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Television Viewer's Guide 2004

A new guide for UK television viewers. All the information you need about Digital TV, including Sky, Freeview and Cable TV. TV transmitter information and map plus advice if you are looking for a new TV, VCR, DVD player or recorder.

Price: £5.95 per copy including postage and packing to UK destinations. Order two copies and get a third copy FREE!

Please make cheque or PO payable to Radio Listener's Guide, FREEPOST (SWB 40688) Plymouth PL8 1ZZ

COMPETITION - WIN A COPY OF 'HISTORY AND THE MEDIA'

We have 3 copies of 'History and the Media' edited by David Cannadine to give to the first three readers who answer this question correctly:

Who wrote and presented the BBC television series 'A History of Britain'?

Please send your answer to:
The Editor, VLV, 101 Kings' Drive, Gravesend, Kent DA12 5BQ.
The editor's decision is final.

HISTORY AND THE MEDIA - Edited by David Cannadine. £19.99. Published by Palgrave Macmillian, Brunel Road, Houndmills, Basingstoke, RG21 6XS. 01256 329242. www.palgrave.com. ISBN 1-4039 2037 0
History programmes have provided one of the recent success stories in British television. Based on a conference at London's Institute of Historical Research, this book is a collection of essays written by leading historians and broadcasters, such as Melvyn Bragg, Simon Schama, Jeremy Isaacs, David Puttnam and Max Hastings. It shows that televised history has come of age. The medium's own unique ability to combine facts and visual imagery allows it to provide vivid viewing and make its own contribution to the study of the past.



Diary Dates

Monday, 20 September

VLV visit to Channel Five
Covent Garden, London WC2
2-3.30pm

Thursday, 30 September

VLV visit to Jazz FM
London W1
2-3.30pm

Thursday, 7 October

Evening with Sir David Attenborough
The British Academy, London SW1
6.30 - 8pm

Monday, 11 October

VLV visit to BBC Written Archive
Centre, Caversham Park, Reading
2.30pm

Tuesday, 19 October

VLV visit to Ofcom, Wales
Caspien Way, Cardiff
2.30pm

Wednesday, 20 October

VLV Welsh Conference
The Academy, Holiday Inn, Castle
Street, Cardiff
9.45am-4.30pm

Thursday, 28 October

Visit to Scottish Screen,
West George Street, Glasgow
11am-12noon

Thursday, 28 October

VLV Scottish Conference
St Cecilia's Hall, Cowgate, Edinburgh
4-8pm.

Monday, 8 November

VLV Children's Forum Conference
The Royal Society, London SW1
9.45am-4.45pm

Monday, 29 November

VLV 21st Anniversary Lunch
House of Lords, London SW1
12.30-2.30pm

Tuesday, 30 November

VLV Autumn Conference
Hamilton House, London WC2
10.30am-4.45pm

Winston Churchill Travelling Fellowships

The Winston Churchill Memorial Trust offers 'Chance of a Lifetime' 4-8 week Travelling Fellowships for British citizens of any age or background to widen their experience by study abroad.

This year's categories include photography and documentary-film making, music for the young, young people and exploration.

Closing date for applications:
21 October.

For full details phone: 020 7584 9315
or visit www.wcmt.org.uk



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VLV Subscription - Individual £14.50, two at same address £22.50, overseas £21.50, student/concessionary £10.00.
Please make cheques payable to VLV Ltd and send to 101 Kings Drive, Gravesend, DA12 5BQ.

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VLV's 21st Anniversary Appeal

Lord Puttnam launches VLV's 21st Anniversary Appeal

Lord Puttnam launched VLV's 21st Anniversary Appeal on 7 July at the British Academy, London. Its aim is to raise £75,000 over the next twelve months. Thanks to the generous support of the Robert Gavron Charitable Trust, which has pledged £5,000 for each of the next three years, and to the personal generosity of numerous VLV members and supporters, we are already off to a flying start.



In addition to approaching grant-making trusts and foundations, we shall be holding a series of different fund-raising events. The first two, with Sir David Attenborough and Lord Bragg, will be very high profile. But we are also planning a wide

variety of events in different places. We would welcome your suggestions and your help in organising them, whether large or small.

Speaking at the lunch, Lord Puttnam said, that he would be delighted if all VLV supporters who could, would try to give 'Just one pound for every year of VLV's existence'. We are delighted that many have been following his suggestion by generously donating at least £21 to the appeal.

WHY WE ARE MAKING THE APPEAL

We need the money to put VLV onto a more secure financial base for the future. Only in that way can VLV grow and extend its work on behalf of listeners and viewers, citizens and consumers, in the harsher environment to come.

We are celebrating more than twenty years of working for quality, diversity and independence in British broadcasting. In that time radio and television have changed dramatically.

Multi-channel television and digital technology, together with increased commercial competition and a changing regulatory framework, are putting ever-greater pressure on all the terrestrial public service broadcasters, making it much more difficult for them to invest in high quality or innovative programmes.

VLV is committed to making the case for high quality radio and television and to supporting the principles of public service in broadcasting and the new media.

cont. on p4

An evening with Sir David Attenborough

Thursday, 7 October



Sir David Attenborough has made a unique contribution to British broadcasting, both as a programme maker and as an executive. As Controller of BBC2 in its early years, he imbued the channel with his own distinctive cultural vision and created its sense of high ambitions by commissioning not only landmark documentaries – who can forget *Civilisation* and *The Ascent of Man* – but also innovative comedy and drama.

We are therefore delighted that Sir David has agreed to give an evening presentation especially for VLV on Thursday, 7 October. It will be the first of a series of fund-raising and other events to mark VLV's 21st anniversary. He will share his experience and discuss some of the techniques of making natural history programmes for the BBC.

