



Forty years young

It's one thing to have an idea, which is what Dick Hibberd had when he first dreamt up the notion of an organisation that would link cameramen across the UK and, ideally, the world – but it's quite another thing to have the drive, commitment and wherewithal to turn that dream into a reality. Forty years on we can take stock and realise that this particular dream is a very well established reality.

Formed with the goals of promoting high standards in the craft of camerawork, establishing a network for television cameramen (virtually all staff in those days), and providing a communication route to the manufacturers of camera gear, the early GTC also had some specific aims, such as pushing for credits for cameramen

and celebrating the work of television cameramen through annual awards.

Much has changed in the world of television – the majority of cameramen now work as freelancers; cameras have evolved beyond recognition; more and more of us are called upon to multiskill; and the evolution of Internet and digital broadcasting has opened up multiple different outlets for our work – but at its core the GTC is still true to those early principles.

With the move from staff to freelance employment, avenues for communication and information exchange have become more important than ever and the GTC is still exploring new ways of communicating. It has a revamped, more interactive, website coming this

spring; an increased presence on social media (see the new Facebook page and follow the GTC on Twitter at GTC_TV); and is currently looking into digital publications, apps and the like.

Meanwhile, the GTC's close working relationship with its wonderfully supportive list of sponsor companies has long since secured the route for dialogue with manufacturers; and the annual GTC Awards ensure that excellent camerawork is rightly commended and celebrated.

While mainly we like to look forward in ZerB, sometimes it is fun to reminisce a little and on our 40th birthday we have collected together a little collection of memorabilia shown on the next few pages in celebration of the first 40 years of the GTC.



So, what did it take to turn an idea into the thriving organisation with a still growing membership that the GTC is today? Apart from Dick, one of the early motivators of the foundation of the GTC was our current Vice President, John Henshall, who kicks off the tale of the very beginning of the Guild of Television Cameramen, then Dick picks up the story.

John's story

Half-naked girls were parading in front of his camera (this was the 70s after all!). No wonder he seemed to have a perpetual smile on his face. But I soon learned that Dick Hibberd always has a smile on his face. Not just because of the young ladies but because he is always positive, enthusiastic, eager and has the finest 'can do' attitude I

have ever encountered. He also had a wicked sense of humour.

We'd spoken on the phone many times but this was the first time Dick and I actually met. It was at Weston-super-Mare, the summer of 1970 and we were there for an 'Miss HTV West' outside broadcast.

To be honest, I was somewhat in awe of Dick. After all, he was the Head of Cameras at one of the major ITV

companies, HTV. The head of cameras where I worked, BBC Television Centre, was an office worker with a team of four camera managers under him. This group was to be feared. It made the Civil Service look like a bunch of amateurs. Every job you did was reported on and if your face didn't fit you could be sent to a crew that did just 'talks' programmes.

In the mid 60s I had made a

fish-eye attachment for my Pentax S1 single lens reflex camera from ex-government lens elements. I took it along to Lime Grove Studios and fitted it into the filter ring of a 2-inch lens on the turret of an EMI203 image orthicon camera. Not only did it work but, by making the 2-inch lens into a reverse telephoto, it didn't even get the 8-inch lens in shot. BBC Technical Operations didn't want it; lenses had to undergo stringent tests by

Research and Planning and Installation Departments.

Johnny Stewart, producer of *Top of the Pops* certainly wanted it though and, over a drink in the BBC Club bar, he suggested I start a company in my sister's name. When colour came in 1967, a multi-image prism was wanted. Start on a single shot and zoom out to five identical images for 'The Many Faces of Frank Gorshin', an American impressionist. The man responsible for providing such effects at the BBC quoted nine months and £750 but the programme was in five

days' time. Technical Manager Geoff Shaw came to me. A colleague's brother machined a block of solid acrylic and I polished it by hand on my kitchen table and didn't even charge for it. I was a BBC man at heart and would have preferred my employer to have given me the additional role of optical effects designer.

So, Teleflex was formed, making 'camera effects for television'. We sold Star Filters all over the UK and then throughout the world. Soon the ITV companies saw the effects used on *Top of the Pops* and Teleflex went what we

would now describe as 'viral'!

