

England's History of Space Broadcasts

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>From Robert Law, over at Yahoo Group's Inside_KSC, (inside_ksc@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx), here's an interesting look at the history of England's coverage of America's space program.... Jim Burns

Re: 36 Years Ago Today, Robert Law

SPACE REPORTING FROM ACROSS THE POND

During the Apollo Program here in the UK we only had 2 TV stations BBC and ITV both provided coverage. The BBC began with Cliff Michimore who was more famous for the Holiday Program to anchor their coverage along with a panel of experts which included Patrick Moore (who had contributed to Lunar Mapping pre space age). They built a big space studio to present their coverage behind the desks suspended from the ceiling was a huge moon globe. One rumor about this globe was that originally it was a prop for 2001 which had been rejected because Stanley Kubrick thought the craters were too deep!. The BBC used the theme music of 2001 to introduce these programs. During the coverage of the Apollo 8 mission in 1968 at the most critical moment when the astronauts were about to fire the SPS for the journey home the BBC cut the program to show Play School! as the Apollo program progressed the BBC decided to get a space correspondent this was James Burke who had been on the science program Tomorrow's World, more recently he has done Connections which is shown on the Discovery Channel, I thought James Burke was excellent and so was Patrick Moore.

The Space Studio also imputed to the News programs. The BBC sent their Air correspondent Reginald Turnhill to cover these missions from the USA (I had the honor of meeting Reg in 2003). Reg is a real expert in spaceflight he also flew in the early test flights of Concorde and is famous for his observers books of spaceflight, more recently he has written The Moon Landings which tells the story of his space reporting. He was the first reporter to break the Apollo 13 story! as the Apollo program continued these programs got better and for the final Moon Shot James Burke and Patrick Moore went to Florida to cover the flight from the USA via Satellite, these programs broke many firsts in broadcasting.

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technology in the history of British Broadcasting.

Unfortunately very little remains as the BBC scrubbed most of the tapes to re-use for sports coverage .

ITV's coverage was provided by ITN the ITV system consisted of lots of regional companies in those days this caused problems for ITN (Independent Television News) as they had to fight to get to show the space coverage , for Apollo 11 it was awful they had a verity night from a theat