah relaxes by tap dancing at evening classes, strumming her guitar at home and skiing down mountains on holidays in the Alps.

A familiar face has recently rejoined ITN after a break of over two years.

**TONY MILLETT**, 42, who first joined from UP-ITN 11 years ago, was a Duty Foreign Editor and also produced special programmes. He is unlikely to forget the Jubilee Day 'Special' in 1977, when ITV's OB coverage was hit by industrial action, and ITN took over the whole show for the network.



In 1982 he left to set up a television news production company and also did a spell as Head of News at TV-AM. He returned on January 1st to become Foreign Editor for Ch4 News.

In order to rationalise the titles of Heads of Department, **MIKE BATCHELOR** has agreed to take the new title of Head of Operations. His responsibilities remain unchanged by this revision of his title.



**PATRICK KEHOE**, 24, the new Bought Ledger Clerk in our Mortimer Street office recently arrived from Dublin where he handled accounts for a supermarket.

In the evenings he practices on his clarinet and hopes to join an amateur orchestra as he once did in Ireland. Patrick also draws portraits in pen and ink, and enjoys theatre-going.



Newly appointed Deputy Foreign Editor **ANGELA FRIER**, 31, is well qualified for the job. She left England at 18 and spent the next ten years working and travelling abroad, living in Paris, Nice, Rio de Janeiro, Manila, Sydney, New York and Vancouver.

Angela first came to ITN as a freelance in 1980 and joined Ch4 News when it came on stream in 1982.

We're glad to see **PEARL DAVIS**, our canteen cashier, back at work again after seven weeks illness.

Pearl was afflicted by a mystery illness that made her break out in a rash. Baffled doctors suspected an allergy but could not find the substance that disagreed so violently with her skin.

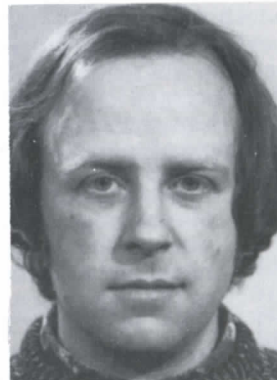
Following exhaustive tests it was discovered that it was one of the most unusual allergies around, Swan Vestas matches!



**ROBYN WILLIAMS**, aged 30, is here to unveil the mysteries of Newsfury and other computer systems for our journalists, et al. Previously she worked in Computer Operations Support for an Iranian Bank in the City, which hit the headlines some months back when 50 women employees were *told* to put on Chadors and veil their hair; remember the story? Robyn was spokesperson for the counter rebellion and was interviewed on our News at 5.45 at the time.

In her spare time she repairs and maintains her own car, is learning French and writes articles which she sends to magazines back home in New Zealand.

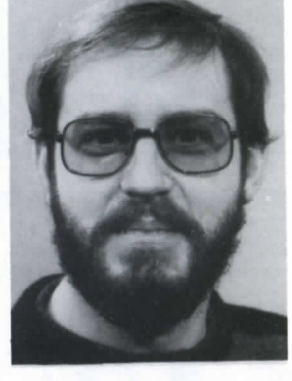
**JERRY LOGUE**, 34 has joined the staff as a Rigger Driver with the OB Unit after working as a freelance for the past six



months. He was previously with Molinaire and Viewplan for three years.

Jerry trained as a Graphic Designer at Harrow Art School and still keeps his hand in by doing freelance illustrations for magazines like Time Out.

A keen tennis player, he will be looking for a partner to join him for lunchtime sessions in Regents Park!



**ALAN BUGBY**, 28, is our newest Driver/Mechanic and joins the team that maintains our fleet of vehicles.

It's unlikely that our camera cars will give him the same sort of recurring problem that he experienced in his last job. As the Palace Vehicles Workshop Supervisor for the Sultan of Oman his most irksome repair task was pushing out dents and re-spraying the Rolls-Royces and Cadillacs which had been parked under trees. Herds of goats would scramble on to the roofs of cars to reach and nibble the branches!

Two senior newsroom appointments have been announced. **PHIL MOGER**, has been named as Programme Editor for News at Ten and ITN's weekend news bulletins. **MERVYN HALL**, has become a News Editor.

Phil joined ITN in 1976 as a script writer from the BBC World Service. Previously, he had worked at Southern Television, the Daily Mirror and various provincial newspapers. He is married to ITN programme director, Jacqui Bromley.

Mervyn Hall, Sports Editor since 1978, came to ITN from LBC/IRN. Since then, he has overseen ITN's coverage of most major sports events, including the Olympic Games, the World Cup and Wimbledon.

**ANNEKE TJOONK**, 22, joins ITN as Secretary to VTR/Film Library Manager.

Originally from Holland and brought up in Germany, Anneke used to be a legal secretary in Eastbourne and later worked in a fashion house just a stone's throw from Wells Street.

She likes swimming, cycling, and horse riding on her father's dairy farm in Sussex where she lives.



# SHIREBROOK

Jane Corbin (right) made it an RTS double for ITN when her Channel Four News report on the Derbyshire mining village of Shirebrook received the top award in the Topical Feature Category.

It provided the peak to a year which has seen Jane travel at home and abroad almost as constantly as she did as a child. Her father was a civil aviation expert, being transferred from airport to aerodrome around Africa, the Far East, and the Pacific Ocean.

Since joining Channel 4 News in September 1982 Jane has been a roving reporter, covering stories throughout Britain, Europe, America and India.

She has interviewed Chancellor Kohl, Indira Gandhi and Rajiv, the late Prime Minister's son and successor; mixed it with Basque separatists, holy-rolling evangelists and Greek prison authorities.

## Crowning success

But Jane's crowning success came in September last year in the small Derbyshire village of Shirebrook. The coal strike, then six months old, had split the usually close-knit community.

The crew - Jane, cameraman Sebastian Rich, recordist Sean Gilmartin, electrician Rob Bowles and Peter Blanchard, VTR editor - spent ten days in the divided settlement.

