

Marshall's Mail

Issue No. 1

January 1994

COMPUTER UP-GRADE COMPLETE

THE COMPANY'S computer system has just undergone a £1.7 million up-grade to dramatically improve its storage and performance capacity.

The system currently links over 250 users at the company's plants and according to group information technology manager Alan Stanger, the investment will enable a more flexible and efficient sales order processing system.

The investment is the first step in plans to move towards an 'open and distributed system'. The aim is to make sure that the correct information is available to users throughout the company in an appropriate format.

The decision to go down this route follows extensive consultation between the information technology department and Bull Information Systems Ltd.

This process first began in February last year and the fact that a large scale upgrade has been completed in such a short time is testament to the hard work of all of those concerned.

It involved plenty of late nights, particularly at the end of November when members of Alan's staff transferred all the data from the old to the new system.

Comments Alan: "The transfer took place over two weekends so that none of the system's users were denied access to it during normal working hours."

The final element of the up-grade is the new system's security capabilities. The installation has been designed so that if disaster strikes, in the form of a fire or a power failure, transfer to a back up system could take place without any loss of information.



The computer upgrade team: (back left to front right) John Littler, Alan Stanger, Jack Nightingale, Joe Chacoris

Commitment Brings Excellent Results

I am pleased, in this first issue of Marshall's Mail, to be able to report a significant achievement thanks to the hard work and commitment of everyone at Marshall's over the past six months.

We have recently announced an interim pre-tax profit of £10.2m for the six months ended 20 September 1993 - a 59 per cent improvement on the £6.41m pre-tax profit achieved in the same period last year.

This is a first step back towards levels of profitability that are necessary if we are to finance organic growth from our own resources.

Our turnover also rose, by 10 per cent, to £102.2m, compared with £93.2m in the same period last year.

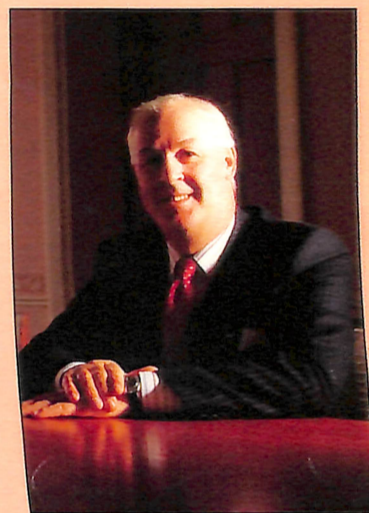
We have achieved these results within a gradually improving economic climate. Housing in particular is showing signs of recovery though there has been further decline in commercial construction.

Particularly impressive performances have been recorded by our concrete and stone and clay products divisions with 10 and 15 per cent increases in sales respectively.

Sales in America have improved slightly despite a tough market and the Florida site is now trading profitably as housebuilding activity increases in the state.

In engineering the company has added some good business in several export markets.

Overall we are positive about the future, and we plan to spend £14m on organic growth and replacement of plant to maintain the most advanced manufacturing capability.



Alongside these capital expenditure plans, we will continue our search for suitable acquisitions such as the concrete block paving business of Alexander Russell PLC which we acquired in November.

As a company we are maintaining our established position in the market whilst striving, with success, to achieve a wider product range and a more comprehensive nationwide coverage.

There are still areas of weakness to build on but thanks to your determination and enthusiasm we are maintaining a steady course and remain very positive about future prospects for Marshall's in 1994 and on into 1995.

Alan Stanger



Ken Davidson (centre front) with the 'Fax'

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Marshall's People

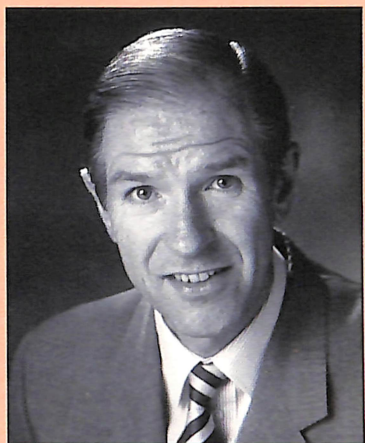
New On Board

Welcome to Christopher Burnett who has joined the Marshall's Board as a non-executive director.

