

CHAPTER TWELVE

Television Preview

When the Labor Government was considering the introduction of television in Australia in 1949, the Pye company in England brought a 405 line camera chain to Australia to stimulate public interest in the medium. This was moved around from State to State, and used to give public demonstrations of television pictures on "closed circuit". However, when the proposals for an Australian service were ditched, on the defeat of the Labor Government, the Pye television camera chain was given in 1950 to the Melbourne Technical College for use in training courses. No other Technical College in Australia had any television equipment, and Fred Kempson, in charge of the Radio School, was not slow in exploiting this facility. Members of the staff were trained in its operation and maintenance, and it was made available to the Council of Adult Education for two series of classes in 1953 - one dealing with Television Programme Transmission and one on Television Studio Technique.

Both series began in March, and continued for 20 weeks, for the princely fee of 17/6. They were held in the Radio School of the College on Friday nights. Rod (R.J.) Biddle conducted the first series and I was invited to deliver two lectures in the Studio Technique series - on "A comparison of British and American Techniques" and "Some faults in studio technique and how

to avoid them". I was also asked to lecture on "The Film in TV" at a CAE weekend Film School in June.

This was followed by another CAE series called "Television Preview" in the third term of 1953 at which I delivered seven lectures on -

- What TV can do
- Studio shows and outside broadcasts
- The Film in TV
- TV compared with Stage, Film and Radio
- What are good TV programmes?
- TV in other countries
- and How will TV affect our lives?

These were given in the Radio School on Thursday nights, lasting up to two hours and illustrated by the Pye Camera chain operated by the MTC staff. I was paid 63/- per lecture, and had to get Departmental approval to accept the fee.

Rod Biddle and Max (J.M.) Albiston provided the technical expertise with the camera equipment and in a final "Open Forum" session I endeavoured to answer a barrage of questions, assisted by Leo Fowler - a PMG technician in the Melbourne ABC studios who had recently returned from 12 months operational experience in the BBC Television Service. I drew heavily on my experience in the 1951 overseas trip, but the Department required me to exclude any comment on the policy of the Government in relation to TV.

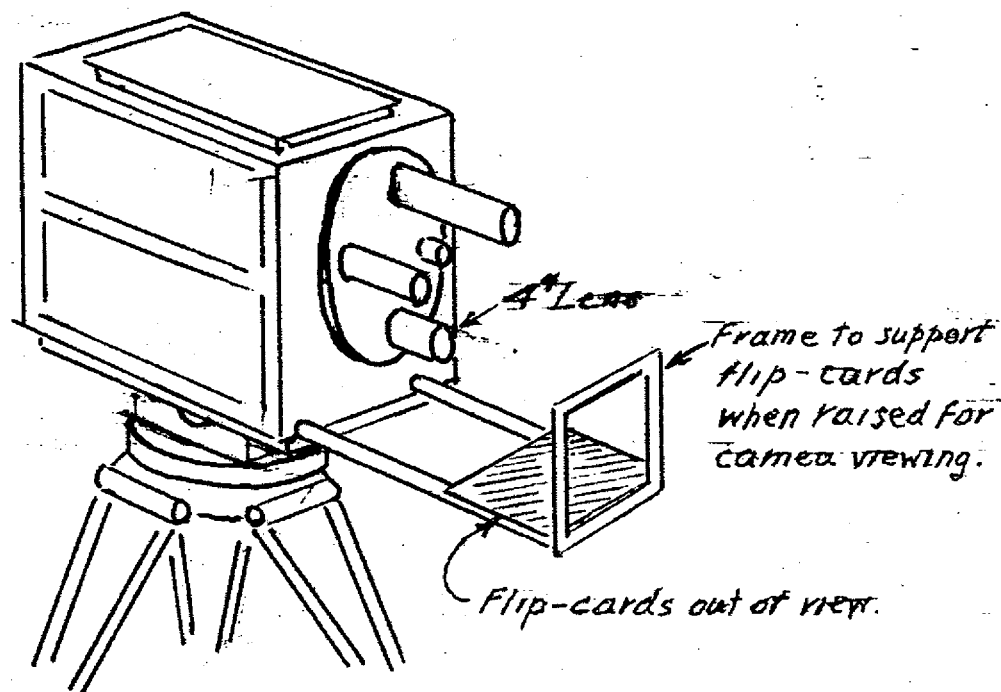
In 1954 the College became "The Royal Melbourne Technical College" (RMTC) as a result of the Queen's visit, and again ran a series of 20 classes on "TV Studio Technique" in conjunction with the CAE. I was asked to conduct three of these -

TV production techniques in British and American Studios
TV staging aids, lighting and special effects, and
Types of TV shows and the part of the writer, producer and cast.

