

NCR Fellowship Committee goes 'high tech' in 2020



The Fellowship Committee usually meets annually in March in the NCR UK HQ in Paddington Basin. The COVID-19 Coronavirus pandemic meant we couldn't do that this year. So on 15th June 2020 the committee met remotely using the 'magic' of Zoom.

I think most people have heard of Zoom by now – for many businesses it has been a lifeline in this most difficult of years. Its use has been extended for social and family use.

The meeting went well in that all matters were covered perfectly adequately and with 11 members present it represented a higher attendance rate than we have had on previous occasions at NCR.

Names are included in the bottom left of each pane but as they are very small here is a key

Top row (left to right) – Hamish Mackenzie (Region 1), Graham Brookman (outgoing editor), Ian Ormerod (NCR Historian), Geoff Jackson (Editor Emeritus)

Second row (left to right) – Adrian Gallagher (Region 9), Keith Templeman (Region 3), Lin Sandell (Chairman & Treasurer), John Jones (Region 7)

Bottom row (left to right) – Stephen Swinbank (President), Roger Whelan (Region 4), Pat Keogh (Regions 2E and 2W).

John Atkins (Secretary), Anthony Welch (Region 5), Alan Hutchins (Region 6), Richard Craigie (Region 8) and Ken Carson (Region 10) were unable to join us.

It is being planned to have the next meeting as a Zoom call again.

WINTER MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

It is with no regrets that we say goodbye to 2020. So many sad memories and restrictions which have prevented us from getting together. We have all missed our regular lunches and have been concerned about the welfare of our Fellowship friends. I sincerely hope that you and your families have managed to keep safe and that you enjoyed even a short Christmas with some of them.

We have again had to put this issue of PostScript together without the usual lunch reports and photographs. We have tried to include articles which will be of interest to you, especially a look back at the impact of decimalisation on NCR. It seems almost impossible that this took place 50 years ago and that all those under 50 will not remember shillings and pence.

I wish you all a happier and healthier new year and look forward to the day when we are able to meet up again.

Keep safe.

Lin

AROUND THE REGIONS

Regions 2E & 2W - Pat Keogh

Hi All. Dot and I are doing as well as most with the support of our two daughters Patricia and Jennifer who live less than a mile away. Bored stiff, working in the garden, watching too much TV and drinking too much Irish Amber Liquid.

The big negative for me was just before Christmas, the loss of Peter Cundall, my close friend and drinking companion. Peter only lived three miles away and was a great help to me at our lunches, particularly taking and processing the photos for Post Script.



This photo was taken at our last lunch in October 2019.

In the last few months Peter was diagnosed with Liver Cancer stage four and deteriorated rapidly. A sad ending. His ex-wife Susan and his two children Laura and William, who lived about a mile away, looked after him as best they could towards the end. He will be missed. A tribute to him appears later in this issue.

2E Report

The general theme of the responses I received was that everyone was pleased to get my email and looked forward to hearing how everyone was doing. They were fed up, bored and looking forward to the time when we can have another lunch so I won't repeat this input for every name. By the time you read this report most of us, in our age group, will have had the vaccine. Holidays in general seemed to be a hit and miss affair depending on timing.

John Wilson, Frank & Margaret Pusey, Roger Fearnside, Graham & Anne Hatton, Richard & Elizabeth Willett, Walter and Jean Bullen, Norman & Denise Roberts, all reported that they were well health wise and waiting for their jab.

Brian Penny reports that he is still doing well after his previous open heart surgery.

Dave Dawson has moved house to be nearer the grandchildren.

Mick and Mary Wood. Mike also reported that **Peter Schwartz's** daughter Lorraine dropped him a note saying that Peter had succumbed to the dreaded Dementia and was now in a care home in York being well looked after, anyone wishing to send Peter a message please email Mike and he will forward Lorraine's address to you.

Sandy and Pauline McMillan. They are certainly doing their bit with 8 grandchildren (latest one arrived 11th November) and 4 great grandchildren, so an expensive Christmas this year. They managed a fantastic holiday in the Holy Land in March.

Alan and Sandy Dixon. Being Chairman of Hull Model Engineers gave Alan something to keep him busy, but their new car is only reading 2,000 miles for the last 15 months.

Richard Slater misses most of the lunches as he is generally busy with one of his six jobs. He is down to one job now doing some Hospice work. Nothing with patients just running around jobs, collecting PPE from Harrogate for the 5 hospices in his area, and other local jobs.

Dave Collins. Dave and Doreen moved to France some years ago and are now in a managed apartment complex, but Dave now suffers with poor health. Doreen responded as follows.

Thank you for your email. We are both well and are fortunate to be living here. During the lockdown the restaurant delivered every lunch time and the local supermarket brought our pre-ordered groceries. We have a carer coming twice a day to help David following the stroke he had in April. It affected his right side and his speech and memory. He is now able to speak a little bit but it is a struggle and if he is tired it is difficult to understand him. He gets so frustrated and annoyed. He can also walk with the aid of a stroller but not very far. We have plenty of friends here who will help us if we need it so that is a great help.

Hope you have a safe Christmas and we wish all the people who know us all the best for 2021.

Doreen Collins

June & Malcolm Rudge-Priestly are fine but have had two holidays cancelled. June has had the injection.

Dave & Judith Torrance

Judith had Covid the first two weeks in November and with her being Asthmatic we were very concerned but she got through it one piece thank god. I am still working full time for HSBC even though I'm now 67 but I feel good enough to carry on for a while yet and I'm still enjoying it.

John & Edith Gilroy. At 73 years of age, we have taken on a new puppy, called Winston "no fool like an old fool".

Keith Penny. I join in with around 6 ZOOM sessions a week to keep my ukulele playing up to scratch and one session with the Wharfe Valley Voices.

Andrew & Irene Hill. Three holidays cancelled through out the year, but the positive side we recovered all the money.

Ian Beveridge. Ian is ok but unfortunately his wife, Linda, passed away August 15. She succumbed to a respiratory problem she'd had for three years or so, not covid related and not really expected. She died peacefully in her sleep.

Region 2E & 2W Continued

Dick Sale Hi Pat thanks for your email, health wise I have been better, suffering from AF. I ended up in hospital in August for 8 days with a severe build-up of fluid in the lungs. Discharged with medication, have had many tests over this last month with a view of open heart surgery to replace a valve as I keep running out of breath.

Keith Stamsfield. Booked in for the first of my two Covid vaccinations, so there's a glimmer of light at the end of the tunnel. Youtube helps tremendously with my efforts to learn guitar.

Terry Bearpark. Coping very well, with help from family with some shopping etc.

I am still working part time for our local newspaper as a photographer and editorial assistant so that keeps me occupied. Managed to get a holiday in Cuba at the beginning of the year but had to cancel one in June.

2W Report

Dave Stopford and Derek & Debbie Allen reported that they were well health wise and hoping for a better 2021.

Ken Haughten got caught in may and took a while to overcome. "doing a few walks to get my hip functioning as had new hip replacement this year."

Peter Cole. I'm fit and well still swimming when the pools are open. No holidays.

Fred Fazackerly. I'm doing ok but I am sorry to tell you that my wife Ursula passed away 6th November 2020.

Terry O'Garr. I have just received an email from Terry's two sons David and Peter informing me that Terry passed away on the 15th January, just four months short of his 100th birthday. Terry attended the last two lunches I organised in the Northwest and was extremely fit and active tucking into a Full English.

I received a package from **Colin Beaumont, Geoff's** son, containing a collection of old NCR documents after he and his sister **Janet** cleared the family house. I will compile some reports for future issues.

Region 4 – Roger Whelan

Note regarding Region 4 lunch in 2021

Happy New Year everyone and let's hope this year is more positive than the last one. What a shame that last October's London get together had to be cancelled because of you know what! I was hoping that we could re-schedule for some time in the coming spring, but with the continuing uncertainties regarding when the Tier 4 restrictions may be lifted, that is also unlikely. I am going to assume that the situation will improve enough to make a lunch booking for 6th October at our usual venue, London Corus Hotel at Lancaster Gate. Let's hope that the continuing roll-out of the Covid vaccination programme will allow social gatherings to resume by then. I certainly look forward to that and being able to meet up with colleagues and friends again as before.



