

THE BBC NEWSPAPER

ariel

SIX DIRECTORS LINED UP
TO ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS
Page 4

◆ **SPOKESPEOPLE:** National bike week is coming up and journalists Sean Riley and Kylie Pentelow are already on the case **Page 7**



PHOTOGRAPH: MARK BASSETT

How did we do at being green

◆ **THREE THOUSAND** printers have gone missing, except nobody's missed them. Making more people share a printer is one energy-saving winner in a year that's seen big waste reduction but modest progress on overall power and water consumption. **Page 3**

Crisis demands fast reactions

◆ **A NEW BREED** of 'information doers', shooting pictures with mobile phones, are transforming the news space – but do conventional sources of authority know how to cope with this unconventional reporting. Nik Gowing revisited the G20 protests and 7/7 to find out more. **Page 10**

Because I'm not worth it

◆ **FOR HONESTY** about abuse of public money, George Orwell would put Westminster to shame. His self-deprecating letter of resignation from the BBC is just one intriguing item unearthed by the archives editorial team for their latest online collection. **Page 5**



Room 2425, White City

201 Wood Lane, London W12 7TS

020 8008 4228

Editor	
Andrew Harvey	02-84222
Deputy editors	
Sally Hillier	02-26877
Cathy Loughran	02-27360
Features editor	
Clare Bolt	02-27445
Reporters	
Carla Parks	02-27630
Laura Scarrott	02-84224
Peggy Walker	01-43940
Production editor	
Claire Barrett	02-27368
Art editor	
Ken Sinyard	02-84229
Ariel online	
Andy Walker (editor)	02-84227
Alex Goodey	02-27410
Business co-ordinator	
Silvana Romana	02-84228
Ariel mail	
claire.barrett@bbc.co.uk	
Ariel online	ariel.gateway.bbc.co.uk

Guest contributors this week

BEN BROWN on surviving frontline war reporting. Page 8
NIK GOWING on the new media power to the people. Page 10
MARK DUFF on a job share in marvellous, maddening Milan. Page 14

BBC Jobs 0370 333 1330
Jobs textphone 028 9032 8478
BBC Jobs John Clarke 02-27143
 Room 2120, White City, London W12 7TS

Advertise in Ariel
 Ten Alps Publishing 020 7878 2314
 www.bbcarielads.com

Printing
 Garnett Dickinson Group
 Rotherham 01709 768000

Subscribe to Ariel
 Six months: £26, £36, £40
 Twelve months: £50, £60, £68
 (prices for UK, Europe, rest of world respectively)
 Cheques to: Garnett Dickinson Print,
 Brookfields Way, Manvers,
 Wath Upon Dearne, Rotherham S63 5DL
 Tel 01709 768199

INFORMATION IN AN EMERGENCY
 Telephone 0800 0688 159
 Ceefax Page 159 www.bbc.co.uk/159
 Ariel is produced by Internal
 Communications for people at the BBC



PLEASE RECYCLE YOUR COPY OF ARIEL



NEED TO KNOW THE WEEK'S ESSENTIALS

Timely takeover by Bradshaw

◆ **BEN BRADSHAW** a former BBC journalist, has replaced Andy Burnham as culture secretary in Gordon Brown's cabinet reshuffle. Burnham, who held the job for 14 months, is now health secretary.

Bradshaw takes up his post just days before the expected publication of the final version of Digital Britain, a report by broadcasting minister Stephen Carter about which there is speculation that it might recommend giving licence fee money directly to help ITV regional news.

If this proves to be an early hot potato for Bradshaw, he is used to feeling the heat. His web profile records: 'My lucky career move was to get the job as the BBC's Berlin correspondent at the beginning of 1989,' just weeks before the fall of the Wall.

After just one Parliament on the back benches Bradshaw was made a minister in the Foreign Office in 2001, becoming deputy leader of the Commons and environment minister before joining the health team in 2007. Earlier this year, he was a vocal critic of the BBC's refusal to air the Gaza emergency appeal.

Bradshaw became the first MP to enter into a civil partnership when he married BBC journalist Neal Dalgleish in 2006.

◆ **THE BBC TRUST'S REQUEST** for more information about Project Canvas has put a temporary spoke in the wheel of one of the BBC's most ambitious and, to many people, most attractive partnership ideas.

Canvas, announced by Mark Thompson at the end of last year with a view to going live in 2010, is a joint initiative between the BBC, BT and ITV that will bring catch-up from the pc to the tv set. Using a new type of set-top box, connected to a broadband line, people will be able to access all the free tv channels as well as the BBC iPlayer and ITV player, plus other interactive content.

After a seven-week initial consultation, during which it received more than 800 submissions, the trust has decided to delay a decision about the project, scheduled for July 24. When it has the additional information, the trust will launch a second period of consultation.

The problem is that many of those consulted, who include Google, indie tv companies and consumer groups, have expressed concern over 'a lack of detail' in key areas. There is also concern over possible market impact. 'Canvas will stifle competition and the development of VOD [video on demand],' Virgin Media claims, while Sky says the project appears 'to position the



BBC as market maker in an area where commercial operators have made, and will continue to make, significant investments, such that the potential for distortion of competition is manifest'.

BBC management's additional information, and a revised timetable to complete the trust's assessment, will be published in due course.

◆ **HERE'S A NEW NAME TO CONJURE WITH:** Amy Coyte, most recently chief executive of the Bat Conservation Trust, has been appointed director of the BBC Wildlife Fund. It's a post newly created by the grant-making charity, set up in 2007 on the back of the BBC's Saving Planet Earth.

This special season of programmes from the natural history unit highlighted how the global landscape was changing and how conservation projects could help to provide a more secure future for animals and plants. Saving Planet Earth included a series of films by celebrities like Fiona Bruce, Edith Bowman and Phil Tufnell, who appealed for money to save a number of endangered species – crocodiles in Cambodia, tigers in India and orang-utans in Borneo.

Since then almost £2m has been raised, enabling the BBC Wildlife Fund to support 50 international and UK projects. The BBC itself has not donated any finance. As a publicly funded broadcaster that would be against the rules.

During a recent visit to Kenya, Ernestina Craig Hall from BBC Outreach saw the work of the Tusk Trust, which has received a grant of £19,371 from the fund. See her report on Page 14.

ARIEL ONLINE EDITOR'S UPDATE

A few dramas but the launch went well

HIGHS AND LOWS IN LAUNCH WEEK, but now we're back to business as usual.

Last week Ariel online's redesign finally launched. It was a challenging few days of technical problems, but as those were eventually resolved, we are now left with a website which complements the colour and depth of coverage in the paper – and with around five fresh news stories and features every day, there's plenty to see, even for the casual reader.

Traffic to the Ariel blog, which itself had a fresh lick of paint last week, has more than doubled and in our inaugural poll, more than 70 percent of you thought that the new look online was a big improvement on the old. I'd hoped for higher, but bearing the gremlins in mind, I'll accept that the launch was a little tempestuous.

More audio and video are on the way, and we're seeking more input from people around the BBC to make their voices heard (or comments read, stories

rated, ears wigged etc), so please make an effort to join the conversation, as many of you have done already.

We value feedback, so we'll be putting letters back into a prominent position and running regular 'just for fun' caption competitions – both suggestions from staff. If you've got an idea, please let me and editor Andy Walker know.

Looking forward to next week, there's going to be a very special competition, so keep your eyes firmly glued to Ariel.

Finally, I would like to single out a few people to thank for their hard work over the past nine months, without whom this project could have turned out very differently: In FM&T's Gateway team – Tiina Jaatinen, David Turner and Nikolai Sirenko; Siemens' TAM team; and TUI, the digital agency, charged with the web design and software engineering.

Alex Goodey

NEWS BITES

JANA BENNETT has launched an online directory of disabled actors, performers and musicians, a nationwide search for new disabled talent and announced that disabled actor David Proud will join the regular cast of *EastEnders*.

RADIO 1'S Big Weekend in Swindon was the most interactive to date, with 5.3m video requests received via the dedicated website, compared to one million last year. 1.1m people tuned to the red button coverage.

OWENNA GRIFFITHS is the new editor of CBBC's *Newsround*. She is currently an assistant editor on *Today*, in which role she accompanied John Humphrys to Basra and edited the US election coverage.

GRAHAM NORTON'S BBC Two chat show is transferring to a new 10.35pm slot on BBC One this autumn as part of plans to raise the presenter's profile.

CBBC CONTROLLER Anne Gilchrist is to join the in-house comedy department on attachment for a year as creative and business director. She will work across the UK, including with Comedy North in Manchester.

BBC WORLDWIDE has struck a deal to launch BBC Knowledge, BBC Lifestyle and CBeebies to 500,000 subscribers on StarHub TV, Singapore's largest pay tv platform.

BBC TWO'S *Beautiful People* has taken the comedy award at the Banff tv festival. BBC Three's *Blood Sweat and T-Shirts* was named best reality format and *Titus: The Gorilla King*, by Tigress Productions for the BBC and WNET, won the wildlife award.

BBC MANCHESTER hopes to have one of its two chillers back in action by Friday and the second shortly afterwards. Both are 35 years old and have been out of action, resulting in stifling conditions in Oxford Road.

LISTEN HERE! the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra's second 'big weekend' of free concerts and music-making events from its home in Glasgow City Halls, will be held between June 18-21.

BARRY MANILOW will make his only UK appearance this year at BBC Proms in the Park, broadcast live on Radio 2 from London's Hyde Park. He joins a line-up that includes mezzo-soprano Katherine Jenkins, also making her Proms in the Park debut.

POETRY PLEASE

Our poetry challenge runs until next Monday June 15. Inspired by the poetry season, we're looking for short poems broadly with a BBC theme. Haikus are proving popular but you can submit anything up to the length of a sonnet. Please send your poem to Clare Bolt. Prizes for the best poems, judged by Robert Seatter, poet and head of history.

Why now we love the rain

It took five years to get the system fixed but now every time it rains in W12 the water is being collected to flush the lavatories in BBC Worldwide's Media Centre offices. Pictured is the 'engine room' of the system in the basement where pipes lead to massive tanks with a total capacity of 222,000 litres. It is estimated that Worldwide will recycle 3m litres of rainwater a year instead of taking water from the mains supply.



PHOTOGRAPH: LAURA SCARROTT

Worldwide sets itself higher standards

by Laura Scarrott

As well as working to meet wider BBC targets Worldwide has its own environmental objectives.

One of these goals is to eliminate carbon emissions and last week on World Environmental Day, the company announced it would be offsetting its carbon emissions for the last financial year.

To do this Worldwide will be investing in a wind farm in Turkey and fuel efficient stoves in Ghana.

'Our priority is to reduce our carbon emissions as much as we possibly can but there are still some irreducible emissions that we've taken the decision to offset,' says Peter Phippen, Worldwide's board sponsor for environment and MD magazines.

