

# Bits & Bytes

No 17

## Editorial

It surprises me how some items in Bits & Bytes create interest and others do not. Pensions "increases" are always a good prompt for emails to the editor, but the immediate response to B&B No 16 was on the subject of "Average age of Death" that John Anderton-Brown raised. I had many emails, one of which said that "the ICL/Nortel pensioners who died at 60 have long gone", (which is what my wife tells me!), but Keith Aspinall has explained it very well and his letter is published on page 4.

I received a telephone call just after the last edition of B&B was distributed, asking to be taken off the distribution list. Just as many ex ICL people are in the Nortel Pension Fund, despite never having worked for Nortel, this chap worked for Cable & Wireless, taken over by Bell Communications, who were taken over by Sorbus, who became part of ICL. He found nothing of interest in Bits & Bytes and thought that it would save the fund money by not sending him copies.

It raises the perennial question, "Why are there not people writing articles which will interest all pensioners?" Maybe the latest batch of pensioners can let me know what they want to see in the next edition. (Incidentally the number of ICL pensioners, including dependants, currently stands at 4827.) Those who never read their copy should also contact the ICL Pension Fund to be taken off the circulation list.

This edition carries obituaries for two outstanding men who for me epitomised the spirit and sense of belonging to "Our Company".

**Adrian Turner**

5 Nun's Acre, Goring-on-Thames, RG8 9BE

01491 872012

adrian.turner5@virgin.net

## Fujitsu Services

### Fujitsu Services returns to profitability

#### *Preliminary un-audited results*

Fujitsu Services Holdings PLC, announced 1 May 2003 a return to profitability after five years. The company made an operating profit before exceptional items of £59.6 million and a pre-tax profit of £30.5 million during the financial year 2002/3. Operating cash flow of £101 million was generated.

### Fujitsu drives growth in Swansea

Fujitsu Services opened a new office in Swansea 13 May 2003 as part of its £200 million ten year contract with DVLA (Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency). The office houses around 160 employees with this figure likely to rise over time.

Richard Christou, chief executive officer of Fujitsu Services, speaking at the opening ceremony said, "We are very excited about our partnership with DVLA and the people of Swansea. We are pleased to be working with a group of people with such drive and dedication. We will be looking to make the most of a rich pool of talent in the local area."

Fujitsu views Swansea as a commercially expanding area with the local population offering an important blend of strong high-tech expertise and commitment. Fujitsu will be providing a comprehensive outsourcing service covering helpdesks, server management, desktop infrastructure and networks.

Fujitsu and IBM Business Consulting Services view this as a landmark deal, as it is one of the first "transform and operate" contracts, which is an increasing trend in the UK Government marketplace. The aim of these contracts is for the partners to work together to fundamentally change the way in which current business is conducted to reduce costs and develop new business channels for the public.

### Fujitsu opens new Essex Data Centre

The data centre will utilise advanced security technology, including proximity cards and biometric fingerprint scanning in all areas. The centre has 13 back up generators and comprehensive UPS facilities, which will allow it to remain operational for 48 hours independently of power cuts and other disasters. It will enable Fujitsu's customers to benefit from enhanced security of their data, dedicated technical space and lab facilities.

The Essex data centre is part of Fujitsu's program constantly to upgrade its facilities including the replacement of existing large corporate servers. Fujitsu's goal is to consolidate its nine UK data centres into five by 2005. Les Allen, director of data centres, networks & internet managed services for Fujitsu Services said, "Fujitsu's investment of £45 million in this new data centre underpins our commitment to our IT infrastructure management business. The services provided by this facility are the most advanced and secure in the South East of England, and will cater for tomorrow's data management needs"

## Good News

### Fujitsu wins £1.3m Weymouth Contract

Residents of Weymouth and Portland will soon be able to make planning enquiries online at anytime of day or night with the help of a new service from the council. The facility being developed by Weymouth and Portland Borough Council and Fujitsu Services will put key resident and business services online by May. This will help enable Weymouth to achieve the 2005 e-Government deadline, as well as providing a faster more efficient service to citizens who want to get information from the council around the clock.

Citizens will be able to choose to contact the council either online, or by calling a manned help-desk number to ask for information on all council services including planning, local services and council tax, rather than having to contact the individual departments. Information previously held by independent departments will be integrated to a single access point, providing a quicker and more efficient service to the citizen. It will also enable professional and technical staff to concentrate on their core tasks rather than answering simple enquiries.

Peter Gilmour, information services manager at Weymouth and Portland Borough Council said, "The infrastructure and training provided by Fujitsu has enabled us to develop an "Ask Jeeves" type service on our website. This will enable users to get answers to questions such as "Do I need planning permission to build a porch?" The service will mean residents only need to approach one point of contact to deal with all their enquiries. It will provide faster responses, at any time day or night at the residents' convenience."

