ORAL AND NARRATIVE HISTORIES

Note: The LEO Computer Society uses Dropbox to hold records of interviews, reminiscences and memoirs recorded by the Society. The Dropbox links are provided for some of the records below. However the link can only be activated by a few designated members of the Society. Anyone who wishes to download a particular item, please apply to Frank Land at f.land@lse.ac.uk

❖ **Interviewee: John Simmons**

Interviewer: Chris Evans
Date of Interview: !970s
Edited Transcript: Science Museum
Copyright: Science Museum
> **Reprinted as** Interview between J.R.M. Simmons, Director and Chief Comptroller of J. Lyons & Co., and the   Science Museum, London. Appendix B, in Caminer, D.T., Aris, J.B., Hermon, P.M., Lanf, F.F. (editors and contributors) **LEO The Incredible Story of the Wold's first Business Computer,** McGraw Hill, New York, pages 360-374

❖ **John Pinkerton (1)**
Interviewee: John M.M. Pinkerton   1919 - 1997
Interviewer: John Pinkerton, self interview
Date of Interview: 23.08.1988
Role in LEO: Chief Engineer
Joined LEO: 1948
> **Abstract:** Pinkerton begins by discussing his education and wartime work in radar technology in England. He then describes his movement into the computer industry after World War II and his work on the LEO I and LEO II computers. In this context he discusses the British computer firms J. Lyons and Company, Leo Computers, English Electric Co., and International Computers Ltd.

Repository: Charles Babbage Institute, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis
Transcript: 54 pages
Copyright: Charles Babbage Institute
Download:
http://conservancy.umn.edu/bitstream/handle/11299/107600/oh149jmp.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

❖ **John Pinkerton (2)**
Interviewee: John M.M. Pinkerton   1919-1997
Interviewer: Chris Evans
Date of Interview: 1975
Role in LEO: Chief Engineer
Joined LEO: 1948
> Abstract: **John Pinkerton joined Lyons as chief engineer at the very beginning of the LEO initiatve and** led the engineering side until the merger with English Electric. He held senior engineering appointments within the merged companies until his retirement. Much of the success of the LEO enterprise lay in his genius for bringing innovative ideas to practical fruition – one of the true heroes of the information age.

Repository: London Science Museum
Audio Recording: Tape 6 in Christopher Evans's 'Pioneers of Computing'

Transcript: Evans, Chris, (1983) **Pioneers of Computing**, <u>IEEE Annals of the History of Computing</u>, Vol. 5, No 1, pp 64-72, January-March.
Copyright: Audio, London Science Museum, Transcript, IEEE

❖ **Interviewee: Mary Coombs (née Blood<u>) 1</u>**   **DOB:** 1929
Interviewer: Thomas Lean, British Library
Date of Interview: 2010 **Reference: C1379/16 Role in LEO:** Programmer
Joined LEO: 1953
Role in LEO: Programmer
    Abstract: This is a full oral history of the life of Mary Coombs as part of the British Libraries Oral History series on the life of selected British Computer scientists.
Repository: British Library, <u>National Life Stories, an oral history of British Science</u>
Type of recorder: Marantz PMD661 on secure digital (Sessions 1-4) Marantz PMD660 on
compact flash (Sessions 5-9) Recording format: Wav 24 bit 48 kHz (sessions 1-4) WAV 16 bit 48 kHz (sessions 5-9) Total no. of tracks 9 Stereo Total Duration 07 hours:14 minutes:40 seconds
Transcript: http://sounds.bl.uk/related-content/TRANSCRIPTS/021T-C1379X0016XX-0000A0.pdf
Copyright/Clearance: Open except for 00:56:57 – 00:59:15 of track 7 and 00:21:51 - 00:22:49 of
track 9; these sections are closed for 30 years until June 2041.

❖ **Interviewee: <u>Mary Coombs (née Blood) 2</u>**   **DOB:** 1929
Interviewer: Google
Date of Interview: 21.11.2011
Role in LEO: Programmer,
Joined LEO: 1953
    Abstract: Google interviewed and filmed a number of old LEO employees including Mary Coombs as part of the celebration at the Science Museum of the 60th anniversary of the roll out of the first business application on the LEO I computer. Narrated by Georgina Ferry/
Repository:
Interview Text
Type of recorder:
Film: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lrn24SdW64I
Copyright: Google. Free to view.

References to Mary Coombs listed in Wikipedia:
1. Jump up ^ *"Mary Coombs"*. *The British Library*.