The two projects have been part-funded by money raised from the Media Centre car park which costs drivers £108 a month to use. The car park fee is seen by Phippen as an incentive to get people cycling to work.

Throughout the day people were also invited to see the Media Centre's rainwater harvesting system which collects and filters rainwater from the roof of the building and uses it to flush the toilets.

Phippen says the water harvesting system is one of many environmental projects made possible by Worldwide's move out of Woodlands.

'There are facilities needed to bring environmental changes about,' he says. 'For instance we no longer have disposable cups. We wanted to do this at Woodlands but we didn't have washing-up facilities available.'

Other recent developments include 90 percent of all paper used in Worldwide's magazines being FSC certified, which means that it is sourced from sustainable forests.

Worldwide plans to continue looking into ways of reducing its environmental impact and is fitting dual flush systems into toilets in Garden House. It is estimated that this will save 800,000 litres of water a year.

David Halford, head of ethical policy, says increased interest in environmental issues has made it easier to implement changes. 'People have been incredibly receptive,' he says. 'There are expectations now that this is how companies should work.'

WORLDWIDE'S ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY OBJECTIVES:

- **Management:** Deliver world class environmental management
- **Materials:** Achieve environmentally-protective product stewardship
- **Waste:** Minimise waste and avoid disposal to landfill
- **Carbon:** Offset unavoidable emissions
- **Water:** Use water effectively

One year on, environmental impact is a little lighter

by Cathy Loughran

The good news is that waste levels are down, recycling is up and carbon emissions from BBC transport are on the slide.

The bad news is that efficiencies have only managed to shave 1.5 percent off energy consumption in the last year – as new activity including the work on digital switchover and the launch of BBC Arabic and BBC Persian put pressure on net use – and water consumption remained static.

A year after the BBC set itself ambitious green targets, including cutting energy use by 20 percent, Caroline Thomson, chief operating officer, admits it's a mixed picture.

'It's encouraging to see what we've managed to do on waste and recycling, through people changing their behaviour, and I'm cheered by gains like doing away with 3000 superfluous printers,' she told Ariel.

'But our energy targets in particular look tough. You soon realise how ungreen an activity broadcasting really is.'

That's why the year ahead will see more resources directed at finding ways to make the business of making and broadcasting programmes more energy efficient.

Charles Simmonds, a director in news, who led pilot work last year on environmentally sustainable production, will investigate wider use of **low energy lighting** in

studios where the saving wouldn't affect broadcast quality.

Simmonds says the impact of replacement – even with initial investment – could be enormous. Only five percent of energy used by tungsten lighting produces light, while it generates almost 40 times the carbon emissions of the low energy alternative. Over a number of years, tungsten costs seven times as much as LED spot-lighting to run, including outlay on air conditioning.

'I know there are creative concerns about low energy lighting and they wouldn't be bright enough or stable enough to light TC1, for instance, but they're perfectly ok for low ceiling studios like in news,' he told Ariel.

Wider use of **rechargeable batteries** is another priority, and Simmonds will work with the Energy Saving Trust to develop an industry standard carbon calculator for tv, radio and online production.

Spend-to-save investment schemes to **update building control systems** can't come soon enough for staff in older buildings who have been sweating in Manchester and chilling in London recently (Pages 2 and 11).

Replacement of **inefficient boilers** at White City alone will deliver energy savings of 25-30 percent when work is completed this autumn, says utilities manager Gavin Sturrock.

The recent reinstatement of

UPS AND DOWNS

MAKING PROGRESS

- **waste down by 11 percent (5 year target 25 percent)**
- **recycling up to 51 percent (target 75 percent)** and all office paper now recycled
- **transport carbon emissions down 6 percent (target 20 percent)**
- **flights between London and Manchester down 31 percent**
- **50 percent more video conferencing, saving 400,000 miles**
- **3000 printers disposed of**
- **automatic shut-down of all non-critical pcs**

COULD DO BETTER

- **energy use only down 1.5 percent (target 20 percent)**
- **no change in water consumption (target reduction 25 percent)**
- **building control systems in need of overhaul – investment in heating/cooling systems will deliver improvements this year**
- **bigger push needed on greener programme making**



the Media Centre's **rainwater harvesting** system will cut water use in the year ahead, although the planned move away from water dispensers and polystyrene cups to taps and mugs will in itself generate extra use.

London-Manchester flights have been cut by a third in 2008-09 but maintaining that trend will be another challenge in the run up and after the move to Salford, Thomson says.

'**Video conferencing** – encour-

aged for all the user groups related to BBC North – has increased, as you'd expect with improved facilities, but it's also about good habits. As ever, the impact of individuals' behaviour cannot be over-estimated.'

There will be fewer but bigger green campaigns in the coming year. And at risk of a blip in transport emissions, the 252 green champions will meet in London on BBC environment day, July 13, to exchange ideas and best practice.

Brown offer puts Sugar on the spot

The BBC remained in discussions with *The Apprentice* host Alan Sugar early this week over his new job as government enterprise tsar, following Conservative calls for him to stand down from BBC One's record breaking show.

Senior Conservatives, including shadow culture secretary Jeremy Hunt, have claimed that the Labour-supporting businessman's dual role would compromise the BBC's political independence if he returns for series six next year.

A BBC statement said: 'Sir Alan is in discussions with us about his plans and has assured us that he is determined not to do anything that would jeopardise his work at the BBC which is something he greatly values.'

Sugar, who has been nominated for a peerage and whose role as enterprise champion to small businesses is still being defined, told Andrew Marr at the weekend that he was to be an adviser but had not joined the government.

A Downing Street spokeswoman confirmed that Sugar's new job would be subject to approval by the appointments process in the House of Lords this week. Whether he would take the Labour party whip in the Lords would be a matter for him.

Sunday night's final of *The Apprentice*, in which restaurateur Yasmina Siadatan snatched the title from favourite Kate Walsh, averaged a record 9.8m audience, peaking at 10.4m as decision time approached. Almost 8m stayed for *The Apprentice: You're Hired*.

HARDER THAN IT LOOKS



Maybe it's not so easy to spot a winner after all, given the results of our *Apprentice* competition. Back in March, we asked you to pick a winner from the line-up of contestants with Rocky Andrews emerging as an overall favourite. But no one chose series winner, dark horse Yasmina Siadatan, proving you can't always go on appearances. Copies of the 'best bits' of *The Apprentice* will instead go to the five runners up.

World tv by phone

European iPhone users can now watch BBC World News live on mobiles thanks to a new piece of software. People in 16 European countries can download the application, which also works on the iPod Touch, from Apple's online shop.

The app enables users to view the international news channel over either 3G or Wi-Fi networks, with the latter giving the highest quality. Launched on June 4, it comes bundled with the BBC's mobile news website and was produced with online tv specialist Livestation.

Global news exec Jim Egan says: 'Having a news channel available live on the iPhone at this level of broadcast quality is a world first.'

Thomson's repeat honour



Today reporter Mike Thomson (right) and producer Edward Main won the radio category of the Amnesty media awards for their reports from the Central African Republic, broadcast last December. Last year Thomson won the same category for his coverage of Congo.

Another BBC winner at the Amnesty ceremony was Gaza correspondent Aleem Maqbool. He won the Gaby Redo award, given in memory of journalist Redo, who was killed while working in Iraq in 2003.

Two big events will answer a lot of questions

Should exec pay be frozen for longer?

IMAGINE THE not too distant future. ITV and C4 are enjoying economic recovery and better business. How do partnerships with the BBC work then – what's in it for us? And how good are the present partnership ideas anyway?

They're the kind of questions you might want answered.

What about pay? Is there a case for maintaining the freeze on executive salaries next year to allow others to catch up a bit?

It's the kind of question you might want answered.

And next Monday anyone can put questions like these to Mark Thompson and his fellow directors when they take part in a q&a session set by the staff of the BBC. The Big Debate will be



Campbell expects to give panel a hard time

streamed live on Gateway on June 15 in a format based on Question Time. Nicky Campbell will be in the chair and the panel will be made up of the director general plus Mark Byford, Jana Bennett, Tim Davie, Helen Boaden and Peter Salmon.

It's live in Studio TC6 at 3.30 for an hour and full details of how to join the audience or send in a question are on the internal comms website tinyurl.com/bigdebate or go to www.bbc.co.uk/atw

Global puts itself on show

JUST LOOK at the menu. Somali chicken, Indonesian noodles, Brazilian snacks, Vietnamese summer rolls and goodies from the Caribbean, Middle East and India.

They're putting on a show at Global News Live on June 17 when international journalism will be on display in a tent encampment at White City – and canteen cooks of various nationalities will be feeding the masses.

It's shaping up to be quite a day, with some programmes going out live from the site by the Media Centre and others recorded. Facing the *Hard Talk* interrogation is maverick film director Oliver Stone while the *World Debate* will examine the issue of the costs – and

hence the affordability – of international news reporting.

The Global News division (World Service, World News, BBC Monitoring and World Service Trust) now has an international audience of 238m and is broadcasting next week not only to the world but to the BBC as well. It has chosen to put on a demonstration of the best of its work throughout the day when anyone at the BBC can sign up to be either an audience member or a participant in workshops covering topics such as technology for journalism and political trends in Africa.

Full programme and how to book tinyurl.com/globallive

Euro poll marathon

It's the 'biggest marathon of all', reckons weary results editor Lizz Loxam, after the gruelling four day local and European election operation. 'Even bigger than the general election,' she says of the double vote which takes place once every five years.

Talking to Ariel on Monday morning from a basement bunker in Television Centre, where she's been holed up since Thursday when the British public went to the polls, she says it 'couldn't have gone better'.

By the time BBC tv coverage of the European elections across Britain and in 26 other EU countries came off air on Monday morning, all 72 GB MEPs had been reported, while full or partial results had been given from all 26 other Euro countries. Local council results had been declared in the previous days.

The fast work is testament to Loxam's network of stringers – one in every GB region and EU country – who telephoned the results to the team of 15 inputters in W12. Having verified the figures, they added them to a computer system which made them instantly available to every BBC outlet and which automatically fired tv graphics and online maps.

It may seem old fashioned, but Loxam says the human to human transmission of results is still the best way to avoid error. 'You can clarify, ask questions, double check – we'd rather be accurate than fast and wrong.'

She reflected on a smooth operation in which even the Greeks obliged, despite their rather quaint polling parameters. 'Last time they delayed the closure of their poll because it was a hot day and they'd all gone to the beach,' laughs Loxam.

Programme gets its hands dirty by putting today's science to the test

by Adam Bambury

A new series begins on BBC One next month in an attempt to rejuvenate the unglamorous image of popular science by way of four brainy presenters and plenty of entertaining demonstrations.

