

# International Procurement Can Be Fun...!!!!

*An autobiography of my working life...*

by John Wastle



## Foreword

### Mr. HP Procurement Maverick—John Wastle

Stories of the HP work culture come from everywhere. We have published several HP memoirs by engineers who emigrated to the US early in their technical careers. Several others, like Carl Cottrell and Ray Smelek ([To see those HP Memoirs, click HERE](#)) involved assignments to overseas management for a period of few years.

This charming tale about the international aspects of HP, originates in Scotland, with the birth of John Wastle. His work path through the company fits an irreverent title that a few of us old timers at Palo Alto Intergalactic headquarters assigned to friends who moved among company divisions as "mercenaries." The term "Maverick" has some of the same connotations, less devoted to a particular product line, but devoted instead to cross-division processes and people. Neither are intended to be at all derogatory, but only to imply that the company needed him in a peripatetic role across the globe.

The other charming difference is our decision to NOT edit out the strange spellings of our Mother tongue, with terms like rumour and neighbour and aluminium (so unfamiliar sounding; al—u—minium, except for those of us who have dealt with Brits) appearing just like they belong there.

WARNING--John's narrative is stunning in his exceptional recall, of names and events. It reads like a novel, adapted for TV, with lots of warts and frank evaluations of managers' personalities, competences and/or incompetence's. For my part as editor, I hate to waste the honesty of an author, but to avoid any personal hurt feelings, in a few instances, I have urged John to assign pseudonym names for a few of the associates and managers he encountered in his work. We have also covered up some of the circumstances and locations to further scramble the personalities. Some (actually a lot) sincerely uttered swear words get the Nixon treatment, and are edit-inserted as (expletive).

Deciding just which personalities to disguise is a judgment call, and you'll just have to trust us with our decisions. Life comes with the good and the bad, the lazy and the personal aggrandizers, the stars and the flops.

John's life story brings us the inside revelations of a class society, in the UK nation, as well as in the industrial companies of post WWII. We have all watched the class society at work in Downton Abbey. His life in the tool-making apprentice programs, then into the actual factory tooling departments are fascinating, and well as sobering. Of course, our experiences within Hewlett Packard are mostly of a more egalitarian work culture, with Bill and Dave building a work society which by and large recognized the merit and hard work of individuals, not union organizers, nor very many selfish or arrogant managers. There were a few, and John calls them out in pretty unfriendly terms—one example, Dr.Death?

You can question his intrepid spirit when he and his wife decided to move to Edmonton, Canada, with next to nothing in resources and belongings. The weather is bitterly cold and the population an amazing mix of ethnic emigrants. His observations of his team and his managers and their work together is a tale which unfolds slowly, and you just keep wondering how this long life story is going to turn out. They ultimately move back to Scotland.

Then comes Hewlett Packard and the new factory in South Queensferry, Scotland. John has found a home, and his recounting of his rise to importance in International Procurement Operations comes as HP covers the globe with factories and research and solid growth. HP was literally EVERYWHERE.

I recall an incident when my wife was travelling in Europe with a neighbor who had bought a new Mercedes, and picked it up at the factory in Sindelfingen. They went sightseeing throughout Europe, but the car was stolen in Rome. Fortunately they had removed many of the purchases into their motel. When she called, highly distressed, I suggested she call the local HP office, who sent a person over to gather the boxes and ship them back through customs, to me at home. When my oldest daughter went to college in the Midwest, and flew home, usually with little cash, I always told her that if she ended in Denver or other emergency place, to call the local HP office, they would recognize my name. She never did.

So this story is different from our previous HP Memoirs, it is not about HP products. It is a human interest story, about the HP people around the world. It is about the HP Way, and how HP addressed the growing need to source commodities off-shore to remain competitive. That involved impacts on people and how they adjusted to it. Hence a lot of the people in the photos are dealing with challenges to the ways things were done before. Like Bill Hewlett before them, who was a dedicated internationalist, John's associates are creating a new interconnected world as they go. In their own way, their contributions are just as solid and meaningful as a brand new hardware product. Moreover, John and his team helped to take the HP Way outside of HP, leading many of his sub-contractors to change their management ways. His aim was to achieve quality and price satisfaction with the end customer, his HP divisions.

It also can be read as a travelogue, since John visited so many countries which contained the sub-contractors, or the countries of HP divisions which were procuring his outsourced components. He seemed to encounter more than usual highway patrolmen, who found him traveling beyond the posted speed limits. It is also a global review of eating cultures around the globe, discovering quaint foods to "enjoy" with his country hosts.

You're also going to run into many funny situations that come along in any human story. Except that when you mix in industrial management, it can get serious very quickly, because of the necessary personnel sensitivities a corporation must enforce. So the Spokane Division was receiving some parts which were wrapped in discarded paper from a printing company, starting with book pages of maps. But, imagine their surprise when the packing paper turned out to be pages from a girlie magazine, which ended up posted on the incoming receiving walls. Not such good judgment there.

Did John have a successful career? How about this statistic? Just before his early retirement in 1999, his IPO operation shipped \$500 million dollars of outsourced and supported component parts to manufacturing divisions. Assuming his parts cost half of a division's internal fab costs, this put \$250 million directly to bottom line profit. Even in a \$75 billion revenue stream, that is significant.

--John Minck

## **International Procurement Can Be Fun...!!!!**

*An autobiography of my working life...*

by John Wastle

**Dedicated to:**

**Harris. The greatest Grandson in the world.**

***"The world is what you make it. It isn't fair, but it is good."***

### **Index...**

1. In the Beginning...
2. Factory Here I come...
3. A New Beginning...
4. The New World...
5. Hewlett Packard. The Return of the Magi !!!...
6. Time to Move On...
7. My First Business Trip...
8. Networks Measurement Division...

9. Signal Analysis Division...
10. Stanford Park Division...
11. Spokane Division...
12. Scrumpy Pressure Die-Casting...
13. Decision Time...
14. Scrumpy Supplier Visit...
15. Corporate Procurement Awakens...
16. Sam Scott's Visit...
17. Dan Nelson's Visit...
18. SAD Visit...
19. LSID Visit...
20. IPO Supplier Road Show...
21. Poison From Home...
22. Supplier Seminar...
23. Decision Time Again...
24. Carry on Alone...
25. IPO Candidates...
26. Hassles of the Host Division...
27. Dr. Death...
28. The Feral One...
29. Problem Child...
30. Latter Years...
31. NWEIPO Style...
32. When Things go Wrong...
33. IPO Development...
34. Breaking the Ice...
35. IPO Mark Up...
36. Power Cord Wars...
37. PAFC Wind of Change...
38. PAFC System II Vinyl Clad Covers...
39. PAFC System II Pressure Die Castings...
40. PAFC European Trip...
41. PAFC Aftermath...
42. PAFC Failure to Change...
43. IJBU Filters...
44. IJBU Ireland...
45. IJBU Springs...
46. IJBU Chip Contact Strip...
47. It's the Polis...
48. Shalom...
49. Division Capability...
50. Should they be Let Out...
51. Let's Steal Each Other's Lunch...
52. GPCD Sign Up...
53. IPO Continued to Develop...
54. VCD UK Visits...
55. The Wolfgang Pack...
56. Off-Site Updates...
57. Dead Horse's Head in the Bed...
58. It's all About Management Style...
59. All Work & No Play, is no Fun at All...
60. 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary...
61. EIPO Black Forest Eat Out...
62. Eating Can Be Fun...
63. Traveling Can Be Fun...
64. Far East Trips...
65. Puerto Rico...
66. Ireland...
67. Trip Funnies...
68. Worldwide IPO Managers Meetings...
69. East European Trip...
70. Enough is Enough...

- 71. My Last World Wide IPO Managers Meeting...
- 72. The Aftermath...
- 73. The Real Inspirational Motivators...

## 1. In the Beginning...

My story starts when I left school in 1960. I probably should have gone on to University but back then my family was of the mindset, that this was not for working class folks like us and you had to go out and get a job and earn a wage. A wage was needed to come into the house, and you had to get a job in a different discipline from anyone else, so that the risk was reduced if there was a downturn. I took up an apprenticeship with a company called Ferranti, Ltd in Edinburgh. My pay for a 44 hour week, at the age of 15 years was twelve shillings and sixpence, prior to decimalisation, which in today's money was 62.5 Pence (95 cents)! I was to spend about 18 months at the Couper Street Apprentice Training School before I would be transferred up to the main factory on Ferry Road. Before that ever happened, there were some challenges I had to meet along the way.

I recall one winter, I was working in one of the out buildings at the side of the playground, you had to cross the playground to get into the main school building. Our Teacher Trainer was old Jock Corbett, I was to later meet his son when I moved up to the main factory, but old Jock was one of the best trainers, if not the best trainer at the apprentice training school. He was an engineering genius who took great pride in training his lads and teaching us some of the most difficult manufacturing machining processes.

On one occasion I was making my way across the playground to the main building. There was a good layer of snow on the ground that winter, and as I approached the building I was hit on the back of the neck by a snowball, thrown by another apprentice, Paddy (Peter) O'Neil. He was a friend who would get me into even more bother as time went by. I immediately bent down and returned the fire, only to be seen by one of the other Teacher Trainers, Kennedy! It would have to be that one! He, who was always full of his own self-importance and power mad, he who held top position for suspending apprentices. He immediately said to both of us, "Three days suspension."

I walked back into old Jock Corbett's machine shop to put on my jacket, which was hung beside his desk. Old Jock looked at me, "Where the (expletive) are you going?" He said. I told him what happened and that we had been suspended. "Hang your jacket back up now!" He shouted at me, and stormed off to have words with the other Trainer Teacher, who just at that very moment had started to make his entrance into old Jock's Machine Shop. Old Jock bellowed at him, "Were you never a (expletive) laddie once? Don't you ever suspend any of my boys, I'll decide if punishment needs to be meted out, the laddie wasn't doing any harm, so he is not being suspended, right!" The other Teacher Trainer with red face turned about and left without uttering a word.

Old Jock used to keep tropical fish in a tank by his desk, if ever he saw one of the apprentices mucking about and not with his head down working, he had a long glass straw that he would suck up the fish shit from the bottom of the tank and immediately blow it onto the offending apprentice. That soon got the errant apprentice back on track.

Apprentices being suspended seemed to be the norm, I don't think there was one apprentice who got through his training period at the school without being suspended at least once, unfortunately that also included me. I was doing a stint in the Drawing Office, where Teacher Trainer Mr. Charlie Dawson was renowned for suspending apprentices for the slightest thing. I think there was a competition between him and the other guy for top spot. Paddy O'Neill, that same snow-balling friend of mine, lived in Gilmerton, and we would cycle up the road together after work, so we ended up becoming good pals. One fateful day Paddy was behind me and every now and then would prod me in the back with his Tee Square, mostly

when the Teacher Trainer was out of the room. I got fed up with Paddy's prodding and turned around to prod him with my Tee Square, just as Dawson re-entered the Drawing Office, "Three Days!" he bellowed at us both, this was one suspension I couldn't work my way out of.

Just when we thought our day couldn't get any worse, it did for Paddy. As we cycled on our way home, cursing, swearing and laughing at each other for being suspended, Paddy had been suspended before so it was old hat to him. I was cycling on the outside of the road and with Paddy looking and swearing at me, we pulled out to pass a parked car, at that moment the car door opened, Paddy was a big heavy lad and with the speed we had up, he hit that open car door, taking it right off its hinges and ending up with Paddy lying on the car door with his bike on top of him. He was spouting even more expletives at the car driver. The car driver got out and asked Paddy if he was okay, then picked up his car door, threw it onto the back seat and drove off! I was helpless with laughter, after being suspended, it brightened up my (expletive) day. Paddy did have some luck, his bike was un-damaged!

I did escape a suspension once, well actually I saved another apprentice from being sent home, but if he had been caught, I'd have copped it also for helping him. We were in the Fitting Room, this was an area where you had to make everything by hand, you only had access to a Drill Press, everything else you had to achieve by hacksaw and file. You had to learn how to use a file accurately in those days, as it was all checked by Andy Haggart, Teacher Trainer by use of an Engineer's Square, it had to be spot on before you could move onto the next part of the hand process. It was great experience and we got to make our own tools and keep them. The apprentices used to try and bribe Andy by offering a sweetie to him, fruit gums were his favourite. Andy had gone to Boroughmuir School when he was a boy and was a keen rugby player and a very strong man who also liked to dish out the suspensions.

The Fitting Room had wooden trap doors in the floor, one day an apprentice Jimmy Grayson, a friend, jumped down one of the trap doors between our bench vices, just as Andy Haggart walked back into the room. I closed the trap door quickly, quick enough that Andy didn't see it. Jimmy underneath the floor knew what was happening, so had to wait quietly in the dark for half an hour before Andy left the room again, then I let him out, a bit dusty, but glad he wasn't getting suspended!

The apprentices had a habit, on pay day to use the Off Hand Wheel Buff to open their pay packets to count the money inside. We were paid in cash in those days. I can still recall the brown ten shilling note and the half crown in the packet. The apprentices would switch on the Buff and run their pay packet edge along it to gain access to the monies inside. One pay day I was talking to Jimmy Grayson and I switched on the Buff not noticing he was leaning on the machine. The Buff immediately grabbed hold of Jimmy's dust-coat and brought the Buff to a sudden halt, with a big chunk of Jimmy's dust coat stuck inside. If Andy Haggart had to walk into the Fitting Room at that point, we would have all been in trouble. Try as we might we could not release Jimmy. The end solution was to use a hacksaw and cut his dust-coat and shirt free from the machine, leaving some extra sewing being required by his mother when he got home that day!

Andy Haggart always gave the impression he was destined for higher things in management circles. He eventually made his way from being a Teacher Trainer in the Apprentice School to being QA Manager right next to the Toolroom up in the factory, so I would bump into him on many occasions when in the QA department, but he never acknowledged the apprentices that he had taught at the Apprentice School. He was always a bit of a class snob as far as his education at Boroughmuir was concerned. I did meet him again in later years when I was with HP. He was employed at one of our subcontract suppliers, Fifab, as their Manufacturing Manager. I thought to myself, when I met him there, that there was no way he would last in that company, he believed in the class structure and that I knew would soon become self-evident to those who reported to him and his new company owner Bill Braid. I was right, he was gone inside six months. Bill Braid's answer to union negotiations was to go round the back of the building and take his jacket off and sort things out that way. Definitely not the way Mr. Andrew Haggart would operate!

One day I saw my first major industrial accident, we would use small paint brushes to wipe away the swarf (chips) cuttings to see the progress the cutter was making on the Milling Machine. On this occasion the apprentice, instead of using the brush to sweep the swarf away from the side and face cutter, he used his hand. The next minute I saw one of his fingers going round and round with the side and face cutter! It made me a bit wary in future.

There didn't seem to be the same level of Health and Safety at work being practiced at the Training School that abounds today, the use of goggles or protective glasses, never appeared to be used, pity really as one day I got a small piece of metal in my eye. Fortunately, Leith Hospital was no more than 200 yards from the training school, so I was sent along to have it removed. I can recall saying to the doctor who was treating me that it was a bit odd, as I was lying back in a treatment chair, I could see both the floor and the ceiling at the same time. "Very probable," he said "as I have your eye out and lying on your cheek".

## **2. Factory, here I come...**

Eventually, it was my turn to go up to the main factory, they had a place for me in the Toolroom. I hadn't a clue what a Toolroom was back then, but it was one of the best jobs a craft apprentice could ever get. I ended up being trained as a time served Toolmaker. I can remember going up to the main factory from the Training School, they took us up in the back of a Land Rover. I seemed to wait longer than others to get up to the factory, there were lads who started long after I had started and they went up to the factory before me, I was just told your turn will come, in hindsight I think they were streaming the apprentices for different departments.

My new Foreman came to meet me, Bob Robertson was his name. He wanted me to learn to become a Press Toolmaker, but I didn't know what that was. I told Bob I wanted to be a Turner. Little did I know that job would not come close to that of being a Toolmaker. Bob said, knowing full well I would change and he would get me where he wanted me to be, "Okay, you can work on that Lathe between Jimmy Rankin and Willie Garvie. There was another guy called Stan Coulson on the Lathes, he was the Union Shop Steward that would later send me to Union School, though later he moved on and Jackie Morris took his place. The Lathe I was given was an old cumbersome American South Bend beastie. It was heavy hard work to change the chuck head and I'm sure I was given a different job each time which involved changing that bloody heavy chuck. Although Jimmy Rankin was great and pointed me in the right direction, he told me more than once to get off the Lathes and get onto the Benches.

Willie Garvie just cussed and swore all day about Celtic and about his fight with the Rate Fixer in trying to earn his bonus. PBR was the norm, Payment By Results, and that it was not like working in British Leyland in Bathgate! I also had directly behind me the Milling Machine Section and a Kenny Madden, who could only best be described as an old temperamental (expletive) of the first order, who's very first words to me were, "Don't you touch any of that stuff, it's mine and I need it to make my bonus." He was the only person I knew who came to his work on a Sunday for overtime, dressed in a white shirt and tie, it turned out he didn't want his neighbours to think he was going to work on a Sunday, so he dressed to make them think he was going to church! There was only one apprentice that seemed to get on with him, Wee Bill Stewart! None of the other apprentices or some of the journeymen had any time for him.

Bob Robertson soon got me on the fitting bench to become a Toolmaker. To be honest, as I said, back then, I had no idea what a Toolmaker was, let alone a Press Toolmaker, but it was a fun job and I learned to make the full range of tools and not just Press Tools, that were required for manufacturing production, something that would hold me in good stead in the coming years. My Journeyman was George Davidson, a tall quiet red headed guy who I got on well with, I even ended up teaching George to drive, but to be fair, nearly all the other journeymen took me under their wings to help train me. Davie Buchan I thought

was one of the best Toolmakers I would ever meet, an older guy, full of fun, a bachelor who lived with his sister and loved the horses. There was Alec Sutherland a wee guy from Leith who had to stand on a box to work the big Snow Plow Grinder, a nice wee guy who was always saying that I learned fast and that I was being given more difficult work than he was.

Then there was Bob Sutherland who in years to come would tell everyone I was his apprentice, when I never ever was. John Creighton was not much older than me, though time served and a member of the Young Communist League, he was forever off demonstrating against the Bomb or something else. The young Jock Corbett was also on the benches, along with Bobby Forbes, who would later join me in HP. John Blythe was a young Toolmaker who came from Fife but he kept mostly to himself, then there was John Kirkwood and Willie Pool, whom I can't recall much about at all. Bob Cassells was the Labourer who could always be found whistling away as he swept the floor and put on the big urn for making the tea. Bob's son Willie Cassells also worked in the Toolroom on the Tool & Cutter Grinding Section, he was nothing like his dad.

Inside the office area was Alan McIntosh (Tosh) who operated the Jig Borer. Bob Robertson had his desk there and right beside him was the Charge-Hand Willie Malcolm, who had a belief in himself that was way above his station and on what others thought of him! In front of Bob was Charlie Keddie, a senior engineer and a really good one too. Charlie was good at giving me help and pointers on making the parts. In front of Charlie was John Notman, another engineer who in no way even came close to matching Charlie's engineering abilities, in fact John Notman was previously on the Jig Borer. Stuck away in a corner facing a blank metal wall was the Rate Fixer Andre, he was a good pal of Davy Buchan as they both loved the horses. He also had a wicked sense of humour and gave me lots of people pointers. The last one in the office was Mick (James) McPherson the Progress Chaser. Mick, I think under Bob Robertson's inputs, always gave me the best and the most difficult of the jobs to do in order for me to learn from.

There were others working in the Toolroom area on specific tasks, the Tool and Cutter section also included Andre Laidlaw, he was a nice old guy who you could hear chuckling away to himself like Precious the Dog in the cartoon series 'Stop that Pigeon'. One Sunday at lunchtime Andre and Andy Sinclair nipped out for a quick pint. Tommy Coupe Tool Engineering Manager, spotted them and upon their return, he leant his elbows on a metal bench and watched Andre closely to see if he had too much to drink. Also in the Tool & Cutter Grinding section was Willie Abbott. He once made a mistake when setting about to sharpen a side and face cutter, the machine ran in with far too big an amount to grind off, next minute a huge bang was followed by bits of the side and face cutter flying through the air in all directions, everybody ducked! One piece of the cutter crossed the passageway, fortunately no one was passing, and it embedded itself in the brick block wall!

The Cylindrical Grinder Section was just outside the caged office, three machines but manned by two guys. Freddie Morris, it was his son Jackie that was on the Lathes, and on the end Cylindrical Grinder was Bobby Walker. Bobby had a bad limp, due I think to a club foot. They were both good guys who would take the time to tell me anything I asked. Freddie was also into the horses and always had a wallet full of pound notes, it was not often back then you'd find someone with £100 in their wallet, but Freddie always had. On the cutting tools were George Brooks, who eventually got fired for cheating on the bonus and Andy Sinclair, who also later joined Hewlett Packard. On the Milling Section beside Kenny Madden was Jimmy Hall. Prior to working on the Milling Machines, Jimmy also worked in the Grinding Section. I would later meet up with him in Edmonton Canada.

The Toolroom reported to the Tool Engineering Design Office, that was run by Tommy Coupe. He obviously never had enough to do as he was forever wandering into the Toolroom to stick his nose in and to spend time with the apprentices in trying to train them. Much to Bob Robertson's chagrin! I always remember Tommy Coupe saying to me, "You can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear, Sonny!" I always felt that everyone, including Bob Robertson had this fear and resentment towards him, but he was never

nasty towards me. On one occasion I had to deliver something to his house in Learmonth Crescent, a VERY upmarket area in Edinburgh, and both he and his wife were very hospitable towards me by offering me a drink and something to eat. Maybe everyone else knew something about him that I didn't.

In the Drawing Office was Ronnie Crowther who ran the office, John Dyce, excellent Tooling Engineer and Designer, also there was Alistair Campbell Tool Designer. Alistair would one day be my Manager for a spell in HP, but also he became a friend in the folk singing groups. Also in the Tool Design Office was an apprentice Drew Owens, he was a craft apprentice, so lucky to get that opportunity, and a secretary Netta Fotheringham and never to be forgotten a Clerk, Harry Davidson. Harry and I became firm friends and still are right up till today, Harry was also the Best Man at our wedding. We would go partying and when at his home I'd spend many a fun hour just sitting chatting with his Dad Archie, a great old guy full of stories. In my early days in the Toolroom, I didn't have much money, Harry on many occasions would take me across to the Social Club and buy me a bowl of soup. I'm sure Harry felt sorry for me back then. Funny how you never forget those simple acts of kind generosity towards you by others.

Bob Robertson had a habit of getting his words slightly mixed up. Every now and then you could see him stand up and peer out through the wire office cage to see if anything was amiss. One day he stood up and saw a bunch of us standing around Davie Buchan's desk. Bob came out of the office like a bat out of hell, straight across to us and shouted, "Don't corrugate around there, get on with your work." I and a few others had a hard job keeping a straight face at his word confusion.

I was forever up to all sorts of pranks, particularly against Bob Sutherland and wee Alec Sutherland as well as Davie Buchan. I would grease their drawers, but they would do the same back. Davie Buchan was forever using an magnifying eye glass in his work, and one day I put Micrometer Blue around the edge of his eye glass, he was soon wondering why folks were smiling at him. I played the same trick on the mail girls who would come through the departments delivering departmental mail. I would show one of the girls something small to look at, knowing full well she couldn't see it, so I offered the magnifying Eye Glass, she would say she still can't see it, I'd say try your other eye. Then she would set off to deliver mail to the other departments, with a blue ring around each eye. Fortunately she saw the funny side of it. She must have forgiven, as I dated her a couple of times. There were many of the occasion's though when I was on the receiving end, and had to accept it, you can't dish it out if you cannot take it in return. On one of those occasions, Bob Sutherland had wired my jacket to my chair and filled all the pockets with heavy scrap metal, at knocking off time I grabbed my jacket to leave, and left with only the sleeve in my hand!

Davie Buchan once organised a day out at the Kelso races, everything went according to plan, though most of the men had way more than they could hold in alcoholic beverages. On the way back they had to stop the bus, some were feeling a bit out of sorts and many needed to go for a pee. Then just as Davie was starting to get them all back on the bus, Andre Laidlaw, our Tool and Cutter King, threw up and came back to the bus, minus his teeth, everyone got off the bus to go look for his teeth. Davie was now getting a bit worried that he might lose a person in the fields, let alone a set of wallies. Eventually Davie did get them all aboard, including teeth.

I spent most of my apprenticeship working in Ferranti's on the tooling required for the manufacture of the TSR2, a state of the art tactical fighter bomber. There was so much work, we would work overtime two nights a week plus a Saturday morning and all day Sunday. We were supposed to work three weekends in a row and have the fourth one off. Being a teenager with money to spend in my pocket due to all the overtime, on many occasions I would turn out for work on the Saturday morning or Sunday morning, straight from Bungi's night club, dressed up in all my finery, and still suffering from the night before's drinking session and lack of sleep.

Because there was so much work and overtime, the three weekends on and one off fell by the wayside. On one occasion, Wee Bill Stuart, and I decided it was such a glorious summer's day, that we would just



clock off at lunchtime and take off for the beach at Gullane. Which was exactly what we did. We both came back next morning looking like lobsters from our sunburn, Wee Bill could hardly walk as his feet were badly burned.

We were no sooner in the Toolroom, when Willie Malcolm, bossy boots Charge-Hand came storming over, "Where were you pair yesterday afternoon?" He knew full well where we were, the journey men had told him. "Well you're banned from overtime!" He said and strutted off smugly. Both Wee Bill and I said, "Fine, you can shove your overtime where the sun don't shine." We both agreed not to do any overtime, we both had been working weeks and weeks and weeks in a row without any time off. The next week Willie Malcolm came to both of us and said, "Two nights?" We both said "No thanks." On the Thursday Willie Malcolm came to us and said "Weekend?" We both replied "No Thanks." Wee Bill and I kept this up for week after week.

Finally Bob Robertson came to speak to us and said, "Enough of this nonsense, why are you not working overtime, we need to get the tools out!" Both Wee Bill and I said, "Sorry Bob, but Willie Malcolm banned us from overtime because we took a halfie." "We had worked loads of weekends in a row without a break and he was out of order, and besides we kind of got used to enjoying the punishment he dished out to us." Bob was staring at us and the smirk on our faces, "So what is required to get you two to work overtime?" To which we said, "Well, we would work overtime, but Willie has banned us and he needs to apologise for treating us in that way." Minutes later Willie Malcolm came to both of us and said, "Okay, I apologise, I shouldn't have banned your overtime for taking a half day off after all those weekends you have worked in a row, I was too heavy handed, so will you work this weekend please?" Both Wee Bill and I looked at each other, then nodded that we would work.

We recognised that Willie Malcolm was spineless as well as toothless and he did what Bob Robertson told him to do, and Willie knew that we knew it, which probably made his life a bit more unbearable as we could milk it any time we wanted to and did.

The Heat-Treatment facility was at the far end of the factory inside a separate building, probably to keep folks away from all the cyanide that was available there, it would not have been a problem if one was inclined to take some away! Two guys ran the heat-treat facility, George and Gideon, they never got many visitors down at that end of the factory, so I was always welcome for a chat and became friends with them. Gideon was built like Arnold Schwarzenegger as he used to pump iron. As I was friendly with both of them I would wander down to that end of the factory to have a blether with them. One day Willie Malcolm walked in and found me sitting having a cup of tea with them and having a natter about the football. Willie Malcolm said, "I've got you now, you've no right being here, I'll get Bob Robertson to suspend you!" At that point Gideon stood up walked across to Willie Malcolm, grabbed hold of his shoulder and said, "If I hear that John has been suspended, I'll snap you in two!" I wandered back to the Toolroom after Willie Malcolm had left, but heard nothing when I got back.

A while later big muscle bound Gideon had a run in with Phil Swan the Time Study Manager. In the end Gideon had had enough and decked him, but after patiently waiting for him to come off the phone. Then he walked back to the Heat-Treatment department to collect his jacket. He knew he would get fired. Not long after, two security men turned up and placed a hand on each of Gideon's arms to lead him to the exit. Gideon looked at each security guard in turn and said, "Hands off, unless you want what Swanee got!" They were astute enough to get the message and walked alongside Gideon as he headed towards the exit, receiving cheers from his buddies around the factory, as they walked towards the exit door.

The last day before we would break off for the New Year three day break, was always a bit of a wild time in the factory. All the apprentices made sure they went nowhere near the Transformer Shop on that last day. That department was full of man eating women and it would not have been the first time they got hold of an apprentice and have him leave the department in humiliation minus his trousers, to all their

laughs and giggles. I always made sure I gave it a wide berth! None of the management ever seemed to be around on that last day, with the exception of Tommie Coupe who would suddenly appear and disappear just as quickly. Harry Davidson would always have a fair amount of booze on hand that last day and I, plus a few others, would join Harry in the toilets for a snifter or two. Management would never enter the shop floor toilets, they had toilets of their own for the different staff levels, so wouldn't be seen dead in the lower class toilets!

There was a job grinding and lapping Pivot Punches that everyone hated to do, basically because it was boring and that the Pivot Punches required extreme accuracy of form and finish. Those Pivot Punches were used to create the indents which the gyros would spin around in the gyro gun-sights, so they had to be extremely accurate. The job required each individual Pivot Punch being lapped on a Tool & Cutter Grinder, then checked out on the Shadow-graph in the QA department, with only the QA Inspector being allowed to pass the finished ground and lapped Pivot Punch. Bob Robertson would say to me that any weekend I was going out on a bender, which was most weekends when I was a teenager, I could do those Pivot Punches on a Sunday overtime as it didn't require me to do hard thinking work! It was a deal that suited both of us, I had a cushy overtime job when I was feeling like (expletive), and Bob Robertson had someone who would do the job that everyone else hated. I became quite adept at it. It was money for old rope as they say.

Stan Coulson was our Shop Steward, one day he came to both Wee Bill Stewart and myself and asked if we would like to go to Union School. I wasn't that interested in the Union, but the Union was offering us an all-inclusive weekend in the Bellevue Hotel in Dunbar. It seemed like a good free weekend to Wee Bill and me, so we signed up for it. It turned out to be a fun drink filled weekend.

A bus was organised and we and some other apprentices traveled down to Dunbar on the Friday after work. It kicked off with an early evening Union meeting then dinner. The schedule was to have meetings on the Saturday morning and afternoon and another meeting on the Sunday morning and home after Sunday lunch. The meetings were all about the fear of Communism taking over the Union and the benefits the Union can bring to the workers. I was even less interested in the Union after their brainwashing attempts.

That Friday night all the apprentices stayed in the hotel and we got to know those from other companies. As the night wore on, card schools soon started up with the employees of the hotel joining in and the bar stayed open longer. The Saturday evening we found out there was a dance in the Dunbar Corn Exchange, which meant that nearly all the apprentices were headed to the bars in Dunbar and the Corn Exchange afterwards. I don't think Dunbar knew what had arrived in town. All the apprentices would recognise each other and say "Hi Brother!" every time we bumped into each other. We moved from pub to pub and on into the Corn Exchange. There were so many apprentices there, it guaranteed there would be no trouble from the local lads, who were all wandering around with their Rangers scarfs on around their necks. It was easy to spot us union apprentices, we were all the ones who turned out in their best Saturday night clothes.

The local girls were happy to see all this new talent turn up. Wee Bill and I got off with two Dunbar girls and we were walking them home around by Dunbar harbour, still the worse for wear with the Belhaven beer. Wee Bill was worse than me, he lost his footing and slipped into the harbour, fortunately the tide was out and the knee deep mud helped to break his fall. But he stank to high heavens and was covered in mud. It ended any idea of a romantic evening we may have had. We got him hosed down at one of the girls homes and I had to walk him back to the hotel. On arrival Wee Bill had his fair share of ribbing, but a card school caught his eye and he was soon joining in.

Ferranti's was a great learning ground for me, it was run along military lines where everyone was placed in their own box and it had a 'We and Them' environment, the type of environment that Andy Haggart thrived in, but which I disliked intensely, many a time I kicked back in resistance.

I was just about at the end of my apprenticeship, when this new American Company called Hewlett Packard set up in South Queensferry. What I started to hear about it intrigued me, so I sent off an application for a job as a Toolmaker. I received an interview and was impressed by the way I was treated, even though there was not much equipment within the building, as it was a green field start up site. I was shown all around the plant by Meyer Averbuch who explained the type of tooling work I'd be required to build. I was introduced to Jim Peachey, "the gentleman?" who managed the Machine shop. Even then I recognised this guy as similar to the old Ferranti types and in future years he and I would have a few head to heads, which he never ever won. I was also introduced to the top managers including the Managing Director David Simpson, who eventually became President of Gould Electronics. I left that day thinking; this company is really different, and hoped I could be part of it, as it was in its infancy.

On return from my summer holiday, a fun time with some old work pals, Fat (Terry) Brown and Jonas (John) Bold, up north. That could be another story about those crazy guys. There was a letter awaiting me from HP offering me a job. However the salary of £76 per month was lower than the £83 per month I was now earning at Ferranti's. I had made the magic £1,000 a year without overtime. At that time with that level of pay you would consider yourself as having made the grade. The following Monday I tendered my weeks' notice to Bob Robertson, which in a way was hard for me as Bob Robertson as the Department Foreman had taken me under his wing and made sure I got special treatment in learning the skills of a Toolmaker. His reply to me was... "I knew this was going to happen!" He stormed off to have a go at the Wages Time Study Manager Phil Swan who had previously refused to upgrade my pay. Two days later Bob Robertson was back at me asking why I had decided to leave the company for a less paying job, he understood my response and handed me a bunch of blank requisitions, saying get what you need out of the stores. I'll never forget him, only the once had we had a serious run in and he sorted that out within a day. He was a good mentor who taught me much and I'll never forget what he did for me. Unfortunately I was never to meet up with Bob again to thank him personally.

### 3. A New Beginning...

I joined HP, it was strange to go to work that first day by train from the Waverly Station, I had been so used to getting on a No. 19 bus to take me to Crewe Toll and work in Ferranti's. I arrived at South Queensferry right on the button, but had forgotten to take my P45, (government document to move from one job to another), which worried me, but it needn't have as I took it in the next day. There were two other people joining HP that day, Bill Scott whom I knew from Ferranti, he was hired to work in the Maintenance Department, and Derek Muir who was going to work in the Toolroom alongside me. Alan Watts was the Machine-shop Manufacturing Manager and he came out to welcome us. A nice guy was Alan full of the HP Way.

I spent the next twenty months working in the Toolroom, it was greatly varied and interesting work which gave me a chance to show what I could do. All the folks were really friendly, even the Managing Director would come and join us on a Saturday morning when we were working overtime, he'd come and have his coffee break with us, he even had a sausage roll that one of the guys would bring in for our break. Most of the HP employees at that time where English, they had worked for the company when it was first set up in Bedford, I actually found it



The "Hairy Toolroom" bunch. Back row:: Tam Cranston, Jim Rooney, Bobby Forbes, Dave Green, John Glyde, Front row:: Tam Lambie, Groege Lunn, Me, Gordon Brechin.

quite a change to work with so many English folks. There were some Scots too who worked for HP in Bedford and were only too happy to come back to Scotland again.

Some of the English guys that were involved in the Fabrication area were John Chennels, Bert Burton, Jim Peachey, Frank Houghton, Derek Wilson, Ray and Pauline Powell, Mike and Judy Farrell, Neville Martin (Our black crooner.), Alan Watts, John Anthony, Vic Thomas Ken King and Ralph Banks. Nearly all of them got put up in a Scottish Special Housing development right next to the HP plant.

Ray Powell was as blind as a bat, he had spectacles with lenses like the bottoms of milk bottles. On one occasion he almost demolished the internal bank with the fork-lift truck because he couldn't see where he was going! On another occasion he put Mike Farrell in hospital. He was handing Mike a battery which he had pulled out of the fork lift truck. Ray thought Mike had hold of it, he didn't and it dropped straight onto his foot and broke a bone or two in the process. On yet another occasion, Ray was standing outside the plant waiting for his lift home. A car pulled up and he got in, the car was halfway down the street when Ray suddenly recognised the drivers voice as not the one he should have been getting a lift home from!! Ralph Banks was an interesting chap, he was originally from Canada, a very quiet and peaceful man, until, that is, he walked onto a golf course. He was like Jekyll & Hyde, his personality did a complete 180 degree flip! Whenever he missed a shot he would start to rage at himself. On one occasion after missing a shot he was seen walking up to the nearest tree and then swinging his club and wrapping it around that tree. On yet another occasion, after a stressful battle around the golf course, he was again seen pulling his golf cart alongside the lake, stopping, picking up his cart and bag of clubs, and heaving them into the lake, before storming off!

One of the main differences between the HP Way and that of Ferranti's, was communications. Every month HP Management would tell us if the targets had been met and on many an occasion this led to a Beer Bust. This was free drink and food, usually a steak, after work finished on a Friday lunchtime. The Beer Bust was such a new concept to the UK, that at the very first one to be held at South Queensferry, the BBC turned up to film the event. As the evening wore on, the BBC were told to stop filming, as more and more people became the worse for wear with drink. It was not something HP wanted the media to get hold of. Mind you it's not a pretty sight to watch Jim Peachey eating a monstrous sized cream cake and washing it down with a pint of McEwans Export beer.

I can always remember one Saturday morning right after a Beer Bust, when we were working overtime. The lads, including Jim Peachey would disappear into the canteen, sorry cafeteria, and return at break time, with a plastic tote box containing a few pints of beer and some left over nibbles. Made a change from the usual coffee that was on the go!

The HP Way was about communication and socialising. Every year there would be a Christmas dance, usually held in the North British Hotel or the Assembly Rooms in George Street. It was a dressy occasion and an excellent full three course meal was served, by a bunch of ladies doing a purvey (catering). There were usually two dance halls, so all tastes could be catered for. George Forrest was an excellent dancer and year after year George would turn up in his black tie outfit. He had a Tuxedo that George Raft or Humphrey Bogart would have been proud of, with its long pointed winged lapels. It looked like something straight out of the Casablanca movie, but at least he did own his own tuxedo, the rest of us Hoi Palloi had to hire ours.

At those Christmas dances, Neville Martin was always badgered to get up and sing. He was our own black version of Bing Crosby, and would sing White Christmas, much to the pleasure of everyone else. On one occasion, Neville was followed on the stage by Ray Smelek, who was a USA Manager over here during the startup phase, to set up the production lines. Ray loved it in Scotland and soon cottoned on to the Scottish sense of humour, which helped a lot. As soon as he took over the stage from Neville, he was greeted with an outburst of the song, "Go home ya bum!" Ben Reilly was the ring leader that year. Ben

was paralytic and he was eventually put on the bus, for home, by his wife Pat and stuck in the back row of the bus up against the corner window, which happened to be the emergency exit. As I left the Assembly Rooms I saw Ben leaning against the window and I opened the emergency door to shout abuse at him for being so drunk. At that point Ben almost fell out onto the street. Just as well I wasn't as (expletive) as he was and able to break his fall and to push him back in.

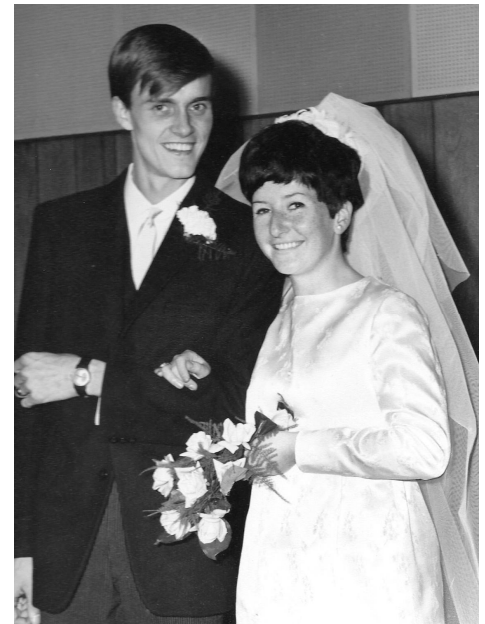
There was a guy in HP called Harry Mushett. Harry was never known for working hard, and he always did as little as possible. Harry had come back from Canada to the old country, but he was never really happy and had made up his mind to go back to Calgary again. I had always wanted to work abroad and already had Canada in my sights. After listening to Harry Mushett, both Sheila and I decided that when we got married we would emigrate to Canada. We did get married on the 30<sup>th</sup> September 1967 and by the next April we were on the first ship out of Greenock, The Empress of Canada bound for the port of Montreal in the new world.

#### 4. The New World...

I had never ever been out of the UK, though Sheila had been to Norway, so it was quite an experience and an adventure for us both to emigrate to Canada. So, in 1968, we traveled, by ship, the Empress of Canada, from Greenock to Montreal. From there we went on overland to Edmonton by train. We were accompanied by Harry Mushett junior, he and his girlfriend Kathy were heading back ahead of Harry senior. The trip by ship was fantastic, we had never experienced such luxury before, there were a lot of children onboard, other families were emigrating also. It got a bit noisy at meal times, until that is we hit a bad storm. They had to tie up ropes for everyone to hold onto as the boat rolled from side to side. Although it was difficult to walk upstairs and stop at our cabin door without the ship tilting and forcing us to run past our aimed destination, it did mean the restaurants were empty and we had peace to enjoy

our sumptuous meals.

The sights we saw as we sailed towards Canada and up the St Lawrence Seaway were unbelievable to us. We saw our first ever icebergs and whales breaking the surface alongside the ship. The ship's Captain had been nicknamed Captain Ahab, as the year before he had hit a whale. As we entered the St Lawrence Seaway the ice was breaking up ahead of us, as we were the first ship up the St Lawrence Seaway that Spring. Once the ship had docked, we had to wait till all the baggage was placed in the terminal. I recall seeing our baggage coming off on the conveyor belt. Amongst which was my large wooden toolbox, which was somewhat on the heavy side. A big longshoreman moved forward to grab my



Were we ever so young? Sheila and I on our wedding day.



My daughter's wedding party gathers, years later, in a more formal Scottish setting (kilts): (L-R) My son Grant, Bridegroom Son-in-law, Craig, Bride, Faye, Grandson, Harris, me and my wife Sheila.

toolbox, unaware of just how heavy it was, he almost fell over with the weight of it. Needless to say we had a good laugh at this, Of course Harry junior had to go and drop his bottle of malt that he had been painstakingly carrying in his arms, smack in the middle of the terminal building! The stench of whisky was everywhere.

We had a few hours to kill before the train left for Edmonton, so we got to see a little of Montreal all lit up in the dark. Even the train ride to Edmonton was fun. Sheila got her guitar out one evening and the four of us were singing songs. At that moment a big railway attendant stuck his head around the corner with a big smile on his face and started to sing with us. We were singing Swing Low at the time. As the train moved inland, it was getting colder, winter still had its grip on the land. The train stopped for an hour or so at the top of Lake Superior, allowing us time to get off and stretch our legs. The big carriage attendant said, "Watch your back, I'm coming through." and then proceeded to place a stool type box on the ground to help us off the train, it was like something out of "Butch Cassidy & the Sundance Kid" movie. The train however had stopped in the middle of nowhere. There was a Hudson Bay Company store, which we trundled to across the snowy ground. The inside of the store was like something out of a Northwest Mountie Police movie. There were animal pelts, animal traps and snow shoes hanging up and native Indians wandering around. I was beginning to wonder if we had done the right thing.

On our arrival in Edmonton we were met by Kathy's uncle. He took us to St Albert, just outside Edmonton to stay with them for a few days. It was he who managed to get us an apartment in the Avord Arms in downtown Edmonton. First we had to spend a week in a seedy hotel before we could move in. A week after we left that hotel, someone was found murdered in it! We basically had nothing, back then there were financial restrictions on the amount of money you could take out of the UK. We had to get work quickly. I went to the Manpower Center, but they were no help, they said why on earth did you come to Edmonton, there were no jobs for Toolmakers here. I got hold of the Yellow Pages and looked for companies and phoned around.

I got an interview with Krause Engineering. They were doing work for the Oil Industry, and they took me on that very day. It was rough work and hard, I had to sharpen milling cutters on the off-hand buff grinder. It was staffed by Germans and one Dutchman, who was the Foreman. He was good towards me and said that I should keep looking for another job and get out of here. I soon took his advice.

Krause Engineering was way over on the far south side of the city, a long bus ride and then a walk of about half a mile. On that walk one day, I found a \$10 bill on the ground. I always remember that, as we were pretty short of cash, so it came in handy. The Germans in Krause were not that friendly towards me, they would always speak in German and try to wind me up and insult me at every turn. I would start Goose-stepping around to shut them up, it worked too! The Dutch Foreman would smile away to himself as I gave as good as I got.

Our apartment was wonderful with a fantastic view over the city. It had a swimming pool, gym and laundry on the top floor. There were sun-beds on the roof outside. On the ground floor were shops and a restaurant, which could be accessed from the inside by the tenants.

Unfortunately we had no furniture apart from our travel trunks, which we covered with tartan travel blankets. We had no credit history in Canada and we found out that it was hard to buy anything without references. The department store, Eatons, took all our details and where I was working. Fortunately, when they phoned, they spoke to the Dutchman and he vouched for me. So we were then able to buy a bed settee and two rocking chairs. I was indebted to that man and I can't even remember his name. Also Kathy's uncle loaned us a small table and some chairs.

Then one day my Krause pay check bounced! The Dutch Foreman said to me quietly, that they had more tied up in the company than I did, so they would not stir things up, but I could, he knew I was short of

cash, and told me of the Canadian Law that states the employees must get paid first before anything else and if necessary the local authorities would step in and sell company assets. I got hold of the Company owner and told him, "I wanted paid by the next day or I was going to invoke the law on employee payment." He said, "There is no such law", thinking I wouldn't know about it. I said, "Try me." When I got home that evening, there was a letter offering me a job in North West Industries. They wanted Toolmakers as they were building parts for the Handley Page Jetstream and the Lockheed TriStar 1011. They wanted me to start as soon as possible. The next day I got my pay from Krause and left the company that same day. The Dutch Foreman smiled and said he would take my toolbox home with him and I could collect it there.

I started the next day at NWI, it was closer to our apartment on the Industrial Airport. Although this was the turning point for us, the work was plentiful and I could make money working twelve hour shifts seven days a week, but the company was run along Ferranti lines. I didn't care, we needed the money, we soon even bought a proper bed and a car. Depending on what shift I was on, Sheila and I would meet for a short period as we both set off to and from work. Sheila had a job with Crown Zellerbach, a paper company. Her boss was a Scotsman called Baxter and a bastard towards Sheila, as she came from Scotland, so he expected her to do more than anyone else. To try and prove some obscure point.

At NWI I was soon earning an hourly rate much more than guys who had been there for years. That was not my problem. The Foreman would walk by as I was machining and quietly drop a note in amongst the metal box of parts, it would be a pay rise. It told me he was impressed at the amount of work I could get through, not like the other lazy (expletives) he would say and he had noticed that I had set up a work unit with me and a German guy called Herman Ergenzinger. We would cut up the job between us and slaughter the times to get the tools finished. I would often receive comments "that no one else ever made those machines remove metal like I did." I was frequently hidden in the smoke from the hot cuttings and coolant oil.

The staff at NWI were a rich mixture from all countries, there was a Turk called Essau, who arrived straight from Turkey, he couldn't believe what he could buy, at one point he had spent more money on goods than he was earning! There was another Dutch guy in the Toolroom by the name of Leo Evers, he had a finger missing from one hand, a big brusque man who had fought in the underground resistance against the Germans during the war. He hated the Germans and let them know it, so they all kept well away from him. He and I became great pals. He was always shouting and swearing in Dutch. He had a great sense of humour and I could always get him laughing.

For a number of days Big Leo kept tapping his watch, as it kept stopping, shouting "Gott fur doma" at it. The watch was obviously now passed its best, so I said, "Leo, give me that watch, I'll fix the bloody thing once and for all." He took it off, handed it to me, I laid it in a big steel anvil and as quick as a flash, I picked up a heavy lead mallet and smashed it down on the watch. All the cog wheels were embedded in the lead mallet face. Big Leo looked up and stared at me, then let out a huge roar of laughter and shouted, "Crazy (expletiving) Scotsman!"

That same Big Leo on night shift would go up to the canteen, which was closed, go across to the ice box where the cokes were stored in a chest type cooler cabinet where you would lift the lid to gain access. To free a coke you entered a quarter, not Big Leo, he took a straw with him, opened the coke bottle at the far end still in the ice box and drank the coke via the straw, then removed the straw, leaving the empty coke bottle in the ice box, they never ever twigged (caught on) onto who was doing this! He was some man, he didn't sleep in a bed at home, he slept on the hard floor beside his bed, he said if you ever met his wife you'd know why!! He smiled when he said that, so it was a wind up. Leo had a foul temper and would have floored anyone who got on the wrong side of him. We ended up with a Polish guy as our manager, Leo hated him and was forever bellowing at him. The Polish Manager would always give him a wide

berth or shout at him from a distance, I can still see Big Leo get up and go after him, but the Pole would dart out a door and disappear until Leo cooled down.

Our previous Manager that the Pole replaced had moved to a Toolroom not far from where Krause Engineering was, and he gave me a call offering me a job, I went over to have a look and see what was on offer, I would have taken the job as it looked like good prospects and I got on well with my old English Manager. Then the owner walked in and joined the meeting, he was Jewish and the first thing he said in broken English to me was, "How much pay you want?" I said I was earning a certain amount, and he replied, "You tell me lies" as he opened the union book and pointed to the union rate. He wouldn't listen to me saying that was the minimum rate. I stood up and told him to "Stuff his job up his (expletive)." And walked out. That evening I got a call from my old Manager apologising and saying he came in at the wrong time, and that he was going to offer me a higher rate than that at NWI as he knew what I was actually earning. I replied that I was sorry that it turned out like that, but there was no way I could work for that company, I didn't need (expletive) like that.

Winters in Edmonton were hell, we had six weeks where the temperature never rose above zero degrees Fahrenheit. On one occasion, the tyres on my car were frozen with flats on them where the car had been standing, you had to plug your car in to stop the oil freezing, as I turned to head off for home you could feel and hear the tyres going bump bump as the frozen flats came around, but this time the tyre came right off the car! On another occasion I was driving down the Kingsway Avenue on my way home stamped on the brake and it blew the four master brake cylinders because the brake fluid had frozen!

Any short distance you walked, your face was white with ice as your breathing settled on you. Before we got our car I would take the bus to NWI and walk the quarter mile to the hanger, usually with an young guy from England. I recall saying to him he should wear a hat, you'll get frostbite, he wouldn't listen, one day he came to work, he had one ear that was more than twice the size of the other ear, it had been frost bitten.

I hated the winters, they were deceiving, beautiful sunny days but cold enough to freeze the balls off a brass monkey. One day it was so nice, Sheila and I decided to drive to Fort McMurray, north of Edmonton. We set off but the roads started to get icier and icier and we decided to turn back. I stopped the car, to do a U-turn, nothing coming, I turned the wheel, but the car kept going in a straight line. It was so icy, the tungsten studs in my rear tyres were pushing the car straight, the front wheels were useless at turning the car. I had to put the hand brake on, get out of the car and push the car around on the ice to point in the direction I wanted to go, then gingerly drive back!

Experiencing such a harsh winter meant we couldn't wait for spring to come, the change from winter to spring took about two weeks! The first weekend we felt that warmth in the sun, we both took off to visit Elk Island National Park for a quick BBQ. Elk Island lay a few miles to the east of Edmonton, a nice spot with a lake. What we hadn't taken account of was all that snow that lay around and it was thawing fast! We made it fine to Elk Island, although the lake was still frozen, the snow was in a rapid thaw and the roads in and around the park were soon a quagmire of slippery mud. Needless to say, we got stuck in the mud. Sheila jumped out of the car to give me a push, it worked, the car shot forward, Sheila fell forward, just as the rear wheels kicked up the mud behind. What a picture she was, covered in mud from head to toe, both of us laughing at what had happened.

There was no way she was getting in our car in that state! I rummaged around in the boot and found a North West Industries boiler suit. So Sheila made off for the public toilets to change. She had to change everything as she was soaked to the skin as well as being covered in mud. Out she comes, looking like a plumber in her boiler suit, shouting, "Pipes, Bogs and Drains are my specialty!" We laughed and joked about it all the way home, I do like a woman in uniform!



It was only about a month earlier I had gone ice fishing with Ken, Paddy Crawley's fiancée. I had never been Eskimo fishing like that before. Ken just drove his car straight onto the frozen lake, I wasn't so sure about that. It held the weight fine, and we drilled a hole through the ice with an auger, the ice was about three feet thick. You pulled a blanket over your head to look down the hole and you could see the fish swimming around below. That was the only fish we saw that day, we caught nowt (nothing)! It was a super experience though.

The next weekend we set off for another picnic to Pembina River Park, which was west of Edmonton on the road to Jasper. We were more prepared this time and we took extra bodies with us, the Lindsey's joined us. That extra week made a huge difference, the river was breaking up and the ice was like floes traveling down it, you could hear all the creaking and crunching as it flowed along.

Willie Lindsey and I set off to explore, we climbed up the surrounding hills and around the tree line where we had found a path, an animal track more like. We had a great view down over the river area. Then we came across some animal tracks on the muddy path. I looked at Willie and he looked at me and said, "Those are big paw tracks, look at the size of those claw marks!" Being the gutsy Scotsmen that we were, we decided that they might be from a hungry Mountain Lion or Grizzly Bear and that perhaps we should meander back to from whence we came. Besides, the sausages and the hamburgers would be ready by the time we got back.

The local High School, close to North West Industries, challenged the company to put a team up to play them Ice-Hockey. Sheila and I went along to give the NWI team some moral support. The NWI guys turned out in their normal attire, jeans and parka, the High School kids turned out in full body armour attire and promptly got stuck in about the NWI team, literally beating the (expletive) out of them in the process. What a humiliation, taken to the cleaners by a bunch of school kids, they would never live that down!

Both Sheila and I had good friends from work and we would have parties, it was like the United Nations with friends from Germany, Hungary, Italy, France, Czechoslovakia, Turkey, Canada and even England. Hermann Ergenzinger, his wife Marika and their kids were great friends, he drove an Oldsmobile Cutlass, it was a flying machine. But we had a great relationship with them, they would later invite us to have Christmas Eve with him and all his extended family, we did likewise at New Year. I will always remember phoning Hermann and saying to him, "Are you watching the war movie on Channel 10," he would say, "yeah", to which I would reply, "You see we are beating you (expletives) again!" and quickly hang up. Minutes later you could hear his Oldsmobile Cutlass roaring up the street, a bang on my door and in he would come, shouting, "Vastel you (expletive)!" Then he would go to the fridge and grab a beer and sit down and watch the rest of the movie with us!

There were lots of other Scots folks we became friends with. Dave and Ina Lindsay, they had three young kids. Willie, who slept all day and was up all night, plus two daughters, Lynn the youngest and Kathy, who was a teenager, would spend as much time as she could with us. Back home in Scotland they had another son and daughter. They were from the Hamilton area, Dave loved it in Canada, but Ina would have gone home in a minute, she missed her family. There was also Bill and Maureen Williams and son Glynn from Wales. We took them out to see the Rockies one day in our Vauxhall Viva, At one point the hills were so steep and we were so high up, it could only manage 30 miles an hour. They loved the scenery though, it was startling. Everywhere we saw Elk and Big Horned Mountain Sheep, unlike today, where very few wild animals can be seen.

We had a couple of parties at our apartment, as I said, it was a bit like the United Nations with our friends from both our work places. There was little Joe Franco from Italy and his girlfriend Eleanor, who I think was a French-Czechoslovakian mix. Paddy Crawley who was Canadian and her guy Ken from England. Then there was Herman and his wife Marika, he was German and she was Hungarian and also from

Sheila's work place was Janette Rudd, who was Norwegian. Ken couldn't handle all the alcohol and was soon lying asleep in our bed. Much to Herman's disdain, he went to prod him awake and shout, "Wake up you limey (expletive)!"

They were all a fun crowd, nearly all had emigrated from their home country, so there was a certain affinity amongst us. I recall one evening after finishing our shift at midnight, we all went back to Joe's apartment, he had some home brew wine on the go and wanted us to taste it. How I managed to drive home afterwards I'll never know, but make it I did!

On our first Christmas in Canada, Herman invited us to join his family at his brother's house. The Germans celebrate Christmas Eve more than Christmas Day. Their family dinner and gathering was at Herman's brother Paul's family house. Everyone there made us most welcome and spoke English to make sure we were not left out of any discussion. Herman had made it his cause to get me drunk on Schnapps, after me doing likewise to him on Scotch whisky! It was thirty below outside, I had so much to drink, I was out in that cold in my shirt sleeves, I never felt a thing. Fortunately they noticed I was not around and folks came to find me. Lucky really, had I fallen asleep in those temperatures, I'd have ended up with serious frostbite.

You'd think I would have learned from my first time out in the cold unprotected, but I was to do it again. This time at a party at Herman and Marika's home. Herman had got me well and truly plastered, I had gone outside to throw up. It was Baltic outside, minus forty or something in that order. Again it was noticed I was missing and folks came looking for me, they found me lying in the snow. It was the Crème de Menthe that did it. I was lucky they found me so quickly, at those low temperatures, frostbite would have been the least of my worries, you could die in a short time span. Ken took us home, three of us in his two seater sports car. Sheila had to prop me up in the lift to hit the floor button, that evening must have been the Mounties (RCMP) Ball, they all had their dress uniform on. I vaguely recall them passing a comment to Sheila about her legless husband, who was slowly sliding down the wall of the elevator, where Sheila had propped me up, to hit the floor button.

Sheila and I took off for a holiday in Vancouver, Sheila had a friend there, Maureen Killorn, so we would pay her a visit. The scenery traveling over was spectacular especially the Fraser River, en-route we even saw a Moose, at which Sheila shouted "Here Moosie, Moosie..." As if it would come close to us. Vancouver was impressive, it still is a beautiful city, we should have gone there instead of Edmonton. As we were driving past Vancouver City Hall, all the hippies from the Flower Power were sitting around the water fountains, they had emptied bubble bath into the fountains and all the soapy bubbles were drifting out and down the main street. We even got to see our first Orca in the Sea Aquarium in Stanley Park, In fact we got a private demonstration from Shamu the Killer Whale, until some tourist saw us and came running across with his camera, only for the whale to jump out off the water and soak him.

After visiting Vancouver we headed south into the USA and Seattle, we didn't expect those packed freeways so turned left and headed inland and back up the Okanagan trail through all the fruit orchards, we had never seen so much fruit growing beside the road.

It eventually all turned nasty at work, we were all out on strike for more pay when the current pay contract expired. We were members of the AIM Union, American Aero Institute of Machinists. I got a job with another Tool Company, Midget Tool & Die, to fill in and earn some money, this enabled others to get more strike pay. I had never been on strike before and the weather was nice, it all felt like a bit of fun, though I sat on the bonnet of my car with my strike placard and welded the bonnet to the battery. Best ever bit of spot welding I've ever done!

North West Industries brought in scab labour from Eastern Canada, French Canadians to do the work. This move incensed the workers on strike and when union members went around to the mobile trailer

homes of those scab workers and smashed them up with baseball bats, I decided it was time for me to leave, I didn't like Unions before and I disliked them even more after that. I got a job with Douglas Aircraft Corporation in Toronto. We packed up and headed east again.