Christopher, 52, is chairman of Moorfield Holdings, a private group of companies which manufacture upholstery and furniture products with an annual turnover of £40m. He purchased the core business in 1990 from Silentnight Holdings PLC where he had been chief executive for five years.

Christopher is also chairman of a number of other companies: Vivat Holdings PLC, worldwide distributor of Lee Cooper Jeans; Kunick PLC, healthcare services and leisure; Fogarty Ltd, which produces bedding and household products.

He is also a non-executive director of Wolstenholme Rink PLC which supplies products to the printing industry. Married with two children, aged 12 and 8, he lives at Ilkley, West Yorkshire.

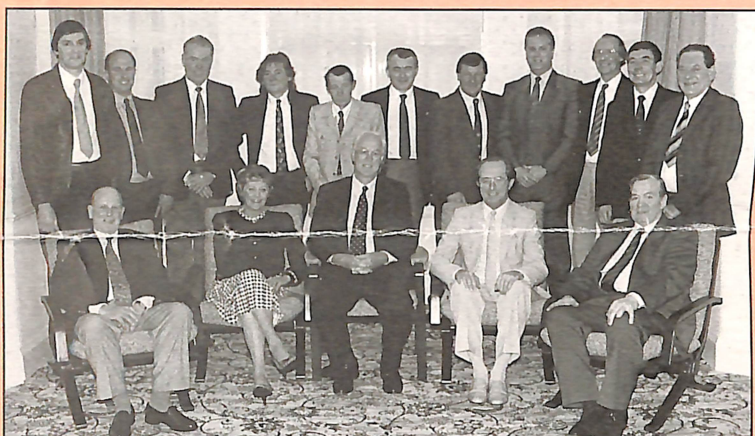


STATESIDE MOVE

Derek MacIntyre has been appointed to vice president sales & marketing, North America for Halifax Tool Company.

He brings more than 40 years drilling experience to the job and has worked for the company both in the UK and overseas.

Derek will head the drive for sales of Halco products in North America and is relocating his family to Benton, Illinois.



Silver Servers

Another 15 employees have celebrated their silver anniversary with the company, clocking up 25 years' service each.

This brings the total of long service employees to an impressive 168 out of 2370.

The silver servers were congratulated by chairman Andrew Marshall. They are pictured here:

Back row (left to right): Paul R Short, Marshall's Hard Metals; Howard Temple, Mono-Stockton; Peter N C Minall, Mono-Brookfoot; Paul F Smith, Mono-Development; Trevor G Duckworth, Mono-Ramsbottom; Geoffrey Coulson, Halifax Tool Company; David Avery, Mono-Hipperholme; Stephen Phillips, Marshall's Hard Metals; Ian Nutbrown, Mono-Brookfoot; Roy Ainley, Mono-Pallet Dept.

Front, left to right: Fred Ingle, Mono-West Lane; Norma S Pearce, Marshall's Plc-Hall Ings; Andrew Marshall; Edward H J Hever, Mono-Brier Lodge; Dennis W Sarratt, Mono-Joiners Dept.

WE WANT YOUR NEWS

Welcome to the first edition of Marshall's Mail, our new employee newspaper designed to keep you up-to-date with the company's plans and what employees at other sites are doing.

For the next issue of Marshall's Mail we'd like your news and views.

These stories could be how you're raising money for charity or the sporting achievements of one of your colleagues. Any stories which you think will interest other readers.

If you have an idea for the next issue of Marshall's Mail please send details and any black and white or colour photography to Sue Beesley, Marshall's Plc, Hall Ings, Southowram, Halifax, West Yorkshire, HX3 9TW.

New Plant in South West



The new plant – a strong base in the South West

Marshall's' new concrete block paving operation at Newport, South Wales, purchased for £2.7m from Alexander Russell PLC, will provide a strong base from which the firm can compete in the South West.

