

## MEET THE REGIONS – REGION 3

*Region 3 are the first to feature in our “Meet the Regions” series where we expand on the usual Lunch Report. In Part 1, where it is appropriate, we will highlight the history of where the meal is held, both of the place itself and how regularly the Region has been using it. The normal lunch report, expanded in parts, is Part 2, and contains all the regular information about the lunch, plus a little more detail about the members. Part 3 is the history of NCR in the chosen Region. That final part may well contain previously published information. We hope you enjoy the feature – you will have your chance to participate of course when the wheel of fortune chooses your region. In the case of Region 3, this was your chance and we hope you enjoy whatever limelight shines your way!*

### Region 3 Lunch Report 10th April 2025 – Keith Templeman

Before I get stuck in though, I would like to thank everyone for the kind messages of get well that I received after having a stroke last November. It was certainly an unwelcome surprise to say the least and is taking more time than I would like to get totally back to normal, but onwards and upwards and the exercises to strengthen my arm and leg are helping enormously.

But now let's get on with today's business.

#### PART 1 – THE BOWLING GREEN

The “Bowling Green” pub, a 17th-century timber-framed building, was rebuilt in the 1930s and is a well-known landmark in Lichfield, says Lichfield Lore.

Since the last time we attended The Bowling Green it has had a ‘make-over’, doesn't it look well.

*Continues on page 12*

**Oh no, that was during . . . . . this was after:**



#### INSIDE

Why are John and Carole Atkins dressed like this, where were they, and why?

(Clue: They were not working that day).



Read all about it in the latest of our Meet The Organisers feature (see page 17).

#### ALSO INSIDE

Ian Ormerod writes about the Dayton Flood of 1917, including some powerful photos. (see page 22).



## CONTENTS

A warm welcome to PostScript's Summer 2025 edition, which from the biased editor's seat, reads like a cracker. Ian (Ormerod) has produced a couple of gems in the Dayton Flood piece, as part of the Defeating Competition series, as well as providing the History of Region 3, this time as part of our new feature Meet the Regions. As explained on Page 1, we will go round all the Regions selecting one per Postscript edition for this expanded report. We have the return of our other regular feature – Meet the Organisers – focussing on John Atkins, a member of the Fellowship Committee, and well known to everyone who worked in NCR UK during the period we all worked there as our Payroll Manager. Thanks to John for all the work he put in providing a very interesting story.

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## SUMMER 2025 MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

In March the committee held its spring zoom meeting with one of the topics being the review of the financial summary for 2024. For the first time since the Fellowship was set up our annual income was slightly less than our expenses, mainly due to falling membership numbers. However, as a result of various donations over the years from many different sources we have sufficient funds to support the Fellowship for many years to come. The annual fee will therefore continue at £10.

At the beginning of 2025 Lloyds bank informed me that they would start to levy charges for processing some of our transactions. For payments made into our account

electronically there would be no charge but that processing cheques would be chargeable. If, therefore, you currently pay by cheque but would be willing to change to standing order, please let me know and I will send the necessary form. However, please don't feel that you have to change. Every little helps as they say.

My thanks as always for the support of all our members and the effort of the organisers and best wishes to those who are facing medical issues.

Hope you have a good summer.

Lin

## OBITUARIES

PIC have advised us of the passing of the following Pension Plan members.

### Fellowship Members:

D J Debnam	Region 4	17.08.24
T A Exton	Region 4	07.02.25
Ms J J MacPhail	Region 3	14.04.25
M C Taylor	Region 6	17.08.25

### Non Fellowship Members:

Abbott J	21.02.25	Goodrich L H	2.12.24
Bacon J	3.03.25	Gretton D	6.11.24
Carter P B	10.11.24	Hale R M	19.02.25
Cartwright D A	3.01.25	Honan S	28.03.25
Child J	13.12.24	Kyle H P	15.01.25
Ms Craig C A	7.03.25	McGowan R J	31.10.24
Evans D P L	30.12.24	Morris A S	13.10.24
Fiore A G	8.01.25	Munro J	9.12.24
Ms Flynn P J	21.11.24	O'Conner J E	3.04.2
Ford J	19.04.25	Porter L	23.10.24
Gibbs M G	8.01.25	Thornhill H P	11.01.25

*(The list is kindly provided to us by PIC. We do not have any further information unless the person was a Fellowship member)*

## ANYTHING YOU WANT TO TELL US ABOUT?



If you have anything you think may be of interest in a historical context (old machines, parts, manuals, newsletters, newspaper articles), please contact Ian Ormerod on [ian.ormerod@ncr.org.uk](mailto:ian.ormerod@ncr.org.uk) or by post at Jasmine Cottage, Hillersland Lane, Shortstanding, Coleford, Gloucestershire, GL16 7NU. Phone: 01594 780219

Ian curates the NCR Retrospective website, which is full of UK and US company history, and has a copy of every Postscript (and other NCR magazines) - visit [ncr.org.uk](http://ncr.org.uk)



## Jill Macphail 1927 – 2025



This is a tribute to Jill who sadly passed away on 14th April, being one of the oldest, if not THE oldest active member of our group.

Jill attended our lunches whenever she was able, accompanied by her daughter, Fiona, and when she needed the assistance of a wheelchair by her son-in-law, John.

This article was first published in PostScript in 2007 so I have re-hashed it slightly as I think it shows how much she enjoyed the early part of her career with the company, how good the company was at the time and how dedicated the staff were.

Brian Briggs wrote that Jill's husband, Alastair, became AAMD District Manager in Wolverhampton before the office "cull" in the early 70's following which he moved to Birmingham Broad Street.

Jill wrote:

I joined NCR Head Office on (I think) the first of January 1950. We did not have New Years Day off in those days. I was engaged by Mrs Mclellan as a temporary operator - Class 3000. I had been a Class 3000 operator in Ilford and knew how to change the 'bars' and move a few 'stops'. Stores such as Swan & Edgars and other customers were where I spent my first few days, and then someone from the Banks Dept. at Head Office asked for an operator to help with an installation in the Royal Bank of Scotland. I was shown how to change debit and credit blocks and dispatched to Lower Regent Street, with the knowledge that Mr. Fagin would be there to guide me. When I arrived, feeling extremely nervous, and met NCR salesman **Patsy Fagin**, I admitted to him that this was my first job, he told me that it was also his first installation. Fortunately, the little we knew was obviously a lot more than the staff at the Royal Bank of Scotland and eventually the installation was a great success.

After that I was asked to join the Banks Dept. and stayed with them until March 1952. I loved the work and the people I worked with - both the NCR staff and the staff in all the different banks where I did installations of the Class 3000 and courtesy calls.

Mr. **Harold Cox** was Head of Dept. His secretary was Pat Willis, who later became Mrs. Rex Fleet. Mr. **J. Walker** and Mr. **N. Bergin** were salesmen. Miss **Phil Elston** was in charge of us three demonstrators, **Jean Adams**, **Pat Yorath**, and me, **Jillian Kitchen**. Oh, happy days!

At a Business Efficiency Exhibition in 1951, I demonstrated a Bank Proof Machine (as I seem to remember we called them) to an SPD trainee salesman by the name of **Alastair MacPhail**, a Scot who had started work with NCR in Glasgow after service in the RAF. We married in March 1952 and I transferred to Liverpool where Alastair had started his sales career a few months earlier. I believe it was quite unusual, at that time, for a demonstrator to marry a salesman and remain in the Company, also for the pair to work together. Anyway we were not very long in Liverpool (again working with lovely people and we had a lot of fun too!) One day in May, I returned to the Liverpool office after spending the day with a customer and Alastair informed me that he had taken a call from either Mr. Hart or Mr. W. B. Woods (I can't remember which) asking us both to return to London as soon as possible for a discussion regarding our suitability to work in West Africa. It appeared that 3000 Class accounting machines had been sold to Barclays D C & O in Lagos and Accra and there was a need for someone to train operators and install the machines. A salesman was also needed to work from the Accra office in the Gold Coast (now Ghana) and as I understood Bank procedures, Alastair and I fitted the bill.

So on 19th June 1952 we were on the tarmac, walking towards the aeroplane (I think it was a Hermes) that would take us to our new home and new job in Africa. It was both exciting and frightening at the same time. I had not flown before, and Scotland was as far as I had travelled. Alastair, of course, was well used to flying, as he had been air crew in the RAF. (Lancasters). We touched down two or three times on the way, and finally arrived in Accra about twenty four hours later. Our first 'home' was one room over the office in Accra and we ate all our meals at the Accra Club. I had a very short time in which to learn to drive, as there was no other form of transport for us, and after six weeks Alastair flew up to Sierra Leone and Gambia. I spent most of my time preparing for the training of the African operators. I had to make up packs of posting media -cheques, paying in slips, waste sheets etc... - as the banks would not let me have any old, used items for security reasons. I had to draw 'pretend' cheques etc...and duplicate them on an old Banda machine. Sometime, about September I think, we moved into a house on the Nswam Road. An old warehouse on stilts with no proper bathroom or kitchen and a 'thunderbox' toilet with a box of sand and a small trowel beside it. The bucket part was removed each night. through a little hatch in the wall, by the 'night soil man' and replaced by an empty one. However, we made it into a reasonable little home, and eventually we had a septic tank built in the garden, over which we erected a trellis arch and grew moonflowers and morning glory.

The machines arrived in Lagos, and I flew there in November to start training. The aircraft was a transport plane and as I remember, it was bare metal inside. I was the only European, apart from the two pilots, and the African passengers appeared to have everything but the kitchen sink with them, including their livestock! Particularly chickens with their legs tied. There was a frightful tropical storm on the way, and one of the pilots came and sat with me. I started the training in the bank but of course had to work round the day-to-day routines. The manager and the visiting officials told me we could not transfer the balances from the handwritten ledgers until after close of business on New Years Eve! Alastair came through from Accra to Lagos as we needed as much help as we could get. I think the Salesmen in Lagos were **Graham Hutchings** and **Paul Rasmusson**. We hoped we would be able to join a party before midnight to celebrate the arrival of 1953, but there was still a long way to go, and everything had to be transferred to the mechanical ledger and balanced ready for the bank to open at 10:00am on the 1st January. At midnight the manager asked us to join him in his office for a drink to see in the New Year, and when we returned to the machine room, all the African staff had disappeared, so we just had to continue without them until we finally finished and balanced. I think it was about 3am. We were all very hot and tired. I stayed in Lagos for a few more weeks and had to steer them through their first month end balance. I then had to repeat the procedure in Accra. I think there were about 6 or 8 machines in each branch.

Accounting machines were becoming very popular then, and Alastair was very busy selling to all types of businesses up and down the West African coast - Gambia, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Ivory Coast, Gold Coast, Togo and Dahomey. We did quite a lot of travelling, mostly flying.

We installed machines in the Northern part of the Gold Coast up past Ashanti. We flew in a little Dove to Tamale and then drove along many miles of laterite roads to a place called Damongo, where the machines were powered by a generator. The Bishop of Accra was with us in the Humber Super Snipe taking us to Damongo, and when we finally arrived there, the Bishop, Alastair and I were covered in red laterite dust. We had to open the windows of the car because of the heat and humidity - no such thing as air conditioning then. We had such fun there with the small expat community and I still have a poem written by one of them.



