

Bits & Bytes

No 1

At Last...

After much cajoling (and support from David Palk of ICL Sorbus) ICL have agreed to fund a newsletter, on the understanding that the pensioners themselves produce it.

The new ICL pensioners, including myself, have had no newsletter since the new fund was established. Now that it has finally got the go ahead, it is up to us, the pensioners, to make it a success.

The response to Mike Clare's letter, (**43 people out of 1500 - less than 3%**), suggests that maybe I am one of a very few ex-ICL employees who wants to have news of the company and keep in contact with old friends.

I am now responsible for the Punched Card Reunion Group which was set up by Frank Tilley and John Bennett about 7 years ago. A questionnaire sent to 160 members recently elicited over 90 replies, so I know that I am not alone in wanting to maintain contact with old colleagues.

In my 35 years with the company, in Field Engineering, Customer Service, Dataskil, GIS/CIS, and Local Government I met hundreds of people, many of whom I would like to make contact with again. I know that there are many informal reunions taking place that others would like to attend if only they knew about them. If you want to meet more of your old friends and colleagues give me details of where you meet and who is the contact so that we can publish the information in the REUNION section of the newsletter.

For this newsletter to continue and flourish it requires input from **You**. If you say that you will leave it to somebody else to contribute, but not me, we won't have anything to publish and *Bits & Bytes* will die.

Technical queries or articles, letters, reminiscences from the past, amusing tales, embarrassing moments, anything that you think would interest other pensioners are required for the next edition. Send them to me.

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MESSAGE FROM ICL GROUP PENSIONS MANAGER

May I say how pleased I am that we now have a "newsletter" especially for those ex-ICL employees who have retired from the "new" ICL Group Pension Plan.

As you know ex-ICL employees who retired prior to August 1991 did not transfer to the new ICL plan. Instead they remained pensioners of the Northern Telecom (previously STC) Plan and they have as a consequence continued to regularly receive copies of "*Diary*", a periodical that helps keep old colleagues in touch with one another as well as with the company.

Although all ex-ICL employees who have taken a pension since August 1991 have received regular six monthly issues of "*Pensions Insight*" there has not been a specific newsletter to cover the particular interests of pensioners

There are now nearly 1500 pensioners in the new ICL Plan and I am therefore delighted that this newsletter has been established to fill the gap.

I hope that you will find this and future issues of this newsletter of interest and I would encourage you to put pen to paper and submit contributions to future issues to Adrian Turner.

With best wishes

Bob Coe

NEWSLETTER NAME

This first edition of the ICL Pensioner' Newsletter is titled "**Bits & Bytes**" in recognition of the basic data we oldies used to work with.

It has been suggested that as it will be distributed with the "**Pensions Insight**" maybe it should be renamed "**Hindsight**"!

Do any of you out there have any views on the present title and maybe suggest something even more appropriate?

Internet

How about a simple introduction to Internet by someone who is on-line?. There are many people who are fed up with all the hype about *surfing* and *cyberspace* who would appreciate an article on how useful it is to be connected.

REUNIONS

Punched Card Reunion Group

Meets every two years in N.Herts. The next meeting is due in October 1996. It is attended by individuals who designed, built, taught and supported Hollerith and Powers Samas equipment, but there are also people who worked on EMI and ICT card equipment. The database is maintained by Adrian Turner 01491 872012.

ICL Central London Group

Meets every six months at The Fox on the corner of Epworth Street and Paul Street. The next meeting is on Weds 17 January 1996 at 12:00. The contact is John Doo 01245 259862

West Branch Engineers

Regular monthly meetings are held at lunchtime usually at the Prince of Wales on the A38 at Berkeley. Eric Reynolds 01452 712047 can confirm date and time.

East Grinstead 81 Club

Was formed in 1981 by people who left the company in that year who worked in Kent and Sussex, Bert Gill 01903 763370 organises meetings and annual dinners.

West Kent Engineers

Meetings are held at The Swan West Peckham on the first Thursday of every month at 20:00. Ron Harding 01732 761076 can give directions on how to get there.

East Midlands UB40s

Meet on a regular basis on the first Thursday of each month in a local hostelry in Derby. Brian Skeldon on 0115 9727835 will tell you where.

