Editorial

The 2001 summer solstice brought news, (along with the rising sun!) which marks the end of ICL as a brand name. Many people will mourn the passing of the name, which was synonymous with the UK computer industry. However since the decision was made not to float ICL on the Stock Exchange I suppose it was almost inevitable. The present ICL is hardly the company that the majority of pensioners worked for, so maybe the name "ICL" should be consigned to history.

A number of people have contacted me, since the announcement of the name change, about the effect on the ICL Pension Fund. As it is purely a dropping of the ICL brand name I cannot see how it should affect us. However in this crazy new world anything may happen especially if there is a profit motive! Hopefully ICL/Fujitsu will inform each of us officially once the ICL name has disappeared.

I have attended two significant memorial services since the last edition. One to celebrate the life of Graham Barwick at Stevenage 29 March 2001 and the other at Manchester University on 1 May 2001 for Tom Kilburn. Graham was only 64 when he died whereas Tom reached 79. From the attendances at each of these celebrations, the two of them made quite an impression on those with whom they worked. Tom Kilburn can be described as one of the fathers of the computer, as he, with F.C. Williams and G.C.Toothill built the first software-controlled computer in the world, known as "Baby", which went live on 21 June 1948.

After the memorial service I went to see the replica Baby, "Small Scale Experimental Machine", built by a team from the Computer Conservation Society, led by Chris Burton, at the Castlefields Museum of Science and Industry. It is hardly small scale in today's terms! It is 16 ft long and weighs half a tonne.

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ICL Organisation

ICL Name to Disappear

ICL has a long and successful association with the Fujitsu Group; over the last 20 years our association has developed and in 1998 Fujitsu became our sole shareholder. In this time, the Fujitsu Group itself has evolved with the target of building a unified Global identity as a leader in the Internet era. The Group is now entering the second year of the brand development programme, initiated by Fujitsu President Akikusa in June 2000, which includes a three year $500 million global advertising campaign. Built around 'the possibilities are infinite', this will heighten global awareness of Fujitsu and its subsidiaries.

Earlier this year, ICL commissioned extensive market and employee research on the perceptions of the ICL and Fujitsu brands. The research clearly showed that ICL's employees, customers and partners strongly support a move by ICL to the Fujitsu brand with its association of global IT leadership, clear long-term strategy and substantial investment in research and development.

As a result, President Akikusa announced in Tokyo on 21 June 2001, ICL's intention to move our brand to Fujitsu within this financial year. In line with this development, it has also been announced that DMR Consulting is moving their brand within a similar timescale. Clearly, this announcement represents continued commitment from Fujitsu to ICL.

ICL has become a trusted brand associated with technical competence and high quality IT services. We will retain these values in our move to the Fujitsu brand and carefully combine the strengths of the two brand personalities. In addition, migration to the Fujitsu brand represents strong opportunities for ICL employees as Fujitsu strengthens its position as one of the world's largest IT companies.

We are working on the next stages of this programme and will continue to communicate with you as it progresses. For now, please help share the good news that this announcement represents, and continues to focus on today's business challenges to achieve our strategic goals.

Richard Christou
Chief Executive Officer, ICL

Local government software applications sold to the Anite Group

ICL announced 2 April 2001 the completion of the sale of its local government software applications business to the Anite Group. The sale of the applications is in accordance with the company's strategic direction in local government to focus its business on the areas of modernising government, outsourcing and managed service rather than on applications development.

As part of the agreement, ICL and Anite will act in partnership to market and sell a complementary range of applications, services and IT infrastructure products to customers. Also ICL intends to enhance its range of services to local authorities based around customer access, e-procurement, electronic service transactions and business support which will allow authorities to meet their e-government targets.

Anite is a software consultancy & services provider with a turnover of £150million and employs over 2000 people, with 330 staff dedicated to working in the public sector. The applications transferring to Anite, and which will be fully supported by them, are LogICL, Pericles, and ICLipse. They will complement Anite's existing applications in the areas of revenues & benefits, housing, social welfare and document management. Approximately 70 ICL staff, who currently work on the development and support of these applications, will be transferred to Anite under the transfer of Undertaking of Employment Protection (TUPE) arrangements. An additional 30 contractors will also transfer to Anite.

Anite Group Overview.

From Anite Website
The Group provides consultancy and services to communication, finance, travel, public sector and industry markets. Anite provides a unique blend of vertical industry knowledge coupled with extensive skills in e-commerce, Enterprise Resource Planning consultancy. Anite has over 1900 consultants working in Germany, UK, Italy, Finland and the Benelux.

Anite's telecoms competence centre provides global solutions to the wireless telephone and network operators specialising in billing, test & simulation software and consultancy.

