



THE LENS

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Another exclusive programme is on the way

The ITN interview with the Prince and Princess of Wales, which attracted over 18 million viewers, was the first part of a much broader agreement with the Palace covering TV programmes, books and video cassettes.

Already, plans for the production of a second, more intimate programme are well in hand and this, like the world exclusive interview by Sir Alastair Burnet, is certain to attract a peak audience.

The format will differ from the first programme and will provide a behind-the-scenes look at many of their official and unofficial engagements. It will also examine their lifestyle, their likes and dislikes, and their interests.

ITN has already been allowed some privileged access behind the scenes during the couple's recent tours of Australia and the United States. But programme editor Stewart Purvis is anxious to emphasise that it will not be merely a compendium of all their overseas visits:

"We are not planning to make 'The Royal Tours Greatest Hits - Volume One'. We are currently negotiating to have access to a number of informal occasions, which we cannot divulge at this stage."

A measure of the co-operation extended by the Royals was illustrated recently when a crew were invited to present themselves at Kensington Palace without knowing the reason. Within two hours they were accompanying the Princess on her solo trip to Belfast.

Filming of the Prince and Princess is likely to continue through until Spring and although the title, the running time and the exact date of transmission have yet to be determined, there is every indication that this second programme will match the success of the first.

Discussions on the Royal package opened in August and the first programme was screened little more than two months later.

"The first programme was largely a pre-determined format and was put together quickly before the Royal Tours," said Purvis. "With the second production we will have more opportunity to assess what we have achieved and the direction we are taking."

"It is hoped that a second book on the Prince and Princess of Wales will be published to coincide with the programme."



IT'S A ROYAL COUP!

Most of the contractual side of the delicate negotiation for the Royal package was conducted between Bill Hodgson, ITN's Director of Development, and the Prince of Wales' Charities Trust who will benefit from the world-wide sales of the programmes and books, and also from cassettes of the programmes, the first of which became available in the United Kingdom earlier this month.

The first programme has already been sold to a dozen overseas countries (including Australia, the U.S.A., Canada and Japan) while a further dozen have expressed their interest.

The C.O.I. has boosted the sales of the cassette by ordering 123 for use by diplomatic missions and, by the beginning of December, the funds raised for the Trust was already around the £½ million mark.

SPACE GIRLS PREPARE FOR 1986 BLAST-OFF

1986 is the year ITN goes into space.

The girls of Ashford School in Kent, who won the ITN Experiment In Space competition with their chemical gardens project, have been giving up much of their spare time - including the Christmas holidays - to ensure it happens.

As one of the school's head-girls said at the annual Prizegiving: "This Space Garden will boldly go where no other garden's been before!"

Progress is good. Brian Stockwell, the school's Head of Science, says this is largely due to the invaluable advice being given by British Aerospace - who have appointed an engineer, Neil Ritchie, to look after them - and by the Physics Department of Kent University, experienced in having flown space experiments themselves.

But there are others, many others, who have shown enormous generosity in offering to help the girls. Kent County Council have given direct financial aid: a £2,000 grant. And firms like Ciba Geigy who have given them hundreds of pounds' worth of Fibrelam, an incredibly tough but wafer-weight



Ashford's young scientists with Britains first astronauts.

plastic material to build the main structure: Acorn and Gould Electronics who have provided thousands of pounds worth of computer equipment, May and Baker all the chemicals they need, a camera retailer donating two superb cameras, Kodak the film...and many, many others giving specialist equipment. "We

are all learning so much about what you can and cannot use in space," said Mr Stockwell who wants to write a paper when all this is over so that other youngsters can learn from Ashford's unique experience. "Space is their future and British schoolchildren should have it included in their studies."

These words are echoed by Roy

Gibson Director-General of the new British National Space Centre. "This country needs to look to the potentials of space and we need to engender in our young an interest in every aspect of space. This is exactly what ITN has set out to do and the girls at Ashford are to be praised for their endeavours," he said.

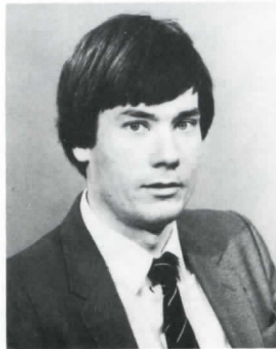
People in the News



Clive D'Urban

SARAH LUDGATE comes to ITN House as a secretary in the Production department. She previously worked as PA/Secretary to the Publicity Manager of Longman's, the publishing house.

CIARAN BAILEY has joined WTN as a product accountant, and **MARY FINN** has been appointed secretary to WTN's senior vice-president.



