

# BUSH TELEGRAPH

Apr 1978



# BUSH

vol. 20 no. 5

# TELEGRAPH

the magazine of **R&EL** wood lane



## Cover

"The Old Mill at Lower Slaughter"  
by Rob Corne

## Editorial Board

David Green  
Denis Groombridge  
Mike Hagger  
Richard Hammond  
Geoff Holder  
Ted Morrison  
Peter Revell



# Editorial

The running of the Wood Lane Social Club is perhaps all too easily taken for granted by many of its members. Whether it be a Disco, Annual Dinner and Dance, Bridge evening, Film Show, Mini Outing, Badminton tournament or any other of the many events that have been organised over the years, most members are enjoying occasions organised by the unsung few, who devote much of their own valuable time in a quiet and efficient manner. This has been so since the Club was first formed over 30 years ago. Although inevitably people come and people go, there has thankfully always been that small core of enthusiasts to keep things rolling along. Admittedly, certain sections have disappeared after very long runs (such as the very successful Whist Drives) whilst others are 'hardy-annuals' of long standing such as the Bridge, Badminton and Film Sections — to mention but a few. Equally important has been the means of communication to members and here, the Bush Telegraph' (25 years old next year) and its predecessors have attempted to fill this role, circumstances permitting. It is therefore with great pleasure that we are able to record in this current Bush Telegraph that the Film Section, who are now preparing for their 25th Season (yes, their 'silver-season') have just been awarded a Commendation Certificate in the Film Society of the Year Competition and in fact, ran a very close second to the eventual winners in this particular category.

On behalf of all our readers and the editorial board we offer our sincerest congratulations to the hard working film committee, and their secretary Annette Mattock, for their well-earned success, and equally important, on their approaching silver jubilee season. Well done, and may you achieve even greater successes in the coming months.

# Personnel News

## STARTERS

Welcome to:-

Mr M.N. Choudahary who joins us as a laboratory assistant in the Communications Department.

Mr J.E. Nevett who joins us as an assistant technical officer in the Communications Department.

Mr D. Dawkins who joins us as a mechanic/driver in the Works Engineering Department.

Mr C.A. Andrews who joins us as gate security man in the Works Engineering Department.

Mrs M.M. Richey who joins us as a secretary in the Commercial and Patents Department.

Mr B.J. Helliwell who joins us as a technical officer on the Conform Project.

Mr N.S. Franklin and Mr A. Mawani, both of whom are students at Brunel University, and join us for a six month industrial training period in the Control Engineering Department.

Mr M. Patel, a student at Brunel University, who joins us for a six month industrial training period in the Chemistry Department.

## LEAVERS

Farewell to:-

Jean Duffy who leaves us at the end of April, to accompany her husband overseas. Jean has been Secretary to Mr J.D. Endacott for eleven months.

Jamaluddin Amin of the Works Engineering Department who leaves after 12 years service, to be with his parents in Malaysia, both of whom are in ill health.

## RETIREMENTS

Jack Blissett of the Chemistry Department retires at the end of April after 31 years service.

Sam Butler retires from the Gatehouse at the end of April after 8 years service.

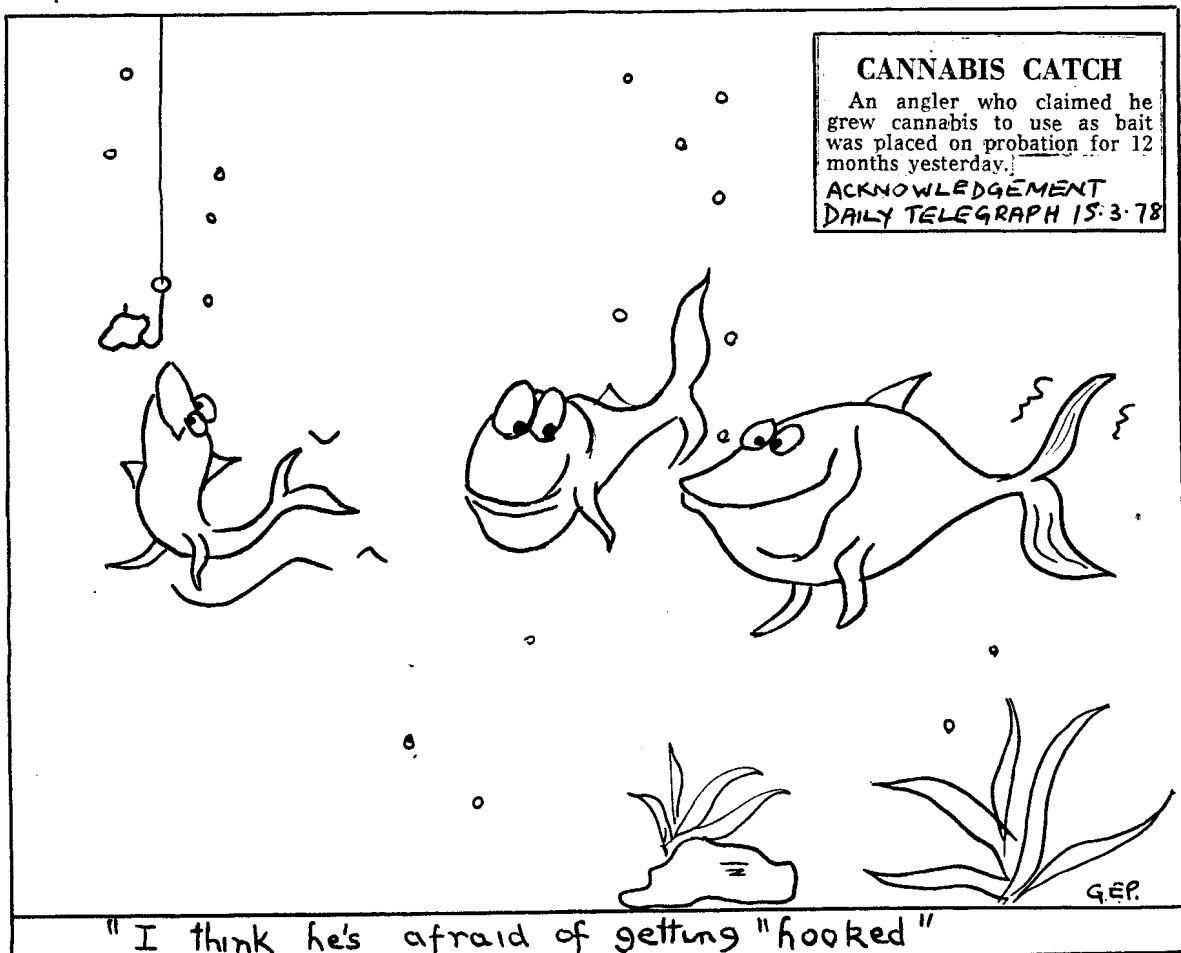
We send to both of the above our thanks for their efforts on behalf of the Company, and our best wishes for a long and happy retirement.

## THANKS TO

Viv Shepherd who has agreed to stay on on a part time basis until we can find a new Typing Pool Supervisor.

# Diary of Events

DATE	EVENT	FOR INFORMATION
April 25, 26, 27	Badminton Tournament (Qualifying Rounds)	Vic Banks
April 28th	Last day for entries to Billiards Tournament	Geoff Holder
April 29th	Sea Angling Trip	Pete Walton
May 8th	Last day for contributions to Bush Telegraph	Editorial Board
Early May	Badminton Tournament Finals	Vic Banks
May 15th	Sea Angling Trip	Pete Walton
May 22nd	Publication Day for Bush Telegraph	Editorial Board
<u>Regular Events</u>		
Tuesdays	Badminton Tennis	Vic Banks Terry Alleyne
Wednesdays	Tennis	Terry Alleyne
Thursdays	Badminton Air Pistol Shooting Tennis	Vic Banks Denis Groombridge Terry Alleyne



"I think he's afraid of getting "hooked"

# View from the Top

In the second discussion with the Editorial Board, Mr Banks spoke primarily about staff recruitment, and the necessity to expand in certain areas due to the increased volume of work compared with previous years. Active recruitment is in progress especially in Metallurgy, Polymers, Control Engineering and Project Engineering. At present the recruitment campaign was not fully satisfying the specific departmental needs of R&EL for staff expansion due to a concurrently increasing staff turn-over following two years of a relatively static situation.

Concerning the development of the library facilities following the recent staff changes, Mr Banks said that the library was not being expanded as such but amalgamated with certain of Dr R.M. Black's present functions and duties. Prescott still houses the main company library, whilst that at Wood Lane is essentially a service to R&EL personnel.

With respect to the current programme of Technical Society meetings, Mr Banks stated that he was basically satisfied with the present arrangements and that the desired objectives were being achieved. He considered that a rigid time-table was not important, but that the meeting facilities should be utilised as necessary such that on-going information could always be available to the staff. In respect of technical information he also commented about one of the main functions of the BT which is to act as an additional information service and forum for the benefit of staff. To this end, he expects full co-operation and participation from his managers in contributing relevant items of interest in achieving these aims (cf this month's article on Optical Fibre Cables).

In conclusion, Mr Banks mentioned a most encouraging response to the New Markets Technology Panel venture (this is covered more fully in the pages of the current BT).

Whilst the BT board realizes that new information or comment 'from the top' may not be available each and every month, we appreciate the opportunity afforded by Mr Banks for these informal but informative talks.

---

## Technical Society

Following the success of the first four meetings it is hoped to arrange one or two more before taking a summer break. Unfortunately difficulties have arisen as some potential speakers have had other urgent commitments which have prevented the fixing of firm dates for the Society meetings. Please watch notice boards and BT Memory Joggers for further details.

# Any More Bright Ideas?

The Secretary of the New Markets Technology Panel reports that to date 23 proposals and 7 suggestions have been submitted by Wood Lane personnel. Proposals indicate specific markets and means whereas suggestions present possibilities without specific means.

