

20th Century crossword answers

- | | | | |
|---------------|--------------|------------|-------------|
| Across | 1. Armstrong | 6. William | 10. Atatat |
| | 11. Einstein | 13. Times | 14. Spanish |
| | 15. Shanman | 18. Sung | 19. Cal |
| | 20. Hur | 24. Gary | 25. USA |
| | 26. Monet | 27. Nine | 28. Tiger |
| | 29. Lennon | 31. Tango | 35. Hitler |
| | 36. Motorway | 37. Eden | 38. Rolls |
| | 39. Aswan | 40. DNA | |
-
- | | | | |
|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Down | 2. Reagan | 3. Stalin | 4. Open |
| | 5. Candhi | 6. Waitegate | 7. Lenin |
| | 8. Mussolini | 9. Mars | 12. Italy |
| | 15. Strong | 16. Angel | 17. Thatcher |
| | 19. Connerly | 21. Right | 22. Burgess |
| | 23. SALT | 30. Neom | 32. AIDS |
| | 33. Owens | 34. Dylan | 36. Meo |

NOTICES

RAL Notices

All lectures are held in the Pickavance Lecture Theatre at 7pm.

27 January Particles and the Universe
Professor Peter Kalnusz, Queen Mary and Westfield

RAL public lecture
This lecture will be held in the Pickavance Lecture Theatre at 7.15pm. Please contact Claire Hoskyns-Jones on ext. 5553 if you would like a ticket.

9 February Seeing is believing
Dr Zbig Sobieski

Of all the senses we possess, sight is the one on which we rely the most. But, how do we make sense of what we see? If grass appears green, and the sky blue, what colour is the rest of the universe?

George Doman
It is with great sadness that we report the death of George Doman on 3 January 2000. He worked as a fitter at RAL until 1979. Our condolences go out to his family.

Rec Soc Xmas draw winners 1999

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| Red wine | Filur Green |
| White wine | Andy Napper |
| Whisky | George Mackerness |
| Port | Pam Moxon |
| Gin | Mark Belmont |
| Carolans | Clyn Davie |
| Roses Chocolates | Alex Lackie |
| Bitter | Marilyn Napper |
| Lager | Alex Lackie |
| Sherry | Joe Moxon |
| Sparkling wine | Sally Brind |
| Bacardi | Eddie Staland |
| Martini | Alex Lackie |
| Sweet biscuits | Rob Major |

DL Notices

DL public lecture
All lectures are held in the Merrison Lecture Theatre at 7pm.

21 January Faces from the past
Dr John Prag, Manchester Museum

LABNEWS

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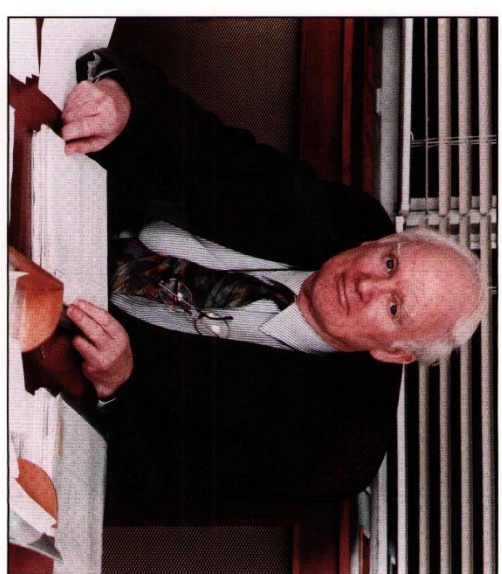
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New Chairman appointed

Professor Brian Eyre CBE DSc FRIng takes up the Chairmanship of CCLRC from 1 April 2000. He wants to hit the ground running, however, so is already working with Bert Westwood and Gordon Walker to ensure a smooth transition to the new management team.

Brian spent his early career in the then UKAEA. He left in 1979 to become Professor of Materials Science at Liverpool University, returning to UKAEA as Director of Fuel and Engineering Technology in 1984. He became a Board member in 1987 and was Deputy Chairman from 1989 to 1996. Professor Eyre was also appointed Chief Executive of UKAEA in 1990 until 1994.

