

Bits & Bytes

No 24

Editorial

As a result of a notice in Newslink, the Nortel Fund's newsletter, I have received over 140 letters and a similar number of e-mails from people wanting to get Bits & Bytes on a regular basis. Welcome to all the new readers. I would like to think that they may be able to provide me with some interesting articles! There are now about 700 Nortel pensioners on my database. The autumn 2006 edition had a print run of 4700 and as about 1500 pensioners opt for the electronic version, B&B does get a wide circulation. (This does not mean that there are over 6000 readers!) Can I request that those who do read it please consider producing something for future editions. Hobbies, sporting events, stamp collecting, holidays, cruises, anything that may interest the thousands of pensioners who are avid readers!

I received news from Australia on 4 January of the death of Albert Cook, the editor of the "ICL Allstars".

Jack Nicholson gave the eulogy at his funeral and it can be found in the obituaries section.

I have received notification today 6 March, that Mike Weatherill, who was my boss in Copthall House from 1975-78 died in October 2006 aged 67. Having just turned 70 it makes me think!

Adrian Turner

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Fujitsu Services

Good News

Fujitsu reduce retail shrinkage

As part of its overall focus on responsive retailing, Fujitsu Services, one of Europe's leading IT services companies, has formed a collaboration with IntelliQ, a leading provider of comprehensive loss prevention solutions. The collaboration will help retailers from across Europe reduce shrinkage caused through administrative errors or theft and fraud at the till.

The average shrinkage rate suffered by stores throughout Europe is 1.24% of turnover, according to the European Retail Theft Barometer. The survey suggests that retailers perceive internal theft to be responsible for 30% of shrinkage and staff error; process failures and pricing mistakes to account for 14.3%.

100 million patient images stored

Fujitsu Services announced on 13 December 2006 that it had recorded the 100 millionth patient image stored in its data centre, as part of the NHS Connecting for Health, Picture Archiving and Communications Systems (PACS) programme. PACS enables access to the right image, in the right place, at the right time – all at the touch of a button.

The 100 millionth image was stored by Weston Area Health NHS Trust. This achievement marks a significant milestone for healthcare in England. Fujitsu's PACS data centre in the South of England was the first to be established within the NHS Connecting for Health Programme and commenced storage of images and reports in April 2005.

As PACS is rolled out to hospitals across the country, medical images and reports are stored on PACS at the Trust site and archived for future retrieval in the data centre. This facility allows radiologists to access images either via the PACS workstation for diagnostic reporting or via web browsers for general viewing by other clinicians. The new system avoids the need for film development processes and delivery by post or hand, and therefore significantly reduces costs in wet film processing and speeds up patient image acquisition workflows, diagnosis and therefore treatment. The number of images is set to grow at a rate of over 2 million per week as the use of PACS continues to increase.

Fujitsu Services and TDS AG

Fujitsu Services, the European IT services arm of the Fujitsu Group, signed a contract at the beginning of December 2006 to acquire investor General Atlantic's stake in TDS AG for a purchase price of € 2.80 per share. The contract will become effective after antitrust clearance. Further shareholders have offered to sell their shares to Fujitsu alongside General Atlantic. This will take Fujitsu's shareholding to 79.1 percent, making it the majority shareholder in TDS AG. The deal is a significant landmark in Fujitsu's 40 year history in the region and further strengthens the company's position in the market as well as demonstrates its ongoing European growth ambitions. The operations of Fujitsu and TDS will be a significant force in the German market focusing on an integrated and already complementary portfolio which includes: IT outsourcing; HR services and solutions; desktop managed services; IT infrastructure and IT consulting.

Fujitsu's IT services revenues add up to more than 14 billion Euros which positions it as number three in the worldwide IT services market. Fujitsu Services, Fujitsu's European IT services arm has a presence in 20 countries and employs 18,000 people across Europe, 300 of them in Germany. In the year ending 31st March 2006 Fujitsu Services had revenues of 3.3 billion Euros. TDS AG had revenues of 93 million Euros in its fiscal year 2005 and employs more than 700 people across Germany, Austria and Switzerland.

Working for ICL/Fujitsu A Senior Moment

The letters on "Was it so Great?" have stimulated me to write some of my own recollections. Chris Finn's letter mentioned 1900, 2900, CAFS and Series 39, most of which I was involved with in my role at the time, which was specifying product requirements, as a link between the sale forces and the development labs. Thinking back, some of the most stimulating times were establishing the pricing for the 2900 range, which was to compete with IBM's 370 series mainframe systems. That was in the days when ICL's mainframe accounts included BT and Tesco!

After that, I think that my years working for Hugh Macdonald at LON11 and SLH01 and later for John Gardner at West Gorton were the real highlights, establishing product requirement statements in conjunction with the UK Commercial and Government sales forces, and those in Europe, South Africa and Australia. One particular activity was the "secret" meetings of the four Brians: myself, Brian Cook, Brian Hardisty and Brian Lewis, which were to confirm and document the importance of having a 1900 emulation mode under VME on the 2900 range.

