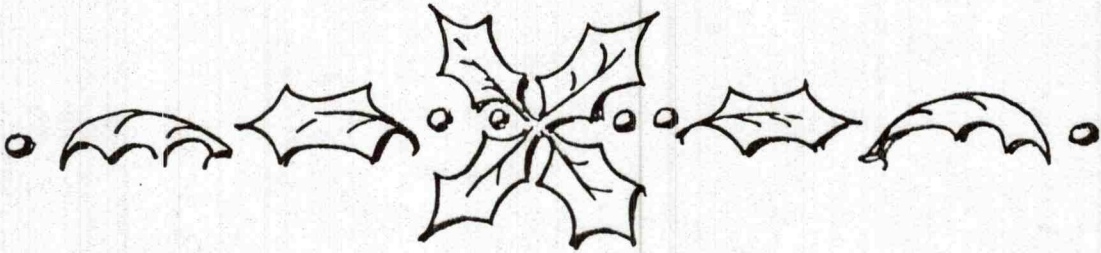




APPLETON LABORATORY NEWSLETTER



No. 185

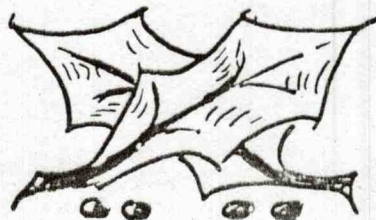
December 1976

CHRISTMAS NEWSLETTER 1976

Staff will be well aware that the past year has been even more difficult for the Science Research Council than was feared when I wrote my Christmas message twelve months ago and, unfortunately, no easing of the situation is likely to occur in the year ahead. The Laboratory has, of course, had a major on-going programme of space science to support during 1976 and much of this requirement will continue into 1977. The ASR Board is currently determining its future programme for the longer term within the probable resources available to it, and it is expected that this programme will require continued A.L. support, albeit eventually on a smaller scale than heretofore. Until the ASR Board programme for the next few years has been determined early in the New Year it is not possible to say exactly what the level of support required from the Laboratory will be, but major staff problems will not occur during 1977.

A considerable part of the in-house research programme within the ASR Board area is linked to the overall fortunes of the Board in so far as it depends upon the use of the space science facilities, but here again reasonable continuity seems probable for 1977. Responsibility for radio and allied research related to communications has been transferred to the Engineering Board, and the future programme of the Laboratory in this field is now under discussion with the appropriate committees of that Board. It seems likely that here we can look forward to the development of more diversified lines of research. The financial provision for the Engineering Board in general appears to be more advantageous than those for the ASR Board over the next few years.

As staff know, this is the last Christmas message I expect to write for the Newsletter. I wish I could have written it in the knowledge that at this time



the Laboratory had a fully assured programme for years ahead to maintain the momentum established earlier in my period as Director. The doubts that exist only reflect the uncertainty in the country's economic prospects as a whole. But, just as we must have confidence as a nation that through diligent effort our prosperity will in due course be restored, so in the Laboratory we must strive to maintain morale through difficult times in the hope that better times lie ahead. We must be prepared if need be to help the realisation of this hope by seeking to diversify our efforts in new directions if opportunities arise.

So, I end my last Christmas message to A.L. staff by once again wishing all members of the staff and their families a very Happy Christmas and with an exhortation to the staff to face the New Year - and succeeding years - with a determination to make the most of any and all opportunities which may occur to embark on new work within the range of the Council's interests.

J. A. Saxon

Staff News

Welcome to :

Mrs. N. E. Ray Cleaner P/t.

Resignation :

R. F. Hufton S.O.

Other Changes:

F. D. G. Bennett	H.S.O.	now Div.	4 Gp.	5.
S. M. Cherry	H.S.O.	" "	6 "	2.
K. V. Buchta	S.O.	" "	5 "	2.
Mrs. H. O'Grady	A.S.O.	" "	2 "	3.



Attention all Car Drivers!

Because most of us spend some time each day driving around the site placing ourselves and others at risk, the Laboratory Safety Committee would like to draw attention to the following points.