The travel operation provides global solutions to tour operators and virtual travel agents delivering consultancy & services and providing bespoke customer relationship management, reservations, cruise & ferry solutions, delivering these solutions on a transactional based cost model.

Public sector division delivers consultancy and solutions to central & local government customers include E-procurement, workflow revenue, housing maintenance and public transport solutions to its customers.

Further information on Anite was published in the **Independent** 20 May 2001. "Anite formally called Cray Electronics, fell into difficulties in the mid-1990s and was rescued by the current chief executive, John Hawkins who took the helm in November 1997. He moved the company away from electronics by selling off surplus businesses and property. He then hit the acquisition trail, buying into an IT consultancy. In the past three months, it has bought France's Delta Partners for £2.15m and ICL's Local Government applications business for £13m."

ICL Good News

ICL and thomascook.com Net Award
ICL and thomascook.com, the online distribution arm of leading travel retailer Thomas Cook, picked up 'Best e-Business Project Award' at this year's Networking Industry Awards, held in London on 26th June 2001.

The companies, which have been working together on the project for two years, received the Award for their use of interactive television technologies, helping thomascook.com become the UK's first travel website that offers consumers choice across multiple devices.

The thomascook.com site was the first high street travel agent to offer its customers an online one-stop-shop service and allows visitors to search, book and pay for holidays online. In addition, in-depth travel facts and holiday information are available.

Judges voted ICL's interactive digital TV service for thomascook.com as superior, citing it as a facility that provides consumers with search capabilities as close as possible to those offered by the website, given the limitations of the medium.

Richard Hadfield, managing director of thomascook.com, comments: "We are extremely pleased to have won this Award with ICL, especially considering the quality of the projects submitted.

For us, winning this Award demonstrates our understanding of the Internet and use of complementary distribution channels, but more importantly, the requirements of our customers."

Derek Sayers, managing director for ICL's e-Innovation business in the UK said: "This award proves that Thomas Cook is leading the way for popular holiday travel shops to become as established on the Internet as they are on the high street. The IDTV service builds on the success of the existing web service by delivering existing content through a new channel that is both convenient and easy to use."

Global Training for MINI Dealers
In preparation for the launch of the new MINI in July 2001, KnowledgePool, the worldwide training service provider specialising in IT, personal and management training developed a bespoke, instructor-led training and e-learning solution for the BMW Group. The programme has been specifically designed to train BMW's selected Dealers who are selling the new MINI. It provides them with information about the car, the most effective selling techniques and how to empathise with MINI customers, a very different target market to the traditional BMW audience.

This is the first time the BMW Group, who has 1.600 MINI Dealers, in 30 countries, has incorporated e-Learning into its training requirements, to demonstrate the uniqueness of the new MINI and the planned sales campaign.

BMW has been actively involved in the development of the specialist-training programme since work began in March 2000. The MINI is a departure from BMW's usual range of cars, which Dealers are accustomed to selling to a predominantly older, male market. The training programme had to reflect this so it was essential that Dealers were aware of the differences involved in selling a fun, cult car to a younger, largely female, market.

The New MINI One and MINI Cooper was sold in the UK from July 2001, the rest of Europe in September 2001 and Japan and the US will get the MINI Cooper early in 2002.

ICL wins contract for unbundled local loop billing with BT

ICL announced 5 April 2001 a £500,000 contract win to implement the billing system to support BT's unbundling of the local loop. It is the only such billing system implementation in the UK.

This project is the most innovative implementation of the Geneva billing software to date. Geneva is usually used to charge for calls or broadcast content. In this instance - for the first time ever - the Geneva system has been tailored to bill operators for space and for equipment hire within the local exchange, but not calls. ICL has also ensured the billing system can rate events ranging from power consumption to human activity, such as engineer visits to maintain equipment, in the local exchanges.

BT is unbundling its local loops – giving access for other telecoms operators to sections of its network which link homes, businesses and local BT telephone exchanges - between January and July this year. The billing system that ICL has implemented allows BT to charge accurately other operators using BT's local exchanges after the unbundling takes place. It includes variable charges for space, equipment and services in the local exchanges.

ICL has implemented the Geneva billing system for BT in an extremely short time scale due to the date for the UK local loop unbundling being brought forward to the beginning of this year to conform with EU regulation. Normally, similar billing implementations take over 10 months to complete but ICL completed this part of the BT project in just 12 weeks.

Simon Herrington, billing development manager, BT Retail, comments, "The unbundled local loop requires a completely new and unique approach to billing. Within the industry, ICL has the reputation of being an experienced integrator of the Geneva billing system. Within BT, ICL is known for doing exactly what they say they will – i.e. keeping their promises. We have benefited greatly from their consultancy and our customers have the assurance that the bill they will be getting has been well-integrated and is correct. The Geneva system is also marketing oriented which enables us to better satisfy our customers' needs."

