

Nov 2015

FREE

Fair deals at C4

DOROTHY BYRNE, head of News and Current Affairs at Channel Four, was our speaker at the LFB meeting in September. Dorothy is a former editor of *The Big Story* and a former *World in Action* producer, and a union activist with first the NUJ and now BECTU. She described herself as “the oldest woman in TV.” When she started out there were “more women than men” in TV current affairs, but the women “gradually disappear, like in an Agatha Christie novel”.

Of exploitation of freelances, Dorothy noted that “nearly everyone who works outside the news for Channel 4 is a freelance.” C4 “doesn’t directly make any of its own programmes”: these are “commissioned from independent production companies... People working on C4 current affairs programmes are usually two [steps] away from me.”

Dorothy says, “If a film gets commissioned, it’s my job to ensure they

get the best deal... (it’s) “really important that we pay people for their work... All these people out there who are trying to pitch their ideas, not knowing what will happen... We try to protect them.” (C4 News is unionised.) She helped introduce contracts whereby “people who work for us have to treat the people working for them properly.”

If “you’ve never worked in TV that doesn’t matter to us: a good story is a good story. Don’t spend loads of time” on developing ideas. (Pitches to Dbyrne@Channel4.co.uk)

If “people have a really good idea, we help and support them. When we get a pitch... I say, can I give your idea to C4 News, C4 would negotiate” to buy the story and on what your role would be. “If it gets bigger, I’ll give you names for at least two independent production companies for you to go and see.” Or she might put you in touch with another out-

let. “It might seem odd that I would help you sell your story to the BBC. But it’s in my interests to have many experienced people working in TV.”

Some “shocking stories” about nicking ideas have come Dorothy’s way. Freelances pitching an idea are told, “we’re already doing that” in a common broadcast scam, but “we are really strict about that at C4... If you think anybody stole an idea... you should definitely get on to me.”

Dorothy observed when she gives talks, female freelances say, that’s all very well, but in my little production company I knew my one-month contract wouldn’t get renewed unless I went to dinner with the man who ran the company. “The only way I find out is if freelances tell me. If you think that’s happening you should tell me directly.”

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• There’s a much longer report of this meeting online, with links.



Dorothy Byrne promises that Channel 4 will do its best by freelances. Photo: Hazel Dunlop

Bad Bill! Down!

THE UK GOVERNMENT is attempting to force through the Trade Union Bill, which is very bad news indeed. Its provisions include a requirement that the “supervisor” of a picket give their name to the police. It would, if passed, compel trades unions to give several weeks’ notice of their intention to use social media in support of a strike. Even the quintessentially

but rebelliously Tory MP David Davis is concerned that some measures in the Bill are “draconian”. The *Free-lance* fears this is unfair to dragons.

Interviewed on Sky News on 13 September, Davis said: “I agree with most of the trade union bill. I think it’s very sensible ... but there are bits of it which look OTT, like requiring pickets to give their names to the

police force. What is this? This isn’t Franco’s Britain, this is Queen Elizabeth II’s Britain.” Francisco Franco was Fascist dictator of Spain from 1939 until his death in 1975.

Write to your MP now, sign the petition and watch for demos and actions you can take, at www.tuc.org.uk/get-involved and www.nuj.org.uk

LFB meetings

9 November

Philip Beresford on the Rich List and other successes

14 December

Seasonal social

See back page & www.twitter.com/NUJ_LFB



And lo! This QR code shall convey your web-enabled smartphone device directly to the Rate for the Job page online. (www.londonfreelance.org/rates).



The Trireme Award

The Trireme Award for “the worst terms since I was chained to the oars” goes for the second month running to a national newspaper. Online showbiz pieces on the *Daily Mail*’s website are, you would have thought, its bread and butter. But they could apparently only find £40 with which to reward 1250 words-worth of showbiz content by one freelance.

