

Bits & Bytes

No 5

Editorial

As the time approaches for each edition to be prepared for the printer I always wonder whether or not it will even run to four pages rather than the eight that I think it should be. As you can see I shouldn't have worried, something always turns up. Whether or not it of general interest remains to be seen. I suppose that reminiscing about the "good old days" is a function of "old" age, and that more recent stories will have to wait until the recent pensioners reach 65!

Since I have been aware of Bletchley Park and the code breaking activities during WW2, the number of ex BTM people, who I knew during my time in the company, who worked on the Bombs, amazes me. In the past few weeks I've spoken to Frank Piggot Bert Gill and Larry Large who were among those sworn to secrecy. Larry still has his pass, which states that the holder of the pass is not allowed to disclose his unit or the nature of his work. Only now do they talk about what they did during the war. I would be interested to know how many were involved. Does anybody know the total?

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ICL NEWS

Fujitsu Acquire Amdahl

Fujitsu, who have had been involved for 25 years with Amdahl, have acquired the outstanding shares in the Corporation from 30 July 1997. Before this announcement Fujitsu owned 42% of Amdahl shares.

ICL believes that this acquisition will strengthen the Fujitsu Group, and will not impact on ICL. Fujitsu recognises and supports the independence of both ICL and Amdahl separate marketing strategies and the importance of their brands in their respective markets. There is little overlap of business between ICL and Amdahl and notably both companies are positioned differently within the systems market place.

New Personnel Director

Fiona Colquhoun has been appointed Human Resources Director for ICL, following the death last autumn of David Berry.

ICL Good News

AA Financial Services

This division of the Automobile Association is a new entrant to the financial services market. It targets the existing 8 million AA members with personal loans, car finance, credit cards, propriety cards and instalments.

ICL Financial Services' consultancy unit were selected as a partner for the £2.3M contract for a new telephone-based customer sales and service system.

The key components of the solution are

- Case Manager providing process automation of the sales and service process with Teleconnect to support telephone integration.
- Dialogue Manager to interface with internal and external host systems
- Access Manager for secure system sign-on.
- ICL/Fujitsu servers

Lloyds TSB

Along with their main rivals in the UK banking sector, Lloyds TSB have had to consider the major impact the Internet could have on their core business. The success of telephone direct banking has led to a similar concept using Internet technology, where customers can manage their account by connecting to a secure home banking web site. Home PC banking is already happening in the US and is about to take off in Europe.

ICL Multimedia Solutions have won the business to develop the customer interface of the Lloyds TSB PC home banking system. This involves deploying Java applets (containing the banking transactions), and presenting a friendly and stimulating service to the customer. Using ICL's New Media Design Cycle, the first phase of the project has been delivered to time and budget. This important success gives ICL another excellent reference in the exciting new markets of Internet and Electronic Commerce.

Telecom Eireann

Have placed an order with ICL Ireland worth £2.1M for a systems and services contract, which will support expansion of its customer sales and service activities. It will also assist a major drive to improve the service delivered to customers.

Supporting over 400 customer sales and service staff located countrywide, the initial phase of the project consists of a Volume Call Centre in Dublin, for over 200 users.

ICL is also designing and implementing a customer marketing database which will form a key element in Telecom Eireann's future sales and marketing activities.

Hoseasons

The UK boating to cottage holiday specialist, has chosen ICL's Millennium data centre technology strategy and invested in a new Series 39 SX system to support the rapid growth and change in its holiday business.

The Series 39 SX 375-10S with SMARTarray - 300 disc systems, TwinPeaks cartridge tapes and Microfocus COBOL replaces a Series 39 Level 55.

On Friday 14 March, Hoseasons made their whole organisation available as a call reception centre for Red Nose Day. BT routed the initial phone call to one of the many reception centres round the country. Hoseasons was the only computerised call reception centre and used the Series 39 SX to record all pledges.

J Sainsbury Take a SHINE to ICL

Supermarket giant J Sainsbury have signed a contract worth £12M with ICL Retail Systems as part of their SHINE (Self Help Instore) project. The contract was devised by a working party of J Sainsbury, ICL Retail Systems and ICL Sorbus to address the client's requirements for unbeatable customer service by maximising PoS availability in each store. It covers the 380 store estate with approximately 10,000 EPoS devices.

ICL provide printer and scanner spares for the tills at each store, along with the appropriate store staff training and a set of procedures to allow them to change the parts when required. This provides huge benefits, particularly at peak trading times, as most problems can be fixed immediately, without waiting for an engineer to arrive. Store staff merely call for a courier to replace the faulty part when swapped out.

