

What a way to spend Valentine's day

When I saw Gill Allan, Denice, Anita and Andrew in their new offices I guessed at once that the move had not been as bad as Gill had expected. No-one had demanded that she give up her hard-won room to house their overflowing filing cabinets; I tentatively asked what, if anything, hadn't gone according to plan.

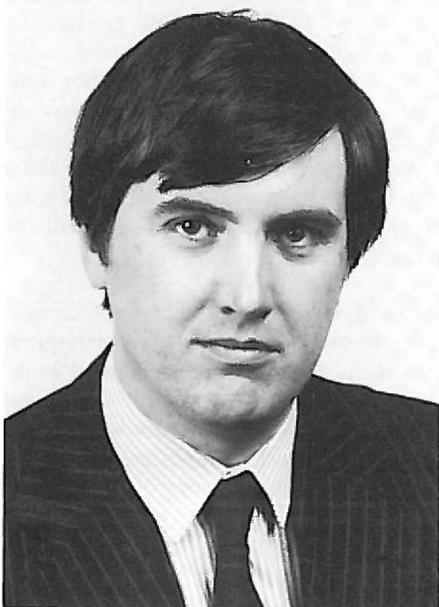
"Almost all our problems involved the removal vans. First of all we were struck by a piece of bad luck – the keys of two of the vans were pinched while they stood in the removal firm's yard, and there were no duplicates. So we started out with half the planned number of trucks. I'd wanted to have two vans loading on each site and then crossing in Cherry Hinton and unloading at the other side, and I'd meticulously worked out the order the men should tackle things in so that they'd be carrying each load into an area that had already been cleared. Of course this plan went out of the window and although it wasn't exactly chaos, it wasn't easy. Because of insufficient trucks, everything took longer than it should have done.

"On Sunday, when the last load – the contents of Unit 3 – had been packed into the largest trailer, someone noticed a smell of diesel. One of the trucks (we had four by now) was leaking, linking the two sites with a trail of fuel. The police were called and the truck was left at the top of Fulbourn Road car park with a man blocking the holes in the fuel tank with his fingers. As a safety precaution the front of the truck was driven onto the waste ground next door and the trailer left unloaded in the car park (as it was too late by this time to unload on Sunday). By Monday at 9 am, when we wanted to move the trailer to the Silver Building entrance to unload it, the truck had got stuck in the mud and had to be hauled out. Customer Services had nothing but telephones until 11 am.

"So apart from mislaying one filing case, things went extremely well. I'm keeping my list of bad packers and my list of moaners. I hope that this is the last move for at least a year."



Marketing man moves in



Ian Laurence, Acorn's new Sales and Marketing Director, took over from Bernhard Steiner at the beginning of February. He comes to Acorn after a year with BICC Data Networks, the worldwide Ethernet specialists based in Hemel Hempstead. That company was heavily technically driven when he joined; his job was to get their marketing department off the ground. Ian's reputation as a marketing man was made during his five years with LSI Computers, makers of multi-user business systems. After a year as the Engineering Manager (he is an engineer by training), he spent two years rationalising production and a further two sorting out the distribution and sales channels.



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Acorn
The choice of experience.

Sales News

Order, order, order

- One hundred Master Compacts have just been shipped to Hong Kong as part of the order for the **Hong Kong Stock Exchange**.
- Eekhorn BV, our Dutch Distributors, have received a tender from the Dutch Government for 20 Archimedes 440 systems. They will be evaluated for use by the Dutch Educational Administration Services.
- Nearly 900 Master 128s were shipped to a Scottish education authority at the beginning of February.
- Two complete Domesday systems have gone to Denmark – one to Tønder Adult Education Centre, the other to Aarhus County Informatics Centre.
- South Tyneside Education Authority was the first to announce that the Archimedes range should become the standard for all the schools in its area. It has since been joined by many others, including: Derbyshire, Hampshire, Nottinghamshire, Cambridgeshire, Berkshire, Trafford, and in Northern Ireland, Western Education and Library Board, and in Scotland, Central Region and Dumfries and Galloway.

Only the best for the best

Harrods, the top people's store, has placed its first order for an Archimedes 440 system, and plan to sell more machines to both home and export customers.

The 440 – a profitable product that is selling well

Sales of Archimedes 440 are well beyond the Company's expectations – production is having to be increased to meet the unexpected demand.

Hitting the target

Acorn achieved 97% of its budgetted sales revenue for February; and many of our sales force are well over their sales targets this month. Well done, and keep up the good work.