Each year the College held an open week for public inspection of their activities, called "Education Week", and this year Fred Kempson asked me to collaborate in producing a TV demonstration. The Radio School had set up a small elevated control room with a window overlooking the large room used as a studio for its single Pye TV camera. This control room housed the sound control equipment, with intercommunication facilities to the camera control operator (who was connected by a trailing cable to the mobile camera), to the cameraman, to the microphone boom operator and to any floor staff involved in the operations.

The first problem was to devise a means of maintaining continuity of visual presentation with a single TV camera - without the necessity of long fades to black when the camera had to change from one subject to another, or move around the studio.

I designed a support for "flip cards", in the form of an outrigger projecting forwards from the body of the



Camera with outrigger designed to provide single camera continuity in
"Wander on the World" at RMTC

camera itself, below the line of sight. At the extremity of this was an open vertical frame, against which a stack of "flip cards" could rest, with provision for these to flop down horizontally, out of sight of the camera lens. With the cards down the camera lens had an unobstructed view through the open frame of the outrigger. The cards measured 7"x8", but the camera lens viewed only an area of 3"x4" on these cards - leaving room for their unseen manipulation. The outrigger carried a small light to illuminate the cards.

When the camera was focussed on one of these vertical flip cards, the camera could be moved around the studio without affecting the picture seen on the screen. Further, if a transparent perspex flip card was used with a caption written upon it, the camera could be re-focussed from the caption to the illuminated studio set seen through the transparent perspex. The caption would then go completely out of focus and disappear on the screen, giving the effect of a lap-dissolve to the studio set. When focussed on the caption, the camera could be moved, and the illuminated studio surroundings - then completely out of focus - appeared as a blurred background of moving light with a quite dramatic effect. A stack of flip cards could be allowed to flop down in succession, giving a sequence of picture or caption changes on the TV screen.

This arrangement was tested in the Radio School and found wholly satisfactory. It required a floorman to operate the flip cards, but it gave a facility for presentation continuity not normally present with a single camera.

It should be appreciated that a TV camera picture of a good photograph of a scene is indistinguishable from a picture of an actual scene in which there is no movement, provided the photograph fills the screen.

Fred Kempson agreed that the demonstration should take the form of a properly produced and coordinated TV programme of the documentary type. He became quite enthusiastic, and I formed a general idea of the programme framework in my mind.

The next task was to assemble relevant "props". I decided to call the demonstration "Window on the World".

From travel bureaux I borrowed several excellent photographic posters of Britain - and chose views of Edinburgh, Bath, Chester and Stratford-upon-Avon. Also smaller photos of landscapes in Devon and New Zealand, which were made into flip cards, together with a photo of a British family watching TV.

The posters measured 22" wide by 32" high. At home I constructed a "window set", having a wooden window

frame 18" wide and 27" high, flanked by plain walls on each side and above and below. Twelve inches behind the open window a vertical board was provided, on which the photographic posters could be hung. Viewed from the front by the TV camera the photo filled the window space, and the camera could be dollied-in for close-ups and panned around without the margin of the photo becoming visible. With one poster in position, the other three - secured at the top but thrown over the back of the board - could be dropped down in succession to provide a change of view.

In the studio this set was "dressed" by the addition of side curtains, a roller blind to cover the window and a bowl of flowers on a table in the foreground.

Then I borrowed a large terrestrial globe on a stand and some records for background music. I had chosen "Window on the World" as my theme because I felt the provision of such a metaphorical window was one of the most important functions of television.

Next, I wrote the script. As this show was to be produced a number of times, it was necessary to devise some way of ensuring that the correct cues for movements were always given at the right moment to the right member of the production crew. I decided to make a tape recording of all but the opening and closing remarks in my script, and to use this as a voice-over commentary

with selected words serving as cue indicators as I followed it on a typescript.

My scenario was -

An opening shot of the rotating globe, with background music.

Lap-dissolve to title. Lap-dissolve to live compere before plain flat.

Fade music. Opening remarks. Slow fade out.

Fade in series of window sketches over recorded commentary.

Flip card of family watching TV. Flip to girl in window set

Girl raises blind on Edinburgh, with background music

Sequence of window views of Bath, Cheshire and Stratford, with girl movements, and camera panning to details in close-up

Girl draws blind. Fade out picture and music.

Flip cards of Devon and New Zealand. Fade out. Stop tape.

Fade in live compere for closing remarks. Fade out.

Flip cards of credits, with background music.

Lap-dissolve to rotating globe. Fade out picture and music.