Additionally ICL are carrying out a refurbishment of all till equipment in the stores, to check for cleanliness and good working order; and providing a banded range of engineering services for stores, depending on their exact requirements

SHINE began in October 1996. Designed to reduce checkout down time, improve store ownership and provide a service tailored for each store, SHINE is already proving a huge success. A 50% reduction in call rates and a 25% reduction in checkout faults demonstrate this. J Sainsbury are handling 35% of the faults themselves and have evidence of an increased level of satisfaction from store staff.

London Underground

London Underground is to save up to £10M a year in maintenance and repair costs by eliminating wasteful visits by maintenance teams and double booking of equipment. Savings will be made by a new computerised possession management system called SABRE (Site Access Booking for Railway Engineering) installed by ICL.

This will enable London Underground to plan and manage daily maintenance programmes for its 900 kilometres of track and 300 stations, and eliminate potential clashes. It will also provide accurate comparison of actual history with plans.

SABRE will make sure scarce resources are optimised and make a significant contribution to

improvement of passenger services by ensuring timetables are not disrupted by unfinished work.

LIFE BEFORE ICL

When I joined the British Tab way back in 1958 the majority of Electronic Engineers employed by the company had been trained in the forces, as National Servicemen or as short-term regulars. I had signed on for 4 years as an Air Radar Fitter in the Royal Air Force to learn all about Electronics. I suppose the majority of people taken on now by ICL as Computer Specialists have had a university education in computing or IT. Times have changed!

About 10 years ago when I was working as a project manager in CIS Networks in BRA01 I was amazed to find out what training one of the Network Planning technicians in LET01 had prior to working for ICL.

At the time I was involved in introducing the X25 network for the whole of ICL, and this required a great deal of co-operation between the users, site services and the Data Centres. Consequently there were many e-mails and telephone calls between BRA01 and LET01. One Monday morning I had to check some details with the Network Planner and rang Bruce Prochnik. I enquired about the weekend that had just happened and this is where the story really starts!

Bruce had gone to a London theatre with his wife and another couple, to see the "Dame Edna Experience" starring Barry Humphries.

After the show they went to the stage door to see if they could get Barry's autograph. The doorman said that it was most unlikely that he would be able to get an autograph as Mr Humphries was going to a party and would be in a hurry. Not to be deterred Bruce waited and when Dame Edna appeared he pushed forward to ask for a programme to be signed. He was told quite abruptly that he was in a hurry. Bruce then asked "Don't you remember me?" Barry looked up and said " Yes you are Bruce Prochnik!" and signed the programme.

I was quite amazed to hear that Barry knew Bruce, how could a West End/ TV personality know the name of an ICL Network Technician. Even though it is quite an unusual name!

When Bruce was 12 years old in 1961 he was a child star, playing Oliver Twist in Lionel Bart's "Oliver!" at the New Theatre in the West End, and then opened with the original cast on Broadway after Los Angeles, San Francisco, Detroit and Toronto! It's true because I've got the CD released by RCA Victor of the show-GD84113. "Oliver!" opened on Broadway at the Imperial Theatre on 6 January 1963 and ran for 774 performances. Barry Humphries played the part of Mr Sowerberry the undertaker.

Can anybody beat this story of training for a career in ICL. If so I would be interested to hear it!

Adrian Turner Goring-on-Thames

LIFE WITH BTM

The Way We Were

It takes some effort to stir the literary attributes that we all have, but all the nostalgia I have read in Bits & Bytes has even moved me to contribute! Retirement gives one time to reflect on past achievements and failures.

My time with the company spans some 42 years, although this was not continual, having taken two breaks to try the world outside.

I divide my time into pre and post ICL, the pre time being the concerned with the excitement of a growth of an industry. In those days one felt like Henry Ford with the motor car, in that we were pioneers. We were treated as some kind of genius and given special status in the Field. I feel we were akin to the early Brooklands Racing Drivers, a breed apart.

In the following I have tried, with the help of some anecdotes, to plot my time with the company. I hope it will stir memories in the reader and if you find it boring please forgive me. Also it may encourage others to contribute with their experiences in the company.

Frank Townsend Pinged Burry Port S. Wales

(As Franks story runs to 14 pages of A4 it will be serialised in this and future editions! Ed)

541 Electronic Calculators

I started with The British Tabulating Machine Company on 16th November 1953 as an Assembler/Tester on grade 36 Model Makers at No. 9 Factory Letchworth. This factory was part of Hollerith Planning which was headed by Jack (Basil) Savill. Having previously been interviewed by Peter Briggs, the Manager (who was christened *The Mekon*, remember Dan Dare?) I was taken to the electronic assembly area which occupied a very small part of the factory and in the corner was a partitioned off room inhabited by Dr Dickey Bird and his team developing the HEC (1200) Computer.

In another area of the factory were the Calculator development team headed by Billy Wood-Hill. It was there that I first met Alec Trussel. Also present, amongst others, was Lorin Knight whom I had already met through Amateur Radio activities.

