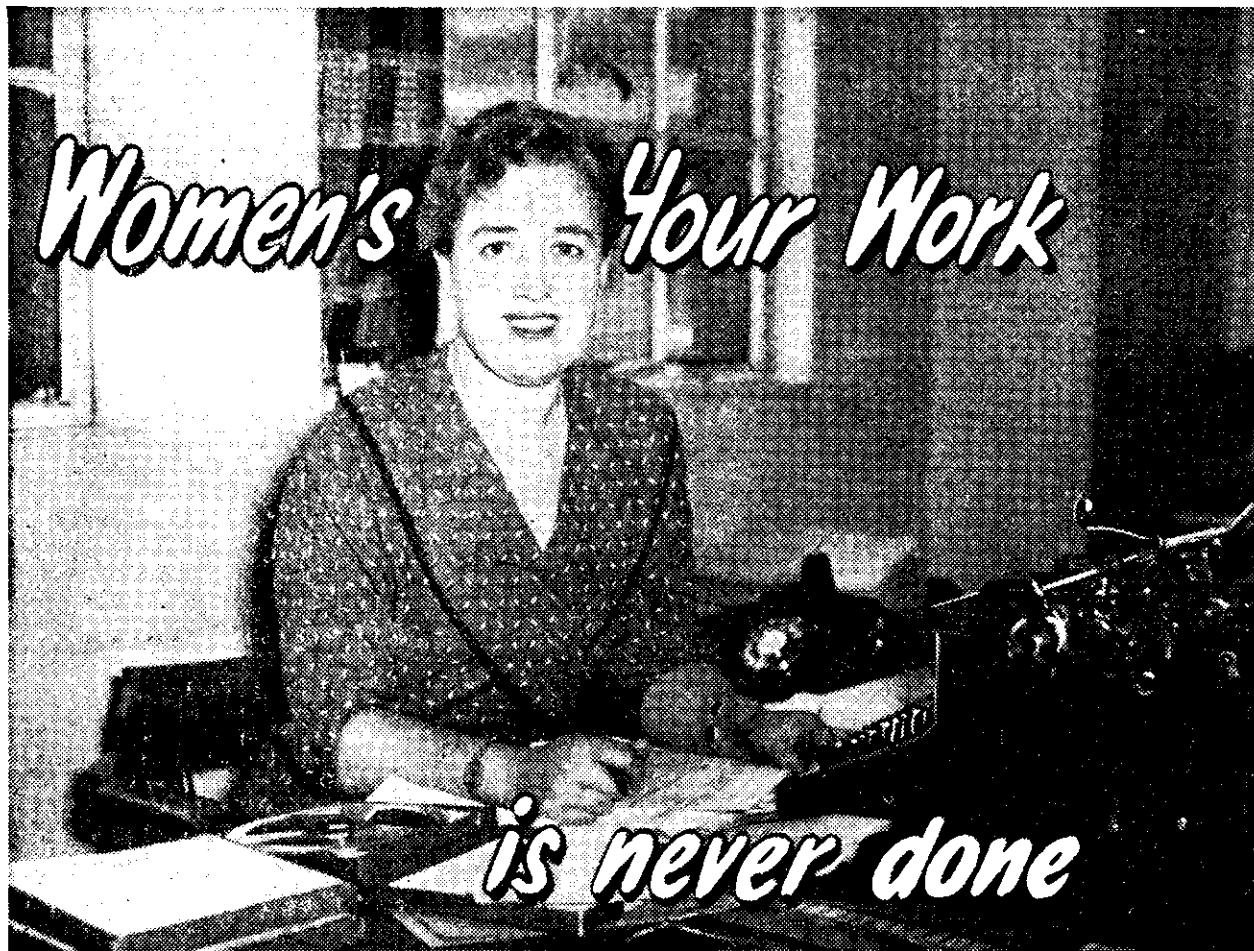




Women's Hour Work

is never done

LEFT: Preparing an hour's broadcasting every day is a full-time job. Doreen Kelso of 2ZB is seen here at work with the raw materials—tapes, discs and scripts

After lunch Doreen began by typing the next day's programme in triplicate, including the copy for the technician. After a search for the appropriate music to play with the interviews planned for the day after next, she made the preliminary draft for that programme, filling in the times for the interviews, the feature, and the commercials against each minute of the hour. The copy, tapes and music were placed with the schedule in a folder for each day with today's on her desk, ready to go on the air.

Doreen checked Merrin's progress on the copy she had been collecting, and told Merrin that some people were expected in the studio at 3.0 p.m. for a live interview; Merrin was to bring them in.

At 2.25 Doreen took the material to the studio and the control room; a piece of copy was changed by a last minute telephone call from a sponsor. In the studio the seconds jerked past on the electric clock. The session came on the air; "Good afternoon . . ."

As each item was broadcast, the sheet with the information was laid aside, the schedule ticked. Beyond the big glass windows a housewife sat watching the broadcast, her basket by her feet. While the tapes were being played, Doreen looked over the programme material, and joked with Merrin. The people to be interviewed arrived. During the feature they were brought into the studio, arranged near the microphone, their voices tested for balance in the control-room, and preliminary questions were asked, so that Doreen had some idea of the things to bring out in the interview.

The studio went back on the air and for the next few minutes Doreen worked from her copy, while the others sat in silence, the only other noise in the room the faint whirring of the air-conditioner. The interview began, the

WOULD-BE recruits to the Commercial Division's Women's Hours often think of this as a glamorous and easy career, an hour's pleasant chatter and perhaps another hour to prepare the programme. "I often see these people," said Elsie Lloyd, the Supervisor of these sessions, "and as I tell them what they will have to do for a test recording, I see their faces drop. Many of them don't even try the test. They simply hadn't realised the demands made upon the personalities of the Women's Hours; few of my girls dare let the pressure off for a moment."

Preparing an hour's broadcasting every day is a full-time job for these 14 girls. They record interviews, prepare documentary programmes, arrange discussion groups and housewives' quizzes, and edit material. And each day they visit advertisers to collect the latest information about the shopping scene. There are some programmes supplied by Head Office, as well as a daily feature, but most of the material the girls must find themselves.

The everyday tasks of the girls came into closer focus after a day spent with Doreen Kelso at 2ZB, a routine day which began at 8.0 a.m., but was complicated when it was learnt that the Shopping Reporter had flu and Doreen would have to take her session—Merrin Craike, who was being trained for work in Women's Hour, would collect Shopping Reporter copy for the next day. Doreen checked the list of advertisers and the copy ready for the session. She also timed an interview with some visiting show people made the night before, and received notice of another one Mrs Lloyd had made that was to be broadcast that day.

At nine o'clock she went out to collect the advertising material for her

own session, seeing for herself the special offers and new merchandise she would be advertising. By ten o'clock she had to be back in the studio, to record an interview. It was briefer than usual, so there was time for a cup of coffee while she opened her mail before the next interview at 10.30. This lasted a full half-hour, while an army officer

spoke about the problems of new recruits. Doreen still had more copy to collect, and all the day's copy to type, before she entered the studio at 11.26 for the Shopping Reporter's Session. She emerged a half-hour later with a dry throat and a pouf of relief—it had been some time since she had to talk solidly for a half-hour's broadcast.



THE INTERVIEW is a regular assignment for Women's Hour workers. Here Doreen of 2ZB interviews Mrs L. G. Hucks on a "Save the Children" Fund appeal