2. ^ **Jump up to:** *ᵃ ᵇ* computingheritage (2013-09-05), *Mary Coombs shares her story*, retrieved 2018-07-26

3. **Jump up ^** *Douglas, Ian (2013-09-11).* *"Bletchley Park celebrates women in computing"*. *ISSN* *0307-1235*. *Retrieved 2018-07-26.*

4. **Jump up ^** *"Women in Computing: a British Perspective - Google Arts & Culture"*. *Google Cultural Institute. Retrieved 2018-07-26.*

5. **Jump up ^** *"Mary Coombs - Computing History"*. *www.computinghistory.org.uk. Retrieved 2018-07-26.*

6. ^ Jump up to: *a* *b* *c* *d* *e* *f* *"Mary Coombs"*. *Diversity in HPC. Retrieved 14 April 2018.*

7. **Jump up ^** *"Museum celebrates women in computing"*. *BBC News.*

8. ^ Jump up to: *a* *b* *Bird, Peter J. LEO: the First Business Computer. Wokingham: Hasler Publishing Limited.* ISBN 0-9521651-0-4.

9. ^ **Jump up to:** *a* *b* *c* *Ferry, Georgina (2004). A Computer Called LEO: Lyons Tea Shops and the world's first office computer. Harper Perennial. p. 106.* ISBN 1 84115 1866.

10. ^ **Jump up to:** *a* *b* *Janet., Abbate, (2012).* Recoding gender : women's changing participation in computing. *Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.* ISBN 9780262018067. OCLC 813929041.

❖ **Interviewee: <u>Frank Land</u> (1)**   **DOB:** 24.10.1928
Interviewer: Thomas Lean, British Library
Date of Interview: 2010 **Reference: C1379/17**
Role in LEO: Programmer, Systems Analyst, Marketing, Consultant
Joined LEO: 1953
   Abstract: This is a full oral history of the life of Frank Land as part of the British Libraries Oral History series on the life of selected British Computer scientists.
Repository: British Library, <u>National Life Stories, an Oral History of British Science</u>

Type of recorder: Marantz PMD661 on secure digital Recording format: WAV 24 bit 48 kHz Total no. of tracks 18 Stereo Total Duration: 15 hours:06 minutes:31 seconds
Transcript: http://sounds.bl.uk/related-content/TRANSCRIPTS/021T-C1379X0017XX-0000A0.pdf
Copyright/Clearance: No restrictions except for the following sections: track 1 [between 35:38 – 35:58, and 40:36 – 41:26], track 4 [between 31:46 – 34:56], track 8 [between 13:04 – 13:15 and 47:20 – 49:19], track 9 [between 18:21 – 18:41, 20:20 – 20:21, 01:02:54 – 01:03:31 and 01:08:31 – 01:09:46] and track 13 [between 18:10 – 19:11] which are closed for 30 years (until March 2041)

❖ **Interviewee: <u>Frank Land</u> (2)**   **DOB:** 24.10.1928
Interviewer: Google
Date of Interview: 21.11.2011
Role in LEO: Programmer, Systems Analyst, Marketing, Consultant
Joined LEO: 1953
   Abstract: Google interviewed and filmed a number of old LEO employees including Frank Land as part of the celebration at the Science Museum of the 60th anniversary of the roll out of the first business application on the LEO I computer. Narrated by Georgina Ferry/
Repository: Interview Text: Dropbox LEO Interviews
https://www.dropbox.com/search/personal?path=%2F&qsid=7569541990649362971185 7519034651&query=frank+land+google&search_token=maaZCi5EZfs9ghMHde3MaOm E5gIkeIs7mVlUbNhfSkQ%3D

Type of recorder:
Film: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lrn24SdW64I
Copyright: Google Free to view.

❖ **Interviewee: <u>Frank Land</u> (3)**   **DOB:** 24.10.1928

Interviewer: Professor Alan Eardley
Date of Interview: 21.02.2016
Role in LEO: Programmer, Systems Analyst, Marketing, Consultant
Joined LEO: 1953
    Abstract: Professor Alan Eardley interviewed and filmed Frank Land as part of his collection of material on the history of computing for his inaugural lecture at Stafford University, April 14th 2016.
Repository: Pre-Interview response to interview questions: Dropbox LEO Interviews
https://www.dropbox.com/search/personal?path=%2F&preview=Frank+Land+Feb+2016+unedited.doc&qsid=801772540355424826653444419183340&query=frank+land&search_token=maaZCi5EZfs9ghMHde3MaOmE5gIkeIs7mVlUbNhfSkQ%3D
Interview and Video: Editing in process
Copyright: Alan Eardley
Restrictions: Interview and video will be available to members of LEO Computer Society