Lockdown in Anglesey

From Keith Hemming

Lockdown in Anglesey tells a familiar story, probably similar that of many others in our circumstances.

Life on Anglesey has been a bit start-stop. We're currently on yet another stop phase. Late Summer was as good as it got here. The pub was sort of open and you could go and have a meal although it was a bit of an insular-like experience.

Dog walking, allotment and greenhouse provided focus for keeping busy. The weather since the end of summer has given us more than our fair share of rain, so the dog walking element often feels like a paddle on some footpaths.

The first lockdown saw supermarkets impose restrictions on the number of shoppers entering, one-way systems for aisles and queueing facilities for tills to maintain social distancing. The visit on Tuesday to complete Christmas shopping was absolute mayhem - no wonder the virus is spreading despite closing pubs, gyms, non-essential retail, etc.

Our rhythm of life on Anglesey is normally punctuated with the arrival of visitors especially during the summer months. This last year has seen 2 visits and one of those before the first lockdown. Our quietest year to date.

The dogs are really looking forward to Christmas as we placed our order on the local butcher expecting family visits on 21st-23rd December and 24th-27th. The sudden change in rules means that no-one can visit - it's too far for a there and back on the day. So we've loads of ham, turkey, pork pies, sausage rolls, and bacon to consume or freeze.

Financially the year could be considered a success. With the pub shut and take-away meals only available for a limited period towards the end of the first lockdown (nothing is currently available), spending opportunities were severely curtailed. Even the window cleaner stopped coming.

We're looking forward to getting a vaccination sometime in 2021 and hopefully seeing life return to a new kind of normality.

All the best for 2021.

Keith Hemming

CAN YOU HELP?

The Fellowship Committee needs to find somebody to take on the role of PostScript Editor.

This role involves (twice yearly)

- collecting articles, as below, to be included in the next edition of PS
- sending the articles, electronically, to the formatter at the printers who will set out a proposed magazine layout
- interface with formatter to refine magazine and then give approval for magazines to be printed

Input is sourced as follows –

- Lunch reports from regional organisers
- Regular items from Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary
- Obituaries various
- Member submissions
- Historical articles from Ian Ormerod

If you would be interested in get involved please contact me, contact details are on the back page.

Support and guidance from the previous editors would be available to help you get started.

Look forward to hearing from you.

Lin Sandell

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

David Jones	26.05.20	Region 7
Andrew Robinson	17.06.20	Region 4
Peter Shipp	28.07.20	Region 5
Tim Snashall	20.07.20	Region 3
Vince Wake	01.03.20	Region 4
Joy Wright	30.09.20	Region 3

Other Deceased Pensioners

J Bates	15.07.20
KH Bates	07.10.20
MG Browne Ms	09.04.20
PD Chapman Ms	22.09.20
CG Devitt	16.03.20
ST Dovey	07.09.20
EW Farningham	21.08.20
JP Flood	25.04.20
IA Henderson	26.05.20
GTE Hill	29.04.20
EC Jackson	17.07.20
BM Labbett	29.07.20
DI Leslie	19.04.20
JA Macdonald	13.08.20
PWL Murphy	07.04.20
WC Norman	15.07.20
EA Searle	29.06.20
GD Woolley	18.06.20

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

Obituary - David Jones



April 1933 to May 2020

DAVID JONES...aka ..Dave, Davey, Dia Bach, or affectionately the "Old Scrote" sadly passed away on Tuesday 26/5/2020 of natural causes.

Needless to say in his own good time.

Dave Jones worked for NCR as a Field Engineer in Bristol, South Wales and a spell in Canada. Was manager of the Swindon Depot and finally a Senior Field Engineer at Bristol.

He is survived by his Wife Jean, Daughter Jackie and Son Parry.

I am sure that many of you who knew Dave whether through work or socially will have your own thoughts as to how he touched so many lives. Whenever in his company you were never going to be short of a good laugh, just one of his many attributes.

In this unusual time that we find ourselves in, it will be strange not to be able to give Dave the send-off that he deserves, but I am sure that all who knew him will have personal thoughts of him to remember. Love and Thoughts to all his family

Pat and Maurice Keene

Condolences to the family from all members of NCR Fellowship Region Seven .

If you wish to add to these please email to: parryjones@gmail.com

Note:

In the last edition we incorrectly reported the passing of MJ Cronin (Region 4) in January 2020. This should have been Mike Croneen who was also a member of Region 4. Our apologies to Mary Cronin for this unfortunate mistake.

Obituary - Peter Cundall



IN LOVING MEMORY OF
PETER CUNDALL

25th September 1949 - 16th December 2020

While in the RAF Peter worked in the Far East as a Radar Technician which was the start of his technical career.

He joined NCR in the mid 80's as an engineer and was promoted to be a Service Manager running a team of 30 engineers. After the closing of the engineering centre in Leeds he moved to the HSBC helpdesk in Sheffield before retiring from NCR.

He passed away of Liver Cancer on 16th December after a short illness. In the later stages he was looked after by his ex-wife Susan and his children Laura and William who lived about half a mile away.

When I informed the Leeds based NCR community I received numerous responses mostly like Brian Penny who writes "Sad news about Peter Cundall's passing".

Frank and Margaret Pueseey wrote "We were very sorry to hear of Peter Cundall's passing. He was a true gentleman and will be missed.

Mike and Mary Wood responded with "Sorry to hear about the passing away of Peter Cundall, his cheerful personality will be missed at our future get togethers".

I was unable to attend Peter's service as I was shielding, but I was represented by my two daughters Patricia and Jennifer. We were very close to the Cundall family.



Yes, they gave him a gun!

Pat Keogh

Donations in memory of Peter would be welcomed and can be paid directly via www.st-gemma.co.uk/online donation.



FRED

I said that when I lost my faithful old hound Benji that I would not, due to my age of nearly 89, have another dog which would outlive me. I reckoned without my sons, Jon, who has an apricot cockerpoo or Andrew who has a black job of the same breed. Jon offered to buy me a dog, as long as it was a cockerpoo, and guaranteed to take it on, if for any reason I couldn't keep it or popped my clogs! With an offer like that, how could I refuse! That is how Fred, a chocolate cockerpoo arrived and is awaiting his second job and when he will meet his public. In times of total isolation a dog is a great mate and antidote for loneliness encouraging one to get out and meet others, at a distance. I am looking forward to many walks in the future with Fred!

To be continued.....

Timothy Snashall – 4/12/1940 – 20/7/2020

by Brian Briggs



Tim (only my Mum calls me Timothy), Snashall and I met on 29th January 1967 at the old NCR offices in Sparkenhoe Street, Leicester. It was my first day, Tim had joined a few months earlier in London and transferred to Leicester as a salesman in what was then known as The Business Forms and Supplies Division, later re-named Systemedia. He brought with him a love of sport, especially football including a passion for Chelsea F.C.

Born in London, he grew up in the Harpenden area where as a boy, he was a member of the Sea Scouts. As he grew older, football took over and he played in a semi-professional league for both Harpenden Rovers and Biggleswade (Academicals) as I liked to refer to them. Whilst there as a goalkeeper of no small talent, following a particularly outstanding performance, he had pinned above his desk headlines from the local press hailing him as "Terrific Tim and Super Snashall". These were phrases that I happily teased him with on numerous future occasions after he had secured significantly good business following his transfer to C & G Sales. (He feigned annoyance but I'm sure that he secretly loved it.)

As our friendship blossomed, he had another more pressing one to attend to in the shape of a particularly attractive 446 programmer and demonstrator. Rachael Green.

Tim and Rachael were married on 18th March 1972. Two sons were born, James, (Jamie) in 1974 and John in 1976. The boys desire to watch Leicester City had Tim turning his football allegiance from Chelsea to "The Foxes" where they all became season ticket holders. The sons in turn were married to Danella and Julie who in due course presented Tim and Rachael with two gorgeous grandchildren Molly and Harley. I'm not sure if they all enjoyed his love of jazz and especially Louis Armstrong, Count Basie and Dave Brubeck, but let's hope so.

Tim and I continued our friendship in the Birmingham, Sheldon office following the closure of the Coventry and Leicester premises. We enjoyed many happy times discussing football and the TV series Minder of which Tim was a particular fan. His sense of humour and dry wit was a great match to that of Arthur Daly, one of the star characters.