On privatisation of AEA Technology in 1996 he was appointed Deputy Chairman of the new company until his retirement late in 1997. He is a Visiting Professor at Oxford University. He has been a member of the PPARC Council since 1996 and of CCLRC's since 1998. He also recently took over the Chairmanship of the CCLRC Audit Committee.



(99R/C5679)

Professor Eyre looks forward to his new job. "Both the Rutherford Appleton and Daresbury Laboratories make a key contribution to the UK's science and engineering base and it is vital that this role continues to develop as we go into the next Millennium," he said.

Articles, ideas and letters are very welcome!

Articles to the Editor or Correspondent by 15th of the month.

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Rutherford Appleton Laboratory, Chilton, DIDCOX Oxon OX11 0QX
Tel: (01235) 46484 Fax: (01235) 46665
Daresbury Laboratory, WARRINGTON, Cheshire, W44 4AD
Tel: (01925) 86233 Fax: (01925) 86195

Editor: Valerie Keating (Tel: 01494 ext. 5184, e-mail: v.keating@rc.ac.uk)
Correspondent: Jane Webster (Tel: DL ext. 3235, e-mail: j.webster@rc.ac.uk)



INSIDE: NEW PLANET FOR NEW MILLENNIUM. SEE PAGE 2

COUNCIL FOR THE CENTRAL LABORATORY OF THE RESEARCH COUNCILS

Boost for dark matter research

UK underground physics facility gets go-ahead

The development of an underground physics facility to investigate the missing 90% of our Galaxy has been given the go-ahead by the DTI/Welcomme Trust Joint Infrastructure Fund. A major investment will be made to the existing facilities used by the UK Dark Matter Collaboration, situated 1100 m underground at the Boulby salt and potash mine in North Yorkshire.

RAL's Nigel Smith, the facility development manager, said, "This is fantastic news for us as it recognises the world class research that has been achieved so far at the Boulby mine. This work has been undertaken in some pretty arduous conditions and the award of the JIF funds will allow us to improve the facility to an international standard. Together the new investments will allow the participating groups to continue developing world-leading experiments

for dark matter and neutrino studies, keeping Britain at the forefront of these exciting fields of research".

The stars in our Galaxy are surrounded by unseen material which holds them in place by gravity and prevents the Galaxy flying apart. This dark matter makes up 90% of the Galaxy and yet its composition is still unknown. Two possible solutions are small, sub-atomic particles: a massive neutrino or a WIMP - a Weakly Interacting Massive Particle.

If either of these particles were observed it would not only solve the question of the make-up of the dark matter but would also require an evolution of modern particle physics. WIMPs and neutrinos are difficult to distinguish from other cosmic particles bombarding the Earth from outer space, so the search for these particles is carried out deep underground where almost all cosmic rays have been stopped.

The bid for funding was made by a multi-institute team comprising the University of Sheffield, Imperial College, London, RAL, University of Manchester and Queen Mary and Westfield College, London, with the support of Cleveland Potash Ltd, the Boulby mine operators. The development of the facility - surface buildings and underground labs - will be undertaken by the RAL consortium of the consortium.

Nigel added, "The construction of a world class facility in the harsh environment of a working salt mine is certainly a challenge, but is one for which the collaboration is well equipped given its experience with dark matter research. The JIF result is brilliant news for us as it will allow us to improve the laboratories, making it more effective for both experiments and people!"

New planet for the new Millennium

A team of British scientists, including RAL's Alan Penny, has made the first direct sighting of a world beyond our solar system. Using the 4.2-metre William Herschel Telescope on La Palma and a tailor-made computer program, they have managed to untangle the faint starlight of a distant planet, nicknamed the 'Millennium' planet, from the blinding glare of its parent star.

"The signal is very faint but it tells us that it's coming from a planet twice the diameter and eight times the mass of Jupiter - a real monster," said Andrew Collier Cameron of the University of St. Andrews, the leader of the team. The planet's parent star, Tau Bootis, is located 55 light years from Earth. It is



easily seen by the naked eye but its planet has, until now only been suggested by the 'wobble' in the light coming from the star as the planet travels around it. Although 28 planets have been indirectly inferred using the 'wobble' method, none have been

confirmed by direct detection of their own light until now.