That day in 1970, I was in Weston-super-Mare with some of the Teleflex optical effects equipment. But I was still a BBC cameraman, a bit embarrassed because I was 'moonlighting'. Maybe this Head of Cameras at HTV was a personal friend of my boss at the BBC? That could spell real trouble.

Yet HTV's Head of Cameras seemed like one of us. He was a real operational cameraman. Jolly, personable, warm. And his crew seemed to be at complete ease with him. He asked a lot of searching questions about how I had come to design all these effects. It was no use. I had to come clean. I had to trust him.

He invited me to a nearby café for tea, where he told me about his dream. He wanted to bring all cameramen together in a society, a guild no less, where they would be able to share their experience for the advancement of their craft. They would be able to talk to camera, lens and mountings manufacturers about the ergonomic design of their products.

There was a problem though. In the days before the Internet, cameramen who moved from company to company often lost touch. They didn't write many letters. Telephone calls were expensive. He wondered where some of the cameramen he had worked with at ATV were now and was amazed when I could tell him – at Anglia, at Thames, at Southern Television.

I could tell him because I had built up crew lists of just about every cameraman at every ITV company in the country. These were crucial to me, for they were my Teleflex contacts.

I sat in that café enthralled by his vision for a guild that would unite

GTC Chairmen

- Dick Hibberd
- Mike Solomons
- Peter Ward
- Laurie Duley
- John Barlow
- Mike Winser
- Paul Sampson
- Dave Ballantyne
- Brian Rose
- Graeme McAlpine

cameramen. It was a grand idea that would take an enormous amount of hard work to achieve but I wanted to be a part of his inspired vision for the craft we loved. And I could play a part by sharing my contacts with him as the basis for the first mailing list.


An 'ITV Cameramen Symposium' to discuss the formation of a guild took place at ATV's Birmingham studios on Sunday 21 May 1972. Only one BBC cameraman was invited – yours truly, to speak on behalf of Teleflex. But I didn't want any guild to exclude BBC cameramen and made a plea for them to be included. We were.

And so The Guild of Television Cameramen was formed. I did everything I could to promote our new craft guild at the BBC, expecting it to be welcomed warmly. I wrote to Huw Wheldon, Managing Director Television, and Neville Watson, Chief Engineer Television, offering to discuss any questions they might have. Looking back, I was extremely naïve, for our camera management saw the new Guild as a threat. They were suspicious it would become a trade

The BBC camera management saw the new Guild as a threat... they believed the design of camera equipment was nothing to do with cameramen, who were regarded as mere operators



▲ John Henshall operating a CPS Emitron in the sixties (long before the GTC!)



Congratulations to the Guild of Television Cameramen on its 40th Anniversary from all the crew at Aerial Camera Systems
the world's leading specialist camera company and proud sponsors of the GTC

www.acsmedia.com

Congratulations, GTC, on 40 fantastic years!



Happy 40th Anniversary to GTC from Camera Corps



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Happy 40th Anniversary



HAPPY 40TH TO THE GUILD OF TELEVISION CAMERAMEN FROM EVERYONE AT PRODUCTIONBASE
WWW.PRODUCTIONBASE.COM

union. They believed that the design of camera equipment was nothing to do with cameramen, who were regarded as mere operators. They even had a secret file about the GTC.

Camera, lens and mounting manufacturers, on the other hand, welcomed us warmly. Our Guild 'specifications' would ensure that future camera equipment was fit for purpose. Bill Vinten immediately became one of the earliest and most enthusiastic supporters of the GTC and remains so to this day.

The negative vibes from the BBC camera management meant that GTC membership got off to a slow start at Television Centre. Cameramen were reluctant to join in case it adversely affected their BBC careers.

Thanks to a few eloquent early members such as Bob Coles, my always calm and patient mentor from my earliest days in television, the message that we were nothing to be feared eventually got through. Later, in a strange twist, one of the camera managers who at first doubted us actually became one of our chairmen.

Forty years on, the BBC camera management is no more. The Guild of Television Cameramen, on the other hand, has never been stronger. And that is that finest tribute possible to the man without whose unflinching vision we would not be here: our founder, Dick Hibberd.

