

LABNEWS

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CLRC Notices

The Enterprise Forum

15 June 10.30am, DL
Delighting our customers
- How to treat them so they keep coming back.
David Hall

RAL Notices

RAL lectures

All lectures are held in the Pickavance Lecture Theatre at 3pm.

24 June

The magic of total solar eclipses
Dr Francisco Diego, University College London

DL Notices

DL lectures

All lectures are held in the Merrison Lecture Theatre at 2pm.

14 June

Genetically Modified food
Professor Richard Morody,
Manchester Metropolitan University

24 June

Lasers in science and industry
Professor Colin Webb, Clarendon Laboratory,
Oxford University

DL public lecture

11 June
Total eclipse of the Sun
Dr Tim O'Brien,
Liverpool John Moores University

Abstract

The lecture describes the importance of the Sun along history and the terrifying feelings of those who have seen the Sun disappear in the middle of the day. It also deals with the nature of the Sun and what we think is powering it deep below its surface. Some practical demonstrations are used to explain how solar eclipses take place and the best ways to observe them. Then a vivid description of the events that take place on the day of the eclipse, which culminate with the appearance of the last diamond ring at the end of totality. Some of the science behind the observation of total solar eclipses is also presented to explain the importance of knowing more about the solar activity, so closely connected with our environment on earth.

Missing equipment

A Psion Series 5 8mb Palm Top computer. Delivered to R65 7 April 1999, box markings include Farnis receipt 50884026. Anyone with any information please contact Andy Napper ext. 6663.

Articles, ideas and letters are very welcome!
Articles to the Editor or Correspondent by 15th of the month.

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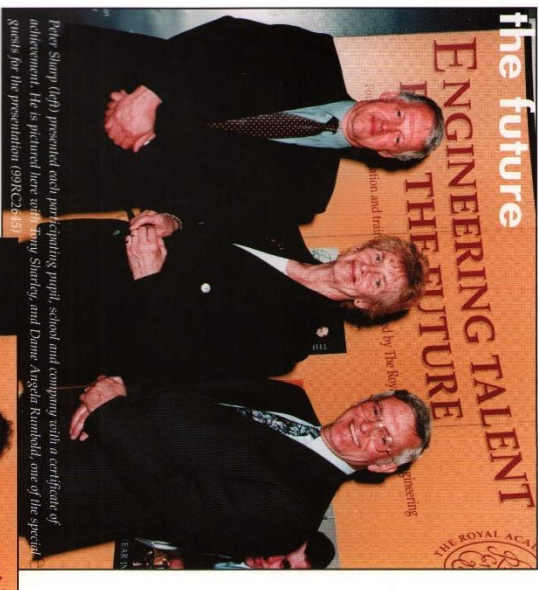
Engineers of the future

RAL hosted twenty-six teams of lower sixth form students from schools in the South-east recently. They were part of the presentation and assessment day for a scheme operated by the Engineering Education Scheme (EES). The students presented the results of the projects they have been working on for the past six months to assessors.

The scheme involves a team of four pupils working with a local company to solve a real problem. "We target bright students who are studying A-level maths and other suitable subjects and enable them to appreciate that engineering is fundamentally concerned with problem solving," said Tony Sharkey, the regional director of the scheme.

"These students haven't necessarily decided to do engineering, but the scheme offers them an opportunity to see what engineering involves and this will help them make a considered choice on whether they would like to enter this profession," he continued. The projects provided a range of engineering challenges and included:

- production of a device which can measure a round top road hump;
- investigation of the source of recording imperfections for IBM Music Services;
- design of a new audition room facility within an existing listed building in Portsmouth historic dockyard;
- development of a secure, economic and practical solution for securing ladder to roofclimbing.



Peter Slury (left) presented each participating pupil, school and company with a certificate of achievement. He is pictured here with young Slury and Dame Angela Rendell, one of the special guests for the presentation (99RC26/27)

- designing a robotic arm restraint for the Mars Beagle 2 Lander due to be launched in 2003.
- Local projects for the scheme included one with CLRC. Students from Didcot Sixth Form worked with Instrumentation's Greg Johnson on a two-axis stage for X-ray tomography and the project included several trips to Daresbury. Another team from Didcot Sixth Form worked with National Power plc on cooling tower performance measurements.



