

The end of September saw the garden at Maxwell Way being levelled ready for the new car park.



New 'Homes'

A further property has been acquired, subject to contract, in Preston Park on the outskirts of Brighton. Taking up occupancy there next year will be the chairman and his p/a; the three sales and support operations namely, DPS, ROCC Aramis (South) and ROCC UNICLASS, together with ROCC Central Europe and the press office.

The lease runs out on the Manchester office next March and the sales and support operation there, and the software house at Bury, will also be moving to new premises in Rochdale. As yet, there is no news on where the Manchester service centre will be relocated.

Robert's prize

The winner of this year's £100 computer prize at the University of Brighton is **Robert Freemantle**. ROCC awards this prize each year to the student who has produced the best second year project in the HND course in computing. This year Robert's Cookery Book Database was judged to be an outstanding project.



Pictured in part of the new Aldrich library at the University of Brighton are (left) Robert Freemantle being presented with his cheque by Luke Aldrich with Liz Matthews in attendance.

September 20 saw Robert being presented with a cheque for £100 by direct marketing manager **Luke Aldrich**. Also present was course leader **Liz Matthews**.

Robert is continuing with his studies having been accepted by Plymouth University where he is reading for a BSc degree in computing and informatics.

Goodbye Mandy

September 30 and it was goodbye to stores and purchasing assistant **Mandy Smith** as she left to take maternity leave.

Our picture shows Mandy with her friends and the useful presents she was given to start her off on motherhood.



From the Editor

I hope you enjoy this edition of Newsline, especially the 'day in the life' feature under the Achievements headline, below. Please keep your news coming in.

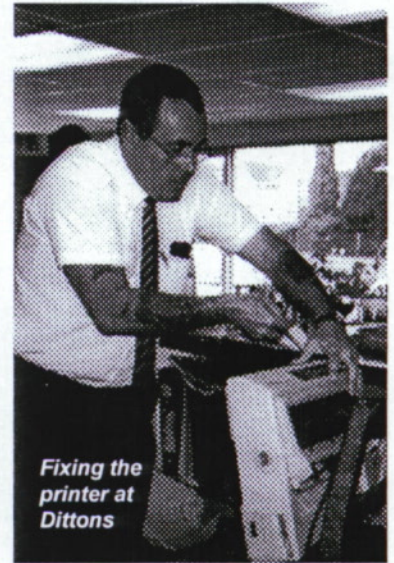
Beryl Hutchin, editor

Achievements Real ROCC assets

In this issue, Newsline focusses on the customer service engineering operation. Its achievements are measured in terms of the excellent quality service it gives to its clients, resulting in many who re-sign again and again. But another important factor to be considered are the engineers themselves, who interface between ROCC and the clients. Perhaps sometimes forgotten, they should be acknowledged for the efficient and courteous way in which they handle the CLASSIC and third party maintenance customers.

The editor accompanied John Ashton for a day to get first hand knowledge of how an engineer copes with his busy schedule.

10.40am arrive Bromley - monitor to be collected and one on loan from ROCC to be installed. See Gareth - systems support manager and meet the girls - offered a cup of coffee. Upstairs to replace the monitor meet more friendly people - downstairs again to complete paperwork. This can be time consuming as it comprises Incident Report Forms giving job and customer number; customer acknowledgment forms detailing customer-owned equipment and what is removed from site and any loaned ROCC equipment. A red tag attached to equipment denotes customer-owned. A manufacturer equipment tag is yellow ochre and is used if it is a warranty call; - a fail-on-fit card is blue and a green pass tag means that the equipment has been repaired ex-



Fixing the printer at Dittons

Crawley. Gareth and his team have their picture taken with John. Everbody smiles! John telephones Surbiton to say that he has cleared the fault call and is about to leave the site. Although he has his schedule for the day, if a more urgent call comes in then it takes precedence as TPM/CLASSIC calls are on 24/8 hours response times. Back in the car, John logs in departure time and mileage in his diary for filling in weekly time sheets and expenses.

...squelched across the floor

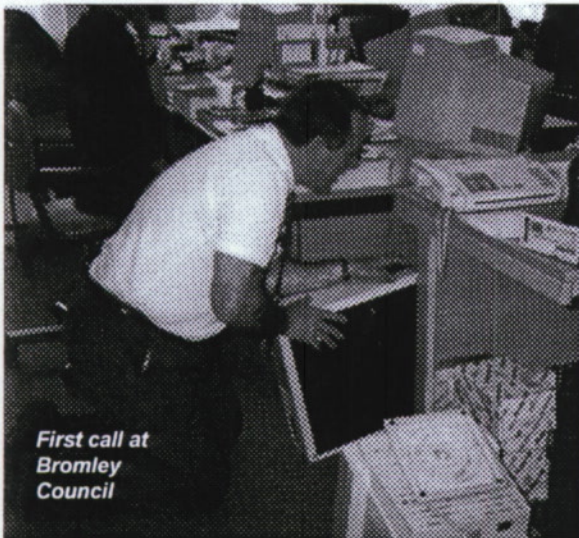
Next appointment Assi Domän, Larkfield, a printing company - job on the shop floor to collect and instal dot matrix printer. "We're supposed to wear a green overall and hat," said John, but no spare clothing was available. The pungent smell from the ink made one gasp as we entered the factory. The computer equipment was housed in an area where large tubs of liquid inks are stored and made up to a specific colour code. Blue seemed to be the current colour as we squelched across the floor - although hosing down is done regularly. The PC was installed in a metal cabinet. "A so and so to get out if there's a problem," said John. The two printers had no such protection. Simon, who makes up the colours, had just returned from holiday to find he had a printer down. Looked a bit cheesed off but was very helpful.