They recorded some of the most harrowing scenes of the strike. Working miner's wife, Rosaline Barton, was seen running a gauntlet of abuse from striking miners' wives.

*Jane Corbin  
wins an RTS  
award for her  
sympathetic  
insight into  
a Derbyshire  
community  
torn apart  
by opposing  
views on the  
miners' strike*

Her daughter was shown crying with fear; she did not want to go to school because of the names her classmates called her.

Working miners were filmed returning home from the Shirebrook pit - under police protection. Several arrests took place.

"We didn't film a scene more

than once", said Jane. "This sort of incident occurred every day. We just happened to be there and record them".

Life was not pleasant for striking miners either - as Jane made clear in her award-winning report: "I very consciously tried to put the striking miners' side, which TV has often

been accused of not doing," she said. "I felt sympathy for both sides".

In February Jane returned to Shirebrook. By then, most miners had returned to work - quite the reverse of August. But as Jane's report sadly noted, much bitterness remains.



## *... and it's fingers crossed on BAFTA!*

With successes already under our belt in both the Royal Television Society and Monte Carlo International awards, ITN could make it a memorable treble at next week's BAFTA award ceremony.

Channel Four News is one of four finalists nominated for Best Actuality Coverage - and the programme selected was the one containing Jane Corbin's Shirebrook report. Sandy Gall has also been nominated as a finalist in the documentary section for his coverage of Afghanistan in "Allah Against The Gunships" which was produced by Central Television in association with ITN.

Picture shows: ITN's Stewart Purvis, Editor of Channel Four News, receiving a BAFTA nomination certificate from Academy Chairman James Cellan-Jones.



Sir Robert Fraser was the architect of ITN. When the idea of a specialist news organisation owned by the programme companies, was put forward in 1954 he seized upon it with avidity. He saw it as providing the answer to a problem which had greatly exercised Parliament, that of ensuring that commercially owned television stations did not put out commercially biased news.

The ITN concept also enabled Sir Robert to put paid to an alternative plan, favoured by the Chairman of the Authority, Sir Kenneth (later Lord) Clark, that the ITA should set up its own news department and produce the news itself. And to strengthen ITN Fraser from the outset attended all its Board meetings himself, as the Authority's representative, instead of delegating the task to one of his senior officials.



**SIR ROBERT FRASER**

To get the structure for news right was half the battle. But even more important was the part Sir Robert Fraser played in ensuring that the Editor of ITN should have complete editorial independence, within the limits of the Television Act.

Not only did he ensure that the programme companies did not interfere with the editor's judgement in matters of programme content or choice of staff, but he also refrained himself from trying to guide or influence the Editor from behind the scenes.

### Old hand

An interventionist-minded Director General could have interpreted the Authority's requirement that all news be accurate and impartial as a remit for back seat driving from what was then Princes Gate, and is now Brompton Road. Yet in my twelve years of editorship I doubt if there were half a dozen occasions on which the Authority offered advice, let alone a ruling, about a story. Bob Fraser was an old Fleet Street hand, and he knew that the best editors are the freest editors.

### Obituary:

## SIR ROBERT FRASER

A tribute by  
SIR GEOFFREY COX

He also possessed plenty of journalistic nerve. A lesser man might have got alarmed when in 1957, only six months after the traumas of Suez, we set about interviewing President Nasser of Egypt without clearing matters either with the Foreign Office or the ITA, both of whom I informed only after Robin Day and the crew were airborne. Fraser backed us without hesitation, and relished the scoop which resulted.

He protected firmly ITN's position as the sole provider of national and international news to the network, ensuring that this was not eroded by company news programmes. He at first took some convincing about the value of a half hour news, but once he decided to back the project he did so with great vigour, taking a keen interest in every aspect of our planning.

### Fought cuts

Here again his nerve held when the early reviews of News at Ten were bad – the critics hated it, but the public, as the viewing figures showed, loved it – and when some companies wanted to cut back the money for it he rounded on them in an intervention which will stay long in the minds of those who heard it.

Fraser's links with ITN were not confined to his days as Director General. After he left that post he gladly took on the chairmanship of ITN, a role which he executed superbly, presiding over a marked expansion of the Company's resources and its airtime. He also steered UPITN through its most difficult years. Indeed, without his farsighted backing it would have gone to the wall.

Sir Robert Fraser had a rare quality of combining authority with friendliness and approachability. He was always easy to talk to, always ready to listen, considerate of the feelings of those with whom he had to deal, surprisingly knowledgeable about the personal difficulties or problems of those working under him.

He was Bob Fraser to a very large number of people within Independent Television, without ever compromising his authority or his final power.

# EVEREST DEAL AS JULIE CLIMBS TO CONQUER



**They call it the last challenge in the world – attempting the last unclimbed ridge route of Everest – and ITN is letting Britain see it.**

**A British expedition is to attempt to conquer the world's highest mountain, via its north east ridge.**

Among the 16-strong team is Julie Tullis of Tunbridge Wells, the first British woman climber to attempt Everest. Julie will also act as sound operator with Kurt Diemberger, a legendary mountaineer and alpine cameraman.

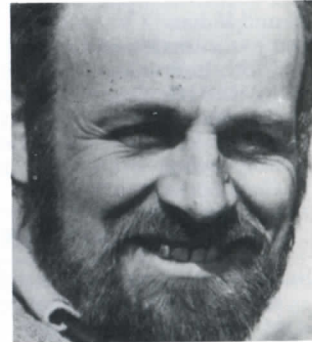
### Assisted

ITN has exclusive British television news rights to the material which Tullis and Diemberger will shoot. It has assisted with camera equipment for the expedition.

Only one other attempt has been made on the north east ridge. The British expedition in 1982, led by Chris Bonington, was abandoned after claiming the lives of two team members, Peter Boardman and Joe Tasker.

Julie Tullis has no doubt about the dangers involved.