Ciaran Bailey

The official retirement of **JOHN DAVIES** from the Reference Library after illness means promotion for both **BOB LEARMONTH** and **MIKE CHANDLER**. Bob, who came to ITN in 1966, becomes Supervisor of the department while Mike steps up to Charge Hand.

CAROLINE KEMP is the new secretary to the Head of Programme Directors and the Computer department.



Sarah Ludgate

DICK DONNELLY has joined ITN as a VTR Supervisory Engineer. He was formerly a VTR engineer with Thames Television and has also had a spell with the BBC.

CLIVE D'URBAN joins as a supervisory engineer (Tx Pool). He was formerly a VT/Telecine operator with the BBC and has also worked as a computer maintenance engineer with IBM.



Mary Finn

Both **LIVINGSTONE HOOPER** and **KEITH HUNTER** have been appointed supervisory engineers in the Transmission Pool.

RICHARD NORLEY has joined ITN as a graphic designer and **ELIZABETH GILES** has come in as a Bureau Assistant.



Caroline Kemp

JULIE WOODHOUSE joins the cashiers department as an expenses clerk, and **ROBERT WILSON** starts working for ITN as a studio cameraman at the end of the month.

And finally there's yet another Harwood on board. **PAUL HARWOOD** has come in as a facilities trainee.

THE NEW ROYAL BOOK IS A REAL TEN-DAY WONDER!

The dramatic success of Sir Alastair Burnet's book "In Person - The Prince and Princess Of Wales" marks his second triumph in four months, following the 85th birthday tribute to the Queen Mother, which was a complete sell-out.

Such is the appeal of his latest work (published jointly by ITN and Michael O'Mara Books Ltd) that most bookshops had placed a second order within the four days of publication. The initial print run of 190,000 will soon be exhausted and the publishers are reprinting a further 70,000 copies, most of them for sale in Britain.

Publication of this best seller on the Prince and Princess of Wales followed Sir Alastair's world exclusive interview with the couple and is part of the overall

contract negotiated between the Palace and ITN for exclusive television productions, programme cassettes and books. The sole benefactor from the worldwide sales is the Prince of



Wales' Charities Trust, and there is already talk of a further book to coincide with next year's special programme.

"In Person" is already a Christmas best-seller and shot to

the top of the sales lists within ten days of its publication date. Of the 200-plus pictures which are featured, roughly one-tenth are ITN video-stills taken from the interview programme.

The great majority of the photographs are however the work of Tim Graham who has made available his extensive library of pictures of the Royal Family. He has also been commissioned to accompany ENG crews and take special behind-the-scenes photographs of the Prince and Princess of Wales and their children.

Once these special pictures have been approved by the Palace, the copyright becomes the property of the Prince of Wales' Charities Trust. ITN, however, has the exclusive right to exploit them world-wide in all media for print reproduction and serialisation etc.



Stewart Purvis

C4 News 'Friday extra' set for grass roots politics

Channel Four News has earned itself a 20-minute extension to the Friday programme. This will increase its running time to 50 minutes thus bringing it into line with the other four transmissions during the week.

News of this additional air time was announced by Jeremy Isaacs at Channel Four's third birthday celebrations last month. It will take effect from April.

However, this doesn't mean that the Friday programme will now fall in line with the Monday-to-Thursday format. The additional time will be used for special political reporting from home and abroad, and will include major interviews on topical subjects.

"Until now the Friday programme has tended to be a sort of half-way house between a normal Channel Four News programme and News at Ten," said Editor Stewart Purvis.

"This new format will allow us to take a more analytical view of the political world. It will also enable us to devote more air time to political issues involving local authorities, which are of growing importance."

ITN's successful coverage of the Royal family continues to increase momentum and there will again be a Christmas Day special embracing highlights of all the Royal tours during the year.

The 60-minute programme, which will precede the Queen's Christmas message to the nation, will be presented by Anthony Carthew and directed by Alan Rodman. Programme Editor is Nigel Dacre.

But there is a slight difference to the raison d'être behind this year's special programme. For the first time since ITN has been majoring on Royal events, the IBA network approached ITN and officially asked for a Royal special at Christmas!

Included in the programme will be the Queen's visits to Portugal and the Caribbean, and the Prince and Princess of Wales in Liechtenstein (skiing) and their more recent tours of Australia and the United States.

There will also be highlights of the Queen Mother's visit to Canada, and Princess Anne's recent visit to the Sudan.

There will be plenty of footage not screened before. In fact, Carthew and company have something in excess of 200 hours of material from which to select their programme content!



