

# THE LENS

The Staff Newspaper for Independent Television News January 1987 Issue No. 22

## An OBE for our Di



The New Year Honours List contained news to gladden all hearts in Wells Street: the award of an OBE to Diana Edwards-Jones, ITN's Head of Programme Directors. Editor David Nicholas described as "outstanding" Diana's contribution to broadcasting in general and to ITN in particular. "In controlling open-ended major news shows such as general elections," he added, "there is no one to touch her". An ITN founder member, Diana joined as a floor manager in 1955 and became a programme director in 1961. Since then she has won acclaim for her handling of a wide range of productions, from live political programmes to the 1981 Royal Wedding "special" and the more recent programmes on the Queen Mother and the Prince and Princess of Wales. Her direction of live coverage of the 1974 elections brought her the RTS award for "outstanding performance behind the cameras". It's a record of achievement built on professionalism, dedication and total commitment, all leavened by a personality that has sparkled like champagne through three decades of ITN service. On behalf of all staff, Lens offers our beloved Di warm congratulations on a richly deserved honour.

## We'll keep you posted, Cyril . . .



At 65 (though who would believe it!) Cyril Page, ITN founder member and senior ENG cameraman, must bow out at last. For 31 action-filled years he epitomised the zest and vitality of ITN. He will be sadly missed by all of us, including his postroom colleagues pictured above at the farewell celebrations. (See inside for special profile, boardroom party report and more pictures).

## Inside . . .

**JOHN SUCHET**, Britain's first cross-frontier TV newscaster, sees News for Europe as ITN's greatest challenge yet

**PETER WALLACE**, new sports editor, on his plans to intensify our coverage of the world sporting scene

**GEOFFREY ARCHER**, in a major Lens interview, spells out the complex role of a defence correspondent in the 1980s

**NICK POLLARD** opens his China notebook to reveal the dramas behind ITN's acclaimed coverage of the Queen's visit

**DAVID MANNION** explodes the myth of Channel Four News muesli munchers and lauds a hive of first-class journalism

**FRANK MILES** tells the remarkable and moving story of how two ITN flying fanatics restored a World War Two biplane

**VICKI ELCOATE**, in Time Off, recounts her adventures as a News at One "gaijin girl" in Japan

## Also . . .

Salute to Howard Thomas, TV buccaneer . . . Michael Crick as soccer historian . . . Andrew Gardner's "TV 25th" . . . Ernie Holloway takes his camera to a party . . . People on the move . . . ITN sport



Thomas

Petley/Jackson

Anderson

Key editorial moves on Channel Four News as the now widely acclaimed programme enters 1987 resolved to go on extending its horizons. (See article by David Mannion) . . .

**Garron Baines** is made senior news editor as part of a restructured input desk to keep pace with C4N's development. Under input editor John Flewin, he takes overall editorial control of day-to-day news gathering.

Two C4N deputy news editors have been appointed: **John Hunt** and **Annabel Harper**. They will work to Baines on both daily and forward planning.

In addition, **Andrew Curry** has been made chief sub and **Sue English** chief sub video, and there are two new script-writers: **Jane Bennett-Powell** joins from the BBC's Newsnight. **Mark Lloyd** has been freelancing on C4N.

**Caroline Burrell**, ex-BBC production secretary, is a new secretary in the office of Channel Four News chief Stewart Purvis and his deputy David Mannion.

Meanwhile, C4N's **Howard Anderson** has been appointed programme editor for House of Lords programmes.

A new look for ITN Sport is promised for 1987 under recently appointed sports editor **Peter Wallace**. (See profile by Michael Jerney) . . .

Fronting Wallace's reshaped department on-screen are ITN's new sports correspondents **Giles Smith** and **Mark Austin**. For ex-ITN industrial editor Smith, the move fulfils a long-held ambition. Austin comes to ITN after three years as a BBC-TV general news and sports reporter.

On the Super Channel front, ex-Reuters newsman **Albert Clack** joins ITN as copytaster for the new cross-frontier News for Europe venture. He has been Reuters correspondent in Paris, Buenos Aires, Havana and Belgrade.

Among Clack's special interests: arms control and disarmament; Soviet policy in Eastern Europe.

New secretary to Sir Alastair Burnet

is **Lindsey Thomas**. She was formerly assistant to the Press Attache at our Washington embassy. She plays tennis, skis, loves opera.

In new managerial moves, **Russ Pipe** becomes manager of technical operations. He will co-ordinate technical ops on special programmes, major stories and long-term projects.

Most immediately, Pipe will be involved in planning coverage of the next general election.

**Alan Moore** is appointed manager of operational resources. He will be line manager to station engineers, MCR, links engineers, riggers and the permanent OB staff.

Both Pipe and Moore will report to ITN's operations controller Bill Reay.

**Richard George** has joined ITN as a rigger driver. He lists golf, flying and motor racing among his special interests. Others are gardening and "my local pub".

New graphic designer **Terance Skidmore** is a keep-fit enthusiast. He swims three miles a week; enjoys many other sports. He has done TV design for English and Arabic networks in Saudi Arabia.

**Sharon Chance** comes to Wells Street as a facilities assistant from Granada TV International. Before that she was with the IBA's Advertising Control department.

**Andrew Petley** and **Lorraine Jackson** have been appointed as ITN trainee programme directors.

New VT80 operators are **Jonathon Barson** and **Chris Steele**. **Alison Blower** has joined ITN as a Harris Still Store operator, and **Penelope Meade** as an Oracle keyboard operator.

**Martina Spencer** joins as a personnel clerk and **Sas Bonser** is a new trainee in facilities.

**John (Mike) Heapey** is settled into his new post as WTN's chief accountant. His previous service includes ten years in Saudi Arabia with Lockheed Aircraft International. Science fiction is among his hobbies.

**Maureen Martin** has joined WTN as a bought ledger assistant.

The death last November at the age of 77 of that creative impresario of the British airwaves, Howard Thomas, has prompted this tribute from ITN Editor David Nicholas.

## Salute to a TV buccaneer

Howard Thomas was Chairman of ITN on three separate occasions and a member of the ITN board from 1956 until his retirement. His longest spell as Chairman was from 1974 to 1976.

His membership of the ITN board coincided with a critical period of growth in ITN. It was a period when we ceased to be lodgers in Kingsway and moved to our own headquarters in Wells Street; when News at Ten became established securely in its slot; when we went into colour and, believe it or not, when the first footings were made towards ENG.

He supported experimentation and appreciated the appeal of news programmes to the viewer. He was Chairman of ITN at the time of the Pilkington Inquiry and expounded to the Committee the value of ITN to the network.

He was the first to advocate — in the 1960s — the idea of breakfast television which he saw essentially as a news service provided by ITN.

I had a sense with him of always being in the presence of a broadcaster first and foremost. I found him ready with sage advice derived from his vast experience about how to project ITN, especially against the background of network ringcraft. It was a perspective I much valued at the time.

He always spoke admiringly about the aggressive newsgathering spirit which he perceived in ITN news programmes. He had a great intuition for the "hard sell" in engaging the viewer's interest.

His passing is a poignant reminder that his retirement from the ITN scene in 1979 marked the end of a distinctive decade and a half in the history of Independent Television.

I never cease to think, when I attend the retirement parties of ITN founder members, how grateful we should all be to people like them — and to Howard Thomas — for the risk-taking and buccaneering qualities they contributed to the fledgling network.

The abiding recollection I shall have of Howard Thomas is of his total faith in the worthwhileness of broadcasting — a belief not always as widely held as one might think.

Eventful times for TV newscasters. Last year, BSB won the contract for the UK's first satellite network, including the NOW news channel to be run with ITN from 1990. But ITN's own space lift-off has come with the nightly News for Europe. JOHN SUCHET, Britain's first cross-frontier TV newscaster, sets the scene...

## NEWS FOR EUROPE - "OUR BIGGEST CHALLENGE YET"



ITN's 'Team Europe' — old hands, new faces

"Good evening. I'm John Suchet and this is ITN's News for Europe".

