



BUSH TELEGRAPH

MARCH 1986

BUSH TELEGRAPH

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EDITORIAL

There is a phrase which runs something like "punctuality is the prerogative of kings", not so for the Bush Telegraph. This issue as everyone will know is late..... I apologise and will attempt to ensure that future editions appear on time.

Now on to other things, or rather thing... the Social Club. The past year has seen a larger number of events than for many years. Of the "new" events, the Games Evening and Bar-B-Que were outstanding successes, the Christmas Social less so. The recent Valentines Disco, though well organised and enjoyable, and a success from that point of view was saved from embarrassment only by cordoning off part of the main hall and by the large contingent of friends of a certain member of Optical Transmission. The relative lack of support from within Wood Lane for both the Christmas Social and the Valentines Disco was disappointing, given the feelings often expressed during the last year or so that the Social Club should organise "more events". It may be that some events will always fail to raise large audiences and may be dependent for their success upon factors outside the control of the organisers. It doesn't take much to image what might have been said about last year's Bar-B-Que had the weather been inclement. It should be remembered that the Social Club is only what its members make it.... so please try to support it as much as you can. If you feel dissatisfied with the type of events being organised... say so, and (preferably) volunteer to organise something that you would like to happen.

To end on an entirely unrelated point, BICCARELLA makes a return in this edition, not on Page 3 as in the past but as part of the Yoga article, any suggestions for a caption ?

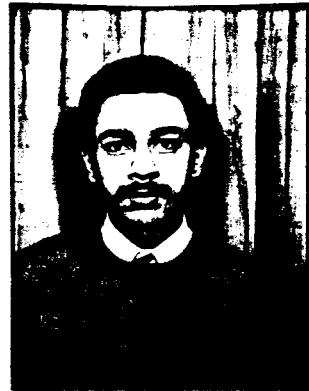
PERSONNEL NEWS

NEWCOMERS

WELCOME TO



MR M P IRVINE
Optical Transmission



MR F L AGLADIOUS
Electronic Development



MR T R MEEK
Electronic Development



MR C R CAVE
Polymer Processes

FAREWELL & BEST WISHES TO:-

Mr. K.W. FFITCH from C.A. Manufacture who retired at the end of December after completing 32 years service.

Mr. H. HOWATSON from Polymer Materials who also retired at the end of December with 30 years service.

Mr. T.E. CONSTANDINOU from Physics who retired at the end of January with 12 years service.

OBITUARY

Miss S.F. Davies

Whilst the name Sarah F. Davies is quite reasonably, little known to most, if not all of the younger members of staff at BREL, it is a measure of the esteem that she was held by those who worked with her that we have received two fulsome tributes following her recent death. The first, by Bob Black is about what one might call her professional life; the second, by Margaret Kingston is rather more personal.

SARAH F. DAVIES 1899-1985

On Wednesday, 27th November, 1985 Sarah Davies died after a long illness. She will be remembered as the first Wood Lane Staff pensioner and by those who knew her as a capable, quiet, loveable soul who did much to encourage others particularly the younger members of the staff.

Sarah Davies joined BICC on the 11th June, 1945 just after the merger of B.I. with Callenders (31.5.45), and was located at Erith in Power Cables Division.

It is thought that Sarah Davies was born in Ross on Wye where her father was a tailor, on 30th December, 1899 thereby just making the 19th century and the reign of Queen Victoria. Fairly soon, however, the family must have moved south as we find that she was educated in Bristol, eventually attending the University there and obtaining a diploma before pursuing her interest in electrical engineering by obtaining an apprenticeship with B.T.H. at Rugby.

In 1949, after serving four years at Erith, Sarah transferred to the research laboratories at Wood Lane. At first, she worked with Mr. W.G. Hawley on the impulse breakdown testing of oil-paper dielectric systems. Starting with a study of the effect of temperature on the impulse strength of dried and un-dried paper, she established that the impulse strength was improved by drying and reduced by a rise in temperature. Over the next few years the investigation progressed in a systematic manner and the various variables connected with the dielectric system were explored.

In 1953, Sarah was transferred to Mr. P.R. Harthorn on Mr. Hawley's translation to A.E.I. and the nature of her work changed to a study of electrical sparkover in gases. This work, associated with the company railway electrification programme, was aimed at establishing a relation between the operating voltage and the electrical clearances in atmospheres similar to those experienced in tunnels used by both electric and steam trains. She found that, almost without exception, the flashover value was greater than 10 kV/in which indicated that the clearances used for the proposed railway electrification layout were on the generous side.

In 1955, Sarah left the High Voltage Department, with some relief, transferring to the Physics Department under Mr. H.C. Hall, where she began an important programme of studies on the bending performance of cables. This was aimed at improving the bending performance of both impregnated and un-impregnated dielectrics and involved carrying out prolonged series of bending tests on model cable samples followed by examination for damage. The model cables were two feet long and constructed with flexible conductors of various sizes having papers applied to produce a wall thickness of about 0.25 in. A range of studies were made of the effect of paper tape width, of lapping tension and of the effect of the physical properties of the paper on the damage caused to the paper dielectric by bending the sample around a mandrel. The effect of decrease in paper tape width in reducing the severity of damage was found to be most marked, fully in accordance with established cable making practice. However, this work not only confirmed existing practice but also gave quantitative results which were applicable to the design of cables with large size conductors.

While such parameters as lapping tension and the use of graded tension dielectrics were shown to have only a limited effect on the bending performance, as might have been expected, the coefficient of friction between the paper surfaces played a prominent part. The results of the investigation gave promise of valuable results. The Annual Report for 1958 comments:-

"It is considered appropriate to mention that recent experience in the factory is fully in line with the predictions made from model experiments and this is a further demonstration that even processes which involve large and complicated factory plant can frequently be explored inexpensively with simple equipment in the laboratory."

On 31st December, 1959 Sarah retired from active service with the Company.

R.M. Black.

The many friends and colleagues of Miss Sarah Davies will be sorry to hear that she died on Wednesday November 27th.

She had had an operation for the cataract that had affected her sight and put a stop to her many activities in the sewing and knitting line, but when I rang her afterwards she said it was going very well and getting better every day. She suggested that I postponed my annual visit till the Autumn as by then she would be "quite alright again", but unfortunately this was not to be. The diabetes from which she had been suffering seems to have got out of hand, and then she suffered a stroke which left her paralysed on one side and in a wheelchair. It was no surprise to hear that she had died and one could not help being relieved that she did not have to suffer this further curtailment of her activities for too long.

I believe she was the first of the Wood Lane pensioners and she left full of happy anticipation to settle down in the thatched cottage she had bought in Hampshire, from which she was able to explore the surrounding fields and streams to study the wild life and flowers. This also proved to be in a convenient position for her many friends to "pop in" for a short visit or just a cup of tea and some delicious home made scones or cakes. Then after some years she felt the call of the hills of her native Welsh Border Counties and moved to Shropshire where she lived till her death. It was my pleasure every year to drive up to visit her and take her out into the Border Counties where it seems every hill, lane and farm had some memory of her numerous family and friends and of her early life when she travelled these counties in pony and trap, on bicycle or on foot. Her tales of cycling home from Rugby at weekends made me very conscious of my deficiencies, and it's only very recently that she hadn't outwalked me. Her interests and her circle of friends were very wide and her knowledge of things electrical and personal relating to her time in Wood Lane never ceased to amaze me.

M.G. Kingston.

RETIREMENTS

KEN FFITCH

K.W. Ffitch joined the Research Organization of British Insulated Callender's Cables Limited in 1953 starting work in the Electronics Section under Mr. R.W. Wells.

Ken was born at Beckenham in Kent during April 1922 and eventually having a good singing voice he became a chorister. Indeed, such was his ability that he became a Child of the Chapel Royal and in consequence was educated at the City of London School. Leaving school for a job in industry at the beginning of the Second World War. He was not called up until 1944 and spent some of the early years as a despatch rider in the Home Guard in the days when Home Guard signals sections used land lines and Fullerphones and one nearby section possessed a heliograph which we were assured could be seen over distances of 70 miles in the Egyptian desert, Aldis lamps were more suitable to the London environment. Ken entered the army in 1944 serving as a signaller with the Royal Corps of Signals specializing in line transmission. On being demobbed in 1947 he returned to his former occupation in industry but soon decided to continue his education with a degree in engineering. For this purpose he enrolled in Battersea Polytechnic in the Autumn of 1949.



Due to personal and family reasons he was not able to complete his degree course at that time and so applied for a vacancy with the expanding Research Organization of BICC at their Wood Lane Laboratories.