High Flyer

Fly Fishing Technology, a small business in Brecon, Wales, has been using BBC micros for three years to control the production of both the Airflo fly fishing line and tapered braid leaders, an essential part of the serious fly fisherman's kit. You'll be proud to hear that the Airflo line, the first major development in fly lines for 30 years, was awarded the design and technology prize in the 1987 Welsh National Business Awards.

Infiltrating the NHS

In conjunction with Minerva, Acorn has secured an order for 98 Archimedes systems from the Western Regional Health Authority. The machines, due for distribution throughout the country, will be assessed under a variety of different demands.

munity is called Esprit. In addition, the Department of Trade and Industry (the 'Enterprise' Department!) has sponsored smaller schemes operating in a strictly commercial context.

Acorn's AR&D is participating in three projects, one under each of these umbrellas.

Mike Ellis works full-time on the Alvey Unison project which aims to link several universities (and Acorn) in a high bandwidth wide area network providing text and real-time video messaging between the sites. The workers on the project have chosen machines running the Olivetti Research version of the Tripos operating system and C. The Cambridge Fast Ring is used as the backbone network in the local Unison exchanges, and transputers control the portals which interconnect the various networks.

Acorn's Speech and Natural Language Group consists of Marion Owen, Rod Hodges and David Elworthy. They look after the Company's current Esprit involvement, a large-scale project with partners in seven EEC countries, whose aim is to implement a crucial phase of text-to-speech and speech-to-text conversion in a uniform way for seven of the European Community languages. Each partner has contributed the rules that convert normally spelt words in their own language to phonemes (the basic building blocks of speech) and vice versa. The team at Acorn has made use of the dictionary that comes with ViewSpell, and if anyone can tell them what 'jim-jamses' and 'mouses' are doing there, they would love to know.

AR&D's third project with outside funding is known as the ES²DTI Behaviour Compiler Project. ES² – pronounced 'ess two' – is European Silicon Systems, and the DTI is, of course, your friendly Enterprise Department. The project will be undertaking research into the elements which are needed to produce a behavioural compiler. ES² then aims to produce an expert system for silicon designers, using Acorn's UNIX workstation, so that non-specialist engineers can do their own chip design. Jamie Urquhart's VLSI team – Harry Oldham and Dave Howard – along with other system designers at AR&D, are the experts whose knowledge will be encapsulated in the software.

30 New Software Titles in March

More and more Archimedes packages are emerging from the independent software houses, and the rate is still increasing. There are already 200 programs that run in Archimedes native mode, on top of the thousands that run under the PC or 6502 Emulators. The range of topics they cover is as astonishing; the common element is their exuberant use of the machine's unrivalled capabilities.

What is AR&D doing with other people's money?

Over the past few years governments in Europe have initiated funding schemes to support research in information technology. These aim to boost research by getting researchers in industry and higher education to pool their resources and, by matching their investment with an injection of public money, enable companies to engage in projects more speculative than anything they could have managed alone. In the UK we have the Alvey programme; its counterpart in the European Com-

Simon Woodward, AR&D's new Commercial Manager, will have co-ordinating responsibility for all outside funded work. He plans to find new projects which will provide yet more opportunities to develop ideas and expertise, and uncover fresh applications for Acorn design and equipment.

Snaps and snippets

A visit to Kenneth Baker

On 29 February Harvey Coleman and his marketing team went up to London to present Acorn strategy in Education to the, Secretary of State and to explain the future plans of England's foremost supplier of computers to that sector (that's us!). Both made a definite hit.

Archimedes – as seen on TV

Every Second Counts, the quiz show hosted by magician Paul Daniels, has appropriately presented 'the world's fastest micro' to a winning competitor. Drama producers from Granada, Thames Television and the BBC, always keen to display the latest technology in their studio set-ups, are including Archimedes systems in forthcoming productions.

Trim the Page

Michael Page, who would not let me measure his girth, has started a sponsored slim. He aims to lose 25 pounds of flab by May 1. Please sponsor him – all the money he raises will go to Famine Relief in Ethiopia. You can also help by keeping an eye on his intake: don't let him put sugar in his tea, down any belly-building pints at lunch time, or scoff sandwiches during working hours.

What a set up!

At 2 am one morning during the Which Computer? Show Acorn's stand manager

was shocked to receive a call informing him that Acorn's Northern sales team had been arrested after a fracas with three Brummies in a local dive. He spent the next hour phoning the police station, in vain – the culprits were in the bar below his room the whole time. He has since been inundated with commiserations from friends in departments ranging from Customer Services to International Sales, offering to help if he should ever wish to retaliate.

Does it run under the PC Emulator?