Fujitsu is responsible for designing and installing the infrastructure to support the contact points. Information that was previously held in independent silos has been integrated through document management for both the front and back office, allowing consistency of information used by all departments. CRM systems have also been developed to provide a more consistent level of service to residents.

David Smith, director of public services at Fujitsu Services said, "Weymouth's plans to provide this innovative level of online citizen contact will be a benchmark for other local authorities looking to achieve the 2005 e-government target. It will provide a more citizen-friendly approach to contacting the council while allowing staff to work more effectively."

The solution implemented by Fujitsu consists of telephony from Siemens, a web-based application developed by Fujitsu Consulting, document management from Merido and workflow from Metastorm.

## Bad News

### ICLway

Fujitsu Services is no longer responsible for ICLWAY. Affinity, along with all their branded ISP's, have now sold ICLWAY to another ISP, VitalDATA. All ICLWAY customers will now be transferred to breathe.

**Please understand that Fujitsu is unable to deal with any enquiries regarding this**

**migration and new services hereafter. ICLWAY is no longer offered as a company benefit.**

A dedicated project team and additional customer service agents have been established to ensure this process runs as smoothly and seamlessly as possible for all end users. For further information please visit the "HELP" section on their upgrade website [www.vitalregistration.com/index.php?page=faqs](http://www.vitalregistration.com/index.php?page=faqs).

You can call the breathe Customer Services team on **0870 747 3970** or Technical Support team on **0906 300 1199**. Please be aware the help desk numbers are no longer charged at a local rate. Your current ICLWAY email addresses and user names and passwords will remain the same and you will not need to make any changes. Your new homepage will now become [www.breathe.com](http://www.breathe.com).

**This information was finally published on CafeVIK on the 9 July 2003, many weeks after the move took place. Ed**

## Life in ICL

### Memories of ICT In Transition

I count myself lucky to have been with ICT during an exciting period of transition when the company truly moved into the computer marketplace.

My first experience, however, was with one of the forebears, Powers SAMAS. This took place in the summer of 1957 when, to improve my deplorable French, I was sent to Paris on an internship at a Powers customer, a large agricultural insurance company. I spent much time in the various departments that used the punched card systems and was even allowed to sort cards occasionally! The high point was to be shown the SAMASTRONIC system that was in the process of installation. When the engineer slaving over the machine heard that I was from England he said "I have a message for your countrymen – it's a wonderful design, but it doesn't work!"

In 1962 I joined ICL and was sent to Technical Advisor training at Cookham. We were well looked after with plenty of time left over to sample the delights of the thirteen pubs in the village. Memories include the total inability of the permanent staff to grow vegetables on the plot between the men's and women's dormitories. Also that one of my roommates, a Scotsman, would terrorize the cattle in the adjacent field while practicing the bagpipes.

After a six week period standing by a sorter at Esso in Bayswater, we completed our training in Brighton during which we received our first classes in presentation and other selling techniques. Our instructor was reputed to have been in Intelligence and we decided that he would have been a perfect spy as we had the greatest trouble recognizing him when showed up to take our classes!

With training completed I was assigned to the Westminster District behind Regent Street. The most important points raised at my first meeting with my new manager were the requirement to always carry an umbrella and gloves and that only one type of hat could be worn – a Bowler. To illustrate the conservatism we had an Australian fellow in the district on a two year visit who showed up in a check suit one day only to be asked where he was going fishing!

I gained valuable sales experience supporting senior sales representatives on various accounts and then was fortunate to become a team member at William Hill helping to convert their punched card applications to run on an ICT 1500. This year long effort taught me a great deal about programming, mostly in assembly language. It also taught me much about the book making business, having watched it take 20 minutes to print the punter's winning statements and two hours to print the losing ones! We did however inaugurate remote testing. When checking out the major applications we would lock the computer room and repair to the pub across the road for a beer and some darts!

After the William Hill project it was back to the district for more sales activities. Such was technology in those days that all kinds of strategies were used, including taking prospective customers to the Newman Street Bureau to hear multiprogramming on an Orion! One of our coupes was to impress the senior managers of the Transport & General Workers Union through a 1500 demonstration. We thought that they would be pleased with our union dues billing program but what really impressed them was that at the end of the demonstration each of the six tape drives rewound in perfect unison!

After a few months at the district I was lucky enough to be seconded to the 1900 Series pre-announcement team at Putney Bridge being responsible for evaluating competitive systems. These were exciting times as, unlike IBM who had just announced the 360 Series, we actually had a 1904 and 1905 to show our customers. So many people contributed so much to the successful launch of this new range and it was great to be around them.

