

Tektronix Long Service Awards

The annual luncheon at which Tek UK employees received their 10 and 20 year service awards took place in December at the Firs Hall, Southgate. The presentations were

made by Ed Morrison, and the event was again attended by European Vice-President, Frank Doyle, who made a flying visit between appointments to join the gathering.



In the above photograph, Marketing personnel attending were, (left to right): Terry Sullivan, Austin Pickering, Alan McHale, David Callendar, John Leverton, Howard Rippiner, Keith Retallick. John Leverton and Keith Retallick celebrated 20 years with Tektronix, the others, 10 years.



Southgate employees receiving 10 year awards were (left to right): Maurice Parker, Joyce Brine, Fred Bonner, Dave Howard.



From Hoddesdon came (left to right — front): Mary Colthup, Cissie Clarke, Amy Eveleigh, Colin Cakebread. (rear): Harry Brown, John Harvey, Colin Skinner, Ken Livermore, all of whom received 10 year awards.

Cover Girl



Karen Shepherd joined the Company on 16-1-78, her hobbies are darts and swimming.

Tubing Dept., Production, Hoddesdon



In a separate ceremony at our Dublin offices, Ed Morrison congratulates Doug Mackay (right) on his 10 years with the company. Doug has been in charge of our sales and service activities in the Republic and Northern Ireland since 1976.

Area Representative Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for 10.30 am on February 21 at Southgate. The management

representative will be Alan Hutley.

The fact that a representative of the weekly magazine "The Motorcycle" was invited to propose a toast to "The Sport and Pastime" at the Auto Cycle Club annual dinner in 1906 may seem to bear little relevance to the present story. But it was from that toast that the idea of having a major British motor cycle race on open roads was born.

On the British mainland at that time there was a legal limit of 20 mph on all road traffic and closure of roads for racing was not permitted. The Isle of Man however, then as now, had its own governing body. They did not have a speed limit, they did allow closure of roads for racing, one suspects also that they were astute enough to recognise the commercial possibilities of hosting the proposed event. And so in 1907 the first of a series of races that were to become the most famous in the world were held on the west coast of the island.

This first course, roughly triangular in shape, ran through Ballacrain, Peel and Kirkmichael and was almost 16 miles to the lap. The first major event was won by Rem Fowler on a Norton at an average speed of 42.91 mph.

Fifty years later in 1957, things had changed a little. The golden jubilee of the T.T. races was being celebrated. This was probably the greatest year ever in the Isle of Man. The circuit now went from coast to coast across the centre of the island and climbed from sea level at Ramsey to just over 1,400ft at the Black Hut on the mountain a single lap 37.75 miles round.

Nortons had dominated the senior event since 1931 winning all but four of the races. 1955 and 56 had seen the emergence of the Italian machines however. Geoff Duke had won in 1955 on a Gilera and John Surtees in 1956 on the MV. The competition in 1957 was fantastic, Moto Guzzi had entered an eight cylinder machine the first one ever, what a sweet sound that made on full bore. John Surtees was back again on the MV and the late and great Bob McIntyre on a Gilera. Bob set up a new lap record from a standing start a fantastic 99.99 mph he then proceeded to put in four more laps at over 100 mph, the first time the magic ton had been achieved. He won both the senior and junior races. John Surtees on the MV was second and Bob Brown on another Gilera third. The best placed Norton was sixth. Jack Brett had been lapping faster than a Norton had ever gone before and was holding fourth place but he tried too hard to hold onto the Italian machines and finally threw it down the road. The sidecar too was a great race but this was dominated by B.M.W. who took the first three places.

History will not record it but all of this coincided with our first season plugging round on the "Mangle" (see *Tek Times* No. 14). It also happened that in 1957 the Auto Cycle Union successors to the A.C.C. — had decided to hold a special event for newcomers to the September Manx Grand Prix.

Equilibrium II

The Isle of Man T.T. Races

Graham had entered this newcomers race but in July we had overturned the Mangle and he had sustained a broken collarbone. I got off scott free. Fortunately this was the pattern for all of my seventeen years racing. Not once did I come out of a spill with more than a few scratches. Graham recovered sufficiently to ride the Norton in the September races but he was far from one hundred percent fit. I therefore agreed to go as Nurse mechanic, administrator, trade negotiator and do all of the considerable amount of donkey work necessary to keep the machine fettled through a week's practice and up to the start fit to race on the day.

In addition to official race practice we did about five circuits a day on my Vincent. Knowledge of the course is half the battle when racing on the island. This taste of the circuit, 1,000 miles of it, and the atmosphere of the T.T., was enough to convince me that I had to become part of it.

As it happened Graham had thrown the Norton down the road at Windy Corner during a foggy last

practice. I did manage to get the bike sorted out for race day but the rider was now in a very second hand condition and retired after one lap.

It was about this time that it dawned on us that we were doing rather better with the "Mangle" than the solo, we felt that as a serious sidecar team we may prove more competitive. So we decided to sell the Norton. The proceeds, together with the money I had put by for a 7R and a little from the hire purchase man, would buy us a pretty good road racing sidecar. We could then attempt to get an entry in the T.T. It sounded simple enough anyway.

I remember the day well, a frosty Jan 10th 1958. We had negotiated to buy a 500 Manx Norton Watsonian from the well known T.T. racer Bill Beavers. It was known to be a fairly quick outfit, Bill had brought it into 14th place in the 1957 T.T. This had included a plug change. Graham had borrowed an old 1937 Morris van from a grass-track pal and we set off for Sheffield. We spend an almost sleepless night in the van and collected our pride and joy from Bill

the following day. So much for the machinery, all we had to do now was to prove we could use it.

