



WHY ALL CAN FEEL PROUD

'In broad terms, we found an organisation giving good service with due regard to economy, and we believe that this should be a matter of some pride to both staff and management'.

This is a key paragraph in a report submitted recently by consultancies appointed to examine and comment upon the organisation and resources of ACTS.

In a special article on Page Two, ACTS General Manager Peter Bainbridge talks about the consultancies report and about the past, present and future of everybody in the ACTS team.

He concludes: 'We can all look forward to a positive future in ACTS if we continue the pattern of the past — giving the best possible service with proper regard to the need for economy at all levels and all times'.

Barking smiles

When you feel you're 'heading for the top', you've got reason to smile, like Bob, Sue, Bert, Pat, Peter and Reg. Above, six of the 'Old Contemptibles' at Barking ACTS, and young Diana Ashworth (below), who joined the regional office only two months ago as Container Control Clerk. They're all part of the Barking Story — told in full on pages six and seven.



Mother and daughter both doing well!



'Mother and daughter both doing well' would seem the ideal caption for this picture of Brunhilde Simmons (Head Office Control Filing Section) and her 23-year-old daughter Rosemary, who was a shorthand typist in Richmond House Administration Department until she left in April to join Dan Air as an air hostess.

A qualification for the job is an ability to speak French and German, and as Bruni was herself born in West Germany, Rosemary had a good tutor!

Based at Gatwick, Rosemary's flying duties will take her mainly to the Continent.

Board appointments

Mr. W. C. (Bill) Campbell, ACTS Operations Manager and a director of the company since January, 1976, has been appointed Deputy General Manager.

Mr. D. (Del) Jenkins, head of Management Services, has been appointed to the Board.

Mr. Campbell first joined ACTS in July, 1967, and Mr. Jenkins in November, 1970.

THEY'RE OFF!

In the Peter Yarwood
Challenge Cup

See Page Ten

YOU are our greatest asset

By Peter Bainbridge
(ACTS General Manager)

From time to time in 'Contacts' we have written about our company (today's feature in the series is on Page 5), but only rarely have we talked in depth about our past performance and what the future holds for us.

In this 'General Manager's Spot', therefore, I want to tell you about various aspects of our work, particularly where we are in such a changing situation.

Our main objective over the years, as most readers will know, has been to service the ACTA/ANL and BLC trades, with their ever-increasing complexity, but a changing pattern began to emerge last year and is developing still further in 1977.

Last year was the year of the Middle East, with ACTS becoming involved in the C.A.M.E.L. trade for Cunard-Brocklebank, and acting as consultants in Sharjah. Both are continuing; with C.A.M.E.L. extending its range of services, and Sharjah now operational as a container port, working at handling rates equivalent to or better than both Tilbury and Seaforth.

The speed with which the Sharjah operation has become effective is due mainly to the efforts of those people from ACTS who are working in the area.

This year will see the beginning of our working for EHCL in the South Africa trade, which brings fresh challenges and interests, particularly in our computer applications. Whatever our political beliefs may be, the future of ACTS will be linked to a continuing trade between Europe and South Africa.

I am sure that it is sometimes difficult for people to appreciate the scale of ACT Services operations and the way in which we

work. As you may know, the Board recently appointed a consulting group, to review our organisation and resources. They have now reported, and I feel certain you will be interested in some of their comments.

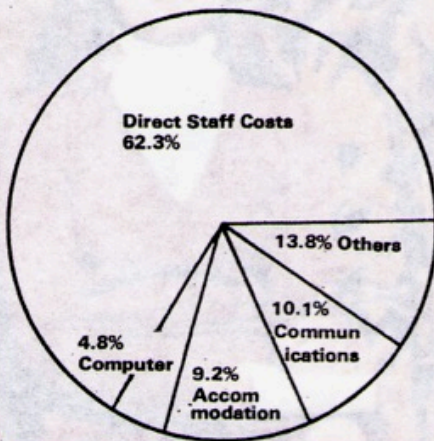
During 1976 ACTS received, on behalf of the Operating Companies, ACTA and BLC, £61.7m in freight paid in the UK. Out of this sum, we remitted £44.1m directly to the Operators, and the remainder covered UK operational expenses of administration, £4.1m; transport, £7.5m; containerbase and terminal costs, £5.2m; and local equipment running costs of £0.8m. Our responsibilities are mainly concerned with these latter costs, whilst the bulk of the revenue is necessary to the Operating Companies for their management, marketing, ship and container running costs.

The diagram below shows the way in which our administration costs are broken down. The main element of our costs, as you will see, is in terms of staff, which accounts for more than 62 per cent of our spending. BUT THOUGH THIS IS OUR MOST SIGNIFICANT LIABILITY, IT IS ALSO OUR GREATEST ASSET. We are essentially a service company, and the services we offer can be effective only when carried out properly by all involved! At times we have been uncertain as to how to measure our efficiency, and this is one of the items which P-E, the consultancy group, were particularly asked to consider. Their general conclusion reads:—

"In broad terms, we have found an organisation which is giving good service with due regard to economy, and we believe that this should be a matter of some pride both to staff and management of ACTS".

The words are self-explanatory. We can all look forward to a positive future in ACTS if we continue in the same way — giving the best possible service with proper regard to the need for economy at all levels and times.

ACTS
ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS, 1976
Total Administrative Cost £4.14m



Too stiff a test of memory!

When preparing this issue of 'Contacts' (writes the Editor), we asked for Silver Jubilee memories. The request apparently inspired the poets among our readers. From A. Verrinder, of Birmingham, came this little gem:—

*I don't remember Coronation Day,
The reason I still mourn;
The Queen in all the wisdom,
Picked the year that I was born.*

*Now you may own a memory,
That outpaces all the rest,
But remembering back when I was nil
Is much too stiff a test.*

See — Unhappy Fate of Leeds Rhubarb on Page Five.

The things that are happening at Leeds COULD THIS BE THE OMEN FOR DYAN?

When transport clerk Jim Cadbury married Glynis Moore at Leeds Registry Office, the bride wore a beige dress with brown fur jacket and matching hat. The couple were introduced by Leeds ACTS typist Dyan Fidler and there are those who consider it significant that it was Dyan who actually caught the bride's bouquet! Watch this column. . .