The Electronics Section under Ralph Wells was then part of the Physics Department under H.C. (Prof.) Hall. Ralph Wells was an interesting character in his own right being very much an inventor in the Heath Robinson tradition and given the opportunity would wax eloquent on the elements of television. He had a small laboratory in part of the old tropical room off the stairs at the west end of the HV1/HV2 building, largely lined with instrument panels and designed with the objective of carrying out the maximum number of electrical tests on a piece of cable with the minimum of physical effort.

In 1955 the Instrument and Control Section was formed under Peter Graneau and in the following year the Electronics Section was transferred from Physics to Instruments and Control. Ralph Wells left the company in 1959 and Ken became Section Leader of the Electronics Section in his place.

Meanwhile, Ken had completed his degree course, his finals subjects including: electric power measurements, electronics and telecommunications. In 1958 he was made an Associate Member of the Institution of Electrical Engineers.

In the Wood Lane Report archives there is a copy of Kwf/T.1 entitled "Experiments to determine whether a search coil would be effective when fitted to a cable grapnel". This immediately takes us back to the days of the Loch Fyne submarine power cable trials which preceded the laying of the Cross-Channel link in 1961 and the installation of the Vancouver and Cook Strait submarine power cables. These cables were, as far as BICC was concerned, manufactured in continuous lengths to preclude any difficulties with joints during

the laying operation. The rather Gilbertian situation which arose with the Cross-Channel cable in which the two lengths of d.c. cable were manufactured in four half lengths two by French companies and one in short lengths by A.E.I. and the other in a continuous length by BICC, jointing being necessary at sea in mid-channel with the weather not particularly calm almost upset the entente cordiale. To ensure that the lead sheath on the BICC length was concentric along the whole length it was necessary to devise some sort of lead sheath thickness gauge. Peter Graneau was at that time exploiting his developments in electromagnetic theory and much activity in the laboratory, involving Ken, was centred on the development of a suitable eddy current gauge for thickness monitoring. In the event, the gamma ray gauge won the day due to difficulties in the mechanical problem of applying a rotating gauge to an angled cable.

In 1961, Ken joined with Peter Graneau in presenting a paper at the IEE Conference on Non-Destructive Testing in Electrical Engineering on the "Non-destructive pinhole testing of enamelled wire by a corona method". In this, the wire was drawn through an open tube held at a sufficiently high voltage for corona to occur on the passage of a pinhole. This method had considerable advantages over the British Standard mercury bath technique which contaminated the enamel surface.

Over the years Ken has been involved in the design and construction of a whole range of instruments and techniques for on-line test and inspection procedures which have varied from that for ensuring the quality of blanket wire to the elaborate automatic cable test facility at Wrexham.

As a man and a colleague Ken has been loyal and invariably helpful. His earlier interest in motor cycling has to some extent given way to model engineering and the expressed intention of building a clock, not a digital electronic gubbins but a real clock that will tick through many years of contented retirement.

R.M. Black.

HUGH HOWATSON



Hugh Howatson one of Polymer Materials Department "elder statesmen" retired at the end of December. An ever popular colleague of all members of the department he will be sorely missed.

Hugh came to Wood Lane in the 1950's having gained a BSc in Chemistry (1953) and Plastics Technology (1959) from the Northern Polytechnic. At the college he was contemporary of a number of other well-known faces at Wood Lane, including "Johnnie" Walker and Ted Morrison of Polymers and John Porter of Analytical Services. Hugh was involved in a great many different projects over the years in a department whose name changed from Rubber and Plastics, to Polymers to Polymer Materials. Hugh's versatility was referred to in Stefan Verne's speech at his retirement presentation.... in particular Stefan mentioned that Hugh had, on one occasion, made a battery charger when no suitable commercial model was available.

Hugh was a great source of help to all newcomers to the Department over many years, both in the technical and personal sense. His tales of events, personalities, projects (both successful and unsuccessful) and of Wood Lane in general were numerous, and often very entertaining.

Before embarking on a scientific career, Hugh served in the RAF as a warrant officer during the Second World War. He spent most of his time flying in bombers from bases in the Middle East. As with his stories of Wood Lane life, Hugh's accounts of service life were often amusing and instructive to many of us younger members of the department who have never experienced service life, let alone war.

Reference has already been made to Hugh's versatility in the laboratory. His skills were not confined to work, however, Hugh is a highly skilled woodworker and photographer (a combination which gives an indication of the spread of his abilities). His interest in photography was reflected in his retirement present.... a professional standard tripod and head for his camera.

The Polymer Materials Department, and indeed BREL, has lost a good man with the retirement of Hugh Howatson. I am certain all will concur in wishing him every success and happiness in his retirement.

Doreen Greenbury

By now, we expect that everyone will know that Doreen has gone into hospital for an operation on her back. We are sure that we speak for everyone in wishing Doreen a speedy recovery.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THANK YOU

Dear Friends and Former Colleagues,

My sincere thanks to all for their generous contributions to my leaving present. This was a cordless telephone with full intercom and number memory. It has already proved very useful, particularly when I am in my shed/workshop.

Retiring, as I did, immediately before Christmas, it took a while to really feel that I was not just on a prolonged holiday. My wife retired early in November and we are both now enjoying the freedom to do just as we please.

My thanks and best wishes to you all,

Kenneth Ffitch

To Friends at Wood Lane,

I would like to thank all those who contributed towards my Benbow Tripod (which has already seen a fair amount of use) and hope that you are all enjoying work as much as I am enjoying my retirement.

Hugh Howatson.

Dear Friends,

I would like to thank all my friends and colleagues for all their get well wishes and concern. I am delighted with the flowers and Lancome talc and the lovely Dressing Gown which I shall enjoy wearing, especially now that my operation is over and I have to rest. I am recovering well and hope to leave hospital soon.

I miss you all and look forward to seeing you all when I am fully recovered.

Best wishes to you all,

Doreen Greenbury.

HOLIDAY ACCOMMODATION

A terraced cottage close to the harbour at BRANCASTER STAITHE, NORTH NORFOLK, available for holiday lets, from April to October. Local amenities include good beach, Scolt Head bird sanctuary, sailing and a golf course.

Details Mike Kendle (341)
Polymers Dept.

HOLIDAY SAVINGS

BICC Research and Engineering Limited's employees will get a 5% saving on their personal holiday travel when booked through Hogg Robinson Travel, and this will operate as follows:-

1. Who Qualifies?

All BICC Research and Engineering Limited's employees plus their immediate families providing they travel on the same holiday. That is, spouse and children in the case of married employees: parents and brothers and sisters in the case of unmarried employees.

2. What Type of Travel Qualifies?

All overseas package holidays but NOT scheduled or chartered air fares or car ferries, and the saving is only available on the basic cost of the holiday and cannot be applied to travel insurance premiums, taxes, room or flight supplements, etc.

3. How to Obtain the Saving

- (a) Book your holiday through any Hogg Robinson Travel branch in the normal way and pay the deposit in full. When you receive your holiday confirmation send a copy to Anne Buchanan in the Personnel Department with a short note asking for the saving.
- (b) She will return the holiday confirmation to you together with sufficient £10, £5 or £1 "Holiday Savercheks" to make up the 5% saved.
- (c) You then pay Hogg Robinson Travel the balance yourselves using these "Savercheks" as part payment. For example, if your holiday costs £300 you enclose your personal cheque for £285 and "Savercheks" for £15.
- (d) It is important that you send the booking confirmation to the Personnel Department as soon as possible in order that you will receive the "Savercheks" in time to meet the payment date which is normally 8 weeks before departure. If you are booking a holiday through Hogg Robinson Travel at very short notice then explain to the Hogg Robinson clerk that you work for BICC Research and Engineering Limited and then contact the Personnel Department requesting the appropriate amount of "Savercheks" to be sent direct to the Hogg Robinson Travel office on your behalf.

The Company accepts no responsibility for any holiday arrangements, which are matters strictly between Hogg Robinson and the employees.

HEALTH AND SAFETY BULLETIN

This is the first of what will hopefully be a regular item outlining news and happenings on the health and safety front.

Recent refurbishment programmes have succeeded in producing a modern, well-equipped First Aid room with adjoining rest room facility. The room is located on the ground floor at the east end of McFadzean building approximately opposite the goods lift and is supervised by the First Aid team led by Geoff Holder.

A bleeper alarm system with personal pagers for first aiders for use in the event of an emergency will shortly be operational. This will enable the first aid team to be summoned at short notice to any serious accident or occurrence. The central control unit will be located in the Gatehouse to enable 24 hour coverage.

