

Bits & Bytes

No 26

Editorial

I have just come back from visiting my doctor at the local surgery and have witnessed the latest NHS system for booking appointments with specialists at hospital. I was not impressed! It seems that all the experience that the IT industry has gained over the past 50 years has not been used to get a user friendly, functional system. Without going into details of my particular problem, the drop down menus offered to the doctor for the department to which I should be referred did not cover my particular complaint. I would suggest a diagram of the human body on which you click would be much easier to use.

However since I went to the surgery I have received notification of my referral and the on-line appointment system- Health Space- worked very well.

The end of 2007 saw the end of an era for me, as John Sherlock, who interviewed me in 1958, for a job in FEHQ Luton; died on the 17 December 2007, age 96. If he hadn't taken me on you wouldn't be reading Bits & Bytes! There was a good turnout at Luton Crematorium on New Year's Eve when a dozen people who had worked at FEHQ paid their respects to a wonderful manager.

I recently had another "Mark Twain" experience when I saw that Pat Holohan had died. Luckily the **other** Pat Holohan, who I knew at Isis in the City of London, sent me an email about two days later proving that he was still alive and kicking! See the stories in the Obits.

Keith Crook is giving a talk at the Stevenage/Letchworth Old Boys (SLOBs) ex Punch Card Reunion on **7 October 2008** on the advances in data storage over the past 50 years. **All are welcome.** See details in the Reunions section.

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Fujitsu Services News

The Cabinet Office and Fujitsu sign first deal for public sector Flex

Public sector Flex, the framework which allows the Cabinet Office and Fujitsu Services to provide information and communication technology (ICT) as a shared service across the public sector, has signed its second customer, the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS).

Fujitsu will initially focus on bringing together the two key divisions within the department that were formerly functions within the Department of Trade and Industry and Department for Education and Skills. The contract which is split into two phases will begin immediately and will see Fujitsu provide a single managed service, to fulfil the newly merged department's immediate need for IT services. This service will later be transformed to the public sector Flex shared service.

The service for DIUS, will provide 1000 users across London, Sheffield, Darlington and Runcorn with access to the appropriate business applications whilst providing a standardised IT service that incorporates a service desk, mobile working and business continuity service.

Phase two is planned to be underway by early 2008 and will see the seamless transition of the single managed service to a shared service under public sector Flex.

Eithne Wallis CB, Managing Director, Government at Fujitsu Services comments, "This is the first of many customers that we expect to sign up to public sector Flex. We are currently in discussions with over fifteen public sector organisations who are interested in reducing costs and improving the effectiveness and functionality of their IT infrastructures."

Police Service of Northern Ireland awards ICT Managed Services to Fujitsu in potential £100 million 8-year contract

Fujitsu Services announced 6 February 2008 a contract with the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) to consolidate the provision of its ICT Managed Services. The initial £34m contract, worth a potential £100 million over a period of eight years, will help the PSNI consolidate its existing, multiple IT service providers into one single provider. This contract will have a direct impact on front line officers providing them with higher quality support for ICT services.

In particular, officers and staff will benefit from a 24/7 on site support desk, which will dramatically improve the speed with which IT queries are handled. Fujitsu will also manage maintenance and servicing of between 8,000 and 10,000 PCs and laptops, which are crucial to police officers and staff performing their daily duties.

The decision to consolidate the managed service provision via the Fujitsu contract will provide benefits for the police service including improved service

quality and a reduction in costs. Currently the PSNI has over five IT suppliers providing its IT systems. At its peak this contract will be managed by a team of around 100 people. Fujitsu Services will be responsible for the provision and management of the PSNI's service desk, fixed line telephony network, data networks (covering WAN and LAN), desktop and laptop computer requirements, applications hosting services, a network of static and mobile automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) cameras and applications support services.

Fujitsu joins the Prince's Trust

We are pleased to announce that Fujitsu Services has become a patron of the Prince's Trust, giving us the opportunity to help transform young lives. As a Patron we are committing to invest £100,000 in The Trust's work over a period of four years. This investment can:

Help 20 disadvantaged young people to set up their own business

Support 60 young people to improve their personal skills through running 4 Team programmes

Improve the life chances of up to 200 young people through running 20 xl clubs

Give 60 unemployed young people the opportunity to gain employment through a Get Into programme.

The relationship with the Princes Trust will also provide benefits to the organisation, our people and the communities we work in. It will:

Provide a platform to demonstrate our commitment to drive forward social responsibility to improve the lives of young people

Benefit volunteers from Fujitsu who can further develop their personal skills such as communication, leadership and mentoring.

Support Fujitsu Services developing community strategy and commitment to Education, Youth and Health

Complement our existing work in the community with local IOS teams

Meet expectations from customers that we can demonstrate our commitment to community relations, particularly in UK local government

Build links to charitable activities where other suppliers or customers are actively involved.