The job would have been fine, but the nearest place we could get to live was fifty miles from the factory. Sheila and I decided we should go home for a holiday and think what we should do next, so caught a flight out of Toronto for Prestwick. Sheila's family didn't know we were on our way despite us sending a telegram, it confused them, but a big surprise awaited them when we walked in, Jean was still in her bed, so got a rude awakening. The family boxer dog Bobby seemed to sense we were there as he pulled Sheila's Mum all the way home from his daily walk.

One day I popped out to South Queensferry to say hello to all the folks in the HP Toolroom. Meyer Averbuch said, you don't fancy a job do you, we're about to advertise for a Toolmaker, I said, "Could you hold that off for a day till I talk with Sheila?" That evening we decided to stay and bring all our stuff home, it was already all boxed up so easy to ship home with a phone call. I started back working at HP two weeks later. So, in the year 1970, I was back to HP for good.

## **5. Hewlett Packard. The Return of the Magi !!!...**

I worked for HP for just under 33 years, but it was over two stints, which I must admit were the best years of my working life, the company was a breath of fresh air when compared to the old fashioned working policies of the vast majority of other companies throughout the UK, and, as I also found out, those in Canada.

Bill Hewlett and Dave Packard were visionaries, well ahead of their time and decades ahead of the other Captains of Industry. They ploughed a path that, for years to come, that led other companies to follow. It was truly successful even despite coming across some in management positions that for some reason known only to themselves, appeared to bring some of the old outside ways into HP. I think that those types felt insecure at giving others the freedom to be responsible for their own actions. They liked to command respect for their management position, whilst they might actually get found out that they were not as good as they thought of themselves. Their biggest failing being, they failed to recognize that you earn respect, you can't demand it.

The Toolmaking work at HP was always varied and interesting, with someone like Meyer Averbuch at the helm, it was always going to be that way. Meyer would try anything. He got us into Gravity Die-Casting, though it didn't last long! He made a Die-cast tool that would produce the End Struts for a Front Frame. It was a dangerous business having molten aluminium around. On one occasion trying out the new Die-Cast tool, Meyer ladled out the molten metal and poured it into the mould. Then he dropped the extremely hot ladle into a bucket of cold water. An immediate explosion ensued, the hot ladle still with some molten metal came in contact with the cold water and it erupted skywards. Meyer could be seen jumping around patting his head as the hot droplets rained down on him from above. Needless to say the rest of the department was helpless with laughter.

Meyer had this thing about the Shaper Machine, everyone hated it, he loved it, he even made a grinding attachment for it to grind huge plates. One day Tom Cranston was on the large Okuma Lathe, he had the large faceplate on and a huge lump of steel attached that was to be bored out. Being such a large work piece, the boring had to take to place at a slow speed to keep the work in balance. Tom by accident pushed the speed lever to high speed without noticing and when he switched the Lathe on, centrifugal force immediately took effect, shaking the machine and everything around it violently and sending the large metal work piece sailing through the air, with everyone scattering and ducking. The work piece came to a

sudden stop when it met the Shaping Machine and in doing so cracked the Shaping Machine right down the middle. Everybody was happy about that, except Meyer. The Shaper had finally come to its end.

Even in HP, tricks would get played against the apprentices. One Saturday morning, one of the guys placed a paper coffee cup on the floor and tried to kick it over the glass partition, this time he placed two cups side by side and said to the apprentice, try and kick the cup over the partition, he let fly at one of the cups, but it didn't go the distance. The apprentice stood up and took a kick at the cup, what he didn't know was that beneath that cup was a lump of steel, which promptly went straight through the glass partition, fortunately no one was on the other side!

It was so easy for accidents to happen in a Machine-shop environment. Ken King had the misfortune to lose an eye when a box die burst under the load and a sliver of the metal shot into his eye. One day I was cutting out the centre of a die on the band-saw and should have been paying more attention than I was, when the die slipped forward and took my left thumb straight into the band-saw blade, it was a nasty one. I closed my thumb inside my fist and set off to see the nurse. It was going to be a hospital job as the nurse wouldn't stitch it up. As she was making arrangements to organise transport to take me to hospital, Colin Wintrup entered the First Aid Room, "Is that you up for a plaster for a scratch?" He said. I opened my hand and he could see the bone in my thumb, at this point, Colin promptly fainted and fell on the floor.

George, one of the labourers from Maintenance, took me to the Western General Hospital. The treatment was worse than the accident. I watched them stick a needle straight into either side of the open wound in order to freeze it before they stitched it up, I was a damn sight more careful in future.

There were two other occasions I got very lucky. One was when I was operating a Milling Machine, the table was on automatic feed and the end handle started to wrap my dust-coat around it, by the time I realised what was happening, it was so tight I could hardly breathe and it was pulling me in even tighter, so I couldn't reach the off switch. I managed to lift my leg up and with a heave kicked the feed handle into the opposite direction, so unwinding my dust-coat and freeing me, I got away with just sore ribs for a day or so.

The other occasion still makes me shudder at the thought of how nasty it could have been. This time I was setting up a plastic injection mould tool to test out the plastic moulding. I slipped the tool in beneath the nozzle that would inject under high pressure, 100 pounds per square inch, the molten plastic of about 350 degrees centigrade into the mould tool. I had been down at eye level to make sure the nozzle was above the die opening, at that point I stretched up a bit to see if there were enough plastic granules to fill the chamber, once the plastic had been injected, and pulled the lever to inject. At that instant, molten plastic shot out the front of the mould tool and landed on my shirt. I had the immediate presence of mind to pull my shirt away from my body, had I not done so, my chest would have been badly burned. But only minutes earlier that would have been my face!

One Saturday morning during overtime a small fire broke out in a bin, due to the red hot cuttings, no problem, we had Jim Peachey run to the rescue, he grabbed a bucket full of what he thought was water, and dumped the bucketful on the small fire. The bucket was standing next to the Spark Eroding Machine and that machine used paraffin, a bucket of which Jim Peachey had dumped on the small fire. Needless to say he was shouting at every one for leaving a bucket of paraffin lying there.

There was one occasion where one of my staff said to me, "There's a funny light coming out of that goods-in, entrance." I walked up to see, the area was on fire, I grabbed an extinguisher to fight the fire and told my staff to set off the fire alarm. I ended up with my picture in the works Readout newsletter fighting the fire. But I needn't have bothered, once the flames reached the sprinkler system it soon doused the flames. I was told, next time vacate the building. I still feel I did what every other person would have done when they come across a fire, fight it.

With the impending birth of our son Grant, it formed the catalyst that spurred me to make changes in my work-life. I decided it was time for me to go back to college. Despite it being a really interesting and satisfying job, I didn't want to be a Toolmaker all my days, for the next nine years I worked my way to attaining further qualifications. I completed my Full Technological Certificate, gaining not only the College Medal, but also the UK City & Guilds Country Medal. This success encouraged me to work to attain the National Certificates in Engineering, first the Ordinary National Certificate, and then the Higher National Certificate, both with Distinctions. Finally I also attended the Higher National Certificate in Business Study, but by then I was also attending numerous internal HP courses in People Management and Finance, as well as many other development courses. Eventually I moved off the making of tools to designing them, and onto managing the whole Tool Engineering Department.

The Toolroom squad was a wild bunch, especially when out on the town. Many of the boys lived in South Queensferry, which included me, but we moved to live in Dunfermline. On one party night out in Edinburgh, we would all get on the train at Dalmeny and head into town, after an especially heavy drinking night out. Those of us would head for Haymarket Station to catch the last train home. The train pulled into Dalmeny Station and the lads quietly tip toed off the train, a rather unusual departure for such a noisy bunch. Then as the train started to leave the station, they started to bang on one of the windows. Ronnie Davidson was fast asleep in his seat, he lived in South Queensferry and should have got off with the rest of the mob. But they did the dirty on him. It meant that Ronnie had to cross the Forth Railway Bridge and as there was no transport home at that time of night, he had to walk the three miles back across the Forth Road Bridge. What a rotten trick to play on Ronnie, they were all laughing their heads off at his misfortune. It took months before Ronnie would speak to those involved.

I thrived in the HP environment, or, as it was frequently called and known as back then "The HP Way." Dave Packard eventually wrote a book called "The HP Way", which covered the way the company was run. Despite some managers who seemed against "The HP Way", they would never admit that of course. They were well outnumbered by other managers within HP who also saw the full benefits of operating under the umbrella of "The HP Way." Throughout my 32+ years with HP, I still came across managers who always sought to control and restrict the freedom of others to express themselves for the benefit of the company and that of their own personal growth.

Over the years I quickly learned to harness those managers to my benefit and that of my IPO (International Procurement Operation.) Team. I think some top level managers also noticed those negative types as they set up a training programme for the staff called "Managing your Manager", where I picked up a few good tips from...HP was tops on training, there were courses for everything and I still to this day have a bookshelf full of training material.

Of my 32+ years in HP, I spent 22 of them in a Procurement/Materials Engineering environment. But my opening opportunity to change into that new career path only became available when I was operating as the Tool Engineering Manager for HP's Queensferry Telecoms Division (QTD). At that time I was reporting to the Manufacturing Manager Jimmy Queen. I have nothing but praise for Jimmy Queen's management style, I can best describe him as one of the best bosses I have had. Jimmy, fell right into "The HP Way" of doing things, as Tool Engineering Manager. He cut me loose to organize and do things the way I wanted. If I did something wrong, he didn't punish me in any way or threaten to cut my next salary increase, he would sit me down and say, "Well what was wrong with that decision?"

One of those occasions was when the company was under tight expense controls, we needed drafting paper and I issued a requisition to Purchasing to order some, which they duly did. Trouble was, the buyer because of a discount bought about 5 years supply. Unfortunately, even though we received a discount, the total purchase was of such an amount, it caught Jimmy Queen's attention as he was looking over expenses for the month. I was duly summoned to his office. In his usual way Jimmy asked if we needed so much

drawing paper, no, had to be the response. Then why so much, to which my response was that I left it up to the buyer in Purchasing, who thought she was getting a good deal. “Ahh a blank cheque” said Jimmy... I knew what was coming, I should have checked out the price but didn't. “Has a lesson been learned here?” He asked. “Oh yes” came my reply. The matter was then never ever mentioned again.

As Tool Engineering Manager I decided the department needed brightening up to get away from all the battleship gray colours that every machine was painted. So we set about a change to try and get away from the standard Machine Shop drab colouring. I had every machine painted a different colour, we had blue, green, yellow and lilac machines, and we added plants all around the department. It raised some comments from those stuck in the same old rut, but it raised more positive comments than bad ones. It also created an unexpected side, with the machines those bright colours, they would show up the grime more, which meant they were cleaned better after use. I also think it improved everyone's mindset in the department, as they could see the smiles from visitors as they passed through.

I always remember when I first started to report to Jimmy Queen, he said to me, “John, don't come asking for permission to do something you think is right, just come and ask for forgiveness if it goes badly!” Jimmy Queen's approach instilled confidence in me on numerous occasions. In my mind he just stood out head and shoulders above other managers. There was one decision he made that sealed it for me, which I will cover later, in which he put his own decision on the line in support of mine, I shall never forget that day.

In the startup days of 1966, HP at South Queensferry was part of the Microwave Communication Group (MCG). The HP Computer Company of today was a far off event, it was Instrumentation Test & Measurement that made HP what it was back then. Computers were a thing of the future and still to come, even when computers started to be developed, the Instrument Group which covered many disciplines was always recognised as the Revenue Jewel in the Crown. It was of such importance to HP's new company officers that once Bill and Dave had gone, it was hived (spun) off around 1998 to survive on its own as Agilent Technologies, whilst HP focused its direction towards being the huge computer company that it is today and the world's largest electronics company, taking over that mantle from IBM.

As South Queensferry grew, mainly from its own internal Research & Development products, there was a need for other divisions inside the MCG organisation to expand their markets and manufacture their products nearer to their European customers. Though this was not something new as some of those USA Divisions were already having some of their products built in South Queensferry under the in-house section called Transferred Products. That resulted in the split from QTD (Queensferry Telecommunication Division) and the creation of a new operation called QMO (Queensferry Microwave Operation.).

## **6. Time To Move On...**

QMO would require being fully staffed in all departments, with one major exception, there would be no lower level in-house part manufacture, only final assembly and test. Parts were to be sourced either from parent division or outsourced to be manufactured. For QMO to be successful, shipping parts from the parent divisions was only going to increase the final cost of the product due to shipping costs and internal accounting practices, so parts had to be sourced locally. The Manufacturing was to be headed up by Jimmy Queen.

With Jimmy Queen as the Functional Manager heading up the manufacturing role, a sideways step for him, but an exciting one as he would be able to create it from scratch. Knowing what kind of manager he was, I immediately shot off to see him and ask if there were any jobs going that I could do in this new infant operation. Jimmy asked me one question, “What can you do to make QMO successful?” My response, “Plenty! You need bits for your manufacturing production assembly lines, and I'm just the guy

you need to get them, with my knowledge and experience on how parts have to be made to meet the HP specifications.” Jimmy replied with, “But you are a middle manager departmental manager with a staff of a couple of dozen people or so, you’d lose all that!! QMO will be minimally staffed.” In return I said, “So, I need more of a challenge, there’s not much more I can do with what I currently have.” Jimmy responded with, “I need to think about it.” In closing he suggested I speak with Bill Oliver as he had just been appointed QMO’s new Materials Manager. As I left Jimmy’s desk, he picked up the phone to make a call.

Bill Oliver’s desk was on my way back to my office, so I decided to stop by and let him know of my interest in seeking a job in QMO. As I approached Bill’s desk, he was watching me approach and he was already on his phone, but quickly hung up as I neared his desk. “Hi Tool” he said, it was a nickname he called me, “What can I do for you?” He added. At which point I replied, “I’m looking for a job in QMO.” Which he promptly followed up with the exact same two questions Jimmy Queen had asked me only moments ago. “What did I have to offer him that might be of use in QMO?” and “What about my current middle management positions as Tool Engineering Manager?” I responded with exactly the same spiel as I gave to Jimmy Queen. At that point Bill Oliver stated, “Well, I’m going to advertise internally today for a Materials Engineer, in fact it should be getting posted on the notice board as we speak and if I was interested I was welcome to apply, but the job status was a few salary grades lower than my current managerial position.” “Okay.” I replied and I left his desk.

I had to make a slight detour on my way back to my office by way of the Personnel Department. I had made up my mind nevertheless about the salary grade being lower, I knew within myself that being “The HP Way” my salary would not get cut because I took on a lower graded job, if anything, worst case condition, it would most likely get frozen for a while, I could live with that and it would give me the opportunity to prove myself. I filled in the application form then and there in the Personnel Department, but before I could submit the application, I had yet again to make a path back via Jimmy Queen’s office. As my Functional Manager, I needed his approval to apply.

Jimmy looked at the application form, looked at me, then said, “You do know what grade this job is?” I nodded a yes. He signed the application form and slid it back to me as he picked up his phone to make another call. Obviously not wanting to say any more about the matter.

Job interviews were to be held two days later. I never said anything to any of my Tool Engineering team. It was odd, a new division was being started up and not one of my team showed any interest in joining them. I received a call from Bill Oliver asking me to attend my interview at a certain time and which conference room to meet him in. I’ve never believed in tardiness, so right on the bell I turned up at the conference room, Bill was already sitting there. “Have a seat” he said and we started to talk about cars, holidays, sport, everything but about the job I had applied for. Then Bill said “We’ve been in here for about an hour, that should be long enough for people to think it is about right for an interview. Start next Monday okay?” He needed a couple of days to get Personnel to sort out the paperwork etc.

It instantly became obvious to me that Jimmy Queen and Bill Oliver had made the decision on my hire the minute Jimmy Queen had picked up the phone when I first approached him for a job in QMO and was making my way towards Bill Oliver’s desk, Bill had told Jimmy he could see me heading towards him. Everything they had said to me was intended to see how I would react and on how serious I was about taking the risk and taking on a new unknown job. I passed with flying colours, and as I expected, my salary never was reduced or held back from receiving further salary increases.

That decision to join QMO was one of my better ones, as it was the start of me about to enjoy the hardest-worked fun-filled exciting experience of my career with Hewlett Packard for the next nigh-on-twenty two years in Procurement.

I was now reporting to Bill Oliver and not Jimmy Queen, that was okay, we were in a dynamic daily changing environment of a new startup operation and Jimmy always had an “open door” policy and as I knew how to manage my manager and my manager’s manager and with Jimmy wanting to know what was going on, I had no problem discussing issues with him and without standing on anyone’s toes, Bill Oliver was always made aware by me what I had discussed with Jimmy. Important to keep the key parties in the loop, no embarrassments that way and you are seen as a good team player.

Bill Oliver was a Materials Manager of many years’ experience, so I soon started to learn fast all the materials systems, structures and cost structures I had never really come in contact with in the past. Bill would call me “Tool” basically because of my knowledge in that area, I eventually called him “Obi-Wan,” he liked that nickname, seemed appropriate as any question I had about Materials, and Bill always had the answer.

That Monday morning I started in QMO, I was about QMO’s ninth employee. There wasn’t even a production line to speak of in existence yet. Ollie as Jimmy Queen would call him, said, “Welcome aboard, there’s a desk over there with a phone on it.” Then pointed to where the Production Line was going to be set up to assemble Signal Analyzers and Signal Generators. Then said, “We need bits for them, if we could get some within three months, that would be a great start.”

Wow!!! I wanted a challenge, here it was and I had no one to fall back on or turn to for support, it was too late now to back out. I had to do everything myself. For starters I didn’t even know what parts were needed for what products or who on earth could make them. What I did know, shipping stuff that was heavy and bulky was expensive and liable to transit damage, and these aspects would cost a small fortune and make QMO uncompetitive when compared to the parent divisions. I first needed to see what was being shipped in, so spent a couple of days in In-Coming Goods, looking at all the parts to get a big picture of what my task would be.

I requested drawings of the component parts I was going to work on first, and pulled out some samples for my use, but I needed to ascertain what subcontractors were out there and what their capabilities were and if they could make our parts to our specifications. There was no World Wide Web back then to interrogate, it was grab the Yellow Pages and use what knowledge I had built up already on outside subcontractors, some of which gained from exhibitions etc. So started my endless visits to suppliers trying to identify those with the potential to make our parts to the specifications we required.

It quickly became apparent; I also had to train the subcontractors to make our parts to our exacting standards. Those suppliers were prepared to pick up this challenge; firstly they knew we planned on zero in-house manufacture, so they would have the business long term as to ship the parts from the States was bulky, expensive and time consuming. This was a long term business commitment to them and a new supplier customer relationship was in the offing, it was more of a partnership, which over time, helped to drive the costs out and get a more competitive product, but one also in which it was expected the supplier would also profit from. I was going to be somewhat busy over the next few demanding years. However, as the task was so large, I was soon hiring staff to work with me, particularly as I had proven I could get those parts to the production line meeting the tough HP standards and at a very much reduced cost, we were on the verge of saving millions of dollars. Which in turn led to us shipping these lower



My QMO Material and Procurement Group: Myself, Brian Potter, Irene Sherridan, Martin Archer, Sue McCann, Pam Quinn, Laurence Bird, Brain McKandle, John Thomson.



cost parts back to the parent divisions, even with the added extra shipping costs.

Shipping our UK-manufactured parts back to the parent divisions, started to lead to other issues I would meet time and again over the coming years. I came up against homeland protectionism, the not invented here syndrome. Over time though, the QMO manufactured products were undercutting the cost of the parent division manufactured product, so attitudes had to change, as MCG products were meeting fierce competition especially on cost, there was a no better focus on paying more attention to off-shore sourcing.

The supplying of parts to the parent divisions started to grow, even though the resistance was constantly there, Spokane division was really feeling the heat and it was from one of their products I achieved a major quantum leap opportunity breakthrough that sealed my belief in HP and the rock solid support I was getting and would continue to get from my Manufacturing Manager Jimmy Queen.

What I didn't realise at that time, when I moved to QMO to set up all the external manufacturing of its fabricated parts needs, would be the knock-on effect it would have on QTD. We were so successful in the development of local sourcing, it became inevitable that there was no longer a need for QTD internal manufacture of their fabricated parts. So they climbed on the back of all our QMO outsourcing successes, eventually leading to the complete shutdown of the Machinshop.

It basically was a process that took place over a period of time, it started in 1988, with the closing down of the Tool Engineering Design office, with no requirement to make new tools for production, the Tool Engineering design team, moving to set up a group that would transfer the parts to external suppliers.

In turn this led to a reduction in the Toolroom personnel, with only a skeleton amount needed to maintain the existing tooling, until those parts were also subcontracted. With the Toolroom reducing further to supply a Model-Shop role to support R&D. I might have worried that my personal actions were resulting in layoffs for other HP people, but fortunately, the transitions happened over longer periods, and most often HP redeployed such loyal workers.

## **7. My first business trip.**

By a year and a half after the QMO startup, Jimmy Queen had decided it was time I spread my wings a bit and said to me it was time I went across to the States and visit those divisions QMO was building products for. This was going to be my first of many, many business trips to the USA, I actually felt a bit daunted by it. The consolation was, Jimmy was going to be in the USA at the same time and he said it would be okay and he'd help me break the ice a bit. I was going to be gone for three weeks, spending time at the divisions and their suppliers; I had not been away from home that long on my own before.

The plan was, I'd meet up with Jimmy, do a quick visit with him to the divisions to get all the introductions going and then I'd follow up on my own afterwards, the way we worked the visits was ideal, as I'd work my way back from the last to the first, then catch my flight home.

Jimmy was already in the States by the time it came for me to fly out, I was to meet him and his wife May in the Flamingo Hotel in Santa Rosa, a hotel I would use on many future occasions. I had my journey all worked out. I would fly from Edinburgh to London Heathrow, the armpit of all the world airports in my mind, then I'd fly to San Francisco, pick up a rental car and drive north to Santa Rosa and the Flamingo Hotel. On paper and on the maps it looked a piece of cake, but this was going to be one long journey that I hadn't prepared myself to meet. Early flight to London, so I hung around Edinburgh airport for about 2 hours before we took off for the hour plus flight to Heathrow. Then I transferred at Heathrow to get the flight to San Francisco, a long walk to that terminal departure, hanging around for another few hours, then ten hours flight to reach San Francisco.

With an hour or so at that end, I had to find my baggage, clear immigration, customs and find my way to the rental car depot. So it was around tea-time California time, or 1:00 am UK time, when I was ready to set off for Santa Rosa. If I could first find out where the hell the hand brake was and when I did, it turned out that the hand brake is put on by depressing a foot pedal, but how the (expletive) do you switch off the hand brake! In the end I had to ask one of the attendants. Apparently the hand brake was switched off by depressing the foot pedal again from its on position. The attendant looked at me as if saying to himself, is this guy going to be safe driving a car? Stupid me, right? Of course everyone knows a “hand” brake is operated by a “foot” pedal!!

So off I set, but I had the map beside me, not that it would be much use as it was now turning dark, but I had the route written down that I would take, I mean to say, how difficult could this be, Highway 101 was right outside the airport and it took me all the way to Santa Rosa, via downtown San Francisco and across the Golden Gate Bridge, piece of cake. Now where is that off ramp to the freeway? Oh, oh, there are five lanes on this road and every one of them has a car almost bumper to bumper, I should have stayed in an airport hotel and driven up in the morning when there was no rush hour traffic. Too late now, I’ll take the middle lane, I’m on Hwy 101 and it goes to where I’m bound.

(Expletive)! What did that sign post say, here’s another, Oakland Bay Bridge, oopps, I better get across and into the correct lane, mirror, signal manouvre, that’s how I was taught, a few horns honked at me as I squeezed into that line of traffic. I can do this; I’ll show them how to drive. What’s that? Wait a minute, I don’t want the Oakland Bay Bridge, it’s the Golden Gate Bridge I want, and that sign post says I should be way over on the other side of all these lanes!!! I was in the wrong bloody lane; it would be a nightmare if I ended up in Oakland. Time to signal and brass my case and push my way over to the other lane on the far side, to be accompanied by a cacophony of various car horns! By now I’m getting a wee bit uptight, but I was glad that I had memorized the route I was taking, I knew I would come off the freeway at its end, right in the heart of San Francisco and that I’d turn left onto Van Ness Avenue, then straight up Van Ness and left at the top towards the Golden Gate Bridge. Later I found out there was an easier route to take via Hwy 280 from the airport and through Golden Gate Park. So far so good, I turned towards the Golden Gate Bridge, I’ve got it cracked I thought to myself.

Spoke too soon, look at all that traffic wanting to cross this bridge, four lanes going into six toll booths, each packed to the gunnels, all this to collect three lousy bucks. With all that money being collected they could build another six bridges and reduce the traffic. I’m now locked in bumper to bumper and a car on either side, which is bumper to bumper with the car in front and behind it. What’s really depressing is, I’m in the express lane and without the badge to let me through, I need to get into a cash toll paying lane. No option but to signal and not move, soon a space opens up and lets me across, so there are gentlemen drivers, or was that a lady who let me in?

Toll paid and I’m off northwards, they have a good system, it’s a six lane bridge, but during rush hour traffic, they switch it to four and two depending on which the most traffic is headed. They really are organized when it comes to the roads. I was soon to find out how organized, not long after I passed the Sausalito turn off, the road seemed to open up a bit, lane wise that is, the traffic was still horrendous, but now a new road sign to me started to make its appearance, two miles ahead ‘car pool lane’, whatever that meant, as I approached nearer it said car pool lane two or more people and it was in the fast lane, what a brilliant idea, except for me, I was in the car alone, like ninety eight and a half percent of all the other automobile users driving along side of me.

Wasn’t this just wonderful, three lanes jam packed with cars driving bumper to bumper and at a crawling pace and one lane with the odd car now and again whizzing by with two people in it, I’m sure one was the driver accompanied by a well-dressed mannequin! Very few of the drivers broke ranks and joined that empty fast lane, the cops would leap out of nowhere and slap a \$200 ticket on them, or as I was some time

in the future to find out, it's called a citation! I had about sixty miles to go to reach Santa Rosa, it was going to be a long journey, by now the time had pushed on and by UK time I would have been starting to wake up to go to work!

The traffic slowly started to drop down a bit as folks pulled off to their homes, great I thought at this rate on a three lane highway I'll soon be there. Wrong again, that three lane highway suddenly became two lanes and it was that all the way to Santa Rosa. The first Santa Rosa exit was a god send, one more to go and I would pull off towards the Fairgrounds, then at the end of the slip road a left turn up Montgomery Drive. Ahead I could see the lit up tower with a Flamingo atop, my destination had suddenly appeared.

Would you believe it, a parking place right by the door? Just as well, since I was truly knackered (exhausted). I unloaded my luggage, put the car keys deep in my pocket, I won't need those till tomorrow morning, I just had to check in, throw my cases in the hotel room and get down to the bar to meet Jimmy and May.

Checking in was easy, a nice smiling face to take my details and an imprint of my credit card. Then the receptionist handed me a map of the hotel, with her pen, placed a cross on where my room was and said. "Just drive your car around the building and park right in front of your room." To which I smiled, picked up my cases and dragged them and myself back to the car and dug out those car keys from deep within my pocket. Drove around the back to where my room was. (From then on, I'd always leave the luggage in the car until I knew where my room was.)

The whole area was in total darkness. I pulled out the cases and made my way to where my room was, with no lights it was a tad difficult to find my way, but under the moonlight I could see this was not my room, it was a couple of doors further down. I opened the door, there was a room on my left and a room on my right and a flight of stairs ahead, and yup my room was up those stairs. I finally got into my room, it looked nice and comfortable, but that could wait, I was in dire need of a drink, so threw the cases down and made my way to find the bar.

My route to find the bar turned out to be a long twisted walk, but I could hear the music slowly get louder as I got nearer. The bar was packed, this was obviously one of those singles bars located in this hotel, it had a dance floor and live music, seemed the appropriate place for folks to meet after work, but it was getting late, by American standards! I looked around couldn't see Jimmy Queen, to be honest I didn't care, I was whacked after my long, long journey from Edinburgh and the girl serving behind the bar was the only one I wanted to speak with. "Three Gin and Tonics in tall glasses with lots of ice" I said. She looked at me if I was some sort of nut who spoke funny. "I've had a long day and I need to unwind!" I added.

I charged the drinks to my room and made for what looked like the only space in the room that was away from the dance floor and the live music, it was also the only place where there was a table with no one at it. I had just sat down and put my lips to the first glass, when I heard the familiar voice of Jimmy Queen say to me, "Three drinks, are two of these for us? We don't drink G&T!" "Hi Jimmy, nope, they are all for me, I'm (expletived) after that journey." Jimmy laughed and said, "Come over here, May and I have a table." May smiled and said, "Thirsty after the long trip?" I responded with "Knackered more like."

On a later trip to Santa Rosa, covering the same path, my flights had been delayed, so I arrived very late one night at the Flamingo Hotel and very tired. The receptionist met me with a huge smile and said, "Good evening John." I hadn't realized as I was so tired, that I must have been the last guest and she was waiting for my arrival, so she would know my name. I respond to her friendly greeting with, "How did you know my name?" She said, "Well you look like a John." With which I replied, "Well I'm glad my name is not Dick!" She was stung into silence, and then tittered away as I picked up my case and made my way to the room. Next morning she met me with another huge smile and said, "Have a good day.....John!"

## **8. Networks Measurement Division...**

Next morning Jimmy and I set off for NMD. Sam Scott the Manufacturing Manager met us and I met more of Sam's staff. Sam had arranged that I spend the day looking around the NMD production lines, meeting more of the staff, Tim Mitchell and John Harmon, whom in time I and my wife Sheila became friends with. The Harmon's, especially Jill, John's wife worked beside Ginnie, Sam Scott's wife. On a later visit when Sheila and the kids joined me for a holiday after a business trip, we would stay at Sam and Ginnie's house, and we were invited to dinner at the Harmon's. They had a young son called Boyd, who would later join the Marines, but at present was ages with our son Grant, Jill thought it would be a great idea for Boyd to meet someone his own age from another country.

Sam was not too hot on the idea of going to the Harmon's for dinner, he knew something we didn't. John and Jill were not that long married, Boyd, was Jill's son from a previous marriage but saw John as his Dad. John and Jill were quite strict about nearly everything in their family life, though somehow I think it was John who was the strict one. When Jill found out I liked Crystal Gayle, she suddenly appeared with a Tee shirt for me from one of her concerts. The dinner that night was very good, they were fairly religious, so grace was said holding hands. There was alcohol, but not in huge supply. Sam liked a beer or two, so must have been feeling a bit thirsty, and he would also disappear outside every so often to have a cigarette. It was all very amiable, but Sam was so glad to get into the car and head for home.

That evening of my first division visit, we were all going to one of Sam's staff managers home, Ed Ulrich and his wife Judy for dinner and drinks around their outdoor swimming pool. Ed was a handy guy with his hands and had built the whole pool area and his work in wood was exceptional, he had made a huge burl table as well as other furniture in the house. As it was getting dark and colder outside we moved in-doors to taste the results of Judy's skills, dessert sweets were her specialty. Judy's sweets are something else and should have come with a health warning. She made all her own and all were marinated in various alcohols.

May Queen, quietly pre-warned me that these were the only desserts that you might have a problem standing up to leave the table, if you eat too much and Judy had a habit of heaping it up on your plate. Ain't that the truth!! The strawberries almost blew my head off, if you had held a live flame to them they would quickly become flambé' strawberries. Judy had this huge store of berries of every conceivable type, each equally as potent as the one before. They would have been an Alcoholic Anonymous Group's worst nightmare! What great friendly sociable folks they all were, I was just surprised they didn't introduce themselves as Ed and Judy Ulrich, we are alcoholics!

NMD was situated at Fountaingrove Parkway, on the top of a hill with a nice view around. I said, "I think I'll have a wander around the grounds", at which point I was warned, "Careful where you walk, there's a lot of rattlesnakes in the grounds!" On second thoughts, I don't need the exercise.

On my return visit to NMD I spent time in their "state of the art" machine-shop, it was quite impressive they were doing some cutting edge stuff, and using Electrode Erosion for some interesting machining, particularly on difficult metals and extremely fine slots. In general, I felt their NC capability in machine tools could be equaled by the likes of FACTS (Subcontractor Fife AutoCam & Tool Services)

## **9. Signal Analysis Division...**

We spent the next day at SAD Signal Analysis Division. Duanne Hartley, who was the Manufacturing Manager. At that point, he was some guy, a driver-driver but fun to be around. He was a great motivator to all his staff, it's no wonder he ended up as the Division General Manager. He was dynamic and he loved

Scotland and to practice his Scottish accent. There was one time when he was in South Queensferry during a presentation, he tried to quote the movie "Brave-heart" and in his American styled Scottish accent, "U'm gonna git oot there an pick a fight wie oanybody." He would also be seen wandering down the Production lines at South Queensferry just chatting to anyone who would talk with him.

Duane set me up to see the production lines and meet with his Fabrication team which was managed by Pete Johnson.

My follow up visit, was spent, nearly all of the time, in their Fabrication Shop, where I met Roy Ingham, Wayne Wendle, Don Connolly, Alfredo Valencia and Dave Stinnett. We were all to become strong supporters of each other as SAD put more and more through our IPO. Don Connolly was not the most supportive though, he felt threatened by what was happening in off-shore sourcing, so he was always difficult to deal with, but Don was always very civil and always tried to use viable arguments against what was happening. Later I also found out that Don had another nightmare that he was living through and having to deal with, he lost two sons in a fire that arose around where he lived in the Santa Rosa area. I could never imagine the horror of that and in having to come to terms with it.

I was given an in-depth look around the Fabrication Shop by Roy Ingham, it convinced me we could help them reduce their costs and that in the future our IPO could do much, much more and did. SAD were under tight costs control and needed to get their costs down, and that was something I could help with, it also helped greatly that they also wanted access to my help and to know more on what could be achieved.

I gave the SAD Team a presentation on what was available so far and on what had been achieved. Pete Johnson and his management team appeared to be quite impressed with what I presented them with and agreed that they would later send a Procurement team over. This led to more than once sending their engineers to carry out audits and discuss new parts they wanted made and to give help and tips in the manufacture of these parts with our suppliers. This partnership approach gave big dividends and boosted the partnership between SAD, QMD, IPO and the subcontractors. It also led to us getting involved in the manufacture of components across all the disciplines of mechanical manufacture and on cable assemblies.

The type of parts they required were technically challenging, so this led to the development of our suppliers capabilities, adding to our strength in what we had to offer.

SAD over time became a major customer to our IPO and there was never a trip to the USA which did not involve stopping by the Rohnert Park and Santa Rosa Facilities, until that is, late in the game a major restructuring took place which led to the control of parts purchasing falling under the responsibility of the Materials department, and they at that time were being lobbied by the QMD materials department against the IPO.

## **10. Stanford Park Division...**

Next stop with Jimmy was SPD, Stanford Park Division in Palo Alto, the place where HP was born. We were met by Don Summers, the Manufacturing Manager, someone I'd get to know well in the years to come, I too would be destined to pop up on his radar, as was Jimmy Queen, in fact he would turn out to be the death knell for Jimmy in the years to come. Don Summers and his wife were from England originally, his wife was a lovely lady who was so pleased at having us for dinner, and I think she missed the banter of the "old country." They had an amazing house up in the Los Altos hills, these hills lay between Palo Alto and the Pacific beaches. It's an area where the really wealthy have their huge houses. Dave Packard also lived in that high value real estate area. Hewlett lived in Palo Alto city. The Summers' house was not as large as some there, but it was big nonetheless with a huge amount of land around it.

They had a swimming pool down at the bottom of their garden, which was completely secluded from the house and everywhere else for that matter, it was surrounded by trees and shrubs. It was a beautiful place where you could sit and relax away from the world, listening to the birds. It was the place Don Summers headed for the moment he walked in the front door of his house. I was talking with Don's wife in the kitchen, saying how lovely her house was, she'd not get anything like that back home, and the swimming pool area was just magic. It too was one of her favourite places around their house because of its privacy.

At that point she said "dinner will be awhile, go have a swim." As she threw me a towel. "I've no costume with me." I said. "That's not a problem, no one will see you." She said. I set off to the bottom of the garden to try out the pool, no one was around so I felt okay about it. My first skinny dip! I didn't hang around though and it was getting dark, but still very warm, plus I didn't want anyone to come looking for me to tell me dinner was ready. So I got out and started to dry myself, at that point there was a bright flash! Jimmy Queen had sneaked up and taken a picture of me from behind, and strode off again laughing to himself, it must have been quite a moonshine. To this day I've still not seen that picture he took that day, but it was mentioned sometime later when I got back that he did have it! I can still remember to this day what we had for dinner that evening, it was barbecued salmon, the reason I remember was that the barbecue charcoal was not lit the way we do it, but it was a tower of coals inside a tube, once they were at the right state, the tube was lifted off and the coals spread around. The chimney effect caused the charcoal to light quickly.

We stayed at the Hyatt Palo Alto, I'd stay there on lots of occasions in the future. I liked this hotel, it was set back from the main road, El Camino Real (the King's Highway), which ran all the way up to San Francisco and all the way south to Mexico, a very busy commercial thoroughfare. But the way the hotel was situated, it was quiet. There was a long drive-way lined with poplar trees up to the hotel, past the tennis courts out at the front and a big swimming pool to the rear, which again was completely secluded. The hotel was once owned by Actress Doris Day, she bought it because it had a sweeping stair case between the ground floor and the next level. Apparently she liked the effect it gave her as she floated her way down the staircase!

On my return visit I was met by Tom Dooley, Materials Manager and a pal of Bill Oliver, Jim Logie, engineer, who was a friend of Callum Logan. Jim Erickson, engineer, was a nice guy but he drew the short straw in life, I didn't know it then, but he was to turn out to be the only person that I know of who died from AIDS. What a waste, he was a young guy with his whole life ahead of him. I was shown around the division and the production lines. They did have some specialized equipment for parts manufacture, but most of the other parts they needed were manufactured at the PAFC (Palo Alto Fabrication Centre.). They did however take parts from us, we were building the same product as they were, and it would make no sense for them to miss out on those savings, though they never would be a huge customer of our future IPO.

## **11. Spokane Division...**

From Stanford Park it was a fast flight north to Spokane. This would be my last stop with Jimmy Queen, he would be flying home with May, but I would be staying on and retracing my steps spending more time in each division going into greater details on their manufacturing needs and visiting their subcontractors. Because we had already achieved so much, this would be the first of many visits to their subcontractors. We were met by Dan Nelson, Manufacturing Manager. I could already see that this visit was going to be different as there were other MCG Manufacturing Managers visiting the site. QTD Manufacturing Manager Alistair Lucas was there from Queensferry. Alistair is an okay guy, but can he ever talk.

Mac McGrath had invited us all back to his house, a big house in the woods, he and his wife were married before and each had kids from those marriages. This house of theirs had two wings, one at each end, the

boys had one wing and the girls had the other, which led to a happy family life, Mac and his wife lived in the central part of the house. They had a rumpus room where they would party with their guests. It was big, and in the middle of it stood a large Wurlitzer Juke Box, with all the golden oldies in it. That was a fun evening despite hearing Alistair Lucas's voice above everyone else going on about things. I also drew the short straw in the traveling arrangements, Mac McGrath had this big car, with all those kids he needed something to ferry them around. The car had three rows of seats, three could sit in the front, three in the next row and three in the back row, which faced backwards, just as long no one rear ended us, it would be fine! I was in that back row with Alistair, so my ears were getting bent all the way to and from the Red Lion Inn.

Dinner at the McGrath's was on the Friday night and Jimmy and May were not flying home till the Monday, so Mac and his wife invited us to the Coeur d'Alene Lake for a day's fun on the water with their boat. Everything that Mac seemed to have was big, including this motor launch, which was pulled to the lake behind his four wheeled drive car, and set down in the water. The boat was well stocked with goodies to eat and booze to drink, just as well the driver wasn't drinking, unlike the rest of us!! We cruised up to St. Maries where we stopped for lunch, all the way up to the end of the lake and on up the river, I couldn't believe the number of Ospreys and Bald Eagles we saw, many within feet of the boat. On this part of the river there is a speed limit, mostly because there are swimmers and the wash can damage the bank. But it's obviously a hot spot for boat speeders, the local cops were sitting in a little inlet on the river nailing the guys that were speeding on the water, every now and then you'd hear a loud speaker blaring out "SLOW DOWN BUDDY!" If they were going too fast or didn't slow down, they got a ticket! With the cops speeding after them and creating even more wake!

After lunch we headed back down the river to the lake and Coeur d'Alene. As soon as we were on the lake, the McGrath's dug out all this water skiing gear. Alistair Lucas's eyes opened wide, he was a water skier, and a fairly good one, he bloody well would be! But Mac's wife managed to dump him a couple of times when he was trying to show off! I have never been on water skis, so they hassled me into having a go. Bear in mind I had had a few drinks by then, so this was not one of my better decisions. I had a hard enough job trying to stay upright after all the drinking, but I've always been game to try anything, at least once. They did stick a life jacket on me that kept me pointing the right way up!! Being a total novice, numptie (idiot), would have been a better description, I had a go.

Eventually I heard them shout to let go off the rope when you fall, but only after being dragged what seemed twenty miles face down, hanging onto the rope for grim death! They would swing the boat around for me to pick up the rope. I did manage to get up on the plank of wood, for all of ten seconds, but I was absolutely exhausted. As they swung the boat around to pick me up, Mac shouts, "Did you enjoy that?" "It's okay" I replied. Mac said, "It's only okay!" To which Jimmy Queen replied, "In Scotland, it's okay, means it was really good." Which it was, I had forgotten about two nations being divided by a common language! That evening we all went to dinner at the hotel on Coeur d'Alene Lake. Cloud 9 was the name of the restaurant, the food was as if it was from 7<sup>th</sup> Heaven! Jimmy Queen leant over towards me and whispered in my ear, "Pick up the tab John." When I got the bill, it almost made my eyes water!! Back then \$280 was a lot of money, especially for dinner. I stuck it on my credit card and the receipt in my pocket, my expense report was going to be a bit on the high side.

On Jimmy's last day he said, "Why don't you come and join May and I for lunch outside the plant." Not a problem, Jimmy wanted my input on what I thought so far before he headed home later that day. We took off for a restaurant on Sprague Avenue. Jimmy had been there before and said it was okay. Indeed it was, as soon as we opened the door and entered, you could hardly see a thing, it was pitch black inside, compared to the bright sunshine outside. A mini skirted waitress showed the three of us to our seats and said that today there would be a fashion show going on during lunch and hoped we would enjoy the show. Apparently this was one of their things and Jimmy thought May would enjoy it, turned out Jimmy and I would enjoy it even more.

Right in the middle of our soup, the show started and as I was leaning over the soup bowl to put a spoonful of soup into my mouth, this shapely young lass appeared right by my side clad in a “G String” and skimpy bra, the fashion show that day was to be ladies underwear. I almost spilt my soup all over the table, I looked up and the young lady gave me a big smile at what happened. “Do you like?” she said. What was I supposed to say to that! I said, “Of course, I like your tan.” “I’m just back from Hawaii!” she replied. Looking again at her “G String” pants, I said, “I can see your tan line!” At which point May and Jimmy burst out laughing, the young lady blushed and moved onto the next table. The rest of the lunch was wonderful as we were on the front row of each model who came to our table, and my soup didn’t get cold.

Jimmy Queen had now left for home and I was on my own. The next few days were to be spent at Spokane with their Procurement Team and R&D Engineers. My first day started with a plant tour, Dan Nelson had organized that the Materials Department under Greg Schmidt would look after me. Bill Burdick, Materials Engineer Manager would be my prime contact. Bill and I became good friends and I’d spend a few good evenings at his house for dinner with his wife Marty and son Chris, with their daughter following on later. Bill was originally from Michigan, a really nice guy but one who would always toe the party line. Bill showed me all around the plant and spent quite a bit of time with me not only on the production lines but in the R&D, showing me the new products and introducing me to some of the engineers, Bill Gaines and Byard Taylor. Gaines was later to join Procurement and on another visit I got an invite to Byard’s house party. The invite came with a BYOD, with the D covering whatever you really fancied at that time! I was later told the D was for Drink, Drugs or Dames!

When in the R&D, Bill introduced me to Billy Reynolds, Billy was their die-casting expert and who had spent many years on the Scrumpy and other pressure die-castings, he had a good brain that I could pick and gave me some good pointers to look out for with the Scrumpy Pressure Die-casting

Following on after the time in Production and R&D, Bill set up a meeting with all his staff and those from the Buying fraternity, along with their Purchasing Manager Peggy Blowers. Peggy Blowers was a stunner, I’m sure with those looks she could have got any price reduction out of their suppliers. I saw her out jogging one lunchtime, and all the cars driving past slowed down to take a better look. At that meeting I met all the key players I would get to know really well as we supported each other with the move to greater and greater subcontracting. On engineering there were; Tom Duncan, Dennis Filipowski and Dave Simmons and Lori Baxter, on the buying side was Gail Nottingham, Dennese Schumacher, Ronna Rico and Denny Layne, also at the meeting was Hugh Ambelang, the QA Manager.

The task of taking me to visit the Subcontractors around the Spokane area was given to Gail Nottingham. Gail was a wee bit quiet at first but over a couple of days she became more open as she listened to me talking with the suppliers. I always gave an open and honest opinion to the suppliers and answered their questions freely, giving advice on the challenges that HP had to face and that of HP’s suppliers, I think they were amazed at my openness.

Back at the Division, Dennese Schumacher was assigned to be the co-coordinator and she spent time with me on the systems they used. Dennese was to become a long standing friend, she had an identical twin sister, I’ve often wondered if it was the sister who came to dinner sometimes? Dennese had a live in boyfriend who was in the water bed business and though she has now left HP, she is still with Dave and his water bed business. During my years of IPO support to Spokane, many of the others visited the Queensferry division and traveled with us to the suppliers, but Dennese was never one of them, though she did come over after I had left the company.

After I left Spokane, I made my way back through the divisions en route to the airport to fly home. This was my first solo trip away from home, and it was getting to me, I was homesick I guess, I just wanted to



get home. I did manage to get home a bit sooner, as I got finished quicker, so flew out two days earlier than planned. I had a fixed ticket, and had to pay a bit more to get home that bit sooner. I put it on my expenses, expecting to get quizzed about it, when I submitted my expenses to Jimmy Queen, who never questioned them, though I'm sure he would have noticed the extra flight cost. In hindsight though, my saving on hotel, car rental and eating expenses, would cancel it out. Funny how I never thought about that at the time and only fretted over the extra airline cost!

## 12. Scrumpy Pressure Die-Casting...

A Spokane product, which also was to be manufactured at QMO, a Signal Generator, HP 8656, was state of the art, particularly with reference to its internal shielding capability. It's competition was fierce and because of the products complexity and its internal shielding requirements, which all added to the cost of the finished product. It was crying out for major cost reductions to gain bigger market share from its lower cost and less technical competitors' products. One of the major components in this Signal Generator, in fact everything was built into it or onto it, was a pressure die-casting, affectionately known in-house as the "Scrumpy Die-casting", it was named after a pint of cider an R&D engineer enjoyed when on holiday in the south country in England.



The project design team for any new product gets to choose a project code name, to be used in the year or more of the design process. This HP 8656 signal generator was to be aimed at the economy market, and thereby received the code name "Scrumpy." Although assigned in Palo Alto, it also turns out to be the name of a cider made in the West Country of England.

This "Scrumpy pressure die-casting" was a monster of a design in aluminium die-casting technology. At that time it by far out punched anything to be seen in the automobile industry. Bear in mind, it was the automobile industry which was the prime mover in the pressure die-casting industry. It also out punched another electronic giant of that time, an IBM Disc Drive Housing. It's funny to think back and compare the Memory storage devices of back then, to those of today. Computers were still in their early infancy and components were a bit on the large side, but those products, particularly those required for memory data storage, like disc drives, were pushing the limits of manufacturing capability in the sphere of machining to extremely tight tolerances.

Our "Scrumpy Die-casting" was probably the biggest pressure die-casting around at that time. Its Pressure Die-casting technology needs, demanded of it to be able to push the limits in RFI (Radio Frequency Interference.) technology. It was also a die-casting of such a size, it would require a Pressure Die-casting Machine capable of up to nearly 2,000 Ton capacity, of which there were not many around. The Pressure Die-cast Tool itself, cost half a million dollars to make. The "Scrumpy" at that time was currently being die-cast by Western Die Casting Company in Emeryville near Oakland California, with the finish machining being done in K & K Manufacturing Inc. in Campbell near San Jose. The cost of the finished machined part was over \$350, the subcontractors were making big losses and both wanted to increase the cost of the finished product by 50% or more, or for HP to take it away, so they could get out of the business altogether.

I got a call from Jimmy Queen to come up and see him. Jimmy says, "This Scrumpy" is causing a few headaches, could I go have a look at it and put it to the top of my priority list." I looked at him, smiled and set off to see what I could do. This was a golden opportunity to really put our mark right out there with the MCG divisions. I needed to get a complete understanding of the "Scrumpy" and its current manufacturing processes, I had a pretty good understanding of what was achievable on our side of the pond, but that would need further investigation. First I needed to get a handle on the "Scrumpy." I had Jimmy's support,

he made sure I would get the same support from Spokane, so off I went to Spokane to meet their procurement team who were currently supporting the Scrumpy with their subcontractors. Dennese Schumacher was the buyer and Tom Duncan was the engineer, they were great and became firm friends and supporters over the coming years, we would share some fun times together.

The companies in Emeryville and Campbell showed no resistance to getting out of that business as they were not making money on it, in fact they went out of their way to help me understand the complete manufacturing cycle. Western were producing this casting on their largest machine, 800 Ton, but it was really too small to cope, resulting in much scrap being produced. The machinist was also having problems with costs, so happy to pass on the parcel. I now knew the current manufacturing process inside out.

Once I got back home I set about identifying who would be the best Pressure Die-cast subcontractor and who would be the best subcontract machinist. Ideally, I wanted the die-caster to also do the machining, but what was required was at that time outside the die-casters capability, they just wanted to shoot parts. So I also then had to make sure that I could find a subcontractor machine-shop that could develop a good working partnership with the die-caster. They had to be able to work together and not blame each other when things didn't work to plan.

It wasn't long before I had made up my mind who would be the best suppliers to take on this work. J V Murcott's in Birmingham and Precision Machining in Dalkeith.

### **13. Decision Time...**

I soon pulled it all together to make my presentation on what could be achieved. In a nutshell my proposal would achieve savings of over \$1 Million and when you take that into account with the accounting processes to achieve the final customer selling price for the finished instrument, those figures would rise substantially towards double figures in millions of dollar savings each year.

I presented two options, one with the largest Pressure Die-Casting company in the UK called Fry's and the other with a smaller family run and owned company called J.V. Murcott. Both companies wanted a new tooling die. JVM quoted \$300K and Fry's quoted \$380K. Lead-time for tooling manufacture was close to a year to manufacture. Spokane didn't have that kind of budget to spare to spend on an existing product, so we would have to go with the original tooling and pay modification costs to get it up and running on our subcontractor company's die-casting machine.

This was a big risk factor decision to make and Jimmy Queen wanted to be sure we covered all the bases. He asked our QMO Financial Controller, Jim Sherrett to run a check on both companies and once the information was in, Jimmy wanted another meeting with both of us. A couple of days later all three of us got together around Jimmy's desk. Jimmy first asked the Finance Controller his input on both companies and to wrap up with what his recommendation would be. True to form Jim Sherrett followed typical Financial Accounting practices and made his decision based on his number crunching, saying Fry's was the much bigger company and was responsible for their actions towards their shareholders. Thus the financial details far outweighed those of JV Murcott who were a smaller family business company.

So his recommendation was that Fry's were the least risk therefore Fry's should be awarded the business to manufacture the "Scrumpy" die-casting. Jimmy Queen turned his head to look at me and said, "Well what do you have to add?" I said, "Nope, that is the wrong recommendation." And I went on further to explain my reasons for saying so. In my belief having spent many hours in the company of both companies, their management teams and those who would actually do the work, I firmly believed that JV Murcott was by far the best choice. They were a family business where even their children were employed and being trained up to run the company in the future. Their business was their "Golden Goose," and they

at all levels would be committed to work with me. They also wanted to diversify more of their work outside that of the Automobile Industry.

In the end, the final decision as Manufacturing Manager lay with Jimmy Queen, it would be his head that would be on the chopping block, if it all went belly up! Jimmy Queen turned to Jim Sherrett and said, "Jim, is JV Murcott in any financial difficulty?" The reply was, "No." Jimmy went on, "Well we have all the financial data pointing to one company, and John here promoting the other smaller company. I've thought about all that has been said here, and I have all my faith and trust in John and his choice. He has proven so far that all the decisions he has made, to be the correct ones in setting up our current subcontract base, I have no reason to doubt that this will be any different, so that is the way we will go!"

This was exactly what I wanted to hear, Jimmy Queen had over-ruled QMO's Financial Controller Jim Sherrett, who I think was not too happy about that. I'm sure he saw it as some sort of loss of face. It was also this decision that led to me to believe that Jim Sherrett, in the coming years would not be IPO friendly towards me or my IPO team and that we would have other run ins as he threw or tried to throw road blocks in our way. That was in the future, right now Jimmy Queen had over-ruled the Financial Controller and had shown his belief in me and my abilities to make this high level project a success, and I didn't particularly care about the Financial Controller not being too chuffed at having his nose put out of joint. Incidentally, Fry's that had been his choice went into receivership some eighteen months later, which pleased me no end to inform Jimmy Queen about. Whilst the company I chose JV Murcott, is still in business today.

The Financial Controller did win one battle which I didn't agree with. He wanted, based on the high initial risk factor, a year's supply of inventory to cover a major disaster should the ship sink mid-Atlantic, whilst bringing the pressure die-casting tool to the UK, as it would cover the lead-time to manufacture a new tool. I only wanted three months of inventory to cover shipping time and tool modification time. Jimmy Queen agreed on the year's inventory, I think he felt it would make the Financial Controller feel a bit better about being over-ruled. Okay, I had won but if it let the Financial Controller think he had won also, I could live with that. If nothing else, it gave me much more time to ensure a smooth run into production. However I did wring out another concession, we'd only take the raw unfinished casting, that way I could get the secondary machining processes well established and up and running long before JV Murcott started to produce raw production castings. This early approach also helped us save around half a million dollars from the previous machining manufacturing costs, so cost savings were being implemented almost immediately. However, the first step was to get JV Murcott and Precision Machining up to speed on both current manufacturing processes.

I met that same mentality about parts ending up at the bottom of the sea again, but on this occasion, the guy was worried about the airplane crashing and losing all his plastic moulded components for his Waltham production line. Fortunately there were some managers with a bit more common sense when those questions arose. I can sort of expect that response from a USA Division whose personnel were not too keen on sourcing off shore, but our home bred folks? Well he was an Accountant after all, I soon learned that Accountants will never give you a reason to invest, only reasons not to, they must like to count their money at the end of each month!

#### **14. Scrumpy Supplier Visit...**

When I suggested that it might be a good idea if I could fix it up for both JV Murcott and Precision Machining to go to California to see the manufacturing processes, they jumped at that suggestion. I spoke with Spokane who also thought it would be the right thing to do, if the USA suppliers would agree and that they'd check them out and get back to me. Spokane did, I heard back the very next day. Both Western and K&K would be more than happy to meet with us and show us the complete process. Which at first

worried me a little, was this project going to be too big? Were these current suppliers wanting out of the business at any cost because it was too much of a problem for manufacturing reasons? Or did they just want out because they couldn't make money on it? In the long run it didn't matter, we would make it successful.

I was able to tie this trip into one I had to make to Corporate Procurement, so I could kill two birds with one stone, and have the visits planned around my other needs at Corporate. Spokane people were keen to help pull it all together and set up the visits around my schedule.

The JV Murcott company, was run by three brothers, they were the main three Directors of the company, Peter, David and Alan, four sons and a daughter also worked for the family business, they decided it was time to develop the boys a bit more so kept them firmly in the loop with me and HP. It was a new business generation to them and they thought the boys might handle dealing with a new business model through me. It was a good experience for the future for them, and they and I would be on other future trips together. Those boys would have at least one of the Directors to chaperone them when they joined me, but on this trip they would send Alan and David. Precision Machining would send Jim Duncan and Mike McCormick.

Spokane sent Dennese Schumacher and Lori Baxter, and the first stop was Western Die Casting Company, I made my way to Berkeley from Santa Rosa, where we were met by Andy Simpson, President and as the name would suggest, of Scottish extract from way back. Once he heard there was a bunch of guys coming from Scotland, his interest piqued even more. Western could not have been more open, they were quite happy to share with the Murcott brothers every little detail of manufacture, in fact they talked about all sorts of issues relating to the pressure die casting industry, including the varying cost of the alloys! Western agreed with the Murcott's that the 800 ton machine they were using was really far too small for the task, but they had no intention of getting into the larger die casting business; they wanted to aim the business towards the middle sized casting range. They had nothing to hide, and being helpful helped them to get out of the business that much quicker. Though our requirement that they must cast a years' worth of inventory was a headache for them they could have well done without.

As the day progressed we were all invited back to Andy Simpson's President's office, for a wrap up discussion and some food and drinks had been laid on. Andy wanted to talk about Scotland; I wanted to head off to Palo Alto as I had a meeting the next morning in Corporate, whereas Murcott's and PM had a day off before we would meet to go to the Machinist. So they were quite happy to sit around eating and drinking, it was all very jovial with lots of laughter all round. But I wanted to head off, particularly as it was now dark and I had to drive about 60 or so miles. Eventually I did make my excuses and had to leave.

Gosh, it was dark outside, I got in the car, not sure which way to go, I did know that I had to get up on the Nimitz Freeway and make my way across the Oakland Bay Bridge onto Highway 101 south, but I'd never been on this route before. I knew roughly the direction I need to go and headed off. There in front I could see the Nimitz Freeway, it was a two storey road, with one level on top of the other, until that is, it was hit by the last bad earthquake in the Bay Area, where the road collapsed on top of each other.

Where the hell was this slip road to get onto it, now I was lost, I was down in the dockland area, I was running out of petrol, I needed to find a gas station, and what's more I now needed a (expletive)!! I'm sure that was brought on by the stress of finding the bloody road and needing petrol for the car, plus it was really dark down in the dockland area. No way was I going to stop and ask someone directions. Down here, people's houses had the windows and doors barred with iron grills!! Eventually I found the access and got myself across the Oakland Bay Bridge and stopped off at the first gas station, not a moment too soon I thought, as I needed to fill one tank and empty another! I was shattered by the time I got to the Hyatt Hotel Palo Alto.

I met all the guys the next night. I had to change hotels, Dennese and Lori had booked us into the County Inn in Mountain View and that took me some time to find also. I could see it from the bloody 101 Freeway, but do you think I could find the damn turn off. Eventually I came off at the exit for the NASA building at Moffett Field. Everyone appeared to be in a party mood after having a day of relaxing, everyone except me, after spending about an hour trying to get to the hotel.

Dennese said she knew a place where we can go to eat, so off we went. Dennese had obviously been there before, and it was a Restaurant/Bar/Dance joint, a local singles place, but not too far from the Inn. So we had a meal, and some drink and Dennese wanted to dance, so here we were, with two young ladies from Spokane. Lori wasn't too keen, she just wanted to go back to the Inn and phone her husband, but Dennese had 5 foreign males with funny accents in tow, so she could have as many dances as she wanted. It was funny, being a singles bar, on a couple of occasions an American guy would come over to ask Dennese to dance, she refused them every time. I asked her why she turned them down, her reply was, "I can dance with American guys anytime, but I don't often get the chance to dance with guys from the UK!"

