

Bits & Bytes

No 16

Editorial

I would like to thank those readers who are kind enough to take the trouble to thank me for "Bits & Bytes". The reasons I started it, back in 1995, are still valid. As David Marwood said recently "It is the only link that most pensioners have with the fortunes of their old Company and colleagues". David passed his copy of B&B No 15 to Roger Houbert in France. As a result I got a phone call from Roger asking to be put on the circulation list and a request for all the back issues. This I did and posted them in the week before Christmas. I received a letter from France on New Year's Eve telling me that he had read all of them from cover to cover.

In a past edition of B&B I sought views on obituaries, and I now understand why Nortel do not have any in the Nortel Pensioners' Newsletter ("Newslink"). I have had a number submitted for publication and apologise now for not including them all in this edition. I think that the editor will have to make the decision on which to publish, because I do not have the space in each edition to include them.

Discussions have taken place with the ICL Pensions Department on how communication with pensioners can be improved. Nortel have recently launched a website nortelpensions.com and the ICL fund is looking at a similar solution plus hard copy for non-Internet people.

Adrian Turner

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Fujitsu Services

Good News

Post Office services

Post Office Ltd have awarded Fujitsu Services, a £650 million contract to provide a new range of extended services through to 2010, that will provide the IT infrastructure to enable the transformation of Post Office business.

Fujitsu Services already provides the Post Office with the most advanced and secure electronic banking and retail network in Europe, providing counter systems in all 17,500 UK Post Office branches. This major new commitment demonstrates the Post Office's trust in Fujitsu Services' ability to run large-

scale managed services and systems integration projects.

As part of this new contract, Fujitsu Services will provide the development and integration of the infrastructure, security, reconciliation and accounting systems that will enable the Post Office to operate an electronic banking service through its branch network. The infrastructure will also enable new online transactions, such as smart card applications, to be provided to its customers.

This electronic banking service will enable customers to continue collecting their benefit payments in cash from Post Office branches after the move from the paper based process to the direct payment of benefits into bank accounts starting from April 2003. The system will also allow high street banks, where they have agreements with the Post Office, to offer their customers the facility for deposit and cash withdrawals through the Post Office branch network.

Other features of the contract:

Post Office customers will be able to use debit cards at their Post Office branch for most transactions progressively from April 2003.

The electronic banking solution will enable the Post Office to process 600 million transactions each year

Southern Water awards £8.5m billing contract to Fujitsu Services

Fujitsu has won an £8.5m, 5 year contract with Southern Water to manage support and enhance the company's customer billing system.

Over the next five years, Fujitsu will continue to operate and support Southern Water's customer billing system which underpin Southern's billing activities collecting some £400 million each year from 1.7 million customers.

In addition, Fujitsu will upgrade the billing application to ensure that it continues to meet the business needs of Southern Water and to support new working practices such as on-line access to customer accounts.

As part of the new contract, Fujitsu will provide and maintain the IT infrastructure that enables Southern Water staff to view billing data, in order to help make informed business decisions.

Fujitsu delivers electronic document management to TNT

Fujitsu Services, has signed a multi-million pound, three year contract to supply TNT Express, the

world's leading business-to-business express delivery company, with 'PACS' (Pre-Arrival Clearance System), a global electronic document management system that will revolutionise its international deliveries.

Previously clearing TNT's deliveries through customs involved a time-consuming, paper-based process, including up to four items of paperwork for each of its 30,000 daily consignments. Each parcel came with paperwork physically attached, which would have to be collected upon arrival at an airport or port and then sorted for appropriate clearance by customs officials.

The new Fujitsu document management system will scan customs related paperwork into an electronic format, which will be electronically transmitted to the parcel's destination depot where local TNT staff can begin the customs clearance process whilst the parcel is still inbound. The improved system will reduce the customs process by up to eight hours.

Staff are also able to work more efficiently and consistently, rather than in brief periods when relevant flights land. The system will also cut down on lost paperwork and is expected to reduce the costs of paper handling and storage costs by more than £1 million per year. Due to Fujitsu's global reach, TNT will roll the system out across its entire international operations by the end of October 2002.

The key benefits of the system include considerable cost savings, quicker deliveries, improved customer satisfaction, reduced paper handling costs and improved staff productivity. Fujitsu and TNT are also committed to participating in regular user workshops to continually improve the performance and functionality of the solution.

Fujitsu helps Luton Borough Council

Luton Borough Council has awarded a contract to Fujitsu Services, for a document management system that will reduce the amount of time spent processing requests for personal information from several working days to just four hours.

Citizens will receive an improved quality of service from the Council, with shorter response times on queries for personal information held by the Council. The Council will be more efficient as it will no longer have to manually search for documents within its file systems and across the four Microsoft Exchange mail servers which do not have global search functions.