“Free money” – claim by 30/11/15

Are you signed up with ALCS to get money distributed to you for secondary uses of your written work, such as photocopying? If you want to get paid in their February-March 2016 “distribution”, you have until **Monday 30 November** to submit claims (via their online form) for articles published in journals and magazine going back to January 2012. Details are at www.alcs.co.uk

NUJ Pay Day

The NUI’s Pay Day conference – on how to negotiate and campaign for better wages and fairer working practices for staff and freelances – is on **Saturday 31 October**. For details, including how to register, see www.nuj.org.uk/events/nuj-pay-day.

The Rate for the Job

OCTOBER’S harvest of Rates for the Job includes some new ones agreed for BBC radio features.

Thinking about work for a company you’ve not dealt with before? Simply look at the Rate for the Job to find out what companies in similar niches have paid. Then aim higher.

You can submit rates online, in confidence, at any time, at www.londonfreelance.org/rates – please give not only the basic rate (e.g. for FBS, First British Serial rights) but

extra payments negotiated for extra uses, like the Web – or for print if it’s a Rate for the Online Job. These are shown as (eg) £400 + 100.

Rates marked **X** are, in the editor’s fallible opinion, below par. Treat all rates as minima, even perhaps the happy ☺ few.

Broadcast: BBC radio features: £45.48 per minute, min. fee £318.30; Script and Read: £23.73 per minute, min. fee £47.46, script only £18.40 per minute, min. fee £36.78, reporting £133 per day, min. fee £66.50, abridgements (per minute): beginner £7.32 established £10.80.

Photography: *Cambrian News* photos, per pic single use print and online £13; *Broadcast* magazine, 5 photos one use £250 **X**; *Soldier* (Ministry of Defence) photo one use £40 **X**; *Luton on Sunday* (Local World) photo one use £15 **XX**.

Shifts: MSN news (online) 8-hour subbing day £170; Haymarket 8-hour subbing day £140; *Daily Mail* 6-hour subbing day £130; *Financial Times* 8-hour subbing day £130 **X**; *Top Gear* 7-hour subbing day £120 **X**; un-

named website content generation, per hour £30; higher education website generation, per hour £25.

Words, per 1000: *Closer* £571; *Grazia* £500; *Economist* 800-word blog @ £300 = £375; *Telegraph* feature £350; *Guardian* online news £325; book for HarperCollins, all rights and soul demanded £200 **XX**; *Ski+board* £180; *Pet Product Marketing* 1200 words @ £150 = £125; *Local Secrets* 500-600 words + pics @ 320; all rights taken, moral rights waived, no royalties, fiddly pitch system, turned down £40 **XX**; *Independent* feature 1300 words @ £200 = £154 **XX**; *El Mundo* 450 words for print edition @ £45 = £100 **XXX**; *Daily Mail* online showbiz piece: 1250 words @ £40 = £32 **XX**⁹; per-1000 rate for the text of a book (Picador Press) £23.

Words, other: Buzzfeed purchase of rights to pre-existing research for article £200; *Quietus* lead review (album) £50; BBC World Service website per article £50; *El Mundo* per online piece of any length £35 **XXX**.

Limited working hours effect

SEVERAL freelances have contacted us about a ruling on working hours. Does it affect us? How?

On 10 September the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) ruled that when workers “do not have a fixed or habitual place of work, the time spent by those workers travelling each day between their homes and the premises of the first and last customers designated by their employer constitutes ‘working time’...”

This was widely reported as saying that time travelling to work – at a place other than a regular office gig – counts as work. Unfortunately, it’s a lot narrower than that. It affects only the WorkingTime rules on your maximum working week and breaks between shifts. A briefing from out-

law.com, an international tax law firm’s advice website, (at www.bit.ly/WorkingTime) makes it clear that UK workers are not entitled to be paid for these hours. Nor does it change UK taxation rules.

The rule applies to workers – employed or freelance – who are not required to clock on at an office before they go out on a job and whose contracts do not specify that their home is their place of work. It has no effect at all on gigs where you are simply paid for the words or pictures you deliver and are not considered to be a “worker”.