Those words into camera on Monday February 2 were to usher in a new era in television journalism. For the first time anywhere in the world, a TV news organisation would be broadcasting a bulletin specially made for foreign viewers. In this case, foreign viewers living in Europe.

Foreign viewers? Living in Europe? So how come you're saying "Good evening" and not "Bonsoir" or "Gutend Abend"? How do you expect those foreigners to understand a word of what you say?

That's precisely the question that had been exercising a group of us at ITN, journalists and technicians, for some months. We faced what was probably the biggest challenge of our careers — creating a TV news programme unlike any other in the world.

(Watching us, said one journalist who worked on ITN's first bulletins in 1955, reminded him of those pioneering days thirty years ago).

And the answer to that question is that we're expecting our audience to understand not only the opening but nearly every word of the half-hour programme — whether they live in Paris, Hamburg, Brussels, Berne or Stockholm.

The reasoning in a moment. First, the background. The new Super Channel offers a 24-hour service showing "the

best of ITV and BBC". In line with that policy, Super Channel asked ITN to make a special daily programme for its viewers.

Not only is the new channel available to all cable subscribers in Britain (100,000 and growing daily) but from London it's being beamed live up to a satellite and back down simultaneously to cable subscribers in at least twelve countries.

It's a widely spread audience. The satellite's "footprint" covers a vast area of Western Europe, from Finland in the north to Spain in the south, from Ireland in the west to Austria and beyond in the east.

On its eastern fringes, it takes in countries of the Communist bloc. We confidently expect reports that a growing pastime in Hungary or Czechoslovakia is clustering round a TV set to watch ITN News for Europe to find out what's really happening in the world!

The overall figures are impressive. In the whole of Europe there are 120 million television homes. Of these, some 11 million already take a cable service.

Belgians love cable TV more than any other Europeans. Out of a total of three million television homes in Belgium, 2.8 million have cable. And have you ever met a Belgian who doesn't speak English?

Come to think of it, have you ever met a German who doesn't speak English?

Or a Dane, or a Swede? In ten years as an ITN reporter, I covered stories in every country in Europe (except Lichtenstein) and I never once came up against a brick wall because someone couldn't speak English.

And what of those who want to improve their English; or those wanting to learn? What more informative way could there be than watching the news on television in English?

We hope, for instance, that teachers of English in schools throughout Europe will encourage their pupils to watch ITN News for Europe as homework, to be tested on it the next day. (Sorry, children!)

We expect also to be watched by British and American businessfolk, MEPs and tourists, all in their hotel rooms — more and more hotels in Europe are taking cable TV.

But most of our audience will be Europeans sitting in front of their own television sets from Helsinki to Madrid, Dublin to Vienna.

They'll be watching because ITN's News for Europe is an *international* news bulletin. Think of it as the International Herald Tribune or BBC radio's World Service. And then imagine how much more exciting it is with moving pictures, interviews, live satellite coverage of major events and everything else that television can offer.

And if the Brenner Pass is blocked by winter snows or roads to the Riviera are at a standstill in August, you'll hear about it on ITN's News for Europe. Weather news will tell you the hottest capital and the coldest capital in Europe each day.

So what kind of viewer will this bulletin appeal to? Take Hans Bauer. He's likely to be aged between 35 and 50; he'll work for a company whose performance is affected by events in other countries; he'll have a keen interest in world news and current affairs; he'll care more about movements on Tokyo's stock exchange or the effect of the Iran-Iraq war on oil prices than he will about record damages awarded to a Mannheim postman who got bitten by a dog!

ITN's reputation for independence, objectivity and accuracy, built up over thirty one years, is sure to become quickly recognised as a major new asset for viewers throughout Europe as they relax at the end of the day.

Our News for Europe will provide Hans Bauer, and millions of Europeans like him, with an alternative view of the world which they cannot afford to miss. Every night, Monday to Friday, 9 o'clock in Britain, 10 o'clock in Europe.

Everyone in Europe is invited to join us. So Goodnight, Bonsoir, Gute Nacht, Goede Nacht, God Natt...

In the first of an occasional series on ITN's specialists, we focus on the demanding role of a TV Defence Correspondent in the 1980s. His working landscape bristles with statistics, initials and trigger words: ICBM, INF, MX, Cruise, Trident, Star Wars... The world's weaponry grows more complex each day. How does he put it all across to viewers? And how does the job affect the man? GEOFFREY ARCHER comes up with the answers...

## A PACIFIST? OF COURSE SAYS OUR DEFENCE CORR!

**Your work as ITN's Defence Correspondent seems to concentrate on violent death, or means of inflicting it. Doesn't it depress you? Could a pacifist do your job?**

But, I *am* a pacifist! At least, I've always thought of myself as one. Surely, it's difficult for a journalist to be anything else? Covering stories like Northern Ireland, or the Lebanese civil war, the only conclusion you can reach is that fighting is a bloody stupid way of settling disputes. More often than not war doesn't settle anything anyway — Ireland and Lebanon being the perfect examples. Even when there's a solution to the conflict, it's not always the right side that wins. Wars are usually won by the strongest force, not by the side with the best case. Even when there is a "compelling reason" to go to war, like in the Falklands conflict in 1982, I'm not fully convinced it was the only solution. Was it really right that one thousand people should lose their lives in the South Atlantic, for the sake of a point of principle? One can go on arguing.

Depressing work? Sure it is at times, but not always by any means. I'd find standing with the pickets outside Wapping much more depressing.

**Are you apprehensive about the future? Does Dr Strangelove feature on your contacts list?**

No, I'm happy to say! Those crazed generals with their fingers on the trigger feature only in the movies, as far as I can see — unless they're kept locked up in cupboards whenever I'm around.

Reporting defence has actually made me less apprehensive about the future, I think. When I started, I expected to find countless 'gung-ho' warmongers in the ranks of the armed forces, but I haven't uncovered that many so far. Amongst the fighting ranks, there are, of course, plenty of men who are excited by the prospect of war — doing for real what they've been trained to do. (We've got a few at ITN too!) But at the decision-

taking level, I've found people to be rather more reflective, more committed to the idea of deterrence, believing that the purpose of strong armed forces is to discourage anyone else from starting a war.

As for the nuclear arms race — there must be so many better ways of spending the money, but nuclear weapons do have the one consolation that even half-blind politicians can't fail to see just how utterly disastrous another world war would be.

**Are you personally interested in weapons?**

Well, I'm not a gun-freak, or anything like that — I don't fire armalites on my days off. But I do have an interest in technology. A long time ago, before I started working in television, and was still planning to take up a more "serious" career, I thought of training as an engineer. Ever since, I've held on to an amateur interest in how things work, and Defence reporting has made use of that. For example, I do find it intriguing to know how a bomb can be guided to its target by a laser beam, how the use of new materials and designs can make a "stealth" aircraft invisible to radar, and how a ballistic missile can fly six thousand miles through outer space and place eight nuclear warheads on eight different targets with an accuracy of plus or minus fifty metres. Even if all that is the technology of death, it does fascinate me, just as much as "peaceful" technology like the difference between pressurised-water and gas-cooled reactors in nuclear power stations.

**With such a wide portfolio, do you get swamped by specialist reading? Is there a Defence 'lobby' like at Westminster?**

There is a vast amount of reading. Defence is a major growth sector of the magazine trade. There are dozens of monthly and weekly publications detailing all the latest developments in defence policy and equipment all over the world. Fortunately most of the stuff is just

regurgitated and rewritten in different forms for the different publications, and it's not too difficult to cut through it all.

I get dozens of books sent to me too. Some of them are the invaluable works of reference like Janes', but many of them cover some obscure aspect of tank warfare, or strategic thinking, and are quite unreadable. But selective absorption of published information is essential, so that when Derek Dowsett rushes up with a piece of agency copy at twenty to six, and asks "What does this mean?", I'm able to give him some sort of answer, without making it *all* up!

As for a Defence lobby, no there isn't one. Defence correspondents attend regular briefings at the Defence Ministry, which are unattributable, meaning that you can't name the man who briefed you. But there's no attempt at pretending the briefing didn't take place, like at Downing Street.

