



The GTC Royal Wedding Album

Back in early April, Zerb Managing Editor Alison Chapman contacted GTC members for their help in putting together a photographic souvenir to record how Guild members spent the day of the Royal Wedding. Lots of you responded and many thanks go to all those who contributed both images and stories. As there were far too many photos to use within the article, we have created a 'mosaic' front cover to show as many varied shots as possible. We hope you will have fun trying to pick out yourself and colleagues.

Now the really hard part; with a vast number of images to sift through, it was extremely difficult to choose one picture that stood out from the rest. However, there was one that caught the eye for its strong composition and great angle from which it is taken – one of the best parts of being a cameraman is the privilege of viewing events from positions that others don't have access to. The photo of the two guards above was taken by GTC Chairman Graeme McAlpine. However, in the best tradition of VIPs who draw out the winning raffle ticket, he has refused to collect the prize – but well done, Graeme, it's a great shot and thank you for submitting it. Instead, bottles of wine have been dispatched to the three photographers of the 'Editor's picks' below.

Editor's picks



▲ Our three winners each sent in interesting portfolios. One shot from each is represented here but others are among those on the cover. James Day captured these cameramen high at work above the London skyline for the BBC and ITN; Bernie Totten is responsible for the arty view of the Mall; and on the right is one of a quirky set of exotic characters submitted by Jane Winder. Congratulations to these three – it really was very difficult to choose!

Andrew Smith

GTC Forum Moderator: technical manager for Creative Broadcast Solutions

Creative Broadcast had been contracted to BBC Events to plan and manage the entire technical capture and delivery of the Royal Wedding with Christopher Bretnall in overall charge as technical producer. My tasks for the delivery week were to catalogue and photograph all the camera positions once the structures were in place to ensure that we could mount a similar project at short notice in the future.

For the technical rehearsal and TX day, I was positioned at the Siemens Central Communications Area (CAR/CCA) in Television Centre where all the incoming main, contingency and international transmission circuits were switched before being sent to the BT Tower for international distribution, and to RedBee Media in White City for domestic transmission. My job was to manage and liaise between Siemens and the technical producer. With seven levels of

protection for BBC1 there was a great deal to be done in the event of technical failure anywhere on the route or if an event occurred that would require the main broadcast hub at Canada Gate to be evacuated. We also had two reverse vision circuits that enabled programme material to be fed out to the OB from Television Centre; this content could then be added to the main transmission, for example, the greetings sent from the International Space Station.

On the day, there was very little for me to do as everything went smoothly and to plan. There was just one instance of flashing on the incoming fibre that was carrying the international feed (main coverage but without BBC presenters). As there was pre-planned reserve capacity via satellite, the problem was simply sorted by switching the distribution to the satellite path.



Graeme McAlpine

Chair of the GTC: on camera in The Mall



What a fantastic day and what a fabulous outside broadcast! The world was watching and was not left wanting.

The Royal Wedding was one of 'those' special occasions. The number of crew within such a small area of London was immense. There were cameras everywhere. It was an opportunity to renew friendships and to swap stories with others you hadn't seen for ages.

I was working for the BBC with the Arena TV unit on The Mall and Horse Guards Parade, following the action in close-up on an 86:1 lens. Alongside us were cameras from ITV/Sky duplicating the coverage along the route.

The weather was kind to Kate and William, the expected rain stayed away and even the de-rig remained

dry. Probably the hardest job of the day was reserved for the security forces. The police and armed services formed an impenetrable yet 'invisible' barrier to the route.

The crowds were very good-natured. They sang along to the hymns, the music echoing up and down the route, relayed by giant speaker towers. They cheered when the couple exchanged vows and their rendition of 'Jerusalem' was louder than any heard at The Last Night of the Proms!

Being part of these special occasions is what can make OB camera work so exciting and rewarding. Whichever channel you watched the coverage on, it was a fabulous showcase for the camera talent we have here in the UK.



James Day

**Camera supervisor,
Horse Guards Parade**

Handel's 'Zadok the Priest' used to be one of my favourite pieces till the PA company played it four times in a row to test out their systems!

This was a great gathering of the TV clan, with many chance meetings with old familiar faces not seen for years.

The cast and script were brilliant, the set design and costumes outstanding and the budget limitless! Thank goodness for the open carriage for the return trip to Buckingham Palace although they went very fast and arrived five minutes early. The crowd and the shots would have loved a slower pace! Overall it was a fantastic show from everyone though, and watching the highlights later at home in full HD, what incredible quality pictures.

