

NCR Sheldon – “so many happy smiling faces”



On 8th April 1980, NCR opened the doors of a shiny new building on the Coventry Road between Birmingham city centre and the National Exhibition Centre. This was to be the new centre for the Midlands engineering, sales and support functions (amongst others) as well as the new home for the NCR Education Centre (with the exception of FED which retained its training facility at Brent Cross).

Having been a teacher for less than six years, I was fortunate to be offered a position as a Customer and Support Education (CASE) instructor based in Sheldon. This meant moving myself, wife and son from Nottingham to Birmingham. I joined NCR on the day the Sheldon office opened. Having spent my, till then, brief working life in the public sector joining NCR came as a bit of a shock albeit a pleasant one.

For those of you who never visited Sheldon the building was an L-shape with north and west wings. The Education Centre was allocated the whole of the second floor for classrooms and administration. The north wing on the third floor was mainly an office area for the Education managers and instructors. At the end of that wing was a very fine restaurant (way too posh to be called a canteen!) for the staff but principally for attendees on the various courses taking place.

In the very early days, and for a few weeks, the Education Division were the only occupants of the Sheldon office. Gradually others moved in; Sales and Support from Broad Street in Birmingham along with the DPC. FED also moved in from Fazeley Street (also in Birmingham) – more about that in Les Clarke's article following this. It took a while for the restaurant to get operational and so buffet lunches were shipped in every day for the course attendees as lunch was included in the price of the course. I remember we instructors who didn't have a class would hang around after lunch was over to see what we could scavenge from the leftovers. We used to do quite well much to the annoyance of the other occupants of the building who had moved in by then.

Over the years occupancy of Sheldon changed somewhat most significant of which was the major installation of the IPC on the fourth floor to cater for all the data processing needs of the NCR organisation in UK and across Europe from what I remember. Systemedia also moved in and for several years the Sheldon office was at full capacity. FED had both the Birmingham and regional office based in Sheldon. In 1991

they held an open day for families and friends (see photo following this article). Photos of the IPC (provided by Ian) are also included following this article.

After eight years I waved goodbye to the Education Division and joined Systems Services as developer under the watchful eye of Peter Heywood (initially). I also worked for about a year on a Help desk for customers. I would like to say that the experience I got there would have made me more favourably disposed to the customer service agents who have the misfortune to deal with me these days, but I'm afraid it didn't. Eventually I moved into Quality in 1994 and stayed there for the next 10 years until my unceremonious departure in 2004.

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 after 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 (see page 3).

They were, on the whole, happy times for those of us who worked there. The bright airiness of the open plan offices was in stark contrast to the rather more sombre facilities at NCR UK's head office in London. That had a charm of its own – but very different to that of Sheldon.

Finally, an explanation of the heading above. During the heyday of the Education Division in the 1980's, one group of people who attended a range of our courses was a team of employees from a bank in Sierra Leone. The bank had bought one of NCR mini-computer range (either an I-8250 or I-8270 running IMOS III or V). The team were going to support the new machine after its installation in Freetown and needed to learn about the operating system and also how to programme in COBOL. At the end of each course they would fill in the obligatory course evaluation forms and as the CASE supervisor at the time I got to read all of these. One that particularly amused me was in the additional comments on the form. This participant wrote "It is nice to see so many happy smiling faces at NCR Sheldon". I think that says it all really!

Graham Brookman

OPEN DAY



HUNDREDS ATTEND FED SHELDON OPEN DAY

Regional Manager Jim Logan's invitation to the Regions FED Staff to attend an Open Day on Saturday 23 March resulted in over 300 staff & their families visiting Sheldon. Guests of Honour on the day were our Divisional Director Tom Boles, David Dally from C&G Division Head Office, and Chris Dolan from Personnel. A warm welcome was also given to some of our retired colleagues, Sid Anderson, Chris Martin and Joe Smith enjoyed spending the day with friends and sharing many happy memories together. The day's events for the children included a Disco, Magiclan, PC games and a Punch & Judy show. Several of the Sheldon staff, who were helping with the children, joined in the spirit of the occasion by dressing up as clowns. Not surprisingly a very popular attraction proved to be the games room. A dozen computers were set up with various games from the sedate flight simulator to the noisy Space Wars with Stereo Sound. Also in the Games room the children, (and some Adults!), had their photo taken by Video Camera and then this picture was incorporated into a special NCR POST with a special story on how they had discovered a Stone Age Computer. While the children were being entertained the older visitors were taken on a tour of the Sheldon Offices and then enjoyed a trip down memory lane in the NCR Museum which had been specially set up for the occasion.

The exhibits included six cash registers dating from 1895 to 1915 and then the range of machines from the 1920s to 1970 including the Class 6000 and 1000. The AMD machines were well represented by 2 Class 31's and 10 adding machines ranging from the Class 14, 15, 18 to the NCF Kalamazoo adding machine of the early 1970s.

Displays of Engineering and Sales Literature from the 1920s onwards attracted a lot of interest as did the displays of extracts from the NCR Post of 1950 to 1960. A treasure hunt which took place during the day meant many people exploring into desks, drawers and cupboards to find the elusive answers to some very cryptic clues.

Eventual winners of the Treasure Hunt were John & Alison Jones of Castro 2555 West Country who won NCR Tee Shirts.

Glenn Farrelly, Chris Butterfield and Claire Ormerod each received an Easter Egg as runners up.

All the replies to the Open Day invitation were entered into a draw and the Lucky Winners were John Latty (Bottle of Champagne), Adrian Gallagher (NCR Track Suit) and Chris Martin (NCR Golf Umbrella).

At Lunchtime an excellent Buffet was provided by the Sheldon Restaurant Staff.

The day eventually came to an end at 4.00pm when everyone began making their way home after a very memorable day. Staff and visitors were unanimous in thanking Jim Logan for his invitation and for providing such an excellent day.



U.K. Information Processing Centre

IPC is the Information Processing Centre for NCR UK's Information Systems and Services department. Formed in 1981 and located in Sheldon, Birmingham, the Centre's main functions are:-

- Processing of NCR's Internal Systems (e.g. Business Information, customer services, inventory management, financial systems)
- Demonstration of NCR's Mainframe Products
- Customer Software Distribution
- Software Support/Mainframe Package Development
- Processing Services for NCR's Marketing and Sales Divisions

The centre is a very active 'production' environment with a staff of 24 running per day an average of 14 online systems (mainly TRANPRO with TOTAL database) and 600 batch jobs.



Current hardware consists of:-

- 2 x 8 megabyte dual-processor V858517's and a V8575M, each using the V8X operating system
- 1 x 4 megabyte 19050, using the IFRX operating system
- 10 gigabytes of disc storage including 31 x 200 megabyte removable discs and 6540 fixed discs
- 6370 DCR encoded and 635 phase mode tape drives
- 4 x 2000 ipm train printers, and laser printer
- 3 x 721 Front-end Processors and 3 x 621 multiplexers linked to the ISS 191S telecommunications network
- 2 x (4x16) DCD (Dynamic Channel Directions) for peripheral pooling

— the site is also the location of the 191S Network Control Centre which operates NCR's UK and International telecommunications services.



In 1985, over a hundred tours of the Centre were conducted by IPC's experienced technical staff for NCR's customers and prospects. Tours are conducted also for the many customers and NCR staff who visit Sheldon to attend courses run by NCR's Education Division.

IPC is pleased to participate in customer demonstration activities from 15-20 minute tours of the facility to fuller demonstration/discussion of specific topics.

Operations services and hands-on operator training are available on an individually arranged basis.



A personal look at Sheldon

By Les Clarke (ex-FED)

FED's Birmingham move to Sheldon was a huge transformation from the old NCR Fazeley Street offices, certainly there had been months of planning, involving most of the workforce. From what I remember the 6 mile move went fairly smoothly, even to having a new computer based call system ...note: FED still used the slips of paper for call details, but now printed on cards spewed out on mass via Epson printers then held on three large blue plastic rotunda.

FED also had installed team leaders for the various fields: Computer, Financial and Retail, there was a parts stores, a rework area, and several work benches. Whereas most engineers used to travel into Fazeley St to get their calls, now the outlying 'task force' would phone in each morning around 9:00am. This meant the ground floor office was a mad time for Marilyn Almond (office manager) our 'call girls' and the team leaders.

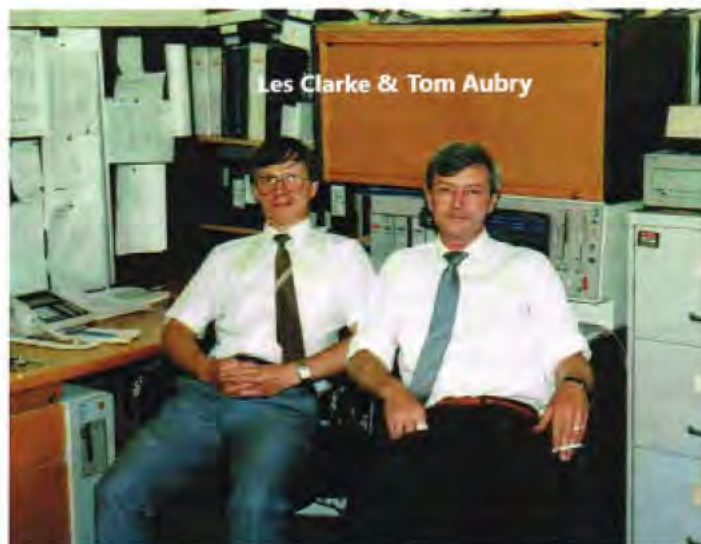
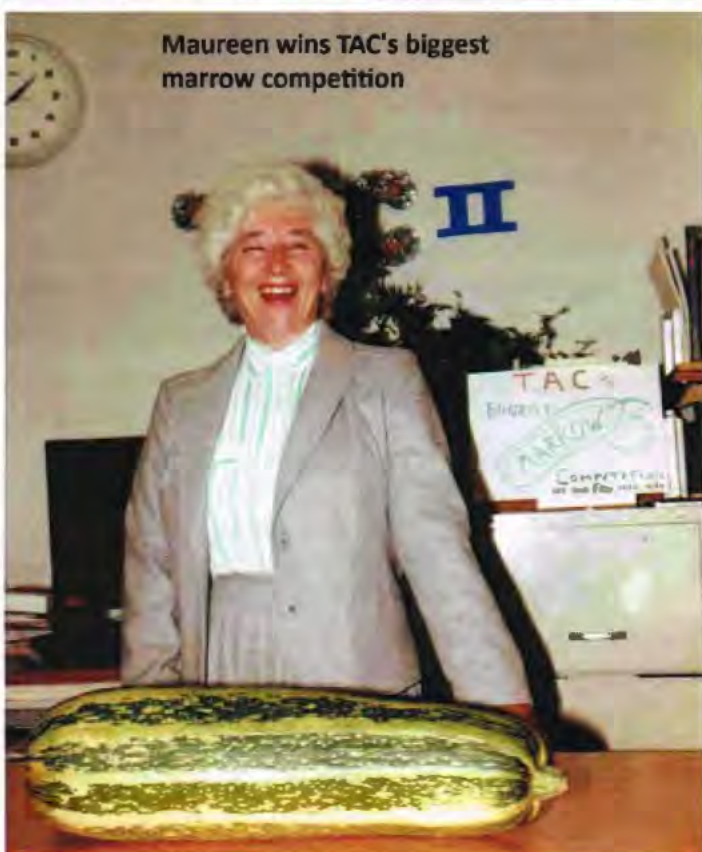
During the 1980's the engineer work force was expanding, so many new faces were joining the crusty old ones. It was about this time electronics was flooding the business machine marketplace, certainly in Retail the mechanical 'marvels' cash registers were gradually being replaced with the beeping keyboards, and LED displays.