The fun times with Hugh were the great evenings at one of London's well known fish restaurants followed by dancing at I don't recall where, are still a firm memory. Later, when I was based partly at Lovelace Road Bracknell and partly at MAN05, the set of marketing training courses set up by Peter Bonfield, were valuable then and still are now, as a useful background to my retirement hobby book-selling activity.

**Brian Steptoe 1958 - 1991, STE04, LON11,
SLH01, MAN05, BRA01
bsteptoe@compuserve.com**

SOME MEMORIES OF WORKING AT ICL, PUTNEY

Based at ICL House (LON 11) non-executive secretaries shared an office. The girl who shared with me was a very glamorous figure who worked for two youngish Managers, one of whom was on loan from ICL Germany. It was summertime and the weather was good so Pat decided that she would spend her lunchtimes topping up her tan by lying in the sun on the strip of land between ICL House and the River Thames.

She came in next day prepared for her sunbathing routine with towels, sun cream and bikini. It wasn't long before some of the other girls decided to join her and soon there were three or four girls lying out there every lunchtime.

It was noted that some of the men were coming to work with their binoculars.

In the secretaries' offices, there was always a cupboard which housed the stationery items. Pat's Manager from ICL Germany came into our office one afternoon to help himself to a notepad and some envelopes, opened the cupboard door and was most embarrassed when an assortment of towels and bathing costumes fell on to the floor followed by a packet of Tampax. He left the office with a very red face.

Working for cuddly little Les Reffell (sadly no longer with us) in GPCD Personnel, I could hear Les in his office next to mine telling David Mark about a Financial Analyst who would be joining us in a couple of weeks. I've been told she's very good, he was saying, not only that do you know she takes size 36E cup. I called out "that's no good for you Les; you don't have size 36E hands." They fell about laughing.

When Les moved on to a "Special Project" outside of Putney, I had to look for a new job. I became secretary to another Personnel Manager, Dr. Tony Buley, a very self important man based in Bridge House South. Every Wednesday lunchtime, it was routine for me to meet friends from ICL House in Micawber's Wine Bar up the other end of Putney which often meant I was late back from lunch. One Wednesday Tony apparently was hopping about after noticing that I hadn't returned by 2 p.m. He had to leave for a meeting and before doing so, pinned a large note on the wall behind my desk saying "2.15 and STILL not back from lunch".

I got my comeuppance a couple of weeks later when he asked me to book a table for X number of people at a very nice restaurant for the Personnel Staff Christmas lunch. I counted the number of people who should be going and realised we were one short. I brought it to his attention and he said "you won't be going; this is a reward for people who work hard."

Keith Roberts, Finance Controller, who worked in the next office, came back from lunch and saw me sitting alone and asked where everyone was. I explained to him and he went straight out and bought me a large box of chocolates!

Working for Mike Forrest, I was attending one of his staff meetings, during which the telephone rang. Mike answered it himself and passed the phone to me saying "it's Ely's of Wimbledon". I knew he would not be very happy about a personal phone call during his meeting and kept my voice low hoping that they would carry on. The caller said "your blouse has come in, when can you collect it?" I said I hadn't ordered a blouse but she was adamant that it was a Mrs Mulligan working at ICL. The penny then dropped and I said "oh that's another Mrs Mulligan, I'll transfer you" which I did. I turned round and found eight pairs of eyes looking at me. OK said Mike, who's this other Mrs Mulligan? I had to explain that by chance, my ex-husband's wife was temping at ICL and was working for Dr. Peter Aylett.

My very happy spell of four years working as Secretary to Mike Forrest was terminated when I became totally deaf in one ear literally overnight. My other ear only functioned with a hearing aid, so I decided I would take early retirement. During my final week, Mike wanted to hold a Staff Meeting and it was to begin at 8 am He asked me if I could get in at this time and I assured him I could. My first duty was to get the coffee machine going and while I was doing so, Geoff Morris from Slough arrived. Right, where's the eggs and bacon he asked from the

doorway. Pardon, I said. Where's the eggs and bacon he repeated. I still didn't get it and when he said it a third time, it really wasn't funny any more.

Sheila Mulligan mullie@dsl.pipex.com

Working for Fujitsu

What are they doing now?