The solution, designed and implemented by Fujitsu, is based on KVS Enterprise Vault software. It will enable Luton Borough Council to manage and automate the archiving, retention and retrieval of information stored in Microsoft Exchange mailboxes, personal folder files and public folders. The software compresses and stores emails and attachments, removing the file from the exchange database, decreasing the amount of storage needed in the Exchange database while retaining the information in a secure format.

Luton is working towards the 2005 e-government deadline and is increasingly using email as a method of communication with its citizens. Under the Data Protection Act, Luton is legally responsible for the security of all information supplied by individuals including within email. The implementation protects emails from being corrupted or information within them being altered. Emails are condensed to about

50% of their original size, saving several gigabytes of space on the email servers.

Local Authorities must also conform to the Freedom of Information Act, which gives individuals the right to see all personal information an organisation holds on them. The solution provides enhanced functionality for searching across all folders, meaning that the IT department no longer has to dedicate the equivalent of half a full time member of staff to track emails.

Life in ICL

Early Anecdotes of a Punch Boy

Joining the Tab as a 16 year old, straight from Technical School, involved an interview, not for me but for my father. It was he who met with Freddy Imber at Fusearc, a factory that had recently been taken over in Ickneild Way, and he was interviewed while I sat at a bench in the workshop stripping down a Model 20 punch just to prove to Tickle Knight that I could handle a screwdriver.

My dad got me the job and Mr Imber and Charlie Cutting who was also involved in engaging me explained my route to the Managing Director's job by drawing a 45-degree line on the blackboard. Me as a Grade 0 Mechanic at the bottom, he half way up as a Manager and the top of course was the MD.

A straight forward, upward climb.

The most important feature was two weeks holiday a year and after twenty-one years service, three weeks. 46 hours a week, every Saturday until 12.30pm, and £2-5-0d. a week paid by cheque every 4 weeks on a Wednesday.

Long loyal service was expected and you could be assured of a satisfying, secure job for life. No mention of pensions at this stage. They hadn't been invented yet.

Because of the war the Tab could not take on new trainees without awaiting an allocation of the "Control of Engagements" order that meant I had to wait nearly six months before I could go on my first course at Letchworth on Mod. 20 punches and verifiers. In the meantime I took a job as a stagehand at the Palace Theatre Watford.

Arriving at the front of Hollerith House which was the hostel for mechanics taking courses at the training school, I handed my ration card over and was shown my bunk, sharing a room with two trainees from Glasgow also on Mod. 20s.

Hollerith House, in the centre of Letchworth was the former Madonna girls school and was opposite the side doors of the Broadway Cinema. It wasn't long before these two Glaswegians had chatted up the usherettes to open the side door after the big picture had started and let us in so that we could "neck" with them in the back row. We certainly couldn't afford the 1/9d to get in through the front door.

Our training was held in a hut at the back of the card works in Ickneild Way and after breakfast at the hostel at 7.am, we all trooped in a gaggle through Letchworth passing the gaggle of Customers female staff on Hollerith plugging courses who were housed at the Garden City Hotel at the bottom of the town. They were going up to Hollerith House for their instruction at the Customers Training School which was at the back of our hostel.

Unfortunately we were strongly discouraged from mixing with the customer's staff. Anyway we were only kids and they were mature ladies in their mid twenties.

The course lasted for three weeks and our instructor was dear Tommy Knowles, such a gentle kind man, so polite to us kids. Always addressing us as "Mister", and never a bad word from his lips. I wonder how many of us passed through his hands.

I remember being kitted out with a brand new set of tools and a BROWN tool bag. Imagine the comments when on my first day Jack Warton the punch inspector at Victoria House and all the other punch boys and girls-yes we had girl punch mechanics in those days too- saw me coming in with a BROWN tool bag.

Jack Warton, in front of all my future colleagues, introduced me and in a loud voice said "Now you know it all Mr. Walker, you can go to Hoovers and do the monthly maintenance and Mr. Mockler, you can go to Hoovers tomorrow and put all the machines right again". I never forgave him for that although we became the best of pals later on.

So much to learn, so many customers to visit. One of my favourites was Woolwich Arsenal which involved a long, top deck tram journey from Victoria House to the Arsenal gates via the Elephant & Castle, New Cross and Greenwich. All through the lovely decadence of South East London as it was then. The whole trip took about two hours and cost tuppence ha'penny 2.1/2d (old money)

The Arsenal had 45 col. machines still to be found in those days. The offices there were primitive in the extreme, great high windows and trestle tables with stools for the punch girls.

One of my least favourite customers was Pyrene on the Great West Road who had a battery of worn out American Duplicator punches which were always in trouble. They were all packed into a small room in the Tower of the offices with no room to work at all. In the winter the smell of unwashed bodies in that small space was overpowering.

