

AMAZING TRUE STORIES

NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE



John Wayne, one week @ \$100K



Music from *Abbey Road* – \$500 gets it all

What do John Wayne and The Beatles have in common? Read on...

SYDNEY AUSTRALIA 1968 Ruth has a problem. "Ruth, we need someone famous to open the new resort. A big name. Maybe a film star." Ruth makes TV spots, she's *in the media* – so Ruth, "Go find a big name movie star."

"You mean like John Wayne?" says Ruth. "John Wayne, yes - he'd be perfect. One more thing - we can't spend more than \$100,000. But **you'll never get John Wayne!**"

You've got to agree that any normal, sane person would hesitate to offer John Wayne \$100,000 to open fly to Australia and open a hotel. Not our Ruth. She locates his agent and makes the international call.

"Hello, my name's Ruth Sainsbury. I work in Sydney Australia for Lintas, an advertising agency. One of our clients is opening a resort on the Australian Gold Coast. We were – err - I was - wondering if Mr. Wayne would like to visit Australia. We'd show him around, see the Great Barrier Reef, visit Ayers Rock, learn how to throw a boomerang - and cut the ribbon to open the resort. It would be a real holiday."

And you know what? John Wayne is in between films - needs a break - has never been to Australia - wants to go. Money isn't important. Ruth tells me he had a wonderful time.

WARWICK UNIVERSITY UK 1969 Same year. Tricia and I have been booked by producer Beryl Stevens to shoot a documentary about students adjusting to life at Warwick University. Mark Stewart, a student there, has made a start on his own film. He needs money to complete his film. Mark approaches Barclays Bank. They're on the

campus and are known for sponsoring research. Barclays sees his incomplete film, likes the idea and will have a film made - but not by Mark. Hey, that's show biz.

Why us and not Mark? Here's our USP (unique selling proposition) - we're young, will fit into the environment, experienced at cinema verite ...

We move into student accommodation at Warwick. There's no script. No planned events. We just wander around. No lights. No tripod.

Go to lectures. Evening singsongs. Enjoy student parties. I carry my Éclair 16mm NPR. Tricia has a Nagra quarter inch and a couple of radio mikes. If it looks good, we shoot it. Bliss. My kind of job. People get used to seeing us around. Ignore us.

One day Beryl and the man from Barclays visit.

"How's it going?"

"Great. Almost there. I'm trying to work out how it will slot together. What music to use."

In the background I hear music from the Beatles *Abbey Road*.

"Beryl, here's an idea – we'll use *Abbey Road*."

"Come on Stefan, **you'll never get The Beatles!**"

NEVER GET THE BEATLES! Them's is fighting words. If Ruth can get John Wayne, The Beatles will be a push over.

I write a hand written, plain paper, letter to Dick James Music. The letter goes something like: "*Dear Mr. James, I am making a film with students at Warwick University. It is to show new students what's in store... making new friends, getting lost, drinking coffee, listening to Beatles music, going to boring lectures... I want to make it very real. Can we use some tracks from Abbey Road in our production?*"

Surprise! I get a reply from Dick James himself, typed on official Northern Songs letterhead. Says, he's spoken to the Beatles (oh yeah). They'd love us to use anything we want from *Abbey Road*. Just fill in the standard MCPS form, attach a copy of this letter, pay minimum rates.

Beryl and Barclays Bank check it out with their own legal people. Does it cover both publisher and mechanical copyright? Yes, it does; works out at less than £250 – about 500 dollars.

My timing is amazing. A month later, Dick James sells out. I like to think he gave it to us as a farewell present.

Want to shoot your pop video in the White House? Use Oprah as a voice over?
Remember these amazing stories. Nothing is impossible.

To view: <http://stefansargent.com/oncampus.html>