Leslie Chetland, who works for Acorn's distributor Kelator, has been testing software under the new and old PC Emulators for the last four months in an attempt to compile a list of PC programs that will not run under either. There is not one program on the list.

Musical clues

Henry Howarth, who works in Product Management, spends his free weekends compiling crosswords for Melody Maker. He uses software that he has written himself for his old BBC B machine. Although he has been supplying a puzzle a week for about five years, he still has not learned how to solve other peoples clues.

Operation Raleigh Lectures

Insects which live on the surface of the Pacific Ocean, the richness of the rain forests in Costa Rica, giant earthquakes in Chilean Patagonia, night-flying moths on the island of Seram . . . Yes, Acorn is helping to mount a series of lectures on such unlikely topics. The speakers are all Project Leaders with Operation Raleigh, the four year round-the-world expedition undertaking scientific research, community tasks and adventure projects in remote parts of the world.

Acorn has been involved with Operation Raleigh virtually from its beginning, and the ventures have carried BBC micros into some of the most inhospitable corners of the planet. So it is entirely appropriate that Acorn should help make Operation Raleigh's scientific discoveries known to the general public. The talks are pitched at an interested, though non-scientific,

audience and are all supported by breath-taking slides.

Two pairs of lectures are still to come.

23 March in the Whitworth Hall, Manchester University at 6.00 pm: Dr. M. C. Horton, "The Bridge of Continents" and Dr. J. D. Holloway, "Macrolepidoptera of the South-East Asian and Pacific Tropics"

13 April in the Scott Polar Research Museum, Cambridge, at 6.00 pm: Dr. John Proctor, "On Slopes of Volcan Barva and Gunung Binaia" and Dr. A. M. MacDonald, "Wild Pigs of South-East Asia"

Dear friends, dear colleagues

After three exciting years in the UK in which I have paid over 200-pounds (sterling!) for speeding and learned a little English it is time for me to go back to the mountains. I have loved my time with Acorn, mostly because of you. Because of your help and understanding I "bloody foreigner" was accepted as one of you. Thank you.

I am leaving Acorn with a laughing and a crying eye: laughing, because I am going home; crying, because my time with Acorn is a lifetime experience. I didn't work for Acorn, I lived with Acorn with my mind and my heart, and I loved it.

I wish you all the best.

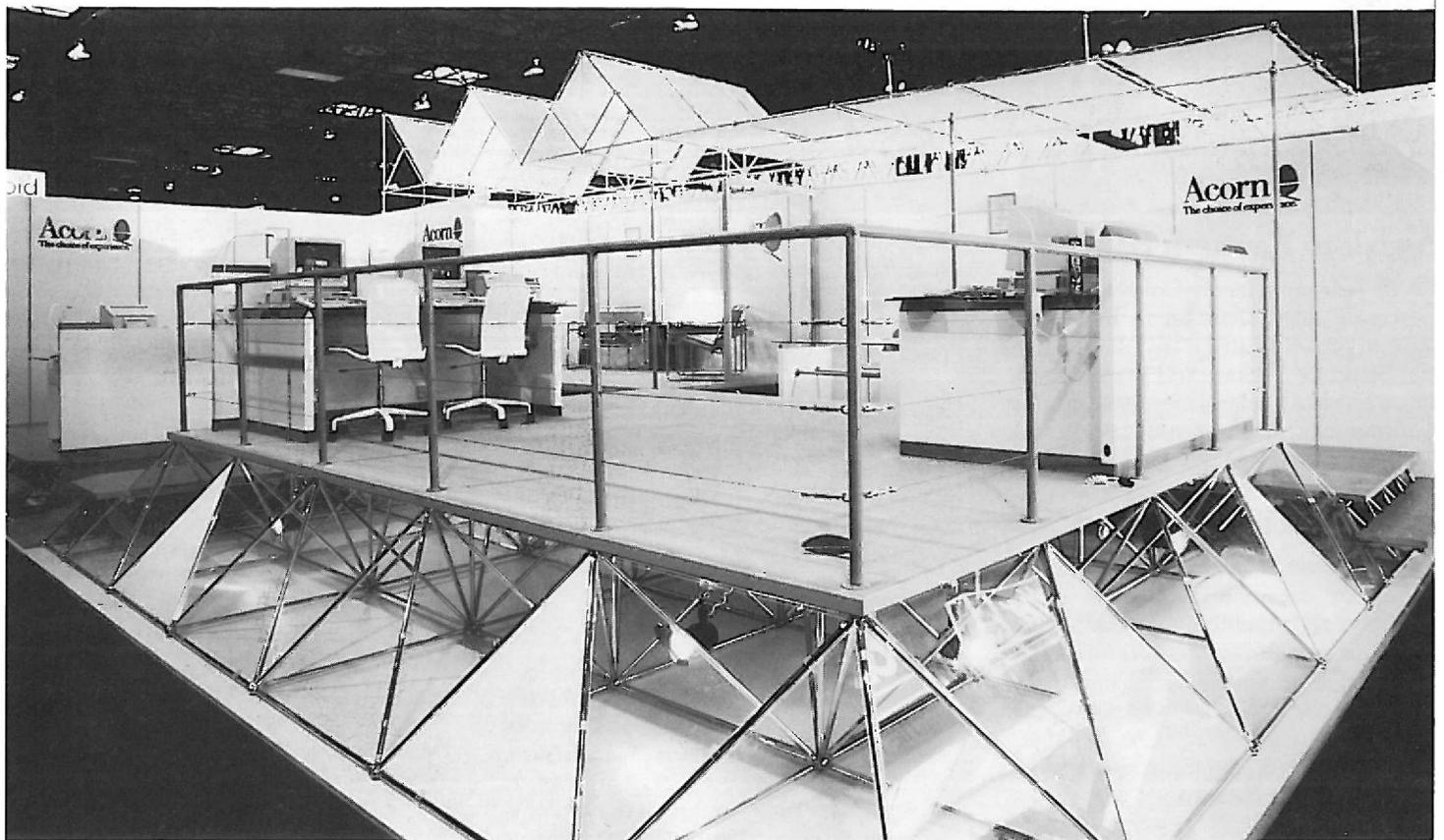
Acorn is a good company to work for. Acorn is people. Thank you all and "Auf Wiedersehn".