We managed as best we could. There was no such thing as a soldering iron. We used to buy solder in a strip, wrap it around a broken joint or terminal and heat it with a match. I have done lots of repairs in that manner in the early days. Circuit testing was by finger. I made a continuity tester with battery and bulb. The Bosses didn't think we could be trusted to be issued with a meter.

As punch boys we held our senior colleagues in some awe. Bill Brown and Frazer Burns headed the management team with secretary Beryl Caden. Dicky Bird, Larry Dailey, Joe Green, Tommy Fulton, Jack Lane and Tommy Sharp were amongst my top guys. Back at the office Daphne Surridge ran the "book" and gave us the "calls" by telephone. Freddy Nice had just started as the store keeper and he reluctantly handed out the parts we needed. There was only one spares list for everyone. Punches, Sorters, Tabs., etc. all in a well thumbed list jealously guarded in the office by Fred.

Most of us gathered every day in the office at 8.30.am and Jack Worton handed out the maintenance sheets for the day. If you were one of his favourites you got given "distant" customers like Miles Aircraft at Reading or Echo Radio at Southend to look after. This involved using Railway Travel Vouchers in exchange for rail tickets and these were

issued by Daphne before we left the office. We used to carry spare signed vouchers in case we got stuck. I had my wallet stolen once and the voucher in it was used from Kings Cross to Aberdeen return. That put an end to us carrying spare vouchers.

Then it was all down to Joe Lyons Coffee Shop in Holborn. Often you could count up to 20 black tool bags and one BROWN one that littered the entrance while we had our morning refreshment before setting off. Jack Warton used to come down frequently and chase us out. It must have been interesting to see a rush of blokes coming out of Joe Lyons at some speed each complete with black tool bag (and one brown one) to catch busses trams or tubes in all directions. To counter this we would change our Coffee Shop until he caught up with us again.

Sometime in 1946 Mechanical Service as we were then known had to move out of Victoria House due to lack of space for the administration staff. Sir Raleigh Phillpotts, the Founder and Chairman of the Tab, lived in a flat behind 17 Park Lane, London and this bombed out but the prestige address was acquired to become the Head Office of the company.

The building had been an annex to St. George's Hospital and the top floors including the operating theatre were open to the elements complete with pigeons flying in and out. Mechanical Service was housed in the basement and what became the board room which was decorated with faded but beautiful plaster wall and ceiling panel relief work picked out in gold leaf. The floors creaked alarmingly and continued to do so even after the building was refurbished in the fifties.

Water damaged mirrors adorned the walls and the whole place had that musty damp feel. Just the place to house a lot of rowdy mechanics and their lockers. A good job we didn't have to spend too long in there every day.

The British Tabulating Machine Co. Ltd. owned all the equipment we serviced. The customers hired everything including the service and because of this some of them demanded their "pound of flesh". We had to behave properly on site and be smartly dressed. Woe betides if anyone stepped out of line.

We had to sign an agreement to always wear a suit, collar and tie. This was difficult because of Clothing Rationing. I remember Jimmy Henderson turning up for work in a sports jacket and cords because his only suit was at the cleaners. He was sent home until it was ready two weeks later.

It wasn't long before I was called up to join the RAF. I missed working in London and in such an exciting job. When I returned years later BTM had changed, and so had the atmosphere some how. Now I was a "senior" engineer with senior responsibilities. That's another story---

Peter Walker BTM ICL & Jobbing builder

Life after ICL

I noted with interest the end piece of your editorial in B&B No15 where you have had complaints about all the stories referring to the "Good old days".....perhaps this is the sort of information some of your readers might like to see?

I spent virtually my whole working life with ICL - starting with ICT in 1975 aged 18 as a "slotted hole" punched card engineer in Oxford and quickly progressing through being a Computer Engineer on

1300s, 1900s and 2900s to first line management. The remainder of my time was still involved with Customer Service but working in various service and support management roles through to Outsourcing and the CHOTS project via Feltham, Basingstoke and the Southwest. After 32 years I took early retirement in 1999 at the ripe old age of 50.

The "Good old Days"? Well I did feel I was enjoying myself most of the time.....but having now left ICL and moved off in a completely different direction I realise I must have been fooling myself for a lot of the time!

I am now self-employed in an occupation that knocks socks off ICL as regards job satisfaction and I now realise what I had missing all those years. I get far more of a kick from my new job than ICL ever gave me.

And what is this new occupation.....??

I am a freelance property consultant selling Spanish property.....and many of the people I am dealing with are exactly the type of person who reads B&B - that is, people who have worked hard for a lot of their life and are now looking to take it easy in a relaxing and pleasant environment away from the stresses and strains (and the lousy weather) of the UK.

Most of my clients are between the ages of 45 and 75 with the majority being those who are just looking at what to do in their retirement. Some will pick just a holiday apartment or villa on the Costa Blanca to while away some of their time whilst enjoying a useful additional income by renting out the property whilst they are not using it. Others will move over to Spain permanently to a much quieter and laid back (and cheaper) lifestyle. The more adventurous might even buy an old 'Cortijo' (Andalucian farmhouse) and spend time reforming it into a wonderful new home with loads of character.