In *Bang Goes the Theory* the object will be to show science in action, from fireworks to water-powered jet packs. 'We take part in science,' says editor

Dermot Caulfield, 'and the idea is to encourage the audience so they want to take part in science too.'

Based in a Bedfordshire power station, the magazine show sees the presenters travelling the world investigating developments in science and technology and often returning to test out the theories they encounter.

The onscreen team is evolutionary biologist Yan Wong, engineer Jem Stansfield, biochemist Liz Bon-

nin and interested layman (and experienced presenter) Dallas Campbell.

'Every piece of content starts with a question, such as what is dark matter?', says Caulfield, 'and the team are on the search for the answers. Often that means us experimenting or building something to try and come up with that answer.'

While Caulfield acknowledges the role the former science strand *Tomorrow's World* has played in pioneering

popular science television in a magazine format, he believes the way people consume both science and television has moved on:

'Rather than simply be a reporting vehicle on what's new in the world of science, we want to roll up our sleeves, stick our hands in the dirty gubbins of the engine and find out why, what, or where science is happening,' he says.

But *Bang Goes the Theory* won't dis-

pense with theory entirely and go the way of Sky's *Brainiac* – all explosion and no explanation. For one thing it's co-produced by the Open University.

'I wanted it to have strong entertainment values and be a bloody good watch,' says Caulfield. 'But there is some learning in there. I've got three kids, and I want them to be inspired so next time they have double physics they'll pay a bit more attention.'

ORWELL uncovered

Details of how the writer ended his BBC career reflect the range of material to be found in the archives

'I AM TENDERING MY RESIGNATION because for some time I have been conscious that I was wasting my own time and the public's money on doing work that produced no result,' typed George Orwell in his resignation letter to the BBC, in September 1943.

The writer, whose real name was Eric Blair, was at that time a broadcaster for the BBC's eastern service. Two years later his satire *Animal Farm* was published followed by 1984 in which the interrogation Room 101 is thought to have been inspired by an office in Broadcasting House.

In resigning, you can't fault his honesty. 'You get a sense of him as an incredibly moral person – he was someone who couldn't tell a lie,' says Julie Rowbotham, who leads the editorial team in BBC Archives. 'Although reading the letters, I suspect it would be difficult to be sitting at the next desk to him.' Editorial lead Kate Wheeler nods. 'He wouldn't have shared his Hobnobs.'

Rowbotham's team has spent a year weaving stories out of the BBC's vast tv and radio archives and putting them online. The George Orwell collection, published last week, is one of their key pieces and they're hoping it will help raise awareness of the resource. 'People care about Orwell,' Wheeler says. 'When we realised that he was on the school syllabus we went to have a look at Caversham's written archive and dug out his staff file. You get a feeling for how he fitted into this big, unwieldy organisation.'

The team is releasing a new collection each week, following a year long trial, in which they opened the archive to 18,000 users. 'We discovered that people like to be given curated collections,' Rowbotham says. 'We try to tell people a story.'

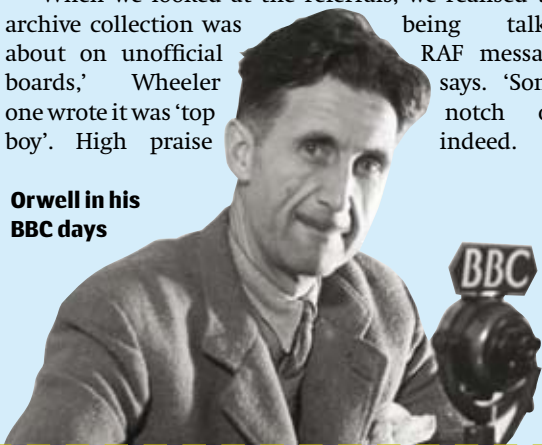
People using the archive can navigate through the material depending on what grabs them. 'One woman who came in to watch *Z-Cars* told us she ended up listening to an archive Radio 4 programme on Kashmir,' Rowbotham recalls. 'If people are interested in the Cuban missile crisis they can run the gamut of that experience, from the Cuban revolution to the Bay of Pigs. We've got files which were released by the KGB...'

They've moved from clips to streaming entire programmes on the site, where they will be a permanent resource. Behind the scenes, the team is working with multiplatform commissioners (who used archive material for the *White Season*) and keeping one eye on the tv schedules to see if they can support the output for BBC Two and Four.

For Andrew Marr's *Britain From Above* they found footage of a 1951 south coast air race – the first time the BBC tried to do aerial photography, by holding an enormous camera out of a freight plane.

'When we looked at the referrals, we realised the archive collection was being talked about on unofficial RAF message boards,' Wheeler says. 'Someone wrote it was 'top notch old boy'. High praise indeed.'

Orwell in his BBC days



CLOWNING AROUND

by Peggy Walker

IF YOU FIND YOURSELF in the company of a garish one handed clown, a pantomime dwarf with telekinetic tendencies, a midwife who thinks a doll is her child, or a serial-killer-obsessive with a penchant for murder mysteries, you, my poor unfortunate soul, are in *Psychoville*.

Unlike Royston Vasey, *Psychoville* isn't restricted to one geographical location; the typically outlandish characters are spread across England from Bristol to Ilkley. *Psychoville* appears to be, if you will, a state of mind.

The first episode submitted by Reece Shearsmith and Steve Pemberton was enough to convince executive producer Jon Plowman of its potential. 'It was pretty dark and very funny,' he remembers. 'We held the read through in a theatre and 250 people turned up, just from word of mouth. We should have sold tickets...'

Psychoville's world is enhanced by a large online presence, designed to take users on an 'interactive journey'. If you sign up to the website you'll receive an

A new 'comedy' written by one half of The League of Gentlemen team is a mix of 'sheer invention and original comic characters', says comedy commissioner Lucy Lumsden. But then she's not coulrophobic...

email after the first episode from a 'black gloved' figure asking you questions about characters in the show (to find the answers you need to take note of any website URLs you spot in the tv episode). Jon Aird, senior content producer, says the website is tied to the episodes in order to enhance the viewers' experience. 'If you to sign up you get the full *Psychoville* experience,' he says.

The series was shot around dis-used army barracks in Mill Hill, north London. 'We created a run

down mansion, a flat, a house, oh, and a courtroom of clowns,' says Plowman. Yes, all coulrophobia sufferers look away now. 'It's a dream sequence where we find out how the one handed clown character thinks he lost his hand, and involves 12 clowns of all shapes and sizes.' Producer Justin Davies nods. 'I'm sure that some people will have nightmares.'

This isn't comedy for the faint hearted – the fact it's shot in HD makes the face paint and grimaces even more intense. 'We chose a designer from the world of drama, because HD means a huge challenge for the design team,' Davies says. 'A show with all these worlds colliding needed that special treatment, but because it's comedy, we also had to do things on a shoestring.'

With the same writers, comparisons with *The League of Gentlemen* are expected. 'It was a fantastic brand,' agrees Plowman, who was also the executive producer on that. 'Fans will recognise some of the style. It's nightmarish and it's funny.'

Psychoville, BBC Two, June 18

CROSS COUNTY

The novice who's now pedalling confidently in pursuit of stories



KYLIE PENTLOW
VIDEO JOURNALIST/
PRESENTER,
EAST MIDLANDS

'You know that old phrase, it's just like riding a bike, well that didn't work for me... I couldn't ride a bike.

When I tell anyone they're amazed. I missed cycling lessons at school, then as a teenager avoided all chances of riding. So at the start of this year I decided to do something about it and I'll soon be off around the East Midlands on the search for stories with a biking angle. That includes a company in Leicester hoping to revive bike manufacture in the city and a *Top Gear* challenge where I'll race myself to work - by bike and by car.

National bike week became my target. I roped in director colleague Sean Riley - an accomplished rider - and the bike challenge began. Since February I have been learning how to ride. No stabilisers - just a technique that helps balance and confidence.

We've been working on routes which will take us across the region over the course of the week. We'll be on and off road and meeting various cycling enthusiasts on the way. It's also given us the chance to look at the role this region still plays in the manufacturing of bikes - contrary to popular belief, they don't all come from Taiwan.

The ride will be about 150 miles - nothing for an experienced rider, but for me it seems epic.

■ You can follow my journey on twitter.com/kyliebikeride and also see extra content, like how to buy the right bike helmet on bbc.co.uk/eastmidlandstoday

RE.CYCLING

Ariel saddles up for national bike week with your two wheel tales

Cycle commuters:
Peter Haywood,
Graeme Kay,
Sally Lovell and
Claire Rawles with
their fold-up bikes



IF YOUR JOURNEY TO WORK involves being either fed into an endless traffic jam or crammed in a metal box on the Central line, this is the month to take matters into your own hands.

June 13 to 21 is officially National Bike Week, and organisers are encouraging people to make their pedalling a regular habit. June, being summer, is of course a good time to get on the saddle; breezing past queues of stationary cars feels all the sweeter in the sun. But other incentives can also be convincing that it's two wheels good, four wheels bad.

Under Bike Week 2009's lycra banner, they're organising 'commuter challenges' around the country. If you live in Greater Manchester and cycle to work during the week, you'll be entered into a draw to win £100 of bike shop vouchers, plus there are time trials, picnics, and off-road excursions.

Not actually owning a bike is less of an excuse now that the BBC Cycle to Work scheme has opened its summer enrolment (it runs until the end of June). Since April last year, 623 people have bought a bike through the scheme. Participants get to repay the cost from their salary over the course of a year, though you do need to solemnly swear it will mainly be used for commuting.

The scheme - which exempts the buyer from Vat, income tax, and National Insurance on the purchase - can save around 45 percent and applies to equipment if the total spend is under £1000. If you travel on BBC business by bike you get a cool 20p per mile claimable expenses.

■ The Cycle to Work scheme is currently out to tender and the BBC is looking for people to pose as buyers to test potential providers. Email Anneke Heaton to volunteer.

PEOPLE WHO SAY THE BEST PLACE TO BE IS ON A BIKE

NEXT STOP CHILE

ALAN 'AJ' JAMES, LONDON

The head of media planning at MC&A in White City is putting his cycling skills to the test in a sponsored bike ride through Argentina and Chile. He'll be covering 342 miles from the foothills of the Andes in northern Patagonia to the Chilean Pacific coast early in 2010.

He hadn't 'really ridden' since his early teens and has enjoyed getting back in action but wonders 'if there is enough Vaseline in the world' to keep him cycling around 50 miles a day at heights of up to 1700 metres.

The week-long ride is in aid of Men-cap - a charity with personal relevance for AJ, who has a son with high functioning Asperger's Syndrome. To support him visit justgiving.com/alanjames63

RETURN PATH

ANDY KERSHAW, SHEFFIELD

I got back into cycling after a 25 year break and after losing my driving licence about four

years ago. I used to cycle all over Derbyshire: Castleton, Bakewell, Hathersage and Edale as a youngster. Now during the week I cycle to work and do some miles at the weekends.