Cameramen and women are at the very tip of the arrowhead of production and are the most significant part as they know better than anyone where the arrow must land

Dick's story

I suppose I am not your 'run of the mill' President. In fact I'm quite sure I must be regarded by some as a bit of a nuisance! I make a point of attending Council meetings and while, quite properly, I do not have a vote, most present at those meetings will be left in no doubt of my views on any

particular issue being discussed.

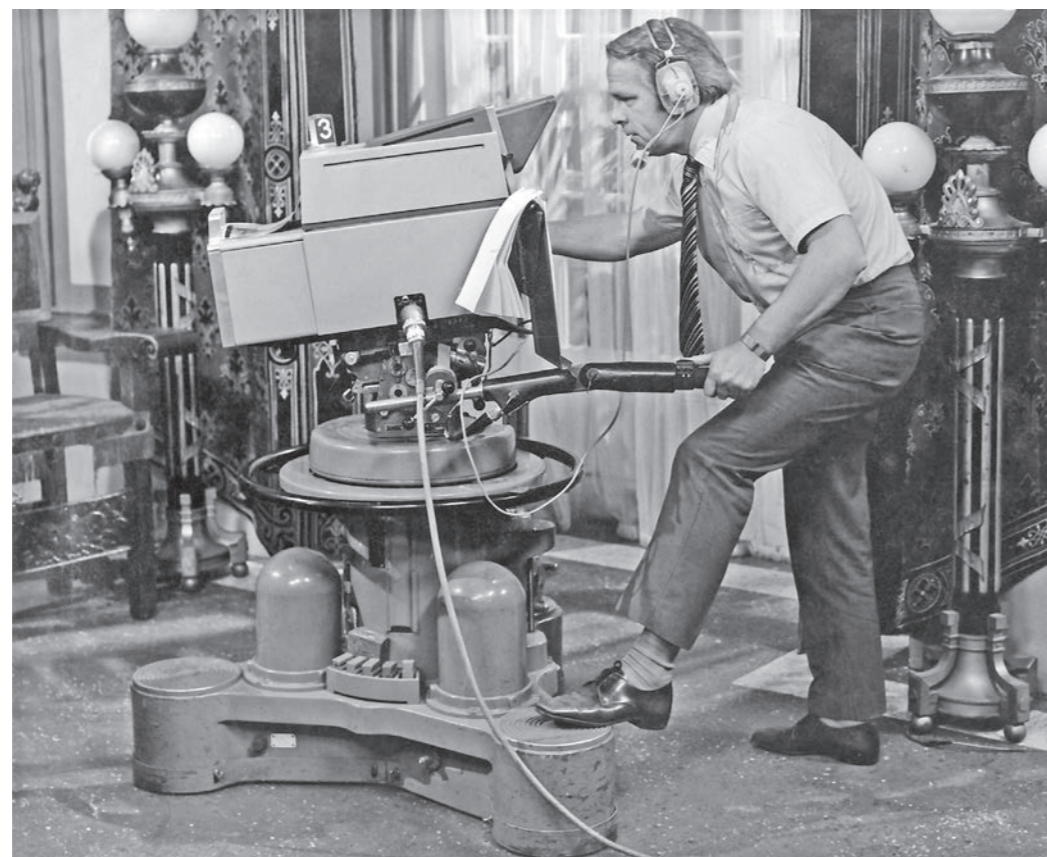
I guess I really should take a back seat and let Council get on with its business without my interference, but the problem is I care too much about the Guild to just be the usual hands-off President, who turns up to make presentations and say appropriate things at public events.

