THE BLETCHLEY CIRCLE

Created and written by Guy Burt

Produced by Trevor Hopkins

Directed by Jamie Payne and Sarah Harding

Executive Produced by Jake Lushington
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Olivier award nominated actress Hattie Morahan joins Anna Maxwell Martin, Rachael Stirling, Sophie Rundle and Julie Graham for four new episodes of the code-breaking thriller The Bletchley Circle, which returns to ITV at the beginning of 2014.

The series, based on the lives of four extraordinary and brilliant women who worked at top-secret HQ Bletchley Park during World War II, features two self-contained stories each played out across 2 x 60 minute episodes written by series creator Guy Burt.

Set a year on from the first series in 1953, the ladies are reunited for their second case in the first two-part story when former Bletchley Park colleague, Alice Merren (Hattie Morahan) is accused of murder. Jean (Julie Graham) methodically sets to work examining the evidence and is intent on helping Alice after a distinguished scientist is discovered shot through the heart in the study of his home with Alice, gun in hand, standing over him.

The evidence is stacked against her, but Jean’s instincts tell her differently and she goes to visit Alice in Holloway Prison. Alice is quietly resigned to the fact she will hang. But why has she offered no defence and why does she refuse to talk?

Jean calls on the ladies to reunite, but will they share her faith in Alice’s innocence?

Susan (Anna Maxwell Martin) is still shaken by the trauma of last year’s events and fears for the safety of her young family.

Millie (Rachael Stirling) has secured a highly regarded position translating for German businessman – the old enemy.

Now working for Scotland Yard as a secretary, Lucy’s (Sophie Rundle) ability to process and recall data (eidetic memory) is vital if the ladies are to investigate Alice’s case.

Will the women overcome their fears and risk their burgeoning careers to save Alice’s life as the days to the hanging countdown? And what danger will they face as they uncover not only Alice’s secret, but also a much darker one at the heart of the British Army?

In the second of the two-part stories Millie’s black market dealings with charming rogue Jasper (Rob Jarvis) lands her in jeopardy when she becomes caught up in the murky world of people trafficking, bringing her face to face with hard bitten Marta (Brana Bajic), a Maltese businesswoman whose family isn’t to be crossed.
Abducted by Marta’s henchmen, Millie is shocked by what she discovers. But with her own life under threat can Millie escape and help the imprisoned young women, whose misery her “innocent” side-business has helped fund. And will the rest of the Circle forgive and help her?

The Bletchley Circle is produced by Trevor Hopkins (Kidnap and Ransom, The Prisoner) and executive produced by Jake Lushington (The Devil’s Whore, Mysterious Creatures) for World Productions. Jamie Payne (The Hour, Dr. Who) has directed the first two-part story whilst Sarah Harding (Compulsion, Torn) has directed the second.

The first series of three episodes launched on ITV in September 2012 with an average audience of 5.6m and a 23% share of the available audience making it the best performing new drama series from a share perspective throughout 2012. Amongst new drama titles, only single film Endeavour garnered a higher audience share in 2012.

During 2013 the first series screened in the US to rave reviews. Broadcast by PBS, The Bletchley Circle was given a prestigious Sunday night scheduling slot by the broadcaster alongside Call The Midwife and the first series of ITV’s Mr Selfridge.

Director of Drama Commissioning, Steve November, re-commissioned The Bletchley Circle for ITV.

“The Bletchley Circle was a wonderful addition to our drama slate in 2012 and we’re delighted that it’s returning to ITV with two new and exciting stories,” said Steve.

Executive Producer, Jake Lushington for World Productions added:

“World is thrilled that after the fantastic audience and critical response The Bletchley Circle has been re-commissioned by ITV with more hours and two exciting new stories for our former Bletchley code-breakers.

“In this series as well as unlocking the sinister forces at work in 1950’s Britain, Susan, Millie, Jean and Lucy are attempting forge their own place and identity as women in that era. The combination of these heroic women’s personal stories and a compelling period thriller has already marked itself out as a winning combination both in the UK and internationally, with its US Premiere garnering rave reviews from the American press.”
CHARACTER PROFILES EPISODES 1 & 2

**Susan played by Anna Maxwell Martin**
Married to Timothy and mother to two small children, Susan’s husband doesn’t know about her past as a code-breaker at Bletchley Park. Susan was the driving force behind getting the group of women together in the first series, but is now reluctant to be involved because of the potential danger it could cause to her family. Strong and intelligent, Susan is conflicted between following her instincts and helping to solve crimes and being a good wife and mother.

**Millie played by Rachael Stirling**
Millie is a ballsy, feisty character with an aristocratic background. She didn’t marry after Bletchley Park but travelled instead. Her street-wise knowledge contrasts with the experience of the other women. In all senses Millie is the most modern and independent of the characters. She is brilliant linguist and cartographer and is currently working as a Government translation with a bit of ‘import/export’ on the side to pay the bills.

**Jean played by Julie Graham**
Jean is the eldest of the four women and was in charge of the women at Bletchley Park. She has the demeanour of a stern sergeant major, but moral and committed at the same time. As in the first series Jean is still working as a librarian where she is exceptional at administration and digging into records. It is Jean’s instinct to prove the innocence of one of their own which instigates her to get the girls back together.