The product being assembled was the BEM IV (known as the 541) Electronic Multiplier, and I was introduced to Bob Hyde the Foreman. Prior to joining BTM I had been in the Post Office at Baldock Radio Station and concurrent with joining BTM six of us had all joined within a period of three months. Now for some name-dropping, Guy Bridges, Derrick Allatson, Eric Chapman, Jack French and Wally Pickering were all part of that contingent.

As some of you may remember, the 541 was about the size of a large wardrobe, consisted of rows of chassis each filled with two rows of nine octal valves.

There was a power supply in the base and the 541 was attached to a 237 Gang Punch for input/output. My job was to fill the chassis with valves, the chassis having been wired in a department at the back of the Card Works, test the chassis on a Tester and then fit them to the machine. After various checks the 541 was switched on and the Power Supply set up. The heart of the Power Supply was a condenser known as the 'Stradivarius Condenser', which would consist of a collection of condensers (Capacitors), connected in parallel. In order to get the correct value, the mains input to the 541 was 'swung' with a Variac over a set range and the HT monitored to give a consistent 160 volts. There was no science involved in selecting the correct capacitance this was purely by trial and error and could take quite some time in arriving at the correct value.

Another curious procedure was a vibration test. This was done by Fred Taplin and consisted of hitting the

machine from all directions with a wellington boot, all very scientific!

When the 541 had been tested the covers were fitted. In those days the electronic engineer did everything, even drilling and tapping holes to fit covers. This was my introduction to the peculiar screw sizes and threads used i.e. 5/40, 3/48, 2/56, quite different to the BA sizes I was familiar with. When all this was done, the final test was started. This consisted of running 50,000 cards through the 237 Gang Punch without a single error. If an error occurred it was fixed, and the test restarted from the beginning. At 100 cards per minute a 50,000 run lasted at least 8 hours 20 minutes for a complete run. Finally Bill Berry would arrive with the delivery lorry and we would push the 541 out of the side door and help Bill to crank the manual Tail Lift to load the machine.

One result of a 50,000 run was the generation of a large amount of 'chat' (the little rectangles punched out of cards). Usually this would be used for occasions such as confetti for a wedding. On one rainy day I came to work with an umbrella and left it standing in the corner. Unknown to me someone emptied a whole punch chat drawer into the closed umbrella. When I left that evening, I put up the umbrella and was covered with the chat.

In the spring of 1954, a vacancy notice appeared offering the post of a Stage II Field Engineer at FEHQ Luton. I applied and got the post starting on 28th May 1954. I was to assist Cyril Mead in installing and maintaining the 541's in the Field. I duly arrived at FEHQ in Oxen Road Luton, and was shown by Freddy Imber into the office of Charlie Luther. I was then introduced to George Webb who was to be my boss. I was then taken to the room occupied by the Engineers and met John Sherlock. From what I remember John Sherlock was then the expert on the Mechanical Multiplier.

Having settled into Luton, my first assignment was to be seconded back to No 9 factory to assist in testing the set of five 541's destined for Cadburys. What a difference to be back at No 9, I no longer had to clock on at 7.30 am and I had a considerable salary increase under my belt. In testing the Cadbury 541's I worked alongside Jeff Vickers.

In due course as the 541's were finished Jeff and I went to Cadburys to install them. In those days Cadburys was one of the largest punched card users. If my memory serves me right, they used 5 million cards per week. What a place, a battery of girls with pulling files assembling invoices, mark sense reproducers punching up the pulled cards, the five 541's calculating the invoice entry value with the refinement of 'alternate half pennies' and a battery of nine Tabulators printing the invoices. This was virtually an Accounting Factory. On reflection, most of this work could now be done with a single PC Pentium.

In July 1954 I had my first experience of Exhibitions. The Royal Show at Windsor contained a stand for the Milk Marketing Board. Due to this prestigious event FEHQ provided engineering cover for the duration. I was to accompany the exhibition engineer John Ellis (whom I knew from school) to provide cover. The machines on display were a Keystor, Verifier, Sorter, Senior RT Tabulator and a 541, all simulating the production of farmers Milk payments. The highlight was to be a visit by the

Queen and Prince Phillip. Unfortunately at the appointed time the 541 gave up the ghost. As there was not time to fix it, a pile of blank cards were placed in the feed hopper of the 237 with a card bent up at the bottom, so that cards would not feed. The output hopper was then filled with already punched cards. When the Queen came the machine was set with all the lights flashing and the start lever wedged on the 237 Punch. This gave the appearance of lots of calculations being performed by the 541. I don't think the Queen knew what was happening, but I believe Prince Phillip twigged the con.