Oxford Region

Albert Brook 01235 531267 organises regular get togethers for engineers who used to work in Oxford, Bucks and Berks.

Technical Query

Having worked on ICT 1500 (RCA 301) systems in the mid 60s I would like to know how modern design and technology achieves comparable data storage space on the hard disc in my PC as on the Bryant Disk File with six foot diameter disks. Is there a disc specialist out there who can tell me?

ICL and Bull team up on spares

ICL and Bull Information Systems are hoping to save money by pooling their logistics and storage of spare parts in the UK and France.

Under the three year agreement, ICL Sorbus, the maintenance arm of ICL, will be able to use the facilities of Group Bull in France. In return, Bull will get the same facilities from ICL in the UK. The companies say they will be able to cut distribution costs by 25 per cent. The agreement covers 40 locations in the UK and 20 in France.

ICL ORGANISATION

Three Streams

A re-organisation at the start of 1995 has reduced the number of trading streams to three- Industry Systems, Technology and Services.

Within these three streams are ten distinct businesses each of which has clear business, rather than geographic, boundaries.

Industry Systems

Retail
Financial Services
Enterprises
Industry Systems Europe

Technology

Volume Products
High Performance Systems
D2D
Technology plc

Services

Multi-Vendor Services
Outsourcing

Can pensioners hazard a guess where their old department is now located?

Majority Club

It's good news that there are still 2878 people serving in ICL companies who have qualified to join the Majority Club.

Three more people have been made members of the Double Majority Club:

Pat Morrish *Camelot*
Dennis Large *Workplace Technologies*
Ted Hewson *ICL Sorbus*

How many more will be expected to achieve 42 years service?

Video

Some time ago an interesting video was made, in which Frank Tilley expounds the workings of a wide range of early punched card machines, demonstrating the ones which until relatively recently were lovingly preserved in the company museum in Stevenage. Copies of this video are still available - or additional copies can be made available.

If you are interested, please contact

John Bennett
14 Chinnor Close
Bedford
MK41 9TQ
Tel: 01234 348272

ICL Sorbus support Windows 95

Microsoft have contracted five companies to handle support calls for Windows 95 including ICL Sorbus who have opened a £1m Microsoft Service Centre at Footscray in Kent. ICL Sorbus hope that users will be attracted to their value added support service after the free 90 day period has expired.. Technical queries, migration consultancy, and a multi-vendor service, ie. equipment maintenance and networking, are covered.

LETTERS

These are excerpts from 43 letters received to date.

"It seemed strange to me that a company as large as ICL should have no means of contact from a social and information aspect with former employees and their dependants and I would welcome any moves to improve the situation"

Mrs. Janet Black

"I must say, and you will probably agree, that ICL has failed in keeping in touch with us. Gone and forgotten must be their keywords"

Dave Sedgely

"I do think that it is a shame that there is no current forum for old acquaintances to keep in touch with one another and feel that a newsletter, particularly if it contains offers of discounted commodities/services is the ideal way of achieving this."

Ken Abram

"My initial thoughts are that it might be an idea to pool available resource on a regional basis, i.e. South Wales area, although I have no idea at the moment how many ICL retired personnel are in my immediate area"

David R. Harries

"One thing I would like is the opportunity to make contact with ex-Ferranti people now that the old Company has gone forever"

Brian Parker

"I think that it is a great idea. Since I retired at Christmas in 1991, I have been very disappointed over the infrequent communication from the company and the complete absence of any news about pensioners. I have considered the idea of starting something myself"

Harry Bagwell

"I would support the idea and would be happy to put together the odd recollection or two from a 39 year history with ICL and its constituent parts, from time to time"

John Scarlett

"I am pleased that there is an initiative to have a pensioners' newsletter. I have missed contact with the company with which I spent most of my working life and the many friends and acquaintances built up during that period"

Harry Hainsworth

"Certainly at the present time I have very little idea at all about what is happening with ICL. Occasionally there might be something in the press but that is rare. So Company news would be welcome with possibly a few names of key people"

David Skailles

"For my part, for instance, I would be interested to find out if there are any other ICL pensioners living near me in Spain"