**Lucy played by Sophie Rundle**
Lucy is the youngest of the women. Having left her marriage to an abusive and controlling man, Lucy has in many ways lost some of her naivety. Now working as a clerical assistant in Scotland Yard, she is hard working and dedicated and determined to keep her head down. She is a very bright spark and is gifted with an eidetic (photographic) memory.

**Alice Merren played by Hattie Morahan**
Another former Bletchley worker, Alice it intelligent and good with machines. As the second series opens Alice is awaiting trial for the murder of an eminent scientist. Jean believes Alice to be innocent, but why is Alice offering no defence when she is facing the death penalty?
**John Richards played by Paul McGann**
A scientist who formerly worked at Bletchley Park prior to being reposted towards the end of the war. John is found murdered at the start of series two and it’s up to the ladies to find the real murderer and prove Alice’s innocence.

**Lizzie Lancaster played by Faye Marsay**
Seventeen-year-old Lizzie has only recently moved to London from Yorkshire. Identified as the mysterious girl spotted leaving John Richards house on numerous occasions it raises questions over her relationship with John? Could she be responsible for his murder?

**Timothy played by Mark Dexter**
Unaware of his wife’s talents, Timothy is a kind and supportive husband who loves his wife and family. A man of the time though, he expects his wife to look after the children and the home. A minor civil servant, Timothy is on the verge of a big promotion Timothy fought in the Royal Artillery in WWII and nearly lost his life but managed to escape with an injury to his leg.

**Ben Gladstone played by Nick Blood**
A young and promising Detective Constable at Scotland Yard, Ben has taken a real shine to Lucy. Because of her past experience she is apprehensive of fully trusting him.
ANNA MAXWELL MARTIN PLAYS SUSAN

“People enjoyed seeing four intelligent women on the television.”

Anna Maxwell Martin was heartened by the success of the first series of
The Bletchley Circle. “I had a Canadian couple come up to me in a park
who said they really enjoyed watching it back at home. It seems to have
a wide appeal.

“Bletchley Park itself had a big boost in visitors after the series was
screened. It’s got people interested and that’s all good.”

The BAFTA award-winning actress plays former Bletchley Park World
War Two worker Susan who, now in 1953, is a wife, mother-of-two and
keeper of secrets.

Those who worked at the Buckinghamshire code-breaking centre were
bound by the Official Secrets Act and could not talk about what they had
done or even that they had been based there.

Having been traumatised in the first series after facing a crazed serial
killer who threatened her family, Susan is reluctant to become involved
in The Bletchley Circle’s latest case.

“One of the reasons I liked this story so much and returned to it is
because sometimes with a series it’s easy to conveniently forget a
journey a character has gone on a year before,” explains Anna.

“They decided to reflect the truth of how someone would feel a number
of months after something bizarre, awful and extreme like that
happening in their lives.

“So I really loved that aspect of the script and that Susan is genuinely
having difficulty coping and getting over and recovering from it - in a life
and marriage of secrecy. I found that really interesting.”

Jean (Julie Graham) is the prime mover in the first two-part story,
convinced former Bletchley Park colleague Alice (Hattie Morahan) is
about to hang for a murder she did not commit.
“Jean had a different life at Bletchley Park. She would have been there longer than Susan or any of the other girls, including Millie (Rachael Stirling) and Lucy (Sophie Rundle), and so has a broader view of what went on there.

“Susan does not want to get involved. She’s still having nightmares about what happened and feeling very confused about the lie she’s continuing to tell her husband.

“But she finds it hard to resist that side of herself. On some levels she can’t help herself because she is bright and doesn’t need an excuse to exercise the grey cells.”

Susan is the only one of the four women in the circle who has the responsibility of a husband and children.

“Clearly Millie is one of her dearest friends and I think their relationship is very interesting and well written. There’s a touch of bitterness from Millie about Susan’s marriage and the fact that Susan let Millie down and didn’t go travelling with her after the war.

“That’s all still explored in this first story and it’s nice that it wasn’t wrapped up neatly last year. There’s a deep well of sadness in Millie about who Susan has become and she feels let down by her. But they are very close and I think they love each other really.

“Her relationship with Jean and Lucy is different. We’ve never tried to say they’re all big buddies. They don’t all pretend to be best friends and they’re not. An interest in justice has brought them all together.

“Susan has always been quite an odd bod and I’d say she is even odder this time. She is dragged into something that she feels nervous about and is put under strain again.”

Yet with Alice’s life under threat Susan knows she has to help.

“Susan is quite unsentimental and unemotional. She gets involved because she can’t resist being a know-it-all.

“It’s much more character driven this year and that’s a really great thing for the story, the series and the relationships.”

One thing that hasn’t changed is Susan’s outfits.

“They’re all the same. That’s an important aspect of The Bletchley Circle. It’s not about fashion and clothes and hair. It’s also still a time of austerity and I certainly didn’t want any new clothes.

