

Measuring up to the tasks ahead

New RX
engineering
apprentice Lesley
Townley (left) gets
things taped with
the help of former
apprentice Debbie
Lowen.



Debbie Lowen was the trail-blazer. Five years ago she became the first girl engineering apprentice to join the training school at Mitcheldean.

Having completed her apprenticeship, and equipped herself with a brand-new higher national diploma, she is now working in the electronics section of MED.

Her father, Dennis, who is a section leader in engineering, told us he was very pleased that training department had faith in her and helped her to achieve what she had set out to do.

'Everyone I worked with was really helpful,' added Debbie, who spent some time during her training in the electronic workshop and is currently engaged on a special project in the calibration room.

Having absorbed the theory, 21-year-old Debbie says she is now concentrating on getting the practical experience to back it up, but in time she hopes to acquire further qualifications.

How did she like being a fully-fledged electronic engineer? we asked her. 'It's great,' said Debbie. There is just one thing she misses – the regulation overall

with the distinctive blue collar. 'I felt quite chilly without it at first!'

Following in Debbie's footsteps is 17-year-old Lesley Townley whom we featured earlier this year in an article on our work experience scheme.

At that time Lesley was doing a project in electrical sub-assembly (where, incidentally, her mother, Jean Roberts, works); she told us then that she was hoping to get an apprenticeship somewhere, and she was delighted to be among the new intake in September.

Her step-father, Dave Roberts, works in CBA assembly (quite by coincidence, his picture appears in this issue too, in the article on the 8300), and several other members of her family work at Mitcheldean too, so she feels quite at home on site.

There's no discrimination in the training school, and 'petite Lesley (she stands about 4ft 11in in her socks) gets no special concessions, with one exception – she is given two pallets to stand on when operating the radial arm drill!



The twelve young people who joined the apprentice training school in September.

TOP STAFF

A furry tale

It was nearly a CATastrophe!

Few can have missed hearing about the cat caught in a container at Mitcheldean.

It must be the most publicised puss in the area, and the story of its ordeal has aroused a tremendous amount of interest.

The grey and white stowaway cat was an unlisted item that took goods receiving staff by surprise when they opened the container bringing lens assemblies from the USA.

Since the seals were still intact, it was concluded that the cat must have crept inside when the container was loaded and sealed at Xerox Optical Systems in Pomona, California.

It left there on 9 November and travelled the Santa Fey railroad to Galveston, Texas; then it was shipped across the Atlantic to Felixstowe (where else?), arriving at Mitcheldean by road on 8 December.

That's some 8,000 miles in 29 days with not even a mouse on the menu.

Chris Fitt, import supervisor in the supply centre, told us that as soon as our goods receiving people saw the cat, they shut the

container quickly and reported the stowaway.

All the necessary authorities were informed – from Customs & Excise (who levied no duty!) to the district health authority. It was, the latter said, a question of quarantine – or curtains – for the cat.

Had puss used up its ninth life? Not if Mitcheldean people could help it.

While a voluntary collection was got under way, the company agreed to meet the cost of a six months' stay for pussy at a Newnham-on-Severn quarantine kennels; together with veterinary and other expenses, the bill came to a total of around £500.

No time was then wasted in getting a vet to the scene and the frightened moggy was caught. It was found to be in surprisingly good condition considering its ordeal, apart from a slight leg injury, and 'Felix' was whisked away in a proper cat container to recover.

When we last heard, he or she (no one had got near enough to ascertain!) was getting on well and making up for lost meals. And when



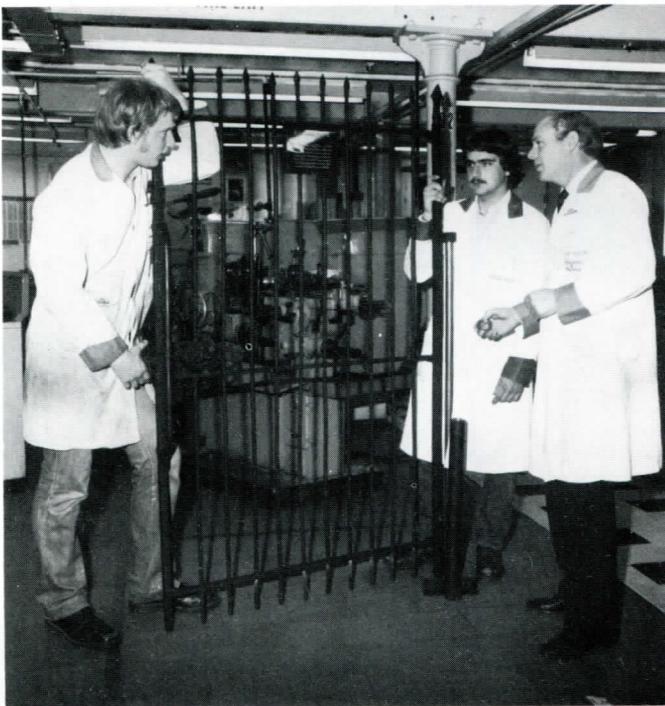
Felix is freed from quarantine next June a permanent home awaits him or her.

A happy ending to a furry tale!

(If you would like to contribute to the Felix Fund, Marion Cornwall in the cashier's office, bld.23/2 – telephone Intelnet 253 – will be pleased to receive your donation.)



Apprentices help preserve the pound



Andrew Prosser (left) and Richard Jones carried out most of the work on the gate. 'It was a most interesting project for them,' said training instructor Dave Matthews, seen right.

First-year apprentices in the training school recently had an opportunity to appreciate at first hand the workmanship of yesteryear – and help to preserve it for posterity.

