

ariel

THE BBC NEWSPAPER

HOW LIFE IN SALFORD IS SHAPING UP FOR R&D PEOPLE **Page 7**

A lot of hot air

PHOTOGRAPH: OLIVIA WOODHOUSE



◆ **MARTIN EVANS** reports for BBC Bristol at the city's famous international balloon fiesta. The Cameron Turtle 120, piloted by Lenny Cant with crew member Charlotte Visser, was one of more than 70 hot air balloons which took part in the four day spectacular.



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Guest contributors this week

ANNE GILCHRIST, controller CBBC, passes on her tips for writing for young viewers P8

KIERAN YEATES, a production trainee, goes on attachment – to the place where he grew up P14

ALEX GALLAFENT, Boston-based reporter, writes on the Red Sox P15

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NEED TO KNOW THE WEEK'S ESSENTIALS

Here is the news – just about

◆ **IS THERE NO END TO THE WOES** of Channel 4 and ITV? Channel 4 is to axe *News at Noon*, presented by Krishnan Guru-Murthy, at the end of the year and will remove all news output from its digital-only More4 channel.

The broadcaster says it needs 'to find efficiencies' in its news budget and that it wants to concentrate its resources around its flagship 7pm programme, presented by Jon Snow.

ITN, which provides news for Channel 4, will close around 20 posts as a result of the loss of *News at Noon*.

As part of its licence from Ofcom, Channel 4 has to include a certain number of hours of news in peaktime but the length of the broadcasts is not specified; one of its obligations is to have a lunchtime summary, so it will offer a brief bulletin – of just a few minutes, compared to the 30 minute duration of *News at Noon*.

Meanwhile ITV, equally hard hit by the recession, posted a loss of £105m for the first six months of the year. At the same time it announced that it had sold Friends Reunited for £25m to Brightsolid Limited, which is owned by DC Thomson, after having agreed to pay a total of £175m for it in 2005.

There is no word yet on who is to replace Michael Grade, who will step down as chief executive of ITV later this year.

◆ **IF IT'S BRIGHTER BROADCASTING NEWS** you're after, there is some – on the high definition front. Two deals have been signed that will bring HD tv channels, including BBC HD, to Freeview, starting in just four months' time.

In the first deal, the corporation and ITV plc have agreed final terms for the launch of ITV1 HD alongside the BBC HD channel on the BBC's Multiplex B, which will be used to deliver Freeview HD. Work is now progressing on carriage deals with Channel 4/S4C and Five, to complete the line-up.

In the second agreement, the BBC has arranged with transmission company Arqiva to provide special early transmissions of Freeview HD in London from December this year and in Birmingham, Glasgow, Leeds/Bradford and Newcastle ahead of the World Cup in 2010.

It means that Freeview HD, including BBC HD, will be capable of reception in around half of UK homes by the World Cup.

Although the BBC HD channel is available on digital satellite tv, the BBC believes it essential that it has a presence on digital terrestrial; Freeview, now available in 70 percent of homes, is the most popular digital tv platform.



◆ **THE APPOINTMENT OF DAVID TAVINER** to the newly created role of series editor of *Songs of Praise* (see Page 4) marks another chapter in the history of a programme that will celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2011.

Not bad considering the scepticism that surrounded its launch all those years ago.

It all started one Sunday lunchtime in 1961 when Donald Baverstock, a producer on the current affairs programme *Tonight*, saw by chance a test transmission of an outside broadcast of hymn-singing in Welsh from a Welsh chapel, and suggested that a similar offering in English might prove popular.

The suggestion was greeted with a marked lack of enthusiasm within the BBC religious department – 'how can we attract young people to religion with a programme of hymn-singing in church?' – but nonetheless a short series was commissioned.

Songs of Praise was an overnight success. It went on to get audiences of 12 million and even today still gets an average audience of 2.5m. It is now the only religious programme scheduled for peaktime viewing on a free-to-air channel in Europe and possibly in the world.

Presenters have included Cliff Richard, Harry Secombe and Thora Hird. Currently the regular team members are Aled Jones, Pam Rhodes, Diane Louise Jordan and Sally Magnusson. Spin-offs include *The Big Sing* at the Albert Hall and *The School Choir Of The Year Competition*, both shown on BBC One.

NEWS BITES

CHILDREN IN Need's 2008 appeal has raised £37 million, up £1 million on the figure announced in April. CiN recently distributed more than £12 million to 333 projects in the UK in the second of three grant rounds. The final grant round will take place in October.

SPORTS NEWS editor Mihir Bose resigned last week because of personal reasons. The BBC declined to comment on reports that he left because he did not want to move to Salford. Bose was appointed in 2007, joining the BBC from the Daily Telegraph, where he had launched the paper's Inside Sports column.

FERGUS WALSH was named broadcast journalist of the year in the Medical Journalists' Association Awards, for the second year running.

KATE WALSH, runner-up in *The Apprentice*, has been named co-host of *Live From Studio Five* on the nightly magazine show will go head to head with *The One Show*.

BBC SWAHILI'S young entrepreneur competition has received more than 10,000 entries. Entrants were asked how they would use \$5000 to start a business that would have an impact in their community.

ZANE LOWE will present the Arctic Monkeys live in session from Maida Vale on August 17. The band will perform previously unheard material from their new album. The special will be broadcast on Radio 1 from 7pm.

NOEL VINCENT, a former BBC head of tv and radio worship, and a regular contributor to Radio 4's *Daily Service* and *Prayer for the Day*, has died after a long illness.

DISCOUNTED STAFF tickets for Radio 2's 'Thank You For The Music: A Celebration Of The Music Of ABBA' in Hyde Park on September 13 are available from the BBC Shop or by calling x(02)58230. They cost £20 each (usual price £25) or buy 7 tickets and get an 8th free.

REPORTING SCOTLAND GOES A LONG WAY TO GET THE STORY

by Brian Ashman

REPORTING SCOTLAND recently sent teams to various remote parts of the country for a week long look at coastal erosion around the shores and the damage being caused to sensitive historical sites.

With reporter Kevin Keane, from Aberdeen, I was tasked with going to Skara Brae in Orkney and then on to the island of Bressay in Shetland to shoot, edit and send finished stories back to Glasgow, plus going live into *Reporting Scotland* aided by portable satellite equipment.

It was the first time that streaming from a BGAN unit using 'xtream' 384k had been used as far north in the UK. Using Quick Link Live software on a laptop into the BGAN unit worked very well for the lives, but as costs were all important, FTP server exchange was



Fieldwork:
Brian Ashman and Kevin Keane on the island of Bressay near Lerwick

used to get the cut packs back to Pacific Quay from Orkney and Shetland BBC bases.

Broadcasting stories about erosion from around the country was deemed to be a success with a similar operation from the

Western Isles during the week with a system called WiMAX using the local community broadband connectivity.

Brian Ashman is a lighting cameraman/editor based in Inverness

More records tumble in latest Rajars

by Sally Hillier

With every fresh set of Rajar figures come new records. And so it was last week when it emerged that 46.3 million people or 90.3 percent of the UK population listens to radio each week. This compares to 45.1 million a year ago and is the highest weekly reach ever recorded since new research methodology was introduced in 1999.

More than one-third of the population (18m against 15.7m at the same time last year) listens digitally, with 16.9m adults saying they live in a household with a DAB (digital audio broadcasting) receiver. The figure 12 months ago was 13.9m.

During the measurement period (March 30 to June 28), BBC radio audiences reached 34.1 million – the second highest ‘All BBC radio’ reach for ten years.

Among the networks, Radio 3 passed the 2m mark, Radio 4’s audience nudged 10 million after attract-

ing around 465,000 new listeners in a year, while Radio 1 and Radio 5 live added 660,00 and 400,000 listeners respectively in the same period. Radio 5 live’s figure was the highest for more than five years

Chris Moyles has 7.72 million listeners – up from 7.21m last year – but Terry Wogan has 7.93m, compared to 7.75m 12 months ago.

1Xtra’s reach is up nearly 150,000 to 634,000; BBC 6 Music has 595,000 listeners (compared to 551,000 last year and 681,000 last quarter); BBC Radio 7 has 834,000 listeners, against 812,000 last year and 984,000 last quarter. The BBC Asian Network, which has refreshed its schedule in a bid to combat falling listening figures, has an audience of 421,000 compared to 473,000 a year ago and 405,000 last quarter. The World Service has a weekly reach in the UK of 1.44 million – up from 1.31m last year and 1.47m last quarter.

Ariel View, P10

WARMTH AND WIT AT STOKE

Radio Stoke and Radio Shropshire were among the BBC local stations that fared well in the Rajars.

Stoke now has 185,000 listeners – 30,000 more than 12 months ago. Sue Owen, managing editor, puts it down to ‘a great team’ and a new breakfast show. ‘About 18 months ago we brought in Pete Morgan and the audience love him. His programme has warmth and wit.’

Previously breakfast producer at



Breakfast star: Pete Morgan

1000.7 Heart fm in Birmingham, Morgan hadn’t presented ‘for a very long time’, Owen explains, but: ‘I’d worked with him when I was at Heart and I knew he had a talent.’

Radio Shropshire has 115,000 listeners a week, up from 110,000 this time last year, and its highest figure since 2005. Tim Page, programmes editor, says the station has worked hard to increase its appeal. ‘It’s about three years since we started thinking in depth about our output. We’ve not had a revolution, but have certainly evolved.’

BBC London 94.9 added almost 100,000 listeners, recording a total of 559,000 listeners a week.

Reach for BBC local radio in the regions, however, continued its downward trend year on year.



PHOTOGRAPH: ED SWINDEN

ALL THE FUN OF THE FAIR: Radio Nottingham weatherman and keen crooner Des Coleman took to the stage to sing a couple of numbers during the latest Big Night Out organised by the station.

After rain all day, the sun finally shone in the evening when crowds flocked to the city’s urban beach (laid down for the summer in the market

square) for live music and other entertainment. ‘It was fantastic,’ says station editor Sophie Stewart. ‘We had the most glorious evening – and Des really delivered.’

The Big Night Out project began two years ago to encourage locals to reclaim the streets from the violence and drunken behaviour for which Nottingham had gained an infamous reputation.