Interested in broadening my horizons I transferred to ICT Australia in 1965. Travelling through the United States gave me the opportunity to visit RCA in Cherry Hill, New Jersey. We were heartily welcomed and shown not only the RCA 3301 (successor to the ICT 1500) but also RACE, or MCF as it was known in ICT. The first inkling that there may have been problems with this amazing device came in a comment from the presenter that "The engineers feel that it is working better than they expected". Upon arrival in Australia, then the land of the 1004, I joined the Sydney branch being responsible for computer sales to new customers.

Of the two and half years in Australia I spent two years working on the systems sale to Dalgetty & New Zealand Loan, then the second largest wool broker in the country. IBM was the incumbent with many other customers in this industry. We fortunately adopted the policy of trying to learn their business as best we might while bringing them up to speed on newer technologies. They took me to a wool store where I found out that wool can be binned in 1300 categories and has to tracked through the sale process for each individual farmer – no surprise that the incumbent systems were IBM 1440's. Fortunately IBM took their usual approach – "you have to stay with us as we know the wool business". After we were awarded the contract the evaluation team leader wondered that if IBM knew the wool business so well, then why were they not in it?

After Australia I decided that the US should be the next challenge. As ICT at that time had limited representation there I joined Control Data and spent

22 happy years with them in four foreign countries, if you include New York City!

Looking back I much appreciate my six years with ICT at such an exciting time. My fond memories are of the great people that I worked with and the luck that I had in working with such interesting customers.

**David A. Lightstone, ICT 1962-1967**  
**dlightstone@mn.rr.com**

## Life after ICL

### LIFE DOWN UNDER

I had no serious thought of leaving UK permanently during my time as a Chief Instructor with ICL Education at Letchworth. It was an interesting job, being in touch with the company's computer developments and required to develop and then teach my share of courses. I was involved with, and taught, many of the field and support staff from UK, from Western and Eastern Europe and what was then known as "General Overseas". The Company had suffered its series of late-sixties mergers as the various UK computer entities settled into ICL and though the Letchworth School did not escape the resulting – should I say chaos? – it retained its facilities and experience and was greatly valued; I like to think, at home and overseas.

Among our students were lecturers from overseas who returned with the necessary skills to teach their colleagues, but other educational methods were used and, following the sale of six systems to the Victorian Technical Colleges early in 1969, I was asked to conduct an engineering course in Melbourne to convert 1900 trained staff to the 1901A System.

ICL's head office was then, and still is, in Sydney, NSW, although these days, and sadly I think, the name ICL no longer exists in Australia. All this after the passing of such names as Powers Samas, Hollerith, GEC, Ferranti, EMI, English Electric, Leo, Marconi, Elliott and ICT!

Returning to my Australian visit, I think I can say that the actual journey is never an enjoyable experience. We suffer from "the tyranny of distance" both within the country and in actually getting here. It is better now I suppose and, also, my timing on this occasion was not good. At Heathrow, a bomb hoax delayed take off for four hours! The flight path was via the North Pole and after eleven hours of darkness I arrived in LA to be immediately escorted by an immigration official through the transit area to board an awaiting connecting flight to Sydney - which took another eleven hours! Then, following a briefing by the Australian Engineering Manager, Peter Bradley, I journeyed on to Melbourne, flying, but not sleeping, in an ancient Lockheed Electra turbo prop, called back into service because of an airline strike. And I thought I had left strikes behind in UK! I arrived to be greeted by the Victorian Manager, exhausted for want of sleep (me not him). Fortunately, it was Friday evening so I had the weekend to overcome jetlag.

I found the Australian people to be very friendly with a cheerful outlook on life. I admired their directness and down to earth approach to problems. Several of the staff invited me into their homes where I was made most welcome. The pleasant climate (sunny days seem to encourage the cheerful outlook) was another factor which attracted me to the country,

especially having just left wintry England in January. Housing was attractive and the standard of living enjoyed by the majority of Australians was higher than in UK. So when I was invited to become the Australian Engineering Training Manager, based in Sydney, I was very interested and later accepted the offer, following due family consultations of course. This was a major decision as we were not going for a two year tour, as sometimes happened, but actually emigrating. ICL Australia preferred permanency and commitment rather than have someone who started planning his/her next move half way through the tour.

After completing immigration procedures, I, together with my wife, son (then 10) and daughter (then 8), arrived in Sydney in March, 1971. My recently widowed mother (71) agreed to accompany us, I being her only child, and we settled in a beachside suburb some fifteen miles north of the city. We quickly acclimatized to our new surroundings, where we continue to live to this day. The suburb is Dee Why, located in the Northern Beaches. We are not near Bondi - which we do not think has a good beach compared to those to the north of the city.