For most of my career in the

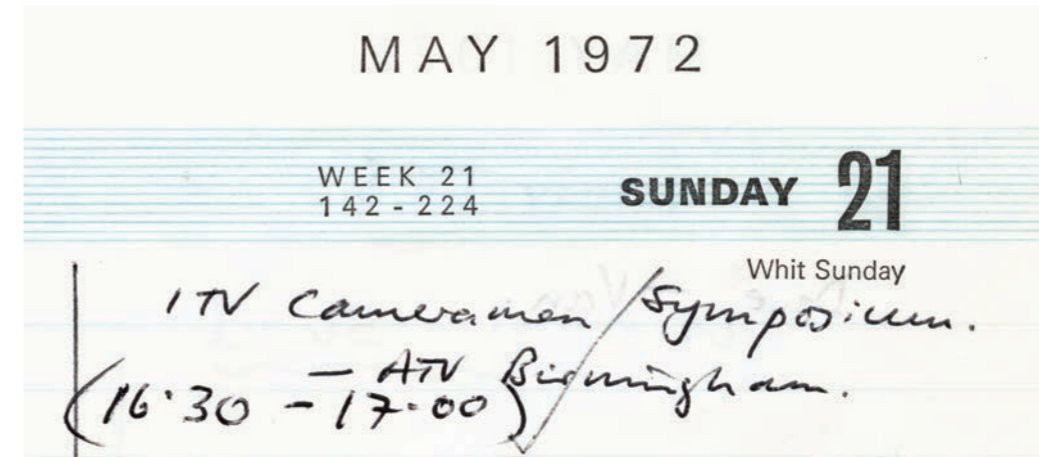
The First GTC Council 1972

Chairman	Dick Hibberd	HTV Cardiff
Vice Chairman	Ken Manning	LWT
Secretary	Dave Rogers	Thames OBs
Treasurer	Dai Higgon	ATV Elstree
Publicity Officer	Gavin Taylor	Tyne Tees TV
Council Members	Dave Bradbury	Granada TV
	Mike Carey	Granada TV
	Jamie Cross	Southern TV
	John Dudman	ITN
	Vernon Dyer	ATV Birmingham
	John Henshall	BBC TV Centre
	Gerry Lord	Yorkshire TV
	P Sergeant	Anglia TV
	John Shirley	Scottish TV
	Dave Swan	Lion TV Services
	Ted Cocks	BBC TV OBs

Co-opted Member



▲ Dick Hibberd operating a Marconi Mark 8 on Vinten HP ped at HTV Cardiff, around the time the GTC was formed



▲ Diary entry for the inaugural meeting of the GTC

An inaugural meeting of as many television cameramen as I could contact and persuade to attend was held at ATV Birmingham

industry I was a television cameraman. Only for the last eleven years did I relinquish my grip on the pan bar to do other things in the television world. Since I was no longer a cameraman, I felt I shouldn't be involved in the running of the GTC any more – but I was still a member. I read each issue of Zerb and went to every AGM (I think I have attended every AGM except two – one when I was having a heart attack and the other because I was in Canada). So, I have always kept up with Guild business and was delighted to be frequently asked to present awards to excellent exponents of the craft of camerawork.

I prefer looking forward rather than keeping a record of where I have been, or what I have done, but I suppose there comes a time in one's life when you have to look back, knowing that what is ahead is a lot shorter than what has come to pass. I suppose I was about 40 when the GTC was formed; this fact has never occurred to me until now, so at 82, perhaps I should glance over my shoulder.

I started my career in this industry as a trainee film director with a small company in Edinburgh that specialised in documentaries. Next I worked for Ferranti filming top-secret flight trials of their gun sight before moving on to Decca Radar to do the same, and then to BBC Lime Grove as a Technical Operations cameraman on Crew 1. ATV beckoned with more money where I remained for eight years doing both multi-camera studio and OB work. From there, I moved to Alpha TV in Birmingham, and then to TWW in

Cardiff, which became HTV. I also worked at Westward TV as holiday relief. This is when I began to see the necessity for an organisation to cater for the needs of all TV cameramen. From this realisation, with the help of a few dedicated television cameramen friends, the Guild was born.

An inaugural meeting of as many television cameramen as I could contact and persuade to attend was held at ATV Birmingham. It was decided that an ad hoc committee should be formed to organise an association that would be to the mutual benefit of all television cameramen.

I contacted many of my past friends and colleagues, and was lucky to persuade Dave Rogers at Thames TV OBs to become our Honorary Secretary, and Dai Higgon, at ATV Elstree to be our first Honorary Treasurer. I also managed to convince Ken Manning, Head of Cameras at LWT, to join our committee. I felt it important to include someone from the freelance world as well. There were very few freelancers then, unlike today, when staff cameramen are few and far between. Dave Swan joined our committee as a freelance representative. And so it went on, and the small snowball that had started rolling began to gather size and momentum, and continues to do so today. Of course it was important that this organisation should cover all aspects of television production both commercial and the BBC, and also should ultimately become worldwide. I still had friends at the BBC.