You're right about the "good old days" and sadly it's all different now. You may be aware that we are a "services" organisation now and any "tin" we sell is bought in from other manufacturers. Fujitsu-Siemens figures strongly, of course. What mainframes we do sell, (the NOVA range currently) are based on Intel chip technology running in a Unisys supplied cabinet. Some development work was carried out in West Gorton (the old MAN05 site) until as recently as 2005 when it was decided that the crumbling state of the building would hasten a move to three brand new buildings further out of Manchester towards Oldham. The old building housed systems that we used to run other companies outsourced workloads on. These might have moved to the new offices or more likely, to the many data centres we have dotted around the country. Since we run a lot of work for central government agencies now, we are not encouraged to speak of the exact locations of these sites just to say that they are secure humungous warehouse sized buildings. The bulk of our income comes from the services we provide for these companies or government departments that want their workload running on Windows, Solaris or even VME platforms. Such services range from running their workloads, as mentioned, to Web site design and maintenance. I'm not sure what type of engineering activities are required to maintain the hardware these days, but I could imagine it's down to some fresh faced youths who have far more knowledge about PCs and networks that I will ever have. I can't see there being many air filters to vacuum out or print barrels to clean. Further more, I don't know what the engineers of today do about car interior lights, now that we don't have chamber lamps to replace. Since departing the engineering fraternity nearly 20 years ago to "progress" onto software support, my time is taken up visiting a diminishing number of VME customers who still like to see a (hopefully) friendly face providing what used to be known as the "VME Super Service". As for the proportionally diminishing number of engineers and what they do, all I can say is they now work from homes that you can only imagine their decorating standard. Because there are so few of them, the areas they cover seem to have increased in proportion to the cube of there collective numbers. (I know of three mobile engineers based in the West Riding of Yorkshire who have recently been requested to look after sites as far a field as Edinburgh, so you can judge for yourself.)

Chris Finn Technical Services Specialist
Infrastructure Services WAK01

Letters & e-mails

AS TIME GOES BY.....

Like many readers of B&B I am well on in years and suffering from what seems to be a very common syndrome called "time seems to pass so quickly as you get older". My own experience certainly confirms that.

No sooner have I put the Christmas decorations back in the loft than I have to get them down again. Adrian expressed to me this at a recent meeting of the Punched Card Reunion whereupon I told him why – or at least my opinion of why - this perception of time seems to hit everybody similarly. Many years ago I was bemoaning this to someone much younger who expressed her view that the reason time seems to go faster as you age is that each year is a smaller proportion of your life. Think back to when you were four. Christmas came and then it seemed like forever before it came round again because next Christmas was a quarter of your life away. Now it's an eightieth of your life away, or something around that. One hears lots of theories about lots of things expounded in some cases by people who actually know what they're talking about but, on this occasion, I found this explanation totally credible. Something similar seems to happen with time generally. Years ago my father proclaimed that after Tuesday, the week seems to rush by. Applying the same sort of theory it's because what's left after Tuesday is a smaller proportion of the week. I find that a year seems to progress quite normally towards the summer then, after July, bingo it's Christmas next week. And it's not just because they start selling cards in August as one of our local shops does. I get the feeling that it's because what is left is increasingly a smaller proportion of what's gone. So there. The ramblings of Crook the great psychologist but if anyone has an alternative view of this rather peculiar syndrome I'm sure Adrian will be delighted to publish it in the newsletter. As an exercise I thought back to two 3-year periods which had a specific beginning and end. One was university from 1952-55 and the other was the early 1900 computer activity from 1964-6. My recollection now is that they both seemed to last the same time even though, at the time, the 64-66 bit was particularly frenetic, much more so than the University years.

Keith Crook (mostly STE04)
kcrook@rmplc.co.uk

Cedric Dickens

Many thanks for the latest 'Bits & Bytes'. I shall read it from cover to cover within a day or two, as I always do, but - as I suspect is the case with most of us!

I turned straight away to the 'Obituaries' page, and was sorry to read of the passing of Cedric Dickens - one of life's great Characters. Cedric was one of my first managers within BTM. I was also very interested to see that the obit had been contributed by Graham Morris and Ray Kilroy - two of my old friends and ex-colleagues, though I have not been in contact with either for many a long year. I can add to their tally.

I joined BTM in September 1949 and went straight to Letchworth to join a year-long Technical Service training course. Early in 1950, on the second of my Field training secondments, I was posted to Government *Section* (before it was elevated to a 'Region') and later that year returned there as a permanent posting. I remained with Government Region for some 20 years, graduating from Technical Service to 'Investigator' (a euphemism for 'salesman', which was not quite respectable in those days!), then Service Manager and finally Area Manager for the Civil Ministries of Government. In the early 70's I moved to Head Office at Putney as Commercial

Manager for International Division, then in the early 80's did a tour of overseas duty as Commercial Manager first for ICL Canada in Toronto, then for the newly-formed North America Division based in Stamford, Connecticut. In early 1987 I took early retirement/redundancy after 37+ year's service. (How's that for a lifetime's career potted into one paragraph!)

