



Safety officer Dave Higman shows it's time for congratulations.

We make it a million

When Mitcheldean site reached its target of 500,000 hours worked without a lost-time accident (LTA), the achievement got full publicity.

As the minutes crept towards noon on 30 June, safety management made last-minute checks with the medical centre to see if any accident had been reported.

The moment the hour struck, John Spratley and Dave Higman sprang into action. Boards saying 'Congratulations! 500,000 hrs' were promptly taken round to the main gates and fixed to the clocks for all to see, and a message went out over the PA system.

To mark the occasion (and act as reminders?), pens inscribed 'RXMP Safe Working Hours Award' were distributed to every employee.

After the half million, a new target had to be set of one million hours. An 800,000 mark had to be put over the zero mark on the clocks ('We hadn't expected to get as far as that,' said John), and plans were set in motion to celebrate the occasion.

Alas, just three days before the deadline, when we had reached 817,000 hrs, the clocks had regrettably to be put back to zero.

People rang up to find out what had happened – an indication that the LTA scheme is giving the safety situation the visibility it needs.

But it was only a temporary setback. Further evidence subsequently came to light which proved beyond doubt that we had, after all, 'made a million' just before the annual summer shutdown.

To celebrate, everyone was given a 'Safe Working Award' voucher for 25p. which they could exchange in canteen areas for food, beverages, confectionery, etc., valid until 30 September.

They're changing the clocks

In view of this achievement, the safety clocks are being changed to show intervals of 100,000 hours (instead of the former 50,000) up to a new overall total of 1½ million.

The clocks will continue to show the hours achieved by each individual site but, for the purposes of an award, Mitcheldean and Lydney safe working hours are being combined.

By the way, congratulations are due to Lydney who, at the time of going to press, had not had a lost time accident since 17 December 1981!

STOP IT NOW

THE XEROX 8300— *a Mitcheldean idea, design and project*



Demonstrating the capabilities of the Xerox 8300, Terry Gardner calls up on the video screen an information page containing the copier diagram. Assisting him is Eric Smith.

Copier-duplicator that shows the way

The Xerox 8300 is based on the Xerox 8200 and retains all its highly productive features, such as automatic document handling, three reduction ratios, the choice of stacked or stapled pre-collated prints, and a speed of 70 prints a minute.

The new 8300 has been made exceptionally easy to use, particularly for casual operators, by the addition of a video screen on the control panel which gives a comprehensive range of information in plain language.

On standby, the display lists the possible choices of paper tray, copy density, sides to be printed, output and reduction. When the appropriate button is pressed, the particular mode chosen is highlighted on the screen. The operator then selects the number of copies required, and confirmation of the quantity is displayed.

Once the start print button is pressed, the 8300 works automatically to produce high-quality matt-finish prints, but if any further action is required from the operator, the display spells it out clearly.

For the benefit of operators who are unfamiliar with the machine, an information button will bring up on the screen a contents list of instructions, ranging from how to copy standard documents to replenishing the paper. Selecting a simple code on the copy selector panel produces full instructions for performing the chosen action.

If the machine itself should refer the operator to any particular part, in the event of a paper jam for instance, and the operator is uncertain where to look, the screen will display a labelled diagram showing where the part requiring attention is to be found.

First customer installations are scheduled for the autumn of this year.

The Xerox 8300 started life as the Xerox 8200 — a copier-duplicator which offers the customer a wide range of features.

These include variable image size, variable copy density, collating options, stapling, paper input tray switching and all the combinations of single/two sided originals and copies. That is pretty impressive, but even though the machine operation has been kept as simple as possible, you still need some training to use all those options properly. The problem was: how could we rationalise the machine controls in such a way that even untrained users would find it easy to make copies?

The answer was a video screen, the idea being to build the screen and its supporting electronic circuitry into the existing machine controller. This would provide the user with clear instructions and diagrams on how to operate the machine, and show what the machine was doing. It would represent a major leap forward in the level of communication/understanding between the copier and the operator.

The idea of putting a video screen on a machine had been dormant for a long time. Then, following a conversation between the 8200 technical programme manager, John

Dennis, and the programme manager in London, the applications software design team at Mitcheldean were challenged to demonstrate its feasibility.

A target was set to produce a working model within three weeks in the hope that it could be demonstrated to David Kearns, who is now Xerox Corporation's chief executive officer, during his visit to Welwyn. The applications software team had at that time just successfully completed a design project on the 8200 machine and so, with both enthusiasm and confidence, they picked up the ball and ran.

During the next two weeks the team were busy with building and checking the electronic circuits — the computer keyboards chattered with software programming activity; finally all the ingredients came together and the entire system was bolted onto an 8200, giving birth to the first ever 8300 machine.

This working model was shown to Ken Fox, then engineering site manager at Mitcheldean, who rewarded the team's effort by giving his approval for the prototype to 'run the gauntlet'.

Crossed fingers

It is the nature of design and development that very few 'good ideas' ever run the full course to become either products or accessories, so all fingers, superstitious and scientific, were crossed in hopeful expectation.

The delicate array of wires, printed circuit boards and video screen were taken off the Mitcheldean copier and gently laid in the back of an old pool estate car (no offence meant, Janet!). The car was carefully driven to Welwyn and the bits 'n' pieces reassembled on one of their 8200s.

As the moment of 'SWITCH ON' came closer, small beads of perspiration appeared on the foreheads of Steve Hardcastle and Terry Gardner who had brought the invention up for the demo.

A flash of lights and thump from the toner dispenser brought a sigh of relief, followed by

The Mitcheldean applications software design team who won an RTG 'Innovation Award' in 1981 for their work on the 8300 — from left, Graham Gardner, Steve Hardcastle, Tony Martin, Geoff Barnes, Terry and Eric (missing from the picture is apprentice Jeff Morgan).



successful demonstrations to David Kearns and Norb Kaupp, Xerox vice-president, product design and engineering division. They encouraged the team to continue their investigations into the opportunities for using the video system.

Developing the prototype design continued with a view to producing a handful of machines for experimentation. As significant developments were made, the model was demonstrated to various business sections of the company. Eventually the point was reached where performance benefits, costs and schedule were right for a product, and the project changed up into a high gear.

Technical and human factors engineering were to complement each other in providing selections, information and instructions, each to be displayed on the video screen clearly and simply.

The enhanced operability was assessed by monitoring the success of a group of operators who were selected from various departments within Mitcheldean plant. Pairs of operators were given tasks to perform on the machine.

A human factors psychologist was always present during the tests to listen to their comments, and to discover what features of the machine hindered instead of helped the operator to achieve the tasks. This resulted in a number of improvements which were then introduced into the machine.