Rooming together, as you had to do in those days, on both training courses and CPC trips leave happy, funny memories too numerous to count.

Since retirement, we continued to meet albeit infrequently for lunch with wives and long time friends and colleagues from the old Leicester and Nottingham offices until the passing of others and Old Father Time made this less easy to maintain.

Tim passed away quietly at home on 20th July 2020 with his beloved wife Rachael by his side.

Goodbye Old Friend. **Rest in Peace.**

Brian



Sally Joy Wright

(21st January 1938 to 30th September 2020)



Obituary – read by her sister Jean at her funeral on 26th October 2020

Sally Joy, always known as "Joy", was born to loving parents at the Duck Pen Cottages on the Birmingham Road. When she was two years old, the family moved to a bungalow in Hurcott where her sister was born. The bungalow had no electricity and evenings were spent sitting around a coal fire, listening to the radio, playing cards and other games.

As her father was the youngest of five, having four older sisters, you can imagine how she was adored by her aunts. How lucky to have such a happy loving childhood. Her father was an animal lover and passed his love of them on to Joy.

Joy was very intelligent and was entered for the eleven plus a year early - and passed. At the High School, she excelled at sport and was known to be brutal on the hockey field. She was also an enthusiastic netball and tennis player.

After leaving school, she helped to run a youth club at Worcester Cross and she played in a local netball team for many years.

Joy joined NCR in 1956. Her job title was Demonstration/Installation Supervisor and she worked in the accounting department. Her job involved building an accounting programme and training operators to use it. She worked for many years in the Building Society Section, travelling all over the UK.

Joy loved her work and was a true professional. She built up good relations with customers, and converted programs to decimal. She was so clever and her family were so proud of her. She had a team working for her and was fondly referred to as "Auntie Joy". Her first priority was always the customer, giving them the best service and she still receives Christmas cards from some of them up to this day. Joy was kind and generous and was always happy to help and advice.

Joy loved all animals but her first love was cats. When she moved into her own home, she immediately adopted a stray kitten, who had no tail due to a road accident. She called

him "Bootsie" and she adored him - he was then joined by another, "Poppy". These she had for 20 years. Then Monty came along, a lovely ginger Tom, and she absolutely doted on him.

When she retired, as you can imagine, she was kind of lost. She then supported the Sutton Park Fund Raising Group and helped to raise thousands of pounds for Kemp, Acorns and other charities.

Joy was a keen supporter of Samaritan's Purse and loved shopping for items for the Shoe Boxes - always looking for a bargain. Often when she saw one, she would clear the shelves, to everyone's amazement - they must have wondered why she would buy 150 toothbrushes.

She enjoyed attending lunches with the Old Girls' Association. I'm told she was the "life and soul" of the party. She always had her camera with her and would give out photographs the next time they met.

Reminiscences from Margaret Edwards and Editor

Joy had a variety of jobs within NCR including: Demonstrators, Programmer (Class 3000, Class 31's & 32's then wired machines - before becoming "Queen Bee" installation supervisor then Area Head - involved in organisation of conversions to decimalisation in 1971 - and subsequently VAT.

She moved from the Birmingham Broad Street office to Sheldon in 1980 where she worked as technical consultant on I-series machines in the Commercial and Governmental Division. She left NCR in the early nineties to join CSM (an organization set up to provide ongoing software support for customers still using I-series machines)

She finally retired in 1998 and regularly attended NCR Fellowship Region 5 lunches right up until the most recent of those in October 2019.

Anyone who passed Joy's desk in the Sheldon office would have been left in no doubt that she was a hoarder. In fact we often wondered if there was indeed a desk at all under the vast amounts of manuals, printouts and other paperwork. Amazingly, despite the apparent chaos, Joy was always able to locate any item when required in a remarkably short space of time.

As technology moved on, and NCR with it, Joy removed and kept copies of much of her work even though there was no practical use for it anymore. Here was a lady proud of her work over the years and rightly so. She will be missed.



Decimalisation 1971

by Alan Perryman & Ian Ormerod

[reprinted from Winter 2007 and Summer 2008 PostScript editions]

As many pensioners in particular will recall, NCR UK shared with several Commonwealth countries a unique system of currency based on two farthings to a halfpenny, two half pennies to a penny, twelve pence to a shilling and 240 pence to a pound!

By general consent, visitors in particular, found £.s.d. currency difficult to assimilate. Moreover, because of a restricted market potential, a growing number of machine suppliers found it uneconomical to tool up for a version capable of satisfying the UK market. Thus UK businesses were denied the benefit of greater efficiency that more advanced decimal machines would provide. Furthermore it was obvious that decimalisation would pose a severe threat to NCR's established markets, especially in the UK, by encouraging new entrants, primarily from Japan, to flood the market.

Whilst most countries changing to a decimal currency opted for 10 shillings as the major unit of currency the UK Government chose to retain the pound. Progressively the old currency was withdrawn (demonetised) starting with the farthing. This happened notwithstanding the argument that such a move would exacerbate inflation and make charm or psychological pricing, so popular with retailers, less effective. For example a pair of stockings priced at two shillings and eleven pence three farthings.

Not widely recognised for its true meaning was the decision to demonetise the half penny well in advance of D. Day. This was because the new two penny coin was the same size and weight as the old half penny and therefore could be

misused, particularly in slot machines.

The relationship between £.s.d. and decimal coins was the subject of debate. For example one MP argued that the familiar 6d coin should be retained as its equivalent decimal value of two and a half new pence. However, opponents who argued there was no place in a decimal currency for a fractional coin won the day.

A major advantage of the decimal coins was the size and weight relationship within the silver coins on the one hand, and the copper coins on the other. This facilitates the determination of value by weight.

Dual pricing was advocated by some retailers as part of an educational programme to familiarise customers with decimal pricing. NCR's advice, based on experience in other countries, was to train staff and customers to think exclusively in the new currency, and not try to convert from one currency to the other.

The effects of decimalisation on the financial accounts of a business were an integral element of NCR seminars, and the benefit of adopting round pound accounting was covered thoroughly by **Stan Harris**.

To combat increased competition and to retain and increase NCR's user base NCR evolved an aggressive marketing plan to convert or replace the total installed machine base. In the main this comprised cash registers, accounting machines and coin operated machines.

In 1966, following the decisions by South Africa, Australia and New Zealand, the British Government signified its



decision, in a white paper, that the country would switch to a decimal currency on 15 February 1971. Following representations from the machine industry the Government decreed that there would be a 18 month changeover period to complete this gigantic task when both currencies would circulate side by side.

The Government appointed a Decimal Currency Board, under the chairmanship of Lord Fiske, to supervise its implementation. The secretary to the Decimal Currency Board frequently shared a speaker's platform with Howard Sledmere and Alan Perryman and between them developed a close rapport. Appointed by the company to liaise with interested parties, Howard and Alan created and delivered in house and external seminars to the sales force, retailers and financial audiences nationwide.

The message was clear. Act now, be aware of the new currency and ensure that your staff and machines are capable of handling and thinking in the new currency. Be sure you are competent to handle both currencies during the changeover period.

Cadburys designed a stick on key 'conversion kit' to be used on cash registers which were waiting conversion. This was produced and distributed by NCR as a temporary measure while other companies out to make a quick killing, promising claims of conversions by breaking teeth off drive segments and fitting stuck on "dual currency" indicators.

Brochures, charts and sample coins were produced by NCR and supplied to businesses, shops and banks to prepare them and their staff for the changeover.

In 1966, following the publication of the Government White paper NCR issued "The big currency changeover: How businesses can prepare for it now" followed in 1967 by "Preparing for Decimalisation: A Decimal Guide for Commerce and Industry from NCR" and "Getting ready for Decimal Currency: A Guide for retailers from NCR". These publications were very popular and high demand meant further editions were published in 1968.

NCR appointed main board director and company secretary, **Roy Bedford**, to oversee this project. Field Engineering Division played a key role in meeting NCR objectives in making maximum use of the preparatory period by building in decimal components in to new machines, known as red point machines. This solution removed a tendency for businesses to prevaricate as well as providing the sales force with an effective selling story as well as earning points on the bulletin. To protect our user base, our sales force was able to offer a similar solution to apply to machines in the field which were deemed to meet the NCR criteria for economic conversion. These machines were identified as blue point machines and, as with red

point machines, contained all the parts necessary for the final conversion.