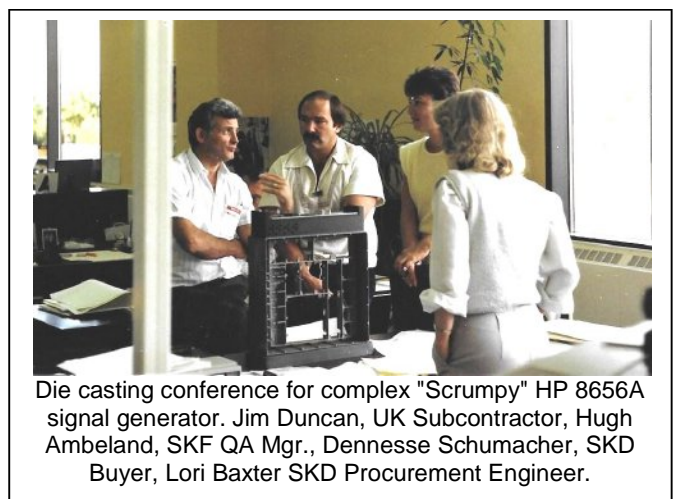
Later back at the Inn, Jim Duncan and Alan said they saw a bar down the street and they wanted to go for a beer, well it was in walking distance, so we headed off. It was a bar all right, but not one we should really hang about in. We ordered a beer, the bartender looked at us somewhat strangely, as did all the others hanging around the bar and pool tables. It seemed a good idea for us to drink up and leave as quickly as we had arrived. Which we were all in agreement with, constantly looking over our shoulders as we walked back to the County Inn in the unlit street.

Next morning we were up early and off to visit K & K Manufacturing Inc. where we were met by Phillip J Kronzer President. Once again, the company showed us an open overview of the complete manufacturing process. I think Precision Machining, as well as myself, was somewhat surprised at the poor level of tooling that was being used. We would, of course, have it transferred to PM's facility in Dalkeith, but how much of it we could use, would be debatable, though we did have PM's tooling cost built in, so it would not be a problem, we could use what we thought best and dump the rest. I was not all that surprised really, that K & K Manufacturing were having difficulty in making money from the Scrumpy, I think it was probably due to Spokane not having the tooling dollars to expend and forcing K&K to use what they had, bad decision.

It was time for the Spokane ladies to head for home, so I had agreed to drop them off at San Jose Airport, and all the rest moved to the Hyatt in Palo Alto where we would spend a day talking about all we had seen and on how we would proceed with setting up the Scrumpy Die Casting for manufacture in the UK.

We should have set off for San Jose Airport a bit earlier, we ran smack into the commuter traffic and time to catch their flight was fast running out. That was bad enough, but it suddenly got worse, the traffic came to a full stop, we could see the junction we wanted to get off at about half a mile further up and the airport further over to our right. The traffic was well and truly grid locked, there was no way Dennese and Lori would get to the airport in time to catch the flight, we were just stuck there!

Then I noticed off the road to my right, there was a hole in the chain link fencing and the road on the other side of it was traffic free. I looked at the ladies and said, "hang onto your seatbelt, I'll get you to the airport in time." I then turned the wheel, took the car over the dirt median and through the hole in the fence. "Yeehaw!" the ladies shouted, I had no sooner driven through the hole in the fence, when I was



promptly followed by about six other cars. I thought, well if the cops saw us, they'll have to catch six other guys, all going in different directions! We got to the airport in time, I got a hug and a big thanks from both Dennese and Lori, then they ran off and disappeared inside the terminal building and I headed off back to the freeway to Palo Alto.

Afterwards both Dennese and Lori, said I was the only person they knew who would have done that for them, they were firm supporters of our IPO from then on.

In general, everyone seemed pretty upbeat about the visits to the suppliers, both JV Murcott and Precision Machining in turn said the current suppliers would never make money with it under their present manufacturing processes. They had now seen, probably how not to make the part, so the lessons were learned, now we had just under a year to make it happen... And we would!!!

### **15. Corporate Procurement Awakes...**

It was around the time of the "Scrumpy" pressure die-casting project, HP Corporate Procurement (HPP) made contact, HPP wanted to expand their global procurement capabilities, beyond that of the Far East, which was mostly Japan at that time, with an office in Singapore and a small office in Boeblingen Germany, which was being run by Karl Heinz Hartmann. KHH was what I would describe as the aristocratic type of German, he was always a gentleman in the way he approached things, though in a way that was one of his weaknesses. People would and did walk over him as he would never put up any form of strong resistance. He and I were to become good friends, I think we were a foil for each other. As Materials Manager, Bill Oliver had direct contact into HPP and as such they had approached him. Of course Bill Oliver was never one to miss an opportunity to let others know, in his own discerning way, how successful things were under his control and on what QMO Materials had achieved with outside subcontractors, particularly in the area of massive cost reductions. Bill was always playing work politics, he thrived on it. It was what got him up in the morning and got him to work, he probably would have made a good government minister. Eventually 'IT' caught up with him and even he found out that the company could manage very well without him, to this day he still misses the politics in his retired life.

Corporate Procurement were interested and biting on the hook, and I received a visit from Dick Locke, Dick was the IPO Director. Dick was what my wife would call an educated American! Dick went to a boarding school in Exeter, New Hampshire, and I think this played a big role in his mannerisms, he tended to be defensive and wary of letting anyone get too close to him. Though he and I got on really well as time progressed, he was one who seemed able to harness my driver-driver style. Dick had a sharp brain and a lot of good experience particularly in relation to off-shore sourcing, he was later to write a successful book about it and did seminars for his own company Global Procurement. Dick had spent a number of years setting up and running the first IPO for HP in Japan. Anyone who has had experience of sourcing commodities in Japan will know that this was no mean feat on Dick's part, the Japanese culture, language and finding your way around Japan are all very challenging tasks to deal with.

Dick was prepared to spend quite a bit of time with me in order to gain an in-depth understanding and as he showed great interest, I gave him the full \$100 tour of all the opportunities that were available. Dick in turn pointed out that there were other financial accounting benefits available to all the user or parent divisions if they ordered their components through an IPO channel. Both Jimmy Queen and Bill Oliver liked the opportunity to help reduce the costs of the products for our parent divisions, it goes without saying those divisions were grateful of any other further cost reductions that could be achieved. So before too long, I was now running QMO Material Engineering Department and a brand new IPO, which was to be called WEIPO, (Western European International Procurement Operation.) quite a mouthful.

In time it was proven that Jimmy and Bill had made one big oversight, the IPO's were open to all of HP's divisions to access and use and our new IPO. We would not be limited to those divisions which made up the MCG and those divisions which QMO was building instruments under license for. Eventually this would lead to another decision I would have to make, but I still had a mountain of work to do and I had now been given the go ahead to help the other divisions inside the MCG. This was to turn out to be a huge learning curve for me but it gave me the foundation to build on for the future.

I also believe it led to the in-house and SAD hostility towards our IPO as QMD tried to create an IPO of their own to supply only their parent divisions. As time would tell, this was something they were never really capable of doing. They still had to rely on our IPO supporting some of their needs, which was a huge pain for us and one my future EIPO Manager Wolfgang Zenger was incapable or had the courage to address, but that was a few years down the road yet.

It wasn't too long before I started to get contacted by other divisions in MCG, but there were still those who looked upon what I was doing as a threat, yet they couldn't ignore what was happening. NMD, (Network Measurements Division) based in Santa Rosa California, which also had its own internal "state of the art" machine-shop, became more aware as my group set up more and more parts at much lower costs for their instruments being built in South Queensferry. NMD's machine-shop was also manufacturing parts for SAD, (Signal Analysis Division) based just down the road a bit off Highway 101 in Rohnert Park. NMD had to sit up and take notice, as we were starting to eat at their lunch, when some of their machined connector parts started to flow through our IPO.

SAD controlled their own sheet-metal subcontractors as well as doing some manufacture in their other facility back in Santa Rosa and as we made headway into those parts, it added to the increasing threat to NMD.

#### **16. Sam's visit.**

With Jimmy Queen at the Manufacturing Managers Meetings and SAD getting more and more interested. NMD's Manufacturing Manager Sam Scott, at Jimmy Queen's invitation decided to come over and have a look for himself. Jimmy wanted me to set up a week of visits for Sam and make sure I looked after him. This was not going to be a problem, Sam turned out to be a lifelong friend.

I organized and set up all the visits for when he was due. Sam decided he would bring his wife, Ginnie over with him. She had never been over here before, so I had to make sure she was well looked after. My wife Sheila offered to help out and they both became firm friends and still are today. Watching the two of them walking side by side, one tall, the other short, Ginnie once commented that they must look like "Mutt & Jeff." The friendship developed more over the years where we would all go on holiday together both in the UK and in the USA and share some memorable moments. White water rafting quickly springs to mind, with Sam in his Oklahoma drawl shouting... "Awwww Sheeett!!! No way will I do that again!!!"

I turned up at the Waverley Railway Station to meet Sam and Ginnie off the train from London. Ginnie had never been to London and wanted to see it before coming to Edinburgh. I managed to park the car inside the station. It was a rental car that I would use for taking Sam around the suppliers in our area, a standard European Mondeo, a mid-sized car similar to a Ford Taurus in the USA. Easily take five people, enough room I thought for a man-sized American. Boy did I get that wrong! I looked along the platform and there I could see two people coming towards me, they just had to be Americans. They had a railway porter in tow, with a huge trolley full of luggage. I thought to myself, "How the (expletive) am I going to get all that in a Mondeo car!!!" With that amount of luggage it would require traveling anywhere by ship!

I smiled and said, "Welcome to Scotland. That's some amount of luggage you've got there." Sam grunted "Hummmpp, don't I know it!" Ginie said, "Well we weren't sure what we'd have to wear!" "Okay, let's go and see if I can get all this in the car, but I probably should have brought a lorry." "What's a lorry?" was the reply, smiling I replied, "A truck." This brought laughter all round, the ice was well and truly broken. One way or the other I somehow managed to get it all in the car and set off to deposit them at the Sheraton Hotel in Edinburgh and leave them to get settled in, I'd pick up Sam the next morning and start the grand tour.

Sam was ready first thing and raring to go, he was a country boy who always got up early, 5.00 am was no problem for him, it was for me though! I picked him up at 9.00 am and off we went. We hit it off right from the start, Sam said Ginie had already bought more stuff and he hadn't a clue how they were going to get it back home, he solved that problem later, he shipped it all back! I liked Sam a lot, he was down to earth and said it as he saw it. The visits went fine and he liked everything he saw, he was very surprised at a company called FACTS in Glenrothes, he said he hadn't seen such an up to date machine-shop with such "state of the art" machine tools, he stated they would certainly compete well against a big part of his in-house machine-shop. How true that was going to turn out.

Despite Sam's visit, NMD's machine-shop were always on the defensive, they were not going to change their ways at any cost. Our IPO shipped very little into NMD, even though we were much lower cost on the parts we set up. Sam let the members of his team make their own decisions. SAD were a different story, NMD couldn't force them to stay with their in-house machine-shop manufactured parts. Time and again SAD would throw down the gauntlet at them to reduce their costs. Meanwhile SAD was taking more and more from us and they sent a Procurement team over to have a look for themselves.

#### **17. Dan Nelson Visit...**

Dan Nelson was Spokane's Manufacturing Manager. He was coming to South Queensferry for a meeting with Jimmy Queen. Jimmy called me in to his office to say that Dan Nelson was interested to extend his stay in the UK and that he'd like to see some of the subcontractor supplier base he was now hearing about, particularly those involved in his products and those that I thought might be of major interest to Spokane in the future. Jimmy ended the meeting telling me to make sure Dan had a good time whilst he was here and see to his wishes as it's his division which has pushed for more to come to QMO. He was an ally of Jimmy's and he wanted him to get special treatment. Fortunately Dan Nelson was also fun to travel with. I quickly found out though, that Dan's sense of direction, could prove to be a challenge. He had two rights, or two lefts, never one of each! I set up the visits and picked some special upmarket hotels to stay in along the way.

On the first day out, not long after we landed in Heathrow and picked up the hire car, I gave Dan the road map, pointed out where we were going and off we set. No problem really, until we had to turn off at a junction, Dan would say turn left, then as I turned left, he'd say, "No not that left the other left!" "You mean right?" I quizzed, "Yeah the other left, that's right!" When we came to roundabouts, Dan would say, "Go round again." We actually on one occasion went around the same roundabout five times! By then we were getting some strange looks.

Dan found that he liked all the different types of single malt whisky. We were staying a couple of nights in the Elms Hotel in Abberley. A beautiful Georgian Hotel complete with courtyard, a hotel where you had to dress for dinner, if you didn't have a jacket and a tie, they found them for you. It was a favourite hotel of mine. Dan spotted all the different malts on offer, and on the first night managed to taste quite a few of them. On the second night at the Elms Hotel, it started to turn into a blizzard outside, "Great" said Dan, followed up with, "I hope it snows and snows and we get stuck here for a couple of days, I'll need that time to get though all those different malts up there."



When I got back to Queensferry, I got a call from Jimmy to say thanks, Dan had a good visit and was pleased with what he saw. On my next visit to Spokane I presented Dan with a bottle of duty free malt he had not tried before, he smiled and put it in his brief case, and then locked it. "I don't want that to go walk about." he said!

### 18. SAD Procurement visit...

The SAD team was headed up by Roy Ingham, although he was much older than I had expected, he was very astute and I became good friends with Roy. Roy was originally from England and had emigrated to the USA many years before. With Roy was Dave Stinnett, whose role was on the Quality Assurance, whilst Roy was on the Engineering side. They also were very happy with what they saw, particularly with FACTS in Glenrothes. They stated then that they would be quite a competitor to the NMD Machine-shop.

SAD eventually were to have us set up a wide range of parts from sheet metal, machined- milled and turned, plastic mouldings and pressure die-castings, we ended up supplying nearly everything for their portable "Hornet" Signal Analyser much to the dismay of NMD and PAFC who had been supplying parts for the Hornet.

After that initial SAD Procurement visit, we would get quite a few more over the years as they sent over their Procurement Engineers and Lab Engineers as well as folks from their Quality Assurance side. They did everything possible to make it a team effort and to be successful. It was great to get a visit from Pete Johnson, Roy Ingham and Doug Oaks, giving us the opportunity to show Pete some Scottish Hospitality on our own turf, especially after the way Pete and all his staff treated us when we visited them. In fact one of the joint owners of FACTS, Bill Davidson, invited Pete back to his home for dinner. Bill wanted to return his own personal hospitality to show his thanks for SAD looking after him so well on the IPO organised subcontractor visits.

Our IPO would ensure SAD were getting good cost reductions with their products, the savings accrued probably also allowed Pete to show his thanks to his staff, as when I and the suppliers were over, there was always a large amount of Pete's staff would join us for dinner, it all helped with the bonding between customer and supplier, as well as boost morale at SAD Fabrication.



SAD Procurement Team, visiting Scotland. Dave Stinnett and Rich Dempsey, awarding us a plaque for excellent IPO support.



Supplier trips to SAD were enjoyable, with the hosts making sure to introduce the visitors to redwoods and wine country, and quaint villages like Guerneville. This gathering shows the SAD Procurement Team and the UK Subcontractors.

## 19. LSID Visit...

Lake Stevens Instrument Division, (LSID) originally got in touch with me because of the contact they had through Spokane. They were using the same subcontractor supplier base and Spokane had been telling them about parts being sourced through our IPO. LSID were no different from all the other divisions in the Test & Measurement Group, they also were under severe competition and needed to drive down their costs. I had met their Materials Manager, Billy Miracle at a World-wide Materials Managers Meeting in Monterrey. He asked me if I'd give his team a presentation? I could do that, I was always open to an opportunity to get new business.

Billy Miracle was from Texas and true to form he was every bit a cowboy, boots, Stetson and all, only the spurs were missing. I planned on my next trip over to the USA, I'd swing by LSID to attend one of Billy's Staff meetings. Billy was always to the point in everything he said, so when I appeared, his staff was all ready for the presentation, with Billy's opening line being, "You guys need to be aware of what's going on in the outside world, so I invited John to come along to make you more aware."

All those in attendance were Billy's first line Managers, from Engineering, Procurement, Quality Control, Goods-In etc.. I gave them the presentation of what had been achieved to date, some of which they were aware of with their contact with Spokane. The audience was the usual mix of people, some keen to know more, some very apprehensive on how it would impact them. Marsha Wolcott, was assigned to be my contact and she showed me around the facility.

Marsha became a good friend and gave me many insights into those I might have problems with, she was never wrong, Marsha didn't have a "qualification" as an engineer, so that tended to hold her back in LSID. Pity really, as Marsha was more of an engineer than those I had to deal with and she was a prime mover in making things happen. What surprised me even more was, LSID put a procurement team together to come over and see the supplier base. This was headed up by the most cheerful boisterous Mormon I have ever met called Gary Madsen, Procurement Engineering Manager. With him was an engineer called Chris Kubicek and on the purchasing side a lady called Carol Millar, who was also Mormon.

Gary Madsen, whom I soon started to call Gary Madman, was always trying to start a rammy (argument) in an empty house! All in fun of course. He had a lovely wife, who was forever trying to keep him under control and a child, who Gary worshipped and a dog at home, all of them I think trying to keep him in check, as well as Marsha who did know how to control him. Gary was a lot of fun and he did get things done, most of which was what Marsha told him was best. It was always strange to me why they did not send Marsha over as she would have the most contact with the suppliers, it must have been due to that engineering qualification bit. Chris Kubicek had been sent in preference to another engineer Steve, which rubbed his nose the wrong way and made him awkward to deal with, which was the real reason he got dropped in the first place. Again Marsha explained to me what happened and why this guy was like that.

Their trip over was a complete success, they intended to have fun as well as work. At one stage we were in a restaurant/bar in Rose Street in Edinburgh and Gary started kicking off and having fun about Scottish accents and having a go at folks at the next table! I thought, someone is going to get up and hit him a shot. He was a chunky guy, but that wouldn't have stopped it, fortunately everyone around was taking it all in good spirits. We even discussed Carol's love life, Gary and Carol were saying that the Mormon Church was trying to find Carol a husband, they



The LSID Procurement Team with UK Subcontractors. LSID folks: Gary Madsen (madman) Carol Millar, Steve Dace, Chris Kubicek, Marsha Wolcott, Alan Balantyne, Mike Macormick, Bill Davidson, Subcontractors. Irene Shirridan and me.

obviously want everyone to stay with the faith!

As well as the supplier visits, I took them on a tour of the Queensferry site. At that time QMO's General Manager was Doug Scribner. Doug was a Mormon, so it seemed a good idea to me at the time to introduce the LSID team to him as two of them were Mormons.

We strolled up to Doug's desk, and I said, "Doug, here are some of your country folks from Lake Stevens who are over here on supplier visits with us, Gary and Carol also share the same religion as yourself." Doug did his cordial bit, then he said, "I hope John is looking after you all right, he's a bit of a Maverick." I knew what he was getting at, so as quick as a flash I responded, "Thanks Doug, I appreciate the compliment, it lets these guys know I'm a leader and not just a follower." The LSID folks laughed, Doug was stunned into silence for a moment, then said "Have a good stay." Gary Madman, when we were away from Doug's desk said in passing, "Nice one Wastle, you soon put him in his place."

LSID soon started to place parts through us, it was inevitable really as they were using standard parts from the System II package system, but they were also going to add their own products specific to themselves.

## 20. IPO Supplier Road show...

By now I had decided it was time to market on a much bigger scale our subcontractor's abilities and in the process promote our WEIPO capabilities. To do this I needed to do something completely out of the ordinary. I would set up a "road show" where I'd take a bunch of our subcontractors on a trip round their USA HP customers, at their expense of course. I approached a few of the subcontractors to see if there was any interest, they almost bit my hand off at this opportunity. It was not going to be easy because some of those subcontractors were direct competitors of each other, and the last thing I wanted was infighting between each other in front of their customers. They also had to give an air of the partnership they shared with our WEIPO. I got all their agreements to this, I also said that at any presentation, costs structures would not be discussed in front of each other, I knew that would take out any heat and make them feel freer to talk amongst each other. I said each would be given time of their own to discuss their company, what they had to offer and what plans they had for the future, and they would be allowed to do this presentation to the HP customer division on their own without the other subcontractors in attendance. It received their full agreement.



Our display table for our IPO work projects, presented at the World-wide Materials Managers meeting in Monterey, CA.

This first trip, which was so successful, other trips would follow. Many of these suppliers would end up being long standing suppliers to many USA divisions, they would join me again on some trips. The suppliers were, Livingstone Precision, Precision Machining, JV Murcott, FACTS, and Border Precision, whose name in itself started a few titters around the presentation rooms, with questions like "Is your precision capability only border-line?" Americans being Americans we had to explain it was due to the locality of the company in Scotland. I approached the US Divisions that we were making parts for, to see what they thought of being visited by a bunch of our subcontract suppliers from the UK? They were all for it, it gave them a chance to have all their procurement folks sit in and find out about these suppliers, plus it gave them an opportunity to interrogate them as to why they can be so cost effective. This also gave them the opportunity to show them more of what was available and how they inspected and used the parts.

I set up for this first Subcontractor-US trip, we'd visit SKD in Spokane, LSID in Lake Stevens near Seattle. NMD in Santa Rosa, SAD in Rohnert Park/Santa Rosa and SPD in Palo Alto. Every one of the visits were a great success, some more so than others, the subcontractors bonded well, they were having fun, at times it was like a rolling party. The division's hospitality was excellent.

In Spokane, the procurement folks had set out a table to have lunch, we were to meet up with some of the other team players who would also join us for lunch. As we approached the table with our trays, (It's always self-service in HP.) Hugh Ambelang, QA Manager, was already sitting there waiting on us. Hugh's style was always that he wore big Hawaiian flowery shirts, today was no different. Hugh was sitting with his back to the window and we all sat around him. As we ate, we heard this tapping sound and it was coming from the window directly behind Hugh, there were three Humming birds, they were trying to get in to reach Hugh's flowery Hawaiian shirt. Roars of laughter soon emanated from our table and Hugh was then on the receiving end of most of the jokes after that, with shouts of, "They want to love you Hugh!"

Material Manager Greg Schmidt thought it would be a good idea to challenge this Scots team to 10 pin bowling on one of the evenings. He insisted there had to be a wager of \$5 a head which would go to the winning team. He realized that this game being popular in the USA, that SKD would wipe the floor with us, he hadn't given any thought that it might also have been popular in Scotland. Many of us had played before, but we had an ace up our sleeve that we didn't know we had. Jim Duncan of Precision Machining, who was a born natural, he could have won it all on his own. So Greg Schmidt had to hand over our winnings after we took them to the cleaners and taught them how bowling should be played.

Later back at the Red Lion Hotel, or Roach Inn as Bill Burdick liked to call it, we all partied those winnings away. The bars in those hotels are nearly always dark with a rock band thumping away in the corner and the bar waitresses who wore low cut tops and the shortest miniskirts were only too happy to run back and forth with refills for the empty glasses, gathering tips in the process of course, and participating in an ice-cube drop. Having a lap that was getting wetter by each drink delivery, it was time I responded. A carefully placed hand over the shoulder from the back of the waitress and allowing an ice cube or two to drop down a cleavage, it soon had those waitresses roaring with laughter, they said, "None of the American boys would ever do that." I think with all us guys that talked funny, it helped to make their work night a fun evening and we got away with it.

At one table I caught sight of Ben Reilly in deep conversation with this cowboy looking red-neck guy, who was a bit more out of his skull than Ben was with drink. Turns out this cowboy guy built trailers for a living and that he could build a trailer that could transport anything, with boats being his specialty, you name it he could build it! A challenge to Ben Reilly, who came back with, I wager the next three rounds I can think of a boat you can't build a trailer for! "Deal" said the cowboy, "Right" said Ben, "Let's see you build a (expletive) trailer to carry from the Atlantic to the Pacific, the Queen Elizabeth Liner!" Hoots of laughter erupted, obviously the drink was taking its affect. With the cowboy then shouting to the waitress, "Honey, bring this Scots gentleman three more drinks!" The last we saw of the cowboy was him staggering to his feet, shaking all our hands, saying "I must get my (expletive) across to Scotland," then unsteadily making his way to the door that led to the car park to drive 20 miles home!!!! I'm glad I wasn't on the road that evening.

Fortunately, next day we were making our way up to Santa Rosa, where we would be staying for a few days in the Flamingo Hotel for our visits to SAD and NMD. So there was time to recover from the large heads most of the subcontractors had next morning. All except Mike, from Precision Machining, who had gone to bed early and was up early for a jog and breakfast in the McDonalds across the street!!!

Taking those guys on a trip like this around the west coast divisions, was a bit like taking a child to a sweetie shop. Trying to keep them under control could be at times quite a challenge. When we were in the Flamingo Hotel in Santa Rosa, we would be there for a few days due the close proximity of NMD and

SAD, it would allow the guys to relax a bit. The hotel has great facilities, a huge Olympic sized swimming pool, though a bit on the cold side and a big hot-tub in the gardens. Needless to say, this is California and it was summertime, so they would all lie around the pool, some of them looking a bit like stranded whales with their beer bellies open to the sun.

On one occasion, Jim Duncan disappeared, we thought he was off to the loo, a little while later he comes swanning back with a glass of champagne in his hand and two new friends in tow! "Com'n guys," he says, "There's a wedding reception going on over there, and we're all invited!" The couple getting married were a few generations removed from Scottish immigrants and they were holding or trying to hold a Scottish wedding. When Jim stumbled onto it and they found out there was a bunch of Scots guys sitting around the pool, they wanted us all to join in! Swimming suits and all!! Fortunately the reception was spilling out into the gardens, so it made it easier for us to take part and help them reduce the size of their champagne lake and canapes.

That same swimming pool was always a great attraction, people would hear the accents and want to stop by and talk. Jim Duncan and I were sitting in the hot-tub late one afternoon talking about the business aspects of that days' visit and enjoying the sun and the hot water. As we looked towards the swimming pool, walking up the path towards us was this tall striking blonde in a skimpy bikini. Jim said, "Ya beauty this is the life, and she is coming to join us!" As the blonde moved to step into the hot-tub beside us she says, "Hello boys, beautiful day." There was only one answer to that. "It sure is... Now!" After another few niceties, she says, "You guys are not from around here with those accents?" I said, "No, we're from Scotland." "Business or pleasure?" she replied, "Both" we said in unison. At that point she said, "Well you must be here for Hewlett Packard?" I said, "I'm impressed, how did you know that?" To which she replied, "There's a huge seminar going on, so I assumed you guys were in town for it." I said "Nope, not that seminar, we're here on other business." At that point she shouts to a guy getting out of the swimming pool, "Hey Chuck come and meet these guys from Scotland, they're with HP." She then promptly introduced us to her husband and burst both our balloons in the process...!

On this and following supplier trips to Santa Rosa, the suppliers always looked forward to going to SAD. SAD was by now a big customer and they always made an extra effort when we came over. Pete Johnson the Fabrication Manager was a big supporter, as was nearly all his team, Roy Ingham his Engineering Manager, would worry in case we lost some of the guys on the nights out at dinner. SAD always put on something special, and on this occasion they had organized dinner in Guerneville, a small village outside Santa Rosa near the Armstrong Woods where the Giant Redwoods grow. The guys got to see some of the giant trees, but I also think SAD deliberately picked this restaurant to see the actions of the boys from the UK.

Guerneville is a lovely little place, it looks almost backwoods, but it is a big tourist attraction, which is also very close to the Wineries. Visiting the wineries is another story. On this occasion we had drinks in a wooden shack type bar near the restaurant. As we were all walking towards the restaurant, the SAD guys had big smiles on their faces, which made me wonder. I asked, "You guys all have big smiles on your faces, what's up here?" Pete Johnson said, "Well this is a sort of special restaurant, as was the bar we were just in." At that point Bill Davidson said, "I thought that bar was a bit odd, it was full of Gays!" That was when Roy Ingham said, "Guerneville is the Gay Capital of California, and this restaurant is owned and totally run by Gays!" You could have heard a pin drop in the main street.

The guys all walked in, in silence, in a straight line one behind the other. They were met with big smiles from everyone and a big welcome in somewhat higher pitched voices. "We've got the dining area all specially ready for you boys!" Said the Maitre'de, "Just follow me." He added. There was a long table where we all could sit at, every one of the suppliers went to the back of the table, that way their backs were to the wall and no one could sneak up on them. The SAD team had a good laugh at that. The

restaurant staff were wonderful, they played these guys from the UK all evening long, it was a fun evening.

On another visit, mostly with those same suppliers, SAD took us to the Korbel Winery, where Korbel Champagne was made. This was going to be some night, the suppliers couldn't believe the place. First there was a winery tour which was superb and ended up back at the Winery visitor centre, where we were to start drinking Champagne around the swimming pool, which was in the shape of a champagne bottle. From there we would be driving over the hill to the other side of the woods. We were going to have dinner in Calistoga, another beautiful small town famous for its water and volcanic mud baths.

I was wondering if this was such a good idea after drinking the champagne, but drive there we did. The restaurant once again was an excellent choice and downstairs they had a great bar. Yet another great fun filled evening, but we had to drive back to the Flamingo Hotel about twenty miles away over foothills roads. We had to go the back roads, which were twisty and dark, no one wanted to come across the Highway Patrol! That included the SAD team! We all safely made it and next morning we all turned up to do the presentations, but it was good to see the SAD procurement team also nursing big headaches, it's not good to mix champagne with beer, wine and spirits! In hindsight everyone was amazed we all made it without a mishap or ending up in jail!

## **21. Poison from Home...**

It was whilst we were in SAD and in the middle of the supplier presentations, that I got a call from Queensferry. Jimmy Queen wanted to talk to me about an allegation that had been made to him, by the QMD Financial Controller, Jim Rigby. For some strange reason I could never work out, it seemed illogical to me, but the Financial Controller had the Maintenance Department reporting to him. Perhaps it's because when a company ceases business, it's usually an Accountant that's last to leave the building and he will need someone to switch the lights off!!

A rumour had started in the Maintenance Department, based I think on a jealous vein there, that they could not accept that my IPO people were "more successful." They insisted that both our departments consisted of people from similar backgrounds. We were becoming more and more successful and traveling to other countries on a frequent basis. The rumour coming out of the Maintenance Department was that I was on the take from suppliers and in particular Livingston Precision Machining (LPE). LPE's Managing Director was Ben Reilly, who had worked in Tool Engineering in HP beside me.

When people talk like that and when the gossip is spread, it gets more and more malicious and eventually travels upwards, this time to the ear of the Financial Controller Jim Rigby. He in turn brought it to the attention of Jimmy Queen.

When Jimmy called me and told me about it, I was livid at this accusation and I demanded to know who stated this and I wanted to see the proof of their allegations. I was a long way from home, dealing with the stress of this road show and to have this extra pressure applied to me was unforgivable. I was raging at Jimmy about it all and I wanted something done about it, and if necessary I wanted those who were spreading this poison fired! And if nothing was done about it, I would make damn sure something was sorted out on my return.

I couldn't get it out of my head, and made a stupid unthinking mistake. I spoke to Ben Reilly off-line and on the quiet. Ben Reilly was even madder than I was about it. He flew off into a rage about the accusation and immediately phoned his office. What he did was make contact with his company's lawyer. By next morning, Ben informed me he had spoken with his lawyer and they were going to take the matter to Court. There is a little known law in Scotland, where if someone makes malicious allegations towards someone,

that person can be taken to Court. If that person was only repeating hearsay, then they have to name the person they heard it from, and they get taken to Court, or they then become the accused. That works all the way down the line until they get the culprit who started the malicious rumour and they get sued.

I asked Ben to cool it, as this would only cause resentment and might lead to his company losing business from HP. Ben said to me, "John, if you can nail this down and get these allegations retracted, I will not take it to Court, but if they are not retracted, I will take this all the way through the Courts." Ben Reilly felt insulted and disgusted and did not want poison like this to reach his other customers so was determined to stamp it out as quickly as it had erupted.

I phoned Jimmy Queen to tell him what had happened. Jimmy's first reaction was to chew me off for telling the LPE Managing Director. I said, "I'm sorry Jimmy, he had a right to know, but this should never have happened in the first place and now HP is going to find itself, or rather, a number of its employees, getting dragged through the Courts." I went onto explain the law about vicious rumours and how it works its way down to find the real culprit and that I had also spoken to Ben Reilly so that we could deal with this without the need for Court action.

The message had gotten across, Jimmy spoke with the Financial Controller, who in turn got all the Maintenance Department in a meeting room and demanded to know who had said this about me and LPE. He also let them know the results of this rumour and that the end result would be a number of them appearing in Court with those who initially stated the rumour being sued for defamation of character. Suddenly, they realized what they thought was a bit of fun, had exploded in their faces and they were now under the threat of appearing in Court and having to deal with the subsequent financial penalty. The culprits owned up to starting the rumour, Jim Rigby read the riot act to them. Personally I feel they were let off lightly as they only got a warning. It was now up to me to defuse the matter completely.

I took Ben aside, told him what had happened, that I had received an apology for it all and I was asked to give Ben an apology on behalf of HP. I also stated that I was not happy with the way the (expletives) had been literally let off, but in all our interests, it would be best if we just dropped the matter. This Ben agreed to. From that day on, there was never another rumour uttered out of the Maintenance Department, they had obviously got a huge fright and had learned their lesson.

## **22. Supplier Seminar...**

I realized that as we were shipping more and more components off-shore. With our small staff we couldn't allow ourselves to get bogged down in a possible daily time consuming drag of checking through part failures and what might have caused them. This would soon detract from our ability to source more parts for QMO's needs and those of our off-shore customers. Nothing would get us a bad name quicker than shipping faulty parts off-shore, those customers would then feel they were not in control of their parts and would use this against us and so stop further parts from being sourced through us. It was a big enough challenge fighting off all those who already saw our IPO as a threat to their personal survival, without us giving them the bullets to carry out our own execution, this was not an option.

I got my group organized to do a Supplier Seminar. The main theme would revolve around Statistical Process Control or SPC as it was more commonly known. Only a couple of our suppliers were using SPC in their business, I wanted them all to use it. It would also be a great selling tool that I could market to all customers and potential new ones.

Although SPC does allow faulty parts to escape the net, the process of SPC can control that, to allow the process to be brought back into control, so the numbers of faulty parts which did get through, would be extremely small. If the SPC process was to be managed effectively on our suppliers' premises, it needed

someone with an aggressive style to push it through. One of my engineers, Judy W., was the ideal person to manage this process with our suppliers, all though nearly all my team members were fully aware of the process. Judy was a driver-driver person who by her nature had to be kept harnessed and given a serious and demanding challenge, I knew this would suit her perfectly and it would have the added benefit that those suppliers not currently using SPC, would soon realise that the IPO was serious about its implementation. If they wanted to continue to be an IPO supplier, then they needed to get on-board, plus it wasn't going to cost them a bean to learn about how to implement it.

With the whole of my group behind this Supplier seminar, we set about pulling it together. It would occupy a couple of days and it also got our full QMO Functional Management support.

I was going to limit it to a handful of our most prominent suppliers, but once the word got out, I was deluged with requests to attend. In the end we had 52 suppliers come along. To make this happen we would run the seminar over a few days, but limit the attendees to two per company. The seminar would cover all aspects of QMO. General Manager Doug Scribner would give an overview of QMO Strategy in the marketplace. Jimmy Queen, in his Manufacturing Manager role, would give an overview on QMO's Manufacturing Philosophy. Bill Oliver and Bill Fulton would give QMO's Materials Philosophy. Bill Oliver, at that time had been assigned a new temporary role, he was to assume the position of Transition Manager for QMO's move into the new building being built on site. He eventually ended up with a new nickname, "Bungalow Bill"... Bill Fulton, who was a Line Manager took on the role of Materials Manager during that time. He was another person I was to have my future ups and downs with.

I and other key players also gave an overview to the delegates of the Working Partnership we were working towards. For the second half of the day, it was given to TQC, Total Quality Control, with an overview being given by QMO Quality Manager Peter Rigby. Then we got down to the actual crux of the seminar SPC run by one of my engineers, Laurence Bird and a QA engineer, Keith Price. The whole seminar was wrapped up with an Open Forum where I would take any questions about the whole programme. There was a complete display of QMO samples, fully supported by my team, where the delegates could see parts that they were capable of manufacturing.

Each delegate was issued a manual which covered all aspects of TQC and SPC sections which they could use to teach their staff, also reminding them they would have access to support from our engineers who would be more than happy to help set the processes up within their establishments.

The seminar was a roaring success, so much so, I received a call from Tom Kennedy at the Irish Development Agency, who had heard about the seminar from an Irish supplier who had attended. He asked me to run it in Dublin for the Irish based suppliers. This we duly did. Even our IPO customer divisions and HPP Corporate Procurement also solicited copies of our seminar programme. That also included divisions which were not 100% IPO friendly. I was quite happy to oblige, it was an added strength to our bow, although I couldn't see those divisions implementing it at their suppliers, since that would need commitment and participation on their part. They didn't think like that, they would expect their suppliers to do it on their own.

### **23. Decision Time Again...**

Our WEIPO was by now starting to get well established, we had a customer base well outside the QMO parent Divisions. Dick Locke, on one of his visits to our IPO office said to me over dinner one night, that our IPO could achieve more, but I was doing two jobs and that the IPO was now at a stage where it needed fulltime management to develop the business further, so why don't I do it. I was being stretched doing both jobs, and there would always be a limiting factor of sticking with the QMO job. But here was an opportunity to play in a much bigger pool. However it would mean me going back again to a very much



smaller staff level. I had done that before and the global aspect of a customer base outside that of only the USA, was quite an attraction and challenge to me, I'd be reporting to Corporate Procurement!

Next day Dick Locke and I went to see Jimmy Queen. Somehow I don't think Jimmy expected this to happen and he asked me what I wanted to do? He also agreed that the time had come where I could not do both jobs to the merits that each required and deserved. Jimmy Queen, I think was now drawing a line in the sand, it was decision time! Somehow I think this time Jimmy was a little disappointed with my decision, as I chose the IPO path.

I explained to Jimmy that QMO Materials Engineering Department was now well kitted out to manage all its materials subcontracting needs. Its supplier subcontracting base was now well established, fully identified and all the processes and procedures up and running. There was little more I could do except turn over similar parts for QMO's new Product Transfers. I went on to say that the IPO was now at the stage of offering me a much bigger opportunity and challenges, to play a role in a much bigger capacity within a much bigger global field, whereas my advancement in QMO was severely limited. I just couldn't pass up that opportunity.

Once again I was back to square one and starting not quite afresh, but I was back with a minimum staff level of support and mountains of work to achieve if I was to make the WEIPO more and more successful. On the upside though, QMO Materials Engineering would have to support the same parts which they were using and going to their parent licensor divisions. All I had to do was make sure those divisions order processing and shipping was taken care of. So in a way as MCG was my biggest customer, QMO had to ensure supply resource was available.

Although I was independent to run my UK IPO business, on a European level I would report to Karl Heinz Hartmann in Boeblingen Germany. I would have a dotted line relationship to the Materials Manager in QMO, who at that time was Bill Fulton, due to Bill Oliver doing his "Bungalow Bill" activities. Later Bill Fulton would move on, but not before I had a few run ins with him, Tony Summerfield would then take on the Materials Manager role, until they eventually pushed him aside and eventually out the door, resulting with Bill Oliver taking on his old Obe-Wan Materials Manager role once again. QMO would also eventually push him out the door much to his great loss and disappointment. However, that was to happen after I had decided to take early retirement. In a way Bill Oliver was always or appeared happy with my reporting into Corporate Procurement, as it gave him another route for inputs to HPP Procurement without the responsibility aspects.

Jimmy Queen, I felt, was still involved in the background, particularly when it came to the IPO sourcing the System II Pressure Die-castings out of the PAFC to JV Murcott in Birmingham. Back then though and unknown to me, a new Division Manager by the name of Don Summers, whom I thought I knew well, had taken over the reins of QMO, and he would decide that Jimmy Queen was way past his shelf life and was instrumental in ousting Jimmy from the company.

On that occasion the jungle drums soon got around quickly that Jimmy was leaving, or being told to get out, and that he would be out by the end of the week. I wandered by Jimmy's desk to have a word with him about it all, and said to him "That if he wanted to quietly leave the building, I would happily take him home." On his last day in the company, Jimmy did just that. He had been at the Social Club and had a couple of drinks, but he didn't want any of



the others to take him home, or have his wife come and pick him up, so he wandered by my desk to see if I would take him home. That was a “no brainer” to me, after all that he had done for me, this was the least I could do to help him. I took him home, he was in a real bit of a downer about it all and on how he had been treated, unfairly I thought. I didn’t feel comfortable just leaving him on his own until his wife May came home. So I sat with him in his garden for a while as he had another couple of beers, I refused the beers as I was driving. After a while Jimmy said that May would be home soon so I could go back to work and thanks for taking the time out to help him.

What I didn’t know then was, that I would also later have a run in with that same Divisional manager My saving grace was that I reported to Corporate and not anyone on his team, plus I could bring customer pressure to bear, with much more clout than he had.

## **24. Carry On Alone...**

If, as I suspected after all those past years, Jimmy Queen had been in the background, a silent but helpful support, that time had now passed. Within myself, I believed I was now more than capable to deal with what was to come. If there was one thing above everything else that I learned from Jimmy and the way he let me manage my business, it was trust and support your team, treat everyone the way you want to be treated. It was only later I began to realize my actions were being observed by my team. I was being seen not just as their manager, but also acting as their Shop Steward. I strongly believe that my actions in those areas gave the end result, that our IPO Team was just streets ahead in every discipline and ability than those of their peers working in the site Materials Department which was supporting the two divisions on the Queensferry site at that time. What’s more, I believe that all the members in our IPO Team knew it! I guess we were a real cocky bunch, it’s no surprise we had so many problems with other department managers on site. We even took onboard the Tina Turner song “Simply the Best” as our motto. Which at every department outing, you’d hear us all singing, as loud as we could!

With Jimmy Queen gone and Bill Oliver basically now gone also, our IPO had to survive on our own. In a real sense, management confusion exists anytime corporate decisions are made to establish what industry (or military) calls "tenant" operations. That is when an unrelated operation, like my IPO is set up inside another group. Logic might have suggested that my group could have been better off in an off-site office, but Hewlett Packard plants offer so much in support services, comms and administrative that it made sense to be on site. Moreover, my real manager in Germany agreed with our location decision.

But when issues like personnel raises and bonuses are managed by the host division, often the tenant gets forgotten. In my case my local dotted line Manager Bill Fulton, whom I recognised, would never stand up and be counted on in my IPO corner when it came to the crunch, Bill's loyalty would always lie with QMO, and, they would always toe the QMO party line pushed down to them from above, since QMO paid their wages and dished out their pay rises.

There were many managers on site at South Queensferry, who wanted to see us fail, or more like, wanted to see me fail, and on many occasions would go out of their way to make things difficult for us. In later years, it also led to my disappointment in Bill Oliver, who pretended to put out an air of support to me and our IPO, but I found out from others that he was instrumental in the background in doing the opposite and in particular, poisoning the Materials Department in SAD against our IPO.

So here I was, 100% IPO and quickly realizing that just supporting those divisions within the Test and Measurement Organisation was never going to ‘cut the mustard’ business-wise for the longer term. For our IPO to succeed we had to break into all of HP’s other business groups. That was not going to be as easy a task as supporting and breaking into the other T&M divisions which we now had as IPO customers.

For starters, the power in all those other groups lay within the USA divisions. There was only CPB, Computer Peripherals Division in Bristol involved in Disk Drives and they were part of DMD, Disk Memory Division in Boise at that time. There would also be that, 'not invented here' mentality, along with the xenophobic mindset that permeated some minds to off-shore sourcing, unless it was out of Japan. Trying to convince some of these people, some of whom had never been out of their own State, never mind being out of the country, was going to be a huge challenge. There were times though, that I wondered who made the decisions to let some of them out of their State, let alone the USA!

## **25. IPO Candidates...**

Over time I had handpicked a good team, I always refused point blank to accept any other department's problem person who would never have had the ability to work on their own. I also got the support of Dick Locke on that score, he agreed with me that we couldn't afford, in such a small team, to take on someone else's 'problem child'. I did take on one person who was a problem within the site Materials organisation, but it was done as a swap which allowed me to move Callum Logan, a person who was obviously going to have problems with the stress that the IPO job would throw up. Besides I thought I could channel that problem person's energies, she was an excellent engineer, way ahead of a high percentage of her peers in her current environment; I was arrogant enough to believe I could sort out those lack of people skills. I eventually learned there were just some cases that I could never fix!

All of those handpicked team members brought with them, their own individual strengths and abilities to the group and in every case benefited the group immensely. I made sure they all got the room to develop those skills and pass them onto others. Every one of them was able to take pride in being able and willing to help the other group members understand or develop whatever was being put forward. Success always breeds success and increases group morale.

I never ever had a shortage of people wishing to join our IPO team, which was much to the disgust of other site managers. I knew of some managers who had on occasion tried to put their people off even applying for any job I was advertising. I had been told by a couple of my team long after they had joined us, they were not sure if it was a good idea when they discussed the matter with their manager. Plus, I must have had some sort of fearsome attitude that scared them off. However nearly every one of them had spoken with other members of my team, which at the time I hadn't known about and they had been told by them that I was one of the best bosses they had ever worked for. What people saw outside the group, was nothing like the atmosphere within the group.

Later I heard from nearly every member of the team, the IPO job was the best job they had ever had at South Queensferry and that I was not such a fearsome boss after all. I also had a couple of applicants who I didn't hire, remind me years later that I turned them down and they wondered why.

To be successful we had to be a team, right off the 'Top Shelf' and one that would offer a 'Knock your socks off' service, and that's exactly what we set out to achieve. And with the right folks on board, that's exactly what we did!!

## **26. Hassles of the Host Division...**

Although our IPO was independent of our host division, we were now totally part of Corporate Procurement. That didn't always sit well within the host division, who always wanted to be able to exert some level of control over us. In hindsight we should have bitten the bullet and moved off-site completely. Because we were on their turf, on many occasions I found myself standing up and defending my corner. It

became even more intense when the IPO's became self-funding and the host divisions, particularly in times of tight fiscal policy, would try and off load their inflated over managed cost structures onto the IPO, which I robustly refused to accept, accompanied by some hard ball or (expletiving) contest. It also irked the host division when they had tight controls and could see my staff and I freely traveling around the world.

There are numerous examples that can be listed.

Every support department on the host site that we purchased services from, would always try and off-load their inefficiency costs onto the IPO, each time they were met with a huge rebuttal from me. I always demanded a complete breakdown of all the costs, they hated that. The Accounts department and the Traffic departments were the worst, funnily enough, Traffic department reported to the Financial Controller and he had told the Traffic Manager to dump a lot of his costs onto the IPO, they soon realised I had other plans on that score. There was only one department that liked our IPO approach to paying for the services we used, IT department, but then they had the same problems that the IPO had with everyone else on site.

On one occasion my dotted line Queensferry Manager Bill Fulton, was adamant that I was to have a chunk of his costs. No way was I going to accept that and aggressively fought back, he didn't like it much when I asked him to list everything he did for me and our IPO, and I'd tell him if I wanted that service level or not, and if I did then we could negotiate a cost structure. Bill was raging and in all his wisdom, he now wanted my card marked. He wrote a scathing e-mail to Karl Heinz Hartmann in Germany and to Dick Locke in Palo Alto, complaining bitterly about me and the way I had rebutted him. Unfortunately, Fulton didn't expect the reply he got from my two bosses, they praised me for kicking back and that it was not the IPO that should shoulder the extra costs from the host division's bad financial management. It shut Fulton up, but he always seemed to have a grudge against me and the IPO.

The Traffic Department, as I stated, reported into the Financial Controller Jim Rigby, he thought he could also dump some of his costs onto the IPO. No way was that going to happen. Basically I told the Traffic Manager, Jim Boyle, unless you give me a complete breakdown of how my IPO charges are accounted for, I will set my needs up with an outside shipping company. From then on I got a complete breakdown, but the hassles with Traffic still continued, with their manager anyway, not with the staff, they always tried to pull out all the stops for us; they were friends with the other girls in our team, plus they had a low opinion of their boss!

The best battle we won was with the Finance and Accounts Department and their Financial Controller Jim Sherrett. Time and time again he would try to dump charges onto us; I had a pretty good working relationship with two of his managers, so he didn't know I was getting inside support, they didn't like him much either! Then on one occasion Jim Sherrett thought he had done the dirty on us. His department was being audited, and thinking he could also deflect some heat from his department, he said to the Auditor, "You know, you should check out the IPO, I think their processes are out of control." The whole thing backfired on him!

The Auditor, Lesley Holstead came across to my desk and asked, "John, could you tell me about the IPO, I've never heard of it before." I said, "Let's first grab a cup of coffee." She sat down and I explained all about the IPO and the reason it was created and the systems and processes we used. At that point she said, "This is great, I think HP HQ in Bracknell would like to know more about it and your Team." Lesley made a phone call there and then to her boss, who turned out to be none other than Andrew Bothwell, who had worked in Finance in Queensferry many years before and who I knew very well. She came off the phone and said, "When can you come down to Bracknell and give us all a presentation?" To which I replied, "Next week okay?" "Perfect, everyone of importance is in the building that week."

That next week I toddled off to HP HQ in Bracknell with a full presentation package of slides in my brief case. Lesley met me and took me up to the office, where I met with Andrew Bothwell. “Hi John” he said, “Long time no see, what’s this I hear you’ve been up too?” I gave him a quick explanation and we all set off to the meeting room. We were joined by a bunch of other HP UK HQ Finance folks that topped off with Paul Valler, Director of Finance for HP UK HQ, including some of his direct staff, of which Andrew Bothwell was one. Also in attendance was his Controller Bob Venus and the European VAT Manager Neil Rees, who turned out to be a great help in the future.

I gave the full presentation, and at the end Paul Valler said, “John, that’s excellent, I didn’t know we had that capability in the UK.” Then he turned to his immediate staff and said, “I think we should help John and his team make this project highly successful.” From then on we got all the Finance help and guidance we wanted, it was a particular help in the area of European VAT which helped us to find ways to manage our “Buy and Sell” programme, which would maintain security of HP’s global pricing agreements on the highly competitive worldwide components market. There was particular emphasis on security of supply and price with DRAMS and other semiconductor commodities. We also got help with our processes to ensure they all met the Auditable requirements.

The morning after that meeting in Bracknell and back at South Queensferry, my first step was to Jim Sherrett’s desk, where I set out with added glee to burst his balloon, but first I wanted him to think otherwise! I strode up to his desk and brusquely said to him, “Thanks a lot for setting that Auditor onto me!” He of course thought that by my tone he had succeeded in dropping me in it! A wry smile quickly appeared on his face, that I soon wiped off by following up with. “Paul Valler was impressed with what the IPO is doing and has instructed all his UK HQ Finance team to give me all the help they can.” Then I had to rub it in by also adding, “Thanks again Jim, for sending the Auditor to me, without that help from you, HP UK HQ would never have known about our IPO and I wouldn’t have gotten the help from them that I am now getting.” At which point I turned away and made my way back to my desk, with a dirty great big grin on my face. Later I found out from one of his managers, he was really (expletive) at what had happened.

Our IPO never had any major problems with the Auditors, unlike site Finance who looked upon them as spies trying to catch them out and so wouldn’t give up any information unless asked for it. We took a different approach, we said we need all the help we can get to improve our processes and system and would appreciate any help they could give. If we were doing something wrong, why hide it, let’s get it fixed. We would ask for recommendations on anything that was turned up. The auditors were so used to being treated the opposite, I think they were glad to help. Their approach towards our IPO was always different from the way they dealt with the division Finance. I think part of the problem was due to the system. When the auditors found any problems in Finance it was always escalated to Corporate Finance as a black mark, so in a way I can understand the division’s reluctance to work closely with the auditors. Two wrongs don’t make a right; the process should have been to address the issues to achieve a win-win situation rather than one of confrontation.

## **27. Dr. Death...**

In the early 1970s, during a period of tight fiscal control policy within HP and more so in the MCG which had bigger problems to manage. HP was fighting a downturn across all its business segments, with each group installing its own controls specific to getting through their own group difficulties. There was no commonality between the groups on how the controls would be affected.

MCG had by far the most pressure in their customer market when compared to those in other groups, like Printers and Personal Computers. Our host division installed a complete ban on all spending, particularly in travel. Unfortunately also at that time our host division General Manager was none other than George

L, or Dr. Death as he was aptly named. George was an unbelievable control freak, who meddled and controlled everything in the minutest detail. He was a micro-manager in the extreme, where absolutely nothing could be done without it passing by him first.

When QMO moved into its new building, George, with wife in toe, set off to visit the John Lewis retail store to choose the curtains for all the meeting rooms!! There was also the situation where all the new overhead projectors were not to his liking, so he had them all locked away in a cupboard until they were replaced. It did have the advantage that no one had to sit through any boring presentations! Childish Divisional Manager behaviour nonetheless! He was by far the worst Divisional Manager I ever had the misfortune to meet and had to deal with. No one ever stood up to him; he just rode roughshod over everyone. Unfortunately when QMO eventually got shot off him, he left an equally obnoxious legacy behind, in his protégé Paul Y, whom, after Gil Reeser's short watch, would take over the General Manager's role.

At the time of these MCG constraints, George banned all travel, which of course led to me going head to head with him. He did not have good interpersonal people skills, there was always only one way with him, and that was his way!

As business would have it, some divisions were still going gangbusters, one of these being the IJB. (Ink Jet Business Units) Parts we had supplied, mesh filters, and had been supplying for some time, for some strange reason suddenly wouldn't work in their new automated production line. These automated lines were extremely complex and cost many millions of dollars to manufacture. When not operable it was a major disaster as it instantly stopped Ink Jet Cartridges being sent to the end users. IJB had an extremely urgent need for me to go and see the supplier who manufactured the filter parts we sent, to ascertain if that supplier had somehow changed their manufacturing process for the filters.

However, my host division under George had installed this strict freeze on all travel, which meant I had to get him to authorize my travel warrant. I was not looking forward to approaching him on the matter as I knew exactly how he would react, but needs must! I handed him the travel requisition fully completed with all the reasons for my trip. Only to be met with, "Don't you know the company is having a hard time just now and there is a freeze on travel?" I said "Yes I do." I explained the reasons for my need, even though they were clearly written on the requisition. He again and again repeated the need not to travel and save expenses. He was not listening to me. At about his sixth time of asking me if I really had to go.

I finally lost it with him and said, "George, this is the sixth time you have asked me the same questions about this travel I need to make, and I've explained six times all the reasons why I must go. If you do not want me to go and you will not sign my travel warrant, I will get the IJB Divisional Manager to call you and instruct you to do otherwise." At that instant he stood up, glowered at me and said, "Don't you ever talk to me like that!" Then he signed the travel warrant and threw it at me. From then on in, I would just place a travel requisition under his nose, and he would sign it without even looking up at me. I can honestly say without any contradiction from others, with the exception of Paul, George L was by far, the least liked General Manager that ever managed a division at South Queensferry. So much so, that when he left to return to the USA, a great relief came over QMO. That elation was to be short lived though, when the announcement was made that his replacement as QMO Divisional Manager was to be Gil Reeser, Then not long after, both their lap dog Paul Y. It was a case for me of out of the frying pan and into the fire. I had already had quite a few head to heads with Paul from the past.

## **28. The Feral One...**

Paul Y was an academic snob of the first degree. He rated and ranked people not by their ability, but depending on which University they had attended.

It was a year or so earlier when I had my first of many head to heads with Paul, we both found ourselves on the taskforce assigned to create a new Job Evaluation Programme and a Job Ranking Programme. As my luck would have it, I ended up in the same working group as Paul. The first part of the Job Evaluation programme was to Grade the different jobs in relation to qualifications, experience, job complexity etc. This turned out to be fairly straightforward because of the various job complexities, and it was really self-evident what level of attributes and qualifications were minimally required to be fitted into those appropriate Job Descriptions. Eventually all the jobs were given a grade number which would position the different salaries which would be applied to each individual job grade.

The aggravation started when our group moved onto the Job Ranking Programme process. It was at this point that Paul tried to force through that each person in each Job should be ranked according to their qualification. At which point I was in total disagreement with his approach and quickly injected that you cannot do that, as qualifications formed the major part of the Job Evaluation Grading and as such could not play a role in each individual Job Ranking. Job Ranking was a function of meritability and capability in doing the job, and as such academic or other qualifications played no part in that whatsoever. I repeated that qualifications played their part in the Job Grading Structure only. At that point I got full agreement from all the other team members, much to Paul's disgust. I had won the day, but Paul had marked my card as the future would prove on a few other occasions.

One of those occasions occurred during a salary increase time. This situation would have never arisen had it not been that Bill Oliver was at this time seconded into a temporary taskforce to help manage a major site project and acting Materials Manager was Bill Fulton. Previous to this, Bill Fulton had been a nice guy to work with, I had really only come in contact with him when he managed the Transformers section. That was a good few years earlier and he had moved into Printed Circuit Board Manufacture for a while and onto the Production Lines. He also had subsequent years reporting to Dr. Death and Paul, this resulted in him changing his personality quite a bit.

That aside, my head to head with both Paul Y and Bill Fulton at the same time, happened when one of my staff, who was due a salary increase, did not received it. I checked it out with the Personnel Department, only to find that it had not been submitted. I was livid, this was yet another example where the host division showed no interest in the IPO and failed in their responsibility to give us even the basic minimum support. As fate would have it, as I got back to my desk, both Paul and Bill Fulton were walking past my desk together. An opportunity to have words with them both at the same time, one that I wasn't going to pass up. I immediately questioned them right at my desk. It turned out that they had completely forgotten about all the folks in the IPO and to take account of the pay raises that were due for my staff.

This led to heated words in the open, which everyone in the near vicinity could hear quite clearly. It was obvious that both Paul and Fulton were really (expletived) that, I had the audacity to challenge them about what I thought was their questionable performance. Today that would probably fall under the terminology of failure to carry out "due diligence" but they also knew full well they were in the wrong and that they had failed in their duty as host division managers to give the IPO this basic level of support. By the next morning they had fixed their problem and my staff got the pay increase they so richly deserved. I on the other hand had my card marked..... Again!

What I didn't realize at that time was that members of my team had witnessed every bit of my discussion with Messrs Paul and Fulton and many of them spoke to me afterwards about me defending their corner and for taking such a hard line with Managers of that level. It was obviously an action that helped strengthen the loyalty within the IPO and towards me. Site managers wondered how I could command so much loyalty from my team towards me, perhaps if they also looked after their team members the same way, they also would have had that same level of respect and loyalty.

There were yet two other occasions where I had major points of conflict with Paul. The first of those was based on the knock on effect of the Government installed pay freeze. The freeze had been employed nationwide as the Government struggled to deal with the country's financial economic disaster and part of their medicine was a total pay and price freeze. This had become law just prior to HP's salary increase period. The Managing Director at that time was Peter Carmichael, who was one of the better Divisional General Managers we had at South Queensferry, so much so he was made Joint Managing Director HP UK. Peter Carmichael had come up with an idea of getting around the Government Pay Restrictions.

Peter Carmichael implemented a scheme that at the end of the Government Inland Revenue Financial Tax Year, the company would move payment of employee salaries from being paid in arrears to being paid in advance. This in effect meant that all employees getting one month's pay a few days after getting paid at the end of the month, in effect 13 month's pay in 12 months, but on paper we were still getting only twelve pays in the new Government Inland Revenue Financial Tax Year, which was as good as an 8.33% pay rise! Peter Carmichael also said to the employees they would never have to pay that extra month's pay back to the company.

