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BECTU History Project
Interview no: 194
Interviewee: Daphne Shadwell [with John P Hamilton]
Interviewer: Roy Fowler
Duration: 07:14:25

[Side 1 Tape 1]

The copyright of the following recording is vested in the ACTT History Project. The date is 1st May 1991 and we're at the flat of John and Daphne Shadwell in Paddington and Roberto Champredanc [ph], this is your life!

[laughter]

Daphne Shadwell, long time radio and television practitioner. Daphne, starting at the beginning – when, where?

DS: Well, when I was born, I was born in Wandsworth Women's Hospital in December 1927, which was the only time in my life I've been really, really early. I was born in Wandsworth because my father, who was Charles Shadwell…

John P Hamilton: You were born in Waterloo, Daphs, the York Lying-in Hospital, the York Road Lying-in Hospital, Waterloo. You were living in Wandsworth.

DS: Shall I start again?

No, no, no, we can't keep doing that.

DS: No, John P will put me right.

JPH: Your parents were living in Wandsworth.

DS: Oh yes, yes. Because my father was Charles Shadwell, a musician, a musical director. He was MD Musical Director at the Putney Hippodrome at that time, so that's why I was born in that area. But shortly after that, I think he was – I don't know whether

he was sacked or it was preference, I have no idea – he went to Brighton as Musical Director at the Brighton Hippodrome and that's why I have a very fleeting memory of a long street with the sea at the end of it. I've never known why, until it was years later I found out that we moved to Brighton and lived there for a little while. And then we moved to… we moved to… I can't remember, was it the other way round? We started in… yes, he was at the Putney Hippodrome and got then… went to Brighton, and he was MD there and Brighton was part of the Stoll Moss empire, which included the Palladium. And in the early thirties, during the bad times, the recession or whatever, they had depression, they closed the Palladium, it must have been one of the few times that the Palladium was closed and the MD there, the Musical Director there was senior, he was the Senior House Musical Director, so – they were very, very sorry and very nice to my father – but they fired him, so that the Palladium MD went to Brighton. But it was of course like good comes out of bad, it worked for him because he got a job as Musical Director at the Coventry Hippodrome, so we moved to Coventry. That's where I started school, in Coventry, St Joseph's, Coventry, in the infants there. And it was good for my father because through Birmingham BBC they started doing broadcasts from the theatre of the Coventry Hippodrome orchestra, MD'd by my father and he became quite well known. In fact, John P, you remember that don't you?

JPH: I do. Yes, I remember listening to the orchestras and [incomp – 0:03:07].

DS: Yes, on the radio.

JPH: It must have been about 1931/32.

DS: So he started becoming quite a name. So I started school there. But the best part was really that we were allowed, my sisters – I have three sisters; my eldest sister Joan Winters went, she was older than us so she was really rather away from us, but the three of us, Sheila [ph], Hazel and I, were allowed every Friday, because we didn't have to get up for school the next morning, it was the end of the week, we were allowed to go first house to the Coventry Hippodrome every week, and it was a wondrous time in our life, we loved it. We didn't sort of get into theatre, but it was, well, all the music hall stuff and we became terribly blasé, knew all the jokes. And either would say, oh isn't he terrible, or isn't that terrible, what a dreadful singer. I mean at the age of nothing. But the great treat was,

when the show was finished we would go down into the pit under the stage where all the musicians were with my father, with all of them having a beer, say 'Goodnight, God bless you daddy', and were taken home. But that was really the initiation to the theatre.

What are the acts that you remember, Daphne?

DS: Oh, I remember Sandy Powell, I remember Billy Russell who drove us mad because, as a child I didn't take in the jokes really, but he used to just stand there. The working man's comedian, he was. And I remember, he always had a pipe and he struck a match and he would just go to light the pipe and he'd go into a joke, and as a child I thought, well we all did, Hazel was the same, we thought we'd go mad because he never lit this pipe, and we became obsessed with this wretched man, every time they said Billy Russell was on we said, don't really want to see him, can we go and have an ice-cream or something, please, when he was on. Oh, lots of… oh, it was the juggling, the dancing things I liked, the dancing acts, all the duos and goodness knows what, pantos we saw. But I became more enchanted with theatre because Joan, my eldest sister, became involved with the Coventry amateur dramatics, the Coventry Operatic Society, and they had shows at the Coventry Hippodrome and she had leading parts; she was very pretty and very talented. And I was enchanted, I thought it was wonderful and we used to be taken to – that was really the only other theatre that I saw, the Coventry Dramatic Society. So that aroused my interest and from then on really all I ever wanted to do was go on the stage and be a dancer, singer, and used to put on either Joan's costumes or my mother's clothes and work out routines in front of the mirror and sing all these songs. I believe my parents were highly amused, then I used to come down and do these pieces for them. Then, because of the broadcasting, the…

[0:05:38]
Let me ask a question, if I may, looking back with adult eyes to those headline acts of your childhood, would they get away with it now do you think? It was an age of great innocence, I think, in terms of material and performance of the talent, do you think?

DS: Yes, it was, it was. I'm sure they wouldn't stand up now, I'm sure they wouldn't.

I don't think Sir Harry Lauder would have lasted five minutes.

DS: No, you're right, that sort of act. But as a child, of course, we weren't so keen on those sort of straight acts, you know, I wasn't so keen. Who was that marvellous man with the…? Clarkson Rose, I remember, as being wonderful and his group. I'll always remember Clarkson Rose, *Twinkle*. And the man with the car, the exploding car.

Harry Tate?

DS: Harry Tate. Harry Tate Junior it was then, of course. I remember him being marvellous and ever so funny. But really, looking back, no, a lot of the acts were really dreadful. And we, of course when we got so blasé we used to send them up terribly, in later years we used to stand doing, you know, and all this, I can see now the drapes, the stage was always draped, I used to love it, with all those marvellous drapes, all the looped back drapes, you know, swagged drapes right up to the back of the stage and the lighting from the side with the piano and the singer, always the ladies had their long handkerchiefs leaning in the crook of the piano and coming forward and 'oooooohhh'. [laughs]

Did you have a sense of a privileged childhood, that every child had the run of a theatre or…

DS: No, the extraordinary thing is, isn't it, when you're very young, you just take things for granted. That's one thing how royalty carry on, they take it for granted that people look at them.

They've known no other.

DS: They've known no other, no. I think we just took it for granted as a sort of right. I mean I suppose I am still a bit uppity about things; we got very uppity about things, you know. You know, my father's in the theatre and let us in please, you know, step aside, we're to come in.

What, this was in the front of the house?

DS: Yes.

Did you laud it over your schoolmates in that respect?

DS: I don't remember doing so. I remember, I think I must have used it, because I remember showing off at school when I was in the infants when I first started school, and in the playground – I can only remember vaguely – it was like gardens and there was a big flight of steps and I used to do this routine up and down this flight of steps that I'd probably seen in the theatre, the glitter steps, you know? And it must have been my directorial sense or my bossiness, I used to, I remember saying to the children, we'll put on a show, come along, now you must all run up the steps here and I'll walk down the… They were all the chorus, of course. [laughter]

Shades of Judy Garland and Micky Rooney!

DS: [laughter] Yes. And then of course because of the broadcasting, the success of it, whether he applied or was asked I don't know, but we moved to London from Coventry when he became Musical Director for the BBC Variety Orchestra.

How long were you in Coventry?

DS: I can't remember. I think it must have…

JPH: It was about six years, wasn't it?

DS: Would you have thought so?

JPH: It was about '31/32 when he first went there.

So…

DS: '36/37.

The end of the thirties.

JPH: ’37?

DS: I think ’37 we went to London.

JPH: Joined the BBC.

DS: Yes.

Was it disruptive for a child to be in that kind of ever changing and somewhat unstable environment?

DS: Well, I suppose it was educationally. My sisters are really on the whole better educated than I am because they concentrated more and, you know, I was shoved around an awful lot.

In schools or home?

DS: In schools. But I never really minded it, in a way. I don’t remember minding, but I’m sure it had a very disruptive influence on me.

Were you as gregarious then as you are now?

DS: I don’t know, I always had a lot of fun at school.

And friends?

DS: Always had a lot of fun and friends. I hated all the school bit, hated it. I lived for the school concerts and the end of terms and the plays and things, which I was always in, thank God. I always took it for granted I would be, and I was, I was always in the plays and the concerts.

What sort of parts and plays were done?

DS: Oh, they were mostly musical things. My first, biggest part, it must have been in '37 when *Snow White* came out and it was in London, my first school. The girls went to the big convent of Jesus and Mary in Willesden, very good education there, very good, but whether my parents couldn't afford it or not, but I went into a junior school in Wembley and I remember, they decided to do the big school play, the big year, and they went mad on it. And they did *Snow White* because the film had come out, and I was to be Snow White. And, oh I was a star, I thought that was wonderful, I was a star and I adlibbed parts in the middle of the play, took great liberties, what I remembered from the film. [laughter]

[0:10:17]
Were they all-girls' schools?

DS: Yes.

A single sex?

DS: That infant school wasn't, that young school, because I remember the boys being the dwarves and things, so that was a mixed school.

You mentioned a convent school before.

DS: But the convent school, all the convents schools had been girls only, yes. That's why I went mad when I came out, like all convent girls, you see.

You'd be playing men's parts as well?

DS: Yes, yes. But they were nearly all, being convent schools, they were musical shows or concerts or things like that, or a lot of Shakespeare of course. Oh that's right, because I played Caliban, I remember I played Caliban. And I played Puck.

Did you?

DS: Yes.

What, still in your pre-teens, or in your…

DS: Yes, once. And then I played Puck again when John and I joined an amateur group, which was really, I went there for training when I was younger and then I joined a group, and we did *Midsummer Night's Dream*. It was a good production, wasn't it John?

JPH: Yes.

DS: And I played Puck in that, as an adult.

Well, Puck I can understand, but The Tempest *would be a bit off-putting, I would have thought, for small children.*

DS: Yes, yes.

What was a convent education like in the thirties from the child's point of view?

DS: It was quite hard, but then John P would say anything would be hard for me. But it was, but I must go by my sisters because they, I mean Sheila [ph] especially, the one next to the eldest, she's always been intelligent and she has been scholarly, and Hazel was too, and they found it quite hard going, especially at the Willesden Covent of Jesus and Mary, it was a very high standard of education there and they had specialised teachers in there.

Were you a Catholic family?

DS: Yes, my father wasn't but my mother was, so we were brought up Catholics and that's why we went into convents. But I remember somebody saying once that convents teach you nothing but good manners, so I thought… So somebody once said, well that's not a bad thing to have, and I thought well, if you've only got that in life it's not bad.

Did the Catholicism stick?

DS: It did… yes, not with my elder sister, Joan, she practised it [laughter] when she was very, very young. My father, he converted, but my mother always said it was because he was interested, it was curiosity, he couldn't think why we kept running to church. But he only lasted about a couple of months or so, got bored with that, that was the end of that. My two sisters have remained. Hazel dropped it, but she's an all church type person now. I went away from it for a while - I think everybody does - I went away from it for a while, but I've come back to Catholicism now and the Church and enjoy it very much, because I've done it my own way and I've come back my own way. But we were convent bred, convent trained and had the thing of having to go. John was the same, he was… having to go to church on a Sunday, being very cross about it and coming up, fed up, being forced to go to church every Sunday. Think I don't want to, but you've got to and it was just, you've got to go and that was it. And going there…

That's what you said?

DS: Yes.

And still you married. [laughter] So what was your dad's appointment? The BBC Variety Orchestra?

DS: Musical Director of the BBC Variety Orchestra, yes, and that was in '37. So that brought us to London and the schooling then, and then my sister Joan had become professional, so she was tied up with the theatre, so I used to go a lot to that. But then we were invited, we used to go to the broadcasts sometimes – not in Coventry, I don't remember. John asked me that, did we go, but I don't remember anything about the Coventry broadcast, only it being on the radio. I remember my mother saying, 'Oh look at the time, it's twelve o'clock, I must listen to the radio', because I believe my father used to say, 'You will listen, I want to know your reaction'.

Was there a broadcasting studio in Coventry or would they all have been out…

JPH: No, they were OBs.

OBs.

JPH: No, they were OBs, from the Hippodrome. That's why he made his name really, because it became…

Well, I didn't mean just your dad, but when you say broadcasts, I wondered if they originated plays or documentaries?

DS: I don't think so.

JPH: No, no, no that a music hall, basically, wasn't it?

DS: Yes, it was a musical programme. I think it went out at twelve noon, it went out during the day.

JPH: It was an hour of light music, basically, yes, from twelve to one, yes.

DS: Yes, something like that.

Okay. So where did you settle in London when you…

DS: When we first came back – oh, in London – we were in Wembley Park, Grendon Gardens, I remember it. 26 Grendon Gardens, and I'd been at the Wembley school, and then I was moved into the same school as my sisters, into the kindergarten, into the bottom junior, and that was great, I enjoyed that hugely. It was, as I say, it was very hard education, but on the junior school line that we had, we had a wonderful time, we were treated and spoilt, you know, we used to carry our little chairs out – 'It's a nice day, we'll take the chairs out and go outside' – and we used to carry our little chairs out, sit in the garden and have a little lesson. And, 'It's time to go back, you've all got to have your milk now', and all this sort of thing, so we were very spoilt in the junior school, in the kindergarten.

Was that still kindergarten? You're now what, ten? Nine or ten, are you not?

DS: No, it must have been the juniors then, because I know we were treated like the babies. We were very spoilt.

But you're learning things by this time, surely?

DS: Oh yes, oh yes.

What were you good at, if any subject?

DS: Nothing really. Nothing really. I always liked history, I wasn't bad at history when I started basic history, because it was stories, you see, it was stories and characters that I liked. Oh, and we started, that's where I started, we started algebra and geometry and everything. But then it was very shortly after that of course that the war came, so we were evacuated immediately and we went to Bristol.

Because of your father's work?

DS: Because of my father's work, the BBC Variety Department. And drama, it was drama as well, all were packed off to Bristol. And my parents got a flat down there, Whiteladies Road, I remember that, not far from the BBC studios, just by the studios. And we used to, again, with great interest we were invited to the studio for audience shows and programmes. And when was *Monday Night at 7* John, was it then?

JPH: Well no, that…

DS: Was that later?

JPH: *Monday Night at 7* and then *8*, *Monday Night at 8*, were in the period '37 to '39 while your father was in London.

DS: Before the war.

JPH: That was coming out of St George's Hall. He was also doing a studio show, Broadcasting House from the Concert Hall.

DS: Yes, that's right.

JPH: Maida Vale, of course, was the big studio centre.

DS: Well that was my first contact with broadcasting, really, because we used to be invited in. It wasn't an audience show, but we used to go and see and hear *Monday Night at 7* and *Monday Night at 8*.

JPH: And *Music Hall*.

DS: And the *Music Hall*, which I loved because that was like theatre, because they were all in evening dress and the acts were all dressed up and the MC was in evening dress and it was like real theatre, I forgot that it was broadcasting. And I always remember, I think one of the *Monday Night at 7*s or *Monday Night at 8*, and it was Ronnie Waldman who fronted it, who was the uncle of Brian Tesler, of course, and Ronnie Waldman was the… did he found it or was he the…

JPH: The quiz segment of it, yes.

DS: The quiz. And he, I remember once on air saying, 'Oh well, it's quite off-putting, the whole of the Shadwell family are sitting looking at me'. Well, of course I was over the moon, I was in a daze for days, the fact that we'd been mentioned on the radio.

Yes, your father was, as it were, a character, a participant in so much that went on in the shows, was he not?

DS: Yes, he was, he was. He became a name because of his, mainly his laugh became famous through music hall because he used to laugh so heartily and had a very distinctive laugh, and he became famous for that. And then the comedians used to start pressing their jokes at him.

JPH: He was a stooge actually.

DS: And using him as a foil.

JPH: Most of the big comics. Like a fall guy anyway.

DS: Yes, and he used to laugh so much.

And was that a genuine laugh, a reaction to it?

DS: Oh yes, he had a very hearty laugh, a very funny laugh didn't he, he could set people off, because he laughed so much.

So it really all developed because he had reacted at some point to the acts?

DS: Yes, yes. And they all loved him. We were talking quite recently to Doddy, to Ken Dodd, and I said, introduced John and said hello and how do you do, we've come to see the show, and we so enjoyed his performances, did he remember my father. Gosh, he said yes, and he said such wonderful things about my father, what a wonderful MD he was and how helpful and how nice. It was lovely, wasn't it John? He said a bit different from, and he named another MD didn't he, which you knew. Stanley somebody was it? Stan somebody.

JPH: Yes, yes.

DS: Anyway, it doesn't matter, but he made us laugh about the terrible things this other MD used to do and the rough time he'd give the music hall. But apparently my father was very patient and very kind with them. So that was nice to hear.

I wonder if your father were typical in that respect or the other characters, this unnamed Stanley was?

JPH: No, I don't think he was, because as the war approached, of course, and in '39 he became a character, almost one of the cast of *ITMA*, of course, the big wartime radio show, because he'd developed this stooge thing and Tommy Handley of course played on that and he actually, apart from being the MD, became part of the cast.

DS: Yes.

JPH: And was known as The Hairpin, and other rude things, being tall and thin.

What about you at this time, your theatrical or stage ambitions, how were they progressing?

[0:19:46]
DS: My stage ambitions were still very much that I just wanted to go on the stage and be an actor and be a singer and dancer. And so I really, I was just pushing along being in everything I could be in, either locally or dancing classes and things like that and there'd be the usual big dancing class shows and things and I would be put in on that, and I would love it of course.

Your parents were benign about this were they?

DS: Oh, they liked it very much and I mean they'd encouraged Joan, they'd encouraged Hazel. The only daughter, Sheila, who loathed the stage, was terrified and wouldn't want to go on stage, and made one appearance once and was nearly sick and was rushed offstage and never appeared or walked on again. So it was strange, that. But the three of us were all mad about it. Hazel was very good, she was a very good actress indeed and in fact when we were evacuated up to, after Bristol everyone was hurriedly evacuated, the BBC Variety Department were evacuated to Bangor, north Wales, and of course there was not much going on there so the BBC had a lot of outside activities, you know, the club things, the golf… and they had a very good amateur dramatic society and Hazel appeared in nearly everything in that, she was always the lead and she was very good as an actress, especially in light comedy and sitcoms. But she got a scholarship to RADA and turned it down. I can never remember why. I was incensed with rage, I was so upset I was nearly sick. I wouldn't speak for a week and sulked because she'd got what I would have liked more than anything and then just turned it down and didn't go. It was a pity really, it was a waste because she was very good.

This plethora of talent in the family, do you think that was somehow in the genes or the tradition, or was it exposure to your father's environment?

DS: No. I think it was there because daddy was always a competent performer and had performed very young, and he'd had to, when he was young, jumping back to his childhood, his father had been a doctor and of course they were much more revered in those days than they are now, and my grandmother was quite an eccentric character and they used to have soirées and musical evenings, and my father was taught violin and piano of course, and he was always called in, 'Charlie boy, Charlie boy, come and…' and he always had to perform for these soirées in the evenings and things and either say something or sing or join in with the parents, or play the piano, whatever. So he was used to performing. But my mother was a natural performer and I don't think there'd been anything in her family, she was just a natural performer and in fact when they first married, she went on tour with my father just after the war, Great World War, and appeared in a show, she travelled in a show and appeared in it for quite a while. But she was…

JPH: [incomp – 22:27] or something, it was a Western, wasn't it?

DS: It was a very famous show. It was an American producer. It'll come to me in a minute, something like The Hayseeds. Something like The Hayseeds. Or it was Harry Hayseed, I think, who ran it. It was a very famous show which my father was part of and part of the orchestra and my mother was hauled in, they wanted somebody and she appeared. So it was always there, she had a natural…

JPH: She had a good voice, she was a good singer.

DS: She had a beautiful singing voice.

So maybe some of it was inherited.

DS: Yes, yes I think so. And then of course, I suppose being with showbiz and being imitative. Joan was very imitative, she could do voices. In her act, when she used to do an act, she used to do a lot of impression, impersonations. And Hazel's quite funny in

copying people and I used to be able to make people laugh with my imitations of people. I don't do it so much now do I, John?

JPH: No.

DS: But I used to make people laugh. So it was there somehow, this imitative thing, I think.

JPH: Hazel was more practical musically, wasn't she?

DS: Yes, she was.

JPH: She used to improvise flute and violin.

DS: And piano, yes. Yes, she was best musically. Sheila hadn't got anything in her. Joan sang very well, I had piano lessons, wouldn't practise of course, behaved badly, always had something wrong with me. Always had burnt my hand that morning, or had the hiccups or something. [laughter] But really the nearest to broadcasting was after the war when we used to go to the shows and things. And then, when we came back to London, I went back to, funnily enough I missed all the middle bit of the convent at Willesden, I missed all the good education, the two girls were working by then. I went back to finish off my schooling and went into the – they had a marvellous secretarial training business class, they had about four or five different teachers in it, and my parents put me into that, because they'd insisted with all of us that we trained ourselves before we thought of ever going to the stage or doing anything, and they insisted with me that whatever I did, I must first of all learn a trade, whatever it was.

So at what age did one go to a secretarial school in those days?

DS: Well, I suppose I must have been about fourteen or fifteen or something like that. Fifteen, I should think.

JPH: They came back to London about '43 from Bangor, the Variety Department came back. Your father was still heavily involved in *ITMA* of course, which was *the* big show, all the team came back to London.

DS: Yes, that's right. And then he had a lot of his own programmes by then. He used to have – he thought up quite a lot of ideas.

JPH: *Garrison Theatre* of course.

DS: *Garrison Theatre* had been his big show, that was his idea.

That was his, was it?

DS: Yes, he'd thought of that. Yes.

That was at the very beginning of the war, was it not?

DS: It was. He'd thought of it, but it reminded him, because he had worked in the Garrison Theatre and had…

JPH: In the First World War.

DS: First World War, and had done a lot of music and…

JPH: He played piano.

DS: …played piano in the mess and for all the concerts, you know, and the colonel would say, 'Come along Shadwell, let's get a bit of entertainment please'. And he did that, so that had given him an idea of the Garrison Theatre in wartime and he and Harry S Pepper and somebody else, the Head of Variety then, John Watts wasn't it?

JPH: John Watts, yes.

DS: Thought of Jack Warner. And then it was suggested they wanted a girl, and I don't know how my father did it, but he suggested Joan and…

JPH: Nepotism.

DS: It was nepotism. But I think the producer knew her, had seen her in something, and that's how sister Joan became Little Girl Joan Winters.

JPH: Ernie Longstaff was it? Ernest?

DS: No, I can't remember who it was. Oh yes, it might have been. So I went to secretarial school and they were doing all that. And then when I came out of secretarial school Joan by this time, when I finished secretarial school, Joan by this time had finished being Little Girl and *Garrison Theatre* had been over and all the stage show and all that, and she'd teamed up with a man who had a variety act. And that drew me very close to the theatre because they always, [incomp – 26:35] used to say to my mother, 'Can Daphne come for the week?' or whatever. So I used to go on tour with them or go for a week to somewhere where they were staying, you know, in Blackpool and sit in the dressing room, stand on the side of the stage and get friendly with the young people. So I was very much involved in theatre again, which I enjoyed, with them, with Joan and Guy [Fielding]. Guy taught me the time step and all sorts of tap dancing things and so that kept me very happy, travelling about with them or going to see them. And through them, they heard of a job going and I went to work at Drury Lane at ENSA – Every Night Something Awful, if you remember, that's what it was called. And I was a secretary in the, I can't remember what the department was called, it was a very nice man and he had to set up the auditions for the shows going abroad for the concert, he was Concerts Manager and he had to audition hundreds of people to form a concert to send out overseas and package them. And I got the job and it all started falling to me to organise these auditions, but oh I loved it, I was so bossy and used to arrange all these auditions, and made them much too long, I was so inexperienced. We would start at 9am and go on till about 10pm and everyone was exhausted! But I loved it, I used to run round Drury Lane ever so bossily, up and down stairs, backstage, here, there and everywhere, and had a lot of fun there. But they were winding up then, or something, I can't remember why, but…

JPH: Well, the war was over wasn't it, virtually? It was only the remaining guys who hadn't come back, that was about 1945.

DS: And they wanted the theatre back, of course, they wanted everybody out and clean up the theatre and open it up again. So my sister Sheila – Joan was still on tour – sister Sheila was working in the BBC, secretarial side, and she was working in the Near East Department of the BBC, and my sister Hazel was working in the Variety Department at Aeolian Hall, but she heard of a vacancy going for a secretary to the Administrative Assistant of the Near East Department out at Aldenham, near Elstree, and she arranged an interview for me. I can't think how I got that sort of job, which was so unlike me and I wouldn't want at all, working in the Administrative Department of the Near East Service, looked after the Arabs, the Turks and the Persians out in the countryside. But I think it was, whether I was getting too wild or too cocky or something, I think it was a ruse by my parents and Sheila to go out there and work there in a good solid straight job with her to keep an eye on me, which she did very heavily.

Was this in the school at Aldenham?

JPH: No, no, no, at Aldenham House.

DS: Which had been a boys' school.

It's my nephew's school so I don't know what they were doing during the war.

JPH: Aldenham Boys' School is a little bit further up the road. It was a private house originally, a country house, which the Beeb had taken over at the beginning of the war and split some of the foreign services between there and Wood Norton in Evesham.

DS: But it reverted to a school again, because last time I took a drive out there it was a school.

JPH: Oh, it's still there? The Latin American Service were there as well, and the Near East Service.

DS: But they used to keep an eye on me, Miss Burton and Sheila, I know. Whether they thought the wicked Arabs were going to take me off to the white slave trade or something, I don't know. But I remember, there were lots of young men there all coming back from the war and everything, so it was a grand time for me, I used to chat to these boys. But I used to be whisked off at lunchtime: 'We've managed to get a little garden plot and we've got one for you, so we'll go digging and hoeing at lunchtime'. The boys used to fall about me digging and showing my knickers and bending over and all the stocking tops and things. And John had worked there, but…

JPH: No, after you'd gone.

[0:30:18]
DS: …funnily enough, I didn't meet him then. So I got very tired of that and again, whether I behaved badly or got uppity or not, I don't know, but I was suddenly told that it was time for me to move on and I went to a much more fun job. I went up to 200 Oxford Street in the BBC and worked in *Forces Favourites*. I *loved* that, that was marvellous. All the records, used to sit with headphones on listening to these records and building up these programmes. I mean the cheek of it, I hadn't got any training or anything. You had to write the scripts, the links for it, and I met Jean Metcalfe there, they were the announcers: there was Jean Metcalfe, Sheila Stewart – who was on there with Sheila?

JPH: Barbara McFadyean.

DS: Yes, Barbara McFadyean. Oh, some marvellous names, marvellous names. That wonderful blonde lady that used to wear her coat over her shoulder, it was the new fashion and…

JPH: Marjorie, Marjorie Anderson.

DS: Marjorie Anderson. And we all took to this, we thought this was wonderful. She had high heels and wonderful blonde hair and just slipped her coat over her shoulder. But it never worked for us; it always fell off or flew off or it was the wrong shape or something. And Jean Metcalfe was lovely, we got very friendly with her, she was a great girl, loved her. But she had the wit to take all the discs, which we'd marked up and timed, and our

scripts, and chucked the script up and just read the letter straight off. But there was a lovely girl called Pat, she was either very nervous, she used to read the scripts absolutely verbatim and I remember her voice changing one day, we were listening – we used to listen to our own programmes going out, *Forces Favourites*, and she said, 'That was so-and-so singing so-and-so. And now, a nice letter here from Bombardier Lance Corporal So-and-So in the Sudan' or wherever it was. 'And he says that he's very fond of apple pie, well he doesn't get much apple pie now, although they have apple pie sometimes in there often, but his mother always cooked a wonderful apple pie, and to bring back memories of the apple pie we've got, *Ma, I Missed Your Apple Pie*. So to give you some memories of those good cooking days of apple pie, we're going to now play…' [laughter] and her voice [speech obscured by laughter]… stunned and weakened as this went on and on and on. And the girl who was in charge, Mar… Marg… Margot…

JPH: Margot [ph] Richards.

DS: We were all sitting listening to this, and her head was slowly turning round and looking at me and she said, 'Did you write this?' And I went, 'Yes', quite happily. And I think from then on she was told to vet my bit of writing, the script. But that was great fun, I enjoyed that job enormously.

What generally was the atmosphere of the BBC at that point?

DS: I thought very good. It was still very strict, you had to behave, you had to know your place and it was very strict.

When you say behave, you mean in the hierarchy?

DS: Yes. Well, you had to mind your Ps and Qs.

Or not bending over and showing your knickers?

DS: Not bend over and show your knickers. And you had to work to, I mean the Administrative Assistant, the AA, was very much in charge of the department, and the head, and you had to know who was the head of the department and you had to bow to

instructions. I mean there was no argument or messing about, well you had to behave and I don't think they liked people…

JPH: And you had to dress properly, I mean you couldn't slop around in jeans or anything like that.

DS: No. And I remember sometimes in *Forces Favourites* we had to help out in the Schedules Department, a very busy department downstairs which, we came under Presentation, *Forces Favourites*, but we were a separate little unit, three girls running *Forces Favourites*. But when they were short staffed downstairs for typing up the schedules and things, we'd have to whip down there quickly. And we hated doing that, we hated it, it was a rotten job. These great long typewriters with these terrible daily schedules. And I did it once and hated it, then I was sent for quite soon again. Ooh, I got very snotty about it all. 'I'm very busy upstairs, how long do you want me for?' What about this and what about that. And I remember Henry somebody or other, he was Head of Presentation then, administration. He said, 'Look Daphne' he said, 'You play ball with me and I'll play ball with you, this job's got to be done'. And I said, 'I don't want to play ball with anybody' I said. [laughter] And I came out saying, 'Who is this man?' And they said, 'He's head of the department'. I said, 'Well, I don't care'. So that's how badly I behaved. Hazel was as bad.

Did you see yourself as the little princess, somehow?

DS: Well, I suppose so. I behaved very badly, but we all did in the family, Sheila has said that before now. We were terribly high-minded. God knows why, we had no reason to be.

Was your father politically important at the BBC?

DS: No, not at all. And we kept it rather quiet, although I remember Ronnie Waldman saying to somebody once, 'Can't walk through the corridors of the BBC without brushing Shadwells off your coat'.

It's an interesting question, the fact that four sisters all got jobs at the BBC.

DS: It was extraordinary, wasn't it?

Now the extent to which nepotism was involved, not just on your part, but on the Corporation's part in those days.

DS: I think it was because, you see, Sheila and Hazel were extraordinarily good at their job, their shorthand and typing was marvellous, their arithmetic was marvellous. I was the lucky one really because I don't think I was as good at them at my work.

But would your father have made a discreet little phone call about it?

DS: No, not at all.

JPH: Oh no.

So it was on merit, but obviously not unaided by the fact that father was…

DS: He didn't particularly want to know. And we never had anything to do with him in the BBC, and it was really not long after that that he went out, he left the BBC, he decided to go out on tour.

JPH: He went out on tour in '45 with his own orchestra, although he came back to *ITMA* again, and music hall and so on.

But as a freelance, presumably?

JPH: But all the artists in *ITMA* went out on the road anyway, because…

It would be foolish not to have done, that's right.

JPH: It would be mad not to, yes. But they all sort of went and came back, they drifted in and out of the series.

DS: But I'm not sure that I didn't…

Who used to be Mrs Mopp? I remember doing…

DS: Dorothy Summers, Dolly Summers.

Yes. I remember doing a television pantomime with her, I suppose '48.

DS: How wonderful. She was a lovely lady. Lovely lady.

JPH: Yes, they were all very big stars.

Right, so there you are, rather peeved that the BBC hasn't made you Director-General, probably, yes?

DS: No, I wasn't really colossally ambitious, Roy, that's the extraordinary thing. I'd never set my sights into, that's the job I want to do or anything, certainly not then, I just thoroughly enjoyed it all and I think it's this peculiar time in your life that you're given like a gift, between sort of about eighteen and twenty-three, or whatever it is, you seem to have no sense of responsibility. You don't think about the future or what you're going to do or anything, it's just having some fun and a good time. But I went from there, I left *Forces Favourites*, because I think the programme changed because it was coming to the end of its era and they were going to have overseas *Family Favourites*.

JPH: Yes, it became, it translated itself into *Family Favourites* on the domestic services. It was purely overseas service when you were doing *Forces Favourites*.

JS: It was. I was outraged because it came to an end and they decided to have this new programme. Again, being so flibbertigibbet, you see, the other girls were getting married, the other two girls were leaving anyway, and they put it up on the board, you know, all the jobs were put up on the board at the BBC and everyone had to apply. And they put the job up, so I, hoity-toity, just sent in a very light note saying, well I'm doing the job, you know. So I applied for this job, I'm doing this. And I was astounded when somebody else got it, an older woman, you know. And of course they wouldn't give it to me, this flibbertigibbet rushing about enjoying herself. And it was just as well I didn't, because I went from there

into a job called Recorded Programmes Bookings, and it was a very interesting… it wasn't an interesting job, people rung in and said they needed – it was for the Overseas Service down at Bush House I was then…

JPH: European Service.

DS: European Service. And people rang up and said I need a quarter of an hour recording time to do something, or there were block bookings for radio newsreel and whatever, and you had to fill in all these charts and then people would ring up and say can you fit me in a quarter of an hour. And it became rather routine, it was shift work. But it was enjoyable, the people in the office were nice, a big group of women, and the Recorded Programmes Library was next door and we all worked very closely with each other. And of course, one got to know the boys and girls doing the work in the studios, and that was a job that John did, Recorded Programmes Assistant. So it was a very happy time for me, socially, I met a lot of people. And then when I was on shift, on night shift, I was supposed to be in the office and I climbed out the window, the boys came and collected me – that was with you John, wasn't it – and I climbed out the window and went to the pub with them and then they took me back and pushed me back through the window half an hour later. Disgraceful. It was absolutely disgraceful.

This is not good BBC behaviour, obviously, no.

DS: No, I could have been fired when I thought about it.

Had you become a member of the permanent staff?

DS: Yes, I think I was from the beginning.

Ah right. They took you on board, as it were, and then they just…

DS: Yes, I was staff.

…shuffled you around, depending on your talents and what else was going on.

DS: Yes, and what was going on, what… But I mean one was free all the time to apply for jobs and it was after that in Recorded Programmes, I applied for a job and I got it, into which was a fascinating job I did for two years, the Duty Room at Broadcasting House, which was in fact, it was there for the Director-General to come in if he wanted to, for all the important talks people. We had a drinks cupboard. I didn't drink then luckily, thank God. And also, you had to every morning, you had to get the stuff out of Hansard, any reference to the BBC at all had to be typed up and sent round all the top people. You had to find the visitors of the day who were coming in, in case there was anybody important. When there were important people there you had to take the visitors' book that had been signed by Kings, Queens and everybody else, Emperors and Presidents, and have that signed. But you were mainly at the end of the telephone for people ringing up making any complaints and queries.

[0:40:16]
People did telephone in in those days did they?

DS: Yes, yes. And if something had happened, I remember one night the Duty Officer went for his supper and I was on my own, and the phones were jammed, something had happened, there had been a wrong programme or somebody had made some statement, and I couldn't get on to a phone to get the Duty Officer back and I took something like 113 calls in about, I think it was about fifteen minutes or something. He came back in the office, or somebody got him, I think the exchange got him, and got him back, and in the end we'd had about 380 calls within an hour.

What might it have been?

DS: Somebody had made a statement on the end of a news programme, I can't remember, because there were so many things happening…

JPH: I remember the incident, but I can't remember what the actual cause of it was.

DS: And then the calls, for instance, when the King died, I remember I was in there when the King died.

JPH: George VI.

DS: Yes, that was very shattering. We had the first news of it, of course, the BBC, and somebody rang me and said, 'I've just heard, I believe the King's died'. And I said, 'What?' and then I checked with whatever head office it was. But I got to know the Director-General, that lovely Sir William…

JPH: Oh, William Haley.

DS: He was lovely, I got to know him quite well.

Were they expecting – I mean this is somewhat irrelevant – but were they expecting the King's death?

DS: I don't think they were so suddenly. No.

I wondered if there were a protocol established, because these days apparently there's a shelf-load of programmes about the Queen Mother.

JPH: Oh, I worked on the film level, played many a disc. The obit programme was there, but I mean he did go rather rapidly towards the end.

DS: I think they must have known, but we didn't in the lower echelons, they must have known that it was coming up, but I think they didn't expect it just as quickly as that. But…

I was in New York at the time and I always remember the headline, I saw it opposite on a subway car going uptown, and it said, 'George dead, Liz Queen'. [laughter] That's my recollection of it…

DS: Oh really? Really?

Yes.

DS: Who died afterwards? Did Queen Mary die after him?

She died after him.

DS: She died after him.

She didn't make the Coronation did she?

DS: Because I remember, that had been such a shock, this call, you know, and all the protocol, everything was set in motion and we were quite involved in the Duty Room, and people running in and out. And I used to have to type things, people would open the door and say, quick, type this and type that.

Out of the frame store comes a memory of a very famous photograph of the three generations of women all in black with veils – do you remember that? It's almost like a Greek tragedy.

DS: Queen Mary, Queen Elizabeth and Princesses. But I remember shortly after that it was that she died, because the phone went and it was a listener saying, 'Excuse me, I've just heard a rumour, I've just heard that Queen Mary has died'. I said, 'Oh, hold on a moment please', you know, and picked up the phone, dialled a number in an office and I said, 'I've got a caller on saying has Queen Mary died, ha ha'. 'Yes, she has.' I went, 'Oh my God'. 'But it's not to be released.' So I put the phone down and course, the viewer had heard me, and I said, 'We've no news at the moment'. 'Oh, I quite understand, thank you so much.' So this person obviously rushed straight out to the newspapers or whoever [laughter], because I'd left the phone uncovered, you see.

That's a bit like Brezhnev dying, when for two days nothing happened other than solemn music. I think we'd better flip the side.

[end of Side 1 Tape 1]

[Side 2 Tape 1]

Right, we're on Side 2, that first side was effortless, was it not?

DS: It was.

Yes, okay.

DS: Thank you very much Roy, thanks to you.

Oh, je t'en pris.

JPH: Might it be a good idea to point the date? We're talking about the death of the King, which was 1952, wasn't it? The Coronation was '53, I think it was about six months before she was crowned. So I'm trying to put our positions together.

DS: Where I was. John and I had met by that time, and having great fun with other boys.

At Broadcasting House or in the environment?

JPH: I think we met out at Aldenham, when I was based at Aldenham.

DS: I had left Aldenham and John had…

JPH: New Year's Eve 1947, to be precise. Sheila brought her to a party, because Sheila was working at the same place as myself.

DS: Sister Sheila was still at Aldenham then, so she took me out and I knew quite a lot of the boys anyway, but I met John for the first time then and that's when we met. So from then on my career was very much tied up with John.

JPH: To some degree the, not lack of discipline, but the change in atmosphere in the BBC, particularly in London, was to a great degree because of people like myself who came out of the services and went back there and were a bit slap happy, that's why. We

took you in and out of the window and said, 'Come on, let's go round the boozer' and all that, because we were sort of evil ex-service types and a much jollier atmosphere. We were still disciplined, you have to be in broadcasting as we all know, otherwise there wouldn't be any programmes done properly. But I think that had a great deal to do with it, because nearly all the Recorded Programmes Department and the Programme Engineering Department, where they twiddled knobs, played records and so on, were nearly all ex-servicemen, but still relatively young, fortunately. I was nearly twenty-seven.

DS: Yes, I remember at Bush House, having to go from the Recorded Programmes Department down to the studios, which we often had to do to go and see somebody or whatever, and there was a marvellous staircase, I used to go down it sliding on the bannisters. And when I look back on it, nobody made any comment at all. I used to climb on the bannisters and slide down it, because I thought it was such fun, it was such a wonderful bannister rail.

JPH: They'd sussed you by then.

DS: And whether I'd been deprived of bannisters as a child or not, I don't know, but I always went down to the studios via the bannister.

A lovely vision.

DS: Then I got tired of it, it was shift work, not very hard shift, I think it was six days on and two off or something, working either early morning or till ten o'clock at night.

JPH: Quite a late evening, yes.

DS: Ten or eleven. And I got tired of it and I started applying for – no, then I went to the Duty Room from there, which was a very nice job, but after two years it was quite enough, most people stayed about twelve months, eighteen months, but I did nearly two years there and I'd had enough of it, and I started applying for every job that was going on the board. It was very funny, anything that I thought that was within my context. Because it was slightly stuffy in the Duty Room. The Duty Officers were very nice men, but very, very proper.

Was there a sharp division between programming personnel and the admin personnel?

DS: Yes.

Yes? Right, so you were more or less with the administrative people?

DS: Yes, I was, yes. And it was very straight and very proper and you had to behave quite well. There was an Assistant Duty Officer who used to work when the other one was off or sick or something…

JPH: GP.

DS: GP, Grays Pearson [ph], he was great fun, he used to make me laugh and he used to give me a glass of sherry in the evening when we were on or make me laugh. We had much more fun with him, but the other two were very proper and I had to be very proper. You never knew when the Director-General was coming in, or President of something or other, or the French President. They would come in, either wanted to make a telephone call or be given a drink, or they'd just made a broadcast and they were given a drink and they wanted to use the phone. Or like sometimes I remember the President of somewhere in Africa, it must have been Kenya or something, he was white, not a coloured person, he was a white man and he was ever so important, with an entourage. And they come, 'Would you type this, Miss Shadwell'. And I was in such a state and so nervous I couldn't type it at all, the keys became totally mashed up in front of me. Oh, and everyone was so ashamed. And the man was so nice, he kept saying, 'Oh don't worry, it's alright, it's alright, don't worry', he was so sweet. But I started to…

JPH: It was probably Welensky, wasn't it? From Rhodesia?

DS: Oh, it could have been. He was ever so nice. He could see how nervous I was. But I got a bit tired of it after a while.

Before we move on then, one question about it I've often wondered about, and that is the extent to which working in the Duty Office one saw oneself as 'us against them', 'them' being the audience, the listener?

DS: Well, it could be like that a bit. We were heavily told by the Duty Office you always had to be polite and right, but the other girl in the Duty Office, Diana Backhouse, she was a scream, she'd been there a long time, she gave me all sorts of tips and things. And she said if they get a bit stroppy, any of them, there was one caller, a man, he was a bit mad, and she used to say, 'Where have you been?' and be very quiet, because he'd obviously been inside for a few weeks or a few months. But she taught me, and I remember, I used it a couple of times but the Duty Officer was there once, a senior one, and this woman was going on… no, it was a man, going on and on and getting very raucous with me and difficult, and I said, 'Right' I said, 'I'll make a note of all this. Could you just give me the number of your radio licence, please?' And usually they'd throw down the phone, you see, you could get rid of them that way. But this one went, 'Oh, oh, I don't know, it's somewhere'. And the Duty Officer went… I remember looking at him, and went, 'No!' and banged the desk like this and screamed at me. Well, I nearly fainted with fright. I dropped the phone and went as white as a sheet because one thing you weren't supposed to do, you had no right at all to ask anybody about their licence, but we used to use it, you see, sometimes. And then I remember another time getting very sharp with a man and, I think, and using that ploy, have you got your licence. And he started screaming at me, so I put the phone down, and he came back on the phone. And I went 'Duty Office' and he said, 'Here, I've just been speaking to somebody up there at the BBC, a young woman, she was so rude and she asked me for my…' I was deepening my voice as deep as I could, 'How dreadful, I'm so sorry, I'll make a note of this', covering up that it was me. But we used to have fantastic calls. I won't do it now, but I've got so many funny stories, haven't I, some of the calls that we used to have.

JPH: What about, I remember one story of yours and that was working on Christmas Day.

DS: Yes, the Christmas Day. This man rang up – it was quite early on Christmas morning, oh no, no, it was mid morning – and he said, 'My name's Alf So-and-So'. I said, 'Oh, good morning Mr So-and-So, Happy Christmas' and he said, 'Thank you. Now look, the BBC's just thanked the police, they've just thanked all the nurses, they've thanked the

drivers of the trains and the buses, they thanked the BBC, but what about the Metropolitan Water Board?' [laughter]

JPH: I was actually in that day because I'd done this mammoth programme we always did on disc in those days, finishing with the King's broadcast. Actually, one of the few days she was on duty on Christmas Day and so was I. And I'd just gone up to the Duty Room to collect her and the call had just come in. 'What about the Metropolitan Water Board?'

DS: Oh, it was funny. And then I had a call one day from a man, I was on my own, the Duty Officer was out, it was in the evening. 'Hallo, hallo, I'm ringing from Sweden.' I said, 'Oh yes, what can I do to help you?' 'We've been trying everywhere, we want to know, we want to know the Prime Minister…' Who was the Prime Minister before the war? Stanley… Peace in our time?

Chamberlain, yes.

DS: Neville Chamberlain. 'Mr Neville Chamberlain, how long was he…' I said, 'How long was he Prime Minister?' 'No, no, how long…' I said, 'How long did he live?' 'Well, oh dear, how long…' I said, 'Look, give me your number or something, I'll see what I can find out for you'. 'We are Swedish Broadcasting and we need your help.' So I said, 'Right'. So I got the number. Well, it was in the evening, I tried to get hold of the Reference Library, I rang the so-and-so, I rang the British Museum, I rang every… I was ages with the phones like this. And in the end I found out how long he lived, how long he'd been Prime Minister, how long he'd done this, how long he was in opposition, how long so-and-so and so-and-so. Anyway, I rang them back and I said, 'Is that Mr…?' He said, 'Yes'. I said, 'I've found this out, gave him…' He said, 'No, so kind. No, we're trying to find out, we find out now what we mean. Not how long is he, how tall was he?'

[laughter]

DS: So I had many calls like that, wonderful calls. And I remember once, I was bored and I was sitting there and not much had happened and somebody came on the phone, a friend of mine, I was chatter, chatter, chatter, chatter, chatter, chatter, chatter. And now the phone went, I thought, oh sod it, and I picked it up and said, 'One moment please' and

threw it down. Chatter, chatter, chatter. And the switchboard came on into this one and said, 'Miss Shadwell, I think you ought to know the Director-General's on the other phone'. I went, urghhh… picked it up.

How typical were you in your somewhat Bolshevik attitude toward the job? I mean was this how it went on?

DS: No, I think it was me. I think it was me, I think I was getting bored with it. It was a fun job really, I met ever so many interesting people and used to do *In Town Tonight* from up there in the top studio at Broadcasting House. And I used to go up in – of course they had marvellous people in, marvellous, I mean the world and his wife from Presidents down to an interesting dustbin man or something, anything – and I used to take this fabulous book, I could sit and look through that book for hours, this book to be signed by important visitors, passing visitors. It was a wonderful excuse to go up to the studio and watch it and listen.

So you had a hankering really to get on that side of things?

[0:10:00]
DS: I suppose I did all the time, yes.

Did you rebel in other ways?

DS: I don't think so. I had a lot of fun. I belonged, by this time I had joined of course the BBC Ariel Players and I was busy with their productions. And we used to perform in that wonderful theatre at the top of Notting Hill Gate which got knocked down, the New Lindsey, and we did a lot of productions there. And we did them in the BBC. We did one in the Fortune Theatre. So I was getting great satisfaction from this work, I threw myself and my energies into that. And then, shortly after that, because I wanted to extend myself, I still wanted to go to RADA or somewhere, or train, so I decided to go to evening class training. And I found one of the best places was the evening institute at – where was it, John?

JPH: The City Lit, wasn't it?

DS: It was the City Lit I started with. I started at the City Lit but then I moved to Warren Street, the Stanhope. I started at the City Lit and did some work with them there, but I was recommended to go to the Stanhope Institute.

JPH: Now is sadly no longer there.