On a lighter note, I have many happy memories of the early days, and after the people, customers and systems had

settled down, we had time to socialise. Someone suggested we raised money for a local charity, and this resulted in various lunchtime events, like the worst taste in ties competition, and I seem to remember a "Name the NCR person" baby picture competition.

Later when FED got to move and fill the first floor of Sheldon, we found time and organised regular charity events, most were enjoyed by all. Now, as a member of the Technical Assistance Centre (TAC) under Mike Webb, and along with Ken Jones, Tom Aubry and others, I organised competitions, coach trips and Christmas do's.

I was the last member of FED to move out of Sheldon in August 1998. I'm not saying my time in Sheldon was amazing every day, week, month or year but looking back and being polite regarding the management at the time, there were certainly decisions made that could have been better thought through. My 29 years with NCR in Birmingham provided me with some great 'techie' knowledge that I value and still use today... Like most employees I guess, it is good to remember all the great people and the mainly happy times spent working in Sheldon.



Fleet's Folly

I understand that the Sheldon building was purchased as an investment by the NCR pension fund, the final decision being made by the then UK managing director, Rex Fleet. The following piece, by Brian Briggs reminds me of the dubious nickname given to the building. Ed.

"Whilst this was still well before I became the Divisional Director of Retail, I had the pleasure of entertaining Rex Fleet to dinner at the Strawberry Bank in Meriden. Although the conversation over dinner mainly revolved around golf, Rex, in his usual charming and disarming way did say when I complimented him on the brave decision to take on the Sheldon premises, that given the current business climate, he did hope that it didn't become known as "Fleet's Folly." In my view it certainly did not and I have great recollections of the excellent business generated and many happy memories of the fun and fellowship enjoyed both in the office and next door in The Three Horseshoes."

Brian Briggs

Postscript on Sheldon

The Sheldon building, now called Lyndon Place, has been acquired by the developers BPG who are converting the four upper floors into 126 residential apartments using up 75,000 square feet and with the pleasant aspect (on the north and west facing sides) of Sheldon Country Park.



Perhaps in the post COVID-19 world Lyndon Place will become a kind of virtual office with more and more people choosing, and being allowed to, work from home. Ed.

Editorial



This is a slightly different edition than what we have had in the past. Normally half the edition would be filled with reports and photos of members enjoying lunches together organised by our hard-working committee. This year I need not tell you that lunches have not been possible due to the COVID-19 pandemic which has shut almost everything down. I haven't heard of any members getting the virus seriously which I hope is correct. I believe I got it at the end of March, and I have described my progression through it (see the article COVID-19 and me on page 12) even though I was never hospitalised.

The first few pages commemorate the 40th anniversary of the opening of the Sheldon office in Birmingham with contributions from Les Clarke, Brian Biggs and 'yours truly'.

There is one lunch report from December 2019 which was not available for the last edition. We also have some reports from the regions where members have described how they have been managing during lockdown.

Other articles include Part 2 of Ian Ormerod's NCR Computers bringing the history up to more modern times, the first of a three-part story by an ex-NCR employee, John Hughes (not NCR-related but an interesting read all the same) and a quiz which I guess will appeal particularly to ex-engineers, kindly provided by John Jones.

I hope some lunches will be able to take place towards the end of this year and I look forward to sharing the reports of those in the next edition.

In the meantime, I hope you all stay well and safe.

Graham Brookman

SUMMER MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

I would never have imagined I would be writing this message during such difficult times and hope that you and your families are well and managing the restrictions.

We had thought that we would not be able to issue this edition of PostScript, due to all our regional lunches being cancelled we did not think that we would not have enough copy. However, thanks to the team we have put together some alternative articles which we hope that you will find interesting and a brief distraction from all the sad news. For my part I hope it demonstrates that you are all in our thoughts.

We had to cancel, at the last minute, our annual meeting in March which was very disappointing. As usual we were looking forward to seeing again the regular Committee members and to meet Hamish and Adrian our two new organisers. I did, however, prepare all the regular annual reports and you will see from the annual statement that the Fellowship continues to thrive and is still welcoming new members.

We have missed meeting with you all at our lunches and thank you for your continued support. Best wishes to you all, keep safe and I hope that normal services will be resumed in the not too distant future.

Lin

NCR Fellowship January 2019 – December 2019

Membership summary:	
2019 start members	382
2019 new members	11
Total membership 2019	393
Deceased members	12
Non renewals	16
Starting membership 2020	365

Membership by region	
Region 1	22
2E	33
2W	26
3	34
4	138
5	22
6	17
7	23
8	15
9	15
10	12
11 (overseas)	8
Total	365

Financial Summary:	
Income	
Total b/f	6540.65
Membership fees	3600
New members	30
Donation	1020
Early payments 18	50
Total	11240.65
Outgoings	
Expenses	562.76
Postscript	2814.73
Total	3377.49
Balance c/f	7863.16

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

From Ian Ormerod



AROUND THE REGIONS – Surviving the Lockdown

Regions 2E & 2W - Pat Keogh

There has always been a lot of cross fertilisation between the Northwest and the Northeast. As a result, we have people who attend both lunches as they worked on both sides of the Pennines on a regular basis. So I have decided to write a single report listing all the responses I have received.

Unfortunately, I need to report some sad news before getting into the rest of my report.

Geoff Beaumont's son Colin emailed me to inform me that his mother, Pauline passed away just over a year after Geoff. He said that she was quite strong after Geoff's passing but her health had been slowly deteriorating for several weeks and despite being positive about the future she finally succumbed to a large stroke and died peacefully in hospital.

FED Golf Society

As you know from previous publications I have run the FED Golf Society for the last thirty years or more. In the winter 19 publication I had to report the passing of the very popular **Trevor Steenkamp**.

Since then we have lost **Vince Wake**. Vince was a member of the society from the start. Based in London he took over the running of the southern event at **Stevenage** after **Dave Hubbard** moved abroad. He stopped playing recently but still attended the events and assisted in the running as well as keeping the bar busy. Future events will not be the same.

I have now been informed by his son, **Thomas**, that **Jimmy Flood** has passed away. Jimmy was an engineer based in **Dublin**. He partnered with me to organise Golf events in **Ireland** which were very well attended. We played courses in many parts of Ireland over the years. Although we played some fabulous venues, apart from the golf, the Irish trips were also fantastic social events, helped along greatly by his wife **Angela**. Jimmy and Thomas also attended a fair number of events in the UK, mostly winning.

I recall one memorable Captain's Day when Jimmy flew in from Dublin to stay a couple of days at my house. Not only was he in great discomfort from 'stones' and taking heavy pain killers, but his clubs, unfortunately, were sent to Newcastle. He borrowed a half set of clubs from the Pro at Gainsborough Golf Club, scored 36 points and won the competition.

He was in such pain when we left the golf club that I took him directly to Leeds Royal Infirmary. He was treated and given even stronger pain killers. He slept well that night and I dropped him off at Leeds Airport the next morning. A few days later he very painfully passed the offending stones.

This is definitely the end of an era unless I can convince Thomas to organise a final farewell visit to the green lands. Watch this space.

From **other responses** you will see that we are learning a lot about our colleagues and lunch companions than we knew before. We didn't know before that other people had families.

On a bright note, no one seems to have succumbed to the virus. Our general age bracket probably means that we are taking good care.

As for myself, Dot and I are doing quite well. When Dot goes out shopping she picks up bits for Patricia, half a mile away and Jennifer, one mile, and visa versa. I'm not allowed out at 72, overweight and diabetic. My eldest, Paul is of no use to us at all in New Zealand although they seem to have come through the worst there without much damage. Isn't Skype great?

Peter Cundall only lives about three miles away on the other side of Otley Golf Course. I speak to him almost daily and was dropping bits off for him but he no longer needs me. His general health and history is so bad that he has received one of the **Red Letters** from the government and now has a flurry of local helpers looking after his every need, well almost. He's not supposed to leave his apartment but I think he dons a jacket and a pair of gloves and goes for a walk around the block now and then.

Bob Appleby has had a bit of a breathing problem which has now improved and hopes everyone else in the fellowship are staying safe.

Terry Bearpark writes,

"We are doing fine in our quiet corner of East Yorkshire. Obviously a bit fed up but at least we are still here. We were lucky, we managed a two week holiday in Cuba in January, great experience, and then a couple of weeks in Tenerife beginning of March."

Mike and Mary Wood

Mike writes,

"Both OK at this end, getting a little weary of the isolation but better than the infection. As we enter week 7 I've hidden all the sharp knives and blunt instruments - just in case!!"