The implementation of the billing system is in three phases: a requirement capture and analysis; the configuration of the Geneva billing system; and finally, the development of interfaces between the new and legacy billing systems. The second phase of the project will deliver functionality to allow e-mail billing and interfaces to other BT systems. ICL has completed the first and second phases.

ICL has previously delivered Geneva implementation projects to time and to budget for BT Retail, BT Cellnet and BT Geoverse and it also provides the mediation systems across BT. In addition, ICL has been able to adapt the implementation as required by EU and Oftel rulings.

John Dixon, head of the billing solutions business at ICL adds, "BT is under a lot of pressure from Oftel, the EU Commission and the UK Government to get the unbundling right first time and quickly too. BT therefore needed a billing solutions integrator that would be one hundred percent dependable. On top of this pressure, the project is to short time scales, especially as the dates for the unbundling of the local loop were brought forward by Oftel, and this has required a lot of responsiveness from ICL."

ICL & DERA solve PKI interoperability

ICL has launched PKCommunicate (PKC), an application which will solve interoperability issues surrounding Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) systems preventing the use of digital signatures.

Developed with DERA (Defence Evaluation and Research Agency), under contract for the Ministry of Defence, and using a DERA design, PKC allows the authentication of electronic messages between companies with different PKI systems. ICL is the first company in the world to develop an application that enables companies to implement secure and interoperable e-Business today, using the Internet Engineering Taskforce (IETF) Domain Security Services (DSS) specification.

PKI enables users of an insecure public network, such as the Internet, to securely exchange data through the use of encryption and authentication based on public key technology. This provides a strong basis for privacy, and digital signature services such as the signing of electronic documents and contracts.

Public keys are associated with users by means of public key certificates, the electronic proof that a particular public key belongs to a particular individual. It is therefore important to check the validity of the certificate. Typically, this involves verification of the certificate at the desktop level, requiring that all users are PKI-enabled, which can be costly in terms of administration. However, there are many circumstances when it is not practical or even desirable to provide these desktop-to-desktop security services.

PKC is an encryption gateway that can translate between different encryption methods. This has been one of the main problems hindering secure e-Business to date. PKC sits on a boundary device at the edge of the network and automatically decrypts and re-encrypts the information being passed. Using this application, a recipient can understand a digital signature that has been issued by the sender's company, even if his company uses a completely different PKI technology. Concentrating the security effort at boundary level rather than on every desktop, will also reduce dramatically the time and cost needed to manage the certificates.

PKI is one of the best technical methods for securing e-Business. However, ensuring that PKI systems of more than one organisation can communicate can be highly problematic, as systems are typically not designed to be linked together resulting in problems such as:

1) Users access email with mechanisms such as Web browsers which re-format messages in the message store making comprehensive encryption and signature validation impossible

2) Server-based mechanisms that check message content and scan for viruses are incompatible with encryption

3) No method to pass Public-Key certificates between two organisations

4) An organisation may be sensitive about aspects of its PKI and unwilling to expose them to outside access

5) Full PKI deployment for all employees may be prohibitively expensive, unnecessary or impractical

Through resolving these issues, PKC will help eliminate security gaps or delays that might occur during a transaction between different organisations.

"Communicating securely is vitally important in an e-Business environment, where companies need to give partners, suppliers and customers access to confidential information and establish a certain level of trust," says John Alcock, principal consultant at ICL.

"It is essential that messages coming into a company can be authenticated and the identity of the sender can be proved. Many companies today have implemented expensive PKI systems only to find that they are incompatible with their partners' systems. ICL's PKC is able to form a bridge between two separate security systems, understanding and decoding both of them."

Tim Dean, senior scientist from DERA at Malvern says: "Interconnection between PKI islands will become an increasingly important issue to solve as more and more Public Key Infrastructure technology is deployed. PKC offers an interesting and novel solution to this problem. With careful deployment, this may solve many of the problems associated with secure exchange of messages between different organisations, and also for secure home working for employees who wish to send encrypted messages back to base."

ICL is in discussion with organisations in other market sectors over the application of PKC.

PKC looks at electronic messages and makes appropriate processing decisions depending on the content. The software is written to be portable using C and C++ programming languages, based on Internet standards and available for Windows NT and Sun Solaris operating systems. It requires no change to a company's email clients and works with existing email hosts such as Microsoft Exchange Server and UNIX Sendmail. The specification on which PKC is based is published as an Internet standard in the S/MIME working group of the IETF. Further details can be obtained from http://www.ietf.org/html.charters/smime-charter.html under the Domain Security Services area.