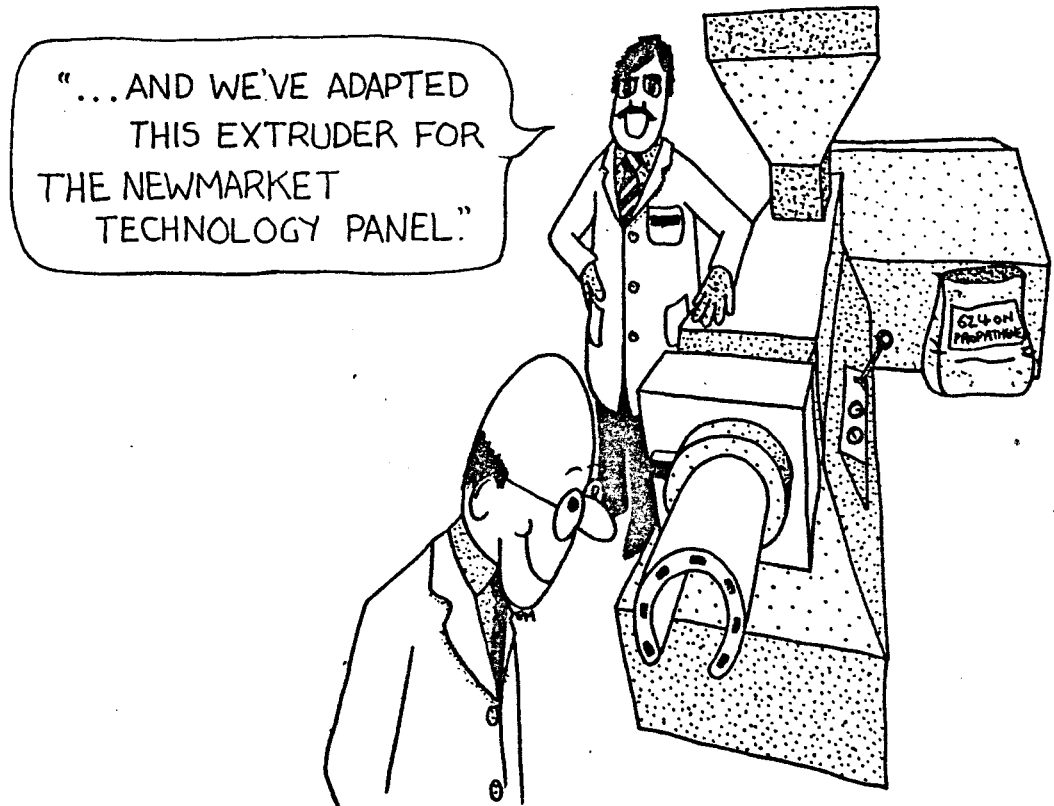
At a recent Panel Meeting, eleven proposals were considered and a new Panel Meeting is arranged for the near future to consider the remainder. Action decisions will be taken only when all the proposals and suggestions have been considered.

Quite a number of proposals would not require development at Wood Lane and some of these will be submitted to the appropriate Operating Companies.

In essence the Panel has to decide firstly, does the proposal constitute a worthwhile business opportunity and secondly, is that business opportunity appropriate to BICC.

The Panel wishes to thank the staff who have submitted proposals and suggestions and to inform everybody that more proposals and suggestions are welcome.

Response to the proposal to hold a Brainstorming Session is just not enough to make a session worthwhile, but a few more participants would tip the scales. Ring 375 Jean Duffy.



# Optical Fibre Communication

K.W. Plessner

The idea of using glass fibres to carry communications signals has been with us for a long time. In 1966 two workers at STL, Kao and Hockham put forward the suggestion of transmitting light signals down an optical fibre, thus replacing the conventional copper wire. The first target was achieved by Corning Glass Works in 1970 when 1% of the total light entering a 1 km long fibre emerged at the end. Fibres currently being made can transmit light so efficiently that 75% emerges after 1 km although a figure of 40% is more usual. Good quality optical fibre is available now and the international research effort into even better fibres and optical communication systems is considerable, our scale of activity is modest compared to some.

Active work at Wood Lane started in 1972 with a contract from the Post Office concerned with cable design. The scale of activity increased markedly in 1973/4 when we concluded agreements with Corning for the supply of optical fibres and with Plessey for co-operation in designing complete systems.

Our present activities fall into three areas - fibre making, cable making and light transmission measurements. We have been drawing fibres and coating them on the tower in HV3 (behind the machine shop) for some years now although we only started drawing "optical" fibres last year but in the near future we hope to expand our fibre making activities quite substantially. Optical fibres have two layers: the core, where the light propagates and the cladding which stops the light leaking out sideways. We made fibres with a plastics coating as the cladding and we have made some from all-glass "preforms". The preforms are made in the Chemistry Department on a glass lathe, where doped silica is deposited on the inside of a silica tube by chemical vapour deposition (CVD). The doped silica later becomes the core of the fibre, while the silica tube becomes the cladding.

Fibres need very careful protection in cables, whose design depends on the particular application. We have been concentrating on cables for Post Office applications, where long lengths will be drawn into underground ducts, but we have also made some cable for short data links. Cable making is very much a joint effort with the BTCL factories and as a particular design becomes established the factory takes over most of the work.

The measurement of light transmission down a fibre, which may be in a cable, involves quite elaborate optics and electronics. In one set of measurements we must arrange for a 25  $\mu\text{m}$  spot of light to be centered accurately on the 62.5  $\mu\text{m}$  core of our fibre, in another measurement we are dealing with a nanosecond pulse and its change of shape.

Proper commercial exploitation of optical fibre communication is still some way off, though some replacement of metallic cables by optical ones in future Post Office junction and trunk circuits is reasonably certain. It is possible that the development of broad-band services to the subscriber will be stimulated by the existence of optical fibre. Some military applications are rather nearer to realization. Certainly research on the subject is flourishing all over the world and many trial systems are being installed. We have sold a considerable length of cable to the Post Office and this is now operating between Martlesham and Ipswich. The cable on the several drums that have lately been standing about in the McFadzean building are for our own trial over a 13 km route between Slough and Maidenhead.

---

## Margaret Kingston

"Things will never be quite the same again in the Library at Wood Lane" was the sentiment expressed by Dr Peter McNeill on the occasion of the retirement presentation to Margaret Kingston. The sentiment was echoed by the very large number of staff who had gathered to wish Margaret every happiness after 25 years at Wood Lane.

Dr McNeill said that before joining BICC Margaret had served in the WAAF during the war and then took a 1st class honours degree in Chemistry and Pure and Applied Maths from The University of Wales at Cardiff. She then joined British Resin Products until the day in 1953 when she came to work in the Rubber and Plastics (now Polymers) Department. It was in 1959 that she took up residence in the Library where she combined the role of Librarian with that of translator of technical literature from at least six European languages, services for which many people had reason to be very thankful.

Thanking everyone for their kind wishes and gifts (a Rollei 35B camera and The Times Concise Atlas of the World) Margaret said that she had never intended to stay very long at Wood Lane, but although things didn't work out that way she had certainly enjoyed her stay at Wood Lane.

A photograph of the presentation appears on the last page.

---

The Bush Telegraph editorial staff, past and present, would like to take this opportunity of thanking Margaret for her many contributions over the years. We hope she will continue to enjoy reading the magazine during a long and happy retirement.



# Puntoon

It's a MISS TERRY to us why NUN OFU have found SIR FISHER time to send us your puntoons. You're an idle, shiftless, uninspiring lot, who probably wouldn't enter even if the prize were a case of champagne and a night out with Raquel Welch or James Hunt, unless we MAJOR DOIT. Actually the prize is an illustrated diploma, but we might persuade David Green to throw himself at your feet with a bottle of Babycham if you're desperate.