Says Midlands divisional director, Ian McDougal: "Prior to the acquisition, Marshall's' nearest plant was over 100 miles away which meant that our products were not competitive due to the haulage costs involved.

"This modern block paving plant is therefore a logical extension to Marshall's' 16-strong network of concrete manufacturing operations."

The plant is situated on a nine acre site and, as well as retaining its sales function, will be developed into a regional sales office for Marshall's.

Adds Ian: "The long term aim is to introduce our own range of concrete block paving and walling products to the manufacturing programme at the site."

Situated alongside the River Usk, the plant employs around 30 people.

Paving The Way to Success

Marshall's Clay Products is paving its way to success with a recent contract for clay pavers in Holland.

The order, for a town pedestrianisation scheme in Brunssum, near Maastricht, was won through a combination of excellent product quality and a strong presence through local agents.

Worth around £200,000, two thirds of the contract has been completed with the balance being supplied and installed this year.

"This represents our single largest order for clay pavers since we started marketing to Europe in mid 1991," said marketing manager Paul Stark.

"And the bricks were prepared for export by our marketing support department led by Brian Commons.

"Holland is now Clay Products' strongest export market and the success of the project has already encouraged enquiries from other interested parties."



Brunssum town centre with the new paving



The Marketing Team (from left to right) Maurice Bro...

Teamwo



The Laneguard Universal Barrier in action

Gas G

A Marshall's landfill site is to become environmentally efficient and supply landfill gas for the heating of nearby brick manufacturing kilns. The kilns are at Marshall's Clay Products' Howley Park brick works.

The old quarry site, at Howley Park near Woodkirk, receives domestic waste from the Yorkshire region and landfill gas will be generated by the breakdown of the material.

Stephen Haymes, divisional property manager of site operators Biffa Waste Services said: "We started to prepare the site last March.

"The site has been engineered to the highest standard available in this country. It took six months to prepare the first area of the site ready to accept waste.

"Using the gas generated at the site for the kilns will provide a cost efficient method of using one of the by-products of the landfill operation.

"Once there is enough gas Marshall's will assess the most efficient way of using it. It is anticipated that the gas will either go directly into the kilns or will be used to generate electricity which will be fed into the National Grid."



Helen Teal, Paul Hill, Jeff Laverack, Sheila Okulus, Robert Briggs. Inset - Val Bretherton

Marketing in the mix

Marshalls' Marketing Department plays a vital role. The Mail looks at plans for 1994.



Creating the right impression - new display material for 1994

Back To The Rescue



When you are really up against a tight deadline for developing and launching a new product, teamwork is crucial. This was the case with Laneguard Universal Barriers which were on sale only four months after being a concept on a piece of paper.

Today, sales of the product - which provides physical protection between live traffic lanes and maintenance operatives - are well above forecast and 36,000 rental days have been achieved in under a year.

Says marketing manager Jeff Laverack: "When you only have four months to learn about a product from scratch and at the same time organise a product launch involving advertising, public relations, literature and exhibitions, you need real teamwork."

"Without the help of Andy Dix in sales and Dave Morrell in technical plus production at Hoveringham, a launch in such a short period of time would not have been possible."

In each issue of Marshalls Mail we will be looking at the work of a different department in the company. This first issue focuses on the marketing department and the work of Jeff Laverack and his colleagues.

According to marketing manager Jeff Laverack the marketing department has a whole host of activity planned for this year in support of Marshalls and its products.

On the specification side (architects, civil engineers, builders and quantity surveyors) the marketing team is developing new literature, a new ring-binder system and a new advertising campaign.

The team is also in the middle of a round Britain tour organising technical presentations to specifiers and well under way with its secret weapon for 1994 - a special computer software package for CAD (Computer Aided Design) users.

On the consumer side there's a bigger and better catalogue, a new product ideas book, a new advertising campaign, plus new merchandising equipment for displaying the company's products to best possible effect in builders' merchants.