**How difficult do you find it to put over? Both the technology, and all those 'numbers game' details on arms control? Are you a high-tech graphics addict?**

There are serious pitfalls in reporting Defence. It can easily be made boring, or confusing, or both. People often say it's an easy subject because there is no shortage of exciting picture. But that is one of the catches. If you are trying to explain the east-west missile balance, and you cover your text with pictures of rockets blasting off into space, then the viewer isn't going to hear a word you are saying. (A good thing too, some may feel!) The pictures must be directly illustrative of the text, and not distract from it. So I often decide that graphics are much more effective than video at getting the message across.

I am a great admirer of the VT80 graphics system. It's an invaluable tool when explaining who's got what in defence balances, or in showing which particular part of the Japanese jumbo gave way, or how the Chernobyl reactor

blew up. But computer graphics are a bit like booze; too much of it clouds the judgement. Sometimes the use of graphics is desperately overdone, in my opinion. I hate the obsessive use of headline captions like "Day 96 in the hostage drama" "The Libyan connection" etcetera. I also loathe the gimmicky bits like page turns and filing cabinet cards that are so involved and fascinating to watch that the words written on them pale into insignificance and just don't get absorbed by the viewer. In my view, simple graphics convey a message effectively, but clever, fancy ones, frequently obfuscate the issue.



One other area of new technology is a great asset, in my view. That's the newsroom computer system, particularly since terminals have been installed in the editing booths. To sit round in the facilities area, take in satellite feeds, edit library tapes, while writing the script on the computer so that it is instantly available to the production team, has become an amazingly efficient process. As an example, I remember when the space shuttle blew up on lift off, we started editing at 5.15pm and had a complete, scripted story of two-and-a-half minutes duration, ready half-an-hour later for the 5.45.

**What is your image of the ITN viewer? Is he/she really interested in weaponry, the nuclear balance, and so on? Are the viewers hooked on defence? What sort of feedback do you get from them?**

I think there is a widespread morbid fascination with the machinery of war. However peaceful one's instincts may be, the sight of a 56-ton tank bouncing across a proving ground like a trials bike, or of a Sea Harrier hovering over the deck of a ship before smacking down on to its surface, has a certain appeal. Interest was boosted greatly by the Falklands war, of course — "Exocet" and "Sidewinder" became household words. I think a lot of people find their own interest in the subject unsettling, and not a little distasteful. They can't help

being interested, yet feel somehow that they shouldn't be.

As for questions like the nuclear balance, I'm sure the interest there is more diluted. Most viewers probably don't follow any of the detail of such reports, and probably just want to know whether anything has happened which puts them in either greater or lesser danger of being blown to bits than before.

A substantial minority of viewers, however, do follow arms control and nuclear balance issues very closely. Some of them write me rude letters after my reports! The trouble about stories on "Who's got what" is that the figures can always be interpreted in a multitude of different ways. In the nuclear balance, what missiles do you include? What assumptions do you make about the numbers of aircraft capable of carrying nuclear bombs? There is no end to the range of permutations. But whatever I say in my reports, which are inevitably oversimplified in order to squeeze into a two-minute time slot, there is someone out there who will disagree with me. Sometimes I get three letters of complaint simultaneously, from three different parts of the country, all making the same points, and all set out in a similar format. CND central office at work!

I'm not anti-CND. I think the arguments for and against nuclear weapons are very finely balanced. On the one hand the deterrence argument is strong — the view that nuclear war would be so disastrous and final, no nation or alliance in its right mind would start a fight and risk nuclear suicide. On the other hand the anti-nuclear argument carries weight — the idea that the very existence of nuclear weapons in such numbers means that someone might be daft enough to use them one day, either on purpose or by accident, and the human race could be obliterated.

Both viewpoints are so strong that I have made them the sub-plot for my first novel, which is being published this month. Entitled SKYDANCER (Century Hutchinson, £10.95), it is a thriller about an attempt by the Soviets to steal the secret plans of a new British warhead for Polaris, following the cancellation of the Trident programme in the late nineteen-eighties. The central character is an Aldermaston scientist whose wife has become an anti-nuclear activist. It's a great read — worth twice the price!

**Are you writing under your own name?**

Yes, I am.

**Do you expect the other Jeffrey Archer to challenge you to pistols at dawn, then?**

Maybe. But don't forget, I'm a pacifist!

## MEDIA QUOTES

- "It's awful for women presenters. Men pick us, and the moment you start looking a bit 'lived-in' they bring on the next model". — BBC Breakfast Time sports presenter **Sally Jones**.
- "So long as the television producer acts honestly, he should not be pilloried by viewers who have taken a different view". — **Lord Denning**.
- "The telling of news, instead of being for the benefit of viewers, has become a platform for the higher ambitions of the tellers". — Sunday Times reader **G. Crow**.
- "The BBC seems to have set itself up as a kind of unofficial Opposition, with access to absolute truths and illuminating insights which are not readily available to the rest of us". — **Lord Chalfont**.
- "The BBC grandees have always been a bit envious of ITN's Sandy Gall who looks as though he's covered wars since Trojan times". — Star columnist **Peter Tory**.
- "The real bias at work — and virtually all politicians share it — is against letting the Press, which includes television, do its job". — **Brenda Maddox**, in Sunday Telegraph.
- "Like beauty, bias lies in the eye of the beholder". — **Nigel Ryan**, in UK Press Gazette.
- "Television is incapable of increasing violence. No one has ever been mugged by a 21-inch Pye". — TV critic **Christopher Dunkley**, in Financial Times.
- "British broadcasters do take the business of violence more seriously than many of their European counterparts, particularly in the area of real violence in news programmes". — **Patrick Stoddart**, in Sunday Times.
- "What's clear is that when social scientists, rather than media researchers, look into the causes of violence in society, television comes way down the list". — BBC's **Will Wyatt**.
- "A fact I would like to see taken more deeply to the hearts of all of us in broadcasting is: Never let a good show get in the way of our integrity". — Veteran CBS journalist **Walter Cronkite**.
- "British television, with some notable and memorable exceptions, is rude to its guests; very rude, unless they're VIPs". — **Robert Kilroy-Silk**.
- "Well, the more newspapers there are, the more we'll all be able to read them". — **Pamela Armstrong**, on BBC 2 chat show.

A new look for ITN Sport . . . New screen faces. Ambitious plans for worldwide coverage. More off-diary stories. A pledge to give minority sports a fairer crack. And a new ITN sports supremo — former schoolboy rugby star Peter Wallace. He is profiled by MICHAEL JERMEY.

# WALLACE LANDS THE JOB OF HIS DREAMS

When Jeremy Thompson left ITN Sport for fresh pastures in the Far East, many of ITN's sports enthusiasts exchanged anxious looks. "What will happen now that Thomo's gone?" asked one seasoned cameraman.

For years the face and the crisp, unmistakable voice of Thompson had characterised all that was best in our

his native Scotland, on the Dundee Courier. It remains one of the very few papers in the country that has no news on the front page. Peter remembers that the atmosphere there was "unbelievably conservative". He admits it came as something of a relief to move on to the Evening Times in Glasgow.

Then he headed south to work for



sports coverage. It was accepted by everyone in Wells Street that his would be a formidable act to follow. But the worries quickly vanished when ITN's new team took the field . . .

Giles Smith moved over from his role as industrial specialist amid all the predictable jokes about beer and sandwiches being sent into the dressing room.

Mark Austin left the BBC on a Thursday, flew out to Australia on the Friday and was reporting for ITN Sport by the weekend.

Peter Staunton remained as a link with the previous team, and during the coming months will be doing more reporting than before.

And directing this impressive bunch from the manager's dug-out is ITN's new Sports Editor, Peter Wallace. He is bubbling over with enthusiasm for the job. He says it has filled him with a new zest for life.

Peter started his journalistic career in

London's Evening Standard. He spent some happy years there, doing a variety of editorial jobs, but he also became determined to land a post in Wells Street.

ITN liked his enthusiasm but told Peter he would need some television experience before he could be considered. So when TV-am was born, he jumped at the chance of a news editor's job there.