Our children blended into their new school without difficulty, the curriculum being very similar to that in England. My mother was initially homesick and took longer to settle, but two elderly neighbours took her under their wing, introduced her to several Senior Citizen clubs - we have many, varied, clubs here - and she enjoyed a happy life until her death in 1985. For me, working with a good, efficient, hard working group in a job I knew well and being able to make many of my own decisions was very pleasing. I still had many contacts with the UK company and the Letchworth School in particular. I had opportunities to visit and help New Zealand and Canadian ICL companies and we shared skills and facilities, particularly when it came to the development of audio and video training - in which we sometimes led the UK. The Australian operation was big enough to have the resources and small enough to be able to take initiatives without the delay inherent in bigger companies.

Cost of living comparisons between here and the U.K. are difficult to make. Salary level differences are not uniform for all occupations and the purchasing power varies considerably, however the current exchange rate of 2.8 Australian dollars to the Pound Sterling is hard to fathom. It should entice U.K. based holiday makers here in droves. When we arrived it was 1.6.

One of the things we miss most of all is a visit to a village pub for a casual Sunday lunch. You have a unique attraction which you should nurture. Another is the ability to meet up with family members who remain in the UK, especially at Christmas time. Christmas occurs in the middle of our summer, so the traditional roast turkey and plum pudding are not so appealing. Seafood and fresh fruit are preferred in the majority of homes.

We also miss the sound of the British songbirds. The sound of the song thrush and the skylark, which we occasionally hear whilst viewing British made TV programmes, are a reminder of the pleasures we once took for granted. Many Australian birds have raucous cries, notably the kookaburra. They gather in small family groups to claim their territory with blood curdling cries, often as dawn breaks. Guaranteed to act as a natural but unwelcome alarm clock! On the

good side, they eat snakes, spiders and centipedes (big ones) without fear of being poisoned.

Through family and friends and visits we feel very much in touch with UK. And Australia, or at least the part I know, is very much anglophile. This in spite of the Pommie jibes, which in my experience are merely a way of communication by friendly insult. The recent 'Barmy Army' of English cricket followers made a very favourable impression here so it must be that we, also, don't mind being insulted if it's done without malice.

**Jack Nicholson ex FETS Letchworth & Oz**  
jacknich@tpg.com.au

## Letters

### Average Age of Death

I think if you asked the respective pensions administrators for the two funds, you would find that the average age of pensioners/deferred in the ICL Nortel fund will be at least 14 years more than that of the pensioners/deferred/current members in the ICL Fund.

The ICL Nortel fund only contains people who retired or left at least 12 years ago when the ICL Fund was re-established in 1991, and cannot contain any existing contributing members. The ICL fund can only contain pensioners/deferred who have retired or left in the last 12 years and also has the dwindling number of current employees.

Also, in the 'old days', more employees worked to 65 as their normal pension date, rather than the current 60.

I am no actuary, but worked for ICL for 34 years, the last 13 in Group Personnel with the Pension Fund as my 'customers' so hope that my explanation is accurate.

**Keith Aspinall**

### Life milestones

- At age 4 success is not peeing in your pants
- At age 12 success is having friends
- At age 16 success is having a driver's license
- At age 20 success is having sex
- At age 35 success is having money
- At age 50 success is having money
- At age 60 success is having sex
- At age 70 success is having a driver's license
- At age 75 success is having friends
- At age 80 success is not peeing in your pants

**Sent from Australia by Albert Cook.**

### There's life in the old girl yet

Flossie is an ICT 1301 Computer, currently in private hands. There is a project, to try to get this machine, Serial number 6, ( Ex London University ), running again in summer/autumn of 2003. If we are successful, then a piece of our computing past, will be resurrected, The Science museum has expressed interest, and the computer conservation Group of the BCS, is also monitoring this project. However the reality is that the owner and I will be faced with breathing some life into this mature lady, now over 40 years old, without the very basic tools we will need.

So if anybody out there still has a 1301 wrapping tool in their old tool box, and would like to donate it to the project, please visit our web page at

<http://web.onetel.com/~rodratab/> where you will find on the Computing history pages, an item about the project and an email address for contact. Please feel free to check out these pages, for updates on the project, such as photo's and progress reports.

We also host one of the retired Kent engineering group's meeting dates, so check us out anyway for meeting dates and links to other groups of current and retired ICT/ICL and Fujitsu staff.

**Rod and Rita Brown.**

## **Powers Samas 65 col Tabulator**

The Computer Conservation Society doesn't usually deal with pre-computer machines, but this case is an exception.

We have heard that Fujitsu Services wishes to dispose of a Powers-Samas 65-column tabulator which used to be on display in Reception at BRA01, because it doesn't fit their company image.