BASYS

In 1983 there were just eight customers. Then ITN stepped in - and now there are 50 worldwide!

THE TWO-YEAR SENSATION

It is almost exactly two years since ITN took the bold and unprecedented step of buying a small struggling California newsroom computer company called Basys and making it a wholly owned subsidiary of ITN.

Now, after two highly successful years, it celebrates its second anniversary by announcing the sale of two major installations worth close to \$2 million.

The largest is to the Broadcasting Corporation of New Zealand, where three major linked Basys systems will connect all of BCNZ's radio and television regions throughout New Zealand. This order follows hard on the heels of another major contract with the Mexican TV company, Televisa, which is desperately rebuilding its earthquake-shattered studios in time for next year's World Cup.

Telephone call

Basys has indeed come a long way since Dave Lyon, at that point ITN's Assistant General Manager (Production), received a telephone call from California back in December, 1983. On the line was Peter Kolstad, President of Basys, the computer company whose newsroom automation equipment was already working in the Channel 4 newsroom and due to be installed in the others in the coming year.

Basys, it turned out, was at a crossroads. Starting life as a two-man partnership with a great idea, in three years it had grown to be a market leader in its field. But like many small companies which need to grow fast, it needed cash injection, and was in need of financial and managerial direction to complement its undoubted creative and entrepreneurial talents.

What Kolstad was looking for was a parent company for Basys ... ideally one which was in the news business, and understood the market. Was ITN interested?

Within a matter of days, Lyon and ITN's Finance Director, Dan Moloney, were in California considering the proposition, and within weeks Basys became a wholly owned subsidiary of ITN.



The Basys way - new technology has transformed newsrooms,

The succeeding two years have seen an amazing transformation. When the takeover took place, Basys had eight employees in a small office in Mountain View, outside San Francisco, and eight users - including ITN, BBC-radio and TV-am.

Now the payroll is climbing towards fifty, there are new spacious offices not only in California, but in regional offices in New York City, and Atlanta, Georgia. Basys' head office in London has already outgrown its original space in Portland Place and will shortly move into the third floor of the same building in Mortimer Street as Peter Marchant's Projects Department.

But the biggest increase has been in the number of broadcasters around the world who have installed Basys systems. In the UK, Channel, Anglia and Granada have led the

way amongst the ITV stations. In the USA, the NBC and ABC networks have both chosen Basys, along with



a large number of smaller broadcasters.

Australia and New Zealand are important new growth areas, with

the recent orders from the Macquarie Radio Network and BCNZ bringing the number of installations to 13.

In all, over 50 Basys systems are now in use worldwide. 1986 looks like being an even more successful year, with major new orders throughout Europe and the extension of their dominance in America and Australia.

"Over the last two years, we have consolidated our position at the leading edge of the newsroom automation business. But there is no time for complacency; to stay ahead requires constant development and expansion into new areas of communications and related newsroom applications," said Basys President Dave Lyon (left).

"The next few years will be exciting for both Basys and ITN as we expand into these new areas."

Author attacks Media Group

Study of
T.V. News
archives
reveals
that our
'bad news'
is really
rather
good . . .

A recent publication provides strong evidence that allegations of "unfair media coverage" by the controversial Glasgow Media Group are totally unfounded.

In his book "TV News - Whose Bias?" (Policy Journals) Professor Martin Harrison of Keele University provides a scholarly analysis of the Group's claims and finds them sadly wanting.

His findings are based on a study of 1,700 pages of transcript from the ITN programmes used by the authors for their virulent attacks on the media in the Group's two publications "Bad News" and "More Bad News". They are particularly critical of television's coverage of strikes and industrial issues, and argue that T.V. news "is locked into an undeviating frame which is unswervingly hostile to the Union movement."

Although the events in question happened ten years ago, Harrison's informed and forthright presentation of the facts is justified in posing the question: "Whose bias is on the line? Is it those responsible for presenting television news, or is it the Glasgow University Media Group themselves?"

The Group has come under attack from many media organisations in the past, but only now have their claims been subjected to the close scrutiny which they themselves invited.

Much of Harrison's work is concerned with detailed re-

examination of the evidence - a mammoth undertaking but one which has resulted in a publication in which, for the first time, these transcripts of ITN news programmes are discussed together with an analysis of their content.

Harrison is on firm ground and he knows it. He doesn't pull his punches and presents his evidence as an analytical casebook. He cites the example, for instance, of an NCB response to a pay claim which was vital to the success of the Labour Government's "Social Contract". Yet, on the same programme, ITN carried an item about the excellent production record of a Scottish pit, with an interview from a miner who emphasised the excellent relationship between men and management.