Modified combined fire and accident regulations will be re-issued early in 1986 following feedback from the June 1985 issue. Confusion between the senior management roles of Controller and Co-ordinator should be alleviated by renaming the functions Personnel Controller and Gatehouse Marshal respectively.

In an attempt to control vehicles from speeding on the premises, a "sleeping policeman" road pacer has been positioned between the west end of McFadzean building and the recently completed west boundary wall. Additional road pacers will be sited in areas of roadway where the 10 mph maximum speed limit is persistently ignored.

The health and safety committee are in the process of organizing regular tours of inspection of the site. The inspections will help maintain the high level of housekeeping and safety awareness attained during 1985.

J.J. Watson.

WHAT IS IT?

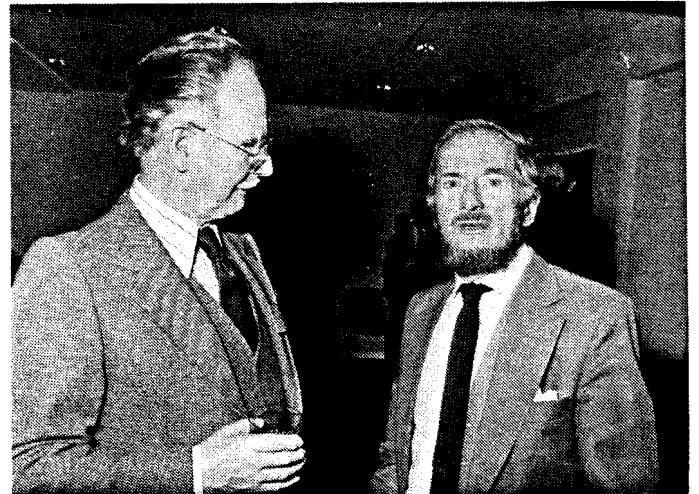
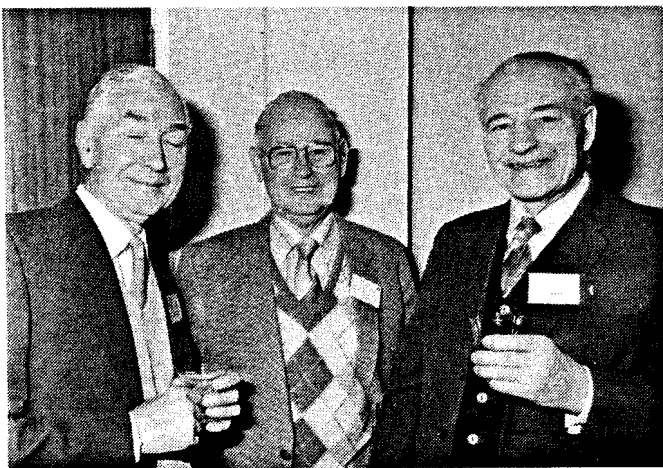
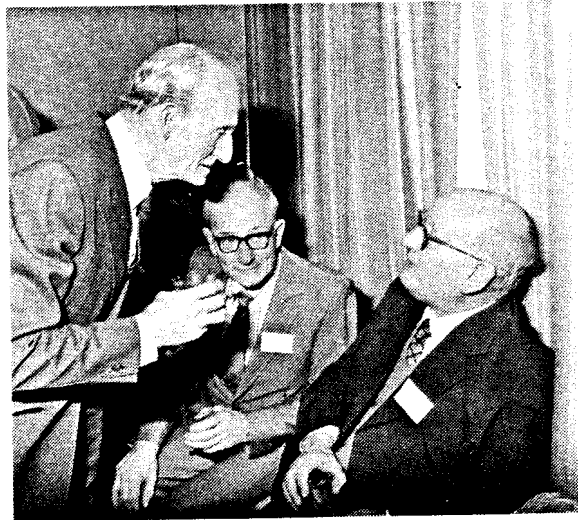
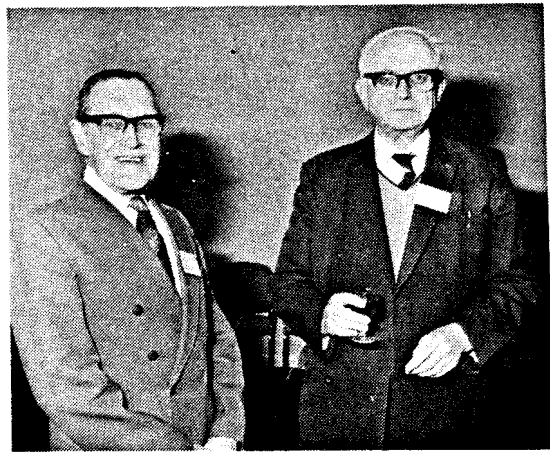
There were only 2 suggestions (given to Roger Millward) describing possible uses for the glass object pictured in the December issue of the BT.

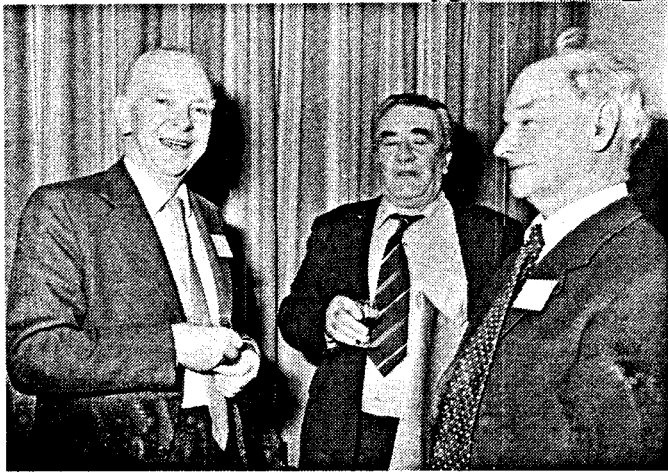
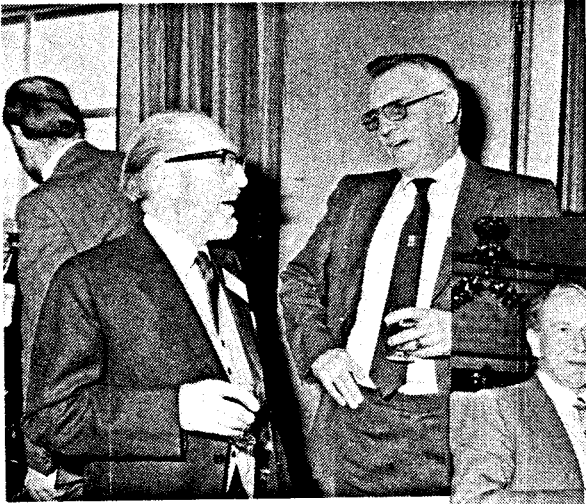
The suggestions:- a toilet roll holder,
a rolling pin,

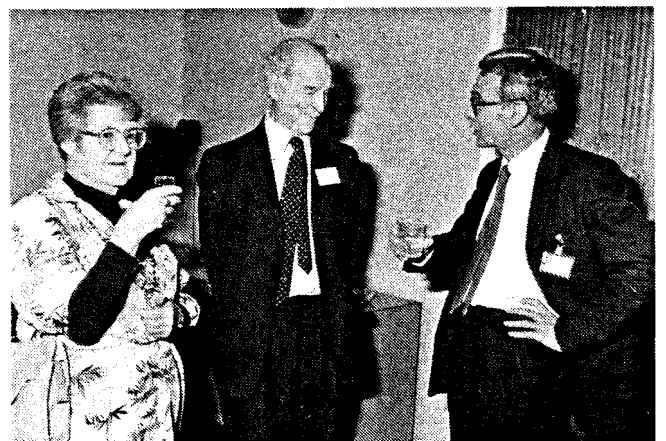
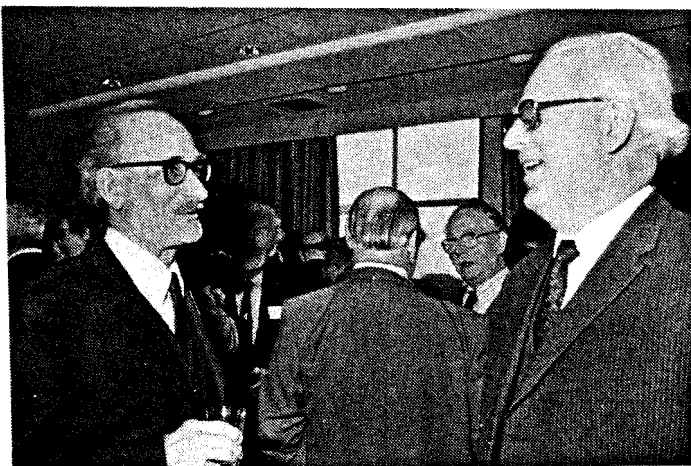
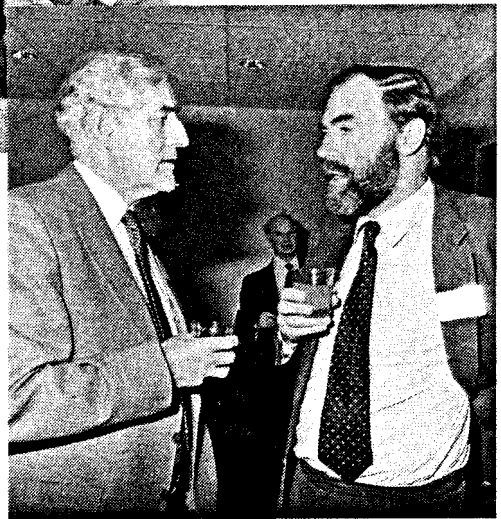
were, however, incorrect. Thanks go, nevertheless, to the two participants in the competition.