The event will be at the British Academy, 10 Carlton House Terrace on Thursday, 7 October, starting at 6.30pm. Tickets, which include a glass of wine or other refreshment, cost £25 each. Only 100 places are available, so we advise early booking.

FORTHCOMING VLV CONFERENCES

WELSH, Cardiff - 20 Oct

SCOTTISH, Edinburgh - 28 Oct

CHILDREN'S, London - 8 Nov

21ST AUTUMN, London - 30 Nov

See page 5

Anniversary Lunch at the Palace of Westminster

Monday, 29 November

VLV's 21st anniversary actually falls in November and we shall mark it by a celebratory lunch in the splendid setting of the Cholmondeley Room in the House of Lords. Lord (Melvyn) Bragg, award-winning author and presenter of the *South Bank Show*, has kindly agreed to be the speaker.

The lunch will provide another very special opportunity for VLV members and supporters to celebrate its achievements in sparkling style and comfort. Tickets, which include lunch and wine, cost £50 each, with a suggested donation of £25 where possible.

Lord (Melvyn) Bragg



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Voice of the Listener & Viewer

Working for Quality and Diversity in British Broadcasting

VLV Patrons

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Professor Naomi Sargant
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Company Secretary

Bob Fletcher

VLV office hours:

9.00am - 5.00pm Mon-Thurs

Voice of the Listener & Viewer Ltd (VLV)

represents the citizen and consumer interests in broadcasting and works for quality and diversity in British broadcasting. VLV is free from political, sectarian and commercial affiliations. VLV is concerned with the issues, structures, institutions, and regulation that underpin the British broadcasting system and in particular to maintain the principles of public service in broadcasting. VLV does not handle complaints.

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Registered address:

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Tel: 01474 352835 Fax: 01474 351112.

E-mail: info@vlv.org.uk

Website: www.vlv.org.uk

2nd AGM of VLV Ltd



Andrew Taussig

VLV Ltd's second AGM was held on Wednesday 7 July 2004, at the British Academy, London SW1 immediately following VLV's summer conference on Broadcasting and the Arts – Renaissance or Retreat?, reported elsewhere in this issue. Nearly 50 members stayed on to attend.

VLV was incorporated as a private company limited by guarantee (No. 4407712) in 2002. It did not, however, commence trading until

1 January 2003. With the end of the financial year set at 31 March, the annual report presented at the first AGM in July 2003 covered only the first three months of trading. The report presented in July 2004 was therefore the first to deal with a full year's operations.

Colin Shaw and Professor Naomi Sargant resigned from the Board during the year, Mr Shaw to become chairman of The Voice of the Listener Trust, Naomi Sargant to continue as The Trust's Honorary Treasurer. The Chairman thanked each for the unstinting support they had given VLV and herself personally over many years, most recently in the preparations for the 21st Anniversary Appeal.

Two nominations were received for the vacancies on the Board, each proposed by Jocelyn Hay: Andrew Taussig seconded by Bob Fletcher, and Warren Newman, seconded by Naomi Sargant. Both were elected unanimously. The Chairman said that she looked forward to working with them both.

The reports of the honorary officers were received and approved unanimously. The report of the Examiners, Messrs King & Taylor of Gravesend was approved unanimously. The Treasurer proposed that new Examiners, Messrs Dendy Neville of Maidstone, be appointed for the coming year. This was also approved unanimously.

As required under Article 26 c of the Company's Articles of Association, all three honorary officers (Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer), having served two years were required to retire, but being eligible for re-election, all three were re-nominated and subsequently elected unanimously.

Three special Resolutions to amend the Articles of Association were approved



Warren Newman

unanimously. The first amended the number of Board members to a minimum of six and maximum of ten, including the three honorary officers. The second provided for staggering the retirement of the three honorary officers over the next three years and subsequently.

The third dealt with the future retirement and rotation of Board members.

In her report the chairman thanked the staff at Gravesend who had been augmented in 2004 by the appointment of VLV's first Education & Development Officer, Eddie Tulasiewicz. Since his arrival, he had been responsible for the re-launch of VLV's website, the production of new membership leaflets and for organising the 21st Anniversary Appeal. Many outsiders, she said, were astonished to learn how much VLV achieved with its tiny but dedicated staff and the enormous amount of voluntary help given by VLV members and supporters. She was particularly grateful to the members of the Board and Strategy Group; special thanks due to John and Carey Clark who, with members of the Mem and Ops Group, organised the presentation of VLV's 2003 Awards for Excellence at the spring conference.

After the close of formal business, over forty members stayed for more than an hour to discuss a wide range of topical issues. A party of some 25 then rounded off the day with a flight on the London Eye and dinner at the Royal Festival Hall.

Copies of the Annual Report and of the changes to the Articles of Association are available to members from the VLV office in return for a large SAE. Audio cassettes of the AGM and the discussion which followed cost £5 including postage and packing.

New Patron for VLV



Sir Charles Mackerras, KT, CBE

Sir Charles was born in Sydney. He was principal oboist with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra before he came to London, becoming staff conductor at Sadler's Wells in 1949. After that, he was Principal Conductor with the BBC Concert Orchestra

and the Liverpool Philharmonic and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestras. He has also been Guest

Conductor at the Royal Opera House, English National Opera, the Metropolitan New York and at many, many orchestras in the UK, on the continent and elsewhere.

Sir Charles and Lady Mackerras, who also comes from Sydney, have been VLV members for several years and we are delighted that he has kindly consented to become a Patron. Speaking at VLV's summer conference in 2003 on the future of broadcast music, he passionately defended the role that the BBC and public service broadcasting play in British musical life. Despite an almost-incredibly full schedule of engagements, we look forward to seeing and hearing more of them both in future.

Public Service Broadcasting: safe in whose hands?