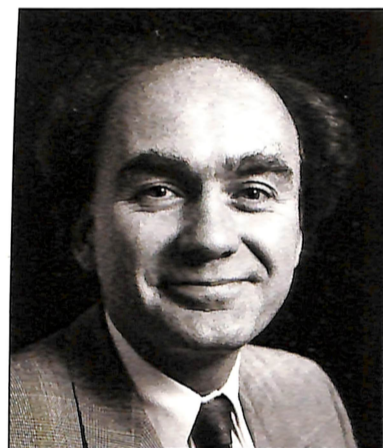
One of the most important items for specifiers is the new ring-binder system for Marshalls' technical literature. It features clear indexing and dividers which make it much easier for specifiers to find and choose the Marshalls' product they require.

The whole company's literature will go in - concrete, clay and flooring - to put over the best, most impressive image of Marshalls' product range.

The company's extensive trade press advertising campaign aimed at specifiers makes the firm one of the biggest spenders in this market. All in all, it is hoped it will reach a combined circulation in excess of 420,000 readers using 16 magazines over a 20 week period.

Taking to the road is also helping Marshalls reach specifiers. A roadshow is touring the country and tackling technical subjects such as the importance of brick masonry in civil engineering and highlighting the benefits of the firm's products.

So far the roadshow has visited Birmingham, London, Liverpool, Edinburgh, Newcastle and Wakefield. By the time it has dropped in at Bristol and Cardiff early this year it will have been attended by over 1,000 delegates.



Marketing manager Jeff Laverack

Marshalls will also continue with its half hour garden construction video fronted by TV gardening presenter Dr Stefan Buczaki. It takes the viewer through garden design and planning as well as step-by-step stages of wall building plus laying a paved patio and a block paved drive.

Meanwhile, for those who possess basic building skills but have problems visualising a special feature such as a barbecue or pool, Maurice Brown, the marketing department's press officer, has written and produced a book of garden attractions which are easy to build and won't cost the earth.

Working alongside the company's books, advertising, literature and videos will be strong public relations support for the firm's products.

Marshalls has an excellent relationship with the press, be it newspapers, magazines or TV and will be exploiting these to the full.

A recent BBC2 Gardeners' World feature on Front Gardens involved a number of garden make-overs using our products and within the first week the BBC had sent out over 20,000 factsheets in response to viewer enquiries, all crediting Marshalls as contributors.

Says Jeff: "As you can see the whole department is going to be very busy this year with all this activity. By working closely with sales, production and distribution we hope to be able to meet the common goal of improving sales to achieve maximum profit."

oes Green

The site will be fully contained by a specially engineered lining to prevent gas leakages or filtration into water sources.

"Biffa Waste Service takes its environmental responsibilities very seriously. We are part of Severn Trent PLC whose Company Environmental Policy sets very high environmental standards within which all of our

operations are carried out," said Stephen Haymes.

The landfill will be completed in 12 years, although it will continue to produce gas for a long time afterwards.

An official opening of the site will be held this month.



Environmentally efficient Howley Park

Marketing Who's Who?

Jeff Laverack - marketing manager responsible for the overall running of the marketing department.

Maurice Brown - press officer for Marshalls.

Robert Briggs - marketing services co-ordinator for specifier activity.

Val Bretherton - marketing services co-ordinator for consumer activity.

Paul Hill - marketing assistant responsible for all photography, audio-visual and exhibition work.

Helen Teal - secretary to Jeff Laverack.

Sheila Okulus - departmental secretary.

Building Reputation

The Build It book, launched last year by Marshalls' marketing department, has proved so popular that it has found its way onto the shelves of W.H.Smith and is to be sold rather than given away.

More than 60,000 copies were snapped up in the first season and the book has been welcomed by the press. Here's a selection of their views:

"Some great ideas on landscaping your garden" - Family Circle

"One of our most requested items" - Professional Builder

"Good imagination fodder and sound practical advice" - Derby Evening Telegraph

Written by Marshalls' press officer Maurice Brown it contains over 100 pages of tips and advice for planning and constructing your ideal garden - using Marshalls' products of course!

