

PCC Internal Newsletter

Number 5

September 1987

New Faces

Welcome to all the new members of staff who have joined us over the last couple of months.

- Michal Andrusiewicz,
Systems Programmer with Applications Development.
- Ian Armstrong,
Operations Manager.
- Wilfred Brimblecombe,
Assistant Systems Programmer with Large Systems Software.
- Jack Cheng,
Assistant Systems Programmer with Large Systems Software.
- Rachel Davies,
Part-time tea person.
- Bronwen Humphries,
Clerk-typist with Finance and Administration.
- John Morling,
Computer Operator with Operations.
- Miguel Peirano,
Assistant Systems Programmer with Applications Development.
- Stathey Tsigounis,
Senior System Programmer with Applications Development.
- Bill Whitehead,
Computer Operator with Operations.

Changes in Operations

The new Operations Manager, Mr Ian Armstrong commenced duty on Monday 24th August. Ian has considerable experience in the computer industry holding positions of Operations Manager at the PNG National Computer Centre in Port Moresby, and more recently at QIT in Brisbane.

As a result of the many positions advertised in the Operations group recently, the following appointments were made:

- David Molloy is now the Program Librarian and will report to Allan Woodland,
- Jeff Scrivener was appointed Supervising Computer Operator,
- Peter Casson and Jan Geritz were both appointed Senior Computer Operators,
- Sharon Oberhardt is our roving Acting Supervisor for the next month covering periods of leave for Lyndal in Accounts and David in the Library.

25th Anniversary BBQ

The Social Club, once again, organised a really enjoyable event. It was great to see some of the former staff of the PCC and reminisce about the "good" old days.

Thank-you to all staff who contributed their time to ensure the night was a success.

Where is Danny Smith?

For those of you who do not already know, Danny is on leave until December 1988. He has been fortunate in gaining a one year appointment as a Research Assistant at Rutherford Laboratories in the UK.

Rutherford Laboratories is a publicly funded research laboratory in Oxfordshire specialising in computing, high energy physics, and atomic energy. Danny will be rubbing shoulders with eminent researchers in these fields.

Danny will be working on electronic messaging systems including X.400 and the knowledge and experience he gains will be most valuable to us when he returns.

Where is Edward Lindsay?

Edward has also taken leave to travel to the UK to accompany his wife Kristen, who is doing a higher degree at the University of Surrey. Edward hopes to gain additional experience while in the UK. He returns in August 1988.

Central Video Replay System

In May this year the Computer Centre was given approval to go ahead with the design and implementation of an optical fibre based Central Video Replay System for the department of Audio Visu-

al Services. The system proposed by Graham Rees uses optical fibres to transmit video, audio, and control information from a central control room to various lecture theatres on campus.

To use the system, a lecturer will make prior arrangements with an operator in the control room to have the required video tape available at the time of the lecture. A control panel will be installed in each lecture theatre, and this panel will have an intercom to talk to the operator plus a bank of switches to perform the standard VCR functions of PLAY, FAST FORWARD, REWIND etc. At the beginning of the lecture, the lecturer will talk to the operator over the intercom and ask for the tape to be loaded and to have control switched through to the appropriate lecture theatre. When this happens, the TV monitors in the theatre will turn on automatically and a light on the control panel will indicate when the lecturer has received control. The lecturer will then be able to manipulate the tape just as if there was a VCR there in the theatre.

This piece of electronic wizardry works by utilising an MC6809 microprocessor board designed at PCC known as VIRUS (Very Intelligent Real-time U-processor System). One VIRUS lurks behind the control panel in each lecture theatre waiting for key presses and controlling LEDs. These VIRII communicate with more VIRII back in the control room over the optical fibres using special modems being designed for us by OPTICAL SYSTEMS DESIGN Pty Ltd, a company in Sydney. The control room will be alive with VIRII. These will be used to multiplex data from the lecture theatres, control the intercom, control the VCRs and communicate with the control PC. The control PC will be used to give displays of connections, switch VCRs to lecture theatres, perform tests on the system, and play games with the bored operator. The type of PC to be used has not been decided yet, but you can't play Dark Castle on an IBM!

The plan is to have twenty lecture theatres working for first semester next year and to bring another fifty online during 1988. Currently, Lloyd and Brian are getting the fibre in, and various technicians are programming VIRII and building a prototype system to demonstrate to Audio Visual Services how it will all work. Then all we have to do is the final design of the control room equipment, design printed circuit boards on the CV system, assemble the PCBs, assemble the control room equipment, assemble and install the lecture theatre control panels, finish installing and splicing the fibre optic cable, and test the whole system by the end of January. All this will be done by PCC techs in their "spare time" when they are not at-

tending to normal maintenance duties. So please help by not reporting any faults for the rest of the year, we need all the technician time we can get!!

Lorenzo

AITEA Conference - Perth

Those of you who were trying to find Richard Armstrong during the last week in August would have discovered he was not about. Richard was in Perth presenting a paper on the QTAC Computer system to the Australian Institute of Tertiary Educational Administrators. Richard returns with glowing reports of the beauty of Perth in winter.

Congratulations David Molloy

David is taking two weeks leave at the end of September to tie the knot and get married. Congratulations David and may all your troubles...

Farewell

Best wishes to Chris Barker who has resigned to take up a position with the Byte Centre at Milton. Chris will certainly be missed, being one of our resident "jack of all trades and master of most". Chris's last day will be Friday 11th September and, for those who can attend, a farewell lunch is being planned at Pasta Pasta on that day. Tell Max if you intend to come.

Janelle's Mind Bender

15,16,17,18,21,23,25,32,101,122,?

Anyone who got this out deserves a medal. The trick is that the base of each number (usually assumed to be 10) in the series is not the same.

The series really is:

$$15_{12} = 17$$

$$16_{11} = 17$$

$$17_{10} = 17$$

$$18_9 = 17$$

$$21_8 = 17$$

$$23_7 = 17$$

$$25_6 = 17$$

$$32_5 = 17$$

$$101_4 = 17$$

$$122_3 = 17$$

$$?_2 = 17$$

$$\text{Therefore } ? = 10001$$