

# THE LENS

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## ITN launches its early-morning news service

DAVID MANNION offers some background information on the C4 service which launches this week.

**ITN's role in the new Channel Four early-morning service, The Channel Four Daily is, without question, the single most important development for us since the start of Channel Four News.**

The future of the company will increasingly depend upon our ability to win and keep contracts such as this. The competition is already tough and it will get tougher still.

In fact ITN has two separate contracts for the early-morning service. The first is for the news modules - three 12-and-a-half minute slots each weekday morning plus a pre-prepared compilation programme for transmission on Sunday mornings. The second is for the continuity or "sleeve" and this involves ITN in a role it has never previously played, the role of transmission controller.

In order to win these contracts we



Mannion: "important development"

had to do two things: come up with the best ideas; and deliver within the budget Channel Four had allocated. If you think about it, combining these two requirements was a difficult job because the best ideas are often the most expensive.

By now you will be familiar with the format for the news modules. Channel Four required a truly international news and our idea for three presenters, each one covering a section of the world, was a major factor in our success. It also provided us with a major challenge.

Within a couple of months and starting from scratch we had to set up the system, recruit the staff, design, build and install the sets and, in the case of Tokyo from where we shall cover the whole of Asia, we had to open a complete new bureau and negotiate picture access deals with major Asian television organisations.

The philosophy of the news modules is straightforward enough - to provide viewers with a "snapshot" of the world each morning. We will report the stories you might see on the front page of the International Herald Tribune or on the foreign news pages of, for example, the Financial Times and the Independent. At the same time we must not - and will not - ignore purely domestic news. Quite often the early morning news will lead with a story that might also lead Channel Four News or News at Ten. We shall differ in that our news agenda will be of a wider and more international nature than is tradi-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

## INSIDE

**PETER SISSONS:** talks about his RTS award and his years in journalism. **PAGE 3**

**TECHNOLOGY GLOSSARY:** The start of our layman's guide to the latest equipment. **PAGE 4**

**ITV WEATHER:** John Charlesworth sheds some light on the launch of the first national ITV weather service. **PAGE 6**

**PENNY BICKERSTAFF:** We get an insight into our new finance director. **PAGE 7**

**NEW BUILDING:** Jonathan Munro talks to the architect behind the plans for Gray's Inn Road. **PAGE 8 & 9**

**TRAINEE DIRECTORS:** Six months into their training, ITN's new directors chat about their studies. **PAGE 10**

**HOME FROM HOME:** Chris Thompson writes about life in Russia. **PAGE 11**

**DISASTERS:** Stewart Purvis talks about how television journalists have had to revise their opinions about covering tragedies. **PAGE 13**

**RETIREMENTS:** JOHN HARWOOD and BRIAN PENDRY remember some ITN stalwarts who have recently retired. **PAGE 14**

**PLUS . . .** sport, letters, news and photographs.



# Nicholas and Purvis appointed to top positions



Nicholas: name synonymous with ITN

After much speculation about who would be appointed ITN's new chairman, David Nicholas was confirmed as chairman and chief executive in February.

It is the first time in ITN's 34-year history that a chairman has been chosen from within the company's ranks and the news was welcomed in the broadcasting industry as a fitting tribute to Nicholas's commitment to ITN since joining the company, and in particular for the last 11 years as editor and chief executive. His move means that Stewart Purvis succeeds him as editor.

Commenting on the appointment, Richard Dunn, chairman of the ITV Association, said: "This appointment reflects the ITV companies' confidence in ITN's future and the shareholders' determination that ITN is in position to exploit the opportunities in the new era of broadcasting as a main provider of news in Britain and the developing markets overseas. The ITV companies are proud of ITN's standing as one of the world's leading news organisations."

He added: "David Nicholas's name is synonymous with ITN and represents its quality, its energy and its

future. He is a remarkable leader. Under the editorial partnership of Nicholas and Purvis, supported by ITN's team of formidable talents, the ITV Association is confident that ITN is in an excellent position to meet the demands of the Nineties."

Purvis has also become a member of ITN's board of directors as does Channel 4's chief executive Michael Grade. David Nicholas said of Grade's appointment, "He has the rare combination of business skills coupled with enormous experience in all aspects of the television industry."



Purvis: partnership

## The membership of the Board of ITN is:

David Nicholas CBE	Chairman and Chief Executive
William Brown CBE	(Managing Director - Scottish Television)
Sir Alastair Burnet	Associate Editor News at Ten
Richard Dunn	(Managing Director - Thames)
James Gatward	(Managing Director - TVS)
Michael Grade	(Chief Executive Channel 4 Television)
Leslie Hill	(Managing Director - Central)
Clive Leach	(Managing Director - Yorkshire)
Paul Mathews	Deputy Chief Executive ITN
Dan Moloney	Director of Business Affairs ITN
Stewart Purvis	Editor
Andrew Quinn	(Managing Director - Granada)
Brian Tesler CBE	(Managing Director - LWT)
Harry Turner	(Managing Director - TSW)

# New recruits join the ranks

Among the newcomers to have joined ITN in the last few months are: Stephen Arkell (writer). Arkell was previously a journalist with the Thames TV City Programme where he had worked since its launch in 1987; he has also worked on a variety of business magazines. His hobbies include cricket.

Paul Flook has joined as a project engineer from a similar position at the BBC; his hobbies include going to the theatre and sailing. Alan Mitchell became a writer on 5.40, he was previously a bulletin editor at Independent Radio News.

Daniel Sandford joined as a VT80 operator. Sandford, who enjoys the theatre, rugby and mountaineering, was previously a sponsored student research assistant at GEC Hirst Research Centre and worked on holography and lasers. Sharon Philcox is a new recruit to the assignments department, joining as an assistant. She was previously an account executive at the British Telecom subsidiary, Gold. In her spare time she likes to go swimming, skiing and keep-fit.

Peter Newell became a new store-

keeper. He has also worked in the same capacity at the BBC. He is interested in car maintenance and rallying. New to the News at One writers' team is Les Skipper, who before joining the company was producing bulletins at Thames Television and has also worked as a sub-editor in radio at the BBC. Finally Jayne Goin is the new member of the graphics department joining as senior designer. She enjoys horse riding, golf and going to the cinema and theatre. Before ITN she had worked as an assistant art and production editor at the BBC's Radio Times.



# Sissons wins top award

Recently honoured by the Royal Television Society with the judges award for his significant contribution to broadcast journalism in "establishing our fourth television channel as a major force in the business of daily journalism", Peter Sissons talks to The Lens.