So if my 37 years is added to the 264 quoted by Graham and Ray that makes 301 - and increases the headcount by one! I hope you will be able to pass this on to Graham and/or Ray (perhaps by just 'forwarding' this message) so that they know there is at least one more extant survivor of the Victoria House fraternity of the 1950's.

Jim Hatley

Cedric Dickens

I was interested to read in the Autumn 2006 issue of Bits & Bytes the obituary on Cedric Dickens.

My association with Cedric came later than the time referred to by Graham Morris and Ray Kilroy. I was a sales manager in European Division and had as my territories Ireland, Scandinavia and what we would now call Western Europe. We naturally had many visits from European customers and staff in the 1960s and one of the high spots of many such visits was to join Cedric Dickens, who had a company PR role, on a tour of some of the pubs in London that were associated with books of Chales Dickens, Cedrics esteemed forebear. These were most enjoyable evenings combining some literary history with some serious drinking! I regret that my failing memory cannot recall the names of the pubs that we used to visit, but perhaps there are Bits & Bytes readers who can.

Hugh Devonald Bracknell

New Nortel reader

Many thanks for the reply and the key to unlocking Bits & Bytes. I've just spent an enjoyable half-hour catching up, and was pleased to see items from two people I know - Brian Leadley (lives 200 yards from me in Letchworth) and Les Hodges.

Bits & Bytes beats Newslink any day, but as someone who worked in both ICL and STC, I always found ICL people more interesting.

Sorry I missed John Harper at the Stevenage do in October I must look out for next year's reunion

Michael Underwood

Life after ICL

All my working life was in ICL in its various guises from 1955 until 1986 when I left for *exactly* the reasons so well articulated by Julia Dickinson in B&B23. My boss was too young and I was too old. The fact that I also called him something anatomical (and female) probably didn't help my cause but he deserved it. In the 1970s I underwent a sort of life change when I noticed, in whatever the ICL newsletter was then, how many people who had given BTM such long service died shortly after retiring. Deaths at sixty something were commonplace and seventy something were rare. I decided then that there was little point in saving for the future if that was the outlook. Look now at the ICL/Nortel Fund obits in B&B23. 2 sixties, 23 seventies, 34 eighties and 8 nineties. What a change

in just 30 years. I wonder what it'll look like 30 years hence. Incidentally does anyone know or have any suggestion as to why the ICL Fund people die so much younger? Nobody over 74 and nearly as many 30s and 40s as 70s. Intriguing.

Keith Crook (EMI, STE04, LON22 and LET06)

Look at B&B No16 &17 for previous comments!

Disturbing the dust

When Peter Bonfield closed ICL's company museum, (not one of his brightest ideas, I reckon), many of the contents went to the Science Museum in London. Like most big public museums, their collection is so big that only a tiny fraction can be on show in the public galleries, but at least all the material is meticulously conserved, and will be available for study by scholars and historians, theoretically for ever.

All the documents, manuals, drawings, photographs, books and other papers are in the care of the Science Museum Library, which rents space for its own open collection in a building belonging to Imperial College. The reserve collection lives mostly in Blythe House in West Kensington, one of the oldest purpose-built office buildings in the world, erected in the 1890s for the newly instituted Post Office Savings Bank. There, up four flights of stairs, past the room that houses three hundred years of the evolution of the dentist's chair, is the silent space that is home to the ICL Archive.

Six years ago, the Library's archivist asked the Computer Conservation Society for help in cataloguing this part of the collection, and in a rash moment I volunteered to have a go. Six years later I'm still at it. There are eighteen 4-shelf racks, each shelf holding two ranks of items - so a total of about 300 shelf-feet, plus four 4-drawer and two 2-drawer filing cabinets, plus another 50 shelf-feet of computing records which, though not directly connected with ICL, are part of the same computing history story. Other material accrues from time to time - usually in spring, when it seems that wives are most likely to say: "When are you going to get rid of all this old clutter?"

There are two current activities: the whole archive is due to be transported some time later this year down to Wroughton, near Swindon, where some converted aircraft hangars will provide more spacious accommodation, so the labelling and listing has to be completed as soon as possible; and the curator of computing has asked me to compile a separate catalogue of all the photographs in the ICL collection.

There are several thousand of these photographs, some going back to the 1920s. The more recent ones are usually self-explanatory or are already well labelled. But Croydon in particular had a habit of photographing bits of mechanism and leaving no clue to their significance, which is challenging.

My personal aim is to get the complete listings available and searchable on the web. I'm told that the ICL archive is already the most active part of the reserve collection; i.e. it has the most students wanting to access the material. It's reassuring that an increasing number of people are taking an interest in our life's work, and seeing how lucky we were to help to found such a fascinating industry. Oh, but I'm sorry we don't have room for yet another copy of the PLAN Programming Manual.