The experience he gained on overnight shifts during the hectic and politically charged days which followed TV-am's launch enabled him, at last, to achieve his ambition of moving to ITN.

Peter started with Forward Planning and came to enjoy it. But now he has settled into the job he really hungered for. He has always been a keen sportsman. He played rugby for the West of Scotland at school level and since then has kept his hand in on the links. His handicap? "No comment," he says with a grin.

But the driving force in Peter's life right now is clearly work. He has firm

views about what he wants ITN Sport to do in 1987 and beyond — "There are three main categories of stories, and we've got to make sure we're across them all". He fills in the picture . . .

"First, the sports news stories: the Hurricane Higgins court case, the Ron Atkinson sacking. We must be able to cover them and not expect the Newsdesk to do it. Into the second category come predictable sports events like Test matches, the Cup Final and so on.

"And third — and also vitally important — are the picture stories like underwater hockey. There are lots of such potentially good picture packages around and ITN Sport should now be actively pursuing them".

As part of that policy, Peter is encouraging our correspondents abroad to send back stories. "I am sure Jeremy (Thompson) will be giving us plenty of material from the Far East. They love horse racing in Hong Kong. And our man in Washington, Tim Ewart, is already lined up to cover the American Masters in Atlanta".

Planning for future sports events is well under way in the cramped, cluttered far corner of the Channel One newsroom where Peter Wallace's HQ is located.

Preliminary arrangements are being made for the 1988 Seoul Olympic Games, and Peter identifies four major global events he would like to see ITN cover comprehensively this year — "We should be at the Rugby World Cup in Australia and New Zealand; the World Athletic Championship in Rome; the Ryder Cup in Ohio; and the Cricket World Cup in India and Pakistan".

On the domestic front, there are plans for more coverage of minority sports. The minorities, Peter points out, are getting bigger every day and should not be ignored by ITN: "Angling, for instance, is now one of the biggest sports in Britain. We'll certainly do something on it". He adds with a chuckle: "Yes, we must cast the net wider!"

Peter brims over with confidence about the future. "In Giles, Mark and Peter Staunton we have a heavyweight team. Mark's reporting from Australia won him the respect of his ITN colleagues in a very short time. It was really impressive how he and Mike Nolan were able to cover the cricket, the America's Cup and, in the early days, the Wright memoirs case.

"On one day, Mark had three pieces on each bulletin. And Giles as we know, is the epitome of the TV hard news reporter — he's already come up with some good scoops. So there's every reason to feel confident".

# ITN's Glitterati — what a party to see off 1986!

Stills man **Ernie Holloway** takes his camera to a Christmas party to capture ITN's upbeat mood as 1986 draws to a close with the foundations firmly laid for the company's future in space.

This was the Newsdesks and Reporters' knees-up, organised with efficiency and considerable enterprise by Lisa Aitken. It proved to be a pretty lively year-ender, even for Charlotte Street, as Ernie's pictures make clear!



## Meanwhile, over at the Green Man...

*Bill Shaw writes:* Time was rolled back just before Christmas at a greatly enjoyed and historic reunion round at the Green Man. To cheers and shouts of recognition and welcome the majority of the old Laboratory staff, disbanded and dispersed when the Film lab closed in April 1983, made their separate entrances into the growingly festive Saloon bar.

In they trooped, as healthy and happy a band of Old Age Pensioners as you could wish to see, all eager to meet up again with their fellow technicians who had been found continuing employment with ITN.

There was "Squire" Saint ("Must find a room tonight!"), Arthur Osborn (urbane as ever), Pip Messer (leaving his cap to the National Trust, we hear), Peter Sapper, dapper and well-looking after his several and serious operations, and many others.

Nostalgia ruled the evening, inevitably, but the memories were happy ones and the joviality mounted steadily as a



succession of foaming pints appeared to fuel a celebration we shall never forget.

Over the years, of course, there have been a good many more limited get-togethers among former lab staff, but

certainly nothing on this scale.

Our picture shows the kind of reunion party it was. All present agreed it had been a tremendous success — and that it should not be the last.



Page in 1955

“Being a good cameraman is simply a matter of being lucky”, says a disarmingly modest Cyril Page.

Luck may have played some part in Cyril’s career but his reputation as one of television’s finest news cameramen was built on a foundation of energy, unbridled enthusiasm and physical courage rather than chance.

Cyril doesn’t remember a time when he wanted to be anything other than a cameraman. He started as a clapper boy in feature films. He remembers when his first task at 6.30 each morning was to clean the cameraman’s shoes. “How’s that for starting at the bottom!” he says.

After wartime service as a naval officer, Cyril joined the BBC as its first news cameraman. There he earned an unrivalled reputation as a war cameraman. The TV critics acclaimed his pictures of front-line action in the Korean War. They called them “brilliant” and “a vivid commentary on war”. Thus, on many occasions during that bloody conflict, Cyril made headlines in his own right.

At the BBC, he had a reasonable income and a job for life. But he felt BBC News was becoming “stuffy” and that, more than anything else, prompted him to accept an invitation to become the newly-formed ITN’s first cameraman in the mid-1950s.

It was a move Cyril said he never had cause to regret. “ITN has given me a more varied life than I could have hoped for in any other occupation. I’ve hunted for the Loch Ness Monster, been water ski-ing on an alligator infested lagoon in Lagos and covered many wars and civil upheavals”.

Cyril will probably be best remembered for his war pictures. It’s the subject he most enjoys reminiscing about, and the assignment he found most rewarding of all was Suez — ITN’s first war.

As he went ashore in Suez, he saw two men in front of him blown up by mines before they reached the beach. It looked as though the invasion of the Canal Zone was going to be an acutely uncomfortable business. But within days Cyril, the “old

His career blazed with action. During three decades of service for ITN, his assignments read like battle honours. In the world’s worst trouble spots his courage, and his sense of humour, remained intact. As CYRIL PAGE begins his retirement, MICHAEL JERMEY salutes one of the most irrepressible characters in our business. . .

## ACE CAMERAMAN PAGE BOWS OUT

soldier”, had made it a conflict with all mod. cons!

He managed to grab practically every calor gas cylinder in Port Said. That meant the entire Press corps (and several helpful Army officers) enjoyed the luxury of hot baths. Cyril also “borrowed” a large white Bel Air convertible in which he drove media colleagues around town.

And he remembers with a chuckle the nickname bestowed on him by the General commanding the British force in Suez. On learning that Cyril was working for ITV, he decided the appropriate label would be “Omo”.

Years later at the investiture of the Prince of Wales, Cyril heard “Omo, Omo” shouted across the courtyard of Canaervon Castle. The General, in a plumed hat, was waving at him from the VIP stand. Says Cyril: “I’ve met some great people doing this job, and I’ve made many friends, more good ones than bad ones”.

The early days at ITN were tremendous fun, he declares. “The organisation was compact, without any bureaucracy, and we relied on pictures rather than talking heads. Surely television should be about moving pictures. Nowadays there’s far too much yackity yack, in my opinion anyway. You don’t have to be told what’s happening if you can see a picture”.

The programme he particularly enjoyed working on was ITN’s Roving Report. “Although we were operating on a shoestring budget — or perhaps because of that — it proved a lot of fun. For instance, it was quite normal for the Rovers team to pop over to France and rattle off three or four reports in no time at all”.

A list of Cyril’s ITN assignments reads like an index of post-war history: Suez, Borneo, Cyprus, Nigeria, Aberfan... Throughout his decades of ITN service, he has been wherever the news was hottest and enabled millions of viewers to “See it Happen”.

Something of the essence of Cyril’s character could be captured by retelling stories that have grown up about him or

by repeating some of the many, and usually self-deprecatory, anecdotes that he tells himself.

But his actions in covering two stories during the 1960s probably say more about the man than a thousand “Green Man” yarns ever could.

His combination of sensitivity and professional toughness were well illustrated at Aberfan in 1966 when, as he freely admits, he broke down in tears yet still won the Rank Hard News award for his pictures of the children’s funeral.