It was fair to ask Alagiah to quit charity role, says Boaden

The decision to ask George Alagiah to give up his charity role as patron of the Fairtrade Foundation has been defended by Helen Boaden, director of news.

She has written to The Times in response to the founding members of the Fairtrade Foundation – including Cafod, Oxfam, Traidcraft and Chris-

tian Aid – who had asked for Alagiah’s patronage to be re-instated in order to continue his ‘immensely valuable contribution’.

Alagiah, presenter of the *Six O’Clock News* and patron of the foundation for a number of years, expressed ‘regret’ at having to step down from his role with the charity, which cam-

paigns for the interests of farmers in the developing world.

It is the campaigning/activism element that presents the corporation with a problem and could, it believe, lead to a potential conflict of interest. Setting out the BBC’s commitment to impartiality, Boaden says: ‘It is not the business of BBC journalism to

take a view on this or to be perceived to take a view.

‘Our job is to represent all sides in an argument accurately and fairly, and test them as rigorously as we can to allow our audiences to reach their own judgements.

‘And it is not enough for our journalism to be impartial. We must also

be seen to be impartial. That is why it is inappropriate for a BBC journalist to take a high-profile, public role representing an organisation which [...]takes a very particular view of the controversial issue of global trade.’

Alagiah is due to present a new series call *Future of Food*, which starts on BBC Two on August 18.

I was given two blankets and put in the cells

by Adam Bambury



Held: Arifa Farooq

A BBC Scotland journalist was arrested last week following her undercover investigations at a care home for *Panorama*. Arifa Farooq was initially quizzed by police at Pacific Quay before being arrested while voluntarily attending an interview at Maryhill Police Station in Glasgow.

Farooq, who works with the investigations unit, had gone undercover earlier in the year to expose the working practices of Scottish care homes. She was detained following a complaint regarding her use of false documentation to secure employment with Clydebank-based firm Domiciliary Care.

'I had no idea I was going to be arrested, so it was a shock,' she told Ariel. 'I had everything put into bags, was frisked quite rigorously, and then basically sent to the cells with two blankets and a wad of bog roll in my hand. I was told: "There you are, sit in there for a wee while."

The journalist was then held for an hour before being released, after she had given fingerprint and DNA samples and been photographed. A report will be submitted by the police to the procurator fiscal, the Scottish equivalent of the Crown Prosecution Service, who will decide what action, if any, to take next.

Farooq's investigations formed part of *Britain's Homecare Scandal: A Panorama Special*, which was originally broadcast in April. Her findings raised a public debate and prompted the Scottish Parliament's local government committee to launch an investigation into the practice of online bidding auctions for homecare contracts.

Many groups spoke out in support of the investigation. Atholl Duncan, BBC Scotland's head of news and current affairs, said: 'We are very concerned about the action taken against Arifa and its consequences for the freedom of investigative journalism. We now await consideration of the matter by the fiscal.'

Though she admits events like her arrest make her job 'that bit more difficult', Farooq says it has not deterred her from further investigatory work: 'I'd do it again in a heartbeat,' she says. 'The issue was so important, and we got such great results from it.'

Over the moon as new football season kicks off

PHOTOGRAPH: MARK LEE



Good to be back: Colin Slater

by Peggy Walker

Radio Nottingham's Colin Slater is among local radio staff preparing for the new football season.

Slater, celebrating his 50th season covering Notts County, received the Sony lifetime achievement award this year for his 'craftsman's skill at shaping match commentary and unstinting commitment to radio's role within the sporting community of his home city'.

He collected the award from former Nottingham Forest winger, and old friend, Martin O'Neill.

BBC Suffolk is also looking forward to the new season after regaining the rights to carry commentary of every Ipswich Town game for the next three seasons. Previously, commercial station Heart had a deal with the club, leaving the BBC station with only away commentaries.

'Last season thousands of people couldn't hear home matches at all because the commercial transmitter didn't reach them,' explains Peter Cook, managing editor. 'We've been inundated with calls, texts and emails from listeners saying how pleased they are now.'

Brenner Woolley will lead the commentary team for the station over the three year deal.

Another happy tale is that of Burnley FC and

its dramatic promotion to the Premier League. Radio Lancashire started covering the Clarets regularly in 1971.

Gary Hickson, sport editor, says the fans are rightly proud of their team. 'They've always had a realistic approach to their football and expectations as far as finance – or the lack of it – is concerned. Who would deny them their glory times ahead in the Premier League and some of the trips to those places they could only dream of for many years.'

The club's success is celebrated in a one-off documentary presented by life long fan Alastair Campbell. *Burnley are Back!* will be shown on BBC One North West on Friday, repeated on Saturday at 4.30am on BBC Two. It will also be available on BBC iPlayer.

It's not all good news in the regions. This year saw the death of legendary Radio Cumbria commentator Derek Lacey.

The voice of Carlisle United took on the role in 1998 and became known for his warmth and self-deprecating humour, as well as earning cult status for his on-air mistakes. As the new season starts, commentator James Phillips has some big boots to fill, but he and the rest of local radio sports teams are excited to be back doing what they do best.

Taviner takes on Songs of Praise

In one of his first moves since joining the BBC as head of religion and ethics and commissioning editor for television, Aaqil Ahmed has appointed David Taviner to the newly created post of series editor on *Songs Of Praise*.

This will free up Tommy Nagra, executive producer, religion and ethics, who exec produces *Songs of Praise*, to take on other projects.

Currently a producer and director in religion and ethics, Taviner has worked for the BBC in tv and radio production for 25 years, 13 of which have been spent in religious broadcasting. His credits include *Morning Worship* for Radio 4 and *Good Morning Sunday* for Radio 2; he has also produced and directed many editions of *Songs of Praise* in the UK and overseas.

Salford to be 'cost neutral'

The reported £876m expense of relocating some divisions to Salford is a 'very early estimate' looking ahead to 2030 and ignores savings that will be made, says the BBC.

The sum was revealed by the City AM newspaper, which said it had seen confidential documents.

In response, the BBC said: 'The figures quoted are early estimates from an internal budget document. They do not include the significant savings that will be made in moving departments out of London after 2013.'

'The move is still in its early stages so any budgets are clearly not final. However the BBC has committed to achieve a cost neutral outcome.'

Northern Exposure, P7

FIGHTBACK: Yentob and Bennett speak out

by Sally Hillier

Enough's enough, declared Jana Bennett and Alan Yentob last week as both came out fighting over the barrage of criticism directed at the BBC.

First Bennett, director of Vision, stood up for BBC One controller Jay Hunt who hit the headlines after it emerged that her husband runs a media training business for which is she company secretary.

Then creative director Yentob took a swipe at culture secretary Ben Bradshaw and equality minister Harriet Harman after they waded into the controversy over the departure of Arlene Phillips from *Strictly Come Dancing*.

'Do I think it's the job of ministers to decide



Robust defence: Jana Bennett and Alan Yentob

who is cast in shows?' asked Yentob when interviewed by the London Evening Standard. 'Everybody around the building would like to be the person who decides who goes on this show or

that show. Maybe Ben Bradshaw and Harriet Harman are no different from anybody else.'

He was also scathing about Bradshaw's support for top slicing. 'He misunderstands the arguments... They are about the integrity of the licence fee and the independence of the BBC.'

Then there were strong words over the criticism of BBC expense claims, with Yentob describing presents for talent as 'small gifts to benefit the organisation'. He added: 'I don't think there's any reason for a collective mea culpa, which isn't to say we should be complacent about the times we're living in. In an environment in which ordinary people are struggling, it's difficult [for them] to understand something of the convention that goes on in certain areas of business.'

Back to Bennett, who in an article in the Media Guardian pointed out Jay Hunt had had no involvement in the day to day running of the company run by her husband, nor any involvement in contracts between it and the corporation.

While she acknowledged that BBC executives would always attract press scrutiny, Bennett considered it 'manifestly unfair' that in Hunt's case this had extended to personal character attack.

'I've known Jay Hunt for years and I know her to be passionately committed to the highest standards in public service broadcasting – for the widest possible audience. [She] is a hugely talented leader and an impeccable executive who has spent the vast majority of her career creating great programmes for BBC audiences to enjoy.'

The talent might include **David Dimbleby** and **Anne Robinson** but culture secretary **Ben Bradshaw** says there's a 'cult of youth' at the BBC. Is he right? Ariel (average age of team: **40**) asked for your views

MR BRADSHAW is for once right about something. I have long felt the BBC is uncomfortably obsessed with youth to the detriment of the much larger viewing public. Much too much time, energy, effort and resources are thrown at a slice of the population who frankly couldn't care less about Aunty's efforts to ensnare them. The solution is not to waste precious resources on [them]...but to continue to plough the Reithian furrow and inform, entertain and educate.

As for the workplace, yes it is over-subscribed with young, predominantly female, new recruits, but there are still a few of the older brigade hanging on, despite being viewed as dinosaurs by some. The odd thing is that when the going gets tough the youngsters all expect us old 'uns to sort it out for them. Never mind: it was ever thus.

Jeremy R Curry
ba, BBC South West

BBC CULT OF YOUTH? Yeah right! Just look at tonight's schedule on BBC One and BBC Two as one completely random, but typical, example. *One Show, EastEnders, Holby, Truth About Crime, News, Neighbourhood Watched, Who Do You Think You Are?, Coast, Desperate Romantics, Wainwright, Newsnight*. Spot anything in there for the under 30s? Me neither. Pass the tartan blanket!

Shaun Peel
sbj, BBC East

OBSESSED WITH YOUTH? That's a gross understatement. It's a barmy policy which shows utter contempt for many of our viewers. Commercial channels have to focus on young people as they are the ones susceptible to advertising. The BBC should have no such worries. We should respect and cherish our older viewers who are loyal to us, and a growing part of the population. The average *Newsnight* viewer is 55. How many *Newsnight* staff are older than 55? Jeremy Paxman and one or two others.

Michael Crick (51)
political editor, *Newsnight*

AS SOMEONE who has been here for 20 years it is sadly noticeable how focused all broadcasting is on capturing the 18-25 market.

If you are in your 30s and 40s the chances are you spend more time at home due to childcare, have less disposable income and so probably use the media as a main source of entertainment.