Being paid in advance ran on for years and years, but the finance and accounts department never liked it as the division was always out of line with all the others and HP's accounts practices. It caused them extra work and they always wanted it changed. They lobbied the General Manager and his Functional Managers and they wanted to have a form on file that stated that the employee would refund that month's salary which had been previously paid out. Of course Paul agreed with what Finance was proposing as it also meant getting people back to being paid in arrears.

Paul harassed everyone on site to sign a form stating that they would refund that salary amount as and when they departed the company. Eventually, there was only myself and a handful of others who had refused to sign this form. Almost a year later the Finance Department gave Paul a list of names of those who had not signed the form. This resulted in Paul bringing more pressure to bear, I still refused to sign the form. Eventually I got a call from him, commanding me to come to his office and sitting there in his little meeting room was Tony Summerfield. Tony Summerfield had by now replaced Bill Fulton, who had been sent out to pasture as he had exceeded his useful shelf life. Tony Summerfield, whom I got on very well with was also to meet the same fate as Bill Fulton, but Tony put up a much stronger resistance, so it took quite a while longer to push him out the door.

This time around Paul's little meeting room table, he himself tried to strong arm me into signing this form. It was quite noticeable that Tony Summerfield was extremely non-committal during the whole meeting. I think Tony Summerfield himself was in agreement with what I was arguing back with. Paul was trying all angles to get me to sign this form, each time I rebuffed them. He then said, "Peter Carmichael had no power or authority to give everyone that extra month's pay by moving everyone into payment in advance." At that point I said, "Peter Carmichael, when he made the decision to give people the extra month's pay by making them paid in advance, was not only the Divisional General Manager, but he was also the Joint UK HP Managing Director. He had no authority to do that at that time, why should I accept that you as a QMD General Manager, have the authority to push through this pay the salary back policy, a country MD outranks a Divisional GM?"

Paul went silent! Then said, "If you do not sign the form I will make sure that you do not receive another pay rise." At that point I had to remind him, that I did not report into his organisation, and that I reported into Corporate in Palo Alto, and that it was my Corporate boss who exerted control of any salary increments that I would receive. Paul stormed out of the meeting room. Summerfield stood up, smiled and followed him out of the room. From then on Paul would often pass me in the corridor, but not once would he ever acknowledge me in the passing. He had lost again in a disagreement with me. I later spoke with my Corporate boss, and told him all about it, he shook his head in disbelief, and said, "John, sign the form,



I'll make sure you do not have to pay any monies back. A month or so later I went into the Finance department and signed the form.

Paul Yhad to be a 'know all' on everything, he was well trained by Dr. Death! I will always remember a USA trip he went on, he was trying to park his car in San Francisco and having some difficulty, until he saw a parking place on the other side of the street, which he immediately drove into, like everything else he wouldn't look at everything around him and see the pattern, nope he parked the car and went off to do whatever he was planning on doing. On his return to his car he found a parking ticket stuck to his windscreen. When in the USA, you just don't park your car on the wrong side of the street, facing the wrong way, that only invites a parking ticket penalty. I laughed within myself. I may not have gone to the University of his choice, but the University of Life taught me to check out things and think when in a foreign land before just parking in a space that just so happened to be on the other side of the street. It just didn't dawn on him that all the other cars were parked and pointing in the same direction. I hope his fine was high!

The other major incident with Paul involved an employee in my team, Judy W. Judy was the problem child I thought, incorrectly as it turned out, that I could shape into being a great team player and away from her interpersonal problems she had with nearly all the people she came in contact with. She was an excellent engineer, one of the best that I had come across, but her one major failing was she had zero interpersonal relationship skills. She had joined my team awhile back after Bill Oliver and I had been discussing two problem people we both had. One was on my team, where the high workload rate was causing him distress and he had a drinking problem, which I could not afford to impact our global customers. Bill Oliver had this problem child in Judy, who was upsetting nearly everyone in his Materials Organisation. So we both agreed to do a people swap, a big mistake on my part! The dealings with Paulon this will come next.

## **29. Problem Child...**

Though this was to cause an upset within my team with one person, Irene Shirridan, I had to press on with making the changes as I had little room to do otherwise.

I was in the USA with Irene. We had been attending a meeting in the Little Falls Site near Philadelphia, and then we were to go up to Boston for meetings in Waltham, Andover and Exeter. It was whilst Irene and I, just after we had dinner, were chatting in the bar, about the work load having an impact on one of our team members. I mentioned that I had to do something and I had come to an agreement with Bill Oliver on doing a people swap. Irene was sharp enough to realize who I might be talking about and immediately said, it better not be Judy W, she is trouble, if you hire her, I will leave the IPO. I couldn't let Irene get away with that and said it was my decision, not hers to say who could and who could not join our IPO team. The end result was that Irene not only left the IPO, she left the company and joined Scottish Enterprise. In a way, I didn't realize it at the time, this was a blessing in disguise, as I had to advertise the position and eventually hired Jim Rooney. Jim had worked for me back in the old Tool Engineering days. Jim wanted a complete change of job, he was rotting away in QTD's Quality Assurance Department. He needed something more challenging, and that he got when he joined our IPO team. Jim was the ideal person that we needed to challenge our purchasing processes and procedures and to help develop a new computer system for the IPO's. He did an absolutely outstanding job in those areas.

I was naive and big headed enough to think I could harness Judy W's skills and mould her into being a key team player, which did happen for a couple of years. But Judy had this huge chip on her shoulder and was always impatient for things to happen for her. Everything had to happen immediately and for her benefit. Eventually enough was enough and there was a complete breakdown of trust between me and Judy. Other team members in our group were by now, all very wary of her and what they said to her about anything. I

tried all sorts of approaches to try and get to the bottom of what was eating at her, I even got Personnel involved and we worked out and agreed in counseling on how things should move forward.

No sooner than we had walked out the meeting room door from Personnel and after agreeing how we would handle things, Judy would say, “Well that was a complete waste of time!” It became obvious to me that nothing was going to sort out what was wrong with her, even if we had agreed to everything she had said, it would still not have satisfied her one little bit.

It all came to a head whilst I was in Japan on a Marketing and Promotional business trip. I had previously set up for Judy to spend six months living and working in Grenoble to understand all the processes used in Grenoble Personal Computer manufacture, so that she could act on behalf of our IPO, support GPCD’s engineering needs with the subcontractor near to us. This was an opportunity that Judy had previously leapt at. All expenses paid six months in the French Alps, but more on that later.

I found out that Judy was abusing her travel benefits of the job when visiting Grenoble, she would seek job interviews but not inform me of what she was doing. Had she been honest and upfront on what she wanted to do, I would not have had an issue with it and given her what support she needed. I had to try and contact her via voice mail whilst I was traveling throughout East Asia, trying to ask her what she was doing, but she was being devious and making sure she was not available to receive my calls.

Other members of my team were aware of what she was doing, and they were trying to protect my back. So they kept me fully aware of what Judy was up to. She would leave short messages on my voice mail and then she would pick up my phone to listen for the tone to see if I had picked up my messages. Meanwhile she was making sure she kept avoiding direct telephone contact with me. In the end I left her a voice mail stating that I was not happy with her behaviour and on my return to the office I would get Personnel involved in the matter.

All of this was happening at a time when QMD management—and there’s no guesses why, you only have to look who was in charge at that time—had received extremely poor results from a recent People Management Survey. The management had come under severe criticism for their management style and lack of communication. Everyone on site knew those survey results. They were aimed at QMD management and not against the IPO. Someone like Judy knew exactly how to milk the situation and had gone directly to Paul to complain that I had threatened her, which I hadn’t done.

On my first day back from the Asian trip I was summoned to an immediate meeting with Paul and Tony Summerfield. True to form and before I could even say a word, Paul’s approach was arrogant and aggressive. The employee survey was very critical towards the QMD site management, so Paul was not prepared to listen to any facts or the story from the other side. He should have known by now, that his approach just would not wash with me, and I interjected and stopped him ranting on by making sure he heard the full facts of what was going on with Judy W.. And that I could back those words up with supportive evidence from my part and with supportive evidence from his own Personnel Department.

Paul was still not interested, he was more worried that another employee complaint, no matter how wrong, would impact his own personal record which would have a big reflection on his tenure. He even went on to say that he would get me fired if this matter went any further, he was adamant he was not going to have an employee dispute at any cost. I followed up with the fact that threats don’t work on me, I’ll just dig my heels in and blow the whole roof off on his management style. I ended with, if he doesn’t want this to go any further, then I suggested that it might be a good idea for Judy to be moved from my IPO.

Within a week, Judy was moved to Marketing. She was now someone else’s problem child and even there she managed to cause a migraine or two with the folks in that department. Not long after joining

Marketing, Judy became pregnant to a guy in Marketing, they got married and a few years later separated, I wondered if even her lack of interpersonal skills let her down there also?

On the upside, I never had any more dealings with Paul. In later years after I had left the company, I heard he also got the chop and was heaved out the door. What goes around, comes around. I was so pleased to hear about Paul's downfall, probably I and a good few others I suspect.

On the bright side, none of those negative General Managers ever managed to dampen my spirits or my enthusiasm, or that of my IPO team and we just marched on and on to make our IPO even more successful.

### **30. Latter Years...**

In the latter years, our IPO was shipping and supporting materials with a dollar value much greater than our host division. By the time of my early retirement our IPO was responsible for \$500 million of materials under our management control. Not at all bad for such a dedicated small group of seventeen people! Though in those latter years the host division resented more and more our successes. One result being that I believe that Bill Oliver deliberately went out of his way to make things difficult for us with SAD in Rohnert Park, which had also undergone management changes with my previous contacts no longer there. Being replaced by the SAD Materials Manager Mike O'Neill, who at one time was an ally. He eventually got in league with Bill Oliver, and between them stopped our IPO from supplying more parts, or for that matter even visiting SAD, trouble was they were even incompetent of taking control of what we were managing on their behalf.

This came was under the guise that the MCG could organize themselves into being their own IPO and supporting each other. Their pettiness was unbelievable. It wouldn't have been so bad if that had gone ahead with this MCG support model 100%, they would have had my 100% support as they were a big drain on our resources. The said resources we could well put to better use and work on many more higher dollar value parts, with Divisions who wanted our help and support. QMD Materials Department, which swamped us in sheer numbers, couldn't cope with the managing and shipping of the parts.

Their business by now had become a real pain as far as our IPO was concerned, and because of their attitude, I would have dumped them in a minute and left them to stew in their own juice and manage it all on their own. Unfortunately I had a new European IPO manager Wolfgang Zenger, who was useless when it came to hardball, he just didn't have the right stuff to kick them into touch. He would rather suck-up his way in management circles that might help him climb the ladder. It was at this juncture I realised I had zero faith in Zenger's capability and management style. His primary aim was not that of his team, but that of what's good for Wolfgang. More on him later as I gave him a few headaches over time.

### **31. NWEIPO Style...**

Prior to me going fulltime IPO, I and my team had created and set up the whole subcontract supplier base from absolutely nothing. It was a task that had never been attempted before. Identifying potential suppliers was one thing, having them make parts to the exacting and demanding specifications of HP standards was another. I had the team together that knew how to make things and we had the reputation with the suppliers of a good supportive group to work with and those suppliers rose to that challenge, time and time again we would get preference over their other customers.

We had proven to the suppliers just how capable our IPO was. The SPC Supplier Seminar was a big feather in our cap, not just with the suppliers but also with Government Agencies like the IDA Irish Development Agency, as well as our HP customer divisions.

Finding the suppliers and teaching them to think HP and IPO was a big learning curve for both the suppliers and us. The suppliers also began to realize that “The HP Way” was also applying to them, a factor which proved crucial in the months and years ahead. At the beginning it was difficult for the suppliers to come to terms with our style, they always thought they were the whipping boy as far as their customers saw them and we came along and stated that we don’t work that way. We wanted them to feel that they were part of HP and our IPO, an extension of my IPO team. Our aim was to create a business friendship and business partnership, where we would work together to satisfy the one and only customer, the customer that bought the HP product.

This approach worked really well and was well accepted, I could see the difference with the suppliers in how they worked with us, against how they were working with their other customers. The suppliers felt at complete ease and unhindered about calling me on any matter that was causing them concern. In fact I told them to call me when HP didn’t keep to the plan. Funnily enough most of the suppliers’ problems revolved around HP Finance and Accounts Payable, which I had to do battle with on more than one occasion.

Initially I wanted our Suppliers invoices paid in Thirty Days, with later a move to fifteen days for some suppliers who offered special concessions on their part, cost reductions or holding special levels of inventory for our benefit. Our suppliers loved it, a customer who paid quickly and promptly, it was a dream come true. It helped ease the supplier’s cash flow no end. Our Finance and Accounts department hated it, they wanted us to stick with the industry standard of Ninety Days! I dug my heels in and persuaded both Jimmy Queen and Bill Oliver of the merits of this change. Both agreed and with Jimmy’s support, it happened.

HP and the IPO as a customer of the suppliers, was now head and shoulders above our suppliers other customers. Not only were we paying them quickly, we were also in there helping them resolve any problems that they had in the manufacture of our parts. This open and friendly working relationship put us to the top of the suppliers customer pile. It gave us huge benefits, when we need that bit extra of unplanned support, the suppliers would bust a gut to achieve it for us. As we had no in-house manufacture, this was a very important benefit to us.

When I offered to the suppliers the benefit of expanding their business via the IPO with HP to the non UK parents divisions in the USA, they leapt at that opportunity, the IPO was offering a free marketing service and a global one at that, the suppliers' sales departments were only too happy to help.

As I said before this was going to be fraught with problems as we were taking work away from those divisions current USA suppliers, and a lot of HP folks themselves didn’t like it much either and would pick faults or create road blocks at every opportunity. Many were quite adept at creating extremely complicated computer mathematical models, which seemed to have some cost multiplier for every minute detail, with further built in allowance for things that just 'might' happen. Boise had one of the biggest and most complicated processes that I had ever seen in a “Landed Cost Model.” Lots of it was totally unrealistic, we eventually created one of our own that was fair and honest. One that we could use to counter the issue some divisions like Boise would throw up at us.

### **32. When things go wrong...**

I’ll never forget the hilarity around one supplier happening. There was nothing wrong with the parts, the supplier had just been a little bit over zealous and had not foreseen what the end result might have been. From a Scottish humour point of view, we thought it was side splitting! Spokane wanted their parts specially wrapped to prevent them from transit damage like scratches and to protect the component finish

etc. Of particular importance were the sheet-metal parts as they could easily rub against each other when in transit. The supplier in this instance making those parts for Spokane was Livingston Precision Engineering (LPE).

LPE, would buy very good quality map paper, this paper came from a printing company, but the paper was of no use as it only had a scrap value due to the map paper having printer faults, in which case it would have just ended up being recycled at a low cost. The paper though was of excellent quality and toughness for the wrapping of sheet-metal work to protect it in transit. In fact Spokane were so impressed with the wrapping paper, they said to us not only were they getting the parts unscathed, but the educational knowledge of their incoming goods personnel on world geography had gone up a notch or two.

Then one day I got this urgent telephone call from my peer Bill Burdick in Spokane, who said, “Wastle what are you trying to do to me!” It turned out that the printer supplier of the paper who had supplied the original scrap map paper to LPE, had run out of this particular print, so they sent to LPE, another faulty printed scrap paper of equal quality. Problem was, this scrap paper was from girlie magazines! The packing guys in LPE, would think nothing of it, but when it arrived in Spokane In-coming Goods Department and the un-packers started to un-wrap all the parts, well they were sticking up pictures all over In-coming Goods Department of topless ladies. I heard afterwards there were a few of their garages at home also lined with these pictures!

The In-coming Goods Manager, gave Bill Burdick a call and said, “Bill you’d better get your butt down here real quick and see what those Scots guys are sending the parts wrapped up in, they’ve changed their process and are using a different wrapping paper.”

Everyone had a great laugh about it, but we were sending parts to the USA wrapped in pictures of topless ladies, at a time when Political Correctness was running rampant across the USA!

However, we made lemonade out of our lemons when this happened, John Thomson in our IPO group came up with a brainwave in sorting out this problem. It was one that would make the suppliers look even more professional. Up to that point all our suppliers were using old scrap cardboard boxes to ship the parts abroad, they were old whisky boxes, cereal boxes, soap boxes, any old cardboard boxes that was the norm, and in fact QMO would receive parts from the USA suppliers in very similar boxes.

John Thomson changed all that. The suppliers believed that those scrap old cardboard boxes were the cheapest option. John Thomson got our own Packaging suppliers onboard, they were going to get more business making boxes for our suppliers, and our suppliers could promote themselves and their products and capabilities. It was a win-win for all, it even got our IPO even more on the map as the professionalism was showing through. It was amazing that something so simple, achieved so much.

### **33. IPO Development...**

In those early days, managing QMO Materials Engineering Department and our embryonic IPO, was really a Godsend for me, particularly as the IPO customers at that time were the divisions in MCG. They were using the exact same parts, plus I now had the contacts there for starting to source their other non QMO components. I pretty much had a captive customer base with which to work. As the IPO business grew, I quickly realized we needed to develop further “The Art of Marketing and Selling,” especially if we were to target other divisions outside our comfort zone in MCG.

Being a Materials Engineer was never going to cut it. I and my IPO team had to learn a whole new set of skills. We needed to develop our Business skills in Marketing and Selling as well as not forgetting to get a

greater understanding of People Psychology. I spent a lot of time reading books on it all. One of the great advantages of traveling back and forth to the USA, the airport shops in the USA are crammed full of business type books, so I would always stuff a few in my briefcase on expenses of course.

I set myself up as guinea pig and attended a lot more courses to suss out if they would be of use to us or not. There was no point in putting other team members through a course that may have proved completely useless to our needs. In the end it made sure that I and other key members in my IPO group attended the better in-house training programmes. Many were aimed primarily at Marketing, Selling, Effective Presentations, People Management, Situational Negotiation, Consultative Processes, Investment in Excellence, Negotiating Contracts, Effective Communications, Working in Groups, Basic Finance, Financial Tools for Decision Making and People Psychology and Body Language, to name a few. I even had set up a course that addressed appearance, what colours to wear and what not to wear, dress that accentuated your appearance when making presentations!

*“But something was missing to help make it click. How could we break the ice?”*

### **34. Breaking the Ice...**

All those courses my team and I attended were a huge help, but we needed more, we needed to find a way that would help to “break the ice.” The answer lay with what the UK is noted for... Humour. The Americans and other nationalities would often comment on the “British Sense of Humour.” From then on I would use humour at every opportunity particularly during presentations and encouraged my team to do likewise. It worked, it could breakdown the most daunting presentation when met by a room full of skeptical strangers and would soon have their total attention.

Humour became an even bigger tool in our toolbox as our IPO started to grow, but to make it really grow into the big time, we needed to focus more of our attention on the other much larger Business Groups, the ones that swamped that of the Test & Measurement Organisation let alone the MCG structure. We needed to break into the Computer and Printer Groups. Humour played a key role in helping us to achieve that break through.

Every time I entered a meeting room I first would have a good look around the room to try and ascertain who was in attendance, looking to try and gain some input that might help me gauge just how to go about making my presentation, it was always useful to spend a few minutes beforehand with my host, there was always something he or she would say that you could use. In most cases when in the USA, you could always crack a bit of humour by exploiting that we were two nations divided by a common language.

On one visit to Roseville, I entered the conference room, there were close to forty people in attendance, each one of them a specialist in their own particular discipline. It was the first time I ever thought to myself, “Oh (expletive), all these specific experts, how am I going to work this?” By the end of the meeting, I needn't have worried, in fact it drove all future thoughts, nervousness and concerns I might have about giving presentations out of my mind.

I kicked off the meeting by introducing myself and said I would give them a presentation on our IPO and on what we have achieved so far. But before I did that, I asked the question, “What questions do you have before I start?” Out came the questions each of which was primarily aimed at their own particular field of interest, these I took note of on a Flip-Chart. I then said, “Let's see how many of these questions get answered and those left I'll deal with after the presentation.” At that point someone said you spell words differently!

Here was a chance to break the ice before I even started my presentation. So with a smile on my face I started to inject some humour, when I replied with, “Ever since America gained independence, standards have been allowed to slip in certain areas, spelling being just one of them. Let me elaborate. It is said that we are two nations, divided by a common language, which is not surprising when you drop the letters U and E from words like epilogue and spell the word tyre with an I, Tire spelled with an I clearly changes the word as it relates to how one can feel. Even the correct pronunciation has been let slip, for instance the word Schedule is not pronounced as schedule. But this slipping of standards also goes into other areas, for instance, the use of silverware when you are dining, I do admit, it does take a certain amount of skill to eat your food with the fork permanently in your left hand and the knife in your right hand, but if you keep up the practice, you will manage it, even to the level that allows you to eat the peas on your plate.

One of the added benefits of you not having to continually swap hands with that fork and put the knife down, you get to eat your food whilst it is still hot.” There were a few hoots of laughter around the room at that point. I then went on to say, “There is another area where we have a difference, holidays as we call them, vacations as you prefer to call them, but even on that you have managed to get the dates all a bit mixed up. For instance, let me give you another example. Thanksgiving Day in the UK is held on the Fourth of July.” There was a second or two silence, then when the penny dropped, there were roars of laughter and applause.

As I turned to get started on my presentation, I said, “So don’t just look upon me as a European IPO Manager, but also as a Missionary who has come here to try and help you find your way.” The presentation was well accepted, although there were still those who had a fear of off-shore sourcing, and even with all those specialists in their field, I think they were a little surprised I could answer whatever questions they had.

Walt Winchenbach who was Materials Manager in Waltham Division in Massachusetts asked me on a trip I had planned if I would give an IPO presentation to his Materials staff? Walt said they were really wary of sourcing parts outside their local suppliers and as such he met internal resistance from time to time. No problem I could do that.

Waltham was part of the Medical Group which had a manufacturing facility in Boeblingen, similar to what QMD was doing in South Queensferry. The German IPO under Karl Heinz Hartmann would be supporting Waltham in a big way, and I wanted to make sure that Waltham felt comfortable with the European suppliers and the support from the IPO.

I turned up in Boston and made my way to the Division, but I had thought ahead as to what Walt had said about his Procurement team. So I walked into the meeting room sporting a wide kipper tie in the form of the ‘Stars and Stripes.’ Walt immediately noticed it, as did everyone else in the meeting room, Walt said, “That’s some tie John!” To which I replied, “This is my sucking up big time tie.” Laughter spread throughout the meeting room. The ice was broken and the Materials group were more accepting of the presentation.

It always pays to try and gauge your audience. On one occasion I wasn’t convinced the humour might help in getting the presentation underway. I was in Singapore visiting APDO, Asian Pacific Distribution Organisation, they were a big customer of ours and a good supporter of our IPO. Bok Swee Tay, APDO Materials Manager asked me on my visit to give his staff an overview of the European IPO, you only had to ask me once to promote and market our services.

I entered the meeting room, and the first thing I noticed, 98% of Bok Swee Tan’s staff were all young girls. Unlike the USA, some of the humour wouldn’t work. So I tried a different approach to get them on my side. In my overhead slide presentation package I had made an overhead of my two dogs at home,

Molly and Fergus, they were Cavalier King Charles Spaniels, they were always an attraction to people because they looked so cute.

I could use this overhead I thought to myself, so as I pretended to set up the overhead projector, I put up this overhead slide of my two dogs and adjusted the picture on the screen. Ooo's and Aahh's came from all those young ladies. They all immediately wanted to ask me about my dogs, what their names were and then tell me about theirs and that they all met on a Sunday to walk their dogs in a local park. The ice was broken and the presentation was well accepted.

Bok Swee Tay said to me later, "That was a clever move John to get my ladies to pay attention, and I didn't know they all walked their dogs on a Sunday."

After that, whenever I had to do a presentation on one of my visits to Singapore, I had to give an update on how my dogs were doing!

### **35. IPO Mark-up.**

The IPO's were funded out of Corporate, but that was about to suddenly change! All the HP Divisions around the world were complaining and balking at the Corporate HPP cost structure. The divisions were having to tighten their belts and were looking for ways to cut out excessive costs. Corporate Procurement seemed an ideal place to start a cost cutting exercise.

HPP now had to defend their corner and in an effort to do that, they could see that if they could divert some of the attention on themselves, it might take the heat out of the situation. HPP decided to cut the IPO's loose. Their argument being, and which was sold to the Divisions, not every division was using the IPO's, so why should they have to pay to keep them going if they were not using them. But, a lot of divisions were using the IPO's and saw the value in them, but they also had to agree that some other funding method was needed.

This gave HPP the opportunity to appear as if they were addressing the Divisions concerns about reducing the costs. HPP decided that the IPO's had to be self-funded and that it had to be achieved within 18 months. HPP applied a mark-up to those divisions who used the IPO's of 2.5%. The Divisions failed to see that HPP were still going to charge the Divisions their costs. Only the IPO cost would disappear, but not if they were using the IPO's. This was a smart move on HPP's part, however over time though, the divisions would start to twig (catch on) and add more pressure to reduce the HPP overhead costs and put a stop to the ongoing mushrooming of HPP. The divisions felt that they could do themselves what HPP was doing. If only we could do similar in the external Public Sector!

This was going to be a big challenge to our IPO, we had lots of customers, but the shipment dollars were small and with that 2.5% mark-up, we'd really struggle to make ends meet. However, we made it, by the skin of our teeth and without making any cut backs that would have affected our ability to support our customers. In fact every year after that we were in a surplus in our mark-up earnings. That allowed us to do even more. With the extra surplus that we didn't use, going into HP UK HQ. That also gained us a few brownie points with Paul Valler in Bracknell. I was glad it was going there rather than into our host division coffers! Even HPP wanted to get their hands on the IPO revenue, but they couldn't. I'm glad after the way they cast the IPO's adrift, it did add more envy on HPP's part as the IPO's could afford to travel at will in support of their customers.

On the IPO mark-up, divisions started to become more aware that when they totaled up what they were paying the IPO, they could probably do the task themselves. In the end we had to limit the cost of the mark-up to a ceiling of \$100,000, which satisfied the divisions. The only people who actually knew just



how much the divisions were paying in mark-up was us, the IPO's, the divisions didn't have the processes to monitor it. This suited us fine, although we would cap the support cost at \$100,000, that was for each component, in many cases, because of complexity and different components and commodities, we could collect much more than \$100,000 from some divisions.

In what I had initially thought was HPP doing the dirty on the IPO's it turned out they did us a huge favour, we were proving our value to the HP Divisions, so much of the heat was off us. Corporate Procurement on the other hand were still in the same boat and having to justify their existence.

Though we had to become a bit more hardnosed and played a few rounds of hardball with some divisions and even Corporate Procurement who suddenly had to wake up and find areas where they could justify their support and that meant they were about to try and steal some of our IPO lunch. I took great satisfaction and a bit of self-pride at taking on Corporate Procurement, with the sound backing of my Corporate IPO boss Dick Locke.

One of those areas was Power Cords, HPP wanted a share of our income from Power Cord support, they stated it was a HPP Commodity. It may well have been at one time, but they had done nothing in any way to support it, unlike what we had achieved in our IPO, so I was determined they would not get a cent from our revenue.

### **36. Power Cord Wars...**

What we needed was a product that we could Market, Promote and Sell on a worldwide basis. A product that was universal across nearly every one of HP's multi-various Product Groups and one where the dominant supplier was in Europe. At first I didn't realize we had such a product right under our nose, but after thinking about it for a while, it suddenly stared me in the face, it was a product that at present was being supplied by many different country suppliers, and that product was... Power Cords. We had a supplier up and running, Volex Pencon in England about four hours' drive from us. It was also a product that did not have high visibility or attention, which meant we could quietly work away at it without it drawing any undue attention. Giving us time to get established and take full control before it started to appear on the radar screen of others.

This was a product that had extremely difficult technical requirements, a product which demanded even stricter evaluation and testing requirements. It was also a product of high volume and of many country variations, all of which would and did act as a barrier to entry. If the commodity was managed by one central area, our IPO, we could pull it all together, which would create an even bigger barrier to entry.

Our supplier Volex Pencon was already an approved supplier to HP for the UK Power Cord; they also had all the laboratory test equipment to ensure the testing of all the different country Power Cords that we would require.

It wasn't that easy though, there were major challenges and roadblocks ahead that had to be overcome. The first of these was the Euro-Cord. The Euro-Cord was controlled by a German Division materials department and their supplier of preference was Feller in Austria, but they also had a facility in North Shields in England, about two hours' drive from us. Unfortunately, Feller's main laboratory was in Austria. From our IPO aspect, if Feller was the most competitive, then all the Power Cord business would have to fall under the GIPO ownership and management.

The second of these challenges was the USA Power Cord; this was lazily controlled by Corporate Procurement, as was their current USA Supplier. However, as usual, HPP was asleep and was only operating in a reactive capacity. I couldn't, or rather didn't want to open up the procurement of Power

Cords on too many different fronts. But I needed a strategy to address the challenges of making Power Cords an IPO operated, supplied and managed commodity on a global basis.

I kicked it all off by setting up a meeting with Volex Pencon's top level management. As they were already supplying the UK Power Cord they were keen to increase their business globally with HP, so were all ears to what I had to say. My presentation covered all the various different country Power Cords that HP used and the volumes that were involved. I also went on to state that our strategy on how to attack it would have to be one bite at a time, with the first Power Cord being the Euro-cord.

The qualification of Volex Pencon as a supplier of the Euro-Cord was only one step in the process, although Volex Pencon had the laboratory to evaluate and the means to test the Power Cord. They were already supplying some of their customers with every country specific cord-set, but I did not want, at first, to use the Volex Pencon laboratory to do that. We first had to prove that they were capable of doing it. To achieve that we had to get the HP German Division to evaluate the Volex Pencon manufactured Euro-Cord in the German laboratory. If we could do that, then we could use the Volex laboratory to test and evaluate and product the test results for every other country requirement.

The one fly in the ointment, Volex Pencon's cost structures had to be globally competitive, and stay that way. It needed Volex Pencon to not look at each individual country Power Cord in isolation, but to look at the cost structure with all the global country Power Cord Volumes in mind. To make sure we appeared fair, I was going to offer the same opportunity to their main competitor in Europe, Feller in Austria, but via their facility in England and the same opportunity to manufacture the UK power cord. Feller UK though, as I knew would happen, had their Austrian HQ attend our meeting. They were really interested in getting the UK Power Cord and I felt they failed to see the bigger picture of what I was offering.

Overall Volex Pencon over all the different world-wide countries Power Cord were the most competitive. I thought they would be as they took onboard the total size of the business that was on offer, plus they also agreed to test the Euro-Cord exactly to the letter laid down by the German engineers. Feller wanted to stick with their tests for the UK Power Cord. Volex Pencon test results met all the German Euro Power Cord specifications, but, Germany did not want another supplier, so they were finding all sorts of reasons, excuses more like, not to test the Volex Pencon Euro Power Cord. Excuses went from saying they were happy with the proven record of the current supplier Feller, to the cost of Feller's Power Cord.

This reluctance by German to test the Volex Pencon Power Cord was now beginning to really annoy me. At the European Materials Managers meeting being held in Barcelona. I stood up and challenged the German Materials Engineering Manager in front of the whole assembly. I put them right on the spot, much to their discomfort. The German Materials Manager Ludwig Ott could see what was happening and stated to the German Materials Engineering Manager Helmut Wagner, that he should evaluate and test the Volex Pencon Cord. That wasn't good enough for me, I had the bit between my teeth and the momentum of making this happen. I pushed for a date that this evaluation would be completed and that I would be in attendance. If this date was not met, then we would accept the proven test results from Volex Pencon and set them up as another supplier of the Euro Power Cord. Basically Germany was told that the Volex Pencon results met all the specifications, so if Germany was not going to move on this, then the IPO would, whether Germany tested the Power Cord or not.

I had boxed Germany into a corner and forced a timeline from them. Germany had the engineering responsibility for the Euro Power Cord, so getting their approval sealed Volex Pencon's ability to evaluate and test all future country Power Cords I would be channeling through them. Germany did evaluate the Volex Pencon Power Cord and approved it for HP use, but they added to me that they would not use Volex Pencon as a supplier, even though their current supplier Feller had a much more higher cost. This was to get even higher as their volumes dried up and the business came through our IPO. Feller would

complain to the German Division about their lack of volume. By the time that happened, it was too late for them to recover. However, another battle in Germany would follow at a later date.

To maintain a global worldwide price, Volex Pencon wanted as part of the cost reduction that all orders for Power Cords flowed through one source of contact, our IPO. This fitted exactly with our IPO strategy for Power Cords and it meant we were assured of generating IPO income from it. The European Divisions wanted to go direct to Volex Pencon to place their orders, the supplier was in Europe so they believed they had every right to do so. This was true, but those orders would be accepted as coming from different customers and they would not get access to the IPO global price.

Volex Pencon time and again would say to those European Divisions, if you want the global negotiated price, order through the IPO. The divisions, in particular the German divisions, would not give in, they wanted a meeting in Germany with the IPO, Volex Pencon and their Zentraleinkauf, Central Purchasing. Derek Kozer, Volex Pencon Marketing Director and myself, plus on my side Irene' Shirridan who managed our Order Processing and one of Volex Pencon Engineers attended the meeting.

At the meeting, time and again the German Purchasing team demanded that they get direct access to Volex Pencon and they also demanded they get the IPO price as they were part of HP. Time and again Derek Kozer stated the benefits to Volex Pencon of dealing with one point of contact, the IPO and the subsequent benefits to HP in much reduced part costs. Germany refused to acknowledge that with Volex Pencon Dealing with one single point of contact, it allowed them to achieve greater economies of scale, particularly when it came to volume forecasting. Our IPO could pull all the worldwide forecasts together and balance out all the ups and downs that each division would bring, so making it easier for Volex Pencon to balance their production requirements. Volex Pencon clearly stated it cost them more to manage all the orders if they were received outside the IPO ordering channel. It didn't make economic sense for Volex Pencon to manufacture Power Cords at a loss to supply some divisions, when there was a much more cost effective order process channel already in place.

I went onto state that it was not in HP's best interest for our suppliers to take a loss, HP expected them to make a profit, and that was exactly what Germany was asking Volex Pencon to do. Centrale Einkauf didn't want to hear that, especially from me an HP employee. Centrale Einkauf was more or less told, "That's the deal, take it or leave it." If Germany Central Purchasing wanted to go direct to Volex Pencon with their orders, they would be accepted, but not at the IPO global price. Germany's Central Purchasing just refused to accept that the benefits were being achieved by both HP and Volex Pencon.

The whole German Centrale Einkauf argument was stupid really, they were happy that the IPO negotiated a global price, they just wanted to order direct. In fact it was Volex Pencon that stated "It must be easier for them to order via the IPO as it was an internal order as opposed to an external order, so they could free up resources to work on other issues." I could hear my inner self laughing at that sucker punch just landed on the Centrale Einkauf chin by Volex Pencon.

It was during my turn when presenting the IPO viewpoint; I was about halfway through the presentation, explaining all the benefits our IPO brought to the table, with all the global volumes, global co-ordination, order balancing etc. I started to listen to them muttering to each other. I had been studying the German language along with my team.

In Germany they always had a rude habit of conversing round the table with each other in German, knowing full well that others around the table did not understand what they were saying. My schooling had taught me enough, that I could pick up and understand parts of the conversation. This time I picked up something they didn't want me to hear! I heard three of them discussing that the IPO was in the supplier's pocket. At that point I said, "Was ist das?" I slammed my book shut, stood up, "You speak German" one said, and I said, "I understand it enough, and I am not going to sit here and listen anymore to what is being

said behind our backs. We are leaving, this discussion is over, and I am now going to submit a complaint against all of you for stating that our IPO was in the supplier's pocket! The IPO is in no one's pocket!" Their faces changed immediately. Attitudes instantly changed and there was a vigorous attempt to apologise for their behaviour. We stuck to our guns, the meeting was over and as we were leaving, I said, you can do what the hell you want with your Power Cord requirements, but if you want your Power Cords at the global IPO cost, then place your orders through us via the internal purchasing order process. Battle number two with Germany was over and in our favour. I could have sworn I heard the tune to 633 Squadron in the air!

Germany did place some of their orders via our IPO, but they still ordered some via Feller in Austria.

Back in our host division, they also approached Volex Pencon to order direct at the IPO price, they were told, you can order direct, but not at the IPO price. The Host Division Purchasing Manager, Duncan Turner beat path to my desk. I told him to place an internal order on our IPO, I explained all the benefits the IPO brought to the party, he humphed and walked away. Their orders for Power Cords were placed through our IPO.

The next stage in our IPO strategy was to set up all the other country Power Cords, with the exception of the USA Power Cord, we intended to leave that one till the last, for one major reason, that Power Cord fell under the control of Corporate Procurement, and that battle could wait a little while longer.



Malcolm Newlands had by now joined our IPO team, Malcolm was another key player who would, with his skills and abilities bring lots more business to our IPO. Malcolm took ownership of the Power Cords, they couldn't have gone into more capable hands. Malcolm also saw the benefit of the global business channeling via the IPO. Now our IPO was stronger than ever on Power Cords, so it was now time to evaluate, test and approve the USA Power Cord from Volex Pencon, which we duly did and at a much more reduced cost than the present USA supplier.

The USA supplier started to realize that their volumes were dropping rapidly and contacted Corporate Procurement. They had now been awakened from a deep sleep to wonder what was happening. Eventually they got around to contacting the USA outlet for Volex Pencon and were told they couldn't help as the business was managed by the HQ in England and the IPO. HPP then contacted me about who had approved and evaluated the Volex Pencon Power cord. At this point we sent HPP all the evaluation and test documentation. It shut them up for a little while, not much they could do as our price was so competitive and they tried to get the USA supplier to match it but couldn't.

It was about to get even tougher for the USA supplier as we wanted to reduce the costs even further and make the price be a major 'barrier to entry' from any competitor.

During one of our IPO Volex Pencon Management meetings, Volex Pencon was telling us of their plans to manufacture more Power Cords in Singapore and Indonesia and that they had also bought a facility in Shenzhen in China. Malcolm Newlands and I accompanied by Derek Kozer from Volex Pencon set off to evaluate those new potential Asian supply bases. Volex Pencon in the UK was also undergoing major changes in the manufacturing structure to meet the changing requirements of lower and lower costs. They were adding automated production lines for their UK and Euro Power Cords, this meant of course a

painful downsizing and redundancy of staff. Likewise in their Singapore Manufacturing Plant, it was becoming expensive, so automation was being installed.

It was a different story in Indonesia and China, labour costs were extremely low, with the lowest costs of all coming from China, it was really 'bums on seats' production. On our visits we had a good look at the Singapore facility, it was very modern and up market, but costs were going to be a problem, even with automation. Batam in Indonesia was totally different, though their cost structure was low, it was not as low as what could be achieved in China. That was where we needed the USA Power Cord to be manufactured. Malcolm Newlands and I thoroughly audited the Volex Pencon Shenzhen facility. It was different that was for sure. Labour was in great abundance, all of which were girls from the hinterland. They would come to the factory and live in the factory dormitories, and they had kitchens for cooking. They ate, slept and worked on the factory premises. They would do this for about four years, then go back to where they came from with a pocket full of money that would keep them for the rest of their lives, or be used as a dowry. It was not really our issue, as long as the people were being respected properly and were treated fairly. It definitely was nothing that we in the western world was used to, but it worked!

The Chinese method of production, because labour was so cheap, was 100% inspection at every stage of production. An operator would do her little bit of the assembly, pass it to an inspector, who checked it, if it passed, it moved onto the next operator, who passed her work onto the next inspector, and so on down the line till they had the final 100% inspected Power Cord. Needless to say this Chinese manufactured USA Power Cord passed the tough technical evaluation of the Power Cord. In fact it sailed through all the tests! Both Malcolm and I agreed that this form of manufacture would just never work in the western world, the cost structures would be too excessive! It sure worked though in a low cost labour environment like China.

Our sales of the USA Power Cord and all those other country power Cords, grew rapidly. In about a year our IPO was supplying the HP worldwide divisions the lions' share of all the volumes available. It was also around this time HPP really did start to make greater rumbling noises. The USA supplier restated that nearly all their volume for HP had all but dried up. HPP at Corporate contacted me about it, they said they had engineering responsibility for the USA Power Cord and they planned on auditing the Shenzhen Volex Pencon facility. I stated there was no real need for them to do that, as our IPO had carried out a full audit and evaluation and that they were in possession of all that information. In eight weeks' time Malcolm Newlands and I were going back to carry out the annual audit of the company and its total manufacturing processes. HPP said they would come with us. I thought it seemed a waste of money and resource as our IPO had it all covered.

HPP Corporate had by now felt that they had been usurped; our IPO had replaced them on a commodity they felt was theirs, even though they brought zero added value to the party. It didn't matter to them that the IPO's were part of HPP Corporate, they always looked down on the IPO's as second class citizens of Corporate Procurement and never really accepted our existence. This was going to be no different with what they were going to try and do next. I didn't know it then but we were moving head first into a (expletive) contest with HPP Corporate.

We had spoken to Volex about HPP Corporate wishing to take part in the audit and with Derek Kozer's help, organized the visit and to make sure all the appropriate people would be in attendance. With two weeks to go, HPP informed me they couldn't now work to our agreed and planned timescales, and that they planned on going on their own the next week without the IPO and Volex Pencon UK HQ management. There was no way I, or Malcolm or anyone else in Volex Pencon could fit that change in plan around our hectic schedules.

I could only pre-warn Derek Kozer of what I thought they were up to so he could forewarn his management team in Shenzhen to expect them and to look after them on their rushed visit to China. The

HPP Corporate visit to Shenzhen went ahead but un-chaperoned. It wouldn't have mattered either way as they had a hidden agenda, which I would later turn around. That would be HPP's downfall in managing the Power Cord business.

HPP Corporate visited the Shenzhen facility, the week before we were going there to do the annual audit. The Volex Pencon Management in China seemed to believe that the visit went very well indeed. I wasn't that convinced! Two weeks later, when we were in Asia, I was proven correct, the contest on who could pee the highest was about to begin in earnest.

HPP Corporate, without giving me and our IPO the common courtesy of contacting us about their visit. (This was a clear example of what they thought of the IPO.) Issued a memo on their visit to every worldwide division in HP who were using the USA Power Cord supplied by the IPO. They stated that after their HPP Corporate audit, their recommendation was that the divisions who were using this supplier via the IPO, were putting at risk their shipments of final products and even a possible safety stop shipment issue and that the divisions should switch back to the previously approved USA supplier. Their memo was further supported by what they believed was their hard evidence, that evidence was that there was not one piece of Statistical Process Control visible throughout the whole Chinese manufacturing process.

That memo to the world, typically emphasized HPP Corporate total lack of understanding the manufacturing processes in China when compared to western manufacturing processes. HPP Corporate didn't see fit to involve me prior to issuing that memo, they were out to shaft me and our IPO and get the business back to their much more expensive USA supplier. Because of their arrogance, I intended to do likewise and nail their (expletive) in such way it would undermine their authority on Power Cords once and for all. They would later try another backdoor approach, but that door got firmly slammed in their face.

I issued a memo of rebuttal to the exact same distribution that was challenging everything that HPP Corporate had said in their memo, and unfortunately for them, it would highlight HPP Corporate incompetence in understanding the differences between the Chinese and the western manufacturing processes. There was no way I could avoid the embarrassment this would cause them, not that I wanted to. In fact I was reveling in the fact, I was embarrassing HPP Corporate. My memo of rebuttal, was fact based and focused on highlighting the difference between East and West manufacture.

The western manufacturing processes put a lot of misguided trust and faith in Statistical Process Control in manufacturing production, which helps to reduce the high labour costs in manufacture, but its biggest failing is, it means the process can and does accept faulty parts. I went on to explain, that the manufacture of parts in any manufacturing process, follow what is known as a 'Normal Distribution' and when parts fall outside the set parameters of acceptance, they can be accepted as the process never captures 100% good parts. SPC can only warn when a process is moving out of control, so adjustments can be made, but by then, faulty parts can be in the system. I then moved onto describe that the Chinese manufacturing process was 100% inspection at each individual manufacturing operation and that the component part was handed from the operator, to an inspector who inspected the work, then passed it onto the next operator to carry out their part of the production operation. They then passed it to another inspector who checked the work out before passing it onto the next operative, and so on down the line until the product was completed. The end result being that not one faulty part would reach their end customer.

Needless to say after I issued my memo there was no drop off in orders for the USA Power Cord, in actual fact they increased. There were subsequent emails from HPP Corporate to myself and not the HP world. They had lost this war and they hated it and they didn't think too highly of me either, like I was going to lose a lot of sleep over what they thought.

HPP Corporate in their emails to me, would highlight the mountains of scrap parts at the supplier in China and they would tell me that it was HP who was paying for all this mountain of scrap. I responded by saying that I totally agreed, but at this juncture I couldn't care less, we had a worldwide quality Power Cord at a worldwide cost that no one could even come close to matching. Somewhere down the road a bit, that scrap mountain would reduce as Volex Pencon got more and more control of its processes and that in turn would either give us stable prices, or a further cost reduction.

HPP Corporate tried one last approach. They contacted the Volex Pencon outlet in the USA, told them that they had engineering responsibility and that they would be the organization that would negotiate with on the worldwide pricing. They were told by the Volex Pencon outlet, we don't have that authority, they would have to contact the Volex Pencon HQ in England. HPP Corporate knew where that would get them and from then on whenever I was in town at Corporate they were always somewhat cold towards me.

### **37. PAFC Winds of Change...**

HP was growing fast and expanding its markets, it needed more manufacturing divisions and operations around the world, but there was also a far greater competition from HP competitors and an even bigger need to cut costs. Customers could be choosy and they wanted much lower cost products. HP couldn't just keep on adding more and more divisions, particularly as the company was making more acquisitions of other companies. HP's customer base increased, and led HP into newer markets. To continue adding more divisions for its current product range would just add even more cost. What was needed was new thinking when it came to increasing internal total manufacture. The previous process of making everything from the raw material upwards into finished product, had to be changed to enable the lowering cost of manufacture. HP's costs were high; HP was a high benefits company, all which added costs to be paid for in higher prices.

Our IPO was instrumental in helping to drive some of these costs out by the use of external subcontracting. It was only natural that we would meet stiff resistance to change as many of those changes would inevitably lead to loss of jobs, people being retrained and redundancies through downsizing. Right sizing was a word that was more acceptable in the higher HP management circles. But HP's need for external subcontracting was about to explode.

MCG or Test and Measurement had been the founding business for HP, right from those early start up days. Bill Hewlett and Dave Packard, in Palo Alto, had their own internal sheetmetal and machine shop to make everything that they required. It had grown and grown and MCG had its own Manufacturing Fabrication Centre called PAFC, Palo Alto Fabrication Centre, which made everything from the raw material upwards and across all types of manufacturing. They had pressure Die casting, Plastic Injection Moulding, Cable Assemblies as well as the standard Machine Shop and Sheetmetal shop and metal finishing activities. HP would have its own raw Printed Circuit Board Manufacture and Printed Circuit Board Population centers, all of which would undergo major upheavals in the years to come as HP struggled to find the right balance between internal fab and outsourcing.

New HP divisions were sprouting up around the world and those fabricated parts were being shipped all over the world, with the shipping costs, import duties and HP's accounting practices adding further to the cost of those manufactured parts. This was leading to those worldwide divisions becoming less competitive. They had to make their own parts to remain competitive. In a way this was the start of resentment between PAFC and those divisions which had internal low level part manufacture making those parts. That very same resentment arose with our IPO which was pushing to have more of the lower level part manufacture, pushed outside to external subcontractors and suppliers, many of whom had much more up to date equipment than most of the HP divisions. That was how those companies made their living, they just had to be more cost competitive than HP would be.

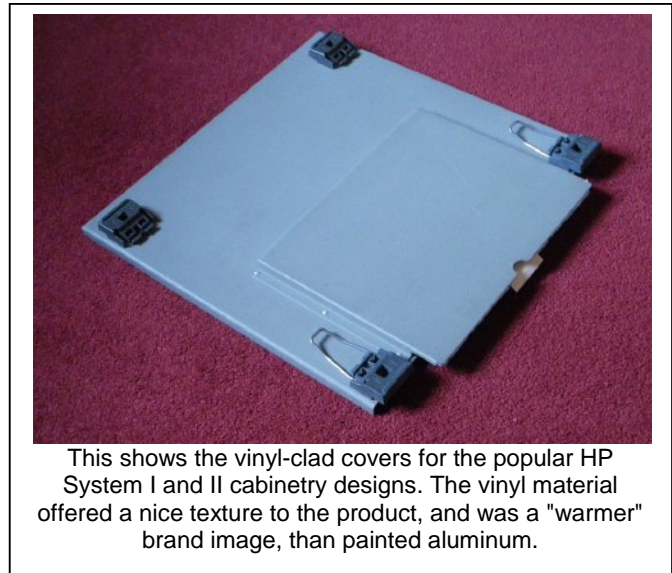
Not all divisions were resentful. The relationship our IPO had with SAD Fabrication Centre was really interesting, but it caused issues between SAD and PAFC as well as with NMD fabrication shop. This led to PAFC and NMD losing manufacturing business, and SAD getting much lower cost parts. The knock on effect to PAFC and NMD was that their cost structures would rise with less parts flowing through them, The writing was on the wall, but no one seemed to read that wall.

The winds of change were about to blow through those two behemoths and many other HP divisions around the world.

### 38. System II Vinyl Clad Covers...

Our IPO compounded the issue for PAFC with the local sourcing of the raw Vinyl Clad aluminium sheet, John Thomson recognised that shipping into the country tons of Vinyl Clad aluminium was adding considerably to the cost of all the thousands of Vinyl Clad sheetmetal covers we were producing, even though our prices were competitive. If we could locally source this special clad material, we could reduce the costs even further.

PAFC recognised this material as a barrier to entry and so maintained their hold over the manufacture of these System I/II covers. One of the major stumbling blocks was the pebbled finish applied to the Vinyl during the rolling process. As a result PAFC was totally against us setting this material up locally. John Thomson spoke with Andrew Murray, Marketing Director of Murray International Metals (MIM), who was our major supplier to HP in the UK, and our suppliers, about the possibility of them manufacturing this special Vinyl Clad Aluminium. He presented them with the estimated usage of our needs, and then the potential level of business available, if we could reduce our costs.



MIM were very interested, they took away samples and eventually came back with a proposal. The only real expense was the special roller that was needed to roll on the Vinyl to the aluminium. They had tested the adhesive to be used and could obtain the exact same, the Roller was the crucial element. This was going to be another flyer, but there was one fly in the ointment! There was a tooling charge for the roller, the supplier wouldn't pay it as it was a risk and they didn't want left with a roller of no use to them or any of their other customers. Our IPO had no tooling dollars in our budget, and as we were a support organisation, we never would have a tooling budget. I had thought, why don't I just go ahead, who would know, but sure as anything the auditors would stumble on it and I'd be in deep doo-doo! We had to find another way.

I approached Bill Oliver and Jimmy Queen with the proposal to reduce QMD's costs on the System II Vinyl Clad Aluminium Covers. Both Divisions on site used thousands of them and I explained the extra costs we were incurring by shipping tons of the raw metal sheeting into our suppliers, and as they were buying it from the USA supplier, they were applying a markup of around 15%. Our IPO calculations showed massive saving that could be made if we purchased the Roller, but to make that happen, QMD had to come up with the tooling dollars. The numbers spoke for themselves and the tooling dollars were made available.



I had intentionally, only mentioned the benefits to QMD and QTD, but there was also going to be a lot of business for our IPO. Later on we would be able to let the QMD engineers deal with supporting the roller, which saved us some engineering support.

PAFC tried all ways to stop our supplier from being approved, they could see what was happening and that they would lose more business to the IPO as we went after the other System II Cover business to the other division users. PAFC failed in their attempt to stop our supplier getting approval, and we knew they were in for more headaches as we approached the other user divisions, we would even send parts as far as Japan.

Our IPO couldn't capture all the Vinyl Clad Cover business, there were still a few divisions with their internal fabrication shops who would want to buy the raw material from our supplier, I didn't make it widely known that it was available, as there wouldn't be anything in it for the IPO as we didn't own the tooling, we just wanted to supply finished covers as a product. It came out in a discussion I had with Karl Heinz Hartmann regarding what we were doing on the System II Covers. Unfortunately he let it slip to the manager of the German in-house Fabrication shop. They knew they might have trouble with me, so they lobbied their Manufacturing Manager Robert Hofgaertner. Robert was a friend of our IPO as he had supported us, along with Jimmy Queen, in getting the System II Pressure Die Casting business into our UK supplier.

This was slightly different in as much as the German Fabrication Shop could just order the raw material and make its own covers. Really there was nothing I could do and as Robert Hofgaertner was helping us in another key area; it was time to repay that support. In a way though, the German purchase of the raw material, still helped us in the IPO, as the volume usage went up, so costs stayed fixed. It also meant that PAFC had to pay more for their raw Vinyl Clad Aluminium, as their volume usage declined, they did of course have the option of buying the material through our IPO, or even to buy the raw material from our supplier. There was no way our IPO could create a road block to them to do that, but with their mindset, they refused, preferring to stay with their current supplier. Myopic decision on their part as their costs would increase further for their finished products, making our IPO even more competitive. It was no surprise that this was another situation that would lead to the downfall and eventual nonexistence of PAFC. They always failed to put the HP division customer first.

Our IPO had lower cost metal fabrication subcontractors and now a lower cost raw material supplier, but still PAFC were arrogant enough to keep with the same old way. Their management had a lot to learn, but never would.

PAFC current HP division customers gradually came more and more to our IPO for their needs. The covers were standard parts, once they were set up for one user division, the other divisions could buy from us almost immediately, this gave us access due to increased volumes, and of course yielded cost reductions.

PAFC resentment towards our IPO would continue to grow. They had a complete mind block towards our IPO, they saw us as the enemy, and not part of HP, which we all were. They had a chance to embrace the IPO and what we had to offer, and be



The standardized System II cabinets harmonized ALL HP products, and provided enormous savings by avoiding unique designs for the cabinetry of new products. In addition, the product styling was a brand image that projected quality.

seen as trying to meet the changes their customers were demanding of them. They were too focused on what I and our IPO was doing. In the future they would even try to get me fired for blowing the whistle on them, without much success, I had too many friends in the divisions on my side.

Their resistance to change would cost them even more!

### **39. PAFC System II Pressure Die Castings...**

All of Test & Measurement Products were designed around a family of standard packages, originally System I and now the new design, System II. These designs were able to cover various packaging options to cover the different sizes of finished Instrument Product. The basic box frame, before the inclusion of the electronic assemblies filled the box, consisted of a Pressure Die Cast Front Frame, a Rear Frame, and Side Frame or Side Struts, along with the Vinyl Clad Aluminium Top and Bottom Covers. Our IPO was well on our way to supplying the Top and Bottom System II Vinyl Covers.

It was time to turn our IPO attention towards those System II Pressure Die Castings. We had the ideal Pressure Die Casting supplier in JV Murcott who was currently making the 'Scrumpy' Pressure Die casting, along with 'Precision Machining' who was finishing off the completed article. John Thomson and I decided it was time to get both these suppliers to look at these Pressure Die Cast parts, and in particular to quote on first the Side Frames and Side Struts, and the Rear Frames. The Front Frames we could leave for present as they were much more involved. It's best to learn to crawl first before walking, it was also the quickest route into supplying these parts and would be readily acceptable by the other user divisions.

Once again we proved that those two suppliers, JV Murcott and Precision Machining, were extremely competitive. In most cases the tooling costs could be written off in a matter of a few months. I put the feelers out to my contacts in the other user divisions, whom we were already supplying parts to, they were all very interested, in particular, Germany. One of their Manufacturing Managers, Robert Hofgaertner, got into bed with Jimmy Queen on what we were trying to achieve. PAFC would soon have to sit up and take good notice of our IPO and this new threat to their domain, especially as other divisions had now shown their interest and in Germany's case, active participative support at Functional Management level.

PAFC had their heads buried in the sand and was trying to ignore what was going on around them. For that reason they were ripe for the picking. I could pick and choose which parts to pick them off on, they were too busy trying to defend their corner, rather than address their problems. I lobbied Jimmy Queen and said we have to go this alone, PAFC are paying zero attention. Jimmy replied that there was going to be a Test & Measurement Manufacturing Managers Meeting held in South Queensferry the next month. Carl Nale would be in attendance, along with Robert Hofgaertner. Jimmy Queen was organizing the meeting and said, I'll clear a spot for you to raise the issue, and then we'll see what the outcome is before we make any decisions on where we go from here.

This was a smart move on Jimmy Queens's part, if we could get PAFC commitment, then they would have to fund the tooling dollars. I made my presentation to Carl Nale, who was obviously not a happy camper. But the savings were too great to ignore, and of course there was lobbying going on in the background that I was not party to. PAFC could no longer ignore us, so they made a concession, they wanted to keep control over what was happening. That involvement meant they had to spend their tooling dollars. So they agreed that after supplier evaluations, our IPO could set up and supply some Rear Frames and Side Frames firstly to the non USA divisions. I knew this was the thin edge of the wedge, but I was also fully aware that it would be only a matter of time before our supply would escalate as the other divisions within the USA, demanded access to the lower cost parts.

PAFC thought they would complicate the process by stating they wanted to see what was available throughout Europe, but I had that all covered. No problem, I thought and immediately pulled together and organized a supplier evaluation programme of supplier visits which covered, UK, Germany, Switzerland and Italy supplier bases. I was able to also call on the support from both the German and French IPO's. Karl Heinz Hartmann, who wanted Robert Hofgaertner to see he was supporting our IPO endeavors, and also Pierre Lavissiere our IPO Manager in Grenoble. Pierre and I were great buddies, so I knew we could put on a good show.

#### **40. PAFC Euro Trip...**

This trip was to turn out to be so much fun and not as stressful as I thought. Attendees from PAFC were Carl Nale Manufacturing Manager, who saw himself as an expert in the finer things in life such as Opera and fine wines! Bill Sullivan, who also saw himself as a man of the world, whom I found out later was a submariner on a nuclear submarine but quit as his conscience wouldn't let him push the nuclear button if he had to. The other attendee from PAFC was Walt Menge, a straight, really nice guy who always put a balanced look on things. From our side would be myself and Duncan Turner from QMD. Duncan was QMD Purchasing Manager. When in Germany, we were supported by Wilhelm Boeckler, a nice but quiet sort of lad and Hartmut Wuerfel, a quiet sort also. Both worked for Robert Hofgaertner, who had instructed them to give us all the support we needed. When in Italy, Pierre Lavissiere would help organize things. The trip was to cover not just Pressure Die Castings, Sheetmetal Fabricators and Machine Shops, PAFC also wanted to look at Plastic Injection Moulding companies.

Germany wanted us to visit a Pressure Die Cast Company in Germany called Stotz and their Machine Shop, which was in Switzerland. Although their Machine Shop in Switzerland was very good, there was no way Stotz could handle the Pressure Die Casting side of the business. This rather annoyed me, as I felt Germany knew exactly what was required to make those System II Pressure Die Castings, unless of course this was deliberate on their part. We also visited Plastic Moulders who were making parts specifically for the Automobile Industry, not exactly a good fit. However, our American colleagues from PAFC enjoyed their visit to Germany, but complained that it took too long to pour a glass of Pilsner and that there was too much meat to eat! They were somewhat tickled though, by the automatic flushing of the urinals and the automatic switching on and off of the wash hand basin taps! They obviously didn't get out much!