“The light has always shone on who these characters are, their intelligence and the fact they were young women at Bletchley, chosen to be part of this extraordinary and unique operation.”
Anna’s credits include: Death Comes to Pemberley; The Night Watch; South Riding; Accused; Poppy Shakespeare; Bleak House.
RACHAEL STIRLING PLAYS MILLIE

Rachael Stirling was delighted to discover the first series of The Bletchley Circle made a big impact in the online world of social media.

“I gather there was a lot of excitement online. We trended on Twitter as #ladynerds - which I love,” she laughs.

“As far as I’m concerned, Bletchley and these girls represent everything that is brilliant about Britain. They’re eccentric, non-conformist and think outside the box. We have good minds on this island of ours and I am very proud of that.”

Rachael returns as Millie, a languages expert who was part of the secret code-breaking team at Bletchley Park during the Second World War.

“When we meet Millie again she is doing government translating work with the Germans. Pretty quickly after the war you had to re-assess who was and wasn’t the enemy and re-align. And Millie has always been a shade of grey rather than black or white. So she has to shift her perspective and stop thinking of the Germans as the enemy.

“Then in the second story we discover that she is involved in some dodgy dealings. She has her finger in many pies in order to keep her head above water.

“Millie is a linguist so I speak German and Slovakian, haltingly. In real life I was brought up speaking a certain amount of languages and I speak French and a bit of Russian. I’m not frightened by languages. I just give it a whirl.”

Rachael again filmed at Bletchley Park for flashback scenes during the war.

“When we went back we were told what an impact the series has had in terms of increasing visitor numbers, which is amazing. The first series has also been a big success in America but we don’t have any sense of resting on our laurels at all. We need to keep working at it, exploring the lives of these characters in the 1950s.”
Hattie Morahan joins the cast at Alice, a woman on trial for murder and facing the death penalty.

“I think joining any series with an established cast would be a pretty daunting prospect but by the end she said it was one of the most fun jobs of her career. Hattie is a really great actress and a huge addition to the drama.

“I did a film about the second last woman to be hung in Britain so, for me, it’s not a shocking thing. But I’ve sat where Hattie’s character sits, in a grey robe, writing my last letter in a very dank, dark, murky cell. And, of course, one absolutely takes from it this sense of impending doom.

“We filmed some of Hattie’s prison cell scenes on my birthday. It was a really cold and wet day outside and there was this sense of leaden sadness, seeing her in this grey sack. You suspend disbelief for long enough for it to have an impact upon both you and everyone else there.

“It was a particularly grey, unkind afternoon. So it was necessary at the end of the scene to drink quite a lot of champagne to get rid of that feeling and celebrate the fact that it was my birthday!”

Millie and Susan developed a close friendship during the war.

“I’ve had friendships with girls over the years - I was at an all girls’ school for a start. So your friendships are, like Millie and Susan’s, intense by virtue of having lived together for a period of time. Friendships that are as near to relationships as you get because you’re dependent upon one another.

“At the end of the war Millie expected Susan to go travelling with her but instead Susan got married and started a family. So there’s a sense of betrayal that Millie feels. That feeling that she can’t quite trust Susan ever again is what underlies their relationship.

“But we also learn that Susan has a deep sense of sorrow and regret about letting her friend down. So they are still close but their relationship has shifted. Something has altered.

“As it does in life. As a woman now, a lot of my friends are getting married and having babies. And of course, the minute you start a family, that’s where your focus is and it leaves your sometimes single friends going, ‘Where do I fit in now?’ It takes time to work out where one fits in.

“So I think Millie and Susan have a very believable friendship with its own complications. Anna and I got some really lovely opportunities to play with that in some of the scenes. It was a real joy to do that with her.”

Rachael says there is now a real off screen bond between the female stars of The Bletchley Circle.
“This job has changed our lives and the course of our friendships. These girls will be in my life, and I hope I will be in theirs, for a long time to come. We are hysterical on set and I should imagine slightly terrifying. But when it comes to the time for a take we focus and work very hard on our parts and the scripts.

“I’m proud of the fact it’s women-orientated and reflects the wit and ingenuity of these women, having been among some of the brightest minds at Bletchley Park and brought together in the first place to help crack the Enigma code.

“What I love about The Bletchley Circle is that you’re not seeing these women through the relationship they have with a husband or boyfriend. It’s not about that. It turns on the axis of their own intelligence. That’s what makes this original, clever and something I fully believe in. I’m incredibly proud to be a part of it.

“People seem to love watching how these women come together to solve a puzzle using their brains and ingenuity. And I think if intelligent women - #ladynerds - are poster girls for British TV then that’s quite right and long may it last.”

Investigating a new puzzle in the 1950s, Millie turns into an action woman in the second episode when pushing another character out of the path of a speeding car.

“I love a good stunt. I throw myself into them wholeheartedly and the other girls think that’s hilarious. I think you should probably not be too good at stunts and leave it to the stuntwoman but I just can’t help myself.

“I do a lot of ballet and boxing in my own life so I am quite physical. But the others still take the mickey out of me for throwing myself into the stunts in such an action woman style!

“Millie is definitely the more physical, bombastic, outgoing, least inhibited of the girls. We’re all physically quite similar to our characters except for Julie Graham (Jean) who has got the most beautiful God-given body but it’s wrapped under double tweed.”