CAN ANY REGION BEAT THIS? Leeds ACTS has a Cage, a Bird and two Doves. Gordon Cage is in Transport; Daphne Bird in Imports; and Wendy and Brian Dove in Exports.

"A proper little bruiser — just like dad" is one description overheard of Amanda Jayne Phillips, who weighed in for Cargo Superintendent Barry Phillips and wife Lesley. Barry and Lesley, natives of Hornchurch, hope to have Amanda Jayne Christened there at St. Andrews Church, where they were married.

WELCOME to 19-year-old Angela Power, who joined Export Bookings as a commercial assistant. Her outside interests — reading, music and dancing. And to 26-year-old Barbara Hesketh, new shorthand typist in the marketing team, who plans to marry in December and likes reading and driving.

Missed by all

GOODBYE to 19-year-old Christine Milner who, after four years as an ACT(A) secretary, left to join the National Coal Board. She's missed by all — especially the Sports and Social Club, for



Glynis Moore and Jim Cadbury.

whom she was a most enthusiastic member.

And to Naru Rawal, who has gone to work with the Export Dept of the National Westminster Bank, after five years with Leeds Accounts and Transport.

Leeds Punch girl Ann Hampshire has announced her engagement to Gary Wilkinson, a draughtsman, and they hope to marry early next year.

New at Glasgow

WELCOME to two new members of the Glasgow team — accounts clerk Marie Harkins, who joined in February and seems to have settled in well; and to Jim Stewart, assistant equipment and container inspector.

Theresa McAfee, a commercial assistant, was married early in May to John Espie, who holds a similar appointment with OCL.

YOUR WELFARE IS THEIR CONCERN

If you're going to be any good at all in a personnel job, you've got to be a bit of a Henry Kissinger," says ACTS Chief Personnel Officer Peter Hughes, pictured below right with his colleague John Berger and their team of very attractive young ladies at Richmond House.

"The chief function of a personnel department, of course, is to give a first-class service to management in all matters relating to staff. That's why you've got to be a good mediator, like Henry Kissinger. While your main responsibility is to management, the welfare of employees must never be overlooked.

"I suppose diplomacy, tact, patience, tolerance and an ability to communicate at all levels are more essential in this job than any other".

So just what does the job entail? To start with, personnel has an overall responsibility for — and a very genuine interest in — the 700 people working for ACTS all over Britain. The majority of them were recruited either by or through the personnel team. Their personal records and contracts of employment are all held on file.

And their welfare so long as they remain with ACTS is something Peter, John and their four young ladies take very much to heart.

Career progress

Personnel Adviser John Berger, for instance, is at this moment working on a new job-evaluation and grading scheme. Since his main responsibilities include the organisation of training courses and career progression, he must be constantly on the alert to ensure that people within the company, if they are suitable, get an opportunity to take over more senior jobs as and when they become vacant.

On a day-to-day basis, Peter Hughes administers the department and looks after recruitment and welfare, with John Berger concentrating on training and career progression. From time to time, however, their paths meet and they come together, with their immediate superior, Administration Manager Bob Howland, on several matters, including looking after the relationship with ASTMS officials.

You do not have to spend long on the second floor at Richmond House to be aware that the Personnel team is both efficient and close-knit. Peter and John, for instance are good friends as well as business colleagues. They play squash together. Their characters and temperaments are complementary.

Peter joined ACTS four years ago from Cunard, where he was Personnel and Administration Officer. He and his wife Linda have two daughters — Caroline, aged eight, and Angela (4) — and he describes golf as "one of my main weaknesses". He is chairman of his local residents' association, a keen gardener and do-it-yourself fan.

John and his wife Mervyn also have two children — boys of 10 (Jonathan) and 12 (Guy). John began his working life as an indentured fitting apprentice with the De.Havilland Aircraft Company. By 1961 he was a qualified development engineer and responsible for the ex-

Please turn to Page 5



Peter (right), John and their Personnel team — Loraine, Maura, Sue and Jan.



Dave Clarke

'Musical brewer' is new deputy manager at Birmingham

"Home brewing," football, cricket, swimming and "all kinds of music" are among the spare-time interests of 28-year-old Yorkshire exile Dave Clarke, who recently took up an appointment as ACTS Deputy Regional Manager at Birmingham.

Dave had previously been with ACT(A) at Manchester and Bristol. He and his wife have a 20-month-old daughter, Rachel, and are expecting a second child in October.

Anyone got a broody hen?

One of the problems of working in Personnel is that you are most things to most people — and everything to some.

One day early last year, Peter Hughes was in his office when the then general manager Peter Yarwood walked in. "I want you to find me a broody hen," he said. Just like that. . . .

"He was the general manager, so I did not question him," says Peter. "Like any good departmental head, I decided to delegate. I gave the job to Jan!"

It was subsequently discovered that while cutting long grass, Peter Yarwood had found a nest of eggs. They were cold, so he took them to the office — and wanted a broody hen to sit on them!

Resourceful as ever, Personnel found the right hen. But alas, there was no happy ending. . . .

★ ★ ★
The best wishes of all at Birmingham ACTS go to Sandra Wells, for two years Regional secretary and "Contacts" correspondent, who gave birth to a 7lb 12oz baby girl at five minutes to midnight on April 19.

Thank you, Peter

Richmond House have asked us to say thank you to Peter Smith (Management Services Programmer) for always being at the ready to take pictures for 'Contacts'.

Peter (they say) not only takes good pictures — he develops them, too. So let's see what develops . . .

THIS IS WHY I BECAME A



Joan Groom and hubby — both facing camera — get into the swing of things.

I'm not quite a square — more an eighth of one writes Joan Groom, of Basildon Central Services.

Just what IS square dancing? Well, apart from being the nicest way to slim, it's a hobby (open to anyone between 6 and 60) that will bring you into contact with the friendliest and happiest people in the world.

When my husband finished shift work some years ago, we decided to find an interest we could enjoy together, and having heard of a club within walking distance of home, we strolled along one evening to 'black our noses'. We returned home completely hooked.