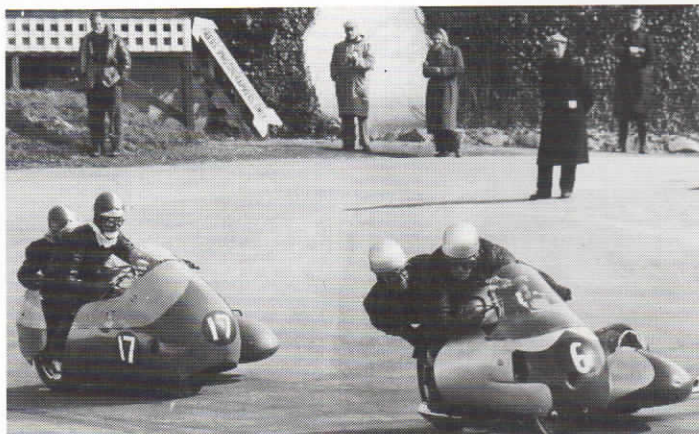
To get an entry accepted for the T.T. or any other world championship event, one requires an international racing licence. This had to be earned through success in open and national races based on a points system. Five points were awarded for a win in a national race, three for a second, two for a third, one for fourth. Twenty-one points were required for the licence.

We drew up a programme which required entering all possible events at Snetterton, Crystal Palace, Mallory Park and Brands Hatch. This involved every weekend from the beginning of March to the middle of May. Some weekends we would attend two venues, three on bank holidays. We soon discovered that completion of this programme was to require total dedication. Spare time became a forgotten commodity, spare cash was defined as something used to purchase more midnight oil, and friends became fewer. One that stayed in pace, attended every meeting through rain or snow and helped every night in the workshop was called Jill, I later married her. There is no way that I could remember all of those races but our first was probably the most exciting. I remember setting off from Chelmsford at 5.30 am on the Vincent, Jill as ever on the back, bound for Mallory Park. Practice started at 9.30 am. As we got into Leicestershire, flurries of snow were falling. Fortunately the day though cold was ideal for racing.

During our first practice the opposition seemed to come past too frequently and too fast. It was certainly different from the "Mangle". Surprisingly enough when we lined up on the grid we were on the fifth row with a few behind us so we had not been the slowest. When the flag fell we got a good start and eased down the inside to be about ninth in the charge for the first bend. I expected them to come by again but incredibly we began picking up places lap after lap and when the chequered square was finally shown we were fourth. Just to prove it was no fluke we did it again in the second race. Our first two points for our international. We managed to maintain this form through the early season and by the beginning of May 1958 we had our 21 points and obtained our International licences. We submitted an entry for the T.T. and were accepted. Looking back, to be competing in a world championship event after only three months of road racing may have been a record. However when we got to the Island we still had to qualify for the race with acceptable practice times, so our next objective had to be to qualify and to finish in the race. A very large proportion of the machines entered for the T.T. fail to finish. If possible we hoped to finish well.

What actually happened will be the subject of a third article.

Dave Fynn



Our first race Mallory Park 1958 going round Peter Russell at the hairpin.

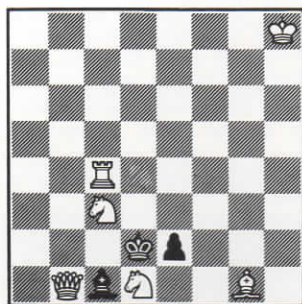


All ready to embark on the 1958 T.T. Graham in front me behind. Jilly our chief mechanic has put a good shine on the coachwork.



Chess

Problem No. 4
January Edition

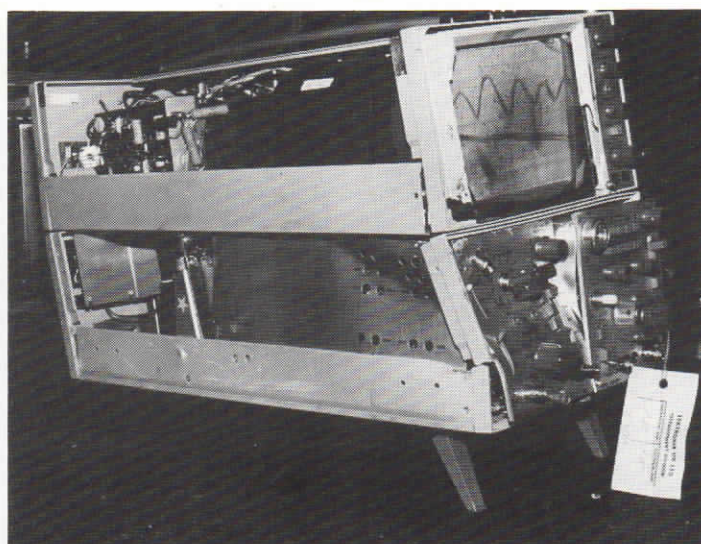


White to play and mate in 2 moves.

Problem No. 3
December Edition

1. N-K7+; Q×N
2. Q×RP+; K×Q
3. R-R5; K-N1
4. R-R8 mate.

Eric Blancquaert
Test Dept. Hoddesdon



The impossible takes a little longer!

(— but not always)

Life in the service department can be full of surprises at times.

This Telequipment D83 oscilloscope recently arrived in the Harpenden repair centre as a routine repair and recalibration job. As you might have guessed, it was considered beyond economical repair.

Mustafa Suleyman
T & M Service, Harpenden

Scottish Dishes

Having printed recipes from several parts of the British Isles, it's high time we did the same for Scotland.

Stovies**

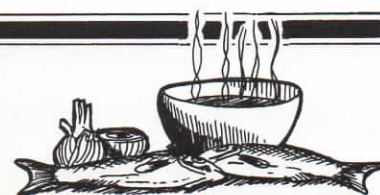
3lbs Potatoes
1 large Onion
3oz Beef Drippings
1 tablespoon Water (if required)
Salt and Pepper to taste
Put ingredients in large thick-bottomed pan and simmer for 1½ to 2 hours. This can be served as an alternative to boiled potatoes, or mixed in with chopped corned beef or cold left-overs of Sunday joint as a meal on its own.