"Bad News" also claims that television fails to provide even basic information about strikes and that even casual explanations of the issues at stake are rarely given. Harrison's book shows that 69 per cent of ITN's strike coverage in the sample analysis provided some detail of the cause of the unrest.

Harrison has not set out to prove that television news coverage is faultless - in fact he is critical of omissions, errors, inconsistencies and over-simplifications. He believes firmly that critical academic discussion has a role to play in news analysis - providing that it never overlooks the disciplines of scholarship.

Response to toys appeal



Hundreds of deprived children will enjoy Christmas a little more than usual this year - thanks to the efforts of the News at One team.

Their appeal to ITN staff to buy or provide a new toy met with an excellent response, and over 300 items were donated by the time the appeal closed.

"We would like to thank all those who contributed so generously and we can confirm that their gifts are now with grateful Mums and Dads," said programme Editor Dave Mannion.



PETER LYNCH: A GIANT AMONG NEWSMEN

Peter Lynch, the former Middle East Bureau Chief for UPITN (now WTN), who collapsed and died at his home recently, was described at his funeral as a giant.

Those of us from ITN who heard that word - amongst our number were six reporters past and present, a video editor and a former Senior Foreign Editor - knew what the vicar meant. For though physically small, Peter stood out in whatever company he found himself.

All who worked alongside him would confess that he taught us a lesson in hard-nosed, fierce competitiveness. He had a fiery drive to get the story, and a bright-eyed impish grin when he got it, which he usually did.



He could generate fury in opponents, and loyalty amongst friends. A voice piece I was once sending to London was interrupted by the din of Peter wrestling on the floor with a rival Bureau Chief. He did not suffer fools at all.

He could ball you out for sloppy writing one minute, and the next invite you to dinner with the sons he adored, Daniel and Adam and that support and love of his life, Megan, his wife.

Peter was born in Sydney, Australia. He learnt his journalism freelancing in England, Canada and Africa. He worked for the UPI wire service in Biafra, the Congo and the Middle East. He was in Tel Aviv for UPITN from 1973 to 1981.

Peter was 56. We'll remember him.

Derek Taylor

Politics and Television News combine for ITN Edito



The Prime Minister, Cabinet Ministers, Lords and many top T.V. journalists headed the list of eminent guests who gathered at The Reform Club to celebrate the 25 years of service by David Nicholas, MBE, who became ITN's fourth editor in 1977. The evening was organised by Lord Buxton, chairman of Anglia T.V. and ITN.



r's 'Silver' Night



And the way Parliament voted on the Editor's big night . . .

It was a cold and confusing night on the OB outside the Palace of Westminster. The vote on whether the Commons should be televised had been called, and two MP's had shown up to comment on the result.

Then came word (rushed out in person by a breathless Elinor Goodman) that Members weren't sure what they were voting about, and the division was being taken again. Austin Mitchell and Tim Brinton duly returned to the division lobbies, and this time it was for real - a defeat by 12 votes. Austin Mitchell (ex-Yorkshire TV) told News at Ten: "I'm not bitter, just furious."

It was only two hours previously that ITN had learnt the Prime Minister was definitely going to go into the 'No' lobby. She took some Conservatives with her, but opinion had been swinging against it before then.

Opponents had been quietly intensifying their campaign, playing on concerns that the presence of the cameras would change the House, concerns at how the public would react, and concerns at the power they believed would be given to the broadcasters.

Tim Brinton (ex-ITN newscaster) warned of the broadcasters power of editing: "selectivity has to mean a form of censorship", he said.

Little mention was made in the debate of the successful television experiment in the House of Lords. The independent Hansard Society, while accepting the experiment had not fully lived up to the expectations of its advocates, concluded "the BBC were more reluctant than ITN to enter into the spirit of the experiment." There was particular mention of ITN's 15-minute late-night summary, "Their Lordships' House".

But there was to be no progression from Lords to Commons. The broadcasters had decided against a high profile on the issue - the majority advice was that it might prove counter productive.

Perhaps in retrospect, we should have set out our stall more effectively: televising CAN be made to work without cameras and lights changing the nature of the Commons and television CAN be trusted to present the proceedings in a fair and responsible manner.

But all this will now have to wait at least three or four more years - until after the General Election. Meanwhile, we hope we will be granted continued access to the House of Lords. After all, some might say their Lordships are readier than the elected House to adapt to the modern age of communications technology.

* * *

ITN's coverage of the House of Lords will continue during the coming year.