I started with a Raleigh road bike and then invested (as a present to myself) in a Specialized Tricross which is a cross between a tourer and a road bike. Last year Mike Woodcock (Radio Sheffield's assistant editor) and I did the coast to coast over three days from Whitehaven to Newcastle, dipping front and back wheels into both the Irish and North Seas.

I love cycling now and normally do around 40-45 miles at the weekends. We've just come back from a four day tour of the Cotswolds triangle. It keeps me fit and, although I'm 51, I don't look a day over 49. I cycle with friends from Sheffield city council and colleagues from Radio Sheffield - Helen Bailey, Kate Linderholm and Steph Barnard as well as Mike Woodcock.

Andy Kershaw is a broadcast journalist (community reporter), Radio Sheffield

Andy Kershaw: back after a break

KINGSWOOD FINALE

OWING TO THE SALE of Kingswood Warren, the last Midsummer Madness cycle ride organised by Research and Development will take place on June 24. 'It's a pleasant ride through woodland, a vineyard and along ancient pathways,' says senior technologist Andrew Mason who is organising the event.

Anyone wanting to take part will need a mountain bike as the route also includes 'a bit of mud' and a hill. For more information, contact Andrew Mason.

WIN A BIKE AND CYCLING GEAR WORTH £800

To celebrate National Bike Week, Ariel is giving away a Dahon Vitesse folding bike and a 'bespoke' cycling jacket with a combined value of more than £800. The competition runs from June 13-21, entry details at Ariel online from Friday June 13.

COMMUNITY ON WHEELS

★ **CYCLISTS GATHER** at the Bike Shed forum on Gateway to compare routes, trade tips and discuss the issues of the day - from the maximum achievable speed for a bike (around 30mph for a regular road cyclist) to the number of lockers available in different parts of the BBC (which also varies). tinyurl.com/thebikeshed

★ **TRANSPORT FOR LONDON** has updated its cycling website, where Londoners can order free maps, get information about taking bikes on public transport, and use the cycle-specific journey planner. tinyurl.com/cyclelondon

★ **BROADCASTING HOUSE**-based environment ambassador and 'fanatical' cyclist Ben Toone has compiled a wealth of information for BBC bikers into an informative webpage: tinyurl.com/toone

week@work

Reporting wars

Keep out of the story, be prepared and try to stay alive says Ben Brown



The BBC news presenter is a former special correspondent and has covered wars in Chechnya, the Gulf and former Yugoslavia

1 Work as a team Don't rush into a situation. If one of you is keen to race along a road, others should think of the potential dangers. Remember Afghanistan: when the Taliban were toppled, we rushed to witness their surrender. But what if it was a trap? Ensure your team know where you are. Don't go wandering off.

2 Take the right equipment Mobile, maps, first-aid kit – I knew a producer who bled to death for lack of basic bandages. A hostile envi-

ronment such as Chechnya in the mid 1990s was like Stalingrad – you need flak jacket and helmet. In intense urban warfare with close house to house fighting, there are no rules.

3 Make sure you know where the front line is Driving around in no man's land can be extremely dangerous. You have to be with one side or the other. In a formal war that means being embedded. If it's more chaotic, you hang out with the rebels or the army. Be clear which side you're with.

4 Remain a detached observer Never give anyone a lift. Not refugees and definitely not men in uniform because that identifies you as a combatant. You're there as a reporter, you're not there to help victims, which makes you feel helpless and a bit shitty.

5 Stay alive Younger reporters take more risks, and maturity keeps you alive. Listen to experienced people. The famous slogan is: no story is worth a life. But then, war isn't a perfect science. People do die.

◆ MEANWHILE... BEN BROWN'S NEW NOVEL EXPLORES THE ISSUES FACING



Sandstealers is about five war correspondents working in Iraq. One of the characters, Danny, heads off to do an interview with an insurgent leader but is ambushed and killed. Questions are then asked about whether any of his four 'friends' could have prevented his death.

A lot has been written about war but not about the journalists who report on them.

I thought about writing my memoirs but decided that the issues facing modern war correspondents could be more honestly looked at in fiction.

Sandstealers is set against the backdrop of places I've been to and I've drawn on the characteristics of some of the people I've met but the book has taken on a life of its own.

When I was reporting there would be a clique of travelling reporters. Although there was a sense of camaraderie there was also jealousy and rivalry.

Sandstealers by Ben Brown, Harper Press, £6.99

AI SCORES

MEDIC ONE – Life and Death in London jumped six points ahead of the average factual AI, scoring 87 last Monday night on BBC One.

It had an average audience of 2.4m and a share of 18 percent.

The one-off documentary followed London's elite trauma team, Medic One, as they attended incidents across the capital. Viewers said they enjoyed the subject matter adding that it was thought-provoking and a high quality programme. Some

people however asked why it was broadcast at 10.35pm, saying they would have preferred it to have been shown earlier. Last Tuesday's Crimewatch also scored an AI of 87, its highest AI of the year so far. The episode, which coincided with the programme's 25th birthday, featured the high-profile disappearance of Claudia Lawrence.

To find out what audiences are saying about BBC programmes visit audienc.esportal.com.

LEARNING CURVE

THE MAN IN CHARGE of not one but two BBC radio stations has found some time to offer people an insight into his career.

One of training and development's 'never stop learning' events Bob Shennan, controller of Radio 2 and 6 Music, will talk about his previous roles at Radio 5 Live and Channel 4 and the challenges that lie ahead. There will also be an opportunity to ask Shennan questions.

The event will be held at Broadcasting House on June 25 from 1-2pm.

For more information and to book a place visit tinyurl.com/bobshennan

COMING UP

◆ Delia Smith is close to signing a deal that will see her return to BBC Two. A planned 5x30 series called **40 Years of Delia** will involve the chef recreating her famous dishes. Commissioned by Janice Hadlow, channel controller, and Jo Ball, commissioning editor, it will be made by Scarlet Television and exec produced by Lisa Edwards. A tx date is yet to be confirmed.

◆ Richard Klein, controller BBC Four, and Lucy Lumsden, controller comedy commissioning, have commissioned a second series of **We Need Answers** for the channel. The show, in which the public asks celebrities questions, will return later this year. It will be produced in-house and exec produced by Jo Sargent.

◆ BBC One's Saturday morning cookery show **Saturday Kitchen Live** has been re-commissioned for a further three series by controller of daytime Liam Keelan. The first of the new series will tx later this year and will be made by Cactus TV. It will be exec produced by Carla-Maria Lawson.

BBC IN ACTION



◆ **A FREE INDIAN HEAD MASSAGE** was one of the treats on offer for listeners to the BBC Berkshire's breakfast show. Reporter Maggie Philbin (above) was in the village of Thatcham, one of five locations the station visited last week,

when its teams set off on a cross-county tour, aboard the borrowed English regions' Outreach bus. Inside, listeners could take part in taster sessions in adult learning, cookery workshops and Spanish lessons – all courses they can sign up

to in the local area. 'It was an excuse to visit places that we don't often get out to,' says assistant editor Duncan McLarty. 'We got lots of positive feedback and stumbled across some good stories through meeting residents.'

The bus will return to BBC Berkshire in September for further excursions. But first it's off to BBC Kent where radio teams there will use it later this month.

Follow the story at bbc.co.uk/berkshire

CHANGING PLACES

Pacific Quay production editor **JOHN MCKENZIE** (pictured below centre) leaves the BBC after 33 years... Bristol based news editor **CHARLOTTE CALLEN** begins a 12 month attachment on the *Politics Show*... **NICK GIRDLER** returns to Radio Solent to present the Sunday morning show. He left Solent three years ago after working at the station for 35 years... **RAHUL SHRIVASTAVA** becomes duty editor, sport interactive, English regions based at the regional hub in Birmingham... **DARREN WATERS**, assistant technology editor in news, leaves the BBC after ten years.



ONE MILE RADIUS

PLACES YOU CAN SEE IN YOUR LUNCH BREAK

◆ **MORAG BAIN, PRODUCER, DUMBARTON** Dumbarton Studios, home to BBC Scotland's *River City*, *Hope Springs* and *PAs*, isn't the most salubrious of places. Being the town where the Cutty Sark was built is its biggest claim to fame. We are, however, on the doorstep of some of the most beautiful scenery so I would recommend a trip by train (a five minute walk away and well within the one mile radius) to Balloch which sits at the bottom end of Loch Lomond (pictured). There I would go on a boat trip round the Loch, shop at the Lomond Shores Centre – posh shop Jenners of Edinburgh has a branch there – or



scoot a few miles up the loch to Luss where Scottish soap *Take The High Road* was filmed. There you can enjoy the most delicious lunch at the fabulous tearoom, The Coach House, which serves homemade soups, sandwiches the size of a dinner plate and wonderful home baking (their carrot cake is out of this world).

QUICK FIX

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH PROVIDES TIPS FOR IMPROVING AND MAINTAINING HEALTH AT WORK

YOUR DESK CHAIR

◆ You should set the height of the chair so that your arms fall into a comfortable right angle to use



the keyboard. If a change in seat height leaves your feet dangling, you need a footrest.

◆ The seat pad should support your thigh along its length but you should be able to slip two or three fingers between the end of the seat pad and the back

of your knee. There is a slide mechanism on some of the chairs to allow you to adjust this.

◆ The back of the chair should be upright without pushing you forward, and can be locked or free floating. The height of the backrest can be adjusted so that the fullest part of the backrest fits into the small of your back. This will ensure that it supports the lower curve of your spine.

blogbites

Monday

An interview with President Obama

On the eve of the big speech to the Muslim world on Thursday, the White House is plainly serious about outreach – that is the main message to take away from the interview I have just conducted with Barack Obama in the White House library. They chose to speak to us now because they want to reach the parts of the world the BBC reaches. The nicest sight in our afternoon in the White House – Sasha and Malia coming home from school. Jolly laughter as in any happy household – though men with wires in their ears prevented us crossing their path as they skipped down the corridor. We could do with those fellows chez nous...

Justin Webb, North America editor

bbc.co.uk/blogs/thereporters/justinwebb/

Tuesday

Bringing old favourites to life

A while back I posted about why we use illustrations on iPlayer for key radio programming. In short we want to avoid galleries of largely unknown faces which don't really hook the listener as much as a well-executed illustration. When we come to illustrate dramas which feature popular and loved characters we are posed with a dilemma – we want to give depth and feeling to the drama without personifying the character too much. The mind's eye is a wonderful thing which conjures up its own distinct image of how Arthur Dent in the *Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* or Ruth Archer from *The Archers* look – it's not the job of the illustration to give a face to the characters, its job is to nod to their characteristics.

