Bits & Bytes

Editorial

Following my request for your views on obituaries I received many letters and emails. I have extracted the salient points from most and published them in this edition. I think that the Editor will have to decide on the length of each obituary and whether or not there is space to include them. Those who have indicated that they do not want detailed obits will have to send me stories so that there is no space left!

I make no apology for publishing the Appreciation of Mick McCrea in this edition. For me it highlights the changes that have occurred in the way that modern business is conducted compared with when I joined the Tab.

I have been talking to a number of you and the subject of B&B content has come up on more than one occasion. I will reiterate the point I made in early editions that Bits & Bytes will be what **YOU** make it. It has been said that it has been taken over by ex-engineers and that most stories are of British Tab/ICT. "Where are the English Electric stories?" I'm not receiving many non-engineering stories and I haven't received a single item from ex-EE people. Please, if you want B&B to appeal to all pensioners, send me **YOUR** items that will interest your old colleagues. I have also heard that there is an English Electric Reunion. Do you want to keep it secret?! I have not been given a contact name/telephone number, which would enable people who have lost contact, to meet old friends

ICL's decision to give access to their Internet Service *iclway* to all employees and ICL pensioners does not appear to have been taken up by many pensioners.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Tony Riley who has taken over the Pensioners' email directory. If you want to be known to your ex-colleagues send an email to **tony.riley@lineone.net**.

Adrian Turner
5, Nun's Acre,
Goring-on-Thames
Reading
RG8 9BE   01491 872012
email: adrian.turner5@virgin.net

ICL NEWS

ICL gains Compaq System Service Provider accreditation

ICL has been awarded System Service Provider (SSP) accreditation by Compaq, the world's largest computer manufacturer, after proving its ability to service customers' mission critical needs. SSP is the highest level of accreditation available from Compaq and is reserved for those partners who have a proven track record in supporting the ever-increasing demands of business critical, distributed enterprise systems.

In achieving this accreditation, ICL has invested heavily in the number of Compaq Accredited System Engineers (ASE's) and also in the specific service delivery processes to ensure Compaq's UK customers receive consistently high levels of service.

Jim Lynch, Compaq Customer Services, commented: "Compaq Customer Services are delighted to have ICL as a new System Service Provider delivering high quality services to Compaq's customers. We look forward to working with ICL in the future to jointly develop and deliver innovative service offerings in the UK marketplace.

"Compaq's System Service Provider status requires partners to invest heavily in areas such as training and infrastructure and is seen in the marketplace as a strong commitment to quality and customer care."

David Palk, managing director of ICL's Operational Services division, explains: "Compaq's SSP accreditation recognises ICL's ability to deliver consistent, quality service to Compaq's customers, ensuring their mission critical systems continually operate at an optimum level. It also underlines ICL's commitment to a successful partnership with Compaq to deliver a certain standard of support through a predetermined network."

SSP provides ICL with access to Compaq's world-wide network of Technical Support Centres located in Europe, the Far East and USA, which will improve the delivery of high-end server support and ensures a streamlined one-stop solution. In gaining this accreditation, ICL now joins an elite group of preferred UK service providers

ICL i500 sold to Peerlogic

It was announced on 15 April 199 that ICL's i500 directory business, including all personnel and products, has been acquired by PeerLogic Ltd, a UK subsidiary of PeerLogic Inc.

PeerLogic is currently progressing a strategy to address middleware market requirements. The acquisition of i500 follows the exclusive marketing agreement established last year by PeerLogic for ICL's DAIS product set.

ICL will continue to deploy i500 internally and to sell i500 products to customers, both through ICL's

solution businesses and as part of systems integration projects where appropriate.

With ICL's continued evolution into a global IT services company, i500 customers will now see the product actively developed, marketed and supported by an organisation dedicated to the middleware market segment.

The i500 management team and personnel are supportive of this transfer and look forward to continued association with ICL in the future.

ICL Good News

ICL Provides Support for Comic Relief

The television linked charity appeal, Comic Relief, chose ICL to design and implement an electronic payment system that allows people to make online donations to Comic Relief. By visiting www.rednoseday.beeb.com people online from anywhere in the world can make donations in 6 major currencies.

This is the first time an online charity has ever accepted multiple currency donations on its website. Donations can be made in UK pounds sterling, Irish punts, US, Canadian and Australian dollars, and the Euro, using a credit/debit card.

Giving to Comic Relief has never been so simple. People can donate online in their local currency without incurring exchange rate charges, safe in the knowledge that ICL's secure technology will protect their bank account details. Visiting the website is a quick, easy and fun way of giving to Comic Relief.

ICL installed the system using a combination of Microsoft, Sun, and Unix technology. To ensure privacy of information, all details are stored in an encrypted format and all transactions are conducted using a secure server.

Comic Relief exists to help less fortunate individuals in the UK and Africa fulfil their dreams and maximise their potential. Now in its 13th year, it is using the Internet to extend the reach of its annual appeal to a global audience.

