

Chapter 111: Technology in the Early 1970s

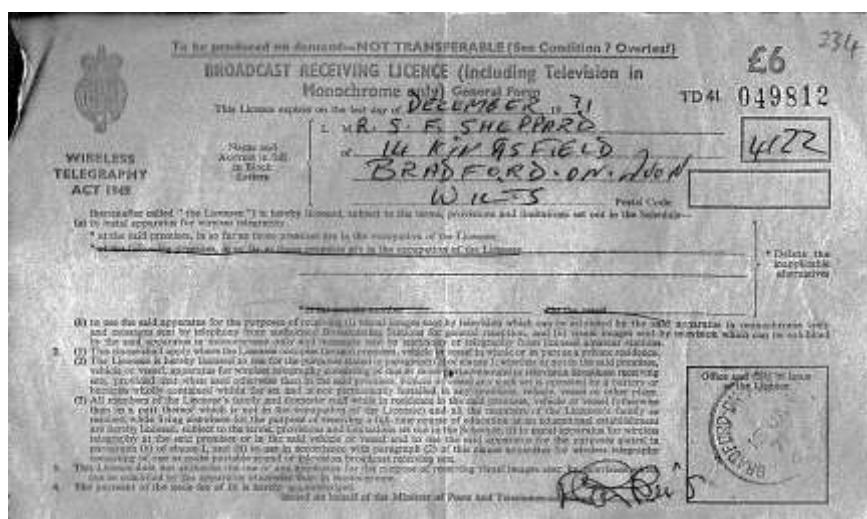
For much of this period, grandma and grandad did not have a phone.¹ Mum phoned on 30 December 1972 to ask about getting a phone but she was told there would be none for a year as there was a waiting list. So, in January 1973, grandad asked Ron if he would be willing to go on a party line and he agreed. At the end of the month, he heard from the GPO that they would fix the phone as soon as possible. On Saturday 17 February 1973, someone came from the Post Office to say they would install the telephone on Monday. They did and it took about two hours. Sometimes, after that, grandad noted when they paid their phone bill and when they made or received a call. For example, grandma phoned him when she was away in Lowestoft in June 1973² and mum phoned them when Alan was not well on 6 December 1973. In addition, Dolly Smith phoned on 2 November 1974, to say that John Smith had died.³ Occasionally, there were some problems with the phone. For example, in November 1973, the phone stopped working and it was repaired two days later.

Grandad sometimes noted what they saw on television. This included major news and sports events⁴ and TV programmes they watched regularly, including the Golden Shot.² Also, grandad sometimes noted renewing their television licence.⁵ In January 1972, someone came and fixed them a new TV aerial which allowed them to get BBC 1 and 2 and ITA 1.⁶



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1970s-style phone. More colours were available than black Bakelite



Example of 1971 black and white (monochrome) TV licence

¹ I don't really know why not. They had been living in the house from when it was built in 1964 (see [Chapter 76](#)) and they had had a phone previously when they lived in Kirkby (see [Chapter 53](#)). It was the sort of thing I would have expected grandad to organise as part of the construction of the house. I don't know if this means it was difficult to get a phone even then.

² See [Chapter 106](#).

³ See [Chapter 100](#).

⁴ See [Chapter 112](#).

⁵ For example, in April 1970 and 1971. In 1971 grandad noted that it cost £6.

⁶ See [Chapter 108](#).

The TV sets of the time were quite unreliable⁷ and grandma and grandad were often getting their set repaired. Initially, they got any such repairs through Hubbards.⁸ Often, this just involved replacing a valve but, in the end, the tube went so they decided to buy a new television through Panks.⁹

One of the main developments around this time concerned the [switch to colour television](#). In October 1972, Barbara Carpenter, grandma and grandad's next-door neighbour, got a colour television. Grandad went round to watch "[Dixon of Dock Green](#)"¹⁰ and noted that the picture was good. The very next night, grandad went to Barbara's again to watch TV in colour. In November 1973, grandma went to Barbara's to watch Princess Anne's wedding in colour.¹¹

Grandma and grandad both listened to the radio although radios seemed to suffer similar reliability issues to televisions during this period. In March 1972, grandma bought a new Roberts radio from Panks.¹²