The technology ICL has implemented is the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) Domain Security Services (DSS) specification. DSS has been designed to solve a number of interoperability problems and technical limitations that arise when different security domains wish to communicate securely using the S/MIME protocol. Interoperability difficulties arise for many reasons: different organisations may use incompatible messaging technologies such as X.400 and SMTP/MIME, or they may have internal PKIs, which are inaccessible by the outside world.

Widnes Census Processing Centre

Over the next year, some 33 million census forms will be processed at ICL's new, 70,000 square foot national document processing centre in Widnes, which is equivalent in size to a Premier League football pitch. It is here that collation of census information will take place with the help of automated computer software that can actually "read" the handwriting on the forms.

Census officials from the three United Kingdom census offices and industry officials gathered at the opening ceremony. The opening marked the culmination of two years of joint preparation among Census offices and the industry team of supporters.

The actual processing started in June and will take the better part of a year, with final delivery of the data to the three Census offices in March 2002. Forms will be delivered to the Widnes Centre, owned and staffed by ICL, from secure warehouse storage and will immediately be scanned by computers. These will "read" the images captured, deciphering the handwritten information and converting it into digital format for the computer to process.

LETTERS

Contributors are asked to give a telephone number on which they can be contacted.

OUT OF SIGHT

There's a story about a computer-translating programme that translated the phrase "Out of sight, out of mind" as " Blind and stupid". This has nothing to do with my thoughts on the title, which describes how I felt recently as my wife and I sat in Casualty at the local condemned workhouse we have for a hospital. My wife had a fall and was in extreme discomfort. She was assessed on reception (through a serving hatch) and labelled "green" priority. After 19 hours on a trolley she got a bed. In the meantime a procession of drunks, limping motor- cyclists, labourers with splinters, even a handcuffed prisoner with a bad finger came and went. Could it be, one is assessed on age and those beyond sell-by date are at the end of the queue as expendable, or had we vanished from sight until the nurse said " The doctor will see you now"?

As a 74 year old, although I'm part of a potentially powerful group I don't feel we punch our weight. We have purchasing power, yet to find a shop that cares about our needs is difficult. If the shop has loud disco music and flashing lights they aren't interested in you. In fact, I think the staff goes to coffee when I walk in! The retreat of The Co-op, C & A, and the decline of M & S reflect the fact that we aren't a market. I haven't bought a suit in years, so why should M & S care about me! Most of the High Street shops don't actually see me. They look through me. It isn't that they don't see me as a customer, they don't even see me!

Whether I began to fade away gradually or woke up one morning invisible I 'm not sure, but barmen and waiters ignore my presence, but notice me as soon as I decide to leave and it's time to pay!

The only shops with staff trained to see the pensioner are chemists, where we represent the source of the bulk of their revenue.

Buses sail past me at the stop. If someone alights and I do get on, there's always school kids on the bus sprawling on the seats eating, drinking and swearing and they don't even notice me (I'm pleased to say). As a cyclist I'm unseen by most motorists. Even passengers open the near side door as I'm peddling apologetically in the gutter and are oblivious of me, unless I damage the door when it hits me!

It has its advantages. Survey people with clipboards never waylay me, they look right through me. Maybe they think I wouldn't be able to remember when I last bought anything anyway. We represent the majority of TV viewers, yet most of the output is aimed at the young, if the adverts are anything to go by.

We are invisible, because we are a nuisance. We've lived too long and are a drain on the economy. Whilst we were earning, we contributed. Now we are liable to need something out of the kitty it seems that's not how it works! We are not adequately represented in Parliament. If there was a candidate dedicated to the pensioner, our voting strength could make him or her powerful enough to settle the problems of retirement home fees, winter warmth and index-linked pensions once and for all!

I'd stand myself, but at my age the Speaker wouldn't see me!

It's as if they rely on the oldies being indifferent. There was a lecture recently on Apathy, but nobody bothered to turn up! Anyone got any thoughts? Does anyone care?

Dennis Goodwin   Romford

Full time employment after ICL

I wonder how many other "Bits & Bytes" readers are ICL pensioners in fulltime employment. In 1999 I decided to grab the opportunity to board theY2K gravy train. Buoyed up by ICL having entered me for a UNIX shell programmer's examination in which I scored well over 90% and being a M.Sc. in Computer Science, I confidently applied to become an Assembler programmer again.