Herrings in Oatmeal

Coat small herrings in oatmeal and fry. These are delicious fried very crisp.

Scotch Broth

2½ to 3 pints rich mutton stock
Small Turnip
2 medium Leeks or Onions
½lb Carrots
Few Brussels sprouts
Small quantity Cabbage
¼lb Barley
Sprig Fresh Parsley (or teaspoon dried)
Chop vegetables except Brussels sprouts which are best left whole.



Simmer for 2 hours. Although this soup is very filling on its own, it can be eaten with dumplings added.

**I must add a rider. We were recently in County Durham and were given a dish for lunch called "Tatie Hash". It was very tasty and I must admit that it was very similar to "Stovies", so if our good friends in the North-East think we're poaching, I hasten to deny this and can only assume that great minds think alike!

by Ann Glasgow and Pat Coulson

Match the face to the voice. . .



This merry band of lasses looks after our ledgers at Southgate. Left to right, seated, are Ann Jeffery and Sally Parsons (Purchase Ledger). Standing, also left to right are Joyce Brine, Evelyn Rendall, Mary Goodman, Sheila Kimpton, Vi Cole (Credit Control).

Ted Gibbs rides again!

We are pleased to announce that Ted Gibbs is now back at work in the Livingston office after his serious accident. He is available for demos, symposiums, bar mitzvahs etc. We, for our part, are delighted to have him back. We have missed his rapier wit, lightning reactions and sweet smile. Seriously though, he is much better and looking forward to the challenges presented by T & M customers in Scotland. He wishes to thank everyone for their good wishes during his illness.

Pat Coulson
Livingston

The British Post Office

by Ray Ganderton

In the eyes of my four-year old daughter, the words 'Post Office' mean the dubiously friendly face of our local postman. My wife relates the words to a frosty-faced teenager reluctantly issuing her family allowance from our local sub-Post Office. Tektronix view the British Post Office somewhat differently, and hopefully the next few paragraphs will give you a good idea why.

The title 'British Post Office' encompasses, with very minor exceptions, two very major areas of government services: Postal and Telecommunications Engineering.

For good, or for bad, both are a monopoly; the Postal side providing all paper-based communication such as letters, parcels, telegrams etc., and Telecommunications all electronic communications, such as telephone, telex, radio and television links, etc. Currently, the postal side of the B.P.O. business makes very high financial losses whilst Telecomms. succeeds in making high profits. Telecomms. subsidise Postal, but this situation may well change when the two concerns are separated. Knowing which is the profit maker, it is not too difficult to guess which *WE* are the most interested in!

Post Office Telecommunications buildings are spread all over the country but are concentrated mainly in central London, although the main research and development buildings are sited just north of Ipswich in a small village called Martlesham Heath.

The engineering groups are highly structured, prefixed with letter abbreviations to indicate work duty, followed by code numbers to complete the various DUTY CODES. Each managerial grade is assigned a specific duty code and is registered in one of several directories.

For instance,

- (1) Managerial Engineering grades, in ascending authority are: Assistant Executive Engineer (AEE), Executive Engineer (EE), Head of Group (HG), Head of Section (HS) and Head of Division (HD).
- (2) Engineering Duties are: Research (R), Network Planning (NP), Telephone Development (TD), Operational Planning (OP), Service (Sv) and Quality Assurance (QA).

A head of a particular working group in telephone development may have the duty code TD11.1, whilst Executive Engineers below him would be given the duty code TD11.1.2., 3, or 4 etc. Generally, each engineer has individual responsibilities and if you consider that the main directories hold approximately 6,000 names, it is not difficult to understand the wide range of work undertaken. In fact, everything from plugs and sockets to microwave dishes.

Without a doubt, the area of highest mass-profitability is the

common telephone service. It is also where the greatest money is invested. To telephone your relation or friend in say, Manchester, may involve hundreds of different electronic and electromechanical switches, plus thousands of feet of expensive copper cable.

When you realise that the cable may travel above and/or below ground and even in water and the speech signal converted many times according to the requirements, frequency and time multiplexed, digitised, transmitted by microwave, encoded and decoded many times, it's not surprising that we suffer the occasional 'bad line'.

The device which automatically routes your call across the country or even next door, is called the exchange. There are small unmanned exchanges which connect to larger manned exchanges. To telephone your neighbour a few feet away may take many miles of cable, depending on the lines available!

1980/81 a very new type of exchange is to be brought into service, in trial areas. This is reputedly, going to be the most advanced exchange system in the world. The exchange carries its early designation of 'System X'. Tek. cable-testers are being used to check suitability of existing lines for use on 'System X'.

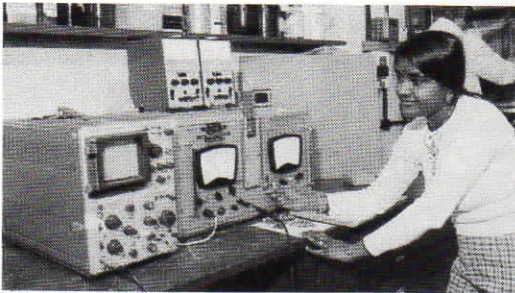
Unfortunately, in an area where existing communications must be maintained at all times, up-dating a system is a very slow process. This is not just because it takes time to replace specific components with better ones, but each new component must be compatible with those remaining of the previous system. Some say it would be far easier to dispose of our current system and install a complete new one. Unfortunately, this is obviously impracticable.