As a patron we join a high-level group of industry leaders from the technology sector, the Technology Leadership Group, chaired by Richard Holway. Members include Microsoft, Royal Bank of Scotland, BT Group, Capgemini, KPMG and Ernst & Young bringing a wealth of networking opportunities to Fujitsu as well as recognition of association.

We are currently looking at challenges and opportunities for volunteers to be involved in and will be sending further communications.

Fujitsu Services complete offer for Mandator AB

Fujitsu Services, announced 8 October 2007 a recommended offer for all the shares in Mandator AB (publ) at a price of SEK 3.00 in cash per share.

The price offered for the shares represents a significant premium of 30% compared to the volume weighted average trading price of Mandator's shares in the 10 trading days prior to the announcement of the offer. The Board of Directors of Mandator

unanimously recommends the shareholders of Mandator to accept the offer.

Sweden has a large IT services market which Fujitsu Services believes has a strong growth potential. It is also home to many important global brands.

Mandator is a successful and growing IT services business which employs more than 560 people - 390 being based in Sweden, 100 in Estonia (also a preferred near-shore location for Nordic customers) and the remainder in Denmark and the UK.

The acceptance period for the Offer expired on 31 October 2007. More than 90 percent of the total number of shares and votes in Mandator has been tendered in the Offer. Fujitsu Services declares the Offer unconditional and announces that it will be completed. Once the final number of shares tendered into the offer is known, Fujitsu Services will take the appropriate steps to delist Mandator AB and to acquire the remaining shares in the company.

Commenting on the outcome of the offer, Mike Stares, managing director of Nordic operations, Fujitsu Services, said "I am delighted with the success of our offer. The positive reactions we have received from the customers and employees of both Mandator and Fujitsu Services, as well as the analyst community, have reinforced the logic of this transaction. This creates the 6th largest IT services company in Sweden, offering great career opportunities to our people and providing end-to-end support across the complete IT environment to an extensive customer base. I am looking forward to welcoming the Mandator employees to Fujitsu Services."

Fujitsu links Eurostar and UK National Rail ticketing systems for online sales

Fujitsu Services and Eurostar, the high-speed international rail operator, announced 3 January 2008 that Fujitsu has connected Eurostar's online ticket system with seven UK train operators' systems. Fujitsu's work means that travellers from 68 towns and cities across the UK can now book through-fares to Continental Europe on eurostar.com

Previously travellers had to book domestic and international rail travel separately. Now, travellers from such cities as Leicester, Cambridge, York and Birmingham can just go to eurostar.com and book one fare valid for the entire journey to Paris, Disneyland Resort Paris, Lille, Brussels (and any station in Belgium), and 75 other connecting destinations in France - making the whole travelling experience easier and more seamless.

Fujitsu has linked Eurostar's online ticketing system with those of Chiltern Railways, East Midlands Trains, First Capital Connect, Hull Trains, London Midland, National Express East Coast and Virgin Trains. In mid-to-late 2008, in the second phase of project, more UK towns and cities with mainline stations into London will have through-fares to the Continent and Fujitsu will link eurostar.com to other UK train operators' online ticketing systems.

FirstInfo Ltd upgrades rail telesales

FirstInfo Ltd, a part of the FirstGroup transport operations company, has announced that it is to replace its existing ticket telesales system with Fujitsu STAR telesales - the award winning

integrated rail journey enquirer and ticket issuing system from Fujitsu Services.

FirstInfo provides telephone rail ticket sales for First Great Western, First Scotrail, First Trans-Pennine Express, Hull Trains and others. The deal represents a continued expansion of multiple channel retailing for STAR, which is already used by seven out of twenty five train operating companies (TOCs) as their planning and ticketing system.

FirstInfo is installing STAR telesales in order to improve the speed and efficiency with which enquiries and bookings are handled at its three call centres in Plymouth, Fort William and in India. The new system will help staff reduce handle time on calls by around 30 seconds because it better supports the call handling process and provides scripting to guide telesales staff, delivering a more consistent service to customers.

Fujitsu is one of the most important IT providers for the Association of Train Operating Companies supporting over 4000 terminals in stations, booking offices and call centres. In 2005 STAR was selected as the winner in the "Innovation in IT" category in the Rail Industry Innovation Awards. Fujitsu also developed the Rail Journey Information Service (RJIS), which it operates for the UK rail industry as a whole.

Government property efficiency savings rest on flexibility of IT

Fujitsu Services believes that the efficiency savings required in the civil property estate can best be achieved by the introduction of flexible IT and working practices across government departments. This is contrary to the alternative concepts of reducing the amount of room available to staff or relocating staff from expensive areas of the UK to cheaper ones – as suggested in this week's National Audit Office (NAO) report 'Improving the efficiency of central government's office property'.