The *Freelance* can see the ruling affecting a typical photographer, for example. They are now entitled to 11 hours’ clear rest between assignments and a clear 24 hours off every

week. In theory they may not be required to work more than 48 hours in a week, including the abovementioned travel time.

Unless, that is, they are “asked” to sign a new contract opting out of the WorkingTime rules.

Please do send such new contracts to editor@londonfreelance.org – who will respect your anonymity.

Incidentally, the rule for deciding what travel time counts toward working time is almost exactly the same as our first approximation of the rule for what travel can be claimed as an expense against UK tax. We have to add that Her Majesty’s Revenue and Customs consider each case on its merit.

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The path of a pitch

MEMBER Martin Hoschik tells us of successful pitching through persistence. He’d dug up the possible name of the new Jeremy Clarkson car show.

He’d started out doing this for his own technology and entertainment site at www.seenit.co.uk

Martin told the *Freelance*, “I could have run the story there – but the huge interest in Clarkson and co meant I thought it best to take the work to a larger publication. That

way I could see a direct return on the time I’d spent.” This strategy also meant he would “avoid overloading my own server or site if the story took off and got thousands of people trying to read it; and the story might have some more credibility.”

So Martin pitched his story at two other titles. First he tried the *Guardian*, who were too slow to make the call and “find out what I’d had – and also said they weren’t interested in paying for it.”

So Martin then pitched the story on the name of Jeremy Clarkson’s new car show – on the rebound as it were – to www.buzzfeed.com – which promised to pay.

The story was promptly picked up and re-hashed by most of the big UK papers, many websites and the international press.

That included the *Guardian*, who thereby ended up re-reporting a story they had only just missed the chance to break.

Domestic extremist moguls

LONDON FREELANCE Branch voted at its September meeting to donate £500 towards the production of a campaigning video, *Press Freedom 3 – Domestic Extremist*. The Branch thereby again assumes the rôle of film mogul.

It's being made by a group of NUJ photographers and will document the struggle to expose the files police keep on journalists, using interviews with those involved and footage and stills taken over ten years.

The first two Press Freedom films – *Press Freedom: Collateral Damage* (www.vimeo.com/87556015) and *Press Freedom: Hostile Reconnaissance* (www.vimeo.com/87514833) have been widely shown and become valuable union campaigning resources.

Six NUJ members have also launched a Judicial Review in the High Court challenging the Met's surveillance of journalists. Some of them – including journalist and comedian Mark Thomas – spoke at the April 2015 LFB meeting (www.londonfreelance.org/fi/1507mark.html). One, Jason Parkinson, recently updated the *Freelance* with

the news that there is nothing to report yet, other than that all the deadlines that were set for the Met

to respond to their initial filing have now passed.

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Photographers converge on a photographer at an "I'm a photographer, not a terrorist" event in Trafalgar Square in 2010. Photo © Matt Salusbury

ANNOUNCEMENTS ROUND-UP

Black History Month event

TO MARK Black History Month (October), the NUJ is hosting a special event in honour of Claudia Jones, the Trinidadian-born activist and journalist who was deported from the US for her political activism, and who was instrumental in establishing the first Notting Hill Carnival.

The event is on the evening of **Tuesday 27 October**. Details were not yet finalised as we went to press, please check www.nuj.org.uk for full details.

Go niche, young hack!

ROYAL REPORTER or health correspondent: how to develop a specialism? That's the title of an NUJ event on **Thursday 29 October** at Headland House, the NUJ London HQ. Speakers include *Times Education Supplement* editor Ann Mroz, *Mirror* health editor Andrew Gregory, PA environment correspondent Emily Beaumont, former *Guardian* fashion and beauty correspondent Hannah Pool and *Express* royal correspondent Richard Palmer.