Greg Johnson (centre) with the team from Didcot Sixth Form (99RC26/46)



COUNCIL FOR THE CENTRAL LABORATORY OF THE RESEARCH COUNCILS

Surface science success



The organising committee of ISSC-12, Paul Bailey, Nick Harrison, David Norman, Bruce Hamilton, Tracy Turner, Frances Quinn, Jane Whittington and Danny Lane (DL99/02130)

Professor Phil Woodruff (University of Warwick) receives the British Vacuum Council Medal from Professor Mike Clossos (University of Nottingham). Both are major users of DL's facilities (DL99/02110)



The 12th Interdisciplinary Surface Science Conference, held at Chester College 29 March to 1 April, provided an excellent showcase for Darabury Laboratory's surface science facilities. For one day, the entire conference, attended by 120 delegates, moved to DL where they toured the SRS, MEIS, RUSTI and CCP3. The ISSC series of conferences has been held every two or three years, sponsored by the

Institute of Physics' Thin Films and Surfaces Group, to feature the breadth and depth of British surface science, with a few invited speakers from the USA and continental Europe. The conference was chaired by David Norman and very capably organised by Tracy Turner and Jane Whittington, the conference treasurer and secretary, who were ably assisted by Karen Richardson and the organising committee.



Anne Centrey with Sarah Condroy (left) and Rina Hollington (right) (99RC2279)

Newsreader visit

At the RAL secretaries' meeting on 14 April, Anne Dawson, Journalist and newsreader for Central TV, gave a most interesting and inspiring talk about her career. From university and a first job on a newspaper to her present high profile job in television, Anne took the audience through an exciting few years where she worked for no salary just to get into tv, and her career break when she spent three years sailing around the world. Serious stuff that sailing - she described being tied to the mast while on watch in a storm and said it taught her that you can't be frightened for 36 hours!

Anne answered all the questions the secretaries had been waiting to ask. She described eminent people she had interviewed and important stories she had covered and talked a little about the technical side of reading of the news live on tv.

Anne now fits her career (including giving talks like this one!) around her family and her home in North Oxfordshire. The secretaries' meetings take place every two months and cover a wide range of topics; various areas of the work of CLRC, training, and electronic systems, to name a few. This particular talk was the first in a series entitled 'Successful Women and their Careers' and was greatly enjoyed by everyone who came.

First collisions in Babar

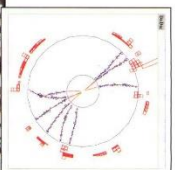
There was great excitement in the particle physics community on 26 May when the first collisions were reported from Babar, a new experiment at the Stanford Linear Accelerator Centre in California, which aims to answer the question, "Why is there an excess of matter over antimatter in the Universe?"

The early Universe, microseconds after the Big Bang, should have contained equal amounts of matter and antimatter. When matter and antimatter meet they annihilate, each leaving only bursts of pure energy - but mysteriously a bit of matter was left over. This eventually made the planets, gasses and stars of the Universe.

Ken Peach explained. By studying B-particles and their anti-particles (B-bars) we hope to see the tiny differences in behaviour between matter and antimatter which will explain the huge imbalance in the Universe. Until today we haven't been able to create enough B-particles to see this effect, nor were detectors able to

record sufficient detail. Babar offers us a fantastic opportunity to take a huge step forward in our understanding of our Universe."

About 70 UK particle physicists, including a group from RAL, work in the international Babar collaboration. It is housed at the Stanford Linear Accelerator Centre in California where an existing particle accelerator has been upgraded to produce millions of B-particles and their anti-particle B-bars. Inside this B-factory the particle detector, Babar, will track the behaviour of each particle. The scientists' efforts were rewarded at 5am on 26 May when, after hard work turning the colliding beams and the detector, the first collision was seen.



UK people from the Babar detector. They stand in front of the endcap calorimeter which is the part of the detector that was built in the UK.