Exchange techniques are changing along with techniques of transmitting the signals. We will soon see conventional copper and aluminium

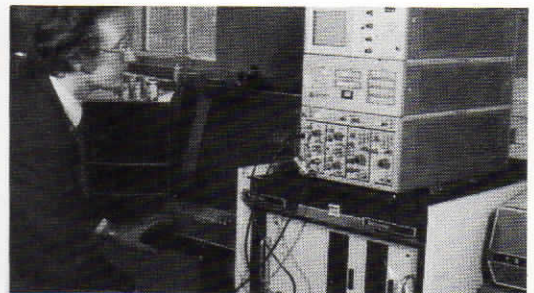
is directed down a glass fibre cable. At the other end of the cable the process is reversed. By ingenious electronic techniques it will be possible to transmit 8,000 conversations simultaneously down one piece of fibre just 0.005" in diameter!

So much for the Post Office, but where do we come in! Nearly every area of Telecommunications engineering requires equipment of the type we produce. Some areas require a large amount of medium cost equipment, whereas others need a relatively small amount of high technology, and hence high cost, equipment.

Exchanges need large quantities of medium cost support equipment, and here we supply Telequipment D1011's, D75's and Tektronix 7313 and 7623A systems. Research and Quality Assurance areas demand some of the latest products in addition to the general type. We supply instruments like digital



Laboratory measurement of "afterglow" of materials used in postage stamps involves the use of Tektronix oscilloscopes.



GPO Engineers use a Tektronix WP1200 for measuring phosphor decay characteristics.

The techniques employed in exchanges has, until recently, been electromechanical; known as STROWGER in the earliest designs, followed by CROSS-BAR. In the past few years there has been a change to 'solid state' switching using conventional transistorised circuits. The first exchange of this type was called TXE2/4 and more recently an up-dated integrated version called TXE4A. These exchanges are much smaller, more reliable and far more efficient. In

cables being replaced with glass fibre. The properties of fibre optical cable have been known for some years but only recently has the proper cable and test equipment been available to make long runs a feasible proposition.

Optical communication will offer dramatic improvements over conventional methods. The principle of optical transmission briefly, permits the voice (in audio communications) to vary the intensity of a light-emitting device, and the light beam

processing oscilloscopes for automated techniques, including unique measurements on optical fibres, and the Tektronix 7104 and 4052 graphics terminals.

At the last count, the British Post Office owned, with minor exceptions, every single instrument in the Telequipment and Tektronix catalogues! Not only one of each, but in some areas, hundreds of particular models.

To simplify the internal purchase of commercial equipment, the Post



Ray Ganderton, Linda Kay and Clive Gilder (left to right), setting up a 4052/7912 AD system for a recent seminar given to Post Office engineers at their Gresham St, London offices.

Down on the Farm

More rural reminiscences from former farmer Peter Hildebrand

Now the winter was really beginning to make itself felt. The days were short and the milking cows were kept in at night. The stocks of food for the animals so carefully harvested during the summer and autumn began to diminish. Grass does not grow in the winter-time so there is little of it to eat for the short time that the cows are in the field. A severe winter can put an undue strain on the stocks of animal food and although further stocks can generally be bought locally, the cost makes it something to avoid if possible. I recall a visit to a farm near Honiton where we had arranged to buy some hay, having run short. Bailing was not the

general procedure in those days, as it is today, and we had to cut great slabs of hay from the rick with a large hay-knife, tie two lengths of binder-twine round each slab and then load these on to our farm trailer. I remember my astonishment at the liberal embellishment of the conversation with expletives by the farmer. Swearing to any great extent had never been pronounced on our farm. True the odd words were never far away when an obstinate cow or animal provoked one, but such words were never used just a matter of course. This farmer used the same swear-word over and over again for every other word and I recall thinking that it must have

taken him twice as long to say anything than anyone else. Ah well, I suppose it passed the time even though he displayed a singular lack of imagination!

"Haying up" was necessary during the winter months and this meant a visit to the cowsheds at about 10.00 pm each evening. The cows were chained around the neck, each one in its own particular place. Straw was placed on the concrete floor so that the cows could lie down in comfort. The evening visit was one that I always enjoyed, for unless you have made such a visit yourselves on a frosty night you wouldn't believe the warmth that twenty or so cows can generate in such a building. It is no wonder that the households slept with their animals in biblical times or above them for underfloor heating!

On reflection it surprises me how warm and snug we ourselves were in our 150 year old farmhouse. The

walls were thick, nearly two feet in places and made of random stone with a soft lime plaster binding them together. The outside was rendered in a hard cement-like finish which prevented the rain and frost penetrating the wall. After we had been in the house some eighteen months, it was decided that larger windows would let more light into the rooms and would give the house better proportions. The builders duly moved in again and commenced by knocking the stonework out from under the old window in my parents bedroom in preparation to putting the new one in. One of the coldest winters I ever remember then set in and they were unable to finish the work. They resorted to stuffing up the hole with some sacks filled with hay and then hung a tarpaulin on the outside to protect it from the weather. My parents occupied this bedroom all winter and neither of them caught cold!

Progress?

The illustrated envelopes were produced by the Post Office in 1890 to celebrate fifty years of Penny Postage. They show the North Mail stagecoach approaching Highgate at eight miles an hour in 1790 and

the North Mail railway train approaching Carlisle at 48 miles an hour in 1890.