Sitting in the comfort of ITN House as details of news coverage were being finalised, she spoke of the challenge ahead.



“The main difficulty comes very high up. There are three rock pinnacles which have to be overcome. After the pinnacles there's still over a mile to the summit. It's the last challenge in the world, really.”

Julie is making history by being the first British woman to attempt Everest. She hopes to cap this by helping film the gruelling climb all the way to the summit.

The first man to make it to the top, New Zealand's Sir Edmund Hillary, has said the expedition is taking the hardest approach. Coverage of the attempt is scheduled to first appear on ITN on Friday March 29th, with a report from the base camp.

### Available

A second report should be available in mid to late April, as the team edges up the ridge, followed by a possible further progress story in early May. If the expedition is successful, film from the summit should reach ITN by late May.

Getting the reports back provides a logistics problem. The film must go by jeep from base camp to Lhasa, the capital of Tibet, then join Chinese airlines flights to Peking, before a British Airways flight to London.





# Space students prepare for day of judgement

The six schools selected as finalists in the ITN/SSI "Experiment In Space" competition are only days away from knowing whether an experiment designed by their students will be chosen to orbit the earth on board a US Space Shuttle.

Young scientists from each of the six schools have been invited to attend the final judging at the Science Museum on Tuesday March 5th, when a panel of judges comprising eminent scientists, physicists and biologists will convene to select a winner and runner-up.

The finalists were selected because their experiments were considered to be imaginative, simple and above all, useful. Science pupils from two girls schools are included among the six. Three of the schools are in Kent, and the others are located in Amersham, Cleethorpes, and Fraserburgh, North Scotland.



Reporter David Chater discusses an experiment with pupils from Matthew Humberstone Comprehensive School, Cleethorpes.

## Imaginative

The sifting of entries was meticulous. Many proved imaginative but highly impractical, while others were based on interesting, but hardly useful, notions. After analysing them all, the first judging panel came up with a list of 36 entries which were recommended "for serious consideration".

A further sifting process reduced this to a short-list of 17 entries, from whom the six finalists were recommended.

But before this recommendation became fact, details of all six experiments were submitted to NASA for clearance. This was duly received and the identity of the six schools was announced at a Press Conference held at the Science Museum in January.

## Opportunity

The winning school and the runner-up will both be invited to build their experiment, and it is hoped that students from the second-placed school will have the opportunity of flying their experiment on a Shuttle at a later date.

The winners will also be told that they will be flown to Cape Canaveral to watch their experi-

ment blast-off on the Shuttle — hopefully the same one which will be carrying Britain's first astronauts and launching the Royal Navy satellite, Skynet Four.

The announcement of the winning school will be made at approximately 2.30 p.m. on March 5th, and will be covered by ITN for inclusion in the evening bulletins.

The six finalists, with an outline of their experiments are:

**Dr. Challoner's Grammar School, Amersham:** The behaviour of convection currents during the heating of an object is not fully understood and this team wonders if conditions would vary in space.

**Ashford School for Girls:** This team wants to study the effect of microgravity on the growth of a "chemical garden" which grows vertically on earth. Would growth be spherical in space?

**Matthew Humberstone Comprehensive School, Cleethorpes:** Alloys produced in space could prove valuable . . . because of improved mechanical properties and purity, says this team. They propose melting small samples of a tin-lead alloy (solder) and then allowing the material to solidify in a weightless/vacuum environment.

**Fraserburgh Academy, Grampian:** With long-duration manned spaceflights becoming commonplace by the turn of the century it is important to consider how food will grow in space. This team chooses to see if mushrooms grow well and whether or not microgravity has any effect on their shape.

**Hayes School, Bromley:** This team has concentrated on creating "a natural environment for growth of vegetation in a space garden" by taking worms into space and seeing how they thrive in weightlessness.

**Ursuline Convent School, Margate:** The peanut is a nutritious food, and a source of oil. On earth the nut forms under the earth after the stalk has turned away from the light and buried its tip in the soil. This experiment is to find out how much gravity influences its growth.

## WHAT A TURN-ON!

ITN is winning the battle of the ratings, according to the results of a recent survey commissioned by the Independent Broadcasting Authority.

According to the report published in "Airwaves", the IBA house journal, viewers think that ITN is doing a better job than BBC news teams. The poll shows that 46 per cent think that Independent Television provided better news coverage during 1984, compared with 39 per cent for BBC-1.

This shows a strong reversal from the 1983 figures when 47 per cent

opted for BBC news coverage compared with 39 per cent for ITV.

The report also showed that television viewing is on the increase, with 67 per cent of viewers watching for more than three hours a day or more, compared with 60 per cent in 1983.

ITN's ratings have also brought smiles to the faces of the News at One and News at 5.45 teams, both of whom have seen their ratings increase steadily over the past three months — well beyond the 10 per cent increase caused by the new ratings system.



A funny thing happened on the way to the cricket tour. I was just packing up my usual ITN medical kit for this sort of thing . . . you know . . . cocktail shaker, calamine lotion, sunglasses, hangover cure and the JT Dictionary of Sporting Cliches, when Mrs. Gandhi was assassinated.

Now it's not my game but I knew it was serious when Ken Rees was flown out and the England team began practising in the High Commissioner's back garden in Delhi!

By the time I got out there all the locals were engaged in a fierce and somewhat ill-defined street game I'd not seen before. I was just trying to work out the camera positions to cover it when luckily Ken pointed out it was actually a riot and not some new Eastern rugby competition, clearly it was going to be a tour with a difference!

Anyway the fires eventually died down, Ken was sent to Washington and the England Cricketers to Colombo. And Fred Hickey and I were left to fathom out the meaning of life in the mystical East on our own.

### The great ticket barrier

Just trying to get to Bombay proved more difficult than extricating a crew car from the ITN car park. Fred and I turned up at Delhi airport proudly waving our tickets only to find 500 other people doing exactly the same. By the time half the Government, a handful of ex-Maharajas and the airport manager's mates have picked off the best seats on a plane designed for 150, there's not a lot of room left. It's hardly surprising hi-jacking's a growth industry in that part of the world. It's about the only way to guarantee a seat.