Fujitsu sees the significant savings highlighted by the OGC in the NAO report – in the region of £1-1.5 billion – as coming from changing the way Government works through IT, i.e. the ability for civil servants to hot desk and log into computer and telephone systems from any desk; and by moving expensive services such as datacentres out of major cities to locations, where they are cheaper to house and run and can be operated on a shared basis. Not only will this lead to better space utilisation, but it will also result in lower IT administration costs, lower hardware costs, lower energy consumption, and more efficient use of resources.

UK Research Councils to implement shared services with Fujitsu

Research Councils UK (RCUK), a strategic partnership working to deliver the Government's objectives for science and innovation, has selected Fujitsu Services, under a competitive tender process, to implement a shared services infrastructure. The shared services framework will unify key back office processes in HR, financial, procurement and grant processing across the seven Research Councils within the RCUK partnership and offer an integrated and efficient service to each Council.

The project, valued at £40 million over 10 years, will help the Councils to more effectively manage their supplier base, enable savings in procurement spend and lead to more efficient back office administration. It will provide benefits that will strengthen the Councils' abilities to support over 12,000 Research Council employees, and approximately 30,000 researchers. As part of the project 600 administrators will be employed at RCUK Shared Services Centre Ltd located in Swindon - the majority of these employees will transfer from existing roles within the Research Councils.

Peter Telford, chief executive of RCUK SSC Ltd commented, "We will deliver an integrated, more efficient and effective service to all the Research Councils. We are pleased to be working with Fujitsu on this challenging venture and look forward to delivering quality services for the benefit of the research community."

Eithne Wallis CB, managing director of Government Business, Fujitsu Services, commented, "Fujitsu is consistently proving that it can deliver effective shared services infrastructures and is playing a vital role in driving forward the transformational government agenda through shared services. Organisations that adopt a shared services approach can experience genuine economies of scale and reduction in costs which can be essential in their drive for continuous improvement. This initiative will strengthen support for the Research Councils' researchers, whose work is vital in the development of science and innovation in the UK."

Each year the Research Councils invest around £2.8 billion in research covering the full spectrum of academic disciplines from the medical and biological sciences to astronomy, physics, chemistry and engineering, social sciences, economics, environmental sciences and the arts and humanities. Current priorities include energy, living with environmental change, global threats to security and ageing: lifelong health and wellbeing.

Life in ICL & before LSD = Lyons Software Development Completing the story

1976 Bohemian Rhapsody

Another change of company, a new operating system, a new everything..... or so I thought it was to be with VME in Lovelace Road. The first thing I noticed was that all the office furniture had seen better days, or even decades! Nothing matched, the seats were moth-eaten and a chair with castors was a prized possession. Then I heard about VME/K and found the development team on the 9th floor comprised of ex Univac bods with the same Ed Mac and Hero No Brain (the O'Heron of 494 fame) leading the unit and other names to anagramise like Emmanuel Ypsylante. I got the impression they were only there for the bucks after the 494 development folded, but then aren't we all influenced by ££££'s?

Back in VME/B support (yes, you've guessed it I have "Support" written through me like a stick of rock) it was the same sort of story as in Paddington. Huge piles of continuous stationery, paper listings of the operating system to debug, hand written responses to customers, avoidances, the famous KEL – if it's on the Known Error Log then why don't you fix

it howled many a customer! The comms were still local, with dumb terminals a few floor up linked to the mainframes on the ground floor. Fixes still went by phone or sometimes by TELEX, I became quite good with the WRU key and interactive TELEX conversations.

Still it was the beginning of COMMUNICATIONS between different systems. And we were worldwide support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week – mainly to the old pink bits on the map of course. Calls from the team at Mount Isa Mines in Papua New Guinea would come in during the night of course. Single processor systems with no mirroring meant commercial customers were in the mire if the machine or operating system failed. It made me appreciate how people on remote sites need a friendly voice at the other end when they are in trouble and call base for help.

Bug priority and commitment to response targets became the flavour with customers trying to classify them as A – System Down (8hrs to a fix) or B – System severely disabled (two days to a fix). Much diplomacy and weasel words were needed to placate desperate customers.

The systems improved and the SWURCC network (SW Universities Regional Computing Centre if you really want to know) which linked the 2900's of Bristol/Bath/Cardiff and Exeter I think was successful. It was marvellous for distributed computing and real communication. Commercial organizations quickly followed suit of course.

It was about this time we saw the Sinclair ZX80 “build it yourself home computer” – 8080 chip was it? In the pubs Space Invaders game machines were all the rage. The market for PC's as we recognize it today was starting with the Commodore PET.