VLV's 21st Spring Conference held on 30 April

Stephen Carter, Chief Executive, Ofcom, the new Office of Communications, gave the keynote speech at VLV's 2004 spring conference in London on 30 April. Steven Barnett, Professor of Broadcasting at Westminster University and Observer columnist was in the chair.

Mr Carter described how Ofcom had been set up under the 2003 Communications Act to replace Oftel and the four former broadcasting regulators. It became operational at the start of 2004 and had had to establish itself extremely quickly because of the timetable imposed on it by political and technical developments. Ofcom is revising all the codes of practice and guidelines of its predecessors and at the same time was required to conduct a review of public service television, the results of which would inform the Government's thinking on the renewal of the BBC's Royal Charter.

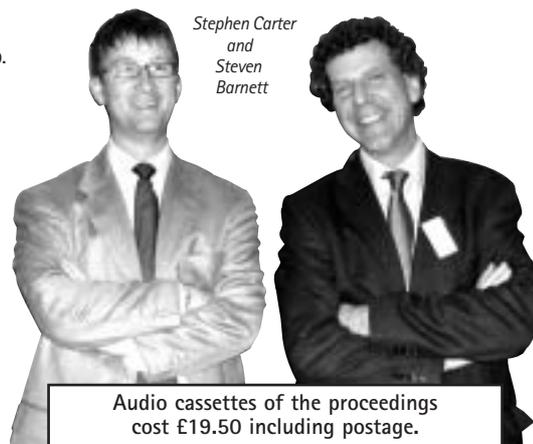
The main Ofcom board would delegate some of its work related to radio and television programme content to its Content Board, chaired by Richard

Hooper, Deputy to the Ofcom Chairman, Lord Currie of Marylebone. An independent Consumer Panel had also been established by the Act to advise the Ofcom Board on consumer issues such as access, privacy, redress, value for money. It was chaired by Colette Bowe. The two bodies would liaise with each other but their roles did not overlap. After a detailed and informative presentation, Mr Carter spent over an hour answering questions before joining members for a sandwich lunch.

Mark Byford, Acting Director General of the BBC, was the speaker in the afternoon session with Gillian Reynolds, Radio Critic and Columnist at the Daily Telegraph in the chair.

Mr Byford, who was appointed in the wake of the resignation of the former Director General Greg Dyke, said the BBC had learnt lessons from the Hutton inquiry and now needed to put the matter behind it. The most important thing, he said, was to look to the future and the BBC Charter renewal. The BBC's response to the DCMS consultation would be delayed until a new

Chairman and Director General were appointed. He spent more than an hour answering questions about many aspects of the BBC's role and workings, including BBC Radio and the World Service.



Stephen Carter
and
Steven
Barnett

Audio cassettes of the proceedings cost £19.50 including postage.

Broadcasting and Civil Society in the Digital Age

VLV's 9th International Conference, held on 26 and 27 April 2004 at the Royal Society, Carlton House Terrace, London SW1

Well over a hundred delegates participated in VLV's 9th international conference which was opened by Lord McIntosh, UK Minister for Broadcasting and Heritage, with a warm welcome from the UK Government.

Mark Thompson, Chief Executive of Channel 4 followed, outlining some of the issues facing broadcasters in the UK and elsewhere as digital technology brings increasing interactivity and hundreds of new channels and services. The implications for public service broadcasters, democracy and cultural diversity, he said, of the consequent economic and social changes were immense. Other speakers from Europe, Asia, Australia, North and Central America took up the same themes, leading to a consensus and Resolution calling on Governments to support the principles of public service broadcasting, drafted by rapporteur, Jeremy Mitchell, and put to the conference in the final session by VLV chairman, Jocelyn Hay. After discussion the Resolution was passed unanimously. Copies are available from the VLV website, or in return for an SAE.

Audio cassettes of the conference proceedings cost £35 including postage.

EURALVA Meeting

During the conference, representatives of EURALVA, the European Alliance of Listeners' & Viewers' Associations, from Denmark, Portugal, Australia, Canada and the UK, welcomed new members from Germany and Norway. An apology was received from Finland.

Euralva representatives pictured above from left to right: Dr Manfred Capps, Roger Raven, Geir Nyborg, Jocelyn Hay, Professor Manuel Jose Lopes da Silva, Professor Noreen Golfman and Preben Sørensen.



Speakers included: Peter Grant, Senior Partner, McCarthy, Tetrault, Canada; Roger Raven, Friends of the ABC, Australia; Dr Daya Thussu, Goldsmiths College, London; Stewart Purvis, City University, London; Guillaume Chevenière, Chairman, World Radio & Television Council, Geneva; Dr Noreen Golfman, Chair, Friends of Canadian Broadcasting; Stefann Depypere, Directorate for Competition, European Commission; Professor Vincent Porter, University of Westminster; Carole Tongue, former MEP; Vladimir Gai, Chief of Section, UNESCO, Paris; Huw Jones, Chief Executive, S4C, Wales; Rafael Segovia, Council for Culture & the Arts, Mexico; Elizabeth Smith, Secretary-General, Commonwealth Broadcasting Association; Dr Ivor Gaber, London; Dr Manfred Kops; University of Cologne; Professor Manuel Jose Lopes da Silva, AC Media, Portugal; Preben Sørensen, Danish Viewers' and Listeners' Federation; Greg Bensberg, Digital Adviser, OFCOM; Ashley Highfield, BBC Director New Media & Technology; Philip Laven, Technical Director, EBU; Milica Howell, the Hansard Society, London; Dr Damian Tambini, Oxford University; John Clark, VLV Board member.

Broadcasting and the Arts - Renaissance or Retreat?