The product was within sight but one more hurdle remained to be cleared. The first public viewing of the now christened 8300 was planned for the Hanover Fair last April. This meant a significant design and translation effort to recreate a version in the German language.

German version

Eric Smith and Steve Gwynne worked frantically to teach the English machine to speak German by rewriting all the instructions in software, whilst Graham Gardner developed diagram displays in order to help operators find their way around the machine.

Printed circuit boards, video monitors, power supplies and even colour brochures all had to be designed, tried and tested to the high standard demanded of any equipment to be let loose with the public under exhibition conditions.

Once again the effort was rewarded by success and the German version of the 8300 was on demonstration throughout the Fair.

Customer approval was endorsed by orders taken and tales were told of how much interest, even astonishment, was shown by representatives from competitive companies.

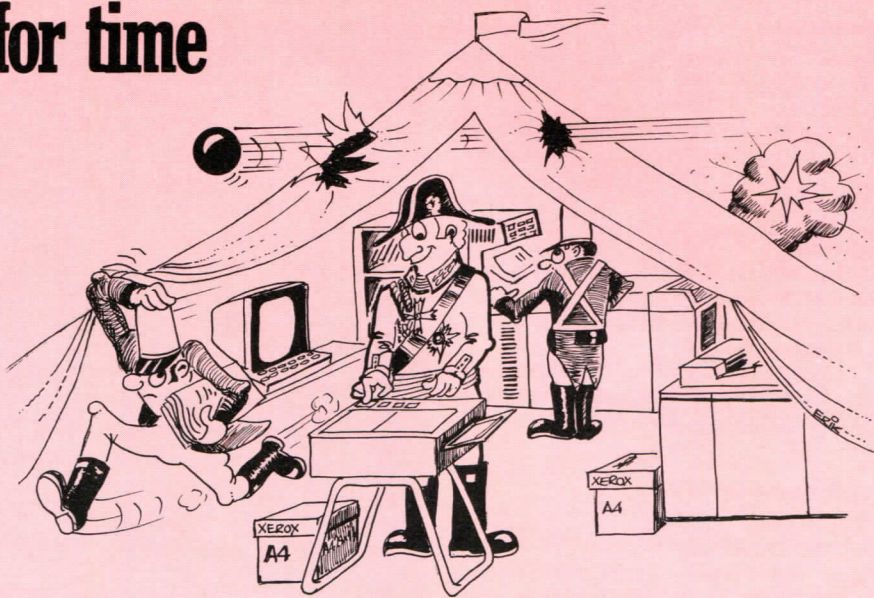
The wheels were by then set in motion for production of the 8300 at Mitcheldean, with all the specialised departments carefully preparing their pieces of the jigsaw.

This August these pieces all come together and Mitcheldean will enjoy the satisfaction of having taken the 'user friendly' 8300 machine from conception to delivery.

Terry Gardner
Applications software design manager

(More about the 8300 product development and manufacture in our next issue.)

In the battle for time



In battles, as in business, communications are all-important. Just imagine if, back in 1815, the Duke of Wellington had had the aid of a whole range of Rank Xerox office equipment in his field HQ, helping him to win a speedier victory over Napoleon Bonaparte!

Representatives of the UK press didn't have to imagine the scene - they saw it when, on 23 June, they were entertained by the UK Company, headed by managing director Don Wilson, at the Wye Hotel, Ross-on-Wye, and were given a premiere showing of a new Rank Xerox film 'Time to Think'.

The film stars Leonard Rossiter as banker Nathan Rothschild, arranging with his agent at Dover for a communications system which would enable him to get information about the Battle of Waterloo quicker than normally possible.

By so doing, Rothschild is able to 'rearrange his investments' and make a fortune on the stock exchange.

During the course of the story an express rider falls off his pony, is knocked out, and dreams of having a range of advanced communications equipment available. Which is where the Duke of Wellington (played by Julian Glover) and the Rank Xerox office products come in.

Highly entertaining, the 20-minute film was produced as a further way of promoting Rank Xerox products during Information Technology Year.

During their two-day visit, the press were told of our two new products - the Xerox 8300 copier-duplicator and the Xerox 821, an advanced word processor.

They toured Mitcheldean site, taking in the machine shop, the supply centre, and bld.32., where they were impressed with our new automated facility. They were also given a demonstration of the 8300. The event achieved good coverage in the press and a brief showing on BBC TV Points West.

Word processor extension for micro

The Xerox 821 is a UK development based upon the Xerox 820 micro computer, launched last autumn, with word processing potential.

Now, this word processing potential has been fully realised with the Xerox 821. It is offered as probably the most advanced low cost word processor available.

The key features include a large screen which can accommodate 80 characters across and 24 lines deep. It has a slimline familiar QWERTY keyboard; 64,000 character memory; high speed quality printer, printing at over 400 words per minute in 10, 12, 15 pitch or proportional spacing; a built-in dictionary of 10,000 words; dual drive discs with a choice of 5¼ in with 82,000 characters, or 8 in with

240,000 characters; CP/M interface and a self-teach manual.

Optional enhancements include fixed disc storage of six megabytes (2,800 pages of text) or twelve megabytes (5,000 pages of text); 'super density' discs, which more than double the character capacity; a shared printer interface and teletype compatibility.

Users of the Xerox 821 will have access to the Rank Xerox 'Helpline' telephone service, manned by experts to solve user problems. At the same time, the Xerox 821 is backed by our comprehensive network of professional service engineers.

The product is available through the Rank Xerox direct salesforce or Xerox Stores at a list price from £3,795.

Pensioners' Reunion

A matter of names and numbers

With some 300 pensioners attending the 11th annual pensioners' luncheon and reunion, identification badges were not simply helpful – they were vital!

Good organisation ensured all were brought together on 12 June in the social centre, wined and dined, and got home safely afterwards.

Personnel manager Derek Knibbs welcomed our guests on behalf of director Ron Morfee.

Everyone quotes statistics, whether it be about 'Miss World' or the World Cup, and Derek had some about Rank Xerox pensioners.

There were 2,019 within the company as a whole, he said. Of these, approximately 50 per cent were Mitcheldean pensioners.



Current situation

More figures followed – about financial results and fierce competition.

'Today Mitcheldean is still providing the major proportion of products sold and rented by Rank Xerox, and there is particularly high demand for small copiers like the 2300, 2350 and the new 2830, and increased placement of the 8200,' said Derek.

He spoke of the quality improvement programme on site, and the introduction of the latest technology, from laser beams to computerised machine tools, mentioning in particular the £3 million assembly facility in bld.32 with its every aid to control/reduce cost and produce a quality product.