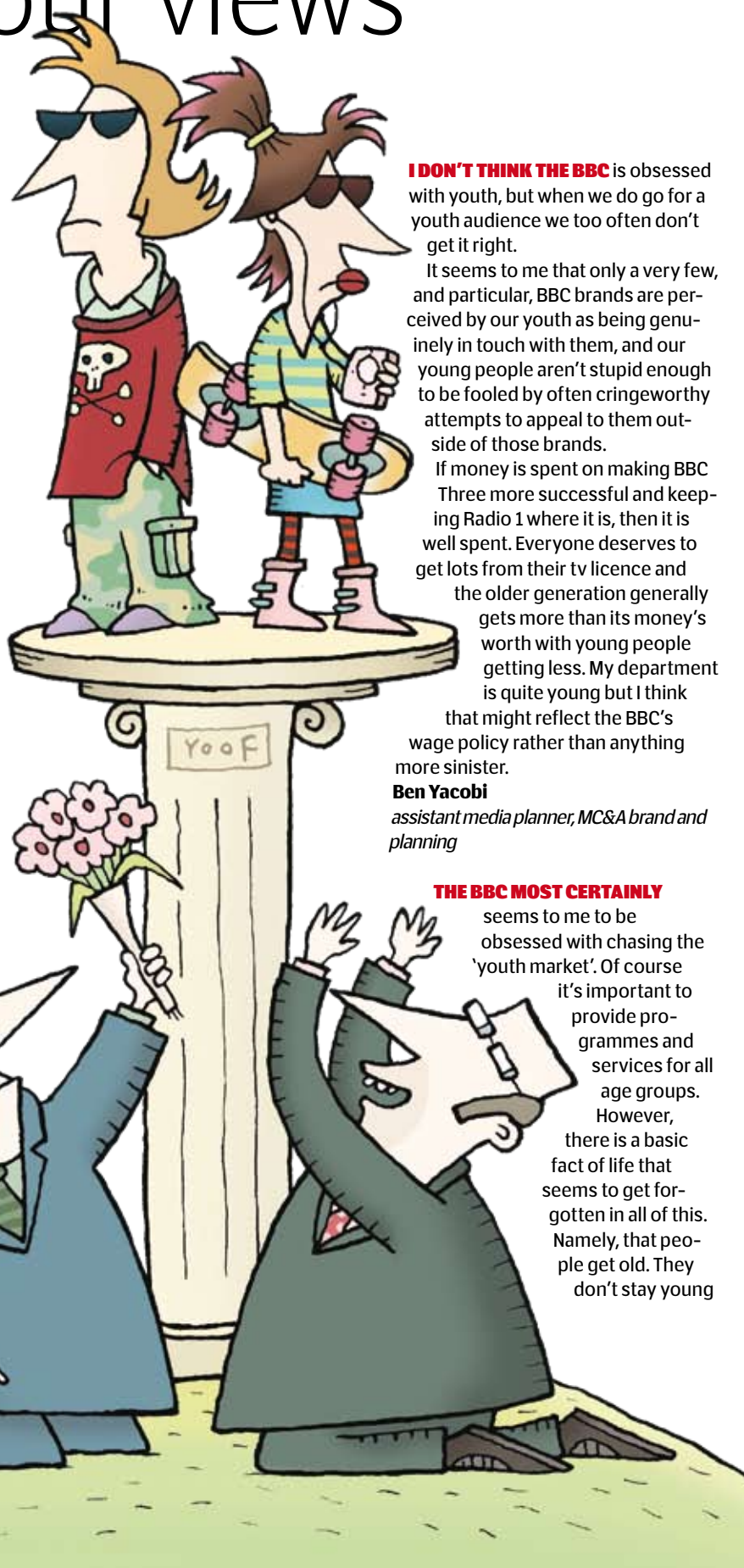
Daniela Mamo
production co-ordinator, *learning formal*

IN ALL THE PLACES I have worked, comments have been made about my age. The BBC is the exception. I'm 28 and in my four years working here, I have not been made to feel insignificant because of my age nor have I been made to feel like I am 'the voice of a younger generation' – even though people occasionally note that I am the youngest in the office. The BBC treats me with equality – which is probably why I've stayed here the longest.

Jo Morgan
pa, N&R editorial

WORKING AT A 'YOUTH' radio station it helps if you understand the audience you are broadcasting to. If, like me, you are young enough to be in the target age group, then it helps even more. No I don't think the BBC is obsessed with youth. It needs to engage the next generation of listeners and viewers – and ultimately with licence fee payers!

James Forster
ba, *Radio 1Xtra*



I DON'T THINK THE BBC is obsessed with youth, but when we do go for a youth audience we too often don't get it right.

It seems to me that only a very few, and particular, BBC brands are perceived by our youth as being genuinely in touch with them, and our young people aren't stupid enough to be fooled by often cringeworthy attempts to appeal to them outside of those brands.

If money is spent on making BBC Three more successful and keeping Radio 1 where it is, then it is well spent. Everyone deserves to get lots from their tv licence and the older generation generally gets more than its money's worth with young people getting less. My department is quite young but I think that might reflect the BBC's wage policy rather than anything more sinister.

Ben Yacobi
assistant media planner, *MC&A brand and planning*

THE BBC MOST CERTAINLY

seems to me to be obsessed with chasing the 'youth market'. Of course it's important to provide programmes and services for all age groups. However, there is a basic fact of life that seems to get forgotten in all of this. Namely, that people get old. They don't stay young

forever. Interests and tastes change as people progress through life.

I still enjoy much of the same programmes that I liked years ago, but my tastes and interests have changed over time and there is tons of stuff I like now that I wouldn't have touched with a bargepole in my youth. I wasn't born an *Archers* addict! The young people we're so anxious about will inevitably get older and will grow into different people who will enjoy all sorts of things that they wouldn't have liked when they were in their teens or 20s.

Ros Twinn
research librarian, *BH Plymouth*

IN SOME PARTS of the BBC we're not doing enough to reach younger generations. I think in all areas of news and current affairs we could do a lot more to encourage younger people to engage with our output. Schemes like *School Report* and *Newsround's Press Pack* are great, but I think we could do more – particularly at a local level – to engage a wider range of people. If we're not careful our audiences might die off. The trick is to engage a younger generation while maintaining the older one.

Louise Walter
vj, *Spotlight, BBC South West*

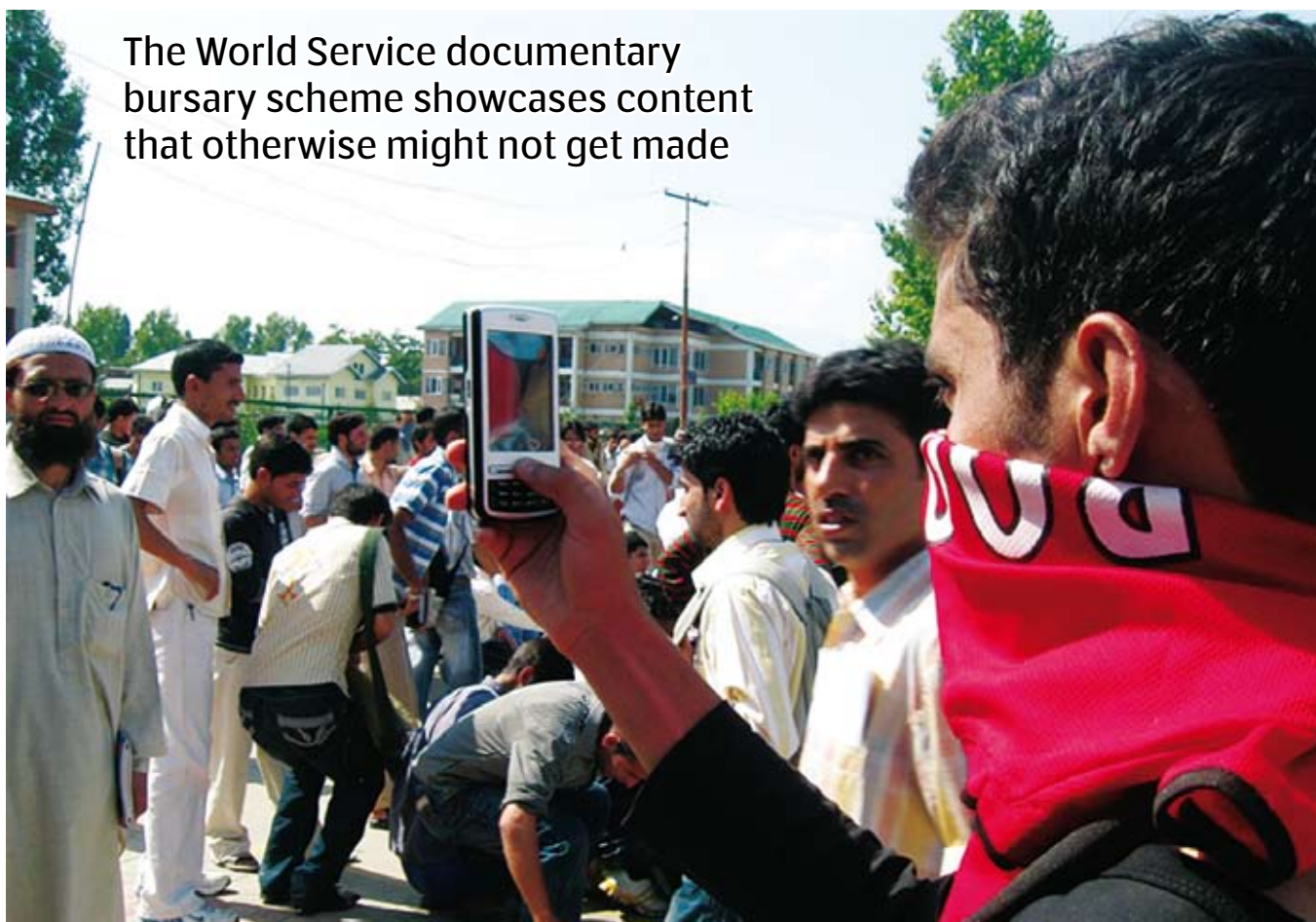
IN MY EXPERIENCE the 'bright young things' have just been exposed to different things. I think experience, enthusiasm and great ideas are possible at any age. This society values youth above all else...educating and informing about the value of collaboration and contribution may help us to change that.