We arrived just in time to catch up with the England team who looked even more bemused than us by the wonders of India. Then followed an interesting day and a half trying to arrange a feed of the cricket from Indian TV. Judging by the state of the three old JVC cameras they planned to use it's hardly surprising India is the leader of the non-aligned movement. The shot changes suggested the ball was moving from the sun-bleached surface of the Sahara to the emerald fields of Ireland . . . all in the space of ten yards. Fortunately, Fred was able to bring India technology into the 20th Century with the aid of his Swiss Army penknife.

### Murder

Things didn't improve. Along with the England team we were invited to a reception at the home of the British deputy High Commissioner, Mr. Percy Norris, only to wake the following morning to discover he'd been murdered on his way to work. Fate once more trampled in the wake of our cricketers.

With no news camera within a thousand miles we managed

to persuade Indian TV to dismantle one of its cricket O.B. cameras. A studio cameraman, who'd never been on a news story in his life, gamely lugged it round the teeming streets of Bombay to compile one of our more unusual reports. Fred edited it all in a dust-filled tent under the stand at the wonderfully-named Wankhede Stadium.

After that the cricket seemed rather irrelevant and not surprisingly England lost. No sooner had we left Bombay – city of 36,000 auto-rickshaw taxis and limbless beggars on purpose-built skateboards – than Bhopal hissed its way into the world's headlines.

Of course just popping down to Bhopal wasn't that easy. After two fruitless days at Delhi

airport with near hysterical hordes of Western-media men, I was finally diverted to Nagpur. Why, you may ask . . . and so did I. Gosh, was I surprised when I arrived at Nagpur's Jagson Hotel (an ill-disguised cattle shed) to find a message saying "proceed to Bhopal soonest". No – Not a lot!

It proved an interesting ten

# A TOUR STORY WHICH SIMPLY WASN'T CRICKET!

*JEREMY THOMPSON takes a sideways look at the mysteries of Eastern TV, travel and technology – and an ITN Guru*



# ent to India . . . but then it changed direction

hour taxi ride across 400 miles of as yet uncharted Indian elephant tracks. Asphalt is as unearthly as Krishna to most Indians. Yet armed with two satsumas, a packet of Indian Charms cigarettes and my invaluable Hindi version of Trivial Pursuits, the driver and I overcame those awkward silences through a difficult night. I arrived in Bhopal as dawn revealed a scene out of "War Games". The sight of rows of white-sheeted bundles, the stench of the funeral pyres, the convulsive coughing of the contaminated. Cricket seemed a mighty long way off.

## Masked scribes

As I ventured onto the streets for the first time I was mobbed by local Indian journalists who insisted I joined their campaign demanding that all journalists were issued with their own oxygen cylinders and masks to survive the gas. That seemed to augur well for the next few days.

That night in the unspeakable President International Hotel I woke at 3 a.m. to discover I'd been savaged by a kamikaze squadron of mosquitoes. Coughing rattled the windows and there was a dreadful smell. I rushed down to the lobby asking for a mosquito coil and demanding to know what the smell was.

## Burning bodies

What remained of the staff, who now slept on the lobby floor, assured me it was "The Smell".

"What, you mean from Union Carbide?" I shrieked, with typically English calm and authority.

"Oh No, sahib, just the smell of bodies burning." Duly comforted I went back to bed and scratched till dawn.

It can be difficult knowing what to eat in a city that's totally polluted. Though I followed the advice of UPITN's splendid cameraman, Purshotam Talreja, which seemed to be: "Give us this day our daily dahl." And I can't say I exactly wasted away.

## Bhopal charge

One abiding memory of Bhopal is the daily race to the airport in a clapped out Hindustan Ambassador taxi (this car, based on a 1957 Morris Oxford, is virtually the only saloon to be seen on Indian roads). In the back sat ITN's reporter scribbling another illegible script on scraps of paper, while in the front Purshotam (Percy to his mates) hammered out the most detailed



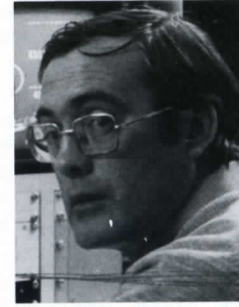
**THOMPSON . . .**  
Stumped by Eastern non-alignment!



**CORBIN . . .**  
A study of expensive Eastern footwear!



**McKEE . . .**  
Popped up with his swingometer!



**HICKEY . . .**  
A cross between a magician and a Guru!

dope sheet you've ever seen on a huge and archaic portable typewriter perched on his knees.

*I returned to Delhi to discover that Fred Hickey, now known to the locals as Mr. Fred or Hickory, had now achieved almost god-like status. Hardly surprising, considering he'd been editing Bhopal for ITN and UPITN, and doing Election stories for C4, and the odd bit of cricket! All in time for "News at One"! Well, almost.*

## Hickory magic

But what we'd not realised was that UPITN, Tom Mathra, the Talreja Brothers and all, had never, in 35 years of working for us, seen their stories edited! So what Hickory weaved on his 800's was rightly seen as pure magic. Later his efforts to pass on his knowledge to our splended colleagues in Delhi earned him the additional title of "Guru

*'The only way to be sure of a seat is to hi-jack the aircraft . . .'*

Fred". (Well, after all, he was brought up in sight of the Elephant and Castle, so it didn't seem inappropriate).

After that it was all pretty mundane. Another Test match passed; John Harewood discovered the value of Rexine; Derek Seymour and Geoff Moyes finally came on a cricket tour and never covered a days cricket; there was the biggest democratic election the world had ever seen; Paul McKee popped up with his computer

and swingometer, guaranteeing that Indian TV would never be the same again; Jane Corbin had another try at capturing a suitably well-heeled ex-Maharaja (only offers over one billion rupees acceptable) and we avoided another Christmas and New Year in England.