It came about through machine tool fitter Andy Gardiner who is also one of Ruardean's parish councillors.

Andy is keen to preserve the village's links with the past, and now, as a result of various negotiations he has carried out, one of the last working pounds in the country will not vanish as a result of development but will be rebuilt in a new location.

The original gate is being retained and hung within a doorway saved from an old mansion called Hooks Hall. It is thought that this doorway could have originated from Ruardean Castle which was succeeded by the Hall in the 17th century.

Refurbishing job

The 150-year-old wrought-iron gate, sturdily made with forged links by a blacksmith, had survived remarkably well with little sign of rust. But it needed refurbishing.

Bars had to be straightened out, hinges reworked and a new hinge pin made so that the weight of the 6ft gate could be properly supported. A new latch was also needed.

Our training school agreed to undertake the project, and, using their newly acquired skills and the tools of today, the apprentices have given the old gate a new lease of life.

They have designed and fashioned a new latch in keeping with the style of the gate; in addition, a handsome brass plate with a brief history engraved on it has been made and fixed to the bars, so that when it is eventually hung in its new setting, passers-by can read and appreciate a little of Ruardean's past.

Director Ron Morfee presents the cheque for £3,000 to a delighted Dr. Hanna.



A big boost for quality – and a good cause

Appeal gains £3,000

Quality up by 15 per cent.

High quality has always been a priority at Mitcheldean, but when you are aiming at perfection, an extra stimulant is called for.

The Charity challenge provided that 'shot in the arm'. Our quality levels have improved by 50 per cent. over the past year and it is significant that one-third of this improvement took place during the period of the challenge.

When sponsorship is the means of raising sums for charity, people will perform the most amazing feats – from falling out of aircraft to crawling miles on their knees.

The idea of linking this enterprising spirit with working to improve our quality levels enabled director Ron Morfee to hand over to Dr Fred Hanna, the Cobalt Unit Appeal Fund chairman, a cheque for £3,000 on 17 November.

the charity chosen through a poll of representative employees.

The final figure of approx. 15 per cent. (with 2830, 2350/2370 and 2300 models leading the league table) resulted in a donation of £3,000.

As Mr Morfee said, it was a pleasure, particularly in today's difficult economic times, to be able to recognise employees' efforts in real quality improvements, and at the same time present a sizeable donation to such a worthwhile cause.

Dr Hanna, expressing appreciation for Mitcheldean's continuing support, said: 'We're very glad to know we are top of the charity pops!' and he thanked everyone who had been involved, both in organising the scheme and working towards its successful outcome.

The money, he said, would go towards the current £1½ million appeal for a linear accelerator which, as Dr Owen, the Cobalt Unit's consultant, explained, would bring about a dramatic reduction in the need for major surgery in cases of breast cancer.

Updated daily

Though it was a welcome surprise for the appeal committee, Mitcheldean people had been kept well informed on how the campaign was going. Day-by-day progress was publicised by means of bulletins over Freephone and 36 'thermometer' posters throughout the site were updated daily with the score, based on audit results.

The company had stated that, for every 1 per cent. improvement during the period August to October, compared with figures for the previous three months, they would donate £200 to the Cobalt Unit Appeal Fund,

Spin-off

The Charity Challenge could have further far-reaching effects. Mr Morfee has said that if any other organisation is interested in doing something similar, the company would be very happy to pass on the administrative details.

Before it was refurbished, Andy Gardiner took the gate along to make sure it would fit into the old doorway.



A longer period than usual has elapsed since the last issue of VISION, which accounts for the fact that some of the events reported in these pages took place several months ago; but rather than disappoint individuals involved, we have included them.

VISION will, we hope, be back to its normal frequency in 1983, and we'd like to take this opportunity to convey the

Season's greetings to all our readers



Travellers' tales

Don Southey of MED electronics goes

Round the world in eighty days

On Friday, 15 January 1982, I left Mitcheldean for home as usual – and come in again on Monday morning, 5 April, eighty days later, having been round the world for the company, via Los Angeles, Tokyo and Singapore.

In Los Angeles, I was to learn about a family of computers and how to talk to them; and after this training, I was to visit Fuji Xerox to learn all about, and carry out acceptance trials on, the DAAS system being supplied to Mitcheldean's bld.32 (see pages 6 and 7).

Between a fairly heavy schedule, I managed to see the Johnny Carson show, 'live'; paddle in the Pacific; fly a 'plane; visit Palm Springs; sunbathe in February; ride a bullet train; sleep through an earthquake; sing hymns in Japanese; and eat in 20 different cuisines and ten languages!

I left Britain the morning after a ton of snow had fallen off my roof (remember that snow?). Thirteen hours later I stepped out into a 'summer' afternoon in California.

It was all so like the movies I almost felt at home! Of course, it's where they make the movies. They were even making them in my hotel (The Ambassador – where Bobby Kennedy was shot), so I got onto a film set.

My main impressions of Los Angeles – what I saw of it – were: the lack of air pollution (possibly less than Gloucestershire), due to very stringent environmental laws; the contrast between rich and poor suburbs; the spaciousness and untidiness; relaxed courtesy in restaurants and shops; giant hamburgers (surely the messiest way of eating ever devised!).

The characters I met, especially travelling by bus, ranged from charming to eccentric to belligerent, and apparently *all* nervous of strangers. No one ever chose to share a bench seat, often preferring to stand. On 'home ground', though, they were warm and outgoing.

Dave Windmill and Don at Fuji Xerox.