Obviously, it takes a little time to learn the basic steps, but with an understanding 'caller' and helpful, experienced dancers, the 'two left feet' feeling is soon overcome.

And if anyone thinks that it is an energetic, tiring pastime, let me assure you that dancing one quickstep or one waltz is twice as exhausting as a whole evening of square dancing.

Fun — and inexpensive

It is a comparatively inexpensive hobby, too. There are Square Dance Clubs all over the country, club nights costing anything from 25p to 40p. Saturday dances can cost up to £1, but this will include refreshment (usually tea or coffee, with cakes, sandwiches — and, just occasionally, fish and chips!)

Dress-wise, anything goes. If you are handy with a needle, matching dresses and shirts can be made, but full skirts are pretty and popular.

I feel certain there is a Square Dance Club near YOUR home, so if you want a recreation that is fun, not too expensive and a great maker of friends, I recommend you to join. Drop me a line at ACTS, Basildon, if you want any help in finding the right club.

DANCE NOTE: Rumour has it that President Jimmy Carter is an enthusiastic Square Dancer. I can't promise an invitation to the White House, but who knows, you *could* be dancing with the President one of these days!

REAL SQUARE



Two pictures that give the joyous 'feel' of square-dancing. Above — bearing the ring. Below left: Promenading.

Wedding bells ring in Manchester

Keith Tyler (Freighting) and Ann Hurst, of Manchester ACTS Credit Control, have married; so have Jean Coen (Bookings) and Brian Taylor.

★ ★ ★

Dave Nicholls and partner were the winners of Manchester's ten-pin bowling knockout competition. Runners-up were Ann Tyler and David Kirk...

★ ★ ★

Ken Thompson and his family came first in an excellent Sunday afternoon car treasure hunt organised by Ray Berry and Bernard O'Connor, of Ben Line. Pauline Hudson was second...

★ ★ ★

Mike McGuire (S.C.A.) and Sue Vaudrey, senior reservations clerk for Yugotours in Manchester, have announced their engagement

Why leave home?

Equipment inspector Bill Vernon received a parking fine ticket from the London area for a day on which he had stayed in Manchester and hadn't been anywhere near London...

Lep Transport, Manchester, were easy winners of a table tennis match against Manchester ACTS...



Max and Charmaine get switched on

Chairmaine McCourt, Soton Terminal's CURRENT Telex operator, offered no RESISTANCE to being CONNECTED, in matrimony to Max Coaker, LIVEWIRE ship supervisor for Solent Container Services.

The couple got SWITCHED ON at a St Valentine's Day party. There was no ELEMENT of doubt about setting up OHM (Heaven forgive us) together.



Chairmaine and Max

Four cars in five months is Eddie's proud record

Southampton Terminal welcomes Eddie (Bamber) Goodall to Transport. Before joining, Eddie had a spell at sea, and later as an instructor at a local sports centre.

Eddie's wife Diana recently presented him with a son, Lawrence.

A car enthusiast, Eddie has had four different cars in five months. His other spare-time interests include squash, swimming — and 'visiting public houses'.

Welcome also to Alexander (Sandy) Inglis, who has joined ACTS as Cargo Superintendent after 14 years with Ben Line. Sandy spent ten years at sea (four as chief officer), and four in Malaysia as technical adviser to BLC.

He and wife Pat have three children — Michael (7), Gillian (5) and Karen (2). Sandy has an unusual hobby — toymaking. He also likes walking in the New Forest near his home.



Telex operators from ACTS head office regions and terminals pictured in Southampton recently when they attended a concentrated training session on the new ADX communications system. BELOW: The company's Office Manager, Dudley Kirk, with Telex Controller Brian Tunmore.



Speeding up our eight thousand messages a week

The recent installation at Richmond House of a £50,000 computerised message switching system means that for the first time ACTS, ACT(A), BLC and EHCL have access to a world-wide integrated telex network.

And if anyone doubts the companies' need for an ultra-sophisticated communications system of this kind, let it be said that in one day soon after its installation, the computer handled the transmission of 1,718 messages involving the use of no fewer than 800,000 'characters' (letters and spaces).

Simple arithmetic turns this into 8,590 messages and FOUR MILLION characters a week — or 446,180 messages and two hundred and eight MILLION characters a year.

ACTS Organisation and Methods Manager Stuart Yates says: "Installation of the ADX system will mean a significant improvement over the old public system — and a great speeding-up of our communications.

"Under the new system, if the same message has to go to, say, ten offices it can be sent to all ten simultaneously, instead of having ten

By CARTER LEONARD

separate transmissions as in the old days. And there are three priority levels — Immediate, 2nd Priority and Normal.

"The ADX is always open for traffic, and each region can send and receive messages at the same time."

The new ACTS private Telex network has nineteen lines in Britain, linking terminals and regional offices with Southampton headquarters and with each other, plus two Continental lines. There are also three inter-Continental lines. One of them, to the Ben Line, Far east network, became operational during May, and the other two, to Sydney and Montreal, were due to come into use at the end of June.

To send a message, each operator simply keys — once only — the required destinations and message text directly to the ADX, which rapidly forwards the message to as many destinations as are indicated.

The offices of companies not included in the network can also be contacted automatically via the computer, and much of the delay caused by the manual setting up of a connection between offices is thereby eliminated. "Wrong and occupied numbers are dreadful time-wasters," says Stuart.

Communication to and from major users at Head Office has been improved by the provision of separate Telex facilities within user departments so that the message is printed out as near as possible to the receiver's desk.

The job of controlling the new network is that of the newly-recruited Telex Controller, Brian Tunmore, who reports directly to Dudley Kirk, the Office Manager. It is Brian's task to ensure that messages flow through the computer with minimum delay, to maintain the operational efficiency of the ADX itself, and to encourage users and operators to make the best use of a system which is making a significant contribution to the control of our business world-wide.

FOOTNOTE: Later this year, computer terminals in regional offices will also be used to reduce the time taken to produce Bills of Lading and Freight Invoices, and subsequently to improve the efficiency of container monitoring. The background story of this will be told in a future issue of 'Contacts'.