It was similar on the visits in Switzerland, but in this case we visited Machine Shops of extremely high volume using Swiss Auto's, again not a good fit. One of the reasons for doing this was that this Swiss supplier had a USA company just down the street from PAFC and they were a supplier to HP. It was as if the PAFC folks were on a touring holiday, they wanted to see some of the sights.

Next stop was Italy. Pierre Lavissiere had done us proud, he got HP Italy Marketing involved. Pierre had lined up a number of companies around the Milan area in the North West of Italy and in the North East of Italy around the Venice area. He set up visits to Zanussi, Europe's largest 'White Goods' manufacturer, which did subcontract work. We flew into Milan where Pierre met us and took us to the hotel. He drove one car and I drove the other. Straight away the PAFC guys liked the hotel Pierre had chosen, I knew he would do a good job. That evening before dinner we gathered in the bar, they had the best olives I have ever tasted, I guess the PAFC guys thought so as they kept going up to the bar to get the bar man to keep filling up the dish. So he ran out of those olives, they cleared his jar full. Pierre said that next morning the Italian Marketing guy would join us and he would show us the way to all the suppliers.

Next morning sure enough, our HP Italian support Giuseppe turned up right on the dot and was raring to go, we didn't really need him as everyone we met spoke better English than we did! However, he would be a great guide, and teach us how to drive in Italy! As I was just about to find out! We left the hotel in a convoy of three cars, Giuseppe in front, me driving the second car and Pierre bringing up the rear driving the third car. We were only two minutes on the road and we hit the Milan rush hour traffic, so we were ground to a halt waiting to access the Superstrada. I could see Giuseppe ahead of me



The PAFC, Palo Alto Fabrication Center, team visits Italy.

looking at the traffic jam and looking around him to see if there was an alternative, we could see the Superstrada across a field to our right. The next minute, Giuseppe, turned his car into a field towards the Superstrada, so I immediately followed, and close on my heels followed Pierre. I thought to myself, what on earth is this guy up to?

Giuseppe, draws up at the edge of the Superstrada, I thought to myself again, 'He's waiting for a clear space and then he'll quickly turn right and we'll shoot off down the motorway.' Oh boy, how wrong was I, he was waiting for a clear space alright, but on the far side going in the other direction! We shot straight across the motorway, onto the motorway on the other side and turned left going up it in the correct direction. I just about (expletive) myself as I followed him, I could hear the expletives coming from the PAFC folks in my car as I was too busy concentrating on what the (expletive) was going to happen next!

We arrived at the first supplier, safely I may add, I said to Giuseppe, "What the hell was that all about? "Ahh John, we were running late, we would have been much later if we had waited in that line to get onto the Superstrada!" I soon learned to drive like an Italian with Giuseppe as my teacher over the next few days!

The first visit went very well, very good plastic Moulding Company, though their main business was in support of the Italian automobile industry. They took us all for an excellent lunch to be appreciated with good Italian wine. Carl Nale, who saw himself as an expert in this (wine) field, enthused about the wine and talked about the Opera in La Scalla in Milan. Pierre knew each supplier visit would take a day, as lunch was part of the programme and could not be rushed. We eventually made our way up to a hotel on Lake Garda for our meeting next day at a Sheetmetal Fabrication supplier.

Lake Garda is a beautiful part of Italy set in a mountainous area, Driving the narrow roads were a bit of a challenge, but it was funny how the PAFC guys in my car were suddenly very appreciative of my driving ability. The visit that day was to another Plastic Moulding Company and their Toolmaker. Once again, both were excellent companies, and again we were off for another long business lunch in an absolutely beautiful restaurant with panoramic scenic views out the windows. Once again our PAFC wine expert was soon singing the praises of the wine our host had ordered, whilst boasting at how knowledgeable he was. Nale said, "The wine yesterday was superb, but the wine today, surpasses that!"

Next day we had to drive a little way to Breccia, again in such a beautiful part of the country. This supplier had an internal Machine Shop and was another Toolmaker, their main line of business was making parts for guns! Pierre had picked the companies well. They also were excellent hosts and tour guides. After the business side was competed, they issued each of us beautiful hard backed Italian books, either on guns or, Italian history and the beauty of the region.

This time though, we were to leave our cars and they would take us for lunch. The company cars were Maserati! I got in beside the Managing Director; he had the top of the range model. Wow! What an

automobile, he and his staff drove us to his Private Club for lunch. As soon as we entered the Club, we were treated like royalty and shown to our seats; our host snapped his fingers, as almost immediately the wine was being poured.

Our host was deep in thought and reading the one and only menu, as we started to sip on our wine. As before, our travel along American wine expert, sipped on his wine, and gave his now usual spiel, "This wine is unbelievable, the first day the wine was superb, and yesterday it was even better, and today, I've just never tasted wine as good as this anywhere." Carl Nale had no sooner finished his sentence, when our host had just tasted the wine, and immediately spat it back into the glass and shouted, "This wine is awful, take it away!" He hadn't been listening to our pet wine expert. The waiter quickly removed to wine from the table to be just as quickly replaced with another that met our host's approval. We all sort of looked at each other, trying to hold back from bursting out laughing at Nale's expert advice on the wine. Carl's expertise in this (wine) field had suddenly turned into his (mine) field! After that Carl never uttered another word about the wine that was placed in front of him. Pierre and I, almost split our sides later reminiscing about the story over a beer back in the hotel.

It was a bit of a long journey, when we left Breccia, we had to head east towards Venice on Italy's busiest Superstrada, but I was an expert by now! We were on our way to visit Zanussi, a massive White Goods manufacturer, which was also doing subcontract work to help feed their massive fabrication capability. They could do everything from Pressure Die casting, to Plastic Injection Moulding, to Sheetmetal, to Machining. Although they were very impressive, their main business was for White Goods and the Automobile industries, they were not really an ideal fit. Unlike the other Italian companies we visited, they were quoted on the Stock Exchange so had shareholders to report to, the other companies would have been so much easier to work with.

With those visits on the continent over, it was time to travel to the UK and show the PAFC guys what I had lined up to do the work on their System II Pressure Die Castings, as well as those who were making other parts for us, including the System II Covers. First stops would be Fry's and JV Murcott in England and both doing Pressure Die Casting. Fry's was the first stop, a big company again quoted on the Stock Exchange, although PAFC saw what they wanted to see, I could see they were not switched on to them.

JV Murcott's was next. The whole team visited both Pressure Die casting Facilities as well as their own Toolroom, so not only did the PAFC folks get to see the Die casting shops, they also saw where the tools would be made and the equipment on offer. Needless to say, some considerable time was spent going over the 'Scrumpy Die Casting'.

As was usual when visiting JV Murcott, lunch was always set in the boardroom and as always was excellent in choice. As we were staying two days at JV Murcott's we all went for dinner that evening.

Dinner that evening was to turn out to be a huge laugh, at Walt Menge's expense. Walt had this raging thirst, the minute we sat down at the table, Walt asked for a glass of water, it was no sooner poured and the waiter starting on the next person's glass, when Walt requested a refill, his glass was refilled four times by the time the waiter had worked his way around the table. As soon as the first order was being served, Walt asked for another refill of water, and a few minutes more, requested yet again another refill. This time the waiter disappeared and returned with what looked like an enormous flower vase, full to the top with water and ice, the waiter promptly deposited it in front of Walt, I'm sure he was saying to himself, "Now drink that sucker!" Walt looked at the huge flower vase, then looked at the waiter, and said, "Now why didn't you bring that to start with?" The whole place erupted in laughter, and Walt's thirst was at last sated!

We all moved back to Edinburgh, and spent time at Precision Machining. I had asked for working lunch as I wanted to focus on what they were going to do, the Euro holiday trip was past, now it was serious, as it

was in JV Murcott. PAFC could see that Precision Machining had all the equipment required, they also had internal electro-plating and painting facilities, so the finished product could be easily achieved.

Next we took PAFC to Livingstone Precision where the System II covers were being made, along with other HP parts, they also saw they too had Plating and Painting facilities as well as Front Panel Silk-Screening, which is a tough HP standard to meet.

#### **41. PAFC Aftermath...**

The Euro trip was over and at a meeting in South Queensferry PAFC totally agreed with my choice of suppliers. We had all the volume numbers on all the Pressure Die Cast parts, there was no way we could allow the PAFC folks to just go home and deliberate on what they had seen on this trip, I was impatient to get parts identified and to start to get the ball rolling. At the meeting PAFC, in particular Carl Nale could see the push was on and he didn't want to be seen as being negative, they had already discussed this amongst themselves, so PAFC proposed a plan where we would first address a Rear Frame and a couple of Side Struts. That met with my agreement, but I also wanted a follow up plan that would list the next stages, for more Struts and Rear Frames, and we got full agreement with those also. Part of that agreement was that PAFC would not replace Die Cast tooling that had been planned for those parts for their internal machines, but for it to be spent at JV Murcott for their needs.

Having now got agreement on what parts were going to be manufactured in Europe, I also stated it was important for those suppliers to get an in-depth understanding of the manufacturing process in Palo Alto in the PAFC fabrication shop, as this would be a big help in foreseeing any production problems that may arise throughout the full manufacturing process. To my amazement everyone thought this would be a good idea to carry out.

I set about and organized that our identified suppliers, JV Murcott and Precision Machining along with me would spend time visiting PAFC in Palo Alto. The suppliers were amazed at being able to do this, but signed up immediately, they also thought that seeing the actual production up front on how to make the parts, should allow them to avoid any pit falls or snags and hopefully make it easier for them to manufacture the parts in their own plants.

It all went smoothly after the visit to PAFC, and the parts were soon up and running without too much hassle or problems. We were supplying the non USA divisions with some of the System II Die Castings. However it wasn't long until the parent divisions of QMD also wanted access to those cheaper System II parts, they wanted to lower the costs of their products. End result was our IPO was soon supplying the worldwide demand for those parts, it also helped speed up the transfer of more Rear Frames and Side Struts and Side Frames, much to PAFC's dissatisfaction and resentment. They were being forced into exiting some of their business, long before they really wanted to give up control.

What they should have done in PAFC, was to start reorganizing and planned downsizing, but not them, as business was booming, any thoughts to downsizing was pushed out of mind into the background, a decision they would regret and not that far into the future either!

There was another growing problem, PAFC resentment started to grow apace, they didn't like seeing their work and jobs starting to disappear and move overseas. They didn't think that the reason for this was due to their uncompetitiveness, nor did they even try to address that issue, PAFC should have been looking at focusing on where they brought added value and not at doing everything at any cost. That myopic thinking would hit hard in few more HP divisions. Their actions always were defensive, where they would try and protect what they had, they were all in for a major shock to their system.

The resentment grew in PAFC, and at one point I got a private call from a friend in Stanford Park Division in Palo Alto, to make sure I always watched my back when visiting PAFC. There were people there who didn't like what was happening and I had a good possibility of coming up against some violence. From then on in, whenever I was visiting PAFC, I did not let anyone know on the PAFC site any of my planned details or schedules or even the whereabouts of where I would be staying or traveling to. I didn't even park my car in the PAFC car park, I would park it a block or so away and walk into the facility, using a different route on each visit.

#### **42. PAFC Failure to Change...**

The arrangement for our IPO to supply the worldwide HP divisions with high volume Rear Frames, Side Struts and Side Panels Pressure Die Castings, was highly successful during all the boom period for the Test & Measurement Divisions. This was about to change as the boom times were coming to an end, and the Test & Measurement Product lines were having a bad time due to market down turns and stronger price competition within the marketplace, by major competitors. Although the Test & Measurement products were in nearly every case the market leaders in technical capability, they were nevertheless starting to feel the pinch of the market downturn.

Throughout the Test & Measurement Organisation, this downturn included PAFC, who were now beginning to realize the error of their ways by not addressing the affects that out sourcing would have on their organisation and manufacturing capability. By not downsizing or right sizing, when they had the proper opportunity to do it, that led them inevitably to being over staffed and unable to manage effectively the sudden work load changes being thrust upon them. The result was PAFC Management were about to make yet another ill-considered management decision.

PAFC Management made the decision, without even considering discussing with the IPO, or their HP customers, or thinking of the impact their decision would have on HP external subcontractors, that they intended to repatriate all those lower cost external manufactured, subcontracted Pressure Die Cast parts. The intent was for in-house PAFC manufacture, to keep their employee's working. One of the PAFC management team, who totally disagreed with this negative backward step, let me know on the quiet what was being planned.

It was obvious that PAFC were giving no thought to the downstream effects that this crazy decision would have down the line. It would affect not only the other HP worldwide divisions, but also the severe damage it would cause to supplier relationships. No way was I prepared to let something of this nature happen without a fight. I issued an e-mail to all the HP worldwide division customer users, whereupon I blew the whistle on what PAFC were planning on actioning. Boy, the (expletive) soon hit the fan in a big way; I hadn't realized just how much support I had with those user divisions. To a man, they all kicked back against PAFC, and all told them they should be addressing their over-staffing issue and leaving the low cost parts with the current subcontractors.

The pressure was so great on PAFC, they had to leave all the high volume parts with our IPO subcontractors, and PAFC would only take back the much lower volume parts, but they also had to supply them to the worldwide divisions, at the IPO cost! PAFC may have kept a few people working, but it was now costing them even more to do that, creating a further financial loss at PAFC.

I was able to work that decision outcome to the IPO suppliers as a benefit to all. It was easier to sell that decision to the suppliers as spreading the workload during difficult times between both HP and the suppliers. But also I pointed out it was even better for the suppliers, as they would still have the higher volume parts and removing the lower volume parts from them would ease their inventory levels and improve costs.

The suppliers viewed this approach as a true example of good customer/supplier partnership. The worldwide HP user divisions had also won a breakthrough. They still had IPO pricing, no matter where the parts came from, and an understanding from PAFC that when the markets improved, PAFC would return those parts to our IPO suppliers for manufacture back via the IPO. There was also a commitment on PAFC's part that they would also fully address a downsizing programme to get the balance correct.

It has to be recognized that when I issued the whistle blowing e-mail, PAFC management were not just absolutely furious, they were fit to be tied! To state they were mad and angry at me, just doesn't cover it. They would have liked to have had me fired for causing them all that embarrassment, but by then they were too late, I also had powerful allies lined up behind me defending my back. Jimmy Queen was one of them, Thomas Hofgaertner in Germany was another. I also know that Spokane got on the phone to PAFC the minute my e-mail hit their in-trays. This meant of course that PAFC just could not muster the forces to damage me; they paid dearly for their arrogance and by not informing me about their internal issues and their crazy solution to deal with them.

Looking to the future PAFC knew full well that they would have to keep an eye on me and not try any more stupid decisions that just did not make economic sense. They wouldn't underestimate me again in future. I also was more acutely aware that I had to watch my back whenever in PAFC's back yard, or elsewhere that I came in contact with them, though I was already doing just that.

#### **43. IJBU Filters...**

Our IPO, in this case John Thomson, received a request to try and source a mesh Filter, The request came from Ken Rick in IJBU (Ink-Jet Business Unit) Corvallis Oregon. IJBU were currently buying this converted mesh filter from a supplier close to their facility. IJBU's supplier was converting the raw mesh material into the finished Filter product. Their supplier was buying the raw mesh from a supplier in Europe and he refused to reveal which company and from which country that raw mesh was being supplied from. This business was a cash cow to him, so why would it be in his interest to give up the name of his source of material. Personally I think that was a mistake on his part as it drove a wedge between his company and IJBU. If he had been more open, I doubt if IJBU would have contacted our IPO, and he would have kept the business.

IJBU's request was to find a source capable of producing and converting this extremely very fine mesh for use as a Filter in HP's Ink Jet Printer Cartridges. The quantities were mind-boggling. John Thomson contacted a few suppliers in the UK. It turned out that this mesh material was used in the aircraft industry in relation to controlling airframe fuel. It had the capability not only to act as a Filter, but it had a flame restrictive action which could stop any blow back from the flame down the fuel line into the main fuel areas of storage. The company John Thomson had identified was GKN, a large well known supplier of components to many industries, particular in the areas of Sintered Products. They did not manufacture the Mesh material, they were converting it into other parts for their customers, but they would turn out to be a much more open supplier than the current one in the USA.

Initially GKN were a little hesitant to get into the business with us. Their sales lady, Frances Horne, was keen, as it was a new business development and her Marketing Director Boss Barry, was prepared to listen. GKN was listed on the Stock Exchange, so trying to get a decision meant it would have to go in front of their Board. Both John Thomson and I went down to Sutton to meet with Frances Horne and Barry and give them a presentation of this new HP IJBU business. We explained that HP was in the throes of overturning the Computer Printing world with its relatively new invention of Ink-Jet printing. Barry was impressed and immediately switched on to our request, and agreed to champion it at the next Board



Meeting. He met some resistance, but convinced the other Board members that GKN should get into this new extremely high volume Ink-Jet Printer Cartridge business.

We were off, GKN, identified who all the main players were in the wire mesh industry; there were only two areas where this material was woven, Germany and Switzerland. The good news was that GKN already had contact with all the major Wire Mesh players in this industry. With Frances in tow, both John Thomson and I set off to give the suppliers a preliminary audit; we would later carry out further audits with the IJBU Procurement Teams. On our first preliminary audit we were pleasantly pleased. We would stay with GKN, as we needed a converter to convert the raw mesh into finished product, plus they had years of experience in working the wire mesh into other shapes.

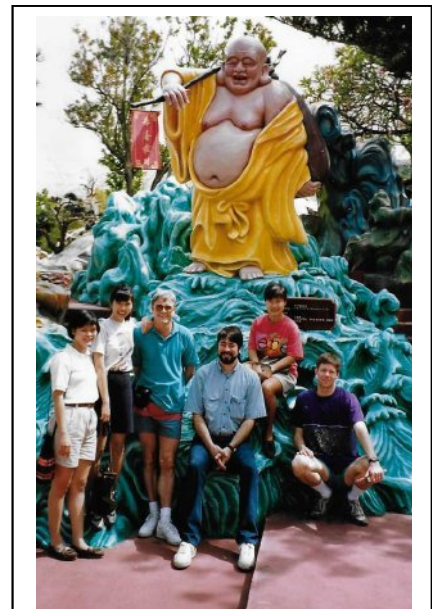
We requested a quotation from GKN on the finished Mesh Filter. The current USA supplier had been supplying IJBU with Filters at a cost of 38 cents each. Overnight we were able to go back to IJBU in Corvallis with our GKN cost of 18 cents each. IJBU couldn't believe it; you don't have to be a rocket scientist to realize that millions of these Filters were being used each and every month, with newer models for new Printer coming on the market. IJBU was now a strong ally of ours.

IJBU, wanted to audit the suppliers, not a problem with GKN, though the Mesh suppliers were very protective of their business, but in the end all but one agreed. The one that was really hesitant, turned out to be the worst of all the suppliers. The audit team from IJBU Corvallis was Ken Rick Buyer and Bart Hunter Engineer. Both John Thomson and I accompanied by Frances Horne would visit three mesh suppliers, Bopp in Switzerland, Paul in Germany and Haver and Boechler in Germany. The volume of mesh we would be requiring would be high, and the timeline to weave extremely fine Mesh was considerable. A weave of a certain size could be on the one loom for many weeks, which meant we would require a number of looms in operation at the one time. It turned out we would have a number of looms in operation ALL the time. We decided on using two suppliers, Bopp in Switzerland and Haver and Boechler in Germany, they were by far the undoubted leaders in their field, it took a while to earn their trust, but they came round to knowing that HP would not share anything from either company with the other company.

We would have numerous visits to both companies and to GKN in the months and years to come. Both the Mesh weavers and GKN would eventually build a unique section, just for our HP IJBU parts, it was most noticeable in GKN, who created a clean room environment to ensure no contamination took place. The level of business with all three companies quickly grew into millions of dollars. Every time we would visit, they would all lay out the red carpet!

Ken Rick and Bart Hunter, like Steve Slover before, moved onto other projects and the managing of the suppliers and the IPO fell to IJBU San Diego and Karen Kuchar. Karen had been involved and taken part in visits and she assumed the management role. Karen Kuchar was also a strong IPO ally and supporter.

Although each and every raw Mesh supplier went out of their way in showing us excellent



Introducing the Singapore and Corvallis Filter Team. The filters were crucial to proper operation of the inkjet cartridges.



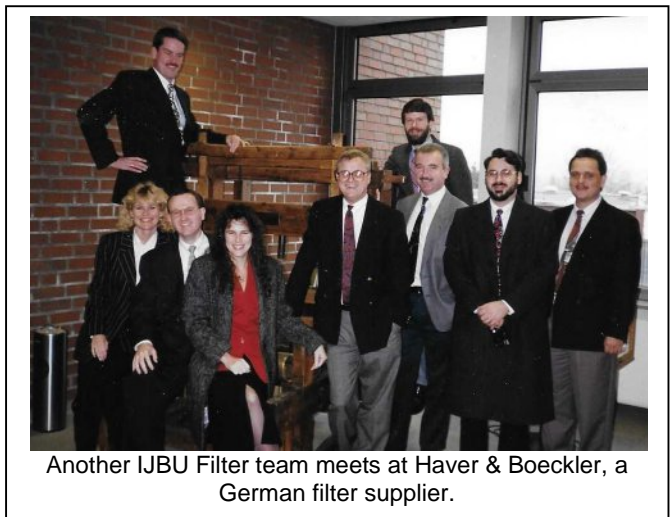
There was also a World-wide Filter Team from CVD, San Diego, Puerto Rico, visiting the UK supplier, GKN.

hospitality, GKN always seemed to go just that bit further. They believed in HP and wanted the partnership developed at all levels, GKN would organize a dinner in the evening where all parties at all levels would be invited on different occasions to join with us to enhance the communications. Those were fun evenings and the IJBU teams really appreciated the special efforts. Over time we also had the IJBU Procurement teams from Puerto Rico and Singapore join us on visits. I arranged the reciprocal of this with supplier visits to the IJBU plants around the world, Corvallis, San Diego, Puerto Rico and Singapore, and eventually Ireland when they came on board.

When we visited GKN in Sutton, they would make a block booking of rooms, but we paid for our own rooms. In the Riber Hall Hotel, a very old hotel with creaky floors and rafters, on one occasion, Karen Kuchar was given the room that overlooked the Secret Garden. She just couldn't believe what was outside her French windows, and she really enjoyed it. The dinners were always exceptional, and GKN always made arrangements that none of us would have to drive, which was very helpful after a few glasses of wine and a Gin & Tonic or two!

JaydaTan, a Buyer and Beatrice Yung an Engineer came on a visit from Singapore. Beatrice had been in the UK before, where she earned her engineering degree; it was Jayda's first trip, so we had to make it especially exciting for her. When the two Singaporean girls arrived in Edinburgh, they were frozen, not used to our colder weather. I had organized a Witchery Tour; it's a walk around the dark old streets of Edinburgh Old Town talking about the witches and ghosts that walked the streets. It started off at Edinburgh Castle, where our tour guide Adam Dalgleish (Deceased) would start his walking tour. The first part was to demonstrate thumbscrews and he need two volunteers, at which point I pushed both Jayda and Beatrice to the front, to be fitted with thumbscrews. They were told they would be left there till the next morning.

Once freed, we all started to walk through all the old closes' and vennels of Edinburgh's Old Town, where every now and then an actor would suddenly appear and carry out an unsuspected act. On at least three occasions, both Jayda and Beatrice let out the loudest screams as some ghoul or other leapt out at them, at one point we had to go and retrieve Beatrice who was half way down the street and refusing to come back! They soon forgot all about the cold, but the looks on their faces from the last bang as the tour ended, said it was time to go and eat some warm food in one of Edinburgh's creepiest and oldest restaurants, "The Witchery".



The IJBU visits both in the UK, Germany, Switzerland, Puerto Rico, Singapore, Corvallis and San Diego were amongst the best memories of all. It's a pity the same could not be said for when IJBU Ireland came on board.

#### 44. IJBU-Ireland...

It's worth mentioning, it was not always IPO versus HP Divisions. A big percentage of divisions were extremely supportive of the IPO and the work we did for them, even though there were lots of times when new men and women would join their new division. One of these events was with the Irish Dublin IJBU facility.

IJBU-Ireland came onboard years after we had set up all the Filters and the other sheetmetal parts. As usual with a new start up in a new country, it was staffed full with so called bright young university graduates, all green behind the ears and pushing hard to make their mark on everything that came across their path. They thought that as they were in Europe, they had nothing better to do than take over completely the control of all the Filter business. They hadn't even added one piece of added value to the whole Filter programme business. They were in Europe, so why shouldn't they take it over, or so they thought!

Unfortunately the stronger commodity management leaders like Ken Rick and Karen Kuchar had moved on to other commodity management positions. The baton was passed to Gary Starr, from Corvallis, to be the IJBU Commodity Manager. Although Gary had always followed in Ken Rick's shoes, he was not made of the same stuff and IJBU Dublin just rode roughshod all over him.

At one of the meetings held in the IJBU facility in Dublin, we were discussing the transfer of a new production line for a new family of Ink-Jet cartridges to be assembled in Ireland. I enquired about the forecasted volumes over the next few years. This Irish university greenhorn, of at the most nine months service with HP said to me, "We can't tell you that! It's confidential HP knowledge that cannot be shared with anyone!" Boy did she (expletive) me off big time; I immediately responded with, "Tell me, how long you have been an HP employee?" "Nine months," she replied. To that I responded, "Well, I've been an HP employee for over 25 years, and have had full access to the most sensitive and secretive of HP confidential information, with a multitude of Divisions R&D departments as well as HP Labs! So tell me again, what makes your information just so special?" She hardly uttered a sentence after that, and from then on, all the volume numbers were always laid out on the table, for all HP parties to discuss. I had little time for the likes of her and the other greenhorns after that.

IJBU Dublin Ireland, wanted to run the whole global IJBU Filter management, and failed. I was wise enough though, to realize they were so green, they would always be a pain for us to support, as they were in Europe and they wanted to deal direct with the European suppliers. John Keogh, who was now managing the commodity for our IPO team, and I discussed with the suppliers the problems that they would meet by agreeing to what IJBU Dublin requested in their agreement. This was to let IJBU Ireland buy direct, with all the other IJBU divisions still working via our IPO network.

It wasn't long though before the suppliers started to complain to our IPO about the chaos IJBU Dublin was causing them and asking us if we could revert back to the single point of contact through our IPO? I told the suppliers that it was too late, and that we had previously warned them that this would happen, but the suppliers in their enthusiasm to please the customer in Ireland, signed up to supplying and dealing with them direct, against our better judgment. It was a problem of their own making, so they had to live with it. IJBU Dublin just could not get a handle on the volumes they would need or not need, they were ordering all the wrong parts and in the wrong volumes. I told the suppliers that you do not stop any of the orders that the IPO places to fit in a screwed up IJBU Dublin rush order. Neither I nor any member of my IPO team was going to get involved in any of the IJBU Dublin screw ups.

What IJBU Dublin didn't know was, that over time, their inexperience in supplier management was being reflected in a slightly higher unit part cost and that their erratic volume parts planning, meant that the IPO would always get priority of parts, just as well those parts were unique to IJBU Dublin and not going to the other IJBU divisions, otherwise our IPO might have found it difficult to explain.

IJBU Dublin's inexperience would show up again on another high volume commodity.

#### **45. IJBU Springs...**

Our IPO, got more involved with IJBU Corvallis. This time it was with sheetmetal parts. Springs that fit inside the Ink-Jet Cartridge Pens. When IJBU Dublin eventually came onboard on this commodity, the greenhorns in Dublin could never understand why we chose a company in Birmingham called Brandeur that made extremely high volume, in the multi-millions of metal Pen Nibs. This, in Dublin's eyes, was not a fit for the types of metal parts that IJBU needed. Once again their immature level of manufacturing experience came to light. They even, behind our IPO backs, stated to Corvallis, that this was not a good-fit supplier for this type of business. Corvallis just ignored the IJBU Dublin inputs and told them this is a Corvallis project and has nothing to do with IJBU Ireland. Seemed to me that the other IJBU divisions who had lots of experience had finally found out what IJBU Dublin was like.

IJBU Dublin just failed or lacked the experience to look below the surface at what supplier capabilities were available there. John Keogh and I as well as the Corvallis engineer, who had worked with us on the Filters and was well aware of our IPO capability, and could see what was needed from the supplier. Brandeur took onboard every detailed input we gave them. They built a clean room type environment well away from their other production lines, to manufacture our parts. They were doing exactly what GKN had done before them with Filters.

Brandeur was a long experienced company with an equally long experienced Tool Room. They excelled in the art of Fine Blanking, a specialist sheetmetal process, and one that recognised the opportunity of moving their business into another discipline.

When Brandeur had our production line up and running, they took great pride in showing it to other potential customers, as long as those customers were not direct competitors to HP's IJBU business. From the outside of the Brandeur Victorian building, one would never have guessed that deep in the bowels of that old building, lay an ultra-modern production line, manufacturing parts in a clean room environment for state of the art Ink-Jet printers for the computer world. The Brandeur Managing Director said to me over lunch one day that the company had started back in the days of quill pens and moved to pen nibs, so it seemed a natural progression to him and his company to move onwards to the latest invention of Ink-Jet Printers... I liked his style!

Our IPO also asked Brandeur to refrain from doing business with any other company that was a direct competitor to HP's Ink-Jet Printer business, that included Printers as well as Ink-Jet Cartridges, which Brandeur fully agreed to do. With our ever increasing volume and new parts, we could more than keep them occupied.

#### **46. IJBU Chip Contact Strip...**

It's not always the green behind the ears straight from University types that display high levels of immaturity, lack of foresight, experience and understanding of the world of supplier management and procurement, whether at home or internationally. On one occasion Malcolm Newlands and I just couldn't believe a decision made by IJBU Functional Management, this time within Corvallis. Corvallis was the parent division in the IJBU global organisation.

IJBU Corvallis on this occasion, clearly demonstrated that those not directly involved in Supplier Management and Procurement, should be kept well away from the decision making. They should have sought out the advice from their in-house experts within their own Procurement and Materials Department, instead of accepting some glorified highly biased intellectual illogical thinking. This had previously been supplied by their peers within the supplying subcontractor high level management.

Our IPO had been contacted by IJBU Corvallis Procurement Department. They wanted us, after past successes, to see if we could identify a European supplier capable of manufacturing their needs for an extremely high volume Chip Contact Strip, which they had sole sourced to 3M in the USA. I asked Malcolm Newlands to see what he could find. True to form, Malcolm identified a supplier in France. What's more the cost of the finished part from that supplier in France would have saved mega millions in dollars to IJBU.

Corvallis Procurement were over the moon at this major breakthrough in cost savings and cost reduction and made a presentation to their Functional Management team. What a huge mistake that turned out to be! It appeared that members of the Functional Management Team had previously been involved in the negotiations with 3M, so there was an immediate resistance to any thought of moving to a new supplier, particularly one that was based in France!

But the savings now on offer via the French supplier were just too big to be ignored. There was no way 3M could even come close to matching those prices. Unfortunately it was members of the IJBU Functional management that set up the previous arrangement, so they decided THEY would contact 3M and the people at their level who they worked with before on the initial set up. Another huge myopic mistake. 3M management stated they could not manage the prices our IPO quoted from the French supplier, so they tried another tack to apply pressure on IJBU.

3M stated they had invested millions of dollars in their R&D to support IJBU, and they needed to cost their parts to reflect this investment, particularly if IJBU would require this 3M R&D support and expertise with IJBU's new product developments in the future.

3M however, recognised that IJBU did have a valid opportunity to reduce their costs, so to make it sound like 3M was playing their part in the partnership; they offered a small cost reduction on their parts. IJBU Functional management swallowed that line, hook, line and sinker. They should have stated that as these parts were now available in the outside market at a much more competitive cost, then 3M were no longer offering a state of the art product. However, IJBU Functional Management couldn't think logically along those lines, so they stated that IJBU would remain with 3M as the primary supplier for all the IJBU production needs.

An extremely bad Functional Management decision. They had within their grasp, the means to control and manage their supplier, 3M. Rather than doing that, they had now basically decided on subsidizing their supplier, instead of maximizing the profit to HP and its shareholders and employees. This IJBU Functional management decision had missed the opportunity to manage their supplier and instead allowed 3M to manage them. At the very least they should have come to an arrangement, where they placed the old cartridge pen requirements via our IPO and with the French supplier. With that move, it alone would have clearly put IJBU in the driving seat with 3M, and 3M would have known it, instead, 3M were laughing all the way to their bank and their shareholders!

It had yet to be proved that 3M had some technological advantage in their involvement in new R&D Products.

If ever there was a clear example required to highlight, that non Materials/Procurement decisions should ever be allowed to be made by those types of people, including Functional Management, then surely this was it.

Unfortunately that will always be the case, there are many Functional Management groups who have delusions of grandeur when it comes to their decisions or capability in a Materials/Procurement environment. Their mindset seemed to be; everyone's a buyer, after all they do it every weekend when they go to Wal-Mart!

#### 47. It's the Polis...

On one occasion I found myself with some extra time on my hands during a USA trip. After I had made all the trip plans and booked all the flights and hotels around all the people I was going to have meetings with, I had completely overlooked the fact that my trip had landed right in the middle of one of those USA long day weekends, for Labour day. This got even more complicated when a couple of the folks I was to meet up with, decided at short notice to change their plans. I was in Roseville and the guy I planned to meet on the Friday couldn't make it. So he said he'd have dinner with me on the Wednesday evening and we could discuss all the aspects then. Not a problem really, I could use the day's extra break. On the Thursday I managed to combine two meetings into the one as another guy wanted to break off early, so I was finished just before lunchtime. With this extra time on my hands I decided to go do some sightseeing as my next appointment wasn't till the Wednesday morning. I decided to take off and drive to Utah and see Salt Lake City.

Utah turned out to be an interesting place. For starters the freeway drove right across the Bonneville Salt Flats and there was some high speed testing going on. Salt Lake City was unbelievably clean, spotless in fact. I managed to have a look around the world of the Mormons and see the Temple etc., though as a non-Mormon, access to the Temple is not allowed. That evening I dined in a nice restaurant, but there was no drinks menu, and I wanted a beer. On asking the waiter, he eventually produced one, but went on to tell me that "Mormons don't drink." to which I replied, "I'm not a Mormon. The waiter brought the bottle of beer, poured it into a small glass and turned away with the rest of the beer that was still in the bottle. I said, "That's not empty, I'd like to finish it." He said he'd bring the bottle back when my glass was empty. Which he duly did, apparently they don't like bottles of alcohol on their restaurant tables in the land of the Mormons, meal was nice though!

Next morning I had decided to turn right and head south to the Canyon Lands and to the North Rim of the Grand Canyon. It was a beautiful morning when I left bright and early, there are times when the deserts are really beautiful, this was one of those times. I could see the road disappear straight ahead into the tomorrow. It was warm, the window of the car was down, the sun was shining and I was blissfully listening to a Country and Western radio station. The road suddenly had this dip in it and sitting in the bottom of the dip was a police patrol car. Before I had completed saying, "Awww (expletive)!" He had turned around and with blue lights and siren was right on my tail, I pulled over.

The cop gets out and walks up to my car, I know enough to stay in the car, no point in getting myself shot. I wasn't greeted with a, "Good Morning Sir." It was, "You're doing seventy in a posted 55 zone!" To which I replied, "Where was it posted? This road has been as straight as a die for the past fifty miles." Back came the reply, "Twenty five miles back! You're not from around here are you?" I said, "Nope, can I get out?" We stood and blethered (chatted) for ages, he wanted to know all about Scotland. His name was Tom Ballantyne, so he was proud of his Scottish heritage. We had some fun with each other, he told me he was related to the Ballantyne's Whisky people. I said "A Mormon related to alcohol, you're winding me up right?" By now we were on first names terms, he was calling me John and I was calling him Tom. He then started to write out a citation as he called it. I said come on, we've been here half an hour and no one has driven past. Then he said out of the kindness of his heart he would write down the citation to driving at 60 miles per hour, which meant a forty dollar fine instead of one hundred and twenty dollar fine.

I smiled and said, "Where do I pay that, I fly home in a week, maybe I should just forget it, it will be a long time before I get back to Utah?" I went on to say, "After writing that ticket Tom, don't tell me to have a nice day!" It was his turn to smile, and he said I could pay it at the next town. I needed to get on and told him it was nice talking to him and started to walk towards my car, Tom shouted at me, "Hey

John, have a nice day!” And with a dirty big smile on his face, as he turned to walk back to his patrol car I shouted back, “Hey Tom,” “Yup” he shouted, to which I replied, “(expletive) off” He roared with laughter, got into his patrol car, did a U-turn and sped off back to the dip in the road.

The rest of the journey was great, I visited Arches National Park, Bryce Canyon, the North Rim of the Grand Canyon and stayed in a little hick town called Moab. Drove on past Zion National Park, which was really spectacular and spent a day in Las Vegas. But I’m in no hurry to go back there, all that glitz and kitsch. It was kind of exciting to drive down the strip at night with all the neon in full view. It was also damn difficult to find my way out of the city onto the freeway. Seemed to me they didn’t want anyone to leave until they fleeced every last dollar out of you! I was heading back to San Francisco, via a drive across Death Valley, what a good exhausting trip it all was, worth doing again someday.

On another visit to Roseville, I had to get myself back to San Francisco airport to catch a flight to Spokane. I left the HP plant in plenty of time and set off down I-80, not long on the road and in the outside lane, the car conked out on me. I was in the fast lane so had to free wheel it into the hard shoulder, accompanied by all sorts of car horns honking at me. I had no sooner stopped at the side of the road when I could see a Patrol car pulling over to draw up behind me.

I got out and walked towards the Patrol car and by the time I reached it, the Officer said, “That car has twelve outstanding tickets on it!” I said, “Well the car may have those tickets, but I don’t, it’s a National Rental car.” He got onto his car phone and checked out the National Rental Company, then said, “Get your stuff, I’ll take you to the airport.” I thought great, he’s going to take me to San Francisco Airport, but he wasn’t, he was taking me to Sacramento Airport to pick up another car. He said, “I’ve told them you’re coming in and to have a car ready for pick up.”

Getting my stuff into the Patrol car was going to be a problem, there was no room in the boot, it was crammed full of police stuff that they use on the highways. So my stuff and myself crammed into the rear seat. As we drove to Sacramento Airport, I got to know him quite well. He was Lt. Ronald Coleman, he even gave me his business card. He told me all about his days in Vietnam and visiting New Zealand. He had always wanted to visit Scotland. I looked at his business card, and said, “As far as I know, cops in the UK don’t have business cards.” I then said, “When I get to Spokane, I’ll hand it to the first Hooker I see!” He laughed and said we could do with guys like you on the force.

True to his word, as soon as we drove into the National Rental car lot, they pulled a car out for me to use. Lt. Coleman said, “John, follow me, I’ll get you back to I-80 and on your way quickly.” He took off like a bat out of hell, with his lights flashing and siren blasting out, we were doing about ninety along the freeway, with cars pulling out of his way as he cut a path through them, with me right behind. As we approached the slip road to I-80, he pointed me towards it. In my response to thank him, I’m flashing my light and had my hand on the horn. I’m sure folks must have been wondering what the hell was going on. Here’s a cop doing almost 100 miles per hour, and there’s a guy in a rental car, flashing his lights and honking his horn as if to pass!

One of the processes we set in place was to promote the EIPO throughout the HP divisions. On one of those trips, John Thomson, Karl Daumueller and myself went to address the divisions in the Bay Area and in Colorado. There were four Divisions in Colorado, we started in the south at Colorado Springs and we would finish in the north of Colorado at Fort Collins. It was a Friday, so all three of us decided to set off and do a bit of sightseeing, heading towards Mount Rushmore in South Dakota. Mount Rushmore turned out to be a big disappointment, somehow I had it in my mind that all those President’s carved into the side of a mountain would have been much bigger than they were, after all, everything is big in America.

We started to head south over the weekend, each of us taking turns of the driving, the countryside soon turned flat and boring, we were now in the bread basket of America, hundreds of miles of flat wheat and

cereal growing country. There was literally nothing for miles. The roads were straight as a die with very little traffic on them, not many people around either, in this, what appeared sparsely populated States. Before long, both John Thomson and I were touching on nearly one hundred miles per hour.

It was Saturday and we stopped off at a place called Oshkosh, somewhere near the South Platte River for lunch. There was only the one dilapidated place and we were its only customers. So we set off again, this time with Karl Daumueller at the wheel, we had just been saying to each other about keeping the speed down when within twenty miles of a town. We were about fifteen miles outside Oshkosh and Karl started to push the speed up. Before you could say Michael Schumacher, a cop cruiser was heading towards us on his way back to Oshkosh. After a quick U-turn on went his siren and flashing lights, so we had to pull over.

The Patrolman came to the window at Karl's side and said, "You were doing seventy five miles per hour on a fifty five zone!" Karl said, "Yeah I probably was!" Then the cop spouted forth, "Where are you from?" "Germany" Karl replied, "So you think you're Michael Schumacher on the Autobahn huh!, Well you're done!" Then the cop gets on his phone, and calls the small town Judge, "Judge, I've caught me a German speeder" Making it sound like it was a hanging offence! We could hear the Judge reply, "It's Saturday, I'm busy what do you want me to do about it! I'm not coming in for that, you deal with it!" There was a grunt from the cop, if he had had any sense he would have just let us leave with a warning. But nope, he was going to make sure this criminal paid the price. Unwittingly though, he was also about to spoil his own Saturday! "Follow me back to Oshkosh."

We followed the cop to the Police Station, which was part of the Courthouse. It was all shut up and the cop couldn't get in, but he was determined. "Wait there he said, I'll be back!" He did return, fifteen minutes later with a key... Karl was in the cop shop for about half an hour, then they both came out and the Cop says, "We'll be back in ten." They were back in a lot less than ten, both went back inside the cop shop, another half hour passes and out comes Karl with a grin like a Cheshire cat, "Let's go," he says, and we set off to resume our journey.

In the car Karl tells us the story. That bastard fined me two hundred bucks for speeding, and demanded the money there and then, all I had was one hundred and twenty, so he took that, then took me to a cash machine, despite me telling him it won't work. Then it was back to his office and he said get the money from your buddies. Karl said, "I can't do that, they are business people that I don't know all that well." Because Karl didn't have the full amount, it meant the cop had to fill in a lot of paperwork, much to his anger, he gave Karl a copy of the paperwork and said, "When you get home, mail the eighty dollars to this address." We all roared with laughter and Karl being a German, did as he was told, when he got home he did mail the eighty dollars to that address, but he sent it in the equivalent amount of Deutsche Marks!!!

I received a request from the Irish Development Agency in Dublin, that they would like to show me around the increasing subcontract base in Ireland. Worth a good look I thought, so I set off for Dublin and was met by Tom Kennedy, who became a good friend in the months to come. Tom had fixed up all the arrangements, I had given him an idea of what I'd like to see and he did a great job, we traveled the length and breadth of Ireland.

We were on our way to Castlebar en route to Galway. The roads in Ireland were quite narrow and twisty, so you need a nippy (fast-accelerating) car for overtaking. Getting near to Castlebar we turned this corner, and at that point I said, "Tom, speed trap!" Too late, the Garda pulled us over. Tom explained to the Garda who he was and what we were doing, it made no difference, he ticketed Tom. That worried Tom as this was the third time in as many weeks, and they would take his licence for a couple of weeks. I laughed as Tom had told me his wife was an advisor to the Teasoich, (Prime Minister) in the Justice Department and if she couldn't get him off with it, no one could.



That night we were staying near to Castlebar, so we went into a small bar there. What a great wee bar it was. It was dark and had a little boxed-in corner where the ladies would sit and sup their Guinness. The bar was packed, as soon as the locals heard my accent they all wanted to talk. The pub was full of all the village worthies, the vet, the doctor, local farmers, butcher, blacksmith, they were all there. I think there was even a candlestick maker! I told them about the Garda stopping us and the reason for my visit to Ireland.

You got a (expletiving) ticket, that ain't fair when you're here trying to place work. At that moment the bar door opened and in walked the village Justice of Peace. "Seamus" Somebody shouted, "Come here and hear this!" Seamus got told the whole story, which the bar patrons elaborated upon. Seamus said, "Hmmm, that Garda is always an over-zealous bugger, leave it with me." Tom Kennedy later told me that the speeding ticket got dropped! So it's not a case of what you know, but who you know!

I had one of those really busy schedules on my hands one day. I had driven up from England dropping off some USA visitors at Glasgow airport for them to catch a flight back to the USA, then I had to get to Edinburgh airport to pick up another group who had just flown in. The time between both flights was going to be tight, if the arriving flight was on time. So I dropped the first bunch off, bid them farewell and then set off for Edinburgh. The M8 motorway through Glasgow can be busy at that time of day, and it was.

I was running a bit behind schedule, but once I got cleared of Glasgow the motorway opened up, there was a huge line of trucks and cars in the inside lane, so I just sped right past them all. I had no sooner passed the last truck than a car pulled out and switched on its blue flashing lights. Rats! It was an unmarked police car, I just pulled over to the side and waited till the car caught up. "Could you get into our car." the officer said. "You were going a bit fast." "Yeah, I'm sorry, I'm trying to get to Edinburgh airport to pick up some American business people." I replied. The officer said, "There was nothing wrong with your driving sir, just a bit too fast, you were obviously well aware of what was going on, because as soon as I switched on my blue lights you pulled over."

The had me on camera, in fact I had overtaken three police cars, They clocked me at one hundred and five miles per hour! The officer did say that his report would state that I was in good control of the situation and suggested I try not to go quite so fast next time. I did get to Edinburgh airport in time to pick up the other visitors.

My local host boss at that time was Tony Summerfield, who had just been stopped that same week for doing ninety eight miles per hour. So we both had to write a letter to the courts. I was obviously a better negotiator than he was, bearing in mind for speeding over 100 miles per hour. They normally take your license away for six weeks, Tony said they would take away my license and fine me £500. In the end we both got 3 points on our license, Tony was fined £120 and I was fined £70. Which helped me to derive a certain amount of personal satisfaction in being able to tell Summerfield that I was a much better negotiator than he was and he should have asked me to write his groveling letter to the court.

#### **48. Shalom...**

As part of the IPO strategy in Europe we wanted to expand into as many countries that would fall into our domain or area of coverage, particularly where HP was selling products. One of those countries was Israel, where the Israeli Government asked HP if they could look at outsourcing there. HP Israel was obviously very helpful and they assigned one of their staff to operate as an IPO Manager reporting into the European IPO. Rahamim Levy was the Israeli IPO Manager. Rahamim was quite a guy and fitted in really well with our EIPO Management team of Karl Heinz Hartmann, Pierre Lavissiere and myself. We were like the Three Musketeers plus Dartangian! I remember once we had a European IPO Managers meeting in South

Queensferry and we went out to dinner and I took my wife Sheila along. She observed, “You lot are like a secret society, you only half finish sentences and each of you know exactly what the other is saying. I would defy any outsider to understand what you are talking about.”

We had decided to maximise our support for Rahamim Levy and I would go out to Israel and meet up with a procurement team from Boeblingen Germany, Siegfried Falk, Hartmut Wurfel. One of that team would also be a new IPO Engineer called Juergen Gerecke. Juergen and I became firm friends and still are to this day. I hadn't met Juergen Gerecke before, so I'd meet him at the Hotel in Tel Aviv. This trip was going to be something different.

To help make our journey and entry into Israel easier, being in possession of a letter of invitation would be a big boon, plus to make things easier. Travelling business class would also make a huge difference, much to the disagreement of the host division management. Rahamim organized that letter and I set off for Heathrow to catch a flight to Ben Gurion Airport in Tel Aviv. I turned up at the gate for the flight to Tel Aviv, and I should have known then that I was to enter a completely new security world. The lounge gate was surrounded by sub machine gun toting police, who first wanted to see my documentation, before I even had checked in for the flight. They were happy, so I went forward to check in. The check in was straight forward enough, so what was the hassle. I was told to sit in a specific place, I did as I was told. I was sat there watching all the orthodox Jews with long ringlets and black suits sitting all around. Some of the women's hair looked as if it had been torn out at random from their heads. None of my business, so I sat and waited. We were called forward to board and every item of carry on was x-rayed, twice!

The flight over was fine and I looked around to see if I could spot which passengers were the Israeli secret air marshals. But they didn't give anything away and I couldn't see any bulging jackets that might give a hint of a concealed firearm. Plane landed on time, but then I came up against the Israeli Immigration, it was going to take some time before they let me in. Their technique was very good, a couple of very good looking female immigration officers, interrogated me about everything and why I was visiting Israel, I told them the reason for my visit, showed them the letter of invitation and told them I was being hosted by Rahamim Levy. Wait there I was told and they walked off with all my documents.

Five minutes later a different two equally good looking ladies and a machine gun toting man in uniform came up to me. They asked me exactly the same questions as the previous two ladies had asked. Then the guy with the gun said, “You say the name Rahamim like you are from these parts?” I responded by saying that I know the gentleman personally, so know how to pronounce his name. But the sounding of the words are close to words we use on Scotland like Loch.” He grunted, they handed me my papers and said, “Have a nice stay!”

The hotel in Tel Aviv was fine, St David's Hotel, quite up market and overlooking the Mediterranean Sea. There was a knock on the door and in strode Juergen Gerecke, who shook hands and said, “Let's go for a beer, John.” I didn't need telling twice, we went off for a drink on the roof terrace. Juergen ordered a beer, I ordered a large Gin & Tonic. The waiter arrived with a McCawbee Israeli Beer for Juergen and a G&T for me. It looked good but it tasted odd. I said to Juergen, “I don't think there is any Gin in this!” Juergen had a taste, then turned around and bellowed at the waiter, who promptly took my drink away and came back with another, which this time tasted like a G&T. I found out via someone else, they would do this with tourists and skim it off for themselves. I complained to the manager and next day an apology was in my room along with a huge bowl of fruit.

Rahamim had organized a good schedule, a lot of the credit goes to Judith Ohana who kept him right, Judith came from Morocco. It was to last a week and would take us not only to visit the suppliers, but also a trip around the key sites of the Holy Land, which to me was unbelievable. The places I was visiting took me back to my childhood and upon hearing of those places at school and Christmas. The suppliers we visited covered a wide range of businesses. Many on the fabrication side, apart from Plastic Injection

Moulding and the internal machine shop for a final high frequency filter supplier, had a way to go to catch up with what was available in other western countries. But I got the feeling they wouldn't be that far behind for long.

What really impressed me was what the Israeli settlers had achieved in the middle of the desert. We would be driving through the middle of the Negev Desert, turn a corner and right before us was this huge area of cultivated land, there was a Kibbutz. There were many, each specializing in some form of production or other. The ones we were visiting were manufacturing subcontractors. I was so impressed at what they were achieving, it's a pity really no solution can be found to the troubles with their Arab neighbours. If it was possible, Israel could bring so much to the development of this Middle East region, but for now that is not to be!

Although at that time it was safe for us to travel throughout Israel and the occupied parts, I always felt a bit uneasy. I was always on the alert, and felt that it was simmering away just under the surface. I knew we would be looked upon as westerners who were aiding and abetting the Israeli regime, so it paid to be careful and not to offend in any way. There were some areas I felt even less safe, Jericho, Bethlehem, Beersheba and parts of Jerusalem were the most noticeable, but around Jericho there were some displaced Palestinian refugee camps, which didn't look the nicest places to live and were obviously a breeding ground for discontent.

We did identify Filter suppliers that would be of interest to NMD and they became a supplier. Germany was interested in a Transformer supplier who also became a German customer. When we were visiting the Transformer supplier, it was quite a tall building and overlooked the nearby Israeli prison, I'm glad I was not locked up inside there! What was noticeable was that there was a heavy presence of the Military and Police wherever we travelled.

I said to Rahamim that the Israeli army has to be the most beautiful army in the world, I had never seen so many good looking women in military and police uniforms. There was an unwritten rule that whenever you see a member of the military walking on the roads, people would stop and give them a lift if they were going in that direction. Rahamim said that as we were on business, it was okay for him not to stop and pick up any soldier. Of course all of us in the car, who had already commented on the good looking army, badgered Rahamim to stop and pick one of them up. Which he eventually gave into and did. Unfortunately, the one he did eventually stop for was probably the ugliest in the whole army and who didn't speak a word of English!! Serves us right! We jibed Rahamim about getting new spectacles, then he told us that when he was called up to do his National Service, his eyesight was so bad, they put him in the artillery division! And he was driving us all over the place too!

I have to admit, that although the business side of the trip was very enlightening, the sightseeing part will always stay with me. When we were walking through the old city of Jerusalem, we would frequently come across army check points, they were checking all the Palestinians passing through. Those check points were manned by usually four soldiers, two male and two female, Juergen and I had some fun with them, they were open and friendly towards us and wanted to know about Scotland, I eventually got my picture taken sitting on the knees of the two female soldiers armed with their sub machine guns, I told the two guys they would spoil the picture, they laughed and shook their heads.

The old city of Jerusalem was all that I expected it to be and more, it was so old, parts had been excavated that were over 3,000 years old. It had the old narrow streets full of Arab Souk traders of all descriptions, quite mesmerizing, I ended up coming away with Arab head gear for my son. Our path through the old city took us past the Western (Wailing) Wall, women on one side, well away from the men on the other. Rahamim, who had a good sense of humour, pointed out the radical orthodox Jews who were wailing against the wall. At which I commented to Rahamim, "I know what they are wailing about, they are saying, Oh those prices are too high!" Rahamim just about choked in laughter.

That evening Rahamim took us to dinner in Jaffa, just a little way down the coast from Tel Aviv. It was a very old restaurant where we sat on the outside balcony to dine. We overlooked the square, and high enough up to also look out over the sea and the sun setting beyond. The square was surrounded by tall palm trees and a camel or two. At night in that light, it was like something out of the Arabian Nights. It was to get even better as every evening a show took place on the square, how could such a beautiful setting have so much trouble.

The bread and the cake we ate, looked so drab, but the taste was superb. I couldn't believe how sweet the cake was, it all got washed down with strong Arabic coffee, which has to be an acquired taste. I said to Rahamim, "This coffee always has, on the bottom off the cup, what looks like a spoonful of sand, is this the way you are trying to get rid of the Negev Desert?" Rahamim laughed and said, "You've twigged our secret!"

On our way back Rahamim dropped us off on Dizengoff Street. It's the main thoroughfare in Tel Aviv, a couple of blocks from our hotel. But on this main shopping street they have this enormous water fountain that on the hour erupts into a big display of water and fire. Quite a sight to behold. All around this fountain are metal crush barriers to help control the people around the fountain. The three of us were standing against the barrier awaiting the water and fire show, and right in front of us was a police van, with three members of the police force on the front seat, all of them very attractive women. So we were going to have some fun with them. We started talking to them, telling them how lovely they looked and that we loved their nail varnish. We were telling them it was a pity our police force was not as pretty as the Israeli police force. They said did we want to get arrested, which brought even more banter from us, then they started to blush, at that point they smiled and moved 25 yards further up the street.

We visited Bethlehem, as there was no way we could go there and not visit the birth place of Christ. It's hard to describe the feeling of walking across Bethlehem Square and through the very small doorway that led into the catacombs. Knowing that man had walked those steps for thousands of years before me was quite an eerie thought. It was beautiful inside and at the very spot where Christ was born, it is marked by a silver star, but then major disappointment, a crib containing a plastic baby doll supposed to represent the baby Christ. How on earth they can get away with such a glaring embarrassment, I don't know.

One of the routes Rahamim had chosen was by Masada, this was where the Romans had surrounded the Israelis who were holed up in their mountain fortress retreat, which eventually lead to many Israelis jumping to their deaths. Today there is a cable car that can take you to the top, on the day we visited, it was stopping that day before lunchtime for maintenance. So we could take the cable car up, but we would have to walk back down, not a problem, it's downhill right!

We had made a couple of elementary mistakes in our thinking, firstly the sun is directly overhead and it got stinking hot. We had no head covering, and we only had a small bottle of water each, we didn't realize these things at the time. The view from the top of Masada is impressive, as it looks out over all directions as it is the highest mountain around. You can look across the Dead Sea to Jordan and south towards Saudi Arabia and across the Negev Desert. We could see how the Israelis held out so long against the Romans as they had this huge underground cavern that held all their water. Talking of which we had now run out of water and it was getting hotter by the minute. However there was water up at the top and we could quench our thirst, well all of us except one, Siegfried had decided the water was not safe to drink, and being a strong minded German was determined not to drink any water until he could buy a bottle somewhere.

We started off to walk down to the car park, it was now very hot, and by about half way down we were all out of water. It must have been hell for our German colleague Siegfried Falk, because he had had no water for ages as he refused to take any from the top of the mountain. We finally reached the bottom and there was a huge tank full of water. By this time Siegfried, who was by now a bright beetroot colour, ran as fast

as he could and dived head long into this water holder. I've never seen anyone try and drink as quickly as he did, I'm sure he almost drowned in the process! We were all neither up nor down with drinking the water, but I think I came close to getting sun stroke that day.

Not far from Masada we stopped at a place called Ein Gedi. It was an oasis smack bang in the middle of the desert. We had to walk into the source of this little stream, it was shaped like a narrow long fissure that had carved its way through the rock. It was beautiful to see, this crack in the landscape full of greenery surrounded by desert. The source of it was bubbling up from underground, pure spring sweet water. Under that hot sun we all stripped off and had a bathe in the cool sweet water, it tasted great. By the time we walked back to the car, we were all dried off. Next we headed off towards the Dead Sea Resort, past the area where the Dead Sea Scrolls were found not all that long ago. The area is riddled with caverns, many not fully explored.

The Dead Sea Resort looked a bit odd with the high rise hotels dotted around, it was a place that people came to, to take the health giving benefits of dipping into the salty mineral Dead Sea. Who were we not to also partake? I must be one of the very few people who almost managed to drown in the Dead Sea. You could see the lumps of mineral salt everywhere, sticking out above the water. The water is supersaturated with the mineral salt, it contains about 25 percent salt solution, which is deadly painful if you get it in your eyes.

Juergen and I stripped off and went straight into the water; it's an odd feeling to be in water that was so buoyant. Of course everyone has to get a photograph of sitting in the Dead Sea reading a newspaper, and I was no different. I shouted to Juergen give me that brochure and take my photograph. Juergen handed me the brochure and said, "Keep it dry, I want to take it home with me." Photograph taken, I moved to sit upright and stand on my feet, but instead, I moved my centre of gravity and because I couldn't get my legs and feet down. I flipped over 180 degrees and was face down under the water, and I still couldn't get my feet down. Thank goodness for Juergen who came to my rescue laughing at my stupidity and misfortune. Juergen quickly flipped me onto my feet, but I was blinded. I couldn't open my eyes and the pain was almost unbearable. Juergen led me to the showers by the water side and I soon flushed the salty mineral water out of my eyes, and off all the rest of me. It was not a pleasant feeling having all that salty mud drying on your skin. As before, it was so hot down there in the lowest point on the planet Earth, you soon were dry again. The water seems to vaporise almost instantly.

Last stop on the way back was past the River Jordan to Lake Galilee on the Golan Heights side of the lake. This turned out to be a favourite spot for Israelis to relax and have family BBQ's. It was packed, but this time we didn't have enough time for a swim in the lake, it was a quick look around and we headed back to our hotel.

One other sightseeing spot Rahamin took us to was Caesarea. It was north of Tel Aviv and was where the Romans had a huge amphitheatre. It was still in pretty good condition. You could sit down on the circular rows of marble seating and imagine what went on below you in the actual arena during the Roman occupation. I told Rahamin that is was Caesar's most favourite place where he liked to spend his birthday. Rahamim was all ears, he thought I was serious, until he got the punch line of the jokes. I told him that for each birthday year, he would put the same number of Christians into the arena and turn the lions loose on them. Then one year, there was one Christian still alive and waving his arm and it sounded like he was singing! Caesar went down to the Christian and bent forward to hear what he was singing, and the Christian was singing... "Happy Birthday to you..." At that point Rahamim had tears streaming down his face with laughter.