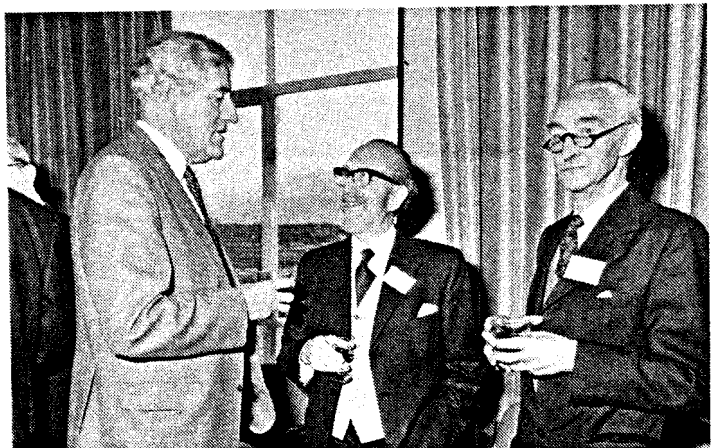
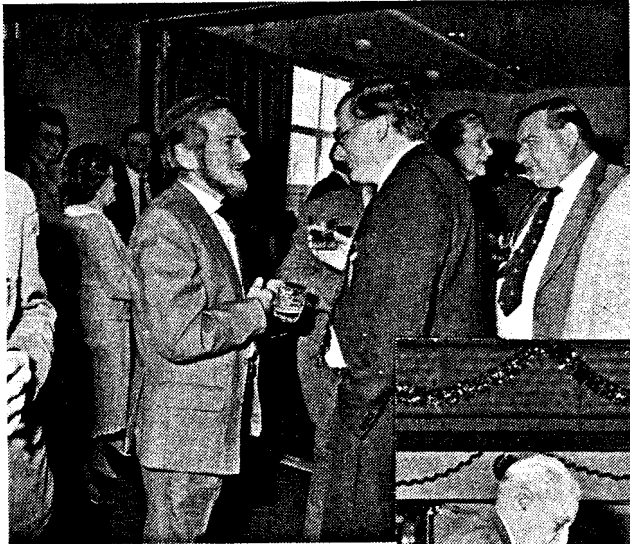
The glass object is, in fact, a glass roller with indentations suitable for fitting to a reciprocating arm in a machine for glazing leather. Such rollers are manufactured by G.L. Murphy Ltd. of Leeds (as they have been for at least 50 years).

PENSIONERS CHRISTMAS LUNCH









GAMES EVENING

The second, annual, games evening will be held on Wednesday, March 12, 1986. Arrangements will be largely the same as last year.

Department team entries should be sent to Denis Groombridge as soon as possible. Since there is a limit of 8, 6-person teams, early notification of your willingness to enter might be essential. Further details from Denis Groombridge, Peter Walters, Ian Fordham.

SITE DEVELOPMENTS

Over the past year or so we have endeavoured to keep you up to date with site developments.... both with regard to the essential fabric of the site and to the organisation of departments etc... We have obtained this information by way of discussions with Tony Docherty and, more recently, also by discussions with and articles from John Watson.

McFADZEAN LABORATORY

Refurbishment of the reception area has been completed to the general delight of most who have commented about it to Tony Docherty (and to the BT). Sir William Barlow is among those who have been impressed by the improvements. As with many of the changes now taking place to the fabric of BREL, a major reason has been a perception that BREL should make a good impression, in all ways, on visitors to the site.

Most people will be aware that Bob Maidlow's Photographic Studio has been moved to the former Conference Room (for slightly older timers, John Banks' old office) on the 5th floor, in order that the West end of the 3rd floor can be converted to accommodate Dr. George Moore. Dr. Rothman has moved into a new office adjacent to Dr. Tim Lane.

On the 5th floor, the two new Conference Rooms are now in use. They are a great improvement on previous arrangements. As indicated in previous BTs the two rooms are separated by a moveable partition and so can be converted easily to one large room when required, with seating for around 60 people.

HV BUILDINGS AND NORTH ROAD

Plans for the alterations to the HV buildings are at an advanced stage of preparation. Details have to be discussed with the Managers concerned.

The liquid nitrogen tank outside HV3 is being moved into the North Road to make room for the new gas meter, required as a consequence of the plan to convert the boilers to combined fuel oil/gas firing.

CANTEEN

The writer of this article is at a disadvantage in commenting on the canteen, since he brings a packed lunch. However, in discussing the canteen with Mr. Docherty the problems of long queues, stained cutlery and the unavailability of certain items on the menu after 1 p.m. were among the points discussed. Mr. Docherty is well aware of the problems the canteen has been facing.

One contributing factor to the long queues in December and early January was the arrival of prospective lunchees (if there is such a word) from the Export Department in Network House around 12.30 p.m. each day. They have been advised that arrival at 1 p.m. would be more convenient. Another contributory factor to the queues was that the canteen did not open until well after 12.30 p.m. on frequent occasions. The situation is being monitored! It may be necessary to introduce a 2-sittings scheme to the canteen in the future.

With regard to the stained cutlery; apparently it is more hygienic to leave cutlery to drain and dry on its own rather than use tea cloths.

CRIME PREVENTION

A Metropolitan Police Crime Prevention Officer visited BREL recently. This was not as dramatic an event as it may seem, an almost routine occurrence in fact, given that BREL has its own security arrangements. The Officer did leave a handbook for Managers and Security Officers with the possibly startling title "Bombs, Defusing the Threat". However, considering the age in which we live being made more aware of possible threats to our personal safety is perhaps not a bad thing. Appropriate extracts from the booklet will appear in the next issue of the BT.

BREL -THE FUTURE

Wednesday January 29th 1986

An event, unique as far as many people can recall, occurred on the above date. The event was Dr. Farmer's calling together of all members of staff (except those engaged in essential service work) to give a "State of the Union" type talk on the running of BREL, its achievements in 1985, the plans for 1986 and the hopes for the future. It is believed that the impetus for the address came from discussions at a Works Committee Meeting held late last year.

Dr. Farmer began by outlining how BREL can be judged in terms of technical progress and money spent. He then, outlined the essential details of the "Long Term Strategic Plan", a plan described in a slender document, succinct but very important might be a way of describing it. The areas of long term research were described, the relationships between BREL and the operating companies and the participation of BREL in Government and EEC - sponsored projects.

The performance of BREL during 1985 was described in detail, projects completed and ongoing (to use current jargon), the budget for the year and that projected for 1986. Dr. Farmer noted that economies in overhead expenditure had been sought during 1985, by, for example, relocating personnel to reduce fragmentation of departments, providing photocopiers at strategic positions around the site to reduce the many man-hours lost in queueing, and planning to change the boilers to dual gas/oil firing.

The breakdown of the 1985 budget showed that income had been slightly lower than expected but expenditure was within expectations. Recruitment had, however been a problem during the year, it is hoped that the shortfall will be made up during 1986.

In describing plans for 1986, Dr. Farmer spoke in detail on key objectives, which included new strategic activities, and the development and strengthening of relationships with universities. As part of the continuing efforts to improve the technological image of BREL there will be:-

- More visitors to the BREL laboratories and more site improvements.
- More articles published in technical journals.
- Publication of a BREL brochure.
- Publication of a bi-annual BICC Technological Bulletin.
- More coverage in the Link of BREL activities.