Just in case you couldn't work out last month's three drawings they were,

- I - GRANDMA NEEAY
- II - MICK STOCKY
- III - DEACON TAMMY NASHUN

---

## The "Rat Run"

### CONINGHAM AREA

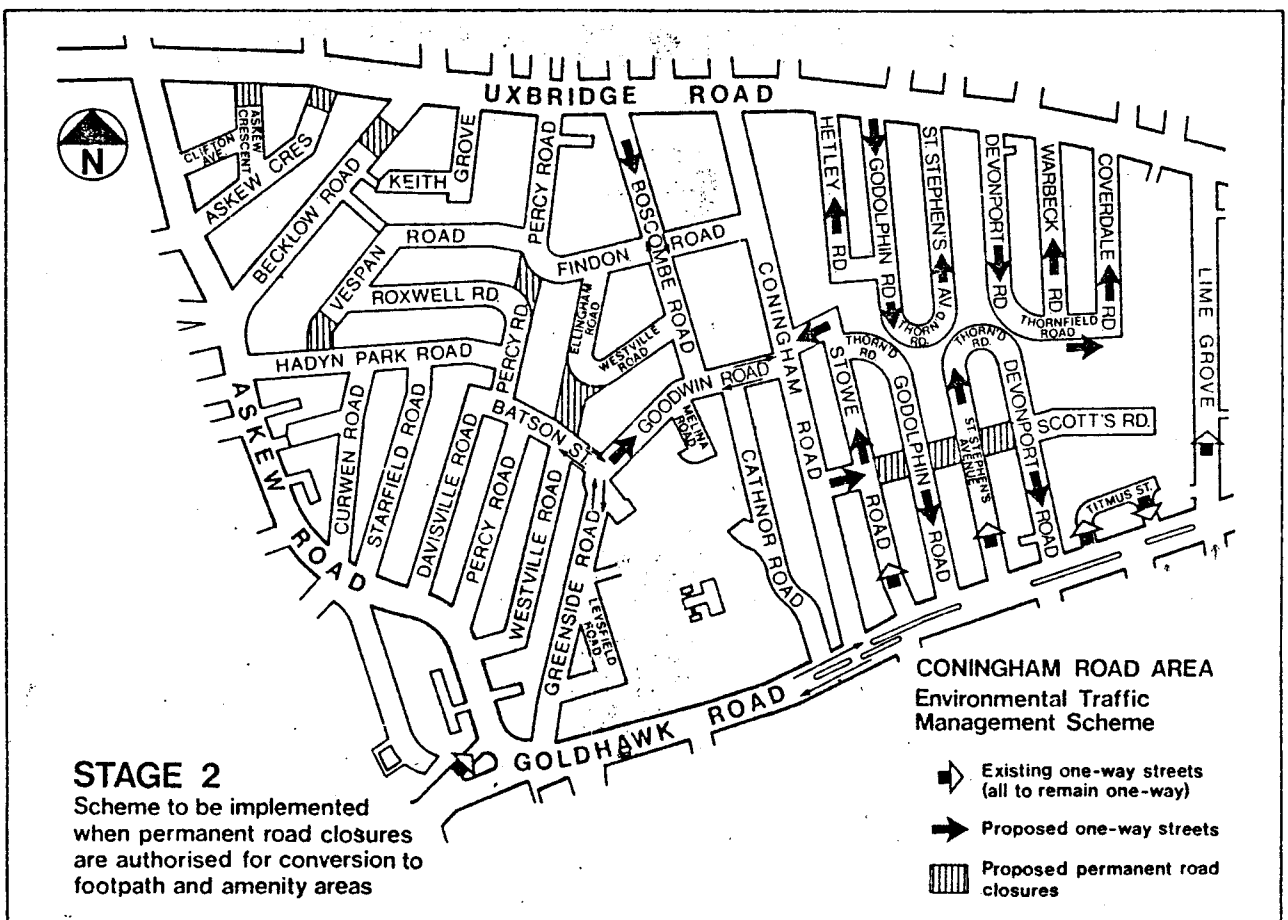
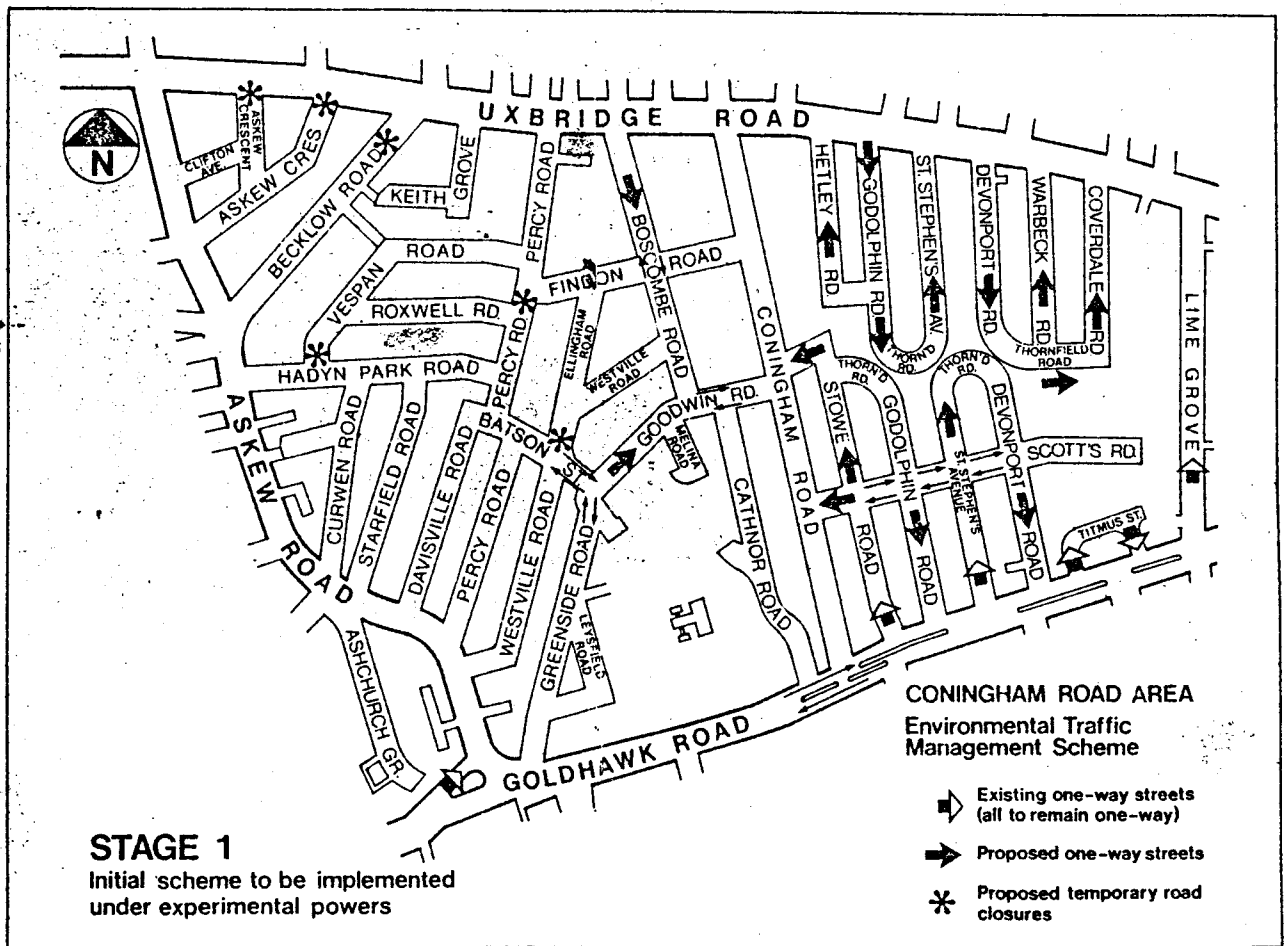
### EXPERIMENTAL TRAFFIC SCHEME

An experimental traffic scheme involving road closures and one way roads has been put into operation in the area bounded by Uxbridge Road in the North, Goldhawk Road in the South, Lime Grove in the East and Askew Road in the West, an area known by some as the "rat run". See Stage 1 map.

The scheme which is designed to prevent through traffic using the area for short cuts will, in its experimental stage, run for up to 18 Months from March 21st 1978.

If the experiment is a success the scheme will become permanent as indicated on Stage 2 map.

A more detailed plan can be seen in Shepherds Bush Library.



# New Telephone System

Installation of the new PABX is well advanced. The exchange equipment is located on the ground floor of McFadzean occupying the whole of Ken Ffitch's old office plus a slice of the cloak/projection room which adjoins the boardroom. This siting has been necessary to comply with Post Office engineering and safety regulations.

The new system is the Thorn Ericsson ARD 561/7 employing relay and crossbar switching. It is designed to handle internal and external calls, and will eventually form part of the BICC private network (see The Link - October 1976). The Wood Lane exchange will initially have a capacity of 180 extensions, although not all of these will be used. The number of external lines will be increased. The exchange will have the capability to increase to 270 extensions in the future if required.

The present switchboard will be closed and replaced with a new console to be located in the reception area of McFadzean. The console will be controlled by a single operator who will act as a receptionist as well.

The existing handsets will be withdrawn and a new push-button dialling instrument will be installed. The facilities provided will fall into one of the following categories,

- (a) Internal only
- (b) As (a), plus receives all incoming external calls
- (c) As (b), plus external calls via operator
- (d) As (c), plus direct dialling local calls.
- (e) As (c), plus direct dialling local and trunk calls.

Arrangements have already been made within each department concerning location and category of facility required.

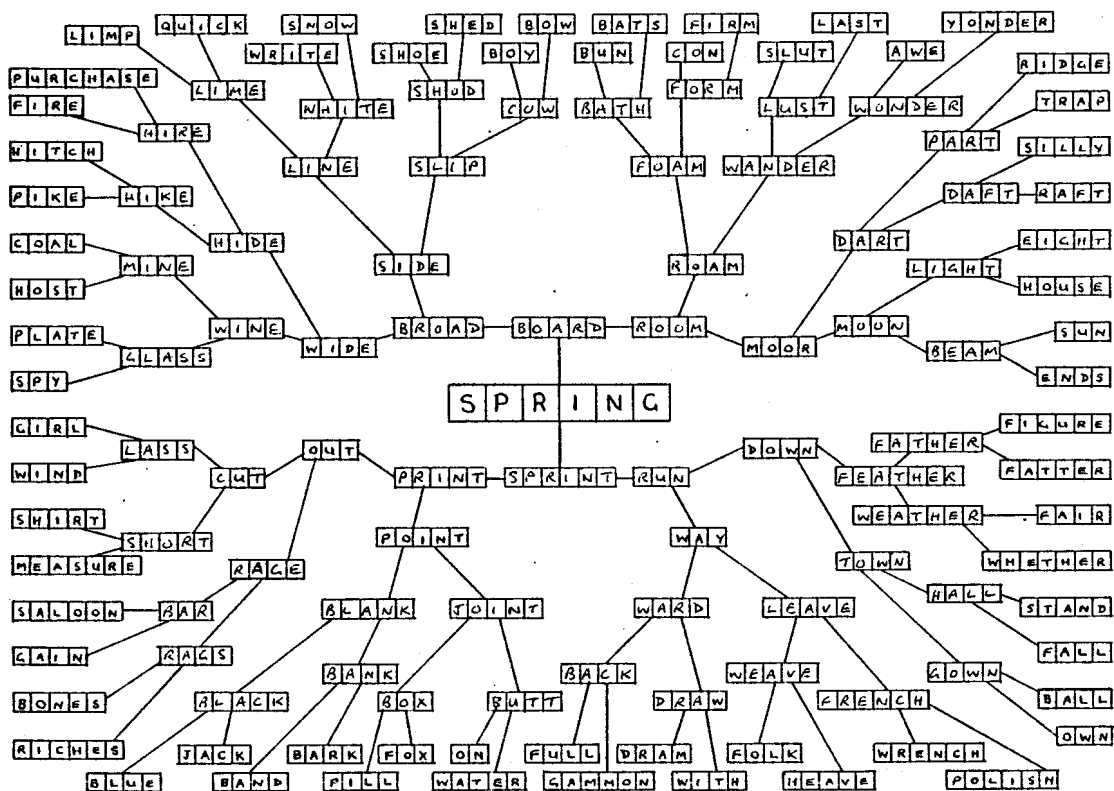
Alperton will come into the Wood Lane internal network.