Looking to the younger element, he told of the high standards that our apprentices were achieving today, the work experience scheme that had been run and our new pilot 12-month training programme for the young unemployed.

'The company that you helped to build is still great, though the future is tough and challenging,' he said.

Doris Coulson, who is currently a visitor for the Ross-on-Wye area, spoke on behalf of her fellow guests. 'We've been well wined and dined,' she said, 'but it isn't the nosh-up we come for – it's the fellowship,' and she thanked the management 'for all you have done for us.'



Some happy groups pictured at the pre-lunch reception in the social centre.

First-hand news

Then everyone took her advice to 'circulate, talk to your heart's content and enjoy yourselves.' Alan Chapman and David Harris of Rank Xerox Pensions were present to answer queries on the spot, and a team of hosts and hostesses helped to dispense hospitality while gaining first-hand news about what our pensioners are doing.

The most senior pensioner present was Sam Taylor who told us he will be 80 next April; Sam worked as a packer until his retirement 15 years ago.

Probably the youngest pensioner there was engineer John Higgins who, although a victim of multiple sclerosis, is cheerfully taking on admin. work for the TAVR cadet force.

Helping to raise funds for those suffering from this disease is Bill Carpenter who works 'from morning 'till night' doing fretwork. He has even taken on some youngsters who thus get a chance to learn the Carpenter trade!

Another former machine shop craftsman, George Weatherley, has been continuing his output of model stage coaches and the like, and was delighted to tell us that a coal waggon which he sold to the Rotary Club had raised over £400 for charity.

There was an interesting item of news too from Basil Walker who certainly isn't putting his feet up! The modern sequence dancing he runs at Cinderford is still going strong after 35 years, and last April he and his wife celebrated the occasion along with their 25th wedding anniversary.

THE REX CLUB

Doris Coulson tells us that the wish to meet and chat regularly with former workmates has led to the formation of the REX Club in the Ross-on-Wye area. At the time of writing it was still in the early stages, but the idea is to arrange monthly informal get-togethers, to have talks on subjects of interest and benefit to senior citizens and to arrange outings.

Dick Taylor is chairman and Diana Harcourt-Mantle has taken on the job of social secretary. Membership is open to any Rank Xerox pensioner or long-term server who may have left too long ago to qualify for a pension. For more details contact Doris (Ross 64713) or Dick (Ross 65466).

It is now nearly a year since John Wilks, formerly commodity operations manager at Mitcheldean, went out to Singapore to set up a purchasing office there. In this article he gives us an interesting insight into

Life in Singapore

Singapore is an independent island state about the same size and shape as the Isle of Wight. But there the similarity stops!

It has a population of 2.4 million (mostly of Chinese origin) and, in addition, attracts around 2.5 million tourists each year.

In the last ten years or so, Singapore has developed into an effective manufacturing area, and, despite having to import all of its raw materials, is able to compete in worldwide markets. Japanese, American and European companies have set up factories to take advantage of lower labour rates and incentives offered by the Singapore Government on investment and company taxation levels.

Unlike the UK, Europe and US, Singapore enjoys full employment. The locals are very friendly, they work hard and are proud of the way Singapore has developed.

Driving around the island, one sees factories, apartment blocks and hotels continually being built – anyone in the construction business has a job for life! Regrettably, this development has meant there are hardly any beaches left.

Different game

The objective of my office is to identify sources of supply in Singapore, and eventually in Malaysia, which are capable of supplying good quality parts, on time and at a lower cost than is currently being paid. Once orders have been placed, they will be monitored to ensure that the receiving plants get the service which they need from an offshore supplier base.

I have a staff of three locals, a buyer, a QC engineer and a secretary. After being responsible for a staff of over 100, I find it is a different game altogether to have such a small number, and working together as a team is a very important aspect of our day-to-day operation.

We are housed in a modern building with air-conditioning – essential because the climate is very hot and humid. The temperature during the day varies only two degrees throughout the whole year – between 31°C and 33°C! Being virtually on the equator, hours of daylight and darkness are equal.

Rainfall is high but is usually confined to storms which last 1–2 hours. The rain has to be seen to be believed, but when it ceases, everything is dry within about half an hour. Not surprisingly with such rainfall, the island is very green.

There are still some natural areas of dense forest and, on one of my weekend excursions, I tried to walk around a large reservoir, one side of which is a natural wooded area.

I was following what I thought was a track that would eventually lead me back to the water's edge, but, after approximately one



Courtesy OCL.

The new contrasts sharply with the old in Singapore harbour.

mile, it came to a stop and I had to retrace my way. When I eventually reached my starting point, I had been walking for nearly six hours!

Traffic which, fortunately for me, drives on the left, is heavy, and in the city, numerous one-way systems make driving difficult for the newcomer. I found that the only way to get accustomed to it was to drive around on Sundays when the streets were quieter. Needless to say, I got hopelessly lost on frequent occasions but at least got the general layout fixed.

Speeding

Speed limits are 70kph on most roads; on two roads only, certain stretches permit 80 kph. Traffic police are very much in evidence checking on speeds. If one is caught speeding, there is a fine and a three-point penalty is given. If you collect more than 12 points in a 12-month period, you are banned from driving for a maximum period of six months.

The standard of driving is not at all like that in the UK. Despite the lower speed limits, traffic weaves in and out, overtaking on either side. I have now found that I do exactly the same but I must admit I never feel comfortable at overtaking on the inside.

In an endeavour to reduce the number of cars on the roads, they are very heavily taxed – and company-owned cars even more so. As an example, a Mercedes 200 (which, I hasten to add, I don't have) costs nearly £25,000 on the road! Buses are very plentiful, so are taxis, and fares are very reasonable.

Golfing enthusiasts in the UK who complain about the cost of golf might be interested to learn that the cost of joining a golf club in Singapore varies between £3,000 and £15,000, and there are seven courses on the island.

Food is varied. One can eat local food, mostly Chinese, very cheaply; it is possible to obtain virtually everything that could be bought in England, but naturally it costs more as it has to be imported.

Unfortunately, there are no typical English pubs or anything closely resembling them and the local beer is not to English standards. But, as I have always maintained, there is no such thing as bad beer – it's just that some are better than others!

Local television provides many English TV series. We have recently had 'All Creatures Great and Small'. Every Sunday morning, an English soccer match has been televised while 'On the road to Wembley' has been covering highlights from current F.A. cup matches. English football results and league tables are printed every week in the *Straits Times*, the daily paper, during the season.

Holidays

There are numerous religious festivals, but Christmas is not really celebrated here. In fact, certain shops open and construction work continues on Christmas Day. The main celebrated holiday is the Chinese New Year, which fell on 25 and 26 January this year. Many factories close for their annual two-week holidays at this time.

