

Kingswood, UK - Chartered 1960

The Youngster



November 2019

BBC Calling

Ed: A cock-up in the production department resulted in my receiving two reports of this visit. I could have disregarded one but I needed something to fill up page 3 - so here's the first opinion. By Mike Bendrey

On Saturday 9th November two parties, Probus and the Y's Men, had a visit to the BBC Studios in Bristol. During the very interesting visit we were reminded that the BBC Natural History Unit is based here, and is responsible for Sir David Attenborough's wild life series which are currently broadcast to 34 television networks world-wide,



based here. As well as the famous TV series, Radio 4 covers many of its radio programmes from Bristol such as *The Food Programme* and *Poetry Please*. It's a very innovative operation.

After going through the security checks two knowledgeable young ladies took us around some of the site. The extent of the site behind the facade which you see from Whiteladies Road is amazing. We were walked through the newsroom, with its bank of empty seats and silent computers (it was a Saturday!) where the guides pointed out the seating for various sections of the news and Radio Bristol activities, into the Radio Bristol studio where they gave us an insight into the local broadcast system. They also let us into the secret of the broadcast which kicks in when there is a death in the Royal Family during a transmission.

and increasing. In addition, *Countryfile* and many other series, such as *DIY SOS*, are



On to the Points West TV studio, via the control gallery. This seemed surprisingly small and cluttered compared with the impression obtained from a broadcast. Apparently, Alex (and David!) do their own hair and make-up and we were told how the four cameras were manually operated, with the camera lens situated behind the rolling prompt.

The couch in the studio even had somewhere that Alex could secrete her hair brush! They think of everything.

On to the studio where we produced our own play, complete with sound effects. These were achieved with flapping gloves (birds flying), a bolt (a opening door), champagne corks popping and shoes on gravel. We also produced our own Points West transmission, complete with the weather forecast.

My visit with Probus was able to set up, by recommendation, Wally to give the forecast. In our case, Janet's daughter Paddy predicted the weather and put London in the South West! The whole thing is more difficult to produce than you think!

The Y's Men only group did the same tour but with different participants at the radio and TV studios. Roger did the narration of the radio play and Bob & Sam presented the 'Points West' production.

Altogether a very enjoyable and informative visit which gave us some of the inside secrets of the BBC. Again, a very well organised Bendrey production!



Fun with a G String

What a great evening at Dinner Night on 17th October! Phil Collins and Partner entertained us by giving a background to the history of the Ukulele covering its roots in Madeira and Hawaii when it was first described as the "Jumping Flea" and had royal patronage.

They talked about the legendary stars who had played the instrument, primarily George Formby, Tessie O'Shea, Lonnie Donegan and Tiny Tim but the real stars of the evening were "volunteers" from our Group who played the



miniature Ukuleles which were distributed and we were all able to join in with "My Old Man's a Dustman", "Frere Jacques", "Deep in the heart of Downend" and "You are my Sunshine".

Others in the Group proved proficient on the cymbals and maracas and then came the highlight of the evening – an attractive ensemble of Kingswood Y's Men and Hanham Y's Men performing a hula hula dance sartorially clad with garlands, grass skirts and upper body items. Those of us who were watching had rarely seen anything to compare with it!

A big "thank you" to Phil and partner after an evening which will stay in our memories for a long time.

Roger Clutson

Barn Christmas Fair

Friday evening found Jerry, Sandy and I busy converting a small room at the Barn into a Grotto for Father Christmas to use at the Christmas Fair. Lots of silver paper and fairy lights transformed the dull interior into a children's wonderland. Saturday morning saw the arrival of Father Christmas and his installation to wait for his visitors. Thirty six



children and their parents were suitably impressed with the chat they had and the small present given to tide them over until Christmas Eve when he promised to bring further delights.

We had many compliments on the scene we had set up for the children and many had their pictures taken by the Camera Club members to record the memories. Judy could not resist a chance to tell Father Christmas what she was hoping for on December 25th. Thanks to all who helped raise about £70 which will be given to the Barn.



Alan Wallington

Ed: Why is Judy having to grasp Father Christmas's hand so firmly?

Bendrey's Broadcasting Collective

(second opinion by Roger Cromwell)

Mike had arranged for us to visit the BBC Bristol premises Saturday 9th November for a guided tour of their studios and newsrooms. Unfortunately, the BBC could only manage parties of 16 people or less; as this was a shared outing with the local Probus Club two parties were created and our leader deserted the Y's party and went off with the old people's group. Our party was the second to gain entry and having approached the security gate we were invited in and asked to wait 'over there' whilst the guides from the departing group could go and 'powder their noses'. We were soon collected by our charming hosts, Lauren & Bella and taken to the reception room for visitors where we watched an interesting video compiled by the Natural History Unit. Here we were shown two of the types of drones used by the cameramen for filming wildlife when the use of aircraft or helicopters would be too intrusive and also told of the lengths of time involved in filming a series of one hour programmes, sometimes up to 5 years! We also learned why there is often a 15 minute 'Diary' section at the end of a programme, making up a one hour transmission: this is to accommodate advertisement slots for commercial TV companies when they buy film from the BBC. Moving on, we visited the Radio Bristol being shown all the controls in the hands of the broadcaster – too many things to remember here so goodness only knows how complex to use when on air. One important switch I do remember and that is used when an announcement of 'National' importance needs to be made – such as the death of a member of the Royal Family: local radio is not allowed to be the first broadcasters of such news so all local stations switch over to Radio 5, which has that privilege.