Ashley Stewart-Noble, senior content producer

bbc.co.uk/blogs/bbcinternet/

Wednesday

Hey look at the little fella

Most babies we know look like Winston Churchill but Noah has now moved on to the William Hague stage. As for peeps like William Hague who look older when they are younger, well then they never seem to age after that. Then there are those people who age gradually and all of a sudden the handbrake goes on and time stands still – Angela Rippon has looked like she does for the last half a century, Michael Palin – always looked exactly the same and I swear Hugh Scully is going backwards. Good for him.

Chris Evans, Radio 2 presenter

bbc.co.uk/blogs/chrisevans/

Thursday

Trying to get into Tiananmen Square

01:08 UTC, 4 JUNE: I have just come back from a tour of the city – on the 20th anniversary of the moment that tanks were sent in to end student protests. The square was sealed off and police stopped us from filming even from a street across the road. From our own experiences and from what we've heard the authorities in Beijing have managed to prevent any public commemoration. 14:37 UTC, 4 June: Tried to get into Tiananmen Square. But the police stopped us. Plain clothes officers used a novel technique to stop us from filming – the umbrella treatment...

James Reynolds, Beijing correspondent

bbc.co.uk/blogs/thereporters/jamesreynolds/

Friday

Friday's quote of the day

'I daresay my mind would wander over a range of animals remarkable for the extravagance of their reproductive techniques' – David Attenborough, when asked which animal he would like to be.

Magazine Monitor

bbc.co.uk/blogs/magazinemonitor/

arielview



ANDREW HARVEY

What we need to know on pay

THE BBC SHOULD NOT be swayed by the shrill squawks of newspaper columnists and MPs on the public accounts committee who are demanding the salaries of presenters (in this case specifically radio) should be published. Commentators like Stephen Glover and Jon Gaunt in the Mail and the Sun flick the switch of indignation but does anyone think they will reveal what they are paid?

Ah, the BBC is different, they will tell you, because it operates on public money forcibly collected. These days there is transparency at board level where we can see the rewards for becoming a director are considerable. There's also a freeze on top salaries at the moment and who's to say whether that might be extended beyond August next year?

But in a society where individuals have the right to negotiate the best deal they can from an employer it remains an important principle of good faith that those details remain confidential from the employer's side – and that applies to BBC top talent, newspaper editors, lawyers, IT specialists or anyone else.

It's when you look beyond the shouty headlines that greeted the PAC report last week on the efficiency of radio production at the BBC that there's interesting financial detail. For instance, the cost of a typical hour of music broadcast on Radio 2 at £1486 is half as much again as it costs on Radio 1. The cost of an hour of *Wake Up to Wogan* on Radio 2 is double the cost of the most expensive breakfast show on commercial radio.

The MPs say these disparities are 'largely because of payments to presenters'. They go on to calculate that for drivetime and breakfast shows the BBC is spending three quarters of its staff costs on the presenters.

Clearly, the broadcasters are the stars and the people most responsible for the popularity of a programme. They deserve to be paid according to their success. But the BBC is faced with making savings of 3 percent a year to March 2013, which in the case of radio means £69m has to be taken out of budgets.

When rates of presenter pay at the BBC have been shown to be considerably higher than the commercial radio equivalents (the PAC insists the BBC is paying 'more than the market price'), there is scope for significant reductions as part of any cost cutting. We don't need to know precisely what presenters are paid but we do need to know that what they get is not wildly out of step with those around them. It's apparent that in radio, where staffing is already tight, savings comfortably in excess of 3 percent can be trimmed off the fat without fear of reducing output quality or losing the big names.

We are told that managers have already warned top talent in radio and television that their rates will come down and that's quite right. It would be intolerable for cuts to be inflicted on people who are needed to put the flagship programmes on air if the presenters were insulated from the economic chill.

Andrew Harvey is editor of Ariel

How 'information doers' have rewritten the rules in a crisis

From the G20 protests to Hurricane Katrina, user generated content is forcing people in power to rethink their response to the media, says Nik Gowing

THE CHANCE 41 SECONDS

of video taken by an investment banker during April's G20 protests dramatically swung public perceptions of police handling.

The film swiftly exposed apparently incomplete police explanations of how and why Ian Tomlinson died. It also forced a level of instant accountability from the police about their orders, behaviour and operation.

This was the latest confirmation of a sharp, but little recognised trend with enormous implications for the credibility of institutions of state and corporate power.

In a moment of major, unexpected crisis those institutions – whether political, governmental, military or commercial – face a new, acute vulnerability of both their influence and effectiveness. They experience policy fragility and brittleness because of the profound impact of the proliferating and ubiquitous breed, not of 'citizen reporters' but of what I label 'information doers'.

As all of us in the BBC multimedia news environment now take for granted, these hundreds of millions of people around the world whose mobiles and digital cameras are the new electronic bearers of witness. Daily, user generated content fuels our news coverage with instant images of an unfolding crisis. We and other media organisations have the systems to handle and validate the material.

New democracy in action

Yet remarkably, most major institutions of power, and those working for them, still don't appreciate the full scale and implications of this new trend in the real-time media landscape. Their internal systems continue to be framed by largely traditional mindsets and assumptions about the media.

They fail to get how exponential changes in technology are redefining, broadening and fragmenting the media matrix. This is why the profound new impact on their credibility in a moment of crisis continues to be a shock.

The new surge of civilian information by way of UGC material sent to us, along with blogs, and material of social media sites like YouTube, Twitter and Face



Video evidence: police approach Ian Tomlinson at the G20 protest

Book is having an asymmetric, negative impact on those structures of power. It subverts their effectiveness, instantly moulds public perceptions and calls into question institutional assumptions that as organs of state or corporate power they function efficiently and will command public confidence.

The implications are two-fold. First, this new technical reality has dramatically shortened the news and information cycle from a few hours to a few minutes.

Second, those vast numbers of new 'information doers' have swiftly modified and broadened the assumed definitions of who the media really are, in a crisis. The new ubiquitous transparency they create sheds light where it is often still assumed officially there will be darkness.

In a two year study for the Reuters Institute, I analysed a host of examples from Burma, to China during the Tibet and earthquake crises, Hurricane Katrina, 7/7 and the De Menezes shooting in London, plus military incidents in Iraq and Afghanistan.

It included brainstormings and interviews with senior official figures who have been pitchforked into handling many of these sudden crises. Together and individually they confirmed there is a new democratisation of policy-making in crises

which a former senior minister described as almost 'subversive'. Increasingly routinely, a cheap, 'go-anywhere' camera or mobile challenges the credibility of the massive human and financial resources of a government or corporation.

One very senior official confirmed: 'We are in trouble.

Those working in government are living in a different age.' Another said: 'Officials are living on a different planet if they think they control the levers of policy now and in the future' during a major crisis.

Extraordinarily, despite the new realities, I discovered how official systems remain structured to assume a six to 12 hour response time frame, not the six to 12 minutes demanded by these new realities. The long-held conventional wisdom of a gulf in time and quality between the news that signals an event and the whole truth eventually emerging is fast being eliminated.

My study is called *Skyful of Lies and Black Swans*. 'Skyful of lies' is the way the Burmese junta dismissed the extraordinary flow of digital reporting and imagery that confirmed the street protests in Rangoon in September 2007. And Black Swans? The description by trader-turned-author Nassim Nicholas Taleb of why the financial system failed: the impact of unexpected events, as rare as black swans.

The world we live in is vastly different to the world we think we live in. It is the same for policy makers with the new media realities.

Frequently just one 'information doer' like the G20 investment banker, will swiftly expose the stark reality of unexpected Black Swan crisis events. These are the moments of acute tension which are so improbable that few in positions of

responsibility will have even considered them a possibility to prepare for.

One senior government crisis manager did claim systems and reactions in his department are now 'shit hot'. But overall, institutional assumptions of commanding the information high ground in a crisis remain from a different era. The instant scrutiny leaves reputations more vulnerable than ever and does so with breathtaking speed.

Pace of events and disclosure

My study is the latest since I started monitoring this dynamic at Harvard 15 years ago. I thought I would be sticking my neck out, and I expected it to be cut off by a barrage of angry voices from officialdom, resenting my intrusion. Reactions have been the opposite.

One senior official emailed me: 'Spot on, I'm sorry to say.' Lawrence Freedman, professor of war studies at Kings College, wrote: 'This [study] should be mandated reading for anyone who might have to deal with a major crisis and still believes that they will be able to control the pace of events and disclosure of information.'

Based on reaction to a presentation of my findings last week to crisis managers in official positions, I have for the first time a degree of cautious optimism that my message about the new media might get a hearing, and even be acted upon.



Nik Gowing is BBC World News anchor and visiting fellow at the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism.

Full report at tinyurl.com/reuterspublications

This is the page that everybody reads. Please email claire.barrett@bbc.co.uk
You can also contribute to the mail page directly from the Ariel Online home page

Ring any bells?

In the olden days, I remember, phones were terrible things. To place a call, one was required to lift the handset and dial the number.

The new Voip phones thankfully come with a double-lock on my decision making. Firstly, I pick up the handset; then I dial the number; finally I am required to press 'ok' to approve my consciously-taken decision to make a call.

If I'm unsure what I'm doing, (an everyday occurrence), Siemens have provided a five-second cooling-off period before actually making the connection. I typically use those five seconds to contemplate the full existential gravity of speaking to someone I cannot actually see. On other occasions I muse whether the BBC can ever do anything the simple way, when a more complicated option is available.

Dominic Casciani
home affairs, TVC

Call for help

In what way is it logical to install new phones, linked to the computer system, so that if the network crashes, so do the phones?

Yesterday in Western House, we suffered a frustrating few hours when the network went down – our only means of contact for help or technical support being our private mobiles. Ridiculous!

Katharine Cracknell
bj, radio newsroom

Drive carefully

Today, one of my colleagues discovered they were able to access my personal files through the c:\ on their machine, which I've logged into on occasion. I always thought that personal files and folders, saved on to the F:\ were protected, but the technology service advisor informed me that, if you were to go looking

Give us some support in the 24/7 culture

An interesting letters page (June 2), juxtaposing Richard Walsh's letter from 2002 with letters from Becky Branford, Bryan Harris and Ian Shoesmith.

What all these correspondents have failed to realise is that those of us who do not work the standard 0930 to 1730, Monday to Friday are obviously seen by the senior management as being of no importance; to be (at best) tolerated or (as has happened) sold off. This is, of course, happening at a time when the BBC's managers, from Mark Thompson down, bang on about 24/7 at the drop of a hat.

You want us to work these hours? Fine, now give

us the same facilities as our colleagues who do NOT work shifts.