DS: Which was part of… to do evening courses. But I started off, I'd do all sorts of things. I took up French, which I'd do with my sister at Hendon Technical College, I thought I'd try and make something of myself, learn French. So I took up French, cookery and drama, three nights a week at the Stanhope Institute. I'd only been there two weeks, I'd dropped everything else and taken up another night of the drama, of course, forgot the cookery and the French, and started doing productions there and it was a very good course because I did stage management as well as acting and I had to do stage management and well…

JPH: You've had a bit of a time slip actually, because that was, I mean we talked about the King's death earlier, we've time slipped. In fact you started doing that in '49 when I joined with you.

DS: For the Stanhope, was it?

JPH: At the Stanhope, yeah. '48, '49, '50, '51-ish, across that four years.

DS: Yes. And I got John to join and we did some marvellous productions there, they were wonderful. It was a good evening class and I learnt such a lot. Because you had to do everything, you couldn't just be an actress, you had to do the course.

JPH: And we did the lot. It was a sort of amateur rep company really.

DS: The worst thing I was at, was props because I'm hopeless at making things. Well, hopeless at everything, but I was hopeless at making things. And they said, Daphne, you've got to do props. And I said, oh not on my own, they said so I could work with somebody, to somebody. And they said, right, your first chore is, go and make a

cornucopia. I didn't know what it was. And then when I found out I was supposed to make a cornucopia, I hadn't a… so I just got some paper, and it looked like a bunch of flowers because I just stuck some flowers, found some flowers and some fruit, false fruit, and I just sort of wrapped this paper round it and papered it, so it looked like a bunch of flowers, nothing like a cornucopia. The producer was ever so cross with me, so of course I got out of it because somebody else made it quickly.

How long did you pursue this course?

DS: Well, the Stanhope, I must have been with them overall, and then I got John to join…

JPH: Oh, about five years.

Really?

DS: Yes, a good five years, just stayed on and on and on.

JPH: Intermittently went back and did a lot of guest spots eventually.

DS: Yes, they kept asking me back to do things, which I loved. But they did do a lot of musicals and revue type shows, which I loved. But it was during that time, while I was in the Duty Room I started applying for everything else because I wanted to move on. And some very funny experiences. One board I went for, I walked in and there was this sea of faces. I was used to just the Administrative Assistant, the Head of the Department and whoever the job was, and maybe one other. And there was this sea of faces and I'd put in for this job which I would have been impossible at, it was really more like John's work, it was like a technical assistant and playing things and everything. One man said to me, 'Miss Shadwell, would you like to tell us how you would go about balancing a small string ensemble with added flute as well?' And I looked at him, I said, 'I haven't got the faintest, but I'm perfectly willing to learn'. And they all went, 'Ohhhh…' [laughter], looked at each other. And another job, I walked in, I remember, into the room, and this lovely lady, the Boards Officer, she'd got to know me so well by now, she just looked at me, she said, 'Daphne, what are you doing here?' She said, 'Did it say you had to be able

to mix with people and look after people?' and I said, 'Yes'. She said, 'That's only part of the job dear, it's quite wrong for you. Thank you very much, good morning'.

JPH: Was that Mrs Killen-Roberts [ph]?

DS: No, it was the other Appointments Officer. And then I applied for three jobs at the same time. I thought I will have a go at everything. And one, because I met her in the Duty Room or not, Anna Instone, who was Head of Gramophone Department, she used to bring her guests in after a show – nice woman, I liked her very much indeed, she obviously liked me. I applied to be her secretary, applied because I thought what fun, the two political correspondents who John worked with a lot, who used to go round the country and cover the Blackpool conference, the Torbay conference and all that, and I thought, ooh, that'd be fun, going about all over the place with them and the boys. Very hard work, good thing I didn't get that. And the third one was secretary to Pamela Brown in television, television producer. I thought ooh, that'd be quite fun, I'll put in for that. Well, I put in for all these, got the boards, and I got the three jobs. It was absolutely extraordinary. Anna Instone wanted me immediately, I'd obviously made them laugh on the television board, because we hadn't got a television set, I think I'd only ever seen one programme in my life on television, and why the political boys wanted me, I don't know. Again, they probably thought it'd be good for a laugh. So there was a hell of a row because I wanted to go to the political boys. Anna Instone was furious because she'd made up her mind and said I want Daphne Shadwell and was absolutely furious, and I didn't want to do the TV job. And the Appointments Officer sent for me with the Administrative… and they were so sweet and they said, 'Daphne, you must go to television, it'll be a wonderful job, it'll suit you down to the ground and you'd like it'. 'No, no, no' and I started to cry and bawl. 'I don't want to go there, I don't want that job.' 'You wouldn't like the political job Daphne, it entails this…' So I went, 'Oh, alright' and off I went to television. And what it means, I don't know, but they didn't have training schemes then, you just went, you went in and you were in television, that was it. I was the last one of that batch. [laughter] From then on they started the training scheme and you had to go into a pool and be – they were secretaries then, you weren't called production assistants, they were production secretaries.

Can we fix the date?

JPH: 1950.

Fifty – five oh?

JPH: Fifty, yes.

Really?

DS: Was it? As early as that, was it John?

JPH: Yes. Because I went to the Variety Department more or less at the same time.

DS: Ah ha. So…

And it's still all based up at Ally Pally is it?

DS: No, they'd gone to Lime Grove. But they still did some things from Ally Pally because I went there, I did two programmes from there, which I'm ever so pleased about that I actually worked in Ally Pally.

JPH: The news unit was still at Ally Pally, they eventually obviously moved to Lime Grove. But it was Children's and Light Entertainment and a few bits and pieces were in Lime Grove then.

DS: Yes, there was some drama there. There was some drama at Lime Grove.

JPH: Yes. Oh yes, of course, yes, yes.

DS: But I mean whether it was my fault that they decided they should have a training scheme for PAs from then on, and a pool so that they could be sorted out. But I went in absolutely raw and they said next, you know, gave me the starting date, when they'd replaced me. That was always the trouble at the BBC, the moves always took so long to go round because they had the board, decided, and then they had to wait for the

replacement and that had to be boarded and all that sort of thing, so it used to take ages to get shifted. So they said you're starting on – it was a Monday, I believe – a Monday, so-and-so, and you're going to work for Hazel Wilkinson, who is a producer, because your producer, Pamela Brown, is away having a baby. Hazel Wilkinson is working in her place, she's doing a production and you're to go to the rehearsal room. I think I told you this story on our last meeting. And that's what I did, I had to find this rehearsal room and walk in and say good morning, there were these artists there, and this producer looked at me, she was very nice – we got to know her very well, didn't she? But when she was working she became, whether she was very nervous or not, she became a different person when she was working. Horns came out of her head and she was like this, 'Good morning, I want you to take this plan and these scripts and go to so-and-so and go back to… and take them to the designer and the so-and-so'. And I went, 'I beg your pardon? Excuse me?' And that… she said, 'But we're leaving this production because on Wednesday I'm in the studio and you'll be doing it with me'. I said, 'I see, thank you very much'. I got the bus, got on the bus – never thought to have a taxi – got on the bus with the model and all these scripts and bits and pieces and everybody staring at me, and got to Lime Grove and had to ask the way to the office and where I had to go. Anyway, I found a nice girl who remained a friend for a long time, who helped me and from then on was wonderful, a girl called Gillian, she was wonderful. And then they said, 'Oh, you're in the studio on Wednesday'. And there I was, I was in a studio at Lime Grove, and I shall never forget, what a suitable programme to start with, it was a puppet programme with voiceover and it was called *Simon the Simple Sardine*, and with my lisp it wasn't the best programme to start with. And I remember going into the studio and it was Ken Connor did the voices of Simon the Simple Sardine. It was very simple, very sweet. And I walked in that studio with a stopwatch in my hand and somebody pointed me to the gallery and I sat in the chair. I didn't know what to do, what I was supposed to do, and of course I saw these monitors in front of me and this great big window and all these people, nobody had shown me round or taken me in or said what to do. I mean luckily I could work a stopwatch. And that was my initiation into telly, I thought what do all these people do, where do I go, what are they doing, how does it work, why are we looking at this, what am I supposed to be looking at, what am I supposed to do.

It's extraordinary.

[0:20:11]
DS: It was absolutely incredible.

How about the producers? Did they have any kind of training or were they flung into it in that fashion?

DS: I can't remember, Roy. I think they…

I mean did people generally seem to know what they were doing?

DS: Well, I was lucky in one way, because Hazel did, Hazel Wilkinson knew what she was doing. I think she had some technical training. She'd come from the theatre, Pamela Brown had come from theatre. Most of them came from theatre.

This is not Pamela Brown the actress, obviously, this is another one?

DS: No, the writer. Pamela Brown, the writer, who wrote the wonderful children's books, there's one called *Swish of the Curtain*, which is very famous, it's been made into television about two or three times. And another one she wrote called *The Windmill Family*, and she adapted that and we did that as a serial. And many other books she wrote, she was a wonderful writer, children's writer. But they didn't really have any training schemes as such, I don't know how the producers – of course they were producers, not directors then, weren't they – how they started. But I mean Hazel seemed to accept me. I did make one awful gaffe. I'd only been there five minutes. I think it was the first programme I sat down with or the second one I did with her. I knew nothing about anything, got my mouth open all the time, and she was… I just sensed that she was fussing in the studio; she was agitated, in a state, and somebody came up and said, you'll be alright if you do so-and-so, so-and-so. It was a sound problem or something. And I think I really meant to be kindly to her, to stop her agitating, and I went, 'Oh, it'll be alright'. And I looked, and she turned her head very, very slowly and looked at me, and I didn't know what to do. I realised that she was thinking – and the whole studio went quiet – that she was thinking to herself, she's been here two and a half minutes, she doesn't know anything, she's telling me it's alright. But I had the wit not to look at her, I just kept looking at the screen, looking down at my script and started writing something, it was

rubbish, noughts and crosses on a bit of paper, and she let it go, thank God. But what a terrible gaffe. But I think, looking back, that I meant for her to be calm.

Yes, I understand.

DS: She thought I was saying, you know… But then when… but she was a good director. So we did the play she was doing, that's what she was rehearsing, a play, and I just fell into it, you know, I suppose when you're young, you know, and I was keen and I liked actors.

Was there suddenly a revelation that this was it for you, that it was your future?

DS: I think I began picking it up, you know, and I liked it, because I was lucky in a way, when Hazel went and Pamela Brown came back to her job and then I was her production secretary, as we were called then, Pamela, she was a marvellous writer, and she used to have a child's exercise book and she'd start writing and she just wrote in this child's… page after page after page, without looking back, and she'd do it in the office sometimes and she'd say, 'God, I feel so guilty, I shouldn't be doing this, but the publisher wants it', or whatever. But, it's a dreadful thing to say, but she really wasn't, looking back, a very good producer, she really wasn't. And I learnt as I went along with her on things, I could feel the irritation of the crews in the studio with her, I could feel it, I sensed it, they used to be very irritated with her. And I had to do a lot, she left a lot to me, or somebody would come in, the designer, and say, 'Daphne, do so-and-so and so-and-so', you know, 'Give us a list of so-and-so'. Or she'd leave me to do all the wardrobe lists and all the make-up lists which I didn't like doing at all, I hated all that, and when I became a director I used to leave that to my PA because I didn't like it. But it taught me so much because I had to do it and she just expected me to do things, and that's really how I learnt, by doing it and talking to the workers, as it were. Although I didn't mix with them very much, which was a great mistake. I kept to her side, I was still young enough to know, you know, I should have mixed with the crews more and chatted to them, I'd have learnt a lot quicker. But I think through her, because she did things quite simply, I learnt a lot with her, how to do it.

Was television still, as it were, an offshoot of radio or was…

DS: No, it was really building.

It was becoming powerful and its own feature.

DS: Yes, it was and they were having the bigger plays and things.

Right.

DS: And the Children's Department was a very busy department. It was *Muffin the Mule* days. They did these plays which Pamela, Pamela was Script Editor of the whole of Children's Television. She was Script Editor for it and she did oh, a serial or a play nearly every… which I did with her. It used to be, we did it live on the Sunday – Saturday or Sunday – and then it was repeated, but live, on the Thursday. So if things hadn't worked or she didn't like or whatever happened, she had time to re-do it and do it again live on the Thursday.

Useful.

DS: It was, but it was very strange. So, and then when Hazel came back again she did some more, I did… it was nearly all drama that I did then, so I learnt a lot and some good things. And *The Windmill Family*, we went filming on that, which I'd never done, of course, before. We went filming on *The Windmill Family*, so I learnt, again, all that about filming. Not very much, just a little bit. But they were doing big plays, big serials. What was that wonderful children's programme? *Whirligig* was the famous magazine programme for children where Michael Westmore was, he was producing it. And he produced it and then he came across to ITV and was my boss for quite a while. Robert Tronson, the marvellous, I think he's a marvellous director. In fact it was his *Darling Buds of May* last week that went out, he's done two in the series. He was something, I think he was like associate producer to Michael Westmore then, very young and very lively. *Whirligig* was the sort of fun, that was the fun programme of children's TV. John will remember, when he comes back, the other people in it. I met so many people. Lloyd Williams was the floor manager, attached floor manager on that, who in fact became the first man to go across to commercial TV and set it up. And so that was my connection, I met Lloyd Williams there, and he had a lady friend who was a secretary in the department,

who became one of my best friends, so I got to know Lloyd very well. And it was rumoured then that commercial television was about to start and through Eileen, this nice girl, she said, 'Oh, Lloyd is going to go across to the commercial television'. I went, 'Oh yes?' It didn't mean a thing to me. I said, 'Oh yes', didn't know what it was. So she said one day, I think we were having a coffee or something, 'Oh, Lloyd wants to talk to you'. And Lloyd said, 'Darling, I wonder if you can help me out. I'm going across to commercial and I want a very good assistant secretary to come, I don't know whether you'd like to come with me?' And I went, 'Oh, oh, oh I don't know, Lloyd' or, you know, 'I want somebody who's good and I'd like you to come across with me'. So of course I was absolutely shattered and ran straight to John, you see, and said, 'Oh my goodness'. He said, 'How wonderful! What an opportunity'. Never asked the salary or what I was to do or anything. And I said, 'Oh, well I don't know, Lloyd, I'll have to think about it. If I can't find anybody, I'll try and find somebody for you'. Anyway, it's extraordinary, the fickle finger of fate, or whatever they call it, he said, 'Oh, well I want to know by next week, you'll have to leave'. So I suddenly thought, I can't leave the BBC, my family have always been here, I've always worked here, John works here, I must talk to somebody about it. So I tried to find my AA – very, very nice man – he was on holiday. So I tried to get the next person up, the senior AA of all television. She was away sick. I then tried to get – I went up the ladder – I went to the next, Mrs Killen-Roberts [ph], whoever it was, head of the whole of administration. She was away in Birmingham or somewhere holding very important boards for a Controller or somebody, or whatever, and couldn't be reached. And I had nobody to turn to, because I was going to ask their advice or say what do you think, or I won't go will I? They'd have of course said no. And I couldn't get hold of anybody and I asked John and he said, 'Oh I think it would be a good idea'. Anyway, I left it and left it and at last I got a call from Lloyd Williams saying, 'What's happening?' I said, 'Oh, oh I don't know, I'm trying to find somebody for you'. And I couldn't, you know when you can't think of anybody, I couldn't think of anybody who'd be right, who would want to go into this void, this strange world. Anyway, I rang him up eventually and I said, 'Lloyd, I'm terribly sorry, I haven't found anybody else and I feel I've let you down'. He said, 'That's very nice of you darling, I'd like you to start a week on Monday. Thanks darling, I'll talk to you about it further', and put the phone down on me. And I was going, oh, oh, oh, and I was looking at the phone, oh, oh, oh. And it was just fate and I talked to my parents about it, vaguely, and they went, 'Well, do you really want to leave the BBC?' And then my father said, 'Well I did'. And I sort of drifted into it, it was

absolutely extraordinary. I put in my notice and drifted in to go into commercial television.

Can you remember whether or not ITV as it was to become was perceived as somewhat not respectable?

DS: Oh, I think so. Oh yes.

I mean was that a part of your worry, your thinking?

DS: Yes, and it was awfully strange, I knew nothing about it and I'd always been BBC, I'd been brought up in the BBC.

Poor but honest? Right.

[0:29:57]
DS: Yes. I'd always been a BBC child. And then the next thing was that Lloyd rang me and said I'd like to see John, because John at that time was doing *The Goon Show*.

Had you married yet, by the way?

DS: I think we'd just married then, yes. We'd just married. We'd just married before I left. And he said I want to see John doing *The Goon Show*, because John was doing *The Goon Show* and *The Billy Cotton Band Show*, apart from other things, but those were his two big shows. So Lloyd kept – because I always used to go to *The Goon Show* every week when John was doing it – so Lloyd came along with Eileen as an evening out to see the show and then we had drinks afterwards, and then he rang John the next day, or rang me, and said, 'I'd like you to join commercial television as Head of Sound'. Well, of course he was totally overcome, John, totally overcome. And he said yes and in the end it worked out that he – oh, that had happened first. I beg your pardon. That had happened first, he wanted John for sound, then he asked me. And I think that's what persuaded me, because John had been asked and was thinking of going, he was sorting it out, that made me sort of say, oh alright. But it worked out in fact that I went first and John came later

with the start of the technicians; Head of Sound, Head of Lighting, Head of Vision Mixers, all joined on April 1st.

We keep saying commercial television, but actually it was to a specific company was it?

DS: Well no, because…

Was it not?

DS: No, because Rediffusion was the start of it. They started it and then joined immediately but what was Central before? John, come here please. When commercial television started it was just known as commercial television, wasn't it?

JPH: Er, yes.

DS: We talked about it, Lloyd Williams said come to commercial television, and it was a bit the poor family, were looked down on a bit. Some people thought oh dear, it was a bit…

JPH: Oh yes, we were ostracised from the BBC. Those awful commercial people?

DS: Yes, it was dreadful and the BBC was shocked and horrified.

JPH: It was 1954 when Lloyd asked you.

So one was hired by…

DS: Rediffusion.

…someone applying for a franchise at this stage, or had they been awarded a contract?

JPH: No, they'd been awarded the franchise. It was the year, the year, bill, they were awarded the franchise at the beginning of '54.

So you both went to AR? Association Rediffusion.

DS: It was Associated Rediffusion. And then what was Central called?

JPH: ATV.

DS: ATV. Did they start at the same time?

JPH: Yes. Weekend in London and Midweek in the Midlands.

DS: That's right. So it was Associated Rediffusion were like the senior body to start with in a way and then…

JPH: Yes, the Monday to Friday London franchise. And carrying the network.

DS: Then ATV took up.

JPH: Weekend, Saturdays and Sundays and the rest of them crept in gradually – Granada about a year later, 1956. In fact Rediffusion sustained Granada for a very long time, they never acknowledge it these days, but they wouldn't have happened without Rediffusion.

DS: But I went first, in the February, didn't I John?

JPH: Daphne left the BBC on February 26th 1955 and started on March 1st at Stratton House.

DS: He's incredible.

JPH: I left the Beeb – well I had to give three months' notice - Daph was only on a week's notice, so she left readily. I had to give three months' notice and resigned on 31st December 1954 and left on March 31st and joined AR as Head of Sound on 1st April, but that's part of my story. But Daph was the First of the Mohicans really.

DS: When I joined there were only about, there were only about twenty of us.

Now Lloyd Williams' job was what?

JPH: Lloyd Williams' title then was Director of Production. He was effectively Controller of Programmes. He wasn't, no, a guy called Bill Gillett, an American, Roland Gillett, known as Bill, was Controller of Programmes but he was American and he didn't know… I mean Lloyd was responsible for all the recruiting, mainly, of all the original staff and programme staff.

DS: And he was consultant to Bill Gillett as for programming, because he'd been a programme man. He'd been an actor, then he worked in the theatre, then he went to BBC.

I think a lot of this we've covered with John.

DS: Yes, you have.

JPH: With me, to some extent, yes.

DS: But it's trying to clarify the companies and when I went across.

Yes. So it's AR and it's to Lloyd Williams, as his secretary or his assistant?

JPH: Personal assistant.

DS: Personal assistant, it was secretary.

JPH: With the proviso that when it was all off and running that she would become the first trainee director.

DS: I would get a chance to be a trainee director. That was part of the pull when I got there and I was like this, what have I done? Well darling, I hope you'll have an opportunity to become a trainee director if that's what you want to do. Most certainly, I said, and that confirmed it in my mind, that's most certainly what I want to do, and

confirmed it. So I worked with him and it was one of the, oh, marvellous times of my life, it was wonderful, the setting up of this company.

What was the atmosphere?

DS: Fabulous.

But I mean…

DS: It was full of fun, it was lively.

Stimulating? And was there…

DS: Yes, tremendously stimulating.

Was that compared to the BBC being rather dull and staid?

DS: Yes, yes. Because it was excitement and the feeling of going into the unknown, because you see we were all safe at the BBC, and we must admit they were the best welfare company in the world then, their welfare.

JPH: You were too young to be pensionable, dear, at the BBC, so there were no problems about winding up your pension or anything.

DS: No. But their way of looking after their staff, the BBC, was marvellous and their facilities and club facilities and everything were out of this world, and they cared about their staff enormously. That's why it was such a shock that I didn't have this care when I needed them about whether to go or not. I mean afterwards there was a terrible outcry and I had letters about, well you should have contacted us sooner, and why did you go. And on my final day when I was seen by the Head of the Department and the AA, this was a terrible shock Daphne, we're very disappointed about it all. You know, they were wonderful about it, but I said, well what can I do, I've done it now. So when I went across…

What were they saying? That they would have made you counter offers?

DS: They would have advised me not to go.

Well, that doesn't really help does it?

DS: No, no, no.

Would they have matched offers or bumped you up in any way?

DS: I've said to this day that I would never have had that opportunity and I would never have been where I am today, such as it is, if I'd stayed at the BBC.

Am I right in thinking, Daphne, that the BBC always really has relied to a great extent on the loyalty of its staff?

DS: Well I think so, yes. I don't think they've got it now. They haven't got it now, but then…

No. I don't think any organisation in the country has and quite rightly so.

DS: Yes, you're right, Roy.

Loyalty is a two-way street.

DS: Yes, yes. And that's why, you see, again why we loved Rediffusion so, because Associated Rediffusion, they were loyal to us and the staff were loyal, mainly because the main bulk had come from the BBC and were used to the two-way thing.

That ethos?

DS: Yes, and good behaviour and you're the boss and we're the workers and you look after us and we'll look after you, all that. But I mean this opportunity that came, but it was

a case of one, I didn't think any more about being a director because it was such hard work, Lloyd worked me so hard.

Well, let your mind rove over what was going on in those days and what you were doing, what he was doing.

DS: Well he was, I mean he never stopped. As his secretary I gave him a very rough time. He used to say sometimes, 'God, you've got to give me time to have a wee', he used to say, because I used to bung the appointments in, because he was seeing people all the time for recruiting.

Hiring programme staff?

DS: Hiring programme… And also seeing people regarding programme ideas and the technical side wasn't his but he was involved by meetings saying, come and look at this studio, or what do you think about this.

What was the lead time, when did you have to go on the air? A date was set for that, presumably?

DS: Yes, September 22nd.

So that was, I've forgotten the date that John said you went over, but that was less than a year ahead.

DS: Oh yes, I went on March the something or other.

Six months?

DS: Yes, and there were only about twenty of us there then. But I think they'd started work on, Lloyd must have started working on who he wanted and how, or he was recruiting very quickly like he did with John for the Head of Sound. But it was very funny because people would ring up and say, I've been given the name of Mr Lloyd Williams, I'd like to see him today, my name is so-and-so. And I'd go, 'Oh hello so-and-so', or

they'd walk in the door and say 'I have an appointment', and I'd go, 'Hello', somebody from the BBC, and they'd go green, white, shake with fear. And I'd say, 'It's alright, I won't say anything, I won't say anything', because they were all coming in quietly through the back door, the BBC didn't know that they were all coming for these appointments. But it was a very…

Why did people want to move over, was it money or dissatisfaction?

DS: I think it was opportunity. I think it was opportunity. Once a couple started going, you see, I mean a lot of people must have said, 'Where's Daphne Shadwell?' 'Oh, she's gone to this new…' 'Oh, what's that? What's it like?' And then they probably heard, again, on the grapevine, I didn't say much about it because I forgot about it, about this. And then it went around like wildfire about they were having trainee directors, they were having a training course, which of course, I mean the BBC, it was almost impossible to get on to a… once you're in as a secretary at the BBC that was it, you never became anything else really. You could become an assistant something or other, or perhaps in administration. But this opportunity to be able to say, well can I have a go.

Was there any kind of American influence or a desire to emulate what was going on in the States? There wasn't a great deal of American programming here then was there, comparatively so?

DS: Not really. No, there wasn't. I think there was probably an American influence, now I look back on it, Roy. I don't know whether I was aware of it at the time. I mean our Controller of Programmes, Director of Programmes was…

Was in fact Bill Gillett.

[0:39:52]
DS: Bill Gillett was American. But I don't think we were over-influenced by the American scene.

JPH: Oh, not in… Bill was very good from that point of view.

DS: There were two American directors who came in. One lovely man – that was much later when I started working as a PA.

JPH: Frank Westbrook.

DS: Frank Westbrook, he was wonderful, a lovely man, but he didn't last long. And then…

JPH: Dickie.

DS: What's his name?

JPH: Dick Lester.

DS: Dick Lester.

JPH: Richard Lester.

DS: Richard Lester was a young man…

JPH: Who'd joined as a trainee.

DS: Yes, and came over. But he had in fact…

JPH: He was very experienced.

DS: …worked very hard in America, he was only a young man, but he'd done a daily radio soap, which of course nobody in this country was used to.

JPH: A Western.

DS: A soap Western, daily, and he'd done quite a lot of television. I think mainly as an assistant, I don't think he was a director.

He was a cameraman, at WCAU in Philadelphia.

DS: Was he? Was he? I never knew that. But I mean he was full of good ideas and of course they immediately put him into the studio to do things and try out shows. And I was lucky enough to be – whoever arranged these things – I went to PA for him, because I was one of the few PAs to start there and it was all so new, there were three or four of us who'd been PAs at the BBC and so whatever came up they put us on to it and said you must have an experienced PA. So it was wonderful for me, I worked with all sorts of people.

This is stockpiling programme, is it?

DS: No, no, no.

Well, you couldn't, you couldn't.

DS: We couldn't, it was live. But Dick did quite a lot of jazz programmes, which was wonderful. I'd never done anything like that before, but I had the wit to write everything down he was doing, and he thought this was wonderful. He'd say, 'What do we do, what are we coming to?'

Well, let's stay with the lead-up period to going on the air, rather than jump ahead.

DS: I was working as a secretary and I used to do everything, reception as well and help out and do all this sort of thing. And I hadn't been long doing that when there was a great thing about the opening night, *the* opening night. So they suddenly decided, with Captain Brownrigg, God rest his soul, who was the Managing Director, and who was very much involved, he wasn't supposed to be, he used to get himself very involved in the programmes and everything, they decided to have an opening night office under the administrative system – another captain, ex-naval captain, lovely man he was – and I was to be secretary/assistant on the opening night office. And it was wonderful, it was a scream. I made an awful mess of things, I used to lose memos or forget things.

Well, you say all this, but obviously since you were…

DS: Asked to do it.

…trusted and yes, and asked to do it, one…

DS: [laughter] It must have been alright.

…one doubts you were that inefficient.

DS: But I was very frightened of Captain Brownrigg. He used to dictate memos to me, I used to stand outside the door for ages too frightened to go in.

Really?

DS: Yes, I did. Well, it was…

Was that you, or was that again typical of…

DS: No, no, it was the way we were brought up in a way, you see, being brought up in convents you were always taught to wait and knock on the door and be polite and wait until you're spoken to, and as a family, the girls, we were brought up very strictly by our parents not to shout or wait and be quiet. So this always made me nervous of people and hesitant and finger in the mouth and go, ah! I was saying how terrified I was to go into Captain Brownrigg when I was working on the opening night office, I used to stand outside his office going, oh dear. I used to say to myself, if I can get through this, I can get through anything, and take a deep breath and go in.

JPH: And he was an example of characters, we got to like him later.

DS: Oh, I liked him later.

JPH: But his discipline and everything was strictly naval.

DS: But the opening night office was the sort of administrative side of helping to get it organised, the tickets for the people to come, setting up the venues. The man I worked for, Captain Fisher, he had, there was the Guildhall and then there was the…

JPH: All the VIPs, the Mansion Hall.

DS: There was a theatre – what was the theatre, the opening night theatre?

JPH: The Granville.

DS: The Granville, and then there was to be the staff party, as it were, after.

[end of Side 2 Tape 1]

[Side 3 Tape 2]

[00:00]
It's Daphne Shadwell, side three. Just to cover that bit over there, yes, you were saying…?

DS: I think it was about the opening night office. Do you want me to go on with that, Roy?

We might as well.

DS: It was the opening night office and I worked under Captain Fisher, another ex-naval officer, and of course there were the set-ups. There was the Guildhall, which was to be the very opening programme and opening speech with all the dignitaries and Lord Mayor of London, goodness knows what and who. And my father, funnily enough, was invited. He did the opening music up in the balcony of the Guildhall.

Was that your idea?

DS: No. It wasn't actually, I think it was Lloyd's. And my father was so grateful, because John was being Head of Sound, he was working in the Guildhall and my father arrived up in that little balcony up in the Guildhall where they were to be and set up all the mics and the chairs and the area for him, and my father was forever grateful, because he arrived to this chaos – you can imagine, the first television programme, part of a commercial company at the Guildhall with all the grandees and everybody - so John was able to help my father.

JPH: That's reverse nepotism.

DS: Yes, but I don't know who suggested it. It was Lloyd, I think, wasn't it?

JPH: Yes, it was, yes.

DS: I never suggested it.

JPH: Charles had a sort of small orchestra up in the gallery. He wasn't involved in the broadcast.

DS: Oh, wasn't he?

JPH: Oh no, no, no. No, they played during dinner and things.

DS: Oh, I see.

JPH: He wasn't involved in the…

DS: I thought he did the opening music.

JPH: No, no, no. It was the Hallé Orchestra, Daphs.

DS: Oh, of course it was. So, there was a lot of work on the opening night office and then there was the… yes…

[pause]

Resuming, Daphne.

DS: right, we were talking about the opening night, commercial television, Associated Rediffusion, September 22nd and John…

JPH: 1955.

DS: 1955. And John was Head of Sound then, I was still assistant, secretary/assistant to Lloyd Williams, lent at that time to the opening night office. It was very funny, because in the opening night office I got very grand and thought, well where am I going to be, am I going to be at the Guildhall with all the knobs, and I going to be at the Mayfair with the smart people after the light entertainment show, or will I be down with the yobs and snobs down at the Granville where the staff were later. And I said at last, I plucked up courage

to ask Captain Brownrigg and said, now, we're all sorting out the tickets, I was sorting out the tickets, 'Could you please, Captain Brownrigg, tell me where shall I be, will I be with you at the Guildhall?' And he said, 'Well of course you won't, you'll be with the staff down the Granville, won't you?' And I went, 'Oh. Oh, I see'. Anyway, I worked it so that I got myself a ticket and I was at the Mayfair all night, of course I was, didn't want to go to the Guildhall, it was too grand. So that was it, a huge success, a wonderful night, wonderful parties and I mean it was done on such a grand scale and it was no wonder that a couple of years later they lost all their money because they did everything on such a grand scale. I mean the directors were allowed twenty cigarettes a week allowance for…

Twenty cigarettes a week?

DS: Twenty, a packet of twenty cigarettes a week.

That's a grand scale was it?

DS: That was a grand scale, then.

I thought you were going to draw analogies between this and BSB, but obviously not.

JPH: It was for guests only.

DS: Oh, it was for guests only. And the ladies were all allowed a hairdressing allowance and the gentlemen were allowed a dry cleaning allowance.

JPH: We were all allowed dry cleaning because the building was such a mess, brick dust everywhere.

DS: But it was just that I couldn't imagine the BBC allowing you to claim on expenses one packet of cigarettes a week for guests. Each person. Anyway, that was all stopped a year later when all the finances went wrong. But after the opening night of course it all felt like a bit of an anti-climax. But anyway, I went back to working with Lloyd Williams, but only for a short time because things were then very much on the move and too much to do and he said, 'Listen darling, I want you to get to women's programmes'. And this

lovely lady, Mary Hill, who'd come from the BBC, experienced in women's programmes, she was to set up and did a women's programme department, and it was very successful. It seemed people looked down their noses a bit at the time and thought, oh dear, women's programmes. It was very much a feeling, oh, it's only the women's programmes. But in fact she did a marvellous job and she had some wonderful programmes, marvellous people and top, top writers, you know, personalities.

May I just, in the light of present day thought, ask you where stemmed that thought? Was it from the men, the men executives, it's only women's programmes?

DS: I don't know.

Or were the women indeed self-oppressing themselves?

DS: I think it was a bit of both. I think I thought, oh well, you know, women's programmes. I don't know, perhaps I didn't think that. It was just an attitude of mind that everybody had, oh it's women's programmes. I mean for years I had the same standard and it still happens, oh it's only children's. I worked for years in children's, I became a children's programme director, not by choice, by habit, and enjoyed it very much. But it was, oh it's only children's. And I think in those early days it was, oh the women's programmes. They were so involved with Light Ent, mainly and…

The plucky little things deserve some programmes and [laughter]… yes.

DS: [laughter] A bit like that, yes.

JPH: It might well have been – if I may interject – the Associated Newspapers' influence and the beloved Deputy Controller, who's still alive and whose name has gone straight out of my head – Cecil!

DS: Maybe it was.

JPH: Who founded the Ideal Home Exhibition for Associated Newspapers and I'm quite sure that…

DS: He came later, didn't he?

JPH: No, no, no, he was there from the off, he was Deputy Controller to Roland Gillett.

DS: Uncle Cecil, yes I'd forgotten that, I thought he came later.

JPH: Cecil Lewis, a wonderful man. Still alive and well and living in Cyprus.

DS: I thought he came later.

JPH: Even as we speak. And I'm sure that was probably his influence.

DS: Perhaps.

JPH: He thought of the Ideal Home, Daily Mail, the housewives' competitions and all that stuff.

[interruption to close bathroom window]

DS: But anyway, Lloyd said to me, we need everybody we can get and I want you to go and help sort them out and help, to go there as an associate. I said very well, I will and am I to PA? No, no, just help them get set up. And I thought, oh. And then I got upset because I didn't want to leave Lloyd, because it was so exciting, it was such a marvellous job and he was reliant on me, I was reliant on him, and I thought ooh, I don't want to go, I'm happy here and I like working with Lloyd and it was all so high-powered and so fast moving and so much to do and so busy. Anyway, I said oh alright, I grumbled a bit and pushed out my lower lip and said oh dear, oh alright, and I went off to women's programmes. And I did as much as I could to help, there was a hell of a lot of setting up to do and pulling programmes together and a lot of admin work to do, so again I was back in admin in a way.

Daphne, I wonder before we go into that then, we should look at the era with Lloyd Williams and whether or not in terms of setting up AR to go on the air there are particular stories or attitudes or points that you wish to recall?

DS: I remember it all being tremendously vital. It was terribly exciting, it was terribly… perhaps I was as wrapped up in myself as anything else, I don't think I had a good overall look, I was a bit wrapped up in myself in the job and Lloyd, he was very much the boss and I worked to him, for him. Again, ex-BBC training, being convent bred, well brought up, you worked to the person, the loyalty was there. I was looking forward to, you know, perhaps moving on and getting into this trainee directorship.

Would you know the extent, if any, to which he was given a hard time by Brownrigg or his superiors?

DS: I think he had, yes, I think he had pressure brought upon him, but I think he was in a very strong position. Well, as regards myself, for instance, he had asked me to come across and I never queried what I was to earn or anything. I think I was earning, at that time in that year, what seemed a fair salary at the BBC, I think I was earning about £8 something a week at the BBC, something like that. And I went across and John said to me, 'Have you worked out terms?' And I said, 'Well no'. And I started work on the Monday morning and Lloyd said, 'Right, well you'll have to sign a bit of paper and a contract. We're going to offer you £11 a week'. Of course I thought I was rich. I said, '£11 a week?' He said, 'Yes, that's what you're starting at and you're starting on that because I want you to be a trainee director at…', you know. I said, 'Oh, alright'. And I signed this bit of paper and I saw him smiling, and then a few hours later or next day or whenever it was, he called me in, he was still smiling, he said, 'Darling, you've got to go in and see Captain Brownrigg'. And I went, 'Oh, what about?' So he said, 'Well, it's about your terms of contract'. And he said, 'You've got to see him and he's got to authorise it, you've got to be signed in'. And I said, 'Well, supposing he doesn't?' you know, fear, fear. I'd been a secretary at the BBC for all these years. 'What do you mean?' So he said, 'All you have to do, darling' he said, 'Just stand up to him, just say that you're here and that's what you've been told you're going to be paid and just stand up to him'. I thought, stand up to him, an ex-naval captain, DSO, DSB, barred, unbarred and whatever

barred, you know, Managing Director of the company. Anyway, I did my usual thing, standing outside the door trembling…

JPH: General Manager.

[0:09:58]
DS: General Manager he was, that's right. And I thought whatever am I going to say? I was wobbling and shaking. I took a deep breath and I thought well, like most things in life, I'll act it through, I'll act it. And so I went in, I was absolutely charming to him. He said, 'Sit down' and I could see he was ever so cross and fidgety, he was tapping his pencil and looking at this bit of paper and turning it over and slapping it up and down. He went, 'I see you've signed a bit of paper here, compiled by Mr Lloyd Williams, saying that you're to work for him as secretary for £11 a week!' I said, 'Yes, that's right Captain Brownrigg'. And he said, 'I can't pay you £11 a week, we can't pay you £11. I don't know who agreed or who said we could pay you £11, we can't afford to pay you £11 a week'. And I thought, oh, I said, 'I'm sorry Captain Brownrigg, that's what I was told, that's what I've agreed, I've left the BBC and I have just given up a ten year pension', or whatever it was, five, ten, whatever it was. 'I have just bypassed at this moment in time, within a few weeks, a pension fund agreement, lump of money, which I was looking forward to having, Captain Brownrigg, and I have given that up to come and join this new exciting [laughter] and vital and forward looking industry and to bring to it whatever…' I mean I was absolutely amazed at the use of words that I was on. And I said, 'And I'm sorry I can't go back on this, and I've given up my job, and I am here for £11 a week'. And I think he was so astounded at this woman carrying on and shouting, he went, 'Well, I'm very unhappy about this, but I shall sign it'. And I said, 'Thank you very much, Captain Brownrigg'. And I left and Lloyd was actually standing outside the door, he was walking up and down, puffing his cigarette and he said, 'Did you do it?' And I said, 'Oh yes'. And he picked me up in his arms and he said, 'Good girl'. But looking back on it in later years I thought, I think he was trying it on, I think I was first case.

JPH: Yes, set a precedent.

DS: I'm sure. And he tried it on on me, wicked man. I think he really had tried it on.

Can we draw inferences from this? I mean was this just AR as opposed to BBC, or were there larger issues? I mean was it a microcosm for the country at that stage?

DS: I think it was larger issues, I think I was totally unaware of what I had come into, that they were absolutely baby new, brand new and all they had was Bill Gillett as probably any background, the few people that they knew, anybody from ATV, and I think they were just feeling their way. Don't you John?

Well, what I meant beyond that was indeed, was it the beginning of the end of the forelock tugging era when people were only too happy to work for the BBC and now suddenly they were beginning to have an awareness of their value?

JPH: Oh, there was nowhere else to go.

DS: Yes. It made an enormous difference, it made an enormous difference because I…

JPH: I think that £11, you were probably getting at least a pound more than Brownrigg's own secretary, I think that's probably what did it.

DS: I think that's what upset him, yes.

JPH: You'd established a precedent then for secretarial salaries.

DS: I think Lloyd was setting up, probably, Lloyd I think was setting up the programme department as against admin, looking back on it. We are the programme people, we make the programmes and you are admin… But they never, ever agreed really, Captain Brownrigg and Lloyd Williams, from that moment on. [telephone ringing] And I feel that there was much more battling going on than I knew and I was aware of. I think John was much more aware of it when he arrived in April as a head of a department, because from then on he was on budgeting numbers and worked with Lloyd. He worked with Lloyd hugely and closely again, because Lloyd was the recruiting and the setting up. But I always looked back on that and thought, I wonder what would have happened if I hadn't won, I wonder what would have been said or done if I'd gone under or Brownrigg had

played it another way and said, 'I'm sorry Miss Shadwell, this man had no authority to offer you this'. It would have been interesting to know.

Do you know what you might have done? Would you, could you have left?

DS: I don't know what I would have done.

You could have picked up, presumably, at the BBC?

[both speaking together]

DS: I think I'd have run back to the BBC. I think I'd have run back and said, you know, I've made a terrible, oh boo-hoo, I've made a terrible mistake, you know me, can I come back please? But I think I would probably still be a secretary there or an assistant or something, or in the Overseas Service or probably banished to East Tasmania or whatever. But I really, from then, working for Lloyd and going into women's programmes, I didn't really look back from then, because when I went into women's programmes I worked very hard and I enjoyed setting up programmes and things, I wasn't actually doing my own. And then suddenly Lloyd sent for me and said, you know, you're going to begin, we've got some programmes for you to do. But again, they did a wonderful thing, they were on air by this time and, whoever it was, Lloyd or the Programme Controller, thought of a programme called *And So To Bed*. And it was a piano player, and it was a trailer for next day's programme. Somebody at the piano would play some tunes and say, 'And at seven o'clock there'll be so-and-so, so-and-so, and don't forget at quarter past nine we'll have…' and then play another bit of a tune. And the company had a brilliant idea, they let everybody, each and every one of us have a go on directing this programme. Well, the people they wanted to, that was.

JPH: Fifteen ways of shooting a piano.

DS: But everybody ran out of ideas, there was no way left of shooting a piano unless you hung the piano, somebody had hung a camera, but… Somebody said, 'Well, hang the piano, for heaven's sake'.

Exactly the same thing at CBS.

DS: Was that right?

Yes. There was a programme called Blues by Margie *and she played and every new flight director…*

DS: Had a go.

Well…

DS: It was wonderful.

You can imagine, you know, some were good, some were bad, but how many ways are there of shooting a piano, or pianist?

DS: It was incredible. And we all PA'd for each other, that was a funny thing. You'd have a go and then you PA'd for somebody that next night.

JPH: Live, of course.

DS: Yes, they were. But I was sorry for the – there were about four regular people who did it and I felt so sorry for them that they had these different, intense people running in every night. All they had to do was sit at the piano and they had people saying, 'Could you look to your right, could you look… do you mind if you look over the shoulder, would you sit to your left, would you sit to your right' for these desperate young people all wanting to make their mark on the whole of television and prove to Lloyd Williams – it was to Lloyd we had to prove ourselves – that we could do it.

And he probably wasn't watching.

DS: He probably didn't even watch. He probably was roaring with laughter somewhere, thinking I've got them all at it and all going. Anyway, from then on we all started, who could. I didn't get into it, they had a training scheme at the – where was it, John?

JPH: The Viking.

DS: The Viking Studios.

JPH: The Viking Studio at…

St Mary Abbots.

JPH: Kensington, yes. St Mary Abbots.

DS: At St Mary Abbots, and that was the training scheme of Rediffusion. And I remember thinking to myself, I think one of the reasons I didn't want to leave Lloyd, because he'd go up now and again to see how they were getting on, or make a presence or an entrance, and I used to go with him sometimes. And I loved it, I remember these people jumping up, 'Daphne, come and sit here', 'No, Daphne here you are, come and sit here', 'Daphne…' I thought, oh I like this, I like this very much indeed, because they were all sucking up to me because of Lloyd, of course, which I didn't realise until a few years later. [laughter] Anyway, I missed out on the training scheme because Lloyd would say, 'Oh, you don't need to go to that darling, don't need to go to that'.

Did you, did you miss out on it?

DS: Oh, of course I did.

Would you rather have done it?

DS: Oh, yes. Oh, yes. I mean I had to catch up quicker than anybody else. But of course I had been lucky at BBC, working with Pamela Brown. A lot of them had come from the theatre, or had come from television off the floor, or technical, hadn't they?

JPH: A lot of people from films.

DS: A lot of people from films. But I'd been lucky that I'd been working in television. I think probably Lloyd in his wisdom thought that, and especially he knew that I'd worked with Pamela Brown, who a lot of people didn't think all that much of, rightly or wrongly.

JPH: You knew what a P as T was and things like that.

DS: And I knew what everything was, yes, and how it worked and having had to do so much for her, I knew how it all worked. So he probably thought in his mind, well she can get by, or she'll manage. Anyway, when I was… and I'd been lucky enough to work with Dickie Lester and Frank Westbrook… who was the lovely drama director? Joan's husband? Peter…

JPH: Peter Moffatt? No.

DS: Joan Miller's husband.

Peter Cotes.

JPH: Peter Cotes, yes.

DS: And Peter Cotes was there and he did a big and very complicated play and asked for me as a PA. I was terrified, but I did it and he was ever so grateful.

JPH: Very honoured.

DS: Yes.

JPH: Very honoured.

Yes, yes.

JPH: Peter Cotes could have asked for anybody to work with him.

DS: Exactly. And half the other girls wouldn't work with him.

JPH: But he blamed you afterwards.

DS: [laughter] No, we had another whipping boy, I'm glad to say, on the production who was the poor stage manager. So I did that, so I did a lot of PA'ing for lots of different directors which taught me a lot, helped enormously. So when I set up women's programmes, Lloyd sent for me, 'I've spoken to Mary and we want you to start directing the odd bits and pieces'. And that's where I started, I was still helping setting up, but I started doing the odd piece into the programme, or the odd programme, in women's programmes, and that's how I started. And I remember how nervous I was, and I was borrowing the corner of somebody's desk for that and I couldn't find a notepad and pencil properly and I had this tiny little mini pad somebody had got out of a joke book, I think, and a tiny stump of a pencil and the corner of somebody's desk, and that's how I started. And Mary said, you know, we want to do a programme about, I remember with… about, *The Englishman's Home* it was called and it was about people's homes and castles, with Lady Maria Hastings, who became Mrs Woodrow Wyatt, Lady Maria Wyatt. She was lovely, we became great friends and I did a couple of programmes with her. And it was from then I started, and then from there, as we progressed in Rediffusion and it all got underway and started going, I left children's [sic] programmes and Lloyd said I want you to go to children's. So I was very much ruled, as we all were, our lives were ruled by Lloyd, who assessed us all, I think really on the whole, touch wood, very well indeed, and he seemed to push each director into the right place, or he'd suddenly say, you've done… I want you to leave that, come and do a bit of Light Ent, or whatever. And really, from then, I didn't look back. I went from women's programmes…

[0:20:32]
JPH: You got admags, of course, which everybody did.

DS: And I went… we all did admags, they were fascinating things to do, very interesting things. I mean they were horrid in one way, because you were so tied by the advertisers and in some programmes one would have a minute, one would have thirty seconds, one would have two minutes, and of course they were all hustling on the programme about who got the best shots or who had longest. And it seems to me there's somebody spending a lot of time carrying on about, they were my pieces coming up, and don't you

think that that close-up you're having about so-and-so, so-and-so… Of course I was very umpty, used to say, 'I'm the director, I'm the director, I'll do what I think best'. And the poor man who was in charge of Advertising Magazines used to say, 'Hang on a minute Daphne, hang on a minute'.

JPH: Joe Garwood.

DS: Trying to explain to me that that's where the money, the bread and butter was coming in from and it wasn't up to me to say I'm the director, I'll do it my way. You're supposed to say, 'Oh, I see what you mean. Just a minute'. But there were some grand admags and I did some, I started off with a lot of musical ones.

JPH: *Lovely to Look At*. Fashions with Peter Ling writing the script.

DS: Yes. And I got Peter Darrell – God rest his soul – who finished up as the Artistic Director of Scottish Ballet. He came as choreographer. And, oh I got all sorts of musical things going.

JPH: [inaudible – 21:47] Some of Daphne's early television stuff.