Lake Okatama, set in a national park north-west of Tokyo, provides half of the city's water supply.



Don (right) took advantage of a special offer to have his first lesson in flying at Santa Monica, LA. With him is his instructor.

Since I was away for so long, the company paid for my wife to fly out to visit me in LA. She only came for four days (we have two young children) but loved every minute – her first time abroad. We kidded friends that all our photographs were taken specially on Hollywood film sets!

On to Tokyo where, armed with the XC resident's home 'phone number, I managed somehow to get the sumptuous Hilton Hotel. To my relief they all spoke excellent English; I had a book on everyday Japanese but had barely started it.

Dave Windmill from MED's electronic workshop joined me here. For the next six weeks we commuted to work – quite an experience! – and saw what we could do at the weekends.

Lasting memories

I had a church contact near Tokyo, which got both Dave and myself some homely hospitality – a rare treat. (We also had two or three earthquakes, one while I was shaving, nine floors up!)

Lasting memories of Japan include little things: tiny gardens, a haven of beauty amongst a functional tangle of concrete, wire and steel; a clerk on the telephone, bowing; a white heron fishing in a busy park; sliding window screens; no tipping; sumoh wrestling on TV (surely the perfect sport for action replays!); quilts hung out on balconies; pulp, not glossy, magazines; octopus stalls; six games of tennis on one court; surgical masks for commuters with colds; schoolchildren coming up to say 'Harro!'; hilarity in the works canteen when I chose chopsticks, not a fork; taking off my shoes in the porch of a little

gospel hall, to the strains of 'Amazing Grace' in Japanese!

And then the overall impressions. I got insights into a totally different culture and way of thinking, in everything from garden design to the literal meaning of everyday greetings (e.g. 'Sayonara' does *not* mean 'Goodbye!').

Everything was so cluttered and cramped, except imperial parks and residences. There were huge crowds of commuters but somehow they never jostled. Hard work, pride in the job and pride in the country were evident. I met with great courtesy and impeccable service, people never staring at a stranger, but making great efforts to be helpful and friendly once approached.

Then there was the amazing Alpine countryside, once off the narrow coastal plain – and the fact that everything was apparently under construction (our joke: 'Japan Inc. apologises for the inconvenience').

One had the feeling of having barely scratched the surface of a very different land, but with people very much like oneself. I made some friendships that I hope I shall keep up.

Finally, home the long way, via Singapore – an amazing sight from the air at dusk – and the Persian Gulf.

Memorable? Certainly – the trip of a lifetime. Enjoyable? Certainly – but chiefly because of two things.

Firstly, my own attitude: to make the most of it, savour the differences, risk getting lost, risk the food, even attempt the language.

And secondly, the people of whom I can say: 'I was a stranger, and you invited me in.' To have experienced that at first hand is something for which I remain very grateful.

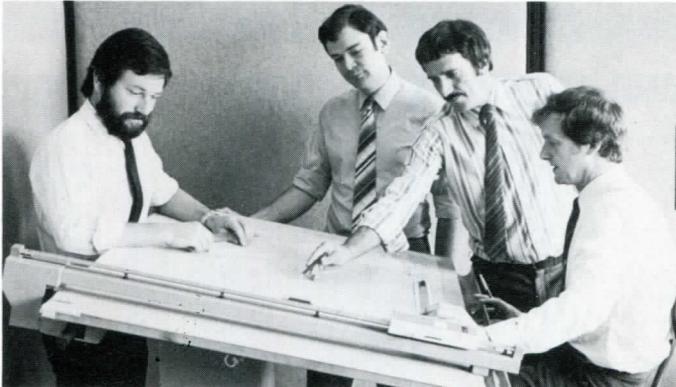
8300 production start-up



A meeting of the 8300 manufacturing team, (from left) Ray Sinclair (commodity ops.), Robbie Robinson (config. control), Alec Davis (PDT), Graham Woodward (MEE), chairman Danny Haines (MEE), Esme Halford and David Davies (config. control), Dave Wade (QA eng.), Brian Reeves (PDT), Mike Allred (commodity ops.) and Graham Smith (PDT).



Assembly operator Dave Roberts sets the brilliance of the VDU image; with him are (from left) Bob Mills (MEE), Colin Williams (MED) and Aif Elcock (MEE).



Firming up on the 8300 bezel design in engineering – round the drawing board (from left) are Nick Swan, Pete Roberts, Pete Cook and Bob Waite.

A graphic case of 'can do'

In the July/August issue of VISION we read about the development of the Xerox 8300 – a derivative of the Xerox 8200 – concluding with its successful demonstration at Hanover Fair in April this year.

While this was going on, manufacturing engineers, configuration control personnel and buyers were busying themselves to meet a very aggressive schedule.

A 'go' decision having been made in March 1982, five pilot machines were scheduled for July, and the production build was switched from 8200 to 8300 during September for an October launch.

This was a seven-month manufacturing schedule to make the first copier with a VDU (graphics) capability available in the Rank Xerox marketplace.

A first, of which Mitcheldean can be justifiably proud.

It means that casual operators will now be able to communicate with the machine, using the copy count buttons as a keyboard to call up displays of information on the screen.

Some flip cards are still required, but the machine has been made much simpler to operate with this feature which, by the way, is also available in an 8200 retrofit kit version.

Nail-biting occasions

How did Mitcheldean achieve all this in such a short period of time?

A project team, set up under the leadership of Danny Haines from MEE, worked very

closely with the design engineering and draughting members of the product development team (PDT) to create a production design.

This involved many meetings with, and visits to, suppliers with 'back of an envelope' sketches.

