

# VISION

THE HOUSE MAGAZINE OF RANK XEROX MITCHELDEAN

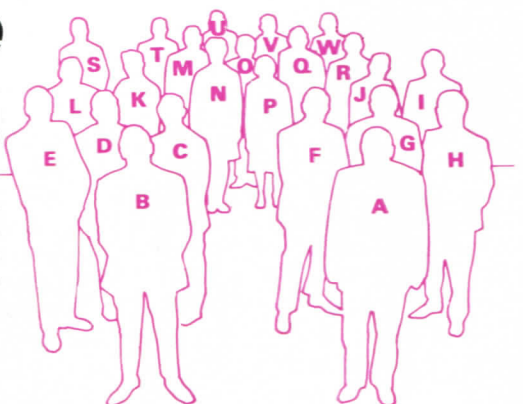


## 947 Years of Service

The Company's decision to present a gift of their choice to all with 30 or more years' service got us doing some sums. We worked out that the initial 28 people who received gifts at Mitcheldean had totted up 947 years of service — surely a remarkable record within Rank Xerox.

**KEY** (years of service in brackets) **A** Reg Arnold (44) **B** Fred Court (37) **C** Henry Phillips (36) **D** George Weatherley (36) **E** Ron Wigglesworth (36) **F** Bernard Smith (35) **G** Bob Walton (35) **H** Jock Currie (35, now retired) **I** Fred Brown (34) **J** Ray Davies (35 now retired) **K** Les Tuffley (33) **L** Frank Edwards (33) **M** Ron Williams (32) **N** Lilian Criddle (32) **O** Bert Cowmeadow (32) **P** Iris Stanton (32) **Q** Bob Taylor (32) **R** Len Hart (32) **S** Joe Bennett (31) **T** Les Wright (31) **U** Roy Nicholls (30) **V** Roy Smith (30) **W** John Brain (30). Missing from our picture are Laurence (Max) Miller (46) Tommy Knight (35) Phil Cleal (32) Eric Wright (31) and May Stidder (30) who were unable to get to the photo session.

Photo: S. P. Hamill





*The team of seven women who went out to Venray initially — from the left : Vivien Wilks, Marjorie Davies, Ethel Peglar, Phyllis Christopher, Lorraine Eckley, Betty Davies and (seated) Sue Barnard. While there Sue had her 22nd birthday which was celebrated in traditional Venray style — decorations at her place of work, sweets and handshakes all round. Several of these ladies offered to stay for the whole six weeks ; Sue was one who did, so she was able to discover the delights of Carnival time.*

## FIRST AID TEAM TO VENRAY

**For the first time ever, women as well as men operators have been sent on a 'tour of duty' abroad**

An emergency operation was called for. Relay bases were causing trouble in the console unit of a number of 7000 machines made at Venray and already in the field. They had to be pulled in to undergo surgical treatment and got back to work, quickly.

Venray sent us an SOS. Could we send them 20 operators who had had 3600 experience to assist with the emergency op?

Soldering was involved, and that is a job at which our women operators are particularly adept.

Ralph Zimmermann, who acted as co-ordinator, told us: 'My immediate reaction was: we shan't get any of our women volunteering to go out. But, as it happened, they were ready and willing to go.'

In the shortest possible time a force of 12 men (from RXMP Assembly, Welwyn Plant and Uxbridge) and seven women (from Electrical Sub-assembly and 4000 Department) was assembled and arrangements were made to fly them to Venray in the middle of January.

Within a remarkably short time the 'expeditionary operators' reached the same standard of quality as their Dutch colleagues, with whom they formed a very good relationship.

The men stayed until the completion of the job; the majority of the women came back after four weeks and were replaced by a further female team.

'We would have been willing to stay out there,' said Vivien Wilks, one of the married women who went first, 'but it seemed fairer to let some others have a chance to go.'

## Over the Brewery Wall

As part of a move to improve communications and give people a better sense of involvement in the overall Plant plan, departments are being invited to make informal presentations to selected representatives of other departments.

First in the field have been Works Engineering, who chose a pictorial package (an introductory talk by Les Inskip or Tony Newman, backed up by slides plus a home-produced colour film) to give 'a sharp and (hopefully) lasting impression of the reality of our job' in the space of some 40 minutes.

The slides were prepared by Tony Austin-Bailey of Projects Planning; he also provided a talk-over on tape for the film made by Eric Tose of Work Study (Industrial Engineering) assisted by his colleague John Martin.

Called 'Over the Brewery Wall', a title inspired by the old Wintle's

poster, the film featured many of the 300 or so members of the department in the course of their work.

As both slides and film showed, this covered a wide range of activities from planned maintenance to security, from transport to carpentry, from the legal aspects to what you might term the 'sewer side' of the department's functions.

At the conclusion of each presentation, criticism was invited from the audience.

Eight of these presentations have been given to date, including two to Works Engineering personnel themselves, and the response has been encouraging.

Several people have been honest enough to admit that there were aspects of the department's work which they had not hitherto appreciated.

Well, did *you* know that the department has to be familiar with,

among others, the Theatres Act, because of the occasional presence of members of the public in the Social Centre?

Did *you* know that nearly £100,000 a year is spent providing electricity for Mitcheldean site alone?

Did *you* know that maintenance men occasionally have to penetrate the nether regions (70ft down in some places) to inspect the main sewage system in the interests of site hygiene?

From the mass of information packed into the presentation, one gleaned the impression of a department called upon to tackle a multiplicity of jobs in servicing the site and providing production support.

Film director Eric, professionally known as Big 'E', has given on the page opposite an account of his experiences which might serve to encourage — or deter — other departments considering the making of a film for their own presentation.

You will also note that our back page this month is devoted to our traffic wardens — another facet of the Works Engineering function.



The whole team pictured on the shop floor at Venray during the first few weeks.

**Right:** Dixie Dean, who once worked at Mitcheldean, now lives in Holland and works at Venray Plant. Recently crowned Carnival Prince, Dixie proved that an Englishman is quite capable of carrying out such a demanding role, even though he lost a few kilos in the process! Here he is pictured with his Dutch wife.



They all seem to have had a great time; they stayed at the Holiday Inn at Eindhoven and managed to visit Amsterdam, Antwerp and Düsseldorf at the weekend.

Those who were out there from February 8 onwards were particularly lucky — they were able to see for themselves how Venray celebrates carnival time, with processions of floats, a public mock wedding and gallons of beer and good humour.