VLV's Summer Conference at the British Academy, London Wednesday, 7 July

Nearly 90 people attended VLV's summer conference on the state of broadcasting and the arts, following the launch of VLV's 21st Anniversary Appeal on 7 July.

The speakers were: Alan Yentob, BBC Director, Creative, Entertainment & Children's; Janet Younghusband, Commissioning Editor for Arts, Channel 4; Kim Peat, Controller of Daytime, Arts & Religion, Five; Roger Wright, Controller, BBC Radio 3.

The theme was chosen after Ofcom published research, conducted as part of its review of public service television, which seemed to show that viewers no longer placed a high value on art and music programmes. Each of the speakers stoutly defended their company's arts policies and all seemed confident that funding would continue at least at its current rate. Only Kim Peat, however, was willing to say just how much of her company's total programme budget was actually allocated to the arts: 2%. (See letter from Michael Darlow, p7). Roger Wright, whose network supports four of the BBC's Orchestras, the BBC Choir and Singers, and the Proms, said that he had no doubt that support at its present level would continue for Radio 3.

Some in the audience were less sanguine and felt that neither broadcasters nor audiences should be complacent.

Audio cassettes of the event cost £12.50 including postage.



Roger Graef



As I write on a hot summer day I feel we are enjoying a short lull between storms. In the past two years, briefings, meetings, consultations and seminars have occurred almost every day. In the first year they were dominated by the Communications Bill, in the second by issues surrounding the Bill's enactment and the creation of Ofcom, the new Office of Communications, and with the start of debate about the future of the BBC.

Discussions have continued, always passionate and intense, right up to August. Now there's just the briefest break in which to re-charge batteries.

In the autumn Ofcom will announce the results of the second phase of its review of public service television. At the same time, Ofcom will launch fresh consultations as it revises and harmonises all the codes and guidelines prepared by its five

predecessors. What a marathon undertaking, not only for Ofcom, but also for organisations like VLV which try to respond in the public interest but have only a fraction of its resources.

Debate about the future of the BBC will intensify as Lord Burns and his committee get fully into their task of reviewing all aspects of the BBC's role. He held his first two seminars in the last week of July. I was invited to speak at one, and Board member Vincent Porter attended the other. Some eight or ten more are to follow. They are all vitally important because the findings will inform Lord Burns' report to the Secretary of State. She will then be involved in drafting the Green Paper on the future of the BBC, expected in the New Year.

Although the BBC Charter runs to the end of 2006, the legislative process is already underway and the first phase of public consultation ended on 31 March. There is now very little time left to influence government thinking. VLV's concern is to articulate and raise awareness of the case for

public service broadcasting and for a publicly funded, publicly accountable, independently governed BBC.

Against us stands an array of free market advocates and commercial rivals of the BBC who constantly assert - and in some cases naively believe - that competition will provide virtually all the programmes and quality 'consumers' want. They argue that subscription TV would be a fairer way to fund the BBC than the universal licence fee and, seductively, add that as the number of channels grows, so the case for a public service BBC is weakened.

Many of those who deploy these arguments, publicly and privately, have no interest in broadcasting as a public good and simply brush aside all the evidence that the rigorous application of market principles is already in danger of seriously damaging the public interest. Yet one only has to travel abroad or entertain visitors from the USA to realise how wrong they are and how many of the benefits that public service broadcasting brings are ones that we in the UK simply take for granted.

VLV needs to boost its resources quickly and massively in order to meet these challenges, so this Bulletin gives prominence to our Anniversary Appeal. I know we can rely on our members and many friends and supporters to help us meet those challenges.

Continued from front cover

VLV's 21st Anniversary Appeal



VLV's priorities include safeguarding the BBC's ability to provide impartial news and current affairs, and to maintain the quality and range of its arts and other programmes; it is vital to ensure that Channel 4 can continue to fulfil its remit as a public service broadcaster with particular responsibilities for innovation and experiment and serving the needs of minorities, and for VLV to ensure that the interests of citizens and consumers are at the forefront of all broadcasting policy, especially as we move towards digital switch-over.

One of VLV's greatest strengths is its freedom from commercial, political and sectarian influence.

Our independence stems from the fact that our work is funded almost entirely by subscriptions and donations from our members and supporters.

Our growth to date has been organic. We have launched our Anniversary Appeal because now we need to grow more quickly in order to ensure that VLV has the resources to meet the challenges ahead. We have set ourselves an ambitious target but the money is essential if VLV is to continue to make the case for public service broadcasting in new and more effective ways, and to continue its work as the leading advocate for the citizen and consumer in broadcasting.

The Appeal will run for the next year, until July 2005, with VLV's actual birthday, 14th November, at its centre.

VLV – the first 21 years

In VLV's first 21 years, the organisation has advanced from a small, single-issue campaign to its present position as the UK's leading advocate for the citizen and consumer in broadcasting. Celebrating that achievement gives us a chance to pause and recall some of the most important developments in VLV's work and activities since 1983.

2004 has already been one of VLV's busiest years. Our work in the first six months alone has included submitting detailed responses to the DCMS consultations on BBC Charter renewal and the BBC's new media and online services, as well as to Ofcom's Review of Public Service Television and a number of others. In March we held a public seminar in BBC Charter Renewal, with the Spring

conference and our 9th international broadcasting conference following in April.

Most recently the summer conference was held on 7 July

The next 21 years!

Looking to the future, the threats to public service broadcasting and to the independence and integrity of broadcasters are real and immediate.

They include controversies over the future governance and funding of the BBC, increasing commercialisation, and the possibility of foreign ownership of British radio and television companies. At the same time, new digital media, including the Internet, offer the prospect of new forms of public service broadcasting and new ways of providing information, education and entertainment.

