

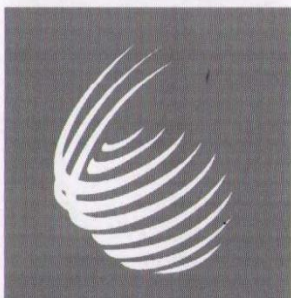
March 1995

# DRAL News

• A Monthly Newsletter for DRAL Staff •

## Inside...

Award for laser physicist, Admin Systems, News in Brief, Social News and Notices.



**CLRC**

*The new CLRC logo.*

## (C)CLRC here we come!

Independence day draws near - no, not the Fourth of July but the First of April - and that's no joke! While the show appears to go on as normal, we hope, behind-the-scenes activity has reached epic proportions in the last few weeks, with a few visible signs of the change from DRAL to

CLRC beginning to appear. By now the new image will be known to you all with the issue of the first notice regarding the new style, seeking orders for business cards and other stationery. It is certainly different from the DRAL approach, although it is funny how quickly even this became comfortable, considering some early comments about it. By the way, CCLRC is the legal name (Council for the Central Laboratory of the Research Councils). The nickname for the Council itself, coined at the highest level, is CCL. The Laboratory is CLRC (Central Laboratory of the Research Councils): CLRC is the name for all sites (Rutherford, Daresbury and outstations) and is likely to be the most used version. The logo shows CLRC being looked after by the Council - the 'swirl' being a subliminal 'C' for Council - at least that is Sci Admin's story and I'm sticking to it!

So what has been going on backstage? Immediately the White Paper 'Realising our Potential' was published, and it was suggested that DL and RAL would merge and their status would be reviewed, management set about searching for a practical solution which would allow us to build on the excellence of the two laboratories. Much political activity went on until, somewhat against prevailing government policy, it was agreed that we would be an independent body sitting alongside the Research Councils within the Office of Science and Technology (OST). The features which make DRAL

special had to be emphasised at every opportunity and our friends, colleagues, clients and users all played their part in achieving the desired result by voicing their opinions on our effectiveness and quality - setting us in good stead for an independent life - but recognising that our main 'business' was supporting research, a business that has little prospect of financial profit for the practitioner.

This momentous decision was promulgated late last year, giving us but a few short months to bring the new body into being. Of course, we had already started to merge the activities of the two sites, particularly in the administration area, but now the challenge to turn them into a single, cost-effective, efficient and even higher quality organisation, began in earnest. This has resulted in the bringing together of similar activities across the two sites - many are now being managed on a federal basis - and will lead to direct cost savings in the future as areas are restructured. The effects on staffing are likely to be felt predominantly in the support services where economies of scale can be gained; it is expected that such economies can be achieved through staff retiring or leaving voluntarily.

Paul Williams' skill in leading us to this point was recognised when he was appointed the first Chief Executive of CCLRC as from 1 April. Since the beginning, he and senior colleagues have been involved in detailed discussions with the OST and the individual Research Councils about how the new organisation will work in practice and the relationship that it will have with its customers and users. Negotiations have already led to the signing of umbrella agreements with most of the Research Councils and service level agreements are also nearing completion: these are the documents which will set the framework within which we will deal with our major customers, the Research Councils. Most recently, the distribution of the Science Vote (the money voted for science by parliament) included, for the first time, a direct vote to CCLRC - a sum of £1.5m - against which we will make proposals to fulfil the responsibilities laid down in the Royal Charter granted last month.

A Statutory Instrument will transfer the appropriate goods, chattels, contracts and liabilities to CCLRC from EPSRC and will define the employment position of staff, ensuring that there is no break in service and pension arrangements



are unaffected. This will be backed up by various letters to those affected by the changes, from our tenants through to those with whom we have international agreements. Other examples of the work of the backroom staff are amending the data protection, VAT and transport registrations; implementing the visual identity - a style guide will be available later this month for all staff; planning the launch of CCLRC (including staff launch celebrations on 3 April); sorting out banking, legal and financial procedures; transfer letters for staff; Health and Safety policy statement; fire certificates; and, last but by no means least, new pay arrangements with Chessington.

You will be pleased to know that all of these things are well in hand and you can now understand why there have been some frazzled-looking people about as they try to keep up with their normal jobs while sorting this all out too! One obvious result of the change will be the disappearance of DRAL News but, fear not, it will be replaced by an even better publication next month, so watch this space!

*Andy Kurzfeld*  
Head of Scientific Administration

## **Institute of Physics award for laser physicist**

This year's Max Born Medal and Prize has been awarded to Professor Mike Key, Head of the Central Laser Facility at RAL. The award is presented jointly by the Institute of Physics and the German Physical Society in recognition of his distinguished contributions to laser research and development. Mike, who is on a year's leave of absence at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in California, will receive his prize at a special ceremony later this month.