CUT

Fred Kempson introduced me to Alex Stitt of the Art School, who agreed to draw 16 black and white sketches of windows in various environments - the shop window, the office, the box-office, the home, and so on - all very human, with touches of humour and pathos. These were drawn on four large sheets of grey paper, with a sketch in each quarter. With the sheets hung on an easel, the TV camera was able to pan and tilt clockwise in close-up to each sketch in turn, then repeat the movement on the following three sheets as they were dropped down in front of the first - in time with the recorded commentary of the script.

The demonstration was to be seen by the public on a number of picture monitors viewed from the passage of the

Radio School, outside the large room used as a TV studio. It was to be repeated on two afternoons and evenings in August during Education Week. I gave a copy of my script to Alex Stitt as a guide for his artwork -

SOUND

PICTURE

Recorded music "Rolling round the World" - sung by Donald Peers (LIVE COMMENTARY)

Good afternoon (or evening) ladies and gentlemen. I'm going to talk to you for a few minutes on the subject of windows. Now don't go away - I'm not trying to sell you Venetian blinds at 4/6 a square foot. Yes, I know August is Home Month at a certain emporium in Bourke Street, but this isn't a commercial programme even though I'm going to indulge in a little window dressing.

Of course there are quite a lot of different kinds of windows. I don't mean clean ones and dirty ones, or ones that won't open and ones that won't shut, or steel frame windows and wooden frame windows, or ones with glass in them and ones that used to have glass in them! I'm thinking of windows functionally. (TAPE RECORDING)

First of all there's the shop window - the kind we are not going to talk about. Then the office window - which we would rather not talk about. Next the box-office window - which doesn't concern us because this is a free show, and finally the domestic window. The link between the home and the outside world. Whether we are outside looking in - or inside looking out, its influence is mutual. The domestic window is the channel through which the light of the home cheers the wayfarer on a stormy night - through which the light of the outside world brightens the sick room. This is the window that streams the warm sunshine into the nursery -

Caption WINDOW ON THE WORLD -
Lap dissolve to rotating globe.
Lap dissolve to compere

Slow fade out

Fade in on sketch 1

Pan to sketch 2

Tilt to sketch 3

Pan to sketch 4

Drop sheet. Sketch 5

Tilt to sketch 6

Pan to sketch 7

the window that shuts out the wind
and the rain from the warm winter
fireside.

Tilt to sketch 8

What would homes be without windows
Housewives watch their neighbours
through them

Drop sheet. Sketch
9

Lovers elope through them

Pan to sketch 10

Brave firemen rescue through them

Tilt to sketch 11

Suicides jump through them!

Pan to sketch 12

In the winter the robin perches on
the sill

Drop sheet. Sketch
13

In the spring the flat-dweller makes
a garden of it with his daffodils
Shadows of lovers on a warm summer
night make romantic patterns on the
blind -

Tilt to sketch 14

and the autumn glory of the garden
is framed by its open casement.

Pan to sketch 15

Every window has its view - some are
depressing, some exhilarating.

Tilt to sketch 16

In 1936 the most wonderful window of
all began to appear in the homes of
the people of London.

Flip card 1.
Family viewing.

They called it "Television" - a Window
on the World! a magic casement that may
open on a dozen horizons in a day. Each
day begins an exciting itinerary that
calls for no passport or passenger
ticket. Let's go on a television tour
of the British Isles. (FADE IN RECORDED
MUSIC - "Nell Gwyn Dances")

Flip card down.
Window set. Girl
raises blind.

And what could be more wonderful to
wake up to than a view of Princes
Street, Edinburgh!

Princes Street, with the graceful
gothic spire of the Scott Monument
soaring its 200 feet skyward in the
foreground. A beautiful monument in a
beautiful city.

The spire forms a canopy over a statue
of St Walter Scott and his dog - and
characters from his works are sculptured
in the niches of its walls.

Dolly in to
close-up

Princes Street divides the old city from
the new. From the modern shop fronts
of the new, the Princes Gardens sweep
back like a receding wave - past the
National Gallery - to rise to the 270
foot ridge of rock, crowned by the
famous castle - one time home of the
hapless Mary Queen of Scots.

Pan left to the
Rock

The spires of the old city merge into
the morning mist of the skyline. But
this is only a beginning - we'll be in
Edinburgh again for the Festival!
One thing Television can't do is to
let us taste the spa waters of the
city of Bath in Somerset. But it can

Pan to centre

Fade out
Drop poster
Fade in

delight us with views from our window such as this -

The baths that gave the city its name were established by the Romans in about 44AD. Alongside this evidence of Roman activity the ancient Abbey in the background seems relatively modern. There are not many cities where the traveller can gaze at Gothic and Roman arches standing side by side, unmolested through the centuries, where their builders placed them.