The new system will contain a number of modern features such as automatic transfer from one extension to another without recourse to the operator, and the ability to make an enquiry of a third party during a conversation. Fuller details of the operational side will be available before the change-over date in mid-July. The latest information from John Littler is that the work is proceeding according to schedule.

It will not be until 1979 that the system will plug-in to the BICC network. Until that time calls to other units of the Company will continue to be "external" calls.

# Family Tree

Of the four entries received, three had acceptable variations on the original solution as depicted below, and of these three, the first name drawn from the receptacle (not, actually, a hat) was that of Keith Sichel, Polymers Department, who wins £1. Another family tree soon.



## For Sale

Newhome Gas Cooker, 4 burners, grill, oven, £10.

2 kW and 3 kW electric fires, teak side panels, £8 and £10.

Double-drainer stainless steel sink unit, approximately 5 foot long with 3 drawers and five cupboards, £8.

Arthur Boardman 316.

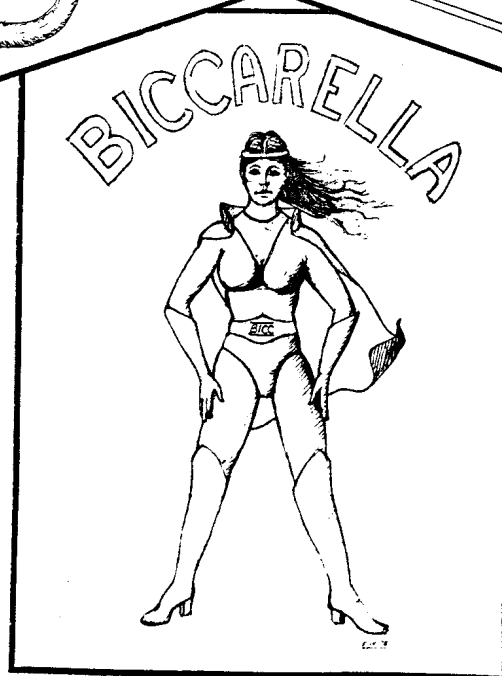
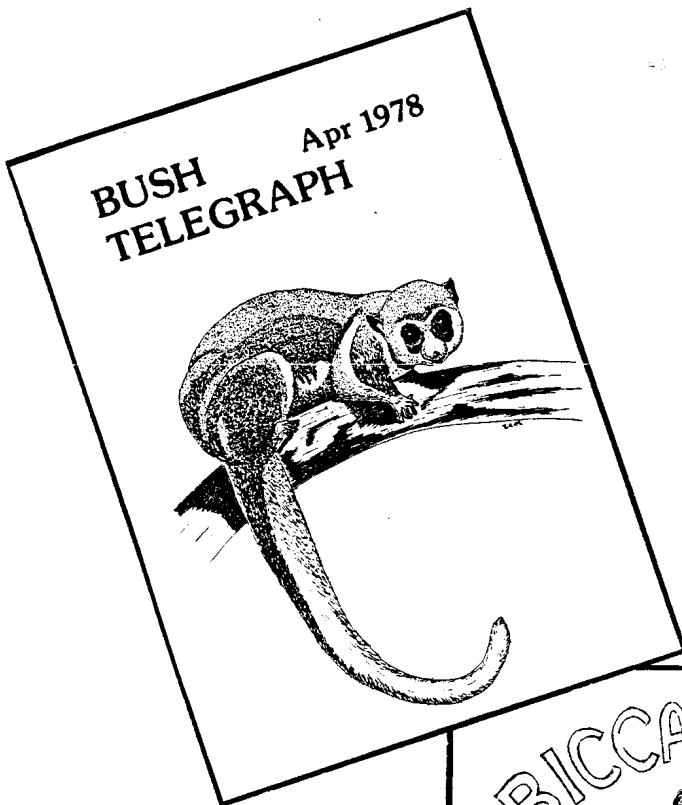
### HOLIDAY ACCOMMODATION

2 self-contained Flatlets in Newlyn, a Cornish fishing village. Overlooking sea. One flat sleeps two people, the other four. £20-£40 per week.

Contact Mary Owen (324).

# Cover Competition

In response to our appeal for BT cover designs three further entries were received by a much surprised member of the Editorial Board at the eleventh (and a bit) hour. A total of 5 designs were received by the close, one from each of the following locations; Prescott Library, Machine Shop, Photography, Communications and Corrosion Departments. After due consideration the Board decided to award two prizes, and instead of dividing the £5 by 2 the awards have been increased to £3.50 each. These go to Bob Maidlow for the 'Bush Baby' and George Price for the 'Telegraph-Cable'. A third design by Simon Stannard-Powell was highly commended, but thought possibly more suitable for page 3 than the cover. These three basic designs are shown below and we would like to take this opportunity of thanking everybody who entered.



# The History of Electric Wires and Cables

PART 5: GUTTA PERCHA

By R.M. Black

The answer to the problem of preventing moisture getting into the cable was to be found in the natural thermoplastic material which became known as gutta percha. This was first introduced into this country by the Tradescants, a father and son both of whom were christened John, in the middle of the seventeenth century. The first reference to the material occurs in a book dated 1656 by John Tradescant the Younger, entitled "Musaeum Tradescantianum, or a collection of Rarities preserved at South Lambeth, near London." This contained a description of "the plyable mazer wood, being warmed in water, will work to any form." A mazer was a hardwood drinking bowl or goblet. No trace of the mazer wood can be found however in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford where the Tradescant collections were deposited and which were to form the basis of the museum.

Gutta Percha, under its own, native, name was reintroduced into Europe in 1843. The first specimens, consisting of a riding whip "made of the concrete milk of a tree indigenous in Singapore called Gutta percha by the Malays, also a specimen of the concrete milk in a lump (it becomes ductile by being placed in hot water)" were brought from the Malay Peninsula by Jose d'Almeida, a Portuguese engineer in that year. A few months later, however, Dr. William Montgomerie, a surgeon in the service of the East India Company brought back a few specimens which were exhibited at the Society of Arts. In the records of the Society we read:-

30th November 1843 "the joint committee of Chemistry, Colonies and Trade took into consideration specimens of a substance called gutta percha from Singapore sent to the Society by Dr. Montgomerie."

23rd January 1845 "with Prof. E. Solly in the chair it was resolved that this substance appears to be a very valuable article and might be employed with great advantage in many of the arts and manufactures of the country."

19th March 1845 "Mr. Francis Whishaw (the Secretary) described the specimens and shewed a piece of pipe and a lathe band of gutta percha made by him. Dr. Montgomerie's specimens were as follows:-

- one bottle of the juice
- specimens of thin sheets (resembling scraps of leather)
- a spongy mass as it concretes in a vessel
- the substance formed into a mass by agglutinating the thin sheets by means of hot water."

It was shortly after this meeting that a Mr. Christopher Nickels induced Messrs. Wilkinson and Jewsbury, a firm doing business with Singapore, to import a small quantity for experimental purposes. Nickels together with his partner Charles Keene was later to form the Gutta Percha Company.

## William Siemens and Michael Faraday

In the Company Publication "The Telcon Story" we read:-  
"Many shrewd scientists and business men were attending the weekly meetings of the Society of Arts, when gutta percha was discussed, and in consequence they became conversant with the material's unique properties. On one occasion Michael Faraday remarked to his friend William Siemens that such a substance being impervious to damp, might prove very useful as an insulator of electric current, whereupon Siemens obtained a piece from the Secretary and sent it to his brother in the Prussian army with the suggestion that it might be tried on the German underground telegraph cables, whose insulation had been troublesome. There is no doubt that Faraday's imagination led to the development of the submarine cable as we know it today."

The evidence that Michael Faraday played this historical role in the development of the submarine cable is open to some doubt, and at a recent week-end meeting arranged by the IEE on the History of Electrical Engineering Mr. Barker, in an interesting paper entitled "Early Attempts at Submarine Telegraphy" writes:-

"Montgomerie sent samples to the Royal Society of Arts and various members examined the material. One was Cromwell Varley, the telegraph engineer, famous for the Varley Loop Test, who used some to repair a pair of shoes. (!) Several books state that Faraday was one of the first people to test gutta percha but I have been unable to find evidence of this."

The first mention of gutta percha in Faraday's Diary is in the entry for the 5th February, 1848 and this was followed by a letter to the Philosophical Magazine in March 1848 in which he drew attention to the use of the material in electrical insulation and concluded:-

"All I desire in this note is to make known its use in the arrangement of extemporary or permanent electrical apparatus for the advantage of working philosophers, both juvenile and adult."

But this was three years after the meeting at the Society of Arts, of which Faraday does not appear to have been a member, and well after commercial exploitation of gutta percha had begun. It is likely that if Faraday had in fact heard about the material, he had forgotten about it, as at that time he had been suffering from some five years of acute physical debility which precluded all but his most important activities, left large gaps in his daily Diary or Laboratory Record and gave rise to a memory which became progressively worse as the years advanced. In 1845 Faraday was 52 but Carl Wilhelm Siemens was only 22 years old.

Siemens who was definitely present at the March Meeting of the Society of Arts, was born on the 4th May 1823 on a farm at Lenthe in the Province of Hanover, which was then under the same sovereignty as Great Britain. He first visited this country at the age of nineteen, returning to Germany to gain practical experience in an engineering works at Magdeburg. He returned to this country in 1844. The brother in the Prussian Army, Werner von Siemens was later to write:-

"By chance my brother William in London had sent me as a curiosity a sample of a substance which had recently appeared

in the English Market, gutta percha. The remarkable properties of this material of becoming plastic in the heated state, and when cooled of being a good insulator of electricity, aroused my attention. I covered some pieces of wire with the heated material, and found they were thoroughly insulated. At my suggestion the (Prussian Telegraph) Commission gave orders for more considerable experiments with such wires insulated with gutta percha which were begun in the summer of 1846 and continued in 1847."