After this my first trip abroad for the company was to install the 541 at ESB Dublin. Having flown from Northolt in a Viscount I was met at Dublin by Tom Corbett. Such a nice person, he took me home to tea and would discuss anything, but reminded me that when in an Irish Pub "Keep off Politics and Religion."

To be continued

LIFE AFTER ICL

Mobile Phone Transmitter Sites

After 33 years immersed in (and manipulated by ICL!) I "retired" in 1992. I enjoyed most of my time with the company - particularly the final 4 years on the Marks & Spencer retail project. The early years, servicing punched card machines, were enjoyable, but the fun really started when I was selected for retraining on the ICT 1500 (RCA 301) computer system. Then the 1902/3 and 1904/5/9, before Regional Management, and final Project Management.

After 2 years of DIY etc, my son asked me if I would like to do some part-time work for the company he had just joined. This is a consultancy retained by three of the mobile telephone operators - Cellnet, Orange and Mercury One2One, to acquire transmitter sites for their cellular networks. These telephone companies are all building networks that will eventually cover most of the country. Cellnet already has about 98% of the country covered with its analogue system, which has been available for about 10 years, but is currently adding a digital service that enables users to take their phones abroad using a global system. Orange and Mercury are not so far advanced, but their digital networks offer very good quality, without the fading and distortion found with the analogue systems.

The way my job works is like this. These mobile operators issue maps to our company with search areas annotated on them in the areas where they require coverage. I then visit these areas and find a selection of 3 or 4 possible locations that will meet their requirements for an aerial system. In cities and towns, this usually knocking on the doors of tall buildings, seeking the owners, (often time consuming and difficult), climbing on to roofs, in order to take a set of panoramic photographs of the surrounding area to put into my report. Many an occasion I have found myself clambering up a steel ladder to gain access to the highest point of the building, and then endeavouring to take the shots while being buffeted by a gale!

In country areas, the aerals are usually mounted on towers. If you look around you on the motorways, you can see these lattice towers dotted regularly beside the road, with a series of vertical aerals, and sometimes small microwave dishes arrayed round the

top. This requires the landowners to lease a small portion of their land for these towers and the control equipment cabins. One does not always get a warm reception when approaching landowners! But contrary to much of the adverse publicity written in the press, most aerals cannot be erected without planning consent from the local authority.

Once my report has been submitted, and the mobile company has selected a site after performing an RF test, they come back to us to "acquire" the site, which means going through the legal steps to draw up a leasing agreement. We then arrange to have the station built, ready for the operator to install all the radio gear.

It has certainly provided me with an interesting and varied post-retirement job. One meets all sorts of people, not all of them friendly as one would like, but the majority cannot wait to get their hands on the rental cheques, which run well into four figures. If anyone is interested to hear more, do give me a call on 01462 683317, and I would be delighted to have a chat.

Graham Barwick Letchworth Herts

Market Research Interviewing

When I left ICL at Christmas in 1991, I was not really ready to abandon business life. The problem is, what does a 59 year-old do about it? I was at first enthusiastic about a business of my own, but eventually rejected the idea because my wife believed (correctly!) that I would spend too much time at it. Another career in the prevailing market conditions seemed unrealistic and the thought of all those rejected applications was totally unappealing.

A solution came for me quite quickly and unexpectedly in the form of freelance Market Research Interviewing. It occurs to me that some early retirees might like to take the same road.

On the plus side, you accept as much or as little work as you want. The odds are, you will be offered a lot more than you want! Payment is by way of fees plus expenses. The work is surprisingly varied and provides an interesting insight into the way business and other organisations are thinking. Most interviews are done using a laptop computer and you soon learn which kind of job appeals to you. There is no retirement age - I met a couple in their seventies-though I believe some companies will not accept new interviewers for training over the age of 60.

On the minus side, Market Research does not pay much, so don't think of it as a second career. A lot of work has to be done in unsocial hours and if you are hesitant about approaching strangers at home or in business, it is not for you!

I undertook jobs for two of the many Market Research companies for five years until the end of March 1997. I can honestly say that I enjoyed it. If anyone wants to know more, feel free to contact me on **01703 407437**.

Harry Bagwell Southampton

LETTERS

Contributors are asked to give a telephone number on which they can be contacted.

Where are you, Putney Pensioners?

I, and many others, worked for ICL in Putney for 23 years, but I rarely see anyone from those days. Are there people interested in setting up a Putney

Reunion group. If so please contact the editor of Bits & Bytes.

Jean van Gils Wimbledon

REUNIONS

It has been pointed out that any serving or retired ICL person is welcome at these reunions but it is better to attend a gathering of people with whom you have something in common. Please inform Bits & Bytes of any reunions that are not listed here, unless you want to keep them select!