**Q:** How do you feel about winning your RTS award?

**A:** *I feel very deeply honoured and very pleased too for the honour it does to the programme.*

**Q:** How do you feel about the programme?

**A:** *The most satisfying aspect about Channel Four News, in my view, is that it is constantly evolving. It's no secret that it had a rocky beginning but now all the evidence is that it is one of the most influential programmes on radio or television. This is a tremendous tribute to the guidance it has had from Stewart Purvis and Richard Tait. The aim must be to go on building on the talent we have so that the programme never falls into a rut. If we became complacent it would be very damaging.*

**Q:** Do you see yourself staying with the programme?

**A:** *I regard myself as very lucky to be associated with Channel Four News. It is the most satisfying thing that ITN has asked me to do. I have no other ambitions; this is the type of journalism that suits me.*

**Q:** What do you remember of the recent interview with the Iranian Charge d' Affaires Mr Basti?

**A:** *I was saddened rather than horrified when I received threats afterwards. The whole thing, that kind of reaction is just so mad and irrational. And it's strange because my recall of my meeting with Mr Basti on that day is one of extreme cordiality. After the interview we had a friendly chat and he told me how much he admired the work of Channel Four News. He told me it was his favourite programme. Clearly some of his compatriots do not count themselves fans, but they are entitled to their opinion - in this country, at least.*

**Q:** Which interviews do you remember as your best/worst?

**A:** *No specific interviews come to mind. The most satisfying are those that have a beginning, a middle and an end, a shape - and actually achieve something. The purpose of an interview is to throw light on and get a bit nearer the truth. If you do your homework properly and give the interview shape and don't allow it to digress then you can see news being created in front of your eyes. I hate watching what I have done. My approach is that once*

*a programme is over let's make another one.*

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**“It is the most satisfying thing that ITN has asked me to do”**

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**Q:** What are your favourite programmes on television?

**A:** *I find I am watching less and less television. I don't like to miss Hill Street Blues. I try to watch most of Newsnight to see what the competition is up to. And I have to watch Liverpool football team when they are on form and scoring goals. And I like all the great classic BBC comedy programmes like Fawlty Towers, Some Mothers do Ave Em, The Good Life and Only Fools and Horses. They are absolute jewels. I could watch them over and over again.*

**Q:** Who are your favourite journalists?

**A:** *That's always a difficult question, I don't want to make people blush. And also the trouble with naming journalists, you make one or two friends and 60 enemies. I have a particularly soft spot for Sir Robin Day who invented the modern political interview. When you begin to assess who has contributed most to the development of television as a journalistic medium it would be hard not to mention such major figures as Robert Keay, Jeremy Isaacs, David Nicholas and Sir Geoffrey Cox, my first editor, but there are many more too.*



The anchor man at Channel Four News



# Coming to terms with the technical phrases

As promised in an earlier edition of *The Lens*, we will be running a glossary of technical terms compiled by Don Peers and Martin Uren. This issue we run through the meanings of some names and makers beginning with A.



Autocue: ensuring prompt delivery by presenters

## GLOSSARY OF TECHNICAL TERMS — A

(Terms used in definitions, and defined elsewhere in this glossary, are marked with \*)

**Abekas** Manufacturer of broadcast equipment. Specialises in picture manipulation devices, including **Gemini\*** and **Zeno\***.

**ACE** (i) Advance Conversion Equipment. A high quality **standards converter\***. Designed to convert time-stable inputs between any two of the following TV standards - **PAL\***, **NTSC\***, **SECAM\*** and **PAL-M\***. ITN has two of these units, which were designed by the BBC and manufactured under licence by GEC/McMichael.  
(ii) Computer controlled editing system manufactured by **Ampex\***, and capable of handling up to 16 machines.

**ADC** Analogue-to-Digital Converter. A device which converts a continually variable voltage or current into a set of numbers. This digital signal can then be processed easily without any further loss of quality.

**Address** Term used for memory location in computers, or selected edit point during **timecode\*** editing.

**AGC** Automatic Gain Control. A circuit which tries to maintain a signal to a constant level. It is often used to maintain video or audio levels in equipment where a hands off operation is necessary. These circuits have no subtlety in performance. Therefore human monitoring and adjustment would invariably provide a better interpretation of the sound or picture content.

**Ampex** Manufacturer of broadcast equipment. Specialises in videotape recorders and editing equipment, such as **ACE\***. Has recently expanded its product range in television computer graphics.

**Analogue Component** A video signal in which a continuously variable voltage or current (rather than a set of numbers) represents the value of a **pixel\***.

**Aperture Corrector** Electronic circuit for increasing the apparent **resolution\*** of a video picture. If too much correction is applied, an unwanted black line appears around objects in the scene and the noise in the picture increases.

**Aspect Ratio** The ratio of the width to the height of a picture. An aspect ratio of 4:3 is used in conventional television, because of its match to the early cinema film format. It was also regarded as being aesthetically pleasing to the eye. A ratio of 5:3 has been recommended for wide-screen **HDTV\***.

**Aston** Manufacturer of broadcast equipment. Specialises in character generators, including Aston 2, Aston 3 and Aston 4. These provide the broadcaster with an on-screen titling capability.

**Autocue** Manufacturer of broadcast equipment. Specialises in television prompters. These provide the artist or presenter with a script display while looking directly at camera. Originally these scripts were specially prepared on a paper roll, viewed by a TV camera and displayed on a picture monitor. This is positioned to provide a reflected image in a semi-silvered glass fixed in front of the studio camera. The text is now provided directly from the newsroom computer system.

**AVR** Automatic Voltage Regulator. These units are used to maintain a constant level of electrical mains supply to equipment.

**AVS System Video** Manufacturer of broadcast equipment. Recent amalgamation of AVS who specialised in **standard converters\***, such as the AVS6500, and System Video who specialised in video test and measuring equipments.



# ITN sets up Asian eye camp

**Donations to the ITN Christmas appeal have helped establish a Third World eye-care camp which will help to save and restore the eyesight of many people.**

The company handed over more than £1,400 to Sight Savers, part of the Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind, last month. Roberta Blattner, appeals department manager, said that the sum was "welcome and impressive. We are very grateful to ITN".

The money will go towards three major eye-care projects, the bulk to creating an eye-care camp. "We will choose a village for ITN's camp and send you reports on how it is doing. We will send you lists of how many people have been treated for eye diseases, how many have had minor surgery and how many have had cataract operations which will allow blind people to see again," said Blattner.

The ITN camp will not be established until October, after the monsoon season, Blattner said we should not expect a report until February.

As well as this some of the gift will go towards an eye hospital and training centre in Bhopal to help cope with the continuing aftermath of the Union Carbide tragedy. "After the disaster the Indian government invited us to work in Bhopal. We have an emergency camp but now we are building a hospital. Many people in Bhopal are still suffering as a result of the disaster."

Meanwhile the rest of the cheque will be channelled into programmes for the irrevocably blind. In the case of children this generally means the provision of braille kits, for adults it can be twofold - rehabilitation schemes, and financial help for those finding it difficult to adapt to blindness. "It is unbelievable how people adapt. We

have a group of women who make clothes, using traditional machinery, even though they are totally blind. We try to retrain people in their former skills, very often the only thing they know about is farming and they want to, and often do, return to the farm."