Jumping for joy



Linda Roberts has raised over £600 for the Cancer Research Campaign by doing a sponsored ascent. The 110-foot assault - down the side of one of the buildings at the John Radcliffe hospital in Oxford - was something that Linda had wanted to do for a long time. She said "I'm thrilled with the support I received! I never expected to raise that much. It's something I've always wanted to do, and raising money for a good cause at the same time made it even better".

INSPEC launched and Library stack opened

In December 1998 INSPEC, the database for physics, electronics and computing, became available via the world wide web, and CLRC took advantage of this to extend the end-user service to customers' desktops. Staff can now search INSPEC using a web browser from their own computer. To officially launch this service the Library and Information Services invited Ray Lewis, Marketing Officer from the Institution of Electrical Engineers (IEE), to introduce INSPEC and demonstrate some of its useful facilities. Ray's talk included explanations of the content and structure of INSPEC, the bibliographic fields used and the specialist indexing fields.

The INSPEC launch coincided with the official opening of the new rolling shelving now glides smoothly along, providing easy access to the stock. Andy Kurzfeld cut the ribbon and the guests took advantage of a delicious cake made to mark the occasion.

Andy Kurzfeld cuts the ribbon (98RCL339)



The events were well attended, and have resulted in an increase in registrations for INSPEC. For those unable to attend the talk, the Libraries have information packs containing the slides from Ray's presentation, and there is also a video of the presentation available for loan. If you would like any more information about INSPEC

or how to register, please contact the enquiry desks:

IDL ext. 3397 <library@rl.ac.uk> and RAL ext. 3384 <library@rl.ac.uk >

The Library would like to thank all the people who helped with the arrangements for the event.

Debbie Franks and Christine Ellis



and Sir Lackey cuts the cake (98RCL343)

Research Systems technical days 11 and 14 June, RAL

Two new seminars at RAL will show the latest software developments in the fields of data visualisation, meteorology, medical imaging, physics, astronomy and acoustics.

The very latest releases of IDL (Data Analysis and Visualisation Environment), ENVI (Remote Sensing Image Processing Software) and ION (Web enabled IDL for the Internet) will also be on show.

The seminar day also includes user presentations, poster sessions, product demonstrations and a buffet lunch. If you would like to attend one of the seminar days please contact Research Systems International on 01344 760400 or email <ksales@rsi.com> or Jerry Beer at RAL on ext. 5618 <jlbeer@rl.ac.uk>



Some special guests staffed the Chudatock Library at the World Book Day, Miss Mapple (Miss Winky Noble) was on hand to solve queries, and Mumptrilla (Gail Murchland) persuaded customers to get their teeth into a good book (D19914511)

A day in the life of Edwin Divall

Walking along the corridors of the Central Laser Facility I have always been intrigued by the flashing 'Laser On' signs and wondered what weird and wonderful experiments are going on inside those windowless labs! I was given the opportunity to find out by spending the day with Edwin Divall, Edwin, who has worked at RAL for the past six years, has been involved on a variety of projects associated with

Sprite, Triania and now Astra. So off I went armed with a notebook and pen to Astra, CLRC's newest high power laser. Some people would be put off by having someone shadowing their every move, Edwin however has already experienced fame at RAL for his star performance in the CLRC corporate video. I am sure he found little difficulty coping with being in the spotlight once again.

As for many staff, Edwin's day starts quite early in order to turn on and warm up some of the small laser equipment which powers the main laser. Today is his turn to operate the laser, therefore one of his main tasks first thing in the morning is to fire it up and adjust the beam. To do this we first had to don clean-coats and overalls along with goggles which protected us from the powerful infrared light. Inside the laboratory was a huge table with thousands of holes, upon which was mounted the laser along with lots of mirrors, lenses and alignment irises. Lining up the laser and focusing the beam involves adjusting the angles of these mirrors so the beam lines up on the irises. The laboratory uses CCTV cameras sensitive to infrared light to help line up the beam with the aid of a cross marked on a monitor. The frequency and timing of the beam pulses also required some fine tuning. I was amazed how efficiently Edwin made all of these adjustments by hand in such a complex array of equipment.