Finally, for those bemused by the lack of availability of out-of-hours sustenance, the watchword here is 'privatisation'. (These people are running a business, and what they care about is profit. Check out the other letter about licence fee collection for its reference to 'rude and unfriendly communication'; squares up well to another firm who won't even give their employees a chair to sit on during a long day).

Face it, people. Privatisation is a vile thing.

Simon Calkin
news production facilities

for such things, you may well come across someone's personal files through the C:\ of your machine if they've logged on to it in the past.

If you've got job applications, appraisal documents or any other personal data saved on your F:\ and you use another machine, it's apparently possible that the next person logging on to that machine will be able to access them. I find this a shocking security breach, but you learn something every day.

Andrew Dickson
researcher, FM&T internet group

Nick Leach, principal service manager, Siemens IT Solutions and Services Ltd, replies: Documents stored within the 'F: drive' are on a central computer and are secure. Only the owner and a controlled group of technical support staff can access them, and technical support staff are prohibited from doing so without your permission.

When you log on to a computer some files are copied to the machine from a location other than your F: drive and remain after you log off. These files are all required to make the

computer look and feel the same no matter where you log in. They include things such as your internet shortcuts and anything on your Windows desktop screen.

We believe that it is these desktop items and favourites that your colleague was able to see. Not everyone in the BBC can do this, again there is a controlled group of people who have been given 'elevated' access to computers at the request of the BBC and based upon a need to do so in order to do their job. Anyone approved for this access is briefed on, and signs up to, conditions and restrictions as to what they are allowed to do with it.

Gap years

I read with interest (Ariel, June 2) that the flat rise of £450 that the staff are being offered is designed to 'bridge the gap between the highest earners and those at the bottom of the scale'.

Well, my earnings at band 7 are not at the bottom of the scale. However, it is going to take around 1700 years for my pay to reach that of the

director general if he stays on a pay freeze.

Richard Moss
BBC news

Rowdy relic

I was looking forward to watching David Attenborough's new documentary. A revolutionary fossil called Ida told a fascinating story.

Nice facts: shame about the music. Haven't the producers heard of light and shade? During numerous talking head interviews there was the unnecessary music again. It spoilt the unfolding narrative, and it drove me nuts. I wanted to turn it off.

Please, no more wall to wall music. Fifty odd minutes is too much. The viewers hate this, so why do we continue to do it?

Greg Wade
vj, Plymouth

Mild-geese chase

'Please consider the environment before printing this email – help save our planet.' So we are told in all

our internal communications, and it makes sense. But why isn't the same care applied to other, greater sources of waste and environmental damage? Here are some examples.

Our team, Radio 3 interactive, works in Henry Wood House. Every morning we find the lights on our floor turned on, even during the summer, when it has been light since 4am.

We've pointed out the problem several times and nothing ever happens.

During the winter the heating is on high. We have asked for it to be lowered. Sometimes it is for a few days and then we are back to roasting. So we keep the windows open in winter.

When the good season comes the air conditioning makes it freezing and we have to ask for it to be switched off. We succeed for a few days and then it's back to freezing and we have to wear jumpers and keep the windows open to let some warmth in.

I appreciate we are at the mercy of an old, and inflexible, heating system, but couldn't we avoid extremes of temperature? It's unhealthy and against environmental commonsense. It must also cost the BBC a lot of money.

Several people have complained about these issues over the last two years or so. It seems odd that no one takes any notice.

Roberto Battista
Radio 3 interactive

Yogesh Chauhan, environment team, replies: Thank you for highlighting these concerns. Unfortunately, no records for calls logged via 047 – which allows problems to be tracked – in relation to heating, air conditioning or lighting issues at Henry Wood House can be found, so BBC Workplace cannot respond fully. We will continue to work with colleagues in facilities management for HWH to make sure any issues are addressed appropriately. Security staff do turn off lights in the evening, but as the building is cleaned in the early morning, lights can be turned on again for safety reasons.

OBITUARY

JOHN SMART

When the news about the sudden and premature death of John Smart, studio and scenic operations manager, reached BBC Scotland, the feeling of shock and sadness was palpable.

Many messages of condolence have also been received from suppliers, contractors and producers – John will be hugely missed by a large number of us working across the creative industry in Scotland and beyond.

I got to know him initially when he worked in the house and office services team, where at one point he was house foreman (only the BBC could think of that title). He progressed to scenic services both in Glasgow and TVC, working up to supervisor then scenic operations manager.

The studios at Pacific Quay were



John's pride and joy. He ruled with a rod of iron and woe betide anyone who tried to do anything he did not approve of. Worse still if you turned up in the studio with open-toed shoes, or a tea or coffee in hand.

Not that he was inflexible. If he saw the need for doing something, he'd interpret the health and safety guidelines to achieve the necessary outcome. He always wanted the best possible product from 'his' studios.

He took his work in their development seriously, and the audiences in Scotland have John to thank for the best studio seating in the UK (well, certainly north of Watford).

His colleague Susan Allman tells of his determination to procure the hover-seating, which he pursued from Wiltshire to Belgium.

Socially, John was a great lover of karaoke and was always happy to take the mic. No one was safe if HIS songs were being played. At one wrap party, John took the mic from a dazed Ewan McGregor who was starting to sing Mac the Knife, telling the actor it was HIS song. Typical John! One of the UK's biggest stars knocked to the side in an instant by the BBC Club's karaoke champion.

John was also proud of the fact that he was the only person in PQ to have an office. He was often heard to say 'even Ken MacQuarrie disnae

have an office' and he was right.

Legacy is an overused word these days, but John has left behind a legacy which will affect the way programmes are made in BBC Scotland's studios for many years to come.

John was only half of the BBC story, however. Catherine is also a long serving colleague and, latterly, a member of staff with Johnson Controls, and a key member of our facilities management team. They were to be married in Zante in September.

However much we like our work, it's the people you meet and work with on a daily basis that really matter and colleagues like John are special and leave a lasting impression. That was illustrated at his funeral when hundreds of workmates and colleagues, from all levels, past and present, paid their warmest respects to a man we will all miss dearly.

Donald-Iain Brown

FROM THE VAULT

June, 1987

Re Ariel item (June 3): 'Scotland spreads the net – Scotland is to open an unmanned studio in Stanraer before the end of the year.'

**As I was going on the air
I met a man who wasn't there
He wasn't there again today
I wonder...**

Can I put in to claim his pay?

... with apologies to A.A. Milne

BW Campbell
Brookmans Park

PROGRAMME MAKING

Series Editor, Songs of Praise
Manchester
10D/Ref: 12310109
E C 18-Jun-09 A 12 months

Senior Presentation Producer, BBC Radio 7
London
Broadcasting House
8D/Ref: 11866109
C 22-Jun-09 A 12 months

Assistant Producer, Newsround
London
TV Centre
7P/Ref: 12309609
C 22-Jun-09 A 06 months

Studio Assistant Producer - The One Show
London
7P/Ref: 11977209
C 16-Jun-09 A 09 months

Media Coordinator, Persian Television
London
Bush House
5D/Ref: 12091209
C 14-Jun-09

Project Assistant, Ulster Scots
Belfast - Broadcasting House
4D/Ref: 12328709
E C 18-Jun-09

Principal Trumpet, BBC Symphony Orchestra
London
N/A/Ref: 11488709
E C 26-Jun-09

JOURNALISM

Assistant Editor, BBC World News
London
TV Centre
10S/Ref: 12300209
C 22-Jun-09

Editor, Multi Media Newsgathering
Cardiff
10D/Ref: 12298109
E C 15-Jun-09

Creative Director of UX & Design for Sport
London
Media Centre
9D/Ref: 12081609
E C 18-Jun-09 A 2 years

Senior Broadcast Journalist, South & West Bureau
Bristol
8/9D/Ref: 12279109
C 22-Jun-09 A 06 months

SBJ, Live Political Programmes
London
Millbank
8/9D/Ref: 12275809
C 22-Jun-09 A 06 months

Senior Broadcast Journalist, BBC Breakfast
London
TV Centre
8/9D/Ref: 10606709
C 22-Jun-09 A 06 months

Producer, 'World Football', World Service Sport
London
TV Centre
8D/Ref: 12228409
C 22-Jun-09

Broadcast Journalists, BBC Radio Derby
Derby
5/7D/Ref: 12140109
E C 19-Jun-09 A 09 months

Breakfast Presenter (Broadcast Journalist)
Bristol
5/7D/Ref: 11911909
E C 17-Jun-09 A 12 months

BUSINESS SUPPORT AND MANAGEMENT

Senior Investment and Business Manager
London
TV Centre
11D/Ref: 10820609
E C 10-Jun-09

Country Director, Sudan
Sudan
10D/Ref: 12334909
E C 21-Jun-09 A 12 months

Legal & Business Affairs Manager
London
Henry Wood House
9D/Ref: 12308509
C 28-Jun-09

Continuous Improvement Consultant
Cardiff
9D/Ref: 12058309
C 14-Jun-09 A 06 months

Senior Health & Safety Risk Manager, BBC Workplace
London
White City
9D/Ref: 11740409
E C 22-Jun-09

Projects Manager
London
Bush House
9D/Ref: 11028209
E C 18-Jun-09 A 08 months

Media Planner
London
White City
8D/Ref: 12256909
C 16-Jun-09

HR Manager, News
London
TV Centre
7D/Ref: 12063809
C 21-Jun-09 A 09 months

Correspondence Advisor, Executive Unit
London
White City
7D/Ref: 11539609
C 22-Jun-09 A 11 months

Chinese Audience Advisor, BBC World Service
London
Bush House
5D/Ref: 11970101
E C 17-Jun-09

Contract Entry Administrator, BBC Worldwide
London
Media Centre
4W/Ref: 12305709
E C 11-Jun-09

Radio Planning Assistant
Glasgow
4H/Ref: 12089109
C 11-Jun-09 A 09 months

Correspondence Assistant, Blue Peter
London
TV Centre
3P/Ref: 11891209
C 22-Jun-09 A 10 months

Lawyer - Project TOO
London
White City
Under Review/Ref: 12319409
C 15-Jun-09 A 15 months

NEW MEDIA

Creative Director/Team Lead
London
TV Centre
9D/Ref: 12145109
C 16-Jun-09 A 06 months

Senior Software Engineer
London
Broadcast Centre Media Village
8D/Ref: 12276609
E C 19-Jun-09

Senior Client Side Developer (Web Developer)
London
Broadcast Centre Media Village
8D/Ref: 10840209
E C 27-Jun-09

Software Engineer (Java)
London
Broadcast Centre Media Village
7D/Ref: 11949509
E C 15-Jun-09

Content Producer, Visualisation
London
Henry Wood House
7D/Ref: 11414009
C 15-Jun-09 A 06 months

Client Side Developer (Web Developer)
London
Broadcast Centre Media Village
7D/Ref: 10974809
E C 29-Jun-09