*Jill and Alastair in a group picture in Lagos, 1952.*

There are so many tales I could tell about our three years in West Africa, such as waking up in the night in a government rest house in Freetown and finding the little bed I was in was covered in ants! (And so was I). The next morning, we discovered the cause - sheets were used on the breakfast table, and some still had marmalade or jam on them when put on the beds! We endured huge cockroaches running over our bed in the Hotel du Pare in Abidjan in the French Ivory Coast. That was where sign language was most useful when training the French operators in CFAO and the French Bank. They learned quickly though, and I think we all enjoyed the experience. The food was very good in Abidjan, they flew it out directly from Paris. We had to wait for the refrigerator ship to arrive in Accra, British West Africa, and often ran out of supplies. We washed salads and greens in permanganate of potash, and boiled all our drinking water then put it in gin bottles in the refrigerator. I remember the manager of the French Bank in Abidjan used to say "we boil our water, we cool our water and then we clean our teeth with it".

Alastair became one of the top NCR salesmen achieving 213% of quota in 1953, I still have the gold plated cash register clock that he was awarded - and it still works. We had one home leave during the 3 years, but decided we wanted to return to the UK to work after the 2nd tour. This we did in March 1955 and found ourselves a flat in London. Alastair then duly reported to Head Office. I thought I would not be needed, but apparently demonstrators were in short supply so I was called in too. By this time the Class 31 machines were being sold, so we were sent to Glasgow for re-training. On our return to London we were told our next assignment would be in the North East. So in June 1955 we presented at the Newcastle Office, still working together - Alastair selling and me demonstrating and installing. We bought our first house in Cullercoats on the coast. Lots of lovely people there too. Selling NCR 31s and 32s was a complicated business at that time, as the customer had to wait 18 months or more for delivery. This caused a number of problems for some of the Salesmen. Anyway, we settled down to our life in the cold North East of England. Alastair started playing rugby again (he had played for London Scottish in London, and now he joined Percy Park Rugby Club). I resigned from NCR in September 1957 as I was expecting our daughter. At the end of November Alastair came home one evening and told me we had been asked to go abroad again. This time to Trinidad in the West Indies. A date was arranged for the beginning of January, but I wasn't too well and Alastair had some work to finish and it was the end of January before we left Newcastle. The flight from London was delayed for three days because of bad weather, and we stayed in the 'Pig and Whistle' in Russell Square (?) at the back of Head Office. I remember we had a large round bed, with a large round mirror on the ceiling! When we eventually took off we had to fly north to Iceland. We landed in Keflavik and there was a problem with the aeroplane, so we had to stay overnight in the American Army / Air Force quarters. Not very pleasant. We flew the next day to Gander for refueling, and then to Bermuda where we had trouble with the undercarriage and had another day and night delay whilst waiting for parts from the States. Next stop was Barbados and then, a week after leaving Newcastle, we arrived in Trinidad. The NCR staff



and their families were quite concerned for me, and had arranged for a Doctor to see me and appointments with a nursing home. Our daughter, Fiona, was born on 14th April, two weeks later than I expected. I was then 31½ years old and they considered me to be an 'old' new Mum.

Dick Shannon was the NCR agent in the West Indies and the names I remember are Roy Skinner, Joan and Alan Hurstfield, Margaret Shaw and Pat Vine. I am still in touch with Margaret and Pat.

We had a couple of months leave in the UK during the nearly six years we spent in Trinidad, sailing home on a Banana Boat. This took 17 days, and our first stop was Jamaica - picking up the bananas - we had a lovely lunch with Pat and Rex Fleet at their home.

When I left NCR. I said I would keep up with developments in the company so that I might return, if and when I was ready and was wanted.

Looking after my daughter proved to be, for me, a full time job, and I did not work again outside the home, for 17 years. We lived for five and a half years in Trinidad and returned to our home in Cullercoats in 1963.

In September Alastair came to work in Wolverhampton and we moved into this house in Codsall in January 1964. I am still here, more than 42 years later. My dear Alastair

died on 11th January 1993. He was 67 and had suffered a severe stroke five years previously and was disabled as a result. We did manage to attend a couple of the retirement fellowship lunches, complete with wheelchair, and the help of Les Williams, CAD manager in Wolverhampton. Les only survived Alastair by a few months. I still see Les Williams' wife Sheila. She is not very well.

These are just a few of my memories of almost eight years employment with NCR, and 29 years, in total, of association which was Alastair's career with NCR. There is so much more to tell, but of how much interest it is to people other than a very few?

I haven't mentioned many names, again my hazy memory, and also I'm afraid I might omit some, probably, important ones.

Nowadays I keep fairly busy. I belong to various organisations and I am treasurer for two of them. I have been chief baby-sitter and child minder to my (now) 16 year old Grandson since he was 6 months old, when my physiotherapist daughter returned to work after his birth. He still comes to my house after school and we eat together. I was 80 in September 2006, which I find hard to believe, and I'm sure many other 80 year olds will feel the same.

Jillian MacPhail  
October 2006

### A Tribute to Iain Simpson 1941– 2025



Iain on a Levada Walk in Madeira in 2015

My husband, Iain R Simpson, died at New Cross Hospital in Wolverhampton on 20th April (Easter Sunday) aged 84 of Urosepsis and Frailty. He had worked for NCR in Birmingham, and we spent a memorable year in Ohio 1976-77 when he worked in Dayton (theoretically described as being on a training course to circumvent visa requirements for working entry into the USA in those days). When retired

he joined the NCR Fellowship and attended lunches in Lichfield, but more recently didn't feel well enough. He had to give up driving (and reading, which he loved) through macular degeneration but continued to play nine holes of golf with a group of friends at Stafford Castle Golf Club until October last year when too much wet weather stopped him, which didn't happen very often. We live quite near the course, and he could leave clubs, etc in a locker room at the Club and some of the other players gave him lifts as they had to pass our house anyway. Things were going reasonably well until the beginning of October when severe back and chest pains turned out to be pneumonia, necessitating nearly a fortnight in Stafford Hospital. This left him weakened, and a series of Uterine Tract Infections early this year, accompanied by delirium (as I gather is often the case) leading to a five week stay in hospitals from March. Unfortunately, the infections did not respond to antibiotics and led to his death. We miss him but wouldn't have wanted him to suffer any more. There's a big hole to fill in our lives, but it's lovely to look back at memories with our three daughters and their families, including small great grandchildren. He said himself, when wondering if the pneumonia might lead to cancer, that he had had a good life which he had enjoyed and left a happy and contented family, so wouldn't be too sorry to go. We're sorry to lose him though!

#### Barbara Simpson

During Iain's NCR career he worked on the 8200, Century and Criterion systems as a Systems Analyst latterly with the VRX operating system.

## MORE ABOUT HEAD OFFICE DEPTS IN THE SIXTIES

*Regular Contributor Hilda Ott, and her friend and ex-colleague Diane Merrifield have contacted us about the above subject. Both have written letters, which I have used to put together the following article.*

Both ladies met through at their local church and realised they had shared time at NCR during the 1964-1967 period under Miss Dorothy Bahruth in the Filing Dept at 206 Marylebone Road. Diane describes her as running the Filing Dept with an iron rod. There were 4 juniors in the dept, Diane being one. "Each morning 2 of us took the trolley laden with files into the lift down to the Basement where the files were kept. We nicknamed it 'the Bowels of the earth' as we seemed to be in the darkest place imaginable. In the afternoon, after our Canteen lunch, we were again sent down to the basement this time with an empty trolley and a list of files. We collected the files that were needed for the various depts. I believe these files kept in the basement were archived files as every office seemed to have offices with filing cabinets in them"

Diane joined from school aged 16½ and was on Day Release one day a week learning Dictaphone typing at Essendine College together with Book-keeping – and Tennis! After a short period in the Filing Dept, she moved on to the Shipping Dept, and then to the Electronic Data Processing (EDP) working as Junior Secretary to the dept Manager, a lady remembered as Edna being the Senior Secretary. Mr Wadsworth is described by Diane as a fair, no nonsense kind man, who liked his staff to be happy and to be hard-working.

The telephone dept was also on the ground floor, and Diane learned how to use the Dolly Peg board and remembers that "the switchboard was a Dolly Peg board, and many times the lines went back into slots very fast and if fingers were in the way, they were pinched". Diane describes the time she spent at NCR

(1964-1967) as "really great as a first job out of school and that experience set me up for life. I will always remember NCR with fondness"

Diane wonders if there is anyone in the Fellowship who remembers her in that 64-67 period when she was single, Diane Rantell.

Hilda was also 16 when she started at NCR, on C2000 and then C3000 accounting machines. It was shortly afterwards she met the man who would become her husband, Fred Lott, who was in sales. "It was love at first sight and 4 years later we were married" Hilda remembers Ian Ormerod from that time (1964-67) "as he was very well known, and very clever". We can vouch for his still fitting that description, Hilda.

In addition, Hilda's sister, Gladys, married Stephen Moore, who worked for NCR until his retirement, and Hilda's brother also worked as a field engineer repairing cash registers. "It goes on and on" Hilda declares! Hilda left to start a family, but husband Fred remained until his sad passing from bowel cancer. Hilda describes how his boss at the time, Mr English, brought to Hilda and Fred's home a computer described as "big and black and very slow to get going. They had put some games on there too for him but he was too ill really to cope but it was a lovely thing to do".

Hilda used to attend the Region 4 lunches, and enjoyed them. However, she still reads Postscript – "they are always so interesting. Amazing how good people's memories are"

I want to thank both ladies for their time, and clarity of thought. It is very reassuring to see just how much the company still means to Hilda and Diane more than fifty years since they left NCR.

**Pat Stroudley**

### NCR Fellowship January 2024 – December 2024

#### Membership summary:

2024 start members	272
2024 new members	4
Prepay member	
<b>Total membership 2024</b>	<b>276</b>
Deceased members	9
Non renewals	7
<b>Starting membership 2025</b>	<b>260</b>

#### Membership by region

Region	1	20
	2E	23
	2W	12
	3	28
	4	104
	5	14
	6	9
	7	15
	8	12
	9	11
	10	9
	11 (overseas)	3
<b>Total</b>		<b>260</b>

#### Financial Summary:

<b>Income</b>	
Total b/f	8783.03
Membership fees	2620
New members	10
Donation	70
Early payments 24	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>11493.03</b>
<b>Outgoings</b>	
Expenses	184.78
Postscript	2643.65
Total	2828.43
<b>Balance c/f</b>	<b>8644.60</b>

NB. Expenses covers all administrative costs (eg. postage, copying, annual meting)



## SPECIAL NOTE TO EVERYONE WHO WILL ATTEND A RETIREMENT FELLOWSHIP LUNCH SOON – AND THAT MEANS YOU



### Announcing : THE POSTSCRIPT PHOTO COMPETITION, WINTER 2025

Every photo sent in with the Regional Lunch reports for inclusion in the Winter 2025 edition of Postscript will also be entered in the competition, like this one



Taken by



But we are looking beyond the normal shots of fellowship members enjoying good food, convivial surroundings and the company of long term valued colleagues – although photos with those elements remain the staple content of your entries.

We will consider these additional categories – at least

- Grumpiest photo
- Most happy photo
- Photo from strangest angle
- Most amusing whilst eating photo
- Best group (more than four) photo
- Best photo of other people taking selfies of themselves
- Most apt caption
- Funniest caption

And we may come up with other categories – when we see your entries!

No professionals! We are all amateurs (including the committee) – but what we may lack in professionalism we make up for in enthusiasm and a sense of enjoyment.



*Brian Behr considers if he had joined IBM he may have made more friends*

You can send photos of your location too....



### BRIEF GUIDELINES

All photos submitted by the Regional Organisers for publication in the Winter 2025 magazine (deadline for photos – 30 November 2025) will be entered into the competition.

The committee will decide the best photos in the categories mentioned in the previous page – and may also introduce new categories if appropriate having viewed the photos.

Details of the winners will be published in the Winter 2025 magazine, expected to be published early January 2026.