Whatever their choice this is becoming a more and more popular way of investing any lump sums from retirement and still reaping the benefits (rather than it sitting in some bank or annuity somewhere). It is also a wonderful capital investment opportunity too.....with property prices rising by 20% year on year on the Mediterranean coast. Combine this capital increase together with the potential rental returns and then compare it with returns from an annuity where your lump sum is virtually lost. No wonder the popularity of house purchase in Spain is so popular!

If you want to find out more then take a look at a couple of my websites www.ajproperty.co.uk and www.casasalmeria.com. I can be contacted on **01367 240013**.

Peter Pickett ICL 1967 – 1999

Life after ICL..and During.

Do you remember?

How often this phrase is used when recalling the "Good Times".

It was in May 1996. I had just finished with ICL after 32 years, Joe Brand had left a couple of years previously and Ken Jarrett, with nearly a double majority, was still with the company.

We were in the Alpes-Maritimes in France, our sixth visit, some 2000m up a mountain, in the tent, in our sleeping bags, having a tot of Southern Comfort before retiring. We had failed again on our 5th attempt, to climb to the top of Mt Geign (2885m).

It's not that it's a difficult climb. We have been up more challenging ones. It's shape reminds me of a Seal lying down with its head arched. We climbed up onto its back (the ridge), walked along it and started to climb up the neck, a 50 degree head slope. About 100m from the top we were engulfed in a complete 'White out' again. The problem lies with the mountains location and the effect it has on the local weather.

"Do you remember" Joe said. "last year and the year before? Sitting here in the freezing cold. Nothing below us, except a 900m drop to Lac Negre, frozen solid still. There must be an easier way of enjoying ourselves". We sat it out and eventually visibility improved enough to allow us to descend safely back to the tent. There is no rescue here. The nearest village is some 20 miles away, the road head and car some nine miles.

"Why do we do this?" someone said. "We are all in our late Fifties. This is an activity for younger people". The question didn't have an answer, but one of us said, "Let's do something easier." What? "Well" T said, "next year let's do a long walk. What about retracing the trek that Robert Louis Stevenson did in 1878, with his donkey Modestine, across the Cevennes? That will be a piece of cake compared to this. The Cevennes are only 1400m at their highest". Joe and Ken seemed keen.

During the winter months, I re-read the book 'Travels with a Donkey'. I also contacted the French FRPP (Federation Francaise de la Randonnee Pedestre) and found that they publish a long-distance footpath guide which covers the route. We decided to stay at local inns at the end of each day's trek to cut down on the weight that we would have to carry on our backs. We later found out, after having nearly completed the walk, that it is still possible to hire donkeys for a least a part of the trail. The Cevennes are very rural and sparsely populated. Finding suitable accommodation at the end of each day was a challenge. It meant that some days the walking would be short, 9 miles or so, and some days up to 20 miles, a long way in the mountains.

Twelve days should do it, giving us an average of about 14 miles a day. The first three days or so would be in the foothills, time to get walk fit; then five days at altitude, ascending and crossing the Mount Lozere Massif, and four days descent to St Jean, with a day off in the middle.

Mid May 1997 found Tony, Ken, Joe and Elizabeth, at 10 o'clock in the morning, standing by a plaque which marks the start of the Robert Louis Stevenson walk. It was raining. We were having a group picture taken by a local villager. We were all a bit fragile. The previous evening, at the inn, there was a birthday party for the waitress and we had been sucked into it. It ended around midnight.

There were numerous incidents during the twelve days. On one occasion, we were approaching a small hamlet and stopped to talk to a man, slightly older than us. "Who are you?" "We are English". "Where are you going to?" "To Landos". "Where have you come from?" "From Costaros". "All on foot?" "Yes". "It's all right for you young people. All I can manage is to get down to the boulangerie for bread".

On another occasion, a glance at the map showed that we would shortly be crossing a stream, about an hour from the village where we were going to spend the night.

The thin blue line on the map turned out to be a raging torrent some 20m wide, the result of the snow melting and running off of the mountains. It took us an hour to cross. Later, sitting in a bar having a few drinks (you have to be careful of dehydration) Ken remarked "Do you remember saying that this would be a piece of cake". "I must go to the loo" I replied. "all this beer". Needless to say, we finished the walk. We had enjoyed spectacular views and an abundance of wild flowers but the walk itself is demanding.

Since then we have been back to the Alps several times and done the Verdon gorge. If you like 'White Knuckle' rides then don't go to Florida. Do the Verdon Gorge walk, a Magnus Magnusson one (I've started so I'll finish). Leave the car at the end of the walk (Point Sublime) and take a taxi to the start (Chalet Maline). Make sure that you sit next to the driver for maximum effect. The road largely clings to the outside edge of the Gorge with a 900m drop to the river below.