I left site about 3 p.m. and as I wandered past Parliament Square on the way back to my car, the bells of Westminster Abbey were still ringing out majestically.



I was home by 4 p.m., in time to join in with my village's festivities on the green, where our small parish church bells were also ringing out a celebratory peal - on a different scale but a lovely echo of the proceedings in London.

Tom Ross

Second year student, Nottingham Trent University, studying broadcast journalism

Any live OB, of any size, is always a big draw for me. While I want to pursue a career in front of the lens, I am a huge techie at heart and so when the biggest OB of them all was announced, I had to be a part of it. After chasing a few people to obtain the right email address and sending a polite request to be involved, I found myself walking out of Westminster tube station, on a rather dull-looking Tuesday morning, through the Horse Guards Tilt Yard and towards the Horse Guards OB compound.

Placing the accreditation pass around my neck, I was grateful that I had been allowed into the circle of crew that would cover this incredible event. On meeting the team, one female operator shook my hand and said, "I'm Audrey, nice to meet you and if you can't banter you might as well go." I'd heard of the banter-filled relationship TV crews have and I certainly experienced it during my four days on site, loving every minute of it!

Everyone was so incredibly welcoming and encouraged me to be hands on immediately. This, of course, I was more than eager to do. Within an hour of



being on site I was being shown how to rig a head, a long-range zoom and fix a camera body to a pod on a rostrum.

My time working on the Royal Wedding with the Horse Guards team is something I will never forget and it will take a lot of beating as the best thing I have ever been a part of. No one could have been more kind, inviting or keen to answer any questions I had. And I had lots! Cameramen, I thank you.

Llewelyn Owen

In Hyde Park

Dan Lobb and Gráinne Seoige are the presenters in this shot with weather girl Lucy Verasamy. The cameraman in action is GTC member Brian Coomber. I'm on the left holding a camera.



View from above

Richard Stevenson

Jib operator, Whitehall

Arena provided the 10-camera HD OB for the Whitehall part of the route, including a hoist opposite Horse Guards Parade and our jib.

There were two very gentle days of rehearsal during which we shuffled the jib around on the pavement awaiting the final nod on position. We extended the jib, shortened the jib and then extended it again! A highlight of the rehearsals was all the cameras panning a milk float along Whitehall. Richard Valentine directed our OB, and he was a complete delight, creating a very relaxed atmosphere.

We were right in amongst the crowds and interacted with them quite a bit. The overnight campers must have been disappointed to wake and find the fences alongside them pretty much empty, but the crowds soon gathered and provided fantastic foreground for us as the carriages sped past. We opened up our 'pen' for kids to stand on the wall, and allowed a couple of old ladies in to watch the service on our TX monitor.



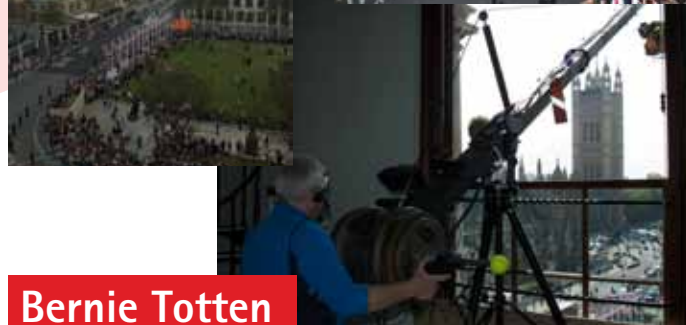
Joe McNally

Rooftop jib for Sky News

We were on top of the National Theatre on the South Bank with our jib. It was a great venue for alternative views over the city. Sky News was hosting a wedding party with invited guests and various fashion and wedding experts, and classical boy band Blake played live.

There were six other cameras on the OB which was provided by Neon Broadcast. Jason Ward, Sky staff cameraman did most of the jib operating.

It was lovely to be part of the day while at the same time a little away from the heart of all the madness down at ground level.



Bernie Totten

Overlooking Parliament Square

We had one jib overlooking Parliament Square poking out of one Treasury window and another with a view of Whitehall. The spiral staircase was great fun for getting the jibs into place although, at least we didn't have as far to go as the police marksmen who were another level up on the roof.