6 Ways You Can Help VLV Continue to Grow!

- **Donate £21 to VLV's 21st Anniversary Appeal**
If you would like to make a donation by credit card, please call 01474 352835. If you would like to send a cheque, please make it payable to VLV Ltd - or, if you are prepared to Gift Aid the amount, which will increase its value by nearly a third at no extra cost to you, please make it out to The Voice of the Listener Trust. The Trust is VLV's charitable arm and funds all its educational work. (Reg charity No. 296207).
- **Recruit a New Member**
Do you have family members, friends or work colleagues who are keen radio listeners or TV viewers and who might wish to support VLV? You could help us by distributing our attractive new membership leaflets to societies or organisations to which you belong, or by leaving them at your local library, college, church or community centre. If you would like more copies, or to discuss the matter, please call us now on 01474 352835 or e-mail info@vlv.org.uk.
- **Renew your Subscription promptly**
- **Hold, or help us to organise, a Fundraising Event or Library Display in your locality; or invite a VLV Speaker to your Club, University or Society.** Please call 01474 352835 for more information or e-mail info@vlv.org.uk



WIN!

What are your hopes and fears for the future of British broadcasting?

Please write and tell us. We will publish the best ideas and there will be a prize of a portable, wind-up radio with built in torch for the most interesting one.

Please send your ideas to the Editor, VLV Bulletin or email to info@vlv.org.uk.

The 2003 VLV Awards for Excellence in Broadcasting

Andrew Marr, the BBC's Political Editor and himself a former award-winner, presented the VLV's 2003 Awards at the spring conference in April. Having been unable to attend at the last moment last year, he went out of his way to say how pleased he was to be invited again. Those who won them, he said, considered them very special. His words were confirmed by the exceptionally high turn-out of members of the production teams who had worked on the winning programmes and the obvious pleasure they, and the many VLV members present, clearly derived from the event. The Awards organised by John Clark are sponsored by The Voice of the Listener Trust. The winners each receive an engraved glass trophy kindly donated by Dartington Crystal.

The Winners of the 2003 VLV Awards

RADIO

Best Programme: The Proms.
Best New Radio Programme: Kathleen Ferrier Night.
Best Individual Contribution to Radio: Melvyn Bragg.

TELEVISION

Best Television Programme: The Lost Prince.
Best New Television Programme: Seven Wonders of the Industrial Age.
Best Individual Contribution to Television: Robert Winston.

Two Special Awards were presented, over and above those nominated:

A VLV Special Award to: Lindsey Hilsum, Channel 4 News, for her reporting from Iraq.

The VLV Critic's Award for 2003, nominated by VLV's selected critic, Stephen Pile of the Daily Telegraph: State of Play, directed by David Yates.



Robert Winston receives his award from Andrew Marr.

VLV'S 2004 AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE IN BROADCASTING

The VLV Awards are popular with broadcasters and members alike. They give members a unique opportunity to air their preferences in a very positive way. Sometimes, however, we feel that nominations are biased towards the timing of voting. In our 21st year we want to make the Awards especially significant and special, so please try to remember your favourite programmes from the first half of this year and send their names to us now. We would like to have the widest spread of nominations in this crucial year for public service broadcasting. Send them marked 'Awards 2004' on a postcard to the VLV office or e-mail to info@vlv.org.uk

Meetings and Events attended by VLV

Some of the events in which VLV has participated since the last Bulletin include: Ofcom's Chair of Consumer Panel and officials reviewing Programme Codes. Seminars on Media Literacy and Ofcom's Review of Public Service Television. Seminars of the Social Market Foundation, Westminster Media Forum on BBC Charter Renewal and BBC's New Media Services; and at the DCMS - for Lord Burns' Committee on BBC Charter Renewal. VLV has also met BBC Policy officials and sent speakers to: World Press Freedom Day; PCML Oxford University Summer School; Association of International Broadcasters; the Advertising Association; Hansard Society; Bromley U3A, Chevening and Beckenham WIs and Gravesend Rotary Club.

Public Consultations

VLV has submitted responses to:

- Ofcom Licensing Community Radio - April
- 2nd Phase of Ofcom's Review of Public Service Television - June
- DCMS Inquiries into the BBC's New Digital Radio and Television Services - July.

Consultations Still Current

- Culture, Media & Sport Select Committee Inquiry into BBC Charter Renewal.
- Ofcom consultation on Media Literacy.
- Ofcom Review of Party Political Broadcasts.
- Ofcom Review of Programme Codes.

For further information visit Ofcom's website: www.ofcom.org.uk or telephone: 020 7891 3000.

VLV's New Website

VLV's new website gives full details of VLV's work, policies and forthcoming events. It includes a booking form for conferences and members' visits and social events, allowing you to reserve priority tickets.

Whilst we know that many people do not have access to the Web, we are pleased that more and more are now finding their way to our website and are enjoying its use. We have designed it to be user-friendly and easily accessible by those with disabilities. Our aim is to make VLV's work much more

widely known in the UK and overseas.

We hope you will now help us to promote it and suggest ways we might improve it.

The web address is: www.vlv.org.uk



VLV Autumn Conference Programmes

VLV's autumn programme is designed to raise public awareness and debate about four key issues facing British broadcasting today: the importance of the role that radio and TV play in British democracy; the future of the BBC, whose Royal Charter expires in 2006; Ofcom's review of public service television; and the implications for viewers and listeners of the government's desire to switch to digital transmission by 2012.

Wednesday, 20 October: Cardiff



VLV'S 7TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN WALES – Broadcasting in Wales – Charting the Future.

9.45am- 4.30pm, The Academy, Holiday Inn, Castle Street, Cardiff.

Speakers include: Huw Jones (left), Chief Executive, S4C; Rhodri Williams, Director, Ofcom Wales; Huw Thomas, BBC Wales, Head of Communications & Public Policy; Tim Suter, Ofcom Partner, Content and Standards Policy.