We have also been up on the glaciers in the Ecrin. It is however, becoming harder.

August 2002 saw Ken and I doing a cycle tour of the Nivernais and Bourgogne Canals. Definitely a piece of cake but you don't get the views.

How, since 1990, have we managed this? I hear you ask.

Well, fitness, stamina, and map reading skills were provided by the Company during our normal working day, flitting from one unknown site to another, criss-crossing London and the Home Counties like headless chickens. The Company has even financed it via the generous salaries paid.

Even now, in retirement, they continue to do so. The current year's pension increase allowed us to have LARGE tots of Southern comfort before retiring for the night. Beat that!

Tony Pipkin tonyp@iclway.co.uk

POEMS

MAN OF LETTERS

After serving in the REME*
(*Acronym—rhymes with dreamy)
to the Acc. & Tab.- now called P.S.A.M.
Initials abounded
I was really confounded
By A.T.A's, A.K.P.'s, such mayhem.

When it changed to valves (electronic),
Initials—something chronic
abbreviated phrases we conversed in.
"E.M.P.'s" and F.C.C.'s
"CRO's" and P.C.C.'s
Consonants and vowels we were well versed in.

With the birth of I.C.L
It meant, we might as well
wipe B.T.M. and "EMI" from the slate.
No more E.A, E.E or "LEO"
it's a new tune, played 'con brio'
a melody harmonious, any rate.

Fresh initials, S.T.C.
promised stability
With wages tied to the R.P.I. (inflation)
Then another change-to Nortel
sounded fine, but who could foretell
a Fujitsu bid, then full incorporation!

By the middle of the Eighties
we realise our fate is
in letters like V.R and A.V.C.
Most initials now are history
yet to me, the end's a mystery
how I.C.L is sadly, R.I.P.

dennis@goodwin43.freemove.co.uk

Letters

FUJITSU THAMES VALLEY WINE SOCIETY

The Wine Society at BRA01 continues with a monthly programme of tastings - well supported by current and former staff. The society is part of the Fujitsu Thames Valley Club (TVC). Readers of 'Bits and Bytes' are welcome to attend, either as members of the TVC, or as guests.

Tastings are of eight wines, with a break for a bite of supper. They are held in the Club Room on Thursday evenings and start at 1845. The price varies, between £6 and £12 depending on the cost of the wines. Next events are:

3rd Apr Iberian wines

Paul Champness of Ellis of Richmond

1st May Frescobaldi's Tuscan wines

Andrew Grubb of Averys

5th June Alsatian wines

Brian Fozard, wine consultant

For further information, and to get onto the Email list for information on future events please contact

colin.mair@iclway.co.uk

WHAT THOSE COMPANY INITIALS REALLY STAND FOR

David Brierley's letter in No. 15 identifies ICL as standing for "It can't last" and IBM as "I'm being moved".

When BTM & Powers became ICT I recollect the latter being thought to stand for "I'm confused too". When this transmuted into ICL we looked for an upgrade to "I'm confused less".

But RCA, where I was "attached" for a time from ICT, was known in Camden, NJ as "Revised, changed and altered", reinforced by its decision to change its logo to Cyrillic characters, from which point on it went relentlessly downwards. Some commonality with the above perception of IBM was reflected in the advice I was given on arriving with RCA: If you are going to be out of your office, tell whoever is likely to answer your phone "If my boss calls, get his name".

Mike Forrest BTM/ICT/ICL

Boston Tea Party

Pensions are now a hot topic and faith in the ICL Fund has in my opinion become dented due to a number of incidents. Our representatives have historically felt that they have no need to communicate to the members and have added to any concerns by failing to explain decisions.

We need an open book so that we can feel that our pensions are safe and we can understand why decisions are taken. I personally can accept that pension increases need to be within the funds safe budget constraints, but when the fund prints "rose-

tinted" reports there is a lack of consistency that worries me.

If the fund made mistakes in the past it is too late to correct them now, but we must be sure that the present trustees have the credentials to ensure that the future is ensured. For members this means knowing what decisions are being taken and being able to examine the results of these decisions.

How can we achieve this? When any representative positions become vacant we need to ensure that we only support new representatives who have a policy of communication.

First, as long as we have "Bits & Bytes", we need a regular feature in every addition for a representatives report, explaining what decisions have been taken and what items are on future pensions fund agendas.

Internet affords our representatives a cheap and simple method to circulate minutes and other pension fund information; they need to set up a Web Page so that this can happen. At the same time this will allow members to comment so that their views can be taken into account.

Meetings are difficult to arrange due to our geographic distribution but where they can be held in London or Manchester then they should be publicised through the web page to keep us informed.