Erika Kraftchenko
senior graphics designer, *BBC News*

SOMETIMES I WEAR A 'HOODIE' to work. Does that mean I'm trying to recapture my youth or that I'm cold? The boss hasn't asked me to remove it – for fear I'd knife him and take his wallet?

Stephanie Barnard
bj, *Radio Sheffield*

The World Service documentary bursary scheme showcases content that otherwise might not get made



PHOTOGRAPH: EMPICS SPORT

Conflict zone: Suvojit Bagchi of the Bengali service filmed 'cyber activists' in Kashmir who have taken their fight online

Stories you won't hear **anywhere** else

by Sue Llewellyn

WHAT DOES A CELEBRATED AMERICAN PHYSICIST have in common with an evasive Burmese rebel leader and a disappearing Mexican island?

On the face of it very little, but their stories have inspired this year's winning entries to the World Service's documentary bursary scheme.

It's a chance for specialist producers from the language sections to find new and unusual stories in their home countries, with the best given a commission to make a programme for the World Service English language service.

'We have these talented producers who hear about stories, and who have access to regions and people that we might not otherwise hear from,' says series producer Andrea Kennedy. 'They can literally reach parts of the world that other producers can't.'

Bombs, Stamps and Throat Singers tells the story of Richard Feynman, an American physicist, Nobel Prize winner, dreamer and stamp collector. Through his stamps he discovered Tuva, a remote region of Russia close to the Mongolian border. He fell in love with the place but died a week before he finally got a visa to visit. Iлона Vinogradova of the Russian service took Richard's daughter Michele on an emotional journey to visit the land of nomads and throat singers that her father could only dream of.

The programmes showcase new material and talent and organisers say the scheme, which was established in 2003, provides a stepping stone for winners, several of whom have gone on to become regional correspondents. Selected from more than 100 applicants, this year's five winning entries came from Tuva to Burma, the Gulf of Mexico to Israel and Kashmir. The producers are all BBC language service programme makers and for all of them this has been their first chance to make a full length documentary in English.

David Cuen of the Spanish American service searched for a missing island in the Gulf of Mexico. Bermeja Island was visible on maps from 1539 to 1946, when it seemed to disappear. Although it could be strategically important and give Mexico claim to millions of dollars worth of oil deposits, nobody knows where it is. 'It was an opportunity to involve myself in two of my passions: geography and mystery,' Cuen says. 'Being part of the



Remote area: Iлона Vinogradova with Michele Feynman in Tuva

bursary scheme means that you can use your local expertise to bring a story to the world. And usually the local stories are the hidden jewels that international audiences are expecting.'

For more than 20 years, the Burmese government has been working to maintain ceasefire agreements with 17 major armed rebel groups, but now it is facing a fightback from one of them. Ko Ko Aung from the Burmese service tells the extraordinary story of a rebel leader, Col. Khun Thurein, and his band of 100 men who are fighting against the mighty Burmese army.

Suvojit Bagchi from the Bengali service explores the impact of new media in a conflict zone and looks at how the new 'cyber activists' are taking their fight online. He discovers how the Kashmir conflict has been shot and reported, literally, frame by frame, by citizen-journalists via video sharing and video blogging websites.

Rachid Sekkai from the Arabic service tells an unusual tale of Muslims fighting for Israel. Considered traitors by their own communities, they are asked why they want to join the Israeli army.

The documentaries will be broadcast on the World Service from Friday August 14 for five weeks, starting with *Bombs, Stamps and Throat Singers*.

The next bursary scheme launches in the autumn and full details will be available via Gateway nearer the time. tinyurl.com/ariel-wsb

cutting edge



NICK REYNOLDS

In the spirit of openness

ON FRIDAY (AUGUST 14) Seetha Kumar, controller of BBC Online, will host an open event for outside organisations. It's an attempt to be more open about what BBC Online will be doing in the next few months.

If I had 20p for every time I used the word 'open' I'd be able to buy more espressos (which would make me more stressed rather than more transparent).

For some being open is a beautiful wild flower growing through the cracks of the BBC's corporate façade. For others it's a practical way of getting closer to licence fee payers. For others it's still a bit scary.

For me being open is about people. As the BBC becomes more open you see more of BBC people. So who has made progress towards the goal of making the place more open in the past few months?

Danielle Nagler, head of BBC HD, is using the BBC internet blog to build a dialogue with HD viewers. And it feels like a conversation, not a series of press releases. She's aided by Andy Quedest, chief technologist, whose comments on the blog are like getting personal text messages from your own HDTV specialist.

When Steve Bowbrick worked for me as blogger-in-residence he was a tireless champion against the notion of 'fortress BBC'. Now that Steve is editor of the Radio 4 blog he's putting his principles into practice and opening up the work of the networks.

To get a contribution from the founder of Wikipedia is impressive

As a result things which seemed impossible are now possible. A blog post about a trial stacking radio series [for iPlayer]? Surely you can't do that? Actually... they've done it! It helps that Steve loves radio – and that in Mark Damazer you have an exec who doesn't just recognise the importance of blogging, but seems to enjoy doing it.

Meanwhile Dan Biddle in Vision is leading a blog around 'Digital Revolution'. This is an 'open source tv documentary' which sounds brave and tricky. But so far the blog has attracted some heavyweight contributors. To get Jimmy Wales, founder of Wikipedia, to discuss just how open they are is impressive in itself.

There are many examples: Stephen Elson and Jake Archibald blogging about the release of Glow – an open source Javascript library which anyone can use to help build websites; Ben Stephenson on the Guardian's website responding to the debate around drama commissioning; Jason Da Ponte and David Madden of the BBC mobile team taking questions on twitter.

If you think you should be on the above list, my apologies (and would you like to write a blog post?). But that tells a story in itself. There's so much openness going on you can't fit all of it into one Ariel column. There's always more to do. But it's too late to stop now.

Nick Reynolds is editor, social media, central editorial team, BBC Online

NORTHERN EXPOSURE



PHOTOGRAPH: ED SWINDEN

Single in the city: Ian Forrester embraces the new opportunities that his move north has presented

IAN FORRESTER

senior producer, BBC Backstage, R&D

When Ian Forrester realised his job might be moving north, his first thought was 'no way'.

'I knew that if I left the BBC but stayed in London there would be other companies I could work for in this sector. Anywhere else, I wouldn't have that option.' A year and one divorce later, the idea of living in a city centre and 'having the lifestyle I wanted' started to look more attractive.

Working for development community BBC Backstage, he's building relationships with techie communities outside London, running the TEDxManchester conference, part of TEDxNorth. 'It's an annual event where some of the world's leading thinkers and doers share the things they are most passionate about,' he says. 'TED stands for technology, entertainment, design – three broad subject areas that are collectively shaping our future.'

So no regrets? 'If you're single it's an amazing place to live. I can do things here that I couldn't do in London....and I can hold meetings in the bar.'

It was never going to be easy leaving Kingswood Warren, R&D's iconic home since 1948 – but pioneering techies have started making the move north. Around 30 have decamped to Manchester and the goal is to have a third of FM&T in Salford by 2011, including R&D North. Peggy Walker catches up with the early bird movers...

ADRIAN WOOLARD

project lead, R&D North Lab

'You can't turn up in a few years' time and just switch R&D on,' Adrian Woolard says. 'You need the momentum of people moving up here.' Having a team based in the region has helped to build academic partners and technology companies. 'They know that we're here now, and that we understand the environment.'

Adrian's children (six and four) moved schools and his wife Helen quit her job. 'We live in Marple, south east of Manchester,' he says. 'It's rural, it's set up for families, and it has a choice of good schools.'

BRUCE WEIR

engineer, R&D

'I'm from York and always fancied moving back north,' confesses Bruce Weir. Two years ago he and his wife swapped their flat in Ealing, London, for a 19th century detached house in the spa town of Buxton, an hour's commute from Manchester. 'We didn't want to move to another urban area. We definitely have a better quality of life which the relocation package just made possible.'

PHIL GREENE

lead technologist, FM&T

It's Phil Greene's job to pin down the tech requirements of each department before they move. 'Because of my connection with BBC North, I was one of the first to move; it was an opportunity to get involved early on.' He began his career at Radio Manchester, but relocated to London 15 years ago. Back then, he says, there were 'very few' media jobs in the north west. He now lives in a four-storey town house in Chorlton, where he grew up. Not bad, given it costs roughly the same as his ex-council flat in Maida Vale.

SIMON LUMB

senior software engineer, FM&T

At the beginning of 2009, Simon Lumb discovered that his department was in line to move north. 'I only had a few months to decide and it was impossible to predict what situation I would be in by 2011,' he says. 'But it's not often that you get to live in a new city, so I thought, why not?'

The chance to blaze a trail in Salford proved irresistible. 'I wanted to be part of redirecting the way we work,' he says candidly. 'I feel I have a responsibility to lead!'

An American football player in his spare time, he'll be joining Manchester Titans for the 2010 season.



week@work

HOW TO WRITE FOR CHILDREN



Handle with care: Dani Harmer as Tracey Beaker

1 Appeal. You're targeting children between six and 12 years. It's a wide age range, so your idea has to work on different levels. Make sure there's a lot of action; a six year old will understand it, even if they don't grasp the nuances in conversation.

2 Situation. Don't write a sketch based on the office coffee run, which is alien to children. Not everything has to be set in a school or a family, but choose worlds that have relevance to them.

3 Budget. Curtail your imagination. You can do big things, just not in every scene. Russell T Davies checked off *The Sarah Jane Adventures* with, 'cheap, expensive, cheap, expensive'. Think about what each scene will give you: do you need a big cast and multiple sound effects?



Gripping: The Sarah Jane Adventures team

4 Create three-dimensional characters. Don't rely on stereotypes or clichés. You can have recognisable figures (the archetypal bully) but make them interesting. Think about who their friends are, and what makes them different.

5 Inspire them. Children spend their lives being told what they can't do. We want to empower them: if we can encourage them to push themselves, be loyal, work as a team, be self-sacrificing, it gives us substance. CBBC isn't Hannah Montana, where the message is if you look good you'll be a success.

6 Make children the centre of the story. It's what makes the difference between children's programmes and family shows.

Do you have an idea you would like to pitch to CBBC? Anne Gilchrist, the departing controller, shared her tips for getting commissioned with 18 writers at a CBBC masterclass, run by BBC Writersroom

7 Be original. We don't need another programme set in a care home (*Tracey Beaker*) or an alien-fighting task force (*Sarah Jane Adventures*). Look at the current CBBC slate: what will be missing when *Grange Hill* goes?

