





In 1974 CEEFAX teletext was introduced and ingeniously used the television screen to offer viewers up-to-the-minute news and information. Subtitling of programmes on CEEFAX began in 1979. The depth and variety of the television schedules continued to surprise and delight. Documentary highlights included *The British Empire*, Dr. Jacob Bronowski's *The Ascent of Man*, Sir David Attenborough's *Life On Earth* and Alistair Cooke's *America*. *The Family*, a powerful fly-on-the-wall series in 1974, could claim to be the first "reality TV" programme that pre-dated later examples of the genre by years.



Elizabeth R, The Six Wives of Henry VIII, I Claudius, Pennies from Heaven, Last of the Summer Wine, The Glittering Prizes and Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy reflected the high standards and variety of television drama. It earned the description of "The Theatre in the Living Room" when the televising of all of Shakespeare's plays began in 1978 with Romeo and Juliet. This was a vintage period for outstanding new comedy with The Two Ronnies (1971), Are You Being Served? (1973), It Ain't Half Hot Mum and Porridge (1974), The Good Life and Fawlty Towers (1975), The Fall and Rise of Reginald

Perrin (1976) and Not the Nine O'Clock News (1979). Mastermind, The Generation Game, That's Life, Jim'll Fix It all started in the early Seventies and later in the decade came Antiques Roadshow, Young Musician of the Year, Top Gear, One Man and His Dog and Question Time.

BBC Radio faced competition for the first time when the first commercial stations, LBC and Capital, opened in London in 1973 New BBC radio programmes included *PM*, *The World Tonight*, *Week Ending*, *I'm Sorry I Haven't A Clue*, *Kaleidoscope*, *Science Now*, *Quote* ... *Unquote*, *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, *The News Quiz*, *The Food Programme*, *The News Huddlines* and *Just A Minute*.



The introduction of phone-in programmes had a mixed reception, but many listeners welcomed the opportunity to put questions directly to politicians and celebrities in live programmes like Radio 4's *It's Your Line. The Long March of Everyman* (1971) was one of the most ambitious series of radio features ever broadcast. The Seventies was also marked by controversies with politicians criticising programmes, especially *Yesterday's Men* (1971) and *The Question of Ulster* (1972). Labour was angered by the first and the Conservative government was equally angered by the second and tried unsuccessfully to persuade the BBC to scrap the programme.





# THE ANNAN COMMITTEE

Following on from the Beveridge and Pilkington, the Annan Committee Report, published in 1977, opened up discussion on a broad range of topics. While reaffirming the BBC's licence fee and editorial independence from the Government, it criticised the BBC for 'loss of nerve' and 'organisational fog'. More significantly, it proposed the establishment of a fourth channel, and an Independent Broadcasting Complaints Commission.

#### **BBC ENTERPRISES LTD**

BBC Enterprises become a limited company in 1979, in response to an increasingly market oriented culture. Needing a greater source of commercial income to supplement the licence fee, the BBC looked to programme sales, records and tapes, merchandising, home video, education and training, and exhibitions. Now a part of BBC Worldwide, turnover has increased from £234,000 in 1960 to over £330 million.

#### **OBITUARIES**

#### JOHN REITH First Director General of the BBC 1989-1971

An engineer with a talent for business management, Reith joined the BBC as General Manager in 1922. He established it as a national unifying force, overseeing the development of radio and the inauguration of British television. Bored with the BBC, he left in 1938 to become Chairman of Imperial Aiways - a 'stupendous folly' which soured the rest of his life. The BBC remains his lasting memorial.



#### **WILFRED PICKLES Actor and Presenter 1904-1978**

Infectious Yorkshireman whose native accent broke the 'BBC English' mould when he read the news in the 1940s. After the war, his radio guiz show, Have A Go, 'brought the people to the people'. Twenty million heard him ask: "Ow do, 'ow are yer?". His television show, Ask Pickles - a forerunner to Jim'll Fix It - confirmed Pickles as one of the BBC's first superstars.

## JOYCE GRENFELL Actress and Broadcaster 1910-1979

Started as The Observer's radio critic, and became one of radio's brightest stars. Grenfell's gentle wit and mimicry illuminated the legendary How To... radio series, and the discussion programme We Beg to Differ. Immense popularity brought film success, but the famous toothy grin was also a regular television fixture - through her own series, and as a panellist on Face the Music.









#### **CEEFAX**

A BBC videotext or teledata system giving viewers the choice of extra pushbutton information on their screens - enabling them to 'see facts'. Early work on the teletext system began in 1972. Like many new developments, it depended on the increased use of digitalisation, a new way of dealing with electrical information.

### **STEREO**

The BBC had experimented with stereo transmissions for a number of years. It was not until the 1970s, however, that it was extended to all networks, bringing with it a greater quality of sound... Initially, the BBC had seen stereo as a transitory gimmick, but it became heavily involved in its development. Some producers believed stereo did for radio what colour did for television.