New Information

STE04 Office and Retail Systems

Meet at the Marquis of Granby public house at Stevenage at lunchtime on the second Tuesday of the month. (i.e. 14 Oct, 11 Nov) Directions: From the Stevenage North /Hitchin junction on the A1M follow signs to Lister Hospital. Go past hospital, at T-junction turn right, pub is 100yds on left.

Derek Tourell 0181 386 9465

Watford-Harrow- Feltham Group

This is the "Alan Anderson Friends and Colleagues" group who meet at the Red Lion in Hillingdon Uxbridge on the first Wednesday of the month at 8pm. The pub is located about one mile on the London side of Uxbridge at the top of Hillingdon Hill.

Derek Tourell 0181 386 9465

Copthall House Newcastle Staffs

A reunion has been arranged in the D2D Sports and Social Club in West Avenue Kidsgrove on **Friday 21st November 1997** at 20:00. Ring Bob if further info is required.

Bob Green 01782 657763

ICL Central London Group

The next reunion will be on **Wednesday 21 January 1998** at the usual venue, The Fox on the corner of Epworth and Paul Street just north of Finsbury Square. The meeting on the 16 July 97 was well attended and reunited two people who hadn't seen each other since 1959. They recognised each other!

John Doo 01245 259862

Punched Card Reunion Group

The next reunion will be held in Stevenage in October 1998. I would appreciate ideas on a theme or a speaker for this get together. Maybe those who were bored by the talk on Bletchley Park code breakers last year could be more positive and suggest something that they would find interesting!

Adrian Turner 01491 872012

Letchworth Group

Dennis Evans 01462 811273

West Branch Engineers

Eric Reynolds 01452 712047

East Grinstead 81 Club

Bert Gill 01903 763370

West Kent Engineers

Ron Harding 01732 761076

East Midlands UB40s

Brian Skeldon 0115 9727835

Oxford Region

Albert Brook 01235 531267

The Walthamstow Mob

Derek Windsor 01992 522761

Tin Hut Reunion Group

Olaf Chedzoy 01278 741 269

WE'LL MEET AGAIN

The ICL Pensioner's Magazine (B&B) arrived. It seems to come with ever-increased frequency lately! It was full of people I didn't know, writing about equipment I hadn't worked on. The Obituaries didn't seem to include me, so I could face the day. One or two names in the ever-growing list I seemed to recall. To think, after all that studying, hard work, overtime, waffling and whinging and you end up as Joe Bloggs (71) LON30!

There was a reunion coming up. I said I wouldn't go to any more , but old Fred might go this time....

At the early reunions everyone was full of jobs they were going to get as consultants etc, how their investments were doing, and amazement as to how ICL was surviving without them!

By the next reunion a few were missing, perhaps they had got their consultants, but someone said old Charlie had died and Syd was in a home. The next get together the seats were occupied by grey-haired or balding old boys who looked vaguely familiar, and the talk as far as you could hear, as they all seemed to mumble, was not about little jobs, but of prostate jobs, not of money makers but of pacemakers! A group of smart looking newly retired unknowns were at the bar, raiding the kitty, and going on about 'servers' and 'networks'. One of them, talking in riddles, was once your trainee!

At the last reunion, those with sticks were at the tables, the groups were smaller and the air was not full of cigarette smoke, but conversational clichés floated around " Just like that... still it's the best way to go, and he didn't suffer" and "Was he round hole or slotted?" Nobody is quite sure, but you know the name but can't quite place him.

"Perhaps we should wear name badges" suggests somebody. With reading glasses on you would be peering at people's lapels! With distance glasses the badge would be indistinct, as would their faces, so it didn't really matter who it was! You move away and are button-holed by "Was it you or your brother who died?" You adjourn to the Gents again. On your return someone, possibly familiar, is telling an anecdote."So" when Ron Goodwin went back to the site and...." Every year he tells this yarn, every year he gets your name wrong, and anyway it didn't happen like that, but the group laughs politely ...Perhaps it did happen like that!

By now frailer members, who look as if they won't make it next year, are heading for the door, mumbling their "Cheers". It sounds ominous. The kitty is dry, the new boys are buying rounds and talking "Unix" or something equally bizarre.

Your feet ache, so you head for the station. The short cut is no longer a narrow City lane, but a canyon between Lego-like blocks of faceless buildings. Outside every entrance are groups of furtive smokers.

Everyone is rushing about, perhaps it was always that way!

At the station you search for your train pass. Even the photo on it looks as unfamiliar as the "lads" at the reunion. In the back of the pass is a note about the 1998 reunion. Forget it!

On the other hand you've known some of them for 30 years, and even though they mumble and are blurry, you were in it together, and old Fred might make it next year!