The machine dates from 1934, and at some stage was modified in the Engineering Training School to operate at slow speed, and with transparent panels in the covers so that the details of the mechanism can be observed in action.

Does anybody know anything more of the history of this remarkable relic? Does anybody want to offer it a home? Does anybody have practical suggestions about how and where it could be preserved? Is anybody willing to see if it is still in working order?

**Hamish Carmichael CCS Hon. Secretary**

## **HOW THE INTERNET BEGAN**

In ancient Israel, it came to pass that a trader by the name of Abraham Com did take unto himself a young wife by the name of Dot. And Dot Com was a comely woman, broad of shoulder and long of leg. Indeed, she had been called Amazon Dot Com.

She said unto Abraham, her husband, "Why doth thou travel far from town to town with thy goods when thou canst trade without ever leaving thy tent?"

Abraham did look at her as though she were several saddle bags short of a camel load, but simply said, "How, Dear?" Dot replied, "I will place drums in all the towns and drums in between, to send messages saying what thou hast for sale, and they will reply telling you which hath the best price. And the sale can be made on the drums and delivery made by Uriah's Pony Stable (UPS)."

Abraham thought long and decided he would let Dot have her way with the drums. The drums rang out and were an immediate success! Abraham sold all the goods he had at the top price, without ever moving from his tent.

But this success did arouse envy. A man named Maccabia did secret himself inside Abraham's drum and was accused of insider trading. And the young men did take to Dot Com's trading as doth the greedy horsefly take to camel dung. They were called Nomadic Ecclesiastical Rich Dominican Siderites, or NERDS for short.

And lo, the land was so feverish with joy at the new prosperity and the deafening sound of drums that no one noticed that the real riches were going to the drum maker, one Brother William of Gates, who bought up every drum company in the land. And indeed he did insist on making drums that would work only with Brother Gates's drumheads and drumsticks.

Seeing it, Dot did say, "Oh, Abraham, what we have started is being taken over by others, and I fear that Job's son Stephen will not be able to pull our fat out of the fire as he did of yore with his fruit of the apple tree."

As Abraham paddled his way across the water on his log, he looked out over the Bay of Ezekiel, or as it came to be known "eBay" and said, "We need a name that reflects what we are!"

Dot replied, "Do not worry thyself, my husband. Just log on. We will call our name, "Young Ambitious Hebrew Owner-Operators."

"YAHOO!", said Abraham.

And that is how it all began.

## **I HEAR WHAT YOU SAY**

"It's a torque wrench!" exclaimed my wife. I was dozing with a book and her interruption awoke me. "What is?" I replied, acknowledging the remark was aimed at me, knowing it was going to get tricky. "What do you mean, 'What is?'" she demanded. I couldn't think of a reply and I'd lost my place in my book. "Talk sense," I muttered. My wife seems to have a selective hearing feature that homes in on things I don't want her to hear. "I didn't say 'Talk sense' I said it was Dawn French" she explained. I glanced at the TV. Sure enough it was Dawn French and she was mugging away, supposedly explaining something to an elderly relative. The usual stuff. Mouthing phrases and nodding madly as if pandering to a child with learning difficulties. It annoyed me as much as the interruption to my reading.

She was picking on an easy target for a cheap laugh, treating an old person like a simpleton. I suppose it was always thus. Dickens did it kindly with his character the Aged P, sitting in the corner being gestured at and the old chap grinning inanely. It doesn't matter how clever or important you were, when the faculties diminish one is the butt of all the tired old jokes regarding deafness and eyesight.

When someone pompously asks "Wasn't it Shakespeare who said..." I get annoyed (I often do) because he **knows** it was Shakespeare! I checked my quote out and he did say,

"Last scene of all that ends this strange eventful history, is second childhood and mere oblivion, sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything"

As usual he got it right. I'm aware of deteriorating eyesight that affects my dexterity. I'm clumsy. It took me a whole morning to fit a new watch strap. In the past I've been known to fix a computer in that time. Well, once or twice!

Concentration and stamina are affected. I try to avoid fiddly jobs. Eventually you lose self-assurance. I notice it in friends around 80.

First they avoid driving in London, then motorways; finally night driving becomes a no-no. To be aware of a loss of skill and being careful is common sense, I suppose.

Talking of driving, I was at a funeral recently (I frequently am) at a United Reformed Church and down the front where one expected an altar was a row of high backed chairs. I asked my companion, a regular at the church, what the significance of the chairs was. She whispered, "They were for the notaries". Irreverently I got the giggles. I thought she said "For the motorists" and I had a vision of leather

helmets, goggles and scarves! It seems they are officials in that church, but it sounded bizarre!

