

Eileen Mair (Make-Up).

"He said he didn't mind as long as the bar bill was as big as it was!"

Throughout the second series of *Survivors* Eileen Mair was in charge of make-up. One might think that on a series such as *Survivors*, where scruffiness was the order of the day, make-up would not be of much importance, but nothing could be further from the truth.

What does make-up on a series like *Survivors* entail? "The essential thing about the make-up was to keep it going through the shots. People would tend to 'get clean' after the shots, instead of staying dirty. Someone like John Abineri, for example, would forget and wash his hands for lunch. I would tell him off about it and he would say, 'All right, I'll dig them in the ground!' So the trick was to get people looking as though they hadn't been to make-up!

"I was brought into the series in about November 1975, and I met the producer Terry Dudley and the directors to discuss the characters of the series and how they should look. For instance, although both the principal male characters were 'machos' (Le. survivors), Denis had a toupee as he had thin hair but a young face and it gave him a better profile; he was supposed to be the impetuous one and Ian the more cautious intellectual type. In a sense we had to make people down, rather than up, as people were meant to be scruffy. What you have to do in the first place is to talk to the actresses particularly, but also the actors, to explain the look, for example no smart hair-cuts. This wasn't a problem on *Survivors*. Lucy Fleming and Celia Gregory were two very natural lookers anyway, so it was easy. Celia, the only medical person on the series, would wrap her head in a bandana. John Abineri was supposed to be the tramp. I'd make him up every day, and he said that we varied between Van Gogh one day and one of the pre-Raphaelites! It should have been the same make-up every day, but over the months it veered! It would take me about an hour to make somebody like John to look scruffy and really convincing. I was constantly telling him not to shave and so on. The actual make-up on *Survivors* was not difficult, but keeping up the continuity was, and keeping the actors looking lean and hungry. Lucy Fleming's character had a baby, and so I would put shadow under her eyes, as pregnant women do actually develop these. But it wasn't enough just to do the make-up in the caravan and leave it. I would have to go out with her and keep the make-up going. Making-up the two children, Tanya and Stephen, wasn't difficult at all. I just had to keep their hair looking not too clean.

"I also remember the awful rat scenes we did in London for *Lights of London*. I found myself on the wrong side of the barrier because I was adding blood to a simulated rat bite when these dreadful real and large sewer rats were released. I was terrified and I don't think from their language Ian and Denis were enamoured by them, as in the script they were supposed to fight them off and in reality sewer rats don't frighten easily!

"We had tried to use white rats, much smaller and I supplied a vegetable dye to make them the right colour. Unfortunately it didn't work as white rats dyed look drunk because of those pink eyes and also they ran away. A long time later I met the rat man in a pub in Surrey who said 'You're the one who killed half my rats.' I apologised and meant it sincerely. By comparison with the sewer rats I am now relatively fond of the white variety."

Were there ever occasions when actors changed their appearance without permission? "I remember that Lorna Lewis wanted to have her hair done one night. I told her that if she did then she'd only be called early in the morning so that I could make it rotten again! 'Oh Eileen,' she said. In a sense you had to bully them a little."

Does Eileen remember the coach crash, in which several of the technical crew were injured? "Yes indeed. It was in winter and there was still snow on the ground. Fortunately none of the actors were on board. We had a 6.30 am call. We got on the coach and we met a cement lorry head on. The lorry was not, fortunately, carrying any cement. I'd just managed to put my arm round Val Keen's head. Val was my assistant. Even so she still bumped her head. The driver was badly cut and dazed, and lots of people had lost and damaged their teeth. We called ambulances to take people away. I was in a bit of shock. A young camera-man and I were the only two fit enough to go on. The injured people had been sent back to the King's Head. The proprietor, Keith, had dispatched various people back to London by train and/or by Ambulance. The P.A., Michael Bartley, who had been paying off various bills at the previous location, wandered back into the King's Head at lunch time, and Keith said to Michael, 'Don't worry I've sent them back to London.' Michael's reply was, 'I'm going to have a drink!' He had no idea that there had been a crash. Amazingly, the story got made. That night the walking wounded came back to the hotel and it looked as though a football crowd had gone absolutely potty. I apologised to Keith for the fact that we had driven all his locals out, but he didn't mind as long as the bar bill was as big as it was that night! Funnily enough,

the driver of the cement lorry and his wife came to join us at the bar that night. The whole Survivors crew was just like a circus. Later on in the year there were several young newcomers, Stephen Tate, Heather Wright and others. They couldn't afford to stay at the King's Head, so they went somewhere else. Keith said to me that if I and the others stayed he would let me have the bridal suite for £5 a night. So I had the bridal suite for the rest of the time!"

Would Eileen describe the Survivors team as a happy one on series two? "It was to begin with, but the intensity of the

relationships and the weather changed things especially after the crash. Of course it was very hard work starting at 6.30 am every morning and stopping when the light went for six days a week. By that time people were literally on a survival course, the main aim being to get five or six hours sleep a night, as there were more colourful characters outside the scripts than in them at Callow Hill, with who we all got involved to a greater or lesser degree.

"I do remember at one party' letting off shot-guns at targets in the garden, having imbibed vast quantities of wine. As you may imagine the scores were not very high, some people missing the target altogether. It was macho time!"

Are there any episodes that Eileen remembers in particular, either for good or bad? "I particularly remember, apart from the rats in the London episodes, Ian's story, A Friend in Need, which I think was originally entitled Sniper. The director on this one didn't seem to understand the storyline at all. Right at the end of the episode, the young boy sees the sniper laying dead on the ground, and says, 'Poor lady'. The director told Stephen that he'd got the line wrong. Ian exclaimed, 'No, he's got it right, that is the point of the story?' I honestly think the director himself was in danger of being killed! He was always running and hopping around the place. A vignette was placed on the end of the camera to simulate a rifle-sight in this story. They actually filmed the director with the vignette in place, running down the hill and sound put on a rifle shot at the end and when he got back to the O.B. van they played it back to him. I don't know that he ever realised quite how much he was detested.

"There are some very funny memories as well, but it's all a long time ago.