Coverage of the new session follows the successful series of trial transmissions which commenced when television cameras were first permitted in the House of Lords in January 1985. Although the experiment was to last only six months, the Lords have agreed to extend the facility pending their official findings on the test period.

COMMENT



by Glyn Mathias

During the experimental period in the Lords, ITN provided Channel Four viewers with live coverage of three major debates. There were also 20 summary programmes, most of which were repeated the following afternoon, and over 60 ITN news programmes featured extracts from debates in the Upper House.

The average audience for each summary (including repeats) was around half a million viewers.



What do the vaults at ITN, a disused banana warehouse in Covent Garden, archives at Camden Town and a shed near Heathrow have in common?

The answer is that in each of these sites ITN's mounting collection of used film material is faithfully stored. Nor — as the boys down in Vaults will vouch — does it end up there by accident. A lot of effort and man hours go in to collating, filing and itemising everything that anyone at ITN has ever filmed.

Sounds a prodigious task? A team of eight — Peter Bartle is the boss — works full time down in the Vaults making sure that every second of material transmitted, and many that aren't, are safely kept both for future use and for posterity.

World record

Two of the men working down there, John Cosaitis and Bill Shaw, came from the Rank Laboratory that processed ITN film before it finally closed down in 1983. It is their proud boast that they processed over 20 million feet of film for ITN every year, and that they held the world record for being able to process 100 feet of film in twenty minutes.

Now their skill is in keeping track of the mass of cassettes, including the rushes, that ITN work



Bill Shaw

MYSTERY OF THE BYFLEET CONNECTION

generates every week. They work under their own version of Sod's Law based on long experience — if you have a stack of cassettes the one you want will always be at the bottom.

They also boost ITN's public relations work. John Cosaitis well remembers when the mother of one child who had leukemia approached ITN. The child had been filmed by an ITN crew at a Children of Courage ceremony but soon afterwards he died. Could ITN supply a copy of the film it took, the mother asked, so that she would never forget the courage of her little boy? The task went to Vaults who happily supplied the film, compliments of ITN.

Royal command

They also remember when, in November orders came from on high to supply a tape of Charles and Diana in Australia and Washington. Who for? they asked. Buckingham Palace, came the reply.

The fact that they work from the basement of an adjacent building, with no access to a lift, and are not widely recognised as a vital part of the ITN operation means that they feel a little isolated. The problem,



John Cosaitis

perhaps, is that too few people take an interest in their activities. Too often all Vaults see is cassettes and order slips, not faces. Too many people too often take their work for granted.

The feeling of isolation and the problem of access will be overcome, they hope, when ITN move to newer, larger premises in Euston. This should also help solve one of the other big problems — space.

No-one seems to know quite how much film, or how many tapes, ITN now has to look after. Some of it resides down in Byfleet, Surrey, though one has the feeling that the mysteries of what film goes where, and why, will never be fully understood.

'What material gets sent to Byfleet?' I asked John Cosaitis. 'What's down there,' he replied, 'God only knows.'

TV and Radio Yearbook offer

Year after year the Independent Broadcasting Authority's research has indicated that television gains in importance at the expense of the press; and when asked about which channel does the

'best job' at national news, viewers put ITV clearly in the lead.

This, and other facts and information about Independent Television and Radio, is revealed in the latest edition of the IBA's 'new look' year-

book, *Television & Radio 1986*.

The work of ITN's news teams receives special attention and the company's 'Basys' computerised newsroom system is also featured.

The IBA's lavishly il-

lustrated 224-page book, is available to ITN staff at the special discount price of £3.80 from Les Burr, ITV Publications Ltd., 247 Tottenham Court Road, London W1P 0AU (Tel: 01-323 3222).

SYNDICATION!



ITN has launched ITN Picture Syndication, making available quality colour transparencies, and black and white photographs suitable for reproduction from video tape, as well as 500,000 original colour transparencies of ITN copyright.

On making the announcement, Jim Green, Head of News Information, said: "We believe the service will be extremely useful to not only newspapers but also to magazines, book publishers, advertising agencies and film production companies.

"As well as the latest in breaking news events, our pictures cover politics, sports and royal occasions, and there is a wealth of archive material."

The service will be handled from Bourlet Close by

Chris McHugh who has been with ITN's picture library for the past two years, and saw the service earn more than £20,000 during its test period last year.

Much of last year's business came from stills of the Bradford fire disaster and, although this possibly provided a distorted view of the average year's business, Chris McHugh is convinced that ITN is on a winner:

"It has tremendous worldwide potential," he said. "Last year was simply a trial but we were able to test the temperature of the market and believe that we can provide a swift and profitable service."