Thursday, 28 October: Edinburgh

VLV'S 10TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN SCOTLAND – Charting the Future – Broadcasting in and for Scotland.

4 - 8pm, St Cecilia's Hall, University of Edinburgh, The Cowgate, Edinburgh.

Speakers include: Ken MacQuarrie (right), Controller, BBC Scotland; Vicki Nash, Director Ofcom Scotland; Bobby Hain, Managing Director, Scottish Television; Jocelyn Hay, Chairman, VLV; Robert Beveridge, Napier University, Edinburgh.



Monday, 8 November: London



8TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE VLV FORUM FOR CHILDREN'S BROADCASTING – Children's Radio & Television in a globalised, multi-channel world

9.30-4.45pm, The Royal Society, 6-9 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1.

Speakers include: Dorothy Prior (left), Controller CBBC; Steven Andrew, Controller ITV Daytime and Children's; Nick Wilson, Controller, Children's & Youth Programmes, Five; Anna Home, Chief Executive, Children's Film & Television Foundation; Andrea Millward-Hargrave, Principal, Millward-Hargrave Ltd, former Director of Research, BSC and Independent Television Commission; Rosalind Bates, Senior Examiner, British Board of Film Classification; Robin Blake, Manager, Media Literacy Ofcom.

Tuesday, 30 November: London



VLV'S 21ST ANNUAL AUTUMN CONFERENCE – Public Service Broadcasting: Charting the Future
 10.30-4.45pm, Hamilton House, Mabledon Place, off Euston Road, London WC1.

Keynote Speakers: Luke Johnson (above left), Chairman, Channel 4; Ed Richards (right), Ofcom Senior Partner, Strategy and Market Development.



Book Reviews

PROMOTE OR PROTECT?

Perspectives on Media Literacy and Media Regulations edited by Cecilia von Feilitzen and Ulla Carlsson. Published by NORDICOM, Goteborg University, Box 713, SE 405 30, Goteborg, Sweden. www.nordicom.gu.se, ISBN: 91-89471-23-7

Media literacy will become increasingly important in the multi-channel digital world for both adults and children. This collection of 21 essays by media professionals from all five continents reflects concerns about the state of media education, media professionals' understanding of children and the effectiveness of media regulation. It aims to stimulate discussion, inform research and influence policy-making in order to develop greater competence among young people as media users.



FREE FOR ALL?

Public service television in the digital age by Barry Cox. £10. Published by Demos, Elizabeth House, 39 York Road, London SE1 7NQ. 020 7401 5330. www.demos.co.uk

Barry Cox, is Deputy Chair of

Channel 4 and adviser on digital to the government. In these lectures, delivered in 2003 as New International Visiting Professor of Broadcast Media at Oxford, he states that digital television provides the chance to create a conventional consumer market in TV programmes. This has profound implications for the BBC and BSkyB.

Both are near-monopolies whose dominance should be challenged. BSkyB, now close to paying off its start-up costs, should lose its near monopoly of pay-TV, he says. The BBC has a choice between remaining a large organisation though funded through voluntary means or becoming a scaled-down publicly-funded broadcaster. Although Cox believes that the licence fee should continue for the present, he urges both the BBC and the government to look at a new model of public service broadcaster which maintains its production base but is funded by voluntary subscription rather than compulsory tax.



INDEPENDENTS STRUGGLE

By Michael Darlow, £16.00. Published by Quartet Books, 27 Goodge Street, London W1P 2LD, 020 7637 3992. Quartetbooks@easynet.co.uk ISBN 07043 81559

Michael Darlow has won many

awards in a long career, first with the BBC and later as an independent producer. This book offers a history of television and calls for a re-consideration of the ideas and values which govern television provision today. Before the creation of Channel 4 in the early 80's, almost all TV programmes were produced in-house by the BBC or one or other of the ITV companies. The advent of Channel 4 provided opportunities for new talent and ideas, freeing the industry from restrictive practices and creating a new multi-billion pound industrial sector. Darlow describes the subsequent struggle of the independent companies to gain the right to supply 25% of the output of the BBC and the ITV companies. With the growth of multi-channel television, the arrival of the new regulator Ofcom and the review of the BBC's Royal Charter before it expires in 2006, he laments the general trivialisation of TV under the pressure of the current emphasis on ratings and the maximisation of profit. He concludes, sadly, that public service broadcasting and its values are today under threat as never before.

VLV Visits for Members

VLV Visit to BBC New Media Unit

Jonathan Kingsbury, the Unit's head, hosted a visit for VLV members to its offices in Bush House, London, in June. He explained that the Unit, which is responsible for BBCi and interactive digital TV (using the red button on the handset) has an annual budget of £105m, of which some £80m is committed to the website. Its statistics are awesome: 2.5million pages, around 10.5 million UK users per month; 77 message boards and a million incoming e-mails each week. The BBC now ranks fifth of all website providers. On-demand audio streaming of radio programmes is an increasingly popular resource, despite problems with rights occur, and they are testing a similar video system for TV programmes.

ICAN, a new facility, allows users to play a greater role in the democratic process by participating in debates from local transport to the future of the licence fee.

Interactive digital TV is being further developed, together with a new version of the information currently provided with DAB radio or radio heard through Freeview TV. Yet again the BBC is taking the lead but how much of this would have happened without its licence fee funding? **Ron Gurd**

Visit to BBC East and Radio Norfolk



A group of VLV members greatly enjoyed a visit in June to the studios of BBC East and Radio Norfolk in their new home in Norwich's spectacular new Forum arts centre. The move from the outskirts of the city to its heart at the edge of the market square was welcomed by staff and the public, who can now 'look in' on some of the programmes as they are broadcast.