In the years leading up to 'D day' engineers worked overtime at nights and weekends doing 'Blue Point' conversions and then almost round the clock in the first few months of 1971. The incentive payments were made based on piece work and many engineers enjoyed generous rates by finding ways to install the modifications in a more efficient way than had

been planned and costed when the work had been when the work involved had first been evaluated. An error doing the work could mean the loss of an entire evening's pay but those like Walter Bullen, whose work in 1968 was inspected and passed by the nominated 'workshop inspector', received a payment in their monthly pay; in Walter's case £4 for a 100 class conversion.

In summary NCR UK delivered on all the major benefits we identified from our decimalisation project. Moreover, 1970 and 1971 produced outstanding results which helped to offset a temporary downturn in the Domestic marketplace.

At the conclusion of the successful introduction of decimal currency those involved posed the question what was all the fuss was about!

The NCR Fellowship on BBC TV

Despite the lockdown interest in the National Cash Register archives continues to grow with requests for help and information coming in from the www.ncr.org.uk website, emails and requests from NCR to provide help to individuals and companies who have contacted them for help on the history of the company.

At the end of last year I was asked to help Warner Bros. who had contacted NCR about the "Back in Time for the corner shop" series. They came to see me at home and borrowed the 100 class cash register and decimalisation literature as well as the porous rubber pricing stamps seen on the counter of the shop.

This year I was asked to help with the 'Repair Shop' program which is filmed at the Weald and Downland Living Museum, Sussex. The first program covering the "restoration" of a detail adder was aired on the series 5 as episode 35 last seen on September 28th.

A spin off program, Repair Shop: "Fixing Britain" followed with me providing films and information for the narrator which took up a good part of the program resulting in our Fellowship being in the credits at the end of the program. This program, series 1 episode 14 was shown on the 23 July 2020

Ian Ormerod

Stills from The Repair Shop: Fixing Britain (Series 1; Episode 14)





FROM NCR TO PORSCHE MY TIME WORKING WITH THE PORSCHE CLUB GB

After my time in the UK IT department I moved to Sophia, France, for 8 years working in the European IT Centre and then to the IT department in Dayton. While in Dayton I was lucky enough to buy a car I had always wanted a Porsche 911. On my return to the UK I decided to bring the car back with me. While in the US I had joined the Porsche Club of America which was a very active and professional club and ran many events, including track days in Ohio, which I participated in and really enjoyed. When I arrived back in the UK I joined the Porsche Club GB.

In joining the club I noticed how out of date their technology appeared. The website looked very old, had little content, and to join it was necessary to call the club or fill in an application form, even though the website appeared to have an ecommerce function.

At one of the events I went to I happened to end up talking with 2 of the directors who were interested in my US experience and how the Porsche Club of America operated. During the conversation I mentioned my views on the website, which they were very interested in. I said that if they ever considered upgrading it I would be willing to review any proposals or recommendations from any companies or consultants they may use. At this time I did not realise there was an IT Director on the board of the club.

Around a month later I had a call from the Chairman asking if I would go to a board meeting and talk about how they could potentially replace the website, how a project may work and give some ideas on costs and timeframe. I realised immediately costs and timeframe cannot be estimated until

more was known about the current environment including establishing the business requirements, reviewing the current system architecture and considering many other factors like implementation activities. These would normally be done as part of an early phase of any project, as we in NCR IT had defined in our Project Realisation methodology which we developed over many years, with many difficult experiences. I also suspected they needed more than just a website.

I provided a fairly high level presentation as requested at the Board meeting, where to my surprise the existing IT Director listened to all I had to say but raised not a single question. Following this there were some changes on the Board, which happen each year as Directors can only serve 4 years. Some months later I was contacted by one of the original directors I had spoken with who was now the new Chairman. He was keen to pursue the project to upgrade their technology and I agreed with some trepidation to help.



I had discussed some initial ideas with a few other members and found 1 person who had a media business and also some project management and web platform experience. Like me he could also see a significant opportunity. The two of us and one Director prepared a business case with some fairly high level tangible and non-tangible benefits. This was presented to the Board and approved. The next step was to define more detailed business requirements and an updated business case including some initial cost estimates. I lead the process, which involved the club staff, the club manager, the Board and a number of key club officials.

This was also approved and we transformed the Business case into a detailed Request for Proposal document and around 10 potential suppliers were identified. This was a high number but some of them were chosen by the Board as they were members who the Board thought had businesses that were appropriate for the project.

During this period the 2 of us who had prepared the business case and requirements found a number of other members, initially 3, who had mostly run and sold their own technology business and had a wide range of skills and some time to help. They could also see a great opportunity. We evaluated and rated the proposals and refined the 10 potential suppliers down to 4 who were invited to present to us, and we also visited their premises. We finally selected our chosen supplier, a Web Technology and Development company base in Oxford. This developed into a very successful partnership and they are still supporting the system and providing development resources for upgrades.

During the project I worked with the Board Director who was now on our team to ensure there was an "IT Budget" approved to support the project. I found there was no detailed IT budget and little experience in the club to establish a realistic ongoing budget.

The team worked with the supplier to split the project into phases of functionality and agree a fixed price and timeframe for each one. We then executed the project which went mostly to plan although as I anticipated we had some issues with data migration from what was called a "members database" to our new system. The main functions implemented initially were a new modern website, online shopping, a forum for answering member queries and exchanging information, a new members communications function based on using the commercial Mailchimp system integrated with the new club Members system, and Membership management processing to enable a considerable reduction in manual work in the office.

The club's 30 regions and register officials were also given access and trained to use the new Content Management system to update their own information. Members were also able to update their own personal and car data and provided a single login and password for the website and the upgraded forum. Previously members had to call or email club staff to get any changes made to their personal data which inevitably became very out of date over time.

During the second phase of the project I was asked if I would be prepared to join the Board as IT Director. The existing person was leaving and the Chairman felt as I was leading the project I should take over the IT Director role. I agreed which meant putting myself forward for formal election at the club AGM where all members can vote. I was voted in and spent the next 4 years on the Board.



During this time we put in place many of the standard disciplines and processes we used in NCR IT. Formal annual budgets were set up for base operations with business cases and a formal approval process needed for any updates to the system. A formal Service Level Agreement was put in place with the supplier, and a support process and system shared between the club and the supplier. A Disaster Recovery plan was established, and initial IT and Security Audits carried out. Just before I left we carried out our GDPR (Data Protection) audit and made some minor changes to ensure the club was adhering to the new legislation.

The initial platform enabled additional key functions to be developed that really improved both the club image and operational efficiencies. These included a Car Sales module jointly developed with Porsche UK, which takes a daily feed from Porsche of all their UK Approved cars and puts them on the website. This module also allows members to advertise cars for discounted rates, and the club's Porsche Specialist Partners who also sell used cars. The UK club is the only club globally that has this link to Porsche corporate systems.

A Porsche Track Day booking and management system were added, and updates to allow purchases to be made from remote events. These updates also allowed the old standalone Sage inventory system to be eliminated.

The initial business case projected a possible membership growth of around 5% without any increase in administration, and some growth in Ecommerce sales. After 4 years membership had grown from around 11,000 to over 20,000, with significant growth in the club shop and merchandising. This was achieved with a very small increase in staff and the business case was exceeded by a large amount in all the key areas. There was also a very significant improvement in the club's overall image and these improvements helped the club attract new major partners like Pirelli, Esso, and Lockton Insurance who all provide additional benefits to members, allowing membership fees to be maintained at a low level compared to other premium car clubs.

The club is still the only officially approved Porsche club in the UK and has maintained close ties with Porsche with many significant joint events and other benefits that result from the close relationship. It is the second largest Porsche Club worldwide after the US.

I have enjoyed Porsche ownership and have made many friends through the club which is mostly made up of enthusiasts and provides a great variety of events both in the UK and in Europe.

I attach 2 pictures, one of my first 911 and the second of the current Porsche, a Cayman GT4 which is a fantastic car on both the track and road.

Chris James

In the last edition we published part 1 of this story written by John Hughes, an ex-NCR engineer.