Dolly back to long shot

Fade out
Drop poster.
Remove flowers.
Fade in

The Roman and mediaeval meet also in Chester, the historic county town of Cheshire. But this city is famous chiefly for its Rows - not the blooming variety - this is spelt R-O-W-S. Our window overlooks Watergate Street, which the Romans knew as 'Via Principalis', or as we would say today - "Main Street". On both sides of this street the half-timbered 16th and 17th century houses have galleries above street level, known as "the Rows". These galleries are reached by staircases from the street, and pass from building to building. On the inner side of the gallery is a second tier of shops, and the balcony on the outside looks down on the street below.

Dolly in to close-up

Pan left to right

The nearer building is Bishop Lloyd's House, with richly carved timber panelling showing scenes from sacred history and symbolic animals.

Tilt up

Architecturally the Rows in Chester are unique. They were mentioned in writings as early as the 14th century. It is thought by some that their design was evolved by building in front and on top of the massive Roman ruins of the first century AD, but the true origin is lost in the mist of antiquity.

Pan left, and centre

Fade out
Drop poster.
Fade in

In 1926 the original Shakespeare Memorial Theatre at Stratford upon Avon, in Warwickshire, was destroyed by fire. George Bernard Shaw sent a telegram of congratulations! The present magnificent Memorial Theatre, on the banks of the Avon was opened in 1932. John D. Rockefeller donated 100,000 pounds towards the cost, and the theatre is a fitting memorial to the playwright who lies buried within sight of its walls. The theatre seats twelve

Dolly back to long shot

hundred, and is truly elegant in its appointments. From the windows of its restaurant, patrons can gaze down on the quiet-flowing Avon, with its drifting white swans and trailing willows.

The drama festival is in full swing. Tonight they are playing "Romeo and Juliet". Let's go!

(FADE OUT BACKGROUND MUSIC)

Yes, Television can give you all this - and Devon too! Glorious Devon, such as this typical scene on Woodbury Common near Exmouth. From closing on the British Isles, our magic casement can open in a moment on the same theme at the other side of the world - New Zealand, with a strikingly similar scene at Queenstown. Or we can choose the mountain grandeur of the lake country in South Island - Lake Wakatipu and the Remarkables, a holiday paradise, with still silent waters and wreaths of cloud hanging low about the mountain slopes. Or a fishing trip by motor launch across the waters of Lake Wanaka. Some people think of Television as a succession of plays brought into the living room. Don't you think you'd get a little tired of plays every night of the week?

No - Television is far more than plays, far more than variety shows, and opera, and ballet, and cricket and football.

It's a Window on the World!

(STOP TAPE, LIVE COMMENTARY)

A Window on the World in your living room! When we can look through the window at the other peoples of the world - living their everyday lives in their everyday surroundings - and when they can look at us, through the miracle of Television - we can expect a greater understanding among nations, a greater brotherhood of man - because we will LIVE together!

(FADE IN MUSIC - "Rolling round the World")

FADE OUT

Girl draws blind

Fade out

Flip card 2.

Devon. Fade in

Flip card 3

Flip card 4

Flip card 5

Flip card 6

Fade out

Fade in
compere

Slow fade out.
Credit flip
cards up.

Fade in.
Credits

Lap dissolve to
rotating globe.
Fade out.

I persuaded Ron White of the ABC to make the necessary seven minute tape recording from my script, and to appear on the show as the compere.

Joy Wren agreed to appear as the girl before the window set, providing some live action and glamour. Joy acted with the Melbourne Little Theatre and later had her own show on ABC television. Both Joy and Ron were members of the CAE Studio Technique classes.

I was to act as producer/director, and I required a crew of seven -

- Cameraman
- Camera dolly pusher
- Camera Control Operator
- Floorman (to cue compere, and operate flip cards)
- Lighting operator (also to manipulate sheets of sketches)
- Poster operator (also to rotate terrestrial globe)
- Audio operator (to control microphone output and operate turntable and tape recorder)

Fred Kempson provided me with a crew of policemen! They were undergoing an electronics course at the Radio School under Max Albiston. We had a full rehearsal, adjusted the lighting, checked the time required for each movement and marked the best positions on the studio floor with chalk - found by trial and error. I marked my copy of the script by ringing the appropriate word-cues for each movement of camera or crew - and prepared cue sheets for the crew.

I could not have had a better production crew. They all cooperated magnificently. The policemen were used to responding to directions. They worked like clockwork and the production ran smoothly from beginning to end. The total production time, including the "live" end-segments, was nine minutes. One spectator who watched the whole show on a picture monitor was surprised to find that it had been produced, as he was watching it, in the Radio School studio. He said he thought it was a film!

That was a great compliment for the degree of continuity we had achieved.

