

WINTER 1973

FEEDBACK

The Extension

IT ALL really started when we went out one day and bought a second-hand piano!

Of course, we quickly discovered there was no way it would go in the lounge. Since our kitchen is not big enough to swing a cat, let alone a piano, the dining room seemed the next best home for it.

Problem number one, as always, related to quarts and pint pots. How do you get a large dining room table, a sideboard, a piano and a young baby's clutter in a room 9' x 9' and still open the door?—you can't!

Inspiration—move the sideboard into the lounge, only that was rather like taking aspirin for bubonic plague—no long term solution.

After the tenth successive Sunday lunch suffering to my wife's rendering of "Clair de Lune" in between courses—not recommended for good digestion—we decided the only course was to move out the walls!

Which wall do we move? Finally we decided—the back. The whole ground floor to make a new dining room behind the lounge and make the kitchen "L" shaped to wrap around and meet it. This would solve our kitchen and dining room space and give us a play/hobby/study room into the bargain.

Ring a few builders for quotes. Answers varied by 100%—not bad for doing the same job!

Problem. For one who has never drawn up building plans, what do you do? Answer. Borrow a next door neighbour's



Howard Dawson.

plans to see what they look like, ring up the Council and ask them for the forms, then bleed the brains of the most likely builder. Beg and borrow the tools of the trade and off you go. But don't attempt to rush it—you're bound to forget a few things.

Plans passed—back to the builders. That one settled, now for the money hurdle. Off to the Building Society, begging bowl in hand.

In order to reduce the cost we decided to do all plumbing, electrics and decorating ourselves. So now the fun started—central heating system. Damn these solid floors. The wisdom of our cost saving was in doubt, especially in the plumbing department.

At last, after delays, the builders start—"Got delayed on our last job," "the weather's not right"—and it's all go. Foundation dug in a day, filled in with concrete the next—seems a bit

stupid really, dig a hole and fill it up again! Bricks disappear from the walls, well really most of the wall disappears, its marvellous how those three-legged houses stay up!

Just at the point when we have what the estate agent would call a through lounge (through to the garden that is!)—the weather takes a turn for the worst—snow and frost—hence the builders have to stop since it means that the floors will crack up if laid with frost.

At this time the company decide I must go to Poland for a week (in February). They obviously think I have been in training for it since it's—22°C in Warsaw!

Plus 1°C and off we go again. Up go the walls—did the plan really put the window there?

Then came the time when the day of reckoning for the plumbing and the electrics came. Since the plasterers do both the walls and the floor screed then you don't need a PERT chart to realise that both underfloor pipes and behind the wall wires (not to mention the sunken switches) all have to be done at the same time. That was when the sub-contracted labour—namely me—started on the 24hr day!

Now it's beginning to look like a room instead of an dis-used pill-box. That was when I got the 'flu. Whilst on my death bed, through the haze of men

hammering in my head, came a voice that said "The builder wants to know where to dig the kitchen sink drain. He wants to cut off the old one tomorrow." So up I get, fortified with the entire contents of our medicine chest, to fit the kitchen units, so that the top goes on, so that the hole can be marked for the inset bowl and drainer, so that it can be fitted, so the waste disposal can be fitted, so the hole in the wall can be made, so the drain pipe can be connected, so we can still have a kitchen sink tomorrow!

Now comes the nice bit; making it habitable. Kitchen units in, paint on the walls, tiles on the floor etc. Of course, the carpet in the lounge is no longer made in that colour and how silly of me to think that we could possibly have two different colours from the lounge through to the new dining room. After all, when the doors are open it really becomes one big room! Having conceded to that female logic the implications also materialise—the lounge should really be decorated too, since it now won't go with the carpet. So, some 30 litres of paint later we are now sitting back and at last enjoying the space. It's really quite fun 'doing (some of it) yourself.'

'Darling, why are you studying the Estate Agents pages in that paper'



"Can this be the handsome, happy MD who invited us to his villa in Barbados for Christmas at the office party last night?"

CHRISTMAS COMPETITION



SIX £100 CHRISTMAS HAMPERS TO BE WON

A VERY Happy Christmas will certainly be enjoyed by six members of the staff when Mr. Keyes picks out six lucky numbers at the Christmas draw to be held in the Manufacturing Plant (Unit 3), Crawley. Each copy of Feedback will have a number printed on the top righthand corner, so make sure you retain your copy. Included in the hampers are such mouth watering delights as Chivas Regal Whisky, Veuve Clicquot Vintage Champagne, Black Cherries in Kirsch, Pheasant in Wine Sauce, Brook Trout, Orange Cake with Orange Curaçao, Liqueur Chocolates and many more tempting delicacies.

Personnel Department arrives

THE Personnel Department have at last arrived in Kelvin Way and are now located in very pleasant offices in Unit 2.

John Martin, who joined us as Personnel Manager in October, would like it made known to all employees that his department is there to help us with any queries we may have, whether about work or personal problems.

As Jenny, a member of his staff said, "Our motto is we aim to please."

The structure of the Personnel Department is as follows:—

Les Thompson—Manpower Planning Officer/Deputy Personnel Manager.

Jan Maidment—Secretary to John Martin.

Recruitment: Marion Barnes and Jo Beckford.

Administration: (salaries and pensions)—Norma Hilborne and Jenny Oliver.

The staff all agree that they are here to help you should you need their assistance.



L to r Jenny Oliver—Assistant Administrator; Les Thompson—Manpower Planning Officer/Deputy Personnel Manager; Jan Maidment—Secretary to Personnel Manager; Norma Hilborne—Personnel Administrator; Jo Beckford—Assistant Recruitment; John Martin—Personnel Manager and Marion Barnes—Recruitment Assistant.

New look for Unit 2

UNIT 2 has now become an ultra-modern environment having been refurbished at a cost of £200,000.

The total area covers 24,000 sq. ft. with Software, Engineering and Drawing Office Departments occupying the central area. On the periphery of the building the Personnel and Technical Publications Departments and the Customer Training Centre are located. Each section in the main area has a refreshment station and another has been installed in the Training Centre.

There has been a certain amount of controversy over the actual planning of Unit 2 in particular the high corridor partitions. Such phrases as "Fort Knox" and the "Berlin Wall" have been used and trying to find an exit out of the Software Department is rather like trying to find one's way out of the maze at Hampton Court.

The various shades of yellow and green sections along the corridor form part of the colour scheme suggested by Farideh Bains, Interior Decorator, and partner in the firm of architects, John and Farideh Bains, as a way of breaking up an otherwise lengthy wall and avoiding clinical looking surroundings.

The Training Centre has six classrooms, lecture preparation areas, audio visual room and a coffee room for students attending the courses. At lunchtime the coffee room will be available for employees to use. The company is still expanding at a terrific rate and we will no doubt be 'bursting at the seams' again before too long. However, with the completion of Unit 2, we probably have one of the most efficient factories in Southern England, and certainly the largest carpeted factory in Europe!