At £1.95, the book is set to prove just as popular with gardening enthusiasts in 1994.

The final element of marketing to specifiers is the new CAD software package. According to Jeff: "As more and more designers move from designing on a traditional drawing board to computer aided design (CAD), there is a real demand for computer software which contains product information and detailing which can be incorporated into designs."

"For this reason we will be producing a number of computer disks which allow people to design using our products."

"I firmly believe it will put us way ahead of the competition. It will be like having the competitive advantage enjoyed say 20 years ago by those companies which had sales literature over those who had none."

For consumers Marshalls will be advertising in all the leading home and garden magazines to raise awareness of concrete's suitability for both these areas.

Once again all the advertising carries a telephone hotline number - last year Marshalls processed over 50,000 leads from calls.

Just as important as the advertising is the firm's catalogue which represents a huge investment for the company. The last catalogue contained more than 60 pages and around 1.25 million copies were printed, the vast majority of which reached the public through stockists.

Sheffield Tees Off to Spike Rivals

Marshall's Hard Metals makes the world's toughest golf shoe spikes and that's official ... for the company has put its spikes to the test on the golf shoes of a 20 stone man.

When the tester took his testing steps the concrete path came off worst with the spikes making marks in the concrete.

The golfing world has traditionally used spikes manufactured from carbon steel which do not last the life of the shoes as the spikes wear out, especially when the

golfer walks on concrete. However, Marshall's has devised a spike that is both permanent and cost effective.

Tamworth company Trisport, exclusive manufacturer for the world's largest producer of golf shoes Footjoy, approached Marshall's three years ago to develop a new type of spike.

Marshall's Hard Metals has produced and sold over five million spikes in the past 18 months and is currently making refinements to the design which will make competitors green with envy!



The spikes that can take the weight of a 20 stone man!

Choose Your Charity

This year employees will have the opportunity to make a tax free donation to their chosen charities direct through the payroll giving scheme.

Operated by the Charities Trust and Work Aid, the scheme raises tax free money for charities nationwide through the pledging of regular sums by employees.

The minimum monthly contribution per employee is £1 - this can be divided between as many as four charities of your choice. As your money is taken before tax, for every pound you pledge your wages will only be reduced by 75 pence.

You can choose any registered charity or cause, local or national, and low administration costs mean that out of every pound you give, 95 pence actually reaches the charity. And, to let us know how much as a company we've donated, regular totals will be sent by Work Aid. Marshall's Mail will keep you posted.

It's up to you to make this a success! Representatives from Barnardos will be visiting your sites soon but remember, the choice of charity is yours and you can withdraw at any time. Watch your noticeboards for further details.

American Tales

Marshall's has seven businesses in America, six concrete plants and one engineering plant which employ a total of 150 people.

Hamilton Concrete is based at Chattanooga, Tennessee where it operates two plants and serves as the head office for two other facilities: at Nashville, Tennessee and Atlanta, Georgia. Paver Systems is based at West Palm Beach, Florida and has a satellite plant at Orlando, Florida. Marshall's Engineering business is at Benton, Illinois some 400 miles South of Chicago.

Joe Aspdin, who looks after the US Companies from the UK, says: "The USA went into the recession earlier than the UK and there is now real evidence that the worst is over - particularly in the important housebuilding market."

The main product at both Chattanooga and Nashville is walling block for housebuilding and commercial applications. Additional products including lintels, septic tanks and pre-stressed flooring complement this activity.

Recently Hamilton has introduced local copies of Marshall's Ryedale Walling, Heritage, Richmond and Saxon paving for sales in the rapidly growing DIY market.

Paver Systems and the Atlanta plant of Hamilton Concrete produce the largest volumes of concrete block paving in the USA.

The paving market in the USA differs from the UK because the majority of pavers are sold into the house driveway market, though recently there have been some major industrial projects.