'There were many nail-biting occasions when we wondered if we would make it,' said Danny. 'One such occasion was when the one and only VDU supplier moved into new premises in July at the most critical point in their delivery period.'

'A buyer from Mitcheldean was sat on their doorstep (almost) when they re-opened to make sure our order was not delayed!'

'John Smith's small batch team was called in to rescue us when a critical part was

delayed, and WGC pulled out all the stops to produce the new printed wiring boards on time.'

Meanwhile at Aylesbury, the customer and service education department (CSE) produced the machine installation procedures, service documentation, flip cards and other service materials in record time.

Through all this, the team never lost their belief that they could do it, and this was well justified when the first five pilot build machines were built and tested successfully to plan last July.

As we went to press, machines were successfully in production and the 8300 had already been launched in the UK, France, Holland and Germany.

D.H.H.

Pictured with one of the first 8300 production machines are (from left) John Overbury (MED), Mike Hook (programme manager), Graham Woodward (MEE) and Danny Haines (MEE manager).



Competitive quality in bld.32



Terry Ward, QA manager 'P' products, in discussion with QA foreman Owen Clark and (centre) John Lewis of QA engineering.



Above right: Sandra Gardner checks the marriage of the frame assembly to the machine base (to strains of the 'Wedding March?'). The plastic card she is feeding into the fixture travels with the machine and is the one used at all the subsequent DAAS checkpoints on the main assembly line.



Having connected an optics assembly to the DAAS automatic gauge and inserted a plastic card, Mary Morgan checks that the light density is evenly spread; the optics card then stays with the assembly. Seen with her is inspector Mike Payne.

Right: In checking the alignment of the frame assembly with the base of the machine, the fixture has to solve five simultaneous equations. Gordon Ennis starts it off on its calculations.



The tug of war featured in our clubs pages is not the only evidence of a strong competitive spirit in bld.32.

But the people who build our latest desk-top copier, the Xerox 2830, are all pulling in the same direction in another bigger and more serious contest.

With the machine facing a dozen or so direct competitors in the marketplace, a good and reliable performance is what is going to count with the customer, and bld.32 is determined to be top of the quality league.

The Xerox 2830 has been set very aggressive quality targets – ½ defect per machine, going down to one in three machines, which

is demanding more from the 2830 than from its fellow 'P' products, or indeed from any other Mitcheldean-made machine.

How is that standard of quality being achieved?

As with the 2300/2350 machines, the 2830 is of Japanese (Fuji Xerox) design with reliability a key factor. It also uses parts made to stringent Japanese quality standards. That's another positive plus, bearing in mind that it is from the Japanese that our fiercest competition comes.

The automatic handling methods featured in a recent issue ensure that these parts, in their individual and assembled states, reach the build lines with little or no sign of 'travel fatigue'.

From then on it's a question of building quality into the assembled machines and to do this, both new and improved methods of working are being employed.

QIP thrust

Says Keith Grant, assembly quality manager: 'We're keeping the thrust of the QIP going and have taken over bld.32 as well as Lydney quality functions.' (Both were formerly run as an integral part of each unit's operations.)

The CCA (central corrective system) which was introduced as part of our total quality

improvement programme is getting good results in all areas, he told us.

CCA is all about gathering information concerning defects and problems, analysing it and ensuring that things are not only put right but are also prevented from occurring again.

Playing a key part in this process in bld.32 is the new DAAS (data automatic acquisition system) – also used by Fuji Xerox.

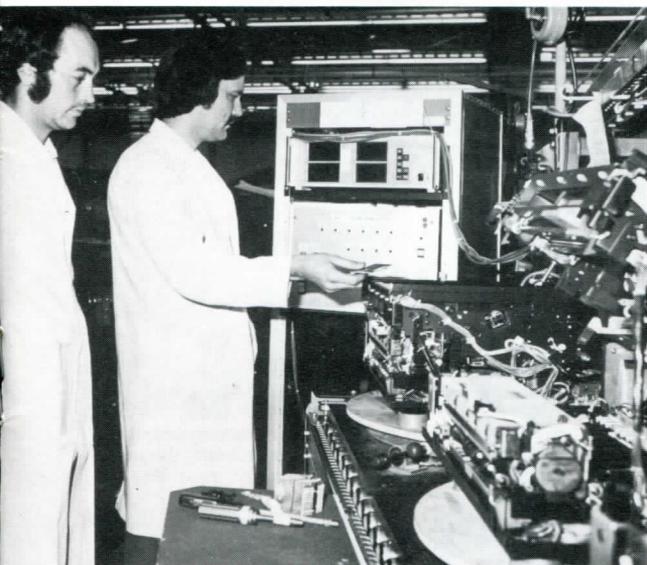
It is similar to the data-logging system which operates in CBA assembly but is much more advanced.

It not only gives operators an immediate feedback on the quality of their work, but also collects data concerning critical settings and analyses it so that drifts and variants in process can be detected.

Says bld.32 operations manager Peter Whiles: 'We can interrogate the DAAS computer at any time and it will tell us not only what has been happening during the past month, week, day or even minute, but also what is likely to happen, giving us the opportunity to take corrective action before a problem develops.'

How DAAS works

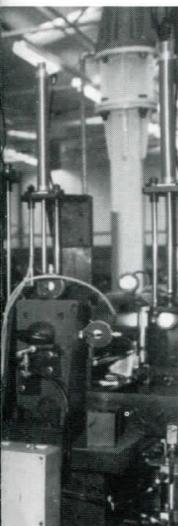
The system involves the use of automatic gauges or fixtures, and these are master-minded by a DEC 'host' computer – one for each of the twin main build lines.