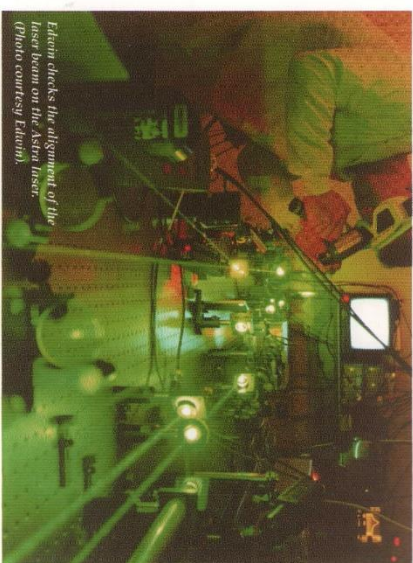
Edwin has to ensure that the laser is ready for when the users arrive. The set up went smoothly until a switch broke on the Pockels cell driver, a piece of equipment linked to a high voltage power switching system. This system is an amazing piece of kit as it precisely opens an optical gate, letting through just one laser pulse, the gaps between pulses being just 3 metres. This is very little, as one pulse could travel round the entire world seven times in the space of a second. After spending time dismantling the equipment and putting it back together again the problem was solved and the laser fired up once again.

Astra supports two target areas. At the time of my visit, one target area was in use by researchers from the University of Reading, the other by experimenters from the University of Belfast and University College London. Edwin was responsible for supporting the latter target area. They were carrying out experiments into the basic physics of how hydrogen molecules dissociate when hit by an intense laser pulse. The laser strips away the electrons to leave two positive nuclei. This creates a Coulomb explosion as the protons repel. Much of the work they had already carried out had been merely to characterise the beam in readiness for the experiment. Once Edwin was sure that his users were okay, we went back to the control room to carry out some design work for new equipment that was needed for a 3rd

amplifier. Although we were out of sight of both the target areas, and the laser room area, Edwin could still keep a close eye on what was happening via a bank of CCTV monitors. He could also monitor the beam stability, position and intensity from here. Not only does this save walking back and forth between rooms, it prevents disturbance in the laser area that can effect the alignment of the beam. We did have to re-enter the laser area at one point to adjust the power of the beam. Edwin and his colleagues are currently developing a system to control much of the laser from outside the area via computer.

After a very busy morning, things quietened down a little in the afternoon. Edwin checked on work to develop new warning lights for the third amplifier. We also checked on progress with Edwin's users and became involved in a debate over some of the results they had acquired. Edwin gets to spend time with a number of different user groups working on different experiments on a regular basis. I enjoyed my day with Edwin a great deal. It's refreshing to find out more about what is happening on this huge site with all its closed doors and dark rooms.

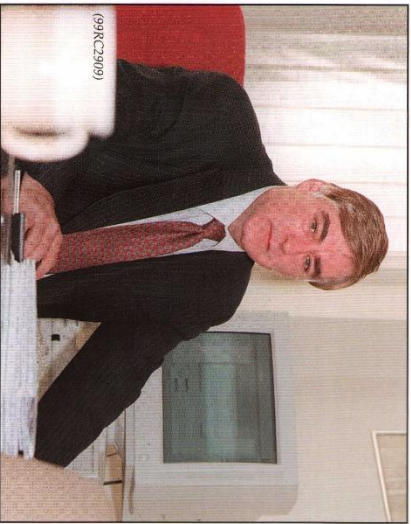
Mark Jackson



Edwin checks the alignment of the laser beam on the Astra laser. (Photo courtesy Edwin)

New appointments

Stuart Hopley, Finance Director



(99RC2909)

Stuart Hopley joined CCLRC in April as the new Finance Director. Stuart graduated from the University of Birmingham in 1970 with a

B.Commerce in Economics and Accountancy, qualified as an Associate of Chartered Institute of Management Accountants in 1975 and was made a fellow of the Institute in 1983.

After a series of posts he joined the BBC as Engineering Cost Accountant in 1979 where he held a number of posts of increasing seniority in finance, throughout the Corporation, working in television and radio production, broadcast engineering and research, subscription television and IT. He left in 1997 to work in consultancy, focusing on business process re-engineering and systems implementation work.