Bernhard Steiner

Bernhard Steiner, the former Sales and Marketing Director, left Acorn on 29 January to take up a senior post with Triumph Adler in Nuremberg, West Germany. He will be sorely missed by his Acorn colleagues – for his good humour, his tempers and his enormous personality.

Marion Kemsley gets her chance – and her man!

Gareth Williams accepted Marion's proposal of marriage on 29th February and was married the same day. With his first wedding anniversary four years away, he'll have plenty of time to plan an extravagant celebration, and no excuse if he forgets the date. Congratulations, Gareth. We wish you many (more) happy years together.



You know Which computer?!

We took space at the Which Computer? Show for only the second time in the Company's history. The stand, which was geared to appeal to the office and small business user rather than the education-
alist, was radically different from anything that we had done before. This new direction paid off – the conference organisers said that it was probably the busiest stand in the whole show.

There was a lot of interest in Archimedes 440, on show for the first time at a major public event. Enquiries ranged from end users who had already started to save up, to large corporations, including a team from GCHQ who were considering it for

“office use”. An encouraging number of parties wanted to write or port software to run on it (and not just to get their hands on a loan machine).

ArcWriter was running on one of the machines which, together with a Brother HL8 laser printer, provided the fastest computer printer combination at the show. Indeed, Brother were so impressed they asked to have an Archimedes system on their own stand. The quality of the output produced by as basic a program as ArcWriter, and its ease of use, was commented on by many visitors. But for sheer ‘gasp’ value ArcWriter was easily outdone by the demonstration version of

1st Word Plus, obviously more powerful on Archimedes than on the Atari ST.

One visitor to the stand asked to see Super Project Plus running on Archimedes under the PC Emulator. “This runs faster than on my own PC”, he said, and after making even more complimentary remarks, said he’d buy an Archimedes system to use at home. He seemed reluctant to show his business card, saying “It won’t be much use to you”, but handed it over when pressed by the well trained Acorn representative. He was from IBM.

Have you seen our video?

A unique BBC documentary, *Micro News*, demonstrates the capabilities of Archimedes and other Acorn Micro-computers across the curriculum of a secondary school. It shows the computers being used in the art room, the CDT class, in business studies and many other areas. The video focusses on the activities of a large group of pupils at William Farr (CE) Comprehensive School, Lincolnshire, as they produce a campaigning radical newspaper using Archimedes, and watches while pupils at Conway Primary School, Birmingham, use the Archimedes MIDI capabilities to produce an unusual combination of sounds. Introduced by TV personality Fred Harris, the video draws

upon the expertise of many teachers involved in computer education and is intended to stimulate debate.

The video was presented to LEA advisers at the British Education Training and Technology show in January and we are pleased to say that its educational value is so highly regarded that it has already been used as part of an in-service training course.

Copies of this video are available from heads of department.