❖   **Interviewee: <u>Frank Land</u> (4)**   **DOB:** 24.10.1928
    Interviewer: Paul Jagger, Director Archive IT
    Date of Interview: 22.05.2018
    Editor: Helen Carter, ArchiveIT
    Role in LEO: Programmer, Systems Analyst, Marketing, Consultant
    Joined LEO: 1953
      Abstract: Archives IT are conducting and archiving interviews of UK individuals who have contributed to the development and evolution of IT. Frank Land has been added to the archive with a whole life interview.   Ninian Eady is also in the archive.
Archive IT repository: http://archivesit.org.uk/interviews/frank-land/
LEO Computers Society
Repository: https://www.dropbox.com/preview/LEO%20Oral%20History%20project/Leo%20Interview%20transcripts/FRANK%20LAND%20by%20ArchivesIT.doc?role=personal

❖   **Interviewee: <u>Ralph Land</u> (1)**   **DOB:** 24.10.1928
    Interviewer: Martin Garthwaite as part of LEO Computer Society's Oral History Project
    Date of Interview: 31st October 2011
    Role in LEO: Bureau Manager, Export Manager
    Joined LEO: 1954
    Abstract: Ralph joined the Lyons Teashop Division in 1953 as management accountant for the Teashops and transferred to LEO in 1954. He rose to manager of the LEO City Office followed by spells in promoting LEO exports in Paris and Dusseldorf before heading the LEO/English Electric team working in Eastern Europe including Soviet Russia. His subsequent career until retirement was with Rank-Xerox and Rolls Royce working on exports to Eastern Europe. Awarded OBE and subsequently CBE for services to UK export trade.
Text: Edited by Ralph Land and Hilary Caminer
Repositary: AAhttps://www.dropbox.com/search/personal?path=%2F&preview=Ralph+Land+unedited.doc&qsid=733042273624179865039938190066113&query=ralph+land&search_token=maaZCi5EZfs9ghMHde3MaOmE5gIkeIs7mVlUbNhfSkQ%3D
Recording: MP3
https://www.dropbox.com/search/personal?path=%2F&preview=Ralph+Land+audio+MP

❖ **Interviewee: <u>Ralph Land</u> (2)**   **DOB:** 24.10.1928
Interviewer: Google
Date of Interview: 21.11.2 011
Role in LEO: Bureau Manager, Export Manager
Joined LEO: 1954
   Abstract: Google interviewed and filmed a number of old LEO employees including Ralph Land as part of the celebration at the Science Museum of the 60th anniversary of the roll out of the first business application on the LEO I computer. Narrated by Georgina Ferry/
Repository: Interview Text: to be completed

Type of recorder:
Film: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lrn24SdW64I
Copyright: Google Free to view.

❖ **Interviewee: <u>Ernest Kaye</u>**   **DOB:** 1922-2012
Interviewer: Google
Date of Interview: 21.11.2011
Role in LEO: Design Engineer, head of engineering procurement
Joined LEO: 1949
   Abstract: Google interviewed and filmed a number of old LEO employees including Ernest Kaye as part of the celebration at the Science Museum of the 60th anniversary of the roll out of the first business application on the LEO I computer. Narrated by Georgina Ferry.
Repository:
Interview Text:

Type of recorder:
Film: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lrn24SdW64I
Copyright: Google Free to view.

❖ **Interviewee: <u>Chris J. Date</u>**   **DOB:** 1941
   Interviewer: Thomas Haigh
   Date of interview: 2007
   Role in LEO: Mathematical Programmer
   Joined LEO: 1962
      Abstract: Chris Date, well known for his work on Data Base theory and practice started his career with LEO in 1962 – 1967, and provides a description of his experience on pages 7 - 9 of the transcript of the interview. Very complimentary about LEO
   Repository: Computer History Museum, California
   Transcript: http://archive.computerhistory.org/resources/access/text/2013/05/102658166-05-01-acc.pdf
            - 51 pages
   Link to Museum: http://www.computerhistory.org/collections/catalog/102658166
   Copyright: Computer History Museum   CHM Reference number**: X4090.2007**

❖ **Interviewee: <u>Betty Cooper (nee Newman)</u>**   **DOB:**
   1930 **Died:** Aug 2019

Interviewer: Janet Abbate
Date of Interview: September 2001
Role in LEO: Programmer on LEO I and LEO II/I
Joined LEO: 1953

<u>**Abstract**</u>: Betty joined Lyons as a labour cost clerk in the Statistical Office in September 1949. In 1953 she was selected for a LEO appreciation course, and as a result was offered a job as a programmer on LEO I. Despite scepticism about what LEO would be able to do she accepted the offer. She worked on a number of applications – payroll under Mary Blood (Coombs) and Tea Blending under Frank Land. She gained a reputation as a sound and reliable programmer. She left LEO to work as a programmer with EverReady before leaving to start a family.

Reference: http://ethw.org/Oral-History:Betty_Cooper **and**
https://www.dropbox.com/s/ix8tnvvm1pdxper/BettyCooper.doc?dl=0