

Some of the favourite children's TV presenters of all time...
together on stage for the first time!

Once Seen on *Blue Peter* Makes, Bakes and Outtakes



Blue Peter first sailed onto British TV screens on October 16, 1958 and it's still there as the longest-running children's television programme in the world!

Aimed at kids from the age of 6-14, *Blue Peter* has been an important part of growing up for generations of youngsters.

60 years and over 5,000 episodes later, an elite group of its 37 presenters are to gather at the 2018 Edinburgh Fringe Festival to celebrate this extraordinary anniversary and look back at their personal highlights and some of the many comical mishaps. It promises to be a nostalgic look back to time when coat-hanger advent crowns, and sticky-backed plastic ruled the world.

Once Seen on Blue Peter - Makes, Bakes and Outtakes, a theatrical celebration of *Blue Peter*'s diamond anniversary, will feature Peter Purves, Janet Ellis, Peter Duncan, Mark Curry and Tim Vincent... and a surprise celebrity guest.

It is devised by Tim Vincent, who said: "*Blue Peter* presenters are like Swiss Army knives ...they can turn their hands to most things. I cannot wait for everybody to see some of their favourite presenters strutting their stuff in this hilarious show."

Once Seen on Blue Peter - Makes, Bakes and Outtakes is scripted by award-winning writer Tim Whitnall, whose one-man comedy, *Morecambe*, about Eric Morecambe, premiered at the 2009 Edinburgh Festival, winning a Fringe First Award, then transferred to the West End, winning the 2010 Best Entertainment Olivier Award.

It is directed by Olivier-Award nominated Ian Talbot, and is from the same producers as last years' sell out fringe show *Alex Salmond Unleashed...*

Once Seen on Blue Peter - Makes, Bakes and Outtakes is a blisteringly funny and poignant tribute to a much-loved TV family favourite.

LISTINGS INFO

Once Seen on Blue Peter - Makes, Bakes and Outtakes
Assembly
Ballroom
4 - 26 August, 2018
Daily at 2.50pm

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PETER PURVES

10 years - 16 November 1967 to 23 March 1978

Top *Blue Peter* moment: Climbing the Forth Bridge.

"Blue Peter was a brilliant mixture of fun and hard work - I honestly believe it was one of the best jobs on television. We dropped in on the best parts of people's lives. Where else would you be taken to 27 countries and be paid for having all those adventures?"

Peter first appeared in the nation's living rooms in 44 episodes of *Doctor Who*, as a companion to the original Doctor, William Hartnell. Originally hired as a *Blue Peter* presenter as a six month stop-gap in his acting career, he stayed for over 10 years, appearing in 850 shows and becoming part of what is now known as the "Dream Team" with Valerie Singleton and John Noakes.

After *Blue Peter*, he regularly presented the BBC coverage of Cruft's since 1976 and in 1999 - 2007 the coverage also went to the USA for Animal Planet. He also regularly commentates at major national events such as the Royal Show, Discover Dogs, All About Dogs, the fast-growing Wag and Bone Show, the Cold Wet Nose Show, presented for the young TV channel Horse and Country TV as well as directing over 30 pantomimes in a career as theatre director.



JANET ELLIS

4 years - 28 April 1983 to 29 June 1987

Top *Blue Peter* moment: Returning after her accident to break the women's European free fall record.

"I'm a great coward and I also don't like heights so it was quite amusing for me to see this person going 'How high is it? Right I'll go up it, where's my helmet?' I'm really not that in real life, not at all."

Janet trained as an actress before turning her talents to presenting. Her first screen credit was playing 'Susie, Marge's friend' in an episode of *The Sweeney*, but her big break was as Tika in the *Doctor Who* story *The Horns of Nimon* in 1979. During her time on the show Janet impressed fellow presenters with her ability to learn the scripts and cope with last-minute changes. "Janet could learn the bible if she had to," remembers Mark Curry. But it is for her pluck and courage during her free fall jumps with the RAF that Janet is best remembered, especially when she returned to her training after injuring her pelvis.

