MINIBIOGRAPHY - from Phil Goble, Course Tutor M202 Fareham

I am informed by my brothers that as a baby I won a beauty prize; they claim to have eaten it. Strange that time should wreak such changes; "beauty dot" has been undoubtedly negative ever since. At the age of thirteen, I left school and became office-boy to a firm of Stock- and Share-brokers. I have smiled many times subsequently when 'modernists' have seized this very theme to speak vehemently against 'trad'. Perhaps you are surprised at the mention of age thirteen: "Old, but not that old surely?" you may think. Actually, I had my fourteenth birthday, as indeed every other one as well, in August.

Then in 1943 I was accepted for air-crew training in the R.A.F. and was channeled into navigating-cum-wireless operating. Unfortunately, or indeed perhaps very fortunately, I was still under-training when the war ended. At interview for entry to a career in teaching, one shrewd-looking lady said: "The papers tell us, Mr. Goble, that the training of a member of aircrew is only six months duration. Why is yours not yet completed after three years?" I was pleased later to get a letter of acceptance from the Ministry.

I have been in the teaching service ever since, and have not regretted one moment of it. There have been occasions when I have desperately asked myself: "Goble! What have you done!" Such as during the first two months when I moved from a Junior Mixed and Infants' School to a Secondary Girls' school as the only male member of staff. The next four years were as happy as any others. Each situation has its own peculiar joys and tribulations.

Por the last ten years I have been on the staff of the College of Education in Portsmouth, my longest term in any one appointment. No two years have been the same: things are changing even faster now than when I first sntered the College. Size has increased from about four hundred to a thousand students: courses have broadened and lengthened, now including four-year B.Ed, and one-year post-graduate work; content of syllabus reflects changing patterns, as for example with the development of Numerical Analysis since the installation of our computer terminal.

My lasting interest in Mathematics was kindled at school by a girl not very much older than myself. I could 'do' simultaneous quadratic equations before I left, and continued reading by correspondence courses. The sheer succinctness of most mathematics texts are daunting to the early self-learner. Over and over again I was driven back to definitions to realise that they possessed greater subtlety than I had suspected. These experiences have given me, I believe, a sympathetic understanding for the problems of Mathematics students of the O.U. far more, surely, than I would have had by an internal undergraduate path through University. I took my first degree externally at London, and was privileged recently to have secondment to Southampton for a year where I studied Numerical Science.

My leisure pursuits have modified over the years. I used to play quite a deal of cricket, and a reasonably fair game of Chess. Then I was bitten by the bug of sea-fishing. Once, when I had a 5-lb. bass alongside, on light trace and no net prepared, so great was my excitement that I embraced the fish and dropped the rod overboard. I had to retrieve it by pulling in the line starting from the hook end. Now it is sailing. My first racing season in Bosham S.C. is approaching, and I shall be trying out a newly acquired SOLO. Then again, I have taken to the art of bell-ringing, and just about manage a plain course of bob-doubles provided I am allowed to ring the treble. The Guinness and cribbage in the Anchor Bleu afterwards is perhaps the motivation.

This is my first attempt at a potted autobiography. Perhaps I shall expand it into a book - some day.

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WHAT DOES A FUNCTION SOUND LIKE? - from Marion Stubbs

Students who read Dr. Vida Carver's appeal on behalf of deaf students in January's Sesame, or who heard her similar appeal on Radio Open Forum, may have joined me in wondering why the OU did not look after its handicapped students and also how anyone could type Mathematics TV programme scripts without a special typewriter.

I contacted Dr. Carver. Apparently the camera script does not usually match the actual edited telecast, and these changes completely throw the deaf student who is trying to follow the script at the same time as he watches the visuals. She hopes that in future years the OU may be able to cope, but at the moment the 40 deaf students have opted for **13** different courses, and she does not want them to be deprived of the nearest equivalent to the educational experience of hearing students just because they decided to exercise freedom of choice, so she is asking for voluntary help - from anyone. 5 deaf students are doing M100.

As for the special typewriter, Dr. Carver says that it will he necessary to write in special symbols in ink afterwards, and knows that it will be laborious. One volunteer typist is currently working on M100, and presumably I will be the second "very precious volunteer."

Now I am not an audio-typist, nor a shorthand-typist, nor even a typist. I bash along merrily at 30 wpm using 2 fingers. In my habitual brilliance, I have had a thought. It occurs to me that my chief asset is that I have both a domestic typewriter (this one) and an IBM Selectric 875 at work. Since I cannot do shorthand, I am therefore otherwise equal to everyone else. So I am wondering if any students would be willing to act as my "writers", feeding me with longhand scripts taken from ordinary tapes (supplied by Dr. Carver to the specification of their individual tape-recorders)? The process will be slow, but if 50 people got onto this job it could be done in a week, while if the Other Typist and I do it, the job will take years. It may also have occurred to you that most maths students are male, while most typists are female, hence our deaf co-victims are likely to be very deprived indeed in comparison with those doing the more 'feminine' courses where perhaps volunteer professional audio-typists abound.