*Mike Key, winner of this year's Max Born Medal and Prize (94RC1577).*

Arriving at the newly-established CLF in 1976, Mike went on to become its head in 1983. In recent years he has made important contributions to the development of high-power x-ray lasers, leading collaborative work with Japan and the US. He has been instrumental in promoting the krypton-fluoride excimer laser as a natural successor to the glass laser technology. He has also encouraged the development of 'chirped' pulsed technology on the Nd:glass vulcan laser, transforming it into one of the brightest research lasers in the world.

During his time in the US, Mike has been co-ordinating experiments in directly driven laser fusion at Nova - the world's most powerful laser facility.

## **News in brief**

### **Preparing for take-off**

This will be a very stressful year for some staff in SSD at RAL as they watch the instruments they have worked on for many years being launched into space. ERS-2, ESA's second remote sensing satellite, is due to be launched on 11 April. It will carry ATSR-2, the second version of the very successful along-track scanning radiometer which has been orbiting Earth onboard ERS-1 since July 1991. This launch was due to take place last December but was delayed while tests on the Ariane-4 rocket were carried out. Then in the Autumn, six satellites with significant RAL involvement are being launched. SOHO (Solar and Heliospheric Observatory), Cluster, a 'gang of four' satellites with identical instruments to study the Earth's plasma environment in three dimensions, and ISO (Infrared Space Observatory) will all be launched within a two-month period in October and November. Fingers crossed for them all!

### **Calling 'old' computer operators**

It is thirty years since the first computer operators loaded paper tape and punch cards into the original Atlas computer. There are now plans to organise a get-together of all operations staff both past and present which will probably take place towards the end of the year. There have been an estimated 300 operators during this time and so far about a third of them have been contacted. If you would like more details, or can help track down any of the past computer operators from either Atlas or RAL, please contact Trevor or Stevie on ext RAL 6389. \*

### **New Junior Science Minister**

Mr Robert Hughes, Junior Science Minister, resigned at the beginning of the month. He is replaced by Mr John Horam, who was a junior minister in the last Labour Government, who defected to the SDP and then became a Tory MP for Orpington at the last general election.





Harry and Zena with Ian Munro and former colleague Cyril Lamerick (95/771/12).

## Harry heads off to a happy retirement

A very youthful-looking Harry Simpson retired from his position as a Security Warden at Daresbury Laboratory on 28 February at the age of 65, after 23 years of impeccable service with the Council. Harry has always lived close to Daresbury and prior to joining the Council, had worked all his life on local farms. Perhaps the Laboratory's reputation as "the most expensive potato field in Cheshire" had first attracted him! Throughout his career at Daresbury, Harry's courteous welcome and helpful manner has provided an excellent first impression of the organisation for many new staff, visitors and users. Not only has he been an excellent ambassador but his integrity, amenable disposition and supportive nature have also made him an ideal colleague. Just to prove that the Laboratory knows when it's on to a good thing, Harry's example led us to employ several more members of his family including his wife and daughter. All have proved to be a credit to the Simpson name. Harry's popularity can be gauged by the overwhelming number of staff, past and present, who attended his retirement presentation.

Although we will all miss Harry, his years of devotion to duty and the rigours of shift work have earned him the right to a long and happy retirement in which to enjoy his family and hobbies. David Bailey beware! We wish Harry and Zena, his wife, many years of health and happiness.

Steve Pridding (DL)

## Evaluation of admin systems begins

You may have noticed that the times are a' changing for all of us. The combination of merging RAL and DL, moving from EPSRC to OST, implementing a new Office Information System and (particularly for those of us at Chilton) the closure of the IBM mainframe, means that almost all administrative procedures, and the computerised Information Systems on which they depend, are being reviewed. I have been asked to set up a steering group to try

to make sure that all these new systems fit together properly with all the other things that are going on, without any overlaps or gaps appearing.

We feel that you ought to know about this group since the systems we are talking about will affect most of you in some way or other. You now have the chance to have your say in what could be a lively debate. We welcome any ideas, constructive criticism of present systems and suggestions for improvements. Some of the issues being considered include whether to fill in forms on computer screens rather than on paper, whether information about the expenditure on projects should be available to all staff or only the project's managers, and which parts of the Laboratory need to use basic (non-confidential) data about people - both staff and users of our facilities. We hope to arrange a workshop on 'people data' in the near future, so watch out for the notices. Whatever we do about making personal data available to others, be assured that we will abide by the Data Protection Act. I know that CCLRC is being registered under the Act as I write.

Ken Hartley (RAL)

Ext RAL 5736, OV/VM id KFH@IB.RL.AC.UK

cc:Mail Ken.F.Hartley@adm.ccm.rl.ac.uk

The other members of the group are: Secretary: Brian Hoddy (DL) Administrators: Karen Lambourne (RAL), Bill Turner (RAL) End-users: Tim Broome (RAL), Mike Poole (DL), Eric Thomas (RAL) Technical experts: John Bateson (DL), Paul Kummer (DL), Brian Read (RAL).