The project extends the service that ICL provides to www.beeb.com. ICL already hosts the BBC's commercial website, www.beeb.com, as part of a joint venture between ICL and BBC Worldwide.

Arsenal Internet

ICL, and VIP Ltd, are providing Internet services to enable Arsenal to be the first football club to offer free Internet access and e-mail services to its fans under its own brand. Bury football club is also offering own-branded Internet access and e-mail services to its fans at favourable rates.

Arsenal becomes the UK's first football club to offer fans free Internet access. Both clubs benefit from the promotional, advertising and sales opportunities available as users access the Internet from their own branded browser and home page.

ICL will provide a total Internet package for the football clubs' service, including hardware, software, Web hosting facilities, maintenance and Internet connectivity.

Daniel Flesch of Arsenal's commercial department, said: "Our free Internet site is an attractive proposition for our fans, and is enabling them to keep in touch with the club, and with each other, around the world. Arsenal is recognised as a major global brand, and our Web service is the latest way of extending that brand to the widest possible audience."

Derek Sayers, managing director of ICL's Electronic Business Services unit, added: "Arsenal and Bury are further examples of companies benefiting from own-branded Internet services. Football supporters are renowned for loyalty to their clubs. The Internet is the ideal vehicle for fans to gain information about their club, whilst supporting them commercially."

In addition to football clubs, over thirty other organisations have signed agreements with VIP, including retailers such as Toys R Us, newspaper groups, supermarkets, directory publishers and existing ISPs.

Features of the service include:

Fully branded Internet site

Branded e-mail addresses

56 kbps or ISDN access

Fully branded technical support available via e-mail and 24-hour, 7 day, help desk Nation-wide local call access (local call charges apply)

Arsenal fans can register for free Internet access on-line at http://www.arsenal.co.uk or collect a free CD from the Gunners Shop or Arsenal World of Sport. Each person will get 5 free e-mail addresses – eg. yourname@arsenalfc.net and can receive support from the Arsenal Helpdesk (calls charged at £1.00 per minute). The offer is only available to UK residents

Bromsgrove Housing and Finance

ICL, has won a contract with Worcestershire-based Bromsgrove District Council, to assist the council to manage its key financial and housing applications, using an ICL Trimetra enterprise server and applications software.

The council has purchased Trimetra to run multiple software applications on different operating systems, to replace its Series 39 mainframe solution which previously ran on Open VME. It will be running ICL's LogICL council tax and business rates application software on Trimetra on the Open VME operating system, together with benefits information software from Academy and ledgers and payroll applications from Peterborough Software.

The council has also turned to ICL for an integrated suite of housing management applications, Open House, running on UNIX, with implementation due for completion in January 1999. The software covers housing repairs, rent collection and housing allocations. The council currently has over 5,000 housing and council benefit claimants and manages over 3,600 council homes in the district, in addition to 2,170 business properties. Bromsgrove Council is also running Office Power, its word processing package on a UNIXware subsystem.

ICL create 1,000 jobs for 2001 Census

ICL, will be creating 1,000 new jobs following the announcement on 25 Feb 1999 that it has won a £23 million business process outsourcing contract from Lockheed Martin, prime contractor for the UK 2001 Census.

ICL will undertake conversion and data processing of the Census forms, providing project management, centre management, processing staff, technical support staff and accommodation. Most of the new jobs will be under fixed term contracts lasting nearly a year. It is planned that a significant number of staff

will be recruited under the Government's New Deal programme. Recruitment will begin in early 2001 via local press advertisements.

The new jobs will be based primarily in Runcorn, Cheshire, where a building belonging to the Department for Education and Employment will be converted to become Europe's largest document processing centre. Here the staff will collate and prepare the 32 million census forms completed by households in the UK, converting the paper documents into electronic data.

The Lockheed Martin consortium won the contract under intense competition from large US rivals. Vital to ICL being awarded the contract is its ability to undertake major outsourcing projects and manage national projects to critical deadlines (such as completion of the initial network of National Lottery terminals rolled out six weeks ahead of schedule).

Under the guise of the British Tabulating Machine Company, ICL played a major role in one of the first Censuses of this Century by providing the tabulation machines used to process data collected for the 1911 Census.

Once the 20 page forms arrive at the document processing centre from the Census enumerators, they are manually prepared for scanning. This includes chopping the forms down to size and feeding them into document scanners. The forms are then scanned at a rate of 80/min and errors such as unrecognisable profession, are corrected manually. Customised software captures data from the scanners and transfers it to magnetic tape for storage and further processing.

ICL is the right fit for Kwik-Fit

In a deal worth several million pounds, Kwik-Fit, one of the world's leading tyre, exhaust and brake repair and replacement specialists, has signed a contract with ICL, the leading IT services company, for new kiosk-based systems to enhance customer service across all of its centres. ICL's GlobalSTORE retail software solution will ultimately roll out in over 1600 Kwik-Fit outlets across Europe, over 800 of which are in the UK.

