

From the Editorial Chair



From time to time your Editor takes it upon himself to speak, as it were, ex-cathedra. So I thought it time for readers to see the actual Tabs/Strandlight Editorial Chair itself, in this picture occupied by the present incumbent.

Previously the chair has, of course, been graced by Fred Bentham, Francis Reid and Phil Rose.

Incidentally, it is most uncomfortable, and is used on ceremonial occasions only.

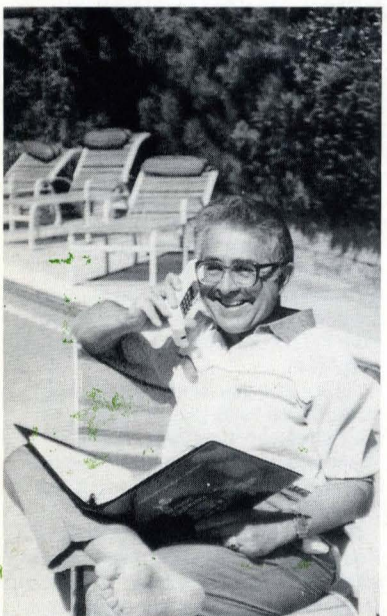
Salute to "Lighting and Sound International".

This is, of course, the lively monthly run by the spry and enquiring Mr. John Offord. It was the excellent article published by him on the Hannover 'motorised lighting' studio which made me realise that as it was an all Strand job I had been remiss in not covering it, so the omission is recovered in this issue of 'Strandlight'. As I must not be too praising of this magazine, I must warn readers that I do from time to time grace its pages myself. In fact I once appeared in one of their cartoons and have hardly dared face a mirror since.

See You at Photokina

Once again this Autumn we shall be at the greatest of European studio equipment shows. But let me warn people considering overnight visits – accommodation is notoriously difficult. I remember once our Quartzcolor team had to stay with 'The World's Favourite Innkeeper' about 60 miles from Cologne and on another never to be forgotten occasion we all signed on for a river boat which was moored near by. Small and dark metal compartments were our lodgings and had we been entirely sober we would have suffered seriously – but, fortunately.....

Bob Schiller now even more accessible.



Bob Schiller, our U.S. West Coast Sales Manager pictured here hard at work. Bob is now accessible on Fax. It may be tested by sending him orders on (818) 789 6957.

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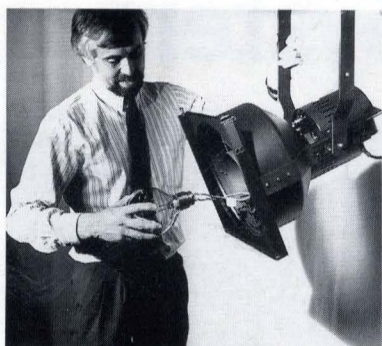
Beam Me Up, Strand!

use a normal bi-post cap but have two flying leads which emerge from the end of the cap. These leads are part of the lamp and 'come with it'.

To put a lamp in, a small button on top of the rear housing is depressed and the whole top of the housing can be slid back. This reveals the clamp which holds the lamp in position. There are two terminals with washers and large wing nuts, all in brass, for ensuring a perfect contact for the lamp leads.

There is a 330mm parabolic reflector, while three spill rings control beam scatter very effectively.

The lantern comes on a fork with 'Cantata' type clamping arrangements and

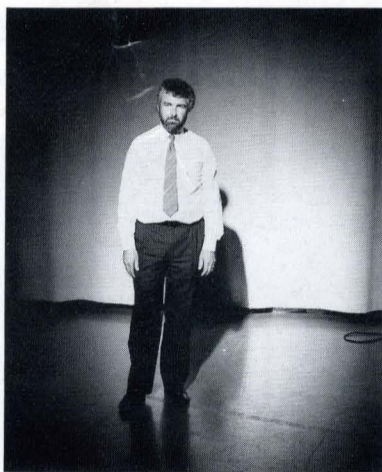


Re Lamping. The internally crown silvered lamp is being offered up to the clamp. The flying leads will be connected to the terminals accessible through the top of the lamp house. Note the cover has been slid back.

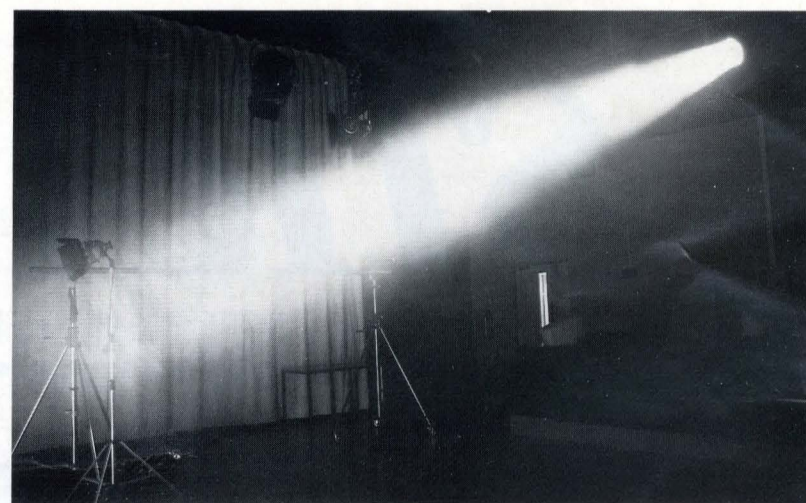
the balance point can be adjusted. There are colour runners for a 365 mm colour frame.

