



Leon Panasiuk retired at the end of May after over 25 years at Wood Lane. Born in Poland, Leon served in the Army during the Second World War following his release from internment by the Russians in Siberia. After the War, in Britain, Leon worked in industry as a rubber technologist and during the period 1956-9 attended the National College of Rubber Technology. (Rumour has it that he developed his passion for Bridge while at the College). Leon's involvement with BREL began in 1960; the story of how Leon impressed Dr. Bielstein, the then head of the Rubber Section, with his reply to or question about the crosslinking of butyl rubber has passed into the folklore of the Polymers Dept. Over the years Leon worked on many different projects - Hypalon sheathing, polymer blends, smoke suppression, improvement of oil resistance.....to name but a few. Without exaggeration, it is true to say that he will be greatly missed by all of his friends and work colleagues throughout BREL.

In thanking everyone, following the presentation of his retirement card and gifts by Stefan Verne, Leon commented on his 35 years association with the rubber industry, 25 of them spent at BREL. His feelings on leaving were mixed, a sense of joy in freedom from the routine of work but a sense of regret at leaving so many friends behind. In taking (a slightly early) retirement he felt he had been granted parole for good behaviour and was looking forward to his freedom and being the master of his own life.