

Ian Bleasdale plays Paramedic Josh Griffiths



Ian taught English, Drama and Art for a year at a senior school. “I didn’t really want to be a teacher, but did so to placate my parents. This was in the days where you needed a steady job and something to ‘fall back on’. However, as soon as I could leave I did, much to the dismay and horror of my parents. They couldn’t understand why I would want to throw away a stable career for such a precarious profession.”

Ian’s first acting job was at the Everyman Theatre in Liverpool followed by more theatre work around the UK. He also worked on a number of TV series including *Brookside*, *Coronation Street* and *All Creatures Great And Small*.

Ian joined *Casualty* over 10 years ago and commutes to Bristol from his home in the North of England. Speaking about his role as Josh, Ian admits: “Where else could I ride in a helicopter, abseil down buildings, go into caves and drive fast motorbikes and ambulances? I do all this, get paid for it and have none of the responsibilities of actually being a paramedic.”

Age: 50

Home town: Born in Upholland, Lancashire but Leyland is now his home town.

Josh's best and worst traits: "He can be so dedicated to his work it can sometimes be at the expense of other things. His relationships and ability to unwind are often affected. He feels and takes seriously the responsibility of those he trains and mentors."

Similarities with Josh: "I think I'm as stubborn as he is though I try to be as calm as him. We seem different as the audience doesn't often see a lighter side to Josh. I love cricket and I'm trying to get the scriptwriters to write the hobby in for him."

Ian's real-life *Casualty*: "Touch wood I haven't had one recently. But I go out with the paramedics on shifts as often as I can, which is as close as I like to get. I find their work fascinating and it's really important to get it right. I always do a full shift, you can't just turn up for half an hour. Initially I just soaked it all in but now I like to help out if I can without getting in the way."

On-screen romance: "Coming up to their first wedding anniversary, Colette and Josh's relationship is far from rosy. There's something wrong with him and he doesn't know what, which makes him crabby and difficult. As a result, he is driving Colette into the arms of another at work."

Favourite food and music: "I have very catholic tastes in music like REM, Travis and The Lighthouse Family. But I also love classical music, in particular Elgar and Mozart. I'm cooking a lot of fish at the moment but still love game and 'interesting salads'. My chocolate puddings are also a favourite. I get plenty of inspiration from Gary Rhodes' TV shows and books as I really like his recipes and methods of working."

How do you keep in shape?: "I walk past gyms very quickly! I walk everywhere to keep fit."

How do you relax? "Golf, wine and walking. Although I'm not very good at it, I love playing golf. My son's almost 15 and we've started playing which is great as it means we get to spend time together when I'm not on set."

Did you know?

- Ian is still waiting for a re-match with Jonathan Kerrigan on *Ready, Steady Cook* after losing to him a few years ago.
- Ian was learning to fly until he took the part of Josh, but as flying is considered a "dangerous sport" it's out of bounds for the *Casualty* cast.
- The character Josh is based on Clive Adrell, a paramedic advisor, who checks on paramedic accuracy in the scripts.