The bulk of the demand is for colour pictures, and comes from overseas magazines.

ITN's mobile earth station beams from Belfast to make history

The world's smallest portable earth satellite station came on stream for the first time this month when it was used to transmit from Belfast.

The elliptical dish, which can be packed into boxes and flown around the world as personal luggage, finally passed its field trials in December.

The Newhawk ground station was developed by GEC McMichael. It can operate anywhere within the zone covered by the European Communications satellite and the Intelsat V coverage areas. It is the smallest transmitter that current satellite technology will permit.

The station is likely to be used broadly within the U.K. -

particularly where "feed" routes are complicated, as in the case of remote by-elections. It will also prove invaluable for beaming back major international sporting events but, it will really come into its own when news teams are working in remote areas.

The transmitter, which was commissioned last year, was delivered to ITN earlier this month and has since been subjected to exhaustive tests. It is one of only two mini-ground stations built by GEC McMichael and the other - commissioned by CBS - is also scheduled to make its inaugural transmission this month.

★ ★ ★

ITN's plans to provide a 24-hour European news service still remain part of the long-term future development programme and have not been shelved, as reported in a recent trade press article.

According to Bill Hodgson, Director of Development, a European news service offered on its own is not financially viable at the present time, but the situation is under constant review.

Meanwhile, ITN is forging ahead with plans for a European news service for the ITV Super-channel which is scheduled to open in Autumn next year.

Letters

I must record the delight at receiving *The Lens* (Issue No 16) which included so many faces which I knew while working at ITN between 1960 - 69 as a cashier. All the "boys and girls" used to come into my office to collect their salaries, expenses and have a chat.

Please give my regards to all those lovely people for giving me such happy memories.

My sincere good wishes to everyone,

Lilian Tozer
An outpost in Devon.

About Martyn Lewis's father-in-law: Your jolly "By The Way"

column said that Duncan Carse succeeded Noel Johnson as radio's Dick Barton and "played the role for six years until the programme finally came off the air in 1953."

Bong! Not so.

Duncan resigned as Barton in 1950 and wasn't the last Dick anyway. So, as Senior Lecturer in Bartonian Studies, may I adjust *The Lens*?

There have been five Dick Bartons. First (1946) was Noel Johnson (also "re-called" as Special Agent in 1972 as part of the Beeb's 50th anniversary), who was

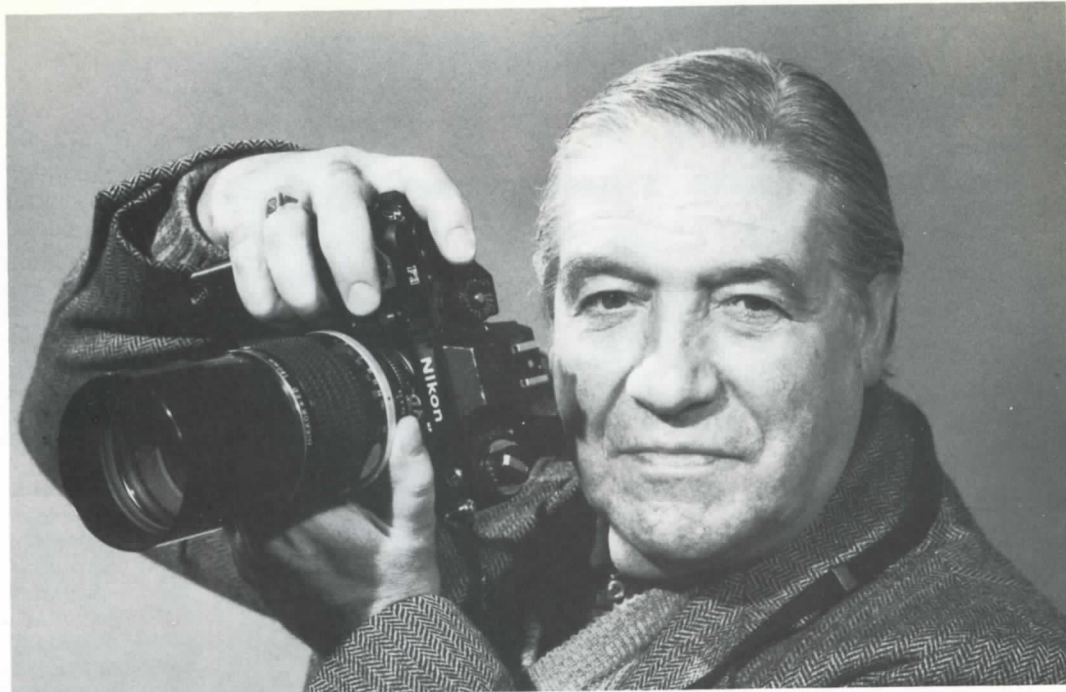
succeeded in 1949 by Duncan Carse, who the following year handed over to Gordon Davies, who stayed until the programme ended in 1951.