## Staff news

### Arrivals...

Welcome to:

**Dr A Beveridge** who joined DL on 17.2.95 as an HSO in TCS Division

**Mr D R Edwards** who joined RAL on 1.2.95 as a fixed-term Security Warden in Admin Department

**Dr R Munro** who joined RAL on 1.2.95 as a fixed-term HSO in Space Science Department

### Departures...

Goodbye and good luck to:

**Mr J Bennett** who left DL on 28.2.95

**Ms P A Hardman** who left DL on 28.2.95

**Mr S Harmer** who left RAL on 24.2.95

**Mr S D Johnston** who left RAL on 3.2.95

**Mrs J Pitt** who left DL on 23.2.95

**Mr G W Scott** who left RAL on 31.1.95

**Mr J H Simpson** who left DL on 28.2.95

**Mr N Weir** who left RAL on 24.2.95

### Promotions...

Congratulations to:

**Dr T Forester** who was regraded from SRA to HSO in TCS Division at DL from 1.2.95



## RAL Notices

### RAL lectures

25 May 3pm  
Pickavance Lecture Theatre  
George Green: Miller, Mathematician & Physicist  
Prof L Challis (University of Nottingham)

### Rounders call-up

In recent years teams from RAL have competed very successfully in the annual Harwell Rounders competition which takes place during the summer months. Last year, out of the four RAL teams entered, three qualified for the knock-out stages with the 1993 winners, the Paper Tigers, losing narrowly in the final. If you'd like to join in the fun again this year, phone Graham Dennie on H 6221 for further details and an entry form.



## DL Notices-Cont'd

### Wednesday Wanderers

'Lantern Pike, Rowarth and Cown Edge'  
7.5 miles of easy walking with a few gentle climbs. Delightful views of Kinder Scout and Hayfield. Lunch at Little Mill Inn, Rowarth.

**When:** Wednesday 5 April

**Start:** 11am prompt please, 4 miles to lunch

**Meet:** Lane off Monks Road, opposite Plainsteads Farm. Ref 024910

**Maps:** Landranger Series sheet 110. Outdoor leisure series No. 1 'The Dark Peak'.

How to get there:

a) Via M56, M63, M66, M67 to end of motorway. A57 to traffic lights - turn right at Broadbottom to Charlesworth. At T-junction turn left and immediate right at monument into Town Lane. Turn right into Chapel Brow (signed Hayfield), leading to Monks Road. After 1.7 miles turn right opposite Plainsteads Farm into lane signed 'Unsuitable for Motors'!

b) From Hayfield, take A624 towards Glossop. After 2 miles turn left, (signed Charlesworth). After 0.7 miles turn left at Plainsteads Farm into lane signed 'Unsuitable for Motors'!

### The Tony Faux Shield

Due to circumstances beyond our control, the original date of Sunday 26 February, which was advertised on the DL noticeboards, has been changed to Sunday 26 March. The venue remains the same - Norton Recreation Club. A similar format to last year will be used for team selection and order of play. Anyone who has already paid, and is unavailable on that date will be reimbursed. Enquiries to: Pete James, ext DL 3510, Room C6, Martin Holbourne, ext DL 3266, Room A72, or Martin Roberts, ext DL 3480, Room D11.

## DL Notices

### Structural Biology Seminar Series

4 April: Immune system MHC1B  
Kate Smith (Oxford University)

26 April: Light harvesting complex - A molecular synchrotron  
Miroslav Papiz (DL)

## DRAL Notices

### Women's Science Night

Would you like to

- find out more about science and technology in an innovative and entertaining way?
- spend the night in the Science Museum?

Tickets are now available for Women's Science Night at the Science Museum, London for Sat 25 March and Sat 8 July. The cost is £18 per person, which includes a midnight snack, breakfast and morning coffee, and a coffee mug and torch.

Enquiries to: Hazel Dale (DL) in A8, ext DL 3600.

### DRAL's new Library Management System

Help us separate the BEST from the REST! The DRAL library and information service is tendering for a new library management system. The evaluation process is imminent and we hope to have each system on test for a week. We would appreciate it if you could try the systems and answer a short questionnaire. Details on when the systems will be available will be put onto the Libraries WWW page. The URL is <http://admin-www.rl.ac.uk/admin/library/newsys.html>. For more information please contact Su Lockley, RAL librarian on ext RAL 6668, Debbie Franks, DL librarian on ext DL 3189, or Catherine Grose, Systems librarian on ext RAL 5402.

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Articles, ideas and letters are very welcome!

Deadline for publication is the 15<sup>th</sup> of month preceding the cover date.