The whole team, men and women, were back at Mitcheldean by the end of February.

## The Art of Coarse Film Making

Deep in Works Engineering something stirred. A voice was heard to say: 'How about a film?'

'Great idea, who'll do it?' asked another.

A third little voice, sounding as if it were chewing on a pair of Army surplus boots, said: 'I will.' The art of moving pictures was alive and living in RX Mitcheldean.

In the past I'd never touched anything more complicated than my old Brownie 44B, so in need of professional advice I visited RXMP's own Ken Russell — Jack Seal.

Jack smiled knowingly in his strange Midland manner and offered his first sound piece of advice: 'Don't whistle in here, it's b . . . y annoying.'

On Jack's further advice I and my

co-director John Martin trotted off to winkle out David Lowde in Training.

'We're making a film, got any equipment?' David shook his head and said 'Yes' (never did find out why), then he showed us what gear he had. Very fine indeed, but not exactly what we were looking for, so back to Jack.

He waved his wand, muttered something like 'Adbra Cadabar' (he's a terrible speller) and produced from his old checked cap one automatic camera and a bag of film.

Full of profuse thanks, we set out to astound the movie world. Not for us the flashing lights, dewy-eyed starlets and romps on the casting couch. We ploughed through piles of grubby laundry, bathed in the delights of Fetter Hill and clung like flies to the clock tower of

St Michael and All Angels in the village.

Our film complete, we sat down and decided the cutting sequence — that's fatal, believe me. Meanwhile Jack prepared the opening and closing sequences in his own inimitable manner.

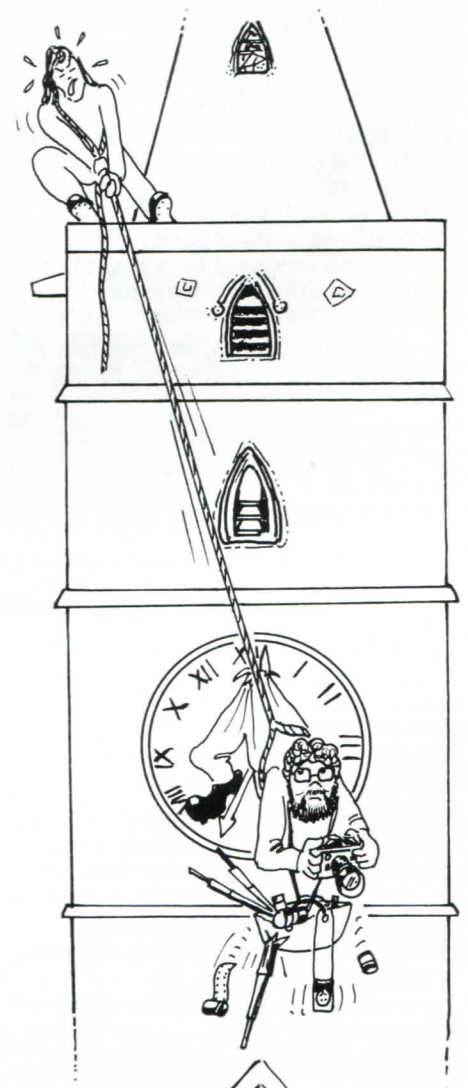
The developed film arrived, and my first move after seeing the 'rushes' was to tear up my cutting script, roll up my sleeves and get on with the real (reel) editing. My stout companion John Martin had by this time gone on holiday rather suddenly.

Editing complete, we presented the film to Tony Austin-Bailey and said: 'OK, put words to that.' He did, some of which I can't even spell (or repeat).

We finished on schedule, an hour before the Board Room Premiere — still, who was to know? I won't say it will win an Oscar, but there again . . .!

For anyone contemplating making a film for the first time, here are a few tips from my wealth of experience. Firstly, don't do it: secondly, if you must, befriend an experienced photographer; and thirdly, always use a tripod — it eliminates the constant handshake (and I don't mean the congratulatory one).

**Big 'E'**



# ACT IN THE INTEREST OF SAFETY

The recent Health & Safety at Work Act, which went on the statute book in August last, is set out in a thickish booklet with a cover the colour of rich cream. The contents are every bit as indigestible and difficult to wade through.

With a view to getting a predigested version, a seminar was held at the Plant on January 9, and James Tye, Director-General of the British Safety Council, was invited along to explain the Act and its implications.

But even he was unable to give a precise answer to every question fired at him by senior management. For, as with most Acts, it will probably take several years, and the submission of various test cases, before the interpretation of the wording is crystal clear.

The Act comes into effect fully on April 1, 1975. Royston Charles, Personnel Services Manager, told us that it aims at rationalising existing safety regulations and establishing new codes of practice, fixing the responsibility for offences and the penal system that will operate (fines of up to £400 in some cases, and in other cases fines or imprisonment of up to two years or both), and raising health and safety at work to a new status.

Basically, it is an 'enabling' measure; it sets up a Commission including representatives of employers and employees with power to amend existing laws and propose new ones, these being enforced by a Health and Safety Executive, an inspectorate group.

We asked Les Davies, as chairman of the Main Safety Committee, for his comments.

'The Act doesn't do away with the 1961 Factories Act,' he said. 'In my opinion, what it does is to support it, add to it and give it more bite.'

'The new Act was tabled about 1971, then it was shelved. At that time we at Mitcheldean were starting to reform our safety system. We adopted many of the provisions of the Act then, so we have a head start.'

Although the Act itself comes into force fully on April 1, the Health and Safety Executive came into being on January 1. As from that date, an inspector can enter a factory at any time and, if he finds a company contravening existing provisions, he can issue an improvement notice requesting the matter to be put right within a certain time.

If the issue is a serious one in his opinion, he can slap a prohibition notice on a section, or on the whole, of the plant, whereas hitherto an inspector had first to prove an offence had been committed before a magistrates' court.

Appeals against notices can be made to industrial tribunals which are being set up. In the case of an improvement notice, the company concerned can wait for the appeal to be heard; but in the case of a prohibition notice, they are guilty until proved innocent, and have to carry out the instructions until the decision is reversed.

Generally speaking, the Act makes a company responsible for ensuring the health, welfare and safety of employees, of keeping them informed about arrangements and consulting them. The employee in turn has responsibilities in maintaining conditions of safety and avoiding endangering himself or other people.