Send in the types of photos which regularly accompany the lunch reports – and also include some within the categories mentioned – most happy photo, grumpiest photo, etc.

### REWARDS

The remuneration for the prize winners comes in subjective form – the pride of your region being the best snappers, or the canniest caption writers, or the grumpiest diners. It is an NCR competition, in this case NCR stands for No Concrete Rewards.

No prizes this time – but you will be the only one in your street to have won a PostScript Photo competition!

AND YOUR PHOTO ON THE FRONT PAGE OF POSTSCRIPT



**Have fun!**

### YOUR PANEL



**Stephen Swinbank**  
Charman NCR  
Postscript  
Retirement Fellowship



**Geoff Jackson**  
Editor Emeritus  
Postscript



**Pat Stroudley**  
Editor

**Ron Gammie**  
Organiser  
Region 1





## REGIONAL REPORTS

### Region 1 - Ron Gammie

(for September 2024)

The Retirement Fellowship 2024 lunch for Region 1 took place slightly earlier on the 24th September at our popular haunt: 'The Italian Kitchen', Ingram St, Glasgow on a calm dry day (it's always like this in Scotland!!).

Numbers were great with 13 colleagues attending. Apologies were received from **Jim Tucker** and **Neil Bathe** (both on holiday), **Hamish McKenzie** (attending funeral), **Roger Green** and **Fred Wiewiorka**. Unfortunately, attendees who planned to attend but had to pull out at the last minute were **John McElroy** (health complications), **Jack Whyte** (damaged rotator cuff) and **Graeme** and **Christine Edwards** with Graeme holed up in hospital down south recovering from a tricky emergency appendix op, get well soon all of you.

Usual attendees graced the venue with **George Brown** and **Bob Stewart** filtering in from Glasgow area, **John** and **Christine Nairn** (thanks for upholding the ladies Christine) down from Perthshire along with **Brian Behr** from Dundee. **George Benson** arrived from Ayrshire along with **Ian Fairbairn** from Kilmarnock, also we had the "Blues Brothers" the two **John McKays** (not related) and also (**Ginger**) **John Grey** along with myself **Ron Gammie** to keep them all in line (I failed).

It was also great to see a couple of new faces we hadn't seen in a while with **Peter Kemp** being fit enough to manage the trip down from Perthshire and **Ian McLauchinian** making it along from down in borders and not sunbathing in Spain as usual (although based on his complexion I think the "sun bathing" is done in a pub somewhere!).

As always, we enjoyed great chat, stories and recalled events of our times at NCR as well as catching up on what we are doing now in our retirement. This ranged from "I don't have enough time in the day since I retired" to "just looking after my massive collection of Motorbikes" to "cycling on average 40 miles a day" we certainly aren't resting on our laurels (or backsides). It was also a good time to try and find out what happened to lost colleagues we have not seen since retiring.

In terms of the meal, mainly very good quality, we went with the normal lower costed menu (2 courses £24 three courses £30) option which resulted in a disappointing choice this year. This means we may have to try a new venue or as a minimum upgrade to the slightly more expensive menu option (2 courses £28, 3 courses £34), watch this space!

With full bellies and in some cases beer, wine, cider etc. on top we managed to sort out the dreaded bill with the restaurant being very helpful in taking part payments on individual cards as well as the bulk in cash. Thankfully no Crypto had to be transferred (this time) but we look forward in the future to just being scanned as we walk out of the restaurant (come on NCR!!).

As per our usual 'modus operandi', a few of us (well most of us really) retired to the Piper Whisky Bar on the corner of George Square to continue the afternoon where more fruit

juice, sparkling water and coke were consumed! After more calories were drunk (I hadn't had a sweet) we finally called it a day, evening, night till next year.

Thanks to John and Brian for providing the pictures and apologies in advance on the attached comments!

We hope everyone enjoyed themselves and would welcome any NCR colleagues who may be up in Scotland next September to come and join us, all are welcome (just email regional organiser).

*(This report was filed by Ian Gammie for intended publication in the Winter 2024 edition. However, due to a blunder by the editor the report was omitted from the published edition. Apologies from the editor to all Region 1 members and, particularly, all attendees).*



*The Table waits patiently for the proceedings to commence with a few aperitifs*



*The 'Blues Brothers' peruse the menu for a plan of attack watched on by George Benson*



*Ginger, Ian McLauchinian and George Benson deep in discussion.*



Region 1 continued



**Peter Kemp looking well along with John Nairn and George Brown.**



**Ian Fairbairn and Ron Gammie enjoying some banter**



**Bob Stewart and John McKay buddy up**



**Brian Behr and George Brown look on as John Nairn tries to remember how long he worked at NCR**



**Christine (two glasses) Nairn and Bob Stewart do well to ignore 360 degree Camera**



**John Nairn gets ready to polish his wine jug (he takes it everywhere!)**



**Peter Kemp points out to John McKay he's not wearing a jumper**



**Bob Stewart and Christine Nairn share their best profile**



## Region 1 continued



**Brian Behr tries to replicate John McKays Guinness head on his pint of cider**



**George Benson and John McKay decide not to send Christmas cards**



**Ian McLauchlin enjoys some sun bounce with George Brown**

## Region 2E – Pat Keogh

### Spring 2025 – Lunch Report

As **Pat Keogh** was still in hospital the lunch was arranged by **Ian Ormerod** at Hawthorne Farm, Yeadon, Leeds, the new location that Pat had negotiated excellent food and facilities for the Autumn 2024 get together.

Twenty-one guests managed to make the day with apologies being received from **Keith Richard, Margaret Ellis, Keith Penny, Jacqui Sale, Keith Stansfield, Tom Wallbank** and **Phil Wilkinson**.

Those attending were: **Ian Beveridge, Walter Bullen, Alan Dixon, Sandra Dixon, Roger Fearnside, Jim Hart, Brian Maude, Sandy McMillan, John Orrell, Frank Pussey, Pete & Sue Scanlon, Richard Slater, Dave Torrance, Richard Willett, Mike Wood**.

All who knew him were very sad to hear that **Terry Exton** had died. Terry was a former Lancaster, Preston and Leeds engineer and several people remembered working with him.

Everyone sent their best wishes to Pat and signed a card for him with our best wishes that he will soon be out of hospital and organising the Autumn lunch.

### Ian Ormerod



## Region 4 – Lin Sandell

### Region 4 lunch report March 19 2025

After a great detail of discussion and many emails we were finally able to hold our spring lunch on the 19th of March. It had originally been booked for April 30th but our regular venue had scheduled refurbishments in April. This last minute change of date resulted in some of our regular attendees being unable to come, but we still had 24. We were also pleased to welcome a new Fellowship member, **Danny Callanan**.

We tried to book the autumn lunch for October 1st but unfortunately the refurbishment is still ongoing and we will not be able to confirm the booking until later in August. I will issue an update as soon as possible.

The following guests attended-

**John Smith, Eric Page, Chris Gillespie, John Fenner, Tracey Brewer, Paul Nichols, Wallace Avery, Ernie Brewer, Nial Anderson, Melville Hill, Steve Mathews, Nigel Hensman, Stephen Swinbank, Doug Milsom, Trevor Friend, Danny Callanan, John Atkins, Lin Sandell, Alan Chard, Cath Sunderland, Robert Gray, Ian Ormerod, Mike Sumner, Ray Harris**.



Region 4 continued



John Smith, Eric Page, Chris Gillespie, John Fenner (hidden), Tracey Brewer



Nigel Hensman, Stephen Swinbank



Ernie Brewer, Niall Anderson, Melville Hill, Steve Matthews



Doug Milsom, Trevor Friend, John Smith, Eric Page, Chris Gillespie, Tracey Brewer



Paul Nicholls, Wallace Avery



Ernie Brewer, Niall Anderson, Melville Hill, Steve Matthews, alan Chard, Cath Sutherland, Robert Gray



Eric Page, Chris Gillespie, John Fenner, Traey Brewer



*(Region 3 continued from front cover)*

The pub has a bowling green which has a rich history and evidence exists that bowls was played here as early as 1520. The area was used by the local Franciscan Friars, and a Vicar was fined for missing choir practice to play bowls. A green was officially laid down in 1924, and was officially opened by the Mayor, Cllr. J R Bridgeman. The Lichfield Museum Bowling Club was formed. Founded in the 1840's the first official AGM was in 1841, although the green itself dates back from much earlier.

Lt. Colonel Swinfen-Broun offered a silver challenge cup for an annual match, which started in 1926.

Lichfield Bowling Club now exclusively plays Crown green bowls, which originated in Lancashire in the 19th century.

**PART 2 – LUNCH REPORT**

19 with us today. Hopefully a pleasant day so far. Do we want to come here next time, return to the George, or try somewhere different? Please let me know. Almost everyone that attended here last October thought it was a good venue to return to, with a varied and perfectly acceptable choice of food, making it worthy enough for a second visit and maybe a third.

Members and guests present today were:

**Ian Ormerod, Doreen Butterfield, Ian Davidson, Phil Rock, Keith Templeman, Tony Barnett, Joe Teeling, David Cooksey, Yatish Ranch, John Harrison, Gert Bakker, Pete Selwyn, Jim Elliott and Barry Skelding. Guests: David Cooksey, Tony Barnett and Hamish Foxley.**

Joining us for the first time since I've been the organiser is **John Harrison**, originally from the Derby area and once an active member of the luncheon group until leaving the area and becoming a gypsy perhaps, we welcome him back. There was a long list of apologies for not attending today though firstly **Jill MacPhail** has been a regular attendee, but now too frail to come any more at 98 years and recently passed away. We send our condolences to her family and you can read a tribute to her life and colourful career elsewhere in the magazine.

Unfortunately another of our members also passed away recently, **Iain Simpson**, after being ill for some time.

Now for the apologies, **Joan Johnson**, ex Birmingham Data centre came to one lunch, said she would come to another, but has so far not made it again, sends her apologies. **Peter Heywood, Brian Briggs, Kevin Rixson, John Latty, Graham Carter, Les Clarke**, and again **Maralyn Zeilski (nee Almond)** couldn't make it, but send their best wishes. I was chasing **Jim McHugh** as he had not responded and found out he had just come home from hospital after having three stents put in. He said he didn't mind my telling everyone, but he has not really recovered enough to venture out yet. I'm sure we all wish him a speedy recovery and look forward to seeing him next time.

I've had a suggestion that, in addition to email, WhatsApp might be a good and secure way of communicating with the group. I'd like to ask if you all think the same. It would only work if we all have Smartphones of course and a way to

read PDF documents I send, I'm not sure if all phones come with a PDF reader these days, or maybe the ability to print them. Most members have now responded positively, and in fact only one member describes himself as a dinosaur and doesn't have a smartphone.