The first underground telegraph line insulated with gutta percha was laid from Berlin to Gross Beren in the summer of 1848 and subsequently over 3,000 miles of such wire was produced by the firm of Siemens and Halske for the Prussian Post Office. J.G. Halske was instrumental in the construction of a sampler press by which the insulation was applied to the wire.

#### Thomas Hancock and Henry Bewley

When Dr. Montgomerie came home to receive a Gold Medal from the Society of Arts for his introduction of nutmeg (which he had grown on his own plantation) into this country, he must have brought some more samples of gutta percha with him for he left some with Samuel Matthews who sold waterproof clothing in the Strand. Matthews was an agent for the clothing manufactured by Charles Mackintosh, one of whose partners Thomas Hancock took more than a passing interest in it. This interest was to result in the formation twenty years later of the Telegraph Construction and Maintenance Company, although the history of its formation is somewhat complex.

There were three Hancock brothers of the twelve children of a certain Marlborough cabinet maker who play a part in the story; Thomas, later regarded as the father of the rubber industry, Charles, the youngest, an artist addicted to experimenting with projects of commercial interest, and Walter, one year older than Charles and known for his invention of the steam omnibus. They appear to have been a very talented family.

Thomas told Charles about the interesting properties of gutta percha and Charles proceeded to incorporate the material into a patent specification for "Certain improvements in cork and other stoppers and a new composition or substance which may be used as a substitute for and in preference to, cork, and a Method or Methods of manufacturing the said composition or substance into bungs, stoppers and other useful articles."

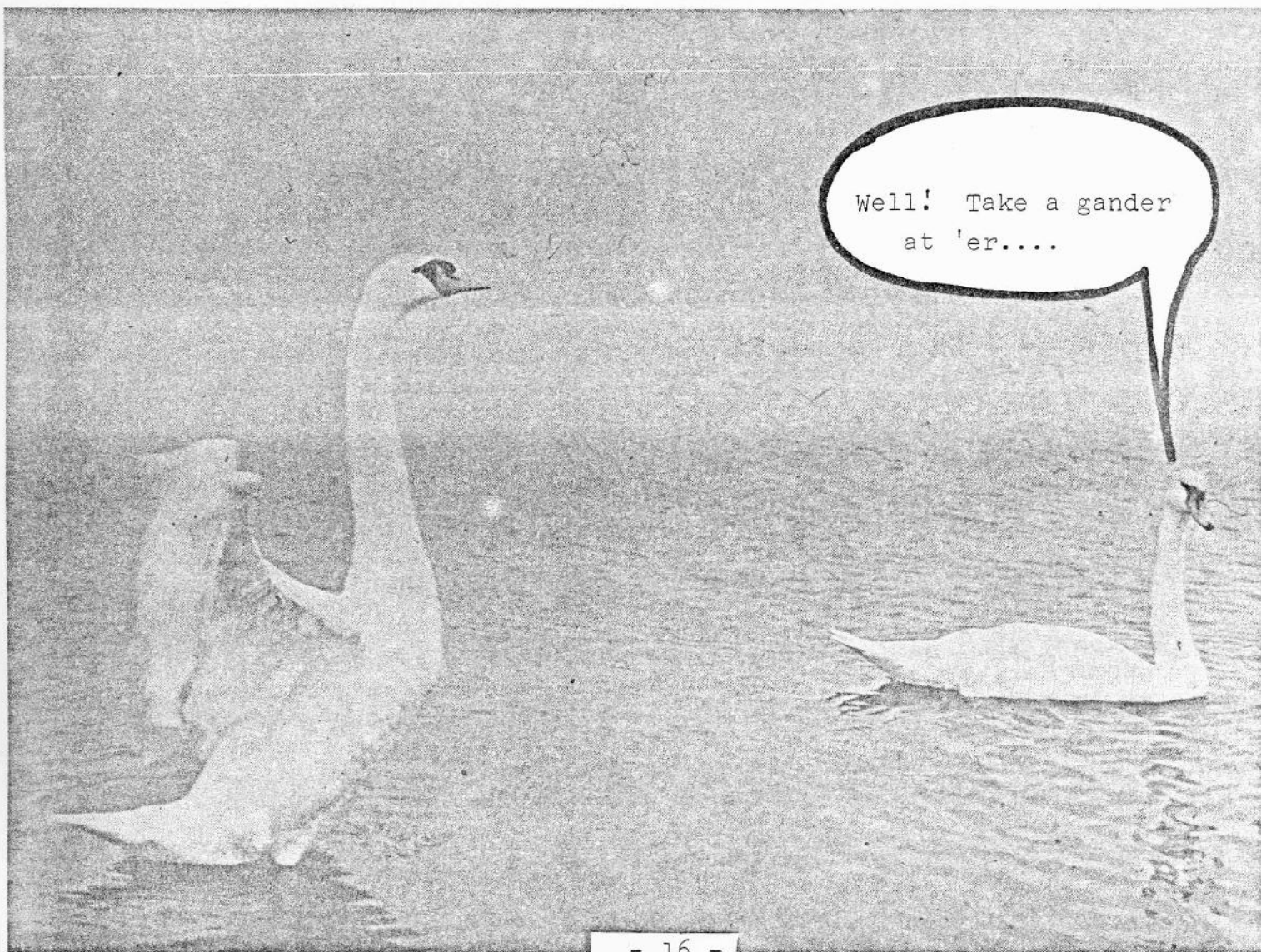
On the 4th February 1845 Charles Hancock was approached by a Dublin chemist Henry Bewley who was interested in the manufacture of soda water and consequently in the patented bung mixture. In 1846 Nickels and Keene formed the Gutta Percha Company and Charles Hancock who had reached an agreement with Henry Bewley whereby they would both trade under their own names, entered into an agreement with Christopher Nickels to take out joint patents in all uses of gutta percha other than those worked by Bewley.



As the authors of The Telcon Story put it:-  
"Charles Hancock was brilliant, but no business man. Bewley was in Dublin; Nickels and Keene were busy in their rubber factory; Thomas Hancock was threatening to compete in a big way and Charles could not afford to devote to his inventions time which should have been more profitably employed in painting. So it was amicably agreed by all parties that in order to pursue the experiments necessary for effectively working the several patents and to manufacture articles for sale, Charles Hancock should be installed in a factory and be compensated for the time he spent there by a salary of £800 in addition to his royalties."

Bewley was to take a partner, called Reynolds, with whom he was to fall out, Charles was to convert Bewley's extrusion machine for making gutta percha tubing into one for insulating conductors and thus to make possible the Brett brothers' cross-channel cable in 1850. In 1848 both Charles and Walter Hancock were to be dismissed from the Gutta Percha Company and to set up on their own in a factory at West Ham as the West Ham Gutta Percha Company. This company was soon to go bankrupt and Walter was to die in about 1851 leaving Charles to enter into an agreement with S.W. Silver and Company which was to result in the formation of The India Rubber and Gutta Percha Company of Silvertown.

To be continued.



# Thank You

Dear Friends,

I'm afraid there were many of you I couldn't thank personally for your very generous gifts. I shall certainly treasure them - not least the card with its wonderful collection of signatures!

I also want to thank you all for a very happy time at Wood Lane. I enjoyed working with you and for you, and I hope I shall see you again from time to time.

Best Wishes,

Margaret Kingston

---

Dear Friends,

It was with mixed feelings that I left Wood Lane. Sadness at leaving so many good friends behind but excitement at the prospect of beginning a new job. The excitement continues because anything connected with the business of extracting 'black gold' from beneath the sea is exciting and fast moving. The sadness has begun to mellow as thoughts turn to the many happy times I had at Wood Lane.

The real purpose of writing this letter is to express my thanks for your friendship and for the marvellous gift you contributed towards. I was overwhelmed and it made leaving all the more difficult. Thank you all.

I wish each of you happiness and success in all you do and I hope to see you very soon.

I must end by thanking you for the wonderful send-off you gave me..... What did happen that Friday night anyway?

Best Wishes,

Jerry Turner

---

A brainy young boffin from BREL,  
(BSc, PhD and can't spell),  
Wrote, "I'l enta yor commp  
Four a wease and a rommp."  
Page nineteen if you'd like to as well.

# There was a young lady from .....

..... or the Limerick exposed

I will begin this article by letting the subject speak for itself as rapidly as possible:

The Limerick's a verse form complex,  
Designed to amuse not perplex,  
It deals with conjunctions,  
Natural functions  
And subtle erotic effects.

The above is recognisably a Limerick, it has the familiar rum-ti-tum rhythm and AA BB A rhyme scheme, it tells a complete story, is at least moderately amusing, and the final rhyme is something of a surprise, all the foregoing being essential features of the genre.

It is held by some authorities that the limerick is improved if it is saucy or risqué or naughty, but generally agreed that gratuitous vulgarity is to be avoided at all costs.

A slightly saucy but not vulgar limerick is now necessary, the example given below is by way of being an old favourite:

There was a young lady from Wantage  
Of whom the town clerk took advantage,  
The borough surveyor  
Insisted he pay her  
'cause he'd altered the line of her frontage.

Here two points are worth noting. Firstly the conventional indentation of the third and fourth lines, when limericks are written down. They are primarily a verbal art-form. Secondly the slight but permissible bending of the English Language in order to preserve the rhyme scheme.

Indeed this can add to the fun as in:

She laughed and called him Mr.  
Because in sport he'd kr.,  
And so in spite  
That very night.  
This Mr. kr. sr.

or  
There was a young wife of Antigua  
Who said to her spouse, "what a pigua",  
He answered, "My Queen  
Is it my manners you mean,  
Or do you refer to my figua?"