OfficePower arrived and email became both a boon and the bane of our lives. Oh, I'll just cc them as well to keep them in the loop and so the list of uninterested people became longer and longer. Mailboxes were clogged with crud. But don't forget we had international email way before most companies had even linked their London and Manchester offices.

1982 Another Brick in the Wall

I think this was the year I jumped ship for the OPD bandwagon forsaking the vast machines I had grown up with for two phone lines, a screen and keyboard, miniature cassette tapes one inch square, Psion and Sidney Snake – which screen level did you reach before running into the blocks?

Parallel development in ICL saw the 1500 range become successful but we in the Desktop Market began to sense the wind of change in computing.

Customer take up was slow at first and a spreadsheet was a new experience. Sending files over phone lines was certainly quick, it was just capacity that was lacking. Development carried on at a great pace. New BIOSes were produced almost weekly it seemed, woe betide you if a leg bent when you were swapping the chips over!

Anon

(Editor would like to know if anybody recognises the author)

Letters & e-mails

KDF9 history

A project has been initiated by Prof. Simon Lavington (lavis@essex.ac.uk) which seeks to archive (save for posterity!) any remaining data about early UK computers, in particular early English Electric mainframes, hardware and software. He would be interested in any documentation held by ex-engineers/programmers

I have been collecting KDF9 material with a few others and would welcome a trawl through the 'lofts' of any ex-KDF9 associates.

In passing, a 'thank you' for the magazine, I suspect it takes quite a lot of your free time!

Bob Beard ex KID01

“B.T ...phone home..”

My broadband internet died suddenly one evening in March. I tried the phone and it still worked. The modem was winking at me instead of glaring and the terse message was “No dial-up”. Whenever the ISP do maintenance, I find cryptic messages appear, implying it's my fault and not theirs. Later things work, but in this case it was still telling me the obvious, all weekend.

A year ago with a new computer, my existing scanner wouldn't hackle and HP blamed Dell who blamed Windows. Dell's free support was naturally on a premium phone line. I'm on a phone package that gives unlimited calls but only on 010 and 020 i.e. private lines and now I was on the merry-go-round of premium calls.

I decided to write complaining and eventually an Indian lady rang, I explained my problem and she sympathized, but explained she wasn't technical, but her function was to smooth irate customers!

This time I had to cope with my ISP- Wanadoo, Tesco- for my phone and BT- guardian of the line.

BT seemed the obvious start, as the line was down. Dialling 100 is free, but frustrating whilst one does the routine of pressing most of the buttons for technical support. A computer checked my phone line and insisted I ring my ISP to get help for broadband. I rang Wanadoo on an 0845 number and eventually got Orange who have swallowed Wanadoo. They dismissed me as a basic package, poor person they weren't really interested in. I was entitled to support as they advertised, but on an 0900 number at 50p/min.

A while back, my wife had a call offering her a new husband if she took part in a competition. Though tempted, she twigged it was a scam and hung up. I then decided to ask BT to block 0900 numbers. Now I needed one! Everybody on the make participates in “Rip-off Britain” where one gets through on a national rate number and then listens to Vivaldi, whilst waiting for a non-existent extension.

I tried our new hospital for 2-weeks over Christmas, getting the operator who says, “I'll put you through” and then silence. In the New Year I went there and the ophthalmic department hadn't been able to receive incoming calls since the opening in December. They were so quiet they offered to do my cataract there and then!

Tesco had to ask BT nicely to reconnect my 0900 facility but it'd take a while. I decided to use my mobile to ring Orange. The first Indian needed my

age, mother's maiden name, my inside leg measurement etc. and then, "Can I help you?"

Faultfinding is by a checklist. "Is it switched on?" "Take out all filters" "Reinstall the modem" At this point I ran out of airtime on the remains of the £10 in my mobile. A week later 0900 was available. My next Indian went through the same mantra. I gave up when he suggested I disconnect all the phones to test it!

The third Indian skipped the formalities and still trying to convince me it was my fault, wanted me to take the computer to the incoming phone socket under the stairs. I hung up.

When I'd calmed down, I borrowed a long phone extension, did what he suggested and still, "No dial up"

Indian number four took the brunt of my irritation and skipped the check list, but noticed a message that there was an OUTAGE at my exchange!

It'd be fixed in a couple of days, no problem. Two weeks later, no fix.

On the library computer I was able to enter the Orange site and with my password get an e-mail off my chest asking for help. A computer replied thanking me for choosing Orange and suggested I ring the 0900 number I was so familiar with!