GlobalSTORE is built upon a Microsoft standards-based platform, and provides a single, consistent framework within which Kwik-Fit's staff will be able to check stock information, send and receive mail, access a client history database, look up addresses automatically and access an electronic catalogue of all products, with graphic displays and costs, and sorted by vehicle type. GlobalSTORE will also support all of Kwik-Fit's point-of-sale and cash office transactions.

The first phase of the rollout will take place in the UK in 1999, and will be followed by further phases encompassing France, Germany, Spain, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Eire. GlobalSTORE is 'euro-compliant' and can also be easily tailored to accept multiple currencies and languages.

The GlobalSTORE system will run on sophisticated kiosks in each Kwik-Fit centre using a flat touchscreen. ICL is also installing central network servers managing an ISDN network and interfacing with Kwik-Fit's existing systems, empowering Kwik-Fit people to access live customer and product files, to further improve customer service.

ICL a strategic IT partner to MAFF

The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) has selected ICL, to be a strategic partner for IT. Under the agreement worth approximately £25 million over 5 years, ICL will support and enhance MAFF's entire IT infrastructure.

As a MAFF strategic partner ICL will provide supply, support, consultancy, maintenance and life cycle services to assist the department in meeting the challenges it faces in delivering its services over the years to come.

One early challenge will be meeting the IT changes necessary when the reforms of the European Union's Common Agricultural Policy are agreed. The current system processes some £2 billion worth of grants and subsidies to UK farmers and will require extensive revision in the near future.

As a contribution to MAFF's "electronic government" programme ICL will be working with MAFF to deploy its ECX electronic catalogue system for the raising, authorising, placing and on-line tracking of orders for new IT products.

LIFE WITH BTM/ICT/ICL
The Way We Were
Completing Frank Townsend's history

In July 1963 I went with a team of engineers to install a 1301 at GCHQ. As you will know GCHQ is one of the most security minded sites in the country. I had already had a taste of this when installing a 555 on a previous visit. At that time when visiting the toilet I was accompanied by a member of the staff who had to stand outside the cubicle door. The 1300 was to be located at one end of a very large computer room, which was already occupied by various computers. When we arrived, an area of the computer floor had been partitioned off with hardboard and the machine placed in the centre of this area. We were told the partitioning was so that we could not see what was in the rest of the room, for security reasons. The flaw in all the trouble to stop us seeing in the rest of the room was obvious as time progressed. Each day during the morning and afternoon we stopped for a tea break. This involved us trooping out from the partitioned area straight to the stairs, going down and then along a corridor under the machine room and then up the stairs at the other end. The ludicrous thing was that to reach the canteen we had then to go through the forbidden room. In June 1964 a second 1301 was installed at GCHQ. This time there was no partitioning, so obviously it had been realised that FEHQ were not a security risk.

In 1966 as the result of reorganisation I found myself desk bound with the grand title of 'Manager Technical Co-ordination Group' located at Number 9 factory. Gone were the days of travelling and sorting out machine faults. The running of field support was left to Ray Baker under John Sherlock. This new organisation was really the final result of the influx of staff from acquiring Ferranti. We were now a Division in our own right headed by Keith Lonsdale with a preponderance of ex Ferranti managers. Now I have always been a technician at heart and desk work never appealed to me excepting programming. Anyway I persevered with the job until ICL was

formed in 1968. In due course the result of forming ICL was yet a further influx of staff from English Electric. I, along with others, found myself effectually pushed down the management ladder with a new boss, Ron Walters, from English Electric. I could only tolerate this for a short period and eventually left the company, in January 1970, for a job in a System House.

This was to be a short lived decision, as after six months the System House found it's self in difficulties so I returned to ICL. As I had been concerned with Systems Software Design and Development at the System House, I returned to ICL to work on George III Support. Now I was back at the technical level I was reasonably happy. George III led to New Range and software on the 2950.

In he spring of 1975 I was working at the Stevenage Laboratory when a bombshell arrived in the form of an announcement that the group I was working in, under Charlie Portman, was to be transferred to West Gorton. We were given five months to decide whether to go or be made redundant.

During the five months I achieved my majority with the company, receiving a watch from Bill Talbot, but I was dubious of a future in Manchester. After deliberation I decided to opt for redundancy which, with hind sight, was probably the right decision as many of those who relocated were subjected to a further move to Kidsgrove at a later date.