According to my diary, pensioner's representative elections are overdue; when they occur we need to ensure that the opportunity to open the door is not lost. If you would like to give me your views please feel free to email me at ed.pedersen@iclway.co.uk I will circulate comments to interested parties.

Ed Pedersen

ICL LEGS

(London Engineering Golf Society)

We are looking for golfers to join our society.

The society was formed in 1975 when all our members were employed by ICL. Now our club consists of mainly retired personnel. In fact there is only one member still employed by the company.

Our numbers have depleted over the years and have now been reduced to only 16 full members in 2002. Each year we play four 36 hole golfing days which include lunch and evening meals.

We play one other event, which is a Ryder Cup style competition against a rival Society.

Most of the venues are in a reasonable distance of the M25 and generally tend to be on the south side of the M25. We also have one week's golf tour and next year will be our 26th consecutive tour. This competition is contended over five stableford rounds. Last year's winner travelled all the way from New York

We have visited Wales, Scotland, France, Spain and numerous placed in England. In 2003 we are off to Spain again with possibly 16 players.

The fact our club is still surviving after more that 25 years is a credit to our members. They may not be the greatest golfers but they are a great bunch of friendly lads.

If anybody is interested in joining our society, please contact Arthur Thurgood on 01825 873522 or E-mail me at mavart@btinternet.com.

Arthur Thurgood

Reunions

New Group: Surrey Engineers

Trevor Harding has contacted Bits & Bytes asking that his telephone number and email address be published for this group that meets "spasmodically".

Please contact him to find out where & when is the next meeting.

Trevor Harding 01483 565144
trevor.harding@iclway.co.uk

ICL Central London Group

The next get together will be on Wednesday 15 July 2003 at **The Flying Horse** at **52 Wilson Street**, from 12 noon. The pub is east of Finsbury Square.

It is suggested that future meetings take place in October and April to avoid holiday periods. The decision on this will be given in the autumn edition.

John Doo 01245 259862

Punch Card & Stevenage Labs Reunion Group

The 2002 reunion took place on 1 October when Keith Crook told us of his career in the computer industry. When he got home he sent me the following.

"I would like, through B&B, to thank most sincerely the many people who contributed to the talk with anecdotes. It certainly opened my eyes to things I had either forgotten long since or never even knew. It transformed what started out to be just another talk into one of the most memorable occasions of my entire career"

The next reunion is on the first Tuesday of October, the 7th. John Bennett is to give his talk on the **History of Punched Cards**. It will take place at "Stevenage Labs" hopefully in the usual location, the Babbage Suite. **Tickets cost £10 and can be obtained by sending a cheque made payable to Punched Card Reunion Group with an SAE, to 5 Nun's Acre, Goring-on-Thames, RG8 9BE.**

Adrian Turner 01491 872012

ICL Midlands Group

The annual meeting will be held at The Black Horse, Leamore Walsall on Friday 25 April at 7:30pm. The pub is on the B4210 at the junction of Bloxwich & Harden roads

Brian Trow 01785 257317 or brians@iclway.co.uk.

Cophall House Newcastle Staffs

Bob Green 01782 657763

East Grinstead 81 Club

Gordon Franklin 01342 328479

East Midlands UB40s

Brian Skeldon 0115 9725119

ICL Double Majority Club

Roy Newbury 01763 852241

Leo Computers Society

Geoff Parry 01628 770129

Letchworth Group

Dennis Evans 01462 811273

Liverpool Engineers

George Lynn 01744 29984

Oxford Region

Ken Jones 01865 340388

STE04 Office and Retail Systems

Derek Tourell 020 8386 9465

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 (new number)

West Branch Engineers

Eric Reynolds 01452 712047

West Kent Engineers

Ron Harding 01732 761076

The Walthamstow Mob

Derek Windsor 01992 522761

OBITUARIES

Bernard Bassett 24.07.21 – 13.11.02

Bernard Bassett the Chairman and Treasurer of the Double Majority Association sadly passed away in Bedford Hospital 13 Nov 2002.

Bernard came to London from his parents Farm/Forge in the Fens & eventually joined Brit. Tab at Letchworth in 1937. He joined the army in 1940 and served in North Africa, and later Italy.

He returned to the British Tab. working in the Accounts Dept. and was almost a founder member of the ICT Majority Club and subsequently the Double Majority Assoc. Having completed his 42 yrs for DMA qualification, he took early retirement in 1980.

ICL Eulogy

In the beginning were two tribes in the land of Britannia, the Samasites and the Hollerithites, known to all as the round holers and the slotted holers. And many were the battles fought in their name as they hurled their engines of war against each other. But even as they ranged their batteries of Samastronics against the might of the 915, the Indian Blanket Manufacturers tribe had entered the battle from the west and swept all before them. Thus it came about that the elders of the two tribes of Britannia joined their forces to fight the new enemy and the new tribe was called ICT.