**A Diary Note for our next Lunch date will be Thursday October 16th.**

Here are some customary 'Mug-shots' of today's group:



**Doreen Butterfield, Sheila and Ian Ormerod**



**Dene Templeman, Kay and Ian Simpson**



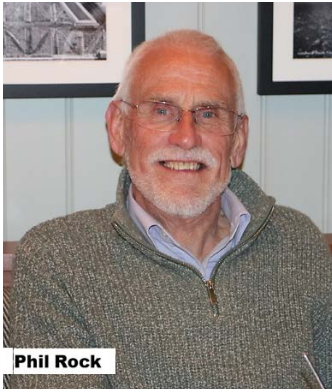
**Oh dear Gert was it something you ate**



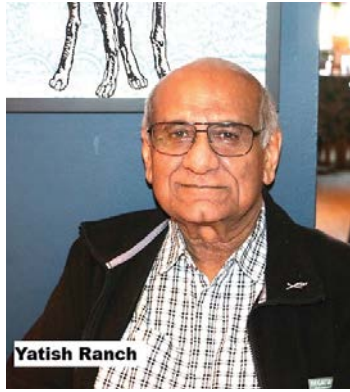
**That's better, Dave Cooksey and Gert Bakker**



## Region 3 continued



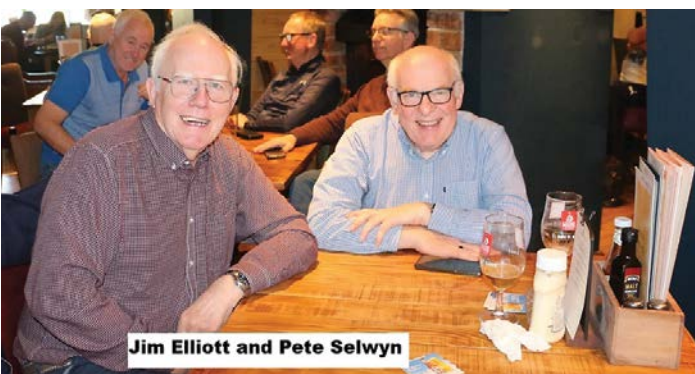
Phil Rock



Yatish Ranch



Come on this is supposed to be serious

OK that'll do  
John Harrison, Jenny and Joe Teeling3 of the ex NCR/ex CSM crew, I wonder where the 4th is?  
Tony Barnett, Barry Skelding and Hamish Foxley

Jim Elliott and Pete Selwyn

## Part 2A The members

Especially for this feature we asked members to send in brief biographies. 3 did so, and two of those are published below. Thanks to Pete and Ian for starting the ball rolling here.

**Pete Selwyn:** Twelve years at NCR (1975-1987) in various roles, including; System Services, Financial Services and Midland Data Centre at Broad Street and Sheldon. Now retired and restoring (slowly) a 1966 Ford Mustang, imported from California. Married for 42 years, 2 kids (one of each), both married (not to each other!), one grandson aged 4. (Pictured below left with Jim Elliott)

**Ian Davidson:** I joined NCR in 1967 and retired at the end of 2011 having travelled to every continent except one. In retirement I took up beekeeping which got me into listening to children reading in school and I spend one morning a week making Cappuccino, Latte etc in a coffee shop. We have 3 'children' and 8 grandchildren.

(Tragically, **Jill McPhail** dictated her mini-biography shortly before her sad passing, and Keith has used those poignant comments as part of his tribute elsewhere in this edition)

## PART 3 – HISTORY OF REGION 3 – Ian Ormerod and Keith Templeman

## MIDLANDS AREA AGENTS &amp; OFFICES

National Cash Register in US first appointed Mr John William Allinson, a Liverpool publican, as UK representative and he began selling National Cash Registers in Liverpool in 1885. He was given the whole of the UK as his territory, and it became apparent that he would not be able to meet the demand by himself and he began appointing agents to sell on his behalf.

Advertisements were placed in various cities across the nation. In 1887 advertisements appeared in Norwich and Belfast followed by Cardiff in May 1888 then followed by London in 1889.



[Bingley Hall, Birmingham: Brewers Exhibition 13th to 22 April 1893.]

One of the first agents was John Wicker who had previously been a hotel manager in Manchester. His territory included all of the Midland's area from east to west.



*Region 3 continued*

In 1895 company founder John H Patterson took back all agency responsibilities from Allinson and took over the 365 Strand, London office. Many of the agents who were retained by NCR had their own offices and these continued to be the responsibility of the agents. This would have been the case with John Wicker who was well established as the Top Agent in the UK.

On the 24th of December 1904, NCR lease the first of its own Midland's offices at Room 67 of Royal London Building, Wolverhampton. This was followed by the lease of 16 Worcester Street, Birmingham.

In February 1907 Stoke-on-Trent joined the growing number of NCR premises with the lease of 1 Glebe Buildings, Glebe Street.

Birmingham's office at 16 Worcester Street was found to be badly positioned for attracting clients and a new showroom and office was opened at 129 New Street on the 18th of September 1911.

The next Midlands office was at 4 Belstone, Shrewsbury, which was leased on the 29th June 1928 for 3 months.

New premises were leased in 1929 for four years at 34 Dale End Birmingham, which must have been substantial as the following year the ground floor and basement were sub-leased, by NCR, to Garnett Whiteley in June 1930.

**1930s**

Wolverhampton Office was opened at 12 Bell Street in February 1929 on a lease of three years.

Birmingham expansion was again planned for 1930 when a twenty-year lease was taken out on the ground floor and basement of 226 Corporation Street.

A shop and storeroom became the first Derby office in December 1930 when a ten-year lease was negotiated.

The first Leicester Office was opened in February 1934 at 107 Granby Street where a ten-year lease was put into place.

The Stoke-on Trent office was moved to 37 Kingsway in October 1934 and on 14th May the Wolverhampton office moved to 11a Lowersmoor.

The first Coventry office was opened at 7 Little Park Street in January 1935 where the lease had been taken out for seven-years. Wolverhampton office moved to 216 King Street, in March of 1935 after being at Bell Street for six-years.

New offices were opened around Birmingham, first at Walsall where Central Hall Buildings, Ablewell Street became the new home for some of the Midland's staff and then at John Bright Street which was leased, for the use of Sasieni & Johnson, a second-hand dealer owned by NCR.

The 6th floor of King Edward House, New Street became the home of the accounting division in December 1938.

Another Accounting Machine Division office was installed at 54 Baldwin Street Coventry, on a lease of five-years.

The Worcester office at Lowermoor was renewed for ten-years with the lease being for Silver street and Lowermoor in July 1938.

In February 1939 the company took out an agreement with Frank Stevenson and Son to finance the partnership to Conduct a second-hand Cash Register Business from 39 miles south of Birmingham to Scottish Boarder.

**WAR YEARS**

During the war years, as part of the work for the government, the company took on a one-year lease for 80 Pershore Street Birmingham, which was used for paint spraying.

The Wolverhampton office was moved to 26 King Street where a five-year lease was signed.

The Birmingham lease for 6th Floor, King Edward House, New Street was renewed in 1945 and in the same year the Derby office moved to 38-40 The Strand

**POST-WAR**

A twenty-one-year lease was taken out in December 1947 for Clarence Chambers, Kingsway, Stoke-on-Trent and the following year a one-year lease for 132 Stratford Road, Sparkbrook was implemented and the lease on 229 Corporation Street was renewed for 14 years.

In May 1951 the Stoke-on Trent office moved to 41 / 43 Kingsway for a planned 17 years.

On the 12th March the Birmingham office at 229 Corporation Street burnt down prompting the early move to Broad Street office which had been planned previously.



*NCR Birmingham Fire 1955*

*(Ian is writing an article on the Birmingham fire which we plan to publish in PostScript soon)*



*Region 3 continued*

1960s

In the summer of 1967, a new data centre was opened in Broad Street using a NCR-Elliott computer which was followed by the latest NCR 315. Staff for the data centre were transferred from London including R. W. H. Longhurst, Manager; J. Duncan, Head of Systems; and I. Handley, Chief Programmer.

The Fazeley Street workshops were opened in June, and the Fazeley Street premises were opened at the same time with manager A. E. Dellar, his men, benches and machines vanishing before a cloud of dust one Friday and by Monday he was his usual serene self in the new building.

The TSD facilities are greatly improved.

1970s-80s INCLUDING SHELDON

In October 1979 it was reported that NCR have recently completed purchase on a new five floor, fully airconditioned office building at Sheldon, five miles Southeast of Birmingham City Centre, which is intended to provide a modern prestigious centre for the company's Midlands operations.

The report read "This building will house all employees presently working out of the two existing Birmingham offices and also the Customer, Sales and Support Education Group from Head Office.

The advantages of these moves will be two-fold: firstly, it will mean that the Field Engineering Department will be working from the same building as their Sales and Marketing colleagues and, secondly, it will give badly needed space to the Education Group, who are so severely cramped at Head Office that they frequently have to use outside facilities.

It is hoped that the building will be ready for part occupation by Easter 1980."

August 1980

Sales and support from Leicester moved to Sheldon. The facilities there are so good that we wanted to make them available to as many people as possible and we felt that as Leicester is so near to Birmingham this will be an ideal move, said Brian Broughton, Executive Assistant to Rex Fleet.

The company's original intention was to occupy as much space as was required for those who had moved from the old Birmingham and Leicester offices and the Education division and to lease the remainder, but we realised that there was still a considerable amount of pressure on the London offices as far as space was concerned said Brian Bruton, so a plan was put forward to move some early support functions to Sheldon. The functions were the UK Information Processing centre, package development, software distribution, documentation distribution, technical Information Services and computer services.

In the 1970 and 80s, Coventry, Northampton and Worcester offices had closed and merged to Birmingham while Stoke centre was split between Manchester and Birmingham. Derby, like many of the other Centres was closed and

moved to Birmingham in the great Regional Office changed that took place in 1998.

## DEPTS IN SHELDON

By 1992 the Following departments were in Sheldon, Education, FED Call Centre, FED Stores, ISD COM Bureau, ISS Computer Room, ISS Network Control, Marketing Services and FED Regional Office and Call Centres.

The FED Sheldon Call Centres covered the following areas: Wales & Severn, West Country, Financial East, Financial West, Systems West, Systems East, NATWEST Midlands East and NATWEST Midlands West.

As Graham Brookman wrote in his comprehensive story about Sheldon Office, "The Sheldon office gradually became less and less occupied and in 1998 the building was sold with just two floors rented back (a shadow of its former self) and not long afterwards NCR moved out altogether, the concept of regional offices having been abandoned by the company with the emergence of the new paradigm of virtual working. The building formerly known as NCR Sheldon has had a few owners and tenants since NCR left and is now being developed as a luxury block of residential flats".

(Graham's story was front page in the Summer 2020 Postscript available on the website. <https://www.ncr.org.uk/media/other/1077/NCRPostscriptIssue62Summer2020.pdf>

It is a perfect companion piece to this section.

## BROAD STREET

Here are a couple of images of our original Birmingham Broad Street office in 1955, followed by what the building has now become.



Wetherspoons pub 'The Figure of Eight', recognise the frontage?





## Region 9 –Adrian Gallagher

On Sunday 18th May 2025, we held our inaugural summer get-together at the Double Locks Inn, Exeter.

It was a beautiful day and setting, the pub accessible via a very narrow bridge. The pub sits on its own right next to the canal, with many paddle boarders and vessels of different types, on the water.

We had 5 people attend the meal, namely **Pete Frost**, attending his first one since retiring and joining the Fellowship, **Graham Storer** and **Julie Mair**, plus **Louise Gallagher** and myself. Thanks to those who managed to make it.

Apologies were received from **Jessie Wallace** and **Martin Prosser**, **John** and **Margaret Stevenson**, **Pat Frost**, **Geoff** and **Angela Cooper**, **Cris** and **Wendy Mackie**, and **Keith Rogers**.

We had a lovely time at a very busy pub with discussions about old times and old friends, plus how the “new NCR” is operating since the Company divided.

Just a reminder that the winter get-together will be held on Monday 27th October 2025, 12.30pm at a venue yet to be decided. I will communicate further details once a venue has been arranged.

Have a great summer and enjoy the sunshine.