Mishearing the essential bit of a remark isn't uncommon with couples of a mature age. Most of our domestic spats are from half hearing a phrase and replying accordingly. As the reply bore little relation to the question, the spellchecker in the brain makes a stab at the sense of it, based on the original remark and so lines get crossed!

Accusations of "Mumbling" and "Not listening" are made. Fortunately with the memory crumbling as well, it's all forgotten shortly (if you're lucky!)

Most of my contemporaries are not particularly happy, but content with their lot, accepting bits dropping off gradually. When one thinks of the alternative, I suppose that's reasonable. I try and fight this fatalistic attitude.

I don't like the view that "All this new fangled technology is beyond me. I get my grandson to set up the video"

There's still a life with the TV off. Most of it isn't aimed at us. We are not a market for the dumb down adverts that insist you "Buy this and you'll be a success" We've all been there and it's unimportant. I get more fun writing articles in Bits & Bytes, especially when they get printed!

[dennis@goodwin43.freemove.co.uk](mailto:dennis@goodwin43.freemove.co.uk)

## Reunions

### ICL Central London Group

The next reunion will be on Wednesday 22 October 2003 at **The Flying Horse** at **52 Wilson Street**, from 12 noon. The pub is east of Finsbury Square.

**These "get togethers" have now been moved to October and April to avoid holiday periods. The Spring date is 21 April 2004.**

**John Doo 01245 259862**

### Punch Card & Stevenage Labs Reunion Group

**Adrian Turner 01491 872012**

### Copthall 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**

### ICL Midlands Group

**Brian Trow 01785 257317 or [brians@iclway.co.uk](mailto:brians@iclway.co.uk)**

### 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**

### Surrey Engineers

**Trevor Harding 01483 565144**

**[trevor.harding@iclway.co.uk](mailto:trevor.harding@iclway.co.uk)**

### 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 Reunion Group

**Ron Harding 01732 761076**

### The Walthamstow Mob

**Derek Windsor 01992 522761**

## OBITUARIES

### **Arthur Humphreys 1917-2003**

Arthur Humphreys, who died on 29th August 2003, was a figure of unique importance in the British computer industry. He played a major part in all the negotiations by which the single company ICL emerged from the preceding assortment of technically competent, fiercely competitive but commercially non-viable outfits that had sprung up in the 1950s. His genius for friendship ensured that a variety of lions lay calmly down with the very lambs whom one week before they had been intent on devouring. In business he had strength, determination and perseverance, while in dealing with individuals he was the kindest and most considerate of men.

Arthur was born on 8th January 1917 in Lewisham, London. After leaving school at 14 he initially trained as a solicitor's clerk and was active in the United Law Clerks Society. He joined the British Tabulating Machine Company, producers of the major line of electro-mechanical punched card machinery, in 1940. A heart defect prevented him from giving active service during the war, but he was thrust into all aspects of the company's operations, and this experience meant that by 1953 he had risen to become head of BTM's Commercial Department. In 1958 he was involved in the negotiations between BTM and Powers-Samas that resulted in the formation of ICT (International Computers and Tabulators). During a visit to a Powers-Samas sales and accounts office he commented wryly that they seemed to manage their desks on the deep litter principle. By 1962 he had been appointed head of product planning at the crucial period that completed the company's transition from the manufacture of punched card machines to that of computers. When it became apparent that home-grown manufacture could not keep pace with demand he played a key role in deals to import two important machines: the 1004 from Univac and the 301 (thereafter known as the ICT 1500) from RCA. His gift for personal relations ensured a smooth integration into ICT of the computing interests of other companies such as GEC (1961), EMI (1962) and Ferranti (1963). That process, however, gave ICT the most incompatible range of computer products that it would have been possible to contrive. It was therefore a stroke of brilliant judgment that allowed him to spot during a visit with his manufacturing colleagues E.C.H. Organ and P.D. Hall to Ferranti Canada, that their FP6000 machine had the potential to grow into a family of compatible systems - known as the 1900 series - that would span the whole range of power, speed and cost required by any customer, from the smallest firm to the largest government department. That decision alone gave Britain a viable computer industry, and its timing

was sublime. In 1964 IBM stunned the computer world by announcing the 360. But in October of the same year Arthur, by now appointed a director, was able to trump that announcement by showing an actual 1902 and an actual 1904 at the Business Efficiency Exhibition at Olympia. It was typical of his attitude that he said: "You don't always have to follow IBM. But you'd jolly well better know why they are doing what they are doing." In 1965 his title of Director of Marketing disguised the fact that he was now responsible for all company functions apart from manufacturing. But running the company had to proceed alongside an almost continuous series of external negotiations, resulting in a workload that would have overtaxed any man of lesser energy.