Outside work his interests include history, antiques, the Times crossword and Lancashire cricket. He is married with one daughter, 19.

Retirements

Sylvia Fones

31 March marked the last day of a 35-year career for Sylvia who, for the last five years, was CCLRC's Chief Personnel Officer.

Sylvia spent her early days at the Laboratory as an AA - equivalent to the present Band 8 - and worked her way through many positions to her final role as Chief Personnel Officer in 1993. She spent her entire career in Personnel, and for much of that time the Personnel Division was situated in R20 which has since been demolished. It has been described by those who worked there as a dark, hot, rabbit warren so undoubtedly Sylvia was jubilant when she had the chance to drive the bulldozer which heralded the first move in the building's destruction. By this time, R71 - a new, modern building - was ready to house the Personnel team along with the rest of Administration.

Over the years, Sylvia saw at least five Chief Personnel Officers precede her, starting in the early days of NIKVNS and progressing through the amalgamation of the Appleton Laboratory and the Rutherford

Laboratory to form RAL and in more recent times becoming SERC and later CCLRC. She made a major contribution to the Laboratory's successful Industrial Relations for many years and supported the Council on numerous golfing events. She is an avid golfer.

Sylvia was a fundamental part of the Laboratory. She knew many people and during her time she helped so many. She will be remembered with great warmth by all her friends and colleagues. Since retiring, Sylvia has taken up watercolour painting. As she has never been able to swim, she has taken lessons and has already received her 10-metre badge! She also intends to travel more, and hopes to work, on a part-time voluntary basis, for the Macmillan Fund.

Moira Henderson

Moira Henderson retired at the end of April after nine years with the Health and Safety Group. Colleagues past and present gathered to say goodbye and to wish her well. RAL Safety Officer Martin Evans presented Moira with some vouchers for Milllets garden centre and a plant arrangement.

Moira says "I would like to thank all those people who contributed to my leaving gift, to those who made my last day so memorable and to say goodbye to those I had no chance to see."

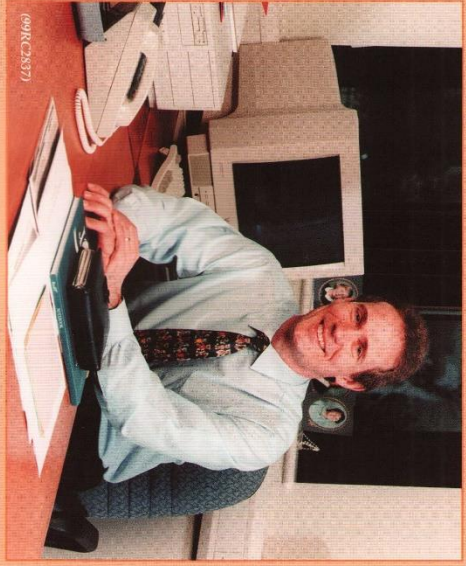


From left to right: Eric Hartley, Norman Botton and Alan Hedges - all ex-colleagues from H&S who joined Moira for her leaving do (99RC2851)

Paul Hartley, Human Resources

Paul Hartley joins CCLRC from AEA Technology at Harwell, where he was HR Manager for their Nuclear Engineering business, and previously spent several years at Downreay. His academic background is in modern languages, which he claims are now 'mainly rusty'. He has three school-aged daughters and lists music, bird-watching and bell-ringing among his interests. "I've been made to feel very welcome by everyone at RAL and at Daresbury and I'm looking forward to working with you", he said.

With Paul's arrival, 'Personnel' will now be known as Human Resources. So, what's the difference? Human Resources is more strategic, focusing on managing personnel matters in a way which supports an organisation's overall objectives. Watch this space!



(99RC2337)

Roger Evans

The banner in the conference room proclaimed Happy Retirement Roger but, as Roger himself put it, "I'm not retiring to do the gardening and decorate the house - I'm hoping to change directions back to science".