The transformer has tapings for 240, 220 and a 110 volt version will also be available. For electrical safety access to the transformer housing with its main voltage requires a screwdriver whereas the low voltage area for re-lamping is readily accessible through the sliding cover. Remember that transformers absorb some current, so the beamlite will actually draw more than 1kW.

Like all the latest Strand products, the beamlite is intended for the world market. Whilst its main appeal will be for the long throws of the Northern European Opera Houses, beamlights are being used more and more in the West End and we expect the new Strand Lighting integrated Beamlight to be specified widely.



Alan Luxford, at a throw of about 30 feet, in a lightly frosted beam.



Not a jet fighter taking off. I was trying, with the aid of a smoke machine, to show the narrow beam angle.



Dramatic profile. Mike Cawte, Luminaire Product Manager, in the 'open' beam.

Getting To Know You

Oliver Hartree, Strand Lighting's recently appointed Managing Director, in conversation with the Editor.

'I am looking forward to getting to know our customers, but in the meantime I hope this interview will help them know a little about me, and my ideas on the future of what is certainly the largest, and I believe the best, entertainment lighting company.' These were Oliver Hartree's opening words when I sat down in his office on a recent afternoon. We talked for over two hours. What follows is a narrative of direct quotes and deductions about the man and his ideas for Strand's future.

They say in business that you can tell something of a man by his office. If that be true then 'monastic' must be the image of our new M.D. The office walls are grey, the furniture is new but distinctly spartan in its appearance and, I suspect, its cost. No charts adorn the walls. No sporting trophies on the mantelpiece. There isn't even a mantelpiece. Any warmth needed enters through sibilant grills along with a meagre ration of air.

Oliver Hartree works at a simple desk which faces the wall as in a Victorian counting house. Visitors are sat at a round table on identically uncomfortable chairs. In one corner stands a computer terminal. Lighting is by uplighters, almost as though even a lampshade could introduce unwanted frivolity. But here is the first puzzle. The man has a strongly developed sense of humour and we were constantly diverting ourselves into increasingly irrelevant jokey side alleys on the world of lighting.

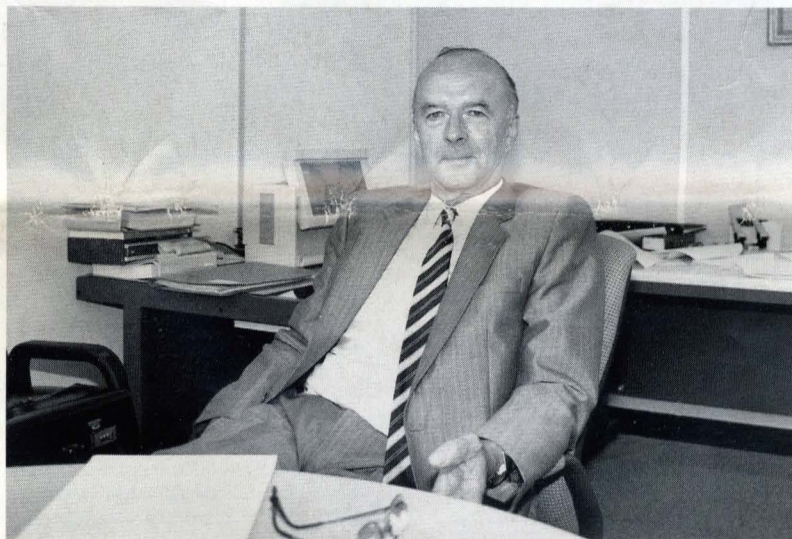
Oliver Hartree was born some sixty summers ago in Cambridge. His father was a Professor of Mathematical Physics and the family were very much part of the university establishment and all that that meant.

He was educated first in Canada as a wartime evacuee. He returned to the UK and with what must have been inevitability, took a degree at Cambridge. Although biochemistry was his first ambition, his degree in Natural Science actually led, after a three year stint with the Royal Navy, to specialisation in Metallurgy. Should you wish to write to him formally, MA, MSc, are the letters to use.

Oliver's first job was with the Bristol Aeroplane Company, now part of British Aerospace, but originally along with Rolls-Royce, the provider of aero-engines for a large segment of the world's aviation.

Oliver's work was the investigation of the behaviour of metals in the highly unfriendly environment of a jet's turbine.