Alan Penny said, "To be one of the first people on Earth to see a completely new planet is an awesome experience, especially on the eve of a new Millennium. Our discovery is a major step in finding out what these planets are really like, a step that could lead to finding planets like Earth".

The team's results were published in Nature in December.

Image: An artist's impression of the 'Millennium' planet based on scientific data from the research team. The moon in the foreground is imaginary, but it is likely that the planet does have a moon. High res scan at <http://ast.starl.ac.uk/~ap/TAUBOOTIS.PIC>

MINOS

On 1 December the TPARC Council approved the allocation of £6.6 million to the MINOS project to answer the burning question of the moment, "Do neutrinos have mass?"

We are bathed in a sea of neutrinos. They come from the Sun, from cosmic ray interactions in the atmosphere and are even left over from the Big Bang at the start of the Universe. Billions pass through our bodies every second. But despite being so common they are the least understood of all the fundamental particles found in nature. We don't even know for sure whether they have mass, like the electron and proton, or are massless like the photon, the particle of light. For many years, however, the fundamental theories of particle physics have assumed that they are massless.

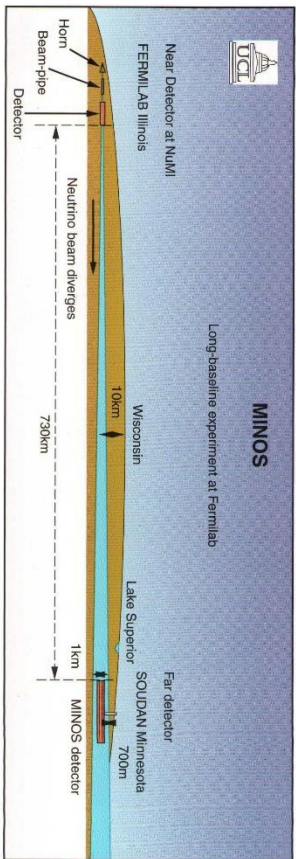
Neutrinos have no electromagnetic or strong interactions and can pass through matter almost as if it was not there. Neutrinos travelling through the earth have less than one in a million chance of interacting, making detection very difficult. Very large detectors have been built deep underground, originally to search for proton decay, but quite unexpectedly they have provided evidence that neutrinos indeed have mass. There are three types of neutrino and it is

possible for one type to change into another as they travel through space, but only if they have non-zero mass. It is this phenomenon of neutrino oscillations which the underground experiments believe they have observed in neutrinos coming from the Sun and from the atmosphere. If true, this proves that neutrinos have mass and disproves one of the assumptions of our most prized theory.

Given such a fundamental revision of ideas it is vital to check these results in a controlled, accelerator based experiment. MINOS (Main Injector Neutrino Oscillation Search) will use neutrinos produced in the new, very high intensity accelerator just completed at Fermilab near Chicago and fired through the earth 730 km to the Soudan laboratory, half a mile underground in Northern Minnesota. Two new, very large detectors will be built, one of 1000 tons at Fermilab and another of 5000 tons at Soudan.

The detector at Soudan needs to be massive since it intercepts only a small fraction of the beam, which at this distance has diverged to cover a radius of more than 1 km. If differences in the neutrino interactions at the two sites are detected this will prove that neutrino oscillations are occurring and enable us to measure the neutrino masses and the properties of the oscillations.

Further information about MINOS can be found at: <http://www.hcp.anl.gov/ndk/hypertext/nunim.html>



Laser meeting

Aspects of laser science were represented at the Lasers for Science Facility's 2-day user meeting held at The Cosener's House on 18 and 19 October. The meeting provided a forum for the community to come together, exchange ideas and learn about all aspects of applying and developing laser technology as well as commenting and learning about future facility developments. Over 70 delegates attended the meeting from throughout the EU.

Titles for presentations included 'Model biomolecular clusters: a scorpion's tale', 'The production of high resolution X-ray masks' and 'Targeting of individual cells using focussed X-rays'.

The meeting was complimented by an informal poster session with 24 posters promoting lively discussions which lasted well into the night!

The meeting ended with presentations from the LSP programme managers on future developments in the facility and a user discussion of future trends.