MARY'S CROWN Part 2



Story so far

Farmer's son Dick has been given a metal detector for his twelfth birthday. Trying it out with his friend Bill he discovers some old coins. He takes them to the archaeologist at their local museum, Mary Pierce, and the coins are identified as being genuine and about 2,500 years old. A subsequent inquest decrees that two of the coins can be purchased (from the Crown) by the local museum with the rest being offered for purchase by the British Museum.

Mary asks if a proper survey of the farmland could take place and Dick's father agrees, on condition that Dick and Bill can observe the process.

The Dig

Mary turned up at the farm the next morning in a large four wheel drive. She had two young men with her and a ground radar machine in the back.

She asked Dick to show her where they had found the coins and they all went up there. Mary walked over the path carefully examining the ground while her two assistants unpacked the ground radar and made sure that it was working properly.

They moved the radar to where the coins had been found and started scanning. Suddenly, they found the remains of a building. Mary became very excited and told the men to keep searching. The radar detected two more buildings and some metal objects and then printed a map of the objects it had found. Mary decided that it would be worth their while doing a full scale dig in the hope that a mediaeval village would be found. Dick's father was asked and gave his permission for the dig and promised to keep his cattle out of the field.

They finished searching with the ground radar and erected a large tent to house their equipment and serve as an office. They laid out tapes, cutting the site into small sections. Each was numbered and the resulting grid was copied onto a large scale map. This took them the rest of the day and so with the tapes securely pegged down, they went home hoping the good weather would hold

The next day, they started work again. They brought two

extra people who would check all the earth removed, putting it through a sieve to make sure that nothing interesting was thrown away. One of the two was called Helen and she was also the official photographer to the dig. Sieving was where the two boys could be useful because that process was quite tiring.

The first task was to remove the grass from the areas that they were to dig. The grass was sieved but nothing was found. The turf was put to one side because it would be needed to restore the dig to its original state. Once the areas to be first examined were laid bare, the real work began using small trowels and brushes so that nothing could be damaged. Gradually the digs went down into the ground. All earth removed was checked by sieve and stacked with the removed turf. At about 11 am a tall, well built and handsome man walked over to the tent at the side of the dig. Mary got up and asked him his business. He produced a police warrant card and told her that his name was Simon Telford and he was with the local police. He was making sure that the dig had legal permission.

Mary liked the look of him and showed him all the documentation. They talked about archaeology for while until Simon looked at his watch and said "Its lunch time, have you eaten?"

After Mary said that she hadn't, he invited her to come to the local pub with him. She agreed and they set off down to his car. Over a pint of bitter and a glass of chardonnay, they indulged in a plate of sandwiches. He explained that he was on leave so he didn't need to go back to work for a few days and not being on duty, he was allowed alcohol. They talked about the dig and of course, the weather until it was time for Mary to go back to work. Simon told her that he would be back in a couple of days and would like to take her to lunch again. This pleased Mary because she had enjoyed his company and conversation.

When Mary returned to the dig, it had become rather larger but nothing of interest had been found. At sunset, they covered the holes with tarpaulin so that if it rained, no damage would be done.

The team returned the next morning, removed the tarpaulins and got back to work. Mary had her own part of the dig but had not got far enough down to reach the start of the ruins.

She was scraping and brushing away the earth. Dick took over the sieving while Helen was away from the task taking photographs. Mary had instructed Dick and had told him not to touch anything he had found, but to call her over to identify it. He spotted something in the sieve and as instructed, called Mary over. He had found another gold coin.

They all stopped work to see this first treasure while it was being photographed. The first major find was exciting and spurred the archaeologists to greater efforts. There was always a little competitive spirit to see who made the best discoveries. After Mary had gently brushed the dirt from its face, she recognised the coin as being the same as the

ones the boys had found. Dick, looking on, was very excited because this find authenticated the coins he and Bill had discovered.

Mary placed the coin in a bubble wrap envelope and locked it away in her metal briefcase. They returned to work and the archaeologist who had found the coin shouted that he had made another discovery. This was the decayed remains of a leather bag. At the bottom of the bag there nestled three more coins. These were in better condition having been protected by the leather. The gold was shining in the sunlight. Mary took the coins and stowed them away, carefully wrapped, with the other find. This meant that had in all had found a dozen coins, and Mary thought that a dozen was a round number and there would be no more. She would be happy to be proved wrong.

They found nothing more and at sunset, they covered their work and went home. Mary took the metal case with her because the museum would be closed and though she had a key, the safe would be closed and on a time delay.

They started work the next morning and after an hour's busy trowelling, there was a shout from one of the diggers. He had found a skeleton. Mary went over to help him remove the earth from the bones. As they were doing this, another skeleton appeared and then three more. These last three had been laid out properly whereas the other two had just been bundled into the hut. They were all very excited by these finds. They carefully removed the first bones and laid them out on the table in the tent. It became obvious that they had been soldiers because all the bodies had the vestiges of fighting men's equipment and the three laid out seemed to have dirks where their socks would have been. This meant that they were possibly Scots. Mary notified the chief of the museum who said that he would tell the authorities of the find and organise post mortems by an archeologically trained pathologist.

While this was being done, the other skeletons were removed from the dig. There was no trace of any coffins so the bodies had probably been killed in some kind of action.

While awaiting the authorities, they went back to the dig. Mary worked beside where the leather bag was found and very soon discovered a decayed wooden box. Helen was called over to bring her camera. She photographed the box as it was lying in the earth. Very carefully, after the earth was removed from all round the box, it was lifted out, again being photographed. This had to be done with great care and gentleness for fear it would disintegrate. It was placed on a board, wrapped and then it was taken back to the tent where it was recorded again and then carefully opened, having been photographed from every angle.

Inside was a golden crown. Mary recognised it as an earl's crown, not a royal one. The decoration on the sides was of Fleur de Lis and roses. It seemed to be probable that it was the Earl of Yorkshire's crown and it had been hidden in what remained of the thatched roof of the cottage together with the leather bag containing the coins.

The box was closed and wrapped to protect it and its contents. Then it was stowed away and locked in Mary's metal case with the four coins. By this time the museum

was closed and so Mary had the responsibility of guarding it before it could be properly protected in the museum safe.

Mary was very worried by this awesome responsibility and wondered how she could protect the find. As she was worrying about this, Simon appeared. She explained the problem and he came up with an acceptable solution. He would take the case and store it safely in the evidence locker at the police station bringing it back after the weekend. Mary was very relieved and handed over the case. Before he left, Simon suggested that they should go to the street fair and market being held in Doncaster that Saturday. Then they could have lunch at their favourite pub. Mary was delighted with this but said that she had much paperwork to get through and would have to work all afternoon.

"OK, that's a date. How about I pick you up again at 7 in the evening and we can have dinner together"

"That sounds nice. It'll give me a chance to change into something dinnerish."

Simon picked up the metal case and took it back to his car for safe keeping at the police station.

The next morning, Simon stopped outside Mary's house, and knocked on her door. She came out, ready to go to the festivities. When they got there, they saw amusement stalls but no large attractions. The first one they stopped at was a shooting gallery. Simon paid for Mary to have a go. She had never fired a rifle before and he had to show her how to aim and try to hit the target which was a line of ducks on a conveyor going past slowly. She missed with all of her six shots and told Simon to show her how it was done. He took up the rifle and fired all of his shots in quick succession, hitting six ducks. Mary was very impressed and took the prize, a squeaky rabbit. They walked on looking at the other stalls. A small child looked at Mary's rabbit with longing and Mary, on getting a nod from Simon, presented her with their prize. The child hugged the rabbit and ran off to show her mother.

The other part of the fair was a vegetable market. Mary bought some lettuce and tomatoes and stored them away in a supermarket bag. By this time it was nearly lunch time and so they collected the car and went off to their pub for lunch. Over lunch Mary asked about Simon's prowess with the rifle. He told her about his experience in the army where he had been taught to shoot properly and he had never lost the art. He had not been a sniper but had had the ability. Before he could go to sniper school, he had been sent to Sandhurst when he had got his commission.

After lunch, they drove back to Mary's house, agreeing to meet at seven o'clock to go to dinner. Before she left the car, Simon put his arm round her and kissed her lightly on the lips. Mary kissed him back and opened her door and got out. Simon drove off and Mary went inside to catch up on her paperwork feeling very happy and looking forward to the evening.

