

TELLY TALK — TO HELP YOU

Hollywood star's gift is going going gone!



Cash In The Celebrity Attic, Wednesday, Feb 4, BBC2, 5.15pm.

Lynsey de Paul at home.

by John Barrett

PINT-SIZED 70s songstress, Lynsey de Paul, has been taking a trip down Memory Lane by allowing some of her most-treasured possessions to be auctioned for charity in a celebrity edition of *Cash In The Attic*.

The animal-loving star has put up artwork, jewellery and assorted knick-knacks in an effort to raise enough money for a telephone line to be installed at the Wildlife Rescue and Ambulance Service, based at Trent Park, in Hertfordshire.

"They need a phone line because the centre is in the middle of a park, and you can't get a signal on a mobile," explained Lynsey.

"The installation cost is £1700, so that's what I'm hoping my items will raise.

"The centre is run by a man called Barry Smitherman, who once helped me rescue a duckling from a pond in Hampstead.

"The duck had a bad wing, so got left behind when his family flew away, and he was being attacked by other ducks.

"So, one morning at dawn, Barry waded into the pond with a butterfly net and scooped him out, with me cheering from the bank.

"We drove him to

Carla Lane's sanctuary in Sussex but, since then, Barry has started his own rescue centre, and I'm keen to support it.

Beautiful

"For the auction, I'm donating a couple of pictures, including an original Hogarth print, plus various other items, including a large glass strawberry, which James Coburn gave me one Valentine's Day during the time we were a couple.

"I've always been a collector of beautiful and

interesting things, but I'd never buy anything simply for investment purposes.

"I have to fall in love with something before I buy it.

"That was the case with the wonderful Gothic lectern which now stands in my dining-room.

"It's almost as big as me, and has a phoenix carving which comes up to my nose.

"I saw it in an antique shop window when I was going through a Gothic phase some years ago.

"The shop was closed, but I pressed my face against the glass and said, 'You've got to come and live with me.'

"The next day, I haggled the owner down, and asked him to deliver it straight away.

"At the time, I had a very Gothic house, full of oak furnishings and metal lanterns and candelabras. It was like

Lynsey's love affair with collecting

something out of the Addams Family!

"I can remember hosting a dinner party one night, to which I'd invited Peter Cook, among others.

"I bought 10 big church candles, lit them all and the room slowly filled with smoke.

"By the time we reached the main course, we couldn't see each other!

"I also own a wonderful oil painting of a courtesan, which I bought 33 years ago, and I never tire of looking at.

"I've never regretted buying anything. I'm not one for sending things back because I've decided I don't like them, though there was one exception.

Investments

"During the 1980s, I purchased a fantastically-colourful Indian wall hanging.

"I had it delivered, and paid by cheque.

However, over the next few weeks, I began to get a really uneasy feeling about it.

"So, I rang the man who sold it to me and asked if I could return it.

"Amazingly, he told me he was expecting my call and hadn't cashed my cheque because he knew I wouldn't be able to live with it.

"One thing I've bought and sold over the years are my pianos — but, contrary to what most people think, they're not great investments, as an old piano eventually loses its sound quality.

"I was given my first one when I was quite young and living in a poky, £8-a-week flat.

"It was on that piano that I wrote many of my most famous songs — *Sugar Me*, *Won't Somebody Dance With Me*, etc.

"I used to get up in the middle of the night to compose and, because I liked to play in bare feet, I covered the metal pedals with baby booties so they wouldn't be so cold!"

OLD MEN BEHAVING BADLY

THEY'RE associated with two of the best-known sitcom figures on British telly, writes Bill Gibb.

Now, Clive Swift, whose Richard was much put-upon by Hyacinth Bucket in *Keeping Up Appearances*, and Roger Lloyd Pack, who was at a loss about anything going on as Del Boy's pal, Trigger, in *Only Fools And Horses* have joined forces.

And the aim is very much to make us laugh again in new BBC1 sitcom, *The Old Guys*, from the writers of *Peep Show* and *The Thick Of It*.

The duo play a pair of pensioners, Tom and Roy, who find themselves sharing a house and their differing views on the world in their later years.

For Clive, at least, it provides the possibility of shaking off the past a bit.

Recognised

"I played Roy in a pilot episode two years ago and felt the characters' relationship was a bit thin," confides Clive.

"But these new scripts were more humanly convincing and very much funnier.

"I laughed a great deal when I first read them.

"I was also delighted to be in a major new sitcom. And perhaps to blur, if not erase, the character of Richard Bucket by which

— for good or ill — I am recognised around the world."

The Glasgow-filmed series put a bit of strain on Clive's good humour — or at least the weather did!

"We had several freezing or very wet days," recalls Clive. "For a tennis scene, I had to wear only vest and shorts, for two hours!"

"My whole body was involuntarily shaking with the cold."

Clive was brought up in theatre variety shows and,

being a Liverpoolian, he says he loved all the Northern comics.

"Ken Dodd in his prime was the most comprehensive and technically-accomplished stand-up I've seen," he said.

Roy's delinquent housemate, Tom, is full of opinions which Roger admits were a delight to spout, if only on screen.

"He's a very good character for me, full of interesting things to do," says Roger.

"Although he's an impossible monster, in a way, I've got a lot of sympathy for some of his attitudes, though I wouldn't be audacious enough to voice some of them.

"He takes political incorrectness to a new level.

Playing it for laughs

"I've laughed on this more than any job I've ever done and some takes have been pretty difficult keeping a straight face."

Jane Asher joins the boys as Sally, the neighbourly infatuation for the two lively-minded oldies.

And playing it for laughs was a welcome break for Jane.

"I love doing comedy, and haven't done a sitcom since the final series of *Carla Lane's The Mistress*, which is many years ago now," she says.

"I've been lucky to do plenty of comedy on stage, but my film and TV work has tended to be far more serious parts, so it was great to be offered this role."



The Old Guys, Saturday, Jan 31, BBC1, 9.30pm.

Roger, Jane and Clive in a scene from the show.