Our call time was 4:30 a.m. and although there weren't many people around in Whitehall at that time, people were beginning to take up positions. Fortunately for us, we had access to tea-making facilities and plumbing... our needs were few! We did have security watching our every move though in case we wandered off around the Treasury building!

Angus MacFadyen

Up a hoist for the BBC

My view of the Royal Wedding was from up on a hoist for the BBC. At around 130 ft, it was not the highest, but high enough for me. I must admit I was pretty nervous. Early on in my career I was on location for *Casualty*

when a huge light mounted on a gantry toppled over tragically killing electrician David Coles. The memory of this has stayed with me. So, it was something of a test for me to climb on to the hoist and hold my nerve as it rose high above the buildings. Luckily it was not too windy but it was still a long and quite challenging day. Comms with the operator were not great and so it was tricky to ask to come down when I wanted to. My shot – which essentially panned the procession along the Mall to and from Buckingham Palace wasn't used a lot but was pretty spectacular when it was. Being up the hoist meant I felt a little bit out of touch but as with all these events, it was brilliant to be involved on such a historic occasion.



News broadcasts

Steve Acton

Standups for SNG

I worked for two days (the day of the Wedding itself and the build up the day before) for SNG, who in turn were doing it for Eurovision.

On the Thursday I reported to Gate 4, found my camera position and went straight to work with a live to Poland, followed by successive lives for various TV stations around the world: Spain, Mexico, Argentina, Austria, Brazil, The Netherlands, Germany, France, the list goes on! It was one after another pretty much every half-hour or 15 minutes.

I had a nice backdrop of Buckingham Palace but had been lumbered – if that's the right word – with an EX3, a camera of which I have no experience. After ten lives I had got used to it, although doubt I will be buying one myself. One unexpected problem was that the trees in the compound were shedding spores; falling like snow, they left fine hairs over everything, getting into the cameras and our throats.

The first day ended at 1 a.m. and I took a slow walk down The Mall, taking in the gathering crowds (rather than me camping out all night!) and the various camera positions.

My call time the next day for standup position 10 was 10 a.m. but I decided to get there a lot earlier as I was worried about getting through the crowds. I needn't have worried; one tube station and five minutes by foot



and I was at my post. After setting up my lights I was ready to start.

First up were the Russians. With no IFB (foldback), I couldn't hear the studio so had to keep reminding the reporters to give me a heads-up when they were coming to me. Sometimes they did but mostly they didn't!

After the Russians, the Royal family started to make their way to the Abbey, during which time we had nothing to do so watched the event both live on The Mall and also the BBC coverage, which everyone agreed was first class.

Later on, I was reassigned to another standup position. By now, the police had stopped people crossing The Mall as the couple and guests were about to make their way to Clarence House for the reception, so I was able to watch as the couple drove themselves there, which the crowds enjoyed enormously. Now stuck on the wrong side of the road, I was just wondering how to get to my position when I spotted none other than Ben Fogel, who was also having trouble crossing. I tagged along and eventually a policeman took pity or recognised



him (I don't know which) allowing him to cross. I flashed my pass and said "I'm with him" and was permitted to go too.

What followed was another succession of reporters from around the world, all with their allotted time slots. As the afternoon and evening wore on, I was moved to yet more positions, relieving others, until eventually I was the last man standing. The last live of the night took place at 2.30 a.m.; I then broke everything down, packed up and went home, still pinching myself that I had played a part in (possibly) the biggest OB ever. I finally climbed into my bed at 4 a.m. – I'm quite sure some



Working Time Directive was broken as it added up to a 16-hour day!

The following day a link was posted by Ged Yeates of a photo made up of a series of pictures stitched together showing the couple returning up The Mall in the carriage. And there I am at my standup position. Something to tell the grandkids about – and now I can show them as well!

Hazel Palmer

News reports for CBS



▲ Contender for the Best Costume award!

For my part in the Royal Wedding I was working for CBS Newspath, perched on a roof in a row of crews and reporters from different countries. We were reminded to wear our luminous 'Don't shoot me' tabards. Looking at the snipers on the roof opposite, this was not hard to forget!