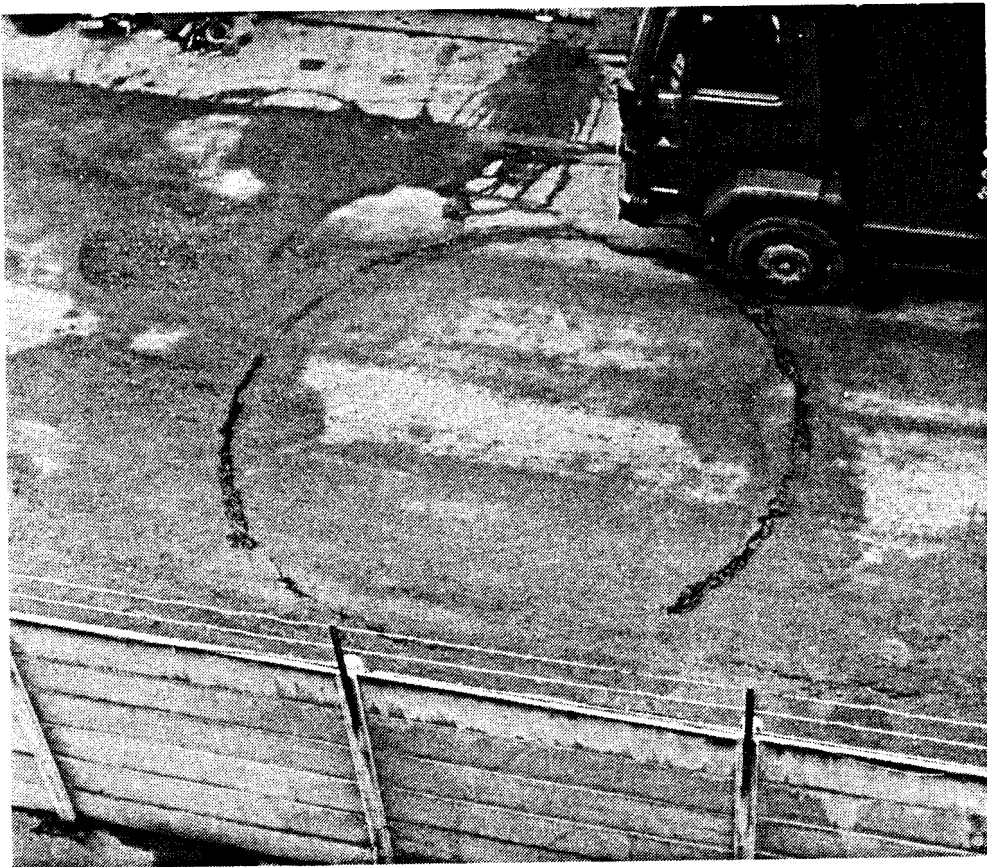
Dr. Farmer concluded by describing a number of improvements that have taken place to the Wood Lane site (further details of which can be found in recent editions of the BT).

Postscript:- In a straw poll of a number of those who attended the meeting, most thought it was very informative, worthwhile and that it was an exercise worth repeating in the future.

HISTORY OF WOOD LANE REVISITED

A piece of Wood Lane history recently re-surfaced right outside my office window after being buried (literally) for at least 35 years.

The constant procession of heavy lorries entering and leaving the lorry park via what used to be the north-east corner of our site (until it was sold to British Rail in part exchange for the area of former railway sidings to the south, now including Brazier laboratory) had begun to break up the surface of the road (which was hardly built to motorway standards - even the M 1!) and a perfect circle of cracks about 12 feet in diameter appeared just outside Samy's and Charlie's garage. (What happened to Charlie?)



The encircled area of tarmac rocks alarmingly whenever a lorry, or even a BBC car, passes over it. Samy & Co must wonder whether they are about to lose a customer or two into the depths, but we can tell them not to worry too much - it is just what remains of a wagon turntable dating from the days of the old Kensington and Nothing Hill Electric Light Company's power station (See "The History of Wood Lane", Chapter 2, Page 8).

Even as I write this piece, a bulldozer has appeared and is scraping off the road surface, prior to re-surfacing. If they don't dig any deeper than that, the "fairy circle" is bound to re-appear in a week or two.

WATCH THIS SPACE !!!

G.F. Holder.

THE OCCASIONAL DIARY

OF A SUBURBAN MAN (AGE INDETERMINATE)

"DAYS OF LEEKS AND ROSES"

"Got a spare ticket, 'ave you, boyo?"

The lilt of the valleys was unnecessary confirmation of what had been obvious a quarter of a mile away. The red and white woolly hat with matching Granny-knit scarf, the outsize leek a la Max Boyce, and the enormous "CYMRU" rosette betrayed the Welsh rugby supporter up for the biennial ritual of thrashing England at "Haitch Kew".

We residents of Twickers have seen it all before; indeed in years gone by we might actually have had a "spare" or two. Not any longer. This year even the clubs and schools, who always get priority, had £3/4 million returned. Ticket applications from Joe Public were not even counted, just returned to sender. Not that our friendly neighbourhood "Mr. Big" seemed affected. His mettalic-grey Volvo estate, groaning with green wellies and well-stuffed wicker hampers, was seen heading for the West Car Park around 10 a.m. to take up a prominent position for the pre-match indulgence.

"Watching it on the telly are you?" said Big with a grin. We nodded, wickedly hoping that Big's bladder was still as weak as the occasion, not many years ago, when he was obliged to deal with the after-effects of acute over-imbibing just as Miss Erica Roe was demonstrating her undoubted talents to a largely male, and definitely appreciative, audience. No amount of action replays can ever compensate for missing the magic moments in life.

Fortunately for the burghers of Twickenham the pre-match invasion spreads itself over a wide area of West London. The ancient town of Richmond-upon-Thames takes its share as early arrivals congregate for the traditional warming-up match between London Welsh and Cardiff. Not that the game arouses any great passion - for higher priority being afforded the early uncovering of beer handles in the clubhouse, and the unending search for that elusive "spare".

A group of Canadians from the Montreal Rugby Club spent the whole match deliberating on the acquisition and division of their meagre allotment, assessing the likely black market price, and eventually splitting into the no-hopers, who accept the inevitable and trek back to the hotel and the TV lounge, and the eternal optimists who hot-foot to the ground determined that Lady Luck is on their side.

The pent-up anxiety of the ticketless is momentarily broken by the London Welsh announcer, who passes on a request that Taffy Jones and Billy Price meet Clive Williams behind the goalposts after the game - "He has a spare ticket for ONE of you". The spectators imagine a hundred different ways of deciding the outcome, most of them uncomfortable for the loser.

Long before the final whistle the crowd had drifted away, the scent of a greater battle growing ever stronger. The side roads for miles around seethe with the tension of finding a parking spot, and 63,000 chosen people home in on the Mecca that was once a cabbage patch.

Secure in our local knowledge we reach home and take up our armchair positions before most visitors have found their destination. By the magic of television, and an occasional visit to the back garden to catch the cheers and groans drifting across on the wind, we contrive to participate. The game see-saws in a way calculated to fill the hospital coronary wards until, with a dramatic final flourish, the English Stand-off Half invites instant canonization ("St. Andrew slays St. David for St. George") and the Red Dragon is sent packing, daffodils trailing between its legs. Nigel Starmer-Smith (the thinking sportswoman's crumpet, as Felicity Kendal might have said) tried hard not to gloat over Gareth Edwards, and Des Lynam whisks us up to Murrayfield to catch a flavour of the Auld Alliance.

The throng leaves town, much of it courtesy of Southern Region. No doubt the trains pulling into Waterloo will be 70° proof and candidates for spontaneous combustion, and the luggage trollies again come to the aid of the Legless Tendency.

In no time at all Twickenham will be back to normal and by next Saturday we shall watch Harlequins, London Scottish or Rosslyn Park as if nothing had happened and tickets were something paid for at the turnstiles five minutes before kick-off.

And Big ? No, he wouldn't soil his wellies for such mundane fare. Anyway, he'll be too busy restocking with champagne for the Irish match six weeks hence.

"Begorra, and is it a spare ticket you'd be havin' now, Sorr ?"

HOMO SUBURBANUS

POETS CORNER

Pain Reveals All

Here I lay where hell is real,
In fear before the torturer's hand,
And it's my soul he's trying to steal,
Then drown my heart in desert sand.

And as the pain flows through my veins,
My lungs they scream, and then reveal,
Secrets that I name with shame,
And with my lips, friends fate I seal.

And is our crime to think too free?
And what of love and hopes we share?
Just wait sweet friends and you'll be me,
And day is night - You'll swear.

FAT CAT

Martin Townshend, who left Polymer Processes towards the end of last year has sent the following verse to us, extolling the virtues of work outside BREL. We print it without comment !