Top row (left to right): Mike Torrie, Dieter Nies, Genome Hirst, Pavel Mlhanoušek
Middle row (left to right): Ian Clark, Stanley Buchta, Wessam Shalsh, Tony Parker, Robin Burton
Front row (left to right): Nas Kuan, Iwan Gray, Sarah Wilkinson, Sue Traverler (99RC5026)

Vicar visit

The Reverend David Felix, the Vicar of Daresbury and Industrial Missioner for Halton Borough since August, visited DL on 17 November. Although a lawyer by initial training, he has a family background in pharmaceutical research and showed a keen interest in the work



David Norman shows The Reverend David Felix around the SRS (DL 99/11113)

done at the SRS. He noted that his web search for 'Daresbury' produced lots of hits for the Laboratory. DIAMOND and Lewis Carroll, but not for Daresbury Church, so he plans to rectify that. David Felix wants to strengthen his relationship with all staff and visitors of the Laboratory and will be exploring ways of meeting the people who work here.

New Year Honours 2000



Frank Close OBE (99RC3738)



Bob Hoggood OBE



Gordon Walker OBE (99RC3981)



Rod Birchall MBE

Congratulations to four members of staff who were recognised in the 2000 New Year Honours.

The OBE was awarded to:

- ▶ Professor Frank Close, Particle Physics Department (currently at CERN) - for services to research

and the public understanding of science:

- ▶ Professor Bob Hoggood, Information Technology Department - for services to computer science;
- ▶ Dr Gordon Walker, Chief Operating Officer - for services to research.

The MBE was awarded to:

- ▶ Mr Rod Birchall, Synchrotron Radiation Department - for services to scientific research and for his fundraising work as chair of Warrington Regional Muscular Dystrophy Society.

Dear Natalie
Can you please print a thank you in LabNews to everyone at Daresbury Laboratory who bought raffle tickets for the dolls' house. £1000 was raised for cancer research.

Sue Waller

Dear Natalie

Can I suggest a couple of New Year resolutions:

- ▶ Cyclists could resolve to use cycle paths where these are provided.
- ▶ Motorists could resolve to park with consideration for others.

The background to these suggestions:

I am a great believer in spending money on cycle paths to avoid the mixing of cars and cycles wherever possible. However, I am less supportive of spending this money if the paths are then ignored - as is the case for a fair fraction of the cyclists who come along the road leading to RAL from the main road. As there is a separate cycle path, cyclists are not expected to be

going along this road, making it doubly dangerous. It may be that the design of the cycle route is less than ideal for some - perhaps it needs changing - but let us not just ignore the problem until there is an accident.

There are a couple of drivers who regularly manage to make life difficult in the car park by the sports field. Their cars are parked too far into the bays in the central parking section, making it very difficult, if not impossible, for cars to be parked in front of them. Please park prettily so we can all get in more easily - after all, if you make it tight, then it is your car that is likely to be damaged in an awkward parking manoeuvre.

Then we can all have a Happy New Year!

Andy Kurzfeld





Thanks to Daresbury Laboratory, the British Red Cross has raised over £12,000 for local people in need and in crisis from a very successful fundraising event.

The Daresbury Laboratory abseil event on 28 November was an absolute sell out. Hundreds of individuals were sponsored to abseil down the inside of the tower, keeping every rope occupied throughout the day.

All the money received from the event has been put to good use, through services such as the new fire victim support scheme and medical equipment loan outlets. Luckily, the donation came just in time for the current cold spells which had already stretched many of the Red Cross services to the limit.

Well done to all the participants, including a number of Daresbury staff.

Pictured are Liz Kennedy and Christine Keating.

Hazel Dale



New face in Learning and Development

Marcia Griffith joined the RAL Learning and Development team in November. For the past six years she has worked for AEA Technology plc in the Human Resources Department, recently



She looks forward to meeting and working with you all. She can be contacted in R71, ext. 6018.

completing the IPD Certificate in Training Practice.

During her time with AEA Technology she has specialised in Management Development, running both certificate and diploma programmes and project management training initiatives. She has also designed and delivered software training and managed the computerised training records system.

Lunches are open to anyone with an interest in the topic of the day.