DS: The first one he ever did with me was an advertising magazine. And then Marks & Spencer's came to Rediffusion and said we'd like to do a whole programme, and that caused a great furore with the IBA and everybody else, whether a company could have a whole thing.

JPH: A whole admag.

DS: So they tried it out and I did it and I made it as a musical and it was very lavish with a mock-up of all the… and dancers coming down the sets and the fashion bit with all their things. They were a bit horrified, Marks & Spencer's, because I went over the top and I wanted so much stuff. But the IBA stopped it in the end, they wouldn't have it.

Well, may I ask, as we get into your directorial era, the end of the Lloyd Williams job – were you aware of the pressures on him at that time, because they must have been enormous in terms of budget if nothing else.

DS: They were enormous and he used to get very ratty and he used to go out. And he used to get very umpty with me, which he hadn't done at the beginning, he used to get a bit off-hand with me suddenly, I thought whatever's the matter with him, but it was the pressure of the job. But he was pressurised and I didn't know how pressurised he was until much, much later after I'd gone. And I used to look back. John found him my replacement, because he was saying we've got to find someone to replace you. And I didn't want to go, but thanks to him, he kept saying you've got to go. And John found… we went to a party didn't we?

JPH: Well yes, it was quite early on in fact, but the changeover didn't happen until quite late. It was as my sound guys were leaving BH, we had a party – I mentioned this in my history project piece – a bunch of studio managers from BH and we had a party at The Cock in Great Portland Street, and amongst the guests was Stella Ashley, lovely lady who worked for Hector Ross Radio Productions as the production secretary there, with the guys, Monty Bailey-Watson and all the people who ran Hector Ross in those days. And as we were talking Stella was sat at one end of the bar and I waved her down the bar and introduced her to Lloyd and said to him at the same time, 'This is the lady you need to replace this one', pointing at Daphs. And…

Here is your…

JPH: So it happened eventually.

DS: Yes, he said, 'Oh really?'

JPH: But get the opening night out of the way and all that first, yes.

DS: And she was a huge success with him. They worked enormously and she became his assistant and they had a secretary each.

Do you know of any specific instances where Williams had run-ins with management, with Brownrigg or other people?

DS: It was not until later that it got very bad, which I was unaware of, but John knew more about it as Head of Sound, and then when he became a director after me, he heard more about it. It did get very bad indeed and also there were changes of Controllers by then. Bill Gillett came and went.

JPH: Well no, Bill went relatively early. Cecil Lewis sort of…

DS: Stood in.

JPH: …he was Deputy Controller and he acted as Controller for quite a long time. And it was a great deal to do, we were great personal friends of Lloyd's and…

DS: Eileen.

JPH: …Eileen, his then girlfriend – he was in the process of being divorced and so on – and we used to go out a lot on Friday nights; we'd meet in the bar and we'd go off and have a meal and everything, and Lloyd took to drink quite heavily, in fact, because of the pressures. And he really used to work his socks off. And eventually he started reeling [? 0:25:26] round the studios and that was too much for Brownrigg and the naval…

DS: And he used to argue at the meetings, he wasn't coherent.

JPH: Oh yes, terrifying programme meetings.

DS: Yes, they had programme meetings, became…

[both speaking together]

JPH: They used to fight like hell and it was very fierce. And in 1960, I started directing in '59 and it was shortly after that, I was one of the last section people to go through as a trainee director, I recounted it in my story and Daph probably remembers it. I was

horrified, we all knew that Lloyd was going and – yes – and Daphne knows it as well, that suddenly in the corridors appeared John McMillan from the BBC, who we'd known in the BBC, and we realised then that Lloyd was not going to get the Controller's job and that the skids were under, and so it turned out.

DS: He never really looked forward from then on, when John McMillan came. I don't think they got on. I didn't like him, I remember Cecil Lewis saying to him… because I walked into John, I'd known about him from my father, my father had known him at the BBC and didn't like him at all. So it was embedded into my brainbox about this man, the stories I'd heard at home that my father didn't like him. And I remember walking in, I was sent for, I had to go in or something, walked into his office and he was there with his feet up on the desk, which I wasn't used to seeing, either at the BBC or certainly not in the area of Rediffusion in the early days with Captain Brownrigg and all the naval… they wouldn't have their feet on the desk, and this man was lolling about with his feet on the desk. And he hardly looked up and sort of went, 'Yes?' and I said something and he didn't bother to answer. And I remember Cecil Lewis saying to me shortly afterwards, 'Well, my dear Daphne, and what do you think of our new Controller?' And I said, 'Not a lot, not a lot at all, Uncle Cec', because I always called him Uncle Cec. And he went, 'Oh!' He was astounded because they were so proud at having got this man, you see, with all this experience and background, they thought we were all going to be over the moon, but I firmly said I wasn't pleased about it at all. But Lloyd never looked forward from that day and he seemed to go down and down and down from there. But it was dreadful, because we were all grateful to him and he'd set it up, he did it all really.

Well, there were so many pioneers at that time who lost out, did they not?

DS: ATV must have had the same problems and the same things.

They did the work and they took the brunt.

JPH: Oh yes.

DS: Yes, yes. And they all seemed to…

Others reaped the rewards.

JPH: There was major redundancy in '56 when people went like the wind, a lot of the people that Lloyd had recruited had to go.

DS: So he must have felt guilty for that, that he'd taken them… But it was very hard for them all because it was very exciting setting it up, but they seemed to go under themselves, those early pioneers, which was terrible. But I suppose it's happening to this day, to a certain extent.

I fear so, yes I'm sure so, yes. Well, satellite is an example isn't it?

DS: Oh yes, yes.

We'll come to that.

DS: We will.

So what was the first thing on which you called shots?

DS: Well, I suppose it was, apart from the *And So To Bed*, it would have been the women's programme area that I was in, that was when I started. And then I started doing series. My first programme, I was so frightened and so nervous, I don't remember anything about them at all, I really don't, but I must have been alright. And of course it was very difficult, because the PAs, whoever it was who were PA'ing with me, I'd been a PA, all the friends and people, but the crews were so helpful and nice, because they all knew, I mean really we all grew up together, that's how it was. We were all young and we were all starting and everybody was most willing to help everybody else, it was really lovely. And – mind you, I still think to this day and age the crews still help people out, it's a sort of, seems to be an inbuilt professionalism in crews.

I think it is, yes.

DS: It's extraordinary.

Yes, the camaraderie between professionals, people had to get on the air.

DS: And get the show on and get it done, yes. And you'll see them, they'll all grumble afterwards and say the man's a fool or the woman's a fool, or she's impossible, but they'll still go and work with them and get the programme out, so I suppose it was inbuilt then.

That was especially true in the days of live, I think, when you really had no choice but to get on and get off.

[0:29:38]
DS: Yes. I had a terrible time on a live drama once, a terrible time, when I was in the drama department. I was very lucky, I went into every department. But I went into drama and I did a lot of… it was the forerunners of *Murder Bag* with Raymond Francis. They were called *Crime Sheet* and *Murder Bag*, which became…

JPH: Which eventually became *No Hiding Place*.

DS: *No Hiding Place*, that's right, and they were the forerunners and all the big drama directors had done it and I think they were tired of it, they'd done…

JPH: Superintendent Lockhart, who eventually became Chief Superintendent. Ray Francis.

DS: That's right. And I did ever so many, and all sorts of directors came through and all the big time directors did it, then they all moved on to everything else. And in the end in fact it was Roger Jenkins and I, Roger Jenkins and I finished up in the end by doing them all between us more than anybody else had done. And when it came to the end of it, I remember Stella Ashley ringing me up and in a rather starchy voice and croaked voice, said to me, 'Daphne, you know that *Murder Bag*'s finishing and you did so many with Roger, well Roger's gone now, and there's you. We're turning, as you know, the series is becoming an hour long a week and we'd like to ask you, Daphne, if you would like to do *No Hiding Place*, our new flagship drama'. I turned round and I said, 'If I have to do another police interview scene with an over the shoulder shot of Raymond Francis

interview somebody else, I shall jump out the bloody window, Stella'. And her voice relaxed and she went, 'Thank you, Daphne, we just thought that we'd like to ask you'. And I threw my drama career away like that. [laughter] You see, flibbertigibbet, you see, uppity again. Threw my drama career straight out of the window.

What were the politics of that little incident?

DS: I think they were very heavy. I should think somebody had said… somebody, obviously very kindly, probably Lloyd said, 'You've got to ask Daphne', because I carried the whole of the last series with Roger. I mean normally they'd had four, five directors on this series, and Roger and I did them all between us.

JPH: Live.

DS: Live. And I think somebody had probably said, look – or maybe even Raymond said, Raymond Francis might have said – look, Daphs has done it a lot, what about asking Daphs.

Why would they want to get rid of you? What was going on?

DS: I think they probably felt it had become very big time and it was their new flagship thing and they were going to ask in the big boys. I was very much, I was always – it sounds as if I'm carping – but I've always had in my career, people patting me on the head and a bit, oh Daphne dear, there, there. Oh, how are the kiddiewinks' programmes? I had years of that. And I got used to it in a funny way. I'd be resentful now and again, but I've always had it in my career, it's a most extraordinary thing, of people saying, oh well, it's only Daphs, you know, now we're going to get the big boys.

You're saying you were almost somewhat demeaned? But if you were delivering, nevertheless, you were up to the best of it?

DS: Yes. I don't, because when they wanted things quickly they used to ring me up and ask me, I mean I was often hauled in to do programmes. But I mean it sounds as if I'm

carping or sorry for myself, I don't mean it that way, but there was that element. Do you agree with me, John?

JPH: Absolutely, yes.

DS: Ever so much. If the big boys were coming on, oh, it's only Daphs, or you'd better give Daphs this. But what I was getting around to…

JPH: Partly to do with her personality, obviously, and character.

Yes, which was what, just a little Bolshevik or a little abrasive?

DS: I did try to argue with people, oh yes, I did argue with people, no doubt about it. Oh, I'd speak up.

For the fun of it or…

JPH: Good for a laugh, yes.

DS: No. I'm very straightforward. No, I'm very straightforward, if I've got something to say…

A spade is a spade?

DS: Yes, I'll say it straight out and afterwards think, I wonder, perhaps I oughtn't to have said that. But I have had it throughout my career, that there's always, you know, I'll get left behind and there's somebody better or they want the big boys. Or there, there Daphne, she's alright for kiddiewinks.

So really we're saying there was never a time that office politics or politics generally were not involved in any television operation or backstage operation, I suppose, would you say?

DS: Well, yes I…

They must have been at the BBC, fraught at the BBC.

DS: No, I think politics were involved all the time. I think in all television that I've done.

Winning factions, losing factions.

DS: Yes. I think politics have always been involved. It was worse when I got to Thames and when I got up into the Euston journalistic news area, that was horrific, but that's for later.

It seems almost suicidal on your part on occasions that you go out of your way to rile someone or…

DS: Well no, stupidity. It's stupidity my dear. Absolute stupidity! I mean because I don't think, you see. One of the people, it drives him mad, I'll open my mouth and say what I feel immediately, quick feeling you see. But I mean I laugh about it, I laughed about it then, but I just threw away my drama career, and obviously Stella was delighted, and I knew straightaway, it was obvious somebody had said to her, you must ring Daphne, or Daphne must be asked. If I'd thought and said, well hang on, you know Stella, I've had a long run on this, let me have a think about it, gone and talked to him. I'd have probably gone back and said, I'd love… thank you so much for asking me, I'd love to have a go.

But why would she want to ditch you, is really what I'm asking.

DS: Yes, I don't know. I'll never know, because Lloyd is now dead, she's dead.

JPH: Stella was only doing what she was told by Head of Drama, who was Peter Wills at that time.

DS: Oh, it was probably Peter Wills.

JPH: Yeah, of course it was.

DS: Yes, who took agin me.

JPH: The old queen.

DS: Yes, the old queen, who took agin me. And then went back on me again, funnily enough.

JPH: Yes, well he was like that.

DS: But he would have, he probably thought I was too flibbertigibbet or something for a… I think he'd just taken over, hadn't he, and he was very head clutching and he wanted a grand level drama department.

We're inclined also always not to think of new brooms coming in and saying I must do something new or different.

DS: Yes, that's right, that's right.

Or see things differently.

DS: But I did, for all that I got a couple of plays, they gave me a couple of plays to do and one was, I chose it because it was so different from *Murder Bag* and *Crime Sheet*. It was a very light-hearted thing about a pop star, I can't remember anything about it.

JPH: Oh, *Rock-a-Bye Barney*.

DS: *Rock-a-Bye Barney*, and we cast Jess Conrad in it as the young pop singer. And it's not one of the worst things I've done in my life, because that chap, Jess Conrad, who is at the moment appearing at the Arts in this thing about the pops in the sixties, every time he is interviewed in the newspapers, the radio – he was on Ned Sherrin's *Loose Ends* four weeks ago, and gives me the most raving, wonderful…

Does he? Oh right.

DS: I think it is wonderful of him. It's all thanks to Daphne Shadwell, he says, who cast me in *Rock-a-Bye Barney*. Isn't that wonderful?

It is indeed.

DS: I can never get over it, I think it's wonderful of him. I saw him once and thanked him, I sent messages of thanks to him. I think it's lovely of him, so few people do it. But I decided on that play, because it was so different from anything else I'd done. It was a very silly play and there wasn't much in it, but it was…

JPH: Bill Carpenter [ph] and Bill Kerr [ph].

DS: Yes, it had a good cast. It was a silly play. And when I went into the studios with it, the very first ever strike hit commercial TV and it was on my play. Anyway, we got Lloyd Williams in and I said, look, we're managing, you know, we've got halfway through act one, and we're sort of managing without props and scenery and whatever it was, and the actors themselves were being very naughty and shifting doors and picking up glasses and going, oh sorry, I've picked up the wrong props, you know. So there was bad feeling on the floor. But Lloyd, to my astonishment, I said, 'Well come and have a look, see how we're getting on, haven't got into act two yet'. He said, 'Well, carry on I'll look at the run', and he came in and looked at half of the run and said, 'Carry on'. Little did I know, he thought – and he was quite right – it had hit the most marvellous publicity that anybody's ever had, you know, and the headlines were, 'Daphne keeps going despite bolshie prop men', and all that. But it was a disaster, because the play was weak enough as it was, without having anything against it, so the play was, as I say, it was absolutely panned and not… but it hit the publicity, which I realised afterwards was all that Lloyd and the company, they didn't give a damn about me or the play or the, you know, the texture of it or the standing of it, get it on the air to show they'd beaten the first strike on ITV. So that wasn't good for me. Then I did another play, it was a mystery, frightening thing, and that was disastrous. The sound effects went… there was a great big thing at the end, it was terribly old hat, you know, this thing at the end all built up to the woman being left alone in the house - the usual thing - terrified and being threatened and all this sort of thing. And I did all the old stuff, I had the door handles turning and the creaks and the things, and there was supposed to be a big thing where she's on the… the phone goes and

she picks it up and the wire's been cut and there's a terrible bang, bang, bang on the door. And something else happened, a ring at the bell or whatever, and that didn't happen. And this bang at the door didn't happen, and I was *screaming* at my floor manager: hit anything, hit anything, pick up anything, hit anything, you know, on the set. And he wouldn't, Len bloody Swainston. He'd got it into his head, ooh it's not my job. Ooh, it's not my job. Oh dear, what shall I hit. And he didn't, and this poor actress, Pauline Yates it was, Pauline Yates, she somehow kept going, it was live, and she was trying to think of the plot, you know, what… Oh, it was a bloody disaster. So we were panned for that, so that didn't help me very much indeed. But, you know, again, we got good publicity because something had gone wrong live and we kept going and nobody had noticed. But the critics of course gave me a right panning I think, because it was such a bad play.

Yes. Well of course there were only two channels then so everything was reviewed, I suppose.

DS: Oh, everything. But then…

JPH: Especially by Peter Black who hated Rediffusion.

I want to digress.

DS: Yes, please, please.

For a moment – two things. We mentioned Peter Cotes who was…

DS: Peter Cotes, yes.

…there and Peter has the determination to write part two of his memoirs.

DS: So he should, what a wonderful man.

So he should, indeed. But why not give us your recollections of Peter?

[0:39:55]

DS: Well Peter, I liked very much indeed. He frightened to death a lot of people in Rediffusion. He was very determined in what he wanted to do and what he wanted, but he had this reputation for having to have a whipping boy on a production. Didn't matter who it was, and the PAs then were all terrified of him. A couple of them had worked on a couple of things with him, but not a big play, he hadn't done his first big play for Rediffusion. I don't know what he did, a couple of small… I don't know whether it was a *Murder Bag* or something like that, wasn't it? And anyway, he decided, I suppose he looked around and thought, who's the most experienced person around, not the best, and of course he kept coming in and out of the office, and Lloyd's office and everything when I first knew him, and he asked for me specially, would I PA this play with him. And I got ever so nervous because I hadn't been to the outside rehearsals or anything. 'Oh darling, you can do it' he said, 'But I need you, you will be there'. So I went to one rehearsal and did the camera script and we got in the studio and I think I was so stunned by it all and so over… I didn't feel anything, and I knew all the crew and they said, 'Oh, it's alright Daphne, it's a straightforward play, it's alright'. And we started, we went on the air live, and I was so used to PA'ing with the other directors, got us on the air, and I looked at him, and he was sitting so close to me, and I felt the fear in him. The poor man, he was totally…

JPH: He was terrified of live television.

DS: …gone with nerves and it made me, because I looked at him and I felt him and he was going, 'Oh, coming to one. No, that was…' we'd written the captions down, captions one, two, three and he was reading those, bless his heart, he'd got in such a state. So I took over, just shouted, it was only the opening, not the direction or anything at all, started the opening, so-and-so and so-and-so, into so-and-so, coming to shot forty-two, shot forty-two, Peter, coming to shot forty-three. And he suddenly, he took a breath and because we were on, he started, he was alright, he got away and he was fine. But that, I only felt for the man, he just went with fear and nerves, and it warmed me to him. And although people grumbled like hell about him and said he was awful and he was difficult, I thought I should love him forever because I'd felt his terrible fear, and together we got the play out. And he was ever so grateful, wasn't he, and he gave me a big present. He'd been to somebody and said what would she like, and gave me a present and thanked me, and we

were sort of friends forever after that. But the PAs were still frightened of him and I was in Lloyd's office then and I'd done that play, and I suddenly was put in charge of allocating the PAs to people. And they used to…

[end of Side 3 Tape 2]

[Side 4 Tape 2]

We're on side four. Daphne, we mentioned admags before and the carryings on on that.

DS: Yes, advertising magazines.

It was a short-lived art, was it not?

DS: It was.

And so maybe we should document as much as we can about that.

DS: It was very good for us, it was excellent work for directors, because it was very hard and it taught you everything about timing, because it was absolutely vital that if they'd bought in for one thirty, if they'd bought in for one, for many thirty seconds, if they'd bought in for a quarter… And they had to each be given their own special place.

Well, let's describe, first of all an admag was an advertising magazine, so let's describe precisely the format.

DS: Well, the classic one was *Jim's Inn*, it was a brilliant idea somebody had, it certainly wasn't me, that Jimmy Hanley had a country pub…

JPH: It was Jimmy's idea, wasn't it?

DS: It was Jimmy Hanley's idea.

JPH: Jimmy suggested it.

DS: This was well into admags, we'd done all sorts and kinds, but he had a brilliant idea and it was in a very small studio in Television House at Kingsway, very small studio, and it was a tiny bar, he was behind the bar in this supposedly pub, and there was the regulars, there were about three regulars. And one was, it used to be Mick and Montmorency, Charlie Drake and…

JPH: No, Charlie wasn't in it. Jack Edwardes.

DS: No, no, Mick and Montmorency were Charlie Drake and Jack Edwardes who had been doing children's programmes for Rediffusion, I did some of them. Mick and Montmorency, just a comedy knockabout thing. Charlie Drake and Jimmy Edwardes. And somebody picked up, or Jimmy Hanley did, that Jack Edwardes would be a good character in this pub, and he sat at the bar on a big stool and sat there with his pipe. And then there was Maggie, Jimmy Hanley's wife, who was of course his wife in the bar, and varying people who popped in and out. And off behind a curtain, at the edge of the set there was a curtain and you'd go through there and you assumed that he went into their little kitchen, and there was a little curtain the other side of the bar where you assumed you went into anywhere that you needed to go into. And it was this tiny studio and Jimmy would come in and say, 'Hello Jack, good evening all, hello to the viewers, oh there you are', sort of thing, and then somebody would walk in and say, 'Gosh, I've had a hard day today'. 'Have you? Well, what you want to do, you want to try a glass of this so-and-so', start the watch, close-up of the glass. So-and-so, so-and-so. 'It's got brightness and so-and-so, it will do you so-and-so good'.

Start the watch means you timed exactly their…

DS: Timed into that…

Segment.

DS: That's right. And then he'd finish that, then he'd…

Was it scripted?

DS: Yes. Yes, but Jimmy, because he was so used to it, he would learn it.

JPH: No autocue.

DS: Oh, it was rehearsed, we had outside rehearsals for it all. But Jimmy could, he was very good, he could adlib round it a bit and whatever. And then he'd say in the next bit,

'Oh Maggie, what have you got there?' 'Well, I've just been washing up, Jimmy, and my hands were so sore and I'm just trying this new stuff.' 'Oh really, Maggie? How does it work?' 'Well, you rub it in and it goes in straightaway.' Thirty seconds of that. And it was just a vague storyline and as much as they could… in fact, that was the trouble with admags, after a while the advertising got in the way. We'd get also carried away with the story or bits of business, that we'd be furious about these wretched adverts and we'd start nicking five seconds off them or something.

That's what the audience wanted, presumably, because they were essentially little soap operas with…

DS: They were little soap operas, exactly. Or we would have different sorts of admags like wedding specials or an admag, I did one which was mainly a cookery one, anything tied up with cookery. They were really quite good programmes, some of them, when you look at them.

JPH: *Shop on the Corner*.

DS: *Shop on the Corner* was…

JPH: It was another little sitcom situation.

DS: Yes. That had a story, there was a man running a shop on a corner. And it was all done ever so tightly, because there was no room, they were all done in little studios.

And no money?

DS: No money. No, even though they were admags, you'd think you'd have as much money as you liked, you didn't at all.

Did you get a fee for directing them?

DS: No, we were staff. But some of them were lovely to do, you know, there were quite unusual ones. And I, as much as I could, would always put dancers and actors or actresses in or, you know, try and get a bigger studio and have something out of this world.

Dancing in the public bar?

DS: Oh yes.

JPH: Or nepotistically, your elder sister.

DS: I put her into *Shop on the Corner*.

Who ran them, who did they come under? Was it programming or was it sales?

DS: It was programming.

It was programming?

DS: But there was a department within programming.

JPH: Advertising Magazine department, Joe Garwood ran it.

DS: Yes, and very well.

JPH: With a lady called Anstice Shaw.

DS: Yes, and they used to come down and they used to stand, come to outside rehearsals and the run through and they would stand between the director and the advertisers. But there was a chap called Ivan, Ivan Staff – I shall never forget him – and – queenie Ivan Staff – and he was an agent and he was a big agent, had a lot of stuff, but he had been an actor and he had done some acting in television and he knew something about it, and he'd come in and he knew everything. 'Why aren't you taking the shot from over there?' and 'Why can't you do that?' You could bluff most of them. You could say, 'I can't take the shot from over there and I'm not doing that because the next bit is, that we're coming on,

is a shirt and that lighting and that thing will mask his shirt'. Or he'd bring in a shirt and I'd say, 'We can't do that, you see, it's so white that we can't shoot it', and all this sort of thing. But he was a devil, because he had a little knowledge, which we all know is dangerous, and he would lean on me, sit… he could be ever so charming, the queenie way of saying, 'Daphne darling' and make a great fuss of me, and then the next thing he'd have the knife in the back, he'd be up to Joe Garwood saying, 'That bitch, she's ruined my product and she won't listen to what I say'.

What was he called?

DS: Ivan Staff.

But his nickname?

DS: I used to call him Queenie Staff or Queenie.

Queenie? Right, I see. Because of his what, his sexual orientation or…

DS: Oh well, he was a bit, a bit camp. But he was very funny and he was hilariously wicked about the other products on the programme, but when it came to his, quite rightly, that was his job, his face would become iron.

He worked for whom? An advertising agency of some kind?

DS: Yes, he did. And he had a lot of products, it was a big agency and they used to buy in a lot to the admags. But he got this thing about that he knew it all and our hearts used to sink when he came in. Joe's face used to quiver because he knew I'd start getting, no I won't. I mean as we all got older we all knew, you know, the client's right and clients, that's what they like.

JPH: Well, dear old Evan Way [ph] who you did a lot with…

DS: Oh yes, the car man, the motorcar man.

JPH: The motorcar man from Kilburn.

DS: He was lovely, yes.

JPH: Our first millionaire acquaintance wasn't he?

DS: Yes. And…

JPH: And he had a package deal, rather like the Marks & Sparks special that she did, which lasted quite a long time before the IBA stamped on them again.

DS: And he loved it, television was fun, that was his fun.

JPH: It was his hobby really.

DS: He used to take me out to lunch, he used to come into the studio. He loved all that. But, it was the most marvellous training ground, it really was, because it was live, it was disciplined, it was hard, everything was different. But I mean the hilarious things that happened. Jimmy Hanley's was my favourite. It wasn't on one of my programmes, but he went through the curtain and said, 'Oh, I'm just going to get a little bit of lunch, I've found something marvellous, come and have a look'. One of those dreadful things. Went through the curtain, cut to – because it was live – we had to cut to the pot on the stove, and he rushed in, wherever it was, and he used to have the things for rehearsal and then the real thing for live. And he got to the stove and it was a new idea of soup, thick cottage soup, a meal in itself in its own packet that you could put on the stove and it would cook, and as he said, 'And here we are, isn't it brilliant? You put it on the stove, turn up the gas, wait for it to heat', and as he said that, the whole of the outside of the foil stuff bent outwards and fell flat [laughter] on to the stove, and he stared at this horrible glutinous lump and vegetable stuff with jelly round it, standing on its own in a lump. And then he stood there staring at it as it went 'plop' and fell and gently flowed all over the stove, down the side, down his front and his trousers, all over the back. And he was saying, 'Here's my lunch, as quick and easy as this'. [laughter] And he didn't know what to do, so he sort of was trying to scrape it up, but it was too hot, and he said, 'Ah well, I shall

gather that later and thoroughly enjoy it' he said firmly. [laughter] All this glutinous stuff dripping down into the gas stove.

It went out? It went out on the air?

DS: Yes, it was live, it happened on air.

Nobody went to black?

DS: No. But I had dozens of things like that happen to me, dozens. I can't remember all of them now, they were so funny. But what a training ground, they were wonderful.

What was the sort of attitude internally toward them? Were they despised? They were revenue producing presumably?

DS: They were revenue producing so you had to have your wits about you, but they were slightly despised weren't they John?

JPH: Well, everybody hated doing them because they were so bloody difficult, and you had the agents to argue with, the agency.

DS: And we weren't used to this, you see, we were not used to it.

JPH: People behind you in the gallery which you'd never had before. There were no viewing rooms as such or any green rooms, anything like that, so they had perforce to come into the gallery, and that was very inhibiting.

DS: And just weren't used to having these people saying, 'Can't I have…?' 'No, you can't', you'd say before they'd finished the sentence. And they were, oh they were difficult. But they were slightly looked down upon. And it started getting, you know, Lloyd would say to me, 'Oh darling, I'm going to put you into admags for three months'. And I would judder, you know, shudder, and people go, 'Oh, you're going to admags' with a sort of slight curly smile on their face.

JPH: Doing the epilogues was preferable to doing an admag penance.

DS: It was, it was.

[0:10:00]
Having Aids sounds preferable.

[laughter]

DS: But when you had a nice one to do or something good, it was very satisfying, because you were learning all the time, and wickedly you were trying things out that you'd never done before. You thought, why don't we do… and wouldn't it be fun. And of course all the cameramen and lighting people were still learning and trying out, excepting very experienced…

So it was a training ground to a large extent?

DS: Yes, for everybody.

Now the ITA killed them eventually. Was that because of the programme companies getting fed up with them or the audience?

DS: No, because it was revenue and they were a great loss, there was a great row when they went and stopped.

JPH: It was an ITA decision to get rid of them, for whatever reason.

DS: But the companies were furious and the agencies were furious.

JPH: They were massive earners for the company.

DS: They were. And of course what upset a lot of people at the time, they had employed a lot of people, I mean a lot of artists went and the department, Joe Garwood's department

went. Whole departments went. Of course it hadn't been suffered before, nobody had suffered whole departments, whole areas going.

JPH: I've got a feeling the Equity strike in 1961 helped to demolish them of course, because the fees for admags were peanuts, weren't they?

DS: Yes.

JPH: It used a lot of people, drifting in and out doing this, that and the other, little character parts, but they were paid absolutely nothing.

DS: But it had given a lot of employment.

JPH: Five guineas or something wasn't it?

DS: A lot of employment to Equity members.

JPH: And the Equity strike in '61, which was over the national deal for the then network as it existed, they all went on strike. We had no actors in anything at all for seven months. It was a very long time. We did all the *Here and Now*s and things like that, as filler programmes for things that would have had actors in them. That helped to finish them off, but it was largely an ITA decision, I think backed by the then government.

DS: But they were sadly and sorely missed by the companies, and as a marvellous training ground for us directors, and everybody. I mean apart from the established people from BBC that Lloyd had employed, everyone was new, young and having a go, or cameramen become lighting men or sound men doing whatever.

JPH: But you more or less moved into Light Ent then, didn't you?

DS: Yes, I went to Light Ent for quite a long time, with *Cool for Cats*. And I did quiz shows, I did quite a few quiz shows and I did quite a lot of music shows, and I did some jazz shows. I did a lot of Light Ent, which I thoroughly enjoyed. And then I went back to drama. I can't remember what to do another series of. I was dreadful, when I was in

drama I thought oh, this is wonderful, I like it, I liked the discipline of drama and I liked the, I liked it, you know, the artists were so well behaved, because Light Ent they're so naughty, turning up late or shouting back or answering back or whatever. But when I was in drama I'd think, oh I do miss Light Ent, and when I was in Light Ent I'd think, I'm missing drama, I'd like to get back to that discipline and those plays and those actors. [laughter] A little flibbertigibbet again, you see. But…

JPH: But a lot of your drama, Daphs, I may remind you, was under children's, like *Sexton Blake* and the science fiction things you did…

DS: Oh yes. I did all the science fiction things.

JPH: They were all very good actors, they were still all alive and well and working.

DS: Yes, *Object Z,* the return of *Object Z*. Peter Ling's plays, Peter Ling wrote a lot of plays for me. I did a lot of drama in children's, lots and lots of drama.

JPH: The *Sexton Blake* series went on for ages, didn't it?

DS: Yes.

JPH: With dear old Larry.

DS: And then of course, in Rediffusion, within children's, we started up *Do Not Adjust Your Set*, which was the Monty Python lot, and I did that with Humphrey Barclay.

That was when?

DS: That was the end of Rediffusion.

JPH: That was the end of Rediffusion. We've done quite a big skip actually.

DS: And that went across into Thames, of course. And of course then the Monty Python lot, jumping ahead into Thames, went to Philip Jones of Light Ent and said look, we've

done two series, extremely popular, we want to move into Light Ent, and he turned them down. Silly man.

JPH: Yes, but if I may say so, you've missed out on a lot of Light Entertainment you did in the early days, like the Matt Monro series.

DS: Oh yes.

JPH: Matt's first television programme. And the Rosemary Squires series.

DS: And Michael Holliday.

JPH: The Michael Holliday series. Which were all musical, big bands, a lot of guest artists; Mel Tormé, all sorts of people.

DS: I did a lot of Light Entertainment with a lot of big stars.

Well, tell us about the operation then. Whom did you answer to, how was it mounted, budgets, things like that, rehearsal time.

DS: The… a lot of…

JPH: Well Michael Westmore was Head of Light Entertainment then.

DS: Yes, but not for very long. I did quiz shows mostly with Michael. I did *Cool for Cats* with Michael, but funnily enough, Peter Wills was very much in my career. When I was working with Lloyd, back to the early days, Peter Wills arrived and he was called Talent Scout, which was a funny name for him, and he was a very funny man, he couldn't get an office. And then he became Manager, Light Entertainment when I was in Light Ent. And then he became Manager, Drama and I went into drama, then he became Head of Drama, then he went back to being Head of Light Ent, and then he had a downfall and an illness and everything happened to him and people took agin him, but he came back again as Head of Children's. So it was very funny that Peter Wills was very much in my

life and my career. I moved around with him and he'd either be on me or off me, very funny.

JPH: Well, as with everybody, Peter was like that. He either loved you or hated you in periods, didn't he?

DS: Yes.

JPH: But generally speaking, we both got on quite well with him.

DS: Yes. But the budgets in those days seemed much easier, you didn't have such enormous personal pressure on your budget as you do today, like above the line costs and below the line costs, and it's your total responsibility. You really, I mean it was so much easier, you were called in by the head of your department and you'd either put up a programme idea or you'd be brought a programme idea which you followed through, or the head of the department would call you in and say, 'Daphne, I want you to do this' and you'd go back to your PA and say, what do you think, we've got such-and-such a thing to do, and you'd get a stage manager and that was it. And you'd set off and you'd do it. And you weren't told you've got only 15,000 or 150 or 1,000 or 10,000 or whatever, you seemed to just do it. Then the head of the department would say, well keep it within this budget. The casting department set up much more the artists within the costing.

JPH: You'd have a meeting with the casting director and say I want Fred Bloggs or whatever, or somebody in the company would be pushing somebody.

DS: Yes. But now the casting department say to you, I've got to see the head of the department first, what is my budget? Then they seemed to sort it out with the head of the department. The pressure of budgeting wasn't anywhere near the pressures it is today. And you didn't have above the line, below the line, you weren't sorted out, you weren't paying for…

JPH: You'd have a straight £980, which was the maximum that *Cool for Cats* ever was. I finished it off after inheriting it from you.

DS: You were just given… yes.

JPH: That was the most it ever was, for everything: for costumes, design, dancers, the whole shooting match.

I want to stop.

[break in recording]

[0:17:28]
We're rolling.

JPH: Daphne, it's about 1961. We've swapped. The interlocutor, the interviewer has swapped. Roy will now interject and I will probe Daphne's memory.

DS: God.

JPH: John P speaking. 1961 or thereabouts, drama was over, admags had gone, you reverted to Light Entertainment. And if I may remind you, three very good series: Matt Monro's first ever…

DS: Yes.

JPH: …after he made *My Kinda Gal*, won the British Song Contest, became a star, literally, almost overnight…

DS: Yes, yes.

JPH: …and you got his first series.

DS: I did.

JPH: What do you remember of it?

DS: Well, I remember that – and it was a lovely lady designer, Barbara, she was the only lady designer we knew in those days then, and she was a designer on the show. And it was a very easy, simple going show. I always remember that Mickie, Matt's wife, was very influential on him, acted as his manager, of course, as much as anything else, and we sat down to discuss the first programme – they were only a quarter of an hour. That was another thing that was rather looked down the nose at, oh, the quarter of an hours, and I got a thing about it. I went to Lloyd and said, 'Look, I seem to be queen of the quarter of an hours'. And he said, 'Would you rather do quarter of an hour Light Ent top shows than nothing, or do you want to go back to admags?' I said, 'No, I'm just saying how nice it is to do the quarter of an hours and I'm looking forward to the Matt Monro series. Anyway, it was to be a series and we decided that it would just be Matt and maybe a guest now and again.

JPH: Johnny Spence Orchestra.

DS: The Johnny Spence Orchestra.

JPH: Wonderful orchestra.

DS: Who would be in vision from time to time. And we said – and he had made up his mind that he wanted to – is it all working? He wanted to do an opening number, he wanted to open with [sings tune], the music…

JPH: Let's start the music and dance.

DS: And I said, 'I don't think you ought to open with that'. And he said, 'It is a marvellous number'. And Mickie started saying, 'It's our favourite, it's our song', and putting her arms round his neck and they started kissing each other. And I said, 'Matt, would you just like to sing the first few lines'. He said, 'Yes, it's a marvellous number, the orchestra goes, *um-ta, um-ta, um-ta*. [sings] There may be trouble ahead… oh, I see what you mean, Daphs'. Well, I said, 'We'll start with *Begin the Beguine*'. [laughter] I said, 'Thank you ever so much, Matt. Start of a new series'. But we did have a lot of fun and I kept it ever so simple, and sometimes we only used two cameras on it. And in for that big stuff it was Studio 2…

[0:20:05]
JPH: Studio 2, yes. Very small studio, very big orchestra.

DS: Very big orchestra.

JPH: Very difficult to mount and shoot.

DS: Three cameras we had on it, but sometimes I kept it very, very simple and we had a gag which people had done, we put in front of him a green light and I would work it from the control room, and a green light for him to start, it was a just a gimmick type thing. And one day we did it by sheer chance, we did it on air and everybody loved it, he said, 'Oh well, I think that was fine' and I went, *dum-dum-dum-dum-dum* with the green light, and said, 'Oh sorry, that wasn't so fine' and we used to have a running gag with the green light going. And he was ever so quick witted and I could sometimes press the button and he'd pick it up, what I was saying or what we were doing, or make something up.

JPH: I'm glad to say, I wrote some of the patter for those shows, now we think about it.

DS: You did, you did.

JPH: And we found some gimmicky things. There was a marvellous automatic hand – do you remember?

DS: Oh, Johnny Spence brought it back from America with him.

JPH: And we put it on the piano, and it was a wind-up thing, or something.

DS: And the hand used to come out and…

JPH: The hand used to come out of a little box.

DS: And press a button and stop itself.

JPH: And start waving around at things.

DS: And it was one of the first evers.

JPH: The band used to fall about. I mean we used to keep things from the band and just spring ‘em on ‘em, and that helped the atmosphere enormously.

DS: Oh, we had a grand time on that series and it was ever so simple, it was just Matt singing with a few – Barbara would get some nice props and things. But she started getting a bit desperate because Matt got later and later every week with what he was going to sing. And Johnny Spence would be going mad for the arrangements and Barbara used to say, well what sort of setting do you want. I mean long before the days you would work out, like big BBC shows you have now, like the Hooligan, you always have the same set with a rocking chair and an area for the guest artist or something, but we’d be trying to do something different every week. And I remember having to send for Matt and get hold of him, and Mickie came with him, and I said I want a very serious talk with you. And I really, it was one of the first times I had to tick an artist off. Because he was so lovely I had to do it in the nicest way and say look, because I’m easy going with you and everybody else is, we’ve simply got to know what you’re going to sing, or you can just stand against a chair if you like and sing anything you want. And it was Don Black who was managing him then, the great Don Black came in with him, and I said look, I said, it’s alright because it’s me, I said, but you could be talking to, I don’t know, the Stoll Moss empires or whoever. He’s really got to pull his socks up, and I always remember giving that sort of pep talk, I hadn’t done it to an artist for years. But he took it very well and really it was silly of me to fuss him in a way, I think we should have… Johnny Spence could have picked any song and he would have come in and sung them against any set. I think it was silly of me, because he was new to television, just been made newly a star, he was just used to coming in to being a guest artist or singing with a band. I think, looking back on it, I would have done better to have just had a set and a couple of chairs and let him come in and sing any song he wanted to. But it was a great pleasure, that programme, great pleasure and marvellous musicians, marvellous artists, good crews, good people. I remember that with great happiness.

JPH: You got a lot of value out of Studio 2 as well, because you did the Michael Holliday series in there as well.

DS: I did the Michael Holliday series after that. And Michael was, he was lovely. I didn't know, we were halfway through the series, his MD was Johnny…

JPH: Pearson.

DS: Pearson, who was his MD, a lovely man. Wonderful arranger. And he told me, much later, about what a dreadful naughty chap Michael was with the ladies and he was always late and he was dreadfully late, but he was very funny with me, he treated me with an enormous respect and great distance and very warmly, and 'Yes Daphne', 'No Daphne' and that's why I had no idea he was such a devil with women, I suppose. And a marvellous story about somebody was driving him to London Airport and he [laughter] he picked up this young woman wherever they picked up the car or wherever, and he said, 'Would you like a drive to London Airport?' 'Oh yes, with you Michael, anywhere.' And [laughter] he was on the back of the floor, the back of the chair, this terrible Michael Holliday, and he was singing to this girl, singing all his songs, and he was shouting to whoever was driving him, 'Slow down, slow down' and whoever was driving, whether it was Johnny or manager, was saying, 'The plane's due in ten minutes'. 'I don't care, slow down. I'm just going to sing her another chorus of…' [laughter], you know, *The Fisherman's Wharf* song. Very funny stories about him. But he was marvellous with me, but he was always being late, so once he turned up late and I didn't say anything at all, we were just carrying on, and I said, 'Good morning Michael' I said, 'We're doing band call, without you, good morning'. And he was going, *te-te-te-te* to people, and he came up and said, 'I'm terribly sorry, I thought you were going to shout and bawl and scream at me and I've got all these excuses ready, and I've got you a bunch of flowers outside and you haven't said a word'. I said, 'No, I'm fed up with you. You can get on with it'. And he was never late again after that, never ever. But he was lovely to work with, very, very nice man indeed. Devil outside, I believe, could be impossible and difficult, but marvellous in the studio, dead easy. Then the Rosie Squires series, that was a joy to work on.

JPH: With Rosemary, yes.

DS: Well, I made that much more - I don't know why, because she was a woman or something, or because she was so easy or such a fine singer – I made that a very glamorous show. I think I had Studio 1 then, a bigger studio, and I had lots of beaded curtains and slashed glitters and, you know, swagged ninons and goodness knows. I made it a very glamorous show, she liked doing that. Very glamorous clothes, she had a good figure. But a lovely singer. And I mean it's really funny looking back on it now, because Rosie's such a fine singer, you could have just had a band and her singing, she didn't need all that dressing up. But again, because we were all new and young and raw, everybody loved doing it. The camera crew liked it, Vic Gardiner mostly on that show on camera one.

JPH: Senior cameraman at the time, yes.

DS: And he had the Mole crane, and of course he loved it, whizzing about, getting all sorts of shots and up and down. So the more they worked and wanted to do it, the more difficult, the more creative we made the sets and what we were doing.

May I ask for your recollections of Vic Gardiner at that stage and age?

DS: Yes, Vic was very… he was always very dominant with his crewing. I mean he was the boss. He'd come from BBC. I don't know whether he'd had his own crew in the BBC, had he?

JPH: Yes, he did, yes, just.

DS: Was he senior cameraman?

JPH: Just, yes, yes.

DS: Just been made. Anyway, he was the senior cameraman, but he was very bossy. I mean he was very tough with his crew wasn't he?

JPH: Mm, very.

DS: And he was very tough on the floor. I mean he would be very tough with directors or people on the floor, he didn't stand any nonsense. But if you got on the right side of him, or you got on with him or he liked working with you, he was wonderful, a wonderful cameraman, great cameraman. But I wouldn't like to have crossed him really, I wouldn't. But he loved doing music, he was great…

JPH: Oh, he was great on these kind of shows, he was a great big band fan.

Did the director have to go out of his or her way to placate him, as it were, to play up to his presence, his personality?

DS: Well, I think the directors did to every senior cameraman. I mean Vic was very specially tough, he was a tough man.

JPH: Well, Don Gale was a very tough senior cameraman as well, wasn't he?

DS: Yes, he was, he was.

JPH: Now film buyer to the ITV's CA, as we speak.

DS: I think they were tougher then than they are now actually, with directors. I think they didn't mind speaking up to directors at all then. I mean now they just either shrug their shoulders, look at each other and do it, or say to the director, is that what you really want, or don't you think it would be better if… But I think in those days they were much… Or you felt, they would just convey to you that you were doing it wrong or it wasn't right, and make you feel put down.

JPH: Jeff Shepherd [ph] was a monster, wasn't he?

DS: Oh God, he came up in the box with John, shouted at him.

JPH: Appeared over the shoulder in the box, saying, 'I said you couldn't do that shot'. [laughter]

What has changed then? What then prevailed and now is different?

JPH: Professionalism.

DS: I think it changed a long time ago.

JPH: Again, we go back to it, don't we? I mean they were so keen to get it right.

And involvement, the dedication?

JPH: Oh, total involvement, yes. They wanted to be part of everything, part of the direction, part of the sound, I mean Vic particularly had a great pair of ears and a great personal sound system at home and things like that, and always had. They were concerned with every aspect of it: lighting, the lot.

Was there more ability then, do you think, and less now?

JPH: Much more, much more then, yes. Again, because of the live. It surely goes back to the fact that everybody did it live, you had to be right.

You had to do it.

JPH: You had to do it and you had to be aware of everybody else's problems and disasters and so on.

It's interesting – if I may interject this, because as you know, at that time I was at CBS and the same thing - the senior cameraman on a shoot, and they didn't lead the crew, there was a technical director, but the senior cameraman on the crew either had one's respect or did not, and if they had it, then one worked hand in hand. They were an essential part of what was being done.

JPH: There was an interesting occurrence in this period of your life, Daphs, when Granada ran out of directors and requested that Rediffusion sent somebody north to direct *Song Parade*.

DS: Yes, it was a programme that I'd very much enjoyed anyway, watching, I loved it, it was a big musical show and again, it was Lloyd Willliams, again who was…

JPS: Just before he went.

DS: …involved so much in my life. No, it was quite a while before he went. He sent for me and said, 'Are you happy to do this, we're sending you up to Granada'. I went, 'What, what?' He said – it was *Chelsea at Nine* then, it had been *Chelsea at Nine,* then it was *Song Parade* - and he said, 'They're in Granada, they need a director in a hurry, I'm sending you, alright?' And I went, 'Alright'. And it was fine, I got on the train and I thought, what am I doing, I've been surrounded by crews, everybody I know and love and we've all grown up together, and here I am going into a strange world in a strange place, you know, I don't know anybody. So…

[0:30:11]
JPH: Well, you knew Mark White [ph], who was producing it.

DS: Yes, but not very well.

JPH: You knew him from radio.

DS: Yes, but not very well, not as well as you. I'd met him. And anyway, I got there and the director who had been on it mostly was…

JPH: Philip Casson?

DS: No, he was the choreographer on it.

JPH: Keith Beckett?

DS: No, the other one.

JPH: Stuart [ph]… we'll think of his name in a minute, yes.

JPH: Mark Stuart [ph]! Thank you very much, yes.

DS: A well known…

JPH: Light Ent director.

DS: Light Ent director. He'd been doing it. He hadn't done it for a couple of weeks because he was put on another show and the director who was doing it had gone off or something and they were desperate for a director. So I got up there and everybody seemed quite strange and nobody seemed to be very warmly welcoming towards me and the PA was a very sharp young lady. And she, you know, she, 'Yes, hello. Yes, here's the office', like this. I was very, very nervous indeed. Anyway, I didn't think anybody was particularly warm towards me and anyway, I think we'd done, I can't remember, it was like doing the camera script or anything like that.

JPH: The senior cameraman was Eric Prize-Birch [ph].

DS: Was it?

JPH: Yes, who was also the shop steward for ACTT in Granadaland and that didn't help, in the circumstances.