Managements will have to have a written policy statement on safety and health; and the Companies Act has been amended so that directors now have to give this subject a place in their annual report.

## Comment on the Cut-back

As we went to press it was announced that short time work at Mitcheldean was to be introduced as from March 17. This move, perhaps not unexpected in view of the fears expressed by Mr Morfee in his New Year's message, affect only those directly engaged in copier and duplicator machine production — up to 1,800 of the total of 4,600 employees — with normal basic pay guaranteed for the subsequent six weeks.

Said J. Maldwyn Thomas, Rank Xerox Chairman and Chief Executive: 'Rank Xerox has progressively expanded its manufacturing capacity over the years, investing to meet market demand. In the present economic climate, however, we are finding that, in most of the countries in which we operate, demand is below our current rate of production.'

'In these circumstances, some action is essential, but we propose to act in closest collaboration with our employees' representatives to ensure that the effect on our people is minimised.'

Here is a quick sampling of initial reaction to the development around the Plant:

'Our main worry now is: what's going to happen when the six weeks are up?'

'I think the Company have been very fair.'

'If there are to be any casualties later, I hope that prior consideration will be given to long-serving people.'

'I'm not going to cancel that carpet for our bedroom.'

'As a district councillor I am concerned with the wider impact on the Forest as a whole. The employment situation is finely balanced in this area; industry is finding it difficult already to obtain development certificates and there are not the job opportunities to keep the youngsters here.'

'We were disappointed. We thought things were getting slightly better, judging from the improved profits that were reported, and as union representatives we would like to have been put in the picture at an earlier stage. We were very impressed with the approach of our local MP, Mr John Watkinson, who was invited to the Plant for discussions with management and with us; he certainly helped to lower the temperature.'

## We're Setting New Safety Standards

Since IPSES (International Product & Environmental Safety Council) was set up about a year ago, it has held council meetings in Tokyo and Washington; last November it held its third such meeting in London.

A corporate body, its council consists of representatives from Xerox, Fuji Xerox and Rank Xerox, and three of the latter from Mitcheldean — John Walker, Manager, Product Safety, and Stan Wheeler, Manager, Optical & Electrical Laboratory, of Engineering, and Dave Mills of RX Manufacturing Group — were among the delegates at the November meeting.

IPSES has initiated a Product Safety Policy, the objective of which is 'to assure that all Xerox products and materials in all operating units meet the generally recognised standards and good practices for safety and physical environment wherever marketed'.

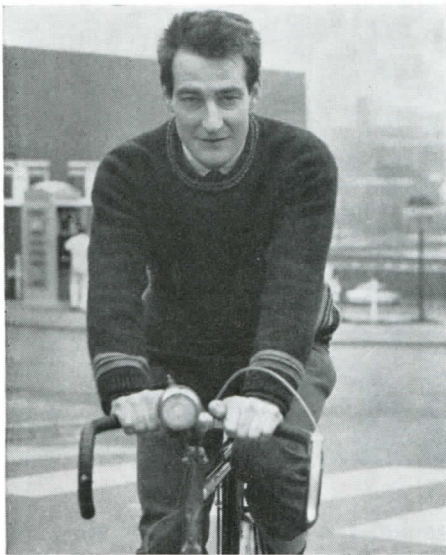
Any machine or consumable placed with a customer by any operating unit of Xerox Corporation is subject to this policy, and products distributed or recommended by the Corporation, although manufactured by others, are included.

Our Mitcheldean delegates told us: 'We want a safe product and we want to ensure that none of our

processes creates an environmental hazard. We're going further than just keeping within the law — we want to show a responsible attitude towards the community.'

'So we are setting standards that will cover all safety aspects of our products — acoustic noise, explosive dust, intense light are among those that have been identified — and the practices that IPSES establishes will have to be complied with.'

Several of the proposed standards have already been drafted and agreed by interested parties and some, like the electromechanical standard, are beginning to be used by design teams.



Petrol problems don't worry **Derek Shuttleworth** of 4000 Design Engineering. He comes to work on a pushbike and the only fuel he burns up is his own energy.

His home is at Skenfrith, 20 miles away. Them thar' hills don't bother him — 'They make cycling interesting,' he says.

It takes him an hour and 20 minutes to get to Mitcheldean, though once when there was a heavy fall of snow it took three hours. 'But I don't know of any car you can hoist on your shoulders and carry across country when the roads become impassable.'

He reckons to come off his sports model about twice each winter because of ice, but at the time of writing it looked as if Derek was going to stay on top this season.

He's been club cycling since he was 15; like cyclist Sam Phillips of PED, he belongs to Ross-on-Wye & District Cycling Club, and does the occasional bit of racing and touring.

He's kitted out his family too so they can all enjoy camping holidays by pushbike; he rides tandem with his six-year-old daughter while his wife takes the three-year-old on her bike.

Cycling has opened up other interests for him too, such as bird watching and photography, and he enjoys walking too (remember it?).

Commented Derek: 'There's been a terrific change in attitudes towards cycling in recent times. People never used to understand why I did it — now they ask me about buying a bike themselves.'

Why *does* he do it? To keep fit? To cut down on travelling costs? The answer is simple: 'I cycle because I like it.'

It'll take a fast talker in Finishing Department to leave secretary **Jane Williams** behind.

She recently passed her 120 wpm examination at 'Cinderford Tech' and now she's getting geared up to take the 130 wpm one.

Twenty-two-year-old brunette Jane comes from Soudley where her father, Harold Williams of PED, was lately the landlord of the White Horse.



Last year she got engaged to a professional musician (he leads the group Profile who have played at the Plant once or twice) and she's had to get used to fitting in with *their* engagements. 'I never get taken out at weekends,' she said.

Like the ladies of old who sewed while their champions went off to do brave deeds, Jane has taken up tapestry, but not on the Bayeux scale though!

She showed us the hunting scene she had started on. 'It will come in useful as a firescreen or something for our future home,' she said.

'One thing I've discovered — you need a lot of patience for this kind of hobby.'

To see **Ernie Holmes** at work you make for the fuser roller section in the Machine Shop. We called to see him at his home in Mitcheldean where he lives with his wife, son and daughter.

On arrival we met a display of antique weaponry on the wall; we dodged an aircraft hovering just inside the door before coming face to face with Joan of Arc at the stake, a caveman and his moll, a Centurion tank, a Trinity House light vessel (with lights) and the Royal Scots Greys about to charge.