See smoking story page 11

## An Honourable discharge by Brian Pendry

**Each morning I would pound along the eighth floor corridor and as I approached the office door it would open as if by divine intervention, and there to greet me would be a dapper figure clad in bespoken suit and waistcoat. Who else but Ernest (E.H.J.) Proctor.**

"Good morning Mr Pendry," he would say, "cup of coffee?" "Thank you Captain Proctor," I would reply, "Good to see you're on parade so sharp and early."

As soon as I settled in, the coffee would appear along with various messages on those evil yellow adhesive labels which seem to dominate one's life these days.

"Just to keep you in the picture" Ernie would say. "Only six staff have gone sick there's no supervisor on Channel 4 and assignments want three editors to go to Aberdeen for News at One. I've left a message for the ENG sup but he's not in till eleven, so nothing's been done. I told assignments you would handle it when you got in."

"Thanks Ern," I'd say, "I don't know what I would do without you."

Indeed, I don't know what we are going to do without him now that he is retiring after more than 33 years service with the company. There cannot

have been a more loyal and dedicated member of staff than Ernie and those who know him well will bear testimony to his fairness and scrupulous adherence to the rules. No-one ever got a raw deal from Ernie.

Except perhaps Brian Edmonton.

As many will remember, Brian is an ardent lover of the game of golf and when he appointed Ernie to the post of production administrator he briefed him very carefully (or so he thought) on the subject of leave entitlements.

"I want the system to be rationalised and administratively efficient but within the bounds of fairness," said Brian.

It was therefore, with some concern that Brian learnt sometime later that Ernie had docked him a day's leave for his ITN Golfing Society Captain's Day meeting!

"I'm not sure you understood what I meant," said Brian "or maybe I didn't make myself entirely clear. However, I did not intend that my leave should be affected!"

It was this attention to detail that has stood Ernie in good stead throughout his career at ITN as a projectionist, chief projectionist and production administrator, where his supportive qualities were invaluable to his production management colleagues. The

affectionate title of "Adjutant Captain" has never been more appropriately given.

Ernie is, by nature a "jolly" person and there have been times when his ability to cheer people up by extracting the tensions of the day have never been more welcome. Now that he has retired, the place is not the same. The yellow messages still come flooding in but the postman isn't as well trained!

It's an honourable discharge Ernie, enjoy the rest!

### John Mullins

**It is with great sadness that The Lens notes the death of John Mullins who died on February 19 of a heart attack. He leaves behind a widow, Betty.**

John joined ITN in 1969 as the company moved to ITN House. He held the post of chargehand of the plant staff until his retirement in 1985. Paul Mathews said: "He will be remembered for his friendliness and sense of humour and for the tremendous contribution he made to the maintenance of the mechanical plant in our buildings and for his influence in the affairs of his union, BETA."



# Weathering Heights

JOHN CHARLESWORTH of International Weather Productions tells us that team work reigns at the new national ITV weather service

**“Sun that actually shines, rain that does everything but fall on to the living-room carpet” is how the Guardian newspaper heralded the new ITV national weather service, launched with my company on February 13.**

Since then, millions of viewers have seen Alex Hill and former TV-am weather presenter Trish Williamson step onto the nation's TV screens after the three daily ITN news bulletins.

Alex Hill christened it “the people's weather”. It uses no “isobars” or “fronts”.

Language that viewers can understand is the hallmark of this new service. As Geraldine Sharpe Newton said, “It's those elements that people can touch, see and hear that viewers are most interested in.”

I couldn't agree more. Isobars cause the winds, and it's the winds that people feel. So we talk about winds, not pressure; and cloud and rain, not cold and warm fronts.

Already the formula is working. From day one the calls and letters have come in - mostly in favour and certainly indicating high interest in the new service. Alex and Trish are now busily replying to the fan mail.

**“The start-up phase was hectic - we all felt we were ageing rapidly!”**

ITN has long wished to have a national weather forecast service. As David Nicholas put it, “Giving up our executive dining suite was the proof of our commitment to having a weather forecast on ITN!”

Our winning tender followed a demanding brief from Stewart Purvis on behalf of the ITV companies. They wanted a reliable, accurate and credible weather service with specific predictions of cloud, precipitation, sun,



At work

Met Office

fog, frost and freezing conditions.

Importantly, to get the contract the winning bid had to put the presentation into a graphics style of top technical quality, with knowledgeable and likeable presenters using simple explanations of the weather situation.

At the time ITN began looking for someone to provide the new service, the Met Office was setting up International Weather Productions (IWP). The company's aim was to specialise in providing state-of-the-art television weather forecasts.

To do this we had to identify the best independent producers, graphics designers and presenters and, of course, the best weather data.

The companies that formed IWP with the Met Office were Spaceward Videosegments and production house INTV. They used the world-beating Weather-in-Vision Graphics System (developed by the Met Office and Spaceward) and harnessed the graphics skills of Vanishing Point.

Perhaps the most sophisticated system of its kind, Weather-in-Vision draws information electronically from the Met Office's computer COSMOS at its headquarters at Bracknell, Berkshire. It transforms the weather data into a spectrum of razor-sharp graphics and animated effects.

Animated sequences of satellite images come from two sources:

METEOSAT, which flies 25,000 miles above the Equator, and the higher-resolution TIROS polar-orbiting satellite which focusses on the UK. The two satellites can look very closely and even detect sea-breeze effects.

Colour-coded air temperature charts dramatically highlight changes from warm to cold air. Weather radar and rainfall forecast charts show where rain is actually falling and predict where it will fall up to 36 hours ahead. Rainfall can be colour-coded and animated to give a real-life effect.

One of the most ingenious features is “flash” weather news inserts. This gives ITN the unique ability to insert illustrated, weather-related news stories directly into a bulletin. These will explain how the events developed - and what is likely to happen next.

Already IWP has given advice on the weather near the recent shipwreck to the north west of Scotland, the late cold snap over southern England and the unseasonal weather in Miami.

The start-up phase was hectic - we all felt we were ageing rapidly! But we survived with a full flow of adrenalin.

The future for ITN's new baby is bright. Developing the team and its style, and combining with ITN's talents, means that there is scope for other ventures either at national or international level. Sorry about your executive dining suite!



# ITN's investment for the future

ITN will not use penny-pinching methods to make profits says Penny Bickerstaff.

Money, as everyone knows, talks and ITN's new finance director and company secretary has an interesting line in conversation, describing her new role as "to make people who realise there is a limited pot to spend, spend more wisely".

She qualifies this by adding: "It is never my plan to tell journalists what they may or may not cover, it is about giving them the freedom to cover what they think is important, balanced over the year, and also to give them fast feedback to show this is how much it is going to cost to, for example, film the Alaskan whales. My job is to make sure resources go where they need to go."