TiCA Award Winners

- 1974 Fulmar pedestal (W. Vinten)
- 1975 Teleflex (John Henshall)
- 1976 Z Cars Production Team
- 1977 Steadicam
- 1978 Tour de France Camera Crew
- 1980 Pebble Mill Camera Crews
- 1982 Bernard Hesketh
- 1984 Graham Berry
- 1985 Ron Green
- 1986 Keith Salmon
- 1987 Peter Shaw
- 1988 Tony Maynard
- 1990 Mike Pidgen
- 1991 Jim Atkinson
- 1992 Mohamed Amin
- 1993 Clive Lovell
- 1994 Trevor Wimlett
- 1997 Big Cat Diary Camera Crew
- 2000 John Brennan
- 2001 Paul Woolston
- 2002 Robin Sutherland
- 2003 Gerry Whitney
- 2005 Garrett Brown
- 2006 Sir David Attenborough
- 2007 Barrie Dodd
- 2008 Dave Taylor
- 2009 Alan Roberts
- 2010 Bill Vinten



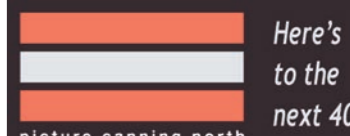
1972 YEARS 2012



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VISLINK

congratulates the GTC on 40 years of success



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picture canning north

Happy Anniversary from the PMA



www.pma.org.uk

prime television

would like to congratulate The Guild of Television Cameramen on 40 years of outstanding service to the people at the rockface of the broadcast, film and TV industries

Congratulations on your 40th anniversary



The generosity of television cameramen daily sharing their knowledge with each other through the GTC Forum gives me great personal satisfaction

One of those friends was John Henshall. This man seemed to know all the names of Heads of Cameras in the UK, and what is more, he was prepared to share that information with me. John and I just 'hit it off' and we seemed to set each other alight with ideas. So here I was with the opportunity to contact many other cameramen, and ask them if they too thought there was a need for an international organisation for television cameramen.

There are many qualities that television cameramen possess, but one quality that seems to be universal to them, is their generosity of spirit. Long may this continue, as I believe it is one of the greatest strengths of the Guild.

I believe that knowledge is valuable. I also believe that knowledge becomes more valuable when it is shared with others. This shared knowledge increases our abilities and strengths, and enables us to perform our function as cameramen more skillfully and more competently. This not only benefits us, and enhances our self-esteem and reputations; it also does something else which I think is vitally important. It produces a better end product for the 'viewer' to enjoy.

The generosity of television cameramen daily sharing their knowledge with each other through the GTC Forum gives me great personal satisfaction. I dreamed and hoped that one day this might come to pass, over 40 years ago, long before the Internet was a glimmer in the eye of its inventor. I had no idea then just how this might be best achieved. And, of course, at this present time, I have no idea what is ahead for us all.

This generosity of spirit is not only shown by TV cameramen, but also by many others who work on and for the GTC Council, by GTC sponsors and many other manufacturers. I am regularly amazed by the massive contribution of time and effort that Council members give on a voluntary basis. Without this selfless dedication, the Guild would just collapse.

Television cameramen and women can be very passionate people, and I am amused when this passion manifests itself on the Forum now and then. We all appreciate that the email lacks a great deal in its ability

to communicate irony and subtlety, and sometimes a flippant remark can be misconstrued. When things get a little unruly the good offices of our Forum Administrator come into play, and put things back on an even keel. On one such occasion not long ago, a remark was written which set me thinking. If my memory is right it was something about 'powerful people on the Guild Council'. The Council has no power; no individual on the Council has any power. The GTC Council is truly embarrassingly democratic. Many of the Council members have no vote, and it amazes me just how well it all functions. I am not saying it couldn't work better - I am quite sure it could - but only with your help and input and with you giving freely of your time and 'generosity of spirit'.

Forty years isn't very long, and to my way of thinking, hardly worth noting. Now, fifty years is something else, but I doubt that I will be here to celebrate that, life being what it is...