I reckon I've finished all the painting/repairing etc that was "on the list". Mary works in the garden darning the weeds to appear! Looks immaculate I have to say."

Walter Scarth is doing ok apart from old age and wishes everyone well, looking forward to the next lunch.

Richard Willett reports that he and his wife are "watching the clock ticking and realise that tomorrow could be the day, so we live for today, especially in the current state of things. Our family are coping well with the present scenario, Mark my youngest working from home remotely supporting the students at Trinity Uni, in the art of media technology. My eldest Simon is still working from the office at DMG, keeping the world of tensile testing alive, for those companies that are still out there working.

My granddaughter Elyse is keeping the residents of Eccleshill entertained on Thursday clap and Saturday music night. Look her up on Facebook, Elyse Willett, ref Ark-I-Tec. She's become a brilliant entertainer."

Richard is really looking forward to the next lunch, when ever that will be.

Sandy McMillan and Pauline are ok with their daughter **Helen** delivering food and drink (Orange Juice I think).

There is another side to Sandy and Pauline which you may or may not be aware of. They have both been members of the performing arts most of their lives.

Sandy, originally from Dundee, played in bands there from 1960 till he moved to Runcorn in 1971 and continued playing. He met Pauline in 1972 when she joined the band he was playing in. After they married in 1974 they formed their own group called Penny Arcade playing all over the Northwest.

During their secondary career they worked with other minor acts like The New Seekers, The Merseybeats, Freddie and the Dreamers, Tom O'Connor, Les Dennis and many more.

They were still playing regularly up to 2018. They still perform now and then as a duo with a backup tape where Sandy plays Bass and they both sing. They also enjoy open mic nights.

The photo below shows them in all their splendour.



I phoned **Don Ward** as he is not on email to find that he and **Judy** are both well. Judy has recovered from her hip operation but is now suffering with her knees. Too much jogging no doubt.

I also phoned **Kathy Argilaga**, another non-techy, She is doing well with her daughters helping out.

I finished my phone run with **Maureen Burdis**. Maurine hadn't been doing too well and was just getting to the stage when she was planning to venture outside again when the Chinese stepped in.

Walter Bullen and Jean are keeping well as long as Sainsbury's and the Post Office keep delivering.

Dick Sale and Jacqui are OK albeit bored but safe, three holidays cancelled. Jacqui got the call to go back to work but she is in the at risk group so decided it was not appropriate. All our children are essential workers, nurse, plumber, gas engineer and distribution administrator.

Like everyone we hope a better treatment comes soon with a vaccine as quick as they can.

Keith Stansfield says he is quite well and keeping safe in these trying times. "Although classed as 'vulnerable' due to my age and diabetes (type 2), I'm not on the government's

'shielded-patient-list' database which would enable me to get preferential treatment when using online ordering and free (?) delivery with the main supermarkets. Living alone and not wanting to stray inside supermarkets, I've been getting my daughter to do my shopping. I provide a shopping list, she does my shopping once a fortnight and we meet near Skipton to transfer things from vehicle to vehicle.

I completed my annual diabetes review in early March, so my prescriptions are being supplied as normal.

Unfortunately, I am probably not doing enough exercise and my daughter warned me against going cycling on my own, which is a shame as the weather has been gorgeous.

I subscribe to Postscript and will look forward to hearing about others in your report and hope that everyone keeps safe."

Richard Slater has finally stopped. Amazing. He writes

"Hi Pat, Sorry to hear about Pauline's death, it seems like the end of a dynasty for me. Everyone here is okay so far. Daughter works at both Dewsbury and Pinderfields Hospitals, and Son is a manager for Tesco so concerned for them both. I am doing as I am told and doing nothing as I have been laid off active duties, the garden is looking immaculate!!

Spoke recently to **Peter Ramsden** and all okay there, asked about **Bernard Hamblet** and the picture was not clear so I called him myself. I am still confused as I suspected he intended. He is still undergoing chemotherapy except it is being done at home. Before lock down he had put his house up for sale - downsizing apparently. I will endeavour to ascertain where he will be moving to when things get back to normal (whatever that is now).

Bas Pickard responded

"Your e-mail came as no surprise. We are in for many months of disruption before some semblance of normality returns. I am not sure what resilience we would have if we got the virus so we restrict ourselves to one journey to the supermarket each week and, where we can, get deliveries for anything else we may need. I have managed to continue my regular bike rides and have enjoyed the spring sunshine. Those of us with gardens are the lucky ones. How families in tower blocks are coping beats me. No wonder social cohesion is breaking down.

Given the average age of the fellowship members I can only hope we all get through this period unscathed."

Peter Carruthers simply says that he is going stir crazy!

I reported in the last magazine (2019 Winter), that **Dave Collins** was not very well. It was his wife **Doreen** that emailed me then saying that Dave had been diagnosed with the early stages of Parkinsons and Dementia. She now reports that

"On April 6th David suffered a stroke which affected his right side and also his speech. He was in hospital for 10 days (no visiting allowed due to the virus) and then brought home by ambulance. He has got some movement back but we don't know if it will get any better but when the lockdown is over we will try and get some physio for him. There are 2

carers coming daily who are working very hard trying to get his speech back. I have been told this is one of the hardest problems after a stroke."

Sad news indeed. What makes it more difficult is that they are living in the dreaded Spain. I will email Doreen asking her to keep us informed.

Phil Wilkinson relates a very busy year, most of it down to health issues.

"In brief I was diagnosed with prostate cancer, given radiotherapy and still having hormone therapy. In between I did manage to get to France for a couple of short holidays. Hopefully I will be having my last treatment in the next few weeks. I then have to see the oncologist who may give me the thumbs up (joke). I try to keep active but because of the situation, walks are off the menu. Since the weather picked up I've been doing a bit of gardening, and revived my interest in chrysanthemum growing. Jigsaws are another way that we pass the time. Give my best wishes to all and hope that we all stay healthy and Covid free.

Alan Dixon was pleased to hear from me (the outside world). He and **Sandy** have both managed to avoid the C19 so far and "we are managing at home with the aid of our son who shares our abode. His son, who is three, visits each weekend under co-parenting rules and livens up our routine (and tires us out). As a keen modeller I have been able to busy myself in the workshop and Sandy is working her way through a stack of jig-saw puzzles – the telly is getting an unhealthy amount of attention too. Stay well, Regards."

Margaret Ellis responded

"Good to hear from you I hope you are keeping well.

On Thursday it will be seven weeks since I went into a shop" I am very lucky that I have two personal shoppers. The young couple across from me and my late friend's daughter who only lives about a mile away. But I do so miss doing my own shopping and I am getting some unusual items. Last week I asked for a packet of biscuits which I could bite into (i.e. coconut or sultana. I received a packet of delicious shortbread, a packet of coconut and a packet of sultanas; I did laugh. I also get lots of delicious items left on my front doorstep by kind people living on the crescent.

I consider myself so very lucky that I live in a home that I love and have a super garden to keep me busy and also so many interests to occupy my time. I have also had more time to enjoy the garden and the birds. Yesterday I watched two young birds learning how to fly.

I have also been overwhelmed by the thoughtfulness and kindness of people who have taken the time to ring, email or even write to me. I think that when we do come out of this awful time the people in the world will be much more appreciative of one another and the small things which really matter to us.

The thing I miss the most is not being able to see family and friends but it will be wonderful when we can see one another in the flesh and have a hug.

Take great care if you are going out. Stay safe. Kind regards, Margaret"

Ian Beveridge responded, "Hi Pat, Doing fine thanks. Linda's on the high risk list so being careful. I trust you and yours are ok.

Sad news about Geoff's wife, Pauleen. I had quite a good chat with her at Geoff's funeral. Nice lady. "

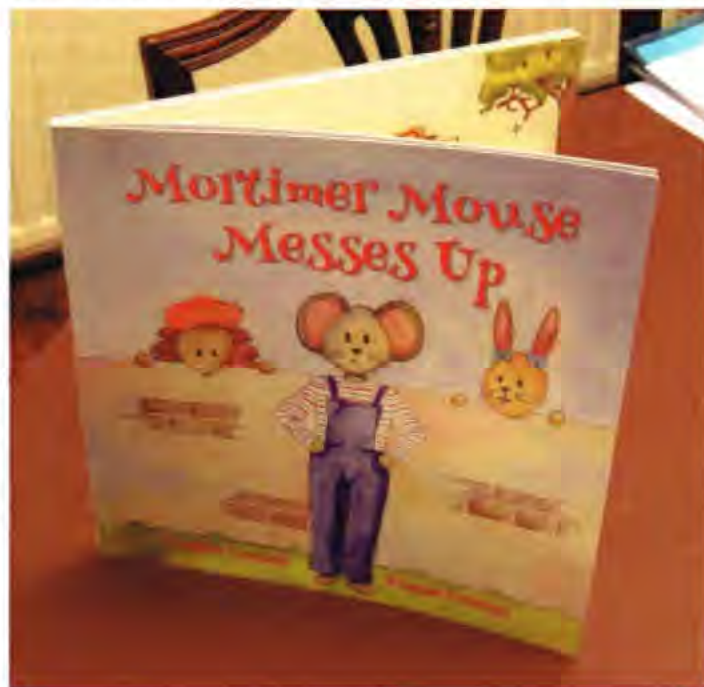
John & Cynthia Evanson

John writes, "we are thankfully both keeping well. With regard to the lockdown we have kept ourselves very busy, in fact we are hoping lockdown will end soon so that we can have a rest. We have spring cleaned every room in the house, I have cleaned out the gutters outside and washed all the window frames and soffits down. Both the back and front gardens have been weeded. It has since rained and it is my intention to weed all the little blighters that have dared to spring up again. Both our May holidays have been cancelled, just waiting for reimbursement and are not holding our breath.

There has been a lovely community spirit in our area with many people helping one another out in various ways. It is good to see a brighter side to the present situation."

John then informed me that Cynthia has a new Mortimer Mouse book published called '**Mortimer Mouse and the Pond Mystery**'.

You may recall in 2016 that I did an article on Cynthia's first book 'Mortimer Mouse Messes Up'



Cynthia had been diagnosed with terminal cancer, but thankfully a long course of chemotherapy enabled her recovery. She decided to publish a children's book based on a story she had previously written. Her sister Maggie agreed to illustrate the book and the proceeds were donated to the building of the new MacMillan Cancer Centre at Chesterfield Royal Hospital. They raised £2,800.