Throughout the day I filmed various presenters from different countries doing their links in front of Westminster Abbey. First was the bubbly American in her wedding hat, followed by a friendly Dutchman. Next the attractive Frenchman with his surly producer, both chain-smoking. Then came the highly-strung Danish presenter, first complaining about the position she'd been given, then angry when technical problems delayed things. The minute she'd finished her link the TV smile dropped and she

launched into a furious rant at the Spanish presenters next to us who'd been talking noisily. They were now on air so had to try and ignore the tirade and carry on with their smiley chat. Meanwhile, Kate Middleton was entering the Abbey and I was trying to shrink into the background. Our final presenter was a cute, inexperienced but charming Hungarian girl to perk everyone up again (especially the men).

Initially I was cynical about the Royal Wedding, but the atmosphere of the day won me round. As my American producer and I watched the horseguards head off from the Abbey in colourful attire and impeccable formation he said "Boy, you guys really



know how to put on a wedding!", and I thought "Yes, actually we do." Our British traditions and the pomp and ceremony that surround them are something to behold. On my walk home I took in the Union Flag-decorated city, the smiling faces and even the friendly 'bobbies'. For one day at least the moody London atmosphere was gone. It was refreshing and I'm glad I was a part of it.

Around the country

Darren Bramley

GTC Secretary and Head of Cameras, ITV Breakfast: technical manager at Bucklebury



The ITV OB in Kate Middleton's village was centred around the Cottage Inn Pub. We had recced the location two months earlier and made plans for a *Daybreak* OB starting at 4.30 a.m. and carrying straight on into the ITV coverage lasting until 4.30 p.m. We would rig on the Thursday morning, test during the afternoon and transmit throughout Friday. However, the new mission within ITV is for ONE ITV and we offered our services to *Meridian Tonight* on Thursday. Once at the pub, I realised we had one of the largest Film and TV Services generators, taking up three of our six spaces in the car park. The landlord insisted we could have no

more spaces so I ended up marshalling five Sat trucks (two ITV, one ITN, one NBC and one Channel 7), our hire van and a gazebo for cover!

The van laden with all our kit was late arriving from London as it had been diverted to drop off staging at Canada Gate and this put us back with the rig by an hour and a half. Once it arrived we disgorged everything and then unpacked and started building a 4-camera OB with disc playback and radio comms, lighting the main bar of the pub for the *Meridian* OB and running BNC cables to the interior, exterior and rear field. We fed SDI with embedded audio to our Upod

Truck, which was also downlinking another Sat truck up the road and feeding back into the Anycast mixer.

We used Sony XDCams and an ITN Anycast, along with a Jimmy Jib supplied by Daniel George at the last minute after the producers were impressed with the shots he had achieved on *Meridian's* programme.

The Friday live transmissions went without a hitch, even though the producers changed their minds regarding locations. With the ceremony underway in the Abbey, we were asked to change location to the field behind the pub and so it was all hands to the pump as we pulled out

and rerouted all the power, video and audio cables out of the pub, across the car park and into the field. The Jimmy Jib was also repositioned and sound had to move all their radio kit as well.

We had no faults whatsoever during transmission, on what was a pretty low-tech OB. We even managed to feed an output to Channel 7 and do a number of multi-camera live hits for Canadian TV.

We were ready to derig by 4.30p.m. on the Friday though, having had no break for 12 hours and remaining on standby for ITV all afternoon.

Tom Paterson

Street party: Caravan park, Northumberland

The alarm went off at a touch after 4 a.m. The caravan park organisers were waiting for us when we arrived and time was tight for the first hit into *Breakfast News* just after 6 a.m. I did a rapid build of the Polecam, adding my new BlackMagic up/down/cross-converter to down-convert from HD to SDI, and was plugged up to the Sat truck with time for a quick rehearsal.

It dawned a cracking, if cold, day on the coast of Northumberland. Gradually people started to emerge from the caravans, already dressed for partying in long dresses, skimpy tops and paper hats. Using a Polecam as an

extra camera for a *Breakfast News* live was a first for the Northern region so it had to be impressive. Bunting and balloons provided both hazards and opportunities for camera crane moves but, luckily, the wind off the sea was shielded by the caravans so I was able to complement the main camera with developing shots that illustrated the numbers of people willing to show their support for the Royal Wedding.

By the time we had the final 'hit' just before 8 a.m. the party-goers were shivering but happy and ready for bacon sandwiches. There were big 'thank yous' with complimentary



comments on the quality of what we had produced relayed from the studio director in London and that was a wrap. Then it was back home

to help out with our own street party which continued until 3 a.m. the next morning!

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