I secured a permanent pensionable position in London, giving me a most acceptable salary increase and shorter hours. I did however want to apply to ICL for an immediate and enhanced pension. At a time when other firms were reported to be paying staff a loyalty bonus, I was unsure whether ICL would allow me to go. However ICL readily accepted my application. It therefore saddened me to find that the policy of paying people like me to leave did not have the desired effect

Never the less I do occasionally chuckle that I'm paid many pounds an hour to be an assembler programmer by one company whilst another provides me with £200 per week NOT to do the same.

Frank Pearson ex STE04

Eastbourne Local History Museum

I retired from ICL just over three years ago, having worked in Eastbourne for nearly 25 years. I spent most of my career with Eastbourne BC but was outsourced to ICL via CFM in the latter years. EBC were always an ICL site and over the years we had many different bits of kit. Along the way I accumulated quite a bit of information and some hardware. Some of this has been "loaned" to the Local History Museum with the intention of keeping it on display throughout the year.

I also have some old manuals that may be of interest to someone. They are namely:

I.C.T 558 Computer Programming Manual and Sub-Routine Manual

ICL 2903 RPG2 Format Reference Card (two off)

Could you perhaps publicise the museum so that any ICL pensioners visiting Eastbourne might like to pay a visit. I would be happy to provide a brief resume of what might be on show

Could you offer the manuals via Bits and Bytes

Phil Gardner 49 Beatty Road, Eastbourne Tel: 01323.639286

Good sound digits to play the piano

In my teens I was perhaps best described as an enthusiastic pianist, but university and subsequent commitments regretfully separated me from the piano. When I was given the lead handshake by ICL in 1992 I was determined to start playing again and I began to trawl the second hand piano market with little success in terms of quality at the price I could afford. However what I did discover was that a 'quiet' digital revolution was taking place in the form of digital pianos.

Most of you will be familiar with the electronic keyboard, ranging in size from a child's toy to a full professional sized keyboard. The more expensive ones came fitted with a multitude of 'voices' and 'rhythm' boxes. You could cha-cha, or rumba to a cacophony of trumpets, violins. "You name it, they had got it". Little matter that the 'trumpet', 'violin' etc. didn't sound too much like the real thing. You could nevertheless give it the 'welly' to the delights or otherwise of you immediate family and the surrounding neighbourhood. Some did come fitted with an anti-noise pollution device called headphones.

All the early keyboards designs have one thing in common, it doesn't matter how hard or how softly you caress the keys, the volume of sound emitted is the same and you cannot acquire the strength and sensitivity of touch needed to play a piano well. Some come fitted with a foot controlled 'swell' pedal to regulate the overall volume but you can't at one and the same instant or in quick succession play soft and loud notes as you can on the traditional acoustic pianoforte. These electronic keyboards, often in the guise of an electronic organ, have one big advantage over the acoustic piano in that a relative beginner, with the 'electronic' assistance provided, can have fun and produce quite acceptable music using only one or two fingers. You don't have to practise your scales for hours on end, so it does encourage people to take up music, which can't be bad.

In an attempt to appease the 'pianists' amongst us, the manufacturers created a pianoforte effect by developing a 'velocity' sensitive keyboard. The harder you strike the key the louder it sounds, but this type of keyboard still doesn't feel and in most cases sound like a 'real' piano. The next innovation was the weighted velocity sensitive key, which gives some physical resistance when the key is struck but it still doesn't have that real feel. At long last, the very latest digital pianos have that true piano feel and sound. The feel is created by an internal system of mechanical levers which physically simulates the mechanical linkages of an acoustic piano and the sound is generated using digital sampling techniques. Roland use the Steinway grand as their sound model, Yamaha sound is based on their own grand piano. We now have digital pianos which look, sound and feel like a quality traditional acoustic piano, with una corda (soft), sostenuto and sustain (loud) pedals. The dumb silent keyboard is a thing of the past, the digital piano with its headphone facility enables 'silent' practice at any hour of the day or night, which is good news for those of us who like myself have limited space and aspire to become pianists without creating yet another dysfunctional family. Some digital pianos have twin headphone sockets so that you can also practice duets in 'silent' mode or your teacher can listen in; a boon if any young offspring is learning to play. You can also record yourself and

check on how you are doing, or even better play a duet with yourself. If you wish to accompany a singer, you can control the overall volume to suit the occasion and further you can let the piano do the hard work of transposing to the singer's register. Like most things, the more you pay the more 'bells and whistles' you can have, with a rhythm box for instance you can create a jazz ensemble or with the disk facility you can play with the London Philharmonic Orchestra.

For the kind of realism that is required by the expert player, the latest digital models have sympathetic resonance, which simulates acoustic coupling between strings, which are free to vibrate, i.e. when the key is pressed. Some are also fitted with a 'graduated' sustain (loud) pedal which allows the pianist to control the degree of damping. Yamaha are now making acoustic pianos, both upright and grand, which at the flick of a switch convert to a digital piano enabling 'silent' practice; at a price of course.

