

IAPetus



Quarterly Bulletin For the Institution of
Analysts & Programmers

Issue 21

March 1997

IAP Launches Recognised Recruitment Agencies Scheme

This initiative is an attempt to identify recruitment agencies who will treat IAP members fairly.

Recognised agencies are committed to a code of practice, reproduced in full below, which governs their dealings both with the potential contractors amongst our membership, and with those whose responsibilities embrace the recruitment and employment of IT staff.

Recruitment is a volatile business, and with this in mind arrangements are renewable annually. Agencies committing to this scheme will enjoy privileged access to those

of our members who wish it, and will be permitted to use the IAP Coat of Arms in their advertising.

Agencies

In this *IAPetus* we are pleased to publish the names of the first agencies to join the scheme. Applications from several more are being processed. We hope the agencies who eventually join will give a good coverage of the market, both geographically and technically. But we do not want too many of them.

There may be some £10 million to be earned annually from the

placement of IAP members and recruitment of staff on their behalf, but we do not want to have to slice this cake too thinly.

So if you know a good agent, tell him to get in now before we have to pull up the drawbridge. Otherwise he may have to wait until we throw someone out.

Contractors

While the Register of Consultants is freely available to the public, the full listing of IAP members printed in the Yearbook is sent only to members.

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IAP Council Elections 1997

It is necessary each year to hold an election for membership of the Council. This year, in addition to the 5 Council Members who retire by rotation, there is an additional vacancy caused by the resignation of Mark Brett from Council, so there are six ordinary seats on Council up for election.

The members of Council retiring by rotation are:-

Gordon Bradley

David Daniel

Gavin Keeley

Ted Pugh

Andrew Morrey – who filled Leslie Almeida's seat when Mr Almeida resigned from Council
Messrs Bradley, Daniel, Keeley and Morrey are all eligible to stand for re-election should they so choose.

We invite corporate members of the Institution (i.e. those in Member and Fellow grades) – who are not disqualified from being Company Directors – to consider whether they would be prepared to stand for election, and if so to ensure that their name is sent into the office to be received no later than Saturday April 19th 1997, along with a brief document (no more than 500 words!) describing why they believe that they should be elected.

If sufficient candidates stand, their details and instructions for voting will be distributed to the membership early in May.

Alex Robertson
Vice President of the
Institution

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A new year, another IAPetus. Perhaps the last, or one of the last, in its present format – plans are well in hand for the next stage in its development towards a 'glossy' magazine that we can all be proud of.

There's plenty of material about the Institution itself this time: the things which are being done, or being planned, for the benefit of the membership.

Sometimes the Institution appears a bit like a duck – just gliding around the pond and you have to look quite closely to see how hard it is paddling underneath! There are a lot of things

going on, and they are there for you to use. If you have thoughts on what we ought to be doing, let us know or even better, stand for the Council and have a hand in making things happen yourself.

Peter Duffy's observations on the matter of a computing museum at Bletchley Park are a good example – this is something he cares about, and feels that the IAP ought to do something.... so he's said so. I'm delighted to be able to put this before you all and look forward to your response. I'm certainly interested – during the war, my father was in North Africa

and Italy in the Intelligence Corps, receiving the 'Ultra' decodes and figuring out what the Germans were going to do next!

I look forward to hearing from you – let me know what YOU care about. What is the one thing that you really love (or hate) about being a computer professional? What's the funniest thing that's happened to you at work or at play? Which issues do you think the IAP ought to get involved in?

Megan C. Robertson
Editor

The IAP on the World Wide Web

It would be rather remiss of a leading computer organisation not to be found somewhere on the Internet, and so the Institution is now present on a new, permanent site - having previously relied on member's goodwill to 'lurk' in private web space.

The new site can be found by sending your Web browser to look at <http://www.iap.org.uk/iapdg....> and the things to be found there are increasing daily.

The Institution's current web master is Alex Robertson FIAP(Cmpn), the Vice President, although he'd be glad to welcome help from those of you whose mastery extends to writing HTML. He has been busy recently setting up an appropriate 'look and feel' in the new home. So far, you can read about the IAP's coat of arms; find out what you have to have done to achieve the various grades of memberships; look at a list of the present Council members and read about the elections for new ones, apply for a membership pack (well, those of you reading this don't need one, but you ought to be telling your friends!) and remind yourself of the contents of the Code of Conduct. You can send email to Alex, to the Institution office and to IAPetus. Oh, and there's a full price list for the various items of memorabilia on offer - the ties, lapel pins and so on.