Although it is an island only some 24 miles by 12 miles, Singapore is connected to the mainland by a causeway (the Johore Causeway) which gives one the opportunity to drive into Malaysia and even further afield into Thailand. I have yet to do this!

To cater for the 2.5 million tourists, there are many luxurious hotels and shopping plazas. The shopping plazas stay open to around 10 pm at night and are ablaze with lights and sell almost anything imaginable. Electrical goods, cameras and jewellery are available in great abundance; in many shops goods are not priced and you are expected to bargain.

Talking of hotel accommodation, when Reg Dixon, Bill Davidson and Don Boucher visited Singapore earlier this year they stayed at the very famous Raffles Hotel.

Whilst Reg was delighted to stay in a hotel that has retained much of the colonial influence of Singapore, I had the distinct feeling that Bill and Don would have preferred something more modern!

As a place to live and work in, Singapore has much to recommend it and I can say I am thoroughly enjoying life. If anyone is ever passing through this area, I would be pleased to show them around.

ANY NEWS FOR VISION ?

If you have, then please –
mail it to me c/o Corporate Affairs, Bld 44/4,
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 — ext 566 or Dean 542415.
Myrtle Fowler, Editor

Cutting our fuel bill

A story of conversion – to COAL



The first of the three shiny red boilers swings slowly across and hovers over boiler house no.2. Several dummy runs were necessary and the rain made a tricky operation even trickier.

For the first time since 1948 coal is to become a major source of energy at Mitcheldean. In October, heat will be raised on three new solid fuel boilers in no.2 boiler house – the one on the bank above bld.32.

Readers at Mitcheldean will have noticed the preparation work going on: the old brick chimney being knocked down, to be replaced later by a new steel one; the old boilers and fuel tanks being carted away on lorries; and shiny red new ones being delivered.

What they won't ever see is any sign of coal being delivered!

This may seem to be a strange statement, as strange as the whole concept of appearing to step back into the 19th century to burn a dirty, dusty fuel in an age of high technology, North Sea oil and North Sea gas.

As works engineering manager Graham Bunt explains, the fuel may be traditional but the technology, with computer-based controls and monitoring, is bang up-to-date.

We must also remember that the working life of a boiler can be in excess of 20 years; so, when making decisions on fuel, one has to consider what the circumstances will be like at the turn of the century, not just in the next year or two.

Work really started on this project about a year ago when our annual maintenance checks revealed that the existing boilers would be completely worn out by the end of the following winter.

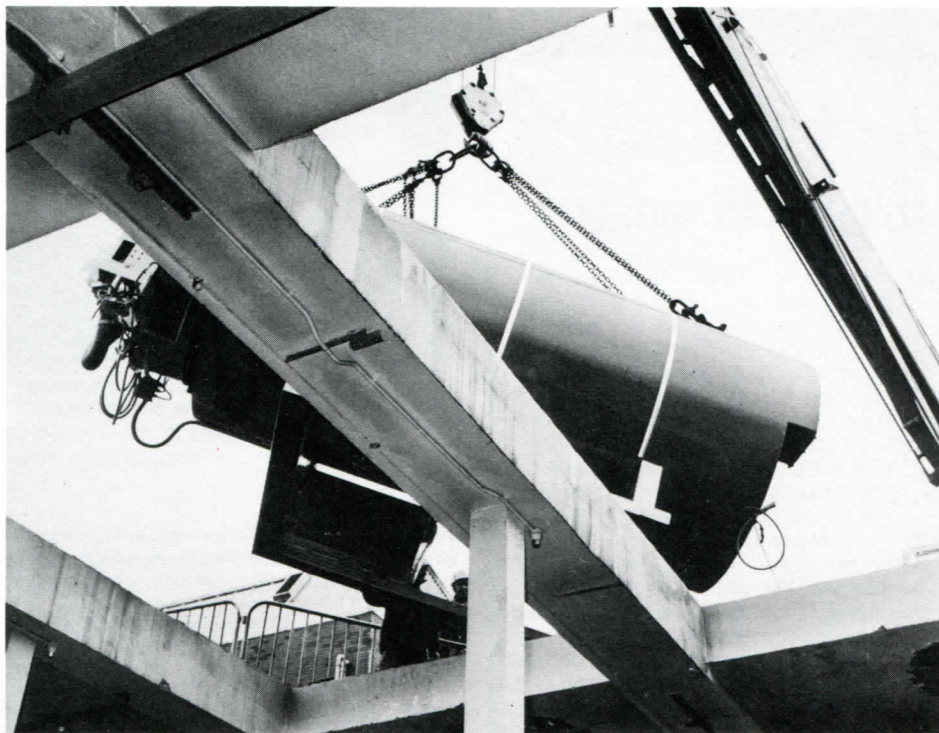
Then, having made the decision that 1982 would be the year to change the boilers, we were left with the decision of 'change to what?'. There were a number of alternatives available, including waste paper and cardboard being used as a fuel. However, we had four principal choices – namely, oil, gas, electricity and coal, or some combination of these.

Systems study

Over the next few months estimates, quotations and calculations proliferated. Keith Jones, plant and services manager, and his team, Robert Johnson, Julian Shufflebotham and Alf Griffiths, scoured the country talking to boiler manufacturers, examining specifications and visiting users to try to establish the most suitable plant for use here.

Meanwhile, our energy manager, Tony Newman, talked with people like the National Coal Board, South West Gas, Midland Electricity, oil suppliers and the Department of Industry. By Christmas we were ready to make an evaluation.

Whichever system we chose, we would have to do lots of things other than just buy boilers. For example, the existing chimney no longer complied with building regulations, the



Before it could be lowered into place in the restructured boiler house, each 8½-ton boiler had to be tilted at a particular angle.

circulation pumps needed replacing, the existing distribution pipework needed modifying to allow for site developments and standards, and so on.

The cheapest system to buy was an oil-fired system (about £200,000) whilst the most expensive was coal (about £440,000). But, when looking at the cost of running, coal was by far the cheapest and oil the most expensive.

With the help of Ted Carpenter from finance a true 'cost of ownership' analysis was done, and the final decision came down in favour of coal. This pleased the Department of Industry who agreed to award a grant of around £40,000 towards the cost of converting to coal.

Having convinced ourselves that this was the right road to take, we then had to convince a lot of other people. Mitcheldean was about to score another first.

We also had to ensure that, whilst the proposal was technically and financially correct, it was also socially correct. That is, we did not want something that would cause our maintenance staff to be working in a dirty, dusty atmosphere, or something that would create a nuisance to our neighbours or pollute the atmosphere. To achieve our aim a lot of sophisticated equipment is being used.