Wendy Witham and David Clayton, station editor, explained that the studios are entirely digital and that its new location enables the station to be involved in and to broadcast many of the events staged, literally, on its doorstep. Tim Bishop, Head of BBC East rounded off the visit with a word on BBC policy and by answering members' questions on a wide range of topics.

Visit to Saga Radio, East Midlands

A small party of VLV members were welcomed by Ron Coles, Managing Director, Saga Group Radio to its East Midlands studios in Nottingham in May. He said that the Group had started as a holiday business for the over-fifties in 1951, later adding the magazine and then radio. Saga West Midlands was its first analogue

station. It was followed by East Midlands in 2003. A new station will open in Glasgow in September.

Paul Robey, Director of Programming and Phil Dixon, Director of Saga 106.6FM, explained that they target their audiences with melodic music and shows that are 40% talk in the morning and afternoon, and include no more than 12 advertisements in the hour.

Cynthia McDowall

Who's Who in Broadcasting



Michael Grade

BBC GOVERNORS – Michael Grade, a former BBC executive and Chief Executive of Channel 4, was appointed Chairman of the BBC Governors in May, following the resignation of Gavyn Davies. **Anthony Salz**, co-senior partner at media lawyers Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer has been appointed Vice-Chairman, replacing Lord Ryder of Wensum PC OBE. **Richard Tait**, former Editor-in-chief at ITN, now Professor of Journalism at Cardiff University, replaces Governor Baroness Hogg, who resigned in February. **Dermot Gleeson** has been appointed Governor for a second four-year term.

Sir Robert Smith, National Governor for Scotland will step down at the end of the year.



Helen Boaden

BBC EXECUTIVE CHANGES – Mark Thompson, left Channel 4 to become BBC Director General in July. **Mark Byford**, who acted as Director General in the interregnum following the resignation of Greg Dyke, reverts to Deputy Director General.

Richard Sambrook moves to become Director of the BBC's World Service & Global News Division. He will be replaced as Director of BBC News by **Helen Boaden**, currently Controller of BBC Radio 4 and BBC 7. **Roly Keating** has been appointed Controller of BBC 2, replacing Jane Root who left to work in the USA. He is replaced as Controller of BBC 4 by **Janice Hadlow**. **Ken MacQuarrie** has been appointed Controller, BBC Scotland, replacing **John McCormick** who has retired.



Mark Thompson

NEW BBC EXECUTIVE STRUCTURE – The new Director General has replaced the former 27 strong executive committee by four smaller boards. They are: the new Executive Board, chaired by himself with **Mark Byford** as deputy; a Creative Board, also chaired by himself with **Mark Byford** as deputy; a Journalism Board, chaired by **Mark Byford** with the Director of News as deputy; a Commercial Board chaired by **John Smith**, Director of Finance, with the Chief Executive of BBC Worldwide as deputy.

CHANNEL 4 – **Luke Johnson**, Chairman of Riskcapitalpartners, has been appointed Chairman of Channel 4, replacing **Vanni Treves**. **Andy Duncan**, BBC Director of Marketing, Communications and Audiences has been appointed Chief Executive, Channel 4, replacing **Mark Thompson**.

Letters to the Editor

Letters do not necessarily represent the views of the Association and may be shortened for publication.

RADIO 3'S MUSIC POLICY

I am concerned that the Controller of Radio 3 has changed the published remit for the station so that it no longer includes the words 'classical music'. To me, that is Radio 3's prime concern. Why is he also including so much 'World Music', and other non-classical music genres especially in the evening? I am sure many other Radio 3 devotees are as unhappy as I am.

Judith Bramley, Blakeney, Glos

Editor's note: These questions were put to Roger Wright at the summer conference. He replied that Radio 3's remit remained unchanged. Classical music makes up 85% of its output. 'World' music, he said, was just a new term for what used to be called 'Ethnographic' music which had always been included in Radio 3's repertoire as had other genres. Jazz Record Requests would this year celebrate its 40th anniversary.

TELEVISION AND CHILDREN

As a primary school teacher I was drawn to the letter from Eddie Tulasiewicz VLV's education Officer in the June mailing about children and television.

I am concerned about the violence and 'unreal' situations thrust upon us at peak viewing times and that thought-provoking programmes are becoming fewer and pushed to late evening.

I don't want to sound like Victor Meldrew, but there is not much for the general public to emulate or admire at peak viewing time. Children from the age of six or seven watch this stuff. I hear about it in the classroom all the time. They think it is real life. Presumably some adults do, too, and believe that the standards portrayed are okay.

Sue Williams Raahauge, Chipping Camden, Glos

THE BBC AND THE LICENCE FEE

When I first came to England from Boston, USA, 45 years ago I was amazed to have to pay a tax for a radio and TV licence. But it has been worth it 365 x over!

Now I understand it is better NOT to have to please the advertisers and much more worthwhile to please, entertain, educate (for me the listeners. We need the BBC's quality journalism interspersed with humour and the common touch.

Ten years ago, my husband and I decided to return to England for two reasons: family and the BBC!

Betty Hooper, Oxford

VLV is doing important work. I live in Cumbria and have contacts with Radio Cumbria. Local radio is vital in rural communities.

Ann Risman, Penrith

INADEQUATE PUBLIC CONSULTATION RE BBC CHARTER RENEWAL

Re Robert Beveridge's letter (spring issue) about the DCMS public meeting in Edinburgh on BBC Charter Review. I was at the meeting in York and was so dissatisfied I wrote afterwards to the Secretary of State. --- I only learnt about it from VLV and when I rang to check details I was at first told that all the meetings were over. --- Only 45 people attended in York, though this was more than the total of the three previous meetings together. --- The Secretary of State spoke only for a couple of minutes, did not take questions. Although the meeting was scheduled to end at 9pm, it was abruptly halted 75 minutes early.