**Adrian Gallagher**



*Julie Mair, Graham Storer (gesticulating)*



*Julie Mair, Graham Storer, Pete Frost, Louise Gallagher*

## Views of the beautiful Double Locks Inn, Exeter





## MEET THE ORGANISERS – John Atkins



John

*PS: Welcome to PostScript, and the sixth in a series of discussions with fellow organisers. In your case, you're the secretary to the group.*

Yes, I became Secretary of the Fellowship when John Burchfield approached me and asked if I would take over from John Nash, who was standing down for personal reasons. This was in 2007.

*PS: When did you start with the company, and in what capacity?*

I left school in May 1953, with the Headmaster's blessing, then had two interviews for jobs. One with Martins Bank and one with The National Cash Register Company (as it was then). Martins Bank turned me down, but NCR offered me a job in the Wages Section, which was part of the Accountants Dept, as a Junior on two months probation, to start on the first of June 1953, 3 days after my 16th Birthday.

My main responsibilities were filing all documentation from the Manager, Norman Covell, getting clock cards printed via the Addressograph Dept, and getting cheques signed for the weekly Payroll and sent out to 70 plus offices across the country.

I would like to explain that the company had 3 wage paying departments: Salesmans Accounts – paying all the salesmen; Insurance Dept. - paying all Head Office administration staff and Directors of the company; Wages Dept. - paying all manual staff in Head Office, all clerical and manual staff in the provincial offices, and the Printing and Supplies Divisions.

Having spent over two years enjoying my time in the Wages Section, I was called up for National Service in October 1955, and joined the Navy. During my time in the Navy, I joined Aircraft Carrier HMS Ocean and transported army officers, ratings and jeeps to Cyprus, during the unrest there between Greece and Turkey. On returning, the ship visited Malta, Tangiers, and Gibraltar before completing the journey to the U.K.



HMS Ocean 1945



HMS Forth

I was later posted to Malta and joined HMS Forth, a submarine depot ship. While I was there, we were sent to the Suez Canal for the crisis in 1956, returning, after a cease fire, for Christmas 1956.

*PS: You are well known within the company as the long serving manager of the Payroll dept. You've covered how you joined, what were the circumstances around your return to NCR?*

On my release from the Navy in October 1957, I contacted NCR., who were obliged to offer me a job. As it turned out, the Wages Dept. had a vacancy and I was offered the job which I accepted. The Wages Section was transferred to Greenford in the early sixties. Norman Covell, the Manager lived in Essex and after trying the journey for several months decided it was too much and transferred back to Head Office as Manager of the Purchasing Department. Brian Jubb was promoted to Manager and myself to Assistant Manager.

As explained earlier, there were 3 paying sections. The Managing Director, Steve Conway, found that confusing, so demanded that all three were to be amalgamated, and based in Head office, and named the Payroll Department. Ben Endsor, from Salesmans Accounts, was made Manager, Dennis Marsh, from the Insurance Dept, was made Assistant Manager, and Brian Jubb, from Wages Section, made Office Manager.



Wages Accountant B JUBB, standing and Assistant Wages Accountant, J G Atkins sitting Extract from National Post November 1963





Greenford office 1970

To cut a long story short, during the Sixties, Brian Jubb (pictured above) first, and then Dennis Marsh, transferred to other departments, and I was promoted to Assistant Manager after Dennis left. Payroll Department had a bad period in the late Sixties, and Ben Endsor handed in his resignation to leave on 30th April 1969. I did not know whether to apply for the position of Manager, so I sought the advice of Harry Redington in the Personnel Department, and he advised me to wait and see if they offered the position to me, and then, if successful, I could run the Department my way. I was only 32 at the time, and worried that I would not be considered. However, Directors Roy Bedford and John Stamps persuaded the other Directors to offer me the position, which I accepted.

The Payroll Department, along with other departments, moved several times between the Seventies and the Nineties. The company leased a building close to Staples Corner (Kemps old Biscuit Factory, I believe, with the iconic address of 1,000 North Circular Road, known as 1,000 NCR), for space to convert or destroy Cash Registers prior to decimalization in February 1971. We were there for several years before moving to Brent (just down the road). Lastly we moved to Finchley from where I retired.

Terry Moore stayed with the department and left with me on 4th July 1997, after 40 years service. The loyalty of Terry and several other members of the department, over the years, greatly contributed to the high standards we set and maintained.

I also owe Lin Sandell a big 'thank you' for looking at a new Payroll system with me, which went live in 1976. Lin supported us whilst we were adapting to the new system, and during the subsequent 21 years to 1997, when I retired at 60 after 44 years.

*PS: Ian (Ormerod) found this picture of the NCR Junior football team from 1963? What do remember of the team?*

I remember we used to play our home games at Wormwood Scrubs, the goals did not have nets, and the pitches were very close to each other. When you scored a goal it also went through the next pitch's goal! NCR had 3 adult teams in those days, they were in leagues, and our junior team played friendlies. We did, however, take over the 3rd team's fixtures, they were playing their games with ten and sometimes nine men, and we did not want to split up and fill their vacancies. We did quite well and won a few games.

John Atkins

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*This season's N.C.R. Junior Football Team: left to right, standing, F. HALES (Apprentice School), J. VARLEY (Outside Service), H. MITCHELL (A.A.M.D.), A. CLEVERLEY (Sales Records), P. GROVES (Service) and L. WILTSHIRE (C.R.D./S.P.D.); seated, left to right, A. STREETER (Customers' Accounts), P. NUNAN (Repair Factory), H. WILLIAMS (Order and Technical), captain, B. BLAKE (Factory Stores) and J. ATKINS (Accounts).*

*Extract from National Post November 1963*

Another sport which took place each year was the inter departmental cricket tournament, played in Regents Park. I remember the Accountants Department winning one year, I was number 11 in the batting lineup!! As I don't bowl or keep wicket, I think I was just there to make up the numbers!

*PS: Back to NCR itself, did you manage any depts other than Payroll?*

Yes, much against my will, Ian Jones (Company Secretary) persuaded me to take over Accounts Receivable in 1992, due to Mike Lovering leaving the Company. He thought there was a certain problem in the Department, and asked me to see if it was true. As it turned out everything was fine, no problems. Then in 1994 the Department was being relocated to Chippenham. Most of the staff left the company with redundancy payments. I also claimed redundancy, which was agreed, but David Horne (Financial Controller), who also had a hand in my leaving Payroll, asked me if I would return to the Payroll Department as several problems had arisen since I had left the Department. This was supposed to be for a short time as the Department was being outsourced. Outsourcing did not happen, and it was over two and a half years before a new system was eventually installed in June 1997.

*PS: You were involved with charities on NCR's behalf, I believe?*

At Finchley, in 1991, Payroll and Accounts Receivable got together to arrange raising money for Children in Need on November 21st.

I rang Paul Entwistle (Financial Controller at that time) and explained what we were doing, and asked if NCR would match whatever amount we raised. He asked what amount we would expect to raise, and I said £500, hopefully. He approached Patrick Mill (Managing Director), rang me back to confirm that NCR would match our amount.





We went ahead with our plans which included, swear boxes, raffle tickets, £1 writs, and asking for food and drink donations to make up hampers as raffle prizes. We also got Head Office and Brent involved. The response for the donations was amazing. We planned to walk down from NCR to Tally Ho Corner, and back up on the other side, with collection buckets, with all those participating dressing up in various attire. We borrowed a trolley from nearby Sainsburys, and had a big baby sitting in it, pushed by Mum and Dad. (Photo above) Yes, I am Mum with the blonde wig!

At the end of the walk we had to count up the money, and add it to the money raised from the swear boxes, raffle and writs, and it totalled £1,500!!

When I phoned Paul Entwistle and told him the amount, he was amazed, and said he would inform Patrick Mill, who agreed to match our amount. £3,000 was sent to the program on BBC, and it was shown during the evening along the bottom of the screen.



*The food and drink donated for the Children in Need charity 1991*

*PS: Did you have outside interests and hobbies? Do you still partake in those activities?*

I ran a local football team from 1978 to 1988. During that time I took the team to Tournaments in Holland 1985 and 1986, and to Spain in 1987. I also became Treasurer of the Watford Swimming Club from 1980 to 2000 and Treasurer of the Football Club in 2001 to 2004.



*The family at Watford Swimming Club 1987: twin son Paul, wife Carole, John, daughter Lynne, twin son Stephen*

*PS: Tell us about your family.*

I met my wife, Carole, at NCR. She started in the filing department, and then became a typist, in the Accountants Department, assisting Mrs James, who was the Chief Accountant's secretary. She then moved on to Accounting Machines mainly responsible for writing cheques. Then she moved into Customers Accounts as an accounting machine operator, eventually leaving the Company for a job in Regent Street.

We married in 1961 and had three children, a girl and twin boys, and now have four grandchildren, two girls and two boys.



*John's 60th: John, Lynne, Paul, Carole, Stephen. May 1997*

*PS: To what extent do you need a sense of humour to survive as a Payroll Manager?*

We often had to have a laugh after trying to explain, to some weekly leavers, where their "Week in Hand" was. Manual employees who were paid weekly worked the first and did not receive any pay, then they were paid each Thursday for the previous week. When they left the company we would pay them on the Thursday as usual, and give them a Petty



Cash Voucher for the current weeks pay. Every now and then they would ask "but where is my week in hand". We would explain that they did not get paid for the first week worked, but have now received two weeks pay in their last week.

Their answer would be "but I worked for that week, where is my week in hand". We would eventually explain it several ways and most left happy, but I am sure the odd one or two left thinking we had underpaid them, and went to the cashiers with their voucher.

I remember one Irish lad who worked in the department coming in to me and asking if I would have a word with the employee he was dealing with, as in his words, "I'm confused and not sure where his week in hand is"! We both laughed and sorted things out with the said employee.

*PS; What's the scariest, or most exciting, moment in your career as Payroll Manager?*

Scariest? One Wednesday in the early eighties, the most distressing event occurred, when two Payroll members, Terry Moore and Jeff Over, along with the security officer, George Gross, and the driver from Express Boyd, were held up at gun point as they came out of our normal bank in Neasden with the weeks wages. The robbers snatched the bag containing the money and fled.

Fortunately nobody was hurt, but obviously very shocked. George Gross rang me and explained the situation. I then phoned Martyn Webster the Financial Controller to inform him of the robbery. It took some time to speak to Martyn as Mrs James, his secretary, came back to me on two occasions to say he could not leave the meeting he was having. I then had to tell Mrs James the reason for the call and asked her to whisper it to Martyn. Yes, the next voice I heard was Martyn's. He asked me if all were safe and sound, and then asked me how much we had lost. I told him the amount and the breakdown of £5, £1, and coinage, to enable him to get the money from the company's bank in Marylebone, and bring it out to us in Brent, so that we could meet our Thursday Weekly Payday.

Paul Williams, Personal Director, then sent a memo to all the weekly employees, telling them of the robbery and asking them to consider switching to Monthly Paid. It was disappointing that only a few did transfer. Martyn Webster said he would not allow us to pick up the Wages in future, and asked me to contact a security firm to pick up the weekly cash. Group 4 were the only ones who answered our call, and after time they eventually took over filling the pay packets, and then delivering to the respective sites. In 1986 the Truck Act was repealed and the company were able to transfer the remaining weekly paid over to monthly paid. A few weeks later Martyn did say he thought that I must have laughed, having the upper hand, and being told he could not possibly leave his meeting.

Most exciting - during my time as Payroll Manager, my wife and I were invited to join NCR UK's annual 4 day sales convention scheduled to be held that year, 1982, in Venice. We were due to fly with Lakers Airline, but before we were due to go, Lakers collapsed. However, Michael Cronin, the



*Some invite*

organiser of the trip, managed to get accommodation, at short notice, in Majorca, and we flew out with Iberia Airlines. We had a very enjoyable 4 days. Whilst there, on a free afternoon, we hired a car to visit a hotel we had booked for our summer holiday later that year. Thank goodness we did, it was in a very run down condition, and the pool was littered with debris. We cancelled when we returned home.