## Priority-based budgeting

Her system, which she calls priority-based budgeting, has already been put to the test at the BBC where it helped her trim £1.5 million off the External Services £70 million budget. And it is already in force at ITN. The day after the Lockerbie disaster Penny's team was already assembling figures on financing the operation and cost appraisals are distributed every week.

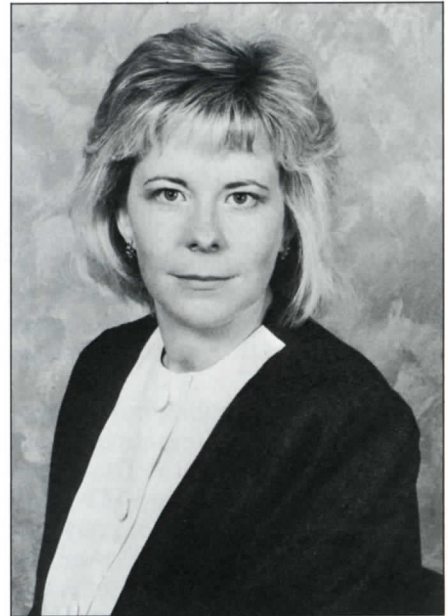
She has a major task ahead of her but appears to be approaching it with op-

timism. "It is an exciting opportunity and a delight to work for such a well-known and respected organisation," she says. And she is sure that by 1992, ITN will have fulfilled the broadcasting White Paper proposal that the company should be a profit centre rather than a cost centre. She cites the sale of ITN's programmes, the development of other enterprises such as the video collection, and the continued success of Basys as the main methods to affect the transition to a profit centre.

## Appointment

Penny won her appointment as finance director and company secretary despite having been a qualified accountant for only four years, partly because of her background in law. She studied at King's College, University of London where apart from gaining a first class honours degree and winning awards in property and industrial law, she was president of the debating society and enjoyed taking part in rag reviews - she has a thespian background, her mother was an actress.

"I very much enjoyed the social side of both school and university. In fact when I was at the University of Miami,



Penny: ready to start turning ITN into a profit centre

I couldn't believe how hard-working the students were. I couldn't believe they couldn't come out to play," she says.

## Mensa

Penny has been married for five years to a Polish freelance designer Waldemar Tobolewski - they met through Mensa and are both still members. Apart from that, they breed Burman cats "they are sort of like Siamese". They have two queens and have bred four litters so far.

She enjoys going to the theatre and restaurants and "taking off my high heels and sitting down in front of the television with a Chinese meal". She says she is not interested in having children now. "I think nowadays there are a lot more options for women in the workplace. If they decide to have children they can still come to work or husbands can stay at home, but for me at the moment they are not on the agenda".

She expects she will still be at ITN in five years. "And that we are still producing the kind of programmes we are producing now at a competitive price and at the top of the market."

## FACT FILE

age: 29

born: Midlands

education: Nottingham High School for Girls; King's College, London (first class honours degree in law, prizes in property and industrial law); University of Miami (Rotary public speaking award).

career: Peat Marwick Mitchell 1981 - 1984 (trainee accountant); 1984 - 1986 WEA Records as (financial analyst and deputy to finance director); 1987 - 1988 Deloitte Haskins Sells (management consultant); 1989 ITN (finance director and company secretary).

status: married to Waldemar Tobolewski.

current home address: Wanstead, London.

hobbies: member of Mensa; breeding pedigree Burman cats.



# ITN's building plans

JONATHAN MUNRO finds out the latest on the new building - including its "polo mint" factor, and canvasses opinions from ITN staff about what they want in Gray's Inn Road.

A few weeks after Martyn Lewis left ITN to join the Opposition, he appeared on one of the BBC's endless programmes about themselves to talk about the new One O'clock News. "Sitting at my desk," he said, "is like being at the helm of the Starship Enterprise."

For those of us still in the independent sector, the working environment is more reminiscent of the Tardis than the Enterprise. Every time ITN takes on another project, it is somehow squashed into the same old space - the new ITV weather service has unseated the executive diners, and Channel Four Daily is adding to already over-used facilities in Studio 2 and on the third floor.

Another roll of the ubiquitous beige



Halfway through



Ready for demolition

wallpaper in the Green Room can't hide the simple truth - we're bursting at the seams.

The man with the daunting task of changing all that is Ken Shuttleworth, head of the team of architects from the Norman Foster Partnership who are designing ITN's new headquarters at Gray's Inn Road.

"When I first went into Wells Street, I couldn't believe my eyes," says Shuttleworth. "It's so cramped, everybody's working in minimum space."

The Partnership knows exactly what it's like to be in ITN's position - it's moving to its own new headquarters within the next six months. "ITN's new building is a very prestigious project for us. It's the first time we've done such a big scheme in Central London, most of our biggies have been in Europe and the Far East."

Ken and his team of 12 architects working full time on the ITN project,

aren't short of experience in designing buildings for broadcasters. "We've done some work for BBC Radio, and I spent some time in Mexico working for the television network after its studios collapsed in the earthquake. But, the new government pulled the plug on the funds, and it's currently transmitting out of an old gymnasium."

Progress on the new ITN building is well advanced. Demolition will be finished by May 1, and soon afterwards work will start on the sub-structure. "It's being built on a sort of raft - a metre of concrete that 'floats' on the soil's ground pressure. The same principle as a ship, really. It means we'll get a good even distribution of the load."

After that, the superstructure itself will emerge, starting with the basement areas which will house the new studios. The building is being designed for maximum flexibility, so that ITN can expand into the three floors which it plans currently to sublet.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

tional. What one might describe as "average" British stories - particularly those without much international relevance, would make way for developments in other parts of the world such as Europe, South America and the Far East.

## Second contract

Each morning our teams in Washington and Tokyo will put together news packages from their parts of the world leaving the London-based team to concentrate on Britain, Europe, the Middle East and Africa:

The news modules will be transmitted on the half hour - 6.30, 7.30 and 8.30. The other programming within the service - business news, arts and entertainment information, a consumer module and a little sprinkling of children's programming will all be provided by separate independent companies. ITN's second contract, the sleeve; is to bind all these elements together with regular news bulletins plus weather and travel information and promotional material. It also means we will be taking on the role of transmission controllers, something entirely new to ITN. We have a lot to learn and not much time to learn it.

The sleeve's constituent parts are news headlines, weather, travel information and promotional material. We will have two minutes of headlines on the hour followed by national weather and travel. At quarter past the hour there will be one minute of headlines followed by weather and travel information aimed at the business traveller (this will be followed by the business news module). On the half hour we have our main news so we will not be doing headlines and at quarter to the hour - again one minute of headlines followed by updated British weather and travel information. In addition there will be promotions for later modules



# in mint condition

On present plans, ITN will use the basement, lower ground, ground and first floors, and maybe the second. The restaurant will be on floors 6 and 7, and the central floors ("the middle of the sandwich") will be sublet. Originally, the council wanted the building to be only five floors high, "But," Ken says, "we persuaded them to allow seven floors by setting the top two back, making them smaller, so they can't be seen from street level. It also has the advantage of providing a sort of terrace for the restaurant."