One recent order for half a million square feet of paving for the Port of New Orleans involved trucking the product 600 miles from the Orlando plant.

Unlike Britain, where the busiest period is Summer, demand in Florida tends to be stronger during the Winter when retirement house completions are at their highest.

Priority on Investment

"Marshall's places a high priority on plant investment because manufacturing our products on the most advanced equipment available gives us a real competitive advantage", says Marshall's Mono managing director John Marshall.

Examples of this commitment to investment are currently progressing at Falkirk in Scotland and Llay in North Wales.

The Falkirk plant has benefited from the purchase of new equipment and an additional 12 acres of land adjacent to the present site, which will allow increased paving capacity and the manufacture of products not made at the site before.

At Llay the construction of a new block paving plant will mean that a variety of additional products can be manufactured and sold in North Wales and the North West.

Work is also underway to improve amenities at the Llay site including a new cafeteria, toilet and shower block.

Other investment involves an updated raw materials preparation plant at Swillington to increase the quality of brick production, while at the Accrington factory a new blending plant in the 'specials department' will lead to improved flexibility and increased capacity.

Halco Hunts Sales Abroad



The new rig destined for South Africa.

Halifax Tool Company is successfully hunting out sales opportunities and fighting off fierce competition in Southern Africa with two recent orders for drilling tools.

Halco's largest ever single order for drilling tools, at \$1.5 million (£1.07 million) was placed by the Zimbabwe Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Water Development.

The equipment supplied included Halco's DTH hammers and drill bits which will be used for drilling water bore holes for drought relief within Zimbabwe as part of the Emergency Drought Recovery and Mitigation project.

The second contract, worth \$600,000 (£402,000), is for a Halco HPD 115-35THD self-contained high production output rig for use in an iron ore mine in the Cape area.

This order, from a large international mining organisation, followed the supply of another rig for use in copper mining.

Tony Bennett, sales director said: "These recent orders show that our competitive presence and commitment to developing equipment suitable for overseas use are paying dividends."

Competition

In our great Marshall's Competition, you have the opportunity to win a meal for two, to the value of £30 at a restaurant of your choice. We will pick the winner at the end of this month, so send your entries to Sue Beesley, Marshall's Plc, Hall Ings, Southowram, Halifax, West Yorkshire, HX3 9TV.

This competition is all about elimination. All you have to do is read the clues in the opposite column and then find the answers somewhere in the words listed below (there are two words to find for each answer). Cross out your answers as you go, and when you have answered each clue, you should be left with ONE remaining word - that's the winning word. For example, the answer to 'Flowery Spots' is Garden Cities.

1. Flowery Spots?
2. Two associated with birds
3. Cats' home?
4. Two in the Bible
5. Two with rabbit
6. Title taken for granted
7. Starting timer!
8. Two going with spoon
9. Two with field
10. Two suggesting door
11. Sweet from a grass?
12. Two going with hammer

Clock	Mouse	Revolving	Knobs	Cities
Jack	Ruth	Garden	Warrens	Assumed
Tea	Name	Body	Job	Alarm
Toes	Wooden	Sledge	Battle	Cottage
Cage	Sugar	Mews	Humming	Barley

NAME
DEPARTMENT
SITE
The one remaining word is

Latest On The 'Fax'

From front page ...

As many of you will know, Marshall's is very interested in faxes and not just the ones which send and receive messages. For the first time, Marshall's is the main shirt sponsor of Halifax Rugby League Football Club, or the 'Fax' as it's known.

The opportunity was spotted through keen fan and former club board member Ken Davidson who is sales director for Marshall's Mono.

Said Ken: "Halifax is a great team and so is Marshall's, so bringing the two together in a sponsorship deal makes a lot of sense. It's an ideal opportunity to support the local team and get valuable publicity for Marshall's in the press and on TV."

Halifax started the season in great form and, in spite of injuries in recent weeks, the team is up with the leaders of the Premier Division of the Stones Bitter Championship.