During this period, there were developments in both [High Fidelity and Stereo sound](#). In September 1971, when Ray Cirket visited, grandad noted that he was very interested in mum and dad's Hi-Fi.¹³ In February 1972, Ken and Irene had a new stereo radio and record player delivered but they found that the automatic record changer did not work. Someone came from Panks the next day and fixed that. Occasionally, during this period, grandma and/or grandad went to listen to music at other people's houses. For example, in February 1972, grandma and Miss Cooke went to hear Mr and Mrs Elsegood's record player in the afternoon. The next month, in March 1972, grandad went to Irene's to tape a record of M Anderson.¹⁴ He said he was not able to as their set was stereo.¹⁵ The month after that, in April 1972, grandma and Auntie Dolly went to Irene's to listen to records. In July 1974, Auntie Bertha went to Irene's to hear "MA's record" which is presumably a reference to the M Anderson record mentioned above. Later that year, in August, Auntie Bertha went to Irene's to hear Harry Secombe.

Extract from the Radio Times for 21 October 1972 showing early evening viewing including "Dixon of Dock Green" which was the first TV programme that grandad watched in colour at Barbara Carpenter's.

Programmes for 21 October

BBC1

5.55 Colour

Bruce Forsyth and The Generation Game

starring

Bruce Forsyth
with hostess Anthea Redfern
and family couples
from all over the country

Orchestra directed by RONNIE BAXTER
Programme associate TONY BAWER
Designer NANCY TAYLOR
Producers ALAN TURNBULL, JAMES WOOD

6.45 Colour

Dixon of Dock Green

starring

Jack Warner

Gun Point

Written by GERALD KELLEY
When a large number of firearms are stolen from premises in Dock Green and Sgt Wills disappears, a full-scale hunt is mounted to apprehend the thieves.

George Dixon.....JACK WARNER
Joyner.....JAMES BECKETT
Mullis.....ANTHONY WOODRUFF
Kimber.....GARFIELD MORGAN
Usher.....JOHN HARTLEY
Sgt Wills.....NICHOLAS DONNELLY
PC Newton.....MICHAEL OSBORNE
Det-Sgt Andy Crawford

PETER BYRNE
Det-Inspt Scott.....KENNETH WATSON
Det-Con Webb.....DEBEN ANDERS
Hoppo.....KEN WYNNE
York.....ANDREW MCCULLOCH
Coles.....EDWARD EVANS
Jones.....DENIS CLARKE
Jackson.....JOHN BOLFE
Adamson.....MICHAEL HALL

Series created by TES WILLIS
Producer JOE WATERS
Director ROBIN RASH

7.35 Colour

The Two Ronnies

starring



Ronnie Barker, Ronnie Corbett
Special guests
Alan Price and George Fame
with
ELAINE DELMAR, SALLY BRACE
IAN GHAY, ROLAND MACLEOD
MARY MURRAY, BRIAN NOLAN
JOHN OWENS, MAURICE QUICK
JOHN RUTLAND, JEROLD WELLS
and SUE LLOYD as Blanche

⁷ I remember talking to someone about this and they advocated renting for this reason. If you rented, it was the rental company's responsibility to repair when broken. If you bought and then needed repairs., you could be on your own. In December 1973, grandad had to let someone into Ron's house to see to his TV which was not working.

⁸ See [Chapter 84](#).

⁹ See [Chapter 96](#).

¹⁰ This was a Saturday and "Dixon of Dock Green" was on BBC1 at 6.45pm. That [episode](#) was called "Gun Point".

¹¹ See [Chapter 101](#).

¹² See [Chapter 108](#).

¹³ See [Chapter 106](#).

¹⁴ I wonder if this referred to American singer [Marian Anderson](#).

¹⁵ I don't really understand this as I would have thought you could play a mono recording on stereo equipment.



The advantages behind our Hi-Fi package.

BSR's package is not a package at all—really we only manufacture turntables.

No amplifiers. No speakers. But when you buy our MP60 or HT70 you're also buying freedom of choice to build up your own unit audio system from the many hundreds of audio separates on the market.