For Ernie is a model-maker; he's also an amateur artist, glass engraver and military history buff.



'The Napoleonic wars are my favourite period,' he told us. 'The costumes were so colourful', and he showed us some of the fine books he has acquired on the subject.

During his eight or so years with us he's earned quite a reputation as a cartoonist too; he's always produced an amusing Christmas poster for his section (Bob Walton keeps a collection of them). Then last year he made his workmates a 1975 calendar with a laugh for every month. (See cartoon, page 12.)

Now he's working on a more ambitious 1976 version — a larger, multilingual one with the days and months in English, French, Italian and Dutch.

Ernie was a regular, not in the Army as you might suppose, but in the RAF (he was an aircraft fitter), and his last tour of duty was at Laarbruch, a NATO base well known to many of our secondees at Venray.

Today you may see him on certain occasions wearing a blue uniform once more — only this time it's the dark blue one of a 'special'.



Everyone in Mail/Stationery gives a hand with Monday's maxi mail load.

**Above:** Ray Carter and John Keal tackle the Datapost. **Right:** Letters are quickly sorted into 48 labelled racks.



**Left:** Coopers simply racks. sorted round

# THEY GIVE US OUR DAILY MAIL

**The increase in postal rates introduced this month, which is expected to boost the cost of our outgoing mail by some £9,000 a year, has focussed attention on the Mail Room. Stationery too is topical as an area where people are being asked to make economies because of shortage of supplies, quite apart from the cost factor. Both areas come within the orbit of Administration Department which we have been featuring in recent issues.**

The aim is to give the Plant 'first-class' service, and to this end some significant changes have been made to Mitcheldean's own private post office over the past year.

It has been moved to more spacious accommodation in Building 23 and designed and equipped to bring it closer to the GPO concept of an ideal mail room.

As the door is marked No Admittance, you may never have noted some of the changes, but you will probably be aware that our Mail Room is now staffed entirely by men, the ever-increasing mail load having proved a bit too much for the 'mail girls' we used to employ.

Women still feature in our mailing system, however. At 8am from Monday to Friday, all members of the Mail/Stationery team (and that

includes some ladies) gather in the Mail Room to cope with the inrush of post.

On Mondays, when the post includes Saturday's as well, it becomes something of an avalanche as we saw for ourselves when we called.

The GPO had delivered ten sacks of mail — 427 lb of it — and the pressure was on to get it dealt with and out to the far corners of the Plant post-haste, so to speak.

While the women opened the letters addressed simply to the Company, our postmen and their helpers worked at speed, sorting mail addressed to individuals or departments into the 48 labelled racks.

Brian Baldwin loaded his trolley with the sorted mail and trundled it out to a

smart new mail van, all in Rank Xerox livery, ready to deliver round the site.

That was just the incoming mail; but the job of receiving and distributing internal mail goes on all day, with collections regularly being made from 32 internal letterboxes.

Two minibuses call in at the Mail Room three times a day for Lydney and Cinderford mail. Some buildings at Mitcheldean get three or four deliveries a day, the heaviest load for any one location generally being that for Design Building 38.

Communications Manager Roy Brooks claims that 'we provide a better service than the GPO. What postman,' he asks, 'would deliver a letter to Mr Brown, Ross-on-Wye?'

Yet that is the sort of task the Mail Room have to handle. Sometimes they get samples in envelopes just addressed to 'Mitcheldean Plant' with nothing to indicate who the samples are meant for.

Sometimes it's an internal envelope addressed to, say, Mr. A. Williams, without benefit of building number, department or code.

Ray Carter, who is in charge of Mail/Stationery, told us: 'It's no exaggeration to say we spend an hour every day trying to trace the right recipient, contacting Personnel Records and so on, all because of insufficiently addressed mail.'

*So next time you address an envelope, spare a thought for our own personal postmen.*

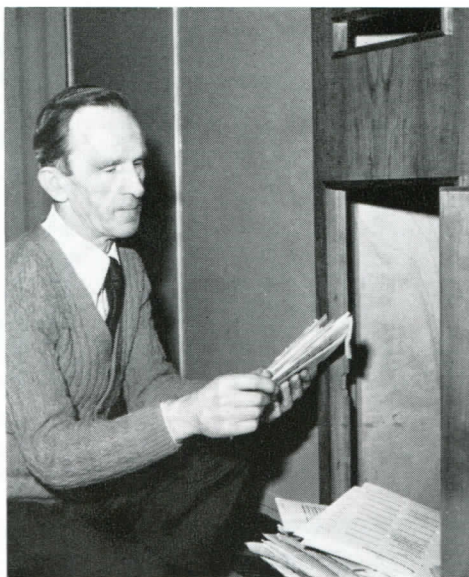
They hold GPO Mail Proficiency Certificates but the course they took didn't include mental telepathy!

## The Last Post

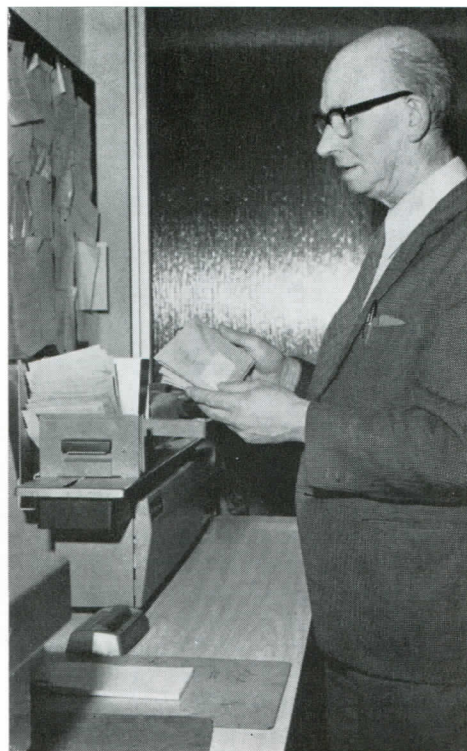
So much for the incoming and internal post. Then there's the outgoing mail. All day long it builds up — items to go in pouches for other RX locations, airmail letters,



nda Bale (foreground) and Phyllis help by opening letters addressed to the Company and sort them into racks. **Below:** Brian Rawlings loads the mail into the van ready to take to the site. Note the registration plate!