Nobody knows how the Limerick got its name. It is appropriated from that of the town in Ireland for reasons never really explained, although it is known that the Limerick metre was commonly used in songs written in the Irish Language, usually dedicated to liquor, love or patriotism, throughout the eighteenth century.

However the earliest recorded appearance of the metrical form was in about 1300, in the stanzaic portion of "sumer is i-cumen in", the oldest popular song in the English Language. The form is then visible in the work of many famous

poets and writers including Shakespeare, Ben Jonson and Robert Herrick, through to the present day.

I will now quote two favourite limericks as a finale. For the first I am indebted to Isaac Asimov, well known author of science fact and fiction, who is now revealed as no mean limericist. This example also illustrates that the limerick form can be used for subjects that are abstruse, erudite and outre and tailored to a specialist audience and still be amusing:

A certain unmusical Persian  
Had a curious sort of perversion,  
He thought that the part  
That was words, was by Art,  
And was sure that the tunes were Gilbertian.

This was composed by Asimov for presentation at the Gilbert and Sullivan Society of New York.

The limerick which follows is to be treated with respect as it is certainly a classic, the equivalent of Paradise Lost or The Wasteland.

While Titian was mixing rose madder  
His model reclined on a ladder,  
This position to Titian  
Suggested coition  
So he leapt up the ladder and 'ad 'er.

Keith Sichel

---

And now a limerick competition. Here is the first line to give you a start:-

"A brainy young boffin from BREL"

Complete the remaining 4 lines and send your entries, you can submit as many as you like, to Mike Hagger by Monday 8th May. A prize for the best effort.

---

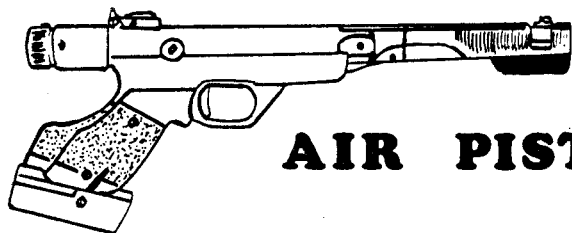
#### THE LINK

Have you noted that The Link now runs a small-ad section as a free service to readers? Advertisements should be sent direct to Prescott using the coupon in The Link. Don't forget that ads in the BT are also free.

# Section Reports

POT WHITE '78

The 1978 snooker tournament has now reached the KO stages. In group 1 Keith Elder and Stuart Castle qualified with 4 and 3 wins respectively. Similarly Mike Kendle and Clive Carroll qualified in group 3. In group 2 Geoff Holder won all 4 matches but Tony Jordan qualified with 2 wins on a better points difference from Les Marriage. In group 4 Terry Alleyne and Glyn Stainthorpe each had 3 wins with Terry leading the group by the narrowest of margins - a points difference of 1. Since completing his matches Glyn has left the Company so the third placed player, "Johnnie" Walker, qualified with 2 wins. This means that the 4 top seeds headed the 4 groups. Since then, however, there has been a distinct wilting of the seeds. In one completed quarter-final Geoff Holder won a very close match against Clive Carroll by 2 frames to 1. Having won the first frame Geoff let the second frame slip and only won the decider by potting an easy black after Clive narrowly missed a difficult attempt at a pot. In another quarter-final Keith Elder played utter rubbish in the first frame against Stuart Castle and deservedly lost by a large margin. In the second frame Keith smashed up the reds in his opening shot and in went the white for his pains. Stuart immediately countered by potting 2 reds and the white in his first shot. This sudden change in fortune set Keith going and he won this frame by a substantial margin. The decider has still to be played.



## AIR PISTOL SHOOTING



Shooting Averages at 30.3.78

Member of

Pos.		Ave.	Pos.		Ave.
1	Joe Lou	44.0	6	Dave Marriage	31.3
2	Denis Groombridge	40.6	7	Roger Roberts	29.5
3	Bob Maidlow	37.5	8	Pat Donovan	28.5
4	Tom Doré	34.3	9	Janet Walters	24.0
5	Pete Walters	31.5	10	Christine Roberts	12.8

## BADMINTON SECTION

The draw into 4 groups has been made and handicaps fixed (!) for the Spring Tournament. Bruce Keen and Glenys Derrick are the back-markers on "minus 7", whilst Adrian Cole and Angela Thornton are at the other end of the scale on "plus 6". The winners of each group will play a final pool early in May.

HORTICULTURAL SECTION

We hope to order another batch of HUMUSH Matured Mushroom Compost. The price for a minimum order of 25 bags is £1.52 per 80 lb bag. (c.f. £3.70 for single bags delivered direct). Please give your order to me as soon as possible.

Diary Dates

May 24-26	Chelsea Flower Show
July 8-9	Rose '78 Show
Sept 26-28	Great Autumn Show

We have some Chelsea tickets left, and free admission to the RHS Wisley, and RNHS Gardens.

We receive the RHS monthly journal. Will anyone wishing to be placed on the revised circulation list please contact me. Similarly if anyone would be interested in the circulation of other journals.

Frank Walker (279)

TENNIS SECTION

With the lighter evenings (one daren't say Summer) coming, it's time to think of Tennis. Weather permitting a start will be made in the last week of April. Usual venue (Wormholt Park); details from Terry Alleyne (tel. 208).

# Billiards Tournament

With the Snooker Tournament reaching its final stages, the proposed Billiards Tournament can now get under way.

The following people have already intimated their intention to play:

Pete Walters, Keith Sichel, Clive Carroll, Tony Jordan, Wally Mascarenhas, Les Marriage, Keith Elder, and myself.

If there are any others - surely there must be? ----- will they please fill in the slip below and return it to me not later than Friday 28th April.

-----  
To G.F. Holder, Polymers Dept.

Please enter my name for the 1978 Billiards Tournament.

..... (Name)

..... (Dept.)

..... (Telephone No.)

## Film Society

The 1978 Annual General Meeting of the Film Society was held in the small Conference Room at 1 p.m. on Tuesday, 7th March. The six members of the committee were present together with five other club members.

The meeting was opened by the Chairman, Richard Grigsby, who suggested that the minutes of last year's Meeting were accepted without reading as they had been circulated beforehand. This was agreed, proposed by Ted Morrison and seconded by Tom Bonikowski. Richard gave the Chairman's report on the 1977/78 season which was generally very successful, followed by Ted Cooke's statement of the financial position that showed the film society had stayed within its budget for the year.

All the present members of the committee agreed to serve for a further year, and because the next season was to be the Silver Jubilee of the society, Ted Morrison, Tom Ruben and Mike Dennis had been asked, and agreed, to return to the committee, to assist with this special season. Albert Pinching, who was present, said that he would also like to join the committee for this year.

Following a brief "any other business" session, the meeting closed at 1.30 p.m. with the Chairman thanking those who attended.

Annette Mattock

The programme at the NFT for the remainder of April is shown below, full details are in the booklet kept in the library:-

20 Thu	NFT1	6.30	Electra	EST	25 Tue	NFT2	6.15 8.30	Our Last Spring	EST
20 Thu	NFT1	8.45	The Trojan Women		28 Wed	NFT1	6.30	Satan's Brew	EC/EST
20 Thu	NFT2	6.15 8.30	Riddles of the Sphinx		26 Wed	NFT1	8.45	Chinese Roulette	EST
21 Fri	NFT1	6.30	The World on a Wire - Part 1	EC	26 Wed	NFT2	6.15 8.30	The Wastrel	
21 Fri	NFT1	8.45	The World on a Wire - Part 2	EC	27 Thu	NFT1	6.30 8.45	Sebastiane	
21 Fri	NFT1	11.00 p.m.	Silent Movie		27 Thu	NFT2	6.15 8.30	The Day the Fish Came Out	
21 Fri	NFT2	6.15 8.30	Laugh, Clown, Laugh	PA	28 Fri	NFT1	6.30	Bolwieser Part 1	EC
22 Sat	NFT1	4.15	Fear Eats the Soul	EST	28 Fri	NFT1	8.45	Bolwieser Part 2	EC
22 Sat	NFT1	6.30	Martha	EC	28 Fri	NFT1	11.00 p.m.	Valley of the Dolls	
22 Sat	NFT1	8.45	Bleak Moments		28 Fri	NFT2	6.15 8.30	Morgenrot/Men Like These	EST
22 Sat	NFT2	4.00	Journey Back to Oz (all seats bookable at 60p) (J.)		29 Sat	NFT1	4.15	I Only Want You to Love Me	EST
22 Sat	NFT2	6.15 8.30	A Matter of Dignity	EC/EST	29 Sat	NFT1	6.30	The Tenderness of Wolves	EST
23 Sun	NFT1	3.30	Effi Briest	EST	29 Sat	NFT1	8.45	Shadow of Angels	EST
23 Sun	NFT1	6.30	The Moon over the Alley		29 Sat	NFT2	3.45	The Nutty Professor (all seats bookable at 60p) (J.)	
23 Sun	NFT1	8.25	Fox	EST	29 Sat	NFT2	5.45	Mare's Tail	
23 Sun	NFT2	4.00	Journey Back to Oz (all seats bookable at 60p) (J.)		29 Sat	NFT2	8.30	Joan Mellen Illustrated Lecture: Masculinity in the American Film (all seats bookable at 80p)	
23 Sun	NFT2	6.15 8.30	Separation		30 Sun	NFT1	4.15	The Sudden Fortune of the Poor People of Kombach	EST
24 Mon-28 Fri	NFT2	2.30 daily	THE TAMING OF THE SHREW (J.)		30 Sun	NFT1	6.30 8.45	Nora Helmer	EST
24 Mon	NFT1	6.00	Zorba the Greek		30 Sun	NFT2	4.00	The Nutty Professor (all seats bookable at 60p) (J.)	
24 Mon	NFT1	8.45	Fox	EST	30 Sun	NFT2	6.15 8.30	Attila 74	EST
24 Mon	NFT2	6.15 8.30	Hamlet/Lindsay Kemp Circus						
25 Tue	NFT1	6.30	Mother Küsters' Trip to Heaven	EC/EST					
25 Tue	NFT1	8.45	Fear of Fear	EC					

BFFS Award for Film Society

Towards the end of last year, the film society committee spent quite a bit of time filling in the forms for the Film Society of the Year Awards. Of the five categories, we came under the 'closed' section - that is, societies within companies, for which membership is not open to the general public.