It was significant historically, because this was the first fully scripted TV show produced in Australia - and that with only one camera, before TV broadcasting services began. No-one was paid - all contributed their services voluntarily in their spare time and were caught up in the excitement of it all. It was an experience I can never forget. Sitting before a picture monitor in the control room, as I called directions to the members of the crew I experienced the thrill of seeing my programme unfold on the screen as I had visualised it when writing the script.

There lies the wonderful difference between film and TV directing. The TV director sees the programme develop before his eyes - the film director has to wait for the film to be processed. But in those early days of LIVE

TV, before the advent of videotape, the TV product had to be right first time - there were no retakes to correct errors. What a mental strain!

Fred Kempson was a great one for publicity for the Radio School, and as a result of his negotiations with the ABC it was decided that the RMTC should run a series of 20 two-hour classes in TV Studio Techniques for ABC personnel, from early October to early December 1954. Two classes were to be held each Friday, commencing at 3pm and 7pm. About 20 selected officers from the Melbourne and Sydney ABC staffs were to attend, those from Sydney travelling to Melbourne each Friday. No similar classes were available in Sydney. By this time the ABC had been given the responsibility of running a National Television Service - to begin in 1956.

It was intended to make these classes more detailed and more constructive than those given earlier in conjunction with the CAE, and Fred sought my collaboration in the suggestion of topics and in drafting a syllabus for the course. I gave him a list of 24 topics, with suggested available text books, and prepared a draft syllabus for 20 classes. This was discussed and approved with a few modifications. I was asked to contribute nine of the lectures, of which seven were on Friday evenings and two on Friday afternoons. I obtained approval from the ABCB and the Public Service Inspector, on the understanding that all preparation would be done

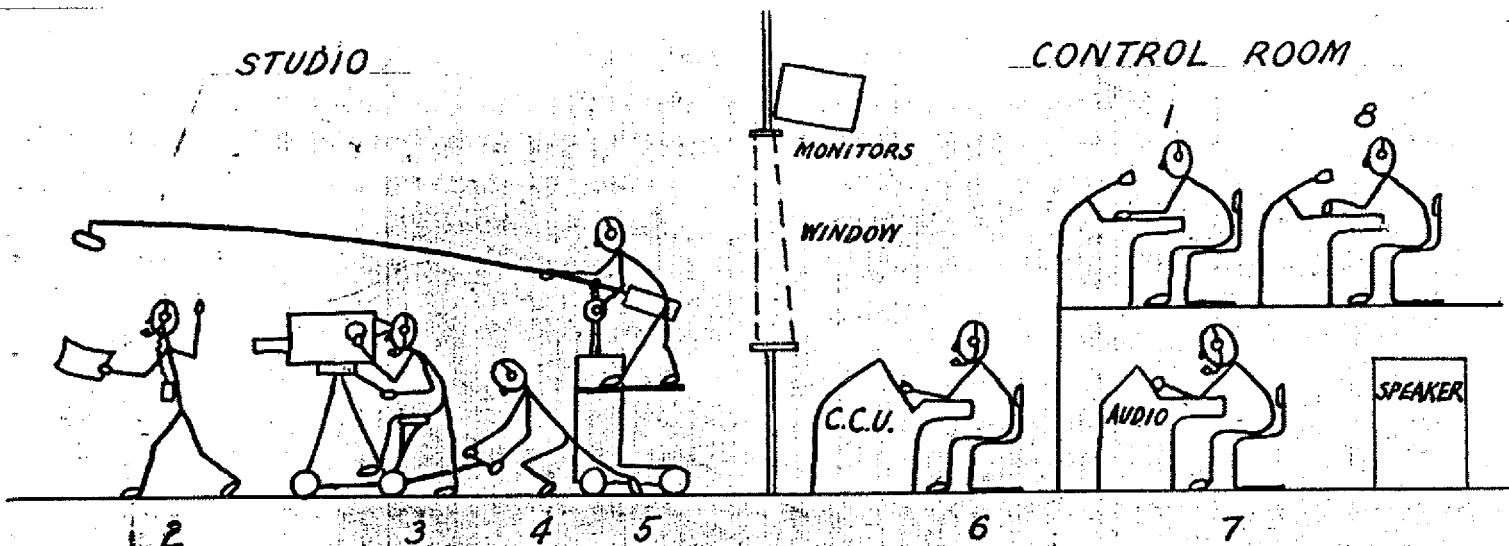
in my own time, that I would make up any time lost during working hours on the two afternoons, and that it would not interfere with my official duties in the ABCB. I argued that - as these lectures were making a significant contribution to the efficient commencement of TV services in Australia, both national and commercial - it was not inappropriate for a member of the Board's staff to play a responsible part in their development and presentation.

Fred Kempson contributed seven lectures in the series and Rod Biddle and Professor G.S. Browne (of the Education Department, University of Melbourne) one each.