The second two-part story finds Millie in trouble.

“We do see a more vulnerable side to Millie that you’ve never seen before and I really look forward to people engaging in that. She’s normally gung-ho, unthreatened with nothing to lose, because you get the sense that she lost it all after the war.

“She had a great adventure abroad but then came back to grey, depressed London. Millie and her bon viveur had no outlet and she’d lost her great girls from Bletchley, with no husband or children. So you see a sadness and that vulnerability.”

The Bletchley Circle
Rachael’s credits include: Doctor Who; Sixteen; Salmon Fishing in the Yemen; Tipping the Velvet; Boy Meets Girl; Women in Love.
SOPHIE RUNDLE PLAYS LUCY

Playing a character with a photographic memory who also knows how to pick a door lock was no help to Sophie Rundle when she flew back to Britain from Hollywood.

“I am completely useless. Whereas Lucy has an amazing memory, I have a terrible habit of always leaving my keys at home,” reveals Sophie.

“I got back from LA recently and had been awake for something like 25 hours before I finally got back to my front door, only to discover I’d brought the wrong keys with me. I thought, ‘I’m going to cry.’ So I had to sit outside and wait for someone to let me in.

“I really could have used Lucy’s lock picking skills at that point. But, alas, I’ve never been taught how to do that for real,” laughs the 2011 RADA graduate.

“We met Lucy with her abusive husband in the first series and the horrible domestic situation she was in. She’s escaped from that and has a new lease of life.

“Lucy has got a job as a clerical support officer in Scotland Yard and has a new freedom. She’s blossomed and come into her own a lot more. The friendship and support she’s had from the other women has given her a fresh start somewhere new.

“Scotland Yard is very lucky to have Lucy, knowing what we know about her past at Bletchley Park. But obviously she’s keeping that all totally under wraps. In their eyes she’s simply a secretary.

“These women had to really play down their amazing abilities, their strengths and minds. They had to pretend they hadn’t done anything special in the war and that means Lucy has to downplay her intelligence. She is upholding the Official Secrets Act.”
Even so, Lucy can still use her brain as the circle of women investigate a new mystery.

“She was extremely wide-eyed and young in the first series. But with the experiences she’s gone through she’s developed a bit more sass and is very smart about how she can manipulate a situation for the greater good. She’s definitely craftier than you would expect.

“At first Lucy doesn’t want to jeopardise her position at Scotland Yard and her new life. But she realises quite quickly that she has to in order to protect these girls. It’s very brave of her.

“What was lovely about Lucy’s development in these scripts was that when I did the first series I was fresh out of drama school and completely new to everything. This time I’d gone off and done a bit more and also learned so much from the girls.

“I was a bit older this time and I did know a bit more. So there was a change and it was a nice reflection of that. The great thing about The Bletchley Circle is that it does reflect the relationships of the characters and how they change with time.

“There is a real bond between all of us off screen as well as on. Anna, Julie and Rachael are some of the naughtiest women I’ve ever worked with. There was lots of fun on set and I think that helps give the drama that sparkle.

“It’s a really honest reflection of female relationships. It isn’t a rose-tinted view. They bicker and fight and there are strains between them. I think audiences appreciate that honesty.

“Hattie Morahan, who plays Alice, was also a lovely addition to the cast. She said it was like turning up to a hen party the second day in. Which was true. Everyone was giggling and there were all sorts of private jokes. But she was amazing and a brilliant actress to work with.”

Alice is a former colleague at the Bletchley Park code-breaking centre, which helped shorten the course of World War Two.

Almost a decade on she is set to hang for a murder Lucy and the others aim to prove she did not commit.

“I think the treatment of women in that time is really shocking. It’s not that long ago that people were sent to their death, sometimes after miscarriages of justice. It is shocking to see a young woman in that situation. That we, as a country, would hang her.”

Sophie filmed scenes again at Bletchley Park in Buckinghamshire.

“It feels like touching base and one of the reasons we’re doing this show. There’s such a tangible sense of history there. It actually happened.
“One day we were walking to set in our costumes and I ended up chatting to one of the visitors. It turned out she had worked there and she said it was amazing seeing all the extras and everyone in costume. It brought it to life again for her.

“That’s one of the reasons I love doing my job and period pieces because it’s like stepping back in time. Bletchley Park is an important part of our history and it’s lovely to go back there.”

Sophie filmed one scene set in a Bletchley Park repair room with a copy of a German Enigma machine.

“The art department built an amazing replica of what it was like. It looks very atmospheric and felt real. All these things really tie it back to that point in history, which is amazing. When you go on set as an actor you’re obviously distracted with all the cameras and everything else that is going on. So it’s great to have those moments where it suddenly feels real. You can actually pretend that you’re there.

“The staff at Bletchley Park were very welcoming and delighted about both the success of the first series and the fact we were making a second, telling more stories. They said that visitor rates and general interest in the site has really gone up. If we’ve had an impact on that then that’s wonderful.”

Lucy has a smart and professional look to go with her new job.

“In the first series it was all long hair and very sweet and innocent. But Lucy has grown up and has a new look. She’s earning money and can spend it on herself. She still has a sweet personality but there is a new freedom. It was fun to show that change through the costume, hair and make-up.”