8 Talent. Commissioners are impressed by it. Can you get someone impressive attached to your show?

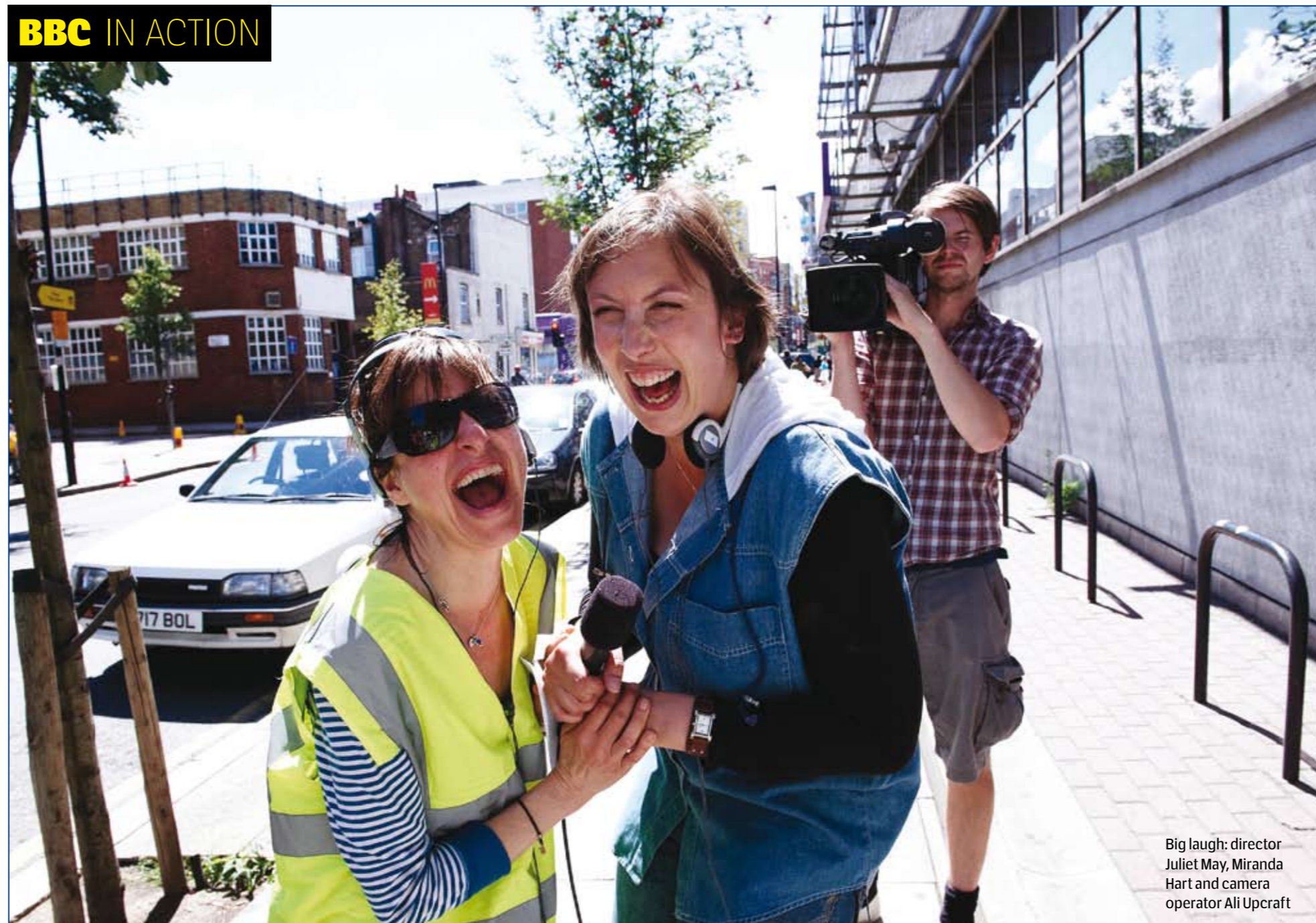
9 Humour. It's a great way to kids' hearts, even if you are writing a serious piece. It's rare for us to commission something that is relentlessly grim. Puncture pomposity.

10 Light and shade. Take them to the edge of their seats, but don't terrify them and don't kill anyone. It's a myth that children always watch tv with their parents. When CBBC is on they're often alone and they will self-edit. They won't watch stuff that might give them nightmares. Think about what will excite them instead. How can you create jeopardy?

11 Episodic. You can't guarantee that a child will see every episode of your show. They're not in control of their own time. Each episode must be clear and self-contained, with a story that leads them on to the next episode in the story arc.

In short: be satisfying, but not superficial. You don't have to have a big message, but you need to have a point. And make your idea stand out.

BBC IN ACTION



Big laugh: director Juliet May, Miranda Hart and camera operator Ali Uprcraft

SPEAK EASY

♦ **HOW DOES ROBERT PESTON SAY IT?** The words economy and economic are ubiquitous in these credit crunch times, but should the initial e be pronounced 'ee' - ee-kuh-NOM-ick or 'eck' - as in eck-uh-NOM-ick?

Economic is derived from the ancient Greek words oikos (house) and nemein (manage). Oikos would have sounded a bit like OY-koss but the 'oi' vowel combination underwent a sound

change and, in modern Greek, it is pronounced as -ee. The modern Greek word for economy - oikonomikos - is pronounced ee-kon-om-ee-KOSS.

In English, both ee-kuh-NOM-ick and eck-uh-NOM-ick are listed in the OED - but a recent poll found that 62 percent of people prefer ee-kuh-NOM-ick. The choice is yours.

For pronunciation queries contact pron.gateway.bbc.co.uk or 02 822277.

LEARNING CURVE

♦ Delve into the opulent history of National Trust castles and highlight the work of volunteers with two Connect and Create projects in the autumn. Both schemes are open to staff wanting to enhance their broadcast skills. The National Trust project will involve producing a film about its properties for its

website. Those working on the second project will be required to make a short film celebrating Make a Difference Day which will broadcast on the Community Channel. For more information and to sign up visit tinyurl.com/nationaltrustfilm and tinyurl.com/volunteersfilm



Glorious: The National Trust's Sheffield Park in east Sussex

WHAT TO WEAR

♦ **RODRIGO DAVIES** REPORTER, 6 MUSIC

Where did you buy the outfit you're wearing in the photo?

Jacket - Hurwunde; shirt - Uniqlo; trousers - People's Market; shoes - Ask The Missus [online] Has your job inspired your wardrobe?

A lot of musicians have a good sense of style, so I don't mind stealing their ideas. Have you had any fashion nightmares? Shaving my head. Whose wardrobe would you most like to rummage through? David Byrne [musician]. What's the worst outfit you were made to wear as a child?

I was allowed to wear whatever I wanted; apparently the dressing up box was my favourite game at school.

CHANGING PLACES

♦ **JAMES PHILLIPS** (pictured) joins BBC Cumbria as sports commentator... **MARIAN MCNAMEE** and **TIM BOSWELL** will take over the BBC Coventry and Warwickshire breakfast show on September 1... Elsewhere at the station, **STUART LINNELL** will present the Sunday morning breakfast programme from September 6... **DELLA PARSONS**, production editor in Hull, leaves the BBC to prepare for her round the world yacht race in September... **HSINYI LIU** joins the BBC as operations assistant with BBC Tours.



COMING UP

♦ Controller of daytime Liam Keelan has commissioned a second series of **MOVING ON** (pictured) for BBC One. Made by LA productions the 10x60 minute series of stand-alone dramas is expected to transmit next year. It will be exec produced by Keelan.

♦ Following in the footsteps of *The Undercover Princesses*, which aired on BBC



Three earlier this year, the channel has commissioned **THE UNDERCOVER PRINCESSES** for 2010. The 4x30 minute series will follow four princesses as they move to the UK to find love. Produced by Kaled and Objective Productions it was commissioned by BBC Three controller Danny Cohen and Karl Warner, executive editor, who will also exec produce it.

♦ BBC Three has also commissioned **WE ARE MONGRELS**, an animated tale of a fox who moves to the city. Commissioned by Cohen and controller of comedy commissioning Lucy Lumsden, the 8x30 minute series will be shown in 2010. Made in-house, it will be exec produced by Stephen McCrumb.

blogbites

Monday

Save Our Sounds

When I first got asked if I would work on a project about acoustic ecology, I really had little idea what that meant. After a while of getting my head around the concept of studying the world through sound and preserving endangered sounds, I was hooked. As a radio producer I like to think that I have a good appreciation of sound, but a simple exercise proved that I take sound for granted most of the time. Suddenly I realised how much gets lost in the general noise of everyday life. The BBC World Service's Save Our Sounds project was all about getting people to stop and listen.

Kate Arkless-Gray, radio producer
bbc.co.uk/blogs/bbcinternet/

Tuesday

Disappointed Derek?

I am feeling quietly confident that the forecast will go according to plan, but there is always a chance that Mother Nature will throw a spanner in the works! And instead of sunshine it will chuck it down! Time will tell, but if you're coming to the Eisteddfod tomorrow bring the sun cream just in case.



Derek Brockway, broadcast meteorologist
bbc.co.uk/blogs/walesnature

Wednesday

The road to musical stardom starts here

BBC Introducing is our initiative to support 'unsigned, undiscovered and under the radar music'. A few weeks ago we launched a new advice section to the Introducing website. There are dozens of videos to watch: industry professionals and DJs all talking about getting gigs, making records and how to make sensible business decisions.

Nigel Smith, senior content producer, A&M Interactive
bbc.co.uk/blogs/bbcmusic/

Thursday

It's a RAJAR day at Radio 4

It's a RAJAR day - when the radio industry gets its audience figures. I must stress that RAJARs are not the be all and end all of matters. Quality, range, impact - all count a great deal. But still - I'd rather they were good than not. And they are. We appear to be increasing quarter-on-quarter in microscopic increments - from 9.98 million reach to 9.999. (Reach is defined as the number of people who listen to at least 15 minutes a week). I am told that this is indeed considered to be 10 million. Hooray.