Above: At a station on the south main line, operator Mark Reid tests the corotron settings; on the left is inspector Bill Nicholls.



Above right: Dave Windmill of MED electronics operates the card-reading terminal at the north line final station. On the right is the inspection data terminal, and overhead a thermo-hygrometer which registers temperature and humidity. Data from all three goes into the host computer. Watching is Maurice Jordan, north line FR&T foreman.



Right: Don Southey (MED electronics) and Malcolm Howard (QA engineering) study a histogram produced by one of the twin host computers.



Two DAAS plastic cards (looking rather like credit cards) are issued for each machine; one relates to the optics assembly, one to the frame and main build assembly.

Together with an IBM punch card, these stay with each machine throughout the build operation to enable the computer to collate a complete picture of every machine's vital statistics.

At each checkpoint for critical settings, the operator attaches measuring heads, or probes, to the machine and then inserts the DAAS card in a reader on the automatic gauge.

Buttons are pressed and, if the lights on the panel show green, that means the work done is within specification – 'That will do nicely!'

But if any of the required checks is missed out, or a setting error occurs, the gauge shows a red light and audibly 'tweets' until the setting is corrected.

Having adjusted the setting(s) until the gauge says 'go', the operator presses a button and the data is flashed to the host computer.

Each machine is thus tracked down the line and its personal quality history is built up.

In the FR&T (final run and test) area various manual checks are made concerning copy quality, registration and so on; these are ticked off on a checklist which is then attached to every machine.

At the end of the line there are two terminals. The copy quality results from the checklist are keyed into the inspection terminal and sent to the line's host computer.

Then the machine is signed off via the automatic card-reading terminal. Here the basic machine data such as model code, serial number, etc. is fed in by means of that IBM punch card mentioned earlier. Then the two plastic cards are inserted into the reader, so that all the information recorded is tied up into a package related to the machine serial number.

Even the temperature and humidity which could affect the copy quality are recorded by a thermo-hygrometer and these details also are sent to the host computer.

Enormous capability

The data supplied both automatically via the gauges and manually via the terminals is collated by the host computers, calculations are made and the resultant data is provided in both tabulated and graphic form (histograms).

Says Malcolm Howard of QA engineering: 'The analytical capability of the system is enormous; it provides information for process control, reveals defect trends, and useful training information.'

Data about each machine can be accessed for any period up to one month, after which

the data is dubbed on to magnetic tape. So if a problem arises with a machine in the field later on, machines with the same serial numbers can be checked out within a very short time.

More dynamic

Working in conjunction with DAAS is a team of 12 inspectors, headed by 'P' products quality manager Terry Ward, who carry out sample checks on the two main build lines.

'The difference between 'P' products and other products where CCA has been introduced is that it has to be more dynamic,' says Terry. 'Because the volume of machines going through the line is so much greater, one's reaction time has to be that much quicker.'

So, instead of being recorded daily on the station performance charts, as in other assembly areas, the quality performance of each work-station is updated at least four times a day after each inspection tour, depending on the frequency and size of the sample.

All these efforts are having their effect and in audit, which gives us the real measure of quality, 'improvements have been dramatic,' says Keith Grant.

The machine has been very well received in the marketplace, and reliability has been reported to be excellent.



There have been so many retirements of long-servers since our last issue that we have space only for brief captions to presentation pictures. But, as president Vic Buhlmann said recently, our good wishes for their retirement are nonetheless sincere.

Chairman Dennis Cook reports that the committee is having to look carefully at the situation as regards retired membership.

But the LSA is looking forward to welcoming new members too. After a time lapse of several years (owing to a change in the qualification period), employees will be becoming eligible to join the association, having completed 20 years' service.

Those concerned will be approached at the start of the quarter-year in which their anniversary falls.



It was a multiple event when (from left) Vic Buhlmann made retirement presentations to Jeff Kew, Ken Fox, Jack Osborne and John Hayward. Longest serving recipient was Ken, engineering site manager, with 35 years' service while Jeff, a close colleague in his capacity as engineering services manager, had been 30 years with the company. Jack, leaving after 21 years (not counting an earlier spell in the 'forties), had most recently been engaged on admin. work in MED, while John ('the quiet man of the reliability lab. '), had been with us since 1958.



One of our longest servers, Don Peates spent almost all of his 37 years with us in the model shop where he had progressed from shop boy to manager. Vic Buhlmann thanked him for his support on the LSA committee and wished him well in his new venture.

Retiring at the same time after 22 years was Norman Griffiths. One of our first-aiders, Norman worked in component test where, as manager Don Cottingham said, he had developed a speciality in work harnesses and connections.



The end of September saw Mary MEEK, LSA assistant secretary, handing in her badge of office before retiring. Mary, who gained her 25-year award earlier this year, was a parts analyst in commodity operations and our picture shows manager Peter Chapman presenting her with farewell gifts from colleagues.

Above: A very helpful member of systems test department was how manager Richard Schofield described Bob Watkins when presenting him with a goodbye gift after 22 years' service.

Right: A recently enrolled member of the LSA, Mervyn Taylor (supply centre) retired at the end of August. He came to Mitcheldean in 1962 and was made a warehouse/chargehand in 1969. Here he is seen receiving a farewell gift from manager Charlie Walker.



Last July works engineering said farewell to one of their best known characters, machine tool fitter Ewart Nelmes, after more than 26 years' service. As manager Graham Bunt said in presenting him with gifts from colleagues, he has always taken a particular interest in assisting the younger element and several of our work experience lads have benefited from his help.