I e-mailed again and got an identical computer message reply. I wrote to the Company Secretary and heard nothing. A week later, broadband came back as mysteriously as it vanished. I rang a friend and he was confused, as my phone number had changed! Then my phone rang and a Chinese lady insisted I was her mother, whose number I now had. I rang BT. They redirected my calls to my mobile and promised to look into it next week, as it was only a domestic fault! 1am Monday I got a call asking if I'd accept a reverse charge call from Hong Kong. I was rude and even ruder when it happened again 15 mins later.

That day, a month from "No dial up", the Chinese lady rang to say her phone was fixed. Mine was now dead. Orange rang, via my mobile, to say they'd got my letter and actually apologized for the mess. They were pushing BT and agreed they'd cancel a month's fee and when I got my phone bills they'd consider helping out!. I queried their failure to contact me but they claimed BT isn't allowed to give them my phone number under the Data Protection Act.

None of this is my fault and I'll refuse to pay for these calls. If I go to prison, perhaps Adrian could organize a collection to pay my fine and get me out in time, if he needs another article, which hopefully will be more amusing.

Oh, how different it was when a local call to Control, was passed to a local engineer and he'd be round the same day to fix it!

PS: I paid for the calls on a promise from BT of a refund. It's now October and BT haven't even apologized!

Dennis Goodwin

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Life after ICL

Warts and All

Cancer is such a frightening word and thankfully most of us don't come into contact with it.

I was very annoyed to find a small wart developing on my face. Just what you don't need when age is

producing its own pattern of lines etc. It was obviously not going to disappear on its own so off to the doctor's surgery and an appointment made for its removal. Nothing to it! It was therefore a shock to get a phone call a couple of weeks later saying the lab had tested the wart and it looked dodgy. Would I make an appointment at the local hospital so that they could do a further test? Well, I didn't think I had any choice. I turned up on my own at the agreed time and was shown into an operating theatre where a surgeon proceeded to tell me what he intended to do. Forget a further test; he was actually going to remove a chunk of my face. No-one had told me that they had had a meeting to discuss my case, decided that it was a malignant melanoma and fast action was required. I could have refused but then what?

The operation lasted just under an hour and they asked if I had anyone to take me home. No I hadn't because I thought they were only going to do a test. Then you should take a taxi they said. So how was my car going to get home, no I would drive. Fortunately it wasn't very far. The reaction to it all came when I arrived home and looked in the mirror. He had told me he would cut a flap of skin and pull it across the hole to cover it and this is exactly what he did. The incision went from my eye down the side of my nose to my chin and the stitches made it look like a railway track. The skin was pulled quite taut and lifted the corner of my mouth into a snarl. The son who lives closest to me came immediately I phoned. "Oh God mum, what have they done to you, why didn't you let us know." Well, I didn't know myself.

There was some correspondence between the hospital and my son in which he let them know how annoyed he was at the way it had been handled. Lessons will be learned they said.

It is now a few months since 14th August 2007 and amazingly there is very little sign of what took place. Just a long scar which was the railway track and some puckering under the eye which they assured me would disappear but seems reluctant to do so. I asked the Surgeon what would have happened if I hadn't had the operation. He told me it would have spread all over my body and I would have died.

One tiny wart which they said was probably due to lying in the sun years ago before we knew what damage the rays could do. I don't mind not going brown now. Somehow lilywhite seems far more attractive.

Sheila Mulligan ex Putney

Reunions

ICL Central London

The next reunion will be on Wednesday 16 April 2008 at **The Flying Horse** at **52 Wilson Street**, from 12 noon. The pub is east of Finsbury Square.
Bill Williams 020 7607 9408

Stevenage & Letchworth Old Boys (renamed Punch Card Reunion)

The reunion which is held annually on the first Tuesday of October at STE04 is open to **all** ex-employees. Keith Crook has volunteered to speak on the technical advances that have taken place over the past 50 years.

"During the Hitchin Festival in July there are various talks on any subject usually, but not necessarily, arty. So I did one called **"From a house**

to a pinhead" which broadly covers how we got computers from the huge, slow and expensive to the small, fast and cheap (1 gigabyte for £5.25!). Not so much the physics which nobody would understand, particularly me. I had 24 people, all green, except for the first 3 who were Peter Mellor, Tony Maynard-Smith and John Harper. "Why are you here?" "Thought we'd come along to heckle". But they didn't (indeed their additional input was quite helpful) and although the talk went for 2 hours, nobody left or dropped off. It's very non-tech and ends up describing digital TV and why we're doing the switchover. Not quite sure why but it sort of evolved and seemed to interest people whom I spoke to afterwards. I think I'll probably do it again next year; takes no setting up and we have an excellent studio at the theatre which is perfect for intimate talks like this. If you think it would do for the next PCR let me know and I'll send you a reasonable synopsis for the appropriate B&B. I think I can reduce it to 90 minutes, say 10:30-12:00 - but not much less, particularly with an interactive audience. I'm not sure how many of the PCR audience actually know what binary/digital is, but I'll explain it faster than I do with a totally green crowd"