COULD YOU GIVE ME ONE GOOD REASON

I have for you all a proven solution,
For those with ties, a revolution,
Don't waste your life, don't be profound,
The clock of life cannot be re-wound,
I maybe out of permanent employment,
But as a barman I've found enjoyment,
- Beer, free and plentiful,
- women, beautiful by the handful,
Burn your labcoats, don't be scared,
Go where only I have dared.

Martin.

P.S. Martin is now permanently employed -
not as a barman.

MUSIC SCENE

Anyone who hasn't visited The Swan in Fulham Broadway (opposite Fulham Broadway Tube) should do so in the near future. The Swan is an excellent venue for up and coming bands of all descriptions and is run by Denis Dickens, one of the most amiable landlords you could hope to meet.

The pub boasts a display of over three hundred musical instruments, suspended from the ceiling! Amongst this colossal gravity defying collection is a white baby grand piano; a recent addition.

Two bands performing at the Swan come highly recommended, these are Exchange and Firefly. Although Exchange may not be available for a short period due to touring commitments. Firefly may be seen regularly at The Ship on Plumstead Common. Contact The Ship or me for further details.

For those who enjoy Rhythm an'Blues go and see GB Blues & Co with singer Roots Jackson. This outfit is guaranteed to get you swinging, which isn't suprising since the drummer and bass player are from the Kinks and the four piece brass section is outstanding. I never believed that "Purple Haze" could be played with a brass section until I heard this band perform it.

Paul Nicholas(Ext 280)

CHRISTMAS LEADERGRAM

The draw took place on Tuesday 7th January, with the name of Denis Groombridge (Analytical Services) being first out of the hat (actually a cardboard box). The £5 therefore goes to Denis, with our congratulations. Consolation prizes go to Roy Featherstone (Polymer Materials) (£3) and Les Ireland (Library) (£2). A total of 26 entries was received, including several from pensioners. To the rest of them, we hope you enjoyed it, and better luck next time.

The solutions to the clues were as follows:

A. GLAD TIDINGS. B. ETHELRED. C. READY FOR ANYTHING. D. ABOVE THE LAW.
E. LOVING KINDNESS. F. DRIVING TUITION. G. DOUBLE WHISKEY. H. UNINVITED
GUEST. I. RASPBERRY JAM. J. RUB SHOULDERS. K. EYE TO EYE. L. LONG WEEKEND.
M. LAWFUL. N. CAT'S PAW. O. ATTRACTIVE. P. THREE WISE MEN. Q. CASSOWARY.
R. HOUND'S-TOOTH. S. MIRROR IMAGE. T. ETHER. U. AUTOMATIC. V. CAR POUND.
W. OUT OF LUCK. X. LIBERTY SHIPS. Y. OFF WITH HIS HEAD. Z. BUTTON BOOTS.
A'.UNAVAILABLE. B'. SEASON OF GOODWILL.

The author was GERALD DURRELL, and the book title 'CATCH ME A COLOBUS'. The extract from the book read as follows:

IT WAS MARKET DAY, AND I LOVE AFRICAN MARKETS SO MUCH THAT WE STOPPED AND WANDERED ABOUT A BIT. EVERYONE WAS SO BUSY AND SO PREDATORY, THEIR BEAUTIFUL EYES GLOWING, THEIR TEETH SHINING, EVERYONE IN THEIR SUNDAY BEST - THE MOST VIVID COLOURING. PILES OF MULTI-COLOURED FRUIT AND VEGETABLES, LONG ROWS OF HIGHLY COLOURED BUNDLES OF CLOTH - IT WAS JUST LIKE WALKING THROUGH A RAINBOW.

CHRISTMAS SOCIAL

Two views of the Christmas Social have been sent in, so as not to disappoint the authors we have printed both.

Once upon a time

.....BREL held a Christmas social evening, where, on arrival, members and guests were invited to take part in a "name that face, flower, bird and commercial" competition. Nobody seems to have the results but perhaps there should be an additional prize for the best spoilt paper. The rather small turn out (it would have been smaller if one member hadn't brought sixteen guests) were faced with double portions of delicious curry, spare ribs, chicken, rice, jacket potato and salad, followed by sweet (but no custard?) and cheese and biscuits. Maybe a small turnout was good after all. The cabaret, a comedian I'll just call Fred (I wouldn't want him to lose any bookings) worked hard, but the audience, determined to stay glum, worked harder. Finally, with music blasting from the club sound system you could hardly hear yourself whisper as, braving acute agrophobia, the disco dancing crowd took the floor. By the time the bar closed I couldn't read my watch so it must've been quite late and people were helped off into the night to live happily ever after.

A. Partygoer

SOCIAL EVENING

In December on Friday 13th, a fateful day, a number of 'volunteers' arrived at Wood Lane for an event loosely termed a Social Evening. However we all knew that this was only a euphemism for an evening of mass interrogation. The aim of the event it is understood, was to find out how different people would react to certain questions and subtle pressures. In fact the first signs of subtle pressure had shown themselves a week or so earlier when the 'volunteers' were actually enticed to part with money in exchange for entrance tickets.

The interrogation on the evening soon got underway with rows of pictures in four categories to be identified. One section was aimed at extracting personal information on what products of clothing, food and drink you were aware of, and therefore might use. Another section consisted of rows of mug-shots of shady looking characters cleverly placed so that any flicker of recognition could be detected. The remaining two sections were on the topics birds and bloomers about which I shall say no more.

The 'interrogators' on duty were all this time keeping a wary eye on the happenings and if people were failing in their endeavours they subjected them to fiendish torture, forcing them to sit down and drink quantities of noxious fluids. The drinks were supplied by a couple of 'interrogators' with evil grins who also extracted money from the unfortunates.

As the 'volunteers' had shown remarkable resilience up to this point a further grilling took place, in the form of a large quantity of Lasagne. Then things really got hot for everyone, with ladles full of curry being thrust upon them. The effects of the drinks and the curry were soon apparent with a steady stream of poor 'volunteers' who had succumbed and had to leave the hall for some dark corner, only to return apparently rejuvenated and thus be subjected to more noxious fluids.

Time passed and then the 'chief interrogator' arrived. He pretended to be a friendly fellow, telling stories and cracking jokes, but we knew that hidden in this jovial banter were coded messages. He paid particular attention to a group of 'volunteers' from the southern hemisphere, using names like Kiwi. Perhaps he was passing information to some foreign power. The meanings of such phrases as "A funny thing happened on the way here tonight...." and "Have you heard the one about....?" have yet to be deciphered.

For those who had managed to withstand all the questions and pressures the evening continued with on-the-spot jumping and leaping, while hypnotic sounds were broadcast in the hall.

Finally the last of the 'volunteers' collapsed and were led away; the 'interrogators' had succeeded.

It was unquestionably a good evening with the three 'volunteers' who had survived the best, Martin Nutton and Dave and Gill Green being given bottles of liquid of doubtful origin.

But seriously folks I would like to thank, on behalf of those who attended, all the people who organised the evening and provided the excellent food and served the drinks.

LONDON TO BRIGHTON BICYCLE RIDE

1986

(Sunday June 15th)

Since my piece in the Christmas BUSH TELEGRAPH, some half-dozen or so people have contacted me and expressed interest. Surely we can do better than that? How about some of the girls coming along - you don't need a top-class racing bike and bulging muscles, just a reasonably roadworthy machine and a bit of determination; you can take all day to get there if you wish, with as many breaks as you like. There are Marshals at every road junction with 2-way radio to help if needed, plus travelling Marshals riding with the groups, several First Aid posts (though I've yet to see a serious spill), frequent refreshment places, travelling entertainers, and patrolling mechanics in vans, in case your bike is less roadworthy than you thought it was! Finally, if you've given your all and still can't make it, or your bike frame has come apart at the seams, there's a "sag-wagon" to pick you up and ensure you can link up again with whoever you've arranged to meet at Madeira Drive. At Brighton there are various entertainments laid on, if you've a mind to participate, or you might just want to recuperate on the beach. BR provide special trains to London from about mid-afternoon onwards, with accommodation for bikes, but you may prefer to arrange for friends or relations (with roof-racks? Estate cars? Transits? Pantechicons?) to pick you up.

It's a great fun day out with about 20 000 friends - come and see for yourself. And it's all in a good cause.

If you've doubts about your capabilities, ring me up and we'll have a chat about it. See you!

Geoff Holder (347)

FOR SALE

Roger Millward (ext. 274) has details of the following items that are on offer from Greenham Trading at concessionary prices :-

1. Double Backed, PVC interlined DONKEY JACKET (£10.35)
2. Dunlop Contractor BOOTS, heavy duty Wellington Style industrial boots designed for heavy general work (£ 4.60)

FOR SALE(CONTD.)