The information needed by the British Federation of Film Societies included the history of the society, its membership, the facilities available, details of equipment, the films shown and any additional activities. We were also asked to submit brochures, programmes and publicity material produced for the season.

After a while, we were informed that we had been short-listed, but heard no further news until the National Spring Viewing Sessions, held at the National Film Theatre over the weekend of 1st/2nd April. On the Saturday evening, a number of awards are presented, including those for the Film Society of the Year. A few of us from BICC Film Society were present and very pleased to hear announced, that we were the runners-up in our category, as you can see from the copy of the certificate awarded to us.

Our forthcoming season is our Silver Jubilee - with your support, maybe we can win the top award next time.

Annette Mattock

**BRITISH FEDERATION OF FILM SOCIETIES**

**FILM SOCIETY OF THE YEAR AWARDS**

**BICC FILM SOCIETY**

has been awarded

Commendation in the "Closed" Category 1977

Presented by

*Donald Bue*

Chairman

*Donald Bue*

Secretary

*John C. Widdow*



## Hot Air Balloon Section

The latest 'gen' about our balloon is good, \_\_\_\_\_ the colour scheme and logo have been agreed and Cameron's are making progress with the construction. Briefly the balloon resembles the house flag with the BICC logo repeated thrice around the equator in letters 9 ft. high. Delivery is expected in May.

Last month we had our lecture cum slide show on Hot Air Ballooning. Many thanks to all 26 of you who attended what was a very interesting and well delivered lecture. Congratulations on a fine job and many thanks to Tom Sage of Cameron Balloons, who so kindly came up from Bristol to deliver it. Many thanks to Geoff Holder for his article, to be found elsewhere.

I have been trying to construct the diary of ballooning venues seen at the end of the article. Unfortunately it is not complete and does not include many BICC events. However one venue up the road at Wormwood Scrubs common did prompt me to include some local aviation history.

The earliest reference I can find is in 1910, when a Clement-Bayard Airship was obtained from France and based at Wormwood Scrubs. It was not a success, but by 1915 a Naval Airship Station Establishment was in full swing. An initiate, a Quirk, would spend his days in drill, lectures and study. He would be taken into the mysteries of Eta-patches, valves, sleeves, petticoats, crabpots, fabric, and ballonets.

In Feb 1915, the U-Boat campaign caused Lord Fisher, the First Sea Lord, to call into being a fleet of small gas-filled airships to patrol the coastal seas to protect shipping. The force was to be split into the larger rigid designs and the non-rigids. The latter were to be brought into service without delay and the first Submarine Scout Airship was put up in March 1915 at Kingsnorth, near Chatham. Of the various Naval Airship Stations, Barlow and Kingsnorth became Naval Constructional Centres and in 1917 Wormwood Scrubs concentrated on erecting non-rigid SS Airships. In addition there were the rigid constructional stations at Barlow, Cardington and Inchinnan.

In 1917 some of the now famous SS Zeros were commissioned at the Scrubs, followed in 1918 by the SS Twin Engined Airships. The North Sea Class was also produced, these carried double crews and flights up to 100 hours were carried out \_\_\_\_\_ much of this in the shadow of the prison and almost within the (futuristic) sight of BR&EL!

### Late News

We've just heard from the Civil Aviation Authority that our balloon has been granted the registration G-BREL.

## Ballooning Events in 1978

April	- Teach-ins at Wood Lane*
May 6th, 7th	- Priston, Bath (BBAC)
May 26th, 29th	- National Championships, Prelims
July	- London Meet, Wormwood Scrubs (BBAC)
Aug 1st-5th	- Tyneside Summer Exhibition (BICC)
Aug 23rd, 28th	- Villiers Meet, Devon (BBAC)
Sept 9th-16th	- Nationals (venue to be chosen)
Sept 30th-Oct 1st	- Irish Meet, Southern Ireland

\* See separate announcements for dates.

# «Transports Of Delight»

The Main Hall on the evening of Wednesday 29th March was the venue for an hour or so of entertainment such as has never before been seen at Wood Lane. (Well, we haven't had a Hot Air Balloon Section of the Social Club before, have we?) But entertainment it certainly was — the speaker, Tom Sage, came across as quite a "character", former press photographer, amateur mountaineer, canal boat enthusiast, patriot, and lover of the Great Outdoors.

He began the evening with lively stories of how he got into ballooning, via press photography and no end of wangling, beginning in 1965 at Cardington with a flight in a hydrogen balloon, courtesy of the RAF: the friendship begun then with Wing Commander Turnbull later led to the June 1967 flight over the Alps which was the subject of the first part of the Slide Show.

Superb photographs of the flight, from lift-off (is that the correct balloonist's term?) from a mountain village in Switzerland, taking along an ice-axe and crimpons "just in case", up to 18,000 ft. over the Matterhorn and other noted peaks, and down to a roughish landing 3000 feet up an Italian mountainside, were combined with the hilarious tale of the problems of getting balloon and equipment back to civilisation again. Tom somehow had to make the local populace understand, by sign language, that he wanted some of them to climb with him 3000 ft. back up the mountain, to rescue another mad Englishman and a balloon they couldn't see (because the Wing Co. had it all more or less wrapped up by then) and probably didn't believe in anyway. He even obtained help from the local police, despite their having arrested him for having no passport, left behind in the excitement of lift-off. At times Tom had the audience in stitches.

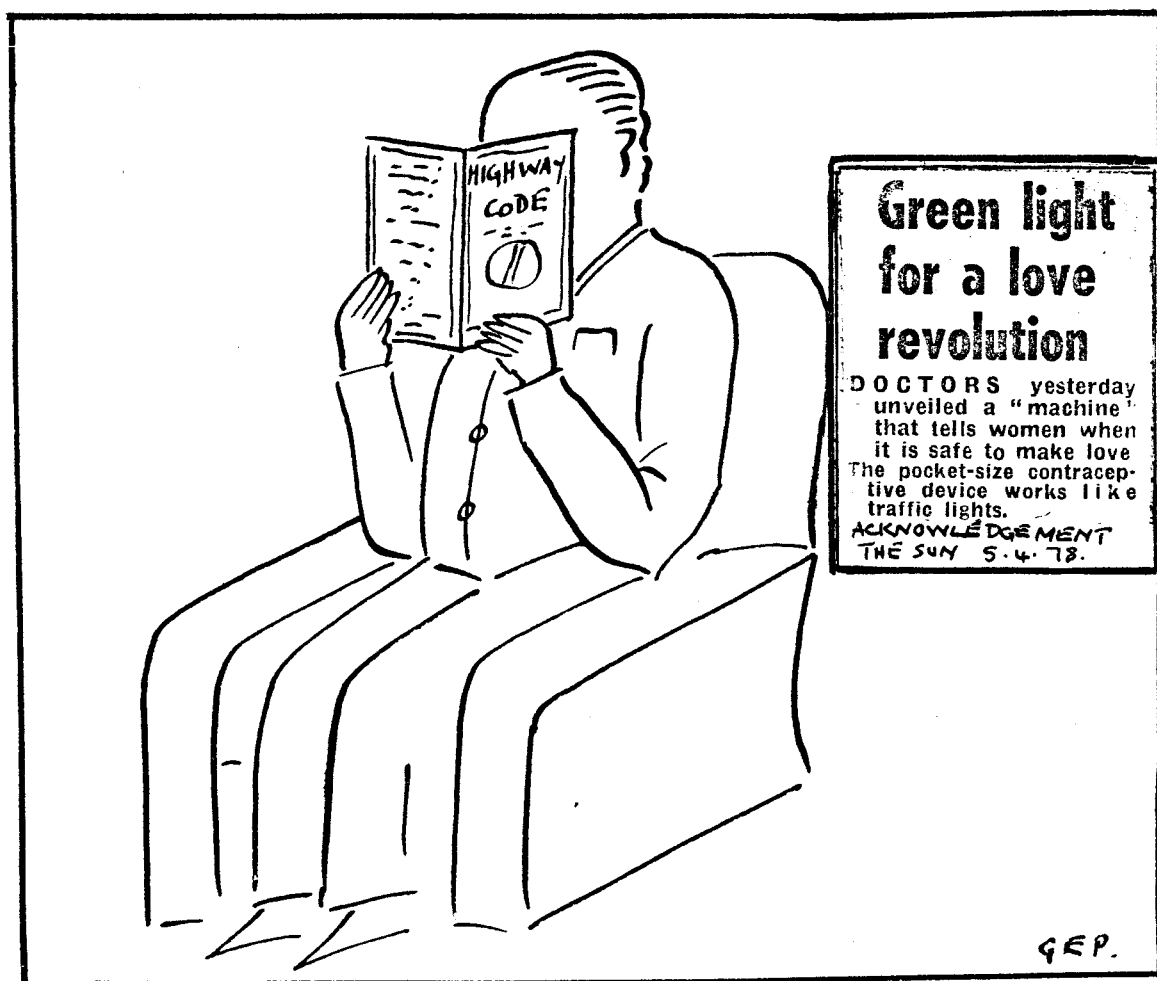
The rest of his slides, taken at various events all over the U.K. and indeed all over the world, including the World Championships, (I'm still not quite clear how one actually COMPETES in a balloon) served to illustrate the colourful, even romantic, sport that balloonists enjoy (and not least the beautiful weather they manage to arrange — the slides weren't ALL taken in the summer of '76!).