## Black widow?

Just to wrap it up in suitably bizarre style, Fred and I covered the Third Test in sweaty Calcutta from the fog-bound attic of Indian TV in Delhi. We had a pet lizard to keep us company and some dear little mice round at the ground station during the feed.

I didn't tell Fred about the snake under the TBC. But he said he didn't tell me about the huge, hairy spider in the cassette box. I'm told it reminded him of an animated black suspender belt. Well you need some excitement after two months in India!

## Not quite the Pavilion end . . .



ENG crew Seymour and Moyes . . . a cricket tour without a day's cricket!



**John Corbett, ITN's long-serving ENG Cameraman, has retired following a long illness during which he underwent open-heart surgery.**

John, aged 59, was a founder member of our company and one of the original team of cameramen whose skill and enthusiasm for the 'new style' television news made such a reputation for ITN in the early days. He had previously spent nine years with Pathé News.

John would take his camera anywhere. He had the knack of being in the right place at the right time, shooting better footage than other cameramen, and rushing his pictures back to base before the opposition.

### Aerobatics

But, like all cameramen, he had his share of hazardous assignments.

One day in 1956 while in the air filming from a RAF Hawker Hunter engaged in an aerobatics display with the Black Arrows, a thick fog suddenly closed in on the ground below. The aircraft all began to run out of fuel and two of them, including the one with the BBC cameraman, did run out in mid-air, and the crews baled out. Corbett's Hunter just made it to another airfield, running out of fuel as the wheels touched down. They had to be towed off the runway!

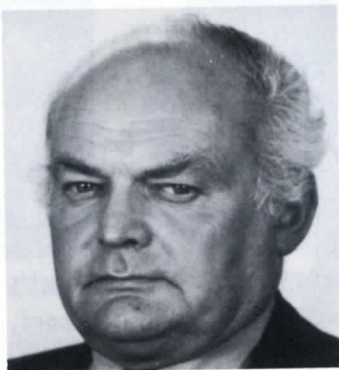
But the nearest that he came to a premature end was in the mid 60's while filming the Round Britain Motorboat Race from a helicopter. While swooping low over Milford Haven, the pilot failed to notice overhead power cables strung between the shore and a small island. The high voltage wires caught the helicopter's rotor and the ends of the blades were smashed off. They made a heavy landing on a tiny beach and were lucky to escape with their lives.

### Genuine

But there were fun stories too. John best remembers the Loch Ness saga which kept viewers on tenterhooks every night for three weeks in 1969 during the search for Nessie. One day a jaw bone was found by someone at the side of the Loch and was declared 'genuine monster' by an eminent zoologist, straight into John's camera. It went out in the News at Ten that night and the next day it was confirmed as belonging to a species of very common whale.

"John has made many outstanding contributions to ITN programmes", said Operations Manager Peter Banyard. "His stories have ranged from one of the first overseas assignments in 1955 when he and sound recor-

Two top cameramen bow out . . .



JOHN CORBETT

dist Ronnie Hubbard (now Head of Assignments) were dispatched with Chris Chat-away to Cyprus, to the first passenger flight of Concorde. He was also a member of the first

Western Crew to enter Peking since the war."

John, a keen golfer, captained the ITN Golf Society in 1978, enjoyed covering the

Open Championship and other sporting events. His friends hope he will enjoy many such days with his wife Stella during retirement in their new home in Devon.

## ONE ON THE JAW AT LOCH NESS!

## Why Mario couldn't shoot Mussolini!

**Psst! Heard the one about the Italian cameraman who tried to film a dictator who was caught short? And turned a Pope into a baby-kisser? Or almost crashed a light plane in his excitement at a scoop.**

Mario Rossetti – a legend of the lens – was in London recently for his retirement farewell. In paying his own tribute, ITN Editor David Nicholas, recalled the day when he and Hugh Whitcomb were passing through the cameraman's home city of Rome, en-route back to London. Mario picked them up at the airport and took the two ITN executives for a tour in his car. Hugh, seated in the rear, was keen for Mario to point out the sights.

Of course every landmark required a demonstrative explanation by the driver – until as David recalled, he hissed at Hugh to stop asking questions – and let Mario keep his hands on the wheel!

But if sedate driving is not his forte, then action camerawork is, most certainly. Mario began work in the industry in 1936, soon progressing to a cameraman following Mussolini. During one journey out of Rome, the cavalcade suddenly stopped. Knowing Il Duce was fond of suddenly "dropping in" on unsuspecting peasants, Mario grabbed his camera and ran after the Italian leader. He turned a corner, only to find Mussolini relieving himself. "I'm a man, too," quipped the dictator.

In 1958, Mario was approached by ITN to become its Rome-based cameraman. His first story for his new em-

ployer was Pope John visiting a baby hospital. Gaining entry by pretending to be a concerned father, Mario then asked Il Papa to kiss a sick baby for the camera. It was a world scoop.

Soundman Pietro Fiori joined Mario in the late 1960's. One story they covered was flying over the Mediterranean, looking for Israeli gunboats which had slipped anchor on a French export embargo.

They discovered the boats and made several runs to film them. On the last run the pilot began yelling at Mario who was filming from the co-pilot's seat. So engrossed was he with his scoop, Mario just nodded and

smiled and kept the camera running. Eventually, the pilot's alarm reached a crescendo. Mario had his feet entangled in the co-pilot's controls and the aircraft was diving towards the blue waters below!

*Mario puts his success as a cameraman down to two factors. "Fifty per cent luck, fifty per cent experience. It's a good combination."*

He's saddened to leave ITN, likening it to a big, if somewhat distant family. But it has always kept in touch and as Mario spends his retirement days in Rome, he hopes the occasional contact will continue.



● Retirement – Italian Style! Mario says farewell to Michael Nicholson and Gerry Seymour.