Then in 1968 there came the biggest negotiation of all, the merger between ICT and English Electric Computers, under whose umbrella the other half of the British company firms had progressively coalesced. Rather to the surprise of many in the City and in Government, ICT emerged as the dominant partner in ICL (International Computers Limited), and Arthur Humphreys was appointed Managing Director of the whole enterprise. It was typical that Sir William Barlow, the Managing Director of English Electric Computers, should become a friend, and he recalls as an illustration of the friendly nature of the merger talks Arthur's gruff voice saying at some point with utter finality: "So that is now settled." (Pause, and then sotto voce): "Until we alter it." In 1971 he was appointed CBE, a fine recognition of his efforts and achievements. However, the impossibility of reconciling the 1900 and System 4 ranges, and the massive task of their replacement by a New Range, led some to think that the company should be run by a younger and more gung-ho style of manager, and in 1972 Arthur was moved upstairs to the post of Deputy Chairman. He accepted, in the company's best interest, what many a lesser man would have seen as a demotion, and continued to provide loyal support and wise guidance until his retirement in 1983.

His experience could often be expressed in droll humour: "What we need to run this company is better hindsight, sooner", or (after Josh Billings): "It ain't what you don't know that's the trouble; it's the things you do know that ain't so." Though not a technical man, he understood very well the critical nature of the technical choices that determined the company's product strategy. He had been in charge at several momentous turning points, and all his decisions proved brave and right. No man could have been more unaffected by self-importance. As Managing Director he could still ring a Letchworth friend from earliest days, then running the Bought Ledger department, and ask: "Tell me, Bernard, how's the company really doing?" His benevolence was well-known: the word *paterfamilias* could have been coined to describe his attitude to all employees - how different from the current cold habit of demeaning them as merely 'human resources'. In 1970 he founded the Double Majority Association for those who had clocked up 42 years of company service. Twelve years later he was proud that he himself had qualified for membership, and when he chaired its most recent dinner, in May 2003, he was proud to be able to record that nearly 420 people had demonstrated the same remarkable level of loyalty. Arthur was a lifelong supporter of Charlton Athletic F.C. and of Kent County Cricket Club. He was also an expert bridge player and

someone who greatly enjoyed travelling. Many will also recall his use of liar dice as a means of exploring management potential. Only if you could hold your own against that squat figure with the glittering eyes, hunched on the other side of the table, could you prove that you had the necessary combination of guile and determination to advance up the corporate ladder. His stamina was formidable, and many strong men went to bed exhausted and poorer after a session with Arthur and his dangerous dice. He was married three times: first, in 1942 to Marjorie who died in 1970; secondly to Audrey who died in 1985; and thirdly, in 1994 to Terry who survives him. He is also survived by two sons and a daughter, the children of his first marriage

**Hamish Carmichael**

## **Stan Glassborow**

When I went to the Engineering Training Centre at Letchworth, in 1957, to do basic punched card equipment and the 542/550 electronic machines, Stan Glassborow was an enthusiastic instructor, leading the small team who taught the latter. I went off to be a field engineer in Southeast region, but not before Stan had encouraged me to keep my ears open for an instructor vacancy.

This opportunity came some eighteen months later, and I went to Letchworth to teach, initially, the 418 interpreter.

I have to say that, for me, Stan was an inspiration to make teaching [and learning] a challenging and satisfying career. Stan enjoyed his work, and when the opportunity came to visit the United States to prepare courses on the ICT 1500 [RCA 301] he was delighted, and became an enthusiast for jazz and all things American. He was over the moon to discover that a few miles from the RCA Training Centre at Cherry Hill, New Jersey, was a little town called 'Glassboro'. Ten-pin bowling was a new-ish import from the States, and Stan insisted that the instruction staff played frequently against a team of students; anyone scoring less than 100 points was threatened with having to teach the EMP.

When Stan became Manager of the Training Centre he clearly missed the motivating atmosphere of the classroom - and in my opinion the company lost a first-class instructor. Sadly, further company changes meant that others came in above him, and, retiring early, he became very bitter towards the company.

With his wife, Vi, and daughter Yvonne, he lived for many years in Ickleford, in a pleasant bungalow by the river, aptly named 'Vista', before moving to a flat in Hitchin. He found some satisfaction again, teaching bridge.

The best tribute, to my mind, comes from Vi; she says that he gave her fifty-nine wonderful years of marriage. They first met, in London, at the age of twelve.

For myself, I'll always be grateful for the encouragement Stan gave me in my career.