DS: Anyway, we got into the studio and I noticed that Mark Stuart [ph] was very offhand with me and sort of turning his head, wouldn't have much to do with me and I thought, well that's not very friendly, I thought he'd give me a warm welcome or something. Anyway, the next thing was, this chap with a beard came up to me and said, 'Excuse me, could I have a word with you?' and I, all bright and eager, said, 'Yes, yes, what is it?' So he said, 'If you're having a coffee break now, aren't you?' And I said, 'Oh, am I?' and he said, 'Yes, you're having a coffee break, would you come and have a coffee'. Well, I went into the canteen, this chap said, 'I'll get you a coffee, please sit here'. And we sat at

a table and chairs in the Granada canteen and I noticed that the rest of the whole of the Granada: my crew, the PA, Mark Stuart [ph] and everybody were at the bottom end of the canteen and I was up the top end with this chap. And he said, 'I'm the shop steward and I'd like a word with you' and I said, 'Yes?' He said, 'I believe you're not a member of our union' and I said, 'Yes, that's quite right'. So he said, 'Why aren't you?' I said, 'Because I've chosen not to be a member' I said, 'I've been leant on at Rediffusion', I said, 'Robert Tronson, Cyril Coke and another member of the staff have often leant on me and said why don't I join, especially as I've been doing three shows a week, but I've chosen at this moment in time not to join'. 'Have you political reasons?' I said, 'No'. 'Have you religious reasons?' I said, 'No'. 'Well, I'm ever so sorry, here in Granada you either belong to the union or you don't work with this shop, or this shop don't work with you'. So I said, 'Well what do you mean?' So he said, 'What I'm saying is that they won't work with you and there'll be no show'. Of course it was live. I couldn't take it in, I was saying, 'What do you mean?' And then this embarrassment hit me with all these people down the other end of the canteen and all furtively looking over their shoulders at me and muttering. So he said, 'So I'm afraid perhaps you'd like to put your name to an application form'. Of course, fool that I was, I mean years later I suddenly thought, well of course I should have just said, oh of course, signed the paper and got on with the show. Instead of which I got myself in a terrible state and said, 'Oh I don't know, I must ring John P'. I mean everybody always laughs in my career, because it's always dotted with, 'I must go and speak to John P about this' or 'I'll ask John P'. So I rang John P, who wasn't there, he was out on a recce. So I rang immediately the head of my department, who I think was Peter Wills, who wasn't there. I rang Lloyd Williams who was out at lunch. I moved up to the next person, it was Ray Dicks or somebody like that, Controller of Programmes, he was away for the week, and I rang Captain Brownrigg RN. He was out for the day. There wasn't one person I could get hold of. I asked for the Personnel, I asked for Staff Relations, I couldn't get anybody. I was a gibbering wreck by this time. So I suddenly thought, oh I know, the Personnel Officer here, so I went to whoever it was in Granada. Oh, he was a charming man. His face was full of pity for me, that's all I can remember. His face was full of pity and he said, 'I don't know what to tell you, it must be dreadful for you'. I said, 'I've rung everybody', he said – I mean if only the poor man had said to me, 'Look, just sign the form'. He said, 'Is it religious, is it political?' I said, 'No' and then I said, 'Also, I'm getting a bit umpty, I don't like to be forced into anything', being uppity again, you see. I don't want to… and why should this man tell me and why

are all those people looking at me, and I haven't done anything wrong. So in the end, it all boiled down to, this man came up and he said, 'Well, you'd better speak to somebody and it's entirely up to you'. So I went back in, everyone was standing with their backs to me and I said to this chap, 'Well give me the form, I'll sign'. So I signed and they all turned round and it was alright, we got on with the show as though nothing had happened. But I always remember Mark Stuart [ph] turning his back on me and he came to Thames of course much later on, and he was always charming to me. But it's a funny thing, it always stuck in my brain, I could see his back to me and his face turned away from me, no matter how nice he was to me, or how he chatted and talked, I always remembered that. Though funnily enough, for ACT…

JPH: Can we pause?

[pause in recording]

[0:35:25]
DS: …story, so what happened was, in the end I signed the form. I don't remember anything else, signed it very crossly and they said right, you're in and everybody turned round and was smiling at me and were alright to me and we got on with the show and we did it, we had some frights.

JPH: And you've been fully paid up since.

DS: I thought, I was absolutely astounded, not knowing anything about union business. I thought I'd sign the form and put my life in, well I don't know… into jeopardy or whatever it was. I thought, what have I done, joining the union, because I'd really had no occasion to know anything about union life or rules. As I'd said to you earlier, I had been leant on at Rediffusion, I remember Cyril Coke, Robert Tronson, and there was somebody else, and they kept coming in to me and saying, 'Daphne, you ought to join the union'. And I kept saying, 'Why? What's it for?' 'Well, the union, we're all working for you and I mean if we get things done and we get things arranged here and the meal breaks and rises, it's all through the union and the group'. And I kept saying, 'I can fight my own battles and I joined here on my own and I've sorted out my salary on my own', which was quite untrue, because I was still on £11 a week and we had to laugh later, John and I,

because years later I was doing three shows a week, a serial, setting all these sort of things up, working in two departments, and I was still on £11 a week. And I went to see Captain Brownrigg and of course he had his sweet revenge on me, because he looked at me and said, 'I'm very sorry Miss Shadwell, at this moment in time we're not able to pay you any more'. So I suppose he'd worked it out that I'd been paid £11 for so many years that I'd earnt quite enough as far as he was concerned and was still probably a pound more than his secretary was. Anyway, I had kept being asked to join the union, so when Granada put me into signing this form, I assumed, I thought well that was it, I'm a member of the union, not knowing that it had to be passed and signed and get another form and get a card and them say you are now a member of the union, I thought that was it. So when I got back to London, having finished the show, it went alright, thank God, and everybody was pleased with it and I finished up thoroughly enjoying doing it, wanted to do some more, and good reports apparently were sent about me back to Rediffusion from Granada. I heard afterwards, many years later, that there were two files on me between Granada and Captain Brownrigg, who was totally incensed that I had been forced to join the union, a member of his staff and he was anti-union anyway. He was absolutely incensed and he wrote to Sidney Bernstein direct, who had written to four other people, who wrote back, and it had then gone down the line, report upon report, and how this had happened, and it was two files thick on Daphne Shadwell and the union affair. But Captain Brownrigg never got over it, he was so cross about it, and I think a lot of people got into trouble. I told him that I couldn't get hold of anybody, because he sent for me and said what happened. I said, 'I even rang you'. 'Oh well, I was out…' and he was making excuses to me, I'll never forget that, it did make me laugh. 'I'm afraid I was out at an important lunch and I hadn't left the number, somebody should have got through to me there'. So when I got back, the very first time I saw a notice or a notice went round there was to be a union meeting, I went to it, absolutely sure that I was a union member, having signed a form. And I stood up and said, 'I have been blackmailed into joining this union, but now I am here I will join it and will be part of this meeting'. 'Oh, thank you very much' they all said. And very shortly after that I became the directors' rep, because I said having joined I would now participate, I would not be a sleeping member, I would participate in the union affairs, and it wasn't very long after that that I became director's rep which, oh, it was a terrible job that, because again still, half the other directors were not members of the union, some of the ones were members of the union who'd been leaning on me, but they didn't really want – and although they'd leant on me to join, they just wanted me to join

and be a member, they wouldn't participate or do anything and I spent my time going to meetings and having directors' meetings, about four other directors there, and sending out rude notes to all the directors afterwards. But I was directors' rep for, I think nearly two years, wasn't I John?

JPH: Yes.

DS: And I went to every meeting, because I was determined that once I was a member I would participate and be part of it. And have remained a member ever since, still to this day paid up. Not so much an active member now, but always was an active part of that.

JPH: Back to work though, that was that.

DS: Back to work and that was that. That was a great big incident.

[0:40:05]
JPH: We had a change of Head of Light Entertainment. Alan Morris had been a director, became Head of Light Entertainment, Peter Wills left the company and…

DS: We'd had Elkan Allan before that.

JPH: I beg your pardon, yes. We had the shock horror meeting didn't we, in the green room on the fourth floor when Brownrigg summoned us all to announce that there would be a new Head of Light Entertainment.

DS: And it was this little-known man we'd seen running around in Features, in Documentaries, called Elkan Allan, who had worked on the *London Gazette*, no what was it?

JPH: *Picture Post*, he'd been with.

DS: *Picture Post* with Cyril Bennett.

JPH: He knew Cyril Bennett.

DS: God rest his soul.

JPH: And it got him into Rediffusion, yes. I went on alarmingly in my history project about that.

DS: Yes, so we've covered that.

John's covered it very well.

DS: So anyway, he sent for me. One of the first shows I did for him – we all laid low for a while, and Elkan Allan sent for me, I thought, I wonder if I shall remain in this department because he's not the sort of man who's going to like somebody like me. And he said he was going to do such and such a programme, he'd got this idea and that, and I crisply said, 'Oh, you mean like a feature programme, not light entertainment?' So that didn't endear me to him and he said, 'No, not like a light entertainment programme, we're going to do this'. And it was he who instigated that he got David Frost in and I did the first programme with David Frost called the *Twist* programme. We did a little light entertainment show about some programmes, David Frost and I. He had been a researcher and it's no thanks to me that David Frost has his two hands that he waves about. I could have done the British public and everybody a great big favour, because those hands that he waves about in front of his face and camera could well not be with him today. He used to come – I'd been doing lots of record programmes and the bottom, Hershey [ph] and I had at the bottom of our filing tray was filled with the small 45s, small EPs. And David Frost used to come in, looking very scruffy and Hershey [ph] loathed him and I wasn't mad about him, and he used to come in and it was, 'Hello girls, hiya girls' and without asking or anything, and he used to open the bottom drawer of this filing cabinet and start fiddling about with the discs. And one morning he did this and I said, 'Right' and I kicked the drawer shut and I said, 'David' as I did it, and he just got his hands out by the grace of almighty God and not my good fortune, he got his hands out of that filing tray without them being smashed to bits, because I was so cross with him forever fiddling with it. And he went, 'Oh, Daphs'. And I said, 'Oh, sorry David'. But it's really thanks to God and not me that he still has those hands today that he waves about.

Can you talk more about the young David Frost, what he was doing there, and how he operated?

DS: He was a researcher, he'd been a researcher, he came in, I think he'd been on a newspaper of some sort or a runner or whatever.

JPH: No, he'd been with the Footlights, which is history, and Elkan Allan had met him and he brought him in as a programme assistant, one of those...

DS: Elkan Allan thought he was marvellous.

JPH: …one of those strange creatures.

DS: A programme assistant, that's right. And he said to me, 'You're going to work with David Frost'. And I said, 'Oh, I see'. So we didn't like him, Hershey [ph]… although I didn't particularly dislike him, just he irritated me and the way he'd been brought in by Elkan Allan. He was pushed upon us, which is always unfortunate for artists or people or anybody, when they're pushed upon everybody.

JPH: And he was scruffy, wasn't he? Never changed his socks and his fingernails were always filthy.

DS: And he was, but he used to try to be quite pleasant. And anyway, Elkan Allan kept sending for me and saying we're going to do another type of programme and we're going to try it out with David Frost again, and we'd try that, we'd do a pilot or something and it didn't work. Then we did a record programme and he said you must feature David Frost more, so we were getting more and more agin him. And I was going more off David and everything he said, I'd say no, I don't think that's a good idea. So Elkan Allan said to me one day, called for me and said, 'What's the matter, what is it you've got against him?'

[end of Side 4 Tape 2]

[Side 5 Tape 3]

Daphne Shadwell, side five. So what have you got against him?

DS: Well, I hadn't really. I think it was being built up with sheer annoyance and because we were being pressurised by him put upon us. He was always very pleasant and always very polite, but Hershey [ph] couldn't stand him and kept saying, ohhh, like this, and grumbling, setting me up. So Elkan Allan sent for me and said, 'Now what is it you've got, you seem to be very off David and he can't seem to do anything right. What is it you've got against him?' I said, 'Oh well, he drives me mad, he's so irritating' I said, 'And he's scruffy and I think he ought to change his socks more'. He said, 'Oh, just a minute Daphne' and he put the key down on his desk and said to his secretary, 'Would you ask David to come in?' And David Frost came in and Elkan Allan said, 'Right David, I'm just sorting out with Daphne whether you're getting on together or not and she tells me that you smell and can you do something about it?' Well, I thought I would die, because you don't really expect somebody to say that straight out. And I said, 'Well just maybe if you just changed your socks a bit…' 'Oh, I'm very sorry' he said, 'I'm very sorry. Oh yes, well I'll see to this'. And I looked at Elkan Allan and I thought, you mean, miserable, horrible little man. That was really his way, he thought that was very funny, he thought that was a great way of setting things up and getting things going. But really after a while I got on with him quite well. He tried ever so hard, he tried too hard. We did a programme then called *Let's Twist* and it was a competition programme, because the twist had just come in and Elkan Allan thought it would be fun. He'd got this thing about the young programmes and the young people and we had a whole mass of people in and they twisted away and celebrities came around and pulled the strings off their arms and they had a winner at the end and David Frost was a sort of compere man, the man in front.

JPH: You taught him how to use autocue.

DS: And I taught him how to use autocue. But we always remember and the crews were in hysterics because they didn't really think much of him, then again, he was just a young scruffy man about the place who was being pushed. He was over-pushed by people and I remember he had the autocue and we had to do a sound recording to put over this *Twist*

programme, and he sat there and he wouldn't listen to what I said, he was absolutely determined. I kept saying, 'David, all you have to say is a few lines about here we are again…', I was saying whatever he had to say. 'No, no, no, I don't want to say that, I'll get it right'. And the crew were in hysterics because it was when those marvellous pills came out called 'Oblivon' – do you remember them? Great bulbous things, blue, they were, and they were to calm your nerves. You were probably in America then, Roy, and they were to calm your nerves. I took one once and I thought oh, I think I feel funny, but in fact apparently they were filled with nothing, they were just auto-suggestion. And they were terrible, huge bulbous things and they were in a little blue case, and the crew were in hysterics because the more the day went on this desk got filled up, there were hundreds of these packets of these blue things, of these Oblivon, but of course that endeared him to me, because I thought the poor creature, oh he is nervous and he is frightened. And I think it was really from then on that I didn't mind him any more, I felt sorry for him. But he never looked back, but he was really Elkan's boy, he was a management boy. And something happened on one of the programmes and Elkan sent for me and said, 'Look, John McMillan has said there are plenty of directors like you, but there's only one David Frost, so shall we get the programme right Daphs?' And I thought, well, I either leave now and don't work again or I've got to be nice to David Frost and have him in every programme. So I said alright, I'll, you know, okay we'll use him. But he was always polite and ever from then on, every time I see him, and he's always the same to everybody, he's always polite, he always remembers you and he's always got something nice to say.

Do you know what management saw in him?

DS: No, I don't.

Since he has no talent, they must have discerned something else.

DS: I don't know what it was, they were absolutely determined, I mean for John McMillan to say that: there are plenty of directors, get rid of the directors but keep him. I don't know what it was they saw in him or thought about him or…

JPH: Well, he defected almost immediately thereafter to the BBC and *That Was The Week That Was*, of course.

DS: But he must have said something to management, he must have had a lunch with somebody, he must have talked to somebody, he must have put some ideas into their head or he must have sold himself incredibly well, because we were forced to use him. And that was it, we didn't really dislike him, it was just that he was thrust upon us. But he was always alright, always polite, always there, never late, never big time, never threw a tantrum. He was no problem at all on the floor, at all. I'd rather work with him than lots of other people.

Very interesting.

DS: But we did give him hell in the office, we really did. The young scruffy programme associate, or whatever he was, or just a researcher.

Did you foresee the kind of future for him that he's enjoyed?

DS: Never, never. Never thought that he would reach the heights that he did. I thought oh, he'll do well because he was Elkan's boy and they kept using him, but I never, no I'd have put money on the table that he would have faded away, that he would fade away. I never thought he would have it in him or anyone would follow him up. So it's as much a mystery to me [laughter]…

Well, it's a general mystery isn't it, because of all the people on That Was The Week*... he was the only one self-evidently devoid of talents.*

DS: Oh, it was incredible. And he loved, he always wanted to appear, he always wanted to perform and it was very hard to stop him performing or appearing. And especially on *That Was The Week,* he would do the sketches, he would climb in, you know, he would get into cossies. Dreadful.

It's embarrassing.

DS: Oh, dreadful.

JPH: We're approaching 1962, chronologically, and we start the *Stars and Garters* saga.

DS: Yes, well I'm sure that's…

JPH: It was me to start with and then both of us collectively for almost two years thereafter, including all the hilarious audition sessions.

DS: Well, I'm sure that's been covered in…

JPH: Well, I covered it fairly thoroughly and you were involved in it, so it's all part of the JPH story from '62 through '63 and approaching '64, when it was decreed that neither of us should be connected thereafter with the series, so we bailed out and it was foreshortened under Elkan Allan for about five weeks with a different director, totally different format, and vanished, never to be seen again, more's the pity. You then entered quite an amusing, for you, and enjoyable work period back in children's programmes with Gerry Marsden and co, did you not?

DS: Yes, I had a very… I thought I was not going to like it at all, which has happened so often in my career, well in most people's career. I thought I was going to be very unhappy and have an unhappy time, but in fact I went into children's, there was a programme called… it was run by, it was backed by or using the Walt Disney people and it was called…

JPH: *Disney Wonderland.*

DS: *Disney Wonderland*, and they'd done about six in the series with a young director who nobody could get on with and didn't know where he'd come from. He went off, I think they got rid of him, I never heard of him again, and I took this programme on and it was quite awful, it was *Disney Wonderland* and they'd got some of the puppet costumes from Disney, there was Pluto and Mickey and they had a girl in, like an Alice in Wonderland creature and they just did talk bits and bits of information and running into bits of film. Oh, and they had the most horrendous children's talent competition. Well, I mean talent competition is bad enough, but children's! Anyway, when I took it over this was just about to start, it was set up and Hershey [ph], my PA, came with me, because it

was wonderful in those days, your PA and you went together everywhere, whatever the director got lumbered with, the PA got lumbered with or if you got a lovely show, the PA got a lovely show. And Hershey [ph] and I were together nine and a half years, the longest standing PA/director relationship ever. We had a wonderful time, we're still very good friends, best friends now. Anyway, she said, 'I can't stand this' she said, 'This is crap, I think I'm going to have to resign'. So I took over this programme, which was quite dreadful, and I got – who's the lovely blond actress, great star now. I cast her as Alice, the young girl was terrible and we got rid of her. Who played King Edward's mistress.

JPH: Yes, yes.

DS: I've got Anneka on my mind. Famous actress.

JPH: It'll come, don't worry.

DS: Oh, she'd just been in the Irish Premier's, the Irish PM, was his mistress. Oh dear. Francesca…

JPH: Francesca Annis.

DS: Francesca Annis played the Alice in Wonderland part and we started on and we set up this talent show. Well, instead of it being horrific it was a scream. We roared, it was terrible. The whole programme was terrible, but it got – and I got Gerry Marsden into it, because, he'd never acted or done anything in his life before, but he's such a wonderful character – I got him in as a character and we turned this programme upside down. The Walt Disney people didn't know what had hit them, they didn't know what it was about. It was a terrible programme but it got marvellous viewing ratings because we all had such fun and we so enjoyed it that we think this atmosphere came across. It sort of lightened up and Francesca was wonderful. But she had to leave, she was only contracted for six weeks, but she had to go because she was already contracted for a play or something and another lady, who became a famous lady presenter, took over, as a young girl, young woman, who married the chap out of *No Hiding Place*. And it ran for weeks. It ran for weeks and weeks. And then I went into another [telephone ringing], we went into another drama. Can we stop it for a moment?

[break in recording]

[0:09:46]
DS: So really, *Disney Wonderland*, which was started as a horror for me turned out - and it went on for weeks – and it turned out to be one of the greatest fun programmes I've done for years and we gradually changed it, gradually changed the programme and got all sorts of different elements and had the lovely Tony Hart in it, who did his BBC series for years, the artist, the drawing, and we did cartoons, we did a marvellous programme on that. And I remember we used to have a lot of fun in the studio. David Yallop, the great David Yallop, who was assistant floor manager then, now the writer, the famous writer, he was assistant floor manager on the series and he and Gerry Marsden and Bill Metcalf ph], the cameraman who is now a director of medical films he makes, they all got on like a house on fire and used to have terrible gaps. And one week, for some unknown reason our studio was being done up, we were put into big Studio 1 and it was such a small set, we were just in one small corner of the studio with Tony Hart and Tony Hart was doing his piece. And I remember Bill Metcalf [ph] was on camera, on the close-up camera, and somebody else, I think it was Vic Gardiner actually, was on the wide angle, and Bill was on his crane. And Gerry Marsden was on the floor. And we'd just started Tony's piece and he was doing his piece and what the competition was and what he was drawing today and somebody said on talkback, Daphne, look out of the window. And I looked and I did the biggest double take, because Gerry Marsden was carefully pouring a big jug of water down the back of Bill Metcalf's [ph] trousers. And I said, 'Cut to camera two', which was Bill's camera, and I said, 'Nobody is to look away, move or anything, we are staying on camera two, the close-up'. And we did, and just now and again you could just see a little judder on the camera. I mean we'd all be fired in this day and age for doing things like this, and I said, 'We're still on camera two' and Gerry just kept pouring this water. It never entered my head that he could have been electrocuted or killed on camera, or anything like that. It never entered… everything was for a laugh. And at last, eventually we cut back to camera one, which was juddering and shaking, because he was hiccupping, crying, hysterical laughter, he could hardly stand still. So his camera was wobbling more than poor Bill Metcalf's [ph] on the close-up. Tony Hart was wonderful, he just kept going as it nothing was happening. And that was then, there was a wind-up of the programme. Oh, then…

JPH: *Five O'Clock Club*.

DS: *Five O'Clock Club* a bit, and then *Five O'Clock* happened and I had Gerry Marsden on that and the usual crowd, and that was a great fun programme. And I really never stopped from that moment on, just having fun. It was wonderful, every programme was fun and a riot, and everything, I mean the things we used to do to each other. Myra and I walked into the control room one day and there wasn't a chair in sight. The whole crew and vision control had taken all the chairs out. Daphne Rennie [ph] was the vision mixer and she went to an office down the corridor and found a wastepaper basket and she upturned that and sat on that. She was the right height, a tall girl, so she could vision mix. And I said, 'Don't say anything to anybody, we'll just kneel'. So we knelt and we did the whole programme kneeling at the desk, we wouldn't complain and we wouldn't mention the fact that all the chairs had been whipped out, so then we would think of something dreadful to do to them on the floor. And it was one of the most enjoyable times of my life and I thought it was all going to be disaster and dreadful.

JPH: Then came *Sooty*.

DS: No, well that was…

JPH: Well, 1967, heading for end of franchise, '68.

DS: That was my first show for Thames, was *The Sooty Show*.

JPH: What happened then between…

You've caught him out!

DS: I did *Do Not Adjust Your Set*.

JPH: Oh, *Do Not Adjust Your Set*, of course, yes.

DS: Yes. We finished in children's doing *Do Not Adjust Your Set* with the Monty Python lot and David Jason and Denise Coffey. I didn't get on too well with the Python lot, I found them untrustworthy.

Can you explain that?

DS: Well, they would…

JPH: Well, Palin and Jones, Eric Idle…

DS: Eric Idle was a difficult one, he would go behind my back. Or I'd find him down the other end of the room redirecting somebody or standing behind my back waving at the artist saying, no, don't do it like that. And they all, none of them, they all thought they were much grander and better than me. Humphrey Barclay was the producer, he was very good and on the first read-through their scripts were so long, and I used to say, 'For God's sake', I'd say, 'That's the end of the sketch there', you know, page three and a half, and they'd got seven pages. Oh, they used to raise their eyes to heaven. And Humphrey used to say, bless him, 'She's right, you know, she's right'. They wouldn't be directed. Terry would sometimes. Eric Idle wouldn't. In the end he used to say, 'I'm alright, I'll do it on my own'. I'd say, 'Fine, carry on then'. And I found them very difficult to work to, except Denise and David, and we became a sort of isolated threesome, in a way, against the others.

JPH: But that's because, to some extent, you filmed *Captain Fantastic*, the cartoon…

DS: Yes. They were all in it at first, they were all in it because it was written and devised by Terry and Michael, with Eric Idle a bit, they thought of *Captain Fantastic*, and we used to go out filming with all of them in it, but gradually they started dropping out and we became a close-knit threesome, Jason, Denise and I, and we used to go out and have a marvellous time, and although it was written by them, Denise is a brilliant character, a brilliant writer, she used to adapt it or change it on the spot. And as we did it silently without sound at all we were all able to scream and shout during it and I used to shout out, 'Fall down, fall down' you know, when in doubt, shout it out and when in doubt fall about. So we used to end our scenes when we got a bit stuck by falling out of frame. But

they were difficult and they, after the first series, I didn't know a word about it, I found out by sheer chance, they went to the head of my department and said that they felt I was difficult and they'd rather do another series without me. And God bless the head of my department, Lewis [ph] Rudd, apparently he turned round and said, 'I know nothing of any difficulties, all that matters to me is what comes out of there', he said, pointing at his television screen. 'That's what's important and what's been coming out of there looks fine.' But, because they were, you know, it was a top-rating show in children's and that's what they wanted, so he called me in and said to me very nicely, I said, 'If they don't want me, I don't want to do it at all'. But in the end it so worked out that the *Captain Fantastic* bit was so popular that we continued that, the three of us. I did that, we did all on film and that was inserted into the second series programme and then it became a piece on its own. We did it on its own as a series, *Captain Fantastic*. But I found Eric Idle extremely difficult, we tried to make it up at one point. At one point we were in the bar and he said – this was during the first series – 'I'm sorry Daphne, we're not hitting it off'. And I said, 'I'm extremely sorry, Eric, and it's very nice of you to say so, let's start again'. But it didn't work and I found Terry impossible. Michael Palin was the best of them all, but he was weak, he'd go along with them. But to me their sketches were…

JPH: The Bonzo Dog Doo-dah Band weren't very nice to work with were they?

DS: No, they were lovely boys but they were impossible. Humphrey used to go mad with them because they were always late or didn't come up with their tunes in time, or they didn't turn up or one was sick. He handled all that very well as a producer and shouted at them, but I got on with them alright, and I felt some of their numbers were very funny. But it was Eric Idle, oh he was a devil to work with. He was so difficult and he just wouldn't be directed, he just knew better and didn't want to be directed, especially by me, didn't want to be directed by me at all. But their second director was Adrian Cooper wasn't it? Who hadn't done anything like that at all in his life and he just stuck a camera on them.

JPH: Film cameraman turned director.

DS: He was a film cameraman. He put a camera on them and let them get on with it. And one show I remember watching, they were all working out of left of frame. But at the

end of the series, Eric especially, wrote him a letter saying, 'We've had a wonderful series together and I can't thank you for all that you've done'. So he got what he wanted, you see, he didn't have any direction. But it was a shame. It was an unhappy series for me when it could have been wonderful.

Was Eric Idle a power within the group? Because he doesn't seem to be as a performer in terms of the material?

DS: No, I'm glad to say. I thought he was the weakest of the lot. He was the weakest of the lot. Yes, I think he was. Humphrey got them together, he got the programme on, he thought of it, he brought it to Rediffusion, to Jeremy Isaacs, and was made producer on it. That made me a bit umpty because he hadn't done any television before, and I went to Jeremy with Humphrey and said I think we ought to have a co-producer's credit.

JPH: No, he'd made his name on radio producing…

DS: *I'm Sorry, We'll Say That Again*. [I'm Sorry, I'll Say That Again] Which was very funny.

JPH: Which some of them had been in.

DS: They'd all been together in…

JPH: That's why they became transmuted.

DS: But it was a funny series, I mean it was a new, it was an absolute eye-opener to everybody, especially children, it had an enormous following with young people. And people I meet today who were young then still talk about it and say, 'Oh, I remember *Do Not Adjust Your Set*, it was wonderful, and I remember the bit where they…' and they remember great chunks of it and sketches out of it.

JPH: Anyway, despite the cast, you won the first Prix Jeunesse.

DS: The very first Prix Jeunesse.

JPH: The very first ever, yes. Somebody's got the scroll somewhere.

DS: But that was the end of…

JPH: Lewis Rudd probably.

DS: Yes, I suppose so.

JPH: It was £1,000 prize money, which we've still got the memo, it's in the archives.

DS: We all had a little piece each. We all had a little piece each out of the thousand. A couple of hundred, yes.

JPH: We went to the party, even the crew, which was nice.

DS: That was the last children's show as such for Rediffusion, and then Thames started, I went across to Thames.

JPH: Change of franchise time in 1968.

DS: And I did *The Sooty Show* which was after the opening ceremony for the new company, Rediffusion.

How did the change of franchise affect the individual?

DS: Enormously.

What form did it take for you?

DS: Enormously, it was horrendous because we all heard that the franchise wasn't going on.

JPH: I remember the year, '67.

DS: It was horrendous and we really, I mean none of us knew what we were going to do and we were all told firmly we were not to apply to anybody, a gentleman's agreement, we were not to apply to any of the companies, we were not to do anything until we were sent for or asked for. And we then were all given forms, which company, if asked, would you like to go to – London Weekend Television or Thames Television. And I said to Hershey [ph], we'll put down for London Weekend Television. Oh no, no, I said, 'We'll put for Thames because it's all the people we know and we'll stay together'. 'Alright' she said, and I filled in her form. Then I came back a day later and said, 'Find the forms where they've gone and tear them up, we'll go to London Weekend Television'. She said, 'Alright, I don't mind'. And I hadn't realised, I thought we'd just go. And then the next thing was, we were sent for for interviews and I was sent for by London Weekend and so was John and he elected that we should go together to see my least favourite person, Frank Muir.

[0:20:32]
JPH: He was Head of Light Entertainment at LWT. I told this story in my history project.

Let me ask why he's your least favourite person.

DS: I find him not amusing whatsoever, I've always found him – I mean I didn't know him personally at all, so I can say, I mean he didn't know me – I found him pompous and unamusing and too slow. I don't like very slow people. And anyway, we went to meet him and I found him in real life pompous and unamusing and he kept asking me what sort of programmes I was going to do and I said, well, you know, I put up a couple of ideas and then he said, 'Well what else, what else can you offer?' And I said, 'Well, when I'm offered a contract or you wish for me to work with you, I will present you with your programme ideas', or something. And then John chipped in, but he obviously was against us. And he said, 'Well, I'll see'. Well, I got very angry when we came out and I rang him up the next day and I said, 'Are you talking to me as if you're offering me a contract, are you wishing me to come to see, shall I come and see you again?' Oh, I went on and shouted at him. And he said, 'No, not really, I'll let you know'. So the next thing was that Jeremy Isaacs sent for me and said, 'Have you accepted anything from him?' I said, 'No'.

He said, 'Oh, we're very glad because we want you to stay with us and be with Thames, will you please accept a job with Thames?'

JPH: That's the first time you've mentioned Jeremy Isaacs' name, I think we ought to explain at this point that Jeremy Isaacs was Executive Producer, Current Affairs and Features, but also at that stage responsible for children's programmes at Rediffusion, but was about to, of course, go into an elevated position at Thames Television.

DS: That's right, so he and Lewis Rudd. So they invited me and said they were glad I wasn't going anywhere, which was very nice, they were very nice to me and asked me to stay, which of course made a mockery. So Hershey [ph] went to London Weekend, she said, 'Very nice Daphs, thank you very much. You filled in my form'. And I said to her, 'I'm not going to LWT, I'm going to Thames'. And it was too late, she'd already accepted to go, so that's how our lives were split. But it worked very well for her as things do in life. But I was then, in the middle of all this, Harry Corbett, God rest his soul, now deceased, ex-OBE, he kept coming in for meetings because there was to be *The Sooty Show*, because Brian Tesler had always adored Sooty and Sweep and at one time in his career, when he was directing the Palladium show, he put Sooty and Sweep on the *Sunday Night at the London Palladium*, because he adored them. And about a year before that there had been a row with the BBC Manchester with Harry because the BBC didn't like Soo, the female doll, panda they had in it and there was a row because he wanted to use her and they wouldn't have it. So Brian Tesler had jumped in and had snapped up Harry and *The Sooty Show* and nabbed it and grabbed it and put it in for Thames. So Harry Corbett was going about trying to see people to say, what's my show, what am I going to do? And Lewis Rudd said, 'Well, we're hoping Daphne Shadwell will be your producer/director, come and meet her', and I met him, and then of course he wouldn't let me know. And I kept saying, 'I'm terribly sorry, I don't know who I'm going to work for. I've no contract with either Thames Television or London Weekend. I think I'm going to London Weekend Television'. And poor Harry became more and more incensed and in a state and he was totally blinkered, Harry, in his whole life and his whole attitude and demeanour and everything, he was locked into Sooty. And he was a very funny man, he used to talk to you and he used to naturally sit like this, and he'd talk like this and he'd go, bye-bye, and he had his fingers which were permanently in this position from the doll. It was ever so funny, wasn't it?

JPH: Yes, yes.

DS: And then when he had the doll on his hand and he was working, he was utterly blinkered, he lived only for that desk, the props, the doll, what was happening, like that. And mayhem used to be going on around him and he never knew. And he wanted to know and he was driving Lewis Rudd mad. So eventually it was all agreed and we set up to go into production for *The Sooty Show*. And because the studios weren't ready, nobody knew what was happening, they booked us into a theatre, the town hall theatre, as it were, civic hall, at Camberley, to do it as an OB, at Camberley. No, it wasn't, it was the Mayfair Theatre. The Mayfair Theatre.

JPH: Yeah, you went to Camberley later on.

DS: Later on. The Mayfair Theatre, in the Mayfair Hotel, very little theatre. And it worked out, we were pre-recorded, but it went out, the first show after the big opening, the new Thames Television and there was a Guildhall thing, whatever, Jim Pople did that, and a parade and God knows what, and then wallop, crash, the first Thames… and it was *The Sooty Show*, the first programme that went out on Thames Television. And it was great fun to do and it started off simply enough with just Harry and the table and Sooty and Sweep, and I had the Alan Braden Band in…

JPH: Who we'd had in *Stars and Garters*.

DS: Yes. But it was called the Alan Braden Sooty Show Band.

JPH: The Braden Sooty Show Band.

DS: And there were just a few of them and they weren't in vision, they were along in the Mayfair, it's a very small stage and there's a balcony for the audience. And they were fitted in along this balcony. But gradually, of course, I couldn't resist it, I asked for light on it and I'd take a shot of them, and then it became more of a shot and more of a shot, and then gradually for the last shot I'd get them down on stage and Harry started making a fuss about it, not because he didn't like it, because he was afeared. He was so overawed

by the band, and he'd never worked with a big band before, he was totally overawed and he was going, oh, oh, and then when we – because he was a fine piano player, Harry, he was trained as a concert pianist – I said well have the piano, you can play. And he made an awful row and we had a row about it, and he suddenly said, 'Don't you see, Daphers love, don't you see, I'm afeared, I'm afeared, it's not that I don't like them and I don't want it, I'm afeared, lass'. And I said, 'Oh, Harry, for goodness' sake'. And it was ever so sweet, he was terrified. Anyway, in the end the band got bigger and bigger, didn't it? It was a huge orchestra. And all of us, we had huge… we had guest artists, we had everything. It turned into a great big Light Ent show. Oh, it was terrible, it just used to be on the shelf with this… [laughter]

JPH: And the worst element of course, the screaming children's audience. That was the worst aspect of it, it was still in children…

DS: It was the tiny tots who adored Sooty.

JPH: It was a great Light Ent show, but with this monster audience going, 'Ergh', carrying on. [laughter] And only interested in Sweep squirting water into Harry's earhole.

What was your audience, was it all kids?

DS: Yes, oh yes, a Sooty audience.

JPH: All under eleven, or whatever. Five to eleven, or whatever.

DS: Yes. But we gradually started getting the kids up on stage and participation, and it was a huge success. But the first time we went on the air, the first night in the Mayfair, we went up, we were dismounted OB, up into a gallery up there and I suppose it was the weight of pressure, but the whole of the air conditioning went. And I've never felt heat like it. I took off most of my clothes, I had a blouse on, I stripped like this and the perspiration… the PA and I… and the men, we were soaked in perspiration. It was something like, I think it was something like 110 up there. And Brian Tesler came to visit, to see us, come round to see how we were all getting on, and I just said, 'I don't care what

it costs', because the Mayfair were renowned for their prices of drinks, and I ordered orange squashes and iced lemonades for everybody, the whole budget went on the first show. But Tesler walked in and said, 'How are you doing Daphne?' and I couldn't speak, we were just looking at him. He thought we were very rude and offhand until he'd been standing in there five minutes and the perspiration suddenly broke out on his head, and it was terrible. But after that, the next series, I did series after series of that, and it was very funny because after we did that series we went immediately into another one, but dismounted into an OB van outside, which was better. Then we couldn't get the Mayfair so we went to this civic theatre at the Camberley, down in Camberley for two series. That was a dismounted OB. And then we went to the Euston Studios for one series, but then I went to Teddington, which was very odd because Thames had then been on the air for about a year and I hadn't worked in the Teddington Studios, so I went down there and got an office, because we'd been working from the site where we were doing *The Sooty Show*, and nobody knew me, I didn't know anybody else. And in the end I took a deep breath and thought I must start to try and know people, and took a deep breath and took myself into the big terrace bar at Teddington, which was lovely. And sat there, and I could see people looking at me and saying, who's that, who's that funny creature sitting there. And I'd try and introduce myself and say, 'How do you do, hello, I'm Daphne Shadwell' and I'd pick on somebody who was nothing to do with anything or just down there for the day, or a freelancer or something. Oh, it was awful. I was so unhappy, wasn't I John?

JPH: Yeah, well, it was the strangulated situation of the forced marriage between ABC and Rediffusion of course, and they were nearly all ABC people at Teddington and didn't want to know about the Rediffusion people who'd caused the upset by losing the franchise. So apart from a few designers and people…

DS: It was terrible, I didn't know anybody, it was awful.

JPH: …who were ex-Rediffusion, she didn't know anybody at all.

DS: But once I got into the studio I was alright, there was another series of *Sexton Blake*, which there was a lot of filming on, I did, and then it went into the studio. And once I'd done quite a few of those, that was quite a big drama, and they looked at me and wanted to

know whether I could do it or not, then touch wood, I came out of that alright and I was alright.

JPH: That was a revival of the *Sexton Blake*s that she'd done earlier for Rediffusion.

What about management in those early days at Thames, your relationships with them? How did they shape up?

DS: I didn't like it very much indeed, I found them very tough and very difficult and very arch, really. They didn't want to know about us Rediffusion people, they did not want to know about us. And they didn't want to know about the way we'd carried on and our…

JPH: We knew Tesler from a long time back.

DS: Yes, for a long time. So it was lucky I knew him, it was lucky I knew him.

JPH: Pre his ABC days, when he was BBC.

[0:30:12]
DS: But there was a terrible, a terrible moment came when the head of my department, Lewis Rudd, who luckily was ex-Rediffusion, I had some filming to do – oh, we did another series of *Captain Fantastic* - and we went away and we did a ten-day shoot done in the seaside and at the country, and we were in this sort of empty house for the story reason, so in the end we used the house for meals and everything and the PA cooked the meals. And it was a very happy time because on *Captain Fantastic* in the Rediffusion days we all used to do everything. I mean Denise and David used to hump the props along and I used to do this, we used to all do everything and it was part of the teamwork and we liked it. And I suddenly got a call from somebody, that I was called to the head of the department somewhere, said we're having a meeting, we believe that you've been doing this and somebody was doing the props and somebody was doing this, and a little wardrobe girl, I remember her now, had gone back and complained that she'd had the unhappiest time of her life and she'd had to help do this and she'd had to help do that, and the whole thing blew up because that was management of ABC and this girl had complained. And I said, I've got nothing to hide, you know, at all, areas of demarcation.

And I said I've got nothing to hide, and my PA came with me, and we walked into a room and there was the whole of the management down one side, there was a whole block of union at a table at another, and down the side, going behind us were a whole lot of other people representing all the departments, and there were two chairs in the middle of the room and the PA and I, they said, 'Would you sit down'. And I sat down and it took me ages, ever so slowly thinking, before I suddenly realised that we were at a trial, that we were sitting in the middle of this room on this chair and people were zinging questions at me round the room. But what happened about when, and what happened after hours? I said, well that was their business, and they all seemed very happy and looked very tired in the morning, so I only can assume that they were all alright. And, you know, I made a few remarks like that and they started laughing. And then my PA was Sheila Hawksworth, bless her, suddenly lost her temper, and she said, 'What is this? Just a minute, excuse me, we've done this series before, have we not had…' – she said all the things I should have said – 'Have we not a successful series, have you something to complain about our work? Where is this little girl, this dreadful tittle-tattling little troublemaking woman, where is she, why isn't she in this room here? Bring her in, let's have her in here and what she's got to say'. And bless her heart, that's really what broke it up. And then they asked me a few more questions, I said, 'I don't know what everybody's on about, we've got the programme out on time, within budget, what is this?' Well, when the head of my department heard about it, he went potty. First of all because he hadn't been asked, because he knew nothing about it, and they'd set up this tribunal, and that was ABC management.

Well, what exactly was it, I mean what validity did it have?

DS: I think because this little girl had complained they wanted to know, because we'd all been doing everybody else's jobs.

Complained to whom?

DS: The head of her department and her shop steward and the head of her department.

So it was a kind of a court, but…

DS: It was a kind of a court.

A union court or…

DS: Well, the union reps were there, but in fact we went away… they had all the people who'd been on, like I mean the props and scenes and everything, and God bless them, each and every one of them, I found out who went in, said we had a marvellous time, we enjoyed working on the show, it doesn't matter what we did or who did what, we got the show out. Because we had had a marvellous time, it had been a good crew and there'd been lots of laughs, lots of fun and a good show and they all adored working with David Jason and Denise anyway. And it was this little troublemaker, but they shouldn't have, never have set up this court on one girl's word.

Was it only an individual or was some faction trying to fit you up?

DS: No, I think it was just this one girl, but it showed the disgrace of that management to have taken it up at that level and force this sort of court.

Do you think it was at all typical, that sort of incident?

DS: Well, I took it for granted that it was. Because they didn't seem surprised about it. I mean my head of department, Lewis Rudd and I and the people are, Rediffusion ex lot, were absolutely appalled by it and astounded, but they all shrugged their shoulders about it, so we assumed that was their way of carrying on.

Well how strong was the union at Teddington?

DS: Very strong. Very strong. In all areas.

Were they of the Fred Kite variety? If you know the reference?

JPH: Well, they were to some degree, they were to some degree, again, stemming from ABC, ABPC, film…

Our Sister Shadwell here has transgressed – is…

JPH: That's right.

Yes?

JPH: Absolutely right, yes, yes.

DS: It got better. It eased off.

JPH: A very strong shop. Most of them had been uprooted from Didsbury. It's understandable, I mean the same thing happened later on with ATV and the Elstree guys. They were uprooted and bunged off to Birmingham and they all hated it, understandably, and all turned bolshie.

They took a revenge.

JPH: Absolutely, absolutely. That was the whole thing. They loathed Rediffusion people.

DS: Yes, they did, they did. But it did ease off, it did get better.

JPH: It took ages, took ages.

DS: It took ages, but it did get better and, as I say, I always tried to go to all union meetings.

Did the two companies finally assimilate ever?

DS: Yes.

JPH: Yes, they did, yes. Thames became an entity.

DS: There were a lot of silly people.

JPH: Except for Euston, Euston has always been out on a limb.

DS: There were a lot of silly people at Euston, Thames, who really overdid it and kept saying, we belong to RUM, the Rediffusion Underground Movement, and it became too strong, it became silly and made other people antagonistic, especially if a lot of people from Teddington went up to work at Euston, they would immediately feel a bit outside or having a go at us, and it caused bad feeling.

How long did that last, do you think?

DS: Oh, quite a long time.

JPH: It still goes on.

DS: It still goes on, because…

JPH: Little dribbles.

It's a generation away now.

DS: Yes, yes. I mean it's been longer Thames than it was Rediffusion. But you see, they were very naughty, the heads of department as such, I remember the Head of Design, the few designers who came across from Rediffusion into ABC designers, they weren't given the best shows or the top shows, they were given a very rough ride indeed, especially lovely Sylva Nadolny who'd been a great, great designer and had done top shows and had awards and everything, but he never ever got a really big show there. And he started – and I mean I nearly died – he was put on *The Sooty Show* with me. I mean that was a terrible comedown.

That was an intentional insult was it?

DS: I think so.

JPH: Yes. There was very little for a designer to do on it in fact, because Harry did all the props and bits and pieces, his own company.

What kind of mobility was there in those days if you weren't happy now at Thames, what chance was there of moving to Granada or wherever else?

JPH: Very little.

DS: Very little, yes. They'd be glad to get rid of you.

JPH: Very very staff, very very staff organisations. You could leave and go to the BBC, but there was very little interchange between the independent companies.

Did people get fired?

DS: Not too much. Occasionally.

What sort of cause?

DS: It had to be quite bad. It had to be drinking caught on duty…

Financial…?

DS: Financial, yes.

Some kind of fiddle.

DS: Fiddling expenses seemed to be the… so if somebody were caught out on financial things, that was the worst thing. But it had to be quite bad to be fired.

JPH: Well, we know two who survived and went on to better things, caught literally with their hand in the till.

DS: But you'd better… don't…

JPH: No, not mentioning any names, no.

Well, we could do, we can always seal the tape.

DS: No, no, because we haven't got total…

What sort of thing did they go on to do, in general terms? This was in the programming area was it?

JPH: Yes, indeed. One of them is still very powerful within Thames Television, in an executive position.

DS: Who's the other one?

JPH: Tom, went to ATV and then TVS.

DS: Oh yes, yes, he's out now isn't he?

JPH: Well, he is now.

DS: Yes, he is now.

JPH: But he survived, became head of a department at ATV.

DS: But it was quite hard to be fired, really.

JPH: Yes. It was almost as difficult to be fired in ITV as it was in the BBC.

Now, what was that due to, do you think? Was it the power of the union or the individuality of the management?

DS: No, power of the union.

JPH: I don't think it was anything to do with the union, really.

DS: Oh, I do. I think they had a great say in it. I do. I think the power of the union was very, very strong.

JPH: Well, in some respects, yes. Not in the two cases I've mentioned because they were managerial and were unrepresented anyway.

DS: No, but I think staff on the whole were very well protected by the union, the crews and the floor crews and everybody.

JPH: From the seventies onwards, yes.

DS: Very well protected.

JPH: It took a long time for ACTT particularly to become established. NATTKE were always fairly strong. And ETU were, the old ETU, of course. In the bolshie days, they were strong beyond belief. But ACTT was pretty wishy-washy for at least the first ten years of their… except in individual places like Granada in the early days, and the BBC.

DS: I voted against both strikes. Well, we both did, didn't we?

Were there any local disputes, not major strikes on the network, but…

DS: Oh yes.

JPH: Oh yes, yes. Right Minds [ph] which I've quoted in my story.

You know, everybody out, sort of thing?

DS: There were quite a lot of local disputes, yes, or not so much everybody out, but getting close to it and not working.

JPH: There was the Bill Smith dispute in engineering, in ’73 or thereabouts. ’63 in Rediffusion, which was quite a big one. There was mine, earlier than that in ’61, joined the Equity strike when they all walked out on me, made headlines, and I was then forced by management to join ACTT. There were quite a few that I can recall, individual, usually over individuals and that was when ACTT were just beginning to make the teeth felt in ITV. Managements were beginning to get scared. Do you want to pause? You look very tired actually.

[end of Side 5 Tape 3]

[Side 6 Tape 3]

We're now on to side six and the date is the fourteenth of May, 1991, and we resume. Daphne, it's occurred to everyone that there was a vast omission in what we did the other day, Ready Steady Go! *Would you like to take that from the top?*

DS: Yes, because it was such an epic, I don't think anybody expected it to take off the way it did. Of course everybody hoped it would be a success and thought it would be popular, because it was sixties Beatles pop scene.

JPH: '63, the autumn of.

DS: It was '63. The first I remember of it, John of course has reminded me, that Muriel Young, who had of course been Rediffusion and done *Five O'Clock Club* and so many shows, and there was a weather girl, marvellous lady, and she had left and gone to, she had gone to Granada.

JPH: No, no, no, no. No, no, no. Sorry, no, no. She was still on the staff and she was still doing *Five O'Clock Club* and you were doing it with her.

DS: Oh yes.

JPH: But Mu was doing a record programme for Radio Luxemburg.

DS: That's right, she was involved in pop, she was always interested in pop, Muriel was, and used to suggest people for *Five O'Clock Club* and interview all the groups that used to be on *Five O'Clock Club*, all the new young groups. And she came to John and I and said I'm doing a radio programme and a record programme and I've got an idea for a pop programme, come and see my radio record programme and see what you think. So John and I went along to…

JPH: EMI.