Ray Griffiths

"After some 40 years in the Company the day one leaves all communication ceases.....a couple of A4 sheets, without the photographs, would be appreciated"

Stan Willis

"I have commented to Hilda on many occasions at the total lack of any communication from ICL, other than to advise of one's pension review percentage, once a year. Maybe we could send an account of our retirement escapades occasionally for the newsletter"

John Fielding

"Many of our ex-colleagues are Northern Telecom pensioners. Some items in their newsletter (I'm not sure of its name) would be of interest to ICL pensioners. Obviously the reverse would be true"

Ray Dowson

"Could this be extended to provide a link up with the Northern Telecom pensioners newsletter since a large number of retired personnel were left behind when the new ICL Pension Fund was set up in 1991"

Jim Watson

"I think a Pensioners' newsletter is a great idea, but the suggestion is that ICL want all the material to be prepared by us, whereas practically, I believe that much of the most interesting input for such a newsletter must come from ICL. Certainly, the sort of thing I most want to see is news about the Company; new contracts, movements of people, introduction of new products, who has recently left, joined or retired etc."

Alec Barclay

Hong Kong airport deal goes to ICL

ICL Enterprises has clinched a contract worth £10m to supply an integrated voice and data communications infrastructure for the new Chek Lap Kok airport being built in Hong Kong.

The deal will involve laying 800 km of fibre optic and copper cable to link passenger terminals, airline offices, the control tower and other airline service providers. The network will carry all the vital information needed by passenger and staff at the airport.

Design and installation work will be undertaken by ICL subsidiary Workplace Technologies. The company will install fibre optic and category 5 structured copper cable in building and underground ducts. Cables will also be installed to deliver cable TV programmes to waiting passengers.

Work has started on the design phase and installation will begin in June 1996, and is due for completion by early 1997.

ICL IT and Telecommunications

All ICL Businesses will use the following application standards by 1st January 1996.

Email :- OfficePower V. 6/7 or TeamWare
Office V3.0/3.1

Basic Office Applications :- Officepower Applications or Microsoft Office V. 4.2

Graphics :- Harvard Graphics or Powerpoint, with Harvard Graphics migrating to Powerpoint.

OBITUARIES

ICL Pensioners who were in the Northern Telecom Pension Plan

Taken from the summer edition of the Northern Telecom Diary.

Baric	Higham	Charles R. 31 17 Feb.95
BIR	Hay	Thomas 75 14 Mar.95
	Ranyell	John Deryck 72..27 Apr.95