Brian Davies came out of retirement to make the presentation to Roger Evans and made it clear that Roger has only spent the last 12 years in computing. Before that Roger worked at Culham Laboratory doing astrophysics before moving in 1974 to the Appleton Laboratory in Slough working on UUE - the long-serving infrared Ultraviolet Explorer satellite. In 1977 he moved to Central Laser Department where he



Roger and his wife, Janet, pose with Janet's bouquet (99RC2415)

spent 10 years before moving to computing in 1987, where he worked predominantly on the Cray computer (hence the crayfish jokes!). Roger's wife Janet was presented with a bouquet of flowers and, together, Janet and Roger unwrapped the TV. "I'll do my academy award speech now and thank everyone", he said. "I have really enjoyed my time at the Lab and I'll miss you all".

Visits

Daresbury Laboratory recently hosted a visit by a group of students from Vrije University, Amsterdam.

After Tony Buckley's introductory talk, the students toured some of the beamlines in two groups. Anna Lawless took her party to the Structural Biology Laboratory, where she is manager of this group which provides support for research. Anna felt quite at home with the visitors as she spent a short time at Vrije University whilst she was a post-doc student. She then took them into the SR Control Room where John Balmer gave an overview of the control systems and then onto the confocal microscope at station 13.1, where both carcass and healthy cell tissue are being studied.



The students tour the SNS (D259/44/8)

Dr Mirzazev Papriz explained how detectors are set up on station 9.6 and, after visiting one or two other stations, the visitors went into the Daresbury Science Centre to sample some of the hands-on exhibits. The other party, led by Dr Steve Bennett, toured station 3.1 where they looked at the gratings which are used to select the right wavelengths in the study of atmospheric chemistry. Steve also took them to see his own station where X-ray diffraction is used to study atoms on surfaces.

The organiser of the trip, Maurits Heijna, thanked everyone involved in making their visit so worthwhile. Marg Jacks would like to add her thanks to all the staff who willingly gave their time to help.

Professor Brian Fender visits RAL

As chairman of the SNS Science Planning Committee in the late 1970s and subsequently Chairman of SIEDRC's Science Board, Brian has played an important role in realising the funding for ISIS. His involvement with ISIS was renewed in his present role as the chief executive of HEFCE (the Higher Education Funding Council for England) which, along with



Brian Fender (centre) with Andrew Taylor (left) and Colin Carlike (right) (99RC1332)

the OST, launched the very successful Joint Research Equipment Initiative three years ago. Several instruments and upgrades including OSIRS, TOSCA, MAFS, and PRISMA, as well as the slow muon facility and the National High Field NMR Laboratory have been funded through JREI by collaborative ventures between university researchers overseas partners and ISIS staff. It was therefore very appropriate to welcome Brian to RAL for a tour of ISIS and the NMR Laboratory, and to renew old friendships. He clearly admired the developments made to ISIS and discussed future plans for the facility.



Phil Tindley explains one of the laser systems to the students (99RC1975)

Investors in People - results of staff survey

Thank you to everyone who returned questionnaires or took part in interviews with Paul Temple - 667 questionnaires were returned and 97 people were interviewed. Interviewees were drawn from all departments, representing all Bands and a wide range of posts. Part-time staff, students and visiting scientists were included.

As we expected there is good news and not so good news! The results against the five management processes which make up the Investors framework are summarised below:

- **Planning** - CLIRC is in the early stages of pulling together business plans and training plans. Some departments are more advanced than others, and some departments have developed excellent planning documents. All areas now need to make sure that plans are regularly reviewed. The link between planning at the organisation and department levels needs to be strengthened.
- **Communication** - Staff understand the broad aims of the organisation and how they contribute to them. They are also aware of the training and

development opportunities available to them. However managers vary greatly in the quality and frequency of the feedback they give staff on their performance and, although there is evidence of commitment to training and development, this is not always effectively communicated.

- **Performance Reviews** - Training needs are reviewed for groups and individuals in all departments but the effectiveness of the AFR process for discussing training and development needs is variable, and in some areas these discussions are not happening. It is essential that all staff have the opportunity to discuss their training and development needs with their managers at least once a year and preferably more frequently.
- **Management Effectiveness** - There are some very good managers and some very bad ones! The organisation needs to develop a standard of management effectiveness and ensure that managers are given the support and opportunity to develop the necessary skills. This is a key area for improvement and one which is being looked at corporately.