She also attracts the attention of Detective Constable Ben Gladstone (Nick Blood).

“He’s someone she works with but considering where she’s just come from with her husband she’s not thinking of a relationship at all. She doesn’t trust men as easily as perhaps she might have done when she was younger. But maybe there’s a little sparkle between them. That gets pushed to the back of her mind, even though deep down she quite likes him.”

Adds Sophie: “The Bletchley Circle is a show I’m really proud of. The audience reaction to the first series was so positive and supportive. It really captured something in people’s imagination.

“It’s about a really important part of our history and it’s a show about women. It’s not about their love lives and about them being sex symbols. It’s about the brilliance of their minds and their relationships with each other. And I think that’s why it was a success and why it’s important that we tell these stories. So I’m really proud to be a part of it.”

The Bletchley Circle
As for Sophie’s trip to LA, it was to reprise her role as Matt LeBlanc’s American stalker Labia in Episodes.

“Episodes were filming the third season at the same time as The Bletchley Circle so I couldn’t do very much in it. But they asked me to go out there to do a little cameo appearance, which was brilliant. So that’s how I came to be locked out in London!”

Sophie’s credits include: Peaky Blinders; Episodes; Talking to the Dead, Shetland, Merlin; Great Expectations.
JULIE GRAHAM PLAYS JEAN

You would not want to be caught in the steely gaze of former Bletchley Park supervisor turned librarian Miss Jean McBrien.

“She can be very stern,” explains Julie Graham. “Having said that, I can also be quite stern. And if I’m crossed I can be extremely stern!

“But that’s what I really loved about playing her because she can be a bit of a prude as well, which is always good fun to play.

“Jean is a straightforward, down-to-earth, pragmatic, practical person. She is very much a woman of her time. Someone like her would probably find it hard to adapt to modern society, as we know it now.

“She’s very old fashioned with old fashioned values. But she’s incredibly kind, compassionate and smart.”

The stars of The Bletchley Circle have developed close bonds both on and off screen.

“We have a real laugh when the cameras aren’t rolling. A fly on the wall might be shocked.

“I’ve been friends with Rachael Stirling, who plays Millie, for a long time but there’s a strong bond now between all of us, including Anna (Susan) and Sophie (Lucy).

“People think actors work together and they’re all suddenly best friends. But that’s not always the case because you work with so many different people. But there was definitely something special about all these girls.

“We all turned out to be good buddies and can be rude about each other in the way that good friends can be. We got there very quickly. None of us are wallflowers.”

That also applied to newcomer Hattie Morahan, who plays former Bletchley Park colleague Alice who is facing the death penalty for murder in the first two-part story.
“It’s daunting coming and joining an established cast but she soon fitted in absolutely perfectly. She’s a great girl and we had a ton of fun.”

Julie was delighted by the reaction to the first series of The Bletchley Circle.

“People loved it and really got it. It got a fantastic reaction and proved that people do want to see women in the lead in television drama. Viewers like intelligent, well told stories.

“I’m always surprised when anything is a big hit because you never expect that. But I got lots of really good positive feedback about the series.”

Jean has a shared history with Susan, Millie, Lucy and Alice as they were all involved in top-secret code-breaking work at Bletchley Park during the Second World War.

Now in the 1950s, Jean is still working in the library after her adventures in the first series when she hears that Alice is about to go on trial for murder.

“Jean was in charge of one of the huts at Bletchley and remembers Alice having quite an extraordinary mind, even though Alice didn’t work in her hut.

“They are all still very much bound by the Official Secrets Act and cannot even say that they worked at Bletchley, let alone talk about the major achievements made there, which helped cut short the war.

“Jean is the catalyst this time in bringing them all together again. When she learns of Alice’s case her gut instinct is that there’s something not quite right about it. So the only way to investigate further is to get the gang back together.”

Jean feels compelled to intervene to try and save Alice from the hangman.

“It’s a very shocking thing to consider that women like Alice were executed in this country within recent memory for some. I hope viewers will be shocked by her story. It’s incredible to think that hanging was taking place not that long ago.

“But Jean faces resistance from Susan who was very shaken by her experience in the first series. She nearly died and went through a more harrowing experience than the others.

“Susan also has children, responsibilities, family. So she’s much more cautious. It’s a big ask from Jean because she knows how traumatised Susan was. Yet it also shows you how much Jean believes there is something wrong with the case against Alice.”
Wartime flashback scenes were filmed at Bletchley Park. “It’s always very thrilling to go to Bletchley Park because of its history,” explains Julie.

“Bletchley Park played such a huge role in winning the war. When you go into those huts you can feel the history. There’s something very humbling about it.

“We also get to play with the real machines they used and that is always very thrilling. There are people with us all the time. Not just because of the safety of the machines, which I’m sure is paramount for them, but also because they want it to look as authentic as possible on screen. So they ensure we’re doing the right things.

“The staff at Bletchley Park were fantastic and really supportive. It was a great privilege to be able to go there in the first place but they are extremely helpful and welcoming. And it’s wonderful that the success of the TV series has boosted visitor numbers.