In September 1975 I left the company for the second time little knowing that I would be soon back again. I joined Motorola as Service Manager in their 'In Car Entertainment' Division. The culture at Motorola could not be any more different than ICL. Although it is a large multinational corporation our division was run on a shoe string. The whole management was unstable with a new Managing Director every year. The upshot was that I yearned for the relative stability of ICL and returned in July 1976. The part of ICL I joined was until then entirely unknown to me. It was known as Contract Programming Services (CPS) and consisted of 95% women all working from home. The advantage was that home could be anywhere and the time was 'Flexi Time'. The whole management structure was female and headed by Hilary Cropper, who went on to run F-International. I had at last found a niche in the company which was to last me for 19 years till retirement. As I said before, working from home allowed home to be anywhere so I moved to Wales in 1978 where I have lived since. Away from the hurly-burly of urban life to the tranquillity of the country yet near the sea. The work covered all aspects of System Design and Programming for many customers of ICL. Working from home requires a certain discipline but has it's rewards as one can arrange the times to suit other pursuits. Also space has to be allocated which rose with the advent of PCs. At one time I had a comprehensive machine room with PC Quattro, DRS 25, DRS 300 and DRS M55 all at once working off-line and on-line through a modem. Many people have said, what will we do when we retire ? To me it is rather academic, as only working an average of 25 hours a week I have been semi-retired since joining CPS.

In 1995 the face of CPS had changed and the whole outlook of Programming too. So, with only nine months to my 65th birthday, I took early retirement.

What do I do in retirement. The company allowed me to keep all the hardware I had at the time which allows me still to do some programming for anybody requiring it. Otherwise I just sit back and enjoy retirement.
Frank Townsend Pinged Burry Port S. Wales

Now here's a funny thing!
A long time ago in the early 70's, Ken McLeod and myself found ourselves lumbered with doing a major overhaul on an Anelex printer at the English Electric site of the Phoenix Assurance Company in Norbury.

We had to remove the 160 column print barrel, separate the eight segments and give everything a through clean, before replacing two worn/damaged segments and then replacing the print barrel. (A thoroughly messy and time consuming job, as anyone of you who had to tackle this job will appreciate)

Well after readjusting penetration and flight times, we ran off a test print and then prepared to hand over the machine. At this juncture Ken spotted a small perspex disc, concave in shape, in the bottom of the machine. After careful examination of the disc and the top of the printer Ken noticed the ribbon reversal counter aperture , which was about the same size as the disc. However, we found that it did not quite fit, and decided that it must have expanded a little before springing out. So we had to chamfer the edge of the disc with a file, then with a spot of glue and slight pressure the cover sprang into place over the counter. Job completed!

Just then I was asked to help out at the CUAC site at Whyteleafe. After driving a short distance I happened to look at my wrist to check the time. No time! Why? There were no hands! Strange there was no glass either! No glass! Oh my sainted aunt, what have we done?

Then I saw the funny side of it. My watch was useless, but if it were any consolation the Phoenix printer was the only one in the entire world with a dust cover to its ribbon reversal counter!
John Grimstone

New Book
An Anthology of Verse
"Gleanings"
Cecil Kellehar has written these poems through his life from 1937, and recently gained a Diploma in Creative writing at the UEA.

If you would like a copy please order through your local bookshop, to encourage them to stock it. The price is **£6.95** and the ref. is **ISBN 0 9525704 5 9**

LETTERS
Contributors are asked to give a telephone number on which they can be contacted.
OBITS
These are the relevant excerpts from those who responded to my request in B&B8.
*"with regard to an obituary policy, I support the one which Nortel Diary seems to follow, i.e. **no** detailed obits."* HS

"Suggest we stick to oneliners as in Diary. I recognise that may be seen as uncaring and that could not be further away from how I feel about everyone who has

made a contribution to "our company" ,but if some action is not put in hand we will be swamped." JK

"I can see your difficulty but I think the current issue is very balanced someone who had such a massive input to the direction of ICL as Charlie Portman deserves a column as most pensioners would be aware of him at some time during their careers". HT

"It was interesting to read just how much he contributed to ICL and therefore as far as obituaries are concerned, such interesting people do deserve a bit of a spread I think." JT

"On the obituary score my vote is for the single line entry, no massive epistles" TY

"All should be published, but that the information provided is limited to a few lines of basic facts - for example that which would be provided as a brief summary at the start of a CV" EB

"Perhaps they should be kept to just a couple of paragraphs only. I certainly agree that rank, etc. should not affect their inclusion." TC

"I would suggest that you stop publishing this detailed information" DH

"dump your obituary problem, and go for a "no detailed" approach" JM

"Is there not a case here for developing a Web site on which these Obits could be posted?" PH

"would it be possible to limit them to say three or four column inches. But I can see your difficulty as some of our people have had such interesting working lives it seems wrong that their deeds should not be recognised. Perhaps Hamish might fancy compiling a book of obituaries like the Telegraph does" EH

"It is for you as editor to decide and your view that it should not be on the basis of seniority is absolutely right" DR

" As for the obituaries question, like most people, I am interested to hear about those people I knew and worked with. The more senior the person the more people will know him/her so the wider the interest. As editor I'm sure you will be able to strike the right balance." RG