Naturally, there is room to expand and all ideas for things to put in there will be gratefully received. Perhaps some of the better articles from IAPetus could be posted there.... I frequently get letters from people saying 'What did you say about such-and-such, it was in IAPetus a few issues ago but I can't find it now?' As the Institu-

tion's membership services expand, we can keep you up-to-date.

One news item Alex has just put there refers to an 'email address for life' service which he has discovered. This has one great advantage.... it's free. Most of the actual addresses are rather silly, I for one don't want my mail going to 'megan@mindless.com' even though that might be appropriate! Still one or two are acceptable, and there are others available for a small

fee if you don't like the free ones.

Those of you concerned about smut on the Internet will be relieved to know that there is absolutely none of THAT..... but when not working on the IAP's site, Alex has put up some pictures of Christine to deal with our extended family - an email from a Canadian uncle asking after the new baby was answered by telling him where to look for her! It's cheaper than posting loads of pictures to friends and relatives!!!!

FREE LEGAL ADVICE

Up to half an hour's free telephone advice per problem on legal aspects of IAP members' work in Information Technology, from solicitors in a top international law firm.

Does not include writing letters, or considering documents sent through the post.

**Special rates quoted for IAP members on any kind of legal work.
Call Mark Snelgrove on 0115 950 0055 or Selva Naidu on 0171 404 1546, at Browne Jacobson.**

GOING FOR A JOB

Belonging to the IAP improves your chance of landing that new job.

Let us have details of any job application which you are making, and – without making any reference to you – we will brief your potential employer on the IAP and the importance of IAP membership as an endorsement of members' qualifications and standing in the profession.

*Call Mike Ryan or Nicole Edwards
on 0181 567 2118 or fax 0181 567 4379.*

The Director General writes

Elsewhere in this copy of *IAPetus* you will find details of the Institution's new Recognition scheme for agencies. This has been a long time in gestation – we wanted to be sure of getting it right. In the meantime there has been a certain amount of advance comment in the computer press, accompanied by a photograph of me looking, according to the family, "fierce".

Rumours that the IAP is launching a vendetta against cowboy agencies are exaggerated. Our aim is much more modest, and it is constructive, not destructive. We are trying to identify agents who will commit themselves to treating IAP members fairly. When we find such agencies we will help them, in so far as a non-commercial body is able, to promote their business with our members.

The FRES code governing relations between agencies and their clients (the employers) is excellent so far as it goes (although only a minority of agents are FRES members). But FRES is not concerned with relations between agencies and contractors. This is the gap the IAP aims to fill, initially for the benefit of its own members, but who knows how the idea might catch on? This prospect has sent a chill through some agencies: maybe the days of 'throw on another couple of contractors' are numbered!

A key point in the IAP's code of practice for agencies is that agents

are obliged to reveal their commission rates if asked to do so by the IAP. Should a complaint be made (from either side), and the Institution be asked to intervene, we would be able to get at the facts. But it is not our intention to broadcast this confidential information, draw up a 'league table' or publish recommended rates. Indeed I hope we will never have to ask an agent how much he charges.

Many IAP members find they are requiring the services of an agency with increasing frequency. But of course you don't have to use an agent – you can find your own work. The trouble is it takes time and costs money.

A big consultant once told me his firm reckoned it took one whole day of marketing to sell four days of fee-earning work. I never managed to do anything like as well myself, but even at that rate it meant he was having to mark up his consulting rates by 25% just to pay for the marketing. Hopefully the Recognised Agents will be professionals like ourselves, but they too need to make money if they are to survive in business and provide a quality service.

Rather than worry about how much the agent is making (or not making), the contractor will do better to concentrate on what he is making himself. The professional approach is to put a value on your services, and then sell them to whoever will pay the money. If you

are getting what you want out of the deal, does it matter that the agent is making money, or that his client is making money too, possibly on a huge scale as the result of the systems you have installed? If a business deal is to work, *all* the parties have to be motivated. The best kind of deal is not one where you rip the other guy off – it's the one where everybody makes money and goes home happy. I once worked for a consultant who I later discovered was marking me up four times. But I was running a Rolls Royce on my share.