And the engineers of ICT, with support from the plains of Emidec and the mountains of Atlas, laboured mightily to produce a new battle weapon to fight the 360 Series and the new weapon was called the 1900 series. And the 1904 begat the 1904E, and the 1904E begat the 1904A, and the 1904A begat the 1904S.

But even as the begatting was being begotten a new force appeared from the lands in the north and the tribe of English Electric Leo Marconi, and all stations to Crewe (change for Kidsgrove) appeared, clad in their blue raiment, and rained down their System 4 on the field of battle. And many were the wars fought as the J operating system was pitted against the might of George 3.

But the rulers of the kingdom of Britannia were sore troubled for they desired a strong indigenous computer industry and they spake unto the elders of the two tribes and said "Get your act together lads or else" And thus in the year 1968 was born the tribe of ICL.

But still all was not peace in the land as the elders of the two tribes and the sons of the elders and the sons of the sons of the elders fought for the top jobs even unto the lowliest Account Manager.

And there arrived a new prophet called the Lord Cross who gathered together the troops and declared "I have seen a vision and the vision shall be called

New Range and it will fire shells tipped with the deadly VME." But for a time the troops were puzzled as only the wisest of the sages in the kingdom were able to comprehend the mysteries of such wonders as the Orthogonal Instruction Set and Reverse Polish Notation. And their puzzlement grew even greater as the acolyte of the Lord Cross, Brian O'Heron, devised new ceremonies and liturgies for the ICL tribe and declared that only if a salesman could walk around the ramparts of Hartree House 200 times whilst hauling the weight of a 750 page Blue Border would he be granted the keys to sell the mighty 2900 engine. But soon all was well and the rulers of the kingdom bought the 2900 by the score and ICL prospered.

But Cross passed on and one day a new prophet appeared unto the tribe and the Lord Wilmot-Bonfield, for it was he, travelled to the east to the land of Fujitsu and returned bearing a shining cube for the family of Gorton to build into their engine of war. And the elders of Fujitsu liked the product so much they bought the company. But even as they laboured, new stars were arising in the firmament and the Lord Wilmot-Bonfield declared "We will follow the new star called UNIX". But even as he spake the barbarian hordes from Microsoft and Intel were sweeping all before them and ICL was sore troubled. And the Lord Wilmot-Bonfield spake again and said "There is no profit in shifting tin; we must change our battle strategy to Services Marketing."

But the Lord Wilmot-Bonfield moved on to a higher plane and the elders who were left began to worship a new God called Flotation. And the God Flotation promised the elders untold riches when they cashed in their share options. But the tribe wasted their inheritance on ceremonies like the Annual Massaging of the Balance Sheet and alas the new God was a false God and soon his statue was toppled to the ground.

And the elders of Fujitsu cried "Enough", and the name of ICL was consigned to that dark hall wherein lie the spirits of those names that have passed before such as Univac, Control Data, Burroughs and Digital and many more. And soon the voice of ICL was heard no more in the land save in strange gatherings of the faithful who met to break bread and drink wine and remember the glories of that once great name.

Hedley White

Average age of Death

Ex-colleague and now good friend John Shute observed that there is a considerable difference in the ages of death of those in the ICL Nortel Pension Fund and those in the ICL Pension Fund.

As he has drawn my attention to this, I decided to average the age of death of employees of both funds. I have done from three issues of 'Bits & Bytes': issues number 9, 13 and 15. The results are shown below:

ICL Nortel Fund

77.37 years

ICL Fund

63.63 years

John Shute and I therefore wish to be transferred to the ICL Nortel Pension Fund.

John Anderton-Brown

Ed: A number of people, including myself, do this calculation every edition. Are there any actuaries out there who can explain why there is such a difference?

ICL/Nortel Fund

Taken from the autumn & winter 2002 editions of the Nortel "Newslink"