Mark Damazer, controller, Radio 4 and Radio 7
bbc.co.uk/blogs/radio4/

Friday

Attacks on seagulls on the increase

The RSPCA says attacks on seagulls by humans are growing by 10% a year, as people vent their frustration at Britain's booming population of urban gulls. But the animal charity warns anyone caught harming the birds risks prosecution. Seagulls have flourished in many coastal towns, including Cardiff which has one of the largest populations of seagulls in the UK.

Christopher Hunter, sbj, Radio 5 Live
bbc.co.uk/blogs/fivelivebreakfast



MADE IN THE UK

A welcome for filmmakers, without the usual price tag

MY FIRST real acting job was with the BBC in Northern Ireland, in the early 1980s, while I was still at school studying for A-levels. I received my Equity card when I was only 16 and appeared as an extra in the 'Billy' plays which launched Kenneth Branagh's career.

Those were exciting days: the *Billy* trilogy electrified audiences who had rarely seen their own lives portrayed on screen, except as bystanders to the latest bomb outrage or sectarian murder. It was among a handful of productions which propelled television drama in Northern Ireland into the mainstream.

I love the relationship I have with the BBC in Northern Ireland. The first BBC drama I had a significant role in there was Michael Winterbottom's film *Love Lies Bleeding*, about an IRA man on parole, one of the earliest films to explore the complexities of the peace process – a foreshadowing, if you like, of more recent work such as *Five Minutes of Heaven*. Later, I had every reason to thank the BBC in Belfast for commissioning the series *Murphy's Law*, and for having the balls and the belief to fight for its continuation.

Drama is born out of conflict. Though the Troubles paralysed Northern Ireland politically and economically, they provided the extraordinary backdrop which enabled more fine plays and films to come out of Northern Ireland than any other region, galvanising the creative community in the area.

The drama produced there through the 1980s and 1990s felt strong and edgy, often generating controversy. It was a testing ground for young writers and directors who learned their craft fast because, in the uncertainty of the times, there was a real hunger for what they could produce.

Their work reflected the real lives of people in a part of the UK that was torn apart by strife, and was often disturbing, haunting and memorable.

Geographically, it is a tiny place, but the creative expertise is phenomenal. Over the years a community of filmmakers and crew has grown up there, and anyone who works in Northern Ireland on a regular basis, as I do, finds themselves working with the same people time and again. Those established creative relationships are really helpful for an actor, because the trust is already there: you relax because you are working with

Belfast still has an edge, along with trusted talent and cultural pride, says actor James Nesbitt – good news for drama production in a place that punches above its weight



experienced people on whom you can depend to get their part of the job right. It is worth remembering too that great productions are made not only by directors, producers, writers and actors, but also by huge teams of people, and success or failure can rest on the talent and skill of each and every member of the crew.

For instance, for the past 20 years or so, Maggie Donnelly has been the wardrobe mistress on many of the productions I have been involved with in Northern Ireland, including *Ballykissangel*. So when I arrive for the first costume fittings on a production like *Occupation*, which I recently made there, I already know and trust the person responsible for a key part of the look of the character I am playing.

It is especially useful on pro-

ductions where schedules and budgets are tighter, because no time is wasted when the crew already know and understand how each other works.

Returning to Northern Ireland to work always feels like going home. When Belfast comes into view through the plane windows, my excitement and emotion mounts. Part is of course the thrill of having a job that takes me back to the place I was born, to see family and friends I grew up with, but it is also to do with the city itself, and the place that it is becoming.

After all those years of conflict, Belfast has not lost its original identity, and it has emerged stronger and more vibrant for it. Unlike Dublin, so much of which has become bland and cosmopolitan with the influx of money over the last decade or

so, Belfast still has an edge and a unique culture, caught between the mountains and the sea.

It holds so much for filmmakers of all kinds: terrific locations that range from urban grit through period grace to the sweep of grand, wild landscapes. Better still, there is a will to make films which extends right through the community. Unlike London, where the bureaucracy of obtaining permission to film can mire a production in weeks of delay and cost, there is a real sense of being welcomed in Northern Ireland.

Some years back, Granada planned to shoot an episode of *Cold Feet* in Ireland. The producers were planning to go to the South, but I lobbied heavily for the North, and so we ended up filming in Portrush and Belfast for eight or nine days, with a crew of 78. At the end of the shoot, the location manager took me on one side. 'You know, Jimmy,' he said, 'usually over a week or two's filming like this, the locations would cost my department something like two or three thousand pounds.'

He shook his head in amazement. 'This week, I've spent exactly twenty quid.' People were genuinely proud and delighted that their part of the world was being shown on television, and no one wanted to charge us any money for being there.

Right now, with Patrick Spence as head of drama for the BBC in Northern Ireland, there is a creative optimism about the place that feels very exciting for an actor. As well as *Five Minutes of Heaven*, a production on which I personally felt honoured to have worked, BBC One has recently shown *Occupation*, a three-part drama about three soldiers whose lives are transformed by the conflict in Iraq.

It seems to me a measure of Northern Ireland's success as a creative spawning ground that as well as single films and series that reflect people's lives in the province, now big-theme dramas are also made there which are not necessarily about the place itself.

Work generates work, success generates success; and in the BBC I sense the passion, the creativity and the conviction that Northern Ireland's time as a centre of excellence for drama has truly come.

Read other essays by well known champions of out-of-London production at the BBC website bbc.co.uk/madeintheuk

arielview



SALLY HILLIER

Wright stuff does the trick

PLENTY OF BBC RADIO people have good reason to cheer the latest Rajar figures (see page 3), and none more so than Roger Wright, controller of Radio 3, which notched up an audience of 2.02 million, its largest in more than two years.

It has been a fruitful spring and summer for Wright who in May saw his network named Sony/Radio Academy station of the year – incredibly it was the first time it had won the title – and is now earning plaudits as the man in charge of the BBC Proms.

During the Rajar measurement period in question (March 30 to June 28), Radio 3 showcased Handel, Haydn and Mendelssohn, launched a poetry season, featuring more than 40 contemporary poems read by their authors, and broadcast a full day celebrating Shakespeare's sonnets, read by Ian McKellen.

Classical music purists might not always share Wright's enthusiasm for seasons and projects (last year he gave his listeners a special on Chopin and another on China) but he is unapologetic. Such initiatives have 'a great impact with audiences' he believes.

The figures bear him out: this time two years ago Radio 3 had 1.78m listeners (under a 1 percent share), rising to 1.91m in 2008, and now it has broken the 2m mark.

It's still a tiny audience of course (Radio 2 has 13.424m listeners; Radio 1, 11.342; Radio 4 night on 10m) but with so much listening and viewing choice now available it is somehow cheering to know that more than two million people a week are tuning in to the BBC's home of classical music. With its patronage of the arts (it's often forgotten that the schedule includes a significant amount of both classical and newly commissioned drama), Radio 3 plays a unique role in shaping the national cultural agenda. In a summer when the BBC has been under such attack, Radio 3's success is a notable silver lining.

Sally Hillier is deputy editor of Ariel

Good on 'em for biting back

AMID THE CONTINUING BRICKBATS for the BBC, it was refreshing to see not one but two senior executives (Alan Yentob and Jana Bennett, see P4) lift their heads above the parapet last week and mount a spirited defence of the corporation. Yentob was particularly robust on expense claims, deeming them 'not intemperate'.

Not only that, he actively turned the tables on members of the government who were sticking their oars into BBC business. People may not have agreed with him, but if the corporation doesn't defend itself with reasoned argument and chutzpah, it's unlikely anyone else will.

Clare Bolt is features editor of Ariel

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

Staff say thanks a bunch for flower favouritism

Did Zarin Patel read Isabel Cosgrove's letter before penning her response (August 4)? Isabel queried why the expenses policy makes it impossible for the BBC to send flowers to the funerals of staff who have died in service (a fairly rare occurrence) when senior management are free to send flowers and other gifts to presenters, actors etc on expenses.

Zarin Patel responded that it was 'hard to justify to the licence fee payer the purchase of gifts for staff'. I wouldn't take issue with that statement in principle, but I can't agree that sending flowers to the funeral of a member of staff is a 'gift' – it is a mark of respect and a gesture of thanks from the organisation.

Beth Hamer
commissions manager, entertainment

■ I would have thought the sending of flowers to a funeral would be a lot easier 'to justify to the licence fee payer' than the £100 spent on flowers for Jonathan Ross in May 2006.

I would like to think that someone such as Bruce Forsyth, whose 80th birthday was celebrated with a £99.99 bottle of vintage champagne bought on expenses by Mark Thompson, would shudder at the idea of such gift purchases being prioritised over funeral flowers.

And I would have thought that if

we're talking about purchases which are 'usual', well, flowers at a funeral seem pretty bloody usual to me. More usual than a £300 cake or a £50 pair of cashmere socks anyway.

James Clarke
sbj, news interactive, Birmingham

■ On the one hand Zarin Patel tells us that 'Our staff are very important to us, they make the BBC what it is', while on the other she tells us that if we are unfortunate enough to die in service the BBC will not mark that sad event with a £40 bouquet of flowers.

This shows the crass style of some of our star struck management when someone who may have worked tirelessly for the good of the corporation is effectively ignored while they fawn over celebrities.

Andy Leslie
audio and music group

■ I doubt many licence fee payers would begrudge the presumably modest annual cost of some flowers for grieving relatives. I am convinced plenty would be unhappy about their money being spent on presents for already well paid 'talent'. I wonder how 'the talent' will feel now they know that their flowers and other fripperies are okay but gestures of sympathy to the loved ones of dead members

of staff are not.

I think it is time that Ms Patel re-calibrated her moral compass.

Adam Batstone
assistant editor, news website

■ It seems that the big names who earn hundreds of thousands – or millions – of pounds are 'talent' but the rest of us are 'staff'. We have no talent, apparently. And the BBC sends the 'talent' flowers because it's 'usual amongst this community'. But an employer sending flowers to the family of a colleague who has died is not usual?

Andrew Craig
sbj, Bush House newsroom

■ I think that on balance the licence fee payer would rather the BBC remember deceased colleagues than give flowers to what the public already perceive to be overpaid actors. To say it is 'usual' to give gifts among this community is no real justification – it was 'usual' for MPs to flip their second homes until quite recently.