Elsewhere in *IAPetus* you will find the code of practice for agencies. But the obligations are not all on one side. Contractors would do well to familiarise themselves with the code of conduct, printed in the current Yearbook, which governs members of the Institution. For example, members are to "work with proper care and regard for the requirements of the client or employer" and shall "not terminate valid agreements without good and sufficient reason". You do not agree to a six month contract (and remember, contracts can be verbal) then abandon it because they are paying 50p more across the street.

Virtually all 3,000 members of the IAP are potential clients for recruitment agencies in some sense, either as contractors or recruiters of IT staff. Someone must be earning around £10 million in agency fees from IAP members every year. So if you know a good agent, tell him to join the IAP's Recognised Recruitment Agencies scheme and some of this money could be his.

Mike Ryan

PROFESSIONAL INDEMNITY INSURANCE

"It is a truly comprehensive policy and we believe, due to the bulk purchasing power of the Institution in this specialised field, provides unbeatable value for money"

General Accident offers a truly comprehensive policy at special advantageous rates for IAP members.

Details of basic cover from the Institution office, or contact the specialist broker who is administering the scheme for the IAP:

Mike Burdon, Insurance Management, 3 Northernhay Place, Exeter
EX4 3QE. Tel 01392 5942

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Correspondence about the Institution should be sent to Charles House, 36 Culmington Road, London W13 9NH. Tel: 0181- 567 2118, Fax: 0181-567 4379, e-mail: dg@iap.org.uk.

IAP Launches Recognised Recruitment Agencies Scheme – Continued from Page 1

The Yearbook will not be available to agencies, but IAP members will of course be able to contact agencies at any time.

To make life easier for both sides, the Institution is creating a database of those members who are potentially available, for the right job, and would like us to make their names known to the agencies.

A survey of members is planned shortly, and this will be one of the questions, but in the meantime you can phone or e-mail us if you want your name added to the list.

Longer term we are considering whether the Institution should maintain a skills database of members and possibly even their CVs. The problem is the huge amount of work that would be needed to keep everything up to date. It is hard to see how this could be justified unless the Institution was to go into the agency business on its own account, something we are determined not to do.

Recognised agencies are obliged to contact a contractor before submitting his CV to a potential employer. This should eliminate the problem of employers being snowed with umpteen vintage versions of your CV from different agents. But you will need to keep your CV updated in the word-processor, ready to mail at a moment's notice.

Institution of Analysts and Programmers Recognised Recruitment Agencies

The agencies listed below have undertaken to honour the Institution's Code of Practice for recruitment agencies, and have accordingly been Recognised by the Institution. These firms are com-

mitted to fair treatment of our members, who may deal with them in confidence.

Amadeus Software Limited

13 Corn Street, Witney, Oxford OX6 7DB.

Contact: Louise Harvey

Tel: 01993 775454

Fax: 01993 700577

email: 74117.457@compuserve.com

Amadeus holds a database on over 200 SAS contractors. We match contractors to our clients' SAS programming and development requirements, which may be 3–6 months and occasionally permanent positions.

Amadeus brief the contractor and arrange interviews for suitable candidates. Amadeus Software rates are amongst the most competitive in the UK and abroad. We have a reputation for fairness and attention to detail.

Flavell Divitt International

Longueville House, South Road, Brighton, East Sussex.

Contact: Jacs Flavell

Tel: 01273 888977

Fax: 01273 707787

email: sales@fdigroup.co.uk

Flavell Divitt International, recognised in the industry as FDi, was formed by Rod Flavell in 1990. Quickly establishing itself during the recession, FDi was able to form preferred supplier relationships with a number of City-based clients, including Lloyds of London, BT, BBC and the Government of Malta.

FDi became a sales partner for Mountfield Software in 1992 and helped grow this software house to a predominant place in the INFORMIX marketplace over 2 years.

FDi and Mountfield Software merged on 1 January 1996 and now supply contract staff, software development and training in INFORMIX, GUPTA, POWER-BUILDER, LOTUS NOTES and most MICROSOFT products.