Your welfare is their concern

Continued from Page 3

perimental functional testing of the flying controls of both the Comet and the Trident. He first became a training officer, in 1965, when with an I.C.I subsidiary.

He joined ACTS two years ago and lists his hobbies as "vintage and thoroughbred motor cars when possible (ordinary ones when not), a catholic taste in music, and repair and reconstruction of houses out of necessity!"

Assistant Personnel Officer Jan Chandler describes herself as "a country girl at heart". One of the apples of her eye is "Cindy", a 25-year-old car which (by a strange miracle) still gets her to and from the office, and which she bought from Cindy Morelli (former Chief Programmer in Management Services) before she returned to America. The other is husband Roger, to whom she will have been married three years in September. Both are keen on cycling and walking, brew their own beer and make their own wine.

Jan has been 4½ years with ACTS (she joined in London) and one of her main responsibilities is that of staff recruitment at Head Office.

Much of her time is taken up with staff welfare, and she is sub editor and general "chaser-upper" of stories, pictures and all other material for "Contacts". She has recently played a leading part in the organisation of the Peter Yarwood Challenge Cup scheme.

Twenty-seven-year-old Sue Cresswell, who is responsible for records and statistics, also helps Jan with Head Office staff recruitment.

Sue, who recently announced her engagement to Graham Godwin, of the Operations Department, and hopes to marry next Spring, has plen-

ty of hobbies to fill her spare time. She plays badminton once a week, enjoys sailing, pewter and copper work, genealogy (she recently traced her great great grandfather), keep fit exercises, going home to Manchester to see her parents — and saving money!

Personnel clerk Loraine Eyers is married and has been 3½ years with the company. Needlework, swimming, walking and driving have been her outside interests to date. Along with her colleagues, she has just started horse riding.

Twenty-five-year-old secretary Maura Engwall joined ACTS on a temporary basis and has been on the permanent staff for a year. Outside interests — horse riding, tennis, canvas embroidery, cooking — and the country life.

The unhappy fate of Leeds rhubarb

As promised at the foot of Column One, on Page Two, we now present the Jubilee contribution from The Poet Laureate of Leeds...

*On the accession of our Queen,
These fields were fertile, fair and green,
With rhubarb blooming thick and straight
Oblivious to its unhappy fate.*

*The rhubarb growing in profusion
Is now replaced by sad confusion —
And in the lovely rhubarb's place
Now stands Leeds Containerbase!*

(Our apologies to the Leeds Poet Laureate for having so little space that we are able to publish only part of his epic — Editor).

BARKING RECKON FOR THE

Eric Russell, regional manager at Barking, has six months to make a prophecy (or is it just a dream?) come true. When he spoke at the region's Christmas party this year, he told those present: "When I came here just over a year ago from Southampton (he had been Terminal manager there), we were a second division team.

"During 1976, we were lucky enough to get into Division One, taking on three trades we had never had before.

"BY NEXT DECEMBER WE AIM TO BE AT THE TOP OF THE FIRST DIVISION!"

It is anybody's guess, of course, whether 42-year-old Eric and his enthusiastic team of 56 will achieve their ambition. One thing is certain — if they don't, it won't be for want of trying.

For the record, it is just over five years — March 27, 1972, is the exact date — since ACTS first went into business at Barking. In that time, container flows have built up from nothing in the first month to a total of 15,300 loaded TFE's during 1974 and 14,400 during 1975 to 16,500 in 1976.

By LESTER CARROLL

"And we expect to move more than 20,000 loaded TFE's this year," says Eric.

When he talks about being lucky enough to get into Division One during 1976, it has to be appreciated that until then Barking were handling, operationally, only Ben Line cargo to and from the Far East.

During the 12 months of 1976, they took on commercial and operational responsibility for cargoes of the Cunard Arabian Middle East Line (not surprisingly known as CAMEL), and for those on the Ellerman Harrison Container service to and from South Africa.

And as an extra bonus, they started to handle transport for the CAROL (Caribbean Overseas Line) service, on behalf of Harrison Line.

TO THE TOP

All of this, as Eric Russell rightly says, put them into Division One. My bet, after spending some time with them recently, is that they will not only stay there, but that if they put their minds to it they'll make their skipper's words come true and jump right to the top.

Senior commercial assistant Bob Hale (lucky fellow) with June Evans, Ruby Manning, Maureen Smith, Jean N well-surrounded that keeps him happy!



You don't have to be long at Barking to realise that it's a happy team. Jean Marsh, who isn't even on the staff but for two years has been dispensing twice daily doses of tea to all and sundry, sums it up when she says: "I enjoy every minute of my job on the ACTS round; they're a lovely bunch to be with." (The word 'lovely' is Jean's).

It's a close-knit team, too, so it isn't really surprising that quite a few of those who helped to set up the Barking ACTS operation more than five years ago are still there. Equipment inspector Peter Toop, for instance; and senior transport assistant Reg Neville; senior commercial assistant Bob Hale; and accounts supervisor Pat Skelton with her deputy Sue Barker. All five were there on 'opening day' or pretty soon afterwards.

Pat Skelton, in fact, was taking a keen interest in the base even before it opened. "I was then with Containerway and Roadferry," she says, "and from my office on the other side of the railway line, I watched the present building gradually taking shape."

Twenty-five years married, with two sons and one grandchild, Pat has a bungalow in Somerset to which she and her husband go every other week-end.

Another of the 'Old Contemptibles', Pat's deputy Sue Barker, first worked with ACTS in the Central Freight Department at Fenchurch Street, and moved to Barking when Head Office went to Southampton. She is no stranger to 'Contacts'. Her picture appeared in the very first issue — when she married Layland Barker, who works with OCL on the floor above her at



MANAGEMENT TEAM: Regional manager Eric Russell, with his deputy Peter Gilmore and Christine Corderoy. RIGHT: Checking movements — Marie Dyster, Bert Starling, Ron Troke and Ted Parker.