Dennis Goodwin Romford ICL

BOMBE REBUILD

Since I produced my last report for Bits and Bytes number 4, we have made considerable progress. For the first ten weeks or so we progressed well on all fronts with the team of those gentlemen involved with the Bombes during WW II growing steadily. More wartime documents and photographs have been discovered and an old Type 202 reproducer already at Bletchley has yielded a considerable number of standard BTM components which are directly applicable to our Rebuild.

In my last report I said that we were short of drawings of basic Hollerith parts. By various means we have more or less obtained the information that was missing and now feel fairly confident that we have the majority of the information required to complete the rebuild.

Around the middle of June it was realised, that whilst we were making good general progress on the research aspects, the actual frame rebuild was getting behind schedule so most other activity was put on hold and all effort went into the construction.

Picking up from where we were when we last reported. The heavy castings were produced according to plan and the many threads were successfully tapped into it. The rest of the steelwork was produced and the lower "trolley" bolted together. One change of plan was made when it was realised that in order to ensure that that the frame was straight and square when welded it would be advisable to manufacture the heavy, horizontal, high precision bars and bolt these into place before welding. This activity added about three weeks to the programme but is now complete.

As I write this report we are on target to deliver a completed Bombe Frame to Bletchley Park in mid September and by the time that this report is with the readers it should be possible to visit Bletchley and view at first hand our first stage of rebuild.

Unless one sees the frame itself it is difficult to visualise the size and complexity of what has been so far achieved. A visit to Bletchley is highly recommended and not just to see the Bombe. There is so much to see on site that one can spend the whole day and still not cover everything.

During the recent construction phase we have been rather short of "hands on" help and we would very much like to hear from anybody who can assist with mechanical manufacture and general fitting. Later on we will need help with the electrical side but before then we need other skills such as estimating, administration, drawing office etc.. In fact we need help with every activity historically used in the design manufacture and servicing of 1940s electro-mechanical machinery.

We have managed to acquire a fair number of standard Hollerith parts and sub-assemblies but are still short of many items. Top of the list is two single plugboards and eight Multi Relays. However there are other shortages and if you think that you could help please give me a call.

If you wish to contact me on Email please use bombe@jharper.demon.co.uk

John Harper
7 Cedar Avenue

Ickleford
Hitchin

Herts. SG5 3XU
Telephone: 01462 451970

Obituaries

ICL staff who were in the Northern Telecom Pension Plan

Taken from the spring & summer 97 editions of the Northern Telecom "Diary".

Birmingh'm	Edwards	Walter	14/2/97	77
	Sutton	Richard	28/2/97	81
Bracknell	Costa	Cecil A	6/1/97	78
	Reeves	Kenneth	27/10/96	65
Bristol	Litson	Ralph A	16/10/96	72
	Weare	Ivy D	28/11/96	84
Croydon	Hockin	Robert M	3/1/97	78
	Hurle	George H	28/1/97	85
Dukinsfield	Rogers	William E	13/3/97	85
	Fillingham	John T	28/1/97	83
E. Grinst'd	Forrest	Michael A	12/4/97	76
	Healey	Kenneth	9/4/97	77
H. Chapel	Mason	Donald	11/1/97	74
	Fone	Frank	21/11/96	79
Kidsgrove	Noakes	Frank G	21/11/96	81
	Bates	Arthur M	5/2/97	67
Letchworth	Carpenter	Mary P	19/1/97	57
	Elwood	Frederick	9/1/97	69
Derbyshire	Evans	William	17/4/97	67
	Smith	Beatrice	16/12/96	70
Eaton	Thomas	William C	4/4/97	72
	Albon	Eric F	17/1/97	85
Evans	Albone	Frederick	10/10/96	87
	Allsopp	Eileen	12/11/96	80
Flitton	Brown	Kathleen	9/1/97	73
	Culley	Lilian E	25/4/97	80
Gentle	Derbyshire	Marion	16/1/97	78
	Eaton	Eileen	20/1/97	77
Graham	Evans	Beryl	1/1/97	67
	Hughes	George D	3/10/96	83
Hulyer	Flitton	Sydney B	9/4/97	90
	Ikin	Peter	8/3/97	82
Jeffries	Hughes	Thomas	13/11/96	88
	Jordan	Reginald	19/3/97	75
Macleod	Hulyer	John V	19/1/97	80
	Neaves	Robert F	9/4/97	73
Ward	Jeffries	Eric G	19/4/97	78
	Woodcock	William J	24/1/97	76
Woodcock	Jordan	James M	6/4/97	79
	Anderton	Raymond	1/2/97	69
Beer	Macleod	Gerald	4/11/96	72
	Cotter	Andy	1/3/97	70
Fry	Neaves	Charles E	16/10/96	84
	James	John	4/10/96	81
Lyne	Ward	Sylvia	19/2/97	63
	Woodcock	Jane A	21/3/97	91
	Anderton	Harold V	26/12/96	95