HARDWARE:

[1] INTERFACE 1	£25.00
[2] ZX MICRODRIVE	£25.00
[3] RS232 PRINTER LEAD	£5.00

SOFTWARE:

[1] FORTH	£3.00	48K
[2] TASWORD TWO	£5.00	48K
[3] SUPERCODE III	£5.00	48K
[4] INVINCIBLE ISLAND	£1.50	48K
[5] DENIS THROUGH THE DRINKING GLASS	£2.00	48K
[6] MUGSY	£2.00	48K
[7] LIBRARY SYSTEM 48	£0.50	48K
[8] PSSSED?	£0.50	48K
[9] CASTLE OF DEATH	£0.50	48K
[10] WIZARD'S TOWER	£0.50	48K
[11] MASTERFILE	£5.00	48K
[12] VALHALLA	£5.00	48K
[13] THE QUILL	£5.00	48K
[14] CATTEL IQ TEST	£2.00	48K
[15] TRANS-EXPRESS	£2.00	48K
[16] SPECTRUM ZAP 2	£2.00	16K
[17] LERM TAPE COPIER	£2.00	16K
[18] THE LORDS OF MIDNIGHT	£5.00	48K
[19] OLYMPIANIA	£2.00	48K
[20] PI-IN-'ERE	£2.00	48K
[21] AIRBRUSH	£0.50	16K
[22] 3D TUNNEL	£2.00	16K/48K
[23] SPACE SHUTTLE	£0.50	16K
[24] ESCAPE	£1.50	16K
[25] CRUISING ON BROADWAY	£1.50	16K
[26] HUNGRY HORACE	£1.50	16K
[27] GARDEN PLANT DIRECTORY	£2.50	48K
[28] TIP SECRETS	£0.50	16K
[29] EASYSPEAK	£2.50	48K
[30] M CODER (COMPILER)	£3.00	48K
[31] GO TO JAIL	£3.00	48K
[32] SHIP OF THE LINE	£2.00	48K
[33] GREAT BRITAIN LTD	£2.00	48K
[34] 1984	£2.00	48K
[35] 16/48 TAPE 01	£0.50	16K
[36] 16/48 TAPE 02	£0.50	16K
[37] 16/48 TAPE 03	£0.50	16K

BOOKS:

[1] BETTER PROGRAMMING FOR YOU SPECTRUM AND ZX81	£0.50
[2] SOME USEFUL BASIC SUBROUTINES	£0.50
[3] THE ZX SPECTRUM AND HOW TO GET THE MOST FROM IT	£2.00
[4] THE SPECTRUM POCKET BOOK	£1.50
[5] FURTHER PROGRAMMING FOR THE ZX SPECTRUM	£2.00
[6] MASTER YOUR ZX MICRODRIVE	£2.50
[7] SUPER CHARGE YOUR SPECTRUM	£2.50
[8] SPECTRUM MACHINE LANGUAGE FOR THE ABSOLUTE BEGINNER	£3.50
[9] Z80 MACHINE CODE FOR HUMANS	£3.00

Contact David Green (Ext. 219, Analytical Services)

COMPUTER FOR SALE

48K SPECTRUM CONVERTED TO SP+
TAPE RECORDER (NEW)
JOYSTICK + KEMP INTERFACE (THE CASE)
7 BOOKS
& SEVERAL GAMES: CHESS THE TURK,
SOFTAID,
TRANS AM,
CLUEDO, ETC.

THE LOT FOR £125 ONO

CONTACT JAY ON 417

PHILATELIC PARAPHERNALIA

STAMPS
ALBUMS
STOCK BOOKS ETC.

DISCONTINUED COLLECTION
PREFER TO SELL AS JOB LOT

CONTACT JOHN HEGGIE

Penfold golf clubs. Immaculate condition, used once. Short set consisting of No.3 wood of laminated maple, Nos. 4 and 7 irons, pitching wedge and putter. Complete with bag, balls and tee holder and "Nice Putt" putting machine. Ideal for beginner.

Price: £69.00 o.n.o.

Contact: Bob Maidlow on 257.

PATENTS CORNER

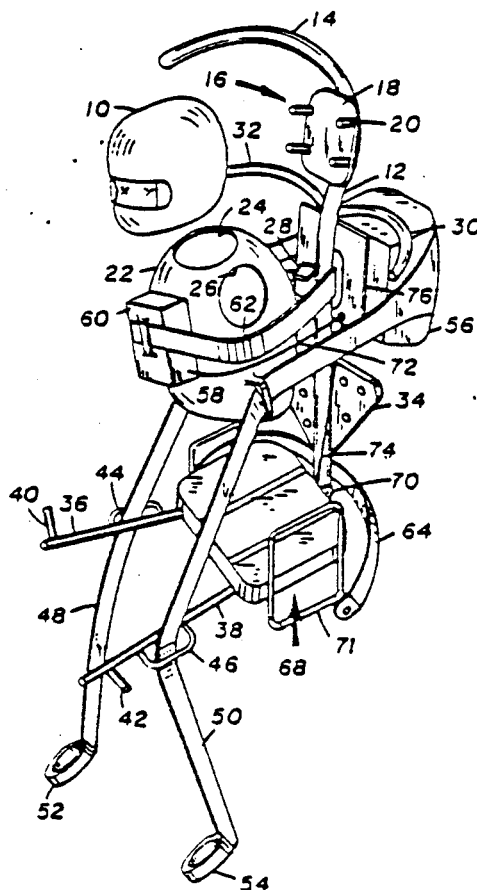
No. 3 in a series of inventions that didn't quite catch on.....

THE CAST-IRON MOTORCYCLE SUIT

U.S. Patent Nov. 10, 1981

Sheet 5 of 6

4,299,406



United States Patent

Thomas

[54] MOTORCYCLE SAFETY SYSTEM

[76] Inventor: Warren R. Thomas, 38 Rivocean Dr.,
Ormond Beach, Fla. 32074

Ride in complete safety wearing this cast-iron safety suit. Note the crash helmet (10), breastplate (22), leg supports (48&50), and black box flight recorder (60). But the feature that makes this suit so safe is that it's so heavy it's impossible to get astride on a motorcycle wearing one

PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

The 1986 Photographic Competition attracted a total of 52 entries for the four categories, plus an additional 70 prints for general exhibition.

FORMAL JUDGING

The prints in each category were awarded points on a 0-10 scale, and the entrant with the highest points total from all four categories judged to be the

"BREL PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR 1986"

ANIMALS:	Winner	A. J. Bangay
	Runners-Up	R. Grigsby Y. Ferrier
SPORT:	Winner	R. A. Price
	Runners-Up	R. W. Corne A. R. Farmer A. J. Bangay
LANDSCAPE:	Winner	G. G. Hawkes
	Runners-Up	A. A. Pinching R. Grigsby
HUMOROUS:	Winner	A. J. Bangay
	Runners-Up	R. Grigsby Y. Ferrier
OVERALL:	WINNER	A. J. BANGAY
	RUNNER-UP	R. GRIGSBY

Overall the Judges felt that the standard of entries was very high, and a marked improvement over the previous competition. The overall placing was extremely close, with only one point separating Alan and Richard.

EXHIBITION

The votes cast for the prints on display in the exhibition were allocated as three points for 1st choice - one point for 3rd choice.

In total 51 voting slips were completed, and the top placings as follows:

1	King Kong	R.Grigsby
2	Rock Climber	R.A.Price
3	Old Man, Crete	R.Grigsby
4=	Tree	P.Naylor
4=	Falling Horserider	A.J.Bangay
4=	Arran Sunset	R.W.Corne
7	Building Site	P.Naylor
8=	Alpine Valley	A.R.Farmer
8=	Mangersta Bay, Lewis	I.L.Fordham
8=	Burnham Beeches	I.L.Fordham
8=	Venice Landscape	R.Grigsby

Once again, the first two places were only separated by one point and just three points separated the next nine places. The competition will now be an annual event although next year's categories may differ from these.

All small prize was awarded to the winner in each category with the overall winner being awarded the "BREL Photographer of the Year" shield.

Ian Fordham/Rob Corne
10th FEB 1986

(P.S. Thanks to Site Services for helping to set up the display boards for the exhibition)

SECTION REPORTS

GENEALOGY SECTION

"HOW TO TRACE YOUR FAMILY ROOTS".....

.....is the title of a weekly seminar given by Dr. Ben Bloxham, the recently appointed director of the London Regional Genealogical Library of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The seminar takes place each Friday at 7.30 p.m. at the Church's centre, 64-68 Exhibition Road, London SW7. There is no admission charge, all are welcome, and the seminar lasts about 1½ hours. Further details from the Section Secretary, Mike Hagger (Ext. 268).