We all love our work and, to be honest, these days it is more of a vocation than pure 'working for a living'. Certainly, the material rewards are not significant, but tremendous job satisfaction is still to be had, whether this be through joining 400 other cameramen and women to broadcast a Royal Wedding to the world, or capturing images from the bowels of an Antarctic volcano, or successfully following a football in the Premier League each week. Even with all the incumbent frustrations and privations we might encounter, this fulfilment makes it all worthwhile.

Cameramen today, are so much more than 'just' cameramen. They are directors, engineers, vision mixers, sound recordists, lighting cameramen, researchers, runners, producers, directors of photography, self-shooters, and so on. But to be the best of any of these you must also be, first and foremost, a cameraman. Cameramen and women are at the very tip of the arrowhead of production, and are the most significant part of any production skill as they know better than anyone where the arrow must land.

Now, I am looking forward to 60 years from now, when The Guild of Television Cameramen, will really have an anniversary to celebrate!

75 Issues of Zerb

A little under a year after the inaugural 'Cameraman's Symposium', the very first issue of Zerb came out, in Spring 1973. The first 'Zerb cover boy' was Tony Williams of LWT who is pictured operating an early handheld camera, the Philips LDK13.

The first seven issues of the journal, at that stage called just 'The Journal of the Guild of Television Cameramen' were black and white A5 size and contained no photographs, just a few cartoons. By issue 8 it had morphed into an early incarnation of the familiar highly illustrated A4 publication we have come to recognise now (although still entirely black and white at that stage). It also acquired its eccentric and intentionally 'meaningless' name. The editor that took the journal through this transformation was John Duncum who did many years hard graft in laying the foundations of the publication we have today.

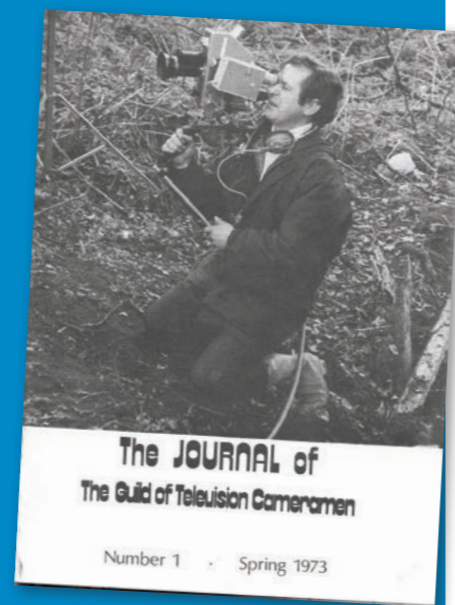
Through the years, there has been a succession of GTC member 'guest' editors on Zerb, in what must be an almost unique way of editing a large, glossy magazine such as this. For many years, these editors, all cameramen rather than professional editors by trade, were given much pretty free rein over one issue of the magazine. Looking back at the magazines these 'amateur' editors put together, the standard was amazingly high and the journal was consistently full of interesting material. Hats off to them! The tradition of the guest editor carries on today and helps give the magazine its fresh approach and variety of material, although in these more corporate times, it has been thought prudent to have one person overseeing the entire magazine to ensure consistency, balance and accuracy.

Dick Hibberd's introductory text to the very first issue read:

The inception of the Guild's own Journal is a source of great pleasure to me and, I hope, to you fellow Television Cameramen. Through this Journal we can communicate with each other about our interests, problems, innovations, etc. In fact, the Journal will enable us to achieve one of the objects of the Guild - to promote the free flow of information about ourselves and our work.

I hope that we will have a regular stream of contributions from Television Cameramen throughout the United Kingdom, and indeed throughout the world. Any comment is welcome, be it critical or complimentary. I hope, as indeed I am sure you do, that the Journal will help to lose some of the anonymity which surrounds us and will enable us to establish an identity for ourselves - something which is long overdue. Please support the Journal whether or not you are a member of the Guild by contributing to the next issue. I look forward to reading your comments in the next edition of our Journal.

It's up to GTC members and Zerb readers to decide if the brief has been fulfilled over 75 issues but we hope you enjoy this glimpse at the snapshot of TV camera history represented through a selection of Zerb covers from the last 40 years.



Zerb covers through the years...