Learning lunches
Learning lunches are two-hour long interactive sessions held over the lunchtime period with light refreshments provided, though please feel free to bring along your own lunch if you would prefer!

The sessions cover various aspects of management and are delivered in an informal, interactive way by members of the Human Resources team.

If you would like more information please contact Marcia Griffith.

Learning and Development Manager at RAL on ext. 6018. If you wish to reserve a place please contact Mary at RAL on ext. 6018 or Margaret at DL on ext. 3600.

DL1

Lunches take place in the R12 training room, at noon unless otherwise stated:

- 25 January Managing different cultures CR4, R27
- 16 February Effective meetings
- 8 March Managing change
- 29 March Communicating with your team
- 13 April Employment law
- 11 May Agreeing SMART objectives

Lunches take place at noon in CR2:

- 26 January Managing students
- 17 February Effective meetings
- 1 March Team roles
- 15 March Managing different cultures
- 4 April Managing change
- 17 May Communicating with your team

Lively debate at young physicists' day

Over 50 of Britain's top young physicists met at RAL recently for a lively one-day meeting presenting posters, exchanging ideas and giving short talks. The event was organised by Eric Wharton's 'Physics Research and R&D for the new Millennium' scheme.

The meeting was opened by Bert Westwood and keynote speakers included Francisco Diego (of eclipse fame)

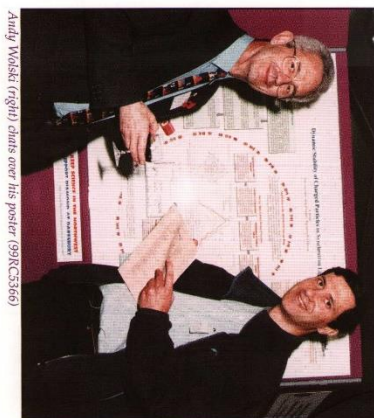


The presentations (099RC3562A)

and Adrian Mears, Technical Director of DERA. PPD's Mike Seymour chaired one of the sessions.

Several CIRC staff presented posters during the day and prizes were on offer to those physicists whose posters were chosen as the best by a panel of judges.

The poster prizes were presented by Adrian Mears and included the 'CIRC prize' which was awarded to Jan Aitl, Oxford University for his poster 'superfluidity of a Bose-Einstein condensate'.



Andy Wolski (right) chats over his poster (099RC3566)

From the tremendous resources at RAL and DL we have actually generated very few patents. At the last count, only 28. So why do we have so few? Are patents important? The answer to the last question is definitely yes.

Revenue from licensing and royalty agreements only just covers the laboratories' patenting costs, but perhaps surprisingly, little of this revenue at present comes from patented ideas. Hardy a secure position to expand from. It is a growing requirement for all of us to increase, where possible, the royalty income from our intellectual property of which the creation of a high quality patent portfolio is a vital element. So, what can we all do - from technicians to scientists - to reach our final target where this income will exceed our costs several times over?

WANTED - INVENTORS!

The Marketing and Business Development department is launching a campaign to raise awareness of Intellectual Property, the needs and benefits of patenting and to stimulate the spin out of ideas from the departments and facilities for commercial exploitation.

To assist in this process, George Hamlyn from the Patent Office will make separate presentations at Daresbury and RAL on 27 and 28 January respectively. He hopes to inform, stimulate and even entertain - there are some pretty wacky patents about! But all this will be wasted effort if you don't come, engage and be prepared to contribute your thoughts and challenges. After that, please come and discuss any ideas you believe have commercial potential with anyone in the MBD team.

John Astison, Marketing and Business Development

RAL Computing Training

Wendy Ferguson has now taken over from Meg Holley - who is on an extended break to Australia and New Zealand - in RAL's Computing Training Office. So in future please contact Wendy on ext. 6122 <w.ferguson@ra.ac.uk>.

Courses for the self-taught

Have you taught yourself to use one of the CLIO software packages or perhaps to program in a particular language? Do you feel that as a result you are not getting the most from the package or not working as efficiently as you might? Then you will be delighted to hear that we are setting up courses to help you. So if you are interested please contact Pat Ahlwees or myself and discuss which topics/ aspects you would like to cover.