At seven, Simon knocked on her door and she answered it. Simon looked at her, entranced by her looks. She had a beautiful pale blue low necked dress and looked really beautiful. Simon said "You look wonderful, that's a marvellous dress"

Mary smiled her thanks and said that she had taken the time off from her work and had gone out to a dress shop to buy it. "I'm lucky that I'm able to fit a standard dress size, so it didn't need any alteration."

"You're just the right size for me," he said kissing her and holding her close.

They got in the car and Simon drove to the restaurant where he had made a booking. They were escorted to a table for two and sat down. The waiter brought a bottle of champagne in a cooler and poured a flute for each of them.

They ordered asparagus soup and steak for their main course. While they were waiting, they made small talk and Simon asked her how she had become an archaeologist. Mary described her reading of Heinrich Schlieman's discovery of Troy at an early age. She became more and more interested in archaeology and when it was time to go to university, she studied for a degree in archaeology at Oxford. When she graduated, she was offered a job at a dig in Greece, looking for the tomb of Agamemnon. They did not find the tomb but they did unearth several valuable artefacts. After her return to England, she went on several British excavations, one of which was an investigation of Silbury Hill and several ancient British graves on Salisbury plain near to Stonehenge. They never found anything at Silbury except that it was manmade but were not able to discover its purpose. She had been the archaeologist at Doncaster Museum for three years and had led investigations of old deserted villages. The crown was the most important find that her team had found and she was very excited that they had found it.

Simon told her how he had become a policeman. He had been promoted to Lieutenant in charge of a small section in the Royal Military Police, investigating the disappearance of a large number of small weapons. After leaving the army, he had joined the police and had done his training at Hendon Police College and had been posted to Bradford as part of the anti-racial force. After being promoted to Inspector, he had only recently come to Doncaster to be a part of the murder squad. Not that they had too many murders in Doncaster.

They finished their meal with a slice of cheesecake and then coffee. Simon settled the bill and they got up to go. When they arrived at Mary's house, she asked him in for another coffee, but they raced up the stairs, tearing off their clothes as they went. Mary's new dress was dropped on the floor like an old rag and they tumbled into bed where Simon finished undressing Mary. After it was over, they made love again but more slowly than they fell asleep in each other's arms.

When Mary awoke she was disappointed to find that she was alone in her bed. She was looking forward to a repeat performance but that was not to be. She put on her robe and went downstairs. There was a note on the fridge, held in place by magnet.

*"That was a fabulous evening.
Our lovemaking was out of this world
I enjoyed every minute and I hope you did too.
Simon"*

The note said everything that she felt about Simon but as he wasn't there, she couldn't tell him. She would the next time they met.

She went back upstairs, showered and changed into her sports clothes. Her beautiful new dress was in a crumpled heap on the floor. She picked it up and put it in her wardrobe on a hangar, she decided to have it dry cleaned before she wore it again. She had usually gone to the gym on Sunday mornings and she thought that a good session on a cross trainer would do her some good and might quieten down her body.

When she got home, she did all her usual housework but this time, did not change her bed because there was a faint aroma of him still in it.

On Monday morning, she arrived at the dig expecting Simon to have brought back the crown but there was no sign of him. By halfway through the morning she was starting to worry and took out her cell phone to ring him and ask where he was. She asked the police operator if she could speak to Inspector Simon Telford.

"I'm sorry, there's no one of that name here."

"I'm Mary Pierce, did you have anything to keep safe for me over the weekend?"

"Not as far as I know but I'll just check for you." There was a pause and a new voice came on the line.

"I'm Inspector Fiona Watson. How may I help you?"

Mary explained and the Inspector said that she would come to the site straight away. A short time later, two police arrived and showed their warrant cards identifying themselves. Mary looked carefully at the warrant cards.

"These are not like the one that Simon showed me."

"I'm sorry. That warrant card was a forgery. It's very rare for people to examine them closely. They usually just give a quick look and accept that their real. Can we sit down, I've got something to tell you."

She took out a photograph and asked Mary if she knew who it was.

"Yes, that's Simon Telford."

"We've been looking for him for some time. His name is not Simon Telford but we know him as George Finch. He had been a corporal in the Military Police but was court marshalled and dismissed the service for stealing a weapon which was quickly recovered. He is what is known as a con-man. We've never caught him and he hasn't ever been charged. He's a very personable guy and he has got away with a great deal of money- all dishonestly. We'd like to find him because we have much to talk to him about. Tell me about your property."

Mary was diffident about the whole episode and her feelings for whom she knew as Simon, but the crown was an extremely important find so she decided to tell them the whole story and ended up with the note which she had kept in her handbag.

"We'd like to borrow this to see if there are any fingerprints on it, you'll get it back - if you want it. Could you come into the police station and make a formal statement this afternoon?"

Also, I need copies of the photos that were taken so we can identify the crown and coins and send out to antique dealers to publicise the theft."

"Yes, I'll come in this afternoon and bring you some prints, I have to come into town and tell my boss what's happened. I think it's probable that I'll lose my job over this."

"Possibly not, you took all the right decisions, it was something anyone would have done. If you have a problem, I'll come in and explain the situation."

Mary went to see the museum's director and related the whole sad incident. She received the worst telling off she had ever been subjected to. She told him what the Police inspector had said and slowly the atmosphere had quietened down. She wasn't dismissed but she knew that her previously spotless reputation was forever ruined.

She went home and threw herself on her bed in floods of tears. She had fallen in love with a crook and had been taken for a ride. What made the whole thing worse was the memory of their lovemaking and the faint male aroma in the unmade bed. Eventually, she fell asleep hugging a pillow to her, not waking till the morning.

She had to go to the dig and see if anything else was there to be found. She couldn't bring herself to excavate any more so she called Dick over and instructed him on how to work. "If you find anything at all, don't do any more digging. Just

call me over and we'll see what you've found."

Dick started work with the brush and trowel and after a short while, he called her over. "Come and see what I've found."

Mary rushed over and saw the corner of her metal case peeping through the earth. Quickly it was taken from the earth with Helen snapping away with her camera. Mary opened the case and inside was the wooden box which had contained the crown. When it was opened, there was the crown and a note addressed to her.

She opened the note and read it to herself, not wanting to tell the others about her affair.

My Dearest Mary

I couldn't take your crown away from you. You were so proud of it and I couldn't bring myself to hurt your feelings over it because I have fallen in love with you.

We can't be together now because my reputation would damage you. I really wish things could have been otherwise.

I must admit that the four gold coins will keep my body and soul together when I go to America or Australia. If I can be honest for some time and restore my reputation, I might be able to come back and see if we could start again, that is if you are willing.

I will always love you Simon

Making my Lockdown Clock

For many years I have been fascinated about time-keeping machines i.e., watches and clocks. Beginning in the 1970's I repaired watches for a hobby, cleaning by hand and with a cleaning machine and repairing them by purchasing parts which were in plentiful supply. I was never skilled enough to make parts, but as they were easy enough to obtain, especially if you got on the right side of a local professional watch repairer who would order parts for you. I still have all the tools, some given to me by Harry Hardacre, who did it for a living for a while, and some books, some from Jim Kembery who also learned the trade, I believe in the services. As the years passed and work pressure increased, I spent less time on the hobby. The late 1980's saw a flood of early electronic watches and low-cost models which went on to replace many mechanical ones in general use.

Although I did not practice the hobby very often then I still had a fascination with time machines.

During a holiday trip to Tennessee, I met a friend of a friend who was also intrigued with time, in this case with clocks made totally from wood. Now that sparked my interest once more. He had several clocks made in the late nineteenth century and would restore them, repairing gears with broken teeth by shaping and gluing in pieces of hardwood.

On returning home I thought about a new 'time consuming' hobby making time keeping machines and had the idea of making wooden clocks by rekindling my past fondness of woodworking too. After all, being retired, I had 'time on my hands'. The World Wide Web is a wonderful research tool, and I was able to research several woodworkers, mainly in

the USA and Australia, who made wooden clocks and even sold the plans. I was hooked.

In order to precisely cut the teeth and gear wheels, makers universally used a scroll saw. I had not come across these before. I only knew about the manual coping saws and fret saws, so I set about researching the scroll saw. For those that do not know, a scroll saw is a cross between a jig saw and a sewing machine; an automated fret saw.