This first book was of excellent content and quality and I look forward to seeing the new book.

If you wish to help and purchase one or both of these books, then refer to the article on page 18.

Ken Haughton, Pete Cook, Nick Frederikson, Peter Cole and Dennis Malkin were very brief in their response, just reporting that they are still alive and keeping well.

Derek Taubman from the **Isle of Man** reports that he is well as are most people on the Island as it was easy to close their borders.

Charles Southall responded that they are both ok, getting lots of support and is looking forward to receiving his copy of the Postscript to see how everyone else is doing.

John Orrel and Elaine are self-isolating and Elaine is not long out of hospital after an operation.

David Cooper writes "very sad news concerning Pauline Beaumont. **Dianne** and I are OK and now in our 8th week of lockdown! However, despite this there is much to do in and around the garden now that Spring and Summer is here, which we both find very therapeutic and good exercise!

Added to that I continue to find time for percussion practice (drums) which is good for co-ordination and exercising those little grey cells !! before formal lessons start again.

Family members and neighbours do much for us in the way of food shopping which is invaluable in these difficult times, but has the added bonus of keeping in touch on a regular basis."

Mike Heaslip writes "Hi Pat, good to hear from you. All is well but have had the pleasure of having a Pacemaker fitted on the 1st of April (only ever thought of it as April Fools day) but am now feeling great."

Well that's all from the Northeast and Northwest. I hope to organise a lunch at Otley and Birchwood Golf Clubs before the end of the year. Keep Safe!

Pat Keogh

Jill McPhail (Region 3)

What a strange situation we all find ourselves in at the moment. It is really sad we had to cancel our lunch time fellowship gathering - although essential in light of the current pandemic. I really appreciate the occasions when we get together and reminisce about times gone by and catch up with friends of old (thanks to **Mr Keith Templeman** for his work in arranging and rearranging our meetings). However, hopefully those times will return in the not too distant future.

During this time I'm sure some folk have been very busy, possibly learning new skills or completing all the jobs on the list that we have never had time to tackle, or maybe even assisting in these difficult times with voluntary work within their area.

I, however, am frustratingly hindered by my poor vision, but with some help from my daughter Fiona (who usually accompanies me to the fellowship meals in Lichfield); we embarked upon a little 'sorting out'. I enclose a picture or two of some of the items we came across during this process. I pride myself generally with an efficient filing system and remember where most things are stored - but of course the detail and the bits and pieces and the reasoning behind where this or that should be stored does not always appear crystal clear when trying

to find something in particular! Much of my husband's NCR memorabilia has already gone to the NCR archives, but some items remain with me for personal reasons - or I simply forgot I had them!

Maybe these pictures will bring back memories for some. Now, where shall I store them away that I'm going to remember!

Hope everyone is keeping safe and well and that we shall meet up again very soon.



Region 4 - Roger Whelan

As you can imagine, arrangements for the Region 4 lunch in October are up in the air at present due to the ongoing lock-down caused by the Covid-19 virus pandemic. The London Corus Hotel in Lancaster Gate, our lunch venue, is closed for the time being and reservations staff can't predict when they will re-open. Normally I would be sending out the lunch invitations by the end of June or early July but this year the invitations will be delayed. The lunch has not yet been cancelled and will go ahead if reasonably possible but cancellation remains a possibility depending on what arrangements the Government announces to ease the lock-down. I believe the next phase of this easing will be announced in early July. I will try to keep in touch and let you know what is happening.

If anyone has any questions or concerns I can be contacted by email on r.whelan2007@btinternet.com or by telephone on 01225 464286

Region 7 – John Jones

When it became apparent that there would not be a get together lunch this Spring I thought I would send out this email.

Hi Everyone as it is very unlikely that we will be able to have a get together this side of June I thought I would try a round robin email for you to say how you are getting on during these problematic times. There will be a publication of Postscript some time but of course as there are no lunches or get-togethers the content might be a little sparse. Let me know how you are coping and I will compile a report about how Region Seven is managing.

I am self-isolating a bit, I only go out to give my daughter in law our shopping list. Which means I have time to do the thing I hate, gardening (I'm reshaping our garden pond). Life isn't all that different except I don't get to blow my trombone at all, can't seem to get enthusiastic about just practicing alone. I expect the neighbours are grateful.

Let me know how you are doing and any news of anybody else. If you do a "reply to all" like Michael McIntire your message should go to everyone else on the list. Rest assured if you don't reply I will be phoning you at an inconvenient time. LOL

Hope you are all well and we will see each other soon

First reply from was **Rita Keitch**:- Lovely to hear from you. Like everyone we are suffering the effects of 'shut down' but we are fortunate enough to be able to walk along the beach, tide permitting, or to follow the coastal path and shout across to our fellow dog walkers keeping the required distance between us, of course! My family here see to any shopping I might need which leaves me free to pursue any other occupation that takes my fancy! I do hope we get the opportunity to meet up again in the not too distant future. Meanwhile, very best wishes and keep safe Rita.

Next was from **Fred Macey**:- Hi all, All healthy at the moment, but getting so bored I've started decorating and watching my wife gardening - it's a struggle, but someone has to do it. She loves the advice I give her! Our midweek break with the family at Centerparcs has been cancelled for the start of May and our river cruise up the Danube from Budapest has just gone the same way. My two oldest grandkids are both self employed, so they're finding it hard. My youngest daughter is struggling with the loneliness up in Cheshire, and Wendy is missing seeing our five month old granddaughter down in Sussex. Dog walking is where I'm getting my exercise and fresh air and Maurice is keeping me supplied with a steady stream of amusing emails. Stay safe everyone and keep apart - as they say 6' apart or 6' under. Fred Macey.

Then **Mike and Christine Sanford**:- Hi John and Team 7. Christine and I are doing fine. The weather has been pretty good, so I have been hard at it doing all the jobs I have been putting off forever - you know, sort the loft out, paint the fence, jetwash the drive and patio. I'm exhausted just telling you about it. I have created a WhatsApp group to video call the family and other relatives based around Birmingham. I was sorry to learn about the loss of Trevor Steenkamp back

in August via Postscript. He was a great friend and helped train me on my first atm repair at a bank in Sheldon. I hope you are all keeping safe and making the most of technology. I haven't tried Zoom yet, but have it ready for a family group chat. It should be interesting. Well take care everyone and stay safe until we can all meet up again. All the best Mike Sanford.

Then Fred came back saying he couldn't send to **Peter Roderick** or **Pete Bodley** as their emails didn't work. So a couple of phone calls later and long chats I get correct email for **Peter Roderick** find out he is doing fine and invite him to come and listen to my band which will be playing on Ross on Wye bandstand on 26th July, lockdown permitting. **Pete Bodley** is going to let me have his latest email address, (I think when his grandson tells him what it is LOL)

I also had a chat with **Johnny Watts** who told me tales of his time as an NCR apprentice back in 1948 must get him to write it down for Postscript.

Then **Keith & Margaret Ponting**:- Hi everyone just to let you know me and Margaret are fine our gardens are immaculate we have recently purchased a new garden shed that took 8 hours to erect and should out live us all as it has a 25year guarantee. We feel this pandemic has come at a bad time as the weather has been perfect since the lock-in started. Margaret and I would normally be travelling around the country by car train or bus as it has been a long winter. We have recently had our holiday in Jamaica cancelled which we were due to go in 2 weeks, time to celebrate our 45th wedding anniversary. Let's hope it is all cleared up by October as we have booked to go to Mauritius. Our son Mark who is self-employed is struggling a bit as he has had no wages for 5 weeks and is unlikely to receive any from the government until June. Our daughter Kate has recently started a new job in London and is currently on full pay working from home. In January my aunt in Dundee died. This was a relation that Ian Leader and myself both visited while on a course in Dundee she was my father's last living relation. Hope you are all keeping well and look forward to seeing you all later in the year when the Coronavirus is clear. Regards Keith & Margaret

Annie and Bev Cunningham:- Well hello our Mr Jones. Glad you are being kept busy! All is good here (although my alcohol intake has increased.) Take Care All... until we meet again as the song says! X Annie

Maurice and Pat Keene:- Hi all...Hoping all is well with everyone...Things are pretty good with us all things considered ..All our holidays, weekend breaks etc have been put on hold like I imagine the majority have had to do. Saying that took a wander down to Argate the other day ,nothin' much doin' so went back indoors and had another cuppa...It's got to the point that our cat gets out more than we do now, but in fairness she does bring in the occasional live mouse which gives us something to do trying to catch it before it disappears under the furniture ..Haven't even been able to visit the seafront for the compulsory bag of chips and candy floss..(See how the other half live)..Running out of job to do now so thought I'd go and wallpaper the dustbin.... Ta Ta Fer Now....Take care all....Stay safe..Pat and Maurice WsM.

I then had a chat with **Rob Fairbairn** who is safe and well despite living in the virus hot spot of Cheltenham. Then on to **Roy Back** whom I know has not got his email working. Roy's daughter needs 24 hour care which makes lock down a little more difficult.