From the Radio Bristol studio we walked through the News Room where quite a large number of staff are involved in collecting material from various sources for the different sections of the local station to us as appropriate. There was not much to see there other than a lot of desks with computer screens and, this being a weekend, not too many staff around.

On to the Points West presenters' studio – please don't stand on the white platform or sit on the red sofa, they have just been cleaned – with its 'formal' desk and 'informal' sofa from which presenter Goldilocks can show off her tanned legs. It is a very clean set-up with very little control equipment on display other than the teleprompter. Then it was on to the 'Playroom', another studio for visitors to have some fun.

A good number of the group were given a variety of devices, some with an obvious use and other more mysterious. There were bells, boots on a tray of gravel, household rubber gloves, industrial gloves, a plank of wood along with other bits and pieces. Then they were given scripts from which they could see that they were to be important members of a radio drama soon to unfold. I was also given a script to read, with pauses at regular intervals when the other members of the cast used whatever they had been given to create the appropriate sound effect for the moment. Some effects were obvious from the beginning – 'they walked up to the door' invited the movement of the boots on gravel; 'they knocked on the door' prompted a knocking on the plank of wood but more intriguing was the use of the rubber gloves to emulate the flapping of little birds' wings and the heavier gloves for the beating of larger birds' wings. Then it was the turn of Bob and Sam to become news readers, using the teleprompt before handing over to Wally for the weather forecast. This proved to be a rather nonchalant performance which gave us all some good laughs – the main problem being that the presenter cannot see the weather map and it obviously takes some practice making sure their gestures indicating the different weather patterns are made in the correct direction. Still, I am sure Alan's forecast was just as accurate as that of Michael Fish on that infamous week of the hurricane!

Our visit proved to be a very interesting and informative afternoon's entertainment and our thanks are due to Mike B. despite him joining the earlier party and pinching all the cakes (well, there weren't any cakes around when our second group went in!).

The BBC Bristol premises are a maze of rooms in a number of different buildings, some old, some new and many are connected by linking corridors. I use this as my excuse should the sequence of departments visited and described above, are not in the correct order.

Desk Top Publishing

For some years now I have been using a Desk Top Publishing program called Page Plus. Although it's relatively inexpensive, it's a good piece of software which is quite comprehensive and flexible. I was going to put some back copies with the books which we sell at the Coffee Mornings at Staple Hill, but I'm happy to give to any club member the copies which I have, which are Page Plus 10 and 11 complete with manuals. If anyone would like one of the copies, just get in touch.

Mike Bendrey

Christmas Concert at Christchurch, Downend

Saturday 7th December at 7.30 p.m.

Tickets: Adults £8 Children £2
(includes refreshments)

Tickets can be obtained from Leon Found
Telephone 0117 9562445
E-mail leonandsue@yahoo.com



The London Theatre Trip

A group of 16 members of Y's Men and Probus had a trip to London. When they were there they split into three groups for theatre visits. The shows they saw were: 9 to 5, Lion King and Matilda.

Everyone thoroughly enjoyed their shows and it was really nice day out. Many thanks to Roger for organising this excellent trip.

Dave Moore

Promote your favourite local charity

Board of Governors has decided that we have been successful in our charity fund raising activities recently and have agreed to distribute £2000 to reduce the fund holdings. You have the chance to recommend a charity for the BoG to consider at the December meeting. Traditionally we have preferred to support the smaller local charities along with the Y'sdom International programmes and projects rather than large national and international charities but this is not a fixed rule. If you believe that you know of a deserving charity then approach one of the BoG members with supporting information to be considered on December 5th

Diary

Thu 21 Nov	7.30 pm Dinner Night - 'Brunel's Bristol' - Chris Bigg
Sat 30 Nov	9.30 am set up 10.00 am Coffee morning
Thu 19 Dec	7.30 pm Christmas Dinner - 'A Magic Show' - Tony Griffith
2020	
Fri 3 Jan	Visit to Bath Royal Theatre to see 'Beauty and the Beast' - Bob Gray organising
Sat 11 Jan	7.30 pm Games Evening at Bob and Sherry's house
Thu 16 Jan	7.30 pm Dinner Night - 'Christmas Toy Memories' - David Cheesley
Sat 15 Feb	7.30 pm Quiz Night
Thu 20 Feb	7.30 pm Dinner Night - 'The life, the poems and the songs of Rudyard Kipling - G Walker
Sat/Sun 28/29 Mar	Visit to Windsor Castle and the Tower of London
Thu 19 Mar	7.30 pm Dinner Night -
Thu 16 Apr	7.30 pm Dinner Night
Sat 25 Apr	7.30 pm Concert at Mangotsfield School
Thu 21 May	7.30 pm Dinner Night - 'Our Heritage of Song' - Robin Burton
Thu 18 June	7.30 pm Presidential Handover with skittles and a buffet at Mangotsfield Football Club
Sat 10 Oct	Race Night

To acknowledge the duty that accompanies every right

Editor: Graham Walker

email: gmwalker@blueyonder.co.uk

tel: +44 (0)117 967 2842