Then there was the late Don Stannard, who played cinema's Barton. And, finally, Tony Vogel, who (and no blame to him) was Capt Barton in Southern Television's pathetic TV revival in 1979.

And now, for the rest of news, over to ITN's Jock-and-Snowey Correspondent.

Michael Watts
Sunday Express
Fleet Street, London

Hold it,
flash, bang
wallop . . .
Spotlight
on a man in
the basement
who spends
his time
stargazing



OUR TOM WAS 'TWELFTH MAN' FOR THE SHOWBIZ ELEVEN!

With a name like Tom Watson, you'd expect a chap to be on first name terms with top sporting personalities and stars from the glittering world of showbusiness.

You'd expect to see him chatting casually with golf fanatics like Sean Connery and Jimmy Tarbuck.... and even a quick "Hi Des" to the passing Mr and Mrs O'Connor wouldn't be out of place.

You'd probably be just a little sceptical, however, if someone told you that it was the same Tom Watson who plays off a humble 36 (and more) with the ITN Golfing Society, and diligently fulfills his "day job" in the stores, deep in the bowels of ITN House.

But it is the same instantly-recognisable character. The same mobile face which frequently grins to reveal a set of teeth which apparently opted for UDI some years ago. The same implacable Mr Watson who is treated as "one of us" by the dozens of top performers who, for more than 20 years, have known him simply as "Tom".

It all started in the early 1960s when Tom, then working for a music publishing company in Denmark Street, "accidentally" became the official photographer for the Showbiz soccer team. By his own admission, he'd always been "a bit keen on the photographic lark" and after being invited to attend a few matches, the whole thing snowballed....

It snowballed as far as the EMI Studios in Abbey Road where he was invited to attend a reception for The Beatles - with camera, naturally! And it took him to the premiere of "Half A Sixpence" at

the invitation of the star, one Mr Tommy Steele.

He was on hand for Bill Haley's one-night-stand in London in 1965 and was probably the last British photographer to take pictures of the great Nat King Cole after the last night of his tour the same year. Cole returned to America the following day and was dead within six months.

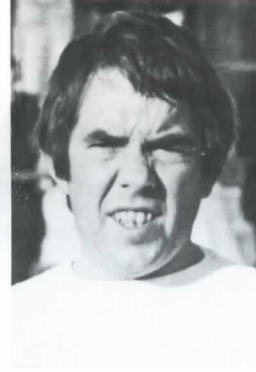
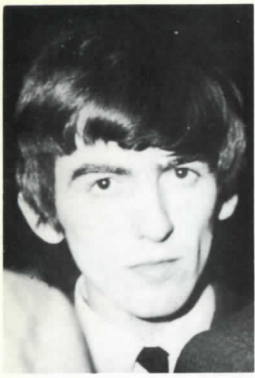
While he is keen to stress it is still merely a hobby, his equipment is of the highest professional standard. He thinks he's got "about four or five cameras" but tends to rely largely on his favourite Pentax SLR. But, at one time or another, they have all been used to capture some classic formal and informal shots of people who, to millions, are the untouchables of showbusiness.

For more than 15 years, Tom Watson was a necessary part of the Showbiz "team". He was on first name terms with them and their families and is still greeted warmly by the likes of Messrs. Connery, Steele, Tarbuck, O'Connor, Corbett, Moore and the rest of them.

Or, as he knows them, Sean, Tommy, Jimmy, Des, Ronnie, Roger and the boys

It's elementary that Watson should know exactly what's what in the world of Who's Who . . .





Sybil revs up for Edinburgh title bid



When ITN's international sprinter Sybil Joseph looks back on her sporting career, 1985 will stand out as the year in which she definitely "arrived".

In 1984, she gained international recognition when she was selected to run for the England B team but this year she won full honours with her selection to run in the 200 metres for Great Britain in two full internationals against the all-powerful East Germans, and also against Czechoslovakia.

She also represented England against Rumania, and was selected for the Europa Games in Moscow, where she ran in both the 100 and 400 metres relays.

But, if 1985 was her year of recognition, she is desperately keen to make 1986 her year of achievement. Although she has only recently switched to the 400 metres, she is already ranked number three in the U.K. and has her sights firmly set on a place in the Great Britain team for the Commonwealth Games in Edinburgh.