"I think that those which are to be included, and their length, should be decided by the Editor. I was fascinated to read the two columns about Charlie Portman. Personally, I find each day's obituaries in "The Times" to be of interest in recording the lives of people who have contributed quite a lot to society. Readers of "Bits & Bytes" are of an age when obituaries are part of life!" DM

"With regard to your 'obituary' problem, please do continue publishing them- I certainly find them interesting." JH

"My view is that it would be worthwhile having a few lines about a restricted set of senior people - say only those who made it to Director AND keep the format you presently have on the back page". JW

"Rank or seniority should not decide who is included. The obituaries in B&B8 were too long"

"I have often felt it a shame when people who loomed large in their day appear just as full name, age and date of death." GS

PARTY PIECE

Every year is an anniversary! Greetings card makers, off-licensees, florists and caterers ensure one is reminded of this truism. Consequently 21st, 40th, 50th and 65th birthdays and wedding anniversaries are promoted as if they must be publicly celebrated.

Why the 22nd, 41st, 51st and 66th. anniversaries aren't being pushed as well I can't imagine, but they will be, in time. As these occasions relentlessly flick by, I feel like the convict scratching off the years to release on his cell wall! I suppose I'm grateful we're still here to reach these milestones.

With the glow of a Golden Wedding on the horizon, I decided to get in early and suggest a party. Just a few friends round? Suddenly the matter was out of my hands and my wife took over. A list of suitable guests appeared before I'd got back to my library book!

To whom do we owe a party?--Which couples make good party people ?--Which are the feuding members of your family?--Should we ask the Browns? They only like cards and quiz nights!--Isn't Ian the one with the funny habit ?

By the time the deficiencies and peccadilloes of our circle of friends have been discussed we're down to about eight. So we scrap it and invite all of them! I'm beginning to think there's no such thing as a perfect party (or perfect anything)

Even if one gets the mix of guests right, everyone's idea of what makes a good party is different and changes with age anyway ! Some don't like dancing. Some, not even music. Nobody wants youngsters. A number would be content with just a bar and sandwiches. Yet others prefer a table groaning with food. Just to sit and chat is ideal for a few, whilst many are happy to circulate and vet the rest of ones friends. So, I'll do it my way, or rather my wife's way and if it all goes pear shaped and we never get a return invitation, there's always "Match of the Day" on Saturday nights.

By suggesting a party I forestalled any attempt by our offspring to inflict on us that nightmare a "SURPRISE PARTY " I've been to a few. They are totally unnatural and a recipe for disaster. If your kids appear unusually interested in your old ICL address book and drop hints about any spare savings about - Beware!   All the diplomatic niceties your wife employed to hand-pick guests goes out the window. Names are chosen from old diaries making the guest list a complete lottery. Close friends won't necessarily be in the address book If the host is ex-ICL, the names in the diary will probably be blokes he met on various courses. The only thing they'll have in common is Letchworth Training School and after you've been through the " Whatever happened to old wots-is-name routine " there's nothing else to say! On the big night, you end up being ushered into a hall you wouldn't choose, to be confronted by a circle of strangers you apparently used to know. Wearing a fixed smile you circulate, trying to establish where on earth you knew this lot. There's bound to be a couple who claim to have met you in Marbella or some place you've never been to.. Someone assures you he was at your wedding and you haven't seen him since. The voice is vaguely familiar but is coming from a face you can't place. Surely if you'd wanted to see this fellow again you'd have contacted him sometime in the last fifty years! Just when some confused old fogey is going on about you and" The Gang " whooping it up in 1970 at Stevenage Bowl, a strip club and Jack's Hill Cafe, you are spared any more mangled memories by the thump of the Disco, thoughtfully arranged by your musically challenged son, whose mate has borrowed all the disco gear and is cheap, as he has his own collection of "Heavy Metal Hits ". All attempts at polite conversation are abandoned anywhere in the

hall. Requests for a decibel reduction and "something we can dance to" are ignored by this terminally deaf DJ

The trouble is your offspring mean well, but their idea of a party isn't what you had in mind. So get things organised by hinting to your wife about a " do "before reminding the rest of the family about the forthcoming jubilee. Perhaps a SAGA cruise would be more in your line?

A party? Unfortunately we happen to be busy on that night (whenever it is!). Sorry!

Dennis Goodwin Romford

REUNIONS

ICL Double Majority Club

The 9th dinner was held at the Blakemore Hotel at Little Wymondley, between Hitchin and Stevenage, on Saturday 15 May 1999. This Bi-annual event was very well attended. The guests included Arthur Humphris and Keith Todd who both made after dinner speeches. The Editor of Bits & Bytes was in attendance despite the fact that he only achieved 35 years service!

The Double Majority Club was formed 30 years ago and 385 people have achieved the magic 42 (of which 194 are still with us). It is expected that the total will exceed 400 in the year 2000.

All members now are on the circulation list for this publication so I am expecting many stories for future editions.