# 1970s Key dates BBC



#### 1970

- 1 January The Six Wives of Henry VIII (TV).
- 9 February Doomwatch (TV).
- 4 March Week Ending (Radio).
- 23 March Up Pompeii! (TV).
- 4 April Radio networks reorganised to introduce more generic broadcasting.
- 6 April Start the Week (Radio).
- 6 April PM (Radio).
- 6 April The World Tonight (Radio).
- 19 April Analysis (Radio).
- 5 October You and Yours (Radio).

#### 1971

- 3 January Open University programmes began on radio and television.
- 1 February Radio-only licence fee abolished.
- 15 February Elizabeth R (left) (TV).
- 10 April The Two Ronnies (TV).
- 17 June Yesterday's Men (TV).
- 19 June Parkinson (TV).
- 21 September The Old Grey Whistle Test (TV).
- 2 October Bruce Forsyth and The Generation Game (TV).
- 3 October The BBC Complaints Commission was established and lasted for ten years until the Government-backed Broadcasting Complaints Commission began.
- 15 October The Onedin Line (TV).

#### 1972

- 5 January The Question of Ulster (TV).
- 11 January The British Empire (TV).
- 19 January Government restrictions on roadcasting hours ended.
- 4 April John Craven's Newsround, later Newsround (TV).
- 11 April I'm Sorry I Haven't a Clue (Radio).
- 4 July Andre Previn's Music Night (TV).
- 11 September Mastermind (TV).
- 28 September War and Peace (TV).
- 5 October The Last Goon Show of All (Radio).
- 19 October Colditz (TV).
- 12 November America (Alistair Cooke) (TV).

# 1973

- 4 January Last Of The Summer Wine (TV).
- 5 February The Wombles (TV).
- 14 March Are You Being Served? (TV).
- 2 April Kaleidoscope (Radio).
- 5 May The Ascent Of Man (TV).
- 20 May M.A.S.H. (TV).
- 26 May That's Life! (TV).
- 6 July Checkpoint (TV).
- 23 July The Radio One Roadshow (Radio).
- 10 September Newsbeat (Radio).
- 14 November The marriage of Princess Anne and Captain Mark Phillips televised.

#### 1974

- 3 January It Ain't Half Hot Mum (TV).
- 19 January The Pallisers (TV).
- 11 May Science Now (Radio)).
- 30 April The Family (TV).
- 5 September Porridge (TV).
- 23 September Regular CEEFAX teletext service (right) began.
- 28 September Stop the Week (Radio).
- 30 December Churchill's People
- (TV).

#### 1975

- 4 April The Good Life (TV).
- 31 May Jim'll Fix It (TV).
- 9 June 4 July First experimental radio broadcasting of House Of Commons proceedings.
- 19 September Fawlty Towers (TV).
- 1 October Arena (TV)).
- 5 October Poldark (TV).
- 12 October On the Move, the pioneering adult literacy series, (TV).

#### 1976

- 4 January Quote...Unquote (Radio).
- 8 January When the Boat Comes In (TV).
- 21 January The Glittering Prizes (TV).
- 17 February One Man and His Dog (TV).
- 20 February Open All Hours (TV).
- 5 August Sailor (TV).
- 3 September A Good Read (Radio).
- 4 September The Duchess of Duke Street (TV).
- 8 September The Fall and Rise of Regional Perrin (TV).
- 20 September I, Claudius (TV).
- 3 November The News Huddlines (Radio).

#### 1977

- 10 April Everyman (TV).
- 21 April Royal Heritage (TV).
- 8 July Going Places (Radio).
- 6 September The News Quiz (Radio).
- 1 October Does He Take Sugar? (Radio).
- 2 October Money Box (Radio).
- 26 October File on Four (Radio).

#### 1978

- 3 8 January All Creatures Great and Small (TV).
- 7 February Young Musician of the Year (TV).
- 8 February Grange Hill (TV).
- 7 March Pennies from Heaven (TV).
- 8 March Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy (Radio).
- 3 April Start of regular radio broadcasts from Parliament.
- 31 October The Voyage of Charles Darwin (TV)).
- 10 November Butterflies (TV).
- 23 November Radio 2 became the first UK network to broadcast regularly throughout the night.
- 3 December Start of BBC Shakespeare project with Romeo and Juliet (TV).

# 1979

- 17 January Telford's Change (TV).
- 16 January Sir Richard Attenborough's Life On Earth (TV).
- 18 February Antiques Roadshow (TV).
- 21 March Publication of BBC Working Party Report on Violence in Television.
- 1 April Feedback (Radio).
- 22 April Heart of the Matter (TV).
- 2 September First CEEFAX teletext subtitled programme.
- 10 September Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy (TV).
- 25 September Question Time (TV).
- 29 September Breakaway (Radio).
- 30 September The Food Programme (Radio).
- 30 September To the Manor Born (TV).
- 30 September Shoestring (TV).
- 16 October Not the Nine O'clock News (TV).
- 4 November Testament of Youth (TV).
- 5 November The Magic of Dance (TV).