Francesca D'Urso
financial accountant, World Service Trust

■ Most employers do bother to send flowers (or other token of respect) to the funerals of staff who have died in service; Zarin Patel's comment is indicative of the way the current

management do not value their staff in death as in life.

John-Paul Dunkley
broadcast engineer, FM&T

■ I am sure the public would sympathise with expenses used in times of bereavement, rather than for gifts which are purchased for talent, who are paid to do their jobs well, to mark successes and significant events.

This is not a matter of BBC expenses but a lack of caring in an organisation which is becoming negligible.

Aileen McColl
BBC Scotland Learning

Similar points were raised by Fay Yeomans, Nigel Holmes, Tom Percival, Lee Rogers, Richard Ellison, Paul Grimsdell, Theo Leggett and Nick Serpell.



Zarin Patel, chief financial officer, replies:

IT IS VERY UPSETTING when

a close friend and colleague dies. Those who knew them will always want to express their sympathy and respects and do so personally in whatever way they feel is best. The BBC as an employer also has several responsibilities to the deceased's family, such as arranging payment of pensions and ensuring that the family has all the support, both financial and emotional, that they need.

When I responded to the inquiry in last week's Ariel, I explained the expenses policy on gift-giving for staff, to make the distinction between business and personal expenditure,

as it is important that we do have clear guidelines in this area. What many of you have pointed out, and what I did not make clear, is that this is clearly very different to when a member of staff dies. The truth is, the expenses policy has no place in guiding what any of us should do in such sad circumstances: friends and colleagues will do what friends and colleagues should do; and the relevant BBC divisional director ensures that we as an employer pay our respects, which could mean, for example, formally representing the BBC at the funeral.

I am grateful to Isabel Cosgrove for raising this point because this is important. Please be assured that the BBC takes its responsibilities to families who find themselves in such circumstances very seriously.

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JOBS

BBC People

PROGRAMME MAKING

Leader, BBC Philharmonic Orchestra
Manchester
9D/Ref: 16939109
E C 27-Sep-09

Assistant Producer, Additional Programme Unit
Cardiff
7P/Ref: 16924809
E C 16-Aug-09 A 03 months

Assistant Producer, Cynhyrchydd Cynorthwyol, Sport
Cardiff
7D/Ref: 15999209
E C 16-Aug-09 A 02 months

Assistant Producer, A&M Factual
London
Maida Vale
5/7D/Ref: 16803909
E C 25-Aug-09

Station Sound/Marketing Producer (Broadcast Journalist) P/T
Derby
5/7D/Ref: 14767109
E C 21-Aug-09 A 05 months

Production Co-ordinator/Cydllynydd Cynhyrchu
Cardiff
5P/Ref: 16661609
E C 16-Aug-09 A 03 months

Researcher/Ymchwilydd, Sport
Cardiff
5D/Ref: 16822109
E C 16-Aug-09 A 09 months

Content Assistant, Irish Language
Belfast - Broadcasting House
5D/Ref: 15501209
E C 18-Aug-09 A Various

Broadcast Assistant, 6 Music
London
Western House
4D/Ref: 16961709
E C 21-Aug-09

JOURNALISM

Guest Producer
London
TV Centre
8/9D/Ref: 16813709
E C 24-Aug-09 A Various

Senior Broadcast Journalist (Reporter), Look North
Newcastle upon Tyne
8D/Ref: 16680509
E C 17-Aug-09 A 06 months

David Dimpleby Producer
London
TV Centre
7/9D/Ref: 16813509
E C 24-Aug-09 A 07 months

Producer, Portuguese for Africa Service
London
Bush House
7D/Ref: 13061909
E C 17-Aug-09 A 2 years

Broadcast Journalist - Casual Talent Pool
Multi Location - Scotland
5/7D/Ref: 4109909
E C 09-Sep-09 A Various

Broadcast Journalist - Radio Bristol
Bristol
5/7D/Ref: 17042509
E C 23-Aug-09 A 06 months

BA (Data Researcher)
London
TV Centre
5D/Ref: 16813309
E C 24-Aug-09 A 10 months

Online Producer, Bangkok
Bangkok
N/A/Ref: 16830909
E C 19-Aug-09 A 06 months

BUSINESS SUPPORT AND MANAGEMENT

Programme Manager, W12
London
11D/Ref: 16827509
E C 24-Aug-09

Business Affairs Manager
London
TV Centre
10D/Ref: 16673409
E C 01-Sep-09 A 04 months

Future Marketing Manager
London
White City
9D/Ref: 16983709
E C 23-Aug-09

Project & Communications Manager, BBC Outreach
London
White City
8D/Ref: 16981609
E C 02-Sep-09 A 12 months

Commercial Executive
London
White City
6D/Ref: 16812609
E C 01-Sep-09

Delivering Quality Assistant
London OR Wood Norton
5D/Ref: 16989709
E C 17-Aug-09

BBC Wildlife Fund Project Co-ordinator
London
White City
5D/Ref: 16982409
E C 02-Sep-09 A 11 months

Broadcast Media Coordinator (Cataloguing)
London
Broadcast Centre Media Village
4H/Ref: 17031909
E C 23-Aug-09 A 07 months

Communications & Events Assistant
London
4D/Ref: 17038409
E C 24-Aug-09

PA to Chief Operating Officer
London
Broadcast Centre Media Village
4D/Ref: 17005209
E C 20-Aug-09

Assistant to Lawyers, BBC Legal
London
White City
4D/Ref: 16887409
E C 17-Aug-09

Regional Support Assistant, BBC Children in Need
Manchester
3D/Ref: 16946209
E C 18-Aug-09

Tour Guides, BBC Birmingham
Birmingham
2H/Ref: 16875109
E C 24-Aug-09 Flexi 12 months

NEW MEDIA

Interactive Editor, BBC World Service
London
Bush House
10D/Ref: 16776309
E C 13-Aug-09 A 12 months

Senior Content Producer, Radio 1/1Xtra
London
Henry Wood House
8D/Ref: 16984709
E C 24-Aug-09 A 10 months

Search Engine Optimisation Specialist
London
Media Centre
7D/Ref: 10605209
E C 14-Aug-09 A 12 months

Web Assistant, Bitesize
London
Media Centre
4D/Ref: 16984209
E C 23-Aug-09 A 12 months

Preservation Assistant, Information and Archives
London
Windmill Road
3H/Ref: 17020009
E C 21-Aug-09 Continuing 12 months

TECHNOLOGY

Senior Client Side Developer
London
Broadcast Centre Media Village
8D/Ref: 16696509
E C 02-Sep-09

Broadcast Engineer, BBC Stoke
Stoke on Trent
5/7H/Ref: 16276009
E C 28-Aug-09

Test Engineer
London
Broadcast Centre Media Village
7D/Ref: 16980309
E C 20-Aug-09

Client Side Developer
London
Broadcast Centre Media Village
7D/Ref: 16696709
E C 02-Sep-09

Technical Media Assistant
Belfast - Broadcasting House
2D/Ref: 16899009
E C 24-Aug-09 A 06 months

BBC WORLDWIDE

Client Service Manager, Distribution: EMEA
London
Media Centre
1W/Ref: 17049909
E C 18-Aug-09

Regional Manager Distribution: EMEA
London
Media Centre
1W/Ref: 17050109
E C 16-Aug-09 Various

Buyer, BBC Magazines
London
Media Centre
2W/Ref: 16854809
E C 16-Aug-09 A 08 months

Circulation and Trade Marketing Coordinator
London
Media Centre
3W/Ref: 16887209
E C 23-Aug-09 A 12 months

Art Assistant/Junior Designer
London
Media Centre
4W/Ref: 16776909
E C 17-Aug-09

See Attachment

History lesson

Kieran Yeates, production trainee, returned to his roots during a four month stint at BH Belfast

I SPENT MANY CHILDHOOD HOLIDAYS in Northern Ireland, so I was expecting a lot of rain. I wasn't wrong, but the four months I spent on attachment in Belfast challenged some of my other preconceptions: from my grasp of tv production to my understanding of the country's history and the responsibility that comes with telling that story.

I arrived at Belfast BH, as part of my 18-month production traineeship, to work on a new series examining Irish history from the land of St Patrick to the present day. As my family is from Northern Ireland I thought I had a good understanding of the pivotal moments in the country's history,



Now I feel that I understand the Ireland of today a little better

but I quickly discovered that I'd only brushed the surface.

The five-part documentary, which is presented by Fergal Keane, begins with the Norman conquest of Ireland. The biggest challenge was working with academics who weren't experienced in making their specialised subjects accessible to wider audiences. Fortunately I found an historian who could break the past down into understandable stories and who weaved a history from the murderous, backstabbing Irish families who would kill their own to have a slice of power. As one of

our historians put it, it wasn't unlike *The Sopranos*.

It was a brutal period, and reading the accounts of the massacres and the destruction of entire villages it would have been easy to become desensitised to it all. But having access to original documents also helped me to understand what it must have been like for ordinary people.

I was working with a small but dedicated production team and there was a real desire to dispel the myths surrounding Irish history. Everyone understood just how delicate the topic was. Covering such a big tract of time, I didn't expect to fully grasp all of the complexities, but I do feel that I understand the Ireland of today a little better.

The Story of Ireland will be transmitted in 2010

**Been anywhere nice?
Send your attachment stories to Clare Bolt**

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

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PHIL WILLIAMS

Phil Williams presents Radio 5 live's Weekend Breakfast with Rachel Burden and is currently sitting in for Nicky Campbell on weekdays



PHOTOGRAPH: MARK BASSETT

CV

Education: BA (Hons) media and business management, Manchester University

First job: Waiter in a carvery restaurant

Career highlight: A world exclusive with The Rolling Stones in 2002. We did 25 minutes with each Stone and then put together an hour's special. They were brilliant.

Family: All in Birmingham

What did you want to be when you grew up?

An actor, although I abandoned that idea quite early on when a friend of my dad's, who'd been in *The Sweeney*, told me that they treat you like s**t. I fancied journalism because I've always been quite nosy and thought it was a nice way to earn a living.

So how did you get started?

I did two weeks' work experience on the Sutton Coldfield News and volunteered to cover a story. I had to get myself there using my bus pass and the next day it was the front page exclusive. I was 15.

When was your next lucky break into journalism?