TO BE HEADING

TOP

th the girls who surround him in his working life
ore, Pat Alcorn and June Paton. It's being so



working!
A keen ice skater, Sue was recently re-
pointed treasurer of Barking ACTS Sports
& Social Club.
Two more of the original team also went to
orking after spells at Head Office — senior
nsport Assistant Reg Neville and Senior
mmercial Assistant Bob Hale. Reg had gone
Fenchurch Street after some years with
llers handling 'animal shipping' — and if
're puzzled about what that means exactly,
k out for a future issue of 'Contacts' in which
g promises to tell all!
Next year, he will have completed 30 years in
pping, which he took up when he came out of



FOUR BARKING GIRLS who keep communications on an even keel — Sue Jackson, Angela Probyn, Val Williams and Jean Edwards. **BELOW:** The team that reckons its heading for the top of the first division, with Regional Manager Eric Russell in the centre of the second back row.

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ANNA LEADS WAY TO LAST £60



Anna

(That's all we now need for a guide dog)

IF A DOG could talk, we guess Anna the only Bernese mountain dog ever to be trained as a guide for the blind in Britain, would be asking: "Can we please have the last £60 to let Basildon Sports and Social Club Guide Dog Fund reach its £500 target."

Readers of 'Contacts' will know that the Basildon Club, spurred on by our indefatigable 'Contacts' correspondent Jocelyn Rees, has been trying to raise money to 'sponsor' a guide dog for the blind.

Recently Anna and her mistress, Mrs. Pam Brand, visited Basildon ACTS as a welcome boost to flagging spirits. Once released from her harness, Anna made friends with everybody while Pam, a registered blind person, gave her personal testimony about what a guide dog meant to her.

Our bet — and our very sincere hope — is that the last £60 will soon be found . . .



Susan Shields

'Everybody out' when lift stuck



John Whitaker

The call 'Everybody Out' sounded for the last time when former union secretary John Whitaker and 14 others were stuck in the Basildon office lift after farewell drinks to mark John's last day with Export Department.

John, who has been with ACT since 1969, was presented by his colleagues with a briefcase and pen to wish him every success in his new career as Divisional Officer with U.S.D.A.W.



Orsett, telephonist Julie Mays pictured after her wedding to Peter Gibb.

Jean Luc, a French member of ACT(A), and his wife joined Basildon Sports and Social Club members when they went to Stratford-on-Avon to see a performance of 'Macbeth'.

During a visit to his brother-in-law — a Tank Corps sergeant in Germany — Les Griffiths (Imports) tried his hand at driving a 55-ton Chieftain tank. (There is no truth in the rumour that the Army has reserved him as a new secret weapon.)

NEW TO THE TEAM

WELCOME NEWCOMERS to the Basildon ACTS family include:

Susan Shields, secretary to the Regional Manager. Recently married, Susan is an enthusiastic cook but (as our picture shows, doesn't let eating her own delicacies interfere with her figure;

Jane Taylor, typist with Central Services. Married with no children, Jane is a keen gardener;

Christine Bryan (Export Coding) is also married with no children;

Maureen Radden, a Telex operator with Central Services, has just started Karate lessons (somebody must have told her about us!); and

Margaret Casey, a clerk in the Import Department, married, interested in drama and poetry, and proud owner of three cats.



Newcomers Maureen Radden, Jane Taylor Christine Bryan

CONTACTS' CROSSWORD

Once again 'Contacts' gives you a chance to pit your wits against those of the crossword puzzler deviser. Be on the alert for answers that have more than a little to do with your company's activities!

There will be a prize of £2 for the first correct solution opened at the end of July. Entries, please, to 'CONTACTS' CROSSWORD, Personnel Dept, ACTS, Southampton.

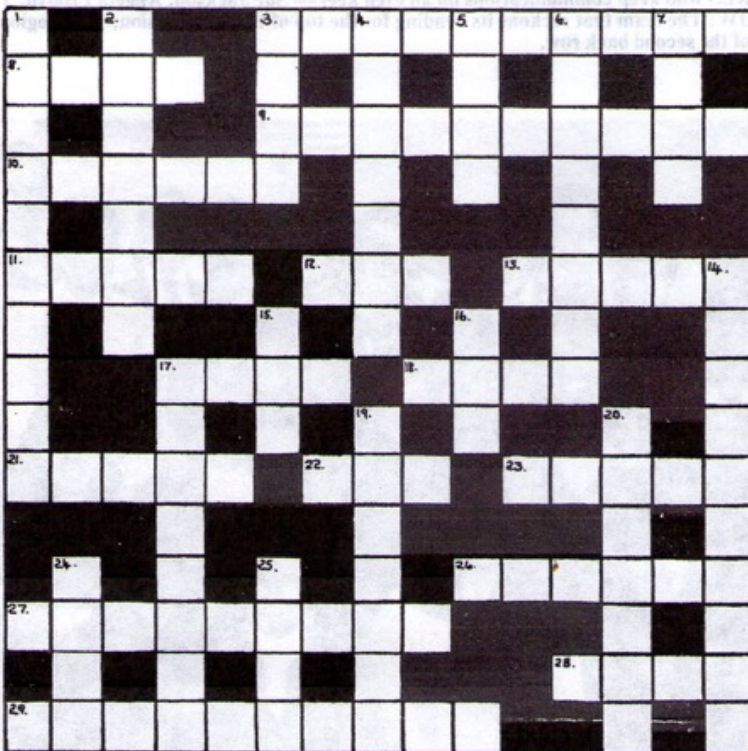
CLUES

ACROSS

- 3 If you Know Your Company, you'll know it's a good name in management! (10).
- 8 Where they play cricket in two valleys (4)
- 9 This chap is a natural (10)
- 10 Signs that look all right in numbers (6)
- 11 A near miss (5)
- 12 Peter takes a nap in the kitchen (3)
- 13 At your beck and call (2,8)
- 17 A bit of a drag (4)
- 18 They're the tops (4)
- 21 Don't bet on it! (5)
- 22 One of the family (3)
- 23 It's the ability to do anything (5)
- 26 Where the sun turns (6)
- 27 Joined up (9)
- 28 Sounds as if there's no rush for the fruit (4)
- 29 Under the influence of spirits? (10)