I did not have any room to create a workshop in the house or garage, so my wife bought me a metal shed, only 6 feet by 4 feet, of the self build variety, small, but big enough for me to work in. This was a lovely Christmas present. Much better than a pair of socks or aftershave. I constructed the shed next to my larger tool shed in the garden, installed electricity and made a workbench.

I then discovered there are different qualities, finishes, and price ranges of scroll saws on the market in the UK from basic machines costing £80 - £150 to better designs costing £500 - £800 and more. The lower priced ones suffered quite an amount of vibration when in use. The better and more expensive designs had a link arm design, an articulated head arm and a tilting table. Would it be worth the money purchasing a high-quality machine initially if I found I was not able to master the technique or enjoy the newly found hobby? No was my answer.

I purchased a mid-range, low-end scroll saw made by a German company, Scheppach. It was one of the relatively lower cost starter model designs, but not the cheapest. It



1. Scheppach Scroll Saw

appeared adequate for me to start off with, having a variable speed motor and a tilting table. It cost around £350 at the time. I needed to practice cutting and making sawdust!

There are plenty of scroll saw sites on the internet with tutorials using YouTube and free patterns to download and cut. One such, extremely good, site is by an American by the name of Steve Good who lives in Lexington, Kentucky. The site address for those of you that may be interested in browsing it is "scrollsawworkshop.blogspot.com". Steve created this site some years ago as it became his hobby too. Not too distant from my career, he was a computer engineer also now recently retired after working for Xerox on their range of Printers and photocopiers; the large printers found in companies for printing their computer output for mailings etc. I had cause to email Steve several times with queries during my practice cutting work and as we had common interests and work engineering backgrounds found that we could chat easily.

I found a site where I could purchase the clock patterns, in Hawaii as it happens, called Clayton Boyer Woodworking Designs, www.lisaboyer.com/Claytonsite/Claytonsite1.htm

Reading through the many clock designs I decided to make the "Number Six Clock" as it was suggested to be one of the most forgiving designs for the beginner. I proceeded to purchase the plans for this in paper form because I did not possess any computer aided design package on my PC. Any future clock I make of a different design would be purchased as cad/cam files as I have since found a program called DeltaCad for the PC for only around \$40. Yes, you guessed it, from the USA. For this plan though paper was the way to go. A week or so later an envelope arrived with a book of plans enclosed.

The idea was to keep the original plans as reference and copy the pages on my printer to cut out and glue to the wood to cut out the design. I later found though that copying the original paper plan of a circular wheel and gluing it to the wood generated a very slightly oval wheel, not obviously detectable to the eye, but which gave problems later when mating the wheels together. Hence the reason for the cad/cam approach in the future.

It was clear from looking at the work involved with cutting the clock parts that I needed to practice with the saw. Steve

Good's site contains hundreds of free patterns to download and cut, supplying ample practice opportunity for me, but what wood shall I use, where should I purchase it and more importantly how much will it cost?

Steve's site suggested Baltic Birch plywood as a good quality medium for sawing, obtainable in various thicknesses and possessing good qualities and strength for a multitude of projects. Great, this is to be my practice wood. The clock plans also suggested that it should be made with BB plywood as it is a very stable wood and, because it is made up from multiple layers of birch hardwood with the grain of each layer lying at right angles to each other, would not readily warp with changes in humidity. Also, it would be strong enough not to break at vulnerable places as other woods might do. I found a sawmill only 8 miles away that would sell me 8ft x 4ft sheets of BB ply of the suitable grade and cut it into smaller 4 x 2 sheets for me to load in the car that I could handle on my table saw to cut into smaller sheets for the scroll saw. I could also purchase hardwoods from them so I could make all manner of things as practice pieces, and hardwood subsequently for the frame of the clock. The cost of both types of wood were not cheap though, however in for a penny as they say, I had come this far.

As I am sure you can imagine, the cutting of clock gear teeth was going to be quite tricky for someone who had not done any intricate wood cutting since perhaps leaving school, so practice, practice, practice is what I needed to do. This probably took me at least a year, during which I made all manner of different things from key fobs in a variety of different and attractive woods to puzzles and tree ornaments for Christmas. Eventually I became sufficiently proficient to set about making my first real clock.

The first clock did work for around six months or so. All the parts, gear wheels and pinions were made with Baltic Birch Plywood, a mixture of one quarter and one-half inch thick. Well, since the plans were American, they were in imperial measurements. As you can probably guess, I had to buy everything here in metric sizes and adjust. One eighth inch steel rod for the wheel spindles became 3mm, and one-half inch thick timber had to be, well, sanded, etc.

I had bought some American Red Oak whilst on holiday in the USA to use for the clock frame as it would be quite attractive when oiled and finished. Yes, my wife did raise eyebrows when she saw it and wondered which suitcase it was to go in on the way home. I mentioned above that the clock worked for six months or so. It kept good time initially, but suddenly began stopping intermittently. I discovered this was due to the warping of the frame I had made. This was a disappointment, and I had to discover how it happened. Further research showed this was partly due to it being American Oak. I found out this timber has quite an open grain structure, easily absorbing moisture. Also, American sawmills dry wood to around 8 to 12%. British sawmills dry timber to around 15 to 18% I was told as our climate is naturally moist by comparison. The wood had begun to absorb moisture and move, I suppose, from the moment I had brought it home. The holes for the gear wheels were causing binding or being no longer in alignment due to the movement. During cutting of the gears, I also found problems



2. Axminster Scroll Saw

with the slightly out of true circles during my pattern copying process. The vibration of the scroll saw combined with my minimal skill level caused various inaccuracies in the wheel geometry resulting me having to cut more than one escape wheel and others. This meant I had failed to make a satisfactory working clock, so I wanted to make a second clock with a better frame, and which would last longer, maybe lasting me out for it to be passed down.

I bit the bullet and bought a better saw branded by Axminster Tools Ltd, a Rolls Royce model compared to my first saw. It had a head that hinged up and tilted from side to side, and a link arm mechanism for blade movement that minimised vibration. It cost around £650.

I bought some African Mahogany from the sawmill, which had a tighter grain structure than the American Red Oak, and it was dried in this country for our climate. It should make an attractive frame for the clock. The wood cost around £70 for the off cuts. Unlike in America, hardwood is expensive in this country, another thing I had not really considered for long enough when contemplating the hobby. I still had plenty of Baltic Birch plywood for the gears. All I needed now was the time to make my second clock.

I am going to 'fast-forward' this now because the intention of this record was to illustrate the making of my 'Lockdown Clock'. This one would be the second clock I have made, the first during 2017 which would, as it turns out, be my prototype and practice model. In March 2020 I suddenly found I had time on my hands, due to the pandemic and our government trying to control the spread of the virus, protect the NHS and save lives. I had nowhere else to be, nowhere else to go to spend my money on days out and visits to restaurants. I set about making a second clock or hopefully first that had a chance of lasting any length of time.

The original plans were copied onto self adhesive, A4, printer label paper and checking carefully that the circles were truly circular by repositioning slightly on the flatbed copier I had. Gluing the first plans to the wood with spray adhesive caused stretching of the paper, so the self-adhesive label paper was a better approach and did not suffer this fate. All I had to do was to remove the backing sheet and carefully stick the patterns to the wood. To be accurate the plywood was

3. Wheel Cutting



first prepared by sanding to 600grit, sealed with a cellulose sanding sealer, and then covered with blue masking tape (painters' tape as it appears to be called now). This makes the pattern easy to remove from the wood once the cutting has been done, the pattern then being applied to the tape, not directly to the wood. After this the pattern was covered with transparent packing tape, which prevents the pattern lifting as the wood is cut. The glue on the packing tape also provides a lubricant for the saw blade and makes them last longer before dulling, or so the scroll saw experts say.

The wheels were carefully cut to the lines of the pattern, holes being drilled in the waste area of the internal cuts to allow the saw blade to be threaded through. The centre hole of the wheel was drilled using a brad-point drill to mark the centre point more accurately.

After cutting out the wheels, in order to ensure they were perfectly round, I had made an adjustable jig to mount the wheels with a piece of stainless-steel spindle rod through their centre holes, so they could be trued on my disc sander to ensure true circles of the correct size. The wheel diameters being carefully sanded so that all teeth formed exact circles.



4. Wheel Trimming

In a similar fashion I attached the patterns of the frame pieces to the Mahogany, not bothering with the painters' tape as there would be an amount of sanding required anyway, then some polishing to achieve a decent finish.