All these lectures were accompanied by film strips, films, and demonstrations with the TV camera chain - and in some sessions members of the classes were involved in practical exercises. The final two sessions took the form of discussion, analysis and recapitulation of the work done - in which Fred Kempson, Rod Biddle and I participated. In the third session I repeated the production of "Window on the World" as a demonstration of camera crew operation.

The RMTCT regarded the series as highly successful, and the ABC were evidently pleased also because they asked for the classes to be repeated in the first half of 1955 - this time for another 20 officers drawn from their Melbourne and Adelaide staffs.

STUDIO

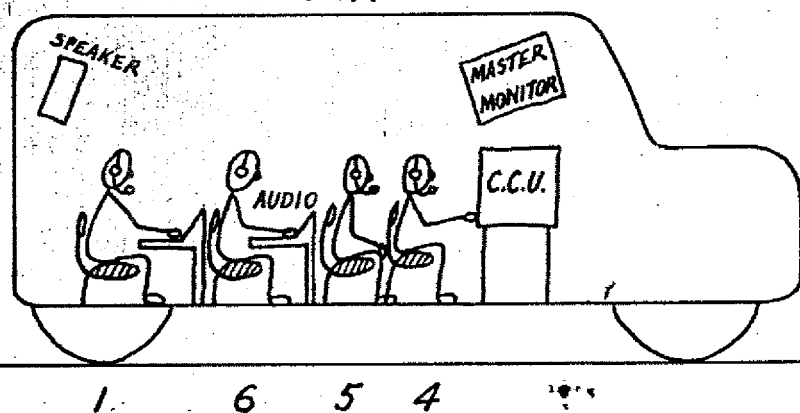
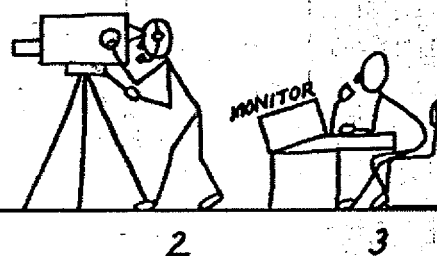


THE BASIC CAMERA CREW

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. PRODUCER (OR STUDIO DIRECTOR) | 5. MIKE BOOM OPERATOR |
| 2. FLOOR MAN (OR STUDIO MANAGER) | 6. C.C.U. OPERATOR |
| 3. CAMERAMAN | 7. AUDIO OPERATOR |
| 4. DOLLY MAN (IF NECESSARY) | 8. TECHNICAL DIRECTOR |

MOBILE UNIT

O.B.



BASIC O.B. CREW

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. PRODUCER (OR O.B. DIRECTOR) | 4. C.C.U. OPERATOR |
| 2. CAMERAMAN | 5. TECHNICAL DIRECTOR (OR CREW CHIEF) |
| 3. COMMENTATOR | 6. AUDIO OPERATOR |

Illustrations prepared by the author for his lectures on TV Studio Technique at RMTC.

Fred Kempson went overseas in the 1954/55 summer vacation and inspected TV operations at Honolulu, San Francisco and Vancouver. When he returned the RMTC decided to run four series of classes in TV Studio Techniques in 1955 - one for ABC personnel as requested - two for personnel drawn from various commercial radio stations, radio programme production and film production units and from ballet organisations - and a fourth for a class recruited by the CAE. The classes were to be of two hours duration each, and all series were to be identical.

The scheduling of the total of 80 sessions - to suit the Radio School availability and the classes involved - was a complicated exercise, and the RMTC solved the problem with -

ABC sessions on Fridays at 3pm and 7pm from
11th March to 10th June
Commercial sessions on Thursdays at 5.30pm and
7.30pm from 3rd March to 13th October
CAE sessions on Tuesdays at 7.30pm from
22nd March to 11th October

The two sessions on Thursdays were identical, catering for the two commercial groups.

The syllabus, used for all four series, followed a similar pattern to that of the 1954 series, with some improvements introduced as the result of experience.

The first 17 sessions in each series were lectures illustrated by film strips, by films, and by TV camera

demonstrations, sometimes involving practical exercises for members of the class. The lecturers and their topics were -

Session	Lecturer	Topic
1	Mr Kempson	How TV works - camera & equipment
2	Mr Fisher	Composition of the camera crew
3	Mr Fisher	Characteristics of the TV medium
4	Mr Kempson	Audio equipment and techniques
5 & 6	Mr Kempson	Camera lenses and practice
7 & 8	Mr Biddle	Picture composition
9	Mr Fisher	Camera movements, mixing & switching
10	Mr Biddle	Camera movement practice
11	Mr Fisher	Production sequence
12	Mr Fisher	Script layout and production planning
13	Mr Kempson	Contrast in light and colours in monochrome TV
14	Mr Fisher	Studio lighting
15	Mr Fisher	Scenery and special effects
16	Mr Fisher	Film equipment & applications of film as programme material
17	Mr Fisher	Types of shows & their development
18-20	Mr Biddle	Trial studio productions

Sessions 18 to 20 in each series took the form of trial production of single scripted and unscripted shows - including planning and rehearsal - followed by discussion, analysis and recapitulation in which the whole class participated.