Carol and Graham Watt:- Hi all, Carol and I are fit and well, keeping our heads down and a low profile. The garden is weedless, lawns immaculate and diy upto date. Walking on the Mendips every day and probably drinking too much wine. Otherwise not much to report except holiday to Sicily and the Aeolian islands at the end of May is probably a non starter. Best wishes to all Graham and Carol Watt

Mary Leader:- Hi Everyone Hope you're all OK and managing to survive and keep sane during these strange times. Bit of a delay in replying to John's message as I've been busy!! I'm in the throws of making Scrub Bags for NHS staff to put their uniforms into after their shift so that they don't have to handle them more than necessary, and can safely get them home for washing. I'm using up old duvet covers and pillow cases dug out of the airing cupboard where they've been waiting for that time when they might be useful – well that time is now here. I've made 50 so far and still have more to make with covers donated by friends. Well it keeps me busy. Had to take my overlocker (a wonderful machine which uses 4 threads at a time and cuts the excess fabric off to make a really neat seam) to a local repair place as it locked itself! Now working perfectly (in fact better than before as he serviced it at the same time – a job that Ian would have done had he still been around!) I never have a problem keeping busy anyway, boredom is a state of mind I believe. Mind you – sitting having lunch in the garden during this wonderful weather is great. Murphy's Law that the weather is fantastic for the private flying which I usually do but I'm not allowed to go up to the airfield to do it!! Keep busy, safe and socially distant everyone. Thanks to John for keeping us in touch and hopefully we'll meet again (as the Queen said!). John, If you don't arrange our next meal in November maybe I'll be able to make it and not be invigilating. Regards to you all. Mary Leader

Bill Hudson:- Hi John & Fellow 'Nacareco's, Thankfully I'm OK so far after mostly self isolating, others not so of course. After my winter hibernation November to March, now lost all my Holiday trips this year. Thankfully refunded Package Tours for March-Rome Weekend, April-Lake Garda, May-Tuscany, June-Austria. (All on reduced NCR pension, British Airways the only one not yet re-imbered Round trip to Germany) Have to wait for September's Austria Trip & didn't yet book November's California > New Zealand. The Town was totally void on Easter Saturday, normally 15 coaches & 1000 people in the High Street. On-line Supermarket food shopping takes forever & then can't get a delivery slot! I've had two 'logistic sized' deliveries so far, but click & collect problematic with car battery issues. (Vorsprung durch technic) I've ordered Face Masks for my Family, they take 5 weeks to arrive and increasing in price. (It's possible we may have to wear them when shopping etc) Happy Days & keep safe, Bill Hudson

Jessie Wallace contacted me on another matter so I know she and Martin are safe and well

Geoff Jackson had this to add We have had many stories from his Region already; didn't realise how many comedians worked for NCR. Living alone anyway, the lockdown has not made that much difference to me. My garden adjoins our village arboretum and, being 9 acres in size, I have an almost limitless garden although I rarely see anyone else there. I own an electric trike and do miss my wandering round our country lanes. Unfortunately the empty roads seems to have encouraged drivers to speed up, making the lanes a bit too risky to use (if I was allowed?). I have started using Zoom which John has suggested we use. On Easter Sunday we had a link up around the 12 parishes our Vicar is responsible for. It worked pretty well except with about 40 open mikes we had some interesting additions 'get that dog out of here', 'Get Daddy to change her' and 'No, the fish and chip shop is not open today' being some of the clearest! This was just a telephone linkup but I am sure Zoom will be similar. Like most people, I have had a massive clear out, emptying files dating back to 2010 and ending up with four large plastic crates for the bin men. Other good things have surfaced like brushing off my lathe to do some wood turning, it occurs to me that my dust mask would be perfect to wear next time I go to the supermarket! Anyway, good luck with the next edition and keep safe. Cheers Geoff.

Anita and Dennis Williams:- Hi John Thanks for your best wishes it was good to hear from you, Anita and I are both fine we are trying to Keep busy this self-isolating is not easy. We were thinking you could always practice your trombone for the NHS on a Thursday evening. I hope all of Region Seven are keeping well, we look forward to seeing you later in the year. Keep safe . Anita and Dennis

From Paul Davis:- Morning John, Thanks for the mail, yes we're doing ok in these very strange times, doing all those jobs I've been putting off for years !! Hope you're all ok as well. Stay safe. Regards

I've had long chats with **Dave Robinson** and **Keith Middleton** and tried to persuade them to contribute, at least I know they are safe and well and I got an email address from Keith for the future .

Wayne Edmund is alive and well but not acting as the studio is closed and he can't self-isolate on his "yacht" as the Club is closed. Any way he has an allotment and a garden to keep him occupied.

Jean Cheek has just come out of hospital from a minor op and is recovering well and using the lock down time to clear out her wardrobe. She sends her love to all who remember her.

Paul & Angie Bryant:- Hi Everyone Both fit and well and have spent the last two weeks catching up with the garden, decorating and cancelling holidays !!

Enjoying the beautiful sunshine, (up to today !) and at least we are lucky to have a garden to escape to when we need to. We returned from the Canaries in early March and for the following three to four weeks we were both ill – not sure if we had the dreaded virus but at least we recovered. Hope you all stay safe and look forward to meeting up sometime in the future.

Best Wishes Paul & Angie Bryant.

Dave Jones is in a residential home in Bristol in reasonable health still recovering from the stoke he had last year.

Michael Wells:- Hi all. We are fine, I had a few supermarket deliveries in the first couple of weeks but it then became impossible to get a delivery slot. Then Pat, my better half, had to go out for supplies for her 92 year old mother so she has been doing our shopping at the same time keeping the need to go out to a minimum. The list of jobs around the house that I have been avoiding for ages is now getting shorter with me actually looking for things to do to make me move, sad I know. This is a testing time for us all but with a bit of luck we will emerge one day and be able to meet up again. Stay safe all

I've been talking to **Ian Ormerod** so I know he is OK. Just Phoned **Sue Hooper** (Kembery), she and family are all well and sends love and best wishes to all. I'm toying with the idea of doing a "virtual" Lunch via Zoom as has been suggested, will let you know in next issue how it went.

Region 9 – Jessie Wallace

This report of our annual lunch will now seem to be from another time, as Lock Down for all is the new norm!!

Our annual Lunch for Region 9 was held on December 2nd 2019, at the Cranberry Farm Inn, which is in Cranbrook Village, on the edge of Exeter.

We had 15 attendees in all, this included members, partners and friends. These were: **Adrian and Louise Gallagher, Graham and Julie Storer, Geoff and Angela Cooper, Cris Mackie, Dave and Sally Hope, Derek and Pam Knibbs, Geoff Jackson and Pam, Jessie Wallace and Martin Prosser.**

Unfortunately Lunch this year didn't live up to expectations, despite us having ordered our food in advance, how a venue can change in a year!! A new place will now have to be sought for next year, all agreed to this change! Despite this a good time was had by all.

We had apologies from the following: **Mr Tony Fiore** and his wife **Sue, Mrs Betty Shadbolt, Mr John Stevenson** and his wife **Margaret**, and lastly from **Martin Phipps.**

From December 2019, you will now all be aware that Region 9 has a new Organiser, **Adrian Gallagher.** Adrian lives in



Adrian Gallagher, Louise Gallagher, Julie Storer, Angela Cooper, Cris Mackie, Dave and Sally Hope, Derek and Pam Knibbs, Geoff Jackson and Pam, Jessie Wallace and Martin Prosser.



L to R: Louise Gallagher, Adrian Gallagher, Cris Mackie, Pam Knibbs, Dave Hope (again), Graham Storer, Julie Storer, Angela Cooper, Geoff Cooper and behind the camera Geoff Jackson.

the South West, and does know all the newer retirees and those who are about to retire, plus the "old timers"!!

Region 9 will go on. My thanks go to Adrian for taking over the roll and I am sure the Fellowship will continue to flourish in this area.

Many thanks to all the members who have supported me over the last 13 years, can't believe it has been as long as that! Time does fly! Best wishes to all.

Jessie

Message from Cliff Ree (Region 4)



The above photo is of my father, Jack Ree, who was a field engineer on 500 series computers as well as all sorts of other equipment like adding and accounting machines in the City of London. He is now coming up to his 92nd birthday. He completed almost 40 years of service with NCR. My brother, Mike, and I also were employed by NCR as field engineers with my contribution being 35 years. They were happy days at NCR for all three of us.

Fortunately, we are all in good health during these difficult times, although Mike and his wife caught the Coronavirus after holidaying in Spain during March and self-isolated for a month but are now fully recovered thankfully.

The photo was taken when Dad, Mike and myself were privileged to fly a British Airways 747 simulated aircraft by our dear friend Captain Pete Mansfield.

We wish all our ex-NCR friends well.

Geoff Jackson

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COVID-19 and me

As I write this (at the end of May 2020) UK, along with most of the rest of the world, is gripped in lockdown necessitated by the novel Coronavirus, COVID-19.

Hopefully most of you have remained virus-free and the lockdown/ isolation/shielding measures you have been forced to take haven't been too distressing for you. There follow some contributions from members of how lockdown has affected them.

As for me, I believe I have had the virus although, like most people have never been tested so I can't be certain. However I am reasonably sure I got it at the end of March.

Although officially retired, I still do some management systems assessment work for a major certification body with most of my visits being to companies in the City of London. The week beginning 9th March I had to travel into London for work on four out of the five days. On the Saturday evening I attended a new production of "The Marriage of Figaro" at the London Coliseum. All of these activities meant I was in close contact with people. The following Monday (16th March) the Prime Minister advised social distancing before making a mandatory lockdown a week later.

I was able to continue doing assessment work remotely using tools like Microsoft Team and Zoom. By the end of that week (on 20th March) I was feeling tired more than I normally do and started with a sore throat. The following week I completely lost my 'mo-jo' and although I only had to sit at my desk at home I really could not be bothered, and the subsequent writing of reports became impossible. By 27th March I had developed a fever hovering around Public Health England's magical 37.8 degrees C that, we are told, is a typical COVID-19 infection. I remember very little of the next five days (Saturday to Wednesday). The fever continued and at some point, the shortness of breath started, none of it serious enough for me to even contact the NHS 111 service, let alone be taken into hospital. I was fortunate that my husband, who himself had only recently been discharged from hospital after major bowel surgery, was sufficiently recovered to give me basic care which was all I needed. I cannot thank him enough for that.

By the sixth day (Thursday 2nd April) I was able to get out

of bed and work on an overdue report for an hour before retiring to bed again. On the Saturday I was able to sit in the garden on an unseasonably warm day. From then on I got steadily stronger every day and soon was able to take socially distanced local walks of between 2 and 6 km, including climbing a wooded hill 10 minutes' walk from my house, which I am still doing every day.

I should point out that at no time did I have any kind of cough at all. Symptoms were restricted to sore throat at the beginning, fatigue, fever, shortness of breath and a bit of diarrhoea towards the end. Two months on I still have very slight shortness of breath and have developed an ache under the right side of my rib cage which may or not be COVID-19 related.