DS: …EMI, at…

JPH: The Green Room in Manchester Square.

DS: In Manchester Square, their great big building there. And she invited us into the show and it was very nice and all the kids were jumping up and down, screaming and bawling and shouting and it was a good fun programme. So each one of us mentioned it to Elkan Allan who was then the Head of Light Ent. I think probably John P Hamilton has mentioned enough about him in his recording.

Yes, at some length.

DS: Anyway, he was the Head of Light Entertainment with whom I was working at that time in Light Ent, as well – I was both really, I was in Children's and Light Ent, it was quite extraordinary, whoever wanted to use me or needed me I'd be one department or the other. It was much friendlier in those days, you weren't put in boxes and you didn't have to be itemised, it was, you know, can you come and do a quiz show or are you free, or we want you back on *Five O'Clock Club*. And so I went to Elkan and John did separately and he went, mm, didn't appear particularly interested. And then sometime later, I suppose it could be six months later or a year later, we suddenly found in the department in Light Entertainment, a gentleman called Francis Hitchings [Hitching], that's right. I think he was a journalist, as was all Elkan's people, that's when the journalists started coming into television.

JPH: Well, only because Elkan was a journalist.

DS: Elkan was a journalist. And Cyril Bennett was a journalist. So Francis Hitchings [Hitching] had been a journalist and was writing a pop column or something, but he got him in, with a secretary called Vicki Wickham. She had worked in the company as a secretary, but she was put to him to be his secretary and to sort out and start a pop programme. They did quite a few pilots and I cannot for the life of me remember who directed them.

JPH: I think it was Peter Croft.

DS: It was probably Peter Croft or Robert Fleming or somebody like that, who really weren't in the pop scene at all, but that was a start, the very beginnings of the attitude of getting the journalists in and having directors in who didn't really know that subject very well and therefore didn't argue or cut across it and directors, that was when it really started, almost like technical directors, that was the very beginning of that evil world and evil scene that started, and that really was the beginning of it. And they'd get people in, say, oh we need someone to point the cameras, that's how it started. And then Elkan Allan, whenever you went into his office – I get on very well with children, I like children, but I took agin this vile red-headed yobby boy of about, I suppose he was about thirteen or fourteen.

JPH: His son.

DS: And a young girl, his daughter, who had a sulky face and obviously took an instant dislike to me. And Elkan used to call me in and talk about it because he knew I knew about pop because I'd been doing *Five O'Clock Club* so much and we'd had so much pop on there. And I used to halt to give a frozen look at these two vile monsters sitting there kicking their legs and turning their lips out at me, and he'd say, 'Well, I have to talk to them, what do I know about pop, and they're young people so well, I asked them'. So I managed to restrain my little rosebud mouth, I buttoned it up to stop the vitriol pouring out. And that's really how *Ready Steady Go!* started with Francis Hitchings [Hitching]. Then Vicki Wickham became an associate instead of a secretary, and before we knew what had happened, she became Editor-in-Chief, and it just took off, *Ready Steady Go!* with different directors, and I didn't do the very first ones, they started as live, and then it was a case of somebody was ill or they were short, and 'Daphne, come and do *Ready Steady Go!*'. And I rushed in, they'd done about, they must have done a good dozen shows by then, so it had settled into a pattern. And it was terrifying to do, because I was used to, as a director then, having planning meetings and sorting it out and doing camera scripts. And that was, it had all been chucked out the window, it was just, there are the artists and make it up as you go along. And this Vicki Wickham became absolutely, well she…

JPH: Power-struck, she was.

DS: She was power-struck and she became absolutely, well she became a name in the land, so all the record companies of course were queuing up at reception to see her and play their records and get their groups in. So of course and it went to her head tremendously, why wouldn't it to most people, because she was feted, wined and dined. She used to go out every night to all the new pop scene groups and cellars and God knows what, with this Francis Hitchings [Hitching]. But it was funny really, he brought her in and was supposed to be the boss and the producer, and he really got ousted out in the end, she became the top dog and was, as I say, renowned in the pop world for being in charge of this programme, *Ready Steady Go!*, which everyone saw of course as, it was a TV outlet for the pop scene and it was, looking back on it now and being really generous, it was a very good idea.

JPH: Fashion and all sorts of things.

DS: Oh, and it was a splendid idea because it was this wildness about it and this discipline thing. I mean if I had done it, if I'd set it up, it would have been very much disciplined and a camera script and all that sort of thing. But when I took it over you just were given a running order by Vicki Wickham or Francis Hitchings [Hitching] of who was coming in, you were given a pile of records and, well, EPs as they were then, and you listened to it and somebody tried to type out the words and what it was about, but you could never understand what they were saying or singing. And then you got down there in the morning and there was a sort of, sort of band call with these groups, although half of them didn't understand what a band call was, and would say, 'What?' 'What do you want?' 'Where do I sit?' 'You want me to sit?' 'Why 'ave I gotta stand 'ere? I wanna stand over there with my mate.' Oh, it used to be awful. [laughter]

Fresh off the building site were they?

DS: Yes, absolutely. And then you went in, sorted out in the morning and told cameras where you wanted and whether you needed rostrum, whatever ideas you could think up, because it was a very small studio, Studio 9, in Aldwych.

JPH: Studio 9, Television House, Kingsway.

DS: It was very interesting, it had a lovely little iron staircase, it went from the floor up on to the gallery. There was a gallery round, into the gallery you could get up there. A very pretty little staircase and quite big scene dock doors. Well, all of us, all of us directors, it was very funny over the time, we used everything. We had cameras above, we had cameras underneath, we had people walking up the stairs, down the stairs, we got…

JPH: There were no sets anyway.

DS: No sets, no.

Just bare studio?

DS: Just bare studio. And pictures, we used to have big posters of pictures and things. And then so you'd sort that out, where were people going to be, and then you got a run-through in the afternoon, as such. Half the people probably hadn't turned up or they'd changed, you know, they were going to get a different guitarist in or whatever. It was alright with the big pop stars, because I was into pop then, I loved it, and so I knew quite a lot about it. But there'd be an awful lot of new groups, you didn't know who they were or the names or anything. But the crews loved it, because you did a sort of run-through roughly of what you wanted and the PA timed it, but come the show, they'd open the doors and let the mob in, and the noise and the pressure, it was terrifying.

JPH: The smell.

DS: And the smell. And sometimes the cameramen used to take their panning handles off and bash back some of the crowds because they couldn't get through. And as a director it was an absolute scream because you'd be screaming at them, track in to Stevie Marriott or something, or get the drums, or solo coming up. Because you had at least heard the disc so you knew slightly more, not very much, but slightly more than the cameraman. But really you gave them their heads and you needed a good vision mixer, we had a good vision mixer, a good cameraman, because they couldn't hear me anyway, because the level of sound. And the screaming and the noise. And I used to say, 'Don't they smell?' I was ever so naïve, I used to say, 'Don't they smell? What a funny smell in this studio'. I hadn't realised they were all smoking the pot. I hadn't the faintest idea.

Well, how old were the kids?

DS: Oh, they were sixteens. Fourteen, fifteen, sixteen.

Turning on at that age?

DS: And there were older ones.

JPH: Ah no, it was the groups, mainly.

Ah, I see. I thought you meant…

DS: But they…

Sorry – were you live on air?

DS: Yes, this was live, absolutely live and…

JPH: They were of course miming at this stage.

DS: They were miming. This was pure mime. Yes, that's why you could do nice things with them, you could have them…

JPH: There weren't any sound problems particularly.

DS: No. I had a small group and I remember I put them on a big moving rostra with ropes and it was quite hard to pull, so we got the kids to pull it and the floor manager would scream, Now! And all the kids get hold of the ropes and pull it slowly forward to camera or something. So because they were miming we were able to do all sorts of things and able to get them to walk up and down the stairs or come in through the dock doors.

How close were you? Were they able to mime that well?

DS: Most of them did, most of them were quite good actually, I thought. They were surprisingly good. Well, they were doing it so much then, you see, that was the pop scene.

[0:10:00]
It was sort of fixed in their minds, yes.

DS: Yes, yes. And if they weren't very good we'd remember or maybe the manager would come up and say, could you be careful on the middle bit, or something.

JPH: *Six Five Special* and *Oh Boy* and they were getting a lot of practice.

DS: And *Five O'Clock Club*.

Even on concerts they were, not just television, but concerts they also would mime would they, or…?

DS: Well, it was part mime, part live. Yes, it was part live. A lot of the backings were augmented, that's right. But they used to be very good and well behaved. The Americans were marvellously well behaved. The difference between some of our pop groups and artists as against the Americans, they were wonderful. I remember Cher – well, it was Sonny and Cher then – coming and she was so beautiful and I said to the floor manager, 'Could you ask Cher what dress is she wearing'. She'd brought some, 'Could she just hold it up for lighting to have a look at'. And we got busy with something else and I went down on the floor and I nearly fainted, she was still standing there, quite patiently, in front of the mic holding this dress up in front of her. We'd all forgotten to the poor soul to say, that's alright. So I came rushing up and said, 'Sorry to have kept you'. I made up some good story. But it was ever so exciting. It was very hard, it was very frustrating because of the rows and arguments that went on. Elkan Allan didn't really like me doing it because I would argue, or because I was doing *Five O'Clock Club* and say I don't think this group is very good at all and I don't know why you're featuring it, or something. And also I knew a lot of them, which Vicki Wickham didn't like, because I knew a lot of them quite well, and had watched them grow up from the *Five O'Clock* days to becoming stars or something. And they had a small group for dancing, to get the kids dancing they got about four professional dancers in, and I spoke to the lead of them, the choreographer, and

I started featuring them more doing a little – because I adore dancers and dancing, adore it – and I was inclined to get them to do some steps or cut away to them and I remember Vicki Wickham coming into the gallery one day and saying, 'Do you mind Daphne, it's the groups and artists we want to see, not the bloody dancers'. [laughter] So I said, 'Well, it's a pity you've got them there, what are you paying them for if you're not going to see them at all'. 'Well, you can see them, there's a difference between seeing them and featuring them.' So there was quite a row about that.

JPH: And the aspect of the presenters, Keith particularly, Keith Fordyce.

DS: Keith was, again it was a good idea, I mean we grumbled about Elkan Allan, but the whole thing really was a very good idea when you look back on it, because Keith Fordyce had been around a long time doing grown-up shows, documentaries and been a DJ, he was the sort of centre man and the rock that it hung on and Cathy McGowan was found and discovered. I don't know where she came from, now I come to think of it, she was just suddenly there. I think the Vicki Wickhams and the Francis Hitchings had found her.

JPH: I think it happened through Frankie, her sister, again, didn't it, because Frankie's always been a journalist and she would…

DS: It was probably through the journalist.

JPH: …Elkan knew her, I think, and she said I've got a kid sister…

DS: Who's mad on pop, yes. But it was Cathy McGowan who took off as a, you know, she was made Personality of the Year, because she really was so daft, bless her, and she had a fear of being seen, that's why she had this great heavy hair and this heavy fringe and if anybody – make-up used to come round and brush her hair – 'Don't touch my fringe, don't touch my fringe'. And she was a very nice girl, I got on with her ever so well. Very nice girl, but she really was a bit daft and breathy. And I remember, I had a long gap away from *Ready Steady Go!*, I'd had a gap away and then it went live, it went to Wembley because the Musicians' Union got in on the act and it was stop this miming and musicians have got to come in. So it was found we couldn't do live music with so many groups in Studio 9, well maybe because the sound channels couldn't take it, the sound balance

couldn't, so we went out to Wembley, Studio 1, the biggest studio at Wembley. And sound had quite a job to cope with it, but they coped with it very well indeed, and I went back to it, I went out there to do *Ready Steady Go! Goes Live* with them. And I hadn't done it for quite a long time and I remember the first one I did, and Cathy came on and said, 'Well everybody, that was lovely wasn't it, that number. Well, we've got a new group now and we're going to see The Hollies in a minute, hope you enjoy it'. There was a pause and she said, 'Don't you think I've improved, Daphne?' Well, there was this terrible silence and she thought probably that I was chatting away in the gallery, I just couldn't speak, because bless her heart, she was just the same as she'd ever been. But…

JPH: [inaudible – 14:12]

DS: Yes, but it doesn't matter, she was very popular and a very, very nice girl and she didn't ever get spoilt by the adulation, all this mixing with these pop groups. She was very good indeed. But I enjoyed it enormously, specially when it went live, and I worked with all the groups and got to know them all. And again, I was alternating with *Five O'Clock Club* and Vicki Wickham and I had to come to an arrangement because we were using the same pop groups. So in the end we had to make up a big chart and put in where we were using who, and we were trying to double-book each other, so in the end we found out who was free and who was using what. My favourites at that time were The Hollies, I adored The Hollies. And the Troggs, that was a group called The Troggs. They did ever so well and then they just disappeared. They were a West Country group, smashing boys. And I used them both so much we just called them The Trollies in the end. 'I've booked The Trollies', which meant whichever group was free, The Hollies or The Troggs, I would have. But it was quite an epic and there was a lot of politics involved with *Ready Steady Go!* really because it had taken off and it became a much bigger show than anybody expected. It was…

JPH: Magazines and all sorts of things, spin-offs from it.

DS: The spin-offs of it, yes. But it was the kids, the kids were very young. And there'd be quite a mixture of sort of eighteen to twenty-five year olds. And of course they were whipped up into hysterics on the floor when The Beatles and people came on. I worked with The Beatles and The Stones. I always remember with the…

JPH: Cilla's first appearance.

DS: Cilla's first appearance, yes. The Stones were very funny because I remember putting the key down and saying, 'Gentlemen, would you mind…' having been brought up in a musical, my father being a musical director, I just knew, he always called orchestras gentlemen, and I put the key down and said, 'Thank you gentlemen, could I ask you to do the second half once more'. There was a stunned silence, the floor manager said, 'Gentlemen? Gentlemen? Are we in the right studio Daphne, do you really think you're in Studio 2 with an orchestra'. And even they looked stunned. [laughter] And, oh funny, and another story I remember, talking about the pot and the drugs, it was The Faces, because it was Stevie Marriott, lately dead, God rest his soul, and we were rehearsing them and somebody was standing there and I said, 'What's happened to Stevie?' 'Oh Daphne, he's not at all well, we've taken him up to Wembley Hospital.' 'Oh' I said, 'How dreadful, the poor man, the poor chap, whatever's the matter with him?' 'Oh, well he's just, he's not at all well.' I said, 'Will he be here for the show, what will we do?' 'Oh yes, he'll be back, he'll be back, but he's not well.' Well, of course, I found out what it was, he was absolutely totally incapable and they'd had to take him up to Wembley Hospital and get him fixed up. [laughter] Oh it was dreadful, and I was blissfully unaware. But I thought it was so sweet that everybody kept it from me. Nobody ever said, 'Oh come on Daphs'. [laughter] 'They're all on pot', or whatever it is.

These were the Swinging Sixties, were they not, or the end of them, the high water mark, I suppose.

JPH: Well, the middle of.

DS: It was the middle of.

Middle of.

JPH: Interestingly enough, the programme only ran for two years, intermittently with summer breaks, so about 168 of them altogether. And Daphs went back to do the very last one in December, the day before her birthday, twenty-first of December 1965.

DS: *Ready Steady Gone!* it was called, the very last one and we had everybody; The Who and everybody we could, and a huge party.

Why did they take it off?

DS: I'm not at all sure. I think because it…

JPH: Well, the live thing didn't help. The MU were getting very naughty.

DS: I think people had got bored with it really, because it was live you couldn't do the movement that we used to do or jazz it up, much as we tried, and I think people just got bored with having the groups on every week, standing there doing their number. Really, if we'd thought about it, if Elkan Allan had thought about it and sat down with his directors and people and said, now what can we do to ginger it up, move it. But of course he wouldn't, he was locked into his family, his two kids, Vicki Wickham, Francis Hitchings [Hitching], and they wouldn't know what to do to be able to technically jive it up or change it. But I think going live killed it. I think it would still be running to this day if they'd left it miming.

Well, when you say going live – ah, live music.

DS: Yes.

And taking it out of the studio.

DS: Yes.

A couple of questions. You were talking about the groups. How about the managers? If you had The Beatles and Cilla there, then you must have had Epstein – or is he still alive?

DS: No, he didn't come down very much, because I think in a funny way, everyone was so knocked out with this programme and so glad to get everybody on it, and I think they just trusted it and they got to know, I think all the dealings were with Vicki Wickham. I

think she was taken out to lunch or feted and wined and dined. We as the directors never really had any dealings with it. My favourite, favourite one, which John P Hamilton, as a lover of music will never forget, when Eric Clapton was on and one of the cameramen, oh he was wonderful, he's a director now, Bill Metcalf, and he went – and the cameramen used to love doing it and they used to go to the cupboard and get special lenses out and things, and I used to say, 'That looks nice, aren't you clever', not realising they'd gone and got a secret lens from somewhere, you know, these great wide angles. And Bill loved working with Eric Clapton, but there was something wrong – it was one of the live ones – and something wrong and the gallery door burst open and a man I'd never seen in my life before came rushing in and said, 'I can't have this'. I said, 'Excuse me, who are you?' He said, 'There's Eric Clapton down there, the greatest guitarist in the world ever, and we can't hear his sound properly and we're not seeing his hands on his…' And I went, 'Oh really?' and I said to John, 'Do you know I've been working with the greatest guitarist in the whole world, ever?' And John never quite got over that. We knew he was good, but we didn't know he was that good, Eric Clapton. The other time was, oh, a funny incident with Françoise Hardy, the young French pop singer. She used to moan, she was a bit like Marianne Faithfull really. And she came in, it was during the live days and we were in the big studio and I'd had some rostra built, like scaffolding structure, and a ramp to walk up, and it wasn't a bad song, but it was a gentle, moody song. So we had a big spotlight brought in and I was going to have her walk up this ramp very slowly and then sit or lean against one of the edges of the rostra. And we had to wait for her, she arrived late and she came in. I think she was nervous because she was very uptight and everything and I said, 'Oh Miss Hardy, very nice to see you, I'm the director, like the song', usual chit-chat. 'Come and meet the cameraman. And now I wonder, I thought it would be rather nice if we got a big spotlight for you, if you walked up here and then turned and leant or sat against the edge'. 'I will not sit, stand, lean or do anything, or walk, in this suit.' I said, 'Well in that case, Miss Hardy, you can stand there on the floor and stand absolutely still and do what you like. Thank you very much'. And I turned on my heel and walked away and said whatever camerawork we're going to do, we'll leave her on one camera, she can get on with it. And [laughter] the next thing I knew, the manager came rushing up, very nice man, with her agent, 'Oh Miss Shadwell, we're very grateful to you for your kindness to Miss Hardy and for being so kind to her'. And I said, 'It's perfectly alright'. And I had a huge letter from them afterwards, thank you for presenting her so well. We hadn't done

anything. I didn't argue, and just left her alone. But we had a lot of that and some of them were a bit umpty and a bit pleased with themselves. And others were…

[0:21:23]
JPH: [inaudible] Miss Springfield, of course.

DS: No, I got on very well with Dusty, I…

JPH: Close friend of Miss Wickham's.

DS: I was ever so lucky. From the minute Dusty and I met we never looked back and we got on like a house on fire. And she did quite a lot of *Five O'Clock Club*s for me. And she adored Ollie and Fred who were the front people, the puppets of *Five O'Clock Club*, as did Cilla, she came on to *Five O'Clock Club* a couple of times, because they loved Ollie and Fred and the programme, and Muriel Young of course, who fronted it, and she knew all the pop scene. So we were quite a rival programme to *Ready Steady Go!*, it was quite interesting really.

They were very cheap from the company's point of view.

DS: Very cheap.

Did you pay scale to the musicians?

DS: Not at first.

JPH: Five guineas, they got.

That was in a scale?

JPH: No, it was the whole group. Get The Animals, anybody. The Troggs.

DS: But it changed. It changed quite quickly.

I can see why the union would get a little unstrung about that.

DS: But it changed, because when I was doing *Five O'Clock Club* later, it changed enormously and I used to say – there was one big group – oh, it was Georgie Fame and the Blue Flames. And they rang and said, 'He's free, do you want him?' And I said, 'Yes, I would, but I really can't, I really can't afford them because the group's so big'. And he said, 'Oh well, Daphne, it's quite alright, we'll do a deal, we'll do a deal. You need only pay for so-and-so', but we were trapped by them, by MU and Contracts and there was no getting round it. In the end, as that one worked out, Georgie said I don't need the group, Daphne. So they came but we sent them home, to their delight. But we got very badly hammered and from then on – that was probably why *Ready Steady Go!* went down, thinking about it, because it became so expensive.

JPH: And *Five O'Clock Club*, all the kids' shows that used pop artists on them just went out of the window.

Directly traceable to the union.

JPH: Absolutely. Yes, their own worst enemies.

DS: It's like the dancers were. We used to, in my younger days, any show I had I used to try and book dancers because I was so mad about dancing and dancers, and in the end it just became impossible, I couldn't afford dancers. They priced themselves out as well.

That's true, yes. Equity and the MU both did have extraordinary practices.

DS: Killed it off.

JPH: They're doing it again now, aren't they, as we speak.

Well, I don't think they ever stopped. But you mentioned politics before, would you care to expand on that, the way in which politics manifested themselves?

DS: Well, I think it was the start of the era when they started getting successful shows. I mean like the Controllers of Programmes and the companies, and then I think the pressure started coming on, because in the early days we used to have enormous freedom. We were given a show to do and used to get on with it, and really you never heard from anybody, whether good, bad or indifferent. If it went on you knew it was alright. Or Head of Department would say, needs gingering up or it doesn't need gingering up, or we want to change it, or isn't it a bit old for the group, or isn't it too young for the evening audiences. But I think that was the start of a successful show, where pressure was put on. Then I think it became politics, because it was after that that we felt the politics on the long story John P has already said about *Ready Steady Go!* It started getting the interference from above because of politics, on *Stars and Garters*. That's when, the politics had started a little earlier, of pressure from the Controller on to the Head of the Department, who then put the pressure underneath, or was frightened or nervous of their job, as Elkan Allan always was. So he would, yes, yes – and I know he said to me once, I think I said it before – 'When John McMillan says he wants some spangles on the artists, cover the studio in spangles and the cameras and everything'. He said, 'You don't argue, just do it'.

John had a somewhat acid view of Allan, does your view of him change from that?

DS: No. I, again, I got on with him better than John P did, but John P had a much worse time than I did because of the pressure of *Stars and Garters*, although we co-directed it, I was unaware a lot of the time, and I'm always grateful to John, I didn't know really of the horrors that were going on. I knew we had difficult times, but I didn't know half of the rows and set-tos. And it was very good of John not to tell me, because I get very umpty and would have probably come off the show or opened his door and started shouting at him or something. But he could be very nasty to me, but I did get on with him better than John did. And I could make him laugh, sometimes. And he could make me laugh, I mean he was a funny little man. And he could make me laugh sometimes, so laughter always breaks up bad times, doesn't it?

One of your hallmarks, it seems to me, has always been a total forthrightness about things. Was that a handicap?

DS: Oh yes. Oh yes. Oh, definitely.

You spoke your mind in any circumstances.

DS: Yes, I was… and people used to say that. 'Oh well, of course Daphne, you did say' and I'd go, 'Oh, yes. Mm, yes I did'. [laughter] But it would come back on me sometimes. 'But you said so-and-so.'

With him? With Elkan Allan?

DS: Oh yes. I think I was more forthright with him than anybody.

So what, he was a very insecure little man who really couldn't take criticism or even suggestion?

DS: No, he couldn't. And he was very nervous all the time. And like so many people, I suppose John, you see he was jealous of John very much in a way because John knew much more than he did, and I'd been around a long time.

JPH: He knew nothing about the technicalities of television and wasn't interested in them, that was the sad thing.

But did he presume to speak about them?

JPH: Oh yes, God yes.

DS: He sent me a letter once. It must have been when I was doing *Stars and Garters* with John, or a show, or *Ready Steady Go!* It was a Light Ent show, a musical show, and in the middle of a song or at the end of a song, and I mean wipes in between things in those days were new, so we were all mad on them and the vision mixers were playing with the new desks and the new wipes and things and I know that whoever it was the artist, it was a woman, we did a diamond wipe into the next thing, whatever it was, dance or song. And he was away on holiday, and this postcard came. I said, 'I've had a postcard from Elkan Allan. He's mad about me, you know, he can't leave me alone'. But I didn't understand

it, it said, ‘My holiday’s great, but try and remember that diamonds are not a girl’s best friend’. Well, we couldn’t work this… I took it to everybody, I said, ‘Has the man gone mad? Why has he sent me a postcard from holiday?’ When we got back he said, ‘I didn’t like that diamond wipe thing that you did’. I said, ‘When, where?’ and he reminded me. I said, ‘Good God’. So I said, ‘Well, that’s my prerogative’. He said, ‘Well I don’t like it, I don’t want those any more’. [sound of front door buzzer] And the next… oh, another time, another day, was it the wipes? Oh, another time he said to me, I was doing a programme with Cleo Laine and I’d taken a shot of a couple of her record covers, her new LP covers, and he came to me and said, I suppose quite rightly, there was a, I think there was a copyright thing on LP covers, you know, the photographic or the flash fee, whatever it was. And he said to me very nastily, ‘I want those shots of that cover taken out’. And I said, ‘It’s right in the middle of a song, you can’t do it’. And I got very nasty with him because he was vile to me and I turned round, I said, ‘If you touch that programme’ I said, ‘I’m walking out and I’ll take this matter to the union’. Frightened the life out of him. He went as white as a thing, but of course he never, I always forget, you see, people in those positions, they never forgive you. He never forgave me, because I put my foot down. I was absolutely adamant, I meant it, you know, I was absolutely firm, banged the table and said, ‘I will not have my programme touched’. Because I think he’d threatened that he would edit it or something, he’d edit it out. I said, ‘If you touch my programme, I’ll walk out with everybody else’. That was it, because he’d threatened to put somebody in to edit it.

Was he typical of that, what shall we call it, that second wave of executive that came in? They weren’t the people who opened up the station…

DS: No.

…they joined the bus later.

DS: Yes, yes.

Was he typical of that? Not really…

DS: I think he was one of the first. He was a forerunner, a starter of that attitude. And of course it spread from then on to whoever was appointed after that, took up that same attitude. But of course it was funny. I've just thought – jumping right ahead to more recent times when I was working in children's at Thames and we had yet another new Controller of Children's and Schools, they never stopped changing and it was really, it got very funny with the staff. We used to say, 'Well, we see them come, we see them go, but we're still all here'. And each Head of Department would come in with, you know, different ideas. We'd just get settled with one head and get it all going and think, well that's the type of programming we're doing, and then in would come another one.

Right, new broom and sling out everything that their predecessor…

[29:56]
DS: New broom. That's right, and changes, and then you'd either be in favour or out of favour with one or the other, you know, who's the flavour of the month, type thing, started. But it used to amuse me, especially at Thames in Children's, because there was the area which was Children's area and the Head of Department's office, everyone who came in changed their office. It was so funny, there was always, every six months or a year or eighteen months there would be crash, bang, because somebody would want a huge opulent office with sofas in that they could sit down in the American friendly manner round a table with their desks behind, and then somebody else would have, I only want a small office because I shall be out there amongst the workers, working with them and to them. So we used to have this change of office. But it was a change of attitude, because as I said to you, in the very early days it used to be the Head of the Department and your PA and the Stage Manager, or whatever it was, you'd have your brief and get on with it. But again, one of the Heads of Departments, Julian Mounter, who I got on very well, is now Head of New Zealand Television. He was a journalist, he'd been a documentary man, journalist, and he came in, Head of Children's and Drama, and he had a most peculiar way of going on because he called me in and said, 'Daphne, I'm going to do a new programme on genealogy, have you heard about it?' I said, 'No'. He said, 'Yes, and you're going to produce and direct it'. I said, 'Oh, am I? Thank you very much. What's it all about?' And he said, 'I'm having a meeting, four o'clock this afternoon'. 'Right' I said, 'Good, I look forward to it enormously Julian, can my PA come?' 'Of course, I expect her there.' And I walked in and to my astonishment he had a researcher, that he'd

had long talks with, with the researcher about what it was to be, and sitting there were the two presenters who happened to be Anneka Rice and Mike Smith. And it was ever so lucky for him that I got on with them and they liked me. But I thought, what an extraordinary attitude, he's got his researcher and he's got the two presenters and then he gets his producer and director. Oh, and the executive producer too that he had there.

JPH: Much later.

DS: Oh, it is, but it's just to show the changes, how it started, the change of attitude and of course he was a journalist and he had a journalist's mind.

So the director had become just a functionary.

DS: Yes. Yes.

Briefest of questions about the office that you mentioned…

DS: The Head of Department's office.

Rearranging their offices. Was there a rigorous arrangement about offices according to the level at which a person was? Did that decide the size of his office and the way in which it was furnished and whether it was at the corner?

DS: It didn't at first. You used to at one time just have your office, you'd get an office and that was it, no matter what programme you were doing. Like when I was doing Light Ent and Children's, I was just in the same office. But then it started becoming more departmentalised, or whatever it's called, so that there were always different areas and you moved into this area. And it became much more, in every building that we went into, LWT and certainly Thames, that you had these sort of bullpens, you know, all open plan, all corridors with little offices off. But then it became in the Children's Department at Thames in the last few years, that you really, you started moving to the office, whatever was the flagship programme at the time, a big programme or how many staff, you moved into the best big office in the corner with the TV set and the VCR, and then you were shoved out, the minute that was finished you went back to a cupboard somewhere.

Well that is sort of what I meant, because in the States, if one worked for CBS, then depending, a Vice President, for example, would have a corner office. But the size was…

DS: Paramount.

…prescribed, yeah.

DS: Yes. Well, I think it's a bit like that now, it certainly is in Thames, especially in the drama department, the senior producers have these big offices and the directors have cupboards. But as they're drama, they're not bad cupboards, they've got windows. It depends what department you're in really. [laughter]

So status and position is reflected in the furnishings and the size.

DS: Oh yes.

JPH: Some of it was affected when leasing came in, leasing of furniture. I mean at one time you had your own desk, like at school, you could carve your initials on it if you wanted to, and then leasing happened and of course everybody had the same kind of desk.

DS: Yes, that's right.

JPH: If you were a lowly one you got a box in the corner somewhere. It was hired in.

DS: Yes, all the distinctive things went. I insisted on having, I liked table lamps, and I always insisted wherever I went that I must have a table lamp in the office. My PA and I used to have excessive sprays of perfume and people used to laugh at this office that had table lamps in it and the smell of perfume and gales of laughter coming out of it. [laughter] A lot of fun we had, enormous fun.

JPH: Back to, you've wrapped up *Ready Steady Go!*?

DS: Really.

JPH: Yes, going back in time. And we'd got as far as, in the first session, the early seventies. Not quite sure when, but I don't think that we've talked about the *Ted Heath Show*, which I think you ought to, in 1973, because apart from anything else, it revived the Heath Band, which Don Lusher is still running.

DS: Well, I think really…

JPH: Because of the programme you did.

DS: Well, I think really, after *Ready Steady Go!* I went back into Children's and did, oh well, it was…

JPH: This was at Thames.

DS: Well, at the end of Rediffusion, after Thames, I went back into Children's, did children's drama, like *Sexton Blake*. And started at the end of Rediffusion, *Do Not Adjust Your Set*, which was the Monty Python lot, and I think that I talked about that before.

JPH: You did.

DS: So that was Monty Python, which went across into Thames for a second series and I didn't direct it all, the second series in Thames, but I did the filming and the Captain Fantastic with David Jason and Denise Coffey. And that led us into Thames and I did *the Sooty Show* and I stayed in Children's, I did some more *Sexton Blake*, which was again a crossover from Rediffusion, did drama. I did another drama series, a play, some plays by Peter Ling. And then I did more light entertainment, children's light entertainment. And a music show with Alan Braden, called *Altogether Now*, that was great fun, with guest musicians and orchestras. That was a lovely programme to do.

JPH: I wrote the script for.

DS: John wrote the script. That was Alan Braden orchestra, with Don Lusher in it and lots of famous musicians, and that was a wonderful series to do. Then we did a sketch

show, again, that was a good Head of Department, Sue Turner, she let us have a good go at things, she was very open-minded. Jeremy Isaacs was overall head of, well, everything. He was executive producer of Documentaries, Children's, Schools and everything. But they were very free going and Denise Coffey and I went to Sue Turner, the Head of the Department and said, 'Would you like a sketchy type of show?' 'Yes' she said, 'have a go at it'. And we, Denise acted as editor and went to all the famous writers on the newspapers, which was a good idea, for sketches and one-liners and let's get a whole lot of one-liners and sketches about doctors and nurses, let's do it about mothers-in-law, let's do one about foreign parts. And we had all these contributors, like Miles Kingston [Kington]…

JPH: Phil Redmond even.

DS: Phil Redmond. Oh, everybody you can think of, the most amazing cast list of writers, of quickies and funnies. And we got a cast together: Gerry Marsden was in it.

JPH: Roy Hudd.

DS: Roy Hudd. And we had a grand time doing that, it was a very funny show. And unfortunately at the last minute the time was changed, because *Do Not Adjust Your Set* with the Python lot had a marvellous slot from quarter past five to quarter to six, before the quarter to six news when all the students came in, and that's how it got its fame and they became so famous, but this was to have the same slot and it was at that time that the network suddenly decided to change children's programmes to quarter to four to half past and then from five to five thirty they repeated a lot of light entertainment sitcoms and we lost the children's slot. There was a terrible row on the networking, terrible row, and the Head of the Department, Sue Turner, she was absolutely stricken. And our show went out at quarter to four to quarter past, which is absolutely lunatic, because it was the little ones who now watch *Rainbow* at that time, and we had no viewing audience at all, failed miserably, and everybody was ringing up saying, what is this show about, what's it doing on at this time, because it was so adult and it was meant for the students and the people, as we did on *Ready Steady Go!*, have a cult following and a cult viewing.

So they were paying lip service to the IBA requirements and that was that.

DS: Yes. But it was a terrible shame.

What did you pay for one-line gags that came in?

DS: Oh, I remember then. It was, because it was Children's, there was, luckily for us, there was a difference in script fees between Children's and Evening Drama or Light Ent, and I think for one-liners at that time, and that must be around the seventies, wasn't it John? I think it was three lines, or whatever it was, I think it was about fifteen pounds, ten or fifteen pounds. And a sketch, I think, you know, a one-page sketch I think was about twenty-five, thirty pounds.

People like Phil Redmond were then on their way up were they? Unknown, but promising.

DS: Yes. But a lot of them were known. I wish I'd remembered, I could have got it out, one of the scripts. They were all top writers. Anybody you would like to mention out of the newspapers. Miles Kingston's [Kington] stuff was wonderful, his little sketchy bits. And we even had… we always had drawings from that lovely man who draws Bristow in *The Evening Standard*.

How did those rates compare then to an evening programme, a comparable evening programme?

DS: They were about half, half to a third, I would think. About a third, I think. But they went up, they were going up all the time. And the more I used… and of course I used so many, it was quite expensive. It was quite a lot of money, it came out in the end. And of course paying the artists, I had six artists in it and they contributed and all sorts of people gave us one-liners or sketches. I can't remember what…

JPH: You had quite a few actors in it as well, didn't you?

DS: Yes, we did.

JPH: They were relatively cheap.

[0:39:53]
DS: Yes, so it was an expensive show. But it was so sad that it was a failure. And I've got a couple of tapes here, somebody raised somewhere, and you can see a lot of it's a bit slow now and heavy, we'd cut half the sketches in half, but I mean it was…

JPH: It was ahead of its time.

DS: It was ahead of its time.

JPH: Certainly the children's programme was.

DS: And we had quickies in between, you know, 'What do you think of that?' 'It's rubbish' and, oh I don't know, just silly things. Denise Coffey was brilliant, she thought up ever such a lot of it, she was absolutely brilliant.

How long did it last?

DS: We did two series of… oh, we did one series of seven. We were going to do another six, it was planned to do another six, but it just failed. And I took it and we started dubbing, because I did it without any audience because it was a quickie show, so we dubbed some laughter on it, but I thought it sounded horrible, but the Head of the Department said why didn't you do that before, it's better. But I thought it sounded dreadful because it wasn't played for an audience at all, laughs or pauses.

So had it been scheduled differently you think it would have taken off?

DS: Oh, I think so, without any doubt at all. Because, you see, I've always done programmes for myself, always. People say, 'What are you aiming at?' and I always looked surprised and I say, 'Well, I do all my programmes for me'. I mean unless somebody says, this is for pre-school, *Rainbow* age, and you've got to be careful of this and remember they can't read, I've always done everything for me. And I think that's why I enjoyed *Hold the Front Page* so much, because we all enjoyed it and there was nothing rude, dirty, risky, filthy, sordid in it. We all did it with enormous fun and

enjoyment and love. We all loved each other, which is a very important part of programmes.

[end of Side 6 Tape 3]

[Side 7 Tape 4]

DS: Oh, I don't want to think about that.

Right, we're on Tape 4, Side 7 of Daphne Shadwell. Shall I stop rolling… and stable. Right…

JPH: *Hold the Front Page*.

DS: That was *Hold the Front Page*, yes. And a very good Head of Department at that time, very good, under Jeremy.

JPH: *Altogether Now*, [inaudible – 00:24].

Well, rather than just say he was a good Head of Department, a little bit more about Jeremy, who's gone on to fame and fortune even greater.

DS: Well, he had, I think he was always a…

Jeremy Isaacs, to say, of course.

DS: *The* Jeremy Isaacs. I liked him very much, we got on well and I think he gave his Heads of Departments a very good free hand, because – was Sue before Lewis or after Lewis?

JPH: No, Jeremy was Executive Producer, Group 3 as they called it at Rediffusion, and then moved across to Thames.

DS: With Lewis Rudd, who was a Head.

JPH: Lewis Rudd.

DS: Yes. Lewis Rudd was the Head of Children's when we moved across with *Sexton Blake* and *Sooty* and *Hold the Front Page*. He was an excellent Head of Department,

Lewis Rudd, very fair man, very interested in all the programmes, very keen on drama, was very interested in drama and had a good eye for casting. He had a terrible temper, he must have been dreadfully spoilt as a child, because all that he didn't do in one of his screaming fit tempers was lie on the floor and kick, that always surprised us. And we used to run, I used to run away. If he started having a tantrum I'd just run away, it was too awful to behold.

How often did this happen?

DS: Not very often, but you had to be careful, you could send him off.

And what would precipitate it?

DS: Well, something as simple as, I was in there having a meeting with him and Sue Turner was producer of *Magpie*, the new magazine series which had three presenters – he was always cross at that at first, he only wanted to have two presenters, I suppose he was thinking of money – but she was copying, going along the lines of *Blue Peter*, who of course was very successful, *Blue Peter*, and had three presenters, and she was given the task of setting up a children's magazine programme - it must have been very hard to do - and she wanted three presenters. And I remember the embarrassment of I was sitting with Lewis one day, they'd obviously had a terrible row, and she came in about something. He said, 'Oh, by the way Daphne, what do you think a children's magazine programme of setting up two or three presenters?' And I said, 'I would have thought two would be enough', and I was just going to carry on to say, and maybe you could have guests in to do different items. I was just going to say that, but he cut right across me, said, 'There you are, there you are, two, two's quite enough, that's what I said'. Oh, I thought oh my God, if somebody had done that to me I'd have died or slapped them across the face or something. Anyway, I think I put it right with her afterwards, but it didn't matter, she got her three presenters. But whenever the programme went out it was across, *Blue Peter* and *Magpie* were nearly opposite each other, it was a bit of daft programming. But I remember her coming in to Lewis's office, because somebody had to monitor it, they had to monitor her programme and somebody else had to monitor *Blue Peter* at the same time, and I remember I was having a meeting with him and she came into his office and said, 'Lewis, I'm ever so sorry to bother you, but the monitor's gone in such-and-such a room,

we're covering so-and-so and there's a news item. Do you think, is it possible to ask if we could come into your office and watch it here?' And he went, 'Well, I don't know, there seem to be enough people around', and he took it quite calmly, he was saying, 'I don't really think so, no' he said, 'I'm quite busy'. And then he went, he was just like a sort of flustered hen, then he started going, 'Quack, quack, quack, quack, quack'. Well, he suddenly blew up and said, 'I've never heard anything like it'. And she ran out and I got up, and I got up and I just ran out, I gathered up my papers and ran out. And he screamed, 'Quack, quack, quack, quack, quack, quack, quack, quack, quack!' And he'd got it into his head [laughter] that he'd been mortally insulted by being asked to leave his office while somebody watched… That sort of thing could send him off, or something about a programme. But when he wasn't having a tantrum he was marvellous and he was excellent to talk to. You could say, you know, could I have a word with you about something, and he'd keep it private and sort it out. Because I had a problem with a producer on *Sexton Blake* and I knew there'd been trouble about it before. He came down, we were filming for five days, and he came down to see it and have a look and see us all, and I said, 'Lewis, can I have a private word with you when this is all over and we get back?' And I forgot about it and he remembered and he sent for me and shut the door and said, 'Right, do you want to talk to me?' And I said, 'Well, yes I do' and said what I had to say, and he called in the other people who'd worked on the programme, and he was very fair about it, he listened to everybody privately and he sorted it out. And I always admired him for that because it couldn't have been easy to do. But he was good in all ways like that and he was very good about considering of programme ideas. He gave us quite a few goes at doing things and I liked him very much. But he moved on, I said, 'Oh Lewis, why are you going?' He said, 'Well I can't be Head of Children's forever', I mean he was only about thirty-seven, wasn't he John?

JPH: Yes.

DS: Yes, he'd come, he was a journalist, he'd come from the journalistic world and Cyril Bennett brought him in and he'd worked on *This Week* for a long time, been a researcher, then moved up to associate producer, then became producer, and he said, I must move on. So he moved to… I can't remember where he went.

JPH: He went to ATV.

DS: He went to ATV and…

JPH: And he's still with Central.

DS: And he's Central, he's Head of Youth Programmes and Entertainment, he's got quite a big title. And I see him still, socially.

In the commercial companies was there a similar system to the BBC for promotion, especially for executives? Were all the jobs posted and…

DS: No. One would be astounded, you'd just suddenly hear. What do you think? So-and-so's out, so-and-so's going to be Assistant Head… And they were always changing the titles, always, wasn't there?

JPH: Oh yes, unbelievable, yes.

DS: That's why they stopped having headed paper, I think, of having memos with 'Head of Light Ent' underneath it, because they always changed, always. I think they thought it was going to be the cure-all for everything and everybody…

JPH: It wasn't so bad at Thames. Rediffusion was berserk on Executive Producer Group 3, which combined Outside Broadcasts with Features and things like that.

DS: We never understood it.

JPH: A couple of months later it would all be different and it would just become Jeremy Isaacs, Executive Producer, Current Affairs and Features. That was the kind of thing you would expect.

Post Brownrigg, or was that all…

JPH: Post Brownrigg, yes, yes. It started with…

DS: I think it was the naval influence, I'm sure it was the naval influence.

JPH: It was carried on to some degree by McMillan, which was silly. But you didn't have that in Thames, that I can remember, in the early days of Thames.

DS: But we didn't know of the changes until they happened, in Thames. And of course it got worse and worse as the years went on and people changing, people being fall guys to other guys. [laughter]

JPH: Oh, Controller of Children's at Thames was unbelievable wasn't it?

DS: Yes, it never stopped changing.

JPH: There were about ten in as many years.

DS: Yes, just absolutely ridiculous.

Were they thankless jobs?

DS: Well, I think Children's became thankless jobs because of the budgets being cut all the time, and it never stopped and every new Controller who came in had the budget cut even further. And then I think the end for Julian Mounter was, I think one of the reasons he took the job on, because he was very excited about it all and he had a meeting with us all and said there are a lot of areas I don't know about, he was very honest, and he said and especially drama, but that's what I want to get involved in. And he no sooner said that than the Controller of Programmes, Muir Sutherland, took drama away from him and any children's drama that was going to come up, if any, would be done under the drama department. It was a terrible shock to him.

So would it be fair to say that the statutory programming and the window dressing programme really was starved of resources?

DS: Yes.

They did it, but they did it rather grudgingly?

DS: Yes, and it got worse and worse and worse, that's why I'm glad I went when I did, because I had the best time ever. Now, there are hardly any children's programmes at all.

JPH: It was done under sufferance. I mean they had to do children's programmes, the IBA insisted that they did children's programmes, they'd got nothing to do them on.

DS: But at one time, you see, Lewis Rudd and Sue Turner and Jeremy Isaacs were very proud of the children's output, ever so proud of it, and the company were really to quite a state, until the wretched change of Controllers of Programmes. After Jeremy went, of course, it all changed and then started the money fight.

Well…

DS: Where could they save money? Children's.

The commercial imperatives, where did they start? Not with a new Controller, presumably, but with the board, surely, the board of directors? Would that be fair?

DS: Yes, it would start from the board. Yes, it would start with the board and budgets, financing.

When did it happen – do you remember?

DS: I think the worst started when Muir Sutherland came.

JPH: Which was the mid seventies, wasn't it? It was after you… chronologically…

DS: It's after Jeremy had gone.

JPH: You're about to go back to Euston aren't you, in your reminiscences, for 1972, '73 '74.

DS: Yes, Jeremy was still there then as Controller, Brian Tesler was still there. No he wasn't, he'd gone. Jeremy was still Controller. And I went back, there was a very bad patch in Children's where – that must have been the start of it, I think – where a lot of programme areas went down and Sue got cross with me about something or other, I can't remember, but – I can't remember what happened – but she said to me, 'Daphne, they need your body up at Euston'. I said, 'What do you mean?' So she said, 'Well, it's for the *Today* programme and the news, they can't find enough directors who can do live programming'. That was when it was beginning to happen in '70, the seventies. And I said, 'What do you mean?' She said well, because I'd helped them out before, I'd done some of the news programmes and – Thames news – and *Today,* as it was then, it was called.

JPH: With Eamonn fronting it.

[0:10:00]
DS: With Eamonn. And I'd done a few and they were pleased with me, they liked me, because I went in with a happy-go-lucky attitude because I didn't really understand it, it was all this news and it was just a scream because it was like a madhouse, all these journalists running in and out and shouting. And it was just, I just got my head down with the vision mixer and got on with it, but quite enjoyed it. So they asked, I was sent for, would I go and do it. So I saw, it was Malcolm Morris then, who was sort of personnel in charge of all directors, and I said, 'I'm a bit worried about this because I don't really want to go to Euston, all those journalists. I don't mind helping out or doing a week here, a week there or an odd programme' because once they sent a taxi for me to go, the director had gone ill and I flew in halfway through the afternoon, it was terrifying. So he said, 'Well if you really, really don't want to go, but there's no harm in you doing it for a while'. So I went and at that time Sue had had her budgets cut and her programmes cut and was very depressed, and so she let me go, didn't mind me going, and I went into full horror time and misery. It was quite, quite dreadful and I stuck it out for quite a long time, but it started causing trouble with John and I at home because I'd have a dreadful day, do the programme, go and have a drink in the green room and look with loathing at all these journalists and horrible people, and all the millions of researchers, and then I'd come home and John would say, 'Well, I saw the programme, what happened? Who was that

fool who just said… why did you do this?' And we found we'd be discussing this wretched programme till nine at night, wouldn't we John?

JPH: Yes.

DS: Having rows, and it started making us both ill, it was quite dreadful. And of course he would make the bullets for me and say, 'You ought to tell them so-and-so, you ought to do this and that'. Well, of course they thought I'd gone mad up there, because I'd get in, look at them, think about what he'd said and then go, *de-de-de-de-de-de-de*, fire out all these remarks. [laughter]

Such as, give us an example.