	Stanworth	John N	10/10/96	81
	Wallace	Margaret	2/4/97	74
	Waltham	Florence	29/9/97	94
Manchester	Croot	Roland T	26/4/96	87
	Roberts	David	29/6/96	70
Newcastle	Macmilan	Donald M	7/2/96	60
	How	Arthur J	14/1/97	72
Oxford	Gourd	Russell C	11/8/96	79
Putney	Crook	Philip J	15/2/97	71
	John	Harry C	29/9/96	90
	Latham	John	7/10/96	67
	Maddox	Wilhelm'a	12/8/96	71
	Mullett	Peter O	13/3/97	71
	Onslow	Peter M	7/4/97	79
Reading	Smith	Richard	16/2/97	82
Sheffield	Armstrong	Robert J	8/4/96	72
Slough	Catling	John V	14/3/96	66
Southport	Beddoes	Dorothy	19/7/96	76
Stevenage	Bradley	Fred	4/9/96	63
	Cooper	Arthur	26/10/96	85
	Craig	Thomas	15/4/97	79
	Gardner	Ronald J	7/4/96	63
	Gettens	Reginald	22/7/96	76
	Hughes	Percy G	29/7/96	76
	Pugh	Walter E	3/8/96	68
	Rutter	Edward E	22/3/97	83
	Thomson	George E	18/5/96	84
	Webster	George W	18/2/97	74
Wakefield	Welch	John W	28/4/96	57
	Birchall	Stanley H	24/7/96	72
	Cudworth	Albert J	1/8/96	67
W. Gorton	Broom	Geoffrey	7/8/96	69
	Engelke	Alfred W	14/2/97	85
Wincanton	Bargery	Don D	7/3/97	65
Windsor	Cable	Edward G	10/2/97	80
	Clarke	Paula	23/11/96	68
Winsford	Baddeley	George	22/2/97	83
	Barker	Ian	18/2/97	71
	Holmes	Leslie	19/2/97	64
	Lightfoot	Ethel	22/2/97	74
	Walker	George W	4/3/97	61
	Pirrazzo	Cosimo	4/5/96	76
Other ICL Locations				
	Bligh	Marion F	11/8/96	88
	Cooke	Brian T	7/5/96	90
	Feltham	Leslie R	16/6/96	88
	Ford	George E	6/5/96	79
	Georgiadi	C.	11/1/96	81
	Harrison	Roy	30/1/97	77
	Heads	George	17/6/96	92
	Hewitt	Cliff W	20/6/96	71
	Hill	Norman	17/4/96	80
	Humphreys	John J	5/7/96	63
	Joy	William	8/9/96	99
	Ladd	Reginald	11/5/96	82
	Lodge	David G	21/1/97	60
	Marlow	Joseph	26/9/96	76
	Martin	Stanley H	7/9/96	81
	Meredith	William C	10/5/96	67
	Morgan	Robert	8/8/96	84
	Ormerod	Keith	2/7/96	73
	Pieteron	William E	25/11/96	81
	Pinnington	Sydney	24/11/96	68
	Robinson	Leslie E	5/12/96	84
	Self	Ronald J	3/5/96	72
	Sinclair	Maureen	22/4/96	60
	Smith	William H	2/7/96	70
	Stapley	Charles H	30/12/96	79

Stevens	Chris J	20/3/97	71
Tebbutt	Donald T	24/6/96	65
Tilling	Robert H	21/8/96	67
Waddington	James	9/1/97	83
Wells	Paul R	30/4/96	73
Whitby	Reginald	31/3/96	73
White	Robert J	14/6/96	70
Williams	Vera	10/4/96	81
Williams	Victor N	17/4/97	85
Wood	Eric O	4/3/97	72

ICL Group Fund Pensioners

KID01	Knowles	James R	18/4/97	68
REA08	Vyse	Phillip J	10/4/97	59
STE04	Vickery	Roy A	5/4/97	55
STE10	Clark	Elizabeth	11/5/97	58

ICL Employee Offers

AA Membership

You should ring **0990 44444** Mon. to Fri. 09:00 to 17:00 stating that you are an ICL pensioner, your membership number and your address and you will be sent a form to claim a **15%** discount.

Personal Computers

PC Interworks Ltd based in Kidsgrove can provide Fujitsu ICL equipment to ICL pensioners at 20% discount on currently listed products. Discounts of up to 50% are available on withdrawn products.

01782 777477

Leisure Travel Services

Discounts are available through **Portman Travel**. For further information call **0181 543 4433 09:00 to 17:30 Mon. to Fri.** State that you are an ICL pensioner.