It was an unprecedented occasion in October when all the following members retired: **front row** – Ron Boakes (eng.) 34 years, Clary Dickinson (machine shop) 22, Sylvia Buckman (config. cont.) 23, Daphne Meek (personnel) 23, Freda Roberts (MED) 23, Jean Marshall (IS) 22, Frances Jones (finance) 21, Jack Herbert (machine shop) 28, Ray Byett (QA) 26, **back row** – Jock McGeachy (m/e shop) 20, Fred Brickel (parts mfg.) 20, Jim Allum (TED) 28, Roy Wynn (tool room) 20, Reg Fisher (m/e shop) 22, Peter Ellis (IS) 23, Bill Marshall (stores) 28, Harold Cecil (MED) 28, John Powell (IS) 27, Geoff Watkins (assy) 20. Missing from the picture are Roy Barton (eng.) 23, John Brain (reliability) 38, Joe Burke (QA) 21, Fred Coombes (supply) 27, Brian Davis (assy) 22, Ted Davis (eng.) 20, Maurice Knight (security) 22, Jim Moody (MED) 20, Vic Morrell (transport) 21, Sylvia Powell (assy) 35, Ray Pyart (eng.) 20. Allan Swordy (PCD) 34 and, longest server of all, Bob Taylor (eng.) with 40 years' service.



Tim Stephens of tool inspection who joined the company, second time round, 21 years ago, is seen holding the wall clock given by his colleagues to mark his retirement. 'I've enjoyed your company,' he said. 'It's the outdoor life for me in future!'



Electronics was the job – and is the hobby – of Stan Masterman of engineering who opted recently for early retirement. Here manager Keith Jones presents him with a gift which came with the good wishes of his colleagues.



Kisses were the order of the day when Joan Findlay left in August after 28-plus years, and manager Julian Hazell followed the example of others when presenting her with a china 'bouquet' from colleagues in stock control. We'll miss your style, Joan!

Eyes on Safety

Total number of accidents for period:

July/Oct '81	July/Oct '82
--------------	--------------

The number of accidents for the safety year ending October '82 amounted to 59, almost half the previous year's total of 103 – a splendid improvement.

Transport department's longest server, Roy Whittington, retired recently after over 23 years with the company to concentrate on his 'filling' role as landlord of the White Horse in the village. The carriage clock, a timely gift, was handed over by manager Ted Tuffley.

Obituary

We are sorry to report the deaths of the following retired members.

Bill Knappgate on 8 August at the age of 86. When he retired in 1964, Bill was working in despatch. A member of the Drybrook Male Voice Choir, he was often to be heard singing solo, or with Taffy Morgan; and both he and his wife Annie, who worked in heat treatment, were indefatigable fund-raisers for good causes. They both strongly supported the Sports & Social Club and, as Henry Phillips reminds us, Bill ran in the veterans and obstacle races when Mitcheldean had its annual sports days.

George Turner on 9 September aged 62.

George, whose work lay always in the financial sphere, was treasurer of the LSA for seven years. He took early retirement last June, having completed 26 years' service with the company, first in London and since the late 'fifties at Mitcheldean, and became a visitor for the RX Pensioners' Association. LSA functions will be all the poorer without his friendly banter and never failing fund of anecdotes. Our sympathy goes to the families of both men.



Freda Jones, the Just in Time captain, holds the trophy while Pepperette Sue Ellen toasts the winning team. **Below:** The runners-up, the Uniskits, whose players included highest individual scorers (far right) Josie Reed (44) and Mark Smith (48).



Just in time!

The team from bld.40/1 assembly were last-minute entrants for the recent mixed skittles tournament – and were Just in Time to become the first-ever winners of the J. Maldwyn Thomas Trophy.

As S&SC chairman Bill Jones explained, when the then chairman of Rank Xerox Ltd. formally opened the new club house in 1978, he kindly donated a cup in recognition of the club's achievement.

Somehow a contest for the cup had never been organised, until the current committee decided to fill the gap between the end of one interdepartmental skittles tournament and the beginning of the next with a unisex skittling event. So organiser Graham Welch got out the cup and polished it in readiness.

Sixteen teams entered and all were invited to attend the finals on 9 October and bring a guest. While the Just in Time and Uniskits (configuration control) teams fought it out in the alley, the rest enjoyed a disco in the function room and had a free 'dose' of Dr Pepper, an 'all-American non-alcoholic drink combining 23 flavours.'

The Just in Timers beat the Uniskits 287/276 and after refreshments the finalists joined the main company for the presentation of awards by Pepperette Sue Ellen, who in turn was presented with a bouquet.

Showing the flag

At the well-attended July meeting of the RX Forest of Dean Computer Club, held at Berry Hill Social Club, Coleford, Stuart Edinborough introduced the Sinclair Spectrum and demonstrated some of its advantages over its predecessor, the ZX 81; these included sound effects.

Keith Jones then ran a Sinclair demonstration program that brought up a full colour Union Jack on the colour TV!

In addition to the six Spectrums brought

along, one lucky member was able to bring his BBC micro.

Sinclair software was reviewed and a programme demonstrated by Keith at the September meeting, while in October there was a demonstration of the BBC micro together with a general discussion.

We surrender the cup

On Sunday, 5 September, the RX Bridge Club defended the Bredon Vale Cup, acting as hosts to six other local teams in this North

Gloucestershire league event.

In the second half, following an excellent tea laid on by the Sports & Social Club caterers, Newent Bridge Club ran out to be this year's winners. Their team, incidentally, included Ron Watkins, formerly of QA engineering; before his recent retirement Ron won the RX individual competition for the second time.