DS: Well, much later on I went into women's programmes to do the afternoon programme, it was called *Afternoon*, and I remember Mavis Nicholson turning round to me and looking at me and saying, 'That was a very nice programme you did dear, yesterday, that hour's documentary' and she said it was such a surprise. And he'd been needling me about all these people and I said, 'Well I have done it before, *dear*'. And she just looked at me and she said, 'I don't know what it is about you Daphne, you can't seem to be spoken to or accept any compliments, can you?' And I went, 'Oh Mavis' and I gave her a kiss, I said, 'I'm ever so sorry, I don't know what's the matter with me'. [laughter]

Jeremy Isaacs, on him still for a moment, was a victim of this changing attitude, if, am I right in saying there was a changing attitude on the part of the company?

DS: Yes, I think he was and he went through a terrible time, this Controller. He had two PA strikes on his hand at one point where, in fact I never got over it, because I had two marvellous programmes which Sue Turner and Jeremy accepted. One was a six-part costume drama and another was a musical, a one-off musical for a children's special, you know, for Christmastime and everything, and I lost it through the PA strike, bless their little hearts.

This was the Union… and were the strikes justified?

JPH: There was a big one in '76, obviously, over the Montreal Olympics, wasn't there, when Paul Fox…

DS: I think that was one of them where I lost one of my programmes.

Coverage.

JPH: Yeah, because Thames of course would have borne a great load of that, Monday to Friday.

DS: But the earlier one was about mainly status and money, because the vision mixers had just been given a huge rise, and the lighting directors and somebody else, and the PAs were miles behind, under the vision mixers. And this upset them hugely and somebody foolishly said, you only type the scripts, we have to interpret them, or something. Course they all went mad and all went on strike immediately. So Jeremy had a lot of that. Then he had a main strike. Then also I think the pressure of the network was becoming almost impossible and I think he was getting to be a very unhappy man, a very unhappy man. I remember, I was standing in one of the doorways, I said it's like a village here, a Spanish village, we're all standing in the doorways in this long corridor, and Jeremy came along and I remember, he was in his shirtsleeves with his tie pulled down, and he'd got his hands in his pocket and he was walking along kicking his heels like a child and whistling. [whistles] And I looked at him and he went, 'Hello'. I said, 'Hello Jeremy'. And he just went on. [whistles] It was so funny. Whether he was trying to calm himself down or whether he didn't care, but I mean it wasn't all that long, was it John, that he left?

Do you remember the circumstances of his leaving, when he released footage to the BBC that Thames had been banned? Do you remember? I think, was it IRA footage?

DS: Oh gosh, yes.

Do you remember that? That was, I think, a direct result but it must have been also part of an internal climate.

DS: Wasn't that his big pet baby, that programme about Ireland he kept wanting to do, didn't he, with one of those journalistic reporters?

JPH: He had a wonderful time, of course, doing *The World at War*.

DS: Yes, he'd loved that. He loved that.

JPH: He devoted his life to it, virtually.

DS: Great programme.

JPH: Wonderful series, wonderful, wonderful series. But then when the admin started to get to him…

[break in recording]

Better, it's much better.

JPH: It was the battery down?

Yeah, it was the battery. Sorry for that interruption.

DS: It's alright, we were talking about Jeremy Isaacs, weren't we?

Jeremy Isaacs and the circumstances of his going.

DS: And why he left. I can't remember, John was talking, John will probably remember much more than I do.

JPH: Well, that was much later. That's 1981 when Channel 4 came up, he left.

DS: Well, this may have been the start of his fed up-ness, why he wanted to go, I would think Roy, because he did have a rough time, when I was there, having a rough time. But, back to myself, it really was a miserable time because I didn't like doing the programme at

all, I'm not a newsy person. I mean now, looking back on it, it has its funny side because it was so horrendous and it would just run away with you, the programme, because items would come in so late or… And I found out, I got a trick, we had that lovely journalist in at the end of the programme, who just died recently, wonderful feature writer man.

JPH: Yes, yes, yes. Yes.

DS: Oh, round-faced.

JPH: Wrote for the *Daily Mail*.

DS: Wrote for the *Daily Mail*, they've just had his memorial service.

JPH: George Gale.

DS: George Gale.

Oh yes.

DS: Oh, he was a nice man and he used to do nearly every programme. If it was over-running, a big item, he was the first one to be cut out, poor soul. But he did the closing piece, a short piece with a bit of humour or a comment on something. And I used to do, as it was the end of the programme, an over-the-shoulder shot when he finished, back to whoever was doing the programme – it was after Eamonn, I think – to close the programme. And nobody knew how I did this, the other directors didn't, but I worked it out in my own little brain, because I worked the whole programme out backwards from that shot to get to it, to be able to get to it at the end, because it was such a fast show and things happened all the time, the cameras were whizzing about. But I knew if I got to a certain point and I got that camera there, I could take that shot. So that was my pride and joy. But otherwise, you just had this bit of paper, you didn't have time to write cameras or anything, and before you knew it, you were running down to the studio, there was a trailer piece by, well it used to be Eamonn, and then the news was on and they all stopped and watched the news in case anything special had happened and they wanted to change an item. But it used to be a nightmare. I always remember somebody rushing into the

gallery, we were all talking, sorting ourselves out, and tapping me on the shoulder and it was a new researcher, said, 'Are you the director?' I said, 'Well yes, as a matter of fact I am, who are you?' 'I've just been told to bring this. Here's some pictures' and threw these pictures at me. And we'd just gone on the air and I had to get these pictures, get hold of somebody and say, put them in front of a camera, or whatever. Oh, it was a nightmare. And then somebody was saying… and then a voice would come up from the floor, 'Daphne, you know the next interview with the MP and the so-and-so, they've got two others in, we've just got some more chairs', and there would be five people in the interview instead of three. Oh, it was dreadful. And then you had all these names and of course it wasn't so easy in those days, you hadn't got all these marvellous…

JPH: No, you had no cap generator.

DS: Had no cap gen or anything like that, they all had to be captioned. And the worst thing was, it was at Euston from the studio there, and there was only one telecine machine, so at the beginning you had to have… you had the *da da da da dum da da dum*, and then there was a very slight pause when they went to the telecine machine and then you had to go to a caption while they changed that caption. And you just had the one machine. If you had any panic thing you had to go, 'Change, change, change, change, change!' while they changed the slides and everything. Oh, it was dreadful. And oh, things used to just go down or they'd want somebody's name up. And I remember the producer standing up, it was Andy Allan, I remember him standing up at the end of the gallery, there was dead silence, we fell off the air, it had been a nightmare, it had been chaos. And they'd changed the seating round of the people, because I used to get the stage manager to write quickly for me the seats and the names underneath, who they were – I didn't know who all these people were – Councillor So-and-So, or the Mayor of So-and-So, and then try and get a caption and find it, find the camera for it, put it up on their chest and get it out while everything was happening. And I remember there was dead silence, we all collapsed, the vision mixer nearly fainted. And just as I took a breath to say something, Andy Allan stood up and said, 'Mm, pity you got the names of the two Councillors wrong', and walked out. Well, nobody said a word, nobody said a single word. I think I got very drunk that night, I went into the green room and thought I'll swallow all their drink, I won't pay for it, I'll [laughter]… But it was a horrible programme to do and it wasn't…

JPH: Well, it wasn't your scene.

DS: It wasn't my… I didn't know…

JPH: You've always been glamour and you've always been Light Ent and it was totally out of your bag.

[0:19:56]
DS: And I didn't know the news, I didn't read the papers inside. They used to get, Alan Hargreaves was marvellous at his job and he used to get there at half past six every morning and read all the newspapers from cover to cover. And then we were all called in to the typical newspaper type meeting at half past nine sharp we all had to be there and sit round with Andy Allan in charge, all the reporters, PAs, and go through the items and what researcher was going to do what story and chase up. I had no idea what they were talking about, I hadn't the faintest idea what they were talking about.

How long did you suffer that?

DS: Oh, I suffered it, it seemed like a year, I think it was about six months, wasn't it?

JPH: No, it was longer than that, Daphs.

DS: Was it?

JPH: Yes. It was almost two years you were there. It was horrendous.

DS: Well, I went into, because they had breaks, they had breaks. I didn't get a break, I got put into promotion area. I got really cross about that, because *Today* was coming off the air for the break, they had quite a long break, and there was a quiz programme to do, which I did with Alan Hargreaves, and I thoroughly enjoyed that, called *The London Programme*. So we did that. Then Alan had a long break and there was to be another one, and they said, 'Oh you ought to go into the Promotions Department'. And I said, 'What do you mean?' They said, 'Oh well, the chap, Bob Ando, who does promotions is going off for a month's holiday special leave and you're to go in and direct it'. So I said, 'I

don't know anything about it, I don't remember hearing anything about it'. 'Well, you know, you've got to put all these things together.' Anyway, I found out then that he wasn't a full director, it was a specialised job, it was a specialised job of… I don't know what grade he was or something, he'd come from the BBC, very clever young man. But he had two assistants who ran around and got all the bits together and found the bits of VT of each show and just picked the bits out. Well, I was very cross, I was very miserable about this, I didn't want to know. Well, I've never had so much fun in my life. That month was like a holiday to me, because the two kids were wonderful, they loved it. One of them, the boy, who is now a director, was busting to be a director, so I let him sit in. Well, he knew more about it than me anyway, what it was all about. And they were both so funny and the chap who did the voiceover was a very funny man. I used to say, what's the Irishman's name, you know, the man who shouts, the preacher, the politician?

Paisley.

DS: Paisley. I'd say, 'Barry, do it as Paisley'. And they'd say, 'Look, look, look' and I'd get up and look out of the window and he'd be standing up with his fists in the air, reading this promotional bit as Paisley. [laughter] Oh, it was funny. 'Do it as…' we used to think up different people for him to do. 'Do it as the Queen.' So he'd do all the promotional stuff as the Queen. And these two kids, they loved it. Well, I had more fun – didn't I, John? I used to come back every night with a story about what had happened that day.

Did you get repercussions?

DS: No. I think they were so glad to have me tucked away and happier. They'd never heard such gales of laughter. The Head of Presentation man wasn't at all pleased, he wondered what had hit him, half of them did in there. I used to bring ice-creams and sweets in and jollies. But then after that, I went to the afternoon programmes, Catherine… Catherine Freeman, who had married the great Freeman.

JPH: A former wife of John Freeman's.

DS: Former wife of John Freeman.

Discarded at this point?

DS: Yes.

JPH: Discarded.

DS: She'd been BBC.

JPH: One of the number.

DS: And she'd come across to Thames, she'd been doing all sorts of things. And then she was Head of Women's Programmes, as it were, the *Afternoon* programme. And oh, she was very… she was like a ship in full sail all the time. Very large lady, very grand and had her inner sanctum. And like all things, that's why we learnt through the years never to stay in one place too long because when you're first new you're given such a welcome because you're somebody new. And I was able to come up with quite a lot of ideas which she liked, and the best thing I did, I did six documentaries for her, six… two of them were an hour and four of them were half hour documentaries, on very nice subjects, three of which I suggested, so I enjoyed that. And the studio programmes were quite interesting to do. But again, then trouble started, I was there for quite a long time, and it was all women. I think the daftest thing to do is to have either a woman's magazine or any programming which is all women. I'd worked in an all-women's department once in the BBC. And it was disaster because I found that everybody in the end was bitching everybody else. There was one man, researcher in the department, and these women were always whinging on. Oh they did whinge, and they'd been there too long, unfortunately, they were nearly all researchers and they'd all got ideas of grandeur about my programme. I remember one researcher, I had a fashion programme to do with Mary Parker… Parkinson.

JPH: Mary Parkinson. Parky's wife.

DS: Very nice, very glamorous looking woman. I used to look at her and say, 'Oh, you look beautiful', because she used to fashion some of these clothes and she never thought she was as beautiful as she was. And there was a programme with her and I was talking it through with the researcher and saying we'll do so-and-so and so-and-so, then I think

we'll go… find me some pictures of so-and-so, so-and-so. And I noticed she was just nodding there, sitting there and looking at me and tapping her pencil. So in the end, I said, 'What are you doing?' She said, 'I'm just thinking it over and assessing it all. Let me see…' I said, 'You're doing what?' [laughter] She said, 'Well, I'm the researcher on the programme, it's my programme and I shall report it all'. And then I found that Catherine Freeman had given them all this power and you were really the middle, again, you were just the director.

Only get it on the air.

DS: Yes, you weren't supposed to come up with all these ideas and say, get me this and get me that, and I don't want, and I'm going to do. And so that started getting on my nerves. I mean John and I have always had this feeling about research, it was a dirty word. And John said it me, and I said it to a researcher once in a rage, 'Just remember, you are the lowest…' – what is it, the lowest…?

JPH: The lowest form of animal life in television.

DS: You're the bottom grade of the ACTT. [laughter] Which didn't please her, they'd been fighting to get in for years.

JPH: Yes, it was a seven-level structure, essentially. We tried to keep them out. The television branch I was on at the time, we had a hell of a battle. Because originally they'd been NUJ, of course, and we tried to keep it that way, but they got in.

DS: That helped with the downfall of our lives, researchers becoming associate producers and then producers.

JPH: Everybody you can think of who has now staffed television since started as a researcher.

DS: There are some exceptions, of course.

JPH: Very few.

DS: Yes. But that was the trouble with that *Afternoon* programme. And then I was there a bit too long and the dreadful day came, I remember Catherine Freeman, who used to have this inner sanctum and call out to people, and she used to have this dreadful thing, the door would open there'd be a pause and we'd all be… and then you could feel the silence and we'd all look round and she'd look at somebody and say, 'Just a word, please Brenda'. And you'd all think, oh dear, all get on with your work. And the dreadful day happened when it happened to me, and it was, 'Just a word, Daphne. Could you spare a minute, dear?' And I thought, this is it, this is goodbye. [laughter] I can't remember, it was something she had a go at me about, something she didn't like or what I'd done, or somebody complained about me, or whatever. And it was Mavis…

Was it goodbye?

DS: Well, quite shortly, because I made sure I got out of it and I said, because it was going to have a break, *Afternoon* was going to have a break. Oh, and I went back to news, I went back to *Today*, and they got, Andy Allan and I both realised that I wasn't right for the programme. I mean he said to me, you know, 'I think you ought to go, don't you?' And I said, 'Well, I do'. And he said, 'I was in Light Entertainment for six months' he said, 'I hated it, I didn't know what anybody was talking about'.

Had you gritted your teeth and borne it or did you make it known that you wanted to get out?

DS: I'd gritted my teeth, but I think it was obvious, I mean I didn't know what anybody was talking about half the time, they were all shouting out journalistic things and going about things.

It is obviously wrong casting.

DS: Yes, totally wrong. And they'd liked me, they'd liked me to go in for the odd show, or the odd week, and that suited me as well, and I'd amuse them, but it wasn't amusing for them after a few weeks with somebody still saying, 'Who's that?' or 'How do you spell paediatrician?' or whatever. It was just wrong, totally wrong, I shouldn't have been there.

So I wrote a note to Malcolm Morris saying now that *Afternoon*'s off the air and *Today* and we've got the break and at the moment you have nothing for me, I'd be very pleased if you will… I can't remember how I phrased it, but I was saying, thank you very much, that's the end of my stay here, I was telling him.

JPH: But no thanks.

DS: But no thank you, I've done my stint now, thank you very much, and I think it's time for me to go so I'll be glad to get back to another department at Teddington. But then I had a dreadful time. I saw him and he said, 'Well I haven't got anything else at the moment, but I'll fix something up'. And I sat at home for eight months. It was quite dreadful.

What were the conditions of your employment? You were on staff, were you?

DS: Yes. Well, I was – you've got it John, well done, you've caught a fly – I was on a contract but it counted as staff. I was on a three-year contract, which was very unusual, I found that everybody else had been taken on on a two-year or one-year, and it was extraordinary, I'd been taken on for some unknown reason on a three-year. So I was counted really as staff, on a three-year contract. But I had a dreadful time, I sat at home for eight months. It was like a nightmare because I never knew what was happening. I never knew why… John was very good, he got in a terrible state for me and it was then, I mean we'd known and loved him before, that Jack O'Connor came round, he came here, didn't he? And he was so lovely, he was so kind, I'd always liked him and I've always loved him forever after that.

Really?

DS: Always sent him Christmas cards and a gift at Christmastime.

JPH: Well, he tried very quietly to try and sort it out with their relations people. Nothing really happened, but he bent over backwards to…

DS: Without making a fuss, without causing…

JPH: Without making a fuss.

Were you in the doghouse? Was that the reason for you being…

DS: Well, we could never find when I was. But nobody would say why or what. And John kept… so then John got in the act and went up to see Malcolm Morris and said we want it in writing, what is going on. And then they started back-pedalling. The worst thing that happened was, I went to see Malcolm Morris, he kept saying I'll ring you tomorrow, I'll ring you next week, and he never did.

[0:30:17]
JPH: Trying to freeze her out.

DS: They wanted me to leave, I think. They put me on a list, because at that time they'd started making up a list of people they didn't want. But the worst thing that ever happened was that one day he sent for me, Malcolm Morris, and I got into his office, and he was all busy, busy with papers and phones. 'Well, I don't know really…' I said, 'Well, you wanted to see me'. So he said, 'Yes, I really haven't got anything. I don't know what to do about you and I've really nothing. So I'll try and let you know when I can'. And then said, 'Thank you' and got on the phone. And I walked outside and I felt the tears coming out of my eyes and I stood at a window, the tears pouring down my face, feeling so unhappy and thinking to myself, I've always said to John, when I'm unhappy with this business and it's finished with me, I'll get out. And I stood there, and to my horror I realised I was standing at the very window that not that short time ago that Robert Stead, a great friend of ours, a beloved chap, a director, had thrown himself out of that window because he'd been in such a state and so unhappy and so miserable. And I was standing at that very window with tears pouring down my face, and it gave me such a fright it pulled me together actually. And I thought, what am I doing, getting in this state and being so silly. But John P was wonderful with Jack O'Connor, they sorted it out.

Well, what do you think was the basis for it?

DS: Never… crossing Sue Turner.

Your, in quotes, your 'attitude'? You'd offended them?

DS: I think so.

Again, the forthrightness?

DS: Forthright. I think so, yes. You see, I told Catherine Freeman exactly what I thought.

JPH: Got up their noses.

DS: Told Andy Allan what I felt about him, their attitude.

Was pussyfooting then generally a director's requirement?

DS: Yes.

Tiptoeing around the egos?

DS: Yes. It started really with Elkan Allan, because I remember, I can quote the directors.

JPH: Oh yes. Crawling within.

DS: It was quite dreadful. On the *Ready Steady Go!*, for instance, I remember, well I'll name names, it was Robert Fleming used to do a lot of them, and I'd done a whole lot and there was going to be a Christmas special with a big Christmas party, they'd had them before, and I couldn't believe it because I'd been doing the series and Elkan said, 'I've got a special job for you on *Ready Steady Go!*'. And I said, 'Oh really?' and I was thinking, you know, we're going to film or something. And he said, 'You are going to produce the party'. And I said, 'What do you mean? I'm doing the programme'. He said, 'No, Robert Fleming's directing the programme and you will produce the party'. And I was so

shocked and shattered that I did it, because I was so shattered and surprised, so I produced the party, organised it all.

How much feeling of job insecurity was there? First of all, it was difficult to fire someone on staff, was it not? And a contract, you either resigned or…

DS: They were top heavy with staff, everybody was on contract, you see. Everybody was staff, very few people. And of course it was then around that time, when they started making this list, which I found out later, John knew, they made this list up, I suppose that's the very beginning of the days when they started saying we must cut back, we don't want staff people, we'll cut back. Better to have people on contract, better to have people show by show.

JPH: Selected freelances.

How did Jack O'Connor get involved? Did you take the problem to him or did ACT…

DS: John rang him.

He did?

JPH: Well, I used to see him regularly when I was a director at LWT and met him weekly, practically.

DS: And he always asked how I was, didn't he?

JPH: Oh yes.

And he accepted that was a Union area problem, your wellbeing?

JPH: Well, he knew it was wrong, he knew that it was wrong…

DS: He took it on almost personally really, and he came round here.

JPH: He did, yes, he got very cross about it.

Since we've raised him at this stage, would you like to – I know John spoke about him at some length and shortly he had died at that stage. What are your memories of Jack O'Connor?

DS: Oh, I loved him and I loved him as much as anything at the Union meetings, the directors' meeting, because he'd come in and he'd either had a hell of a lot or he hadn't drunk very much, and he'd always have one with him. But he was so entertaining, I mean it was never dull or boring and somebody would always pick on him, which used to upset me, somebody somewhere would have a go at him. But my God, I need not have felt sorry for him, he could stand up to anybody.

He was a very ferocious character.

JPH: He had a marvellous sense of humour actually, he was very funny as well with it.

He was very off-putting for a lot of people, don't you think?

JPH: Yes.

DS: Was he? He never was for me, I just liked him from the very beginning and then I never got over him coming round here and his kindness to me, and I never forgot it, always sent him cards, birthday and Christmas and things, or offered him a drink or whatever, and always kept in touch with him. So I never ever had any… I never saw that ferociousness at all, not even at meetings. To me he was just funny, if he shouted at people, it used to amuse me highly. They usually deserved it anyway.

Was it a joke for him, was it a veneer or…

DS: I think, yes I think he thoroughly enjoyed it. Yes, I think he thoroughly enjoyed it at those meetings and shouting at people, or bringing them to order, whatever.

JPH: Oh yes.

DS: He was very good.

What's the basis for your forthrightness, is it just not suffering fools gladly, do you think?

DS: Well, I've been told that before. I've been told that before. Somebody introduced me to somebody, I can't remember what it was, and said, 'She doesn't suffer fools gladly'. I think I get it from my mother, my mother was very forthright, she's a Scot.

JPH: Yes. I second that.

DS: Do you?

Because you're not unduly opinionated.

DS: I hope not.

No. I mean you're very reachable in discussion, but you obviously [laughter] do rub people up the wrong way occasionally.

DS: I do, I do. I will open this rosebud mouth, you see, and out it pours.

More power. More power, m'dear.

DS: It doesn't come out right, I suppose really, that's the trouble. If I could be calmer and slower and say something…

I think it's the way it's received by people who should be a little more objective about what they're doing and how they're doing it, I suspect.

DS: Well, I think I got cross Roy, by people – anyway, we all get cross enough, we don't like to be told, none of us like to be told anything – but I get cross with people because I think inside it was resentment. How dare they say so-and-so or criticise, how do they know, or it was a good programme, why… I mean I shall never forget John Hambley,

who became Head of Children's for a very short time at Thames, and is now Executive Producer of Cosgrove Hall and making all these films in places, and I always said…

JPH: And Euston Films.

DS: And Euston Films. I mean he's a very famous important man now, but I mean he was a joke to all of us.

JPH: Big joke.

DS: I used to say, well I'd prefer to have a used car salesman round here. And he, I was doing a programme for my magic programme called *Five Magic Minutes*, which had been set up before he came and I did the programme, as best I did, with no budget, no time whatever, one of the cheaper children's programmes. It was a filler, *Five*…

JPH: *Five Magic Minutes*.

DS: *Five Magic Minutes*. And they were repeated ever so many times, because… And it was just a magician in and I had lovely Don Harvey, who's Bruce Forsyth's pianist and MD, he came and did piano for me, he was a lovely character, and I included him because sometimes a magician has to have somebody to take a card, to hold something, or have a bit of personal rapport. So I used to take over-the-shoulder shots or use him. And I had this call, John Hambley wants to see you to view your programmes with you. And he had a dreadful reputation because he'd either not be there or he'd cancel it, or you'd go in to see him and he wouldn't be there and the secretary would say - I think she had a nervous breakdown in the end – she used to say, he hasn't turned up, he's just rung up, he's in Scotland, or somewhere. But anyway, after about four tries I sat down within his room and we ran the tape. He was going, 'What's that? What's that? Don't like that shot. Don't like that shot. Don't want any more shots like that'. And I said, 'Well, you've got plenty of them' I said, 'It's a series of thirteen, you've got about three in each show, so you do the calculations'. 'Well, I don't like that, I don't want that.' And I said, 'Well, that's what you've got. What else do you expect?' So he said… and another thing… And I said, 'Well, what about the music?' So I said, 'What do you want, Madness? They're only £4,000', because they were big at that moment, it was the only group that he knew of,

I said, 'Do you want Madness? Give me £4,000, you can have them. They can't do the magic, but you can have them if that's the show you want'. So he didn't like that at all, you see, but I couldn't help it. I was so annoyed with the man who knew nothing, had come from nowhere, saying, 'I don't like that shot'. I thought well, I'd rather the money taker in Tesco's said that because at least she's a viewer and would be able to say, 'I don't like that shot' and I would listen to her. [laughter] So that's my forthrightness, you see. Didn't hold my tongue.

And you have a concept of professionalism?

DS: Well, I hope so. I hope so.

Which is what? How would you define it?

DS: Well, I think considering other people, really. Considering the audience, considering what the show is about, what it's aiming at, what you've got to make it with and how you make it and your attitude of making it.

Well, how ruthless must the director or the producer be to achieve that?

DS: I don't think they have to be ruthless. There probably are times when you've got to be. I've been ruthless twice, I think. But I think twice. I got rid of an actor once, it was quite dreadful. Probably I've been ruthless on the floor with people, shouted unkindly at them or something.

Well, that's not being ruthless, that's…

DS: No, that's being directorial.

…saving time, yes, yes.

DS: Ruthless that time I got rid of an actor when I knew he was hopeless. I can't remember being ruthless…

But again, that's the good of the show, if an actor's lousy, then he shouldn't be working anyway.

DS: Yes. No, I don't think… I think you've got to work…

I'm sure you didn't fire him in a nasty fashion, did you?

DS: Well, I was a coward. I was a coward, I got the casting to do it. And I said, you know, for heaven's sake, do it as kindly as you can.

[0:40:00]
Well, that's not being ruthless, I don't think.

DS: No, I suppose not. I had to make the decision.

You've not enjoyed cutting throats. Have you had to? And I don't count firing an actor cutting a throat.

JPH: [inaudible – 0:40:11] by nature to be ruthless.

DS: I don't think I've been ruthless.

JPH: But at least you knew the nuts and bolts of television and people like Hambley and Co didn't, and that was really what upset you.

DS: Yes, and I suppose I didn't like him. I didn't like him having a go at my artist, because I thought the artist was good, I thought Don Harvey was good and he worked hard in a different field and that sort of thing. I was annoyed at him having a go at the artists, who'd done their best, and I thought they were right and good, and I'd booked the man and so…

Was it any kind of criticism that rubbed you up the wrong way, or was it just what you thought unjustified criticism?

DS: I think unjustified. I would take criticism, if the Head of Department would say, that's so slow, or something's wrong, I would take it. And I've always been quite good in the gallery when I'm doing a show, if people would come in with a comment, especially people I respect, I won't even argue about it. If they come in and say, so-and-so, I'll turn directly into the mic and say, tell them not to do so-and-so, or change so-and-so, or whatever. But I'll take a turn if somebody comes in or makes a fuss in the gallery or shouts out across in the gallery with some criticism about something that I don't agree with, then I will take a turn. But I hope on the whole I can take criticism, professionally. Do you think I can, John?

JPH: Yes, yes. Taken enough from me in the course of the years.

DS: [laughter] Oh, well.

JPH: Especially about technical things.

DS: Yes, yes. I find that helped, that's meant to be helpful.

Since we're on attitude, what else perhaps would you care to add in that general area of regarding one's job and one's colleagues and superiors, especially, because that's always dodgy.

DS: Yes, it is. I like to have, I've always been irritated by colleagues, directors for instance, who go into a show and make it up on the day, type thing. I know there are certain shows you do and I know I've done it within a show. I've left a bit, thinking, you know, I can't do that bit now, I'll have to see it, we'll make it up on the day, and the camera crews accept it. But I do have very little patience with Heads of Departments who let their directors do something like that, go and make it up, don't do their homework, so people on the floor don't quite know what's happening. Or they've got to carry them. That irritates me, I think, more than anything. And I used to get cross, again it started in the seventies when I was at Euston on the news programmes, they were getting a lot of directors in or researchers being made up to directors for news programmes and things who really had no training or anything at all, and relied on the crews and the crews were carrying them. And I made quite a fuss about it, because the crews started coming to me

and saying, ‘Daphne, where’s this man come from?’ and ‘It’s dreadful, he can’t direct for anything’ or ‘We can’t do anything’, ‘Do you know what they did yesterday?’ And I’d say, ‘Well, don’t do it’. And they’d say, ‘Oh well, we have to, we have to’. And I used to say, well, to the sound I’d say, ‘If somebody walked in the studio and climbed up on the boom and started handling the boom very badly, would you all stand there?’ I said, ‘You’d be straight to the Union wouldn’t you?’ ‘Or a vision mixer or somebody, or a racks operator sat down, put their bum in the chair and said, right, let’s get…’ I said, ‘The minute a director does it, none of you say anything, you just sit there and mutter and complain’.

Where generally did these characters come from? Was it nepotism or…

DS: Well, people, although I’ve said well of Jeremy, Jeremy was quite bad about letting people have a go.

Yes. Were they internal promotions or characters coming in from outside?

DS: Some of them, quite a lot of them were internal, mainly from researchers or somebody. I mean we never got cross really about the technical people being made up because you felt that they knew what they were doing. But you’d get somebody in who’d been a researcher on something or, I can do it, and suddenly they’re a producer and suddenly the producer is sitting in the chair directing it. But I mean that’s all gone out of the window now anyway, that’s old hat. But somebody came to me some years later, a director from Euston, and said, ‘Daphne, it’s got so bad at Euston, people coming in from outside anywhere and are directing programmes and the crews are in a terrible state about it, I’m trying to form a group down there to make a protest, would you form a group down here?’ And I said, ‘No, I won’t’ and he was absolutely astounded. He said, ‘Whatever do you mean?’ I said, ‘I had my say when I worked at Euston’ I said, ‘I had a good grumble’ I said, ‘I remember when Vincent Stafford was made up out of the blue I made a terrible fuss and got into terrible trouble about it’. And I said, ‘I remember then when I made a fuss about people being made up’ and I said, ‘You were all grumbling, but when it came to the crunch and I was asked what was the matter, what was going on’ I said, ‘I looked over my shoulder and none of you were there.

[end of Side 7 Tape 4]

[Side 8 Tape 4]

DS: [laughter]

I had a question following on from that, which is, it sounds as if they were internal promotions, so all they did was to change grade within the Union and there was no problem about membership of the Union. Because after all, the director section in films anyway, was always really very difficult to get into.

DS: Very tough. It was harder to get into film than anything. But we're talking about – John P, who's just arrived – we're talking about how people were suddenly being jumped up and made up mainly from researchers and associate producers, but they were mainly internal. But some people did come from outside and we'd find that they'd been a researcher on something and there was an open door, there was a way in, they could go to Ireland and do some work there and get a ticket. It was very strange, quite a few people came in that way. But I was just telling a story of when Eddie Jaffick [ph] came to me and said would I form a group of protest at Teddington, and I said no because I tried to do that at Euston and nobody backed me, so I wasn't going to do any more about it ever again.

Did the Union ever take this on board as a problem? Jack O'Connor, for example, was he involved in promotion…

DS: They started to.

JPH: Well, it was talked of often enough at producer/director section meetings then.

DS: But a lot of them opened the door. The floodgates were opened, that's when we shut down. There were a lot of meetings. We voted against it because we used to go to nearly all the meetings, we were good Union members, and we were outvoted, weren't we, at one big meeting that the people should be let in. And we had made our point that we didn't want to stop young people joining the industry, but could they please do it the proper way and be trained or come from the floor, whatever.

JPH: Training, training, training.

DS: No, no, no, no, and all these people. So we just shut up and we never argued again, and it was from that day – that was in the seventies wasn't it?

JPH: Yes.

DS: The floodgates were opened.

Whom were you arguing your case with? With the ITV division or…

DS: No, with the other producers/directors.

Within television or in film?

DS: Television.

JPH: No, in television.

In television.

DS: Yes. And the main body, mainly new people, all the new people had come in, said it wasn't right to have this closed shop on directors, that they had to be a director to direct. And we went under and that was the end of that, from then on really anybody could come in.

Well, now the BBC, which had a marvellous training programme in its heyday…

DS: Yes, best in the world.

…was that ever matched by any of the ITV companies? Was there any training programme at Thames?

JPH: No. I sat on a sub-committee with Vic Gardiner as the two representatives of LWT on training and we even met with Lew Grade and Bernstein, all the Managing Directors of the companies, but they would never fork out the money.

They didn't want to know.

JPH: It's quite simple. We did a lot of in-house training, and I, in my history project I think I talked about it at some length, we did a lot of in-house training. You did a bit at Thames, but not very much.

DS: Yes, they had not a bad course, because I remember, well, well Woodsy was on it for one, wasn't he? They had a three-week course, it wasn't bad. They have now a very good one, they send them away to Bristol to…

JPH: That's right. Yes, lectures…

DS: No, no, whatshisname? Somebody you know who runs the course.

JPH: Steve Wade.

DS: Steve Wade.

JPH: He was running the course there, yes, at Bristol University.

DS: And some of my colleagues and friends at Thames who have become directors through that course, they say it's a marvellous course and it's done them the world of good. And you either stand or fall by it.

When was that introduced?

JPH: That's the ITCA.

DS: That's about, that was only introduced about three, four years ago.

I see, right. So at this time there is no formal organised training at all, it's just on the job.

DS: No. They had to train on the job, yes, as it were. Or go and do a crash course outside.

JPH: Yes, but it is sort of formalised now through the ITCA, it's at a halt at this moment as we speak, because of the franchise situation.

DS: Yes, Roy was talking about in the seventies, I was talking about when it started, when they started, anybody could suddenly…

I'm talking really about the internal tensions and that very wide feel of how people progressed in their careers.

DS: Yes. It caused very bad feeling with the rest of the crews and the people in the company, and the PAs of course were very cross, because they had to work with half these people who'd been made up, made them very cross indeed. And half of them wanted to have a go at being a director anyway.

But mostly the villains and villainesses were researchers, you feel, is that it, is that fair?

DS: It was mainly researchers or journalist associate producers, yes, yes. No, they all came from the news side.

JPH: It was always basically as well, the fact that they were non-technical, wasn't it?

DS: Yes.

JPH: I mean the crews resented it because they hadn't the faintest bloody idea what sound was or what a lens was or anything else, and they had to be carried perforce, because they didn't know anything about it, they were talking gibberish in the gallery.

DS: They used to say the daftest things, yes. Or just say… I mean I've been guilty of doing it, but luckily have made people laugh, of going into the gallery, but knowing what I

want, saying I want to see that put on top of that and then change over to that, how can I do that. But that's alright because the technicians quite enjoy fiddling about and playing with that and finding that sort of thing, if you know the effect you want, that you're after.

Yes, and it's a way of getting things out of people too…

DS: Yes, they like it.

…by appearing terribly ignorant and relying on their knowledge and expertise.

DS: Yes, they love it. What shall we do now?

Made a career out of that.

DS: [laughter] But that's a good grumble on my part, because I was so unhappy, I had such a bad time. It was absolute horror and you never think, I mean it's happened to so many people in television, a rough time, and you never think it's going to happen to you, especially when you're… I mean I was very lucky before that with Sue Turner in Children's. I was really, I hadn't realised it, I was queen bee in the department, I could do no wrong and I was swanning about - I'm sure I was thoroughly disliked by a lot of people there - swanning about, doing what I liked, thoroughly enjoying myself, doing big shows. And then when this hit me, it was just too awful and the eight months at home, it was just, because of not knowing. Every time the phone rang I jumped, and Malcolm Morris kept saying I will ring you, I'll see you next week, we'll have it sorted out by next week.

But you were quite obviously getting the treatment.

DS: Yes.

I mean did you realise that at the time?

DS: No, not at all, not at all. John realised it all much more than I did. He was very, very good to me, as he always is of course, my best friend and financial adviser, and professional adviser.

JPH: [laughter]

DS: [laughter] But he sorted it out and then that lovely man, Jack – what was his name, John? The personnel man who took over from Malcolm Morris?

JPH: Jack Andrews.

DS: No. The other one. Jack Andrews was a lovely man, but Malcolm Morris took over from Jack Andrews. The lovely man who put me back in, got me back in working again. We went to see him. I've forgotten his name, Roy.

JPH: James Coulsand [ph]?

DS: No. John will remember in a minute. A lovely, lovely man who suddenly, I think it was through Jack O'Connor who went to see him and said something's got to be done.

JPH: Had quiet words, yes.

DS: Had quiet words, I think. And then next thing I knew was, I got a telephone call, you're to come up. And I said, 'Can John come?', 'Yes, we'd like John to come'. And we went up to see him, he said, 'I'm dreadfully sorry of this hiccup that's gone on, it's been quite dreadful and we shall make quite sure that you will start work next Monday, Daphne and you'll get a job'. And he wrote the most marvellous letter which came about the next day, I think, saying we can only apologise for what has happened to you and it's been quite dreadful and it's been a hiccup and mistake on our part.

Had there been a change of regime anywhere?

DS: No, I think what it was, I think John got very heavy with Jack and started saying I want it in writing, that's what you kept saying, wasn't it? I've got to have in writing what is wrong and why, why is she not working and why she's not being accepted into the department. Because word got back to him that my name had gone round all the departments and there'd been a no put against it, by all departments, which I found

astounding why it should be. That was absolutely astounding. But it was through John's doing, and this lovely man whose name will come to me in a minute, he left, he went to Limehouse. Lovely man and such a nice…, and when I went back, then I had a call saying that you can start next Monday. We don't know where to put you and we haven't got a desk, and all this went on, we haven't got anywhere, but if you'd like to call in. And I went to Head of Features, Ian Martin. He was Head of Features and Documentaries and something else and I saw him, and he was vile to me. I think he was heavily embarrassed. And he said, 'Well I don't know what we're going to do with you and I'm not quite sure, but I'm going to put you back to *Afternoon* programme with Catherine Freeman'. I said, 'Oh, that's nice'. [laughter] I couldn't think of anything else to say. And he said, 'Then we'll have to see how it goes from there'. So I told this lovely man, whose name we shall remember in a minute, he said, 'That wasn't very Christian-like of him, was it?' I said, 'Well no, I didn't think so either'. So he said, 'Oh well, let's see how you get on'. So I went back to *Afternoon* and Catherine Freeman, I really quite enjoyed it, because I was embarrassed, I thought well, how are we going to get on? And the poor lady, she was in such a state and she was so embarrassed and her hands were trembling, that it immediately made me feel better.

Someone must have been the ringleader in all this.

DS: Oh yes.

Was it she, or did you ever find out who…

DS: No. I've never found out to this day really, have I John?

JPH: I think it probably started with her, actually.

DS: Yes, yes.

JPH: Dropping the word in at meetings and things.

DS: She and Diana Potter. And Diana Potter was not to be trusted, she was now Executive something or other. She had been in Catherine Freeman's place, head of this

Afternoon programme, women's programme, but she'd been promoted to something or other. She was religious programmes and something else. And she wasn't my best friend either. I think it was, I think it was too many women again, you see.

It's an extraordinary story. Were you perhaps unique or did this happen to others too?

DS: Not as bad as that. Other people did have a rough time. But as I say, I never thought it would happen to me, and so badly. But anyway, I went back to *Afternoon* programme.

[0:10:03]
JPH: The thing was that everybody was amazed, I mean the crews and people, and the ex-Rediffusion people at LWT, just saying what's Daph doing? And I was saying she's sitting at home not doing anything, and their mouths would fall open. They'd all worked with her for years, they thought, why?

DS: Apparently it got to board level, because I remember now, it's come back to me, that Muir – no – the sports man who was Managing Director.

JPH: Brian Cowgill.

DS: Brian Cowgill, who liked me, I mean I met him, he knows John much better than me, who liked me, I knew. And then apparently at a board meeting banged the table and said, 'I want an end put to this, I want Daphne Shadwell back at work now'. So something had happened, you see.

Well, you were being victimised for some reason by some person or group.

DS: Yes, something had happened.

Quite extraordinary.

DS: And I think it was because of that this nice man, whose name we can't remember, got on to it. And I think Malcolm Morris was a lot to blame, he hadn't moved and shifted. I always was very nice to him but I don't think he liked me particularly. I don't know why,

I don't know why at all. Maybe I'm just saying that. I think it was just his attitude, didn't work, didn't like his job and didn't bother. And I think he got rapped over the knuckles, the fact that he'd just sat on it, hadn't done anything, hadn't bothered, and that's why this lovely chap took over and put it to right. But marvellous letter of apology.

Well, that itself is quite…

DS: That made it better.

…unusual, isn't it?

DS: But then I got back to Thames.

Right. So was Thames generally a happy ship?

JPH: Back to Teddington, you mean.

DS: Back to Teddington, I'm sorry, yes.

At Teddington rather than Euston, right. And it was happier at Teddington, was it?

DS: Oh yes, and when I got back and this John Hambley was Head of Children's there and I went back to do *Rainbow*. But what was a help to me was that a chap called Charles Warren, who'd been around for years, he'd been Head of Schools and I'd known him for donkey's years. Well, so had John, when he first started in Rediffusion as a stage manager. But he'd been in the theatre and done a lot of work at the BBC and I like him very much – John gets irritated by him – and he'd had a terrible time in the company, he'd had a rough time and nearly lost his job altogether, and had gradually, he'd got put into Children's to do a little programme somewhere and he worked his way up and up and up and he'd become Executive Producer, or Senior Producer then, he was Senior Producer, Children's, under John Hambley. And I went back there and he just looked after me, and I was put on to *Rainbow*, which I was delighted about, because it's a programme I've always loved, everybody loves *Rainbow* and it was a wonderful programme to do and they were so pleased to see me and gave me such a welcome back, and a very busy programme.

So it was wonderful for me, I'd got back and got thrown into *Rainbow* and got so busy and was happy and enjoying myself and in no time at all I was back again and everything was alright. But Charles Warren looked after me and got me back. And luckily for me, I mean none of us liked John Hambley. Quite wrong for the job and he was hopeless, we all loathed him and he went quite soon after that. So that was alright. But it was a dreadful time, dreadful. I get the shudders when I think about it.

It does sound absolutely appalling. I can understand now why Jack O'Connor became involved and became interested, because you were being victimised.

DS: Yes. And I just didn't realise it, I'm terribly naïve about some things, it's extraordinary.

Well, it does sometimes take a while for the penny to drop, doesn't it? And then you think, my God!

DS: I kept thinking, what is it, why?

But also I think one's inclined to expect to be treated the way one treats other people, so if one believes people, well one does believe people, but it isn't always sensible.

DS: Yes. Or you don't expect people to lie to you or be evasive.

Where does that bring us to now then? We're…

DS: Well, it's got to be into the, certainly well in the seventies.

And you're back at Teddington. We won't go into great detail over programmes that…

DS: No, I can't remember now, but I mean I was quite happy there. Then I did some, oh, then I did *The Ted Heath Band Show*, I went into Light Ent to do that, which was marvellous.

That's the one…

DS: No, I think I've jumped ahead, haven't I, John?

JPH: Yes.

DS: It doesn't matter. In my career at Teddington, either before or after, I did *The Ted Heath Band Show*, which was just wonderful, it was something out of this world, something I shall never forget and a treat in a lifetime to do and I shall never forget it.

What especially pleased you?

DS: It was just doing this marvellous music, this wonderful band, this huge band, they were mine, all mine. [laughter] And working with Don really, wasn't it, that…

JPH: A little refreshment.

DS: I was just going to say, can I have a drink of water?

Thank you. Those of you listening to the tape, can you hear the bubbles?

DS: Yes, cheers.

Cheers.

JPH: Cheers.

DS: God bless.

We'd better stop.

[break in recording?]

JPH: Well, hang on one second.

Yeah, we're recording. We've established the date, 1976, The Ted Heath Band Show.

DS: Yes, '76 and Don Lusher fronted it and it was a lovely show. Philip Jones had been persuaded to do it and the crews adored doing it, of course, the crews. And the party afterwards, the atmosphere, well, it wasn't a party, it was just going up into the main bar for a drink.

JPH: *The Ted Heath Band Show*, 1976.

DS: It's those bubbles, have just blown the cans off Roy's head.

Yes. [laughter]

DS: But Philip, after the show Philip was looking askance at everybody, me. I think he felt very out of it, Philip Jones. I think he'd wanted to be part of it and he was very out of it. I didn't produce it, David Clark produced it, but he had to disappear in the middle of it all because he went to America to set up another show that Philip wanted.

Have I asked you, Daphne, how musical actually you are? Do you read music or play music?

DS: Very roughly. Very roughly. No, because…

Because there's always a very strong musical aspect to so much that you've done. Now, how evocative of that was your childhood?

DS: Well, it was because I was brought up with music, in music, because of my father being a musical director and playing the piano all the time, and my parents used to have, when we were very young, had musical evenings with friends round. And very funny, we always remember, us girls, the songs that always stick in our mind, I suppose that we hadn't realised as children, but after they'd had a drink or two they always used to join in, [sings] 'The yeomen of England, the yeomen…' And another time it would be, [sings] 'The fishermen of England…' and these great roaring songs round the piano, and we as

kids used to groan and moan, say isn't it awful. But it was a musical household. I had piano lessons, but I never practised.

Wasn't it also something that was part of the times, because I come from a wholly non-musical background, but clustered around the joanna and singing what were… what? Old Victorian and Edwardian songs generally.

DS: It was just part of life really, wasn't it?

It was also part of the extended family, wasn't it, in the absence of television and such things.

DS: I suppose they had them in the pubs didn't they, pianos, so everybody could join round and sing. But I didn't, I can't play an instrument, I did not stick with the piano, it was disgraceful, but I picked up just enough to just be able to read a bit of music, but not very well. But I can count and I've got the feel of it.

JPH: And I converted you to jazz.

DS: And you did. And I love, you see I love dancing. I should have been a dancer really. That's, I think that's more the musical side of me, wouldn't you say, John? Dancing more than anything. And I just love doing music and having music in programmes and having live music, or having musicians there and talking about music or sorting it out, love that.

Was The Ted Heath Band Show *an important show for the station?*

DS: It was at the time, yes it was, because they hadn't done anything like that really before. Philip Jones was keen, because he was keen on music, he'd done *Thank Your Lucky Stars* which was the sort of follow on of ABC, which was sort of the answer and with *Ready Steady Go!* And he had directed that and he loved doing it and he'd been very keen on that sort of show, and he liked music shows, so that's why Thames were lucky enough to have as many music shows as they did, or as much music included, like *The David Nixon Show*, the magic show, I did quite a lot of those. But always was music, there was always a big band, Ronnie Aldrich and guest singers.

What sort of budget and what sort of format?

DS: For which, Roy?

For the Ted Heath programme.

DS: Oh, the Ted Heath.

JPH: It was a one-off.

Oh was it, oh I beg your pardon, oh I thought it was a series.

DS: No, no, a one-off special. And afterwards Philip Jones was persuaded, leant on by all the crews and everybody to do some more, and of course John P, who'd got himself totally involved with it and helped me enormously, co-directing it really with me, although he was LWT, not supposed to be there…

JPH: I co-operated with Alan Dell on the script and things.

DS: Yes. And had suggested all sorts of other groups, like the Squadronaires, to do a programme with the Squadronaires. And then one led on to another. And Philip said, 'Oh yes, yes, yes'. But I don't know what it was with him that night, his face was like thunder, and it was a huge success, everybody loved it and thought how good it was, but he refused to do any more and he didn't want me to do any more. And John always had a feeling it was a bit of jealousy. We got on with it, David Clark and I, and David went to America and I got on with it, and on the night we just got on with it and he sort of came into the gallery. Well no, he called me out of the gallery after the show and gave me - it was too late – 'I would have preferred so-and-so' and 'I wish you'd done so-and-so', 'I didn't like the shots of so-and-so'. And I was looking at him, I said, 'Oh, I see Philip. Oh, well I'm sorry you felt like that'. I was quite polite about it, but it seemed odd that he should give me notes after a programme.

[0:20:00]
Which had been rehearsed, presumably?

DS: Oh yes, all day.

No notes previous to that?

DS: Oh no, no.

Rather strange.