Formula Systems

7A Milburn Road, Westbourne, Bournemouth BH4 9HJ

Contact: Tony Chewins/Alan Thake

Tel: 01202 752660

Fax: 01202 752665

email: contracts@formula.demon.co.uk

We aim to exceed your reasonable expectations of quality and value by adopting an honest, open and fair approach, and, by doing so, give you the freedom to achieve your objectives and the confidence to recommend us to others.

We wholeheartedly embrace the Institution's Code of Practice for recruitment agencies as the minimum requirement to meet these aims.

Further details, together with a selection of our current vacancies, can be obtained from our Web site at www.formula-systems.co.uk or alternatively contact us directly.

Professional Systems Personnel Ltd

9th floor, Swan Office Centre, Coventry Rd, Yardley, Birmingham.

Contact: Tony Battersby

Tel/Fax: 0121 706 7672

email: pspacityscape.co.uk

Web: <http://www.psyp.co.uk>

Established in 1985, PSP now has a large client base to which it supplies contract and permanent IT staff. In 1993 PSP achieved ISO9002 status and is currently working in attaining IIP recognition.

An established IBM Mainframe specialist, PSP now services both Midrange and PC requirements. We also have considerable experience in placing IT Graduates in both Contract and Permanent positions.

PSP's philosophy has always been Quality and Value. Its margins are extremely competitive.

"agencies who eventually join will give a good coverage of the market"

IAP Cufflinks & Pins

Now available from the Institution Office, these stylish enamelled items are based on the hexagonal IAP Badge.

Cufflinks are of the swivel-pin variety, and the pins have a short pin with friction-grip clasp enabling them to be worn as brooches, tie or lapel pins suitable for both ladies and gentlemen.

The cost, including postage and VAT is:

Cufflinks £12.50

Pins £7.50

Send your cheque or credit card details to the Institution Office. We will send a receipted invoice and the goods by return.

Code of Practice for Recruitment Agencies Recognised by the Institution of Analysts and Programmers

General

1. Any agency which is recognised by the Institution of Analysts and Programmers shall comply with this code of practice.
2. The agency shall ensure that their activities comply with the laws and regulations of the country in which they are operating.
3. The agency shall pay the annual fee from time to time prescribed by the Council of the Institution and make such payment within fourteen days of such payment becoming due.
4. The agency shall give due regard to the membership grades of the Institution, and in advertising appropriate posts specify the advantages of membership to candidates and seek to persuade employers of its relevance.
5. The agency shall provide full information to the Council of the Institution on:
 - a. the range of commissions taken as a percentage of the fees charged to clients and
 - b. the services they offer to candidates in return for such commissions.

Information so provided shall remain confidential to the Council of the Institution unless a dispute arises between any of the client, agency or candidate, and the Institution is asked by one or more of the parties to intervene in which case the Council of the Institution shall have the right at its absolute discretion to reveal some or all of such information to all parties concerned.

Candidates and Contract Personnel

1. The agency shall only submit a candidate's Curriculum Vitae/Resume to a prospective employer or client after securing the permission of the candidate.
2. Where the post offered is other than in the candidate's usual country of residence, the agency shall acquaint the candidate of any special regulations applicable to and/or in that country prior to any interview.
3. The agency shall make appropriate arrangements for and give suitable notice of interviews, and

inform candidates in advance whether expenses will be reimbursed and the procedures for such reimbursement.

4. Following the submission of a candidate's Curriculum Vitae/Resume the agency shall endeavour to keep the candidate fully informed of the progress of his application.
5. The agency shall endeavour to respond quickly to all enquiries from potential candidates.
6. The agency shall treat all information supplied by the candidate as confidential and shall not divulge any part of such information to a third party without the permission of the candidate.
7. The agency shall ensure that the Curriculum Vitae/Resume sent to clients is up to date and relevant to the post to be filled.
8. The agency shall ensure that all the forms of remuneration are clearly defined in terms of amounts and due dates in the contract between the agency and the candidate and that payments are made promptly in accordance with the contract.
9. The agency shall endeavour to give accurate and up to date information at all times to a candidate in relation to a post.
10. The agency shall not penalise a candidate for refusing to attend an interview or take up the offer of a post.

11. The agency shall, unless instructed to the contrary by the client, identify the client to the candidate in order to eliminate the possibility of the candidate's details being submitted by more than one agency.