Some of you may also have wives, or sisters, or daughters who are audio-typists, or shorthand-typists and who might like to help in this work either for M100 or for any of the other 12 courses currently needing assistance. Also, maybe someone has access to an IBM golfball with the mathematical elements on it for my typewriter at work - maybe someone works at IBM, or in a school or College which only uses the golfball for examination papers. (For the uninitiated, a golfball is an interchangeable unit containing the type letters and symbols on a modern electric typewriter. There are dozens to choose from, but only one of them has all the mathematical signs and greek and roman alphabets.)

If anyone can offer any kind of help, either in the ways indicated above, or in any other way, please let me know immediately, or contact Dr. Vida Carver. (My address is, of course, printed at the beginning of this Newsletter.)

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PROBLEM CORNER

If x, y and z represent proper fractions, and if, in a certain hospital, x of the patients have lost an eye, y have lost an arm, and z have lost a leg: what is the least possible number who have lost all three? Lewis Carroll. Pillow problems. New York: Dover; London: Constable, 1958. Problem no. 25)

Solutions please? All those sent in will be published, especially if different from the given answer!

SELF-HELP GROUPS

    The Self-Help group situation (face-to-face variety) remains a problem. Incidentally, the OU is now calling them Study Groups, and this term will be used in future. Solutions must, I think, be left to students to suggest and to put into operation. An analysis of returns follows, while anything received later from the remaining unknown members of our tutorial group will be included in the next newsletter.

"YES" [4 names]

"A FEW" or "POSSIBLY" [4]

"PROBABLY NOT" [2]

NOT STATED [2]

A302 is already off the ground, meeting in students' homes on a rota basis. Do we want this sort of thing, or do we continue to slog it out alone, with telephone contact?

The Telephone Scheme has proved to be quite a morale-booster re the disastrous TMA 01 grades, and anyone not yet using it for informal chats with complete strangers is missing something good. It is incredible that some of us have been doing the same courses for two years but never talked before, and sometimes never met each other at all.

Note that the following should be added to your Telephone list: [1]

DATA DOPE

Deadline date for contributions to Newsletter No. 3 is April 7th, for issue at the Fareham tutorial on April 14th (or with returned TMA 03 for those not present at the tutorial.) Deadline for Newsletter No. 4 is May 12th. Comments, brickbats, bouquets, letters to the editor, jolly fun puzzles for Problem Corner, solutions to Problem Corner, items for sale or wanted, news, views, light and learned lore - in fact literally anything - would be welcomed from students. Minibiographies of counsellors, and any other contributions from staff (including solutions to Problem Corner!) would be most gratefully accepted. Please use the Newsletter as a general means of communication on educational, social and welfare matters.

Distribution is currently to the 19 students attached to Fareham tutorial group and to Phil Goble, to 7 mathematics counsellors in the area (including Jersey and IoW), to one student of the Bournemouth tutorial group, and to the one anonymous M202 student on Jersey. It is also being sent to Peter Dewar, G.S. Hadley, Drs. Elliott, Dugdale and John Mason, and last but far from least, to Professor Bruckheimer, for general information and, hopefully, interest.

Cost of production for these copies and a few spares is around 25p., plus about 40p. postage. Donations would be appreciated, but items for publication more so, since it is hardly worth paying for yet, and your editor's pocket can stand 65p. a time for an experimental period. However, if anyone outside the above group reads it and would like to have future issues, please send a 2p.stamp plus a stamped addressed envelope (TMA or CMA envelope size, or larger) per copy required. Thank you.

Tutors or counsellors of non-Fareham students may order in bulk, if they think it is worth while to get this thing off the ground and want to introduce it to their students. Apart from minor, trivial technicalities, such as lack of contributions and mass-production problems, there is no obvious reason why it should not be extended to a general Southern Region Mathematics Faculty Newsletter, incorporating all courses. Thank you for your anticipated comments.

Any copyright in this Newsletter No.2 is hereby formally renounced. Please re-duplicate and distribute ad lib, if you so wish, and happen to have the facilities - and cash!

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SOUSU ACTIVITIES FOR YOUR DIARY

Wednesday April 4th at 7.30 pm

>   DR.JAMES BARBER
>   Pro-Vice-Chancellor
>   Staff and Student Affairs

Wednesday May 2nd at 7.30 pm

>   Annual General Meeting, plus elections
>
>   (Note that the first AGM in November 1972
>   was an historic occasion on which SOUSU
>   voted unanimously to secede from the
>   embryo NOUSA.)

All SOUSU meetings are held in the upper room of the Bay
Tree Inn, 10 New Road, Southampton. This is opposite the
College of Technology, at the traffic lights. Some parking
is available at the rear of the pub, and is approached via
an alley on the east side.

It would perhaps be advisable to make a final check
beforehand that neither of these dates has been changed.

Non-members of SOUSU who would like to come to a meeting to
see what all is about before committing themselves would be
very welcome.

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STOP PRESS

Since the publication of this newsletter, Phil Goble has
resigned, due to pressure of work, and Dr. Elliott is now
Course Tutor for both Bournemouth and Fareham groups.

We hope that Bournemouth members will join the Maths
Telephone Scheme, thus creating more local networks. Please
send details asap, unless you prefer solitude or wish to
remain anonymous.

>   [Items in square brackets were inserted by me to replace
>   the actual details given - EK] [Page 7 is a complete list
>   of the 17 members and an exhortation to anyone to inform
>   any mathematics students, anywhere, who might wish to join
>   to send for details to Marion Stubbs.]