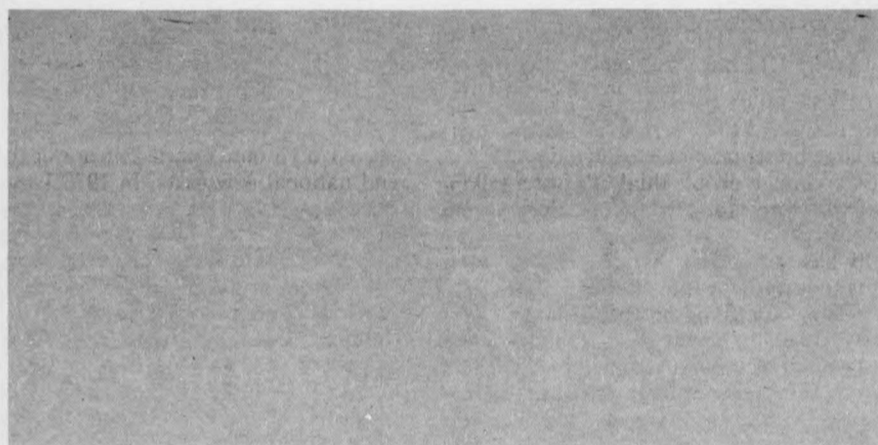




Lloyd Robertson, anchorman for the CTV National News, started his broadcasting career over 30 years ago at the local radio station in Stratford. Since that time he has become one of the most respected and trusted people in the business. *Excal's* Lorne Manly recently spoke to Robertson, a fellow of McLaughlin College, about his experiences in radio and television.

PHOTOS BY GARY BLAKELEY



Behind the Screen with Lloyd Robertson

EXCAL: Did you always know that you wanted to get into broadcast journalism?

ROBERTSON: I always knew I wanted to get into broadcasting; broadcast journalism sort of came by way of my getting into broadcasting originally. I knew that I was interested in news once I got into broadcasting because that seemed to be my bent—I just headed off in that direction. As a result of that it seemed that I was the one in the private radio stations who always got the news assignments, who was always given the newscasts. So I guess it was natural calling and I just followed along with it.

EXCAL: What were the reasons you wanted to get into broadcasting?

ROBERTSON: That's very hard for me to answer; I don't know. I can recall from a very early time listening to the radio, the old shows on network radio on Sunday nights in this country, which included *Fibber McGee and Molly* and *Wayne and Shuster*.

Radio always had a particular fascination for me, and I was always interested in current

affairs. My father was very interested in the world of politics and he introduced me to that world. I met politicians that would come around to the house occasionally in the early days. So I think that when you put the two together, which was this early fascination with broadcasting plus my natural interest in politics, eventually the two merged and I became a political journalist as well as a general broadcaster.

I also did some stage work in those days which was very helpful to me. It taught me voice projection and proper use of voice, which in the early days of radio, especially, was very important.

A lot of people consider [voice training] to be a cosmetic factor that you shouldn't be concerned about. Maybe in fact you shouldn't be concerned, but you *have* to be because people do notice it. People are concerned about the way you speak, and the way you look in radio and television whether you care to admit that or not.

EXCAL: At the Radio York "On Air '86" conference, held in November, Ed Needham of CFRB

mentioned that all students at journalism schools should have to take an acting class . . .

ROBERTSON: That's right. Now of course that's heresy to a lot of professors of journalism and deans of journalism schools but I'm sort of a moderate in that respect.

I would say you can learn a lot of things from acting and apply them to your broadcast presentation but whether or not you have to get deep into acting and how close you have to get to your own emotions and that kind of thing, which they do in acting school, I'm not sure that's necessary. What is necessary is that you learn how to speak well, that you learn how to use your voice properly, and that you learn how to address a camera.

Now you have to have the other fundamentals taught as well—you have to have political science, an understanding of how to put a story together. All that has to be done but I don't think that the cosmetic factors can be overlooked even though a lot of journalism professors tend to downplay them, downgrade them in fact.

EXCAL: You've been both a reporter and an anchorman in your career. What have you found to be the major differences between the two jobs? A lot of people dismiss anchorpersons as mere "talking heads"—what's your opinion of that phrase?

ROBERTSON: Most of all I enjoy getting out in the field; I enjoy doing news specials. These are the things you can really get involved in and a lot of you comes out in the process. With the anchoring, and I've done it for a long time now, it's what you make it really. I prefer to be a very involved anchor in the sense that I like to write a lot of my own material, and to edit all of it myself. As senior editor of the *CTV National News* I'm responsible for what I say on the air and that is the way I've always like to conduct myself in the anchor position.

Now it just so happens that because I've been reasonably successful at anchoring, they [the producers and executives at CTV] are not inclined to send me out into the field too often. But they do allow me to do special broadcasts—elections, conventions, those kinds of things—which I really enjoy doing. But I find it more