12. The agency shall only advertise or notify candidates of genuine vacancies.

Clients

1. Agencies shall provide clients with full details of their terms of business in writing.
2. The agency shall treat all client information, other than the name of the client, as confidential unless instructed otherwise by the client.
3. The agency shall not approach a client's current staff with the purpose of inducing them to take up other posts.
4. The agency shall not approach a client's contractors with the purpose of inducing them to break or refuse to extend their current contracts, unless the contractors have first intimated their wish not to extend such contracts, provided always that members of the Institution are bound by the Code of Conduct of the Institution.
5. Agencies shall not offer vacancies which have not been submitted by clients.

PROFESSIONAL INDEMNITY INSURANCE

"The savings in premium under the IAP Policy can be enough to offset the annual membership subscription of the Institution"

General Accident offers a truly comprehensive policy at special advantageous rates for IAP members.

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Mike Burdon, Insurance Management, 3 Northernhay Place, Exeter
EX4 3QE. Tel 01392 5942

One of my major interests is gathering information on all manner of uniforms and insignia, and I have recently found that the Internet is a good source of material on, of all things, American police badges!

It's Amazing What You Can Find...

One wet Sunday afternoon, I set a Web search engine loose with 'uniform' and 'police' as its keywords. It came back with a huge list of 'hits', although when I started to look through them, I found that the American police are fond of what they call 'Uniform Crime Reports', which had upped the results considerably. Still, all was not lost, because if you start rooting through their Web site, you will often find a picture of their sleeve badge – known as a 'patch' – somewhere, and occasionally you get really lucky and there's a picture of a police officer in uniform. One site (Nashville Metro PD) had a worried-looking bomb disposal officer (are there any other kind?) in his bomb-suit, several had proud pictures of police cars or the odd helicopter.

Suffolk County Police Department, to be found on Long Island in New York state, has a splendid 'patch wall' with examples of different patches worn by members of the department such as the highway patrol, dog handlers ('canine patrol'), Motor Carrier Safety Unit,

Emergency Services, Aviation Section, the Marine Bureau and the Dive Team. They hadn't labelled any of these, but I left a message in their "visitors' book" and received an explanatory email from the

officer who'd created the web site. They have now started an additional area where they post pictures of patches sent to them by other police departments nationwide.

It's interesting that when I attempted to look for possibly the most famous US police force, the New York City one, all I found were endless episode guides to the TV show NYPD Blue! (The Suffolk County PD had the NYPD patch in their collection, however.) Quite a few American universities have their own police departments – I suspect they are the equivalent of college porters and security staff over here – and being university-related, are fixtures on the Internet. Some even post advice to students about areas in town to avoid, and hand out hints and tips on personal safety.

You never know what information is out there until you look...

Megan C. Robertson

Above are the NYPD patch and that of Suffolk County PD. The police



officer to the right is Ronald A. Ricucci, Chief of Police of the Jefferson County PD in Kentucky.

Below is the Canine Patrol patch worn by dog handlers from Suffolk County PD.



Accountancy Services

With the onset of self-assessment, and the trend for more and more professional people to become self-employed or employees of their own small businesses, the idea of having an expert to sort out your accounts is increasingly attractive. These services can be cost-effective, but there are, as they say, horses for courses.

From time to time the Institution is approached by firms which specialise in minimum-cost accounting for the self-employed and one-man businesses in the IT sector. Provided your affairs are straightforward, standardised accounts can be prepared for you, and for hundreds of others in similar circumstances, on a mass production principle at a very low cost.

In a forthcoming issue of *IAPetus* we are planning an article featuring firms which offer these services, and we would like to hear from any such firms willing to contribute editorial material or place advertisements. If members know of any such firms they could recommend (not ordinary accountants) we would be glad of the contact details.

We would also like to hear from IAP members with experience, for better or worse, on the receiving end of such service.

IAP GROUP PENSION SCHEME

with The Equitable Life Assurance Society

Being a Member of the IAP entitles you to join the IAP Pension Scheme on enhanced terms.

Equitable Life is one of the best known pension providers in Britain whose consistent performance and low charges have kept it near the top of the industry's performance tables for a long period of years.

Contact the Institution office for an information pack.

Bletchley Park – Computing History

Member Peter Duffy has been in touch regarding something which he feels strongly about, and which he feels the IAP could and ought to assist with.