One of my lectures at the Radio School in 1953 had dealt with TV compared with Stage, Film and Radio. It explored the difference in the demands made by the four media on the performers because of -

the environmental surroundings of the audience
the spatial relationship between performer and audience,
the size (or absence, in the case of radio) of the images presented to the audience, and
the problems of dressing, scenic backgrounds and properties (except in radio).

It dealt also with the time factor and continuity in production with the four media, the memorizing of lines, the sustaining of moods, the length of performances, the repetition of shows, the space required for production, the problems of sound and lighting, the suitability of different types of shows for the four media and their appeal to various age groups.

When this lecture was repeated to a class of ABC personnel in October 1954 I realised the need to bring home more forcibly the differences in problems of presentation between TV and radio, and the ways in which the limitations of a TV studio can be overcome - when compared with the relatively limitless facilities of film.

The lecture was due to be repeated four times in 1955 and, encouraged by the success of "Window on the World", I decided to attempt a demonstration to illustrate the presentation capabilities of TV.

Having recently heard an adaptation of Charles Dickens novel "Great Expectations" on ABC radio, and having seen the excellent 1946 black and white film of the book made by David Lean, I obtained a copy of Roger Manvell's analysis of part of the opening scene in the film - when young Pip encounters the terrifying convict in the churchyard on the Thames Estuary at sunset. I

decided to attempt a TV production of this incident, so I took my copy of the book and re-read the opening chapter in which the encounter takes place. I wrote a draft script, covering the essential dialogue from the encounter up to Pip's departure from the convict.

The State Film Centre had a 16mm copy of a documentary film called "The Critic and the Film - Great Expectations", which contained the opening sequence of the story, and the ABC had a tape recording of their radio version. I borrowed both.

Then I persuaded Don Whitelock, a member of the "commercial" TV Studio Techniques class, who had amateur acting experience, to take the part of the convict. He was teaching at Preston Technical College, and had a drama class. He said he had a promising 12 year old actor in this class, Bill Wright, who should be able to take the part of Pip, and this was arranged with parents' consent. Don and I discussed the script and made a few cuts to make it more manageable and to keep it within reasonable length. Costumes were not difficult, as the convict was to be very unkempt and Pip lived in poor circumstances. The convict, escaped from a convict ship about to depart for Australia, was to be in leg-irons. I borrowed some genuine leg-irons of that vintage from the Police Department in St Kilda Road.

With Fred Kempson's assistance I arranged for a practical tombstone (4'6" high) and a large painting of an English churchyard - with a reproduction of this tombstone among the graves in the foreground - to be constructed and painted by Mr E.R. Fewster of the RMIT Art School. I also borrowed two 6ft x 3ft realistic artificial grass mats from the furnishing department of Foy's store, to place beneath the tombstone, and two records of "eerie music" and "low wind" from the Effects Library at the ABC studios.

The tombstone had the necessary inscription, as described by Dickens -

PHILIP PIRRIP
LATE OF THIS PARISH
ALSO
GEORGIANA
WIFE OF THE ABOVE

Then I prepared a detailed plan of all the camera shots and a cue sheet. My scenario was -

"Great Expectations" - Opening Sequence

Fade in caption - "GREAT EXPECTATIONS"
Fade in eerie music recording.
Flip to caption-"FROM THE NOVEL BY CHARLES DICKENS"
Lap-dissolve to establishment shot of churchyard
Dolly-in to close-up of tombstones
Pan right to "PIRRIP" tombstone
Lap-dissolve to caption - "1830"
Fade-out music
Fade-in low-wind recording
Lap-dissolve to close-up of PIP, kneeling and examining inscription on practical tombstone
Followed by a camera coverage of live action, in medium and long shots.
Pip becoming aware of feet of convict with leg-irons, beside him.
The convict grasping Pip and demanding his name and family associations.
Pip's explanation of the tomb of his deceased parents, and his home with the blacksmith.

The convict's demand for a file and "wittles",
with threats of further violence.
Pip's hurried departure to get them, leaving the
convict gazing after him with anxiety.
Fade-out of wind and picture.

CUT

The TV camera was to use a 4" lens throughout and
the "lap-dissolves" were to be achieved with perspex flip
cards on an outrigger as in "Window on the World". A
crew of five was required.