Early retirement and redeployment have had their impact, and the RX club have only one team playing in the North Gloucestershire Bridge League this winter.

Build-up to Christmas

The contest to find the best all-round performers in bld.32 began in August when teams representing various sections took the strain in a tug-of-war at Drybrook RFC. Outright winners were FR&T who subsequently won the skittles and the darts competitions and drew with the north line team in the pool competition.

Their supremacy was challenged, however, in the 'final run and test' when subs, re-tote and stores secured first place in the card contest.

As we went to press the overall winners

(no prizes for guessing who) were about to receive a trophy, donated by operations manager Peter Whiles, at the department's Christmas party on 18 December.

Earlier a special free junior disco for children and grand-children of bld.32 personnel was held on 27 November, enabling mums and dads to get some serious shopping done on their own.

Out in the field, the department's football team, managed by Bob Davies, have been notching up successes in a remarkably consistent manner.

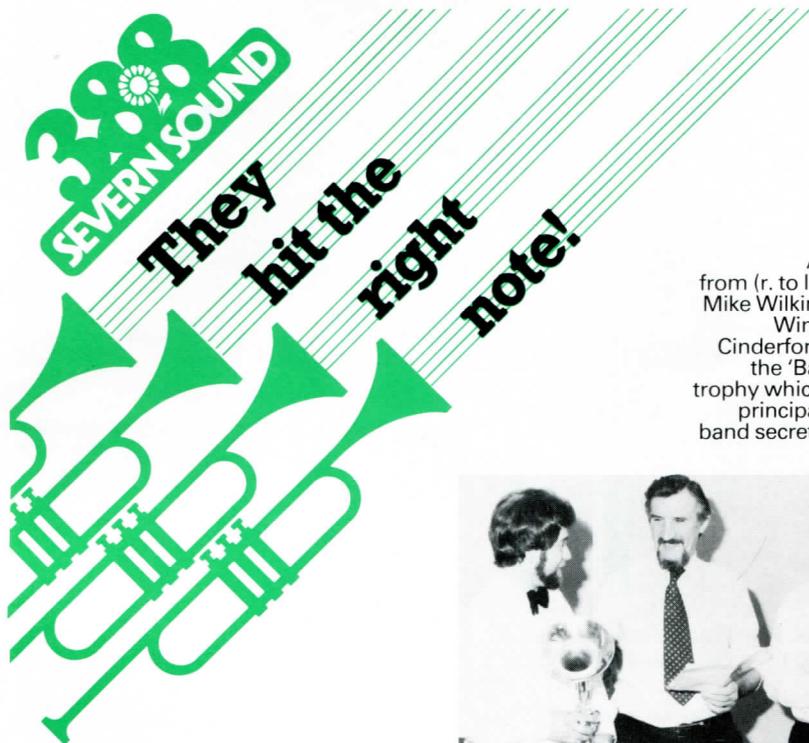
They kicked off by winning six goals to nil in their first match last August, playing the Boat Inn side at Redbrook. This goal difference was repeated in a friendly game at Harrow Hill in September against an Ardri team when the score was 7:1 to bld.32, and again in October, when they played RX Outsiders and won 8:2!

Harvested for charity

On 14 October bld.32 held a very successful harvest festival in the club house in aid of the Bristol Children's Heart Circle. Jack Beckingham of Severn Sound Radio proved an able auctioneer, and the sum of £130 was 'gathered in' and handed over to the charity representatives by Jamie, young son of John Scrivens.

The FR&T team take the strain. **Right:** What am I bid for this king-size cabbage?





A rising fanfare from (r. to l.) Tony Murrell, Mike Wilkinson and Steve Wintle to celebrate Cinderford's retention of the 'Band of the Year' trophy which Philip Turner, principal cornetist and band secretary, is holding.



Left: Maurice Jones (centre), who, as chairman of the Gloucestershire Band Association played an active part in organising the event, chats with Coleford bandsmen Richard Morgan (left) and Benito Marangon.



While the last night of the proms was taking place on 11 September in the Albert Hall amid scenes of patriotic fervour, local musical talent and loyalty were being strongly demonstrated in Stroud Leisure Centre.

It was the finals of the Severn Sound 'On Air' brass band competition sponsored by Rank Xerox Mitcheldean, and the four bands taking part gave the audience a never-to-be-forgotten evening.

Jack Beckingham, who presents the popular 'Strike up the Band' programme every Sunday evening on Severn Sound, welcomed the Rank Xerox contingent led by assembly manager Roy Powell (representing director Ron Morfee). Jack expressed gratitude for our company's 'generous support' – and a souvenir programme helped to beat the drum for Rank Xerox.

Twenty-six bands competed this year, the recorded tapes being judged over several weeks by Ernest Woodhouse, last year's adjudicator. Of the four finalists, two were Forest of Dean bands, which says something for the talent existing on our doorstep.

Cinderford Band, the 1981 'Band of the Year', were defending their title against Thornbury Band in the championship section, while in the second section Coleford Town Band com-

peted with Hawthorne Brewery (Gloucester) Band.

The adjudicator on the night was Ted Buttress, who is very well known in the brass band world, and edits the weekly brass band journal *The Mouthpiece*.

While Mr Buttress and other initiates who knew all about the finer points were listening with a critical ear, the rest of us in the audience were happy to sit back and enjoy a most entertaining and varied concert.

There were the rousing marches we expected, and elegies we didn't, novel arrangements of familiar tunes, and challenging pieces like the finale from 'Checkmate' by Bliss with which Cinderford Band rounded off their performance.