- (1) The Laboratory speed limit is 15 m.p.h. and should be observed at all times.

- (2) The traffic flow in the main car park is in an anticlockwise direction and is clearly marked. Those who choose to ignore the recommended flow place themselves and everyone else at risk.
- (3) Parking is only permitted in the marked areas, parking elsewhere causes traffic blockages and may lead to accidents.
- (4) Passage through the main gate barriers is not without risk. When approaching either of the barriers you should ensure that it has been raised for your passage, if it is being lowered after the passage of a previous vehicle it is a dangerous practice to rush through because the cycle of operations cannot be reversed.

It may also be worth remembering that the hackneyed old adage, 'It is better to arrive safely than to arrive dead on time' has some merit where the motor vehicle is concerned.

Angling Success

Robbie Robens of A.L. Workshop who is a Founder Member of the Berks and Bucks Sea Anglers Club has won two trophies for the year ending 31st December 1976.

These are:

Heaviest Gross Weight catch 108 lbs 2 oz.

Heaviest Conger Eel 28 lbs 8 oz.

These awards will be presented to him at the Club's Annual Dinner and Dance to be held at the Thames Hotel, Windsor next February.

We offer him our congratulations and wish like success in the future to his skills.

Names and Places

Would you believe:

- Sutton Park, Bucks.
- Radar and Spacr Research Station.
- R.S.R.S., Ditton Park, Bucks.
- Upperton Laboratory.
- Appleton Laboratory, Newgate House, Slough.
- Sanityary Research Laboritories, Ditton Road (Park).

A firm whose franking machine offers to supply 'Electronics and praying systems'. Presumably thinking we are the Appleton Lab. Oratory.

The lady organising a welding course is Miss C. Sparks.

In the road sign at the foot of the bridge which points to the Appleton Laboratory.

Letter to the Outstations

Dear Colleagues,

Paradox is, presumably, part and parcel of a living gained in the scientific trade. The other day, however, I briefly felt the presence of the Mysteries when confronted with an electric light bulb, in place, seemingly intact, half-full of water. Flowing (the word is used advisedly, for it was far more than the odd drip) from the light socket was a steady stream of liquid.

Irrational fear made me, as it were, drop Occam's Razor and my first explanation was that the Works Unit, ever mindful of cut-backs and economy, had deionized the water supply and, using the conduit to double effect, was offering both services through one pipe. Who knows, they might be interspersing it with gulps of natural gas, presenting a public utility trinity in unity.

This economic thought was quickly put to flight by the arrival of sundry electrical and mechanical experts who, clearly, did not view the thing as a joint victory for their skills. They spoke about the matter, though not in a way suitable to be reported in this family paper, and turned off everything in sight. A hole was then drilled in the ceiling from which gushed accumulated rainwater sufficient to fill three dustbins!

How Time taints triumph. But four short months ago this feat would have generated an F.R.S. or two; assured the Laboratory ample funds though infants starved in the streets of Slough; filled the National News sheets and provided weighty evidence for a Canonisation some two or three centuries ahead. All it now occasioned was abuse of the architect and maintenance team responsible for the roof.

Rational explanation conquered all - nearly - the bulb half-full of water was a bit creepy and never satisfactorily explained. Fair enough, really, when you consider that it is now that season when wishes to you all for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year come from,

Yours sincerely,

The Editor

December Reprint List

- A 1195 W M Burton, R G Evans, W G Griffin, 'The absolute spectral flux distribution from γ^2 Vel.' Mon. Not. R. astr. Soc., 1976, 176, 29p-31p.
- A1076 W M Burton, R G Evans, W G Griffin, 'Skylark rocket observations of ultraviolet spectra of γ^2 Velorum and ζ Puppis' Phil. Trans. R. Soc. Lond, 1975, 279, 355-369.
- A1147 W M Burton, 'Image detectors for recording astronomical ultraviolet spectra' Image Proc. Techniques in Astronomy, 1975, 103-108.

Internal Memorandum

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