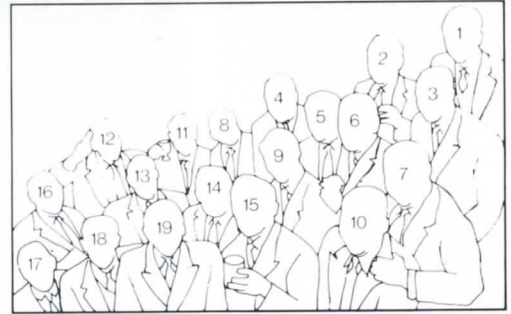




## (And while on the subject of moving pictures . . .)

. . . here's a rare sight of ITN's pioneer news cameramen and sound recordists. With the retirement of John Corbett, only two – Cyril Page and Peter Brown – are still operational. If the memory's not quite what it was, the key diagram will reveal:

1. Ronnie Hubbard (now Head of Assignments); 2. John Corbett; 3. Frank McNally; 4. Stan Crockett; 5. Ronnie Read; 6. Ian Grant; 7. John Cotter; 8. Jackie Howard; 9. Bill King; 10. Pat Fox; 11. Len Dudley; 12. Derek Scott-Lesley; 13. George Rottner; 14. George Richardson; 15. Billy Best; 16. Martin Gray; 17. Sid Roberts; 18. Peter Brown; 19. Cyril Page.



## The man who started the ball rolling!



Wells Street isn't exactly Memory Lane for former ITN Company Secretary Tommy Trial . . . but some familiar faces evoked some happy recollections of the early days when he visited ITN House recently with his wife Edna (formerly Edna Owen).

Tommy's days with ITN were spent long before the company moved to its present home. He has the distinction of being the first "employee" – although there was not actually a company formed when he took up his appointment in April 1955. He was appointed by the embryonic programme companies – Rediffusion, ABC and Granada – to help set up ITN and was responsible for approaching all non-journalistic and non-

technical staff.

Almost inevitably, his first appointment was telephonist supervisor Jo Redding. Together, they watched the ITN staff grow steadily to a level of around 200 by the time the first ITN bulletin was transmitted on September 22nd 1955.

It is a day neither Tommy nor Edna – then working in ITN's Personnel Department – will ever forget. "It was a terrific moment – excitement ran very high and we will never forget it," they said.

Their old friends didn't forget, either, and with Tommy and Edna (seated) founder members Ernie Proctor, Di Edwards-Jones, Alfie Wilson, Jo Redding, Ursula Heinze and John Lodge happily gave them "one for the album".



## ITN House: The very acceptable face of commercialism

While most of us are busy making news programmes, there's one man at ITN whose chief concern is making money.

Mike Jessey has the unique task of earning money directly for ITN by using the company's surplus resources. And considering he can only use the ITN facilities once the bulletins are through with them, a turnover in excess of £600,000 a year isn't bad at all!

Squeezed between the four daily bulletins Mike and his team have the use of the Outside Broadcast unit, Studio Two, and a couple of standards converters with associated VTR's.

The demand for these facilities comes from an extraordinarily wide clientele. In an average week Mike's department, under the trade name of "ITN House", can be dealing with anyone from pop stars to ballpoint pen manufacturers.

The O.B. unit can claim the greater part of the glories. In June 1984 the COI hired them, through "ITN House", to exclusively cover the Western Economic Summit in London. Throughout the week key meetings, as they took place, were beamed to a central hall where the world's press watched them on a giant screen. Not only were ITN paid for their work, but ITN's news bulletins received as much coverage as they wanted, free of charge!

There was another red-letter day when British Petroleum hired the unit to cover the opening of their new Magnus oil field. ITN installed a satellite dish on the oil rig to transmit live pictures back to Britannic House where the Prime Minister pressed the button to start the oil flow. That event ended up as the lead story for News at One on the day.

### Bizarre

And there are other, more bizarre, bulletin stories with which Mike has been associated. Like interviewing Ronnie Biggs by satellite from South America for Australian Television with Jack Slipper as the interviewer. And bringing Zola Budd into the building to record an interview. Unfortunately, she spoke in Afrikaans but at least the pictures were useful for News at Ten!

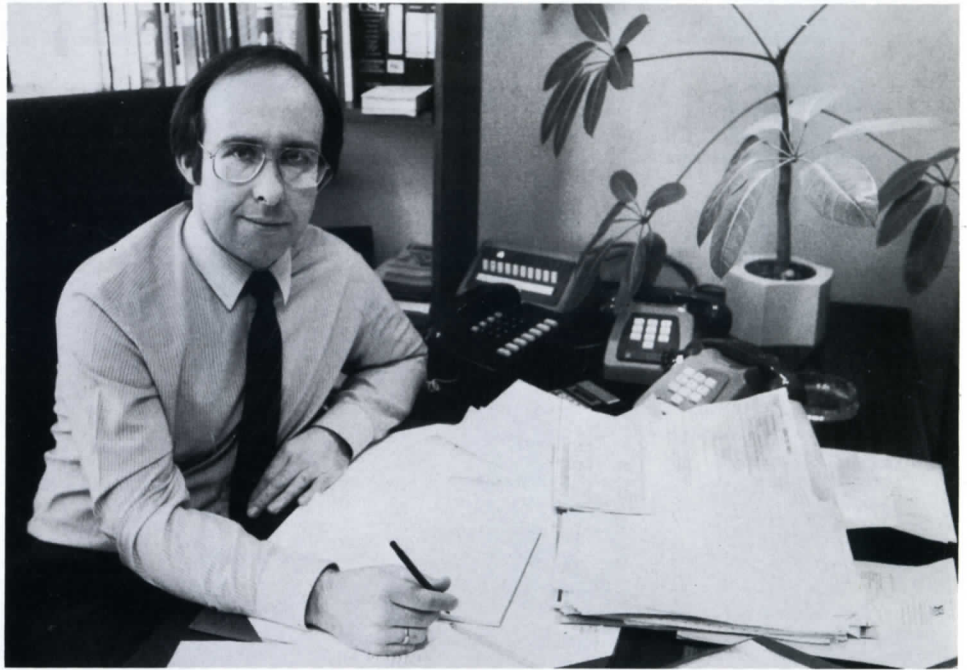
It's even been known for the BBC to hire them to cover a major football match at Wembley. But please, they begged, no ITN signs on the unit!