And his tenacity, good humour and professional commitment were never more clearly demonstrated than when, in an incident embedded in ITN folklore, an ITN crew was ambushed during the Nigerian civil war. Cyril swept aside military indifference to secure blood, an ambulance and a plane for the wounded Peter Sissons. His professionalism ensured that London received full coverage of the incident and all that followed.

The words in a telegram sent from ITN to the Federal Hotel, Lagos — “Great Admiration Your Coverage... Congratulations” — might also serve as a tribute to more than thirty years of service with the company.

When asked what he will miss most about ITN, he winks and says in typical fashion: “Why the money, of course!” But he goes on to talk more seriously about the friendships, the shared memories and, in particular, the comradeship that characterised his ITN years.

And his regrets? The reply comes without hesitation: “None at all, except that I’m sorry to be getting older. I’ve enjoyed every minute at ITN and would do exactly the same again”.

Now Cyril and his wife are moving to a new house in Sevenoaks, Kent. He intends to spend more time on his hobbies — model railways and sea fishing — and wants to go on travelling.

“I’ll keep a camera with me and if I get any interesting pictures I’ll flog ’em to the highest bidder”. The familiar Cyril Page grin flashes on again. “Once you’re a cameraman, you’re always one”.



# ITN history on parade at Page farewell



**Arthur Clifford writes:** It was a fitting climax to Cyril Page's thirty-one years of ITN service: a farewell party awash with laughter and memories. ITN staff were there in force and the response of yesterday's giants was overwhelming.

This was ITN history on parade: Don Horobin, Sir Robin Day, Gerald Seymour, Freddy Partington, Huw Thomas, Jo Redding, Peter Snow, Julian Haviland, Nigel Ryan, John Edwards, George Ffitch, John Whale...they all turned up to say goodbye to a rare man.

Messages streamed in from those who could not make it: from Cyril's first ITN boss and old friend John Cotter, from Ernest Proctor, Andrew Gardner and many others.

The speeches were pure joy. "What a gathering!" beamed Editor David Nicholas. He described the departing ITN founder member as an outstanding professional; then recalled how

during the Suez conflict Cyril had advised the young army PRO Michael Parkinson about a possible TV career. Added Nicholas: "Cyril has asked for a number of other offences to be taken into consideration". The audience loved it.

Then Sir Geoffrey Cox, in praising the dash and vitality Cyril had brought to ITN in 1955, demonstrated his own unquenchable zest for life. That delighted everyone, too.

The evening had begun with a lively video of the Page years, written and narrated with wit and affection by Peter Sissons. But at one point the chuckles gave way to silence as we saw a gravely wounded Sissons in Biafra, later bundled to safety by the nerveless, combat-wise Page.

Finally, in a speech which blended sentiment with outrageous anecdote, Cyril won the hearts of all present. On this memorable

night, he used words as skilfully as he had always used his camera.

Perhaps most moving was his plea for ITN to remain a close-knit family as its role expanded. "Now we've become a bit of a high-tech factory," he said, "it's vital that we hold tight to that family spirit. If we do, ITN will never fail".

Later, in the party's dying moments, Cyril became unusually subdued. As he gathered up his wife Mick and the rest of the family, the many presents (including JVC video camera and one of Richard Andrews' splendid models) and the armfuls of flowers, more colleagues came up for a final word.

Now the veteran lensman was looking truly sad, even vulnerable. It was then we realised he was going to miss ITN just as much as this company would miss him. We knew, too, that from now on our working world would be a greyer place... Lens magazine wishes Cyril every happiness.

*The Queen's visit to China last year made history. So did ITN's superb coverage of the tour. But now Lens can reveal another aspect of the China assignment — the diary kept by Programme Editor NICK POLLARD. It's witty, frank, colourful, in fact unmissable...*

## Fred and Trev win glory on the Great Wall!

### OCTOBER 6TH

Ever felt like a criminal? I certainly did while driving to Peking airport with \$26,500 in local currency stashed in a holdall. The man from China Airways counted it all out, gave me a receipt (in Chinese — sorry Accounts) and ITN had hired itself a four-engined Russian-built Antonov cargo plane, complete with crew, for flying our satellite dish from Peking to Kunming.

A quick taxi ride through Peking's rainy, cycle-clogged streets to the British Embassy for a meeting with China's helicopter hire agency. Once you're in the mood, it's fairly painless to part with \$19,000 more for our helicopter hire to lift the satellite dish up to the Great Wall and back again.

### OCTOBER 9TH

I've seen some dismal things in my time, but the sight of 22 ITN staff trooping off a flight from Tokyo at Peking airport after 48 hours without sleep ranks high on the list of scenes requiring an X certificate.

Humping 220 heavy equipment boxes on to the waiting trucks soon cheered them up though. (It's amazing how quickly 1.2 billion people can disappear when there's some heavy lifting to be done!)

### OCTOBER 10TH

We stood in a freezing cold wind peering out from the highest tower on the Great Wall, looking anxiously for the helicopter bringing the satellite dish from Peking airport fifty miles away.

Every few minutes we would persuade ourselves that we could either see or hear it, but it was long overdue and spirits were dropping by the minute.

And then, amazingly, it was in sight — just a dot away down the valley at first, but slowly staggering overhead, a small fortune in electronics bobbing alarmingly above us in the wind.

Non-essential personnel (happily including myself) retreated below the tower as the Chinese pilot battled the helicopter down. A few feet below, and looking appallingly crushable, links

engineer Trevor Davies and rigger Fred Rich tried frustratingly to catch and unhitch a ton of swaying satellite dish.

After one heart-stopping failure, it was done. Brilliant flying by the pilot and some authentic valour from Fred and Trevor got the gear landed. And just for good measure Bob Hammond and Paul Dickie, also crouched on the tower, got breathtaking pictorial evidence that we really were in business.

### OCTOBER 12TH

Morale plummets. Such a dreadful rehearsal for our live half-hour special that you can only control yourself by muttering "bad rehearsal means a good first night". It doesn't normally, of course — the only consolation is that things couldn't be any worse.

No chromakey available, vision mixing panel wired up to trigger practical jokes at the touch of a button, a "studio" that was actually a shed without lights, and replay machines that sprinted into fast forward without benefit of human contact.

Much discussion about chartering a getaway plane with the remaining cash. (Not enough left anyway).

### OCTOBER 13TH

So it is true what they say about rehearsals. We stood around after an amazing half hour of television, hardly able to believe that we'd produced it in the same studio that seemed so keen on thwarting our every effort the night before. Great ITN teamwork and wrong to pick out individual heroes — suffice it to say we had stunning pictures, beautifully edited, elegantly scripted and an impressive studio operation to go with it.

Yes, Leonard Parkin still looked like he was sitting in a coalshed, but at least it was a recognisably Chinese coalshed.

### OCTOBER 14TH

The big crunch — a live OB from the Great Wall with a Chinese scanner, a BBC director and ITN's satellite dish. All three performed wonders. Would I be over-optimistic in thinking that the



major headaches are behind us?

### OCTOBER 15TH

I would! Enter the headache to end all headaches — the satellite dish is stuck on the Great Wall because the weather is too bad for the helicopter to lift it off. In fact it's too bad for the helicopter even to find the Great Wall.

The dish was to be lifted off today, flown in two shipments to Peking airport, packed on the Antonov, flown a thousand miles to Kunming, unpacked, taken to the Kunming Hotel, rebuilt in the car park and tested.

Now all that has to be done tomorrow. If the weather is bad again in the morning, we can say goodbye to our coverage from Kunming.

### OCTOBER 16TH

With one mighty bound, as they say, we were free. On the way from Shanghai to Kunming, at a stopover in Xian, I heard that the Chinese helicopter pilot and ITN's incredible staff had triumphed again, and the dish was on its way to Kunming. It got there — just 15 minutes before we needed to transmit.

### OCTOBER 17TH

We sat nervously in the darkened car park of the Kunming Hotel listening to the last of our five live half-hour specials being transmitted. The pictures had gone from Kunming to London, back to Peking, then on to London a second time. The sound we were listening to over the four wire had come an extra hop, back from London to Kunming.