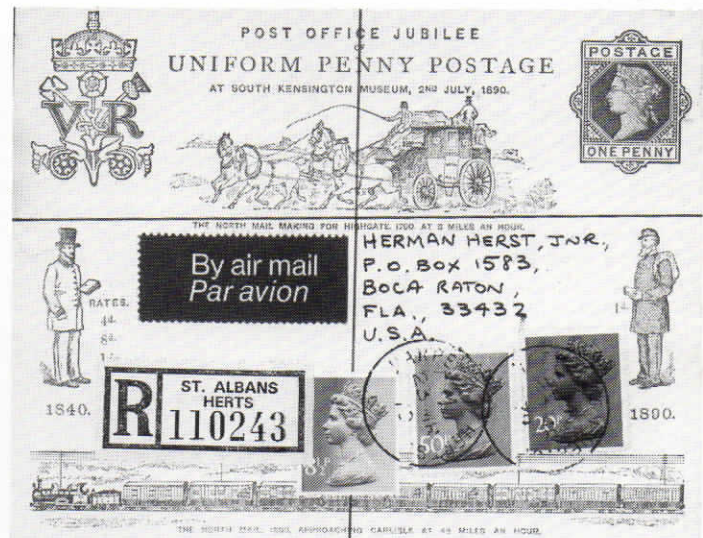
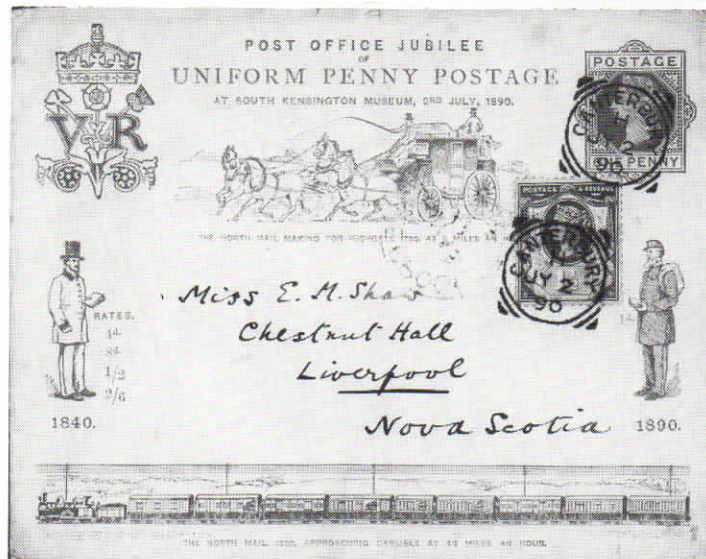
The cover to Nova Scotia is scarce as it was used on the first day of issue. It took twelve days, including

dates of postmarks to travel from Canterbury to Canada.

The one I sent from Harpenden to Florida in 1979 was in transit for five days. If it had been sent by surface mail it would have taken from six to eight weeks!

I may be pushing my luck but I have another unused cover for transatlantic use in 1990, the centenary of its issue. I will let you know how long it takes.

John Seaman



The British Post Office

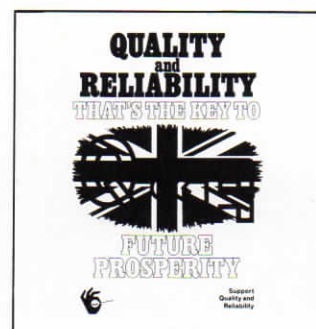
Office has a 'Rate Book' which lists thousands of equipment types by special type number and brief technical description. No indication is given of manufacturer. It is a requirement that every engineer wishing to purchase a certain piece of equipment must consult the 'Rate Book' before calling a commercial supplier of his or her choice. Clearly, it is advantageous to be included in this Post Office "bible". In this area we are fortunate since we have four items registered and one other pending. These instruments and their rate book codes are:—

Telequipment S61(6c), D1011 (19A), D75(16A) and Tek. 465 Option 7 (17A). By April 1980 the Tek. 7623A will be included as code 20A.

The British Post Office are currently the largest UK customer for both Tek. and TQ. products.

Next time you make a telephone call and get a bad connection try and quell your anger by thinking it is highly likely that a piece of our equipment is being used to rectify the fault and others are improving the service. Long live the British Post Office!

Real Quality Improvement



It's very encouraging to see that our efforts to improve Quality and Reliability are bearing fruit.

The number of defects that are found during the manufacturing process have reduced dramatically and this is due to greater dedication on the part of everyone to do a better job. Communications are improved and a training scheme has been launched, beginning with a two-day seminar for senior manufacturing managers which was conducted by Roy Clements, a Quality and Reliability consultant.

The poster shown left will be placed in all Quality and Reliability notice boards and underlines that the key to prosperity is Quality and Reliability.

Eddie Curran

London River Revisited

You may remember — at least those of you who read it — that in a previous article, entitled "Old (Grand) Father Thames", I wrote of a long-term ambition to revisit the places along the River Thames which my father had photographed over fifty years ago. This notion, having been committed to print, soon got the better of me and so, toward the end of last September, I took a week of my annual leave, bought some film, and set off daily with camera, lenses, filters, and a packed lunch.

My plan was to cover a different stretch of the river each day, trying to find, wherever possible, the same viewpoints and angles as in the old pictures. In most cases this was possible, if occasionally somewhat fraught with danger.

For example, a quiet little High Street in the North Woolwich of 1926 has become the busy Pier Road, which is on the main lorry route from East Ham to the Woolwich Ferry. While the buildings remain substantially the same, the background has changed, and you have to remember that, any second, a heavy lorry is likely to come roaring round the corner towards you.

It is no longer possible to stand at Horsleydown New Stairs to photograph the Tower of London through Tower Bridge — the stairs seem to have disappeared under an electricity sub-station, and the Tower is dwarfed by a backdrop of skyscraping office-blocks.

And do you remember that busy scene at Freshwater Wharf, in front of London Bridge? The river there is now devoid of shipping — apart from a few pleasure launches — and

the old warehouses and cranes are long gone.

The footbridge clinging to the downstream face of Hungerford Bridge was a favourite vantage point for viewing the Savoy Hotel — Somerset House area, but it was closed for major repair-work last year. By way of compensation, however, the South Bank complex of Festival Hall and National Theatre offers superb views of the opposite bank, both upstream and downstream.