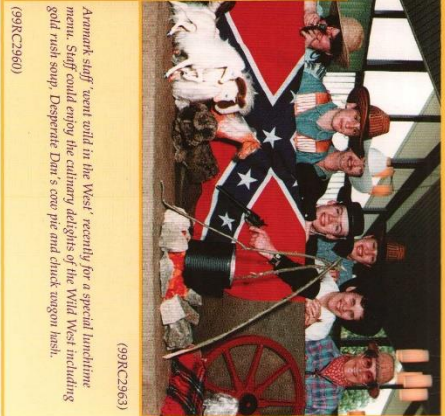
development opportunities available to them. However managers vary greatly in the quality and frequency of the feedback they give staff on their performance and, although there is evidence of commitment to training and development, this is not always effectively communicated.

- **Training and Development processes** - Induction is generally sound, although some local arrangements need to be improved. Many appropriate training courses are available to staff, and there are many examples of employees being encouraged to develop themselves. There is good evidence that the training received has had a positive impact on the organisation, although the objectives for training and development are not always clear and many managers are not reviewing training and development activities with staff after the event.

To summarise, there are good management processes in place and evidence of good management practice throughout CLIRC. However there are also weaknesses in some key processes which we now need to work on. We have made considerable progress in the 18 months since we started working towards IP. Our progress rate is not dissimilar to other organisations of comparable size and complexity who typically take 2-3 years to achieve. There is no reason why, with continued hard work and commitment, we cannot become a recognised Investor in People during the next 6-12 months.

Rosie Sherry

ARAMARK



Aramark staff went wild in the West recently for a special lunchtime menu. Staff could enjoy the culinary delights of the Wild West including gold rush soup, Desperate Dan's cow pie and duck wagon hash.

(99RC2963)

(99RC2960)

Jack Howlett 1912-1999

Jack Howlett, the first and only Director of the Atlas Computer Laboratory died recently aged 86.

Jack, a numerical analyst, was one of a select group who recognised the significance of computing and influenced the development of mechanical and later electronic computing.



Educated at Stard grammar school, he went on to read mathematics at Manchester University. He then worked, pre-war, for London Midland Scottish Railways - introducing to engineers the benefits of computation and analysis. From 1940 until 1946 he was a member of a Manchester University group which built a mechanical 'differential analyser', an analogue machine which was probably then Europe's most powerful calculating engine. The group's calculations made a valuable contribution to the atomic bomb project and led him to take charge, in 1948, of what became the Harwell Atomic Energy Research Establishment's computing section of the Theoretical Physics Division. Incidentally, the job offer came from that well known Russian spy, Klaus Fuchs, who was at that time head of the division.

In 1958 Harwell acquired a Ferranti Mercury computer which was used by both Harwell and the Rutherford High Energy Laboratory (RHEL). For reactor design, there was a need for much more powerful computers and IBM embarked on the design of a new computer called Stretch. A British machine of similar power was needed to keep the UK in the computer

business - the Mercury was a massive leap forward. With Manchester University and Ferranti, Jack and the Harwell Group were involved in planning the Atlas project. The aim was for a large computer to serve the needs of Risley, Harwell, Culham and the UK universities!

In 1961 Jack became the Director of the new laboratory and its only employee for quite a while. Jack acquired a piece of land in 1962 and building work started on the current Atlas Centre, which was completed in 1963. The Atlas machine was installed in the spring of 1964. It came in 19 large trucks and took a month to install - a massive machine for those days with 48K words of main memory, 96K word drums and 18 magnetic tape decks!

About 25 of the old Harwell Group moved across to help get the project off the ground (Paul Bryant and Bob Hoggood are still with us!). There was a large operations group, and both systems and applications programming groups. About 20 current ITD staff

were members of the Atlas Laboratory. Others have moved departments, some even reached Daresbury (Vic Saunders and Martin Guest).