I was at university when ten of us went to a Radio 1 roadshow. All the girls went off to get Gary Davies's autograph and, as I needed work experience, I went off to find Gary Davies's producer. Then I got into local radio.

Plenty of work experience then, but what about training?

After I graduated I spotted an ad for the local radio trainee reporter scheme. Twelve of us were taken for a recruitment day in London. I thought I didn't stand a chance. When I was told I'd got the job I didn't believe it. They said they liked my sense of humour and that I was the

only person who'd taken the legal errors out of the test. That's so going to haunt me in future when I get done for libel.

Have you always been a natural born performer?

I am a bit of a show off, although I'm not the first up at the karaoke. I don't like making a fool of myself.

Do you think it's a necessary quality for being on radio?

The fact that you put yourself in front of the mic seems to suggest you think you've got something worth sharing. It has to be done with confidence or you'll fall down.

What do you most enjoy about presenting?

I enjoy getting a response. If you come up with a really good idea for a text punt, and you watch texts come pouring in, that's very satisfying. I'm also keen on trying to get younger people interested in news. When I was younger I couldn't understand why people my age weren't passionate about it like I was. I think there's a mission for us at the Beeb to explain it in a way that's relevant.

How do you deal with emotional interviews?

I once interviewed a female vicar who'd just renounced her faith after her daughter

was killed by the July 7 bombs. That was incredibly emotional and quite tricky. I felt a lump in my throat, but it's my job. People ask what I do and I say I talk on the radio. They say they couldn't do that, but then I couldn't do their job.

Is there anyone you'd love to get in the studio?

I'd love to interview Ian Botham. He's a little bit rebellious but also incredibly gifted. Or Clint Eastwood – although they say you should never meet your heroes. You want people on the show who are extraordinary in whatever way, shape or form because their lives are invariably more interesting than mine.

What's next for you?

I've pretty much got the best job in the world. My plans would be to do more of it, providing they're happy for me to do that. I also do a bit of mentoring and coaching through the BBC college of journalism for local radio presenters. It keeps you sharp. When you're advising someone else it makes you think about the process of the job rather than just doing it.

How do you feel about 5 Live's move to Salford?

I don't have children so the decision is a lot easier for me. My current contract

expires before the move but if they wanted to give me a reason to relocate, it wouldn't be complicated for me to move to Manchester.

What is your passion?

I'm a season ticket holder at Aston Villa. Every second weekend, when they're playing at home, I come off air and drive up to mum and dad's.

Has your accent been a help or a hindrance?

I thought I was too Brummie to make it in radio. Maybe 20 years ago it would have been a massive hindrance but others paved the way and probably made it easier. I've also had some voice coaching, which has taken off the harder edges, but what you hear is what you hear, maybe with less profanity when I'm on air.

What advice would you give to others following in your footsteps?

It's uber-competitive but if you want it badly enough it is possible to get a job doing what you love whether it's journalism or playing football. Hard work has to be matched by desire and commitment and then you need a lucky break.

Interview by Sue Llewellyn

foreign bureau



ALEX GALLAFENT

BROADCAST JOURNALIST
THE WORLD, BOSTON

PREVIOUS CONTRIBUTORS to this column have remarked on the dangers of their postings: the violence, the death-defying traffic or the climate. *The World's* newsroom confronts daily a threat of a different order: Dunkin' Donuts. We're opposite the store and collectively represent, I suspect, a fair proportion of its business.

The World is a World Service partnership with Boston-based public broadcaster WGBH and the US distributor Public Radio International, which together connect us with local audiences across the US. We offer Americans an entry-point into news, culture and opinion beyond their borders.

Since Boston makes room for us here it demands certain commitments in return. Chief among them is fealty to the Red Sox, the local baseball team. The legendary Babe Ruth wore Red Sox colours before he turned Yankee, making his future in New York. For Boston it was a curse. Fate denied the city a World Series crown for more than

eight decades, a sequence of failure that lasted until 2004.

Up go the fans, as the teams switch

Even though the team is now one of the strongest in the US, the Red Sox still breathe a form of homespun sentimentality. Not for

Boston a brash new stadium. No, the Red Sox remain at Fenway Park, a compact ground which opened in 1912, making it the oldest Major League ballpark in use.

Still, you'll find money-spinning hospitality suites and luxury boxes alongside all the creakingly romantic corners. As swarms of vendors exchange towering cones of popcorn for not-inconsiderable chunks of money, the entire crowd will rise to sing 'Take Me Out To The Ballgame'. It's sung – as it is at ballparks across the nation – during the 'seventh inning stretch', a tradition of gentle exercise reportedly started during a game in 1910. Up we go, thousands of fans stretching out, as the teams switch between batting and fielding.

As Stephen Fry observed, it's a fool's errand to draw sweeping conclusions about the national character of the US from anything as singular as this ritual. The country is vast in its variety, contradictory in its attitudes and pastimes, glorious and ugly. Try to pin it down in any given fashion and a counter-example to your theory will pop up. Maybe that's why I appreciate the seventh inning stretch. It doesn't – to this observer anyway – claim to stand for anything larger than itself. It's not promising better health. It doesn't require that everybody stretch out of patriotism. It's just what you do when the seventh inning rolls around. It's just a stretch.

green room

THE ARIELATOR

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



UPSIDE BBC PRIDE caused a stir at Brighton's annual Pride festival with their matching polo-shirts – no mean feat at an event renowned for its outrageous costumes. Twenty three members of the Diversity Unit's forum for LGBT [lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual] staff took part in the Carnival Parade, as documented by BBC Sussex in their accompanying radio car. 'The crowd reaction to our presence was very warm, and actually contained a hint of surprise,' recalls Philip Mullen, BBC Pride comms officer. 'People were saying, 'Wow, it's the BBC!''

DOWNSIDE:

John Barnes, presenter of *The Late Show* on Radio Lancashire and Radio Manchester, is one of many people mourning the recent death of North West broadcasting legend Keith Macklin. As is the modern way, Barnes left internet tributes on his personal Twitter and Facebook accounts,



then last week the Daily Mirror ran a story on Macklin's death and used a quote from the tributes. All satisfactory, except for one clanger: the quote was attributed to 'former colleague, footballer John Barnes'. 'It caused great amusement,' says Barnes (the presenter, pictured left). 'I thought they would have noticed that a fat bearded balding man and the former England international are not one and the same. I'm sure that Keith is somewhere laughing about it.'

EARWIGGING

OVERHEARD AT THE BBC

...I have to put in lines like that; it makes the programme seem relevant...

...Gotta go, gotta life...

...You can counterbalance it with efficient use of your butt...

...No, this isn't the Spanish Embassy – it's BBC Radio Cambridgeshire...

...Sexist baboons are fine, but I think I should draw the line at dead fish...

...Has anyone been in yet to deliver a penguin?...



PONY TALES

'IT IS THE EARNEST HOPE of us all that those who wish may be able to enjoy riding instruction and the pleasures of the saddle on well-fed, contented horses, at a charge within the reach of the most modest purse,' said an article praising the BBC Ariel Riding Club (no relation) in 1953. Those pleasures must still be in demand as the club celebrates its 60th anniversary this year, and has organised a bbq at the end of the month.

Previous events have attracted some big names – the club's archives reveal that in 1956, 'BBC personalities expected' included 'Director General of the BBC, Sir Ian Jacob, and his wife, and Tony Hancock'. We're unsure of the guest list this year but all members – past, present, or prospective – are welcome on Sunday August 30 at Trent Park Equestrian Centre: email bbrc60@yahoo.co.uk or contact Hannah Wythe on 07779 729891.

OH, BEE-HIVE!



Taking the sting out: Radio Sheffield is de-bee-ed

A buzz of agitation spread through Radio Sheffield last week when staff spotted what they thought was a nest of wasps lurking under a bench in their car park. Mass panic was averted when closer inspection revealed instead they had been harbouring a colony of altogether more popular honey bees. Wasp-induced fear morphed into a cautious respect for our increasingly rare furry friends, and the station's

resident bee expert was called in to retrieve the nest live on Rony Robinson's afternoon show. 'Everyone from the office was watching from the windows as we removed it – you know you're doing a good broadcast when that happens,' said ba Katherine Cowan. Green Room can only assume the bees had heard about the latest trend for 'urban beehives' in the news last week and were trying out a bit of city living.

WE HEAR THAT...

Though Chris Moyles may have been beaten in last week's Rajar figures by 'breakfast king' Terry Wogan, what must really be bothering the man is his position as fifth most listened to breakfast show in Hull, a fact he ironically celebrated during a karaoke event in the town at the end of last month. But that escapade didn't answer the question currently occupying water coolers up and down the country: just who is Hull's favourite dj? Thankfully Karoo.com are putting us all out of our misery by running an online poll to find the finest disc spinner in the area. Local BBC men Andy Comfort (already the most listened to breakfast dj in Hull) and James Hogarth are on the list, but who will take the coveted title 'best in Hull'? Watch this space.

IF SOME people working at 5 live aren't too sure how to write it correctly, what hope the rest of us? Luckily Victoria Derbyshire provided much needed enlightenment when she opened an internal memo on air that explained the official way to write the station's name (it's the number 5, a space, and then a lower case 'live'). Perhaps confused staff should vent their frustrations with their friends at 1Xtra (That being the number one, a capital X and no space before the 'tra')...



GREEN ROOM notes the mysterious disappearance of the 'Sack Bill Turnbull' thread on Talk gateway – a lively debate sparked by word that Turnbull had eaten a live octopus in a Korean restaurant. The *Breakfast* presenter was happy to put the record straight: 'It's considered a delicacy and to refuse it when offered would have been discourteous,' he tweeted. 'For the record, it was already dead when I met it, honest. Wriggling, but dead. Tasted okay though.' Thank goodness. We're reliably informed that 'live' octopus is one of the most dangerous foods known to man and that more than one intrepid diner has suffocated when the octopus has attached its suction cups to their throat.

TECHNOLOGY WHIZZ Erik Huggers was surprised to be greeted on his recent trip to Salford by none other than... himself. It seems BBC North thought it would be a wheeze to graft the director of FM&T's head on to the famous 'Welcome to Manchester' poster created by Manchester City football club to welcome Argentinean striker Carlos Tevez to the camp following his defection from arch-rivals Manchester United. So, no hidden message there then.

