



ALAN ERLICH

Recipient of the 2005 DGC Award for Distinguished Service to the Guild

Born in Plymouth, England, Alan and his family survived in one of the most bombed cities in England during World War II. His mother's side of the family had been in show business and had performed at a Royal Command Performance in the 1920s.

After completing his education, Alan was called up and served in the Royal Air Force but, although he wanted to be a pilot, the thought of signing on for five years didn't appeal to him. Following his RAF service he went into television at the beginning of the 60s.

Starting at the very bottom, as a glorified "call boy," he progressed to the position of Floor Manager (AD). His experiences brought him in contact with some of the best drama directors of the time and to say that his interest in directing was piqued is an understatement.

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In late 1966 Alan immigrated to Toronto and within one week had two jobs. From 8 am to 3 pm he was a story editor at TVO and from 3:30 to midnight a floor manager on the CBC National News. Within eight months he was offered a directing position with the News and a further eight months later was directing the federal election broadcast. At the same time Alan was seconded to Newsmagazine, Weekend and Documentaries. He was rewarded as the co-recipient for the first Michener award for Journalism.

In 1975 Alan directed the very first *Codco – Festering Forefathers* and *Running Sons*, following which John Hirsch asked him to join CBC's Drama department full time. One year later he went freelance and over the years directed more than 270 network sitcoms, starting with *King of Kensington*.

Alan developed new techniques for transferring stage productions to the TV screen and presented plays both at Stratford and Shaw, among other venues. His work as a freelance director has included many dramas and documentaries. He continues to work and/or search for it, but thankfully not at "quite the same pace" as in the past.

At the DGC, following a term as the Directors Representative, Alan was elected president on three occasions during the 80s and, after a brief hiatus, has continued in various positions at the Guild ever since. Presently, Alan serves as 2nd Vice President on the DGC Ontario board.

Alan has two grown sons: Tony, 27 and Andrew, 25. Due to an unfortunate illness at age six, Tony became handicapped. Andrew is presently in his fourth year at the University of Saskatchewan. Alan is a co-founder of the Epilepsy Research fund of Canada. He is also a passionate sailor and crossing the Bermuda Triangle, albeit the southern end, was one of his happiest achievements.