By Christmas, the superstructure should be up to roof level, and some of the interior fittings will be in place. "Most things come prefabricated, like the toilets, which come ready made with loo roll holders and ashtrays already in place, just waiting to be lifted into the frame."

"The outside of the building will be completely glazed. It will be a unique look. The idea is to push the building right to the edge of the site, and maximise the natural light right down to the basement with a big hole right down the middle, a bit like a polo mint. That'll give the building a focus, and a heart," says Ken.

That's good news for those of us who permanently work under fluorescent light, and should satisfy Alan Mitchell - one of the "victims" of a Lens straw poll of priorities for the new building. "A lot of natural light in the newsroom" was top of his list. But then he does work in the shady world of the 5.40 writers desk.

Anna Capel, who can at least see the windows from the foreign desk, wants a rest room. "Not that any of us have time to rest," she adds hastily. "Fail-



Flattened: The old Sunday Times building is gone

ing that, a champagne bar would do."

Rest rooms, or at least quiet areas, were also top of the list for Aston supervisor Pat Watson and PA Leah Puplett. I lost count of the number of people who wanted car parking out of reach of the clampers - Jill Chisholm for one.

From Hilary Denness, a plea to the interior decorators. "No orange paint in the ladies loo. Looking at oneself in the mirror is painful enough, but surrounded by bright orange paint it's excruciating."

Albert Clack wants a much more fundamental change. "Work stations" should replace desks, with glare-guarded computer screens and more comfortable seating. And I thought World News already had the most comfortable seats in the building. There's no pleasing some folk!

"What we need is a creche for all the kids," says Libby Wiener, "and for all the mums and dads too." Reporter Simon Marks spoke for many of us (doesn't he always) "High speed lifts

are the one thing we need most of all. As well as a sauna, of course."

But, alas, it seems that hopes of a super-duper, no-expense-spared health club have been dashed. Among those who wanted to work out at work, so to speak, was programme director Jacqui Bromley. "If we can't have a proper health club, the least they can do is provide us with a decent empty room with a stereo so we can do our aerobics."

Health was the last thing on the minds of Peter Hood and Pat Harris, both of whom are convinced of the massive benefits for the company from a 24-hour bar! And, from News at Ten's Nick Valentine, the most bizarre request, "a bike shed, so we can go behind it to have a fag."

But the special Lens award for the simplest desire of all goes to PA Naomi Williams. "All I want in the building is a job." Not even Ken Shuttleworth can promise that!



Barnes: face of the morning

and for Channel Four programmes due for transmission later that day.

Carol Barnes will be the "face" of the news service. She will be on the air every 15 minutes delivering the headlines, and will present the London-based news in our main World News. We will also have a second out-of-vision presenter or, if you like, a continuity announcer who will present the weather, travel and promotional material.

James Mates will present from Tokyo and, for the first two or three months, Mike Nicholson will look after Washington.

Our weekend module "International Times" will bring together the best of

the week's coverage from around the world in a style not dissimilar to Radio Four's From our own Correspondent.

As you will see, this is one heck of a commitment, but one which we are

## Commitment

facing with great enthusiasm and excitement. We have put together a talented team of people - a good mixture of youth and experience. At the time of writing a massive amount has been achieved and a lot more remains to be done. But if I dare say it, I'm sure we'll be alright on the night - make that the morning!



# Next rung on the ladder

The trainee directors took the first step on the ladder in October, now they're climbing . . .

ITN's trainee directors have just reached the six-month mark in their busy training schedule and from this month on will be included on the rosters for News at One and World News as programme directors.



Scenes from Bristol

The five trainees Lesley Friend, Stephen Rankin, Sue Caro, Shelagh McHugh and Jane Thompson began their instruction on October 31 with the three-week basic engineering Module 1 course. They then returned to ITN, moving from one department to the next getting "foot-in-the-door" experience of how each unit operates and the difficulties and constraints which affect them.

Then in January, it was down to Bristol, for a two-week course at the university's Film Services department; not only was it the first ITCA course to specialise in news rather than drama and light entertainment, it was also the first time that ITN has sent trainee directors to a structured course. The unit in Bristol is equipped with its own studio and facilities (the university makes corporate and medical films from there).

For the ITN trainees it was to become a mock setting for ITN news

programmes as they were literally given previous weeks editions of 5.45, News at One and Channel 4 News by course tutor Tim Sumner and told to direct them - complete with all the hiccups that actually happened on the day and a few more to test the trainees to the limit. "We had to do live interviews with machines going faulty, feeds not appearing, stories supposedly happening and then dying," said Lesley. "It was all done as realistically as possible and was extremely intense." And then there were the post mortems.

The dummy programme-runs and subsequent post mortems took place in the second week, the first few days were spent learning interview techniques with Ray Moloney and Anthony Carthew, and getting to grips with all roles in the studio. One trainee would direct while another operated the camera, another controlled the sound or acted as floor manager. "It was invaluable experience of understanding the jobs of everyone else in the studio," said Lesley. "We would never have had



All round training

the chance to take on other roles without this course."



Different perspectives

"We all came from different areas," added Stephen Rankin, "I was in VTR, Sue was a camera operator, Shelagh a PA and we all gained from each other by drawing on the various strengths. Rather than be competitive we were all very supportive and it gave us an invaluable insight into the problems in other departments," he added.



On the ladder



# Moving experience

CHRIS THOMPSON, who is married to Alan Thompson - the Moscow bureau picture editor, describes life in Russia.

**A correspondent here recently wrote that Tuesday January 31 belonged to the Cockroach.**

He was wrong - it belonged to ITN. That particular day, the huge Kosmos Hotel, with enough beds for more than a third of all foreign tourists, was suddenly closing for "sanitary reasons". ITN staff, who had served long sentences in the hotel: Robert Moore five months and Alan Thompson 13 months were given the dubious pleasure of being allowed to stay. This privilege was extended to ITN's Dick White and Chris Goacher recently arrived from London. They first had to agree to sign a disclaimer concerning the health risks of "de-insectisation".

As all the bewildered tourists left, we made a positive move. ITN's third apartment in Moscow was finally ready for occupation. After more than one year's delay due to extraordinary local protocol January 31 was moving day. 45 Leninsky Prospect, was to become our new home.

My son Mark and I said an emotional goodbye to the key-ladies, also farewell to an army of cockroaches.

Even the porters showed a rare and remarkable perception. They agreed we were in fact **leaving** and not arriving. Thus they waived the frustrating procedure of producing the "key-card" as we ferried back and forth with belongings.

Unceremoniously our motley convoy of two frozen Ladas, each loaded to the

roof wended its way with caution via the notorious Prospect Mira. The two cars sported between them two working windscreen wipers and a single wing-mirror.