Hamish Carmichael

Fujitsu Thames Valley Club's most popular sports section

I had received my latest edition of Bits and Bytes and glanced through the newsletter when I came across the interesting article by Mike Stewart entitled "Working for Fujitsu ". In the article he talks about the social side of Fujitsu at BRA01 the Thames Valley club. In this section he gives a run down of the activities made available to members and besides the various sports activities the travel, theatre trips etc.

His run down of the sports section makes no mention of the largest and most popular section of the TVC the golf society. I'm sure there are many retired employees who play golf or have taken it up in retirement who would be interested to learn more about the golf section.

The golf section of the TVC meets to play golf on a golf day 4 or 5 times a year. Our membership is somewhere between 70 to 100 members, family, and friends. During the past year approx 60 people have participated in a golf section activity of some kind. We play at golf venues across the Thames Valley with a regular friendly golf competition followed by a meal and prize giving. In September for the last three years we have been able to extend the golf activities to a weekend away playing golf.

There is a web site www.tvcgolf.ukgolfers.com where you will find more details about the society, the venues we have played at and on future golf activities. You will also find complete lists of all who played, those who won a prize and some photographs of the winners.

I have been running the golf section for over 5 years now as secretary and general driving force for the society. We are not all brilliant golfers although some of our members do have low handicaps. We set out to have an enjoyable day's golf with other employees or ex-employees now retired. The emphasis is on meeting with regular friends and colleagues. We do not offer advise or lessons on how to play golf, but if you can hit a ball reasonably well and have some enthusiasm for the game you will be welcome. An official handicap is not required.

Just send me an e-mail @ tvcgolf@ukgolfers.co.uk or look out for our activities published in the TVC newsletter or on the web site.

Peter Haysom

Psychometric Tests or Graphologist

Dave Richardson's article (B&B No 23) on selection/aptitude tests reminded me of the introduction of psychometric testing into the company in the late 70's or early 80's. A few of us were called into the Regional Director's office (Peter, now Sir Peter, Gershon). and told that the Directors had taken the tests and that now it was our turn. Great emphasis was laid on the significant amount of money and time that the company had invested in these tests.

The first test comprised twenty to forty questions, each of which consisted of four or five apparently unrelated words; for example, "forceful, sporting, literate, friendly, hardworking". You had to select from each question, the word which you thought was most applicable to you. We were instructed not to spend much thinking time about the questions, and although there was no time limit, it could be

completed in well under twenty minutes. When we each saw our own results, most agreed that it gave a broadly accurate profile of how each individual saw himself/herself in terms of personal skills, attitudes etc., even those to which he was reluctant to admit.

A second set of tests some weeks later comprised two papers, each which was time limited. They seemed to have a literacy and numeracy flavour respectively. Again, most individuals thought the results were broadly in line with the view they held of themselves, but there were some areas with which individuals disagreed violently. Whether this was justified, who knows? (Lord, gie us the power to see ourselves as others see us).

So, well worth the cost of the purchase of the tests, training of HR administrators, administration of the tests, candidates' time etc., then. Well, read on.....

In 1984 I attended a wedding reception at a leading seaside hotel in Brighton. A natural break occurred after the meal and before the dancing. I, two other men, and a lady went to the foyer for a breath of fresh air. In a small room off the foyer, a well known graphologist was offering to read your handwriting - it was as a promotion for his book. We all four agreed. All that was required was to write five lines on a slip of paper (an invitation to a friend for dinner, for example) and sign it as you would a cheque. He then spent ten minutes or so analysing it and then separately called each individual and outlined his analysis. In my case, he covered everything that the psychometric tests had "revealed" and a heck of a lot more including emotional and personal matters. The two other men would only admit that they were shocked at the accuracy and breadth of the profile the graphologist had detailed. The lady dismissed it as rubbish - but from her look and demeanour the graphologist had clearly got it right.....and the cost of this last test? £2.00!

Vernon Hardman

The Goodwin Slot

MYTH-APPREHENSION

At the wake, following the funeral of the much-missed Derek Windsor, we were lightening the mood with anecdotes about him. Every ICL mourner had a tale about Derek's idiosyncratic approach to the job and them. At one point, a chap I vaguely knew started on a yarn relating to Derek and the RCA 301/ICT1500. This threw me, as I'd frequently told the same story in the past, but never involving Derek. I first heard it around 1964 at a site in the City where I was on a call. It could only apply to the 1500 and apart from the fact Derek wasn't around then, it was a gag the engineers played on the site operators and visitors, the sort of thing Derek would have no part of.

I'm being ambiguous, as I don't wish to identify the misguided speaker and secondly I might have it wrong too. Like most urban myths they nearly happened to you, but not quite.