AutoCAD

RAL Computing Training is now running courses on AutoCAD at the introductory and intermediate level as well as workshops to address particular

problems. The courses that have been run so far have been very successful, so if you have a need for AutoCAD training then let us know.

Individual training plans

As part of AFR process and IP staff should have their own Individual Learning and Development (L&D) plan in place. Your L&D plan should be discussed regularly with your line manager to make sure that it continues to meet your own individual development needs, project needs and the needs of the organisation. Many plans will include computing training, so if you have any particular training needs then you would like to discuss them with us then please give us a call.

Programming courses

RAL Computing Training is running the following programming courses:

- ▶ An introduction to Perl
- ▶ Perl for the self taught
- ▶ An introduction to C programming
- ▶ C programming for the self taught

- ▶ UNIX fundamentals
- ▶ Advanced UNIX
- ▶ UNIX administrators

Contact us if you would like to attend
Susan Hilton ext. 6154 <s.s.hilton@ra.ac.uk>

ITD technical seminar series

ITD is holding three more technical seminars. Andrew Sansum's seminar will provide an introduction to Unix security. It will be suitable for system managers with limited security expertise and for all line managers who need to be aware of security-related issues. No Unix knowledge is necessary. The seminar will run on 25 January from 10.20am to noon.

The fourth seminar, by Ken Robinson, entitled 'Do business more effectively - spend a business process hat' (22 February - 2pm to 3.30pm) will be videoconferenced to DL if there is sufficient demand. Business process can be thought of as the set of interlinked tasks that need to be completed to achieve a corporate goal. Some familiar examples are ordering and paying for supplies; submitting an expenses claim and getting it paid; and preparing the annual accounts. This brief introduction will explain what a business process is, what a process approach can do for you, and how to go about applying business process thinking. Nothing but an open mind is required to understand this talk!

The fifth seminar will provide an insight into the use of virtual environments in computer supported visualization and will be given by Julian Gallop. The use of 3D computer-supported visualization is critical for many applications but often the resulting 3D scenes are complex. Virtual environments allow a user to explore within such scenes, understand spatial relations and control changes to the way information is represented in the scene. Examples will be presented to illustrate the concepts discussed. Again, if there is sufficient demand the seminar will be videoconferenced to Daneshury Laboratory. The seminar will be held on 30 March from 10.20am to noon. All the seminars will take place in the Pkissarone Lecture Theatre. Please email Susan Hilton if you would like to attend, or if you are at DL please express an interest in having the talks videoconferenced.

Susan Hilton ext. 6154 <s.s.hilton@ra.ac.uk>



Cyril Robinson retired from RAL on 17 December 1999. He joined the Laboratory in 1966 and spent his last two years with the Central Manufacturing Facility. He is pictured here with his wife, Pippin (098C576)

Retirement



Last month I wrote an article with an example of how sometimes, after putting in a lot of work, your news story can get splashed (in print) or bumped (in broadcasting) from the schedule. Ironically, the editor of Labnews splashed my story in favour of - a

crossword! This month I have a good news story, which hit the headlines in a big way.

First some background. Alan Penny (SSTI) has been working alongside some scientists from the University of St Andrews, and this autumn they were able to detect, for the very first time, light reflected directly from a planet orbiting another star (see story on P2). This was going to be an interesting news story for the media as it's a first. They wrote a joint paper for Nature, and then had to sit tight on the story until publication date. (Nature, and many other refereed journals, forbid their stories appearing in the popular media prior to publication.) They obtained permission from Nature to talk at a conference about the method used (but not the discovery), but an over-enthusiastic journalist reported in the Sunday Times that scientists had seen another planet. To everyone's relief, no other journalist took up the story. Then about three weeks before the publication date the Daily Telegraph carried the story. Luckily, the other science journalists respected the news embargo on the item, and it went quiet again.

In the meantime, JPPARC appreciated the importance of the story and commissioned an artist's impression of what the new planet might look like. The image was quite expensive, but stunning. Then, how to release the story? Nature allows news releases to be issued up to a week before the article's publication date, so long as they are embargoed until 7pm on the day before publication. Because the story had already been covered a couple of times, it

was agreed not to hold a press conference for the media. To issue a news release, along with the image. This was done three days before Nature's publication date, and suddenly everyone wanted to cover the story. Alan had a quotation in the news release, and although he wasn't the prime author, he was in great demand. The story appeared in every newspaper, from the Financial Times to the Sun (including, interestingly, the Daily Telegraph), with Alan mentioned in all but one of them. He gave radio interviews (BBC World Service, Radio 4, 5 Live, London News Service (which is broadcast abroad) and various local stations) and was interviewed for TV (BBC, Carlton and Sky news programmes).