Since leaving, she has worked as an actress, presenter, broadcaster and writer. Her last appearance at the Edinburgh Fringe was in *Hell's Bells* by Lynne Truss, at the Pleasance. She is a regular panellist on C5's *The Wright Stuff*. Her first novel, *The Butcher's Hook*, was published by Two Roads in 2016. She is the mother of the singer Sophie Ellis-Bextor



PETER DUNCAN

4 years - 11th September 1980 to 18th June 1984

9th September 1985 to 27th November 1986

Top *Blue Peter* moment: Running the first London marathon.

Peter worked as actor from the age of 15. He joined the National Theatre at 17, made several films including *Stardust* and *Quilp*. On *Blue Peter* he became the action man of the team, in the John Noakes mould. Among his most famous feats was running the first London marathon and completing the Royal Marines' Endurance Course. He fought a sumo wrestler in Japan, cleaned the clock face of Big Ben. The production office received a number of complaints from parents about his scruffy image. In response, a 'design Peter an outfit' competition was launched - with a green and white checked suit the winner and he wore his green and white check suit whenever he could.

Peter returned to acting, most notably, playing the title role in the musicals *Barnum* and *Me and My Girl*. In 1995 was nominated for an Olivier as Best Actor for his role in the musical *The Card*. He is currently Children's Art Champion for Action for Children's Arts and is a patron of Youth Music Theatre and Neighbourhood Midwives. He possesses a Gold *Blue Peter* badge for his volunteer work as Chief Scout.



MARK CURRY

3 years - 23 June 1986 to 26 June 1989

Top *Blue Peter* moment: The day he was strapped to the wheels of a revolving windmill.

Aged just 15 made his film acting debut, playing the producer in the film *Bugsy Malone*, opposite a young Bonnie Langford. It was while working on the Children's BBC series *Treasure Houses* and *Saturday Picture Show* that he was spotted by Biddy Baxter and her team to present *Blue Peter*. Mark was a hit with viewers, but unlike other presenters his popularity was little to do with his action man status, but more to do with his ability to ad-lib and crack jokes. He was also well known for dressing up and bursting into song and dance at any opportunity - especially for the annual *Blue Peter* panto. During his time with the show, Mark became infamous for his cock-ups, especially in the kitchen. One particular item saw Mark bump into a life-size lego man, knocking his block off. When he left the programme, viewers were asked to vote for their favourite Mark moment - they voted to see a compilation of Mark's mistakes.

In the theatre Mark has co-starred in, *The Woman In Black*, in the West End. He appeared in *Company* and *Victor/Victoria* at Southwark Playhouse and *Talent*, written and directed by Victoria Wood at the Menier Chocolate Factory. His UK tours include, *Charley's Aunt*, *All Creatures Great and Small*, *And Then There Were None* and *Tons Of Money*. Mark recently completed a 16-month run as The Wizard in the London production of the hit musical, *Wicked*.

Mark was the proud winner of the BBC *Children In Need*, "Strictly" Special. He divides his time between Eastbourne and southern Spain



TIM VINCENT

4 years - 16th December 1993 - 24th January 1997

Top *Blue Peter* moment: Training with the Paras.

Tim began his acting career when he was 13, appearing in various productions at Theatre Clwyd. At the age of 15 he got his break when he won the part of alcoholic teen Billy Ryan in *Children's Ward*. In 1993, after six series of the *Ward*, he joined *Blue Peter*. During his time with the programme he flew a fighter jet, successfully completed the New York Marathon and travelled to South Africa. Tim also qualified as a sports scuba diver and gained his licence to race cars and motorbikes. Whilst presenting *Blue Peter* he could also be seen playing Marty in two series of the BBC One drama *Dangerfield* and as a presenter on *The Clothes Show*.

After leaving both *Blue Peter* and *Dangerfield* in 1997, Tim carried on presenting *The Clothes Show* and *Short Change*, Children's BBC's answer to *Watchdog*. He later presented the Saturday show *Fully Booked*. He has presented several Miss World contests. Vincent is now based in the United States where he has presented some mainstream shows such as *Access Hollywood* and *Phenomenon*