5. Frame Layout

Once completed, the frame was used to mount the wheels in their correct positions, two at a time to check the alignment of each with the pinion of the next. Some teeth of each wheel needed to be sanded or filed more in order to achieve the correct teeth alignment and depth to ensure smooth running. Fortunately, this work was minimal, and my practice had paid off.

This progressed with each pair of wheels, blowing on them to ensure they turned with minimal friction and the gearing was smooth with each mating tooth, gradually building to all gears in place engaging with their appropriate pinion on the next.

Once the 'going train' of the clock was running well by putting pressure on the 1st wheel by finger pressure. I then turned my attention to the drive.

The clock is powered by a weight of 5 lbs by design. OK, my experience with the first clock suggested I ought to be sure of enough power, so I decided on 6 lbs, or around 2.7 kilograms. I had a large quantity of lead air rifle pellets in the garage. Do not ask how I came by them, or why I had not thrown them away many years ago. My wife had already asked. I, of course, knew they would come in extremely useful one day.



6. Wheel Alignment

I needed a container to put them in and the plans only provided a guide, as in a plastic cylindrical tube or drain-pipe affair. I decided a nice cylinder of African Mahogany would look well so cut out twelve rings from the flat timber I had, glued them on top of each other, then sanded and polished to form the container. By various experimentation, this had to have an internal depth around 7 inches and a diameter of around 3. I decided the lid should be removable so I could adjust the weight if needed. From the top of this a cord would enter the base of the frame and be wound around the wind pulley. The wind gear would pull the cord up and around the pulley, thus providing the energy to turn the wind wheel (1st wheel).



9. Rough Glued Weight Container



8. Sanded Weight Container



7. Polished Weight Container

Once all the gears were assembled and the weight attached the clock should run. The regulation and time keeping of how quickly the escape wheel (the 4th wheel) was allowed to turn would depend on the length of the pendulum, approximately 36 inches, how the teeth of the 4th wheel were allowed to 'escape' by the shape of the the escape wheel teeth and how they slide over the 'pallets', to impart an impulse to the pendulum to keep it swinging. The most critical components were the pallets and the escape wheel teeth. These needed some sanding and adjustment before the clock would run and I had deliberately left the escape wheel teeth slightly long to enable this. More practice and experience gained from my first attempt.

The 'going' train was now complete. Now for the 'dial' train.

The dial train is a set of wheels which sit on the outside of frame front and converts the rotation of the 2nd wheel, which turns once per hour directly carrying the minute hand, gearing down the speed of the hour hand to turn once every twelve hours. The hour hand mounts onto the hour wheel which slides over the 2nd wheel spindle or arbor on a hollow brass pipe. Smaller brass pipes also fit over the stainless-steel gear arbors to fix the gear wheels in place within the frame relative to each other.

The hands were then cut from dark Walnut. I wanted the hands to be darker than the almost white Baltic Birch plywood gear wheels and the golden-brown colour of the African Mahogany frame so they would stand out.



11. Finished Dial

The original plans did not include a dial and I thought it would be good to have one after receiving some comments about my first attempt "Nice work but how do I tell the time?"

I had some dark Walnut that I had picked up some time ago from the sawmill costing about £24 which would look nice when polished, but it was only about 4 inches wide by around 3 feet long, plenty wide enough for making the hands, but not for the 12inch dial. Steve Good's web site provided an attractive pattern for a dial with Roman numerals that I could freely download and re-size to use, so I cut the pattern into four quarters, cut the quadrants out and glued them together to form the dial.

This completed the work on the clock which I then hung in the workshop, tinkering with the adjustment of the escapement teeth until I was happy with time



12. Finished Clock

keeping. I had to shorten a few teeth to prevent intermittent stopping and adjust the length of the pendulum, which had a screw at the bottom of a threaded steel rod, in order to adjust the height of the pendulum bob.

I then hung the finished time piece on the wall in our dining room and will see how long it will work for this time. Presently it is keeping perfectly good time, but it is early days and 'time will tell'.



Here is a photograph of the finished clock. If you wish to see it, and maybe hear it ticking here is a link to it on YouTube: https://youtu.be/4d6eacZ_aKAube

All-in-all it was a very well spent lock-down period, hopefully there won't be many more.

Keith Templeman

The NCR Fellowship

PRESIDENT:
Stephen Swinbank

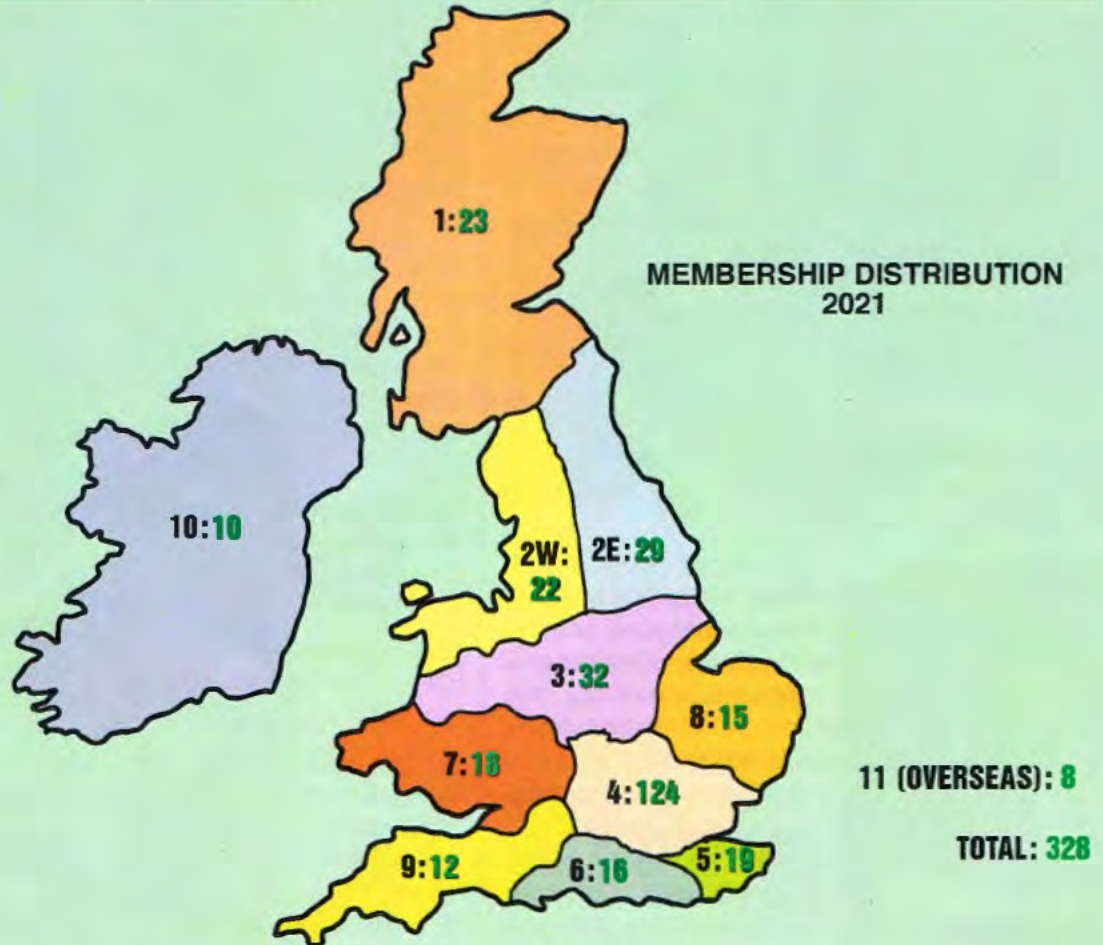
ORGANISING COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN & TREASURER: Lin Sandell

SECRETARY: John Atkins

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER: Graham Brookman

EDITOR EMERITUS: Geoff Jackson



REGIONAL ORGANISERS

Region 1: Hamish Mackenzie

Region 6: Alan Hutchins

Regions 2E and 2W: Pat Keogh

Region 7: John Jones

Region 3: Keith Templeman

Region 8: Richard Craigie

Region 4: Roger Whelan

Region 9: Adrian Gallagher

Region 5: Anthony Welch

Region 10: Ken Carson