Leonard Parkin, sitting in his coalshed a thousand miles away from us, signed off and we broke out the local beer for a few rather weary toasts. But tired or not, I guess we all felt pretty good. It had been a fine team effort and we had made television news history. Even at ITN you don't get a chance to do *that* every day.

Channel Four News is now well into its fifth year. It promised to be different, and it was. It vowed to change the news agenda, and it did. Today C4 News represents solid success. But it still offers a challenge to the most skilled TV journalist. One such is DAVID MANNION, who left the NAO Editor's chair to become Deputy Editor (C4N). In typical Mannion style he tells Lens how it's working out...

## C4N 1987 — NO MUESLI, JUST GOOD JOURNALISM

The first thing people still ask me about Channel Four News is "Where is it?" To my mild amusement and deep concern a journalist, to whom I shall grant anonymity, buttonholed me the other day to ask what it was like to work in Charlotte Street!

So for his benefit and anyone else still baffled by ITN geography, allow me to explain how to get there...

Do *not* take the lift — not unless you have a couple of days to spare and a handsome supply of Kendal Mint Cake. Much better and quicker to hike up the stairs to the bit between the second and third floors. Go through the door marked "Fire Exit". If in doubt, check what's on the floor. If there's a green plate with a solitary, petrifying potato chip on it, surrounded by congealed tomato sauce, then you've cracked it. This is indeed the gateway to Channel Four News. Nice innit!

There is another bit, half a floor up. It's a sort of corridor with desks and people fighting over squatting rights to them. A frenzied game of musical chairs goes on here. At least it encourages folk to get in early, lest the music stopped in the dark hours before dawn and some shadowy figure from House Services removed another chair. This is where I live.

I have certainly come up in the world — three and a half floors to be exact. I have a communal telephone I can rarely use because someone else is always on it, and a plastic three-tier tray complete with offensive sticker that the most evil fluid Graphics can produce won't shift. The door to my office, as I always tell people, would always be open... If I had an office, that is — or a door.

But don't get me wrong. I am not complaining. In ITN's current accommodation crisis I count myself lucky not to be strapped to a hitching post on the roof. It may not be much, but it's home.



And that brings me to the second thing people ask me about Channel Four News: "Do you feel at home there?"

Well as a matter of fact, unlike my anonymous colleague, I *did* know where Channel Four News was before I joined it. I often used to sneak in, hoping for evidence of all those rumours about earth mothers and fathers eating muesli out of woks.

No such luck. Bacon sandwiches rule, OK. And strange as it may seem, no one seemed to mind my popping in. You should try it sometime. The locals are really quite friendly. So, yes, I do feel at home here.

It was, of course, one heck of a wrench to leave News at One. That was the most frustrating, exciting, exhausting, rewarding time of my professional life. It was also, without question, the happiest.

My News at One colleagues became, and remain, my friends. Together we enjoyed many marvellous moments; often just small things that worked out as we hadn't dared hope they would. And together we endured some unmitigated disasters, though thankfully not too many.

During my time on the programme, ENG made the impossible possible. But going for broke every day turned my blood pressure up and my hair grey.

Even now at about five to one, I am

engulfed with a nauseous desire to vomit. On one dreadful day when stories one, two and three were still in bits and two machines failed on air, I was reduced to leading with the weather. We were in such a mess there would almost have been a case for starting with the recaps and doing it all back to front. I could have claimed it as "innovative broadcasting".

I owe so much to everyone who worked with me on News at One: to the reporters and crews who produced the goods against all the odds day after day after day; to brilliant magicians in Facilities who saved my bacon so often; and to the people who had the guts to appoint me in the first place, when there were some who saw the move as the most surprising elevation in status since Caligula made his horse his consul!

I would not have left News at One for many jobs. But Channel Four News proved an irresistible challenge. Why?

Well, number one I liked the programme. As a viewer I enjoyed watching it and it's nice to have the opportunity of being part of a product you admire. Number two — that old masochistic desire to test your ability in a different, slightly wider area.

And yes, Channel Four News is different. Its brief requires it to be — but different only in terms of subject areas that we have the time and expertise to cover. It is still first and foremost a NEWS programme and its record of exclusives needs no embroidery from me.

The programme was four years old last autumn, still a comparative toddler. Yet since the traumas of its infancy, it has grown into something of a child prodigy.

Sometimes it can be quite brilliant. There is a passion here also for good, straightforward, decent journalism that is not elitist. It is a quality we must all continue to draw to our chests and hold dear, because there is no doubt that it is a quality sadly abandoned elsewhere in our trade.

In the last three years, under the guidance of Stewart Purvis, Channel Four News has been stunningly innovative. Barriers of tradition have been courageously torn down. Stewart has backed good ideas and given them the space and time to flourish.

Peter Sissons and Trevor McDonald have been the rocks on which all that has been built now stands. And the team of journalists now assembled provides great hope for an even better future.

All of which brings me to the third thing people ask me about Channel Four News: "Do you want to change things?" Well of course I want to change things. For a start, I *hate* the colour of the carpets!



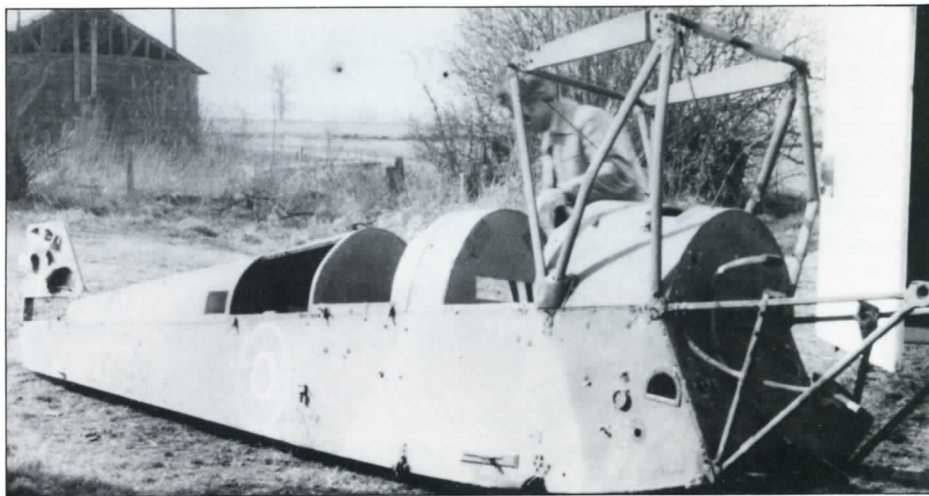
For almost four years, video editor Barrie Bayes — later joined by sound recordist John Sharman — worked to transform a crashed World War Two bi-plane from scraps of wreckage to its former glory. It proved a costly and frustrating task. But the ITN flying fanatics would not give up. And last November the story ended in triumph as their beloved Queen Bee soared skywards again...

## BARRIE'S DREAM IS ALIVE — AND FLYING!

By Frank Miles

The aircraft was as antiquated as the shout of "Chocks away!" To the uninitiated it looked for all the world like a Tiger Moth. Its two fabric-covered wings moved gently under the strain of the slipstream from the yellow-tipped propeller that spun faster and faster until it formed an almost transparent disc, and the long grass flattened behind it as if trying to escape from the roar of the engine.

In the rear cockpit, at the controls, sat Barrie Bayes — ITN video editor, hang-glider, microlight enthusiast, and holder of a coveted PPL (Private Pilot's Licence).



An impossible dream: price £400

Number LF-858, its dull wartime camouflage brightened by an RAF roundel, moved into position. Minutes later, the world's only flying Queen Bee was airborne for its first flight since it crashed 35 years ago...

The urge to restore the plane (now re-registered as G-BLUZ) had an odd beginning. Barrie had been given a rare glimpse inside a secret barn of the Shuttleworth collection "somewhere in Bedfordshire" almost four years ago.

It was pitch dark in the barn. The floor was littered inches deep with bits of rusting metal and rotting fabric, nuts and bolts, broken instruments, pieces of splintered glass. Barrie clambered over piles of scrap — then the beam of his torch struck a mould-covered broken fuselage.

"How much?" he asked the two engineers showing him round.