Just over a year ago in August 1999 I bought a Roland digital piano. The modern digital piano gives you a high quality sound and feel at a much lower price than an equivalent acoustic piano and what's more it doesn't weigh a ton, it can readily be moved or dismantled, nor do you need to have it tuned twice a year.

I am fortunate in that my local college runs a weekly group piano class at a very reasonable price where I meet and play amongst similar misguided souls. I find that having lessons gives direction and discipline to the learning process and there is nothing like playing in front of an audience to ensure that you practise your homework. None of the re-learning process has been easy, but for me the hardest bit has been trying to recapture the necessary dexterity.
charles@leveson.freeserve.co.uk

PUNCHED CARDS ARE NOT DEAD

It was an odd enquiry, but intriguing: did the Computer Conservation Society know of any place where some punched cards could be reproduced? There were only two possible answers. The first, truthful but boring, was "No". The other was a rapid fire of return questions: Who wants to know? How many cards? 80-column, or 40-column? How urgent? A one-off requirement, or a regular job? Is there any money in it? You can easily invent lots of others. The "who" was easy - He was an academic in Edinburgh. And one other answer was equally obvious - No, he didn't have any money.

Twenty years ago a chap called Rex Sawyer wrote a book called "Pollen Identification for Bee Keepers", which was edited and published by a Dr R.S. Pickard of University College, Cardiff. It was based on the argument that you can identify grains of pollen, and hence deduce what the bees have been feeding on, if you observe such characteristics of a pollen grain as Size, Shape, Colour, Aperture numbers, Aperture types, Surface, Exine (whatever that is), and Other features. The book was very well illustrated, with photos and tables, and told you how to judge actual pollen examples against the tables. Each identified pollen was given a unique number. Then, to make the process almost infallible, the book was accompanied by a pack of fifty punched cards. Each card was printed with twenty columns of numbers, from 1 to 200, allowing the recording of the details of up to 200 types of pollen (though only 150 are needed to identify all the pollens found in British honey). Each card

represented one value of one of the identifying characteristics - for example, there was one card for "Size - Very Small" - and was punched with holes alongside all the numbers of the pollens which share that characteristic. Thus if you want to identify a pollen which is Very Small, Yellow, and Triangular, you pick up the relevant Size, Colour and Shape cards, hold them up to the light, and you can see that it's either pollen number 73 or pollen number 94. Usually three cards are sufficient. Occasionally, as in this example, a fourth characteristic is used to find a unique identification.

The Moir Library in Edinburgh is believed to have the most comprehensive collection of books about bee keeping anywhere in the world. It therefore had four copies of the Sawyer/Pickard book, but all the accompanying punched card packs had gone missing. The enquirer had one master pack, which he was not prepared to entrust to the post, but he did send me Xerox copies of each card against a black background.

Therefore four replacement packs, and two spares; fifty cards per pack; 300 total. Not worth refurbishing a reproducer for that lot, even if one could be found. So out with the old hand punch, and grudgingly extract some of the blank cards from one's lifetime supply of bookmarks, lecture notes, and shopping lists.

The enquirer thought he would be able to get the pollen numbers printed onto the cards by some friend in Edinburgh, so the punching was done onto 'blank' cards with the printed side down. Just to make it more fun, the punching only occurred in every third column, starting at column 9 and continuing to column 48. And what we know as positions 0 to 9 were printed 1 to 10 on the master cards. And there could be multiple punches - up to ten, in fact - in the same column, so hold one key down until you've punched the next, which was not what we were taught in UAKP training in 1958.

Verifying was easy: lay the newly punched card on top of the Xerox master. If all the holes filled with black, all was well, because clearly the new holes all corresponded to holes in the master card. Any discrepancy - ditch the card and punch another. I'm not saying how many days it took, or how many cards were mis-punched in the process. But I do hope he doesn't extend the system to the pollens found in foreign honeys.
Hamish Carmichael Tolworth

ICL Pensions

The letters that you published regarding ICL pensions have some good points. However, pensions in payment are a complex mix of factors and are a reflection of years of service and contribution, final year qualifying remuneration and the amount of cash paid in or taken out at the time of retirement. Some pensioners took early retirement, forfeiting employment and contribution years. Some took the maximum cash allowable at retirement. It would be unfair to simply top up small pensions at the expense of long serving and prudent pensioners and contributing fund members. However, there is a good case for occasional special reviews, perhaps every five years, to provide a percentage boost on a sliding age scale, to compensate for long-term deflation. For most current pensioners, if the RPI stays at 3% or less, we cannot moan too much, although it would be nice to have even a partial link to growth in salaries. If the

RPI is above 3%, then 3% RPI capped pensions in payment deflate in real terms, eg. RPI at 5% for five years, pensions up by 16% and cost of living up by 28%.