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**“It had almost been enough to wrestle with the alphabet, master the metro and join endless queues”**

---

Each round trip therefore took 50 minutes, allowing for frequent stops to clear the windows of snow and mud.

At 6pm surrounded by all our possessions plus a "Habitat House Pack" consisting of 15 cases we took stock of the situation, our senses and a bottle of champagne. Where **was** Alan at that unique moment - where else but an isolated outpost in Afghanistan.

I am in no doubt that if it had been known to the authorities that we were

moving, they may well have considered postponing the withdrawal of troops for just a few days.

Over the next 48 hours Mark and I unpacked, cleaned, shifted and rearranged in a fervour of "House Pack" excitement.

The janitor, Viktor, warmed by vodka appeared from the bowels of the building to identify and repair fuses as we were frequently plunged into darkness at the mere switch of a kettle.

The man from the Ministry arrived to formally check on our acceptance of the apartment. He was accompanied by Oleg, ITN's translator and secretary, also friend and adviser.

In the wake of this visit the gas man cometh. Without removing his boots or fur hat (such was the urgency of the situation) he agreed that a strong and serious smell of gas issued from the cupboard. He promptly checked the leak with a lighted match!

He pronounced "Nyet problema" and left. The man from the window department came to test the windows. He opened and closed them all - "Nyet problema" and left.

I admit it had almost been enough over the past year to wrestle with the alphabet, master the metro, trains and buses and join endless queues. I did my best to absorb the culture, sights and unavoidably at times the smells of Moscow. But, now was the chance to really 'live' and not just exist here.

All round it had been a significant week for ITN, a new chairman, a new year at the Moscow bureau with new Betacam equipment and a new apartment.

But the lead was that the first family of cockroaches who had dared to try and share our new home had been successfully evicted.

L E T T E R

# Breaking the habit

• For what it's worth may I offer my advice to those wishing to kick the smoking habit. The short answer is willpower and self discipline.

I was a smoker once. Not a heavy one, but I started early. I can remember the furtive puffs, often of a shared fag, behind the school bike shed

When I started my first job it was five Woodbines a day which increased as I became more addicted. I remember those early days when, with my fellow post room boys, we had our lunch in a little Italian cafe where lunch was a cheese roll, a cup of tea and, most important, five Woodbines. All that and a penny change out of sixpence! The

smoking habit continued throughout my six years' war service and beyond.

I cannot remember precisely when, but in my late twenties I began to develop a chesty cough and the first cigarette of the day made my head spin.

"Enough's enough" I decided one evening sitting beside the lounge fire. "I'm giving it up" and there and then I tossed a half-full packet of Players on to the fire. I haven't smoked since.

I don't recall it being terribly difficult breaking the habit. There were times when I felt the need for a cigarette but I mentally told myself that I'd given it up and that was that. Sometimes when out with friends the temptation

was strong but the time came when I was proud to say "No thanks I've given it up" and not feel I was missing out on anything.

Another advantage was that I didn't have the constant worry on the way to work - "Have I got enough to last the journey?" or "Should I stop at the tobacconist and stock up now in case I run out?" And of course there was money saved - all of 10 bob (50p) a week! What would it be today?

However, enough of my life story, to reiterate, it is all down to self discipline. Tell yourself you have given it up. You are stronger than that paper tube of tobacco so don't let it dictate to you. Extend your authority and tell it to go to hell!

Best of luck.

**Doug Amor**



# QUOTES

- "Afghanistan? Oh yeah, not too good out there, is it? . . . Not much you can put on expenses."

**Sun newsdesk reporter to ITN press officer**

- Husband: "Jitterbugging - isn't that when a bloke puts a woman through his legs?"  
Wife: "No, that's something else - perhaps that's where we are going wrong."

**Overheard at 5.45 Christmas party**

- "Several minutes of television have achieved more than several months of diplomatic lobbying and bureaucratic UN haggling."

**Nik Gowing talking about ITN's coverage on Afghanistan**

- "I've heard some people call Nicholas Witchell the poisoned carrot."

**Gordon Honeycombe**

- "There's nothing glamorous about reading the news. It's only television, after all."

**Fiona Armstrong**

- "When I've had a dinner party I often get four or five thank-you faxes the next day. My 18-month-old nephew sends me faxes, as do my father and brother."

**Former editor of Honey magazine Jo Fairley**

- "The structure of the BBC is hopelessly bureaucratic and corporatist. It has grown like Topsy. It should be demerged."

**David Owen**

- "He (Andrew Neil of Sky Television) is a man who combines two of the rarest human qualities: complete meglomania and the common touch. I understand he is proud that he has put four channels on the air, something the existing channels took 50 years to achieve. And on the seventh day he rested."

**Michael Grade**



Scenes from the leaving parties of former ITN chairman George Russell, American ambassador Charles Price and journalists Jeremy Hands and Tony Carthew.



# Dealing with disasters

STEWART PURVIS wrote this article which discusses TV journalists' attitude to reporting tragedies for *Airwaves* magazine, the IBA publication. Here we publish some extracts.

**The applause was rather muted this year as the top names in British television news and current affairs gathered for their annual prize-giving - the Royal Television Society awards.**

It was no reflection on the award-winners themselves who had shown great reporting skills, but it was difficult to forget the stark images of a year of disasters and accidents.

The judges had to choose between an oil rig fire and a plane crash, and between the pictures of the victims of a murderous Ulster mob and those of a London commuter train crash.

It was a timely reminder of the challenge such events pose for news organisations. We want to provide the fullest possible coverage but not to distress viewers.

Traditionally general election night has been regarded as the competitive set piece of the television news organisation with months of planning put into computer graphics and complex engineering to provide national live linkups. There are long discussions about editorial balance and standards.

However, in the past year ITN and BBC News have been judged by their audience and by their colleagues for their coverage of events for which there can only be hypothetical planning, no pre-set graphics or engineering plans and the shortest possible time scales for careful judgement about what it is right and wrong to transmit.

The nature of disasters is such that the problems of accessibility and the paucity of details add to normal everyday newsgathering problems. Many decisions, taken in the vital first minutes after hearing of a potential disaster story, will affect the eventual on-air coverage - such as editorial judgement of the story's potential news-worthiness, the allocation of the available manpower and equipment resources, and negotiations for newflashes and special reports.

The media has been covering death and disasters for years but particularly in the past 12 months news executives have been concerned about the issue of just HOW to cover it.

An American survey found that almost two-thirds of the respondents felt that journalists take advantage of 'victims of circumstance' and that because of intense competition, news

organisations rarely let concern for a victim's privacy get in the way of a good story. Being aware of this public concern is not enough - often what television journalists would judge to be the most powerful material is also the most painful to grieving survivors or relatives.

The lessons have been learnt from this. Consider the incident last year when two British corporals were dragged from their car in Belfast and murdered. The first hint that this had happened came just a short time before our lunchtime Saturday bulletin - the actual pictures arrived only minutes before going on air and the senior news executive that day chose to use them for that bulletin. But after they had been transmitted throughout the bulletins of the next 24 hours, ITN decided that this scene should not be repeated in future reports.