As I previously mentioned, the most obvious contrast on every reach of the river was in the volume and nature of the river traffic. Gone are the tugs with their trains of barges; gone are the "flatirons" and colliers. They are replaced by day-tripping launches plying their trade by day from Westminster to the Tower and Greenwich, and by night as "Disco-Trips". Actual working boats are comparatively rare above Greenwich.

I was very fortunate to see a Thames spritsail barge off Cherry Garden Pier, Bermondsey, but it had only token sails set, and was running under auxiliary power.

The saddest sight of all was in dockland, where the once-thriving basins have been transformed into forlorn acres of idle water and deserted quaysides, where the warehouses exist only in outline at ground level; where a Luddite approach to progress brought years of disruption, so that shippers moved their trade downstream to Tilbury, Felixstowe and even to Rotterdam, putting their goods into great boxes at a safe distance from the London Dockers. Container-



Horsleydown New Stairs, 1926



From a point just downstream from Horsleydown Lane, 1979



Freshwater Wharf, 1926



Downstream from London Bridge — formerly Freshwater Wharf, 1979

isation — an ugly word, like so many "-isations" — spelt the end of the skilled trades of Docker and Stevedore on London's river.

Possibly the most fascinating episode in an interesting week was my trip across the Woolwich Free Ferry, sitting in my car. I had crossed years ago as a foot-passenger on the old crab-like "Will Crooks", an elderly steam-powered paddle-boat with room for about six cars on the upper deck amidships. Its new counterpart (there are actually three ships, named after old Labour party stalwarts) is bigger, diesel powered, and the motor-vehicle deck runs virtually the whole length of the ship, while the bridge is a sort of overhead gantry. But what

a load this ferry can take! Two men on the approach-ramp marshal cars and a variety of heavy lorries onto the deck with consummate skill, leaving barely a square yard of unoccupied deck space. I marvelled that the "Ernest Bevin" (for thus is the ferry-boat named!) remained afloat.

In all, a very pleasant week, though tinged with a little sadness at what has passed; and rounded off, on a sunny September afternoon, with a brief tour of St Katherine's Haven in the shadow of Tower Bridge, followed by a pot of excellent tea at the "Captain's Cabin".

*Ron Tradgett
Accounts — Southgate*



High Street, North Woolwich, 1926



Pier Road (formerly High Street) North Woolwich, 1979

A letter to the Editors that should concern you

Don't denigrate, participate!

Dear Editors

In this country and certainly in our company, we all have a degree of freedom to take part in deciding how things should be done, which would have been unheard of 100 years ago.

Yet, despite this new found freedom, all is not well. The past century has seen battles being fought between entrenched groups representing on the one hand employers or management and on the other, organised labour or employees. The past decade has seen the battle fought with mounting savagery. To be sure, there have been victories and defeats, but in reality the victories are pyrrhic and all of us lose.

Fortunately, within the company, this battle has scarcely touched us, but there are parallels to be drawn. Battles often result from a failure of communication. At this time of year, we should be giving some thought to the effectiveness of our area representative system. This is because at the time of writing, elections are due to be held for new representatives and also because during the past year, many Tek UK employees have been apathetic or at best indifferent to their system. There are many reasons for this, both good and bad. I would like to analyse them here, but first it is necessary to explain the nuts and bolts of the area representative system:—

Noddy's guide to the Area Rep. system

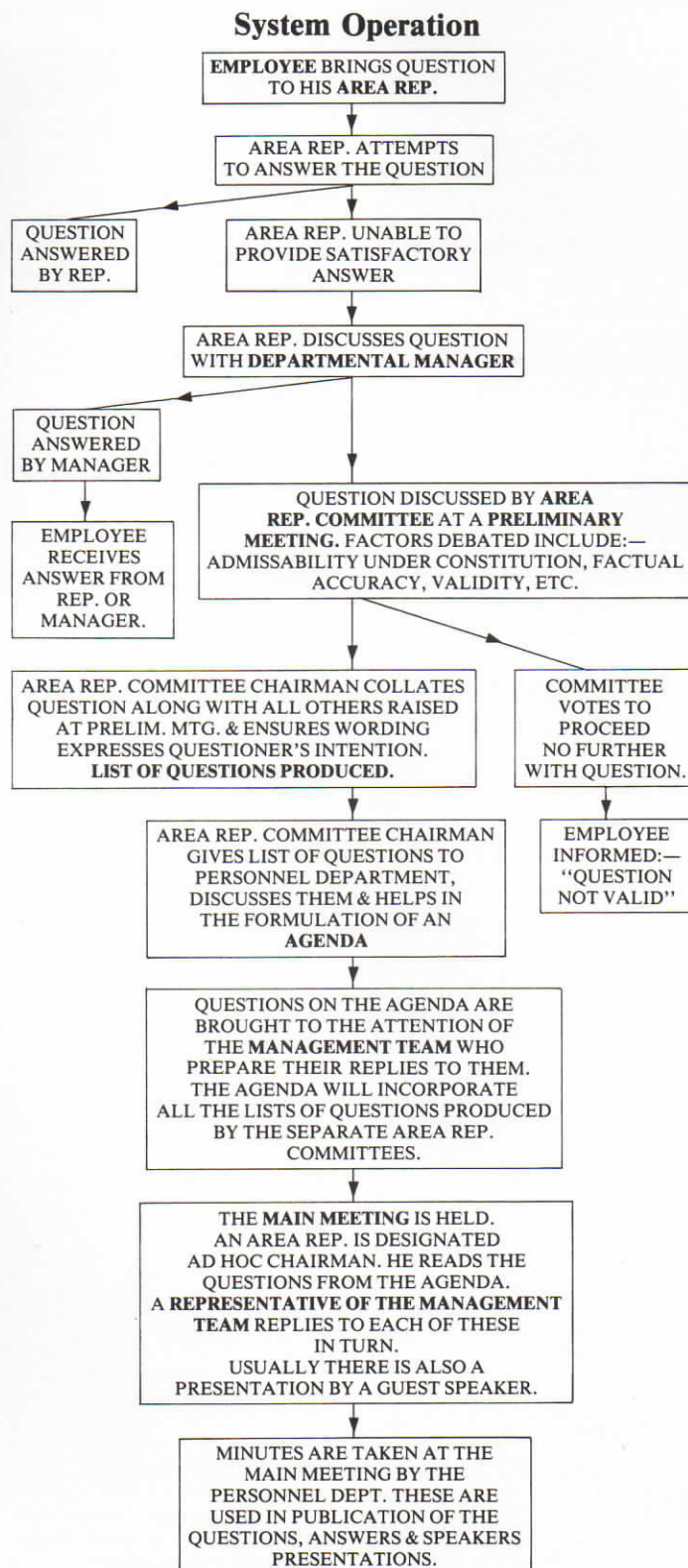
Anyone within Tek UK can be an area rep. Subject that is to one or two perfectly reasonable eligibility claims contained within the constitution. The constitution is a document entitled "Guide Lines to Area Representative Activities". It was produced by our management team who based it upon a similar document relating to the Guernsey area rep. system. The document is just what its title suggests: a framework for the scheme's activities, a way of defining and separating those matters which can and cannot be dealt with by the area rep. system, and a repository of important miscellaneous items such as election details, maximum terms of office, format of meetings etc.