Coal will be delivered to the site in a tanker. The tanker will blow its load through hoses into a silo which is taking the place of the old oil tanks. Hence the earlier remark that no one will ever see coal being delivered.

From the silo coal will be fed through pipes into the boiler house, being delivered automatically to whichever boiler needs more fuel.

Before going up the chimney the products of combustion, i.e. the fumes given off when the coal is burnt, will pass through a special

cyclone known as a 'grit arrester' which will take out any grit or dust to prevent it being scattered around the countryside. Any grit collected will be passed back into the boiler to be burnt.

The hot gases will then go up the chimney in the normal manner, but on the way up they will be automatically analysed to ensure the correct air/fuel ratio is being maintained to give the best combustion efficiency.

The new 95ft steel chimney is due to be built in September.

Clinker crusher

Burning coal not only produces fumes, but also ash.

This ash will have to be manually pulled out of the boilers after every eight hours or so of operation. This is the only time when anyone will actually see evidence of solid fuel.

As the ash is pulled out it will fall into a hopper which feeds a device called a 'clinker crusher'. This is a totally enclosed unit which breaks large clinkers into small clinkers. These will fall into a tube and be blown into a disposal skip.

We expect to burn 20-30 tons of coal each week producing about three tons of ash.

The storage silo will hold 100 tons of coal giving us a three-week stockpile even under worst winter conditions. But, should we have any delivery problems because of snow or whatever, the boilers can be converted within a few hours to burn oil, and an emergency standby supply of oil is being maintained.

A lot of people have been involved in this project, and without exception everyone has had to perform in a very positive fashion. When you realise that the old boilers couldn't be turned off until the middle of May, and the new ones will need to be producing heat by the end of September, you will appreciate that there was no time for anyone, whether RX staff, suppliers, or contractors, to stand back and risk missing their target dates.



Watching progress are works engineering staff (from left) John Weaver, Alf Griffiths, Julian Shufflebotham and Keith Jones.

As we go to press we can report that all is going according to schedule and as from this autumn, buildings 32, 29, 24 and part of 23 will be heated by solid fuel.



Jack retires after 35 years

'I've covered a fair bit of ground, one way or another,' said Jack Woods, looking back over his 35 years at Mitcheldean when he retired last June.

One of our 'Top Ten' long-servers, he played a prominent part in Mitcheldean's expansion and development into a thriving manufacturing site.

He joined British Acoustic Films in 1947 as assistant to Bernard Smith, then works accountant. You could say that Jack started at the top, for at that time the accounts department was accommodated in the attic of one of the old brewery buildings!

It was in the 'forties that, acting as '50 per cent of the original personnel department', he hired the commercial staff while the late Bob Baker saw to the industrial side. Those were the days, Jack recalls, when you not only took people on, you often had to run them home after work.

In due course he succeeded Bernard as works accountant and in the years that followed he held a number of senior accounting positions. As his responsibilities changed, so did the style of our finance operations, from old book-keeping methods to the sophisticated computer systems in force today.

In 1972 Jack became administration manager (still in the finance area); then, in 1976, he moved into personnel when the admin. function was merged with that department. The scope of his work grew to embrace telecommunications, the mail room and the central reprographic service which Jack was responsible for setting up.

Though a self-professed non-joiner, Jack served as chairman of the Long Service Association for the last three or so years; he has also been secretary and treasurer of the Sports & Social Club in the past.

He and his wife Beryl, who once worked in inspection at Mitcheldean, live in Ross-on-Wye. Having been tied to time during his working life, Jack says he intends to enjoy his freedom from it, except perhaps in one respect: he has an ambition to be a really good gardener and get jobs done at the proper time!

Two other stalwarts

Two of the people whom Jack hired in the late 'fifties – Ken Taylor and Skip Carpenter – also took their leave this summer. In fact, Jack, Ken and Skip were long regarded as the stalwarts of the finance department.

With Ken's retirement, after 23 years' service, the LSA lost its treasurer as well. It was Ken who took over as works accountant when Jack became deputy divisional accountant; since then he has worked in various senior capacities in finance, most recently as manager, business planning, in the supply area.

Both he and Skip were noted for their dedication to accuracy. Skip worked on the



Personnel manager Derek Knibbs presented Jack Woods with his 35-year service award shortly before his retirement.



Right: At a farewell dinner with colleagues past and present, Jack received a presentation from personnel director Ron Barnett, and found this cartoon of himself and his beloved pipe reproduced on all the menu covers. (According to Jack Bonney 'He tried smoking hash once but couldn't get the corned beef to light!')



Skip Carpenter (centre left) and Ken Taylor (centre right) each shake hands with an LSA chairman – Dennis Cook, the recently elected one (left) and Jack Woods, immediate past chairman – at a get-together on their retirement.

nominal ledger and, together with Bill Fennell and Norman Ball, formed 'the keystone of our activities' when things were still done by hand. He enjoyed good rapport with the auditors, except when they spoilt the neatness of his books with big red ticks!

Skip (or Royston, as he is known to some) originally came to Mitcheldean in 1943 to work in the old experimental shop; then he left to do his national service and it was some time afterwards, in 1958, that Jack took him on in finance. Both Ken and Skip are keen followers of sport, Ken being more of a cricket man while Skip was regarded as a sporting oracle particularly with regard to soccer and rugby. In fact, it was by virtue of his captaincy of the Sea Cadet football team in Cinderford years ago that he came by his nickname.

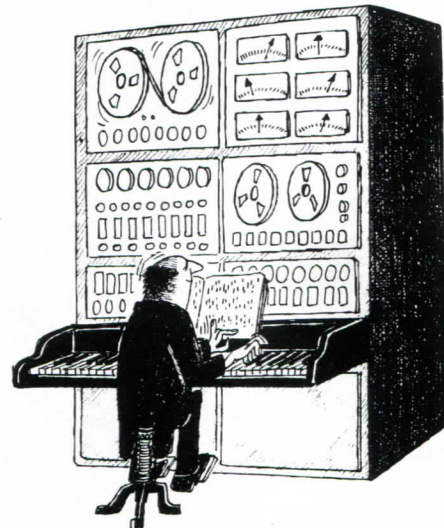
His wife Margaret works in the cashier's office, so Skip still retains a contact with things financial at Mitcheldean.

Albert Wing

We are sorry to report the death on 3 June of Albert Wing, aged 78. Albert retired in 1969, having spent all his 29 years with us in the press & sheet metal shop. Our sympathy goes to members of his family.

More farewells

During July there were more farewells – to Ken Fox, Jeff Kew, John Hayward, Jack Osborne, Ewart Nelmes, Mervyn Taylor – so there'll be plenty to say in our next LSA Letter.