Tom Drury collects mail from one of 32 internal letterboxes. **Right:** George Hyett copes with the metered mailing (franking) machine. The rate required is dialled — any post not marked first class goes second. Postage spent and credit balance is recorded on registers.



first-class mail, Datapost, ready-stamped private post (it's all part of the service) — pigeonholed in the 24 racks provided.

At 5.15pm the GPO call to pick up the mailbags and take them to Gloucester, for the Plant is eligible for free collection of parcels and letters.

Currently averaging about half a ton a week, outgoing mail has been showing a steady rise, due to increased mail to Observatory House (Field Engineering), Slough; to Welwyn (where Denham Supply Centre has been relocated); and to Milton Keynes.

Datapost, which gives a door-to-door overnight delivery service and is used principally by Engineering, is also a factor.

*While this data about our mail service is fresh in your mind, we invite you to have a stab at the none-too-serious quiz below.*

## DEAD STOCK LIVES AGAIN

Things in the 'Dead Store' down in Stationery are coming alive again. The 'corpse' may be a folder or a file discarded because of the words printed on it. But with an economy label pasted over them, the item is ready to start life again.

Recycling is the trend today, for stock items are not only getting more expensive, they are also getting impossible to get!

'There is a world-wide shortage of pulp; some paper is on 12 months' delivery,' Ray pointed out.

Clerk Jean Harper has been earning the title of Chief Chopper. 'I have to cut requisitions down; it's got to be done in fairness to others. If one person gets more than his fair share, someone else may have to go without.'

So it makes sense to be economical with everything. Cost-conscious Roy Brooks recently attended a training session and noted with

*Continued on page 9*

*Jean Harper (below) and John Keal run the Plant's own W. H. Smith store. Jean, who has been appointed Chief Chopper of requisitions, says: 'We're down to bare necessities' and that has nothing to do with the picture gallery behind her desk!*

### Mail Quiz

- In order to operate four rounds a day on Mitcheldean Plant site, the Mail Services use:
  - A flock of Brian Lampshire's pigeons trained for the purpose.
  - Mail vehicle.
  - Shanks's pony
- Outgoing mail costs per month from Mitcheldean:
  - £500.
  - £1,100.
  - £1,700.
- True or false? When addressing interoffice envelopes, the Mail staff actually prefer that you do not include the full name and initials of recipients or their department, building number and floor number, as they enjoy tracking down this information — it provides them with a challenge and excitement as they have nothing else to do.
- True or false? The Mail staff enjoy processing large envelopes that are

- improperly sealed, because they are hooked on the taste of envelope glue.
  - Overnight mail delivery is made to RX locations
    - Every time there is a full moon.
    - Whenever the mail staff get in the mood.
    - Every day by pouch or parcel.
  - If you move and you want to receive your mail, you should:
    - Hang a note on your office door or typewriter.
    - Tell no one.
    - Inform Mail Room.
  - How many items of mail are handled per day by mailing staff?
    - Approximately 15,000, two-thirds of which are intersite.
    - Actually 87; all those envelopes you see Mail staff carrying around are just to make them look busy and to impress people.
- With apologies to Xerox Corporation's 'The Digest'. Answers on page 11.*





Harold Potter of Works Engineering takes some birds for training flights. A relative newcomer, he lost his novice status last year by winning Drybrook Club's season and also the Gloucester Federation race from Weymouth in which 3,247 birds took part. Harold's wife Pat works at the Plant too, in Cleaning Services.

## THE PEOPLE WHO

Pigeon fancying used to be known as the 'cap and muffler sport'.

Today its image is rather different. The Queen races pigeons (she has a loft in Norfolk, run by a manager), and sums like £4,000 have been known to change hands for a feathered champ.

But one of the attractions of pigeon racing is that it is open to all. The OAP with pigeons housed in a tea-chest in his backyard has as good a chance of winning a race as the millionaire with his palatial air-conditioned loft boasting every pigeon convenience — maybe better, since the OAP will probably give his few birds more individual attention.

Mitcheldean Plant, we discovered, is rich in pigeon fanciers, all members of numerous clubs which exist in the locality. The clubs are grouped in Federations; Gloucester & District Federation has some 18 clubs, including Drybrook, West Dean, Lydney, Blakeney, Newent and two at Cinderford which fly North and South (that means the birds fly back from points in the North or South).

We talked to Jim Davis of Lydney Medical Department, treasurer of Blakeney Club for five years and 'unofficial secretary' of the FOD (a group of four Forest clubs who fly with the West of England South Road Combine).

He told us that, with the possible exception of the peregrine falcon when swooping on its prey, which is sometime an adult pigeon the racing pigeon is probably the fastest bird on the wing. Its current speed record is believed to be 97mph (with a tail wind!).

The bird is also famed for its ability to fly long distances and can average 40mph for ten hours.

From the start of the racing season at the end of April until the moulting season starts in September, South flying events build up from a distance of some 50 miles to the long 500-mile or so haul from La Reole in the South of France.

If, like John Thomas of PED, you fly in National Club races, your birds

may do 700 miles from Pau in Spain (they fly out there by 'plane).

How do the pigeons find their way home? No one knows. 'There's no jockey on a pigeon's back,' says Dennis Lowen (Engineering Drawing Office) who is assistant secretary of Drybrook & District Flying Club (his wife Iris is secretary).

Right now the breeding season is well under way and winners of future pigeon grand prix, fresh from the nesting boxes, will soon be undergoing training.

At five days old a ring is put on the bird's leg bearing the number under which it is registered with the Royal Racing Pigeon Association (formerly the Royal National Homing Union).

From about one month old, it starts getting used to the basket in which it will be travelling; it is trained to

return to its loft from ever-increasing distances, and at three months starts racing in earnest.

Sitting on the tiles when it comes home is frowned upon — it must go through the trap into the loft so it can be clocked in without delay.

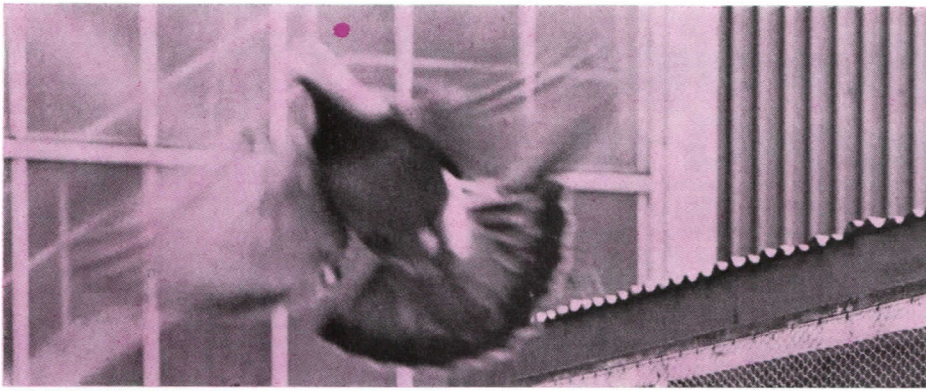
Sometimes wives and families join in the fun and race along with father, having a flutter on their favourites. But even if they don't participate, wives tend to get involved.