BRA	Cook	Frank Leonard 86 9.Jan.95
	Stow	Edward W. 64 17 Jan.95
CRO	Mathews	Emily E. 82 10 Apr.95
FEL01	Chatfield	Leslie R. 72 2 Apr. 95
HAR	Lucking	James R. 58 11 Nov.94
HIT	Crawley	Betty F. 82 19 Jan.95
HQ	Stowe	Josephine M. 78 15 Dec.94
KID	Alcock	Alfred 80 22 Nov.94
	Clegg	Herbert 74 26 Feb.95
	Gilmore	Harry 76 26 Mar.95
	Kelsall	Percy 77..23 Mar.95
LEI	Gameson	Harry W. 81 21 Mar.95
LET	Clarke	William L 72 3 Feb.95
	Harrison	John Angus 86 2 Jan.95
	Verrier	Reginald 72 4 Apr.95
	Waterman	Dorothy M 66 25 Dec.94
LET04	Barker	Frederick 75 21 Feb.95
	Brooks	Julia Ann 69 16 Feb. 95
LET05	Aylott	Peter Walter 73 15 Apr. 95
	Bray	Lesley George 71 13 Apr. 95
	Farley	Edgar Albert 72 11 Mar. 95
	Howard	Stanley James 67 9 May 95
LON29	Colton	James C. 81 26 Jan. 95
LON30	Crocker	Stanley C 73 13 Mar. 95
	Fuller	Kenneth W. 55 9.Mar. 95
LUT	Brazier	Leslie B 76 26 Feb. 95
MAN05	Ackerman	David John 66 6 Jan. 95
	Chippendale	Harold 93 21 Feb.95
	Selwood	John William 56 3 Mar.95
MAN12	Bowler	Sydney 70 10 Jan.95
	Hill	Herbert Julius 60 18 Feb.95
NEW01	Warman	Eric Leonard 13 Apr.95
	Putney Sewell	Francis W J 81 6 Dec. 94
REA06	Kenworthy	David H. 65 30 Jan.95
SE Reg.	Howse	Maurice 75 12 Mar.95
Southport	Gerrard	John Lord 87 17 Apr.95
WAK	Fletcher	Derek Ernest 30 6 Mar.95
Winsford	Staples	Gordon Francis 81 8 Jan 95
	Vickers	Joseph Henry 73 31 Jan 95
	Watson	Clara Mary 76 11 Feb.95
WIN01	Cheetham	John 63 30 Mar.95
Wolverhampton	Taylor	Clifford W. 83 11 Dec. 94
ICL (Unidentified Locations)		
	Burnell	Alfred F. 76 7 Nov.94
	Dixon	Thomas S. 74 3 Jan.95
	Griffin	Thomas Day 74 30 Jan.95
	Hart	Charles John 80 1 Jan.95
	Jeffreys	John Lewis 70 24 Nov.94
	Kerford	Edmond 64 28 Jan.95
	King	Peter Henry 77 28 Apr.95
	Latham	George Eric 83 31 Mar.95
	Leg	George Herbert 85 4 Mar.95
	Lunt	Ida 79 3 Feb.95
	McAulay	Francis 70 9 Mar.95
	McCann	Joseph 73 9 Feb.95
	Meredith	George V. 87 17 Jan.95
	Mortby	William C.G. 71 16 Mar.95
	Mould	Margaret D. 71 21 Mar.95
	Mountjoy	Reginald W.72 24Dec.94
	Murphy	Patrick J. 72 3.Feb.95

Packer	John Marshall 85 1 Mar.95
Rowe	Robert G. 72 15 Mar.95
Shepherd	Samuel I. 73 21 Feb.95
Thwaite	Alan 69 10 Apr.95
Watson	Oliver 71 2 Feb.95

ICL Pensioners who have died since the start of the ICL Fund

BIR03	Wilkins	Keith A. 53 7.Sept.93
BIR04	Callaghan	Yvonne 27 29 May.95
BRA01	Burge	Mr. C.M. 63 12 Apr.94
BRA05	Moore	Peter 55 25 Mar 95
BRS06	Stores	Alan 56 29 Aug.95
FCY02	Wilson	Stanley 57 2 May 93
FEL01	O'Brian	Edward P. 62 28 Mar.95
HOM99	Lewin	George 60 11 Mar.92
	Laahs	Ralph 61 24 Nov.92
KID01	Humphries	Clement 60 5 May 92
	Elsby	John 60 16 Sep.93
	Birchall	Barbara 56 30 Jan.94
LON15	Manning	Robert 54 25 Jun. 94
MAN01	Thompson	Marion 55 29 Dec. 91
	Shearsmith	Kenneth 63 10 Apr. 93
MAN12	Rose	Patricia M. 57 17 Apr.95
MDN04	Hartley	Harold 60 16 Dec.94
NEW05	Little	Robert I. 57 15 Jan.95
SIN07	Davies	Trevor 58 20 Aug. 95
STE04	Izzard	Alan 56 19 Feb.93
STE09	Robson	Ken 49 1 Jan.93
STE10	Sutton	John 66 31 Jan. 94
	Asquith	Thomas J 61 28 Mar.94
WAK01	Speakes	Wendy 51 15 Mar. 94
WIN01	Walton	Alan 57 12 Jan.94
WSR01	Schmidt	Kathleen A. 40 15 Jun. 95

NEXT ISSUE

In the next issue we hope to bring you more details of the Computer Conservation Society. This began as a collaboration between the British Computer Society and the Science Museum in South Kensington. Its first project was to restore an early Ferranti machine in the Museum to working order. In May 95 they held a day long seminar on the early days of LEO. There ought to be a similar event on the origins of the 1900. Can you Help?

Editorial Committee

Hamish Carmichael
Jack Kane
Adrian Turner
Bill Williams

COPY FOR THE NEXT ISSUE MUST BE SUBMITTED BY 29 FEBRUARY 1996