As we stood up to head back towards the car we passed the beach. I pointed out to Rahamim that on one birthday year, Caesar had decided to have a BBQ on the beach in celebration. That year, for a change, the entertainment had an equal number of Christians to his birthday years, but they would be buried in the

sand up to their necks. Caesar would sit high up on the rocks and watch them drown as the tide came in. I went on to tell Rahamim that that year also held a special surprise for Caesar. As he sat on the rocks awaiting the return of the tide to do its drowning deed, he could hear the Christians once again signing. "What are they singing," he enquired. But no one could make it out. Caesar went down to the water's edge to listen to what they were singing. He bent his head down towards a Christian, whose head was going from side to side, and heard the words of the song... "Oh I do love to be beside the seaside..."

From that trip to Israel onwards, Rahamim Levy was a loyal member of our European International Procurement Operation Management Team.

#### **49. Division Capability...**

Similar to the IJBU situation with 3M our IPO came across it even between divisions. I have already mentioned some other examples, PAFC believing that their internal manufacturing capability far exceeded that of the external subcontract supplier capability, they were totally wrong. Each and every time our IPO would prove the opposite and then we would come up against strong resistance to change.

Another similar situation arose to that which happened when the PAFC manufacturing capability was challenged, but on this occasion it was between SAD and NMD. NMD always stated that their internal Machine Shop was a 'state of the art' world leader. They saw it as bordering on as near as you can get to R&D expertise when it came down to machining parts. To be fair, to some extent this was true, but it could not be applied across the whole of their manufacturing expertise, which was what NMD professed. Much of it, including some every complicated machining, our IPO could easily match from a supplier within an hour's drive from our IPO office, that company was called FACTS. (Fife Auto Cam & Tooling Services).

It all started peacefully enough when we easily undercut NMD's prices on high precision machined Connector parts as well as with the machining of some RF Filters. It was just as we had done with the Sheetmetal Assemblies, Pressure Die Cast Parts and Plastic Moulded Parts versus PAFC.

It was the usual story; SAD products were under severe price competition from their competitors and they were desperate to cut cost structure. On this occasion SAD brought to my attention, during a visit I was making a very complicated machined Wave Guide, the current cost of which was a staggering \$850 each! It was a complicated and difficult part, for that I would agree, but the price still seemed to me to be exorbitant. NMD had said to SAD that no one in the outside world could make this part; the technology was just not there. I like a challenge and so much wanted to prove NMD wrong. If I could achieve that, I would be able to drive a wedge between SAD and NMD that would impact their machining relationship forever.

Once I got back home I set off for a meeting with FACTS, armed with sample part and complete documentation and specification. As soon as FACTS saw it, they also agreed that this was a very complicated and difficult part, but FACTS Management also liked a challenge and they never ever wanted to be beaten by any machined part. FACTS got immediately onto it. They got together with their local University to work out a software programme on how this machining could be done and also on how to actually measure the part. This approach was so successful, FACTS got the part exactly to specification at their very first machining attempt. What was even better, the cost of manufacturing this Wave Guide was \$150 each. An amazing \$700 cost reduction in one stroke! It was just as well I never divulged the NMD manufacturing cost to FACTS!

NMD point blank refused to believe that the Wave Guide could be manufactured at such a low cost. NMD approached me requesting that they send their Machine Shop Manager over to see FACTS, I told NMD

that Sam Scott had visited and that they should speak with him. I was immediately wary of this NMD request and let FACTS know my concerns with this. This would be a hostile visit, but working with FACTS and because I had taken FACTS Managing Director Bill Davidson on a USA trip around some of the HP divisions, FACTS felt comfortable in allowing the visit.

I arranged to take the NMD Machine Shop manager to FACTS and squeeze in another couple of supplier visits for him. In the end, the NMD Machine Shop Manager had to concede that we had an excellent supplier, like nothing they had available in the USA amongst all their suppliers. Clearly, FACTS was capable of making that complicated Wave Guide, as well as many other parts which NMD were making.

But that same internal protectionist mindset that existed within PAFC was just as prevalent in NMD. This time their argument against downsizing their machining capability, was that if they lose the manufacture of this Wave Guide, it could lead to the further loss of their machining skills if downsizing was to take effect. Thus it would affect their ability to manufacture future complicated parts emanating from the R&D department. It was just the same old usual protectionist claptrap. It did though, lead to NMD not putting up such a resistance when SAD placed more Machined parts with our IPO. So in hindsight, SAD got the best of both worlds, they could source more with our IPO, but not this Wave Guide. However, we had proven it could be made for \$150 and not \$850, so NMD had to supply the part to SAD at the IPO cost, with NMD making a loss on the part, another nail in their coffin. Our IPO now had more enemies within NMD to work with.

I don't have to go too far from home to find procurement decisions made by inexperienced non procurement/purchasing folks that seem illogical. For some strange reason, unknown to me, and beyond my logical comprehension, when QMO was being set up as a starter division, the decision on what office furniture was to be purchased and installed throughout the facility, was made by the Financial Controller.

The phrase "Everyone's a Buyer" yet again springs to mind! The office furniture of his choice, had firstly an unbelievably long lead-time for deliveries, and the cost of each item of furniture was extortionate to say the least. We could have received office furniture of equally if not better quality from our nearest flat-pack supplier, or even from one slightly further afield at a tenth of the cost, I still can't believe the cost HP paid for a desk. My office furniture I have at home, is more than I had at HP and cost me a lot less than my desk as HP. In fact, with the money saved I could have had a superb evening out on the town with my wife!

If I didn't know any better, I could have been led to believe that perhaps someone on the HP staff had shares in the supplying company. I happened to hear of a few people make similar comments on in passing.

#### **50. Should they be let out?...**

There were times in our IPO capacity when travelling or hosting supplier visits with people from other HP divisions, you would find yourself saying to yourself, "*Why do they let people like that out to represent the HP company?*" There are examples where those air-heads, even when accompanied by professional HP Procurement people, still somehow managed to open their mouths at the most inconceivably wrong time and cause HP some level of embarrassment.

We had a situation with an R&D engineer from McMinnville. McMinnville Division was part of the Medical Group and they manufactured HP's Defibrillator Products. It could be that this incident was maybe due to the fact that McMinnville is sited away in the boonies of Oregon and that some of their employees just don't get out all that much!

McMinnville were having problems in finding a Relay supplier capable of manufacturing a Relay to meet their new product specification. Our IPO was asked if we could help. We found a supplier in the UK called EEV, and the cost of their part was extremely competitive. McMinnville sent over their Procurement team to carry out an audit, along with this team, was their R&D engineer who was responsible for the engineering design and specification of the Relay they were seeking.

Prior to meeting with the EEV management, I briefed everyone on their roles that they should take up during the meeting. I told the R&D engineer, to stick to only discussing the technical aspects of the Relay. Leave all the other details like lead-times, Tooling, pricing etc. to the others in McMinnville's Procurement Team and our IPO. Everyone agreed that this is the best way to proceed. As an engineer myself, I found the plant tour was really interesting as its manufacturing processes were something we would not come across very often, although the metal contacts manufacturing processes was widely known to us, the glass forming processes were new.

After the plant tour we all gathered around the meeting table in EEV's Boardroom to discuss all the various aspects. We kicked off firstly with the R&D engineer's overview and the technical requirements. It was during the R&D Engineer's discussion on the technical aspects of the EEV manufactured sample Relay that he had tested back in McMinnville, he suddenly blurted out in all innocence, "We have searched the world for a relay to meet our specification, and you are the ONLY supplier we have found that is capable to make the Relay to our tough specification." That R&D Engineer, suddenly sat up straight, as he quietly tried to recover from me almost breaking his ankle from the short hard kick I had placed on it under the table. I could almost see the smile coming over the EEV management as they thought, "Only supplier in the world huh! We can name our price here."

Afterwards when I spoke to this R&D Engineer out of ear shot of others and told him what he had just done, he was still wondering why I aimed a short kick at his ankle. His face visibly changed as it dawned on him exactly what his remarks meant. He said, "Sorry John, I just didn't realize what I said could have that effect, I was just so pleased we had found a supplier when it looked hopeless." Clearly, he was glad we were there as he would have paid any price to get that part.

Our IPO received a request from Boise DMD. Bob Mortensen wanted to come and see some of our suppliers as they wanted to improve their global knowledge base. Not a problem, it would give us an opportunity to show things off. Although Bob was a really nice guy, it was pretty obvious he had not travelled far. We got wind of that very quickly, when he asked the question, "Can I get a taxi from Heathrow Airport to South Queensferry, I looked at it on the map and it doesn't seem that far." Never give a Scot an opportunity to set you up, because we will! I replied with, "Sure, but make sure you have plenty of money, because the taxi fare to drive four hundred and twenty miles, could be a bit expensive."

His next e-mail asked the question, "Could I hire a car and drive?" By asking that question, it was now time to wind him up, "Yup, you can get a rental car and drive." Back he came with, "Do they have automatic cars?" My reply was, "You can hire an automatic, though most cars are stick shift, so you have to order the automatic ahead of time." I went on, "But remember we drive on the other side of the road than you do in the USA, which is not a problem really as you soon get used to it. However, you need to also remember to take into account that the driving pedals for brake, clutch and accelerator are the other way around." Back Bob came with, "It's probably better if I just fly to Edinburgh, could you pick me up and take me to the hotel?" Which was what we did.

During Bob's visit with us, he was an easy target for our humour, John Thomson and I were driving back to South Queensferry with Bob in the car, as we approached from the west side we got a great view of the Forth Railway Bridge, a world famous cantilever bridge. John and I started to tell Bob about the bridge and how it worked and that it was a real pity there was no train crossing at that moment. We joked that he



would be able to see the train go up the slope on one side and down the slope on the other!! He believed us! We never did see much of him again!

There was a period when Tom Cunningham took over the Corporate Management of the IPO's. Tom liked to visit Europe, so we saw him fairly frequently. On one occasion when he came over, we had a currency change in the UK, well in England really. The Bank of England had done away with the One Pound Note and replaced it with a One pound Coin. Unfortunately, Tom had a One Pound Note from his previous visit and couldn't use it. He said to me, "John, this One Pound Note is no longer valid!" As he handed it to me, I said, as I delved into my pocket to produce a One Pound coin, "No they are obsolete and have no longer any financial value as they have been replaced with this One Pound coin, you should just throw it away, or keep it for a souvenir." At that point Tom smiled and took my one Pound coin and said, "You can throw it away or keep it for a souvenir!" I just shook my head and stuck the one Pound Note in my pocket.

Some months later though, fate dealt me a favoured hand. I was in the Roseville area and decided to spend the weekend in Reno having a look around. I was sitting in a Casino bar having a beer and got talking with the guy sitting next to me. Turned out, he collected money from other countries. I gave him that One Pound Note telling him it had been replaced with a One Pound coin. So I gave him a One Pound coin and a bunch of other British coins so he had a full set. We had a couple of more beers, then the guy said, "I have to get up early, thanks for your company, I need to hit the sack." He got up to walk away and as he turned he flicked a coin at me and said, "Don't put that in the slots!" He had just flicked me an 1833 silver dollar made in Carson City! I checked it out when I got home, back then it was worth about \$50!!!!

It gave me great pleasure when I was back in Corporate in Palo Alto to rub it into Tom Cunningham that I got this silver dollar for that One Pound Note he dumped on me. You could visibly see his chin drop, he couldn't believe it, it was my turn to smile now.

During the early days of QMO, the site would frequently get visits from the top managers from the divisions which QMO was building products for. I will always remember we had this visit from NMD General Manager, Bill Wurst. He wanted to give everyone a big morale motivational boost, and at one point during his presentation, he said, "I want you all to get up off your Fanny (woman's private parts) and get moving!" He couldn't figure out why he didn't get a laugh all round, until someone told him afterwards why! He really meant for us to get up of our butts, but he didn't know at that point that Fanny meant something else in the UK, which was probably just as well as his blushes might have shown.

Political Correctness was one of my biggest bug bears and it was rife throughout HP, throughout the USA for that matter. I could never figure out why they could not see when someone was being downright derogatory towards someone and those who were just having some fun with no malice intended whatsoever. There was a case in Corporate that was downright stupid.

A woman who had been attending a meeting that was running late, nipped (jumped) into Jim Jones' work cubicle to use his phone to call her babysitter to tell her she was running late. Whilst she was using the phone, she noticed on Jim Jones desk a photograph of a young teenage girl clad in a skimpy bikini sitting atop a convertible sports car, a Corvette Stingray. The next morning that woman went straight to the Personnel Department and complained about the photograph of the scantily clad girl sitting on Jim's desk and demanded it be removed.

Jones got called into Personnel and they told him to remove the photograph as someone had found it offensive. Jim refused, and stated the woman had no right going into his work area without his permission. The woman was told this, but adamantly still demanded the photograph be removed. Again Jones refused, eventually Personnel said to Jim that if he didn't remove the photograph, he would face disciplinary proceedings. At which point Jim said, "Are you telling me I cannot have a picture of my daughter on my desk?" Personnel fell silent, if it's your daughter, well that's different.

Personnel told the woman that the picture was of Jones's daughter and they could not tell her to remove it. The woman said she didn't care, it was the wrong type of picture to have on an office desk! Personnel then asked Jim if they could do them a favour and take the picture down, if nothing else but to get that woman off their backs, and that they had now marked her card for the future. Jim took the photograph down, but reinstated it a month or so later! I doubt if that woman's career moved much further after that episode, if it was down to me, I'd have sacked her!

## **51. Let's steal each other's Lunch...**

Our IPO was always fighting a constant rear guard action, where divisions and others tried to climb on the back of the successful work carried out by our IPO, and that of other IPO's. Many divisions just seemed to think, "Oh well, the IPO has done all the spadework in identifying and setting up successful suppliers and subcontractors. But those suppliers and subcontractors are manufacturing our division parts for our products, so we have the right now to take control of all the supplier management and procurement of our parts. They would have had the IPO's let them, and if they did, they soon came to realize they could never ask our IPO for help again.

It was not just the non-European divisions who wanted to steal our lunch. It seemed it was open season for everyone who thought along these lines to attempt to try and do it, for instance, HPP Corporate. We also got the same nonsense from the European divisions, as well as some IPO's, that tried to get up to those sort of tricks. As I already mentioned, Centrale Einkaufen in Germany tried it on, as well as IJBU Dublin.

What really got to me was when it turned out to be another IPO that was after our lunch. It was even more painful when the IPO's were forced into being self-funded. It happened more and more as our suppliers, in an effort to reduce costs, moved their manufacturing bases to lower labour cost countries. SIPO, (Singapore International Procurement Operation) had an issue with this, Power Cords again!!

As previously mentioned we had convinced Volex Pencon of the need to manufacture in those low cost country regions, or they could lose out on business, not just from HP but their other customers. SIPO realized that Volex Pencon had manufacturing facilities in Singapore and in Batam, Indonesia, which was their area. They wanted those orders for Power Cords being manufactured there, through their IPO office. SIPO contacted the Singapore Volex Pencon and found support within that organisation, they too also wanted a share in this business. It ended up with SIPO pressurizing our IPO and Volex Pencon Singapore pressurizing Volex HQ in the UK. Volex Pencon Singapore met with a big fat NO! and were told to keep out of it as the business would be managed on a global basis from Volex Pencon UK HQ. That in turn (expletive) off SIPO.

That event didn't stop SIPO from trying to poach some of our other business, but that would work both ways! Singapore Divisions and Penang in Malaysia, would order parts and components from UK suppliers via our IPO. This gave me and those in my team ample opportunities to visit South East Asia and the Far East to market ourselves and what our IPO had to offer as well as promoting our suppliers.

With all the out sourcing of Printed Circuit Assemblies, it ended up with all the IPO's playing in each other's backyards, which was really a bit of a mess. The prime reason being that the end user HP division in each IPO region wanting their local IPO to manage the restricted component supply. They needed greater flexibility at short notice, and getting prime access to the limited supplies of certain components. Having the IPO next door to the PCA subcontractor, made for quicker and easier reaction times.

There were two big exceptions to this, the first was the USIPO, which did the dirty on all the other IPO's. USIPO visited all the major high volume user HP divisions, mostly in the Computer Group, offering a

“Buy & Sell” component service. The goal being to preserve HP’s pricing from being known outside HP. The process was to buy the components at the HPP Corporate negotiated global contract price and sell the parts to the PCA CM (Contract Manufacturer) at the market price, refunding the difference to the user HP Division. The USIPO knew full well all the global IPO’s could offer that very same level of service, especially as many IPO's were much nearer the PCA CM than the USIPO was. In this case the USIPO used a different argument when they visited those HP divisions, they convinced a number of divisions that since it was HPP Corporate that negotiated the global pricing contract for the limited supply components such as Drams. Moreover, the USIPO was sitting in the next desks to those in HPP Corporate who managed the contract, and it made sense that the USIPO should handle these parts. Why those divisions swallowed that I can’t understand as Corporate brought no added value to the party.

Fortunately, the USIPO made such a colossal mess of managing this “Buy & Sell” process. The divisions soon saw the error of that channel and used the IPO’s nearer to the PCA CM. It also turned out later that not only did the USIPO do such a lousy job of managing the component parts to the PCA CMs, but HPP Corporate had done an equally lousy job of negotiating the global HP price for Drams and other short supply components. All of that debacle came to light when HP acquired and integrated a much smaller computer company called Apollo. Their much smaller Corporate Procurement Group had negotiated much more competitive component prices from the same component suppliers than HPP Corporate had achieved! However, it was the manner in which the USIPO had sneaked in there in their Machiavellian way that irked me and many of the other IPOs. We were also unhappy in the way they sold the process to the HP divisions on the USIPO/HPP Corporate relationship and being within the same building.

What really screwed the USIPO and eventually led to the other IPOs gaining access to this business was, because the USIPO hadn’t thought it through properly, it ended up causing a lot of heartache all around. The IPOs, and in particular the USIPO, being housed inside Corporate, didn’t have the computer systems in place to manage it. Though IPOs that were hosted within a host manufacturing division were somewhat better off, as we had access to the divisions Materials computer systems, we could in a roundabout way have part system control on the business. The USIPO didn’t even have that sort of access. This failure on the USIPO part had a big knock on effect. The other IPOs were getting tarred with the same brush, even though we were not at that stage involved and our other businesses were running to plan.

A new IPO specific computer procurement data system was urgently required. It became apparent that the other IPOs had to keep a wary eye on this as it would have become a USIPO specific computer system! Jim Rooney in our IPO would head up our input on the software development. Jim Rooney had to fight many a hard battle as the USIPO was in such a dire need, it threatened at nearly every turn to become a USIPO specific system.

The second problem area was with the German IPO over Drams. They were purchasing Drams from the Japanese supplier NEC, less than half an hour from our office. It was big dollar business, where GIPO had been buying the parts for the German Divisions for the German designed products being manufactured in the USA. It was easy to argue that GIPO was playing in our sand-box and as this was very early in the PCA CM business days, both Jim Rooney and I pushed hard on this. Doris Fischer in the GIPO saw our challenge as life threatening to the existence of the GIPO, and Fischer was much more assertive and aggressive than Karl Heinz Hartmann was ever going to be. To be truthful I admired Fischer’s



This is the Scots contingent, showing how to turn out for a IPO meeting, kilts and all.

tenacity. She was more typical of the other Germans we dealt with. Hartmann was more of the German aristocratic type of breeding than Wolfgang Zenger ever was, as my wife would later describe them both.

Karl Heinz and I worked the issue out to the satisfaction of both IPO's, we would leave the current GIPO set up as it applied to the current German Products and NEC. In addition, we would also let GIPO manage the numbers between NEC and our IPO current and future HP users division's needs, but we would hold access to supplying those PCA CM's for the user divisions GPCD, BCD and Bergamo who wanted our IPO support.

The compromise worked well, Doris Fischer was happy as she didn't feel threatened and it gave her a bit of status as she managed the numbers for the European Dram usage. It reduced at a stroke our two IPO's infighting, though it would still allow what I believed to be healthy competition between both our IPO's, and that helped keep us both on our toes.

## **52. GPCD Sign Up...**

After a while things became even more muddled on what was the best option, an IPO nearer to the PCA CM, or an IPO nearer to the HP division. Our IPO ended up doing a considerable amount of this PCA CM business because of a smart decision on our part. It was on a visit to Grenoble PC Manufacturing Division, where I had an unplanned discussion with the division's Materials Manager. This was just as they were in the throes of considering using our IPO to supply a new PCA CM in our region, as opposed to using the USIPO, basically because of all the heartache the USIPO had caused them. It was during that discussion that I realized there was something else we could bring to the party, something the USIPO didn't have; they were only an ordering function. We had engineers, and it was this decision which led to the previous development of Judy W.

GPCD liked the suggestion of us supplying an engineer who they would train, someone they would have right on hand to deal with issues immediately, without the need to send someone over straight away. That hit the sweet spot with GPCD and got us in the PCA CM door with them. As for the USIPO, I didn't know what they would think of our approach, but to be honest, I didn't care, it was time to get some justice back.

My suggestion to GPCD was I could send an engineer to Grenoble for six months. During that period the engineer would learn all the manufacturing techniques needed for supporting their PCA's. GPCD were by then well aware of the benefits to them having an engineer so close to the PCA CM. There was going to be cost to all this and my suggestion was, I'll pick up the engineers salary and GPCD pick up all the expenses for that six months the engineer would be in Grenoble. They agreed, seemed a fair offer, and we had now broken in to supporting GPCD. No other IPO had or been able, or had even thought of offering this level of support.

As luck would have it I had the very engineer to take on the task, Judy W. Judy was a very good engineer, with a good brain in her head, but there was one problem with her, she lacked interpersonal skills. She had upset a few of her work colleagues in the past, which was the main reason she joined the IPO in the first place. She also spoke French, not totally fluently, but she would learn more in Grenoble. The plan was in place and she set off for six months in Grenoble.

I was always concerned about Judy's relationships with others, particularly in GPCD, with that in mind, I would go over every six weeks or so, to make sure she felt I was giving her all the support I could. Meantime I also checked out the background to ensure that she was getting on alright with the other GPCD team members. After the six months were over, GPCD said they were very happy with her progress, but that they had noted her interpersonal skills were lacking a bit. She was a good engineer that I

knew, and I was also aware that her lack of people skills could be made useful when dealing with subcontractors in the cut and thrust PCA CM business. PCA CMs had a hire and fire approach to managing their business, from that point Judy would accept none of their nonsense that was for sure. But how she went about it might be a different matter. I think GPCD also thought along similar lines.

I had heard before from other suppliers that Judy was, 'Well different' from other members of our IPO team. Our IPO now had a good strong team for dealing with the PCA CM's, no other IPO team could offer the level of service we could now supply. We were truly in the driving seat when it came to supporting the Division needs with their PCA CM's.

Jim Rooney's team was managing the controls for ordering and shipping with Judy W. on the engineering support side. Her level of engineering support was later surpassed when Malcolm Newlands came on board. Malcolm Newlands was to prove he was one of our IPO's great players, not just on his engineering ability, but also in his people management and marketing skills.

Getting to Grenoble was never an easy task, you had to fly to Heathrow, then either catch a flight to Lyon, of which there was few, then drive to Grenoble, or fly to Geneva, of which there were many flights, but you had to drive to Grenoble and cross the Border from Switzerland into France, which was always a hassle when you have a hired car!

I remember once on our way home from Grenoble, Jim Rooney and I were going home via Geneva, but this time the Swiss Border Police decided to check us out big style. They stripped everything they possibly could out of the car, then let us go, we had to put everything back into the car, as they smiled on at us. The delay of over an hour meant we were pushing it to catch our flight home. I had no choice but to put the pedal to the metal and risk getting caught speeding in order to catch the flight. We caught the flight just in time, but we must have set off around twenty speed cameras along the route, we were getting flashed all over the place. But it was a hired car, so I didn't give a (expletive), serves them right for stopping us in that way on the border crossing. I heard no more about it, I guess they realised it would be too much hassle to track down the driver of a rental car.

### **53. IPO Continued to Develop...**

Malcolm came to us from the in-house blank Printed Circuit Board manufacturing department; he took to his new role like a duck to water. Malcolm quickly took to my style of management and he thrived on being cut loose to make things happen. His skills helped to bring more business to our IPO and he contributed greatly in helping me with our teams' development. His people skills led our customers loving his involvement with their projects. Malcolm's good people skills not only helped with our IPO, our customers, but also with our suppliers. With Malcolm's in-depth Printed Circuit Board engineering manufacturing knowledge, not only did it add an extra strength to our PCA support business, it soon brought more actual blank manufactured PCB business to our IPO, particularly as HP was by now rapidly divesting itself out of this internal business.

We had on our doorstep a globally capable raw PCB supplier ISL, within two hours' drive from our office. It wasn't long before we had VCD (Vancouver Ink-Jet Printer Division) on our books as a customer. The VCD procurement team was under the management of Dave Bennie, they were demanding task masters, but the exception was they wanted us to be successful and operate as part of their off-shore procurement team. A strong friendship soon built up and we had many fun times working together and supporting each other.

The PCB business with VCD, also led us into another area of support not too far apart from the PCB business. We were soon to be involved in a new high volume business in Flexi-circuits, which every Ink-

Jet Printer requires. Malcolm through his knowledge in PCB work, identified and developed a supplier on the south coast of England, called Flextronic. Dave Bennie, though having been born in Edinburgh, had moved south before emigrating to the USA, as a result Dave still had family in the south. Maybe that helped us a bit in winning some of this flexi-circuit business. That aside, Flextronic was to turn out to be a good supplier, very willing to take onboard any input and keen to develop their processes further. With Dave Bennie's direction and guidance, they developed more into the more difficult and demanding flexi-circuits. However it all would never have flown had it not been for Malcolm Newlands knowledge and support.

Malcolm was also instrumental in getting us onboard with Bergamo in Italy, which was another division partly linked to HP's Ink-Jet Printer business. The ball was starting to roll; we had an IPO team with a good strong knowledge that could now support all the different manufacturing needs across all HP products that would be required. It wasn't long before BCD; Barcelona Printer Division also came onboard, though we did have a few ups and downs with them.

One of the worst downers was on the Mechanical side. I was really annoyed with myself, as I took my eye off the ball and missed all the signals that one of my senior team members was having a problem. I didn't know it at the time but he was going through a major personal crisis, which all came out into the open very much later. Had I known about it and had he taken me into his confidence about what was happening in his life, I'd have ensured he would have had the maximum of support during his tough and difficult transition. However, he was old school and chose otherwise and didn't let me know the difficulties he was going through, for that matter no one else knew either. The results of which lead to him deciding to leave our IPO. As a senior player in our IPO for a number of years, I had no reason not to put my trust in his work, I had always trusted him in the past and without fail, he always came up with the desired results.

Our IPO had to make a full high level IPO presentation to Barcelona Materials Management at our site in South Queensferry. At that time BCD's Materials manager was Tony Alonso, Tony had been transferred from San Diego to help BCD set up the newly burgeoning BCD. Alonso was a strong ally of our IPO and as such pushed his procurement team to avail themselves of our knowledge and skills. Unfortunately also at that presentation we had in attendance our new European IPO manager Wolfgang Zenger. It was a meeting that would lead to many ongoing issues with Wolfgang Zenger and get covered shortly.

#### **54. VCD UK Visits...**

VCD were frequent visitors to our IPO and to our suppliers. They were strong supporters as mentioned with Malcolm Newlands involvement in PCB's and Flexicircuits, which meant we were frequently in Newcastle and Bosham with them, resulting in many funny occurrences. We always made sure that either Malcolm or I or Jim Rooney was always on hand to support VCD. They were a big customer and we were playing a big part in their procurement success. Each and every one of them under Dave Bennie's management were fun to work with, we all worked hard but also had lots of fun times together.

Some of those that Dave brought over had never been to Europe before and of course Dave wanted to make sure they appreciated all the best bits, as he would call them! On one of the visits to Chichester we had arranged that evening to go for dinner in a nice restaurant that overlooked the sea. No they didn't want to do that, they had heard Dave Bennie going on and on about fish and chips from a chip shop and eating them out of the paper! So here we were, Brenda Lashbrook, Rusty Osborne, Dave Bennie, Jim Rooney, Malcolm Newlands and I hunting all over Chichester for a fish and chip shop.

Eventually after asking a local where there was one, we arrived at the chip shop door. I asked Jim Rooney if he had any cash with him, he didn't, but neither did I and neither did all our visitors. Chip shops don't take switch or credit cards! So off we set again, this time looking for a hole in the wall cash machine,

which did take my card, then it was back to the chip shop! They were like kids in a sweetie shop, asking all sorts of questions, we eventually emerged with a selection of fish and chips and pie and chips and we all trundled back to the car, where we all squeezed in to eat them on our laps. Needless to say, within minutes we couldn't see a damn thing out of all the steamed up windows! It was all washed down with cans of Coke. Never in all my years of entertaining visitors had I ever bought such a cheap and nasty dinner, which they all loved!

That same trip created some other funnies, especially with our Scots accents. We were sitting in the Millstream Hotel in Bosham, a nice Olde Worlde hotel, having breakfast, I looked up and saw Brenda Lashbrook coming down the stairs to join us and I said to the others at the table, "Here's Brenda in a tartan mini skirt!" Rusty roared as he laughed, "You can't say that!" Just as Brenda sat down beside us, "Said what?" I asked, Rusty replied, "Brenda a tart in a mini skirt!" Dave Bennie about choked on his toast and Brenda gave me a look. Dave, after he cleared his throat said, "That's not what John said, he said here's Brenda in a tartan mini skirt." Rusty had misread the brogue. Brenda laughed, I said, "By the way Brenda you look good in that tartan mini skirt."

Later that day our visitors wanted a look around Bosham, which has some historical interest, I overheard Malcolm say to Rusty, "King Canute was here." To which Rusty indignantly replied "No it's straight!" Dave Bennie burst out laughing again, Malcolm and I wondering what on earth Rusty was on about. Dave Bennie explained that it appeared when Malcolm had said "King Canute was here" Rusty because of the brogue had heard, "Is there a "Kink in it!" Hence what we thought was his rather odd reply, now made sense, "No, it's straight!" More laughter all round.

On another visit, Dave Bennie had brought Jim Ash with him. Jim was a nice chap but was having some domestic issues at home with his wife not wanting to move to Vancouver. Jim had always wanted to drive on the left side of the road. Despite all my protestations that we would drive, for everyone's safety, he wanted to drive. Reluctantly I conceded, bad decision. Firstly it was a stick shift, Jim said it would not be a problem as he had driven one before. It was a problem! I also said to him that spatially his eyes were used to driving on the other side of the road, so he would need time to readjust. Not a problem he said. It was!

I swapped seats with Jim and he took up the driving position, I'm glad they were quiet country roads. Off he went, crunching the gears because he would forget to use the clutch. I'd keep saying to him, pull out a bit Jim, you're getting close to the curb, a little bit further on, I'd shout, pull out a bit Jim! Just as the tyres bumped up onto the curb, he would pull out a wee bit, but minutes later I would shout the same words at him again, too late this time, he had taken a bush out by the side of the road. Dave Bennie and the others in the car were helpless with laughing. It was time to say, enough was enough and we swapped seats and I took over the driving! Jim had his experience of driving on the left, and he lived to tell the tale, so did the rest of us!

The Millstream Hotel really is a beautiful hotel where you can have afternoon tea on the lawn by the Millstream with the ducks and swans wandering up to you looking for tidbits. On the other side of the stream is the local church, at which point Jimmy Rooney said, "Finished your tea John, let's go get conkers (horse chestnuts) for my kids!" So there we were, two men dressed in their business suits, rummaging around the church yard gathering conkers, I'm sure passersby were thinking we were bonkers! The hotel had one drawback, at night the car park was pitch black. On this occasion my room overlooked the car park and the rental car I had, had this very loud horn that on this occasion also operated as an anti-theft device. I could make it go off by pushing a button on the key ring. That evening I could see how dark and quiet it was outside in the car park. The devil in me would watch cars arrive and park and as the owners would creep their way along in the dark and quiet pathway to find the hotel entrance, they would pass my car, at which point I would set off the very loud car alarm horn. The passerby would let out a yell or a scream as it scared the pants off them, meanwhile I was giggling away to myself in the peace and

quiet of my hotel room! The things that can amuse an International Procurement Manager are endless!!! Just as well no one took a heart attack!

When we visited the South Shields Printed Circuit Board Manufacturer, ISL, we would stay whenever possible at the Lumley Castle Hotel. It was a big draw to our visitors to stay in an old medieval castle, with all its long dark creepy corridors and creaking stairways, also reputedly known to have its own ghost. All the staff that served you were always dressed in medieval costume dress.

I was sitting in the library bar with some of our visitors, the waitress came over to take my order wearing a long low cut medieval dress, I ordered a couple of beers and some other drinks and two double gin and tonics. When the waitress returned with the drinks she bent over to place them on the low table in front of me and I unthinking said as she was putting the drinks on the table, "Two large ones?" She smiled, everybody laughed, I said, "I meant the G&T's." She smiled again, so I said, "I'm not complaining though!" Still smiling she returned to the bar!

We had dinner in the hotel that evening, which was really good with the candlelight bouncing off the old castle walls giving a great ambiance to dine in. The hotel was fully booked and Derek (Bugs) Buglass had a room that was way up a spiral staircase into the tower. The path to that room was extremely poorly lit with long dark shadows. As Bugs made his way along the dark corridors, I couldn't miss the chance to make ghostly and eerie like noises to help him on his way, much to Bugs's scary annoyance! I'm not too sure Derek Buglass slept all that well that night, because he slept in for the next morning and missed breakfast!

We had a visit from another of the VCD procurement staff, whose name was Gary Christie, Gary was a happy sort of Chappie, he and Malcolm were great buddies always trying to pull a fast one over the other at their expense. We were visiting a supplier in the Manchester area and the hotel we were staying at was the Haydock, near the horse racing track. To me it fitted in with the typical plastic type hotels, but had a good sports and spa area with swimming pool, sauna, hot tub and gym.

When we got back after the supplier visit, we all agreed to meet in the sauna, Malcolm had told Gary that when in the saunas in Europe, you went in starkers (naked), which is true on the Continent, but not really in this Haydock Hotel. Malcolm and I were sitting chatting in the sauna waiting for Gary to arrive, and arrive he did. Gary was not the slimmest of shapes, quite rotund actually, and he entered the door of the sauna with the skimpiest towel wrapped around his butt, which barely covered all the parts it needed to cover. Gary was cussing the fact he could not find a bigger towel, Malcolm was ending himself in laughter. Eventually the penny dropped with Gary when he saw us sitting in swimming costumes. "Malcolm you wee (expletive)" he shouted, but proceeded to sit down beside us and joined in the laughter.



## 55. The Wolfgang Pack...

I never agreed with Wolfgang Zenger's appointment to the IPO, and it would prove one that I could never get to grips with. I knew Zenger's management style from his days in Zentraleinkauf, everything was for his own benefit. What's more the GIPO Manager Karl Heinz Hartmann absolutely detested him and his management style. The strange thing was, it was KHH who hired him years earlier into HP.



Despite both Karl Heinz Hartmann and myself trying to convince Bill Boller our HPP Corporate IPO Manager that hiring Zenger would be a bad idea, and that it would lead to the demise of the IPOs in both Germany and Scotland, Boller still went ahead and hired him anyway. True to form as we had stated, it led to the end of the IPOs in Europe. I knew within myself Hartmann would not last long in his role as GIPO Manager and that it would only be a matter of time when I would come to blows with him. My prophesy would be proven in the future.

The meeting our IPO had with BCD Materials was going to plan, with each of my senior team players giving their presentations in turn. I kicked the whole thing off, followed by Jim Rooney, John Keogh, Malcolm Newlands and another was to bring up the rear and close it all off. With all our busy schedules, as a group we didn't do a pre-meeting dummy run, I knew my team had done dozens of presentations in the past and all over the world, I had nothing to make me think that this presentation would be any different. I trusted each and every one of them to give a top notch presentation on our IPO support and what we had to offer. Which each and everyone did, until that is it came to the final presentation.

The presentation was a complete and utter disaster. It totally missed BCD's needs and requirements from our IPO support on their mechanical parts. I can still see in my nightmares an overhead slide that was presented, showing a hare running across the map of Europe. The presentation was immature and bordering on the amateurish side, it was certainly not up to our and his usual IPO status of previous presentations given then and on many other occasions in the past. I could see the BCD procurement team starting to squirm and look at each other, I'm sure they were starting to wonder if they had the right person in charge of their mechanical parts in our IPO.

This whole presentation was on the verge of going "belly-up" and becoming a major disaster for our IPO, if I didn't do something very quickly. I had no option as I had been left no room to manoeuvre or manipulate the situation, I had to show we were in control no matter what. My direct interjection was bold and harsh and led directly to him later leaving our IPO. His confidence was shattered and my trust in him at an all-time low. If only he had taken me into his confidence, this situation would just never have arisen.

In my response, I took a deliberately harsh stance of taking a very unprofessional opening to make the mark and draw the attention away from what had happened. I opened with an expletive that was intended to capture the attention of all at that meeting. I still regret to have to use such a hard opening line, but the situation demanded aggressive control. I said, "You've (expletiving) missed completely the needs of BCD in the support of their mechanical parts." I moved the discussion on to getting back to BCG within three days on an update on how our IPO would support their needs.

Tony Alonso spoke on behalf of BCD, he knew like I did that we were doing an outstanding job in supporting their needs. Afterwards he said to me that there must have been something else behind this aberration. I tried afterwards to find out what had gone wrong with him, but he clamped up and even then wouldn't tell me about his personal home situation. What a waste. He was of the age group who didn't believe in letting others know what their problems were. There was another downside I had to manage from this presentation disaster. It of course had given Zenger the opportunity he was looking for to stick his jack-boot in. He stated that he wanted from now on to approve all presentations beforehand.

I was livid at Zenger demanding to see every presentation before they went out, and it resulted in him and I having a full blown argument about it. I refused point blank to share any presentation of mine beforehand. I went on to say, "You might intimidate others, but you don't intimidate me." I further went on to say, "You've painted yourself into a corner by demanding that you preview all the presentations. So I obviously need to help you out of this embarrassment. I'll tell my team you only want to do this once." I also went on to tell him my reasons why, "I can't allow you to impact their ability and confidence, especially as it was based on one guy's lapse of control, all the other presentations were perfect." To

which he agreed. So he got one preview from each, which allowed him not to lose any face with my group. I told my group that he wanted to use the first preview of their presentation so as he could get to know each of them. The members in our group knew differently, they knew of my support for each of them.

The German IPO was a different story, Zenger vetted all the presentations and had them change them to what he wanted. This situation was the start of many further disagreements still to come. In a way I think Wolfgang sort of liked them as it made sure he was on his toes. I certainly noticed on numerous occasions he would change his planned approach and include the inputs I had given. To Zenger's credit, he did reward hard work and good effort. On that score both he and I saw eye to eye.

The big difference was in our management styles. I encouraged my staff to question and challenge my proposals, statements and directions, more so if they totally disagreed with me. They all knew that any resulting heated discussion, was and never would be held or used against them. They also knew if they had any better inputs or suggestions to what I was proposing, they would be incorporated in whatever line we took, and I'd drop my proposal. That approach always ensured we had the best solutions to meet our IPO and our IPO customer needs. It was true unfettered teamwork, where all were encouraged to make their inputs. In addition, I always made sure that those who had come forward with a great decision or input, or idea that everyone knew it was their own creation. Neither I, nor anyone else was going to steal their thunder or get their credit.

Whereas Zenger's management style was to dominate everything, he had to be the Fuhrer, telling everyone what and how to do it. He would line up all his 'yes-men' behind him, as we were to see as time went on. It was important to him to be recognised as the boss, the leader, and he expected all his staff to fall in line behind, in an unquestioning manner. He bought loyalty with cash, but that would never be true loyalty. This fitted well into the German structure, I'm sure they would have all followed on behind as their Fuehrer walked off the end of a pier into the water! I could never fall into line like that, to me it was a suffocating entrepreneurial spirit killing structure, being me, as a Maverick, I would always fight and resist it.

I would have lots of head to heads with Zenger, many in the GIPO office would look on in disbelief, they couldn't believe the relationship I had with him, and none of them would ever dare to speak to him and say what I would say. Unfortunately, it also meant that members in our IPO would talk to me in a totally different way than they would talk to Zenger and he knew it, and he commented to me on how my team supported me and were loyal towards me.

I always believed that my management style and approach, allowed all members of our IPO team to develop and not to be afraid to make suggestions or give inputs. No input would ever be considered as irrelevant or silly, it was our team that developed the strategy. Unlike Zenger whose style was always to be the one that set out the strategy and order the other IPO members to do it without argument, and in that way he could always claim it as his.

## **56. Off-site updates...**

I always knew that department communications were of prime importance. To me I felt strongly that every member of our IPO team from the bottom to the top were always fully aware of which direction our IPO was heading. In that way there would always be an opening for all to make inputs to help that happen. To fulfill this we would have a day off-site on a regular basis, where all my senior players would present to everyone on the team, what they were currently working on and future plans to be addressed. There was no way I was going to have some person say to me they didn't know what was going on, or who would be visiting our IPO office.

The off-site meeting was always a full day starting at 9.00 am and would finish at around 3.30 pm, with lunch set up for everyone to bond. I would see folks come into work early that day and work away till we left for the meeting. As well as lunch we made sure there were always snacks and drinks laid on for all to enjoy. After the meeting, instead of going home many would go straight back to the office to deal with anything urgent that might have arisen whilst they were away from their desks.

Witnessing commitment like that from the team allowed me to take a relaxed approach whenever any team member needed unplanned or planned time off work to deal with some personal matter or other. The team members would ask if they could take time off to go do something. Their request was always met with a, "Sure, take whatever time you will need, we'll see you when you get back." Never once did I ever have to say to any team member it would have to be unpaid or the time made up. I didn't have to, I knew that every one of the team would always go beyond their daily hourly need, many would stay late to ensure the customer's needs were met or would contact customers around the world from home, because of the time zone differences.

Not one of the IPO team abused taking time off, with an openness and trust like that, our IPO always got more back than it had given out.

### **57. Dead Horse's head in the bed...**

Barcelona was turning out to be a good customer, despite the one major hic-cup we had with them, turning that situation around worked to our benefit. We got a call from one of their PCA engineers, Alberto Martinez, who asked if he and his Purchasing team member Pili Sebastian could come over and talk with us. No problem, come whenever you want and we'll work around your schedule. They both came over within the week, which made me wonder why they were in such a rush. It turned out to be a very beneficial visit for our IPO. They wanted our support with 'Buy and Sell' and wanted us to support a Barcelona PCA CM in Naples Italy. We didn't know then it would turn out to be a somewhat worrying experience for one of our team, Sue McCann.

The business was to be kicked off with Alberto setting up a meeting with the PCA CM and he wanted both Jim Rooney and I to attend. Alberto said he'd fix up all the arrangements and he would pick us up at Rome Airport and drive us to Naples and back. True to his word, Alberto met Jim Rooney and I at Rome airport and he drove us down to Naples. The journey was great as neither Jim nor I had been to that part of Italy. We drove past Monte Casino, which I had known about from history of the last war. Both Jim and I were glad that Alberto was doing the driving, when we entered the city of Naples it was a nightmare, cars just drove anywhere, there seemed no logic or system to driving. Going up the wrong side, never seemed a problem, not stopping at traffic lights when at red appeared to be accepted practice. Even driving where the tram cars only should be was the norm. During all the time we were in Naples, I didn't see one car that did not have a bash or large scrape along one side or other. Naples is an experience and fun place to visit, I just wouldn't advise anyone to drive there though, rules of the road as we know them, just don't seem to exist! After my previous experience driving in the Milan area, why am I so surprised?

The hotel Alberto had chosen was one of the oldest hotels right on the sea front of Naples Bay, we could see Mount Vesuvius on our left and the Isle of Capri dead ahead. What was even more spectacular, was that view was where they served breakfast up on the roof terrace, served by waiters dressed in white aprons and bow ties no less!! It felt like something out of the movie "The Italian Job".

The meeting with the PCA CM appeared to go very well. They looked like they were technically capable of manufacturing the HP Barcelona PCA, plus Barcelona would oversee all the technical aspects, Malcolm Newlands in our IPO office would hold a fall back upon support role should the need arise.

Barcelona would also manage the PCA CM and the finished PCA assembly. Our IPO focus was to only manage the component supply.

Barcelona and our IPO explained the process of ordering parts through our IPO, at first the PCA CM Managing Director, a jovial sort of chap, had some difficulty in coming to terms with that. He just wanted us to tell him where to buy the parts and at what price. We had to explain that the pricing was confidential and that our component suppliers also wanted it kept that way, as HP did. We explained that if the PCA CM's knew what price we were paying they would demand it for their other customers, the PCA CM Managing Director said, "Oh we wouldn't do that!" Yeah right, this was the process and he would have to live with it. The PCA CM Managing Director gave us a plant tour and the history of the company from when they first started up the company. Which included him telling us of his facility total shut down due to their water supply being cut off? It was then he told us the reason for the water shut down was due to it being controlled by the Mafia, who demanded regular monthly payments to keep the water flowing!! Which they duly paid!

Sue McCann was our IPO office staff member who was responsible for the supply of components to the Naples facility. The PCA CM relationship with our IPO worked very well. Our Sue liked dealing with all those guys speaking their English with their sexy Italian accents, This was at a time when demand for HP products were high, at a time of even greater demand for Drams and other components which HP could gain a price advantage on, which were also in short supply in the open market. Sue's job was challenging enough in trying to get enough components and the coordinating of component shipments. Everything was going smoothly, until that is, the worldwide shortage of components started to bite. Every OEM was feeling the pain as components were now being rationed from the component suppliers. In turn this affected our IPO ability to supply the PCA CM's with all the quantities they all needed to keep production up. The Naples PCA CM was no different from all the other PCA CM's we were supporting, BCD were also fully aware of the global component situation and asked us just to do what we could. The Naples PCA CM thought differently, they started to apply threatening behaviour, it just added unnecessary stress and pressure.

The PCA CM Material Manager who had been told exactly what to say to Sue McCann by his Managing Director, started to use threatening language to Sue by saying that they had access to contacts in the Mafia in Naples and that they would single her out if she did not supply the parts they needed to keep their production going. Sue came directly to me looking worried and tearful and told me what they had said to her. This was totally unacceptable behaviour on the PCA CM part.

I set up a conference call with the Naples PCA CM Materials Manager around a speaker phone, with Sue McCann, Jim Rooney and myself so all could hear what was being said, and to also record the conversation on tape. I called the Materials Manager in Naples and started off by asking him if he was aware of the worldwide shortage of some components. He was. I progressed the conversation further by asking then why if he was aware of the component shortages, he used threats involving the Mafia to Sue over the telephone. He fell silent for a while, then went on to explain that he had been told to do so by his Managing Director, who wanted to keep all his production lines up and running. He had decided that the Mafia might help him achieve that.

I went on to state that I now needed to escalate this to his Managing Director and to Barcelona as well as HP Corporate, but first I would speak with his Managing Director after I had spoken to Barcelona. Barcelona agreed with my line of action in dealing with it and I was to report back after my discussion with the Naples PCA CM Managing Director. I contacted the MD, who admitted he had said this to his Materials Manager as he wanted to keep his PCA lines up and running and that his goal was to keep BCD happy. I told him that this was totally unacceptable behaviour and that he or anyone on his staff had no right whatsoever to threaten any member of my staff, let alone a young lady who was already trying hard to get his company as many parts as she possibly could. I went on to say that the matter would be

escalated to Barcelona and HP Corporate, it would then be up to Barcelona to decide whether his company should be black listed as a PCA CM supplier to HP.

I fed back to BCD and HP Corporate the results of my telephone conversation with the PCA CM, HP Corporate immediately wanted to install a ban on the PCA CM and to escalate the matter even further, I stated that any thoughts that HP Corporate may have on escalation, should only be carried out after BCD had decided upon what path to take. BCD top level management contacted the Naples PCA CM Managing Director and informed him that his company's behaviour was totally unacceptable and unwarranted and that a top level management meeting was about to be held about removing their business from his company and blacklisting his company throughout HP for any business.

The PCA CM MD, did an immediate 180 degree turn, he said he was only joking and that he meant no harm and apologised profusely for their non-professional behaviour. BCD Management accepted his apology and went on to state that they would now monitor the situation. HP Corporate then had to agree to BCD's decision on the matter. I later received a call from the PCA CM MD apologising for the matter; Sue McCann also received a call from the PCA CM Materials Manager apologizing for their behaviour. A day later a huge bunch of flowers arrived on Sue McCann's desk from the PCA CM MD containing a card of apology. The flowers were returned to from whence they came, that way they would get the message on how they had upset Sue McCann and they also had to learn the lesson to live with the global component shortages, just like everyone else had to.

After the dust had settled Sue McCann was always very businesslike when dealing with the Italian PCA CM supplier in Naples, they had destroyed the open and friendly trust that they had built up with her.

### **58. It's all about Management Style...**

Our IPO team was always head and shoulders above every other Procurement Group in our host division There was also a noticeable difference in our IPO Team when compared to the other global IPO's. Even our worldwide customer divisions just didn't seem or show the same level of ability. Many of course would say I was biased in this line of thinking, but I strongly believe that it is they who are the ones who are wrong. Everyone in our IPO Team had this air of enthusiasm, confidence and capability. I'm big headed enough to believe it was down to my management style.

Having worked in Ferranti's, learning to be a Toolmaker, a company that was organized along military lines where there were three layers of management above the workers, of which I was one of the lowest, being an apprentice. Those three upper layers of management, with each having their own cafeteria and toilets, I could never see any distinctive business benefit to be gained from such a rigid class structure. In fact it created the opposite effect, a 'we and them' structure which would always keep each other at each other's throats, 'divide and rule' being that kind of structures motto. Worse, it further enhanced a complete lack of sharing of information environment. It led to everyone from the bottom up to the top, going out of their way to screw each other level for their own benefit and to maintain their inflated egos and believed class status.

When I heard about HP, it was like a breath of fresh air. On joining the company, I couldn't believe it at first, everyone shared the one cafeteria, and shared the same toilets. Everyone was on an equal status, no matter what their job function. The use of everyone's first name was the norm in daily use. The "HP Way" as it was called, was a visionary act, well ahead of its time back then. Bill and Dave, Messrs. Hewlett and Packard were true entrepreneurial visionaries of their time. Their style was so successful, that many companies would later follow in their shoes and implement that style of management.

Communications was the key factor, information was freely communicated downwards for everyone to know. A monthly site update meeting was the norm, particularly on how the company was faring. In later years when the company got so much bigger, Bill and Dave were involved less and less in the company, then the information being fed downwards became less and very selective. I was a true believer, follower and supporter of the “HP Way.” It convinced me that if you put your trust in people and gave them the responsibility for their actions and for them to be successful, then they would rise to that challenge. I tried to practice all these things, but I also recognised that as HP was a non-union company, my role as my teams’ manager, also meant that I had to operate as their shop steward. On a few occasions that didn’t go down too well, with some of the higher management levels in the South Queensferry site!

It was never an easy task to operate as the IPO team manager giving guidance, direction, tasks to be done and discipline. On other occasions, I was standing shoulder to shoulder with my fellow employees and defending them against issues which may affect them negatively. Somehow I managed to do it and enjoyed all the challenges and problems that such a dichotomy would throw up at me.

First and foremost I would always stick to the first basic rule, trust your employee, give them the responsibility and ownership of their tasks. Learn to stand back and ignore the urge to step in and interfere and take over, a trick Zenger would never get the hang of.

If you are of the attitude, “If you want a job done, do it yourself,” you will never succeed. You must stand back and monitor from a distance. If things don’t go to plan or the exact way you want them to go, try to make alternative suggestions, but let the employee work it out as his responsibility. Gradually that approach will build employee confidence and ability, as well as their trust in you.

I had a few other rules I would apply to myself, and I managed by them.

I would never have an employee come and ask for permission to do something, just have them come to you to seek forgiveness if it all goes wrong. Even then, give them the support and help to get over whatever went wrong. Never use a mistake against them or cast it back at them. They’ll learn better and faster and make fewer mistakes in the future.

I would never steal an employee's thunder for their good ideas, good work, or good inputs. I would always make sure that everyone knew from whom the good work, good idea, or good input came from. People like to know they are doing a good job and openly welcome recognition for it. In turn it will lead to even more employee enthusiasm, participation and employee success and growth. Always make sure that whenever possible, your employees actively witness you operating on their behalf, even if that may directly have an impact on yourself with higher levels of management. That supportive approach will bring honesty, trust and loyalty to you and your whole team. You will eventually find out that your team members will also jump to your defence when that need may arise.

Communications are crucial, share all the information and trust your team members to treat such news with confidence. Make sure you reward those who consistently go the extra mile. Money is only a short term motivator, but it is also a very important one and should never be underestimated. It may well be only a short term motivator, but get it wrong and it is a long term de-motivator. Open recognition of efforts is the biggest motivator of all and it has to be a continuous ongoing process. I always remember my Foreman from Ferranti's Bob Robertson, once saying to me, when he failed to get my pay increased, which led to me leaving Ferranti, “John, the money is not very good, but look at the laughs you get!!” Sure I had lots of laughs, but Bob had forgotten the most important part of all and didn't play that card. His recognition of good work done, was to give me even more difficult and varied work to do, knowing full well that I could do it and would rise to the difficult challenges. That was the best motivator of all, but the pay had also to be right, if I had been paid fairly, then I may not have had a career with Hewlett Packard.

I previously mentioned paid time off, helping team members in this way to deal with their personal issues will also help reap even bigger dividends. Always try to offer a form of supportive counseling help which is private between yourself and your team member. It will help to build even more trust within the team, but disguise it in such a way as to not come across as counseling. If ever there's a word that will scare people off from being helped, it's the word counseling!

Anyone who has ever experienced depression—which could or could not have been induced by the stress of work—will tell you it's a very difficult issue to work through and solve. Most mature people will try and hide it from others, they don't want anyone to think they are weak and cannot deal with things. Depression is an illness, no different from any other illness, but it seems to have a stigma attached to it.

I have had personal experience in dealing with depression which included overcoming panic attacks and the fear of going to work. True to the norm, I followed the standard pattern and the only two people who ever knew about it were my doctor and my wife. Not one person at work knew about it, it's amazing how you learn to hide it and cover it up. But I did battle on with the illness for two years, to fight my way through it, which I successfully managed to do, thanks to the support from my wife and my doctor. I once met my doctor in a restaurant, he and his wife were out celebrating some event. I was in the restaurant with a group of American business visitors. My doctor, at my next appointment with him, said to me, that he was sitting there knowing what I was going through and how much of a fight I was fighting to keep it all together. That to him proved I was determined to get well again.

The secret to winning though with depression, is to recognise and understand what you have and how you develop your own process to deal with it internally within yourself. I noticed those patterns in one of my senior team members, casually one day as it neared lunchtime. I openly asked him if he fancied a walk at lunchtime, the weather looked nice outside, a lovely day for a walk and I wanted spending a bit of it out in the sunshine.

Daily lunchtime walks around the outskirts of the facility were common with employees since the facility was situated in the countryside, and people liked to get away from their desks for a little while. So there was nothing suspicious to be garnered by others from me suggesting a walk.

During the walk I asked the team member how he was feeling? After a little while he started to describe the feelings and effects of depression. He was most surprised that I had spotted what was wrong and freely admitted he was suffering from depression and was under medication. I explained to him that I could read the signs as I had the 'T' Shirt, I had been there before and knew exactly what it was like and what he was going through. Like him I hid it from everyone else around me. I went on to offer my support and told him he could have someone to talk with about it, without anyone else ever knowing about what he was going through. When we got back to the IPO office, I shouted to him across the office floor, "That was a good walk, I needed the exercise, and it got me away from my desk, I need to do that much more often, do you fancy doing that every day?" Saying it like that, everyone around heard it and would think nothing untoward about it. However, my team member also recognised I had a very different reason for saying it and he replied, "Yeah, let's just do that, I need the fresh air and to get away from my desk also."

So for a number of months, we both went out in all weathers for our lunchtime walk and I was able to support him and help him talk through his illness, leading to a much speedier recovery. He thanked me for all my help and understanding as well as maintaining his privacy. Taking that line of action also allowed me to help make sure the team member had every support at hand to maintain his success with the projects he had in hand. That made it a win-win for all, the employee and our continued IPO success.

## **59. All work & no play is no fun at all...**

Everyone in our IPO team worked hard, so it was important to allow fun in the office and to have off-site fun and play. Daily fun and laughter could be heard emanating from our IPO office, I encouraged it. Fun and laughter in the office is very important as it relieves the built up stresses and allows the team to relax a bit during the normal work hours. I would make myself the brunt of the amusement from time to time. This also helped ensure that I as Manager, I was also seen as being human and approachable. The laughter that emanated from within our team, on occasion caused some displeasure with other managers whose offices surrounded our IPO office, particularly when members of their staff joined in on the fun.

I would always try to use humour at every opportunity. I would have all sorts of comical things around my desk area, I'd pick them up in the various places I would visit when traveling. I once had a Gorilla sitting on my desk that whenever a noise was made, he'd start singing a rock and roll song! All those things helped to relieve the work tension and bring a smile to peoples' faces. A happy worker is a productive worker.

It was also important to make sure we had fun outside the IPO office. The office Christmas party was always just a wee bit on the wild side, you'd likely find our IPO group members forming a circle and all singing "Simply the Best," when the DJ played the Tina Turner classic number. All helping to further emphasise we were "Simply the Best." It was our signature tune after all!

At one Christmas party, which normally started around 11.30 am, we'd arranged transport to pick us all up at the HP plant and take us to the Maybury Roadhouse for our Christmas meal and disco. Then around 7.00 pm we all headed into town, usually using a Corporation bus, helping the public to get into the festive spirit with our singing. On hitting the West End we made for the Rutland Bar. There was always a huge crowd in the Rutland and loud music blared, the bouncers were always on their toes. On one occasion though they missed the trouble that suddenly sprang up. I had my back to it, so was completely unaware of what was going on. Suddenly one of my staff, Claire Urquhart, who I was talking to, pushed me to one side, she had seen a bottle get thrown and it was headed straight towards my head, Claire pushed me out of the way, but she took the full force of the bottle on her shoulder and fell to the floor. At that point the bouncers had the guys ejected and came to see if Claire was okay. Thank goodness she was, but she had a bruise, which she said was better than the team taking me to hospital to have my head stitched up!

Sadly, one Christmas the bouncers wouldn't let us into the Rutland bar. You always had to make sure you appeared sober to enter. John Thomson bent down to tie his shoe lace, lost his balance and fell over, that was enough for the bouncers not to let any of us in! There are plenty of other bars in Edinburgh, so no harm done.

## **60. 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary...**

On the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our IPO I decided to organize something special. I had previously realized, especially since it also happened to me, that because of the efforts of each of our team members who were managing their business, they were often kept away from their homes. It was now also time to reward their partners in our celebrations. This was to be in the form of an off-site celebration for IPO members and partners or spouses at the Drimsynie Resort on the west side of the Scottish Highlands. The plan was we would all stay for a fun filled weekend, with a choice of activities for all to choose from. There would be Golf, Horse riding, Clay Pigeon shooting, and Bowls and for the winner of each event, there would be a fun trophy. Each trophy was in the shape of an egg and it would be presented to the person who proved to be the most "eggcellent" in partaking in that activity, at that evening's celebrations.