It is in my opinion, a very significant document and ought really to be read by everyone in the company. Certainly anyone with an area rep. query would do well to read it before raising their question. Copies of it are possessed by representatives and by the personnel department. Another aid to understanding how the system works is knowledge of the roles of key groups involved. The groups are:

1. The area rep. committee
2. The management team
3. The personnel department
4. Individual representatives
5. Employees in a department or area represented
6. The departmental manager
7. The area representative committee chairman
8. Representative of the management team

No significance attaches to the order of the list, what matters is the way in which these groups interact. As we are an electronics company a flow chart is probably as good a way as any of outlining how the system operates:—

Of course it is impossible to represent every aspect of the system's



Kathy Horrigan

It is with deep regret that we announce the death of Kathy Horrigan, who died on the 31st December, 1979. Kathy joined Tek in March 1975 and worked in the cash section within Credit Control Department at Southgate. A sweet and sincere person who will be missed by all who knew her. We are sure you will wish to join us in offering our Deepest Sympathy to her husband Ned Horrigan and to her Family.

David Broadbridge.

operation in this way. Some require individual comment:—

Voting

Area reps. are created (or re-installed) once a year by election. This is covered in detail in the constitution but the main points to remember are that before the election proper, candidates have to be nominated. This just means that any employee can name a person whom they would like to become an area rep. by the act of entering that person's name on the nomination list. Clearly this is one of many reasons why all employees should read the company notice boards if they are to see the lists. The election itself can be conducted about a week after the lists have appeared. Votes are then taken by a rep. (who is not a candidate) from the people in the department in the form of a secret ballot. The votes are counted in the presence of a personnel representative.

Duties of the Representative

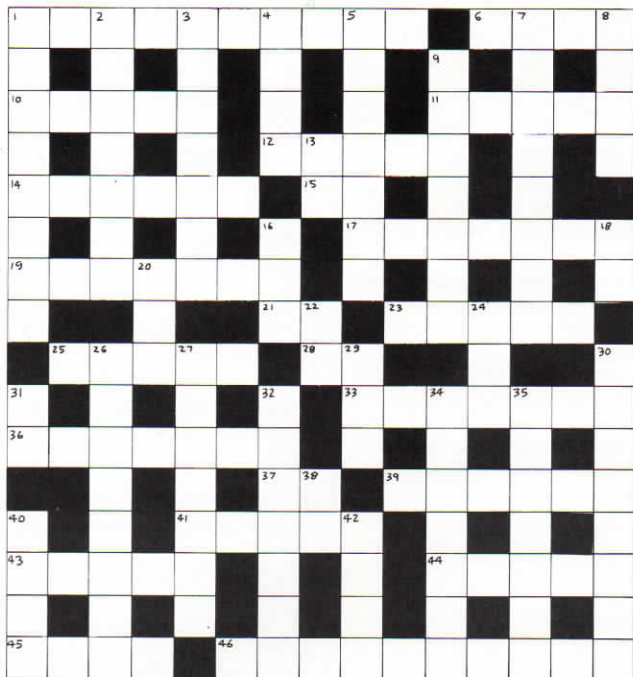
The representative makes himself available to answer questions. As well as being helpful and a good listener, he (or she) should do the following things:

1. Be a source of knowledge about the company so that if possible, he can provide answers directly.
2. Encourage the questioners to find out things for themselves. Again the rep. can achieve this by showing his knowledge of how the company works. The questioners should always be encouraged to put questions directly to the departmental manager.
3. Discuss questions raised with the departmental manager before proceeding on to the meeting.
4. Help the questioner produce an effective question. (People often have valid points to make which they are unable to articulate).