Almost a royal tour

Warm, sunny weather put the crowning touch on what was almost a royal tour for retired members of the LSA when they went on their annual summer outing on 16 June.

After a successful round-up locally, the three coaches, carrying well over 100 people, met up at Chepstow and crossed the Severn en route for Bath, Cheddar and Weston-super-Mare.

Following royal example, they stopped for coffee at the delightful Cross Hands Hotel, Old Sodbury, where the Queen took refuge during a blizzard last December after paying a visit to Gatcombe Park.

Breath-taking

The sun shone on as the party travelled via Bath and through the breath-taking scenery of Cheddar Gorge to stop for lunch at the Bath Arms Hotel – and another royal surprise!

Some 40 years earlier this hotel had been 'honoured by a visit from King George VI' – we read on a plaque put up to commemorate the event.

Some of the LSA party sat inside, others sunned themselves in a pleasant beer garden as they enjoyed a really excellent packed

lunch and a drink with the association's compliments.

A different surprise awaited everyone at Weston – for once the sea was not miles out and the resort was seen to be 'super Mare'!

A last stop was made on the return journey at Newport Towers (royalty seemed to have missed this one) and all had a drink 'on the house'.

Mamie Lark and Les Baynham won a bottle of sherry each in a draw and George Turner nearly got the better of a fruit machine.

One of the best

Before leaving, a well-earned vote of thanks to their hosts was offered on behalf of the party by Doris Coulson.

A great deal of work had gone into the organising, and Dennis Williams and Mary Meek could not have searched out a more delightful route.

With Dennis Barnard in charge, and helpers Mary, Joan Turley, Dennis Williams and Dennis Clarke (the LSA committee is rich in Dennises!) plus first-aiders Jill Maxfield and Ken Hook to take care of everything, all went smoothly, and the outing was surely one of the best ever.

Charity Challenge

By the time we went to press with this issue, everyone on site had discovered the reason for those recent mysterious references, on posters and over Freephone, to a 'Mitcheldean Charity Challenge'.

We have embarked on a sponsored quality improvement project, the object being to raise our quality standards, and at the time benefit an important charity – the Gloucestershire Cobalt Unit Appeal Fund.

Without disclosing the reason behind it, a random survey was carried out among employees, asking them what charity they preferred to support, and the appeal fund topped the list.

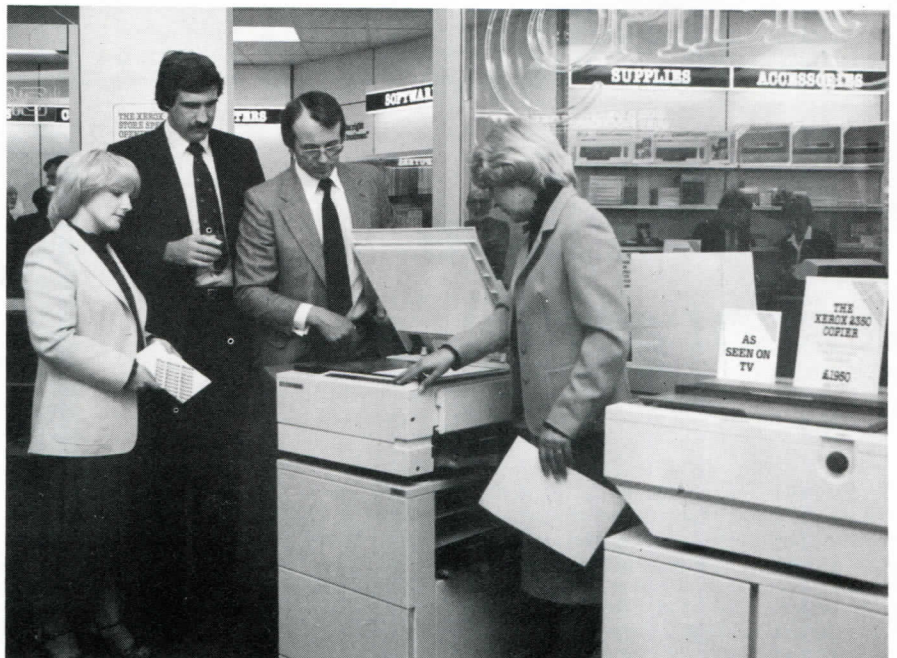
Briefly, the idea is this: for every 1% improvement in quality achieved during the months of August, September and October, as compared with the three months prior to the summer shutdown, the company has promised to pay £200 to the chosen charity.

All are being kept informed of progress. A daily bulletin is being given over Freephone and all people can see from the thermometer posters at the entrance to the main buildings the state of our quality 'temperature'!

It's a site-wide challenge, since everything we do at work can affect the quality of our products, and we hope to have good news to report in a later issue.



The cumulative total for the current safety year to June is 38, compared with 68 for the same period last year.



Xerox Store at Cardiff

On 12 May, Welsh rugby international and businessman Jeff Squire opened Cardiff's newest centre for small businesses – the Xerox Store in Wood Street. Like our other such stores, it combines over-the-counter sales and service with counselling for the owners and managers of small businesses who may be unaware of the productivity gains made available by modern microcomputers, word processors, copying machines and other office communication products. A wide range of these products from leading manufacturers and suppliers are on show; pictured looking at the Mitcheldean-made Xerox desk-top copiers are Jeff Squire (centre left) and store manager Mike Cross with Sue Lewis (far left) and Nadia Kemley from our personnel department who were among those attending the opening.

New social club for bld.32

People working in bld.32 have formed their own social club and a lively programme of activities has been lined up.

As well as cricket and football (they were about to play their first match, against Redbrook, as we went to press), they have got a really competitive spirit going internally with an 'all-star' section contest.

The building has been divided into eight sections and each is putting up a team to compete in five different games (skittles, pool, darts, cards and tug-of-war).

The winning 'all-star section' will receive a cup to be donated by their operations manager Peter Whiles at a Christmas party.

Money for the party is coming in regularly from a weekly draw with attractive prizes, and to keep the social ball rolling the club are holding one disco a month in the club house.

There is also to be a junior disco for the children and grand-children of bld.32 personnel; it will be held in the club house a few weeks before Christmas so that the adults can get some shopping done more easily.

Chairman of the club is George Carpenter with Sue Freeman as secretary and John Shields as treasurer, and each section is represented on the committee.