Mike's no stranger to the music scene either. Over the last year his services have been required by Mike Oldfield at Wembley Arena, pop group Bad Manners, heavy metal band Whitesnake, and Henry Mancini at the Barbican.

### Gleam

He's not saying which was his favourite concert, but there was a definite gleam in his eye as he watched the Whitesnake video.

December was the busiest month yet. On the same weekend "ITN House" tackled two big jobs. One was the launch of 'Newsline', a pilot for a news quiz series, hosted by Jeremy Beadle. The news clips are all



*Anything from  
a train robber to  
a soccer match—  
Mike'll fix it!*

drawn from ITN's film library and archives. Simultaneously there was a live two way satellite link set up between Boston USA and the Octagonal Room in Greenwich Observatory, (using the OB) for a debate on world issues organised by the American newspaper The Christian Science Monitor. The programme was relayed to over 150 ground stations in the USA coast to coast.

Studio Two is also working very hard on HOS projects and is

currently servicing the advertising agency Young and Rubican with all their Fine Fare commercials. Shaw Taylor's Police Five is just one of many other regular Studio Two productions.

There's money to be made too from the European appetite for American 'soaps'. ITN standards converters process the likes of Barney Miller and Candid Camera for Independent Television, and Portuguese versions of "Crossroads" for the Italian television networks.

The only way to get contracts for this kind of lucrative work is to go to the television conventions which explains why Mike Jessey was looking sun-tanned, having just got back the day before from Miami!

"It's part of the job" he sighed resignedly. "It just so happens they hold the big conventions in Monte Carlo and Cannes. And if I don't go, I don't make money for ITN".

It's a hard life.



## WHAT'S A FEW PINTS BETWEEN FRIENDS?

Barry Penstone, ITN's blood donor extraordinary, has donated 100 pints of blood to the Edgware Transfusion Centre in little over a year, and has now donated a total of 630 pints.

The occasion was marked at a meeting of the 'Heavy Bleeders' Club a friendly group of dedicated donors, and Barry was presented with his sixth Wedgwood Plate. These special trophies are given by the National Blood Transfusion Service for each 100 pints of blood given.

The giving of such large amounts of blood is only possible due to advances in medical technology of course. The latest technique is called Plasmapheresis and two needles and tubes are used (one in each arm) to extract up to seven pints. The blood passes through a machine which spins it, and extracts from it very minute quantities of several constituents. The remainder flows back to the donors other arm in a continuous cycle that takes two hours to complete.

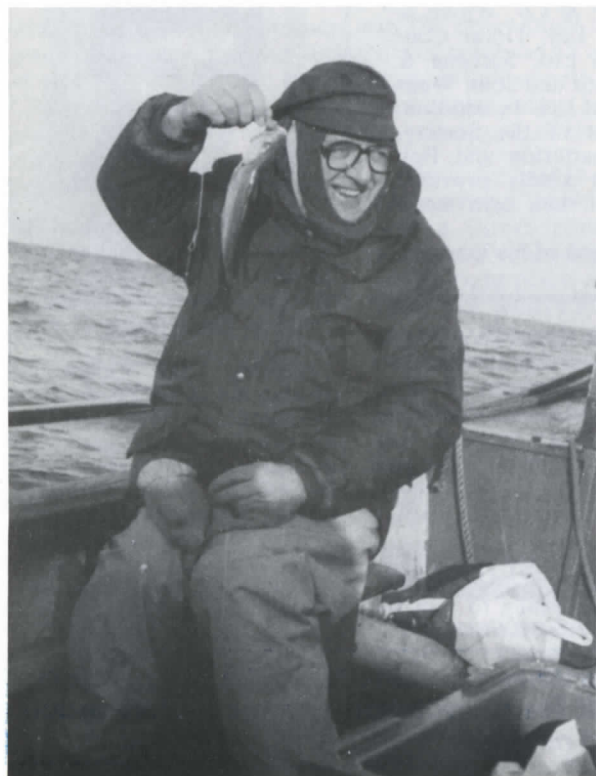


## When a man is at home in Wells St., there's no point in moving . . .

John Mullins, Foreman Plant Engineer, retired in January after 17 years with ITN. At his farewell party General Manager Paul Mathews echoed the sentiments of his colleagues by wishing him a happy retirement, and presented him with a TV set with Teletext and remote control.

A unique feature about John's career is that he never came to ITN - in fact in 1968 ITN came to John Mullins. He was employed by the previous owners of the building (then called Mormay House) and switched employers!

A long standing member of NATTKE, he was elected Chairman of the ITN branch of the union in 1972 and in 1978 was also elected Chairman of NATTKE London Television Divisional Council, holding both offices until retirement.



## Whale of a Tale?

**Eh, Norman, it's a whopper!**

A fishing trip, for journalists, usually means searching through a mass of documents for a vital piece of information. But, there comes a time to leave the paperwork behind, board a boat, and go fishing - for sub-aqua species!

Editor David Nicholas, General Manager Paul Mathews, Chief Assistant Editor Norman Rees and Senior News Editor Nigel Hancock, took to the Channel during January.

Former ITN stalwart, Alex Valentine, now at Thames, organised a boat from Littlehampton. Supplies loaded aboard, they steamed to a point eight miles off the coast. A sweep was organised for the first catch and the biggest fish of the day.

David Nicholas pulled the first catch aboard - a tiny whiting. (See picture). Norman Rees and Paul Mathews shared the other prize for their catches of just over two pounds.

And you can imagine the stories about the ones that got away!

## Awards for the sharp shooters

February's Annual Meeting of the ITN Gun Club proved to be an AGM with a difference when for the first time, the meeting embraced the annual prize-giving.