The first time I recall such an incident was in the winter of 1940. The nightly blitz had started. My father was home on leave and it was his introduction to the bombing, whereas Mum and I were battle-scarred and a bit blasé. We were awakened by a mobile anti-aircraft gun inconsiderately being parked outside our front door and opening up. The whole place shook and Dad insisted we headed for the

Anderson shelter in the garden. His agitation was catching, as he chivvied Mum along, whilst all I wanted to do was look at the 3.7" gun out of the bedroom window. In the dark, as the blackout was down, we grabbed warm clothing. As the bombs and shrapnel fell, Dad hurried my mother to the landing. Flustered by now she cried, "I can't find my teeth!"

"Never mind yer teef!" my father snapped, "They're dropping bombs-not bloody ham sandwiches!"

It broke the tension and we made it to the shelter still laughing.

Years later I'd bore my own family to death relating this, until one day I heard the same anecdote on the radio. I know it happened, it's so typical of my Dad and I've never put anything in print until recently, or could it be I'd heard or read it during the war and by a kind of osmosis absorbed it into my folklore?

Similarly, my father-in-law, a solemn, authoritative man, unlike my father, rarely spoke of work but told us of a colleague taking his driving test on a Vespa scooter. As it was a solo machine, the examiner asked him to do a circuit round a chosen route and he would signal for him to do an emergency stop. After two laps without a sign of the examiner, the chap came across the examiner being loaded into an ambulance having stepped into the path of another learner on a Vespa minding his own business out for a bit of practice! Again the story went the rounds. I stopped telling it when the same scenario appeared in an episode of "The Likely Lads" in the Seventies!

About a year ago at an ICL reunion, I reminded a friend of the time when he moved into a house and stayed home for the gas board to remove the gas meter as he was all-electric. After a couple of "no shows" the meter was disconnected but left in the porch, to be collected. It ended up in the garage, as nobody came for it. A few weeks later the meter reader insisted on reading it, presumably to close the account. The next quarter it was read again. Then my pal received a bill for £0. I suggested he wrote a cheque for £0, which he did and the saga ended. The trouble is, when we finished chuckling, he remarked that it wasn't him and he'd never had gas in the house!

I know proper authors gather material from any source and give it provenance, but it seems every time I recall an amusing incident in my past, somebody claims it!

Am I the only one with a database of personal reminiscences that never happened?

Dennis Goodwin

dennis@dennisgoodwin.wanadoo.co.uk

Reunions

ICL Central London Group

The next reunion will be on Wednesday 18 April 2007 at **The Flying Horse** at **52 Wilson Street**, from 12 noon. The pub is east of Finsbury Square.

John Doo 01245 465830

Punch Card & Stevenage Labs Reunion Group

The annual meeting for 2007 will be at STE04 "The Stevenage Labs", on the first Tuesday in October, the 2nd. Tickets for this reunion are available from Adrian Turner at the address on page 1. Please send cheque for £10, with a SAE for return of ticket, which will pay

for tea/coffee and buffet lunch. All pensioners are welcome.

Adrian Turner 01491 872012

City Slickers Reunion (New)

ICL Financial Services, Dataskill and ICL Sorbus Financial Services reunion to be held on Friday 18th May 2007 at "Bangers" wine bar, Wilson Street, EC2M 2TE. (0207 377 6326) commencing around 4pm. Pass the word round to ex colleagues and friends to make this an evening to remember.

For location and meal provision information at Bangers, visit site **www.davy.co.uk** and look up Bangers

ICL Double Majority Association

Nine new members joined the DMA in 2006 and 17 people will achieve 42 years service in 2007.

Joseph Gardner 01438 362806

Oxford Engineers

Ken Jones 01865 340388

kenwynjones@aol.com

Surrey Engineers

Trevor Harding 01483 565144

trevor.harding@iclway.co.uk

ICL Australia

Val Mickan valmickan@optusnet.com.au

Copthall House Newcastle Staffs

Bob Green 01782 615290

East Grinstead 81 Club

Gordon Franklin 01342 328479

East Midlands UB40s

Brian Skeldon 0115 9725119

ICL Midlands Group

Brian Trow 01785 257317

Leo Computers Society

Geoff Parry 01628 770129

Letchworth Group

Dennis Evans 01462 811273

Liverpool Engineers

George Lynn 01744 29984

Surrey Engineers

Trevor Harding 01483 565144

Tin Hut Reunion Group

Olaf Chedzoy 01278 741 269

West Gorton Reunion

Eric W Watts 01457 875080

Watford-Harrow- Feltham Group

Mike Ray 01895 230194

West Branch Engineers

Eric Reynolds 01452 712047

West Kent Reunion Group

Ron Harding 01732 761076

OBITUARIES

Gavin Kirkpatrick

I received the following email 21 November 2006

It was with a slight sense of puzzlement that I read your piece in 'Bits & Bytes - Issue 23' about the Helsinki Reunion. Let me explain.