I feel I was lucky that being in the over-65 age bracket (I'm actually 67) I did not have any more serious symptoms. I attribute that mainly to a weight loss and sugar-reduction regime I started last October after being warned by my doctor that I was a borderline Type 2 diabetes candidate. This was like a wake-up call and I started a strict weight-reduction regime cutting out those foods with excess carbohydrates/sugar including sweets, cakes, biscuits, white bread, white rice and potatoes. The result is that in seven months I have lost 3 stone 10 pounds in weight (from 15st 2lb to 11st 6lb) and blood sugar levels have returned to normal. I honestly believe had it not been for that my brush with COVID-19 could have been a lot, lot worse.

Graham Brookman



NCR Computers Part 2

(following on from Ian Ormerod's article published in the last edition of PostScript)

NCR continued to develop and manufacture computers and new technology meant that systems for small and medium size businesses could now have technology which didn't need large rooms with large scale air conditioning.

By **1960** NCR had developed the Class 390 a computer which provided the ability to process data at electronic speeds and still retain a 'hard copy' as a conventional ledger sheet with magnetic memory stripes on the back.

In **1963** the announcement was made that the company received the largest single order in its history. This order called for the installation of from 160 to 174 computer systems at 130 U.S. Air Force bases around the world. The systems handled all pay records for 800,000 Air Force members.

Electronic accounting systems were developed, firstly the Postronic then the Computronic followed by the 395 and the 400 introduced data processing to class 3000, 31 and 33 accounting machine users. A later model was the 299 introduced in 1973

Enhancements to the 390 resulted in the Class 500 being released in **1965**. The largest single order for this system was for 'travelling data centres' installed in mobile vans and used to track the maintenance requirements of US Army equipment used in Vietnam.



(The eagle-eyed amongst you may recognise the operator in this picture as Ian Ormerod's wife, Sheila and the photo dates back to 1969 before Ian and Sheila were married) Ed.)

In **1968** the Century Series was introduced, the first two releases, the Century 100 and 200 were lower priced systems aimed at the "mass" market. Some of you may remember the rod memory for the Century (pictured below).



The NCR 399, utilizing the NCR 605 processor cabinet, was released in **1972** as an "accounting computer terminal" because it served as an intelligent terminal or satellite to larger systems.

NCR's work in integrated circuitry meant that these small MOS (metal oxide silicon) circuits could be used in most equipment from retail systems to large computers and in **1972** a 30,000 square-foot facility for semiconductor was opened in Miamisburg outside Dayton.

A successor to the Century was announced in **1976** with the release of the Criterion 8550 and 8570 Computer systems along with the 8250 upgrades of the 8200. The successor to the 399 was the 499 also released in this year.

During **1977** the 8000 series of computer expanded into five classes: the 8100 (i8130 & i8150), 8200 (i8230, i8250), 8300 (batch & interactive processing using Century programs, 8400 (8430) and 8500 (V8590).

The 8100 family were low-cost interactive direct-processing computers.

Also introduced in **1977** were the 3200 family of microcomputers.

Larger mainframes were introduced in **1978** with the new V8600 family (8650 & 8670) as upgrades to Century and 8500 systems. The V-8600 family were the first to use 64K-bit memory chips.

Two new models the i-8270 and the i-8410 enlarged the mid-range system families.

New smaller systems were introduced with the release of the "computer on the desktop" 7500 series of microprocessor-based systems (7510, 7500, 7530).

Multi-Processing was introduced to the V-8500M family in **1979** along with an i8140 tabletop system for the i8100 family.

1980 brought even more new products including the i-8270 with three different cabinet heights: 29 inches, 45 inches and 66 inches. The cabinet housed a processor 500k memory, 20 million characters of disk storage, cassette drive and interfaces for up to 24 terminal workstations.

Highlights from **1981** product release included the 'NCR Work saver' word processing system and four new i9000 series computers the i9010, i9020, i9040 and the i9050.

The NCR 5000 'Branch Automation System' for financial institutions was launched in June 1982

Four new V8500 computers were released including the V8535 II, V8575 II, V8585 II and V8595 II followed by the release of the extremely popular Tower 1632 computer.

NCR Tower 1632 released for end-user market.

In November **1982**, NCR introduced the Tower 1632 processor as an OEM product.

With its UNIX™-based operating system, industry-standard hardware components and communication interfaces, the Tower was ideal for that market.

Early in **1983**, the Tower was also released for direct sale to NCR's traditional markets as a fully featured, end-user system.

It could either operate as a standalone computer for small businesses or be used in distributed data processing networks by very large organizations.

In January **1983**, the Company entered the multibillion-dollar personal computer market with the introduction of the NCR 3273 Decision Mate V an 8-bit and dual-processor 8/16-bit PCs. The 8-bit model runs applications written for the industry-standard CP / M-80® operating system; the dual processor, applications written for CP / M-80®, CP / M-86®, or MS-DOS™. Either model could operate as a freestanding personal computer or be linked into a local area network to allow NCR personal computers to communicate with NCR or other manufacturers' PCs and with mainframe computers, sharing files and peripherals. Other features include a programmable, multilingual keyboard; optional, high-resolution colour graphics; and a unique architecture that lets users add new features and expand memory by simply plugging in self-contained cartridges.



The new personal computers' flexibility made them adaptable to a variety of distribution channels including direct sales and sales to third-party resellers, such as business equipment retailers.

To ensure users have access to the best software packages available, NCR established a Software Publishing group which evaluated and distributed both internally developed and licensed third-party software.

To assist third-party vendors in adapting hardware and software products for use with NCR personal computers, the Company also established technical support centres in the United States and West Germany.

NCR 9300 debuts on March 15, **1983**, NCR unveiled the first in a new generation of mainframe computer systems, the NCR 9300. With an architecture based on the NCR/32 microprocessor, the 9300 was the first externally programmable, 32-bit VLSI (Very Large-Scale Integration) computer for general business applications.

VLSI allowed 9300 designers to condense the electronics for a central processor, up to four million characters of memory storage, a communication processor and an input/output subsystem into a two cubic foot cabinet. The unit weighed about 50 pounds, plugged into an ordinary electrical circuit and operated at normal temperature and humidity ranges.

Despite its small size, the NCR 9300 was a full, 32-bit mainframe computer with features usually found only on much larger, costlier systems. It supported a wide range of peripherals and terminals as either a host processor or peer processor in distributed processing and SNA networks.

9300 software emphasized productivity and ease of use. The operating system derived from NCR's long experience in developing transaction processing systems, which process data as transactions are entered, so information was always current.

In conjunction with other software, called TAPS™ (Terminal Application Processing System), it takes the complexity out of programming transaction processing applications.

Other ease-of-use features included a comprehensive set of software tools and a powerful data base management system.

NCR 9300 32-Bit Mainframe Processor

NCR 9300... 32-bit general purpose mainframe computer

The first of its kind... the first in a family, this compact (17.6 x 25.6 x 7.5 inches) mainframe processor establishes new standards for the EDP industry.

Advanced technological developments and unique NCR VLSI designs and processes combine to make the 9300 the epitome of reliability with an improved price/performance ratio.

- The first full 32-bit VLSI mainframe for business
- One of the first available content addressable memories for address translation
- One of the first available 32-bit external data paths to memory.



Two new models of the Tower were introduced in **1985**; the NCR MiniTOWER was one third smaller than the original TOWER 1632 was designed for two to eight users and the "NCR TOWER 32" microcomputer provided for up to 32 interactive users.

New Personal Computers, the PC6 and the PC8 provided enhance performance and multi-user capability.

The release of two new supermicrocomputers NCR9300IP and the 9400IP provided 50% more processing power than the previous versions and a new NCR9500 with 32-bit technology provided twice the processing power of the 9400ip.

A NCR 3390 workstation was one of the computers released in **1986** followed by the new family of NCR 9800 computers. Two more members of the Tower family released were the NCR 32/400 and the most powerful Tower yet released the 32/800.

Six mid-range models of the System 3000 were released for sale in **1990**:

- Models 3320, 3340, and 3345-single-processor, desktop systems, each configurable as a high-performance, personal workstation or as an entry-level workgroup server.
- Model 3445-a powerful, single-processor server.
- Model 3450 - a multiprocessor system offering from one to four processors in a single, compact cabinet.
- Model 3550- a multiprocessor "mainframe class" system offering from two to eight processors.

By March **1995** the 3000 server models in the price list were the 3404, 3416XL, 3430, 3455, 3525 and the 3555.

The Globalyst range in June **1995** were the AT&T Globalyst 130 Notebook, Globalyst 200S Notebook, Globalyst 250 Notebook (Pentium), Globalyst 515 Desktop became the Globalyst 520 Globalyst 525 became the Globalyst 530 Globalyst 575 and Globalyst 590 which became the Globalyst 630, Globalyst 550 and Globalyst 580 became the Globalyst 620, Globalyst 600 minitower which became the Globalyst 720 (desktop) and 730 (deskside), Globalyst S10 and Globalyst S40.

Following the spin-off from AT&T the 'new' NCR stopped manufacturing PCs in **1996** and concentrated on the NCR Worldmark Server family including the Worldmark 5100 series and the Worldmark 4300 which enabled a single processor system to be expanded to eight processors all in the same cabinet.

Ian Ormerod

Editor's software footnote

In my early days in the NCR Education Division, I taught about the operating software, programming languages and tools that were on some of the machines Ian mentions above.

My first course was IMOS III, the second operating system for the 8250 series. This was a little more user-friendly than its predecessor IMOS I. One of my biggest challenges was teaching the IMOS commands to non-technical ex-accounts staff from NCR's clients. I remember one operation was copying a file from one location to another. The command was MOV (move) although it actually made a copy. The command string:

AS A FILE1(1)

AS B FILE2(3)

MOV A B

caused consternation and confusion to many – and this was the more user-friendly operating system!

When the 8270 came out we moved on to IMOS V which had a bit more functionality than IMOS III. The I-9300 series that Ian mentions above introduced the ITX operating system which combined elements of IMOS V and IRX (the interactive operating system for the 8400 and 8500 mainframes).