Inky site

Lunch was next on the agenda - down the road to The Malt Inn overlooking the Medway. The sun attempted to break through. We sat under a willow to eat. 'Bullseye' - as a sparrow made contact with John's shirt!

Next, the parts department at Dittons Service Station, Larkfield. A very busy Vauxhall/Bedford dealer. Smiles all round as we go behind the counter. Job - Oki printer needed paper feed gears replacing and an internal fuse - on site for an hour. "Fiddly job", said John "but it's been fixed within the contracted response time."



First call at Bromley Council

October 8 - 9.45am we leave Crawley, John having left home at 8.00am for headquarters to pick up replacement equipment, spares and pick up the day's jobs. All are third party maintenance (TPM) calls.

First appointment Bromley

Council - IS Solutions. To avoid the ever congested M25/M23 intersection John drives across country picking up the A25 then on to the A22, following the signs for Warlingham, Seldson and Hayes. "You really have to know all the alternative routes to avoid the snarl ups when road improvement schemes are underway," he said, "otherwise, it can badly effect the work schedule."

During the journey Newsline asked John to give a profile of himself. "I joined May 2 1977 as a customer engineer, having come from ICL where for three years I was a site engineer at the Institute of London Underwriters, maintaining its System 4 mainframe - boring job; 2 years as an electrician. At 15, I joined the army, three years at college then into the Royal Engineers for a nine-year term travelling the world with the sappers. Married to Elaine I lead a very full life away from ROCC. Joined the fire brigade 11 years ago when I lived in Romney Marsh as a part-time firefighter, thinking it was community service. Now, leading firefighter Blue Watch - Tonbridge and I'm on call from the time I arrive home from work until 7.00am and at weekends. Other interests lie in DIY, gardening, walking and eating out."

Five minutes down the road to **Hotpoint's** customer care centre for keyboard fault. Colin gives us coffee. John certainly has a way with his customers, especially the ladies! "Mandy's birthday on Friday, said Hazel. "We'll book a fault call so you can come and have a piece of cake," they joked.

4.00pm John telephones Surbiton - call screener **Phil Jones** tells him that an urgent fault needs fixing but it's in Southampton - can we hotfoot it down to the client! Nice try Phil!

Driving back to Crawley John remarked that it had been a pretty average day, no hold-ups or parking problems - surprised they were all in a 30-mile radius. Some appointments can be up to 60-70 miles between clients and one he remembered was 110 and the important criteria is that faults should be fixed within the time contracted.

...just washed the keyboard

Newsline asks if he has any anecdotes to relate: "One customer logged a keyboard fault saying that a glass of orange had been split over the keys. On arrival I was told 'Oh! we just washed the keyboard' - and they really had. At another site I turned the keyboard upside down and about a teacupful of ash came out - yuck! I had replaced a hard disk, was about to leave the site when client said: 'Aren't you going to load in my software.' (This is not included in a TPM contract). No, I replied - and the client proceeded to lock me in, resulting in a Mexican stand-off. Eventually, the client relented and I left not best pleased - 7.30pm on a Friday evening!" As John told Newsline. "I can load in DOS and Windows 95. Today hardware engineers really have to have a good working knowledge about software, but this particular client didn't have a clue what he wanted loaded."

He usually arrives home at 5.30 to 6.00pm although he has worked on a CLASSIC site until 11.30pm - no firefighting duties that night. Wherever we went, John had a good rapport with the clients and they genuinely made him welcome. Newsline thoroughly enjoyed the day and our thanks to Surbiton's manager **Alan Whitty**. John and his customer service engineering colleagues can certainly be classified as one of ROCC's 'people' assets.

Glamour Girls... part 2

Newsline published part one of Glamour Girls in its September issue. **Sandra Champ** and **Katie Bristow** now continue the story of the photographic shoot.



"We decided to put our worries to one side and take what was given to us with good grace. The appointed time for this miraculous transformation arrived and we duly booked in at the reception desk

and took a seat as directed - only to find that they were running 90 minutes late. Eventually we were escorted to a different waiting area and introduced to the person to be responsible for the promised metamorphosis into glamorous photographic models.



Katie Bristow

The splendid results of the production line metamorphosis.

This is when all our illusions of this being a pampering experience were shattered and it became clear we were on some kind of production line. One of the biggest concerns we had was the lack of mirrors - was this a sick joke? - had they made us look like something from a horror film? We are sure that some of our colleagues would say that anything would be an improvement!"



Sandra Champ

Katie told Newsline that Sandra was the lucky one, as she could see her reflection in the photographs displayed on the wall, but she had to discard her glasses and couldn't even see across the room!

...a trip to the osteopath

"Now the real fun began with the photographic session. There were so many instructions to absorb - turn to your right, tilt your chin more, look at the light and smile all at the same time. (A trip to the osteopath was needed after this). But this was familiar to us - after all we were used to having our photograph taken by our press officer Beryl! However, not once did they ask us to 'lick our lips' or say 'Camembert', so obviously they hadn't had her experience of professional shoots! Financial controller **Kevin O'Neill** said they appear to have attended a different one-day course from Beryl!"

...the moment of truth

"The moment of truth arrived some two hours later when we were treated to the sight of ourselves projected on a screen, followed by some very hard sell. We have to admit that the results were better than either of us had expected but, as we have failed to win the lottery to date, we could not afford to buy many. Oh well, never mind, perhaps the other 318 'glamorous models prepared on the line' that day were more generous than us.

All joking aside, everyone we met was polite and kind - it just didn't live up to its billing."