Tickets for this event are available from me by sending an SAE and a cheque for £10 made payable to the Punch Card Reunion, to 5 Nun's Acre Goring-on-Thames RG8 9BE

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Copthall House Newcastle Staffs

Bob Green 01782 615290

East Grinstead 81 Club

Gordon Franklin 01342 328479

East Midlands UB40s

Brian Skeldon 0115 9725119

ICL Double Majority Association

Joseph Gardner 01438 362806

ICL Midlands

Brian Trow 01785 257317

Leo Computers Society

Geoff Parry 01628 770129

Letchworth

Dennis Evans 01462 811273

Liverpool Engineers

George Lynn 01744 29984

Surrey Engineers

Trevor Harding 01483 565144

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Tin Hut Reunion

Olaf Chedzoy 01278 741 269

West Gorton Reunion

Eric W Watts 01457 875080

Watford-Harrow- Feltham

Mike Ray 01895 230194

West Branch Engineers

Eric Reynolds 01452 712047

West Kent Reunion

Ron Harding 01732 761076

ICL Old Buggas

Les Mowbray www.cuin.co.uk/oldbuggas/

NEW

ExICL Kidsgrove

I retired from FJ/ICL in 2002. Since then I have organized a reunion which we call simply ExICL. We meet at lunch time on the first Thursday in the month and have a Xmas dinner annually. Attendees run at about 8-12 regulars with another half dozen intermittents. They are all ex software, mainly VME.

We meet at the Foresters Arms 473 Crewe Road Winterley, Sandbach CW11 4RF tel no: 01270 762642. Normally 12:30 to 15:30.

Nick Edmonds 01270 585953

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OBITUARIES

Tom Corbett

I was sad to see Tom Corbetts name in obituaries, but more than offset by many warm memories of him. I met him many times over the years, the last time about 12 or 15 years ago, before I retired. He never changed all the time I knew him. Always cheerful and optimistic, unassuming, soft spoken and very caring and friendly. He must be badly missed by his close friends and family.

I first met Tom late 1957 or early 1958. He would be about 40 and I a mere 22. I had been sent with John Hudson to install one of the first 1202's for the Irish Sugar Company. I have written about this time in an earlier issue of Bits & Bytes. We were joined for a while by Pete Watts from the STE04 production team (and his wife Olive and young daughter of 2 or 3). There was a newly trained site computer engineer (one of the Flyn brothers) and a very young DP engineer Jim Donnovan, who was to induct us into the Irish, country pub, closing ritual – out the front, round the side and in the back. Same glasses, but now a closed private party. While working in Thurles for many months, spread over the first 18 from installation, I was to learn all about beet farming, sugar production and tare weights, meet the Killacky girls (Marion was the new computer operator), their friends and many locals, often through one of the local priests. Thurles has a very fine cathedral.

Anyway, I digress as usual. Tom met John and I at the airport – not quite elastic band plane, but a very early type, possibly a "Fokker" or even a Pioneer (converted Dakota). We were whisked off to the office, then to a pub for a Guinness and brief about the Irish Sugar Company and then off down the Cork road for Thurles in Co. Tipperary. About halfway, near Abbeyleix, permanently fixed in my brain, very relaxed in the back (no seat belts then), enjoying the Irish countryside and some Irish music, we hit the little humpback bridge. The car leaped into the air, I hit the roof and fell back in a daze, with Tom's gentle Irish voice saying "Ah, I was to tell you about that"! I still have the bruise.

Alan Wray, BTM, ICT, ICL, Fujitsu.

Pat Holohan

I have just seen this name in the deaths which brings back a memory of the late 60s. Pat was the site engineer for the ICT 1500 (RCA 301) at ISIS in Lime

Street in the City of London. They had one of the "large memory" systems with all of 40K bytes storage!

RCA had brought out a modification to increase the performance of their processor memories. They called it "Speed-Pak." We had upgraded many of the 20K systems but this was the first of the 40K systems attempted. We had to remove much of the backplane wiring and replace it with new links. The modification was started on the Saturday morning and at the end of the day we thought that we could test the system on Sunday. When we returned we discovered that the system would not operate correctly. After checking all the wiring again we came to the conclusion that the upgrade would not work with the 40K memory. It was now 4am and we had to hand over a working system to the customer at 8am. So we removed all the new wiring and reinstated the original wiring. It worked!

RCA confirmed later on the Monday something that we suspected, that the modification had never been proved on a 40K system!

There was a dark haired Hungarian young lady working in the computer room who the visiting engineers thought was very attractive. When Pat was asked for his opinion he replied "I don't like her hair". We couldn't understand this until he clarified the statement with - "Under her arms".