Leo Computers Society
Geoff Parry *01628 770129*

West Gorton Reunion
Eric W Watts *01457 875080*

ICL Central London Group

The next get together will be on Wed 19 Jan 2000 at the usual venue - The Fox at Epworth/Paul Street, from 12 noon.

John Doo *01245 259862*

Punched Card Reunion Group
Adrian Turner *01491 872012*

STE04 Office and Retail Systems
Derek Tourell 0181 386 9465

Watford-Harrow- Feltham Group
Derek Tourell 0181 386 9465

Copthall House Newcastle Staffs
Bob Green 01782 657763

Letchworth Group
Dennis Evans *01462 811273*

West Branch Engineers
Eric Reynolds *01452 712047*

East Grinstead 81 Club
Bert Gill *01903 763370*

West Kent Engineers
Ron Harding 01732 *761076*

East Midlands UB40s
Brian Skeldon *0115 9727835*

Oxford Region
Albert Brook *01235 531267*

The Walthamstow Mob
Derek Windsor *01992 522761*

Tin Hut Reunion Group
Olaf Chedzoy *01278 741 269*

An Appreciation
Mick McCrea

Marcus Michael McCrea died on 16 November 98 at the age of 83. Born in the Philippines, he joined the British Tabulating Machine Company in 1937. During the 1939/45 war he served in the Rifle Brigade, was twice wounded resulting in his having to wear a special boot and to walk with a limp. He left the army in 1946 with the rank of Major and rejoined the "Tab". His forte was in personnel and training and when he retired in 1968 he had been a Director of ICT since 1963.

Ross de Havilland writes

I first knew Mick in 1946. He was waiting for the tea trolley at the Hollerith Training School in Gernon Road Letchworth. To relieve the tedium he became a cockney rifleman in the Naafi queue. It brought the house down. In early 1947 he invited me to meet his wife Anne at Highgate. We went in his open Alvis. At the bottom of the hill it stopped so Mick instructed me to lean over the windscreen and pour petrol directly into the engine. "Don't spill any or we might blow up"! We drove some five miles in this manner. He told me afterwards that some bystanders looked astonished. I had been too busy to notice. He took it for granted that I knew what I was doing. We went up North in the same car, stopping at a lorry drivers' pull-in. As we took our bacon sandwiches and mugs of tea and sat at a nearby empty table a strange hush fell as this impeccably dressed ex-officer sat down as if he always ate there. A few minutes later all within earshot were laughing and joking with him, and, as we left cries of " Cheerio, sir, all the best etc." rang out. Mick took it all in his stride - "Best sandwiches anywhere".

When Donald Spooner retired, Mick invited me to his farewell. Donald had been with BTM for over 40 years so it was a rather sad occasion. Where we stood at the back, two old dears were nearly in tears. Cecil Mead made a long and lugubrious speech about the man whom Mick was about to succeed, so he (Mick) decided to cheer things up a bit. He strode up to the front and warmly thanked the Managing Director, who had not finished.

Asked to describe his wartime experiences for a piece in "The Tabulator" (the BTM House Magazine) on the occasion of his admission to the Majority Club, Mick wrote " I spent about 6 years in the army. During this time I met a lot of pleasant people, mostly on our side"

Obviously, in the 50 plus years that I knew Mick there were many similar recollections. I can see him now, smiling over his spectacles saying "All right old cock, you've had your say, now give someone else a go".

Time spent with Mick was always fun. If you listened you learned a lot. He could spot talent from the most unlikely source. He was the most generous and gallant gentleman I ever knew.

Brian Cocup writes

Mick McCrea gave me my first job in civilian life after being invalided out of the Royal Navy in 1956. It was as a Technical Serviceman Trainee with the BTM. Following my training and after about two years in the field , he asked me to move to Personnel Division as his PA, his having become Personnel Director of the newly formed ICT. This started me on my way to becoming a Personnel specialist. Working closely with him, he became my role model as a

manager in many ways. He once turned me down flat for a post in Personnel Div. saying that I hadn't yet made enough mistakes in my present job.

One of the most important lessons I learnt was how important it was to enjoy your job. Two of his quotes that I always remember:

"If you don't enjoy working here, go and work somewhere else"

"Please don't bring your long faces here to the office, leave them at home with your wife and the kitchen sink".

He used to work us hard but it was always good fun. Happy home that I was blessed with, I still used to look forward to going back to the office Monday morning.

Mick was certainly a brilliant interviewer of people and a shrewd judge of character. Deciding to stop working for Mick and to move away from ICT was one of the most difficult decisions that I have taken. He agreed, however, to provide me with a reference and called me in to see what he had written. Suffice to say it was a heartening report but it nevertheless ended " If I have one criticism of Brian Cocup is that he is inclined to like to have his own way" "Well" I remember saying " if you had said that I was thick, lazy or plenty of other things, I could have accepted it, but to say that I, who bends over backwards to accommodate other people's views, perhaps too much in fact, but to say that I of all people want my own way. Well!" "So, Brian" says Mick "here's another lesson you can take with you - people seldom recognise their own weaknesses" He was right, of course.