STARTER LEAFLET

Copies of the FFHS's "How to tackle your Family History" leaflet are still available from the Secretary.

IGI MICROFICHE

An order has been placed to update and expand our holding of the International Genealogical Index. The majority of our "rural" counties will be updated to the 1984 version, and four new ones, Hants., Hunts., Oxon and Westmoreland obtained. In addition, individual members have subscribed the funding for Australia and France. The new fiches are anticipated in 4-6 weeks time.

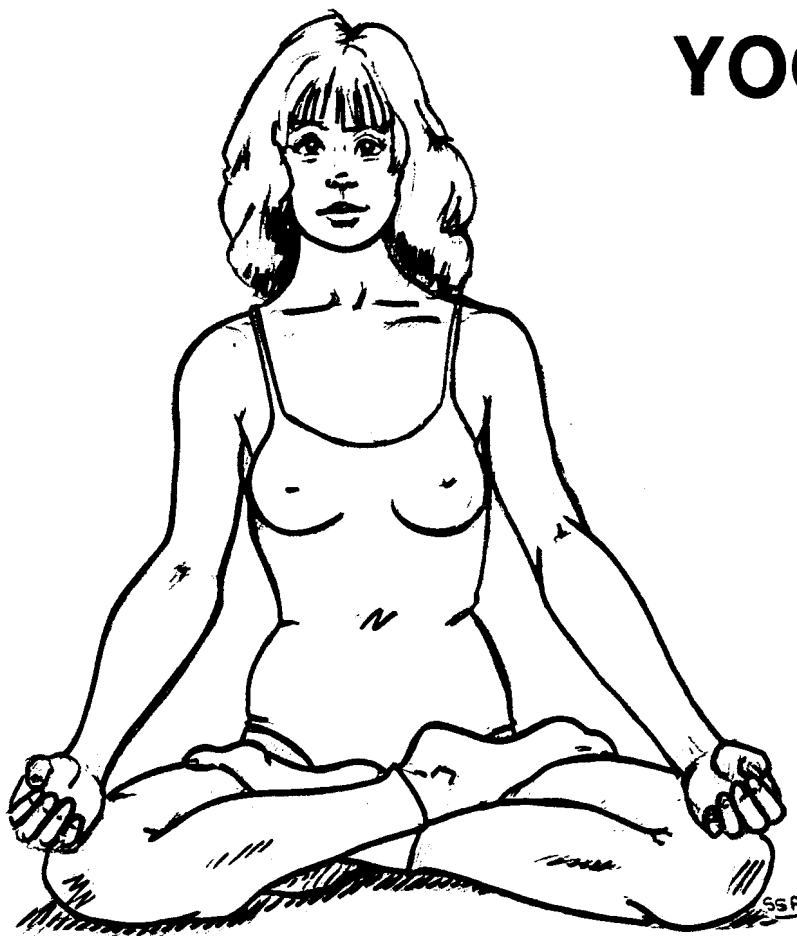
HELLO SAILOR!

We need the support of all would-be sailors to help launch (ugh!) a Dinghy Sailing and Windsurfing Section of the Social Club. So far only a handful of people have expressed interest, which isn't enough. So come on, you don't have to get your feet wet, (yet) - ring the sailing hotline on Ext. 340.

Rob Corne, Gordon Irwine

P.S. If you are interested in doing a Sailing Course in 1986 we have some brochures you can look at.

YOGA



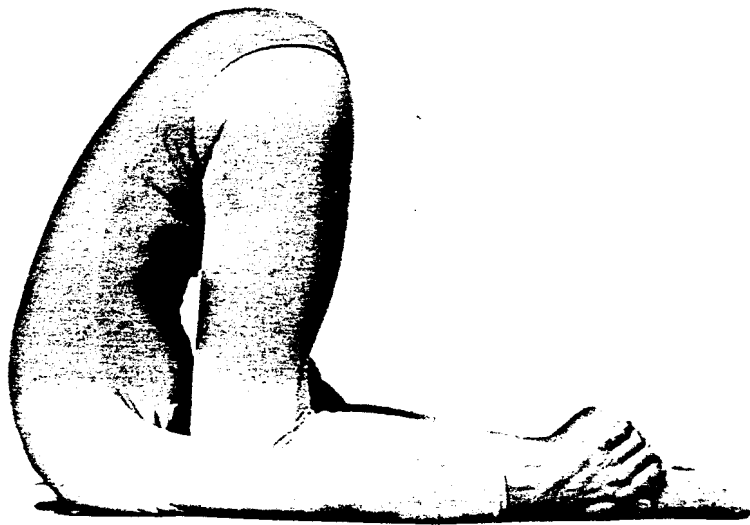
Y O G A

From the toning of your body,
To the peace within your mind,
It's the feeling of floating,
As you let yourself unwind....

The Yoga Club began in January with a few keen members, however word spread quickly and the class is now full. Yoga is a pleasurable way of moving & improving virtually every part of the body, with minimal effort, as the class has discovered.

If anyone is interested in joining the next session please contact me by the end of March.

Anne Buchanan
Extn: 315



GO FOR IT

The section has no new members this month, in fact it doesn't have any members at all yet as nobody has gone for it. But if you think different let me know. However, we have a young hopeful in the form of Gordon Irwine of the Polymers Department who is planning a sponsored solo hang gliding flight in aid of MENCAP if he can raise enough sponsor money. (hint).

And now some grief.... I was disappointed to hear that only two people so far have entered for the London to Brighton sponsored cycle ride on 15th June 1986. Go for it!

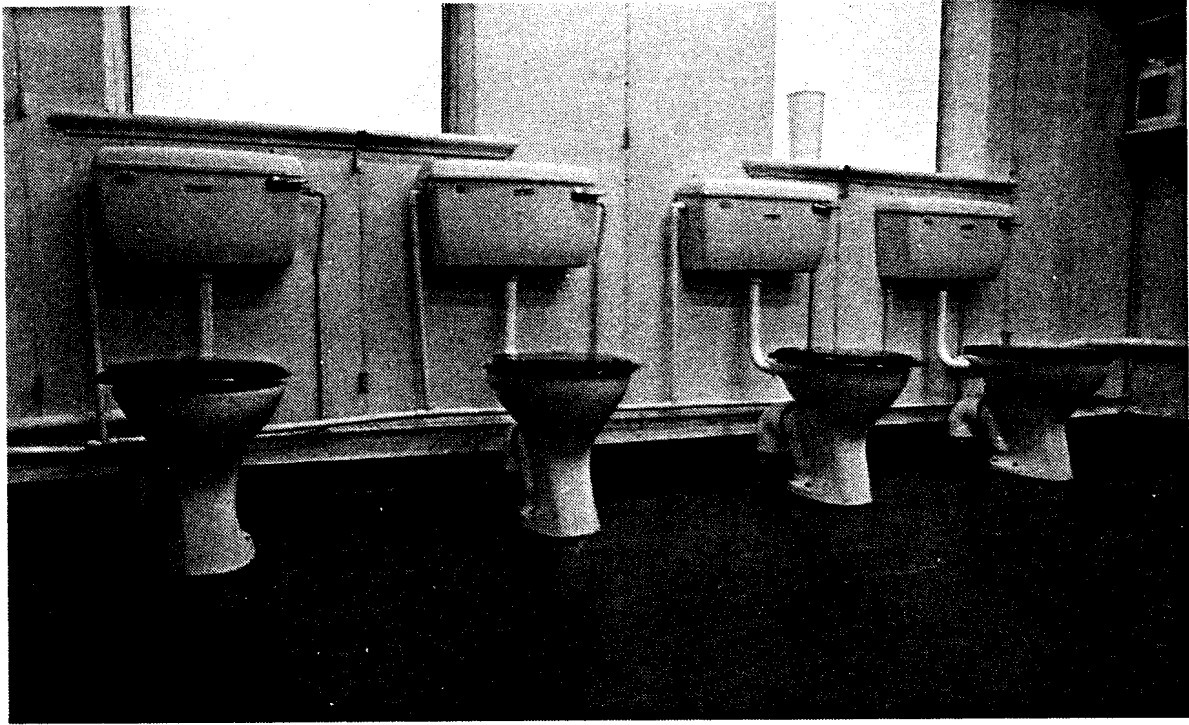
Rob Corne Ext. 340

CHAMPIONS



The 1985 Interdept. 5-a-side Football Champions, Site Services, receiving their trophies from Anne Buchanan.

THRONE ROOM



A scene in Polymers earlier this year, they appear to be taking the need for improved communications seriously !