DOWN

- 1 They are the modern way to transport (10)
- 2 A dog's life in ACTS? (7)
- 3 Just a matter of prejudice (4)
- 4 Taking a narrow view of the sun rail (7)
- 5 Sounds as if the poet's not allowed in! (4)
- 6 It's quite a blow if you come under their influence (3,5)
- 7 Subject to change on the highway (4)
- 14 Looks as if they've lengthened your carport, Ted! (10)
- 15 Sounds like the place for club refreshment (3)
- 16 A shipping company, but what a performance! (3)
- 17 For many a vessel, it's journey's end (8)
- 19 Table-land (7)
- 20 You **could** call it a corn strike! (7)
- 24 The rear, whichever way you look at it (4)
- 25 He's a real scoundrel (4)



Glenise tastes The Good Life in Sharjah

FAMILIAR face in a new place — and (judging by the picture on the right) it's obviously Tiffin Time in Sharjah! We apologise for the quality of the picture, but hope that many of our readers will recognise Graham Wilson (right) and colleague now helping to set up (as General Manager Peter Bainbridge reports on Page Two) the Sharjah containerbase.

Some three or four months ago, Glenise Mealing — Graham Wilson's secretary when he was Regional Manager at Basildon — went out to join her old boss and his colleagues. Here is her first report from Way Out There:



Sue Ide and I are now sharing a really pleasant apartment (two bedrooms, two bathrooms, kitchen and lounge/diner) quite close to Sharjah Town. The Town itself is close to a mass building site-cum-rubbish dump which swarms with rather large rats. I've got used to them now, but when I first got here, anything small that moved after dark made me scream.

Our office is about 15 minutes walk (five minutes by bus), depending on the heat.

Office hours are 8 am to 1 pm and 4 pm to 6.30 pm. We used to spend the lunch-time sunbathing on our apartment roof, but the landlord has now locked us out!

Double U.K. price

Our weekend starts at 12.30 p.m. on Thursday afternoon, when I go swimming on various local beaches. On Fridays I go further afield. Sharjah Town itself has several supermarkets

and general stores, selling almost everything at double or treble the price charged in the U.K.

The buying policy for nearly all goods is to bargain and never accept the asking price, which is invariably 10 per cent above what the seller expects to get.

Clothes are very expensive. An ordinary cotton dress costs about £25, and a top about £10.

The social scene is quite good. Most restaurants don't know how to serve hot food, and really good eating places are very expensive. On average a meal for two (starter and main course only) costs between £35 and £40. Latest night spot — the Grand Flotel, a ship moored in the creek quite near our apartment, with restaurant, club, casino etc.

Beaches are good, but I am a bit wary about where I go into the water because of sea snakes and sharks. On my first swim here, I suddenly realised my speed had increased — but when I tried to swim back to the shore, I could make no headway. I tried to stand up, but kept getting dragged down. It needed a courageous male (attracted by ladylike screams) to save this damsel in distress.

Indians at work

It is amusing — and fascinating — to watch the Indians at work. They are methodical in everything they do. I recently spent several hours watching a gang of Indians operating a cement mixer. It took one man to pour water in; one to fill every barrow with a mixture of sand, rubble and cement; one to push said barrow to the mixer; and yet another to operate the lever on the mixer itself.

It's all very bewildering at first to a newcomer, but the suntan gets deeper, I get fitter and slimmer — and, best of all, I get richer! As Margo might say, It's a Good Life...

Barking heading for the top

the Royal Tank Regiment. He is married, with two daughters.

It's difficult to believe that stranger things happen in the workaday life of Bob Hale, fourth of the Original Five, than in his private life. The way he tells the story of his whirlwind courtship and marriage seems to prove the point.

"Pamela was a commercial assistant at Barking," he says, "and I suppose we'd known each other, in a casual sort of way, for about a year.

"One weekend, I was flying to Spain with a football team, and Pamela, who had been a nanny there some time before, joined the party.

"I guess the atmosphere must have been right, and the wine was certainly drinkable. The fact is that a couple of days later, on St. George's Day, we got engaged."

Today, Bob is still a keen footballer — he plays for the Barking ACTS team — but Pamela stays at home to look after their pride and joy — 15-month-old son, Matthew, whose picture has a prominent place in Bob's office.

SEEING THE WORLD

Another of the Barking originals, Peter Toop, joined ACTS in 1972 after 30 years in the Services, mostly as a WO2 with REME.

It would be easier to list the places to which the Army did not take Peter than those to which it did. "I was lucky enough to see a great deal of the world," he says.

Peter and wife Maureen have a boy of 23, and two girls aged 20 and 17.

But if the success of Barking ACTS over the years owes something — as it must — to the energy and enthusiasm of those who first got it off the ground, its driving force today comes from the tight little bridgehead appropriately placed in the middle of the 'ship'. (Actually, between the tea room and Bob Hale's office!).

Here Regional Manager Eric Russell and his deputy Peter Gilmore are kept in order by Christine Corderey — whose office is strategically sited between them.

This is a convenient position from which to act as secretary and ministering angel to the region's top brass; first-aid administrator and nurse to everybody in sight; sorter-out of general personal problems and district correspondent for 'Contacts'.

Christine joined Barking ACTS three years ago as Regional Secretary, and was married in November 1976 to Roy Corderey, who works for Brain Haulage Limited.

Though it would be strictly true to say that Eric Russell himself has been with ACTS only since 1969 — he was originally cargo superintendent at Liverpool and before becoming Southampton Terminal Manager had a spell in the cargo department at Head Office — he has in fact spent 24 of his 42 years with ACT and associated companies.

He went to sea straight from school in 1953 — "I joined my ship on April 1, a nicely appropriate day" — and was a First Officer with Ellerman Line. He met his wife Pauline in Hong Kong, where she was a schoolteacher teaching Army children. They have two children — Mark, aged seven, and Louise, aged five.

Eric's deputy, 34-year-old Peter Gilmore, went to Barking in 1975 after nearly two years as Documentary Services Manager at Southampton. Out of office hours, he divides his time between hobbies he calls 'active' and those that are not.

The latter include chess, 'playing war games' — as part of a burning interest in military history — and 'fiddling with electronics'.

'No time for hobbies,' says Bert

As in most offices, you'll find quite a few 'characters' at Barking ACTS.