We, the broadcasters, have become even more sensitive to this kind of issue because the events of the past year have had their effect on our own staff who have witnessed the disasters and the aftermath for themselves. This includes not just the reporters and camera crews on locations but all those including videotape editors who view the full unedited rushes.

The experiences of all these people keep us sensitive to the concerns of the bereaved. There is a balance to be achieved between providing the viewer with a complete report on an event and repeating scenes which will, after a while, dull our responses to horror.

Similarly care has to be taken when using library material to illustrate events like a public inquiry many months after a disaster. To the victims' relatives the unexpected sight of these graphic reminders may re-open all the pain.

The ease of access to some international news reports can have disadvantages because there are no global standards on what is in good taste. Often in foreign news coverage the bodies of victims are shown in long, close-up sequences that are simply not acceptable to British audiences and so have to be edited out.

Looking back over the past year, the Piper Alpha disaster, the Lockerbie and M1 plane crash and the spate of rail disasters have seen the news organisations competing to be first with pictures and information while aware that a slip in standards causes deep public concern. There are no prizes for being first with incorrect information or distasteful pictures.

It has been a challenging and difficult time but in my opinion the broadcasters have done their job and done it well. It is in the first few hours after an event - during the confusion of the conflicting first reports - that mistakes can be made and it is in this area that steps are being taken to try to prevent them happening again.

The news events of the past year have sharpened the professional response of television journalists. It has also made us think again about the issue involved.

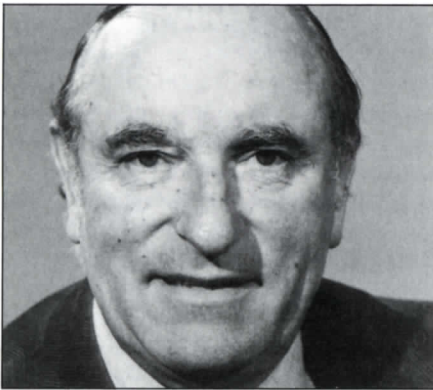


Piper Alpha: balancing news and sensitive reporting



# CLASS OF '55

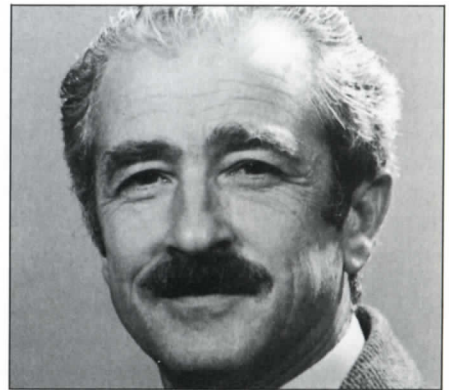
**JOHN HARWOOD** reports on three former employees John Lodge, Leo Rosenberg and Alf Wilson, and **BRIAN PENDRY** bids a fond farewell to Gordon Hickey; between the four of them they have clocked up more than 130 years at ITN.



**John Lodge**

John Lodge started his career in film and television on the other side of the camera - but a brief appearance in an early British picture was the end of his climb to stardom in this field. He then went to Gaumont British News and, after a stint in the army, returned to Gaumont British as a film news editor, following in the footsteps of David Lean who also worked for Gaumont British. Working mainly on the foreign newsreels, John stayed at Gaumont until he joined ITN in 1955. He had a varied career at ITN: he started on the daily news bulletin and then worked on Roving Report, our weekly documentary programme at the time, and later on network obits as well as working on the occasional news programme that popped up. He was working in the profiles department on ENG when he retired. Apart from his work, John was a keen amateur movie-maker which he managed to successfully combine with his other love - that of cricket. John was coached professionally and enjoyed a long career with Acton Cricket Club. He now has more time to devote to the community in his other role as Justice of the Peace.

Leo Rosenberg, after a very hard early life, began working at the Davis Theatre, Croydon. There, as a spotlight boy, he used to climb up into the dome and operate the spotlight. Margot Fonteyn, I think it was, once gave him a fiver for doing a great job. Leo left the Davis to join Paramount Pictures as a cutting room boy in the newsreel section. When he realised that newsreel was dying out, he joined ITN - also as a cutting room boy. But he quickly worked his way up to film editor and spent all of his time on the news bulletins. As a top-line editor, Leo spent many weeks away from ITN as a location editor. He spent many months in the Orient during the Vietnam War, working mainly with Sandy Gall who was in the thick of the war. One of the many stories about Leo at the time was the one which had him using a Thai family's children to hold all the pieces of film up - in order - while he joined them together. When the Middle East flared up he was there again, and he made several trips to Europe and America. In all, a widespread career on the road. However most of us will remember Leo as film/ENG supervisor where his talents were truly needed. Leo is now retired and living in North London with his wife Ruth and two daughters.



**Leo Rosenberg**



**Alf Wilson**

Alf Wilson was already a name in films when he came to ITN. Like John Lodge he started at Gaumont British News as a lift boy but then moved on to the feature film side of Gainsborough Pictures. Alf worked as an assistant dubbing editor laying soundtrack to many feature films. His promotion to dubbing editor proper was a real baptism of fire. On returning from his lunch one day he was told "your boss the dubbing editor has been taken to hospital. You take over." He did and went on to receive many screen credits as dubbing editor of early British films. The film 'Angels One Five' and 'The Wicked Lady' were among his many accomplishments. As the British Film Industry waned, Alf decided in 1955 to come to ITN where he took over the dubbing of all ITN soundtracks. The weekly documentary Roving Report kept Alf busy for many years, in between which he did all the sound dubbing for the obituaries department. With the advent of ENG Alf took the change to videotape in his stride and was responsible for many promotion and trailer videos which were needed at the time.



I first met Gordon Hickey, affectionately know as "Big G" back in April 1960 when I joined the film department as a newly promoted dispatch clerk. "Hello Ugly" he said "Do you play football?" "I've played a bit" I said "but I'm more of a rugby man really."

"Jesus, not another public schoolboy," Gordon said. "Anyway, you'll have to do, we need players for a new ITN team we're setting up. See you at Hackney Marshes on Sunday at 10.30."

Dutifully, I arranged a lift with John Lodge at Marble Arch at half past nine on the Sunday morning - only editors were allowed to own a car - not realising that Gordon would still be in bed and would not arrive at "The Marshes" until well after kick-off time claiming that he had been held up in a diabolical traffic jam caused by a bent copper at Mile End Road.

But that is Gordon, always a law unto himself - and who would argue with him! - at 6ft 4in and 17 stone!