If the birds are detained because of bad weather, the fancier himself has to go off to work in an agony of suspense and his wife, or a friend, watches for the birds and clocks them in.

Sometimes the 'ministering angel' touch is required. Yvonne Randall, 4000 Dept chargehand, whose husband Terry (PCD Shop Control Supervisor) races pigeons, told us how a bird once arrived back with its crop slit, probably by telegraph wires. She promptly got a needle and thread and sewed it up, successfully.

As a member of Cinderford & District North Road Flying Club, Terry Randall had the fastest pigeon over the year for 1974; he was also top prizewinner in the Gloucester Mid Week Flying Club, competing against the County's best. With him is his wife Yvonne, his eldest daughter Nicola and the trophies he has won since 1967. That's an automatic timing clock on his knee, by the way. **Below:** Brian Lampshire's daughter Jane (Goods Inwards) and wife Eileen (Mechanised Stock Records) with two of Brian's stock birds. The one on the right came from America, by 'plane'!





## DEAD STOCK LIVES AGAIN

*Continued from page 7*

approval that both sides of the flip chart were being used!

Items held in Stationery range from flip charts right down to tiny knob pins. Stock items made of paper or card come in 800 different varieties — forms, cards, envelopes, multi-carb stuff, coloured collating paper — all kept in numbered bins whose contents are carefully recorded on stock cards.

A check has to be kept on amounts and it is up to John Keal and Jean Harper to make sure items don't drop below a certain level.

The largest part of the store is given over to forms printed to O & M's specification: purchase orders, coding forms for use in the computer, even the requisition forms which eventually come back completed as stationery orders.

There is strict control over certain forms, such as those used in SOLAR, and Stationery have to report back to File Control what forms have been issued to certain departments.

Before anything printed is ordered, Stationery liaise with O & M to check that there is no change in format. Printing orders are reduced wherever possible by in-house copying, as in the case of telex forms, car authorisation notes, etc.

We asked Ray how people could help most in the economy cause. 'By not using new plain envelopes where internal envelopes will do,' he said. 'An internal envelope has 32 lives, if treated kindly.'

chargehand), whose 40ft-long loft was featured in *Pigeon Gazette*, reckons that in his case it's 'pigeon blood' — 'Our family have been racing pigeons for the last 70 years', he told us.

There are other pigeon fanciers we've not yet mentioned: Bill Morefield and Stan Beach (RXC), Ralph Jones, Cyril Miles and Stan Pettiford (Machine Shop), Len Harper (Works Engineering), Larry Gardiner (Transport), Johnny Hawker (Stores), Fred East (Stock Control, Administration) and probably more — but space is limited.

Two points raised by Dennis Lowen are worth repeating for the benefit of any non-fanciers reading this:

Firstly, if you're trigger-happy, remember that bird you'd like to bring down may be worth a lot of money.

Secondly, don't get too possessive about any stray pigeon that lands on your doorstep. Pigeons have been known to return home after several years' absence — they're not called homing pigeons for nothing.

# FANCY EAST BIRDS



Pigeon racing rather absorbs a man's Saturdays. Instead of putting up shelves, or taking the family out, he's away at the club or scanning the skies for birds or 'phoning his pals to find out if any have been sighted yet.

Appreciating this, many clubs now organise family social activities and fete the ladies at the annual prize presentation. However, more lady fanciers are appearing on the horizon — possibly on the principle that 'if you can't beat 'em, join 'em' — and Drybrook Club even hold a ladies' race.

The races are highly organised affairs, run under strict RRPA rules. Members take their birds along to the club for 'marking'; each pigeon acquires a rubber ring bearing its race number; timing clocks are set, and forms filled in in great detail.

The railways no longer transport and liberate the birds; today they are taken by feeder service to specially equipped transporters, owned and run by the Federations, the cost being covered by race fees (birdage).

These are driven to the liberation point and the birds are released simultaneously in their thousands. Immediately they return home, the rubber rings are removed, put in a

*Brian Lampshire (Supervisor, Site Cleaning-External in Works Engineering) lets his birds out for their daily circular tour, taking in the Canteen Building. He feeds them on maize, beans and a titbit of hemp. Helps them get high, we suppose.*

'thimble' and slotted into a sealed automatic timing clock which is taken along to the club later in the day as proof of performance.

The velocity of the birds, in yards per minute, is calculated (sometimes to three places of decimals) from the time taken and distance covered. Every member's loft is marked on a map, with the distances between it and the liberation points computed by the RRPA.

Gloucester Federation payout last season to prize and pools winners amounted to £3,674.30, so the financial interest is not inconsiderable.

John Thomas, who was formerly secretary of Tewkesbury Flying Club and is now its treasurer, told us that, for three years running, he and his partner have been highest prize-winners in the club, and last season they collected £400. 'But the money isn't the chief thing. What really matters is the sense of achievement one gets when a bird has done well.'

Brian Whittington (RXC service

# PUTTING YOU IN THE PICTURE



Julie Ward (Financial Accounting) and her bridegroom, Phillip Witts (Sorter, Lydney) after their wedding at Holy Trinity Church, Drybrook, on February 1.



J. Ingram

Stuart Meek (Reliability Engineering) with his bride Heather Bird after their wedding on January 25 at St Michael's & All Angels, Mitcheldean.

## Richard Novak

Our apologies for a mix-up in dates. Richard Novak who featured in International Meetingplace last month came to this country in 1958 and joined the Company in 1966 (not 1970). He has now left RX Cinderford and is currently working as temporary chargehand in 7000 Sub-assemblies.

## Births

Emma Jane, a daughter for Ken Smart (Sheet Metal Shop, RXC) and his wife Glenys (formerly Production Control), on December 21.

Mark, a son for Peter Skelton (RX Cinderford) and his wife Lin, on March 2.