As well as nuclear physics, there was application work in finite elements, crystallography, time-series analysis and text analysis which was in its infancy. Collaboration with the Meteorological Office led to a weather forecasting model which forms the basis of current computer-based forecasts.

Under Jack's direction, the Laboratory attracted a stream of British and overseas visitors. A former Atlas employee Jim Halsstone remembers Jack. "He was loved and respected, he knew everyone by name and to have been a member of Jack's Atlas Laboratory is recognised as a privilege".

The Atlas Laboratory's visitors book bears ample witness to the array of famous scientists and engineers who came to see him. The Atlas ran until 1973 (the Atlas Centre was extended to its current size to host an ICL 1906A which ran in parallel with Atlas for a while).

On Jack's retirement in 1975, the Atlas Laboratory merged with the Rutherford Laboratory. Jack then became chairman of the national committee on computer networks for two years and continued to work as a consultant to the computer company ICL, editing its technical journal. He is survived by his wife Joan, who he married in 1939, four sons and a daughter.

RAL Golf Society Society Day Competition

Weather, course (nice fairways, fast true greens), company and refreshments all excellent. No complainers really, until that is you actually start to play golf!

Seriously though the turnout was good, including five new members (one of whom walked away with the trophy - boy! has his handicap been cut!)

As well as concentrating on my game, I made a point of taking a gender at others from various vantage points on the course. Some good, some bad, some indifferent and some funny. I shouldn't laugh but there's something funny about a ball finding the water AGAIN on the same hole and watching the player jump up and down, lean this way and that in a vain attempt to will the ball off its disastrous line. Been there, got the T-shirt!

Thanks to the RAL Rec Soc for their support, all the players for their pleasant company and Lynham Golf Club for taking good care of us.

Congratulations to our winners:

First place and this year's holder of the Stableford Trophy - Barry Best with 76 points

Runner up - Derek Howe with 75 points

Longest Drive (by miles) - Derek Howe

Nearest the pin - Adrian Morris

Hole in 2 - Neal Grafton and Dave Ripplington

The 1998 Knockout Championship was finally decided on 13 May when Dick Carter beat Tony Baker on the 19th hole. Dick was 3-up after 6 holes, then Tony won the next 3 to level the match at the halfway mark. Dick again took a lead winning the 11th & 13th, Tony fought back again taking the 15th, 16th & 17th to be 1-up with one to play.



Neal Grafton
<n.d.grafton@jacuk>
RAL Golf Section Secretary

The 18th wasn't Tony's favorite hole and the match was all square, so off to the 1st once more. They were kindly allowed to play through by the players on the tee, which usually means you rush things. This happened to Tony who ended up taking two more shots than Dick, so Dick Carter won the match on the 1st extra hole.

Congratulations to Dick who's handicap has been adjusted by -1. Hopefully I'll see some of you in this year's knockout championship and at the Inter-Establishment tournament in Scotland.



ERSRC Council

Four appointments to the Council of the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council have been announced. Professor Philip Kochanski FRS (University of Glasgow) and Dr Jeremy Gunawardena (Basic Research Institute in the Mathematical Sciences at Bristol), have been appointed to serve for three years, and Professor Keith Burnett (St John's College at Oxford), will serve for four years. Professor Wendy Hall has been re-appointed for a further three years.

Applications for small, local or pilot projects (£250 to £10K) should go to PPARC's Small Awards Scheme.

BBSRC Council

Five appointments to the Council of the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council have been announced. Dr Margaret Stanley (University of Cambridge) and Professor Keith Gull (University of Manchester) have been appointed to serve until 31 March 2002, and Dr John Padfield (CE Chitoscience Group Plc) will serve from 1 December 1998 to 31 March 2002. Professor Bernard Atkinson and Dr David Shannon have been re-appointed.

- anyone can apply, however use of PPARC funds must result directly in the promotion of our science area, and bidding consortia must have good links with active researchers;

- partnerships are encouraged, e.g. between scientists and teachers or communicators.

Short applications are required by 10 July. Short-listed applicants will be asked for full business plans for support by mid November.