Camera rehearsals were arranged, the actors having
learnt their parts. The production took approximately
three minutes and it was produced four times in the
classes held at the RMIT Radio School in March and April
1955. Don Whitelock was not available for the last
production. His place was taken by Bill Wren, another
member of the Studio Techniques classes and husband of
Joy, with considerable acting experience. The actors
played their parts most professionally, and captured the
required atmosphere of the dramatic encounter.

In these classes, the film and radio versions of the
same opening sequence of "Great Expectations" were
replayed, followed by this TV version which I directed.
Thanks to the skill of the actors, the TV performance did
not compare unfavourably, and the churchyard painting and
the tombstone reproduced marvellously on the TV camera.

Comparisons were then drawn between the techniques
used to tell the story in the three media, and to produce

the desired atmosphere. The TV demonstration illustrated

- the advantages of captions to give information over mood music,
- the use of a painting for an establishment shot,
- the use of panning over this in close up, to concentrate on a centre of interest,
- the use of a matched dissolve to a "live" set
- the use of close-ups to convey emotion and information, and to follow action,
- the use of long-shots to show relationship between characters, and
- the use of a fade-to-black to denote the end of a sequence.

Above all it showed that an effect can be obtained by simple means, and at relatively low cost, using techniques which do not exist in radio - and in an environment which lacks the spatial advantages of film.

I repeated the production of "Window on the World" in each of the four series of TV Studio Techniques classes in 1955, and again in Education Week that year. On these occasions my crew comprised young students doing the new course for the ABCB TV Operators Certificate of Proficiency, with Max Albiston (their instructor) operating the camera control unit. Three of this crew subsequently came to work for me - Euan Downing, Malcolm Titchener and Russell Bourne. Max Albiston was to join me later as my assistant.

Commercial stations were being planned in August 1955, so it seemed appropriate to introduce a commercial in the presentation of "Window in the World". However, it would have been incongruous to have an ABC personality compering such a show, so I approached Len Mauger - then

an announcer at radio station 3AW - and persuaded him to be compere and make a new recording of the script.

As the show dealt with windows, a commercial content dealing with venetian blinds seemed appropriate, so I wrote a short commercial script, borrowed a blind of suitable size from a Melbourne manufacturer and fitted it to the window-set in place of the roller blind.

Joy Wren agreed to do the commercial sales spiel "live", extolling the virtues and decorative advantages of these venetian blinds, and I borrowed another larger blind, complete with pelmet and curtains to use in the commercial set in front of a plain scenery flat. This was to be used at the commencement of the show before the introduction of the main script by the compere, and again in the "live" segment at the end of the show. An imaginary manufacturer's name was sign-written on one side of some of the slats so that this appeared when the slats were tilted inwards. A flip card showing an imaginary location of the imaginary manufacturer's store was also included.

"This "commercial" worked quite well except that a small Asian student who was given the job of operating the slats, persistently turned them over at the wrong time - to the acute discomfort of Joy, who knew her part perfectly.

These modifications increased the total length of the show to 11 minutes. It was produced during Education Week five times, on the evenings of August 1955. This was my last attempt at TV production. In all, Window on the World had been produced 12 times. Rod Biddle asked me to leave him a copy of the script and cue sheet and the tape recording. I don't know whether the Radio School had further productions of the show.

I had had a small taste of script writing, set design and construction, prop procurement, lighting, casting, rehearsal, production and direction of a live television show. This, I felt, would help me understand the problems confronting people engaged in such activities when television services began in Australia. But now I had to concentrate on TV engineering!

It is interesting to examine what became of some of the people involved in the presentation of "Window on the World" -

Len Mauger became Managing Director of the Nine Network.

Joy When compered her own TV programme for several years on ABV-2

Alex Stitt formed a successful film animation company

Rod Biddle became Chief Engineer of GTV-9

Max Albiston became Assistant Chief Engineer, and later Director of Engineering and Operations at HSV-7

Euan Downing became Chief Engineer of a regional TV station

Malcolm Titchener became an engineer at ATV-10

Russell Bourne became Transmission Supervisor at HSV-7.

From 1953 to 1955 I had delivered 60 lectures on TV at the Radio School - mostly of two-hours duration. These were based on my reading, and experiences in the 1951 overseas trip, but their preparation involved a considerable amount of research and writing - done in my spare time. All except five were given outside office hours, and I had to work additional hours to make up for those. My apprenticeship in the Rostrum Movement had stood me in good stead. I think these "Television Studio Techniques" courses played a significant part in the preparation for Australian television. They were unique in the country. Hector and Dorothy Crawford were among the commercial participants. The success of the series was a tribute to the initiative and enthusiasm of Fred Kempson and everybody concerned at the RMTC.