It has been reported recently that the Bletchley Park museum has failed to secure funds from the National Lottery. For obvious reasons, this is a scandal of the highest proportions, but particularly so for anyone involved in the IT industry: without the advances made at Bletchley, we would in all probability be working in a different field (and be considerably the poorer!).

If you don't happen to know the significance of 'Bletchley Park', it is the place where computing pioneers strove to break German ciphers during the last war using early valve machines – a pocket calculator's power in a whole room-full of equipment! – and mathematical techniques. This is where the mechanically generated ciphers produced by the German Enigma machines were decrypted and sent out under the codename 'Ultra' to intelligence officers working closely with military commanders in the field. There are now plans to turn the establishment into a museum to preserve early computers such as 'Colossus' used in this work; and to trace the history of the development of computing in general.

Peter says 'I believe that something should at least be attempted to be done about this, either by (a) bodies such as the IAP lobbying the powers-that-be to impress on them the necessity for the nation's heritage of the museum plans going ahead, and/or (b) a nation-wide appeal to IT staff to contribute to the cost of the museum themselves (obviously, this would have to be looked into in some detail for viability, but if sufficient people could be canvassed, a significant contribution might be made: I would personally be happy to donate at least a hundred pounds, and possibly quite a bit more.)'

What do YOU think? Please let the Institution Office or any member of the IAP Council have your views on this, and we can consider the matter at the next Council meeting. The thought of a discreet plaque on the door acknowledging the IAP's help in raising funds for the museum is quite tempting!

Year 2000 – the Saga Continues

In recent months much has been written on the 'Millennium Problem', indeed there is great speculation and many predictions of the pending disasters. Our sister society the British Computer Society has published a definitive guide to the Year 2000 problem.

The book, entitled *YEAR 2000 – A Practical Guide for Professionals and Business Managers*, (ISBN 0 901865 97 4) aims to provide a greater understanding of the potential of the Year 2000 problem. The book is intended to:-

- a) assist businesses in understand the nature and scale of the Year 2000 problem
- b) establish the need to appoint a responsible executive within a business
- c) explain the urgency of the problem and nature of the time-box within which work must be completed
- d) raise some of the strategic and resourcing issues on which early decisions need to be taken
- e) provide guidance on assessing the impact, and the likely cost of resolution
- f) present a strategy to maximise the business value of what appears to be a cost-only exercise to maintain continuity and function
- g) identify potential business benefits which may be achieved
- h) help establish responsibilities
- i) provide practical advice on the approach to take, the processes, planning, resourcing and management, and on available tools. Potentially the problem is

present in products from all sources, and not only in business computing and communications services, but also in control electronics embedded in industrial plants or vehicles. Newer technology is not exempt, and products are still being produced today that are not Year 2000 compliant i.e. will not correctly process dates after the millennium.

The problem needs to be approached as a potential crisis – an unknown amount of work, boxed in by an immutable deadline, which if not completed in time has the ability to stop your business.

YEAR 2000 – A Practical Guide for Professionals and Business Managers is aimed at all business managers from all disciplines at all levels, particularly senior management, and for all BCS Professional Members. The book provides guidance on all Year 2000 issues, and was prepared by a Working Party of the BCS's Professional and Public Affairs Board, chaired by John Ivinston FBCS. It is presented in a clear concise Question & Answer format in 32 pages. Even if you think the whole matter is overblown and alarmist, this is quite a good book to ensure that there really are no problems!

To order a copy send a cheque payable to The British Computer Society – the cost is £7.50 (inc. P&P) for BCS members and £10.00 for non-members – to The British Computer Society, FREEPOST, Publications Dept (YEAR 2000), Swindon, Wiltshire, SN1 1BR.

PROFESSIONAL INDEMNITY INSURANCE

"We believe that all those who work as consultants, freelance analysts or programmers should protect themselves by carrying Professional Indemnity Insurance as a matter of principle"

General Accident offers a truly comprehensive policy at special advantageous rates for IAP members.

Details of basic cover from the Institution office, or contact the specialist broker who is administering the scheme for the IAP:
Mike Burdon, Insurance Management, 3 Northernhay Place, Exeter EX4 3QE. Tel 01392 5942

Due to pressure of work **Mark Brett** has been forced to resign from the IAP Council and from his position as Treasurer of the Institution.