Voluntary Employee Benefits

ICL Personnel have selected a company to arrange a package of Benefits and Services for ICL Employees. This package is now being offered to ICL Pensioners. The announcement to ICL employees states:

"It is important to recognise that ICL is neither promoting or underwriting any of the services offered. The decision to use a service is entirely yours and you should therefore seek the kind of independent advice that you normally would take"

The company chosen by ICL Personnel to manage the package is **Sedgwick Affinity Group Services**. For advice, queries or suggestions call their Helpline on **0171 481 5665 Mon. to Fri. between 09:30 and 17:30.**

Green Flag National Breakdown

For details and a brochure call: **0800 000 111 08:30 to 21:00 7 days a week quoting G9682** and stating that you are an ICL Pensioner.

Motor Insurance - Guardian Advantage

For details and quotation call: **0345 697 361 08:00 to 20:00 Mon. to Fri. 09:00 to 13:00 Sat.** stating that you are an ICL Pensioner.

New Car Contract Scheme - Freeway

Free quotations and further information call: **0345 697 361. 09:00-20:00 Mon. to Thurs. 09:00-17:15 Fri.** ICL Pensioner should be stated.

Household Insurance- Guardian Advantage

Same telephone number and hours as Motor Insurance. State that you are an ICL Pensioner.

Independent Financial Advice

Sedgwick Financial Services can give advice on their products when you ring **0500 12 13 12 09:00 to 17:00 Mon. to Fri.** State that you are an ICL Pensioner.

Annual Overseas Holiday Insurance

ICL Pensioners under 65 can get annual worldwide travel insurance from **Home & Overseas**.

For an application form and further information ring **Home & Overseas Customer Services on 0345 66 04 53 from 09:15 to 17:00 Mon. to Fri.** State that you are an ICL Pensioner.

PENSIONER REPRESENTATIVES Update

There may still be some retired staff (especially those who have recently retired) who may not know who their representatives are on the ICL Pension Fund Committees, and what they actually do. It is hoped that this article will answer those questions.

ICL Pensioners have two member elected representatives. Jack Kane who is a Trustee of the Pension Fund and a member of the Consultative Committee, and Bill Williams who is also a member of the Consultative Committee. Both provide their services on a voluntary basis. In broad terms Jack's role as a Trustee is to represent the interests of all members of the fund (working and retired), to ensure that the fund is administered competently and at all times meets the requirements of all pensions legislation enacted by Parliament. As members of the Consultative Committee Jack and Bill interface with the company and represent pensioners' interests.

Basically their role can be split into two parts - Tactical and Strategic. The tactical one is responding to day to day matters that pensioners raise by letters and telephone. They try to give guidance and answers within 48 hours. However they are not walking encyclopaedias on pension matters and seek assistance from the staff of the Pension Department at Beaumont on the more difficult issues.

The Strategic issues cover the whole of pension policy, legislation, investment, benefits etc. and are much too large a subject for this short article. However two areas of concern at the present time are:-

1. *The abolition of Advanced Corporation Tax Relief announced in the Budget and its impact on the fund.*
At the time of writing (Aug 97) it is too early to state the impact, other than to say that it will be detrimental. When a full evaluation has taken place you will be advised.
2. *The decision by ICL to take a contributions "holiday."*

The fund would appear to be oversubscribed, however by law the fund is only allowed to be oversubscribed to a specific level and the company must redress the position by either taking a holiday or using the surplus for the benefit of fund members. The reason why the company is entitled to the surplus is quite straightforward. Should the fund run into

deficit (and this has happened in the past) the company is legally bound to make up the shortfall. The right of organisations to claim the total amount of overfunding has recently been challenged in the courts by members representatives of another fund, but the organisation's rights have been upheld, although an appeal is under consideration.

There are several reasons why a surplus can occur. Two of which, are the company oversubscribing to the fund, and a better than expected return from the funds investments. The current surplus in the ICL fund arises from both areas. It is the general view of the Consultative Committee that a portion of the overfunding has come about as a result of investment return on members contributions and as such should be retained by the pension fund with a view to it being used as follows:

1. An increase in pensions benefit for existing pensioners
2. Limited Indexing of Pensions (LPI) to be increased to 5% for all contributing members of the fund and current pensioners.
3. An enhanced early retirement package for current staff.

Representation has recently been made to the company. The proposals will require evaluation and a decision is likely during September.

Jack and Bill continue to provide assistance to ICL pensioners on matters concerning their pension and can be contacted at:-

Jack Kane 21, Hazlebank Close, Liphook, Hants.
GU30 7BZ **01428 725169**

Bill Williams 98, Heddington Grove, Islington,
London N7 9SZ **0171 607 9408**

NEXT ISSUE

Copy for the Spring 98 issue must be submitted by 1 March 1998

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