Solos gave added interest, and 'The Lazy Trumpeter' by Coleford's cornet soloist contrasted with the 'Czardas' which Cinderford's principal cornetist Philip Turner played at breath-taking pace.

Philip, incidentally, is a former RX apprentice now with works engineering, and he was the Severn Sound 'Cornet Soloist of the Year' in 1981.

For the second year running, Cinderford were named as winners of the coveted title 'Severn Sound Band of the Year'. The decision

was greeted with cheers and we were especially pleased for members of the band who included Mike Wilkinson (facilities) who plays the flügel (and his 12-year-old son Keith, a solo cornet), Stephen Wintle (MED) second cornet (plus wife Christine, third cornet), and solo trombonist Tony Murrell (finance), as well as Philip.

Coleford Band were runners-up in the second section; among them we recognised Benito Marangon (refurbishing), a bass trombonist, and Richard Morgan (tool room), a solo tenor horn player.

They won the challenge cup for the nationally-graded fourth section band achieving highest place in the contest, and have done so well recently they are being promoted nationally to a higher section.

There was a further opportunity to hear the finalists 'on air' in Jack Beckingham's programme on Sunday, 19 September, and we'd like to add our congratulations on their achievement.

Solo no longer – Further congratulations to Philip Turner – he has recently become engaged to Elaine Walding, a solo cornet in Cinderford Band!

The golf score

This is a rather brief account of the Golf Society's 'travelling show' but at least it keeps the record straight.

Summer Cup (July) – To secure the trophy, Dave James managed to negotiate Clevedon's hazardous course twice and return a total of 138. This gave him a winning margin of 6 strokes over second-placed Danny Haines with Dave Robinson, a further 4 strokes behind, coming third.

Inter-departmental Cup (August) – At Broadway the ISC team (Mike Newlove, Jeremy Barnard and Keith Winter) ran out winners with the lowest score

of 291; runners-up on 298 were Billy Gilmour, Alistair Caldwell and Dave Robinson, masquerading as the PDT Pirates.

RX Inter-plant (August) – Two six-men teams represented Mitcheldean in this annual event played on the Brabazon Course at The Belfry, the HQ of the English PGA. Ten teams, including one from the Irish Opco, turned out, but none of the 60 competitors got within a drive and a four wood of the stableford equivalent of a nett par round (35 points), the closest being the 32 points scored in the afternoon by Mark Barnard of Mitcheldean's 'A' team. This major contribution to the team's tally of 205 points enabled capt. Harold Gardiner to collect the silverware on their behalf. The rest of the 'A' were Billy Gilmour, Don Meek, Mike Newlove and

Dave Robinson. RXEG Welwyn came second with Mitcheldean's 'B' team in 7th place with 179 pts.

Captain's Day (September) – This event at Stinchcombe brought the season to a fitting climax. The society's longest serving member, captain Harold Gardiner has contributed much to its success over the years, and this was his last outing before retiring from the company.

Supreme on the day was Don Meek, whose all-day total of 67 stableford points won him the main prize of four crystal glasses. In second place was Nigel Allsopp (65 pts) who edged out Bob Howells by virtue of a better score for the back nine holes of the afternoon round. Nigel also emerged top of the Order of Merit table for 1982.

Putting you in the picture



Michael and Jacqueline Humphries



Kevin and Sandra Beard



Laurie and Kay Ingmire



Stirling and Anne Jordan

Weddings

Michael Humphries (bld.32) to Jacqueline Ashford at Upton St Leonards Church on 24 July.

Kevin Beard (QA engineering) to Sandra Turner at Christchurch Church on 31 July.

Laurie Ingmire (refurbishing) to Kay Buchanan at the Forest Church on 14 August.

Stirling Jordan (engineering) to Anne Plant at All Saints Church, Newland, on 4 September.

Birth

Sarah Jane, a daughter for Tony Baldwin (RX Lydney) and his wife Shirley, on 6 August.



Geoffrey Bennett of works engineering – better known throughout the plant as 'Duff' – receives a retirement gift from manager Bill Phelps (who has since retired). Duff, who joined us 16 years ago, was works convenor for the industrial staff in the 'sixties and more recently has been chairman of ASTMS.

Obituary

We are sorry to have to report the deaths of the following: *employees* – Roy Taylor (machine shop) on 20 July aged 51 – he had been with us since April 1978; Raymond Morris (machine shop) on 18 August, aged 61 – he joined us in October 1977; Ken Causon

(works engineering) on 30 September at the age of 61; he had served 13 years with the company; *pensioners* – Ada Hawkins on 23 July aged 66; Wallace Gurney on 4 September aged 73; William Davies on 23 September aged 64; Cyril Jones on 11 November aged 66; and Charlie Meek on 15 November aged 64.

Safety reps had a preview of the styles offered.



Getting expert attention

A fitting solution

Business was brisk when the new safety footwear service was introduced at Mitcheldean and Lydney on 17 and 18 August, and over 700 pairs of shoes were issued by the mobile Plus 50 unit.

The fitting service was a bit pushed because of the numbers that turned up at these initial visits and, due to popular demand, one or two of the sizes in a particular range were depleted. But, as anticipated, demand levelled out at subsequent visits and the few problems have been resolved.

Top sellers were the light-weight spring-boks (one of the range where people were required to pay a small percentage of the cost); the with-it blue leather safety trainers (no contribution required) have gone very well too.

The new system has given users better quality footwear in a wider range of styles and fittings, while safety management have the benefit of better control and the means to detect any particular problems at an early stage.

Another satisfied customer!