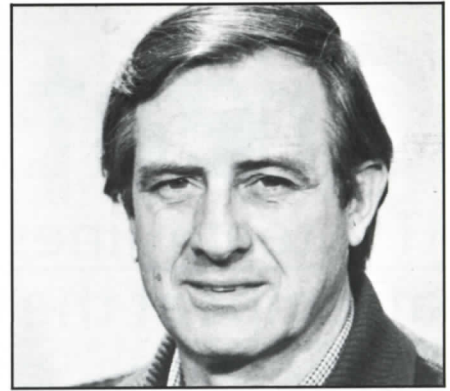
Nevertheless, Gordon's influence on the football field was obvious. He was always involved. It was just this kind of passion that led Gordon to be involved in the editing of countless major stories during his career. It was his expertise that contributed to many award-winning reports that have enhanced ITN's reputation. As an innovative editor too he was always trying new methods of producing quicker and more comprehensive edits. "Hickeyspeed" was a common phrase in the Sixties and the package edit as we know it today is in no small way due to Gordon's skill at developing new ways of putting pictures together.

Since that time, Gordon was always in the forefront of facilities development whenever new formats or equipment were introduced. The transition from film to ENG in 1980 was, for the film editors, an entirely different way of working and it is a tribute to Gordon and others like him that the move into electronic news gathering was achieved so smoothly.

It was therefore entirely in keeping with this pioneering spirit that he should want to be in at the start of the first all-night news service in the UK and so after almost 30 years service, he reverted to nights where his experience was invaluable to the other night staff, many of whom had no previous working knowledge of ITN.

Apart from his footballing talents, Gordon's main relaxation was athletics. Not many will know that for some years he represented England at the High Jump, regularly clearing six feet six inches. Latterly he held the distinction of veterans high jump champion of Great Britain and was still jumping at the ripe old age of 52.

In thirty years at ITN, Gordon has never given less than 100% to the job. He will be sorely missed by all his friends and colleagues.



Gordon Hickey

Letters to the editor

"He and his newsdesk assistant a glamorous brunette" thus wrote Judy Lustigman in her account of YTV's visit. I don't know the name of the assistant - Lustigman in true sexist tabloid style didn't tell us - although everyone else in her article had a name.

Sorry, there was one other person also nameless - the cleaner.

Joy Johnson

**Editor's note:** no offence was intended.

CAPTION COMPETITION



Can you think of a funny caption to go with this picture of Lawrence McGinty. If your entry wins, you could get a bottle of wine. Captions to the press office not later than June 15.

Last issue's winner

The winner of the caption competition in the last issue of The Lens was D Beavis from the links department who captioned The Tempest picture: "Are you the Really Useful Company?" He wins a bottle of wine which he can claim from the press office. Other good attempts which deserve a mention are Claire Pullinger, Basys, for "One couldn't help but be drawn to your enormous stage presence." Huw Roberts, press office, for "Cod shave the Queen", Nick Dodd, film library, for "Yes mam, I've had to keep my story under wraps." N Cubbage, production, for "Is that why they call you Prospero?" and Robert Wild, facilities, for "Your plaice or mine?"



Name ..... Dept.....

Caption.....



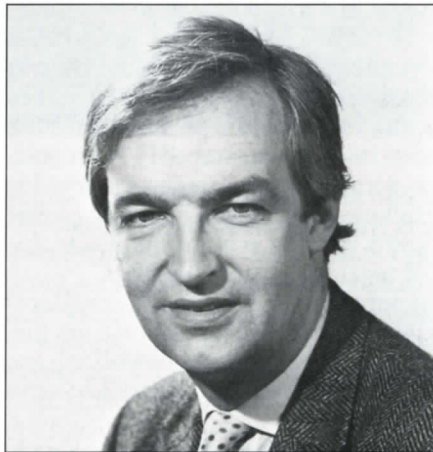
# Great Run

## ITN team lines up for another attempt at the Great North Run.

Last year a team of 16 runners from ITN took part in Europe's largest participating half marathon. There were 27,000 competitors. This year an expanded ITN team of 23 people will enter the Great North Run.

The event is set on Tyneside and has a record entry of 30,000 competitors; 3,000 more than last year and a staggering three fold increase on the starters for the very first run back in 1981.

The origin of the race stems back to 1980, when The Great North Run was



**Snow: hoping to run**

merely an idea in Brendan Foster's head.

Earlier that year, while training in New Zealand in preparation for the Moscow Olympics, Gateshead's world athletics hero had been moved by the sight of a mass run in Auckland.

There the 10km "Round the bays" run attracts an estimated 70,000 participants. Foster was so impressed that he wanted to create a similar event on Tyneside. The course takes you from the centre of Newcastle to the coast at South Shields.



**Green: joining the team**

Vivienne Brooks  
Paul Carter  
Fife Crawshaw  
Peter Edwards  
Neil Escott  
Paul Gordon  
Mike Green  
Keith Harber  
Mike Inglis  
Mathew Kemp  
Harry, Paul and  
Richard Lambert  
Angela and Marcus Nason  
Andy Palmer  
Murali Pushpangadan  
Peter Robertshaw  
Steve Shipman  
Karen Singleton  
Jon Snow  
Paula Wilkinson  
and Peter Yore

Well there is the history, and above is the ITN team for 1989.

We will be running in aid of a charity (as yet undecided) so if a sponsor sheet is placed under your nose - please sign it. Last year we ran for Cancer Research and raised £520 and we are hoping to beat that figure this year.

We are all looking forward to our trip to Newcastle for our Stottie cakes and Broom...

**Good luck team - keep training**  
**Richard Lambert**  
**ENG. Maintenance**

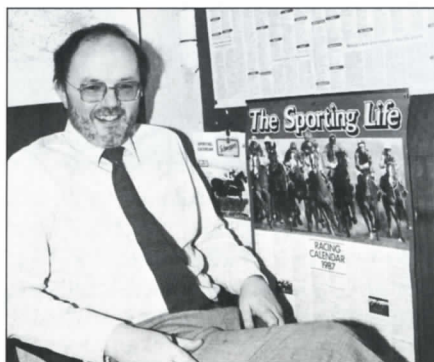
# ITN takes part in a soccer special

A little bit of television history was made earlier in the year when ITN assisted the ITV soccer production.

In January, for the first time on ITV every First Division goal from all nine matches was screened on the day of the match.

It was quite an operation involving Chrysalis, the independent company which filmed the games, LWT who put out The Match on behalf of Thames, and ITN Sport which co-ordinated the production. Tyne Tees and Central also opened up to edit and feed action from games in their parts of the coun-

try. Goals from six matches were shown in the half-time break of The



**Wallace: television history**

Match (Arsenal-Spurs) while the other two were broadcast immediately after the game.

Derek Guthrie was director and the action was voiced by ITV's Martin Tyler and Mark Austin.

**Peter Wallace**

## Contribution to The Lens

More people are offering articles to the Lens these days. Do you have any ideas or subjects that you think ought to be in the magazine, or would you like to volunteer to write something for a future edition? If you have any comments please send them to Susan d'Arcy in the press office or telephone on extension 2475. We would also welcome letters and photographs.