Area Representative Committees

There is one of these for each of the Tek UK locations. It would take too long to discuss in detail each of the key groups, but it is hoped that enough has been said to give a rough idea of how it all works. It cannot be

continued on page 8



Crossword

ACROSS: 1 Opposition (10); 6 The American stop (4); 10 Two covered lorries to sleep (5); 11 Stranger (5); 12 More pleasant (5); 14 Anglers indication takes to water (6); 15 Say yes to an Italian (2); 17 26 Is (7); 19 Topical Games (7); 21 Kinds of tree with edible roots (2); 23 Speak completely (5); 25 Quadruped on the road (5); 28 Fourth, musically involved in sport (2); 33 Rolling Stones? (7); 36 Deliverer at the start (7); 37 Measure of acidity (2); 39 No risk to this frolic (6); 41 Of the calf of the leg (5); 43 Mother with a promissory note sounds catty (5); 44 Painful land? (5); 45 A drunken, Scottish fisherman may encounter this thrice (4); 46 Adoptive Nomenclature (10).

DOWN: 1 Useful when the heat's on (8); 2 Highly seasoned skinful (7); 3 wintery substitute (7); 4 One of your editors (4); 5 Decisive (7); 7 A single poem about galaxies (8); 8 An offkey note (4); 9 A justifiable

officer (8); 13 Exists (2); 16 The eighth month? (3); 18 Unit of current without politician (2); 20 Crowd (3); 22 Begin to question (2); 24 Staves and hoops make this (3); 26 Change Pete Land (8); 27 Produce again (7); 29 Liable (3); 30 Strip of hair (8); 31 Leader in the afternoon (2); 32 Squash again to keep down (7); 34 Courage displayed (7); 35 Freedom (7); 38 Half a laugh (2); 40 Arab Prince (4); 42 In place of the toilet (4).

Derek Smith

Answer to Issue 14



1. That you rarely get a direct answer, i.e. answers that could be yes or no, are delivered with all the circumlocution of a politician's speech.
2. That the nature and scope of questions which can be discussed are unduly restricted, i.e. topics which people really want to discuss are unconstitutional.
3. That it takes too long for the issues raised to be dealt with.
4. That the educational aspect of the system is fine for area reps but does little to enlighten the majority of employees i.e. only the area reps get to see the films or hear the guest speakers.

Answers to the Main Criticisms

Up to this point I have attempted to be objective and only deal with what I believe to be facts. However, the next part (an attempt to answer criticisms) will inevitably be

Letters to the Editor

Dear Ed.

May I, through your columns, thank the various contributors at Maidenhead who responded so promptly to my request for material for *Tek Times*.

In particular, I would like to thank the anonymous Jonah and Toby, both for their contribution and their sympathetic reference to the goldfish bowl in the Southern region office (a recognition of my unfortunate working conditions).

Dave Fynn
(Alias Moby Dick)

coloured by my own impressions and opinions. Hopefully though, my experiences last year as an area rep. and chairman of the Southgate area rep. committee will lend them some validity. As I see it, there are four main problem areas, which are:

1. A lack of knowledge of the area rep. system.
2. An insufficiency of commitment to it by middle management.
3. The age-old problem of apathy and indifference throughout the company.
4. Inhibitions caused by real and imagined ideas of the limits imposed by the constitution. Dealing with these in turn:

I hope that this article has achieved something towards overcoming the lack of knowledge. As far as commitment by middle management is concerned, I believe this will improve with an awareness by that group of the positive role that the system can play in helping them with communication and that it does not threaten anyone's authority. (I apologise for the use in this article of words like manager and employee. In an international company, managers are really only another kind of employee with perhaps a broader range of responsibilities. The words are a useful fiction to delineate the groups involved).

Apathy and indifference are no strangers to any society be they residents in a street threatened by "development" who are too lazy to form residents' associations or be they people in a company too lazy to talk to each other about obstacles to the company's (and hence to their own) progress. Maybe human nature can't be changed but apathy can be fought by good example. If I can be bothered to write this article, other people can make an effort to use and take part in their area rep.

The most controversial point made so far is perhaps the restrictions on the types of questions that can be asked, implicit in the constitution. My experience as a chairman has always been that management are prepared to interpret this document pretty liberally, that is to say, my committee have at times "got through" questions that we believed management were entitled to reject. How-

Dear Ed.

While recovering from shock at reading my crummy poem in December *Tek Times*, Debbie Dimmock (Maidenhead transport) rang me to say that she had found the missing D1016.

I must therefore thank the anonymous person who sent in the poem and *Tek Times* for printing it.

Ann Pryke
(L.C.P.G., Harpenden)

Ann points out quite rightly that we were wrong to state that Dave Fynn was from the Eastern Region. He is, as most of us know, Southern Region sales manager. Our apologies Dave.

ever, I think there is a case for the constitution to be examined over a period of time with a view to amendments. Before this happens though, there should be a much higher level of participation. Most of the people who directly or by implication criticise the constitution have not even read it! Having said this, I believe that management have not always been ready to face controversy head on. To my way of thinking, avoiding controversy is a bit like sticking a finger up the spout of a kettle — the pressure builds up and the steam gets out anyway!

Really most of the subsidiary criticisms like the length of time it takes for some issues to be dealt with (infinity sometimes) boil down to a lack of commitment on both "sides". There is no doubt in my mind that the company could do more to extend the educational aspects of the area rep. system (films, guest speakers, etc) to other employees apart from area reps.

Although area reps. can share the knowledge gained in this way, they cannot be expected to bear the whole burden.

To summarise then, for the system to work well, more commitment is required from all concerned. Also more effort is required to understand the system's operation.

Instead of criticising, people should be taking part, reading notice boards, standing for election, finding things out for themselves and sharing the knowledge with others.

To illustrate with a corollary to Edsel Murphy's Law:

"The people who make the most scathing attacks on the area rep. system are the least likely to attempt correction of its faults by participating in it".

This is where I came in — don't denigrate, participate!

Peter Holness, Staff Engineer
Hoddesdon

Editor's Note

Thank you for your letter Peter. I am sure you will be pleased to know that Alan Hutley is currently preparing a presentation package on the concept and structure of the Area Representative activity which we hope will solve the problems you mention. This will be presented to all personnel in the UK very shortly.