“I never go into a new television drama thinking there will be another series. I just never do. So it’s always lovely when it goes again another time and I think The Bletchley Circle has got great potential to tell lots of stories.

“You’re always pleased when you work hard on something and it turns out to be a hit. Especially one with so many great, strong female characters.”

Julie’s credits include: Shetland; Survivors; William and Mary; Doc Martin; Mobile.
HATTIE MORAHAN PLAYS ALICE

The stakes could not be higher for Alice Merren as she awaits the noose in Holloway Prison.

“She is behind bars and facing execution for murder, possibly a crime of passion. She says nothing in her own defence and is prepared to hang,” explains Hattie Morahan.

“Alice is an enigmatic figure who has a shared history at Bletchley Park and knew Julie Graham’s character Jean,” adds the Outnumbered actress.

“But Jean believes she is innocent and enlists the ladies of The Bletchley Circle to investigate. That’s when various secrets emerge from Alice’s past.”

Hattie filmed at Bletchley Park in Buckinghamshire for flashback scenes in the Second World War. It was there that code-breaking experts cracked ciphers enabling them to read secret messages sent by the German military.

“I went there as a visitor first for research and then we filmed there. You would sometimes meet veterans who had actually been there in the war, which was extraordinary.

“A lot of it was built as temporary structures and a lot of the huts are in disrepair. But there’s an atmosphere and I found the museum so interesting and well curated. The people who work there are really informative and passionate.

“Getting to film at Bletchley was magical. It feels a bit like hallowed ground. A very special experience as I had to do some work on an original machine and filmed a scene outside, in between the huts in moonlight.

“If you squint you could be back there in the war. Especially with the extras milling around in their costumes. I’m sure in many ways nothing has changed. It was very inspiring for playing the character of Alice.”

The Bletchley Circle
Hattie was thrilled to join the cast of The Bletchley Circle for this second series.

“It can be a bit daunting coming on to something where everyone knows each other and they have already bonded. But they were the most welcoming group and I had such a hoot filming it. It was joyous getting to know everyone and a really great experience which I enjoyed immensely.”

As with everyone who worked at Bletchley Park, Alice is sworn to secrecy about her past code-breaking work during the war. Workers also had to remain tight-lipped during their time there, even when mixing with their own colleagues outside of a shift.

“That is mind-blowing for our sensibilities today when we share everything and people put things on Facebook, Twitter and text. It’s a level of self-discipline, which is very difficult to imagine. When it was all over you couldn’t say, ‘Oh guess what I did to help win the war?’ It just became ingrained in their way of being, how to keep a secret. Which is fascinating.

“Because of doing this job I’ve encountered several people who mentioned mothers or aunts or grandmothers who had been through some of these things and finally made revelations in the 1970s. And the effect that then had on the family or on themselves.

“One wrote to me and said, ‘We discovered my sister was a Wren who worked for the Navy at Bletchley and didn’t tell anyone for 30 years - then suddenly told us all. We had no idea.’

“Women couldn’t even tell their husbands, which caused problems later on when they finally felt able to divulge the secret. Some husbands would be understanding of that secret being kept from them but some might not.

“So you have these incredibly intelligent, capable women having to hide their achievements and abilities, feeling diminished and underestimated. The frustration must have been very difficult to live with.”

How good is Hattie at keeping secrets?

“I don’t know that I’ve ever been tested, particularly. Probably I would be able to if it was something I knew to be important but I tend to be quite open about things. So it would be a stretch. Obviously if the stakes are high you just get on with it.

“The danger is you then become distant from people because you don’t want to lie. That’s what I would find uncomfortable, having to make a cover story if the subject comes up.”
The Second World War was also a time of farewells. In the opening episode Alice has to bid a swift goodbye to a man who is posted elsewhere.

“The war put people in all sorts of peculiar situations of sudden partings, not seeing one another for months or years on end. There was a level of stoicism that it was just assumed you would have in these situations. What would be the use of weeping, crying or protesting? The state of international affairs is more important than the individual.

“So there was a far more stoical approach to heartache and heartbreak then than nowadays. I think we’re indulged today, which I’m not sure is a good way to be. There’s a great celebration today in showing one’s emotion and the media celebrate it.

“But back then it was a very British way to be, although I’m sure it was happening the world over. Bletchley Park was shrouded in a culture of, ‘Don’t ask, don’t tell,’ and people understood that things had to be secret and life went on whatever happened.”

Alice made a key breakthrough at Bletchley in 1943.

“I wouldn’t say I’ve got a particularly good puzzle-solving brain,” says Hattie. “Certainly nothing like Anna Maxwell Martin’s character Susan. Alice’s strength seems to be with anything mechanical or technical. Also she’s a good lateral thinker.

“I do feel a sort of affinity with both of those aspects. I quite like technology and I’m quite logical. Alice is very good at seeing things from other people’s perspective. I’d say I’m also quite good at taking a step back and being objective.”

Sophie Rundle’s character Lucy has an eidetic, photographic, memory.

“Mine is nothing like Lucy’s but actors must, of course, have a good memory to learn scripts. Like anything it’s a muscle you exercise and everyone discovers little mental tools to help them remember.