Noel James, a son for Fred Pritchard (4000 Dept.) and his wife Margaret (formerly Central Records, PED), on March 5.

## 21st Birthday

Kelvin Burt (Works Engineering) on March 8.

## Engagement

Jane Beddis (Engineering Records) to Keith Parker on February 19.

## Obituary

We report with regret the following deaths:

Charlie Daniels (labourer in Electrical Sub-assembly) on February 12, at the age of 58; Charlie had been with us since November 1971.

Harold Morman (RX Lydney) on February 18; aged 60, he had been with us just over four years.

Reg Kentsbeer (section leader, PED) on February 27 at the age of 48; he joined us in September 1967.

We would like to extend our sympathy to their families.



Taking the picture above was one commission which Jack Seal turned down. The presentation to him of a cheque on his retirement as works photographer at the end of January was made by Information Officer Jimmy Bake at a party given for Jack and his wife. People at Rank Xerox HQ contributed to his leave-taking present. 'Perhaps', said Jimmy, 'this was to compensate him in some measure for the hours he spent one day on top of the canteen building waiting for a certain DC10 to circle over the Plant!' During his six years with us, Jack earned himself a reputation, not only in the realm of straight and cine photography but also for his inventive approach to the preparation of slides for training and presentation purposes. He served on the committee of our Amateur Photographic Club and it was while he was chairman that it fell to Mitcheldean to act as hosts for the Gloucester Film Festival in 1973. Its success was due largely to Jack's organising ability.

## ANY NEWS FOR VISION?

If you have, then please —

let your departmental correspondent know,

or leave it at any Gate House for collection by me,

or post it to me at Tree Tops, Plump Hill, Mitcheldean,

or ring me — it's Drybrook 542415.

Myrtle Fowler, Editor

## February Retirements

Our best wishes to the following who retired in February: Ted Bennett (Remodelling), Horace Hook (Supply Centre), Bill Miles (Machine Shop), Tom Rawlings (Electrical Sub-assembly), Maurice Watkins (Tool/Consumable Stores).

## CAR POOL

Mrs J. M. Bailey, ext. 377. Lift required daily, Bream to Mitcheldean, staff hours, willing to share petrol costs.

## DANCE!

Finishing Department

SPRING  
BUFFET & DANCE

Saturday April 19

in the

Social Centre Ballroom

Dancing to MAGIC FORMULA

Tickets from: Roma Meredith  
or Ethel Constant (Auto Plating Dept.,  
Bldg 29/1), ext. 325/329 int.



A party of 12 Rank Xerox pensioners and friends recently returned from a month's holiday at Magaluf in Majorca during which time they enjoyed perfect Mediterranean weather with temperatures in the 70's and 80's. They had the pleasure of meeting Dick Hebden and Pat and Barry Leach, ex-Rank employees from Welwyn Garden City, who now run a bar at Magaluf, and who wish to be remembered to all in Purchase at Welwyn. Their address is Willie's II, 5 Edificio Nova 3, Magaluf, Majorca. As you can see from this picture, the party from Mitcheldean occasionally got behind with the drinks!

**Tournament Progress**

As we went to press we obtained the following progress report on the various tournaments being held :

*Skittles:* The men are down to the last 32 teams and due to start round 3 while the ladies first round is scheduled to commence on March 18.

*Chess:* It is hoped to get to the finals of the Portman Trophy individual contest by early autumn. The semi-finals of the Wickstead Shield (interdepartmental) with Information Systems v. Design and Knightshifters (4000 Assembly) v. Group Inventory Control have been played off and the finalists are Design v. Group Inventory Control.

*Football:* The semi-finals are to take place on April 13 at Weston-under-Penyard and Lydbrook, with the final at Harrow Hill on April 27.

**Table Tennis Trophy**

A men's singles competition for the Ted Wenderlish Trophy has been arranged for March 25 in the Ballroom at 7pm. A men's doubles and possibly a ladies' singles will also be played.

**Sunday Shoots**

The Shooting Club attended the Norton Shooting Club's skeet practice (a form of clay shoot) on February 23 and, on Sunday March 2, held a clay shoot of their own at Shapridge Farm, Abenhall.

If any members wish to take advantage of the club's re-loading equipment, will they please contact Charlie Probert, ext. 319, or Hubert Burton, ext. 728.

**A COSTLY EXPERIENCE**

A busload of likely lads from RX Cinderford went on a day trip to London in February. Having spent a happy day avoiding ten million cars, one breakaway group of four seeking a bit of night life, got a taxi to Soho. They found a nightclub, paid £2.50 just to get in and another 25p to hang up their coats, then made for the bar.

The barman said 'No beer.' So they decided just to wait for the show. Said a bouncer: 'No drink? Then out you must go.' They decided on four whiskeys and the barman advised a bottle. 'It's cheaper that way.'

Just *how* cheap you can gather from the following lines; they were taken from a narrative poem which Geoff Norris, co-organiser of the trip with Pete Skelton, wrote to commemorate the affair:

Like lambs to the slaughter, a bottle they bought,  
And there dear reader, is how they got caught.  
Twenty-two quid was the price to be paid.  
The barman must have thought he had it made.  
Then up spoke one yokel, as quick as a flash:  
'I've thought up a way fer us t'save cash.  
One half-bottle, ole mate,' he said, 'if we may'.  
The barman replied: 'Sixteen quid you will pay.'  
So into their wallets the yokels all looked—  
By now they each knew that their goose had been cooked.