Also, in 1990 I was invited, along with my wife, to join Rex Fleet at Buckingham Palace for a Garden Party celebrating 150 years of the Royal Warrant. Rex had been invited and was asked to bring 3 other long serving staff with their partners. They were, Allan Perryman from Sales, John Fothergill from FED, and myself from Administration. It was one of the most exciting times of our lives.

Whilst there, when the event was drawing to a close, we were at the front of the Queens tea enclosure when the Queen, and Princess Diana, arrived for their tea. We heard Diana say to the Queen "my feet are killing me".



*Carole and John at the Palace, Garden Party entrance, 1990*



*PS: What do you enjoy about retirement?*

Retirement gave us more time to travel over the past 28 years. We have enjoyed many cruises, covering most of the Mediterranean, the Canary Islands and Madeira. Also a New Year cruise starting at Acapulco in Mexico, visiting Nicaragua, Costa Rica, through the Panama Canal, Curacao, Grenada, St Lucia and Barbados. I would recommend cruising, but on a small ship (approx 800 passengers and crew)

*PS: What does your role as secretary to the Fellowship committee entail?*

My role has decreased over the past few years as new members are very few now. I doubt there any employees now at NCR who would know anybody in the Fellowship. The work from home situation ends the comradeship we all enjoyed in the past years. I do more as co-ordinator, alongside Lin Sandell, of the London Region's lunches, holding 2 lunches per year. Lin sends out the invitations, I receive their menu choices, along with either their bank transfer notification or cheque for the cost. I send Lin details of the number of attendees, and their menu choices, for her to inform the Hotel. I send a bank transfer to the hotels bank account, paying for the meals in advance, and reconcile our bank account.

PIC, the Pension Payers, advise any new retirees that they can contact Lin or myself if they would like information about the Fellowship (any new members lately, have been older employees who are now receiving their deferred pension).

I also obtain a list of deceased pensioners every six months from PIC, sort out members of the Fellowship and non members for input to the Post Script magazine.

*PS: Looking back now at your time at NCR, what are your thoughts?*

Reflecting over the 44 years, I really enjoyed my time in Payroll, both prior to being Manager and being Manager.

Yes, I did have my ups and downs with Personnel/Human Resources, as they supplied the Payroll Department with all the starting and leaving notices. Apart from that, the Company left me alone to (as Harry Redington said) run the Department my way. One of the reasons why the Department ran smoothly was due to the long service and loyalty of the staff. At least 5 ladies and 1 gentleman only left to take retirement. Several young ladies got married during their time in the Department and only left to start a family. Also, any time we needed to work late or come in on a Saturday, everyone was willing. I was very fortunate not to have a constant turn over of staff.

I also enjoyed serving all the employees with their Wages/ Salaries, and hopefully, they looked upon the Payroll as an efficient working Department. I also hope that I have helped assuage the notion from my time in the forces that "if you came up through the ranks, you cannot manage".

One question for our readers: As I said at the beginning, I started work on 1st June 1953. I could not go to work the next day, and it was not because of anything for which I was responsible. Why? *Answer on page 26*

## THE COMPANY FLAT

*(Following the article on Head Office special depts in the last edition, Ian Davidson recalls his experience of the Company Flat)*

Not actually in Head Office, but just round the corner (Dorset Square, actually on the corner of Baker Street and Marylebone Road) there was the Company Flat. There is a large building bounded by Baker Street, Marylebone Road, Glentworth Street, and Melcombe Street. If you have been to Head Office, there is a good chance that you will have walked past it and just seen a number of shops. However, there is an entrance on Glentworth Street and on the upper floors there are a number of flats (128) and NCR had 2 of these. They were used by NCR people visiting Head Office and offered Bed and Breakfast. When you went in the main entrance there was a large open area with a water feature in the middle (I think it had goldfish swimming in it). In each corner there was a lift and on each floor that served 4 flats. I imagine that, in its heyday, it would have been like Hercule Poirot's (David Suchet) flat in the TV series. On entering the flat there was a visitor's toilet (convenient!) and then a large Reception Room. From the Reception Room there were sliding doors to a Dining Room (which was served by a kitchen) and another door to what would have been the 'private area' of the flat. In the private area were a number of bedrooms and also bathrooms and toilets. The bedrooms were not en-suite which was the reason that some people would try to book late in the hope that all the rooms were booked and they had to find other accommodation. Some of the bedrooms faced out onto Baker Street – others faced it

to an inner light shaft (much quieter). One of the rooms was used as a lounge with a TV – and, if there was something you particularly wanted to watch you might have to ask whether others minded you switching channel. On the roof there was a roof-garden which was pleasant on a summer evening. Walking round the roof you could notice that there was another set of lifts for the servants to use – so that they did not need to share facilities with the owners. If you would enter the kitchen of an evening (for a peek) you would find that there was rooms for the housekeeper there. NCR had two adjoining flats such that one door served both flats.

I would try to stay in the Company Flat when I visited HO – the bedrooms were larger than some of the nearby hotels. On one occasion I took the Birmingham 'pool car' as I was going to a meeting in Head Office, but I also had to borrow (or return) a couple of CRT monitors. It was a very windy day and after the meeting the advice was 'not to travel'. I asked about the availability of the Company Flat – and there was space, so I was sorted for the night. I arranged to be able to put the car in the HO car park for the night and was able to drive back to Birmingham in the morning. I learned that a number of people had been in Head Office for some course and had vacated the flat that day. I think that I got back to Birmingham about the same time as they did because of travel disruption.

**Ian Davidson**



## Defeating Competition - Part III

### 1913 A Time of Terror

The month of March 1913 began with the company management and senior staff still under the threat of the prison sentences imposed on them the previous month.

On Monday the 24th March, nature took a hand in projecting J.H. Patterson into conspicuous public service. A warm wind from the Gulf of Mexico headed northwards across Cincinnati towards Dayton. Another wind began in the mouth of the Saint Lawrence River. This icy blast of frigid Canadian air travelled south through Detroit and at Toledo the temperature fell rapidly as it headed southwards towards Dayton.

A third wind formed in the Great Northern Plains. And quickly became a wind of hurricane force in central Nebraska. It struck Omaha on Easter Sunday, and dealt the city a devastating blow. After buffeting Peoria and Springfield, it then increased in vigour again as it nears Indianapolis, then moving on eastwards towards Dayton.

These three great air masses collided over a wide expanse of farmland extending from Indianapolis to Fort Wayne and Lima in the north, Columbus in the east and at the southern edge, Dayton.

To the north of Dayton four rivers converged within the city limits, The Great Miami River, Wolf Creek, Stillwater and the Mad River.

When the three great air masses collided a sustained rainfall occurred which deposited an average of nearly 9 inches of water on every foot of the 2500 square miles of the territory.

These four great torrents, each travelling at approximately 25 miles an hour, met at, 7:00 AM on March 25th, 1913, inside the city limits of Dayton, Ohio.

On the following day at six-thirty am Patterson arrived at his office calling Barringer, his secretary, to follow and they went up to the top of the NCR office building.

As the angry, rain-swollen waters began to rise Patterson viewed the growing desolation.

He said: "Dayton will have an awful flood today. We must prepare to house and feed the people who will be driven from their homes. I now declare NCR temporarily out of commission and proclaim the Citizens Relief Committee." He then ordered that the Powerhouse sound the factory whistle at one-minute intervals for thirty seconds as a warning and to wake the residents of Dayton.



**Dayton Flood from Fairground Hill, arrow points to Union Station**



**Patterson (identified by arrow) at Main and Apple Streets**

The highly trained and flexible NCR organization went into action. Executives were given tasks including setting up two emergency rooms, an isolation ward, a morgue, a nursery, and maternity ward, and sanitation. The next executive he instructed "select fifty handpicked men from among the foremen not already engaged in emergency work. Brief them fully as an auxiliary but functioning police force. They will act as guards in and about the plant, prevent possible theft, rioting and looting here and elsewhere".

His next statement was, "There will be a grave need for boats to rescue marooned people. Draw plans and templates for an easily constructed flat bottomed stable rowboat that will safely seat 6 plus the rower. Start turning out boats and oars within an hour. We'll need at least 200 of them".

He ordered 500 men be selected for rescue work on the slopes of the high level of the water. To another executive, he said "Dayton's electrical service will go out quickly. Transfer NCR's service to the emergency generators immediately".

By 7am the meeting had finished, Patterson had changed the NCR Factory into an Emergency Relief Centre, and it was precisely at 7:00am on 25th March 2013 that the waters in the river reached twenty-four feet and burst over the banks into Monument Avenue. Within minutes the city was flooding. Within forty-five minutes the water was three-feet deep and carrying cars with it.



**Dayton Flood Patterson in NCR Rescue Boat**



## FLOOD EDITION

Volume III

The Third Section Edition

## The N C R Weekly

DAYTON, OHIO, SATURDAY, APRIL 12, 1913

## FLOOD EDITION

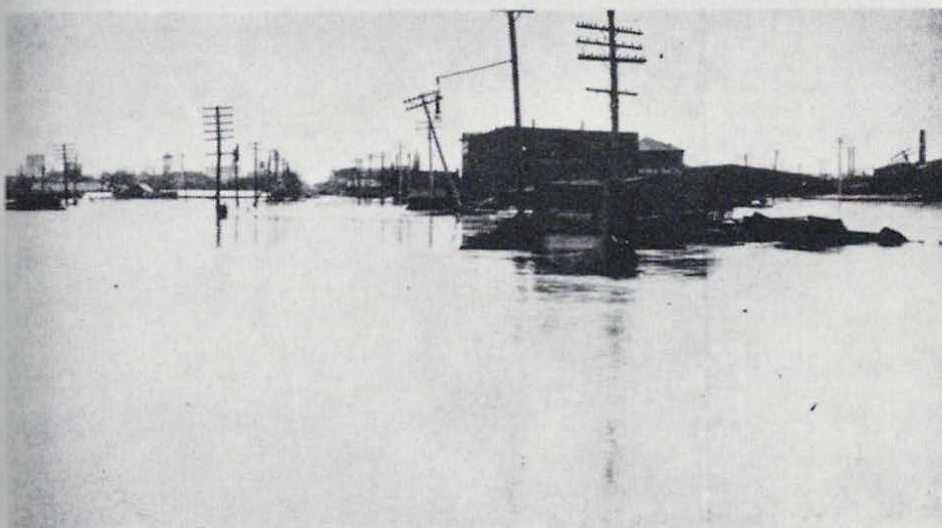
Number 13



Third Street, Looking Toward Business Section of City



A Portion of Flooded District Near N. C. R. Factory



West on First Street. Office Buildings in the Distance

## Dayton Suffers From Most Destructive Flood in Its History

The Miami River valley in which Dayton is located, under ordinary conditions one of the most beautiful and peaceful valleys in this country, was suddenly transformed on Tuesday, March 25, into a channel of death and destruction. This was the culmination of a series of unusually severe wind and rain storms which had been in progress for several days throughout the north central section of the United States. As a result of these cyclones and floods a large portion of the country has been devastated from Nebraska on the west to Pennsylvania on the east.