Ashton	Copas	Christine	08/06/02	60
BSN01	Sare	Gerald B	23/06/02	72
Birmingh'm	Williams	Cyril S	05/09/02	81
Bristol	Skinner	Stanley W	21/08/02	79
Burgess H'll	Parris	Reginald	18/08/02	95
Cambridge	Linsey	Michael J	29/05/02	68
Castlereagh	Barr	Maurice	30/06/02	75
Croydon	Green	Walter	04/08/02	89
	Monroe	Alexander	03/06/02	83
	Steele	James	24/07/02	89
Dukinfield	Davenport	Kenneth	11/06/02	76
	Sanderson	Stanley	28/07/02	75
E. Scotland	Morrice	Frank A	14/10/02	87
Exeter	Fisher	Arthur J	01/08/02	67
Hollerith	Pope	Reginald	24/07/02	78
Kidsgrove	Bale	Aubrey F	01/10/02	76
	Belcher	Edna M	26/05/02	82
	Feltbower	Ethel E	31/08/02	91
	Field	Richard W	02/06/02	77
	Gibson	Arthur	18/07/02	74
	Gotham	Thomas E	15/06/02	93
	Gourgjian	Edward S	15/06/02	92
	Hesse	John V	12/06/02	75
	Littler	Leonard W	24/10/02	80
	McLoughlin-	Kenneth	20/10/02	75
	Goldstraw			
	Rawlinson	James T	01/06/02	78
	Smith	Kenneth H	03/10/02	78
	Talbot	Florence	28/06/02	79
Letchworth	Albon	Wilfred T	24/09/02	92
	Baxter	John R	04/08/02	71
	Buckle	John A	26/06/02	81
	Bygrave	John S B	29/10/02	69
	Edwards	Norman J	19/06/02	90
	Fox	Stanley G	16/08/02	78
	Gentle	Sidney J	17/09/02	89
	Gray	Alan J	31/10/02	71
	Sheil	William F	22/08/02	88
	Thorpe	Joy F	03/08/02	81
	Vosper	Kenneth	26/08/02	78
LON14	Banning	Dennis F	01/08/02	75
LON16	Anthony	Ralf H	08/08/02	68
LON22	Cooper	Frank	12/09/02	81
LON30	Harvey	James B	26/09/02	88
LON38	Whittle	Stephen A	26/07/02	71
London	Abrahams	Maurice	14/06/02	90
	Evjen	Jerrold A	05/06/02	65
Manchester	Griffiths	Kenneth	13/06/02	72
	Stansfield	Arthur W	17/07/02	89
MAN05	Williams	David P	23/09/02	69
MAN12	Emery	Alan	11/09/02	73
Norwich	Seville	Reginald A	09/07/02	76
Newcastle	Sloan	Robert	24/08/02	80
Park Lane	Lilley	John E	28/09/02	84
Powers	Barrow	Frederick	12/06/02	93
	Boorman	George H	01/08/02	81
	Collins	Reginald	12/06/02	79
	Comrie	Neil J	02/06/02	80
	Frier	Alan F	11/06/02	69
	Hardman	John R	01/06/02	79
	Taylor	John E	28/06/02	71
	Appleby	Michael J	18/01/02	88
	Yandell	Ronald P	07/07/02	82
Putney	Bull	Pamela M	21/06/02	81
	Gatling	Martin P	20/05/02	75

	Yeomans	Geoffrey B	07/09/02	92
Reading	Davison	Keith	16/08/02	68
	Negus	John A	01/07/02	67
Sth Africa	Viles	Walter R	09/09/02	94
S'hampton	Bliss	Norman S	21/06/02	72
	Hunt	Anthony J	26/05/02	61
	Luke	Jocelyn B	16/09/02	82
	Slapka	Emil	17/05/02	72
Southport	Greer	Bruce W	04/11/02	78
Stevenage	Gaskin	Ernest C	18/05/02	85
		W		
	Meeks	Geoffrey L	13/06/02	71
	Lyme	Percy	23/08/02	84
	Seager	Terry	30/09/02	67
	Simmonds	Henry E J	12/08/02	81
	Walsh	Sidney	16/07/02	83
Sydenham	Barr	Lillian	29/08/02	78
Wakefield	Ball	Derek T	06/07/02	72
W.Gorton	Cory	Ernest E	24/08/02	73
	Butterworth	Arnold W	20/07/02	75
	Chilton	James	27/05/02	73
	Holmes	Brian	14/10/02	62
	Jones	Ewart	07/10/02	87
	Naylor	Ronald	02/06/02	74
	Tudberry	Ronald O	07/07/02	80
Winsford	Atherton	Ronald	04/07/02	70

ICL Fund

BIR03	Upright	John E	10/10/02	63
Dublin	Waters *	Frank	19/08/02	65
FCY02	Francis	Peter E	15/09/02	71
GLO04	Caswell	Sandra J	29/12/02	55
GRS01	Frater	George M	30/09/02	61
HOM99	Evans	Alan H	28/10/02	70
	Fox	Roland J	27/02/03	70
KID01	Madden	Vincent	20/02/03	61
LON15	Blanchard	Gerald I	26/11/02	64
MAN05	Manwaring	John T	20/01/03	71
	Mellor	Arthur	21/02/03	75
	Walker	Sidney	04/09/02	73
	Whelan	James I	17/02/03	69
	Wills	Desmond	30/09/02	55
MSC32	Matthews	Patrick J	30/12/02	55
STE04	Stratton	Peter J	15/12/02	69
	Ward	William	07/10/02	59
WAK01	Sidgwick	Peter H	07/10/02	63

*Not a member of the ICL Fund

PENSIONER REPS

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Jack Kane retired as a pensioner representative in March, elections will be taking place shortly.

Pensioners' Directory

The email address is: tonyriley@europe.com

NEXT ISSUE

Copy for the Autumn 2003 issue must be submitted by 1 September 2003, but would be appreciated earlier.