More for tennis

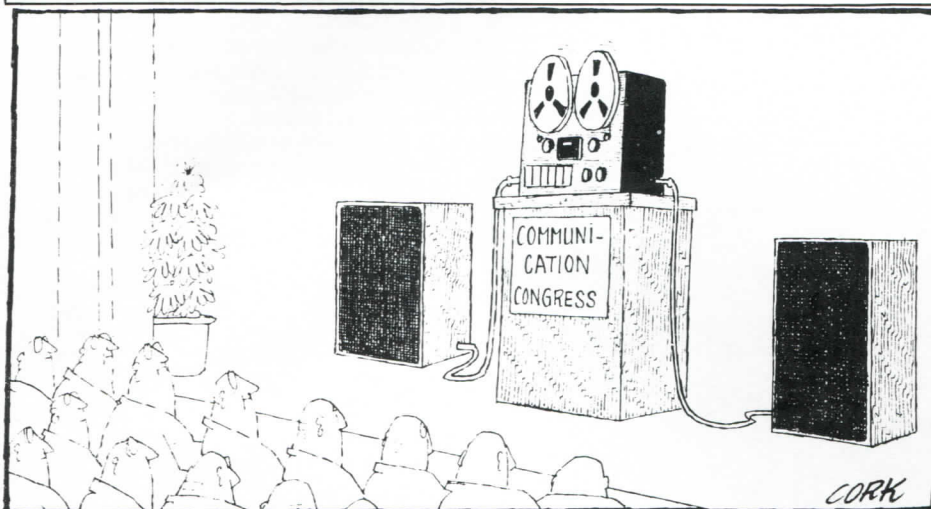
The RX Tennis Club is now well into its 1982 tournament season. The generally fine weather of this summer has seen the Crossfields courts (and the Prince of Wales pub!) well frequented on Tuesday and Thursday evenings.

Finals day on 12 September will be followed by a trophy presentation evening, probably in early October, after the success of last year's inaugural event.

We are pleased to see a good number of new members this year. Prospective new members, particularly those living in the Ross-on-Wye area, are reminded that even occasional players really can save pounds by joining the Tennis Club.

It takes only a few visits to our Crossfields courts there to recoup the £5 membership fee (negotiable for this year!).

Laurie Walker



Systems and the Spectrum

Around 30 people attended the June meeting of the RX Forest of Dean Computer Club at Berry Hill Social Club to hear Geoff Barnes give a vivid introduction to micro-computer operating systems, demonstrating the CP/M system which he has built into what was once a Nascom 1!

Great interest was shown in Clive Sinclair's latest product – the ZX Spectrum – which offers colour, sound and 16K memory for £125. A number of club members placed orders for the Spectrum and demonstrated them at the July meeting.

If you would like more information about joining/visiting the club, call Mike Selwyn or Keith Jones on ext. 708.

Why not have a shot at it?

The Rank Xerox Clay Pigeon Club recently got a new lease of life with new members being allowed from outside, but they would still welcome more, whether novice or expert.

It costs £1 for 25 days and approximately £2.20 for 25 cartridges; the ground rent fee is 50p per shoot or £5 per annum. Shoots take place every other Sunday morning, from 10am to 12.15pm.

Our pictures show some of the club members enjoying themselves – that's Richard Aston (IE) on the trap and Joe Buckman (transport) taking aim while the others wait their turn.

If you're interested, contact either Joe (ext. 934 or Dean 22876) or Richard (ext. 1889).



Chaired all the way

The Cinderford RFC team once again walked away with the Rank Xerox trophy in the recent sponsored sedan chair race from Speech House to RX club house. Our picture right shows them receiving it from Charity Queen Tina Giles, daughter of Brian Baldwin (mail room), who is vice-chairman of the Mitcheldean Charities Organisation, the people who organised the fun. Runners-up were Drybrook RFC, pictured below (some familiar faces there too). Treasurer Sandy Gaylard (PCD) told us that the events on the day, which included a disco, brought in £400, not counting the sponsorship money. During the past ten months or so, the organisation has donated well over £2,000 to local charities.



Her loss was their gain

Putting on weight can become a vicious circle – the more you gain, the less active you get, and so you put on even more pounds.

Marilyn Mercer, a secretary in engineering, found herself in this situation. She tried every diet in the book without success – until she joined the Weight Watchers' club in Cinderford.

She found the food programme suited her, and slimmed her. 'I lost over five stones over 17 months,' she told us. (We didn't recognise her when we met on the stairs, she looked so different!).

Slimming in company with her mother, sister-in-law and niece made the effort easier. Says Marilyn: 'I lost more weight than any of them, but then I needed to!'

Feeling more lively as a result, she joined a French evening class where she met Eileen Lilley, head of Severnleigh Home for mentally handicapped adults in Lydney. Marilyn volunteered to do some secretarial work for them and found herself secretary of the fund raising committee who were trying to raise cash for a summer holiday for the residents.

Apart from donations from various organisations (Rank Xerox among them), the appeal was boosted by the proceeds from a sponsored walk last May which raised over £1,000 ('I could never have taken part if I hadn't lost so much weight,' says Marilyn).

As a result, a party from the home were able to spend a most enjoyable holiday in France. More funds have since come in from a summer fete and this money will go towards a much needed new minibus and a Christmas party.

Talking of parties, we asked Marilyn how she guards against getting those unwanted pounds all over again.

'You never actually finish with this method,' she told us. 'Once you have achieved a planned reduction for eight weeks you become a life member and going for check-ups ensures you keep up your eating routine which, I should add, isn't at all boring like some diets.'

Marilyn would be pleased to pass on details to any plump people interested; she'd also like to hear from anyone willing to help Severnleigh – just ring her on ext. 1826.

Strokes – of sun and luck

A bright, warm morning heralded the second of the Golf Section's outings, which was held at Knowle Golf Club on 13 May.

The glittering prize at stake was the America Cup, which would be presented to the one in our number who could negotiate the 36-hole stableford competition with the least number of disasters and/or hard luck stories.

Setting off on the morning round on the par 3, 10th hole, every golfer cherished the thought that maybe – just maybe – this would be the day that he would be the one to step forward, at the end of the evening meal, to receive the cup from the captain prior to carrying it home in triumph to his admiring family.

Unfortunately, after surprisingly few holes, the cruel hand of fate (allied to sunstroke and a temporary(?) lack of aptitude) forced most of us to seek solace in the fact that at least we wouldn't have the cost of filling the blasted thing for all those free-loaders to drink at our expense!

When the final thirst-crazed, three-ball had gained the shelter of the bar, the serious business of checking cards and counting points was already well under way.

The result of all the deliberations was that Mike Mee and Nigel Allsopp had both amassed a very creditable 36-hole total of 68 stableford points, with the cup going to Mike by virtue of a better back nine holes total for the afternoon round.