He next joined AEI as a research metallurgist working on high temperature properties of metals. This included research into materials for the then nascent nuclear industry.



Then his career began to turn towards Strand's world, via posts of increasing responsibility in the production of power cables and switchgear.

In January 1984 he was recruited by Strand, initially on a specific contract basis, to spend a year looking at and making recommendations on our Kirkcaldy factory.

Some customers reading this may recall that our factory, although it always made things well, did not always make them as promptly as would have been ideal.

It took Oliver very little time to see that Strand had, potentially, a wonderful asset in the modern, well-equipped plant that Kirkcaldy has always been. It just needed giving a focus, with clear objectives setting for its production team.

Very quickly there were dramatic improvements in production and in morale. This led to far less rejection at the inspection stage, so production in a few months leapt up again.

As an example from today, nearly ten thousand Cantatas have been produced since last November, a consistent flow of product at a rate we have never approached before.

Four years were spent at the factory. Then came the summons to Rome. Strand were about to purchase the Quartzcolor television lighting business and it was essential to have management continuity during the change from Italian family control – and all that that meant – to becoming part of a major international group like Rank – with all that that means in terms of budgets, stock control, management objectives, etc.

Then, six months ago, came the summons to take on one of the two Strand Lighting top jobs.

Oliver Hartree now runs Strand Lighting Europe, Asia and Australia. Within the

European company there are separate companies in Italy, France and Germany.

Disraeli made a speech once about eventually reaching the top of the greasy pole. But this implies vigorous climbing. Interestingly enough, Oliver has always been asked to take on increasingly difficult jobs. He has only applied for two jobs in his whole career, and one of those was his first!

To consider Strand and its future we have to look back a little. When I joined Strand twenty years ago, its worldwide turnover was six million pounds. This year it will be seventy million. Even allowing for twenty years' inflation, the company has still grown under Rank's aegis five or sixfold. And there have been management casualties.

As the rocket has roared up, various booster stages – and some space rubbish – have dropped away. But the achievement is indisputable. For one example, over half the world's total of installed memory systems are Strand made.

Now we moved in our talk into that difficult area to discuss in public, the future.

The considerable research and development effort will continue. New products must remain at the very centre of our effort. The work on motorised luminaires and their control is the lighting story of the eighties. Already in Germany (See front page item) this is the way both stage and television lighting is going. Because of the mammoth savings in time and money these systems allow, they are unstoppable. We are now with motorised control about where memory systems were in the days of MMS and QFile. Everyone is beginning to want the advantages, but the cost is too high for all but the wealthiest users. 'But we are working on it – watch this space for dramatic developments!'

Ed: 'How should new products be

developed? Should a Marketing team specify them in detail, or should the engineers be given their head, as in Strand's glory days under Fred Bentham?

OH: 'First – the world glory days are now! I believe Marketing and R&D are two sides of the same coin. Without marketing knowing and understanding what the emerging technologies can do and without R&D knowing the conditions and needs of every market, products will emerge that will only fill half the bill'.

Ed: 'So you are going to knock their heads together?'

OH: 'Well, let's say I encourage collaboration!'

Ed: 'Will world products still be our goal?'

OH: 'Yes. The policy is to develop products which have applications beyond one national market. For example, our new Beamlite 1000 was developed for Eastern Europe, but it will certainly find homes in Germany and Switzerland. As Lighting Designers travel the world, so they call for products that they are familiar with. Look at the success of the Leko now in Europe! "Song and Dance" and "Phantom" are just two shows heavily into Lekos. Soon Cantata will have a 110 volt axial lamp version to, as it were, return the compliment!'

Ed: (In a provocative mood) 'Surely there is no point in going beyond Galaxy III and Palette 3? What more can anyone want?'

OH: 'Well, they certainly want it cheaper! Software is the key. It's that area where future switchboard developments will concentrate. At the lower end we dipped our toe in the water with Action. That has been such a winner we now have Action 48. So you can start at a thousand pounds and go up from there.'

Ed: 'I sometimes think it must be more fun to be number two or three in the market, so you have the summit to aim at. Isn't being No. 1 for so long a little tedious?'

OH: 'If I thought that I would go back to motor bike scrambles – not that I always won them! We have quite a few advantages from being a proven market winner. One of these is acquisitions. Any company up for sale you can be sure will have been offered to us first. Sometimes, like Quartzcolor, we go straight ahead and we made one of the best business decisions I have ever been involved in. If we turn an opportunity down, it's usually because we reckon we can do it better ourselves already! Another advantage is that we can recruit the best people. We have a brilliant engineering team – no! better say competent or they will all want even more money. And look at the Kirkcaldy lantern team! Cantata – a whole family – and now the Beamlight with over a million candelas from a 1K lamp!'

Ed: 'And the downside?'

OH: 'The bigger the company, the harder we must fight internal bureaucracy. I wage constant war against memos and long reports! "Keep it Simple" is my dictum.'

Perhaps this explains the so simple office, after all?