I still feel very strongly about the points that I made four years ago to Fiona Colquhoun. We are lucky to have a benevolent and caring Company behind our pension fund, but the fund should be reasonably self-sufficient, whatever happens to ICL. Any final salary fund surpluses declared at actuarial evaluations should be apportioned equitably between Company contributions, contributing fund members, pensioners in payment and particularly reserves. Who knows how the fund will actually perform over the next five years or what further tax and revenue restrictions the future may bring. No one wants sudden hikes in contributions, especially the Company in times of financial difficulty. Presumably all new money-purchase members will have their own, individual pension funds.

Alan Wray Watford

Reunions

Copthall House Newcastle Staffs
Bob Green 01782 657763
East Grinstead 81 Club
Gordon Franklin *01342 328479*
East Midlands UB40s
Brian Skeldon *0115 9725119*
ICL Central London Group
The next get together will be on Wednesday 16 January 2002 at a **New Venue: The Flying Horse** at **52 Wilson Street**, from 12 noon. The pub is east of Finsbury Square. Wilson Street is a southern continuation of Paul Street. The reason for the change is that the Fox is under new management and it is impossible to get any food for less than £4.50. The old boys' pensions are not that good!
John Doo *01245 259862*
ICL Double Majority Club
Roy Newbury *01763 852241*
Leo Computers Society
Geoff Parry *01628 770129*
Letchworth Group
Dennis Evans *01462 811273*
Liverpool Engineers
George Lynn *01744 29984*
Oxford Region
Ken Jones 25 Bridge End, Dorchester on Thames Wallingford, Oxon. OX10 7JR email gwynken@btinternet.com
Punch Card & Stevenage Labs Reunion Group
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STE04 Office and Retail Systems
Derek Tourell *020 8386 9465*
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Olaf Chedzoy *01278 741 269*
West Gorton Reunion
Eric W Watts *01457 875080*
Watford-Harrow- Feltham Group
Mike Ray *020 8635 5010*
West Branch Engineers
Eric Reynolds *01452 712047*
West Kent Engineers
Ron Harding 01732 *761076*
The Walthamstow Mob

Derek Windsor *01992 522761*

OBITUARIES
ICL/Nortel Fund
Taken from the spring and summer 2001 editions of the Nortel "Newslink"

Ashton	Hankinson	Richard	04/04/01	86
Birmingh'm	Douglas	Stanley V	19/01/01	78
Bracknell	Milledge	Derek	26/07/00	70
	Scammerton	James E	01/04/01	72
	Webster	David K	10/11/00	59
Bristol	Williams	Reginald	06/12/00	72
Croydon	Loseby	Sidney H	04/12/00	81
	Marshall	Ella J	08/12/00	85
	Young	Alexander	07/04/01	94
Dukinfield	Marr	Mona	11/01/01	77
Feltham	Dooley	Dennis	03/02/01	69
	Peachey	Ernest R	04/01/01	
Glasgow	Mckee	William M	29/12/00	73
Kent	Chapman	Dan	11/04/01	71
	Ellard	Edward J	02/03/01	92
	Taylor	R	02/03/01	70
Hitchin	Chalkley	Frederick	18/01/01	81
Kidsgrove	Capey	Kenneth W	29/03/01	73
	Degg	Anthony J	29/04/01	61
	Gerrard	Thomas H	17/01/01	77
	Hough	Glynn W	12/02/01	52
	Humphries	Arthur	10/05/01	73
	Kirkham	Charles E	01/11/00	74
	Lambe	Ronald E	12/02/01	73
	Marvin	Maurice A	15/04/01	68
	Tenniswood	Robert P	04/03/01	75
	Wright	M	27/02/01	80
Letchworth	Allen	David L.G	21/04/01	81
	Bottomley	Ronald J	07/04/01	85
	Briars	Jeffrey G	23/04/01	90
	Browne	James H E	20/02/01	85
	Buckland	Hilda F	28/03/01	81
	Cole	Nesse A	14/02/01	72
	Davey	William F	09/04/01	86
	Denton	Leslie C	08/12/00	77
	Dickson	Arthur	25/01/01	80
	Goodman	Eric J	23/10/00	79
	Kentish	John W	14/12/00	78
	Ladbrooke	Oswald	14/02/01	89
	Lonsdale	Keith	01/12/00	77
	Massey	Ernest F	27/01/01	86
	Pain	John W	22/03/01	90
	Phillimore	John R	24/12/01	80
	Pikesley	Cyril A	07/12/00	78
	Skelton	Samuel	13/04/01	83
LON15	Ross	William H	07/02/01	85
Manchester	Griggs	Brian G	24/04/00	71
	Carey	Raymond	15/03/01	76
Newcastle	Fowell	Alfred	23/03/01	76
	Sanderson	Irene A	12/04/01	74
Norwich	Britt	Gerald P	14/09/00	74
	Cooper	Francis A	04/12/00	78
	Wright	A T	22/08/00	80
Portsmouth	Manning	Percy C	16/02/01	79
Preston	Wadsworth	Herbert	01/05/01	69
Putney	Matin	W	12/01/01	71
	Reffell	Lesley C	24/03/01	68
	Robinson	Leslie W	07/03/01	77
Sheffield	Hicks	Arthur	08/03/01	90
Slough	Griffith	William J	09/03/01	75
S'hampton	Cairney	Hugh	10/11/00	59