“I’ve never had trouble learning, actually, because you’re not literally learning lines like a parrot. It’s about playing a character on a journey and that becomes ingrained,” adds Hattie, who recently reprised her acclaimed role as Nora in A Doll’s House at London’s Duke of York’s Theatre.

Alice is prepared to die at the gallows and refuses all offers of help.

“I think younger viewers may be shocked that Alice would be hanged. It’s rather terrifying to think today that the death penalty was enforced in this country not so long ago.
“We shot those scenes in the incredibly bleak surroundings of a disused hospital. It was a very chilling environment. Very cold. The costume department researched what female prisoners at Holloway Prison would have worn then. Certainly not my most glamorous moment. It was quite a breath of fresh air when we finished filming there.

“It does make you think about those lives that have gone before us and the times when an injustice was done. It’s a very extreme, uncompromising, black or white result. I find that frightening. You do wonder how many women and men went to their graves and they were innocent.”

Viewers eventually discover why Alice if willing to sacrifice her life.

“I think it’s very understandable that a woman would act as Alice does. She’s not overtly affectionate, sentimental or emotionally very open. But her feelings do run very deep. She is at heart very passionate, even though she’s a rational, sane human being.

“Attitudes were very different in the 1950s. There were all sorts of aspects to the story, the setting and what happens to the characters on a daily basis that brought home just how things have changed for women and how lucky we are today.”

There were some lighter moments off camera during the filming of Alice’s story.

“I’ve often found that. And in the theatre as well. If the play is serious or emotional, it keeps things light and releases the tension. Then funnily enough the opposite can happen.

“There have been times when I’ve been working on something which is purely comical, like a farce, and there’s actually an atmosphere of seriousness about hitting the moment. It feels far more rigorous, the mechanism that one’s involved in. That can render everyone rather dour in trying to achieve the laughs. It’s very odd.”

The daughter of actress Anna Carteret and TV director Christopher Morahan, Hattie met acting legend Sir Laurence Olivier when she was a child and he helped out with her homework.

“It wasn’t a very lengthy encounter. My parents were old friends and colleagues of his and we used to go to these summer parties. It was a Sunday afternoon and I was sent inside to finish my homework, which I’d failed to do the whole weekend.

“So I sat inside doing my multiplication. He sat with me for a bit and I remember talking to him about my math’s and him looking at it. I think he pointed something out but I was only about seven or eight years old. It wasn’t any formative mathematical epiphany but it was nice to have a little encounter with him.”
Did Hattie always want to be an actress?

“When I was tiny I wanted to be a teacher because that’s what I saw every day. Or a writer. I really loved writing. And I loved art and painting. But if I’m honest I think it was either going to be writing or acting. My family are in the business and so it’s part of your life.

“I’ve been very lucky to be able to go to the theatre from a very young age and I just love it. I think I just projected into the future and thought, ‘Ooh yes, I’ll be doing that, thank you. Hopefully.’

“But the weird thing as an actor is that you have a little fake taste of other jobs when you do your research. When I played a doctor on television I was really struck by how astonishing it is to undergo that training and have that body of knowledge and expertise. Something that is genuinely helping humanity. So wherever you go in the world you can be of use in a very basic way.”

Hattie’s own expertise includes learning to play an accordion her actor partner Blake Ritson gave her as a birthday present.

“I was taking lessons for a while. I play the piano. It’s the same theory but different practice, obviously. We recently moved home so the accordion has been sitting in a storage box somewhere. But I’m looking forward to getting it out again.”

Hattie’s credits include: Summer in February; Outnumbered; Eternal Law; Lewis; Sense and Sensibility; Trial and Retribution.
CAST LIST

Episodes 1 and 2

Anna Maxwell Martin ................................................................. Susan
Rachael Stirling ..................................................................... Millie
Julie Graham ........................................................................ Jean
Sophie Rundle ........................................................................ Lucy
Hattie Morahan ........................................................................ Alice
Paul McGann ........................................................................... John Richards
Faye Marsay ........................................................................... Lizzie
Freddie Anness-Lorenz ........................................................ Sam
Mable Watson ........................................................................ Claire
Mark Dexter ................................................................................ Timothy
Nick Blood ................................................................................ Ben Gladston
Paul Ritter ............................................................................ Professor Masters
Tim Pigott-Smith ................................................................ Colonel

Cast list for episodes 3 and 4 are available on request from the ITV Press Office
NEWS RELEASE
November 2013

WALK IN THE CODEBREAKERS’ FOOTSTEPS
The Bletchley Circle Series 2, to coincide with real-life developments at Bletchley Park in 2014

Key scenes in the second series of the hugely successful ITV drama, The Bletchley Circle, were filmed at Bletchley Park, the Home of the Codebreakers and the birthplace of modern computing. To coincide with its broadcast in early 2014, visitors to this vibrant heritage attraction will be able to walk along the very corridors where the geniuses of the Government Code and Cypher School walked during World War Two.

Soon to open for visitors at Bletchley Park are a number of exciting new displays – including some in buildings which have never before been open to visitors and, until recently, stood derelict.