David Eggington, Oprmskirk, Lancs

I was at supper with an ex-chairman of the Liberal Party, ex-Tory MP, UK director of a charity, frighteningly bright lawyer, young civil servant/diplomat and a very clued-up lady. Not one had heard of the DCMS public consultation on the future of the BBC.

Peter Glazebrook, Oxford

RADIO 4 LISTENER'S BLIND DATE

As a Radio 4 enthusiast, I received a curious invitation via VLV to take part in a Radio Academy 'Blind Date' event. The format was simple: six 'guests' sat on a stage, separated by a screen from a hidden panel. The panel comprised three executives from BBC Radio 4 and commercial radio. They asked questions in an attempt to guess the listeners' preferred radio stations. Surprisingly, both the audience of radio practitioners and the panel found it difficult to identify the stations. Hopefully, the radio controllers will remember when planning their schedules that they are being listened to by a diverse audience.

For the record, the stations selected were Choice FM, Virgin, Capital, Magic, Radio 4 and Radio 1.

Tim Bourne, By e-mail

CONGRATULATIONS ON THE VLV WEBSITE

I took some of the new VLV leaflets to my local librarian, who mistakenly confused VLV with the organisation founded by Mary Whitehouse. When he looked up the website he was so impressed he immediately agreed to display our leaflets.

Incidentally, thank you so much for a most enjoyable day on 7 July - interesting conference, good viewing from the London Eye, followed by a delicious dinner in excellent company. What a pleasure! I enclose my contribution to the 21st Anniversary Appeal and wish you well.

Cynthia McDowall, Derby

DIGITAL RECEPTION PROBLEMS.

I got your address via the idtv web site. I live near Stroud in Gloucestershire. Although there is a 'booster' transmitter, none of us can get a signal for Freeview (5,500 population). Is it just a more powerful transmitter at Nailsworth that is needed? Who will pay? There must be other areas of the country that have this problem:

- 1) Who can we lobby to change this?
- 2) What happens when analogue is switched off? A digital TV is no use without a good quality signal.

Derek Pitt, Via e-mail.

Editor's note: VLV's representatives will take this up with other similar complaints we have received. We suggest people in problem areas ring the Freeview helpline 08708 809980. Contact their local Trading Standards Officer or write to the Secretary of State at the DCMS, 2-4 Cockspur Street, London SW1Y 5DH. Or log on to the DCMS website: www.culture.gov.uk

BROADCASTING AND THE ARTS

Re: the Ofcom research (published with the report of Phase One its Review of Public Service Television). If audiences do NOT place a high value on arts programmes then we must be even further down the barbarian track than we'd realized. We must still have arts programmes, but perhaps they need to be better done than they sometimes are. I am not sure that 'reconstruction' inserts are always helpful, and I'm sick to death of spooky music or otherwise inappropriate sound effects.

Cherry Lavell, Cheltenham, Glos

At VLV's summer conference see p3, the speakers seemed reluctant to answer questions about how much of their channel's total budget is currently devoted to arts and music programmes.

Kim Peat of Channel 5 was the only one to give a figure - just 2% goes to the arts. Surprisingly, the others do no better. A glance at the recent annual reports of Channel 4 and the BBC reveals that in 2003 Channel 4 devoted just £9.3 out of a total programme budget of £457.5 to arts and music, i.e. 2.04%. This provided 247 out of a total of 8760 hours of airtime. Based on the BBC's 2003-4 report it seems that BBC1 and BBC 2 (including regional programmes of £1390m) provided 355 hours of arts and music programmes, only 201 hours of which were first transmissions. The average cost of these was £145,600 per hour, hence it can be deduced that the combined spend by the two channels on new arts and music programmes was £29,27m, i.e. 2%. Just 201 hours of first transmissions out of a total of 17,130 hours of airtime for the two.

On BBC 3 and BBC 4 the position looks superficially better. Out of a combine total of 6,192 hours, 1,381 were arts and music - on BBC 4 accounting for no less than 42% of airtime. However, just 336 of the 1,381 hours were first transmissions. We can deduce therefore, that although half of BBC 4's total budget of £35.2m was spent on arts and music, three out of every four hours devoted to them on BBC 3 and 4 were repeats. As BBC 4 achieved a total audience reach of just 5.8% and a total share of just 0.1%, rising to 0.2% in multi-channel homes, the real measure of the BBC's public service output must be judged by BBC 1 and BBC 2.

Michael Darlow, Bradford-on-Avon, Wilts

Deadline for next issue: 25 September, 2004

Write, fax or e-mail your letters to the Editor at: VLVbulletin@btinternet.com

Obituaries

Anthony Pragnell CBE

Tony Pragnell, who died in June served with the ITA the first regulator of commercial television, and later its successor, the Independent Broadcasting Authority with great dedication from 1954 until his retirement as Deputy Director General in 1953. He was much more than an administrator and had a keen understanding of the relationship between quality in programming and the constitutional structures necessary to guarantee it. In retirement he gave strong backing to VLV and was a frequent supporter of VLV events with his wife Terry. We send our deep sympathy to her and to his family.

Patrick Campbell, who was in his late nineties when he died in July, was one of the BBC's foremost radio drama producers in the years after the second World War. Himself a playwright and prolific writer on broadcasting matters, Patrick was a passionate defender of public service broadcasting and of the role he felt the BBC should play in setting standards across all genres. In his later years he was an active member of the Writers' Guild, and editor of its monthly newsletter. It was in this role that he came to know and support VLV and its work. He continued to write to the end and his history of TV drama in the 70's: 'Vibrations in the Memory - a decade of television drama' - was published this year. We send our sincere condolences to Mrs Campbell and his son Michael, an early VLV committee member.