Tom Sage is of course Sales Director of the firm making our 70,000 cu.ft. balloon, Cameron Balloons, of Bristol, and many if not most of the slides naturally featured balloons designed and made by this concern: balloons of all shapes and sizes, up to the largest in the world (500,000 cu.ft.) capable of lifting 30 lager-quaffing passengers in a double-decker basket probably meant to look like a giant beer-crate, but to my mind resembling nothing so much as a wicker-work tram! (Why wicker-work? Well, it seems that even in this plastic age, it is still the best material for absorbing the shock of a rough landing, whilst also allowing easy attachment of wires and ropes and the hundred-and-one odds and ends needed on a flight). And the fanciful designs made up to advertise other commercial firms — Robertson's famous Gollies, Osram's electric light bulb (a gift for the designer, that one!) Champion sparking plugs, and believe it or not, a pair of Levi Strauss jeans with a 200 ft. inside-leg, and complete with the prominent labels which are 'de rigeur' with wearers of the more normal sizes! Airships, too; in reality fat cigar-shaped balloons with steerable fins at one end, and a Volkswagen engine driving a small propellor, capable of about 12 knots in still air.

All in all, a fascinating scene.

Bags I first in the queue, Derry!

GFH



# What's in a Name?

All the descriptions of occupations or jobs given in the centre column are true, but are arranged out of order with the names on the left. List the names in the blank column to match the descriptions, then take the specified letter from each name and rearrange to give a modern occupation.

<u>FALSE NAME</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>TRUE NAME</u>
✓BEATER	Horse Dealer	(4)
✓HORNER	Cask Maker	(3)
✓MERCER	Bit Maker, Spurrier	(3)
✓MILLER	Guitar Maker	(2)
✓COPER	Man employed to rouse game	(3)
✓MENDICANT	Proprietor of corn mill	(6)
✓WHEELWRIGHT	Shoemaker	(4)
✓BOWYER	Person converting hide into leather	(2)
✓CORDWAINER	Worker in tin	(4)
✓COOPER	Maker of spoons and combs	(1)
✓GLEANER	Maker of bows	(5)
✓NAVY	Stable hand at an inn	(3)
✓OSTLER	Horse Doctor	(2)
✓TANNER	Dealer in silks and cloth	(4)
✓LORINER	Maker of wheels	(11)
✓SPECKY	Person employed in cutting canals	(1)
✓FARRIER	Gatherer of corn left by reapers	(5)
✓WHITESMITH	Chief harpooner on Whaling Ship	(4)
✓LUTHIER	Beggar	(6)

Answers to Peter Revell, Chemistry Department, by noon on Monday 8th May. A small prize awaits the lucky winner.

## DECORATING MATERIALS

Fred Palmer (Tel. 279) advises us that he has managed to obtain a trade card for cash-only purchases at:

J.P. McDougall Ltd. (formerly Chiswall Ltd.)

which is situated off Hammersmith Grove.

Discount is only available on production of the card, which may be used by any member of staff on application to Fred or, in his absence, Frank Walker.

Decorating materials, tools, bathroom fittings etc. are available at McDougall's, but staff borrowing the card are asked to return it immediately after use.

# Friday Night Fever

The last of the evening commuters had left on trains and buses, rumbling faintly in the distance. It had been dark for an hour and a fine drizzle was beginning to fall as my accomplice and I drove into the deserted car park. It was as we had feared, too quiet for our liking. As we alighted from the van a shaft of light struck out from the fifth-floor window, as if to beckon us forward. Could it be a glimmer of hope? With grim determination we trudged across the puddle-strewn tarmac in search of our destiny.

It was somewhat brighter and warmer inside the building where the elevator stood, awaiting our arrival. As we ascended the dull thudding noise grew louder, and louder until we were filled by the constant rhythm. Leaving the confines of the elevator we knew it was too late to turn back now. The truth lay behind those curtains. Taking a deep breath and a firm grip on myself, I drew back the curtains. An awesome sight struck my eyes. It was the Wood Lane Disco - Empty!

But seriously though folks.....

Apart from being taken aback by the place still being practically deserted at nine o'clock, when people did turn up the disco really got going. The music was of very good quality, not the usual ear-splitting noise so often heard at this type of 'do'. The lighting was superb, incorporating three colourful projector displays backed by a couple of spotlights. There was quite a wide selection of music, new, old, funkey, soul, a good old 'knees up' (we won't say anything about the conga), reggae, rock and roll and a few smoochies in between. For the best part of the evening everyone let themselves go.

In honour of the Oscar Awards presented earlier this month we, the Wood Lane Snoopy Society, present our annual disco awards to the following:-

- |                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| Best Dancer:          | We couldn't spot a John Travolta but everyone was doing their best. |
| Best Dressed:         | Olric Morrison because he didn't wear his tie.                      |
| Best Director:        | Roger, showing people how to dance.                                 |
| Special Effects:      | Rob Corne shone out like a light, especially when he was flashing.  |
| Best Supporting Role: | People who cleaned up after us.                                     |
| Screen Award:         | The person who thought of putting the screens up.                   |

Sorry, no prizes this year, the Snoopy Society has run out of funds.

By one o'clock I think everyone had drunk and danced enough and hopefully enjoyed the evening. Special thanks to the bar staff, the clearers-up (who couldn't find anything

incriminating) and of course Yvonne for organising the whole affair.

Rob & Rich

P.S. When's the next one?

Swinging scenes from the dance are featured on our Photo Page.

---

# Poets Corner

## SCULPTURE

Oh to be a modern sculptor  
Modelling the female form  
In such shapes as Mother Nature  
Never gave the human norm.

Leave out all the tedious details,  
Shaping feet and fingers palls,  
Concentrate on hips and bosoms,  
Have you tried old cannon balls?

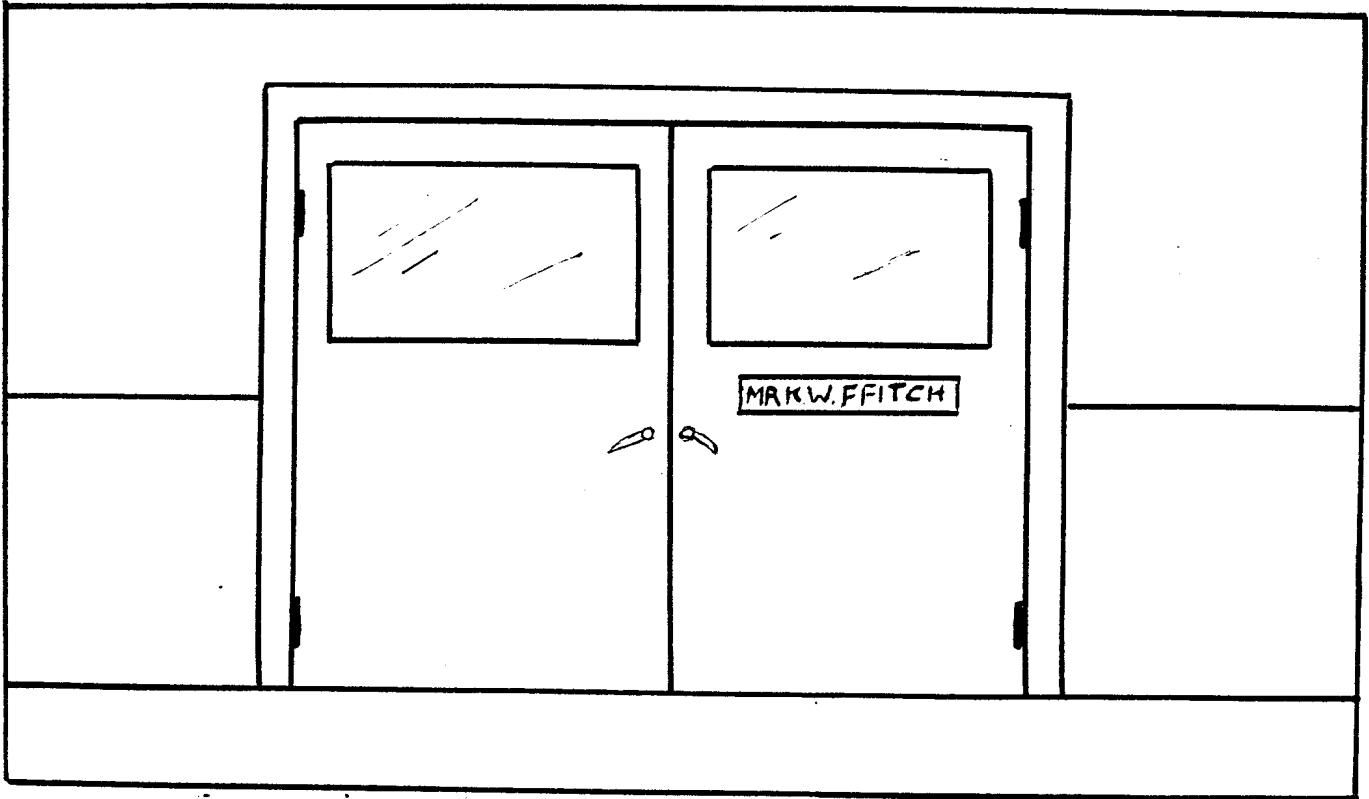
Search the scrap yards for material  
Specially parts of vintage cars,  
Don't make grooves in awkward places,  
Bend her limbs from mild steel bars.

HAMMER HAMMER on the anvil  
Cut the iron with flame and spark,  
If you're tired of shoeing horses  
Take up sculpture. What a lark!

So you suffer pains rheumatic!  
No excuse for you to shirk.  
Buy a set of tools pneumatic,  
Let your students do the work.

If her features still elude you  
Don't despair boy, have a try,  
Shape her head just like a lemon,  
Turn her gaze up to the sky.

HAMMER HAMMER on the chisel  
Make the marble chippings fly,  
Copy any odd shaped pebble  
Never never ask me why.



I SUPPOSE YOU THINK THATS FFUNNY!

# PHOTO PAGE