Drimsynie complex is a hotel surrounded by log chalet type cabins, with a varied selection of outdoor and indoor activities and sporting facilities, which we were going to make full use of. We would kick off the event with a party in the largest chalet on the Friday evening. As most of our team was involved in frequent overseas travel, we had a more than ample access to the supply of 'duty free' spirits. To these we would add a supply of beer and soft drinks, mixers and nibbles. Some of the team member's partners made even more delights to eat. We were all set for a fun filled evening, complete with party games. Needless to say the evening soon drew out into the small hours of the next day, creating a few hangovers that had to be managed during the next day's events! This only helped to add to all the fun.

As this was our first visit to Drimsynie for our celebration, I had also invited the GIPO Manager Karl Heinz Hartmann and his wife Christel and their youngest daughter. Knowing what my group were like, I had those guests housed inside the hotel, I also knew Karl Heinz wouldn't come to the party in the chalet, he would recognise it as not ideal for his little daughter. That though didn't stop the Hartmann family from having a great time at dinner. After dinner they were on the dance floor all night for every Scottish dance, including a rather long and tiring 'Strip the Willow'. Their energy was amazing, they all just loved learning the Scottish dances. Years later Karl would comment on such a great night he and his family had and that every member of our team made sure they were not left out. In fact they encouraged them to take part in all the dances.

It was at the evening party in the chalet that my IPO team gave me a huge surprise. Totally unknown to me my team presented me with a whisky decanter inscribed with,

**"Simply The Best!"**  
**Presented To John Wastle**  
**By**  
**The IPO Team**  
**On Our 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.**

Sheila was also given a huge bouquet of flowers. They had caught me unawares and for once I was completely speechless, much to the team's amusement. I was so chuffed (pleased, grateful) that they had gone to this length on my behalf. That decanter still holds a prime position in our cabinet at home.

At breakfast Derek Buglass commented that he had looked out his chalet window at the loch. It is a sea loch and between the time he last looked at it and when he looked at it that morning, the tide had gone out. This lead Derek to ask, "God did I drink all that as well in my drinks?"

On the golf course, Jim Rooney played the longest drive of his golfing career. The ball went straight for 275yards, but it was vertical, and straight back down 275 yards, giving a total drive shot of 550 yards. Unfortunately the ball only landed about 30 feet in front of him, nevertheless it was the longest drive of the day!

Out at the horse riding event, Malcolm Newlands, who was not the tallest member of our group, somehow managed to end up with the largest horse on the planet. However, his height didn't stop him from clattering his head on the stable roof. Malcolm was quite a sight to behold with his short legs split astride this monstrous brute of a horse. He was virtually doing the splits around the whole trek. Every now and then he would let out a loud yell as he bounced up and down on the horse's back and smacked his 'family jewels' in the process. It was to get even funnier as after the trek, watching Malcolm dismount and try to waddle bow-legged back to his chalet!! Mind you he did get off lucky as we trotted along the water at the

side of the loch, his horse wanted to have a roll in the cold water. But by then Malcolm's able riding skills had improved to such an extent, he did manage to stop the horse from rolling in the waves.

The Clay Pigeon shooting contest turned out to be quite a surprising event. In this case the trophy being played for was the "Eggsterminator Egg" The winner and undisputed champion for this particular event turned out to be the biggest surprise of all. It was Rose Patrick. Rose was one of those ladies who would never go anywhere without her handbag, high heeled shoes and all her make-up on. The fact that the Clay Pigeon shoot was taking place out in the countryside half way up a mountain, made no difference to our Rose.

Rose appeared at the Land Rover with all the slap on, skin tight pants that looked as if they were sprayed on, high heeled shoes and handbag. She promptly climbed into the back of the Land Rover whence they all set off up the side of the mountain to the shooting area. The instructor had two shotguns a large one and a smaller shotgun. It was soon Rose's turn for her first shot, as she steps up to the line, she says to the instructor, "I've never fired a gun in my life." She picked up the shotgun held it loosely, shouted pull, to release the Clay, and said, "Ooohh," She pulled the trigger, and her shot went all over the place. Rose then said, "That bloody thing hit my shoulder!" At that point the instructor said to her, "Next shot hold the shotgun butt tight into your shoulder." Rose is a quick learner, she shouldered it tightly for her next shot. From that second shot and every shot thereafter, Rose never missed hitting the Clay Pigeon. She was incredible for someone who had never fired a gun in her entire life; she was a natural, and richly deserved her 'Rambo' trophy. She put all the boys to shame! Maybe it was something to do with her first marriage... A shotgun wedding!

Between the rows of chalets lay a small grassy slope which had to be negotiated to get from one chalet to the next one. Not a problem really, until that is when it became wet after a drop of rain, and even more treacherous when combined with the copious amounts of alcohol that everyone consumed. All of which led to hoots of laughter from all as they made their way from one chalet to another dressed in their Sunday best! If they were to give a score card for negotiating that journey, the highest score would have been awarded to Claire Urquhart. It was she who made the most inelegant downward passage towards her chalet much to the amusement and pleasure of others and with their encouragement as they egged her on. Just as well clothes are washable!

On the night after the party and the dance. Sheila and I left to go back to our Chalet, before the others, they were still deep in merrymaking. We were lying in bed and could hear the noise as our IPO team were making their way somewhat unsteadily back to their chalets. They stopped outside our chalet, and started to sing at the tops of their voices..."Simply the Best"...! Guess they all had a good time.

#### **61. EIPO Black Forest Eat Out...**

On one of our joint UKIPO and GIPO meetings in Boeblingen, or Bubblegum as my guys would call it, we had each of our two IPO group's key personnel, engineers and key business staff get together. We needed to share ideas and strategy on how we would work together to address the bigger HP opportunities. On this occasion, Karl Heinz Hartmann had reserved rooms in Bad Tienach Spa and had arranged a dinner in an old hostelry in the village of Zavelstein. As we were all staying in the Bad Teinach Spa resort right on the edge of the Black Forest, the village of Zalvestein was a walk



The entire EIPO Team meets with GIPO Dick Locke.

through part of the forest to reach the old Inn. Fortunately, we were walking there was in daylight and uphill, so getting there would not be a problem, however, the journey back would be a somewhat different matter!

We set off for the dinner. Walking through the Black Forest was fun as there was plenty to see, everyone on the lookout for the wild Boar! We all reached the hostelry after a wander around an old ruined castle of sorts, and were led inside by Karl Heinz, to wend our way down a windy stair. We were to eat in the dark cellar! Karl Heinz said, "This is a special place where we eat only with our fingers and a dagger and a wooden board as a plate, plus we drink out of Bull horns." The party soon got into full swing with these wild guys from the UK IPO.

Karl Heinz went on to say, "You can only take a drink by saying, Zum wohler allerzeit!" At which point everyone has to lift up their Bull horn and shout out "Zum wohl(e) allerseits!," and then take a good swig at the wine in the horn. The Scots contingent just loved that, as well as drinking the wine of course. So every thirty seconds or so one would shout out "Zum wohler allerzeit!" and down the throat the wine would go, with everyone else shouting the same and swallowing another gulp. Karl Heinz went on to explain to someone that people would just pretend to drink by raising the Bull horn to their lips. Yeah right, like the Scots contingent would do that! Those that forgot and took a drink by themselves and didn't follow the set pattern by not shouting "Zum wohler allerzeit!" toast, had to either sing a song or kiss a virgin!

As the night wore on we had to change a few of the arrangements and rules. First to go was "Zum wohler allerzeit!" It soon became "Bill Boller outta sight!" (Our Boss.) The next rule requiring modification, due to the fact we were the only folks in the cellar, the kissing of virgins had to quickly change to kissing ex virgins! Otherwise there would have been no kissing and the few ladies in our group were already in relationships! By now everyone, except Karl Heinz was well oiled. He was still practicing just lifting the bull horn to his lips without drinking. Then someone unearthed this strangest of mechanical contraptions, a machine that represented an old Bavarian gentleman, it was passed around everyone to have a shot, it produced snuff on the back of your hand to be sniffed up each nostril. John Keogh almost choked on it and was cursing away about it choking his nose!

With the dinner and drinking now over, it was time to make our way back to the Bad Teinach Spa Hotel. The upside, it was downhill, so it would make it easier with us all being a bit tipsy. The downside, it was pitch black outside. Not to worry, Karl Heinz had all contingencies covered, he appeared with an armful of huge candles on a stick for everyone to light their path! So off we all set to stagger down the hillside with flaming torches in hand.

We almost lost a couple of the guys on the way down. John Keogh bumped into John Thomson and they both disappeared off the path into the darkness as their torches went out when they fell to the ground. After a little fracas we managed to get them back onto the path, candles reignited and into the group, which was now spread out over about 500 yards from front to back. Karl Heinz Hartmann was getting more and more agitated that we'd lose someone in the forest and have to call out a search party. However, we finally managed to help the real tipsy ones like John Keogh and John Thomson down to the bottom. John Keogh looked somewhat different as he glistened in the light from being covered from head to foot in candle wax!

We made it back to the hotel and straight into the bar! We all needed a drink after that journey, any excuse for some beer. We weren't at the bar two minutes when we noticed a couple of guys from England having a beer, at that point Jim Rooney shouts out, "That was never a goal!" The English guys knew exactly that Jim Rooney was talking about the 1966 World Cup! We ended up with the English guys joining us for a few more beers before we all went off to bed.

## 62. Eating can be Fun....

Shenzhen on mainland China was an odd place even in the best of times. It is where taxi drivers are encased inside a wire mesh cabin in case someone tried to beat them up and rob them. I quickly learned that it's not a good idea to sit directly behind the driver in case of an emergency stop, which seemed all too common with the hundreds of bicycles that had to be negotiated. There were no seat belts in the beat up taxis. Even squatters were different, all over the streets you could see these makeshift dwellings built illegally on the roofs of the building, a good wind would bring them toppling down on top of the people in the streets below, but there were always plenty more to replace them!

It was on one of those trips to China that I had a very unusual dinner. The General Manager of the Volex Pencon Chinese facility took us all out to dinner. The restaurant was not one that the ordinary person on the street would visit. It was a bit up-market by Chinese standards, but nowhere near the standard of western Chinese restaurants. The Chinese Volex Pencon General Manager, summoned over the head of the restaurant, and said something to him in Cantonese. A few minutes later the restaurant manager appeared at the side of our host with a large white polythene bag, which was moving! In all my travels in the Far East, I had learned, 'Don't ask!' Enquire later once it has been cooked and eaten. I looked at Derek Kozer, who had looked at me also in wonderment. So we all tucked into a beautiful tasty meal, everything tastes like chicken. So I could now ask, "What was that we just ate that was in the polythene bag?" "Did you like it?" came the reply, to which I had to respond with a "Yes, it was very tasty." I was then informed we had just been eating a Bat...! It's true, the Chinese will eat anything, as long as its back faces the sun! Mind you, one of the courses on the table was a plate of fish heads. What on earth is there to eat in a plate of fish heads? But then the Chinese women eat chicken feet, and there has got to be even less to eat on them!

At another business dinner the Chinese host had ordered this huge fish, which was placed down in front of me, with its head facing me. As the chief guest I was given the privilege of eating the fish eyes first! I sort of passed on that, having that fishes sharp teeth pointing towards me and those staring white eyes, it just looked like it was daring me to eat them at my peril.

Jim Rooney and I both attended an IPO meeting in Singapore. Jim was attending the IT Systems Meeting, which had been added onto the World Wide IPO Managers meeting to give inputs and get agreement on the way forward. That evening a dinner, a karaoke and dance trip had been organized aboard a Junk boat. The star performer that evening was to turn out to be none other than our Kenji Mutaguchi from the Japanese IPO. Kenji was a wild guy at the best of times as we had found out. In Japan they have different eating habits from us folks in the West. On the menu that evening was 'Drunken prawns.' A huge glass bowl of live king prawns arrived on our table, some spirit poured onto them, and they all start jumping about in the bowl, hence the name 'Drunken prawns. In the restaurants where the westerners eat, they would then take them away and cook them.

But before they took the prawns away to be cooked, quick as a flash, Kenji Mutaguchi, takes one out of the bowl, rips the head and legs of the live prawn, dumps the head and legs on a side plate and proceeds to open the prawn shell body to eat the uncooked prawn, sushi style! Meanwhile the remaining part of the prawn, bodyless head and legs of the upper prawn torso have now crawled off his plate and onto the table. With cries from the westerners sitting nearby shouting, "Kenji!!" To which he replies, "Ooopsss!, I forgot who I was dining with!" Kenji made up for it later as he was quite tipsy by the time we all got back onto the bus to take us back to our hotel, with Kenji entertaining us all the way singing all the songs in his repartee.

Singapore is a culinary delight, you can find all sorts of different tastes in food, many of which are in the most inexpensive areas. A favourite has to be the Hawker Stalls which are dotted around all over the

place, the better ones being found in small groups, but all have strict hygiene controls, so it's quite safe to eat there. Westerners maybe be a bit more discerning in what they choose. The sea food is to die for, huge prawns, crabs and lobster, I thought I was in heaven. The system was you visited each of the stalls and pick out what you fancy and go sit and eat it all on nearby benches.

South Shore restaurant area, a favourite spot of mine, is where Lionel Alexander and his Irish wife Lynn would take me. It was a bit like Hawker stalls, but featured outdoor restaurants where they served your tables. These are renowned for the Chili and Pepper Crabs, they have to be tasted to be believed, but you have to drink copious amounts of draft beer, to stop your mouth going on fire. Every time I left the table my mouth was numb. The downside is the beer, alcohol is a sin, and as such attracts a large tax. But the food is inexpensive, so there are never any complaints.

On another visit to Singapore, we were visiting the IJBU facility, I had Frances Horne, GKN Key Accounts Manager, and her manager in tow. We were that evening to meet our hosts in an area between Changi Airport and South Shore. Because we said we liked sea food they had picked out this special fish restaurant. We all met at the restaurant entrance and we were led towards our table, passing huge glass fish tanks full of fish swimming around.

Once at the table we were told that you point out to the staff which fish you would like for dinner! At that point Frances said to me, "I can't do that, John pick a fish for me!" I wandered over to the tank and picked out a couple of fish for us. When I got back to the table Frances asked how could I do that. I said it was easy, I just looked for the ones that were not smiling at me!

On a visit to Singapore with the Bergamo team, again we were in a fish restaurant and discussing the menu. Mara Ongaro, when it was pointed out that they had sea Cucumber on the menu, let out a yuck!! followed by her saying "Stronzo Di Mare!" We had to press her for a translation of those Italian words, to which she quietly replied, "(Expletive) of the sea!" I have to agree it is one of the worst things I have ever tasted and I am in no hurry to ever taste it again.

In Singapore there are just some of the most fabulous eating areas around the Singapore river. Clark Quay was always a favourite of mine, it also had Hawker stalls on the side streets, but the ambiance of eating on an old Chinese junk tied to the pier is something else, especially on a hot tropical night. One of the Junks specialised in hot stones. You would order surf and turf, and a large steak and lobster would arrive placed upon a very hot stone sizzling and still cooking away in front of you, along with a baked potato, all to be swallowed down with more draught beer.

Another favourite eating area was Bugis, which at one time was known for its transvestites, though I've yet to ever see one there! All around you are market stalls, so if you want a copy watch as well as silk items and other stuff, this is the place to be. Once again you just sit down at a table and folks just come across and thrust menus at you, you pick what you want and another comes over to ask if you want beer, the food is always great. As you eat there always seems to be some show or other going on around the tables. On one occasion Jim Rooney and I were eating and this old wizened man with bony fingers appeared next to us, then he started to break his way into a coconut husk by just using his fingers, how he never broke a finger I'll never know.

It was in Singapore where I had my first Birds Nest Soup and Sharks Fin soup at a very upmarket club, Raffles Golf Club to be precise. One should also go to Raffles Hotel for a Singapore sling in the Long Bar, it's the only place in Singapore where you can make a mess! By dumping the shells once you have taken the peanuts out of them. You also have to try what they call the King of fruits, Durian. It stinks to high heaven, so much so you are banned from eating them on public transport or taking them into hotel rooms. It's an acquired taste which I quite like, looked a bit like yellow custard. If I had the choice between the king of fruits and the Queen of fruits, Mangosteen, I'd plump for the Queen.

Eating in Japan was interesting, our head host had invited us to a very special dinner, it was housed in a small Japanese village, the building was made of wood and paper. As we tapped on the door, a Geisha met us on her knees, we had to remove our shoes and entered on our knees, sliding another panel by she led us into a small room with one low slung dining table, no chairs. You sat on the floor with your legs crossed. Fortunately for useless westerners like myself, I was given a sort of chair with no legs, but it had a back that supported me. If there had been a fire, I'd have told everyone to save themselves, it took me about half an hour to straighten myself up after sitting in that position.

Kyung Sook Lee and Shinichi Yamashita were with me, one on either side of me, with the head host directly opposite me and his henchmen on either side of him. Kyung Sook felt uncomfortable all through the wonderful dinner we were to experience. Kyung Sook wore a mini skirt on and there was no place for her to hide her legs, when sitting with legs folded at such a low table, poor girl she did as best as she could by using her napkin, but at times her embarrassment would show, not that the Japanese gentleman sitting opposite would complain!

The menu itself was printed on hand made rice paper and we had twenty three courses, I've that menu mounted in a frame at home. This restaurant was licensed for more than just alcohol, they could prepare Blow Fish! So we had Blow Fish! I lived to tell the tale, so the chef knew his stuff. We also had Kobe beef and all sorts of other stuff. It was all served by the Geisha complete in her kimono and always on her knees. A meal I shall never forget.

When in Tokyo, Shinichi took us to a Noodle bar for lunch, those noodles were great, cooked in what tasted like a beef consommé. On another day we went to a Teriaki Bar and another Sushi Bar, I've loved that food ever since. The least appetizing was the Bullet Train to Kyoto. They don't sell food on the train, you buy a box from the vendor on the platform. The good news is, you're not on the fast train for long, so you won't starve.

In Korea though, I felt the food was an oriental version of what you get in Germany. They seemed to like their cabbage, served up under the exotic name of Kimchi! But the noodles were okay.

Not all good meals are to be had in Asia, we had a few good times in Europe. I will always remember that when I got home from any overseas trip, my daughter Faye would always ask me what I had to eat. On my return from a trip to Italy with Pierre Lavissiere, who liked good food, being a Frenchman and one from the coast, his first choice, like mine, was always seafood. On this occasion he heard about a nice restaurant north of Venice and not far from a supplier we had to visit. It was a seafood nouvelle cuisine type restaurant.

I remember telling my daughter, she was very small at the time, that they served this large round plate and all around the outside of the plate were clams, prawns, mussels, cockles, squid and oysters. Smack in the middle of the plate was a baby octopus. I told her I ate my way around the outside of the plate and left the octopus till the very end. Then I stuck my fork into the octopus to pick it up, but it refused to budge, it held onto the plate with all its tentacles and suckers, there was no way I could get it off the plate and into my mouth. Faye sat there intently and asked, "What did you do?" I went on to tell her, that with my left hand I picked up a spoon and made to smack the octopus on the head. At which point the octopus raised its tentacles to cover and protect its head. Then, as it was no longer holding onto the plate, I was able to quickly stick my fork into the octopus and get it into my mouth to eat! Her face was a picture of disbelief and horror.

When staying in Sindelfingen in Germany we had a favourite German Pub/Restaurant called Funzel's. It was all wood inside, like something out of Hansel and Gretel, full of character and good beer and good food. My favourite was Rost Schweinshaxe, roast pig leg, which was covered in hard crackling. They had

other good food, always meat of course, but I couldn't see past this roast pig leg and for starters Maultaschensuppe, which was a beef consommé soup with a huge ravioli right in the middle of it. Our German friends would also eat spetzle, some sort of noodle type thing that I could not get the taste for at all. They also spread on their bread, schmalz, which was literally pig fat, and they would add salt to it. That stuff would go straight for your arteries, I'm amazed they didn't fall over with a heart attack after eating that stuff!

Being renowned for their sausage in Germany, I never really found one that I liked. But that didn't stop Juergen Gerecke and John Thomson from having a sausage eating contest, just as well they had lots of beer to wash it down with! During that competition, Derek Buglass was more interested in getting into the schnapps, yuck. I could never get the taste for Schnapps, there was peach schnapps, I thought, that'll be like Archers we have at home, no way, it all tasted the same, ghastly! I can recall when we were at the Hanover Messe a large trade fair, Wilhelm Boechler kept urging us to have a schnapps, we don't like it so you should have it! It was also at the Hanover Messe we ordered Gin and Tonic, but they didn't put any Gin in it. When pressed why there was no Gin in it, the reply was that tourists don't usually notice it!!!

Ireland is another country where you come across some excellent eating establishments. On the way to Galway near Shannon is a place called Durty Nellies, next door to Bunratty Castle. It's a bar type restaurant, the food is not fancy, but tastes superb. Not far from Galway on the way to Limerick is a place called Morins on the Weir. It's a little bit off the beaten track down narrow Irish roads, a bit more narrow than normal, and you come across this little pub and restaurant, that sells sea food to die for! You can have, and I did, a huge plateful of mussels and oysters which you can wash down with a nice pint of Guinness, one of the best lunches I have ever eaten. In fact, if I had had my way I'd have stayed there all afternoon!

Just outside Cork right on the sea is a beautiful village called Kinsale, it's a diners delight. You could spend a few weeks there enjoying all the wonderful restaurants that supply everything from steak to seafood, and Chinese if you want. I had a good few evenings tasting the delights, especially the oysters, mussels and lobster. There was a little restaurant up on the hill, that was so cozy to walk into on a night where the rain was horizontal and chilly. Drinking the stout, in this case as we're so close to Cork, it has to be Murphy's, sitting beside the log fire burning away, then to go and sit down and let my taste buds run riot over the sea food platter placed in front of me. I need to go back there again!

On a trip to Dublin, John Thomson and I both took our wives. That evening we were invited out to dinner by two of the Directors of Computerfab, Brian Kearney and Keiron O'Farrell and their wives, Geraldine and Mary. They had just been awarded the Raven Computer Housing Module to manufacture for DMK. They wanted to go out and celebrate, that we did!!! We all met up at a restaurant called Brubecks, I guess named after Dave Brubeck the Jazz musician. A very modern eating house, in fact an ultra-modern eating house, bright lights and chrome everywhere and décor that resembled a piano. Back then this was the "in place" in Dublin. The food was good, but it didn't make a burning impression on my brain, unlike some of the other places in Ireland. What did leave a lifelong impression on my mind, was the amount of Irish Coffee's we all had to drink. First time in my life I can ever say I had a skin full and it was all down to coffee!!! The company that evening was great, we all just laughed and laughed. It turned out that Keirons' wife had been a Nun, the stories she told had us in tears with laughter all night long, I'm sure the Irish accent just made the stories even more funny, either that or all the Irish coffee!

It's funny, although I have had many good meals in the USA, there is not one that leaps out at me and says, "I'll remember the taste of that forever." Though I did develop a liking for Prime Rib and the gravy that came with it. But then I also liked Colonel Saunders Kentucky Fried Chicken and the gravy that came with that. I had a liking for the A&W beef burger and the gravy that came with that, gravy being a common denominator here!!! I always recall being with Bill Burdick, he was a real greasy burger guy. We were to catch a flight from Seattle to Spokane, on Horizon Air. Before we got on the flight, Bill needed his

greasy burger shot, so we headed off to a burger joint in the airport. I settled for a chicken toastie and a gin and tonic, Bill said have a burger they are great here. I stuck with the chicken. This monster of a greasy beef burger arrived, complemented with a monster amount of French fries, to which Bill dutifully added copious amounts of tomato ketchup. Bill ate the lot!!

We headed off for the flight, I could smell the greasy burger oozing out from Bill. We boarded the plane to be met by the best air hostesses I've ever seen, they were wearing hot pants! They led us to the front of this small plane and asked if we would like a drink. At that point I said, "He's the one reeking of greasy burger, not me, and I'll have a G&T." Bill had a root beer! My accent took the trick, they kept coming with the G&T's, and wanting to hear me speak in my cute accent.

### **63. Traveling can be Fun....**

It was on one of my trips to Shenzhen China we came across the regimented Chinese pedantic bureaucracy upon entering the country. On this trip with Volex Pencon, they asked if it would be alright if DEC (Digital Equipment Corporation) procurement folks joined us? Not a problem to me, but it turned out to be a nightmare for them. My wife and I had dinner with them the night before, they were an okay couple of Scots guys from the DEC facility in Irvine. We dined on Shabu Shabu beef in a Japanese restaurant in Hong Kong, and delicious it was too. The DEC team had visited Shenzhen the day before my arrival, but they wanted to go back for another day to finalise some things. They should have checked their paperwork first.

There are two ways to enter Mainland China at Shenzhen, by rail and by car from Hong Kong, today we were going by car. We arrived at the immigration point. You have to go through one by one, and it can take a while. Derek Kozer said, "John, you go first, one of my guys is on the other side and I'll follow through last." The immigration official, takes my passport, looks at me and my picture on my passport, takes note of the passport details and mumbles "Visa," I point back to the passport and he starts rummaging through the pages until he finds the visa stamp. Takes down more details from it, nods and gives it back to me, I'm now free to enter China.

I'm now stood outside the Immigration office with the Volex Pencon Chinese representative and we've been standing there for thirty minutes, "What's going on?" I said, "It didn't take me as long as this." Then the Volex Guy goes into the building and fifteen minutes later brings out Derek Kozer, Derek says to me, "The DEC guys have been arrested!" Turns out the idiots didn't check their visa dates. Their visa expired the day before, and they were under arrest for illegally trying to enter China! So both Volex guys went back inside to negotiate, another half hour passes and they all finally come out. The DEC guys had steam coming out of their ears. They were issued with new visas for that day only, at five times the original cost and it had to be in cash!! Needless to say they were not happy campers at having to fork out the extra cost in cash! It ate into their Duty Free spending money!

The DEC guys' problems reminded me of my first trip to Shenzhen, so I was well aware of the immigration and on how pedantic they could be. On my first visit I was with one of the CIPO, (Chinese International Procurement Operation) engineers, he was taking me to visit HPC, (Hewlett Packard China). We traveled there by train. That was quite an enlightening way to enter China. All the folks on the train carried all sorts of weird and wonderful items of baggage which included huge polythene bags all filled and bulging with stuff. They are not allowed to live in Hong Kong, so they travel there to buy stuff to take home to Shenzhen. This included livestock on the train, all sorts of chicken and pigeons as well as a few reptiles! When we arrived at the station, there were literally hundreds and hundreds of Chinese everywhere, queuing up to get through immigration. I thought to myself this is going to take a while, but it didn't since I was channeled via another exit route away from the masses. Once all the documentation was



checked we carried on into the railway station, there were stalls everywhere selling all sorts of counterfeit and copy goods. Next stop was to pick up a taxi.

Rows of state taxis awaited us; I jump in behind the driver. Obviously no thought is given to passenger safety, the taxi driver is surrounded by a steel mesh cage, it is there to protect him from being robbed by his passengers!! I know who the robber was, he took us in a roundabout way to the HP facility, negotiating his way round thousands of cyclists. When we got to HP, my CIPO colleague starts to argue with the driver in Cantonese, my IPO colleague threatens to get the police as the taxi driver was trying to rip us off, they both finally settled for a certain amount to cover the journey. I'm glad the CIPO guy was there. Being a dumb westerner I'd have just paid him and been none the wiser!

In Singapore I came across an unusual situation. Myself and a couple of folks from Corvallis were in a taxi heading off to have dinner in a restaurant. Our taxi driver gets cut off by a guy in a sports car. Immediately an argument starts up between both drivers, our driver gets out of the taxi and both men are shouting at each other. Our taxi driver sticks his head in the cab, apologises and asks if we saw what happened, which we told him we did. He then goes back to argue with the other driver. A few minutes later, he gets back in the cab, apologises again, then tells us he and the other driver are going to the police station.

We all sat in the police station for half an hour, then out comes our driver and says, "Okay, I take you to restaurant now!" Before dropping us off, he gives us a card and tells us, "Thank you very much, this my brother's restaurant, you go there give him card, you get free dinner." I wonder why back home we don't solve out car rage incidents like that!!!

Because most travel is by air, there are always situations arising that you never forget. I did experience one particularly scary flight one January, I was headed off to Stuttgart. I caught the shuttle flight from Edinburgh to Heathrow London, normally just over an hour, but this time it took over three hours!!! We flew smack bang into the January gales that hit southern England, it was the worst storm on records, Seven Oaks in England after the wind blew through, should have been renamed Three Oaks. The plane was being buffeted about like a cork on the sea. The air hostesses, as they were handing out sick bags were themselves filling them, not exactly the sort of thing squeamish passengers wanted to see! The plane was really bouncing around, the people around me were either praying, sweating, crying and moaning. It did make me feel a bit uneasy, I just closed my eyes and ignored all going on around me.

Eventually we landed, with a bump! Everyone was applauding, the Captain said that the airport was now closed. We were the last plane they would allow to land, hours after it was meant to! I disembarked and made my way to the frequent flyer lounge to await my flight on to Stuttgart. After an hour they opened the airport again and we departed another couple of hours later, but by then I had quite a few gin & tonics, so I was ready for the flight. The new aircrew said there would have been no way they would have got on a flight right after getting off that previous one!!!

I was on an Eastern Airways internal flight in the USA, when we landed at San Francisco I made my way to the baggage reclaim, only to see my case arrive, with a lock burst open. Off I went to the baggage office to complain. They wanted my ticket and boarding card and baggage tag. I gave them my ticket and pointed to the baggage tag on the case as I had left my boarding card on the plane with the other half of the baggage tag stuck to it. They refused point blank to accept responsibility and they would not allow me to re-board the plane to get my boarding card. Then the (expletive) said, "Tough, next time don't leave your boarding card on the plane." After I used a few expletives towards him, I told him I hope he and the bloody airline go bust. Three months later that's exactly what happened, the airline went bust and everyone lost their jobs. As the saying goes, "Whae daur meddle wie me!" Hearing the news of the airlines sudden departure from the skies, brought a happy contented smile to my face!

On another flight a blond good looking air hostess opened the overhead compartment, a camera case fell out and hit me on the shoulder. She was so apologetic, I said it was okay no harm done, the way she smiled at me, I'd have forgiven her anything! As I was getting off the plane, she stepped in front of me blocking my exit, again said sorry and handed me a bottle of champagne! Now that is how to look after your customers.

A similar situation happened on a flight from London to Edinburgh, I was tired and on my way home. I climbed into my seat, pulled the pillow away as I sat down. I felt something hard that I had just sat on. It was someone's wallet, opened it and there was a passport and money. I pushed the attendant button, and an irate air hostess comes up saying, "Sir, can you wait till everyone has boarded?" I said "Sure." She did come back once we were airborne, this time with a smile and asked, what can I do for you? I showed her the wallet and passport and she was full of thanks and disappeared towards the back of the plane. She came back and said the gentleman was very thankful for receiving his possessions, he hadn't noticed they were missing!! The air hostess offered me a drink, which I declined, I told her I was tired and about to drive home. As I was about to disembark, she handed me a large brown bag full to the top with miniatures, saying that I could have one when I got home! Another nice touch I thought, and from British Airways at that.

I was on a trip with Derek Buglass (Bugs) around the world, on the flight out to Sidney. The air hostess took a shine to Bugs, we had been upgraded to business class, but on opposite sides of the plane, no great problems to me. Bugs afterwards told me that the Air hostess gave him the special touch, by tucking him in. I still don't know whether to believe him or not! On that same journey around the world, Bugs lost a bottle of rum, he was moaning to the air hostess that he left it on the previous flight. I whispered to the air hostess, wind him up, give him a miniature bottle of rum. Which she duly did and said she hoped it help him cope with his loss!!!

During the time when the USA bombed Libya, the F-111's flew out of the UK. I was in Germany with John Thomson and we turned up at the airport in Stuttgart to catch our flight home. As we drove in towards the Terminal building with our German friends, we started to notice it was not as normal, there were soldiers and tanks barring our entrance. Eventually at the road block we were asked to produce our travel documents and they let us through. To check in we had to go up an escalator, its ingress being blocked by a heavily armed commando and the fiercest looking German wolfhound I have ever seen, they were guarding the British Airways check in. He looked at our tickets, and let us proceed to check in, but would not allow our German friends up the escalator.

Once we checked in, we duly started to make our way back down the escalator to spend some time with our friends before we flew out. Again we were met by yet another armed-to-the-teeth commando with an equally big and fierce looking hound. He said you can't go back down. He obviously doesn't know the Scots! We said we're going down, we have to say farewell to our friends and there is nothing up here to keep us occupied for the next hour or so. After a few grunts and groans he let us go back down, to enjoy a German beer in the bar with our German friends. In hindsight, it was very reassuring that they were taking no chances in protecting us just in case some terrorist planned a revenge attack on the British for allowing the USA planes to fly out of bases in the UK.

Derek Buglass and I were in Indianapolis and were heading to catch a flight to Green Bay. With us was an engineering guy from Corvallis named Cary Bybee. Cary is a quiet bible basher, with whom we got on with very well, and it turned out that he was a black belt judo expert. As we were making our way along the travelator towards our departure gate, this American guy comes running through pushing people out of his way, he pushes me to one side and I shouted at him for his behaviour. He stopped, turned around and comes back to threaten me. He says he hopes he's sitting next to me on the flight. At which point Cary grabs him and says if my colleague is sitting next to him, then Cary will swap seats. Cary was going to thump him there and then but Derek Buglass and I stopped him. We said his sort is not worth worrying

about. Cary was raging, he still wanted to go after him. He was annoyed that visitors to his country would be threatened like that and wanted the guy sorted out. A beer helped bring the matter under control with Cary apologising for his countryman's behaviour!!

Malcolm Newlands and I were on a visit to Bergamo in Italy. It was time to head for home, and we had to get to Malpensa Airport at Milan. It was going to be tight, but Malkie knew the way and we made it in time. Turned out we didn't have to rush after all. We all boarded the plane and the Captain started to take off, then he stopped, over the speaker system he said, "I've just spotted a hole in the runway, we need to go back to the terminal till they fix the hole!" Two hours later, they patched up the hole and we got to leave. We made it just in time to catch the last shuttle to Edinburgh, and we only caught that because it was a Friday night, and nothing leaves Heathrow on time on a Friday night!!

We had many a fun time driving as I've already mentioned. Pierre Lavissiere was always a great fun guy to be with in a car on long drives. We would always comment on things we would see as we drove along. On a visit to Italy we were driving from Venice towards Milan on a road that has to be the busiest Superstrada in Italy. But that today somehow seemed worse than normal. I happened to comment to Pierre that there was an awful lot of Italian military vehicles on the other side of the road, heading away from the direction we were heading. I commented to Pierre about it and said do you think we are heading into a war zone as all those Italian military vehicles are going in the opposite direction? At which point Pierre laughed dropped his cigarette on his lap almost setting fire to himself and almost veered into a truck in the inside lane. Next time I need to make sure of what's going on before I make a joke.

Pierre once set up a short holiday break for Sheila and I in Paris, he knew the layout, so did a great job in finding us this little hotel near the Eiffel Tower. I'm glad Sheila was there, her French came in handy as all my French is swear words!! The next time I was in Grenoble meeting with Pierre I thanked him for picking such a great hotel and location, and followed up with, "You know Pierre, there were a lot of Germans in Paris and none of them were carrying a gun" At which point he spilt his coffee on his lap!

John Thomson was on a supplier visit to Germany with Juergen Gerecke. As Juergen turned around a corner, there in front of them was a huge Dam. John recognised the Dam as the Mohne Dam from the Dambusters movie and said to Juergen, "They've fixed it." "Fixed what?" was Juergen's reply, "The Dam." John said, "We blew that up during the war." "Never." Juergen said. He had to eat those words later when at the supplier, the supplier pointed out the water mark that remains there to this day where the flood water from the destroyed Dam flooded the plain.

Jeff Kaye, Juergen Gerecke, Karl Daumueller and I were doing a EIPO promotion to the divisions in Colorado. After that was done we were going to split into two groups and visit our current customers. We flew into Denver to pick up two cars, and were then going to head south to Colorado Springs staying at the Double Tree hotel. Unfortunately we were beset by a couple of mishaps, first of all my luggage got lost, but they knew it was on the plane. Outside it was snowing a blizzard, and it so happened that in Colorado Springs, there were two Double Tree Hotels and I was the only person with the correct directions. As I was screwing around trying to find my case, Karl and Jeff went ahead to get the rental cars.

Eventually my case turned up and I headed off to find the guys. They were nowhere to be seen! I got the rental courtesy bus to the car rental lot, to be told they had headed back to the terminal. Back on the courtesy bus I go to the terminal and find Juergen, who was wondering where the hell I had been, funny I thought the same of them. We found Karl who said, "Jeff has taken off for Colorado Springs, he'll meet us at the hotel." I said, "Oh, that's good, I hope he knows where to go as there are two hotels." Karl intimated that Jeff was aware which one it was. Fine, let him get on with it, the guy is a dork, there's a blizzard blowing and he will be in the car on his own.

The drive down was a nightmare, cars were abandoned all over the freeway because of the deep snow. We made it fine to the hotel, got checked in and enquired if Jeff Kaye had arrived. The answer was no, yet he had left at least half an hour before we left Denver Stapleton Airport. We would wait in the bar for Jeff to arrive. We were in the bar for almost two hours when the hotel lobby door opened and in comes Jeff, not a happy chappie. He grunted, said he was going to bed and would see us at breakfast. I said to Juergen and Karl, "\$10 he went to the wrong hotel!"

Next morning at breakfast, Jeff told us he went to the other hotel. Then his car got stuck in the snow at the hotel and had to be dug and towed out. He could see the correct hotel on the other side of the freeway but couldn't find a way to reach it. He eventually went north, back up the freeway towards Denver, took a turn off and came back south again, eventually getting into the hotel. No handy parking places were left, so he had to struggle through to the hotel entrance. This explained his not too happy demeanor on his arrival. Serves the stupid smart arse right, next time he'll listen and wait to travel in convoy with everybody else.

Sheila and I were in the USA, where I was to attend a World Wide Materials Managers Meeting in Monterey. Before that we were on holiday in Nevada, I checked my voice-mail to find a message telling me to phone home. Our son had been in a serious motorcycle accident and was in the intensive care unit. We dashed across the Sierra Mountains through Yosemite National Park to San Francisco. We just missed the flight out, there was however an early morning flight that could get us home early.

It was at this point Northwest Airlines topped my popularity chart. Sheila was traveling on a non-transferable air miles ticket. When NWA became aware of the seriousness of our situation, the ticket restrictions were waived and they booked us into a hotel at the airport and gave us seats on the next morning flight.

We rushed off to the airport early morning, dropped off the rental car and caught the flights home. Only to realise when we were at home, our cameras were left under the seat of the rental car.

Fortunately, I contacted our Corporate IPO secretary Jean in Palo Alto, who phoned up the rental car company, only to be told, no cameras were left in any cars. At that point Jean took off for the rental company at the airport, created a merry old song and dance about it. Again they said nothing was left, at which point she said, I'll call the police. Almost immediately, the rental car person said, "I've not asked so and so." Then disappeared, and as if by magic returned with our two cameras! Good lass, she stuck to her guns and we got our SLR's back again.

Not everyone operates in an untrustworthy manner. On the trip that Derek Buglass and I made to Australia, after a long journey we were tired and grabbed a taxi at the airport terminal. The cabbie took us straight to our hotel and hoped we'd have a nice stay. About half an hour later I realised I had left the duty free cigarettes in the taxi. Stupid me I thought, I'll have to buy Sheila more. Then the phone rang in my hotel room. The taxi driver had found them and brought them back to the hotel for me. He left before I could thank him. The cigarettes were not that expensive, but at least I'd have liked to have thanked him and bought him a beer.

I never traveled much by train in a foreign land, but when I did, I always had an expert on hand, like Brian McKandie when on the SNCF TGV high speed train in France, and Shinichi Yamashita when on the Bullet Train in Japan, or Karl Heinz Hartmann when using the trains in Germany. Unlike John Thomson who got put on the train by Juergen Gerecke in Stuttgart heading towards Grenoble, where Brian McKandie would meet him. Unfortunately, John was supposed to get off half way and change trains, but no one told him that. "Muss mann umsteigen?" Is the question he should have asked! The train John should have been on, arrived in Grenoble exactly on time, as they always do, unlike the UK. Brian McKandie was patiently waiting, for John who didn't arrive.

So whilst Brian set off towards the railway station bar to wait for the next train, John had to get another train back to where he had to change trains. Eventually some three or so trains and as many hours later pulls into Grenoble, and John finds Brian still waiting on him. Trouble was, he waited in the bar, and by now somewhat worse for wear with all the beer he had been drinking whilst waiting. Brian being what Brian is like, asked John if he fancied a beer before they set off in Brian's car for his home!!!

There is also relaxed fun type traveling to do, especially in the USA. A great place to do all the things you want to do and not pay an exorbitant price to do it. I experienced two unusual methods of transport when in the USA, on holiday of course.

The first was Hot Air Ballooning in Napa Valley. I had to get up early in the morning, before even the sun was up! The air at that time is very still, but what an experience, there were about six others that climbed into the woven basket, once the balloon had been inflated. It was still darkish but the sun was about to rise. As we floated higher, the sight of the sunrise over the California countryside and wineries was spectacular. What I didn't expect was the hot head I was getting every time the pilot ignited the burners, next time I'll wear a hat. As we drifted along a pickup car would follow us to be on hand when we landed. Landing was an experience, as we were coming down we clipped the top of the trees, which in the process disturbed an eagle roosting at the top of a tree. It let us loudly know, in no uncertain terms, it was not happy about us disturbing its early morning nap.

We landed with a bump, then lifted again followed by another bump, I felt like a pebble bouncing across a lake. We came to a sudden stop as the guy from the pickup grabbed the rope. Which then tipped the basket over, fortunately the lady who landed on top of me didn't spend her life eating at all the fast food joints! Then we all got into the back of the pickup truck to drive to the highway for a bus to take us all back to the parking lot and our safe on-the-ground cars.

The next experience also took place in California, I had planned a vacation with Sheila, Faye, Sam and Ginnie Scott. We had planned on traveling all over Northern California and Oregon. The drive around Crater Lake was incredible, as was the Jet Boat ride up the Rogue River. The highlight of that trip was the White-Water rafting we did on the South Fork of the American River which ran into Folsom Lake. At certain times they opened the gates at Folsom Dam to make sure plenty of water flowed into the lake and to generate electricity. This was to be one of the better days they let the water run loose.

Sam, it has to be said was not too keen on the idea of shooting the rapids in a rubber raft. I wondered if he knew something we didn't! It seemed fine at the time, where we were, the river was flowing calmly as all five of us climbed into the rubber raft with our guide and helmsman taking up the back position on the raft. Sam and I looked at our guide, I'm sure thinking exactly the same thing... Gosh he looks kind of young for this? Our guide did assure us that although he was a student, he had done this hundreds of times, so we believed him, no option really!

The young guide, who Faye liked of course, set Sam and I at the very front of the raft, Sheila and Ginnie were at the back and Faye in the middle. As we paddled off downstream, our guide said, if it gets bumpy, slide into the centre of the raft, if you fall over board, the life jackets will keep you the right way up, just carry on downstream feet first! How reassuring he was.

The first rapids were fun, hoots of laughter all round with the guide shouting, "Paddle like you mean it!" Then he tells us as we near the end of our ride, the last rapid is the worst, "The Devils Hole." As we were just about to hit it, both Sam and I said, "Awww (expletive), look at it!" The first bump and the ladies behind us disappeared into the raft and Sam and I just screamed as we paddled like crazy to keep the raft in line. We have the pictures taken that shows our expressions at that point. When we all finally got off the raft and made our way to the School bus, minus windows to take us back up the hill, Sam said, "That's it I

will never do that again!" It was clear if we wanted to go White Water-Rafting again, it would be without Sam! But boy what an exhilarating time we all had and we still talk about it.

#### **64. Far East Trips...**

At one stage not long after Dick Locke had left HP to set up his own Procurement Business, our European IPO's found ourselves with a new Manager, Michelle Long. Michelle was the best looking boss I have ever had, she was also a lot of fun to work with and was keen for the European IPO's to be more successful. Michelle, could hold her own with any of the guys when it came to a drinking session. In fact on many an occasion, she out drank them, so much so I named her "Hollow Legs" a nickname she loved. She always had a problem saying Edinburgh, it always came out as Edinboro! After much coaching on my part she eventually cracked it and got the saying word perfect. The penny eventually dropped and she said, "It's like saying, "Bread and butter." In an American accent of course! Which funnily enough is correct! Michelle's logical way of working it out, I used on many occasions again. One of those being with Tony Alonso, who after months of living in Spain and traveling throughout Europe, just couldn't say Edinburgh, without it coming out as Edinboro. The minute I said, "Say it as you would say bread and butter." The problem was solved. I even heard him telling other people how to say Edinburgh the same way.

Karl Heinz Hartmann and I had been discussing the need to become more visible in the Far East, Michelle latched on immediately. "Great idea, let's do it." she said. Michelle got the agreement of the others in Corporate and set up our trips to visit the Asian IPOs we had not visited before, as well as some of the HP divisions also along the way in Singapore, Penang Malaysia, Taiwan, Tokyo, Hong Kong and Seoul in South Korea. I think some of the IPOs were not too keen as they saw this as the Europeans playing in their backyards, but Singapore and China had by now got used to seeing me in their area of operations.

When we were in Singapore, it was a quick drop in to visit the SIPO office as both Karl Heinz and I had our own customers to visit as well as the other divisions there, who were not our customers, but we wanted to make them aware of our presence in Europe and what we had to offer. It was a good trip to Singapore for me, gave me the chance to spend some time with APDO, Asian Pacific Distribution Operation, who were a strong supporter and sung our praises. This did not go un-noticed by Michelle, it was likewise from the IJBU, Ink Jet Business Unit. The APDO folks wanted to push the boat out and make an impression of their gratitude for the IPO support. Bok Swee Tay was the Materials Manager and he took us all to the up market Raffles Golf Course Club for lunch, which was excellent. It was there I had my first taste of Shark Fin Soup and on a later visit Bird Nest Soup. To finish that day off, we ate on Clark Quay on the Singapore River, aboard an old wooden junk where they served steak and lobster served on hot stones. It cooked before your eyes, but it's always hot and sticky in Singapore, so the heat from the stones didn't help us to cool down much, Michelle fixed that with ordering a couple of jugs of beer.

From Singapore we moved up the coast to Penang in Malaysia. Our IPO was already supplying one of the divisions with the little microswitch that was being assembled into every Computer Mouse they made. Karl Heinz was also supplying a component for the LED Division. The plant tours were something else, especially where they were making the LED's Light Emitting Diodes. It looked so low tech, but it did the job.

We stayed at the Intercontinental Hotel in Penang, it was somewhat different in hotel styles, because Penang is so hot and steamy, the building was of an open airy structure, designed to maximize air flow. Though it was quite a luxurious hotel, we had to use taxis to get everywhere as it was not in the main part of the city. That was not too much of a problem though as there were ample taxis and they were cheap. We were going to move to another hotel the next day which was right on the beach, the Shangrila on Ferringi Beach.

That night we stayed in the Intercontinental, we had a meeting in my room to go over the events of the past couple of days in Singapore. My room was high up around the eighteenth floor and from my balcony had a great view over the swimming pool area and the palm tree gardens below. It was pitch black at night and we were all standing outside on the balcony having a drink and looking down at the lit pool area and the buildings surrounding about a mile away. I got out my laser pointer and you could see the red dot on the far off buildings.

At that point, down below around the pool area two women and a small boy appeared, and sat down to have a drink, while the little boy was running around the poolside. I shone my laser pointer into the swimming pool and the little boy saw the red dot. I was moving the red dot around the bottom of the pool. The little boy shouted, "Mum, Mum, come and see this!" As soon as Mum appeared I switched the laser pointer off. The boy was pointing to where it was, but Mum could see nothing. The moment she went back to her seat and her drink, I switched the laser pointer back on again and moved the red dot around the bottom of the pool. "Mum, Mum" the little boy shouted, Once more Mum comes over to the pool, too late I had switched off the laser pointer again. Mum moans at the boy for getting her up from her relaxing seat. Mum had no sooner sat down and the little boy was shouting at her again as the laser red dot was moving about the swimming pool. This time Mum comes stamping across to the pool side, but no red dot was to be seen, I had switched it off again. At that point, Mum gave the little boy a smack on the ear for wasting her time and strode off back to her seat and drink.

As the little boy was rubbing his ear, I played the laser red dot on the pool bottom, this time there was no cry to his Mum to come and see the little red dot, he was silent. That was until I moved the red dot out of the swimming pool and it made headway towards the little boy, who took off like a bat out of hell screaming to his Mum that he was being chased by the red dot! They left the pool side not long after! Karl Heinz said, "John, you're terrible." Michelle and I just laughed. I'm sure that little boy is still traumatized to this day!

**Editor's Note: John, you sometimes show signs of just being a mean jerk!**

**Author Response: Mark it down to British sense of humour...**

Next evening we were staying in the Shangrila Hotel right on the beach. Wow, here was a place to have a holiday. The grounds were tropical and the waves lapped the shore. As it was the weekend that approached, we were going to stay there and do some sightseeing. We paid a visit to the Snake Temple, where we all had our photographs taken covered in so called poisonous snakes, yuck! We visited Kok Si Temple, which was very beautiful with its high towers all gleaming white.

One of the evenings we are in a beach side restaurant where, as you entered you passed a row of tanks full of fish. From which you could pick whichever one you want. As we passed, they were moving some fish from one tank to another and one leapt out slithering toward Michelle, "That's got your name on it I cried," Some women who were following us in, let out some screams and made for the exit. The restaurant was open air, right on the beach, but it had a roof over it, it was like the Intercontinental hotel, designed to maximize the air flow. From our table we could see along the beach to where natives were standing on the shore casting nets to catch fish. Somewhat dangerous I thought as there are lots of sea snakes around there and they are really poisonous. I did hear later they do lose the odd fisherman from time to time!

Next day we lazed around the pool. I was lying on a lounge soaking up the sun's rays and I heard a clump, I thought it was the gardener watering the plants and he had dropped his hose. As I opened my eyes to see, I realized it wasn't, a snake had just fallen out of a nearby tree and was slithering away. I moved to another lounge where there were no trees! Michelle meanwhile, was off down the beach to get a foot massage and we'd meet her there for lunch at one of the beach eating hawker stalls, whereas always the food is excellent to eat and cheap to buy.

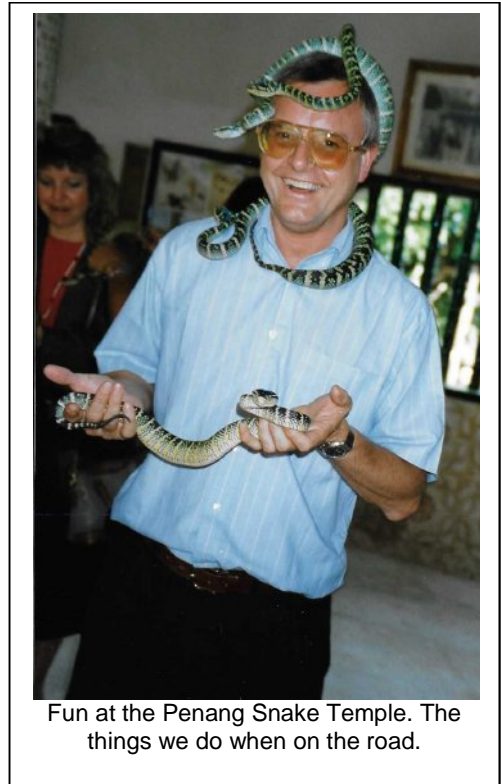
On the way back from lunch we were walking along the beach and there was a Malay trying to get people to go paragliding behind his speedboat. He was not getting any takers. He started to talk with us in the hopes of persuading us to go up, but he was having no luck. I suggested that as he had no takers he should negotiate with me, a special knock-down price. My selling point was that once people saw someone up on the parachute it would encourage others to try it. The Malay had a big smile on his face and said, "You Scots are all the same!" Then he went on to say, "Okay, I give you a very special rate for a very special trip!" From those words I knew something was going to happen, but I couldn't back out after negotiating a better low cost rate.

He fastened me into the parachute, then spoke with the boat driver. You lift right off from the sandy beach. As soon as the speedboat moved off the parachute filled up and I was off the ground. The special trip was, as I was about to find out, my Malay friend had told the speed boat driver to dump me in the Straits of Malacca and lift me right back up again, meanwhile they were all laughing on the beach. The sights to be seen from being way up in the sky tethered to a speed boat by parachute, were super. The water was clear azure and the fish below and to also look out over the top of the Malayan jungle that surrounded the beach area. It was well worth being dunked in the sea. My Malay friend thought I was a good sport and wanted to offer me a special deal on a holiday apartment for when I came back.

Although for some reason I just didn't feel comfortable in the Penang capitol Georgetown, all the other areas I visited on the island then and later were excellent. Well, with an exception that is, around the Shangrila Hotel at around 5am when the local Imam called the Muslims to prayer through a loudspeaker that woke everyone in the radius of about two miles!

Every one of my team who went on to visit Penang, loved it. I recall Jim Rooney and I staying at the Shangrila Hotel and we were sitting around its swimming pool area, in our swimsuits, having lunch and a beer. As we wrote up our meeting notes in our lap-tops, Jim noted, "We have had so much exotic travel I begin to associate palm trees with work!"

Next stop was Taiwan. We arrived at the airport to fly to Taipei, but the airline were not going to let me board, as I didn't have a visa. But I didn't need a visa, two weeks before they had relaxed the rules for those with a British passport and who had an air ticket, and were not staying longer than fifteen days. I told them, "I don't need a visa." "Yes you do." said the airline staff. "No I don't, go and check it out, the visa rules were changed two weeks ago." I replied. Fifteen minutes later, someone came back said something to the airline staff, who quickly printed me a boarding card. I said, "Where's my apology?" "No one told us." came the reply. "That's an apology?" I slung back at them as I stormed off to go to the lounge.



Chiou-Ming Chen was the Chinese IPO manager, and he made an effort to meet us in Taiwan at the hotel we were staying at, He was based in Hong Kong so it was excellent of him to go out of his way. He was a



nice guy that I got on well with in the years to come. When we arrived, we were met off the plane by a chauffeur who led us to a big limousine, it was an hour's drive to the hotel in downtown Taipei. The Limo was furnished with refreshments and a TV! I only did see half the movie, I thought I'd see the rest on our return, but I didn't since they had changed the film!

Taiwan was a big supplier country to HP, so we spent most of the time in the TIPO office in meetings. That was good as it came through that we all shared the same issues with suppliers and other IPOs. We were well looked after, but I'm not sure it is a place I'd like to spend my summer holidays. It is a totally different culture. We actually visited General Chang Kai Chek's Museum which contained all the ancient artifacts brought there from mainland China during the Cultural Revolution, these were very impressive and very, very old.

I recall us walking down through some sort of small park which became the main road. There were monkey's running around loose everywhere. I just kept my eye on them, they have a habit when you're not looking of nipping in and stealing something from you.

The hardest thing to come to terms with was our walk down snake alley. I didn't find it very appetizing to see them cut the heads of a snake and squeeze the blood into a glass to be quickly drunk. It promotes a long healthy and virile life I was told. Well, maybe, but not for me. Cooked snake I could handle, it just tastes like chicken, but not the drinking of the snake blood.

One of the other things that stuck in my mind was the traffic. You would pull up at the traffic light and almost immediately in front of you would appear about one hundred cyclists, scooter and moped cyclists, loaded up with goods and the women sitting sidesaddle. Off they would go as soon as the lights changed, I was surprised we never saw someone get creamed in the traffic.

KIPO, Korean IPO awaited us. We were met by Kyung Sook Lee, whom I had already met on a previous trip to Tokyo with Shinichi Yamashita. Kyung Sook was keen to take on the hospitality role when she heard I was coming. She remembered the fun our group had when we were all together in Tokyo. South Korea was like Taiwan, a big HP supplier base country, the largest being Samsung and LG. Most of all the large companies are part of the one massive company. There was a HP manufacturing division in Seoul. It was part of the Microwave and Communication Group, building the same product as my host division in South Queensferry, so I had much in common with the facility.

KIPO was managed by Deuk Soon Lim. He was a strange character, extremely serious with no room for humour of any sort, unlike his staff who complained to me about his style and wondered why I couldn't be the KIPO Manager! We had lunch with all the KIPO staff at a local restaurant, it is always good to mix with all the IPO employees, you can learn so much as we share the same issues. At the lunch I said to Kyung Sook, "My little butterfly can you pass me that food dish." "Why did you call me that?" she asked. I explained that when we were in Japan, you had a little shiny butterfly on the ankles of your stockings. From first impressions or seeing something for the first time, you can make something up that will remind you of the person. In particular, this imaging helps remember names, not a trivial function with Asian-style names.

This tickled all their fancies and I had to find something that fitted each and every one of them around the table. There was laughter all around as I picked names for them, probably because Deuk Soon Lim had not arrived yet. Before he did I was asked what about their boss, what's the first thing that comes to mind. I said, "Duck Soup." That turned out to be a bad idea on my part, although they all had a titter about it, someone told Deuk Soon Lim who never saw the humour in it.

That evening Kyung Sook had organized a Korean Pageantry evening which took place in a huge restaurant where you had your meal then moved into their theatre for the show. It was full of colour and

warlike plays from the past. I enjoyed it, though was not too keen on the food, which didn't improve the longer we stayed in South Korea. Next day we were taken to the Palace. It was bitterly cold, but very impressive as we walked through the gardens. The Palace looked like Temples with all the carvings. We stopped off for some typical staple Korean food Kimchi, cabbage, although I could never get a taste for it.

Everyone in Seoul wants to go shopping, so we all went to the Itewan shopping area. It was a confusing arrangement of streets and alleyways, but on different levels, prices were a bargain, but it was so damn cold you didn't want to hang around and haggle.

Japan is another country of different culture, always best to visit with a chaperone. On arrival at Narita airport, you catch a taxi into the city centre, the drive usually gives you a good look at the Emperor's Palace surrounded by water as you drive by. The taxis themselves are an experience. The driver never gets out of the cab, he pushed a button to open the trunk lid for you to put your baggage in, then he has a lever he uses to open the rear door to give you access. The interior of the cab has what looks like little lacy doilies across the backs of the cab seats, and the driver wears white gloves! Probably why he doesn't carry your luggage, he might get them dirty!

Most of the travel around Tokyo is by train. Shinjuku Railway Station is massive, but what caught my attention was all the down and outs. You'll see them in every country, but in Japan they all live inside the long railway passages inside cardboard boxes, which are all neatly arranged with no litter anywhere and when they doss down for the night, they place their shoes on the outside, looking as if someone would come along to take them away and clean them to be returned for the next morning! In the morning all the cardboard is stored tidily away to be brought out in the evening.

JIPO under the Management of Michi Enji was the oldest of all the IPO's, it was first started and set up by Dick Locke. However we were not going to be there very long, so it was basically presentations to the HP Materials Managers and their staffs. On this occasion I had spent some time learning a bit of Japanese and started my presentation in Japanese, much to their pleasure and they applauded it. I also had a little Scottish gift for each of those who attended the presentation, a miniature of Scots Malt whisky, which no one refused and accepted with a great smile.