My first period of service was with ICT/ICL from 1961 to 1970, at the end of which time I had become Personnel Manager GOSO under Cliff Oldham. There then followed 8 years (1970-78) of what retrospectively became known humorously as my

'sabbatical' with Sperry Univac as a) Personnel Director, Europe for 6 years, b) Director, Worldwide Personnel Planning and Development at Univac Worldwide HQ in Pennsylvania. In late 1977, Geoff Cross and Peter Ellis invited me to return to ICL as Group Personnel Manager, Worldwide Marketing Group and I remained with ICL in different HQ positions and a 2 year secondment to the BCS until formally being appointed Chief Executive of the British Computer Society in May 1992.

In the early 1970s, Univac had a lot of management /personnel problems in Finland and I had to make many trips to Helsinki to help sort them out. These were eventually resolved with the recruitment from Kesko and appointment of Timo Mannermaa as Gen Mgr Univac Finland. Timo and I became very good colleagues and personal friends and we exchanged sons (his Eero and our Tom) two years running during the summer months. My last meeting with him and Lena was in the summer of 1993 when I was in Helsinki on BCS business. Since then we have lost touch although through other Helsinki friends, I hear news occasionally.

Keep up the good work - 'Bits& Bytes' is high value stuff for us old codgers!

Unfortunately Gavin died 9 February 2007 after a long fight against leukaemia. I thought that I should publish this letter as his memorial Editor

Albert Cook

Sadly Albert passed away on New Year's Eve from cancer, at the age of eighty. Albert joined Power-Samas in 1948 and became a Supervisor for the North Eastern Region six years later. In the mid 1960's he joined the 1900 Support Group at Letchworth and one of his tasks was to coordinate the training activities of visiting Overseas Staff.

In the late 1960's he transferred to Sydenham in Kent to become the National Logistics Support Manager and two years later he was appointed Manager European Services Organisation at HQ in Putney. It was during his tenure there that he made many friends in the European Division and, during International Training Conferences, which I attended in the UK, many remarked on the excellent work which Albert had performed on their behalf.

In 1974 Albert visited Australia to carry out a review of the local logistics operation. He so impressed Management here with his knowledge and skills that they offered him the position of the Australian Logistics Manager, which he eventually accepted. He enjoyed the Australian way of life and its people and immigrated here later that same year. In the late 1970's Albert was appointed the Northern Region Services Manager, which encompassed NSW, QLD and Papua New Guinea.

Albert retired from ICL in 1983, but since then he has been an active member of the ICLALLSTARS Club, editing the Newsletter and arranging reunions in the Australian Capital Cities. He will be remembered by many ICL people in the UK for his help and kindness. He was highly respected in Australia and will be greatly missed by his many friends.

Jack Nicholson

I first knew Albert many years ago when we both worked in 1/2 Factory Letchworth. I lost contact with him and only established a very close link with him

when he discovered Bits and Bytes in 2003. His name was very familiar to me but we only realised that we knew each other when we emailed photographs of ourselves. We were able to use many stories from our respective newsletters to interest pensioners on the other side of the world

I will always remember Albert for becoming an out and out Australian. He was an avid follower of cricket and rugby and definitely passed the Tebbit test for becoming an Oz! Editor

ICL/Nortel Fund

BIR03	Cartlidge	E A	20/02/07	80
	Clay	R	31/10/06	74
BRA01	James	Glyn	04/10/06	73
	Harvey	G W	24/01/07	81
Dartford	Grant	R J	26/01/07	89
Dublin	Black	Atchison	18/12/06	92
Dukinfield	Higgins	T J	27/10/06	87
	Ratcliffe	Wilfred	07/10/06	77
EDI04	Wright	E	13/01/07	78
	Lawrence	Walter D	31/01/07	71
	Preston	Davis A	26/10/06	83
FEL01	Slattery	T J	01/11/06	67
	Monk	G F	30/01/07	86
	Barr	William F	09/11/06	65
Grimsby	Clements	Peter D	01/11/06	64
Hong Kong	Careless	Joan M	13/09/06	79
KID01	Ashby	Maxine C	09/12/06	63
	Cooper	Delha M	09/09/06	75
KID02	Hood	Thomas B	09/02/07	70
Kidsgrove	Brookes	David	24/11/06	65
	O'Neil	Samuel	10/01/07	87
LET02	Hutcheon	William H	12/10/06	82
LET04	Tomlin	I G	15/01/07	81
	Castle	Dennis R	22/10/06	84
	Gentle	Jack	01/01/07	82
LET05	Grimes	Marjorie R	05/12/06	90
	Welch	Michael J	16/10/06	71
	Fisher	Jack A	11/12/06	80
LET	Medland	E	07/01/07	80
	Hyde	Victor J	25/11/06	88
	Miles	Arthur P	13/12/06	79
LON11	Taylor	G N	12/01/07	90
	Wright	V G	23/09/06	79
	Crawford	A	29/10/06	78
LON13	Paul	Dennis J	02/09/06	82
	Cook	Albert	31/12/06	80
	Mitchelson	Thomas A	09/12/06	87
LON18	Bedford	Mavis C	19/12/06	87
LON28	Greenway	Frank P	18/01/07	84
LON30	Needham	David	01/10/06	85
LON31	Dowdall	C C	09/01/07	83
London	Wynn	Jack S	23/11/06	81
	Barrett	R	13/10/06	84
	Ludgate	Eric N	29/09/06	81
MAN05	Todd	Ralph	13/10/06	84
	Farrington	J R	28/09/06	72
	Weatherill	Michael E	03/10/06	67
MAN12	Meek	G M	27/01/07	72
NEL01	Lister	Leon A	04/10/06	86
Norwich	Day	David	01/11/06	62
Putney	Smith	Lillian K	11/01/07	80
REA02	Dalton	W J	14/10/06	70
STE04	Hudson	R F	14/11/06	78
Stevenage	Day	J D	19/12/06	89
	Powell	George J	23/12/06	93
	L			