The results of the morning and afternoon rounds were as follows: *morning* – 1st Nigel Allsopp (36 points), 2nd Mike Newlove (35 pts),

3rd Gordon Hayward (34 pts); *afternoon* – 1st Mike Mee (36 pts), 2nd Billy Gilmour (34 pts), 3rd Mark Barnard (33 pts).

The next Golf Section outing to Malvern on 24 June also gained favour with Mother Nature, with a perfect day sandwiched between some very unsavoury weather.

The course had actually been closed the day before, due to flooding caused by heavy rain, but was in miraculously good condition as we began the two rounds which would decide who would win (a) the Scratch Cup (best gross medal score) and (b) the Powell Cup (best nett medal score).

Despite the first round efforts of Mike Newlove and Ken Ellway, the Scratch Cup ended up as usual as a straight fight between those two golfing superstars, Geoff Paton and John Cash.

Geoff, the holder for the past six years, this time had to give best to John, who finished with a fine 36-hole total of 152 gross, three shots ahead of his rival.

As luck would have it, John's nett total of 144 for the two rounds enabled him to complete a clean sweep of the silverware on offer by pipping Nigel Allsopp by one stroke to take the Powell Cup as well. Well done, John!

Golf balls were presented as prizes for the morning and afternoon rounds as follows: *morning* – 1st Des Gibbs (nett 69), 2nd Ken Ellway (nett 70), 3rd John Cash (nett 71); *afternoon* – 1st Nigel Allsopp (nett 71), 2nd John Cash, Harold Gardiner, Don Meek, Roy Taylor (nett 73).

W.G.

Putting you in the picture

Engagement

Mark Phillips (commodity operations) to Debbie Ryman-Saib on 19 July.

Weddings

Tom Head (engineering) to Joan Wooldridge at Ross Register Office on 10 July.

John Whittington (engineering) to Pamela Kear at Aylburton Church on 17 July.

Malcolm Bevan (personnel) to Debbie Ewers at St. George's Church, Brockworth, on 17 July.

Birth

Lucy Patricia, a daughter for Harold Hale (engineering) and his wife Jane (formerly engineering), on 7 April.

Retirements

George Nicholls (works engineering) 11 years; Bill Teiser (group QA) 18; Evan Miles (MED) 10; Jack Parker (MED) 15; Trudy Morant (supply) 10; Fred Eacups (machine shop) 11; Jack Sleeman (PCD) 16; Don Aston (PCD) 16; Ron Merrett (engineering) 10; Mervyn Taylor (supply) 20; Mabel Matthews (business planning) 15; Charlie Meek (security) 10; Charles East (supply) 9; Maurice Cook (Lydney) 10; George Gapper (PCD) 7; Fred Clissold (tool inspection) 19; Leslie Smith (stock control) 10; Stan Pulford (works engineering) 8; Derek Preece (wages) 14; Alan Warren (machine shop) 11; Violet Hillman (electrical subs.) 10; Tony Brewer (engineering) 15; Ken Hook (engineering) 13; Albert Meek (assembly) 17; Gerald Wilks (engineering) 19; George Powell (stock control) 14; Audrey Carr (security) 8; Kathleen Cooper (electrical subs.) 4; Bill Barrell (heat treatment) 9; Victor Laskey (press & sheet metal) 9; Peter Harness (business planning) 16; Victor Thomas (materials planning) 17; Ted Price (assembly) 14; Kath Rudge (supply) 13; Brenda Lewis (engineering) 14; Violet Sayce (bld.32) 9; Bert Smith (press & sheet metal) 12.

(See also LSA Letter)



John and Pamela Whittington



Malcolm and Debbie Bevan

CROSSWORD SOLUTION

Winners of the crossword competition in our last issue should by now have received their prizes, and the next time we have a crossword they will be able to do it with a Papermate ball-point pen. Your editor drew the 100 winning entries out of the bag—but please don't blame her if you didn't get a pen even though you got the right solution shown below!



Obituary

We are sorry to report the death of George Clark (electrical subs.) on 21 June; he was aged 60 years and had been with us since 1972.

Service Awards

This issue we have two 'top quality' awards to report – a 35-year award to Ivor Ward of QA engineering and a 30-year one to Tom Knight of receiving inspection.

After an initial spell in the finishing area, Ivor embarked on his quality career as an inspector, first in the sheet metal area and then the machine shop; he became staff chargehand and later supervised goods inwards inspection when this was centralised.



Ivor Ward
35 years

In the mid-sixties he moved from the shop floor into the office area of gauge planning, within PED. As the work expanded, the department changed its name to quality engineering and was split into two parts, with Basil Brown leading the assembly QE section and Ivor the materials QE section.

With the setting up of QA engineering, Ivor transferred to the new area where his responsibilities as section leader now involve him with the collection and analysis of data for

the running of CCA – the central corrective action system we featured some months back.

Like Ivor, Tom Knight started in parts manufacturing (small batch); then after national service (during which he went to Malta with the RAF and 'got caught up with the Suez crisis') he too became an inspector in the machine shop.



Tom Knight
30 years

With the advent of Xerox, he got involved with the inspection of castings; this section later formed the basis of the centralised goods inwards inspection facility mentioned earlier and in due course Tom succeeded Ivor there.

Now manager, receiving inspection and spares QA, he has seen major advances in quality improvement with the putting into place of systems such as Skiplot and GRIT, and the development of supplier conformance. 'Today we are into statistics for reporting quality,' says Tom, 'and the onus is on the supplier to get it right the first time.'

Tom has done his fair share of travelling for the Company – his most unusual assignment being some months in Brazil in 1973, setting

up a goods inwards inspection facility at Resende where Don Presdee was helping Xerox start up a new assembly plant.

'I never saw a snake in all that time and only one (stuffed) alligator: and instead of being among dark Latin types, I found myself living in the midst of a Finnish colony complete with saunas!'

Tom saw some soccer out there on a visit to Rio's massive Maracano stadium; here at home his game is cricket and he has played for Mitcheldean CC for a number of years.

We recall a 1969 issue of VISION featuring Tom, his father Tommy (a foreman in the machine shop until his retirement) and mother Winnie (formerly engineering records) as the only instance of father, mother and son all being members of the LSA at one time.

To complete the picture, both Tom's wife Pam and his sister Brenda worked at Mitcheldean in past years.

Other awards

The following have also become eligible for company service awards:

25 Years

July – George Meek (QA), Martin Parsloe (machine shop); August – Mel Goulding (transport), Brian James (Lydney), Derek Jones (refurbishing), Sam Phillips (MED), Bruce Powell (works engineering).

20 Years

July – George Payne (spot weld), Dick Skyrme (group materials), Bill Smith (QA), Jack Thom (QA), Joe Watkins (tool inspection); August – Dave Morris (finance).