Lessons we can learn from this experience:

- ▶ A good image is worth paying for.
- ▶ After the release is issued, scientists have to be available at the end of a phone.
- ▶ Scientists have to be prepared to travel (for a good story, don't plan to do much work in the 2 days after the news release is issued).
- ▶ Have a good quote in the news release - something like "We were gobsmacked" is better than the standard "We were delighted".
- ▶ Think about good analogies in advance. "It was like looking for a glow worm situated alongside a strong searchlight" was a well used soundbite.
- ▶ The timing of the release is important, and for a story like this an embargo works well, giving journalists time to do their research and write up their story.
- ▶ News is only news for a day - then it's old news and you can get back to work.

Judy Haldinsson

What they don't tell you on the media training courses

As Jacky says, we got a lot of media coverage for this story. How do you get a similar coverage? Here are some tips I learnt on that day, in addition to the points Jacky mentioned.

First, have a major story in a sexy field with British authors and a Nature publication. But that's the easy part, we can all do that. (However, publishing in Nature does cause problems in that news will almost always leak out, and you won't be able to comment.) Choose a slow news day if you can, but events can always crop up - like England being drawn against Germany, a news story which bumped me from GMTV.

Then, make everything as easy as you can for the media.

- ▶ Get professionals to revamp your press release, and consent to the cringe-making quotes - it means they will include your name.
- ▶ Make sure the quotes they supply from your research sound chief and the Science Minister are scientifically accurate.

- ▶ Put your mobile phone number on the press release, and carry the mobile everywhere; news is news for only a very short time, so never say to a journalist, "I'll get back to you." You have to respond at once, otherwise the journalist will find someone else to talk to.
- ▶ Having co-authors to share the media load helps.
- ▶ Dress in your smartest clothes - in my case jacket, the shirt, trousers and shoes.
- ▶ If you are male, bring a battery razor to work, as some TV news goes out at 9 or 10pm.
- ▶ If a TV team gives you make-up, remember to ask them to remove it afterwards, as it becomes uncomfortable on the trip home. And a quick wipe with a Kim-wipe isn't enough.
- ▶ Ask how long the interview will be before you start, so you don't give considered responses when they're looking for sound-bites.
- ▶ If you get a clash of live interviews, distribute and ask the other one to shift. They will, even to the point of recording a studio interview at an earlier time.
- ▶ Get the name and telephone number of someone you can contact in the hours before the interview, in case the car they have promised to pick you up, doesn't.
- ▶ Having your own car helps. It enabled me to drive to Oxford for an interview in the BBC studio here, and still get, via the Abingdon studio for another TV interview, to Didcot in time to catch the train for the London interviews.
- ▶ Finally, go on the media courses that Press and PR arrange. Giving good interviews is a craft and your natural style will only carry you so far.

Alan Penny



Little stars at nursery

Children at the Little Stars Nursery ended the year as they began - enjoying the story of 'The Three Little Pigs'. The nursery began 1999 with the story as their chosen theme and in December the children performed the story to their parents as a play.

"The Three Little Pigs was the obvious choice for our nursery play" said Anne Pearson, nursery manager. "Since we began 1999 with the story as our first theme the children have continued to act it out through out the year, spontaneously, as they play. All of the children aged 3-5 enjoyed taking part but we did need to adapt the story line to accommodate a few more pigs and 'woolwool'."

The nursery staff and children made scenery for the play and parents made the costumes. A fun afternoon was had by all.



Most of the cast at the dress rehearsal (99)RC5718)



AlphaGalileo
This internet-based press centre for European science, engineering and technology has seen increased usage throughout the year. On 13 December the site had:

- ▶ 1,233 registered journalists,
- ▶ 707 registered contributors,
- ▶ 2,164 press notices, and
- ▶ 300 calendar events.