LIKE Bert Starling, 45 years in transport and looking fit for another 45, though, he's got only one year to go before retiring. Hobbies? He reads a lot ('anything I can get hold of') but finds little time for other pastimes.

"By the time I get home after working here, I'm ready for sleep," he says. "My wife says that if she wants to talk to me, she has to do it in the morning as it's the only time I'm awake."

LIKE Ron Troke, assistant cargo superintendent, who was a ship's clerk for 20 years, and joined ACTS four years ago. Along with his pal Bob Newton (also an assistant cargo superintendent), Ronnie is a great soccer fan. In his younger days, he played for West Ham reserves. Bob signed amateur forms for the same club.

Ask Ron what his big interests are and a smile comes over his face. "My interests are at home," he says. "My wife and I had been married for 16 years without having a family, and were contemplating adoption when along came Lisa."

Lisa is now aged eight and the reason you're more likely to find Ron at home than anywhere else in his off-duty time.

LIKE Jim Jeffreys, Senior Transport assistant, classical music fan and enthusiastic cricketer.

At 47, Jim plays as he has done for 30 years, for Stondon Massey — and, as both batsman and bowler, can still teach the young 'uns quite a few tricks. His ambition now is to get a cricket team playing for Barking Sports and Social Club, of which he is chairman.

Jim and wife Dorothy have three children — Michael (21), Andrew (17) and Pauline (15).

SPORTSFRONT

THEY'RE OFF



Bob Hale and Co. give a lift to Jean Edwards — to prove they're fighting fit to represent Barking in the Peter Yarwood Challenge Cups.

Battle joined for Peter Yarwood Cup

Biggest news on the sports front today is that the battle for the ACTS Challenge Cup — to be known in future as The Peter Yarwood Challenge Cup — is at last under way.

The following five sports will be undertaken by each team of five taking part:

- i Darts
- ii Table Tennis
- iii Five-a-side Football
- iv Pool
- v Tug-o-war.

At a meeting in London, it was agreed that the following teams would meet each other in the first round of the knock-out:

Basildon v Head Office; Barking v Soton Terminal; Glasgow v Leeds, Birmingham v Tilbury Terminal; Liverpool v Manchester.

All first round matches are to be completed by June 30.

Two points will go to the winner of each of the five darts matches and each of the table tennis and pool competitions, making a maximum of 30 points available in these three categories.

Points system

There will be three 'pulls' in the tug-o-war, with two points available for each, and five points will go to the victors in the five-a-side football, to be decided by penalty kicks in the event of a draw.

Total points available, therefore, are as follows:

Darts	10
Table Tennis	10
Pool	10
Soccer	5
Tug-of-war	6
Total	41

"We appreciate that because of differing facilities available in the regions, each sport may not be 100 per cent popular with every club competing," says Mrs. Jan Chandler, of Head Office Personnel, administrator of the competition. "It has had to be a question of give-and-take, and we hope that in long discussions we have found a solution acceptable to all to get the competition off the ground.

"This first year is really a 'trial run'. At the end of it, we will sit down together and see what changes, if any, are needed."

SPORTS EDITOR'S NOTE: This issue of 'Contacts' is due to go to Press before the first-round closing date. Results will be published in the next issue.

DANCE-TIME CONVERSATION PIECE

But who's saying what — and to whom?

We're not offering any prizes, but we really would like to know what Project Manager Brian Creighton was saying to Sandra Smith, wife of Southampton's Peter Smith, as they dance together at the Head Office annual party at Southampton in February.

It could be, of course, that we are wrong — and in fact Brian was listening while Sandra did all the talking.

Imagine please, a 'balloon' above both heads. Fill in the missing words and let us have your ideas. *And, of course, we'd like to have the correct solution from Sandra and Brian!*



Spend 15 seconds here in Smile Corner . . .

IT IS BETTER to be silent and thought a fool than to speak up and remove all doubt.

A SMALL TOWN is one where there is no place to go that you shouldn't.

A SECRETARY is a girl who learns to type in your time while she waits for the chance to get married.

FOR EVERY WOMAN who makes a fool out of a man, there's one who makes a man out of a fool.

IT WAS OSCAR WILDE who said that a pessimist is one who, when he has the choice of two evils, chooses both.

CALLING ALL GOLFERS

Head Office throws down the gauntlet

Ask Tom Conway (Inland Transport Co-ordinator at Head Office) how his golf is these days and he will probably say "not bad", but John Brooks and Peter Hughes will tell you, to their cost, that he is in unbeatable form.

Tom, who has been playing on and off for nine years, is a member of Romsey Golf Club and his recent achievements include winning the monthly medal, coming second in a Stapleford competition and, for good measure, holing in one.

Set in picturesque woodland close by Southampton, on land owned by Lord Mountbatten (President of the Club), the course has recently been extended from 9 to 18 holes and, for the initiated, the standard scratch score is 69.

Keen players

Besides Tom, there are a number of keen golfers at Head Office who would like to organise an Inter-Regional competition. Obviously the idea of all getting together on one course is not practical, but how about something on the following lines:

- (1) Each Region to nominate a team (minimum three players).
- (2) Players to use their club handicaps or, alternatively, a handicap assessed on known performances up to a maximum of 24.
- (3) Matches to be played on a course and date agreed; the course should have a standard scratch score of not less than 68.
- (4) The best three cards to be submitted and the Region providing the lowest net aggregate score wins.

How about it, you golfers? Anybody interested should contact Peter Hughes, Chief Personnel Officer, at Southampton. (It's his idea, so let him do the work — Editor).



MEET THE CHAMPIONS

Aintree's forte at table tennis and darts will be put to the test in the Peter Yarwood Challenge Cup competition.

Meanwhile, here are the present Liverpool ACTS table tennis and darts title holders, together with Sports and Social Club committee members and contest organisers Mike Jones and Martyn Neary.

Left to right:— John Pritchard (singles winner), Mike and Martyn, Pauline Keegan (ladies' darts champion), and Damien O'Hagan and Ted Coyne (doubles).

This was a game the Aintree club would like to forget

WE suspect that A.C.T.S.A.L., Aintree's sports and social club, would like to forget the day they did battle with Ausmond Freight.

