

Review of Alex Leger's 'Blue Peter – Behind the Badge' Thursday 9th Sept 2021

For our first visit back to Exmouth Pavilion since March 2020 it was just right; a superb action packed presentation taking us back to many memorable scenes from that favourite children's programme, Blue Peter.

Alex Leger lived and breathed the Blue Peter programme for 36 years, filming, producing and directing. A skilful story teller Alex held our attention from start to finish. Our u3a audience laughed at the famous scene with Lulu the baby elephant with his keeper, another Alex trying to maintain control and failing but with hilarious results. That edition was filmed in 1969 and before Alex joined the programme but he brought it to life again, taking us back to our youth.

It was clear that Alex really cared about achieving the very best that he could for the Blue Peter viewers. Nothing was too challenging or too much of an obstacle as we saw when we watched the black and white film of John Noakes climbing up to the top of Nelson's Column. No safety harness, no helmet and what seemed to be ordinary ladders leaning against the massive column. A real achievement to secure the filming of a unique event which Alex did on so many occasions.

Having started work in 1975 with TV legends John Noakes, Peter Purves and Lesley Judd he went on to work with every one of the 27 presenters that followed and produced many iconic ground-breaking reports. He certainly found new ways of doing things that proved effective and successful as we saw in his clips of the volcanic eruption of Mount Etna in 1983 and then in 2001 from the Solomon Islands. In these days of multimedia and advanced technology it is easy to forget how difficult it must have been to secure those incredible scenes on TV, compelling viewing, tailor made and perfect for children and adults alike.



Alex stayed behind afterwards to sign his all action, colourful, vibrant and most interesting book 'Blue Peter – Behind the Badge', once again showing he cared by chatting to each one of our u3a members who decided to purchase a copy.

Thank you Alex!

Photo of Christine Chittock and Alex Leger by Maurice Chittock

Review by Christine Chittock, Chair and Speakers' Coordinator