ITD's Ian Johnson, the site's technical manager said, "The technical development of AlphaGalileo has mainly been to provide an easy way of viewing the site in other European languages. The motivation (and funding) for

this came from the French Ministry of Science and Industry, who wanted to increase AlphaGalileo usage by French journalists and scientific organisations.

The solution was to separate the language-specific parts of the HTML web pages so that they can be replaced by French if this is the user's language preference (set in their browser). This technique is flexible enough to incorporate other languages when the translations become available.

An email alert service, which notifies journalists of new press releases about their keywords, is also

available of the users preferred language, and now has the option of generating a daily digest, rather than sending individual alerts."

Citation superstar

Dick Roberts, PhD, appears a lucky thirteenth in a list of the most cited scientists in the field of physical sciences during the 1990s. The list, produced by Science Watch, ranked scientists by total citations to papers published and cited between 1990 and June 1999. Dick has had his scientific papers cited by other scientists over 3,500 times during this period. Dick was very modest about this achievement, but it is one worth congratulations.

Rec Soc music room
The Rec Soc is promoting the use of the music room, which can be found in R58.

The replacement piano sounds really good and there are enough chairs and music stands for a small ensemble. So why not make use of it! Any member of the Rec Soc can use the facilities free of charge, but the room must be booked through the Music Society Co-ordinator, David Farrell. There is a calendar in Outlook which shows when the room is being used - look under R58 Music Room.

ERCIM

ERCIM celebrated the 10th Anniversary of ERCIM with its own local event. Members of the industrial/commercial and academic communities were invited to a series of lectures at RAL on 23 November. The topics presented were chosen from the diverse range of IT research and development interests at the lab, including Virtual Reality, the future of the web, and e-commerce.

The afternoon of lectures ended socially with a birthday cake and a selection of wines and food products from all 14 ERCIM member countries (cheese from Switzerland, wine from Italy and herring from Norway, to name but a few).

These are real signs found on various products

In a helmet mounted mirror used by US cyclists: REMEMBER OBJECTS IN THE MIRROR ARE ACTUALLY BEHIND YOU.

On a Taiwanese shampoo: USE REPEATEDLY FOR SEVERE DAMAGE.

On the bottle-top of a (UK) flavoured milk drink: AFTER OPENING, KEEP UPRIGHT.

On a New Zealand insect spray: THIS PRODUCT NOT TESTED ON ANIMALS.

In a US guide to setting up a new computer: TO AVOID CONDENSATION FORMING, ALLOW THE BOXES TO WARM UP TO ROOM TEMPERATURE. (Sensible, but the instruction was inside the box.)

In some countries, on the bottom of Coke bottles: OPEN OTHER END.

On a hairdrier: DO NOT USE WHILE SLEEPING.

On a bar of Dial soap: DIRECTIONS - USE LIKE REGULAR SOAP.

On a Transisu dessert (printed on bottom of the box): DO NOT TURN UPSIDE DOWN.

On a bread pudding: PRODUCT WILL BE HOT AFTER HEATING.

On a Korean kitchen knife: WARNING KEEP OUT OF CHILDREN.

On a string of Chinese-made Christmas lights: FOR INDOOR OR OUTDOOR USE ONLY.

On peanuts: WARNING - CONTAINS NUTS.

On a child's Superman costume: WEARING OF THIS GARMENT DOES NOT ENABLE YOU TO FLY.



Snooker final

The 1999 Singles Final was played recently between David Farrell and Andy Wells at RAL.

Unusually, the final was won in two frames. Both frames were closely fought, but this was probably down to the rub-of-the-green (luck) and snookers - unintentional and deliberate - rather than any real putting ability and big breaks! David won the first frame by the narrowest of margins and the second frame, only slightly more convincingly, to take the Paul Williams Tankard for the first time.

As David is the organiser of the competition, the result could have been called a fix had it not been for having had two previous winners of the competition in the same half of the draw. Andy had also shared his half of the draw with last year's finalist as well, so it was a satisfying conclusion to the competition.

A further singles competition is being considered for 2000 to run on a league basis instead of the knockout format of this competition). Should anyone be interested in taking part or joining the Snooker section, please contact David Farrell on ext. 5935.