The main award - a crystal glass Rose Bowl - went to Club Champion Brian Foakes and, although he has to return it at the end of the year, he can keep the gold medal which accompanied it. Second place went to Fred Rich and sound recorder John Sharman and purchasing manager Dave Clark tied for third position. Caroline Yates took the prize for the Ladies High Gun with a score which would put many men to shame!

Pistol shooting was also included, with film/VTR editor Ray Smith taking the men's award and Jo Magner of Channel Four News taking the ladies prize.

Awards were also made for the High Gun at the regular monthly 'shoots' held by the club. Again, Messrs Foakes, Rich and Clark were prominent, and prizes were also won by Richard Rose and Mike Chandler.



The Christmas shoot at Cotsfield in Sussex was a great success, helped greatly by the weather which was unusually temperate for the time of year.

In the morning a 50 bird single barrel competition was held. Tradition prevailed, and it was won by Brian Foakes (score 46), equal second Dave Clark and John Shormon (43), fourth Fred Rich (40). Caroline Yates again took the ladies honours with 39.

Then, with the preliminaries over, it was down to more serious business with everyone retiring to the local inn for lunch and the traditional elbow-bending.

NOTE: A reminder to our members that subscriptions for 1985 are now due. Any prospective members will be more than welcome, for information contact Fred Rich or Brian Foakes on 2310, or Dave Clark (2212).



Threats from the Vets, but —

# STILL ON COURSE FOR THE TREBLE!

**With further victories tucked under their maroon waistbands, ITN's football team is now talking of 'doing the treble'.**

After two further recent victories, ITN increased by four points its lead at the top of the London Friendly League. The team has also reached the quarter-finals for the Buckingham Palace Cup.

The biggest challenge they may have to shin up to, however, comes on March 3 at Battersea Park. Lumbering onto the field against the present incumbents will be the ITN Veterans.

## In Memory

It is intended to mark this annual fixture by putting up a trophy to be known as "The John Holland Cup". This fitting tribute to the late ITN soundman would be inscribed with the winner's name and kept on display in the Club bar.

The ITN team is confident they will take the cup. One of their most recent league games saw them strolling to a 9-0 win against Bush Green. Re-appearing at this match was Jim "Sniffer" Dutton, after a long lay-off with ligament trouble. It was also the debut of John "Cordon Bleu" Hooker, who proved a tenacious legman.

## Cerebral style

The ebullient ITN skipper, Mike Inglis, believes however that the team has more than physical ability as the cause for its success.

"I was worried that our style was becoming too cerebral," he mused over a post-match cordial. "But our fans seem to like it and we haven't lost much."

A week earlier, the team came close to defeat. The first three fixtures of 1985 were abandoned because of the weather, so it was a somewhat rusty ITN which took to the pitch against championship rivals, St. Helens.

Despite being able to dictate play and leading twice, when

half-time came the score was 2-2. The second half proved a deadlock until the dying moments of the game. Dead ball specialist Nick Dodd floated in a corner for John Tompson, who used a spectacular overhead bicycle kick to put the ball in the top left hand corner of the net.

Such skills are quoted in changing room talk when the issue of 'doing the treble' arises. The ITN veterans may be all that stands in the way.



Mick Hawkesworth on the ball . . .

## GOLF SOCIETY HONOURS RETIRING LUMINARY

At the AGM of the ITN Golfing Society held in January, the retiring captain Geoff Moyle reported on a most successful 1984 Season.

All meetings were well supported (average attendance 35) and the fine weather contributed to good scores and a general improvement in the standard of play.

This was significantly reflected in the resounding victory over the BBC in October.

Teams competing at the Natural Break at Lytham, Lancs in May and at the London Meeting at St. George's, Weybridge in September also did well although hampered respectively by a late withdrawal and poor weather. In the case of the latter, completing the course was

an achievement in itself on what must have been the wettest day of the year.

Due to the successful introduction of a penalty points system for competition winners, prizes were evenly spread providing incentive for everyone to do well.

Once again, the Society is grateful to the following for their generous sponsorship. Location Lighting, W. M. Younger & Co, Whyte & Mackay Ltd, Doral Construction Ltd, Saccone & Speed Ltd and John Wells Electrical Ltd. In addition, President of the Society, Jack Chatterton and Bob Redburn kindly provided prizes of their own meetings.

In recognition of his long and

active service to the Society, lighting man Wally Moss who is to retire from ITN in April, has been created a Vice-President. Frank Duesbury, Stan Crockett, John Corbett and Peter Sadler become Life Members.



The London Marathon is looming again and once again a handful of the fitter ITN athletes will be endeavouring to complete the arduous 26-mile course.

Heading the challenge (though not in size) is diminutive star Mark Webster who, it is claimed, needs to take twice as many paces as anyone else. He will be joined by Mike Green, Sebastian Rich, Rob Bowles, Malcolm Johnson and Dave Prime.

Again, it's for charity, so support generously!

**FIXTURES** Friday 22 March, West Herts. (Wally Moss Special Day); Thursday 18 April, Woodcote Park (Brennan Bowl); Thursday 9 May, Worthing (Presidents Cup); Thursday 6 June, Nevill (Tunbridge Wells) (Captains Day);

Friday 19 July, East Herts. (Redburn Bowl); Thursday 1 August, Cuddington (Carris Trophy/Angorra Cup); Monday 30 September, Sundridge Park (Dudley Cup); Friday 11 October, West Herts. (BBC v ITN Ronnie Read Cup).

The London Meeting will be held at Beaconsfield on Wednesday 28 August and the Natural Break at North Berwick from 14-16 May.

New members are always welcome. Anyone wishing to join the Society should contact the Secretary, Brian Pendry on extension 2593.

## The Next Issue

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The next "Lens" will appear in two months time. All copy, letters, advertisements and comment for consideration should be forwarded to the Press Office by the end of March, 1985.