Mark has been active in the Institution for quite some time, and was the man responsible for designing the IAP's own academic dress. Thanks for all your efforts on our behalf, hope the work goes well and we hope to see you around when time permits!

Members' News

Kevin McDonnell FIAP writes:

"Two years ago circumstances conspired to assist me in the making of a decision to emigrate from the UK to Australia, a decision which I have, as yet, never needed to question. Accompanied by my wife, two children and a brace of border collies (we have had the dogs longer than the children – so it only seemed fair) we journeyed to a distant land! Fortunately my wife's parents lived over here, unfortunately they lived in a small coastal town. I say unfortunately because computers were really considered to be objects used by government and state organisations which 'lost' information. Taking 6 months R&R, I richened my life by undertaking jobs I had never considered – furniture removalist and packing tuna and marlin for export to the Japanese in the local fishermen's co-op! Having lulled myself into a sense of false security that IT was still to 'hit' I decided that the rest was over and it was time to get a proper job so I ventured into the city.

"What I subsequently found 'in the real world' was remarkable. The level of IT awareness within the organisations that I have dealt with in Sydney is staggering. Virtually all the people I have dealt with require that as a basic skill anyone is fully conversant with Microsoft Office and computer literate. What is exceptional is that the people in business, regardless of age and position are so eager to learn that you feel like you are watering a field of sponges. Communication is electronic by default and international communication is by the Internet. Combine this with the Australian down to earth 'no rubbish' attitude and you have a formidable IT audi-

ence. Project specifications have to be clear, precise and complete as you will find that everyone in the organisation wants to put their bit in and they all know precisely what they want and they will let you know it in their in-imitable Oz style.

"I am working for the John Fairfax organisation in Darling Harbour as a business analyst and have been fortunate enough to have been exposed to the widest range of hardware and software platforms I could have anticipated. A new factory containing computer driven presses, latest computerised editorial, advertising and production control systems and desktop developments to address events supported by the Sydney Morning Herald, it is a dream! However the one thing that is as true down under as well as up there, is that in the end it is not the technology that makes the system work, it is the people who operate it. Understanding and guiding the users to clearly define what they need and then ensuring that IT delivers what the user wanted

remains perhaps the most important element of any deliverable solution. Funny, that is what I found in the UK, maybe the fact that I am on the other side of the world is irrelevant – or not... I am just off for a quick swim in the pool as its about 28°C, I don't suppose you could do that today, could you? Hope your weather warms!"

In colder climes, **Anthony Donaldson FIAP AMISM AMILog**, claims the title of 'Gobsmacked of the Royal Air Force' and writes that, despite what was said in the 'New Fellows' section of *IAPetus*, he is still serving Her Majesty as a member of the RAF and has not retired in any way, shape or form. While apologising to him for any confusion our error caused, we can at least continue to sleep soundly at night, knowing that the defence of the realm is in good hands.

What have YOU been up to lately? Why not write and share your news of life and times in the IT world.

New Fellows

We are particularly pleased to welcome the following members who have been admitted as Fellows of the Institution since IAPetus was last published.

Simon L.W. Davies An analyst and programmer since 1984, Simon Davies was trained at Golden Wonder, working with them until 1987. This was followed by three years with Travis Perkins and Robert Horne Paper. A specialist in accounting and cost control systems, in 1991 he joined the BBC to help implement John Birt's efficiency drive, remaining there until moving to his present job at Barnardo's in 1995.

Donald A. Gardner BSc An outstanding professional who sold commercial programs while still at school, Donald Gardner has worked mainly in the banking sector. He spent four years at TSB, responsible for the bank's MIS software and mainframe hardware. This was followed by six years at

Clydesdale Bank with similar responsibilities. A widely recognised authority on Oracle and MIS, he is now with TPI Systementwicklung AG, Switzerland.

Ian G. Jones A service professional whose career has included a succession of highly responsible IT assignments for the RAF. As Site Manager at RAF Spadeadam, Ian Jones was responsible for continuous maintenance and upgrading of the software and hardware controlling key radar installations used in connection with the Gulf War. Since 1993 he has been Quality Assurance Manager at RAF Bentley Priory.

Andrew M. Watts BA(Hons) Andy Watts has worked for AGB Television since 1984. For the last five years he has been PC Development Manager, working mainly on software products which collect TV audience viewing data. These market-leading products earn £1 million a year and are sold throughout Europe.