"Four hundred quid".

They dragged the fuselage out of the barn. Barrie rubbed away dust to reveal some dirty brown fabric. There was nothing that looked worth £400. A dilapidated bucket seat inside the fuselage, a few wing ribs — that was all. No engine, no tailpiece, no wings.

But Barrie knew it had flown once and

he wanted to take it up to the clouds again. The fuselage was part of a Queen Bee de Havilland had made in World War Two to be flown by radio remote-control and used as a target for air-gunners. They had turned out 380 of them, but now there were none.

So Barrie knew that if he could get it flying again it would be unique and, for him, yet another challenge. His last "impossible dream" he had already accomplished: jumping off the Alps at 6,000-ft to fly down a valley strapped to a hang-glider. Now he needed the spur of a fresh ambition.

But this new dream was to cost Barrie a lot of money and, more than that, a long and often frustrating search for more than five thousand genuine spare parts.

"Take the petrol tank," he said. "I located one but the owner wouldn't part with it even when offered £800". It took Barrie months to discover what he believes is the only other one in the world.

Almost 3,000 hours had been spent on the plane's restoration when, two years ago, he ran out of funds. He'd had to pay for everything except the throttle — the only gift. And the plane was only three-quarters finished.



"Biggles" Nicholas

In the front cockpit sat the plane's co-owner, John Sharman — ITN sound recordist and also a hang-glider until he broke both legs when he crashed at Dunstable ten years ago.

Both adjusted their goggles and grinned broadly to the group gathered by the hangar at Meppershall, a country flying club in the middle of Hertfordshire. They, in turn, shielded their eyes against the bright autumn sun to watch the take-off.

“It was a mission of sheer delight . . .”



“That’s when John Sharman stepped in,” Barrie told me, “and offered to pay all the remaining bills to get it finished”. Barrie bit at his bottom lip as he recalled that moment.

And so it was that on a crisp, bright November day a group of us from ITN, including the Editor, were able to gather under an almost cloudless sky to see its maiden flight.

Later, David Nicholas went up. After his flight he was, most unusually, almost lost for words to describe the experience. All he could murmur was “Bloody marvellous!” as he posed with Barrie and John to capture the moment on film for his own scrapbook.

I was equally happy after Barrie had flown me for a solid hour on a mission of sheer delight and celebration. The

clarity of vision up there was stupendous from an open cockpit.

“Take me up to a cloud,” I yelled, and we zoomed upwards to 2,000-ft where I was able to reach out and touch one, since there wasn’t the usual fly-spotted perspex to shut me in from the open air.

When I left some hours later, the airfield was lit by a full moon and the remains of one of those sunsets you rarely see outside a television nature programme — black skeletons of trees silhouetted against a vivid orange sky.

As Barrie walked me to my car he said something that made me wish I could turn the clock back on my own life. “You know,” he said, “we all have dreams. But I feel there’s no point in having a dream unless you do something to make it come true”.

IN BRIEF

## Squash comeback

*Michael Green writes:* Thanks to all those enthusiastic players who have helped revive the ITN Squash Club. Despite the straining of neglected muscles and (I can personally vouch) the odd bruise, the club has come on by leaps and bounds since it restarted in August last year.

One reason for progress is the kind help given by more experienced players in coaching.

The next step, to encourage people to play a wider range of partners, is to start a “ladder”. This will necessarily be a bit rough and ready to begin with, but should soon sort itself out.

Please contact me or the specialists’ secretary Shelagh Harrison (ext. 2539 or 2332) with any other suggestions.

Do you think, for instance, that we should have a regular “club day” for members to turn up on spec? Would enough people commit themselves to turn out regularly for matches against other TV teams?

Do let us know — and send in your 1987 subs!

## Terrorism expert

One of the world’s leading experts on terrorism, Professor Paul Wilkinson, has been contracted to ITN.

Professor Wilkinson, who is Professor of International Relations at Aberdeen University, is now available to ITN as an information source. He will also serve ITN as an on-air expert interviewee on an exclusive basis.

Newsdesks requiring further details should contact David Mannion.

## NAO’s Aids video

After the success of AIDS week on News at One, ITN has produced a 26-minute video called “AIDS — A Health Crisis”.

During the week of special reports on AIDS, some 7,500 calls were made to the recorded message phone line, and News at One received a number of requests for the package in video form.

Keith Hatfield and Vicki Elcoate have compiled the video, and it’s being sold for £4.99, mainly to schools, universities, hospitals and other institutions.

The profits will go to the leading AIDS charity, the Terrence Higgins Trust.

**The Next Lens . . .  
will be published in two  
months’ time.**

Former ITN newscaster Andrew Gardner, writer, wit, raconteur and one of the true gentlemen of television, recently celebrated his 25th anniversary in broadcasting. News at One journalist LIAM HANLEY, who worked with Andrew at ITN for many years, has written this personal appreciation...

## AN UNBEATEN 25 FOR TV'S STYLISH ANDREW

One day a tall gentleman in a well-cut suit walked into the ITN newsroom and that night he read a well-cut news which, in those far off Kingsway days, was at five minutes to nine. That was Andrew Gardner.

He joined a cast that could boast it used the services of such itinerant talents as actors to read the film commentaries, an expert in strategic affairs who wore pinstripe trousers and a solicitors' clerk's jacket, a copytaster who was a consul in Spain before the war, and George Ffitch, an interviewer who could tear at politicians' turn-ups like a terrier.

It was an intelligent newsroom and it missed nothing about people. No one escaped.

There was much to notice about Andrew and happily we can say today that the nation has enjoyed noticing him on our screens most days of the week for a quarter of a century.

In an age of superlatives, stalwart



virtues get swept aside for the more dramatic qualities associated with the so-called "television personality". That most certainly is what Andrew is not. His achievement is remarkable. While for all those years he has lent gravitas and charm to news programmes, he has remained a most private and thoughtful man.

He had his quirks, of course. There was one particular word he did not like to say, and that was "infantryman". So "troops" or "soldiers" would be the order of the day. Very rarely did he change a script, and the merest hint of an editorial opinion never came from him on transmission.

He and Reginald Bosanquet launched the first News at Ten. It was a great partnership that lasted until 1977, and it was the first of its kind in Britain.

When it came to tailpieces, Andrew was the master. They were like those little lumps of coal some of us get for luck at the bottom of our Christmas stockings and were treated with suitable glee.

In a career well packed with incident there is one he may recall. Near to the end of the evening bulletin, Spike Milligan walked in for an interview and while a film package was being run he leaned over to Andrew and said: "Does your mother know you do this for a living?"

## Searching for the spirit of 1986...

Challenger, Reykjavik, Westland, Libya, Irangate and the invisible perils of Chernobyl and Aids. On a happier note, the Queen in China, a Royal Wedding, the Ashes retained...1986 was all that and more. No lack of incident, spectacle or crisis. The big stories, and the human issues behind them, gathered up and put into sharp focus in ITN's Review of '86.

On the screen: the usual smooth, sure-footed job. Behind it: the seemingly endless, though ultimately rewarding, slog through the archives to extract the year's authentic flavour.

Productions like '86 succeed because they represent the very best kind of ITN team effort — an aspect nicely caught in this Lens picture of programme editor **Mike Sheppard** and presenter **Mike Nicholson** hard at it.



For the News at One writer, it was the chance of a lifetime. No more dawn coffees from Brunchies. No more nerve-jangling deadlines. Instead, a life of leisure in Japan — for a few months anyway. Well, it didn't work out quite like that. But it enabled VICKI ELCOATE to write a splendid travel piece for Lens.

## Adventures of a News at One Gaijin Girl!

I gulped. It was a daunting prospect asking for extended leave when, lurking at the back of my mind, was a vision of overburdened News at One scriptwriters. We could hardly spare someone to pop round to Brunchies for early morning coffees. Could they spare me?

My young man's company had asked him to go to Japan on business; and they'd offered to pay for my flight, my accommodation and a share in the seemingly *huge* living allowance. My bosses thought it too good an opportunity to miss. They would somehow struggle along without me for four months.