That way you get something which fits your room, your pocket and your Hi-Fi needs. Instead of a package deal which could be more expensive than it sounds.

Our range of turntables includes sensibly priced high-quality models, both single play and automatic.

The MP60 player costs only £14.78 complete with low mass, fully counter-balanced square section pick-up arm, slide in cartridge holder, bias compensator, viscous cueing, 3½ lb diecast turntable, 4-pole dynamically balanced motor and immaculate styling.

For a few pounds more you can buy the HT70, with the same features plus a deep-rim 4½ lb

diecast turntable, a rotating stub spindle to reduce record friction and a 4-pole dynamically balanced synchronous motor to compensate for normal fluctuation in mains voltage.

With these models, and our range of automatics, you get the flexibility of price you need to build your whole Hi-Fi set-up.

For a preview just return the coupon to:

BSR Limited, McDonald Division, Monarch Works, Cradley Heath, Warley, Worcs. Tel: Cradley Heath 69272.

Please send me your illustrated brochures of the complete range of turntables.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

It's a sound start



The October 1972 Radio Times that I bought for details of the first colour TV programme that grandad watched had no less than three different adverts for Hi-Fi or stereo equipment. Two are shown here with the third overleaf.

A Garrard deck—ask the man who owns one



Make no mistake—your deck is the key unit in your Hi-Fi equipment. All the latest electronic refinements in amplifiers and speakers can be wasted if the deck is not precision-built and mechanically reliable. Ask the man who owns a Garrard. He may take it for granted—but that's the way it should be. You have no second thoughts, no regrets once you've bought Garrard. That's why the overwhelming majority of 'package deals' start with a Garrard. Hi-Fi dealers can't afford after sales problems, so they go for Garrard. Go along with your dealer—go for Garrard.

▲ PFM module: this superb deck offers every modern feature you need for Hi-Fi performance. This is a genuine transcription quality deck at a moderate price. Fitted with 75/6/SM Shure cartridge.



SP25 Mk III module: this automatic single play deck offers the refinements of enthusiast Hi-Fi at a budget price. Fitted with 75/6/SM Shure cartridge.

▲ PFM module: the connoisseur's single playing transcription deck. It is beautifully styled with precision performance to match any Hi-Fi system. Fitted with 75/6/SM Shure cartridge.



ZERO-100 module: the ultimate. Transient pick-up arm virtually eliminates tracking error. The transcription turntable with the greatest combination of advanced features available today. Fitted with M93/E Shure cartridge.

Complete the coupon and post it now!

Please send me more details on the Garrard range of modules and decks.

Name _____

Address (Block Letters) _____

Garrard
A PLESSEY QUALITY PRODUCT



To: Garrard, Dept. RT10,
Newcastle Street,
Swindon, Wiltshire.
© PLESSEY



A superior Ferguson stereo console system ...and only just over £100!



If you're looking for something different from a stereogram, but still maintain your radio and stereo record reproduction should be soundly based on four good legs - Ferguson's Unit Audio System 3451 is very probably what you had in mind. And at £101.70 represents amazing value w a specification like this.

Amplifier output: A room-filling 7 watts per channel speech and music rating.

Radio: VHF/FM, Long and Medium waves, AFC on VHF/FM.

Record deck: BSR 4-speed changer with optional automatic or manual operation, 10" turntable and tubular tone arm.

Cartridge: Ceramic stereo with turnover sapphire styl for playing all size LPs and 78s.

Controls: Rotary On-off/Volume, Treble, Bass Balance and Tuning. Push-button selection of Gramophone, VHF/FM, MW, LW radio and Tape.

Speakers: Twin 8" x 5" loudspeakers in sealed enclosures each with 10ft. of connecting cable.

Accessories: Internal MW/LW and plug-in wire dipole for VHF/FM.

Sockets: For loudspeakers, FM aerial and tape recording/playback.

Cabinet: Modern teak finish with clear acrylic control panel, tinted transparent record deck cover and strong black metal legs.

Floor standing speakers, and player/amplifier tuner unit, too. All in all, a powerful, impressive sounding combination for £101.70.