He pushed himself hard until the end of his life despite the handicaps he had from his war wound and a major operation for cancer. On the morning that he died he had been out sweeping leaves and was settling down to make bread when his life came suddenly to an end. It was exactly how he would have wanted it to be.

From Ormonde Browne in Australia.

It was very sad to hear of Mick's death. He had been a good friend for over 50 years. I last saw him 3 years ago when I spent a very pleasant weekend with him and Anne in Kelso. I thought at the time that he had changed very little from the Mick that I first knew in Victoria House in 1946.

He became Manager of the Records Section, reporting to Cecil Mead who was obviously impressed with his talents, because by 1950 he had taken over Personnel, and shortly afterwards was also in charge of Training, leading ultimately to a seat on the Board. It was a time of rapid expansion for BTM/ICT and Mick's contribution was very significant in selecting the right people and then ensuring that they were properly trained. He played a major role in the establishment of living-in training, first at Moor Hall Cookham and then at Bradenham Manor. Mick's contribution to the BTM and ICT of the 1950's and 60's was a very significant one. His standards were of the highest and he had the ability to see the way ahead more clearly than most. He was a loyal decent person with a wonderful sense of humour and a considerable ability as a mimic. Perhaps in the end he lacked an element of ruthlessness which made him vulnerable to the fierce in-fighting which is sometimes experienced in the top echelons of business, but nothing can detract from his considerable achievements.

George Thomson writes

I first met Mick in May 1950 when he interviewed me for a job with the British Tabulating Machine Company. My first impression was of a large man wearing wire rimmed lozenge shaped glasses, a blue shirt with a white collar and red braces. We talked for an hour, and at the end of that time I had a hazy idea of what Hollerith did and what I would be doing for £299 pa starting on the 16 June at the Company Training School in Letchworth.

I was to meet him at frequent intervals over the next few years until, in March 1958 he asked me to join Martin Webb and Frank Worsfold in establishing Computer Systems Training in the company. HEC 4 had been announced some 12 months previously. I was at Bradenham one Thursday afternoon at the beginning of May when he rang me and asked me if I could stay on until he got there. He arrived at about 6:30 and after I had poured us a couple of drinks, the following conversation ensued.

Mick: " You have had a lot of unkind things to say about Moor Hall"

Me: "I think with some justification"

Mick: "You could be right. I have decided to do something about it"

Me: "Good! What?"

Mick: "You're taking over"

Me: "When?"

Mick: "Tomorrow"

Me: "What about John (Armstrong)"

Mick: "I am going over to Maidenhead now to tell him"

Me: "What about a handover"

Mick: "Make your own arrangements"

So saying he left. He was never one to mess about.

During my time at Moor Hall, I had many dealings with Mick - too many to relate here, many of which I frequently recall with the utmost of pleasure.

After one of his Personnel Division Management Meetings when we were having drinks, he and I were standing together a little way apart from the rest of the gathering when Mick said "Half the people in this room think they can do my job better than me." You are lucky Mick, every Instructor at Moor Hall knows he can do my job better than I can." "Doesn't it worry you?" "No! I'm making damn sure that they can't." "So I've noticed"

Nothing escaped Mick. He often gave the impression of being laid back, of not treating the company, the job, or himself seriously enough.. Not so - he treated everything with the deference it deserved - even if his tongue was not infrequently located in his cheek. He could find humour in most situations. He worked extremely hard. He could not tolerate fools.

After my ICT days, Doreen and I had the greatest of pleasure in entertaining Mick and Anne in Hong Kong. I again met up with Mick at the Royal Show at Stoneleigh a couple of times around 1980 and visited him at Kelso. In latter years, communication was confined to the exchange of Christmas cards. I was the only person from BTM or ICT to attend his funeral, where, at lunch I was able to talk to his grandchildren about the Mick that I knew and the one that they had scarcely heard of. He will be sadly missed.

Obituaries
ICL/Nortel Fund

Taken from the spring and summer 1999 editions of the Nortel "Diary".