## Storm Began Easter Sunday

The storm proper did not reach Dayton until Easter Sunday, March 23, when it rained at intervals during the afternoon and night. On Monday the waters seemed to fall from the clouds in torrents, and by Monday evening, the twenty-fourth, the Miami River, which flows through Dayton, was higher than it had been at any time this year. It continued to rise rapidly and by five o'clock in the evening much of the lowlands surrounding the city and a few of the lowest streets began to fill with water. The rain continued to fall all through the night, and early Tuesday morning the blowing of steam whistles and the ringing of fire alarms and church bells gave warning to those in the lower sections to seek safety from the currents which were rapidly growing in volume and fury. Many heeded the warning and reached the higher points. Others apparently did not appreciate the gravity of the situation and hesitated to leave.

## Rapid Rise of Waters

The waters after once breaking over the banks and levees rose with such alarming rapidity that only those who acted promptly were able to escape. There was no time for a second thought.

Hundreds had left their homes in the morning for their daily work only to be caught in the floods on the way and compelled to seek refuge in residences, office buildings and shops in the business districts. Thus they were imprisoned and separated from their families and with no knowledge as to the fate of those whom they had left at home a few minutes before.

The cellars were filled and the first floors of the houses in the residential districts were covered early Tuesday morning. This forced the people to the second floors, attics and roofs of their houses in order to escape with their lives. By nine o'clock in the morning the streets of the greater portion of the city were filled with floating rubbish, lumber, horses and houses. The telephones and telegraph lines were put out of service. Railroad trains could neither enter nor leave the city. There was no method of communication with the outside world or with the different sections of the city.

## Terrible Plight of Refugees

The rains continued to fall during all of Tuesday and Tuesday night, and the waters as a consequence continued to rise. The air, growing cold and chilly, was filled with snow flurries. The skies were brightly illuminated at different points by fires which had broken out in both the business and residence sections of the city.

These were the conditions which faced thousands of people who were left marooned on the second floors, attics and roofs of the houses on Tuesday evening. Added to the discomforts of being without food, water, heat, light and dry clothing, the worry and distress which accompanied the separation of families, and the danger of being carried away by the flood, was the apparent necessity of fighting the flames should they continue to spread. On Wednesday, the twenty-sixth, the waters began to recede and by Thursday evening or Friday morning practically all persons in the flooded district had been brought to dry land and their physical wants provided for.

## Millions of Dollars Worth of Property Destroyed

This is considered one of the greatest disasters in the history of this country. It is impossible to estimate the loss and damage to property, but it will run into the hundreds of millions of dollars. In this city the merchandise on the first floors of the stores in the principal business sections of the city is completely ruined. The large plate glass windows and the expensive store fixtures are broken and destroyed.

Several business blocks have been destroyed by fire. Numerous houses have been completely wiped out of existence, while hundreds of others are so badly damaged that their repair is almost impossible. Along with the loss of the houses themselves is the furniture and personal property which is usually found in them, including many articles which cannot possibly be replaced by money alone. Horses, carriages and automobiles are also numbered among the property which was swept away by the waters.

## Members of Foreign Department Safe

A number of the members of the Foreign Department were in the submerged district and lost their household effects and valuable personal property. They were fortunate, however, in escaping with their lives and all were able to resume their usual duties on Monday, April 7.

The loss of life was not as great as at first estimated. Approximately one hundred bodies have so far been recovered. Others will, no doubt, be found as the waters recede, but it is not likely that the number will exceed two hundred. This is remarkably low considering the nature and extent of the flood and speaks volumes for those who risked their lives in the work of rescue and for the devotion of the doctors, nurses and others who assisted in caring for the refugees.





**Dayton Flood First Survivors in NCR Boat 4th & Main**

Street cars were picked up and turned over and tossed like toys through shop windows and the sides of residences. One came to rest upside down in front of the YMCA.

At 8:52 the library flooded.

Frank W Newell, a retired US Commissioner and resident of the Old Soldiers Home, climbed a telegraph pole and using his penknife sent a morse code message to the Associated Press requesting help.

By 10:00 AM. Some of the new boats built by the NCR company's woodworking department were already in use. As ordered by Patterson, as soon as the boats were completed a rescue man was assigned to each and the boats were carted to the high watermark on the nearest roads.

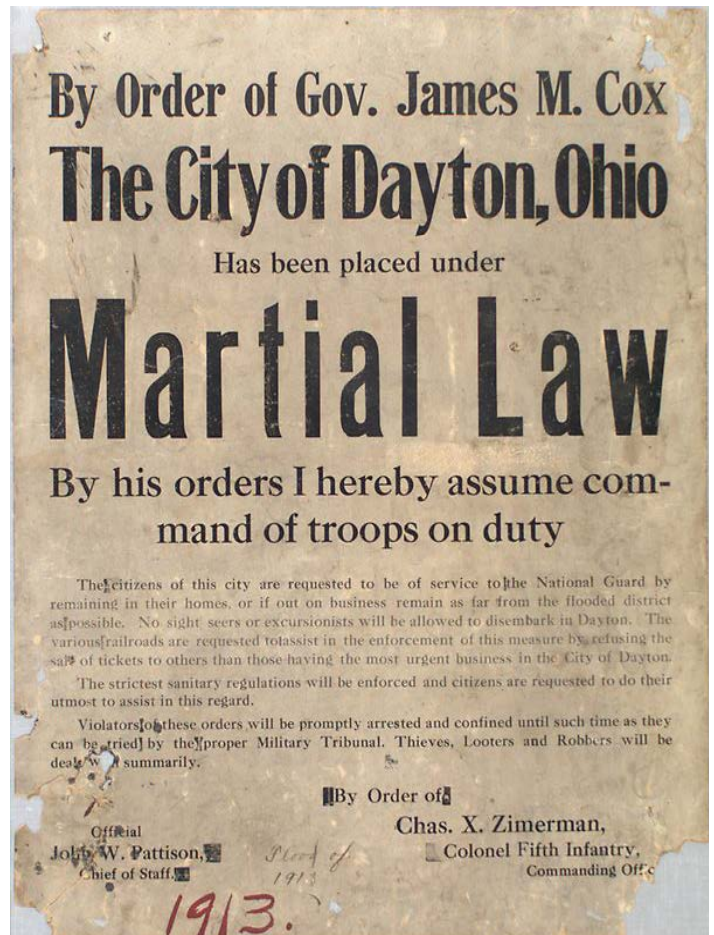
By 11 am houses were being swept away and thirty minutes later the Ohio Governor, James. M Cox was informed of the disaster at Dayton.

The water was at least 13 feet deep on Perry Street covering the tops of the lampposts. Here residents were being rescued from the rooves of single storey houses.

By noon, Patterson's employees had brought over 500 People to the hill. The same rescue activities were being carried on by NCR men at the slopes of Brown Street, Wayne Avenue and 5th St to the east. All of those who were rescued were shuttled in trucks and waggon to the massive relief station that the National Cash Register had become. As the first of them arrived shortly after 9:00 AM, the first truckloads of provisions were also arriving from the countryside to the South.



**Dayton Flood Trolley Car Main Street**



The early afternoon brought the sound of a large explosion when a drug store at the corner of Third & St Clair streets disintegrated in smoke and dust. At 3:15 pm the President, Woodrow Wilson, was informed of the disaster, at that point, there was 20 to 30 feet of water in the main business district, and it was still rising.

Twelve of the NCR boats were lost before 1:00 PM although no men manning them were lost. Replacement boats were being made by the woodworking department at the rate of two every fifteen minutes.

NCR was declared, by Mayor Phillips, to be the nerve centre and brains, relief headquarters and operational core for the whole of Dayton. Now more and more supplies were reaching the plant, along with military police officials, doctors and nurses. It was said by midafternoon, that NCR gave the appearance of an organisation that had been in the business of emergency relief for years.

It was 5:45 pm when the Ohio governor declared Dayton a major disaster area with a promise of Federal Aid. Fires had broken out on Main and Vine Streets and burning debris floated down the streets to set fire to other buildings.

By every available wagon truck and motor car Patterson rushed food, clothing, bedding, medicine and hospital supplies to the plant. He ordered a special trainload of supplies from New York. He built boats, mobilized doctors, nurses, and relief workers.

Thousands were rescued from their flooded houses and brought to the factory, which expanded into a huge relief camp. NCR Hill became Sanctuary Hill.



THE POST MARCH 26 1913—PAGE 7

# N. C. R. Plant and Company Officials; 2000 Flood Sufferers Took Refuge Here



## REPORT HAMILTON POLICE CHIEF DEAD

By Staff Correspondent.

HAMILTON, O., March 26.—It is reported that Police Chief Zellmer was accidentally shot and killed this morning. His body is supposed to have been carried away in the flood. The report has not been confirmed. Zellmer was 45 and married.

## WOMAN IS DROWNED

The body of Mrs. Ida Busch, 60, of Sanfordtown, four miles from Covington, Ky., was found in the backwater from Banklick Creek, near her home, Wednesday. Apparently she had fallen into the water, but a report to Coroner Wise, of Covington, said the body was tied to a tree when discovered.

It was not tied, however, when it was taken out by Joseph Ostendorf, a relative, attracted by grandchildren of Mrs. Busch, who saw the body.

## HIGH WATER COMING

MEMPHIS, TENN., March 26. Local weather observers today issued a statement that the greatest flood ever known can be expected in the Mississippi Valley in 10 days. The river here is rising more rapidly than ever before. The flood stage is expected tonight.

## DROWNED NEAR CIN'TI

BIRD MITCHELL, of Ivorydale, O., drowned when a skiff capsized while he was being rescued from Seibert Hotel, Ivorydale.

RAY SHAW, 37, watchman of the Y. M. C. A. Boat Club, drowned when skiff capsized at Tower Hill.

## KENTUCKY TOWNS SUFFER DAMAGE

While the flood damage has not been great in Covington, Newport

When officers of the federal government reached Dayton, they said to Patterson: "We can do nothing more than you have already done".

In Isaac F. Marcossan's book 'Wherever Men Trade' Marcossan said "Those grim flood days that marked the high tide of Dayton's turbulent waters also marked the high tide of the Paterson humanitarianism. The waters receded, but there was no recession in his public service".

City officials used the National Cash Register Co Factory as their base. Over 2,500 people slept and were fed there each day, pregnant women gave birth there - and christened their babies 'Cash' in several cases.

Patterson was suddenly a national hero, and when the waters subsided, he chaired a citizens committee to clean up the city.

Cox, who had become city governor asked. President

Wilson to grant a pardon to Patterson for his conviction in the Criminal Court, but Patterson refused to accept it. He was later cleared in the Appeals Court of any criminal charges relating to his business practices in the past.

From then on NCR's stature in the business and public community grew. Patterson became a tireless promoter of young people's clubs, of community centres, public health and education and much else. He also gave thousands of acres of parkland to the city and to his employee's club.

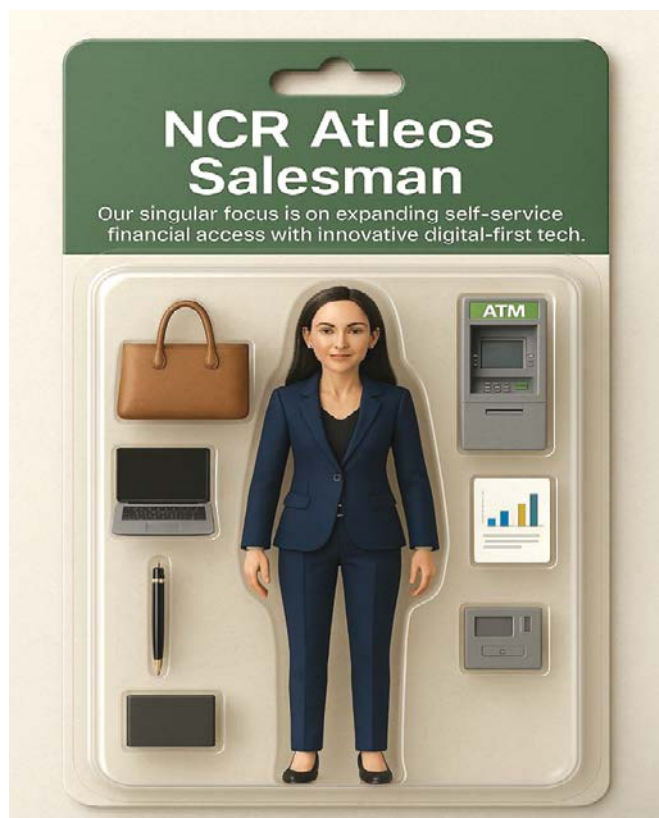
John Henry Patterson died in 1922 on a train to Atlantic City. It was said that "The old man with all his tumultuous years behind him must have had the satisfaction of knowing that he had created not only a business employing thousands of people in many countries, of transforming retail business around the globe but also building a company name which was respected throughout the world".



