

CARDIFF SEARCHLIGHT TATTOO

THE Cardiff Searchlight Tattoo takes place in the grounds of Cardiff Castle every two years during August, and calls for a large amount of lighting. How large you'll appreciate by the following equipment list:

400 Parblazer complete with CP60 Narrow beam lamp.

40 Parblazer complete with CP61 Medium beam lamp.

6 Cadenza 12/22.

15 765 kW CSI Follow Spot each with an operator.

8 225A Carbon Arc Cloud Searchlight, each with its own generator vehicle and an operating crew of four RAF personnel!

31 Dimmer racks (mixture of Mini 2+, Tempus 10A, Act 6)

The above were arranged on live scaffolding towers on three sides of the arena, on the flats making up the artificial village in the background, and on low level scaffolding for lighting of bushes, trees, gateways, etc.

Control was by two M24 desks, one 120 channel controlling the main arena lighting and one 72 channel controlling the rest. The desks were situated in a control room on the centre tower. The Multiplex boxes were scattered around the site, adjacent to the dimmer racks, resulting in one mux control cable being over 550m long!

The lighting controller was Jack Williams, from the New Theatre, who now looks after the Stage Door there – some of you may have been met by his smiling face when visiting.

Operators for all but the Air Force Searchlights were provided by Messrs. Light Relief, who also supplied all of the lighting hire equipment.

Problems with setting all of the equipment up were legion. Power came from four separate supplies, one conventional earth, one Neutral-Earth bond and two P.M.E., and even when the earthing was sorted out it was still not possible to do a full up as not enough power was available.

Distribution boxes were arranged at each dimmer

point, and incorporated contactors controlled by mains pulse signalling, allowing sections of lighting to be turned off and on as required.

Acts of God included the local Peacocks biling through the MUX lines, exceedingly strong winds blowing the scenery flats over (including the heavily braced scaffolding behind) and requiring most of the Parcans to be refocused 3 times, and filling a number of MUX boxes up with water.

Nevertheless, it was a spectacular occasion – congratulations to Jack, Ian Holden and the rest of the crew.

How about using 12K HMI's instead of the Searchlights next time?

Colin Clarke of Stage Electrics



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