DS: It was strange and he took me aside, totally on my own. But I mean I didn't get upset about it, oh I'm sorry you felt like that, or oh well, too late now, something I said. But John saw him in the bar afterwards and he said that he was looking very sideways at everybody in the club, and he never did another one. But I did more light entertainment then, I did…

JPH: You should say, Daphs, it was a landmark programme insomuch as it revived the Heath Band. I mean all the guys had gone to the wind after Ted's death, into other bands. But Don got the originals back together again and it still exists, Don still fronts the band now, the Ted Heath Band, and they do concerts all over the place and their records are a rave on Melody FM.

DS: And it was through that, yes, of course.

JPH: And it was the programme that pulled the band back together again.

It always seems to me…

JPH: There's a huge fan club still.

…seems to me a strange thing for an ex-Prime Minister to do.

DS: [laughter] Oh, but he was musical. He was known to be musical.

Playing his organ.

DS: [laughter]

Right. I mean scrub all that, will you?

JPH: That was the main thing about the programme.

DS: Yes, that's why John says it was so important.

JPH: And it's revived it and it's kept the memory of Ted going, the greatest band this country ever produced, without a shadow of a doubt.

DS: Yes, so it was quite an important programme in its way, it was a landmark. The rest of the department, there was a programme – I mean all the departments had programme meetings – but Light Ent always had one and we went to one about a fortnight later and Philip was talking about programmes, he was very good about asking people about programme ideas or thoughts, and somebody said, oh I think it was David Clark who was sitting next to me, and said, 'Well, now the Ted Heath Band Show has settled down, what about our suggestions of follow-ups, the Squadronaires, and gave the list. And Philip went, 'Mmm…' and I always remember a couple of directors said, 'Yes, yes, it's very good, but I mean who really wants to see shots of old gentlemen blowing the trumpets or whatever they're blowing, I mean who wants to see that?' Then somebody else said, 'Yes, it was very well done, but I mean it can be very boring, can't it?' So it was finished like that with a few words, and Philip not being mad about it, if he'd have been mad about it he would have done it anyway, that was the end of that, which was a pity. But I did some more then, I did the quiz programme with David Clark who produced them. That's before he started directing. And he was very kind and good to me, David. He always said to Philip, 'Let's get Daphne to do this'.

JPH: *Looks Familiar*.

DS: There was *Looks Familiar*, which was still running till recently, with Denis Norden. *Quick on the Draw*, I loved doing that, with Bob Monkhouse. That was a programme where they would have guest cartoonists in like Bill Tidy or…

JPH: Humphrey Lyttelton.

DS: Humphrey Lyttelton, all sorts of people, and Bob fronted it as the host. And it was a formula, it was a silly quiz. They were asked questions or they had to answer in drawings or guess what it was. It was just an excuse. It was really quite hard to shoot because there were three large drawing pads, and no matter how I set it up, I'd always forget that somebody would be left-handed, always forget, which threw all the camera shots out, of course, so you had to turn the board round or change everything. Oh, it used to drive me mad, and I'd always forget to ask them if they were left-handed or not. But it was a lovely programme to do and Bob was brilliant, absolutely brilliant. I hadn't worked with him before and like the British public, I used to go, oh, Bob Monkhouse – although I'd liked quite a lot of things he'd done – but once I'd worked with him, I thought I'd always like to work with him again. Great pleasure to work with, Bob, so professional, so good, so quick. And then, what was the third one with Steve Race? *There Goes That Song Again*. That was a very pleasant, very lightweight, very easy programme. It didn't last. I think we did two series, didn't we?

JPH: Yes.

DS: Again, David Clark produced and I directed. Very nice programme to do. It was a light quiz programme and had guest singers and guest stars. Worked with all the stars.

You say it didn't last, but you did two series. Now, it seems to me two series is good enough, because really… how does one count the success of a programme?

DS: Whether it goes on and on and on, yes.

But should it continue indefinitely?

DS: No, not really, that was too lightweight a programme.

JPH: The slottings again, wasn't it? They were early evening, late afternoon shows again, therefore no ratings, therefore no advertising, therefore goodbye. Great shame, nice programmes.

DS: They were nice programmes, nice and easy and filled with stars. We had Diana Dors and…

JPH: All the stars enjoyed them, all the guests.

DS: Diana Dors, Milly Martin.

JPH: Oh, everybody.

DS: Oh, any names you care to think of. I've worked with all the stars. [laughter]

Let's take a little digression here, which is Teddington at the time, your memories of the studio generally, which had a – well it wasn't long or honourable – but it had been a Warner Brothers' lot in the thirties.

DS: Oh, a fascinating history. I think it's why it fascinated me, because years ago I'd done a programme with Rediffusion called *Close-up*, which was a film programme. I loved doing that programme, I *loved* it, and we went out filming to all the film studios and it always fascinated me about the front office, I'd never really understood about the front office until I went filming to all the places, Elstree and Teddington, everywhere. And I was like a child with joy over this, and then going behind the front offices on to the lots and then going and seeing the film and interviewing people. And going into – where's the famous dining room, is it Pinewood?

JPH: Pinewood, yes.

DS: Yes, going in there, we filmed in there. Oh, I loved that. We had lunch in there. And I was totally carried away with the film world, adored it. That's why I still adore filming to this day, I prefer filming to VTR'ing, and have always enjoyed on film. So I

was fascinated by Teddington of course, the minute I got there, having – I don't think I would have understood it if I hadn't done these films about the film studios. And it had fascinated me that they had kept it still as the front offices. At Teddington the front offices were still where that top administration was and where the Managing Director had his best office, the Head of Personnel had their best offices. And the first transgression, or I suppose the first intrusion into it was because of the siting of the new studio, Studio 3 where *World of Sport* started, they put the make-up offices and the wardrobe offices along the bottom floor of the front offices, which I think must have come as a terrible shock to the administration and administrative people. And then the wardrobe offices, they opened up the back and went into the wardrobe area, so there were all these marvellous camp and queenie dressers and designers leaping about and rushing about and plumed hats and shouting and screaming darling, and hauling along great trollies of clothes, and it must have been a terrible shock to administration in the front office. [laughter] But the studio, and of course while I was there, I was very lucky when I went there, to see the total rebuilding from out the back lot and where the old canteen had been from the old Teddington, a little old hut, to see that go and knocked down and the whole area covered to be the huge scene dock and then a new canteen built with a big car park put in. And it's really hard to remember it almost as it was when I first went there, that it's so changed, but basically – and it's so lovely on the river, that marvellous view on the river, and they built a wonderful, lovely canteen and restaurant and bar.

What about the yacht, the boat?

DS: The boat. Oh yes, I only got to get on the boat twice, and I longed to and I used to run down to wardrobe and say, 'I might be asked on the boat next week, have you got a sailor's outfit? And I wish to be piped aboard and I want a sailor's outfit'. I saw myself in that, that wonderful dancer, tap dancer, Eleanor Powell, with a white pleated skirt and a naval jacket on and a nice jaunty little hat. I kept saying to wardrobe, 'Will you order this for me the minute I'm invited on board ship?' But I only got invited on twice.

How was one invited? What was the boat essentially reserved for?

DS: Oh, you had to be ever so posh. It was mainly for the Managing Director, for Heads of Departments, for special lunches – they did marvellous meals on there, marvellous

meals – but it was Heads of Departments, special dos, the Managing Director of the board. Then it gradually started getting a bit common, like the Heads of Departments would have a few people in from the programmes.

JPH: And retirement parties.

DS: And retirement parties.

They would actually allow technicians on would they?

DS: Oh yes. But even to this day they're still very tight about who goes on, but of course it's a new boat now. That one got too rickety and started to sink, so it was towed away and they've got a new one. But I saw it, the new one…

JPH: What's the name?

DS: Thames…

JPH: Something Rose. No, no…

DS: Yes, but they got it, they bought it. I mean that's typical of Thames TV, they bought this boat and had it done and all repainted with the names put on it and they couldn't get it under the bridge, the lock there. So it sat, it was anchored upstream, for ages, they had to take one mast down and everything, bring it down. But I haven't been on to that new one. That was properly brought in and berthed just before I left.

Was there an enormous difference in atmosphere between Teddington and Euston Road?

DS: Yes.

Right. Now why was that? Was it because of the journalists and the researchers on salary?

DS: Yes, I think it was, because it was built all wrong anyway. It should have originally been built with all the studios on the first floor, but…

Where were the studios?

DS: The studios were on the ground floor, and tiny, absolutely tiny.

JPH: And one with a pillar up the middle.

DS: One with a pillar up the middle. So they really felt as if they were not studios.

JPH: Toytown.

[0:29:56]
DS: They felt like Toytown. And it always had this feeling of being temporary, had this strange feeling of being temporary. But the Teddington was really always better because it was Drama and Light Ent, and Children's Drama and Children's Light Ent. Although I did quite a lot of shows out of Euston. I did a whole series of *Sooty Show*s out of there. But it's very hard to work. There were very nice people on the floor, the floor people were very nice indeed, but it got a bad feeling, a bad name, because it really became the journalistic side, it was the news, like *The Time and the Place* show they have in the morning, the morning discussion programme. It was all politics.

JPH: Yeah, the main split though, surely we all remember to our cost, was the fact that Euston was largely ex-Rediffusion people and Teddington was largely ABC people.

DS: Yes, which caused a split.

JPH: And when you first went to Teddington you were even more unhappy than you were when you went back to Euston.

DS: I didn't know anybody, no.

JPH: You were ostracised by the ABC people who didn't know you and your working methods.

DS: That's right.

JPH: There were very few Rediffusion people at Teddington in '68, '69 and early seventies.

DS: Very few, there were very few of us there and we were very much patted on the head.

So a variety of culture clashes here?

JPH: Absolutely, yes.

DS: Yes, yes.

JPH: Two different ways of operating, yes. Strangely enough.

DS: But then, when one got…

JPH: A lot of unhappiness for that reason.

DS: Yes, it was, and it was purposely done, it was absolutely done totally on purpose to split and divide everybody. And I mean there was very bad feeling at Teddington because the few Rediffusion people who worked there were very much treated like, pat on the head, and oh dear, oh yes, oh you're Rediffusion, you're not our class, the ABC people. But, I have to say that after I'd worked at Euston with my ex-Rediffusion people, that when I went to Teddington, they really were so efficient, the floor people. I mean the difference in the floor managers, I was shattered, wasn't I? I was totally shattered and the floor manager, my floor manager, because I started off with drama down there, came to me about seven days before I did the show and said, 'Well I'm with you now'. I said, 'Oh what, till lunchtime?' 'No, no, no, I'm with you on the show.' I said, 'Whatever do you mean?' because we used to at Rediffusion, if we were lucky, see the floor manager perhaps the day before, but normally on the morning while you're trying to do everything

else, trying to go through the show with him, and the floor manager would be for seven days and say, 'May I have your plan and do your plan?' I'd say, 'No' snatching it back, 'What do you mean? I do my own plan'. 'Can I put the booms in for you?' 'No, no, no, I'll do that', realising what a fool I was, I could have, you know, great days. And then I heard the stories of the great days of ABC drama, the Philip Savilles and oh, and all the great names you can think, the *Armchair Theatre*s. But the PA and the floor manager stayed with the director and they'd be there till two, three in the morning, with coffee, while the director going, 'I think I'd like a close-up of, I'd like a big whiz close-up of the man'. And the floor manager would go right, 'Camera 2' and the PA would go, 'Right, camera 2'. And I thought, if only I'd known that, instead of sitting on my own for hours, sucking my pencil, working it all out for myself when they used to do it for you, you all worked it out together.

JPH: ATV had that method as well.

DS: The directors just sat back and were totally creative, going, 'I want to see' and 'I shall have' and 'I want a long, long shot of them walking down the corridor'.

All this presumably began in the very early days of commercial television?

DS: Yes.

Again, presumably because of management and commercial imperatives, overheads, budgets?

JPH: And ABC of course was film orientated.

DS: ABC was much more film orientated and so they worked very much… Well, drama they worked on filming lines really.

JPH: Rediffusion was largely theatre/radio, I suppose, from the production point of view.

DS: Very much theatre, John, yes.

JPH: Yes, yes.

DS: So many of the floor managers and directors came from the theatre.

JPH: Are we about to call an interval, sir?

If you choose to, if we remember where…

[break in recording]

Daphne, resuming after a fifteen minute lunch.

DS: [laughter] A little snack.

Yes, a teensy little snack. One thing occurs, which is your advent into filming, which previously your experience has been with electronic cameras.

DS: Yes, yes. I think, like everything at the start of my career, I was thrown into filming, I really knew very little about it at all because my background had been theatre, musical and electronic, into… And I suppose when I went to the BBC I was able, being very young and very new and excited about it all, I picked up, I did a lot of filming with Pamela Brown, my director, and I think I was able, I was very lucky, I picked up a lot. It was so new to me, it was so strange and peculiar I picked it up quite very quickly. It's quite funny, I think when you're young you can do that, can't you, with something so unusual, and take it very calmly, not be agitated by it. So when my first filming, which I cannot remember at all what it was, but I went out filming, and I was very lucky that I had very good, they were very good film cameramen who started with Rediffusion. I don't know why or where they came from, John will probably know better than I did, but they came from BBC mostly, I think.

JPH: Yes, they did, yes, yes. Mostly from film sections.

DS: Oh, mostly from film sections. And they were excellent and I used to, and I suppose being young and unwise or whatever, I used to just ask them, I used to say, 'Oh what fun,

we're going filming'. To me it was always fun, I loved going filming. I suppose it was the office part of me, my upbringing always being in an office, but it was fun to go outside and play – to me it was always playtime and I'd always enjoyed going to the cinema. And I used to just ask them, I used to say, well we've got to go and take a shot off and we need this girl walking down the thing and the man's walking into the house. Because it was very basic filming at the very beginning that we did, mainly just outside shots of somebody walking down the street and walking into the house, cut to studio inside the house, and it was very simple. I treated it all as a game, I loved it, and I used to always insist on being in it. I said, 'Well if Hitchcock can do it, I must do it', so I always insisted on being the figure walking across the street, or the person coming out of the doorway somebody went in. And relied ever so much on my film cameraman. And then I did more and more filming, bits here and bits there, and I really just learnt as I went along by doing more. And then the editors, good editors we had, very good film editors, I was extremely lucky, I'd learnt such a lot in editing of course, as everybody does in filming, and enjoyed the editing, that's what surprised me. I thought that I would be too impatient – I'm a very impatient person – thinking, oh you do it and get on with it. But I very much enjoyed film editing right from the start. And then, as I became more involved in drama, I became more involved in filming and started thinking, well I must think about it a bit more, not just rush out and say we want this long shot. But I always was inclined to be slightly childish about it and I was lucky with my film cameraman in Rediffusion and again in Thames, who enjoyed going out with me for the fun and enjoyed the participation that I would say, this is what we need to see, here's the script, this is what we want to do, this is the place, this is the artist. And I would always stand in for the artist, I would always be the artist, I would say, somebody's got to do so-and-so, look, how about if they run out here and stand here and do this and do it for them. So then I understood what the artist had to do, I could then tell the artist exactly what they had to do and the cameraman would have worked it out with me what was the background. And then I started trying to enjoy it more and doing, making it harder and by the time I finished my last series on, well really *Family Trees* that I did, the programme about genealogy where we went travelling all over the country finding out people's backgrounds and dramatising things in the past from them, I really put a lot of work into that and worked it out much more, what we wanted to do and longer recces, going out for longer recces instead of just going up the day before, being there sort of four hours ahead of the crew. And then enjoying the editing enormously, there was a tremendous amount of editing afterwards, because I had shot

much more than I used to in the past when I first started. And I just love working on film now, I really love it, and of course it's a pity because it's now going out and all our film editors have become electronic editors, or they've gone, they've left and the film cameramen are electronic cameramen.

It was what, 16mm?

DS: Yes. I have worked on 35 a lot in the past, in the early days it was mostly 35. And then we went to 16mm and then you had to ask especially for 35, which of course they all preferred working on. Then we just got used to being 16. But we started on 35.

What sort of crew would you be allowed?

DS: We had, we always had film cameraman, film assistant, sound, sound assistant, I think we nearly always had…

JPH: Sparks.

DS: We always had sparks of course, and we always had rigger driver and focus puller sometimes. But it was only lately that we started being pulled in.

JPH: Basics.

[0:39:48]
DS: And basics. And then it was a three-man crew and terribly basic. You had to really put up an argument for a full crew, as it was. When I did *Captain Fantastic* of course we were incredibly popular and of course we had a lot of fun because we shot it entirely without sound, and that spoilt us all. And undercrank, we did a lot of undercrank and of course that was marvellous, because it was a much lighter crew, of course, and of course we could do what we like, to play about and say what we like, and we all rather got the taste for this, going out and filming without sound. But we used to have full crews, but we were taught from the beginning, I think we were very well taught in Rediffusion in the early days not to go mad, we didn't expect to go out with this huge unit. It got a bit heavy in about the sixties, in the late sixties, mid seventies, it got very heavy, the crew, and we

started finding that people got very naughty on the Union side. Instead of just going out with, or setting ourselves up with wardrobe in the morning, having them fitted up and taking it with us and just doing it, we'd have to have a wardrobe person with us. And it got very bad in the end that we were having to have a wardrobe supervisor and a male dresser and a female dresser, we were having to have a make-up artist, plus a make-up assistant. We were having to take chippies with us, you know, just to hang a caption on something. And really, it got totally out of hand. And we were having assistants to the assistants, and the location managers and the production assistants and the production manager. And that's really what caused a lot of the trouble of us having been pulled back and going electronic.

And killed it.

DS: I remember one unit I was with, I looked round, I couldn't believe it. We were filming, I think it was something as simple as a Sooty, a Sooty special, and we were filming in the countryside and it was that boiling hot summer of seventy something or other.

JPH: '76.

DS: '76. And I'll never forget it, the heat, and of course as usual, the cameraman and assistant and sound and me were all in the middle of the sun, with our backs to the sun, the heat, and the artists working – well, there weren't many, only a couple – and I looked round, and this huge unit were miles away, all under the trees, all sunbathing, and we were by the sea, or some were in the sea, and I couldn't get anybody's attention to try and get us some water, all we wanted was a cup of water or a bottle of water, that's all we wanted. Or everybody was saying, 'Well it's not my job, lovey'. 'Water? I don't know where props are.' 'Oh, we're busy, we're looking for so-and-so Daphne, we can't get you any water.' And we could not, and I thought I'd go mad. I got into a terrible frenzy of rage. I couldn't get a glass of water in this heat, and the unit, it filled the field, it was so big, the unit. But that's, they really put the killer…

Just insert filming, essentially.

DS: Yes, for insert filming, yes. And that's what really killed it off.

How did you travel in those days?

DS: We used to all travel…

In the early days?

DS: In the early days we'd all go in different cars, but on the whole I've always travelled, get a minibus or a coach, nearly always, it worked the best.

JPH: Or went with the crew, yes.

DS: Or went with the crew and all get on a train, and have a minibus or a coach. Because in the early days, you know, when I was still very young and we were all travelling, we used to do daft things like all meeting up somewhere or going in separate cars, or trying to get taxis. I mean we learnt the hard way, to get a minibus was the best.

One thing we missed is the transition to colour.

DS: Oh yes. The transition to colour.

JPH: '71.

DS: All I remember about that, funnily enough, is personal involvement, was because it was so huge and so exciting and the new cameras, that Rediffusion, who had just taken Wembley in the great big new studio, the biggest studio in the world, Studio 5, decided to put on a show to show all the staff and everybody how colour worked on cameras. And somebody had the brilliant idea of we'll put on *a show*, 'We'll put on a show right here!'

Said Judy and Mickey.

DS: Yes. And I can't remember, one of the directors was put in charge to produce it and somebody else did direct it and everything, and I was asked to be in it. Of course, I mean I

couldn't wait, I want to be in it, it's all I cared about, and had to learn some pieces. So I missed the actual transition and all about it because I was so busy being an actress and being in it and learning my words and rehearsing and appearing on camera, that I lost the sort of actual… I was one day doing it in black and white, the next day it was colour, to me, I don't remember anything special at all.

So it really had no effect, or no specific, particular effect on directors?

DS: Not really. No, I think it was more lighting and make-up and costume.

Design.

DS: And the electronics and the racks and people. It was much harder for them.

Well, the design.

DS: Yes, exactly.

Okay. Well then, let's pick up the thread with, what, we're still at Teddington, now are we in the seventies?

DS: Yes.

JPH: About '78.

DS: Really, and then just having gone back, having had my dreadful time, as it were, I just went on then from show to show, series to series, different Heads of Departments coming and going.

Any that were noticeable for either talent or lack of it?

DS: John Hambley was noticeable for total lack of talent of knowing how to run a department or work with people, but what can you say, he's a successful businessman

now, runs Euston Films and Cosgrove, but it doesn't meant that he can work with people or know anything about programmes. He was followed by…

JPH: Malcolm.

DS: No. I've forgotten who it was. Then Marjorie…

[end of Side 8 Tape 4]

[Side 9 Tape 5]

DS: Oh, who was the man who used to be ITN?

It's Daphne Shadwell, side nine.

JPH: Oh! Yes.

We're fumbling for a name.

JPH: For a very short time.

DS: We're going through who were the Controllers – Controllers they were called then – became Directors, Heads of Department, was John Hambley. And then there was a chap, he was so short-lived, he had been ITN.

JPH: Long, thin.

DS: Long and thin and tall. I can't remember, he had an enormous impact as you can see, here. Can't remember him at all, he had no effect whatsoever on the department. Changed the office. Then Marjorie Sigley came, she was a very warm character, she really wasn't very much use at all, I'm afraid. She… no, no, Julian was before her.

JPH: [inaudible – 0:00:56]

DS: Yes, he did. Julian Mounter was before her and he was very dynamic. Very dynamic, very strong, very sure of what he wanted. But as I said in the past, he went under because of the… it was the state of the company by then, the pressures, the pressures of cutting back and cutting back on Children's and over the network. And of course this new business, instead of the network meetings where they used to discuss the network, became the pool – this terrible term 'the pool' – where they all went in fighting. And I remember Lewis Rudd telling me, he said it's dreadful, it's got nothing to do with the quality of programmes any more. It's become a butcher's house, a butcher's shop of carving everything up between everybody, slaughtering things by killing off shows that

they felt that they didn't want to help pay for, have anything to do with, and chopping off anything that was on that they didn't want to know about or continue. It was a real butcher's shop, the pool.

Is the disillusion, do you think, in retrospect, or was it experienced at the time?

DS: Oh, it was experienced at the time. I mean everybody was getting fed up. It was getting more and more raised eyebrows and just making a joke of it really, of who's coming next and what's going to be next.

Was Thames alone in this or was…

DS: I don't think so.

…this part of a pattern?

DS: I think it was part of a pattern. John probably knows more because he's had more contact with outside people. The disillusionment, John, the feeling of going downhill.

JPH: Yes, it started really back in about 1973 with the economic situation then.

DS: Yes, but I'm talking about the eighties now, when Julian came in. I mean really things were going from bad to worse, specially, I'm talking really in the area of where I was with Children's programmes. But even Light Entertainment were not in the top flower of what they did before, even Light Entertainment, the directors… And again, I popped in and out of Light Entertainment doing odd things, and in recent years, really because I worked in the office next door and I knew them all, they used to pop in the door and say, 'Daphs, can you come and do an insert for us for *This Is Your Life*?' which I did quite a lot of, I did inserts and pick-ups for *This Is Your Life*. And we had a lot of fun together and I liked them and I knew them all, so they used to put their head round the door and say, 'Are you free next Thursday?' At the same time there was a children's magazine programme called *Splash*, which was across the corridor from me and they used to put their heads round the door and say, 'Daphs, can you do a bit of filming for us next Saturday?' or whatever. And it was quite fun, I enjoyed that, didn't I John? And I was

still doing a programme called *Illusions*. That's one of my most favourite programmes in all my career, which was all about magic, because I loved magic, and I worked with a young man. It was really through his instigation, started with Julian Mounter, to do a magic programme, because this young man was into magic. He was a cameraman but had been connected with the theatre.

JPH: And was a member of the Magic Circle.

DS: Member of the Magic Circle and very good cameraman, full of good ideas, young Paul Kuraj [ph]. I had great respect for him. And he managed to persuade Julian Mounter and then through me to do a programme about magic. It was about illusions and it was sort of part story, part history and then it would finish up with one of the great illusions by one of the great illusionists, performer of the past, and set up as they used to do it either in the thirties or the 1890s or 1927s or whatever. And that was a very successful show, we did two series. And I loved that, I loved doing that because there was everything in it that I enjoyed: magic and dancing and artists and guest artists and stories and everything. But it was really during, while I was doing that and in the space in between that these heads would pop round the door and say, could you do some shows for us. So I really wish a lot of my career had been like that, of being asked to do all sorts of things at different levels for different areas, you know, Drama, Light Ent or Children's. But really, I know I sound a bit sad and down about it, but it really was, I felt, it was never the same, and we kept thinking, oh it'll get better, and the Heads of Departments will all say, oh well, the new budgeting and the new programme schedule'll be coming out and we'll all know what we're doing in a couple of months. But it was getting farther and farther away, they were working so far ahead and it was rather depressing really. You'd say, well what am I going to do, in the old days it would be on a month or three months, something to look forward to and you never quite knew what was coming up, or you were able to offer programmes. But in recent years it had become that you would offer a programme and they'd go, mm, well we've got something a bit like that. But the schedules went up to next year, I mean you might be talking to somebody in, say, in February, were up to next February, but about, you know, next August we might be looking for something. And I'd think, oh I can't be bothered, anything could be happening by a year next August. Or I won't have any enthusiasm for it. That was half the trouble, the enthusiasm would go.

You say you would offer up a programme, so the origination programmes would start on the level of directors or producers…

DS: Oh yes, we could always put in programmes and they were often taken up.

How many came in from the production level and how many came in from the executive level, would you think?

DS: I would think from the executive level, not very much, I would say.

JPH: Hardly any.

DS: Well, hardly any. I mean if anything came in from the executive level, it would have come to them from outside or American sources.

Head of Department level is what I mean, in other words, people who should be originating ideas. Are you saying they weren't?

DS: Not really, no. I don't blame them entirely because they would be so bogged down with so many ideas, and again, they would be so leant on by Controllers to say I've bought an American series in, or I want you to have a look at this Australian series, or I want you to do a co-production with, but I don't think the actual Heads of Departments were very able to do their very own thing. I think that's what happened with Julian Mounter, that's why he was pleased to do the genealogy programme and put so much into it before he asked his producer/director, because he felt it was his idea and his baby, what he wanted to do. But the only trouble with that was that he announced that he wanted a programme that was really *This Is Your Life*, but a bit like *Jim'll Fix It* with a mixture of the Jeremy Beadle, LWT programme, the comic programme. So we looked a bit astounded, all of us, and said well, what do you want out of that? But he never really made up his mind.

JPH: *Game For A Laugh*.

DS: *Game For A Laugh*. He wanted *Game For A Laugh*, *Jim'll Fix It*, but mainly with the basis on *This Is Your Life*. But after that he never really was satisfied, whatever he did

he was never quite satisfied, always changing his mind. But that was really because it was his idea, he wanted a programme about genealogy based on *This Is Your Life*. So that was his idea. But I think it was really not that they weren't able to put in their own programme ideas, they were able to do it, but they were put down by the Controllers and the pressures and what they had to do and what they hadn't.

JPH: And the money, or lack of.

DS: Everything was, yes.

JPH: Same old story.

DS: Yes, lack of money. But I think it was getting as bad with Light Entertainment because I mean I had, still have all my friends there and being with the *This Is Your Life* lot and all having lunches together, I mean that's the best time in television, everybody having lunch together, that's where you hear all the gossip and what's happening and who's doing what and who's coming in to do what. But I mean they were always forever trapped by they must have a quiz show or *This Is Your Life* must go on forever and well, any shows you like to name, or mainly the quiz shows, or they'd get a new one, like *Strike It Lucky*. But I mean they were quite open to ideas in one way, specially in Light Ent, but it would get bogged down again by money, or somebody saying well wouldn't it be a better idea if, or yes, that's a good idea, we'll do that, but Des O'Connor must front it. That type of thing. And what goes best? A chat show. Right, we'll do a chat show with music. But as I said, I think the great days of light entertainment were sort of withering away. Now and again there'd be an odd thing. But I remember there was a marvellous Light Ent pilot they did called *Quirk* [ph] and that was, the title was taken off the keyboard, the left-hand keyboard of the typewriter. And they did this pilot and the director, Geoffrey Sax, who has now just made such a great name for himself on *Sleepers*, Nigel… what's his name? Wallace thing and Nigel thing have just done *Sleepers*, the BBC. And Geoffrey Sax…

[0:10:17]
JPH: Oh yes, yes, yes. Nigel Havers and…

DS: Nigel Havers.

JPH: [Warren] Clarke.

DS: Yes. And Geoffrey Sax is the director on that. Well, he did this pilot with a lot of bright young men and I thought it was a scream. They asked a group of us to go and look at the tape and I fell about and they said, 'Oh we wish we'd taped the reaction' And Philip Jones and the Controller looked at it and said, 'Oh we don't like that at all'. And it was just wiped out, and I thought what a pity, because it was such a funny show. It'd probably go well now because since then, I mean that's what, five, six, seven years ago, and since then of course they've had all the alternative comedians and everything else on too, it would probably go quite well. So again, it was timing of programme suggestions.

Well, it would be a blind alley I suppose to go down that particular route, the number of so-called executives in television, motion pictures who couldn't have been more wrong.

DS: It's the same old story isn't it? Yes. But really that is my career. Oh, then I went to, when I left Thames I had the opportunity of working at Sky, that was through a fellow director of mine.

Right, well you've jumped into leaving Thames, why don't we explore that a little more?

JPH: Yes, an interesting exploration that would be.

DS: Why?

JPH: Well, because the Equal Opportunities Act came into force, literally in November '87, and Daphs was carded to retire in December '87 on her birthday.

At the age of... I'm being nosey, but sixty?

DS: Six oh, yes.

JPH: On December twenty-two. And I started the ball rolling quite early on, again with Jack, and ACTT and said – I wasn't alone, a lot of other people did it as well – because of the changeover in 1968 on retirement ages when staff at Rediffusion, male staff were due to retire at sixty-five and female staff at sixty, and of course in between things had changed, not least of all one month before Daphne's due date was there. And we started quite early on making enquiries about why should she not be offered employment to sixty-five in the same way as the ex-Rediffusion employees who had been redeployed by LWT and Thames in the London area. And the lawyers started to look at it and then I think they all chickened out, quite frankly. We had personal discussions with James Coulsand [ph], who was then the labour relation guy at Thames, and my impression was that he more or less agreed with us and that somebody really ought to make a stand somewhere along the line. Nevertheless, we failed, because we had no support. It would have cost us a lot of money. And a few other people, old mates, ex-Rediffusion at Thames, including male people like Ivan Agar [ph], who, I don't know what happened to it, took out a lawsuit against Thames because they made him go before he was even sixty-five, and so on. And nothing happened. I cut out the piece in the paper only two weeks ago at the time we speak, in May 1991, of retrospectively some ladies who were forced to retire at the age of sixty, have now through the European Court of Human Rights, have brought cases against their former employees. And I still think that Daphne Shadwell has a case against Thames Television and one of these days I'll get round to reviving it with ACTT, perhaps.

How did you leave it? You just abandoned it?

DS: Well, John was very good again, took up the cudgels for me. We went to see James Coulsand [ph] who said that I had signed a paper with some other people – I don't understand it, I don't understand it at all – apparently when my contract came up, that I had signed it at a certain date, agreeing that date, and they had made a list – without telling anybody – they made a list, ABCD list, and you were put into that category of A, B, C or D of when you signed your contract, and I happened to be in C, which in the insurance thing said that I would leave at sixty. Which I'd never seen, he never saw.

JPH: All of which was very hard to understand.

DS: I didn't understand any of it.

Yes, it does sound odd.

JPH: I'm quite sure what they argued was totally wiped out by the Act, eventually.

Obfuscation. Yes, indeed.

DS: Somebody else was hit with it with me, but two other ladies stayed on till they were sixty-five, because they hadn't signed that bit of paper, they went into group A. And I thought, oh yes, I couldn't be bothered. I really thought, I can't be bothered. I missed five years' salary of course, but…

JPH: Yes. It almost felt like a revival of, let's get rid of Daphne Shadwell.

DS: Yes, and I thought I can't face all that. And it was, I felt it was time to go, I really felt it was time to go and I worked so hard in my last year there.

Do you think there was an element of thank God, thank God she's sixty!

DS: Yes. I wouldn't be surprised.

JPH: Well, I think it was thank God a lot of people were sixty, as far as Thames were concerned.

DS: Because they've got rid of nearly everybody, nearly everybody's on contract now. You see, I was one of the last great staff ones left on this three-year contract thing and I certainly earnt every penny of my last year there, I never stopped working. I don't know how many shows I did, I must have sort of cracked the whip.

JPH: Her diary for '87 is unbelievable.

DS: I looked awful and I felt very tired.

Do you think this related to the political activity within the country at that point? I mean a variety of things here, that it was a return to laissez-faire and it was also I think at this stage an awareness that television was going to be deregulated and therefore…

JPH: Quite possibly, yes.

…the fewer people they carried… yeah.

DS: I hadn't thought of it, John understands that more than I do, Roy.

JPH: The fewer people there were on the salary grade that Daphs was on, which was quite high of course…

Just through seniority.

JPH: Through seniority and length of service and everything else, yes, and they wanted to get rid of her as rapidly as they could. Bring another few researchers in and con [?] directors, down the other end. The old, old story.

DS: I mean half the people there now, they're only on contract. Some staff people left going up to sixty-five, ex-Rediffusion, but they're all very wobbly. I mean the young directors, old directors, everybody I know, they're all ever so wobbly, they don't know whether they're going to be working next year or not and there's very little to look forward to. In Light Ent they're just doing *Strike It Lucky*. *This Is Your Life* will come back, it's in rest period at the moment, that will come back. But hardly anything else.

JPH: It'll come back on the back of Michael Aspel, the frontman of course, and the vast contract.

DS: Yes, well that will go on.

JPH: Much publicised, he's just signed up to, Mike.

DS: *Strike It Lucky*, the Des O'Connor chat show will probably come back, but with a very small orchestra. Again, MU business, you see. They had a huge orchestra which was beautiful and wonderful, they're cutting it right back, down to about five-piece or something. So…

It's just occurred to me, I just interject this, that tomorrow I think is a great historical day in this sense, what, twelve noon the bids are in?

JPH: Twelve noon the bids finish.

DS: Ah, funny after all this chat.

Right.

DS: Yes, how strange.

Which relates directly because you were a part of leading up to…

DS: Right from the very beginning

…noon tomorrow.

DS: Yes. And the horror time of when Rediffusion lost its franchise.

JPH: '68, '69.

DS: And of course the years before, after that first flush of Rediffusion when everything was cut back and people were fired.

JPH: '56.

DS: I mean it was horrendous, but it never entered my head that I might be fired. Never entered my head, when all the people were fired and I thought oh, how dreadful. And we

were all cut back and all our allowances were cut, I just thought how dreadful, poor souls, but it never entered my head that it could have been me. [laughter] How dreadful.

We used to have a saying at CBS, I remember, that if you can keep your head when all about you are losing theirs, then maybe you don't fully understand the gravity of the situation.

[laughter]

JPH: That's the story of her life.

DS: [laughing] Exactly right, it is exactly right. I just looked startled at everybody else's mishaps.

Right. So now it's a very interesting period that you have lived through in this respect, the decline and fall of Thames. I wonder what more we might explore about this, what we might…

DS: Well I don't think they think it's a decline and fall, because I mean the higher ups, the hierarchy at Thames like Richard Dunn and the people at the higher level, they all think they're marvellous and going to get the next franchise. So this is only my…

JPH: Well, they're all ever so rich anyway and they have their share options.

DS: This is my soured view on it all, it sounds as if I'm very sour about it.

But it's a mess and whatever happens tomorrow and whatever comes out of tomorrow, it's a watershed and it's a disastrous one in terms of what we've been used to in this country in terms of a kind of benevolent, altruistic, service oriented television programme.

JPH: And caring.

Yeah, caring. It's caring.

DS: It is true.

JPH: The staff cared, the management cared about the staff at one time.

DS: Yes, there won't be any of that. Yes, you're quite right, there won't be any of that any more. Then we all cared terribly about our programmes, they cared about us, we all cared about each other and the rapport between crew…

JPH: The bought-in life from now on.

DS: Between crews, the thing on the floor was wonderful.

Shareholders' interests only as of tomorrow.

DS: Yes, yes. But the feeling on the floor between artists, you know, between artists, props, cameramen, lighting, us in the gallery, them on the floor, was just wonderful, magical. I think it would be very hard to bring it all back.

[0:20:06]
Try and recapture that or talk about it, because there was such pride and pleasure, it seems to me looking back on what I did, that there was always that enormous satisfaction. Doing something, getting off the air, if you were only getting off the air on time, at least there was a reward in that.

DS: Yes, exactly.

But there was never that feeling of, oh Christ, you know, what a fucking chore.

DS: No, it wasn't.

JPH: Well, the great thing was, we were all friends weren't we?

DS: We all grew up together, that's what it was.

JPH: We all went to the bar together, we all went out to eat together: cameras, sound, artists, directors.

[both speaking together]

DS: We grew up together, that's why. And we'd suffered together, we suffered agonies.

Wrote the book, for better or for worse, right?

JPH: Yes.

DS: Yes, that's right. Good times. Very good times, and we were all pleased when it…

A word to the future, only to say that here we are screaming and scratching, carrying on, but there's great validity to what we're saying, I think.

DS: And it was, I mean we all helped each other and we were all ever so pleased when we all got on, when somebody moved up one or became a lighting director or somebody moved into directing. We were ever so pleased. And the enormous help we gave each other. Well, I shall always be grateful for the help I was given when I started directing. The help I was given, it was wonderful.

JPH: Yes, the camaraderie that doesn't exist any more now.

DS: Yes, the marvellous suggestions.

JPH: You just walk in and focus up and stick a mic in and turn the knob up and go home.

DS: Yes, and they used to say, 'Daph, you're not going to do that', or 'What's that supposed to be?' or something. And I'd say, 'Well, I thought it was rather nice, I rather liked that'. 'It looks horrible.' Wonderful.

Well, this is the period of your leaving Thames, and let's milk it for all it's worth. What else is there to be said possibly about this? Anything at all?

DS: Well, I think it was…

JPH: Had a great party, not on the company.

DS: Yes, I was very disappointed, I thought I would have, I don't know why, I thought I would have more fuss of me made by the company. I think it was a lot…

Ie, management?

DS: Yes, because I thought…

So what did management do?

DS: It's John's fault really, because he kept on saying to me, you see he makes the bullets, you see, and I fire them. My mother used to say this about my father. Because he kept saying, 'Well Daphs, I hope they appreciate that you've done…' how many years was it?

JPH: Oh, thirty… plus. Thirty-two years.

DS: Thirty-two years. I hope they appreciate and there aren't many people like you and you've been…

A direct line of continuity from the opening days?

DS: Oh yes, and before that from BBC into the…

Well, in commercial television.

DS: Yes, and right from the start, working in the office with, there were about twenty of us. That was the opening and the start. And I don't think, I mean they sort of offered me a party, they had the usual leaving party, which was you can have, we will pay so many pounds and you can have twenty people. That was the official leaving party. It was

something like that wasn't it? You can have twenty people on so-and-so, and a small buffet and somebody will come and make a speech. And of course he, John P Hamilton went mad and said, 'We're not having any of that, we're going to have our own party, I don't care what it costs, go and arrange a party'. So I arranged a party. And I made it an open party, but I made it very clear, I didn't want anybody from management coming down and making a speech to me, that's one thing I didn't. And then they said we could give you a farewell present, we could make an arrangement for some money, and I wrote back…

JPH: £400.

DS: I don't want it, I said.

Were they as niggardly as you make them sound or as they appear to be?

DS: Yes, I think they were. And in the end they graciously gave me £400, I bought a desk with it, that desk in the room, I bought a desk with it and they'd given me £400. But I didn't have a letter from anybody, nobody wrote to me, including my Head of Department. Nobody wrote me a letter and said, 'Well, cheers Daphs' or 'Thirty-three years, thank you for contributing something to the industry'. That's what I missed more than anything, that somebody didn't say, well you've given something, or you have helped or you must have put something into this industry.

You were there, if nothing else.

DS: Yes. And nobody said and I said to the head of my department, I said, 'Oh, we had this big party' and I just looked at him and he said, 'Oh hello', in the corridor or something. And I said, 'You didn't come to my party' I said. He said, 'I wasn't invited'. I said, 'It was an open party and everybody could come and have a drink with me'. 'Oh.' And he never said goodbye to me or shook me by the hand. I saw Richard Dunn in the corridor, I was walking down with Maurice Leonard and I said, 'Hello Mr Dunn' and then I said, 'Oh, Richard', because he'd said some weeks before, 'Just call me Richard' or something. 'Oh, Richard' and he just nodded his head at me, he said, 'Oh Maurice, by the way, so-and-so, so-and-so, how are you?' and turned his back on me. And I walked out of

the building, that was my last day in television. I never had a note. I thought David Elskin [ph] would have written me a note because we'd known him for years, hadn't we? And I thought he would have sent a little note saying, 'Cheers on you Daphs' or whatever. But… I mean maybe it was my attitude, maybe I… because I'd thought of having a party. I think they said I could have £400 either to have a lunch, because we thought of having a lunch didn't we? I was offered a lunch and I said yes, I'd have a luncheon and twelve people I was allowed. I mean it was awful. When I started thinking about it, I can have a twelve person lunch or I can have twenty people for a drink in the bar or… I thought, oh I can't bear any of this and neither could John, and I just left, I packed up my things and put them in the car and emptied the office and off I went.

Were they usually that ungracious?

JPH: Well, by and large, yes they have been. Since then, yes. We had lots of old buddies who pioneered it, the same as Daphs did, in all sections: cameras, lighting, sound, you name it…

Just bundled out.

JPH: …who just went. Some of them just closed the door. Audrey Starritt [ph] just walked out of the building, didn't she?

DS: Yes, she didn't have a drink.

So it wasn't even personalities?

DS: No, no, no, no.

JPH: No, no.

This was now company policy.

JPH: And management attitude.

DS: And very glad to be rid of us. Thinking, oh thank God, that's another one off the payroll, you know. Oh no, I don't think it was personalised at me, no. It was just like everybody else, I was a bit hurt about it inside, a bit let down, which I suppose everybody else was, but it was just everybody. And it's even worse now, I mean people do just walk out.

JPH: Oh yes.

Well, the fact that Dunn would cut you in the corridor, again, is that indicative of the relationship that existed between so-called management and…

DS: Yes. He's alright to some people, he's a good frontman, but I've always thought of him as just a frontman, a good looking man, a frontman.

For whom?

DS: For the company.

Well yes, but what is the company? The board or the shareholders or…

JPH: The board, yes.

DS: The board, I suppose, yes, yes. He's the one who makes all the statements, gets all the publicity and the press, looks good, good looking man, big handsome looking man.

Yes. Turns up on television and rabbits.

DS: Yes, talks rubbish. I can never remember what he's said at the end of it. He used to have meetings with all the staff and I never remembered anything. But I have very little patience for him, I think he has no kindness of heart or care for staff at all. I mean Brownrigg, God rest his soul, whatever he was, but my God he cared about the staff.

So somewhere there was this change between paternalistic capitalism and Thatcherism red in tooth and claw, where the plebs trundled away at their wheels producing profits for the masters. That's the way it sounds.

DS: Well it does really. I don't know whether it's as bad as that, I don't think it's quite as bad as that. It's just I suppose a state of life, because as we said earlier off the recording, it's happening in every walk of life, in every industry.

Should it though, should it?

DS: No, it shouldn't, it…

JPH: Quite sad.

DS: It's because the accountants have taken over, that is the trouble, that's where it's gone wrong.

JPH: Yes, the bottom line.

DS: That's what happened in Thames, that's where it's gone wrong.

Well, the accountants and the financiers perhaps.

DS: Yes, they've taken over totally. I mean it became a joke when I was there when all the offices were being moved and we were all hurdled out of one building into another into tiny spaces, because three floors were taken over by the accountants' department. We never knew who they were, we saw all these chaps whizzing about. We all went, other people were fired, people disappeared, but not the accountants.

What would be most interesting is to try and capture the flavour at this moment, which is quite obviously highly transitional and nobody knows what's going to happen to what we always fondly have called public service broadcasting in this country and what anyone who might be listening to this tape in the future will know. I mean do you have any kind of feeling about that, the direction in which it's all going?

DS: No, I think it'll become, my opinion is it'll just become Americanised. I mean I'm totally disappointed with what's on the box now. There are exceptions, there are some things that are still marvellous, there are some things that are still very good, some things are very enjoyable, but not so much. I think again, that buying up cheap American programmes has lowered the level of good programming. I think the level of presenters and the presentation of news and the factual programmes, I think is very bad for the whole of television. I think while you have a standard on that, it keeps up a level.

I'd question whether we've bought up that much bad American programme. I think by and large, bad American programme's only been bought as a curiosity, by Channel 4 as bad American programming. Surely we do our own bad programming, we're not half bad at doing bad programming.

[0:30:10]
DS: Oh yes. I understand what you mean, Roy, yes, I realise, I mean a lot of what I've said…

I don't just mean Jeremy Beadle, but…

DS: [laughter] I realise what I said. I suppose the programmes are bad because we've done poor English copies of so many American shows, American sitcoms, American game shows, American… and I think that's probably lowered the level of entertainment.

Yes, a very good point. We're always at our worst when we imitate American stuff.

DS: Yes, yes. That's probably what I meant. And also, I do think that the level of presentation in the news and documentary in the higher class areas, that anybody can go on that screen now and utter and speak or present a news programme or do anything, there seems to have been… At one point there had to be a certain standard of speech, a certain standard of appearance, a certain standard of behaviour, and to me now, well I mean John and I sit here absolutely a-gog at some of the people who walk on and do the pieces on news South East or the end of the news or…

JPH: Yes, four reporters a night who are completely useless.

DS: I know they have to try out…

JPH: They're obviously researchers or news assistants or whatever.

DS: Anyway, again, it's probably cheap.

JPH: Anybody can do it.

DS: Somebody who's gone out, saying well, put her in front of the camera, go out with the cameraman, you're the researcher, you're a researcher-presenter, go out and do your piece.

JPH: Researcher-presenter-director, unfortunately.

DS: And there's nobody behind that camera saying, don't stand like that, you can't wear that coat, for God's sake comb your hair. Don't say that word, it sounds awful.

Well, do you think that may be a reflection of a general – I hesitate to use the phrase lowering of standards - but deteriorating education…

JPH: Yes.

The old systems, for better, for worse have broken down.

DS: Yes. Because they're laughed at, they're thought as ridiculous now, if you speak too well or you have a standard or a moral stand.

Right. So the BBC again, with all its faults, was perceived as a centre of excellence in many, many ways.

DS: I think it still is in most areas.

JPH: The BBC is worse than ITV in that respect.

DS: At the moment.

JPH: In my opinion, now, yes.

DS: At the moment.

JPH: From the news point of view.

So where does this change originate, do you think? Is this imposed or does it well up from our Sun reading populace?

DS: Yes, I think it's signs of the times. I think it's when certain Controllers or executives think that people like Danny what's his name…

JPH: Baker.

DS: Baker and Janet Street-Porter and – who's that other awful presenter? They think they're funny, new and then they put then on because young people like them, they'll be popular with the young people and the new vogue of expressionism or behaviour. And I think, I think that's led to the downfall or to the lowering of standards of speech and behaviour and dress and outlook.

But that's very localised. Isn't there probably a much larger movement somehow afoot? And again, I ask you whether that somehow is imposed from a political level that has captured the integrity of the country or whether somehow it is welling up from below.

DS: I think it wells up from below, and I think executives and people and politicians jump on the bandwagon of what they think is a swell of popular demand or acclaim or…

So it is populism at work really, is what you're saying?

DS: Yes, I think so. Yes.

And obviously you don't appreciate…

DS: I don't. I don't at all. I think there's probably a programme or a place where you can put on to show Janet Street-Walker… Janet Street-Walker?