Fielding an under-strength side, A.C.T.S.A.L. made a great start with a goal from Trevor Hughes after only five minutes. Unfortunately, the lead was short-lived, Ausmond putting two quick goals past 'keeper Gerry (Hat-trick) Till.

After comments from the opposition that the goalie should be on his old-age pension, and the goals having been scored from the half-way line, Bill Bernard had no choice but to put Gerry out to stud.

Ausmond added two further goals, going in at half-time 4-1 up.

After the break, another 'keeper was initiated, but to no avail. With the score 6-1 to Ausmond

Freight, the sight of a third goalie did not deter them from scoring again! However, in the last five minutes, Ian Clapp scored at his second attempt at an open goal.

Thanks are due to Brian (The Gnome) Dooley, a former employee, who refereed the game, after which he was returned to the Southport garden from which he had been stolen two hours earlier!

Result: ACT 2, Ausmond Freight 7.

So just what IS an eagle?

How well do you know your golf? Six golf balls will be given for the first all-correct card answering the following seven questions. (Cards to be sent to: GOLFQUIZ, Personnel Dept., ACTS, Richmond House).

- i Where is 'the home of golf'?
- ii Where was the 1960 Centenary Open Golf Championship played — and who won?
- iii What is the Ryder Cup?
- iv Who has won the British Open Championship most times since the war?
- v What is an 'eagle'?
- vi How many balls are used in a foursome?
- vii From the following jumbled letters, you can make the names of two famous golfers — of different generations. Who are they?

SR SIEORRFAEATM XEUOPRLEUNTH
Entries to reach Personnel by August 15.

What a referee!

ACT Glasgow fielded a new look team — with new strips and new faces — when they met Ben Line Edinburgh for the annual soccer battle (writes Alex McLaren).

The match began without a referee, who unfortunately turned up after ten minutes of the first-half and quickly proved that he came from the Edinburgh area! Result — a 6-2 win for Ben Line.

Despite tired muscles, the match was keenly contested and both teams had 'enough stamina left to hold an inquest on the game at the nearest 'local'.

THIS IS WHY IAN LIKES TO SHOOT TRAINS



track so that once again people can sample the unique atmosphere of the steam railway age.

Lines reopened

"Many former British Rail lines have been reopened by the societies and are operated by private railway companies whose staff are entirely unpaid volunteers.

"A visit to the West Country, for instance, would not be complete without a visit to the commercially-operated Dart Valley Railway, which meanders along the course of the River Dart between Totnes and Buckfastleigh. Its sister line, the Torbay Steam Railway, connects with the BR station at Paignton and stretches six miles southwards to Kingswear, where a ferry takes passengers across the river to Dartmouth."

In addition to the operating lines, however, a number of former British Rail depots have been converted into preservation centres and museums. One such centre, of which Ian is a member, is that of the Great Western Society at Didcot, specialising, as its name suggests, in the restoration of former GWR stock.

Without equal

"Since its humble beginning in 1961," says Ian, "it has built up a collection of locomotives and rolling stock which, as a record of a single major railway company, is without equal anywhere in the world. The dedicated, unpaid labour force there has saved many steam locomotives and rolling stock from the scrapyards. Indeed, some of the 20 old engines had been laid up in scrapyards for more than ten years before being restored, from decaying lumps of scrap iron, to the magic of a gleaming, steaming giant.

"The Society's many hours of hard graft were rewarded in 1972 when the Didcot depot was approved by British Rail as a centre from which the main line running of steam-hauled trains would be allowed.

"The Great Western Society holds regular Open Days during the Summer, and I recommend a visit with the utmost confidence. There's something of interest for all ages."

Ian's interest in old steam engines began by accident ten years ago, when he was sent on a business studies course. It included a study of the History of British Railways — and the die was cast!

The 'run past'

Finally, if you have ever wondered what makes an enthusiast settle into a railway carriage at the weekend just because it's being hauled by a steam locomotive, Ian has the answer.

"If you look carefully, you'll see that 90 per cent of those on such trips are carrying cameras," he says. "The pleasure comes not from sitting in the compartment, but from clambering out of the train at some lonely, remote spot to watch a 'run past'. You get some superb shots."

As one picture on this page certainly proves.

At 28, Ian Drinkwater is almost too young to remember the heyday of steam locomotives in Britain. The steam era on British Rail ended in 1967, when he was only 18, and it had been dying a lingering death long before that.

Yet today Ian devotes as much of his spare time as he possibly can to the preservation and restoration of these giants from a bygone age.



He's almost too old, also, to remember beer as it was in the good old days, yet he's just as devoted to the preservation of beer as it used to be as he is the preservation of steam trains — and is secretary of the South Hampshire branch of the Campaign for Real Ale.

Just what is the attraction of the steam engine for thousands of boys and men of all ages? "The magic," says Ian, "lies in the character of the brute.

"Each engine has its own character, and you have only to see them restored by enthusiasts to their former glory to know what the attraction is.

"In more than 40 preservation societies all over Britain, thousands of dedicated enthusiasts get together at weekends and spend hour after hour restoring locomotives, rolling stock and



Ian Drinkwater

Tilbury Kevin celebrates his 21st

It was good to see Kevin Hymas, of Tilbury Terminal, taking time off on his 21st birthday to have his picture (above) taken with four colleagues who will join him in the Terminal's team of five for the Peter Yarwood Challenge Cup competition (see Page 10). After the picture, Kevin and friends were entitled to celebrate his Key-of-the-Door day!

In the picture with Kevin (left, background) are Peter Meredith, Norman Hornigold, Kevin Thompson and Maureen Wright.

★ ★ ★

Maureen — wife of Deputy Terminal

Manager Len Wright — has joined the Terminal team as accounts clerk.

★ ★ ★

Wee Jock Barr has been appointed Head Shipplanner with Tilbury Container Services, and Richard Hill Shift Manager.

★ ★ ★

Lack of support caused cancellation of the annual soccer match against Southampton ACTS, and Tilbury table tennis team came off second best against Horndon, for which defeat Mike Rollings will perhaps accept some of the responsibility!