Editor: This was not the Pat Holohan who died! It was one who was based up north. See below

Ron Whitehead

Hi Adrian. This is Pat Holohan, ex BTM, ICT/ICL. Will you note that Ron Whitehead died on 21st December 2007. He died from Motor Neurone Disease. His wife, Irene, and his daughter, Christine, have asked me to let you know so that his name can be included in the next issue of Bits & Bytes. Ron was 79 when he died and worked for the company as a Field Engineer for 35 years, always in London S E.

I live quite close and shall be in touch with the family in the coming weeks. The only person that I know that Ron was in touch with is Denis Goodwin, also ex London S E. He is a fairly frequent correspondent to B & B and I am about to try and dig his details from my files in order to let him know. Can you let me know if there is anything else I might do to help his wife through this sad event?

Pat Holohan. London S.E.

John Sherlock 1912-2007

In 1958 I was de-mobbed from the RAF after 4 years service as an Air Radar Fitter, working on navigational radars on V Bombers at RAF Wittering. As my demob date approached in the October of 1958 I was lucky to meet a reservist named Jimmy Webb, who worked in Sheffield. I asked what he did. He took a piece of paper and a sharp pencil and proceeded to make holes in the piece of paper. He then said that the company, for which he worked, fed cards with holes into machines which had wire brushes which "read" these holes!

This was the first time I had heard about these devices and as I wanted an interesting job I asked Jimmy for the name of his employer. "The British Tabulating Machine Company" he replied. I sent a letter to 17 Park Lane and as a result was asked to attend an interview at FEHQ Oxen Road Luton.

John Sherlock interviewed me and was able to enlighten me about the mysterious machines called computers. My first question was "How do they work?" "Binary" he replied. "What's binary?" I asked. "Ones and noughts, - on and off". I was twenty one, had worked on complex analogue circuitry on Doppler radars but had never heard this term. I was rather disappointed that computers just used ones and noughts. Little did I realise that wonderful things were possible using binary!

I got the job as an Electronic Engineer on the princely salary of £750pa, working on 542 and 550 punched cards calculators. It was quite a culture shock working for bosses like John Sherlock after four years in the RAF. He could actually help on technical queries, where the officers I reported to at Wittering knew nothing about the workings of the radar sets I repaired. Instead of orders from the boss I was **asked** to go to sort out a particular problem. Nobody ever said no, we worked until we fixed the fault, without being paid overtime. We did however get seven and sixpence meal allowance. Loyalty is the word which sums up the attitude of manager and employee to each other. It is not like that today in any organisation that I know.

Adrian Turner ex FEHQ

ICL/Nortel Fund

ABI01	Hazeldine	Frank L	03/11/07	84
BIR03	Thompson	Frederick	02/11/07	79
CAF02	Boorman	David C	10/09/07	76
CRE01	Pegg	Geoffrey	26/10/07	79
Dublin	Corbett	Tom	01/09/07	90
Dukinfield	Collinson	J	17/10/07	88
	Walker	June	27/09/07	76
ELS01	Whitehead	Ron	27/09/07	79
FEHQ	Sherlock	John	17/12/07	96
FEL01	Bury	W J	18/10/07	79
	Carvey	L P	09/01/08	84
	Rowles	William J	23/09/07	81
GLA01	Morrison	Alan Alex	03/01/08	79
HOM99	Clorley	David A	27/10/07	77
KID01	Atkin	A	11/01/08	89
	Glennon	John	06/10/07	76
	Hassell	Harry	30/11/07	82
	Hunter	Gilbert G	06/10/07	85
	Morris	William L	23/10/07	72
	Rogers	Jacqueline	14/11/07	76
	Tompkinson	John	02/12/07	76
LET01	Elson	J D	26/01/08	75
LET04	Noel	Ruby C	31/10/07	78
	Whitney	Paul	08/11/07	79
LET05	Cook	Raymond	04/11/07	74
	Jeapes	Betty M	01/10/07	76
	Lee	Joan H	15/01/08	80
	Murray	William S	07/02/08	80
	Phillips	D F	19/10/07	76
Letchworth	Conway	D M	19/12/07	90
	Lambie	J A	29/09/07	83
	Rosedale	Eugenia	06/01/08	85
	Smith	David	02/12/07	82
LON11	Crampton	Pauline	07/11/07	80
	McWethy	Charles C	23/09/07	87
LON24	Sale	John P	02/10/07	82
London	Henrick	Peter J	12/09/07	73
	Murphy	Cecelia	26/11/07	89
MAN05	Edgley	Harry N	31/08/07	80
	Robinson	John E	09/10/07	83