**Dave Clarke**

## ICL/Nortel Fund

*Taken from the Spring & Summer 2003 editions of the Nortel "Newslink"*

Birmingh'm	Brannon	Joseph J	22/04/03	82
Bradwell	Shropshire	Geoffrey	01/11/02	67
Bracknell	Langshaw	Harold J	19/12/02	76
	Conway	George F	05/03/03	75
	Hodgson	John E	23/04/03	73
Bristol	Desmond	Royston C	14/01/03	74
Cambourne	Langdon	Kenneth	18/01/03	81
CESO	Perkins	Edmund W	09/11/02	90
Croydon	Lucas	Gordon	18/01/03	80
Dukinfield	Burke	Mary	19/12/02	73
	Heald	George	27/12/02	82
Governm't	Nightingale	Ronald J	20/11/02	72
Kidsgrove	Crittenden	Frederick	24/12/02	76
	FullerMachin	Victor J C	25/04/03	69
	Maguire	Charles E	09/02/03	88
	Ross	Robert	22/02/03	77
	Williams	Clifford	26/03/03	73
Letchworth	Apps	Lewis T	03/03/03	66
	Bandy	Edith J	17/01/03	87
	Bassett	Bernard W	13/11/02	81
	Blay	Frank E	24/03/03	84
	Emery	Horace	19/12/02	91
	Entwistle	Harold F	09/12/02	78
	Hawkins	Robert F	08/02/03	79
	Henderson	Albert	19/02/03	86
	Irons	Louise H	27/02/03	87
	Kelly	Harold	12/11/02	84
	Lovejoy	Walter E	13/03/03	84
	Miles	Thomas A	02/04/03	87
	Morris	Leonard R	30/11/02	82
	Pearmain	Neil H	14/04/03	92
	Smith	Ernest G	20/01/03	80
	Tullett	David J F	11/03/03	67
	Warner	Peter M	24/11/02	70
LON15	Curran	Betty	10/04/03	85
	Heyne	Norman A	31/01/03	81
Middlesb'gh	Williams	Edwin	14/02/03	86
Norwich	Williams	Bernard	21/01/03	86
Powers	Jones	Gwilym J	21/02/03	86
Preston	Dandy	Norman C	09/02/03	76
Putney	Hermitage	Jean	06/02/03	65
	Nelson	John J	24/04/03	86
	Raceview	Allen W P	16/10/02	76
Reading	Drummond	Charles I	22/11/02	70
S'hampton	Brown	Stanley	25/04/03	61
	Cossey	Bertie F	27/11/02	82
	Hurst	Frederick	03/01/03	80
	McIssac	Michael F	12/02/03	89
Stevenage	Brewer	George S	23/11/02	86
	Burbidge	Syd	16/02/03	80
	Cary	Peter G	25/03/03	85
Taunton	Wyatt	Margaret R	10/03/03	79
W. Gorton	Dean	Lester	04/02/03	88
	Dicken	Eric	01/04/03	82
Winsford	Egerton	Margaret E	03/02/03	68

## ICL Fund

Includes people who died in service

BSN01	Conroy	Michael P	12/06/03	57
BRA01	Ward	Marc	08/06/03	39
BRS06	Trussler	Anthony P	01/06/03	70
FEL01	Khan	Abdul S	05/04/03	66
HOU01	Jones	Constance	01/05/03	60
MAN05	Smith	Roger A	12/06/03	71
SWN03	Bennison	John S	15/06/03	37

## PENSIONER REPS

### Colin Marshall

Grange Villa, Sandy Lane, Longsdon,  
Stoke-on-Trent ST9 9QQ  
01538 371618  
colinmarshall\_caldon@yahoo.com

### Rod Scott

89 Cottenham Park Road, Wimbledon, London  
SW20 0DS  
0208 947 1132  
rodscott@hotmail.com

Meet your new Pensioner Representative at the Thames Valley Club BRA01 on Wednesday 12th November; 5.30 (in the bar) for 6pm (in the clubroom).

TVC life members who are ICL Group pensioners are invited to attend for a brief address and discussion with Rod. Other ICL Group pensioners are welcome by prearranged invitation as guests.

Please advise if you wish to attend (re numbers) or wish further information on the event, by Email to [alan.thomson@iclway.co.uk](mailto:alan.thomson@iclway.co.uk) - or by phone to: 01344 422993.

### Jack Kane

Thanks must be paid to Jack who was a Pensioners representative from the very beginning of the ICL Fund which started in 1991 when Fujitsu bought ICL. The position of rep is very difficult, in that members expect all their complaints to be answered positively, whereas the reps have no power to make things happen, especially when it comes to pension increases. Jack received many brickbats and not many thanks. Thank you, for all your hard work over the past 12 years.

## 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](mailto:tonyriley@europe.com)

## NEXT ISSUE

Copy for the Spring 2004 issue must be submitted by 1 March 2004, but would be appreciated earlier.

Published and printed by the ICL Group Pension Fund October 2003