Editorial Assistant Food
London
Media Centre
3D/Ref: 12284209
C 18-Jun-09 A 10 months

TECHNOLOGY

Head of Product Management, FM&T, A&M&M
London
Henry Wood House
11D/Ref: 11917709
C 15-Jun-09

Technology Development Manager
Cardiff
10D/Ref: 12198409
C 19-Jun-09

Programme Manager, Central Editorial, FM&T
London
Broadcast Centre Media Village
9D/Ref: 12341309
C 14-Jun-09 A 12 months

Multi Media Archivist, Information & Archives
London
Broadcast Centre Media Village
9D/Ref: 12208609
C 16-Jun-09 A 06 months

IT Project Manager, BBC Monitoring
Reading
8D/Ref: 6054109
E C 24-Jun-09

Technical Project Manager
London
Media Centre
8D/Ref: 12220409
E C 21-Jun-09 A 06 months

Senior Client Side Developer
London
Henry Wood House
8D/Ref: 12090809
C 18-Jun-09

Senior Operations Engineer
London
Broadcast Centre Media Village
8D/Ref: 11928609
C 14-Jun-09

Project Assistant
London
Henry Wood House
6D/Ref: 12091409
C 15-Jun-09

Assistant to CIO
London
Broadcast Centre Media Village
4D/Ref: 12333809
C 18-Jun-09 A 09 months

Head of Platforms
London
Broadcast Centre Media Village
Under Review/Ref: 11938109
C 14-Jun-09

Network Engineer
London
Broadcast Centre Media Village
Under Review/Ref: 11929909
C 14-Jun-09

Senior Systems Administrator
London
Broadcast Centre Media Village
Under Review/Ref: 11928809
C 14-Jun-09

Technical Architect
London
Broadcast Centre Media Village
Under Review/Ref: 11928709
C 14-Jun-09

BBC WORLDWIDE

Chief Technology Officer, BBC Worldwide
London
Media Centre
DDIR/Ref: 12250609
C 17-Jun-09

Project Analyst
London
Media Centre
2W/Ref: 12335109
E C 21-Jun-09 A 12 months

Credit Controller (Part-time)
London
Media Centre
4D/Ref: 11902909
E C 15-Jun-09 A 03 months

PA to Company Secretary and Team Assistant
London
Media Centre
4W/Ref: 12307709
C 14-Jun-09

See Attachment

Call of the wild

Ernestina Craig Hall went from London for two weeks in Nairobi

YOU'VE GOT TO BE IN IT TO WIN IT, I thought, as I filled in the short application form – I've had to answer more questions to order a mouse mat at the BBC before. But I soon forgot about the placement, presuming that my chances of getting it were slim. Two weeks later when an email popped up in my inbox offering me a placement with BBC Monitoring in Nairobi there were several gasps, yelps and a moment of panic, before I started making plans for a departure date only three weeks away.

Part of my job at BBC Outreach is about communicating to the outside world that the BBC is more than a broadcaster. As I spend a lot of time telling people how the BBC 'reflects the world to the UK and the UK to the world' the placement seemed like a good fit. I was also keen to find out more about other BBC work in Africa, so with help from the BBC Monitoring team I arranged meetings with the World

Service Trust, local schools and an organisation that has received funding from the BBC Wildlife Fund.

While I was in Nairobi, I was able to report back on how the Tusk Trust had spent the grant of £19,371 that the BBC WF gave them back in 2007. The grant has created jobs, resources for teachers and is changing the destiny of people's lives. I have to admit I was amazed by the wildlife in Kenya

– life teems across every inch of land – I saw giraffe, wild dogs, zebras and even rhinos. If you ever need convincing what a unique place it is and how important protecting it is – just go there.

Thanks to the team at BBC Monitoring I got an insight into global politics and current affairs. Everyone who works there is incredibly knowledgeable and I realised that my understanding of Africa was quite naïve. Watching the Kenyan news gave me a different perspective on the world and I've kept up a more active interest in African current affairs ever since.

I feel privileged to have been given the opportunity to spend two weeks with the teams in Nairobi. I will certainly never again whinge about how slow my internet in London is (or at least not with quite so much indignation), as the daily technology challenges they face made me realise how easy we have it here.

Read the BBC Wildlife Fund report at www.bbc.co.uk/bbcwildlifefund/diary

Have you been anywhere nice? Send your attachment stories to Clare Bolt



Application was much easier than I expected

FULL DETAILS AND HOW TO APPLY

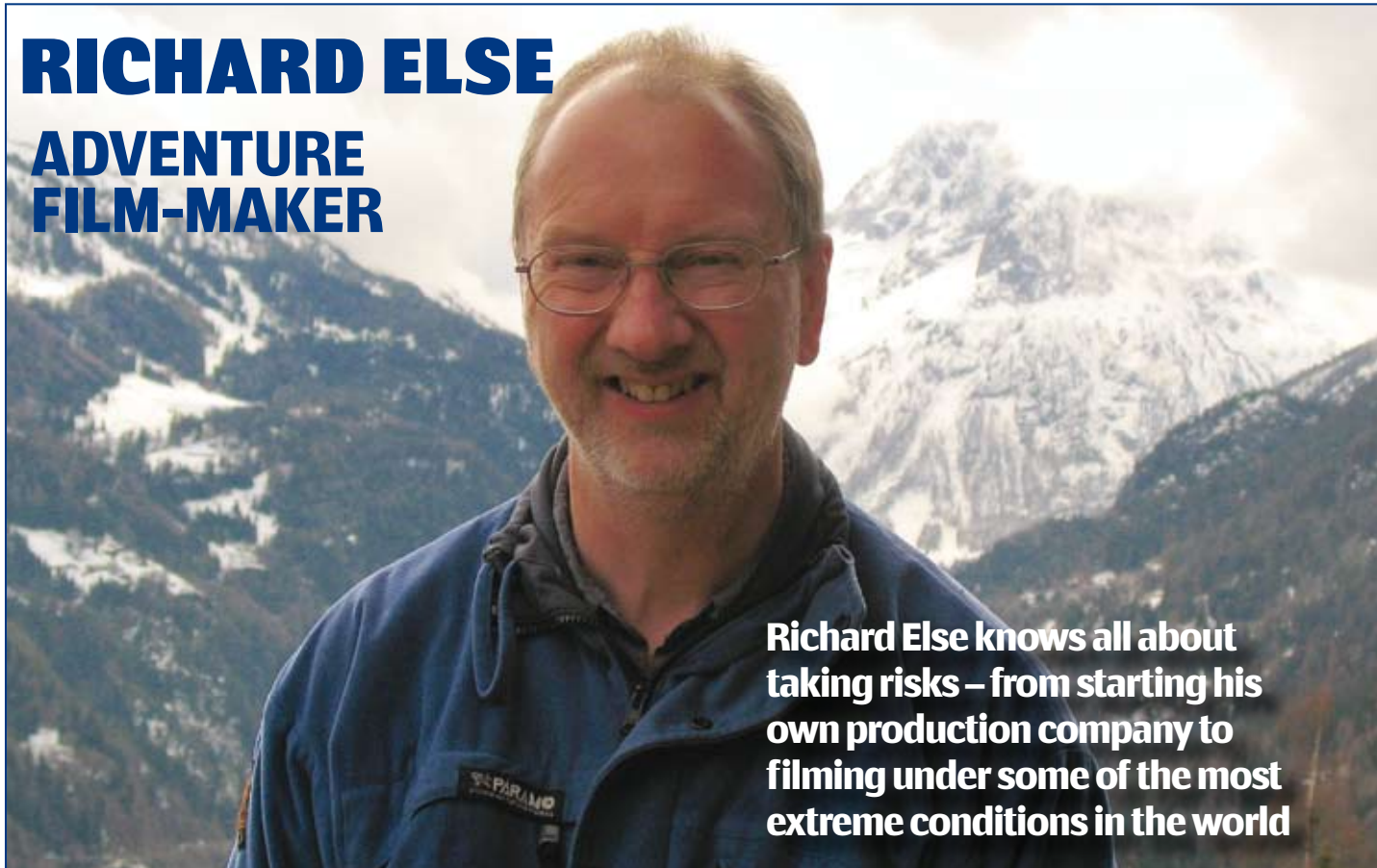
Full details and how to apply are on Gateway at: https://jobs.bbc.co.uk/fe/tpl_bbc02.asp
For assistance contact BBC Recruitment's Response Team on: 0800 082 8080 or 0370 333 1330

EXTERNAL APPLICATIONS

Vacancies published on this page are open to BBC Staff.
Where indicated (**E**), external applicants may also be considered. Please contact (quoting the appropriate ref.no.): Recruitment BBC HR Direct, PO Box 1133, Belfast BT1 9GP Tel: 0370 333 1330. Textphone: 028 9032 8478

RICHARD ELSE

ADVENTURE FILM-MAKER



Richard Else knows all about taking risks – from starting his own production company to filming under some of the most extreme conditions in the world

You are known for producing extreme adventure shows. Have you ever been in danger?

Many years ago a helicopter pilot lost his nerve while we were filming halfway up a mountain in the French Alps. He took off while a colleague and I were hanging underneath. We were on the skids and had to crawl in as this guy was flying away. It was like something out of James Bond, but also a very frightening, sobering experience. You realise just how easy it is to have an accident. For us safety is key.

You took the brave decision of leaving the BBC to set up Triple Echo Productions. Why?

I'd been at the BBC in Newcastle for 20 years, producing programmes for network television. When I made *The Climbers* with fell walker Alfred Wainwright and mountaineer Chris Bonington, I decided that I wanted to specialise in extreme adventure programmes. I'm based in Scotland but we have another office in Cornwall.

But it's not extreme adventure just for the sake of an adrenalin fix...

We've just made a film with a woman paralysed from the chest down, who we filmed kayaking in Patagonia. I know that when people see this programme it will make them rethink how they view disability. Our programmes are as much an exploration of people finding their own limits as they are about extreme adventure.

Why have you just come back from India?

I work for a fairtrade charity called Traidcraft and I was in India filming some of the work they've been doing. These

films are then seen by the charity's supporters and are used to lobby governments, both in Britain and in Europe.

I'm also a university professor and I do quite a bit of academic work. One of the missions of St Chad's at Durham, where I work, is social justice, so it's partly through the college that I work with Traidcraft. I'm also involved in a report that the Joseph Rowntree Foundation will publish in July, looking at how people in poverty can be given a voice through the media.

primetime. It's something that BBC Scotland has nurtured and supported and we're grateful. In each programme there will be an adventure race of some sort, but we also have lifestyle features such as where to eat and what to see, as well as environmental stories.

What's your most memorable experience to date?