Location	Surname	Name	Date	Age
Birmingh'm	Crowe	Edwin	11/12/98	80
Bracknell	Antrich	David	07/10/98	77
	McCarthy	Terence J	24/04/99	68
Bradwell	Woollam	David	30/01/99	66
Croydon	Ferris	Ada F	06/01/99	94
	Harris	Keith F	08/03/99	78
	Marden	Leonard O	18/02/99	89
	Speed	Edith B	03/09/98	86
Hitchin	Atkinson	Thomas	20/12/98	86
Kidsgrove	Burton	Evelyn R	18/07/98	70
	Harvey	Joseph W	22/01/99	71
	Higgs	George A	23/04/99	64
	Jepson	Alfred	30/12/98	73
	Moore	Edith	23/08/98	83
	Roberson	Eric G	15/02/99	78
	Walton	James E	13/03/99	79
	Wilcox	Derek	28/01/99	62
Letchworth	Acquah	Emmanuel	19/10/98	62
	Bradford	William L	30/12/98	75
	Bramwell	George W	04/03/99	86
	Broadhurst	Frank	16/09/98	74
	Carr	Thomas	02/01/99	81
	Duffield	Glyn J	03/01/99	73
	Edwards	Roy David	24/10/98	74
	Gray	William C	14/03/99	81
	Hayes	Ronald J	28/11/98	73
	Hood	Dennis R	19/01/99	64
	Jones	Thomas A	22/02/99	81
	Kent	Henry J	14/04/99	87
	Millard	Reginald H	22/10/98	84
	Pavey	David J	26/11/98	76
	Sandford	Maurice J	04/01/99	71
	Tinklin	Kenneth H	05/01/99	82
	Thompson	Roy B	26/04/99	72
	Tyson	David C	04/02/99	67
Lon03	Tomayan	Joseph S	25/03/99	75
Manchester	Emerson	Ronald	18/02/99	70
	Harrison	Victor	09/01/99	65
	Kelly	Terence	01/04/99	67
	Sinclair	Jean	27/03/99	71
Norwich	Riches	Ivy E	18/06/98	
Nottingham	Alderton	Margaret	29/12/98	72
Putney	Houghton	Margaret	04/03/99	61
	McCrea	Mick M	16/11/98	83
	Pearce	Kenneth S	13/02/99	82
Reading	Clark	Charles S	20/04/99	80
S'hampton	Hodson	David F	29/08/98	73
	Allen	Ronald G	07/04/99	77
Stevenage	Hamlin	Victor J	22/11/98	72
	Huber	Henry W	14/11/98	71
	Scherrer	John W D	07/01/99	72
	Setterfield	Evelyn M	12/10/98	76
	Shoebridge	Gordon	11/03/99	89
	Trussell	Alec	25/07/98	76
	Wright	Stanley A	10/03/99	82
Sydenham	Wisby	Ellen J	10/03/99	83
Wakefield	Bereton	Walter L	15/01/99	84
	Ives	Ronald	30/11/98	67
W. Gorton	Black	Leonard	31/03/99	69
	Brusell	Clifford	03/01/99	77
	Hyde	Thomas C	28/12/98	83
	Prince	Geoffrey	26/01/99	73
Winsford	Purvis	Ronald D	02/01/99	69

Location	Surname	Name	Date	Age
	Maloney	James	06/02/99	64
Other ICL Locations	Burn	John	13/02/99	88
	Cotter	Patrick	02/04/99	72
	Cowles	James T	08/11/98	91
	Durham	Doris I A	21/03/99	79
	Edwards	George H	15/02/99	75
	Flockhart	Robert E	26/11/98	72
	Flower	Ronald J	31/10/98	67
	Glennon	Joseph P	25/10/98	67
	Harland	John F	12/08/98	77
	Hewings	Henry S	03/04/99	74
	Hocking	George T	02/11/98	77
	Hodgeson	Mary E	13/10/98	78
	Holland	Percy	03/12/98	87
	Hooton	Henry E	18/03/99	74
	King	Jessie F	24/12/99	83
	McArthur	Douglas W	28/03/99	87
	Melia	Jack	16/02/99	64
	Merrett	Philip L	05/02/99	72
	Nicholson	Kenneth	19/03/99	77
	Northcote	Michael S	26/02/99	77
	Painter	Ernest E	20/11/98	78
	Playfair	Sir Edward	21/03/99	89
	Sands	William	17/08/98	70
	Sayer	Elizabeth	28/02/99	65
	Sear	Nancy	05/11/98	85
	Smith	Gerald	03/01/99	74
	Smith	Margaret A	26/02/99	79
	Squires	Gordon	11/11/98	69
	Stuchbury	Peter W	21/08/98	59
	Thompson	George R	27/03/99	88
	Tyson	David C	04/02/99	67
	Welch	William I	17/01/99	83
	White	Alfred J	21/09/98	73
	Wilson	Clive	05/10/99	77
	Wright	Albert H	05/12/98	75

ICL Fund

Code	Surname	Name	Date	Age
BRA01	Wavish	John	13/02/99	69
BRA05	McCourt	Brian G	02/06/99	69
FCY02	Aston	William	15/07/99	57
	Liu	Clifford	31/05/99	56
KID02	Barnett	Roy	13/04/99	72
MAN05	Hoad	Frank M	29/07/99	69
REA08	Russell	Mike	04/06/99	57
STE04	Martin	Maureen	15/05/99	67
	Maudling	Derek M	03/05/99	58
	Watts	Monica	14/07/99	61

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NEXT ISSUE

Copy for the Spring 200 issue must be submitted by 1 March 2000