	Chapman	Stanley	27/03/01	87
	Mason	Harold S R	21/03/01	92
	Singh	A	20/08/00	75
	Thorne	George R	27/04/01	81
Stevenage	Baker	Ernest G	05/12/00	89
	Holt	Arthur D	07/01/01	76
	Horne	Anthony J	27/12/00	86
	Noble	Victor A	04/09/00	87
	Puxley	Thomas H	02/02/01	87
W.Gorton	Baylis	Henry P	06/05/01	76
	Cassidy	Edward	02/12/00	86
	Hill	Peter W	19/10/00	83
	Goddard	Harry	26/04/00	80
	Pinches	William R	12/03/01	72
	Sigley	Peter J	02/03/01	67

ICL Fund

BIR03	Robinson	Ian Bray	24/06/01	61
ELS01	Shackels	Reginald	20/05/01	54
FCY02	Graham	Joseph	04/03/01	64
FEL01	Adams	Terence A	20/06/01	62
	Barwick	Graham J	20/03/01	64
HOM99	Setchfield	Frederick	01/06/01	67
KID01	Berry	Kathleen	17/07/01	60
	Mills	David B	16/03/01	64
	White*	Danny M	15/07/01	57
MAN01	Hendry	John	01/07/01	67
	Miller	Edward	18/03/01	69
MAN05	Houseman	Godfrey R	06/04/01	70
SLH06	Broughtflower	Raymond	07/06/01	62

*Not a member of the ICL Pension Fund

ICL Used Equipment

UES have a range of refurbished PC equipment available to ex-ICL staff and their families. All items are cleaned and tested, and are despatched to any UK destination by courier. A 2-month guarantee is given,

Example

P166 base unit with 32Mb RAM, 2Gb HDD, CD-ROM drive plus 15" SVGA monitor keyboard and mouse. £180.00 inc. VAT and delivery.

Unfortunately we do not have any software licenses available to sell. What we tend to do is pre-install either Windows 95 or 98, then back it off to the point where a valid license number is required

This should mean that when the user switches on for the first time they are presented with a screen asking for their name, then the license number.

My suggestion to a first timer would be to purchase a copy of Windows from either a local computer shop or a computer fair; prices should be around £25 for W95 and £40 for W98.

For full details of currently available items please contact;

Steve Febery-Watts 01438 313361 ext. 2546.

B&B Email Directory

A reminder, especially to new pensioners, that Tony Riley maintains a directory of email addresses for those pensioners who want their details published.

His email address is **tonyriley@europe.com**

Friend of ICL?

ICL have created a website called http://www.friendsoficl.org.uk for all those ICL'ers and ex-ICL'ers who have enjoyed each others company and want to stay in touch - both for business and social reasons. Please visit the site and decide if you want to be part of this community. I hope to add items of general interest over time and you can use the site to do the same. I will be emailing more of my contacts but please, if you like this idea, pass on the site address to anyone you know who would be interested in joining. Please let me know what you think and any ideas and suggestions you have.

Sheila Turl Programme Director ICL Observatory House, Windsor Road, Slough, SL1 2EY Sheila.Turl@icl.com

B&B Distribution

The circulation list for B&B is obtained from two sources. The ICL Pensions Dept is responsible for keeping the addresses of the three thousand plus ICL Fund pensioners. Those Nortel Pensioners who have expressed a desire to have B&B, (now approaching 500), are on a database that I maintain. If they change their address they need to inform me, (as well as Nortel). Nortel do not know who of their pensioners receive Bits & Bytes.

ICL pensioners only need to inform ICL Beaumont at Old Windsor.

Adrian Turner Editor B&B

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NEXT ISSUE

Copy for the Spring 2002 issue must be submitted by 1 March 2002 but would be appreciated earlier.