DECEASED FORMER NCR EMPLOYEES

We are sorry to have to tell you that the following employees are no longer with us. Our condolences to all the affected families:

Fellowship Members

Ms P Beaumont	26.04.20	Region 2E
JL Barrie	16.12.19	Region 2W
H Hardacre	21.03.20	Region 3
MA Anderson	12.04.20	Region 4
MJ Cronin	23.01.20	Region 4
JJ Wellington	09.03.20	Region 4
Ms SM Murray	11.03.20	Region 6

Other Deceased Pensioners

P Addy	04.08.19
MJ Apperley	08.12.19
JJG Bates	01.11.19
JR Beckley	01.12.19
AS Bennett	16.03.20
BM Costello	11.12.19
IM Gould	13.01.20
JR Hay	10.10.19
Ms K Hill	21.01.20
JE Masey	15.11.19
JF Nolan	28.11.19
BT Piper	25.03.20
Ms RE Rice	10.12.19
Ms VJ Roberts	30.12.19
BJ Roe	24.03.20
KJ Sheikh	05.02.20
RT Smith	12.11.19
JL Torrance	23.12.19
Ms CM Welford	26.03.20

Unfortunately, PIC do not give us any more detail than this so we appreciate that it can be difficult to identify individuals (especially non-Fellowship members) from the information given.

***This is an article published in the Dundee Courier at the end of April 2020.
It's good to see NCR making a positive contribution to the Coronavirus pandemic.***

Coronavirus: NCR Dundee puts its 3D printers to work to create face shields for frontline staff at Ninewells Hospital

by Rob McLaren

NCR Dundee has responded to the national shortage of PPE equipment for frontline staff by using its 3D printers to help produce face shields.

NCR's printers are being used to make the headband and then they are being assembled into protective visors to be used by front line staff.

Dundee-based Signature Signs has used its laser cutting equipment to cut specialist shields to be used with the NCR headband.

The visors are already in use at Ninewells Hospital and at two doctor's surgeries in Dundee.

Lisa Dickson, director of hardware engineering, said: "We received designs from another 3D printing company and they were approved by Ninewells Hospital last week.

"They have very strict guidelines on the designs they are able to use. They've got to be able to disassemble them and rebuild them again.

"So far 44 have already been produced given to Ninewells and they are urgently asking for more."

Face shields were being manufactured at a rate of 12 a day and there were already back orders for the next two weeks.



Staff at Princes Street Surgery in Dundee are using the face shield produced by NCR



NCR's Dundee Centre of Excellence.

Shields are also being made for use by NCR's engineers who are keeping ATM and point of sale terminals running within supermarkets.

"Everybody wants to be able to help any way they can and it was important for us that we've been able to help our local hospitals and front line staff," Ms Dickson added.

Meanwhile Dundee printing firm Tradeprint has launched a crowdfunding campaign to raise £10,000 to produce 4,000 face shields.

Managing director Charlene Douglas said: "We have all seen the reality of the current situation in producing and supplying protective equipment, delays in production, product not being delivered and shortage of supplies.

"We have a robust and scalable operation which we have mobilised to produce as many face shields as we can.

"While these are not official PPE products we have received many calls for assistance from frontline caregivers who are desperate for our help and we have already sent this equipment to those who have asked for help and they are already in use.

"All monies raised will go purely towards the cost of production and distribution of the product and will not be used in any other way, purely for the benefit of those who are in the greatest need of this type of equipment."

An article to hopefully make you smile by An any mouse

Am I going crazy?

Just be careful because people are going crazy from being in lockdown!

Actually, I've just been talking about this with the microwave and toaster while drinking coffee and we all agreed that things are getting bad.

I didn't mention anything to the washing machine as she puts a different spin on everything.

Certainly not to the fridge as he is acting cold and distant.

In the end the iron straightened me out as she said everything will be fine, no situation is too pressing. The vacuum was very unsympathetic... told me to just suck it up, but the fan was more optimistic and hoped it would all soon blow over!

The toilet looked a bit flushed when I asked its opinion and didn't say anything but the door knob told me to get a grip. The front door said I was unhinged and so the curtains told me toyes, you guessed itpull myself together!

Kevin Rixson

Geoff Jackson has sent me a short story written by a former NCR employee, John Hughes which I have decided to serialise in three parts. So here is the first – I hope you enjoy it. Ed.

MARY'S CROWN Part 1



Dick woke up with a start. The sunrise was peeping through the curtains and shining on his model aircraft. A beam of light fell on his favourite poster. It was of a tennis player scratching her bare bottom under her tennis dress. A friend had told him that it was in fact a man but Dick didn't believe him. His mother had wondered about the poster but had been satisfied that it was not too sexy for a boy of his age.

He swung his legs out of bed and climbed into his clothes and drew the curtains. As he went downstairs he saw that the grandfather clock was about to chime 5 o'clock. He would be sitting at the kitchen table eating his cereal when his parents came down and being farmers, they always got up early. It was an exciting day because it was his twelfth birthday and he knew that his parents would have marked it with a present. After a while, his father appeared at the door "What are you doing up at this hour?"

Dick said "I couldn't sleep and anyway, it's my birthday."

"Oh yes, that's right," his father went on, "Richard Burns, now you're twelve years old, you can start getting the cows in for milking every day and I'll pay you a twelve year old's wage. Because it's your birthday, you can have today off and start tomorrow." They shook hands on the deal and winked at each other. Then his father said that they should wait till Dick's mother came down.

She soon appeared and she gave Dick a hug and a motherly kiss, wishing him a happy birthday. His father reached into the kitchen cupboard, brought out a large present and presented it to Dick. After unwrapping it, he gasped in pleasure. It was a metal detector and a pair of headphones. It was exactly what he had wanted. He and his friend Bill had explored a mediaeval pathway up on the hill near to the farm's boundary and they thought that there might be something to find. He wanted to survey the path and see if the travellers had lost anything as they went along the path. He and Bill had searched the path by eye, but had found nothing. A metal detector should be able to turn things up even if it was only knives and forks. At least they should be mediaeval.

He rang his friend, telling him to come round so they could

take the metal detector and check the path as it went over the hill near the boundary of the farm.

They walked up the hill to the path and then Dick put on the headphones and switched the detector on. They moved over the path, but found nothing. They swapped roles, still finding nothing. After an hour, they sat down for a rest. Then Dick picked up the headphones and switched on. Suddenly there was a loud screech from the detector. It had found something in the ground. Bill took out a trowel and started digging. Very soon, he uncovered a coin. Dick continued searching and soon they had found eight coins.

In glee, they took them home to show Dick's father. "Look what we've found," he shouted.

His father said, "Terrific, I'll just wash off the dirt and we can see what they are."

He carefully cleaned the soil off one coin with soap and water and gasped in astonishment. "It looks like gold, and it should be worth a fortune. Let's see the others". They quickly washed the others and found they were all identical.

"We'll take some of them to the local museum and get them valued, OK" They carefully wrapped four of the coins in tissues and put them in a bag. The other four were wrapped and locked away in the farmer's safe.

When they got to the museum, they asked for the chief archaeologist and expected a wizened elderly man, bald and wearing glasses. Instead an attractive girl with blonde hair and a lissom figure appeared. "Hello, I'm Mary Pierce and I'm the archaeologist here. What have you got to show me?"

They pulled out one of the coins, unwrapped it and laid it on the counter. "Wow, that's the best one I've ever seen. Come up to my office and we'll make sure it's right. You haven't scrubbed it or polished it, have you?"

"No, only carefully washed the earth off them"

"Just as well, coins like these need specialist cleaning. Have you anymore?"

"I've got three more here just the same". Dick laid them on the desk blotter.

"Where did you find them?"

"Just by the old pathway in Dad's field. We found them with my new metal detector"

"I'm afraid you'll probably not be allowed to keep them. They are what's known as Treasure under the Treasure Act of 1996, used to be called Treasure Trove, and the local Coroner has to decide who owns them. If he finds in your favour, you'll get a reward which should be considerable and we'll probably be allowed to keep some of them for display. There is no doubt in my mind that you will be given the reward."

"You mean that they will be in your museum?"

"Yes, but possibly only a couple of them, because they were found here. The rest will have to go to the British Museum

in London. Are these all you found?" Dick looked rather sheepishly at his father and decided to come clean.

"Well, we have a couple more!"

Mary carefully measured one of the coins and laid it on an accurate scale. She weighed it and it was of the correct weight for a gold coin of that size. She explained "Sometimes these coins are forgeries and in fact, either lead or other base metal and they will weigh less than if they were gold. These are extremely old. I think they were first minted in around 500BC by King Croesus, so that makes them over 2,500 years old. They were kept as treasure by kings and royal families over many years."

"Hang on to the others for the time being but keep them safe because they're very valuable. Let me pack these away and I'll come with you to the Coroner's office. I'll just ring them and tell them we're coming."

After that, she slipped the coins into bubble wrap envelopes, locking them in a metal brief case and they set off for the Coroner's office in the Doncaster Archives Building.

After Dick explained where they had found the coins, the Coroner's deputy took them and locked them into the office safe, giving Dick's father an elaborate receipt. He said that the inquest would be held during the next week because the Coroner was not busy at this time.

The next day, Dick started his job and so before breakfast, he herded the cows into the milking shed. That was the end of his task as he was not expected to assist with the milking. That would probably be the next part of his apprenticeship, after he had proved himself.

When the post arrived, they all got summonses stating the date of the inquest and telling them to present themselves.

Dressed in their best and carrying the metal detector, the

whole of both families presented themselves at the court. Just before the inquest, Dick's father gave the remaining four coins to Mary, who passed them on to the Coroner's deputy. The Coroner's court was just like a law court as seen on television. One by one, they had to take the oath and sit in the witness box to tell their side of the story. Mary had to give expert testimony as did a representative of the British Museum who examined the coins and identified them just as Mary had done.

The Coroner then presented his decision. The coins were officially termed Treasure as there was no evidence as to who owned the coins and so they now belonged to the Crown. The coins were valued at £1,000 each and the museums had to pay for them. This was only the value of the gold metal making up the coins. The Coroner was not able to ascertain the value of the coins as historical artefacts.

The money was to be donated to the family. Dick's father as the owner of the land was to receive 30%, and the remainder was to be put into trust, half each for the two boys. Two of the coins were to be kept on display at the Doncaster Museum and the others were to go to the British Museum in London.