The one that sticks in my mind was when we took the famous American mountaineer Charles Houston, who was instrumen-

we had to camp there. We have to be prepared for anything and have the best safety officers in the business.

What advice would you give to people wanting to set up their own production company?

I'd think carefully before setting up a production company, as it's a very crowded marketplace. I think you need something special. For us that's adventure and remote film-making and the specialist knowledge that goes with it, but we also work across other media.

I've recently started a publishing company with colleagues and we have a book coming out in September. It helps that I'm inspired by an office in the Scottish Highlands with one of the best views in Europe.

How does an adrenalin junkie relax?

I love ski mountaineering and wilderness travel. What I do when I'm not working is the same as what I do when I'm working. There are some world-class landscapes in Scotland and getting out there, be it on bike, ski or simply walking, is what I really like to do. I've always found cities really hard.

Somehow, you've also found the time to co-write four books...

They tend to be based on my experiences in wilderness travel. I think a lot of people are looking for real adventures and I want to show people that you don't have to go far. People's jobs have become more demanding and email haunts us all the time. There's a demand for people to get out there and push their own boundaries.

Interview: Laura Scarrott

foreign bureau



MARK DUFF

MILAN CORRESPONDENT

MILAN – YOU EITHER LIKE IT OR LUMP IT. It isn't pretty. In summer it's stifling; in winter, damp and cold. Apart from the duomo; some of the coolest shopping opportunities in the world; and – if you like that sort of thing – La Scala, or the San Siro (delete as applicable), it can pass you by, self-deprecating in its understatement...

Milan keeps its real self concealed: old monasteries, for example, that hide astonishing works of art behind unremarkable facades. Guilty secrets too: like the subterranean platforms at the massive stazione centrale from where thousands of Italian Jews were deported to Nazi death camps – still there, unseen, below the commuters bustling to work.

You could argue, though, that the real Milan is on the edge of town where new housing, industry and shopping malls encroach year-by-year on the surrounding farmland. The dynamism is ugly, brutish – but somehow invigorating too, a reminder that not all Italy is a tourist relic. They still make things here.

Twenty minutes drive through this low density industrial sprawl lies the old city of Bergamo. This is my Milan – Ryanair-Milan, if you like. I still work, part-time, in London, on a job-share with my wife. Milan itself is too expensive (it always was, even before the pound's suicidal dive against the euro). It lacks open space and can be horribly polluted – so Bergamo was

always going to be a better bet with two young children in tow.

Not all Italy is a tourist relic – they still make things here

The wonders of modern technology have hardly touched our old rented home high on a hill outside Bergamo. I have a pc, unreliable broadband and a minidisc. The view's not bad, though – and constantly changing. On a clear day you can see

Monte Rosa 200 km away, in Switzerland; when it's cloudy you can barely see the end of your nose.

Work-wise, my bread and butter tends to be the stuff that the Rome correspondents are too busy to cover: human interest stories, in the main, that strike a chord but don't force their way to the mainstream news agenda. Italy seems to be full of them – though I sometimes worry that, on their own, they reinforce our patronising north-European views of the place as an endearing basket case, great for holidays and food – but not to be taken too seriously, even if it is the world's seventh biggest economy.

As a single dad much of the time (my wife does most of our job share), work has to take second place to the children who've been uprooted from their London home and have had to make their way in an alien state school system and language.

This can be frustrating, but it's a reminder of the real pressures with which real people here have to wrestle. For instance: the fact that the school day is so fragmented – the bane of my life – helps explain why women are still so badly represented on the Italian labour market: too often they're simply trapped on a near-constant school run.

That said, Milan does its best to break down the frustrations. Compared to most other Italian cities, it's positively cosmopolitan. It feels connected to the heart of Europe – rather than cut off halfway down a boot-shaped peninsula. And the signs on the Metropolitana are in English as well as Italian. You can't get much more user-friendly than that.

CV RICHARD ELSE

Education: St David's University College, Lampeter, BA, English; Open University, educational research methodology.

Career Landmarks: Persuading reclusive fell walker Alfred Wainwright to appear on tv; winning a Scottish Bafta for *The Edge*; receiving this year's award for excellence in mountain culture; travelling the world

Family: Married to film-maker and adventure traveller Margaret Wicks. Two grown children, one a hospital registrar and the other a composer

First Job: Recycling tapes at BBC Radio Leicester, 'an invaluable experience'

Where did your interest in academia come from?

While I was at the BBC I worked with academics from different universities to produce a set of tv programmes that were linked to new research. It was the Thatcher years and the programmes were quite controversial. One of them, *The Real Cost of Unemployment*, caused a huge fuss because, for the first time, it calculated how much unemployment cost the UK.

You now make BBC Scotland's primetime series *The Adventure Show*...

It's now in its fifth season and it is the only adventure programme on a mainstream channel to go out during

tal in big Himalayan climbing in the 30s and 40s, back to the Himalayas for the first time following a bad accident. It was a fantastic experience and the programme, *The Climbers*, went on to win a few awards.

You've won quite a few of those...

I think it's because of the quality of our stories and our audio. The hallmark of most of our films is that we don't know what the outcome is going to be, and I think the viewer shares that with us.

A few years back we made a trip that one broadcaster thought was impossible – we crossed Baffin Island, in northern Canada, during the winter on dog sledge. The wind chill was minus 100c and

green room

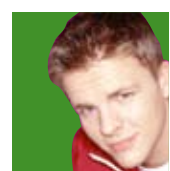
THE ARIELATOR

A weekly take on life at the BBC: who's up, who's down, who's off

UPSIDE It is congratulations to bj **Andrew Gordon** and the team at BBC Oxford for organising an hour-long euro election debate that was heard on the six BBC south east stations. Together with producer Anna Lindsay, they got all the top MEP candidates together, although the programme was almost derailed when three of the candidates said they were to appear on *Question Time* the same day. Hats off to Richard Townsend and Bob Ledgwick for helping move it from Oxford to Millbank.



DOWNSIDE BBC South Today's **Sean Killick** bravely battled the elements for a piece to camera about repairs to a collapsed sea wall at west beach, Selsey. Unfortunately, his trousers emerged from the ordeal rather wet. But an elderly couple who live at the top of the sea wall came to his rescue. When the lady of the house saw the state of Sean's trousers, she whipped them off, put them in the tumble dryer and gave him her husband's dressing gown. The sbj's one regret was that he was wearing less-than-perfect socks.



It turns out that fast cars and tv presenters don't always mix... as F1's **Jake Humphry** discovered in Turkey at the weekend. Shortly before the high speed race began he started his route to the grid by walking and talking across a lane. Fortunately, he was pulled back by colleague Steve from behind the camera. As Jake admitted later, 'I nearly met the front nose of a Toyota.' His near miss can be seen on iPlayer.

EARWIGGING

OVERHEARD AT THE BBC

...I would definitely cheat on Les Dennis...

...I don't chow on cow teats...

...Does anyone have the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra's gong rack?...

...Are you polishing the Catholic?...

...You sound like that senile aunt I never had...

...I chose the wrong day to have a weak bladder...



SALMON WATCH



Heaven knows I'm not miserable now: Peter Salmon gets into his stride in Manchester on a busy second day in his new role as director of BBC North

PETER SALMON likened his first week in the job to the first week at a new school – though hopefully not as painful. It can be hard making friends. He even put on his best new shirt in anticipation, he reveals via yammer. 'There is optimism, hope and energy here for the Big Project. From the BBC Philharmonic to local radio – sunny skies ahead,' adds a chirpy Peter, whose first official day

in the north included an interview on Radio Manchester, a visit to the orchestra and meetings where he was clearly well briefed as he was carrying a copy of *Ariel*. 'All we need to do now is get The Smiths to reform...' Ah, he might have hit a bit of a stumbling block there.

Where pigs ride in the front seat

An actor's life is not all glamour, especially when you are playing an unattractive oaf-cum-pig. It was an ordinary day's filming for Steve Speirs, who stars in BBC Two's new comedy series, *Krod Mandoon And The Flaming Sword Of Fire*, airing later this week. The make-up was a particularly evil chore – it would take 45 minutes just to remove. 'We were filming just outside Budapest,' says Steve, 'and on our way from one location to another near the end of a long day. My make-up had been on for so long – maybe eight or nine hours – that I had forgotten I was wearing it. 'I was sitting in the front of the mini-bus and we stopped at a bus stop to ask for directions. There was a guy looking at me a bit slack-jawed and it was only then that I realised that I was perched on the front seat dressed up as a pig!'



WE HEAR THAT...

GREEN ROOM doesn't know if it's the influence of the offspring rising through the ranks – yammer, twitter and the other upstarts – but it has noticed that talk.gateway's list of 'current' threads on the front page of Gateway hasn't been updated in weeks. Does anyone look after the ageing parent or has it been left to live out its remaining days in a virtual nursing home?

JUST WONDERING if anybody has some Mickey Mouse ears that they'd be willing to loan to us for an away day next Monday,' says an assistant in tv management. No matter how you dress it up, the BBC is not going to become the most magical place on earth.

MARTIN LEWES, bj from Cumbria, travels to Brussels ahead of the euro elections and discovers that his European colleagues at the BBC bureau have been keeping mum about this building across the street (below). Sadly, he didn't sample its delights, but we suspect that hacks might flock to it like pigeons flock to Trafalgar Square.



ON THE subject of meetings, Sharon Baylay has completed her first four weeks as director of MC&A. 'I thought you might like to know that I've had an 'ironman' of a meetings schedule this month – completing 95 meetings in total, phew – no wonder I was ready for that bank holiday weekend,' she writes bravely in MC&A's newsletter. This equates to nearly 24 meetings a week. We hope she at least got some biscuits.

WE'VE HEARD of the Gorillaz, Damon Albarn's alternative rock band, but he'll need to make room for another primate on the block. Welcome the *ZingZillas*, CBeebies new musical series for the under-sixes. The zingzilla is the musical sound made by infusing music with a primate twist. Toddlers love music, but let's hope this won't drive parents to beat their chests in despair.

NEWS BULLETINS on BBC Essex have amused one of their loyal listeners. 'Today on the 5pm bulletin, Hastings found itself in Kent, then moved back to Sussex by 6pm,' the listener emailed. Green room's geography is only marginally better than its maths, so we can sympathise with the person who got a little confused.

WE KNOW that Peter Salmon has a fondness for The Smiths (see left), but he's not the only one. *Springwatch* presenter Chris Packham has been rumbled trying to drop the band's song titles into programmes without warning his co-presenter Kate Humble, who appeared bemused when he started speaking a tad bizarrely. In one exchange, he tells Kate, 'you just haven't earned it yet, baby'. Other random comments include: hand in glove, what difference does it make, handsome devil and frankly Mr Shankly. Frankly, it's a wonder he didn't give the game away with a fit of hysterical giggling.