Edinburgh? Doesn't she feel a little miffed that Games aren't being held in one of the

more distant Commonwealth countries?

"Not at all," she said. "At least I can be fairly certain that the food will be alright."

Sybil, who started running seriously only eight years ago, admits that she found the competition tough in the 100 and 200 metre international events, and feels more confident about the prospects in the 400.

Nevertheless, she was still good enough to finish on the rostrum at the U.K. Championships, taking second place in the 100 and third place in the 200 metres. And, perhaps not surprisingly, she is Southern champion and Kent County champion at both distances.

Sybil, who is 25, is coached by her boyfriend, sprinter Juno Field, and when not striving to clip fractions of a second from her best performances, she can be found in ITN's Mortimer Street offices where she is secretary to Peter Marchant, the Deputy Director of Engineering.

Eeeeeaaaggggh!!!

That's the mating call of a 53-year-old scribe who jumps with the Red Devils!

Two certificates hang, framed, on the wall of the loo. The smaller, from my family doctor, reads:

"Re- Peter Cole (b. 26.4.32). I have read your guidelines and I consider this man fit to jump with a parachute."

As she handed me the note, my G.P. observed: "Physically you're alright. But you must be mad to want to do it."

Not until the door of the plane opened at 2,000 feet did it dawn on me. I am bloody mad!

So why, after more than 50 relatively unexciting years, does the old fool find himself on November 13 sitting petrified with his legs dangling out of an aeroplane over Aldershot?

Volunteers

It started with David Nicholas's scribbled note "Bet we get plenty of volunteers". Attached was a letter from Coloroll, the Red Devils' sponsors. It began "We are inviting a small, but brave, group of journalists to enjoy 24-hour parachute training with the Parachute Regiment's crack free-fall team The Red Devils. This will be exhilarating and enjoyable

For 35 years I'd wanted to parachute. As an air gunner during National Service, I'd carried a chute on my back for a couple of thousand hours, but never had the chance to use one.

Until now, that is.

Instructors

But a few days later the Editor nearly took away my Smarties by insisting that if there was only one place, it should go to a reporter. So I got Terry Lloyd to volunteer and coaxed an extra place for myself from the sponsors.

At the Red Devils HQ at Aldershot, three instructors had the course on the go for seven hours. They guaranteed we'd ache all over by the end of the day - and we did!

Next morning - anticlimax! It was

PETER COLE on the joys of realising a life ambition



blowing a gale so we all went home with the promise of a jump on a calmer day.

It took nine days for the wind to drop, and Lloyd had long since been dispatched to earn his crust elsewhere. Zero hour had come, and I found myself being ushered on board with a plane load of skydivers - last on, first to leave.

You sit on the floor. At 200ft they slide open the door to show you what the ground will look like as you're about to hit the deck. At 400ft you hook up the strap that will pull out your 'chute.

"What if you don't want to jump?," someone had asked.

"If you don't make an exit," came the reply, "you leave".

At 2,000ft the door opens, and I slide along on my bum and hang my legs over the side. At this point you're meant to look up to the jumpmaster for the word. Instead, you look down, mesmerised by the ground down there. Then, a tap on the shoulder. "Go!"

You've been drilled a hundred times but now you're speechless with fear as the 80-knot slipstream of the aircraft forces your voice back down your throat.

"Eeeeeaaaggggh!" Then you've stopped falling. From hurtling down, you feel you've been snatched up in an express lift. Your feet fly past your face. (They're not supposed to, but don't ask how you can stop them).

Then all is calm. You're floating. Look up and find the toggles, rip them off the velcro, and now you can steer.

A voice comes over the radio in your helmet. "Pull down right". You obey, and up there on Cloud Nine, you turn as gently as if on a swivel chair.....

Certificate

In two minutes, you're just 200 feet above the field. Keep facing into the wind. Feet and knees together and turned to the left. Then you hit - feet, hip, shoulder - and thank God for the helmet. Roll, run round the parachute to deflate it gather it, and walk back to the assembly point, looking for all the world like Father Christmas.

"Next time," says the jumpmaster, "look up at me - not down. And don't forget to count!" Next time?

They gave me a certificate. It says I've been admitted as a "humble novice piglet to the Noble Order of Flying Pigs".

The "Parabore of the Year" award was soon to follow. I'm running out of indulgent friends. So if you know anyone who hasn't heard this tale, please put them in touch!



Back on terra-firma!

GOLF OFFER

ITN has produced its own golf umbrella in blue with the company logo in gold. So if you want to treat yourself (or someone else) go to the stores, cheque in hand

They cost £15 each.