## RACHEL RAY

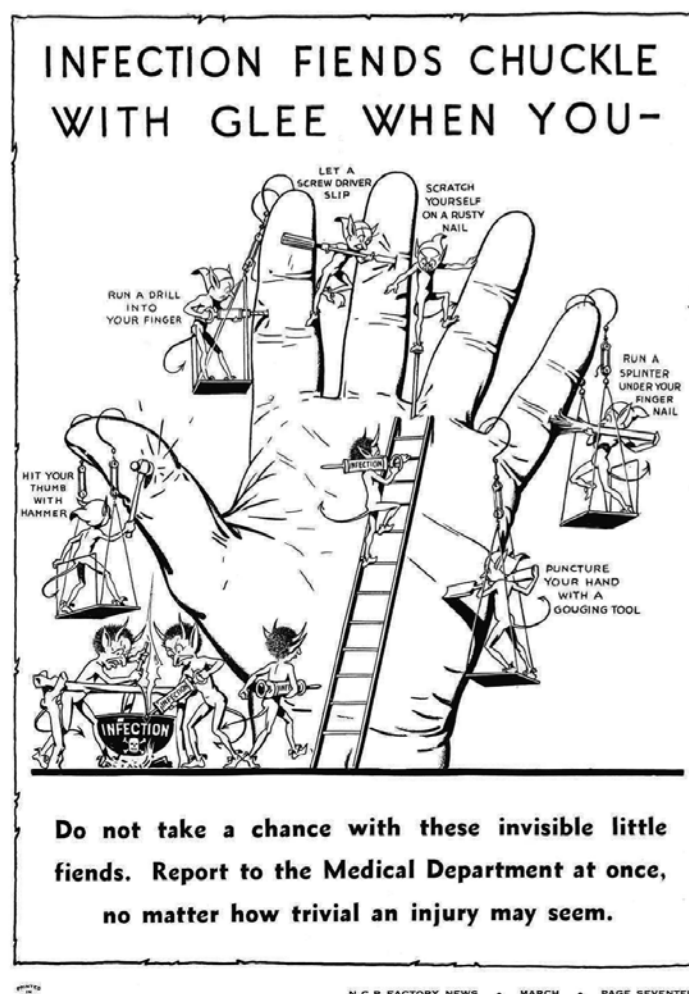
NCR Atleos Executive Accounts Manager

Meet the newest action figure on the market! The NCR Atleos Account Executive. Equipped with a laptop, NCR Atleos branded swag, business insights, abd a serious love for self-service innovation. She's ready to expand financial access one solution and one community at a time. This little package represents real hustle! Her passion is strengthening partnerships, helping execute strategic self-service initiatives, and brings a lot of fierce determination and positive energy to every project. Coming soon to a market near you!



## INFECTION FIENDS

Ian found this page in the NCR Factory News  
March 1936 edition



Answer to 'Why John Atkins could not go to work that day'  
*Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II*

## THE FULL COMMITTEE



John Atkins



Ron Gammie



Keith Templeman



Adrian Gallagher



Lin Sandell



Pat Stroudley



Pat Keogh



Stephen Swinbank



Geoff Jackson



Ian Ormerod



## BONFIRE TOFFEE

In the early Nineties all the engineers from Derby FED used to collect their parts from a firm called PAS (Private Access Storage) in Nottingham. One year PAS invited all their customers to send in any humorous experiences they'd had, to be printed in PAS's magazine, and the authors of the ones which were printed would receive a bottle of Champagne.

Well, here's a copy of a story I sent in about an experience I had in the late Sixties when covering the NCR 500 computer.

The story was printed and I duly received my bottle of bubbly (the illustration was not mine, I'm afraid).

I've attached a copy of the of the article, and hope you'll consider this worthy of a mention in Postscript.

Kind Regards,  
John Harrison, ex Derby engineer.

### Cool heads were needed when John Harrison came up against a sticky problem

Most engineers know the frustration of trying to impress an important customer and end up feeling they are banging their head against a brick wall. Well, several years ago I got that futile feeling with one of my customers.

I had finished my course (eight months down in London) in the August of that year and could not seem to get on with the people in the computer department. Every time the machine broke down either I was miles away and took hours to get there in my clapped-out Ford Anglia, or if I did happen to be on the doorstep it would seem to take me an age to find out what was wrong with the damn thing; and of course it was always wages day or month end when it did go wrong. I have always considered it one of the Great Unexplained Mysteries of Life why computers insist on giving trouble on those most sacred of days when customers achieve Olympic standards in jumping up and down.

Well, it was the beginning of November and this customer was jumping up and down all right. They had been struggling valiantly to cope with their end-of-month workload, when all at once the machine resolutely refused to read any of their magnetic ledger cards; foolscap sized with a magnetic stripe on the back. When I arrived the operator was fidgeting, the programmer was hopping from foot to foot, the manager was tearing his hair out (which was painfully thin anyway) in blind panic.

When they told me what had happened I was tempted to scratch my head too, but not wanting to end up as bald as the manager, I got down to business. In a rare flash of inspiration I decided there must be something wrong with the magnetic head that read and wrote the ledger cards. I set about dismantling it, a very fiddly job. As I took the head out I could see there was some kind of deposit on it. I got my meths out and started to rub the head as if I was Aladdin with the Magic Lamp. No way, would it dissolve in the meths. Then I really did scratch my head; "What is it!" I asked myself frantically. Meanwhile the manager was hovering in the background, watching me like a praying mantis.

In desperation I resorted to the engineer's standard cleaning fluid, licking my finger and trying to rub it off with good old fashioned spit. To my astonishment (and everyone else's too, for by this time I had an audience) it started to dissolve, and when I wet my finger again I could taste something sweet.

It was then that I glanced down to the side of the keyboard and spotted a small white paper bag sitting there innocently. All at once everything fell into place; sweet sticky substance, beginning of November, fidgety operator; it was Bonfire Toffee!



She had been eating it as she fed the cards in, some had stuck to the back of the card and then to the head as the card went in. All I had to do was to clean it off with a little more spit, put everything back together quick and the little beauty worked perfectly, albeit with a rather red faced operator.

Everyone saw the funny side of it and after that little ice-breaker I was their hero for all time. I could do no wrong in their eyes, but if they ever forgot I was their knight in shining armour and got uppity, all I had to say were two words to bring wide grins to their faces; "Bonfire Toffee".

## NEXT TIME

That's all we have from you this time. So, as Ian and I collapse onto our (separate, and well distanced) chairs for a bit of a rest, and Bob Baker (our man at BusiPrint, the printers) basks in our praise for another job well done, and moves on to his next project, we remind you of next edition's feature – the Photo Competition from our Regional Lunches in the autumn/winter. See Page 7 for full details.

All your region has to do at your lunch is to take all your normal photos, which will be part of the competition, and also send photos which are appropriate for these prize categories:

- Grumpiest photo
- Most happy photo
- Photo from strangest angle
- Most amusing whilst eating photo
- Best group (more than four) photo
- Best photo of other people taking selfies of themselves
- Most apt caption
- Funniest caption

Or send photos in for categories we haven't even thought of! Have fun!

**IF YOU HAVE AN NCR PENSION QUERY,  
HERE ARE THE CONTACT DETAILS**



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**Monday - Friday, 8am - 6pm**

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**Web: [picmemberzone.com](http://picmemberzone.com)**

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**Need extra help? Please get in touch,  
we are here to support you.**



# The NCR Fellowship

**PRESIDENT:**  
Stephen Swinbank

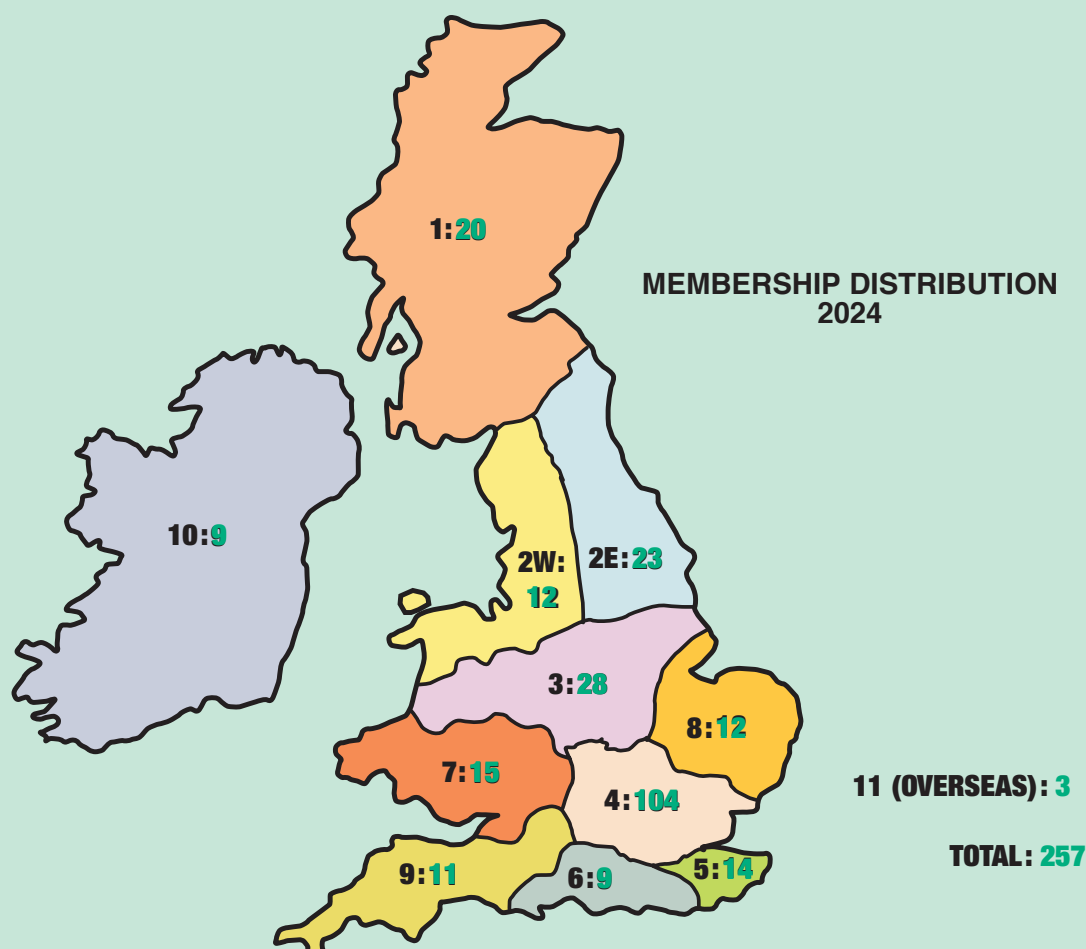
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