Mary was delighted that her museum was to get two of the coins and she was mentally planning the way in which they were to be displayed. They would need to be securely protected as they were extremely valuable.

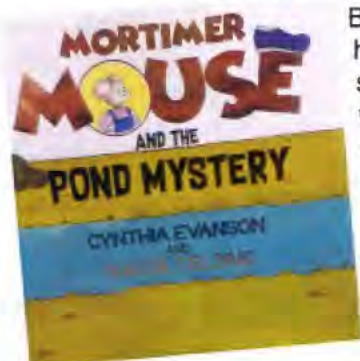
She asked Dick's father if he would give permission for a survey of the site. She told him that this would initially involve a ground radar survey. If anything were found, they would then need to do a full scale archaeological dig. Permission was given but only if Dick and his friend were able to witness the whole process and make themselves useful whenever needed.

Part 2 will appear in the Winter 2021 edition of PostScript.

Mortimer Mouse is back!

This is the second 'Mortimer Mouse' book written by John Evanson's wife Cynthia and illustrated by her sister Maggie.

John is a retired engineer on the northern region and about seven years ago his wife Cynthia had been diagnosed with terminal cancer, but thankfully a long course of chemotherapy enabled her recovery. She decided to publish a children's book based on a story she had previously written. Her sister Maggie agreed to illustrate the book and the proceeds were donated to the building of the new MacMillan Cancer Centre at Chesterfield Royal Hospital. They raised £2,800.



By popular demand, she and her sister have produced a second book. The first book was of excellent content and quality and I look forward to seeing the new one.

If you wish to help and purchase one or both of these books, then follow the instructions below.



You can contact John and Cynthia on their home number 01246 824 435 or email at jandc.evanson@talktalk.net.

To buy the new book, the cost is £9.50, P&P included.

To buy the pair of books, the cost is £14, P&P included.

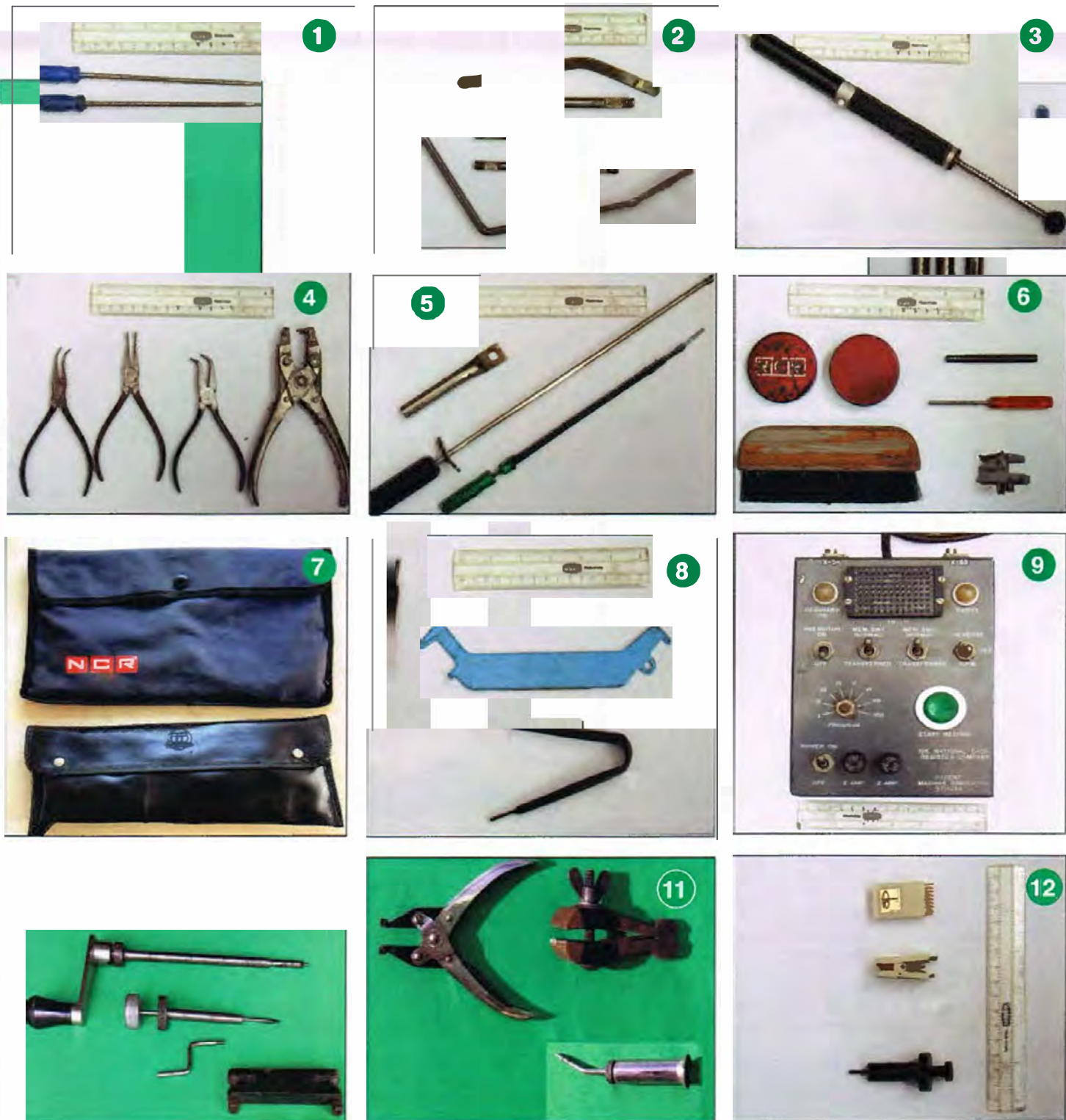
You can send a cheque to Cynthia Evanson, 57 Rectory Road, Duckmanton, Chesterfield, Derbyshire, S44 5JQ, including your postal address.

Feel free also to contact me if you have any queries.

Pat Keogh

QUIZ - by John Jones

This is a Picture Quiz of tools and equipment used by NCR employees in days gone by. See how many you recognise or remember. Picture 6 is mainly for Operators and Demonstrators. The six inch ruler is for size comparison and is not part of the Quiz. Sorry no Prizes.



Answers

- (1) Spring hooks & Spring Gauges. (2) Adding Machine & Class 31 "Benders". (3) Solder Sucker. (4) Relay Pliers & 31 Print Sector Removing tool. (5) 31 Fluid Drive spanner, C Clip tool, Split Blade Screwdriver. (6) 2000 class ribbon tin, Class 31 Stop Spanner, Date changer, Keyboard Brush & Carriage Stop. (7) Blue Contained ESD Kit & Black a Portable Light (8) Card puller (Century 100 ?) Bulb Extractor (500?) (9) Punch Paper Tape Tester (10) Class 31 Handle, Adding Machine Speed Adjuster, Class 3000 Handle, Class 31 Print Sector Riveter (11) Parallel Pliers, Hand Vice, Oiler (12) Chip Clip (2 Views) & Pin Extractor.

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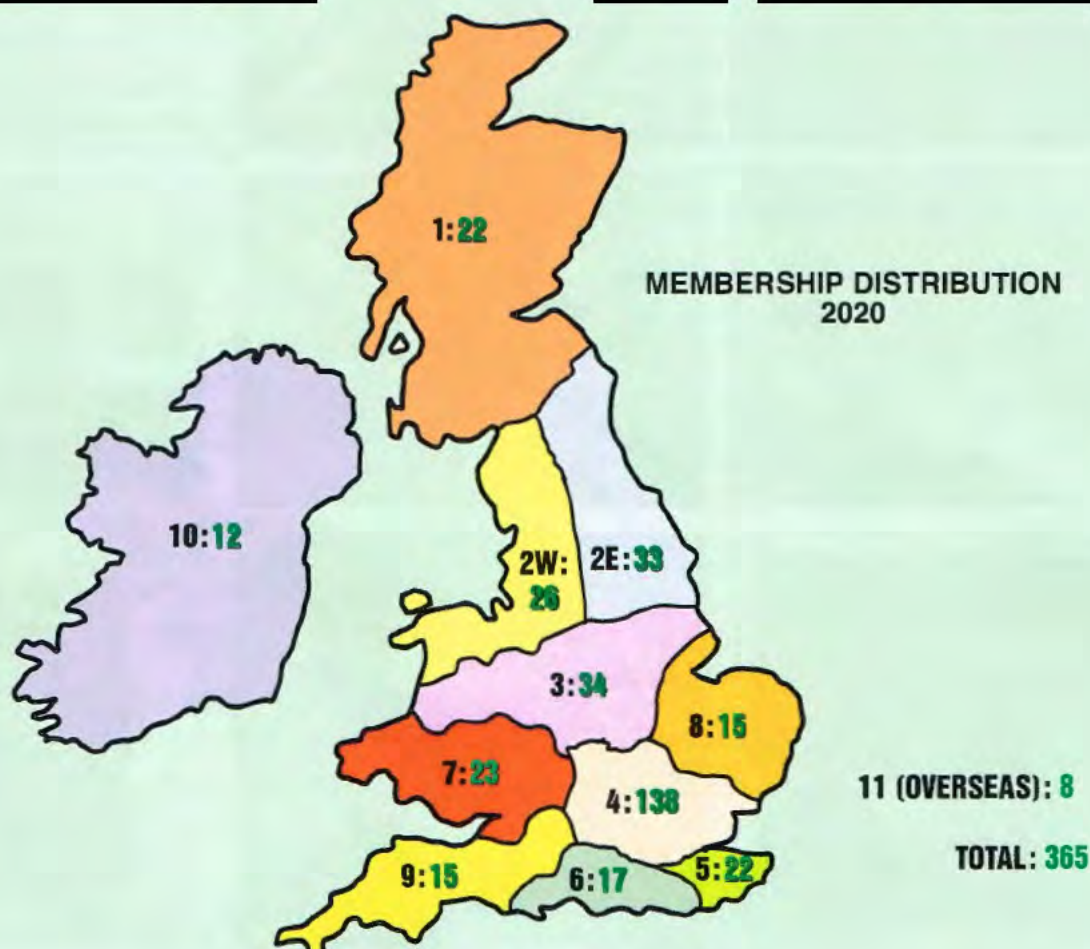
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