We would finish this trip in Hong Kong and spend some time with Chou-Ming Chen in the IPO office, which was housed in the Times Building. It's an impressive piece of real estate, in a very classy business part of the city. The trip, although tiring was one that helped us set out our stall in the Asian market, which proved beneficial in the years to come.

## **65. Puerto Rico...**

Puerto Rico, our HP island in the sun, if you don't think about Penang that is! The HP plant in Puerto Rico is on the far side of the island from San Juan, where everyone has to fly into, from there you have two choices, catch a puddle jumper and fly into Mayaguez, or take a hired car and take your life in your hands. It's only recently they opened up a tolled freeway, which makes the choice that much easier. Having flown in and out of Mayaguez during a tropical storm, and being delayed for three hours, which we spent sitting in the airport lounge watching the steam rising from the runway, it soon became obvious the car was the better option, especially with the new freeway, you could do it in a couple of hours.

Before the new freeway, it was whacky races time. It was like driving in Naples but worse when it got dark or rainy as there were no lights. People just drove where they liked. Derek Buglass said to me he was glad I was driving and not him! On one occasion driving back to the hotel after dinner, ahead we could see the traffic lights and slowed down as they were at red. That didn't matter to the ramshackle truck with it's wavering load that just came storming through the red light towards us, then swerving at the last minute to

avoid us, bumping over the opposite side grass verge, losing part of his furniture load and carrying on as if nothing had happened, driver probably full of rum, or lungs full off cannabis!

On one visit to Puerto Rico, we met up with Karen Kuchar and her boyfriend Wayne Pawelek. We all decided to have a drive through the tropical jungle and then on to the beach. Everyone piled into my car, as I drove along, we could see the road we needed to be on, but we were stuck on this one way system that was taking us further and further away from the road we wanted. At that point I said to everyone, okay, enough of this, I'm going to drive like a Puerto Rican, so keep your eyes opened. I immediately turned up the wrong way of a one way street and floored the accelerator, we quickly got on the road we wanted to be on, much to Karen's screams and shouts to watch where I was going. Karen had a good laugh afterwards about it, with Wayne saying, "Well if John hadn't done that, God knows how we would have got onto the road we wanted."

On another weekend, Derek Buglass and I headed off for dinner and a drive around the coast, we saw this little restaurant right on the beach, so we stopped for dinner and a couple of beers. It was lovely and peaceful there just listening to the breakers crashing onto the shore. There were about three other couples also sitting and enjoying the ambiance. Suddenly this car pulled up into the parking area and two women got out, looked like mother and daughter. They headed straight for the couple sitting just down a bit from us. Then all hell broke loose, the daughter suddenly grabbed the woman at the table by the hair pulled her onto the ground and whacked her one. Then she set about the man the woman was with and let him have a hard punch to the face.

The restaurant staff came running across to try and get control of what was going on. They told us that the woman who arrived with her mother was the guy's wife and had just found out about his love affair with this other woman and had come to the restaurant to put a stop to it, Latin style! Still we got a free beer out of it as the restaurant manager apologised for what happened, noting that that doesn't happen very often. Which implied it had happened before! Great entertainment, and a free beer, not much to complain about there!

The HP folks we worked with in Puerto Rico were always a nice bunch, they were always women. They also played a good supportive role by attending the supplier meetings in Europe. Karen Kuchar was the Commodity Manager, so she managed to keep them in control, once Ireland came on board, the Puerto Ricans struggled a bit to keep the Irish in control.

On Derek Buglass's first trip to Puerto Rico, he became somewhat distracted. There had been an organizational change of staff which we were not aware of, but they had organised lunch at a nearby restaurant. We were told some other folks were going to join us. Then this really good looking woman appeared in short mini skirt and stockings and high heels, Bugs couldn't keep his eyes from wandering. She turned out to be the new Materials Manager. She was on the fast track, not too far in the future she became the Divisional Manager!



There was always ongoing changes in staffing, which proved difficult at times to remember who was who.

## 66. Ireland...

Our business with Ireland grew quite steadily, it was helpful to have the IDA (Irish Development Agency) take such an active role. In fact on one occasion, Tom Kennedy had us organised to go and meet with their Government Minister for Labour at the Dail Parliament. This lasted all of five minutes, just so the Minister could get his photo shoot to help boost his chances at the next election. Personally I thought, "If there's ever a guy I wouldn't vote for, it was him!" Tom Kennedy was a great support and would try and meet up with me whenever I was in town. On one occasion he and his wife Kay, who was the Irish Prime Minister's personal advisor, (so she earned more money than Tom), took Sheila and I to dinner, The next day Tom's wife Kay and Sheila met up to go off and have lunch together. Tom would refer to his wife Kay as his early retirement plan!

When in Dublin, we tended to stay in the Burlington Hotel. This hotel was great for the business contacts, it was always packed with people from all over. It was within walking distance of most places, so we could dump the car and walk to which ever pub or restaurant we wanted to visit. I recall one evening John Thomson and I were sitting in their bar. I looked across to the bar, and there was Tom Kennedy standing with a bunch of people from Japan. I wandered over towards Tom, who didn't see me coming. As soon as I got within earshot I said, "You can't get near this bar for (expletiving) Irishmen." Tom knew immediately it was me behind him, "John what are you doing here?" "Keeping your crappy Irish suppliers in line." I replied, He laughed and asked if I wanted a glass of Guinness, then introduced me to his Japanese visitors. They were obviously wondering who this strange guy was that their chaperone had suddenly begun having a craik (friendly conversation) with.

I said to Tom, "Why don't you take your visitors round to the IDA building? They'd like that I'm sure!" Tom knew exactly what I was getting on about. The last time we went back to his office, it was late and we couldn't get in to the back door of the building without first moving the hookers aside that were plying their trade there. I jibed Tom about those working ladies, he replied with, "Well it's a bit warmer here under the building and we do like to try and look after all our workers!"

Just around the corner from the Burlington Hotel are two really nice restaurants, one French, the other Italian. There was excellent food in both, and smack between them is a great bar. During one of Bill Boller's trips over, he wanted to go to Ireland to have a look. As usual we stayed in the Burlington. Bill liked the bar atmosphere. We dined in the French restaurant, again he approved of the food, but Bill had heard about the Irish pubs and wanted to go and see one. We went to the one across the street. Having frequented that establishment on many occasion, I knew it would be noisy and typically Irish, with plenty craik going on. The weekend before, Scotland had played Ireland at Rugby, and beat Ireland on its home turf. I walked up to the bar and shouted "Two Pints of Guinness please." The barman looked at me and said, "What the expletive are you still here for, trying to rub in our defeat?" After that every Irishman and woman in the bar started talking to this Scotsman and American. Bill soon got the hang of the craik and the pints of Guinness, which showed as we tottered unsteadily back to the hotel.

The bars in Ireland are real social gathering areas, many of which have live music being played. One of the most well-known of these is O'Donahue's, Sheila and I paid it a visit one Saturday afternoon. It was packed and there were a number of musicians sitting in the corner playing away and getting free pints for their efforts. We hadn't noticed the time, but it was well past pub closing time and all the doors had been locked shut, but the beer still flowed and the music still played. We got up to leave and the bar tender said, "The doors locked come this way." He led us out through a courtyard to a back entrance. He was looking through a small crack and said, "The Garda's there I know he is." "Okay quick out you go before the Garda comes back." We couldn't get out the door for others dashing to get inside. What a fun experience that was.

It is well known that Ireland is famous for its bars and social life. There's an area called Templebar, very appropriate name, it has bars every few yards, with one actually called Temple Bar. Sheila and I with some of my team were to have a fun time in there. Sheila and I visited the Temple Bar one lunchtime for a quick bite to eat, and a Guinness of course. In the corner was a young girl plucking away at her Banjo, I said, "Can you play the Mason's Apron?" She smiled and immediately started to play the tune, much to our pleasure. That evening a couple of my guys were arriving in Dublin, so we all set off for the Temple Bar. There in the corner was the same little girl plucking away at her Banjo, and as soon as she saw us enter the pub, she changed her tune to the Mason's Apron and gave us a nice smile.

That evening in the Temple Bar was a fun filled one. They brought on Irish Step Dancers, which looked like something straight out of Michael Flattley's Lord of the Dance! But it got better as people in the bar also got up to do a folk dance. There was a couple there from the American deep south and they got up to entertain the crowd with their local French Cajun step dance. As the evening wore on it got rowdier and rowdier, it was good to step outside and get some cool air.

We had two top level managers from Roseville come over, Terry Pierce, Manufacturing Manager and his Financial Controller Dennis Balmer. They were a really nice couple of guys, both mad keen on golfing. Of course we would be taking them past some of Ireland's best golf courses. Though here were two senior managers, they appeared as if they were let out to play! First stop though was to visit their suppliers of choice in the Cork Area. That was fine by me as it gave us a good excuse to go and have dinner in Kinsale.

Both Terry and Dennis wanted to see some of the sights on their trip, and as we were in Cork, Blarney Castle was a must, as was kissing the Blarney Stone. This turns out to be no mean feat even for a teenager! First you have to climb your way to the top of the ruined castle battlements. There are iron rails to help prevent you falling over. The Blarney Stone however seems to be located on the far side of what may have been a chimney of sorts. Not only is it not easy to reach, the process is you have to do it lying on your back with a large part of your upper torso, hanging over the edge, bent backwards and downwards to reach the stone for you to kiss. There is an attendant there to help you and hold onto you and there is an optional fifty pence charge. Dennis, being a Financial Controller was for (expletiving) on paying the fifty pence charge, those were his words. Funnily enough, once Dennis saw how I had to kiss the Blarney stone, I made sure I paid the attendant up front before I went through the process. He soon coughed up his fifty pence, rather than run the risk of the attendant not holding onto him.

The attendant told us that in all the years, he had never lost a patron, though a few sets of false teeth did manage to plummet earthwards onto the rocks below. Both our American friends assured me that they did have their own teeth, so that would not be a problem. However, most of us had a sore back for the rest of the day.

One morning I was down to breakfast first before both Terry and Dennis arrived. I was tucking into my usual Full Monty, Irish style when I saw them hovering around the self service area. They came to my table muttering to themselves, said Good Morning, then no sooner had they sat down, they were up again and off to the self service area. Then back they came again. Minutes later they were up and off again, then back to our table. I asked, "What's up with you pair this morning?" Dennis replied, "Have you not seen the woman on the other side this morning?" "No I hadn't." I replied. At that point Terry said, "Well you should go and see, she's got the lowest top on, they are almost popping out!" I just shook my head and said, "You guys ought to get out more often."

When we were loading up to leave, Dennis was too busy watching that same woman get into her car, he put a big scratch along our car with his luggage!

## 67. Trip Funnies...

During the trips funny happenings would occur out of the blue that were just not related to work. But they made many a business trip a special point of laughter to recall.

There was the time Irene' Shirridan and I were in Boston. It was a Saturday afternoon and we were wandering around doing some sightseeing. It was a beautiful sunny day and we were sitting eating ice cream on a bench at Faneuil Square in downtown Boston, beside the Market area. I happened to comment to Irene, asking if she noticed something odd? She said, "Yeah, there's a lot of Irish people around." I said, "Not that, that's because there's a football match on with the Irish National Football team. Look around at all the same sex couples that are mingling and hanging around." Irene hadn't noticed, until I pointed it out to her.

We didn't know at that point what was up but we soon found out. At 2.00 pm on the dot, those couples all formed up, it was the Annual Gay Parade through Boston. Once they were all lined up, they set off on a march around central Boston, chanting at the tops of their voices, "We're here, we're Gay, we're fabulous, get used to it!" They kept on chanting those words again and again. All of a sudden, from the pub across the Square, the doors suddenly burst open, and all those Irish football supporters covered in green had come out to see what all the commotion was. After a few grunts and groans they all disappeared back inside the pub to drink their beer.

A short while after, those same pub doors burst open again, the Irish were off to watch the football match. Being typical Irish supporters, they lined themselves up and marched off, but they also had a chant of their own. They started to shout. "We're here, we're white, we're expletiving dynamite!" You've just got to love that Gaelic sense of humour, I almost dropped my ice cream laughing at them.

I was in Spokane, staying at the Red Lion Inn, as were a couple of engineers from South Queensferry. I was having breakfast with John Cochrane and Vinod Malkani when Vinod said it was his birthday. So we all agreed to meet up after work and take Vinod out on the town to celebrate his birthday. It was a Friday so we could have a good night as we didn't have work next morning.

We met up later and set off for downtown. We were going to have a beer in the Irish pub then go to Clinkerdagger, Bickerstaff & Petts, a good steakhouse restaurant that overlooked the Falls on the Spokane River. It was one of those restaurants that specialises in birthday fun. All the waitress's wear miniskirts and low cut tops, just the place to take Vinod to celebrate. John Cochrane had pre-warned the staff it was Vinod's birthday and to make it special for him. He was constantly being surrounded by buxom ladies. They brought him a birthday cake and a present inside a round tin, as well as singing happy birthday to him. The theme of the round tin on birthdays was, whatever was in it you had to wear it. Vinod's tin contained skimp bra and panties, which he gamefully donned on top of his clothes. We made him wear them all evening.

When we left the restaurant to go back to the Red Lion, we looked for a place we could have a good drink. But we found ourselves stuck in a huge traffic jam. It was Friday night and the time when all the kids cruise up and down the main street, shouting and whistling to each other, much to the disdain of the local police who were constantly telling them to drive faster. The teenagers saw Vinod with his gear on, so it wasn't long before they were shouting at us. As soon as they heard the accents, they wanted to join us in our car. One of the girls shouted to Vinod, "It's your birthday, how do you expletive in Scotland on your birthday?" Vinod wanted to let her in our car, we said, "No, that's jail bait!" Eventually we got back to the Red lion and made our way to the bar.

John Cochrane went straight up to the Rock Band that was playing and told them it was Vinod's birthday. He announced that he wanted to dance with every girl in the bar!! The drinks were soon flowing and a few

of the girls in the bar got Vinod up to dance. We were all getting well and truly oiled. Vinod was a nice guy but could be easily led. This huge female, not pretty, massive, came across and asked Vinod to dance. So we egged him on and up he got and she wouldn't let him leave the dance floor. Eventually he got back to his seat. John and I told him that as she spent a good bit of her time dancing with him, he had to buy her a drink. John and I knew exactly what we were trying to get him to do. Vinod was reluctant, but gave in and called the bar maid over, telling her to buy that girl over there a drink of whatever she was drinking.

John and I knew the 'large lady' would see this as a come on, and we were right. No sooner had the drink been placed in front of her and she was told who had bought her the drink, she came straight over with drink in hand. She grabbed my seat, which had castors on, and she gave it a push which sent me flying two tables up and in she went to sit right beside Vinod. John and I bought another couple of rounds, then when Vinod was up dancing with the lady, we both slipped off to our rooms, leaving Vinod to enjoy the rest of his birthday with his new found friend!!

Next morning Vinod had a few choice words to say to us. He couldn't get rid of this large girl, she wanted to go back to his room with him. John and I just laughed about everything that happened the night before, with Vinod saying, "Don't tell anyone back home about this!" Like we would do that!

Whenever I visited Boeblingen, Germany, it was always great to relax after work in the swimming pool area. All the hotels we would stay in had fairly good spa facilities, the Germans love their saunas. I must admit to having two quite pleasant spells in their saunas. The first was in the Holiday Inn in Singelfingen. I arrived fairly late one evening after a hassle flight from the UK. I checked in, went up to the room and dropped off my stuff and made my way up to the spa area. The place was deserted, I had it all to myself, peace to chill out. I got stripped off and towel around my waist stepped into the sauna, splashed some water on to the hot coals, closed my eyes, lay back and relaxed.

Not for long, about five minutes later my peace was noisily disturbed, the door opened and in came five loudly chatting women. "Hello Sir." they all said. It's not often one finds oneself sitting amongst five good looking naked women. Bang went my peace and quiet, they all wanted to talk about their day, and my day! It turned out, two blondes were German and the other three were air hostesses and American. It was quite good fun just blethering about nothing in general.

I was getting too hot so made my goodbyes and left to shower and go for a beer in the bar. Quarter of an hour later I heard this voice, "Hi John, I don't recognise you with all your clothes on!" Thankfully they were off out for dinner somewhere but said they'd see me when they got back! I had an early start, so was off to bed long before they got back. It might have been interesting though, had I stayed up!!

On another visit to Boeblingen, this time I was staying at the Ramada in Sindelfingen. It was almost a copy of what happened in the Holiday Inn, but this time I was lying relaxing in the sauna when the door burst open and in comes about fifteen German guys. Now I had to sit up as it was a squeeze to get those fifteen naked Germans onto the three levels of wooden benches! Saunas are never very big places at the best of times, so it was a tight squeeze. Then it got even tighter, another one of their colleagues entered, this time it was a woman! They all squeezed up to let her in, the only access to the space they had made was for her to squeeze past me into the space above me. Not a problem, until she slipped as she was trying to step over me and ended up with her legs straddling my right shoulder and her crown jewel up against my ear. There was laughter all around and she said to me, "I hope you are alright?" After a few minutes I left to go shower and go for a beer. I wondered later how many women in the UK would go into a sauna naked with fifteen of their male work colleagues! Not all that many I would guess.

There were always things going on in the hotels. On one occasion I was with Karl Heinz Hartmann and Pierre Lavissiere while we were staying in the Red Lion Hotel in Boise Idaho. We were pretty much beat by the time we got there and had dinner, so we all set off to crash in our rooms. Next morning I got up,

showered and set off to meet the guys for breakfast. I stepped out of the room and thought, "That's funny all the doors in the hallway were shut and there were buckets of water lying around. I got to the restaurant, but the other guys had beat me there, and were sitting eating, halfway through their breakfasts. "Where were you last night?" They asked. "What do you mean, I was in my bed?" "Didn't you hear the fire alarm telling everyone to assemble in the parking lot?" Obviously I didn't. My buddies didn't even inform anyone that I was not there!!! I said, "Thanks a lot guys, I may have been cremated in my bed!" All in all though, I think I won the day, they didn't get back to their beds for a couple of hours, so were shattered. It was getting near time for breakfast, before we had to leave for our meeting, so they stayed up. I was the only one as fresh as a daisy!

A similar situation happened in a hotel we were staying in close to Nottingham, but this time it didn't really affect us. We had just returned to the hotel from a business dinner, to find the hotel grounds full of people, many still wrapped in towels. Apparently the fire alarm had gone off and they were told to immediately vacate the building because there was a fire. Something happened in the kitchen, the firemen wouldn't allow anyone back into their rooms until they were sure there were no other fires that might have been missed. Our timing was perfect, as soon as we got out of the car, we were let back in, which meant we were first to the bar.

Every few months we would organise a get together of the key engineers and business folks in both our EIPO teams. These were always good bonding sessions where we would all stay off site and have meetings during the days. We would have relaxing sessions on the days when meetings were not held. In Germany we would go Go-Kart Racing, which was highly competitive, but great fun, I think all the Germans saw themselves as Michael Schumacher and all the Scots saw themselves as Jackie Stewart. So it was pretty cut and thrust stuff, we were lucky there were no serious crashes.

On one occasion in Scotland, I organised all my team to appear, without the German team knowing, to meet in the bar well before the meeting time for all. We would be in full Scottish Highland dress, power dressing, to catch them off guard. It worked too, when the German team came down to the bar at the appropriate time, all at exactly the same time, as one would expect from our German friends. They all walked into the bar, stopped at the far end and ordered drinks, not one of them recognised us in our highland dress, kilts and all. It was when we shouted at them and asked if they were going to stand at that end of the bar all night, that they realised it was us. Round one to the Scots team I think. That evening I had arranged a Burns Dinner. and I had the Haggis (Haggis is a savoury pudding containing sheep's pluck; minced with onion, oatmeal, suet, spices, and salt, mixed with stock, traditionally encased in the animal's stomach though now often in an artificial casing instead.) piped in by a local piper and quoted 'To a Haggis.' But I had it translated into German, they all thought that was great. Next day we had a Clay Pigeon shoot organised, we out shot them that day also.

We always had people traveling back and forth to and from Germany. On one visit that Karl Heinz Hartmann was making to Scotland, John Thomson asked him if he could bring with him 200 cigarettes and a bottle of Gin? That was in the days when we could get a Duty Free allowance during travel between the UK and EU countries. Karl Heinz had said no problem to John. When KHH arrived at our office, John asked him where his Duty Free was. "Expletive" was the reply, KHH had left it on the plane!!! To which John replied with, "Well, no goods, no money!" "Fair enough!" KHH said. So he was out of pocket on that trip to Scotland.

Mike Morris of ISL created an embarrassing moment for himself. Mike liked his red wine and he joined us in Bergamo to visit the HP plant there. That evening we were to have dinner in the old part of the town, a beautiful place with very narrow streets. Mike had had a few glasses of red wine before we set off and he parked his car right up against the restaurant wall. That was fine, till later after we had eaten and drunk a few more bottles of red wine, by which time he was quite well oiled. His car was parked right against the



wall, so it was somewhat difficult for him to negotiate, so he left some of his paintwork on the wall. We were all laughing at him of course.

## **68. Worldwide IPO Managers Meetings...**

One of the achievements of Bill Boller, was to bring the worldwide IPOs much closer to each other. He accomplished this in such a way that it was meant to try and have the IPOs being seen as operating as a single unit in the customer's eyes. This was, in effect what happened but in reality it was the opposite, competition was rife between the IPO's. I personally think the competition was healthy as it kept us on our toes. During Bill's tenure there were notably three worldwide IPO Managers meetings, Singapore, Hong Kong and Boeblingen. Actually, there was a fourth, held at South Queensferry, which I played no major role in since I was soon to leave the IPO and Hewlett Packard. Wolfgang Zenger saw it as unimportant that I should partake in the event, which turned out to be a big mistake on his part and damaged his credibility amongst his peers.

The first meeting was held in Singapore, which as it turned out was also a good time as the new IPO systems were under development. It allowed quick decisions to be made and which speeded up the process. Bill Boller in his wisdom also invited a couple of his corporate peers to attend, one of whom was Marsha Begun, a lady from hell. She incidentally was related in some way to with the Israeli Prime Minister of past years. On this occasion, I was going to have a major dust up with her. At the meeting it was planned that all the IPO Managers would give a presentation of their past years' business. There also would be other topics open to be presented and discussed. I was asked to come up with a topic and give a presentation, the topics had to be related to the IPOs on a global basis. The topic I chose was "Global Communications and its barriers for the Global IPOs."

My presentation on Global Communications was well accepted by all, with the exception of Marsha Begun, who took real issue with an overhead slide I had produced. I had intended to inject a bit of humour, which everyone to a person saw and accepted as fun, except Marsha Begun. She accused me of being sexist and tactless! I had started to talk about ways that communications can get confused and misread depending on the circumstances that prevailed at the time. I produced an overhead which showed the picture of an old witch with typed captions top and bottom which I had covered up to be shown at the appropriate time.

The slide first showed the old crone, complete with warts. Then I removed the paper cover from the first caption, which read, "Before six Beers!" Next I spun the same picture through 180 degrees, and the old witch turned into a beautiful Princess. When the paper that covered that caption was removed, the caption read, "After six Beers!"

There was laughter all round until Begun shouted out, "That is sexist and has no place in a HP presentation!" I asked "What is sexist about that?" She replied, "It's degrading to women!" I replied, "On the contrary, if anything it is derogatory towards men as it portrays them as drunks." Bill Boller had to pacify her by talking to her off to the side. She had won no Brownie points with everyone else in the meeting room, each of whom came up to me at a later stage and said she was way out of line. She was never invited back to another IPO meeting!

Begun's hysterics were soon forgotten about that evening, when a boat trip had been organized that took all the IPO managers off to an island just off Singapore. It was not a restaurant as such, it had all been cobbled together to make a fun evening with a big bonfire, lots of booze and food. There was a Barbie—no, not the doll kind—the charcoal kind, and music. As the night wore on, everyone ended up doing the

Limbo dance, which was made all that easier to fall over. Two ladies helped to pick us back up again. Next day there were a few twinges from the back aches and the drink induced headaches!

The next Worldwide IPO Managers meeting took place in Hong Kong. This time it was organized by Gary Peck, who was in his last year before taking early retirement. He had decided it was to be a meeting we would all remember. He got that right, he didn't seem to care about the expense, that would be someone else's problem.

The whole meeting took place in the very up market Aberdeen Marina Club. It was so up market, that, to save money. They weren't going to allow our spouses and partners in to use the swimming pool and join us for lunch! The facilities were excellent, I'd swear all the bathroom plumbing was gold plated!

Gary did everyone proud, even the partners and spouses, who all received a necklace made out of Ming pottery! The meetings all went to plan. No Marsha Begun at this venue. Gary had also gone

out of his way to make sure people got a good sightseeing view of the Hong Kong and Kowloon area. One of the dinners involved us going up to the new territories in North Kowloon. We first traveled by bus, then by boat and then onto an even smaller boat at sea, to get into the small landing at the restaurant, but what a great Chinese restaurant it was.

We all got sat down and the waiters came around to ask what we would like to drink. I didn't notice, but the Chinese restaurant owner was listening to me order a beer. He came over beside me and said, in the strongest Scottish accent, "Ow's it goan Jimmy, yae want a pint o heavy, yuil bae haein a wee Ruby Murry fur yur tea then!" Everyone at the table looked up and wondered what the restaurant owner had just said to me, it sounded like a foreign language to everyone, except me of course. Turned out the owner lived in Stirling in Scotland for a number of years, he loved it and had picked up the Scottish accent and colloquialisms. Upon hearing me order a beer, he had to come across and talk about Scotland. After that, the service to our table was always the quickest, with the boss helping and spending a few more minutes talking with me. He wanted to go back to Scotland, but his Mother was old and frail. But in the future he hoped he would go back.

Boats seemed to figure in Gary Peck's plans, on another night it was a small water taxi in Aberdeen to the world's biggest floating restaurant, Jumbo's in Aberdeen harbour Hong Kong. On another night we had dinner in the Aberdeen Marina Yachting Club, afterwards the evening went with a bang as he had arranged a Karaoke evening. One of the highlights featured all the IPO managers giving "Born to be wild" a rather painful and tuneless airing.

A number of the IPO Managers who had brought their partners had discussed with Gary staying on longer to go and see the ancient Chinese artifacts and buildings in Beijing. Gary worked out a deal for us all,



we'd visit Beijing and see the Great Wall of China, the Ming Tombs, the Forbidden City, the Summer Palace as well as other famous places around the Peking City or Beijing as it is now known as, such as Pearl and Cloisonné factories.

The Hotel we stayed at, in Beijing, was named the Capitol. We were not sure at first what we would be arriving at, but it was luxurious, our bathroom was floor to roof in marble. Even the TV was set up for westerners. It was there we saw the death of Diana Spencer as it happened in Paris. To walk around Tiananmen Square looking across at the Forbidden City was quite eerie, especially as we could recall the brave Chinese dissident standing in front of a tank in protest. Where ever we wandered, there were always two policemen close by. The Chinese themselves would gather around us to listen to us as speak. When we were in the Forbidden City the police or security would film us no matter where we wandered.

It was good to see Beijing, which was also getting a fair amount of Chinese visitors. They would come to their capitol from the furthest flung corners of China and be dressed in the native costumes of that area. We had Wolfgang Zenger's children with us, their blonde hair and blue eyes was like a magnet to the Chinese who would stretch forward at every opportunity to touch their hair. Eventually the kids were getting truly (expletived) off with it all and they would stand in the middle of our group out of the reach of touching hands.

What a fantastic feeling it was to walk the Great Wall and through the Forbidden City, and thousands of years of history. It was a pity that the Red Guards in Mao Tse Tung's days were allowed to destroy so much. Most of the treasures were now on Taiwan, taken there by General Chang Kai Chek, which I had the fortune to see when I was in there on another visit.

The worldwide IPO Managers meeting in Germany, was not as exotic as those in Asia, but Zenger had organized some good sightseeing trips. The meeting took place in Bad Tienach, and we did have dinner in the same hostelry as our EIPO dinner. But this time the dinner didn't take place in the cellar and there was no "Zum Wohle Allerseit." To be honest, I felt a golden opportunity had been missed by not doing that. Our Asian IPO Managers would have loved it. But Zenger would think it was not the type of Germany he wanted others to see.

I was never a great lover of the Bad Tienach spa resort, to me it was too typically German in taking the "cure" as they call it. Rotund old Germans of both sexes walking around in white dressing gowns, flip-flop shoes drinking the spa water, but they seemed to like doing that.

The sightseeing trips were more interesting when we went on to Oberammergau, Garmischpartenkirchen and visits to the Neuschwanstein Castle and Mad King Ludwig's Palace hideout. It was built to resemble a cave. It was all very nice, but it was missing something, it was just too clinical and sanitized. A fun evening could have been had in Sindelfingen at Funzel's Bar, which as I've mentioned is like something out of Hansel and Gretel. They do serve a mean rost



At this WWIPO meeting at the Bad Tienach spa resort in Germany, some managers brought their families.



I'm celebrating the Oktober Beir Fest in Munich with Gary Peck, CIPO.

schweinehaxe, to be swallowed down by lots of wheat beer. That ambiance would have gone down well with all the others. There was also a nice restaurant in Boeblingen but the Pils takes forever to pour. You also need to make sure that when in the Boeblingen area that you like meat. Fish is seldom on offer, and stay away from the schmaltz unless you want a heart attack. Otherwise you'll be injecting pig fat straight into your arteries! The beer is good though as is the Wuerttemberg wine.

The technical meeting trip was organised to be in Munich in time for the Oktoberfest, which is not in October. At last it was something everyone had heard about and typically German, well Bavarian to be exact. It was always going to be a great hit with all, as was the Volksfest which took place in Stuttgart. But as those nights wore on, it was up to each individual to get themselves back to the hotel. I'm still amazed we never lost anyone. It's a very German thing to sit at very long tables and eat the huge sausages, swilled down with huge steins of beer. The beer was supplied by the serving ladies, who seem to be able to carry around eight one litre steins at the one time. The music is loud and the lederhosen is everywhere. It's not long before people are standing on the tables and dancing on the form seating. The most favourite song being "Alice" where every person to a man can be heard shouting the lines, "Alice, Alice, who the (expletive) is Alice?" Though at our IPO Managers table, the Alice quickly became "Marsha, Marsha, who the (expletive) is Marsha!" It was a pity really the old witch wasn't there to hear our praise being placed upon her!

The Macarena was also popular at that time, allowing Victor Melendez to come to the fore and show us how it is done in Mexico! As the night wore on, everyone was getting drunker. Jeff Cooke in a sober state would never have been seen chatting up the ugliest woman in the world, but I was obviously sober enough to take the picture. This picture of Gary Peck and I in Bavarian hats make us look like the local village idiots!

We had some fun times at those Beer festivals, but I always avoided going on the shows rides. This was a wise and calculated move, when seeing those who disembarked from some funfair death ride, puking down the front of themselves, mostly women!

## 69. East European Trip...

After the fall of the Berlin Wall, Eastern European countries came to the fore as our low cost supplier base. Karl Daumueller and Manfred Kandolff had been doing a lot of research in a number of those Eastern European countries. Some of the USA Materials Managers wanted to know more about it. This was right up Wolfgang Zenger's street. He would organise a trip, actually his minions would, but Zenger would take the credit.

A supplier trip was organised that would take us to Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, Estonia and Russia. The trip would hit all the oldest and most beautiful cities in Eastern Europe. We would visit, Prague, Warsaw, Brno, Budapest, Tallinn and St Petersburg. There was a huge demand to join in on the trip. It gave Wolfgang an ideal opportunity to pull a fast one. He organised the trip in such a way that the guys traveling wouldn't have to worry about all the different currencies or travel arrangements. He told them he'd work it all out to cover the transport and hotel costs. Then he would bill them the cost in advance, they all thought it was a great idea. What Wolfgang never told them was that all of us IPO guys—there were about six of us—we'd be going for free, our costs were divided amongst all those



This is the frog-eyed Russian An-124 jet that carried us around Eastern Europe, previously owned by the Romanian dictator.

other Material Managers!!! All they would have to pay extra was their bar bills and they could do that with their credit cards. If they had found out Wolfgang's scam, all hell would have broken loose.

The IPO would charter a plane and a bunch of buses to ferry us around. It was still a bit difficult to move from one old Iron Country to another. So it was easier to charter a plane from within one of those countries. We ended up flying in a bug eyed, well that was what it looked like, Anatonov. It was a strange contraption, I never felt all that safe in it. It apparently had belonged to some East European dictatorial leader. Thus it was kitted out for his comfort, complete with sofas and easy chairs, as well as a drop down door at the back which allowed his bullet-proof luxury Zil to drive in! I'm sure the plane bodywork was made of steel! I'm positive it had a few of our USA visitors a wee bit worried. One even shouted at me to switch off my lap top when we were taking off in case it interfered with the avionics!!

The trip around the suppliers was different, I didn't see one that could match what we could achieve at our West European supplier base. What was really interesting though, was that some forward thinking western companies had installed their own people in suppliers with the best potential, most notably in Hungary. Even an OEM (Original Equipment Manufacturer) from Ireland was there. Their Irish engineers loved it, their money was worth just so much more there, so they lived a life of luxury. IBM had a Disc Drive Facility up and running, supported by their imported engineers.

One of MCG's major European competitors, W&G (Wandel & Goltermann) from Germany, had an assembly line building Signal Analysers. It gave me a certain pleasure when I got back to South Queensferry to go and update George Taylor, who was Manufacturing Manager to tell him of my findings. I had previously asked George if he intended to send any materials person on the trip. He said no, there was nothing there that would be of any benefit to his division or that of MCG. His face changed a little when I said, "George, one of the reasons W&G are taking business from you is because they have an assembly line in full operation in Hungary."

The visit to Russia and the Russian suppliers were more restricted than the other east European countries. There was a distinct wariness and distrust from the people we met. It started the minute our plane touched down on Russian soil. As soon as we started to taxi towards the terminal building, almost immediately soldiers with dogs started to appear out of the woods to line our path into the terminal building. After a long wait, immigration people arrived to check out our documentation, then we could set off. It was not much better when we returned to fly out. We had a charter plane, so departure should have been quick, but it wasn't. Those same immigration people were off having lunch somewhere, even though they knew when we planned on leaving, so we often had to hang around for a couple of hours.

Even at the Russian suppliers, they watched every one of us during the plant tours, pushing some along to keep up with the main party. They even hovered over us when we all sat in their dark wood paneled meeting rooms, which had pictures of Lenin on the walls and Hammer and Sickles. When any of the guys got up to go to the loo, someone would stand outside the door to make sure that was the only place he went to and came back from.

St Petersburg's old buildings were marvelous though, it was early Spring and the ice on the river was breaking up as we took a boat trip up and down the river past the Hermitage. A beautiful city, yes, but it was dirty, dust lay on the streets everywhere, and nearly all the windows had not been cleaned in a long time. The drainpipes from the roofs ran down the side of the building and were open at the bottom where the water just sprayed across the pavements. Maybe that's how they got rid of all the dust.

A couple of the ladies in our group got up early and took off jogging around St Petersburg, when they got back they were telling folks where they had been. Our Russian guide's face changed colour, he said that that was not a good idea, especially where you jogged to. Foreign visitors had been mugged and kidnapped in that area! There was no more early morning jogging outings after that!

One of the major highlights on our visit to St Petersburg was that Wolfgang had organised an evening at the ballet. So we all set off to watch the Kirov Ballet perform Don Quixote. It was the first time I had ever been to a ballet, the place was packed out and the show was just mesmerising, I will never forget it.

The hotel in St Petersburg was very old, but it had been somewhat renovated to cater for upmarket tourists. The decor was well done, though not up to western standards. But somehow it was just right for the area, complete with old chandeliers and doormen on the main entrance. Their primary job, I think, was to keep the distasteful and unsavoury characters at bay, I'd have thought that the walk through metal detector at the front door would have done that.

Our arrival in Poland was also a jerk into reality and was a sign of what was to meet us. Immediately outside the air terminal as we boarded the bus, were lines of hookers. The suppliers in Poland were a bit more upbeat and keen to shrug off their past history and move closer to Europe and the west. You could feel the resentment they had towards the Russians, and beyond that, they were not too keen on the Germans either. With good reason, Warsaw had been razed to the ground during the last war, but the Poles have re-built it brick for brick exactly as it once was. They have made an absolutely superb job of it. All around are memorials to the last war, most probably instigated by the Russian. The Jewish Ghetto area is also on the tourist route.

On our first night, we all went for a meal in the re-built Old Town Market Square, which was just stunning to wander round and inspect. The restaurant had a classical music group playing in the corner, similar to that in Prague. The meal though has not made a mark on my memory, but there was copious amounts of ice cold vodka which had to be passed around. On returning to the hotel, we all made our way to the bar. On this occasion it was full of ladies, 'ladies of the night.' They must have thought their boat had just come in and that their pay cheque had just arrived. Although they chatted to all the guys around the bar, but with women in our group, they tended to keep their distance. That was until our ladies turned in for the night. Then they got chatty again.

A little while later a couple of the Americans had commented on the bar. They had looked across the street and wanted to go see what a local pub was like. Despite us telling them it was not an ordinary pub where the locals would go, half a dozen of them set off to visit the pub. The next morning over breakfast we heard their story. It was an escort bar, they no sooner walked in the door but they were joined by a few lady escorts, whom of course they had to buy drinks for! All went well, until it was time to leave and they asked for their bill! Between the six of them they couldn't raise enough money to pay the bill.

The bar bouncers had no intention of letting them leave the premises until the bar bill was paid. In the end, the bouncers let one of them leave to go back to his hotel and collect his credit card to pay for all their drinks. On his return and bill payment they were allowed to leave. I wonder how they covered that on their expenses? After that evening those same six guys never parted from the total company. Lesson learned I guess.

Budapest was also a beautiful city for sightseeing. But even here, within spitting distance, the hookers plied their wares around the hotel entrances. It was a bit cold for the guys to do any extra walkabout activities after walking around the old towns of Buda and Pest that straddle the Danube.

It was much the same in the Czech Republic, though there was a stronger air of mechanical capability. This was probably because they manufactured automobiles like Skoda and they made tanks and other military vehicles. But it meant most of their industry was attuned to those types of specialist markets. Prague has to be one of the most beautiful cities in Europe, Wenceslas Square, very classical. Every restaurant we visited had a classical music group playing away in the corner, the ambiance was great.

Tallinn in Estonia was quite a surprise on the supplier front, until you realise that Finland is just across the waterway and as such has a huge presence in Estonia. They make use of the cheaper labour for the manufacture of Nokia mobile phones. That Finnish presence was making a huge difference to Estonia's manufacturing capability. It appeared a much more affluent country than all the others we had visited, in spite of previously being under Russian control. It was cleaner and tidier for starters. It featured beautiful cobbled streets all around the old town centre and around the old castle.

We would eventually seek to do more in Estonia as an Irish company formed a partnership with their PSA CM suppliers.

All in all, the East European trip was very enlightening, though I did come away thinking that it wouldn't be too long for those companies to catch up in capability with the west. In cahoots with western OEMs, their cost structures would rise, as was later proved with the Irish/Estonian HP partnership. Though if HP was to follow suit like many of the other OEMs, there were huge savings to be made in building final products. BCD was to follow that up with Ink Jet Printers.

The other area that struck home with me was Wolfgang Zenger. That trip gave me an insight into how his unknown and unmentioned plans would shape up. He had brought along two of his previous henchmen that had worked with him in the past in Zentraleinkauf. Zenger had it in his mind he was going to create something out of nothing. He wanted to have his sidekicks back beside him in the IPO. Unfortunately this was going to be at the expense of a couple of the other German IPO members that had worked for Karl Heinz Hartmann. It had also quickly dawned on me that I would have a bigger fight on my hands with Zenger and his henchmen. I had already made sure I deliberately stood on both those new guys toes on this East European trip. I tried to put them in their place, and they didn't like it. I knew of course that they went running straight back to tell their Fuhrer that I had disagreed with them.

## **70. Enough is Enough...**

It had been building up for some time, actually from the very first day both Karl Heinz Hartmann and I tried to persuade Bill Boller not to hire Wolfgang Zenger. Sadly, Bill had this fixation that there needed to be a European IPO Manager to manage the whole region. This despite both KHH and I doing really well without another level of Management. It was a crazy move by Boller, and one where he knew nothing of the past history of Zenger.

Wolfgang's first task was to get rid of Karl Heinz Hartmann. This was not an easy task, when it was he who had originally hired Zenger into HP. Karl Heinz also had 30 years' service with the company. Wolfgang was wily enough to make it look like he wanted to use Karl Heinz's skills in other areas. So he brought in one of his pet Yes Men from Centrale Einkauf, Karlheinz Hauber, to manage the order processing side of the IPO and leave Karl Heinz with the engineering side. Hauber was not an Engineer. Karl Heinz knew this was the beginning of the end and told me so. He also said this is how Zenger operates, he whittles little bits away at a time to get his own yes-men around him. This proved to be the case, as it was shown when Manfred Kandolff and Karl Daumueller started to do work on researching Eastern Europe. They had to report directly to Zenger on that project, which left Karl Heinz with little people management left.

To Karl Heinz's credit he hung on until Zenger sweetened the pot enough for him to take early retirement. That move was to benefit me later. Zenger was also smart, he knew KHH had lots of information and knowledge he needed access to, so agreed that when KHH left, he would use him as a consultant under the guise of Quality Training. I attended KHH's retirement celebration in Germany, I was intent on making sure he would go out with a bang and a big smile on his face, which he dearly deserved.

At the retirement dinner, I sloped off and covered the dining area in huge posters I had made on our department plotter. I used old photographs of KHH from his years in the IPO. They brought huge smiles from KHH and his wife Crystal as well as hoots of laughter from his team members. Zenger just smiled, which was understandable as he was the brunt of some of my not-so-subtle humour. I presented KHH with a huge Edinburgh Crystal Bowl from all his friends in the UKIPO, which he and his wife loved. I gave Crystal a bouquet of flowers. I'm glad I gave the flowers as there were none forthcoming from the German side.

Even at KHH's retiral dinner, I could see the Wolfgang Pack crowding around their Fuhrer at the one table. I decided I wasn't sitting there and sat amongst KHH's team. They asked me why I didn't sit at the other table. I told them I wanted to sit beside my friends, people whom I could trust and have fun with. It brought smiles of approval to their faces and comments, that they knew that I knew what Wolfgang Zenger is like. KHH said to me after dinner that he had wished he had sat with Crystal beside me and his team as it would have been much more fun. You couldn't measure it by the sound of all the laughter emanating from our table. KHH's team couldn't stop talking about the posters I had put up. They enjoyed the put-down, and the fun we made of everyone, including Wolfgang Zenger!

KHH, moved to northern Germany but would travel down roughly each quarter and do some training, it lasted about a year. Then KHH decided he had had enough and stopped doing it. I believe KHH was hurt pretty deeply about the way he had been treated by Wolfgang Zenger. The end result being that to this day, KHH no longer makes contact with anyone, even in the German office. This sadly has also upset some of his former team players.

Once KHH was gone, I was on my own in dealing with the Wolfgang Pack.

There was never once that Zenger could or ever did criticise my team, though he always had plenty of criticism for the German team. I'm sure it irked him that it was always the senior players in my team that took the leadership and drove everything from the front, and were more creative in every aspect. The only really strong member on GIPO side was Doris Fischer. But she was too focused on her own little DRAM world. Besides, Karl Heinz Hauber stifled creativity within his team. He was of the Zenger idiom. It was only he who could come up with good ideas, he was a purchasing guy, so was always out of his depth on engineering issues and marketing capabilities. Even on the Systems side, he was never as creative as Jim Rooney was, but again Jim was also an engineer, so looked at systems from that angle.

Meeting after meeting, it was always the UK IPO guys that dominated. But Zenger wanted to change things, he wanted an EIPO Zentraleinkauf. He demanded that Hauber and I have weekly calls, I think basically to keep tabs on me and on what I was having my team working on. I knew Hauber would feed things back to Zenger, I pulled that string to the maximum.

Eventually Zenger had no option but to come clean on what he wanted to do, and that was to create a EIPO Zentraleinkauf. He was clever enough to work it as playing to our strengths. He said Hauber has great Purchasing knowledge and experience while I had great Engineering and Marketing skills. He wanted all the Purchasing, Systems and Processes to fall under the responsibility of Hauber and all the Engineering, Selling and Marketing responsibilities to fall under me. Even though the strength on the Systems side lay in my team with Jim Rooney.

The group would have been split with all the German engineers reporting to me and Jim Rooney and our purchasing staff reporting to Hauber. I knew though, that this was just the thin end of the wedge. It would lead to eventually all the purchasing moving to Boeblingen and the loss of the UK IPO purchasing jobs in South Queensferry. All in all, it would have been a good job for me and all the engineers, but it was bad news for my purchasing folks. This meant that I totally rejected the idea out of hand, and said it needed more work before proposing it.



I could only delay the inevitable, Zenger had made up his mind. It was going to happen, with or without my support, and those were the words he eventually used to tell me. I had to make a decision. My first loyalty was to my team, so I spoke with both Malk and Jim in confidence and let them know what Zenger's plans were. Both agreed I would get a good job out of it, and that it would impact the Purchasing side and the Systems side. I also told both of them that I had had enough of the infighting and that perhaps it was time for me to take early retirement. This kind of stunned them a bit. I also suggested that they might also want to consider their futures, which was what happened with all my key team members.

It was in a way, good timing for Malcolm, Terry Pierce in Roseville had approached me on offering Malk a job in Roseville. I talked it over with Malk and he was interested, Zenger knew nothing about what was going on. Malk took the job and as soon as it got out, Zenger tried to change his mind, it was a done deal, it was too late. Zenger was too busy working on a package for me, he took his eye off the ball and left me to work away in the background with my senior players to seek other opportunities.

I had told Zenger that I could not stay and work with his plans, he knew the job he was offering me was a good one and had expected me to look after myself and take it. He had underestimated my bond with my team and that I had had enough of the continual infighting he had brought to the IPO. This meant he would have to rethink his plans and he would have to make me an offer. If acceptable, I'd take early retirement. Wolfgang agreed and gave me everything I wanted, including my choice of date for departure, which helped ensure I got all my key players sorted out. When each person left, they were not replaced, which eventually led to Jim Rooney moving to Germany, and even then moving on to another department in Germany outside the IPO.

In the end it left Germany with all the work and no excellent people to run it! With the eventual takeover of Compaq and its subsequent impact on Corporate HPP, and the demise of Agilent, many of my team moved on to take up other key positions in other companies. With their training, skills and ability it wasn't long before they were making their marks in their new positions. I'm still receiving requests to supply them with references, all those years after I left the company.

### **71. My Last World Wide IPO Managers Meeting...**

My very last World Wide IPO Managers Meeting was to be held in South Queensferry. Unfortunately this was about two months before I was leaving the company, as I had decided on taking early retirement. Wolfgang Zenger, in all his wisdom, decided I shouldn't attend the meeting, his thinking being, as I was about to take early retirement, I didn't need to attend. It didn't matter to him that Michi Enji, the JIPO manager was also retiring at the end of that month, and he was in attendance!

This Wolfgang Zenger decision didn't win him any brownie points with all the other World Wide IPO Managers in attendance. Every one of them had brought their spouses or partners along, all of whom wanted to tie up with my wife Sheila, particularly after they all had bonded at the last World Wide IPO Managers meeting in Hong Kong. Zenger was worried that I'd upstage him. After he told me his decision, I said to him, "Don't ask me to organize anything for the meeting." He was an idiot, because I'd have made sure they all had a ball whilst in Scotland. In the end, the meeting more or less fell flat and the wives and partners felt let down. I was to find that out on that last night as I mixed and socialised with them before and after dinner.

All the IPO Managers and their spouses and partners surrounded both Sheila and myself all night, which meant I ended up with a bit more to drink than I had planned! I wasn't caring as it was going to end up on someone else's bill.

That night was to be an IPO dinner where all the UK IPO staff would attend and Enji-san and I would be given retirement gifts, which I had not been made aware of. Those gifts were an insult to both Enji-san and myself. Nor had it been mentioned that both Enji-san and I were expected to give speeches at the retirement presentations, Zenger wanted to catch me cold. However, I had been around too long to get caught out by him, and was aware that as this would be my last time at this gathering, a farewell speech would have been mandatory.

Enji-san stood up and got out all his retirement notes and started to read his speech from them. I had previously written my retirement speech and had learned it off pat. So when it became my turn and everyone looked at me to make a speech, I stood up, I looked at Zenger and said, "Oh, I didn't realize I was to give a speech, no one had informed me of a retirement presentation, but I've never needed an excuse before to mouth off." Which brought a few smiles from around the room.

I started my speech without a piece of paper in my hand. I firstly went on to praise every single member of my IPO team and heaped the praise on all of them for making our IPO such a success. I gave Bill Boller a quick reference on some of the direction he had given. I never once mentioned Wolfgang Zenger by name, but I let it be known I was concerned for the European IPO future. I then went on about all the special help I received from someone who knew HP and the IPO inside out. I noted that without that person's help, support and guidance, I doubted if I would have been able to go the distance and been so successful. I went on to say I'm sure you are all wondering who this Hewlett Packard person is? Well, it's my wife Sheila. At that point I sat down, and all my UKIPO staff all started to cheer and shout. At that point Carl Snyder HPP Corporate Procurement Director shouted across at me, "Well John, I didn't know all that much about you before, but I certainly know a lot about you now!"

I did get the last laugh on Wolfgang Zenger. After dinner we all adjourned to the bar. Carl Snyder said to the barman, "Put all these folks drinks on my room." After this was done Carl Snyder went off to bed. I just kept adding more and more rounds of drinks to Snyder's room number. Wolfgang Zenger was getting angrier every time I did it. In the end, I lost my head with him and told him exactly what I thought of him as a manager. I emphasized that he was destroying the European IPOs and that I'd give it twelve months and they would be done, finished, destroyed forever. As the night ended and we were making our way back to our car and Zenger his way back to his room, I was still at his throat on what I thought of him. He was visibly shaken, obviously he had never had anyone tell him what they thought of him. I made sure there was no way I was going to miss him and hit the wall!



At my retirement gathering, my IPO team and support departments offer their appreciation to me for those wonderful years, doing what we did best, saving LOTS of money for HP. (The baby employee came with mother Claire Urquhart.) Sheila was not there that day.

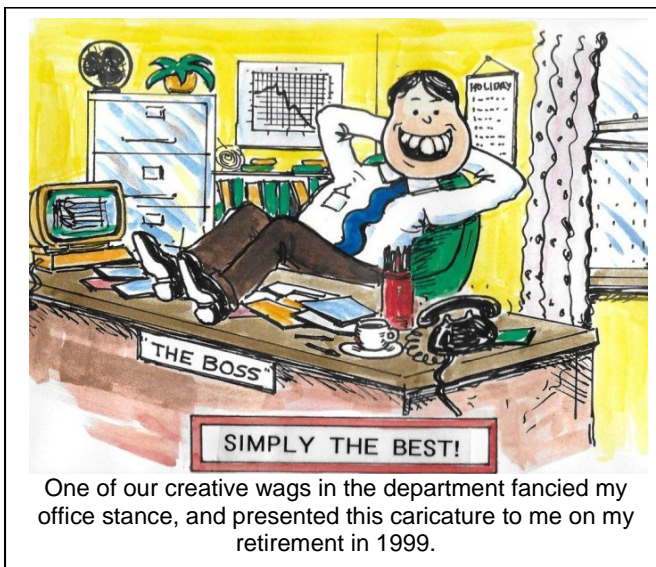
Unfortunately, time would eventually prove I was wrong, it took close to 18 months for our IPO to die! Followed by the end of the GIPO not long after. In my last two months in the office, I never spoke once to Wolfgang Zenger! After I had left the company, he was eventually moved out of the IPO world.

As for the retirement gift that Wolfgang Zenger had presented to Enji-san and myself, this was basically a lump of coal with a clock inserted into it. It carried a brass inscription which had spelling errors. Zenger hadn't even made sure the syntax was correct. I sent my retirement gift back to Bill Boller, he was the

manager in charge, it was up to him to do what he wished with it. However, I knew it would not go down well and it would not make Wolfgang Zenger look good!

The end was messy, particularly the last three years when Wolfgang Zenger came on board. And yet those years in Procurement and the IPO were the best work years of my life, thanks to the great team I had and the support I got from my real allies.

During those last couple of months, I just played around at the IPO. It was pointless really to get too involved in anything, so I just cruised along with lots of support from my team who continued to tell me they were sorry that I was going. The very last day was the saddest. I was the last person in the office that morning, that was a first for me. My team had a surprise presentation ceremony where they gave me various gifts. The best of those still takes pride of place in my study, a caricature painting of me sitting with my feet up on my desk, with 'The Boss' written on the desk and with a caption with the words written below it saying...



One of our creative wags in the department fancied my office stance, and presented this caricature to me on my retirement in 1999.

### “Simply The Best!”

It was the perfect send off on a sad day, I said my goodbyes to the team. There were a lot of hugs and a few wet eyes in the process. Both Malcolm Newlands and Jim Rooney led me out to my car, having handed over my security pass and credit cards etc. to Personnel, I was otherwise locked in the building. Both Malk and Jim stayed and waved till I eventually disappeared outside the Security Gate and onto the public road heading for home for the last time.

The day I left Hewlett Packard, was the day Sheila and I moved our house to East Linton. That day was the 31<sup>st</sup> October 1999. The Millennium and a new life beyond Hewlett Packard was about to start.

## 72. The Aftermath...

As it was to turn out, Wolfgang Zenger was to get his wish, but not the way he had intended. It involved moving of all the UK IPO Order Processing to Germany. At the time of my departure HP had decided to hive (spin) off as a separate company the MCG Instrument part of the company. This would not be part of HP and would be known as Agilent Technologies.



Here stood a vibrant and vital factory in the Hewlett-Packard family for some decades. HP brought a modern work culture to Scotland, and left hundreds of retired employees.



And now the end is near, as large demolition machines move in to destroy the physical plant where so much human creativity was unleashed.

The IPO, of course, was part of HP and Corporate Procurement. The time had come where a decision had to be made about the IPO, as it was part of HP and not Agilent, so it could no longer be housed within the Agilent building.

Confusion abounded on where the IPO would be housed. The IPO ladies worried about what would happen to their jobs, they didn't want to move anywhere else. They wanted to stay working at Queensferry, as their lives revolved around that location.

Sadly, the decision was made to find jobs for them in Agilent and move all the IPO business to Germany.



How do you say goodbye to an entire community of workers, engineers, researchers, and a tenant group who lived and worked there in the Queensferry plant, but whose domain circled the globe, the International Procurement Operation?

Bill Boller left the IPOs not all that long after I had departed, Corporate as usual replaced him with a very much less dynamic leader, who didn't last all that long. It just added further to the mess, at which point another major change was about to take place in HP.

That change was caused when HP bought Compaq Computers, headquartered in Texas. A major reorganisation then took place regarding both Companies Corporate Procurements.

Compaq Corporate Procurement had a much better record at negotiating competitive pricing. Many components suppliers made identical parts that HP was purchasing. A major reorganisation ensued with Compaq Corporate Procurement employees commanding the prime positions and say in the organisation.

Part of that reorganisation involved moving of Wolfgang Zenger out of the IPO to take on a role of Managing the Memory Team. This was a job he had done previously at Apollo. Compaq did not have IPOs in their structure. Not long after Wolfgang was also given early retirement.

The IPO that remains today in Germany is a shadow of its former self. To reduce costs further, a large part of the Order Processing transaction work was moved to the Czech Republic, a low cost labour rate country.

Agilent Technologies, also underwent major restructuring. They failed to have the products to meet the changes in technology, so much so that the facility at South Queensferry, which occupied approximately 800,000 square feet, was closed down. All employees were made redundant and the building razed to the ground to make way for housing.

A very sad end to 40 years of state of the art electronic engineering in Scotland's Silicon Glen.

### **73. The Real Inspirational Motivators...**

There are two people who should not go unmentioned, without them the majority of my memoirs would have been involved elsewhere. They were two of the world's greatest and forward thinking Captains of Industry, Bill Hewlett & Dave Packard. Those forward thinking men, who were way ahead of their time, brought a whole new dimension to employee - work place relationships. There was no class divide, through their "HP Way" and with their inspired leadership they allowed and encouraged employees to aspire to attain their best.

From the first day I started at HP, I knew I had found an unbelievable company to work for. There was no real "We or Them" everyone was on first name terms and treated equally, though some employees were a bit lax on the latter. After I had addressed and dealt with my itchy feet need, I came back to HP. After that, HP was always going to be my first choice. I never looked back. HP was home, I felt it was part of my family. HP gave me access to new opportunities, that were not readily available in other companies, a chance to take ownership and responsibility to achieve.

My thanks go to Bill & Dave for that opportunity which allowed me to have such an exciting, challenging, hard-working and rewarding career. I thoroughly enjoyed every minute of my 32 years at Hewlett Packard. I would do it all again.

Since retirement, I have been asked on many occasions, HP, do I miss it? Seventeen years have since passed from my last day at HP, in 1999. Do I miss it? Yes and No. I don't miss the stress, hassle and the managing of some of HP's more self-centred, egotistical—the world revolves around me, I know better, do as I say types. I do miss, the friends and friendships I made all over the world, many of whom I still stay in touch. These were the real sincere HP'ites, who no matter race, colour, nationality were just like everyone else, they wanted a good life for themselves and their families and wanted the very same for you.

Closer to home and within HP Queensferry, as well as Ferranti, there were a few who I want to single out, and who helped to motivate and inspire me. One, from my apprenticeship days in Ferranti's, Bob Robertson. Although part of the old class regimental type structure, he instilled in me that you can always do better and master the more difficult tasks, I always regret the fact I never got back to see him and thank him. From my first days in HP, coming in contact with David Simpson and Alan Watts, they convinced me there was a better employee working relationship to be had, in how to treat and manage people. Peter Carmichael showed me how when he became Divisional Manager and Managing Director. Though David and Peter were Division Managers and Managing Directors, both of those leaders always managed to find their way down to the grease monkeys on the shop floor. Even if in some cases they wanted a wee homer done, but they did come themselves. Peter would also like to hear what the latest rumour mill was at that time.

There are two other HP managers that in my mind deserve a special mention, as they put their trust and faith in me, then cut me loose and supported me. Unfortunately, one has passed away, so I can't thank him personally. Jimmy Queen. The other, left HP to start his own Global Procurement Training Programme. Dick Locke. Both of these men played a major role in my development and access to a great world opportunity career.

Having acknowledged those in HP Management for their help and guidance. I must give a massive acknowledgement and sincere thanks to ALL my South Queensferry IPO team. Many have been mentioned personally in my memoirs, but there are still others who in my mind were the unsung heroes. Others worked in South Queensferry support departments, IT, Traffic and Accounts. I salute all of those who worked diligently in the background to make ALL our IPO team and myself the great success. We were in business to supply a "Knock Your Socks off Service" to all our customer divisions and supply base. I could not have asked for a better or more supportive team.

There is one other person who basically without her help, none of it would have been achieved. My wife Sheila. She stood by me, while making sure I had the support to go back to College and study to gain further qualifications. Sheila knew HP inside out, and gave me great support and inputs when I came home from work moaning and bitching about some of who I had to deal with. She frequently gave me great advice on how to deal with some situations. She showed MUCH more understanding in putting up

with my many, many days/weeks away from home, building up my career. It would not have been possible without Sheila's endless support.

**"Simply the Best!"**

---John Wastle  
East Linton, Scotland  
May, 2016