Kick-off is at 6.30. For details and to book: www.nuj.org.uk/events/royal-reporter-or-health-correspondent-how-to-develop-a-specialism

#LetItBeeb

MUSIC INDUSTRY group UK Music has launched a campaign to support BBC music services called **#LetItBeeb**. The campaign has the backing of Coldplay, Rita Ora, Paul Epworth, Emily Eavis, Paloma Faith, Chrissie Hynde, Brian Eno, Midge Ure, Rachel Portman, Debbie Wiseman, Alan Moulder, Michael Price, Bombay Bicycle Club, Bob Geldof, Young Turks and more. UK Music would ask supportive members of NUJ to sign the petition at www.letitbeeb.tumblr.com, and follow the campaign online via www.letitbeeb.co.uk

European digital media workers' survey

IF YOU work in digital media – and which of us doesn't these days? – please take a few minutes to fill in the online survey by the new Expert Group on Digital Media of European Federation of Journalists on conditions for journalists in digital media. The NUJ is a member of the EFJ as well as the International Federation (IFJ). The survey is in French and German as well as English and you can find it at www.surveymonkey.com/r/Y2ZZZHQ. It aims to map the working conditions of journalist working in digital media in order to help shape union policy.

Reckoning of day

FREELANCE financial journalist Andrew Bibby has released the latest edition of his invaluable *Freelance Ready Reckoner*. Produced every two years, and now in its sixth edition, the *Ready Reckoner* has become a standard guide for freelance journalists to compare their pay with that of staff writers. Key facts in this year's report include: freelance journalists should invoice media clients £283 for a day's work to achieve comparability with a staff journalist earning £25,000 – and, to match a staffer earning £40,000, a day's freelance earnings should be £427. The real cost to an employer of an employee earning £30,000 is £43,689. See www.andrewbibby.com

New members' meeting

THERE IS a meeting for new and recently-joined members of NUJ London Freelance Branch on **Thursday 29 October**. It's a chance to meet other people new to the Branch, and there will also be some more experienced working journalist Branch members on hand with advice and tips. The meeting's from 6pm at the Camera Café, Museum Street, London WC1A 1LY (nearest Tube Holborn). It ends at 8pm – come any time before if you can't make it at 6.

Training alert!

THERE MAY still be time to sign up to Pitch & Deal, the NUJ's professional training course on how to develop your ideas, target outlets and pitch to commissioning editors, how to talk money and protect your rights. It's on **Friday 30 October** at the NUJ's London HQ. This course is taught by long-standing freelances and NUJ Freelance Industrial Council members Louise Bolotin and Phil Sutcliffe. It is part of the NUJ trade union training programme and is therefore subsidised, at the bargain rate of £70 for NUJ members, £60 for student or unemployed NUJ members and £130 for non-members who are in a General Federation of Trade Unions affiliate. For details and to book see www.nuj.org.uk/events/pitch-and-deal-oct-2015

The Freelance

This issue of the *Freelance* is shorter than usual, because the *Journalist* – the magazine of the NUJ with which it is mailed out – had an unusually short interval between issues this time. We have less time than usual to put together, and the world had less time for relevant stuff to happen so that we could report on it.

LONDON FREELANCE BRANCH MEETINGS

Successfully freelance, end of year party, AGM

PHILIP Beresford, best known for his work on the *Sunday Times* rich list, will talk about positive, life-enhancing things like being a successful freelance at the LFB meeting on **Monday 9 November**. This meeting is also the last one at which we can debate motions that the Branch may want to present to the union's national Delegate Meeting.

The get-together on **Monday 14 December** is very likely to be a seasonal Branch social event, possibly hosted jointly with other London NUJ Branches. The December gathering will probably be on the fifth floor of the NUJ HQ at Headland House, 308-312 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1X 8DP (Tube: King's X) but may be in a pub somewhere in the Euston/King's X area. Watch the sources below for updates. The Branch will provide free food and some free drink.