*Answers to Mail Quiz: 1. (b) and (c). 2. (c). 3. False. 4. False. 5. (c). 6. (c). 7. (a).*

# Dance Programme to December 1975

**Saturday September 13**

RAY McVAY  
AND HIS ORCHESTRA  
with  
THE HI-LIFE SHOWBAND

**Saturday November 29**

JOE LOSS, HIS ORCHESTRA  
AND SINGING STARS  
supported by  
PENDULUM

**Saturday October 18**

CHRIS BARBER  
AND HIS JAZZ BAND  
with the popular  
VARIATION SHOWBAND

**New Year's Eve**

DANCE  
CABARET  
BUFFET

**To be certain of tickets for all Sports & Social Club dances, ring 1169 (Roy Steward or Doris Meek) and book them in advance.**

## HOME MARKET

**When sending in items please give your extension number and/or department to ensure inclusion.**

**For Sale**

- Baby Walker, cost £10 new, hardly used, will sell for £7 o.n.o. E. Cole, RXC, ext. 19-17.
- Child's cycle, as new, suit boy or girl 4 to 9 years, £18 o.n.o. Reg Matthews, Goods Inwards, ext. 416 or Coleford 3745.
- 1972 Astral Ranger Tourer, 12ft, 4-berth, loose covers, oven-cooker, toilet, fitted carpet, 2 gas bottles and regulator, salon awning, £520. C. Popejoy, 11 St Annals Road, Cinderford, after 6 pm.
- Mitcheldean, 2-year-old detached house in quiet cul-de-sac. Central heating, garage, Hygena-fitted kitchen with wood panelling. Large lounge, separate dining-room, 3 beds. Reduced for quick sale to £8,950. M. Cheshire, ext. 1111.
- Vogue knitting machine, as new, hardly used, easily operated, £35. Mrs E. Baldwin, ext. 1198.
- GEC 3Kw Slimline night storage heater. Ross-on-Wye 2210.
- HMV stereo system complete with speakers, 25W, 2 years old, as new, £80. R. Carter, ext. 322.
- Redfyre oil-fired central heating boiler, can be seen working, £45 o.n.o. N. Andrews, ext. 1254 or Cinderford 23018.
- Three-bedroom semi-detached house (1968) near town centre. Central heating and garage. Quiet cul-de-sac. £9,500. Ext. 281 or Coleford 2029.
- Puch M50 red sports moped, M registration, April '74, good condition, can be seen any time, £150. Mrs M. James, ext. 330.
- Enthusiast: Armstrong chassis FC38, 3 waveband 8 watt push-pull (old type). Philips 3-speed autochanger mono. 12in. Vitavox speaker 25 watt undistorted output, can be seen working. Any offers. T. Smith, ext. 884.
- Gas warm air central heating unit, 35,000 BTU, suitable for bungalow or greenhouse. Any reasonable offer. J. Hill, 5 Harptree Way, Mitcheldean. Drybrook 542859 or ext. 1260.

Set of 'as new' fitted rubber mats (black) for Morris Marina 1.8 (K reg.), £8. K. Drewry, ext. 1225.

Five alloy wheels, as new, suitable for Mini, £20. J. Beavan, ext. 654.

Staffordshire bull terrier pups, 1 dog 1 bitch, ready this month. M. Elias, ext. 1195.

Victorian ruby ring, shank requiring attention, offers around £20. Len Harper, ext. 534.

Budgies first-class show birds. Dennis Clarke, ext. 278.

Monmouth, lovely Wye Valley — bright modern bungalow, CH, 5 rooms plus kitchen, bathroom, gardens, near town. Mrs. J. Skevington, Switchroom, ext. 898  
Hillman Minx 1969 (H reg) 1500cc, dark blue, taxed and tested, very tidy car, £450 o.n.o. Chris Rawlings, PED, ext. 761.

Coleford, Coombs Park — attractive 3-bedroomed spacious semi-detached bungalow, full gas central heating, detached garage and outbuildings, private open views garden front and rear. Excellent order, £11,500 o.n.o. W. P. Trigg, ext. 522 or Coleford 2459.

**Wanted**

Photographic model, preferably of the female variety, for facial portrait work. M. Quinn, Supply Centre, Bldg. 41, ext. 454.

Rayburn cooker. H. Ward, ext. 394.

Garden shed, average size, good condition. T. Carpenter, Stores, ext. 321.

Old model railway and model car parts for reconditioning and re-sale in aid of preservation and restoration of ex-GWR 9681PT for Dean Forest Railway Preservation Society. K. Hirst, 3 Commercial St., Cinderford, or ext. 409.

Modern sideboard in good condition. Mrs D. Whitfield Newnham 249 or ext. 1156.

A place in a shared flat or house, preferably in Gloucester area; needed urgently. A. Thomas, Design, ext. 865.

**Holiday '75**

De luxe 8-berth caravan, 1 year old, at delightful Amroth. Site includes heated swimming pool, club house, shops, etc. £30 p.w. Stroud 2024.



Two traffic wardens on morning duty at the roundabout, one of the potential danger spots. With traffic coming from all directions, they risk screwing themselves into the ground! Our lower picture shows the team at the magic hour of 8am when they throw off their disguise as traffic wardens and turn back into drivers themselves — of forklift trucks, lorries and vans. The 12 wardens and reserves are: Dennis Beard, Dave Board, Geoff Cornwall, Terry Gardner, Dave Grindle, Pete Harris, Cecil Hopkins, Ted Jayne, Bob Jenkins, Gilbert Meek, Brian Meredith, Rodney Pensom, Geoff Powell and Derek Villis.

## THE MEN IN THE YELLOW MACKS

In their yellow oilskins they look a bit like lifeboatmen. And as they go out to face the tidal wave of 4,000 or so people, on foot and on wheels, that sweeps in and out of the Plant site every working day, they must need something of a lifeboatman's courage.

What kind of men are our traffic wardens? How are they equipped to take on such a task?

'You've got to be daft to stand there.' 'You need a fast pair of legs to get out of the way.' 'You've got to have eyes in the proverbial!' were the qualities they felt worth mentioning.

They're all Internal Transport men. During the day you can see them at the wheel of forklift trucks, lorries and vans, driving around the site.

But from 7.30 to 8am and from 4.40 to around 5.15pm they take over the job of controlling the traffic within our roadway system, taking up their stand at potential danger spots.

The team of wardens was formed about two and a half years ago when the Supply Centre was built and a one-way traffic system was introduced. It was realised some form of control at peak hours would be necessary and Security called on



the men who already had internal transport experience.

While the police man the gates, the wardens go on point duty, their principal concern being to take care of the pedestrian (and that includes the driver before he gets into his car).

The men get normal overtime pay and are covered by their normal insurance. Dennis Williams hasn't lost any of his men yet, though there have been some near misses. And they are the target for the occasional bit of abuse.

'There's no truth in the rumour that they carry truncheons under their macks though', Dennis assured us.

When necessary, they help out as on-the-spot mechanics, or guides to inadvertent visitors.

Once a complete stranger who had been following the works buses along the main road was surprised to find himself in Rank Xerox territory and stopped to ask a warden how to get out again.

A case of 'if you want to know the way, ask a warden.'

- Which traffic warden was knocked down recently by a car driven by a fellow warden?