TAP01	Andoe	Robin E	02/09/06	75
W Gorton	Taylor	Raymond	26/01/07	78
	Morrow	J E	21/12/06	83
	Prescott	J	01/09/06	75
	Mayson	J	12/01/07	70
	Travis	H W	24/01/07	76
	King	H B	09/11/06	94
	Williams	A P	13/01/07	82
	Lane	Ronald	09/02/07	77
WIN01	Price	J R	07/02/07	81
	Kelly	F J	28/01/07	80
	Finnigan	Gwen	08/10/06	82

ICL Fund

Includes people who died in service

BIR03	Johnson	Trevor W	01/02/07	61
BOL01	Williamson	Alexander	26/11/06	65
BRA01	Donaldson	Elizabeth	15/11/06	58
	Hunter	Matthew	09/02/07	48
	Kildare	Michael D	11/12/06	57
	Strange	Christina	10/10/06	37
BRA04	Foote	William D	11/10/06	69
BRS06	Russell	Graham M	30/11/06	68
BRS07	Fisher	Robert J	14/12/06	71
CAF02	Patel	Dinesh	03/09/06	34
DBY01	Kay	Linda L	13/10/06	44
GRW01	Drysdale	Austin C	07/01/07	46
HOM99	Styles	Brian W	24/10/06	70
	Kirkpatrick	Gavin A Y	09/02/07	68
Int'l	Blake	Stuart J	11/12/06	56
KID01	Brocklehurst	Trevor F	24/01/07	65
	Mollart	Kenneth	07/02/07	74
KID02	Holley	Kevin G	01/02/07	54
LON49	Beale	Peter C	19/01/07	71
	Lyon	Robert A	09/01/07	72
LON78	Day	Eric J	16/01/07	61
LON90	Slade	Peter J	23/10/06	53
MAN01	Clarke	Laurence A	13/01/07	71
	Coe	Doreen	02/01/07	68
	Cox	James	04/01/07	74
MAN05	Higgins	Brian	08/01/07	55
	Quinn	Fred W	08/01/07	65
NEW05	Porter	Geoffrey	31/08/06	52
SLH01	Herbert	Michael I	01/01/07	57
SLH06	Gunning	Brian G	06/09/06	53
STE04	Price	John E	06/02/07	63
WAR04	Bradley	Arthur D	12/10/06	54
WSR01	Belsey	Derek F	16/01/07	70

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PCs for Pensioners

I have been surprised by the numbers of pensioners who have not taken the plunge into the Internet world, so an advertisement in the **U3A News** caught my eye. Fujitsu Siemens have introduced a new PC system –SimpliCo – “designed for newcomers to computing”

I made contact with **John Bradley** on **0800 028 2576** to find out more about it. If you have been frightened by the technology and jargon this may be the answer for you. Give him a ring to find out more.

Pensioners' Directory

Tony Riley maintains the directory for those pensioners who are on the Internet and want their email address and career details published.

His email address is: tonyriley@europe.com

Online for ICL people

The website for ICL Group pensioners is <http://uk.fujitsu.com/pensioner>

News items are published as they arise, and a monthly news update is published at the time that pensioners get their payslips.

The site has a members area including a directory of ICL Fund pensioners who have registered – over 3380 have so far. Members can contact others in the directory using a message relay facility.

All ex ICL people can now access previous editions of B&B. This facility was originally available only to members of the ICL Fund, but has been extended.

Former ICL staff, many of whom are members of the Nortel scheme, can read back copies by logging on at <http://uk.fujitsu.com/pensioner/bitsbytesres>. The user name is **Nortel** and the password is **pensioner**.

We thank Fujitsu for providing this new online facility.

NEXT ISSUE

Copy for the Autumn 2007 issue must be submitted by **1 September 2007**, but would be appreciated earlier.

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