	Rowan	T	17/02/08	75
	Smith	Eric Ned	03/10/07	69
Newport	Bolt	Alan J	27/12/07	79
REA08	Tarr	RG	20/01/08	77
Reading	Griffiths	Malcolm	26/11/07	72
SLH01	Cook	C S A	11/01/08	71
SLH06	Money	Joan V	22/02/08	78
SOU06	Smith	Frederick	02/01/08	80
STE04	Basford	Eric H W	28/09/07	84
	Holding	Margaret	08/01/08	73
	Howlett	Leslie C	05/01/08	77
	Rudd	M R	11/01/08	76
	Skudder	Clifford G	24/10/07	70
	Taplin	Keith F	24/09/07	82
Stevenage	Blackmore	Arthur E	16/11/07	90
	Prestage	R S	09/09/07	96
Sydenham	Jensen	Celia	24/11/07	92
WAK01	Murray	Neil	06/03/08	69
	Simmnett	John G	03/12/07	80
WIN01	Stokes	Jabez H	01/12/07	89
WSR01	Dean	George E	20/10/07	83
Unknown	Carter	W E	28/02/08	91
Location	Craig	A E	08/12/07	86
	Curtis	E	29/02/08	96
	Dakin	K	08/10/07	80
	Denbigh	J A	01/12/07	91
	Doney	E F	18/02/08	89
	Hampton	Ralf	04/10/07	57
	Harrison	T T	11/02/08	78
	Howard	R L	09/10/07	79
	Lawrence	D M	08/11/07	88
	Morgan	A	24/12/07	79
	Brown			
	Nakielny	P M	14/01/08	82
	Phillips	Ernest	29/10/07	87
	Pryke	E L	05/01/08	92
	Smith	John H	13/11/07	82
	Springle	David	29/01/08	70
	Willacy	Stanley	25/09/07	87

ICL Fund

Includes people who died in service

BIR03	Parkes	Stephen J	01/10/07	40
BRA01	Evans	Kenneth	04/03/08	72
	Jackson	Richard A	08/09/07	62
	Mladenovic	Malcolm	14/08/07	45
BRA06	Brown	Lionel L	06/02/08	77
BRS05	Adam	Mike A	14/05/07	61
CRE01	Conway	Ian P	28/06/07	48
FCY03	Bannock	Alice E R	27/12/07	52
FEL01	Cresswell	Adrian P	25/11/07	64
GLO03	Scrase	Robin L	18/01/08	65
HOM99	Holohan	Patrick A	08/10/07	74
	Parker	Janet	06/01/08	48
	Perks	Andrew J	07/12/07	52
IRE02	Whitehead	John A	28/08/07	77
KID01	Jones	Gerard E	07/03/08	48
	Willis	Roy	18/01/08	74
LEW02	Daniel	Jeremy W	17/01/08	57
LON78	Russell	Susan A	06/11/07	50
MAN05	Buckley	Raymond W	21/12/07	71
	Holder	Stanley	18/01/08	72
	Kavanagh	Rita	26/10/07	75
MAN12	Shimmin	Derek	05/02/08	72
	Coburn	James S	15/11/07	72
REA21	Barclay	Jonathan	26/12/07	46
REA23	Garrett	Christopher	08/10/07	58
SLH06	Venn	John L	09/01/08	77
	Woodhouse	Roger C	24/02/08	63

STE04	Clifton	Christopher	15/01/08	63
STE10	Curtis	Norman W	22/09/07	79
STE12	Rudd	Margaret R	11/01/08	75
STE14	Kearney	Hilary	05/03/08	66
WAK01	Blanchard	Mary T	09/11/07	68
WIN01	Barrett	Roger R	19/01/08	67
	Fleming	Pauline	09/11/07	55

Average age of death

I know many pensioners are interested in the difference in age of those in the Nortel and ICL Funds.

I have done the simple sums and come up with the following results:

Nortel average age of death is **81**. Three people reached 96, two 92, two 91 and three 90.

ICL average age of death is **63** which is exactly the same as I worked out 8 years ago. The oldest was 79, five 77 and the youngest 31.

It is worth re-iterating that no ex ICL people have joined the Nortel fund since September 1991 and that the ICL fund has members still working in Fujitsu.

It makes me wonder what my "sell by date" is!

Editor

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Pensioners' Directory

Tony Riley maintains the directory for those pensioners who are on the Internet and want their email address and career details published.

His email address is: tonyriley@europe.com

Pensioners' Website

The website for ICL Group pensioners is <http://uk.fujitsu.com/pensioner>

News items are published as they arise, and a monthly news update is published at the time that pensioners get their payslips.

Bits & Bytes is also published on the website and all previous issues are now available.

NEXT ISSUE

Copy for the **Autumn 2008** issue must be submitted by **1 September 2008**, but would be appreciated earlier.

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