The coupon can bring you still further impressive details of this and other Ferguson Unit Audio Systems. Clip it today.

FERGUSON

British Radio Corporation is a member of the Thorn group

Unit Audio

To: British Radio
Corporation Ltd., Dept. C,
224 Southbury Road,
Enfield, Middlesex.
Please send me details of
Ferguson Unit
Audio Systems in
your colour brochure.

Name _____
Address _____

Advert for Ferguson stereo equipment that
appeared in the Radio Times in October
1972



1973 advert for Sony stereo equipment. The advert refers to 4-channel stereo system which I recall being marketed as "[quadraphonic](#)". I am not sure it ever caught on to the same extent as stereo. However, although it was considered an initial commercial failure, it was the precursor to modern surround sound systems.

Grandad remained interested in photography, particularly slide photography. In June 1970, grandad noted modifying Barbara's slide viewer so that it would run from the mains.¹⁶ That same day, while grandad was giving a slide show, the bulb burst but he had a spare so he replaced it and was able to continue. Grandma sometimes went to slide shows, for example, between 1970 and 1972, she attended a number of slide shows related to the Oberammergau trip.¹⁷ Other people gave picture shows during this period including Mrs Pointer, Dr Gale¹⁸ and Rev Warren. In November 1972, while visiting, Jack Attwood showed them some cine film and grandad showed some of his stills.

I don't know how much grandma and grandad used their tape recorder at this time. But, in January 1972, they gave it to mum. Grandad noted that they had bought it from Fishers of Huthwaite when they lived at Welbeck Street.¹⁹ I assume it was the same tape recorder that grandad and Arthur tried unsuccessfully to repair in February 1974. So, in March 1974, mum took the Philips tape recorder to be repaired by Norvic Television Company²⁰ in St Benedict's. On the 17th, mum brought it back. The cost was £12 plus £1.20 VAT making the total cost £13.20.²¹

¹⁶ See [Chapter 108](#).

¹⁷ Details of the Oberammergau trip are found in [Chapter 106](#). There were various slide shows from that trip, see Chapters [106](#) and [107](#).

¹⁸ He showed slides of his holiday in Capri and Rome.

¹⁹ See [Chapter 84](#).

²⁰ In the 1967 Kelly's Directory, Norvic Television and Electrical Co Ltd were described as domestic appliances, television and radio engineers at 40 Exchange Street. Similar details appear in Kelly's Tradefinders for 1970-71 and 1971-72. I suspect this is the address grandad was referring to as it is on the [corner of Exchange Street and St Andrews](#), which is a continuation of St Benedict's. The premises are currently home to estate agents [Property Ladder](#).

²¹ [VAT](#) replaced Purchase Tax in the UK in 1973 and was initially set at a rate of 10%. Grandad probably noted the tax because it was new and because it was applied at the point of sale and not manufacture as had been the case with Purchase Tax.

In July 1971, Arthur Elsegood lent grandad his telescope/episcope.²² Grandad started using it on the 19th. The lamp fused!



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Norvic Television & Electrical Co. Ltd.

NORVIC TELEVISION & ELECTRICAL CO. LTD.

ALL MAKES OF TELEVISIONS
SUPPLIED. HI-FI & TAPE RECORDERS
RADIOS & ELECTRICAL GOODS ON
NO DEPOSIT TERMS

40 EXCHANGE ST. NOR60G

PHONE
21083

Above – advert for Norvic Television & Electrical Co Ltd that appeared in the Kelly's Tradefinders for 1970-71 and 1971-72.

Left – example of episcope

Grandad's diaries did not contain a great deal about household appliances but, in December 1972, the spin dryer went "wonky". Someone came to fix it. Apparently, it was the switch for the dryer which was a five-minute job to fix. Grandma and grandad bought a trolley²³ from him for £9 as otherwise he would have had to charge them £3 just for the callout. He waived that charge because they bought the trolley.

²² An [episcope](#) allowed the projection of solid objects, such as photographs and was the forerunner of the overhead projector. On balance, I think it was probably an episcope as reference to a lamp makes no sense for a telescope.

²³ I am not entirely sure what this was.