Among the buildings being lovingly brought back to life as part of the £8m, Heritage Lottery Funded restoration programme are the iconic former Codebreaking Huts 6 & 3, where Enigma messages sent by the German Army and Air Force were deciphered, translated and analysed for intelligence. These fragile wooden Huts are being sympathetically restored and will be fitted with light-touch interpretation allowing visitors to experience the atmosphere in which the WW2 Codebreakers did their most important – and most secret – work. In addition, Block C, where Hollerith punch-card machines carried out rapid analysis of...
encrypted message systems to assist the Codebreakers, is being returned to its wartime layout and atmosphere and will become a Visitor Centre with new, atmospheric exhibition space.

This will feature a Cyber Security Exhibition and Learning Zone as part of the Bletchley Park Trust’s partnership with McAfee, the market leader in security technology.

From June 2014, visitors to Bletchley Park will be able to enter these restored buildings to experience the authentic wartime ambience and feel the presence of those intellectual warriors who worked within them. Bletchley Park remains open to the public throughout the project and visitors during 2013 will purchase an Annual Season Ticket allowing them to enjoy Bletchley Park both pre-restoration and post-restoration in 2014, for a single admission fee.

Iain Standen, CEO of the Bletchley Park Trust, said “We are delighted that key scenes of the second series of this evocative, atmospheric and gripping drama were filmed in and around the real buildings where the brilliant work of the real-life people who inspired the characters and storylines took place. Buildings we are delighted to be opening up for visitors to enjoy in 2014.”
Historians often suggest that the work of Bletchley Park helped to shorten the war by an estimated two years, saving countless lives. The true Bletchley Park Story is more incredible than fiction. It was a desperate race against time, pitting Britain’s best brains against Hitler and his chief commanders. The World War Two Codebreakers’ mission was to crack the German Enigma and Lorenz ciphers and decode seemingly unbreakable messages. Against them were odds of 159 million, million, million on breaking Enigma alone, not to mention the fiendishly complex Lorenz system used by Hitler and high command. Their reward was ‘Ultra’ Intelligence that helped to save Allied convoys carrying essential supplies from U Boat wolf packs on the prowl, and contributed to all theatres of WW2. So effective was Bletchley Park that the decoded messages sometimes reached the Allies before the enemy. Discover how it was done. Be amazed by the total secrecy in which around ten thousand people worked and lived. Marvel at the technology they designed to do the job. Bletchley Park was at the heart of the world’s biggest secret communications network. It was the home of the first electronic digital computers; the centre of a huge Codebreaking operation, the like of which had never been seen before; and the birthplace of today’s Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ).

- ENDS -

For visitor information contact 01908 640404, info@bletchleypark.org.uk or go to www.bletchleypark.org.uk

Notes to Editors
1. Bletchley Park is the Home of the Codebreakers - where during World War Two top secret codebreaking work was carried out on behalf of the Allies. It is said that the work carried out at Bletchley Park helped shorten the war by as much as two years.
2. The Bletchley Park Trust was formed in 1992 to save the historic site from being lost to development. Bletchley Park has since opened to the public as a heritage site and museum. The present mission of the Trust is to preserve and develop Bletchley Park as a world-class museum, heritage site and education centre in order to enhance the understanding of the critical contribution of codebreaking and intelligence in World War II, the birth of computing and electronic security, and how these unique achievements remain relevant today.
3. Bletchley Park is open daily except Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year’s Day. Details of the exhibitions, operating hours and events at Bletchley Park are available at www.bletchleypark.org.uk, together with details of admissions charges.
4. Bletchley Park Trust has initiated a major project to preserve the historic buildings on the site, to develop a world-class museum on codebreaking and the development of computers. Further investment is needed to bring these plans to fruition.

5. Contact: Katherine Lynch, Media Manager, 01908 272661, 07903 138806, klynch@bletchleypark.org.uk
PRODUCTION CREDITS

Writer.........................................................................................Guy Burt
Executive Producer .................................................................Jake Lushington
Producer ................................................................................Trevor Hopkins
Directors ..................................................................................Jamie Payne
..............................................................................................Sarah Harding
Line Producer ...........................................................................Matthew Patnick
Director of Photography episodes 1 & 2 ..............................Adam Suschitzky
Director of Photography episodes 3 & 4 .........................Jake Polonsky
Casting Director .................................................................Rebecca Wright
Script Executive......................................................................Gwen Gorst
Art Director..............................................................................Lucienne Suren
Costume Designer ..................................................................Anna Robbins
Make Up and Hair Designer ...........................................Karen Hartley Thomas
Production Designer ............................................................Claire Kenny
Editor episodes 1 & 2 ...........................................................St John O’Rorke
Editor episodes 3 & 4 ............................................................David Rees
Composer .................................................................................Nick Green
1st Assistant Directors ....................................................Nick Brown
..............................................................................................Fletcher Rodley
2nd Assistant Director .........................................................David Chalstrey
3rd Assistant Director .........................................................Daisy Caton-Jones
Prop Master ..............................................................................Nick Walker
Sound Recordist ......................................................................Rupert Ivey
Locations Managers ............................................................Simon Nixon
..............................................................................................Nick Wade
Post Production Supervisor .............................................Beewan Athwal
Production Coordinator ....................................................Juliette Woodcock