But what about me? Would I survive the strange food, the early morning exercises, being taller than everyone else? I packed a large bag of muesli, my doctor's exemption certificate, a pair of flat shoes and set off.

I knew I'd been right to worry when they showed a video on the plane of a woman in a kimono doing exercises in her plane seat. All the Japanese joined in. All the Europeans suddenly became preoccupied with their immigration forms.

My arrival coincided with the Tokyo summit, closely followed by a tour featuring the Prince and Princess of Wales. A chance for me to get some foreign "logging" under the belt. It was a far cry from News at One: eating noodles with Michael Brunson in the NHK canteen, surrounded by off-duty Samurai extras with shaved blue heads. We felt almost out of place!

When I first spotted people pointing at me or jostling to have their photo taken next to me, I thought they'd mistaken me for a Royal (possibly even *her*). Then the reason became all too clear.

The problem was me — a tall, white, ungainly, unmannered foreigner. Or as they call us, "gaijin" which literally means "outside person". While the snags include being excluded from things you might want to do or places you might want to go, the advantages include getting preferential treatment and, best of all, being excused not knowing all those Japanese social taboos.

A gaijin can actually wear shoes indoors without causing World War Three. You

could even be caught (as I was) wearing your summer kimono inside out without prompting more than a blank stare. The Japanese are rather good at the blank stare. It causes lots of confusion for foreign businessmen. (No, there aren't any foreign businesswomen).



After my ITN chums left, it was time to manage alone. You don't need an A to Z in Tokyo — just a "Squiggle to Squiggle". In fact, incomprehensible squiggles loom at you everywhere. Imagine trying to operate a bank cash dispenser! I just pressed every button until it stopped taking the book away for updating and the computerised bowing woman disappeared in favour of the required sum.

Incidentally, everyone bows. The rule is that the oldest straightens up first. The exception is when foreigners are involved — and we discovered that the hard way. We became enmeshed in an epic bow with one old woman who refused to unbow until we had. If valour hadn't triumphed over discretion we would probably all still be there today.

In between mastering these social niceties and travelling the 1,500-mile length of the islands, I had to eat. This truly was my first worry when I arrived in Japan and it was not ill-founded.

It wasn't really the raw fish or those endless bowls of sticky rice for breakfast, or the struggle for control by chopsticks over a slippery bit of beancurd.

First you had to get the food. Luckily for visitors who are commonly defeated

by the sight of a menu not only with the edibles in squiggles but the prices, too, plastic models of food are on show everywhere.

Originally these models helped the Japanese to cope with foreign food. Now the reverse is true.

The easiest method of securing your favoured dish was to entice the waiter or waitress into the street and point to the appropriate model. Or you could copy the squiggle and show it to them, which usually worked — but only after they had recovered from a very un-Japanese laughing fit.

Many of our Western stereotypes are based on truth. The men *do* go out to work all day until 11pm. It is horribly expensive: £3.50 for half a lager, £800 a month rent for our one-bedroomed flat, hence the massive living allowance.

And it is so overcrowded that it makes Piccadilly Circus look like East Grinstead on early closing day. We even had to stand in line to climb Mount Fuji.

But there's another side to everyday life in Japan, and so many things come as a pleasant surprise.

The people are amazingly kind and polite. The trains run on time and always have plentiful supplies of refreshments. Muggings are so rare they get reported on the national news, in between the interminable stuff about the privatisation of the railway system or the changing of the seasons.

Women can walk about the cities at midnight without having to be Karate black belts. Male unemployment is 3% and there is no widespread poverty. It is impossible not to be impressed.

But on the negative side again, a common feature of Japan's intensely-competitive education system is children committing suicide because they've been bullied.

And if you are a university graduate and a woman, you cannot expect much more than a secretary's job — and if you get married that nearly always signals the end of your working life.

But after all this, the greatest shock was coming home. The people (even in ITN!) still look funny. They wave their arms about and talk in loud voices — and they're all so *big*!



Teen-age fan

## Telling the Man United story

# NOW CRICK IS SOCCER HISTORIAN

Channel Four News reporter Michael Crick is turning his main hobby into journalism. He's just agreed a deal with the publishers Pelham to write the history of Manchester United over the past twenty years — since the end of the Matt Busby era. It will be published in 1988.

Crick has been a faithful United follower since he was at school in Manchester. "In my teens I hitched-hiked everywhere to watch them, spent every penny on United, and only missed six games home and away in five years".

Today his record is not quite so good. "I get to about three-quarters of the games," he says, "but ITN work stops me being totally loyal".

A season-ticket holder at Old Trafford, he travels by train every Saturday from his home in Oxfordshire to Manchester or wherever else they may be playing. "It costs me about a thousand pounds a year. Now, of course, I'll be able to claim tax relief on that!"

Crick has never reported football for ITN. "I don't think I'd be very good at it". The nearest he got was a Channel Four News piece on police crowd control at a Liverpool-United game two years ago.

"I made sure I included United's winning goal in the report, just to annoy that armchair Liverpool supporter, Peter Sissons. But then I got the only letter I've ever had at ITN accusing me of bias — from a man in Manchester saying I'd been unfair to the United fans! I was very upset about that".

"Life's never boring at Old Trafford". Bobby Charlton once remarked. "There's always something happening". United are Britain's most popular football club, and since the 1960s have boasted a string of stars from Best to Robson.

If United aren't near the top of the league, they're near the bottom — as this season — but rarely are they in the middle.

Crick intends to find out just why in recent years, under a string of managers,

United have never seemed to reach their full potential, and have failed to match the success of their arch-rivals, Liverpool.

"They're by far the wealthiest club in Britain, and bring in far larger crowds than anyone else every year, yet since Matt Busby they have never managed to win the league championship or a European trophy," Crick says.



He shakes his head rather sadly. "What is it that's missing? That's what I want to find out. It won't be a 'glory, glory' type book. I hope to get to the bottom of what makes the club tick or, as so often I'm afraid, not tick as smoothly as it should".

Crick will also be telling the story of how in twenty years United have grown from being an ordinary football club into a multi-million pound business.

As with his previous books on Militant and Arthur Scargill, an important part of the work will be dozens of interviews with many of those involved — past players, managers and directors.

"Not being a sports journalist will probably help in a funny way. I don't depend on reporting football for a living, so I don't have any contacts to offend".

But won't United be very different from his previous political subjects? Crick thinks not. He quotes one of United's former managers, Tommy Docherty: "There's a hell of a lot of politics in football. I don't think Henry Kissinger would have lasted forty-eight hours at Old Trafford".

## ITN Golfing Society

# Read Cup retained, but Beeb is close!

By Brian Pendry

The final meeting on the ITN Golfing Society 1986 calendar took place at Richmond on Thursday 9 October where ITN hosted the annual match against the BBC for the Ronnie Read Trophy.

This event, sponsored this year by Roger Gooch of Doral Construction, is held in memory of Ronnie Read, a former Royal Rota cameraman who was widely respected by his colleagues both at ITN and in the BBC.

A team of 14 ITN golfers matched the BBC numbers, with the remaining 22 playing in a domestic competition. The very large turn-out undoubtedly had something to do with the Indian Summer weather which made golfing conditions ideal.

ITN retained the Cup for the third year running but by a narrower margin than last year: 410 pts to 385 pts. We'll have to watch out for the 'auld enemy' next year!

The domestic competition was won by cameraman Derek Seymour, making one of his rare appearances, with a gross score of 41 pts. Ex-WTN editor John Connor ran a close second and retiring Captain George Harrison got in some valuable practice for next year by taking the third prize.

In the combined ITN/BBC competition, our old adversary Brian Baker, now retired from the BBC, took the first prize yet again with Paul Janaway, also of the Beeb, second. Brian Edmonton, playing as consistently as ever, was third.

Everyone is now looking forward to next season when the effervescent John Copleston assumes the Captaincy. I doubt his golf will improve — but the speeches should be interesting!

In the meantime, the Society was set to hold its AGM on 16 January in the ITN boardroom.

Finally, a reminder that new members are always welcome. Anyone wishing to join should apply in writing to me.