

ENG INF

The Quarterly For BBC Engineering Staff



The Royal Wedding



Cameraman Chris Wickham covers the procession from St. Clement Danes Church

The Royal Wedding on July 29th was the largest single outside broadcast ever mounted by OB's. Production facilities involved some seventeen Colour Mobile Control Rooms (CMCR's) and over sixty cameras, providing cover of all the wedding celebrations nationwide. 109 broadcasting organisations from 74 countries took the pictures to an estimated worldwide audience of 750 million viewers. In this special feature we take a look behind the scenes at some of the facilities and people that made the broadcast possible.

The engineer behind the broadcast was Frank Hughes, Head of Engineering Planning at Kendal Avenue "It was just like any other outside broadcast really", said Frank, "except on a larger scale." Technical planning for the broadcast had been going on ever since the engagement announcement in March. Some of the early plans had to be changed when clearance for camera positions was refused by the Police; other details, such as the honeymoon departure point, were only known a few days in advance.

Focal point for the outside broadcast was the Colour Mobile Central Control Room (CMCCR) which was located at St. Paul's Cathedral and had only entered service in April for the Boat Race (Eng Inf No. 4). It was designed by Bill Rhodes of SCPD and his team with broadcasts such as Royal Ceremonials, Open Golf Championships

and Wimbledon Tennis in mind.

In productions involving many cameras or other sources, it is not possible to display all of the inputs on monitors because of the limited number available in a conventional CMCR. Even adding additional monitors creates a problem because of the limited space available. Vehicles of conventional roadwidth are just too small for the job, so the CMCCR uses an unusual design to overcome the problem. The sides of the production area in the middle of the vehicle are expanded by 1 metre on each side, increasing the width from 2.4 metres to 4.4 metres. This allows a bank of thirty-four monochrome and four colour monitors to be seen by all of the production staff at the control desk, and all of the picture sources can normally be displayed. For the Royal

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