The LFB meeting on **Monday 11 January** will be the Branch's AGM,

when we elect the Branch office-holders and its Committee – posts and what they entail are www.londonfreelance.org/lfb/jobs.html – if you are interested in standing for one of these, contact a member of the current Branch committee via www.londonfreelance.org/lfb/contact.html

For details of these and other LFB meetings, see: www.londonfreelance.org/lfb/meetings.html

For possible motions for debate at this meeting, see: www.londonfreelance.org/lfb/meetings.html#motions – and to ensure you get email alerts of meetings and the online *Freelance* – just one message a month – see www.londonfreelance.org/linkup.html

This issue went to press on **29 September**.

Deadline for the November online-only issue: **19 October**.

• LFB meetings (with the exception of the December seasonal gathering) are from 7pm to 9pm at Friends' House, Euston Road NW1 (opposite Euston Station), which is accessible to people who use wheelchairs. If you need the Branch to pay for care for a child or dependent so you can attend a meeting, call a Branch officer.

• For updates on meetings see the Branch calendar web page www.londonfreelance.org/lfb/meetings.html and LFB's Twitter feed [www.twitter.com/NUJ_LFB](https://twitter.com/NUJ_LFB)

Can members who have difficulty reading the agenda on paper please contact us to get the agenda in electronic form ahead of the meeting.

For etiquette on recording or live-tweeting from LFB meetings, see www.londonfreelance.org/fl/1507film.html

For details of NUJ London Photographers' Branch meetings, see londonphotographers.org

FREELANCE

Branch contacts: www.londonfreelance.org/lfb
Online Freelance contents: www.londonfreelance.org/fl

TAX WARNING

ALREADY? YES, already. You have only until **31 October** if you want to send in your tax return on paper. Please note that's the deadline for it to arrive at HMRC, not the date for you to send it. Nowadays you need to ring up your tax office if you want to do it this way: it can take a week or two for them to print and send a paper tax return for you and send back by post. And HMRC no longer acknowledge or record receipt of paper tax returns. The only way to get confirmation out of them that your returns have arrived is to file them online.

If you do your tax return online, the time to start sorting out all those receipts for tax year April 2014-April 2015 is now, as the **31 January 2016** deadline is rushing towards you faster than you think.

And if you became self-employed

during the tax year that ended in April and need to submit a tax return for the first time, register now to get an HMRC online services user ID log-in. You will need an activation code: this requires HMRC to send a password to you by post, which can take a while (up to seven working days, or much longer if the lines become progressively busier in the build up to the 31 January deadline). So get it sorted now, via HMRC online services at <https://online.hmrc.gov.uk/login>.

And sort out now (if you're not sure already) which is your tax office, and what their phone number is. It will get much harder and more time-consuming to find all this out at the end of January. Fines – in three figures – for filing your tax return late are now automatic. So don't say we didn't warn you.



Tax alarm! Imagine the sound of air raid sirens sounding in your head now. And here's the original World War Two air raid siren from the Long Shop engineering factory in Leiston Suffolk.

Photo © Matt Salusbury

UNCLASSIFIED ADS

FREELANCE UNCLASSIFIEDS are FREE to members for non-commercial purposes. To non-members and for commercial purposes, £10 for this much. Acceptance is at the editors' whim; appearance does not imply endorsement. If you have any comments on an advertiser, tell us. Submit ads by email to unclassified@londonfreelance.org

I AM SEEKING to diversify so have stated trading in vinyl records. So, fair prices paid for good condition LP records. In particular, 50s to 90s rock, 60s-early 70s soul, jazz, blues, folk, ska/reggae, Latin, Samba/bossa, African, Cajun/Zydeco, klezmer. But all popular genres

and eras considered. Contact Mike at: info@vinylvanguard.com.

WRITER REQUIRED to write monthly newsletter. Neutradol send out a monthly newsletter to subscribers and are looking for a freelance writer to compile this and send out via Mail Chimp. Please email: mark.davis@msg.co.uk

GALLOWAY COTTAGE. Wood-burning stove and games room. One mile from Scotland's book town, two minutes walk to good village pub and distillery. Beautiful countryside and unspoiled beaches. woodpeckercottage@btinternet.com woodpecker-cottage.co.uk

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