Porter! Porter!

DS: Janet Street-Walker!

She of the 'yoof' programming. [laughter]

DS: [laughter] And Danny thing and these people you see on now. Yes, I'm not saying that you shouldn't have programmes with them in, but I don't think that everything else should then stem from there and all programmes become like it or all people or presenters.

JPH: Not just television, radio's just as bad.

Are you seeing it from a middle class vantage point?

DS: I expect so.

You talked about Michael Aspel with that probation before, but to me he is one of those appalling creeps who again is a parasite on the system, but he just happens to speak with a more acceptable accent.

DS: He probably is, it's just because I probably have met him, know him, worked with him, and found him so charming and so likeable, so easy to work with, so professional, that that's coloured my view on him.

But no bottom, I would think? May I venture that as a thought?

DS: [laughter] I don't know.

In the old-fashioned expression.

JPH: He does what he's asked to do better than most other people do.

Right. So professionalism he has, but…

DS: Yes.

Right, well let's not pick on him unduly. Would you venture any kind of crystal balling about what's going to happen?

DS: No, no. I think because I've been in it for too long and at the moment I really just feel depressed about it all and I'm just hoping to be encouraged or pleased by what's to come about. I hope that I won't be too disillusioned, too tired, or this awful can't be bothered feeling, not to participate. I hope that maybe when they've all pulled themselves together and something's come out the… Because somebody's got to make some programmes soon. To me the most depressing aspect at the moment is it's bad enough that there's so many people out of work, so many people on the market, so many people not working, it's quite dreadful. And how many will stay in it, how many will survive, how many will go back, good people, without turning their talents to something else or going away or leaving the country. I hope so many of them will survive. But I mean what I'm so depressed at is that nobody's making any programmes or anything decent or no money's being spent, nothing's being built up. I'm only hoping, to try and remain cheerful about it, that somebody somewhere's going to have to make some programmes at some time, we can't keep putting out repeats or cheap programmes or quiz shows, or returns of, or another series of, because it's safe and they know exactly what the budgets are and what the audience will be. And I'm hoping that some programmes will be made and therefore things will stir again. Like when the recession's over when property moves or the building trade starts again. I hope some life will come back into the industry. I think there's no life in it at the moment.

JPH: Do you want to say a little about your experiences with Sky?

Yes, I was about to say.

DS: Oh, well they're very little.

We've left Thames and…

JPH: Left network television after many, many years.

And Sky now is very much part of the transitional activity, which none of us can say… out of that what will come. So, right. So you left Thames…

DS: I left Thames.

…with your £400 desk.

DS: [laughter] Yes. Very nice it is too.

On your back.

DS: And lots of still good friends. And it was through a friend of mine, John Woods, a very good director-producer, who was asked to go and see somebody at Sky in the Children's Department for a programme called *The Fun Factory* and when he got there he said, 'You've got quite the wrong person', he's very funny, he said, 'I don't think it's me you're looking for, but I know just the person who would be right for this programme. You *need* Daphne Shadwell'. And luckily this lady, the executive producer, Amanda Cuthbert, knew me, she'd been a researcher a long time ago at Euston, had met me and knew me there. She said, 'Oh I know Daphne Shadwell' and she asked me to go for an interview, to see her, very nice lady. And I had a long chat with her, went up to see the programme, and it was just my cup of tea, the programme, because it was just like *Rainbow*, and I understand and like puppeteers very much indeed and had done, well I've done many puppet programmes apart from *Rainbow*. And I met them all and they all seemed to like me, so she asked me to do the programme. So in I went to do a series of this programme called *Fun Factory*. But of course…

This was immediately after you left Thames?

DS: No, a matter of weeks. Six months.

JPH: Well, close after.

DS: Yes, close after, close after. So up I went, but it was difficult to feel that it was Sky Television, because they as a unit, the Sky *Fun Factory* unit, worked from Carlton TV. They had offices within Carlton TV up at St John's Wood Road, in St John's Wood, the studios there, and of course it's so near home for me, that it didn't feel as if I was going anywhere, I just ran up the road into Carlton studios, and worked there for quite a few weeks. But it didn't feel as if I was at Sky, I felt as if I was doing an outside broadcast for Thames, and there were quite a few people I knew there, there were freelance crews and there were quite a few who'd worked at Thames or I knew. The gallery was very strange, it was quite, quite different and their methods were quite different and I found that the usage of technical language was different, which again, later on the programme moved up, again because of finances with Sky, they cut back and they took, pulled the *Fun Factory* unit out of Carlton, because the hire of offices and the hire of Carlton was getting too expensive, although it fitted the programme very well indeed, to give them Portakabins up at Isleworth, the new Sky buildings up at Isleworth, and to use their studios there, could use the studio. So when I went up there I found again a change of terminology, it was very strange, it was very good for me to learn all these things. But it was very strange, you worked with different vision mixers who'd come from BBC or ATV or – not ATV – Central, or had worked elsewhere, all have different terms and terminology. So I had the wit to keep my mouth shut and find out or question somebody, a friendly person very closely. And once you knew the terminology, what the thing was, then it was all very simple, but at first it was very frightening to go into this different world with different people. But, the programme was great fun and it was very near to *Rainbow* and the puppeteers were lovely and they were all nice people, so I thoroughly enjoyed myself. It was like the good old days, wasn't it John, for me? A very enjoyable show to do, very nice people and pitch into.

[0:41:05]
JPH: And helpful.

DS: But, very, very hard work because you were very tied, they were tied for money and tied for time, you couldn't go over time and there was one day in the studio, not like at Thames, I mean you were in awful disgrace if you did go over time, but somehow, somewhere another day in the studio or half a day, but you couldn't do that at Sky if you didn't finish.

Did you ever not get through?

DS: No, touch wood. Thank God I didn't. I overran. My first day was a disaster, I overran by two hours, I nearly died of shame, and then found out that every other director who worked on the programme had overrun by, there was somebody who ran over by four hours.

Did you go in in the very early days at Sky? Were they on the air?

DS: Yes, they'd been running sometime.

On satellite already?

DS: Yes, they'd been…

JPH: Yeah, the programme had been running in Europe anyway for quite a long time.

DS: For about four years.

Four years, yes, yes.

DS: It had been a long running programme.

I'd forgotten that, yes.

DS: But it was very interesting to find out about the audience thing. I mean most of the young viewers who watched were from Yugoslavia and Hungary. Tons from Holland, amazing viewing figures. But then there was a great changeover, which I didn't quite

understand, because they were pulling out from Europe more – oh, and of course it was the case of the changeover when BSB came in, they concentrated, starting concentrating on Britain and wanting the programme changed.

JPH: Had to sell the dishes.

DS: Yeah, wanted to sell dishes, and changed the programme for Britain and much more competitions and things, to involve them and to encourage the British kids to write in and watch. But it was harder working at Isleworth because it was much nearer, you know, the heads and the bosses.

Yes.

DS: And what you were allowed to do and what you were not allowed to do. They were much tougher on the sites, I mean the fact that you… they had a canteen there, it was quite a nice canteen, very small, but a good canteen, good food. No drink at all, it was totally dry, not a… totally dry ship. This, I believe, was because Mr Murdoch had stopped any drinking or clubs or any drink at all on his newspaper sites because there'd been a very bad accident somewhere through somebody being drunk. I don't know what it was, I don't know the ins or outs, but through drinking there'd been a bad accident and he banned all drinking on his newspaper sites, so he felt, actually I think quite rightly, that in his television site it would have to be the same. But of course it's a bit difficult in television when you've got guests and people, and I mean Isleworth is one of those dreadful sites – what are they called – business, industrial sites, trading sites.

Yes, an industrial site.

DS: Dreadful. Nothing around, I mean no pubs, no cafes, no restaurants. So, I mean it's a good thing in one way because you become immersed in your work, because you can't go out, so you go to the canteen, have a quick sandwich and a bite and go straight back to the office.

Did people bootleg liquor on to the premises?

JPH: Yes.

DS: [laughter] Well, a certain person did, they weren't supposed to.

JPH: There was the rugby club up the road.

DS: There was a rugby club round the corner, you could run round there if you had the energy.

I'll leave my next question to the next side.

[end of Side 9 Tape 5]

[Side 10 Tape 5]

DS: Nobody's told me, and they haven't told me now, have they?

So, importing alcohol had penalties?

DS: It did, so I was told, yes. I believe it was instant dismissal, instant.

Was it very antipodean at Sky in Isleworth, or is it?

DS: Well, I think it was. When I first worked for them I had to go editing, up to Isleworth, up to head office to do some editing up there, and somebody who I knew from Carlton was going up there said they'd show me round, and that was in the early days of Isleworth. And the editing suites were very nice and huge, but they were all manned by young Australian gentlemen, either over for nine months or six months, they were all Australian, were most of them were Australians, the VT editors, and a lot of the staff. But one of the studios had been built… I said, 'How nice', they said, 'This is Studio 3', and I said, 'Oh, how funny, it's just like Studio 3 at Teddington'. It had got the same small little doorway that you went in and the gallery was in the same place and it was about the same size, a bit bigger. And they said, 'What do you notice about it?' I walked round and I said, 'Where's the dock door? Where do the scenery and cameras come in?' They said, 'They forgot to build it'. [laughter] Everything had to come in this tiny doorway, which of course half of it couldn't so it was a bare studio. And there was another, the big studio, they were having to completely rebuild because it had been designed with the scene dock miles away outside, so if it was pouring with rain everything would have to come in sopping wet, so they had to rebuild that. And I said, 'Who built this, who was the designer?' And nobody seemed to quite know, they said they thought it was an Australian. And I said, 'Well it was probably somebody who had designed the Managing Director's auntie's bungalow down in Woggaland somewhere'. [laughter] But anyway, they got it put right. When I went back there, they'd changed a lot, it was not a bad building. The galleries were very good, the galleries were excellent and they had their VTR area within the gallery area, which was much quicker than having to get on the phone or talkback, or whatever.

JPH: A lot of electronics. Electronic cap gen.

DS: Yes, all in the gallery, very good galleries indeed. Well designed.

Was Murdoch ever in evidence?

DS: I didn't see him much. He was there one day having, funnily enough, they were having a great big luncheon for the board and him and the studio was closed, I had to go down to the prop area, so I saw it, and we were given a bottle of wine because they had a great big luncheon with marvellous wine and food and everything, and everybody was nipping out getting the odd glass of wine where they could outside where this lunch was.

So the dry rule changed for the management?

DS: It was a special lunch. Special luncheon which was laid on by outside caterers.

For special people.

DS: But the people there seemed very nice. Again, it's like all television, the people on the floor level are just lovely; all the props, all the… A lot of the crews, they were very young crews, very good, very enthusiastic and energetic. A lot of them had come from the Ravensbourne School.

JPH: College.

DS: The College. They were very good and they loved it with a challenge and I did a couple of shows where we did a couple of musical numbers and things. Oh, and they loved it, because they were normally doing the newsroom there or fairly straightish programmes in the studio, so anything, that's why they loved doing *Fun Factory* because it was a funny programme. I had so many interesting, like a magazine programme, had different elements in it, you know, somebody's dance school come in or somebody, famous guest star, somebody on film coming in with something, and they never knew what was coming, so the crews loved doing it. But last time I was there it was quite hard

because there was pressure on the programme, terrible pressure on the programme. They'd got a new man in to…

JPH: The hatchet man.

DS: The hatchet man to tighten up on the programmes, what was wrong, and poor Amanda Cuthbert…

Financial pressure?

DS: No, no.

JPH: No, it was programming, wasn't it?

DS: It was programming. It's got a funny… like…

JPH: In connection with BSB and then subsequently of course the amalgamation with BSB.

DS: So it was after BSB. And poor Amanda Cuthbert, the executive producer, was having a terrible time. She was suddenly leant on, saying there was one character in the puppetry they didn't like, they wanted to change, they wanted it out, they had no reason. And they only wanted two puppets, which meant it didn't work in the storyline. So she got another puppet in which cost a fortune, they didn't like that and that was thrown out, and then the next thing was they wanted it shorter, and then they wanted this and they wanted that. The pressure on her was terrible with these gentlemen up top just sending messages: take that out, do this, do that. Became like the terrible old nightmare of television, you know. Somebody she never saw. And then one day…

Who were these people up top?

DS: Well, it was the Programme Controller and the…

The Aus-tri-*lian?*

DS: And the Aus-*tri*-lian, and the... yes, and the accountants and goodness knows what. And then one day she was sent for.

Are you saying accountants were saying this puppet is…

DS: I think one of the accountants, yes, they all sat, looked at the programme and just went, 'Don't like that!'

Don't like that, fair dinkum.

DS: Take it out! And then anyway, the last programme I did was last September and she said well, we've having to cut back now, because I used to do some outside work for them as well, just some ENGs, some VTR inserts, you know, five minute pieces of interest of whatever, which I used to do. And she said we've got to cut back so much on the programme we're not doing any, so come the spring I hope you'll come and do some more for us. And her producer, Gillian, very nice girl – and I was just going to ring them up and say, 'Hello, any work please?' you know, 'What's happening?' And I used to say to them what about doing this, what about doing that, which they liked. And the PA rang and said we were all in the studio last Wednesday doing the programme, including all the competitions - write to, and results next week, and we'll let you have, and six months' time apply for… and on the Thursday morning Amanda was sent for and told that the programme was cut, axed, finished. And she said, 'Well what about the competitions? Next Saturday they'll all be sitting there', right. They said, 'Oh we can't help that', and the programme was axed overnight. The whole unit, so I mean it's bad enough for me that there was no work for me, but that poor unit worked together for four years, gone, finished. Plus another programme with a friend of ours, called *Deadly Earnest*, which was a very good programme, rather funny, that was axed overnight. So those programmes have gone, so that's more people out on the market out of work, which is not good. So that was the end of my Sky work, unfortunately, but I enjoyed it when I was there. I didn't enjoy it as much as Thames, but again, the old, old story, on the floor with the programme was just lovely. Lovely people.

The pleasure of doing it.

DS: Yes, the pleasure of doing it, and the lovely people on the floor. The props people, and the lighting chap was marvellous. And it was just like being with friends again, you know. And I remember some directors in the old days of Rediffusion used to be ever so silly, they used to work with the same crew all the time, they used to say, ring up in advance and say, can I have such-and-such a crew for my show, it's so-and-so speaking. But I'd ask now and again for some people, but on the whole I worked with everybody, it was much more fun, because you got to know everybody and everybody's different ways and little quirks and ways of working. So that was, the last time I worked with Sky was last September or October, I think it was, and I'm sorry to say I haven't worked since, but please God, it will all change and I'll get some work soon.

Well, at a certain stage you're due a bit of peace and tranquillity.

DS: The less I do, the less I want to do.

And relaxation. I know that feeling. Right, so now, what, we come to the summing up.

DS: Yes, I find that very hard. I don't know whether we can do that.

Well, let's do maybe one or two areas and see where that leads us. First of all, you are a woman, so how was that in part of your career, affected it, fortuitously, adversely, any other way?

DS: Well, funnily enough, I had never, ever thought of it and it used to amaze me. And when the Women's Movement came in – I know this will irritate a lot of people – but it used to infuriate me, because the only time I was aware of being a woman was when Lloyd Williams offered me the job of being a director, all he said to me was, 'I'll give you this opportunity, you can do this show, we'd like you to have a go at being a director. We offered it to you at the beginning, said that you could be a trainee director. I want you to do your best, don't let me down and don't forget, as a woman you've got to be ten per cent better than anybody else'. And I just laughed and I said, 'Oh yes'. And from that moment on, it's quite extraordinary, Roy, and John knows it, I never, ever thought of myself as a woman. It never entered my head, I never thought about it, I never ever remember saying,

'Just because I'm a woman…' or 'I suppose it's because I'm a woman'. It never entered my life, ever.

JPH: Never been an issue technically or…

DS: Never, ever.

JPH: Never.

DS: No. I can't think of any case.

Is that a general rule, would you think?

DS: Well, I would have thought so, unless somebody made an issue of it, and it was only in much later years when we started having this thing about equality and women, and I used to go, what are you going on about? You know, either do it and get on with it, or you can do it or you can't do it. I never understood what the fuss was about.

Were you paid the same rates as men, would you say?

[0:10:00]
JPH: Yes.

DS: Yes, I earnt so little to start with, for so long.

JPH: She earned more than I did for a long, long time because she was much senior than I and...

DS: Because I'd started before, yes.

JPH: …directing, she started before.

DS: I never, I mean touch wood, thank God, I think the whole of my life, whether I've been lucky or whether I just, the way I treat it, Roy, I've never ever had that problem. It's never entered my head.

So now, let's try and work it out. Would that have been commercial television? Because the BBC was never that, what? Open or…

DS: No, they weren't.

The advancement of women, they were secretaries or whatever.

DS: Yes, I was always a secretary at the BBC, I don't think I would ever have been anything else. I've always said that, haven't I John?

So right from the early days of ITV, women have been liberated and part of the activity?

DS: Yes, right from the beginning. You know, it was all thanks to Lloyd Williams, God rest his soul, wasn't it? I mean he'd say, have a go, you know, if you're good enough. He always invited people to have a go or have a chance. If they didn't come up to it they were out. There were a lot of women PAs and vision mixers who did a couple of shows and didn't make it and they were out, that was the end of it.

Were they women in a men's world, couldn't cope?

JPH: Possibly, yes. The ones we're thinking of in the early days of Rediffusion.

DS: Penny what's her name, Penny Wootton.

JPH: Yes, and Liz, Liz Cole and…

DS: June.

JPH: June Cornwell. They, in my opinion, and I was sound then, relied on being women.

DS: In what way, John? I mean I don't understand it.

JPH: Well, they were a bit lovey-dovey on talkback and, 'Oh come on chaps, do it for me' type thing.

DS: Oh, I see.

JPH: Which you never ever did.

DS: Never would have thought to have done that, no.

And therefore…

JPH: You never relied on a lovey-dovey, I'm a woman, approach to the technical…

DS: No, never thought of it, never used myself as a woman, I don't think.

JPH: And therefore you were considered just one of the guys and you got on with it and they accepted it and there were no problems.

DS: I think it was because I never thought about it. Maybe those ladies thought about it.

[both speaking together]

JPH: The only time of inequality was right at the end of your Thames career when we took a stand, or tried to, on the point of pensionability.

DS: Yes, that's true, that's true.

JPH: In relation to an Act of Parliament and we failed on that, but I still think you've got a case.

DS: Yes, because if I'd been a chap I could have stayed till sixty-five, ex-Rediffusion. As I was a woman I had to leave at sixty. I think that was the only time in my whole life and career it's affected me.

You were badly positioned for that because that will get sorted out, I suspect by Europe, rather than in this country.

DS: Yes, it'll be much too late.

JPH: Although, the case I quoted earlier, a judge in this country has now agreed that it should be so and a case has been proved.

DS: I notice it as a woman driver, but that's a different story. [laughter] But as far as my work's concerned, I can't ever remember, can you John? Coming home and saying, so-and-so said to me, and he's a beastly man…

JPH: Or something like that, yes.

DS: Or whatever. I can't think of any instance at all that I've had to complain.

JPH: No, no, no.

DS: Or just because you're a woman, or don't cry, don't pull that on me. I mean I have cried, yes, I've cried.

Were you patronised ever, in your recollection?

DS: Yes, I remember being patronised by some of the, a couple of the drama directors. Cyril Coke patronised me, Cyril…

JPH: Well, he would.

DS: Cyril, poor old Cyril…

JPH: Cyril Butcher.

DS: Butcher, he patronised me. That very early director, Robert – I always used to think his name was Richard – Stigwood. But it isn't Richard Stig…

JPH: Bob Stigwood.

DS: Robert somebody or other.

Robert Stigwood?

JPH: No, no, no, no.

DS: No. I did meet him, Robert Stigwood, but it wasn't him. It was a director who came in. He was Australian, he'd been Light Ent, I can see him. And he was absolutely shattered, I could see it, he was shattered when I was made a director, kept looking at me. And he used to talk about having the angles, he used to irritate me, he used to always talk like that about it and how we shoot and do this, that and the other, used to do that. And he had a go at me one day about being a director or starting to direct and how did I know it, and I knew, I realised, although I was very young, I realised he was patronising me. But I did, I used to be patted on the head and, 'Hello, how are the kiddywinkies?' Used to drive me mad. 'How are the kiddywinkies getting on?' Or, when I was doing drama, I mean I did a lot of drama, they'd say, 'Oh, how was your little programme last night?' It was always 'little programme' or something, or 'How did you manage?' in a surprised tone, 'How did you manage last night?' Or amazed, 'That was good!' [laughter] I had quite a lot of that.

Did you return it in kind?

DS: I think, well not always, but I don't think… I think the tongue didn't… I don't think I wasted…

JPH: You restrained yourself, didn't you?

DS: I restrained myself a lot. I did spout out, I remember one thing, which has got nothing to do with anything, Roy, but you were saying my forthrightness. I remember Peter Wills, he'd been Head of Light Entertainment, we've talked of him earlier, and he was Head of Drama then and there was the Equity strike on and a lot of us were doing…

JPH: '61.

DS: I was doing a series of programmes with non-Equity light ent actors, you know, people are jugglers or singers, people who just hadn't joined Equity. They were CSA.

JPH: Concert artists.

DS: They were concert artists, yes. So we did a quarter of an hour programme and I remember Peter Wills coming in as Head of Drama and looking down his nose at me and saying, 'Well, well, well. What about you, what about these funny little programmes you're doing?' I said, 'Well at least we're doing programmes aren't we?' And there was a stunned silence and the people in the circle roared with laughter and he was furious, wasn't he, he was absolutely furious, and everyone said, 'Oh that was wonderful. At least we're doing programmes aren't we?' So it was the wicked tongue again you see, got going. So a lot of people didn't get away with it, but I was definitely patronised.

Does that explore that issue, do you think?

DS: Did what, Roy?

Does that explore that issue?

DS: I think so, yes.

Right, okay. The next thing then I would ask you about would be the Union. Your feelings about ACT, ACTT and your relationship with them, your participation?

DS: Well, I think I told you the story of how I was forced to join, much to my irritation and annoyance, I didn't want to, but once I had joined I decided that as I had been forced

to join and I had joined, I would join in, which I did. I've always gone to a lot of meetings, so if Bob Hamilton hears this at all he'll go mad, because as a freelancer I've paid up my dues – I'm still fully paid up – and I keep having notices about the freelance meetings and I haven't been to any of them. But I've always gone to meetings, I've gone along, I've appreciated what ACT have done to back us up in television when things have been bad or gone wrong or people have shouted, put it into dispute. I've appreciated the back-up. I haven't appreciated everything that the Union have done, I haven't always agreed with Alan Sapper's trips here and there and announcements, in any way whatsoever. Although personally he's always been very nice to me and I have always been very nice to him. It's just I haven't agreed with everything that he's said or done at all. But on the whole I have no bad words about the Union at all.

Well, they stood by you in your time of tribulation…

DS: Wonderful, wonderful.

…at Thames, which I think is a nice story to hear about.

JPH: Well, Jack did. I don't think the Union, per se, would have done if it had become an issue…

You think they wouldn't have backed Jack…

JPH: No, if it had become an issue – and I tried to make it an issue at television branch – and no, there was no support whatsoever there, I have to say. And I was more closely associated with that aspect of it than Daphne was.

What then would have…

JPH: Jack, from a personal point of view, yes and I think that he probably worked the oracle in the end which gave rise to the letter of apology that Daphs mentioned earlier. But I think as a Union, no, they wouldn't have supported her at all.

DS: Although there were getting to be a lot of murmurs and rumblings down at Teddington, I found out afterwards. Angela Morgan, a PA there, set up a great tumult [? - 0:18:35] and Bill, the lighting director…

JPH: Bill Lee.

DS: Bill Lee, the lighting director, came to see me especially at Euston after I'd gone back to ask me how I was and was I alright, because a group of people down at Teddington had started getting very perturbed about me and worried about me, which was very nice.

JPH: They were concerned for you on a personal basis.

DS: They were concerned about me.

JPH: Nothing to do with ACTT.

DS: But I don't know whether they would have stood up in the shop. I don't know, they might have done. But no, I have no grumbles about the Union at all. As I say, I'm still paid up and I went to all meetings and I think that they backed us and behaved very well.

At a time when a working stiff does not have to be a member of the Union, do you intend to continue as a member of the Union? Or you see no reason not to be?

DS: Well, I remain a member of the Union. Or now that we don't have to be?

Or pay your dues, I suppose, isn't it?

DS: Yes, well I have, you see, I have. John thinks…

You have, but do you intend to?

DS: Well, I think so in a funny way. I think it's because I've made such a fuss now, in the past few years, except in the recent years when I haven't bothered at all, in the past I

made such a fuss about all these nobodies jumping in and coming in and no Union cover or getting their ticket through the back door, I made such a fuss about it that I think morally and inside me I feel it's right for me to remain a member for whatever work that I do. I don't know why, it's a silly… it's a difficult thing for me to say and John wouldn't agree with me at all. But I'm a funny person, I have loyalties, haven't I John?

JPH: Yes.

[0:20:09]
DS: I'm very loyal about things and I think that I feel that I should be loyal to the Union and if I'm going to do the job and I'm going to be part of it, then I may as well be wholly part of it, and I think a Union is necessary. You see, I found it very interesting at Sky that they were having such a rough time and they had terrible difficulties, but they couldn't do anything about anything. And I remember Amanda Cuthbert saying to me, as executive producer and as an ex-researcher, how sorry she was, how they all felt, that they hadn't got Union back-up, because there was a point where they being moved office into a totally appalling area next to the canteen with no light, no windows, no anything. And they went and complained to the Programme Controller and the Executive Manager of the whole place, and they said, 'That's the situation, what are you going to do about it? If you don't like it, leave'. And then of course they've all just been given notice, a month's notice and sacked, most of the programme floor. Can't do anything about it. So I mean in a way that shows whether you want a Union or you need a Union or not. And I think they do and I notice the difference in Sky without a Union.

Yes. Okay. Following on from that, I still would like to ask you your favourite people, the people who you remember, respect, admire most and maybe those that you have a less kind feeling for.

DS: [laughter] I'm bound to say, aren't I, Roy. [laughter]

We've covered some of them in the course of all this, but…

DS: [laughter] I think it's obvious to someone, some of the people I don't like. Who do I remember fondly? Well, to start with of course it's got to be Lloyd Williams who started

us all off, gave us all a chance, got us where we are now. Oh, I remember so many lovely people in crews, you know, working from the floor. I remember nice Heads of Departments; Heads of Lighting Departments, most people I liked very much, most artists are lovely to work with and I've been very lucky, I've worked with an enormous number of stars, real stars, real top people, and on the whole they're lovely and when they're not, there are a few of them who are absolutely rock bottom, sod awful, God awful sods, shits they are, and I've met some of them, oh I have. Dear oh dear, oh dear. Do you want me to… you're dying for me to name them aren't you?

Any particular shit story? No, it's… name them by all means, but I don't think anyone's going to sue, we'll just seal the tape.

JPH: Jon…

DS: Who?

JPH: Jon Pertwee.

DS: Oh, Jon Pert… But funnily enough, a lot of people who were first class shits and gave me a rough time, somehow turned round and it was alright in the end, they made it alright in the end and they weren't so bad. But I remember the shitty side of them and I'd say I'd never work with them again, but they turned out alright. There were a few who remained… Oh, I'll tell you who's a real shitty person to me…

On your S list, let's talk about your S list.

DS: Well, one of the first is Michael Lindsay-Hogg.

Yes?

DS: Now, he's a renowned and revered director now isn't he? Drama and film and all sorts of things.

He's done some very good things, yes.

DS: He has. And he did when I knew him, but oh, what a little sod. And I remember that when I'd been doing *Ready Steady Go!* he came in, I can't remember how or why he came in, John will probably remember.

JPH: He was an assistant floor manager originally.

DS: Was he really? And he came on to *Ready Steady Go!* and he was always… I met him and said hello and talked to him and everything, but he used to look down his nose at me. And I thought, I wonder why this man doesn't like me. I just felt it, you know, instinctive, we all know, don't we, when somebody… I thought this man doesn't like me. Anyway, he came on to *Ready Steady Go!* and after I left it and when it went live, he went in and took over and he did the thing with Vicki Wickham and his PA, every night he used to do the rounds of the clubs and the Soho clubs and the pop clubs and got in on the pop scene. And he got in with The Stones, they adored him, they thought he was marvellous. But he was a good director. I said to John, he was the first, he was one of the first directors who played with the new electronic, the VTR. He was the first director who did a stop frame and sound continued on The Stones. It was an end of a *Ready Steady Go!* and it had enormous impact, it was brilliant, it was marvellous and we couldn't work out how he did it. And he did all sorts of other things and very clever things as a director. But I always remember that I was taking over from him and I hadn't done it for quite a long time, so I went along to see him but he was too busy to speak to me or talk to me, and so I saw his PA, and I said, 'Could you ask Michael please, may I sit in the gallery, because I'm taking it over from next week', 'May I come and sit in the gallery please?', which we all did with each other, it was accepted practice, 'on Friday, just to watch the programme through as I take over next week'. 'Yes, Daphne, I'll ask him.' And I got a note from her, not a personal… 'Awfully sorry, Michael said it's not convenient, he'd rather not have anybody in the gallery, he's got a difficult show'. And I thought, right, you sod. So I went to the studio anyway, I had to see it, so I watched a run-through on the floor, so I went into the sound gallery on the show, and he had, I said afterwards, I got the floor manager up, and I said, 'Who are those people?' 'That's the PA's father, has come for a visit, he's got two friends there, that's the manager of a pop group he's having next week, and that's his girlfriend', or somebody. So I went down, stood outside the door, and as I stood outside the door and when he came out I said, 'Good evening' and he just ignored me totally. So I

had a field day, I wrote, oh I wrote a marvellous memo, with the help of John P Hamilton to get the full stops right and the spelling right, and sent a copy to him, I did have the good manners, I sent a copy to him and I sent it to everybody. So we've never spoken from that day to this. But he was always vile to me, he was…

What was the substance of your memo?

DS: I said that I was absolutely appalled, for having asked a colleague I found – again, I went into my favourite area of being professional or not.

It's said his father was Orson Welles, did you see any sign of that?

DS: Oh yes, oh yes. He's terribly like him, as he got older, bigger, he was more and more like him. And I saw him once, he was at – did he come to Teddington? I think he was at Teddington, I was walking down the corridor and he was walking towards me or something and somebody said, 'Oh look, here's Daphs' and he just looked over my head and looked the other way. I did exactly the same, so it was mutual. But he was awful. I don't know why he was so rude to me, but he was rude, bombastic, but, clever director.

Yes, yes.

DS: Very clever director. No doubt about it. But a nasty person.

Other people on your S list?

DS: Charlie Drake.

Ah. That's a boring old name, isn't it?

DS: [laughter]

Why…?

DS: And I refused to have him on a programme.

What was your experience of Charlie Drake?

DS: [laughter] This is only to make you laugh, isn't it Roy?

Well, not really, no. I…

DS: You're enjoying it hugely. But again, you see, that turned right.

I like…

DS: [laughter] You like to hear all this.

Not… I was going to say that I like to hear a spade called a spade, because again, we're back to talent as opposed to no talent.

DS: I had worked with Charlie for a long time when he did a programme – we touched on this on my tape much earlier – he did a programme called *Mick and Montmorency* with Jack Edwardes, a children's comedy programme, with Rolf Harris, Rolf Harris was in the programme. It wasn't my programme idea, I went and directed it from time to time. It was a series, running series for Children's. *Mick and Montmorency*, Charlie Drake and Jack Edwardes, they did a knockabout comedy, it was very funny, and Rolf Harris was on the programme too. But I should have foreseen it then, because one of them was messing about and Charlie said, 'Well, Rolf's here, why don't you turn the cameras on him? Put the cameras on him, we may as well not be here'. And of course the cameramen all thinking it was a joke, all turned the cameras round on to Rolf or whatever. He went mad and I thought, oh dear. At any rate I went on the floor and placated him. But he was alright, and I knew him very well, and years later he made a film when I was doing this programme called *Close-up* about the film industry, which was a lovely programme, with Margaret Hinxman, was the writer. She was lovely and I see she's just got a new book out, by the way, marvellous review. And we were going to do a piece about Charlie Drake on this big film and Peter – oh, John where are you? Famous - he's got a three-barrelled name – famous drama director with us. He had directed it and we were to interview him and Charlie Drake down at Dover where they were making it. Well, it was a funny story,

we went, whole film unit, we went down for the day and it was arranged that we would see Peter at such-and-such a… we were to go to Charlie Drake's hotel and they were filming up at the castle as well, and we would film and talk to Charlie, who I knew ever so well, but I couldn't get him before we went there because he was on vacation, or whatever it was. But I'd spoken to Peter and we went down to Dover and we got there and gave them all coffee and everything. I said, 'Right, let's get to the hotel, speak to Charlie first, and then we'll sort everything else out'. Got there. 'Mr Drake is not available. He is still in his room, he was working late last night and he is not available.' I said, 'Yes, but it's Daphne Shadwell who knows him, the film unit are here'. 'He's not available to *any*body.' 'Oh.' So we stood there. I was very young and inexperienced still. 'Right' I said, 'I'll tell you what, we'll go up to the castle and we'll see if there's anything being done there or film crew up there and we can film them'. [laughter] So we went up to the castle, it was a dull grey day, and we went up to the castle and it was absolutely… there weren't even any visitors there that day, and we all stood there and they all looked at me and they said, 'Well, what is it?' I said, 'We'd best go back to the hotel. We'll go back to the hotel and see if we can get hold of anybody on the film unit or Peter, and find out what's happening, get Charlie, best get him…' And my PA said to me, it was Hershey [ph], 'Daphne, you've got to do something, get him out of bed or something, whatever'. So I said, 'Right, we'll go back to the hotel' and back we all went, back to the hotel, gave the crew, by this time I think it was a drink and a sandwich before lunch – it still wasn't lunchtime – gave them a drink, started trying to get hold of anybody on the film crew, couldn't get anybody. 'Could you get hold of Mr Drake please?' 'Mr Drake is in the bath and dressing and cannot see or speak to anybody.' I said, 'Well, I've got to speak to him, I'm sorry, I'm here with a whole unit from Rediffusion on the programme, must speak'. 'Sorry, he's not available, he'll be down later.' So we sat and looked at each other and I said, 'Let's get back to the castle, they must be there by now'. So we all climbed in the bus and we went back to the castle, and I said, 'Well, while we're here, I know what we'll do' I said, 'We'll take a shot of the castle and the flag'. The Charlie Drake story.

[0:31:31]
JPH: Charlie Drake.

DS: I said, 'We'll take a shot of the castle and the flag and it will do for our film library, because we'd had a note from film library about anything useful. Well, we took this shot,

there wasn't a draught of wind, there was this limp flag down this pole, and the cameraman was fed up to the back teeth, so he took this shot and I said, 'We'd better go back to the hotel'. So we went back to the hotel. What was the name of the director, that lovely director, the drama director, Peter Something-Something? Three-barrelled name, drama director, and he was producing and directing this film of Charlie Drake. You'll remember it in a minute, John, nice man. Anyway, I got back to the hotel and Peter was there and he said… oh no, he wasn't. 'Mr Drake is now up but he's having something to eat and doesn't want to be disturbed.' I said, 'Where is he eating?' He said, 'Down there'. So I went down, he was in the corner, so I went down to the table where he was sitting with some bird or something, eating his breakfast, and I said, 'Good morning Charlie Drake, there you are'. And he went, 'Do I know you, dear?' And how I didn't pick up his toast and marmalade and smash it in that bleeding little round fat red face, I'll never know. [laughter] I said, 'Yes, you do know me Charlie, it's Daphne'. 'Oh yeah, yeah.' I said, 'We are all waiting, a whole film unit, so-and-so, so-and-so, waiting for you'. 'Oh yes. Well, I'm not ready yet and I'm not sure about it and I've got to think about it, and I'm having my breakfast so would you leave me alone?' I said, 'Right'. So I went and found Peter – Graham Scott!

JPH: Oh, PGS.

DS: PGS, who was in a terrible state because he's had his day filming cancelled for some reason, he was having a terrible time with Charlie Drake, and he was terribly worried, and I did a little in… I said, 'Peter, just give us a little interview about the film' or whatever. So he did a piece to camera. And he said, 'Oh, is that alright Daphne? Oh, you won't use it, will you? Did I say the right thing? I'm having a bit of trouble'. And I said, 'You're not the only one'. So I said, 'We're going straight back home, we're not doing any more filming here'. So we went back after a day's filming with a shot of a limp flag with the top of Dover Castle and we cancelled the piece about the film and never used that. But years later, years later when I was doing *Looks Familiar* with David Clark and Denis Norden, they wanted to use Charlie Drake, and they said we've got him down on the guest list. I said, 'If you use Charlie Drake, you get another director next week, because I am not working with him'. 'Do you mean it?' I said, 'Yes, get another director, much easier for you than try and change the cast list'. So they didn't use Charlie. But I came up against him, I did another programme, which I came in quickly on, and he was on it, and

I've never seen such a changed man. He came over across the studio floor and took me by the hand and said, 'Daphne, how nice to see you, how are you?' Whether anybody said anything… oh, that was the day when he'd had his decline. He'd been a great star and he went into a tumble, do you remember?

Oh, absolutely. Well, yes, I mean I never rated him anyway.

DS: But he was ever so… So although I say that he was at first an old shit, he was so nice and sort of behaved so differently and had had… I think he found religion or something, didn't he?

Yes.

DS: That I had to forgive him, like I did Jon Pertwee who behaved so badly.

How did Jon Pertwee behave badly?

DS: Oh well, he behaved badly at the end of a programme because we'd rehearsed it all and something happened and it under-ran. Something happened, he forgot a whole chunk of – it was a sort of sketchy, children's show – or somebody hadn't turned up, but whatever it was, and it was live, we under-ran by four and a half minutes, and these were the first days of networking and we had to go to time. On the early days we were able to slip two or three minutes either side, didn't matter too much. But this was a new era where we were to time, and we were four and a half minutes under, and Steve Race was on, had a small group with piano as a backing group, and he was supposed to go on and Jon Pertwee became so enraged because it had finished and he didn't know what to do and he was getting signals from me through the floor manager, carry on or do so-and-so, or talk to anybody, you know, grab hold of somebody, interview them. And he suddenly went mad, 'Oh' he said, 'this is ridiculous, the whole programme's fallen apart. Pull the curtains down, close the… bring those…' and of course the poor prop men thought it was all part of the show so were doing exactly what he said, and absolute chaos ensued. And the PA was saying, 'Three minutes', 'Three and a half minutes', 'Three minutes'. So I said to the floor manager, tell Steve Race to play something. And Steve Race started playing a tune and all he could think of was *Happy Birthday To You*. And for three and a

half minutes he played *Happy Birthday to You* and I shot him from every angle that anybody with four cameras could shoot a camera, for by then three and a quarter minutes. And it went on and on and eventually we were able to put a couple of captions up, which were live then, and the floor manager nearly went mad because I said, 'Oh, that's a nice shot, thank you', it was a lovely shot of the keyboard coming out to him, or something. And I took it, not realising that it was the camera at the far end of the studio, at the very far end, and the floor manager was standing like that to everybody, holding his hands up, frightened to death that everybody was going to cross the shot or the prop men moving across or Jon Pertwee tearing his hair would tear across. And at the end of it we fell off the air and Steve Race came up the stairs and I fell on him and said, 'You were wonderful'. He said, 'Why couldn't I think of one of my tunes to play? All that, three and a half minutes of my tune, all that money, all that PRS'. He got stuck on *Happy Birthday*. [laughter] Anyway, Jon Pertwee came flying up the studio and I said, 'What do you think you were playing at?' And he said, 'It's my half-French blood, Daphne, it's my half-French blood'. I said, 'You behaved disgracefully'. He said, 'I don't care, it's all your fault the programme fell apart'. Anyway. So I wasn't really pleased with him anyway, but the next week when we met for rehearsal he said he was terribly sorry and I said I was sorry, and then something happened on the floor that week and it was just a joke, he looked up into the camera and he said, 'Daphs, just think about the other half of French blood now please', because he was just about to have a shout about something. But it was a terrible moment, terrible. We just brought the programme to an end.

The joys of live television.

DS: Yes. Four and a half minutes early. Finished the programme, he said.

Well, now we have a few minutes left on the tape, what shall we explore? Shall I stop while we…

[break in recording]

[0:37:43]
A small story about [laughing] James Mason and David Frost.

DS: Yes.

For the third time. Right, take three!

DS: Doesn't matter. This was about when I was doing the lovely programme about films called *The Other Screen*. Clever title, Ray Dicks thought of it, *The Other Screen*. And Margaret Hinxman was writing it and Ray was the producer, I forget her name, lovely young girl, very clever young woman. And she rang me up at home late afternoon and said, 'Daphne, we've got a piece of the new James Mason film, he's coming into town and we've got him in the morning at his hotel', whichever one it was, somewhere on Park Lane or something, 'And we've got David Frost'. I said, 'David Frost?' She said, 'Yes, we're using him odd interviews', you know, because to me he was still just a researcher and somebody hanging about. So she'd got him to do some interviews. And she said, 'Can you get there for… he can do ten o'clock, can you get there for half past nine? I've got the crew, and could you tell the PA? And he can't wait very long'. So I said, 'Alright'. So I rang Hershey [ph] and she said, 'Oh how exciting, how lovely'. So I said, 'So are you alright and clear?' She said, 'Yes, I'll pick up the stopwatch and everything'. So I don't know why, we arranged to meet at Tottenham Court Road, God knows why, but Tottenham Court Road station. So I got there, I said, 'I'll see you there at nine o'clock, we're to be there for half past nine'. Well, I got there at five to nine and at half past nine, like a fool I'm still standing there at Tottenham Court Road station thinking, what am I going to do, where is my PA? Instead of just going to the place, which I would do now, no, I had to stand there waiting, because not only was she my PA, she was my best friend. Well, at quarter to ten she arrived, looking like a wraith. I said, 'Whatever…' I was furious, 'Where have you been, what have you been doing?' 'I couldn't find the stopwatch', or she'd dropped it or it had broken or been stolen or something. Something else had happened, she was in a terrible state. So we grabbed a taxi. I said, 'Well, it's starting at ten' I said, 'and he can't wait, I hope they're not in a terrible state'. So we got to the hotel and said 'Mr James Mason'. 'Who are you?' I said, 'We're part of the film crew, I'm the director'. 'Oh, well they're already up there and they don't want to be disturbed.' I said, 'I beg your pardon? I'm the director and this is the PA, they can't start without me. Could you ring them up?' 'No phone calls.' I said, 'You can ring them and tell then we're on our way up, room something or other'. Well, Hershey [ph] and I went there, we already felt, because we were in such a state we felt the giggles coming on, and

we tried the door, it was all locked. [makes knocking sound] On the door, bang, bang, bang, bang. Nothing. Bang, bang, bang, bang, bang. And we heard at the door, 'Sssssshhhhh'. I said, 'How dare they, what's this shush?' So I bang, bang, bang on the door and I looked, and the door opened, and I looked at face level and there was nothing, there was nobody, and then we both, our eyes dropped down nearly to the ground and a small child was standing there with his finger to his lips, going 'Shh, go away' and slammed [laughing] the door in our faces. So Hershey [ph] looked at me, she said, 'Well'. So I went, bang, bang, bang on the door and the next thing was, the door opened, the small child said, 'You were asked to be quiet and not come in'. So I pushed the door open, said, 'Excuse me, child' and I went in and Ray Dicks, Ray, her face was crimson and James Mason was just sitting there looking at me. I said, 'What is going on?' She said, 'Daphne, I'm terribly sorry'. And David Frost said, 'Do you mind Daphne, we're trying to do this interview and you've interrupted it twice and Mr Mason's got to go in a minute'. Well, I thought I was going to die. I didn't know whether to bust out laughing, burst into tears or run away. Hershey [ph] by this time who didn't, I think I told you on an earlier part of the interview, didn't like David Frost at all, said, 'Just a minute, little lad' [laughter], 'let's get things straight. I want to make out the sheets and the film crew and get my stopwatch out and what have you done and what haven't you done?' So I apologised to James Mason and by this time we were absolutely nonplussed and overcome and Mr Mason said, 'Oh, good morning, how do you do?' And I said, 'I'm terribly sorry'. He said, 'I'm dreadfully sorry, I have to go in a minute'. So David Frost said, quite nicely, to me, 'Do you think we should carry on, Daphne?' And I said, 'Well, yes please, you'd better'. So they said, 'Can we pick up where we left off?' and it was, 'Well, that was very nice and when did you say you'd be back? Well, thank you very much, Mr Mason'. [laughter] And it was the end of the interview. And he got up and said, 'I must leave, goodbye' and they took the child by the hand and out they went. And I said to Ray, 'Is that it?' She said, 'Yes, that's it' and we'd missed it, the whole thing, and had ruined, and utterly ruined the recording and the film and everything and it had to be edited very tightly and carefully because of this terrible banging and 'Sshhh' going on in the background. [laughter] So that was the only time, only ever time I met Mr Mason, was to say, 'Good morning', 'I'm sorry' and 'Goodbye'. [laughter]

Was that the last time you encountered Mr Frost?

DS: No, I worked with David quite a bit after that. He was taken on, again I suppose he'd been told, because this programme came under Light Entertainment, I should think he'd been told, Ray had been told as producer to use him and he did quite a bit. He was quite alright, he was quite good and he was always ever so polite and cheerful.

Ms Shadwell, the peroration.

DS: The peroration. Well, I think I should just say that I've given a very garbled account of my career. I sound as if I've knocked the industry dreadfully, and I don't mean to, I've had great happiness from it, and money, and I've enjoyed my career hugely and enormously and I only hope that I've given something to it and I hope I've been able to pass something on to younger people, I hope I've helped somebody somewhere along in the industry.

Daphne, very interesting series of interviews and very interesting lifetime. Thank you very much.

DS: Thank you, Roy.

[end of Side 10 Tape 5 – end of interview]

Queries

p1 Roberto Champredanc – spelling?

p2 [incomp] name of performer on 1930s radio?

p15 [incomp] name of Western show

p18 [incomp] name?

p21 Margot Richards – spelling? Worked at Forces Favourites

p31 Grays Pearson – spelling? Worked in BBC Duty Office

p37 Mrs Killen-Roberts – spelling? BBC Appointments Officer

p71 reeling? Not clear.

p79 Bill Carpenter/Bill Kerr – names of actors? Not very clear.

p87 Evan Way – spelling? Name of motor car man (admags).

p101 Jeff Shepherd – spelling? Cameraman at Associated Rediffusion

p103 Mark White – spelling? Producer at Granada

[Mark] Stuart – spelling? At Granada

p104 Mark Stuart x 2 – spelling?

P104 Eric Prize-Birch – spelling? Cameraman

p106 Mark Stuart – spelling?

p109/p110/p111/p115 Hershey x 2 – spelling? PA at Associated Rediffusion

p116 Bill Metcalf x 4 – spelling? Cameraman

p117 Daphne Rennie – spelling? Vision mixer at Rediffusion

p123 Hershey – spelling?

p144 inaudible comment by JPH

p148 inaudible comment by JPH

p161 inaudible comment by JPH – name of TV programme?

p186 inaudible comment by JPH about whether DS was ruthless

p189 Eddie Jaffick – spelling? Director at Euston studios

p194 James Coulsand – spelling? At Thames TV

p219 inaudible comment by JPH about Marjorie Sigley

p221 Paul Kuraj – spelling? Worked with DS on *Illusions* programme

p223 Quirk/Qwerk – spelling? Pilot programme by Geoffrey Sax

p225 Ivan Agar – spelling? Worker at Rediffusion

p225 James Coulsand x 2 – spelling? Labour relations at Thames

p227 con ? directors – meaning unclear

p234 David Elskin – spelling? At Thames TV

p234 Audrey Starritt – spelling? At Thames TV

p259 tumult? Talking about union activity

p265/p269/p270 Hershey – spelling? DS's PA